

A Comparative Research on the Craftsmanship Spirit Between
Japan and China:
Based on the Ethic, Technique and Belief Between Kongō Gumi and
Xiangshan Bang

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Introduction

0.1 Research Topic and Research Aim

0.1.1 Definition of “Craftsmanship Spirit”

The corresponding words of craftsman in Japanese are Takumi 匠 and Syokunin 職人, while the word in Chinese is Gongjiang 工匠. Craftsmen are all independent social individuals. In the aspect of personal qualities, a craftsman is “a creator of great skill in manual arts.” Starting with the results of the work, a craftsman is “a professional whose work is consistently of high quality.” Craftsman is an inclusive concept. The personal qualities of the craftsman, the process in which the craftsman is engaged, the final products created by the craftsman, even the social characteristics of the craftsman as an individual are all included in the connotation of the craftsman.

Spirit is a concept that is widely used in both the individual and social sense. It can refer to the character, attitude, and mind of a human being. In philosophy, it can also be opposite to substance, which constitutes one of the two sides in the world. The meaning of spirit is extensive. The connotation of spirit in this study refers to the ideology with certain characteristics that are owned by the community in the existing historical process. According to this dissertation, it is framed as: the cultural psychology behind the craftsmanship technique, the ethical relationship in the craftsman’s social life, and the spiritual belief embodied in the craftsmanship system.

Craftsmanship spirit is a concept which has gained worldwide attention. Its popularity

stems from *Report on the Work of the Government*¹(the Central People’s Government of the People’s Republic of China, 2016) and the subsequent political exposure of the concept.² However, before this, the Japanese society has formed a continuous concern about this proposition. The Japanese craftsman community shows the craftsmanship spirit in social practice,³ which has become common sense in the world. In view of the social development and the general cultural psychology, the study of the craftsmanship spirit between Japan and China has become possible. Furthermore, the craftsmanship spirit between Japan and China is not limited to a particular industry; it can be regarded as an internalized social spirit. Its extension has been generalized to the whole society and has become a universal social spirit.

¹ In the context of China, the craftsmanship spirit was widely discussed in 2013. The emergence of this concept in the *Report on the Work of the Government* in 2016 triggered its worldwide media exposure.

The cognition of craftsmanship in the context of China embraces a clear purpose presupposition that hopes to promote the spirit of internal industry practitioners in China so that the country will independently become a manufacturing power. It represents that China needs to learn from its own history on the one hand, while on the other hand, it is necessary to seek cultural and spiritual resources from other manufacturing powers (such as the United States, Germany, and Japan) on the other hand.

² Here, we need to recognize the political and cultural influence of China as the role of leading economies in the world. However, we also need to pay attention to the fact that after the mainstream media in the world regards the concept of “craftsmanship spirit” as current events, they often use the “China needs...” to describe this upsurge. In the same media, it often includes a special report on Japanese craftsmanship technique or craftsmanship aesthetics. This can be seen from another side where people generally believe that the craftsmanship really exists in the world.

³ Above all, it is hard to find words that perfectly correspond to this spirit in Japan. The Japanese words corresponding to the craftsmanship spirit include: 匠の精神・クラフツマンシップ・クラフトマンシップ・ものづくり魂・職人魂・職人氣質. Also, the range of these words is mostly mixed and crossed. However, since the complexity and diversity of the concept of craftsmanship spirit in the local environment of Japan, it has become a possibility to research the spirit of Japanese culture from the outside.

0.1.2 Research Subject: Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang

When it comes to Japanese craftsmanship spirit, the oldest craftsmen group is Kongō Gumi 金剛組. According to the genealogy of Kongō Gumi, it started the business in 578. That year, three skilled craftsmen from the ancient Korean kingdom of Baekje came to Japan at the behest of Prince Shotoku. One of them was the first generation of Kongō Gumi, Kongō Shigemitsu 金剛重光. In 593, the first Japanese temple in Buddha law, Shitennoji Temple 四天王寺 was established. After the temple was built, the Kongō family stayed here to guard the temple. For generations, they were responsible for the new construction, reconstruction and maintenance of the temple. In development for more than a thousand years, Kongō Gumi has also participated in the construction or restoration of many famous Japanese buildings, such as Osaka Castle (1583), Kōbuntei of Kairakuen 偕楽園好文亭 (two restorations in 1958 and 1972) and so on.

Kongō Gumi has faced several crises but always prevailed in them in the end. In 1955, on the basis of its original form of organization, Kongō Gumi was reorganized into a joint-stock corporation (kabushiki gaisha) in order to modernize its operations. Since then, Kongō Gumi has expanded its scope of business. In addition to the construction of temples and shrines, the construction and renovation of the general building are carried out at the same time. In 2006, due to the collapse of the property bubble, Kongō Gumi eventually went into liquidation. Afterwards, under the investment of Takamatsu Construction Group, the company reorganized itself and looked back on the original business of the construction of temples and shrines. In recent years, Kongō Gumi returned to the tradition and revived itself.

In China, there is a group of craftsmen with a long history, namely, Xiangshan Bang 香山

幫 (means Xiangshan Group). According to the present administrative divisions in China, they are mainly active in Xukou 胥口 and Guangfu 光福 of Wuzhong 吳中 in Suzhou 蘇州. Since this place is close to Lake Tai 太湖, next to Xiangshan 香山, these craftsmen were named Xiangshan Bang, who specialize in traditional Chinese architectural techniques, especially in carpentry. In China, a saying goes that “Excellent craftsmen in the southern regions of the Yangtze River are all from Xiangshan 江南木工巧匠皆出於香山.”

Before Xiangshan Bang was seen as a group of craftsmen, it formed a relatively well-known industrial agglomeration based on the region. Since ancient times, this area has been famous for its craftsmen who built many outstanding buildings. In the Northern Song Dynasty, Yingfeng Bureau was set up in Suzhou to serve the court with local treasures such as woods. During the Ming Dynasty, Kuai Xiang 蒯祥 (1399-1481) was called to Beijing to participate in the construction of the imperial palace (the forbidden city). He was appreciated by the emperor and started his political career as a craftsman. The craftsmen living close to Xiangshan spontaneously pursued Kuai Xiang as the originator and tried to organize these craftsmen together. Since then, Xiangshan Bang rose to fame. In addition to the craftsmen who built the palace architecture, craftsmen from Xiangshan Bang also engaged in residence building (garden architecture), which can be represented by the classical gardens of Suzhou 蘇州園林.

Since modern times, with the confluence of the Chinese classical construction industry and the modern construction industry, Xiangshan Bang has a place among the academy. During the transition to a modern corporate system, the various groups in Xiangshan Bang are also experiencing the corporatization of the organization, which is mainly carried out around the

choice of the main craftsmanship inheritors. Currently, Xiangshan Bang, as an optional craftsmen guild, still has an important value.

In recent years, the value of Xiangshan Bang's architectural skills has been widely recognized. "Traditional architectural construction skills of Xiangshan Bang" was listed in the first batch of China Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2006. In 2009, "Chinese traditional architectural craftsmanship for timber-framed structures" (including traditional architectural construction skills of Xiangshan Bang) was among the List of Representatives of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO.

It needs to be emphasized that when setting Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang as the research objects, this is not in hopes of conducting a panoramic study of their industries and specific types of work, but striving to study them as "craftsmen" themselves, with concern about the ethic, technique, belief and the social culture they carry. In other words, this research is interdisciplinary, starting with craftsmen.

Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang mentioned above are the oldest craftsmen groups in Japan and China. In terms of the abundance of their history, the complexity of their spirit, and the continuity of their craftsmanship, these two groups of craftsmen can be regarded as the representatives of craftsmen in Japan and China. Based on this characteristic, the particularity of the two major craftsmen groups was demonstrated, and the comparison between the two as representatives of the craftsmen groups in Japan and China was established.

Taking these two research objects as representatives, we can find the similarities and differences in the Japanese and Chinese cultural spirits represented by these two groups of

craftsmen. That is, from the perspective of craftsmen, “craftsmanship spirit” is a key to open this subject, and has the value of cultural history and intellectual history.

0.1.3 Research Aim

Firstly, as far as academic context is concerned, craftsman is the important academic subject that cannot be ignored.

Along with the “culture turn” in the academy, especially the emergence of new cultural history, the academic community began to pay attention to the underclass of society, gradually touching on the subject that previous scholars were not concerned about. For example, a series of studies on laborers (the working class) came out in British cultural studies. Its representative works, *The Making of the English Working Class* (Thompson, 1963), *Learning to Labor: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs* (Willis, 1977), point out how cultural practices relate to social phenomena. In Asian studies, however, this trend has not received sufficient attention. Researching the craftsmen and their cultural spirits of Japan and China can be seen as a re-exploration of the knowledge of East Asia.

Secondly, from the perspective of academic awareness, the craftsmanship spirit is a key to dealing with the subject of the craftsman.

In this dissertation, the focus on Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang contains certain academic awareness. In ancient times, the two groups of craftsmen can be positioned in the historical process of Japan and China. Throughout history, they have made their transition in the process of modernization. In terms of the practice system in the two groups of craftsmen, the

reason for the reserved and abandoned parts in their craftsmanship system is complex, it can only be achieved through a comprehensive research on ethic, technique, and belief. In addition, the main proposition of this dissertation, such as ethic, technique, and belief, will not only be explored in itself, but also in the pattern of the culture behind it.

Thirdly, in the practical sense, from the internalized craftsmanship spirit, it is possible to extract cultural models between Japan and China which are worth taking in.

Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang mentioned above are the most outstanding representatives of the traditional Japanese and Chinese woodworking craftsmen. In this dissertation, they are placed in the same horizon of the craftsmanship spirit, providing the key to the cultural characteristics of the two countries. Moreover, researching craftsmanship spirit in detail is beneficial to the understanding of social formation, economic mode and cultural psychology between Japan and China. It will pass on the experience to foreign countries, which may also strengthen the economic and cultural connection between different countries.

0.2 Literature Review

0.2.1 Research on the Specialized History

The study of craftsmen often take place through specialized history. Researchers often affirm the value of historical relics created by craftsmen (such as architecture, technique, etc.). From this perspective, the history that belongs to the craftsmen can easily evolve into concrete narrations.

The research from the perspective of architectural history is not uncommon. As for studies

related to Kongō Gumi, a series of studies by Mae Hisao 前久夫 (Mae, 1979, 1980, 1981, 2002) carefully examined the origins, times, forms, designs and construction methods of temples and shrines accompanied by detailed illustrations, which hold high reference value. In addition, the research of Murata Kenichi 村田健一 on the traditional wooden architecture based on the perspective of cultural heritage is also beneficial. Specifically, the study of the architectural form of Shitennoji Temple constructed by Kongō Gumi often starts from its spatial structure (Okamoto, 2002) and its historical origin (Kawagishi, 1989). The architectural research on Xiangshan Bang mainly focuses on the residential buildings in Suzhou and the palace architecture of the Ming and Qing Dynasties. Among them, the research on classical gardens of Suzhou is more in-depth, mainly focusing on the spatial structure and aesthetic features (Liu, 1994; Zhou, 2010). The research on palace architecture can be regarded as a research hotspot (Ru & Peng, 2019).

The second category is the specialized history of woodcraft. As for Japan, such works are generally specialized on the definition. Some of these works include a detailed description of the wood materials and the cultural spirit of Japan (Narita, 1984). In addition, there are also books devoted to woodcraft in the construction of temples and shrines (Matsuura, 2005). As for China, research on woodworking techniques are also similar. These studies generally summarize the practical mode of the woodcraft (Shen, 1981; China Forestry Association 中國林學會, 1982; Zhao, 1994). The research on techniques of Xiangshan Bang often rely on certain architecture (Suzhou Landscape Development Co., Ltd. 蘇州園林發展股份有限公司, Suzhou Xiangshan Gujian Co., Ltd. 蘇州香山古建園林工程有限公司, (Eds.), 2012). However, different from the research in Japan, the research in China is often limited to the technical form itself, and has not

expanded to the culture.

Corresponding to the previous two types of research, craftsmen who created historical relics have not been able to obtain recognition due to their social class and the difficulties in obtaining documents. The vast number of craftsmen who hide behind historical narratives are confronted with their “collective aphasia” in orthodox studies.

0.2.2 Research on the Method of Cultural History

Since then, the specialized research on craftsmen has gradually emerged under the category of culture and society. The span of such works and previous studies is that craftsmen begin to emerge as narrative subjects instead of hiding behind history, architecture, technique and aesthetics. This kind of research is also well done around the world. The most widely-known work is *The Tinkerers: The Amateurs, DIYers, And Inventors Who Make America Great* written by Alec Foege. However, the American craftsmanship spirit focuses almost exclusively on innovation, while the connotation of Japanese and Chinese craftsmanship spirit is more multiple and complex. The method of this research is worth learning, but the content of this research cannot be simply duplicated.

In Japan, such attempts are taking place, too. Such studies often attempt to provide a panoramic view of all craftsman industries over a given period to preserve detailed documents. Among them, there are researchers including Ei Rokusuke 永六輔 and Yoshida Mitsukuni 吉田光邦, etc. It is noteworthy that new methods were brewed in the research of Yoshida Mitsukuni. In addition to his basic statements, he conducted a more detailed examination of the

history source and dealt with some more difficult or interdisciplinary problems: For example, the craftsman system of the three periods of the Medieval Ages, Edo and Meiji were examined from the perspective of social class (Yoshida, 1976). For another example, the techniques was placed at the level of civilization (Yoshida, 1979). These studies have already showed definite awareness of method transformation.

The research on the craftsmen in China has only occurred in recent years, but has developed relatively fast. Due to the ideology, the enthusiasm on this proposition has reached an unprecedented level and the number of case analysis papers has experienced explosive growth. However, the quantity of scholarly monographs is limited, among them, *The Craftsmen in Ancient China* and *The modernization of the Traditional Craftsmen* can be seen as the representative works. The former book mainly summarized the ancient craftsmanship system in China by category (Cao, 1996). The most noteworthy point of this research is the consciousness of everyday life (e.g. marriage, living, taxation, etc.) of craftsmen under the trend of “historical crisis.” The latter book mainly concerns the modernization of the traditional craftsmen, and explores the models of transformation in Chinese culture (Yu, 2012).

0.2.3 Research on the Research Subject

Kongō Gumi is universally recognized as the oldest enterprise in the world. It starts with the research of O’Hara and Mandel (2002), in this research, Kongō Gumi was recognized as the world’s oldest family company. Because of this characteristic, the focus on Kongō Gumi around the English-speaking world is to describe its long history. The articles from James Olan

Hutcheson (2007), David Pilling (2007) , April Holloway (2015) and the news from Mark Willacy (2011) showed the trend. These studies mainly focus on the history of Kongō Gumi.

Kongō Gumi itself, is satisfied with this expression. Based on this recognition, Kongō Gumi tries to publish the books on its long history and business mode. The member of Kongō Gumi also participates in the interview, introduces the unique experience of Kongō Gumi. Kongō Gumi even applies to the Guinness Book of World Records (Nishiyama, 2003), tries to construct this discourse. The book *1,400 Years of Entrepreneurship - 16 Instructions from the Oldest Company in the World* 『創業一四〇〇年——世界最古の会社に受け継がれる一六の教え』, written by Kongō Toshitaka 金剛利隆, the 39th generation head of Kongō Gumi, describes the development history of Kongō Gumi and summarizes the reasons for its development and decline (Kongō, 2013). As the leader of Kongō Gumi, Kongō Toshitaka also participants in some interview, introduces the business experiences of Kongō Gumi (Kongō, 2006). Recently, Ogawa Genji 小川完二, as the actual executor of the reorganization of Kongō Gumi by Takamatsu Construction Group after its bankruptcy, also participates in many interviews introducing the history, culture and business philosophy of Kongō Gumi (Ogawa et al., 2012; Ogawa & Ito, 2016).

Although the research on Kongō Gumi is rare in Japan, it is basically concentrated on the proposition of long-established stores 老舗企業/長寿企業. These studies are mainly focused on the discipline of management, the main researchers include Inoue Yoshihiro 井上善博, Nakajima Yukisuke 中島幸介 and Sone Hidekazu 曾根秀一. A series of studies from Sone Hidekazu are the most comprehensive works. These researches mainly focus on the business

mode of Kongō Gumi as long-established companies (Sone et al., 2006; Yoshimura & Sone, 2006; Sone, 2008; Sone & Sasaki, 2014). Sone's doctoral dissertation (2010), is published as *Survival Mechanism of Long-Established Companies* 『老舗企業の存続メカニズム』 (2019). Besides, as the text of Kongō Gumi's tradition, researches about *The Will* of 32nd generation head have taken place (Sone & Yoshimura, 2004; Kato & Sone, 2007; Sone, 2017).

There is no doubt that it is the right direction to study Kongō Gumi, but we have to admit that due to the brilliance of this aspect, the researchers have missed out on many important questions about Kongō Gumi. We can see that the history of the development of Kongō Gumi can completely shape the history of the development of Japanese craftsmen from one aspect. The buildings built by Kongō Gumi as well as its own belief system, rite, technique, and form of organization all serve as representatives of the Japanese craftsmanship spirit.

As for Xiangshan Bang, since modern times, with the transformation from Chinese classical construction industry to the modern construction industry, the Chinese researchers begin to look at the architectural skills and architectural experience of Xiangshan Bang from the perspective of modern architecture. In addition, as mentioned above, the skills of Xiangshan Bang as an important part of traditional Chinese architecture construction skills, have been certified by UNESCO. This causes a research boom in China.

However, these fixed biases also confined the research of Xiangshan Bang within the architectural techniques and architectural forms. From the book *Yingzao Fayuan* (or *Guidance of Construction*) 《營造法原》 to the recent researches; all of them are within this category. Recently, the representative works, such as Cui Jinyu 崔晉餘's *Buildings by Xiangshan Bang in*

Suzhou (2004); Li Zhoufang 李洲芳's *Buildings of Suzhou and Xiangshan Bang* (2010); Liu Tuo 劉托, Ma Quanbao 馬全寶 and Feng Xiaodong 馮曉東's *Building Skills of Xiangshan Bang in Suzhou* (2013); Feng Xiaodong and Yong Zhenhua 雍振華's *Illustration of the Buildings by Xiangshan Bang* (2015), are all interested in the techniques and architectural forms. In addition, the researches about Xiangshan Bang in English-speaking world are all came the introduction by Chinese researchers (Liu et al., 2018; 2019). A research on Xiangshan Bang's craftsmanship, Shen Li 沈黎's *A Research on the System of Xiangshan Bang's Craftsmanship* (2011), also comes from the vision of department of architecture. The belief system, the inheritance mode, and the form of organization are often ignored. This dissertation will investigate these important aspects of Xiangshan Bang from the perspective of Chinese craftsmanship spirit.

In addition, unlike the case of Kongō Gumi in Japan, the text about Xiangshan Bang hardly come from inside. Even in modern times, although company records or other texts can be used as supplements, the important information about Xiangshan Bang still comes from the collation of academic circles.

As far as the introduction of the subjects goes, the literature review on Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang has been clarified. However, we have to admit that few researchers have placed Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang in their historical background according to the research method of cultural history. They are ignorant of social systems and social cultures, as well as the spiritual aspects of the technique and the architecture related to the craftsmanship system. In particular, the absence of ethic and belief in the aforementioned research can be seen as the main drawback. Under the circumstances, this dissertation hopes to make up for the gaps mentioned

above, present the vivid historical and cultural phenomena which are represented by Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang, as well as explore the origin and the state of craftsmanship spirit in Japan and China.

0.3 Research Methods

0.3.1 Main Research Method: New Cultural History

The method used in this dissertation is new cultural history. This method was rediscovered in the 1970s, Britain⁴ and the United States⁵ are now the two major research centers. Now, it has further influence all over the world. In the present sense, new cultural history has gone beyond the classic cultural history which put culture as the top-level of the society and aimed to characterize culture as portraits of an age (Burke, 2008, p.7). Moreover, it absorbs the advantages of structuralism history and regards culture as an organic part of society. At the same time, new cultural history extends the scope of culture from the narrow sense of art, beauty and spirit. It uses interdisciplinary methods to make social class, power structures, ethical relationships, belief systems, and national consciousness, which are all closely related to culture, accessible to the investigation of culture.⁶

⁴ Peter Burke(1937-), his representative work is *What is Cultural History?* (2004).

⁵ Lynn Hunt (1945-), her representative work are *The New Cultural History* (1989) and *Beyond the Cultural Turn* (1999).

⁶ It is particularly worth noting that by the process of incorporating visual cultural theory, anthropology, folklore, psychology, daily history, and micro-history into its own research methodology, new cultural history has actually expanded the connotation of culture, integrating culture to the interdisciplinary, multiple perspectives, which naturally implies the analysis of macroscopic cultural psychology through the investigation of micro and details.

Referring to new cultural history in the study of the craftsmanship spirit between Japan and China is mainly based on the following three considerations.

First of all, new cultural history pays attention to the spiritual core behind the representation of culture and interpreting it as a cultural sense accurately. The representation includes double meanings. “One is to describe or depict the object expressed by specific language, that is, the process of textualization. The second is the symbolic meaning acquired in the description or depiction of the object” (Hall, 2003, p.16) . Among them, a dynamic expression relationship among “object--representation--symbolical meaning” is formed, which makes it possible to obtain unlimited signifying practices between the subject and its representation. The research on the craftsmanship spirit between Japan and China mentioned in this dissertation will be based mainly on this kind of method.

Secondly, new cultural history focuses on the discovery of the people (Burke, 2008, p.17). As previously discussed, some communities are difficult to divide into the academic research category; by this method, they will be studied under the academic perspective. From the literature review, we can find out that the research on the craftsmen community is peripheral in Japanese and Chinese academia, and the study of its historical development and spiritual system is rare. This dissertation hopes to make up for the great gap by this method.

Finally, the perspective of new cultural history often runs through history, present and future with the sense of reality and future awareness. Therefore, the aim of this dissertation lies in the long history of evolution, and how the spirits of Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang have been shaped into what they look like today. Meanwhile, this dissertation concerns about the

experience they will bring to the universal spirits of mankind in the future.

0.3.2 Comparative Research Method

The accessorial method used in this dissertation is the comparative research method. This method provides a multicultural approach, that seeks to explore the spiritual core through the representation of similarities and discrepancies. We can even conclude that comparison is the internal consciousness of the most of problems in cultural communication and interaction.

In fact, Japan and China are in the East Asian cultural circle. They have certain cultural similarities in a long period of history. Only through in-depth comparative research with a value-neutral attitude can we come to the differences between Japan and China. That is the only way for us to clarify the unique cultural traits of the craftsmanship spirit between the two countries.

In addition, aiming the future awareness of new cultural history and the multiple denotation of the craftsmanship spirit, the craftsmanship spirit of Japan and China holds the guiding significance to the economic form and cultural consciousness of the East Asian cultural circle. This cross-cultural awareness is bound to promote the economic and cultural communications in East Asia.

0.4 Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation contains an introductory chapter, six chapters in the body of the text, and one conclusion chapter.

The introduction introduces the research subjects, the literature review, the research

methods, and the main research contents.

Chapter 1 focuses on the social class of craftsmen. This chapter will present the historical development process of Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang in the specific social environment. Later, we will place the history of Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang in the specific historical environment in which they are located, and explore their relationship with the power center, economy, and culture.

Chapter 2 concerns the form of organization. It will discuss the relationship between a craftsman as an individual and the craftsmen group as a community. Firstly, we will compare the concepts of “kumi” and “bang,” the names of the Japanese and Chinese craftsmen groups respectively. Secondly, we will take a more detailed look into each of the two groups by firstly discussing the responsibilities of each position in the pre-modern society and the operation modes of the hierarchical structures, and then exploring how did the two groups adjust their organizational structures after adopting the modern enterprise system. Thirdly, through analyzing the differences in the family inheritance patterns, the ethnical consciousness that maintains the two groups is explored.

Chapter 1 and chapter 2 attempt to comprehensively demonstrate the ethical aspects of Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang from the external and internal perspectives. Chapter 1 mainly begins with the social affairs of the two craftsmen groups, presenting external ethics about the community and the society. Chapter 2 mainly focuses on the ethical patterns within the craftsmen community.

Chapter 3 focuses on the techniques of Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang, and tries to

describe the individual position of the craftsmen in the craftsmanship system. Firstly, we will describe the ways of inheritance of the two craftsmen groups and the roles of individuals and the group in the inheritance system. Secondly, we will point out the relationship among materials, tools, and production spaces in craftsmanship. Thirdly, we will look at the meaning of existence and inner logic of craftsmanship in the modern world, that is, to seek for the modern representation of techniques.

Chapter 4 focuses on the architecture as the historical relic of the technique. Under the perspective of spatial structure, we can take the architecture as the signifier, in order to analyze the historical facts, power consciousness, and aesthetic spirit which are hidden behind the architectures and techniques.

Chapter 3 and chapter 4 focus on the technical aspects of Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang. From the historical relics of technique, that is, the architecture and the technique itself, the cultural characteristics of the two craftsmen groups can be achieved.

Chapter 5 is about the rite of Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang. Compared with certain beliefs, the rites can be regarded as secular spirit with direct purpose, which is closely related to the daily practice. In this chapter, we will pay attention to the architectural ceremony (beam raising ceremony), the ceremony of the carpenter with a hatchet in Kongō Gumi, and the master's ceremony in Xiangshan Bang.

Chapter 6 focuses on the belief system of the craftsmen. It concentrates on the belief systems of Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang, while paying attention to the spiritual logic of these beliefs in the craftsmanship. This chapter will also focus on the religions and beliefs which

are accepted by the craftsmen groups in modern society.

Chapter 5 and chapter 6 focus on the belief of Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang. Whether the secular beliefs in chapter 5 or the religious beliefs in chapter 6, the spiritual dimension of the representative craftsmen groups in Japan and China will be described.

Chapter 7 is the conclusion of the dissertation, which focuses on the future awareness of craftsmanship spirit in Japan and China. The whim or revival of the craftsmanship spirit is not hard, but it is difficult to preserve this spirit in details by daily work, it is even more difficult to carry on this spirit systematically and organizationally. The conclusion of this dissertation will be based on the reasoning for the craftsmanship spirit of Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang, in order to draw the universal direction of the future.

Chapter 1

Class and Profession from the Perspective of Social Culture

Chapter 1 focuses on the class and the industry. According to new cultural history, the first step towards the understanding of an object is to describe the social and cultural environment which it is located in, this is an important representation of ethical relations. According to these two clues, this dissertation will present the historical development process of Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang in the specific social environment.

Status system (or more directly known as the class system) is an important basis for understanding patterns of culture in ancient Japan and China. Before modern periods, the artisans 工 (the craftsmen) was not just the profession, it was mainly used for dividing the social class in the social system. Not only in Japan but also in China, craftsmen belong to the lower class. However, even in the hierarchical society of identity, Kongō Gumi was able to break through the barriers in the status system, it had stable pensions⁷ and distinguished status⁸ as upper class. Since the Ming Dynasty, the outstanding craftsmen with excellent woodcraft of Xiangshan Bang participated in the traditional Chinese bureaucratic system,⁹ achieved a leap in the class. The first part of this chapter will study the class of the artisans in Japanese and Chinese history, describe the origin of the historical development in detail.

After the Meiji Restoration, especially after the World War II, Kongō Gumi faced

⁷ For most of the historical time before the Meiji Restoration, Kongō Gumi can receive stable pensions from Shitennoji Temple.

⁸ Kongō Yoshisada 金剛喜定, the 32nd generation head of Kongō Gumi, was cited for his architectural achievements. He owned the right to bear a surname and to wear a sword 苗字帶刀 for the family.

⁹ Referring Kuai Xiang's example.

multiple difficulties. Meanwhile, Kongō Gumi also faced opportunities provided by the general development of society. These crises and opportunities have effects on the industry, business scope and form of organization of Kongō Gumi. Since the late Qing Dynasty and the early Republic of China, the social status and existence of the craftsmen in Xiangshan Bang also changed dramatically. The struggles of the two groups of craftsmen can be seen as attempts by the traditional craftsmen group to innovate in the process of modernization, which hold universal significance. The latter part of this chapter attempts to straighten out this problem.

1.1 Macro-History: Political Systems and the Class of Craftsmen

1.1.1 Political System and the Class of Craftsmen in Japan

1.1.1.1 Ancient Times

In the historical record, the groups of craftsmen in Japan have remained close with the identity of toraijin 渡来人 (means immigrants). Japan got (invited or accepted) craftsmen from Korean Peninsula, which not only improved certain industries,¹⁰ but also promoted the forming of Japanese local craftsmen.¹¹ For Japan, since the introduction of Buddhism, the Buddhist doctrines needed to be spread by monks, architectural techniques, painting skills and stela techniques needed to be spread by craftsmen as well. So, in historical texts, we can find that

¹⁰ Such descriptions can be found in the *Nihon Shoki* (or *Chronicles of Japan*) 日本書紀, and the industries cited below include the textile and leather industries.

“14th year, Spring, 2nd month. The King of Baekje sent as tribute a seamstress named Maketsu. She was the first ancestress of the present seamstresses of Kume.” The original text is 十四年春二月、百濟王貢縫衣工女。曰眞毛津。是今來目衣縫之始祖也。 Refers to *Nihon Shoki* (Vol.10), from *Nihon Koten Bungaku Taikei* 日本古典文学大系 (*Japanese Classic Literature Outline*) (67), p.371.

“In this year Hitaka no Kishi returned from Koryo, and delivered to the Emperor the artisans Sunyuki and Nonyuki. They were the ancestors of the Koryo tanners of the village of Nukada in the district of Yamabe in the province of Yamato.” 是歲、日鷹吉士、還自高麗、獻工匠須流枳・奴流枳。今大倭国山邊郡額田邑熟皮高麗、是其後也。 Refers to *Nihon Shoki* (Vol.15), from *Nihon Koten Bungaku Taikei* (67), p.533.

¹¹ “In consequence of this, the Silla men were called to an account. The King of Silla, when he heard of it, was afraid, and, greatly alarmed, sent tribute of skillful workmen. They were the first ancestors of the Ina Be.” 由是、責新羅人。新羅王聞之、讐然大驚、乃貢能匠者。是猪名部等之始祖也。 Refers to *Nihon Shoki* (Vol.10), from *Nihon Koten Bungaku Taikei* (67), pp.377-379.

In the Bemin system 部民制, Ina Be is a group of carpenters with written records in the Yamato Court Vocational Department. There is also a record in the *Nihon Shoki* about the name of Ina Be participating in the construction of the palace.

Japan invited temple builders, painters and Buddhist statue architect from Baekje. Benefited by the inclusiveness, Japan introduced advanced techniques in east-Asia in the beginning of culture interaction, which synchronized with the development of traditional techniques.

After Japan stepped into the Ritsuryō system 律令制, the identity and status of craftsmen could be witnessed in the codes. In Japan's Taihō Code 大宝律令 and Yōrō Code 養老律令, imitating China's Liangjian Zhi (means class system) 良賤制, the ruled classes were categorized as the upper 良 or lower 賤 classes in commoners.

The upper classes in commoners are categorized as citizens and generalist, Generalist is categorized as Shinabe 品部 and Zakko 雑戸, that is, craftsmen and tradesmen. Both were people affiliated to officials with specific techniques.¹² In the Code of Tax and Corvee 賦徭令 and the Code of Construction and Restoration 營繕令, work of those craftsmen¹³ and the country's measurement of their work¹⁴ were stipulated. When they were on duty, their catering was provided by the country; when they passed away on trips to the venue, their coffins would be under the state's expenses. We can tell that this corresponded to the active cooperative relations of traditional state-owned handcraft industries.

Moreover, part of the craftsmen were included in the lower class. When their identity must be specifically marked by rules in census registration. "Servants of the officials should be registered in this department in each January. The documents should be made in duplicate, on handed to the administrative officials, one remained in this department. If there are craftsmen

¹² *The Dictionary of Japanese History* (8) 国史大辞典, 1997, p.537.

¹³ Refers to *Ryō no Shūge* 令集解 (1)(Vol.14), 1912, pp.460-467.

¹⁴ Refers to *Ryō no Shūge* (2)(Vol.30), 1913, p.236.

with techniques, specific annotations should be made (the Code of Revenue 戸令).”¹⁵ Craftsmen therein were specially mentioned. As for why craftsmen with special techniques were marked, it is explained in Annotations of *Ryō no Shūge* that “they can be of use in some occasions.”¹⁶ It can be concluded that it was an identity affiliation system dominated by demands.

To conclude from the above, at that time, identities of craftsmen cannot be summarized in one definition. Craftsmen were usually categorized in different classes, dispersed in loosely organized associations in different clusters. Craftsmen of different classes serve different groups, the distinctions of affiliations led to disparity of craftsman’s social status.

1.1.1.2 Medieval Period

Before the medieval period of Japan, characters of craftsmen were usually noted by Takumi 工/匠. Since the medieval period, the word 職人 appeared. In Kamakura period, the word was pronounced shikinin, meaning the inferior staff managing manors (Kita, 2008, p.18). In the late Nanboku-chō period (the late 14th century), pronunciation of the word was changed into Shokunin, meaning handicraftsman (Kita, 2008, p.19). The change in the meaning of this word implied the financial independence of craftsmen. In this period, craftsmen started to earn wages with their own techniques. Through a more specific categorization, there appeared out-craftsmen (working outside) and in-craftsmen (working inside one’s home) (Endō, 1956, p.6; Yoshida, 2013, p.268).

From the 14th century, *Shokunin Utaawase* (or *Poetry Contest by Various Artisans*)職人

¹⁵ Refers to *Ryō no Shūge* (1)(Vol.10), 1912, p.360.

¹⁶ Ibid. p.361.

歌合 was created and spread. Situations of various craftsmen were saved by drawings and texts. Among them, *Tohokuin Shokunin Utaawase* 東北院職人歌合, *Tsurugaoka-houjoue Shokunin Utaawase* 鶴岡放生会職人歌合, *Sanjuniban Shokunin Utaawase* 三十二番職人歌合 and *Shichijuichiban Shokunin Utaawase* 七十一番職人歌合 were the representatives. Utaawase (Contest of Poems) is a literature form popular among the nobles taking craftsmen as the materials, which conveys that part of the craftsmen who attracted attention from the nobles. As Endō Motoo 遠藤元男 said, that was when the hierarchy of craftsmen groups were formed, and this kind of social formation cannot be ignored (Endō, 1956, p.3). Moreover, the changing form of utaawase reflected the interior transformations of craftsmen, among which profession division was the most significant. As the time progresses, profession division recorded in utaawase grew more specific and the number of craftsmen was increased.¹⁷ Meanwhile, vocations recorded in traditional shokunin utaawase still existed. That is to say, from the medieval period, profession division of traditional Japanese craftsmen was generally fixed.

We can say that medieval period was an important time for shaping the identity of Japanese craftsmen, when the impact from China was gradually removed, the unique craftsmen culture was formed in Japan. The independence of manufactural industry and profession division formed in that period have been influential till modern times.

¹⁷ In chronological order, there are 10 occupations in *Tohokuin Shokunin Utaawase* (Manshuin Temple Edition in the Tokyo National Museum), and there are 24 occupations in the *Tsurugaoka-houjoue Shokunin Utaawase*. There are a total of 32 occupations in *Sanjuniban Shokunin Utaawase*, and there are 142 occupations in *Shichijuichiban Shokunin Utaawase* created in the Muromachi period (about the end of the 16th century). This social and cultural phenomenon of paying attention to craftsmen has become a tradition, and even entered the Edo period. There are hundreds of occupations recorded in *Jinrin Kinmō Zui* 人倫訓蒙図彙 (1690).

1.1.1.3 Early-Modern Times

In analogy of Chinese thoughts, Japanese molding of Shimin system 四民 at least started in the early stage of Edo Period. In Japanese-Portugese Dictionary compiled in the 8th year of Keichō (1603), the entry of Shinokosho were listed with “warriors (samurai), farmers, artisans and merchants,” and the entry of Shimin were listed with “warriors (samurai), farmers, artisans and merchants” as well (Asao, 1992, pp.17-18). That proves that Japan followed China in adopting the concept of “Four Categories of People.” That was aimed at applying a special definition about Japanese samurai. That idea was similar to what China did in redefining “scholars, farmers, artisans and merchant” and to distinguish “scholars” from “farmers, artisans and merchants” after the rise of scholars.

When adopting the Chinese concept, Japan had the same confusion with China-the origination of the concept in Chinese classic did not contain determination of social status, but a sort of social division of labor. As Nishikawa Joken 西川如見 (1648-1724) mentioned in *Chōnin Bukuro* (or *A Bagful of Advice for Merchants*) 町人囊: “There are four categories of people called shimin, that is shinokosho, shi means warriors (samurai), no means farmers, ko means artisans and sho means merchants.”¹⁸ And standard of the categorization is based on “contribution to the country.”¹⁹ Mitsui Takafusa 三井高房 (1684-1748) wrote in the preface of *Chōnin Kōken Roku* 町人考見録: “There are four categories of people in our life, divided into warriors, farmers, artisans and merchants, each performing their duties. Their descendants would

¹⁸ Written by Nishikawa Joken (finished in 1692, published in 1717). Refers to Nakamura (1975, p.87).

¹⁹ Ibid.

inherit their business and manage the family.”²⁰ It can be conclude from this that “warriors, farmers, artisans and merchants” as methods of vocation divisions, occupied an important position in the society.

In addition, the top-level design existed in social ideology, viewing warriors, farmers, artisans and merchants as the social status hierarchy. But the concept rooted in the scholars working for warriors was usually targeted at restricting the development of merchants. Wealth accumulated by merchants may lead to extravagance, resulting the retrogress of agriculture, and it is the reason for restricting the social status of chōnin, especially merchants In the 11th year of Kansei (1799), *Kannō Wakumon* (or *Persuasion on Farmers*) 勸農或問 written by Fujita Yūkoku 藤田幽谷 (1774-1826) mentioned that “as for warriors, farmers, artisans and merchants in ancient times, farmers were ranked after warriors,”²¹ which was aimed at safeguarding the orthodoxy of agricultural country, and the domination of the samurai. Under this mentality, ranked after merchant, artisans were not suppressed.

Though the concept of “warriors, farmers, artisans and merchants” was introduced into Japan to safeguard the status of samurai in Edo period, it was not completely localized.²² The imperfect match with the social background would inevitably lead the systematic faults. In Edo period, merchants approached samurai by marriage, and artisans obtained privilege endowed by

²⁰ Written by Mitsui Takafusa (finished in 1728). Refers to Nakamura (1975, p.176).

²¹ Written by Fujita Yūkoku (finished in 1799). Refers to Takasu (1941, p.28).

²² Japan is not a unified country like China. It does not have a full-fledged officer selection system (the examination system for scholars), nor does it have a broad agricultural population and corresponding agricultural economic form that support the identity of farmers. Even if Japan introduces Shinokosho as an status hierarchy, it does not represent the cultural background in which it generates and nourishes this status system.

samurai by their techniques, the examples were not rare. Certainly, endowment and reception of the privilege did not mean rise of the receiver's social status. It is similar to a kind of honor, representing the granting of the ruling class.

In recent studies, some scholars believe that identity definition of “warriors, farmers, artisans and merchants” is not substantial enough to conclude the universal social environment of Edo period. In this period, samurai, imperial court and temples as the multiple forms of dominators, lead the state. People were not only segmented by professions, but also by residential location. For instance, Yoshida Nobuyuki 吉田伸之, Tsukada Takashi 塚田孝 and Wakita Osamu 脇田修 advocate an emphasis on “the edge of identities 身分的周縁,”²³ state demonstrated in the loose part of status system. This mentality just came from the polymerization which can be seen in the social landscape.

1.1.1.4 Modern Times

As Japan steps into the progress of modern state, policies closely related to craftsmen's position and changes of craftsmen's identity can be viewed in the following facets:

Firstly, reshaping the class, showing the equality of all people..

After Meiji Restoration, the remarkable events of transformation of craftsmen's identity is policy equality brought by human rights revolution of the whole society. In the 2nd year of Meiji(1869), identities of Japanese society was categorized as “kazoku (the nobles)華族, shizoku (the warriors) 士族 and heimin (the class of commoners) 平民.” Farmers, artisans and

²³ Please refer to the works from Yoshida et al. (1994), and the other works from these scholars.

merchants in Edo Period were included in the commoners. In the 3rd year of Meiji (1870), the government released the *Bulletin about Families Allowed to Have Family Names* 自今平民苗氏被差許候事.²⁴ The commoners can have their own surnames, which shook the privilege of bearing a surname and wearing a sword of samurai in Edo periods. The concept of equality is therefore reached into people's heart. In the 4th year of Meiji (1871), the government abolished the disdainful name of the lower classes.²⁵ In the 5th year of Meiji (1872), as popularization of education to all the people, what represented the identity and profession of traditional status system was broken entirely. In a surprisingly short time, Japan abolished traditional status system in policies, basically achieving equality of identities. Artisans, as the original class in the society, acquired identity liberation in the mentality of equality.

Secondly, the guidance of establishing middle and small-sized enterprises from the government.

In pre-modern society, operations of craftsmen usually depended on handicraft factory or family stores. After World War II, Japan set up a series of enterprises system with “invisible hand” and “visible hand,”²⁶ regulating operation management mode of traditional craftsmen. Many

²⁴ Refers to National Diet Library, Japan, *Codes of 3rd Year of Meiji* (No.680, September 19), <http://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/787950/212>

After that, in the 8th year of Meiji (1875), the Meiji government published the *Bulletion of Commeners Must Have Family Names* 平民ニ必ス苗字ヲ唱ヘシム. Refers to National Archives of Japan, http://www.archives.go.jp/naj_news/11/anohi.html

²⁵ Refers to National Diet Library, Japan, *Codes of 4th Year of Meiji* (No.448, August 22) 穢多非人等ノ稱被廢候條自今身分職業共平民同様タルヘキ事, <http://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/787951/205>

²⁶ According to the traditional production methods of craftsmen, they can generally transformed into small and medium-sized enterprises. After World War II, Japan quickly published the *Small and Medium-sized Enterprise Cooperatives Act* 中小企業等協同組合法 (1949), *Small and Medium-sized Enterprise Stabilization Act* 中小企

handicraftsmen promptly become a member of modern economic social system by transforming the original production to the enterprises system, In the same period, with consumers' demand, some enterprises developed rapidly. Some innovation behaviors among them even became the paradigm of Japanese economic (Dower, 1999, p.533). This economic miracle somewhat provided basic social background for preserving traditional craftsmen' techniques by preserving craftsmen themselves.

Thirdly, cultural relics protection system and craftsmen protection system were established.

In the 24th year of Shōwa (1949), the main hall in Hōryūji Temple was destroyed in a fire disaster. Japan started to discuss the establishment of comprehensive system for protecting cultural relics. In the 25th year of Shōwa (1950), Japan enacted *Act on Protection of Cultural Propertie* 文化財保護法, which categorized cultural relics as “tangible cultural heritage,” “intangible cultural heritage” and “folk cultural heritage.”²⁷ The law remains extended its effectiveness to present. It is noteworthy that Japan was the first country in Asia to set up intangible cultural relics protection system. Japan's intangible culture is mainly based on plays, music, and craftsmen's techniques with great value, which is closely related to traditional craftsmen. This system not only includes the state's ratification of traditional techniques, but also includes protecting artistic materials, propagating in public, inheriting techniques, improving craftsmanship and living conditions (Ichikawa, 2007, p.122). Therefore, the system not only

業安定法 (1953), and *Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Group Organization Act* 中小企業団体組織法 (1957). These laws ensured the "smooth transition" as mentioned above. . For details of specific policies, please refer to Odahashi (1971, pp.181-183).

²⁷ According to the website of e-Gov, https://elaws.e-gov.go.jp/search/elawsSearch/elaws_search/lsg0500/detail?lawId=325AC1000000214#M

aimed at protecting traditional techniques, but also aimed at protecting the inheritors of cultural heritage (generally called a living national treasure 人間国宝), so that relevant craftsmen groups and production mode can be preserved as well.

To sum up, after the Meiji restoration, Japan established economic, political and cultural systems, which preserved the vitality of craftsmen.

1.1.2 Identities and Systems of Craftsmen in China

1.1.2.1 Pre-Qin Period

It is generally believed that Chinese hierarchical identity ranking of “scholars, farmers, artisans and merchants 士農工商” is originated from the policies and arguments of *Guanzi* 《管子》, that is: “scholars, farmers, artisans and merchants are four categories of commoners of a country’s fundamental.”²⁸ Gu Yanwu 顧炎武 (1613-1682), a scholar in the end of Ming Dynasty and beginning of Qing dynasty, made a statement in *Rizhilu* (or *Record of Daily Study*) 《日知錄》 as follows; “scholars, farmers, artisans and merchants are four categories of commoners, the expression of which is originated from *Guanzi*.”²⁹ Gu’s thoughts had a great

²⁸ The original text is 士、農、工、商四民者，國之石民也, *Guanzi: Xiaokuang* (chapter 20) 《管子·小匡》. Refers to *Guanzi*, from *Siku Quanshu* (or *Complete Library in Four Sections*) 欽定四庫全書, Zibu 3, Fajia 子部三·法家類, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity* 景印文淵閣四庫全書 (The Commercial Press, Taiwan), 729-p.89.

The thought in the book *Guanzi* is complex. The academic circles generally believe that *Guanzi* was written between the warring states period to the Han Dynasty, and this book is feigned as the work of Guan Zhong, the chancellor of the State of Qi 齊.

²⁹ The original text is 士、農、工、商，謂之四民，其說始於《管子》. Refers to *Rizhilu* (Vol.7), from *Siku Quanshu*, Zibu 10, Zajia 子部十·雜家類, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary*

impact on the later ages, and his statement remain tremendously influential to Modern China.³⁰

However, it is noteworthy that “scholars, farmers, artisans and merchants” as “a country’s fundamental” mentioned by Guan Zhong 管仲 (c.723-645B.C.) is just “the four categories of commoners,” but not the incorporate distinctive features of “the hierarchical identity ranking” presupposed by the later ages.³¹ From that perspective, it is slapdash to view that system as the lowness and nobleness order of social occupations. Actually, in the Spring and Autumn Period (770–476B.C.) and the Warring States Period (475–221B.C.), the order of “scholars, farmers, artisans and merchant” was not strictly distinguished by the social mentality, which is manifested in the unfixed orders of “scholars, farmers, artisans, and merchant” in different texts. As is documented in *Zhouli: Dongguan, Kaogongji* (or *Rites of Zhou: Office of Winter, The Records of Examination of Craftsman*) 《周禮·冬官·考工記》 “Six vocations³² are set in a country,

Profundity, 858-p.555.

³⁰ Lü Simian 呂思勉, who is considered as one of the four greatest modern Chinese historians together with Qian Mu 錢穆, Chen Yuan 陳垣, and Chen Yinke 陳寅恪, when studying on the tradition of agrarian policies in the history of Chinese political system, takes *Guanzi: Zhiguo*(chapter 48) 《管子·治國》 as an example, the original text is 禁末作, 止奇巧, 而利農事(Lü, 2005, p. 5, also in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 729-p.171). It can be regarded as the influence of Gu’s thought.

³¹ First of all, returning to the text of *Guanzi: Xiaokuang*, Shi 士 is a concept of the Spring and Autumn Period, which is distinct from the Confucian’s Shi(means scholar) in the later generations. Secondly, the main points of the discussion on the differences between scholars, farmers, artisans and merchants proposed in *Guanzi* are to enable them to live in fixed areas according to their professions and maintain professional stability.

As for the impact of this inheritance feature, it will be discussed in detail later. Finally, it is mentioned in *Guanzi: Zhiguo*, “farmers, scholars, merchants and artisans can exchange their labor products 農、士、商、工四民交能易作(in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity* 729-p.172).” The ranking of four categories of commoners was not settled in the same book. In addition, the division here is only a difference in occupation, and there is no distinction between inferiority.

³² In the following text, the six vocations are clearly defined as six types by kings and dukes 王公, Scholar-officials 士大夫, artisans 百工, merchants 商旅, farmers 農夫, and the work of women 婦功.

and artisan is one of the six vocations,”³³ in these vocations, “the intelligent men create, while the skilled men realize and inherit, who are named as the artisans. What artisans specialize in are all inherited from the wise men.”³⁴ In *Xunzi* 《荀子》, the order is placed as “farmers, scholars, artisans and merchants.”³⁵ In *Chunqiu-guliangzhuan* 《春秋穀梁傳》, the order is placed as “scholars, merchants, farmers, and artisans.”³⁶ The above quotations are qualified as supporting evidence proving that the order of the four categories of commoners was not a common sense.

In addition, another two person that may offer supportive evidence to testify the artisan’s status in this period are Mozi 墨子 and Gongshuzi 公輸子. Mozi (c.470-391 B.C.) , original name Mo Di 墨翟, the originator of Mohism, used to be artisan making utensils and processing proficient craftsmanship.³⁷ Some arguments in theories of the Mohist School were made by

³³ The original text is 國有六職，百工與居一焉。Refers to *Zhouli Zhushu* 《周禮注疏》, from *Siku Quanshu*, Jingbu 4, Li 經部四 · 禮類, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 90-p.709.

³⁴ The original text is 知者創物，巧者述之守之，世謂之工。百工之事，皆聖人之作也。Refers to *Zhouli Zhushu*, from *Siku Quanshu*, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 90-p.712.

It is noteworthy that, in this text, the artisans are linked to the wise and the sage, suggesting that the affirmation of the perspective of the artisans has been presupposed in the text. Thus, the discussion of the artisans is raised to a certain position.

³⁵ The original text is 君君、臣臣、父父、子子、兄兄、弟弟一也，農農、士士、工工、商商一也, *Xunzi: Wangzhi* 《荀子 · 王制》. Refers to *Xunzi*, from *Siku Quanshu*, Zibu 1, Rujia 子部一 · 儒家類, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 695-p.165.

³⁶ The original text is 古者立國家，百官具，農工皆有職以事上。古者有四民，有士民，有商民，有農民，有工民, *Chunqiu-guliangzhuan: The 1st year of Duke Cheng* 《春秋穀梁傳·成公元年》. Refers to *Chunqiu-guliangzhuan Zhushu* 《春秋穀梁傳注疏》, from *Siku Quanshu*, Jingbu 5, Chunqiu 經部五 · 春秋類, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 145-p.742.

³⁷ In *Hanfeizi: Waichushuo zuoshang* 《韓非子 · 外儲說左上》, there is text about Mozi’s craftsmanship, 墨子為木鳶 (Mozi made a kite by wood). In addition, Mozi is good at defending the city and has many accounts in the history. Refers to *Hanfeizi* 《韓非子》, from *Siku Quanshu*, Zibu 3, Fajia, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 729-p.703.

taking “artisan” as the example.³⁸ Because the school of Mohism was then viewed as a representative of mid-lower-class labors, its members are usually knowledgeable labors and its theories are characterized by distinct practicality. Mohist thoughts, greatly influential in Pre-Qin dynasty for the practicality, is called prominent school together with Yang Zhu School Another representative. Gongshuzi³⁹ (c.504-444 B.C.), is also one of the craftsmen in Spring and Autumn Period. He invented many handcraft instruments and delicate gadgets,⁴⁰ and participated in the political activities of that time, backed by the fame achieved by inventing those instruments. Since Mozi can “present himself before the King,”⁴¹ Gongshuzi can “offer suggestions to the King,”⁴² we can note that a strict and fixed status system did not form at that time, which can serve as another supporting evidence of the artisan class’ identity.

Compared with the incompletely fixed status and hierarchy, artisan system of Pre-Qin Period is incorporated with more noteworthy characteristics. In the pre-Qin period, the sense of

³⁸ See details in Mozi’s text about craftsman 工/百工/匠.

³⁹ There are multiple ways of describing the name of Gongshuzi. Gongshu Ban 公輸般 is based on *The Book of Rites*, *Stratagems of the Warring States* 《戰國策》 and *The Annals of Lu Buwei* 《呂氏春秋》, Gongshu Ban 公輸盤 is based on *Mozi: Gongshu* 《墨子·公輸》, and Gongshu Ban 公輸班 is based on *Book of the Later Han* 《後漢書》. It can be speculated that Gongshuzi himself and his students should be incapable of writing. In addition, it has not been determined whether Gongshu Ban and Lu Ban are the same person. But what is certain is that Lu Ban is regarded as the ancestor of woodworking and other industries by artisans, and has a profound influence in the traditional handicraft industry.

⁴⁰ Those with written records include “Boat Warcraft”舟戰之器, “Cloud Ladder”雲梯, “Wood Magpie”木鵲 and so on.

⁴¹ The original text is 子墨子見王, *Mozi: Gongshu*. Refers to *Mozi* 《墨子》, from *Siku Quanshu*, Zibu 10, Zaijia1, Zaxue 子部十·雜家類一·雜學之屬, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 848-p.124.

⁴² The original text is 公輸盤曰：不可，吾既已言之王矣, *Ibid*.

division of labor and cohabitation implied in the cognition of craftsmen's identity, not so much as the formation of identity hierarchical sequence, but the formation of identity consciousness. As is said in *Guanzi*, "for the gathering and cohabitation of craftsmen, who can choose good timbers, take into the consideration the lives in four season, judge the quality and arrange the utensils, delicateness and comprehensiveness must be included when giving the rating, judging the sizes, and making the new utensils. In this way, they can talk about their work, demonstrate their products, compete their techniques and improve the intelligence. As long as they are dedicated to this every day and teach their apprentices about it, they can remain concentrated not impacted by the exterior factors because they are accustomed to this since their childhood. Therefore, education from their father and brother can be effective without strictness, and the apprentices can master the techniques free from laborious work. The descendants of an artisan are usually artisans."⁴³ As is written in *Guoyu* (or *Discourses of the States*) 《國語》, "Therefore, the descendants of artisans are usually artisans."⁴⁴ The interior logic is that technique inheritance of inside a family benefits from the cohabitation mode. Identity recognition actually formed the handcraftsmanship inheritance and management in the unit of family.

⁴³ The original text is 今夫工群萃而州處，相良材，審其四時，辨其功苦，權節其用，論比計，制斷器，尚完利，相語以事，相示以功，相陳以巧，相高以知事。且昔從事於此，以教其子弟，少而習焉，其心安焉。不見異物而遷焉，是故其父兄之教不肅而成，其子弟之學不勞而能，夫是故工之子常為工, *Guanzi: Xiaokuang*. Refers to *Guanzi*, from *Siku Quanshu*, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 729-p.90. (Compared with *Guoyu*, the character “今” might be “令”.)

⁴⁴ The original text is 故工之子恒為工, *Guoyu: Qiyu* 《國語·齊語》. Refers to *Guoyu*, from *Siku Quanshu*, *Shibu 5, Zashi* 史部五·雜史類, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 406-p.66.

1.1.2.2 From Qin Dynasty to Song Dynasty

In Qin and Han Dynasties, the divergence of taxes imposed on farmers, artisans and merchants was not enormous, all of whom have to bear corvee. A system was recorded in *Hanshu* (or *The Book of Han*) 《漢書》: “In accordance with the system in Qin and Han Dynasties, the rent tax imposed on dukes and princes is 200 per family. Those who covers 1000 families under the territory shall pay 200000. Among the commoners, that is: farmers, artisans, merchants, etc., with a wealth of 10000 may have an interest of 2000, and families with a wealth of 2 million have an interest of 20000. With taxes and corvee covered from the endowment, they are supplied with better food and clothes.”⁴⁵ From the perspective of institutional history, same tax imposed indicates similar financial status, which can also be viewed as the practical equality led by moisture of the status system.

This change is mainly witnessed in eras after the Han Dynasty. Political structure of centralized authority established by Liu Che 劉徹, Emperor of Han (156-87 B.C.) and the dismissing the hundred schools and revering only the Confucians with Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (176-104 B.C.)’s thoughts as the core became the universal trend among the ruling class and produced the ethos of external Confucius and internal law-based society that was headed down in the following 2000 years. That resulted in the rising status of Confucian Scholars, which gradually reached the highest stratum of the ruling system.

⁴⁵ The original text is 秦漢之制，列侯封君食租稅，歲率戶二百。千戶之君則二十萬，朝覲聘享出其中。庶民農工商賈，率亦歲萬息二千，百萬之家即二十萬，而更繇租賦出其中，衣食好美矣，Ban Gu 班固，*Hanshu: Huozhizhuan* 《漢書·貨殖傳》，Refers to *Qian Hanshu* 《前漢書》，from *Siku Quanshu*, Shibu 1, Zhengshi, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 251-p.148.

The mentality's constant influence on social classes was gradually visible in the following historical progress. In Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties, the status of the scholar-bureaucrat rose, the rationality of which is backed by the order of “scholars, farmers, artisans and merchants” finally placing scholars first. The Northern Wei Dynasty was the earliest time when artisans were prohibited from being educated. The regulation was stringent: “those who violate the law will be sentenced to death for a whole family” (Cao, 1996, p.6). A proverb in *Qimin Yaoshu* (or *Essential Techniques for the Welfare of the People*) 《齊民要術》 goes, “in seeking wealth and being lifted from impoverishment, an artisan gets easier than a farmer, a merchant gets easier than an artisan, going prostitution is easier than embroidering... It is talking about the bottom of the vocational rank, which make an impoverished man affluent.”⁴⁶ That proves from one facet that artisans and merchants were at the bottom of vocational rank. As Kong Yingda 孔穎達 (574-648) mentioned when commenting *Chunqiu-zuoshizhuan* (or *The Commentary of Zuo*) 《春秋左氏傳》: “Those who were banished as artisans, musicians, or generalist, are documented in red paper (generally called Hongji 紅籍), in accordance with laws of Wei.”⁴⁷ It shows that artisans were degraded as an status system of punishment.

⁴⁶ The original text is 以貧求富，農不如工，工不如商，刺繡文不如倚市門.....此言末業，貧者之資也, Jia Sixie 賈思勰, *Qimin Yaoshu*(Vol.7). Refers to *Qimin Yaoshu*, from *Siku Quanshu*, Zibu 4, Nongjia 子部四 • 農家類, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 730-p.84.

⁴⁷ The original text is 近世《魏律》，緣坐配沒為工、樂、雜戶者，皆用赤紙為籍. Refers to *Chunqiu-zuozhuan Zhushu* 《春秋左傳注疏》，from *Siku Quanshu*, Jingbu 5, Chunqiu, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 144-p.132.

Examining the household registration system at that time, you can find that the red register represents an abnormal status. The normal household registration is called Huangji 黃籍, which means documents in yellow paper. (The original text is 郡國諸戶口，黃籍，籍皆用一尺二寸劄，已在官役者載名, *Taiping Yulan: Jinling* (Vol.606) 《太平御覽 • 晉令》. Refers to *Taiping Yulan* 《太平御覽》，from *Siku Quanshu*, Zibu 11, Leishu 子部

Afterwards, with the full initiation of imperial examinations, learning Confucius Classics became the only way to enter the political stratum. This identity segment, become an important method to distinguish scholars from other vocations. As Li Shimin 李世民 (598-649), the 2nd emperor of the Tang dynasty said, “as for artisans, merchants and generalists, if their techniques proficiency exceeds the peers, they can only be endowed with financial award, but cannot be granted the official positions. They are not allowed to stand side by side, or sit and dine with officials.”⁴⁸ This shows that the rule simply prohibited craftsmen from officialdom, which resulted a complete drop of artisan’s position in the political stratum.

In Tang and Song Dynasties, compared with the sharp increase in political status, the working system of artisans was completely changed due to economic development, that is, from corvee to employment. The system of “Gongshang Shiguan”工商食官 (means craftsmen and merchants serving the officials) started from the West Zhou Dynasty. Handcraftsmanship remained in the auxiliary position and was government-owned.⁴⁹ In Qin and Han Dynasty, the

十一 • 類書類, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 898-p.562.)

The corresponding household registration concept is Baiji 白籍, which is a temporary household registration system created during the Eastern Jin Dynasty for the resettlement of northern migrants. Cao Huanxu (1996) believed that this Hongji later evolved into a strict artisan system after the Yuan Dynasty (For details, see Cao, 1996, p. 63). This statement cannot be confirmed, but it can be proved from another side that the status of artisans in the Wei, Jin, Northern and Southern Dynasties has declined.

⁴⁸ The original text is 工商雜色之流，假令術逾儕類，止可厚給財物，必不可超授官秩，與朝賢君子比肩而立，同坐而食, Liu Xu 劉詢, *Jiutangshu: Caoquezhuan* 《舊唐書·曹確傳》. Refers to *Jiu Tangshu* 《舊唐書》, from *Siku Quanshu*, Shibu 1, Zhengshi 史部一 • 正史類, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 271-p.326.

⁴⁹ Refers to *Guoyu: Jinyu* 《國語·晉語》. Anecdote from Wei Zhao 韋昭 goes: “Gong, that is Baigong, shang, that is Shanggu 工，百工。商，官賈也。” In the Western Zhou Dynasty, the royal family owned handicraft workshops, occupying a large number of handicraftsmen, namely Baigong, and set up official to govern the

state remained with the introduction of Jiangzuo Dajiang 將作大匠 (means court architect).⁵⁰

In Tang Dynasty, the first record of “money in exchange of labor” appeared in the group of carpenters, which was a great leap. As is recorded in *Tangliudian* (or *The Six Statutes of Tang*) 《唐六典》: “In construction projects of capital, carpenter engaged in the construction project is employed”⁵¹ with annotation of “if the artisans are not enough, peers can be employed and included in the mansion.”⁵² That is to say, when other employment methods cannot meet the recruitment, the craftsmen can have a kind of freedom of work in the way of “money in exchange labor,” which can be viewed as a chance for transformation of state-owned handicraft industry to private-owned handicap industry.

With the arrival of Song Dynasty, where commodity economy is developed greatly, the employment system of craftsmen embraced new changes and “Hegu”和雇 (means binary employment system) appeared. From unpaid labor in corvee to the paid work in employment, a big breakthrough was made.⁵³

In a word, status of Chinese craftsmen was greatly changed through the long history of

craftsmen.

⁵⁰ See more details in Li (2016).

⁵¹ The original text is 京都之製備焉，凡興建修築材木工匠，則下少府將作，以供其事。Refers to Zhang Jiuling 張九齡. *Tangliudian* (Vol.7). Refers to *Tangliudian*, from *Siku Quanshu*, Shibu 12, Zhiguan 史部十二 • 職官類, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 595-p.79.

⁵² The original text is 其驅役不盡，及別有和顧者，征資市輕貨，納於少府、將作監。Refers to Zhang Jiuling. *Tangliudian* (Vol.7). Ibid.

⁵³ In the Song Dynasty, Wang Anshi 王安石’s reform included Guyi Fa 雇役法 (means the law of heir craftsmen), which was embodied in providing the government labor reward similar to that of the private labor. Zeng Guofan 曾國藩 commented that “the new law of Wang Anshi has only one good deed, which was Guyi Fa 王荊公新法惟雇役為善政.”

China. First, the reform was seen in the descending of craftsmen's political status. The descending is a cultural concept compared with the rise of scholars, rather than a concept directly lifted from work distribution in Pre-Qin Dynasty. It is a concept gradually forming in history. Secondly, as the employment system changes, craftsmen had greater decision-making right in social production. Two extremes were demonstrated in the artisan's status in this period.

