

第1回上野眞資記念「日本を知ろう」事業入選者
＜研究報告原文＞

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Looking at Gender Norms in *Hana Yori Dango*

Introduction:

Visual media culture in Japan reached a new high in the 18th century when manga was developed in the form of ukiyo-e prints. During the early period of its creation, the genres available were limited, however, with the unprecedented growth of print media, the manga industry and its audiences expanded, and a market full of numerous genres developed. One of the most popular genres has been *shōjo*, which first came into existence through Osamu Tezuka's *Ribbon no Kishi* in 1953. Although it was initially created by men, in a matter of years, from around 1969, *shōjo* became a genre that was drawn predominantly by women for women (Thorn, 2001).

Although the market for most other types of print media has suffered a decline, the market for manga has remained consistently strong. *Shōjo* manga has continued to be of particular importance since almost 30% of all manga publications belong to this genre (Choo, 2008). Furthermore, it has been recreated in the form of TV dramas, anime, and cinema, which has helped in creating a much larger market for its stories. Due to this, the audience that may have been influenced from *shōjo* as a genre has been large. This has been especially true for Kamio Yoko's *Hana Yori Dango*, which has been one of the best-selling *shōjo* manga of all time, and as a result of its immense popularity, it has also been adapted into an anime, a TV drama, and a movie. Foreign audiences such as those in South Korea or Taiwan have also supported the series, and its popularity in these places has been visible since Korean or

Taiwanese reproductions of *Hana Yori Dango* have also been produced. Therefore, *Hana Yori Dango* would be the most appropriate example to investigate what *shōjo* manga has aimed to do and what it has actually achieved in terms of the influence it has had on its audiences.

In this essay, the way gender is played by the characters of *Hana Yori Dango*, in the manga as well as the Japanese TV drama version, shall be analysed. In addition, the author's intentions and the researcher's analysis shall be explained. Various sub-themes present in the story shall be investigated to examine how they may be connected to the concept of gender norms.

Connecting Gender and the Role of Media:

Before one begins to talk about gender, it is important to talk about the difference between sex and gender. Sex can be defined as the biological and physiological difference while gender can be understood as a social construction. Thus, gender usually carries with it expectations created by the respective societies it occurs in. Another point of difference is that sex stays stable in terms of its definition, however, interpretations of gender keep changing with time (Kimmel, 2001). Although, the most significant difference would be that the concept of gender establishes a hierarchy, which contributes to the creation of unequal status in the society.

Since gender is something that is consciously constructed, it is necessary for the society to use various tools to entrench the idea and depict it as something “organic” and “fundamental.” One of the best techniques to achieve this is through repeated exposure to specific ideas and following this up with proper regulation through social rewards and punishments. Media can be a very important tool to embed norms this way since it has access to large populations and can, therefore, influence their perceptions over time. It is believed

that media usually maintains the existing social structures and hierarchies in a society rather than to question or change them (Saito, 2007).

The Author's Intentions:

The author and manga artist of *Hana Yori Dango* was interviewed by the researcher in December 2016. The findings from this interview were mostly about what the author intended to portray in the manga and how she expected it to be understood by the readers. The author wished to avoid any direct quotations from the interview therefore only the interpretations of her answers by the researcher have been discussed in this section.

Kamio Yoko had hoped to create typical *shōjo* manga characters, however as she began creating *Hana Yori Dango* she realised that her characters were typical but still not quite so. The manga became filled with characters that were relatable yet refreshing, which was not something she had initially planned to do, but due to the warm reception of these types of characters by the audiences, she continued to create them this way. She believed that manga stories should be something that match the reader's expectations and these are often connected to the problems of that time period, which in her case was bullying. Thus, as an author, she was aware of this problem and wanted to portray it to make the manga relatable for the readers. However, she purposely also included instances that were exaggerations of reality since she believed that manga was supposed to be more of a fantasy than reality. The author was also largely convinced that *shōjo* manga could not influence the society which is why its goal rarely was to change people's ways of thinking. Rather, this job was better left to the novelists and manga was made to be all about enjoying the reading experience. She also felt that *shōjo* manga did not have enough power to change the perspectives of women in the society since it was read by a mostly adolescent audience.

The author was quite aware of the importance of appearances in manga. Since *shōjo* manga characters are usually supposed to be “cute” she felt she was required to follow that pattern. However, she also felt if she made the female protagonist, Makino Tsukushi, too “cute” then she would become too distant from the reality of the young female readers. Thus, to keep her relatable, Kamio made Tsukushi a lot more “plain” looking than the usual *shōjo* manga protagonists. Tsukushi was created in a way that she was neither too thin nor too “beautiful” but just on the borderline so that she could be “cute” if she tried.

There was also an understanding of the extremely far-fetched notion of putting romance before everything. The author knew that this was definitely different from real life situations of the readers, however, she had received immense support as well as requests from the fans to focus on the romance side of the story more than anything else. The author originally wanted to write about Tsukushi’s academic goals and career plans but she thought that junior high and high school students, who were the intended audience for the manga, were too young to think about such matters. She was also concerned that if she included these ideas, they would take away the fantasy aspect and it would no longer be the “dream world” that manga was supposed to be. Other aspects that were created far from reality included the absence of consent. Kamio was aware that in the real world such actions would be wrong but she felt that readers enjoyed bold scenes with dominating boyfriends and *kabedon* because that would never happen to them in real life as Japanese men were too shy in their approach. She did feel that if these were to be real then it would be terrible since non-consensual actions are not right, however, since many readers wrote to her claiming that they were waiting for these scenes, she continued to create them in the story.

The Role of Appearance

The characters are the essence of any story, and it is their performance of gender roles that makes them relatable (or not relatable) for the audience. In the case of this story, relations to “established” gender roles are clearly visible. To give a brief idea as to what is being seen as “established,” traits associated to femininity and masculinity in Japan can be discussed. Femininity is linked to traits such as gentleness, purity, and fragility; while masculinity is linked to being independent, experienced, and strong. However, in the manga, all these traits are also heavily related to the appearance of a character, and not just the sex and gender. Thus, what is observed is not just the performance of gender, but also a spillover effect based on the appearance of the character (Choo, 2008). One of the best examples for understanding this effect would be the case of Domyōji Tsubaki, Tōdō Shizuka and Hanazawa Rui. Tsubaki, who is portrayed as a strong and violent woman, is often depicted in a very “masculine” fashion (Picture 1). While Rui, who is seen as this gentle boy often has the quintessential “feminine” look to him (Picture 2).

It is important to note that these aspects are not equally recreated in the drama version, wherein Rui is portrayed in the gentlemanly manner with a somewhat less masculine appearance, but both Tōdō Shizuka and Domyōji Tsubaki remain considerably feminine both in terms of their appearance as well as their behaviour. This incongruity between the manga and drama maybe attributed to the difference in their respective target audiences. While the manga caters to a relatively younger spectrum of individuals from 12 to 18 year olds, the drama focuses on working women who are most likely to be from their early to their late 20s.

The most interesting difference would be the fact that the drama got rid of the scene where Shizuka declares that she wants to be an international lawyer in a huge party, cuts her hair short in front of everyone almost as sign of abandoning her “femininity” and embraces

the rational “masculinity,” that is the field of law. Instead, in the drama it becomes a private, intimate announcement and there is no sign of Shizuka symbolically cutting ties with her “femininity.” In the manga by doing what she did, she exemplifies her independence from her family, strength of her own ambitions, and a disregard for societal standards of what defines a woman. From a typically “feminine” female, she went to the idealised form of a “masculine” female. Thus, while the manga appears to challenge the accepted norms of the society, the drama functions to maintain the status quo, even if these are unintentional consequences due to the limits of the medium.¹ This is in line with the ideas proposed by Shinichi Saito, “...With regard to attitudes toward gender roles, television tends to decelerate social change by cultivating traditional views among many viewers” (Saito, 2007).



