

WISH YOU
WERE HERE,

hiroshiye



Wish you were here, Hiroshige

Comparative selection of prints
from Hiroshige's earliest and latest
Tokaido woodcut sets

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FOREWORD

As if responding to the call of the exhibition title <<“Wish you were here,” Hiroshige>> (someone in the class sensed the artist’s personal invitation), a group of RISD students undertook a virtual journey through space and time to Edo period Japan. For a duration of a semester the entire class plunged directly into the midst of the Tokaido world, mixing with all kinds of travelers and local residents, learning their customs and manners, trying out various travel modes and road-side services, exploring every bend of the road, in winter and summer, at dawn and dusk, in sunshine and violent storm.

Our project, however, was much more than a foray into the history of material culture, enriching as it was. We had an equally daring goal in the area of art criticism. We wanted to look into the ultimate evolution of the artist’s style, comparing Hiroshige’s earliest and latest representations of the same Tokaido post stations. In-between these two Tokaido sets twenty years had passed during which Hiroshige came up with over twenty Tokaido woodcut series, experimenting with formats and sizes. This comparative lens revealed quite a significant shift in Hiroshige’s vision of the world and, correspondingly, in the message of his works. Hiroshige’s horizontally oriented Tokaido compositions created by the artist in his prime tended to be lively close-up views, inviting the onlooker to partake in the experience of the place. In his late 50s, Hiroshige started showing consistent preference for the vertical orientation of his images, making them timeless distant vistas seen from the perspective of his advanced age and wisdom.

The goal of this book was to approximate a professional museum catalog of an art exhibition. Some students were writing general articles introducing the exhibition, looking into the history of the Tokaido in the art of Hiroshige, and Hiroshige’s contribution to the development of Japan’s idea of national identity. Glossary of terms was put together to facilitate understanding of time-specific objects and concepts. The majority of the students were involved in the in-depth exploration of individual prints. As a result of this intensive and focused research, all came up with multiple little discoveries reflected in their essays.

“Wish you were here,” is an exclamation of a traveler overwhelmed by the new sights and desiring to share the excitement with those of kindred spirit. The class that authored this project enthusiastically addresses these words to the exhibition’s visitors and catalog readers.

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Introductions

Intro One

Tokaido Road in Hiroshige's Life Journey:

paired views of seven stations from the artist's earliest and the latest Tokaido sets in the collection of the RISD Museum

by Yi Bin Liang

The impact of Hiroshige's work is indubitable - his prints have come to define the universal view of Edo Japan - even today, we still see the country through his artistic lens. In the late 19th century his work was highly sought after among many Western artists and heavily influenced their art, particularly among the Impressionists. Though he designed for other genres, his most outstanding works were in landscape, and among those, the various Tokaido series were probably the most well-known in their time. Though Hiroshige had previously published landscape series such as the Eight Views of the Eastern Capital (1831), it was the Hoeido Tokaido that made his name (Strange).

The publication of the first Tokaido series coincided with the first travel boom to hit Japan in the early 1800s (Vaporis, 462), when the production of travel guides and literature rose due to increased demand. The daimyo processional requirement had already led to the development of the Tokaido highway, while the long period of peace and growing prosperity made it safer and easier for commoners to travel around Japan. As ordinary people became more acquainted with places further away from their homes, interest in prints of landmarks and famous views grew. Also, publishers found that bijinga and yakusha prints were only fleetingly popular, while landscape views were more enduring, and therefore more profitable (Tinios, 188). In particular, Hokusai's 36 views of Mount Fuji (1826-1833) had been a huge financial success. Hiroshige's teacher, Utagawa Toyohiro, had himself published a number of prints featuring the Tokaido.

It is important to note that ukiyo-e as an art form was very commercially driven. Mass production made it possible for publishers to reach a much wider audience, specifically the commoners, or chonin. These prints would have been the equivalent of postcard pictures for popular consumption, rather than art made for museums and galleries. They might have been casually displayed on folding screens for everyday appreciation, or collected in albums to be perused by a gathering of friends. In fact, the RISD museum has one such album with the complete set of Tate-e Tokaido prints.

For our exhibition, we are looking at seven pairs of prints from the Hoeido and Tate-e editions. The former series, produced in 1833-1834, are all horizontal, while

the latter, from 1855, are all vertical. Both series followed the theme of depicting the post stations along the Tokaido, but are markedly different in how they present the places. We were interested in analyzing how the changes in Hiroshige's prints might reflect the evolution of his stylistic and conceptual approaches, as well as the socio-cultural developments that were happening in Edo at the time.

The early 1830s, when our prints were produced, was viewed as both a good and bad time for Edo Japan ("Hiroshige in History", 35). The peace and prosperity of the Tokugawa reign, which had lasted for over 200 years, was soon to give in to external pressures. Even within the society, there was tension between the ruling elite and the lower classes. The Tenpo reforms of 1842 were attempts to resolve political problems, and also to address domestic uneasiness. Besides religious, economic and political changes, ukiyo-e was affected by limitations on the prices and broad censorship on content. Of course, this only led the printing industry to be more inventive and diversified.

Yet, Hiroshige's poetic landscapes reveal no such rebellion or turmoil. Instead, they focus on the beauty of nature, diverting people from their troubles. These lines from a famous Chinese poem by the Tang period poet Du Fu (717-770) capture the idea beautifully:

國破山河在 /
国破れて山河在り /
The country is broken, yet the mountains and rivers remain

城春草木深 /
城春にして草木深し /
The city in spring is deep with grass and trees

感時花濺淚 /
時に感じては花にも涙を濺ぎ /
In troubled times the flowers weep

恨別鳥驚心 /
別れを恨んで鳥にも心を驚かす /
At bitter partings the birds fret

As brought up by Smith, Hiroshige's employs the three techniques of psychological consolation laid out by Mary Elizabeth Berry: "an emphasis on place, presented with integrity; a focus on the cyclical time of the seasons and the ritual calendar; and a preoccupation with people and their everyday customs" ("Hiroshige in History", 36). As such, the specificity and familiarity of the landscapes he created were important to connect with the viewers. Uchida suggests that "Hiroshige was the only Japanese painter who proved himself an absolutely faithful interpreter of the native scenery". Hiroshige's work was in line with the spirit of yamato-e, a marked departure from the early tradition of landscape in Japanese art, which had been derived from the Chinese painters of the Tang dynasty and used stock motifs to compose an image steeped in Zen Buddhist and Taoist ideas. Hiroshige's landscape designs represented places that Japanese people could actually visit. He

used the existing travel guidebooks and gazetteers as well as sketches from his travels rather than composing the print directly on site, so while some views were impossible, they employed enough accuracy to be recognizable. Also, in comparison to Hokusai, his personal style was less intrusive in the depiction, showing a greater sensitivity and faithfulness to nature.

According to a record in the Collected Biographies of the Utagawa School (Ukiyo-eshi Utagawa retsuden, 浮世絵師歌川列伝, 1894) by Iijima Kyoshin, in 1832, Hiroshige accompanied an official delegation to Edo with the gift of two white horses for the emperor. It is said that the Hoeido Tokaido series was inspired by the sketches he made on the trip, though it has been disputed because the prints were produced in a remarkably short time following his return from the trip. Perhaps the idea had already germinated before he left for Kyoto, or perhaps the skill and efficiency of the artist and the artisans were just excellent.

He also certainly liked reworking his previous designs, taking successful components and repurposing them. This is particularly evident in the Hara pairing we have, where the peak of Mount Fuji break through the border in both pieces. Sometimes, prints of his incorporate elements of previous ones, perhaps drawn from an alternative viewpoint or from a different distance.

