

## Imperial Progress to the Muromachi Palace, 1381 A Study and Annotated Translation of *Sakayuku hana*

Matthew STAVROS, with Norika KURIOKA

*Sakayuku hana* is the official record of Emperor Goen'yū's 1381 visit to the Muromachi Palace, the residential headquarters of the shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu. The document, most likely authored by the elder statesman and former imperial regent Nijō Yoshimoto, is a testament to Yoshimitsu's attainment of sweeping influence at court and mastery of imperial protocol. It is also a rich source of information on elite etiquette, ritual, and the material culture of medieval Japan. This study and full translation marks the first time *Sakayuku hana* has been critically examined in any language.

**Keywords:** imperial progress, *gyōkō*, Ashikaga Yoshimitsu, Nijō Yoshimoto, ritual, protocol, translation, Kyoto, Goen'yū (emperor)

In the spring of 1381, the shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu 足利義満 (1358–1408) hosted Emperor Goen'yū 後円融 (1358–93) at the Muromachi Palace.<sup>1</sup> The six-day event was an extravaganza of pageantry, performance, and leisure. It was also unprecedented. Never before had a reigning emperor engaged in a formal imperial progress, a *gyōkō* 行幸, that took him to the residence of a warrior leader. The progress of 1381 was of profound significance to the politics of the day and especially to Yoshimitsu's career. It marked the culmination of an ambitious, multisided campaign that had, over the course of three years, transformed the complexion of capital politics and solidified Yoshimitsu's position as a central player in military, religious, and court affairs. The official record of that visit, *Sakayuku hana* さかゆく<花, is a testament to Yoshimitsu's attainment of sweeping influence and cultural capital. It provides the most detailed account of a famous episode in which the emperor, in a rare display of deference, personally poured and served the shogun a cup of *sake*. The document is also a source of detailed information on elite protocol, ritual, and premodern Japanese material culture. Before entering into an examination of the text, translated in full below, let us briefly review Yoshimitsu's political rise during the several years leading up to the imperial visit.

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<sup>1</sup> The visit took place between Eitoku 1 (1381) 3/12 and 3/16, however, because drinks extended long into the night of the sixteenth, the emperor's departure took place during the early morning of the seventeenth. See *Gukanki*, vol. 4, p. 348. The Muromachi Palace appears in documents variously as Muromachi-dono 室町殿, Muromachi-tei 室町亭, and Muromachi-dai 室町第. It was also popularly known as the "Palace of Flowers" (Hana no Gosho 花御所), a name associated with the site (not the building) prior to Yoshimitsu's involvement.

The advent of Yoshimitsu's independent political career can be dated to about 1378, a decade after he became shogun at the age of ten. Until then, he and the shogunate had been under the benevolent dictatorship of Hosokawa Yoriyuki 細川頼之 (1329–92), an Ashikaga vassal made regent at the time of Yoshimitsu's youthful appointment. Yoshimitsu took a critical first step toward political autonomy in 1378 when he began building the Muromachi Palace, a residential headquarters located in Kyoto's elite district of Kamigyō 上京.<sup>2</sup> The move to Kamigyō was dramatic for several reasons. First, it meant a sharp break with the past. Since the establishment of the Ashikaga regime in 1336, shogunal administration had always been based in the capital's southern, "commoner" district of Shimogyō 下京 (see Figure 5).<sup>3</sup> Over the course of the preceding four decades, that base, the Sanjō-bōmon Palace (Sanjō-bōmon dono 三条坊門殿), had become the nucleus of a substantial warrior enclave and the primary venue of Ashikaga memorial rituals.<sup>4</sup> For Yoshimitsu, therefore, leaving Shimogyō meant abandoning his first and most natural political and social milieu.

But just as the move entailed a departure, so too did it signal an arrival. Kamigyō, after all, had been an enclave of the Kyoto elite from as early as the eleventh century. During the Heian period, civil aristocrats gravitated to the area to be close to the imperial palace and other venues of statecraft.<sup>5</sup> In time, the district's elite character intensified as temporary imperial palaces (known as *sato-dairi* 里内裏) proliferated, and exceedingly wealthy families such as the Fujiwara 藤原 built numerous sprawling palaces of unprecedented size and ostentation. Yoshimitsu's move to Kamigyō was a foray into the realm of high capital politics, a physical infiltration soon matched by formal and increasingly public displays of acceptance. It was just fourteen days after he moved into the still-unfinished palace, for example, when he was promoted, as if on cue, to the imperial post of Gon Dainagon 権大納言 (Acting Grand Counselor), instantly making him a member of the senior nobility.<sup>6</sup> Five months later he was granted the post of Udaishō 右大将 (Commander of the Right), a title that placed him at the center of court affairs.<sup>7</sup> These promotions were remarkable not merely for their timing, but also for their precipitousness. Until then, Yoshimitsu had occupied the wholly unremarkable post of Sangisakon no chūjō 参議左近中将 (Council of State Advisor-Captain of the Left Palace Guards) with the rank of Chūnagon 中納言 (Vice Counselor). In one great leap, he had moved into the court's inner circle with as much apparent ease as moving house.<sup>8</sup>

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2 On the start of construction, see *Gogumaiki*, vol. 2, p. 259.

3 Ashikaga Takauji 足利尊氏 (1305–58) maintained a residence in Kamigyō from 1344 to 1351, however, that structure did not serve as the headquarters of shogunal administration. See Stavros 2010.

4 For details on the Sanjō-bōmon complex, which included the temple of Tōjiji 等持寺, see Stavros 2010.

5 On the formation of Kamigyō, see Stavros 2014, chapter 3.

6 The promotion to Gon Dainagon took effect on 1378/3/10. See *Kugyō bunin*, vol. 2, p. 726.

7 The appointment was made on 1378/8/27. See *Kugyō bunin*, vol. 2, p. 726. Udaishō, which was the highest court rank attained by Minamoto no Yoritomo 源頼朝, has been translated variously as "Commander of the Inner Palace Guards" and "Head of Palace Guards-Right Division."

8 *Kugyō bunin* (vol. 2, p. 737) uses the word "leap" (*okkai* 越階) to describe Yoshimitsu's promotion from junior third rank to junior first rank on 1380/1/5.

Yoshimitsu was not the first warrior leader to possess formal court ranks and posts, nor would he be the last. He might, however, have been one of only a very few who set out to master—not just mimic—court etiquette and protocol.<sup>9</sup> To achieve this, he enlisted the tutelage of Nijō Yoshimoto 二条良基 (1320–88), an elder statesman and former imperial regent.<sup>10</sup> Possessing matchless pedigree and a lifetime of experience, Yoshimoto could hardly be considered the shogun’s pawn. On the contrary, Yoshimoto may have engineered Yoshimitsu’s rise with the aim of tapping the young man’s access to wealth and his hereditary control over the military estate.<sup>11</sup> This interpretation is particularly plausible in light of the civil war that was raging at the time. Since 1335, the imperial institution had been split into two opposing courts, one located in Kyoto (the “Northern” court) and another in Yoshino 吉野 (the “Southern” court).<sup>12</sup> By enlisting the shogun and emphasizing his role as a ranking member of the Northern Court, Yoshimoto may have sought to bolster Kyoto’s viability vis-à-vis its southern rivals.

To instruct the shogun, Yoshimoto authored *Hyakuryō kun’yōshō* 百寮訓要抄, a detailed dissertation on court practices, customs, manners, and etiquette.<sup>13</sup> This text undoubtedly came in handy when, for example, in the first month of 1379 Yoshimitsu visited the imperial palace to enjoy drinks and an intimate audience with the emperor. Incidentally, the shogun’s manners on this occasion were not impeccable. After the third round of *sake* had been poured, he reportedly failed to pause long enough to ensure the sovereign took the first sip. The faux pas, which reportedly scandalized the elite community, is commonly interpreted as insolent disregard for protocol and proof of Yoshimitsu’s intent to steamroll traditional bodies of authority amidst a relentless pursuit of power. There is, however, a far less dramatic and eminently more plausible explanation: the gaff might have been a simple mistake.<sup>14</sup> At the time, Yoshimitsu was a newly promoted young man and had only been receiving instruction on court etiquette for several months. Moreover, as we see in *Sakayuku hana*, in other contexts he was obsessively punctilious about protocol. Reviewing his career, it is difficult to sustain an argument that Yoshimitsu disrespected the system he sought so energetically to infiltrate and eventually control.

In 1379, Yoshimitsu engineered a successful coup to dislodge Yoriyuki from his post of shogunal regent, eventually sending him into exile.<sup>15</sup> In the fourth month of that year, he made Shiba Yoshimasa 斯波義将 (1350–1410) the shogunate’s administrative officer (Kanrei 管領) and Ise Sadatsugu 伊勢貞継 (1309–91) the chief operations officer (Mandokoro shitsuji 政所執事). Together, the three men set about undoing many of Yoriyuki’s unpopular policies and redressing his political missteps. Among the latter was his exacerbation of

9 Taira no Kiyomori 平清盛 (1118–81) might be the only other comparable example. Kiyomori’s ritual savvy is highlighted in Blair 2013, and much more on this topic will soon be published in Adolphson and Commons 2015.

10 Sanjō Kintada 三条公忠 refers to Nijō Yoshimoto as “the shogun’s retainer” (lit. “The Great Tree’s ‘man’”) in *Gogumaiki*, entry for *Kōryaku* 1 (1379) 4/28, vol. 3, p. 14.

11 Usui 1960, p. 39, and Imatani 1990, pp. 38–40.

12 On the era of northern and southern courts (“Nanbokuchō” 南北朝, 1336–92), see Varley 1971 and Satō 2005.

13 *Hyakuryō kun’yōshō* is included in *Gunsho ruijū* 群書類従, vol. 5, pp. 639–69.

14 Shocked by Yoshimitsu’s actions, which he heard of from his daughter, Sanjō Kintada wrote, “[I]t’s the first time such a thing has been heard of since the advent of the imperial/warrior diarchy.” See his *Gogumaiki*, entry for *Eiwa* 5 or *Kōryaku* 1 (1379) 1/7, vol. 3, p. 3. The details of this encounter could themselves be the topic of a separate article.

15 The coup that ousted Yoriyuki is known as *Kōryaku no seihen* 康暦の政変. For details, see *Kaei sandai-ki* 花營三代記 in *Gunsho ruijū*, vol. 6, p. 102.

tensions between the Zen 禪 and Tendai 天台 Buddhist establishments.<sup>16</sup> Under the new regime, sectarian antagonisms were temporarily mollified amidst an overhaul of the Zen administrative structure. The shakeup entailed a reorganization of the Gozan 五山 temple hierarchy and the creation of the Tenka sōroku 天下僧録 (Register General of Monks), a powerful office charged with superintending the Gozan establishment.<sup>17</sup> Over this, Yoshimitsu exerted direct and virtually absolute control.

At the same time he was reforming the shogunate and the religious establishment, Yoshimitsu began lobbying the emperor for changes to the composition of the court. Most important, he sought to have his tutor and close confidant, Nijō Yoshimoto, reappointed imperial regent. When that was deemed impossible on procedural grounds, the job was instead given to Yoshimoto's son, Nijō Morotsugu 二条師嗣 (1356–1400).<sup>18</sup> A few months later, Yoshimitsu made his first formal appearance at court, during which he underwent the rite of passage marking the initial donning of senior nobleman's robes (*nōshi hajime* 直衣始).<sup>19</sup> He was later chosen to co-host the palace's annual review of horses (*aouma no sechie* 白馬節会), a new year's event attended exclusively by the emperor and senior nobility.<sup>20</sup> It was the first time someone of warrior pedigree had been given such a responsibility, and Yoshimitsu's reportedly faultless execution of the formalities put on display his growing mastery of court etiquette.

