Privileging the Visual: Part II

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What follows is a revised syllabus from my one-quarter course “Arts of War and Peace: Late Medieval and Early Modern Japan, 1500-1868.” Like all syllabi, no matter how frequently I re-do it, this one seems never to reflect my current thinking about the subject. I find that as my approach moves farther from the way I was trained, which consisted mainly of stylistic analysis and aesthetic concerns, I have begun to wonder whether I am using art to illustrate culture or culture to illuminate art. Perhaps the distinction is no longer important. Next time I do the class I will approach the material more thematically (“The Construction of Gender,” “The City,” “Travel,” etc.): I will also do more with the so-called minor or decorative arts, including robes, arms, armor, and ceramics. Text used was Noma Seiroku, Arts of Japan, vol. 2, Late Medieval to Modern (Tokyo, New York, and San Francisco: Kodansha International Ltd., 1980), chosen primarily for its reproductions. I also made a duplicate slide set of roughly 150 slides and put them on Reserve.

POWER SPACES: MILITARY ARCHITECTURE OF THE LATE SIXTEENTH AND EARLY SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES

Various kinds of domestic architecture existed during the late sixteenth century (best viewed in screens known as Rakuchū Rakugai zu 洛中洛外図 depicting the city of Kyoto). The most common (and the least studied) are the long shingle-roofed rowhouses of commoners, which fronted the streets and often doubled as shop space. In contrast, wealthy courtiers and warriors lived in spacious mansions consisting of various buildings linked by roofed corridors and enclosed by wooden walls and sliding doors, the top half of which was often papered with translucent shōji 障子 screens. Flooring consisted of polished wood or tatami 軟 matting. By the late sixteenth century, most mansions included a tokonoma 諸所 (decorative alcove for hanging scrolls and displaying treasures) and projecting shoin 書院 window/desks. Roofing consisted of sleek (and expensive) miscanthus thatch or high-quality wooden shingles, tile being reserved primarily for temples and shrines. The mansions of the elite were hidden from vulgar gaze within walled compounds embellished with beautiful, often legendary, gardens. Most of these architectural features (tatami, tokonoma, and shoin) originated in the Zen temple architecture of the medieval age, the complex at Daitoku-ji 大徳寺 being an outstanding surviving example. Because Kyoto was subjected to prolonged, devastating civil war, however, there are no extant examples of either aristocratic or commoners' domestic architecture.

As the warfare of the sixteenth century engulfed both capital and countryside alike, another architectural form intruded itself upon the landscape: the castle. Primarily functional and improvisational from the outset, castles gradually developed standardized features: keeps or donjons (tenshukaku 天守閣), moats (horibori 坑裏), compartments (maru 丸), apertures for dropping stones (ishiotoshi 石落し), to name a few. Castles came to speak a clearly coded language, the language of power and authority. Nobunaga 徳長 was the first to develop this language at Azuchi 安土, integrating the defensive and residential aspects of the castle to a refined degree. The castle and its attendant castle town also hastened the urbanization of Japan during the sixteenth century. Since the fate of the castle was integrally bound to that of its lord, castles rose and fell during this turbulent period with astonishing rapidity. By the time of Ieyasu, castles were subject to strict regulations; the building of new castles was proscribed, and repair of a castle required permission from the shogun. The Tokugawa ordered the dismantling or destruction of numerous castles all over the country at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Further, these behemoths required such costly maintenance that even the shogunate could not afford to keep all its castles in repair (the keep at Nijō, for example, was not replaced when it was destroyed by lightning). As a result, the castles that remain in Japan are largely reconstructions, consisting of bits and pieces of the original (see list). The resplendent residence areas of castles contrast with the somber keep. Here, as exemplified by the complex at Nijō, were located the monumental
audience halls (complete with elevated area for the shogun himself, the jōdan 上段), the massive tokonoma for the display of treasures, and the projecting shoin window.

The Tokugawa carried this highly ornate, polychrome architectural style into the realm of sumptuary proscription: it was deemed appropriate for the military and no other class, and its extremes can be seen in the Tōshōgū 東照宮 at Nikkō 日光, the Shinō shrine/Buddhist temple complex that served as the mausoleum for the deified shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu 徳川家康. The carved motifs with which such edifices are embellished refer to Confucian themes, invoking the prestige and authority of China as emblematic of the shogun's just rule.

Concomitant with the development of the castle/residence came the evolution of the tea ceremony and its distinctive accoutrements and architecture. Just as sixteenth century military men warred intensely, so did they play intensely. The tea ceremony became a primarily socio-political instrument during this period (rather like the closed-membership clubs that afford access to higher circles of influence-peddling in Washington today). Originating as a meditation break for Zen monks in China, the ritualized drinking of tea took on the proportions of a major boom during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Although lingering overtones of the purification of spirit to some degree persisted in the ideology of the tea ceremony, this activity became an exercise both in the allocation of power and in conspicuous consumption, which reached its peak during the time of Toyotomi Hideyoshi. Among Hideyoshi's numerous tea masters, Sen no Rikyū 千利休, a merchant from Sakai, offered the most radical innovations. Rikyū pushed the aesthetic of simple poverty to its limits, seen in the two-mat Tai-an 待庵 teahouse at Myōki-an, as extreme in its way as the monumental audience hall at Nijō.

Works for Study

Azuchi-jo 安土城, prototypical Momoyama castle, built by Nobunaga in mountains northwest of Kyoto, destroyed at his death in 1582

Himeji-jo 姫路城, base goes back to 14th c., enlarged by Hideyoshi. Keep reaches present form in 1609 (best preserved keep in Japan)

Components of castles at Matsumoto, Kumamoto, Karatsu, etc.

Nijō-jo, established as Kyoto residence of Ieyasu late 16th c; enlarged/embellished 1602-3. Keep of primary enclosure no longer extant. Impt. area is the second enclosure (ni no maru), built for visit of emperor GoMizuno-o 後水尾 in 1626:

Gate (Karamon 唐門)
Large reception room (Ohiroma 大広間)
Informal audience hall (Kuroshoin 黒書院, "Black Shoin")
Shogun's private quarters (Shiroshoin 白書院, "White Shoin")

Nishi Hongan-ji Shoin 西本願寺書院. 1632.

Great Audience Hall
Noh Stage

Tōshōgu at Nikkō 東照宮, dedicated to Ieyasu, posthumously deified as the Shinto deity Tōshō Daigongen 東照大樞現, the "Great Incarnation Who Illuminates the East," ca. 1636

Pagoda at Buddhist temple complex
Tori marking Shinto shrine
Sunlight Gate (Yōmeimon 陽明門)
Chinese Gate (Karamon)
Offering Hall/Main Sanctuary (haiden 拝殿/honden)

Tai-an Teahouse, Myōki-an, said to have been designed by Sen no Rikyū in 1582
Tea ceremony ceramics: Shino 志野, Iga 伊賀, and Bizen 倉前 ware teabowls, water containers, flower vases

References:

Noma, chapter 1-2, 4-5
Hashimoto, Architecture in the Shoin Style
Kirby, From Castle to Teahouse
Okawa, Edo Architecture: Katsura and Nikko
Tanaka, The Tea Ceremony
The Great Japan Exhibition, section on ceramics

Further reading (optional):

Cooper, Michael, They Came to Japan: An Anthology of European Reports on Japan, 1543-1640. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1965
THE MARRIAGE OF POWER AND BREEDING: KATSURA DETACHED PALACE

The country estate at Katsura 桂離宮 was begun by an imperial prince, Toshihito no Miya (1579-1629), who had been adopted (and thus lifted above his impoverished peers) by Toyotomi Hideyoshi, until Hideyoshi produced an heir of his own. Such intermarriages between court and military were matters of convenience: impoverished courtiers gained funds, and parvenu warlords gained prestige. Toshihito was responsible for part of the shoin and the garden. Toshihito's son, Toshitada (1619-1662), enlarged the complex. Katsura represents a different taste in shoin architecture from that demonstrated by the examples at Nijō Castle and at Nishi Honganji. The term sōkiya zukuri 数寄屋造 indicates the kind of subdued elegant rusticity associated with the tea ceremony. Not only does this aesthetic apply to the various subsidiary buildings on the grounds at Katsura, it also pervades the main sequence of shoin themselves. Equally important is the garden in which the villa is sited, designed to afford segmented or framed views and incorporating both the Japanese love of literature and strongly-felt sense of place.

