

Site of Koshido Hall

The Koshido was a hall dedicated to the Chinese philosopher Confucius that, during a time of cultural flourishing in Kikuchi, became a hub for Confucian and Buddhist scholarship as well as intellectual pursuits in general.

The hall was built in 1472 by Kikuchi Shigetomo (1449–1493), the head of the Kikuchi clan. Like his father and predecessor, Tamekuni (1430–1488), Shigetomo devoted himself to supporting local culture and providing education for samurai and townspeople. As a result, Kikuchi experienced a cultural golden age, when pastimes such as poetry and tea culture blossomed.

Koshido Hall was at the center of these currents. It is thought to have been a temple-like complex with several buildings, where members of the Kikuchi clan studied and scholars from as far away as Kyoto came to lecture and conduct discussions. One of these men of letters was the Buddhist priest Keian Genju (1427–1508), a leading authority on Zen and the Chinese classics who had spent several years studying at the Ming court in China.

Images of Confucius and his disciples held a place of honor inside the hall, which was also used for ceremonial rites to honor the Chinese sage. Most likely, the images were moved and reused after the Koshido was dismantled after the fall of the Kikuchi clan in the mid-1500s.