Although the Tate-e Tokaido is known as the vertical series, it was not Hiroshige's first foray into vertical compositions. Preceding it were the so-called Jimbutsu (Tokaido with Figures) and Bijin Tokaido (Tokaido of Beautiful Women) editions, both of 1852, though the latter was more of a horizontal landscape paired with figures. Some of his work in other genres, namely historical illustrations and bird and flower prints, also employed vertical formats. What is unique about the vertical compositions of the Tate-e is that Hiroshige uses them to give greater prominence to the landscape. His previous works mostly zoomed in on the figures or activities happening in the foreground, as was common with the genres that typically used vertical orientations. Here, the view is more zoomed out instead, and shows the landscapes from a more exaggerated height, giving a vaster sense of distance. In the Vertical Tokaido we also see a lot more clouds and mist being used to obscure certain elements of the composition, separating parts of the landscape and adding a sense of atmosphere and maybe mystery to the space.

Of course, the exaggeration of the environment meant that the figures became much smaller in the pictures. The Hoeido series generally has closer views of the humans, their features and expressions defined with specificity. In contrast, the Tate-e series does away with such details and renders figures much more simply. That is not to say that they lack expressiveness - their postures and gestures are still extremely vivid, and their interactions remain engaging. It is as if Hiroshige has decided to whittle his marks down to just enough to convey all that needs to be conveyed.

In any case, the figures in Hiroshige's works mainly function as entry points for us, the viewers, to experience the Tokaido's many environments and daily activities. While he dutifully integrates human interaction into the various settings, his reverence for nature really shines through. If there is one conclusion to be made, it is that Hiroshige loved nature in all its forms, and in turn, traveling to see as much variety of nature as he possibly could.

Intro Two

Hiroshige's Tokaido: Journey to Edo Japan

by Annie Bai

Utagawa Hiroshige's 1833-1834 woodblock print set "Fifty-Three Stations on Tokaido Road" was immediately popular at the time of publication. Commissioned jointly by the long established Senkakudō publishing house and the newly established Hoeidō publishing house, the project was unprecedented in its ambitiousness. Its quick popularity inspired numerous additional commissions of Tokaido sets from Hiroshige by other publishers from a period of two decades from 1830 to mid-1850s. The historical value of these prints is indomitable as a view into the commercial, domestic conditions and uniquely reflective of the floating lifestyle of the Edo era. Due to the many versions of the views of the fifty-three stations by Hiroshige, it is possible to see an evolution of style and even the choice of the subject matter over the twenty years, during the time period of the relative stability of the late Edo era.

The stability of the Edo era was what had emerged from about a century of continuous civil war between regional warlords, the period called the Warring States, or Sengoku era from 1467-1573. In the end of this period in the last quarter of the 16th century, Oda Nobunaga, as well as many other daimyo (feudal lords), saw an opportunity to overthrow the failing Ashikaga shogunate. Under Oda Nobunaga, one third of Japan came under his control, but it wasn't until his death and succession by Toyotomi Hideyoshi that the country fractured in the civil wars was fully reunited and the order was restored in the tumultuous life of the populace. However, Toyotomi Hideyoshi's heir was not old enough to take over after his father at the time of his death. Tokugawa Ieyasu used the situation to his political advantage, defeating Hideyoshi's allies two years after the latter's death in the battle of Sekigahara, 1600, receiving the title of shogun from the emperor in 1603 and ultimately destroying the Toyotomi clan in 1615. Under the Tokugawa shogunate, strict control over all aspects of life of the society was established, contact with the west was all but severed except for the limited trade with China and the Netherlands, and peace finally settled in the tumultuous country for over two centuries until the Meiji Era.

The Edo era owes its name to the city of Edo, which was a small fishing village in its humble beginnings. Due to its large distance from Kyoto, the Tokugawa

made it the base of operations of the administration, the bakufu, and soon mandatory residence of all daimyos every alternate year, a policy called sankin-kōtai, was introduced. Their presence and commercial demands turned Edo from a unremarkable fishing village to a blooming city with a popular culture quite distinct from the courtly customs of Kyoto. It was estimated that most inhabitants of Edo were temporary residents of the sankin-kōtai system. Commerce grew in this politically stable era as well as an emerging middle class of merchants and artisans. With money to spend, Edo developed a fast-paced culture of entertainment, pleasurable and light-hearted, maybe even playful, acceptance of the impermanence of this in their carefree, "fleeting" lifestyle. Kabuki theatre, the pleasure district Yoshiwara, and the Nihonbashi fish market are mainstays of the city, and ukiyo-e woodblock prints illustrating the world of Edokko – "the child of Edo," were carried by the travelers far and wide as the messengers of the new interests and fads.

Travel became an important part of Edo era culture. Five main highways called the Gokaidō connected the cities of mainland Japan, founded by the Tokugawa shogunate to better manage sankin-kōtai system and other movements of the population. Of the five roads, Tokaido (eastern sea road) had the most significance being the road connecting the most populated parts of Japan (and also the most significant political and cultural centers – Edo, the new shogun's capital and Kyoto, the old capital of the emperor). Tokaido was the busiest road as well as the safest. Post stations (shukuba), many of which included governmental check stations (sekisho) to control the traffic on the road, supported a courier system and also provided lodgings. Responsibility of the sekisho was to verify and record the traveler's travel permits and merchant's goods. There were road markers every ri (3.9 km/2.4 miles), starting at Nihonbashi. The length of Tokaido is approximately 300 mi (500 km). It was said a hasty traveler could get from Edo to Kyoto in twelve days traveling on the Tokaido road.

Fifty-three post stations located along the Tokaido road were ready to provide food, lodgings, entertainment and escape for the tired travelers and stables for the horses. Due to its high traffic, travel on the Tokaido quickly took a life of its own. Each city, town and post station boasted its own attractions (meisho), be it specialty cuisine, hot springs, tea, products, souvenirs, or even prostitutes. German traveler Franz von Siebold described it as "...a continuous line of towns, villages, tea houses" in 1826 (Traganou 18). Brochures and guidebooks were published to advise travelers of the best locations to visit, best inns to stay at and what local specialties to partake in. Authors such as poet Matsuo Basho and poet and novelist Jippensha Ikku wrote contemplative and entertaining works of the Tokaido travel experiences. Tokaido travel culture was based on human interaction and local experiences, many of these popular non-informational works that were not concerned with accuracy of the locations. Travelers often purchased souvenirs (omiyake) at each location to exchange and treasure as a memento of their experiences.

Ukiyo-e woodblock prints were a most widespread and popular kind of souvenir specific to Edo to be acquired by travelers. Prints were produced very quickly in vast quantities to sell to the public at a very low price, as ukiyo-e artists, carvers and printers were not considered fine artists but as artisans. Being a commercial art form, ukiyo-e often depicted the popular culture of Edo, occasionally accompanied by the Edo-period specific form of witty poetry kyōka. Artists often included

allusions to history, myth, wordplay, jokes and traditional seasonal references in their compositions. The main subjects of ukiyo-e prints include beautiful women (bijinga), famous kabuki actors and their roles (yakusha-e), erotic images (shunga), historical heroes (musha-e), landscapes (fukei-ga) specifically of famous locations (meisho-e). Tokaido was a popular subject amongst many artists.

The process of publishing ukiyo-e is not without complications, for print and literature is a heavily regulated commodity. First, the artist must get the sponsorship of a publisher. Once the partnership is established, the artist will make the drawings, including the indications of how color should be applied; the finalized drawing must be sent to the authorized censorship office to be approved. Once approved, the drawing is then sent to the carver who will make carvings – a key-block for the outlines, together with the censorship seal, and one block for each color to be printed – based on the drawing. The blocks are then sent to the printer, who will make the impressions.

Only with the office's approval can prints circulate on the market. Despite the government's control over print content, rights and ownership were only vaguely established amongst publishers, so copies of famous prints were often be made by competing publishing houses hoping to earn money. If one publisher were to acquire the woodblocks from another publisher by way of purchase or some other form, they were free to make their own impressions and sell them without paying the original artist or carver.