Picture 1: Domyōji Tsubaki



Picture 2: Hanazawa Rui

¹ Dramas need to fit a lot of information in a shorter frame of time while manga can have much more elaborate storylines since there are no temporal restrictions.

Female Masculinity: Creating the Ideal Fantasies

The idea of female masculinity becomes an important topic all through the manga since it has several scenes in which the female characters transgress beyond the traditional boundaries of their gender. However, it is important to remember that by challenging the status quo these women are not just appropriating “masculinity” but rather they are creating an ideal that other women can admire. This has been an integral part of various sorts of medias in Japan including the Takarazuka Revue. The female actors who play male roles, called *otokoyaku* become the idealised versions of male, and the fans revel in these fantasies due to their unavailability in real life (Darling-Wolf, 2004). Similarly, it could be said that the case of strong female characters plays an identical role by providing other female characters as well as the readers with an ideal they can admire. It is observable even within the manga itself since Makino Tsukushi states how she feels “*akogare*” (admiration) towards both Domyōji Tsubaki and Tōdō Shizuka as they portray certain aspects of masculinity despite being females.

The Female Body: Dependence, Virtue, and Aesthetic Value

Issues related to the female body are another important point to debate upon. While the manga tackles the issue of dependence of female characters on male characters considerably well, the TV drama fails to do so. The drama portrays heavy dependence of not just the protagonist but even female side characters. This is especially true when Matsuoka Yuuki gets help from Nishikado Sōjirō to get revenge on her ex-boyfriend but ends up falling in love with Sōjirō. The relationship not only showed dependence but even portrayed the gender traits discussed earlier, since Sōjirō is a playboy and Yuuki is innocent. Although rare, we do see some instances of the male characters depending on the female ones, such as the scene

where Domyōji Tsukasa falls sick and Makino Tsukushi takes care of him. However, this portrayal too can be tied to traditional notions of gender roles since the female is seen as inherently affectionate and “motherly.” It is this latter characteristic that becomes of utmost significance since it shows how the dependence in this case recreates the existing models of gender present in Japanese society. Therefore, what is highlighted is not the weakness of the male, but rather, the latent “motherly” compassion within the female, which does not necessarily signify strength or weakness of the female but merely the existence of the “innate” quality of being a “good mother”.

The second issue with female body is that of innocence and purity. When Makino Tsukushi ends up spending the night with a man in a hotel she says, “*Atashi no karada ga yogoreteshimatteru*” (My body has been polluted). Although this line only appears in the manga, it is repeated on several occasions almost to imply the inherent virtuousness of being “pure” in terms of sexual experiences for a woman. In the TV drama this message comes across when Tsukushi screams “*Mada shōjo dayo*” (I am still virgin). Since the manga is aimed at a teenage audience it is in line with what the society deems as unacceptable behaviour and may be done to reinforce these ideas. However, in the drama which is aimed at a relatively older audience, this does not necessarily function as a means for reinforcement of traditional values on the audience, instead, it is consumed as pure fiction without much correlation to real life circumstances since the contexts of the audience and the characters are different. This does not mean that the older audience does not agree with the existing notion that teenage girls should not be engaged in sexual activities, it simply means that these ideas do not apply to them anymore nor do they represent their own lives since they are no longer teenagers.

The third issue is the lack of different body types among female characters even though we do see at least two types of male body types, a thin one and a muscular one. It is the same with the idea of facial beauty, wherein the main insults directed toward female characters are those related to beauty while there is not as much stress on male beauty. Although this may not necessarily convey anything about gender relations, it does show the expectations that society puts on women to be aesthetically pleasing while there is considerably less pressure on men. While this may solely be due to the lack of necessity for more diverse type of representation since Japan has one of the lowest obesity rates in the world (Central Intelligence Agency, 2008), it still implies that there is a strong association between being thin and being attractive. It is this implication that may put pressure on women and even lead them towards eating disorders. Therefore, it is not surprising that the problem of eating disorders has been increasing in Japan (Mazumdar, 2016). While other modes of media such as certain magazines are trying to encourage women to accept their bodies, this phenomenon remains untouched in both shōjo manga and TV dramas. In fact, on television, most of the shows that feature larger women are variety shows which often make fun of these women or show their transformations to “beautiful girls.”

Absence of Consent

This is probably the most perplexing issue out of all. All through the manga as well as the anime, absence of consent comes up several times. Whether it is about a male character lifting up a female character, kissing, hugging, declaring that they are in a relationship, it is all just done by the male characters without the agreement of the female. The problem gets even deeper when the protagonist, Makino Tsukushi, after being kissed forcefully says to herself, “*Kō naru koto kokoro no dokoka de nozondeitano kamoshirenai*” (Maybe I wanted

this as well), which not only makes it a situation where there has been disregard of consent but the female herself starts to question her own conceptions about it. As baffling as it may seem though, since it is consumed as mere fiction in the Japanese context, such portrayal does not disturb the audience.

Conclusion

Hence, through these understandings what can be observed is that there can be occasional discrepancies between what the author intended to create, how the television media recreated it, and how all of this is perceived by the audiences. While the manga seems to include more transgressions which may actually be in line with the audience's self-perception, the TV drama is much closer to the reality in terms of the norms it portrays despite the unrealistic storyline in the context of Japan. However, it is important to note that one significant limitation of this essay is that due to the difference in the social background of the researcher, the understanding of certain concepts might be very different from that of the Japanese audiences.

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日本国の文化に自然の影響

サーサク バトハック

背景:

The theme of my research, as I described in my interview, was to study the nature and history of Japan by travelling to places in Japan whose culture was affected by nature. Coming from a country which has been influenced greatly by geography and nature, I believe Japan has too. As I said during the interview, 'Nature makes culture'. In order to see and experience this, I visited the following places -

1. 富士山の文化, Mt Fuji, because I believe it is Japan's most important place of nature that affected its culture.
2. 東北地方 : 日本三景松島、山寺. This is because my last trip to this area was only one day long and I saw both places only for a few hours. This time, I took a 3 day trip and visited various places to study them in detail.
3. 広島 : 日本三景宮島、尾道 in order to see one of the most famous symbols of Japan.

The specifics of the study plan are different from the original plan I had submitted. However, due to constraints of time and money, I changed my research plan to other areas that I was able to easily travel to and study in detail. Some of the places mentioned were visited by me earlier. However, this time, I took a longer trip in order to study them properly. Most of the money received was utilized for travel expenses.

富士山

First, I will talk about my study about Mt. Fuji. Mount Fuji (富士山) is obviously the highest mountain in Japan at 3,776. It still remains an active volcano that last erupted in 1707, but is considered to be dormant these days. It can be seen even from Tokyo on a clear day. The speciality of its shape is that it has an extremely symmetric cone.

It is considered to be one of Japan's "Three Holy Mountains" (三霊山). The other two are Tateyama (立山) in Toyama prefecture and Hakusan (白山) in Ishikawa prefecture. It was added to the world cultural heritage list in 2013 because according to UNESCO, it "inspired artists and poets and been the object of pilgrimage for centuries". Including Fujisan itself, there are 25 other such sites nearby which have been included in the list.

I heard that the Kanji for Fuji - 富士 does not signify its meaning. It is simply an 当て字. The name 'Fuji' has existed since before the kanji and its true meaning is unclear. Some say the name could come from 'immortal' (不死 fushi).

The area near Mt. Fuji is very large and difficult to travel across various parts of the mountain. Moreover, it was simply a one-day trip from Tokyo and not too expensive. Hence, I made three one-day trips to Mt. Fuji and the surrounding areas including the lakes. One in September, right after receiving the grant, one in November, to see the onset of autumn, and one in December to see the beginning of winter.

