A Japanese Armor of The Late-Edo Period

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Abstract

This IQP examines Higgins Armory Museum artifact series 2712.1 –18, a suit of Japanese armor of the mid-Edo period (c.1800). The project examines the artifacts and presents their historical and cultural context. The research and the pieces are presented on a web site that was built as part of the project.

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1. Introduction

The Edo period in Japan, which lasted for almost 250 years from 1603 till 1868, was a time of peace in the country. The strong rule of the Shogunate government isolated Japan from the rest of the world, so there were no military conflicts with other countries. The internal conflicts between the various feudal lords (daimyos) were minimized due to a carefully structured policy of control through strict rules and obligations. It was a period of an enormous cultural bloom and development in many areas. All forms of arts and crafts progressed by acquiring and inventing new trends and techniques.

Bearing all that in mind, a research of this Japanese armor suit produced during that time is of particular interest. In the Edo-period Japan, the armor served more for an esthetic purpose as a piece of art, rather than for practical use. This project aims to examine a particular suit of Japanese armor of the Edo period and to present the information as a research paper and as a web site.

By exploring the history of the Japanese armor, we were able to trace the changes and the developments that occurred in the craft of armor making, for which Japan is famous.

By examining the different pieces of the suit one is able to observe the techniques that were used by the masters of that time, while they were dealing with various materials such as metal and wood, as well as cotton and silk.

The decorations and the patterned ornaments on the armor offer a glimpse at the mysterious and charming world of Japanese symbolism.

By knowing about that period's cultural aspects and trends, and by understanding the social and political environment and the ideological and philosophical background one can look at the whole picture of the Edo period. Applying some imagination, we may reconstruct, from those somewhat dusty pieces of the past, the vibrant world in which they were made and used.

2. Government and Society in The Edo Period

2.1 The Shogunate- Sociopolitical Structure

The fundamentals of the social and political organism of the Edo period were structured as early as 1185 with the establishment of the first *Shogunate* system. The title of *Shogun,* which literally means General, was granted by the Emperor to confer supreme military power upon an individual in order to oppress "barbarians", the Mongols that were trying to invade Japan. In 1192 it was made permanent.

In 1192, the *shogun* Minamoto Yoritomo established the *Bakofu,* a form of military dictatorship, that was the real power in the state. It was created in the name of the Emperor but in practice did not include him or his ministers.

The establishment of the Shogunate gave prominence to the growing strength and status of the warrior class – the *Samurai*. This fact has influenced and shaped Japanese history and culture from then until the 20th century, even though the system was officially abolished in 1868. The term *bushido* – the way of the warrior - came to represent the code of conduct for the *samurai.* It demanded loyalty and discipline, which resulted in great valour and self –sacrifice being displayed in battle. The *samurai* armor and sword played an important part of *bushido.* The 12th century was the age when a certain legend and mystique developed about the sword. There were a set of particular rituals of purifications before the forging of important swords, and the blades that were produced in Japan were unequalled in quality anywhere in the world.

The Tokugawa shogun dynasty that ruled during the Edo period started in 1603, when Iyaushu Tokugawa was made a Shogun, and united the country after more than a hundred years of extremely bloody civil war. Iyaushu established a centralized government, which was a mixture of military and civil administration as well as of private and public regional and national administrations. His main task was to control the *Daimyo* - the feudal vassals- and to develop a system that would compel them to obedience to the *Shogun* and keep the possible political powers at bay. The most pressing issue was the need to keep almost 250 semiautonomous *daimyo* in check; even the most trusted of them was a potential threat to the balance of coalitions that was achieved when Iyaushu came to power.

The title *daimyo* was given to people corresponding to the following conditions: (1) controlled a *han,* a domain with an agricultural productivity of over fifty thousand bushes of rice; and (2) swore complete loyalty to the Shogun. The *daimyo* were divided into three groups. First was the Shogun's extensive family of over twenty houses that were allowed to contribute heirs to the main house if the latter failed to produce an appropriate successor – this group controlled about one-third of the total agricultural area of Japan. The longtime allies called *fudai* (house) *daimyo* consisted of men whom Iyaushu trusted and had created as *daimyo*; their domains were relatively modest in scale but were located in strategic areas. Collectively they controlled almost 30 percent of the farm land. The third group, Iyaushu's former but still powerful enemies, the *tozama* (outsiders) controlled nearly 40 percent of the land. (Samson 1963: 105)

The main tool of control that was used by Iyaushu and his heirs to control the *daimyo*, *tozama* and *fudai* alike, was the order that every daimyo must spend half their lives in the capital Edo, and the other half in their home province. This not only allowed the *Shogun* to check closely on the daimyo, but also the great costs involved in the maintaining separate residences in their *han* and in Edo, as well as the travel expenses, served as indirect and unofficial taxes. Their families were kept in Edo at all times as hostages. The entrance to the city was guarded by a military check point where guards were instructed to watch for weapons going in and women going out, because either could indicate a plot.

The unique type of the *bakofu* government that was established by Tokugawa lasted 268 years. Mainly it was decentralized in its treatment of the semi-autonomous daimyo. It forced them to live in Edo half of their careers and therefore centralized the government in the capital. One council made of fudai councilors debated policy and advised the shogun before he made the laws and issued edicts. Another council of "junior advisors" oversaw the army commanders and the administration of the Edo castle complex. The "senior" and "junior" rankings designated not age but the size of the daimyo's holdings.

Another need was to deal with the imperial house, which in the shogun's eyes was a great potential source of mischief. In Japanese history at least three times an attempted imperial restoration caused a change in the government. A liaison office was established

in the ancient capital Kyoto, the residence of the Emperor; it was packed with the shogun's most loyal retainers and the *daimyo* were forbidden from entering the city without the written permission of the shogun himself. The emperor was treated with great deference and respect. The court was endowed with large tracts of tax land, administrated by the *shogun*, and the palace was rebuilt with great grandeur. But every imperial action was closely monitored and no ceremony could take place without the shoguns present.

2.2 Christianity and two and a half centuries of Japan's isolation from the world

Beginning with Iyaushu, Japan entered a 286-year period of isolation from the outside world. Iyaushu expelled and eliminated Christianity from Japan and closed the country. Iyaushu feared the foreign faith; at first he used Christians as the shoguns before him did, but increasingly he started to use the different groups against one another; the Spanish Franciscans and the Augustinian and Dominican priests against the Portuguese Jesuits the first who had discovered Japan and had most influenced the converting of Japanese to Christianity. He also used the English and the Dutch Protestants who unlike the Roman Catholic Portuguese and Spanish did not try to spread their faith in Japan. Iyaushu granted the latter two trading rights.