Of the artists depicting Tokaido, Utagawa Hiroshige is the one who made it his claim to fame. Born in 1797 to a minor samurai family, he took over the hereditary job as fire warden for the Edo castle after his father's death at the age of twelve. With the granted stipend and time to spare, he studied under the master Utagawa Toyohiro of the Utagawa School, known for their actor prints and landscape prints. Spending his early days assisting his teacher, Hiroshige started signing works with his own artist name "Hiroshige" in 1812 at an early age of fifteen. In 1823 he formally quit his job as fire warden, a post transferred to his brother, to focus on art. Traditionally creation of his first series of woodblock prints on the Tokaido road is connected with Hiroshige's alleged participation in the shogunal delegation that delivered gifts of white horses from Edo to the emperor in Kyoto. His first series, Fifty-three Stations of Tokaido Road published in 1833 by the Hoeido publishing house of the publisher Takenouchi Magohachi (for details see above) was instantaneously popular. Popularity of the prints from this set established him as a landscape artist and caused many other publishing houses to approach him over the next two decades to do more print series of the Tokaido. From 1833 to his death at age sixty-two in 1858, Hiroshige produced more than twenty sets of Fifty-three Stations on Tokaido Road. This theme was such an important part of his life that in his death poem, he combines it with the Buddhist journey of self from life to death as East to West (Buddha Amida's Western Paradise), as the sun – "I leave my brush in the east and set forth my journey, I shall see the famous places in the Western land".

Like in other publications about the Tokaido road, Hiroshige's Tokaido prints were concerned with accuracy that was matched by the artistic considerations in treatment of the scenery. Hiroshige's apprenticeship with the Utagawa School shows through in his use of European perspective in his scenery; the influence

by the more formal Kanō School shows as well. Apart from landscape paintings, Hiroshige was known for his prints of flowers and birds, a common subject of Kanō paintings. Hiroshige's images differed from the traditional grandiose large scale gold-decked landscapes of the Kanō school in being small, mass-produced and cheap but they are remarkable in their exceedingly lyrical and humane rendering views of nature. Hiroshige's Tokaido series stood out as one of the first large sets of prints devoted to landscapes, as before prints of nature views were sold in smaller sets, as Eight Views of Omi Province. Of his Tokaido prints, Hiroshige enjoys employing unusual vantage points, seasonal allusions, and references to other artists' visual representations and literary works such as the widespread Tokaido Meisho travel guides or Jippensha Ikku's book Tokaidochu Hizakurige telling of two adventurous commoners traveling along the Tokaido.

The first Tokaido prints by Hiroshige began as a joint project between Hoeidō and Senkakudō publishing houses. Hoeidō was an up and coming publisher, but Senkakudō was a long established very popular publishing house, being founded in the 1620s and lasting all the way until approximately 1852. However, trouble with the censorship office with one of their most popular publications, Country Genji (a parody of the well-known Tale of Genji) had rendered Senkakudō all but bankrupt, forcing Senkakudō to pull out of the project. Hoeidō took over the project to completion, printing twelve stations with both the Hoeidō seal and Senkakudō seal and the rest with only the Hoeidō seal. Later on, Hoeidō released a new version with recut blocks, altering the content and removing the Senkakudō seals. The Vertical Tokaido prints were published by Tsuyata Kichizō. The publisher Tsutaya Kichizo started in 1820s with publications of images of beautiful women, Kabuki theater actors and warriors but in 1830 he turned to the Tokaido theme and published numerous Tokaido sets by various artists, including Hiroshige. Tsutaya Kichizō's most significant achievement was publication in 1855 Hiroshige's Vertical Tokaido series, seven prints from which are displayed in the exhibition. (Marks 23-24).

The Hoeidō edition is the first Tokaido print series Hiroshige produced and is the set that most people nowadays associate with the name Hiroshige. Hiroshige used human vantage point in this series with focus on the culture of Tokaido, paying close attention to human element shown against the backdrop of the natural landscape. His compositions are dynamic, fostered by the use of the western perspective to cause the scenery recede into the background, inviting the viewer into making the already lively scene even more animated. Hiroshige also took care of setting an atmospheric mood, often using colors in gradients (bokashi) to indicate the exact time of day and the motion of the weather, making reference to the season as is typical in Japanese art. This series was also unique in style, differing significantly from Hiroshige's later works, as whether it was derived from sketches whilst traveling as opposed to being done from memory or guidebooks is a debated topic.

As stated above, popularity of the Hokeidō Tokaido was immense and immediate. Hiroshige received numerous commissions from various publishing houses. As a true artist he never stopped to experiment, looking at the Tokaido through various lenses, trying out a range of formats, sometimes collaborating with other ukiyo-e artists. Each of these sets has its idiosyncratic feature that is

reflected in the common names by which all of these sets became generally known.

In early 1840s, about a decade after the publication of the Hoeidō Tokaido, there appeared the so-called Kyōka Tokaido series of smaller-sized chūban prints (7.5x10”), each of which was inscribed with a kyōka – a 31-syllable parody poem. In the Kyōka Tokaido prints the everyday life moments at the post stations were paralleled wittily to various aspects of Japanese traditional culture. The imagery of the Kyōka Tokaido series shows the noticeable degree of similarity with the Hoeido Tokaido but the scenes perhaps are even livelier due to the more intimate print size. One other well-known chūban format Tokaido set appeared much later, in 1851 – it is usually referred to as the Kichizō Tokaido by its publishing house; the Kichizō Tokaido’s specific feature is its focus on topographic characteristics of the stations, downplaying the scale of human presence and including place names in vertical boxes akin to Japanese maps.

Further experiments with the horizontal format included the so-called Gyōsho Tokaido, (Semi-Cursive Script Tokaido) 1841-1844, in aiban format (9x13”), slightly bigger than the chūban of the Kyōka Tokaido just mentioned but smaller than the large ōban (10x15”) of the Reisho Tokaido (Tokaido in the Clerical Script) that followed in 1847-1852.

These two sets share their focus on both the human characters and the scenery and have many compositional features in common. Their difference primarily lies in the variations of the scripts used on each print from the corresponding set to indicate the set’s title.

Looking into the evolution of Hiroshige’s approaches to the treatment of the Tokaido theme in his work, one can observe quite distinctive shift towards preference for the vertical format towards the end of 1840s. Here one must mention collaborative print series Fifty-three Parings for the Tokaido Road that made its appearance in 1845-1846. Sixty prints of this interesting set were designed by three leading artists of the Utagawa School, thirty-one by Kuniyoshi, twenty-one by Hiroshige and eight by Kunisada. Each print of the set showed a historic figure associated with the represented station against this station’s landscape. The upper third of the prints is given to the title of the series and a brief explanatory text enclosed in a cartouche of a specific shape. This print series not only was designed by three different artists but was also published by six publishing houses, each of them with its own unique shape for the text frame. Prints of this set are large format upright ōban sheets but the image proper is nearly a square only slightly elongated vertically. We can only hypothesize if the work on these prints with their slight verticality could have affected Hiroshige’s forthcoming preference for the upright compositions.

One other famous Tokaido collaboration is the set Tokaido by Two Brushes in which full-length figures of characters by Utagawa Kuniyoshi, the leading figure master in ukiyo-e, appear against half-length landscape insets by Hiroshige. This series was published in 1854 and fully relied on Hiroshige’s earlier horizontal compositions, only the central part of the sheet was freed to make space for the acting figure.

Similar approach we encounter in the print set fully designed by Hiroshige – in the so-called Bijinga Tokaido (Beauties’ Tokaido) published in 1849-1853. It is focused on the human characters, this time of beautiful women lounging or involved

in simple activities in front of a smaller print of the Tokaido landscape. Due to their smaller size, the landscapes in this set are simplified, with less landmarks and more generalization of the landscape elements. The focal point of this set is definitely the women, who are drawn with complex patterns on their clothing, sensual curves, and flowing gestures.

