
Hokusai the Alchemist

— 錬金術師北斎

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要旨

北斎はその独創性と作品の多様性で賞賛されている。ただ、あまり注目されてこなかったのは、彼が用いた図像の典拠と、絵師がそれらをどのように操ったかである。他人が描いたごく普通の本の挿絵を、新鮮で刺激的な新しいデザインに変える北斎の手腕は、本論で錬金術師 (alchemist)、つまり鉛を金に変える魔法使いと呼ぶ理由である。本論では、北斎の長きにわたる画業の晩年期における図像の借用について考察する。また、彼の著書に見られる二つの特徴的な構図の、前身となった図像についても考えてみたい。

Abstract

Hokusai is praised for the inventiveness and variety of his work. What has received less attention has been his visual sources and how he manipulated them. In this essay I will concentrate on book illustrations he created in the last half of his career for which he drew upon the work of fellow artists. His skill at transforming very ordinary book illustrations by others into fresh and exciting new designs is the reason I call him an alchemist, a wizard who could turn lead into gold. I will begin and end by considering the models for two distinctive layouts encountered in his books.

1. Introduction

Over the last twenty years—in lectures, seminars, and publications—I have explored books illustrated by Katsushika Hokusai 葛飾北斎 (1765-1849). From time to time, I mentioned that Hokusai sometimes took compositions by other artists as starting points for his own book illustrations. His skill at transforming very ordinary book illustrations by others into fresh and exciting new designs is the reason I call him an alchemist, a wizard who could turn lead into gold. In this article, I will examine his borrowings in the last half of his long and productive career. I will also consider the precursors to two distinctive layouts encountered in his books.

2. Hokusai manga: a ‘stolen’ format

I begin with the antecedents to Hokusai's most widely known book, the fifteen-volume *Hokusai manga* 北斎漫画 (1814-78).¹⁾ The defining feature of the *manga* volumes is the predominance of pages covered with numerous small-scale depictions of all types of people, of man-made objects ranging from tools to entire buildings, of plants of all kinds and every variety of animal, bird and fish, and a multiplicity of landscapes. Hokusai sought to include ‘all under heaven’ in this series. It may be regarded as a

vast visual encyclopaedia.²⁾

The artist Kitao Masayoshi 北尾正義 (1764-1824) accused Hokusai of plagiarising the format of the *Hokusai manga* from his six-volume *ryakugashiki* 略画式 series, which he produced between 1794 and 1813.³⁾ The *Hokusai manga* were launched in 1814, the year after the publication of the last of Masayoshi's *ryakugashiki*. As reported by Kitamura Intei 喜多村筠庭 (1783-1856) in ‘Kansei nenkan hiji’ 寛政年間記事, Masayoshi complained that ‘Hokusai was always imitating others; he never created anything. He [Masayoshi] said that this was the case with the *Hokusai manga*, too. He believed that Hokusai was simply copying the concept of his *ryakugashiki* series of books...’

政英語リテ云、北斎ハトカク人ノ真似ヲナス。何ヲモ己ガ始メタルトナシトイヘリ。是ハ略画式ヲ蕙斎ガ著シテ後、北斎漫画ヲカキ...⁴⁾

When we compare spreads from *ryakugashiki* volumes with spreads from *Hokusai manga*, it appears that Masayoshi had a case. The ‘feel’ and appearance of the *Hokusai manga* are close to the general appearance and the ‘feel’ of the *ryakugashiki* volumes. (Figs. 1 & 2) Both artists were doing more or less the same thing. In addition, some of Hokusai's individual figures are very close to figures in the *ryakugashiki* volumes. Masayoshi claimed his ‘intellectual property’ had been stolen by Hokusai. Was Masayoshi justified in his complaint? Can

such a basic presentation of material on a page be considered ‘intellectual property’?

As far as I have been able to determine, Masayoshi was the first Japanese artist to use this page format for an entire book. He experimented with it in just two spreads in his *Shōshoku ekagami* 諸職画鑑 of 1794, and then adopted it for nearly every spread in his subsequent *ryakugashiki* volumes, with the exception of *Sōka ryakugashiki* (1813) in which a different format predominates.⁵⁾ However, what I refer to as the *ryakugashiki* format was not original to Masayoshi. It was employed, for example, in the seventeenth-century Chinese painting manual *Kaishi-en gaden* 芥子園画伝 (1679–1701). (Fig. 3) The latter was circulating in Japan from the early 18th-century and would have been known to Masayoshi. Should we accuse him of plagiarism? I do not think so.

While *Kaishi-en gaden* may have provided inspiration for the format of Masayoshi’s *ryakugashiki* series, the relevant pages in the Chinese book lack the density, animation, and variety we find in Masayoshi’s books. Masayoshi took this format to a new level of complexity. His *ryakugashiki* volumes proved popular and some of them remained in print into the 20th century.

Hokusai had before him *Kaishi-en gaden* as well as Masayoshi’s *ryakugashiki* when creating the Hokusai manga. Naitō Masato 内藤正人, in an article published in 2008, presents numerous examples of Hokusai borrowing figures, bridges, gates, buildings, insects, etc. from *Kaishi-en gaden* in his manga.⁶⁾ Hokusai also found inspiration in books such as Tachibana Morikuni’s ten-volume encyclopaedia of all things Chinese, *Morokoshi kinmō zui* 唐土訓蒙図彙 (1719).

