

# Kaneshige Toyo's Rise to National Treasure: Background to Post-WWII Bizen and Consideration of Newspaper Articles and Official Records

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# Kaneshige Tōyō's Rise to National Treasure

## Background of Post WWII Bizen and Consideration of Newspaper Articles and Official Records

John Thomas Wells

### 1. Introduction

The province of Bizen 備前 has been one of the major pottery centers in Japan for approximately one thousand years.<sup>1</sup> Bizen ware reached an aesthetic climax in the Momoyama period (1568-1615), when its beauty was fully recognized, sought after, and nurtured by the tea ceremony masters, resulting in prized tea wares being produced. Bizen ware of that fine quality was not again produced until the 1940s and 50s when the late Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽 (1896-1967), one of the first to be designated a Living National Treasure in Japan (1956), revived the old techniques and artistic values.

Koyama Fujio 小山富士夫 describes the role of Kaneshige Tōyō in modern Bizen ware in *Kaneshige Tōyō Hito to Sakuhin* 金重陶陽人と作品:

Kaneshige Tōyō is an excellent potter who was produced by Bizen. If Tōyō did not exist Bizen ware might not have prospered as it is prospering today. Like Bizen, Tamba 丹波, Echizen 越前, Shigaraki 信楽, Tokoname 常滑, and other kiln centers have long traditions dating back to the Kamakura and Muromachi eras. They have carried on their traditions by making ceramics for everyday usage in rural areas, but they are not as world famous as Bizen, nor are their works given such high appraisal ... One reason is that they did not produce a skilled artesian like Kaneshige Tōyō. Kaneshige Tōyō is considered to be the founder of the revival of Bizen ware.<sup>2</sup>

The law for the protection of cultural properties, which would eventually include the Intangible National Treasure Designation, was enacted and took effect in 1950. Kaneshige Tōyō would be designated Important Intangible Cultural Property in 1952. The designation was not readily accepted by all artists, and was rejected by Kitaōji Rosanjin. The law was met with resistance and resulted in turmoil in Bizen when it was first established. Bizen had a long history of figurine makers who felt that giving the award to a tea ware maker was unjust.

In the following text, newspaper articles and documents from a crucial moment in time that occurred at the change of eras. They reveal the conflict that occurred in Bizen resulting in two clear-cut sides, wheel throwers and figurine makers. That conflict was largely brought about by the new law for the protection of cultural properties. Fighting erupted as to who should receive it and in what form, individual designation or group designation.

It is notable that, beginning in the 1930s and then coming into full bloom for a brief timespan (perhaps some 30-40 years) following WWII, modern classic renditions of Momoyama tea wares were created by a few pioneering potters. It is also notable, that the creating of these classical art renditions started in prewar-wartime, and came into full bloom just after Japan's WWII catastrophic defeat, when times were severe. Those potter's efforts have come to be referred to as the Momoyama revival. Those wares by Kawakita Handeishi 川喜田半泥子 (1878-1963), Kaneshige Tōyō, Arakawa Toyozō, 荒川豊蔵 (1894-1985) Katō Tōkurō 加藤唐九郎 (1897-1985), Kitaōji Rosanjin 北大路魯山人 (1883-1959), Miwa Kyūwa 三輪休和 (1895-1981), and other top potters in their time go unequalled

<sup>1</sup> Bizen ware is generally considered to have first originated with the change from the court ruled Heian period to the feudal Kamakura period around the time when the other "six old kiln" production centers were starting production. For a more detailed explanation about the beginning of Bizen ware see; Usui (1995) p. 9-10, And Uenishi (2012), p. 63-64.

<sup>2</sup> Matsuoka (ed.) (1968) p. 138.

in capturing the Momoyama tea ware spirit (that spirit and style to be explored in a following article) and still command a high price.

Historian-curator Dr. Usui Yōsuke 臼井洋輔 has commented in an interview that after setting up many exhibitions he realized two phenomena, that at the change of an era, (when there is turmoil and change), "really superior articles are produced. And there are almost no cases of things improving over an era...the quality usually declines."<sup>3</sup> Reading through the pages that follow in this article, particularly the newspaper articles documenting the events that took place, one cannot help but feel the turmoil in post WWII Bizen already mentioned. It is within this new Post WWII era and hostile sounding environment that Kaneshige Tōyō would continue to develop his technique and would become one of the greatest modern-day potters in Japan.

The change in eras would provide a stimulus for the potters in Bizen. The heightened nationalism sentiment after WWII would create renewed interest in Sen no Rikyu and the tea ceremony in Japan and this would help to create a market for Momoyama style tea wares.

This article gives the background of the post WWII potter's society in Bizen and then presents the official documents and newspaper article announcements pertaining to Kaneshige Tōyō's rise to National Treasure designation. Tōyō was in a town with a long history of highly regarded ceramics. Tōyō's family had been making Bizen ware for over 400 years. The Kaneshiges were one of 6 families (also including Kimura 木村, Terami 寺見, Mori 森, Tongū 頓宮, Ōae 大饗) that had the rights to control the 3 giant Bizen kilns in the Momoyama period. It describes what the post WWII society was like, that created Kaneshige Tōyō. Official designations, newspaper announcements and Kaneshige Tōyō chronologies were compared to determine if they are all in agreement. The designations, opposition activity, and turmoil are documented in the newspaper articles. The accuracy of the chronologies, opposition standpoint (to Tōyō's 1952 designation), cause for the turmoil, etc., are explored.

## 2. Background of Post WWII Bizen Ware

### 2.1 Three Golden Eras

Bizen ware has undergone three eras which markedly stand out. The first two eras are sometimes referred to in Japanese as *ogonki* 黄金期 or *ogonjidai* 黄金時代 (golden era). Katsura Matasaburō refers to the postwar Bizen ware era that he lived in as a golden era in the following passage written in 1976:

The golden era of the Momoyama period was the summit (of Bizen ware). but in the Edo period the capitol (golden era) was gradually left behind. From the late Edo period to early Meiji period Bizen ware suffered a terrible depression and it seemed like the end, but the crisis was overcome, and a gradual recovery was seen in the Taishō and Shōwa eras. And the Bizen ware boom of today is as though the Momoyama golden era has come back once again.<sup>4</sup>

The third golden era is considered to be the result of Kaneshige Tōyō's efforts, as Koyama Fujio is quoted at beginning of this article, "If Tōyō did not exist Bizen ware might not have prospered as it is prospering today. ...Kaneshige Tōyō is considered to be the founder of the revival of Bizen ware."<sup>5</sup> The second golden era is of paramount importance because it is the character of the tea wares of this era that Kaneshige Tōyō skillfully emulated 400 years later to become National Treasure and spark the occurrence of the third golden era. A description of the eras is as follows.

The first golden era occurred at the beginning of the Muromachi period (1338-1573). As a result of the research conducted by Dr. Usui Yosuke on the Hyōgo north checking point ship arrival records 兵庫北関入船納帳 (1445), it was found that eighty-six percent of the shipped ceramics were

<sup>3</sup> Usui. From an interview with Dr. Usui Yōsuke conducted by the author on Dec. 8. 2011.

<sup>4</sup> Matasaburō (1976) p. 135.

<sup>5</sup> Matsuoka (ed.) (1968) p. 138.

Bizen ware, implying that Bizen ware commanded an extremely large percentage of the Japanese market.<sup>6</sup>

The second golden era occurred in the Momoyama period (1573-1615), when Bizen ware reached a new aesthetic climax under the direction and patronage of tea masters Takeno Jōō 武野紹鷗 (1502-1555), who was active just prior to the Momoyama period, his pupil, Sen no Rikyū 千利休 (1522-1591), and Furuta Oribe 古田織部 (1544-1615). This was a golden era when classic Bizen tea wares were produced.

After World War II there was a bold shift from a focus on figurine making to making Momoyama period style tea wares in Bizen, pioneered by Kaneshige Tōyō. Popularity again skyrocketed, creating the third golden era. The number of potters in Bizen increased from about twenty workshops in 1950 to about five hundred individual potters in the 1980s, and then started to decline.

## 2.2 An Analysis of the Birth of Post WWII (Third Golden Era) Bizen

The evolution from severe circumstances in the Meiji period, when mass produced “product” type wares and drain pipes were produced in order to persevere in hard times - to more artistic wares reminiscent of the Momoyama period tea wares in post war Bizen is analyzed and described. The major turning point in the third golden era was the designation of Kaneshige Tōyō as National Treasure. With that designation, production of figurines would quickly dwindle and Momoyama style wares, along with modern wheel thrown wares, would become in vogue.

Katsura Matasaburō 桂又三郎 describes how *saikumono* 細工物 (figurines) would become the main product of Bizen in the Edo period and how the skilled *saikumono* craftsmen would be selected, and designated as *osaikunin* 御細工人 by the Ikeda *han* government and be treated favorably.

Taking hints from incense burners imported from China and designs created by painters of that era unique Bizen *saikumono* began to be made in the Momoyama period ... From the mid to late Edo, through the Meiji, and on into the Taisho period, *saikumono* was the main product of Bizen, followed by tablewares and tea wares.