In 1614, during the midst of the siege at Osaka Castle, Iyaushu commanded that all foreign priests leave Tokugawa domains within a month. Two years later the priests were banned from all Japan. All Japanese Christians were ordered to renounce their faith and to become Buddhist; those who refused faced death. The process culminated in 1638 in the siege of the castle at Shimabara where 37,000 Japanese Christians were slaughtered as they made their last stand. By 1640 Tokugawa had eradicated every vestige of Christianity in Japan. (Samson 1963: 247)

The Portuguese merchants were replaced by the Dutch who were allowed to stay only in the small artificial island of Deshima in Nagasaki harbor and were obliged to prove that they had no Roman Catholic sympathies. Chinese and Koreans were also allowed to conduct monitored trade, the English and Spanish had left on their own accord. The *bakofu* made laws to ensure a *sakoku* - a closed country. Japanese were forbidden to

go abroad, and those who did could never return. Only small coastal ships were allowed to ply Japan's waters. Unauthorized ships were fired upon, shipwrecked foreign sailors were to be killed while swimming, before they could hit dry land. Foreign books were illegal and the ones brought by the Dutch for their own use were carefully searched for any references to Christianity. The change of attitude to the Japanese rulers after earlier tolerance for Christianity is attributed to the suspicion that the Portuguese and Spanish were promoting Christianity for political purposes. The decision to isolate Japan was not as strange as it might seem. The degree of civilization achieved in Japan already compared favorably with that of Europe.

2.3 Neo-Confucianism as a Sociopolitical Philosophy

The sociopolitical philosophy of Neo-Confucianism served as an ideological base for the Tokugawa political system. Developed by the twelfth-century Chinese Confucian reformer Chu Hsi, it was brought to Japan by traveling monks and Chinese and Korean refugees. It was popularized in the sixteenth century. Iayashu employed the separation of society into four occupational social classes, patronizing the Neo-Confucian scholars within his government. The philosophy was based on the concept of benevolent moral rule supported by a strict hierarchy that governed the family and other social structures. The virtues of obedience, patience and sacrifice, the respect for age and authority and courtesy in speech: all these were cultivated and were absorbed into the social life and culture.

Neo–Confucianism claimed that nature itself demanded efficient rule by the " best and brightest": the educated moral sages. The four social classes based on functions helped to keep an efficient and healthy society. This preference for an educated civilian elite instead of the aristocratic, powerful military, or landed wealthy leadership, had to be adapted to the Japanese reality. During the Edo period the country was officially at peace. The rough uneducated samurai warriors had to become administrators, and they were educated by the Neo-Confucian principals of moral administration. Those who wanted to prosper had to study: Iyaushu appointed only the ablest administrators regardless of their family backgrounds. For over two centuries the samurai continued to pride themselves on

their military prowess, but their careers depended a great deal on their mastery of Neo-Confucianism. The principles of benevolent and moral rule were incorporated into the Bushido code of ethics creating the "military bureaucrat". (Perez 1998: 103-110)

The main point of the new ethic was the idea that all people regardless of status and social station could fulfill their duties and obligations in an appropriate manner.

"Propriety of status" is the idea of finding honor in proper conduct, according to one's lot in life. Everyone had a place in the society; peasants were not to behave like samurai, merchants were not to behave like peasants. Each class was to defer to its superiors, and the language reflected the levels of stratification between roles. Different verbs were to be used according to the status of the speaker and listener. Below the bureaucratic nobility and the samurai were the peasants, the artisans and the merchants in descending order of precedence. Peasants produced food, artisans created tools, merchants transferred goods and food where needed and the samurai governed and regulated all. Most peasant families possessed a highly prized "house code" of ethics that reflected those of the samurai and the rich merchant houses. The peasantry accepted their lowly, and frequently burdensome, niche in society, because the philosophy tied them to the greater and grander whole of Japanese society. The merchant, although at the bottom of the list of precedence, profited great deal from conditions of peace, and as the nobility and samurai came to want more and more, they fell more and more into debt with the merchant who, in the larger cities, began to lead a life of luxury and extravagance. (Mason 1935: 243-245)

3. Arts and Culture

A new stimulus was given to the arts; although the period was dominated by social and political philosophies of the samurai, the cultural arts at the time reflect the tastes of the merchant *chonin* class. The Tokugawa method of political organization, the semiannual migration of the daimyo, created a tremendous process of urbanization.

Edo increased in population from about thirty thousand in 1590 to nearly a million a century later. By 1650 there were over forty cities of over ten thousand population, the ancient capital of Kyoto maintained a population of a quarter million and by 1750 had grown to almost twice that. By 1700 almost 10–12 percent of the population was urban. About half of that were samurai, the other half were *chonin* class that consisted of merchants and artisans. To the strict Zen arts of the samurai the *chonin* preferred colorful, joyful and loud street entertainment.

3.1 *Bunraku* Theater

Origins of the *Bunraku* theater are found in the *joruri* puppet shows, which had originated in Shinto festival dances. These shows were put on by small informal theater groups. As the process of urbanization advanced and the cities' audience grew larger, those troupes settled down in regular permanent theaters. The puppets are made with great care, their costumes are elegant, and their construction allowed a great imitation of human movements. The act is accompanied by chanters and musicians. *Bunraku* (the new name of settled *joruri*) became very popular and human actors began to mimic the puppets - this is how the *Kabuki* theater was born. Bunraku's main themes reflected the concerns of the merchant class: the psychological conflict between *giri* (the duty to society and family) and the *ninjo* (emotional love). They also included romanticized warrior tales that incorporated the *giri-ninjo* struggle as well as stylized acrobatic combat.

The *bunraku* puppet theater took on satire and social commentary as well as pure entertainment. By the early eighteenth century the puppets and the actors were setting the style for fashion and behavior. Both *kabuki* and *bunraku* experimented with music, dance, sumptuously decorated costumes, and elaborate stage props and devices (revolving stages,

trapdoors and elaborate entryways.). The *bakofu* tried unsuccessfully to suppress them so they began to control and tax them instead. "Licensed Quarters" were set in Osaka, Edo and other cities where theaters could play their trade.

3.2 Origins of Kabuki Theater

During the Edo period the *Bakofu* government implemented a policy of "control by segregation", which placed a restriction of movement upon all sectors of society, both geographically and between social classes. As the Edo period progressed there was a considerable resistance to this method of government as the circumstances of the population changed. In particular, the increasing affluence of the merchant class *chonin* - and its subsequent evolution into an influential economic force was perceived as a genuine threat to the status quo.