1.1.2.3 Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties

Yuan Dynasty was the earliest time when census registration system of artisan 匠籍 was implemented.⁵⁴ The system was backed by a macro background; Yuan Dynasty Administration, to order to enforce its ruling in Central China, implemented the system of "Census Registration Required to All except Mongolian," which is called "Zhuse Huzhi 諸色戶制." The artisans registered in Yuan Dynasty mainly came from two forces: first, prisoners of wars served as artisans; Second, original folk artisans of the colonized areas that were issued with census registration. There is a code by Yuan Dynasty: "As the children of the artisans, boys should learn the technique, girls should learn embroidery, and those who dare to arrest them are forbidden."⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Before the Yuan Dynasty, although there was a concept of census registration system of artisan, it did not refer to a specific household registration system, but refers to the craftsman family who worked for generations. For example, Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 recorded in the *New Book of Tang: Baiguanzhi2* 《新唐書·百官志二》, "There are people who buried next to the tomb, the officers of industry could own tombs build by guard, offered craftsmen for them 陪陵而葬者, 將作給匠戶, 衛士營塚." Refers to *the New Book of Tang*, from *Siku Quanshu*, Shibu 1, Zhengshi, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 272-p.695.

⁵⁵ The original text is 諸匠戶子女, 使男習工事, 女習黼繡, 其輒敢拘刷者, 禁之. Refers to *Yuanshi:Zhi51, Xingfa2* 《元史·志第五十一 刑法二》, from *Siku Quanshu*, Shibu 1, Zhengshi, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 294-p.86.

The system directly led to fixation of artisan's identity, which further caused the lowliness of artisans' social status. As is accepted in the ideological trend of then, "In our system of our Great Yuan, there are ten categories of people: The first class is public officials (Guan), the second class is officials (Li); The anterior-ranked are the noble, who are contributive to the nation; The seventh is artisans, eighth is prostitutes, ninth is Confucius scholars, tenth is the baggers. Those who rank behind are the low and degrading, who are not contributive to the country."⁵⁶ Not considering the despise on Confucian scholars in that historical background, the social status of artisans was only above that of prostitutes and beggars.

In Ming Dynasty, the census registration of artisans was managed by the Ministry of Works. As is recorded in "Census Registration of People" 人戶以籍為定 in *Minghuidian* (or *Codes of the Great Ming Dynasty*) 《明會典》: "Soldiers, citizens, cooks, doctors, artisans, musicians and all classes of people shall be subject to census registration."⁵⁷ Whoever drop out of the registration or fake the identity would be punished with a beating for slight violation, or be imposed on military services for serious violation. Inside the groups of artisans, according to differences of working-time and venues, there were artisans on shift hours 輪班工匠 and artisans kept in fixed hours 住坐工匠,⁵⁸ but no distinctions of identity pertained. In the early

⁵⁶ The original text is 曰我大元制典，人有十等。一官、二吏。先之者，貴之也，貴之者，謂有益於國也。七匠、八娼、九儒、十丐。後之者，賤之也，賤之者，謂無益於國也。 Refers to Xie Fangde 謝枋得. *Dieshanji* (Vol.6) 《豐山集》， from *Siku Quanshu*, Jibu 4, Bieji3, Southern Song 集部四·別集類三·南宋建炎至德祐, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 1184-p.870.

⁵⁷ The original text is 凡軍、民、驛灶、醫卜、工樂諸色人戶，並以籍為定。 Refers to *Minghuidian* (Vol.154), from *Siku Quanshu*, Shibu 13, Zhengshu 史部十三·政書類, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 618-p.359.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

Qing Dynasty, all provinces had artisans recruited for corvee in shift, which was later changed into substitute of shift for taxes, called “Jiangbanyin” 匠班銀 (means artisans’ tax for corvee exemption). In the April of the 2nd year of Emperor Shunzhi (1645), the Qing administration decided to abort the artisan census registration system, “The census registration of artisans in all provinces shall be aborted.”⁵⁹ Therefore, the social status difference derived from economic system no longer existed. In the 1st year of Emperor Yongzheng (1723), new tax system, “Tanding Rumu 攤丁入畝” (means collecting taxes by the field) set up. Until that time, the census registration difference by the standard of poll tax existed in name only.

Different from the identity fixation, broader prospects were brought to artisans by economic development. In the Late Qing Dynasty, though the government-owned handcraft industry still occupied an important position, rapid development occurred to the private-owned handcraft industry. In the regions south of the Yangtze River, the handicraft industry cluster, new types of crafts appeared. The work distribution of different artisans of the same industry became more specific.

More importantly, with the gathering of cities, especially the forming of towns driven by professional handicraft industries, the trade associations of artisans with regions as the center started to appear. For instance, artisans employed in silk industry of Suzhou was divided into the association of Jing (Nanjing) and Su (Suzhou), each holding respective production rules and operation scopes.⁶⁰ These loosely organized associations followed the aim of the common

⁵⁹ The original text is 各省俱除匠籍為民. Refers to Wang (2013).

⁶⁰ The original text is 蘇城花素緞機生業，向分京、蘇兩幫，各有成規，不相攙越. Refers to *Yuan Chang Wu County for the Four Industries of Hua, Su, Duan and Ji with Different Customers Stone Tablet* 《元長吳三縣

interest of home fellows in the same industry.

To conclude from the above, artisans in Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties were managed under stringent census registration. Artisans, an important identity and class, played a key role in standardized social life. Though artisans could return as people of free identity with codes of Qing Dynasty, we have to admit that they were still somewhat affiliated to the state to some extent, which was due to the extension of governance system. In the addition, the development of commodity economy made the team of artisans grow, but it also resulted in their restriction and exploitation by commerce. Moreover, guilds from artisans were based on traditional industries, which did not incorporate the progress seen in modern industries. All of those above are manifestations of identity uncertainties that artisans had to face and could not resolve in traditional society.

1.1.2.4 Since the Republic of China

In the Republic of China and the People's Republic of China, with the change of economic and political environment, the social structure upon which artisans survived transformed drastically.

Firstly, large-scale mechanized industry and the production logic behind it impacted the traditional producing mode of craftsmen.

The self-supplied producing mode of artisan in traditional society faces dual influence

為花素緞機四業各歸主顧不得任意攙奪碑》 in the 24th year of Emperor Guangxu (1898). From Suzhou Museum, Department of history, Jiangsu Normal University, Ming and Qing History Research Office, Nanjing University, 1981, p.46.

from commercialization and industrialization. Though some craftsmen kept their vocational titles (like carpenter, stone-cutter, and iron-striker) sustaining traditional producing state and ethical system, the original production method was inevitably impacted. At the same time, more handcraft craftsmen started to join the new historical stage by adopting the new identity as professional workers (like cotton spinners and printers).

Secondly, the way of craftsmanship inheritance was gradually involved in the modern education system.

From the period of Republic of China, various categories of knowledge were extended to academies. Both knowledge and technique can spread in schools. The thriving of industrial education in Late Qing Dynasty and the introduction of professional education in Republic of China, Republic of China's administration established a relatively complete professional schooling system (Ren, 2009). In 1922, Beiyang Government released "Plan of Schooling System Reform" ("Renxu Education System" 壬戌學制), which provided systematic ideas of vocational education for the Education Festival of that time. In thousands of years under Chinese ideology, techniques, as secret not to be released, were hard to be included in the education system. The new educational policy just provided a chance for traditional techniques to be included in educational system.

Traditional techniques and techniques (especially modern industrial technologies) both became the components of vocational school, which extended in vocational education after the foundation of the People's Republic of China. In 1950s, China followed the Soviet Union to begin the process of industrialization. To rapidly supply talent demand, China used to put the

emphasis on middle vocational technical education that could cultivate practical talents in a short term. But the exploration was halted before fruits were borne. During Cultural Revolution, viewed as indications of “capitalism” and “dual-track approach,” vocational schools were suspended and closed down in a large scale. It was after the end of Cultural Revolution that vocational education continued.

But multiple issues occurred to the reform. First of all, traditional techniques existed as affiliates to modern scientific technique under the educational system. Traditional techniques was set as an independent subject, but as a supplement of modern subjects institutions development or the process of localization, which is a major drawback of education purpose. The second problem lied in the popularization. We have to admit that although China has established the modern vocational education system with the largest scale in the world,⁶¹ many traditional craftsmen did not pass the basic education exams and was not admitted to vocational schools. Numerous handicraft craftsmen living in the countryside was excluded from the system as well.

Last but not least, for craftsmen, the biggest reform is visible in economic status.

With deepening of Reform and Opening-up came the trend of intelligence economy. The accelerated development of higher education also pulled the reform of the comprehensive social ideology. Discrimination of despising labor and techniques were formed in the society, which can be witnessed in the difference of salary and social status⁶² between those who received

⁶¹ Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China: *Golden Period for Vocational Education*, February 3, 2018, http://www.moe.gov.cn/jyb_xwfb/moe_2082/zl_2018n/2018_zl16/201802/t20180227_327950.html

⁶² China still maintains the personnel management system under the planned economy system in the household

higher education and the groups of craftsmen. It in essence influenced job selection: the subsistence materials on which craftsmen lived on were squeezed. Those who used to specialize in this would have to select other jobs, resulting in a decrease of traditional craftsmen. That explains why traditional artisan industries faces the lack of descendants.

To solve this, China provided the techniques of craftsmen with cultural legitimacy. This driving force of this action came from the outside, that is, UNESCO's construction of the concept "Intangible Cultural Relics,"⁶³ and traditional techniques preserved by craftsmen is an important component of this concept.

In recent years, China's ambitious to move towards intangible cultural relics is visible: with government department as the main force, China established a series of protection center, protection associations and research centers, improve the system of studying, protecting, inheriting, and spreading intangible cultural relics.⁶⁴ After navigations and interference dominated by state forces, China saved some traditional techniques on the verge of failing to be

registration system and file system. The original triad of cadres, workers and farmers is still used in the file system. In addition, in the household registration system, the way to fill in the occupation column is often specified as: cadres, soldiers, workers, farmers, etc.

⁶³ With the establishment of the Intangible Cultural Heritage List by UNESCO in 1999 and the organization of declarations from 2001, China began to care about this issue. China soon established the China Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Center (2006) and China Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Association (2012) through the administrative organization, the Ministry of Culture (now the Ministry of Culture and Tourism), began to select National Intangible Cultural Heritage List in 2006.

Prior to this, China has always paid more attention to the protection of tangible cultural heritage, but this history is not long, and its mark is the promulgation of *Cultural Relics Protection Law of the People's Republic of China* 《中華人民共和國文物保護法》(1982).

⁶⁴ *Intangible Cultural Heritage Law of the People's Republic of China* 《中華人民共和國非物質文化遺產法》(2011).

handed down, by initiations of “listing of intangible cultural relics, inherits of intangible cultural relics,” etc.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ This measure is reflected in measures such as identification, recording and filing of intangible cultural heritage. Inherit and spread intangible cultural heritage with certain value.

1.2 Micro-History: Status and Legitimacy

1.2.1 The Position of Kongō Gumi in the Historical Narrative of Japan

1.2.1.1 Arrival as the Peak: Confirmation of the Identity of the Temple Builders

According to the genealogy of Kongō Gumi, it started the business in 578. That year, three skilled craftsmen from ancient Korean kingdom of Baekje came to Japan at the behest of Prince Shotoku. One of them was the first generation of Kongō Gumi, Kongō Shigemitsu.⁶⁶

This historical fact is closely related to the social and cultural environment at the time. In the middle of the 6th century, Buddhism spread to Japan via Baekje, which led to discussions among Japanese ruling class about whether or not to believe in Buddhism. Because of the irreconcilable contradictions, a war broke out between the Mononobe clan who supported the traditional Japanese beliefs and the Soga clan who supported Buddhism. After the end of the war, the strength of the Mononobe clan gradually weakened, and the Soga clan, the winner, established a closer relationship with the central government. Since then, Buddhism has become a universal belief in the Japanese ruling class, and large-scale temple-building activities have begun to rise.

During the period when Buddhism was introduced to Japan, the construction of temples began. As an opportunity for Japan to accept Buddhism, Baekje has become a pathway to provide

⁶⁶ Refers to the genealogy of Kongō Gumi, the original text is 夫人皇三十二代用明天皇之御宇皇太子伽藍御建立之即自異國堂塔作金剛早水永路三人大工被召寄四天王寺御建立時金剛重光當山被殘置是當家始祖也.

temple builders for Japan. According to the *Nihon Shoki*, in the 6th year of Emperor Bidatsu (577), Baekje provided temple builders for Japan,⁶⁷ the historical fact of which can be proved in the *Shitennōji Engi* (or *Origin of Shitennoji Temple*) 四天王寺緣起.⁶⁸ It can be speculated that the temple builders recorded in the *Nihon Shoki* should be the building talents reserved for the construction of Shitennoji Temple. Compared with the self-narration of Kongō Gumi, the time was basically accordant, and it can be judged that the record of immigration in genealogy of Kongō Gumi has certain reference value.

In 593, the first Japanese temple in Buddha law,⁶⁹ Shitennoji Temple began to be established. After the temple was built, the Kongō family stayed here to guard the temple. For generations, they were responsible for the new construction, reconstruction and maintenance of the temple. The maintenance and rebuild organized by the 8th generation head Kongō Shigenori

⁶⁷ The original text is 冬十一月庚午朔、百濟国王、付還使大別王等、獻經論若干卷、并律師·禪師·比丘尼·呪禁師·造佛工·造寺工、六人。遂安置於難波大別王寺。Refers to *Nihon Shoki* (Vol.20), from *Nihon Koten Bungaku Taikei* (*Japanese Classic Literature Outline*)(68), p.141.

⁶⁸ The original text is 復律師禪師比丘比丘尼咒師造佛工造寺工相重渡送相當敏達天皇治天下丁酉歲也。Refers to Sakamoto Ryumon Bunko 阪本龍門文庫& Nara Women's University Academic Information Center 奈良女子大学, *Shitennōji Engi* (1301, the 3rd year of Shōan): <http://mahoroba.lib.nara-wu.ac.jp/y05/html/263/>.

⁶⁹ The oldest temple in Japan, the Asukadera Temple, is the temple of Soga clan. It was not the state-sponsored temple at first. One reason for Shitennoji Temple was regarded as the first Japanese temple in Buddha law should be referred to *Nihon Shoki* (Vol.21):

After witnessing what happened, Prince Umayado (Prince Shotoku) decided to make statues of Shitenno (the Four Devas) out of a Nurude tree to pray for victory and receive blessings, and then promised himself that if he won the battle, he would build a Buddhist pagoda for Shitenno.

The original text is 是時、麩戸皇子、束髮於額、而隨軍後。自忖度曰、將無見敗、非願難成。乃斫取白膠木、疾作四天王像、置於頂髮、而發誓言、今若使我勝敵、必當奉爲護世四王、起立寺塔。Refers to *Nihon Shoki* (Vol.21), from *Nihon Koten Bungaku Taikei* (*Japanese Classic Literature Outline*)(68), pp.163-165.

金剛重則 and the 17th generation head Kongō Shigetsugu 金剛重繼 were clearly recorded in genealogy of Kongō Gumi.

It can be found that Kongō Gumi had an inseparable connection with the power at the beginning of its establishment. As the status of toraijin, the immigration of ancestor, the determination of the profession, and even the development direction of the family in the next millennium were basically subordinate to the presupposition of the social and political environment at that time. In other words, the original status of Kongō Gumi, except for the technique they have, almost entirely depended on power structure at the time.

1.2.1.2 Distance to the Power Center

As mentioned in chapter 1, section 1, in the Edo period, the Shimin system was gradually strengthened, and the four social classes of the warriors, farmers, artisans and merchants were gradually shaped. How to climb above in a fixed status system has become a key to opening the gap in the Japanese social system. As far as the historical facts of the Edo period are concerned, local merchants can gain certain privileges through financial contacts with the upper class. However, as craftsmen who lacked economic base, the class leap became very difficult.

As for Kongō Gumi, the promotion in identity came from a close proximity to the power center. In the 1st year of the Kyōwa (1801), Shitennoji Temple was destroyed by thunder fire. Tokugawa Ienari 徳川家斉, the eleventh shōgun of the Tokugawa shogunate, blamed the destruction of Shitennoji Temple on the failure of the Kansei Reforms, and ordered to rebuild the temple. Kongō Yoshisada, the 32nd generation head of Kongō Gumi, who was responsible

for the reconstruction of Shitennoji Temple, were ordered to take charge of the rebuild. At first, the Bakufu 幕府's plan was that Kongō Gumi only participated in the project as a designer, and the materials and construction were convened by the Bakufu. However, Kongō Yoshisada was determined to argue that if he could not control the entire process of rebuilding the temple, he would rather not participate. The Bakufu knew that without the original drawings, only Kongō Gumi builders who had already known the whole structure of the temple, can take charge of it. So they had to accept the request of Kongō Yoshisada.

The reconstruction project was originally scheduled for the end of autumn, but Kongō Yoshisada was once again rebellious and insisted on starting work in the next summer. For Kongō family who strictly control the quality of the project, only the “suitable materials” and the materials in the vicinity of the construction site can maximize the life of the building. Such as for the excellent beam, the live wood was needed, and the amount of water in the wood must be limited. In the rainy Japan, only the winter can meet such conditions. After cut down, the wood cannot be made into lumber immediately, it must be naturally dried for three months, so as to be strong and to withstand long-term usage. After listening to the explanation of Kongō Yoshisada, the executive office of Bakufu could not find a reason for rebuttal, so to fully hand over the construction to Kongō family.

In the 2nd year of Kyōwa (1802), the reconstruction of Shitennoji Temple was completed. Kongō Yoshisada was awarded the privilege of bearing a surname and wearing a sword. In the context of status system, to obtain the privilege beyond the class, that is, to a certain extent represents the promotion of social status. It was rare to be able to worship the samurai privilege

as a craftsman in the Edo period when the Shimin system was strict.

The above narration contains the recounting of Kongō Gumi for a specific history, but for the definite historical materials, there are only the *Scroll of Permission about Bearing a Surname and Wearing a Sword* 苗字帯刀認可の巻 collected by Kongō Gumi,⁷⁰ the construction drawing drawn by Kongō Yoshisada for the reconstruction of mail hall of Shitennoji Temple,⁷¹ as well as the identification of Kongō Yoshisada's reconstruction of the "main hall of Shitennoji Temple" in genealogy.⁷² Through the above materials, which can be sure is that under the historical conditions of that time, the representatives of Kongō Gumi did gain a promotion on their identity. What we can infer from the narration passed down from generation to generation is that Kongō Yoshisada, just like what he wrote in *The Will* (1832), he ordered himself and his family to insist on the principle of the craftsman, do not act mechanically in accordance with the requirements of the power center.⁷³

It was not easy for a person who relied on the power center to make a family glorious to maintain certain calm in front of power. This requirement also allowed the future generations of Kongō Gumi to be free from the power. It was this kind of active choice of the alienation from the highest class that provides the possibility for Kongō Gumi under the later historical conditions.

⁷⁰ The picture can be seen in website of Kongō Gumi, <https://www.kongogumi.co.jp/takumi.html>

⁷¹ The picture can be seen in website of Kongō Gumi, <https://www.kongogumi.co.jp/ja/topics/110714.html>

⁷² Refers to the genealogy of Kongō Gumi, the original text is 四天王寺金堂御再建.

⁷³ Refers to *The Will*, the second sentence, Kongō (2013, p.75) and Sone (2004).

1.2.1.3 The Road to Modernization: Crisis and Resolution

Kongō Gumi faced three crises on the road to modernization, which were closely related to the political and cultural environment of society.

In the 1st year of the Meiji (1868), after the separation of Buddhism and Shintoism 神仏分離, Kongō Gumi lost the territory of Shitennoji Temple, and the pensions were also repealed. In the face of difficulties, the craftsmen of Kongō Gumi, centered on Osaka, actively sought the work of other temples and shrines, finally survived in the crisis with exquisite techniques.

The emergence of this crisis mainly came from the social upheaval in the early Meiji period. As mentioned in section 1, during this period, not only did the political system undergo unprecedented innovation, but the inherent status system of the Edo period was completely rebuilt. Although full equality was achieved in identity, the power center that Kongō Gumi had been able to rely on had become the “past” in the society. The resolution of this crisis can be regarded as a loosening of the traditional power perception of Kongō Gumi, which was reflected in the expansion of the scope of operation of Kongō Gumi, from the original acceptance of Buddhist temple architecture to the acceptance of shrine buildings at the same time. This fine tuning can be regarded as: through the external factors of social culture, Kongō Gumi quickly broke away from the original concept of power and belief, and obtained a new identity cognition in the new social system at that time.

Since then, on the occasion of the World War II, although Kongō Gumi can undertake the construction of the national shrine or the military shrine, the work from the temple was very few, the management of Kongō Gumi was bleak and in crisis. Coupled with the corporate merger

policy pursued by the government at the time, Kongō Gumi faced a crisis of merger with other companies. In such an environment, Kongō Gumi was able to escape from the predicament only by making military wooden boxes.

This was a social change that cannot be chosen by ordinary people in society, and as a member of the country, what Kongō Gumi can do was to maintain the family business. Therefore, at that time, Kongō Gumi chose to be close to the power center and adjusted its business scope according to the needs of the society as a whole.

In 1955, Kongō Gumi was reorganized into joint-stock corporation (kabushiki gaisha) as Kongō Gumi Co., Ltd. Based on the original organizational form, Kongō Gumi wished to seek the modernization of management. At this time, Kongō Gumi ushered in a new opportunity. After the World War II, temples and shrines throughout Japan were damaged to varying degrees. Kongō Gumi improved its technique and created a building technique by using of the reinforced concrete and traditional wood. This kind of building had the characteristics of fire prevention with a lower cost. At the same time, Kongō Gumi had a unique advantage in repairing traditional buildings because it still retained the traditional techniques passed down from generation to generation. Kōbuntei of Kairakuen, which was the Japan's national cultural heritage, were rebuilt by Kongō Gumi twice in 1958 and 1972.

Since then, in the 1980s, when the Japanese economy took off, Kongō Gumi expanded its business scope to build and reconstruct general buildings besides the temple buildings. In 2005, due to the collapse of the property bubble, Kongō Gumi eventually went into liquidation. Afterwards, the company reorganized itself and looked back on the original business of the

construction of temples and shrines. In recent years, Kongō Gumi returned to the tradition and revived itself.

The crisis and reorganization of Kongō Gumi can be regarded as an attempt in the free economic system. Kongō Gumi has gradually shifted from the traditional craftsmanship system to the modern management system, which can also be seen as a response of the Japanese craftsmen community to the economic superiority under the social conditions of that time.

In summary, among the above three ups and downs, we can see that Kongō Gumi, which hoped to stick to the industry, responds to the times. We also can see that Kongō Gumi's failure due to the wrong judgment of the times. The attitude of Kongō Gumi to the power center has also led to many changes as a business entity.

1.2.2 The Position of Xiangshan Bang in the Historical Narrative of China

1.2.2.1 Generating and Flourishing: The Legend of the Craftsmen Become Official

As for Xiangshan Bang, before it was recognized as an craftsmen group, it had formed a relatively well-known industrial agglomeration based on the region. Since ancient times, this area has been famous for its craftsmen who built many outstanding buildings.⁷⁴ In the Northern

⁷⁴ During Spring and Autumn Period, this place has the city of Helv 闔閭大城 and the palace of the Wu Kingdom 吳王宮室. In addition, the Pijiang Garden 辟疆園, which was built by Gu Pijiang 顧辟疆, is the earliest private garden in Suzhou according to the record. Lu Guimeng 陸龜蒙, a poet in the late Tang Dynasty, wrote in a poem that “the Pijiang Garden of Wu shadows other gardens.” Fan Chengda 范成大, in the Southern Song Dynasty, wrote in *Wujun Zhi* (or *The Recording of Wujun*) 《吳郡志》 that: “This garden is the best among the gardens and fountains in Wuzhong 池館林泉之勝, 號吳中第一.” Refers to *Wujun Zhi* (Vol.14), from *Siku Quanshu*, Shibu 11, Dili, Duhuijunxian 史部十一·地理類·都會郡縣之屬, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu*

Song Dynasty, Yingfeng Bureau 應奉局⁷⁵ was set up in Suzhou to serve the court with local treasures such as woods. However, as a group of regional industry clusters that already had high prestige among the people, there was still no one who can represent this group to enter the historical orthodox narrative.

This situation was maintained until the emergence of Kuai Xiang (1399 - 1481) in the Ming Dynasty. In the 15th year of Emperor Yongle (1417), Zhu Di 朱棣 moved his capital to Beijing and recruited craftsmen from all over the country to build the imperial palace in Beijing, Kuai Xiang's ancestors and father are also among them. Kuai Xiang and his father participated in the construction of Chengtianmen 承天門 (known as Tiananmen recently). Later, he took over the duties of his father and was responsible for the constructions of Taihedian 太和殿, Zhonghedian 中和殿 and Baohedian 保和殿 during the Zhengtong period (1436-1449). In July of the 1st year of Tianshun (1457), Chengtianmen was destroyed by fire and Kuai Xiang was responsible for reconstruction. In addition, he was responsible for the construction of two palaces, five prefectures, six government offices and a number of imperial mausoleums. Due to the appreciation of the emperor,⁷⁶ Kuai Xiang was finally appointed as the assistant minister of the

in Belvedere of Literary Profundity, 485-p.95.

⁷⁵ In the first year of Chongning 崇寧 (1102), the government of the North Song Dynasty set up Manufacturing Bureau 造作局 in Suzhou and Hangzhou to create the precious items required by the court. In the fourth year of Chongning (1105) Yingfeng Bureau was set up in Suzhou, which was temporarily abolished in the third year of Xuanhe 宣和 (1121) due to the rebellion by Fang La 方臘 and was resumed after the rebellion. Yingfeng Bureau was completely abolished in the seventh year of Xuanhe (1125).

⁷⁶ According to *History of Emperor Xianzong of Ming Dynasty* 《大明憲宗純皇帝實錄》, Kuai Xiang was “a carpenter who started his political career in Ministry of Industry and specialized in the crafts 以木工起隸工部，精於工藝(Vol.213);” and “all the buildings by Kuai Xiang represented auspiciousness 凡百營造，祥無不預 (Vol.213).”

Ministry of Industry 工部侍郎.⁷⁷

As mentioned above, in the Ming Dynasty, the artisan system was continued, but was loose at the institutional level. Although craftsmen still cannot get away from the serve and change their profession, the emergence of the shift system made it unnecessary to serve permanently. In addition, the artisan could also choose to replace his corvee by handing in “Jiangbanyin.” This was unprecedented in the previous historical era. Although the artisan of the previous era were often able to engage in agricultural production outside the serve, the artisan system of the Ming Dynasty made the artisan have the right to not engage in the industry at all. The personal status of the artisan has been improved, and more importantly, the artisan has the possibility of moving to the upper class or even the top.

Kuai Xiang is a typical example of the upward movement of the craftsmen. His outstanding feature was that he entered the highest class of the scholar-officials, and ranked as the high position of third grade ranking 正三品, which was the higher official of the Ming

In addition, the folklore tells that Kuai Xiang was ever praised as Kuai Lu Ban by Emperor Yongle 永乐, which can be seen in an article by Xin (2011), *Kuai Xiang, Kuai Lu Ban appointed by Emperor Yongle*.

⁷⁷ The fact that Kuai Xiang started his political career was confirmed by the *History of Emperor Xianzong of Ming Dynasty*, whose sixth volume was about Bai Gui 白圭, the minister of Ministry of Industry and Kuai Xiang, assistant minister. As for the process of Kuai Xiang started his political career, Sun and Xu (2011) have provided detailed investigation information in the article of *The Forbidden City, a Glorious Masterpiece by the Craftsmen of Xiangshan Bang in Ming Dynasty*..

Dynasty craftsmen⁷⁸ and the earliest of the same official position.⁷⁹ At that time, the scholar-official class still held a very conservative attitude towards the craftsman's being official, even with a harsh judgment. For example, Shen Defu 沈德符 (1578-1642)'s *Wanli Yehuobian* 《萬曆野獲編》 recorded that: "Minister Zhao Rong, assistant minister Kuai Xiang, Lu Xiang... Two assistant minister, one is carpenter, another one is stonemason, how ridiculous."⁸⁰ Then, how can Kuai Xiang, an individual craftsman, overcome the fissures in the system and enter the ranks of scholar officials representing the core of power in ancient China?

Under the craftsmen system, craftsmen often had the techniques of family inheritance. *Suzhou Fu Zhi* 《蘇州府志》, which was completed in the Qing Dynasty, recorded that Kuai Xiang was skilled in building structure and manufacturing wood components, "(Kuai Xiang) measured the accuracy with the ruler... put the component back to the original place without deviation."⁸¹ We can hardly imagine that the scholar-officials class with traditional knowledge training can obtain such a subtle technical practice level, that is to say, the unique technical

⁷⁸ The highest grade of artisans in the Ming dynasty was second grade ranking 正二品. In *The History of Ming: Huanguan2 Lifang* 《明史·宦官二 李芳》, it records: "In period of Shizong, Xu Gao was engaged in artisan work, became minister of the Ministry of Industry." The original text is 世宗時，匠役徐杲以營造躡官工部尚書。He was convicted and killed. Refers to *The History of Ming*, from *Siku Quanshu*, Shibu 1, Zhengshi, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 302-p.281.

⁷⁹ In the 7th year of Jingtai (1456). Kuai Xiang (carpenter) and Lu Xiang (stonemason) was appointed to assistant minister.

⁸⁰ The original text is 尚書趙榮。侍郎蒯祥、陸祥。.....二侍郎。一木匠。一石匠也。三堂俱異途可笑。 Refers to *Yehuobian* 《野獲編》 (Vol.24)(same as *Wanli Yehuobian*), from *Xuxiu Siku Quanshu* 《續修四庫全書》, 1174-p.563.

⁸¹ The original text is 略用尺準度，若不經意，既造成，以置原所，不差毫釐。 Refers to *Suzhou Fu Zhi*, from Harvard-Yenching Library 哈佛燕京圖書館本: <https://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&res=89833&remap=gb>

advantages of the excellent artisan can make up for the vacancies in the knowledge structure of the scholar-officials class. At that time, some enlightened rulers have realized that the talents selected through the civil examinations do not apply to certain professional level, especially the scope of the Ministry of Industry.⁸² As a result, when the system of the artisan system was amended, the barriers to the division of the artisan began to loosen, and the channel of the promotion of the class was opened. The result of this historical fact is that in the Ming Dynasty, the example of the artisan as a deputy of the Ministry of Industry (that is, the assistant minister) was more common. Since Kuai Xiang was appointed as the assistant minister of the Ministry of Industry, Kuai Yi 蒯義, Kuai Gang 蒯綱, Cai Xin 蔡信 and others had held this position as carpenters. This measure has enabled the scholar-officials class which selected by civil examinations to maintain a regular position, guarantee the legitimacy of the scholar-officials class. On the other hand, the addition of craftsmen also made the administration more professional and effective.

Although the craftsmen entered the scholar-officials class because of technique, they had to subordinated to the administrative system at that time. Under the administrative system at the time, the administration of the document was the main domination method, almost all the reporting and releasing work depended on documents. According to research, Kuai Xiang had studied in private school⁸³ and had certain writing ability, which increased his survival

⁸² The scholars often lack professional knowledge in architectural creation. For example, when Jiajing ordered to rebuild Fengtianmen 奉天門 in the 30th year of Jiajing (1557), Zhao Wenhua 趙文華, minister of the Ministry of Industry, had difficulty in proposing effective methods. He answered the Emperor's question with irrelevant answer, the Emperor was angry and let him go.

⁸³ In the early 1980s, Wan Jinsheng 萬金聲, vice head of the Wuxian City Shanghai Opera Troupe, wrote the

possibility within the administrative system of the document after entering the scholar-officials class. As mentioned above, before the Ming Dynasty, literacy education was almost impossible for the craftsmen. In the Ming Dynasty, a total of five people of Kuai Xiang's family entered the official class, which was related to the fact that his family grasped the promoting channel and cultivated the family tradition of attaching importance to literacy education besides the traditional craftsmen system.

At that time, in the relative loose but still narrow promoting channel, Kuai Xiang successfully completed the stratum of the class due to his outstanding performance. Kuai Xiang successfully completed the social mobility of the class due to his outstanding carpenter skills. As a result, The craftsmen living close to Xiangshan spontaneously pursued Kuai Xiang as the originator and tried to organize themselves together. Xiangshan Bang has been famous since then.

1.2.2.2 Attempts at Academics: Education and Book Compilation

The Qing Dynasty abolished the artisan census registration and the craftsmen became civilians. Since the severance of the possibility of artisan's being official in the govern system, the craftsmen of Xiangshan Bang work in the private sector. This situation changed during the Republic of China.

In September 1923, Jiangsu Public Suzhou Industrial College 江蘇公立蘇州工業專門學校 established the first building department in China. The specialist was personally taught by academic masters such as Liu Shiyong 柳士英, Liu Dunzhen 劉敦楨, Zhu Shigui 朱士圭, and

Wuxi Opera's playbook *Hongqiang Chunqiu* which praised Kuai Xiang. According to his research, Kuai Xiang had learned in private school for a few years and had a certain cultural accomplishment.

Huang Zumiao 黃祖淼, who had studied in Japan, and opened a precedent for modern architecture teaching in China. It is particularly noteworthy that Yao Chengzu⁸⁴ 姚承祖 (1866-1938), the representative of Xiangshan Bang, was also hired by this school to teach traditional architectural techniques.

It should be pointed out that unlike other teachers who teach in the school, Yao Chengzu did not belong to the academic masters trained by the modern academic discipline, but was the representative figure under the traditional technique inheritance system. In the historical conditions of the time, it was almost impossible for the craftsmen of Xiangshan Bang, which represented by Yao Chengzu to have the “vouchers” for entering academic institutions, that is, higher education certificate. These craftsmen only had a wealth of experience in construction, which had almost no place in the education evaluation system at that time. It is true that Yao Chengzu, as a representative of Xiangshan Bang, has a high reputation and status in the local area. However, we must admit that, given the conditions of the times, it is still quite contingent that the craftsman can enter the modern education system only by relying on traditional techniques. Because of this “historical accident,” relying on academic institutions, the technique of Xiangshan Bang at the practical level obtained the possibility of becoming theoretical

⁸⁴ Yao Chengzu was born in the 5th year of Tongzhi 同治 (1866). His family were carpenters of Xiangshan Bang. He was influenced by his family and loved the construction industry. Yao Canting 姚燦亭, the grandfather of Yao Chengzu, is also a craftsman of Xiangshan Bang. He is the author of five volumes of *Ziye Yishu* 梓業遺書. At the age of 11, Yao Chengzu studied carpentry with his uncle Yao Kaisheng 姚開盛. After he finished his study, he built in the countryside and counties all his life. He designed thousands of garden houses. In the 1st year of the Republic of China (1912), the Luban Association of Suzhou was established, Yao Chengzu was elected as the president. This fact can also prove that Yao Chengzu has a considerable position and reputation in the local carpentry industry.

knowledge. From then on, the study of the technique of craftsmen of Xiangshan Bang and the study of the construction form of Xiangshan Bang came out from common people to the official.

After spreading the architectural practice of Xiangshan Bang in academia, Yao Chengzu also recorded the traditional architectural techniques of Xiangshan Bang into a book. Before then, due to the exclusivity of technique, it was difficult for craftsmen to teach it to the public. The choice of Yao Chengzu was likely to be closely related to the social and cultural environment at that time. During the Republic of China, with the establishment of higher education institutions, the compilation of textbooks became a common practice. At that time, the compilation of textbooks had a great characteristic, that is, the professional teachers who taught in various schools had greater autonomy in compiling textbooks. *Yao Chengzu's Drawing of Yingzao Fayuan* 《姚成祖營造法原圖》 contained in the book, *Yingzao Fayuan* (or *Guidance of Construction*) was drawn by Yao Chengzu for students when he was teaching the traditional construction craftsmanship in the architecture department of Suzhou Industrial College. Therefore, we can infer that, the creative intention of *Yingzao Fayuan* was very likely based on the need to compile professional textbooks.

Based on Yao's ancestral woodworking techniques, Yao Chengzu collected a large number of Xiangshan Bang's architectural drawings, techniques and terminology based on his family's cheats and atlases, as well as the search for local craftsmen. After six to seven years of hard work, in 1929, Yao Chengzu finally finished the book *Yingzao Fayuan*. After the book was finished, Yao Chengzu handed it to Professor Liu Dunzhen of the China Construction Society 中國營造學社 in Beijing, and asked him to proofread. Professor Liu had no time but introduced the book

to the China Construction Society in 1932, which was reviewed by President of the society, Zhu Guixin 朱桂辛. However, since the terms used in the book are different from those of Beijing's official buildings, there are no printing after several years. In the autumn of 1935, Professor Liu handed over the manuscript of *Yingzao Fayuan* to his student Zhang Zhigang 張志剛 at Nanjing Institute of Technique 南京工學院. Zhang Zhigang was a Suzhou native, with this reason, he immediately added the book in to print list and the book was finally published. During this period, Yao Chengzu chose the way to follow the traditional direction of writing books by the intellectual class, and it was precisely because of this traditional identity cognition that Yao Chengzu maintained the traditional craftsmanship after the leap of identity, but at the same time immediately turned to the book compilation which could be quickly recognized by the academia.

Even with the limitation that give priority to one kind of traditional craftsmanship and promote one kind of technique, Yao Chengzu's *Yingzao Fayuan* can still be regarded as the first book to systematically summarize the construction technique of Xiangshan Bang. As a work output based on the academic institutions, *Yingzao Fayuan* has become an important path for the academic school to study traditional Chinese architecture, and based on its position in academic history, the architectural techniques and architectural style of Xiangshan Bang have also become an important part that cannot be ignored by future generations.⁸⁵ In this regard, *Yingzao Fayuan*

⁸⁵ *Yingzao Fayuan* has a great reputation and profound influence in the classical construction industry. Later generations of Xiangshan Bang's craftsmen regard it as a treasure. In August 1986, when the original *Yingzao Fayuan* was reprinted, there was a saying at the end of the book: "this book is a monograph recording the traditional architectural practices in Jiangnan area of China. The original is the legacy of Yao Chengzu, an architect from Suzhou. It was added and compiled by Professor Zhang Zhigang. According to the practices of various parts, the whole book systematically expounds the types, structures, materials, work limits and other contents of traditional buildings in Jiangnan area. The book also includes 172 photos and 51 pictures. This book is

is called “the only collection of Chinese architecture in the South China,”⁸⁶ which is not an exaggeration.

During the period when the intellectual circles had a high position in the society, Xiangshan Bang completed the important process of academization by Yao Chengzu. Through knowledge dissemination and textbook compilation, Xiangshan Bang’s construction skills and architectural forms have been widely recognized by the intellectual community under the guarantee of the education system.

1.2.2.3 “Going Global” and “Intangible Cultural Heritage”

Xiangshan Bang is a group of craftsmen who still do not compulsory to this day, relying on the spontaneous association of craftsmen to form a group. When the social system is undergoing rapid fission, this loose group of craftsmen will be immediately divided into independent individuals, which is particularly obvious during the historical period from the founding of the People’s Republic of China to the Reform and Opening up. During this period, the craftsman was neither a worker in the factory nor a pure peasant, the status of the craftsman was once again marginalized in the discourse system of socialism. For Xiangshan Bang, in this stage, the craftsmen who were re-used tend to be in charge of the basic maintenance work of the classical gardens, while the lower-level craftsmen return to the individual handicraft industry.

So, what is the opportunity for Xiangshan Bang to get the orthodoxy again? We believe

valuable to the design and research of traditional forms of architecture and the maintenance of ancient buildings."

⁸⁶ The original text is 南方中國建築之唯一寶典. Refers to Yao and Zhang (1986, p.3).

that the classicization of Xiangshan Bang comes from the rise of two national consciousnesses in China since the recent times. From the political and economic level, it is a national policy of “opening up to the outside world.” From a cultural perspective, it is the identification of “Intangible Cultural Heritage.”

Since Deng Xiaoping 鄧小平 established the policy of opening up to the outside world, the biggest challenge facing China actually comes from the outside, that is, how to explore effective ways to make China smoothly enter into the world’s existing political and economic order. The basic interpretation of this policy was clearly put forward at the third plenary session of the 11th central committee of the communist party of China, which was regarded as a turning point: “Actively develop economic cooperation with other countries on an equal and mutually beneficial basis on the basis of self-reliance.” However, there is still no fixed answer on “how to do it.”

It has become an urgent matter to shape a positive and active national image and establish a model for opening up according to a direct and simple solution. In 1978, the American Museum delegation visited China for the first time. During the period, Professor Fang Wen 方聞 (1930-2018), the special adviser to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and the director of the Asian Department, and Professor Chen Congzhou 陳從周 (1918-2000) discussed the transfer of the Dianchunyi 殿春簃 in the Master of the Nets Garden 網師園 to the United States for exhibiting furniture of the Ming Dynasty.

The power of the nation quickly took action. In 1979, Suzhou Garden Construction

Company⁸⁷蘇州古典園林建築公司 undertook the construction of Astor Court (is also known as Ming Hall 明軒). Approved by the State Council, all the Nanmu wood used in the project were harvested from Sichuan, and the project was specially restored to the royal kiln of Lumu 陸墓, Suzhou for firing bricks and tiles. After 5 months, a total of 193 boxes of courtyard components was shipped abroad, and in March 1980, Mingxuan was completed.

As for Xiangshan Bang, it was the first time to build gardens in foreign countries. This activity not only had distinctive Chinese characteristics, but also can meet the western imagination of China. Due to the mature and stable technical system of Xiangshan Bang, this foreign trade activity had the possibility of rapid transplantation to other countries. Since then, in America, Africa and Europe, more than 40 New Suzhou Gardens have been exported overseas. The success of Xiangshan Bang has become an experience that can be replicated.

We can see that in the process of the “garden art” foreign trade of Xiangshan Bang , the state power occupied a dominant position. The achievement of intention, design and construction, and even the acquisition of materials, there are powerful national administrative forces behind. This is because, at that time, China is eager to set up the image of the world, the construction of Xiangshan Bang can be used as the medium of the “Going Global,” and the technique of Xiangshan Bang can be the bond of the “Going Global.” These materials, with Chinese characteristics but different from foreign traditions, enable China to establish practical and

⁸⁷ In contemporary China, this company is one of the main representative companies of Xiangshan Bang’s technique inheritance. Its predecessor is Suzhou Garden Construction Team, which was founded in 1958, directly under the jurisdiction of Suzhou city. For details of the development and change of this organization, please refer to Shen (2011, pp.97-98).

effective relations with other countries. In fact, it is the export of national image that the country supports Xiangshan Bang to go global. Although we cannot deny the economic benefits brought by infrastructure construction, at that time, the political benefits would far outweigh the economic benefits.

It has to be admitted that everything mentioned before originates from the shaping of external images at the national level. In recent years, the value of Xiangshan Bang's architectural techniques has been widely recognized by most of Chinese people. "Traditional architectural construction skills of Xiangshan Bang" was listed in the first batch of China Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2006.⁸⁸ In 2009, "Chinese traditional architectural craftsmanship for timber-framed structures" (including traditional architectural construction skills of Xiangshan Bang) was among the List of Representatives of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO.

In the modern cultural context of China, intangible cultural heritage is always a cultural hot spot. Having a national-level intangible cultural heritage identity, and even obtaining this label of intangible cultural heritage of all humanity, it can almost be equated with the guarantee of orthodoxy in China's social culture. Under such an opportunity, a group of Xiangshan Bang's craftsmen as intangible cultural heritage inheritors, won the affirmation of national level. The most representative ones include Lu Yaozu 陸耀祖 (senior woodworking technician, the national representative inheritor of traditional building construction craftsmanship of Xiangshan

⁸⁸ *The National Intangible Cultural Heritage List* is an intangible cultural heritage list approved by the State Council of the People's Republic of China, determined and published by the Ministry of Culture. The list is mainly responsible for the protection, management and rational use of intangible cultural heritage, adopting the four-level system of the state, province, city and county. The State Council has named four batches of national intangible cultural heritage lists in 2006, 2008, 2011 and 2014.

Bang), Xue Fuxin 薛福鑫 (national intangible cultural heritage inheritor of Xiangshan Bang) and others.⁸⁹

In domestic and overseas, the main techniques of Xiangshan Bang and its inheritors have all been shaped into typical representatives of Chinese culture in a short period, which has completed the confirmation of the legitimacy of craftsmen's cultural status in the new era.

⁸⁹ However, we can still find that in addition to the inheritors recognized by the nation, there are a large number of craftsmen who have inherited the skills of Xiangshan Bang. Even if the name of Xiangshan Bang is shared, a large number of craftsmen is still free from the legitimacy established by intangible cultural heritage.

1.3 The Force Behind the Power

It is found from the analyses in the previous section that the widely-mentioned “underprivileged craftsmen” under certain concepts is simply a summary of status rather than a universal fact under certain rules. Ancient China’s social status was not determined immediately after the concept of “scholars, farmers, artisans and merchants” was invented, but was gradually strengthened with the improvement of centralization of authority. In ancient Japan, the concept of “samurai, farmers, artisans and merchants” was not widely used until the Edo period. Before this time, very complex social status existed in the Japanese society.

From the perspective of sociology, status refers to differences between groups in the social honor or prestige they are accorded by others (Giddens & Sutton, 2017, p.485). In other words, the “difference” on the social level is the main factor used to determine a social identity, and is usually based on cognition of this group by the external environment. In terms of Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang, the condition is specified as how the status of Japanese and Chinese craftsmen were determined in the social-cultural background, as well as the major factor which was shaping the difference. The subjects behind the representation are how Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang adjusted to their identities which was shaped by social cultures, and how the craftsmen from the two countries managed to improve their statuses after efforts.

In traditional societies, social identity and status were usually determined on the basis of first-hand knowledge of a person gained in a certain social environment through interaction over a period of years (Ibid.). In pre-modern societies of Japan and China, craftsmen almost followed this general trend as well. In specific regions and professions, they passed on the knowledge as

families or as masters and apprentices. In Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang, these two craftsmen groups were both gathered by region,⁹⁰ while the two groups maintained the techniques of carpentry (the first-hand knowledge of carpenters) by their inheritance. Under such condition, social division of labor is the key to differentiating identities, meanwhile, the certain social class which was given a higher status by authority is determined as a relatively higher status.

Kongō Gumi always kept a distance away from the power center due to the complex power structure in the Japanese society. In ancient Japan, local powers were not completely centralized. Since the medieval period, the supreme power in Japan was held by three aspects, the court, the shogunate and the temple. Kongō Gumi did not refuse to seek recognition from multiple power centers. For a long time, Kongō Gumi gained production resources and salaries from the temple, as well as gained prestige from Tokugawa Shogunate. Confronted by the complex social powers, Japanese craftsmen had to keep calm and restrained for their own survival. Benefiting from this, Kongō Gumi still maintained great independence even in the modern society.

Xiangshan Bang won fame by adhering to authority. In ancient China, political authority changes by dynasties and authority systems, but always remains centralization in essence. The political system is maintained by government officials (that is, the scholars) with administrative capacity, which forms the most fundamental political adherence in China. There is a hidden plot in the previous historical development of Xiangshan Bang, which is the process of craftsmen approaching traditional “scholars” and modern “scholars” (intellectuals in the Republic of China and cultural officials in People’s Republic of China). This thought is derived from traditional

⁹⁰ Kongō Gumi performed their work mainly around Shitennoji Temple, Osaka. Xiangshan Bang was gathered around Xiangshan, Suzhou.

Chinese society, that is, the lower classes are able to improve their esteem by adhering to the power center.

In summary, in traditional societies with a simple division of labor, the differences in Japanese and Chinese social power organizations shaped totally different personalities of the two countries' craftsmen on attitudes towards power centers. This is how the two groups managed to transcend their original social statuses in different societies.

In modern societies, with the further division of labor, the smallest production unit in the form of a family or an industry is not commonly seen. Profession is not the sole judgment of status and identity. Rather, status and identity are shown by people's styles of life (Giddens & Sutton, 2017, p.485). In this case, such markers or symbols of status, such as type of housing, dressing, manner of speech, are shaping the social status. This shows that economic status becomes an important scale against traditional social status. The status of craftsmanship in national economy becomes the main factor used to judge the status of craftsmen.

Japan has offered equal status and employment freedom for craftsmen since Meiji Restoration. Japan formulated comprehensive policies targeted at middle and small-sized enterprises after World War II. Under these policies, some craftsmen were transplanted to become part of middle and small-sized enterprises and rapidly transformed from traditional craftsmanship to modern enterprises. Kongō Gumi was transformed in 1955 from Kongō Construction Department 金剛建築部, which was on the behalf of the country's advocacy at that time. At the early stage after Kongō Gumi's transformation, they incorporated the whole original craftsmen system into the modern enterprise, so that the original organization of

traditional Kongō Gumi was reserved.

China has experienced a swift and rather violent process towards modern economic system. During the transition from traditional craftsmanship to modern management, most of the craftsmen of Xiangshan Bang were gathered to certain construction projects, yet no modern enterprise was rapidly formed among the craftsmen. After the foundation of People's Republic of China, the most excellent craftsmen from Xiangshan Bang were retained within state administrations,⁹¹ while others were left outside. After implementation of Economic Reform (since 1978), as China promoted market economy, the craftsmen with a close tie to national economy were able to rapidly restructure into enterprises, but the way they undertook projects and organized themselves could be still regarded as "planned." Except these craftsmen from Xiangshan Bang, the others were marginalized, had to struggle to survive. The polarization still exists today.

The status of Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang in their separate national economy shows Japanese and Chinese general attitude towards craftsmen in modern societies. The restructuring of Japanese economic seemed milder. It was guided with policies but had no enforcement intervention, so that the traditional industries was naturally preserved, the craftsmen had a smooth transition in status as well. In Chinese economy, the government filtered the original industries and regulated practitioners, so that those traditional craftsmen gradually differed in status by the position (especially in or out) of the system.

Besides, it deserves extra notice that Japan and China had renovations in cultural

⁹¹ The previously-mentioned Suzhou Garden Construction Team, affiliated to Suzhou Municipal Administration.

consciousness after entering modern societies. In terms of craftsmanship, the renovation mainly included the whole society's awareness of protecting traditional techniques, and the re-cognition of craftsmen.

Preserving traditions derives from the rise of national consciousness. Socialized groups need labels differing themselves from others, while traditions represent the characteristics that differ their country from other countries.⁹² Shaping the national differences by using traditional symbols formulate the national identity, which may also build up the national image. However, Japan and China hold traditions that are not completely broken,⁹³ the traditions formulate their national identities, derive from "imagination,"⁹⁴ both take root in "reality."⁹⁵ The traditions bridge imagination and reality, and offer the self-consistent awareness for national identity. This kind of circulation also justifies the existence of traditions in the modern society. The consciousness of protecting traditional techniques comes from practical considerations of cultural relics' protection, also meets the demands to shape national characteristics.

In the field of traditional techniques, craftsmen are the ones who master certain traditional techniques. This awareness draws attention on craftsmen in the modern society again. In this

⁹² In *Imagined Communities* by Benedict Richard O'Gorman Anderson, nation is usually considered as a special "cultural artifact," which describes the phenomenon of split countries restructuring history as a nation state.

⁹³ Japanese aristocrats and elites were not heavily harmed in social reforms, and social cultures were preserved to the maximum extent. According to Benedict, Japan had the consciousness of shaping an "official national consciousness" before the War.

As China became a nation state, although the original social structure was damaged, character and social consciousness were not completely harmed, so traditions were preserved to some extent as well.

⁹⁴ "Imagined communities," from *Imagined Communities* by Benedict Anderson (2016).

⁹⁵ "Real communities," from *Here in "China" I dwell* by Ge Zhaoguang (2017).

sense, both Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang gained recognition from the society.⁹⁶ However, as stated in section 1, there exists an almost 50 years gap between Japan and China in formulating this cultural consciousness. Besides, Japanese craftsmen are respected in the society from inside, while Chinese craftsmen are recognized retroactively by the intention from outside. As for China, this is the cognitive difference which should be made up as well.

⁹⁶ The two representative craftsmen of Xiangshan Bang were identified as “National Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritors,” and the 39th generation head of Kongō Gumi, Kongō Toshitaka was awarded the prize by the Commissioner for Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan 文化庁長官表彰 (1978).

Chapter 2

Collective and Individual: The Organizational Forms of Craftsmen Groups

In the field of sociology, organization is an unneglectable topic and its definition is diverse. Howard. E. Aldrich and Peter. V. Marsden pointed out that “people frequently band together to pursue activities that they could otherwise not readily accomplish by themselves. A principal means for accomplishing such cooperative actions is the organization, a group with an identifiable membership that engages in concerted collective actions to achieve a common purpose (cited in Giddens, 2006, p.637).”⁹⁷ Max Weber focused more on the role of organization at the economic level. He proposed, “organizations are ways of coordinating the activities of human beings, or the goods they produce, is a stable way across space and time (cited in Giddens, 2006, pp.638-639).” To sum up, organizations are based on coordinated collective human activities, and their generation and development have specific objectives and rely on specific methods.

Based on the above understanding of organizations, this chapter conducts an in-depth exploration of the organization forms of Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang. Section 1 in this chapter compares the concepts of “kumi” and “bang,” the names of the Japanese and Chinese craftsmen groups respectively, summarizes the formation of Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang, and thus explains the different features of the two major craftsmen groups. Section 2 takes a more detailed look into each of the two groups by firstly discussing the responsibilities of each

⁹⁷ Refers to Aldrich and Marsden (1988, pp.361-392).

position in the pre-modern society and the operation modes of the hierarchical structures, and then exploring how did the two groups adjust their organizational structures after adopting the modern enterprise system. In section 3, the perspective of the discussion is placed at the top-level of the organization. Through analyzing the differences in the family inheritance patterns, the ethnical consciousness that maintains the two groups is explored.

2.1 “Kumi” and “Bang”

2.1.1 Kongō “Gumi” and Organization

In the construction industry in Japan, “kumi”組 (pronounces as “gumi” when after other words) is commonly seen in company names, such as Obayashi Gumi 大林組,⁹⁸ Kumagai Gumi 熊谷組,⁹⁹ Zentaka Gumi 錢高組,¹⁰⁰ and Okura Gumi 大倉組.¹⁰¹ Historically, a “kumi” is a labor organization of carpenters widely existed between Edo period and Meiji period. The operation of kumi is like this: each kumi is led by a master carpenter 棟梁 and the craftsmen in the industry follow this master carpenter. After the grouping, with the master carpenter being a representative 請負人, each kumi undertakes specific type of carpentry projects. In terms of the organization form, the kumi in the construction industry in Japan is a very pure industrial group. Since formation, the kumi has been related directly to the industry. At the heart of this group is the leaders in the industry. A working group is formed, whose responsibilities is gradually concentrating from ordinary craftsmen to the leaders.

It was in 1955 that Kongō Gumi chose the name “kumi.” Before the establishment of a

⁹⁸ They started their business in the 25th year of Meiji (1892), the name of them was Obayashi Mise at first. Then, they change their name to Obayashi Gumi in the 37th year of Meiji (1904). Refers to website of Obayashi Gumi: <https://www.obayashi.co.jp/company/history/index.html>

⁹⁹ They started their business in the 31st year of Meiji (1898), run a company in the 13th year of Shōwa (1938). Refers to website of Kumagai Gumi: <https://www.kumagaigumi.co.jp/company/history/sougyou.html>

¹⁰⁰ They started their business in the 2nd year of Hōei (1705), set up their name as Zentaka Gumi in the 20th year of Meiji (1887). Refers to website of Zentaka Gumi: <https://www.zenitaka.co.jp/company/history.html>

¹⁰¹ In the 6th year of Meiji (1873), Okura Kihachiro founded Okuragumi Shokai, then renamed to Kabushiki Gaisha Okura Doboku in the 6th year of Taishō (1917), it was also regarded as the first stock-type company in Japanese construction industry. They renamed to Taisei Corporation in the 21st year of Shōwa (1946). Refers to website of Taisei Corporation: https://www.taisei.co.jp/about_us/corp/ayumi/1169092558063.html

modern enterprise system, Kongō Gumi was called “Kongō Construction Department” (Kongō, 2013, p.113). According to Uematsu Jōichi 植松襄一, the adviser consultant 相談役 from Kongō Gumi, in 1961 when he just joined the group, Kongō Gumi was a small company with only 17 employees (KANSAI · OSAKA 21st Century Association, (Eds.), 2018, p.108). The size of the group exactly matched the need of their construction project. As a craftsman group specialized in construction of temple and shrine, Kongō Gumi’s operation form is bound to be different from other construction companies. However, the choice of the name “kumi” is a process of self-embodiment. It has also proved that the organizational structure of Kongō Gumi is in accordance with the operational form “kumi” (Figure 2.1).



Figure 2.1. Kongō Gumi at Present © 2018 Xie Yuxin

Even today, the traces of “kumi” can still be seen in the structure of Kongō Gumi: it manages eight groups (also called kumi): Hatayama Gumi 畑山組, Kiuchi Gumi 木内組, Doi Gumi 土居組, Kato Gumi 加藤組, Kiguchi Gumi 木口組, Iwasaki Gumi 岩崎組, Kitano Gumi

北野組 and Haba Gumi 羽馬組 (Figure 2.2).¹⁰² Similar to Kongō Gumi, these sub-groups use the surnames of their master carpenters as the group name. In terms of structure, these “kumi” are smaller groups of craftsmen. Each group is led by the most skilled carpenter who is managing 8 to 12 craftsmen in his group. Each group has the ability to undertake a construction project independently. In simple terms, these sub-groups can still be regarded as a construction team led by the master carpenter.

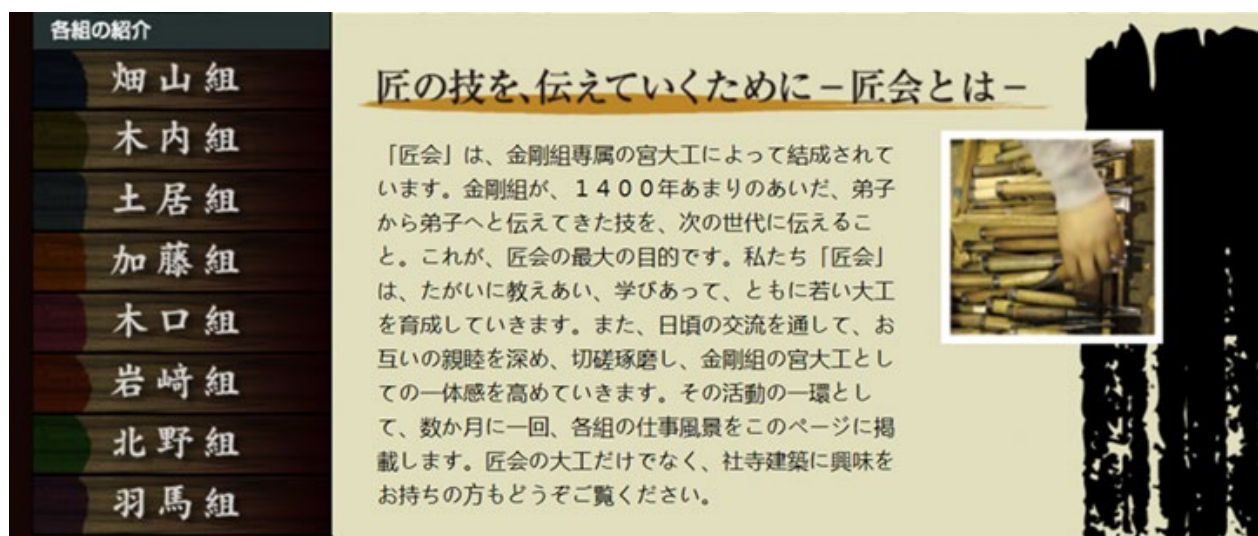


Figure 2.2. Eight Groups of Kongō Gumi¹⁰³ © 2013-2020 Kongō Gumi

When Kongō Gumi undertakes a new project, these sub-groups will often be evaluated and compete with each other, in order to select the most suitable team to take up the project. The master carpenter of each group has a high degree of management autonomy over his “kumi,” and the craftsmen in the group usually only report to the master carpenter of their own group. In order to enhance the overall strength of the group, the master carpenter usually has very high

¹⁰² Refers to Kongō Gumi, craftsman association: <https://www.kongogumi.co.jp/ja/takumi/index.html>

¹⁰³ The picture can be seen in website of Kongō Gumi, craftsman association: <https://www.kongogumi.co.jp/ja/takumi/index.html>

requirements for the young craftsmen in his group, and the craftsmen also regard their group as a community and learn and grow actively. However, in order to prevent the internal separation caused by the high degree of autonomy, none of the groups is allowed to undertake projects directly from the clients. They can only serve Kongō Gumi exclusively and undertake tasks assigned by Kongō Gumi. If Kongō Gumi allows each group to operate independently, it is highly likely that there will be intensive internal competition, which may lead to the decline of the whole Kongō Gumi.

This management method of subdividing the whole kumi into smaller working units firstly guarantees the concentration of labor forces. The craftsmen in each group consistently work together for a very long time, so it is easier to build a good sense of collaboration, thereby ensuring the positive working attitude within the small craftsman group. On this basis, the unique features of each group are retained to the largest extent. The techniques used by each group have both commonality and uniqueness, which improves the overall strength of the entire kumi. In addition, under this structure, each group is managed by Kongō Gumi, which ensures that the secret techniques on wood construction can be kept within the company, without being leaked.

In many cases, each group in Kongō Gumi is able to do projects independently. However, if the scale of the construction project is too large, then several groups need to work on the same project. Therefore, in order to strengthen the connection between the various groups, Kongō Gumi established the “craftsman association” (Takumi Kai in Japanese) 匠会 which includes all the craftsmen in the organization. The main function of the “craftsman association” is to facilitate the regular technical exchanges within the separated kumi. By exchanging skills and experience,

the craftsmen can learn from each other, realize self-development, pass on their heritage skills, and bond with each other, which eventually help to build up the sense of collectiveness within the kumi.

The advantage of the “craftsman association” is that it provides a “non-binding” collective based on the fact that each group in Kongō Gumi has a high degree of autonomy. The craftsman association does not apply a top-to-bottom style constraint to regulate and unify all the groups. On the contrary, it relies on the individuals, who are spontaneously bonded by skills, techniques and experience exchanges,¹⁰⁴ to maintain the community.

In Japanese, “kumi” also means “a collection of people with the same personality or characteristics.” Semantically, the “kumi” values the concept of “being the same” especially. For the craftsmen, it usually reflected in their same profession, so the kumi is a professional community. In Kongō Gumi, the craftsmen not only keep the highly-concentrated and independent operation mode of “kumi” in the construction industry, but also have established “craftsman association,” a functional association which is on top of all the groups. With the collaborative effect of “kumi” and “craftsman association,” Kongō Gumi has achieved a high degree of autonomy and cultivated the awareness of unity, generating an organizational experience that surpasses that of other architectural groups.