In the Momoyama era, *saikumono* were not made much at other kilns. The *saikumono* made at that time were superior and that was the reason for Bizen's prosperity. From that time *saikumono* were the primary product of the kilns of Inbe.

In 1632, When Ikeda Mitsumasa was relocated from Tottori to become the feudal lord of Bizen, he quickly selected skilled craftsmen and established a *saikunin* system. He bestowed the *saikunin* a stipend, and treated them favorably. It can be compared with receiving a “prefectural intangible cultural asset award” given nowadays. The Bizen *han* administration kept yearly official records in a manuscript called *Satsuyōroku* 撮要録, and the *saikunin* system is mentioned as follows.

Gave rice to the *osaikunin* of Inbe village 伊部村

Gave exchange certificate for 1 *koku* 石 (180.39 liters) 1 *shō* 升 (1.8039 liters) of rice.

In Kan'ei 13 寛永十三年 (1636), at the time when Takahashi Shinemon magistrate 高橋新右衛門様奉行, for the first time, gave 9 to 6 *shō* to both of the *osaikunin* Yohachi 与八 and Shingoro 新五郎 .

It was given as a small token of gratitude. Until Jōō gannen 1 承応元年 (1652) to both men on the right (Yohachi and Shingoro)

Same (Jōō) 2 (1653) to Kanbun 2 寛文二年 (1662) Seizaburō 清三郎

Same (Kanbun) 3 (1663) to Enpō 2 延宝二年 (1674) Goemon 五右衛門

Same (Enpō) 3 (1675) continue with Chōemon 長右衛門<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Usui (2014) p. 33.

<sup>7</sup> Katsura (1989) pp. 119-120.

The passage in *Satsuyōroku* is shown in Fig. 1.



Figure 1. Early Edo period *Satsuyōroku* 撮要録 records with mention of *Osaikunin* 御細工人. Original original: Okayama University Library.

One can easily assess the pride and grandeur of receiving such a designation from the government in the Edo era. That designation by the Ikeda government surely ensured the perception of those figurines as valued high-class art objects.

Todate Kazuko 外館和子 describes the change of Bizen from a major figurine production center in the Edo period, which operated under the *osaikunin* designation system, to private kamamoto style kilns that would produce tablewares at a relatively low price in the Meiji period. “As figurine production centers, Bizen, along with Kyoto, had no peers in the Edo period. The *osaikunin* designation was in the Kaneshige family lineage. But in the Meiji era, when Tōyō was born, Bizen ware was undergoing its worst crisis.”<sup>8</sup>

From a slightly different viewpoint, *Bizenyaki monogatari* (Uenishi Setsuo, ed.) describes the change from making *seihin* 製品 (products) in the Meiji era to the making of *sakuhin* 作品 (works of art) in the Taisho era. “After the Taisho era, a movement developed where, once again, an attempt was made to return to making *sakuhin* by hand. That change can probably be assessed as having been a sort of backlash from the mass production of the Meiji era. As the era progressed, rather than something simply made and fired, artistic quality and the artist’s individuality came to be pursued. In that sense, The Meiji period was the germination point for the phenomenon of Japanese ceramics changing from *seihin* to *sakuhin*.”<sup>9</sup>

Prior to WWII, two men would greatly influence the future and concept of ceramics in Japan, Yanagi Muneyoshi 柳宗悦 (1889–1961) and Koyama Fujio (1900–1975). The folk craft movement influenced how people thought about ceramics in general. “At the end of the Taisho era, the folk craft movement, which was advocated by Yanagi Muneyoshi, began to take hold. There was beauty found in handmade things that were used in everyday life which had gone unnoticed before. This was the discovery of *yō no bi* 用の美 (the beauty in practical use).<sup>10</sup> This encouraged a differentiation between ceramics that were mass-produced and those that were made, one by one, as artworks. The way people now think about ceramics was born at this time.”<sup>11</sup> Pioneer medieval kiln researcher Koyama Fujio had been examining the major medieval kiln ruins in Japan (Seto, Tokoname, Shigaraki, Tamba, Bizen, and Echizen) from the 1920s to early 40s, and coined the term “*rokkoyō*” 六古窯 (Six-Old-Kilns) in the 1940s, which was easy to grasp for

<sup>8</sup> Todate (2005) p. 5.

<sup>9</sup> Uenishi (ed.) (2012) p. 129.

<sup>10</sup> Yanagi Muneyoshi (1889-1961), also known as Yanagi Sōetsu, was the father of the Japanese folk craft movement. He published *The Unknown Craftsman* in English in 1972. That book became internationally influential. See Yanagi (1972, 1989).

<sup>11</sup> Uenishi, (ed.) (2012) p. 129.

the general public.<sup>12</sup>

“Koyama’s theory of the Six Old Kilns had the effect of publicizing ceramics from the six production centers where ceramics continued to be produced. One result was a gradual increase in the number of ceramic enthusiasts who appreciated those wares as well as greater interest in Kamakura and Muromachi period ceramics. The growing reputation of the wares of the Six Old Kilns not only fueled awareness of their existence but also stirred up interest in the history of ceramics in Japan as a whole”.<sup>13</sup>

*Bizenyaki monogatari* describes the chain of events from just prior to WWII, when potters working in Bizen started to become more expressive and explore new ideas, culminating in the designation of Kaneshige Tōyō as national treasure in 1956. “Kaneshige Tōyō is considered to have been a master of figurine making in his 20s, and later on in his career, made (pioneer) efforts to reproduce Momoyama tea wares. Matsuda Kazan the third 三代松田華山 was firing brownish wares and researching about *hidasuki* 緋襪 with a German muffle kiln.<sup>14</sup> Fujiwara Rakuzan the first 初代藤原楽山 was making tea wares by the salt glazing method. Nishimura Shunko 西村春湖 and Ōae Nidō the first 初代大饗二堂 made great efforts in figurine making. Mimura Tōkei 三村陶景 explored colored and white Bizen (figurines), Fujita Ryūhō the first 初代藤田龍峰 made blue Bizen and explored the use of a coal-burning kiln. Isezaki Yōzan 伊勢崎陽山 was a ceramic sculptor. Konishi Tōko the first 初代小西陶古 made market friendly artificial *sangiri* wares.<sup>15</sup> Kimura Hyōji 木村兵次 first used the coal burning kiln, etc. Those potters broke away from making the standard, craftsman (*shokunin* 職人) made,<sup>16</sup> mass produced items, which were common until that time. Instead, they sought whole heartedly to make expressive artistic tea wares and figurines 置物 *okimono* type wares.”<sup>17</sup>

Then Japan would become immersed in WWII. Due to depleted metal resources in Japan, the potters would be forced to make ceramic grenades and other articles for the war. Japan was devastated by the war. “Before WWII, including both the kamamoto style and artist style of setup, there were about 30 houses with kilns, but just after WWII only about 20 remained.”<sup>18</sup>

<sup>12</sup> An explanation is given about the first usage of the term *rokkoyō* in *Koyama Fujio Chosakushū (chu) Nihon no Tōji*, which is a compilation of Koyama Fujio’s articles about Japanese ceramics which was published in 1978. On page 537 Hasebe Gaguzi explains: “The phrase *rokkoyō* was coined by Koyama Fujio. In *Echizen Ko yō no Hakutsu*, which was published in 1948, the term *gokoyō* (5 old kilns) was still used to express Seto, Tokoname, Shigaraki, Tanba, and Bizen. So, that Echizen investigation in May of that year changed the phrase (with the addition of one more kiln center). We have to consider the term *rokkoyō* to have been born then.” The term *rokkoyō* does not, however, exist in that article. There is a passage in *Nihon Rokkoyō no Omoide* (page 74 in *Koyama Fujio Chosakushū(chu)*) where Koyama writes that “I coined the term *rokkoyō* before the war”. It may be that he already got the concept when he first had the opportunity to visit Echizen in 1933. The term may have been used orally somewhat randomly before it was written.” See *Echizen Koyō no Hakutsu*, in *Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan news*, no. 13 (Tokyo Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan, 1948) and *Nihon Rokkoyō no Omoide*, in *Bessatsu rekishi teccho*, (Meicho Shupan, 1974) both recorded in Koyama, Fujio, *Koyama Fujio Chosakushū (chu) Nihon no Tōji* (Asahi Shinbunsha, 1978).

<sup>13</sup> Inoue (2010), p. 457. More information on Koyama’s examination of “six old kiln” ruins on p. 456.

<sup>14</sup> *Hidasuki*, is a type of surface marking created by first wrapping the pots with (pounded in order to soften) rice straw before loading them into the kiln. In an oxidizing atmosphere the clay fires white at approx. 1250 degrees centigrade. The parts of the pot where the rice straw contacts the surface undergo a chemical reaction and become red.

<sup>15</sup> Charcoal is placed on top of the wares in the kiln near the end of the firing with a fire-resistant steel shovel with a long handle. The charcoal burns and creates localized bluish melted ash surface markings. The method is convenient because natural ash does not flow through all parts of the kiln.