Buildings:

Main house, series of shoin:
- Old Shoin, built by Toshihito ca. 1620-1625
- Middle Shoin, added by Toshitada ca. 1640-1655
- Music Room
- New Shoin, built for visit of Emperor GoMizuno-ō

Gepparō 月波廼 (“Moon-Wave Tower”), small, rustic bldg.
Shōkintei 松琴亭 (“Pavilion of the Pine and Ch’in”), 6 rooms.
Shōkatei (“Flower Appreciation Pavilion”), small tea hut.
Enrindo/Onrindō, Buddhist chapel.
Shōken (“Laughing Thoughts Pavilion”), 7 room bldg. with servants’ quarters, pantry, kitchen, etc.

Grounds:

Front Gate, Katsura Fencing
Shinsen Islands
Amanohashidate 天橋立 (“Bridge of Heaven”)
The Rocky Shore
Sumiyoshi 住吉 Pine (alternatively interpreted as Karasaki Pine)
Valley of Fireflies
“Face of Night”
Maples Hill
Drum Waterfall

References:

Noma, chapter 5
Hashimoto, *Architecture in the Shoin Style*
Okawa, *Edo Architecture: Katsura and Nikko*
DECORATION FIT FOR A LORD: FORMAL FIGURE, FLOWER-AND-BIRD, 
AND LANDSCAPE PAINTING OF LATE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

The styles of the great Momoyama painters—Eitoku 永徳, Tōhaku 等伯, Yūshō 友松, and Sanraku 山楽—can 
best be understood as a synthesis of two essentially different manners of painting, the native Yamatoe 倭絵／大和 
絵 mode and an adaptation of the monochrome inkpainting styles imported from China (called Kanga 漢画, “Han 
painting,” in the Edo period).

Yamatoe, painting which flourished during the Heian period (ninth to twelfth centuries), applies to works with 
Japanese—as opposed to Chinese—themes. Yamato is the old word for Japan, and e means painting. Yamatoe was 
closely linked to literature, particularly poetry, to Japanese sensibilities, and to the distinctively Japanese feeling for 
the cyclical rhythms and moods of the four seasons. Its style originally derived from T’ang China, but after the 
eighth century the imported Chinese style evolved into something uniquely Japanese. The single most famous work 
in the Yamatoe style is the twelfth century illustrated handscroll Tale of Genji, a tenth century novel treating life at 
the Japanese court (see Sherman Lee, History of Far Eastern Art, colorplate 30 and pp. 305-308). Very little early 
Yamatoe survives, but literary sources refer to various categories: shikie 四季絵 (four seasons painting); tsukinamie 
月次絵 (paintings of the monthly activities); nenjū gyōjie 年中行事絵 (paintings of the events of the year); and 
meishoe, 名所絵 (paintings of famous places). Since these places were usually famous for their scenery at a given 
time of year, however, all these categories share a preoccupation with the seasons that is a distinctive feature of the 
Japanese world view. The Yamatoe tradition survived after Heian, and indeed some of its most exquisite creations 
are the narrative handscrolls that were produced during the subsequent Kamakura period (late twelfth and thirteenth 
centuries); but it was soon to be eclipsed by new developments in the fourteenth century. The major identifiable 
perpetuators of Yamatoe during the medieval period were members of the Tosa family, which served both the 
imperial court and the Muromachi shogunate. Their style is colorful, abstract, stylized, and miniaturistic.

During the fourteenth century a renewed interest emerged on the part of the Japanese in Chinese painting (as 
part of the appropriation of Chinese culture to help legitimize the parvenu authority of the shoguns). The Muromachi 
shoguns, eager to demonstrate distinctive cultural accomplishment independent of the court, avidly collected Chinese 
paintings representing a variety of styles. Works of professional painters of the Sung academy such as Ma Yuan and 
Hsia Kuei comprise one source of the Kanga (“Han Painting”) or Suiboku 水墨 (“water-ink”, or monochrome 
inkpainting) tradition (see Lee, pl. 457-464) and formed the basis for the formal painting style known as shin. 其 
Works by monk-painters like Mu-ch’i (Lee pl. 467) and Yu-chien inspired the gyō 行 (semi-formal) and sō 草 
(cursive, i.e. splashed ink) styles respectively. In addition to matters of style, such as the “one-corner composition,” 
the skillful use of elegantly silhouetted forms, and a distinctive vocabulary of brushstrokes including the so-called 
“axe stroke”, the works of these painters provided new subject matter as well: pure landscape, flower-and-bird 
painting, and figures of Zen monks and other worthies. A number of brilliant artists appeared during the Muromachi 
period, and the imported style began to be infused with Yamatoe sensibilities, as witnessed, for example, by the 
transformation of the Chinese theme of flower-and-bird into “Flowers and Birds of the Four Seasons” (shiki kachōga 四季花鳥図). The process of transformation, which began in Muromachi, culminated in the Momoyama period. The 
Kano 狩野 family workshop was at the forefront of this process (see Lee, pl. 514).

Artists and Paintings

Background:

The Tale of Genji handscroll, 12th century.
Ma Yuan 馬遠 (13th c.), Mountain Path in Spring.
Mu-ch’i 枚溪 (13th c.), Kannon triptych.
Yu-chien 玉潤 (13th c.), Inksplash Landscape.
Hui-tsung 徽宗 (12th c.), various flower-and-bird paintings
Sesshū Tōyō 雪舟等楊 (15th c.), landscape paintings
Kano Motonobu 染野元信 (early 16th c.), Flowers and Birds of the Four Seasons.

Kano Eitoku (1543-1590), third-generation head of Kano school, pioneer of the opulent polychrome-gilded Momoyama warlord “look;” died young of overwork.

Fusuma (sliding doors) of Jukō-in, a subtemple of Daitoku-ji, 1566. Flowers and Birds of the Four Seasons (central room); Four Accomplishments (Music, Go, Calligraphy, and Painting (Kinki Shoga)) (North-east Room). See Momoyama, no. 4; Doi, pl. 1, 12-13, 38-39.

* Cypress. 6-fold screen. Tokyo National Museum

Kano Sanraku (1559-1635), adopted son of Eitoku

Fusuma at Tenkyū-in, Myōshin-ji 妙心寺. *Pheasant and Plum; Tiger and Bamboo; Morning Glories. 1631. See also Doi, pl. 50-51, 116. These are attributed to Sanraku and perhaps his adopted son Sansetsu.

Hasegawa Tōhaku 長谷川等伯 (1539-1610), rival of Kano Eitoku, came to Kyoto from Noto lured by the lavish commissions, but was able to flourish only after Eitoku died; friend of Sen no Rikyū, had access to Daitoku-ji and other Zen temple collections.

* Maple Tree, Chishaku-in 智積院. Wall painting.

Kaihō Yūshō 海北友松 (1533-1615), another Kano rival. Son of a lord massacred by Nobunaga. Raised in a temple, an adept at the tea ceremony.

* Plum Screen and Peony Screen. Myōshin-ji.
  Crane. Hanging Scroll. Boston Museum of Fine Arts
  See Doi, pl. 145.