2.1.2 Xiangshan “Bang” and Guild

In the context of European craftsmen, a guild is “a specialized organization for craftsmen

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

who have the same occupation. It has two main functions: to make the standard and rules of the industry and to establish monopoly of business” (Weber & Kang, 2004, p.106).¹⁰⁵ In China, the noun “Hang 行 (means guild divided by profession)” has been firstly seen in Tang Dynasty and continued in Song, Jin and Yuan Dynasty. In Ming and Qing Dynasty, the guild for craftsmen were usually called “Huiguan 會館 (means guild hall)” or “Gongsuo 公所 (means guild hall)” (Qu, 1999, p.68).¹⁰⁶ During the period of the Republic of China, it was developed into “Hanghui 行會 (means guild)” and “Tongye Gonghui 同業公會 (means the same profession association, as well as guild)” (Qu, 1999, p.80).¹⁰⁷ In terms of organizational structure, the Chinese craft associations that are discussed in this paper are more similar to the regional craft guild.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, it is believed that Xiangshan Bang, the craft association, was formed in the mid-Ming or late-Ming Dynasty, and flourished during Qing Dynasty and the Republic of China period in Xiangshan area, Suzhou. Since its establishment, Xiangshan Bang has been identified as a local guild. With Xiangshan Bang being the major user, the guild hall for the carpentry and plasterer industry in Suzhou was called “Ziyi Gongsuo 梓義公所” or “Gongshuzi Ci 公輪子祠.” Gongshuzi Ci “was located in Zhusi Alley. It worshiped Gongshuzi (name of a craftsman, means Luban) from Country Lu. It was initially built in Qiqiao

¹⁰⁵ It can be seen as the definition of “Handicraft Guild” by Max Weber, However, the concept of guilds cited by Max Weber, especially in the “freely associating guilds and their spirit,” contains the knowledge of the city system and citizenship rights. By this method, Max Weber also came to the conclusion that all the craftsmen in ancient China were belonged to a certain village, while “there is no guild that forms part of the urban system.”

¹⁰⁶ Huiguan is a place (a hall) which generally gathering the people from the same county. However, in terms of the organization of economic life, there are often close industrial links between the same townships, so Huiguan will also have the function of industry coordination, and even some halls will be directly converted into guild hall. Gongsuo, in comparison, is clearly reflecting industry characteristics.

¹⁰⁷ In this period, Hanghui and Tongye Gonghui is more likely to the guild.

Alley during Jiaqing period in Qing Dynasty (1796-1820) and was destroyed in the tenth year of Emperor Xianfeng (1860). It was relocated and rebuilt during Tongzhi period in Qing Dynasty (1862-1875). Now, it is used by the carpentry industry for worshipping (Figure 2.3, 2.4).”¹⁰⁸



Figure 2.3. Qingzhou Huiguan¹⁰⁹

(Previous Ziyi Gongsuo)

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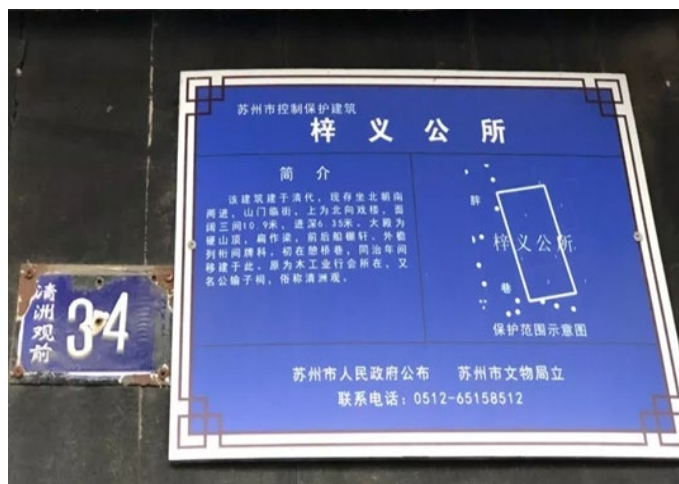


Figure 2.4. Introduction of Ziyi Gongsuo¹¹⁰

(Established by Bureau of Cultural Relics, Suzhou)

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Now, the hall no longer exists, while the eleven stone tablets with inscriptions in the hall have been well preserved. The stone tablets were produced between the 30th year of Emperor Daoguang (1850) and the 35th year of the Republic of China (1945), and record the operation, organizational structure and personnel of Xiangshan Bang in detail.

¹⁰⁸ The original text is 在洙泗巷，祀周魯國公輪子，初在憩橋巷，清嘉慶間建，咸豐十年毀，同治中移建，今所為木工業奉行香火. *Wuxianzhi* (Vol. 34) 《民國吳縣誌·卷三十四·壇廟祠宇二》, refers to Cao and Li (1991, p.520).

¹⁰⁹ Qingdiao Suzhou 情調蘇州, At Xuanmiao Guan, How Many Suzhou People Reminds Ziyi Premerary School Before 100 Years 觀前玄妙深處，還有多少蘇州人記得百年梓義小學:

<http://www.ourjiangsu.com/a/20190424/1556091969380.shtml>

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

According to the inscriptions on *Plasterer and Carpentry Craftsmen Building Gongsuo Good Deed Stone Tablet* 《水木匠業興修公所辦理善舉碑》 made in the 30th year of Emperor Daoguang (1850):

Gu He, Zhou Shangde, Xu Xuezhou, Huang Kanghou and other people from Wu County went to the government. According to their words: “In the plasterer and carpenter industry, Xiangshan Bang is the best one, the craftsmen of Xiangshan Bang are dedicated to the Master Luban in Yuanmiaoguan, Changyi. The place is also regarded as the office of Xiangshan Bang. Due to lack of funds, the place goes in disrepair, and all public actions are gradually abandoned. There is an old fellow Tang Bin, who has the ambition to start repairing, hopes to resume the traditional system, invites Gu He and others to help him. In addition to buying...in Xiangshan as the funeral place for the craftsmen of Xiangshan Bang, they also suggested that each Zuo should donate 1000 strings of money to repair this place, buy medicines and coffins for the craftsmen of Xiangshan Bang. As well, a public donation from all the craftsmen of same profession in three county was negotiated. Due to the use of bricks roof tile and wood, one should donate 10 Wen (money)•••, we will punish the craftsmen who do not obey the rules. We set up Sinian (means the person who is responsible to the whole year) and Siyue (means the person who is responsible to the whole month) to protect the place, and one person who burns the joss stick as an offering to Luban, Chang Chuan, takes charge of this place.” They were afraid of the underworld organizations which may make trouble, while they also worried about the craftsmen of same profession who do

not obey the rule. They reported the situation to the government of Changzhou County and asked to post the agreement..., to prove the existence of the agreement and ask for the prohibition.¹¹¹

Similar to the stone tablet above, refers to *Both Plasterer and Carpentry Industry in Chang (Changzhou County, a place), Yuan (Yuanhe County, a place), and Wu (Wu County, a place) Donate 3000 Wen (money) Every Month As Monthly Savings to Build Gongsuo Good Deed Stone Tablet*¹¹² 《長元吳三縣規定水木兩作每作每月捐錢三千文按月儲存公所辦理同業善舉碑》 made in the 12th year of Emperor Guangxu (1886), and *Plasterer and Carpentry Industry Renovating the Ziyi Gongsuo Good Deed Stone Tablet*¹¹³ 《水木作修理梓義公所照舊辦理同業善舉碑》 made in the 13th year of Emperor Guangxu (1887), we can see that Xiangshan Bang took up the major responsibility to rebuild and renovate the Ziyi Gongsuo to establish a livelihood security system centered on craftsmen. After the government entering it in the records, the craftsmen in the industry should follow it strictly.

¹¹¹ The original text is 據吳縣人顧鶴、周尚德、徐學周、黃康侯等赴府稟稱：水木匠業，香山幫為最，向在長邑元妙觀□□□□中，供奉魯班仙師，為辦公之所。嗣因經費不敷，年久失修，一切公舉，漸次廢弛。現有舊董湯斌，有志興修，率由舊制，邀鶴等襄理。除在香山購得□□□□為同業喪葬義地，並議各作先為湊錢一千串修葺，添設醫藥棺木。議得三邑同行公捐，一應磚瓦石灰木料，每千捐錢十文，並不在夥工捐□□□□不捐，照章議罰。設立司年司月輪管，並有香工一人常川照管。恐有棍徒藉端阻擾。及同業不遵義舉，為將現辦情形，具稟長洲縣外，抄粘□□，稟求立案示禁。 Refers to Suzhou Museum, Department of history, Jiangsu Normal University, Ming and Qing History Research Office, Nanjing University, 1981, p.122.

¹¹² Refers to Jiangsu provincial museum, 1959, p.81.

¹¹³ Refers to Suzhou Museum, Department of history, Jiangsu Normal University, Ming and Qing History Research Office, Nanjing University, 1981, p.127.

From the perspective of value judgement, it can be seen from the titles of the inscriptions on the stone tablets that this act was regarded as a “good deed 善舉” and a “righteous act 義舉” which should be recognized and praised by all the craftsmen in the guild. From the perspective of organization principles, these measures are usually based on the patriarchal clan nature, that is, establishing a family-like organization which has a certain restraining power among the craftsmen. The individuals in this group should “work together to overcome difficulties and should not disobey the rules or create conflicts.”¹¹⁴ Also, on the basis of not violating this patriarchal management style, they should perform their obligations(making donations) and may enjoy their rights (receiving medical service, coffins, and funerals).

When it came to the period of the Republic of China, the culture of the craft guild changed. It can be seen a little from the inscriptions. *Ziyi Gongsuo's Decision on Increasing the Payment for Plasterer and Carpentry Industry and Implementation Date Stone Tablet* 《梓義公所決議水木作增加工資及施行日期碑》 (1920) , *Increasing the Payment for Plasterer and Carpentry Industry Due to the Increase of the Material price Stone Tablet* 《水木作因物資昂貴增加工資標準碑》 (1922) and the *Increasing the Payment for Plasterer and Carpentry Industry Stone Tablet* 《水木作增加工資碑》 (two pieces, 1925 & 1929)¹¹⁵ mentioned that due to higher living cost, craftsmen were having a difficult time; therefore, after the representatives having a meeting in Ziyi Gongsuo, it was decided that the payment for the craftsmen should be increased and the working hours should be limited.

Besides, it is recorded in detail on *Wu County Labor Union Approving That The*

¹¹⁴ Ibid. p.122.

¹¹⁵ These four pieces of stone tablets are recorded in the book by Jiangsu provincial museum, 1959, pp.84-88.

Construction Industry Should Not Hire Non-members Stone Tablet 《吳縣縣工會整理委員會核准營造業不得僱傭非會員工作碑》(1946) that in the construction industry, “the non-members should not be employed.” This exclusive regulation is regarded to be beneficial to the organization itself. It can be seen that during the Republic of China, Xiangshan Bang guild has already gained a certain degree of modernity and started to show its feature of striving for interests of the members in the community, which is what Max Weber called “the struggle of guilds” (Weber & Kang, 2004, pp.112-113).¹¹⁶ This also marks Xiangshan Bang’s gradual transformation from a traditional guild to a modern labor union (工會 in Chinese and 労働組合 in Japanese).

As a guild, “bang 幫” is “an organization, whether loose or close, formed because of ‘Yuan’ 緣 (means predestined relationship in Chinese) in industry, location, etc.” (Qu, 1999, p.162). The essence of this concept is “Yuan” and the network with interpersonal ‘Yuan’ as the ties. Xiangshan Bang does embody the feature of a mixture of the region and industry, while in the pre-modern society, the regional and industrial feature of Xiangshan Bang is under the influence of the patriarchal system. After entering the modern society, Xiangshan Bang embodied the features of a modern labor union more clearly. With its nature as a group, this craft organization has played a more important role on the external level.

¹¹⁶ “the struggle of guilds” that Weber said is reflected in many aspects, such as the struggle with consumers, the struggle with other competitors, the struggle against laborers (often concentrated on the working class), the struggle with businessmen, etc. In Xiangshan Bang during the period of the Republic of China, we can see that at least the struggle within the laborers was manifested.

2.1.3 The Organizational Forms of Craftsmen Groups in Japan and China

“Bang” and “kumi” are both the organizational forms of craftsmen groups in essence, both of which take on the basic functions of external communication and internal regulation. Externally, the community of craftsmen has made individuals into a whole which undertakes the responsibilities that cannot be borne by an individual. Depending on the group, it often needs to be represented by an individual to negotiate with administrative agencies and undertake projects (Quan & Tao, 1934, pp.66-68).¹¹⁷ Internally, by managing the facilities and materials owned by the community, it can to some extent restrict its personnel and affect the cognition and behaviors of the craftsmen directly or indirectly.

However, if we look into the details, there are still distinct differences in the organizational forms of these two craftsmen groups.

The “bang” established by Xiangshan craftsmen is more similar to the “Za”座 in the Japanese Middle Ages and the “Kabunakama”株仲間 in the Edo period, or the cooperative association 協同組合 in this day and age. It is a type of labor union.

Firstly, Xiangshan Bang was originally a guild, and its core member was one or several industry leaders from renowned families, whose social status mainly relied on his personal financial strength or social prestige (such as the relationship with the government and the role he played in local construction). But this leading figure was not always from one single family. The crown was rotated among several families with the contest of financial strength or social prestige.

¹¹⁷ One representative opinion of Quan and Tao is: in traditional society, the community of craftsmen can face externally, handing over to the government involves undertaking business.

Secondly, the goal of a guild is to achieve the monopoly of the skills mastered by the practitioners within a certain region, and to exclude those practitioners who are not a member of any organization. By doing so, the guild protects the interests of its own members. Meanwhile, a guild can undertake large-scale construction projects which are often too difficult for one family business or independent practitioners to complete. Therefore, the guild often plays an important role in sharing benefits. In essence, the value of the guild lies in mutual assistance, and its ultimate goal is to maximize the benefits of its members.

Thirdly, as the guild itself does not have any cutting edge skills and lacks the power to control and restrain the families and its members, it is a loose labor community. In order to run the guild smoothly, it needs to set up a series of external rules, such as to hold meetings regularly to discuss matters (to select chairman and to balance the relationship between various families), to hold memorial ceremonies for the industry ancestors, and to promote the networking among the members (establish schools and build cemeteries). The internal logic of this series of external rules is to establish a large family-style ethical system centered on the “Yuan” of location and industry.

Kongō Gumi is a small scale professional community, which is more similar to the small and medium-sized modern enterprises.

Firstly, Kongō Gumi has always been a compact and small-size organization. When the number of craftsmen increases, a small group of similar size will be formed immediately. Because of the shared interest, there is no complicated social relationship within the small-scale professional organization. Instead, the sense of unity is much valued.

Secondly, focusing on a single business is often the feature of small craftsman organizations. For a long time, Kongō Gumi had relied only on Shitennoji Temple, which has a government background, and the only business this organization undertook was to construct the temple. Although Kongō Gumi is a regional group, it had never tried to monopolize a specific industry in a certain region before adopting modern enterprise system and only focused on its own professional field.

Thirdly, for a professional community, the inheritance and updates of its unique techniques are always kept within the organization, that is to say, as long as the industry still has a demand for some specific techniques, it is hard for the craftsmen to leave the community. Therefore, techniques and skills are usually a strong power to unite the professional community and to generate the centripetal force within an organization.

The organization forms of the two groups have been distinct since their establishment, which has led to the internal spiritual differences between the two major craftsmen groups. We can summarize their features using “expansive” and “compact.” Xiangshan Bang focuses on expanding its power, while Kongō Gumi aims to maintain the stable development of itself. These are the two different directions chosen by the two groups since their formation.

As Xiangshan Bang is a loose guild, it still has the interpersonal representation under the shadow of the patriarchal system. However, in essence, it is not bonded by consanguinity. Therefore, when the “Yuan” of location or industry collapses, it is likely that the guild will split into smaller interest groups. While as a family-style group purely bonded by the “Yuan” of industry, Kongō Gumi is likely to be sustained as long as the industry still exists. When transiting

into modern enterprise system, many craftsmen groups in Japan can finish the transformation easily. The internal motivation is exactly powered by this organizational structure.

2.2 Organizational Structures and Operation Modes

2.2.1 The Hierarchical Structure

During their development, both Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang have formed a hierarchical structure which organizes manpower centering on the construction project.

It is clear that Kongō Gumi is a more united and close-related organization. The individual who takes the largest responsibility is the “seidaiku 正大工 (means master carpenter),” who is usually from the Kongō family and is responsible for the operation and management of the entire Gumi. The seidaiku is often the best craftsman in the group, and he also plays an important role in passing down the valuable and unique skills of Kongō Gumi. If he cannot bear the responsibilities in both management and developing techniques, he would resign.

In the accounts of Kongō Gumi, after the death of the 32nd seidaiku, Kongō Yoshisada, the 33rd seidaiku, Kongō Yoshiyuki 金剛喜幸 was unable to hold the position for a long time because of a serious illness, and he passed the position to his brother Kongō Yoshimori 金剛喜盛, as the 34th seidaiku. However, his younger brother, Kongō Yoshimori, was retired by himself because he was “not skilled in technique and had no merit in being a master 職道不熟ニ付当家功ナシ” (Kongō, 2013, pp.77-78). As another example, because the “Shōwa Financial Crisis” in 4th year of Shōwa (1929) led to the overall decline in the operating conditions of the construction industry, the 37th seidaiku, Kongō Haruhito 金剛治一 felt that there was nowhere to be implemented. On September 26th, 1932, in Shitennoji Temple in front of the tomb of the Kongō family, in Shitennoji Temple, he stabbed his throat with scissors, made his suicide (Kongō,

2013, pp.94-95). These examples are also sufficient to prove that seidaiku is not only a top position in the organization, but also represents a sense of taking responsibilities to one's family and a devotion to techniques.

In Kongō Gumi, under seidaiku, there is the also “gondaiku 権大工 (means vice master carpenter),” who are often from the collateral branches of Kongō family or other families. They also participate in the management of Kongō Gumi as an assistance to seidaiku. When seidaiku is absent, gondaiku would take up the responsibility of leading Kongō Gumi. In Kongō Gumi, there have been many cases in which the seidaiku was not qualified enough to be the leader due to his poor construction skills or because he passed away without having a successor, when gondaiku, as a backup leader, would perform the leader's duty during the transitional period. For example, during the 8th year of Bunka (1811) to the 11th year of Bunka (1814), Kongō Yoshiuji 金剛是氏, the 32nd gondaiku, presided over the renovation and rebuilding of certain temples, towers, halls, and gates of Shitennoji Temple (Kongō, 2013, p.179). In the 2nd year of Kae (1849), the 34th gontaiku of Kongō Gumi, Kongō Shigenari 金剛重為 repaired and rebuilt some buildings of Shitennoji Temple again (Kongō, 2013, p.179). It can be seen that both the seidaiku and gondaiku are at the top of the pyramid of Kongō Gumi. Although it seems that the seidaiku has a higher position, gondaiku sometimes would perform the actual duty of seidaiku, and thus there is a subtle balance between the two positions.

The grass-roots of Kongō Gumi are called “miyadaiku 宮大工 (means carpenter who build temple and shrine),” who account for the largest proportion in Kongō Gumi. While considering the skill level and experience, there are also many apprentices whose pursuit is to

become miyadaiku (Figure 2.5).

Even today, Kongō Gumi still differentiates among seidaiku, gondaiku and miyadaiku through daily details. For example, in the Ceremony of Carpenter with Hatchet (see chapter 5, section 2 for details), seidaiku needs to wear the costume of Prince Shotoku's craftsman, gondaiku wears a kariginu 狩衣, and miyadaiku wears a daimon 大紋 with the eagle feather family pattern of Kongō family (the black coat means the leader of each group, while the blue coat means ordinary craftsmen).¹¹⁸ When entering and exiting Shitennoji Temple, they must strictly follow a fixed order. The sense of hierarchy which not only exists in daily working but also penetrates into everyday life can reflect Kongō Gumi's rigorous attitude to maintain the traditional organizational structure.

Xiangshan Bang is a loose organization with a large amount of craftsmen. Usually, the unit who undertakes projects from the clients is an individual. This individual is called “zuotou 作頭.” “Zuotou” is the leader of a group of craftsmen who participate in a specific construction project. As recorded in *Ming Shilu* 《明實錄》, in the 6th year of Emperor Yongle (1408), “the craftsmen who went to Beijing were given ten ingots of silver, warm jackets, and shoes, and in addition, the zuotou was given one more felt clothes.”¹¹⁹ The successor of intangible cultural heritage of Xiangshan Bang, Xue Fuxin, has also mentioned that it is a tradition that “the zuotou would get double salary 把作師傅拿雙工” (Shen, 2011, p.75). It can be seen from the above

¹¹⁸ Hashiyama, ホーム | なにわ大坂をつくった 100 人 | 第 69 話 金剛重光:
https://www.osaka21.or.jp/web_magazine/osaka100/069.html

¹¹⁹ The original text is 給賜工匠赴北京者，人鈔十錠，並胖襖、鞵鞋，作頭加氈衫一領. Refers to *Daming Taizong Wenhuangdi Shilu* 《大明太宗文皇帝實錄》 (Vol. 82).

that the zuotou earns more than other craftsmen as he is the manager of the project. Except zuotou, the rest of the craftsmen are called “gonghuo 工夥”, which refers to the ordinary craftsman involved in the construction project.

The most obvious relationship between the zuotou and the gonghuo is the employment relationship. In the civil construction projects between Ming and Qing Dynasties and the Republic of China, the zuotou is usually the contractor of a project. He charges the owner of the project and pay the other craftsmen, while the gonghuo accept the leadership and contribute his skills and labor to the construction. Generally speaking, there would be several craftsmen who follow the zuotou all the time. Those craftsmen are his apprentices or juniors in the industry. Therefore, the zuotou and the gonghuo have established a relationship beyond the scope of construction projects.

Besides the zuotou and the gonghuo, there is also a large group of part-time workers 雇工 / 散工. According to the registration records of the Suzhou Construction Industry Union 蘇州營造業同業公會登記冊 in the Republic of China, the number of workers in each project was not large, because most of the workers were hired temporarily (Shen, 2011, p.75). Usually, these part-time workers had not participated in any professional training before joining the project. In China, this phenomenon is quite common. Even today, there are still many migrant workers who are not well-trained. They are individuals included in the project management system while excluded from the technical and skill system (Figure 2.6).

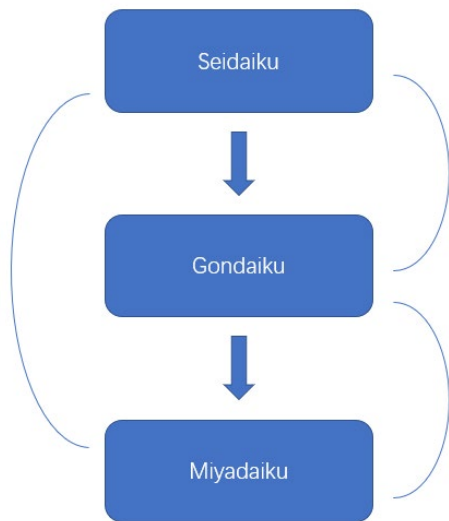


Figure 2.5.

The Hierarchical Structure of Kongō Gumi

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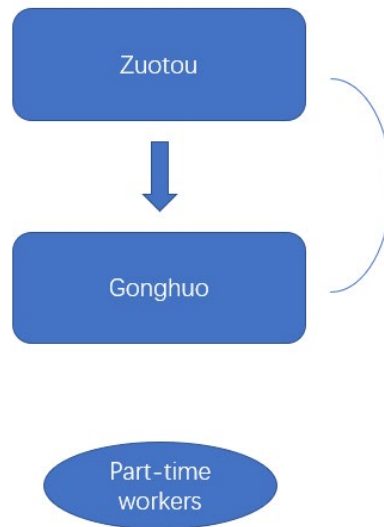


Figure 2.6.

The Hierarchical Structure of Xiangshan Bang

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As far as the hierarchical structures of the craftsmen groups in Japan and China are concerned, we can draw the following conclusions.

First, both Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang have established an internal hierarchy: both groups have classified their craftsmen based on their social resources and level of skills. Those who are at the top of the hierarchy assume the leadership and those at the bottom are ordinary workers. That is to say, this hierarchy is an organizational structure as well as a management method which depends on a form of authority similar to what Max Weber called the traditional authority (Weber & Kang, 2004, p. 303),¹²⁰ that is, the dominant figure exercise his power based

¹²⁰ Weber summarized the three types of authority in the organization as “the three types of legitimate rule”: legal authority, traditional authority and charismatic authority (relying on organizational leadership. Individual’s personal charm is carried out). Here in Weber, power is the ability to ignore people’s opposition and force people to obey, while authority means that people are willing to accept orders; power has great coercion, while authority

on the craftsmen's traditional cognition of techniques.

However, the difference between Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang is the complexity of the established hierarchy. It can be seen clearly from the previous discussion that in Xiangshan Bang, there are two ranks while in Kongō Gumi there are three. When discussing the ideal hierarchical structure, Max Weber put forward such a judgment standard: "The structure of the organizational system is a pyramid, which is divided into senior management, middle management and grass-roots management. The senior is the person in charge whose function is decision-making; in the middle is the administrators, whose main function is to carry out the decision; at the bottom are general staff, whose main function is to implement the decision."¹²¹

In the three-tier hierarchy, its organizational structure can be divided into "decision-execution-implementation." The organization is more orderly and more flexible. In the two-tier hierarchy, the organizational structure is simplified to "decision-implementation," so those at the bottom will have a stronger dependence on those at the top. If the upper tier collapses, the entire organization will no longer exist. It can be seen from the investigation on the gondaiku in Kongō Gumi that they can be a supplement to the seidaiku, while they can also interact with the grass-

has some kind of voluntariness, and can be accepted by most people.

Weber believes that legal authority is the basis of hierarchical structure. That is: (1) it provides the basis for management continuity; (2) the person holding the management position is selected according to his competence for the job, which is reasonable; (3) the leader has the law as the means of power; (4) all powers have clear regulations, and incumbents cannot abuse their formal powers.

¹²¹ From the perspective of Max Weber, from a purely practical point of view, bureaucracy is the most efficient and rational organizational structure, which is superior to other organizational models in terms of accuracy, stability, disciplinary and reliability. He has made accurate descriptions of bureaucracy in *Theory of Social Organization and Economic Organization*(1964). He believes that the bureaucracy mainly includes the following characteristics: (1) hierarchical structure (2) division of labor (3) control by rules and regulations (4) dilute human relations (5) career orientation. The bureaucracy often contains some elements of legal authority.

roots in the organization. Although this hierarchical structure in ancient Kongō Gumi cannot compete with the ideal bureaucracy and can only be regarded as a simple intra-group hierarchical classification, this attempt meets the need to maintain some organizations which are united by specific targets.

Also, it is noteworthy that the leader of the two organizations, namely seidaiku/gondaiku and zuotou, have the most advanced techniques and skills, and meanwhile are the managers of the organization. Before adopting the modern enterprise system, the leaders of both Japanese and Chinese craftsmen groups demonstrate the feature of having double identities: technical identity and management identity. For a craftsman group in construction industry, an important standard for undertaking projects is that the group's skill level should not decline, and even need to be constantly improved. Therefore, when selecting leaders, skill level is the most important factor. There are even circumstances where the skill is more valued than management. It is also an important feature of craftsman organizations before the establishment of the modern enterprise system.

2.2.2 Craftsmen in the Modern Enterprise System

Since the 20th century, economic activities in both Japan and China have revolved around the enterprise system. The construction industry is no exception. Under the existing construction system, all construction activities must be done with the construction company as the main body. Now, Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang also operate in the form of modern enterprise organizations. The issue that cannot be ignored under the enterprise system is that how does

management, a technique to make the organization run smoothly, conform to the industrial techniques of the craftsmen.

While in Japan, after the rapid establishment the modern enterprises in 1955, Kongō Gumi, facing the rapid change in corporate organizational form, went through a trail-and-error period of more than a decade (Kongō, 2013, p.117). Since 1970, Kongō Gumi has chosen to take mature large construction companies as the blueprint to establish an enterprise system. During the next two decades, Kongō Gumi expanded in size gradually (Kongō, 2013, pp.117-118), and finally established the current enterprise form (Figure 2.7).

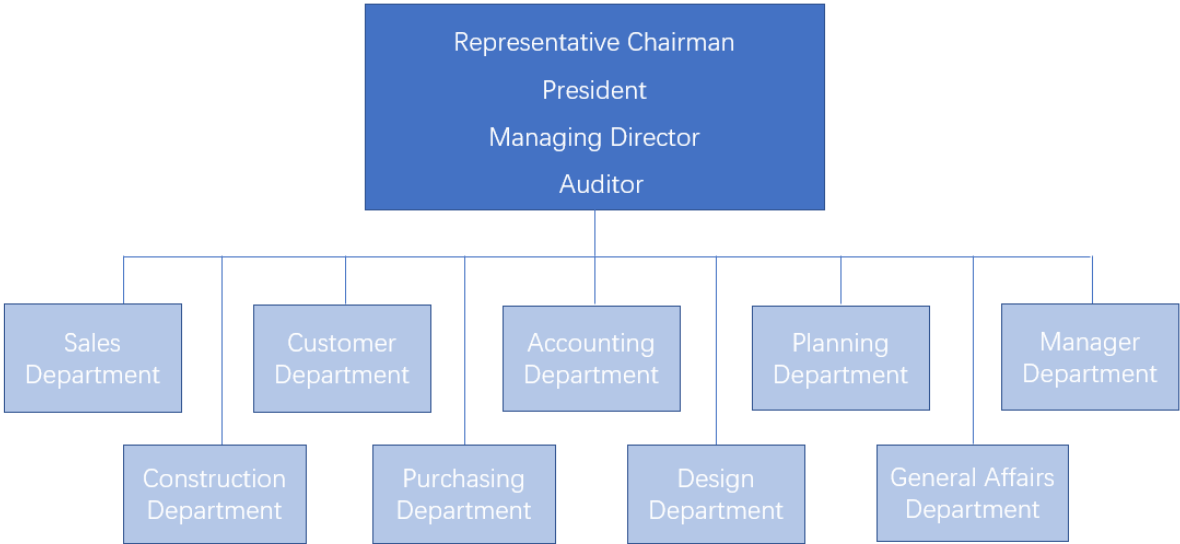


Figure 2.7. The Enterprise Formation of Kongō Gumi © 2020 Xie Yuxin

As for the management, before the bankruptcy crisis in 2005, the seidaiku of Kongō Gumi had been the “president 社長” of Kongō Gumi Co., Ltd. as well, that is the chairman and general manager in the company. After the bankruptcy, both seidaiku Kongō Toshitaka and gondaiku Uematsu Jōichi have taken the position of adviser consultant. This position is not a part of the

management team, but only a title with no real power,¹²² so the seidaiku is no longer the leader of the organization and becomes a mere “concept,” the spiritual leader.

After the division, many miyadaiku who only provided techniques in the past now have joined the construction headquarters and been engaged also in procurement and design.¹²³ However, all business activities, from undertaking projects to customer service, have been excluded from the craftsmen system and operated by professional departments, so the craftsmen have lost all professional identities except the technical identity.

The situation of Xiangshan Bang is complicated. As mentioned above, the “bang” actually shows the nature of a guild and it is a very loose organization; it has been mentioned that the smallest working group that undertakes project only has two levels. Therefore, Xiangshan Bang does not have the conditions to transform into a modern enterprise system.

After the establishment of the People’s Republic of China, Xiangshan craftsmen mainly engage in construction activities in Suzhou area. Within Suzhou, there are mainly two major enterprises that continue the architectural traditions of Xiangshan Bang, namely Suzhou Landscape Development Co., Ltd. and Suzhou Xiangshan Gujian Co., Ltd..¹²⁴ Suzhou

¹²² This position has nothing to do with the management of the enterprise, but provides a position to protect Kongō Gumi (Kongō, 2013, p.155).

¹²³ Refers to the Brochure of Kongō Gumi, *Kongō Gumi*, in the section of “construction process.”

¹²⁴ The number and the grade of Suzhou ancient construction qualification enterprises can be found on the website of Suzhou Construction Bureau, see the website for details, www.szjs.net

Many small companies have also come from the above two large companies. For example, the second branch of Suzhou Xiangshan Gujian Co., Ltd. was transformed into Suzhou Kuaixiang Gujian Co., Ltd. 蘇州蒯祥古建有限公司, and the fourth branch was transformed into Suzhou Taihu Classical Garden Construction Co., Ltd. 蘇州太湖古典園林建築有限公司.

Landscape Development Co., Ltd. is the former Suzhou Garden Construction Team which was established in 1958 (Figure 2.8). Suzhou Xiangshan Ancient Construction Co., Ltd. was originated from Wuxian Ancient Construction Technique Company, which was affiliated to Wuxian Construction Bureau (Figure 2.9). Both these two large companies are controlled by the state-owned enterprise Suzhou Landscape and Garden Investment and Development Group Co., Ltd., which undertakes most of the ancient construction projects invested by the Suzhou government. Other small companies are also undertaking various minor construction projects in the city.

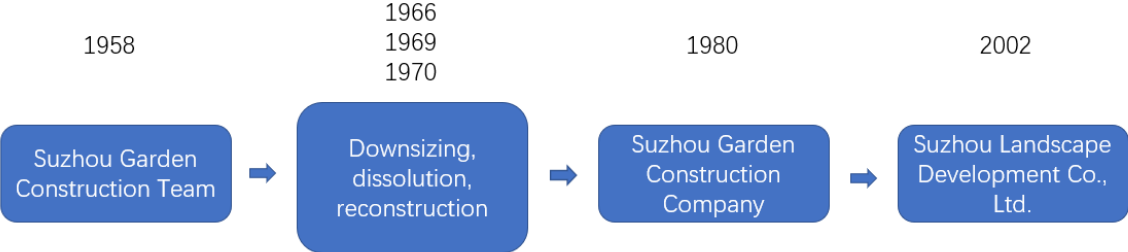


Figure 2.8. The Timeline of Suzhou Landscape Development Co., Ltd. © 2020 Xie Yuxin



Figure 2.9. The Timeline of Suzhou Xiangshan Gujian Co., Ltd. © 2020 Xie Yuxin

As for the development of the series of companies that continue the traditional craftsmanship of Xiangshan Bang, they are all facing the pain of the separation of technique and management. Some companies, when first established, did not even have a construction team

and had only the administration department (Shen, 2011, p.98).¹²⁵ This is the disadvantage of two-level organizations mentioned earlier: after removing the leading craftsman who represents sophisticated and advanced skills and techniques, the original form of the craftsman organization is unlikely to be continued.

However, once a complete enterprise structural system has been established, many craftsmen who inherited the skills and techniques of Xiangshan Bang will join the technical departments of these companies. For example, in 1986, there were 27 interior carpenters in the construction and technical department of Suzhou Garden Construction Company.¹²⁶ Besides, there were also departments such as cast iron, repairing, craving, rockwork, etc. Compared with the two-level structure summarized before, the craftsmen of Xiangshan Bang entering the modern enterprise system is basically the process of filling the gap between the zuotou and gonghuo and transplanting them as a whole technical team to some department of the enterprise.

The establishment of the modern enterprise system can also be regarded as a process of shifting from traditional authority to legal authority (Weber & Kang, 2004, p.303). Legal authority means to hide the function of the leaders behind some certain decrees and regulations. With these regulations, the dominator has the right to make orders. For the enterprise, the regulative dominance will definitely lead to the separation of its business and the dominance

¹²⁵ Through interviews, it was known that Wuxian Ancient Construction Technique Company, which was established in 1979, did not have craftsmen at the beginning. In 1981, the company only started from the construction teams of several townships because it undertook the off-site construction project led by the government..

¹²⁶ Suzhou City Landscape Bureau Ancient Construction Company Compilation Group.(1986). *Suzhou Classical Garden Architecture Company Record* 《蘇州古典園林建築公司志》. internal information, not published (cited in Shen, 2011, p.98).

system, which, to the craftsman organization, means the separation of techniques and management.

In the context of the division of labor in society, modern enterprises are more similar to collaborative groups with orderly functions. In the division of labor within the company, management has taken the more important position, as it allows the company to get more support and resources from outside the company, to adapt to the ever-changing market, and to satisfy the clients. Those elements which were relied on individuals in the traditional dominance organizations and mixed with techniques are now separated. In this business environment, the craftsmen, who have the techniques, can no longer take up all the positions in the company. They can only play a role in the technical department.

When transforming from the traditional form to modern enterprise, both Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang have faced the stage where the original leaders who relied on traditional domination cannot be consistent with the regulative domination of the modern enterprise system. After shifting to modern division of labor, the two major craftsmen groups both ended up with the original managers being excluded from the real management team and becoming mere a conceptual existence (as the case in Kongō Gumi) or ordinary craftsmen¹²⁷ (as the case in Xiangshan Bang) .

¹²⁷ Here is the situation when the enterprise system was first established in the 1980s in China. After decades of development, with the growth of some enterprises, some craftsmen of Xiangshan Bang will also become the head of a certain department in the enterprise. Some craftsmen even established his own company (for example, Xue Lingen 薛林根, son of Xue Fuxin, a national inheritor of Xiangshan Bang, relied on his father's experience to establish Suzhou Taihu Classical Garden Construction Co., Ltd., he is a relatively excellent craftsman as well).

2.3 The Ethnical “Family”

2.3.1 The Family Pedigree of Kongō Gumi

Since the 19th century, the description of the family tree of Kongō family has become clear. Through the time and historical facts, we can basically clarify the family structure of the Kongō family for nearly 200 years.

In the 2nd year of Kyōwa (1802), the 32nd seidaiku, Kongō Yoshisada¹²⁸ passed away, and the 22-year-old eldest son Kongō Yoshiyuki served as the 33rd seidaiku (the 5th year of Bunka, 1808). Just a few years later, he suffered seriously ill, he retired and passed the position to his younger brother Kongō Yoshimori, who is only 15 years old, as the 34th seidaiku (the 9th year of Bunka, 1812). Kongō Yoshimori automatically retired because he was not good at technique. His younger brother, Kongō Yoshinaga 金剛喜永, served as the 35th seidaiku (the 4th year of Bunsei, 1821) (Kongō, 2013, pp.77-78).

In the self-narration of Kongō Gumi, the Kongō family has always been a “family with a strong female color (Kongō, 2013, p.78).” Almost no boys can be born, and boys often die early. After Kongō Yoshinaga, the Kongō family has no successors, so the second son of the collateral branch of Kongō family, Kongō Tameuji 金剛為氏, was adopted as Kongō family’s adopted son. He became the 37th seidaiku (the 32nd year of Meiji, 1898).

¹²⁸ Kongō Yoshisada is also the adopted son of Kongō family. He was born in Yanagi family 柳家 of Settsu country. Because of his outstanding craftsmanship when he went to Kyoto in the 7th year of Tenmei (1786), Kongō family was concerned about the performance of Yoshisada, and Yoshisada is happy to be the adopted son of Kongō family. See Kongō (2013, p.72).

After the 37th seidaiku, Kongō Haruhito committed suicide, the Kongō family had only his wife, Kongō Yoshie 金剛よしゑ and three young girls. As a result, Kongō Yoshie took over the 38th seidaiku (the 7th year of Shōwa, 1932) (Kongō, 2013, pp.95-97). Subsequently, Kongō Yoshie chose Kongō Toshitaka as the husband of her youngest daughter, who was rich in construction techniques and had worked in the Kumagai Gumi. After Kongō Yoshie was old, Kongō Toshitaka, as live-in son-in-law, took over the 39th seidaiku (the 42nd year of Shōwa, 1967).

From the end of the 20th century to the beginning of the 21st century, Kongō Gumi met crisis due to the expansion of the business scope. Under this situation, the aged Kongō Toshitaka passed the positions of the 40th seidaiku and the president of Kongō Gumi to his son, Kongō Masakazu 金剛正和 (the 14th year of Heisei, 2002) (Kongō, 2013, p.119). This situation continued until the bankruptcy and liquidation of Kongō Gumi (the 17th year of Heisei, 2005) (See Figure 2.10).

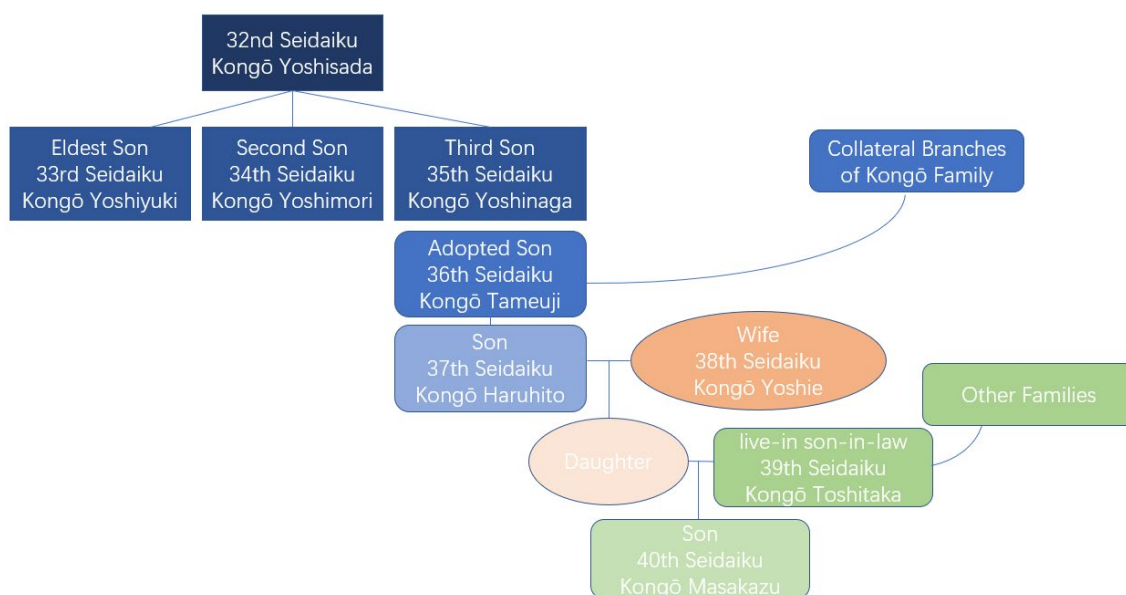


Figure 2.10. The Family Structure of Kongō Gumi (From the 32nd Seidaiku) © 2020 Xie Yuxin

It can be seen in the family structure of Kongō Gumi that the intergenerational transmission follows the basic father-and-son orientation, but there are also unique and abundant ethical representations in Japan in addition to the customary ethical order in the Chinese culture.

First, the adoption system. In Japan, the adopted children could be from the separated families or from families completely unrelated by blood. Throughout nearly 200 years, there are two adopted sons in the family structure of Kongō Gumi. One of them is from other families (the 32nd seidaiku), another is from the collateral branch of Kongō family (the 36th seidaiku). Concerning the Chinese ethical system, the adopted son usually has the same surname with the adoptive father and is adopted from the brother of the adoptive father. If this condition cannot be met, the adoptive father-son relationship cannot be built no matter by blood or from the emotional lineage. In Kongō Gumi, however, the ethic of kinship is relatively loose and flexible.

The second is the live-in son-in-law 婿养子 (matrilocal residence) system. In Japan, it is also an aspect of the family succession system, including two major factors, namely marriage and adoption. For the family, they are called “live-in son-in-law.”¹²⁹ In the classification of anthropology, the Japanese social system does not strictly follow patrilocality. Instead, many factors of matrilocality are involved,¹³⁰ which help create softening patrilocality (Figure

¹²⁹ In China, they are called as “Zhuifu 赘夫” or “Zhuixu 赘婿” in Chinese (live-in son-in-law), instead of the adopted son. The reason is that, in this kind of marriage, the continuation of the family depends on the children of the couple bearing the family name of the wife instead of the male being called a member of the woman’s family. That is to say, the essence of the Chinese live-in son-in-law system is the continuation of the clan, which is directly reflected in the continuation of the surname.

¹³⁰ Since the 1950s, the traditional concept of patrilocality in Japan began to change, and a series of research works appeared, such as Takamura Itsue 高群逸枝(1953), *A Study on Live-in Son-in-law Marriage*.

2.11).¹³¹ In the Chinese family concept, it is rather difficult to understand this system, which refers to that the male abandoning his original surname and the entire clan behind it, and getting into the clan system of the female. In Japan, however, there are a number of such cases.

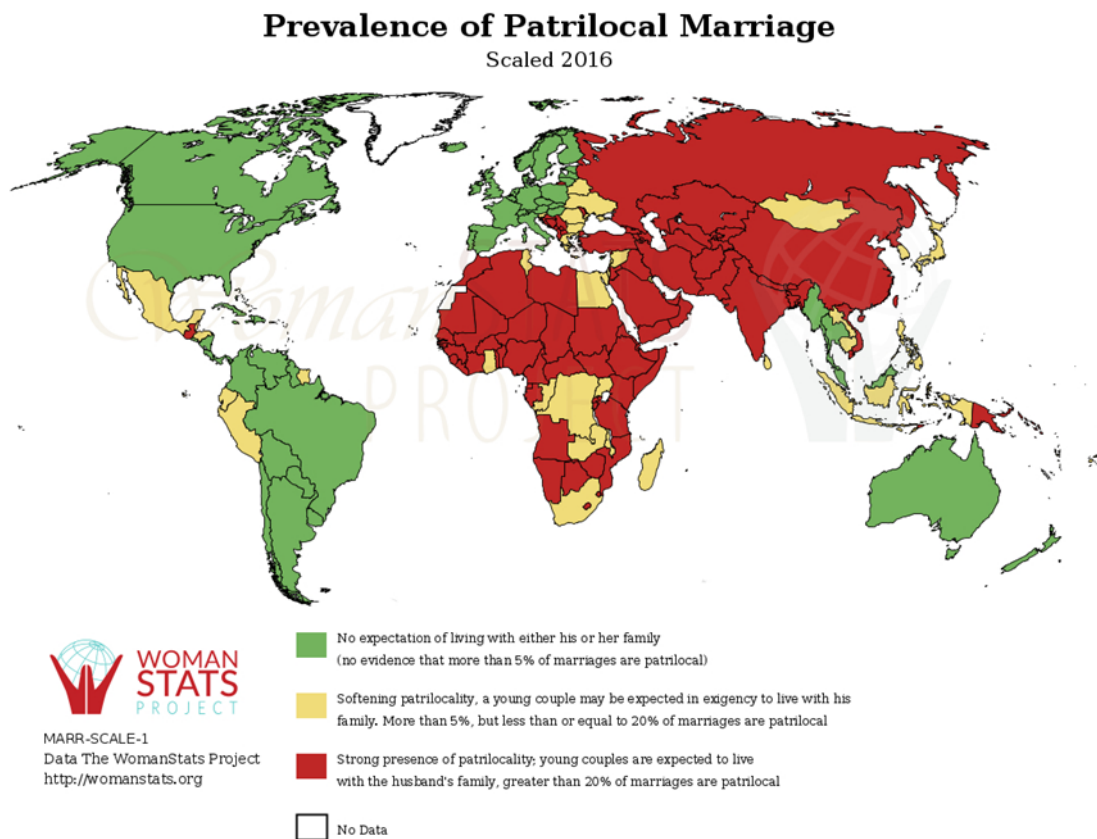


Figure 2.11. Prevalence of Patrilocal Marriage¹³² © 2020 The Womanstats Project

For the adoption system and the live-in son-in-law system mentioned above, their history can be traced back. Among Japanese Samurai, many kinds of adoption system had developed. In the early 18th century, the adoption system had already had a huge impact on the folk society (Guan, 2005, p.246).¹³³ When there are no sons or without talented sons in the family, it is

¹³¹ That is, according to the Womanstats Project, about 5%-20% of all marriages in a country are matrilocality.

¹³² Refers to: The Womanstats Project, data base, create map, MARR-SCALE-1, Prevalence of Patrilocal Marriage: http://www.womanstats.org/new/map_create/

¹³³ The part of this book also captures the Takeuchi Toshimi 竹内利美's research data. From the early to the

necessary to choose adopted sons or live-in sons-in-law that they will have the ability to inherit the family property. In Japanese, there are some proverbs about live-in son-in-law, such as “three generations of live-in son-in-law, family gets richer 婿三代は金持ちになる”and “three generations of live-in son-in-law, fortunes accumulate 婿取り三代身上,” which discuss the relationships between live-in sons-in-law and family property. Despite the inheritance of identity, the inheritance of property is also involved in the Japanese adoption system. For the adopted sons, they are chosen carefully by the family, cultivated for a long time, and then accepted by the family through changing the surname directly or after marriage. In this way, they may have a chance to inherit the legacy from the "father.”¹³⁴

In extreme cases, Kongō Gumi is also extremely tolerant of women. Craftsmen, especially the carpenters represented by Miyadaiku, are mostly male due to the physical intensive nature of the job. Women should face more obstacles in inheriting the family business. However, there is still circumstance when a female inheriting the family business in Kongō Gumi. Outstanding women can also lead the craftsmen group.

In 1934 (the 9th year of Shōwa), when Kongō Yoshie had just taken over as the 39th seidaiku for two years, a typhoon hit Osaka. The five-storied pagoda of Shitennoji Temple collapsed. With the doubts of the outside world, Kongō Yoshie consulted with Shitennoji Temple, and continued

middle of the 17th century, the proportion of the adopted son in the name is 8.2%, and by the middle to the late of the 18th century, the proportion rose to 31.3%. Refers to Kan (2005, pp. 247-246).

¹³⁴ For example, Matsushita Konosuke 松下幸之助 of Panasonic Group (to his son-in-law Matsushita Masaharu 松下正治), Suzuki Shunzō 鈴木俊三 of Suzuki Group (to his son-in-law Suzuki Osamu 鈴木修), And Toyoda Samachi 豊田佐吉, the founder of Toyota Motor (to his son-in-law Toyoda Risaburō 豊田利三郎), they also passed on the business to their son-in-law during the inheritance.

to build the five-storied pagoda by Kongō Gumi. It is said that during the construction, Kongō Yoshie wore a half coat and straw sandals to supervise the work on site. In 1940 (the 15th year of Shōwa), the reconstruction of five-storied pagoda was completed. Kongō Yoshie was praised by the newspapers and magazines as “the woman master carpenter of Osaka.” After that, the story of the reconstruction had even been adapted into a novel.¹³⁵ According to the records of the genealogy of Kongō Gumi, she was also responsible for the restoration of the Kōbuntei of Kairakuen, the Tenman Courtyard in Higashi Honganji Temple 東本願寺, the bell tower in Fukui Eiheiji Temple 永平寺, and the pagoda in the Kyoto Daikakuji Temple 大覚寺.¹³⁶ In terms of practical achievements, she played an important role in the transformation of Kongō Gumi from a traditional construction group into an enterprise.

In the summary of Kongō Gumi, this flexible family inheritance pattern is defined as “inheriting family business by ability rather than by blood (Kongō, 2013, p.71).” In essence, this way of thinking is related to the common family cognition in Japanese society.

Based on this flexible family concept, many Japanese enterprises tend to involve their employees into the "family" system, which is also reflected in Kongō Gumi. Uematsu Jōichi recalls the situation of Kongō Gumi in the mid-20th century: “The president (Kongō Yoshie, the 38th seidaiku) lived in the building of Kongō Gumi. It was a company with great family atmosphere. The president was very friendly to all the craftsmen (KANSAI · OSAKA 21st

¹³⁵ In 1939 (the 14th year of Shōwa), Vol.15 and Vol.16 of the magazine *Dai-osaka* 大大阪 serialized *Secrets of the Reconstructing the five-storied pagoda of the Shitennoji Temple, Tales from the Widow of the Female Leader Kongō Yoshie*.

¹³⁶ From the genealogy of Kongō Gumi.

Century Association(Eds.), 2018, p.108).” Based on the emotional ties, even though the scale of Kongō Gumi in the future expanded, the craftsmen of Kongō Gumi should still be regarded as a generalized family. Meanwhile, Kongō Gumi also tries to restrain craftsmen with family motto¹³⁷ and creates the concept of “family” within craftsmen, so as to form the inertial thinking that Miyadaiku belongs to Kongō Gumi. Kongō Gumi also noted in its self-identification that its craftsmen are “not exclusively Kongō Gumi miyadaikus who rely on contractual relationships (Kongō, 2013, p.84).” The concept that the craftsmen are exclusive for Kongō Gumi profoundly affects the future development of Kongō Gumi. After the bankruptcy of Kongō Gumi in 2005, it was reorganized to be a subsidiary of Takamatsu Construction Group in January 2006, while “not even a craftsman left”¹³⁸ according to the records, which originated in the unique family values of Japan.

2.3.2 The Family Pedigree of Xiangshan Bang

In the pre-modern society where knowledge and technique have not yet been taught in schools, they are usually passed down from fathers to sons, and from masters to apprentices. Therefore, there ought to be a clear pedigree inside the craftsmen groups. This kind of pedigree is not only a clue to the inheritance of skills and techniques, but also related to the cultural heritage of the inheritor’s family or the masters behind it. However, for a long time, as the social

¹³⁷ That is The Will of Kongō Yoshisada.

¹³⁸ According to the account, all eight members of Kongō Gumi said something similar: “Our previous master carpenters used to support the Kongō family, and we should continue to do so with respect and consideration for our master.” See in Kongō (2013, p.149).

status of craftsmen is relatively low, many historical materials are not preserved, and thus there are few well-preserved family pedigrees in craft-families in China.

In Xiangshan Bang, even the minister of construction Kuai Xiang's family (mentioned in chapter 1), which are later regarded as the leader of Xiangshan Bang, does not have a clear family pedigree.¹³⁹ As for Yao Chengzu, who brought the knowledge possessed by Xiangshan Bang into institutions, we can only see his grandfather-father (uncle)-son inheritance from the preface of *Yao Chengzu's Drawing of Yingzao Fayuan* (mentioned in chapter 1) written by Chen Congzhou.¹⁴⁰ Besides, after the period of the Republic of China, the skill inheritance of many famous craftsmen in Xiangshan Bang often ended within three generations, which cannot even generate a complete pedigree. These craftsmen whose inheritance of skills and techniques can be clearly traced are tiny links of the overall inheritance of Xiangshan Bang.

If we take a look at the historical materials we have, the most noteworthy is a group of renowned the craftsmen of Xiangshan Bang who were active in the 20th century.¹⁴¹ During their

¹³⁹ Kuai Mingsi 蒯明思 (grandfather)-Kuai Fu 蒯福 (father)-Kuai Xiang-Kuai Gang (son)...Kuai Yi (posterity), in the Ming Dynasty.

¹⁴⁰ Yao Canting (grandfather)-Yao Kaisheng (uncle)-Yao Chengzu-Yao Kairen 姚開仁 (son), in the Republic of China.

¹⁴¹ *Suzhou Classical Garden Architecture Company Record* (1986) which recorded the craftsmen Zhu Zhenyu 朱震裕, Lu Wen'an 陸文安, Zhong Xiongchun 鐘熊純, Tang Jinsheng 唐金生, Han Buben 韓步本, Kuai Rongsheng 蒯榮生, Zhu Mingxian 朱明祥, Du Yunliang 杜雲良, Xue Fuxin, which contained the main construction activities of the craftsmen.

Also in the 1980s, Liu Shen'an and Qiu Renquan at Xukou Cultural Station collected information about the craftsmen of Xiangshan Bang in the compilation of local records, and wrote *The Record of Skilled Craftsmen of Xiangshan Bang* (1989). The craftsmen involved are Zhang Sheng 張升, Zhang Zhongqing 張仲慶, Jia Junqing 賈鈞慶, Jia Linxiang 賈林祥, Yao Canting, Yao Kaisheng, Yao Chengzu, Yao Kairen, Zhong Jinru 鐘錦如, Yu Anqing 郁安卿, Wang Guochang 王國昌, Zhu Zhenyu 朱震裕, Zhu Yongxiang 朱永祥, Lu Wenan, Xu Wenda 徐

activeness, many written materials have been preserved. Although it is not likely that we can trace the detailed inheritance history, it is undeniable that they are closely related to those craftsmen who are now active in Xiangshan Bang.¹⁴² Here are some famous masters of Xiangshan Bang who have information available in modern times:

Jia Junqing¹⁴³ (1861-1954)-Jia Linxiang (son), Gu Xiangfu (apprentice)

Yao Guiqing (grandfather)-Lu Wen'an¹⁴⁴(1906-1982)-Lu Yaozu (son)

Li Qingshan (great-grandfather)-Li Wenqing (grandfather)-Li Yuanyun (father)-Li Jinxing¹⁴⁵ (1927-)

Zhu Xiangqing 朱祥慶, Zhu Fuqing 朱富慶, Sun Chunbao 孫春寶, Sun Xinzhai 孫

文達, Xu Qinqing 徐琴卿, Xu Hongqing 徐鴻卿, Wang Hanping 王漢平, Wang Zixiang 王子祥, Kuan Rongsheng 蒯榮生, Jiang Yinzhai 蔣吟齋, Shi Junpei 時君培, Liu Hesheng 柳和生, Liu Jinfu 柳晉富, Li Jinxing 李金興, Li Yuanyun 李源雲, Li Wenqing 李文卿, Li Qingshan 李清山, Zhang Heshang 張和尚, Gao Shijun 高士俊, Lu Yaozu, Shen Chunfa 沈春法.

Chen Congzhou recorded the craftsman Gu Xiangfu in the postscript of *Yuanyangting Damu Shigongfa* 《鴛鴦廳大木施工法》 (*The Construction Method of Yuanyangting Craftsmanship*, 1981). See in Shen (2011, p.39).

¹⁴² Lu Yaozu and Xue Fuxin, as inheritors of China's intangible cultural heritage, are still cultivating craftsmen in Xiangshan Bang.

¹⁴³ Constructed Tianfei Palace 天妃宮 (in Henan Road, Shanghai).

¹⁴⁴ Lu Wen'an followed his grandfather Yao Guiqing to participate in the construction of the carved house and Xijia Garden 席家花園, and later participated in the reconstruction of Ou garden 藕園 and Zhan Garden (Nanjing) 南京瞻園. This branch is called "Xiangshan Xiaohengshan Yao's Carpenters," which is supplemented by the fact that the main heir Lu Yaozu is still alive. Since the ancestor Yao Sanxing 姚三星 entered the Lu family as son-in-law, some of descendants have a surname of Lu, and the specific branches can be refined as: Yao Sanxing-Yao Guiqing 姚桂慶, Yao Genqing 姚根慶-Yao Shengshou 姚盛壽, Lu Wen'an, Yao Longquan 姚龍泉, Yao Longxiang 姚龍祥-Lu Yaozu. See in Shen (2011, p.38).

¹⁴⁵ Drafted "Jiangsu Province Classical Architecture and Garden Construction Project Budget Quota," participated in the drafting of "National Unified Garden Project Budget Quota."

新齋, Xue Hongxing 薛洪興-Xue Fuxin¹⁴⁶(1928-)-Xue Lin'gen (son)

Among these examples, we can know about the inheritance of Xiangshan Bang in recent 100 years.

Through the inheritance of skills, we can see that the family played an important role in the continuation of Xiangshan Bang. In China, “Zongzu 宗族” means a patriarchal clan, which is a important concept in recognizing Chinese family. “Zong 宗” means the ties of blood formed centering on worshipping in Chinese, that is, the patriarchal family branches of the same ancestor. The prototype of this family system has appeared at the end of the primitive society. The system was gradually established through the patriarchal clan system adopted in the Shang and Zhou Dynasties, especially in the practice in the noble families. It has completely penetrated into the life of ordinary people until the Ming and Qing Dynasty (Feng, 1994, p.6). This patriarchal clan system did not collapse until the founding of People’s Republic of China (Guan, 2005, p.356).

To some extent, we can say that the family system has been the foundation of China’s traditional society for more than two thousand years, and “all the surface structures of politics, laws, ethics, morals, academics, ideas, customs and habits are based on the clan system (Dajiazu Zhidu 大家族制度, means the system of a big family connected by the ties of blood). (Li, 1959, p.296)” In China’s ethical system, the clan system has always been stable. In the traditional society, centered on the structure of family, the patriarchal hierarchy and the rules and regulations

¹⁴⁶ Participate in the repair of Ou Garden 藕園, Zhuozheng Garden 拙政園, Yi Garden 怡園, Canglang Pavilion 滄浪亭, etc.

are formed and allow all social members become participants of social organizations. For craftsmen, this thinking pattern is still far-reaching. From the intergenerational inheritance of Xiangshan Bang, we can see that the inheritance of skills mainly happens between two generations of a family, mainly from fathers to sons. Besides, another way of passing down skills is the younger generations learn from their uncles.

Firstly, from the perspective of the ties of blood, the family structure of modern society is centered on marriage. The couple is the main axis the family structure. When the children become adults, they will leave the original family and start a family of their own. Therefore, the connection between parents and children is the side axis. However, in the traditional Chinese family, on the main axis lies the father-son relationship, and the husband-wife relationship is the side axis. All skills and fortune of the family is pass down along the main axis, which is the blood tie between fathers and sons. The most obvious feature of this blood tie is “surname.” The ownership of the surname has become the exclusive right of men. Even in the most basic social unit, family, when a woman becomes a wife, she must use her husband’s surname. When the daughter is married, she also needs to use the family name of the family she marries into. Under this circumstance, the pedigree, which is established among the males who share the same ancestor and surname through the father-son main axis, is called a clan. In a clan, all the families are connected by blood ties.

Secondly, because of the ties of blood, various families are connected to generate a large pedigree. How to make it a stable organizational system? Ethics has played an important role in traditional Chinese society. In this ethical relationship, age, proficiency in labor, the level of

intelligence, or strength are not determinants to maintain the clan. Instead, it is established on the basis of the level of closeness between the members of the family and the shared male ancestor. Because of the existence of ethics, families can coexist peacefully and be firmly bonded, thus forming a clan community centered on blood and characterized by ethics.

From the perspective of production, the family is temporary, because with the maturity of the children or the death of the parents, the labor of the family would be completely ended. The same is true of the craftsmen's families. In such society, the production and labor within a family allows the young generation to learn the skills in daily life. Therefore, the unique skills and techniques owned by the family can be passed down from generation to generation in the clan through the ties of blood. With the end of families, the skills and techniques carried will also vanish.

2.3.3 Differences in Family Structures and Craft-Inheritance Between Japan and China

The continuation of craftsmanship is often realized through the intergenerational inheritance of a unique skill in a stable group. From previous discussion, we have drawn the conclusion in the analysis on the social and historical background that in traditional Japanese and Chinese societies, the inheritance of skills and techniques are usually realized through families and apprentice.

In the structure of the society, the family is the most basic unit. The parent-child relationship is the bond of the whole family and its core includes father, mother and children. Centering on supporting family life and raising up children, family is the smallest production

community. Family members earn living resources and supplies through working. In both Japanese and Chinese craftsmen group, there is a concept bigger than family, which is the clan. In the intergenerational inheritance of craftsmanship, the clan, which consists of various connected families, plays an important role. Whether it is Kongō Gumi or Xiangshan Bang, at the top of their organizational structure, clan structures of more than three generations can be observed.

However, an obvious and intuitive difference that can be observed intuitively is that the “family” of Kongō Gumi is continuous, while the “clan” of Xiangshan Bang is fragmented. Behind this phenomenon lies the difference between Japan and China in the understanding of family.

In Japan, compared with kinship, the family as a community is a more important concept. Of course, this community mainly relies on blood ties. However, there are some other ways as supplements. For example, in Kongō Gumi live-in son-in-law adoption system can help to enrich the successors of the family. Also, although it is not common in the context of Japan, the females in Kongō Gumi do defend the family interests. The motivation behind it is that many families in Japan value and respect the entrepreneurship demonstrated by their ancestors and regard family business as glorious. Therefore, the existence of the family is their foothold, which can be guaranteed by the flexible membership system.