<sup>16</sup> In Japan potters can broadly be separated into two categories, one is the *shokunin* (craftsman) and the other is the artist potter. The *shokunin* or craftsman works for the owner of a kiln who may hire commonly two to six craftsmen to make the wares. Such kilns are called *kamamoto* in Japanese. Those craftsmen produce the shapes which are requested by the owner, generally more mass production type items which are to be sold at more modest prices. *Shokunin* are generally very skilled at the wheel but lack freedom to be expressive. The artist potter is more in control of all elements, from the acquisition of clay, preparation of clay, to determining which shapes to make and how the kiln will be loaded and fired, finishing of the fired wares, holding exhibitions, etc. He generally has many tasks and little help, and therefore does not have as much time to sit at the wheel and make wares. For this reason, the artist potter may be less adept at making the same shape quickly and accurately over and over again. But, he is free to fine-tune all of the elements, become famous, and hopefully command high prices. The aim of many craftsmen in post WWII Japan is to become an independent artist potter after working some years at a *kamamoto*.

<sup>17</sup> Uenishi (ed.) (2012) p. 132.

<sup>18</sup> *ibid.* p. 134.

It is fitting to mention the potter's organizations here, since they will play an important role in the events leading up to Tōyō's being designated National Treasure. An article by Moriwaki Yūko 森脇裕子 states that there were no potter's organizations in Bizen before WWII,<sup>19</sup> however there is an article in the March 8, 1942 *Gōdō Newspaper* about a Bizen ware potter's guild being disbanded and reorganized (figure 2).<sup>20</sup> This is interesting because it demonstrates that the potters in Bizen were functioning quite normally 3 months into the war after the bombing of Pearl Harbor (and three months before the Battle of Midway). According to Kimura Kōzō 木村宏造, the potters were encouraged by the government at that time to form such an organization. He added that the *kumiai* guilds mentioned in the article were the roots of the present Tōyūkai guild. When asked about the Bizen potter's organizations, Kimura Tōzan 木村陶山 articulated that during the Edo period the potters did not have various organizations; everything was controlled by the government. But with the change in policies that came with the Meiji era, the potters could do as they liked and so, created organizations and groups.

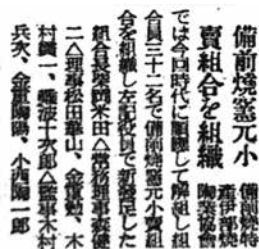


Figure 2. March 8, 1942, *Gōdō Newspaper* 合同新聞 article about the forming of a potter's guild. with 32 members.

Translation of article in full (Figure 2):

### Bizen Ware Kiln Factory Retail Guild Organized

The *bizen yaki tokusan inbe yaki tōgyō kyōkai* 備前焼特産伊部焼陶業協会 (Inbe ware Ceramics Business Bizen Ware Specialists Association) has broken up the organization and newly formed the *bizenyaki kamamoto kouri kumiai* 備前焼窯元小売組合 (Bizen Ware Kiln Factory Retail Guild) with 32 members in order to adapt to the present times. The newly formed guild has the following directors : President Shibaoka Yoneda 柴岡米田, director of commercial affairs Mori Kenji 森健二, directors Matsuda Kazan, Kaneshige Tsutomu 金重勉, Kimura Kōichi 木村貢一, Nanba Jūjirō 難波十次郎, managers Kimura Hyōjii, Kaneshige Tōyō, Konishi Tōichirō 小西陶一郎.

*Bizenyaki Monogatari* gives a detailed description of the events leading up to Kaneshige Tōyō being designated a National Treasure: "In 1950, in the midst of those (severe) circumstances, a law for protecting cultural properties was passed. Tangible Cultural Property designations were to be given for architecture, painting, sculpture, and ceramics, and Important Intangible Cultural Property (National Treasure) designations were to be awarded to excellent artists from the fields of stage, music, and ceramics. Bizen was included in the scope of those fields. At that point...the small town of Inbe 伊部 (central area of Bizen ware production in what is now Bizen City) erupted into extreme turmoil as to who would receive that award."<sup>21</sup>

As mentioned above, the potters formed groups or guilds. These pottery groups would take sides

<sup>19</sup> Moriwaki (2006) p. 259.

<sup>20</sup> March 8, 1942, *bizenyaki kamamoto kouri kumiai wo soshiki*, *Gōdō Newspaper*, p. 4.

<sup>21</sup> Uenishi (ed.) (2012) p. 134. The passage in *Bizenyaki Monogatari* refers to the designation "Important Intangible Cultural Property", however, in 1952 the designation was "Intangible Cultural Property Holder". The law would be amended in 1954 to create the "Important Intangible Cultural Property" designation.

and develop strong convictions, which resulted in disharmony among the potters and all out fighting. *Bizenyaki Monogatari* defines two major groups and summarizes the roles they played. “Kaneshige Tōyō was the leader of the Bizen Yōgeikai 備前窯芸会 (group of Bizen potters) which had been formed in 1949 and concentrated on wheel made wares. The main members included Kaneshige Tōyō, Fujiwara Kei 藤原啓, Yamamoto Tōshū 山本陶秀, Fujita Ryūhō the second 二代藤田龍峰, Kaneshige Sozan 金重素山, and Uragami Zenji 浦上善次.”<sup>22</sup> In March 1952 Tōyō was designated Intangible Cultural Property Holder 無形文化財保持者. An opposition group was formed called the “Bizen Tōkōkai 備前陶工会 headed by Mimura Tōkei 三村陶景. The members included Mimura Tōkei, Nishimura Shunko, Ōae Nidō the first 初代大饗二堂, Ishii Furō 石井不老, Isezaki Yōzan 伊勢崎陽山, Fujiwara Rakuzan the first, Kimura Sōtoku 木村宗得, Uragami Zenji 浦上善次, Kinami Chikasen 木南知加選, and Fujiwara Tōsai 藤原陶斎. The aim of the group was to promote figurine production.”<sup>23</sup> Examples of the leader’s works are given in figures 3 (Bizen Tōkōkai, Mimura Tōkei) and 4 (Bizen Yōgeikai, Kaneshige Tōyō).



Figure 3. *aishiki* (colored) Bizen 彩色備前, *isamikoma kōro* 勇駒香炉 (courageous horse incense burner), Mimura Tōkei 三村陶景, H. 29.1cm. Okayama Prefectural Art Museum.



Figure 4. Bizen ware, *sankaku ruiza hanaire* 三角插座花入 (triangular vase with small attachments), Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽, 1953-54, H. 25.6cm. privately owned. Image, *Kaneshige Tōyō: seitan 100 nen kinen tokubetsu ten* 金重陶陽：生誕100年記念：特別展, Okayama Prefectural Art Museum.

“On April 4, 1952 an advertisement sponsored by the Bizen Tōkōkai appeared in the *Sanyo Newspaper* containing an approximately 300 word objection to Kaneshige Tōyō being selected as Intangible Cultural Property. (Summarized): [In present day Inbe there are craftsmen with greater skill and or more distinguished service than Kaneshige Tōyō and so are more qualified to receive the award. In light of other prefectures in similar circumstances, nominating a region (for the award), nominating only Kaneshige Tōyō is unfair].”<sup>24</sup>

“In 1954, the government announced special guidelines for the selecting of an Okayama Prefecture Intangible Cultural Property Holder because the opposition to the likely candidate became radical and the selection process difficult to resolve. The Bizen Tōkōkai demanded that the locality (Bizen) be designated. The Bizen Yōgeikai demanded that because the traditional arts are passed on from generation to generation by individuals, an individual should be designated. As a result, the conditions required for nomination were determined to be that the potter must have his own

<sup>22</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 134, 136.

<sup>23</sup> *Mega* (2003) p. 301.

<sup>24</sup> Uenishi (ed.) (2012) pp. 134-135.



privately owned kiln with ceramics being his principle occupation. Eight potters in (at that time) Bizen Cho were designated: Mimura Tōkei, Isezaki Yōzan, Ishii Furō, Oae Nidō the first, Shodai Fujiwara Rakuzan, Kaneshige Tōyō, Yamamoto Tōshū, Nidai Fujita Ryūhō, and from Iri Chō 伊里町 (now part of Bizen City) Fujiwara Kei. The problem was solved with a somewhat ambivalent solution. Qualified individuals from the locality were designated.

In the end, in spite of all the fighting between the Momoyama tea ware (wheel thrown works) group and the figurine group, Kaneshige Tōyō was chosen as National Treasure in 1956. Mimura Tōkei died immediately after that.”<sup>25</sup>

The designation of Kaneshige Tōyō as national treasure was the single most influential event in post WWII Bizen. With that designation, the making of figurines would drastically decline, and the making of Momoyama influenced tea wares, along with some modern sculptural artistic wares would suddenly increase and become the mainstay of the Bizen market.