By early 1381, Yoshimitsu had taken over full control of shogunal affairs. He exercised significant influence over the Gozan Zen system and had entered the highest echelon of the imperial hierarchy. It was within this context that he took the dramatic step of inviting the emperor for a six-day visit to the Muromachi Palace. In premodern Japan, an imperial progress to a private residence of any kind was an extremely rare occurrence. For a reigning sovereign to visit the home of someone considered to be of warrior pedigree was even more unusual. In fact, the total number of cases can be counted on one hand, and two of those—the first two—were by invitation of Yoshimitsu himself.<sup>21</sup> In addition to the Muromachi progress of 1381, he welcomed Emperor Gokomatsu 後小松 to his Kitayama Villa 北山殿 in 1408.<sup>22</sup> Yoshimitsu's son, the shogun Yoshinori 義教 (1394–1441), hosted Gohanazono 後花園 at the Muromachi Palace in 1437; Toyotomi Hideyoshi 豊臣秀吉 (1537–98) received Goyōzei 後陽成 (1571–1617) at the Jurakudai Palace 聚樂第 in 1588; and Tokugawa Iemitsu 徳川家光 (1604–51) received Gomizunoo 後水尾 (1596–1680) at the newly refurbished Nijō

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16 Prior to his ouster, Yoriyuki had become extremely unpopular among both the Gozan and Tendai establishment, in part for his banishment of the eminent patriarch Shun'oku Myōha 春屋妙葩 (1311–88) from Kyoto in 1371. For details, see Collcutt 1981, pp. 119–22.

17 The document in which Yoshimitsu appointed Shun'oku is included in *Rokuō'in monjo* 鹿王院文書, quoted in Imaeda 2001, p. 277. On the establishment of the *Tenka sōroku*, see Collcutt 1981, pp. 119–23.

18 Goen'yū reportedly balked at the appointment on the grounds that there was no precedent for someone of jugō 准后 status serving as regent. See *Gukanki*, vol. 4, p. 279. Jugō is discussed below.

19 This event took place on Kōryaku 2 (1380) 1/20. The official record, *Rokuon-in dono on nōshi hajime ki* 鹿苑院殿御直衣始記, is in *Gunsho ruijū*, vol. 22, pp. 179–81.

20 Yoshimitsu served in the capacity of *geben* 外弁 on Eitoku 1 (1381) 1/7. See entry for that date in *Gukanki*, vol. 4, pp. 315–18.

21 There were many cases in which an emperor took temporary refuge at a shogunal residence in times of emergency. These, however, were fundamentally different kinds of visits from the ones being discussed here, which were formal, planned, and celebratory. Taira no Kiyomori could, and often did, summon the retired emperor at will. That too, however, is different from the formal *gyōkō* of a sitting emperor.

22 Gokomatsu stayed at Kitayama a staggering twenty days.

Castle 二条城 in 1626. In each of these later cases, Yoshimitsu's 1381 progress served as a formative model and *Sakayuku hana* was the primary reference source.<sup>23</sup>

Historians have frequently portrayed Yoshimitsu as an ambitious climber who transcended his warrior roots to infiltrate and eventually dominate the civil aristocracy. While not necessarily inaccurate, the spirit of the prevailing narrative rests on the assumption that there was a clear and (normally) unbridgeable gap separating warriors and aristocrats. In fact, there was not. The dichotomy is false.<sup>24</sup> Except for the singular example of Toyotomi Hideyoshi, all great warrior leaders in Japanese history could legitimately claim noble pedigree.<sup>25</sup> Taira no Kiyomori and Minamoto no Yoritomo, founders of the first and second military dynasties, owed much of their success to their having blood ties to the imperial family.<sup>26</sup> The Ashikaga and Tokugawa were both branch families of the Minamoto. On this topic, it should be noted too that Yoshimitsu was not just Goen'yu's courtier, he was the sovereign's first cousin on his mother's side and, not insignificantly, three months his senior.

Japan's warrior hegemony likewise universally enjoyed formal status within the classical state system. All except for Oda Nobunaga 織田信長 (1534–82) not only held court ranks and posts, they coveted them.<sup>27</sup> Long after the weakening of public institutions and the rise of temple and warrior influence from about the twelfth century, the traditional imperial hierarchy continued to be the universal benchmark of elite status. Maintaining the integrity of that hierarchy, however imperfect, was a marker of membership in the traditional order, a membership that power-holders of all stripes—including courtiers, monks, and warriors—sought to attain and maintain with unflagging enthusiasm.

The absence of formal or even genetic differences between warriors and civil aristocrats did not stop contemporaries from drawing social or cultural distinctions. They certainly did. And yet it was in this respect that Yoshimitsu was perhaps most remarkable. His apparent sincerity vis-à-vis court engagement set him apart. Others, such as Kiyomori, Hideyoshi, and Tokugawa Ieyasu 徳川家康 (1542–1616) notoriously disdained the trappings of traditional authority, accepting formal ranks and posts merely as means to better control the court and emperor.<sup>28</sup> In stark contrast, Yoshimitsu became an aristocrat par excellence. Although there were aristocrats who scorned his success, occasionally using the pejorative “warrior” (*buke* 武家) to accentuate his status as other, these same men conceded that Yoshimitsu was a master of protocol and decorum.<sup>29</sup> *Sakayuku hana* captures this sentiment unambiguously and in great detail. The image of the shogun that emerges is one of a gifted

23 As we shall see, the impulse to emulate the 1381 progress on the occasion of Emperor Gomizunoo's visit to Nijō Castle in 1626 was what likely led to the creation of this version of *Sakayuku hana*.

24 On this topic, see Farris 1992, esp. chapter 5, and Friday 2004, chapter 2.

25 Born in obscurity, Hideyoshi famously fabricated an aristocratic ancestry, and later, a divine one as well.

26 As a way of culling the pool of possible contenders for the throne, Emperor Kanmu 桓武 (737–806) began the practice of granting imperial princes family names and sending them away from the capital. Although stripped of any hint of divine status, these men could draw on their hereditary ties to the capital (and their wealth) to nurture feudal bonds and establish armies. Taira and Minamoto were the most common family names assigned to these princes and it was the Ise Taira 伊勢平 and the Seiwa Genji 清和源氏 that spawned Kiyomori and Yoritomo respectively. See Shively and McCullough 1999, p. 7.

27 Nobunaga initially eschewed high court appointments, only to eventually relent and accept the post of Minister of the Left (Sadaijin 左大臣).

28 Again, an evolving interpretation of Kiyomori makes it possible to argue that Yoshimitsu was not, in fact, alone in this respect.

29 See, for example, discussion in Ōta 2002, pp. 53–54.

politician who, knowing the rules of courtliness, sought to play by those rules rather than challenge or change them.

Of course, a full consideration of Yoshimitsu's social and political profile would require a book-length examination of his pedigree, his career, life and times. The annotated translation of *Sakayuku hana* presented here is a step toward achieving that larger objective. It provides insights into a critical historical moment, one that at once thrust Yoshimitsu to the forefront of court society and helped propel him toward ultimate domination.<sup>30</sup>

### About the Text

*Sakayuku hana*, which might be translated as “The Flourishing Flower,” is one of four known accounts of the 1381 imperial progress.<sup>31</sup> It is by far the most detailed and, based on its content and form, is widely considered an official record. Unfortunately, however, it is incomplete. The portion of the document detailing the last four days of the event is lost and has been so since at least 1626. It was in that year that nobleman Nakanoin Michimura 中院通村 (1588–1653) transcribed the version of the text best known today. The production of Michimura's edition, not coincidentally, corresponded to the year Emperor Gomizunoo visited Nijō Castle. Michimura was a close advisor to Gomizunoo and held the position of Buke densō 武家伝奏, official intermediary between the court and shogunate. Michimura likely sought to use *Sakayuku hana* as the template for planning his own sovereign's progress. In the early nineteenth century, Michimura's text was incorporated into the vast historical compilation *Gunsho ruijū* 群書類従, guaranteeing its preservation and broad dissemination. The version used for this translation comes from the 1902 edition of *Gunsho ruijū*, now digitized and made publicly available online through the National Diet Library.<sup>32</sup>

Despite being widely known and cited, *Sakayuku hana* has received almost no critical scholarly attention.<sup>33</sup> To be sure, there seems to be a lack of interest in imperial progresses in particular and the significance of pageantry in general. While historians habitually note the cases in which a reigning emperor traveled from one place to another, the style in which he or she did so and the choreography involved tend to be ignored.<sup>34</sup> One of the objectives behind preparing this translation is to demonstrate how the material and performative elements of an imperial progress shed light on a broad range of topics, including status, aesthetics, religion, and material culture. Needless to say, much more research is necessary to help reconstruct the complex grammar of performance to which the elite were obviously responding so strongly.

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30 Yoshimitsu retired from the post of shogun in 1394. Seven days later, he was appointed prime minister (Dajō daijin 太政大臣), the highest ranking member of the imperial court. He soon relinquished that post, thereby formally withdrawing from public life. His influence, however, remained. In 1404 the Ming emperor called Yoshimitsu Nihon kokuō 日本国王 or “King of Japan,” and prior his death in 1408, arrangements were underway for him to be granted a status equivalent to retired emperor.

31 The other accounts include: Kujō Noritsugu 九条教嗣, *Muromachi-tei gyōkōki* 室町亭行幸記; *Muromachi-dai gyōkōki* 室町第行幸記; and Konoe Michitsugu's *Gukanki*.

32 Access at <http://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/2559079/92>.

33 The only notable exception is Kuwayama 2003.

34 A significant exception is found in the groundbreaking work of Momozaki Yūichirō 桃崎有一郎 (2010) on “road rituals” (*rotō rei* 路頭礼).



Figure 1. First page of *Sakayuku hana* in *Gunsho ruijū*. National Diet Library.

*Sakayuku hana* was most likely written by Nijō Yoshimoto. As a celebrated politician and man of letters, few others could have described the setting, people, and activities with such lucidity and obvious knowledge of protocol. A staunch supporter of Yoshimitsu, Yoshimoto would have also possessed a clear motive for creating a record so adulatory of the shogun. As a further clue about authorship, the former regent is known to have often written in a mixed *kana* and *kanji* style similar to that found in *Sakayuku hana*.<sup>35</sup> This evidence notwithstanding, there remain many questions about the text because the original has been lost. The version copied in the seventeenth century by Nakanoin Michimura was itself a copy which, as we read in the colophon, was written in the hand of Retired Emperor Gokashiwabara 後柏原 (1464–1526). The compilers of *Gunsho ruijū* copied the text yet again, first by hand then again when it was carved into woodblocks for printing. Annotations and embellishments may have been added at both stages. All these factors make it impossible to be entirely sure about authorship, just as they increase the likelihood of textual mutation.

Some qualifying remarks should be added for readers unfamiliar with the style of records like *Sakayuku hana*. The text is cumbersome in places and its exhaustive lists can

<sup>35</sup> *Hyakuryō kun'yōshō*, mentioned above, is itself composed in a mixed script style.

be, frankly, exhausting. Official ranks and titles are spelled out in full, every time, no matter how often they appear, and the level of attention paid to such things as protocol and clothing might strike the uninitiated reader as obsessive. Its ungainliness notwithstanding, *Sakayuku hana*'s content and style reveal much about the values and preoccupations of the medieval elite. As a class, they were exceedingly preoccupied with matters of status and precedent. In fact, they seem to have organized their lives, conduct, and aesthetic choices around these twin pillars with quasi-religious fervor. So important was precedent in particular that texts such as *Sakayuku hana*—with all their extraordinary detail—were likely produced with the primary aim of showing respect for precedents while at the same time establishing new ones.

### Format and Conventions

The text of the translation that follows is laid out on verso pages. Corresponding annotations are juxtaposed on recto pages. To facilitate fluid reading, Japanese words have been (mostly) left out of the translation. Because much of the source text is written in *kana*, there is ambiguity about the meanings of some words, and many names cannot be rendered confidently into ideographs (*kanji* 漢字). To maximize the work's usefulness to readers interested in material culture and translation, particular attention has been paid to identifying or otherwise establishing accurate translations of objects and colors. Illustrations have been provided for the same reason.<sup>36</sup>

Rounded parentheses signify words in the source text written either in superscript (*furigana* ふりがな) or inline split annotations (*warichū* 割註); angular brackets signify a gloss or annotation made by the translators.

A brief epilogue lists the activities that took place on days three through six of the imperial visit. It is based on *Gukanki* 愚管記, the diary of Konoe Michitsugu 近衛道嗣 (1332–87).