As the wealth of the merchant class increased so did their desire for more accessible forms of entertainment. The aristocratic *No* theatre did not satisfy this class's desire for folk tradition.

The three Japanese characters for kabuki separately refer to "dance, music and craft/skill". Originally, kabuki was written with different characters that meant "out of balance", the implication being something that might be considered exotic, racy or debauched. In fact the early history of kabuki had more in common with vaudeville and burlesque than its origin in temple dance might suggest. The mostly women dancers performed a mixture of folk dance and *nembutsu odori,* a form of religious dance, however the nature of the dances was far less sacred than one might expect. The performances became increasingly popular amongst the lower classes and the number of dancing troupes proliferated. As the crowds became more violent, the government became increasingly concerned until in 1608, after a quarrel occurred between rival supporters, the Shogun banished the actors and dancers from the City, establishing a place for them in close proximity to the pleasure quarters. Much of the early history of Kabuki is closely connected with the relationship that developed between the theater and these centers of entertainment for the common people, or "floating world" – *Ukiyo-e.*

Actors were considered social outcasts and the theater managers were disparagingly known as "riverbed beggars". If they moved outside the pleasure district they were obliged to wear a large umbrella-shaped reed hat, which would hide their faces, the same type of hat worn by criminals.

The authorities began to recognize that because of their burgeoning popularity, it was necessary to permit kabuki performances, but in regulated way, and licenses for the building of theaters were granted in the main cities, such as Edo, Kyoto, and Osaka. Eventually in 1629 women were banned from performing. This exclusion led to the invention of an acting role unique to kabuki, *onnagata,* "woman person", which became an extremely specialized role requiring great dedication. Development of the mature form of kabuki dates from this period.

During the Genroku period (1688-1704) kabuki enjoyed a great popularity unprecedented in Japanese history. The quality of plays improved radically, particularly under the influence of Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653-1724) who originally wrote for the puppet theater (*Bunraku).* He brought a literary and philosophical touch to what had been simple stories, and every playwright who came after him was influenced by his work. Chikamatsu was one of the first professional writers for kabuki, until then most plays had been written by actors, often in an improvisational style. Especially popular were his love suicide plays, in which a young couple would decide to take their own lives when social pressures kept them from being together. Many of the famous kabuki plays are adaptations of his puppet dramas. This trend of borrowing between the two theaters, continued and spurred the growth of both styles. At this time also, kabuki drew on forms of drama such as *No* and *Kyogen.* (www.fix.co.jp, 2002)

Stylization of Kabuki

Most of the conventions and stylization of Kabuki, including play structure and character types, took form during the Genroku period. Actors were arranged in a strict hierarchy, which determined the kind of character they would play each month. The head actor at the theater, *tachiyaku,* received the main role, while the star onnagata played the main female role. Beneath came the *waka-onnagata,* the young onnagata, the villains and the comic actors.

Kata is an important concept in kabuki; it is used to describe performing style. This includes vocal and movement techniques and can be extended to embrace make-up, costumes and scenic effects. There are *kata* related to performance style and *kata* related to a specific performance technique.

In this period, among tachiyaku male character roles, other prominent acting styles emerged.

In Edo, Ichikawa Danjuro (1660-1704) created *aragoto* – the rough style. This extremely exaggerated style projects power and masculine vigor. Its literal meaning is "rough business" and it reflects the brashness, vitality and bombastic martial spirit of 17th- century Edo. The dynamic style emphasizes the superhuman qualities of the principal characters with dramatically heightened speech and gesture, elaborate costume, extravagant stage and decorations. Danjuro developed a specialized form of makeup, known as *kumadori*, as well as movements and ways of delivering lines to emphasize their essence. He also created the *mie* of this style, which is the culmination of an intensely passionate emotion. These poses where the actor glares fiercely with one eye crossed became a trade mark of kabuki and are often used to create dramatic effect in the ukiyoe woodblock prints of actors. The *aragoto* characters had a strong sense of justice and fought against strong villains who advanced their own causes at the cost of those too weak to protect themselves. In this sense, this style was seen as an embodiment of the animosity of the common people towards the ruling Samurai class, and actors were thought of as gods when they played those roles. (Spenser, 1999)

Picture: Actors Saitôgo Kunitake, Utagawa Kunisada. ca. 1847-1852 (LC-USZC4-8521)

While the aragoto of Danjuro was a hit in Edo, still very much a frontier town with large military presence, Kyoto and Osaka, collectively known as *kamigata,* had histories over 1000 years old and were dominated by the merchant culture. That's where the *wagoto* – soft style - appealed to the refined tastes of the kamigata audience. Wagoto,

created by Sakata Tojuro (1647-1709), is a relatively realistic style of acting and it became increasingly used in the portrayal of love scenes. Wagoto characters were often the sons of rich merchants that had fallen in love with beautiful courtesans. Having spent great amounts of money to visit their lovers, they would be disowned by their families and forced to wear kimonos made of paper. Despite their sunken state, though, they never lost their own self-perception of living in the lap of luxury, which provided the role's comic touch. (Ibid)

Maruhon is the style that was derived from the puppet theater and became extremely popular during the 17th century. Sometimes the onnagata in particular would emphasize this connection and recreate the movements of the puppet. A special narrative style of the puppet theater was used to accompany the actor's performance and as with the manipulations of the puppets, this had to be well coordinated with the music. Unlike other kabuki styles, because the narration produces a slower pace of action, the actors would not appear upon stage until the chanter had set the scene.

A play that is concerned almost exclusively with dance is *Shosagoto.* A kabuki play can include sections of this sort, which relate the story accompanied by one of the narratives, or it can be an independent dance piece which is more concerned with showing the beauty of the dancers movements to the music played by the accompanying ensemble.

A subsidiary style was the *hengemono.* This "transformation" piece consists of a group of dances during which the leading actor makes several changes of costume and role type. The dramatic content of these is usually quite abstract, dealing with themes such as the seasons, or the three concepts of snow, moon and flowers. The theme of the performance determines the number of changes. *Shosagoto* derived from No plays are called *matsubame*- literally pine and board, after the back wall of the No stage that was decorated with picture of a pine tree. One of the most popular plays of this sort was "*The Stone Bridge"* by Shakkyou. It derived from ancient Buddhist scripts and has both No and kabuki versions. Performances of this require a virtuoso display from the actor who must play both the role of onnagata and then, for the final stages of play, become transformed into a long-maned lion which performs a highly charged dance.

Dramatic Content - Main Categories

In comparison to the development of the dramatic styles in the West, kabuki was perceived as a performance without any pretence to realistic portrayal. In many ways it is like the western pantomime. The responsibility for maintaining the dramatic impetus is taken in turns with only one character at a time delivering the lines directly to the audience. In kabuki even the intimate dialogues are spoken with the actors facing out into the theatre.