Comparing spreads from *Hokusai manga* and Masayoshi’s *ryakugashiki* volumes, we immediately detect differences. Masayoshi’s designs are suave and fluent, but they lack the precision, imagination, inventiveness, and meticulous attention to detail characteristic of Hokusai’s book illustrations. Those features enhanced the appeal of the *Hokusai manga* — first to the domestic market and then to European and American tourists and collectors. Masayoshi’s *ryakugashiki*, as a group, did not attain the fame, mass appeal or global circulation enjoyed by the *Hokusai manga*.⁷⁾

The only other close Japanese antecedents to the *Hokusai manga* that I have identified are two books by the Kyoto artist Kawamura Bunpō 河村文鳳 (1779–1821): *Bunpō sogā* 文鳳龜画 (Nagoya, 1800); and *Bunpō kanga* 文鳳漢画 (Kyoto, 1803).⁸⁾ The extent of Masayoshi’s sensitivity to other artists encroaching on his

‘territory’ is revealed in an incident relating to *Bunpō sogā*. I thank Christian Dunkel for bringing this incident to my attention, and for sharing the paper he presented in 2021 at an EAJS panel on copyright in the Edo period.⁹⁾

After *Bunpō sogā* was published by Fūgetsudō 風月堂 (Fūgetsu Magosuke 風月孫助) in Nagoya in 1800, Masayoshi’s publisher Shinshōdō 申椒堂 (Suharaya Ichibē 須原屋市兵衛) filed formal complaints in Osaka and Kyoto asking that sale of the book be banned in those cities. At issue was the claim that Bunpō had stolen the *ryakugashiki* format. There is circumstantial evidence that Fūgetsudō abruptly stopped selling *Bunpō sogā* shortly after it was first published. Some copies of fine, early printings of the book carry a red seal impressed on the Fūgetsudō colophon that reads: ‘Chōfu Eirakudō shi’ 張府永樂堂梓, which indicates that the Nagoya publisher Tōhekidō (Eirakuya Tōshirō), who had taken over ownership of the printing blocks, had also acquired all of Fūgetsudō’s unsold copies of the book. A Tōhekidō list pasted on the inside back covers of the two published volumes of *Meika gafu* 名家画譜,¹⁰⁾ confirms that that firm was selling its own edition of the *Bunpō sogā* by 1814 at the latest. For that edition, Tōhekidō replaced the original colophon, and had an extra set of colour blocks cut.

The action against Fūgetsudō was part of a campaign by Kamigata and Edo publishers against the Nagoya *hon’ya nakama* 本屋仲間, the guild of publishers established in Nagoya in 1794. The charges laid against Fūgetsudō for the publication of *Bunpō sogā* may be regarded as a precedent for Masayoshi’s criticism of *Hokusai manga*. However, there is no evidence that formal action was taken to block sales of the latter. Perhaps *Hokusai manga* was never targeted because Tōhekidō co-published it with Shūseikaku 衆星閣 (Kadomaru Kinsuke 角丸屋甚助), a major Edo firm. Nonetheless, Masayoshi still expressed strong criticism of Hokusai and the *Hokusai manga*, accusing him, as we have seen, of ‘always imitating others; never creating anything’.

3. Fugaku hyakkei

The success of Hokusai’s colour print series *Fugaku sanjūrokkei* 富嶽三十六景 (c.1830–32) may have encouraged publishers in Edo and Nagoya to commission a *hanshibon*-size, three-volume book from Hokusai devoted entirely to Mt Fuji, *Fugaku hyakkei* 富嶽百景 (Edo, 1834 & 1835; Nagoya, c.1850).¹¹⁾

There was a significant precedent for such an ambitious book: the four-volume *Hyaku Fuji*

百富士 (1771) illustrated by Kawamura Minsetsu 河村岷雪 (dates not known). First published in Edo by Bunkokudō 文刻堂 (Nishimura Genroku 西村屋源六), with co-publishers in Osaka and Kyoto, *Hyaku Fuji* proved popular, appearing in numerous editions, each with different covers and printed on slightly different grades and sizes of paper.¹²⁾ Hokusai had already drawn upon images in that book when designing the *Fugaku sanjūrokkei* print series.¹³⁾ It now provided him with starting points for a number of his *Fugaku hyakkei* designs.

The table below highlights significant differences between *Hyaku Fuji* and *Fugaku hyakkei*. Because lively foreground figures are so prominent in *Fugaku hyakkei*, the Englishman Laurence Oliphant, one of the first Europeans to encounter the book and to reproduce images from it in a Western publication, described it as ‘illustrative of the various trades in Japan’.¹⁴⁾

Hyaku Fuji is mentioned in the preface to the third volume of *Fugaku hyakkei*. The author of the preface, the otherwise unknown Nagoya-based, Shippōsanka rōjin Shōryū 七賓山下老人小笠 summed up the difference between the two books as follows: ‘While Kunshuku’s *One Hundred Fuji* are the picture of orthodoxy,¹⁵⁾ old man Hokusai’s *One Hundred Views of Fuji’s Peak* are the picture of eccentricity.’ 「君錫子の百富士は画の正なるものなり北斎翁の富嶽百景は画の奇なるものなり。」 That is a fair comparison of the two books.

