

Kenjiro Tokutomi (Roka)

Kenjiro Tokutomi (Roka) was born October 25, 1868 in Minamata, Ashikita District, Kumamoto Prefecture (the present-day city of Minamata). He had four sisters and a brother five-years older than him named Ichiro (Soho).

In the summer of his 11th year his brother Ichiro took him to enter Kyoto Doshisha University to study. With his studies starting and stopping repeatedly, he began to work for the Minyusha publishing company, which was run by his brother, in May 1889. In his work presenting works and translating Western articles for the magazines Kokumin no Tomo and Kokumin Shimbun, he learned much about writing. He also became friends at this time with Doppo Kunikida.

In May 1894 he married Aiko Harata, also from Kumamoto, who was studying at Ochanomizu University Teacher's College in Tokyo. Roka was 27 years old and Aiko was 21. Rare for the times, they were a dual-income household.

Although getting off to a difficult start in their marriage, with the brilliant success of Hototogisu in 1899, Roka earned an established position as a recognized author, following up with Shizen to Jinsei, Omoide no Ki, and other noted works.

Roka's main works include Hototogisu, Shizen to Jinsei, Omoide no Ki, Kuroshio, Junrei Kiko, Yadorigi, Mimizu no Tawagoto, Kuroi Me to Chairo no Me, Shi no Kage ni, Shinshun, Nippon kara Nippon e, Takezaki Junko, and Fuji.



Inside the Memorial Hall



Appearance of Connecting Corridor in Original House

Valuable pieces exist among the items curated here, including Namikogozo, a picture painted by Kuroda Seiki of Namiko, the protagonist of the novel Hototogisu, which was highly influential in film, theater, and rokyoku performances; Tolstoy's Letters, about the Russian author whom he met while returning from his pilgrimage; and The Book of An Jung-geun, about the Korean independence activist who was executed for being Ito Hirobumi's assassin. Many other pieces are on display as well, including first editions of Roka's works, pictures he painted, and items he used.

Personal history of Roka Tokutomi

1868
Born October 25, 1868 in Minamata, Ashikita District, Kumamoto Prefecture. Given name Kenjiro, he was the youngest of four sisters and three brothers.

1870
The whole family moved to Oe village on the outskirts of Kumamoto City when his father, Kazutaka, began working for the Kumamoto government.

1878
Leaves in June for Kyoto with his brother to enter Doshisha University.

1885
Attends church in Imahari, Ehime Prefecture where his cousin, Tokio Yokoi, lived. The pen name, "Roka Ichi," begins to be seen on his notes.

1886
Moves to Kyoto in June, restarts his studies at Doshisha University. Falls in love with Hisae Yamamoto, daughter of Kakuma Yamamoto, Vice President of Doshisha. The whole family moves to Kyoto with the success Shorai no Nippon published by his brother, Ichiro.

1887
Leaves his studies at Doshisha University after breaking up with Hisae Yamamoto. Wanders Kagoshima for two months having given up on life. His brother Ichiro founds Minyusha.

1889
Returns to Kyoto after being called by his brother in May to work at Minyusha. Minyusha publishes Nyoshitsufuraido, and Risashikakufuden.

1894
Marries Aiko Harata in May, moves to rental house on land belonging to Kaishu Katsu in Akasakahikawa.

1897
Moves to Willow House in Zushi from Akasakahikawa. Minyusha publishes Tolstoy.

1898
Minyusha publishes Aoyama Shirakumo, a collection of short works in March, Meifu Kagami in April, and Gaiko Kitan in October. Hears the sad tale of Nobuko Oyama from Mrs. Fukuya that lived in the same set of houses in Zushi in the summer. In November Kokumin Shimbun begins serialization of Hototogisu.

1900
Minyusha publishes Hototogisu and Shizen to Jinsei.

1903
Establishes Kuroshiosha and publishes Kuroshio Dai Ippen at his own expense.

1906
Sets out to visit Tolstoy while writing a junrei kiko (pilgrimage account). Publishes Junrei Kiko.

1907
Moves to his permanent home in suburban Chitose Kasuya, Kitatama-gun. Moves his address on the family registrar from Minamata.

1911
Gives his Muhonron lectures at Ichiko.

1913
In February, Kokumin Shimbun is attacked by a mob. In what should help rebuild the company he promises to write a new serialized novel, Junen, but sends a letter resigning suddenly after the eleventh episode. In March, publishes Mimizu no Tahagoto. From September through November he travels with his wife and Tsuruko to Kyushu, Manchuria and the Korean Peninsula.

1914
Starts writing a diary again on May 5, his wedding anniversary. Does not go to visit upon notification of his father's critical condition, nor appears at the funeral after his Kazuyoshi's death at 93. Returns adopted daughter Tsuruko to his brother and begins 3 years in exile. Publishes Kuroi Me to Chairo no Me in December.