Mt. Fuji is the most important natural landmark in Japan, ubiquitous with its image. It has very important cultural significance to Japan and hence, it has entered the UNESCO world heritage list as a 'cultural' heritage, not a 'natural' one.

The 36 views of Mt Fuji by Hokusai (富嶽三十六景) are the most famous recording of its image in Japan. My original destination was to travel to these 36 places and click pictures in accordance to the paintings, but I soon found that most of them cannot be accessed today. For example, the famous view of Mt Fuji from Nihonbashi is now occluded by an expressway. Instead, I decided to visit the Fuji five lakes.

富士吉田 :

First, I visited the town of Fujiyoshida in September. I was able to see the famous Arakura Sengen (新倉山浅) temple which contains the Chureito pagoda. It was built as a peace monument in 1963. (図1) (図2)

本栖湖・青木ヶ原 :

Next, in October, I visited Lake Shoji and Lake Motosu. This was the peak Koyo season, so I was able to get excellent photographs of Mt Fuji in a background with red Koyo leaves. The bus I took also passed through the famous Aokigahara forest. I learnt about several dark things related to this forest. The forest, next to Lake Sai, is naturally very dense and it is easy to get lost. This made the forest popular as a suicide spot, although there is less evidence of this. Legends say that the spirits of people left to die in this forest still haunt it. The ancient, dark practice of *ubasute* was also carried out here.

(図2) (図4)

河口湖 :

Finally, in December, I visited and walked around Kawaguchiko, the largest of the five lakes around Mt. Fuji. I learnt that there was an eruption of Mt Fuji back in 864 AD. It was said that the God Asama could control the eruption of Mt. Fuji and hence, there are many shrines dedicated to him around the mountain, for example the Fujisan Hongu Sengen Taisha. I also heard that the lake used to constantly flood during heavy rains, until a canal was made, connecting it to the Sagami river.

(図5)

甲府 :

Another place I visited in Yamanashi prefecture was the city of Kofu. I visited a gorge called 'Shosenkyo', where the River Arakawa (that flows through Tokyo) originated in October. This is part of the Chichibu Tama Kai National Park. I climbed the valley with a combination of some hiking and the ropeway. It was here that I got to taste a historical dish of Japan for the first time - Houtou. It is said to have been invented by Takeda shingen as it was very easy to make and cut, even with his sword. The remaining ingredients are simply boiled miso and some vegetables. I believe that Houtou is an important part of Fujisan culture and hence, it was important for me to try this dish.

(図6) (図7) (図8)

東北地方

I had already made a week-long trip to Tohoku and Hokkaido earlier. However, it was a trip done by 普通列車 and I did not have more than a few hours to visit each place. Most of the time was spent travelling in trains. During my last trip, I visited some places near Sendai, Aomori, and parts of Hokkaido within a week.

As a result, I could only see these places for a few hours during my previous trips. This time, taking advantage of the grant money, I decided to revisit some of the places I had visited last time in order to study them better.

Among these places, I chose Yamadera (山寺), and the second of the 日本三景 - Matsushima (松島) for my visit. I made this visit in November, at the height of the Koyo season.

山寺

Yamadera is perhaps the most beautiful mountain temple in Japan. Its name itself means 'mountain temple'. Just like Miyajima (宮島), this is not its real name. The real name is Risshaku-ji (立石寺). It was founded in 860 AD, during the early Heian Period by the priest Ennin (円仁) who is more famously known as Jikaku Daishi. He was one of Japan's most important Buddhist priests.

It was built as the head temple of the Tendai sect of Buddhism in the Tohoku area. I heard about Matsuo Basho, a famous haiku poet of the 17th century who visited this mountain temple and composed a poem on its tranquil beauty in the woods. I found an English translation of it as follows -

Close your eyes. Take a deep breath and feel the cool air at the top of Yamadera fill your lungs. Now open your eyes and be rewarded.

A statue of him and a rock inscription of this poem can be found near a lower part of the mountain even today. (Sadly, I was unsuccessful in finding it as I cannot read much of Japanese.)

It is said that a buddhist flame has been kept burning since the founding of this temple. This flame was said to have been brought from Enryakuji Temple in Kyoto, which was the head temple of the Tendai sect of Buddhism. After more than eleven hundred years the flame remains burning as the Fumetsu-no-Hoto (the Undying Light of Buddhism).

The temple lies on the top of a mountain, with 1015 steps leading up to it. The steps are shrouded and surrounded by many tall cedar trees. The stone steps lead to the 'Okunoin', which has the Buddha temple. Jikaku Daishi's final resting place is said to be here.

On the way, there are several small statues and lanterns. There is also a huge rock shaped like the Buddha. Towards the top of the mountain is the main hall of the shrine and various other halls. There is a famous Godaido Hall, which was built in the 1700s and extends out over the cliff. It provides excellent views of the valley covered with Koyo.

Over here, I got to taste a special variety of Japanese soba known as '山菜そば', or Soba with mountain vegetables such as warabi, zenmai, and takenoko.

(図9)

日本三景：松島

This was the first of the 日本三景 that I visited, the other being Miyajima (宮島). I had plans of travelling to the third one - Amanohashidate (天橋立), but I could not get enough time to finish all three. As of now, it remains as a future plan.

On my last visit to Matsushima, I was not able to see much except for the area near Matsushima station. During this visit, I decided to spend an entire day in Matsushima and also took a boat ride around the bay.

Matsushima is a set of islands covered with pine trees in the Miyagi prefecture. Due to this, it has been named - Matsushima (松島) or pine island.

The first thing I learnt about Matsushima was that it was directly hit by the 2011 Tsunami from the Great East Japan Earthquake (東日本大地震). However, the islands acted as a barrier for the tsunami and protected the coast. I also heard that historically as well, the islands have been known to protect this part of the coastline.

Matsushima became famous in the early 17th century, when the famous feudal lord in Tohoku - Masamune Date visited the area. He restored the Zuiganji temple near Matsushima. The Zuiganji temple is one of the most famous zen temples of Japan and it was also founded by the same person who founded Yamadera - Jikaki Daishi. I also visited this temple during my visit to Matsushima. It was founded as a temple of the tendai sect of buddhism, but later converted to a zen buddhist temple during the Kamakura period.

Afterwards, it was visited by the same poet I mentioned while describing Yamadera - Matsuo Basho. He composed many haikus for the beautiful scenery of Matsushima in his nook - 'Okuno Hosomichi'.

(図10) (図11)

I also had a chance to visit the Entsuin Temple, which was built in 1646 next to the Zuiganji Temple. It housed the mausoleum of Date Mitsumune, the son of the ruling local lord Date Terumune of Tohoku. I got a chance to stroll along and experience its lovely gardens - the first was a Japanese style moss and maple garden full of koyo, while the second was a Western style rose garden.

(図12)

広島:

Just before finishing this report, in February, I had a chance to visit the city of Hiroshima and see one of the 日本三景 - Miyajima, along with a small town called Onomichi. This was a three day trip intended to study the three places.

尾道:

On the first day, I visited the small coastal town of Onomichi. This town at one end of the Shimanami Kaido - one of the most beautiful roads in Japan, connecting West Honshu to the small island of Shikoku. It is a unique port town that serves as the beginning of the only land connection to the island of Shikoku.

I learnt that Onomichi was an important port town for trade with foreign countries, but its economy suffered during the 鎖国 period of the Tokugawa Shogunate. The first realization that struck me about this place was the severe lack of population. Tokyo seemed to be a hundred times crowded in comparison! I had the famous Onomichi Ramen and Anago and while talking to the shop owner, he informed us that each year, shops and people go away from a town, in a disastrous feedback cycle. I saw many old and abandoned houses.

