

HISTORY OF THE INTRODUCTION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF BONSAI IN THE WESTERN WORLD

by

Thomas S. Elias

I. HISTORICAL SETTINGS

Many authorities attribute the origin of bonsai and related art forms to China approximately 1,700 to 2,100 years ago (Wu, 1969; Hu, 1987). Deborah R. Koreshoff (1984), however, maintains that bonsai in China may have begun as early as the Hsia, Shang and Chew Dynasties, which means that the art of growing styled miniature trees in pots and trays began approximately 4,000 years ago.

Exactly when this art form migrated from China to Korea and other continental Asian countries is uncertain, although some scholars associate it with the spread of Buddhism. Buddhism is thought to have reached Japan from Korea in the mid-sixth century when the King of Hyakusai, one of the Korean States, presented a golden Buddha and scrolls of the sutras to the Japanese Mikado Kimmei. According to Professor Basil Hall Chamberlain (1890), all education in Japan was in the hands of Buddhist monks for centuries. He credited Buddhism with the introduction of art and medicine, and believed that it helped mold Japanese folk-lore and dramatic poetry. For example, the practice of flower arranging arrived in Japan with Buddhist priests and eventually gave rise to the Japanese flower arranging schools of ikebana. Tea plants and orange trees also came to Japan from Mainland Asia with Buddhism, and bonsai could well have been introduced at that time.

There is further evidence of early contact and interaction between China and Japan, and it is certainly feasible that bonsai or bonsai-like plants were introduced with Buddhism. This would be consistent with the observations of Frank Brinkley (1901), an authority on oriental art. He concluded that bonsai in Japan had attained the rank of a national pastime from the Muromachi Era (1338–1573). He noted that the practice of dwarfing trees and shrubs had been present in Japan for a long time preceding the Muromachi.

It is possible that tray landscapes known today as bonkei, which consist of plants and rocks on a tray, may have preceded bonsai. Yee-sun Wu (1969) has attributed bonkei to the East Han Dynasty (206 B.C.–221 A.D.) scholar Fei Jiang-feng. Young (1977) concluded that tray landscapes or rockeries pre-dated the bonsai that had a more tree-like appearance and that individual tree bonsai specimens did not appear until about 1650.

The purpose here is not to establish when and where miniature trees first appeared. People interested in this subject are referred to the excellent accounts by Deborah R. Koreshoff (1984), Yuji Yoshimura (1993), and to the more recent volume about the historical influences of Chinese penjing on Japanese bonsai by Hideo Marushima (1998).

This paper will focus on how and when people from western countries learned about bonsai, how and when bonsai reached the western countries, and how bonsai became established long after it had been introduced. No attempt will be made to account for more recent times and events following World War II, except for brief highlights of the contributions of Haruo Kaneshiro, John Naka, and Yuji Yoshimura. That is another chapter in and of itself.

The first westerners to observe bonsai were likely Portuguese. A small group of Portuguese merchants arrived in Japan in 1544 when a monsoon drove their ship so far off course that they landed on Kyushu in western Japan. Other Portuguese adventurers, traders and Jesuit priests followed, established a small foothold in Japan, and began to control foreigners' access to and trading with Japan. In 1580, the Port of Nagasaki was given to the Portuguese for commercial purposes.

Descriptions of dwarf trees or bonsai probably lie buried in some of the detailed diaries and accounts of ship captains or those of the Jesuits. Both the Spanish and Dutch followed the Portuguese in establishing a presence in Japan. The first Englishman, William Adams, arrived on April 12, 1600. Adams eventually became a trusted advisor to Tokugawa Ieyasu, a lord with considerable power and authority. Because of this, Adams had access to all levels of Japanese society. He too likely observed bonsai plants during his long stay in Japan. These earliest accounts of bonsai have yet to be fully documented.

The western world began learning about bonsai along with many other Japanese art forms and culture from the early writings of traders, scientists, diplomats, and others venturing to Asia and Japan in the late 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries.

II. JAPAN: EARLY OBSERVATIONS IN THE TOKUGAWA (OR EDO) ERA (1603–1867)

By 1615, the Tokugawa family succeeded in forging successful alliances with other families while defeating opposing feudal lords through a number of military battles until they had supreme authority of all of Japan. Lords loyal to the Tokugawa family and the ruling Shogun were rewarded with fiefs and positions in the new administration of the Shogunate. The sparring and fighting among the representatives of the Portuguese, Dutch, Spanish, and even English caused the ruling Shogun

to worry that one or more of these countries might form an alliance with the lords to oppose the Tokugawa family.

Out of fear, the Tokugawa government first banned the Portuguese and, then, people from other countries. With this inward focus, the Japanese ruling class largely severed its ties with the outside world. However, they did allow the Dutch via the East India Company to continue trading in the Port of Nagasaki. Dutch agents living in Japan were confined to the small man-made island of Deshima. Nagasaki also served as a trading port for the Chinese, and several thousand of their merchants were restricted to Nagasaki. While the Tokugawa government did establish trading relations with Korea and Okinawa in the Ryukyu Island, it was largely the Dutch and Chinese who served as Japan's link to the outside world.

The Shoguns of the early and mid 1600s were strongly militaristic. The fifth Shogun (Tsunayoshi) of the Tokugawa Era however, demonstrated more interest in the arts and culture than in military matters. His interest in Chinese literature resulted in the establishment in an academy for the sons of dignitaries of the feudal system. The influx of Chinese literature in support of this academy was the beginning of a long and gradual change of the isolationist position. Japan prospered during the peaceful years of the 17th century. During this time, the fine arts were encouraged and practiced by the ruling members of the Tokugawa society. As the Tokugawa Era entered the 18th century, officially sanctioned trade between China and Japan flourished. Because early Japanese laws forbade the construction of ships capable of open ocean voyages, trade with China was accomplished by Chinese ships. The use of Chinese ships afforded a new opportunity for Chinese arts and crafts, perhaps including ceramic pots and artistic potted plants, to be imported to Japan.

The Dutch enjoyed a privileged status in Japan, as Holland was the only country allowed to have its citizens living in the tightly restricted place known as Deshima. Once a year, the Dutch were required to travel to Edo to meet with and pay their respects to the Shogunate. Engelbert Kaempfer, a German physician who lived in Deshima in the late 17th century, traveled to Edo with the Dutch delegation. Kaempfer kept detailed records of his travels and wrote the most thorough and accurate account of Japan known at that time. His *The History of Japan* (1727) was the definitive work on Japan for nearly 150 years.

In describing the Japanese post-houses, inns, eating houses, and tea houses, Kaempfer recalled a particular courtyard garden in which he saw a number of old engrafted plum, cherry and apricot trees. He noted that the Japanese placed a great value on the older, more crooked or gnarled trees than on uniformed straight ones. He also described dwarf trees planted in flower pots, growing in pumice or another porous stone without any soil, and thriving provided the roots were given adequate water.

It was not unusual or difficult for other Europeans to pose as Dutch provided they knew the Dutch language and appropriate mannerisms. Philipp Franz von Siebold, a German scientist, presented himself as a Dutch scholar in order to gain access to work in Japan from 1823 through 1830. As he studied there he came into contact with many Japanese scholars and students. As his relationships grew, his Japanese contacts began sharing information with him, including information forbidden by Japanese law. When the Japanese authorities discovered that he had forbidden materials and information, many of his students were arrested and punished. Siebold went on to become one of the earliest and great scientists of Japanese natural history.

In addition to Siebold's scientific contribution, he will be remembered for his generously illustrated encyclopedic work *Nippon* (1832), a compilation of all that was known about Japan at that time. According to Faulkner (1991), Siebold used some 2,000 Japanese woodblock prints he had collected as the basis for his illustrations in his classic work published between 1832 and 1838. Siebold deposited his extensive collection of woodblock prints in the National Museum of Ethology in Leiden, Netherlands, where it remains today. These and other woodblock prints were the means by which many westerners could visualize the Japanese landscape and see the entire gambit of daily life in Japan.

Although woodblock prints had their beginning in the early Edo Era, it was not until approximately 1680 that the often brightly colored and boldly dramatic prints were produced by scores of artists. These prints belonged to a school of genre painting and print making known as *ukiyo-e*. Ukiyo-e prints depicted all aspects of daily life, including intimate scenes, and often contained illustrations of bonsai, tray landscapes, or ikebana. In some prints, bonsai were merely objects in the background, while in others they were more prominently featured in the print.

One of the earliest known woodblock prints of a bonsai was Kiyomasu's Uekomihachiue or "Plants in a Pot." Kiyomasu, who worked between 1690 and 1720, produced prints typically in black and white but these were sometimes hand-colored. The well known artist Harunobu Suzuki (approximately 1725–1770: not sure of the actual birth year) made the print *Mitate Hachinoki* based upon a scene from the Noh play *Hachinoki* in which a peasant is shown with his prized three bonsai that he is about to burn to warm a down trodden traveler. Harunobu also made *Courtesan with Bonsai in Snow* (1760), a beautifully touching scene of a woman carefully carrying a potted miniature tree. He made three other colored woodblock prints featuring bonsai.

Another 18th century example is a bonsai nursery illustrated in a colored woodblock print from *Ehon Tuto Neisho* (Famous Sights of Edo, ca 1770). This print is in the collection of the British Museum in London. Other mid-Edo artists who produced prints exhibiting bonsai include Seicho, Utamaro, and Toyokun III. Toyokuni produced no less than 10 different prints which featured bonsai including *Party of Spring Plum and Companion of Four Seasonal Flowers – Autumn*.

Examples of late Edo period woodblock prints include Kunisada's *The Tales of Genji, Chapter 14 – Miozukushi* (ca. 1847-1850). A medium-size bonsai pine in a blue and white pot is illustrated as part of the background of an interior scene [Figure 2.1]. Yoshitoshi Utagawa's *New Willow Tree – 4 hours – 2 o'clock* and Tokyukuni II's *36 Aspects of Daily Life* published in 1859 shows a woman on a porch holding a small five-needle pine in her right hand. Scenes like these demonstrate the important role that bonsai played in Japanese society. Late Edo



Figure 2.1 Close-up of portion of a Japanese woodblock print by Kunisada, *The Tales of Genji*, Chapter 14 – Miozukushi, about 1847-1850.



Figure 2.2 Woodblock print by Kikukawa, *Care of Bonmatsu*.

artists who included bonsai in their ukiyo-e woodblock prints include Kiyonago Korii, Utamaro Kitagawa, Kunisada Utagawa, and Eisen Kikukawa.

Eisen Kikukawa, well known for his portrayal of women, created a scene showing a woman in the process of pruning a five-needle pine or *goyo matsu* [Figure 2.2]. She is observing the small pine as clippings lie scattered around the base of the pot.

Most of the ukiyo-e woodblock prints showing bonsai featured the plum or Ume tree or the five-needle pine. Deep pots or wooden boxes were typical for bonsai in the early and middle Edo, while in the late Edo, pots with carved dragons and other intricate designs were sometimes featured. Also in late Edo, colored pots were evident. For more detailed information on Japanese woodblock prints featuring bonsai, see Iwasa (1976, 1989).

Woodblock prints served as an important source of visual information for people in Europe and the United States to learn about life in Japan. For many, seeing bonsai in these works was their first exposure to this art form. The Japanese woodblock prints would later influence the Impressionist period of art in the West.

By the late Edo, more and more foreigners were allowed on Japanese soil. They traveled in Japan when allowed and began recording their observations. From this period forward, there is a steadily increasing record of observations about bonsai from Americans, English, and Europeans. This opening of Japan also provided an opportunity for botanists and horticulturists to collect plants, seeds, and bulbs and to learn of the diverse and beautiful flora of Japan. This helped lead to the discovery by westerners of the Japanese art of bonsai. Those with a limited or shallow understanding of Japanese culture considered bonsai to be a curiosity or even abhorrent, while others with a greater depth of understanding described them admiringly and accurately.

Near the end of the Tokagawa era and a year before Commodore Perry's arrival in Edo Bay, Charles Mac Farlane (1852) published a detailed account of life in Japan. His book gave accounts of the early history, religion, government, mineral wealth, customs, language, fauna and trees and forests. It also described in some detail the Japanese custom of creating miniature trees. Mac Farlane saw that the Japanese took great delight, and had extraordinary skill, in dwarfing all manner of plants. In describing plants used in Japanese home landscapes and in their homes, he noticed that they would place in their windows dwarf trees or other little plants that easily grow in pumice or other porous stone. Mac Farlane was obviously aware that the Chinese had developed miniature trees and miniature landscapes because he wrote that, like the Chinese, the Japanese possess the singular art of producing miniature samples of plants. His book described this art as scarcely known in Europe, and as only to be admired as a curiosity. He also referred to a plum tree in flower – growing in a box only three inches long and one inch wide – that was offered for sale to the Dutch governor of Nagasaki. A small box was described that contained miniature specimens of every tree that grows on the islands. While this was probably an exaggeration, it does confirm that a mixed variety of tiny trees were used in box gardens.

In July 1853, Commodore Matthew C. Perry with his four American gunboats sailed into Edo Bay and changed the history of Japan. Both the English and Russian had been pressuring Japan to open its ports to ships from their countries, but it was Perry's actions that forced the change. Perry returned the next year with an even larger armada of war ships and was able to conclude a treaty with Japan that opened two remote ports and other provisions, including the establishment of American consulates in the two ports. Afterward the British, Dutch and Russians entered into similar agreements and the door to Japan grudgingly swung open.

The English government dispatched the Earl of Elgin to Japan four years after Perry's second trip. Laurence Oliphant accompanied the Earl and served as Private Secretary of the Mission. Oliphant (1860) kept detailed notes and published a thorough narrative of their three-year journey. While in Japan, Lord Elgin made a trip to Hojee located about ten miles outside of Edo (present day Tokyo). This summer resort was an area of attractive scenery, well-appointed tea houses, and a botanical garden. Oliphant described little cottages with thatched roofs and accompanying flower beds. He saw yew trees, cut into fantastic shapes and dwarfed trees, extending their deformed arms as if asking for assistance and support, as favorite garden ornaments.

Oliphant noticed that the most popular plants in the gardens at that time seemed to be grasses, mosses, and ferns of all sorts, and an extensive assortment of dwarfed trees. He thought that Japanese gardeners chiefly prided themselves on their skill in dwarfing. Oliphant wrote:

The most venerable forest-tree may here be seen in flower pots, their old stems, gnarled and twisted as if writhing under the torture of distortion, perhaps scarcely two feet high, while their unnatural branches spread out laterally like the fingers of a deformed hand.

Oliphant's opinion of Japanese miniature trees was typical of most English visitors to Japan.

III. JAPAN: THE MEIJI RESTORATION (1868–1912)

EARLY MEIJI OBSERVATIONS

The Meiji Restoration marked the end of the old Tokugawa order. Their system of government and policies were discarded, and the long period of isolation and anti-foreign sentiment was broken. The old domains were abolished in favor of dividing the country into prefectures. The once secluded monarchy emerged from a hidden existence to one of high visibility complete with western style dress. A new land tax law was enacted in 1873 to help support the fledgling government. The Meiji Restoration marked a decided shift from a basic agrarian society to one more reliant on manufacturing and heavy industry.

By the 1870s the government was determined to speed its acquisition of western technology and hired nearly 3,000 foreign technical experts and workers to come to Japan to start new enterprises and to train Japanese to take them over eventually. Private Japanese companies also hired over 2,000 foreign experts. Thus, for ten years, these foreign specialists were instrumental in working with the Japanese to transform the old system into one more like those found in western countries. These fundamental changes set the stage for Japan to enter into the international marketplace and begin exporting goods, including nursery plants.

The Meiji government staged five Domestic Industrial Expositions in Tokyo, Kyoto, and Osaka beginning in 1877 and ending in 1903. Agriculture and gardening each had its own pavilion in these expositions. Several million Japanese attended along with an unknown number of foreign visitors. These occasions provided many opportunities for westerners to come into contact with bonsai. As word spread about the art of bonsai and the beautiful elements of the Japanese flora, the demand for bonsai grew.