* = Noma

References:

Noma, chapter 2.
Doi, Momoyama Decorative Painting.
Momoyama: Japanese Art in the Age of Grandeur.
Takeda, Kano Eitoku.
UNWRITTEN NARRATIVES: GENRE PAINTING OF THE MOMOYAMA AND EARLY EDO PERIODS

During the sixteenth century new subjects emerged from the mixture of the traditional classical themes of Yamatoe and the Chinese-inspired subjects of Suibokuga: people of the time and their various daily activities. The six-fold screen depicting Maple Viewing at Takao by Kano Hideyori 秀頼 (fl. 1566-1577) is one of the earliest surviving examples of the new taste for depictions of contemporary manners and customs. Appropriately enough, it is painted in a hybrid Chinese-Japanese style.

A survey of the genre paintings of this period reveals how they begin gradually to lose their dependence on old Yamatoe conventions like meishoe, (paintings of famous places), tsukinamie (paintings of the activities of the months), and shikie (paintings of the four seasons), and come to depict human activity for its own sake. These works also begin to divorce themselves from the close connection with literature that characterized traditional Yamatoe. The Japanese term for this new type of painting is Fuzokuga 風俗画, which refers specifically to genre paintings produced during a hundred years from the latter sixteenth to latter seventeenth centuries.

Screens depicting the city of Kyoto (Rakuchū Rakugai zu) constitute a matrix for the emergence and development of genre painting. Embellished sometimes with literally thousands of people from all walks of life going about their daily business, these screens reveal the attitudes and priorities of the elite who commissioned them. As the screens develop over time, the ideal (and utterly fictitious) vision of social harmony and order, the preoccupation with the commonweal, gives way to emphasis on public, and then private, pleasures.

Fuzokuga was the precursor of Ukiyoe 江戸世紀 ("Pictures of the Floating World"). As genre painting came increasingly to focus on themes of pleasure--brothels and kabuki in particular--the Tokugawa shogunate quite predictably became disenchanted with it and began to disparage Fuzokuga as deleterious to samurai morals. As a result the Kano painters in their employ were discouraged from painting such works and gradually abandoned these kinds of subjects, which came to be the preserve of workshops of anonymous town painters (Machi eshi 町絵師), who worked in eclectic styles that combined Yamatoe and Kanga.

Works for Study

Genre Precursors:

*Kano Hideyori (late 16th c.?), Maple Viewing at Takao. 6-fold screen, Tokyo National Museum.

Rakuchū rakugai paintings ("In and Around Kyoto"):

*Machida 町田 screen, TNM ca.1525-36. Yamane, fig. 28.
*Uesugi 上杉 screen, Uesugi Col., by Kano Eitoku, shows city ca.1570

Keichō (ca. 1570-1615) Genre Painting:

Funaki 舟木 screen, TNM, ca. 1617. Momoyama, no. 28.
Hōkoku 豊国 Festival by Kano Naizen 内善 (1570-1616), commemorating the 7th anniversary of the death of Hideyoshi in 1604.
*Jurakudai 聚楽第 screen, Mitsui Coll., 1588.
*Pleasure Quarters at Shijōgawara, Domoto Coll., Kyoto and Seikadō Coll., Tokyo.

Kan'ei (1624-1644) Genre Painting:

Entertainments at a House of Pleasure, Suntory Mus., Tokyo.
*Yuna 湯女 (Bathhouse Prostitutes), Atami Museum.
*Matsuura 松浦 screen, Yamato Bunkakan, Nara.
References:

Noma, Chapter 3.  
Genre Screens from the Suntory Museum of Art.  
Momoyama: Japanese Art in the Age of Grandeur.  
Narazaki, Early Paintings.  
Yamane, Momoyama Genre Painting.  

* = illustrated in Noma.

THE PAINTING ‘ESTABLISHMENT’ OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY:  
THE KANO AND TOSA SCHOOLS

Seen in the light of the originality soon demonstrated by a multitude of painters of the Edo period, later Kano and Tosa School painting, representing as it does the end of a long-established “orthodox” tradition, is sometimes characterized as being dull, derivative, and devoid of vigor. To view it in this way, however, is to miss the important role played by these schools. They transmitted traditional subjects and styles; they trained aspiring artists; they wrote important treatises which served to introduce Chinese painting theory; and they served as catalysts for reaction by the more innovative painters of the day. It is safe to say that the majority of painters during the Edo period either trained with or were to some degree influenced by Kano, and to a lesser extent, Tosa painters.

The major Kano painter of the Edo period was Tan'yū (1602-1674). The Tokugawa bakufu (military government) continued the practice of employing the Kano family, and, shortly after the establishment of the new capital at Edo, appointed Tan'yū Goyo Eshi, Official Painter to the Shogunate. He was given land at Kajibashi and there set up his studio. His brothers Naonobu (1607-1650) and Yasunobu (1613-1685), also Goyo Eshi, founded the Kobikicho and Nakabashi branches of the Kano School respectively. Goyo Eshi was the highest subdivision of the general rank of Oku Eshi (Painters of the Inner Quarters), serving the bakufu and the great daimyo of the day. Other of the numerous Kano painters became Omote Eshi (Painters of the Outer Quarters), serving less exalted patrons, while their pupils frequently became Machi Eshi (Town Painters—not a formal title but a descriptive term), spreading Kano themes and styles to a broader segment of the painting world.

While the Kano School got its start interpreting Chinese themes in Chinese-derived styles, the Tosa School represents the Yamato-e lineage, treating Japanese subjects such as literary, religious, or political history, classical romances, and the like, in a native Japanese style. The Tosa family first appears during the fifteenth century, at a time when Yamato-e had lost considerable popularity in the face of the new Suiboku tradition. Tosa painters, nonetheless, enjoyed the highest patronage, and many attained the rank of Kyūtei Edokoro Azukari Director of the Imperial Painting Bureau, which served the emperor and the court. The most important medieval Tosa painter is Mitsunobu (1434-1525), whose works, mostly handscrolls (emaki) preserve ancient Yamato-e subjects, motifs, and techniques, although Mitsunobu cleverly introduced elements of Chinese Suiboku into his work to show his familiarity with the leading style of the day. The severe political disruption during the sixteenth century, which had brought such prosperity to the Kanga painters such as Eitoku, Tōhaku, and Yūshō, caused a reverse in the fortunes of the Tosa family. When the head of the family, Tosa Mitsumoto (1530-1539), was killed in battle, the Tosa family lost its patronage at court. Mitsumoto’s younger brother Mitsuyoshi (1539-1613) moved to Sakai, a port city near Osaka, in search of customers. The fortunes of the family were restored by Mitsuoki (1617-1691), who regained the traditional position of Director of the Imperial Painting Bureau. Mitsuoki, like Mitsunobu, reverted to eclecticism when lack of patronage threatened Tosa fortunes, and his paintings reveal an imaginative blending of the colorful Yamatoe figure style and monochrome Kanga technique employed in the landscape.
Paintings by Kano Tan'yū:

Decoration of Castles and Palaces:

Hawk, Nijō Ōhiroma, 1626. Wall painting. Reproduced Nihon bijutsu kaiga zenshū, vol. 15 (hereafter NBKZ), pl. 1. (not on reserve)

Sliding doors from Nagoya Castle, 1634:

Four Accomplishments, in the Jorakuden, Ni no ma, NBKZ pl. 5.
Cycle of Good and Bad Rulers, Jorakuden, Jōdan no ma, NBKZ pl. 8.
Plum and Bamboo in Snow, Jorakuden, San no ma, NBKZ pl. 4.

Other:

Tiger and Bamboo fusuma at Nanzenji, Abbot's Quarters, 1641. pl. 10-11
Compare with same theme by Kano Sanraku (1559-1635) and his son Sansetsu (1589-1651) (Kyoto Kano painters), Myōshin-ji.

Jurōjin, the god of longevity, kakemono (hanging scroll) triptych, flanked by flowers and birds, Tokugawa Museum, Nagoya.