The entire town is built on a series of slopes because of the fact that it is located on a mountainous area. I managed to do a part of the temple walk - a path leading up and down several slopes, passing through all 25 temples in this town. One of the temples I noticed had a rope with large beads - 108 of them. One of them was red in color, perhaps to keep count. The inscription nearby said to slowly turn the rope so the beads keep falling, all the way till 108. This reminded me of prayer beads using in Hindu philosophy. Further searching revealed to me that the concept was carried over into Buddhism from Hinduism.

(図13) (図14) (図15)

日本三景: 宮島 :

As part of my goal to see all three 日本三景, I visited the island of Miyajima near Hiroshima. The real name of this island is Itsukushima (厳島), but is called 'Miyajima' or 'shrine island' as it is more famous for the Itsukushima shrine. Specifically, it is famous for the view of the large floating Torii (大鳥居) gate in front of the shrine.

I learnt that this area is part of the Seto Inland sea (瀬戸内海) and is strongly affected by tides. Itsukushima shrine was built in order to withstand these tides. It is build slightly jutting out of the island into the sea, on a raised platform, with the large torii gate in front of it. The Torii gate has an additional leg in front and behind in the style of Ryōbu Shintō, associated with the Shingon sect of buddhism in Japan. In addition, I also noticed a Noh (能) theatre as part of the shrine's complex. It seems this theatre has existed since 1590.

This particular shrine was a must-visit for my research as it has specific significance in terms of nature worship in Japan. It is dedicated to the three daughters of the Shinto god of seas and storms, and brother of the sun goddess Amaterasu, the most important shinto god. I heard that commoners weren't allowed to set foot on it for a long time, in order to maintain its sacred purity. The reason it was build jutting out into the sea was to allow visitors to approach it during high tide without setting foot on the island. The 大鳥居 gate was build in order for visitors to pass through with their boats, before approaching the shrine.

I also heard that in order to retain the sacred purity to an extreme, since 1878, death or birth is not permitted on the island. Even today, pregnant women and terminally ill women are supposed to go to the mainland. And of course, burials of the dead on the island are also not allowed.

(図16) (図17) (図18)

Another temple that I visited next to Itsukushima was the Daiganji (大願寺) temple. This was a personal quest of mine as this is said to be one of the most important temples of Benzaiten (弁財天). Benzaiten is the Japanese goddess of wisdom and cleverness and is a form of the Hindu goddess Saraswati. Daiganji temple is said to house one of the three Saraswatis in Japan. This temple belongs to the Koyosan Branch of the Shingon denomination of Buddhism. Earlier, this was in charge of the construction and repair of Itsukushima shrine.

(図19)

結論:

During the course of this study, I got to visit 3 major places in Japan multiple times and experience their culture. I experienced 富士山 culture in the form of the 富士五湖, ほうとう, and Koyo. I experienced the culture of 宮島 and the 瀬戸内海, and the 東北紅葉 culture.

I got to experience and learn a lot about Buddhism and its similarities with Hinduism, which comes from my country. I learnt about the three great Benzaiten shrines of Japan - Enoshima (江ノ島), Itsukushima (厳島), and Chikubu-shima (竹生島). I have visited the first two out of these.

I am thankful to the Shimonaka Foundation for funding me and allowing me this chance to broaden my knowledge and increase my experience of Japan.

今後の展望:

Unfortunately, I could not complete all of my intended study plan. I could only experience 2 of the 3 日本三景, could not visit the 出羽三山 - the sacred mountains of Japan. I could also not visit the parts of Hokkaido I intend to visit the most - the Shiretoko Peninsula, in order to experience Ainu culture.

These remain as personal future plans for me and I will strive to study all the natural history of Japan as long as I am here.

写真

図1：富士山と新倉山浅神社



図2：富士山と新倉山浅神社

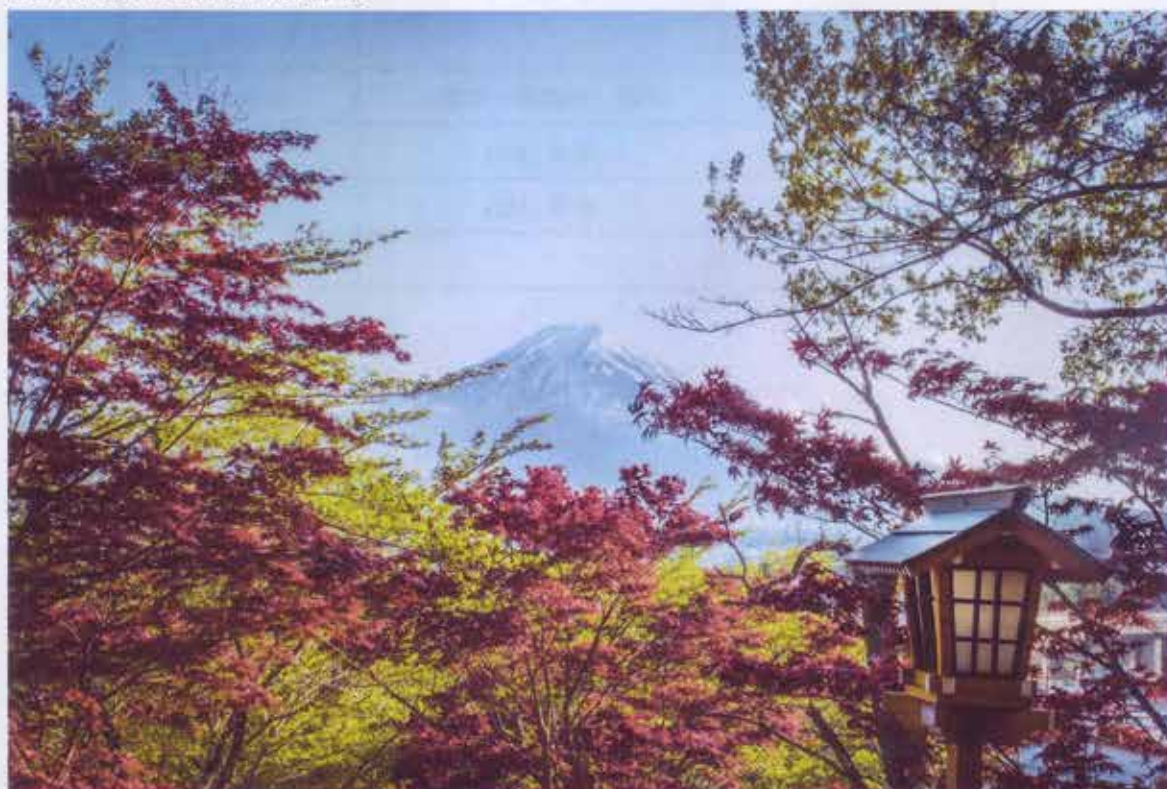


図3：本栖湖からの富士山と紅葉



図4：精進湖からの富士山



図5：河口湖からの富士山



図6：昇仙峡からの富士山



図7：昇仙峡



図8：ほうとう



图9：山寺立石寺



图10：日本三景 1：松島



图11：日本三景 1：松島



图12：円通院, 松島



图13：尾道



图14：尾道：Narrow, winding, sloping steps leading to temples



図15 : 尾道 : Broken down and abandoned houses due to declining economy :(



図16 : 厳島神社と大鳥居門



図17：日本三景2：大鳥居門



図18：日本三景2：大鳥居門



図19：弁財天 (Saraswati) の大願寺



MUSEUM EXPERIENCE

THROUGH *TREASURE HUNTING*

SHUBHAM TRIVEDI

PREFACE

Millions of people visit museums all over the world every week. Museums inspire the curious minds of our current generation with the deeds and ideas of past generations. Bearing such immense responsibilities, the design of museum experience becomes significant. Museums must not be mere books of history and culture. They must exhibit a dynamic experience capable of exciting the curiosity of the future generations about our fantastic achievements and thus inspire the posterity to attain even greater accomplishments. This study explores an alternate dynamic experience design for museum exploration utilizing the concept of gamification through treasure hunting. Popular museums in Tokyo are surveyed and possible venues for application of this experience design are identified. The process of experience design is carried out and a test-run is organized at a museum venue. Hurdles encountered in the design process and the concluding participant responses are discussed to suggest possible improvements for a more effective experience design.