### Frequently-used Words and Their Translations

Acting Grand Counselor, Gon Dainagon 権大納言  
Advisor, Saishō 宰相  
Chamberlain, Jijū 侍従 and *shikiji* 職事  
Chief Imperial Secretary, Kurōdo no tō 藏人頭  
Commander of the Left, Sadaishō 左大将  
Commander of the Right, Udaishō 右大将  
Grand Counselor, Dainagon 大納言  
Imperial Inspector, Azechi 按察使  
Imperial Regent (or just Regent), Kanpaku 関白  
Imperial Secretary, Kurōdo 藏人  
Intendant of the Right Watch, Uhyōe no kami 右兵衛督

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<sup>36</sup> Major reference sources include Miner 1985; Tyler 2001; the University of Tokyo Historiographical Institute's "Online Glossary of Japanese Historical Terms"; "JAANUS, the on-line Dictionary of Japanese Architectural and Art Historical Terminology" ([www.aisf.or.jp/~jaanus/](http://www.aisf.or.jp/~jaanus/)); and the publications of the Costume Museum of Kyoto.



lady in waiting, *naishi* 内侍  
Lord, Ason 朝臣 and the suffix *-kyō* 卿  
Major Controller of the Right, Udaiben 右大弁  
Middle Captain, Chūjō 中将  
Minor Controller of the Right, Ushōben 右小弁  
Minor Counselor, Shōnagon 少納言  
Palace Commissioner, Chūgū Gondaifu 中宮権大夫  
palace guards, *jishō* 次将  
Palace Guard of the Right, Saemonfu 左衛門府  
palanquin, *mikoshi* 御輿  
Secretary Captain, Tō no chūjō 頭中将  
senior noble, *kugyō* 公卿  
Superintendent, Bettō 别当  
Vice Counselor, Chūnagon 中納言

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## *Sakayuku hana*

### (Imperial Visit and Bestowal of the Heavenly Cup)

#### [Preface]

Spring is the season for revelry  
Flowers are to be admired  
The warbler on branch and the frog in water cannot help but sing  
Such is even more so of man

Truly magnificent are the words of the ancients:  
“He who does not make merry in the springtime is a fool.”

#### [The Host]

The Barbarian-quelling Generalissimo, August Lord (Yoshimitsu), long ago pacified the barbarians of the four directions, guaranteeing peace to the people.<sup>37</sup> Well versed in noble rights and an exemplar of the gentle arts, he enjoys music and merrymaking as much as calmly reciting Japanese and Chinese verse.<sup>38</sup> He has a positive influence on customs, is discerning in all things, and is knowledgeable on the good and bad in art. People of taste cannot help delighting in his presence.<sup>39</sup> Busy with the affairs of state, he finds solace in nature, pondering the lakes and forests.<sup>40</sup> Oh how virtuous he is!

#### [The Venue and Invitation]

North of the capital, there is an area of the greatest scenic beauty.<sup>41</sup> There, [Lord Yoshimitsu] recently built a new palace. It was finished quickly and without subjecting the people to hardship. Inside, water flows into a pond and meanders around a simulated mountain garden; it is not dissimilar from the retreat garden of King Wen of Zhou.<sup>42</sup> Surely the grounds are no less scenic than the Ten Islands and Three Sacred Mountains of legend.<sup>43</sup> The pond is as big as a whole city block; gazing across it, one feels as though the horizon is visible [see Figure 6].

37 Barbarian-quelling Generalissimo: Seii tai shōgun 征夷大將軍; August Lord: Ippon yūbatsu 一品雄拔; barbarians of the four directions: *shii* 四夷.

38 Gentle arts: *shodō* 諸道.

39 The text refers to “these times” (*konotoki* この時), presumably meaning those occasions when people are in Yoshimitsu’s presence.

40 Literally, “...finds solace in the water and rocks, pondering the greenery.”

41 The text refers literally to an area “north of Rakuyōjō 洛陽城,” a name synonymous with the Chinese capital of Luoyang. The name was applied to Sakyō 左京, the Kyoto’s eastern half, by Emperor Saga 嵯峨 in the ninth century. A site “north of Sakyō” corresponds roughly with Kamigyō.

42 The text mentions a *kazan niwa* かざんにわ in *hiragana* with the ideograph 暇山庭 written in superscript as an annotation. *Kazan-tei* 暇山庭 are also known as *tsukiyama-tei* 築山庭, lit. “built-mountain garden.” 靈沼 (Ch. Lingzhao, Jp. Reijō) is the garden at a legendary Chinese imperial retreat boasting a clear-water pond. It is thought to be the inspiration for the Shinsen’en 神泉苑 garden in early Heian Kyoto.

43 According to Chinese legend, Shizhou 十洲 and Sandao 三島 (two of the “Three Sacred Mountains,” *sanshendao* 三神山) are places of extraordinary beauty and the homes of wizard hermits (仙人).

From the outset it is clear that Yoshimitsu, not the emperor, is the central personality of both the text and the event. He is referred to here, in this singular case, by his hereditary title as head of the military estate, “Sei tai shōgun.” Below and throughout the document, however, he is called by his court title, Udaishō, “Commander of the Right.” Note how the change in signifier parallels a shift in emphasis: after perfunctory mention of his role as pacifier, Yoshimitsu is hailed at length for his status as a man of culture, taste, and courtly refinement.

The area “north of the capital” corresponds to the district of Kamigyō, which straddled Kyoto’s original northern boundary (see Figure 5).<sup>44</sup> As mentioned in the introduction, Yoshimitsu’s move to Kamigyō in 1379 coincided with an assertion of political independence. It also conveyed his unmistakable impulse to infiltrate elite society, installing himself as a permanent fixture. The specific plot of land where he built the Muromachi Palace had generational ties to the eminent court family of Saionji 西園寺, a locational pedigree that underscored the shogun’s aristocratic ambitions.<sup>45</sup>

Comparing the grounds to several celebrated sites of Chinese legend, while provocative, was probably more conventional than sincere. Indeed, at the time, there would have been nothing unusual about a Kamigyō palace sporting a simulated mountain garden (*kazan-tei*) and a leisure pond. In fact, it would have been typical.<sup>46</sup> Only the size of that pond might have been remarkable. We know from other sources that the Muromachi Palace covered a total area of about 1.5 blocks (5.25 acres).<sup>47</sup> A pond of one whole block or 3.5 acres, therefore, was at least possible albeit unlikely. See Figure 6 for a conceptual illustration of the grounds.

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44 For details on the formation and significance of Kamigyō, see Stavros 2014.

45 The locational pedigree of the Muromachi site and Yoshimitsu’s career-long preoccupation with the Saionji family are discussed in Stavros 2009.

46 Gotō 2003, pp. 34–37.

47 Kawakami 1967. For a revised and updated study on the palace grounds, see Takahashi 2004.

## Imperial Progress (*Sakayuku hana*): Translation

The palace, with its elevated connecting corridors, fishing pavilion, and other structures is dazzling to the eyes. Water drawn from the Kamo River tumbles over rocks and babbles as it flows beneath the corridors. Blending with the wind in the pines, the sound is most elegant. The ridgepoles of the main hall, with their three and four-leaf decorations, are said to be newly crafted of cypress.<sup>48</sup> It is all so very felicitous; the future indeed looks bright.

It is often said that the present is difficult to evaluate objectively. And yet, surely there can be no other time in the past as brilliant as now.

A decree was issued stating that a reception lasting several days should be arranged so that the sovereign may amuse himself.

### [Pre-Departure Assembly at the Imperial Palace]

First Year of Eitoku [1381], Third Month, Eleventh Day

An Imperial Progress.

The format of the imperial progress largely conformed to conventions observed when one travels to avoid directional taboos.<sup>49</sup> The Commander of the Right [Yoshimitsu] ensured protocol was followed. There were only two departures from custom: the progress took place during the daytime, and most of the senior nobles—from the Imperial Regent ([Nijō] Morotsugu) on down—wore festive costumes.<sup>50</sup> For generations, these variations have been the rule when a Regent accompanies an imperial progress.

At the hour of the serpent [9–11 a.m.], the senior nobles assumed seats of honor [on the palace's hurdle veranda]. Orchestrated by the Commander of the Right, the program proceeded in the standard fashion. The Emperor [Goen'yū] emerged at the hour of the sheep [1–3 p.m.].<sup>51</sup> A lady in waiting took possession of the sacred sword and the Regent took his place at the sovereign's side [see Figure 3].

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48 Cypress: *tomikusa* 富草 (Chamaecyparis obtusa).

49 Directional taboo: *katatagae* 方違え.

50 Senior nobles: *shokyō* 諸卿.

51 The emperor's name never appears in this text and direct reference to his station is rare. Here, the text merely mentions the "august emergence" (*shutsugyo* 出御).

In this and later passages, we learn that the Muromachi Palace had a main hall (*shinden* 寝殿), elevated connecting corridors (*sukiwata-dono no kairō* 透渡殿の回廊), a fishing pavilion (*tsuri-dono* 釣殿), eastern and northern opposing halls (*tainoya* 対屋), and a central gate (*chūmon* 中門) (see Figure 6). These were hallmark traits of a residential compound built in the *shinden* style, an architectural model typical of Kyoto's ruling elite.<sup>52</sup> Later, we learn that the imperial procession entered the Muromachi Palace by passing through a “four-legged gate” (*yotsuashimon* 四脚門). This seemingly superfluous detail is significant because four-legged gates were status-specific apparatuses allowed only at the homes of senior nobility. Passing through it, participants were subjected to an unambiguous emblem of their host's lofty—and newly acquired—public standing.

Recycling building materials was commonplace at the time. Mention of the ridgepoles being newly crafted suggests how important (and expensive) the project was. Indeed, the Muromachi Palace was not replacing or transplanting any similar structure. It was entirely new.

Propriety dictated that the impetus for an imperial visit should originate with the sovereign himself, thus the reference to a “decree” in the last sentence. We can be fairly confident that the actual suggestion came either from Nijō Yoshimoto or Yoshimitsu himself.

The opening passage of this section sets the tone for the rest of the document. There is an obvious preoccupation with protocol and the attention given to apparel foreshadows a dominant theme. Yoshimitsu is unmistakably the event's choreographer and master of ceremonies. The Regent, Nijō Morotsugu, also occupied a central role, although at the time he was still young and inexperienced. As we shall see, this was probably the first occasion in which he engaged in an official court activity in the capacity of senior nobleman.

“Festive costumes” (*some shōzoku* 染装束) were court robes dyed in colors extravagant enough to be considered unconventional. They were customarily permitted only under special circumstances, such as when attending a New Year's Gosaie 御齋会 ritual.

The sacred sword mentioned in this passage is one of three Imperial Regalia considered symbols of divine descent and emblems of imperial legitimacy. The others were a curved jewel and a mirror. It was standard protocol for the sword and the jewel to accompany the sovereign when he stayed away from the palace for more than one night.<sup>53</sup> In this case, however, it appears that only the sword made the journey. The imperial schism and war that was raging at the time had led to contentious debate about the authenticity of the Regalia in the possession of the Northern Court.<sup>54</sup> Specific mention of the sword in *Sakayuku hana* here, and again below, might be interpreted as a rebuttal. On the other hand, the absence of the jewel might also reveal weakness.

52 On the relationship between Ashikaga legitimacy and *shinden* style, see Stavros 2006.

53 See entry for “Kenjiyaku 劍璽役” in *Kokushi daijiten* 国史大辞典.

54 See Conlan 2011, pp. 59–63.



Figure 2. Courtesy of Kyoto University, Faculty of Arts.



Figure 3. From Fukuyama 1978.