More pronounced leaning towards the upright format is evident in Hiroshige’s so-called Jinbutshu Tokaido (Tokaido with People), with a stronger presence of both the human element and the setting. The intimate viewpoint invites the onlookers into these scenes and familiarizes them closely with the happening. In many images there is sweeping dramatic perspective emphasized by the architecture

One should also mention the so-called Tokaido Harimaze-zue – Cutout Pictures of the Tokaido, several ōban print sets published in 1850s with each print representing a collection of small-sized vertical and horizontal mini-views of the Tokaido stations to be cut out and used separately. Abridged as these images are, they perhaps further contributed to Hiroshige’s comprehensive elaboration of the possibilities of various formats in the Tokaido representations.

The last of Hiroshige’s Tokaido sets and perhaps the second most famous one by the artist is the Tate-e edition, or ‘Vertical Tokaido’. As mentioned above, published in 1855 by Tsutaya Kichizō publishing house three years before Hiroshige’s death, the Vertical Tokaido can be regarded as stylistic culmination of all Hiroshige’s Tokaido works. Composition starts off from Edo as more static, but gradually the compositions and the movement within are growing bolder. In many prints the dramatic use of western perspective can be seen in the nature elements and architecture. Two compositional devices regularly featured include (1) a large vertical element in the foreground and a diagonal across the middle part of the sheet and (2) a winding path from the front of the page to the middle, where a triangular shape would appear. Landscape elements from earlier print sets are recycled once again, but this time this citation is more subtle, taking up quarters of the page and pieced together with other landscape elements instead of obvious replications. In this edition, Hiroshige tried to get every major landmark associated with each post station into the frame of the print. He was remarkably successful in creating a symbolic overview of the post stations, unconcerned with locational accuracy or realism.

The most telling relics of each time period are often the things that tell of what the people of the era valued. Hiroshige’s Tokaido prints are in a way perfect representation of the culture of the Edo era with what it tells us of the people not only through the characters shown in the prints, but also through these prints’ immense popularity with the general public. The fascination with the Tokaido theme in ukiyo-e and the existence of thousands of the Tokaido designs produced in large runs provide the evidence that people of Edo valued travel, commerce and entertainment. Its subject matter tells us of the politics and the economy of the period with the daimyo processions and views of bustling towns and markets. Seasonal allusions and allusions to popular literature of the period and hidden advertisement in the prints tell us still more about the culture in Edo Japan. At the time of their publishing, Hiroshige’s Tokaido prints could only reference famous and popular works that came before it. At the time of this analysis, Hiroshige’s Tokaido prints have become so representative of Edo Japan and of Japanese art

in general that there is a plethora of works that came afterwards yet are directly influenced by Hiroshige, making the Tokaido prints a significant part of Edo history and of Japanese culture.

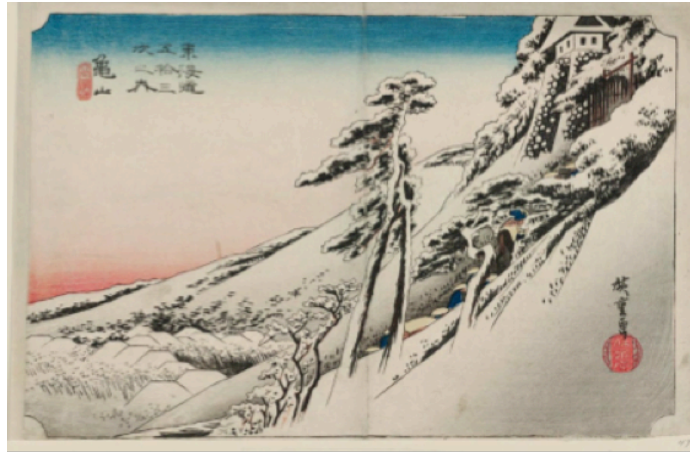
Intro Three

Narratives of Tokaido Landscape: Constructing Japanese national identity

by Taehee Whang

Utagawa Hiroshige's woodcut set *Fifty-three Stations of the Tokaido Road*, published by Takenouchi Magohachi (best known by his firm name Hoeido) and Tsuruya Kiemon (firm name Senkakudo), depicts the stations along the Tokaido road from Edo (Nihonbashi) to Kyoto (Sanjoohashi). These fifty-five prints published in 1833-1834 established Hiroshige's reputation as a leading ukiyo-e artist as they gained immediate popularity and spread quickly throughout Japan. This publication turned Tokaido and, broader, travel and landscape, into the major theme in the arts. After the initial success of the Hoeido edition, Hiroshige created over twenty Tokaido print sets as well as numerous other prints with views of Japan; many of his contemporaries followed suit. Hiroshige's last series of prints on Tokaido published in 1855 by Tsutaya Kichizo (publishing house Koeido), was designed in vertical format and became known as the *Vertical Tokaido* or *Tate-e Tokaido*. Appearance of this set further testifies that for over twenty years the Tokaido topic still held the ground. The question, however, is what made Hiroshige's Tokaido designs so desirable? What were their compelling elements other than Hiroshige's expert draughtsmanship that seized attention of the popular culture of Edo period Japan? The key reason probably is that not only did Hiroshige illustrate the beautiful landscapes of the fifty-three stations of the Tokaido road, but he efficiently captured Japan's building of its national identity through the presence of travelers (daimyo processions, pilgrims, traders, etc.) in iconic Japanese landscapes that, seen together, united people's hearts..

Hiroshige's landscapes of the Tokaido road reflect the hierarchical framework of Japan's feudal structure through exploring relationships between travelers and nature, at once harmonious and self-contained. This could be seen in print No. 47 *Kameyama: Clear Weather after Snow* that depicts a daimyo procession climbing the hill to the Kameyama castle, placed above the village where commoners live. (Hiroshige, 1797-1858, No. 47 *Kameyama: Clear Weather after Snow*, Hoeido edition, 1833) In this sublime snowy landscape, the travelers may only be recognized from glimpses of their straw hats. The procession's presence is almost a secret, engulfed by the mountain. It is also interesting that Hiroshige relied here on printers' delicate usage of ranges of bokashi in the sunrise warm orange/



Hiroshige, 1797-1858,
No. 47
Kameyama: Clear
Weather After Snow,
Hoeido Edition, 1833

ochre yellow sky which gives soft and welcoming atmosphere to the landscape as if the nature itself is greeting the presence of daimyo. The juxtaposition of this procession and Japanese local landscape is intriguing, considering the history behind daimyo procession of the Tokugawa shogunate. After early Tokugawa period occurrences of social and political unrest, riots caused by famines and merchant's bankruptcies started to take place. It became clear that the political and economic system of the Tokugawa needed to be revised and

reconsidered. One of the revisions was introduction of the alternate attendance or sankin kōtai policy that aimed at strengthening the Tokugawa's feudal system. All daimyo were required to alternate a year of residence in Edo in direct service to the shogun with a year of residence in their own domains while the families of the daimyo remained in Edo at all times as a kind of hostages. Daimyo travels to Edo became a mandatory practice, unlike the practice in early Tokugawa period when such visits were done on voluntary basis as a means of showing homage to the shogun and providing assistance. These trips of the daimyo through Tokaido road became something more than what institutional regulations required. They

became vivid displays of shogun's political power and presence of feudalism to the general public as "daimyo processions were often grand spectacles that attracted much attention, and often formed the backdrop of many woodblock prints." (Vaporis 10) By the time of Hiroshige, these processions, that usually took place on highways, became spectacles that attracted the locals of each station. Due to Tokaido's political importance rooted in the sankin-kōtai system, the space of the road was inevitably tied up with the space of the national identity that displayed shogun's power. This political allegory in Hiroshige's landscape could be also seen in No. 22, Okabe: The Narrow Ivy-Covered Road at Mt. Utsu, from the Vertical Tokaido edition. In it the travelers climbing up the mountain have distinctive social status that can be determined on the basis of their attire. Starting from the bottom, a pilgrim carrying a mask, a monk with shaved head, a samurai with two swords, all are climbing up the mountain getting closer to the very top view of Mt. Utsu. The fact that the person with the higher social standing based on Tokugawa standard is closest to the top of the Mt. Utsu as the commanding natural form, alludes to how the hierarchy of social status blends harmoniously in nature.