I will consider Hokusai’s response to four images in *Hyaku Fuji*, beginning with *Taiseikiji* 大石寺. (Figs. 4 & 5) There are general resemblances in the two artists’ treatment of this view, however, it appears that Minsetsu’s design also provided Hokusai with the starting point for his ‘Fuji amid the pines’ 松中の不二. (Fig. 6) (Minsetsu included a view labeled ‘amid the pines’ 松間 in his book, an awkward design that did not

inspire Hokusai.)

Minsetsu provides a view of Fuji ‘under a bridge’ 橋下. (Fig. 7) The viewer is drawn into the image by the accompanying poem: ‘Viewing Fuji with joy from the cool shade beneath the bridge. Kakō’ 富士みへて寿や橋の下涼 花口. Hokusai took this sparse composition as the starting point for a witty design in *Fugaku hyakkei*. The Fuji of seven bridges in one glance’ 七橋一覽の不二. (Fig. 8) He used Minsetsu’s composition as a framework, which he filled with multiple figures in a complex landscape that pivots around Fuji’s distant peak. Hokusai adhered more closely to Minsetsu’s design in ‘Fukagawa Mannenbashi shita’ 深川万年橋下 ‘Under Mannen Bridge at Fukagawa’ in the print series *Fugaku sanjūrokkei*.

Hokusai developed a powerful design out of Minsetsu’s confusing depiction of Mt. Fuji from among the Hakone mountains 箱根山中. (Fig. 9) Here Hokusai cropped Minsetsu’s sprawling image, to focus on Mt. Fuji seen through a line of trees running along an embankment 柳塘の不二. (Fig. 10) Again, Hokusai followed Minsetsu more closely in the *Fugaku sanjūrokkei* print ‘Tokaidō Hodogaya’ 東海道路ヶ谷 ‘Hodogaya on the Tōkaidō Highway’ than he did in *Fugaku hyakkei*. In the book, for example, he replaced Minsetsu’s pine trees with willows; he did not do that in the print.

Finally, we have Mt. Fuji seen in a window 窓中の不二. (Figs. 11 & 12) The poem accompanying Minsetsu’s design reads: ‘Geese inscribe their path in the sky, with Fuji framed in the window. Saichō’ 鴈わたる 文字も何そか 窓の富士 再蝶. Hokusai does not need poems to enhance our appreciation of his images; the human figures he incorporated into most of his *Fugaku hyakkei* designs provide us with commentaries on or reactions to the views. That Hokusai depicted birds ‘inscribing their path in

Table. *Hyaku Fuji* and *Fugaku hyakkei* compared.

<i>Hyaku Fuji</i> [100 Fuji]	<i>Fugaku hyakkei</i> [100 views of Fuji’s peak]
<i>Ōhon</i> size [26 x 18 cm]	<i>Hanshibon</i> size [23 x 16 cm]
Four volumes.	Three volumes.
Line only.	Line with grey tints
Views from specific, named locations	Idealised/abstract views for the most part
Each volume contains views from a specific region	No such systematic organisation of the views
Title and a poem in each image field.	Short title in each image field.
Broad vistas with no significant foreground figures	Foreground figures feature in 78 of the views.

the sky', a detail Minsetsu omitted from his design, is, I believe, a further indication that Hokusai worked directly from *Hyaku fuji*.

4. Hokusai gafu

The three volumes that make up *Hokusai gafu* 北斎画譜 were published over nearly twenty years, between the early 1830s and 1849.¹⁶⁾ They were printed, in part, from blocks originally cut for two *ōhon*-size books, *Hokusai gashiki* 北斎画式 (1819) and *Hokusai sogā* 北斎簞画 (1820). In the late 1820s, Tōhekidō acquired the blocks for those two titles from the original publishers and had them cut down from *ōhon* to *hanshibon* size (from approx. 26 x 18 cm to approx. 23 x 16 cm), modifying the designs where necessary. Tōhekidō also commissioned Hokusai to produce further designs to fill the projected three *hanshibon* volumes that would make up the complete work. Those supplementary illustrations include a five-page sequence relating to whaling. (Figs. 13.b, 14.a & 14.c) In this instance, Hokusai drew upon the ten-page sequence on whaling in the *setsuyōshū* 節用集 'illustrated encyclopaedia' *Nihon sankai meisanzue* 日本山海名産図会 (1754). (Figs. 13.a & 14.b) We can see at once how Hokusai relied upon the illustrations in the *setsuyōshū* for precise details of whaling as practised on the Japanese coast, how effectively he reimagined his source, and how much more dynamically he rendered the scene.