Life of Ieyasu, five handscrolls/emaki in Yamatoe style, Tōshōgū, Nikkō: Birth of Ieyasu; Battle at Sekigahara; Flower Viewing at Suruga; Kegon Waterfall; 1640. pl. 45-48.

Poets Ono no Komachi and Ariwara Narihira, from album of 100 poets, Tokyo National Museum, pl. 44.

Tosa School Paintings:

Kiyomizudera engi emaki/Scroll of Legends of Kiyomizu Temple, dated 1517, by Mitsunobu (c. 1429-1521). Section showing Thunder God. NBKZ vol. 5, pl. 30.

Ishiyamadera/Scroll of Legends of Ishiyama Temple, scroll 5, by Mitsunobu. Sec. 1: Lady Murasaki Writing the Tale of Genji. Sec. 5, Burning of Main Hall in 1078. NBKZ, pl. 28.

Seikōji清光寺 engi emaki, 1487.

*Tale of Genji album by Tosa Mitsuyoshi (1539-1613), Kyoto National Museum. Great Japan Exhibition, pl. 9: Young Murasaki/Wakamurasaki; Festival of Maples; Ususemi 空師, Kiritsubo 桐壺, and others. Compare with 12th century Tale of Genji scrolls in Goto Museum, Tokyo and Tokugawa Museum, Nagoya. See also leaves of accompanying text in kana (native syllabary) script.

Tale of Genji album in hakubyo monochrome line drawing technique, Freer Gallery, by Mitsunori 光則 (1563-1638). Rep. in Paine and Soper, Art and Architecture of Japan, Pl. 97b. II

Lady Murasaki Writing the Tale of Genji, hanging scroll, by Mitsuoki (1617-1691). Not rep'd.

Quail Screen by Mitsuoki (see Paine and Soper, ch. 11, and Great Japan Exhib., no. 16). Compare with Chinese Sung painter Li An-chung 李安忠.

Quail, hanging scroll by Mitsuoki, Gitter Coll, rep. A Myriad of Autumn Leaves, no. 7
Anon. 18th century painter, Tale of Genji Album, rep. Buell, *Genji: World of a Prince*, no. 10. Scenes: Ukifune 浮舟; Asagao 朝顔; Tamakazura 玉鬘; Young Murasaki/Wakamurasaki 若紫; Utsusemi; Kiritsubo; Sekiya/Barrier Gate.

References:

Browse through Buell, *Genji: The World of a Prince*, and *The Great Japan Exhibition*.
Look at plates in *Nihon bijutsu kaiga zenshū*, vol. 5, Tosa Mitsunobu; vol. 15, Kano Tan'yū.

**APPROPRIATION AND DISSEMINATION OF COURTLY CULTURE: KŌETSU, SŌTATSU, KÔRIN, AND THE RINPA ‘SCHOOL’**

Monuments like Katsura Detached Palace represent an alliance of unlikely bedfellows from courtly and military, parties with no profound cordiality toward each other. Another example of the court reaching out to form bonds outside its own membership is the case of its collaboration with Kyoto’s wealthy, cultivated merchant class (the *machishii* 町衆) to produce a modernized revival of the classical Heian aesthetic and subjects.

This artistic movement began with the accomplishments of Hon’ami Kōetsu 本阿弥光悦 (1558-1637), a sword connoisseur, potter, calligrapher, ceramicist, and lacquer-designer, and Tarawaya Sōtatsu 備前宗達 (d. ca. 1640), a fan painter and proprietor of a fashionable Kyoto fan shop, and their interaction with highly placed members of the imperial court, including the emperor GoMizuno-ō himself. Unlike formal schools such as Kano and Tosa whose members were blood-related and carried the same surname, the painters within this newly formed ‘school’ were related by common artistic interests. These included *painting style*, which was based to large degree on the revival and modernization of Heian aesthetics, on a distinctive *subject matter* (such as courtly romances like the *Tale of Genji* or Tales of Ise, themes from classical history, and the like), and on a recognizable *technique* (which used a thick, supple, pliant, calligraphic outline, and the puddling of ink, known as *tarashikomi* 塗込). It was only during the Meiji period that the painters practicing this style were formally designated as a school (ha). The school was named Rinpa 瑠派, using the last syllable of the name of one of its leading lights, Ogata Kōrin 尾形光琳 (1658-1716).

After the deaths of Kōetsu and Sōtatsu, the bold new style that they created seemed in danger of fading away. Sōtatsu’s successor, Tawaraya Sōetsu 宋雪, went to work in the north for the Maeda daimyo, daimyo of the Kaga domain, carrying on the Sōtatsu manner in a gentler, more diffuse form. The artist responsible for reviving and expanding on Sōtatsu’s vigor was Ogata Kōrin.

Kōrin was one of a number of major cultural figures who emerged during a creative interval of the Tokugawa period, the Genroku era (1688-1704). Genroku is synonymous with the flowering of high-spirited, distinctive, middle-class culture. While the samurai were in theory duty-bound to uphold the serious obligations of military and administrative service, to deport themselves according to certain proper codes of behavior, and to surround themselves with the accoutrements determined by tradition to be befitting of their dignity, the townspeople were left relatively free to invent new forms of cultural expression. Further, they were less inhibited than the military in the pursuit of making money and having fun. Entertainments flourished, particularly the kabuki and puppet theaters and the pleasure quarters. A galaxy of major creative talents appeared on the Genroku horizon: the playwright Chikamatsu 近松, the haiku poet Bashō 芽蕉, the novelist Saikaku 紙芝, and the printmaker and painter Moronobu 蓑宣. Ukiyo, a Buddhist term referring to the impermanence of the transient world (of grief), took on new meaning to the Genroku townsman: it referred to the fleeting world--of pleasure. It became a part of popular slang: there were ukiyo novels, ukiyo hairdos, ukiyo baths, and ukiyo, “pictures of the floating world.”

Kōrin was a perfect child of his times. Born into a rich mercantile family in Kyoto, purveyors of fine textiles to the nobility, Kōrin quickly squandered his inheritance on typical fashionable ukiyo pursuits, went bankrupt, and was forced to turn to painting professionally to earn a living. Legends abound regarding his profligate and dissipated behavior, his various scandals and love affairs. Trained by a Kano-style painter, Kōrin was distantly related to Kōetsu, and owned various objects by that master, which he was forced to pawn. It was, nonetheless, to Kōetsu’s
and Sōtatsu’s style that Kōrin turned when he began to make his living as a painter. He, too, produced designs for lacquer objects and textiles, as well as collaborating with his ceramicist-brother Kenzan on pottery.

**Works for Study**
(unless otherwise specified, all screens the 6-panel variety)

**Works in lacquer and ceramics by Kōetsu:** Inkboxes and Teabowls

**Collaborations by Kōetsu and Sōtatsu:**

- Deer and Waka poetry scrolls, c. 1610, Atami and Seattle Museums
- cf. 12th century Taira Family Sutras
- cf. 12th century Anthology of the 36 Poets in kana script
- cf. 12th century text to the Tale of Genji
- cf. 17th century text to the T. of G. by Tosa Mitsuyoshi

Cranes and Waka poetry handscrolls, Kyoto Nat. Mus. and elsewhere

**Small-scale works by Sōtatsu:**

- Copy of Saigyō Monogatari Story of Priest Saigyō, 1630, handscroll, Mori Collection.
- Screens of fans: Heiji Monogatari 平治物語; Raijin 雷神 (the thunder god); Priest Saigyō (Imperial Household Collection); Farmhouses in Spring; Priest Saigyō (Daigo-ji)

**Monochrome works:**

- Ducks and Lotus, hanging scroll, KNM.
- Bullocks, hanging scroll, Chōmyō-ji.