### 3. Tōyō's Ascent to National Treasure

The newspaper articles and documents printed at the time of the events pertaining to Tōyō's rise to National Treasure are shown in chronological order in this section. The newspaper articles are translated into English and the official documents are reproduced for reference. Read in chronological order, the newspaper articles seem fairly self-explanatory and confirm many of the above historical accounts of post WWII Bizen. The newspaper articles capture the trends and mood of the times and tell an interesting story. One can easily feel the tensed relationships and pride of the potters in the small town of Inbe. The articles and documents are displayed here along with limited explanation. They will be considered in more detail in the “discussion” section.

The Agency of Cultural Affairs of Japan describes the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties as follows: “The term *bunka-zai* (cultural properties) has come into general usage, and is heard frequently in Japan today, but cultural properties received their first legal definition in 1950 when the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties was enacted and took effect. Since then, the law has undergone several amendments to become what it is today.”<sup>26</sup> “Under the initial law before amendments, the system for protection of cultural properties consisted of support for intangible cultural properties of especially high value, which would be at risk of extinction without governmental protection. In 1954, the law was amended to establish the system of designation of Important Intangible Cultural Properties and recognition of their Holders.”<sup>27</sup>

The following chart, which can be found on the Agency of Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan homepage illustrates that there are different types of designations.

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<sup>25</sup> *ibid.*, p. 136.

<sup>26</sup> Agency for Cultural Affairs of Japan (ed.), *Protection System for Intangible Cultural Heritage in Japan* (Asia/Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO [ACCU]), p. 5.  
[http://www.bunka.go.jp/tokei\\_hakusho\\_shuppan/shuppanbutsu/bunkazai\\_pamphlet/pdf/pamphlet\\_en\\_05.pdf](http://www.bunka.go.jp/tokei_hakusho_shuppan/shuppanbutsu/bunkazai_pamphlet/pdf/pamphlet_en_05.pdf)

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.* p. 7.

Holder	Category	Objects of Recognition
	: <b>Individual Recognition</b> 各個認定	Those who embody outstanding skill in performing arts designated as important intangible cultural properties; those who possess outstanding skill in craft techniques designated as Important Intangible Cultural Properties.
	: <b>Collective Recognition</b> 総合認定	Members of a group consisting of two or more people who together embody outstanding skill in the performing arts; or members of a group of people who possess outstanding skill in a craft technique with unique characteristics shared by two or more.
<b>Holding Group</b>	: <b>Recognition of Holding Groups</b> 保持団体認定	A group mainly consisting of holders of a technique which by its nature is not characterized by strong distinctions between individual holders. <sup>28</sup>

The existence of different types of designations would become a source for argument among the members of the Bizen ceramic community. In 1952 there were also three categories, but they were worded slightly differently. The categories in the 1951 *Bunkazai Yōran* 文化財要覧 (from April 1, 1951 to March 31, 1952) were listed as individual 個人, organization 組織, and regional 地域の.<sup>29</sup> The following are records and newspaper articles from the 1950s documenting Tōyō's ascension to National Treasure. They reveal that Tōyō met fierce opposition, and that there was controversy among the potters in Inbe about the way in which the national treasure system should be applied.

Tōyō was selected by the national Committee for the Protection of Cultural Properties to be designated as Intangible Cultural Property Holder 無形文化財保持者 in March 1952. An article in the 1952 March 30<sup>th</sup> *Sanyo Newspaper* announces both the tangible and intangible Cultural heritage designations being made on March 29, and simply lists Tōyō's name at the end of the article (figure 5).<sup>30</sup>



Figure 5. March 30, 1952 *Sanyo Newspaper* 山陽新聞 article announces the designation of both Tangible 有形文化財 and Intangible National Cultural Properties 無形文化財保持者 on March 29, including Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽.

The title of the article and the section pertaining to Bizen ware at the end of the article are translated here. Only Kaneshige Tōyō is listed at the end of the articles (his peers who received the

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>29</sup> *Bunkazai yōran, shōwa 26 nenban*, Bunkazaihogoinikai (ed), (1951), p. 190.

<sup>30</sup> March 30, 1952, *Kokuhō ni kibitsu jinja, tennenbutsu nado 243 ken wo shitei*, *Sanyo Newspaper*, p. 3

award in 1952 in other prefectures are not listed) in the section titled “Individual, Organization, Regional possessed technology for which measures must be taken” as follows:

**Kibitsu Shrine as National Treasure: 243 Natural Monuments and Others Designated**

(Individual, Organization, Regional possesses technology for which measures must be taken, Bizen ware, Kaneshige Tōyō, Okayama Ken Wake Gun Inbe Chō U Inbe.)

In the following record book called *Bunkazai Yōran*, a record of Tōyō's designation can be seen. The record of Tōyō's designation is dated March 1952. The record can be found in the 1951 fiscal year *Bunkazai Yōran*, which contains records from April 1, 1951 to March 31, 1952, and is shown in fig. 6. A partial translation is given in the “discussion” section of this article.

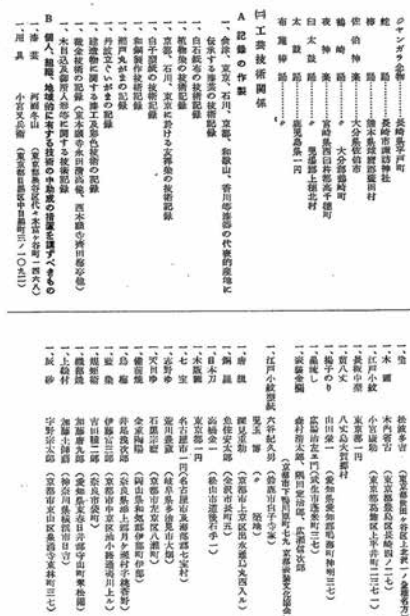


Figure 6. 1951 *Bunkazai Yōran* (from April 1, 1951 to March 31, 1952) 文化財要覧：昭和二十六年版, p. 190, containing record of Kaneshige Tōyō's 金重陶陽 designation for Intangible Cultural Property Holder 無形文化財保持者.

Immediately after the March 30, 1952 article was published an opposition group called the Bizen Tōkōkai was formed in Bizen, objecting to the designation of Tōyō as Intangible Cultural Property Holder.<sup>31</sup> The forming of the Tōkōkai is documented in a short article in the April 2, 1952 *Sanyo Newspaper* (Figure 7).

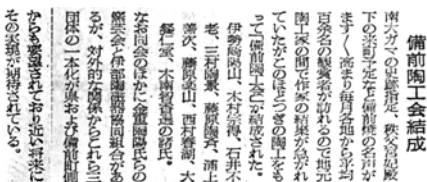


Figure 7. April 2, 1952 *Sanyo Newspaper* 山陽新聞 article reporting formation of Tōkōkai 陶工会.

<sup>31</sup> April 2, 1952 Wake, *bizen tōkōkai kessei*, *Sanyo Newspaper*, p 4.

Translation in full (Figure 7):  
**Bizen Tōkōkai Formed**

Minami Ōgama has been designated a historic site and Princess Chichibu's visit (to Bizen) is scheduled. The fame of Bizen ware is increasing more and more. An average of over 100 visitors come to see Bizen ware every month from various parts of Japan. With this increase in fame there is a rush among the Bizen potters to mobilize (take stances and support certain ideas), and the Bizen Tōkōkai was formed. The members include Isezaki Yōzan, Kimura Sōtoku, Ishii Furō, Mīmura Tōkei, Fujiwara Tōsai, Urakami Zenji, Fujiwara Rakuzan, Nishimura Shunko, Ōae Nidō, and Kinami Chikasen. Along with this group the Yōgeikai group formed around Kaneshige Tōyō, and the Inbe Tōki Kyōkai exist. Okayama prefecture and Bizen town hope for the unification of these three separate groups.

The aim of the Tōkōkai was to promote figurine production. That group was composed of figurine and sculptural makers, who had carried on the long figurine making tradition in Bizen. As mentioned earlier, from the mid Edo period till just before WWII, figurines were the main product of Bizen. Those makers had had the support of the local government in the Edo period, some being designated as *osaikunin* for their superior skill. With such a long prestigious history, it is understandable that they would reject the designation of Tōyō for his tea wares.

The Bizen Tōkōkai planted an opposition advertisement in the *Sanyo Newspaper* on April 4, 1952, just one month after the announcement of the designation of Kaneshige Tōyō as Intangible Cultural Property Holder in March, 1952.<sup>32</sup> The full translation accompanies the advertisement (Figure 8).



Figure 8. April 4, 1952 *Sanyo Newspaper* 山陽新聞 Advertisement placed in newspaper by Tōkōkai 陶工会 opposing designation of Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽 as Intangible Cultural Property Holder 無形文化財保持者.

Translation in full (Figure 8):

**Declaration**

Bizen ware has maintained a long tradition. It goes without saying that there is no other ceramic in Japan or the world that is so special and rare. We are protecting our ancestor's footprints within a ceramics world consisting of glazed wares. The potters in Bizen have been diligent and have stories of tears and hard times in the severe post war circumstances. Bizen

<sup>32</sup> April 4, 1952, Seimei, *Sanyo Newspaper*, p. 4.

ware cannot be thought of as only one person.