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INTRODUCTION

1

Before any discussion on the proposed experience design for museums may be taken up, it is imperative to explain the need for a new experience design and the objectives of this study. In this chapter, museum experience in the present times and its inherent shortcomings would be briefly discussed followed by an introduction to the art of treasure hunting and its fundamental characteristics. Finally, using this introduction as background, objectives of this study would be enlisted.

1.1 Museums of the world

Museums have been collecting, preserving and exhibiting various arts and artifacts around the world for over 2000 years. Even though most ancient museums began as private collections closed to the general public, most of the museums today are open for public viewing and are visited by millions of people of various age groups every week all over the world.

Museums in present times exist to serve various purposes. From collection and preservation of ancient artifacts to the exhibition of latest works of art, from the display of popular scientific principles to the exhibition of religious artifacts. While different types of museums have different primary objectives, one common aim binding all the public museums is



Most modern museums have the same static experience design

nonetheless present. All public museums inevitably aim to enhance the public's awareness of cultures and understanding of our modern world. Museums aim to engage the curiosity of the visitor and astound them with the glorious displays of various arts, artifacts or reproductions of scientific phenomenon. Younger generations can take inspiration from the fantastic scientific and cultural achievements to attain even greater heights in the future.

While this noble objective is commendable, measures employed by most modern museums to achieve the same are less so. Most of the museums treat their visitors with a rather static experience. While the artifacts at display may be exotic and the collection exquisitely exhibited, the visitor experience still consists of merely browsing through the elements of the museum at one's leisure. Such an experience is akin to reading a book of history, albeit a glorious one. Despite the fantastic representation and brilliant realism of most exhibitions, their reception is inherently dependent upon the sincerity and personal enthusiasm of the visitors.

Another drawback of such experiences is the short length of time over which the subject impresses on the mind of the visitor. Even the most

amazing display of museum collections would fade with time and with it any chances of learning or inspiration.

1.2 Treasure hunting

Earliest forms of treasure hunting appeared as searches for treasures of immense value thought to be hidden or misplaced by the nobility from ancient times. The key aspect of such hunts was the motivation for a big prize that drove searches far beyond the supposed capabilities of the human minds to solve even the most obscure clues in order to expose the hidden treasure¹. Such campaigns could be organized only by professionals and would have been beyond the common people. However, the successful multiple broadcasts of the American Gameshow “Treasure Hunt” which televised sponsored treasure competitions finally brought widespread popularity to treasure hunting among the general public.

1. Easton, D. F. “Heinrich Schliemann: Hero or Fraud?” *The Classical World* 91, no. 5 (1998): 335-43. doi:10.2307/4352102.

Treasure hunts have emerged in numerous forms in recent times. From a fun event for a group of kids with nothing more than a few toys to be won to national events involving a number of participants competing for a grand prize, all forms of treasure hunting are based on the same concept of using the allurement of a prize to lead to the solution of complicated riddles. Recently, treasure hunting has also been organized as an entertaining way to explore a place or as team building games².

2. Sharma, Sunita, and Jo Geneen. “Team London Ambassadors hunt for a world record title.” *London & Partners - Telling London's story brilliantly*. June 25, 2012.

While treasure hunts can be incredibly fun activities, their educational capabilities are also immense. In treasure hunts, similar to the phenomenon observed in design of video games, human behavior challenged by a difficult mission can persevere to great lengths while pursuing the target objective. Such an experience, with appropriate modifications in design, may also be applied in an educational sphere where the subjects are challenged with riddles closely related to the educational objectives. Within a treasure hunt experience design, the participants may be induced

to search for and discover the educational objectives by themselves as if in self-study environment. In contrast to the self-study environment though, there is no requirement of any strong personal motivation on the part of the participant to continue the study. Instead, participants are allured by the object of treasure hunting. Such an experience design not only makes the educational activity fun, but also ensures continued learning after the event as the participants learn the charm of self-learning and self-exploration.

1.3 Objectives of the study

With this background on the role of museums in spreading cultural awareness and the lack of dynamism in the current museum experience, an innovative new dynamic experience design based on the principle of treasure hunting is explored. In this design, the participants are required to search for and analyze information about the museum artifacts on display in order to answer the treasure-leading quest being posed. Such an experience is bound to not only enhance learning through single museum visits but also excite the participant's curiosity to continue the learning and exploration of the information about the artifacts on their own even after the visit.

Primary objectives of this study may be expressed as follows:

Test run: Primary objective of this research is to evaluate the feasibility of applying a treasure hunt based museum experience design to the museums in Tokyo. Basics of a treasure hunt design are explored from scratch and the design is suitably modified to comply with a museum background. Riddles targeting the educational objectives are designed as a part of the experience design. Appropriate museum venues are also examined and a test run is staged to evaluate the feasibility of treasure hunt experience design.

Analysis: Based on this preliminary design and test run, the observed response and experienced design obstacles are discussed and future ap-

proaches for a more effective treasure hunt design are suggested.

DESIGN

2

This chapter forms the core of this report. Entire process of treasure hunt design from reconnaissance to test run organization is detailed here. The treasure hunt design is broadly divided into three stages: primary reconnaissance of the various museums in Tokyo to determine suitable venues at which the event could be organized, detailed background study on the selected museum for riddle formulation, and finally the on-site event organization to examine the practical feasibility of the event design.

2.1 Stage I: Reconnaissance

Tokyo, being the capital city of the nation and a center of modern art and culture, is home to more than a hundred organized museums. While art museums form the majority of the numbers, wide categories are still exhibited in ample numbers. From the museums of history preserving the artifacts from the past to a number of museums of science, sports and music exhibiting the achievements of modern world in their respective fields, wide of range of experiences are available within the city.