The subject matter, would often be based around a conflict in which the characters of a play become entangled. This would always move to a logical conclusion that lay within the recognized code of ethics, which governed the Edo-period society. Honor always had to be served, thus if a hero transgressed, he would pay with his life.

Generally the literary style of the plays was undistinguished but littered with puns and allusion. Only seldom, was it written in poetic metre, however there were occasional exeptions, in particular the style known as *keiyouzerifu* when lines could be delivered in the classic 7-5 rhythmic distribution of syllables (the syllabic arrangement in the classic structure in haiku is 7-5-7). This structured style eventually developed into a form that combined the 7-5 delivery with music. (Spenser, 1999)

Since the inception of kabuki around 10,000 plays have been written, over 200 are still performed. With a dialogue full of puns, double meanings, epigrams and allusion, their content can be classified into two main categories.

Jidaimono – usually addresses matters concerned with the pre-Edo aristocracy. The subject matter is that of the historical conflict of the Nara and Heian period, and the names of the characters are usually those of the historical figures. The tales of the wars between Heike and Genji clans were extremely popular, this encouraged playwrights to include the audience's favorite characters on a regular basis. One of the most popular characters were Lord Yoshitsune and his retainer Benkei. Stories used in this style recount historic deeds, personal sacrifice, loyalty, and death before dishonor, in many cases the tales are quite bloodthirsty. (Spenser, 1999)

During the Edo period, it was forbidden to dramatize events relating to the nobles and the samurai class. Therefore it was common for playwrights to set the same events in

historical context with the names of the protagonists disguised, but often recognizable to the audience.

One of the most famous plays, *Chuushingura* is of that sort. The play tells the story of the vendetta carried out in 1703 by the 47 samurais, to redeem the honor of their dead master. Upon finding that their master, in breach of the rule of the shogun, had been condemned to commit suicide by seppuku for drawing his sword in anger inside the palace, they exacted their revenge. Subsequently they too committed seppuku. As there had been peace in Japan for almost a hundred years, this sort of resolute action seemed to have been forgotten. Because the ban on the dramatization of current events that involved the nobility the theatrical version was set in the 14th century with change in names, and the location moving from Edo to Kamakura.

Picture: Kanadehon Chushingura , Utagawa KUNIYOSHI (1797 - 1861)

In contrast to jidaimono, *sewamono* deals with the lives of the ordinary citizens of the Edo period such as the farmers and the merchants. They capitulate to the relentless ethical code of loyalty and obligation that governed the society at that time. The dilemmas posed by attention to *giri,* moral duty, emotion or humanity, love affairs, and general dramas of contemporary life are common. In some way, they are much like today's soap operas. The first *sewamono* is attributed to Chikamatsu Monzaemon and his work *The Love Suicides at Sonezaki.* It set the trend for the production of a number of "double suicide" plays which were after a while banned by the authorities for provoking a rash of similar misadventures.

Costumes

Many of the costumes that were used on stages of kabuki, reflected the contemporary styles of the day and in fact there were reverse influences when the theater began to set the trend of dress for fashionable society.

Costumes can designate the class, traits, or age of a character by color, contour and textile. In addition there are several styles that display an element of fantastic invention particularly suitable for the roles of nonhuman manifestations or "super heroes".

Although it would have been simple to imply nobility by aping the style of aristocratic clothing and using the same rich materials, because of the strict restrictions banning imitations of the noble classes, the use of similar fabrics and clothing styles was proscribed. Therefore, ingenuity was left to find an alternative method to imply the importance of a particular character. This was done with the use of extravagance in color, pattern and design, and in this way the hard pressed theater managers were able to exploit several loopholes in the law. For example, the use of printed satin had been forbidden, but this textile could be mimicked with exotic embroidery or appliqué. Fortunately for kabuki, the city officials responsible for upholding the law were as interested in the theatre as the merchant class, following the letter of the law exactly to restrict use of prohibited fabrics, while permitting fabrics of similar appearance but different techniques of production.

Increasingly extravagant costumes were designed to fulfill the burgeoning need for more glamorous attraction in order to satisfy the desires of the increasingly wealthy audience. This was a risk because, as in other areas of society, the strict oppressive government regulations prohibited any expression of ostentation for anyone but the ruling class. In the middle of the 18th century a high-ranking government official, Matsuda Sadanobu, instituted a ban upon the wearing of luxurious clothing, and theatres were obliged to submit their designs for approval for each new production.

Picture: Actor Kurôda Ukinaga, Utagawa KUNIYOSHI (1797 - 1861) LC-USZC4-8444

The costumes themselves are full of subtlety, illusion and hidden meaning and thus for the more informed kabuki-audience help to emphasize a character's role. The short *hapi* coat can infer a samurai's armor and may be printed with the crests of the acting company. The multiple layers of an *onnagata* costume is achieved by showing just the hem of each new fabric which is attached to the main outer garment, and the flash of a red lining in a *kimono* suggests the role of a courtesan. (Spenser, 1999)

Other elements of costumes include a special sort of wig each of these consisting of individual strands of hair attached to a copper base that had to be redressed for each performance. Headbands, hats and handcloths were put to a variety of uses frequently as head cloths. An additional important item of costumes was the fan – *ougi* - of which there were many different types. This was a device used to great effect particularly in the dance part (*shosagoto)* where it could be used to symbolize a wide range of meanings ranging from swords or spears to running water and mountain ranges.

3.4 *Ukiyo-e*: Pictures of the Floating World

The playbills and advertisements of these establishments created another art form. As the need for colorful action playbills increased, the printing took on a serious artistic style. By the eighteenth century a new art form was created: *Ukiyo-e,* meaning "pictures of the Floating World". Maruyama Okyo developed an eclectic, synthetic style of lyric realism that was to have a profound influence on later developments. In Edo ukiyo-e woodblock prints of everyday life, came into vogue among the common people in the mid-eighteenth century. Thus followed the golden age of ukiyo-e, characterized by colorful prints of actors and beautiful women.

Picture: Three Beauties of Edo by Kitagawa Utamaro (Tokyo National Museum)

Masters such as Suzuki Harinobu and Kitagawa Utamaro applied scores of intricately laced colors to each print of actors and courtesans. Later artists employed similar techniques to create picturesque travel scenes that sold as souvenirs for people on journeys and pilgrimage.