5. Shinpen Suiko gaden and Ehon Kansō gundan: creating a 'virtual China'

Hokusai illustrated numerous *kibyōshi* 黄表紙. After the demise of that genre in the early years of the 19th century, he did not shift to illustrating *gōkan* 合巻, which evolved out of *kibyōshi*. Instead, he chose to illustrate *yomihon* 読本, another newly emergent genre. *Yomihon* were published in *hashibon*-size (approx. 23 x 16 cm), which offered scope for larger and more complex illustrations across the double-page spread than was possible in *chūhon* 中本 size (approx. 18 x 13 cm) *kibyōshi* and *gōkan*. In addition, dense texts did not fill the backgrounds of illustrations in *yomihon* as they did in *kibyōshi* and *gōkan*. From 1803 into the final decade of his career, Hokusai applied himself to providing sequences of introductory illustrations and stand-alone double-page spreads for forty-two *yomihon*. Thirteen of those were written by Kyokutei Bakin 曲亭馬琴 (1767-1848), the leading author of the age. Hokusai was particularly responsive to *yomihon* set in China. The two most substantial

and famous of his Chinese *yomihon* are *Shinpen Suiko gaden* 新編水滸画伝 (1805-38) and *Ehon Kansō gundan* 絵本漢楚軍談 (1843-45). The China Hokusai depicted in *yomihon*, and also in school texts such as *Ehon chūkyō* 画本忠経 (1834), *Ehon senjimon* 画本千字文 (1835) and *Ehon kōkyō* 絵本孝経 (1850), and in anthologies of Chinese poetry and warrior books, may be regarded as his 'virtual China'.

All that Hokusai knew about China was second hand. He had to rely upon imported illustrated books, and the visual information distilled from those publications by Japanese artists such as Tachibana Morikuni 橘守国 (1679-1748) into the painting manuals and encyclopaedias that were published in substantial numbers in Japan from the early years of the eighteenth century.¹⁷⁾

Lack of access to early modern Chinese books has meant that I have had to rely on facsimiles of varying quality and surveys of Chinese book illustration published in the People's Republic of China in my search for books from China that Hokusai may have encountered. My first discovery was very exciting. In a pivotal moment in *Suikoden*, the hero Song Jiang 宋江 inscribes a poem on the wall of a restaurant. There are numerous correspondences between this scene as depicted in *Yingxiongpu* 英雄譜 (Japanese: *Eiyūfu*) and Hokusai's rendering of it in *Ehon Suiko gaden*. (Figs. 15 & 16) After that promising start, the trail went cold. I have not found another Chinese illustration that Hokusai followed so closely in so many particulars. I have realised that he was more likely to have drawn on his varied sources for details relating to clothing, buildings, gardens, armour, weapons, and landscapes rather than entire designs. He combined all those elements in complex compositions. While they sometimes contain anachronistic features and even diverge substantially at times from Chinese reality, Hokusai was able to evoke a compelling Chinese 'ambiance' for the readers of the wide range of Chinese texts he illustrated. Much work remains to be done for us better to understand the basis of Hokusai's 'virtual' China.

While Hokusai relied on models found in Chinese imports and in books by Japanese artists for his depictions of Chinese warriors and heroes, he was critical of both sources. He voiced his disapproval of them in the preface he wrote, in Chinese, to his *Chūgi Suikoden ehon* 忠義水滸画本 (1829). There he stated that he felt it was necessary to prepare the book in order to demonstrate the correct way of drawing heroes. He explained that for many years he had studied Japanese and Chinese illustrations of warriors

and heroes, and came to realise that all of them were lacking: Yuan and Ming dynasty illustrations have much detail but the bodies of the heroes are weak and without life; Japanese illustrations of warriors appear to be stronger but when we look closely at them we discover that they lack true spirit. Hokusai's depictions of warriors and heroes are certainly not lacking life or spirit.

6. Ehon Tōshisen gogon-zekku

I introduced Hokusai's *Ehon Tōshisen gogon-zekku* 画本唐詩選五言絶句 (hereafter, *Ehon Tōshisen* 画本唐詩選) at an ARC International Seminar in November 2019, and in the article 'A neglected book by Hokusai'.¹⁸⁾ *Ehon Tōshisen* was published in Tokyo in 1880 using block-ready drawings Hokusai had created in the late 1830s. In the twentieth century, Western collectors and scholars paid surprisingly little attention to the book. After the publication of *Tōshisen ehon* Parts VI and VII in c.1832 and 1836 respectively, which were illustrated by Hokusai, the publisher, Sūzanbō 嵩山房 (Kobayashi Shinbē 小林新兵衛), invited Hokusai to illustrate the *gogon-zekku* poems in the *Tōshisen* anthology that the firm had originally published in 1788 as *Tōshisen ehon* Part I with illustrations by Tachibana Sekihō 橘石峰 (dates not known). It seems likely that Sūzanbō wished to reissue those poems with more dynamic illustrations by Hokusai. Nonetheless, comparing Sekihō's illustrations with Hokusai's, we soon see that Hokusai drew inspiration for many of his illustrations directly from Sekihō's designs.

First, let us consider the two artists' respective treatments of a poem by Li Bai 李白 (701-761) titled 'Sitting alone on Mt Jingting' 独坐敬亭山 (Figs. 17 & 18):

A flock of birds flies off into the empyrean;
a solitary cloud idly passes by.
Exchanging glances, we two aren't bored,
just Mt Jingting and me.

衆鳥高飛盡
孤雲獨去閑
相看兩不厭
只有敬亭山

In this poem Li Bai celebrates losing oneself in the majesty of nature. Formally, Sekihō and Hokusai's treatments are mirror images of one another—the poet is seated beneath a tree looking upward toward a mountain peak. Sekihō takes care to render each detail in the poem. Hokusai's concern is with the poet lost in the

magnificence of the mountain, leaving it to the viewer's imagination to supply the birds and the passing cloud.