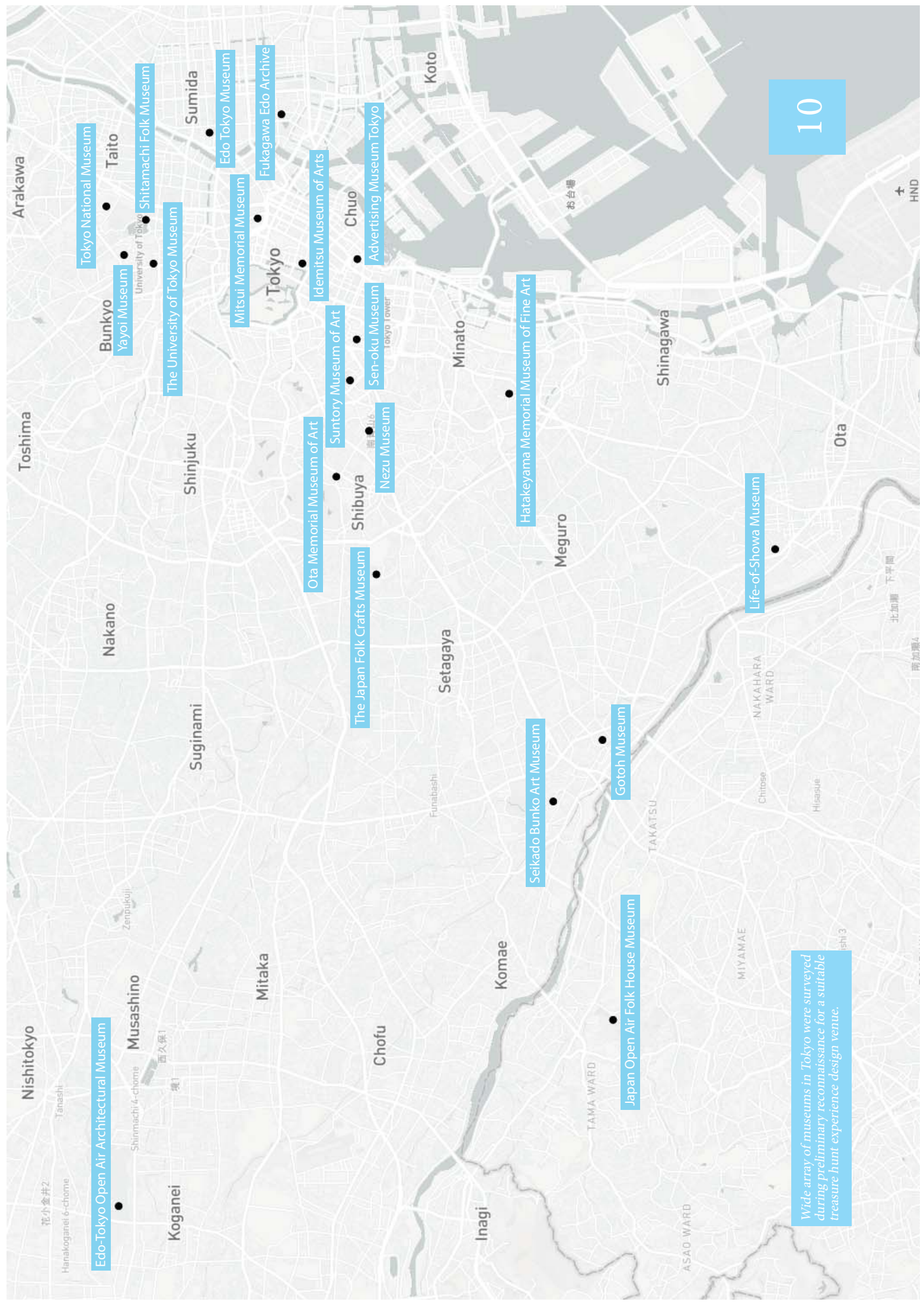
While all museums have their specialties that make them impossible to compare with any other, a shortlisting was carried out for the purpose of efficient reconnaissance. Major museums hosting significant collections were selected as the primary candidates. Some museums of smaller size

but hosting items of importance such as national treasures were also included. Locations of the shortlisted museums are illustrated on a map of Tokyo on the following page. While most of the museums are located within the 23 wards of Tokyo metropolitan area, a few of them are situated in the neighboring Kanazawa and Chiba prefectures.

Although all the shortlisted museums had an amazing collection on display, their suitability for the treasure hunt experience design was evaluated on the basis of following consideration:

Type of collection: In order to design an appropriate riddle for any artifact, it is essential to build a thread of connected stories about the artifact. Artifacts with a unique origin and an identifiable history make it easier to frame an appropriate and interesting riddle. For an example, a statue of bodhisattva from *Tokyo National Museum* would be a much more convenient subject for framing a riddle as compared to some ceramic utensil from ancient china at *Nezu Museum* which, despite being an exquisite work of craftsmanship, doesn't have a clearly identifiable artist or age of manufacture. This argument would become clearer in the section on riddle design.

A number of folk craft museums surveyed in this study were found to be in appropriate for treasure hunt experience design in this regard. Exhibitions at *Japanese Folk Crafts Museum*, *Shitamachi Museum*, *Fukagawa-Edo Museum*, and *Showa Era Lifestyle Museum* were an impressive collection of items or recreations of items from old ages but they could not be used to frame a dynamic treasure hunt experience. On the other hand, *Edo-Tokyo Open Air Architectural Museum* and *Japan Open-air Folk House Museum* exhibited similar collections but with a significant historical background suitable for a treasure hunt design. Exhibitions in art museums with a strong historical theme are also good opportunities for a treasure hunt design. "Heroes from Tales of the Water Margin" exhibition at *Ota Memorial Museum of Art* and "The Grand Sengai Exhibition" at *Idemitsu Museum of Arts* exemplify such exhibitions. Art



Wide array of museums in Tokyo were surveyed during preliminary reconnaissance for a suitable treasure hunt experience design venue.

museum exhibitions designed around themes with no associated historical background are ill suited for a treasure hunt experience design. “Introduction to Chinese Ceramics” exhibition at *Nezu Museum*, “The Traditional Performing Arts of Japan” exhibition at *Mitsui Memorial Museum*, and “Seven Daring Years: Odano Naotake and Akita Ranga” exhibition at *Suntory Museum of Art* were deemed inappropriate with this reasoning.

Collection display length: Most museums that own a large collection of artifacts adopt a rotating exhibition policy of displaying only a set items at a time based on some predefined theme. While such an arrangement ensures exhibition of items under some brilliant scheme, it limits the time for which any particular set of artifacts are on display. As a result, it was not possible to carry out the process of reconnaissance, riddle development, and event realization within such short time frame in the case of some museums

Art museums such as *Nezu Museum*, *Mitsui Memorial Museum*, *Idemitsu Museum of Arts*, *Suntory Museum of Art*, *Seikado Bunko Art Museum*, and *Yayoi Museum* had a typical exhibition duration of merely two months and were therefore deemed inappropriate for designing a treasure hunt despite some of them having very appropriate collections by other considerations. Large museums such as *Tokyo National Museum*, *National Museum of Japanese History*, and *Edo-Tokyo Museum* had a permanent exhibition in addition to short term special exhibitions allowing sufficient space of time for treasure hunt design. Museums such as *Edo-Tokyo Open Air Architectural Museum*, *Japan Open-air Folk House Museum*, *Edo-Tokyo Museum*, *Fukagawa-Edo Museum*, *Shitamachi Museum*, and *Showa Era Lifestyle Museum* were the most suitable in this regard as they exhibit the same collection year round.

Museum regulations: In order to solve the riddle, the participants are required not only to observe the artifact carefully but often also to search on the internet for supporting information or other clues. Therefore, un-

restricted use of mobile phones at the museum site is an indispensable requirement for organizing treasure hunts. Unfortunately, some museums restrict not only shooting photos at the exhibition but outright prohibit the use of mobile phones irrelevant of the purpose citing the fragility of artifacts on display as the reason.

Museums exhibiting private collections such as *Nezu Museum*, *Idemitsu Museum of Arts*, *Ota Memorial Museum of Art*, *Suntory Museum of Art*, *Seikado Bunko Art Museum*, and *Yayoi Museum* were particularly restrictive in this regard making it difficult to hold a treasure hunt event. Open air museums such as *Edo-Tokyo Open Air Architectural Museum* and *Japan Open-air Folk House Museum* on the other hand offered a restriction free environment suitable for organizing a treasure hunting event.

Relevance of the exhibition: Apart from the above mentioned requirements related to the ease of treasure hunt design, one additional criteria was adopted in the context of this study. Exhibitions not related to Japan or Japanese culture were excluded. “Introduction to Chinese Ceramics” exhibition at *Nezu Museum* and “Heroes from Tales of the Water Margin” exhibition at *Ota Memorial Museum of Art* were deemed unsuitable for this reason.

