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TSUKAMOTO, Sonoko. Consideration of an active phase and a landscape print by Shōtei Hokuju: Focusing on the genealogy of the Western-style expression

Shōtei Hokuju (dates unknown) was an early pupil of Katsushika Hokusai (1760–1849) in the late Edo period. Hokuju created strongly Western-style landscape woodblock prints adapting the Western-style which Hokusai created in the early and middle Bunka era (1804–17). However, Hokuju research has hardly progressed. This paper examines his biography and active period and considers how his characteristic Western-style expressions were accepted and led to the prospering of the Western-style in ukiyo-e in the Bunka era.

Regarding his biographies, three documents, though known as materials have hitherto not been analyzed as part of his biography. In particular, *Shoka Jinmei, Edo Hōgakuwake (Names of Various Specialists in Edo Direction)* relates that he lived beside Ukiyo Shōji Street in Nihonbashi, and that his name was “Genzō.” This is obviously an important information regarding his biography. Research has so far defined the beginning of his active period when he became a pupil of Hokusai late in the Kansei era (1789–1801) and adopted his pseudonym “Hokuju.” As supporting evidence, this took place when he created *surimono*, *ōban* triptychs, and *uki-e*. In comparison with the signature of his dated works, the author is convinced that he created the landscape woodblock prints in the Bunka era. Furthermore, works such as the *surimono* and printed books are analyzed. Thus, we show that he became a pupil of Hokusai only late in the Kansei era and that he worked mainly in the Bunka era.

As the genealogy of the Western-style expressions, comparing *uki-e* works of the same title by Utagawa Toyoharu (1735–1814), his pupil Toyokuni (1769–1825), Hokusai, and Hokuju, this paper shows that different expressions are found from Hokusai in the Temmei era (1781–89) and that they changed significantly in Hokuju’s work of the Kansei era. Furthermore, as a factor of the change, we show works by Katsukawa Shunshō (1743–92), who adapted the style of the copperplate prints by Shiba Kōkan (1747–1818) of the Temmei era. Shunshō’s works show many new expressions that are not found in previous prints. Hokusai, who was a pupil of Shunshō, first succeeded and developed the Western style that Shunshō began and so did Hokuju, Katsukawa Shuntei (?–1824), and others. Seen against the background of the popularity of the Western style in the Bunka era, we find the landscape of the complicated development by such various artists.

Hokuju’s landscape woodblock prints are generally considered to succeed Hokusai’s landscapes. Looking at his works in detail, however, we find expressions that are not found in Hokusai’s, so I conclude that Kōkan and Aōdo Denzen (1748–1822), and others influenced Hokuju. In particular, Kōkan’s oil painting *Picture of Shichirigahama Beach, Kamakura, Sagami* influenced Hokusai regarding the low horizon and complex depiction of the clouds. Denzen’s copperplate prints stimulated Hokuju regarding the rendering of shadows, especially a unique sense of light. Furthermore, he copied a Western copperplate print which demonstrates Hokuju’s interest in rendering the sky and light. *A Franciscan Monastery in Holland*, which is now considered a composition by Toyoharu, and Hokuju’s landscape woodblock prints have a common description. We can consider that Hokuju’s works have peculiar expressions in comparison with other artist in the same period, partly because this Western copperplate print directly influenced him.

Hokuju’s landscape woodblocks were continued to be printed after the Bunka era (in the Bunsei and Tempō eras), an evidence that they were widely accepted. However, the unique expression of the scenery is evident only in the first printing by the Nishimura-ya and not in the latter prints by the Yamamoto-ya. Thus, we can say that a change of taste in the new era developing in landscape woodblock prints of the Tempō era had already appeared.

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