(Hiroshige, 1797-1858, No. 22, Okabe: The Narrow Ivy-Covered Road at Mt. Utsu, Vertical Tokaido, 1855) But why was this element of harmony in nature so emphasized in Fifty-three Stations of the Tokaido Road, especially when presented



Hiroshige, 1797-1858,
No. 22,
Okabe: The Narrow Ivy-
Covered Road at Mt. Utsu,
Vertical Tokaido, 1855

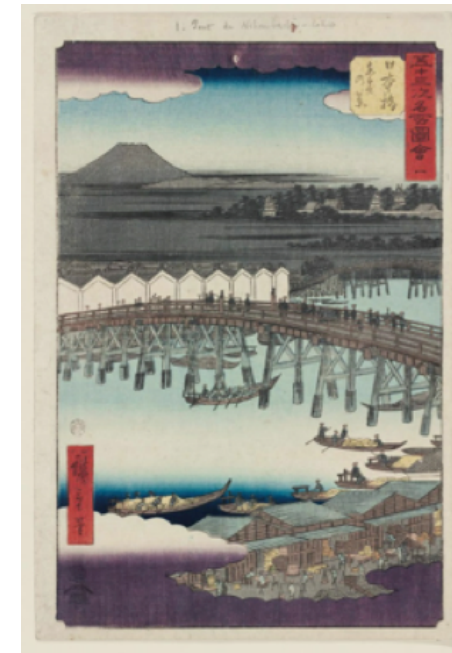
in juxtaposition with political spectacle such as daimyo processions? The element of spectacle in daimyo processions on Tokaido road was crucial because it was the space where it unified Japanese identity by means of representing local territories along the road. In those local territories the notion of Japan as a nation was not fully defined yet. According to Jilly Traganou in *The Tokaido road: traveling and representation in Edo and Meiji Japan*, under normal circumstances Japanese people during this period would hardly be aware of the notion of Japan as an all-encompassing territory. "Until Edo Japan, people were less aware of the character of remote places, even within the territory of Japan the domain where one came from was almost equivalent to one's own country. The development of

highways that crossed different domains leading to ultimate symbolic destinations (Edo, Kyoto, Ise) became a means of strengthening the consciousness of Japan as a unified country." (Traganou 209) It could be stated that Hiroshige's use of landscape along the Tokaido road as a connection to Japanese identity, representing perception of homeland through nature, addresses locality yet unites the station with all other under one national identity. In addition to considering nature's relationship to political narrative of the time, Hiroshige's Tokaido print sets further contribute to the formation of Japan's national identity by connecting local landscape with Japan's historical, mythological and religious narratives within which Japan's idea of homeland was cultivated. The reference to mythological narratives could be seen in No. 1, Nihonbashi: View of Dawn Clouds, a bird's eyes view of Nihonbashi bridge

from the Vertical Tokaido series. Other than the bridge this print depicts Mountain Fuji and Edo castle in the distance, Japan's recognizable landscape icons. One of the noteworthy features of this print is its composition and how symbolically the landscape elements were woven together. Mt. Fuji is placed at the very top side of the print. Then the Edo castle is positioned right under the mountain. Nihonbashi bridge is placed in the center of the print and then at the very bottom there is the marketplace where townsmen interact. The hierarchy of these sites puts spotlight on the presence of Mt. Fuji in prints. But why is this so?

(Hiroshige, 1797-1858, No. 1, Nihonbashi: View of Dawn Clouds, Vertical Tokaido, 1855) Not only in No. 1, Nihonbashi: View of Dawn Clouds, Mt. Fuji appears in Hiroshige's other prints such as No.14 Hara: Mt. Fuji in the morning, No.15 Yoshiwara: Left-side Mt. Fuji. Why does Hiroshige deliberately use this image of this particular mountain throughout Fifty-three Stations of the Tokaido Road? Looking from the spiritual point of view, Mt. Fuji has been revered in Shinto practice, according to Andrew Bernstein's essay, *Whose Fuji? Religion, Region, and State in the Fight for a National Symbol*. Climbing Mt. Fuji to Sengen shrine, which is located at the top of the mountain, was

one of Shinto pilgrimage paths. As the numbers of commoners who worshiped Fuji increased, the economic and political influence of Mt. Fuji imagery also increased to the point where, "The celebration of Fuji in woodblock prints and other media, often in association with Edo, the seat of political power, set the stage for the mountain's transformation into a national symbol after the Meiji Restoration." (Bernstein 59)



Hiroshige, 1797-1858,
No. 1, Nihonbashi: View
of Dawn Clouds, Vertical
Tokaido, 1855

Therefore, the fact that Mt. Fuji and Edo castle are placed above the Nihonbashi bridge and the trading part of the city is no coincidence. It is likely that these sites signify the symbolic presence of Emperor and Shogun in Japanese landscape. Also it is interesting that the bridge where daimyo would cross is the link between the heavenly nature and the earthly world. *** Works cited: Vaporis, Constantine. Lordly Pageantry: The Daimyo Procession and Political Authority, University of Maryland Baltimore County, *Japan Review*, 2005, 17:3-54 Traganou, Jilly, Tokaido: Traveling and Representation in Edo and Meiji Japan. New York : Routledge Curzon, 2004 Bernstein, Andrew Whose Fuji? Religion, Region, and State in the Fight for a National Symbol, *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 63, No. 1 (Spring, 2008), pp. 51-99

Essays



Hiroshige, 1797-1858
No. 1 Nihonbashi: Morning Scene

Print No. 1

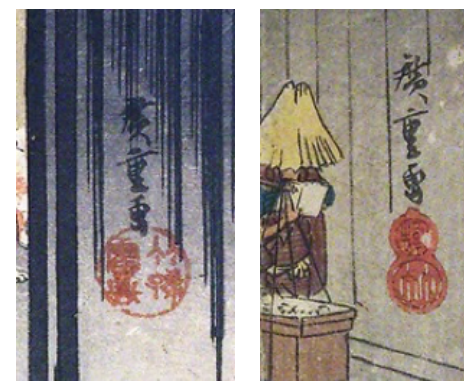
Nihonbashi, from the Hoeido Tokaido, state 1 and state 2
Nihonbashi - the Microcosm of Edo

Yue (Meredith) Du
Xiaowei (Vica) Zhao

The prints we are going to talk about are Morning view, Nihonbashi and its second state of print: Crowd at Nihonbashi. These designs opened Hiroshige's earliest series of prints dedicated to the Tokaido road – the topic to which the artist devoted over twenty print sets in the course of his career. It was this very series that became universally recognized as Hiroshige's masterpiece and that became known as the Great Tokaido. Publication of this series started as a joint venture by two publishing houses, Senkakudō (belonged to Tsuruya Kiemon) and Hoeidō (belonged to Takenouchi Magohachi) in 1833-34. Later, after twelve prints were published, Senkakudō withdrew from the collaboration and Hoeido completed the series by itself, immortalizing its own name by the association with this outstanding work of art – this print series is often called just Hoeido Tokaidō. Particularly interesting is the first print of the series because it exists in two very different states. The first print was initially published by two publishing houses. For some unknown reason the blocks were later re-carved – maybe they were lost in some disaster, for example, burnt during a fire (this is a mere speculation). All we know is that Hiroshige altered significantly the original design, adding many new characters to the original image. In this essay we are going to compare these two images and comment upon their content and form.