**Large-scale works by Sōtatsu:**

- Lion, panel from Lion and Elephant cedar doors at Yōgen-in.
- Waves of Matsushima Screens, Freer.
- Bugaku Dancers, pr./2-panel screens, Daigo-ji.
- Wind and Thunder Gods, pr./2-panel screens, Kennin-ji.
- Narrow Road of Ivy/Tsuta no hosomichi Screens (based on Ise Monogatari 伊勢物語/Tales of Ise, the 9th century diary associated with Ariwara no Narihira).
  - Compare with album leaf of same subj. by Sōtatsu, Burke Collection, New York.
  - Compare with screens of same subj. by Fukae Rōshū 深江頼舟 (1699-1757), Cleveland Museum.

**Works by Ogata Kōrin:**

- Lacquer box with Irises
- Design for short-sleeved kimono, TNM.
- Portrait of Nakamura Kuranosuke 中村蔵助, hanging scroll, 1704.
- Iris Screens, based on Ise Monogatari. Nezu and Metropolitan versions.
- Handscroll of Flowers of the Four Seasons, 1705, Nakamura Coll.
- Waves, 2-panel screen, Met. Mus.
- Wind and Thunder Gods, 2-panel screens, TNM.
- Thirty-six Immortal Waka Poets, 2-panel screen.
- Sketches from life, handscroll.
- Red and White Plum Screens, pair/2-panel screens, Atami.

**Works by Ogata Kenzan**
ART AS POPULAR ENTERTAINMENT: UKIYOE, EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY FIGURAL PRINTS

Ukiyoe ("pictures of the floating world") represent in a sense the continuation of the lively genre painting which flourished in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Like Fizokuga, Ukiyoe dwelt on the pleasures of the moment, but a very different moment: the flourishing post-Genroku society of the Edo townspeople, particularly their brothels (the officially-licensed Yoshiwara 吉原 as well as other areas of prostitution like Shinagawa) and their theaters. Although Ukiyoe paintings and prints were produced in Kyoto and Osaka, Edo became the greatest center of printmaking from the early eighteenth-century, riding the glow of the bourgeois culture of the Genroku period (1688-1704).

Famous actors and prostitutes formed the core subject matter for these "pictures of the floating world," which afforded vicarious pleasure to those who could come no closer to these heroes and heroines than owning a reproduction of their image. For admission into this select society came dear: money was only the beginning. One had, in addition, to possess a quick wit, elegance of person, flair in speech and dress, and knowledge of the inner workings of this complex world to become tsu 通, or connoisseur. Occasionally good looks, immense charm, or exceptionally quick wit were acceptable substitutes for money. Those who aspired to this cafe society but lacked the necessary finesse were called hanka-tsu 半可通, half-baked tsu, while the yabo 野暮, usually a rich bumpkin from the country, was destined to be a hopeless laughstock, quickly fleeced of his savings by the practiced hustlers of the "greenhouses", as the brothels were called in Edo slang. Such was the world of the Edokko, "child of Edo," whose ideal was never to go to bed while there was still money in his pocket, to best his adversary with verbal insults, and to keep abreast of the latest fashions. Edo people viewed Kyoto inhabitants as old-fashioned, tight-fisted, and short on pluck (Kyoto people viewed the Edokko as untutored, vulgar, and cheeky).

Prints developed from monochrome, occasionally with hand coloring, to simple two-color-block printing, to a theoretically unlimited possibility of color blocks (indeed, one print is said to have used 109 blocks before such extravagance was banned by the government). These images tell us much about constructions of gender and sexuality, and about what constitutes 'realism' in portraiture (by the end of the century men's portraits were vividly individualized, while women's portraits of the same period remain general stereotypes). They also document quickly changing notions of physical beauty and fashion. While they present themselves as 'real life,' they clearly represent a point of view, the idealization of the world of pleasure and the utter effacement of its seamy underside.

Works of Art

I. Early Prints: monochrome prints (sumizuri-e 墨摺絵) and hand-colored prints (tan-e 丹絵, beni-e 紅絵, and urushi-e 漆絵/"lacquer prints"). To ca. 1745.

Hishikawa Moronobu 麗川師宣 (died 1694), the "Sparrow of Edo" and the "Father of Ukiyoe:"

Printed books.
Maple Viewing at Asakusa, Cherry Viewing at Ueno, pair of six-fold screens, Freer Gallery. Not reproduced.
*Set of woodblock prints of scenes in the Yoshiwara, N.Y., Met. (no. 143)
Kaigetsudō Ando 懐月堂安度 (fl. ca. 18th c.) and school:

*Prints and paintings of Bijin 美人/beautiful women (no. 145)

Torii 鳥居 School: (Kiyonobu 清信, 1664-1729, and other printmakers to ca. 1745)

Prints and Paintings of actors (Yakusha-e);
Onnagata (female impersonators) (compare text, no. 144)
Aragoto 荒事 (‘rough business’ roles)

II. Transitional Ukiyoe, ca. 1745-1765

Okumura Masanobu 奥村政信 (1686-1764): Two-color-block printing (benizuri-e)

III. Full-color-block printing: Nishiki-e 綾絵/’brocade pictures’

Suzuki Harunobu 鈴木春信 (1725-1770): *Kasamori Osen Teahouse 笠森おせん (no. 146) and other beauties

Kitagawa Utamaro 喜多川歌麿 (1755-1806):

Full-figure portraits of women. See especially his set “Twelve Hours in the Greenhouses”
*The Fickle Face (no. 148), genre of Ōkubi-e/’large head pictures’

Tōshūsai Sharaku 東洲斎写楽 (fl. 1794-5):
*The Actor Ichikawa Ebizo 市川囃蔵 (no. 149) and others

References:

The Great Japan Exhibition.
Lane, Images of the Floating World.
Narazaki and Kikuchi, Utamaro.
Suzuki, Sharaku.
Takahashi, Harunobu.
DECADENCE, DEMONS, CENSORSHIP AND VIEWS: NINETEENTH-CENTURY UKIYOE: KUNISADA, KUNIYOSHI, HOKUSAI, AND HIROSHIGE

As the nineteenth century dawned a new look appeared in Ukiyoe figure prints: colors become brighter, designs more elaborate, figures harder and more exaggerated in expression. Utagawa 歌川 School artists like Kunisada 国貞 and Kuniyoshi 国芳 dominated the figural prints of the early nineteenth century. The market for prints proliferated, and their sheer number is astonishing. Over half of the surviving nineteenth-century ukiyoe prints are the output of Utagawa School artists. While technical facility reached a peak, a number of cut-rate publishing houses produced low-quality, mass-produced work that lowers the level of nineteenth-century prints as a whole. For this and other reasons, prints of this era have come to be known as “decadent.” Kunisada and Kuniyoshi are seen as the quintessential artists of the so-called Decadent Style.

Subject matter for prints also widened, in response to intrusive government censorship, which sporadically banned ‘undesirable’ subjects like prostitutes and actors. These subjects were joined—sometimes displaced—by depictions from Japanese history, mighty warriors of the past, phantasmasia, demons, and ghosts. Eventually landscape subjects attained pride of place in the diverse panoply of 19th-century prints. Katsushika Hokusai葛飾北斎, famous for the underlying geometrical composition of his prints, and Andō Hiroshige 安藤広重, celebrated for his lyrical interpretations of landscape, led the way in developing the landscape print.

Works of Art

Utagawa Kunisada (1786-1864) and Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1798-1861):
Various prostitutes, actors, warriors, ghosts, demons

Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849):
Thirty-six Views of Fuji, and other landscape series

Andō Hiroshige (1797-1858):
The Fifty-three Stations of the Tokaidō
One Hundred Famous Views of Edo, and other sets

References:

Hiroshige: One Hundred Famous Views of Edo.
_____ Hiroshige: The Fifty-three Stations of the Tokaido.
SPIRITUAL MATTERS: ZENGA, THE PAINTING OF ZEN MONKS

Painting associated with the Zen Buddhist establishment had a long history in Japan, exemplified by the work of Shūbun 周文 and Sesshū 雪舟 during the medieval period. During the Edo period the painting of Zen monks took a new turn. It has received the modern designation Zenga 禅画 ("Zen painting") to differentiate it from its antecedents, which the Japanese call bokuseki 墨跡 ("ink traces").