In 1876, Reverend William Elliot Griffis published *The Mikado's Empire*. While his description of Japanese gardens and bonsai was limited, a brief comment was included on his visit to the Kannon Temple at Asakusa in Tokyo. He noted that dwarf trees in every shape were present and that dwarfing or the unnatural enlargement created freaks of nature by careful selection. This unflattering description of bonsai did little to encourage its practice in western countries. Griffis did include a nice full-page illustration of a flower stand with several bonsai or bonsai-like plants.

Another early Meiji account of bonsai is found in the diary of Lady Anne Brassey, who made the first circumnavigation of the world solely for pleasure rather than for exploration or trade (Brassy, 1878). Her husband Thomas Brassy had a new 157-foot, three-masted schooner constructed and named this ship "Sunbeam." On July 6, 1876, the Brassey family and crew departed England and eventually arrived in Japan. On February 2, 1877, Anne Brassy visited a nursery garden to examine the Japanese art of dwarfing and distorting trees. While she found some of the plants to be curious, she mostly found them to be hideous. She wrote that they saw old gnarled fruit trees covered with blossom, and scotch fir and other forest trees, eight inches high.

On March 18, 1899, John K. M. L. Farquhar of Boston presented an illustrated address to the Massachusetts Horticultural Society regarding Japanese nurseries he visited in Japan in the previous year. Farquhar noted that many travelers were impressed with the tree nurseries that produced bonsai, particularly conifers. He observed that podocarpus, pines, thujas, maples, and ivies were used in making dwarfed or stunted specimens in small pots. In Farquhar's opinion, these trees would never be popular in the United States because they required too much labor and a few weeks of neglect could result in the loss of generations of efforts.

Frank Brinkley, an English author and editor of the *Japan Mail* for more than 40 years, was one of the first westerners to truly appreciate and understand the significance of bonsai and tray landscapes. In his classic multi-volume work, *Japan, Its History and Literature* (1901–1902), he was one of the first writers to use the Japanese word “bonsai” to describe the miniature trees.

Brinkley noted how the Japanese considered bonsai to be an object of art, and how they took shapes, sizes and colors in suggesting new possibilities of harmony between the receptacle and their contents, the trees. He observed that bonsai had become a specialty of Japanese gardeners, enjoyed almost cult status and were revered by many of the upper class in Japan. Brinkley did not, like so many other writers, dismiss bonsai as unnatural or grotesque. Instead he wrote:

Many a Japanese statesman or man of affairs, when he finds himself in the presence of his treasured collection of bonsai, can pass from the troubled realm of political squabbles and business cares to the imaginary contemplation of quiet scenes and tranquil landscapes, and can refresh his tired brain by realistic visions of nature’s peaceful solitudes.

Miniature landscape gardens were described in Brinkley’s book. He attributed the origin of the tray landscape to China. Like bonsai, tray landscapes were considered capable of inducing serenity, filling the heart with love, and even banishing evil passions. The miniature landscapes he saw were arranged in trays of pottery, porcelain or bronze with each tiny tree or bush carefully trained and each pebble playing an integral role in the setting.

Woodblock Prints in the Meiji

Woodblock prints in Meiji Japan were inexpensive to travelers and could be purchased for a few cents each. As they were lightweight and could easily be carried back to Europe or North America, they made nice gifts and gave westerners glimpses into Japanese life. Many of these prints illustrated bonsai or tray landscapes. For example, Yoshitoshi's 1877 *Beauty with Bonsai* [Figure 2.3] shows a woman carrying a small flowering ume in a pot. This print was offered for sale for 2.5 cents! A later artist, Ogata Gekko, produced his *Bonsai*, an oban-size print from the series "Customs and Manners of Women" [Figure 2.4] in 1898. This depicts two women on a porch observing two nearby bonsai. Another print by Gekko, *Bon-seki Arranging (Stone Garden)*, illustrates two women each preparing a tray landscape made of stone and sand.



Figure 2.3. Woodblock print by Yoshitoshi, *A Collection of Desires, Beauty with Bonsai*, about 1877.

Woodblock print artist Chikanobu featured bonsai in several of his prints, one of the most noteworthy of which is his 1905 *Scenes of Various Beauties*. Several large bonsai are illustrated including a five-needle pine, a cycad, and an interesting tray landscape. This is one of the prints that prominently features multiple bonsai.

The woodblock printers also produced illustrated books, some for the western market and others to aid the Japanese people in learning English. Hasegawa published

the interesting illustrated book *Japanese Topsyturnvydom* with the text contributed by Emily S. Patton (1896). Two bonsai were illustrated on page 6 of her book. They are placed on a shelf behind a man working at a writing table while a woman in the foreground reads a book [Figure 2.5].

Later Meiji Observations

In December 1901, U. S. Department of Agriculture scientist and plant explorer David Fairchild spent a day at the Yokohama Nursery with its founder Uhei Suzuki and his son. Fairchild (1938) wrote that the nursery had offices in New York and London and was doing an enormous business in lily bulbs and employed over a hundred workers. Fairchild provided evidence that bonsai was indeed a significant part of the Yokohama's nursery export business. He saw dwarf potted trees neatly arranged on long tables and even larger trees in figured blue and white porcelain pots. Also seen were tiny maples in small pots of green porcelain no larger than a teacup and flat porcelain trays containing groups representing little garden scenes, or miniature clumps of bamboos.



Figure 2.4 Woodblock print by Gekko, *Customs of Ladies, Bonsai*, about 1891.



Figure 2.5 Page four from book *Japanese Topsyturnvydom* by Emily Patton (1896) showing two bonsai on shelf. Courtesy of Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, MA.

IV. CHINA: EARLY OBSERVATIONS OF EXPLORERS, BOTANISTS, AND TRAVELERS

A series of naturalists, botanical explorers, and missionaries traveled extensively in the Orient and especially China seeking to learn about plant life and to obtain new plants for English, European, and American gardens and nurseries. This led to the discovery of hundreds of new species of plants of pants and to the discovery of dwarf or miniature trees created by Chinese gardeners.

Clark Abel (1819), for example, wrote of a journey into the interior of China in 1816 and 1817. After encountering penjing or miniature trees at a nursery he visited at Fa-tee along a river about three miles from Canton, he wrote that almost all of the dwarf plants he saw were elms twisted into grotesque shapes. Abel observed that one of the principle methods of slowing their growth and giving them the appearance of age was to put a young plant into a pot too small to allow good root development, thus depriving the tree of vigorous growth. He also noted that gardeners would wound the bark in different places in order for it to appear scarred and decayed, thereby giving it an older appearance. Abel also described how the branches are tied to each other and shaped into various curves.

John Livingstone (1820) provided the first thorough English account of the Chinese method of developing miniature trees. Livingstone lived in Macao in southeast China but was a corresponding member of the Horticultural Society of London. His paper was read to the membership of the Horticultural Society of London on June 20, 1820. He described how the Chinese cut the taproot and placed the trees in shallow oblong or square-shaped pots to promote smaller, lateral root development as part of the “dwarfing” process. The trees were often placed on flat stones before planting in pots, techniques still used today to encourage a spreading trunk base and greater spreading of the root system. Livingstone noted

that the Chinese in the Canton region used small pieces of alluvial clay broken into small bean-sized pieces as the growing medium. This would supply “scant nourishment” – another integral part of the dwarfing process. A further segment of this process was regulating the water supply, as well as the amount of sun and shade. By limiting root growth and regulating food and water, he observed that each generation of leaves would be smaller and more and more stunted. For some trees, this could be accomplished in two or three years, but for others, it could take 20 years or more.

Livingstone outlined a seven-step process used by the Chinese to produce dwarf trees. This process relied on air layering large branches to obtain old or ancient-appearing trees in a relative short time. The steps were basically the same as those used today in air laying techniques. He went on to describe how the Chinese bent and contorted branches by using wires and various other mechanical means to suit the taste of the artist. The plants were then finished in various ways. Livingstone even described the custom in Fo-kien Province of using ants to destroy the heartwood of certain trees to develop the best dwarf trees. He wrote that sugar water was placed in the opening in the heartwood to attract the ants. The Chinese liked the dwarfed plum tree the most; if it had a hollow trunk and branches bent and contorted in various forms, it was more esteemed. The more esteemed the tree, the higher price a purchaser would pay for it. Elms were more plentiful and easier to form than the plums; therefore, they commanded a much lower price.

It is remarkable that most of the techniques described by Livingstone from the early 1800's are still largely employed today, except perhaps for using ants (termites) to hollow trunks. No early records have yet been found to verify that termites were used for this purpose. In the early days of wooden sailing ships, sailors knew that black ants on firewood loaded onto their ships were not a problem, but that white

ants were definitely dangerous to ships. These white ants were actually termites. At that time, many did not know the difference between termites and ants.

There were many other accounts of dwarf trees in China, including the article “Chinese Method of Dwarfing Trees” in the November 1846 *The Gardener’s Chronicle*. Robert Fortune (1847), who wrote a book about his travels in China, devoted a chapter to the described dwarf trees that he saw in various forms in southern China and attempted to explain how dwarf trees are made. He indicates that the trees typically used by the Chinese in the dwarfing process were pines, junipers, cypresses, bamboos, peach, plum trees, and small-leaved elms. He noted that the Chinese were fond of dwarfing the Maidenhair tree (*Ginkgo biloba*), which was often seen in a dwarf state in their gardens.

In studying agricultural practices in China, Le Baron Leon D’Hervey-Saint Denys (1850) gave a brief account of how the Chinese were able to reduce to the tiniest proportions trees that ordinarily are of great height. He too wrote about the elm trees that the Chinese developed to a height of less than a meter while still retaining the appearance of their original or full size.

Ernest Wilson, or “Chinese” Wilson as he was later dubbed by some of his colleagues, made two collecting trips to China, one in 1903 and his second in 1905, for the English nursery company Veitch and Sons. He later made a series of collecting trips to China for the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University. Like Fortune, he observed many dwarf trees (1913), but did not choose to ship any of them back to England or the United States.

V. EXPORTING, IMPORTING AND SHIPPING BONSAI

JAPANESE EXPORTERS

The first decade and a half of the Meiji Restoration (1868–1912) witnessed Japan's struggle to cast off the restrictive ways of the Tokugawa Era and gain sufficient knowledge and skills to successfully enter into international trade and relations with other countries. The first phase of international trade in bonsai with the United States began in the early 1890s and continued for nearly 30 years. Japanese nursery companies were established primarily for international commerce and exporting trees, shrubs, specialty plants like bonsai, porcelain pots and even tray landscapes. These companies were often brokerage companies that served as intermediaries between the actual growers and the retail companies in foreign countries.

The plants were shipped during the winter months to ports on the west coast of Canada and the United States. Some of the materials were then trans-shipped via railroads to East coast cities, particularly Boston and New York.

The Meiji government of Japan invited hundreds of foreign specialists from the United States, England, Germany and perhaps other countries to teach production and marketing procedures and techniques to help them learn how to enter into the world of international trade. One of the founders of what would become Japan's largest and most continuous nursery, the Yokohama Nursery Company, spent the first seven years working for a German nurseryman, Louis Boehmer, before establishing a wholly owned Japanese cooperative company.

Japan staged lavish exhibits in most of the important international world fairs and exhibitions beginning in the mid 1800's and continuing through much of the Taisho Period (1912–1925). This exposure, plus the accounts of many western visitors to Japan, helped to develop a strong demand for Japanese nursery products.

It was not surprising that one of the first Japan-based export nurseries, L. Boehmer & Company, was established in 1882 by German agricultural specialist, Louis Boehmer, who had earlier assisted the Japanese government in developing more modern agricultural practices.

Growth in Japan's export of trees, shrubs and other plants was rapid. In 1879, the value of these exports was 3,322.68 Yen for trees, shrubs, seeds and 4,933.30 Yen for lily bulbs. Twenty years later, the value of these exports had risen to 81,659.89 Yen for all plants and 259,563.88 Yen for lily bulbs. It is not surprising that this led to the establishment of many additional brokerage houses to export nursery products.

The Japanese nurseries did not use the term *bonsai* in their English-language catalogs. Instead, they consistently referred to miniature trees growing in pots as *dwarfed*, *trained* or *naninized*. The word *naninized* originates from the Latin noun *nana* meaning "small."

Without question, the Hinoki cypress or Chabo-hiba (*Thuja obtusa 'nana'*) was the most commonly promoted and exported species of bonsai to western countries between 1890 and 1920. The Hinoki cypress was often trained into a "pom pom" style where long, leafless, bent branches terminated with dense clusters of leaves. Large older specimens claimed to be 200 to 300 years old were featured in the catalogs as relics of the Tokugawa. These and smaller specimens of Chabo-hiba commanded the highest prices of any bonsai specimen exported. According to the Japanese bonsai historian Hideo Marushima, the Chabo-hiba was not very popular in Japan but was easy to grow and also inexpensive. However, these large specimens were appealing to westerners and to those attending the many world's fairs and international expositions held in the United States, England, and France. The price of the Chabo-hiba in Japan was not very high; however, in the export trade they

commanded much greater prices and increased profits for the nurseries. This helps explain the prevalence of these plants in the early 1899 auction in Boston, the 1900 auction in London, and the 1904 auction in West Orange, New Jersey. The willingness of westerners to pay premium prices for them resulted in their becoming the best known type of Japanese bonsai in the West during the Meiji and Taisho Eras.

At the turn of the nineteenth century, there were at least twelve Japanese nursery companies that were engaged in the export of bonsai specimens, along with other nursery products. Their original catalogs have been preserved in a few botanical and academic libraries. Also, the Yokohama Nursery Company published a detailed history of its first 100 years of continuous operation. Although many gaps remain, there is a sufficient number of catalogs to confirm that bonsai were readily available and being exported throughout the world from the late 1880s through the 1920s. Companies continued exporting bonsai after that time, but the numbers and varieties coming to the United States dropped sharply due to the implementation and enforcement of new plant quarantine laws to prevent the accidental importation of injurious insects and diseases of plants.

The known Japanese nursery export companies are listed in order of the known or approximate dates of their establishment. This order also reflects their relative importance in dispersing bonsai worldwide.

Louis Boehmer & Company was located at Nos. 5 and 28 Bluff in Yokohama. Boehmer was a German who went to America to become a successful gardener before going to Japan to head a government-owned farm operated by American agricultural officials. After the dissolution of the farm, Boehmer established his own nursery and became the official purveyor to his Majesty The German Emperor,

King of Prussia. In 1890, Albert Unger arrived in Yokohama to help Boehmer operate his nursery. Upon his retirement, Boehmer sold his nursery to Unger who continued to operate it with his wife Mary.

Boehmer & Company's catalogs offered both flowering trees (plums, cherries, peaches, wisteria, and pears), conifers (pines, junipers, cryptomerias, and thujas), many kinds of maples and even rock sceneries containing dwarfed old trees. A photograph of a very choice old bonsai specimen of Trident maple was featured in their 1902–1903 catalog [Figure 2.6]. In this catalog they stated: "We have most wonderful specimens of both maples and conifers of all sizes, shapes, and ages, the attractiveness and peculiarity of which are simply unsurpassed."

Boehmer & Company began to experience greater competition from other nursery companies, especially the new cooperative of Japanese growers who founded the



Figure 2.6 Trident maple bonsai illustrated in L. Boehmer and Company's 1902–1903 wholesale nursery catalog.

Yokohama Gardeners Association. In response to this, Unger sought out Tokejiro Hasegawa, one of the premier wood block publishers in Japan who gained fame for his series of illustrated crepe-paper books. Unger contracted with Hasegawa to produce a strikingly beautiful illustrated book, *The Favorite Flowers of Japan*, first published in 1901. The text of this 64-page work was written by Mary Unger to acquaint English-speaking readers with many of the ornamental and floral gems found in Japan that Boehmer & Company made available to buyers. The book

described and illustrated each of the major groups of flowering trees and plants, and included a section on dwarf trees [Figure 2.7]. Later editions of this work were published and included woodblock illustrations by Shoso Mishima.