The value judgment originated from flexibility is justification. When a person is suitable for the family business, this person can be recognized as a family member. In other words, this unique concept of family in Japan bring about a unique consciousness among the craftsman

group: a family can be “planned” and reconstructed. The motivation behind this rationalism is the existence and continuation of “family” and “family business,” which contains a sense of optimization. A similar view has also emerged in the modern society that although the “Japanese family business is low in growth, it is high in continuity.” This justification is like a huge container, which can hold all the material, spiritual, and cultural fortune generated during the intergenerational inheritance of craftsman families, and pass down the family culture, glory and spirit.

In traditional Chinese society, families in a clan are connected by two important bonds, namely blood ties and ethics. Since the clan needs to rely on blood ties to establish order among its members, it has to rely on strict identification. This kind of identification is rooted in the surname, that is, to take the kinship and age as references to decide the responsibilities and obligations of each individual in the family. For the family members, a rule to follow is “no marriage between same surnames” and “do not raise kids of other surnames.” Besides, in the traditional Chinese patriarchal clan system, women are excluded from membership, because in a typical patriarchal society only men can inherit the blood lineage of their ancestors. Based on these ideas, we can draw a conclusion that the characteristic of a traditional Chinese clan is stability.

The value judgment generated from stability is legitimacy. Only when a person belongs to a clan can he do things that this clan does. That is to say, the clan must be a pure community. The legitimacy is like a long river. Those that does not belong to the river will definitely be removed and the purity of blood can be constantly maintained. The price to maintain legitimacy is: when

there is no suitable inheritor of the craftsmanship within the clan, there is no ideal way to find the balance between maintaining the purity of the clan and passing down the craftsmanship.

In conclusion, the differences in family system and family concepts has led to the difference of inheritance between Japanese and Chinese craftsmen. During the development, the craftsmen in Xiangshan Bang usually tend to make the construction business belong to each family of the clan. The craftsmanship has become an accessory of a patriarchal clan. Craftsmen are highly responsible to maintain the purity of the clan, even at the expense of industrial decline. While the craftsmen in Kongō Gumi regard the family more of a community to live in. The members are affiliated to the family and those who are capable can even join the community. The craftsmen are highly responsible for the “Kongō family” itself, with the passion to prolong the family business.

Chapter 3

Techniques: The Inner Power of the Inheritance of Craftsmanship

This chapter focuses on techniques¹⁴⁷ (伝統技術・技/技藝) rather than technology in the modern society. For craftsmen, since the beginning of human kind, humans have been trying to use natural resources and transformed them into the material and cultural resources we needed through certain actions. This production process contains crafts techniques.

Studies related to craftsmen are often cross-disciplinary. The characteristics of this kind of research require researchers to find a suitable subject base for the research object. For the study on craftsmen in Japan and China, texts¹⁴⁸ and researches¹⁴⁹ that focus on techniques, mainly on

¹⁴⁷ In the text of this chapter, in order to express the difference, the two words, “technique” and “technology” are used to distinguish the pair of concepts. In the classical Chinese literature, the words 技/藝/巧 often appear, the meaning of these words are connected with technique.

In the prospect of Japanese studies, the words are often expressed by 伝統技術 (Yoshida, 1961, pp.149-165) and 技 (Yuasa, 1989, p.127). Yoshida regards the technique possessed by craftsmen as the coexistence of tradition and technology (Yoshida, 1961, p.153), which is insightful at that time.

¹⁴⁸ For instance, there are plenty of craftsmen in Japan who wrote about their experiences:

Matsuura Shōji 松浦昭次 (2002a, 2002b, 2005) recorded himself in a series of books. Matsuura Shōji (1929-) is the inheritor of the construction and woodworking category of the Japanese the inheritors of cultural heritage (generally called a living national treasure) mentioned in Chapter 1, selected in 1999.

Ogawa Mitsuo 小川三夫 and Shiono Yonematsu 塩野米松 (2011) recorded master Nishioka Tsunekazu. Nishioka Tsunekazu 西岡常一 (1908-1995) is known as the last miyadaiku of Horyuji Temple. Ogawa Mitsuo was his inner disciple, and he established the Ikaruga Kōsha 鶯工舎 that preserves the inheritance of craftsmen’s traditional skills.

Kikuchi kyōji 菊池恭二(2008), recorded himself and Nishioka Tsumekazu. He participated in the construction of some temples with Nishioka Tsumekazu. Now he is the owner of Shaji Kōsha 社寺工舎.

¹⁴⁹ As far as Chinese academia is concerned, as research on the “craftsmanship spirit” become a academic hotspot, related degree thesis has appeared in the past five years. These studies often focus on sorting out the inheritance characteristics of Chinese traditional craftsmen and their technical characteristics, there has also been an introductory study of the Japanese craftsmen community, such as:

its inheritance, are the most common ones. This is because when the craftsmen are recording their individual experience, besides describing the history of the group and personal development, it is inevitable to describe the technique, as it is a very important representative and distinctive feature in their working experience. Obviously, this description bias is inevitably leading the scholars to have a similar research tendency.

Besides, in the process of field investigations, compared to beliefs or ceremonies which requires long-term investigations, the inheritance of techniques is more commonly-seen and intuitive. This is another reason for the prominence of the introductory research on techniques among research on craftsmen.

Based on sufficient previous research, on the technique features of Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang, the following topics are worth studying: first, the ways of inheritance of the two craftsmen groups, and the roles of individuals and the group in the inheritance system; second, the relationship between craftsmen and materials and between tools and production

Zhang Guiping 張桂萍.(2018). *On the Spirit of Artisans and Its Cultivation* 技進乎道——論工匠精神及其培育. Shenzhen University, master's thesis.

Mei Hongxia 梅紅霞.(2018). *Research on the Cultural Implication and Inheritance of Chinese traditional apprenticeship* 中國傳統學徒制文化意蘊與傳承研究. Guangxi Teachers Education University, master's thesis.

Hong Xiaoru 洪曉儒.(2018). *The Study of Craftsman Ethics and Its Inheritance in Ancient China* 中國古代工匠倫理及傳承研究. Xiamen University, master's thesis.

Shi Baihua 史百花.(2018). *Theorization of Architectural Technology and Inheritance of Xiangshan Bang Technique (1400-1950)* 建築技術理論化與香山幫技藝傳承研究（1400—1950）. Soochow University, master's thesis.

Zhang Fan 張帆.(2016). *Research on the Inheritance Methods of Craftsmen about Shrines and Temples: Based on the sample of Nishioka Tsunekazu and Ogawa Mitsuo* 社寺工匠技術傳承方式的研究——以西岡常一和小川三夫為例. China Foreign Affairs University, master's thesis.

spaces, that is, the relationship between people and things in the techniques; third, the meaning of existence and inner logic of craftsmanship in the modern world, that is, to seek for the modern representation of techniques. In the three sections of this chapter, we will discuss from these three aspects.

3.1 The Inheritance of Techniques

3.1.1 The Way of Inheriting Techniques

3.1.1.1 Kongō Gumi: Learning Through Observing

In Kongō Gumi, the intergenerational inheritance of techniques is usually realized between master-apprentice and father-son relationship. However, the practical standard in Kongō Gumi is more stringent. The process and the meaning are worthy of analysis particularly.

In terms of the duration of study, Kongō Gumi believes that “it takes at least ten years to train an apprentice into a qualified miyadaiku (Kongō, 2013, p.20).” At the beginning of the apprenticeship, the apprentice gets the minimum number of carpenter tools, namely nomi 鑿, kanna 鉋, and nokogiri 鋸. During the first couple of years, the apprentice mainly learns to sharpen the tools and do odds and ends (Kongō, 2013, p.20 & p.22). Later, he will learn to use nokogiri and kanna, and gradually learn to be a qualified miyadaiku.

Similarly, referring to the researches of Yoshida Mitsukuni 吉田光邦 (1961), the learning period of carpenter apprentices before the Meiji Restoration in Uma-gun 宇摩郡 (located in the east of Ehime Prefecture) is: “Introduction at the age of 14 and expiration at the age of 25. For ten years. After the expiry, the master will give tools, haori coat and hakama to the apprentice, and the apprentice will thank the teacher for one year. In the process of apprenticeship, the specific content of the first year is doing miscellaneous affairs and grinding tools; in the second year, the apprentice still needs to learn grinding tools, from the fourth year, the master will teach

the apprentice about specific craftsmanship skills (Yoshida, 1961, p.220).”¹⁵⁰ After the Meiji Restoration, it was changed to “introduction at the age of 16, expiration at the age of 21. For five years. The first year of study repairing tools, drilling holes, sawing, and helping other carpenters; in the second year, learning specific skills (Ibid.). ” Even now, Kongō Gumi still preserves the tradition of “10 years” duration of arts and crafts passed down from generation to generation. This persistence includes strict pursuit of skill standards.

In terms of the way to teach the techniques, Japanese craftsmen prefer the concept of “verbal instruction and learn by heart,”¹⁵¹ but in Kongō Gumi, they prefer learning by heart, which means to learn through observing 見て習う (Kongō, 2013, p.20). The apprentice learns the techniques mainly through his own observation. The master’s actions are the demonstration of the technique. In the process of practical operation, the master would not tell the apprentices the correct way of doing the task or detailed steps in advance, but let the apprentice try first (Kongō, 2013, p.22). The master points out the apprentices’ mistakes as a way of teaching (Ibid.). This method of technique acquisition relies heavily on the apprentice’s personal qualities. In

¹⁵⁰ The book also records the carpentry skills of Onsen-gun 温泉郡 (north of Ehime Prefecture) and Ochi-gun (north islands of Ehime Prefecture).

Onsen-gun: in the first year, sawing, drilling and inking; in the second year, grinding tools, using of axe, planer and inking tools. (Yoshida, 1961, p.221)

Ochi-gun: in the first and second years, getting tools and drilling holes; in the third and fourth years, cutting and combining materials; in the fifth and sixth years, comprehending construction techniques and architectural design. will learn thirty percent in three years, seventy percent in four years, and ninety percent in five years. (Ibid.)

From the above records, it can be seen that the years of Japanese carpentry learning are not completely same, the shorter ones are two years, the middle ones are five or six years, and longer ones are ten years.

¹⁵¹ Please refer Nishioka (2008).

addition to the apprentice's personal abilities, the process of self-observation, experience, and development of skills is also very likely to form a habit of continued learning and drilling among the craftsmen. For the craftsmen in Kongō Gumi, this training process can help the apprentice to enter an intuitive world where he can tell that “it can be done like this” or “it cannot be done like this(Ibid.)” This is the concept of kan 勘 (means intuition) in Japanese.

In addition, the essence of Kongō Gumi is a small occupational community (see chapter 2 section 1). As a result, the apprentice is absorbed into this occupational community the moment he commits to the master-apprentice relationship, and shares the resources of the community. For the survival of this community, the feature of “making the best use of human resource based on their abilities” is inevitable. For example, cutting with a kanna is a relatively difficult task, but due to individual differences, some apprentices can get started immediately, but some cannot master it even after three-year hard training. Therefore, Kongō Gumi allows the apprentices to “have the crafts they are good at and those they are bad at (Kongō, 2013, p.24),” and encourages them to “practice the craft they are good at in order to not to lose to others (Ibid.)” For the masters of Kongō Gumi, there are no “untalented” apprentices. Under the influence of this belief, the masters pay attention to apprentices' strengths and guide them, and eventually include every apprentice into the technique system of Kongō Gumi.

3.1.1.2 Xiangshan Bang: Words and Deeds

In the traditional way of technique inheritance, Li Zhoufang 李洲芳 believes that “master passing down to the apprentice” and “father passing down to the son” are two important features

(Li, 1998, p.140).¹⁵² In fact, as mentioned in the previous chapter, these two ways of inheritance are often combined in the pre-modern society. In a family, the intergenerational inheritance not only happens between the father and the son but also between the uncle and the nephew. In traditional Chinese culture, “as long as one is your teacher for a day, one is like your father for a life time 一日為師，終身為父。” This concept also helps to build up a intergeneration ethics similar to family structure. Therefore, the technique inheritance of Xiangshan Bang can be essentially abstracted as the intergenerational inheritance of crafts techniques.

In terms of occupational constraints and duration of study, the apprentices in the crafts industry in China are usually unpaid during their study and have no vacations. In Xiangshan Bang, the intergenerational inheritance of techniques is usually represented as the dependence of the new generation on the old generation. It is usually reflected in the fact that during the apprenticeship, the apprentice lives with the master’s family and his clothing, food, housing and transportation are all taken care of by the family. The duration of apprenticeship varies. However, influenced by the trend of “three-year as learner, three-year as assistant,”¹⁵³ the duration is usually as short as three years and as long as five to six years. The craftsmen in Xiangshan Bang

¹⁵² This paper can be found in the book called Liu Naihe 劉乃和(Eds.)(1998).*Researches on Taihu Culture* 《太湖文化研究》. China Archives Publishing House.

¹⁵³ Refers to Su Yuan (2019), A78 (society).

The earliest historical documents about this tradition is: “among Jiangsu and Zhejiang, those who learn techniques must take three years, then serve their teachers (or masters) for three years after they are finished. They cannot get any salary during this period. As the saying goes, ‘three-year as learner, three-year as assistant.’ After six years, the teachers(or masters) will let the students (or apprentices) go.” It can be seen in Yu Yue 俞樾 (1821-1907), *Notes of Youtaixianguan* 《右台仙館筆記》 (Vol. 8).The original text is 江浙間，凡學手藝者必三年而成，成後役於其師者三年，不取直。故俗語謂之“學三年，幫三年”，六年之後，任其所往. Refers to *Notes of Youtaixianguan*, from Peking University Library 北京大學圖書館本.

like to recruit boys aged twelve to thirteen (Shi, 2018, p.60), because children at this age are smart and flexible, always easy to control. When the apprenticeship finishes, the children are usually 15 or 16 years old and are fully-developed physically, so they have the ability to conduct the construction tasks.

In terms of the way of technique inheritance, in Xiangshan Bang, it is usually “from the easy to the hard, from the overall to the detailed; during the practical production, the master will teach while working, and the apprentice will learn through working; the key of the technique is taught through demonstration and verbal instruction (Shi, 2018, pp.140-141).” That is, practices combined with pithy formulas. If we abstract this way of inheritance, it can be seen that it belongs to the Chinese teaching method “words and deeds (言傳身教, meaning to teach by verbal instructions and physical examples). “Deeds (teach by physical examples)” is the teaching of the standard operation of a technique. The result of technique learning is that the new generation will apply what he learned into real work; while “words (teach by verbal instructions)” serves as an assistance to “deeds,” which can promote understanding and pass down experience.

What should be noticed are the craftsman pithy formula 匠諺口訣, the verbal instructions in Xiangshan Bang. The formulas contain the experience accumulated by the craftsman in Xiangshan Bang for many years, including the architectural style, the selection of materials, and the architectural proportion, and wood carving, etc.¹⁵⁴ For the long time during which the

¹⁵⁴ Refers to Liu et al. (2013, pp.243-248).

After entering the modern society, because of school education, the traditional apprenticeship system was impacted, and the inheritance of craftsman pithy formula also faced a crisis. The craftsman pithy formula recorded in the book above were compiled from Lu Yaozu in the *Inheritance Questionnaire* and the internal data of Xiangshan Bang Traditional Crafting Protection Planning Group 香山幫傳統營造技藝保護規劃課題組 of the

techniques are not recorded in written form, those pithy formulas actually help to build up the “second-hand knowledge” within Xiangshan Bang, which are similar to a verbal textbook.

Besides, judging from the relationship between technique learning and the life and practice of craftsmen, it is a trend that for many craftsmen, their living space and learning space are converging. At the beginning of the apprenticeship, the apprentice usually needs to do chores or some most basic work for the master. In some cases, the apprentice even spends half of his time helping with the master’s household chores (Liu et al., 2013, p.243). As a result, the apprentice does not have enough time to study and can only learn some techniques using the short time left. In addition, due to the deep-rooted concept of “if the apprentice has learned everything, the master will starve to death 教會徒弟，餓死師傅,” some masters do not teach the apprentice all the techniques they acquired. Therefore, the top apprentice needs to observe carefully all the time and practice hard, learning through observing the operations of his master. In the learning of techniques in China, this common phenomenon is called “Toushi 偷師 (means secretly observe and learn from masters without them knowing).” The ability to Toushi is regarded as an excellent quality of a craftsman.

For many apprentices, the first few years of learning is only an introductory stage. If he really hopes to engage in this industry, he need to rely on the operation and practice after finishing the apprenticeship. In terms of craftsmanship, the master usually has sufficient project resources. Therefore, even if the apprentice has finished the learning, he still needs to depend on the master

Chinese Academy of Art (assisted by Suzhou Xiangshan Workshop 香山工坊 to complete the inheritors’ interview) are the most detailed Xiangshan Bang documents.

to get access to working opportunities. This is the inner technique inheritance logic of the formation of the “zuotou-gonghuo” structure (see chapter 2, section 2).

3.1.1.3 Comparison of the Two Craftsmen Groups

From the introduction of the way of teaching techniques in the previous two parts, it can be seen that in the two groups, apprenticeship is the core method to realize intergenerational inheritance of techniques. No matter the “learning through observing” of Kongō Gumi or the “words and deeds” of Xiangshan Bang, the essence of the two ways of technique inheritance is closely connected with the production and practice. The common aim is to pass the technique from the old generation to the new and to continue the techniques, thus ensuring the successful conduction of crafts.

As for the contents of learning, the apprentices in both Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang would learn all the techniques from the usage of tools to the crafts in a certain period of time. But when it concerns skills, to learn the technique does not necessarily mean to have a good command of it. After knowing the basic steps of a technique, for ordinary people, it requires a large amount of time to practice before they have a good command of it. Whether “keep improving” pursuit by Kongō Gumi or “to keep observing and practice diligently” advocated by Xiangshan Bang, they both point to getting command of the ultimate practical value of craftsmen, to get command of the techniques.

In terms of the allocation of time, before starting to learn the technique, the apprentices in both groups need to experience a period to serve as a helper (or an assistant). The craftsman

group contains two major dimensions in production and techniques. Internally, techniques are mastered by the craftsmen. Externally, the technique is also an essential element of production activities. It can be seen from this feature that the learning of techniques is inseparable from the job form. At the early stage of learning, the apprentices' working as helpers allows the students to be included in the industrial system at the beginning of the craftsmanship. The working experience is included in the learning. The apprentices learn techniques to prepare for the later entry into the craftsman system.

As far as the duration of the apprenticeship is concerned, the ten-year learning of Kongō Gumi is indeed a very long period. This long-term training is regarded as the “secret for training a miyadaiku (Kongō, 2013, p.19).” The apprenticeship duration of Xiangshan Bang is shorter, but it is still from three to five years. Moreover, after the apprenticeship is due, the apprentice is in fact still closely connected with the master professionally. As the apprentice lives and works with the master in the same space for a long time, the master's techniques and working methods become the example for the apprentice to imitate. And it has framed what the apprentice will become in the future. Both “when an apprentice start learning, he becomes a reserve member of Kongō Gumi craftsman system” and “learning techniques is the necessary condition for the apprentice to share the resources in Xiangshan Bang” embody the close connection between techniques and the occupational groups.

When talking about technique learning of the two craftsmen groups in Japan and China, the biggest difference should be the specific educational methods, that is, “learning from observing” and “words and deeds” mentioned above.

In the process of Xiangshan Bang's technique learning, through the master's two-aspect teaching method, words and deeds, the relatively abstract physical sense can be expressed by words to some extent. Therefore, the learning difficulty of the apprentice is reduced. "Easy to learn and easy to remember" has become a great progress of language in facilitating the inheritance of techniques. In addition, during "words," the masters often some rhyming texts that are easy to remember, which are the pithy formulas. The essence of Xiangshan Bang's pithy formula is to repeat the key points, architectural proportions, etc., and to represent the process and the steps using the order of words. When the pithy formula is formed, the complicated procedures can be performed in order with the help of words. This can avoid the missing steps when a task is too complicated or the worker is too tired.

In addition, Xiangshan Bang's "words" points to another direction: the fixation of oral language will generate texts. A knowledge society is gradually formed, and the techniques will also face the change from the empirical form to the theoretical form. "The textualization of experience and techniques remarks the theorization of the techniques in tradition industries (Yu, 2009, p.547)." Its main content is to summarize the traditional techniques in a scientific way and write relevant documents.

The only existing literature on techniques of Xiangshan Bang is *Yingzao Fayuan* (finished in 1929; see chapter 1 section 2 for the writing process of the book). This book is written by Yao Chengzu based on his grandfather's work *Ziye Yishu* (finished in the period of emperor Daoguang in Qing Dynasty). The second and the third chapter of *Yingzao Fayuan* mentioned some pithy formulas (Yao & Zhang, 1959, pp.15-27), which are similar to the style formulas, material

formulas and construction formulas in *Suzhou Xiangshan Bang Construction Techniques* (Liu et al., 2013, pp.244-247). However, there are dialects, industry terminology among the pithy formulas passed down from generation to generation in Xiangshan Bang, and there are even a lot of codes formed to avoid the leakage of secret techniques. In *Yingzao Fayuan*, each formula is followed by a detailed explanation, so that it is reader friendly and becomes the textbook of systematic experience and techniques.

Actually, among the carpenters in Japan, there are pithy formulas and textbooks as well. miyadaiku Nishioka Tsunekazu of Horyuji Temple had once summarized his experience as texts for oral spread (Ogawa, 2011, pp.211-218). If we take the carpenters in all industries into consideration, the earliest publication on the construction techniques in Japan are *Takumiya Gokuh Denshū* 匠家極秘伝集 and *Hidensho Zukai* 秘伝書図解 (the 12th year of Kyōhō, 1727), such carpentry guide-books are all about specific construction techniques like kiku-jutsu 規矩術 (Nakatani et al., 1997, p.256). Till the end of the Meiji period, there has been dozens of “craftsman technique guide-books” which record the craftsmanship (Nakatani et al., 1997, p.259). Under this trend, Kongō Gumi still insists on its tradition to “learn through observing.” This is the special and stubborn aspect of Kongō Gumi.

This state may be similar to what is said in *Zhuangzi: Tiandao* 《莊子·天道》: “Words are valuable because of their meanings, and their meanings have connotations. The connotations cannot be said.”¹⁵⁵ Indeed, there is a gap between language and its connotation. It is true that

¹⁵⁵ The original text is 語之所貴者意也，意有所隨。意之所隨者，不可以言傳也。 Refers to *Zhuangzi Zhu* 《莊子注》，from *Siku Quanshu*, Jibu 14, Daojia 子部十四·道家類, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 1056-p.73.

without language the “connotation” cannot be expressed easily, but it can also avoid the misunderstandings caused by language. The technique learning and teaching in Kongō Gumi is conducted without words. The knowledge is gain by observing, so it is first-hand knowledge. Due to the lack of words during the study, it is more difficult for the craftsmen to remember the procedures. They can only remember the construction procedures by heart, and build up the connection between the representation of the techniques and their bodies by “memorizing” or “reciting silently.” This learning form has higher requirements for the qualities of the craftsmen themselves: they need to be more observant, more careful and more diligent to achieve this connection between “techniques” and “body.” The process of learning the techniques is also a process of spiritual training. In Kongō Gumi, the learning process is indeed defined as “a process to enhance endurance (Kongō, 2013, p.24).”

As mentioned earlier, the master only correct the errors made by the students, that is, the master only corrects the apprentice’s action when the apprentices make mistakes. As they do not use language to instruct and only depend on the apprentices’ feeling, so when learning the techniques, the apprentices must participate in the working on site. This relatively closed learning environment avoid the leakage of key techniques. If the instruction is done orally, craftsmen outside Kongō Gumi may learn the key techniques of Kongō Gumi through language. This direct way of learning set all the students in an environment where the techniques are practiced, thus avoiding the prying and stealing of other practitioners.

In conclusion, the craftsmen’s techniques are reflected in the process to practice. The similarities of Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang in technique learning and teaching are the

pursuit of learning duration and process and the close relationship between skill learning and occupational form. In terms of the differences, Xiangshan Bang establishes an open world through “words”; while Kongō Gumi builds up a closed world through “observation”; just like their respective organizational forms.

3.1.2 The Gap Between the Inheritance of Traditional Techniques and Modern Education

In the previous parts, we can see that there is an inherent logic in the process of inheriting traditional techniques, that is, intergenerational inheritance has its lofty rationality by default. On this condition, the technique is evaluated according to the time that the building or the craft itself continues-the items created or maintained by the craftsmen need to be close to the original appearance. Therefore, the craftsman who is closer to the time of the creation of the craft at the origin will be considered to be closer to the technique itself. The items that might have disappeared along time can be restored or recreated in the hands of elder craftsmen. This ability to be close to tradition has blossomed into a more transcendental existence, which is then defined and shaped by this sacred way of discourse. For instance, Nishioka Tsunekazu, who is one of the representative craftsmen in Japan, once said, “In our culture, we dare not to say progress, because our ancestors have several times more power than us (Nishioka, 2008, p.216).”¹⁵⁶ Craftsmen are bound to be influenced by this way of thinking in which ancient technique has a higher value and craftsmen within this system deeply believe in the power of tradition.

In the system of inheriting traditional techniques, except for the factor of talent, the

¹⁵⁶ In the same book, in Kawai Hayao’s interpretation, this view has become a kind of knowledge system similar to art, which may be more accurate in terms of “change” than “progress.”

maturity of craftsmen mainly results from the accumulation of experience. The older generation, who have been sharpening their technique for a long time, have always been at the forefront of techniques. Although techniques have been updated, they are the drivers of technical innovations. This kind of domination is more similar to the “traditional authority” claimed by Max Weber. The more techniques the older generation have, the greater the authority they own in tradition. After having this authority, their words have more power and they can even define the direction of the development of techniques.

This logic is embodied in the method of traditional technique inheritance: knowledge and technique flow in only one direction: from the old to the new. For technique itself, the process of passing down knowledge from the older generation to the younger generation is justified. For example, Kongō Toshitaka, the 39th seidaiku of Kongō Gumi, also said that “guarding tradition means training the next generation of inheritors in the world (Kongō, 2013, p.19).” Xue Fuxin, the inheritor of Xiangshan Bang, said that he devoted his life to “training talents,” hoping that the techniques of Xiangshan Bang can be passed on (Shen, 2011, p.101). This way of thinking is derived from the characteristics of technique inheritance.

In the modern society, facing the professional subdivision and the rapid update of knowledge and technology, no one can always stand at the forefront of knowledge and technology. The rationality of knowledge passing down from the old generation to the new has been broken to a certain extent. Young people even show superiority in terms of the breadth of knowledge because of their faster access to information. Hence, the basis of traditional authority has fallen apart.

Moreover, the new employment relationship has also shaken the traditional arts and crafts apprenticeship system: unpaid helpers, no caps on the upper limit of study and working time...The common methods in the inheritance of technique are no longer suitable for modern employment. Miyadaiku Matsuura Shōji also made it clear that after the introduction of the *Labor Standards Act* 労働基準法 (1947) in Japan, due to considerations on human rights and labor rights, the apprenticeship system is difficult to survive, which is also unavoidable (Matsuura, 2005, pp.207-209).

In modern times, despite the fact that the intergenerational inheritance between master and apprentice and father and son still has a certain position in the inheritance of traditional technique, it is being replaced by some new educational methods influenced by the logic of modern education. Workers with craftsman characteristics enter the construction company after receiving school education and then become modern engineers or construction managers. Nevertheless, the logic of the inheritance does not adapt with the changing of era and environment. Hence, the craftsman community had to make changes to correspond to these changes. Today, the attempts made by Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang are “retraining”: after attracting talents from the modern education system into the craftsman system, they continue to train craftsman in accordance with their own standards in the traditional way.

For example, Xiangshan Bang came up with the “Xiangshan Talent Plan 香山人才計畫” in 2019, which brings famous master to the outstanding young craftsmen to provide them with hands-on training (Su, 2019, A78-79). As for Kongō Gumi, after recruiting architectural talents with experience or qualifications 建築士資格 and construction management technician

qualification certificate 建築施工管理技士資格, it also provides corresponding training in order to make them fit for its tradition.¹⁵⁷ While ensuring that the craftsmen can obtain traditional techniques as before, this way of learning through the school first, and then acquiring practical techniques through vocational training actually caused reduced learning duration.

Even so, the inheritance of traditional techniques is still facing a challenge. "How to train the new generation" is still a problem faced by Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang in which most mature craftsmen are relatively old. Kiuchi Shigeo 木内繁男, the master carpenter in Kiuchi Gumi of Kongō Gumi, once said that "all what they can do is to pass on the techniques they learned from the elder generation to the next generation, but this is the most difficult thing."¹⁵⁸ Xue Fuxin, the inheritor of Xiangshan Bang, also said that his "biggest worry is how the techniques of Xiangshan Bang can be passed on (Shen, 2011, p.101)." The traditional education methods of the techniques and the school's education system do not completely match: for the modern technology, the newer are the better, while speaking of inheriting traditions, the closer to the original, the better. Even in the current attempts made by Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang, this contradiction is still difficult to reconcile.

Now, in terms of technique learning, the school-company cooperation (the combination of production and education) may be an ideal way to make up for this gap, which means that the school and the company cooperate with each other to train the craftsmen's technique and professional ethics. At school, craftsmen studying as students can learn architectural theories in

¹⁵⁷ Kongō Gumi- recruit, <https://www.kongogumi.co.jp/ja/recruit.html>

¹⁵⁸ *Takumi - A 60,000-hour story on the survival of human craft*, <https://takumi-craft.com/jp/ja>, 11:00~11:10 of the video.(© 2019 Lexus)

a more complete, systematic and theoretical way, which is often a combination of theoretical knowledge and some basic practical techniques. In the company, craftsmen as workers can gain practical experience through practicing, enriching the craftsman's skills. School education and technique acquisition are carried out simultaneously: it is possible to maintain the traditional form of techniques in a shorter time span through this way.

3.2 Materials, Tools and Workplaces

3.2.1 The Inherent Beauty of Materials: Understanding Lumber's Characteristics

When talking about the relationship between nature, materials and craftsmen, an old Chinese saying corresponds perfectly: “The time is going, the earth is full of energy (Qi), the craftsmen can be skillful, and material has its own beauty. The comprehensive consideration of the four will be the best.”¹⁵⁹ For craftsmen from Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang, their materials are trees grow in nature, which should be processed and converted to usable lumber before construction activities are carried out.

The pursuit of "lumber" can be even more extreme in Japan with the longtime tradition of lumber making. For Japanese craftsmen, “the culture of the wood is profound and even bottomless (Matsuura, 2005, p.214).”

First of all, it is worth paying attention to Japan's view on the life of trees: when trees are plants, the life they have is their first life, while when they are buildings, they are greeted by their second life (Shiono, 2010, p.16). This way of thinking is deeply influenced by pantheism in Japan, that is, there is spirituality in all lives, means animism. Especially from the perspective of temple architecture, the unique spirituality of this kind of tree makes the lumber have more “divine” value, becoming more consistent with its architectural activity accordingly.

Besides, similar to Xiangshan Bang, the craftsmen of Kongō Gumi also emphasize on

¹⁵⁹ The original text is 天有時，地有氣，材有美，工有巧，合此四者，然後可以為良, *Zhouli: Dongguan, Kaogongji*. Refers to *Zhouli Zhushu*, from *Siku Quanshu*, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 90-p.712.

observing the characteristics of trees, thus using lumber more accurately. In Japanese, the characteristic of lumber is called *kuse* 癖 (means characteristic) (Kongō, 2013, p.26). In terms of materials commonly used in Japanese architecture, such as cypress, cedar, pine, etc., each one also has its own hardness and color.¹⁶⁰ Nishioka Tsunekazu also mentioned that “when building the pagoda, the materials used are not only trees, but mountains the trees planted”; “Use the tree as it originally grew”; “The lumber structure of the pagoda is not only built by designs, but by the individual characteristics of the lumber (Nishioka et al., 2005, p.53),” which means that theoretical knowledge cannot be fully applied to the use of lumber, but should be used according to the growth habits and characteristics of the tree. For example, trees originally grew in the south of the mountain can be used in the south of the building. Trees growing on the top of the mountain will be fine in hardness and are more suitable for bearing parts such as pillars and beams.

When describing craftsmen in Japanese, there is a word that cannot be completely translated into English or Chinese, namely, *kodawari* こだわり (means adherence, or commitment), which represents giving extraordinary attention to trivial matters or problems and is now extended to never compromise in the pursuit of extreme. During the construction of temple and shrine buildings, Kongō Gumi will often choose a piece of lumber that costs hundreds of thousands and even millions of yen (Kongō, 2013, p.25). In this case, the craftsman must be extremely cautious, because when the craftsman’s skills are presented on the material, due to the high value of material itself, almost no mistake can be made. Therefore, the strict demands on

¹⁶⁰ Refers to Takenaka Daiku Dōgukan 竹中大工道具館, 2017, pp.165-167.

materials made by Kongō Gumi also shaped the strict demands on techniques of its own craftsmen.

To Xiangshan Bang, when choosing lumber, craftsmen have the following pithy formula for reference:

When building a house, how can it be measured by the commonly used measurement in the market? Bamboo strips are used to surround the lumber, and the lumber measured as 9 feet can be the best lumber.

7 to 8 feet can be used for ordinary construction, and 5 to 6 feet can be reasonable lumber for economical purpose.

There is a five-element rule in lumber, “gold” and “water” are connected with Qi but mutually reinforce and neutralize with lumber.

Nanmu, mountain peach and schima superba, cypress, beech and camphor tree.

They are stiff, straight and beautiful in nature, and can be used with no problem. According to the previous size, it can also be reduced by 15% in quantity.

Only cedar and pine tree, snow platycladus, tallow tree and catalpa tree.

They are soft and delicate in texture and need to be used according to the proportion mentioned before. They should also be careful of knots, spots and disease on the trees.

The branch knot is a tattered place, the spot will lead to unshapely appearance, and the disease is the most deadly problem that can hurt the lumber in depth.

This kind of lumber must not be used if the width of the room is very deep and it

needs to bear a lot of weight horizontally.

(How to Select Lumber and Measure Dimensions¹⁶¹)

After analyzing the contents of this formula, and excluding the sentence (the third line) that contains the knowledge of ancient alchemy, we can find that it mainly tells the following three aspects.

Firstly, the pithy formula stipulates the basis for judging the fine, ordinary and bad lumbers¹⁶² when building houses (first and second lines). After determining the features of

¹⁶¹ The original text is

屋料何謂真市分，圍箴真足九市稱。
八七用為通用造，六五價是公道論。
木納五音評造化，金水一氣貫相生。
楠木山桃並木荷，嚴柏樛木香樟栗。
性硬直秀用放心，照前還可減加半。
唯有杉木並松樹，雪柏烏絨及梓樹。
樹形松嫩照加用，還有留心節斑癰。
節爛斑雀癰入心，疤空頭破糟是爛。
進深開間橫吃重，勿將病木細交論。
——選木圍量

Refers to Liu et al. (2013, p.248) ,and Yao and Zhang (1959, p.22).

In Yao and Zhang (1959), there also contains the origin, color and hardness of these woods in detail. The text mentioned here are due to dialects, according to Yao Chengzu's work, here comes a brief explanation:

In the first line, the so-called Weimie 圍箴 is a kind of soft ruler made of thin bamboo. The use of this kind of bamboo ruler is to surround the lumber and measure the length in detail. (Yao & Zhang, 1959, p.100)

The so-called Jiaban 加半 in the fifth line means 1.5 of tenth, refers to Yao Chengzu: "To carpenters, Jiaer is 2 of tenth, Jiaban is 1.5 of tenth 匠家所稱加二，系十分之二。加一半系十分之一·五。" (Ibid., p.21)

¹⁶² According to the text of *Yingzao Fayuan*, the sentence of "bamboo strips are used to surround the lumber, and the lumber measured as 9 feet can be the best lumber" was noted as "first class 上等," the sentence of "7 to 8 feet can be used for ordinary construction" was noted as "middle class 中等," the sentence of "5 to 6 feet can be

lumber, the way of application can be adjusted according to the actual needs of specific buildings.

Secondly and most importantly, the formula focuses on the differences in “characteristic” and “shape” of different tree species (fourth to seventh lines). For example, craftsmen of Xiangshan Bang need to pay attention to the nature and characteristics of lumbers such as color and hardness that affect the building quality. In addition, the difference of materials will also affect the standard of judgment. On the basis of the materials specified in the first and second sentences, due to the hardness of nanmu and other tree species, when building the same house, 15% of the materials can be reduced, while it requires sufficient lumbers when it comes to cedar, pine and other relatively loose, which exactly demonstrates the work philosophy of not rigidly adhering to the old method, but paying attention to the specific characteristics of trees.

Thirdly, the formula especially emphasizes the need to pay attention to the defects of trees and not to use problematic materials (seventh to ninth lines), for defective trees cannot bear weight and must not be used as beams. When selecting lumbers, craftsmen need to keep their eyes open and be extremely cautious.

Three aspects have been included in a short formula of Xiangshan Bang: selection, characteristics and quality supervision of materials. The craftsman of Xiangshan Bang has established a very close connection with lumbers during their practices. As the “lumber with several hundred Jin 斤 (means half a kilo)” used in the construction process often requires several people to carry it together,¹⁶³ and the basic skills of sawing lumber and drilling holes are

reasonable lumber for economical purpose” was noted as “low class 下等.”

¹⁶³ Suzhou Internet TV Station: *Following: Post-90s “New Craftsman” in Xiangshan Bang*, <http://www.csztv.com/doc/2019/06/23/456212.shtml>, 6: 34 ~6: 38 . (© Suzhou Radio and TV Station)

perfected through continuous practices. Craftsmen need to be familiar with materials in the long process of craftsmanship, so as to acquire the ability to screen and apply materials.

Although the lumber used by Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang is different due to the difference in natural conditions between Japan and China, the two groups of craftsmen have the same understanding of lumber characteristics, and thus have the same demanding on lumber properties. In the same state of concern for nature, both Japan and China pay attention to the characteristics (xing 性 in Chinese and kuse in Japanese, same in English as “characteristic”) of different lumbers. Although the wisdom of distinguishing and using materials passed down from generation to generation is not embodied in concrete form, it should still be regarded as a valuable skill resource for craftsmen.

For craftsmen, this ability to recognize materials should be regarded as a valuable “experience” and an important reason why machines cannot completely replace craftsmen currently: “from a technical point of view, it is possible to directly process lumber with machines, but machines cannot distinguish the characteristics of lumber. Instead, experienced craftsmen can (Kongō, 2013, p.26).” Craftsmen understand the importance of considering the whole building from the characteristics of lumber, thus transforming “the life of tree” into “the life of lumber” and continuing in the building.

Even though machines cannot replace craftsmen’s understanding and knowledge of lumber, both Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang are facing a severe challenge that reinforced concrete buildings are gradually replacing wooden buildings. Compared with reinforced concrete, lumber faces challenges of corrosion prevention, structure, flame retardance, extreme

temperature and humidity, etc. Also, the cost of reinforced concrete buildings is often of lower cost, becoming the fundamental impact brought by the change of construction standards in the construction industry. Speaking of which, the rationality of wood construction technology itself is gradually being eliminated.

At present, both Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang can actually apply reinforced concrete in construction,¹⁶⁴ but they are still trying to keep the traditional technique for constructing buildings in wood. Confronted with realistic situation, the solution proposed by Kongō Gumi is to emphasize the resilience, repairability and durability of wooden buildings. Japan is in essence a disaster-prone country, and “none of the temples and shrines built by Kongō Gumi collapsed during the Great Hanshin-Awaji earthquake 阪神淡路大震災.”¹⁶⁵ This way of promotion is indeed attractive to Japan, and Japan’s unique view of life on trees itself has reserved a possibility for the temple community to choose wooden materials for buildings. On the other side, Xiangshan Bang faces more complicated situations. In order to continue the original materials and techniques, they put forward the concept of “repairing the old as the old,” that is, using the same materials as the original to repair the buildings built by their predecessors, whose concept echoes the cultural heritage protection method. Meanwhile, some craftsmen of Xiangshan Bang also address the advantages of modern wooden structures, namely, close to nature, comfortable

¹⁶⁴ In the brochure of Kongō Gumi, about 30% of the newly built temples as construction achievements are made of reinforced concrete. In addition, the golden hall and five-storied pagoda of Shitennoji Temple, which is the representative of Kongō Gumi, are also made of reinforced concrete by the reconstruction in Shōwa period. However, Kongō Gumi retained the appearance of wood for it.

The craftsmen of Xiangshan Bang can also use reinforced concrete. Refers to Lu and Chen (2008).

¹⁶⁵ Refers to Kongō Gumi (2016/04/16, p.64).

and durable, earthquake-resistant, safe, flexible design, having short construction period, etc.¹⁶⁶

Under the concept of energy conservation and environmental protection, wooden buildings have once again earn certain room for development. These attempts by Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang have proved that until now, these craftsmen are still willing to share their understanding of lumber characteristics, stick to their original intention of lumber in the craftsmanship system, and are eager to pass this obsession from generation to generation.

3.2.2 The Value System Behind Tools: Efficiency and Accuracy

“One shall sharpen his knife before get the work well done 工欲善其事，必先利其器 (*The Analects of Confucius: Weilinggong*).” Likewise, the craftsmen and tools are interdependent for perfecting technique. Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) had once made a comment on this: “The human body is the magazine of inventions, the patent office, where the models from which every hint was taken. All the tools and engines on earth are only extensions of its limbs and senses. One definition of man is ‘an intelligence served by organs’ (cited in O’Keefe, 1995, p.168).” Tools are “the extension of man,”¹⁶⁷ by applying which craftsmen is empowered with the ability to utilize materials better and complete the production purpose of technique. As mentioned above, Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang still retain their handicraft tradition, using manual tools to facilitate the production, whose definition is not equivalent to machines, but have

¹⁶⁶ Refers to Suzhou Xinxiang Ancient Construction Garden Engineering Co., Ltd., *Modern Interpretation of the Culture in Xiangshan Bang*, <http://www.xx-gj.com/newsshow.asp?id=17>

¹⁶⁷ This concept comes from *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (McLuhan, 1994), when talking about the media and human being. But generally speaking, the relationship between “man” and “everything outside man” can be concluded by the concept of “extension.”

their own meanings as the extension of craftsmen's hands to have direct contact with the materials. Tools can help craftsmen feel the texture of wood, thus better showing the charm of materials. Even if the original materials are exactly the same, after processing with different tools, the materials will come into different shape, forming the interaction between techniques and tools.

The development history of carpentry tools in Japan and China has been discussed in detail by many scholars and will not be repeated here.¹⁶⁸ This section will be focused on the values and working logic behind the differences in carpentry tools between Japan and China.

The carpentry tools in Japan and China can be divided into the following four categories according to their functions: 1. The tools for defining standards (such as rulers and marking tools). 2. The tools for cutting wood (such as axes and adzes, saws). 3. The tools for drilling holes (such as chisels and drills). 4. The tools for shaving surfaces (such as planes).¹⁶⁹ As for the tools for defining standards, the differences between Japan and China are not obvious. But when it comes to the tools for cutting wood, drilling holes and shaving surfaces, there are great differences at the technical level. In fact, many Japanese carpentry tools originated in China, but Japanese craftsmen improved these tools to make them more in line with the habits of them.

¹⁶⁸ For the development history of carpentry tools in Japan and China, please refer to: Watanabe (2004); Zhang and Guo(Eds.)(1994); Li (2004).

¹⁶⁹ Li Zhen mentioned in *The Category and Characteristics of Chinese Traditional Carpentry Tools* (Takenaka Daiku Dōgukan, 2014, pp.146-156) that Chinese carpentry tools can be divided into four categories: The tools for marking, sawing, shaving and cutting (Ibid., p.147). In this dissertation, according to the general order of using tools by Chinese and Japanese craftsmen, we reorganize them into four categories above, the main difference is to add axe and other cutting tools to the sawing tools. The independence of drilling and chiseling as the tools for drilling holes is preserved.

Among the tools for cutting wood, China's rip saws 大鋸 need two people to push and pull together. This kind of big saw was introduced into Japan and had a great influence in the 15th century. However, after entering the 16th century, Japanese craftsmen improved it into wide-blade rip saws 前挽大鋸, which can be operated by single person (Takenaka Daiku Dōgukan, 2017, pp.21-22). Moreover, Japanese saws can be divided into two types: horizontal cutting and vertical cutting (Takenaka Daiku Dōgukan, 2017, p.63). The cutting method parallel to wood fiber is vertical cutting, with sharp serrations. The cutting method perpendicular to wood fiber is horizontal cutting, with tiny and tight serrations, like a knife.

Among the tools for drilling holes, the Chinese chisel is made of iron outside and the wooden handle inside, which is called bag type, considering the demand of carving hardwood. The Japanese wood are always soft, the chisel is made of iron inside and the wooden handle outside, which is called stem type (Takenaka Daiku Dōgukan, 2017, p.104). Chinese drills use linear rotation and can change different kinds of drills with high efficiency, while Japanese drills are usually manually operated. Both Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang are very proud of their mortise and tenon joint 榫卯/継手・仕口 skills. When creating various mortise and tenon structures, the necessary tool is chisel. The chisels used by craftsmen of Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang can be divided into many categories. For example, in Xiangshan Bang, chisels can be divided into five categories: flat chisel 平鑿, round chisel 圓鑿, cocked chisel 翹頭鑿, butterfly chisel 蝴蝶鑿 and triangle chisel 三角鑿.¹⁷⁰ In Kongō Gumi, the general craftsmen

¹⁷⁰ Refers to Zang et al. (2008, p.12).

The main tools used by Xiangshan Bang from the late Qing Dynasty to the Republic of China were recorded in Yao Chengzu's *Yingzao Fayuan*. There were 42 kinds of tools, including 5 kinds of chisel. The names of chisels

will use a set of chisels of ten, while the master carpenter will even use a set of chisels of twelve.¹⁷¹ The multiple drilling tools correspond to the refined mortise and tenon processing requirements.

As for the tools for shaving surfaces, Chinese planes 鉋 needs to use two hands to push forward. Similar to China, planes in many parts of the world is used by pushing forward. The characteristics of this tool are that when pushing forward, the weight of the craftsman can be used to increase the driving force: although a certain precision is lost, the efficiency of work has been greatly improved. Japanese planes 台鉋 appeared widely in the 16th century (Takenaka Daiku Dōgukan, 2017, p.23). It was improved from China, but it needs to be pulled to the inside of the body when it is used. In the eyes of Japanese craftsmen, the ability to shave extremely thin and long wood slices is the symbol of their supreme skill,¹⁷² which also represents the infinite pursuit of precision of Japanese craftsmen.

As far as the differences in the characteristics of the aforementioned tools are concerned, we can sum up the value that Japanese and Chinese craftsmen tend to pursue, that is their labor efficiency and accuracy cannot be perfectly balanced under the condition of relying only on

are different from those in this paper. They are “thick chisel 厚鑿子, thin chisel 薄鑿子, oblique chisel 斜鑿子, round chisel 圓鑿子, rough chisel 蠻鑿.”

¹⁷¹ Refers to the picture in Kiuchi (2018, p.85).

¹⁷² In the interview about Kongō Gumi, the craftsmen in Kongō Gumi are also very proud of their shaving technique, extremely in the ability to shave the thin and long wood slices. In the video made by NHK (長寿企業 大国につぼん, 2007) and Lexus (*Takumi - A 60,000-hour story on the survival of human craft*, 2019), there are many scenes of that skill. At the same time, in the text, we can also see the measurement photos of 0.002cm wood slice shaved by the craftsmen of Kongō Gumi, and describe the planed wood as “as smooth as a mirror, and water stains are difficult to penetrate (Kodomo Kurabu, 2015, p.7).”

human labor than applying machines, thus trade-offs should be made, giving us a glimpse of the craftsmen's value accordingly.

Xiangshan Bang and even all Chinese craftsmen pursue efficiency in nature. The logic behind the way of thinking to sacrifice accuracy to some extent and improve efficiency is to finish the systematic work as soon as possible. Speed has become an important measurement for craftsmanship. In the thinking mode of "efficiency first," craftsmen have a profound understanding of time and cost, and are bound to pursue "a high degree of rationalization of the production system (Takenaka Daiku Dōgukan, 2017, p.99)." Therefore, the tools they use have also formed the characteristics of systematization and efficiency.

Representing Japanese craftsmen, Kongō Gumi put more emphasis on precision and delicacy in essence. Compared with sacrificing part of efficiency, the craftsmen's ultimate pursuit is to prolong the life of materials through continuous improvement. In the thinking mode of "accuracy first," it is necessary to select and improve tools, encouraging to form fine features of tools.

In addition, it is especially noteworthy that Japanese craftsmen greatly appreciate the concept of tool customization. Many craftsmen have mentioned that their tools were customized from well-known forging craftsmen¹⁷³ or improved by themselves,¹⁷⁴ thus forming "tools that only belong to themselves (Takenaka Daiku Dōgukan, 2018, p.3)." The participation in the process of making tools also improves the compatibility between tools and the techniques they

¹⁷³ In Kongō Gumi, the chisel and other tools loved by Kiuchi Shigeo are custom-made (Kiuchi, 2018, p.85).

¹⁷⁴ The wooden handle of the purchased hatchet needs to be adjusted according to each craftsman's own use requirements, because "the length of the handle must fit your body (Matsuura, 2005, p.26)."

have retained.

Similar to the change to foundational materials, the passing on of traditional carpentry technique has also been challenged as the traditional manual tools are impacted by electric tools. However, not all kinds of tools can be replaced by electric tools like traditional saws and drills. Fine processing tools such as ruler, ink pot, axe, planer and chisel still maintain lasting vitality because craftsmen can only accurately perceive the material characteristics by using traditional tools to form smooth planes on the wood surface rather than electric ones. Besides, special techniques such as mortise and tenon joint be displayed by electric tools currently. At the present, electric tools have not reached the precision of craftsmen when using traditional tools except for improving efficiency and reducing the workload of manual labor. Therefore, the rationality of traditional tools has not been completely dispelled either in Kongō Gumi or Xiangshan Bang, among which of craftsmen, traditional tools are still used in a more comprehensive way, with the spiritual dimension of “efficiency” and “accuracy” inherited almost completely preserved.

3.2.3 Workshops and Sites: Workplaces for Performing Techniques

For Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang, their workplaces can still be divided into two major areas, the “workshop” and the “site.”

The wood “workshop” (工場 in Chinese) is a place where the design drawings are enlarged to the original size of the building and wood is processed according to the size. It is also called “workspace with actual size 原寸場” in Japanese (similar to the model workshop in Chinese), highlighting the meaning of materials and space.

As the name implies, the most important meaning of the workshop is that the craftsmen’s work is realized here. Whether in Kongō Gumi or Xiangshan Bang, the workshop is visually a huge working space (Figure 3.1, 3.2), and all steps of craftsmanship except assembly can be carried out here. The wood processed in the workshop will be the materials directly used in the subsequent construction of the building. Also, “processing is not valid until all the works are depicted (Kongō, 2013, p.28).” The craftsmen must establish a macro concept with an understanding of the appearance and actual size of the building, and place the wood processed by himself into the whole picture for consideration. In the huge working place, the craftsmen will always maintain the consciousness of concentration and immersion, keep thinking about the reason of doing this work and the final result of the work to be done (Ibid., p.29).



Figure 3.1. The Kansei Processing Center of Kongō Gumi¹⁷⁵ © 2019 Lexus

¹⁷⁵ Takumi - A 60,000-hour story on the survival of human craft, <https://takumi-craft.com/jp/ja>, 4:54. (© 2019 Lexus)



Figure 3.2. The Workshop of Xiangshan Gongfang¹⁷⁶ © 2019 Suzhou Radio and TV Station

In the production space, each craftsman has his own strength in techniques, thus there is bound to be a division of labor. Generally speaking, for wood with higher prices, only highly respected craftsmen can be responsible for measuring and drawing lines, which forms the process of “concretizing design into material.” After planning the functions and patterns of wood, young craftsmen will often process according to the lines drawn by their predecessors. This naturally occurring workflow in the workplace also indirectly consolidates the seidaiku/zuotou responsibility system that has always existed in Japanese and Chinese craftsman systems.

The independent workshop (production space) has also facilitates the craftsmen’s understanding of themselves. Inamori Kazuo 稻盛和夫 once said, “there are gods on the workplaces (Inamori, 2004).” Perhaps the “gods” can be understood as the true hearts of the craftsmen, that is, the sincerity of their own work. The craftsman’s workshop actually reflects their mood, state of mind and their understanding of techniques. For Kongō Gumi, the

¹⁷⁶ Suzhou Internet TV Station: *Following: Post-90s “New Craftsman” in Xiangshan Bang*, <http://www.csztv.com/doc/2019/06/23/456212.shtml>, 5: 40.

“immediate job that took place in the workspace with actual size was not only to make the craftsman become skilled, but also to enhance the craftsman’s own sense of responsibility for the job (Kongō, 2013, p.29).” In the workshops of Xiangshan Bang, one can realize that “behind the exquisite craftsmanship lies the hard work of craftsmen for decades.”¹⁷⁷ Therefore, the workplace has become a space linking craftsmen and craftsmanship. It is not only a manifestation of craftsmanship, but also a manifestation of craftsman’s self-awareness and responsibility.

The “site” is the place where the building is located. The wood processed in the workshop will be transported to the site and assembled by craftsmen to form a whole building.

As mentioned earlier, the consideration of the site starts from workshop based on the needs of the site construction. For example, Kongō Gumi craftsmen will also sort the wood in the original yard according to the pseudonym sequence of *Iroha* いろは (for example, いゝ五 means No.5, part 1) to mark the wood to be used in different positions in the building, Xiangshan Bang craftsmen will mark the end of the wood with Suzhou code 碼子 (a counting method in Suzhou area) in the workshop. During the process of craftsman’s work, in order to optimize the work flow, it is natural to form a consistent system concept from processing to assembly. “There is no better place to learn techniques than the construction site (Ibid., p.44)” has become a commonsense among Kongō Gumi. The cooperation, exchange and discussion between craftsmen will be reflected in the rationalization of work logic in the site.

We also need to pay attention to a group of contradictions in the site, namely, the contradiction between the traditional technique logic and the knowledge logic in the academic

¹⁷⁷ Suzhou Internet TV Station: *Following: Post-90s “New Craftsman” in Xiangshan Bang*, <http://www.csztv.com/doc/2019/06/23/456212.shtml>, 6: 20~6: 24.

system. People who have received architectural training can often become professional designers under the modern discipline system. In this context, the craftsman's original "design" and "construction" techniques have been reduced, transferring their design skills to the designers, and only retain part of the construction techniques. However, the core of craftsman's skill, that is, the traditional skill logic grown in the field, is not completely consistent with the knowledge logic in the academic system. Such contradiction sometimes causes cognitive conflicts between craftsmen and scholars, with the extreme expression of this contradiction expressed as follows: "craftsmen build buildings first, then scholars can study them. It is not because there are scholars then we have buildings, but because there are craftsmen then we have knowledge (Nishioka et al., 2005, p.71)."

In the practice which is shown in the site, this cognitive difference is often reflected in the fact that even if the design drawings exist objectively, experienced craftsmen will still build according to their own technical logic. Kongō Gumi also mentioned the conflict with external designers when rebuilding the five-storied pagoda in Shitennoji Temple, and finally insisted on its own construction method. Master Ma, an old craftsman of Xiangshan Bang, once said: "Sometimes, I will make things you did not draw and will not make things you draw (Shen, 2011, p.113)." The craftsmen have formed a thinking mode of thinking with on-site spirit. Whether buildings are feasible in practical sense is the only solution to knowledge and skills in their eyes. As a result, the rigidity and obstinacy shown by many craftsmen from this aspect is actually a manifestation of the logic of respecting their own techniques.

In this regard, we can find a way to reconcile Japanese and Chinese craftsmen and

academics. Designers can play their own role in the macro design of buildings, but when it comes to the details of construction, some designers who have a good knowledge of the construction industry can invite experienced craftsmen to play freely instead of giving strict restrictions only on their design drawings. This kind of cooperation can be regarded as a revelation, that is, the idea of integrating knowledge and skills logically instead of forcibly splitting them may be helpful to the survival and development of craftsmen's traditional architectural techniques.

To sum up, the whole process of materials from “workshop” to “site” is actually the process of integrating and concretizing craftsmanship, which contains the operation logic of craftsmanship itself and is displayed through the craftsman's workflow.

3.3 Manual Work and the Position of Man

3.3.1 Tao and Technique

In the previous discussion, we can make a conclusion that within Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang, no matter how the method of acquiring skills changes, their pursuit of technique is consistent. Then, a question hidden behind this presentation is whether there is an idea beyond craftsmanship among craftsman, which becomes an incentive for them to pursue all the time?

In ancient Chinese classics, we can find that there is indeed a concept parallel to “technique,” that is, “Tao 道 (or Dao).” It refers to the origin of all things. It can also be understood as idealized things among craftsmen. It is different from the real things created by craftsmen and only exists in the conceptual world. It is not concrete in itself, but an essential existence, or the concept of ontology. The technique associated with it refers to the technique that possessed by the craftsman himself.

In the discussion of the relationship between Tao and technique, we can find that Tao is often superior to technique. As *Zhuangzi* goes “Therefore that which pervades (the action of) Heaven and Earth is (this one) attribute; that which operates in all things is (this one) course; that by which their superiors govern the people is the business (of the various departments); and that by which aptitude is given to ability is skill and technique.”¹⁷⁸ Tao is contained in all things, and

¹⁷⁸ The original text is 故通於天地者，德也；行於萬物者，道也；上治人者，事也；能有所藝者，技也， from *Zhuangzi: Tiandi* 《莊子·天地》. Refers to *Zhuangzi Zhu*, from *Siku Quanshu*, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 1056-p.61.

technique is the development of Tao on the practical level. “The skill and technique were manifested in all the (departments of) business; those departments were all administered in righteousness; the righteousness was (the outflow of) the natural virtue; the virtue was manifested according to the Tao; and the Tao was according to (the pattern of) Heaven.”¹⁷⁹ This progressive relationship shows that although technique is at the bottom. It can still be divided into the nature of business, righteousness, Tao, and Heaven. In this logical system, “Tao” can be seen from “technique.” The skills and techniques possessed by the craftsman can be regarded as the “minor Tao 微末之道,” thus achieving the unity of the two under the category of “a man.” And the ideal state of the craftsman is that what he loves is the Tao, which is more advanced than skills and techniques.¹⁸⁰ Technique and Tao have something in common. The craftsman’s understanding of Tao is conducive to his skill to reach the divine state that is consistent with the Heaven, earth and nature. The acquisition of exquisite skills is the result of the combination of subjective cultivation and Tao. The story of Paoding dismember an ox 庖丁解牛 (see details in chapter 4, section 3) as skillfully as a butcher is a good example of this method.¹⁸¹

In fact, in the relevant literature of Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang, there is no expression of “Tao.” However, we have to admit that in the face of real-world skills and techniques, the Tao cannot be easily explained. But Tao as a universal law, and technique as a logic chain embodied in it, they do exist, which also provide a possibility for the analysis of

¹⁷⁹ The original text is 技兼於事，事兼於義，義兼於德，德兼於道，道兼於天, *Zhuangzi: Tiandi*. Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ The original text is 所好者道也，進乎技也, *Zhuangzi: Yangshengzhu* 《莊子·養生主》. Refers to *Zhuangzi Zhu*, from *Siku Quanshu*, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 1056-p.20.

¹⁸¹ The story can be found in *Zhuangzi: Yangshengzhu*. Ibid., pp.20-21.

craftsmanship.

3.3.2 Mind and Body

The discussion of the relationship between craftsman's mind and hands can be traced back to Zhuangzi (or Chuang-tzu) at the earliest: "what the mind wishes one's hands accomplish."¹⁸² Besides the skill of hands, it can adapt to what the mind grasps, which is the most exquisite skill. In the system of Confucianism, the relationship between mind and hands has become a way of giving meaning to craftsman's identity. He Xiu 何休 (129-182) of the Eastern Han Dynasty made a note for the *Chunqiu-gongyangzhuan* (or *Gongyang Commentaries on the Spring and Autumn Annals*), saying that "skillful mind and working hands are used to make objects and to work."¹⁸³ Craftsmen need to have "skillful mind" and "working hands" to produce excellent items. In this narrative, the mind and hands are placed in a parallel relationship, which are two important elements for craftsmen.

Before the modern concept of craftsmanship was fully developed, the original Japanese word "handcraft 手仕事" was always used to refer to the work of craftsmen (Ichikawa, 2007, p.125). The Chinese concept of "craftsmanship 手藝" was also used in novels in Ming and Qing dynasties.¹⁸⁴ "Hands," as the first part of craftsman's body acting on things, is often given a rich

¹⁸² The original text is 得之於手而應於心, *Zhuangzi: Tiandao*. Refers to *Zhuangzi Zhu*, from *Siku Quanshu*, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 1056-p.73.

¹⁸³ The original text is 古者有四民，一曰德能居位曰士，二曰辟土殖谷曰農，三曰巧心勞手以成器物曰工，四曰通財糶貨曰商. *Chunqiu-gongyangzhuan Zhushu* 《春秋公羊傳注疏》，from *Siku Quanshu*, Jingbu 5, *Chunqiu*, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 145-p.327.

¹⁸⁴ For example, in *Rulin waishi* 《儒林外史》 (or *Unofficial History of the Scholars*) by Wu Jingzi 吳敬梓 in

extension meaning, which can be used to refer to craftsman, craftsmanship and so on. To generalize the concept of hands, it can be regarded as the body represented by hand(s) in essence.¹⁸⁵

The concept of “mind” is more abstract and diversified. It can be used as a general term of human spiritual activities, referring to knowledge, emotion and meaning, as well as mind, mood, judgment and so on. Among the craftsmen, the mind can be refined to the craftsman’s own craftsmanship, that is, the basic understanding of craftsmanship and creation.

There is a supreme ideal state in Japan, which is “the unity of mind and body 身心一如.” It was first proposed by Japanese a master of Zen, Eisei 栄西 (1141-1215), to express the inner experience of meditation (Naka, 2011, pp.737-747). This term is also often used to describe the spiritual practice of art, martial arts or crafts. In other words, spiritual practice is the way to achieve unity of mind and body.¹⁸⁶ Yuasa Yasuo 湯淺泰雄 once expressed an impressive view

the Qing Dynasty. There was a part of story goes: “鮑文卿起身斟倪老爹一杯，坐下吃酒，因問倪老爹道：‘我看老爹像個斯文人，因甚做這修補樂器的事？’那倪老爹歎一口氣道：‘長兄，告訴不得你！我從二十歲上進學，到而今做了三十七年的秀才。就壞在讀了這幾句死書，拿不得輕，負不的重！一日窮似一日，兒女又多，只得借這手藝糊口，原是沒奈何的事。’”

¹⁸⁵ This concept has also been expressed in the Japanese Craftsmen. For example, Matsuura Shōji once said: “Handcraft is not just concerned about hand, but also feet, waist and brain.” (Matsuura, 2005, p. 201).

The discussion of “hands” in the Western world has never stopped. In the field of philosophy, Raymond Tallis once published *The Hand: A Philosophical Inquiry in Human Being* (2003).

In addition, in the works of western research about craftsmen, Richard Sennett’s *The Craftsman* also specifically discusses the role of “hands” in chapter 5. (Sennett, 2008). On the cover of the Chinese edition, he also pointed out, “It is impossible to connect the hands with the brain, and it is impossible to recognize and encourage the desire of the people to engage in craftsmanship. is a deep-rooted defect of Western civilization (Sennett and Li, 2015).”