We saw the announcement of solely Kaneshige Tōyō being designated as National Intangible Cultural Property Holder for Craft Technique 国家の工芸技術保存資格者 (the expression in this advertisement is worded slightly differently than on official records) and cannot understand the reasoning.

In present day Inbe there are craftsmen with greater skill or more distinguished service than Tōyō, and so are more qualified to receive the award. The Prefectural Culture Committee has ignored the existence of the local Bizen Chō authorities as well as the Bizen potters. We, the Bizen Tōkōkai, state an objection.

In light of other prefectures in similar circumstances nominating a region (for the award), designating only Kaneshige Tōyō is unfair. We want a responsible answer from the Prefectural Culture Committee in the newspaper.

Declaration, Showa 27 (1952), April 4

Bizen Tōkōkai

Isezaki Yōzan, Nishimura Shunko, Kinami Chikasen, Fujiwara Tōsai, Urakami Zenji, Ishii Furō, Kimura Sōtoku, Fujiwara Rakuzan, Ōae Nidō, Mimura Tōkei

An article appeared in the *Asahi Newspaper* on Feb. 5 1953 about the suspected assault by Tōyō on Tōkōkai member Ishi Furō.<sup>33</sup> The article is testament to the friction between the Yōgeikai group promoting the newly popularized Momoyama style ware wheel thrown work and the Tōkōkai group promoting figurine production (Figure 9).



Figure 9. Feb. 5, 1953 *Asahi Newspaper Okayama Edition* 朝日新聞岡山版 article about assault by Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽 on Tōkōkai 陶工会 member Ishi Furō 石井不老.

Translation in full (Figure 9):

### Assault by Bizen Ware Potter: Cultural Property Designated Tōyō Clashes with Ishi Furō

Documents were sent to the local prosecutor that say that, in Wake area, on the 4<sup>th</sup>, Kaneshige Tōyō

<sup>33</sup> February 5, 1953, *bizen tōkō ga shōgai, hozon shitei wo meguri tōyō, furō shi tairitsu*, *Asahi Newspaper*, p. 8. (article introduced to author by Seki Yōhei 関洋平, curator at Setouchi Museum of Art.)

(Kaneshige Isamu 57) is suspected of assault and the event is being investigated. Previously, On the night of Last December 17<sup>th</sup> while at a drinking party held to celebrate building reconstruction at a restaurant in Nishi Katakami, he got into a quarrel with Ishi Furō (Ishi Yosakichi 石井与三吉54). Tōyō hit Furō's left ear and left cheek, leaving him with injuries that took three weeks to heal. The following are the details of the incident. Last year, on March 29<sup>th</sup>, Tōyō was designated Intangible Cultural Property Holder by the Committee for the Protection of Cultural Properties文化財保護委員会, Ishi Furō and 9 others who formed the Tōkōkai objected, claiming that "In the Kinki area, the award is given to a region rather than an individual as in Bizen. We cannot accept the award being given to an individual in only Bizen." This event had come to a head.

Another similar article about the fight appeared in the Sanyo Newspaper as follows (Figure 10).<sup>34</sup>



Figure 10. Feb. 5, 1953 *Sanyo Newspaper Evening Edition* 山陽新聞夕刊 article about Documents being Sent to the Prosecutor and the suspected assault by Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽 on Ishi Furō 石井不老.

Translation in full (Figure 10):

**Kaneshige Tōyō, Documents Sent to Prosecutor: Suspected of Hitting Ishii Furō**

Documents were sent from the police office in Okayama prefecture, Wake district to the Bizen prosecutor's office on the 4<sup>th</sup> that say that potter Kaneshige Tōyō (Kaneshige Isamu, 57), a potter in Wake county, Bizen town, is suspected of assault.

While at a drinking party held to celebrate building reconstruction, in the large room on the second floor of Ebisuya, a restaurant-inn in Wake gun Bizen town Nishi Katakami owned by Araki Masashi, Tōyō got into a quarrel with Ishii Furō (Ishii Yosakichi ), also a potter from Inbe, last December 17<sup>th</sup> . The quarrel was about Tōyō's designation as Intangible Cultural Property. Tōyō said: "I am the master! I deserve to be designated. Anyone defiant about it is a good for nothing. You came to Inbe from outside (not born in Inbe). If you pick a fight with me I will fix it so that you can't be in Inbe anymore." Tōyō then suddenly hit Ishii Furō's left cheek. The injury took three weeks to heal.

The following two articles (Figures 11 and 12) were found in the November 1953 Sanyo Newspaper in rapid succession, just one week apart. They demonstrate the chaotic state of affairs between the potters, and the local government attempting to persuade them to get along with one another. It can

<sup>34</sup> Feb. 5, 1953, *kaneshige tōyō shi wo sōchō, furō shi wo nagutta utagai*, *Sanyo Newspaper*, evening edition, p. 2. (article introduced to author by Seki Yōhei 関洋平, curator at Setouchi Museum of Art.)

be seen that four of the Tōkōkai potters formed a group called the Bizenyaki Dento Gijutsu Hozon Kai (organization), and applied for group designation. The officials in charge call for harmony between the local potters in the Nov. 11 article,<sup>35</sup> and in the Nov 18 article the Bizenyaki Dento Gijutsu Hozon Kai potters state that the only true traditional technique is that of figurine making.<sup>36</sup>



Figure 11. Nov. 11, 1953 *Sanyo Newspaper* 山陽新聞 article stating That designation of Bizen ware Cultural Property Holder will be unlikely if there is no agreement among the local potters.

Translation in full (Figure 11)

### Designation of Bizen Ware Cultural Property Holder Will be Unlikely if There is No Agreement Among the Local Potters

The Bizenyaki Dento Gijutsu Hozon Kai (organization), formed by 4 members including leader Mimura Tōkei,<sup>37</sup> sent a written application for the Bizen ware Important Intangible Cultural Property Holder designation to the prefectural office by way of the Bizen Town Board of Education on the 9<sup>th</sup>. The Officials in charge stated that as long as the local potters can't agree on a solution (to the dilemma of individual or group designation) it will be unlikely for such a group to be designated by the prefecture. The decision made by the advisory committee is a hot topic recently.

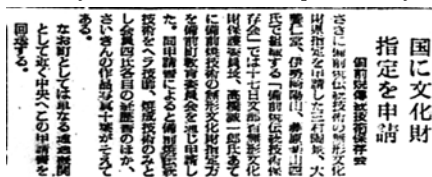


Figure 12. Nov. 19, 1953 *Sanyo Newspaper* 山陽新聞 article about Bizenyaki Dento Gijutsu Hozon Kai 備前焼伝統技術保存会 applying as a group with the Japanese government for Cultural Property Designation.

Translation in full (Figure 12):

### Apply with the Japanese Government for Cultural Property Designation Bizenyaki Dento Gijutsu Hozon Kai

Mimura Tōkei, Ōae Nidō, Isezaki Yōzan, Fujiwara Rakuzan, who make up the Bizenyaki Dento Gijutsu Hozon Kai (organization), have already applied for Okayama Prefecture Important Intangible Cultural Property Holder for technique designation. On the 17<sup>th</sup> they sent an application form, via the Bizen Chō Board of Education, to Takahashi Seiichiro, the official in charge of Important Intangible Cultural Property in the Ministry of Education (on the national level as opposed to prefectural), to apply for Bizen Intangible Cultural Property Holder designation. The application claims Bizen ware traditional technique to be solely that of *hera* (figurine making) and kiln firing craftsmen and includes the career history of each potter and 10 photographs of their works. The Bizen Chō Board of Education will act as vehicle of transmission and deliver this to the central government.

<sup>35</sup> Nov. 11, 1953, *jimoto no tōkōkan no enman nakereba muzukashii*, *Sanyo Newspaper*, p. 3.

<sup>36</sup> Nov. 19, 1953, *kuni ni bunkazai shitei wo shinsei, bizenyaki dento gijutsu hozon kai*, *Sanyo Newspaper*, p. 3.

<sup>37</sup> The actual text reads Kimura Tōkei, but it is a typo.

On December 27th 1953 an *Asahi Newspaper* article announced the unofficial Okayama Prefecture Important Intangible Cultural Property Holder 岡山県重要無形文化財保持者 designation a few days after the specialist committee met on the 24<sup>th</sup> and determined the final results (Figure 13).<sup>38</sup> Eight potters from (at that time) Bizen Chō were designated, and one from Iri Cho (now part of Bizen City).



Figure 13. December 27, 1953 *Asahi Newspaper Okayama Edition* 朝日新聞岡山版 article announces the unofficial designation of 9 Okayama Prefecture Important Intangible Cultural Property Holders 岡山県重要無形文化財保持者 a few days after the specialist committee met on the 24<sup>th</sup>.