During this time Katsushika Hokusai and Ando Hiroshige adopted the Western method of drawing in perspective introduced by such painters as Shiba Kokan through Nagasaki, the only port open to foreign trade. Their landscapes opened a new phase in ukiyo-e

Another school of painting contemporary with ukiyo-e was Bunjinga, a style based on paintings executed by Chinese scholar-painters. Just as ukiyo-e artists chose to depict figures from life outside the strictures of the Tokugawa shogunate, Bunjin artists turned to Chinese culture. The exemplars of this style are Ike Taiga, Yosa Buson, Tanomura Chikuden, and Yamamoto Baiitsu.

3.5 *Kokugaku* – Native Studies and Literature.

Japan had been at peace and its society relatively isolated from the rest of the world for nearly two centuries, and the era was one of conscious reexamination of Japanese culture.

One of the major cultural movements of the Edo period was the study of Japanese cultural history. A scholarship called *kokugaku,* was established. The term literarily means "Native Studies", "Nativism." or "Japanese Studies". This branch aimed to distinguish between what was genuine Japanese culture from what was Chinese or Indian or European culture. Mostly it focused on Shinto, the earliest poets in Japan (the poets represented in the earliest collection of Japanese poetry, the *Manyoshu*), and the inventors of Japanese culture in the Heian court, such as Lady Murasaki and Sei Shonagon.

The traditional *tanka* poetry went through changes, new complex rules were developed The period saw a great variety of intellectual activity and serious writing, collections of ancient poetry, many religious and Neo Confucian studies were published.

4. Motifs and Symbolism in Japanese Art

One of the fundamental characteristics of the Japanese culture is its richness of symbolism. The perception of beauty in everything developed the approach in which nothing is regarded as is, rather it always serves as a medium for expressing some mental concept. A principal characteristic of Japanese art is that it leaves so much unsaid, usually a slight suggestion is enough to satisfy the cultivated observer, for it is believed that true beauty can be discovered only by mentally completing the incomplete.

This appreciation to the minimal representation owes much to the principles of Zen Buddhism. *Shibumi* is the ability to perceive greatness and beauty in everything, in the smallest incidents and manifestations of life; thus a painting that shows everything instead of leaving most unsaid and possessing a hidden philosophy is considered without *Shibumi.* The Japanese artist will frequently represent the whole sky with one stroke of the brush or a distant mountain with a simple contour line and a flower or a tree appears as the symbol of the inner essence of nature. (Mason 1935: 23-26)

Japanese culture has developed a profound appreciation for nature and its qualities as they have always lived so close to it. Through their belief in Shinto and the teachings of Zen Buddhism, association of specific plants and animals often appears in some legendary symbolism passed on from the ancient times. One group of emblems is that of the animal-guardians or messengers with their respective Shinto deities. Among others in this category is the monkey, who is the messenger of the Sanno-Sama or Hie shrine in Tokyo, which was the most popular shrine in the capital during the Edo period. The dove is associated with Hachiman, the deity of peace, but also considered a god of war because Minamoto Yoritomo, the great feudal lord, was such a devotee of the Hachiman shrine that its deity became erroneously associated with militarism.

Since practically everything in Japan is given symbolic meaning, it follows that because of the Japanese love of nature, beautiful and thoughtful attributes have been applied to trees, plants and flowers. Philosophical interpretations suggesting permanent eternal ideas, historical associations, a legion of traditional fancies, and the double combination of flowers with certain bird and animal attributes are among the flower

subjects or themes which have become a permanent part of the Japanese cultural heritage and hold an important position in art and literature.

The chrysanthemum, *kiku,* the principal flower of the fall, is probably the best loved of all the flowers. Recognized as the symbol of the sun, the chrysanthemum was used as a crest or badge as early as the ninth century, but it was not until a thousand years later that it became the official emblem of the Imperial family.

It appears often in decorative art, though never with sixteen petals, this form being a special mark of the Emperor. Since the chrysanthemum lasts longer than the majority of flowers, it has come to be associated with longevity. In design it is represented with the crane, also emblematic of longevity. The one thousand cranes, the *semba suru,* is a sign of good luck and is a popular motif of kimono fabrics. (Mason 1935: 24, 203)

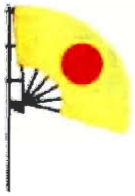
A set of three lucky symbols that frequently in all arts is the *shochikubai* or pine-bamboo-plum. The pine is the symbol of devotion, because it is evergreen and its needles are usually in pairs, representing conjugal love, and it is also a symbol of longevity; the bamboo stands for devotion and strength, and the plum for perseverance, because its fragrant flowers come out in the early spring after withstanding the cold winter. The lotus is the main symbol of Buddhism, it is emblematic of purity and wisdom and invariably seen on the altars of Buddhist temples, as well as in designs for articles used in the Buddhist service.

As to the fan, it is rather difficult to trace the origins of this popular motif of Japanese art. It is the symbol of good luck and especially of future prosperity because it grows larger as it opens, the starting point being the rivet from which the frame expands just as the road of life widens out towards eternity. (Boger 1964: 307)

The functions of the fan in the everyday life of Japanese are very comprehensive as it is an accessory of both sexes and all ages, besides it has been put to every possible use.

Among these uses the one in war is particularly interesting. There are two types of war fan, *gambai uchiwa* and *gun sen,* which were used on the battlefield as offensive and defensive weapons as well as for signaling. The *gun sen* face would be usually painted black with a red sun in the center. This ensemble appears throughout the various periods of Japanese military history and remained a prominent feature of a soldier's equipment.

The military fan banner of the Tokugawa family called the *uma jirushi* or horse ensign, which was borne before them as a symbol of their presence, has the decoration of a fan that has a red circle in the center.
(Boger 1964: 309)



Picture: The military fan banner of the Tokugawa family.

The symbol of the sun, *hinamoru,* was used in Japan since ancient times, it recalls the country's name, *Nippon* or *Nihon*, meaning 'source of the sun' or 'Land of the Rising Sun'. Japanese rulers have long claimed to be direct descendants of *Amaterasu Omikami*, the sun goddess. Today this symbol is found on the national flag of Japan.