People in the United States who wished to purchase plants from Boehmer & Company could place their orders with Messrs. Henry & Lee at 97 Water Street in New York City.

Yokohama Gardeners Association and the **Yokohama Nursery Co., Ltd.** were located at Nos. 21-35, Nakamura in Yokohama. A group of four Japanese nurserymen (Uhei Suzuki, Mr. Yamaguchi, Mr. Iijima, and Mr. Suda) established the Yokohama Gardeners Association on February 7, 1890, for the direct exportation of numerous varieties of Japanese plants, seeds, and bulbs. Uhei Suzuki had worked for Louis Boehmer for seven years until he left with Boehmer's encouragement to take a leading role in establishing this association.



Figure 2.7 Page from Mary Unger's 1904 illustrated book *The Favorite Flowers of Japan*.

The association's 52-page 1892 catalog offered 49 varieties of lilies, 50 different tree peonies, 30 herbaceous peonies, 27 varieties of camellias, 28 different azaleas, 30 types of Japanese maples, 14 magnolias, and three varieties of their famous dwarf trees in pots. One hundred year old *Thuja obtusa* var. Chabo-hiba could be purchased for \$2.50 to \$15 each (about \$48 to \$285 in today's dollars), while



Figure 2.8 Illustration of Chabo-hiba bonsai for sale from the 1892 catalog of the Yokohama Gardeners Association.

this variety with golden variegated leaves was slightly more expensive at \$4 to \$15 dollars each [**Figure 2.8**].

The Yokohama Gardeners Association, through its California branch office, participated in the Chicago Columbian Exposition in 1893. This could easily explain the origin of the large bonsai specimen that Charles Sargent saw in Chicago and wrote about in *Gardens and Forest* magazine in that same year. At some point between 1893 and 1894, the Association re-organized into the Yokohama Nursery Company and began issuing impressive catalogs in English with beautiful colored, woodblock illustrations.

Uhei Suzuki came to the United States in 1893 and contracted with Henry & Lee Company for the promotion of the Yokohama Gardeners Association's products in all areas in the United States east of the Mississippi River. They had an office for a short period in Oakland, California, but closed it in 1895 to concentrate on their New York office.

The Yokohama Nursery has a bonsai-styled wisteria illustrated on the cover of their 1898 catalog that included a large section devoted to dwarfed trees or bonsai [**Figure 2.9**]. This catalog offered dwarfed cherry trees and 100-year old specimens of *Chamaecyparis obtusa* 'nana'.

This may well have been the most important Japanese company exporting bonsai judging from their extensive listing of conifers, flowering trees, shrubs, and vines offered as “dwarfed trees,” and their continued presence from the 1890s to the present. The Yokohama nursery catalogs were the only ones to offer extensive information in English concerning the cultural requirements for their dwarf trees. They contained precise information about watering techniques both during the winter and summer months, identified correct exposure and light conditions, and when and how to apply fertilizer (finely powdered oil cakes or bone meal). Additional instruction on pruning conifers, flowering and deciduous trees was included.



Figure 2.9 Cover of 1898 Yokohama Nursery Catalog showing *Wisteria* as a bonsai.

In the 1890s this nursery offered one of the most extensive ranges of specimens of dwarf trees for sale of all the Japanese companies. The conifers included three species of pine, three different junipers, two podocarpus, a larch, hemlock, cryptomeria, and cycad. Flowering trees included styrax, crape myrtle, flowering cherries, plums, wisteria, and hawthorn, and they also offered three different maples, an oak, zelkova, ivy, and even bamboos. Pomegranate and euonymus were later added to the list.

Their descriptive catalogs of 1925/1926 contained an added emphasis on dwarf specimen plants of Kurume azaleas. These were described as superb specimens

plants growing on a single stem with an umbrella crown and profusely blooming in varying shades of white, rose, pink, lavender, red, and mottled.

This nursery also offered miniature rockery gardens for sale. These landscape plantings consisted of several smaller trees and rock formations, along with several tiny replicas of pagodas, bridges, and/or huts. These resemble the early Japanese bonkei or tray landscapes rather than present-day saikei.

Yokohama offered attractive decorative porcelain flower pots for export along with plants, seeds, and bulbs. In their 1898 catalog and subsequent catalogs, Yokohama offered pots in round, square, oblong or hexagonal shapes and in sizes ranging from 6 inches to 12 inches or 18 inches in diameter [Figure 2.10]. Their

best pots sold for approximately 20% more than their “common” pots.



Figure 2.10 Page illustrating porcelain pots from the Descriptive Catalog of the Yokohama Nursery Company, 1898.

F. Takaghi/The Tokyo

Nurseries/Takaghi & Company was located at Komagome Denchu in Tokyo. While it is unknown when this company was established, they did issue a 1894 catalog over 100 pages in length and containing extensive lists of plants, including bonsai, and detailed information concerning terms of payment and shipping details.

F. Takaghi was registered as a commercial company in Japan under the title of

The Tokyo Nurseries. They published catalogs beginning in 1895 bearing the name “Tokio Nurseries” or “Tokyo Nurseries.”

A note that Takaghi & Company was offering dwarf conifers (i.e., bonsai) for sale was published in the June 29, 1899, issue of the respected British horticultural journal *The Gardeners Chronicle*. The Tokyo Nurseries offered eight different conifers, three species of pine, one juniper, one thuja, and three variegated forms of podocarpus.

This nursery also offered to supply quotations upon request for very old and valuable dwarf trees. They offered trees up to \$100 each depending on age and size. This was a large sum of money for a plant in the late 1890s. According to the illustrations in their catalogs, Takaghi & Company was a large operation with extensive numbers of bonsai available for sale [Figure 2.11].

The remaining nine export nursery companies were established later and appeared to be smaller in scope, but they operated in a similar manner to the three nurseries described above. Suzuki & Iida in Yokohama were



Figure 2.11 Bonsai illustrated in F. Takaghi 1894 Catalog of Bulbs, Plants and Seeds.

known to be in operation by 1889, while Tokyo Engei Kaisha, Ltd. in Tokyo is known from a 1907 catalog. Saitama Engei & Company is known from its 1913 through 1919 wholesale trade lists or catalogs. The Nippon Engei Kaisha, Ltd. offered 25 types of dwarf trees in their 1910/1911 nursery catalog. The Tokio Plant and Seed Company published small catalogs between 1901 through 1917 and perhaps later. They too offered a limited number of dwarf trees for sale. Although established in 1872, little is known about the Akashi Koraku-en Nursery Company in Kurume City. A copy of their 1917/1918 catalog in Japanese listed dwarf trees for sale. It is not known if this company actually exported bonsai. The Chugai Nursery Company near Kobe, Japan published fairly extensive, high quality catalogs, which had dates ranging from 1928 to 1938. They offered 31 different types of dwarf trees for sale.

WESTERN IMPORTERS

The opening of shops in Europe selling bonsai was inevitable, and one of the first businesses to offer bonsai for sale was owned by a Mr. Eida who maintained a shop on 5 Conduit Road in London, and another facility on Newburgh Road in Action. A note in the March 31, 1900 issue of *The Gardeners Chronicle* announced that he had several miniature, aged trees on sale including tiny fruit trees. Both the Action and London locations had bonsai on sale. Bonsai or naninized trees were for sale in florist shops in Paris at the time of the exposition of 1878 according to Carriere (1878).

At the beginning of the 1900s, bonsai was imported into the United States for many of the expositions held throughout the country. Beside these special occasions, a collection of bonsai was imported in 1911 by Mr. Ernest F. Coe, President of Elm City Nursery of New Haven, Connecticut. Coe maintained these trees and

then presented them to the Brooklyn Botanical Garden, where they formed the basis for one of the oldest continuous public displays of bonsai in the United States.

The period from 1890 to 1920 was a remarkable time in horticultural history, given the huge flow of fruit and ornamental trees, shrubs, bulbs, and seeds from Japan to western countries. Millions of new plants and bulbs were purchased and shipped to various regions of the western world. Many of these plants quickly became established in parks, gardens, and home landscapes. During no other time in the history of Japan/United States relations has the number of plants brought from this Asian country to North America matched this 30-year period.

SHIPPING

Export nurseries in Japan were shipping literally hundreds of thousands of bulbs, dormant trees, shrubs, seeds, and pots annually to the United States, European countries, and Australia from the 1890s through the 1920s. Steamship companies departed regularly from the port of Yokohama to various major ports cities of the world. The Tokio Nurseries, for example, listed eight steamship companies they used to transport plants in 1894. Additional lines carried goods to Hong Kong, Australia, and the South Pacific. Export nurseries in Japan recommended shipping plants from October through February.

The Canadian Pacific Railway Company had three or four weekly ship departures from Yokohama to Vancouver, Canada and other Pacific North American ports, while the Northern Pacific Steamship and Railroad Company maintained three weekly dispatches to Tacoma and other U.S. and Canadian ports. Many of the plants were then shipped by railway to the eastern United States.

Steamships sailing from Yokohama reached their western North American ports in approximately 12 days for Vancouver, 17 to 19 days for Tacoma, and 18 days for San Francisco. Plant materials were also shipped directly to New York and European destinations via the Suez Canal. The voyage to New York took from 70 to 80 days and was recommended only for strong plants and bulbs. Plants bound for European ports took approximately 43 days for Marseilles, 51 days for London and Southampton, and 55 days for Dutch and German ports.

A testimonial letter published in the 1902/1903 Wholesale Catalogue of L. Boehmer & Company of Yokohama confirmed the arrival of bonsai in England in 1901. The letter read:

Baildon, Shipley

Kirkfield, June 11, 1901

The trees (dwarf trees) which we bought from you and brought to England on board the "U. S. Princess Irene" arrived safely at their destination and in good condition considering the variations of climate they were exposed to on the voyage. They appear to be doing well....

Signed

Mrs. Elsie M. Hogdon

Shipping rates in 1897, for example, ranged from \$8 to \$10 dollars gold (about \$164 to \$205 in today's dollars) per ton on steamships and about \$14 to \$16 per ton via transcontinental railroad. The transcontinental coast-to-coast trips were often completed within two weeks.

VI. THE EARLY YEARS OF BONSAI IN THE WEST

First impressions by westerners of bonsai were sometimes based more upon western values and understanding of horticultural practices than on an appreciation of how Asians viewed and valued these plants. As a result, many early accounts of bonsai published in the United States were not complimentary, as exemplified by a 1900 article in the respected journal *Scientific American Supplement*. The author characterized a bonsai as a crippled dwarf of a tree made quaint and picturesque by years of struggle:

Worried literally half out of their lives by ill treatment and starvation, it is not to be wondered at if the size of some of these unhappy victims is wholly out of proportion to their age.

WORLD FAIRS AND EXPOSITIONS

Bonsai and other Japanese horticultural products did not reach the West independent of other products, but instead were part of a much larger interest in bringing Japanese arts, culture, and products to the attention of the western countries. Japan sent numerous envoys to the industrialized countries, particularly France, Germany, England, and the United States to learn more about these countries and to participate in a long series of international expositions and world's fairs. These grand exhibitions served as an important means for countries to show off their prosperity, their goods, their culture, and to gain status internationally. This was at a time when trans-continental and inter-continental communications were slow. In the days prior to television and world-wide media coverage, the fairs and expositions provided an excellent venue for large numbers of people to see and learn first hand about the customs and cultures of many different countries, including those of exotic China and the long forbidden country of Japan.

Japan participated in major expositions in Paris in 1862 and 1867, just before the beginning of the Meiji Restoration. Japan, more than any other Asian country, then reached out aggressively and participated in 27 world fairs or international expositions (Earle, 1999). Japan emphasized its highly refined decorative arts and crafts rather than its more industrial-type products. The beautiful arts and crafts of Japan captured the attention of people in both the Americas and in Europe and England. The fascination with Japan grew to such proportions that it was labeled Japanese mania in some regions of the West. In fact, a new word *Japonisme* was coined in 1872 by the French art critic Philippe Burty to describe this new phenomenon. The desire to learn about Japan and to acquire arts and crafts from that country provided many aspiring and successful businessmen the opportunity to open new markets. This curiosity with Japan helped to fuel a greater awareness of bonsai and related art forms.

London – 1851

The first of the world fairs, the Crystal Palace Exhibition, was held in London in 1851. Other countries soon followed with their own fairs and expositions. France, in particular, became the leading continental European country to pursue these. A rivalry between France and England ensued and each tried to out do the other. The Paris International Exposition and the London International Exposition became more grandiose as the competition continued into the early 1900s.

New York – 1853

The United States entered this arena in July 1853 with the opening of the New York World's Fair. Major exhibits were in one of four major areas – raw materials, manufactured goods, machinery, and fine arts. Since Japan was not yet participating in these international expositions, it is highly unlikely that bonsai were exhibited.

Philadelphia – 1876

This changed with the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition in 1876 to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the United States. The new Meiji government built Japanese Pavilions and imported their arts and crafts. This was a milestone event as it marked the first public Japanese garden built in the United States. This garden contained a traditional garden with Japanese pines, camellias, stone lanterns, bamboo fence, and even a small stream. This was probably the first time that bonsai was publicly displayed in this country. According to Ingram (1876), there was a blue porcelain box containing a stunted cedar tree 60 years old and not more than 32 inches in height. The branches spread 4.5 feet at its widest point and the trunk was eight inches in diameter. He also describes the garden as containing young bamboo, flowers, and stunted trees. Approximately 10 million visitors came to this Philadelphia Centennial Exposition, and many saw the 30,000 items displayed by the Japanese.

Paris – 1878

In 1878, the Japanese planned and staged a major exhibit at the Paris International Exposition. This was likely the first public exhibition of bonsai and bonkei in Europe. The editor-in-chief of the internationally regarded journal *Revue Horticole*, M. E.-A. Carriere, provided some of the earliest detailed information about Japanese horticulture along with an account of the bonsai specimens on display at the 1878 exposition in Paris. In an essay on Japanese horticulture, Carriere (1878) described at length the process of “*nanisation*” and included illustrations of seven different specimens. Four are exposed-root style, three of which are extreme examples. The Chinese influence on these illustrated specimens is very pronounced. These were among the plants displayed in the exposition garden at Trocadero.

While the French were extolling the virtues of these strange new dwarf trees, the British continued to write disparagingly of Japanese bonsai. In the January 25, 1889 article in the *Gardeners Chronicle* magazine about an exposed-root *Chamaecyparis* (*Retinospora* in the article), the author said that:

the tree was denuded of all beauty, and made ridiculous as well as unhealthy by having its roots drawn out into aerial cables so that the tree has to be a prop to display the roots that have been strangely abused.

Paris – 1900

Another great exposition was held in Paris in 1900. Preparations for this were made years in advance and a brief note in *The Gardeners Chronicle* in 1899 states that Japanese gardeners arrived in Paris to begin preparing for the exposition in the following year. Chrysanthemums were prominently featured along with approximately 200 bonsai specimens. These plants were sold soon after the exposition closed (Tissandier, 1902).

Chicago – 1893

The 1893 Columbian World's Fair in Chicago was one of the most grandiose fairs ever held in North America. It attracted over 27 million visitors from May through October of that year. The Japanese government succeeded in obtaining extensive space in several of the buildings as well as constructing a Phoenix Place on a small island. The palace was landscaped and planted in traditional Japanese style using plants brought from Japan.

While the primary focus was on the decorative arts, a variety of Japanese bonsai were featured in one part of the huge Horticultural Building. Oak, pines, and other species were described as being hundreds of years old, perfect in every detail,

gnarled trunks and only a few feet high, and growing in what was described as small flower pots.