The prints portray the Nihonbashi Bridge, a very famous and important place in Japan's capital city, Edo (now Tokyo). This bridge has been a very busy spot already during the early history of the city of Edo. Nihonbashi means "Bridge of Japan"; it was the point of origin of all Japan's major roads. It once was the central crossroads not only of Edo, but of the entire country. Originally conceived of as a public space in which the bakufu could display its authority, by the end of the Tokugawa period the inventiveness of Edo-based writers, artists and publishers had transformed Nihonbashi and the neighborhood immediately surrounding it into a "famous place" (meisho 名所), whose importance stemmed not from its official status, but from the economic and cultural vitality of urban commoner life. (Yonemoto 50)

Both prints represent the bridge front on with a daimyo procession appearing from



Left: Nihonbashi, 1st state
Right: Nihonbashi, 2nd state



Hiroshige, 1797-1858 No. 1 in the series, second version, with altered subtitle; published by Hōeidō alone. Nihonbashi: Daimyo Procession Setting Out

behind and moving towards the viewer. Behind is the city of Edo with just rooftops visible; in front of the bridge there are some commoners. In both states of the print Nihonbashi Bridge is shown through the open wooden gates seen at both sides of the print. The road besides the gates gives a special feeling by using different degree of grey, shifting from light to darker colors. In the foreground there are six people on the left side of the road. The left-most person, only partially seen, is facing towards the bridge while the man in blue-gridded clothing next to him is turning his head backwards to watch the incoming procession; the rest four men – all fishmongers – are walking away from the bridge. Two dogs are playing on the print's right side, offering the viewers a comfortable and easy life scene compared to the busy atmosphere among the people on the left. The little black marks right in front of Nihonbashi demonstrate the texture of this road made of slates. Then, moving to the print's center part, we see a double-arch bridge at that time made of wood (replaced with granite in 1911), so in the print the bridge shares same color with the little wooden proclamation boards next to it. The light grey color on the bridge introduces a sense of light and emphasizes three-dimensional visual value of this print. Similar can be said about the colors used on roofs at back.

The print in the second state includes many people more while keeping only four of the original figures. On the left part of the print, a group of people dressed in white with red aprons is shown; one of them is carrying a huge decorated umbrella and some are holding fans in their hands. Moving to the right, instead of several fishmongers, a lot of other peddlers are showing in the scene. Also, on the second state of the print several women and children appear. The larger dogs from the print in the first state are substituted for by two smaller ones in the middle of the print. In the middle of the print, a boy is holding a box that bears a mark – it is the logo of the publisher added for advertising purposes. The character inscribed means “bamboo”, which is the first character of the publisher's name.



Nihonbashi, 2nd state

The RISD Museum has imprints of both designs. From those owned by the museum, the print in the second state was printed on a much older paper than the one in the first state. Hence, the colors got a washed out; perhaps the fading was caused by the condition of the paper. Yet the print in the second state definitely required more color blocks the print in the first state; its color varies in a very sensitive and delicate way.

The color varies in the two versions of the print. Since Japanese art has always shown sensibility to the transition of time in nature, characterization of the time of the day is often present in all forms of art in Japan. Comparing these two states in composition, the print in the first state demonstrates more warm colors than the second state print; also the colors are stronger and more vivid. The orange color, shifting in a subtle way to white and then to sky-blue, indicates the rising sun. However, the order of these colors in the sky appears reversed in the print of the second state. So are the colors of the space under the roof on the left side that seem inverted from black to light grey. Moreover, the print in second state uses lines to emphasize perception light instead of adding different colors. However, prints of

both states share very similar colors except for the sky and the boxes carried by the porters in the daimyo procession that are depicted in the center of the field of vision.

The two states of the Nihonbashi print from the Hoeido edition differ also in the calligraphy of the inscriptions on the images. Inscriptions were apparently written by different persons while the characters and style remained the same.

We can also tell the stamp-like subtitles on the two prints are different. The subtitle of the print in the first state means “Morning Scene”, and the other one means “The Starting Point of the Daimyo Procession”. This feature will be discussed further later. Also some of the objects in two prints are in different shapes, especially the sheaths of the spears in the hands of the spear-bearers in the daimyo procession. The facial expression of some characters changed as well.

The spatial history of Edo can be assessed in microcosm in Nihonbashi, the official geographic center of the city. (Yonemoto 50) This section will comment on the multitude of the prints’ details documenting life of the Edo period Japan. These details are abundant and are rendered with such high precision that Hiroshige’s prints can serve as an exceedingly valuable Nihonbashi, 2nd state Nihonbashi, 1st state resource on cultural history. Understanding these details, uncovering their meaning revives the spirit of the Edo period Japan and enriches comprehension of the images tremendously.

In the early years of the seventeenth century, the shogunate established several key public institutions of city governance, justice, punishment and official commerce in the area surrounding the bridge. (Yonemoto 52) One can see official announcements associated with these institutions at the left-hand side of the print right next to the spot where the bridge ends. This kind of roof-shaped wooden boards is called *kōsatsu* (高札). The proclamations on this kind of boards were called *ofuregaki* (御触書). Such announcement boards were widely used in Japan since Edo period. Next to Nihonbashi there is a place called *kōsatsuma* (高札場). These announcements were usually issued by the administration of the area, daimyo or shogun, to the general public. These kind of wooden proclamations are still used in some cities which intend to preserve traces of traditional culture (Kyoto, for example). The announcements on them may be ordinary signs which are common in contemporary life, like “no parking in this spot” or advertisements. But to hold the traditional spirit, the headline is still written in ancient Japanese usually.

A tall construction with the ladder on the rooftop right behind the bridge is called “fire lookout tower”, *hi-no-mi yagura* (火の見櫓). In Edo period, fire was an inevitable occurrence of daily life. The city of Edo was characterized by frequent conflagrations as the saying “Fires and quarrels are the flowers of Edo” (Wikipedia “火の見櫓”) goes. Even in the modern days, the old Edo was still remembered as the “City of Fires” (火災都市). Fires were often caused by lighting, cooking or even arsonists. Since all buildings in Edo were structures of wood, fire usually spread very quickly and caused huge damage. Because of the repetition of great fires, government decided to establish the firefighting system –*hikeshi* (火消). Usually the fire lookout tower was built near a fire station and was equipped with a ladder, lookout platform, and an alarm bell *hanshō* (半鐘). From these towers watchmen could observe the



Left: Nihonbashi, 1st state
Right: *Kōsatsu* – proclamation board

entire town, and in the event of a fire they would ring the alarm bell, calling up firemen and warning town residents. In some towns the bells were also used to mark the time.

People who wear uniform as they are marching across the Nihonbashi bridge represent a typical scene that could be observed in Edo – a daimyo procession, *gyōretsu* (行列), a part of the political arrangement known as *sankinkōtai* (参勤交代). Japanese feudalism during Edo period is called *bakuhatsu* (幕藩) system, which means that *bakufu* – administration of the shogun – is the most powerful authority, and the second most powerful were their subordinates, local governments of the daimyo who ruled over their domains, known as *han*. Back then in the Edo period there were over two hundred landlords known as daimyo, which were required to alternate a year of residence in Edo in the service to the shogun and a year of staying in their own domains caring for home affairs there. Shogun government demanded that daimyo families remained in Edo at all times as hostages – guarantors of loyalty of the daimyo. Daimyo are the governors of *han*, they serve for the *bakufu*, and the *bakufu* implemented the alternating audience regime for them. So basically daimyo are still very powerful and independent. On their travels to and from the capital daimyo were accompanied by their numerous retinue of hundreds and sometimes even thousands of attendants, depending on the wealth of the daimyo. The larger the crowd was, the more powerful and richer that landlord was. Procession marched in a designated order, carried a variety of luggage and held banners and standards.