In his diary, Kujō Noritsugu (1362–1404) explains that the people who were to join the procession began assembling at the imperial palace early in the morning on the eleventh. With very little to do besides wait, most spent the time strolling the grounds and socializing. Proceedings got underway only when Yoshimitsu arrived and began assigning duties to the assembled gentlemen (*meshiōse* 召仰).<sup>55</sup> Eventually, the senior nobles assembled on the hurdle veranda (*sunoko* [en] 簀の子 [縁]) to the left and right of the main staircase (*kizahashi* 階) (see Figure 2). Once in position, they apparently spent the next four hours waiting for the emperor to emerge. What they did during that long period is not described in any text.<sup>56</sup>

Figures 2 and 3, from *Nenjū gyōji emaki* 年中行事絵巻 (late 12th c.), illustrate events taking place in the forecourt of the imperial palace (Dairi 内裏). Although the product of a much earlier period, the images serve as useful sources for visualizing the pre-departure assembly since they include many of the material elements mentioned in *Sakayuku hana*. Figure 2, for example, depicts the emperor and senior nobility seated on the hurdle veranda of the imperial palace, watching a dance performance. It shows the main staircase (*kizahashi*), a dragon boat, and the two trees indicative of an imperial courtyard, cherry and *tachibana* (discussed below).

Figure 3 depicts the departure of Emperor Nijō 二条 (r. 1158–65) at the start of an imperial progress (*gyōkō*). In a fashion that closely matches the description in *Sakayuku hana*, the emperor (in green) is shown preparing to descend the main staircase and board a palanquin borne aloft by a special retinue of guards and noblemen. A sword-bearing lady in waiting stands on the sovereign's left; the Regent, dressed in black, looks on from a seat of honor (top-right). The cherry and *tachibana* trees appear in the foreground and background respectively.

<sup>55</sup> See *Muromachi-tei gyōkōki*, p. 214. (Page numbers for this source refer to those written in *kanji*.)

<sup>56</sup> The times that appear in Kujō Noritsugu's diary are a few hours later than those in *Sakayuku hana*.

[The Procession]

Proceedings began with a Henbai incantation carried out by Lord [Abe no] Ariyo. Compensation was bestowed [onto Abe] according to custom.<sup>57</sup>

The Emperor rose and advanced, escorted by two ladies in waiting [see Figure 3]. With the Regent standing by under the eastern peripheral gallery, the Commander of the Right moved to a spot just right of the main staircase.<sup>58</sup> He was escorted by attendants who had emerged from a place on the near side of the *tachibana* tree.<sup>59</sup> Surprising to the eyes, their travelling robes surpassed the beauty of a flower.<sup>60</sup> The Commander of the Left ([Tokudaiji] Sanetoki) passed before the main staircase and stood on the left side. Beside some flowers was a tree native to the deep forest. Although wholly unrefined, its commonness made it beautiful.

The other senior nobles took up their respective places in the procession. They included: Major Counselor, Lord Koga Tomomichi [1342–97];<sup>61</sup> Major Counselor, Lord Saionji Kin-naga [1353–90]; Major Counselor, Lord Tōin Kinsada [1340–99]; Major Counselor, Lord Sanjō Sanefuyu [1354–1411]; Major Counselor, Lord Kazannoin Michisada [?–1400]; Vice Counselor, Middle Captain, Lord [Kujō] Noritsugu; Vice Counselor, Lord Nakanoin Michiuji [1347–95]; Chamberlain, Vice Counselor, Lord [Sanjōnishi] Kintoki [1339–83];<sup>62</sup> Vice Counselor, Lord Madenokōji Tsugufusa [1341–1401]; Imperial Inspector, Vice Counselor, Lord [Hino] Sukeyasu;<sup>63</sup> Vice Counselor, Lord Tō Nakamitsu [1342–1406];<sup>64</sup> Superintendent, Lord [Hino] Sukenori; Advisor, Middle Captain, Lord Ichijō Kinmasa; Advisor, Lord Nakamikado Nobukata [1350–?]; Advisor, Middle Captain, Lord Nakayama Chikamasa [1352–1402].

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57 *Roku o kyūji* 禄を給事 refers to the payment of a salary to a civil servant for services rendered. For a similar example of *roku* being bestowed following a Henbai incantation, see *Azuma kagami* 吾妻鏡, entry for Karoku 2 (1226) 12/10 (serial entry 3498).

58 Peripheral gallery: *bisashi* 庇; main staircase: *hashi* 階 (also read *kizahashi*).

59 *Tachibana* 橘 are ardisiacrispa.

60 Travelling robes: *kōsō* 光粧.

61 In this paragraph, the suffix used to indicate senior nobility –*kyō* 卿 has been translated as “Lord.”

62 “Chamberlain” here is written Jijū 侍従.

63 There is only scant information on a nobleman named Motoyasu during this period. He was apparently also known as both Hino Sukeyasu and Uramatsu Sukeyasu. Dates unknown.

64 The text indicates Tō とう as family name, probably meaning 藤. This is most likely Hirohashi Nakamitsu 広橋仲光, also known as Kadenokōji Nakamitsu 勘解由小路仲光.



Henbai 反閤, which are still performed today, are dramatic Onmyōdō 陰陽道 divination rituals carried out by court-appointed diviners (Onmyōji 陰陽師). They serve to pacify malevolent spirits in sovereigns prior to their engagement in travel. The Abe 安部 and Kamo 賀茂 families shared the hereditary privilege of performing these and other divinations until about the eleventh century, at which time the Abe became preeminent. Yoshimitsu is known to have patronized Abe no Ariyo 安部有世 (1327–1405), even arranging for him to be created senior nobleman with the name Tsuchimikado 土御門.<sup>65</sup>

Onmyōdō appears several times in this document, including the previous reference to directional taboos. As we shall see, it also seems to have influenced the Muromachi Palace's décor.

The forecourts of imperial residences were (and again, still are) generally bare of all vegetation save for two trees standing before the main hall: a “left cherry tree” (*sakon no sakura* 左近桜) and a “right *tachibana* tree” (*ukon no tachibana* 右近橘) (see Figures 2 and 3). The significance, if any, of there being another tree on site, one reportedly “native to the deep forest,” is unclear.

These passages narrate the senior nobility's assembly into the main contingent of a long procession. Left and right within an imperial context are always relative to the emperor's gaze. If, for example, the emperor sits facing south, as was customary, “left” is east and “right” is west. Imperial posts had a similar left-right distinction indicative of both ritual practices (where one sits or stands vis-à-vis the sovereign) and relative authority (officers of the left took precedence over their right counterparts). Due to his “left” status as Sadaishō, Tokudaiji Sanetoki was formally superior to Yoshimitsu. That fact, however, had no discernable manifestation on this occasion. Yoshimitsu was clearly in charge.

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<sup>65</sup> Yanagihara 2013.

[Departure]

Next, the bell ringing ritual was carried out by Minor Counselor, Lord [Higashibōjō] Hidenaga [1338–1411]. The sovereign’s palanquin was then moved to the base of the [main] southern staircase, accompanied by palace guards of the left and right.<sup>66</sup> Arrayed on the left side of the palanquin were Lord Chikatada, Lord Sanenobu, Lord Takaatsu, Lord Masauji, Lord Suketsuna, Lord Tamehira, and Lord Sukehiro. On the right were Lord Akihide, Lord Takanobu, Lord Norifuyu, Lord Noritō, Sanetane and others.

Vice Counselor, Middle Captain, Lord Kujō [Noritsugu] served as bearer of the Imperial Regalia.<sup>67</sup> When the Emperor boarded the palanquin, the Regent folded and stowed the august train.<sup>68</sup> The Commanders of the Left and Right then called out in the ritualized manner used to signal the departure of an imperial progress.<sup>69</sup> The palace guards responded to the call in an appropriate way.

The palanquin was exceedingly beautiful, as always.<sup>70</sup> When it passed the Kenshun Gate, everyone, from Heads of the Palace Guards on down, mounted horses.<sup>71</sup>

The procession of court grooms was accompanied by the barked cadences of the Hayato guards. Leading his deputies was the Palace Guard of the Right, Akiyori. The pageantry was simply magical.

The palace guards, [Yanagihira] Sukehira and Sukefujii, advanced along with [Hino] Shigemitsu. Next came the senior nobles and their attendants: Advisor Superintendent Nakamikado; Vice Counselor Tō; the Imperial Inspector, Vice Counselor; Vice Counselor Madenokōji; the Chamberlain, Vice Counselor; Vice Councilor Nakanoin; Vice Counselor Kazan’in;<sup>72</sup> Vice Counselor Sanjō; Major Counselor Tōin; Major Counselor Saionji, and Major Counselor Koga.

Each being dressed according to his own liking, the splendor of the scene was unprecedented.

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66 Palace guards of the left and right (*sayū no jishō* 左右の次将).

67 *Kenji no yaku* 劍璽の役 refers to the duty of the person bearing the regalia.

68 August train: *okyo* 御裾.

69 The text refers merely to *taishō* 大將 (“Commander of the Palace Guards”), yet the diary of Kujō Michitsugu (p. 215), specifies that it was both “left and right” commanders (*sayū taishō* 左右大將, or specifically, Yoshimitsu and Tokudaiji Sanetoki) who conducted the *keihitsu* 警蹕, a ritualized call to signal the departure of an imperial progress, a noble procession, or religious ceremony.

70 Exceptionally beautiful: *tsukihana* 月花.

71 Literally, the text refers to passing the Saemon no jin 左衛門陣, a guard post attached to the imperial palace’s Kenshun Gate 建春門.

72 In an earlier passage, Kazan’in Michisada is referred to as a “Major Counselor.” According to *Kugyō bunin* (vol. 2, p. 737), he was promoted to Major Counselor on 1381/7/23, three months after the progress. The author, who likely revised this text after the promotion, might have made a mistake in this case by using Michisada’s later title anachronistically.

Bell ringing rituals (*suzu no sō* 鈴奏) marked the stages of an imperial progress. Hidenaga rang the bell again when the procession arrived at the Muromachi Palace.

In his diary, Kujō Noritsugu describes in great detail how he received, on bended knee, the sacred sword from the imperial attendant. Standing, bowing, and gesticulating according to a highly scripted routine, he placed the sword into the palanquin just prior to the emperor himself boarding.<sup>73</sup> Upon arrival at the Muromachi Palace, he repeated the action in reverse. Exhausted after a long day, he then went home, presumably missing the rest of the festivities.

Noritsugu's departure highlights something important about multi-day events such as this. Despite the inclusion and participation of many dozens of people, it appears that the emperor alone lodged full-time at the Muromachi Palace (along with Yoshimitsu). All other guests came and went according to their assigned roles and, when duty was not a factor, according to their liking.<sup>74</sup> They did not spend the night.

The Hayato guards (隼人), trace their origins to a family from the Satsuma 薩摩 region that had originally rejected Yamato 大和 hegemony. Eventually folding themselves into the emerging centralized state in the early seventh century, they rose in importance at court by securing hereditary control over the policing of palace gates. "Barking" in unison was one of their trademarks.

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<sup>73</sup> *Muromachi-tei gyōkōki*, p. 215.

<sup>74</sup> Based on entries in *Gukanki*, Konoe Michitsugu seems to have come and gone freely.

The Commanders of the Left and Right [Tokudaiji Sanetoki and Yoshimitsu], served as guides walking ahead of the palanquin. On this occasion, the Commander of the Right stayed close to the sovereign's vehicle because he was of the first imperial rank. The Commander of the Left walked somewhat further ahead.

The cortège of the Commander of the Right included the keepers of the relief horses and stable grooms.<sup>75</sup> Joining them in the procession were twenty swordsmen led by ten officers.<sup>76</sup>

Vanguard: Akamatsu Saburō; Akamatsu Magogorō  
2nd Rank: Chūjō Hyōgonosuke; Nikaidō Inaba Shirō Saemonnojō  
3rd Rank: Ise no Hyōgo; Ise no Shichirō Saemonnojō  
4th Rank: Ise Inaba Hachirō; Shitara Enchū Saburō  
5th Rank: Chōsa Sadonokami; Matsuda Hizennokami  
6th Rank: Ebina Shirō Saemonnojō; Ebina Hachirō Saemonnojō  
7th Rank: Ōshi no Shimousanokami; Katsuta Jirō Saemonnojō  
8th Rank: Sasaki Kuroda Gorō Saemonnojō; Sasaki Kuchiki Gorō Saemonnojō  
9th Rank: Doi Rokurō Saemonnojō; Wada Mikawa Hikokurō  
10th Rank: Sasaki Gorō Saemonnojō; Sasaki Ōhara Rokurō Saemonnojō

These men wore court costumes with gold and silver inlay, and carried long swords adorned by white sheaths.<sup>77</sup> As for the swordsmen, their appearance called to mind the foot soldiers mentioned in the annals of old.

