

Life at Sea, Life on Lands

The Shinagawa Irrigation Canal

The villages of the Shinagawa region constantly struggled with a lack of water. The Shinagawa irrigation canal was developed to address this concern. The 27.5 kilometer-long irrigation canal was completed in 1669, split from the Tamagawa irrigation canal in Sakai Village, the Tama District (present-day Musashino City, Tokyo). This canal greatly improved the agricultural production of the Shinagawa region.

Agriculture in Shinagawa

When the Shinagawa irrigation canal was completed, the many farming villages of Shinagawa, which made up over half the villages during the era, began producing their own specialized products. Some of the most notable products include Shinagawa green onions, Oi carrots, and Togoshi bamboo sprouts. Togoshi bamboo sprouts originated as a product when Yamaji Jirobei, a wealthy sea merchant who owned a villa in Togoshi Village, brought Mosochiku bamboo from the Satsuma Domain (primarily present-day Kagoshima Prefecture) and began cultivating it in Togoshi around 1789. Togoshi bamboo sprouts spread surrounding areas, and became one of the most specialized products of Shinagawa.

Shinagawa *Nori* Laver

Nori seaweed laver was a specialized product that was harvested in the fishing villages from Shinagawa-ura to Haneda-ura. Its seaweed cultivation began around the 1670s when Shinagawa developed better cultivation techniques. These techniques then spread throughout the neighboring regions, and the production increased. Shinagawa *nori* became one of the products offered to the shogunate families. Shinagawa *nori* seaweed was brought to Asakusa, sold as Edo-meisan Asakusa *Nori*, a premier product of Edo, and came to be known throughout Japan.

Ketabune Ship

1/6 scale model by Nobuki Kojima

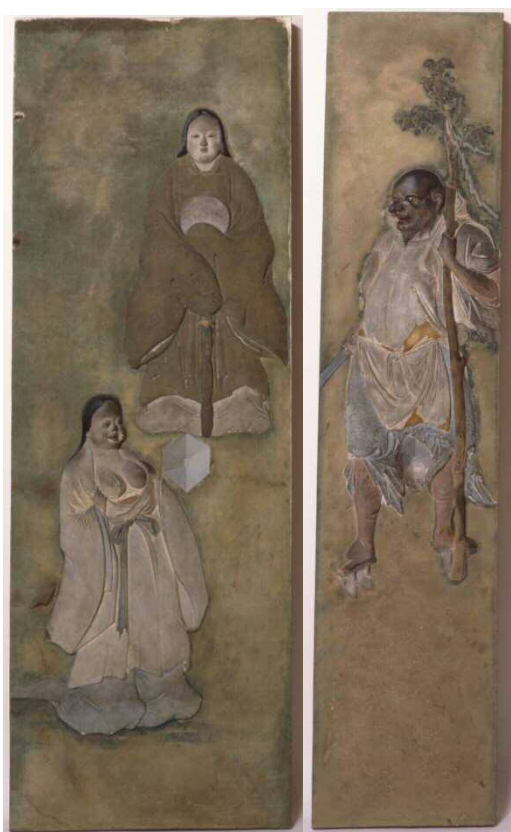
Fishing in Shinagawa centered at around Ryoshimachi Town (present-day Higashi-Shinagawa, Shinagawa City, Tokyo). The fishing technique used at the time involved



trawling five to nine fishing nets, named *ketaami*, low in the water while using the sails to drive the ship laterally.

The ships were called *ketabune* and the technique was called *ketabune* fishing. Shinagawa-ura thrived the most among the various fishing villages, but the construction of the Shinagawa batteries in the mid-19th century decreased the fish catches. Shiba shrimp fishing considered as an alternative, but a dispute with another fishing village that laid claim to the tools needed for fishing.