Large white fuzzy tufts crowning the tall poles in the hands of the attendants in the second row of the procession are *keyari* (毛櫓). Traveling daimyo processions looked spectacular. Being a form of a parade, daimyo processions were such a characteristic and captivating sight in those days that many *ukiyo-e* prints depicted them. The two spear-bearers in the front act as a group; the number of groups also showed the ranking of the daimyo. There are three types of Daimyo. The first one consists of shogun’s relatives; their lands are closer to Kinki (the western area of Japan, including Kyoto, Osaka and other cities). The second type comprises the shogun’s loyal retainers. The bottom level are the daimyo that got defeated during wars and surrendered, they couldn’t win the trust of *bakufu*, so they would be sent to remote places. According to this information, we can conjecture the daimyo’s status; the daimyo who is crossing Nihonbashi wasn’t a very powerful one, for he only had one group of spear bearers.

When the troops entered a city, they would dance for a while, again, to show the power of the daimyo. There is a video of the dance performed by contemporary actors.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VjO4aMOiwkc>

Since Nihonbashi was a very busy spot during Edo period, many peddlers carrying goods are passing through the street. One figure appears in the prints in both states – the fishmonger who is carrying fishes on his head. Since this man is shown in both states of prints, we can tell he is a very important symbol of Nihonbashi. Indeed, the most important fish market called *Uogashi* (魚河岸) was situated at that time at the other side

of Nihonbashi. Originally, the Uogashi began as a way to supply fish to the shogunate. (Tomioka 1) So, early in the morning fishmongers would rush to the market and be the first to get the fish from the fresh catch and to take it to the customers in various parts of the city of Edo.

The man in the middle of the crowd with books on his back represents kashihonya (貸し本屋) – a book lending library. The man who is slightly to the left from the man carrying books is selling flowers, most likely to be sakura. People used to buy them for flower arrangement or kadō (花道).

At the left side of the crowd in front of the bridge there are several individuals dressed in white robes and red aprons, some holding fans in their hands and one carrying a huge umbrella with a valance. These people are a type of itinerant performers of the dance called sumiyosiodori (住吉踊り). This dance is believed to have originated from the celebratory dances performed to greet Japanese legendary Empress Jingu kōgo (神功皇后 3rd century CE) when she allegedly returned from conquering Korea. As time went on, this dance acquired a meaning of praying for harvest and peace and started to be performed not only in Osaka where it came into being but became a feature of Edo life.

All men in the print have the crowns of their heads shaven and the hair growing at the back of the heads gathered together in a topknot. This hairstyle is known as the chonmage (丁髷). This kind of hairstyle was required for samurai and perhaps is associated with the necessities of military practice. Samurai emerged as a particular class of warriors by the end of Heian period (794-1185). It is said that in the late 12th century in order to hold a helmet steady on the head, this kind of hairstyle began to spread among the military. Such hairstyle helped also against Sumiyoshi dance feeling stuffy when wearing a helmet. During Edo period, chonmage, instead of being a symbol of samurai alone, became an indicator of person's status in Japanese society.

However, in this print, the hair style is not a formal chonmage. In particular, it should be a mage, a topknot. There were many kinds of mage for different class of citizen. Fishermen, salesmen or actors all wear particular kinds of mage. In recent age Japanese use chonmage as a general feature to represent the hairstyle of Edo Period.

One distinctive feature we can easily observe in both prints is that many people, both male and female, wear kinds of head-cloth. There are two or three kinds of head-cloth shown in the print of the second state. The first kind is mostly worn by workers or dealers, for example the Topknot chonmage Headband hachimaki two peddlers on the left of the print. The function of such head-cloth is to keep sweat from running down the face. The second kind is called zukin (頭巾). As was mentioned earlier, during Edo period, the hairstyle of chonmage (丁髷) was very popular. So, general public usually wore zukin to keep warm and prevent dust. The third kind of head-cloth is the one worn by the two females in the middle of the print. Its name is sodezukin (袖頭巾); it is a kind of zukin used only by women, to keep the hair style. There were several other kinds of zukin popular in Edo period; wearing zukin was a kind of fashion in that time.

Furoshiki (風呂敷) is a kind of a wrapping cloth or a burden cover cloth. It was a



Top: Hanauri – flower peddler

Bottom: Kashihonya – book lending library peddler

traditional way for carrying or storing things by wrapping them in a piece of cloth in a kind of a bundle. Its origin remains unclear. It gained the name of furoshiki centuries ago. Furoshiki became later widely used by common citizens to carry things needed for a bath because of the popularity of public bathhouses. This kind of cloth became widely used in Japanese people's daily life. There were furoshiki of many different sizes in order to carry different items. After Meiji period, purse came in Japan and took the place of furoshiki and it is rather rare in Head-cloth zukin contemporary Japan. While recently government suggested to restart using furoshiki instead of plastic bags because of environmental pollution.

Another interesting feature of the prints is that both were published in 1833-1834. The Edo bakufu collapsed in 1867. So the prints were produced before Tōbaku-ūndō (倒幕運動, anti-bakufu event), however, Japan already had uprising against the bakufu's tyranny and dictatorship in 1837. During middle part and later part of Edo period, the imports of silk reduced dramatically because of Japan's self-imposed isolation (the closed-door policy), and there were not enough local silk products to meet the needs of kimono making. In addition, because of the great famine of the Tenmyō era of 1783-1788 (Tenmyō no daikikin (天明の大飢饉), the bakufu had forbidden civilians to wear silk clothes in 1785. So, civilians started to make clothes by using cheaper materials such as cotton and hemp fabric instead of silk fabric. In addition, due to the instability of current political situation, the style of clothes started to become lighter and simpler.

There is a special type of heritage of Japanese tie-dyeing technique named shibori (絞り染め), which was in vogue back in Edo period. There are an infinite number of ways one can bind, stitch, fold, twist, or compress cloth for shibori, and each way results in very different patterns. Various methods are used to achieve certain results, but each method is also used to work in harmony with the type of cloth used. Therefore, the technique used in shibori depends not only on the desired pattern, but on the characteristics of the cloth being dyed. Also, different techniques can be used in conjunction with one another to achieve even more elaborate results. (Wikipedia "shibori")

By using shibori, people can create several kinds of indigo color shades within the spectrum of indigo, blue-violet and midnight blue. And six types of this dyeing technique include kanoko shibori, miura shibori, kumo shibori, nui shibori, arashi shibori and itajime shibori.

Back to the prints, the characters are shown wearing clothing with different kinds of patterns and from these details we can get an idea of the status of textile making in Edo period.



Wrapping cloth furoshiki



Hiroshige, 1797-1858
No. 1, Nihonbashi: View of Dawn Clouds

Print No. 1

Nihonbashi, from the Vertical Tokaido

Shannon Crawford
Devyn Park

Hiroshige's series known as the Vertical Tokaido started as all Tokaido print sets – with a view of Nihonbashi, the commercial center of Edo (now Tokyo), the capital of the Tokugawa shoguns. Although not the first station on the Tokaido road, Nihonbashi bridge was Tokaido's starting point located within the sight of Edo castle from where shogunal authority over the population was manifested. This vertically oriented large format oban print set (15"x10") was published by Tsutaya Kichizo in 1855, some twenty years after the first horizontal series on Tokaido was started by Hiroshige in 1833. The print represents an upright overhead view of the Nihonbashi river spanned by the bridge, with the fish-market and trade that happened during that time period at Nihonbashi in the foreground and the distant vista of Edo castle halfway between the bridge and Mt. Fuji on the horizon. Through a large opening in the clouds, we see a scene at the river of Nihonbashi. The focal point is the bridge bisecting the composition and connecting two banks of the Nihonbashi river, one with a fish marketplace and harbor and the other filled with warehouses. On the bridge there are many people traveling both ways, some of them presumably fishermen, fish peddlers or fish wholesalers walking to work since they are costumed in the same clothes that the fishmongers are wearing in the lower half of the composition. Next to them four men are carrying an important figure in a palanquin, a large box attached to a single crossbeam at the top. One can assume that this figure might be a daimyo, since it was the predominant means of transportation for samurai and other important figures. At the rear end of the bridge, we see several white storehouses that were used to hold anything from preserved fish to rice and other grains and crops. Further to the right there is another bridge of Ichikokubashi. This indicates where on the Nihonbashi river we are. The upper part of the image is given to region-identifying landmarks such as Mount Fuji and the castle of the shogun, Japan's military ruler. These landmarks are described through a subtle use of line and shades of gray. The castle at Edo was included in the landscape as a symbol of the efficiency of the shogunal rule over the country and to indicate to the viewer that this location was at the heart of Edo. Today, the area depicted

would be a busy part of the dynamic modern Tokyo. On the horizon the all-important Mount Fuji is silhouetted. This only further solidifies the location of the piece, but also illustrates the majesty that Mount Fuji represents in the Japanese culture.