Charles Sargent (1893), writing anonymously in *Garden and Forest* journal, described a single large 300-year old dwarf cedar that had been presented by the Emperor of Japan. Sargent noted that the tree had been removed from its pot and wrapped in paper when it was shipped to Jackson Park. The tree was not in good condition and it died. Despite this, the defunct form was carefully set in a pot and exhibited in the Horticultural Building. A photograph of a large Chabo-hiba cedar was published in White and Ingleheart's detailed 1893 account of the World's Columbian Exposition [Figure 2.12]. This may have been the same plant that Professor Sargent described in his article.



Figure 2.12 Large Chabo-hiba bonsai exhibited at the World's Columbian Exposition held in Chicago, Illinois in 1893.

North American nurserymen, seed producers, and pomologists held their Horticultural Congress at the World's Columbian Exposition from August 16–18, 1893. At this meeting, “Henry” Izawa, a Japanese nurseryman read a paper to the attendees describing the methods of producing dwarf plants and miniature gardens. This is one of the earliest records in North America of a public presentation about bonsai by a Japanese to a North American audience (Anonymous, 1895).

St. Louis – 1905

Not to be left out, St. Louis joined the number of cities to organize a world's fair by developing the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in 1905. The Japan Exhibit Association, representing 50 leading merchants and manufacturers in Japan, was responsible for staging their country's exhibit. An elaborate 150,000 square foot garden was constructed in a prominent location within the fair grounds.

According to Bennitt (1905), the Japanese spared neither effort nor expense to make the most comprehensive display of their products and resources ever sent to an exposition from an Asian country. Japan's exhibit was three times larger than the one in Chicago in 1893.

The extensive garden contained many azaleas and heavily pruned conifers and other styled trees. T. W. Brown (1904) recorded that an interesting collection of Japanese conifers were scattered about in this garden including several dwarf plants of *Chamaecyparis obtusa* or cedar from 80 to 350 years old. A published map of this garden includes a photograph of a large pine bonsai in the lower right hand corner.

San Francisco – 1915

San Francisco was the host city to the 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition. Japan staged an elaborate exhibit just as it had in previous fairs and expositions. Bonsai were imported for use in the display. At least two of the trees from this 1915 exposition are still alive and thriving in bonsai collections in 2004. Two large Trident maples growing in similar large rectangular pots were imported in 1913 from Japan. According to DeGroot (1994), one of the maples was selected for display in the Japanese Garden at the exposition while the other one was sent to San Diego, California. The San Francisco tree turned out to be unsuitable for the Japanese Garden and, instead, was displayed by Kanetaro Domoto, owner of Domoto Brothers Nursery in Oakland. It was cared for by his son Toichi and in

1988 the tree was acquired for the Pacific Rim Bonsai Collection in Seattle, Washington where it can be seen today [Figure 2.13].

VII. THE EARLY MAJOR AND MINOR BONSAI AUCTIONS

There were a series of auctions of bonsai in the late 1890s and early 1900s. The exact number of these sales is not known but five can be documented. The origin of the plants for these sales can be traced to different sources. At least three of the sales involved the direct import of 300 to 500 trees and related items for each of the auctions. Smaller auctions were likely held involving the deposition of an individual's

collection that had been assembled over several years. A third source of bonsai for sale came from plants that were imported for the many international expositions in Europe, England, and perhaps even the United States.

The first of the major auctions was held in Boston in 1899, a second in 1900 in London, and a third in West Orange, New Jersey in 1904. The successes of other auctions of typical Japanese art and craft objects in the United States and England likely was the stimulus for entrepreneurs to attempt auctions of living plants. A total of 1,310 bonsai and related artifacts were sold at these three auctions, 1,010 in the United States and 300 in England. An analysis of the plants and materials in these three catalogs provides an interesting window into exported bonsai during this period.



Figure 2.13 Trident maple originally imported from Japan for the 1915 Panama Pacific Exposition held in San Francisco. This tree is now in the Pacific Rim Collection in Seattle, WA.

Boston – 1899

The first of a series of three major auctions was held from November 15–18, 1899, in Boston, Massachusetts. The auctioneers were Leonard and Company of 47 Bromfield Street in Boston, and the importer was Yamanaka and Company of Osaka, Japan. A 86-page descriptive catalog, *Rare Collection of Japanese Plants*, was published by the importer, and potential buyers were able to view the auction on November 13. Four hundred and fifty items were offered during this four-day auction. All but one, a 150-year-old stone lantern, were plants. Most of the sale plants were listed as being less than 50 years old, some between 50 and 100 years old, and only six were listed as being between 100 and 300 years old. Seventy-eight plants were sego palms, bamboos, and smaller companion plants. One of the sego palms (*Cycas revoluta*) was listed as being 3.5 feet high and 400 years old. Tray landscapes or bonkei comprised about 12% of the sale items.

The most common plants in the auction were 145 Chabo-hiba, 97 five-needle pines (*Pinus parviflora*), 50 plants of *Podocarpus*, and 5 to 10 plants of Japanese Umbrella Pine (*Sciadopitya verticillata*), *Cryptomeria*, and maples. A few tea (*Thea sinensis*), azaleas, and heavenly bamboo (*Nandina*) were included.

London – 1900

This sale occurred on November 6–7, 1900, at the auction house of Robinson & Fisher. Messrs. Yamanaka & Company of Osaka, Japan imported the trees for this sale. By all accounts, this auction should have been a great success due to the combination of the large number of older bonsai specimens. An article, however, published the day after the auction in a London newspaper stated:

The prices realized yesterday scarcely showed that this form of arboriculture is adequately appreciated in this country. Prices as low as a guinea were paid for some, very choice specimens.

Conifers strongly dominated this auction. The most frequently encountered was the Chabo-hiba, followed by the Japanese five-needle pine (*Pinus parviflora*), and black pine (*P. densiflora*). Other conifers represented were *Podocarpus*, *Cyptomeria*, and *Juniperus*. Flowering plants were poorly represented. Maples and azaleas were not included in the sale.

The styles of bonsai were substantially different from the current styles found in Japan. Many of the conifers were made into the shape of various animate or inanimate objects. For example, the octopus was a common theme in many of the *Thuja obtusa nana* specimens.

Orange, New Jersey – 1904

The S. M. Japanese Nursery Company of 191 Valley Road, West Orange, New Jersey, held an auction of Japanese plants, stones, and garden items on May 4–6, 1904. Their *Catalogue of Japanese and Arboreal Plants* contained a total of 560 items for sale. According to the catalog, all of the items were sold without reserve by the importer.

The majority of the bonsai offered were conifers – *Thuja*, *Larix*, *Juniperus*, *Podocarpus* and *Pinus*. A more limited number of *Acer*, *Enkianthus*, *Virburnum*, *Zelkova*, and *Euonymus* were among the flowering trees included in the sale. Many specimens of Chabo-hiba (*Thuja obtusa nana*) ranged from 40 to 300 years old were offered for sale. Selected older specimens were referred to as the finest plants in the sale. For example, specimen number 340, a 160-year-old *Thuja*, was attributed to the famous temple Hongauji in Kyoto, the ancient capital of Japan. Specimen number 352, a 300-year-old Chabo-hiba was from the famous Hoshoji Temple of Oshin Province and in the family of Baron Dewa for 150 years.

Fifteen bonkei and 19 small gardens and box gardens were included in this sale. The distinction between bonkei and box gardens was the size, the box gardens being much larger. Most of the box gardens were recreations of famous sites – the garden of the Kotohira Shrine in Sanuki Province, for example. The sale also included many plants that were shaped in a specific form such as a butterfly, crab, dragon, seal or even an umbrella. These plants today would be classified as topiary because they do not conform to traditional standards for bonsai.

There were many minor sales of bonsai. Robinson & Fisher at Willis's Road, King Street, S. James Square in London held at least two auctions, one small sale in 1899 followed by a major auction in 1900, which has already been discussed. The minor auction was held on July 19, 1899, when 22 bonsai were sold. Over half of the trees in the sale were maples and several had three or four varieties grafted on one stem. Three zelkova trees were also auctioned, one of which had a trunk diameter of 9 inches and was thought to be 83 years old. The sale of the trees commanded a total sale price of 189 pounds and 13 shillings, a considerable sum of money at that time. The plants were the property of a lady who had earlier exhibited many of her plants at Kew Gardens. These plants which had been imported years earlier were reported to be in good health. This confirms that bonsai had been imported into England in the early 1890s.

Messrs. Knight, Frank & Rutley at the Conduit Street Auction Galleries held a sale of bonsai in the spring of 1902. They sold without reserve a collection of 47 specimens that had been assembled by an enthusiastic amateur in Japan. The trees were imported during the late winter and arrived in London just prior to the sale. The sale included a specimen of *Taxus sieboldi*, two varieties of maples, and a 120-year-old *Juniperus chinensis* var. *procumbens* that was 21 inches tall.

Another minor auction of bonsai was held in Paris in June, following the close of the Paris International Exposition. Tissandier (1902) briefly mentioned a sale of 200 bonsai. He reported that the sale included a 250-year-old *Thuja* that sold for 1310 French francs. The sale of all of the trees generated 26,000 francs.

VIII. BONSAI IN EUROPE

It is difficult to establish when bonsai first arrived in England, France, Germany or even the Netherlands. Most of the known references to bonsai in Europe are from British and French publications. Most Europeans probably saw their first living bonsai at one or more of the international expositions or world's fairs being staged in Europe at regular intervals. These multinational events served to introduce bonsai while the early auctions often following the exposition provided opportunities for people to acquire their own specimens. This was followed by the commercial importation of specimens from Japanese nursery brokers to a few English and European nurseries.

A collection of Japanese bonsai was described in an article on plants shipped to England from the Far East (1862). This shipment, which arrived on a steamship during the winter months of 1861, consisted mostly of conifers. Fir trees less than a foot high with their branches bent backwards were thought to be very old. *Podocarpus* and *Retinospora* (*Chamaecyparis*) were also mentioned in this article. The British writer noted the Japanese were very clever in grafting, including inarching grafts.

Early examples of bonsai being grown in England are referred to in the British horticultural journal *The Gardeners Chronicle and Agricultural Gazette*. In 1872, the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce held a banquet in honor of the Japanese Embassy. At that banquet, twelve Japanese flower vases filled with bonsai and

flowers were proudly displayed. The arrangements were described as “Dwarfed trees and clusters of giant flowers ... associated together without the least attempt at symmetrical arrangement.”

Slowly, the practice of bonsai gained a small foothold in England because not all horticulturists and gardeners found them to be monstrosities and deformatives of nature. A few nurseries began to import them from Japan, and, by the time of The Temple Show of 1901, no fewer than five exhibits of bonsai were displayed (Elliott, 1998). Three years later, the firm of Peter Barr constructed a miniature Japanese forest for exhibit in Regent’s Park. These early years of the 1900s coincided with the amazing fascination with the Japanese and Japanese products. According to Elliot, this turn-of-the-century craze with bonsai did not last in England and, likely, in France. Bonsai disappeared from the Chelsea Flower Show for several years only to reappear after the First World War. The art of bonsai in England languished for many years, and it was not until the early 1960s that its popularity began to grow again.

IX. BONSAI IN AUSTRALIA

As with many countries, bonsai was probably introduced to Australia by steamship captains who carried them as gifts in the 1850s and 1860s, about the same time that bonsai was first taken to Hawaii, North America, and Europe. According to information supplied by Australian bonsai artist Megumi Bennett, one of the earliest known bonsai artists in Australia was Hideo Kuwahata (1863–1930). In 1908, Mr. Kuwahata had a Japanese shop at the Rocks in Sydney, and he opened the Mikado Nursery also in Sydney. He sold bonsai, bonsai tools, pots, and display tables at his shop. These items were all imported from Japan. A few years later in 1928 and 1929, he constructed a Japanese garden at his residence.

By this time, a significant number of Chinese immigrants had reached Australia to supply a growing need for laborers. This led to the development of a Chinatown in Sydney. A shop in Chinatown displayed Chinese fig bonsai in its window. The fig bonsai had the appearance of a human body that was sitting cross-legged and with two branches raised to represent arms. This was likely a florist shop similar to those found in authentic Chinatowns in large urban cities.

However, it was not until after World War II that professional nurseries serving a broader audience began to appear in Australia. One company, the Silver Bell Nursery, was owned by the late Mr. Len Weber. A second nursery, the Koreshoff Bonsai Nursery, was owned and operated by the late Vita Koreshoff. These two nurseries opened in 1951. At that time, many types of Japanese bonsai trees could be imported, such as the Japanese black pine, five-needle white pine, *Prunus mume*, *Cryptomeria japonica*, and others. Later, stringent rules regarding the importation of living plants and seeds greatly restricted the types and amount of materials that could be imported.

X. EARLY PUBLICATIONS

The transition of bonsai from an art form practiced in the Orient to one adopted and practiced in the western world could only be accomplished when three conditions were met. First, there had to be a supply of trees, pots, wire, suitable tools, and other specialty items. Next, there had to be pertinent information in western languages, especially English; and third, there had to be proper instruction from knowledgeable teachers. Once these three elements were firmly in place, bonsai began to be embraced by larger and larger numbers of people in the western world.

The transition involved two distinct audiences in the United States – the Japanese-speaking people mainly along the Pacific coast and the English-speaking Caucasians

throughout North America. Japanese and Japanese Americans residing outside their native country had a substantial body of literature to use in learning about bonsai and to study the techniques used to make their miniature trees. Such works as Bungo Miyazawa's *Bonsai: tsuketari hachiue kaki* published in 1922 and again in 1925, Iwao Yoshimura's *Shumi no bonsai shitatekata* first published in 1933 and reprinted in 1935, and Sawada Ushimaro's 1934 *Bonsai geijutsu* served as valuable references to the Japanese community. Norio Kobayashi, one of the bonsai leaders in Japan, edited and published the monthly *Bonsai Magazine* beginning in 1931 and continuing after World War II. This magazine was primarily for bonsai enthusiasts in Japan, but was also sent to several subscribers in the United States. Some of the subscribers like John Naka saw advertisements for books on bonsai in Kobayashi's newsletter and ordered copies directly from Japan. Thus, the small number of Japanese bonsai artists in the United States had access to information written by the most experienced bonsai artists in Japan. It is not surprising that many of these people not only developed some of the finest early bonsai in the United States, but also became the first and second generation teachers. These teachers helped to bridge the gulf between Asian arts and culture with that of western countries.

While such early bonsai leaders in North America as John Naka and Yuji Yoshimura had extensive libraries of Japanese-language literature relating to bonsai, most Caucasians did not have these books nor could they read them. Until 1940, there were no teachers of bonsai outside of the Japanese-speaking communities in the United States. This may explain why none of the bonsai sold in the 1899 auction in Boston and the 1904 auction in West Orange, New Jersey survived to the present. People simply did not know how to properly care for those trees.

Only after a critical mass of published materials was available in English did people have sufficient guidelines to follow on their own in attempting to develop

and style miniature trees as bonsai. The early publications in non-oriental languages set the stage for the successful spread and establishment of bonsai in North America and Europe. These can be grouped in chronological order of their appearance into five major categories:

1. Nursery catalogs produced in Japan in English for the export market.
2. Articles appearing in English and French language magazines and journals.
3. Books published in English for foreigners living or working in Japan.
4. Books published in Japan in English for consumption abroad and for the growing tourist trade.
5. Books published in English in the United States and Europe.

1. Nursery Catalogs Produced in Japan in English for the Export Market

Japanese nurserymen realized early on that cultural and background information in English and other languages would be needed for the art of bonsai to spread to non-oriental countries. Thus, some of the early nursery catalogs of the 1890s and the early 1900s produced in English are among the first to have information on the care and maintenance of bonsai. The most comprehensive information was provided in the catalogs of the Yokohama Nursery, described above. This material, repeated verbatim year after year, was the primary source for people in the Western countries. The Louis Boehmer Nursery was another Japan-based company to include instructions on bonsai care in its catalogs.

Unfortunately, the excellent information on bonsai care presented in the catalogs of the Yokohama Nursery did not receive wide circulation or notice which can be seen in the contents of the numerous articles that appeared in American periodicals from the late 1890s through the 1940s.