Translation of title and section pertaining to Bizen ware (Figure 13):

**(Ōketsu gun) and Others: 27 Okayama Prefecture Important Intangible Cultural Property Designations**

Intangible cultural property holder for the production technology of Bizen ware: Fujita Ryūhō, Ishii Furō, Mimura Tōkei, Yamamoto Tōshū, Kaneshige Tōyō, Isezaki Yōzan, Fujiwara Rakuzan, Ōae Nidō, , and From Iri Cho (now part of Bizen City) Fujiwara Kei.

On January 5<sup>th</sup> 1954 an article in the *Sanyo Newspaper* announces that 4 of the 9 designated as Okayama Prefecture Important Intangible Cultural Property Holder declined the award on grounds that the award should be given to an area and not an individual.<sup>39</sup> The four who declined the award were Mimura Tōkei, Isezaki Yōzan, Ōae Nidō, and Fujiwara Rakuzan, who had made up the Bizenyaki Dento Gijutsu Hozon Kai (organization). However, since their names appear in the official March 5, 1954 *Kenkōhō* record, the four must have accepted the award in the end (Figure 14).

<sup>38</sup> December 27, 1953, (*ōketsu gun*) *nado*, 27 ten, ken, jūyōbunkazai ni shitei, *Asahi Newspaper*, 朝日新聞, p. 8.

<sup>39</sup> January 5, 1954, (*kojin shite*) *wo jitai*, *bizenyaki mimura tōkeira yon shi*, *Sanyo Newspaper*, p. 5.



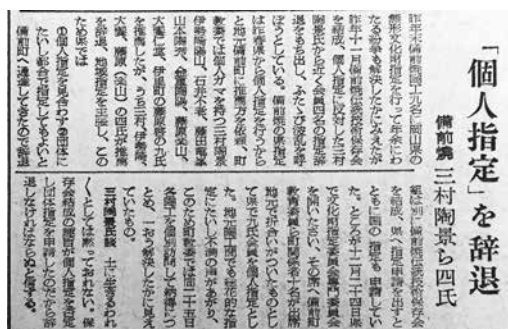


Figure 14. January 5, 1954 *Sanyo Newspaper* 山陽新聞 article announces that 4 of the 9 designated as Okayama Prefecture Important Intangible Cultural Property Holders 岡山県重要無形文化財保持者 declined the award on grounds that the award should be given to an area and not an individual.

Translation in full (Figure 14):

**Individual Designation Rejected: Bizen Ware Mimura Tokei Group of Four**

It seemed as though the dispute, which lasted over a year, had been resolved with nine Bizen ware potters being designated Okayama Prefecture Important Intangible Cultural Property Holders at the end of last year. However, in November last year, the Bizenyaki Dento Gijutsu Hozon Kai (organization) was formed and Mimura Tōkei, who had been against individual designation, announced that 4 members, (including Tōkei), would decline the designation, stirring up trouble for a second time.

Since last spring, activity for the Bizen ware prefectural designation was carried out so a request was made to Bizen town (town office) to recommend potters. The following 9 potters with private kilns were recommended: From Bizen town: Mimura Tōkei, Isezaki Yōzan, Ishii Furō, Fujita Ryūhō, Yamamoto Tōshū, Kaneshige Tōyō, Fujiwara Rakuzan, Ōae Nidō, and from Iri town: Fujiwara Kei. However, 4 of those potters, Mimura, Isezaki, Ōae, and Fujiwara (Rakuzan) declined the recommendation because they advocate designation of an area. For this reason, In Okayama ken 1), individual designation was postponed; And 2), it had been requested that Bizen town accept the possibility of group designation according to circumstances, so the recommendation declining group formed the Bizenyaki Dento Gijutsu Hozon Kai and applied for group designation both prefecturally and nationally. But on December 24, when the Bunkazaishite Iinkai Senmon Iinkai (Cultural property Designation Committee Specialists Committee) held their meeting with the Bizen Town Board of Education and 10 community members present, a compromise was made and all 9 were given individual designations. Some of the local potters expressed dissatisfaction with the all-around designations without specific reasons for each designation. For this reason, on the 25<sup>th</sup> the committee visited each of the designated potters and the problem seemed as if it were solved. Mimura Tōkei said “We who live our lives for clay cannot remain silent. The reason for forming the Hozonkai was to object to individual designation. We applied as a group so we believe that we must decline.”

The official record for the designation of Tōyō along with eight other Bizen ware artist as Okayama Prefecture Important Intangible Cultural Property Holder is dated as The March 5, 1954 in the *Okayama Ken kōhō* 岡山県公報, which is the official prefectural document (Figure 15).<sup>40</sup> Kaneshige Tōyō along with eight other Bizen ware potters are listed in the *Okayama Ken kōhō*.

<sup>40</sup> *Okayama kenkōhō*, Number 5429, 1954, p. 240.



### Third National Treasure Designation: Twelve Individuals and One Group, Eishō Koshino and His *Sōkyoku* Group

(Craft technology) Bizen ware, Kaneshige Tōyō (60) (Isamu), number one researcher of old Bizen, which has the oldest tradition among Our country's ceramics.

The official documentation of this event can be seen in the *Kanpō* 官報 about one month after the announcement of the decision. The official documentation is dated April 24, 1956. According to the Bunkachō 文化庁, the designation becomes official only when it is documented in the *Kanpō*. Kaneshige Tōyō's name and address are listed in *Kanpō*.

A word of caution about the dates for Tōyō's designation in the following excerpts from the chronology in *Bizen Kaneshige Tōyō, 1977*.<sup>42</sup> When they are compared with the newspaper articles and documents, inconsistencies in dating criteria are revealed. The March 30, 1952 newspaper article announces the cultural property awards and the Bunkazai Yōran official record of Tōyō's designation also lists March, 1952 as the date for designation. These are both in agreement with the chronology. On December 27th 1953 an *Asahi Newspaper* article announced the unofficial Okayama Prefecture Important Intangible Cultural Property Holder designation a few days after the prefectural cultural property specialist committee met on the 24<sup>th</sup> to determine the recipients. The date in the official *Okayama Ken Kōhō* record is listed as The March 5<sup>th</sup>, 1954, so the official record of the event is the date recorded in the chronology. But for the 1956 National Treasure award, the unofficial newspaper announcement on March 27 announcing the designation of Kaneshige Tōyō and others as Japanese Important Intangible Cultural Property Holders on March 26, 1956 by the Committee for the Protection of Cultural Properties is recorded in the chronology, and seems to have become the universally accepted date. The official documentation in the *Kanpō* is dated April 24, 1956 and should be the date recorded in chronologies (Figure 17).

	Intangible Cultural Property Holder 無形文化財保持者	Okayama Prefecture Important Intangible Cultural Property Holder 岡山県重要無形文化財保持者	Important Intangible Cultural Property Holder 重要無形文化財保持者 (National Treasure)
Chronology <i>Bizen Kaneshige Tōyō</i> 備前：金重陶陽, Tanigawa 谷川 (1977) pp. 241, 242	March 1952	March 1954	March 1956 ×
Newspaper announcement of designation	March 30, 1952 <i>Sanyo Newspaper</i> 山陽新聞 (determined on March 29)	December 27, 1953 <i>Asahi Newspaper</i> 朝日新聞 (determined December 24, 1953)	March 27, 1956 <i>Asahi Newspaper</i> 朝日新聞 (determined March 26)
Official documentation of designation	1951 <i>Bunkazai Yōran</i> (from April 1, 1951 to March 31, 1952) 文化財要覧：昭和二十六年版	<i>Okayama Ken Kōhō</i> 岡山県公報 March 5, 1954	<i>Kanpō</i> 官報 April 24, 1956 ○

Figure 17. Comparison of newspaper announcements, official records, and chronology designation dates.

Reading the old newspaper articles gives one a sense of having actually been in Bizen at the time when Toyo received various designations and conflicts between the potters developed from 1952 to 1956. The opposition movement and fighting become more or less real-life events. It is clear that there was great turmoil and disharmony among the potters in the midst of a new era in Japan. The new Law for the protection of cultural properties proved to be provocative, it didn't just motivate the potters, the reaction went beyond motivation, it brought out deep feelings of pride and anger. The potters' livelihoods, faith and future were on the line. In that setting, Toyo maneuvered through the chaos and/or was all the more stimulated to succeed with his convictions. Toyo continued to make classic Momoyama style wares that go

<sup>42</sup> Tanigawa, (ed.), (1977), pp. 240-243.

unequaled, and advanced to National Treasure.

#### 4. Discussion

The newspaper articles confirm that there was opposition to Tōyō receiving the 1952 Intangible Cultural Property Holder designation. They reveal that the potters in Bizen were weary of, and found it difficult to accept, the new Cultural Property Protection Law. Part of the reason can be thought to be of the pride in the long history of figurine production in Bizen. At that time the figurine makers were the majority. The making of Momoyama style tea wares was a new trend in Bizen. In an interview given to Kaneshige Sozan (Tōyō's younger brother) by Hayashiya Seizō, Sozan states that he feels Toyo was the first to begin making Momoyama style tea wears in Bizen.

**Hayashiya** Did Tōyō develop a strong desire to reproduce Momoyama style wears after becoming acquainted with Kawakita Handeishi and friends, or was it before that?