My second example presents Hokusai's realisation of an untitled poem by Du Fu 杜甫 (712–70) (Figs. 19 & 20):

Against the blue of the river the birds
so intensely white;
against the green of the hills
the flowers about to ignite.
This spring is no sooner seen than gone;
Which will be the year of my homecoming?

江碧鳥逾白
山青花欲燃
今春看又過
何日是歸年

The scholar-official whose voice speaks these lines pauses on a distant bridge, attended by his boy servant, to take in the scene. In a startling play with space and perception, Hokusai has rotated what they see a full 180° and brings it before us in the near foreground. The expanse of empty space surrounding the diminutive observers, the large, fully open blossoms set against a minimal amount of dark foliage and the three white geese moving gracefully against the fine pattern of shimmering ripples they are creating on the surface of the water together convey the impression of a scene seen in bright, mid-day light.

How different this is from Sekihō's cluttered rendering of the poem — yet even here Sekihō provided Hokusai with a starting point for his design: the two figures pausing on a bridge to take in the scene. Neither the bridge nor the servant are mentioned in the poem. Hokusai borrowed both from Sekihō. However, he did not follow Sekihō's lead in setting the scene in a fully worked out landscape — Hokusai dispensed entirely with hills, banks, paths, streams, reeds and trees. Nor did he depict the unidentified birds of the poem as egrets; he chose to present them as white geese whose sinuous neck movements had long been regarded in China as a model of strength and elegance.¹⁹⁾ Hokusai's extraordinary powers of composition and unerring sense of line and his ability to offer fresh and exciting realisations of his source texts and images — as seen in these examples — are evident throughout this book.

7. Ehon saishiki tsū: a case of format reuse

I will conclude with *Ehon saishiki tsū* 画本彩色通 (1848), Hokusai's final book, in which he sought to record all he knew about the art of painting. The book was intended to be in four *chūhon*-size (approx. 18 x 13 cm) volumes; Hokusai only lived long enough to prepare the first two volumes for publication. He explained in his postscript to the first volume: 'This book is in smaller format to make it affordable.'²⁰ As a *chūhon*-size book, it was significantly smaller than the *hanshibon*-size *Hokusai manga*, *Fugaku hyakkei*, *Tōshisen ehon* and most of the other books Hokusai illustrated in the second half of his life. In addition, it was printed in line only; no additional blocks were required to print shades of grey or other tints. Further, in addition to adopting the size used for *gōkan* — the most affordable of all commercially produced illustrated books published in the nineteenth century — Hokusai also took over the layout of *gōkan* that combines text and image on every page. (Fig. 21) This was an innovative design for a painting manual, one that significantly reduced the page count. By adopting these expedients, Hokusai was able to reduce the cost of production so that this book could reach a very wide audience. In this, his final publication, Hokusai reveals yet again his commitment to educating through illustrated books, a commitment that informed most the books he produced in the last thirty-five years of his life.

8. Postscript

Landscapes loom large in Hokusai's reputation today primarily because of the global popularity of designs from his print series *Fugaku sanjūrokkei*. However, in his book illustrations — whether for works of fiction or poetry anthologies or for his numerous drawing manuals — rendering the human figure was a primary concern. Even in *Fugaku hyakkei*, Hokusai enhanced the viewers' appreciation of his vistas of Mt. Fuji by populating most of them with animated foreground figures that provide glosses on the landscapes in which they appear.

Throughout his long and astonishingly productive career, Hokusai absorbed a vast array of images created by others. Constantly seeing and absorbing images and motifs is part of being an artist. All that is seen by a creative mind is internalised and then transmuted in the process of generating new works. As I have shown in this article, Hokusai had the ability to take very ordinary images he encountered in books by others and use them in two ways. The first was to

learn about a process, activity, object or place of which he had no first-hand knowledge. This might involve the structure of Chinese armour or how whales were hunted. He then re-presented that visual data in his own illustrations.

The second manner in which he exploited images by other was to derive compositions from them. Often, mundane scenes provided him with the starting point from which he created fresh and exciting designs that were entirely his own. The examples included above make this point very powerfully. Hokusai was not afraid to borrow; even, as some thought, to steal. He knew that what he produced far surpassed the quality of his models. Some of Hokusai's fellow artists, like Masayoshi, may have been critical of him, but as Pablo Picasso is alleged to have said, 'Good artists copy, great artists steal.'²¹ Hokusai was more than a thief — he was an alchemist who could turn lead into gold.