¹⁸⁶ As Yuasa Yasuo mentioned in *The Body*, practitioner originally originated in the field of religion, but in the history of Japanese culture, it has a broad influence on various cultural fields other than religion. (Yuasa, 1990,

on the relationship between technique and mind-body theory: “There, the mastery of ‘waza’ does not only consist of physical training, but it also means to train the person’s mind and improve the personality...In short, technique originally requires psychosomatic correlation as a prerequisite. Thus, the training for ‘waza’ means training for the mind through physical training (cited in Sato, 2019, p.118).” It is intuitively represented as a physical process. For craftsmen, it is a process of training skills. The ultimate goal is to train the mind and improve the personality at the “mind” level.

Taking Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang as examples, the two groups of craftsmen regarded grinding tools as the only way to enter the technical path at the beginning of apprenticeship. Moreover, among the tools of craftsmen, there are more tools for grinding tools, which are independent of the tools used to make objects. They are often called “tools for tools.” In the expression of Japanese craftsmen, “a man grinds tools to achieve a spiritual practice (Matsuura, 2005, p.135).” In practicing the craft, the craftsman needs to “understand and perceive the tool as a part of the body (Ibid., p.136),” and finally achieve a “non-distracted 一心不乱 (Ibid., p.137)” state of focus on practicing skills and techniques. This method has

p.24)

In addition, when he talked about the uniqueness of Eastern thought, he also cited practice as an example: “What is the uniqueness of Eastern thought in philosophy? One of the features that has been revealed seems to be that the personal practice is regarded as the philosophy of Eastern thought. Basically, in short, the true meaning (knowledge) cannot be obtained only through theoretical thinking, and can only be obtained through ‘experience’. And ‘knowledge,’ that is, one must devote one’s body and mind to pursue the true meaning. A practice that obtains the true meaning by using the whole body and mind.” (Yuasa, 1990, p.21)

Outside of the scope of philosophy or cultural history, the professor whose major was medical, Yōrō Takeshi, also mentioned in *The History of Japanese Body Views* (1996) that spiritual practice is important in Japanese body view.

obviously surpassed the normal skill and technique practice itself, and constitutes a process of physical and mental cultivation.

3.3.3 The Position of Man

In the first two parts, we have analyzed the relationship between Tao and technique, mind and hands. From the previous discussion, it can be seen that although they respectively tend to the art itself and the physical and mental experience, these two pairs finally converge on “a man” (specifically craftsmen) and get unified here. Yuasa said: “Since technical knowledge is a kind of empirical knowledge gained through the mastery of ‘waza (technique in Japanese),’ it cannot be considered separately from the issues of body (cited in Sato, 2019, p.118).” Here, “technical knowledge” can be isomorphic in the “Tao” and “mind” mentioned above. It is not only the conceptual existence in the world, but also the meaning that the craftsman wants to grasp in his mind. The “Tao” of all things and the “mind” of a craftsman converge in the craftsman’s technical process (body performance), and finally form finished products through manual creation, which also forms the basic process of craftsmanship (Figure 3.3).

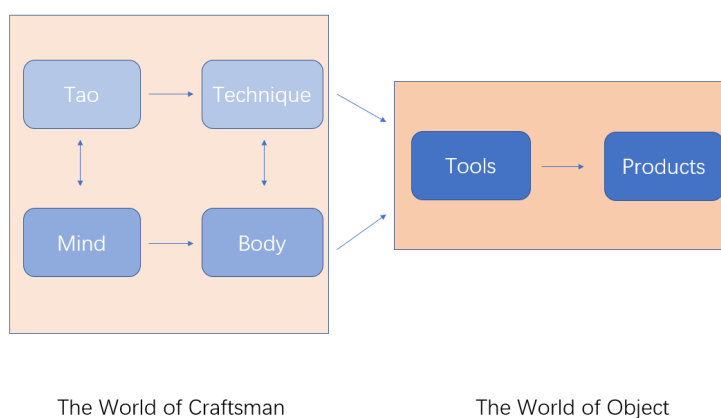


Figure 3.3. The Relationship Between Craftsman and Object © 2020 Xie Yuxin

Here, we can see two clear logical chains:

For techniques: Tao-technique-tools (material)-finished product

For a man: mind-hands (body)-tools (material)-finished product

Because of the isomorphism of Tao and mind, and the isomorphism of technique and hands (body), the ultimate goal of craftsmen is to achieve the “unity” of man and techniques. At the same time, there are close links between Tao and technique, mind and hands (body). “Tao goes through technique” and “the unity of mind and body” express such a relationship. This state is almost incomprehensible in the context of mind-body dualism. But in the pursuit of people in Eastern countries, this “free state with the smallest distance between body and mind activities (Yuasa, 1990, p.26)” can almost be regarded as the pinnacle of craftsmanship.

In the field of research, traditional craftsmen still pay close attention to the relationship between technique and body and mind. Under the social form of modern large machine technology production, the traditional technique still contains modern significance (Sato, 2019, p.118). This is also the continuous development point of craftsmanship research.

Chapter 4

Architecture: The Historical Relics of the Craftsmen's Techniques

The identity of “craftsman” was originally related to the creation of pragmatism. It was recorded in *Hanshu* that “craftsmen are those who make objects with their skills.”¹⁸⁷ It was also recorded in *Zhouli: Dongguan, Kaogongji* that: “The intelligent men create, while the skilled men realize and inherit, who are named as the craftsmen.”¹⁸⁸ Since the emergence of the distinction of craftsman, the definition of the craftsman has been closely associated with “making objects” and “creation.” There is a technical connection between craftsmen and the objects created by them. Additionally, the connection may be presented as sense of responsibility and an ideal personality, which is called “inscribing the maker’s name.”

Zhouyi 《周易》 (or *Book of Changes*) records: “In preparing things for practical use, and inventing and making instruments for the benefit of all under the sky, there are none greater than the sages.”¹⁸⁹ For human beings, the instrumental value of things is the foremost, and the objects craftsmen make can benefit the people who use them. The craftsmanship which connects “craftsman, object and user” is also a value pursuit. The result of craftsmanship lies in “objects.”

¹⁸⁷ The original text is 做巧成器曰工, *Hanshu: Shihuo zhishang* 《漢書·食貨志上》. Refers to *Qian Hanshu* 《前漢書》, from *Siku Quanshu*, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 249-p.532.

¹⁸⁸ The original text is 知者創物，巧者述之守之，世謂之工, *Zhouli: Dongguan, Kaogongji*. Refers to *Zhouli Zhushu*, from *Siku Quanshu*, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 90-p.712 (Please see detail in chapter 1, section 1).

¹⁸⁹ The original text is 備物致用，立成器，以為天下利，莫大乎聖人. Refers to *Zhouyi Zhushu* 《周易注疏》， from *Siku Quanshu*, Jingbu 1, Yi 經部一·易類. in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 7-p.542.

Some text was recorded as 備物致用，立功成器，以為天下利，莫大乎聖人. Refers to Gao (2004, p.592).

For Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang, however, it lies in the architecture as a historical relic. In the section 2 of this chapter, we mainly adopt the space theory proposed by Henri Lefebvre (1901-1991) as the basic method to analyze the historical consciousness and social function of architecture as the signifier from the perspective of spatial structure instead of specific architectural techniques.

In addition, the theories of aesthetics are also introduced into the research. The relationship between the users and the space of the architecture enable the users to perceive the aesthetic experience in the process when using it, which constitutes the aesthetic background of the creation of craftsman. Therefore, this chapter will examine how Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang complete the eternal and independent pursuit of the spiritual proposition of aesthetics through craftsmanship and creation between religiousness or secularity.

4.1 Inscribing the Maker's Name: The Relationships Between Craftsmen and Architecture

4.1.1 Origins and Traditions

“Inscribing the maker's name 物勒工名” refers to the process that a craftsman inscribes his own name on the objects he makes. For China, the earliest records of “Inscribing the Maker's Name” can be found in *Liji: Yueling* 《禮記·月令》 (or *The Book of Rites: Proceedings of Government in the Different Months*):

This month, the director of the craftsmen was ordered to assess the performance of the craftsmen. The sacrificial vessels made by the craftsmen were laid out to judge whether they complied with the legal procedures. They were not allowed to make things too exquisite, which may blind the mind of the emperor. The craftsmanship should be at the first place. The objects are inscribed with the name of the craftsman who made it, so that their work can be assessed. Those whose work is not appropriate must be punished and investigated.¹⁹⁰

From the perspective of the book, *Liji: Yueling* is a text compilation of astronomical

¹⁹⁰ The original text is 是月也，命工師效工，陳祭器，按度程，毋或作為淫巧，以蕩上心，必功致為上。物勒工名，以考其誠。功有不當，必行其罪，以窮其情。 Refers to *Liji Zhushu* 《禮記注疏》 (Vol.17), from *Siku Quanshu*, Jingbu 4, Li, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 115-p.369. Translated by James Legge.

phenomena, the accommodation of the emperors, equipage, clothing, diet and decree, following the order of months. From the notes of this text, we can conclude: in the pre-Qin period, due to the constraints of natural conditions, after Shuangjiang 霜降 (or frost descent), the craftsmen relying on the government will stop their work.¹⁹¹ In the month of Mengdong 孟冬,¹⁹² the director of the craftsmen will “assess the objects,” namely recording the objects made by the craftsmen in the form of a list.¹⁹³ Inscribing the maker’s name refers to inscribing the name of the craftsman who makes the object on it to assess his/her credit and measure whether his/her works are firm and fine.¹⁹⁴

The system was kept in the Tang Dynasty and we can directly see the form of “inscribing the maker’s name” in the literature works. In Liu Zongyuan 柳宗元’s *Zirenzhuan* 《梓人傳》, the story of a carpenter surnamed Yang was recorded: “At the completion of the construction task, the master carpenter will inscribe the date and his name on the beam of the house after the beams are erected, while the names of other craftsman who participate in the work will not be inscribed.”¹⁹⁵

¹⁹¹ Zheng Xuan noted: “Frost descent, hundreds of craftsmen stop working, and all the objects are finished 霜降而百工休，至此物皆成也。” Ibid.

¹⁹² Mengdong refers to the first month of winter, that is, the October of the lunar calendar.

¹⁹³ Zheng Xuan noted: “The director of the craftsmen is the chief of craftsmen. Assessing the objects refers to recording the objects made by the craftsmen in the form of a list 工師，工官之長也。效功，錄見百工所作器物也。” Refers to *Liji Zhushu* (Vol.17), from *Siku Quanshu*, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 115-p.369.

¹⁹⁴ Zheng Xuan noted: “Inscribing the maker’s name refers to inscribing the name of the craftsman who makes the object on it to assess his credit and measure whether his works are firm and fine 勒，刻也。刻工姓名於其器，以察其信，知其不功致。” Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ The original text is 既成，書於上棟曰：“某年、某月、某日、某建”。則其姓字也。凡執用之工不在

The system of “Inscribing the Maker’s Name” was also applied to the quality supervision in the construction projects of the government in the Song Dynasty. In the 3rd year of Jingde (1006), there was an order recorded: “Due to the large number of construction, some craftsmen took advantage of the opportunity to make profits, only focusing on speed and ignoring quality, which resulted in the damage of the building soon after putting into use. Therefore, the government explicitly requested craftsmen to inscribe their names and construction dates on the buildings after completion. Supervisors will check them regularly. If the buildings were damaged in a short period of time, the craftsmen would be called to account (cited in Cheng, 2018, pp.102-103).”¹⁹⁶

Unfortunately, with the development of the society, this state of “inscribing the maker’s

列. Refers to Liu Zongyuan’s *Zirenzhuàn* (or *Biography of Carpenter*), *Liu Hedong Collection* 《柳河東集》 (Vol. 17), from *Siku Quanshu, Jibu 2, Bieji* 集部二·別集類, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 1076-p.165.

From this article, we can also learn about the carpenters’ organization and division of labor at that time. The carpenter, surnamed Yang, only approached, planned and supervised the works, which we refers to in chapter 2, section 2 as zuotou. The work was carried out by the craftsmen he had assembled, which were similar to the Gonghuo described in chapter 2, section 2. The carpenter surnamed Yang, said he would earn three times as much as any other craftsman if he was hired by an official, and he would take more than half of the payment if he was hired privately. He led the craftsmen to the decoration office of Jingzhaoyin 京兆尹 (means capital officials in Chang’an) and orderly command construction, whether craftsman with an axe or a saw would “watch his expression and weigh his words without making personal decisions 皆視其色，俟其言，莫敢自斷者.” Under his unified command, they have clear-cut division of labor, with each one being charged with specific responsibilities.

In addition, this article also wrote about his “skill in choosing materials 善度材,” this spirit is also closely related to the craftsman’s understanding of the material we mentioned in chapter 3, section 2.

¹⁹⁶ The original text is 近日京中廡宇營造頻多，匠人因緣為奸，利其頗有完葺，以故全不用心，未久複以損壞。自今明行條約，凡有興作，皆須用功盡料。仍令隨處志其修葺年月、使臣工匠姓名，委省司覆驗。他時頽毀，較歲月未久者，劾罪以聞。

name” cannot be seen in Xiangshan Bang today.

However, the form of “inscribing the maker’s name” can still be found in Japan today. For Kongō Gumi, the oldest existing external object of it today is the inscription of the “Master Carpenter Kongō Takumi 総棟梁金剛匠” on the lightning-protection copper plate 雷除けの銅板 in the pagoda of Syōmanin Aizentō¹⁹⁷勝鬘院愛染堂 of Shitennoji Temple (Figure 4.1).¹⁹⁸ This form of inscribing the name of the craftsman on the copper plate is similar to the “inscribing the maker’s name” system of ancient Chinese craftsmen.

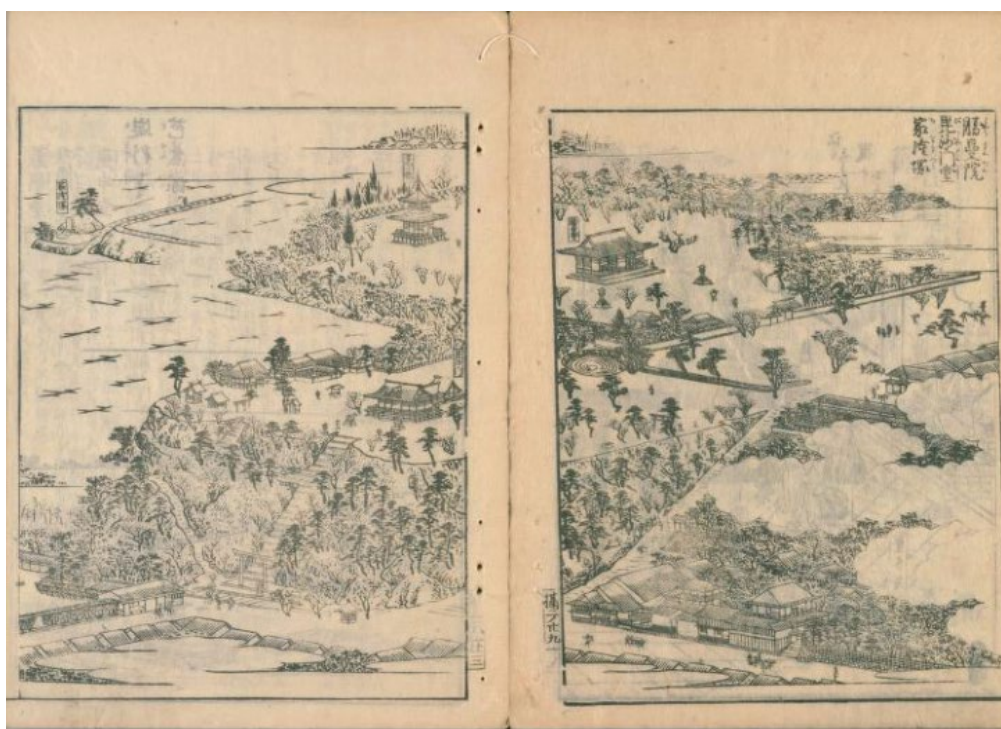


Figure 4.1. Syōmanin Aizentō from *Settsu Meisho Zue*¹⁹⁹ © 2011-2020 National Diet Library

¹⁹⁷ Syōmanin Aizentō was originally a Yakuin 施薬院 in Shitennoji Temple, which can be found in *Shitennōji Engi* (refers to Sakamoto Ryumon Bunko and Nara Women’s University Academic Information Center, *Shitennōji Engi* (1301, the 3rd year of Shōan): <http://mahoroba.lib.nara-wu.ac.jp/y05/html/263/>). It was later renamed as Syōmanin, and was widely known as the Aizentō because of the belief in the Aizenmyōō 愛染明王 in the Heian period. Refers to Syōmanin Aizentō, history: <http://www.aizendo.com/history.htm>

¹⁹⁸ Kongō Gumi, history: <https://www.kongogumi.co.jp/enkaku.html>

¹⁹⁹ National Diet Digital Collections, *Settsu Meisho Zue* 撰津名所図会 (Vol.2):

Furthermore, the system of “inscribing the maker’s name” of Japanese craftsman can be found in other aspects. As Kongō Gumi said, for Japanese carpenters, their names will be recorded in “Munefuda 棟札” when the building is completed (Kongō, 2013, p.39). In addition to the name of craftsmen, the name of the building, the time it was completed, the donors and other information will also be recorded.²⁰⁰ After the beam rising ceremony (see chapter 5, section 1 for details), munefuda is often placed inside the roof by the craftsman, which will be “rediscovered” by craftsmen in the next construction (Ibid.). Comparing the contents of munefuda with the records in *Zirenzhuang*, we can find that they basically belong to the same category and should be regarded as different forms of inheritance.

In recent years, in addition to the documents related to construction process, “inscribing the maker’s name” associated with Kongō Gumi has been reflected in the text. The positions of Kongō Gumi as the basic worker 仮設工事²⁰¹ and the engineering contractor 工事請負者²⁰² were recorded respectively in the *Report on the Repair Works of the Ganzandaishi Hall of Shitennoji Temple* 重要文化財四天王寺元三大師堂修理工事報告書 (1963) and the *Report on the Repair Works of the Gochikōin of Shitennoji Temple* 重要文化財四天王寺五智光院修理工事報告書 (1985). In addition to those who are mainly responsible for the project, even the name of the basic craftsmen can be added into the new records.²⁰³ Since the expanded capacity

<https://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/2563460?tocOpened=1>

²⁰⁰ To know munefuda for details, please refer to Suitō (2005).

²⁰¹ Refers to Shitennoji, 1963, p.17.

²⁰² Refers to Shitennoji, 1985, p.6.

²⁰³ In the *Report on the Repair Works of the Gochikōin of the Shitennoji Temple*, there recorded the craftsmen of Kongō Gumi except the 39th seidaiku Kongō Toshitaka. (Ibid.)

of the writing carrier, the information recorded can be more complete, which can be considered as a pioneering work.

In terms of the historical facts above and the development and survival of the “inscribing the maker’s name” system in Japan and China, we can see that this system is mainly based on the thinking of the relationship between man and objects. The further question is, why the craftsmen should inscribe their names on the objects they make, and what kind of spiritual value the process of inscribing names will bring.

4.1.2 Inscribing the Maker’s Name and the Sense of Responsibility

From the perspective of cultural anthropology, name avoidance (or name taboo existed in the primitive period of many regions,²⁰⁴ which can be mainly reflected in avoiding calling the name to show respect for people. In the pre-Qin period, when the system of “inscribing the maker’s name” began, there was also name avoidance for the nobility mainly to show respect for the people of high status.²⁰⁵ But craftsmen do not belong to this category obviously, so the use of their names and the ways they are used require special consideration.

Through analyzing the ways of inscribing the maker’s name, we can find that the person who inscribe the name on the object is not the owner or the user of the object, but the lower-

²⁰⁴ Refers to Hozumi,1926. Based on the anthropological data at that time, Hozumi Nobushige 穂積陳重 collected more than 120 ethnic groups with names and taboos on all continents. They are specifically recorded in the picture of the book and the tables on pp.201-213.

²⁰⁵ *Liji: Qulishang* 《禮記·曲禮上》 writes: “The son in front of the father, or the minister in front of the monarch should claim their name to express their identity with lower status 父前子名，君前臣名。” Refers to *Liji Zhushu* (Vol.2), from *Siku Quanshu*, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 115-p.13.

ranking object maker (or supervisor). The reason why they inscribe their names on objects is that they are responsible for the quality of objects.²⁰⁶ As mentioned above, “Those whose work is not appropriate must be punished and investigated.” Sun Xidan 孫希旦 (1736-1784), a scholar of the Qing Dynasty, once made a fine analysis of this system: “The quality of the objects cannot be easily identified shortly after its creation, so it should be continuously monitored by inscribing the name of the craftsman and examining it in the course of its use.”²⁰⁷

In the process of name-inscribing, the only “link” between the craftsman and the product is established, and thus forming a stable traceability system between “man and objects.” We should realize that the use of “name” is quite different from that of the name in modern sense. In modern society, names often represent a kind of ownership. At the beginning of the system, however, the relationship between the craftsmen as “man” and the “objects” they created goes beyond the general relationship of the creator and the created, or the user and the used. When some scholars investigated the use and significance of names in ancient China, they also placed the system of “inscribing the maker’s name” under the relationship of “name and responsibility (Hou, 2005, pp.3-21).”²⁰⁸

²⁰⁶There was a note for *Liji: Yueling*, “For those who do not work well, the materials are beautiful but the products are not strong 功不當者，取材美而器不堅也。” Refers to *Liji Zhushu* (Vol.17), from *Siku Quanshu*, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 115-p.369.

²⁰⁷ The original text is 器之功致與否，一時未能遽辨，必用之而後見，故刻工名於物，於其既用而考之，則其誠偽莫能逃矣。 Refers to Sun (1989, p.490).

²⁰⁸ In the research of Hou Xudong 侯旭東, in this era, the user’s name rarely appeared on the utensils. If it appeared, it also used “courtesy names 代字, titles 封號, but not names.” Therefore, the appearance of one’s “name” on utensils mainly means responsibility, not possession. The meaning of “name” is basically the same as the meaning of “name” in “name--field--house 名田宅” system established by Qin State during the Shang Yang 商鞅 reform and inherited in the Western Han Dynasty.

From the archaeological objects of the same period with this text, it can be seen that not only the names of craftsmen but also the names of officials responsible for supervision at all levels are inscribed on the objects.²⁰⁹ In other words, in the pre-Qin period, from the craftsmen to the supervisors, a complete system of quality control, supervision and assessment was established under the “inscribing the maker’s name” system. British sociologist Anthony Giddens put forward the concept of “the structuration of daily life”²¹⁰ in the discussion of the formation of social structure, emphasizing the importance of “daily contact”²¹¹ for the formation of structure. This system can be regarded as the process of establishing the social structure of craftsmen by adding “names” to “objects.”

Some scholars suggested that the responsibility system may affect the free creation of craftsmen. As Lü Simian stated in the *History of Chinese System*, “In the ancient time, the industrial policies were paid much attention. A very fine and progressive industry should be accomplished, but sometimes did not, so why? Craftsmen should give full play to their wit to improve their skills and make everything finer. Given the clear rewards and punishments, the craftsmen must adhere to certain standards in the process of their work.”²¹² It is true that given the clear rewards and punishments, the craftsmen must adhere to certain standards in the process of their work--which contains a kind of conservatism, which makes the craftsman’s skills tend

²⁰⁹ See Gao Ming 高明’s *General Theory of Ancient Chinese Characters* (1996) for details, pp. 431-455, which records examples of weapon inscription of various states in the period of Warring States.

²¹⁰ Refers to Giddens et al. (1998, pp.60-108).

²¹¹ Based on the theory of Erving Goffman (1922-1982). *Ibid.*, pp.109-177.

²¹² The original text is 古重工政如此，宜其工業甚精而日進矣，亦未必然，何也？曰凡事必日竭智巧，思改作而後能精。工既設，官隨之以賞罰，則必奉行故事，以顧考成。 Refers to Lü (2005, p. 17).

to shrink and thus depend on the assessment system. However, there are individuals who try their best to improve their skills through reflection and innovation. The development process from ancient times to the present has proved that the development of skills and the promotion of creation has never stopped, and that the role and status of the responsibility system in history maintained by “inscribing makers’ name” should be properly assessed.

4.1.3 Inscribing the Maker’s Name and the Ideal Personality

At the beginning of this system, “inscribing the maker’s name” leads to a compulsory relationship of responsibility. With the rapid development, however, more craftsmen and operators made or sold the same kind of goods, and different craftsmen made objects of different degrees of practicality and beauty through different skills and selection of materials. Under such historical conditions, the easiest way to distinguish objects is to borrow the “inscribing the maker’s name” system from the official handicraft industry, and to inscribe the name or other symbols on the product, which is the embryonic form of the ancient trademark (Zhang, 1986, p.18). In contrast to the previous government-mandated process to inscribe names on objects, craftsmen can also take the initiative to leave unique symbols on their own products. These symbols are usually left on the objects for the sake of anti-counterfeiting, propaganda and so on. This form of “inscribing the maker’s name” contains another relationship between the craftsmen and the objects.

In this case, the intergenerational transmission of Japanese and Chinese craftsmanship mentioned in chapter 3 is taken into consideration. If the objects made by one generation or one

person become popular with the users, the craftsman will become “famous craftsman” among the ordinary craftsmen, and the objects they make will become “famous products.” The names or symbols used in this generation or in this period will be easily fixed and become the name of one family or one school of technique. “The first name refers to cultivating one’s moral character, while the courtesy name refers to the virtue.”²¹³ And when the business expands, this way of referring to the product by the name of the craftsman will naturally be transformed into the name of the enterprise or brand.²¹⁴ At this time, the sense of responsibility for inscribing the maker’s name analyzed in detail in the previous sections will be transformed into a kind of technical moral honor or business moral honor. That is, the craftsman inputs his ideal personality into the name embodied in the object, and pursues the perfection of the quality with the criterion of living up to the name as self-supervision.

With the development of the society, the promotion of craftsman’s status has been allowed by the general environment of the society, and the process of having excellent craftsmanship and making excellent objects has also become the way to achieve identity leap for craftsmen.²¹⁵ They can enjoy higher social identity by their own creation, and thereby obtaining higher social status. In this logic, objects become the standard of evaluating people, because of which craftsmen will pay more attention to their craftsmanship and create refined works with their ideal

²¹³ The original text is 名以正體，字以表德. Refers to Yan Zhitui 顏之推 (531-591), *Yanshi Jiazun: Fengcao* 《顏氏家訓·風操》. Refers to *Yanshi Jiaxun* 《顏氏家訓》, from *Siku Quanshu*, Zibu 10, Zajia1, Zaxue, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 848-p.947.

²¹⁴ Such as Zhang Xiaoquan 張小泉’s scissors and Wang Mazi 王麻子’s kitchen knife in China. There is also the practice in Japan that lacquer or bamboo-knitted craftsmen writing names on boxes of their work.

²¹⁵ Please refer to the story of Kuai Xiang and Kongō Yoshisada in chapter 1, section 2.

personality.

This way of thinking can also be reflected in Kongō Gumi. They mentioned that munefuda with the name of the craftsman will be kept under the roof “at least for decades, at most for hundreds of years. No one can know the great work of the craftsman until the next repair of the architecture (Kongō, 2013, p.40).” However, they still “nurture the craftsman with a mind to do the best job at all times (Ibid.).” This state can also be understood as the process by which craftsmen shape their own personality in history through creation.

In fact, concerning the naming of Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang, the name of Kongō Gumi comes from the tradition of “inscribing the maker’s name.” The company’s name is derived from the surname 苗字 of Kongō Gumi. In the present Xiangshan Bang, since it was originally a group in the name of the region, it is very common to replace the “name of work” by the “name of place.” As a result, many ancient construction companies that have learned the skills of Xiangshan Bang are now named as “Xiangshan.” However, there are also companies in the current Xiangshan Bang taking advantage of famous craftsmen in the history of Xiangshan Bang, such as Kuai Xiang.²¹⁶

Currently, it is a common pursuit for the sense of responsibility and the ideal personality of the craftsman to trace the system of inscribing the maker’s name with modern thinking.

²¹⁶ For example, Suzhou Kuaixiang Ancient Garden Engineering co., Ltd. 蘇州蒯祥古建園林工程有限公司, was established in August 28, 2003. Its founder Yang Genxing 楊根興 is the provincial inheritor for Xiangshan Bang building technique. He “has been deeply influenced by the traditions of the family as craftsmen. Under the influence of his grandfather and father, he determined to learn and develop the traditional construction craftsmanship represented by Kuai Xiang, the originator of Xiangshan Bang building technique,” and then added the name of Kuai Xiang into the name of the company.

4.2 The Structure of Space

4.2.1 Space: The Relationship Between Craftsmen and Users

The concept of “space” is purely extended from the Western academia.²¹⁷ Since its birth, it had the characteristics of mathematics, physics, philosophy and geography, etc. In these disciplines, however, the status of space is still marginalized.

As the traditional concepts of space, Euclid (325-265 B.C.) regarded it as “an abstract, empty shell without content,”²¹⁸ René Descartes (1596-1650) regarded it as the extension of an object and is filled with materials; Isaac Newton (1643-1727) regarded it as an absolute, independent and infinite three-dimensional container. Among these definitions, the pre-modern concepts of space has distinct “background characteristics” and “geometric characteristics (Wu, 1994, pp.4-5).”

In the modern sense, if our understanding of space concentrates on the discipline, we can find that the study of the relation between forms of space and social appearance was mostly

²¹⁷ In ancient China, three-dimensionality was often used to explain space. Words referring to this concept often included “He 合” and “Yu 宇”. The definition of space always emphasizes its objective reality. That is, space is an objective reality, it can accommodate everything, but it cannot be accommodated by other things. This definition also involves the infinity of space. The definition of this space mainly emphasizes orientation.

In recent studies, Japan’s understanding of space was integrated by Western thought. Katō Shūichi 加藤周一 mentioned that subjectivity, intuitiveness, horizontality and partiality are the features of considerations of Japanese time, space, and space-time perspectives (Katō, 2007).

In the exposition of French orientalist Augustin Berque, the Japanese concept of space focuses on the value of generation, which contains the characteristics of “non-essentialism” and “place-centralism (Berque & Miyahara, 1985, p.265).

²¹⁸ Henry Lefebvre: *The New Preamble of the Production of Space* (1986), cited in Zhang (Eds.), 2006, p. 177.

conducted from the perspective of sociology, represented by Karl Marx (1818-1883), Emile Durkheim (1858-1917), Georg Simmel (1858-1918) and Chicago School of Sociology, focusing on the study of urban sociology, etc. However, there is still no systematic discussion on “space” in these classical sociological theories. Rather, it is often hidden in the study of specific areas such as factories, cities, shops, dwelling houses and public spaces. Space becomes a core theme of social theory after 1970s.²¹⁹ Space-centered research, namely “spatial turn,” has emerged only in recent decades. From the perspectives of philosophy, sociology, and literary criticism, we can find that the research under the guidance of a linear sense of history is becoming more disintegrated. At the same time, the geographical and spatial elements are increasingly becoming the major perspective and entry point to observe problems.²²⁰

Architecture represents as a form of space, as well as a necessary link between the craftsmen and the users. Therefore, it is necessary to introduce reasonable spatial analysis, namely Lefebvre’s “ternary dialectics” of space. He divides the forming and cognitive process of space into “spatial practice,” “representations of space” and “representational spaces (Lefebvre, 1991, p.33).”

“Spatial practice”²²¹ can be simply understood as the practical concept of Marxism. In

²¹⁹ From then on, the discourse construction dominated by history-time mode was gradually eliminated. Scholars turned to the spatial horizon to examine the historical situation and social life. The pioneers and representatives of this turning movement mainly include famous scholars such as Michel Foucault (1926-1984), Henri Lefebvre and Manuel Castells(1942-)(Cai and Zhang (Eds.), 2003, pp.145-191).

²²⁰ For example, *Social Relations and Spatial Structures*, published jointly by sociologists and human geographers in 1985, reflects the willingness of many disciplines to connect with each other within theory.

²²¹ Lefebvre define the “spatial practice” as: “spatial practice, which embraces production and reproduction, and the particular locations and spatial sets characteristic of each social formation (Lefebvre, 1991, p.33).”

Lefebvre's concept of space ,“(social) space is (social) product.”²²² For architecture, it is in fact the result of the material production activities of craftsmen, and today's architecture with historical meaning is also derived from social practice at the beginning of its construction.

“Representations of space”²²³ refers to the conceptualized space, namely the intellectual and conceptual space in the minds of technologists, that is, a code system that can replace the daily real space. Lefebvre regards these powerful, planned and intellectual spaces as important objects capable of creating social order.

“Representational spaces”²²⁴ is a specific daily private space, which can be experienced. The space mainly originates in the space experience and imagination of the space user. Thus, the relationship between the architecture built by the craftsmen and its users is based on different dimensions of the same space.

For space, these three elements exist at the same time. The craftsmen realize the “representations of space” as expected through the “spatial practice,” while the space user experiences the “representational spaces” in the created space. Under this logical chain, with the formation of space, craftsmen and users are connected through architecture, and the historical consciousness and social relations that they shape are also formed.

²²² “(Social) space is a (social) product (Ibid., p.26).”

²²³ Lefebvre define the “representations of space” as: “representations of space, which are tied to the relations of production and to the ‘order’ which those relations impose, and hence to knowledge, to signs, to codes, and to ‘frontal’ relations (Ibid., p.33).”

²²⁴ Lefebvre define the “representations of space” as: “representational spaces, embodying complex symbolisms, sometimes coded, sometimes not, linked to the clandestine or underground side of social life, as also to art (which may come eventually to be defined less as a code of space than as a code of representational spaces) (Ibid.).”

4.2.2 The Space Creation of Kongō Gumi

The intuitive space of Shitennoji Temple or other temple architecture built by Kongō Gumi during the process of construction and perception can be abstracted as a kind of “divine space.” That is to say, the invisible power structure of “craftsmen--temples and shrines--believers” has been formed in space.

Take Shitennoji Temple, the most representative buildings of Kongō Gumi as an example, considering its forming mode of the whole space, the middle gate, the five-storied pagoda, kondo hall (main hall), and lecture hall lie tandemly from the south to the north, and are symmetrical. With the corridor around them, they constitute central Garan 中心伽藍, the initial center of Shitennoji Temple (Shitennoji, 2005, p.6).²²⁵

First of all, the space created by Kongō Gumi presents a central symmetrical structure. This kind of architectural space is considered to be a temple style developed “since the period of China’s Northern and Southern Dynasties (420-589) from Baekje, which is the style of Shitennoji Temple (Hasegawa, 1925, p.677).” For the general theory of the study of Chinese Buddhist architecture, this kind of architectural space is similar to the “front pagoda and back temple”²²⁶

²²⁵ In addition, in the research works and database about the Shitennoji Temple, the spatial structure of this kind of architectural complex, as the basic knowledge of the Shitennoji Temple, is also often mentioned. For example: the research by Kawagishi (1989, pp.23-29).

²²⁶ Zhang Yuhuan 張馭寰 divided the changes of the layout of Buddhist temples after Han Dynasty into four periods: the period of “pagoda alone 獨尊佛塔” (the end of the Han Dynasty), the period of “front pagoda and back temple 前塔後殿” (from the Northern and Southern Dynasties to the Tang Dynasty), the period of “parallel layout of pagoda and temple 塔殿並列” (in the Tang Dynasty), and the period of “front temple and back pagoda 前殿后塔” (after the Tang Dynasty).

He summed up the changes in the space as follows: Chinese Buddhist architecture first drew lessons from the

layout in the Northern and Southern Dynasties. The following theories basically followed this view and designated the space structure of Garan configuration of Shitennoji Temple style 四天王寺式伽藍配置.²²⁷

This spatial structure is characterized by the emphasis on the uniqueness of each independent space in the central part through symmetry on the transverse axis. Concerning the ductility of space, the center is focused, but can extend infinitely, showing the trend of continuous outward expansion, and reflecting the power of Buddhist architecture in the center. For example, in Shitennoji Temple, except for the central Garan, other temples and gardens are mostly built by later generations. They lay out around the central Garan. In the central Garan, the five-storied pagoda in the central position is the highest building in the whole architectural complex, while the building on both sides of the central axis is relatively low. Following the idea of “Pagoda is Buddha,” the power of this belief is naturally reflected in the buildings.

Moreover, there is a corridor around the central Garan to distinguish the “Buddha” from the vulgar world. Today, many of Japanese buildings are not fenced except political and religious spaces. The fence or wall is in fact a symbolic representation of “boundary.” In addition, from the perspective of the space formation, the establishment of the wall requires that all people must enter through the same direction, through the space displayed by the only path. The

overall layout of ancient Indian Buddhist temples, adhering to the concept of “pagoda is Buddha.” Then, as people need to adopt the Buddhist temple as a space for offering and paying respect for Buddha, the status of the pagoda gradually decreased while the space of the temple (hall) gradually expanded, and began to occupy the major position of the Buddhist complex.

See in Zhang(2012, pp. 8-9).

²²⁷ Shitennoji Temple, History : <http://www.shitennoji.or.jp/history.html>

This kind of view can also be seen in the researches of Mori (1991, 1994), Okamoto (2002).

aforementioned spatial structure provided by the architect can be truthfully communicated to the believers (Figure 4.2, 4.3).

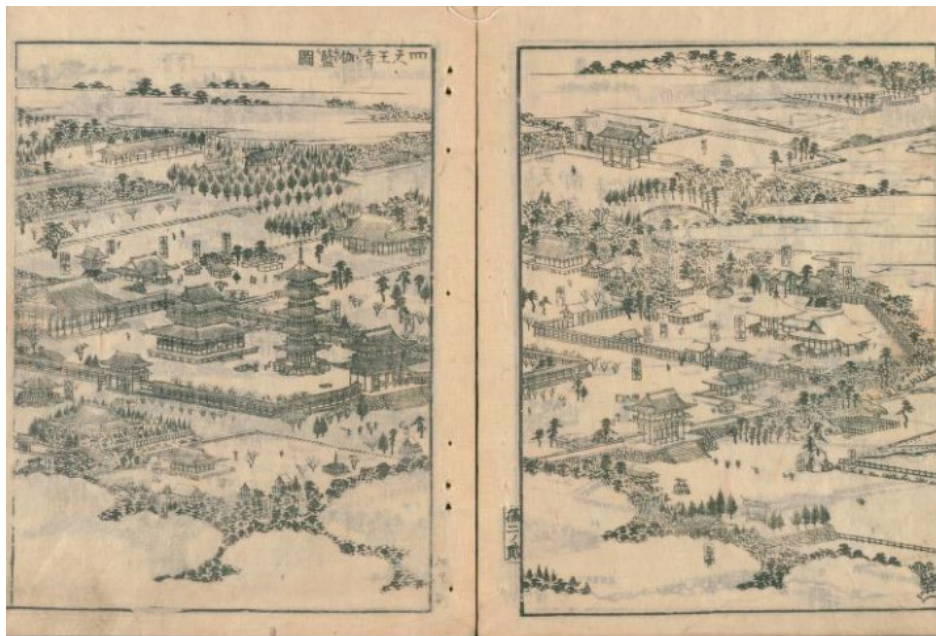


Figure 4.2. The Garan of Shitennoji Temple in *Settsu Meisho Zue*²²⁸ © 2011-2020 National Diet Library



Figure 4.3. The Garan of Shitennoji Temple²²⁹ © 2011 Shitennoji Temple 宗教法人 四天王寺

²²⁸ National Diet Digital Collections, *Settsu Meisho Zue* (Vol.2):

<https://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/2563460?tocOpened=1>

²²⁹ Shitennoji Temple, Access: <http://www.shitennoji.or.jp/access.html>

Concerning the architectural details of the temple, Kongō Gumi is especially good at creating the mysterious sense of space for the halls of Shitennoji Temple (such as kondo hall and lecture hall) in order to show the worship of the Buddha. This feature is also almost the common spatial composition principle of the Japanese temple and shrine architecture.

First of all, under the sloping roof supported by the huge bucket arch frame. For the Buddhist temple, except the door, the wall is mainly composed of wooden structures with no windows. This kind of space structure without direct lighting will lead to a dark and mysterious space experience within the temple, and then create a strong religious atmosphere of temple architecture. Meanwhile, this feature of the building will also lead to advanced characteristics like constant temperature and humidity, as well as lighting-avoidance, which also provide a strong guarantee for the preservation of statues and murals in the temple.

In addition, all the objects within the temple also rely on space. The wooden structure of the temple architecture is tall and empty as a whole. When entering the temple, this architectural style turns out to be magnificent, and the space experience of people is solemn and majestic. In addition to the Buddhism statue in the center of the temple, the overall building space is in the state of “*sūnyatā*,” which means emptiness, voidness, openness and thusness in Buddhism. When people stay in the temple, they may feel themselves negligible. Expressing the great, complex and real Buddhist spirit through the small, empty and virtual architecture is the spatial feeling that be conveyed through the craftsmanship and their design.

4.2.3 The Space Creation of Xiangshan Bang

The architectures Xiangshan Bang engaged in are mostly dwelling houses, which, in terms of scale, can be mainly divided into “urban residential building 城市住宅 and water town residential buildings 水鄉民居 (Liu et al., 2013, p.36),” while palace architecture reaching the largest scale (Figure 4.4). Apart from the unique meaning of political space in the palace architecture,²³⁰ the main achievements of Xiangshan Bang can be abstracted as “living space.” Thus, the implicit relationship of “craftsmen-- residential buildings--residents ”gradually formed.

For the urban residential building, since there are a large area of landscape in addition to housing, so they are often named as Suzhou Gardens. For architecture, these large houses strictly adhere to the ethical system of the traditional society, and the established family concept of father and son, and the respect for seniority, which lead to roughly the same layout of most these houses. Depending on the different utility of the houses, they will be arranged in different locations with specific scales and shapes.

Typical large urban residential building of Xiangshan Bang is basically symmetrical with the central axis. Generally, there are four or five enclosed courtyards, with a maximum of eleven

²³⁰ The Forbidden City was basically constructed in accordance with the principle of the construction of the imperial capital of “The left side is the ancestral temple, the right side is the nation altar, the front is the court and the back is the market 左祖右社， 面朝後市”， Zhouli: Dongguan, Kaogongji. Zhouli: Dongguan, Kaogongji. Refers to Zhouli Zhushu, from *Siku Quanshu*, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 90-p.769.

Thus, the craftsmen in China formed the basic appearance of “the front is the court and the back is the residential buildings 前朝後寢 (Xiao, 2006, p.104).” The functional area can be divided into a political area (front) and a living area (back).

courtyards (Cui, 2004, pp.44-46).²³¹ Some scholars summarize the basic form as “Three Halls and Five Courtyards 三落五進式 (Liu et al., 2013, p.37).”²³²

Three halls refers to the main hall and the two halls on both sides. The main hall contains the lobby 門廳 as the first courtyard, the sedan chair hall 轎廳 as the second courtyard, the middle hall 正廳 as the third courtyard and the chamber 內廳 as the fourth and fifth (or only the fourth) courtyard, which is the place where the owner and the family live. There are always three courtyards of the side halls. The first courtyard is the drawing room 花廳, while the two courtyards after are mostly secondary rooms and service rooms. The side halls and main halls are connected by the side lane 備弄/避弄.

This kind of Xiangshan Bang architecture is represented by the Master of the Nets Garden (Figure 4.5) and Yanjia Garden 嚴家花園 (Figure 4.6).

²³¹ This book categorizes the urban residential building of Xiangshan Bang into medium-scale and large-scale, but because the basic shape of the building is roughly the same, this dissertation puts them in the same category.

²³² The traditional residential layout of Xiangshan Bang regards “Jian 間” (a room) as the basic unit, the horizontal connection of three to five “Jian” (rooms) is “Luo 落” (hall), which forms a house with its front courtyard, that is “Jin 進”. Each courtyard is separated by the “Tianjing 天井” (patio).



Figure 4.4.

The Structure of the Forbidden City

© 2005 Beijing Lüyou Wang

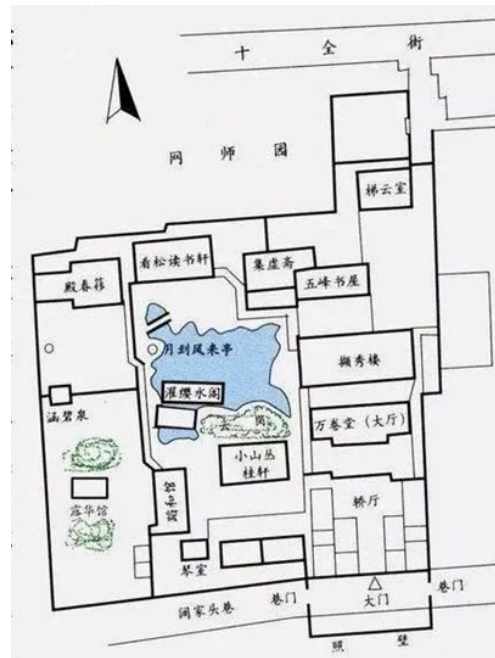


Figure 4.5.

The Structure of the Master of the Nets Garden

© 2020 Qingdiao Suzhou



Figure 4.6. The Structure of Yanjia Garden © 2020 Yanjia Garden

The symmetry of central axis is a kind of spatial structure commonly seen in Chinese architecture. It pursues the sense of symmetry of left and right and balance of architectural

complex. The center of the complex is the symbol of status, mainly based on the concept of internal and external differentiation, and the order to primary and secondary. Considering the need to echo with man-made “nature” in the garden, in addition to the symmetry of the central axis, the spatial structure of the side halls can also be moderately reduced or inclined to form a mutual echo and supplement with the garden, which also reflects the flexible feature of taking asymmetry in addition to symmetry. In addition, the main entrance and exit are set merely on the main hall in the middle. Generally, there is no direct entrance or exit in the side halls. The front and the back are not interconnected. This feature also reflects the Chinese tradition that the family cannot live in a separate house.

The last courtyard of the main hall is often the two-story embroidery building 繡樓 or library. Comparing with the single-story lobby, sedan chair hall and middle hall, it looks higher. As a result, the housing also formed the space situation of “lower front and higher back,” implying “the latecomers surpass the formers 後來居上.” This also proves to a certain extent that, in addition to the spatial form shaped by the traditional family concept, the concept of good or bad (fortune) in the traditional folk customs also affects the way of thinking of Xiangshan Bang craftsmen in space construction.

Subsequently, the small residential building built near water are also worth paying attention to, namely the “water town residential building” mentioned above. This category of buildings can be divided into three types: “water-facing 面水, water-front 臨水, cross-water 跨水.”²³³ Different from the complex of the large houses described above, such small dwelling

²³³ Water-facing houses are generally built on both sides of the open water channel. Both sides of the water are streets. The buildings face water but not near water.

houses often consist of only one (up to two) building, with mostly one or two stories. They are made of wood on top of a stone cushion (Figure 4.7). In the architecture, different functional areas will be divided according to the requirements and specific needs of the residents for the structure, so as to provide a more secure, private and human living space.



Figure 4.7. The Water Town Residential Buildings in Suzhou © 2019 Yuanjian Sheji

The main spatial characteristic of these rural houses are based on the principle of economic application. Based on the characteristics of “every house stands near water, every house can be reached by boat,” the water town houses are especially adapted to local conditions, especially compared with the urban large dwelling houses which strictly follow central axis. These

Water-front houses are generally built near the river, often forming the pattern of “street front and river back”.

Cross-water houses are rare. They are generally built on both sides of a narrow river, with a bridge in the middle across the river.

The specific forms of these three water town residential buildings can be found in Liu et al. (2013, p. 43); Cui (2004, pp. 47-50).

buildings are distinctly flexible. According to the social status and economic conditions of the residents, Xiangshan Bang craftsmen provide a possibility for the people to coordinate their lives and their living space.

4.3 Vision and Aesthetics

4.3.1 From Craftsmanship to Art

In the discussion of this chapter, we always hold the idea that the result of craftsmanship, that is, the architecture: is the concrete presentation of craftsmanship spirit. In the category of aesthetics, architectural aesthetics itself occupies an important part of the practical aesthetics (Li, 2003, pp.203-204).²³⁴ At the same time, the artistic characteristics²³⁵ of architecture have also been widely studied by researchers. Following this idea, architecture, as the historical relic of craftsmanship, can be regarded as the representation of art and become an aesthetic object from the aesthetic perspective.

Here, it is necessary to analyze the relationship between the craftsmanship and the art, so as to straighten out the relationships among “the craftsman (the owner of technique)--architecture (aesthetic object) – the user (aesthetic subject).”

First of all, craftsmanship, or technique, is a specific means used to arouse specific feelings

²³⁴ According to this, Li Zehou 李澤厚 divides aesthetics into philosophical aesthetics, historical aesthetics and scientific aesthetics (which contains fundamental aesthetics and practical aesthetics).

²³⁵ Architecture was originally produced to meet the needs of physical life. With the progress of human beings, architecture gradually develops aesthetic functions from practical functions. There is beauty in architecture, which is architectural beauty. Architecture beauty has existed since the beginning as an aesthetic object.

For nearly half a century, as technology has gradually become the driving force for social development, the relationship between technology and beauty contained in architecture has also triggered the thinking of philosophers and architects themselves (Ito & Mizuta, 2008).

The representative scholar in this trend is Roger Vernon Scruton (1944-2020), who is also regarded as the founder of architectural aesthetics. His representative work is *The Aesthetics of Architecture* (1979), tried to reverse modernity through the aesthetics of architecture itself with a conservative attitude.

of aesthetic objects. It focuses on methods and processes. Compared with it, art is a pursuit in a particular field, biased toward concrete results. The difference between the two mainly lies in the perspectives. For example, in the process of creating “works of art,” the specific skills of craftsmen (architects), painters and writers are required in all the fields that are basically recognized together as art, such as the field of architecture, painting, literature and so on. Therefore, even faced with the same aesthetic object, from the perspective of result, it can be regarded as art, while from the perspective of process and execution, it can be classified into the category of craftsmanship.

From this perspective, the core of craftsmanship is cognition and operation. Excellent craftsmen will have at least a very high skill cognition and adept manipulative ability. Yet the foundation of art is specific skill, and the core of art is emotion and expression. Apart from superb craftsmanship, great artists will also possess profound independent emotions and outstanding skills of expression.

The word “craftsmanship 技藝” in Chinese itself contains the implication of “art 藝.” From this way of word-formation, it can be concluded that in the Eastern thought, “technique” and “art” are indeed connected to some extent. In Japan, similar views are easily formed among craftsmen of all kinds at the operational level: the perfection of skill is the basis for all art, and craftsmen will even regard their own skills as a kind of art.²³⁶ On the creation of aesthetics,

²³⁶ From the perspective of aesthetics, the most representative researcher of these studies is Yanagi Muneyoshi 柳宗悦 (1889-1961, his name is often translated into Yanagi Sōetsu under the English system). He raised the term *mingei* 民芸 (folk craft) in 1925 and created the corresponding aesthetic system (Yanagi, 2003, 2005). This research direction mainly focuses on the concepts of handcraft, masses, functional in daily life, beauty and so on. It takes the craft which created by the craftsmen as the main research object and pays attention to the discussion of

following the view of “humanization of nature (Li, 2003, pp.464-473),”²³⁷ Li Zehou put forward “humanization of inherent nature (Ibid.,p.468)”²³⁸: in production practice, people are bound to understand the function and form of things, during which the perceptions, senses, feelings and even aesthetic experience will first accumulate in labor practice. In the process of the formation of aesthetics, it becomes possible for the “technique” accumulated in the productive practice to approach the “art” in the aesthetic sense.

In this case, there is a certain isomorphism between technique and art. In the story of Paoding dismember an ox in *Zhuangzi*, the skill of Paoding was described specifically: “Wherever his hand touched, his shoulder leaned, his foot tread and his knee thrust, there was the sound of ripping and the sound of slicing, which kept time with the rhythm of the dance of *Sanglin* and were as melodious as the music of *Jingshou*.”²³⁹ In other words, when technique is mature enough, its methods and processes themselves become a concrete form of aesthetic possibilities. Imamichi Tomonobu also discussed the relationship between craftsmanship and art (Imamichi, 1973, pp.193-194). Besides, it is interesting to note that the common way of

its aesthetic implication. Refers to Nihon Mingeikan: <http://www.mingeikan.or.jp/about/> and Yanagi et al. (1989).

²³⁷ Li Zehou developed his concept of “humanization of nature” from Marx’s “humanized nature.” The English translation of “humanization of nature” comes from Rošker (2019, p.88).

²³⁸ The English translation of “humanization of inherent nature” comes from Rošker (2019, p.89).

²³⁹ The original text is 手之所觸，肩之所倚，足之所履，膝之所踣，砉然騞然，奏刀騞然，莫不中音。合於《桑林》之舞，乃中《經首》之會, *Zhuangzi: Yangshengzhu*. Refers to *Zhuangzi Zhu*, from *Siku Quanshu*, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 1056-p.20.

Besides, James Legge (1891) translated 所好者道也，進乎技也 (see details in chapter 3, section 3) to “what your servant loves is the method of the Tao, something in advance of any art.” Here, he regarded the technique as art.

describing something as “advanced technology” in English is “state-of-the-art,”²⁴⁰ in the literal form and the meaning of which art is endowed with practical characteristics, and technique also can be seen as a practical form of approaching art. As sociologist Daniel Bell (1919-2011) put it, “Technology, like art, is a soaring exercise of the human imagination (Bell, 2017, p.224).”²⁴¹ In the level of human creativity, the common ground of technique and art can be clearly stated.

However, despite the possibility of “technique” approaching “art” stated above, there are differences between them. Originally, they are from different dimensions, and many philosophers have discussed the differences from the perspective of the freedom of creation.²⁴² Therefore, we need to note that when it comes to the aesthetic consciousness of craftsmen as creators, it cannot be raised to the level of free creation, but still need to be studied in the perspective of production practice.

²⁴⁰ This term began to be used in the 20th century and generally refers to technology and other fields. The definition in the Cambridge Dictionary is “very modern and using the most recent ideas and methods.”

²⁴¹ Daniel Bell’s argument is basically based on the perspective of post-industrial society. The technology mentioned here does indeed refer to the science and technology used in the industrial society. As he said in the following text: “Techne, too, is a form of art that bridges culture and social structure, and in the process reshapes both.” However, based on the knowledge of technique to technology which was stated in chapter 3, his definition of “art” and “imagination” still applies to the level of technique.

²⁴² “*Art* is likewise distinguished from *craft*. The first is also called *free art*, the second could also be called *mercenary art*. We regard free art [as an art] that could only turn out purposive (i.e., succeed) if it is play, in other words, and occupation that is agreeable on its own account; mercenary art we regard as labor, i.e., as an occupation that on its own account is disagreeable (burdensome) and that attracts us only through its effect (e.g., pay), so that people can be coerced into it.” Kant & Pluhar (1987), *On Art in General* (Section 43), in *Critique of Judgment*, p.171.

4.3.2 The Aesthetics of Craftsmen

Architecture must first meet the physical needs, and then the aesthetic needs of human beings. Its usable value and aesthetic value are symbiotic. A construction craftsman is a skill master as well as an aesthetic individual at the same time, whose body, in the process of skill learning, has accumulated his own aesthetic experience, which also superimposed the aesthetic tradition passed on from generation to generation among the craftsman group. In this way, we will consider how Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang create through their own craftsmen, so as to complete the eternal and independent pursuit of the spiritual proposition of aesthetics between the values of religion or secularity through the result of the art of architecture.

From the perspective of senses, the aesthetics of architectural presentation is mainly presented in the visual aspect,²⁴³ focusing on “the shapes that compose it, the color (colour in original text), texture, handling of the paint and so on, with a view to enjoying what we see (Munro, 1987, pp.115-128),” as well as on the balance, contrast, unity and scale of the building, etc. The architectural beauty mentioned here mainly refers to the formal beauty of architecture, which directly appeals to the human senses. In this aspect basically lies the dimension that craftsmen can create through their own skills. Apart from the formal beauty, the spirit of the times and the social material and cultural features embodied in buildings are also hidden in the overall category of architectural beauty: every building built by craftsmen reflects the cultural characteristics of times, nationalities and regions, and embodies the social, political,

²⁴³ In the aesthetic process, people mainly use “sensual non-utilitarian,” the senses of vision and auditory gradually surpass the existence itself, and become the most important senses of aesthetic (Li, 2003, p.408).

philosophical and ethical concepts of a certain era and nation, restricted by national cultural traditions, geographical climate, customs and habits. After that, the study on concrete architectural aesthetics of Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang will be based on color and shape, the two levels perceived by vision, thereby study the cultural and geographical factors behind it.

The study starts with the color. From the perspective of exterior colors of buildings, the original temple buildings by Kongō Gumi have always maintained the looks of white walls, red columns and green windows, while the residential buildings by Xiangshan Bang are mainly presented with white walls and black tiles.

So far, the earliest preservation of the color using form of Shitennoji Temple is the painting *The Garan Reconstruction of Shitennoji Temple in Genna* 四天王寺元和再建伽藍図 (Figure 4.8). This construction began in 1623 (the 7th year of Genna), taking the opportunity of General Tokugawa Hidetada 徳川秀忠 rebuilding the five-storied pagoda. Tokugawa shogunate also helped Shitennoji Temple build other halls. The colors of Shitennoji Temple in the old painting is almost the same as it is today: Shitennoji Temple that Kongō Gumi has been maintaining is very unique in color setting, that is, white walls, red columns and green windows (Figure 4.9). This feature is almost different from the prevailing Buddhist temples in Japan. Kongō Gumi's rich and distinct way of using colors shown by Shitennoji Temple can also be found in residential building in northern China²⁴⁴ and traditional Korean palaces.²⁴⁵ As for the background of technique, Kongō Gumi retained the most original construction techniques from ancient China

²⁴⁴ In some traditional courtyard houses 四合院 in Beijing, China, the characteristics of white walls (grey walls), red columns, and green windows are still preserved.

²⁴⁵ Such as Gyeongbokgung Palace in Korea.

through Korean Peninsula, so, this way of using colors should also be regarded as a part of its preservation of the architectural style of Buddhist temples in ancient China.

Many Buddhist temples in Japan adopt white walls, decorated with log-colored windows and columns. In the current construction, due to the expansion of business, Kongō Gumi is bound to consider the specific style of the original building in the construction of the temple architecture. Therefore, both in the existing and restored temples of Kongō Gumi, we can find a large number of log-colored building materials. This production practice, which is different from its original technical background, can be understood as the integration of Kongō Gumi in the Japanese cultural background and the local aesthetic style.

In the large urban residences by Xiangshan Bang, the color features of the white walls and black tiles (Figure 4.10) are very obvious: “Suzhou Gardens are different from gardens in Beijing, rarely using colored painting... The walls are white. Some of the lower halves of interior walls are lined with square light-grey water-grinding bricks, setting off the white on the upper halves. The roof tiles and eaves are all pale grey. These colors work with the green color of grass and trees, bringing people a quiet and comfortable feeling. And when the flower season begins, various colors of all the flowers are more visible and impressive against the background (Ye, 1979, p.59).” This way of color using also still exists among residences in watery regions.

It forms a simple and refreshing visual feeling using colors in this way. In fact, this aesthetic characteristic comes from the technique itself. The tile is an important waterproof material for the roof, which is usually made from fired soil. Because of the soil quality in the area where Xiangshan Bang is located, the newly fired tiles show the colors of green and black,

and because of the existence of various organic matter in the soil, the tiles become suitable for growth of the moss, which, when growing all over, makes the tiles look thicker and deeper black. Besides Xiangshan Bang, many craftsmen in Jiangnan area of China (such as Anhui Province) will paint white lime (calcium oxide) on the exterior wall of the building, because as an architectural coating, lime is easy to get, moisture-proof and insect-proof as well, which accords with the basic environmental characteristics of this area. From this we can conclude that Xiangshan Bang is generating its aesthetics from the perspective of technical pragmatism.



Figure 4.8. The Garan Reconstruction of Shitennoji Temple in Genna²⁴⁶© 2011 Shitennoji Temple



Figure 4.9.

The Vision of Shitennoji Temple

© 2020 Osaka Convention & Tourism Bureau



Figure 4.10.

The Vision of the Master of the Nets Garden

© 2020 The Master of the Nets Garden

²⁴⁶ Shitennoji Temple, History: <http://www.shitennoji.or.jp/history.html>

Besides, Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang basically retain the original color of wood inside the building. Among the temple architecture built by Kongō Gumi, the wood in some positions is even not painted to maintain the original color of wood (Figure 4.11). In the architecture built by Xiangshan Bang, “beams, columns, doors and windows are mostly painted by Chinese lacquer,” thus forming “soft color (Ye, 1979, p.59),” which has almost been a technical consensus (Figure 4.12). In the chapter 3, we have mentioned the demand of these two groups of craftsmen on materials. The use of log-color indoors can basically retain and extend the attitude of craftsmen towards materials.

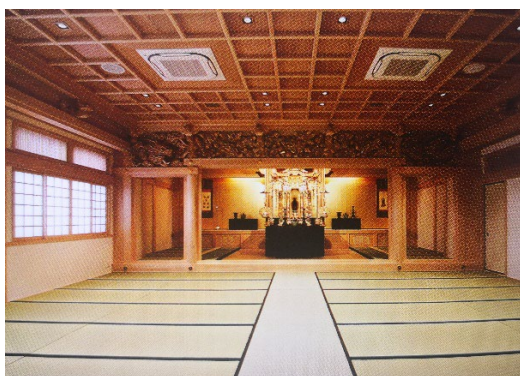


Figure 4.11.

The Vision of the Saishōji Temple (Indoor)²⁴⁷

© 2018 Kongō Gumi



Figure 4.12.

The Vision of Kansong Duhua Xuan (Indoor)

© 2020 The Master of the Nets Garden

Furthermore, in the overall style embodied in the architectural form, Xiangshan Bang’s creation of residential building tends to be of dexterity and elegance, and the temple building of Kongō Gumi is more solemn and quiet.

Judging from the shape of the residential building, the roofs of the houses built by

²⁴⁷ Kongō Gumi built the Saishōji Temple 西勝寺 (Osaka). From the brochure of Kongō Gumi: the new building of the temple.

Xiangshan Bang differ according to the identity of the residents. Most of the water town houses are with gable roof 切妻屋根/硬山式, while the large-scale residential building are mostly with East Asian hip-and-gable roof 入母屋造/歇山式, such as the Humble Administrator's Garden 拙政園, Lingering Garden 留園, Joyous Garden 怡園, etc., the tail end tips up to form cornice, like birds spreading wings, being dynamic and smart. The tiles used to decorate the eaves of the houses of Xiangshan Bang include drip-style tile, lace-style tile, round tile and so on (Li, 2004, p.279), showing soft curves and decorative beauty. In the building, the columns, plinths and beams in the wooden frame of Xiangshan Bang residential buildings especially emphasize the delicate beauty. "The columns are straight, the shape is round, and the degree of thickness is in proportion. The thicker is not the better, because it creates a sense of awkwardness instead of dexterity (Ibid)." These exterior features constitute the architectural dexterity and elegance of Xiangshan Bang's architecture.