Next, the cortège leader mounted his relief horse and rode to the head of the line. The Commander of the Right mounted a sorrel steed of over fourteen hands.<sup>78</sup> A junior attendant led the horse by its bit; two stable grooms travelled on either side. One of the grooms hitched up the horses while another affixed a decorative saddle cover. Eight junior attendants took up the rear, with two sub-attendants standing by. Five samurai clad in court costumes walked beside the horses.<sup>79</sup> They were Mashimono Kageyu, Matsuda Jirō, Aōda Jirō, and Hamanako Jirō.<sup>80</sup>

Asahi no Inaba was also present, but because he was of the fifth imperial rank, he did not walk with the group.<sup>81</sup>

So splendid was the procession, it cannot be described in words.

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75 Keepers of the relief horses: *utsushiuma no ikai* 移馬の居飼; stable grooms: *toneri* 舍人.

76 "Officers" (*bantō* 番頭) could refer to officers of the shogunate or the palace. Literally, the text refers to swordsmen (*tachitai* 太刀帯) "following" the officers.

77 Court costumes with gold and silver inlay: *kin gin no hyōmon no hitatate* 金銀の平文の直垂; long swords decorated with white sheaths: *shiroki uchikukumi no tachi* 白き打衝の太刀. *Uchikukumi* could equally refer to a hilt or hilt cover.

78 Sorrel steed: *hibarige no uma* 雲雀毛の馬.

79 Court costume: *hōi* 布衣.

80 The names of each of these samurai includes the suffix Saemonnojō 左衛門尉, meaning "Lieutenant of the Outer Palace Guards, Left Division."

81 Literally, the text refers to Asahi not walking the ろじ, which implies he did not walk the same "road" or "route" as the others.

At the time of the progress, Tokudaiji Sanetoki was of the “senior first rank” (*shōichii* 正一位) and Yoshimitsu was of “junior first rank” (*juichii* 従一位). While Sanetoki’s higher rank meant that he walked near the head of the procession, the text suggests Yoshimitsu enjoyed the distinct privilege of being in a position to walk closer to the emperor’s palanquin, as if escorting the sovereign.

The level of militarization is palpable. In addition to the deployment of actual soldiers, such as those indicated here and below, Noritsugu’s diary explains that some members of the aristocracy were made to carry bows and arrows on the parade route. Note that senior noblemen pictured in Figure 3 are likewise armed. Were these weapons part of the pageantry or could it be that travelling through medieval Kyoto was somehow dangerous? We soon learn that the route was packed with gawkers. Besides a generic fear of common rabble, might there also have been a concern that supporters of the Southern Court hid among the spectators, insurgents who saw Emperor Goen’yū as an illegitimate ruler? Alas, we have no way of answering these questions and the lack of research on imperial progresses in general makes comparison difficult.

Measured at the withers, a horse of “over five *shaku* 尺” would be about 14.3 hands or 1.51 meters tall. By way of comparison, Secretariat was 16.2 hands (1.62 m).

This passage includes the cryptic phrase “一二の座御うまのくちをはる,” which implies the leading of a horse by the bit (lit. mouth). The word 一二の座, however, is ambiguous. None of the several possible interpretations fit well in this context: “One or two saddles”; “twelve saddles”; or perhaps “in the direction of the boar (11 o’clock).” Alternatively, the *za* could be a counter for the number of horses.

## Imperial Progress (*Sakayuku hana*): Translation

The palace guards of the left and right clustered on either side of the emperor's palanquin. On the left were: Lord Chikatada; Lord Sanenobu; Lord Takaatsu; Lord Masauji; Lord Suketsuna; Lord Tamehira, and Sukehiro. On the right were: Secretary Captain, Lord Kinnaka; Lord Akihide; Lord Takanobu; Lord Norifuyu; Lord Noritō; Sanetane; Senior Nobleman, Vice Counselor, Middle Captain; Advisor, Middle Captain, Lord Ichijō [Kinmasa]; and Advisor, Middle Captain, Lord Nakayama. These and others constituted the procession's core contingent.

The Palace Guards of the Right, Sanenobu and Naritoshi, were followed by Chamberlain, Major Controller of the Right, Lord Tsuneshige; Imperial Secretary, Minor Controller of the Right, Tomosuke; Fujiwara Nagayuki; and Tachibana Tomosue.

To accompany the core contingent, the Regent boarded a carriage with latticed shutters [see Figure 4].<sup>82</sup> Four senior attendants transferred to relief horses and moved to a position just ahead of the Regent's carriage. The mounted vanguard and others were arranged according to precedent.



Figure 4. Carriage with latticed shutters (*bōsha* or *hajitomi guruma* 半蔀車). Ox-drawn carriages (*gissha* 牛車) were reserved for use by members of the imperial family, the senior nobility, and eminent monks. Courtesy of the Costume Museum of Kyoto.

82 Carriage with latticed shutters: *bōsha* 蔀車; mounted vanguard: *zenku* 前驅.

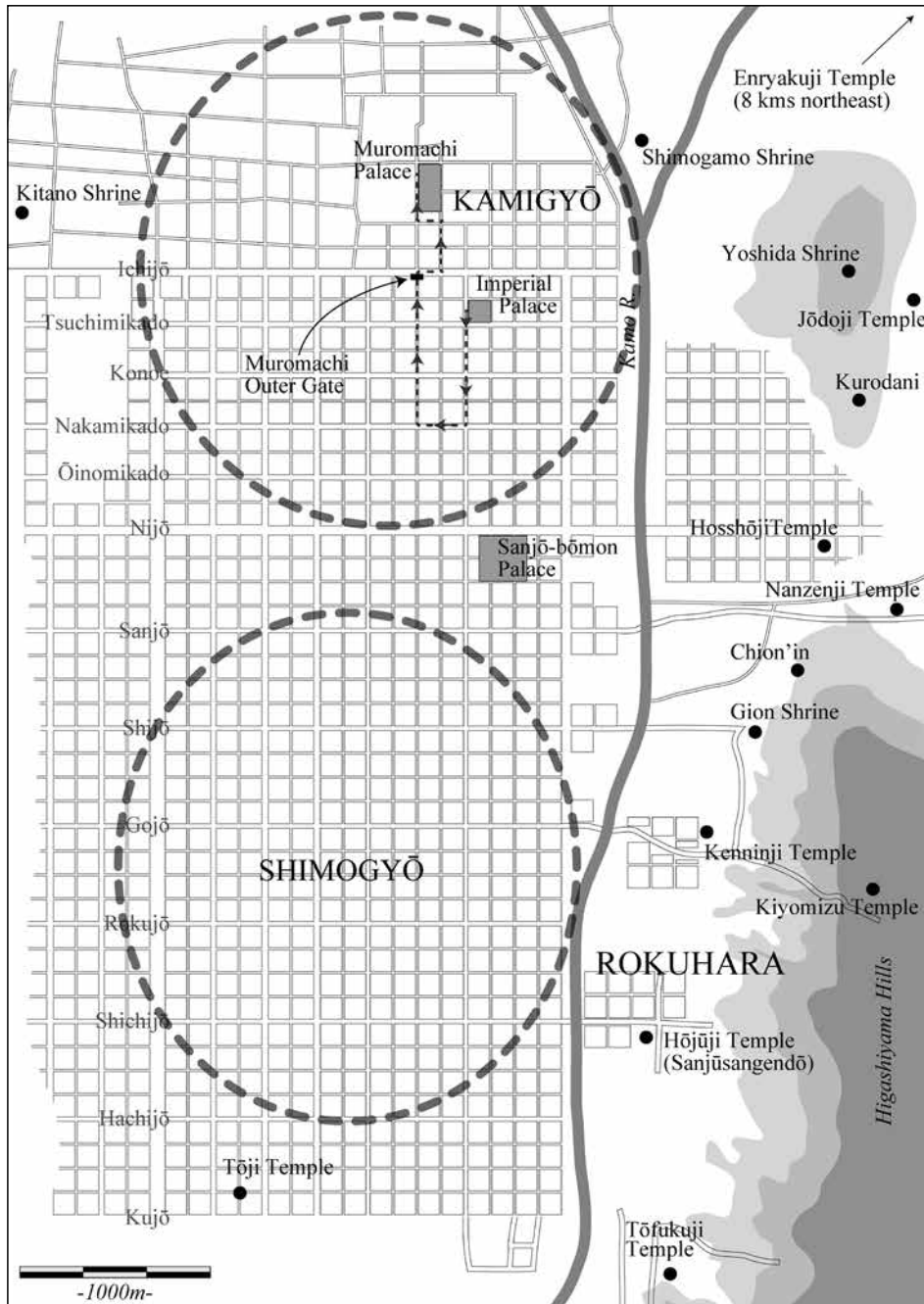


Figure 5. Medieval Kyoto, showing the parade route (*roji*) used to reach the Muromachi Palace. Hashed ovals indicate approximate boundaries of Kamigyō and Shimogyō.

## Imperial Progress (*Sakayuku hana*): Translation

The route took the procession south on Higashinotōin, west on Nakamikado, north on Muromachi, east on Ichijō, north on Imadegawa, west on Kitanokōji, and north again on Muromachi [see Figure 5].<sup>83</sup>

Walls of gawkers lined the streets. There were odd-looking country bumpkins, palace menials, and chambermaids.<sup>84</sup> People had journeyed from the various provinces to see the procession. A parade such as this is extremely costly [to attend]. And yet, for a commoner to have the chance to glimpse the sovereign, that indeed is a blessing. It is for this reason that imperial progresses are called *gyōkō*, meaning “blessed visitation.”<sup>85</sup>

### [Arrival at the Muromachi Palace]

The emperor’s palanquin came to a halt in front of the Muromachi Palace’s four-legged [main] gate.<sup>86</sup> There, the Chief of Shrine Affairs presented the sovereign with a purification wand.<sup>87</sup> The Commanders of the Left and Right proceeded ahead through the passage. Upon reaching the central gate, the palace guards [that had been on duty] were relieved.

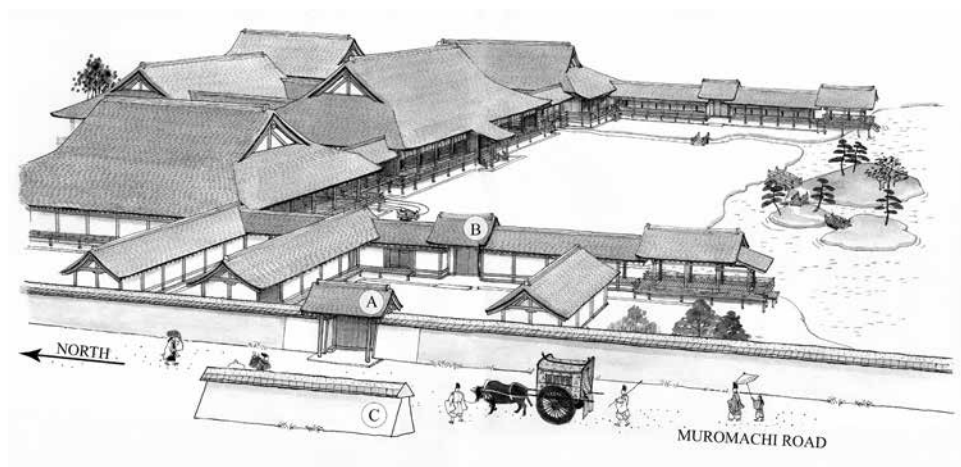


Figure 6. The Muromachi Palace viewed from the west-south-west. A: four-legged gate (*yotsushi-mon*); B: central gate (*chū-mon*); C: *ura-tsuiji*. Adapted from Nishikawa and Takahashi 1997, pp. 40–41.

83 These are the names of roads.

84 *Yamagatsu* 山賤 (“country bumpkins”) literally means “commoners of the mountains,” including the likes of huntsmen and woodcutters. Palace menials: *osame* 長女; chambermaids: *mikawayō[do]* 御側人.