Zen (Chinese: Ch' an) was the last sect of Buddhism to develop. Although its adherents claimed that it originated in India with Shakyamuni (the historical Buddha, known in Japanese as Shaka 駿迦), in actuality it is a blend of Buddhism with Chinese Taoism, and came even to include aspects of Confucianism. Zen claimed to have little use for the sacred scriptures of mainstream Buddhism or the vast pantheon of formal deities associated with the other sects. It stressed mind-to-mind communication between adept and pupil, with meditation and strict discipline as the primary means of attaining enlightenment, and a spiritual lineage traced back to Bodhidharma (Japanese: Daruma 達磨, died ca. 532). These notions are fundamental to understanding the imagery of Zenga, which consists in large part of portraits of the patriarchs, of the semi-legendary figures who serve as metaphors for the Zen ideals of enlightenment and unconventionality, of graduation certificates, of kōan (puzzles to be meditated upon), and of other kinds of unconventional imagery seen as a product of the spontaneous Zen mind.

Zen began to flourish in Japan from the thirteenth century, when it was adopted by the military class to give them a cultural milieu rivalling that of the courtiers they had supplanted. (This is not the first time we have seen the culture of China invoked as a source of authority and a means of prestige). During this almost totally Zen-centered era a culture grew up centered upon the institution of the Gozan 五山 (literally “five mountains”), a system of organizing Zen temples based on a similar scheme in China. The monks of the Gozan came largely from the military elite and were closely connected with the political goings-on of the day. They were ardent devotees of Chinese literature, a suspiciously secular pursuit. Attached to these temples were ateliers whose painters, professionally-trained artists with monastic titles, produced masterpieces in the new Chinese Sung and Yuan-based styles. The Kano school is the result of the secularization of this ink-painting movement.

Edo period Zenga, like the Scholar-Painting we will next study, is an extremely personal kind of art. Its practitioners were usually monks who had no formal training as artists—and hence are differentiated from their Muromachi antecedents, who were of more professional bent—but painted in order to try to communicate something of the enlightened Zen mind. Their paintings are didactic in intent. Zen during the Edo period encountered myriad difficulties; the Gozan temples still existed but like everything else connected with the high culture of the period were subject to the most stringent and oppressive kind of regulation by the military elite. The major Zenga painters are provincial monks who wisely stayed away from these major centers and brought their message to the populace at large. Their paintings have a direct simplicity calculated to evoke an immediate response. As in Scholar-Painting, calligraphy, too, is an important part of Zenga. It provided the basis for the painters’ facility with the brush: it communicated sayings and maxims fundamental to Zen philosophy, and in its extremely personal nature it reveals intimate glimpses of the creative personalities of the great monks of the age.

Works for Study

Fūgai Ekun 風間慧薰 (Ana 穴/“Cave” Fūgai) (1568-1654). The earliest of the monk/painters to fit the pattern of the independent peripatetic artist-monk. Escaped from authority to live in a cave, painting to get across that which cannot be said in words.

- Paintings of Daruma (Crossing the Yangtze; Bust portraits)
- Paintings of Hotei 布袋
- Kanzan and Jittoku 寒山拾得/Han-shan and Shih-te

Hakuin Ekaku 白隠慧鑑 (1685-1768). Revitalized the Rinzai sect of Zen through the system of riddles (koan) and emphasis on proper training of monks. Began to paint around his fiftieth decade, simple paintings of Zen
Buddhist figures, moralizing tales, and themes from traditional Japanese art. Distinctive broad flat style of calligraphy.

- Paintings of Daruma
- Paintings of Hotei
- Ensō (circle)
- Self-portrait
- Graduation certificate
- Blind Men Crossing a Bridge
- Monkey
- Calligraphy ("Virtue" and other writings)

Sengai Gibon 仙崖義梵 (1750-1837). A wandering monk who finally settled in Kyushu, then became a layperson. Playful paintings with a peculiar bite in them, wide range of subjects from Buddhist figures to landscapes, astonishingly modern in conception.

- Daruma
- Kanzan and Jittoku
- Hotei
- Tiger and Dragon (diptych)
- Frog
- Nansen 南川/Nan-ch’uan Kills the Kitten
- Ensō (circle)
- Circle, Triangle, Square

References:

- Addiss, Stephen. *Zenga and Nanga: The Art of Zen*
- *A Myriad of Autumn Leaves*
- Suzuki, D.T. *Sengai Gibon*
- Stevens, John. *Brushstrokes of Enlightenment*
CONFUCIANS, SINOPHILES AND MOLD-BREAKERS: LITERATI PAINTING

The expansion of the market for luxury items during the eighteenth century resulted in the establishment of new forms of painting, which took their place alongside the established modes of Kano, Tosa, Rinpa, and Ukiyoe. One of these new currents was Chinese scholars' art, a tradition of considerable antiquity on the Chinese mainland. This phenomenon was multi-faceted in its country of origin and became even more so in its new Japanese incarnation.

In its most ideal form, Literati or Scholars' Painting, as the name implies, was a form of artistic expression associated with the scholar-gentry class of China. It is called by two appellations in Japanese: Nanga 南画 ("Southern Painting"), an analogy with the southern stream of Zen Buddhism, which espoused the principle of spontaneous and instant enlightenment, and Bunjinga 文人画 ("Scholars' Painting"), referring to the original class who practiced it. Neither term is particularly appropriate to the art as it was taken up in Japan.

The Chinese scholar-gentleman emphasized the distinction between the professional painter, who was viewed as an artisan (the third lowest the Confucian class scheme of scholar, peasant, artisan, and merchant), producing functional objects for a livelihood, and the amateur (such as himself, more rarely, herself), who took up painting along with other arts, such as poetry, music, and calligraphy, as a form of self cultivation and of self expression. Scholar painters claimed to paint only to please themselves, not others, and in theory never sold their paintings. Not trained in the practices and techniques of the professional painter, these self-styled dilettantes relied on the proficiency with the brush achieved by their training in calligraphy and prided themselves on the seeming awkwardness of their works. They saw in painting an analogue to calligraphy: just as a person's calligraphy is inimitably personal and revealing of one's character, so should a painting be "read" as a spontaneous outpouring of a unique, cultivated individual. In actual practice, however, scholar-painters in China engaged in oblique and elaborate commercial transactions that only now are starting to be understood.

Another fundamental tenet of Chinese scholars' painting was the creative transformation of accepted models from the literati past. By the eighteenth century, the time this artistic genre reached Japan, there was considerable diversity of opinion regarding just what those models should be. Japanese added their own layer of complication to this complex issue by designating the styles certain Japanese painters of the past as worthy models for transformation.

The concept of Scholars' Painting became familiar to the Japanese through the florescence of Confucian studies in the late seventeenth century. But it took on dimensions unknown in its mother country. First there was no corresponding scholar class in Japan; literati painting appealed foremost to culture-seeking townsman and impoverished lower-class samurai, who rarely had the financial resources to live up to the amateur ideal. Second, calligraphy (the mother of literati painting) never had the status in Japan that it did in China; thus the strong relationship between literati painting and calligraphy that existed in China was weaker in Japan. Third, the Japanese, sealed off from the rest of the world, had no opportunity to see the ancient models of Chinese scholar painting that had served as inspiration for their Chinese counterparts. They had to make do with inferior, often spurious, Chinese literati paintings; paintings by non-literati Chinese commercial painters; the works of a handful of Chinese immigrants in Nagasaki such as Shen Nan-p'in 沈南蘊 (who practiced the antithetical and realistic "Northern" style) and I Fu-chiu 伊淵, a horse trader (i.e. lowly merchant) who painted as an avocation; and imported Chinese woodblock books depicting the styles of great masters--literati and non-literati--of the past. Thus from its inception, Nanga had an improvisational quality and was adopted piecemeal. Its foremost practitioners, Ike Taiga 池大雅 (1723-1776) and Yosa Buson 与謝蕪村 (1716-1784), began their careers as anonymous machi eshi working in eclectic styles incorporating elements of Kano, Tosa, and Rinpa, to name a few. In their hands it gradually became popular, until by the end of the Edo period there were probably thousands of painters working in this Chinese "amateur" manner.
Works for Study

Examples of Chinese calligraphy.