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[Notes]

- 1) *Hokusai manga* may be Hokusai's most widely known book, however, in the popular mind it is often misunderstood because of the subsequent use of the word *manga* for a very different kind of publication.
- 2) *Banmotsu ehon daizen* 萬物絵本大全 was another vast picture encyclopaedia planned by Hokusai. He prepared the block-ready drawings for it but the book was never published. See Clark [2021]. In his introductory essay to the latter, Clark explores the printed sources Hokusai drew upon when creating the block-ready drawings for *Banmotsu ehon daizen*. Clark [2021], pp.15-19; 30-35.
- 3) *Ryakugashiki* means 'simplified drawing style'. Masayoshi's six volumes are: *Ryakugashiki* 略画式 ('Simplified drawing style' 1795); *Chōjū ryakugashiki* 鳥獸略画式 'Simplified drawing style for birds and beasts' (1797); *Jinbutsu ryakugashiki* 人物略画式

- 'Simplified drawing style for human figures' (1799); *Sansui ryakugashiki* 山水略画式 'Simplified drawing style for landscapes' (1800); *Keisai ryakugashiki* 蕙斎略 'Keisai's simplified drawing style' (1808); and *Sōka ryakugashiki* 草花略画式 'Simplified drawing style for plants' (1813).
- 4) Quoted in Yamamoto [2023], endnote 3, p.121.
 - 5) In *Sōka ryakugashiki*, Masayoshi chose to present a single plant on each page through most of the book.
 - 6) Naitō [2008].
 - 7) Hokusai's books were marketed more aggressively by their original publisher, Tōhekidō, and later by Unsōdō, than Masayoshi's titles had been by his original publisher, Shinshukudō, or later also by Unsōdō. For Tōhekidō and Hokusai, see Tinios [2023].
 - 8) *Bunpō sogā* and *Bunpō kanga* are both *hanshibon*-size (approx. 23 x 16 cm) and complementary in terms of their content: the former depicts Japanese engaged in every kind of mundane activity; the latter includes numerous Chinese famous in myth, legend and literature with identifying labels, which makes the book a useful tool for identifying the individuals depicted by Maruyama-Shijō artists in their paintings and book illustrations. It also depicts generic Chinese fishermen, peasants, etc. *Bunpō* included spreads filled with small-scale depictions of Chinese peasants and literati, types of foliage etc. in his *ōhor*-size (approx. 26 x 18 cm) *Kanga shinan, nihen* 漢画指南 二編 (1811). However, in that book, a manual on Chinese literati-style painting, fully worked out landscapes occupying entire spreads predominate.
 - 9) Dunkel [2021]
 - 10) The first (*ten* 天) and third (*jīn* 人) volumes were both published in 1814; the second volume (*chi* 地) was never published.
 - 11) For the complex publishing history of this book, see Tinios [2023] and [Appendix 1. 2023].
 - 12) As a further indication of its popularity, the *Kokusho dētabēsu* 国書データベース lists 31 institutional copies of *Hyaku Fuji* in Japan, a high number.
 - 13) I thank Timothy Clark for drawing my attention to *Fugaku sanjūrokkei* prints based on illustrations in *Hyaku Fuji*. In this article I have restricted myself to models for Hokusai's book illustrations.
 - 14) Quoted in Tinios [2022]. p.102.
 - 15) Kunshuku 君錫子 was one of Minsetsu's *gō* 号, or art names.
 - 16) For a detailed account of the publishing history of this book, see Tinios [2023] and [Appendix 1. 2023].
 - 17) The latter include Morikuni's *Morokoshi kinmō zui* 唐土訓蒙図彙 (1719), *Ehon shahō bukuro* / *Ehon tsūhōshi* 絵本寫宝袋 (1720) and *Ehon jikishi takara* 絵本直指宝 (1745), each of which ran to ten volumes. These are among the sources Hokusai drew upon for his great unrealised project, *Banmotsu ehon daizen*. See Clark [2021].
 - 18) Tinios [June 2020].
 - 19) Wang Xizhi (王羲之), the great fourth-century Chinese calligrapher, is said to have based his brushstrokes on those movements.
 - 20) Katsushika Hokusai [2023] p.90. This book presents translations of approximately one third of *Ehon saishiki tsū* along with translations of Hokusai's comments on the art of painting that appear in earlier books.
 - 21) T.S. Eliot expressed a similar sentiment with regard to poetry: 'Immature poets imitate; mature poets steal; bad poets deface what they take, and good poets make it into something better, or at least something different.' Eliot [1920], p.112.

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Figures



Fig.1. *Hokusai manga. Part I.* 北斎漫画 初編. 1814. Ebi0386.



Fig.4. *Fugaku hyakkei, Part II.* 富嶽百景 二編. 1835. 'Taisekiji' 大石寺. Ebi0608.

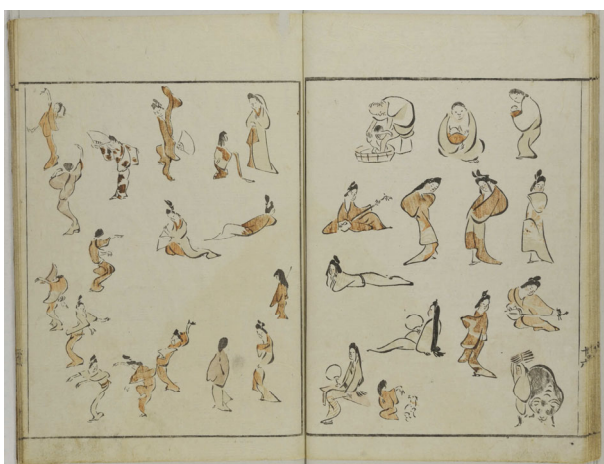


Fig.2. Kitao Masayoshi. *Ryakugashiki* 略画式. 1795. Ebi0574.