85 For details on the implication of the word *gyōkō*, see Fujitani 1998, p. 46.

86 Four-legged gates (*yotsushi-mon*), which actually had six “legs,” were reserved exclusively for nobility with a status of *daijin* 大臣 (Great Minister) or above. The original text refers to the “door” of the gate, suggesting it might have been closed at the time of arrival.

87 Chief of Shrine Bureau: *Jingikan* 神祇官. Purification wands, sometimes called “streamer wands”: *ōnusa* 大幣.



Members of the ruling elite in premodern Japan—imperial, warrior, and religious alike—paid close attention to the routes (*roji* 路次) they travelled when moving about the capital.<sup>88</sup> Although their specific reasons almost never appear in the historical record, choosing the appropriate route seems to have reflected a traveller’s awareness of precedent as well as his sensitivity to rules of comportment. A gentleman, should he be worthy of the name, would take into consideration geomantic and cosmological factors as well as directional taboos based on astrological phenomena. Knowing which houses were mourning and which temples were celebrating might be additional factors.

The route used on this occasion helps confirm a recent finding suggesting that Yoshimitsu created a sort of buffer zone around the Muromachi Palace by building at least two detached gates several blocks from the compound.<sup>89</sup> One of these is thought to have stood at the intersection of Muromachi and Ichijō roads [see Figure 5]. While the significance of this zone and the gates that defined its boundaries remain unclear (and full discussion is outside the scope of this work), the route described in *Sakayuku hana* at least helps substantiate the existence of both.

The Muromachi Palace’s main gate and the grounds that lay within were screened from public view by a special kind of wall that split Muromachi Road lengthwise for a certain distance to the north and south (Figure 6). Appearing in the documentary record as *ura-tsuiji* 裏築地, this type of barrier was a status-specific apparatus strictly restricted to the entrances of the imperial palace, the palaces of the retired emperors, and the homes of a very few others.<sup>90</sup> Its appearance at Muromachi underscores Yoshimitsu’s high court status, as does the “four-legged” gate.

Purification wands possess ablutionary powers.<sup>91</sup> It seems the sovereign was given the chance to cleanse himself ritually after the defiling journey through the city.

The sentence referring to the entry of the Commanders of the Left and Right (i.e. Yoshimitsu and Tokudaiji Sanetoki) is cryptic. When they reached the “central gate,” there occurred some kind of “changing of the guards” (*tachikawaru* 立ち替わる). It might be interpreted as a symbolic changing of roles for Yoshimitsu. Up to that point, he was a member of the court, Udaishō, accompanying an imperial progress. Arriving at the palace, however, he took on the role of host, the “Lord of Muromachi” (Muromachi-dono). This interpretation is supported by the fact that the change took place at the *chūmon* 中門, the primary entry point into the palace’s central forecourt.

88 Despite the tremendous attention given to *roji* in the historical record, the topic has received only tangential scholarly consideration. See Momozaki 2010.

89 Takahashi 2004.

90 Momozaki Yūichirō has confirmed the existence of *ura-tsuiji* at the Ashikaga headquarters during the shogunal reign of Ashikaga Yoshimochi 足利義持, Yoshimitsu’s immediate successor. He argues that the wall likely dated to Yoshimitsu’s time because there is no evidence of construction during the later period. See Momozaki 2010, chapters 8 and 10.

91 For details, see Mostow and Tyler 2010, p. 108.

As this was taking place, a prelude sounded from the music chamber.<sup>92</sup> Riding on a pair of dragon and heron boats, musicians emerged and drew close to the procession.<sup>93</sup> It was all most excellent.

The palanquin was brought to the base of the main southern staircase. Two ladies in waiting were already stationed near the bamboo blinds.<sup>94</sup> Vice Counselor, Middle Captain, Lord Kujō served as bearer of the Imperial Regalia.

The emperor alighted and lingered for a moment outside the blinds. The Regent folded the sovereign's train and withdrew. Lord Hidenaga stepped forth and marked the sovereign's arrival with the ringing of the bell. Because night had fallen, Lord Akihide called attendance in the ceremonial manor while facing the Heads of the Palace Guards.<sup>95</sup> Once this was completed, the emperor withdrew behind the blinds.

Since the décor of the guard house accorded with precedent, there is no need to describe its appearance here.

### [Palace Décor]

Places to sleep were arranged for the deans of the monastic community in the main hall's eastern corridor.<sup>96</sup> The lion throne was installed in the culinary chamber.<sup>97</sup> The space was decorated with [statues of a] dragon bearing a divination trigram and a tortoise adorned with writing. There must have been three or four hundred silk robes set around the chamber as decorations.<sup>98</sup> There were also confections and heaping bowls of rice.

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92 Musical prelude: *ranjō* 乱声; music chamber: *gakuya* 楽屋.

93 Dragon and heron boats: *ryōtō gekisu* 竜頭鶴首.

94 Bamboo blinds: *misu* 御簾.

95 The taking of attendance (*myōetsu* 名謁) is a choreographed call-and-response routine generally conducted by the night watchman (*tonoi* 宿直).

96 The word *shoshi*, written here しょし, could alternatively signify the head of the *samuraidokoro* 侍所. We have opted for the monastic interpretation (所司) due to mention of the lion throne. Main hall's eastern corridor: *shinden no higashi no rō* 寝殿の東の廊.

97 It seems the author has used the words *daiban dokoro* 台盤所 and *nyōbō* 女房 interchangeably here. Both words, in context, can signify a station for ladies in waiting or a place to prepare food.

98 Trigram: *hakke* 八卦. The text refers literally to “died silk items” (*kinusomemono* 絹染物), yet probably means articles of fine clothing.

On celebratory occasions such as this, it was common practice to deploy two barges bearing dancers and musicians playing classical court music (*gagaku* 雅楽). Dragons and herons, the respective decorative motif of each, were traditionally thought to have talismanic powers to ward off water-related disasters.

The structural traits mentioned here (central gate, southern stairs, bamboo blinds) further confirm that the Muromachi Palace was built in the *shinden* style, which by definition was similar in structure and layout to the imperial palace. As a result, the arrival routine very closely resembles that of the palace departure, only in reverse.



Figures 7 and 8. Dragon and heron boats (*ryōtō gekisu*). Courtesy of the Costume Museum of Kyoto.

A lion throne (*shishi no za* 獅子の座) is the seat of honor for an eminent monk. It would have been entirely normal for elite members of the clergy to attend an event such as this, and their having been accommodated in luxury could likewise be expected. Curiously, however, monks never appear in any of the several known accounts of the Muromachi progress. They seem to have performed no rituals and, if they attended any of the events, their presence went completely unremarked.

A culinary chamber (*daiban dokoro*) is a standard venue within the Seiryōden 清涼殿 of the imperial palace and similarly planned *shinden*-style palaces.

While the Japanese language does not generally make a distinction between turtles and tortoises (both are *kame* 亀), the tortoise is most closely associated with divination and its symbols. The text does not provide enough information to grasp sufficiently the appearance of these decorations.

In the living room there was a robe stand decorated with sprinkled gold inlay.<sup>99</sup> It was adorned by a high nobleman's outer robe, wide-mouthed vermilion trousers, and other articles of clothing.<sup>100</sup>

Scarlet bed linens and sleeping robes were laid out in the sleeping chamber and there was a pillow of agar wood. On the floor was a Chinese rush mat hemmed in gold brocade. Next to the pillow was a long sword in a brocade bag.<sup>101</sup> All was purportedly arranged in accordance with established precedents. The metal fittings of the curtains and blinds were radiant. From the opposing halls to the ladies' chambers, all [rooms] were decorated with fine clothing.<sup>102</sup>

The imperial visits of old certainly cannot compare!

Because this was an imperial visit, the palace's décor was changed in due course, with the emperor's day-seat being set up in the peripheral gallery near the bamboo blinds. The tatami dais was hemmed in a cloud pattern and topped by a small square cushion.<sup>103</sup> Circular straw mats for the senior nobles were laid out in the hurdle verandas to the left and right of the main staircase [see Figure 2].<sup>104</sup>

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99 During this period, *tsunegosho* 常御所 ("living rooms") were chambers on the north (back) sides of central *shinden* structures, used to accommodate the mundane activities of daily life. Their function contrasted with the largely formal and ritual spaces of a palace's north (front) side. Robe stand: *ika* 衣架; sprinkled gold inlay: *makie* 蒔絵.

100 High nobleman's outer robe: *sage nōshi* 下直衣; wide-mouthed vermilion trousers: *hi no on'ōguchi* 緋の御大口.

101 Scarlet: *kurenai* 紅; sleeping chamber: *yoru no otodo* 夜の大殿; pillow of agar wood: *jin no onmakura* 沈の御枕; Chinese rush mat: *karamushiro* 唐蓆; gold brocade: *kinran* 金襴; long sword: *hirazaya no oken* 平鞘の御剣; brocade case: *nishiki no fukuro* 錦の袋. Agar wood is often burned as incense.

102 Opposing halls: *tainoya* 対屋; ladies' chambers: *nyōbō no tsubone* 女房の局.

103 Square cushion: *shitone* 茵.

104 Circular straw mats: *enza* 円座.

The description of the palace's décor reveals much about elite sensibilities and the material culture of the time. Perhaps most striking is the ubiquity of clothing as decoration.

Mention of agar wood, a heartwood native to Southeast Asia, and a Chinese rush mat demonstrate access to foreign goods long before Yoshimitsu began officially trading with the continent in about 1400.

During the Heian period (794–1180s), tatami mats that were colorfully decorated with “cloud hems” (*ungen beri* 纏縷縁) were reserved strictly for use by the emperor. Gradually, however, they were adopted by retired emperors, crown princes, imperial princes, and regents. Yoshimitsu himself, in what is widely read as a sign of imperial aspirations, is known to have sat upon one later in life at his Kitayama Villa.<sup>105</sup>



Figure 9. Tatami dais with “cloud hems” (*ungen beri*), topped by a square cushion (*shitone*). Courtesy of the Costume Museum of Kyoto.

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105 Imatani 1992, p. 71.

[The Celebratory Rite of the First Day]

The emperor emerged in due course. Accompanying him was the Regent, who sat to the right of the main staircase. (He wore a golden yellow train robe with embroidered flowers and deep red outer trousers with a wisteria pattern.)<sup>106</sup> The Chief Imperial Secretary was directed to summon the senior nobles.

The Commander of the Right [Yoshimitsu] was the first to advance, taking a place at the emperor's side. (He wore a scarlet train robe and grass-green outer trousers with flush embroidery.)<sup>107</sup>

Following him, each senior nobleman emerged in turn: the Commander of the Left [Tokudaiji Sanetoki] (in a deep red train robe); Major Counselor Koga (in a willow train robe);<sup>108</sup> Major Counselor Saionji (in a golden yellow train robe with embroidered flowers and outer trousers in purple with an embroidered white pattern);<sup>109</sup> Major Counselor Tōin (in a train robe and golden yellow outer trousers); Vice Counselor Sanjō;<sup>110</sup> Vice Counselor Kazan'in (in a deep red train robe); Vice Counselor, Middle Captain; Vice Counselor Nakanoin; Chamberlain, Vice Counselor [Sanjōnishi Kintoki]; Vice Counselor Madenokōji; Imperial Inspector, Vice Counselor [Hino Sukeyasu] (in a deep red train robe); Vice Counselor, Imperial Intendant Tō; Advisor, Middle Captain Ichijō (in a deep red train robe); Advisor Nakamikado; Advisor, Middle Captain Nakayama (in golden yellow outer trousers with embroidered flowers and a layered green train robe).

The costumes of each were so fine that it was as if the beauty of spring flowers and autumn leaves had combined.

Chamberlains and attendant nobility of the fifth rank distributed low meal trays to the senior nobles.<sup>111</sup>

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106 Literally: *hanayamabuki no orimono no shitagasane, suō no fuji no ue no hakama* 花山吹の織物の下襲, 蘇芳の藤の上袴. *Hanayamabuki* is translated as golden yellow with embroidered flowers. Train robe: *shitagasane*; deep red: *suō*; outer trousers: *ue no hakama*; wisteria: *fuji*.

