

NAGOYA SENSU



NAGOYA

TRADITIONAL SENSU



NAGOYA SENSU MANUFACTURING ASSOCIATION

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紳士扇
A fan for men

祝儀扇
Shuugi ougi or a fan for celebration



婦人扇
A fan for ladies

茶扇
A fan for a tea ceremony



舞扇・飾扇 A fan for dance or ornament



イベント・PR扇子 A fan for events or PRs

The origin of a "sensu" or a fan

An Ougi or a Japanese fan is originally thought to be an uchiwa that came from China in Later Han Dynasty (from 25 to 220) as it is mentioned, "丁綬 made 'hichirin sen' or a wheel with seven fans. It consisted of seven gears. The largest one was over three-meter diameter. Those interlocked one another. By rotating the wheel the wind created by the fans was cold enough to make people in the room shiver from cold," in "Saikai zakki".

This ougi seems to have entered Japan in Nara era (from 710 to 784) and to have been called "ougi".

Now the origin of "sensu" is thought to be "Hiougi" which is made of the thin skin of "hinoki" or a Japanese cypress in the beginning of the Heian era (from 794 to 1192) as it is mentioned that the beginning of a Japanese fan is "Hiougi." in "Wakun-no-shiori". A "Hiougi" is made by tying the thin skin of a Japanese cypress with a string and fixing with a "kaname" or a pivot at the edge of the fan.

An "ougi" was different from an "uchiwa" according to "Wamyuu ruijiiu shou", the encyclopedia in the Heian era.



Hiougi

The history of a "sensu"

The "Hiougi" spread among the imperial court and Buddhist priests quicker than thought. In the last of the Heian era, its production increased so much to export to China.

A "Kawahori", which is constructed by affixing paper over the bone-like lengths of bamboo, was made just after the "Hiougi" production. This is the origin of the present "sensu".

The "ougi" which was immigrated into China became a "kara ougi" both sides of which were the faces and which imitated a Japanese "sensu" in China Ming era (from 1368 to 1661).

During the 16th century, it was introduced to Portuguese and Spain and to France at last. Especially in Paris, an "ougi" was really accepted and it was said that there were about 150 fan manufacturers in Paris in the middle of the 17th century.

"Ougis" which had started in Japan developed into "Kara ougis" and after being introduced to France, it had wiped out its Oriental scent and changed into the fans that suited to European's tastes.

In Paris, fans had flourished during the era of Luis 14 and 15 (from 1643 to 1774) and had disappeared with the Paris Revolution.

But in Spain, Spanish fans are still produced.

On the contrary, in Japan, the "kara ougi" was reimported during the Muromachi era (from 1336 to 1573) and got popular through Japan with the name of a "sensu".

This reimported "sensu" was gradually refined in Japan. The method of making a fan is the following, make the surface with three layers of paper (the middle paper was called the core paper), draw or paint a picture on the surface before folding the paper and inserting bone-like lengths of bamboo through the layered paper. This method continues to today.

As it is mentioned above, a "sensu" invented in Japan is the thing inevitable for Japanese. Its history is tightly connected with not only the cultural but also political history. It is thought to be the original invention and the origin of the exports of Japan.



Kawahori-sen

The history of the Nagoya sensu

It is said that the Nagoya sensu was created by Inoue Kanzo and his son, who moved from Kyoto to Nagoya and settled at the land near Nagoya castle (present Habashita, Nishi ward) during the Houreki era (from 1751 to 1764).

Nagoya and Kyoto are two main fan production areas. The "Nagoya ougi" is produced as a "shuugi ougi" or a fan for celebration, and a men's fan whose size is 25 or 35 ken (which means the number of used bamboo sticks) is mainly produced as a mass production while the "Kyoto ougi" is produced for targeting a ladies' fan, a "Mai ougi" or a fan for dance, a "Kazari ougi" or an ornament fan. In the first time the "Kara ougi" was popular, but it has been gradually substituted with the "Nagoya ougi", which was tanned on the both side of the surface.

During the Taisho era, it was used for a typical gift as chugen or a summer gift. The export to China and Korea which began in the Meiji era brought more than 10 million pieces of sensu production per year.

Although the export to the U.S., Europe and Australia increased after World War II, it decreased because of the change of the economic environment like the increase in the yen's value.

Meanwhile, domestically, the change of the life style and the spread of air conditioners made the demand of the "sensu" in summer decline. With the review of Japanese culture, the "sensu" came to be accepted by young generations and its demand is expanding to things for gifts, shuugi or celebration, events, memories and dance.

A "sensu" for shuugi includes a fan for birthday, omiyamairi of hichi-go-san, a white fan used for wedding, a gold-silver fan and so on.

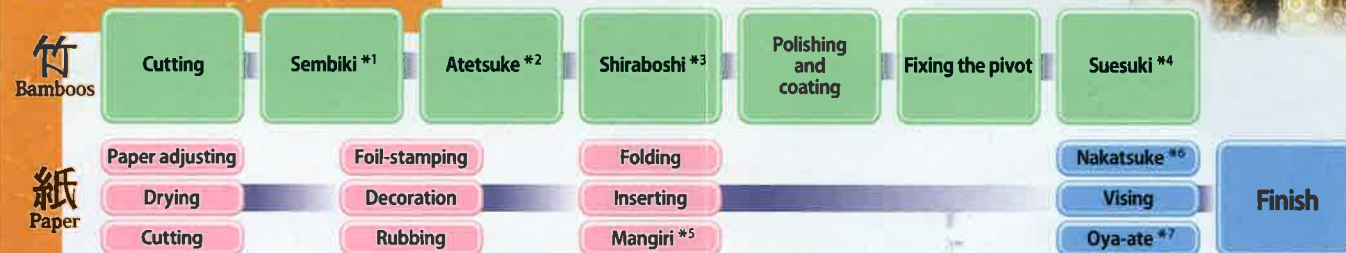
And there are many varieties of "sensu" used in Japanese life; a fan for a funeral, a fan on the surface of which han-nya-shin-gyo is printed, a fan for a tea ceremony, a "Keiro ougi" and so on.

The production of "sensu" consists of many processes based on the traditional handmade home manufacturing as ougi-hone (fan's bone), paper, folding, finishing and so on.

It is a very complicated work. Therefore, there are few successors and not enough of them to continue the tradition.



Process to make SENSU



- *1 Sembiki : Make the cut bamboos into a thin stick-like shape by separating the outside of the bamboo called "kawa" or a bamboo skin from the inside of the bamboo called "hara".
- *2 Atetsuke : Shape the bamboo stick; make the corner round.
- *3 Shiraboshi : Dry the shaped bamboo sticks in the sun.
- *4 Suesuki : Grind the bamboo sticks inserted between papers thinner.
- *5 Mangiri : Cut off the folding paper.
- *6 Nakatsuke : Insert the bamboo stick between the folding papers.
- *7 Oya-ate : Thick bamboo stick on the both ends of ougi.



Kamiawase (paper adjusting)



Uwaetsuke (draw or paint on the paper)



Ori (folding)



Nakasashi (insert bamboo wires between the papers)



Fuki (blowing)



Nakatuke (insert the bamboo sticks between the surface papers)