In terms of the basic form of the temple building, the roofs of Shitennoji Temple (such as the middle gate, kondo hall and lecture hall) created by Kongō Gumi are all East Asian hip-and-gable roofs. Kondo hall, due to its significance, adopts double hip-and-gable roof.²⁴⁸ In East Asia, we can find that the main door of Gyeongbokgung Palace in South Korea and Tiananmen in China use this roof style. The end of the roof is smooth and slightly tilted, being quite stable. Visually, this kind of roof creates a sense of angular and clear structure, showing a solemn aesthetic style. With the broad body of the building itself and the large platform, the structure with distinct layers makes the whole complex solemn and vigorous. It is easy to experience the

²⁴⁸ The double hip-and-gable roof belongs to East Asian hip-and-gable roof. The "double" means double eaves, refers to adding a eave under the original East Asian hip-and-gable roof.

strong rhythm and the solemn beauty of the building.

From the previous description, we can conclude that the aesthetics of architecture naturally contains technical characteristics, and many of the identified aesthetic styles may be derived from the craftsman's own technical needs or technical background. That is, the environment in which the craftsman carries out production practice, the materials obtained and even the sources of the skills can have a great impact on the aesthetic attributes and value of the building. Additionally, the aesthetic consciousness of craftsmen also makes aesthetic creation of the architecture in practice, and produces a "historical relic of craftsmanship" with both practical and aesthetic characteristics.

4.3.3 The Aesthetic Reception of Aesthetic Subjects

The architecture created by craftsmen is actually a permanent existence, which is independent from the perception of the aesthetic subjects. Its objective existence does not depend on the aesthetic experience of the aesthetic subjects, and its structural form will not change because of the subjective feeling. When the architecture is created as an aesthetic object, its aesthetic significance is independent from the craftsmen. Only when the architecture forms the objective relationship with the users and appreciators, can it create a new level of aesthetic experience, that is, the process of aesthetic realization needs to be completed by the aesthetic subjects.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁹ This way of thinking is influenced by the concepts of reception aesthetics, such as "audience" and "oppositional reading." Reception aesthetics, also known as reception theory, originated in the mid-1960s, was a literary category of aesthetic research. The first advocate was Hans Robert Jauss (1921-1997) of Germany. This

In this sense, the aesthetic experience formed by the architecture only exists in the cognition of the aesthetic subjects, which is a relative, concrete existence and can be controlled by the thought, emotion and psychological structure of the aesthetic subjects. In the aesthetic process of users and appreciators, the architecture is actually perceived, regulated and recreated by the aesthetic subjects, and it is the aesthetic object that integrates the personal experience, emotion and artistic taste of the aesthetic subject.

In other words, the aesthetic prospect of craftsmen cannot be faithfully conveyed by the architecture. Instead, it depends on the direct reception of the users and appreciators, which also constitutes the uncertainty of the architectural aesthetics. After being created by the craftsman, the aesthetic subjects may have many misreading of the architecture. This aesthetic state was recorded in text in China:

After visiting the north hall of the Lu Ancestral Temple, Zi Gong asked Confucius, “I visited the north hall of the Ancestral Temple, but I did not stop. I turned to look at the nine doors. They were all made by pieces of wood. What are the reasons? Was it the carpenter’s fault that broke the wood?” Confucius said, “The north hall of the Ancestral Temple was a fine place indeed. The officials employed skilled craftsmen to give play to

paradigm of aesthetic research focuses on the role of the audience in aesthetic reception. It is proposed that the aesthetic realization process of the aesthetic subject is the process of the work gaining vitality and the final completion of the work.

At the same time, some commentators also pointed out that “reception aesthetics is not the study of aesthetics, nor the study of criticism in literary theory, but the independent self-sufficiency based on phenomenology and hermeneutics, according to human reception practice (Jauss & Holub, 1987, p.4).”

their craftsmanship according to the wood. It is not because there is no good wood, but perhaps it is because of the value of art.”²⁵⁰

The wood used in the door panel of the north hall of the Ancestral Temple is “all broken.” From the perspective of craftsmanship, it is definitely the structure of mortise and tenon joint (see in chapter 3, section 2). Although the craftsman does not use the whole piece of wood, the connection between the wood is equally strong and has excellent characteristics such as shockproof. But from the perspective of Confucius as the appreciator at that time, it was interpreted as “the value of art.” In this way, the appreciator endows the form of architecture with aesthetic value. The process of upgrading craftsmanship to aesthetics is the misreading of aesthetic subject. In this section, the aesthetic style of “white wall and black tile” in Xiangshan Bang is essentially developed also from the demand of craftsmen. However, it is the knowledge difference between the appreciator and the user that leads to misreading, which creates infinite feeling for aesthetic subjects for generation.

At the same time, the interaction between craftsmen and aesthetic subjects can jointly

²⁵⁰ The original text is 子貢觀於魯廟之北堂，出而問於孔子曰：“鄉者賜觀於太廟之北堂，吾亦未輟，還瞻被九蓋皆繼，彼有說邪？匠過絕邪？”孔子曰：“太廟之堂亦嘗有說，官致良工，因麗節文，非無良材也，蓋曰貴文也，*Xunzi: Youzuo* 《荀子·宥坐》. Refers to *Xunzi*, from *Siku Quanshu*, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 695-p.296.

The similar text comes from *Kongzi Jiayu: Sanshu* 《孔子家語·三恕》. The original text is 子貢觀於魯廟之北堂，出而問於孔子曰：“向也，賜觀於太廟之堂，未既，輟，還瞻北蓋，皆斷焉。彼將有說邪？匠之過也。”孔子曰：“太廟之堂，官致良工之匠，匠致良材，盡其工巧，蓋貴久矣，尚有說也. Refers to *Kongzi Jiayu*, from *Siku Quanshu*, Zibu 1, Rujia, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 695-p.22.

generate the aesthetics of the architecture itself. This process can promote the architecture of a certain area or a certain type to be fixed in a particular aesthetic style, because objectively the craftsmen are employed by the users or the owners of the architecture. The aesthetic subjects generated in the production practice also implies the craftsman's own speculation on the aesthetic pleasure (or aesthetic feeling) of aesthetic subjects. Correspondingly, some very outstanding craftsmen are sought after due to their advanced craftsmanship, and the architecture will also reshape the aesthetic perception of the aesthetic subject.

Combined with the basic viewpoint of traditional aesthetics, the realization process of aesthetics mainly includes “perception, understanding, imagination and emotion (Li, 2003, p.477).” For the aesthetic subjects, these senses are often intuitive, and the aesthetic process is rapid and even immediate. Therefore, based on the aesthetic characteristic of architecture, for Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang, the architectural characteristics of their areas (such as Suzhou Gardens of Xiangshan Bang) or the types engaged in (such as the temple architecture of Kongō Gumi) are more distinct and intuitive, which also become the inevitable pursuit of craftsmanship.

Chapter 5

Rite: The Reflection of the Craftsmen's Secular Spirit

Rite is a set of formal acts, often fixed and traditional, performs on important social or religious occasions. It is generally considered to be the belief in action. Within the scope of cultural anthropology and religious studies, the study of the rite is often an important entry into the common psychology of a certain social group.

In the past, the study of rite and ritual²⁵¹ has undergone several transformations. The first genre of this kind of research often involves the origin of the ritual. It developed in the 19th century, was represented by the myth and ritual school²⁵² and psychoanalysis²⁵³. Subsequently, it follows the social structural-functional analysis²⁵⁴, which cares about how the rites promote social organization and social life, that is, the social attribute and functionality of the rite. Nowadays, the dominant school of this research is the symbolic-cultural school, which takes the rite as an independent cultural system. The analysis of this chapter will mainly rely on the cognitive system of the latter two schools.²⁵⁵

²⁵¹ There are two words in English that can be used to express this meaning, one is for the ritual, the other is for the rite. In the study of rite and ritual, these two words are often confused. Even though, there are still subtle differences between the two words in previous studies. In the sequence, we can find that the meaning of the two words differs from the norm and order and the practice.

²⁵² Its representative scholars are Edward Burnett Tylor (1832-1917) and James George Frazer (1854-1941). They hold the opinion of rituals are the source of religion and culture, according to the concept of evolution.

²⁵³ Representative scholar is Sigmund Freud (1856-1939). This school mainly involves in the mysterious power or emotion, shows enthusiasm for the integration of individual psychological cognition.

²⁵⁴ Representative scholars are Alfred Radcliffe-Brown (1881-1955), Emile Durkheim (1858-1917), Max Gluckman (1911-1975), etc.

²⁵⁵ In the previous studies, this paradigm has precedents, such as Edmund Leach (1910-1989) and Mary Douglas (1921-2007). They maintain a research interest in the social structure as well as the cultural concern.

As far as the craftsmen community is concerned, rites can be regarded as the reflection of the craftsmen's secular spirit. The set of behaviors stipulated by the craftsman cultural traditions embodied in the rites is distinctively intuitive and symbolic. The discourse system behind it can be regarded as a tool for observing human emotions and spirits.

In section 1, this dissertation will concern about the similar rite shared by Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang, that is, the beam raising ceremony. This chapter will interpret the unique performance situation of these blessing ceremony, explain the secular spirit of Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang.

In section 2, when talking about the most representative rites, there are certain differences between Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang. The representative ceremony in Kongō Gumi, the calendar ceremony, that is, the ceremony of carpenter with hatchet. The most important ceremony in Xiangshan Bang is the ethical ceremony, that is, the master's ceremony. The external difference has a distinct cultural significance, it represents the various ultimate value between the two craftsmen groups.

5.1 Ceremony and Building Construction

5.1.1 The Beam Raising Ceremony in Kongō Gumi

5.1.1.1 The Procedure of the Beam Raising Ceremony in Kongō Gumi

The earliest reference to Japan's beam raising ceremony 上棟式 is found in the records written in the 1st year of Jyōgen (976) in *Nihon Kiryaku* 日本紀略: “column setting up and beam raising for imperial palace.”²⁵⁶ It can be thus inferred that by the Heian period at the latest, the beam raising ceremony had already become an important part of construction ceremonies in Japan. The beam raising ceremonies in Japan usually vary by the building size and the builders. The ceremony can be divided, according to the size of the ceremony, into three types: shin-style (真の式, the style of authenticity), kō-style (行の式, the style of practice), and kusa-style (草の式, the style of brevity) (editorial department of seizansha, 1999, pp.104-105). The shin-style is the most complete ceremony (Ibid, p.105),²⁵⁷ while the other two can be seen as simplified versions of the shin-style. Compared with the simplified ceremonies, the beam raising ceremony of Kongō Gumi still retains a great deal of detail, and the specific process of performing mainly consists of the following steps:

The first step is “scripture reading 読経” (for the ceremony of a temple), or “prayer reading

²⁵⁶ The original text is 廿八日庚寅。辰刻。内裏殿舎等豎柱上棟。内記進宣命於神祇官祈申之, in *Nihon Kiryaku (Sequel, 6)*. Refers to *Nihon Kiryaku (Sequel)*, from *Shintei Zoho Kokushi Taikei* 新訂増補国史大系(11), p.132.

²⁵⁷ This kind of style is rarely performed. It is said that this style was used in Nikko Toshogu Shrine, the Dacheng Hall of Yushima Temple and Edo Chiyoda Castle (editorial department of seizansha, 1999, p.105).

祝詞奏上” (for the ceremony of a Shinto shrine). The structures built by Kongō Gumi are mainly temples and shrines. Due to the differences between temples and shrines, the content of the texts read before the formal ceremony vary: either Buddhist scriptures or Shinto prayers is usually chosen by the Buddhism chief priest of temple 住職 or the Shinto priest of the shrine 神職. In essence, this form derives primarily from the Japanese belief in kotodama 言霊 (means spirit of language), a belief that believes the power of the gods is contained in language and can be exerted through the narrative of language. The scripture or prayer reading before the beam raising ceremony is a way to ask for the blessing of the Buddha or Shinto spirits through language.

The second step is “the rite of purify with yari-ganna plane 清鉋の儀,” a process to purify evil spirits by yari-ganna plane 槍鉋, a traditional Japanese carpenter’s tool, outside the building (Figure 5.1, 5.2). In the self-narrative of Kongō Gumi, the purpose of this rite is to protect the building from fire and other disasters.²⁵⁸ Since yari-ganna plane is a carpentry tool unique to Japan, this rite process could also be considered as one unique to the Japanese industry of temple and shrine construction.

The third step is “the rite of stake 博士杭の儀,” and the closely related “the rite of measurement 杖量の儀.” “The rite of stake” is a process of planting a hakasegui (a kind of wooden stake), which is used as a datum, into a reference point of the building under the guidance of a highly experienced carpenter (Figure 5.3). “The rite of measurement” involves measuring the distance from the stake to the building with a large ruler (several meters long, called shakujo 尺杖 in Japanese) to confirm that the building is in the correct location (Figure 5.4).

²⁵⁸ Kongō Gumi: <https://www.kongogumi.co.jp/ja/topics/110828.html>

The fourth step is “the rite of rope pulling 曳綱の儀,” a process of pulling the stringers, which are used as “beams,” to a fixed position on the roof (Figure 5.5). This step is similar to the second step “raising the beam” of Xiangshan Bang’s beam raising ceremony. Before the rite of rope pulling, the stringers are already placed close to the intended installation position, and tied to red and white ropes with one or two ends brought out and extended to the crowd on the ground. When the rite begins, the crowd on the ground, led by the craftsmen, the Buddhism chief priest of temple or the Shinto priest of the shrine, pull up the rope in the work song of “Ei, Ei, Ei,” and with the adjustment of the roofer, the beam is slowly pulled to the predetermined position. At the beam raising ceremony held by Kongō Gumi in recent years, at most, there have been hundreds of people attending the rite of rope pulling together.²⁵⁹

The fifth step is “the rite of hammering 槌打/棟打の儀,” a process to fix the beam on the roof by hammering it (Figure 5.6). In the ceremony by Kongō Gumi, this rite is often performed by two (or four, in two groups) carpenters, who respectively stand on the left and right sides of the roof holding a wooden mallet, put a skid on the beam, and hammer the skid with the mallet. On the roof deck or behind the carpenters, there is a craftsman called administrator carpenter 奉行役 (comes from a government post in Edo period), who does not participate in the actual construction process, but leads the carpenters’ construction procedure through the use of slogans. When the carpenters perform the rite, the administrator carpenter shouts “building for hundred years 千歳棟, building for thousand years 万歳棟, building for forever 永々棟”²⁶⁰ to control the process of the ceremony.

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

The sixth step is “the rite of bow stringing 鳴弦の儀,” in which the carpenters on the two sides of the roof pick up bows and arrows and string the bows (Figure 5.7).²⁶¹ The Japanese believe that the sound of the bowstring is able to drive away evil spirits, and in construction ceremony, the role of the sound is extended to the protection of buildings.

The final step is “the rite of scattering money and pastries 散錢散餅の儀.” The craftsmen and the Buddhism chief priest of temple or the Shinto priest of the shrine gather together to throw coins, rice cakes and snacks to the crowd, while the craftsmen also shout “good omen, good omen, very good omen 吉祥、吉祥、大吉祥.”²⁶² With this step, the ceremony comes to an end in a harmonious atmosphere (Figure 5.8).

After the ceremony, the owner of the building gives a banquet to the craftsmen. After the banquet, there is sometimes an additional step called “escorting the master carpenter,” in which the owner and all the craftsmen send the master carpenter like seidaiku, to his home. Then, the master carpenter will return the favor by hosting another banquet and inviting the guests to gather again.

Nowadays, the beam raising ceremony preserved in the construction of wooden buildings in Japan mainly include rope pulling, hammering, and scattering money and pastries (editorial department of seizansha, 1999, pp.106-110). Apart from scripture or prayer reading, the beam raising ceremony of Kongō Gumi may also be reduced to these three steps in some cases, with the other steps being chosen on a case-by-case basis. Therefore, these three steps can also be considered as the core steps of the beam raising ceremony.

²⁶¹ Kongō Gumi: https://www.kongogumi.co.jp/ja/topics/081126_01.html

²⁶² Kongō Gumi: <https://www.kongogumi.co.jp/ja/topics/110828.html>



Figure 5.1.& 5.2. The Rite of Purify with Yari-Ganna Plane



Figure 5.3. The Rite of Stake



Figure 5.4. The Rite of Measurement



Figure 5.5. The Rite of Rope Pulling



Figure 5.6. The Rite of Hammering



Figure 5.7. The Rite of Bow Stringing



Figure 5.8. The Rite of Scattering Money and Pastries

Figure 5.1.~Figure5.8. © 2013-2020 Kongō Gumi²⁶³

5.1.1.2 The Symbolization System of the Beam Raising Ceremony in Kongō Gumi

Through the previous explanation, we have basically sorted out the procedures of the beaming raising ceremony. Next, we can analyze the form of this rite from three aspects: the symbolization system, the behavior system and the discourse system.

From the perspective of the symbolization system, the appliances used in the ceremony can still be divided into two categories: the self-owned tools and the external tools. For the craftsmen, the self-owned tools belong to the “profession system” of carpenters, and mainly include carpentry tools and building materials. It can be highlighted as a feature that, apart from the beam itself, nearly ten tools and building materials are used in the ceremony, including yari-ganna plane, wooden stake, ruler, rope, wooden mallet, etc., which is a significant number. Many of these tools are not necessary for the construction process of beam raising, but rather exist to support some rite steps before beam raising, which is a feature closely related to the “extension”

²⁶³ The pictures come from Kongō Gumi: https://www.kongogumi.co.jp/ja/topics/081126_01.html
Kongō Gumi: <https://www.kongogumi.co.jp/ja/topics/110828.html>

of the carpentry that will be analyzed later.

Particularly, the beam raising ceremony of Kongō Gumi presents a vast system of external tools and objects. In the first step “scripture reading,” for example, an altar is set up in the middle of a Buddhist building, with a “Namo Amitabha Buddha” scroll placed in its center, a munefuda (see details in chapter 4, section 1, means a wooden board stating pertinent information of the building) next to the scroll, and flowers, fruits, and candles as offerings (Figure 5.9). With the change of building form and territory, gohei 御幣 (wooden wands used in Shinto rites) and sacred liquor are occasionally placed in this step. From the very beginning of the ceremony, the space for external objects, made up of a fusion of Buddhism and Shintoism, has provided a sacred and solemn atmosphere and shaped a sacred space interwoven with the construction ceremony.



Figure 5.9. The Symbolization System Inside the Building © 2013-2020 Kongō Gumi²⁶⁴

As the rite shifts from inside the building to outside of it, the construction ceremony begins. During this process, the external objects associated with the ceremony could have been reduced, but instead, the ceremony of Kongō Gumi presented an opposite feature that the entire ceremony

²⁶⁴ The picture comes from Kongō Gumi: <https://www.kongogumi.co.jp/ja/topics/170127.html>

is encased in a container constructed from external objects.

In terms of the roof, three heisoku 幣束 (wooden wands decorated with two zigzagging paper streamers, used in Shinto rites) are set up in its center, and between the one in the middle and the one in the east often hangs a hontsubosuzu 本坪鈴 (a Shinto bell). On the east and west sides of the roof edge, a “bow of heaven” and a “bow of earth” are erected respectively (Figure 5.10). The size of these external objects is usually several times the height of the craftsmen, and among all the settings on the roof, apart from the beam, nothing can be compared in scale to these external objects. This striking contrast constructs an extremely solemn and majestic working field,²⁶⁵ placing the major steps of the beam raising ceremony in an absolutized sacred space.



Figure 5.10. The Symbolization System on the Roof © 2013-2020 Kongō Gumi²⁶⁶

²⁶⁵ The concept of field is defined by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1930–2002). It can neither be simply understood as an area surrounded by certain boundary objects, nor be equated with a general domain. Rather, it is a presence where there is intrinsic power, vitality, and potential. In the field, the group occupies an important position.

²⁶⁶ The picture comes from Kongō Gumi: <https://www.kongogumi.co.jp/ja/topics/170127.html>

Besides, during the beam raising ceremony, the external surface of the building representing the work of the craftsmen is surrounded by red and white curtains, whose form remains the same whether for temples or for shrines. This can be seen as an attempt to place the craftsmen in the sacred working field, and also as a deliberately established division between the craftsmen and the common people (the secular world).

In summary, in terms of the system of external objects, the object setting of Kongō Gumi's beam raising ceremony has gone far beyond the "decoration" function for the working process, and through the accumulation of objects,²⁶⁷ highlights the sacred qualities of the craftsmen and continuously divides the external space.

From the perspective of the behavior system, the beam raising ceremony of Kongō Gumi is functional and performative at the same time. Needless to say, all parts of the ceremony that are not functional can be directly classified as performative. Among the steps of the ceremony, those can be directly regarded as performative include the first step "scripture or prayer reading" (god), and the final step "the rite of scattering money and pastries" (human). This performativity vividly provides a path from god to human, while the functional part mainly maintained by the craftsmen is placed between god and human. Here, a distinctive feature of the ceremony needs to be mentioned, a feature that can be regarded as a peculiarity of Japanese construction ceremonies, that is, the functional part of the ceremony is also very performative.

This feature is primarily reflected in the fact that the steps of the ceremony that are closest to the construction are reduced to the smallest units with merely symbolic meaning. As

²⁶⁷ The system of objects in a building can be divided into at least two levels, the first being the roof, which serves as the beam raising ceremony's main working space, and the second being the building itself.

mentioned above, for the beam raising ceremony, raising and settling the beam should be the most important steps in the construction process symbolized by the ceremony. In the beam raising ceremony of Kongō Gumi, however, these two steps are greatly simplified. The beam raising step can be exactly corresponding to the rite of rope pulling, in which the process of pulling the beam from the ground to the beam is simplified as a process of people together pulling the rope while at this time, the beam has already been placed on top of the beam. The beam settling step, accordingly, can be exactly corresponding to the rite of hammering, which is reduced to a process where each time the slogan sounds, the mallet hammers the beam three times. With the abstraction of the ceremony, the original working process is simplified and earns a performative quality of its own.

This feature is also reflected in the fact that in the ceremony, the time for the carpenter's action is prolonged. During the process of Kongō Gumi's beam raising ceremony, some construction steps, which were not part of the beam raising process before, are very strongly present for most of the ceremony time, including the previous summary of measurement behaviors (the rite of stake, and the rite of measurement), and furthermore the blessing of the building embodied in the tools (the rite of purify with yari-ganna plane). The craftsmen's behavior of voluntarily increasing their workflow and their proportion of appearance in the ceremony can be considered as praise and recognition of their own working manners and achievements. The symbolization system of external objects mentioned above acts as a stage where the craftsmen are allowed to perform on their own.

From the perspective of the discourse system, the beam raising ceremony of Kongō Gumi

also has a distinctive feature, that is, the craftsmen’s highly concise language, except for the step of scripture or prayer reading (Table 5.1). To some extent, this accords with their manner of behavior in ceremony performance.

Table 5.1. The Work Song of the Beam Raising Ceremony in Kongō Gumi

Relationship	Participants	Discourse System	Secular Spirit
craftsmen themselves	craftsmen	“Ei, Ei, Ei(labor song).”	value of labor
architecture and man	craftsmen	“Building for hundred years, building for thousand years, building for forever.”	blessing the architecture
man to man	craftsmen and people around	“Good omen, good omen, very good omen.”	ultimate value

The craftsman song in the beam raising ceremony of Kongō Gumi, which is very simple in terms of text, contains in its discourse system almost only abstract work songs and a few words of blessing. However, as the discourse system is enacted in the ceremony, the richness of discursive values in the words is not weakened by the simplicity of texts. From the summary of the craftsman song’s discourse system in the table, it could be found that the values embodied in the beam raising ceremony of Kongō Gumi are mainly composed of self-value, blessing value, and ultimate value, in the order in which the language occurs.

In this ceremony, corresponding to the previously discussed behavior system, the discourse system within the craftsman group is initially directed towards the craftsmen themselves. The words “Ei, Ei, Ei” in the rite of rope pulling can be primarily understood as a work song according to its most directly viewed state, and also be regarded as a highly abstract behavior of labor embodying the values of labor. At the same time, this recurring work song is shouted not only by the craftsmen, but also by the crowd who participate in the rite of rope pulling and are requested to shout together. An interpretation for this discourse feature could be that the craftsmen lead all the people in the ceremony space into the working state of the craftsmen and impart their labor values to the crowd through the discourse system of the ceremony. Similar to the previous analysis of the behavior system, the idea behind this discourse system could be an attempt to promote the status of craftsmen. Specifically, through the guidance of language in the ceremony, the identity of craftsmen is established as “leader” of the ceremony. That is to say, to a certain extent, Kongō Gumi completes a process of deifying their own craftsmen through the beam raising ceremony.

The value of blessing can still be considered as the most intuitive value, as the blessing of building security is fundamental to the existence of the ceremony. In the beam raising ceremony of Kongō Gumi, the slogan “building for hundred years, building for thousand years, building for forever” during the rite of hammering not only expresses the expectation of the building’s perpetual existence, but also plays a role in rite management.

In addition, in terms of the language itself, only the slogan “good omen, good omen, very good omen” during the rite of scattering money and pastries can be seen as a process to point to

the external space, while these words themselves, due to the generalization of their values, do not point to a particular group of values.²⁶⁸ Compared with the discourse system of Xiangshan Bang's beam raising ceremony in which the interpersonal value accounts for a large proportion, the discourse system of Kongō Gumi's beam raising ceremony has little need to be dependent on external values, and even less need to please external groups. In the language of the ceremony, Kongō Gumi's craftsmen regard themselves as carriers of the ultimate value, and this mindset reflects the recognition of self-value that always exists implicitly in the Japanese craftsman community.

In general, the beam raising ceremony of Kongō Gumi can be considered as the craftsmen's recognition of their own working manners and states within a particular period of time and field. Through a moderate separation from the secular world and a broad connection between the craftsmen and the god, between the architecture and the god, this ceremony completes the movement of deifying the craftsmen, thus presenting, through the leading of craftsmen, a productive and sacred space based on construction activities.

5.1.2 The Beam Raising Ceremony in Xiangshan Bang

5.1.2.1 The Procedure of the Beam Raising Ceremony in Xiangshan Bang

The beam raising ceremony 上樑式 was created in the construction industry in ancient

²⁶⁸ “Good omen” can be considered as an auspicious sign blessing either the construction process or the onlookers of the ceremony. As an ultimate value pursued by human beings, it can also be considered as a universal auspicious sign.

China. Regarding this rite, the earliest written records can be traced back to the Wei and Jin Dynasties.²⁶⁹ During the Ming Dynasty, the steps and procedures have been generally fixed²⁷⁰, and the ceremony has become popular in all parts of China.

In Xiangshan Bang, the beam raising ceremony in its construction activities can be roughly divided into the following steps:

Before the architectural ceremony begins, people goes to the step of “blessing the beam 祝樑,” which sometimes is also called “worshipping the beam 祭樑.” Fruits, incense burners, red candles are placed on a red cloth-covered worship table. Then, the zuotou carpenter, as a representative, worships Zhang Ban and Lu Ban(see details in chapter 6, section 2), the master of carpenters.

The first step of the architectural ceremony is “arranging satins 布彩” or “sticking red papers 貼彩,” which is the process of arranging the items prepared by the owner on the beam. This is often completed by the zuotou carpenter. The items decorated on the beam mainly include copper coins and red and green ribbons, etc., which carries the meaning of “red and green satin

²⁶⁹ In the Northern Wei Dynasty, craftsmen read aloud the beam raising texts, and the crowd threw things such as pastries and money onto the beam. See in Shao Lu 邵陸’s dissertation: *Houses and Ceremonies: An Analysis of Architectural Anthropology of Chinese Traditional Folklore*, Tongji University Doctoral Dissertation, 2004, p. 94.

²⁷⁰ In the Ming Dynasty, *Lu Ban Jing Jiangjia Jing* (see details in chapter 6, section 1) recorded: “When raising the beam, wait for the lucky day and time. Place incense on the table in the central hall for Pu’an Xianshi. Prepare five-color coins, flowers, candles, three kind of animals as sacrifice and wine for the ceremony. The craftsmen worship three worlds gods, five house gods, Lu Ban, and all the hermits in the heaven. The craftsmen place tools on the rice barrel on the table and scare away the evil. The residences will be safe, lucky and wealthy forever 凡造作立木上樑，候吉日良辰，可立一香案於中亭，設安普庵仙師香火，備列五色錢、香花、燈燭、三牲、菓酒供養之儀，匠師拜請三界地主、五方宅神、魯班三郎、十極高真，其匠人稱丈竿、墨斗、曲尺，繫放香棹米桶上，並巡官羅金安頓，照官符、三煞凶神，打退神殺，居住者永遠吉昌也。” Refers to *Lu Ban Jing Jiangjia Jing* 新鑄工師雕斲正式魯班木經匠家鏡, from Peking University Library.

hung in pairs to stabilize the nanmu beam 紅綠綢緞掛成雙，壓穩楠木紫金樑。” Sometimes the Chinese character “Fu 福 (means good luck and happiness),” “Fu Xing Gao Zhao 福星高照 (means the lucky star is shining in the sky),” “San Xing Gao Zhao 三星高照 (means the three lucky stars: luck, wealth and longevity are shining in the sky),” or “Fu Lu Shou 福祿壽 (means good luck, wealth and longevity)” are also written on red paper and pasted on the beam. On the choice of time, the day of the ceremony should be “both an even number and a lucky day 逢喜又逢雙,” which carrying the meaning of good luck and happiness will come to the door. The formula recited by the craftsmen and the couplet on the column of the house often emphasize the concept of Jishi 吉時 (the luck and best timing).²⁷¹

The second step is “raising the beam 上樑,” which is also known as “insert the beam 叉樑.” This is the process of lifting the stringers using ropes and then fixing them to the corresponding positions in the house. During this time, the carpenters in Xiangshan Bang would recite their labor formula while working:

When raising the beam, raise the front end first. What a lovely piece of wood with fragrance. When raising the beam, raise the back end last. The residences will be lucky, healthy and wealthy for a life time.

The beam and rope I am holding are as long as a thousand meter. The beam can last for more than ten thousand years. The beam is pulled up high in the midair, like a dragon.

²⁷¹ The couplet goes: “Erect the column when it is a lucky day, raise the beam when there is Ziwei Star 豎屋適逢黃道日，上樑巧遇紫微星。” The formula in the step of “arranging satins” is: “the year, the month, the day and the time are all lucky 年月日時都吉利。”

Where is this dragon going? It is settling in this house.

The beam is pull up to the midair, like a dragon. Where is this dragon going? It is settling in this house, like the Forbidden City.²⁷²

The third step is “settling the beam 安樑,” which is the process of installing the stringers to the beam. During this step, the craftsmen in Xiangshan Bang usually pour wine onto the beam and recite the formula as well:

I am holding a shiny silver wine pot, inviting the craftsmen to my house. The bricklayers and the carpenters are happy to come, to raise the beam on this good day.

I fill the cup and toast to the sky and the earth. It is such a good time to raise the beam. Then I toast to Jiangtaigong. After this all will be forgiven and we will always be well.

Then I toast to Zhang Ban and Lu Ban. These two masters are blessing us up in the heaven. It is a lucky day when the project starts. It will definitely be a lucky day when it finishes.²⁷³

²⁷² The original text is

上樑先上頭，好塊五香老木頭。上樑慢上梢，世世代代束金套。
手拿千里長，又上萬年樑。一又又到半空中，搖搖擺擺像金龍。要問金龍哪裡去？今日安到老令宮。
系樑系到半空中，搖搖擺擺像金龍。今日金龍哪裡去？一心要登紫金宮。
Refers to Li and Yuan (1991, pp.89-100).

²⁷³ The original text is

手擎銀壺亮堂堂，請來師傅到府上。瓦木師傅帶喜來，正遇吉辰雙澆樑。
滿杯先敬天和地，今朝上樑好吉利。再敬太公笑開顏，在此百無禁忌來。

The next steps are “climbing up high 登高,” “collecting treasure 接寶” and “throwing from the beam 拋樑.” These steps are the ceremonial procedures after the construction. The zuotou carpenter will set a long ladder on the beam. With a basket or a wooden tray filled with coins, candies and pastries on his head, the zuotou will climb up the ladder, which indicating to ascend step by step. The zuotou will go onto the “Phoenix Terrace 鳳凰台” set in the wooden structure, tie the “fairy peach 仙桃” or parcel with a long red silk strip, and slowly lower it down from the main beam. The houseowner will spread a blanket under the beam to receive the fairy peach or parcel. This process is known as “collecting treasure,” which means happiness falling from the sky. When the neighbors hear the news of the ceremony, they also come to see, and the craftsmen would throw the things in the basket to the crowd, which is called “throwing from the beam.”

After the ceremony, the zuotou carpenter will read the couplet pasted on the column aloud and shout “Fu Xing Gao Zhao” for several times. Later, the houseowner will send lucky silver money to all the craftsmen, and the head of craftsmen will receive more. After the ceremony is the “beam raising party 上樑酒,” where the craftsmen will sit in the seats for distinguished guests.

5.1.2.2 The Symbolization System of the Beam Raising Ceremony in Xiangshan Bang

Similar to the discussion on the beam raising ceremony of Kongō Gumi, the analysis of the form of Xiangshan Bang’s beam raising ceremony can be conducted in terms of the

又敬張班和魯班，張魯師傅來觀看。開工巧遇吉祥日，完工定遇紅運時。(Ibid.)

symbolization system, the behavior system, and the discourse system.

First of all, from the perspective of the symbolization system, the appliances of the beam raising ceremony in Xiangshan Bang can be divided into two categories: the self-owned tools and the external tools. Craftsmen's construction tools and building materials are regarded as the necessary materials in the ceremony, without which the construction activities cannot be carried out. But beyond that, all other objects used in the ceremony can be regarded as "external appliances," which have symbolic and added secular value. They serve as pure carriers of symbols in the rite.

Before the beam raising ceremony, the participants of the ceremony will set up a worship table outside the house, set up Lu Ban's and Zhang Ban's spirit tablets, and prepare candles, fresh fruits, wine to conduct the rite of worshipping (Figure 5.11, 5.12).²⁷⁴ Copper coins and satin are placed on the beam stand to pray for wealth and blessings. The fairy peach used in "collecting treasure" stands for longevity. The pastries used in "throwing from the beam" means having abundant food and clothing. Almost all the objects used in the ceremony are red, creating a festive and joyful atmosphere in the eyes of Chinese people. It can be seen that these objects are not necessities for the construction process. They are only images which are wrapped in the shell of the secular celebration culture through homophony or the extension of meaning. The idea that symbolic significance is greater than its practical function is based on the common value

²⁷⁴ This custom still exists today, which can be seen in the article entitled: [2010-11-26] *Xiangshan Workshop Reappear* (the original text was mistaken for "在現") *the Traditional Customs of Xiangshan Bang, Chengxiang Tang held a Grand Beam Raising Ceremony* 《【2010-11-26】香山工坊實地再（原文誤作“在”）現香山幫傳統習俗，“承香堂”舉行隆重上樑儀式》. Xiangshan Gongfang, News: <http://www.xsgf2000.com/news/html/?220.html>

judgment of the participants.



Figure 5.11.& 5.12. The Symbolization System of the Beam Raising Ceremony in Xiangshan Bang²⁷⁵

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Secondly, from the perspective of the behavior system, the beam raising ceremony in Xiangshan Bang is a very typical construction ceremony, and its practice has a very obvious symbolic meaning. In terms of the internal process, the ceremony can be disassembled into two parts: functional behaviors and performance.

Raising the beam and settling the beam are the functional actions during this construction rite. They are parts of the construction process. However, it should be noted that the “working moment” performed in the ceremony is just a process of placement and installation. In the whole process of the constructional activity, they are only relatively simple steps with a small workload: before the ceremony, the relevant preparations that require a lot of time and efforts have been completed (beside building the foundation and the wooden structure of the house, roof building steps such as building the linkage frame and the stringers are finished before the ceremony). The completion of the functional actions in this ceremony indicate that the carpenters have finished

²⁷⁵ Xiangshan Gongfang, News: <http://www.xsgf2000.com/news/html/?220.html>

their job in building this house. This condensation and abstraction also represent the carpenters' recognition of the value of their own work.

Arranging satins, climbing up high, collecting treasure, and throwing from the beam are full of the phenomenon of carnival.²⁷⁶ In these steps, the actual construction functions implied in the construction ceremony have disappeared and replaced by intensive performance. In the established social norms, craftsmen, as the main operators of the rite, build up the connections between themselves and gods, other participants and the viewers of the ceremony by a certain figuration. As this perspective extends, the production activities of the craftsmen have played an integral role in connecting the performance: through the appropriate de-emphasis of their subjectivity, the construction activity is well wrapped in the shell of social activity.

Secondly, whether it is the construction of gardens in the city or the construction of houses in the countryside, Xiangshan Bang mainly focuses on residential buildings. Therefore, the construction ceremony in Xiangshan Bang is deeply rooted in the folk society. This means that the secular values presented by the beam raising ceremony in Xiangshan Bang must not only focus on the craftsmen themselves, but also take into account multiple groups such as the house owner, relatives, friends, neighbors, and even Feng Shui specialists.²⁷⁷ The discourse system presented in the beam raising lyrics²⁷⁸ also reflects the diversified value orientation faced by the

²⁷⁶ Mikhail Bakhtin (1895-1975) uses "carnavalesque" as a literary mode, which comes from the human psyche seen in rituals.

²⁷⁷ Some craftsmen of Xiangshan Bang will also participate in the construction of the temple, when there will be no Feng Shui specialists' participation. They usually just choose the lucky day according to the almanac 黃曆 in ancient China.

²⁷⁸ "The beam raising lyrics is the formula when carpenter recite during beam raising ceremony. When constructs the palace or residential building, they must choose auspicious days, stay with all the relatives, throw things to

craftsman group (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2. The Beam Raising Lyrics of the Beam Raising Ceremony in Xiangshan Bang

Relationship	Participants	Discourse System	Secular Spirit
architecture and god	gods(deities)	Erect the column when it is a lucky day, raise the beam when there is Ziwei Star.	blessing
		Then I toast to Jiangtaigong. After this all will be forgiven and we will always be well.	
man and god	gods(deities)	Zhaocai Tongzi is leading the way, brings the wealth to this family. ²⁷⁹	social

celebrate, thank the craftsman. So the master carpenter recite this text during beam raising ceremony to show their best wish. Both the beginning and the end of the text are antithesis. There are six poems in the text, each have three sentences, to show the worship to all the gods. The text belongs to the system of folk songs 按上梁 (the character 梁 is same as the character 樑 in this text, the same below) 文者，工師上梁之致語也。世俗營構宮室，必擇吉上梁，親賓裏麩，雜他物稱慶，而因以犒匠人，於是匠人之長，以麩拋梁而頌此文以祝之。其文首尾皆用儷語，而中陳六詩。詩各三句，以按四方上下，蓋俗體也。” Refers to (Ming Dynasty) Xu Shizeng 徐師曾, *Wenti Mingbian* 《文體明辨》, Appendix (Vol.13) 附錄卷之十三, from Harvard-Yenching Library.

Xu Shizeng (1517-1580) is from Wujiang 吳江, Suzhou. The scope of his residence is basically similar to the scope of the construction activities of Xiangshan Bang. It can be seen that there are some differences between the basic form of the lyrics of the beam raising ceremony and that of the beam raising text recorded in historical literature. The content is richer and more complicated, and the sentence patterns are more diverse. However, these differences may be caused by changes in the era.

²⁷⁹ The original text is 招財童子前引路，嘻笑和合送財來。

		The Queen Mother of the West brings the fairy peach, the houseowner is lucky generation to generation. ²⁸⁰	relationship
		Zhaocai Tongzi and Lishi Xianguan stand on the left and right, Eight Immortals come to celebrate from the sea. ²⁸¹	
	master Lu Ban and Zhang Ban	Then I toast to Zhang Ban and Lu Ban. These two masters are blessing us up in the heaven.	blessing
man to man	houseowner and craftsmen	The bricklayers and the carpenters are happy to come, to raise the beam on this good day.	social relationship
	houseowner, relatives and	Houseowner is always lucky, the neighbors are always healthy.	social relationship

It can be seen intuitively in the analysis of the language style of the lyrics that the lyrics is very simple. The same character is used for rhyming. Some images and short sentences appear repeatedly. This way of expression is more in line with the cultural identity of craftsmen and can be analyzed as a credible text. The table summarizes the discourse system of the lyrics. We can

²⁸⁰ The original text is 王母娘娘獻仙桃，東家世代洪福來。

²⁸¹ The original text is 招財利市分左右，八仙慶賀過海來。

find that there are mainly two major secular values embodied in the beam raising ceremony in Xiangshan Bang.

The first is the value of asking for blessing, which is the extension of functionality in the rite behavior system. The industry gods that are repeatedly quoted in the discourse and the subsequent expectations on safety generate a closed loop of value expectation, that is, the simple thoughts on linking industry god with industry production. The concepts such as “Huangdao Jiri”²⁸² 黃道吉日 (means auspicious days with fortune) have appeared repeatedly, which reflect the ceremony’s purpose of asking for blessing and protection. Through the recognition of the start of the project and the vision on the completion of the project directly reflected in the text, the craftsmen and construction safety which embodies the value of their work are closely connected.

The second is the interpersonal value, which is the extension of performance in the rite behavior system. From the analysis of the proportions of the various parts of the lyrics, it can be seen that craftsmen themselves only occupy a small part of the rite discourse system,²⁸³ reflecting a strong dependence on the external. The focus of this value is not on the craftsmen, but on the owner of the building. This presents a distinct value bias, that is, pleasing, integrating and thus strengthening the social relationship established by the owner of the house.

In conclusion, the beaming raising ceremony in Xiangshan Bang can be interpreted as a

²⁸² Refers to the couplet mentioned above: “Erect the column when it is a lucky day, raise the beam when there is Ziwei Star.” And the formula mentioned above: “it is a lucky day when the project starts; it will definitely be a lucky time when the project finishes.”

²⁸³ Craftsmen are only mentioned in the lyrics when settling the beam. The lyrics of other steps do not mention the craftsmen directly.

way to communicate, transit, strengthen order and integrate social relationship in a specific group or a specific culture. The main intention of this rite is to establish the relationship between buildings and god, man and god, and interpersonal relationships, so as to present a harmonious production space and social space based on construction activities leading by the craftsmen.

5.1.3 Profession Consciousness and Religious Spirit

5.1.3.1 The Uplifting of Profession Consciousness

The worship of “beam 梁/棟” embodied in construction ceremonies exists not only in the ceremonies of Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang, but extensively throughout the world.²⁸⁴ This psychological pattern can be traced back to the animism, that is, the worship of trees, which is common to all human beings in the ancient times. However, the considerable similarity in form and process between China’s beam raising ceremony and Japan’s beam raising ceremony can be hardly found in the ceremonies in other parts of the world. This feature provides a way to analyze the craftsmanship spirit of Japan and China.

After classifying China’s beam raising ceremony by step in accordance with the general

²⁸⁴ In the Western culture, this ceremony is widespread in Europe, North America and Australia. In terms of building type, it is present in the construction process of both wooden buildings and modern buildings made of reinforced concrete. Its origin can be traced back to around A.D. 700, when the Scandinavian mythology held that every tree has its spirit, and that human beings originate from trees and return to trees after their death. For this reason, after the construction of the basic framework of a building, people would attach the highest branches and leaves of the tree to the highest position of the roof. the position of the beam, so that the spirit of the tree could continue to exist in the building. The steps of the beam raising ceremony in the West basically include (1) placing garlands, wood, or regional or religious flags on the beam, (2) raising the beam to the predetermined position, and (3) giving a banquet to the craftsmen and guests at the end.

classification²⁸⁵ of Japan's beam raising ceremony (Table 5.3), it could be found that the similarity is attributed to the fact that the steps and processes conducted by both countries' craftsmen can be divided, according to function and object, into the same rites.

Table 5.3. The Comparison on the Beam Raising Ceremony Between Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang

The Producure of Rite	Kongō Gumi	Xiangshan Bang
god-related rite	scripture reading; or prayer reading	blessing the beam
construction rite	the rite of purify with yari-ganna plane; the rite of stake; the rite of measurement; the rite of rope pulling; the rite of hammering; the rite of bow stringing	arranging satins; raising the beam; settling the beam
human-related rite	the rite of scattering money and pastries	climbing up high collecting treasure throwing from the beam
human-related activity	banquet	banquet

²⁸⁵ Generally, for wooden buildings, the process of beam raising ceremony can be divided into three major aspects: the rite by priest of Shinto or Buddhism, the rites by craftsmen, and the rite of scattering money and pastries (carried out together by the Buddhism chief priest of temple or the Shinto priest of the shrine and the craftsmen, symbolizing the unity of the divine and the secular)(editorial department of seizansha, 1999).

Following the order of the rites, the ceremonies can be divided into four categories, respectively god-related rite, construction rite, human-related rite, and human-related activity.

Among all the rites mentioned above, the greatest similarity between the two types of ceremony lies in the construction rite. Although they are quite different in terms of specific practicing forms,²⁸⁶ the abstraction and simplification of them reveals that both ceremonies are “variations” of beam raising, the central construction activity, and are always led by the carpenters. In other words, the core of the two ceremonies is still the craftsmen, regardless of their religious or ethical appearance. In contrast to the internal and closed nature of the craftsmen’s construction work, the beam raising and beam raising ceremonies are public scenes where the craftsmen’s self-presentation is most common and most obvious. Unlike the “secrecy,” “implicitly” and “meaning of silence” in daily life, the rites where carpenters perform are collective and public narratives that reveal the spiritual system behind them.

According to John Skorupski’s judgment of the spiritual meaning behind the symbolic rite, it is an appropriate and ideal model of social life (Skorupski, 1976, p.84). Within the scope of construction ceremony, craftsmen are the primary practitioners of the rites, and their screening plays a prominent role in the development and inheritance of the rites. Of the entire process of the construction activity, beam raising can be generally regarded as the step that best integrates the construction skills and expresses the construction achievements. That is to say, in China’s

²⁸⁶ In the beam raising ceremony of Kongō Gumi, the process of beam raising reaches a higher level of abstraction, while the beam raising ceremony of Xiangshan Bang focuses more on carrying out construction activities.

beam raising ceremony and Japan's beam raising ceremony, the object "beam" has a richer meaning and can be considered both as a part of the tree according to animism, and as an important component of the building, while it must also be recognized as the object to which the craftsmen's skills and work are directed. In this way, within the symbolic space created by objects, behaviors and words, carpenters from both Japan and China view their work as the source of the rites, and preserve the meaning behind the symbol. The craftsmen's choice of a grand beam or beam raising ceremony can also be considered as their retrospective recognition of the "appropriate and ideal" working state, which represents the ultimate value of appreciating their own profession as conveyed by themselves.

To summarize, whether the complexities presented in the ceremony, the gathering of the crowd, or the influence of the ceremony in a particular region, it indicates that the craftsmen are attempting to, by virtue of the ceremony, penetrate the various levels of social life beyond their own boundaries. This considerable denotative meaning extended from their own profession also reflects the richness of the craftsmen's construction activities, as well as their confidence and respect for their profession.

5.1.3.2 The Underlying Religious Spirit

Between the beam raising ceremony of Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang, a relatively great difference exists in the part involving the god. Behind the appearance of rite performance lies the difference in the supporting logic and value system between the craftsmen of the two countries. In the god-related rite (refers to Table 5.3), the biggest difference between these two

ceremonies is the religious belief on which the ceremony is based on.

The beam raising ceremony of Kongō Gumi embodies a very focused belief system. Although according to Kongō Gumi's self-narrative, its construction business is centered on both temples and shrines, its history of temple construction for thousands of years still has an influence on its current business, making it tend more to the construction of temples. The step of "prayer or scripture reading" in their ceremony is more often presented as "scripture reading" of Buddhism. In the ceremony, the "Namo Amitabha Buddha" scroll on the altar can be viewed as a manifestation of "chanting the name of Buddha" in the Pure Land Buddhism. Indeed, for the general public in Japan, the most accessible branch of Buddhism is the Pure Land, whose believers, regardless of their status, can proceed to the Pure Land of rebirth as long as they devote themselves to Buddhism, which is a manifestation of the Pure Land's high level of openness. It is worth noting that the Pure Land is the purest form of Japanese spirituality,²⁸⁷ as stated by D. T. Suzuki, who used the concept of "perpetuity (Suzuki, 1972, p.161)" to explain the characteristics of the Pure Land. Chanting the name of Buddha represents the never-ending wishes, and this state bears a great similarity to the psychological pattern of pursuing perpetual security of the building in the construction ceremony. However, during the process of chanting the name of Buddha, the Pure Land attaches considerable importance to "a flash of the present

²⁸⁷ According to D. T. Suzuki, Japanese spirituality refers to the part of the Japanese people's cultivated ability that is expressed through individual transcendent experience. Japanese people are extremely rich in this ability, and the purest form of spirituality lies in Zen and Pure Land. At the same time, Suzuki did not completely agree that the Pure Land is a popularized expression of Buddhism, but held that religion must rely on a certain metaphysical system, and that the popularization of Buddhism is an artificial and intellectual operation which must first possess spiritual intuition.

(Ibid., pp.161-164),” which refers to the realization of a momentary experience at a particular moment that transcends the meaning of reality. This coincides exactly with the very short time of the rite, which contains a way of feeling unique to the Japanese.

It is also worth noting that even though the ceremony is inclined more to Buddhist thoughts, the setting of the objects mentioned above, whether it is the heisoku, hontsubosuzu, bow of heaven or bow of earth placed on top of the roof, or the red and white curtains used to divide the field, reflects obvious characteristics of Shintoism. In other words, Shintoism, as the foundation of the Japanese belief, still exerts a strong influence in every aspect of the spirit of the Japanese.

Compared with Kongō Gumi, as the case of Xiangshan Bang, it is useful to quote Xu Dishan 許地山’s statement about the influence of Taoism: “in terms of Chinese people’s daily habits and belief, Taoism accounts for a larger proportion than Confucianism, and we can even affirm that it is Taoism that governs the ideals and lives of the common people in China (Xu, 1999, p.141).” This opinion is also reasonable for the beam raising ceremony of Xiangshan Bang, which is conducted in a dense atmosphere of folk religion centered on Taoism.

In detail, a key feature of Xiangshan Bang’s beam raising ceremony is the diversity of god’s forms. First of all, Lu Ban and Zhang Ban, the master of carpentry,²⁸⁸ are the main ancestors placed on the table for sacrifices to be worshipped during the rite of blessing the beam, and repeatedly appear in the lyrics during the rite of beam raising. As the leading form of god in the ceremony, it reflects a rather distinct type of worship for industry gods, the worship for industry master. Second, many figures in the lyrics can also be categorized into folk beliefs

²⁸⁸ Industry gods are those worshipped by people involved in various industries to bless themselves and their industries with good fortune and prosperity (see details in chapter 6, section 1).

integrated by Taoism. For example, “Huangdao Jiri” and “Ziwei Star” are derived from astronomy as a way of determining good or bad fortune, and are later widely used among the people to seek benefits and avoid harms. “Jiangtaigong” is Jiang Shang 姜尚, a historical figure. “Zhaocai Tongzi 招財童子” (lucky boy) originally belonged to the traditional Chinese belief in the God of wealth. The Queen Mother of the West 王母娘娘 was initially found in Chinese mythology, and the Eight Immortals 八仙 in Chinese folklore. These god figures were later incorporated by Taoism to enrich its own god system. Behind the religious forms of the ceremony, a basic principle of Taoism could be found: Taoism has absorbed and modified the original belief system of the Chinese folk, integrating and rearranging the well-known folklore, myths and legends, incorporating them into its own system of god, and by returning them to the folk, deeply influencing the beliefs of the folk which, as a result, are of quite strong Taoist qualities. Even though religion has become an unspoken topic in today’s China, it still remains with a strong vitality in the foundation of social life.

It is especially interesting that the carpenters in Xiangshan Bang are present in every step of the ceremony. Although the entire god system of the ceremony originates from the folk beliefs centered on Taoism, the absence of clergies (such as Taoist priests) is still a state that cannot be ignored. According to the belief forms described above, it could be found that this absence is firstly due to the fact that the major god worshipped in the ceremony is an industry god rather than the main god in Taoist god system, and secondly due to the heterogeneity of god systems in the ceremony rather than the choice of a single representative god. Besides, in essence, the ceremony is not a religious one, but rather a secular one. Therefore, the fact that the elders with

the highest position among the carpenters, instead of the clergies of a religion, act as the main performers in the ceremony is consistent with the secularity of the ceremony.

5.2 The “Chosen” Secular Values

5.2.1 The Ceremony of Carpenter with Hatchet in Kongō Gumi

For the carpenter who is engaged in the construction of temples and shrines, the ceremony of carpenter with hatchet 手斧始式/鉦始式 is one of the most important rites held by this social group during the year. This is a traditional rite performed in temples and shrines, which is intended to pray for the safety of craftsmanship system for a whole year.

Through the tools that remain to the present (the national treasure, the tools and the box of carpenters²⁸⁹国宝「大工道具及び箱」 of Nikko Toshogu 日光東照宮, the tools in Edo period²⁹⁰ preserved by Shimizu Corporation 清水建設, etc.) and the ceremonial activities (Shitennoji Temple, Tsurugaoka Hachimangu²⁹¹鶴岡八幡宮, etc.) that are still in progress every year, the ceremony of carpenter with hatchet in Kongō Gumi has been taken place relatively early. Moreover, there are still historical facts with a clear organization and a complete structure. It can be seen as a ceremony passed down from history.

Compared with the religious beliefs, the extant rite of Kongō Gumi can be regarded as the practice of worldly spirit with a direct purpose, which is closely related to the daily work of the craftsmanship system. This part will focus on the establishment and the finalization of the ceremony of carpenter with hatchet in Kongō Gumi, analyze the interaction between the

²⁸⁹ According to the homepage of the Nikko Toshogu Museum 日光東照宮宝物館.

²⁹⁰ Refers to Shimizu Corporation 清水建設株式会社, 2014, p.174.

²⁹¹ According to the homepage of the Tsurugaoka Hachimangu, the ceremony in January. It is considered to be the earliest ceremony among the ceremony of carpenter with hatchet.

techniques, tools and craftsmen presented in the process of this rite. This part will also analyze the basic conditions of this worldly nobility and the implications of its spiritual core.

5.2.1.1 From Architectural Ceremony to Calendrical Rite

In the self-identification of Kongō Gumi, according to the genealogy preserves inside the family, the ceremony of carpenter with hatchet in Kongō Gumi has been taken place as early as 1617, that is, the period when the 25th generation head of Kongō Gumi held the reconstruction of Shitennoji Temple (Kongō, 2013, p.66). In addition, according to *The Genealogy of Kongō Family* by Kongō Gumi itself, this rite also appeared in reconstruction of Shitennoji Temple by the 27th generation head in 1669 and the 29th generation head in 1732.²⁹² At this time, the rite did not become a fixed ceremony which was held every year, but an architectural ceremony accompanied by the major reconstruction activities of Shitennoji Temple.

In the book named *Settsu Meisho Zue* (1796-1798), the ceremony of carpenter with hatchet was drawn on paper as an important activity of Shitennoji Temple. This is the earliest external documentary about this rite which holds highly reliability (Figure 5.13). The text above records the name, time and place of the rite: on January 11th, Japanese calendar, the ceremony of carpenter with hatchet was held in the Kondo Hall of Shitennoji Temple. The text also shows the social identity of the main characters in the picture.²⁹³ We can speculate that, at this time, this

²⁹² The genealogy of Kongō family, refers to Kongō (2013, pp.178-179).

²⁹³ The original text is 正月十一日 金堂手斧始 (てをのはじめ) 金堂において毎歳正月十一日正番匠 (しょうばんじょう), 権番匠, 副 (そへ) 大工立ち双 (なら) びて, 手斧始の式例あり。秋野坊は座上に堂聖堂仕 (どうせいどうし) 列を糺して嚴重なり。これは皇太子番匠の事を教えさせたまふ遺風とぞしられける, refers to *Settsu Meisho Zue* published in 1919, pp.154-155.

rite came to a ceremony which was regularly held by Kongō Gumi at latest. Until now, the rite was still fixed on January 11th each year²⁹⁴ and has been confirmed as a part of Osaka’s intangible cultural heritage (April 1st, 2011, the ceremony of carpenter with hatchet of Shitennoji Temple 四天王寺手斧始め式).

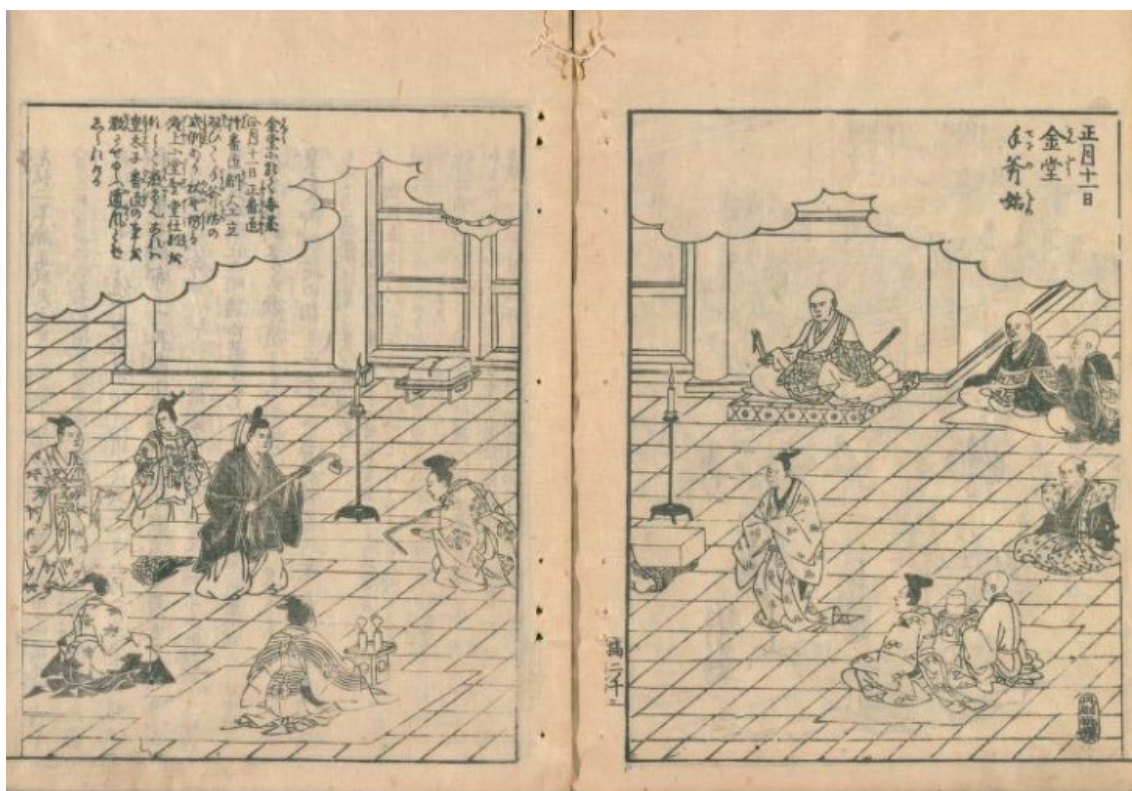


Figure 5.13. The Ceremony of Carpenter with Hatchet from *Settsu Meisho Zue*²⁹⁵

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We can find that the texts and the historical facts that continue to this day contain a possibility of the development of the rite itself, that is, it transfers from the intermittent architectural ceremony which accompanies the important construction process, gradually

²⁹⁴ According to Kongō Gumi, the rite was held at 8:00 pm in past days, now changed to 4:00 pm.

²⁹⁵ National Diet Digital Collections, *Settsu Meisho Zue* 撰津名所図会 (Vol.2):

<https://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/2563460?tocOpened=1>

becomes a calendrical rite.²⁹⁶ This may also represent a general psychology: the divine existence often comes from the concrete practice, after that, it will be regarded as high-level, powerful, highly respectable existence, departed from everyday life. The daily life corresponding to it can be regarded as ordinary and actual existence. Thus, the rite holds the distinguishing characteristics, finally derives from the secularity, sublimates to worldly nobility.

When considering about the reason of the rite was determined at such a time, we can speculate that its establishment contains a universal human psychological form, represents the certain work spirit and life spirit of the craftsmen.

What cannot be overlooked here is the meaning of the “beginning” given by this rite. It is consistent with the universal perception of the carpenter’s working conditions under certain historical conditions. When the rite was first established as a calendrical rite, the calendar used by people was still the traditional Japanese calendar.²⁹⁷ At that time, the carpentry system actually faced the limitations of working temperature and working conditions, for example, the log, after being cut down, has to take a whole winter to ensure the dryness before it can be used as the raw material. In this way, this rite can still be seen as a simple and primitive respect for the laws of nature. It was not until 1872, when the calendar was modified to the solar calendar

²⁹⁶ Recently, there is an influential classification method for six rite types by Catherine Bell (1953-2008). These six types are: rites of passage, calendar rites, rites of exchange and communion, rites of affliction, feasting, fasting and festivals, political rites. Catherine Bell (1997, p.94).

²⁹⁷ The era of the creation of the *Settsu Meisho Zue* can be regarded as the latest time when the rite was determined as a time calendrical rite. The calendar which was used at that time was the Hōryaku calendar 宝曆曆. The ancient Japanese calendar is similar to the Chinese lunar calendar. It is the luni-solar calendar 太陰太陽曆, that is, the calendar based on the movement of the sun and the moon, regarded on the agricultural production cycle. This calendar contains the simple cognition of human beings and natural relations under the conditions of social and economic development at that time.

太陽曆 (be known as Gregorian calendar グレゴリオ暦), the ceremony was shifted to an earlier date according to the revision of the calendar. From then on, the role of dividing the working time and non-working time by this rite gradually shrinks, the rite itself becomes a pure spiritual representation.

In short, the establishment and finalization of this rite has its own evolution process. It does not present a complete form at the very beginning. In the course of its gradual development into a calendrical rite, it integrates the craftsman's own specialty, holds the natural view and life consciousness which are directly related to the craftsman's practice system. At the same time, with the change of the calendar itself, this rite changes to the state of the present.

5.2.1.2 Technique and Reputation: Identity Cognition of the Craftsman

As mentioned above, the ceremony of carpenter with hatchet in Kongō Gumi has evolved into a rite with a fixed process. Its significance is to show the beginning of a year's work of Kongō Gumi in Shitennoji Temple and pray for the safety.²⁹⁸ That is to say, it has a certain purpose at the beginning of its establishment.

In this case, how to make a close connection between the rite itself and the craftsmanship system becomes a very important proposition. At this time, it is necessary to examine the rite process in the present case. (Table 5.4).

²⁹⁸ About the function of the ceremony of carpenter with hatchet, please refer Kodomo Kurabu (Eds.)(2015, p.6) and Kongō (2013, p.64).

Table 5.4. The Current Process of the Ceremony of Carpenter with Hatchet in Kongō Gumi²⁹⁹

Rite Progress	Tools	Rite Performer
worship on bended knees		the chief priest of a Shinto shrine 宮司 ³⁰⁰ ; all the carpenters
wave the gohei 振幣	gohei (a wand with hemp and paper streamers used in a Shinto ceremony)	the chief priest of a Shinto shrine
take out the shakuzue ruler	shakuzue ruler 尺杖	miyadaiku
analog measurement		
pack up the shakuzue ruler		
analog the using of carpenter's ink pad and carpenter's square	carpenter's ink pad 墨壺; carpenter's square 曲尺	gondaiku
ink marking		
take out the hatchet	hatchet 手斧	

²⁹⁹ Refers to Kongō (2013, pp.65-67). Supervise by Hamashima and Sakamoto, edited by the committee of *The Teaching of the Five-storied Pagoda* 『五重塔のはなし』, 2010, pp.116-117.