1919
In January, to tour the world. While living in Jerusalem, attends the Paris Peace Conference and sends a proposal with his requests.

1923
Begins the draft of Fuji. Shocked by American anti-Japanese immigrant campaigns, in September publishes an edition of Taiheiyō wo Naka ni Shite. Delivers a written report to the Imperial Ministry about sparing the life of Daisuke Namba.

1927
Worsening illness. Based on his requests, is moved to Ikaho Chigira Jinseitei to recuperate in July with his nurse. September 18, Passes away that night at 10:50.

Kenjiro Tokutomi (Roka)



Aiko



Wedding Photograph



Life of Practical and Intellectual Pursuits



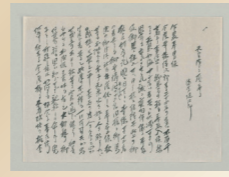
Egypt



Hototogisu, First Edition



Shizen to Jinsei, First Edition



Muhonron, Draft



Restored relationship with his brother, close to death



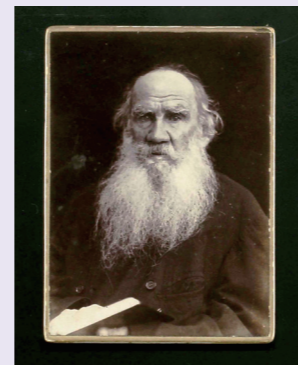
Namikozo

Namikozo by Kuroda Seiki

The novel Hototogisu, which was based on the life of Nobuko, the daughter of Field Marshall Oyama Iwao, was published in the Kokumin Shimbun from November 1898 until May 1899 — a newspaper managed by Soho, Kenjiro's older brother — and it had a significant impact on the world. This novel marked Roka's debut as a writer.

The novel tells a sad story about Namiko, the heroine, who suffers at the hands of her stepmother, and then finds happiness by marrying Baron Takeo Kawashima, a second lieutenant in the navy. However, her happiness is cut short when, in the second month of married life, she comes down with tuberculosis, an "incurable disease" at the time. Her illness becomes an excuse for her mother-in-law to meddle, and while Takeo is away from the house, the mother-in-law obtains a unilateral divorce. Three years later, still in love with Takeo, Namiko leaves this world for the next. "I want to live! For a thousand years — even ten thousand!" "I want to be your wife forever!" "It's just so, so hard! Why did I have to be born a woman? It's unbearable."

Namikozo was painted by Kuroda Seiki, a leading figure in the Western-style painting movement. One of his greatest works was Lakeside, and Namikozo is considered another painting in that style.



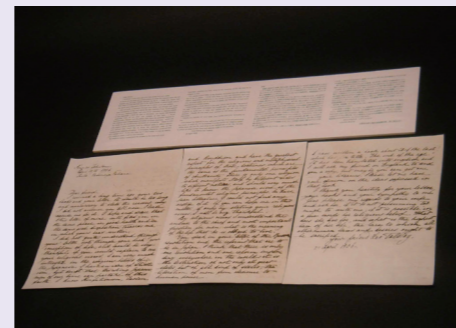
Tolstoy

Tolstoy

Impressed by Tolstoy's book What Is To Be Done?, Roka sympathized with Tolstoy's humanitarian philosophies and resolved to go visit Tolstoy.

In April 1936, Roka travelled to Yasnaya Polyana, Russia, where Tolstoy lived, via Shanghai, Hong Kong, Colombo, and Jerusalem (the Holy Land of Palestine). When he left Tolstoy, he asked himself, "Tokutomi, do you think you could adapt to farm life?" He then made a decision to start living as a farmer out in the countryside.

In February 1937, Roka moved from Aoyama to 356 Chitose Kasuya, Kitatama-gun (present-day Rokakoshuen Park, Kasuya, Setagaya Ward). Deciding to make this his long-term home, he called himself Biteki Hyakusho, worked his fields on sunny days, and stayed indoors rainy days, during which time he produced the books Mimizu no Tawagoto, Kuroi Me to Chairo no Me, Shinshun, and Fuji.



Tolstoy's Letters



Tolstoy and Roka

The calligraphy of An Jung-geun

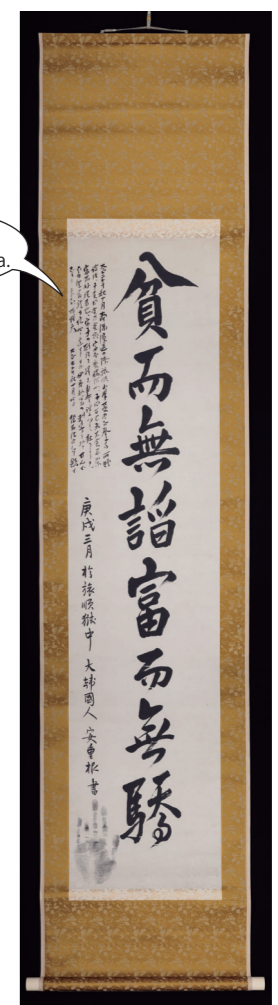
An Jung-geun (September 2, 1879 – March 26, 1910) was a Korean independence activist who, on October 26, 1909, just prior to the annexation of Korea to Japan, assassinated Ito Hirobumi (Japan's first prime minister, serving as Resident-General of Korea at the time) at Harbin Railway Station. He was executed as the culprit the following year.

