

## 【Commentary 1】

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Prof. Román Navarro reminds us of the mythic power of Momoyama ceramics. That ethos has some historical credibility—great pots were made in the Momoyama—but its twentieth century incarnation has moved Momoyama beyond historical context to become synonymous with the national artistic genius and more astoundingly, with modernity itself. Under Prof. Román Navarro’s scrutiny, we realize that Momoyama *chatō* is far less a historical style and far more a canonical mechanism that affects contemporary careers, exhibitions, and prizes. To put it more extremely, it is now a form of ceramic “common sense,” a *modus operandi* that has come to negate the very creativity that it prides itself upon.

I agree completely with Prof. Román Navarro’s fundamental premise and I am thankful for her exposition of the literary and institutional forces that generated and sustained “Momoyama” in the modern era. While much of the terminology and aesthetic referents are demonstrably new, Momoyama-ism in a broader sense is not. Prof. Román Navarro states that the publication of *Chatō zenshū* (1935- 37) marks a rupture with earlier research in its preoccupation with investigating the cultural value of the Japanese tea ceremony at its original stage—before the Edo period and in the identification of Rikyū’s tea as the origin of the modern tea ceremony. I think that a similar statement could be made about cultural production in the period roughly spanning the Jokyo and Genroku eras (1680s-1700), which witnessed the publication of various equipment manuals and concomitant categories and the creation of the *Nanporoku*, all inflected by the first Rikyū death centennial. The notion of Momoyama as a *ceramic* golden age is a little more difficult to find in the Edo period, but in the recipes that the Ninsei workshop passed to Kenzan in 1699, some of the Momoyama classics—Karatsu, Shino, Oribe—were already been singled out for favor. The early Shōwa “Momoyama wave” was clearly not the first. How do we meaningfully distinguish Shōwa-Momoyama from the broader East Asian model of *fugu*, the “revival of antiquity” that drives both authority and creativity in the visual and literary arts?

Prof. Román Navarro's paper states that the tea ceremony was gradually defined as a traditional art (*dentō geijutsu*) throughout the early decades of the twentieth century. But throughout the Edo period tea practitioners stressed their uniqueness and continuity with the past, and constantly devised new ways of doing so in response to real or perceived attacks from outside. We know that "dentō" as a term is employed in a new way in the early twentieth century, but aside from that how did this modern claim differ from the older ones?

Prof. Román Navarro is spot on in identifying the modern emergence of tea ceramics as a distinct form of traditional Japanese ceramics. The extent of this transformation can be seen in overseas collections. Those formed in the Meiji period have few if any Momoyama tea wares. Collections made in the first decades after the Pacific War are singularly Momoyama-esque. I remember my surprise upon visiting early European collections of Bizen ware. They were all figurines—not a single *yaki-shime* water jar or flower vase among them! At that point I realized the profound transition that had taken place in the twentieth century. Bizen had been reinvented, and Prof. Román Navarro is right to point it out.

The critical investigation of Momoyama-ism at several early Shōwa pottery communities reveals various fabrications of a non-ceramic nature. Names, genealogies, and techniques are all mustered in support of a putative legitimacy. Yet this cultural production has allowed many communities to flourish, and for many of its members to be engaged in craft-making. These workshops also support myriad other businesses, ranging from clay diggers, brush makers, box makers, gift shops, etc. Tradition itself may be invented, but as one person active in Tanba in the 1950s told me, "before Mingei (Tanba's equivalent to Momoyama-ism) there was nothing to eat." This in no way negates Prof. Román Navarro's argument. Indeed, looking at it from the other side we might speculate that Momoyama-ism, while a temporary success, has fossilized much of Japanese ceramics. It has also become something to rebel against. In either case, as Prof. Román Navarro demonstrates, it is a phenomenon that any modern craft historian must attend to.

Prof. Román Navarro has identified how individual potters, scholars and government agencies created and reinforced Momoyama *chatō*. Further discussion of this topic would require an inquiry into the enhanced popularity of chanoyu, which coincided with if not actually caused the new Momoyama. How did tea masters and utensil

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dealers participate in the market for new tea wares? What were the criteria for inclusion into the select company of revivalists? This presentation has opened up all these questions, and we look forward to Prof. Román Navarro's fuller exposition in a paper or monograph.