³⁰⁰ According to the latest time of the establishment of the ceremony as the calendar rite mentioned in the first part, we can infer that until 1798, the Buddhist clergy was still the religious core of the rite. After the separation of Buddhism and Shintoism (1868), Kongō Gumi was forced to leave Shitennoji Temple for a period of time. It can be speculated that during the time when their territory was lost, this rite was carried out by Shinto ceremony. The influence has continued to this day.

use the hatchet to chop the log		seidaiku ³⁰¹
pack up the hatchet		
take out the yari-ganna plane	yari-ganna plane	seidaiku
use the yari-ganna plane		
pack up the yari-ganna plane		
serve the wine wares		seidaiku
combine the wine from two wine wares		seidaiku
chant the congratulatory address		seidaiku
bring the wine to the altar		seidaiku

It is worth noting that the core parts of this rite, besides the craftsmen themselves, are the tools they used: the reason of this rite is called the ceremony of carpenter with hatchet, is also partly due to the utility of the hatchet in the craftsmanship system of the carpenters. The hatchet is often used as a tool for chopping logs, regarded as one of the tools used in the initial stages of the entire process of woodworking.

According to the difficulty of the tools' usage, the process of this rite shapes the process

³⁰¹ Since January 11th, 2014, due to the fact that the descendant of Kongō family has not made a good technical reserve yet, seidaiku is absent, the right to these processes are passed to gondaiku of Kongō Gumi, Uematsu Jyōyichi.

of self-growth and technological growth of the craftsmen in Kongō Gumi. In general, measuring the size of logs is the most basic technique for carpenters (with shakuzue ruler). After that, trying to shape the logs to the woods is a necessary skill to become a carpenter working independently (with carpenter's ink pad and carpenter's square). The tools for the most important steps are the hatchet and the plane: such workflows need to deal directly with large logs, the sunk cost is extremely high. It requires the professionalism of the craftsmen, the craftsmen themselves also hold a grave responsibility. The basic steps of the craftsmanship system contained in this rite show that there are both the personal growth experiences of the craftsman and the responsibility of such professional practitioners in the spirit of this rite.

Starting from this rite, we can also find that it is trying to deal with the relationship between the craftsmen and the tools, even the technique itself. The relationship it hopes to form is not only a relationship of daily use, but also a non-daily, even a divine connection between them. In the circumstances, it is especially prone to generate a kind of identity: the craftsman rises himself from an individual with certain technique to an individual selected or blessed by certain technique, the individual who participates the rite can share the nobility as well.

This kind of recognition system can also be seen in the self-narration of Kongō Gumi: "The behavior in this rite is the highest reputation as the seidaiku."³⁰² It can distinguish the feature of identity from everyday life, shape the professional identity of the group of craftsmen. This sensitivity about nobility models a stable, regularly internal education system unconsciously, ultimately points to the worldly purpose of safety in the coming year.

³⁰² Refers to Maekawa and Oumi (2016, pp.96-97).

5.2.1.3 The Intersection of Religious Nobility and Worldly Nobility

As mentioned in the first part, the finalization of the ceremony of carpenter with hatchet in Kongō Gumi can be analyzed as sanctification. On this basis, this rite is based on both religious reality and worldly reality.

First of all, this rite relies on the religious sites and the religious personnel, it is affirmed by the religious sites and personnel as well. The ceremony of carpenter with hatchet in Kongō Gumi is recognized by Shitennoji Temple as an annual event, acknowledged the non-publicity of this rite.³⁰³ It is particularly noteworthy that, among all of the religious ceremonies and activities in Shitennoji Temple, the chance of holding a rite before the principal image of Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva (Kannon in Japanese) 本尊・救世観音菩薩 in Kondo Hall is rare. In addition, whether the Buddhist clergy in the picture of *Settsu Meisho Zue*, or the chief priest and the Buddhist clergy in the existing rite, their witness undoubtedly provided the religious nobility beyond the worldly nobility to the rite.

However, this rite also presents a tendency of the secularity. its integration of social relations goes further than its attitude to religion or belief itself. Looking at the specific progress listed in the second part, we can point out that except for the beginning of this rite, the religious personnel is hidden, the most important part of the rite is completely generated by the internal personnel of Kongō Gumi. That is to say, the worldly nobility is risen. Although this rite is wrapped in the outer shell of religion, the content and the essence pursued by this rite are quite secular.

³⁰³ According to the homepage of the Shitennoji Temple, the annual events of January.

By this means, we have to consider the power consciousness and the relationship of the social group existing in this rite. On the one hand, in the queue when they walking into Shitennoji Temple, the team marches in the order of the carpenter, the vice master carpenter and the master carpenter strictly. On the other hand, in the queue when they walking out Shitennoji Temple, the team marches in the order of the master carpenter, the vice master carpenter, then the carpenter (Figure 5.14). The order of their participation of the process is also in accordance with the internal power structure of the social group, At the same time, the most important part of the rite is on the behalf of Kongō family.

Here goes the statement of themselves: “this ceremony is the most glorious stage for the Kongō family who works as the master carpenter of Shitennoji Temple (Kongō, 2013, p.66).” By the strong technical connection in this process, the rite itself does present some established social structures: the organizational relationship already existing in the internal practice system becomes strict and regular. Along with this periodic recurrence, the subconscious in everyday life has become a distinct norm. Although it does not intend to shape the authority of a certain individual, it does form the social bond between the individual and the group at large.



Figure 5.14. The Ceremony of Carpenter with Hatchet in Kongō Gumi © 2019 Xie Yuxin

All in all, in this rite, Kongō Gumi formed the identity cognition between the group itself and the outside world through the interaction with the religious sites and personnel of Shitennoji Temple, completed the confirmation of the authenticity of Kongō Gumi in the craftsmanship system of Shitennoji Temple. At the same time, Kongō Gumi also strengthened its internal power structure though the executors of the rite, divided their status to ensure the stability of its craftsmanship system.

5.2.2 The Master's Ceremony in Xiangshan Bang

5.2.2.1 The Establishment of The Master's Ceremony

For all this time, Chinese people have kept an established concept that respecting teachers is a long-standing tradition, but actually the formal rite of acknowledging teacher is not a long-standing manner. When talking about the object of education, Confucius mentioned that “for those who are willing to bring me more than ten pieces of dried meat (called Shuxiu) as a courtesy, I have always given them instruction.”³⁰⁴ This is a relatively simple teacher-student relationship. The apprentices can confirm the teacher-student relationship by only giving “inexpensive gifts.”³⁰⁵ The Pre-Qin scholars giving private lectures are basically the same.

³⁰⁴ The original text is 自行束脩以上，吾未嘗無誨焉，*The Analects of Confucius: Shuer* 《論語·述而》。Refers to *The Annotation of The Analects* 《論語注疏》，from *Siku Quanshu*, Jingbu 8, Sishu 經部八·四書類，in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 195-p.587.

³⁰⁵ Xing Bing 邢昺 (932-1010)'s annotation: “Shuxiu, inexpensive gifts as tuition fee 束脩，禮之薄者。” Refers to *The Annotation of The Analects*, from *Siku Quanshu*, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 195-p.588.

The master's ceremony 拜師儀式/拜師禮 was established during Han to Tang dynasty.³⁰⁶ At this stage, as the Confucianism gradually gained absolute authority in the national intellectual class, the master's ceremony in the ethnical frame of Confucianism has gradually become the orthodox ceremony in education system. In *Tongdian*《通典》 written in Tang Dynasty, it records in Han Dynasty “the emperors’ acknowledgement of teachers 天子拜敬保傅,”³⁰⁷ but the rite is not recorded. However, the ceremony of the prince acknowledging the teacher 皇太子束脩 in Tang Dynasty is recorded in *Tongdian*, which is the earliest text of the master's ceremony in China.³⁰⁸ Later, as the master's ceremony was widely implemented in the central and local government, the impact of this ceremony has gradually extended to the entire education system in the whole society.³⁰⁹

Among the craftsmen, text on apprenticeship in the pre-modern period is very rare. However, the existence of the master's ceremony is a specific fact and has continued to this day.

³⁰⁶ “In the Han and Tang Dynasties, the Shuxiu, as the tuition fee, is no longer indicating its original meaning. It is etiquette indicating that the teacher-student relationship is established if the teacher and knowledge are respected, and agreeing to the identity as a Confucian student is agreeing to the Confucian ethics. It is ritual and ethnical meaning is more prominent and it is finally included in the scope of national etiquette learning (Gai, 2007).”

³⁰⁷ The original text is “In Han Dynasty, Zhang Yu was the teacher of Emperor Cheng 漢張禹嘗為成帝師.” Du You 杜佑 (735-812): *Tongdian* (Vol. 67), *Tianzi Baijing Baofu*. Refers to *Tongdian*, from *Siku Quanshu*, Shibu 13 Zhengshu, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 603-p.799.

³⁰⁸ See in Du You: *Tongdian* (Vol.117), *Huangtaizi Shuxiu*. Refers to *Tongdian*, from *Siku Quanshu*, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 604-p.434.

³⁰⁹ “In September of the 2nd year of Loushuo (662), students are commanded, in an order of age at school. New students need to perform the Shuxiu ceremony 龍朔二年九月，敕學生在學，各以長幼為序。初入學，皆行束脩之禮。” Wang Dingbao 王定保 (870-954), *Tang Zhiyan: Liangjian*《唐摭言·兩監》. Refers to *Tang Zhiyan*, from *Siku Quanshu*, Zibu 12, Xiaoshuojia 子部十二·小说家类, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 1035-p.699.

It can be inferred from the development and popularization of Confucian rite of teacher acknowledgement that the master's ceremony among craftsmen is influenced by the Confucian way of teacher acknowledgement. With the loosening of the single-family inheritance structure in the Ming and Qing dynasties, the number of craftsmen has gradually increased (see chapter 1), and there was an urgent need to establish a stable master-apprenticeship structure within the craftsmen class. At this time, the ethical and moral system established by the Confucianism and the rites supporting the ethics of apprenticeship became resources that the craftsman group could directly borrow. As we can see now, in China, the master's ceremony exist in many industries in which the skills and techniques need to be passed down through apprenticeship, such as all sorts of crafts, martial arts and even traditional medicine. The master's ceremony has influenced the inheritance of knowledge and skills in traditional Chinese society, and has penetrated into all aspects of social life.

5.2.2.2 The Aggregation Effect Demonstrated by the Ceremony

The craftsmen in Xiangshan Bang have a systematic set of rules when seeking for apprenticeship. Before acknowledging a master, the apprentice³¹⁰ need to find the introducer, or the mediator, in advance. The mediator needs to have certain financial strength or social prestige in the local area, and is responsible for all the behaviors of the apprentice during his

³¹⁰ From the end of the Qing Dynasty, most craftsmen in Xiangshan Bang were farmers. Since they could not earn more income from farm work, they learned some construction techniques to make some extra money. Xiangshan Bang craftsmen usually recruit apprentices who are at the age of twelve or thirteen, and the master is usually a craftsman with a higher prestige and good craftsmanship in the local area. However, among Xiangshan Bang craftsmen, it is not rare that the master and the apprentice are relatives.

apprenticeship. When any financial loss or other damage occurs, if the apprentice is unable to compensate, the mediator needs to compensate the master for the apprentice.

After finding the mediator, in order to establish a formal apprenticeship, the craftsmen in Xiangshan Bang also need to generate a “Guishu 規書,” that is, a contract for the apprenticeship. As the literacy level of the craftsmen is generally low, most of the Guishu are written by others who can read and write. The format of this contract is relatively fixed. The general form is as follows:

This contract is set by (the name of the apprentice), who is recommended by (the name of the mediator) to acknowledge (the name of the master) as master. The duration is (number) years. During the apprenticeship, the apprentice should learn skills diligently and follow the master’s order. If any accident happens at work, it is the apprentice’s destiny, and the master is not responsible for it. If the apprentice run away and cannot insist on this apprenticeship, the mediator is responsible. In case there is no proof in the future, this contract is now written.

The apprentice’s father’s signature and fingerprint

The mediator’s signature and fingerprint³¹¹

When everything is ready, the master’s ceremony will be prepared. The ceremony is usually held at the apprentice’s home, but there are also cases where the ceremony is held at the

³¹¹ Refers to Liu et al. (2013, p. 242).

master's workshop or other places. During the ceremony, a portrait of Lu Ban should be hung in the guest hall and a pair of red candles should be set on the long table. In front of the table, there should be a Taishi chair. In front of the chair, there should be a red carpet. When the ceremony gets started, the apprentice should first kowtow to the portrait of Lu Ban for three times and then another three times to the master who will be sitting on the Taishi chair. If the ceremony is held at the master's home, the apprentice also need to kowtow three times to the master's wife.³¹² After that, the apprentice must kneel down in front of the master and his wife to read the master acknowledgement letter and sign the Guishu (contract). Finally, the apprentice must listen to the master's admonition and give gifts or money to the master. After the master's ceremony, a banquet is held. The number of guests in the banquet is often determined by the social relationship of the master. Generally, the number is between one to five tables. The apprentice is the one who pays for the feast. During the banquet, the master would often tell his peers or guests that "this guy is learning with me now, so please take care of him."

When the apprenticeship is due (the duration is usually three to five years), if the master approves the apprentice's skills, it is called "fully-taught 滿師," and the apprentice need to hold another banquet to thank the teacher. This banquet indicates that the apprentice has finished his learning and is able to conduct construction activities independently. On this banquet, the master usually gives the apprentice a set of carpenter tools as a memento, wishing the apprentices a successful career in the future and pass down the skills he learned.

³¹² Refers to Zhang and Yuan (1993, p. 102). During the apprenticeship, the apprentice is not paid and the master usually guarantee the apprentice's living by providing food and accommodation. Therefore, the apprentice is usually tightly connected with the master's family.

Today, those two rites are often combined into one, which is generally divided into steps such as the apprentice's making reverence to the master, reading aloud the apprenticeship contract, signing the contracts, tea ceremony, and the master giving the toolkit.³¹³ After those steps, the rite is finished (Figure 5.15). Compared with the traditional master's ceremony, the modern ceremony abandons kneeling and reduces the restrictions on the apprentice, which is a major improvement. In addition, the toolkit giving in the step of appreciating the master is finished in the master's ceremony, which largely shorten the time gap between the steps.



Figure 5.15. The Master's Ceremony in Modern Xiangshan Bang(Photo by Hang Xingwei)

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Within the scope of China, the master's ceremony in Xiangshan Bang can be regarded as a rite that establishes the apprenticeship, while in the perspective of rite research, it can be classified as a rite of passage. In the human society, with the change of time, each individual's personal life will transit from one stage to another, "the transition from one group to another and

³¹³ On April 18, 2019, a master's ceremony was held for the national inheritor of Xiangshan Bang in Suzhou Landscape Development Co., Ltd..

from one social status to another is regarded as an inevitable connotation of the real existence (Gennep & Zhang, 2010, p.3).” At each stage in such a life cycle, a corresponding rite can be held to give meaning to this change, and this rite is called the rite of passage.³¹⁴

Cultural anthropologist Arnold Van Gennep (1873-1957) once mentioned in his book *Rites of Passage* (1909) that there are usually three stages in rites of passage, namely separation, margin, and aggregation (Gennep & Zhang, 2010, p.10).³¹⁵ It is obvious that the master’s ceremony is at the stage of aggregation, at which the subject of the rite (the apprentice) at the professional level “gets a new status and identity, and correspondingly new rights and obligations.”³¹⁶ In the master’s ceremony, the separation from the old identity and the acquisition of the new demonstrated in the rite formed a self-conformity with the order of the master-apprentice and father-son in the Confucian ethics, which together constituted the presentation and connotation.

5.2.2.3 The Emergence of Relationship and the Gathering of Emotion

For the craftsmen of Xiangshan Bang, the value of the master’s ceremony is more reflected in an ethical way. It first lies in establishing an orthodox ethical relationship of the inheritance of knowledge and technique, and then focuses on consolidating group emotions and providing

³¹⁴ Rites of passage is translated as “通過儀式”“過渡儀式” or “過渡禮儀” in China, and “通過儀礼” in Japan.

³¹⁵ The separation stage symbolizes the separation from the past identity or state; in the margin stage, the individual enters a transitional stage that neither belongs to the original state nor the new state; the aggregation stage represents the individual entering the new state of life and realizing the transformation of the role of life. Generally speaking, a single rite can only express one aspect among separation, margin and aggregation.

³¹⁶ Victor Turner, translated by Zhao Yuyan: *The Forest of Symbols*, Commercial Press, 2006, p. 94.

social acknowledgement.

In the pre-modern society, the ceremony pays special attention to the establishment of the order between the master and the apprentice, that is, the ethical system of “master-apprentice and father-son.” In the written contracts of the master-apprentice relationship, we can clearly see that this relationship emphasizes more on the apprentice’s responsibilities and obligations. The master, who has the skills, is in an advantageous position in this relationship. In the rite, this master-apprentice order appears as a kind of life education and regulation, that is, it imposes a subtle influence on the lifestyle of the individual (the apprentice) through rites, agreements, and habits in daily life. In the process of publicly performing ethics, the apprentice is able to establish socially-recognized and reasonable codes of conduct and generates a sense of reverence.

In terms of group emotion, what cannot be ignored in the ceremony is the structural existence in the Chinese society, that is “guanxi 關係,” which is the background of Chinese ethical society. In previous studies, researchers such as Fei Xiaotong 費孝通 (1910-2015) and Prasenjit Duara, (1950-) have explained the “guanxi” in Chinese society, and regarded those societies which are bounded by interpersonal relationship, such as China, as a society based on “ritual and customs 禮俗.”³¹⁷ In this type of society, interpersonal relationship is regarded as the most valuable assets. This relationship presents a network of the society in which individuals live and participate organically in the organizations in the society. Craftsmen, who always have

³¹⁷ Fei Xiaotong uses “Gemeinschaft” (in Durkheim) to describe a society that occurs naturally because people grow up together. This concept was put forward when compared with the “Gesellschaft” (in Durkheim, means the society based on law and reason) which has modern significance (Fei, 1998, p.9). As a researcher born in Wujiang, Suzhou, Fei Xiaotong grew up in an area which overlaps with the social and geographical area on which Xiangshan Bang relies.

relatively low social status, depend largely on interpersonal relationships to develop and communicate. The master-apprentice relationship is an embedded resource for the apprentice. After becoming an apprentice, he has the right to access to the industry prestige and interpersonal network of the master. And through important event such as banquet, the master's interpersonal relationship is also consolidated, and the interpersonal network formed by the "face-to-face community"³¹⁸ is also further strengthened.

In conclusion, the master's ceremony in Xiangshan Bang is a rite of passage formed with the goal of establishing the orthodox ethical relationship between teachers and students and enhancing group cohesion. This ceremony shapes the orthodox path of Xiangshan Bang's technical inheritance and enlightenment, and provides an important opportunity for inheritors to recognize their own identity transition.

³¹⁸ Refers to a group of people who cooperate with each other and meet every day. From *From the Soil* (Fei, 1998).

Chapter 6

Belief: The Spiritual Logic of the Craftsmanship

Belief refers to the perception that something is to be believed in, worshipped, and taken as a rule and guide for words and deeds. For believers, their belief features a sacred character and thus endows their goals with nobility. On a practical level, belief can guide the believers to live their secular life and enable their behaviors to be led and constrained by it.

In the craftsman community, belief can be regarded as the clearest manifestation of their spiritual system. Compared with many underlying cultural spirits hidden in techniques and ritual systems, belief itself is closest to the spirit and definitely needs to be carefully considered. Therefore, this chapter focuses on the belief systems actually existing in Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang, as well as the self-consistent spiritual logic of these beliefs within the system of craftsmanship.

Section 1 delves into the industry gods that are unique among the craftsmen. The worship of industry gods is a traditional folklore belief derived from ancestor worship, as well as a cultural product resulted from the emergence of industries after the formation of the social division of labor. A necessary definition of industry god could be “the god related to a particular industry or the fundamental interests of a particular industry that is worshipped by people engaged in the industry (Qu, 1999, p.169).”³¹⁹ Generally speaking, the industry gods in both Japan and China can be divided into two broad categories: god of industry pioneer, and god of

³¹⁹ A similar definition is “industry god, also known as industry guardian and industry protector, refers to the god that is worshipped by practitioners to bless the interests of themselves and the industry they engage in and usually has some connection with the industry’s characteristics (Li, 1990, p.1).”

protection.³²⁰ In Kongō Gumi, it is the belief in Prince Shotoku, while in Xiangshan Bang, the most representative belief is the belief in Lu Ban. Since the industry gods worshipped by craftsmen have not been intensively studied, this section also attempts to elaborate the essential ideological characteristics of this kind of belief.

Section 2 starts from the discussion on religious beliefs and philosophical systems. Such beliefs, before entering the craftsmen's spiritual world, have already developed a system of systematic and sacred ideas about the transcendental world, and often have a direct impact on the craftsmen's spiritual world. In the course of Kongō Gumi's development, their belief system had evolved from a purely Buddhist belief of "temple builders" to a common understanding of the three religions of Confucianism, Buddhism and Shintoism, which can be understood as an institutional religion. In Xiangshan Bang, the most influential ideological trend is folk religion. Their folklore beliefs were not organized into religious sects, but rather mainly manifested by the worship of mutually independent gods in various aspects of the construction process and integrated with customs and daily life. Therefore, the similarities and differences between Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang also need to be investigated in detail. Furthermore, this section examines how beliefs and religions are accepted by the craftsman communities in modern society, with a focus on the two craftsman communities' respective relationships with religious sites, practices, and texts in daily life.

³²⁰ "Industry gods can be roughly divided into two broad categories: god of a particular industry, and god that serves merely as a protector (Li, 1990, p.1)."

"Industry pioneer is also known as industry god or industry protector (Qu, 1999, p.169)."

6.1 Worship of Industry Gods

6.1.1 Kongō Gumi and Prince Shōtoku

In Japan, craftsmen in construction-related industries,³²¹ especially carpenters, revere Prince Shōtoku 聖徳太子 as their founding master. Prince Shōtoku is a real figure that once existed in history.³²² He was an aristocrat during Asuka Period. In fact, Prince Shōtoku was not, and was in no way likely to be, the founder of Japanese construction industries. Given that Japanese craftsmen still revere him as the founding master, the historical reason and craftsmen's psychology are worthy of study. Prince Shōtoku is also known as Prince of Eight Ears 八耳皇子, Prince Kanejaku 曲尺太子, or simply The Prince お太子さん among Japanese craftsmen.

The first Japanese ancient classic to link Prince Shōtoku and craftsmen is *Shōka Kojitsu Roku* 匠家故実録: 棟上鉦始諸式礼格 (or *The Tradition of Craftsmanship*):

In the past, Prince Shōtoku taught carpenters how to use compasses and rulers (or kiku-jutsu in Japanese). Now that their craftsmanship has been fully developed, the craftsmen revere Prince Shōtoku as their founding master and worship him as the god.³²³

³²¹ Such as masons 左官, construction workers for high-place operations 鳶職, rooftop workers, tatami builders, barrel makers, forgers, etc.

³²² The existence of Prince Shōtoku is debated in Japanese ancient history studies. However, as this has no direct link to this section's topic, craftsmen's beliefs, it is therefore assumed that Prince Shōtoku is Prince Umayado 厩戸皇子 recorded in *Nihon Shoki*.

³²³ The original text is 中古八耳皇子普ク木匠ノ矩用ヲ全フシ教爾シ給ヒタルヨリ今ノ世ノ業満具ル番匠ノ道ハ成レリ故其御神等ヲ番匠家作ノ祖神ト敬ヒ奉ル.

Refers to Matsuura Hisanobu 松浦長門椽橘久信, *Shōka Kojitsu Roku* (1808, the 5th year of Bunka),

Correspondingly, today, Japanese carpenters still hold a worship ceremony named the Rite of Prince Shōtoku 太子講, which best demonstrates Japanese carpenters' respect for Prince Shōtoku (Miyamoto, 2014, pp.292-298). Literature study shows that, however, the form of the Rite of Prince Shōtoku in middle ages and modern times was directly related to Buddhism rites and beliefs,³²⁴ but not to craftsmen.

From *Collections of The Rites of Prince Shōtoku*³²⁵ 聖徳太子講式集 which recorded many rites, we can find that these texts mainly focused on the *suijyaku* 垂迹 (that is, manifested form) of Prince Shōtoku and Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva the Saviour, which lay a logical foundation for worshipping Prince Shōtoku since the middle ages. However, these texts did not show a clear link between Prince Shōtoku and craftsmen, especially carpenters. Despite this, we

<https://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/1027757>, p.13.

³²⁴ The process of Prince Shōtoku entering the Japanese belief system, especially the process of entering the Japanese Buddhist belief system is a long one. In the Asuka period, Prince Shōtoku did not become an object of religious belief. However, in the Nara period, Shitennoji had begun to hold the Ceremony of Holy Spirit for Prince Shōtoku, This is considered to be the embryonic form of the belief of Prince Shōtoku (by the interpretation of Kawagishi Kōkyō in *Encyclopedia Nipponica*). In *Nihon Shoki*, which was written in the Nara period, the description of Prince Shōtoku is also exaggerated and mysterious. In the mid-Heian period, Prince Shōtoku was described as the incarnation of the Saviour, represented by the *Biography of Prince Shōtoku* 聖徳太子伝暦. Later, with the worship of Buddha relics and of salvation centred on Horyuji Temple and Shitennoji Temple, the ritual form of the belief of Prince Shōtoku gradually formed (Such as *Shitennōji Engi*). Represented by the prince worship of Tendai sect - Jōdo sect (Pure Land buddism) monks such as Jien 慈円 and Shinran 親鸞, the believer of the Pure Land Buddhism began to make various statues of the prince, created the Prince's biography, and established the Prince's Hall. Other sects of Buddhism also the Rite of Prince Shōtoku.

Refers to Gamaike(Eds).1999), Miyazaki(1972).

³²⁵ It recorded the eulogies at the Rite of Prince Shōtoku in different periods, such as: the 9th year of Genna (1623), the 2nd year of Meitoku (1391), the 3rd year of Kyōroku (1530), the 4th year of Kōka (1847), the 2nd year of Bunki (1502), the 2nd year of Antei (1228), the 2nd year of Genkyū (1205), the 1st year of Kenji (1274), etc.

Refers to *Collections of The Rites of Prince Shōtoku* published by Ōya Tokujyō 大屋徳城 (1921, the 10th year of Taishō), <https://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/963579>.

could still find some clue within, that is, these texts consistently recorded Prince Shōtoku's accomplishments in building Buddhism temples, which were used as an argument to show the Prince's accomplishments of *suijyaku*. His accomplishments were written in these texts as follows: “the ambition of construct the temple is for the emperor and the people³²⁶ (Ōya, 1921, p.8),” “since then, based on seven temples, many temples were built³²⁷ (Ibid., p.13),” “built forty six temples³²⁸ (Ibid., p.54 & p.76).” In addition, “chose proper places to build temples³²⁹ (Ibid., p.40)” has always been seen as one of Prince Shōtoku's accomplishments in Buddhism. “Stable the temple and prosperous Buddhism³³⁰ (Ibid., p.58)” is seen as one of the benefits that Prince Shōtoku offers to people, which bears the same importance as “for the equal benefits of the human world³³¹ (Ibid. p.58)”, the most widely known status of Prince Shōtoku. This has made it possible for craftsmen to pray to Prince Shōtoku for safety, and objectively creates a link between them: “trust and be trusted.”

The earliest written record of this rite dated back to *The Rite of Cintāmaṇicakra* 如意輪講式 (Ibid., pp.62-74) in the 2nd year of Genkyū Period (1205):

³²⁶ The original text is 立塔寺之志為君為民.

³²⁷ The original text is 自而以降、七箇寺為其根本、建數箇之寺塔.

³²⁸ The original text is 四十六箇所之伽藍.

³²⁹ The original text is 擇勝地建伽藍.

³³⁰ The original text is 為伽藍安穩興隆佛法.

³³¹ The original text is 為天下法界平等利益.

Trikāya is Bhagavat Śākyamuni, Amitābha, Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi,
Cintā-maṇi, Cintāmaṇicakra, four stages of enlightenment and the pillar of Buddhism
Prince Shōtoku...³³²

In this text, such an expression as “the pillar of Buddhism Prince Shōtoku”³³³ appeared as a praise of his accomplishments in promoting Buddhism in Japan. “Pillar” in Chinese means “the spandrel wood in houses,”³³⁴ and is then used as a metaphor to refer to those who “shoulder great responsibilities.”³³⁵ In Japanese, “pillar” can also refer to the head of carpenters, that is, dōryō. It is not difficult to imagine how “the pillar of Buddhism Prince Shōtoku” could be viewed

³³² The original text is 敬白三身即一釋迦牟尼世尊、瞻養教主無量壽佛、十方三世應正等覺者、廣大如意摩尼寶珠、隨類兩寶大根本秘密咒等、八萬十二權實正教、本尊施無畏大悲莊嚴者、如意輪觀自在菩薩等、地前地上諸大薩埵、身子目連善吉滿願等、四向四果賢眾僧救世願王傳燈（東）方佛法棟梁聖德太子（Ōya, 1921, p.63).

³³³ “Pillars of Buddhism” include the monk Eji 慧慈 from Goguryeo and Esō 慧聰 from Baekje. See *Nihon Shoki* (Vol.22). The original text is 五月戊午朔丁卯、高麗僧慧慈歸化、則皇太子師之。是歲、百濟僧慧聰來之。此兩僧、弘演佛教、並為三寶之棟梁. Refers to *Nihon Shoki* (Vol.22), from *Nihon Koten Bungaku Taikei* (68), p.175.

³³⁴ For example:

Zhuangzi: Renjianshi 《莊子·人間世》：“When he looked up, however, at its smaller branches, they were so twisted and crooked that they could not be made into rafters and beams 夫仰而視其細枝，則拳曲而不可以為棟梁 (translated by James Legge).” Refers to *Zhuangzi Zhu*, from *Siku Quanshu*, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 1056-p.28.

³³⁵ For example:

Chen Qiu Zhuan 陳球傳 (or *Biography of Chen Qiu*), *Hou Hanshu*(or *The Book of the Later Han*) 《後漢書》 (Vol.56): “You are the pillar of the country. The country is about to collapse. If you do not support it, what do we need you for 公為國棟梁，傾危不持，焉用彼相邪?” Refers to *Hou Hanshu*, from *Siku Quanshu*, Shibu 1, Zhengshi, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 253-p.201.

Chapter 97 from *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* 《三國演義》：“Zi Long has died. The country lost one of its pillars, and I lost one of my arms 子龍身故，國家損一棟樑 (same as 棟梁)，吾去一臂也。”

as a pillar in carpentry. Such a literal link offers a possibility that “similarity and identity,” which may well become the very foundation why carpenters revered Prince Shōtoku.

Although the rite was initially a Buddhism ceremony dedicated to eulogizing Prince Shōtoku, it allowed the public to participate from its very beginning. For example, it was recorded in *The Rites of Prince Shōtoku* 聖德太子講式 from the 2nd year of Antei that apart from the tutor and various monks, “the public can also worship the Prince Shōtoku³³⁶(Ibid., p.36),” and after the ceremony “the tutor guided the public to have a feast³³⁷ (Ibid., p.45).” It is commonly believed among carpenters that it was Prince Shōtoku that taught people how to use *kanejyaku* 曲尺 (or carpenter’s square in chapter 5), which is why he was also known as Prince Kanejyaku (see Figure 6.1, 6.2). This image was quite similar to that of the prince holding an incense burner in Buddhism paintings. It could be inferred that Buddhism rites and paintings offered some kind of inspirations for craftsmen to worship Prince Shōtoku. “Being able to participate” has made it possible for craftsmen to reorganize the rites as an occupation aggregation after its Buddhism characteristics gradually faded away.

³³⁶ The original text is 大眾諸共可奉禮上宮太子聖靈.

³³⁷ The original text is 導師下座以後引式眾於便宜所可有饗宴.



Figure 6.1. The Drawing of Prince Kanejyaku ³³⁸

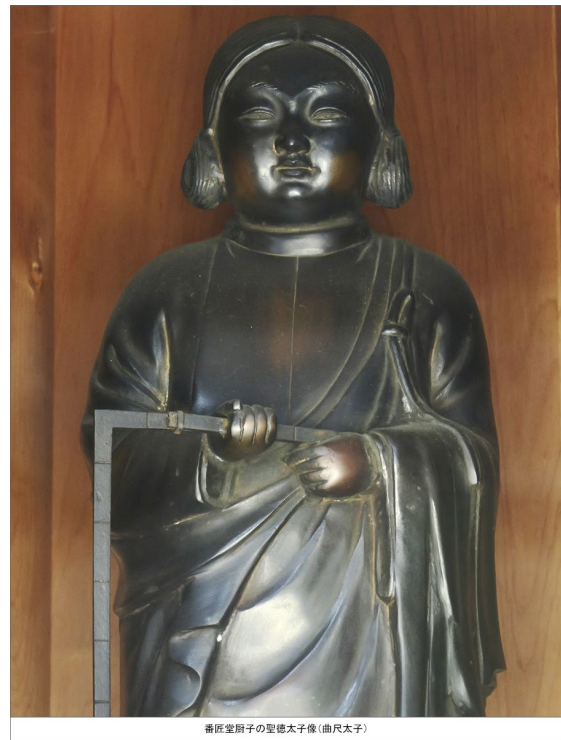


Figure 6.2. The Statue of Prince Kanejyaku ³³⁹

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Through the previously mentioned characteristics of the rites, such as “trust and being trusted,” “similarity and identity” and “being able to participate,” a link has been formed between craftsmen and Prince Shōtoku, which has strengthened the worship as well. In as early as Muromachi Period, Prince Shōtoku has become the object of worship of the craftsmen (Hyōdō, 1989, p.33), and the Rite of Prince Shōtoku has become the way they assembled (Noto, 2005).

³³⁸ The figure comes from <https://www.ensenji.or.jp/blog/6012/>

³³⁹ The figure comes from https://www.osaka21.or.jp/web_magazine/osaka100/069.html

This statue of the prince with kanejyaku is in the cabinet of the Hall of Craftsmen 番匠堂 of Shitennoji Temple. Usually, the cabinet of the Hall of Craftsmen is tightly closed. On the 22nd of each month, that is, on the death date of Prince Shōtoku, the cabinet of Hall of Craftsmen will be opened.

By the Edo Period, the Rite of Prince Shōtoku prevailed among craftsmen. Nowadays, the Rite of Prince Shōtoku is usually held on February 22nd.³⁴⁰

For Kongō Gumi, ceremonies related to Prince Shōtoku mainly include the ceremony of worshipping Prince Shōtoku in the Hall of Craftsmen 番匠堂曲尺太子奉賛法要 on November 22nd (Kongō, 2013, pp.61-62), cutting chopsticks 箸削りの儀 on December 22nd (Kongō, 2013, p. 62) and worshipping the Hall of Craftsmen after the ceremony of carpenter with hatchet on January 11th. Regulations on Prince Shōtoku worship mainly include *Seventeen-Article Constitution on Leaders* 幹部十七條憲法 (Kongō, 2013, pp.158-161).

The form and function of worshipping Prince Shōtoku in the Hall of Craftsmen are similar to those of the Rite of Prince Shōtoku.³⁴¹ However, because the Hall of Craftsmen (Figure 6.3) in Shitennoji Temple was built on November 22nd in the 14th year of Heisei (2002), this ceremony is also set to be held at 10 am on November 22nd every year. Attending the ceremony are mainly senior monks at Shitennoji Temple and craftsmen in construction industries. On the nobori 幟 (that is, a long, narrow flag attached to a pole with a cross-rod. See the next section for details, about a nobori named “craftsmen’s tools”) around the Hall of Craftsmen, which are used for blessings, there are also the names of several construction companies and individuals with Kongō

³⁴⁰ The Rite of Prince Shōtoku in Shitennoji Temple and Horyuji Temple is held on February 22nd.

However, in the text, the Rite of Prince Shōtoku was held in January, May and September, even can be held in every month, such as Toji Temple (Ōya, 1921, p.46).

In recent Japan, there are also examples of holding the Rite of Prince Shōtoku on January 22nd (such as Samukawa-machi in Kanagawa Prefecture, Hōkai-ji 宝戒寺 in Kamakura, etc.).

³⁴¹ Refers to 四天王寺：番匠堂曲尺太子 奉賛法要の話，

<http://www.shitennoji.or.jp/report/1122%E3%81%AB%E7%95%AA%E5%8C%A0%E5%A0%82%E6%9B%B2%E5%B0%BA%E5%A4%AA%E5%AD%90-%E5%A5%89%E8%B3%9B%E6%B3%95%E8%A6%81%E3%81%8C%E5%8E%B3%E4%BF%AE%E3%81%95%E3%82%8C%E3%81%BE%E3%81%99/>

Gumi as a representative. The aim is to impose constraints on the behaviours of craftsmen by establishing an industry community led by Prince Shōtoku.

Cutting chopsticks refers to the ceremony held on December 22nd each year when craftsmen in Kongō Gumi would cut rectangular sticks into octagon cylinders with a radius of 2cm and a length of 24cm, which are also known as chopsticks. While worshipping Prince Shōtoku, the chopsticks made by Kongō Gumi are also offered along with other offerings to show their respect.

After the most important ceremony for Kongō Gumi, the ceremony of carpenter with hatchet (see chapter 5, section 2 for details), all the participants would worship the Hall of Craftsmen and pray to Prince Shōtoku for construction safety again (Figure 6.4).



Figure 6.3. The Hall of Craftsmen in Shitennoji Temple (Left) © 2019 Xie Yuxin

Figure 6.4. Worshipping the Hall of Craftsmen by Kongō Gumi (Right) © 2019 Xie Yuxin

After bankruptcy recombination, Kongō Gumi referred to the contents of *Seventeen-Article Constitution* and the structure and contents of *The Will of Kongō Yoshisada* (1802), the

32nd generation head of Kongō Gumi, to form the *Seventeen-Article Constitution on Leaders*, which was used to constrain industry leaders' behaviours. Kongō Gumi's *Seventeen-Article Constitution on Leaders* is similar to *Seventeen-Article Constitution* in its prescriptions, such as “peace, shinbutsu (Shinto and Buddhism), law, courtesy, justice, goodwill, responsibility, getting up in the morning, credit, no anger, good perception, organization, mutual assistance, no jealousy, listening to both sides, timing, no dictation.” Only, it replaced the relationship between “emperor and subjects” in *Seventeen-Article Constitution* with that between “leaders and subordinates.” Kongō Gumi's said that this system is not compulsory (Kongō, 2013, p.161) in any way, but Kongō Gumi craftsmen would voluntarily confine their behaviours.

The above discussion on the relationship between Kongō Gumi and their industry god Prince Shōtoku shows that the various ceremonies held and standards established by Kongō Gumi in the name of Prince Shōtoku not only protect them but also restrain their behaviours within the group and maintain their relationship with others in this industry.

6.1.2 Xiangshan Bang and Lu Ban

In China, craftsmen in construction industries like carpenters, plasterers and masons usually revere Lu Ban 魯班 as their founding master. Lu Ban is a historical figure with the original name of Gongshu Ban 公輸班,³⁴² who then became a divine god (patron) of builders

³⁴² See chapter 1, section 1 for the record of Gongshu Ban in pre-Qin classics.

There has always been a differing opinion about whether Lu Ban and Gongshu Ban refer to the same person. *Gu Yuefu* 《古樂府》 (or, *Ancient Songs of the Music Bureau*) in Han Dynasty had a verse “Who can carve this? Gongshu Ban and Lu Ban can 誰能刻此鏤，公輸與魯班.” Refers to (Yuan Dynasty)Zuo Keming 左克明, *Gu Yuefu*, From *Siku Quanshu*, Jibu 8, Zongji 集部八·总集類, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of*

and contractors while his stories were passed down through dynasties³⁴³ and were interpreted differently. Lu Ban also has a number of honorary names, such as Lu Ban the Celestial Master 魯班仙師, Gongshu the Founding Master 公輸先師, Lu Ban the Ingenious 巧聖先師, Lu Ban the Revered 魯班爺, Lu Ban the Lord 魯班公, Lu Ban the Holy Master 魯班聖祖, etc.

Lu Ban's story in the carpentry industry mainly originates from the article *Origin of Lu Ban the Celestial Master* 《魯班仙師源流》 (Figure 6.5) written in *Lu Ban Jing Jiangjia Jing* 《魯班經匠家鏡》 (or, *Mirror of craftsmanship and guidelines by Lu Ban*):

Lu Ban has a name of Ban and a surname of Gongshu, and who styled himself as Yizhi . He was born in Dongping Village in the state of Lu. His father has a name of Xian. His mother has a surname of Wu. Lu Ban was born at midday on May 7th,

Literary Profundity, 1368-p.495.

In late Qing Dynasty, Sun Yirang 孫詒讓 wrote in *Gongshu The Fiftieth, Mozi Xiangu* 《墨子閑詁·公輸第五十》 (Vol. 8) that “Gongshu Ban might be Lu Ban 公輸盤或魯班,” identifying them as the same person. Sun Yirang's idea influenced later studies to a large extent. In modern studies, both Liang Qichao 梁啟超 and Wu Jingan 吳靜安 agreed upon this idea. They differed only about the birth and death years of Lu Ban.

Sun Yirang: *Mozi Xiangu* 《墨子閑詁》, from Peking University Library. Retrieved from <https://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=32256&page=26&remap=gb>

³⁴³ For example: In Tang Dynasty, Duan Chengshi 段成式 (803-863) has recorded in *Youyang Zazu* (sequel, Vol.4) 《酉陽雜俎·續》卷四《貶誤》: “Nowadays, every time people see the beautiful buildings, they must talk about the work of Lu Ban. In Chang'an and Luoyang, the temples are also regarded as the work of Lu Ban, which shows the admiration of tradition 今人每觀棟宇巧麗, 必強謂魯般奇工也。至兩都寺中, 亦往往託為魯般所造, 其不稽古如此。” It can be speculated that until the Tang Dynasty, there was already a tradition that attributed the architectural craftsmanship to Lu Ban. Refers to (Tang Dynasty) Duan Chengshi, *Youyang Zazu* (sequel), From *Siku Quanshu*, Zibu 12, Xiaoshuojia 子部十二·小說家類 in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 1047-p.796.

In addition, as for the collation of folk Lu Ban legends, Please refer to Tian(2003).

507 B.C.. On that day, white cranes were clustering around the house, and exotic fragrances were filling the room and lasting for months, astonishing everyone. At 7 years old, he did not attend to his studies, which worried his parents very much. At 15 years old, he changed suddenly and began to learn carpentry from Duanmu Qi, a student of the scholar Zixia (that is, Bu Shang). Within just a few months, he became thoroughly acquainted with it and exceeded others. He felt ashamed at the ceaseless wars between the various states at that time, and began to lobby them to pledge loyalty to the Zhou Dynasty, but failed. He decided to seclude himself in Xiaohe Mountain on the south of Mount Tai for almost thirteen years. Once upon a time, he came across a senior Bao and had a pleasant talk with him. He began to learn from the senior with a focus on carving and painting and an aim of reinvigorating Chinese cultural items. He once said: “The Heaven forms circles without a compass and squares without a ruler, but human beings have to rely on compasses and rulers. Although I could utilize my craftsmanship to draw circles and squares without them, how could I know that future generations are as capable as I am? If they are not, then the techniques would be lost.” For this reason, he invented compasses and rulers for future generations’ use. People who used these tools revered him as the master. They selected the appropriate tools for different purposes and kept modifying those tools. Lu Ban’s wife, Yun, was also gifted. She invented countless tools as well and even had some advantages that Lu Ban did not have. She was praised by many people and held a great reputation. At 40 years old, Lu Ban secluded himself again in Mount Li

and met someone who taught him a unique skill. He travelled across the whole country, only leaving his axe and saw in Bailu Xianyan, which are still visible even to this day. Throughout Han, Tang and Song Dynasties, Lu Ban could manifest himself and help the dynasty in its construction works, and hence received his fame. During Yongle Period, Ming Dynasty, the emperor ordered to build Longsheng Palace in Beijing, which required tens of thousands of craftsmen, terrifying all of them. It was thanks to Lu Ban that the Palace was finally completed, and therefore the temples for worshiping him were named “Lu Ban’s Gate.” He was honoured as Lord Beicheng, and received two worships a year in spring and autumn respectively, his sacrificial offerings is Tailao (that is, six kinds of animal, horse, ox, sheep, chicken, dog and pig). Lu Ban was also conferred a title of nobility. At present, anyone who prays for Lu Ban’s help would receive a response. Lu Ban is deeply revered.³⁴⁴

³⁴⁴ The original text is: 師諱班，姓公輸，字依智。魯之賢勝路，東平村人也。其父諱賢，母吳氏。師生於魯定公三年甲戌五月初七日午時，是日白鶴羣集，異香滿室，經月弗散，人咸奇之。甫七歲，嬉戲不學，父母深以為憂。迨十五歲，忽幡然，從游於子夏之門人端木起，不數月，遂妙理融通，度越時流。憤諸侯僭稱王號，因遊說列國，志在尊周，而計不行，乃歸而隱于泰山之南小和山焉，晦迹幾一十三年。偶出而遇鮑老輩，促膝譙譚，竟受業其門，注意雕鏤刻畫，欲令中華文物煥爾一新。故嘗語人曰：“不規而圓，不矩而方，此乾坤自然之象也。規以為圓，矩以為方，實人官兩象之能也。矧吾之明，雖足以盡製作之神，亦安得必天下萬世咸能，師心而如吾明耶。明不如吾，則吾之明窮，而吾之技亦窮矣。”爰是既竭目力，復繼之以規矩準繩。俾公私欲經營宮室，駕造舟車與置設器皿，以前民用者，要不超吾一成之法，已試之方矣，然則師之。緣物盡制，緣制盡神者，顧不良且鉅哉。而其淑配雲氏，又天授一段神巧，所制器物固難枚舉，第較之於師，殆有佳處，內外贊襄，用能享大名而垂不朽耳。裔是年躋四十，復隱於歷山，卒遭異人授秘訣，雲遊天下，白日飛昇，止留斧鋸在白鹿仙巖，迄今古跡昭然如睹，故戰國大義贈為永成待詔義士。後三年陳侯加贈智惠法師，歷漢、唐、宋，猶能顯蹤助國，屢膺封號。我皇明永樂間，鼎初北京龍聖殿，役使萬匠，莫不震悚。賴師降靈指示，方獲落成。爰建廟祀之

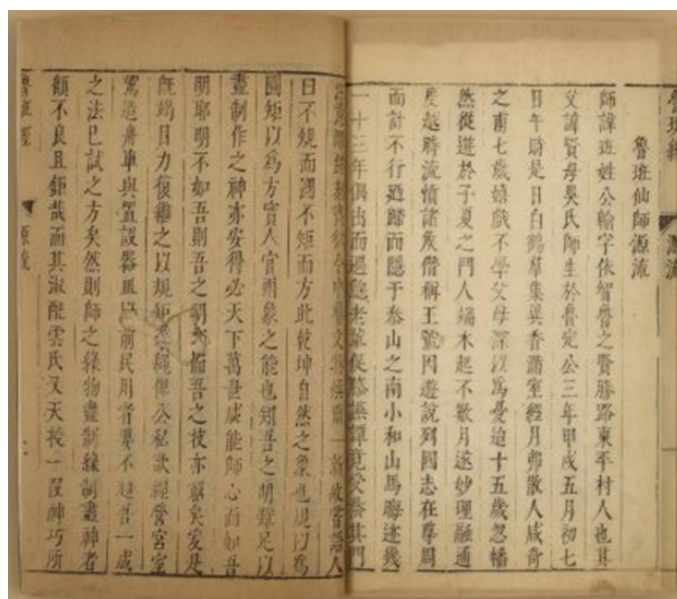


Figure 6.5. *Lu Ban Jing Jiangjia Jing* in the Palace Museum³⁴⁵

© 2001-2020 The Palace Museum 故宮博物院

This text records Lu Ban’s family and describes Lu Ban’s identity in an annal-biography style. After the close reading into the text, we could find that the image of Lu Ban in this text is

扁曰“魯班門”，封待詔輔國太師北成侯，春秋二祭，禮用太牢。今之工人凡有祈禱，靡不隨叩隨應，忱懸象著明而萬古仰照者。 Refers to *Lu Ban Jing Jiangjia Jing*, from Peking University Library.

³⁴⁵ *Lu Ban Jing Jiangjia Jing* (3 Volumes), was edited by Wu Rong 午榮, Ming Dynasty. As the version of Pingsha Yuchi Jing 《平砂玉尺經》, engraved by Huixian Zhai 匯賢齋 during the Wanli period of the Ming Dynasty (1573-1602). The frame is 20cm×14cm. Half page with 9 lines, 20 characters in line. Title at the end of the volume shows: “the new engravement by Beijing’s craftsman, the official Lu Ban Jing Jiangjia Jing 新鑄京板工師雕斷正式魯班經匠家鏡.” The center of the book is titled “Lu Ban Jing.” The end of the volume is signed: “Edited by the leader of Beijing Admiral’s Ministry of Industry’s Royal Craftsman Wu Rong, collected by the leader of the Craftsman Institute Yan Tong, and revised by Nanjing’s Royal Craftsman’s leader Zhou Yan 北京提督工部禦匠司司正午榮彙編，居匠所把總章嚴全集，南京禦匠司司承周言校正。”

Refers to The Palace Museum 故宮博物院: <https://www.dpm.org.cn/ancient/yuanmingqing/148044.html>

For recent research about *Lu Ban Jing Jiangjia Jing*, please refer to Lu (2010) for details.

a mix of politician, hermit and celestial being, although his fundamental identity is a craftsman. This is the “foreground” of worshipping Lu Ban as an industry god.

It is especially worth noting that at the end of the text Lu Ban’s “celestial features” are emphasized, and that: he could “manifest himself and help the dynasty 顯蹤助國” throughout different dynasties; in Ming Dynasty when *Lu Ban Jing Jiangjia Jing* has been compiled, he enjoyed two worships a year in spring and autumn respectively;³⁴⁶ while craftsmen pray for Lu Ban’s blessings and guidance, he would give responses. So far, Lu Ban has been made into a god worshiped by all carpenters.

In Chinese folk society, craftsmen have been organizing worshipping activities for Lu Ban ever since Ming and Qing Dynasties. The activities are usually held in Gongshuzi Ci, that is, Lu Ban Ci (or, Lu Ban’s Hall).³⁴⁷ Xiangshan Bang is no exception. We mentioned in the introduction of chapter 2, section 1 that: “in the plasterer and carpenter industry, Xiangshan Bang is the best one, the craftsmen of Xiangshan Bang are dedicated to the Master Luban in Yuanmiaoguan, Changyi (*Plasterer and Carpentry Craftsmen Building Gongsuo Good Deed Stone Tablet*).”³⁴⁸ Similar records include: “There used to be a place known as Ziyi Gongsuo in Zhusi Alley, which worshiped Lu Ban and Zhang Ban, which was the office of same profession

³⁴⁶ Beijing Longsheng Palace was not existed till now. If it is true that the emperor Yongle built the Longsheng Palace in Beijing, the possibility of not including it in history books is very low. There is no record of this temple in *Ming Shilu* or other books. And if the Longsheng Palace is built by the order of emperor Yongle, it would be illogical to name the temple plaque as “Lu Ban’s Gate” after the final completion. Therefore, this text is likely to be the fabrication. That is to say, there was the fact that craftsmen believed in Lu Ban first, and then compiled a section of the text that make Lu Ban into god.

³⁴⁷ They can be found in Shandong Province, Beijing, etc.

³⁴⁸ Same as that in chapter 2.

(Both Plasterer and Carpentry Industry in Chang, Yuan, and Wu Donate 3000 Wen Every Month As Monthly Savings to Build Gongsuo Good Deed Stone Tablet).”³⁴⁹

As mentioned previously (see chapter 2), Xiangshan Bang is formed based on geographical and industrial connections. The common worship of industry gods helps strengthen their industrial connections and promote the formation of guilds. Historical inscriptions indicate that the place where Xiangshan Bang craftsmen worshipped Lu Ban and Zhang Ban³⁵⁰ was also the place where they discussed important matters. In other words, they discussed important matters and worshipped industry gods in the same place. Inscriptions of stone tablets in Ziyi Gongsuo also indicate that Xiangshan Bang craftsmen preferred settling industry-related issues here in front of the two industry gods (Zhang Ban and Lu Ban) such as arbitrating wages and nominating guild leaders. This not only shows their respect to the gods but more importantly imposes constraints to others who are present because they believe that “people should never lie before the industry god.” This contains an ideology of administering the people through the help of the gods.

In addition, the spirit tablets of Zhang Ban and Lu Ban were often prepared in the beam raising ceremonies of Xiangshan Bang craftsmen. Craftsmen also worshipped the shenma³⁵¹ 神

³⁴⁹ Refers to Jiangsu provincial museum, 1959, p.81.

The original text is: 前有同業梓義公所一處，在洙泗巷內，供奉魯、張班仙師，為同業辦公之所。

³⁵⁰ Zhang Ban is revered as another industry god in carpentry in addition to Lu Ban. According to *Journey to the West* 《西遊記》, the Jade Emperor 玉帝 ordered Zhang Ban and Lu Ban to build a palace for the Monkey King 玉帝命工幹官張、魯二班在蟠桃園右首，起一座齊天大聖府 (Chapter 14). While the two craftsmen stand together, Zhang Ban often stands in front of Lu Ban. Folklore in China believe that Zhang Ban is senior to Lu Ban and Zhang Ban is the older brother while they become sworn brothers.

³⁵¹ Shenma 神馬/神祢/神碼 is a paper drawing of a god that is carved into wooden blocks. In the folk society,

马 of Lu Ban or Zhang Ban or both (Figure 6.6, 6.7). Such worship of their founding masters deriving from their practices can also be seen as the masters' guidance and constraints on craftsmen's behaviours and craftsmanship practices.

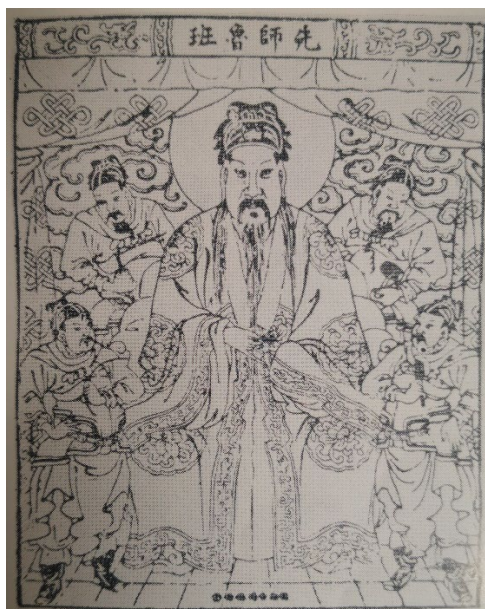


Figure 6.6. Shenma of Lu Ban



Figure 6.7. Shenma of Zhang Ban and Lu Ban

Figure 6.6.-6.7. © 1990 Li Qiao

On the spiritual level, worshipping industry gods in daily lives mainly derives from the idea of *respecting those who are virtuous and rewarding those who have made contributions*³⁵² 崇德報功. Craftsmen believe that the industry was created by the industry gods and the techniques were invented by them as well. There is an old Chinese saying that goes, “the founding master gives (does not give) the livelihood 祖師爺（不）賞飯吃,” another proof of craftsmen viewing their livelihood as the gift of their founding masters. For craftsmen, the role

such drawings are often used. It usually takes the shape of a shrine 神龕 and has the image of the god worshipped in the middle and has the god's name on the above.

³⁵² Li, 1990, p.35. Or “never forget to pay a debt of gratitude 報本反始.”

of founding masters is as indicated by its name: a master who teaches them all the techniques they depend on for a living. Therefore, craftsmen would sincerely worship the industry gods, appreciate their grace and try to requite.

Moreover, the most important role of industry gods is to bless the industry. For example, Xiangshan Bang craftsmen would directly pray to Lu Ban and Zhang Ban for safety and smoothness in their construction works. In some literature and mythologies there are also stories about Lu Ban manifesting himself to save carpenters in difficulties.³⁵³ These prayers are more of secular values, such as gaining profits and avoiding disasters. In this regard, industry gods can be seen as the representation of the beliefs of craftsmen. By worshipping and praying to the industry gods, craftsmen are able to express their expectations and therefore gain a psychological compensation of “not to heaven but to the earth.”³⁵⁴

6.1.3 Essence of the Worship of Industry Gods

Taking a look at the overall form of Japanese and Chinese carpenters, we could find that worship of industry gods is not unique to Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang but is a shared culture among all the craftsmen in this industry.

³⁵³ “...terrifying all of them. It was thanks to Lu Ban that the Palace was finally completed.” From *Origin of Lu Ban the Celestial Master*.

³⁵⁴ “For religion in itself is without content, it owes its being not to heaven but to the earth, and with the abolition of distorted reality, of which it is the theory, it will collapse of itself.” Karl Marx, *To Arnold Ruge. November 30, 1842*, refers to Marx and Engels (1975, pp.394-395)

In a way, the fact that Chinese popular beliefs have a significant basis on secularism has made contemporary China introducing Marxism as the theoretical basis of atheism quite natural.

First of all, one feature is especially distinctive about the worship of industry gods in both Japanese and Chinese craftsmen, is fictive. It is shown through the fact that craftsmen from both countries chose a prestigious and high-powered figure as their industry god and worshipped this figure.

This can be explained as follows. The founding of an industry is usually the result of collective wisdom. Although techniques, that are pivotal to the industry's development, depend on people, scarcely would the invention of a certain technique be credited to any individual. Hence, the real founding master of an industry can be hardly determined from history for most industries; instead, people have to overly interpret historical texts to find someone worthy of the name. In China, Lu Ban was posthumously credited as the founding master of a lot of industries due to his expertise. In Japan, Prince Shōtoku was revered as the industry god of constructions because he built Buddhism temples and pagodas. This process of creating industry gods is known as “the public creating gods (Li, 2000)” by some scholars, which, to some extent, describes the sociocultural psychology when the industry gods were first created.

The divinity given to the industry gods by craftsmen usually include the following:

Firstly, extraordinary power that far exceeds those of craftsmen themselves but originates in them as well. Gorky (1868-1936) once talked about human beings' worship of gods: “For primitive men, god is not an abstract or imaginary concept, but rather a realistic figure with some kind of tools for labor. God is an expert in some techniques, teaching and working with human beings (Gorky & Lin, 1980).” Therefore, in historical texts about industry gods, the focus would always be on how industry gods taught craftsmen techniques and tools. In this way, craftsmen

made the transition “from gods to people” in their own industry and techniques. Moreover, descriptions about industry gods’ power would be exaggerated, with a particular focus on the gods’ special talents in the industry, adding to the mysteriousness.

Secondly, a high status in history and noble characters. In fact, the industry gods of Japanese and Chinese craftsmen are quite influential figures in history already. Still, the craftsmen would try to further enhance the gods’ status by, for example, giving the gods additional titles,³⁵⁵ building honorary halls and memorials,³⁵⁶ holding commemorative ceremonies,³⁵⁷ etc. In addition, these industry gods are often given noble characters, with which they may offer protections to craftsmen in the industry. Facing great uncertainties in society and nature, craftsmen have a strong desire to pray to industry gods for blessings and safety. The benefits that industry gods give are usually supernatural. Industry gods may ensure the service life of buildings and construction safety for craftsmen in Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang. Craftsmen first had the need to entrust their wishes and then began to worship the industry gods. Worship is simply a means rather than an objective. This is another proof that creating industry gods is a secular practice for craftsmen.

³⁵⁵ For example, Prince Shōtoku was revered as “Prince Kanejyaku” by Japanese carpenters, Lu Ban was honoured as “Lord Beicheng” and received two worships a year in spring and autumn respectively (see chapter 6, section 1).

³⁵⁶ For example, Prince’s Hall can be seen in Japan, Lu Ban’s Memorial Temple, Lu Ban’s Hall, Gongshu’s Memorial Hall are common in China. Also, there are the Hall of Craftsmen at Shitennoji Temple, Osaka, for Kongō Gumi and Ziyi Gongsuo for Xiangshan Bang.

³⁵⁷ For example, Kongō Gumi worships Prince Shōtoku in the Hall of Craftsmen, and Xiangshan Bang worships Lu Ban.

Second of all, the functions of Japanese and Chinese industry gods are mainly to help craftsmen unite the industry and raise their own status in the industry.

Both Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang have the rights to worship their industry gods in an area, and therefore have charisma in the industry, virtually making them leaders. Worshipping an industry god is closely related with an area's management. For example, Yeguo Licheng 葉郭立誠 wrote the following when discussing the relationship between Chinese historical guilds and industry gods: "Chinese guilds usually select a historical or legendary celebrity or god as the industry's founding master. This celebrity or god becomes the industry's inventor. The guild is able to use people's worship of this founding master to convene and command them and to promote businesses. The guild leader is the primary ritualist of the rites. Every year, there would be a major worship ceremony on the birthday of the industry god. All the guild members would participate in the ceremony. After the worship, they would have meetings to discuss public matters in the guild, elect guild leaders, adjust prices, fine violators, etc., all in front of the statue of the industry god to show their impartiality and justice (Yeguo, 1967, p.3)." Inscriptions found in Ziyi Gongsuo of Xiangshan Bang indeed prove this characteristic. Worship of industry gods not only benefits the management of guilds but also unites the industry, which can also be found in both Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang. For Chinese craftsmen, "...for unity, all craftsmen worship their founding master to a great extent. Grand ceremonies would be held on founding master's birthday to show their respect. For example, carpenters worship Lu Ban (Dong, 1981, p.83)." In terms of Japanese craftsmen, the procedure of worshipping Prince Shōtoku in the Hall

of Craftsmen³⁵⁸ by Kongō Gumi also demonstrates the worship's characteristic of uniting the industry.

On the spiritual level, craftsmen can also raise their own status in the industry by worshipping their industry gods. In pre-modern times, looking up to the ancient and down on the present was a common psychology in society. For this reason, craftsmen would always select ancient figures as their industry gods. It was quite logical and natural for an industry to try to enhance their own status in a hierarchical society by selecting a prestigious industry god. Although it did not practically enhance their status in reality, this practice enhanced craftsmen's sense of pride and was entrusted with their wishes.

These practical and spiritual functions of worshipping industry gods are undeniably the foundation for the practice to emerge and to sustain.

³⁵⁸ Refers to Watanabe, 渡邊純一：大工の始祖は聖徳太子！四天王寺【番匠堂曲尺太子奉賛法要】に参加してきました。： <http://www.shuzen-torasan.jp/blog/jirei/2035/>

6.2 Evolution and Modern Acceptance of Beliefs

6.2.1 Kongō Gumi's Interpretation of Three Religions: Confucianism, Buddhism and Shintoism

6.2.1.1 Buddhism as Initial Thoughts

In the discussion of the craftsmanship spirit of Kongō Gumi, the oldest craftsmen group in Japan, it is inevitable to obtain ideological resources from their own cognitive system in addition to their practical form. In particular, it is an important aspect to study the craftsmanship spirit in Kongō Gumi on whether some of the formalized spirits have been inherited. Buddhism is the most important one among these religions. There has not been a clear record in text about the initial religious belief of Kongō Gumi. However, given that they initially built temples, and Shitennoji Temple that they built did not belong to any sect,³⁵⁹ it could be inferred that the initial thoughts of Kongō Gumi craftsmen derived from the belief of Shitennoji Temple.