**Sozan** It was from before that. Tōyō gained a sense of security by talking with Handeishi. Tōyō could confirm that his principles were correct.

**Hayashiya** No one knows exactly at what point in time Tōyō developed a strong desire to reproduce Momoyama style wears. But no one else had that strong feeling.

**Sozan** That is correct. I don't think there was anyone else.<sup>43</sup>

The rival group claimed that designating only Tōyō was unfair, that there were others more skilled than Tōyō, the designation should be to a group rather than individual, figurine making was the only traditional technique in Bizen. The fact that Tōyō's chief rivals were older than him would have also made his designation all the more difficult to accept, as the *senpai-kohai* (senior-junior age relation) relationship is rather strictly adhered to in Japan. One might suspect that jealousy had played a role in their uproar. However, when the author asked Isezaki Mitsuru 伊勢崎満 about the opposition to Tōyō's designation, he flatly denied, in a calm normal voice without any tension, that jealousy had played a role, and related the viewpoint that the reason had been that Bizen ware was great...and not any one maker of Bizen ware.

It is interesting to note that where The Tōkōkai advertisement complains that, "In light of other prefectures in similar circumstances nominating a region (for the award), nominating only Kaneshige Tōyō is unfair", the *Asahi Newspaper* article mysteriously changes their wording somewhat, "The Tōkōkai objected, claiming that "In the Kinki area, the award is given to a region rather than an individual as in Bizen. We cannot accept the award being given to an individual in only Bizen." The Tōkōkai states "other prefectures" which is reworded as "Kinki area". Inspection of the 1951 *Bunkazai Yōran* (official records) is enlightening. Under the section entitled "Individual recognition, organization recognition, regional recognition for technique which must be supported" (個人、組織、地域的に有する技術の中助成の措置を講ずべきもの), 25 awards are listed. Of the 25 awards, most of the awards are for individual recognition: 21 are individual and only four are awarded to regions. The four awarded to regions are for *nagaita chūgata* 長板中型 (indigo kimono dying) Tokyo region, *mokuhanga* 木版画 (ukiyo-e) Tokyo region, *Shippō* 七宝 (cloisonné) Nagoya region, and *kihachijō* 黄八丈 (yellow silk cloth with a dark striped pattern) Hachijōshima Ookagō Mura. Cloisonné is the only item of the four vaguely related to stoneware (as it is fired in a kiln). Among the individual awards are Tōyō's contemporaries, potters Ishiguro Munemaro, Arakawa Toyozō, Katō Tōkurō, etc., which makes Tōyō's receiving the award seem very fair and natural. Was the reporter who wrote the article about the fighting incident with the changed wording giving a subtle hint of bias or misleading statements in the Tōkōkai's advertisement? It must be concluded that The Tokokai's statement about group designation in other prefectures in the advertisement is untrue and suggests that their argument is or makes it appear to be, nonobjective and highly emotional (Figure 18).

<sup>43</sup> Tanigawa (1977) p. 227.

1951 Bunkazai Yōran (from April 1, 1951 to March 31, 1952) 文化財要覧：昭和二十六年版 containing record of Kaneshige Tōyō's 金重陶陽 designation for Intangible Cultural Property Holder 無形文化財保持者.

(二) 工芸技術関係  
Relating to craft technique

B 個人、組織、地域的に有する技術の中助成の措置を講ずべきもの  
Individual recognition, organization recognition, regional recognition for technique which must be supported.

1	漆芸 Shitsugei lacquer art 河面冬山 Kōmo Tōzan	東京都 Tokyo
2	用具 yōgei tools 小宮又兵衛 Komiya Matabei	東京都 Tokyo
3	塗 nu plaster 松波多吉 Matsunami Takichi	東京都 Tokyo
4	木画 mokuga woodblock print 木内省古 Kiuchi Shōko	東京都 Tokyo
5	江戸小紋 edokomon dying technique 小宮康介 Komiya Kōsuke	東京都 Tokyo
6	長板中型 nagaitachūgata dying technique for yukata 東京部一円 Tōkyōbu ichi en	東京都 Tokyo
7	黄八丈 kihachijō yellow silk cloth with a dark striped pattern 八丈島大賀郷村 Hachijōshima, Ookagō Mura	八丈島大賀郷村 Hachijōshima, Ookagō Mura
8	揚子のり yōjinori glue for dying 山田栄一 Yamada Eiichi	愛知県 Aichi Pre.
9	墨流し suminagashi paper marbling 広場治左エ門 Hiroba Jizaemon	武生市 (福井県) Takefu, Fukui Pre.
10	表装金襴 hyōsōkinran brocade 森村清太郎 Morimura Seitarō, 隅田定治郎 Sumida Sadajirō, 広瀬信次郎 Hirose Shinjirō	京都市 Kyoto
11	江戸小紋型紙 edokomonkatagami dying technique 六谷紀久男 Rokutani Kikuo 児玉博 Kodama Hiroshi	鈴鹿市 (三重県) Suzuka, Mie Pre.
12	唐組 karagumi textile braid 深見重助 Fukami Jūsuke	京都市 Kyoto
13	銅鑼 dora gong 魚住安太郎 Uozumi Yasutarō	金沢市 (石川県) Kanazawa, Ishikawa Pre.
14	日本刀 nihontō Japanese sword 高橋金一 Takahashi Kinichi	松山市 (愛媛県) Matsuyama, Ehime Pre.
15	木版画 mokuhanga woodblock print 東京部一円 Tōkyōbu ichi en	東京都 Tokyo
16	七宝 shippō cloisonné ware 名古屋市一円 Nagoya Shi ichi en	名古屋市 (愛知県) Nagoya, Aichi Pre.
17	<b>志野ゆ shinoyu Shino glaze 荒川豊蔵 Arakawa Toyozō</b>	<b>岐阜県 Gifu Pre.</b>
18	<b>天目ゆ tenmokuyu tenkoku glaze 石黒宗磨 Ishiguro Munemaro</b>	<b>京都市 Kyoto</b>
19	<b>備前焼 bizenyaki Bizen Ware 金重陶陽 Kaneshige Tōyō</b>	<b>岡山県 Okayama Pre.</b>
20	烏梅 ubai dying 井尾浅次郎 Io Asajirō	奈良県 Nara Pre.
21	藍染 aizome indigo dye 伊藤富三郎 Itō Tomisaburō	京都市 Kyoto
22	規矩術 kikujutsu carpentry technique 吉田種二郎 Yoshida Shujirō	奈良市 (奈良県) Nara, Nara Pre.
23	<b>織部焼 oribeyaki Oribe ware 加藤唐九郎 Katō Tōkurō</b>	<b>愛知県 Aichi Pre.</b>
24	<b>上絵付 uwaetsuke overglaze 加藤土師蒨 Katō Hajime</b>	<b>神奈川県 Kanagawa Pre.</b>
25	<b>辰砂 shinsha glaze 宇野宗太郎 Uno Sōtarō</b>	<b>京都市 Kyoto</b>

Figure 18. Partial translation of 1951 Bunkazai Yōran (from April 1, 1951 to March 31, 1952) 文化財要覧：昭和二十六年版, p. 190, containing record of Kaneshige Tōyō's 金重陶陽 designation for Intangible Cultural Property Holder 無形文化財保持者. The shaded areas are group designations, the entries in bold type are individual designations of potters including Kaneshige Tōyō.

One reason for Tōyō's designation, along with his great skill, can be attributed to the increased popularity of the tea ceremony during post WWII Japan. And on the other side of the coin, the increased popularity and market for tea wares might be thought of as the medium that produced the society that created Kaneshige Tōyō and his contemporaries. Kato Etsuko tells us how at that time the tea ceremony, and from the 1960s, department store exhibitions were becoming popular in Japan, how new interest in *chanoyu* (tea ceremony) was born out of postwar cultural nationalism and Sen no Rikyū began to be referred to as *chasei* 茶聖 (tea saint). "One of the earliest uses of *chasei* exclusively for Rikyū appears in 1941. ... Suzuki Hancha 鈴木半茶 edited a collection of historical documents supposedly written by Rikyū."<sup>44</sup> Kato tells us that in 1952, Kuwata Tadachika, 桑田忠親 professor at Kokugakuin University referred to Rikyū as *chasei* in his book *Sen Rikyū*, and that that book had 17 impressions by 1975. In 1985, it was given a new title, *Tei-hon Sen Rikyū: sono eikō to zassetsu* 定本 千利休—その栄光と挫折.<sup>45</sup> Kato goes on to tell us that "In 1961, Shirokiya (later Tōkyū), one of the major department stores in Japan, held a 6-day exhibition titled *Chasei Sen no Rikyū* 茶聖千利休".<sup>46</sup> She also explains how more women came to be able to buy tea utensils, "Due to the socio-economic changes in the postwar period, "non-privileged" women who were teaching and learning *temae* 手前 (etiquette of tea ceremony) as *sahō* 作法 (manners, etiquette) became able to afford utensils, calligraphy or other artistic objects."<sup>47</sup>

In *Visiting the Mino Kilns*, author Janet Barriskill noted that, along with Arakawa Toyozō's 1930 discovery of the sixteenth century Mutabora kiln site in the Kani gun area of Mino, the publication of Kawabata Yasunari's novel *One Thousand Cranes* increased interest in Momoyama tea wares. "...the publication in 1949 of Kawabata Yasunari's *One Thousand Cranes* (awarded the Noble prize in 1968) in which he praised the Momoyama tea wares, mentioning specifically a black oribe tea bowl, a shino water jar and a shino tea bowl in a romantic context. Sometime later a film based on the novel was released and this introduced Momoyama tea wares to an even wider audience."<sup>48</sup>

Mimura Tōkei passed away on March 28, 1956, two days after the newspapers announced Kaneshige Tōyō's National Treasure designation. With Tōyō's National Treasure designation, connoisseurs and fans would seek to buy Momoyama style Bizen tea wares. The market would turn to Bizen tea wares and the number of figurine makers would steadily decline. In 2004, 50 years after Mimura Tōkei, Isezaki Yōzan, Ōae Nidō, and Fujiwara Rakuzan rejected the Prefectural designation in 1954, Isezaki Yōzan's son Isezaki Jun, making mostly wheel thrown and modern sculptural pieces, would be designated National Treasure.