From the ancient Chinese the Japanese adopted many traditions, one of the most important and meaningful being the "Five Colors". The proper order of sequence of the five cardinal colors is: yellow, blue, red, white and black. Each of the five colors is mutually related in a significant manner to the five directions, the five seasons of time, the five virtues, and the five elements. The proper sequential arrangement of each set to conform to the sequence of the five colors, as well as with one another, is as follows: Direction – center, east, south, west and north. Seasons of time –*doyo* (each season has a *doyo* consisting of eighteen days at its beginning), spring, summer, autumn and winter. Virtues – faith, humanity, decorum, justice, and wisdom. Elements – earth, wood, fire, metal, and water. The symbolism attached to these important sets of five Oriental subjects has had a profound effect upon the cultural and the legendary tradition of Japan and their general or abstract principles are found associated in many respects of Japanese life.
(Mason 1935: 36-38)

5. Description of the Decorations of the Suit of Armor.

During the Edo period armor gradually developed into a finer costume, a complete Samurai armour (*Tosei Gosuku*) of that time being a fine work of art, usually made by several artists. Parts of the armor are made from wood, mostly bamboo, metal is used for the plates, coloured leather, cotton and silk for supportive layers and decoration. The decorations and ornaments found on this suit are typical of the Edo period. Some decorative details are found on different parts of the armour, unifying the different pieces into one.

The pattern of the red plum flower, which symbolizes perseverance, is placed on gold-painted leather; it can be found on parts of the helmet, the breast and the back plates, the *do,* as well as on the hand protector of the *kote* (the sleeves).

Another detail is the design of the small beautifully chased metal pieces that have two metal chrysanthemums in the middle. The *kiku,* chrysanthemum, is probably the best loved flower in Japan, it is the symbol of the sun, and as such has a great variety of implications. (See the section on symbols). Three of those pieces are found on the *Do,* two of them found on each of the *Sode,* the shoulder protectors.

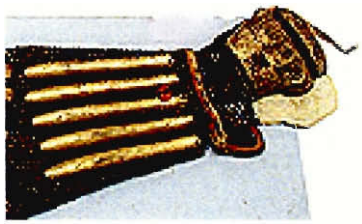
The helmet, *Kabuto,* is a 56-plate iron *suji kabuto,* a multi-plate helmet bowl that was popular during the late part of the Edo period. *Suji kabuto* can be identified by the ribs that stand up at the edge of each plate (*suji* means "tendon" or "line"). The underside part of it is red lacquered, which is a frequent trick intended to reflect grotesquely on the face. The nape guard, *shikoro,* is made of 5 metal plates, put together by a special type of lacing. Blue and orange were among the most popular color combinations for a samurai armor lacing, as it is in this suit. The lacing stripes are mostly silk but in some parts are of leather. (Bryant, 2001)

Originally, *fukigaeshi* (lit. "blow-backs") were made from the entire front sections of the *shikoro.* The original purpose of the *fukigaeshi* was to prevent a downward sword

blow from slipping between the lames of the *shikoro* and severing the suspensory lacing. By the fifteenth century, they were greatly abbreviated, and were made up only of the top two lames with a mild sweep backward. By the end of the sixteenth century, they became even more vestigial, often being little more than ear-like flanges emerging from the top-most lame. The *fukigaeshi* is decorated with the warrior's heraldic badge, the *mon.* Here it has a design of a portal of Shinto shrine, most probably, the crest of one of the Samurai families. It takes the form of a gilt copper appliqué. While the visor, *mabizashi,* was covered with printed leather, the *fukigaeshi* usually received the same treatment as in this case.

The helmet has a *maedate,* of a lacquered wooden *oni* – a monster with two horns, which might be the representation of the god of thunder, the patron of the warrior. The *mabizashi* is leather covered and has the same decoration of red color plum flowers as other parts of the suit. The rivets of the visor are designed in the form of a small chrysanthemum.

These sleeves are a typical *Shino* (splinted) *kote*, which were very popular during the Edo period. The *shino* can be widely spaced or closely butted together; they can be narrow or broad. *Shino* can number from three to 11 or more, usually in odd numbers. On this *kote* there are 5 'splints'. They are held to the fabric by being stitched down through pairs of holes along their edges. (Bryant, 2001) Under the black mail there is a layer of silk, which can be seen through the mail; it serves as part of the decoration. The same foundation fabric is also used in the construction of the *Sode,* the shoulder protectors. The innermost layer of the sleeve is made of cotton. Cultivation of cotton began in Japan in the 15th century, and by the mid-Edo period became very popular. On the hand protectors (the *tekkô),* there is the same sign as on the helmet, made of metal pieces; it was common to put the owner's heraldic badge – the *mon* -here. The plum flowers are found here as well.



The shoulder protector, *sode,* is a fully laced *Mogami sode,* a type developed in the early sixteenth century, when someone came up with the idea of making *sode* smaller and less cumbersome. These *sode* were made to the same pattern as the other suspended portions of the armor. The width of the lames is the same as those of the tassets, *kusazuri* (usually the same as those on the *do*). The smaller models, like this one, were also called *tôsei sode.*

The *sode* is backed with a cloth panel as wide as the *sode* itself and as long as the next-to-last lame. This serves to prevent rattling and to provide some additional padding as well. It also cut down abrasion on the plates of the *kote.* This panel is two or three layers of fabric, rimmed with leather tape, and stitched to the edge of the lames along the top of the top-most lame and the bottom of the next-to-last lame through small pairs of holes. (Bryant, 2001)

Apart from the pattern of the lacing, the back of the *sode* is covered with delicately patterned silk cloth. The cloth is of *Kate-zome* stencil dyeing technique that began with fairly small patterns during the Momoyama Period and since then frequently appeared in warriors' jackets worn under armor. During the Edo period the use of silk and wool for the common people was prohibited by the Tokugawa government. Official wear for the Samurai class was prescribed by the government. Silk *komon,* a type of fine patterned stencil-dyed design, became a standard. The silk used through this suit of armor is dyed and has embroided patterns of chrysanthemum flowers, orange blossoms and a form of three connected fans. The design of the fans has a set of three lucky symbols that frequently occurs in all arts, the *shochikubai,* or pine-bamboo-plum. (Boger 1964: 307)

The banners were worn on the back of armor for identification. They are made of wood and leather. The wooden handle is 27 inches long. The two-sided banner ornament is a print on gold-painted leather.

As identification, the banners usually had the family crest, or the heraldic badge of the warrior. On one side of the banner appears a symbol of a circle with three lines, which could be the family crest of the Samurai Anagata family. (samurai-archives.com)

On the other side the banner has a fan. The fan has been an important symbol in the Japanese culture in general and in military ornament in particular. It is a symbol of good luck and especially of future prosperity. The fan was an ornament of the Tokugawa military banner. However, it is a very popular decoration, and as such was present on banners of other samurai families. The fan has a *honomar,* the ornament of a red or golden circle on the black background, that symbolizes the sun. Its earliest appearance in the Japanese military history is dated to the 12th century.

6. **Conclusion**

The first stages of the project concentrated on gathering information about the historical background of Japanese society during the Edo period. The principal sources included the Higgins Museum and Worcester Public Libraries and the Internet, where a fair amount of information was found and analyzed.