Examples from woodblock books such as the *Mustard Seed Garden Manual of Painting* and the *Hasshu Gafu*.

**Works by Ike (no) Taiga:** (Note that translations of titles differ from book to book.) The artist who helped popularize the new Chinese style(s) in Japan by producing pictures of Japanese scenery in the Chinese manner. A talented calligrapher, indefatigable mountain climber, one of the first “professional eccentrics.” Styles based on Chinese woodblock books and inferior imported Chinese paintings. Pronounced attention to calligraphic line and brush vocabulary in his paintings. Capitalized on Confucian networks to find patronage.

- Calligraphy (“Kinzan” 金山 and Seven-character poem in Clerical Script, Jishō-ji).
- Eight Views of the Hsiao 蕭 and Hsiang 湘, set of fans: Autumn Moon over Lake Tung-t’ing 洞庭; Evening Snow over the River; Sunset Glow over a Fishing Village, Kumita Col, Tokyo.
- Four Types of Painting Models, handscroll, Powers Col.
- The Five Hundred Rakan 羅漢, sliding doors, Manpuku-ji, Kyoto. Painted with his fingernails.
- The Lan-t’ing/Rantei 蘭亭 Pavilion Gathering of Wang Hsi-chih 王羲之, six-panel screen, Burke Col., New York.
- The Six Chinese Distances, hanging scrolls, Tokyo National Mus.
- Six Sights in Kyoto, hanging scrolls: The Great Buddha Hall, in the style of Mi Fu and Tōfuku-ji 東福寺, in the style of Hsia Kuei, Hamaguchi Col., Tokyo.
- The True View (Shinkeizu 真景圖) of Kojima Bay 児島湾, hanging scroll, Hosomi Col., Osaka.
- True View of Asamagadake 朝熊嶽, hanging scroll, Yabumoto Col., Hyogo.
- The Ten Conveniences, album, Kawabata Col., Kangawa.

**Works by Yosa Buson:** A talented haikai poet whose paintings reflect the breaking of established forms and the close scrutiny of the world around. Captures transient appearance and lyrical moods of nature. Variety of styles from elaborate, realistic polychrome to simple scribblings reminiscent of Zenga.

- Willow, Peach, and Birds, Burke Col., New York.
- Thatched Hut in a Bamboo Grove, Bridle Path through Willow Grove, pair of six-fold screens, Yabumoto Col.
- Landscape in Sun and Rain, Kōnosuke Matsushita, Hyogo.
- Cuckoo over Spring Verdure, Shinji Hiraki, Tokyo.
- Night Fishing, Itsuo Museum, Osaka.
- Sages on a Mt. Path, pair of six-fold screens, BMFA.
- Mount Emei/Gabi 峨嵋, handscroll, Mayuyama Col., Tokyo.
- Rock Screens, Powers Col.
Haiga (Haiku-style painting):


The Narrow Road to the Deep North (travel diary of Bashō), Yamagata Museum.

Broom, Poems, and Poet, University of Michigan Museum, Ann Arbor.

References:

Noma, pp. 148-149
Cahill, Scholar Painters of Japan, Chapters on Taiga and Buson
Takeuchi, Taiga's True Views
French, Poet-Painters
A Myriad of Autumn Leaves (read sections on Taiga and Buson); Yonezawa, Yoshiho and Yoshizawa,
Chu, Japanese Painting in the Literati Style, browse
SLIPPING THROUGH THE CRACKS: WESTERN INFLUENCE IN EDO ART

Although the presence of Westerners in Japan during the Edo period was limited to eleven or twelve Dutchmen attached to the trading compound of Deshima in remote Nagasaki, and scrupulously segregated from the rest of the populace, the influence that these “red hairs” (in Japanese, kōmōjin 紅毛人) ultimately had on Japanese art and society was far-reaching. They and their exotic imports and paraphernalia immediately entered the thematic repertoire of Japanese art. The maps which they brought contributed to the xenophobia of the Japanese, who saw for the first time how small and vulnerable their island country was in proportion to the rest of the world. The books they imported (although few Japanese could read them) opened up new worlds of Western learning (botany, zoology, astronomy, medicine, known collectively as Rangaku 萘學) and caused the Japanese, for the first time, to question their own world view. Included in this literature also were illustrated treatises on art, which were to have profound influence in Edo painting. Another, less-widely acknowledged form of Western influence on Japanese painting came third-hand, from Europe to China, and thence to Japan.

The influence of Western art took primarily two forms: subject matter and technique. The former is exemplified by the work of the Nagasaki printmakers, who transmuted their mysteriously exciting foreign residents into something akin to symbols of their city for purposes of the souvenier trade. Four enterprising publishing houses, Hariya 萊屋, Bunkindō 文錦堂, Yamatoya 和屋, and Toshimaya 堂島屋, controlled most of this business; their products were called Nagasaki miyage (Nagasaki souveniers). Although not comparable in sophistication of technique (indeed many were hand- or stencil-colored) to the nishiki-e 鈴絵 of the capital, and usually not even based on actual glimpses of their subjects, these prints, nonetheless, have an immediacy which communicates the Japanese wonder and delight at these foreign curiosities.

To employ Western technique, on the other hand, required more artistic acumen than to render depictions of foreigners in familiar Japanese styles and media. The artist most remembered for his activities in this regard was Shiba Kōkan 司馬江漢. The irascible and eccentric Kōkan, who began his career as a forger of Harunobu’s prints, viewed himself as a gadfly pricking the conscience of the conservative society of his time. He devised a technique to reproduce the opacity of Western oil pigments (which earned the term “mud painting”). He reconstructed the lost art of copperplate engraving. And he tirelessly prosylêtized the superiority of Western ways, always presented against the inferiority of things Japanese. His works include both foreign and domestic subjects done in various Japanese and Western techniques and styles.

For all his radical viewpoints and significant contributions, however, Kōkan was handicapped by one sad circumstance: limited artistic talent. Others, such as the engraver Aodo Denzen 亞梭田善, were to realize his aspirations to work in the Western manner with considerably greater finnesse. Others, like Maruyama Ōkyo 円山応挙, studied a wide variety of painting styles and managed to incorporate foreign elements without the self-conscious stiffness that marks Kōkan’s work. One of the most satisfactory syntheses of Western and Japanese art occurs in the work of the famous nineteenth century printmakers Hokusai and Hiroshige, who combine Western techniques for rendering pictorial space with purely Japanese subject matter and sensibilities.

Works for Study

(all in the Kōbe City Museum of Namban Art and reproduced in French, Through Closed Doors):

Worldmap and Peoples of Various Lands (1645?), two-panel screen, woodblock with hand-applied coloring. See also the “deluxe edition,” hand painted pair of six-panel screens.

The Dutch Factory at Deshima 出島, handscroll, ink and color on paper.

Dutch Factory at Deshima, woodblock print, Toshimaya.

Elephant, woodblock print with hand-applied color, Yamatoya.
Camels, woodblock print with hand-applied color, Bunkinkō.

Hollander, woodblock print with hand-applied color, Hariya.

Juffrouw von Hollad, woodblock print with hand-applied color.