## 5. Conclusion

The newspaper articles provide a marvelous snapshot of a crucial time when the pendulum would shift from fairly monotone figurine and everyday usage wares to fine art tea wares fired in various shades and types of ash glazes making full use of the long Bizen wood firing. In 1976 Katsura Matasaburō 桂又三郎 elaborated on how the improvement of the kiln firing (largely through Toyō's efforts) helped create the third golden era:

There was no *yōhen* 窯変 (a dark bluish type of surface marking, but used loosely here to mean markings from melted ash) in Meiji Bizen. It was a one colored brown firing so they often coated it with lacquer. This continued until the Showa period. Indeed, it was the invention of *sangiri yaki* サンギリ焼 (a dark bluish type of surface marking, another term used for *yōhen*) that saved Bizen ware and produced the present *ōgonjidai* (golden era).<sup>49</sup>

Tōyō's pioneering efforts to create wares with the Momoyama Bizen atmosphere resulted in dynamic, extraordinarily interesting wares. Tōyō was revolutionary. Tōyō created techniques, looked for

<sup>44</sup> Kato (2004) p. 81. Kato cites "Suzuki Hancha (1941: 5)" on page 82 in her text, and I have included in the references.

<sup>45</sup> *ibid.* p. 82, 83.

<sup>46</sup> *ibid.* p. 84.

<sup>47</sup> *ibid.* p. 89.

<sup>48</sup> Barriskill (1995) p. 3.

<sup>49</sup> Katsura (1976), p. 2.

and dug the clay that he required, and greatly modified the kiln, to fully exploit the possibilities of the Bizen clay and long firing.

Bizen ware changed from being more product type wares to expressive Momoyama style tea wares that would be considered as fine art. It is important to realize that Tōyō did not choose himself to be a Cultural Property Holder or National Treasure, rather, the preferences of the times changed. One might say that the general swing to heightened interests in tea, Sen no Rikyū, and Momoyama tea wares in Japan at that time allowed Kaneshige Tōyō to realize his full potential and more as an artist and that full realization of his potential created the post war Third Golden Era Momoyama tea wear boom in Bizen. According to Tōyō's last apprentice, Moriyama Michiko, after Tōyō became National Treasure, all the Bizen potters had to make Momoyama style wares because of their sudden popularity that went along with the designation. There was a complete change.

Tōyō made classic Momoyama style wares that have proven to be unequalled. Through his vision, determination and superior creative skills, Kaneshige Tōyō was principal catalyst for the Third Golden Era revival of Bizen ware, and of its appreciation as one of Japan's finest art forms.

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In chronological order

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### Interview

Usui, Yōsuke 臼井洋輔, head curator at the Okayama prefectural museum 岡山県立博物館 from 1975 – 2002, presently head curator of Bizen Pottery Museum 備前焼ミュージアム, interview given by John Wells on Dec. 8, 2011.



## Bizen Ware Images

- Figure 3. *Saishiki* (colored) Bizen 彩色備前, *isamikoma kōro* 勇駒香炉 (courageous horse incense burner), Mimura Tōkei 三村陶景, H. 29.1cm. Okayama Prefectural Art Museum.
- Figure 4. Bizen ware, *sankaku ruiza hanaire* 三角播座花入 (triangular vase with small attachments), Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽, 1953-54, H. 25.6cm. privately owned. Image, *Kaneshige Tōyō: seitan 100 nen kinen tokubetsu ten* 金重陶陽：生誕100年記念：特別展, Okayama Prefectural Art Museum, 1996. p. 53.

## Figure Captions

- Figure 1. Early Edo period *Satsuyōroku* 撮要録 records with mention of *osaikunin* 御細工人. Original 原本: Okayama University Library.
- Figure 2. March 8, 1942, *Gōdō Newspaper* 合同新聞 article about the forming of a potter's guild. with 32 members.
- Figure 3. *Saishiki* (colored) Bizen 彩色備前, *isamikoma kōro* 勇駒香炉 (courageous horse incense burner), Mimura Tōkei 三村陶景, H. 29.1cm. Okayama Prefectural Art Museum.
- Figure 4. Bizen ware, *sankaku ruiza hanaire* 三角播座花入 (triangular vase with small attachments), Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽, 1953-54, H. 25.6cm. privately owned. Image, *Kaneshige Tōyō: seitan 100 nen kinen tokubetsu ten* 金重陶陽：生誕100年記念：特別展, Okayama Prefectural Art Museum.
- Figure 5. March 30, 1952 *Sanyo Newspaper* 山陽新聞 article announces the designation of both Tangible 有形文化財 and Intangible National Cultural Properties 無形文化財保持者 on March 29, including Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽.
- Figure 6. 1951 *Bunkazai Yōran* (from April 1, 1951 to March 31, 1952) 文化財要覧：昭和二十六年版, p. 190, containing record of Kaneshige Tōyō's 金重陶陽 designation for Intangible Cultural Property Holder 無形文化財保持者.
- Figure 7. April 2, 1952 *Sanyo Newspaper* 山陽新聞 article reporting formation of Tōkōkai 陶工会.
- Figure 8. April 4, 1952 *Sanyo Newspaper* 山陽新聞 advertisement placed in newspaper by Tōkōkai 陶工会 opposing designation of Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽 as Intangible Cultural Property Holder 無形文化財保持者.
- Figure 9. Feb. 5, 1953 *Asahi Newspaper Okayama Edition* 朝日新聞 岡山版 article about assault by Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽 on Tōkōkai 陶工会 member Ishi Furō 石井不老.
- Figure 10. Feb. 5, 1953 *Sanyo Newspaper Evening Edition* 山陽新聞 夕刊 article about Documents being Sent to the Prosecutor and the suspected assault by Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽 on Ishi Furō 石井不老.
- Figure 11. Nov. 11, 1953 *Sanyo Newspaper* 山陽新聞 article stating that designation of Bizen ware Cultural Property Holder will be unlikely if there is no agreement among the local potters.
- Figure 12. Nov. 19, 1953 *Sanyo Newspaper* 山陽新聞 article about Bizenyaki Dento Gijutsu Hozon Kai 備前焼伝統技術保存会 Applying as a group with the Japanese government for Cultural Property Designation.
- Figure 13. December 27, 1953 *Asahi Newspaper Okayama Edition* 朝日新聞 岡山版 article announces the unofficial designation of 9 Okayama Prefecture Important Intangible Cultural Property Holders 岡山県重要無形文化財保持者 a few days after the specialist committee met on the 24<sup>th</sup>.
- Figure 14. January 5, 1954 *Sanyo Newspaper* 山陽新聞 article announces that 4 of the 9 designated as Okayama Prefecture Important Intangible Cultural Property Holders 岡山県重要無形文化財保持者 declined the award on grounds that the award should be given to an area and not an individual.
- Figure 15. March 5, 1954, *Okayama Ken kōhō* 岡山県公報, p. 240, official record for designation of Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽 along with eight other Bizen ware artist as Okayama Prefecture Important Intangible Cultural Property Holders 岡山県重要無形文化財保持者.
- Figure 16. March 27, 1956 *Asahi Newspaper* 朝日新聞 article announcing the designation of Kaneshige Tōyō 金重陶陽 and others as Important Intangible Cultural Property Holder 重要無形文化財保持者 (National Living Treasure) by the Committee for the Protection of Cultural Properties.
- Figure 17. Comparison of newspaper announcements, official records, and chronology designation dates.
- Figure 18. Partial translation of 1951 *Bunkazai Yōran* (from April 1, 1951 to March 31, 1952) 文化財要覧：昭和二十六年版, p. 190, containing record of Kaneshige Tōyō's 金重陶陽 designation for Intangible Cultural Property Holder 無形文化財保持者. The shaded areas are group designations, the entries in bold type are individual designations of potters including Kaneshige Tōyō.