The second stage concentrated on studying the actual artifacts in the museum. This involved a close examination and analysis of all the pieces of the suit using the facts and details that were found in the first stage. By identifying materials and decorations it was possible to associate this specific suit of armor with the late Edo period, namely 18-19th century.

The third stage primary focused on the creation of a web site that presents the research of the project. Pictures of the artifacts that were taken by another IQP group were available for our use. Using them and the material from the previous stages that was already in documented format, facilitated the creation of the site.

The most difficult part of the site was to prepare the web pages that didn't have any previously organized material. By some knowledge of Photoshop and HTML and the great option of automatically converting the Word document into web pages the task was faster to accomplish.

One of the difficulties that were faced, was the fact that close examination of the actual artifacts was done during the later stages. It seems that having a closer relationship with the actual pieces from the beginning can help to establish a deeper meaning to the theoretical research of the first stage.

Another difficulty that emerged during the progress of the project was an organizational problem. Initially this project was planned to be accomplished by a team of two people. My partner was responsible of researching the methods, materials and techniques used to make armor. I was handling the social-cultural and artistic decorative aspect of the research. Unfortunately, the arrangement did not work out and I completed the project on my own.

I would like to thank professor J.L. Forgeng for his great patience help and support and to the Higgins Museum that made this project possible.

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8. Appendix

8.1 *KABUTO* – The Helmet

Weight: 6.25 pounds
Width: 15.5 inches
Height: 7 inches
Item#: 2712.11

The *Kabuto* is a 56 plate iron *suji kabuto,* multi-plate helmet bowl that was popular during the latter part of the Edo period. *Suji kabuto* can be identified by the ribs that stand up at the edge of each plate (*suji* means "tendon" or "line"). The underside is red lacquered. This was a frequent method, its purpose to reflect grotesquely on the face. The Nape guard, *shikoro,* is made of 5 metal plates, put together by special type of lacing.

Fukigaeshi

Originally, *fukigaeshi* (lit. "blow-backs") were made from the entire front sections of the *shikoro,* or all but the bottom-most lame. The original purpose of the *fukigaeshi* was to prevent a downward sword blow from slipping between the lames of the *shikoro* and severing the suspensory lacing. By the fifteenth century, they were greatly abbreviated, and were made up only of the top two lames with a mild sweep backward. By the end of the sixteenth century, they were even more vestigial, often being little more than ear-like flanges emerging from the top-most lame. The *fukigaeshi* is decorated with the wearer's *mon.* Here it has a design of a portal of Shinto shrine, most probably, the crest of one of the Samurai families. It takes the form of a gilt copper appliqué, a lacquer-painted crest. If the *mabizashi* was covered with printed leather, the *fukigaeshi* usually received the same treatment as it is here.

Decoration

The helmet has a *maedate* of a lacquered wooden *oni* – a monster with two horns, which might be the representation of the god of thunder the patron of the warrior. The visor, *mabizashi,* is covered with leather having the same decoration of brick-color cherry blossoms as other parts of the suit (the torso armor and the sleeves)

The rivets of the visor are designed in the form of small chrysanthemums, a decorative element that is found on the breast and back plate as well.

8.2 *MENPO* – The Mask

Weight: 1.3 pounds
Height: 10 inches
Width: 8.5 inches
Depth: 5.25 inches
Item#: 2712.08

The menpo is made of iron and lacquered with black on the outside and red on the inside. The red color reflects on the face and gives the warrior a formidable look.

The part that protects the neck is constructed of four metal plates that are laced together and covered with golden lacquer on the inside as the *do,* the *sode,* and the tassets.

8.3 *DO*- The Torso Armor

Breast Plate

Weight: 4 pounds
Height: 15 inches
Breadth: 12 inches
Depth: 5.5 inches
Item#: 2712.09

Back Plate

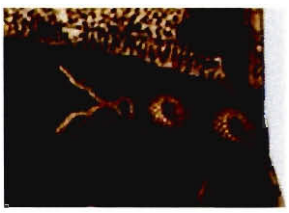
Weight: 6.6 pounds
Height: 17.25 inches
Breadth: 12 inches
Depth: 9.25 inches
Item#: 2712.10

The *dô,* or torso armor, is the largest and most visible part of any given armor. As such, it really sets the feel for the suit. In fact, it is the design of the *dô* that gives an armor its name, be it a *yokohagi ni-mai dô gusoku* ("horizontally-rivetted clamshell cuirass armor") or a *go-mai dangaie haramaki dô gusoku* ("armor with a five-sectional cuirass with two stepped, different lacing styles, opening up the back"). (Anthony Bryant, 2001)

This do is made of iron plates lacquered on the outside and covered with gold-painted leather on the inside. The shoulder area has a thick layer of cotton for support that is covered with silk cloth embroidered with a pattern of orange flowers.

Decoration

The upper part where the leather is viewed is painted in gold and decorated with brick-color *sakura,* the cherry blossom



flowers. It's a popular motif for decoration and often is considered the national flower of Japan.

Right beneath it is a beautiful metal decoration with two *kiku* flowers on each pallet. The *kiku* is the chrysanthemum a symbol of longevity. When represented with 16 petals it is the official emblem of the Imperial Family, here however it has more petals than 16.

8.4 *KOHIRE*- Winglets

Weight: 1.5 pounds
Length: 10.25 inches
Width: 9.5 inches
Depth: 2 inches
Item#: 2712.13

Kohire were winglets (literally -- the word means "small wing") attached to the *watagami* (shoulder straps) and extending out over the shoulder. *Kohire* are a feature found only from the late 16th century onward, not on earlier armors.

These *Kohire* are made out of two or three small lames laced up in the traditional manner. *Kohire* of brigandine were easier to fit with *sode,* while solid or lame *kohire* made the fit difficult. In fact, the brigandine *kohire* came to be a standard feature. (Anthony Bryant, 2001)

The use of solid or lame *kohire* meant that *sode* could not actually be worn comfortably with the armors, but often suits were equipped with *sode* anyway, as they were expected to be provided.