Dutch Women (The Blomhoff Family), multiple-block print, ca. 1835?, Yamatoya. Compare with Kawahara Keiga (c1786-1860), The Blomhoff Family, single panel screen.

Shiba Kōkan (1747-1818): A virtual polymath, learning enough Dutch to produce scientific treatises (perhaps with help from Chinese texts), to rediscover the lost technique of copperplate etching, and to replicate Western opaque pigments. Typical of late-eighteenth century oddballs, he sent out a death notice for himself in order to collect funeral donations and to be able to work uninterrupted. A fervent advocate for things Western, and a pioneer in the field of Edo Rangaku, Dutch studies. If Taiga furthered Chinese painting by showing the Japanese their scenery through the filter of Chinese styles, Kōkan did the same for Japanese scenery, interpreted through Western styles and techniques.

Enjoying the Cool of the Evening, hanging scroll, ink and light color on silk.

Hollander on a Pier and Dutch Woman, hanging scrolls, ink and opaque colors on silk.

Daruma, hanging scroll, ink and opaque colors on paper.

Shichirigahama 七里ヶ浜/Seven League Beach, two-panel screen, opaque color on paper mounted on wood.

Artist’s Studio, copperplate engraving.

Shinobazu Pond in Ueno 上野不忍池, copperplate engraving with hand-applied colors. Compare with Toyoharu’s ukiyoe version of same subject in Through Closed Doors.

Aodo Denzen (1748-1822): An accomplished artist and protege of the statesman Matsudaira Sadanobu. Famous for his copperplates in Western style.

A European Plaza, copperplate engraving.

Kinryūzan 金龍山 Temple, Edo (Asakusa Temple), copperplate engraving, hand-colored.

References:

Noma, Chapters 7 and 9 (marginally relevant).
French et al., Through Closed Doors.
BRINGING IT ALL BACK HOME: ŌKYŌ AND THE MARUYAMA-SHIJŌ SCHOOLS OF PAINTING

The impulse towards direct observation of nature that gained momentum throughout the eighteenth century cut across all the artistic lineages. If it found a raw, unassimilated expression in the work of Shiba Kōkan, in the able hands of the Kyoto painter Maruyama Ōkyō the Japanese found an artist supremely capable of blending the new appetite for visual truth with time-honored themes in an undemanding vision with great appeal to an enormous cross-section of the art buying public. The call for Ōkyō’s painting was brisk, and he left a host of pupils, followers, and imitators. The popularity of his manner continued unabated throughout the nineteenth century, even after the fall of the Tokugawa, and it formed the basis for the Nihonga movement of later times. It still thrives today.

Ōkyō, the son of a farmer, began his career as an assistant who applied coloring to dolls in a Kyoto toy shop. Impressed by the lad’s talent, the proprietor urged Ōkyō, then about 18 years old, to seek formal training in painting. Ōkyō studied with a master versed in techniques of Kano, Tosa, and Rinpa painting, all of which the budding artist eagerly absorbed. During his twenties, while Ōkyō was still employed at the toy shop, he was set to work copying and then designing “perspective pictures” for a viewing device called “Dutch glasses” (Oranda megane). Thus he became familiar with the spatial illusionism and one-point perspective of Western painting (and Chinese painting that was influenced by Western painting) that also was informing the prints of Okumura Masanobu during the 1750s. Ōkyō’s lucky chance came when he attracted the patronage of Yūjō, an imperial prince and abbot of Enman-in 円満院, in 1765. This cultivated man shared the temple’s treasures and his own collection with Ōkyō, resources that included objects as diverse as Yuan-dynasty paintings and Western botanical studies. The Western studies probably helped spur Ōkyō further in the direction of empiricial study from nature. Further, Yūjō’s connections afforded Ōkyō introduction to patronage at the very highest (although not necessarily the most affluent) levels of society. Ōkyō’s art blends an eclectic range of styles and techniques, including the use of Chinese axe-strokes, a flat brush for applying broad washes, an unevenly-inked brush for graded outlines, and the so-called boneless technique that avoids outline altogether.

The most interesting among Ōkyō’s many pupils is the eccentric artist Nagasawa Rosetsu 長沢煕雪 (1754-1799). Said to hail from a warrior family, Rosetsu came to study with Ōkyō around the age of 25 and quickly learned Ōkyō’s high degree of technical mastery. But Rosetsu often used this realist style for surrealist ends. His paintings betray a personality as bizarrely original as it was intense--there is something appropriate about the legend that Rosetsu, who died at the age of 45, was poisoned by a jealous rival. A style so dependent on the forceful personality of its originator could not be as successfully transmitted to pupils as Ōkyō’s more neutrally limpid art, so Rosetsu’s manner of painting soon died out.

While Rosetsu pushed Ōkyō’s style in the direction of eccentric fantasy, another pupil, Matsumura Goshun 松村呂春 (1752-1811), merged the Ōkyō manner with the literati-style brushwork and poetic vision of his erstwhile mentor Yosa Buson. After Buson’s death in 1783, Goshun at the age of 31 begged to join Ōkyō’s studio. Rather quickly he founded his own atelier, the Shijō 四条 school, named after its location on Fourth Street in Kyoto. Goshun’s work combines Ōkyō’s clarity and precision of form with Buson’s impressionistic lyricism. Unlike Rosetsu, Goshun produced a vision that was easily imitated, and Shijō painting flourished as luxuriantly as Ōkyō’s. The legacy of these two schools is subsumed under the rubric of Maruyama-Shijō painting.

Works for Study

Works by Maruyama Ōkyō:

Thirty-three Bay Hall (Sanjūsangendō 三十三間堂), Hand-colored woodblock print, Kobe City Museum of Namban Art.
Four Paintings on a Handscroll: A Theater in Kyoto (a) and A Harbor Scene in China (d), KCMNA
Sketches of Insects, Album, TNM, and other sketches
Birdseye View of the Capital, hanging scroll, KCMNA
Courtesan Eguchi no Kimi 江口の君 as Fugen Bosatsu, 1794, hanging scroll, Seikado.
Ono no Komachi, hanging scroll, Takaaki Coll.
Wild Geese over Waves, Enman-in, Kyoto.
Pine Trees in Snow, Pair of 6-fold screens, Mitsui Col., and hanging scroll version, TNM.
Wistaria, 1776, Pair of 6-fold screens, Nezu Mus.

Works by Nagasawa Rosetsu:
Peacocks, hanging scroll, copy of painting by Okyo, Shin'enkan Col.
Fuji and Cranes, hanging scroll, private col., Japan.
Islands of Immortality, hanging scroll, Sanso Col.
Buring of the Great Buddha Hall, album leaf, Kishimoto Col.
Bullock with Puppy, Elephant with Crow, pair of screens, Shin'enkan.
Chinese Beauty, hanging scroll, Kishimoto Col.
Ghost, hanging scroll, Shin'enkan.

Works by Matsumura Goshun:
Landscape in Buson Manner, hanging scroll, Keigensai Col.
Hibiscus and Blue Heron, hanging scroll, Kurokawa Kobunka Kenkyusho, Hyogo.
Landscapes in Snow and Rain, pair of 8-panel screens, TNM.
Stag in an Autumn Landscape, Itsu6 Museum.
Deer Haiga, hanging scroll.
Portrait of a Poet, B6an Coll., Berkeley.

References:
French, Poet Painters.
———, Through Closed Doors.
A Myriad of Autumn Leaves.
Okyo and the Maruyama-Shijō School of Painting.
The Great Japan Exhibition.
Moes, Rosetsu.


*Exquisite Visions: Rimpa Painting from Japan*. Tokyo, 1980.

French, Calvin. *The Poet Painters: Buson and His Followers*. Ann Arbor, 1974


*Okyo and the Maruyama-Shijo School of Painting*. St. Louis, 1980.