2.2 Stage II: Riddle design

Riddles form the core of a treasure hunt experience. Suitably designed riddles are the key to an enriching and interesting treasure hunt. Riddles are posed in the form a simple clue or fact that is supposed to be connected in some way to one of the artifacts. It is the job of the participant to explore in depth about the provided clue or the artifacts in the collection and identify the connection in order to solve the riddles. The task of riddle design may be considered in two stages: collecting relevant background information on the artifact, and stringing the relevant

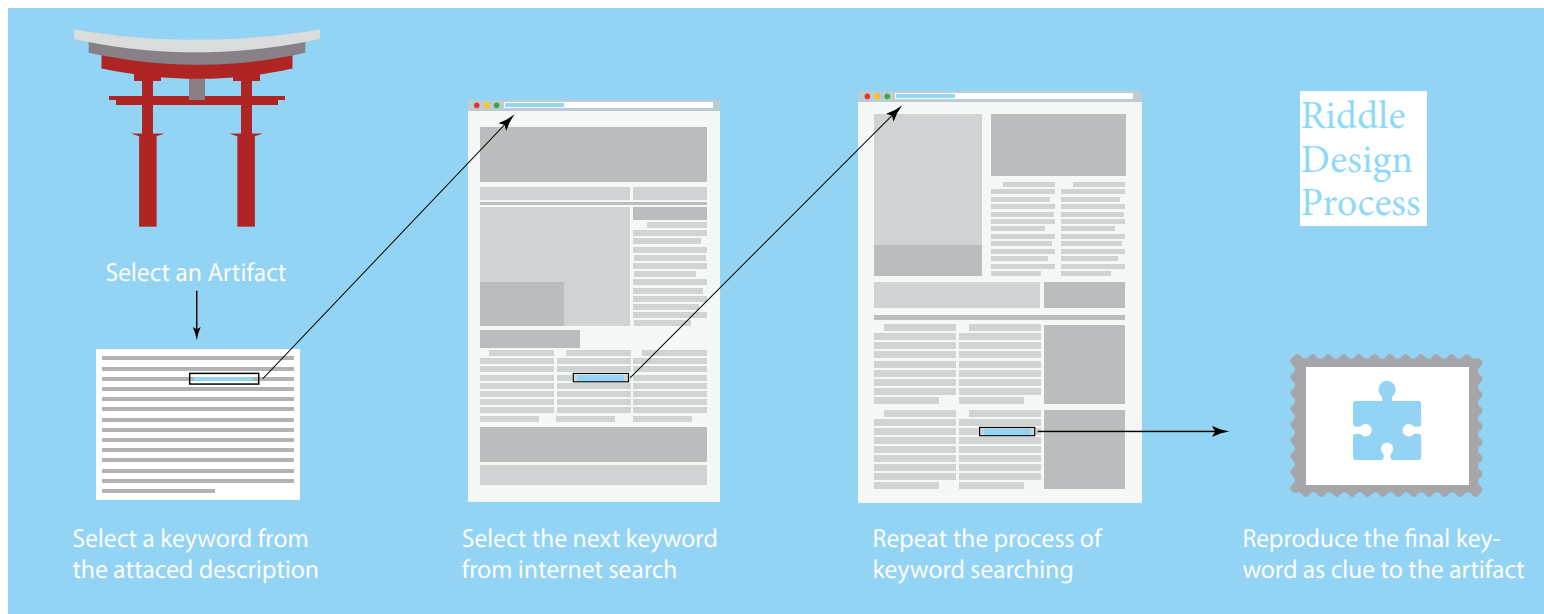
background stories to form the riddle.

Information collection: Most of the modern museum artifacts are furnished with a short description placed right next to the item on display. This description forms the basis for collecting detailed background information. Museum shop's book collection facilitated convenient reference of this primary description for most of the museums. Further, various online databases hosted by the museums or other national organizations also made available the basic description of certain artifacts.

Basic description thus acquired is surveyed for characteristic keywords specific to the artifact and having potential to form an interesting connection. Further information on these keywords is acquired through more generally available sources such as web encyclopedias.



Museum description plates, Museum collection books, Museum web databases and Web encyclopedias were the primary sources of information used for designing the riddles.



Ease of access of the information sources referenced in the riddle design also makes it easy for the participant to search for relevant clues. Description boards placed at the museum site and the web resources readily available from any smartphone are thus the only tools needed for participating in the treasure hunt experience.

Stringing stories: Final task in the design of riddles is the assembly of collected information regarding each artifact into an appropriate thread of connected ideas starting from an apparently obscure clue and ending in the answer that is one of the artifacts. Difficulty of the riddle is directly related to the number of connected stories in the riddle. A number of connected stories that render the clue seem unrelated to any of the artifacts in the museum make a complicated and tough to solve riddle. On the other hand, a rather easy to solve riddles can be designed by stringing together fewer stories. The figure on the top of the page comprehensively illustrates this riddle design process.

This process of riddle design may be illustrated though a simple example. Consider the scroll painting called “Twelve Devas” held by *Kyoto National Museum* which is also designated as a National Treasure. The painting depicts the twelve gods of esoteric Buddhism. An internet search about the “twelve gods of Buddhism” reveals that 10 of these gods

represent one of the directions and the other two represent the sun and the moon. Taking this as the keyword, an internet search for “sun and moon in Buddhism” reveals that unification of sun and moon is one of the seventeen important tantras in Tibetan Buddhism. Selecting this as the storyline for the riddle, the number “seventeen” is declared as a clue for the painting of Twelve Devas. In solving this riddle, the participants read through a number of topics and not just the simple description of the artifact provided by the museum.

2.3 Stage III: Event realization

Final stage in the design of treasure hunt experience is the organization of the event at a museum site. In order to effectively achieve the goals of treasure hunt experience design, proper organization and delivery of the final event is crucial. Following aspects are considered in this regard:

Selection of the riddles: Depending on the size of the museum and the number of suitable artifacts it houses, a number of riddles may be developed. However, owing to the restricted length of time available for the conduction of the event at any given site, only a selected number of riddles can be implemented at a given event. Selection of the suitable riddles for a museum was done to maintain a balance of difficulty and variety in target artifacts. If all the riddles are too difficult or too easy, the participants might quickly lose interest in the hunt, thus bringing to an end any hopes of promoting self-learning through the museum. Uniform spread of the riddles to various categories of the museum artifacts is also necessary in order to ensure sufficient coverage of all topics under the objective of promoting self-learning through the treasure hunt experience design. Selecting too many riddles from a narrow range of categories would also render the riddles easier to solve.

Event formation: Selected riddles can be finally put together into a treasure hunt event at the museum site. While many different event formats

may be possible, following recommendations are given in the context of the current study. Clues for each riddle are expressed in the form of pictures. Posing riddles through pictures instead of a text added a layer of difficulty to the question while also making it equally easier for participants of all linguistic background to grasp the riddle. Further, a web based means of communication was adopted for send riddles and other information to the participants during the event. This arrangement ensures smooth delivery of picture based riddles while requiring minimum additional tools. Finally, an arrangement of furnishing additional hints for the original riddles was also made whereby participants could request hints for the questions they felt to be too difficult.

CONCLUSION

3

In accordance with the design outline, a treasure hunt event was organized at one of the museum venues to examine participant response to such an experience design. This chapter details the event organization and discusses the observed response and participant feedback. In conclusion, further improvements to the proposed design are discussed.

3.1 Event description

A treasure hunt event was designed for *Edo-Tokyo Open-air Architecture Museum*. This museum was found to be one of the most appropriate venues in the preliminary reconnaissance stage. Year round permanent exhibition, no restriction on photography or use of mobile phones, and the present of a relevant collection of artifacts satisfy all the necessary requirements for a treasure hunt event design. The museum houses restored buildings from Showa to Edo periods and gives an insight to the life in those times. Unlike other open air museums (like *Japan Open-air Folk House Museum*) exhibiting buildings from the past and folk craft museums (like *Edo-Tokyo Museum*) exhibiting items or replicas of from the past, this museum exhibits buildings that each have a significant historical background related to important people or events in Edo and Showa periods. Hence, a treasure hunt could be easily designed for this museum. Following thorough background study and following

the process of riddle design as expressed in the previous chapter, a set of riddles were developed. The list of riddles employed in this event can be found in the appendix.