Fig.5. Kawamura Minsetsu. *Hyaku fuji Part 4.* 百富士 四編. 1771. 'Taisekiji' 大石寺. Ebi1721.

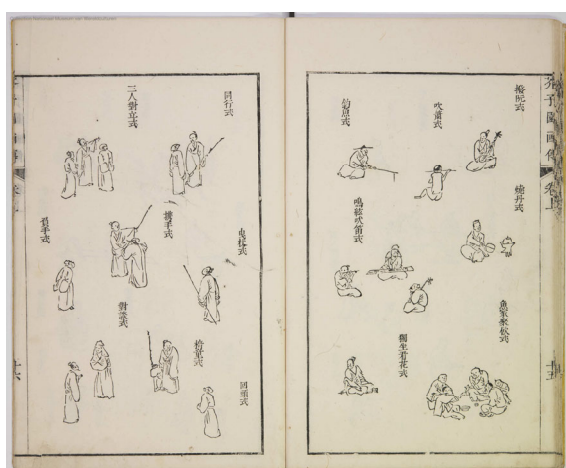


Fig.3. Wang Gai 王槩. *Jieziyuan huajuan* 芥子園画伝 (J. Kaishi-en gaden). Vol. 4. 1800 ed. Ebi1344-4.



Fig.6. *Fugaku hyakkei, Part I.* 富嶽百景 初編. 1834. 'Matsu yama no Fuji' 松山の不二. Ebi0381

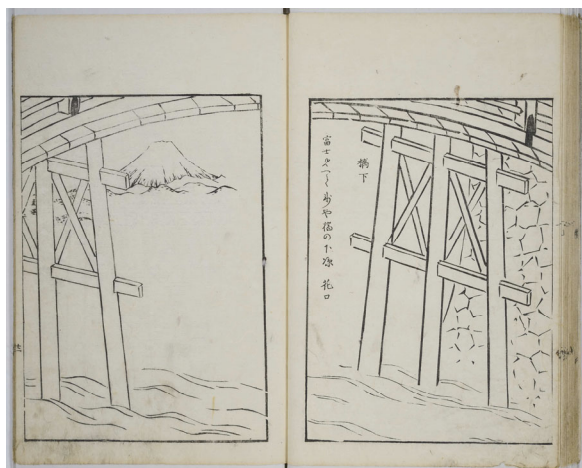


Fig. 7. Kawamura Minsetsu. *Hyaku fuji*. Vol. 1. 百富士初編. 1771. 'Hashimoto' 橋下. Ebi0794



Fig. 9. Kawamura Minsetsu. *Hyaku fuji*. Vol. 3. 百富士三編. 1771. 'Hakone Yama naka' 箱根山中. Ebi0794.

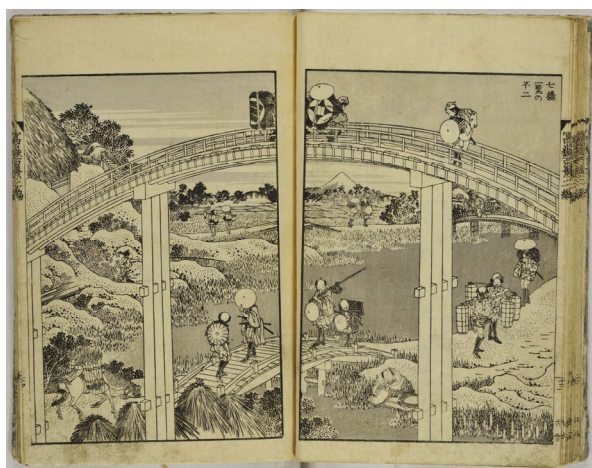


Fig. 8. *Fugaku hyakkei*, Part II. 富嶽百景 二編. 1835. 'Shichibashi ichiran no Fuji' 七橋一覽の不二. Ebi0608.



Fig. 10. *Fugaku hyakkei*, Part I. 富嶽百景 初編. 1834. 'Yanagi tsutsumi no Fuji' 柳塘の不二. Ebi0381.



Fig.11. Kawamura Minsetsu. *Hyaku fuji*. Vol. 1. 百富士 初編. 1771. 'Mado naka' 窓中. Ebi0794.



Fig.12. *Fugaku hyakkei, Part II*. 富嶽百景 二編. 1835. 'Mado naka no Fuji' 窓中の不二. Ebi0381.



Fig.13. a. *Nippon sankai meibutsu zue*. Vol.5. 日本山海名物図会 五.1754. 鯨遠見 (first of a sequence of five spreads). Ebi1931.



Fig.14. a. *Hokusai gafu. Part III*. 北斎画譜 三編.1849. 其三. (third of a sequence of three spreads). Ebi1719.



Fig.13. b. *Hokusai gafu. Part III*. 北斎画譜 三編. 1849. 鯨遠見櫓相図. (first of a sequence of three spreads). Ebi1719.