In South Korea, he is regarded as a "Hero of Anti-Japanese Activism", and an An Jung-geun Memorial Hall has been built in the Special City of Seoul.

Roka Tokutomi toured Dalian and Lüshun, China in 1913, where he received this book from an acquaintance, and he wrote several messages in it. Today, it has become The Book of An Jung-geun and is housed in the Roka Memorial Hall. This book is sometimes lent out to South Korea to be used as a subject of research.

Inside the book, words have been written down which carry the meaning "poverty does not make one servile, and wealth does not make one haughty."

This bit was written by Roka.



Spring



Flower Hill - Prunus pendula Cherry Blossoms



Flower Hill - Gyoiko Cherry Blossoms



Flower Hill - Rape Blossoms



Flower Hill - Cherry Blossoms

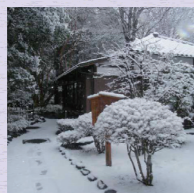
Winter



Winter Plum Blossoms



Winter Plum Blossoms



Koshunen in Winter



Peony



- Toilet
- Accessible Toilet
- Arbor
- Pergola
- Water Fountain
- Telephone Booth
- Parking (Fee)

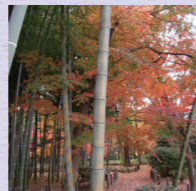
Autumn



Flower Hill - Festival



Baika (Plum Blossom) Library



Fall Leaves

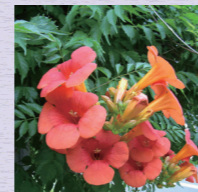


Child Park Fall Leaves

Summer



Flower Hill - Styrax obassia



Flower Hill - Sunflower



Flower Hill - Trumpet Vine



Flower Hill - Sunflower



Flower Hill - Flower Bed

TOKYO METROPOLITAN ROKAKOSHUNEN PARK

ROKA MEMORIAL HALL

ROKAKOSHUNEN PARK



Memorial Hall



Main House



Baika Library



Shusui Study

Tokutomi Roka

Rokakoshunen

Rokakoshunen is the place where Kenjiro Tokutomi (pen name, Roka Tokutomi) spent twenty years working his farm sunny days and writing on rainy days, starting in 1908 (when he was 40) with his wife, Aiko. One of the famous Japanese writers of the Meiji and Taisho periods, some of his more well-known works include Hototogisu, Shizen to Jinsei, Omoide no Ki, Kuroshio, Junrei Kiko, Yadorigi, Mimizu no Tawagoto, Kuroi Me to Chairō no Me, Shinshun, and Fuji.

Roka passed away in September 1927 in peaceful Ikaho. Ten years later, his wife donated the land, residences, gardens, graves, documents, manuscripts, paintings, articles of daily life and all other remaining items to the City of Tokyo (now the Tokyo Metropolitan Government) under the condition that it be kept in its current state and that visitors would be able to get a sense of the living conditions of the late author. An area totaling 12,624.52 m2 was opened to the public as a metropolitan park in February 1937 as Rokakoshunen Park. Including the extensions that came later, the park now covers 80,304.43 m2 (or 6.3 times the space when it was opened).

The metropolitan government established the Tokutomi Roka Memorial Hall in 1961, containing the works, manuscripts and other items of Roka. The hall has some display areas that are freely open to the public.



Guide to Rokakoshunen Park (Memorial Hall and Koshunen Area)

Open: 9:00-16:30 (Memorial Hall/Rokatei until 16:00)
Closed: New Years holidays (Dec 29-Jan 3)
Admission: Free

Walking
15 minute walk from the south exit of Chitose Karasuyama Station on the Keio Line
15 minute walk from the south exit of Rokakoen Station on the Keio Line
15 minute walk from the south exit of Hachimanyama Station on the Keio Line

Bus
Disembark from Chitose Karasuyama Station on the Keio Line, take the Keio bus from the south exit towards Chitose Funahashi to the Rokakoen bus stop and then walk 7 minutes
Disembark from Chitose Funahashi Station on the Odakyu Line, take the Keio bus from the north exit towards Chitose Karasuyama to the Rokakoen bus stop and then walk 7 minutes
Buses run every 5 to 10 minutes