2. *Articles Appearing in English and French Language Magazines and Journals*

At first, most of the magazine and journal articles about bonsai stemmed from the presence of bonsai at the many world's fairs and expositions. These articles sometimes included lengthy descriptions of the plants on display at the expositions. One of the earliest was written by Carriere (1878) who described the bonsai on display in the Paris International Exposition in 1878. Articles on various aspects of bonsai development, care and use were published in some of France's leading periodicals including the *Bulletin Societe Botanique de Paris* and the respected *Revue Horticole* (e.g., Carriere, 1889). Maury (1889) authored an interesting article describing the procedures employed by the Japanese to obtain miniature trees. Techniques of root pruning and training branches were included. The information was accurate because it originated with M. S. Takuda from the botany section of the Imperial Museum in Tokyo and from M. Kasawara who was exhibiting bonkei and bonsai at the exposition. Vallot (1889) wrote about the physiological causes that produced what he referred to as a "stunted" tree produced by the Japanese.

The English, like the French, were fascinated by Japanese miniature trees. Notes and articles appeared, including one in the July 29, 1899 issue of *The Gardeners Chronicle* and another in the same journal by the Yokohama Nursery on how to grow Japanese dwarf trees (1899). One of the most important early papers was by Albert Maumene that was translated from French and published in 1909 in the *Journal of the Royal Horticultural Society*. This lengthy and scholarly work

provided the most thorough account of bonsai at time. Other articles appeared in later years.

In the United States, articles about bonsai and tray landscapes began to appear in periodicals in the late 1890s and continued with greater frequency up until the mid-to-late 1930s. No attempt will be made here to account for each of the many articles that were published. The pre-war and World War II years intervened, and it was not until the early 1950s that a renewed interest in Japanese bonsai developed. The pre-war articles were published in a broad range of journals including *Garden Magazine*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *House Beautiful*, *House and Garden*, *Popular Mechanics*, and *Scientific American*. Most of these articles reflected a general lack of understanding by the authors of these plants, how they were developed, or how they could be maintained. In general, the articles published in the United States were not as thorough nor as detailed as some of the articles being published in England and France. It may have been due to the fact that gardening and the level of sophistication in horticulture was higher in those two countries than existed in the United States during this period. Some American writers even felt that Japan was attempting to keep secret the techniques of producing bonsai, but this was an incorrect perception not based upon fact.

In 1923, Ernest F. Coe wrote one of the more significant and valuable early articles published in the United States. He was a landscape architect and plantsman writing about his eleven years of experience actually growing bonsai in the United States. Coe purchased a collection of bonsai in Japan and shipped them to the United States in 1911. While he was in Japan, Coe learned about bonsai care. He kept his trees in a cold frame during the winter months and demonstrated that the old dwarf Japanese trees were not as difficult to maintain as healthy plants as many other writers had maintained.

Soon after the end of World War II, *Life* magazine published a photographic essay titled “Japanese Miniature Trees.” The October 7, 1946 issue contained fourteen photographs of bonsai belonging to Keibun Tanaka. Mr. Tanaka was described as having one of the best collections of miniature trees in Japan. Among his 5,000 bonsai specimens were some 600 years old.

American gardeners had to learn by trial and error prior to World War II because of the lack of detailed information. This changed with two significant events.

The first was that Japanese and Japanese Americans living in California broke away from the Japanese-speaking-only bonsai clubs and began teaching Caucasians the art of bonsai. Frank Nagata, Kelly Nishitani, and John Naka are three outstanding examples of these early teachers. Secondly, American institutions and organizations began inviting Japanese artists to come to the United States to teach. Among the first to be invited to the United States was Kan Yashiroda in 1951 followed in 1952 by Yuji Yoshimura. Both of these men were invited by the Brooklyn Botanical Garden to teach at that garden.

3. Books Published in English for Foreigners Living or Working in Japan

The first detailed books on bonsai techniques in English were written and published in Japan for the growing number of foreigners living there who wanted to learn about this art form. An excellent example and perhaps the first of these was *Dwarf Trees (Bonsai)* by Shibobu Nozaki published in 1940. The English edition was largely a translation of Nozaki’s 1938 work supplemented by many additional photographs.

Nozaki’s *Dwarf Trees (Bonsai)* consist of 74 pages of text that is generously supplemented with 115 full-page plates and numerous lists and tables. Nozaki had been practicing the art of bonsai for many years and had written several earlier books in

Japanese on this subject. Mr. Nozaki enlisted the aid of a Mrs. Hornby, who was living in Japan and was probably one of his students, to translate his work into English. Nozaki wrote that the purpose of his book was to answer often-asked questions while introducing the bonsai art of Japan to Western readers.

Nozaki's work contained 29 chapters and included some historical and background information, but most of this work was devoted to the care, selection, planting, transplanting, watering and fertilizing, and the process of bending trunks. Regrettably, the growing nationalistic movement in Japan and the outbreak of World War II restricted the number of copies reaching western countries. After the war, Nozaki continued his prolific writing and published a series of highly regarded works on bonsai but all were in Japanese.

The Western world is indebted to Alfred Koehn who played a pivotal role in helping to educate English-speaking people in Japan about bonsai, tray landscapes, and ikebana. His 37-page *Notes on Bonsai* was produced in Japan in 1953, specifically for students who attended courses at Kofu-en Bonsai Nursery in Tokyo. Koehn became friends with Yuji Yoshimura, who was at that time a founding member of the Young Men's Bonsai association of Japan. Yoshimura suggested that he and Koehn collaborate in giving bonsai lectures and demonstrations. Yoshimura would present the practical demonstration while Koehn would give a detailed explanation in English. These courses began in the spring 1952.

Koehn, a German, was a tropical agricultural specialist who worked in East Sumatra and then in Japan where he first studied Japanese flower arranging. Prior to and immediately after World War II, Koehn lived and worked in China before returning back to Japan. Koehn published over twenty books on Japanese and Chinese arts and culture, including *The Way of Japanese Flower Arrangement* (1935), *Japanese*

Tray Landscape (1937), *Fragrances from a Chinese Garden* (1944), *Japanese Classical Flower Arrangement* (1951), *Japanese Flower Symbolism* (1954), and *Japanese Floral Arts* (1955).

Japanese businesses catering to foreign visitors responded in various ways to bridge the language gap. The Mujiya Hotel of Miyanoshita, Japan, an inn that received thousands of overseas guests in the 1920s and 1930s, published an English language guide to Japan and the Japanese people (Garis, 1934). This illustrated 200-page guide entitled *We Japanese* contained descriptions of the customs, manners, ceremonies, festivals, arts and crafts of the Japanese. Concise overviews of bonsai and bonkei landscapes were also included.

4. Books Published in Japan for Consumption Abroad and for Tourists

Without question, *Things Japanese* was the single most important guidebook for westerners traveling to Japan between 1890 and 1930. The author Basil Chamberlain, Professor of Japanese and Philology in the Tokyo Imperial University, had a great facility for languages and knowledge of the orient. The first edition of *Things Japanese* was published in 1890, followed by many other expanded editions. Chamberlain wrote that “you may see a pine tree or a maple, sixty years old and perfect in every part, but not more than a foot high.”

The spread of the art of bonsai and miniature landscape received a critically important and significant boost with the publication of two major works, one in 1951 by Norio Kobayashi and the second by Yuji Yoshimura in 1957. The first major work by a leading bonsai authority to be widely distributed outside of Japan was *Bonsai – Miniature Potted Trees* by Norio Kobayashi who was the publisher and editor of the monthly Japanese *Bonsai Magazine*. This 177-page illustrated volume was prepared for the Japanese Travel Bureau as one of a series of books on Japanese arts and

customs. Kobayashi's work is an excellent introduction to bonsai. Contents range from the history, classification and types of bonsai to the cultivation, soil, transplanting, watering, fertilizers, and pruning. It also has an extensive section describing the various species of trees used to create bonsai. This work was hugely popular – it was reprinted thirteen times with the final edition appearing in 1964.

The second major English-language work on bonsai produced in Japan was *The Japanese Art of Miniature Trees and Landscapes* by Yuji Yoshimura and Giovanna M. Halford in 1957. Since the publisher, Charles G. Tuttle and Company, was based both in Tokyo and Rutland, Vermont, this work had assurances of being adequately distributed widely. Aware of the growing interest in the art of developing miniature trees and landscapes, Yoshimura began to teach this art form to westerners based in Tokyo and saw the need for a book. For this Yoshimura turned to one of his advanced students, Giovanna M. Halford, wife of the Education Attaché at the British Embassy in Tokyo. Together they were able to produce a suitable manuscript for the publisher.

5. Books published in French and English

Les Arbres Nains Japonais, a small but valuable work by Albert Maumene published in France in 1902, was one of the earliest works solely on bonsai to appear in a western country [Figure 2.14]. This excellent compilation of informed advice was based upon several early articles that appeared in French journals supplemented with information and some photographs supplied by A. M. Yoshida, Secretary of the Society of Horticulture of Japan and Tokyo, and by M. Theo Eckardt of the Louis Boehmer Nursery in Yokohama, one of the leading exporters of plants and bonsai from Japan to Europe.

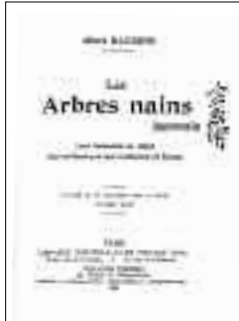


Figure 2.14 Title page from Albert Maumene's 1902 book on Japanese bonsai, one of the earliest known works to appear in a western country.

Les Arbres Nains Japonais is divided into three main chapters. The first deals with an introduction to miniatures, their causes, the different forms, miniature scenes on bonkei, and the importation of the trees. The second chapter focuses on the processes the Japanese use to create the nanized trees, while the third chapter discusses the use, maintenance, and conservation and preservation of the trees in Europe.

A condensed version of this wonderful book with photographs was published in English in the British *Journal of the Royal Horticulture Society* in 1908, although Maumene's name was misspelled "Maumerne" in this article.

Ironically, the author of the first major work on bonsai in English in the United States, Bunkio Matsuki, was not a bonsai specialist or even a horticulturist, but a businessman who specialized in importing and selling Japanese goods in the United States [**Figure 2.15**]. He sold his wares in Boston and Salem, Massachusetts. Matsuki's publication, *Japanese Potted Trees (Hachinoki)*, in 1931, gave American readers their first more detailed account of bonsai. Matsuki pointed out that the Japanese never used the term *dwarf trees* but instead used the older name *hachinoki* until the more modern word *bonsai* was adopted.

Japanese Potted Trees (Hachinoki) described the Japanese propensity for landscape gardens, their love of miniature landscape, and their representation of older, ancient-appearing trees. In this work, Matsuki provided an introduction to bonsai and bonsai techniques, while he introduced the 32 Japanese hachinoki or bonsai that Ernest F. Coe gave to the Brooklyn Botanical Garden in 1925. In a

brief section on how to train dwarf trees, Matsuki described a technique using a solution of Funori, a Japanese glue made from a marine alga, to soften the stems and make them more pliable to bending and wiring them into new positions.

Matsuki also wrote another guidebook, *The Japanese Garden of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden*, which was published in 1930. For further information on Bonkio Matsuki, readers are referred to a detailed account of his life by Scharf (1993).

By the 1950s several additional books, pamphlets and articles began appearing about bonsai and bonsai techniques.

XI. EARLY PUBLIC BONSAI COLLECTIONS

Clearly, the first public exhibitions of bonsai in the western world were at the many world's fairs and international expositions; however, these were temporary exhibits lasting only six months to year in length. The Royal Botanical Garden at Kew in London, England may well have had one of the first displays in a public botanical garden. A collection of miniature trees at Kew was mentioned in a March 3, 1900 issue of *The Gardeners Chronicle*. This may have been a seasonal display rather than a more lasting display.

There were three early bonsai collections that were on public exhibition in the early 1900s in the United States. They could be seen in the Japanese Tea Garden in San



Figure 2.15 Bunkio Matsuki, Japanese businessman living in New England, wrote one of the major English language publications, *Japanese Potted Trees (Hachinoki)* in 1931. Courtesy Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, MA.

Francisco, at the Arnold Arboretum in Boston, and at the Brooklyn Botanical Garden in New York City.

Japanese Tea Garden

This commercial venture developed after M. H. de Young, a San Francisco businessman, visited the Japanese exhibition at the Chicago Columbian Exposition.

The Japanese Village that Young established was so successful that it was made a permanent feature in Golden Gate Park in San Francisco. The operation of this village was turned over to Makoto Hagiwara who transformed it into a Japanese Tea Garden. Mr. Hagiwara was a talented and creative person who understood and valued Japanese gardens and immediately began to import garden items from Japan, including lanterns, other art objects, and large mature bonsai.

Hagiwara's efforts were stymied in 1900 when the state transferred Golden Gate Park to the city of San Francisco. Hagiwara and the city were unable to agree on the terms for his continued participation, resulting in Hagiwara establishing a competing operation nearby. Hagiwara's operation was very successful while the city's was not. By 1910, Hagiwara and the city agreed upon terms for Hagiwara to run the Japanese Tea Garden. He built a Japanese-style house and ran a very successful concession. The gardens were expanded and enhanced with ponds, an arched bridge, and other amenities, some acquired from the 1915 Panama International Exposition held in San Francisco. Hagiwara continued to import garden items and bonsai until his death in 1925. The garden was run by his son Goro and his family until the outbreak of World War II. The Hagiwaras were forced to abandon their business and home for a relocation camp during much of the war. The Tea Garden, renamed the Oriental Tea Garden during the war, was never able to resume its pre-war operation, and most of the collections of bonsai, stone lanterns, and other items were sold to private individuals.

Brooklyn Botanical Garden

The Brooklyn Botanical Garden (the “BBG”) was founded in 1910 by the Borough of Brooklyn, New York City. Soon afterwards, a traditional Japanese garden was designated and constructed on the grounds of this new institution. This development may have inspired Connecticut plantsman Ernest F. Coe to donate his collection of 32 Japanese bonsai representing 21 species of trees and shrubs. Mr. Coe was President of the Elm City Nursery in New Haven Connecticut. He had imported the bonsai from Japan in 1911 probably from the Yokohama Nursery.

The initial 32 bonsai that Coe donated apparently were not on public display for many years (Scholtz, 1979). It was not until the end of World War II that this garden began to pay special attention to them. George Avery (1965), Director of the BBG, credited much of the public interest in bonsai to the thousands of American servicemen who were sent to Japan immediately after the war ended. Upon their return, those living in the New York City area began making inquiries each week about bonsai care.

In response to this new interest, the garden published a 12-page article about bonsai in the summer 1950 issues of their *Plants and Garden* journal. Mr. Kan Yashiroda, a Japanese horticulturist and owner of a nursery in Japan, wrote this paper. George Avery then invited Mr. Yashiroda to edit the BBG’s first handbook on bonsai in 1951. In January 1954 Avery and Frank Okamura, Curator of the Japanese garden and the bonsai collection, taught their first bonsai class in January 1954. Eighty-six people were enrolled in their class.

The bonsai collection at the BBG continued to expand and today it is one of the premier bonsai collections on public display in America.

Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University

The Arnold Arboretum has some of the oldest surviving bonsai specimens of all of the early introductions of these plants to the United States. They were given to the Arnold Arboretum by the family of Larz Anderson. Anderson was born into a well-to-do family and traveled extensively with them throughout his youth. He embarked on a worldwide tour in 1888, following his graduation from Harvard University. He brought two dwarf maple trees back to the U.S. from Japan in 1899 at the end of his trip.

Anderson served in the military and then in different diplomatic posts including a brief six-month term as Ambassador to Japan during the Taft Administration. During this time, he visited the Yokohama Nursery where he arranged to purchase 40 bonsai and have them shipped to his estate in Brookline, Massachusetts (Tredici, 1989). Anderson exhibited his bonsai at the Massachusetts Horticultural Society's spring flower shows in 1916 and 1933. After his death, his wife donated 30 bonsai specimens in 1937 and later the remaining plants following her death.

