A Repurposing Technique of the Taizan Pottery:  
The *Shūsei* (Assembly) Tiles of the Koshien Hotel

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The bar of the former Koshien Hotel is located in the southeast corner of the main lobby, down a flight of steps. Its floor is a mosaic of tiles whose shapes and colors appear random at first sight but which prove, on closer inspection, to be made up of various types. Some have a glaze that changed color during firing, some have a fabric weave pattern in relief, some are test-fired color samples, some have even been laid face down.

The Koshien Hotel was completed in April 1930 in Koshien, Nishinomiya City, Hyogo Prefecture. According to an issue of *Shinkenchûku* (New Architecture) dedicated to the hotel, it was constructed by Obayashi Corporation, and the tiles used in the bar and elsewhere in the interior were supplied by the Taizan Pottery in Kyoto. This suggests that the bar floor may have been laid by agreement among the architect, contractor, and tile manufacturer. However, the building came under new ownership after fourteen years as a hotel, and no detailed construction records indicating how the bar floor was designed and executed have survived. It is worth noting that tile floors of this kind are rare in buildings designed by Endō Arata or constructed by Obayashi Corporation, but that the Taizan Pottery subsequently supplied similar tiles for the areas around the entrances of two Kyoto coffee shops, Shinshindo in 1930 and Tsukiji in 1934.

In light of this background, in this paper I explore the design ideas behind the composition of the Koshien Hotel’s bar floor by examining the Taizan Pottery’s tile manufacturing and laying techniques.

In the first section, using actual examples, I examine how the Taizan Pottery’s “art tiles” were incorporated into the spaces of Western-style architecture in the early Shōwa period (the late 1920s to early 1930s). In the second section, I examine the Taizan Pottery’s tile manufacturing techniques, using as a basis the key term *Nihon shumi* (Japanese taste), which appears in the literature published by the Imperial Ceramic Experimental Institute. In the third section, I discuss the design ideas behind the spatial composition of the bar floor in terms of Taizan’s tile-laying technique, which used their *shūsei* tiles (“assembly” tiles, that is, tiles designed to be split for use in mosaics). Finally, I discuss the distinctive features of the Taizan Pottery’s manufacturing and laying techniques in terms of the repurposing of tiles that this case involved.