Decoration

The *kohire* and *sode* are laced with the same orange color, a metal pattern at the end is similar to the one found on the *do* and the *sode.*

8.5 *SODE* - Shoulder Armor

Weight: 1.5 pounds
Length: 10.25 inches
Width: 9.5 inches
Depth: 2 inches
Item#: 2712.14

The shoulder protector, *sode,* is a fully laced *Mogami sode,* of a type developed in the early sixteenth century, when someone came up with the idea of making *sode* smaller and less cumbersome. These *sode* were made to the same pattern as the other suspended portions of the armor. The width of the lames is the same as those on the tassets, *kusazuri* (usually the same as on the *do* as well). The smaller models like this one were also called *tosei sode.* (Anthony Bryant, 2001)

The *sode* are backed with a cloth panel the full width of the *sode* and as long as the next-to-last lame. This serves to prevent rattling and to provide some additional padding as well. It also cuts down abrasion on the plates of the *kote.* This panel is two or three layers of fabric, rimmed with leather edging, which is stitched to the silk cloth, along the top of the top-most lame and the bottom of the next-to-last lame through small pairs of holes. (Anthony Bryant, 2001)

Decoration

A part from the pattern of the lacing, the back of the *sode* is covered with delicately patterned silk cloth. There are embroidery patterns of chrysanthemum flowers and a form of three connected fans. The patterns of the fans have a set of three lucky symbols that frequently occurs in all arts, the *shochikubai* or pine-bamboo-plum.

8.6 *KOTE* – The Sleeves

Weight: 2.4 pounds
Length: 27 inches
Breadth: 7.5 inches
Depth: 0.75 inches
Item#: 2712.08

This is a typical *Shino* (splinted) *kote*, which were the very popular during the Edo period. The *shino* can be widely spaced or closely butted together; they can be narrow or broad. *Shino* can number from three to 11 or more, usually in odd numbers. On this *kote* there are 5 'splints'. They are held to the fabric by being stitched down through pairs of holes along their edges. (Bryant, 2001)
Under the black mail there is a layer of silk which can be seen through the mail and serves as part of the decoration. The innermost layer is made of cotton.

Kote and *suneate* (shin guards) are taken as *en suite,* that is, they are designed to match each other. Even though the plate shapes may be different, the color, decoration, and foundation fabrics are typically the same. The same foundation fabric is also used in the construction of the *haidate.* (Bryant, 2001)

Decoration

On the hand protectors, the *tekkô,* there is the same sign as on the helmet, made of metal pieces.
It was common to put the owner's heraldic badge – the *mon* here. The cherry blossom flowers are found here as well as on the *do* and the *kabuto* as applied metal pieces.

8.7 *KUSAZURI* - Tassets

Weight: 0.7 pounds
Length: 8.25 inches
Width: 6.25 inches
Depth: 1.5 inches
Item#: 2712.01-07

The tassets are seven identical parts that originally were attached to the *do.* Their construction resembles that of the shoulder protectors, *sode,* where five separate plates are connected by lacing. The inside of the plates is covered with golden lacquer.

Decoration

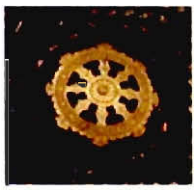
The main part of the decoration is *odoshi,* full lacing. The braids that are used for lacing are silk braids. The orange color is one of the most popular ones for lacing called *hi* (usually translated as "scarlet" but in fact orange).

8.8 *HAIDATE* - The Thigh Guards

Weight: 1.5 pounds
Length: 10.25 inches
Width: 9.5 inches
Depth: 2 inches
Item#: 2712.15

The *haidate,* is used as thigh protection. Its construction and decoration closely resembles that of the sleeves. The metal plates are floating in black mail. Underneath the mail and on the side stripes a patterned silk cloth can be seen.

Decoration



The design of the *haidate,* incorporates decorative elements used in sleeves and the *sode*. In the black mail there are floating metal pieces designed as the Buddhist symbol of the *Dharma* wheel, the wheel of fortune, that symbolizes the unity of all things and Buddha's teachings of Universal and Spiritual Law. It can be recognized by eight spokes, which represent the eight noble paths of truth.

Underneath the mail there is delicately patterned silk cloth. There are patterns of the chrysanthemum flowers and a form of three connected fans. The patterns of the fans have a set of three lucky symbols that often occur in all arts, the *shochikubai* or pine- bamboo- plum.

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8.9 *SASHIMONO – The Banner*

Weight: 2.4 pounds
Length: 27 inches
Breadth: 7.5 inches
Depth: 0.75 inches
Item#: 2712-16

Banners were worn on the back of armor for identification. The banners are made of wood and leather. The wooden handle is 27 inches long. The two-sided banner is a print on leather.

Decoration

As identification, the banners usually have the family crest, or the heraldic badge of the warrior. On one side the banners have a fan. The fan has been an important symbol in Japanese culture in general and in military ornament. It is a symbol of good luck and especially of future prosperity. The fan was an ornament of the Tokugawa military banner. However it is a very popular decoration and was present on banners of other samurai families The fan has a *honomar* ornament of a red or golden circle on the black background, which symbolizes the sun. Its earliest appearance in Japanese military history is dated to the 12th century.

On the other side of the banner appears a symbol that could be the family crest of the Samurai Anagata family.

8.10 *TSURU-BUKURO* - The Pocket

Weight: 6 ounces
Height: 5.25 inches
Depth: 1.25 inches
Item#: 2712.17

The pocket is made of wool and embroidered with silk lace in geometric pattern. During the Edo period silk and wool were prohibited for common class. The production of these was for strictly for the ruling class. The wool was imported for the use of warlords and *Daimyo.*

The same pattern in wool appears on the upper part of the torso armor.
It is not evident for what purpose was it used, however it might have been storage for warrior's small personal belongings such as amulets.

5. List of Terms

Bakofu - The military government, headed by the *Shogun*

Chonin- The merchant class, developed and gained power during the Edo Period

Daimyo- Feudal vassal

Han- An agricultural domain controlled by a Daimyo

Shogun- "barbarian-subduing generalissimo" The head of the military government

Aragoto- Rough style Kabuki, that projects power and masculine vigor

Bunraku- Puppet Theater

Giri- Moral duty

Jidaimono- A style of Kabuki that addressed matters concerned with pre-Edo aristocracy

Kabuki- Dance, music and craft- name of popular Japanese theater

Kumaduri- Special makeup technique used in Kabuki

Nembutsu odori- Religious dance preformed by women, the ancestor of Kabuki

Onnagata- Woman character usually played by man

Shibumi- The ability to perceive greatness and beauty in everything

Wagoto- Soft style of Kabuki, focused on everyday life and love scenes

Do- Torso Armor

Fukigaeshi- "blow backs", part of the helmet

Haidate- Thigh Guards

Kabuto- The helmet

Kote- Sleeves

Kusazuri- Tassets

Manpo- The mask

Mon- Heraldic Badge

Sashimono- Banner

Sode- Shoulder Protectors

Tekko- Hand protectors, form part of the sleeve

Tosei Gosuku- Complete Samurai armor

Tsuru-Bukuro- The Pocket