For a more complete account of the Larz Anderson collection, see Peter Del Tredici's paper elsewhere in this publication.

XII. IMMIGRATION

New immigrants typically bring different aspects of their culture with them. The traditional arts and crafts are among the many contributions the Chinese and Japanese brought to the United States and other western countries. But why weren't the Chinese responsible for the introduction and spread of miniature trees (penjing)? After all, the Chinese immigrated to the western United States in much larger numbers than the Japanese and approximately 50 years earlier.

To understand why the Japanese were successful and the Chinese were not, it is necessary to examine their immigration patterns.

The Chinese immigrants, predominantly uneducated young males, came to California to participate in the gold rush. Their population in the western United States grew from 41,443 in 1860 to approximately one quarter of a million by 1880. Because they were largely uneducated, they were not well trained in traditional arts and crafts skills. Unfortunately, the Chinese were often badly treated and discriminated against, making it difficult to assimilate into the predominant Caucasian population. After the gold rush frenzy subsided, large number of Chinese returned to their homeland. Those who stayed behind eked out an existence mainly in service-oriented trades, such as cooks, tailors, and cleaners. Since it was primarily Chinese men coming to the U.S. seeking fortunes in the gold field, men outnumbered women by nearly 20 to 1 in 1880. There were no serious attempts to bring greater numbers of Chinese women to the western United States during this period. The Chinese immigration came to a halt in 1882 when Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act due to a fear that the Chinese were taking jobs away from Caucasians. The Chinese population began a steady decline for nearly 50 years.

As for the Japanese, the government of Hawaii first recruited Japanese as laborers long before they were immigrating to the United States. Hawaii was faced with a growing need for laborers in the mid 1800s to support the expanding sugar industry and a sharply declining native population. The British ship *Scioto* arrived in Honolulu on June 19, 1868, with 149 Japanese on board. Three years later, Hawaii and Japan entered into a treaty to facilitate trade and immigration (Marumoto, 1972). Japanese immigration to Hawaii increased five-fold between 1890 and 1900. By 1900, there were 61,111 official Japanese residents, and by

1920 the Japanese population had swelled to 109,274 or 42% of the population of the Hawaiian Islands (Odo & Sinoto, 1985).

It was during the late 1800s that bonsai first arrived in Hawaii. It seems that Japanese captains of merchant marine ships brought bonsai as gifts in appreciation for the hospitality they received from the Hawaiians. In fact, a Japanese Black pine in the Hawaii State Bonsai Repository at the Fuku Bonsai Center in Kona, Hawaii reportedly originated as a ship captain's gift from the late 1890s.

The Japanese immigration to mainland United States and western Canada did not get underway until after the Chinese influx had stopped. Prior to 1890, only 3,000 Japanese immigrants had come to the United States; however, the numbers increased to approximately 275,000 by 1920. Many of these Issei (first generation immigrants) eventually became farmers. Most owned or operated small farms that were intensively managed as high labor and high yielding operations. Some even developed ornamental nurseries. The Domoto brothers first established a small nursery in 1882 in Oakland, California. Eventually, the Domoto brothers' operations grew and they had a major influence on horticulture in the San Francisco Bay area.

There was a major difference between the Japanese Issei immigrants and the first generation of Chinese immigrants. The Japanese Consul in San Francisco urged his government not to send undesirable persons to the United States, but instead to send more educated and highly skilled people. Many of these were skilled in traditional arts and crafts. Secondly, recently established Japanese men frequently went back to Japan to marry and then return to the United States with their brides. Or in some cases, they obtained their brides through marriages arranged by their families in Japan. Thus, by the time the U. S. Congress shut off Japanese

immigration in 1924, the ratio between the sexes was far more favorable than existed for the Chinese population. The 1920 census showed that Japanese men outnumbered women by less than 2 to 1.

Japanese-owned nurseries like that of the Domoto brothers were importing and selling bonsai in the late 1890s and early 1900s, mostly to a select number of knowledgeable Japanese and to a small group of curious Caucasians. Japanese and Japanese-Americans began to come together to form Japanese-only clubs or associations to share information about plants and to teach and learn from each other. These were the first organized bonsai clubs in North America, primarily in the Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Seattle regions.

XIII. THE WORLD WAR II YEARS (1942–1945)

On February 19, 1942, U.S. president Franklin D. Roosevelt signed an executive Order 9066 authorizing the Secretary of War to prescribe military areas within the United States as a means of protection against espionage and against sabotage to national defense materials, premises and utilities. This was the legal basis to force over 120,000 Japanese people, the majority of whom were American citizens, from their homes and jobs into camps or War Relocation Centers away from the Pacific coastal regions of the United States. The War Department established two zones along the West coast. The prohibited zones included all the coastal regions that were off limits to anyone of Japanese descent, and another area more inland that was off limits except for those with special permits for work or for educational pursuits. These two zones covered approximately two-thirds of the state of California, one-half of Oregon, and about two-thirds of the state of Washington.

A War Relocation Authority (WRA) was created on March 18, 1942, by another Presidential Executive Order and was given the authority to administer ten perma-

ment relocation centers in seven states. Two centers each were located in Arizona, California, and Arkansas. Additional camps were located in Wyoming, Colorado, and Utah. While the camps were being constructed, Japanese and Japanese Americans residing in coastal areas were made to report to holding facilities in different cities until the camps were ready. In the spring of 1942, those living in the Los Angeles Basin were told to report to the Santa Anita Race Track in Arcadia, California. During this time, many bonsai collections were lost.

Frank Fusaji Nagata practiced the art of bonsai in Los Angeles prior to the war and had a collection of bonsai [Figure 2.16]. According to his daughter, Kay Komai,



Figure 2.16 Frank Nagata, one of the early bonsai leaders in southern California who was willing to teach Caucasians. Courtesy of Peter L. Bloomer.

Mr. Nagata and a friend, Morihei Furuya, placed many of their bonsai on the curb of a boulevard not far from their home and attempted to sell them. Fortunately, Nagata owned a Model A Ford and was allowed to bring as much of his family's possessions as his car would carry to the Santa Anita Race Track. His family rode in a bus in order for him to carry more in his small car. Frank took several of his prized bonsai with him and then to Camp Amache near Granada, Colorado. Some of the plants not sold were given to his Caucasian friends for safekeeping by planting them in the ground.

A friend of Nagata's, Morihei Furuya, who also lived in Los Angeles, similarly brought several of his bonsai with him to Santa

Anita and then to Granada, Colorado. At Camp Amache, Frank Nagata and Morihei Furuya would tend their small collection of bonsai as they waited for the war to end. Their teacher, Sam Tameichi Doi, a key figure in bonsai both prior to and after World War II, was also assigned to the same Colorado camp. While this was a difficult and fearful time, some positive outcomes resulted from the internment. Doi continued his teacher/student relationship with Nagata and Furuya. These three individuals would later play a crucial role in re-establishing the art of bonsai in California after the war and the two Doi students along with three others would serve as the five founders of the Southern California Bonsai Society (the forerunner of the California Bonsai Society).

It was here in Camp Amache that Doi, Nagata and Furuya planned and staged what may have been one of the earliest bonsai exhibitions to take place during the war years and one of the earliest ever held in the United States.

Other Japanese American bonsai practitioners who were displaced include Chiyokichi Takahashi, Mr. Ishii, and Mr. Tsunekawa. Mr. Takahashi's daughter, Grace Suzuki (1975), wrote that her father was one of the outstanding bonsai stylists and teachers in the San Francisco Bay area. He arrived in the United States in 1895 and worked initially as a tailor, but his true love was gardening. In 1927, he began to work in earnest with bonsai using seeds he receiving from the Yokohama Nursery. Mr. Takahasi rented his Berkeley home with the understanding that his bonsai trees would be watered. When he finally was able to return to his home, he found that half of his trees had died and the remaining ones had grown to jungle proportions. She reported that with time, her father was able to develop them back into bonsai once again.

In his touching and revealing book, *Beauty Behind Barbed Wire* (1952), Allen Eaton tells about bonsai artist Mr. I. Ishii who was a resident in the relocation center near

Topaz, Arizona. Mr. Ishii missed his 35-year-old maple bonsai that he started from seed. Ishii began to experiment with desert plants for bonsai and by the time he was able to leave Topaz, he had a respectable greasewood bonsai.

Mr. Tsunekawa, an experienced and trained florist skilled in growing chrysanthemums, made bonsai at Camp Rohwer. In addition to growing a wide range of traditional chrysanthemum, he also grew and developed dwarfed chrysanthemum plants in tall, narrow, handmade wooden pots. One of his dwarf chrysanthemum plants was reported to have 500 blossoms. A photograph of this plant is included in Eaton's book.

Many of the Japanese Americans based in relocation camps used their time and opportunity to pursue their traditional arts and crafts. They practiced calligraphy, wood carving, embroidery, painting, dance, koku, ikebana, suiseki, bonkei, and bonsai. Each of the camps held regular art exhibitions of products made by teachers and students. Perhaps one of the benefits from the camps was the opportunity for some of the members to pass their knowledge and skills on to others and to the next generation. The camps afforded the time for a larger number of people to pursue these artistic endeavors than would have occurred under normal circumstances.

All people of Japanese origin living in Hawaii during the war years were ordered to refrain from any acts of hostility or aid to the enemies of the U. S., and to turn in all firearms, explosives, cameras, communication devices. All Isseis were prohibited from traveling or changing their residence without approval. Some were arrested and detailed to one of several camps established in Hawaii.

Second-generation families and individuals were afraid that adherence to Japanese traditions might identify them as sympathetic to the Japanese side. Eager to show

their loyalty to the United States, many of them disposed of their traditional Japanese items, such as swords, Japanese language books, and even their bonsai. As a result, many pre-war bonsai collections were deliberately destroyed or abandoned by planting them in yards.

One individual in Hawaii is credited with saving many early bonsai specimens and building a collection when all others had abandoned them. Mr. Sobuku Nishihira assembled his collection in Hilo where he lived. Nishihira and his bonsai had a profound influence on a friend, Haruo Kaneshiro. Kaneshiro or “Papa” Kaneshiro, as he was affectionately called, became fascinated with Nishihira’s plants and went on to become the premier bonsai artist and teacher in Hawaii.

XIV. THE PRE-WORLD WAR II AND EARLY REGIONAL BONSAI LEADERS

A sampling of some of the early bonsai artists and regional leaders illustrates how wide spread bonsai had become in North America prior to 1960. While it is very difficult to identify every early bonsai leader, two individuals are known to have practiced bonsai or bonkei in the Pacific Northwest prior to World War II and helped establish these art forms in this region of North America. They are Kelly Nishitani and Zenhichi Harui. Nishitani was responsible late in his career for influencing a Caucasian, Bertram Bruenner, who was one of the few westerners to have studied and practiced bonsai in the pre-war years.

Zenhichi Harui (1882–1970) immigrated from Japan to the Pacific Northwest in 1908. he established Bainbridge Nursery in 1910 on 20 acres of land on Brainbridge Island near Seattle, Washington. Zenhichi married, raised a family and operated this nursery until 1942, when he and his family were forced to leave and not allowed to return until 1946. By then, most of the plants they once had were

dead or missing. Although little is written about Mr. Harui, his son Junkoh fondly remembers seeing his father and his uncle practicing the art of bonsai. After a hard day's work, his father would sit on a hard wooden stool in front of a wooden bench and work silently for hours – clipping, shaping, pruning, caressing, manicuring and even talking to a group of odd-shaped plants. Zenhichi Harui was actually practicing the art of bonkei more than working with individually-styled trees. He developed tray landscapes often with small figures. He would make miniature landscape and bonsai to sell to the public, although he would place “Not for sale” signs on his favorite specimens.

Zenhichi would lose himself in the realm of these miniature landscapes and come closer in touch with nature. He could easily imagine himself walking among the scenes he created. Watching his father create these wonderful tray landscapes, Junkoh learned to appreciate them just as his father did. Junkoh once wrote in a local newspaper that he would creep into his father's workroom and watch in fascination as his father created those miniature wonders. Junkoh imagined, as his father did in his work, that he would magically shrink down to a size in proportion to the miniature landscape. There, he would climb the hills and pause at the bubbling stream. He would have imaginary battles with tigers and other great adventures within his father's tray landscapes.

Bertram Bruenner saw his first bonsai soon after he moved to Seattle from Minnesota in 1935. He was thrilled at the sight of a five-needle pine growing in the window of a florist shop in Seattle (Cunningham, 1976). Bruenner learned that it was one of several for sale by a Japanese businessman who had imported much of his collection from Japan. He quickly arranged a visit to see these plants and purchased three of them. From this point on, bonsai would play a major role in Bertram Bruenner's life. While his interest first developed in the late 1930s, it

significantly increased when he moved in 1941 from an apartment into a house with a garden. His collection grew to several hundred plants.

Bruenner remembers being greatly influenced by Kelly Nishitani and George Miller. Nishitani was one of the early nurserymen in the Seattle region to grow and possibly import bonsai and other plants from Japan. Bruenner recalled going to Nishitani's garden to see his collection and to learn bonsai techniques. Nishitani served as an advisor to Bruenner and others when they were organizing their first bonsai exhibits. Bruenner would go on to become known as the "Grandfather" of bonsai in the Pacific Northwest and play a leading role in the establishment of the Puget Sound Bonsai Association in 1974.

George Fukuma was born in Japan in 1902 and immigrated to the United States in 1919 where he settled in Denver, Colorado. He created bonsai at his home and maintained a collection of them. He was one of the founders of the Denver Senior Bonsai Club in 1945. Many years later, he helped to establish the Denver Junior Bonsai Club. Six years later, these two clubs would merge and become the Denver Bonsai Club.

The greatest concentration of people practicing bonsai in the pre-war years were the Japanese or Japanese-Americans living in California. The earliest members were immigrants who practiced and taught others this art form. Among those fostering the practice of bonsai in the United States are Toshio Domoto, Chiyokichi Takahashi, Sam Tamekichi Doi, Frank Nagata, Morihei Fuyama, and Ryozo Nomura. Sam Tamekichi Doi (1880–1953) was one of the most influential early teachers of bonsai in the western United States. Doi apparently learned to develop bonsai as a young man in Japan prior to his immigration to the United States in 1906 (Yeager, 1999). He and his wife first lived in Berkeley, California.

Unfortunately his wife died soon after giving birth to their second child. Doi and his children lived in a Japanese community while he worked as a gardener. It was here that he first became acquainted with Frank Nagata. In 1933, Sam Doi and family moved to Los Angeles and lived in a predominantly Japanese neighborhood. There, Doi organized one of the earliest bonsai groups in southern California whose members included Frank Nagata, Morihei Furuya, and Mrs. Ai Okumura. Like many other Japanese living in southern California, Doi and his family were sent to Camp Amache in Grenada, Colorado, soon after the onset of World War II. Yeager (1999) reported that Doi practiced bonsai in this camp. Frank Nagata and Morihei Furuya were also based in Camp Amache, and they too continued to make bonsai when suitable materials could be found. After the war, Doi returned to his former neighborhood in Los Angeles where he discovered a group of avid bonsai artists living within a short distance of each other. The group consisted of Frank Nagata, Mrs. Okimura, Khan and Kay Komai, and a relatively young John Naka. Doi continued to teach bonsai to his friends until he returned to Japan in 1949 and never came back to the United States.

Frank Ekizo Iura (1896–1984) was another of the early influential bonsai leaders in southern California. Iura came to California in 1915 and lived with relatives in Anaheim. Like many other young Japanese men, he returned to Japan to marry and then returned to California with his new bride. He continued his business in San Francisco until 1932, when he moved to Los Angeles and, together with a partner, opened a nursery center. He and his family were moved to Fort Lupton, Colorado during the Second World War. After this, he returned to Los Angeles and pursued a career in landscape gardening. According to Yeager (1999) his interest in bonsai developed at this time. Iura and several others of his Japanese friends

founded the Los Angeles Bonsai Club in 1960, a club that was exclusively for Japanese men and all meetings were held in Japanese.