107 Grass-green: *moegi* 萌黄. On “flush embroidery,” the text refers to かうをり物, which is probably a transcription error for かたをり物 (堅織物 or 固織物).

108 Willow: *yanagi* 柳.

109 Purple with an embroidered white pattern: *nukishiro* 縹白. *Nukishiro* usually describes a solid purple textile with a pattern in white thread woven through delicately.

110 Sanjō Sanefuyu and several others who follow are referred to by a title lower than that appearing earlier in the text. These noblemen were promoted on 1381/7/23, suggesting the author, who could have been writing this text after the promotions, made a mistake in the initial reference.

111 Chamberlains (*shikiji* 職事) and attendant nobility (*tenjōbito* 殿上人) were royal intimates who enjoyed the special privilege of entering the emperor's privy chamber; low meal trays: *tsuigasane* 衝重.

This section seems to describe an *ichinichi bare* 一日晴, the “celebratory rite of the first day.”<sup>112</sup> Corresponding to the opening of a major event, it was one of the rare occasions in court life when an aristocrat was free to break with status-based rules of comportment and dress according to his liking. The intended informality notwithstanding, such occasions could be extremely competitive. A fine robe, after all, stood as a potent symbol of its wearer’s wealth and good taste.

The attention given to clothing contrasts sharply with the information provided on food. Here and in the next section, we read of the distribution of layered meal trays and the serving of a “celebratory” meal. In both cases, the focus is on the décor instead of the food itself. Indeed, what the guests ate on this and all subsequent occasions during the six-day visit is not recorded in any known accounts. In this respect, *Sakayuku hana* is typical. Judging from their writings, medieval elites cared very little about food, its composition, taste, and—in stark contrast to contemporary Japan—its appearance. Accounts of even the most lavish events reveal very little about meals or the act of eating, even when dwelling on descriptions of utensils and pottery. Conversely, the consumption of alcohol receives much attention. It appears, in fact, to have been one of the most important elements of social interaction, done on practically all occasions and at any time of day.

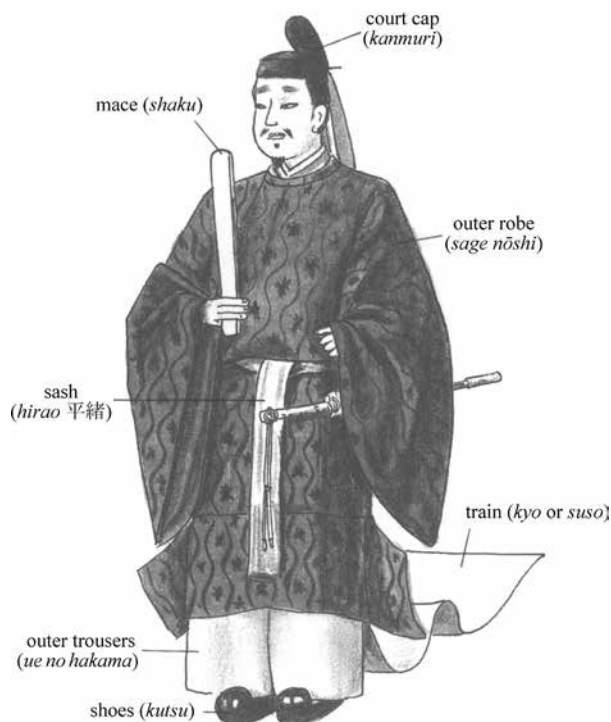


Figure 10. Court costume (*hōi*). Train robes (*shitagasane*) and both “gathered” and “wide-mouthed” trousers were a kind of undergarment not pictured here. The “robes of a senior nobleman” (*nōshi*) were different from standard court costumes only in their uses of color. Because status-specific color protocols did not generally apply to senior noblemen, their robes tended to be brighter and more flamboyant.

112 For pictorial example, see <http://www.iz2.or.jp/gyoko/shitsurai.html>.

[The Bestowal of the Heavenly Cup]

Next was the bestowal of the cup.<sup>113</sup>

The Chief Imperial Secretary did the honors. The Regent received the first cup and passed it down the line. The celebratory meal was then laid out. The six-legged serving trays inlaid with mother of pearl and the decorative tablecloths all seemed to conform to precedent.<sup>114</sup>

Taking a bow and arrow in hand, the Commander of the Left stood and began serving food. He was assisted by council of state advisors, the Chief Imperial Secretary, and others.<sup>115</sup>

Next, the Secretary Captain, Lord Kinnaka, brought cups, which were taken by the Commander of the Left and placed upon decorative tablecloths. He then brought the pouring kettle and laid out the *sake*.<sup>116</sup>

The emperor lifted his cup and cast a meaningful glance in the direction of the Commander of the Right. With this, [Yoshimitsu] stood, approached, and sat before his majesty. The emperor drained his cup of *sake* before refilling it. He then proffered the heavenly cup to the Commander of the Right who quickly tucked away his mace before gratefully receiving it.

Returning to his seat, [Yoshimitsu] called his attendant, the Secretary Captain [Kinnaka], who brought an unglazed earthen vessel. Kneeling, [Yoshimitsu] transferred the *sake* he had received from the emperor into the vessel and handed the [heavenly] cup to the Secretary Captain who departed with it.

[Yoshimitsu] drank the *sake* and set the earthen vessel down beside his seat.<sup>117</sup> Bowing deeply in the formal court manner with mace in hand, he descended the [main] southern staircase and took up a position to the west. There, he danced in a show of profound gratitude.

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113 Bestowal of the cup: *kenpai* 献盃.

114 Six-legged serving tray: *oban rokkyaku* 御盤六脚; inlaid with mother of pearl: *shitanji no raden* 紫檀地の螺鈿.

115 Council of state advisor: *sangi* 参議.

116 Pouring kettle: *chōshi* 銚子.

117 The text here indicates 大将, but judging from the context, it probably means 右大将, none other than Yoshimitsu himself.



By all accounts, the bestowal of the “heavenly cup” described in this section was the main event of the Muromachi imperial progress. For a reigning sovereign to present someone with such an august gift was extremely rare. As glossed in the next passage, it had only happened on five previous occasions. While the full or specific significance of the act is impossible to infer from extant sources, we can be fairly confident that it was heavily laden with political implications, perhaps indicative of an impulse on the part of Emperor Goen'yū to ingratiate himself to Yoshimitsu. By this time, the shogun had transcended his traditional role as hereditary head of the military estate to dominate the imperial court and large parts of the religious establishment. The state and emperor had become almost entirely dependent upon the shogunate for revenue as well as physical protection during a time of war. Under the circumstances, it seems only natural for Goen'yū to recognize and reward Yoshimitsu publicly. One might conjecture, however, that his actions on this occasion go well beyond showing thanks, betraying instead a degree of subservience. While it is difficult to identify precisely when Yoshimitsu came to enjoy virtually unmitigated political power, this instant in 1381 might be considered a watershed moment. It is no wonder the shogun celebrated with a dance.

There are several ways to interpret the phrase *しゃくをさして*. *Shaku* could mean either a mace of public office (笏), pictured in Figure 10, or a ladle for pouring sake (杓). Irrespective, it seems Yoshimitsu needed to put the object away (perhaps by stuffing it into the folds of his robe), so he could receive the cup of *sake* from the emperor with both hands.

It is noteworthy that Yoshimitsu did not drink the proffered *sake* directly from the “heavenly cup” itself. Instead, he first transferred it to a more humble earthen vessel. He did not, however, return the cup. He received it as a gift and promptly removed it from the room.

A bow in the court manner (*yū* 揖) entails holding one's mace (a symbol of public office) upright and tightly to the breast while bending deeply at the waist.

*Butō* 舞踏 (also *haimu* 拜舞) was a meticulously scripted court dance executed by someone seeking to convey gratitude, usually to the sovereign.



Figure 11. *Sake* pouring kettle (*chōshi*). Courtesy of the Costume Museum of Kyoto.

Presently, fifteen or sixteen vassals descended into the forecourt and bowed.<sup>118</sup> The Regent rose as well and dazzled everyone with a most excellent bow. [When finished,] he put on shoes proffered by Advisor, Middle Captain, Lord Chikamasa and returned to his original seat in the senior nobles' chamber.<sup>119</sup> Everyone else followed suit, including the vassals.

Next, the Secretary Captain brought out a flagon of *sake*. [Yoshimitsu] picked up the previously mentioned earthen vessel and passed it around.<sup>120</sup>

For someone to receive a cup from the son of heaven is most unusual.<sup>121</sup> It happened to the “Regent of the Temple” ([Fujiwara] Michinaga) when the emperor (Ichijō) visited his residence in the third month of Kankō 3 [1006], and then again in the twelfth month of Kankō 5 [1008].<sup>122</sup> The “Regent of Uji” ([Fujiwara] Yorimichi) received a cup when the emperor (Goichijō) visited his residence (the Kayain Palace) in the ninth month of Manju 1 [1024].<sup>123</sup>

It also happened to the “Regent of Kyōgoku” ([Fujiwara] Morozane) when there was an imperial visit (by Emperor Horikawa) to his Jōtōmon'in Palace in the second month of Kahō 3 [1096].<sup>124</sup> The “Regent of Kōmyōbuji” ([Kujō] Michiie) received a heavenly cup during an imperial visit (by emperor Gohorikawa) in the ninth month of Kanki 3 [1231].<sup>125</sup>

Much time had passed since that last bestowal. On each occasion, it was a ritualized event used to express reverence for the host. For the same thing to take place on this occasion in the manner of old was most auspicious.

With the event having concluded, the emperor retired indoors. He was accompanied by the Regent and a private drink was shared between them. The Princely Minister ([Nijō] Yoshimoto), having been stationed inside since early morning, had made the sundry preparations. He wore a casual court costume.

The rituals carried out on that day were magnificent. Several dying customs were successfully passed on, while some of those that had been abandoned were resurrected.<sup>126</sup> Truly wonderful it was, to say the very least.

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118 Vassals: *kerai* 家来. These are probably vassals of Yoshimitsu.

119 The shoes were put on at a place on the “western edge of the landing” (*migiri* 砌), a stony area at the base of the stairs.

120 Again, the text merely indicates 大將, yet probably means 右大將, Yoshimitsu. The *sake* brought by the Secretary Captain may have been decanted into the earthen vessel and passed around for each of the senior nobles to share.

121 The wording of the text suggests a ritualized, celebratory bestowal (*seigi* 晴儀).

122 Fujiwara no Michinaga 藤原道長 (966–1028). “Regent of the Temple”: Midō kanpaku 御堂関白; Ichijō 一条.

123 Fujiwara no Yorimichi 藤原頼通 (992–1074). “Regent of Uji”: Uji no Kanpaku 宇治の関白. “Kayain Palace” (高陽院) was added by the compiler or transcriber due to apparent omission in the original.

124 Fujiwara no Morozane 藤原師実 (1042–1101). “Regent of Kyōgoku”: Kyōgoku no Taikō 京極の太閤.

125 Kujō Michiie 九条道家 (1193–1252). “Regent of Kōmyōbuji”: Kōmyōbuji no Kanpaku 光明峯寺の関白.

126 The text only implies “customs and precedents.”

Michinaga, Yorimichi, and Morozane, all of the Fujiwara house, and Kujō Michiie, were extremely powerful aristocrats of the Heian period. Their influence stemmed from hereditary control of high public offices and their use of sexual politics to dominate the imperial family. For Yoshimitsu to be mentioned alongside these monumental figures signaled his membership in a very exclusive club of men who, among other things, could summon a sitting emperor at will.

In a style typical of the era, the author used toponyms in reference to Michinaga and the other great aristocrats. Uji is a district south of Kyoto, Kyōgoku is a road, and Kōmyōbuji is a temple. It was common during this and earlier periods for people of influence to acquire location-based appellations associated with their primary residence. While the Japanese aristocracy was not unlike its European counterpart in this respect (the Duke of Orange Nassau or the Prince of Wales are just two of many examples), there were key differences that set the Japanese case apart. First, despite being used almost ubiquitously in a wide range of official and unofficial records, the toponyms were entirely informal. Also, they could—but did not always—change when a domicile changed. Yoshimitsu, for example, became “Lord of Muromachi” (Muromachi-dono 室町殿) in 1381. Following his retirement and move to the Kitayama Villa in about 1399, however, he was called Kitayama-dono 北山殿, the “Lord of Kitayama.”