1_04_01




“The Deeds of Ameno-uzumeno-mikoto”
Painted on Raised Plaster Relief
(Reproduction)

Original: Yoriki Shrine Collection
Shinagawa City Designated Cultural
Property

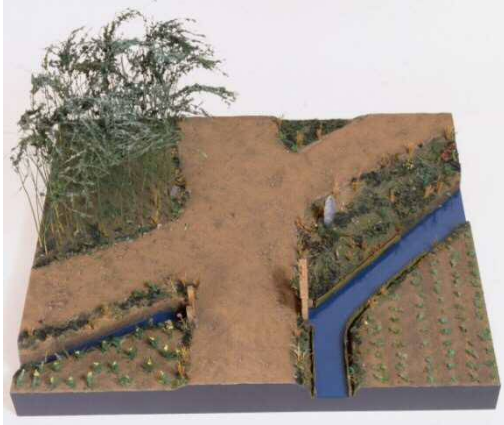
A raised plaster relief originally painted on the inside of the doors at the central shrine at Yoriki Shrine, devoted to the local Shinto deity of Shinagawa-Ura (Ryoshimachi Town, Minami-Shinagawa), sculpted by the famous plaster artist Izuno Chohachi (1815 - 1889). The plaster relief featuring Amaterasu-omikami* on the upper portion, and Ameno-uzumeno-mikoto* on the lower portion of the left door, and Saruta-hikono-mikoto* on the right door.

* Amaterasu-omikami (the supreme goddess who ruled the sun) hid herself away in a cave named the Amanoiwaya due to the violence of her brother, Susanono-mikoto. This caused light to disappear from the world, enveloping it in darkness.

Seeking to draw out Amaterasu-omikami, the other gods held a festival in front the cave, and thanks to the laughter of the gods brought by the humorous dance of Amenouzumeno-mikoto,

	<p>Amaterasu-omikami cracked open her cave just a bit to peek out, and was thus pulled out by the revelers to restore light to the world.</p> <p>Furthermore, when the grandson of Amaterasu-omikami, Ninigino-mikoto, descended from heaven to the earth, Amenouzumeno-mikoto directed Sarutahikono-mikoto to guide him through the realm. In this way, the both doors recounts the deeds of Amenouzumeno-mikoto.</p>
<p>1_04_02</p> 	<p>A <i>Kosatsu</i> Notice Board Displayed in a Fishing Village</p> <p>1714 Shinagawa City Designated Cultural Property</p> <p>The development of shipping lanes led to a large number of shipwrecks. In 1711, the government affixed <i>kosatsu</i>* wooden notice boards throughout all the seaside villages of Japan to proclaim a unified policy. Two fishing proclamations descended at Yoriki Shrine in Shinagawa-ura (Ryoshimachi Town, Minami-Shinagawa). The one <i>kosatsu</i> was issued in 1712 to be a response to the shipwreck bearing rice tributes destined for the Edo Castle. The other <i>kosatsu</i> issued in 1714 forbade illicit trading. Both plaques are believed to have been displayed at the Ryoshimachi Town <i>kosatsu</i> post.</p> <p>* <i>Kosatsu</i> Notice Board: A wooden board inscribed with official proclamations, such as laws or forbidden acts. These boards were displayed at a <i>kosatsu</i> post in a well-travelled area.</p>

1_04_03



Shinagawa Irrigation Canals – Model of Jizo no Tsuji Crossing

A reproduction of the Jizo no Tsuji, where the Shinagawa irrigation canal split in the direction of the Meguro River and Tachiai River (today, Ushiroji crossing at Koyama 2-chome, Shinagawa City, Tokyo). The name of the crossing comes from Asahi Jizo-son, the name of a stone statue that can still be found in the area today.

1_04_04



Nori Laver Box

Meiji Period (Surmised)

Shinagawa City Designated Cultural Property

A decorated box used to present dried nori to Kan'ei-ji Temple (Taito City, Tokyo), a family temple of the Tokugawa and other shogunate family.

1_04_05



Nori-geta

Used from the Edo Period until 1962
Shinagawa City Designated Cultural Property

These elevated geta sandals were used when erecting the *hibi* (bamboo latices used to cultivate the spores of seaweed and oysters) in the seabed to raise seaweed and also for harvesting seaweed. They were worn for doing work in relatively deep seaside areas.

1_04_06



Sudare Bamboo Screen

Used from the Edo Period until 1962
Shinagawa City Designated Cultural Property

Raw laver was laid out upon this thin, square bamboo screen and then dried in the sun or over fire. The bamboo screen was mounted on a *wakuboshi* wooden frame.