Volunteers were invited for participation in a test run of the thus designed treasure hunt experience. A total of 7 interested students were thus gathered as volunteers mainly from through participation calls in University circles and foreign students' community in The University of Tokyo. For their participation, a compensation of 1000 yen for transport and Museum entry fee was arranged. A prize of 5000 yen for treasure hunt contest was also set up in order to ensure enthusiastic participation.

The event was held over 3 hours on a Saturday morning. First 30 minutes were designed to be free time over which participants could orient themselves with the large museum premises and get an overview of the kind of buildings on display in various parts of the museum. At the end of the free time, all the riddles were sent out over a messaging application and answers were accepted over the same application. Hints were provided to the participants upon request. Finally, the participant with most correct answers within shortest time at the end of stipulated 3 hours was declared the winner and rewarded with the prize.

3.2 Response discussion

At the end of the event all the participants were interviewed on their opinion about the event. All the participants were on their first visit to the museum. Participant response was generally positive and they described the event as quite interesting. They also reported that the challenge to find solution to a riddle was an immense motivation to thoroughly browse through the entire museum.

While the response of the participants about this experience was en-

couragingly positive, they did not seem to realize the educational objectives behind this event. While searching for the solution to riddles, the participants also gained knowledge on various topics not directly related to the museum which would not have been possible in a regular museum visit. Furthermore, they achieved this with the strength of their own motivation to compete for the prize and solve the given challenge. In this process they also learnt the art of self-learning through freely available sources of information online.

3.3 Future recommendations

Although an event could be designed and evaluated through a test run in this study, the findings are subject to the limitations that were encountered during reconnaissance and design phases. Taking into account these limitations, following recommendations are given for future studies:

1. While the volunteer response was positive, the small number of volunteers from a very narrow background severely limits the utility of the results. More volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds would better validate the applicability of the treasure hunt experience design.
2. A number of museums court restrictions unsuitable for a treasure hunt design experience. Negotiation with the museum authorities to compromise these restrictions specifically for holding a treasure hunt might be considered in order to expand the scope of the study.
3. Treasure hunt design evaluated in this study is limited in scope to only certain types of museums and artifacts. Other types of museums not targeted by this study also attract vast numbers of visitors every week. The riddle design may be modified to suit other museums in order to design a holistic treasure hunt experience.

APPENDIX

A.1 List of riddles

All the riddles developed for the treasure hunt event at *Edo-Tokyo Open-air Architecture Museum* are listed here for reference. Included in the description of each riddle is the story line leading to the clue from the artifact description.

[Riddle 1](#)

Artifact Name: Jisho-in Mausoleum

Selected keyword from attached description: A *mausoleum* dedicated to the wife of shogun Iemitsu Tokugawa

Next keyword: One of the most popular mausoleums in the world dedicated to a queen is *Taj Mahal* in India.

Provided clue: Taj Mahal

[Riddle 2](#)

Artifact Name: Kokaden Palace

Selected keyword from attached description: This building built as temporary ceremony hall for the *2600th anniversary of the founding of Japan* in year 1940.

Next keyword: *1940 Summer Olympic Games* were planned to be organized in Tokyo as a commemoration for the 2600th anniversary of the founding of Japan.

Provided clue: 1940 Olympic Games

[Riddle 3](#)

Artifact Name: Kodakara Bathhouse

Selected keyword from attached description: *Seven gods of good luck* are carved above the entrance of the bathhouse

Next keyword: The seven gods of good luck are *Ebisu, Daikokuten, Bishamonten, Benzaiten, Fukurokuju, Jurōjin, Hotei, Kichijōten*.

Next keyword: All these deities have their origin in ancient Hinduism or Chinese Buddhism except for *Ebisu* who has a Japanese ancestry.

Next keyword: *Ebisu station* in Shibuya-ku, Tokyo is named after Ebisu

Provided clue: Ebisu station

[Riddle 4](#)

Artifact Name: House of Koide Family

Selected keyword from attached description: The house is designed in a style that combines the *European design* of those days and traditional Japanese design.

Next keyword: Of all the European style buildings in the museum, only this building had an *accessible loft*.

Provided clue: An image of loft from this building.

[Riddle 5](#)

Artifact Name: Farmhouse of Tenmyo Family

Selected keyword from attached description: The building was home to the *Tenmyo family*.

Next keyword: The Tenmyo family moved to Edo area from their original residence in *Tochigi* during Kamakura period.

Next keyword: The Tenmyo family were engaged in iron casting in *Tochigi* and produced famous ironworks trademarked as *Tenmyo casting*.

Provided clue: An iron kettle of Tenmyo casting

[Riddle 6](#)

Artifact Name: House of Georg de Lalande

Selected keyword from attached description: The building was home to a *George de Lalande*, a famous german architect living in Japan since early 1900s.

Next keyword: de Lalande designed many western style buildings in Japan during those times including the now famous *Thomas House* in Kobe.

Provided clue: Thomas House in Kitano, Kobe.

Riddle 7

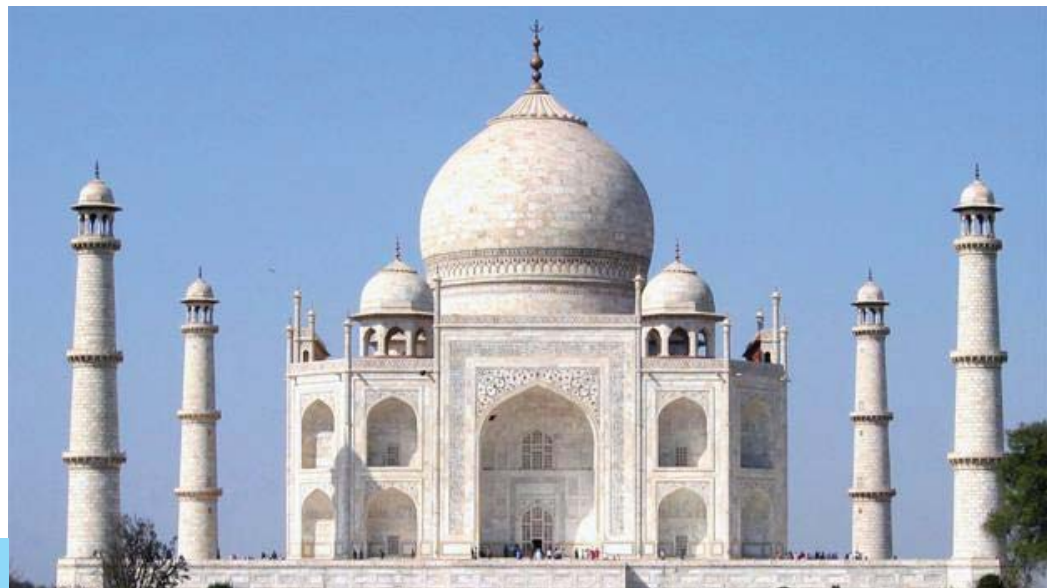
Artifact Name: House of Kunio Mayekawa

Selected keyword from attached description: This building was designed by *Kunio Maekawa*, a famous architect during post-war times in Japan.

Next keyword: Kunio Maekawa worked in France under the apprenticeship of the famous French architect, *Le Corbusier*.

Next keyword: One of the most popular and characteristic work of Le Corbusier is the *Villa Savoye in Poissy*.

Provided clue: Villa Savoye in Poissy.



Clue to Riddle 1

Clue to Riddle 2



Clue to Riddle 3



Clue to Riddle 4



Clue to Riddle 5



Clue to Riddle 6



Clue to Riddle 7

