

The background of Katsunin-ken

「活人剣」のいわれ

活人剣建設の経緯は、その発願者である可睡齋四十八世日置禪師主が記した副碑「種徳活人剣碑」から知ることが出来る。それによると、その目的は、日清戦争終結時に医者の力で困難を救った陸軍軍医総監医学博士佐藤連（順天堂第三代堂主）の功績を讃えるとともに、この戦争で亡くなった日清両国の戦死病没者供養のためと記されている。

明治二十八年三月、日清開の講和条約締結の為に来日した清国講和全權大臣李鴻章が交渉会場からの帰途、暴漢に撃たれ重傷を負う事件が発生した。まさに国を揺るがす大事件である。

この時、勅命により李の治療に当たったのが佐藤である。李の傷が快方に向かう中、李と佐藤との間で次のような会話が交わされた。活人剣台座の四柱碑に刻まれている。

この四柱碑は、修証義の編者として有名な宗敬家、大内青嶺の撰。書によるものである。

常に軍服帯剣の正装で診療に当たった佐藤に対して、李は「医者の仕事にどうして剣が必要なのか」と尋ねたところ、佐藤は「これは活人剣です。日夜、百の病と戦い、必ずこれに打ち勝ちます」と応じ、李を深く感動させた。

その後、この活人剣の話は、美談として世間で大評判となった。そもそも、佐藤が当常即妙に活人剣と応じられたのは、佐藤が可睡齋における日置禪師の先任であった西有樓山禪師の下でかつて参拝した経験があったからであり、このことに活人剣と可睡齋との深い縁を感じた日置禪師が発願、建設したのが可睡齋「活人剣」である。剣の部分は、明治を代表する彫刻家、高村光雲の手によるものであった。

第二次世界大戦で供出され、残ったのは剣の台座の四柱碑と、李が佐藤にお礼として贈った七言律詩と戦後活人剣碑の刻まれた石碑（副碑）のみとなった。



陸軍軍医総監、佐藤連



建立当初の活人剣碑



清国全權大使、李鴻章

その律詩の中で、李は自分の現在の苦衷を中国の故事になぞらえて表すと同時に、佐藤への感謝の気持ちを「妙手回春」と、匠者としての中国での最大の褒め言葉を贈っている。

この度の、平威の活人剣再建に当たって、剣は現代の名工である宮田亮平東京藝術大学学長が制作し、場所も山門横の景勝の地に移すとともに、旧活人剣の跡地の周辺整備も行った。

二〇一六（平成二十八）年三月吉日 活人剣再建委員会

Explanatory Plate of a Former Katsunin-Ken Monument

We can learn the background of the erection of the Katsunin-ken monument from the engraved statement on an accompanying monument entitled “Seitoku Katsunin-ken Hi,” which means “The monument honoring the virtue of Katsunin-ken.” This statement was written by its main supporter, Buddhist monk, Hioki Mokusen, the 48th Master of Kasuisai temple. He wrote that the monument was erected for the repose of the war dead of the Sino-Japanese War (1894-5) as well as in honor of Dr. Susumu Sato, Surgeon General of the Imperial Japanese Army at the time of the war, and subsequently the 3rd President of Juntendo Medical University, who averted a national crisis with the help of his knowledge of medicine. In March 1895 (in the 28th year of the Meiji Era), Mr. Li Hong Zhang, Imperial Commissioner of the Qing Empire who was visiting Japan, was shot by a scoundrel and seriously injured in the face while on his way back from a peace conference venue. This was a horrible incident that rocked the nation. It was then when Dr. Sato was given an order by Emperor Meiji that he administered medical treatment to Li. On the two-tiered, cylindrical-shaped pedestal of the monument, this was engraved: “While Li’s injury was healing

nicely, there was the following conversation between Li and Sato. Li asked Sato, who was attending him, always wearing a sword with his uniform, ‘Doctors do not need a sword, do they?’ to which Sato immediately answered, ‘This is what we call “Katsunin-ken” or a healing-sword, which constantly fights against all kinds of diseases and will never fail to defeat them.’ These words deeply moved Li.” The statement on the cylindrical-shaped pedestal was written by Ouchi Seiran (1845-1919), a religionist who was famous for having compiled the “Shushogi” Buddhist textbook.

Later, the story about Katsunin-ken became publicly talked-about as a laudable anecdote. Incidentally, what prompted Sato to make such a clever riposte? This was because he had learned Zen from a Zen Master, Nishiari Bokuzan (1821-1910), a predecessor of Hioki Mokusen of Kasuisai temple. Hioki Mokusai, feeling a profound bond between the Katsunin-ken and Kasuisai temple, proposed the erection of the Katsunin-ken monument. The sword part was designed by Koun Takamura (1852-1934), a renowned sculptor of the Meiji Era. However, it was delivered to the government for war purposes during World War II. The remains were only a cylindrical-shaped pedestal and an accompanying monument on which a Chinese poem which had been bestowed on Sato by Li as a token of gratitude, and the engraved background about the Katsunin-ken.

In his Chinese poem (of eight lines, each of seven Chinese characters), Li expressed his predicament of those days, making a Chinese historical allusion, and at the same time praising Sato, showing his appreciation by appropriating the Chinese golden maxim: “Recovery thanks to a medical virtuoso.”

For the re-erection, we asked a modern master swordsmith, Prof. Ryohei Miyata, a former President of Tokyo University of the Arts (appointed as a commissioner of the Agency for Cultural Affairs from April 2016) to forge a new sword. Then we moved the monument beside the temple gate, a scenic spot, and restored the former site and its surroundings of Katsunin-ken monument to proper order.

In March 2016 (in the 28th year of the Heisei Era)
Katsunin-ken Re-erection Committee