Frank Fusaji Nagata (1890–1980) rose from being a student to become one of the great early leaders in bonsai in southern California and was among the first of the Japanese willing to teach Caucasians this art form. Nagata was born in Japan but immigrated to Berkeley, California when only 16. He studied bonsai under Doi's tutelage. Nagata moved to Los Angeles and pursued his interest in bonsai and developed a collection of miniature trees prior to the outbreak of World War II. The war forced him to sell or abandon most of his collection except for the ones he took to Camp Amache in Colorado. After the war, Nagata returned to Los Angeles and began a career in landscape gardening. In 1952, he opened one of the first bonsai nurseries in the United States – the Alpine Baiko Bonsai Nursery. This grew to such an extent that he could give up his landscape activities to pursue bonsai full-time. Nagata helped to organize regular exhibits of bonsai in Southern California, taught Caucasians the art form, and became a widely respected leader in this region [see **Figure 2.16**].

Fred Lape, an innovative American pioneer who developed the George Landis Arboretum near Esperance, New York started developing bonsai when he transplanted two stunted red cedar, *Juniperus virginiana*, trees in shallow wooden boxes. He had seen pictures of bonsai but did not have any books on bonsai, nor did he have the benefit of a trained instructor. Lape didn't see any reason why the art of bonsai couldn't apply to native American plants and proceeded over many years to develop what was likely the first American collection of bonsai in the eastern United States, and, perhaps, even in North America.

Even though his first trees died, he persisted and eventually developed a collection of 24 bonsai that were displayed in the George Landis Arboretum in the early 1950s. His collection consisted of twelve native North American species, including juniper, red cedar, balsam fir, eastern white pine, pitch pine, hemlock, white birch, beech, hornbeam, hop hornbeam, and shadbush. In his wonderful little book *A Garden of Trees and Shrubs* (1965), Lape wrote:

And however popular bonsai may become with the mass public, they will always appeal most to the person who is at heart an art connoisseur and whose interest in natural things is linked to a feeling for line and beauty.

XV. EARLY POST-WAR BONSAI LEADERS

Three individuals stand out far beyond all others in bringing bonsai to the attention of people of all races in the United States and other western countries. Haruo Kaneshiro emerged as the premier bonsai leader in Hawaii and a pioneer in promoting tropical bonsai worldwide. Yuji Yoshimura and John Naka, men from different backgrounds, would emerge as the undisputed leaders in the continental United States from the late 1950's to the new millennium. An entire volume would be needed for both Naka and Yoshimura, to adequately detail their enormous contributions to the development of bonsai in the United States and Western world. A brief summation of some of their contributions is given here.

Haruo "Papa" Kaneshiro

Bonsai flourished in Hawaii following the Second World War due to the efforts of many but especially to Haruo "Papa" Kaneshiro (1907–1991). Kaneshiro was born in Kanegusuku village Okinawa in 1907 and was taken to Hawaii by his father as part of a large immigrant work force. Kaneshiro eventually opened the Paawa Café

in Honolulu and later expanded and open two other restaurants. His business flourished during the rapid economic growth in the 1950s in Hawaii. Kaneshiro and his wife Masako became naturalized citizens of the United States on November 11, 1954. After selling their restaurants, they retired to the St. Louis Heights of Honolulu. Here Kaneshiro was able to devote more time to his family and to pursue learning better English and developing bonsai. He served as a sensitive teacher and leader and as a pioneer in expanding bonsai into the tropical realm. He experimented with many tropical tree species and promoted their use in making bonsai.

Kaneshiro obtained many books and magazines from Japan, including Norio Kobayashi's monthly *Bonsai Magazine*, to fuel his growing interest in bonsai. In 1970 Kaneshiro joined with Mike Uyeno, David Kukumoto, and Ted Tsukiyama to split away from a Japanese-speaking-only bonsai club to form a new organization that would teach and popularize bonsai in English to all. Kaneshiro was the oldest of the group and the leader of the new Hawaii Bonsai Association. As Ted Tsukiyama so aptly stated in 1991:

Papa Kaneshiro got his name "Papa" because he has truly been a "a bonsai Papa" to most of the current bonsai generation of Hawaii today.

Kaneshiro did not confine his teaching and bonsai demonstrations to Hawaii. He was invited to conduct demonstrations in Seattle, Washington; Los Angeles, California; and Washington, D.C. Kaneshiro lead an Hawaiian delegation to Australia and New Zealand. This five-person delegation taught others how to create tropical bonsai. Kaneshiro was awarded a Certificate of Merit by the Nippon Bonsai Association at the Bonsai Clubs International's 1990 Convention in

Honolulu in recognition of his contributions to bonsai. His friends, family, and members of the world bonsai community honored him by raising the funds to build a public greenhouse to display tropical bonsai at the U.S. National Arboretum's National Bonsai & Penjing Museum in Washington, D.C.

John Yoshio Naka

The rapid growth and interest in bonsai in North America and many other western countries is inextricably linked to one individual, John Y. Naka. His extraordinary talents as a bonsai stylist, a teacher, and a leader have produced new generations of bonsai artists and leaders. He has influenced and stimulated thousands to practice the art of bonsai, and produced two of the most widely used and high regarded books on bonsai techniques in the West. No other American or immigrant to the United States has had a greater impact on the field of bonsai or received such national and international recognition as Naka.

Naka was born in Fort Lupton, Colorado on August 16, 1914, the third child of Kakichi and Yukino Naka. In November 1922, his parents took him and two other siblings to Kyushu, Japan to help care for Kakichi's father. John Naka was educated in Japan and was strongly influenced by his grandfather Sadahei. Sadahei shared his love of nature and his knowledge of bonsai with his young grandson. Sadahei told John Naka not to torture trees but to accept them as they are. John learned his basic bonsai techniques at this time.

Naka returned to Colorado at the age of 21 and worked with his older brother on a farm in Watenburg. John married Alice Toshiko Mizunaga and began to raise a family in Colorado for the duration of the war. The Naka family moved to Los Angeles in 1946, and John began working in landscape gardening. During this time he began to develop bonsai. Sam Doi, who spent the war years in the inter-

ment camp at Granada, Colorado, was also in Los Angeles. John sought him out and studied with Doi until Doi returned to Japan in 1948. Doi introduced Naka to other bonsai enthusiasts including Frank Nagata, Morihei Furuya, and Mrs. Ai Okumura.



Figure 2.17 Witman G. Hope, Manager of the Annual Pasadena Spring Flower Show, presenting the best in the show award for a bonsai display to John Y. Naka, April 3, 1954. Courtesy of John Y. Naka.

John Naka subscribed to the Japanese language *Bonsai Magazine*, edited and largely written by Norio Kobayashi, and also purchased many books on bonsai from Japan. John began displaying bonsai in numerous horticultural shows beginning in 1950, when he first exhibited some of his trees at the Fannie F. Morrison Center in Pasadena. He and four others formed the Southern

California Bonsai Club in 1951. In 1954, he and his friends entered bonsai specimens in the Pasadena Flower Show and John accepted a trophy for the best exhibit by a private grower [**Figure 2.17**]. A year later, he and four of his close friends formally organized the California Bonsai Society, Inc. This society replaced his informal Southern California Bonsai Club.

John became known for his outstanding skills as a bonsai stylist, but also for his outgoing personality, his enthusiasm, and his willingness and ability to teach others. Naka eagerly appeared on television shows and readily accepted requests for magazine and newspaper interviews. As a result, he was in demand for lectures and demonstrations. Naka had a particular style of teaching that was interlaced with

numerous proverbs that he learned from his grandfather. He used these to help guide his students. For example, he used the proverb “*Better to walk before the hen than behind the oxen.*” This was useful to help the beginners feel a greater degree of satisfaction from making their own bonsai than from viewing someone else’s masterpiece specimens. If he saw a student criticizing someone else’s bonsai tree, one might hear Naka tell the critic “*Don’t laugh at the other monkey’s red fanny.*” This was his way of telling the person not be critical of a person’s bonsai when he probably has several at his home in need of care.

One of his new students purchased a large pot and several foemina junipers with the intent of duplicating Naka’s famous “Goshin” group planting. Obviously the over confident student taking on more than he could handle reminded Naka of another apt proverb: “*One inch snake believes it can swallow a cow.*” By using proverbs combined with encouragement and by example, Naka developed his highly successful and effective teaching techniques. Nina Ragle captured the proverbs that Naka used throughout his career in an engaging book, *Even Monkeys Fall Out of Trees* (1987).

John was a gifted artist who loved to draw and paint. John first began drawing bonsai in 1960 and used many of his early drawings in his *Bonsai Techniques I* that was published in 1973. His reputation spread rapidly, and, beginning in 1962, John began traveling to other states including the east coast of the United States to teach and demonstrate. During the 1960s, many new bonsai clubs were formed with support and encouragement from Naka. With his encouragement as President, the California Bonsai Society began publishing its annual *Bonsai in California* magazine. This richly illustrated publication featured the specimens exhibited in that society’s annual exhibition.

John and his wife Alice returned to Japan at the invitation of Norio Kobayashi in 1965 to attend the 29th Kokofu-ten Bonsai exhibition in Ueno Park, Tokyo. While there, Naka met with many of the Japanese bonsai leaders. Norio Kobayashi gave John an annotated business card that helped Naka with other introductions during his visit. Kobayashi influenced John Naka more than any other figure in bonsai. He was a source of encouragement and was responsible for persuading John to look for and use native North American plants as bonsai materials and not rely on the traditional plants used in Japanese bonsai.

By the early 1970s John Naka was the acknowledged leader of bonsai in the western United States and, along with Yuji Yoshimura in New York, they were the two outstanding bonsai artists in North America. Citations from the various bonsai clubs and associations were presented with increased regularity. He received awards and recognition from throughout the United States. The Massachusetts Horticultural Society in Boston presented Naka with their Thomas Roland Medal in May 1975.

In the 1970s Naka began to take students on study tours of Japan. During this period he traveled to Canada to teach and later to Australia. His international travels continued with his first trip to South America in 1976. Naka continued to travel to various countries teaching and demonstrating for another two decades. When *Bonsai Techniques I* was published by Naka's own Bonsai Institute of California, the demand for his book was so great that it resulted in a series of reprints over the years. In 1979, he co-authored a book on *Bonsai Techniques for Satsuki Azaleas*.

As his students advanced and became more proficient in this art form, Naka realized that they would need more advanced instruction. This led to the publication

in 1982 of his *Bonsai Techniques II*, a hefty 442-page tome. This too was richly illustrated with hundreds of line drawings and photographs by John Naka. By 1987, his *Bonsai Techniques I* had been translated and published in Spanish, German, French, and Italian.

Naka's first lecture and demonstration trip to South Africa extended throughout most of the month of October 1980. There he amazed audiences in Johannesburg, Pretoria, and Cape Town. This was the first of three trips to that country. By the 1980s John Naka was the most popular and admired bonsai master in the western world. His travels also took him to Hong Kong, China, and India.

On March 7, 1984, John Naka donated one of his best bonsai specimens, "Goshin" (Guardian of the Spirit), to The National Bonsai Foundation in Washington, D.C. This was the first tree to be contributed to the then planned North American Pavilion at the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum at the U.S. National Arboretum in Washington, D.C. It was Naka's leadership gift of one of the best known bonsai that led to the gift of many other outstanding specimens styled by people throughout the United States.

Naka's most prestigious award was conferred on him by the Japanese government. On October 7, 1985, Taizo Watanabe, Consulate General of Japan in Los Angeles, notified Naka that he would receive the Fifth Class of the Order of the Rising Sun. This is the highest award that can be presented to a citizen of a country other than Japan. National recognition in the United States was also bestowed on John Naka. An announcement from Washington, D.C. on July 31, 1987, informed the public that the proposed new North American Pavilion at the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum would be named in honor of Naka.

Another coveted national award came on May 26, 1992, when the National Endowment for the Arts selected John Naka to receive a National Heritage Fellowship. Each year, this federal agency recognizes a few select folk artists in the United States. He received this award because he represented the very highest standards of performance in his art form – bonsai! On March 5, 2004, John Naka received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles.

John Y. Naka continued to practice the art of bonsai well into his late 80s. Throughout his career, John benefited from the steadfast help and devotion of his wife Alice. Her behind-the-scene support permitted him to achieve the great recognition that he so deserved. John Yoshio Naka will be long remembered as the greatest bonsai master in North America in the nineteenth millennium.

Yuji Yoshimura

Bonsai artist and teacher Yuji Yoshimura was born, raised, and educated in Japan, but spent most of his adult life in the United States teaching others the art of bonsai and enthusiastically promoting it wherever he traveled. Yuji was born in 1921 in Tokyo in a bonsai nursery owned by his father and was exposed to bonsai and practical horticulture at an early age. As a young man, he studied guitar, violin, and developed a keen interest in classical music. Yoshimura received his formal training in horticulture from the Tokyo Horticultural School where he graduated in 1938. After serving in the Japanese Army in China during World War II, Yuji returned to Tokyo and in 1948 established a bonsai nursery. He was one of the founders of the Nippon Young Men's Bonsai Association.

Yoshimura became acquainted with Alfred Koehn, a German agricultural specialist who was already knowledgeable about tray landscapes, ikebana, and bonsai. They

agreed to join together to teach English-speaking people at Yoshimura's nursery. Koehn wrote *Notes on Bonsai* (1953) specifically for the students taking classes at Yoshimura nursery. Yuji was invited to speak about bonsai to officials at the British Embassy in Tokyo in 1952. As a result of this talk and a 10-day bonsai exhibit in a major department store with daily demonstrations on how to create bonsai, he became known to English-speaking people in Tokyo as someone who was willing to teach them the art of bonsai. Between 1952 and late 1958, over 600 students had taken classes at his nursery. One of them, Giovanni Halford, helped him write the most detailed work on the styling and care of bonsai in English at that time. *The Japanese Art of Miniature Trees and Landscapes* (1957) rapidly became the standard reference for people in western countries to learn about bonsai. Many of his students refer to this work as the "Bonsai Bible" and Yoshimura himself as "The Father of Bonsai" (Stowell, 1964; Lanman, 1994), a reflection of the high esteem in which they held this outstanding teacher.

In 1957, Yoshimura was offered a fellowship from the Brooklyn Botanical Garden to teach courses in bonsai. Yoshimura must have decided at that point that he was going to stay in the United States because he brought 22 cases containing numerous plants, books, tools, and other materials he would need when he began teaching classes in Brooklyn, New York in 1958. When he first started teaching, Yoshimura was very rigid and clung to the more traditional ways of developing classical bonsai. Later, as he had the opportunity to travel, he became more flexible and began developing his neo-classical style of bonsai.

By the next year, 1959, Yoshimura taught a course in bonsai at Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania. Later that year, he formed a partnership with Jaunita Schiff and established the Yoshimura Bonsai Company in Tarrytown and in Ossining, New York. Schiff also served as his student and assistant for many years.

Yoshimura began offering courses in bonsai on a regular basis at the New York Botanical Garden in the Bronx borough of New York City.

Yoshimura began his international outreach by spending two months in 1962 traveling and teaching bonsai in Australia. He made a second teaching trip to Australia in 1984 and included Hong Kong and Hawaii in his itinerary. His first trip to England was in 1994 where he taught a summer course in bonsai at the Greenwood Bonsai Studio in Nottingham.

Yoshimura fostered the formation of clubs, and in 1963 he was the driving force behind the organization of the Bonsai Society of Greater New York. Although he never served as President of this society, he did serve as advisor and international secretary. In this capacity, he gave lectures, shared information about bonsai care in Japan, and imported pots, tools, and some plants for the growing number of his students. In 1963, he drove to Cleveland, Ohio to lecture and demonstrate his techniques. From there, he proceeded to San Francisco to spend a month teaching and promoting bonsai to several clubs in this region. Afterwards, he drove to southern California on his transcontinental teaching tour. He was known by his many students for his amazing artistic skills, his wit, and the care and execution of presenting a dramatic demonstration of bonsai artistry on stage.