Jugō 准后, translated here as “Princely Minister,” is synonymous with the title Jusangū 准三宮, a formal status that afforded the holder the same rights and privileges—including remunerations—as those of an emperor’s wife or first consort. Despite its point of reference, the position was not gendered.

It should be noted that the author (if in fact it is Nijō Yoshimoto) is referring in this passage to himself and his son, the Regent. It was their turn to dominate the emperor’s attention.

[The Next Day]

The Twelfth Day of the Same Month and Year

On this day, the emperor was entertained on the eastern veranda by dancing [and music].<sup>127</sup> The Princely Minister [Nijō Yoshimoto] wore a robe with white trim and pale blue gathered trousers.<sup>128</sup> Is that not unusual? Similar costumes are said to have been worn by the [late] “Lord of Uji” [Fujiwara Yorimichi] and the “Lord of Chisokuin” ([Fujiwara] Tadazane) in their golden years.<sup>129</sup>

On that day, the Regent underwent a rite of passage marking the first time he donned the robes of a senior nobleman.<sup>130</sup> He wore a robe with plum red trim.<sup>131</sup> [When the rite was finished,] he and the Princely Minister retired behind the bamboo blinds.

The Commander of the Right [Yoshimitsu] wore a court cap with rolled pendant and horse-hair blinders. A quiver was slung across his back and he held a bow decorated with sprinkled gold inlay. The trim of his robe was plum red with wisteria patterns. His appearance was exceedingly splendid; his comportment, most graceful.

[The Entertainment]

Major Counselor Sotsu played the flute. Major Counselor Imadegawa played the lute.<sup>132</sup> Major Counselor Ōmiya was on the mouth organ and Vice Counselor Ōi no Mikado was on the flute. Advisor Yamashina and Advisor, Middle Captain Ichijō were both on the mouth organ. Former Advisor, Middle Captain Muromachi played the *koto* while Advisor, Middle Captain Muromachi played the flute. Intendant of the Right Watch Yamashina and Reizei of the third rank both played the mouth organ.<sup>133</sup> Lord Mitsuaki played the reed pipe and Lord Noritoyo played the mouth organ. Lord [Yamashina] Noritō was on the flute while Lord [Fujiwara] Kanekuni and Lord Takatsugu both played the lute.

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127 *Kakarimuki* かがりむき literally means “the place facing the kickball (*kemari* 蹴鞠) court.”

128 White trim (*shiroki orimono no idashiginu* 白き織物の出衣) and pale blue (*usuasagi* 薄浅黄) gathered trousers (*nubakama* 奴袴).

129 “Lord of Chisokuin”: Chisokuin-dono 知足院殿. Fujiwara Tadazane 藤原忠実 (1078–1162).

130 First donning of the robes used by a senior nobleman: *nōshi hajime* 直衣始.

131 Plum red: *kōbai* 紅梅.

132 Instruments in the following passages include the lute (*biwa* 琵琶), mouth organ (*shō* 笙), flute (*fue* 笛), reed pipe (*hichiriki* 篳篥), *koto* (琴), and drum (*taiko* 太鼓).

133 Intendant of the Right Watch: Uhyōe no kami 右兵衛督.

The author (if indeed it was Yoshimoto) refers to himself in the third person here and in the previous passage. His use of honorific verb forms might suggest an impulse to conceal his identity and sound objective while being highly complimentary.

It is peculiar for a *nōshi hajime* to take place in this context, away from the imperial palace and outside a formal session of court. Perhaps it was planned to coincide with the Muromachi progress as a favor to Nijō Yoshimoto who was, it is worth repeating, Yoshimitsu mentor, the Regent's father, and likely mastermind behind the imperial visit.

A rolled pendant (*ken'ei* 卷纒) and horsehair blinders (*oikake* 綉 or 老懸) were both elements of dress indicative of a military officer (*bukan* 武官). Although tempting, it should not be assumed that Yoshimitsu had, at this point, reassumed the dress and comportment of shogun. Udaishō was itself a court post of martial significance.

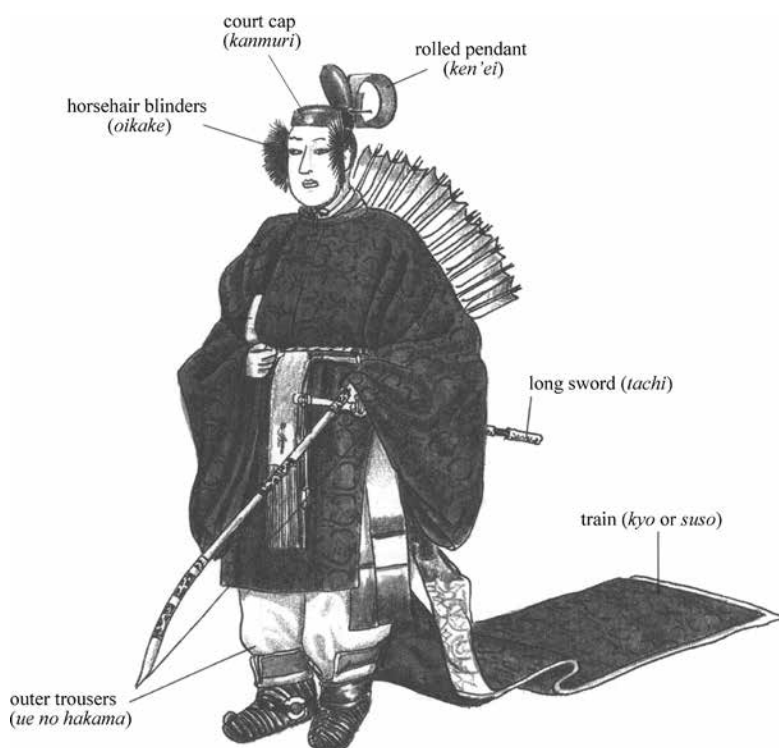


Figure 12. Court costume of a military officer (*bukan*).

Guests took up instruments and began dancing while others played a variety of *gagaku* pieces. Similar to imperial posts and the pageantry of court rituals, the performances appear to have had left and right components.

Kuwayama Kōnen claims the leisure boating of day five had a strong instrumental component. He refers to guests, including the emperor, leaping from one boat to another, each time picking up different instruments and playing along with a predetermined tune.<sup>134</sup>

<sup>134</sup> Kuwayama (2003, pp. 23–24) does not cite the source of his information.

## Imperial Progress (*Sakayuku hana*): Translation

The following members of the lesser nobility played the mouth organ:<sup>135</sup> Noriaki, Kuniaki, Hideaki, Fusaaki, Fujiaki, Moriaki, Sadaaki, Ujiaki, and Kazuaki. The following played the flute: Kagetsugu, Kagenaga, Kagefusa, and Kagehide. On the reed pipe were Suemura, Suetane, and Suehide.

Takasago served his majesty while lesser nobles acted as percussionists according to necessity.

Left Dancers:

Chikakage, Toshikatsu, Shigekatsu, Katsufusa, Masakatsu, Asaharu, and Motokatsu.

Right Dancers:

Attendant Noblemen Moronari and Sadakiyo (both danced the *Chikyū* and *Chōhōraku*). Lesser nobles included Tadaharu, Tadao, Hisakage, Tadayoshi, Hisano, and Tadaaki.

Left Repertoire:

*Banzairaku*, *Sogōkō* (four movements in rhythm), *Saishōrō*, *Ryōō* (the “Kōjo” section), *Shundeika*, *Rindai*, *Seigaiha* ([during which] Yoshimitsu’s attendants did the garden accompaniment surrounding the dancers), *Taiheiraku*, and *Sanju*.<sup>136</sup>

Right Repertoire:

*Chikyū*, *Shintoriso*, *Chōhōraku*, *Nasori*, *Kotoriso*, *Sanju*, *Komaboko*, and *Kitoku*.<sup>137</sup>

When Hisakage danced the *Saishōrō*, a double-layered robe was pushed out from behind the bamboo blinds. The Commander of the Right [Yoshimitsu] picked up the robe and draped it over the dancer’s shoulders. The gesture was most refined! The Commander of the Right repeated the action when a scarlet robe was sent out while Toshikatsu danced the “Kōjo.”

The flute was played by Kagenaga, the mouth organ by Hideaki, the drum by Hisakage, and the gong by Shigekatsu.<sup>138</sup> Since this dance [“Kōjo”] is a guarded secret of the privileged few, it was clear that everyone present was of the highest quality. The sound of the instruments was grand enough to stop the clouds and uproot the trees.

Among the artistic pursuits, Chinese poetry and music are the most revered. There is not a soul who does not relish both. Explicated at length in *The Mencius*, there is no need to go into detail here about the pleasures of music.

The performance of that day was particularly impressive and elegant. The emperor was deeply moved.<sup>139</sup>

Preparations were later underway for the next day’s game of kickball.

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135 Lesser nobility: *jige* 地下.

136 *Banzairaku* 万歳樂, *Sogōkō* 蘇合香, *Saishōrō* 採桑老, *Ryōō* 陵王, *Shundeika* 春庭花, *Rindai* 輪台, *Seigaiha* 青海波, *Taiheiraku* 太平樂, *Sanju* 散手.

137 *Chikyū* 地久, *Shintoriso* 新鳥蘇, *Chōhōraku* 長保樂, *Nasori* 納曾利, *Kotoriso* 古鳥蘇, *Komaboko* 狛梓, and *Kitoku* 貴徳.

138 Gong: *shōko* 鉦鼓.

139 Deeply moved: *eikan* 翫感.

By itself, the phrase “*renchū no koto Takasago saburō*” 簾中のことたかさごさぶらふ suggests someone named Takasago served as the emperor’s attendant. Since “Takasago” is also the name of a *gagaku* piece, however, a literary interpretation is also possible and perhaps even preferable.<sup>140</sup>

*Renchū* is also ambiguous. Possible translations include “behind the blinds,” “august person,” and “imperial wife or consort.”

The music and dance repertoire (*bugaku* 舞楽) was comprised of *gagaku* pieces of varying pedigrees and importance. “Kōjo” 荒序 was one part of the full form of *Ryōō*. It was an extremely secret dance that, requiring a special mask, was rarely performed.<sup>141</sup>

Yoshimitsu’s personal attendants played the roles of *kaishiro* 垣代, performers who stepped out of the music chamber during the performance of *Seigaiha* and played instruments in a circle around the dancers.

These robes were apparently rewards for superior performances. Originating from behind the blinds, we might safely assume they were gifts of the emperor to the dancers.

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140 Note that Takasago cannot possibly signify the famous noh play of that name written by Zeami 世阿弥 (1363–1443). It had not yet been written.

141 Personal communication with Royall Tyler, 7 January 2014.

## Imperial Progress (*Sakayuku hana*): Translation

### [Colophon]

Sourced from the government archives. (Written in the hand of Retired Emperor Gokashiwabara, I copied the source text more or less as is.) I let my brush run, later editing [more carefully] by lamplight. (The source is volume 1 of a multi-volume text. I shall copy the remainder when it is found.)

Summer, third year of Kan'ei [1626], twenty third day.

Palace Commissioner, Minamoto no Michimura.



### Epilogue

The activities that took place on the four remaining days are listed in *Gukanki*, the diary of Konoe Michitsugu. They were:

Thirteenth Day: Drinking indoors due to rain.

Fourteenth Day: Kickball; *waka* gathering (*wakakai* 和歌会).

Fifteenth Day: *waka* gathering; reception and kickball (*goen kemari* 後宴蹴鞠), leisure boating with *waka* recitation, Chinese poetry, and the playing of music.

Sixteenth Day: Yoshimitsu's presentation of gifts (*bikedemono* 引出物); the emperor's bestowal of titles upon Yoshimitsu's ladies and servants; the emperor's departure for home.

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