³⁵⁹ According to Shitennoji Temple's own introduction, when Prince Shōtoku established Shitennoji Temple, Japanese Buddhism did not form a clear concept of sect, and Shitennoji Temple was not named as a certain sect. During the Nara period, Prince Shōtoku Buddhism, as The Six Schools of Nara Buddhism, also known as the Nanto Rokushū 南都六宗 namely East Asian Yogācāra 法相宗 (or Hossō-shū), Satyasiddhi 成実宗 (or Jōjitsu-shū), Kegon-shū 華嚴宗, Kusha-shū(俱舍宗, Risshū 律宗, East Asian Mādhyamaka 三論宗 (or Sanron-shū). However, Shitennoji Temple did not belong to one of these sects at the time. During the Heian period, Shingon Buddhism represented by Kūkai and Tendai Buddhism represented by Saichō became the mainstream of Japanese Buddhism. Both Kūkai and Saichō had lived in or practiced at Shitennoji Temple, so for a long time, Shitennoji Temple became the leader temple of these two sects. However, compared with Kūkai's close relationship with Tantric Buddhism, Saichō's Tendai Buddhism values the Lotus Sutra as much as Prince Shōtoku, and Saichō himself is also a person who respects Prince Shōtoku. Therefore, in its development, Shitennoji Temple gradually moved closer to Tendai Buddhism. Until World War II, Shitennoji belonged to the Tendai sect. However, since Japan has opened up the naming of Buddhist sects in recent years, Shitennoji Temple hopes to

There was a consensus among Kongō Gumi craftsmen that they mainly focused on temple and shrine. In order to construct in such religious buildings, they had to maintain a close trust relationship with owners of the temple and shrine (Kongō, 2013, p.167).³⁶⁰ It could be inferred that during the thousand years when Kongō Gumi mainly relied upon Shitennoji Temple, they were bound to develop a close relationship with Shitennoji Temple, and that the evolution of Japanese Buddhism thoughts with Shitennoji Temple as an aspect would necessarily influence the thoughts of Kongō Gumi.

As compared with Tendai Sect which mainly uses doctrine for meditation, as has always been emphasized by Shitennoji Temple, although Shitennoji Temple has never clarified the influence of Pure Land Buddhism on its sects, in fact, the Pure Land worship since Heian Period has profoundly influenced the Buddhism system of Shitennoji Temple. Along with Buddhism relics worship and Prince Shōtoku worship, the Pure Land worship constitutes many aspects of the Buddhism thoughts of Shitennoji Temple. In terms of the worship of Kongō Gumi, some

return to its original intention when it was founded and became independent from the Tendai sect in 1946. They take the word “harmony” is extracted from the “harmony as precious” in Article 1 of the *Seventeen-Article Constitution*, which is called Wa sect 和宗.

It is worth noting that the process by which Shitennoji Temple was finally portrayed as Wa sect is almost the same as the above-mentioned way of thinking of Kongō Gumi using Prince Shōtoku’s *Seventeen-Article Constitution* to establish the *Seventeen-Article Constitution on Leaders*.

³⁶⁰ With the gradual expansion of the business of Kongō Gumi, when facing temples and shrines of different denominations, the names of the owners of the temples and shrines should be different. This means that in addition to their professional skills, they also need to know a lot of expertise about temples and shrines. This way of learning and understanding should be passed on (Kongō, 2013, p.167).

items, as well as the aforementioned ceremonies, have been a proof of the profound influence of the Pure Land thoughts on people.³⁶¹

At the construction sites of Kongō Gumi, a nobori named “craftsmen’s tools 番匠器名号の幟” (Figure 6.8) could often be seen. Such a name is generated by combining the character of “Namo Amitabha Buddha” and craftsmen’s tools (Figure 6.9). It used to be a scroll.³⁶² Same as the “Namo Amitabha Buddha” scroll placed on the altar during the beam-raising ceremony, this name could be seen as a manifestation of “chanting the name of Namo Amitabha Buddha 念佛称名” from the Pure Land thoughts. Craftsmen would have to frequently use these tools in their construction. In this way, they would pray to Buddha for protection while they regularly use the nobori and the kamifuda 紙札. In addition, writing down “Namo Amitabha Buddha” using the craftsmen’s tools itself instilled Buddha-nature into the tools. This mindset further strengthened the factual link between craftsmen and the Buddhism belief system. The time when such a nobori appeared is not clear,³⁶³ but Shitennoji Temple acknowledged that its appearance was based on

³⁶¹ For ordinary Japanese people, the Pure Land faith is based on the purpose of believing, eagerly, earnestly, and surviving the Western Pure Land. Compared with other Buddhist sects that need to understand the teachings and practice according to the law, Pure Land Buddhism does not distinguish between foolishness and wisdom, and gains all benefits. As long as one believes deeply and earnestly, by chanting the name of Namo Amitabha Buddha, one can be reborn in the Western Pure Land. The widespread popularity of the Pure Land faith is precisely because it possesses the easy methods in Buddhism, which can be seen as the “practical character” of the Pure Land Buddhism. This belief system is directly related to practice, which can also be directly related to the craftsman’s construction process.

³⁶² It is housed in the Hall of Collections at Shitennoji Temple 四天王寺寶物館.

³⁶³ The kanna on craftsmen’s tools is a Japanese plane, rather than a Chinese plane, which was introduced from China. It could be inferred that the time when such a nobori appeared should not be earlier than the 16th century when planers were widely used (see chapter 3, section 2 for details).

the Pure Land worship popular among people during Heian and Edo Periods, and that such a belief was also mixed with Prince Shōtoku worship.³⁶⁴

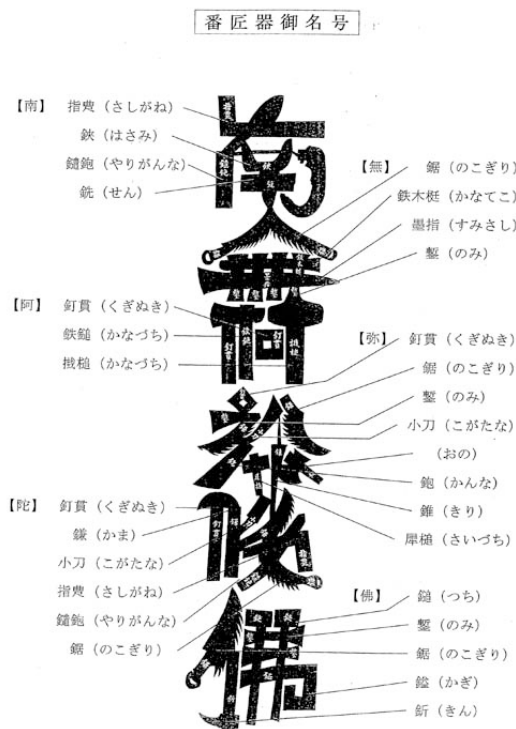


Figure 6.8. Nobori named “Craftsmen’s Tools” (Left) © 2011 Shitennoji Temple

Figure 6.9. “Craftsmen’s Tools” Name in Shitennoji Temple (Right) © 2011 Shitennoji Temple

In addition, according to the records of Kongō Gumi, since it maintained a close relationship with Shitennoji Temple ever since its founding, every generation of Kongō Gumi would participate in Shitennoji Temple’s traditional ceremonies. Apart from the aforementioned the ceremony of worshipping Prince Shōtoku in the Hall of Craftsmen and cutting sticks 杖削り on January 2nd, Kongō Gumi would also offer its planer used in cutting woods to Shitennoji

³⁶⁴ Refers to 四天王寺：番匠堂曲尺太子 奉賛法要の話，

<http://www.shitennoji.or.jp/report/1122%E3%81%AB%E7%95%AA%E5%8C%A0%E5%A0%82%E6%9B%B2%E5%B0%BA%E5%A4%AA%E5%AD%90-%E5%A5%89%E8%B3%9B%E6%B3%95%E8%A6%81%E3%81%8C%E5%8E%B3%E4%BF%AE%E3%81%95%E3%82%8C%E3%81%BE%E3%81%99/>

Temple on January 14th when Shitennoji Temple holds a fire prevention ceremony. These belief shown in daily life also indicate the continuing influence of the Buddhist system on Kongō Gumi.

6.2.1.2 Absorbed Confucianism

On the basis of the available resources, in the descriptions of Kongō Gumi, the doctrine of the mean 中庸 is a concept which has been mentioned several times, the frequency of its appearance is hard to ignore. In the historical narration of Kongō Gumi, “keeping the spirit of the doctrine of the mean is an important thing.”³⁶⁵ Also, a judgment has been made when it comes to the inherit experience of Kongō Gumi: Kongō Gumi’s “history is connected by the spirit of the doctrine of the mean (Kongō, 2013, p.79).”³⁶⁶ Based on the confirmation above, we can assume that the position of the doctrine of the mean in the ideological system and practice system of Kongō Gumi is self-evident. Therefore, the discussion of this thesis becomes possible.

In addition, *The Will* that was later considered to be an early introduction to the doctrine of the mean, was a text produced in 1802. When Kongō Gumi described the status of the core concept in its ideology system, it was with such expression without evading: “the earliest records of *The Sixteen Teachings* 十六の教え were written by the 32nd generation head of Kongō Gumi. However, according to communication and daily behaviors, it has existed long time before (Ibid.).”³⁶⁷

³⁶⁵ The original text is 分に合うた中庸の精神が大事だということですね, refers to Maekawa and Oumi (2016, p.97). The relationship between identity and the doctrine of the mean mentioned in this text will be discussed primarily in part 3 of this thesis.

³⁶⁶ The original text is 「中庸の精神」こそが歴史をつないだ.

³⁶⁷ In this book, *The Sixteen Teachings* is same as *The Experience of Career* 職家心得之事 in *The Will*. It can

That is to say, in the formal system of Kongō Gumi which can be regarded as a group itself, the doctrine of the mean, as a basic practice mode that has actually existed, is a kind of accepted spirit. That is, now taken as a matter of course (Ibid.),³⁶⁸ as a simple way of thinking and as a universal virtue, the doctrine of the mean should already have existed in the practice of Kongō Gumi in the early days. But, judging from common sense, it could not occur before the expansion of Neo-Confucianism in Japanese society.

Prior to the Tokugawa period, Confucianism was almost impossible to become a socialized trend, as well as becoming the spiritual yardstick of craftsmen. By means of the classic argument of Maruyama Masao 丸山真男 (1914-1996), Tokugawa ideology =Edo Neo-Confucianism,³⁶⁹

also be confirmed in a series of studies from Sone and Yoshimura (2004), Kato and Sone (2007) .

³⁶⁸ Zhu Xi has said: “As for the things under heaven, each must have its own reasons and rules for granted, so-called Li 至於天下之物，則必各有其所以然之故與所當然之則，所謂理也。” The phrase “reason for granted” (a matter of course) has a significant impact on the ideological level since Zhu Xi. Li Xiangxian 李相顯’s *Zhu Zi Philosophy* 《朱子哲學》 elaborated on Zhu Xi’s “rules for granted” and “reason for granted” respectively(Li, 1947).

³⁶⁹ From the ideological resources, all the concepts in Edo Neo-Confucianism related to the doctrine of the mean mentioned in the previous part can only be considered to be Neo-Confucianism, or be anti-Neo-Confucianism, but not to be non-Neo-Confucianism.

Whether it is “the ideology mainstream of the Tokugawa period is Edo Neo-Confucianism,” as judged by Maruyama Masao, or, as said by these critics, the ideological system of Edo Neo-Confucianism and the interpretation itself have various aspects. There is no doubt that these ideas point to the strong influence of Neo-Confucianism on Japanese knowledge system.

In the history, the expression “the doctrine of the mean” first came from Confucius 孔子 (551-479B.C)’s *The Analects of Confucius* 《論語》, and it was regarded as a morality 德 in a universal sense (the original text is 子曰：中庸之為德也，其至矣乎！民鮮久矣, *The Analects of Confucius: Yongye* 《論語·雍也》). Refers to *The Annotation of The Analects*, from *Siku Quanshu*, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 195-p.585). In the classic annotations of *The Analects of Confucius* by He Yan 何晏 (?-249) and Xing Bing, the interpretation of the doctrine of the mean has not gone beyond the scope of ethics. The concept of the doctrine of the mean is only a moral concept. After the interpretation of the Neo-Confucianism 宋明理學 which

we can infer that Confucianism was recognized by broader social class in that era. At this time, the saying, “Confucianism, Buddhism and Shinto³⁷⁰” appearing in *The Will*, can almost be compared and confirmed.

Kongō Gumi’s use of the doctrine of the mean included a way of thinking that is almost similar to Japan’s use of Confucianism: when a foreign ideology needs to be combined with the local social culture, it can be achieved by removing the parts of the original idea that relate to

represented by Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200), this concept is added to the meaning of the cosmology in addition to morality (the original text is 中者，無過無不及之名也。庸，平常也。至，極也。鮮，少也。言民少此德，今已久矣。程子曰：不偏之謂中，不易之謂庸。中者天下之正道，庸者天下之定理。自世教衰，民不興於行，少有此德久矣. Refers to *Sishu Zhangju Jizhu* 《四書章句集注》, from *Siku Quanshu*, Jingbu 8, Sishu, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 197-p.36).

The Doctrine of the Mean as a text has been meticulously studied in Buddhist temples at least during the Kamakura period, but it is widely known after the Edo period. Starting from different versions of the annotations on *The Doctrine of the Mean* in Japan, we can find that Japan’s interpretation has its own unique characteristics. We can take the important theoretical school of Edo Neo-Confucianism (known in Japan as Shushi-Gaku) as an example. Kimon school 崎門学派, represented by Yamazaki Ansai 山崎闇齋(1619-1682), puts self-cultivation and practice 実践修養論 in a more important position . Yamaga sokō 山鹿素行 (1622-1685) divided the entire Confucianism into a school for daily use , while Itō Jinsai 伊藤仁齋 (1627-1705) directly quoted Zheng Xuan’s ancient note, taking the doctrine of the mean as the best reference standard, the usual virtue . Furthermore, Ogyū Sorai 荻生徂徠 (1666-1728) puts practice in a more important position, regarding the doctrine of the mean as a morality that is not very strict but easy to complete . In these contexts, everyday life 日常 and practice 用 have become important keywords besides morality.

From the above discussion, we came to the conclusion that although the system of the doctrine of the mean in Japan was influenced by Zhu Xi’s Philosophy, in fact, it removed the cosmology that Zhu Xi’s Philosophy placed on the doctrine of the mean to the maximum extent, explored the pragmatism in which it existed but was restrained, finally pointed to the practical ethics. This kind of cognition is a common way of thinking in this nation, and it is directly related to the spirit of the doctrine of the mean which is embodied in Kongō Gumi.

³⁷⁰ *The Will* from Kongō Yoshisada, the 32nd generation head of Kongō Gumi, 1802.

Although the introduction of Confucianism and the concept of the doctrine of the mean happened in an earlier historical stage, as far as the research subject is concerned, this document is the earliest document of Kongō Gumi on Confucianism.

the cosmology, the world view, the ontology, etc. After removing these parts, the core concepts involving ethics and morality in the ideological system can be smoothly integrated into social life.

The method of the doctrine of the mean entering Kongō Gumi is also similar. If looking at the existence of this concept in Kongō Gumi, it can be almost divided into “the factual existence of the practical form,” “the text of the practical form” and “the theoretical construction and spiritual recognition” according to the scope mentioned above. However, in these three parts, the common characteristic is that the group never cares about ontology and world view, almost merely concerned about the core concepts and the moral ethics derived from the ideological system, especially the practice of this spirit. If not regarding this scope of understanding as a deviation from the original intention, but as an attempt to combine this idea with a native feeling, it is able to draw a universal conclusion. That is: the basic value of this concept is not confined to the ideological system, but only in the morality and practical form. Based on this discussion, it is possible to research on the interpretation of the spirit of the doctrine of the mean embodied in the practice of Kongō Gumi.

As mentioned above, it has already been analyzed that the spirit of the doctrine of the mean in Kongō Gumi is essentially participated as a “common virtue.” In essence, Kongō Gumi refers to the discourse resources of the doctrine of the mean, after the combination with its own practical form, this spirit has been shaped in this group. That is to say, after discovering the concept of the doctrine of the mean which emerges from the horizon of history,³⁷¹ Kongō Gumi

³⁷¹ “Emerging from the horizon of history” is a term used in modern literary criticism to express a new ideology or text form that emerges from the ideas or texts produced in a particular historical period, widely known

is bound to internalize the spirit in order to make it more suitable for the spiritual and practical forms within the group.

In the self-identification of Kongō Gumi, *The Sixteen Teachings* is regarded as the important text which concentrates on the spirit of the doctrine of the mean. In later cultural interpretations, the content of this text is thought to be used to illustrate “the importance of holding the spirit of the doctrine of the mean which conforming to identity (Kongō, 2013, p.80).” As explained in the preceding parts, with the method of the spirit entering Kongō Gumi, the main content of this text can be divided into two main aspects.

The first comes to the shaping of personal morality. In any context, the basic meaning of the doctrine of the mean contains a strong moral sense. In Kongō Gumi, this kind of simplified ethical consciousness is extended to the relationship between “morality and identity,” which comes from the elemental ethical relationship of the doctrine of the mean.³⁷² It is essentially asking the craftsmen to “not do anything beyond their own identity (Ibid.)” by establishing the relationship between themselves, with others, and even with the center of power.³⁷³ This kind of morality not only confined to the pure “self-cultivation” of Mencius 孟子 (371/?-289B.C),

as the title of the book by Meng Yue 孟悅 and Dai Jinhua 戴錦華 (2006). Referring this term here is intended to follow the way of thinking embodied in it as a reference.

³⁷² The concept of the contains the relationship between “morality and identity,” but the logic of this relationship lies in holding such virtue before arriving the corresponding position. For instance, the great virtue, can win its position, its wealth, its fame, its life (The original text is 故大德，必得其位，必得其祿，必得其名，必得其壽. Refers to *Sishu Zhangju Jizhu*, from *Siku Quanshu*, in *Facsimile Reprint Siku Quanshu in Belvedere of Literary Profundity*, 197-p.205).

In Kongō Gumi, the recognition of the relationship between “morality and identity” is contrary. It often emphasizes what kind of virtue a person should have under a certain position.

³⁷³ The specific standards can be found in the next paragraph.

which continued by Chinese Confucianists, but also becomes the identity cognition between personal cultivation and social relations.

In *The Sixteen Teachings* of Kongō Gumi, there are operational, determinable and quantitative restraints. In the aforementioned relationship among themselves, others and the center of power, almost every social relationship has a fixed way of judging. For craftsmen themselves, these criteria can be refined to apparels, skills and manners.³⁷⁴ However, in the relationship between the uppers and the lowers, as well as the masters and the disciples involved in craftsmanship system, the practice of the doctrine of the mean in Kongō Gumi pays particular attention to the guidance of the upper stations so as to create a harmonious working relationship.³⁷⁵ Meanwhile, in society, Kongō Gumi has also carried out specific restraints on the aspects of etiquettes, communication modes, speech styles and so on.³⁷⁶ For the center of power, Kongō Gumi requires craftsmen to focus on controlling desires which have nothing to do with their identity.³⁷⁷ In terms of the interlacing of the standards and individual behaviors in

³⁷⁴ For example, “to learn things that correspond to your station;” “do not wear gorgeous clothes above your station.” (from *The Sixteen Teachings*)

³⁷⁵ For example, “to have deep mercy on the lowers and the disciples who are inferior to you;” “ask them to do things in gentle words.” (from *The Sixteen Teachings*)

³⁷⁶ For example, “when communicating with people in the world, never show off;” “do not argue with others;” “do not look down upon others and say bad words behind others;” “to be polite no matter who you are with;” “although there are differences in the stations of people in the world, it should be respectful and polite as well;” “to be selfless in dealing with people who do business with you.” (from *The Sixteen Teachings*)

³⁷⁷ For this, Kongō (2013, p.80), made a very appropriate explanation, which is quoted below as a detailed explanation.

“Do not go to the disproportionate occasions, this teaching can reflect the spirit of the doctrine of the mean.

The work of the carpenters who built the palace is closely linked to temples and shrines. Temples and shrines used to be the center of the power.

This is not impossible to reach the aristocracy by using this relationship. If there is a desire to stand in the

these aspects, Kongō Gumi tries to create a complete practice system from the ethical system in the doctrine of the mean. It can be said, the moral restraint provides not only the personal cultivation in Confucianism, but also a kind of station consciousness through spiritual discipline.³⁷⁸ Through the system, Kongō Gumi shows both personal identity and social identity for its own craftsmen.

The second is the proper practical forms. In the context of Chinese culture, we can never deny that the doctrine of the mean is an impartial, practical form. However, after Neo-Confucianism, the methodology of practice has been limited in the category of knowledge 知. Once specified in practical situations, it might be regarded as the blasphemy and the looseness of the methodology. In this kind of cognitive mode, the concrete practical forms, that is, how to achieve the doctrine of the mean, are not clearly stated. In Kongō Gumi, these proper practical forms have their own standards that can be explained in the craftsmanship system.

The interpretation of the craftsman's professional practice is extremely significant in the text of Kongō Gumi, for instance, "devote yourself to the work of temples and shrines"; "provide the right price with sincerity" and so on. These practical forms are all recognized as the footnotes of the doctrine of the mean in interpretation (Kongō, 2013, p.79). We can find that the core ethical concepts behind these practices can be contrasted with the concept of the doctrine of the mean, such as "devotion," "sincerity" and so on. What makes Kongō Gumi unique is that, while

similar position with a certain power, Kongō Gumi may ruin during the war.

Moreover, in the process of success, desire will occur in any case. Accordingly, it can be assumed, in order to inherit the career of Kongō Gumi, the advice was made by the 32nd generation head of Kongō Gumi. "

³⁷⁸ This perception is very similar to Ruth Benedict (1887-1948)'s classic judgment of Japanese culture, namely "Taking One's Proper Station," in *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, p.61.

referring to these ethical concepts, the group established the practical forms directly related to the craftsmen, such as “the work of temples and shrines” and “the right price”.³⁷⁹ By this means, the morality comes into everyday life, which makes it possible for the spirit to exist in practice, and pass on to the present.

Kongō Gumi also focuses on guiding individual practical forms at the same time. “Do not drink too much” which is regarded as a footnote of the doctrine of the mean (Ibid.) can be seen as a concrete example. These constraints in everyday life are very close to the personal restraint in Confucianism, in Kongō Gumi, the individual practical forms serve for the completion of their work. Based on these constraints, the individual behaviors of the craftsmen in Kongō Gumi can be hidden behind the professional behavior, and finally be confirmed as the professional practice. “Performing one’s craftsmanship well” has become the peak of the ideological system in Kongō Gumi.

To sum up, on the one hand, the relationship between “morality and identity” can be seen as a transformation of personal identity to social identity. In this way, the practice of craftsmen is regarded as the craftsmanship spirit, achieving the transformation of social identity to professional identity. On the other hand, as for the practical form, in addition to the stability of identity cognition within the doctrine of the mean, it inherits a stable state of work and life, providing continuous spiritual resources for the craftsmanship system of Kongō Gumi. From the above-mentioned two aspects, we can draw the conclusion that Kongō Gumi extracts the basic concepts of Confucianism into its own professional cognition, identity, morality and practical

³⁷⁹ Refers to *The Sixteen Teachings*.

form, shaping its craftsmanship spirit by certain restraints.

6.2.1.3 Routinized Shintoism

Shinto is a religion originating in Japan. In the middle of Heian Period, a trend called Shinbutsu-shūgō (or syncretism of kami and buddha) appeared, which lasted until the introduction of Shinbutsu-bunri (or separation of Shinto kami from buddha). So far, stone-made myōjin torii³⁸⁰ 明神鳥居 could still be seen around Shitennoji Temple (Figure 6.10). It is therefore reasonable for Kongō Gumi to include Shinto elements under this influence.



Figure 6.10. Stone-Made Myōjin Torii in Shitennoji Temple

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Shinto was a routinized religion for Kongō Gumi. Kongō Gumi worship Shinto but do not interpret it overly, neither are there any texts found in Kongō Gumi clarifying their relationship

³⁸⁰ It was built in 1294 by Ninjyō Shōnin 忍性上人 and is now a national-level tangible cultural heritage site of Japan.

with Shinto.³⁸¹ However, the influence of Shinto on Kongō Gumi could still be seen in a lot of its items and ceremonies that are still prevalent today.

For example, the form of munefuda mentioned previously (see chapter 4, section 1 for details) actually originates from the shinsatsu 神札 in Shinto. In China, information about the building and constructor are usually written directly on the building. In Japan, however, they write them on a wood or bronze plate. The shape of the plate is quite similar to that of a shinsatsu. Some even invite shinkan 神官 to write down the names of gods to protect the buildings. The previously mentioned nobori of craftsmen's tools derived from the Pure Land worship, but while it was created, kamifuda of the tools would also be created. The kamifuda were pasted at the construction site, as a manifestation of the Pure Land worship of people in an animistic way of Shinto, just as the nobori. The kamifuda certainly derived from Shinto as well, and, specifically, from shinsatsu just like munahuda. In the construction of Japanese craftsmen, the role of religious thoughts as a "belief" is weakened but its role as "being practical" is strengthened. When "being practical" is attached great importance to by craftsmen, different religions would be well mixed in their life. This is also why Shinto elements exist in Kongō Gumi.

In the ceremony of carpenter with hatchet (see chapter 5, section 2 for details), apart from the abbot at Shitennoji Temple, shinkan would also lead the queue. In such ceremonies with distinctive Buddhism features, the shinkan he offers protections and blessings by "being present" despite not participating in the whole ceremony as a priest. In addition, as mentioned in the

³⁸¹ Kongō Gumi uses the word "God 神明" to refer to Shinto. This is similar to the initial plain belief of animism of Shinto (*The Will*, 1802).

previous chapter, even in the construction of Buddhist temples, the beam raising ceremony (see chapter 5, section 1 for details) and other construction ceremony of Kongō Gumi are also full of Shinto elements. As the furnishings in the certain environment, they all reflect the strong Shinto characteristics. That is to say, even within the scope of non-Shinto, Shinto has a strong daily influence on the practice of Kongō Gumi. It often appears in the construction activities of Japanese craftsmen as a “presence” way: Shinto, as the foundation of Japanese faith, still shows a strong influence on all aspects of the Japanese spirit.

6.2.2 Folk Religion Practices in Xiangshan Bang

6.2.2.1 Beliefs as Folk Customs

In Chinese context, folk religion³⁸² can be defined as the beliefs and worships of gods, ghosts, ancestors, sages, Heaven and Earth, society and objects, that are deeply rooted in folk

³⁸² Folk religion is also known as popular religion or popular belief. In mainland China’s studies, “folk religion” more often refers to secret sects in the folk society, and “popular belief” is often used to study the custom beliefs of people. The latter often belongs to the studies of various subjects such as religious studies, folklore, sociocultural studies, etc. Some scholars with an international vision (such as Wang Mingming 王銘銘, Wu Zhen 吳真, etc.) integrate the two concepts into one, and study popular beliefs by using the concept of folk religion.

Many scholars believe that folk religion is spontaneous and folk (Wu, 1985; Zhong, 1999). That is, people who have folk religious beliefs do not realize the difference between folk religion and institutional religion, and, none of them consciously conducts folk religious activities or calls it a religion.

There are also scholars who discuss the characteristics of folk religion from its religious nature. For example, Jin Ze 金澤 in his book *China’s Popular Beliefs* 《中國民間信仰》 considers folk religion “an inheritor of primitive religion,” which means that religion is the primitive form (Jin, 1989, p.1). In addition, some scholars, with Li Yiyuan 李亦園 from Taiwan as a representative, call popular beliefs “diffused religion 普化宗教,” saying that “folk beliefs are also known as diffused religion, meaning that the beliefs, ceremonies and religious activities are closely mixed into daily lives and therefore become part of it, so their religious doctrine is also mixed into daily lives. As a result, they lack systematic classics, not to mention organized sects (Li, 1992, p.

customs and beliefs and have continued up to now. In contrast with institutional religion, folk religion is closely related to folk customs and daily lives. It has neither fixed classics nor organized sects. Hence, folk religion can also be seen as religious activities conducted by ordinary people themselves without the guidance of ritualists or mythologists. In general, Chinese folk religion is rather complicated in terms of its composition. It is affected by Buddhism and Taoism, and is also closely linked to the ancient animism and ancestral worship.

The folk religious practices of Xiangshan Bang can be dated back to the time it was born: In as early as Ming Dynasty, the organization of people at the grassroots level formed in society already exhibited some geographical and popular belief features. In middle and late Qing Dynasty, thanks to more advanced ways of inscriptions and books, the specific worship activities and its organization in Xiangshan Bang were recorded (see chapter 2 for details), and we are hence able to have an insight. In addition, in the ceremonies of Xiangshan Bang (see chapter 5 for details) that continue to this day, popular beliefs were also recorded.

Some scholars mentioned that the subject of popular beliefs is god.³⁸³ Similarly, one of the characteristics of popular beliefs in Xiangshan Bang is to “borrow” gods from various

180).”

Western scholars, with Daniel Overmyer as a representative, believe that mainland Chinese academia generalize the western folk religion concept using popular beliefs after the reform and opening-up policy, which is a flexible tactic in response to the state’s religious policies that classify religions with political concepts (Overmyer, 2001, pp.103-126). Also please refer to Ma Xisha 馬西沙 and Han Bingfang 韓秉方 (1992), Overmyer (1993).

³⁸³ Chinese popular beliefs are “animistic and polytheistic (Wu, 1995, p. 4).”

In the studies of folk religion, many scholars prefer analyzing Chinese people’s polytheistic belief. For instance, Chinese people would worship every god they meet and burn incenses in every temple they come across. This is also seen as the main difference between Chinese popular beliefs between western institutional religion.

religions to form a diversified “system of gods” of its own. As mentioned earlier, Lu Ban and Zhang Ban appeared frequently in various ceremonies, classics and inscriptions as the industry gods of Xiangshan Bang, and could also appear in the bigger cultural picture of the whole industry. In addition, the eulogies of Xiangshan Bang’s ceremonies also include the image of a lot of gods from Taoism.

Moreover, affected by folk religion, Xiangshan Bang’s craftsmen would usually take good or ill luck as the standard of value judgement of the buildings they constructed, and therefore formulate the approach-or-avoid principle. The final result of their craftsmanship is a building, which, especially a residence building, weighs extremely heavily in Chinese people’s mind, since people believe that the good or ill luck of a building affects the resident’s and even his/her offspring’s future luck. The Feng Shui 风水 theories popular among the folk society are specific reflections of such a mindset. Lu Ban’s Ruler³⁸⁴ 鲁班尺 is the best proof of it. Xiangshan Bang’s craftsmen believe that different sizes and layouts of a building affect the resident’s luck. Measuring tools used to be a mix of theory and practice from geographical and architectural knowledge, but as it began to be influenced by popular beliefs, craftsmen’s work gradually deviated from construction itself and mixed with people’s wishes for blessings and driving out evil spirits. Moreover, the measures deriving from astronomy such as “Lucky Day

Scholars would commonly use the literature study method to investigate gods’ history, god-related folk literature and stories, etc. Representative works include *Chinese Industry Gods’ Worship* 《中國行業神崇拜》 by Li Qiao (1990, first published in 1985) and *Chinese Folk Gods* 《中國民間諸神》 by Zong Li 宗力 and Liu Qun 劉群 (1986).

³⁸⁴ The earliest record about Lu Ban’s Ruler dated back to the Southern Song Dynasty. In addition, the Palace Museum, Beijing, China, housed an entity of Lu Ban’s Ruler. It is 46 cm long (one *Chi* equals 32 cm according to Qing Dynasty’s standards), 5.5 cm wide and 1.35 cm thick (Lu, 2010, p.16).

黄道日” and “Ziwei Star 紫微星” used to judge good or bad luck, as stated in the previous chapter, have also been widely used by Xiangshan Bang in their approach-or-avoid practice. Some scholars summarize Chinese folk religion’s fundamentals and even the whole Chinese nationality as “utility (Hou & Fan, 2001) .” This makes sense at least in terms of Xiangshan Bang’s practices.

6.2.2.2 Contemporary Space of Folk Religion

With social renovations and enlightenment ideas in modern China, “folk faith 俗信³⁸⁵” in folk religion was often identified as non-scientific “superstition,” and was therefore described and even criticized.³⁸⁶ At that time, religion had become a narrow and highly politicized term, usually referring to formal organizations and institutions, belief systems, which related to religion. Subsequently, with the founding of People’s Republic of China, the Communist Party of China as the leading party believed in Marxist materialism theoretically. In national discourse, Marxist materialism often constitutes a contradiction with idealism represented by religion. Vigorously advocating and popularizing atheism has become a political correctness.³⁸⁷ In recent

³⁸⁵ Tao (1999) advocated using “folk faith” against the overuse of “superstition.” In the meantime, in academia, “folk religion” and “popular beliefs” were used instead of “superstition,” which have become a consensus in this field.

³⁸⁶ Representative works include *Superstitions and Legends* 《迷信與傳說》 by Rong Zhaozu 容肇祖, 1929, Folklore Society. The title itself indicates its judgement on the value of its study object.

In 1930s, some scholars would sometimes use the word “popular beliefs 民間信仰” from Japan to replace “superstition 迷信” (Tao & Suzuki, 1997). However, this somewhat neutral academic concept did not meet up with the strong expectations from the society at that time to get rid of superstition, and therefore was not widely used.

³⁸⁷ So far, state atheism is still widely used in the characterization of China and constitutes a source of

decades, as “freedom of religious belief³⁸⁸” became part of the constitution, and the diversification of thoughts in the 1980s.³⁸⁹ “Since 1990s, folk belief activities across China began to be made public, with some even being restored to pre-1950s scales (Wu, 2008).” Over the past decade, folk religion studies from the perspective of “state-society” and “culture-power” guided by the academia have been prospering. The value and importance of folk religion and popular beliefs in contemporary society are emphasized again. The popular belief activities which used to be scarce are now considered an important part of the more profound Chinese culture. Therefore, the significance of folk religion in thought and culture are repeated time and time again.³⁹⁰ Reshaping folk religious activities and behaviours becomes possible.³⁹¹

In fact, this characteristic is quite similar to the folk religious form in Xiangshan Bang: From 1950s to middle 1970s, some folk customs and beliefs were removed as “superstitions.” Nearly all of the disappearance of worshipping Lu Ban and the aforementioned construction ceremonies could be attributed to this policy. Since Xiangshan Bang consisted of only a limited number of members, after an intergeneration suspension, their ceremonies and folk religious contents could hardly be sustained. By 1980s, Xiangshan Bang’s ceremonies could only be found

controversy.

³⁸⁸ *Constitution of the People's Republic of China* (Article 36).

³⁸⁹ Since then, folk religion has once again become an object of academic discourse. In 1979, after Gu Jiegang 顧頴剛, Zhong Jingwen 鐘敬文 and other scholars initiated the *Proposal for the Establishment of Folklore Studies and Related Research Institutions* 《建立民俗學及有關研究機構的倡議書》, among folklore researchers, the issue of reconstruction of folklore began to be discussed extensively, and one of the important propositions was restoration, that is ,the investigation of beliefs and customs.

³⁹⁰ Such as the ethical value of “promoting public goodness (Bu & Zhao, 2019) .”

³⁹¹ On the basis of transforming customs, there also appeared attempts to seek the basic rules of folk religion and popular beliefs and to re-include them into contemporary Chinese cultural system.

in some remote rural areas and were then recorded by scholars. In recent years, the country regained its emphasis on Xiangshan Bang's techniques. Their folk religious ceremonies such as worshipping Lu Ban, holding beam raising ceremony and completion ceremony, etc. were reinvigorated as part of traditional Chinese culture, and again became important in Xiangshan Bang craftsmen's construction works. That is to say, even if religion is an isolated field in modern countries, folk religion has become an important part of people's daily lives in China. It is deeply rooted in people's minds and social culture, and is the fundamental reason how folk religion maintains its vigour.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

7.1 Tradition-Based Craftsmanship Spirit

Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang are considered to be the oldest group of craftsmen in Japan and China, represent the tradition of craftsmanship spirit of the two countries. Their ethics, technique and belief are the epitome of the craftsmanship spirit of Japan and China.

Chapter 1 hones in on the social class of craftsmen.

In societies pre-dating the modern era, one's social status and identity were largely determined by the first-hand knowledge an individual accumulated in a given environment over a period of time, typically years. In the context of these social conditions, individual identities were differentiated based on how labor was socially divided. At the same time, those who were of a higher class (as deigned by an authority) also enjoyed a relatively higher status.

Due to the complex power structures found in Japanese society, Kongō Gumi maintained a safe distance from the center of power. For some time, Kongō Gumi were provided with salaries and resources to produce goods form the temple and also enjoyed prestige from their association with the Tokugawa Shogunate. To ensure their survival, Japanese craftsmen had to remain calm and restrained when navigating the intricate power relationships of Japanese society; by doing so, they were able to achieve a high degree of independence which even persisted in modern society.

Xiangshan Bang is noted for its strict adherence to authority. However, over the course of

its historical development, an unseen plot in Xiangshan Bang has come to light: craftsmen came to be seen as akin to traditional scholar-bureaucrats and even likened to modern “scholars” (those deemed as intellectuals in the Republic of China and cultural officials in the following People’s Republic of China).

To summarize, where traditional societies pursued a simple division of labor, the differences in how labor was divided led to a divergence in Japanese and Chinese social power groups and more specifically, how craftsmen from these two countries felt towards their respective centers of power. Even so, both groups were able to transcend the confines of their originally allotted social status and elevate their positions in their respective societies.

By way of contrast, modern societies use touchstones other than the division of labor to judge and imbue individuals with status and identity. Instead, economic status has become a key measure that is referred to. As such, in modern societies, the position and status of craftsmanship in the broader context of the national economy is what is used to determine the status of craftsmen.

In relation to the period immediately following Kongō Gumi’s transformation, all of the original craftsmen were incorporated within the modern enterprise, thereby preserving the original Kongō Gumi organization. In Xiangshan Bang, the most skilled craftsmen were retained as state administrators whilst those who were deemed to be less skilled were largely excluded, a dichotomy that still persists today.

The position of Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang in their respective national economies demonstrates the attitudes held by Japanese and Chinese people towards traditional craftsmen in

modern society. The manner in which the Japanese economy was restructured was arguably milder, as any policies implemented were not backed up by enforcement interventions, thereby naturally preserving the national industries and allowing for the traditional craftsmen to enjoy a smooth transition. The Chinese government regulated the position of craftsmen in the economy by filtering out the original industries and subjecting practitioners to regulations, such that traditional craftsmen ultimately differed in status based on their position, regardless of whether they were in or out of the system.

It should also be noted that following their transition into modern societies, both in Japan and China, cultural consciousness underwent serious changes. With regard to craftsmanship, these changes ushered in a renewed social recognition of traditional techniques and craftsman and an enthusiasm to protect them.

The desire to preserve traditions is born out of a burgeoning collective national consciousness: traditions act as a bridge between real and imagined worlds, provided a degree of self-consistent awareness for national identity. At the same time, this also underscores and justifies the need to protect traditions in modern societies. Therefore, it can be seen that the desire to protect cultural artifacts both stems from a desire to protect such traditions and the need to shape national characteristics.

In relation to traditional techniques, craftsmen are individuals considered to have mastered given traditional techniques. Again, this awareness brought craftsmen to the attention of modern society and both Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang enjoyed an elevated degree of recognition. However, it is notable that there is a lag of nearly 50 years between Japan and China achieving

this level of cultural consciousness. Meanwhile, Japanese craftsmen received respect from inside society itself, whereas Chinese craftsmen have been retroactively respected due to intentions external to society. Accordingly, China needs to bridge this cognitive disparity.

Chapter 2 explores the forms these organizations take.

Essentially, “kumi” and “bang” are both organizational forms of Japanese and Chinese craftsmen groups, which assume the core responsibilities of internal regulation and external communication. Nevertheless, there are key differences in the organizational forms of these two craftsmen groups.

Kongō Gumi is a small scale professional community, more akin to a modern small or medium-sized enterprise. Throughout its history, Kongō Gumi has always remained a streamlined, small-size organization. In instances where the number of craftsmen increases, a small group of a similar size will immediately be created. As these groups hold shared interests, there are no complex social relationships amongst the small-scale professional organizations and instead, they feel a much-valued sense of unity. For small craftsmen organizations, a common feature is a focus on a single business. Within these professional communities, the passing on and refining of their unique techniques strictly remain within the organization; the corollary of this approach is that as long as there is demand in the industry for given techniques, it is difficult for the craftsmen to leave the community. Therefore, techniques and skills form the very core of the community and bind its members together.

Xiangshan craftsmen established the “bang” is a type of labor union, based on localism. Initially, Xiangshan Bang was a guild, the membership of which consisted of industry leaders

from renowned families. The leader of this guild was not fixed to a certain family, with the leadership rotating through several families depending on changes in financial strength or social prestige. The ultimate aim of a guild is to realize a monopoly on the skills mastered by its practitioners within a given region or area, thereby excluding any practitioners who are not part of the organization and protecting the interests of the guild members. However, as a guild does not possess any skills itself, nor does it wield power over the families who make up its membership, it should be viewed as a loosely formed labor community. To ensure the smooth running of the guild, external rules underpinned by internal logic had to be implemented to create a family-style system of ethics centered on the “Yuan” of location and industry.

Since they were established, these two craftsmen groups have adopted different organizational forms, leading to internal differences in their respective cultures. The features of the two groups can be viewed as either “expansive” or “compact”: Kongō Gumi looks to ensure its own stable and sustainable development, whereas Xiangshan Bang directs its efforts on expanding its power.

With regard to these two groups’ hierarchical structures, the following conclusions can be drawn: first, both Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang have well established internal hierarchies, in which craftsmen are categorized based on their access to social resources and their skill level. In these systems, those atop the hierarchies take on leadership positions whilst those at the bottom function as ordinary workers. The key difference between the two systems is the complexity of their respective hierarchies. From the previous discussion, it is clear that Xiangshan Bang has two ranks, whilst Kongō Gumi has three. In the latter’s three-tier hierarchy,

its organizational structure can be divided into “decision-execution-implementation,” making for a more orderly and flexible framework. Meanwhile, in the former’s two-tier hierarchy, the structure is refined to “decision-implementation,” meaning that those at the bottom of the hierarchy are highly dependent on those at the top. In the case where the upper-tier gave way, the entire organization would cease to exist.

The development of the modern enterprise system can also be viewed as a process in which traditional authority started to shift to legal authority. In the context of the craftsman organizations, this meant the separation of techniques and management. During this transition, the original leaders of both Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang were faced with the incompatibility of their traditional forms of domination and the regulative domination of the modern enterprise system. Following the shift to a modern division of labor, the original leaders of both groups were excluded from the new management teams, either becoming a mere conceptual existence (as was the case in Kongō Gumi) or being relegated to the level of ordinary craftsmen (as was the case in Xiangshan Bang).

An apparent difference between the two is that the “family” of Kongō Gumi is continuous, whereas the “family” of Xiangshan Bang is fragmented. This difference is underpinned by the difference in the conception of ‘family’ between Japan and China.

The hallmark of a traditional Japanese family is flexibility, as this value then generates justification: where an individual is suited to the family’s business, they can be recognized as a member of the family. This approach is unique as it allows the “family” to be engineered, planned, and reconstructed as needed. The underlying rationale here is that the “family” and “family

business” have an inherent sense of optimization. Kongō Gumi craftsmen view the family as something more akin to a community to live in than a strictly defined family. Members are linked with the family and those who are capable can then become part of the community. The craftsmen are responsible for the “Kongō family” and will seek to ensure the longevity of the family business.

The hallmark of a traditional Chinese family is stability, as this value then generates legitimacy: only when a person is part of a family (clan) can they do activities that their family (clan) undertakes. It follows that a family must be a pure community. Accordingly, when developing, Xiangshan Bang’s craftsmen typically ensure that the construction business belongs to each family (clan), making the craftsman an accessory of a patriarchal clan. These craftsmen are then responsible for ensuring and maintaining the purity of the family, even if that causes industrial decline.

Chapter 3 focuses on Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang’s techniques and details the position of craftsmen in the craftsmanship system.

In both craftsmen groups, the intergenerational inheritance of techniques is achieved through apprenticeship. Inheritance is the key to production and practice, whether this is through the “learning through observing” of Kongō Gumi or the “words and deeds” of Xiangshan Bang. The mutually held goal is to pass on a technique from one generation to the next, thereby ensuring the technique’s survival. Meanwhile, both groups also share similarities in how techniques are learned and taught and also how closely skill learning and occupational form are related. With regard to the differences between the two groups’ approaches, Xiangshan Bang creates an open

world through “words” whereas Kongō Gumi develops a closed world through “observation”. It is interesting to note here that their respective approaches mirror the characteristics of their respective organizational forms.

Furthermore, there is a readily apparent logic inherent in the process of inheriting traditional techniques: by default, intergenerational inheritance has inherent lofty rationality. This rationale ensures that the technique is appraised based on the craft itself or the building being constructed. Any items being produced, repaired, or maintained, must adhere to the appropriate original appearance. As such, a craftsman who is has a closer connection to the time when the item was created will be deemed as being closer to the technique itself. The logic is ingrained in how traditional techniques are inherited, as knowledge and techniques can only flow in one direction: from old to new.

For technique itself, the process of passing down knowledge from the older generation to the younger generation is justified. In light of the professional subdivision in modern society and the rapid development of knowledge and technologies, no one can ever continually be at the vanguard of technology and knowledge. This seismic change has disrupted the process of passing knowledge on from one generation to the next and the traditional basis for authority has eroded away. Despite the fact that intergenerational inheritance still exists, it has been disrupted and displaced by new methods of education informed by the logic and methodology of modern education.

Whilst the lumber utilized by Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang differs due to the different environmental conditions in their respective countries, the two groups adopt the same

understanding of lumber characteristics, and therefore, have the same demands in relation to lumber properties. Due to their mutual concern for nature, both Japanese and Chinese craftsmen pay close attention to the characteristics of lumber. For any craftsmen, the ability to discern materials is an invaluable “experience” and one of the key capacities which cannot currently be replicated by machines.

With regard to the disparities in the characteristics of the tools used, Xiangshan Bang (and arguably all Chinese craftsmen) pursue efficiency in nature. The logic here is that accuracy can be sacrificed (to a certain degree) in order to boost efficiency and finish the project in a shorter amount of time. Thus, speed has become a key aspect of craftsmanship. By way of contrast, Kongō Gumi emphasize the precision and delicacy of their work: the ultimate aim is to ensure the longevity of their work through continuous improvement, even if this comes at the expense of efficiency.

For both Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang, their workplaces are divided into two areas: the “workshop” and the “site.” The workplace has turned into a space that bridges craftsmen and craftsmanship; whilst it is a manifestation of craftsmanship, it is also the physical manifestation of the craftsman’s self-awareness of and responsibility towards his craft.

The concepts of Tao and technique, (mind and hands, respectively) refer to the technique itself and also the physical-mental experience of constructing an object. In this instance, “technical knowledge” is similar to the “Tao” and “mind” noted above: they refer not only to the conceptual being in the world but also to the very meaning which the craftsman seizes in his mind. The “Tao” of all things comes together with the “mind” of a craftsman converge in his

technical process (body performance), finally forming finished products through the process of manual creation, which is also the essential process of craftsmanship.

As a result of the isomorphism of Tao and mind, as well as the isomorphism of technique and hands (body), the ultimate goal of craftsmen is to achieve the “unity” of man and techniques. At the same time, there are close links between Tao and technique, as well as between mind and hands (body). “Tao goes through technique” and “the unity of mind and body” express such relationships. Traditional craftsmen still pay close attention to the relationship that links technique with body and mind. Thus, this marks a point of continuous development in craftsmanship research.

Chapter 4 explores the architecture created by the two groups of craftsmen.

The custom of “inscribing the maker’s name” is practiced by both Japanese and Chinese craftsmen. This custom stems from the need to create a link between the craftsman and the product he creates, thereby providing a way to trace the relationship between “man and object.” It should be noted that “name” here does not mean the same as it does in modern society, where a name or title is akin to a form of ownership. The relationship between the “man” or craftsman and the “objects” he creates transcends the typical relationship of creator and creation and instead should be regarded as a relationship of “name and responsibility.”

As society has developed, society has promoted the status of craftsmen as it is seen to be beneficial to society more generally to have excellent craftsmanship and products to enjoy. This has further elevated the status and identity of craftsmen. As such, craftsmen can further bolster their status by having their name associated with their creations. Following this logic, individuals

are evaluated based on the objects they create, meaning that craftsmen will pay greater attention to the work they create and ensure that it is imbued with their ideal personality. For both responsibility and personality reasons, the practice of craftsmen inscribing their work with their name has endured into modern times.

Craftsmen have come to realize that “representations of space” are achieved through “spatial practice,” whilst space users experience “representational spaces” in the created space. Within this logic, in the context of space formation, craftsmen and users are related to each other through architecture, and the historical consciousness and social relations that such architecture creates.

The intuitive space of Shitennoji Temple and the other examples of temple architecture created by Kongō Gumi during the construction and perception process can be viewed as a kind of “divine space.” To phrase this another way, the perceivable structures of power found in “craftsmen--temples and shrines--believers” form in these spaces. For example, Shitennoji Temple demonstrates and communicates the complex and visceral spirit of Buddhism spirit in a limited space and the application of craftsmanship and design.

In addition to the unique meaning ascribed to political space in palace architecture, “living space” can be seen as the main achievement of Xiangshan Bang. Accordingly, the implicit “craftsmen -- residential buildings -- residents” relationship has formed over time. The works created by Xiangshan Bang craftsmen allow people to bring together and align their lives and their living spaces.

From an aesthetic perspective, it is important to look into the relationship between

craftsmanship and art, so as to identify the relationships among “the craftsman (the owner of technique) -- architecture (aesthetic object) -- the user (aesthetic subject).”

First, craftsmanship (also termed technique) is a specific method to elicit specific feelings when appreciating an aesthetic object. It achieves this by focusing on methods and processes. By way of contrast, art is a pursuit in a particular field that demonstrates a bias towards concrete results. When producing things, craftsmen have to demonstrate an understanding of both form and function and through this process, the product will be imbued with emotions, senses, and aesthetics. When aesthetics are formed, the “technique” can accumulate to such an extent that it starts to approach what is viewed as “art”, in an aesthetic sense.

For the two craftsmen groups in question, their aesthetics are expressed through the execution of their vision for what they are building. It can be concluded that the aesthetics of architecture inherently include technical characteristics, such that many of the aesthetic styles may stem from the craftsman’s personal technical skills or background.

Ultimately, the aesthetic intentions of the craftsman cannot be fully and accurately communicated by the architecture. Rather, it depends on how users and observers receive the architecture, thereby introducing a degree of uncertainty to architectural aesthetics. In practice, this can lead to misreading or misunderstanding of aesthetic intentions. However, it should also be noted that the interplay between the craftsmen and his aesthetic subject can also contribute to the architecture’s aesthetic. This can promote a certain region’s or type of architecture to remain fixed in a given aesthetic style.

Chapter 5 explores the rites of Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang.

The “beam” worship found in architectural ceremonies exists in the ceremonies of both Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang. It should also be noted that this practice exists extensively throughout the world. Nevertheless, the close similarities in Japanese and Chinese raising ceremonies are not found elsewhere. Based on the order of the rites, these ceremonies can be split into four parts: god-related rites, construction rites, human-related rites, and human-related activities. There are many aspects of these ceremonies which demonstrate the craftsmen’s attempts to penetrate into levels of society beyond themselves: the many complexities found in the ceremonies, the gathering of crowds, the influence of the ceremony in a given area. The rich meaning here emirates from their profession and embodies the confidence and respect they hold for their craft. Although there are many similarities in the beam raising ceremonies of Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang, the one key area of divergence is the extent to which god or the religious spirit is involved: the ceremony in Kongō Gumi largely involves Buddhism and Shintoism, whereas the ceremony in Xiangshan Bang largely involves Taoism and folk religions.

Kongō Gumi ceremony of carpenter with a hatchet was an architectural ceremony which was first conducted during the wide-ranging reconstruction activities conducted at Shitennoji Temple. Over time, it has developed into a calendrical rite, integrating the craftsman’s own specialty and embodying a natural view of life consciousness which is directly related to the practice system of the craftsmen. As part of this right, Kongō Gumi interact with the religious sites and personnel of Shitennoji Temple to create the identity cognition between the craftsmen group itself and the wider world, thus completing the confirmation Kongō Gumi’s authenticity in the craftsmanship system of the Shitennoji Temple. Concurrently, Kongō Gumi uses the rite

to reinforce its internal power structures by determining how can execute the rite and dividing up members' status to ensure the stability of its internal system.

Xiangshan Bang's master's ceremony can be viewed as the rite establishing apprenticeship. From the standpoint of rite research, it can be seen as a rite of passage. The individual who is the subject of the rite at the professional level (here, the apprentice) is afforded a new identity and status, and accordingly, the rights and obligations that come with them. For Xiangshan Bang craftsmen, the value derived from the master's ceremony is more ethical in nature. Firstly, it establishes an orthodox ethical relationship that is premised on the inheritance of traditional techniques and knowledge. Then, it moves on to hone in on the consolidation of group emotions and the provision of social acknowledgment.

Chapter 6 focuses on the craftsmen's belief systems.

Each of the craftsmen groups has its own unique industry gods. For Kongō Gumi, it is a belief in Prince Shōtoku, for Xiangshan Bang, the dominant representative belief is a belief in Lu Ban. Fictive is an especially distinctive feature about the worship of industry gods in both Japanese and Chinese craftsmen. It is shown through the fact that craftsmen from both countries chose prestigious and high-powered figures as their industry gods. Those figures are usually with a high status in history and noble characters, they always have extraordinary power as well. The functions of Japanese and Chinese industry gods are mainly to help craftsmen unite the industry and raise their own status in the industry. These practical and spiritual functions of worshipping industry gods are undeniably the foundation for the practice to emerge and to sustain.

In addition, from the perspective of religious belief and philosophical system, these spirits

have formed a systematic and sacred concept system for the transcendental world before they enter the spiritual world of craftsmen, which often has a direct impact on the spiritual world of craftsmen.

Over the course of Kongō Gumi's development, the group's belief system transitioned from a purely Buddhist system of "temple builders" to one which exhibits a common understanding Confucianism, Buddhism, and Shintoism, which can be understood as an institutional religion, thus forming an inclusive mentality based on the practice of craftsmen. With regard to Xiangshan Bang, folk religion has exerted the most ideological influence. These beliefs in folklore were not categorized into religious sects; instead, they largely manifested in the worship of independent gods who governed different aspects of the construction process who gradually came to be integrated with the daily lives and customs of the craftsmen.

7.2 Future-Oriented Craftsmanship Spirit

In both Japan and China, the concept of "craftsmanship spirit" and the meaning behind has been continuously developed ever since its proposal. At the same time, it has also been adopted by traditional craftsmen to shape modern social values.

In Japanese society, concepts such as craftsmen technique and craftsmen spirit are often used in the advertisement of traditional handicraft industries to present an image of a high-quality product. In addition, the term "craftsman" itself has also been imbued with new meaning in the contemporary context, as marketers have sought to draw a link between craftsmen and modern

production ever since the 1980s.³⁹² In recent years, employing this term has become a way for Japanese industrial enterprises to cultivate a positive brand image by utilizing the same elements as traditional craftsmen in machine-based production and drawing spiritual strength from traditional craftsmen's features.³⁹³

The term “craftsmanship spirit” in China originally comes from Japan. As stated in the introduction, the popularity of this term is closely linked to China's recent emphasis on modern industries in its political language.³⁹⁴ After having drawn on and established a mindset from external sources, China has reached an academic consensus on discovering its own craftsmanship traditions so as to create “Great Country Craftsmen”. In the last five years, many studies have explored the history of China's craftsmanship spirit by either presenting a summary or offering a restricted view. Such studies first set out the basic rules of China's craftsmanship spirits before incorporating those spirits related to manufacturing industries as rules into their studies, and finally proposing several strategies in response to modern manufacturing industries.

This kind of mindset is exactly the focus of this dissertation's conclusions: the role of traditional craftsmen in modern and even future societies can be viewed as a new form of cultural history that links the past, present, and future.

In terms of society, Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang, as representatives of their respective countries' craftsmen, reflect the status of Japanese and Chinese craftsmen in their own

³⁹² Uchihashi Katsuto 内橋克人 wrote a series of books named *The Era of Craftsmen* 匠の時代 in 1980s, which covers the “craftsmanship spirit” and “craftsmanship experience” in Japanese high-tech businesses. It spreads the experience and values of modern manufacturing industries by means of the concept of “craftsman”.

³⁹³ Such as the advertisement of Lexus, 2019.

³⁹⁴ *Report on the Work of the Government*, China, 2016.

country. In Japanese society, highly skilled craftsmen are readily respected and their salary and social status rank at least above the average level.³⁹⁵ In China, however, as stated previously, craftsmen have always been divided into representative craftsmen and ordinary craftsmen. The representative individuals are valued and seen as positive examples whilst the ordinary individuals (who make up the vast majority of craftsmen in China) are typically lower ranked in terms of either salary or status. Chinese policy makers should acknowledge this situation and rectify it by drafting relevant policies. An atmosphere should be cultivated in society to promote the respect of all workers and craftsmen.

In terms of technique, Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang have very important roles to play in inheriting techniques and protecting cultural heritages as they are the craftsmen in their respective country who should shoulder the responsibilities.³⁹⁶ Moreover, in the context of modern society, the way Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang display their techniques also reflects the relationship between people and these techniques (technology) themselves.

Firstly, it remains of significance to discuss the value of handicrafts from a technical perspective in modern society, since there are still manufacturing issues that can only effectively be addressed through the application of human labor. The techniques inherited and passed on by traditional craftsmen and their ability to understand materials are a valuable asset, which is also why machines have yet to completely replace craftsmen. We could also expect machines be just

³⁹⁵ Based on the salary and social welfare reflected in the recruitment.

³⁹⁶ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization talked about world cultural heritage as follows: “real cultural heritage” should be preserved repaired with “the same type of trees”, “the same quality” and “the same technique” (Kikuchi, 2008, p.153).

as accurate in their execution as craftsmen; hence, craftsmen' experience could be best integrated with modern manufacturing industries.

Secondly, the processes through which both countries' craftsmen learn the techniques and the way they display them offer a value in mind-body problem, which is one aspect of the added value inherent in oriental craftsmanship. Oriental craftsmen have the tradition of integration of mind and body while western craftsmen value "body;" despite this difference, both are equally important mindsets. In the system of global ideologies, the sublimity that oriental craftsmen pursue is at the extremes of what human beings are capable of attaining.

Regarding their spirit, Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang, as long-standing groups in Japan and China, have developed comprehensive ways of thinking. In Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang, the common paradigm of the two is to take spirit as a practical standard. In view of the establishment and interpretation of the rite and the belief in Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang, we can reach the following two conclusions.

First of all, when talking considering practice, it is essential to infuse spirit into a group's own ideological system, that is to say, they transform their spirit according to their needs. Religion has expanded its ideological system from the micro to macro scale, while at the same time dispelling the multiple possibilities of its interpretation. In the cognitive systems of Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang, the interpretations of rite and spirit present a kind of flexible thought through the extraction and interpretation of independent concepts. Thus, metaphysical considerations can be avoided. Under the circumstances, this kind of cognitive mode makes it possible to interpret the concept in detail and the expressions of certain ideologies can also be

reshaped through specific practice.

In addition, it is important to weave the ideological and practice systems together and detail specific standards for the practice system.

By establishing practical and certain standards for their spirit and practice, these craftsmen groups transform religion into two parts: personal cultivation and external practical restraints directly related to the craftsmen's work. In this way, craftsmen in Japan and China can exert the reality in spirit to an extreme.

By looking at this aspect of the craftsmanship spirit in Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang, we can also discover the value of spirit for modern craftsmen on a practical level. It should be noted that although there are unspoken meanings and vagueness in this ideological system, due to its interpretable features, the spirit itself will increase its capacity, especially from the perspective of practice. If we try to link brings together ethics, technique and spirit into the daily practice of craftsmen, it may be possible to achieve the modern transformation of traditional craftsmanship spirit.

In conclusion, this dissertation is based on practical awareness, starting from the history and current situation of Kongō Gumi and Xiangshan Bang and moving through the possibility for the future development of craftsmanship spirit. From the perspective of methodology, "craftsmanship spirit," as defined in this dissertation, is an important aspect of the research on craftsmen, which to some extent eliminates the limits of the research object in the history of ideas, or philosophy itself and expands the research scope of craftsmanship by taking spirit or culture as the key. This method may become a paradigm for the study of craftsmanship, providing

a specific perspective for subsequent researchers to utilize in their work.

For the academic community, the innovations of this dissertation are mainly based on the following aspects:

First of all, it is to apply new cultural history research methods to the research of craftsmen, in other words, using such research methods to bring the craftsmen themselves into the scope of academic research. This academic approach rethinks the subjects and objects that constitute knowledge itself, thus allowing the academic community as a whole to obtain a deeper, more comprehensive and thorough understanding of social and cultural lives of craftsmen. For this research proposition, the role of traditional craftsmen in modern society and their future role can be demonstrated through the perspective of new cultural history by bringing together the past, present and future, which is also the most vivid realistic orientation of this research.

Secondly, regarding the analytical methods of detailed issues, this research actively employs an interdisciplinary perspective in the research of craftsmen. Specifically, when analyzing the history of the craftsmanship spirit in Japan and China, sociology is incorporated into the research to discern the position of the craftsmen and allow for comparisons in social cognition between Japan and China. When analyzing the characteristics of the inheritance of craftsmen in Japan and China, this research locates the family at the heart of this practice and analyzes the internal logic of the inheritance of their techniques through the characteristics of the craftsmen's family between Japan and China. In addition, taking a philosophical point of view as the starting point, the natural spirit shared by the craftsmen in Japan and China, as well as the secular and religious spirits they have respectively constituted, form the spiritual background of

the craftsmen in Japan and China. As far as aesthetics are concerned, based on the general recognition that the traditional Western academic system separates technique and art, Eastern craftsmen and their ways of thinking provide the possibility of connecting technique and art. Such comparative research does not merely compare the craftsmanship spirit between Japan and China: in this comparison, we can also draw on many characteristics of Eastern craftsmen and Eastern thought, thereby enriching the overall academic understanding of this subject.

In the future, using this kind of method, craftsmen as individual cases can smoothly enter academic discourse. Moreover, the complex ideological system underpinning these craftsmen groups is also worthy of further exploration: by centering on each unique or typical craftsman or craftsmen groups, systematic research can be carried out. In addition, research across the world on craftsmanship is still lacking. In the systematic and integrative concept system framed by multiple cultures and perspectives, many different varieties of craftsmanship can serve as different representations of different cultures, which can provide a broader research subject for the academic community.

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