Yoshimura wrote, co-authored or edited several other important works during his career. Together with Samuel H. Beach, they translated into English *Bonsai Masterpieces – Grand View Of Japanese Bonsai and Nature in Four Seasons* (1972).

Five years later, he published a *Commemorative Album – The Murial Leeds Collection*. Yoshimura's long-standing interest in Viewing Stones culminated in 1984 in another classic work *The Japanese Art of Stone Appreciation – Suiseki and Its*

Use with Bonsai. This valuable work was co-authored with Vincent T. Covello. Late in his career, he wrote a series of scholarly papers on various aspects of the history of bonsai. These were first published in Japanese, but later translated into English and published in a single issue of *International Bonsai* (1993).

What started out as another invited lecture and demonstration turned out to be a pivotal event in the history of bonsai in the United States. The Potomac Bonsai Association sponsored Yoshimura to come to Washington, D.C. in 1973. Dr. John Creech, Director of the U. S. National Arboretum, attended this demonstration and over dinner with Yoshimura began to discuss the idea of a permanent exhibit of bonsai in the nation's capital. The two agreed that this could be the place where American bonsai artists could give their finest plants. The seed for the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum had been planted. The seed was nurtured by Dr. Creech and sprouted forth in the form of a gift of 53 masterpiece bonsai as a bicentennial gift from Japan in 1976. The initial gift was followed by a donation of 56 bonsai produced by American artists and the seedling museum continued to grow. The museum expanded further when the John Y. Naka North American Pavilion and the Yuji Yoshimura Study Center were built and then dedicated in 1990, thanks to the generous contributions of the many students and friends of Naka and Yoshimura.

Both Naka and Yoshimura used their knowledge and contacts in Japan to foster study tours to Japan by westerners. They often worked with the Nippon Bonsai Association (NBA) to encourage Japan bonsai masters to travel abroad and demonstrate their bonsai techniques. The support and encouragement of the NBA was another key factor in the establishment and growth of bonsai in the West.

It is beyond the scope of this work to document the development of bonsai from the 1960 to the present except for the brief summaries of the roles of Kaneshiro,

Naka, and Yoshimura. By the 1960s bonsai was firmly established and thriving in North America.

REFERENCES

- Anonymous.** 1846. Chinese Method of Dwarfing Trees. *The Gardener's Chronicle*. 6: 711-772.
- _____. 1862. The Horticulture of the Far East. *The Gardener's Chronicle and Agricultural Gazette*. pp. 22-23.
- _____. 1889. The Dwarf Trees of Japan. *The Gardener's Chronicle*. 136.
- _____. 1893. The Horticultural Congress. Nurserymen, seedmen, pomologists and florists meet at the World's Columbian Exposition. August 16-18. *The American Nurseryman*. Vol.1, 8. 95.
- _____. 1899. Japanese Nurseries. *The National Nurseryman*. 7(1): 24.
- _____. 1946. Japanese Miniature Trees. *Life*. Oct. 7, 87-88. 90.
- Abel, C.** 1819. *Narrative of a Journey in the Interior of China, and of a Voyage to and from that County, in the Years 1816 and 1817*. Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, London. 420 pp.
- Bennitt, M.** ed. 1905. *History of Louisiana Purchase Exposition*. Universal Exposition Publishing House Co., St. Louis, Missouri.
- Boehmer, L. & Co.** 1902–1903. *Price List of Japan Nursery Specialities*. Yokohama.
- Brassey, A.** 1878. *A Voyage in the 'Sunbeam'*. Longman, Green & Co., London.
- Brinkley, F.** 1901–1902. *Japan, Its History, Arts and Literature*. 2 vols. J. B. Millet, Boston & Tokyo.

- Carriere, M. E-A.** 1878. Essai sur L'Horticulture Japonaise. *Revue Horticole*. 50: 271-275.
- . 1889. Japonaiseries. *Revue Horticole*. 61: 374-378.
- Case, M. P.** 1965. Bonsai in Days Gone By. Part 2. *Bonsai Bulletin*. 3(1): 3-4.
- . 1965. Bonsai in Days Gone By. Part 3. *Bonsai Bulletin*. 3(3): 7-10.
- Chamberlain, B. H.** 1890. *Things Japanese*. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd. Hakubunsha, Kelly & Walsh.
- Coe, E. F.** 1923. Keeping Japanese Picture-plant Alive. *Garden Magazine*. 37: 331-332.
- Covello, V. T. & Y. Yoshimura.** 1984. *The Japanese Art of Stone Appreciation*. Charles F. Tuttle Company, Inc. Rutland, Vermont and Tokyo.
- Cunningham, L.** 1976. An Interview with Mr. Bonsai of the Northwest. *Bonsai Journal*. 10(1): 7,18,19.
- DeGroot, D.** 1994. The Domoto Trident Maple. *Bonsai*. 33(6): 46-49.
- D'Hervey-Saint-Denys, L.** 1850. *Rescherches sur L'Agriculture et L'Horticulture des Chinois*. Allouard et Kaepelin. Paris.
- Duss, P.** 1998. *Modern Japan*. 2nd ed. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston.
- Earle, J.** 1999. Splendors of Meiji. Broughton International Publications. St. Petersburg, Florida.
- Eaton, A. H.** 1952. Beauty Behind Barbed Wire. *The Arts of the Japanese in Our War Relocation Camps*. Harper & Brothers, New York.
- Eaton, N. & M. Eaton.** 1997. San Mateo Bonsai Club Exhibits Trees Destined for the GSBF Collection North. *Golden Statements*. 20(6): 14-18.
- Elliott, B.** 1998. The Beginning of British Bonsai. *The Garden*.

- Fairchild, D.** 1938. *The World Was My Garden: Travels of a Plant Explorer*. Charles Scribner & Son, New York.
- Faulkner, R.** 1991. *Masterpieces of Japanese Prints*. Kodansha International. Tokyo, New York & London.
- Fortune, R.** 1847. *Three Year's Wandering in the Northern Provinces of China*. John Murray, London.
- . 1863. *Yedo and Peking*. John Murray, London.
- Garis, F. de.** 1934. *We Japanese*. Yamagata Press. Yokohama, Japan. 200 pp.
- Griffis, W. E.** 1876. *The Mikado's Empire*. Harpers & Brothers Publishers, New York.
- Hildreth, R.** 1860. *Japan and The Japanese*. Bradley & Dayton & Co., Boston.
- Hu, Yunhua.** 1987. *Chinese Penjing. Miniature Trees and Landscapes*. Wan Li Book Co. Ltd. Hong Kong. 171 pp.
- Ingram, J. S.** 1876. *The Centennial Exposition*. Hubbard Bros. Philadelphia.
- Iwasa, R.** 1976. *Bonsai Bunka-shi* (Cultural History of Bonsai). Yasaka-shobo. Tokyo.
- . 1989. Bonsai in Ukyoke. In: *Encyclopedia of Bonsai*. Vol 1: 132-142. Dohosha Publishing Co., Kyoto.
- Johnston, G.** 1983. Bonsai in Historical Perspective. *Bonsai Bulletin*. 21(4): 10-16.
- Kaempfer, E.** 1727. *The History of Japan*. 2 vols. The Translator. London.
- Kawaguchi, G.** 1993. Living with Flowers. *The California Flower Market History*. California Flower Market, Inc., San Francisco.
- Kobayashi, N.** 1951. *Bonsai – Miniature Potted Trees*. Japan Travel Bureau. Tokyo, Japan.

- Kohen, A.** 1935. *The Way of Japanese Flower Arrangement*. Kelly & Walsh Ltd. Shanghai.
- _____. 1937. *Japanese Tray Landscapes*. Lotus Court Publications. Peking.
- _____. 1944. *Fragrances from a Chinese Garden*. Lotus Court Publications. Peking, China.
- _____. 1951. *Japanese Classical Flower Arrangement*. Tuttle, Rutland, Vermont.
- _____. 1953. *Notes on Bonsai*. Foreign Affairs Association of Japan. Tokyo.
- _____. 1954. *Japanese Flower Symbolism*. The Lotus Court. Peking.
- _____. 1955. *Japanese Floral Arts*. The Lotus Court. Tokyo.
- Koreshoff, D. R.** 1984. *Bonsai: Its Art, Science, History and Philosophy*. Boolarong Publications, Brisbane, Australia. 255 pp.
- Lape, F.** 1965. *A Garden of Trees and Shrubs*. Cornell University Press. Ithaca, NY.
- Lanman, J. E.** 1994. Yuji Yoshimura "Father of Bonsai." Unpublished manuscript. 6 pp.
- Livingstone, J.** 1820. *Account of the Method of Dwarfing Trees and Shrubs as Practiced by the Chinese, including their Plan of Propagation from Branches*. Transactions Horticultural Society of London, London. 1820: 224-231.
- Long, C. R.** 1971. An Informal History of Bonsai. *Arnoldia*. 31: 261-273.
- Mac Farlane, C.** 1852. *Japan; An Account, Geographical and Historical; from the Earliest Period at Which the Islands, Composing This Empire Was Known to Europeans, Down to the Present Times; and the Expedition Fitted Out in the United States, etc.* George Rutledge & Co., London.

- Marushima, H.** 1998. *Chugoku bonkei ga Nihon bonsai ni ataeta rekishiteki eikyo ni kansuru jissu oteki kenkyu* (Studies on the historical influences of Chinese penjing on Japanese bonsai). Chofu-shi, Tokyo. (In Japanese.)
- Marumoto, M.** 1972. "First Year" Immigrants to Hawaii & Eugene. In: Conray, H. & T. S. Miyakawa. *East Across the Pacific*. American Bibliographical Center Clio Press, Santa Barbara, California.
- Matsuki, B.** 1931. *Japanese Potted Trees* (Hachinoki). Guide No. 6 Brooklyn Botanical Garden Record. 20(6): 279-289.
- Maumene, A.** 1902. *Les Arbres Nains Japonais, Leur formation au Japon, Leur utilisation et leur traitement en Europe*. Librairie Horticole.
- Mauzy, M. P.** 1889. Sur les procedes employes par la Japonais pour obtenir des arbres Nains. *Bull. Societe Botanique*. Paris. 36: 290-294.
- Naka, J. Y.** 1973. *Bonsai Techniques I*. Bonsai Institute of California. Whittier, California.
- _____. 1982. *Bonsai Techniques II*. Bonsai Institute of California. Whittier, California.
- Nozaki, S.** 1940. *Dwarf Trees (Bonsai)*. The Sanseido Co., Ltd., Tokyo & Osaka. 74 pp. plus 115 plates.
- Odo, F. & K. Sinoto.** 1985. *A Pictorial History of the Japanese in Hawaii. 1885-1924*. Hawaii Immigrant Heritage Preservation Center. Bernice P. Bishop Museum. Honolulu.
- Oliphant, L.** 1860. *Narrative of the Earl of Elgin's Mission to China and Japan in the Years 1857, '58, '59*. Harper & Brothers, New York, NY.
- Patton, E. S.** 1896. *Japanese Topsy-turvydom*. Hasegawa Takejiro, Tokyo.

- Ragle, N. S.** 1987. *Even Monkeys Fall Out of Trees*. John Naka's Collection of Japanese Proverbs. Nippon Art Forms. Laguna Beach, California.
- Sansom, G. B.** 1970. *The Western World and Japan*. Alfred A. Knopf. 504 pp.
- Sargent, C. S.** 1893. untitled article. *Garden and Forest*. March 15.
- Schiff, J. H.** 1907. *Our Journey to Japan*. New York Co-operative Society.
- Scharf, F.** 1993. ed. "A Pleasing Novelty": *Bunkio Matsuki and The Japan Craze in Victorian Salem*. Peabody & Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts.
- Scharf, F.** 1994. Takejiro Hasegawa. *Meiji Japan's Preeminent Publisher of Wood-Block-Illustrated Crepe-Paper Books*. Peabody Essex Museum Collections, Vol. 130, No. 4.
- Siebold, P. F. von.** 1832. Nippon, Archiv zur bescheibung von Japan.
- Stowell, J.** 1964. Meet The Members. Yuji Yoshimura. *Bonsai Bulletin*. 21(1): 7.
- Suzuki, G.** 1975. A Tribute to My Father. *Bonsai Journal* 9(3): 66.
- Takaghi F. & Sons.** 1894. *Catalogue of Bulbs, Plants, Seeds, etc. from The Nursery of F. Takaghi*. Komagome, Denchu. Aoyama Industrial Press. Tokyo. 112 pp.
- Tissandier, A.** 1902. Jardins Chinois et Japiniais. *La Nature*. 30: 86-90.
- Titley, N. and F. Wood.** 1991. *Oriental Gardens*. Chronicle Books. San Francisco. 128 pp.
- Thompson, D.** 1885. *The Mouse's Wedding*. Kobunsha, Tokyo.
- Tokio Nurseries Co.** 1895. *General Catalog of Plants, Bulbs, Seeds & etc.*
- Thunberg, C. P.** 1784. *Flora Japonica*. Lipsig.
- Tredici, P. Del.** 1989. *Early American Bonsai*. Arnold Arboretum. Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts.

- Tsukiyama, T.** 1991. "Aloha 'Papa' Kaneshiro." Eulogy delivered at the funeral of Haruo Kaneshiro on September 28, 1991.
- _____. 1993. "The Bonsai Legacy of 'Papa' Kaneshiro." Speech given at the dedication of the Kaneshiro Conservatory, October 15, 1993.
- _____. 2000. Bonsai in Hawaii. *Bonsai Magazine*. 39(1): 8-12.
- Unger, M.** 1901. *The Favorite Flowers of Japan*. L. Boehmer & Co, Yokohama.
- Valavanis, W. N.** 1998. Yuji Yoshimura. A Memorial Tribute to a Bonsai Master & Pioneer. *International Bonsai*. 20: 29-44.
- Vallot, M. J.** 1889. Causes Physiologiques qui Produisent le Babourgrissement des Arbres Des Cultures Japonaises. *Bull. Societe Botaniques*. Paris. 36: 284-289.
- White, T. & W. Igleheart.** 1893. *The World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893*. P. W. Ziegler & Co., Philadelphia & St. Louis.
- Wilson, D.** 1989. *The Circumnavigators*. M. Evans & Co., New York. 345 pp.
- Wilson, E. H.** 1913. *A Naturalist in Western China*. Methuen Co., Ltd., London. 2 vols.
- Wu, Yee-sun.** 1969. *Man Lung Garden Artistic Pot Plants*. Wing Lung Bank Ltd., Hong Kong.
- Yeager, R.** 1999. *Bonsai in Los Angeles. A History*. Part I. Golden Statements. 22(5): 6-14.
- Yokohama Nursery Co.** 1898. *Descriptive Catalog of The Yokohama Nursery Co., Ltd.* Yokohama, 72 pp. illus.
- Yokohama Nursery Co.** 1993. *The Yokohama Nursery, Inc.: 100 Year History*. Yokohama Nursery, Yokohama.

- Yoshimura, Y.** 1993. *Modern Bonsai Art – Development of the Art of Bonsai from an Historical Perspective – Part 1.* (translated from Japanese by C. W. Risser from *The Journal of Bonsai Science* in 1990.)
- _____. 1993. *Modern Bonsai Art – Development of the Art of Bonsai from an Historical Perspective – Part 2.*
- Yoshimura, Y. & G. M. Halford.** 1957. *The Japanese Art of Miniature Trees and Landscapes.* Charles E. Tuttle Co., Tokyo & Rutland, Vermont.
- Young, D.** 1977. The Philosophy of Chinese Bonsai. *Bonsai Bulletin.* 11(1): 8-10.
- _____. 1984. *Bonsai: The Art and Technique.* Prentice Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey. 423 pp.