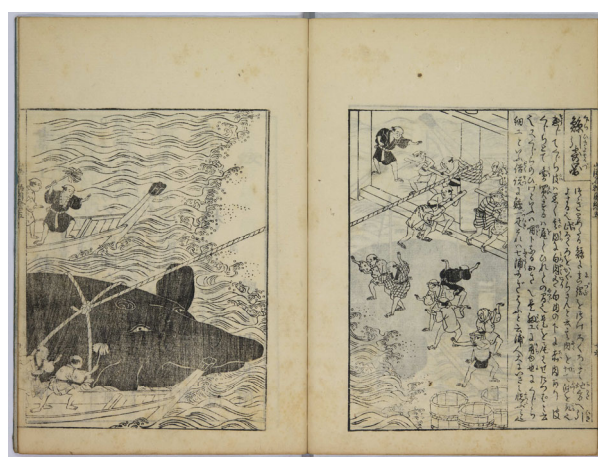


Fig.14. b. *Nippon sankai meibutsu zue*. Vol.5. 日本山海名物図会 五.1754. 鯨遠見 (last of a sequence of five spreads). Ebi1931



Fig.14. c. *Hokusai gafu. Part III*. 北斎画譜 三編. 1849. 其二. (second of a sequence of three spreads). Ebi1719.

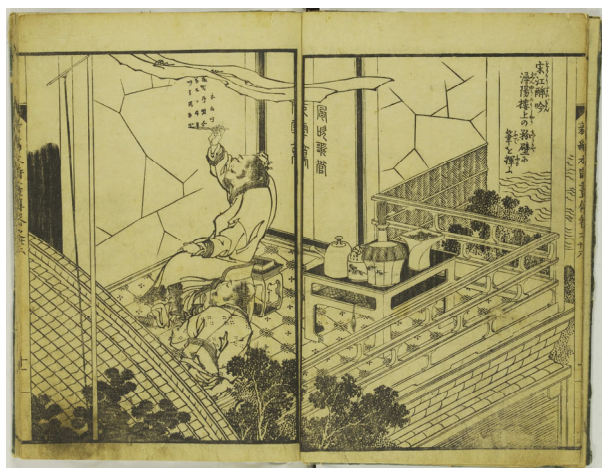


Fig.15. *Shinpen Ehon Suiko gaden. Part III.* 新編水滸画伝 三篇. 1835. Ebi0521.



Fig.17. Tachibana Sekihō. *Tōshisen ehon Part I: gogon zekku*, vol. 1. 唐詩選画本 初編 五言絶句 一. 1788. Ebi0573.1-1.

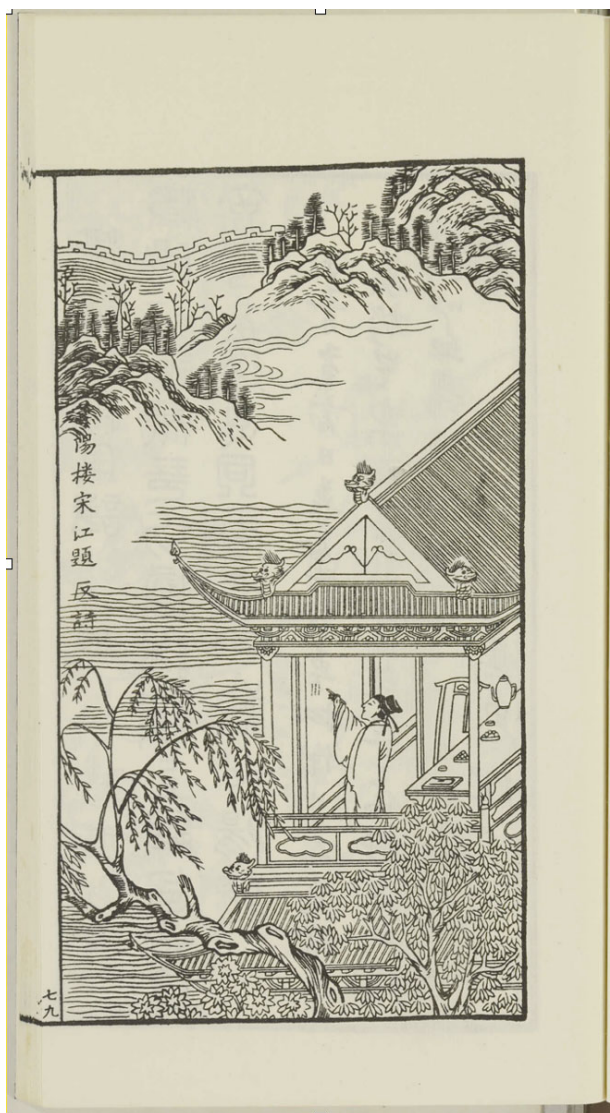


Fig.16. *Yingxiongpu* 英雄譜 (Japanese: *Eiyūfu*) Xiong Fei, ed. 熊飛 編. Facsimile produced by Jiangsugang guzi keyinshe 江蘇廣古籍刻印社. Jiangsu. 1977.



Fig.18. *Ehon Tōshisen* [Vol. 1]. 唐詩選 [上]. 1880. Ebi1673-01.



Fig.19. Tachibana Sekihō. *Tōshisen ehon Part I: gogon zekku*. vol.3. 唐詩選画本 初編 五言絶句 三. 1788. Ebi0573.1-3.



Fig.20. *Ehon Tōshisen*. [Vol. 2]. 唐詩選 [下]. 1880. Ebi1673-02.



Fig.21. *Ehon saishiki tsū. Part I*. 画本彩色通 初編. 1848. Ebi1549.