In the bottom of the image in the foreground, we get a glimpse of the fishing trade and market of Nihonbashi. Hiroshige is portraying the beginning of the fishing industries' average work-day. These fishermen, and fish wholesalers in the early 19th century controlled Edo's largest and greatest business, the Nihonbashi district having over three-hundred fish wholesalers alone (Tomioka). These fish wholesalers were often small groups of men who would hire and manage fishermen or the owners of fishing boats to collect their product. The wholesalers would sell the fish to a large range of Edo residents, from brokers, commoners, and the shogunate. Brokers, who haggle and sell their fish and crops to the merchants, would also sell fish alongside the merchants. They are often depicted carrying empty baskets on a shoulder pole to transport the fish they would buy to restaurants and other buyers. One of the benefits that the fish wholesalers enjoyed was that they could spread their fishing empire outside of Edo and the greater Nihonbashi district and fish in neighboring areas. This is why in Nihonbashi: View of Dawn Clouds you can see large boats entering and exiting the river in the lower half of the composition. Hiroshige wanted to portray the success and importance of the fishing industry in Edo and showed here fish being delivered from a variety of areas that these fishermen had the privilege to fish in. This small look at the market also helps to make the connection to Hiroshige's earliest horizontal images of Nihonbashi that depict the bridge gates on the opposite side of the fish market. Nihonbashi was the start of an extremely successful fish trade in the city of Edo. This trade began in year 1606 or 1607 when the previously established fish market at Dosanbori, a commercial district in the area of the castle moat, was moved to Nihonbashi. This change in location made all the difference in the newly budding fish market. Previously, when the market was at Dosanbori, it specialized in salt trade; thus it was the preserved, salted fish that was mostly sold there. Once the move occurred, the fishermen started selling fresher fish. After Nihonbashi fish market Uogashi was established, the fishermen in the area divided into specific shops. As these shops grew more successful, the original fishermen began to do just the selling, while hiring fishermen separately. This arrangement led to the development of hierarchy between the fishermen and the wholesalers of their fish. The wholesalers would take great pride in their quality of fish. A wholesaler would sell the fish to a broker, who would then sell the fish at the market, for an unset price. Fish would be displayed in the baskets as well as laid flat on wooden boards known as itabune, the tables which can be seen occasionally on the print

discussed under the orange wooden arch structures in the marketplace. Depending on the success of the presentation and overall quality of the product, prices would be determined by the different fish wholesalers at the end of the market day, signifying if the market was profitable or sustained a loss (The History of Nihonbashi Uogashi, Tomioka). Hiroshige was able to capture this hierarchy and manner of fish trade in both his vertical print and horizontal prints of Nihonbashi. We can clearly distinguish between the brokers,

fishermen, and merchants purchasing the fish. The brokers are standing in front of the market stalls, and the merchants can be distinguished because they are carrying fish-tubs. Within the stalls you can see merchants moving around the fish and other products for sale. The fresh fish that merchants purchased would be carried and brought to restaurants in the area to be prepared. This type of trade became vital due to the importance of fresh fish and this new food trade. People could preserve the fish by salting it, but the fishing trade became so prolific that it created the start of what we see today as traditional Japanese cuisine. Eel, sushi, sashimi, rice, and soy sauce had become popular in Nihonbashi as the market grew. This fish trade was the start of something big in Edo and the Japanese people understood this. They understood and valued this trade, and this product. It was so valued in the community that it was considered normal for the daimyo procession to stop for the fish merchants, instead of walking the other way around. Even more impressive is that the shogunate, the governing officials at the time, insisted the best fish be supplied to them. The shogunate demanded their fish to be of the highest quality and rarest available. Some of these rare fish included icefish, sea bream, flounder, and carp all of which were delivered to the shogunal court (Tomioka). The fish wholesalers provided these rare fish to the shogunate and in return the shogunate offered them their protection and other significant benefits. If a merchant did not offer the proper fish, the shogun went so far as to have men known at Uogashi to seek the best fish from the markets in the name of the shogun. They would take whichever fish they pleased, without pay, so they were often disliked by those in Nihonbashi. Hiroshige considers this relationship pictorially by including the castle of the shogun in the upper right corner of the composition, next to Mt. Fuji. The fish trade was a fast-paced and progressive movement during the Edo period, that brought about wealth, culture, and delicious cuisine for the Japanese people. The system of trade established helped to grow the fish market and the pride for one's work throughout Edo. Nihonbashi would eventually grow into the modern day Fish Market in Tokyo. A look back to

the start of this rich cultural tradition in Japan serves to show how much Hiroshige was able to capture in his prints, and how it truly was an insight into the important places of the time. In the horizontal prints of the Hoeido edition fishmongers are shown outside of the marketplace context – they already have their baskets filled and are now carrying them to sell to their customers. In the vertical print discussed here most of the baskets are empty to be filled with the fresh catch. Both versions of the prints emphasize the vigor of the fishing industry in the city and its significance for the capital's life. This print employs a typical Japanese compositional device of framing the scene with the clouds at the top and the bottom of the image. The clouds frame the image much like they do in the painted folding screens of the rakuchu/rakugai type (In and Around the Capital) that were popular since the late 16th century. Such folding screens consisted of multiple upright panel images joined together in a folding screen that represented a panorama of Kyoto, Japan's imperial capital. Clouds were used to break up the scenes and show that the spectator was observing the scene for an overhead, top down view, as if "looking through the clouds." The clouds within this vertical print reference this distinctive spatial organization in a highly

meaningful way: similar to the screens showing the entire city of Kyoto from above, in the current case the clouds set the scene as an all-inclusive panoramic representation of Nihonbashi area of Edo as the heart of the Tokugawa Japan. Hiroshige lived in Edo, after inheriting his father's position of firefighter supervisor, and maintained the status of a low-ranking samurai (Smith). Hiroshige's social standing gave him a complete perspective of this city (Smith). In the prior iterations of the Fifty-three stations of the Tokaido Road we see Hiroshige compose images where there is a clear divide between the foreground and background. In the horizontal designs Hiroshige usually portrays backgrounds with calm imagery that is filled with basic symbols easily understood by the public. The foreground portrayed contrasting subject matter of personal references, and often contained active subject matter (Smith). Types of poetry from that era such as haiku or senryu poetry are said to have made "aesthetic parallels" (Smith) because both demand a rhythm or sequence that was designed to be read from background to foreground (Smith). Hiroshige's prints in this series worked to capture the environment of the Tokaido road, with a focus on the human interaction with it. The vertical Nihonbashi print exemplifies this, by focusing on the natural creations of the river and Mt. Fuji, along with how humans have inhabited the area. The Japanese people made use of these special places by harvesting the natural resources and creating a strong cultural community through the trade. Every iteration of Hiroshige's Fifty-Three stations of the Tokaido Road is an important piece of art history. The well-composed and high quality images of the horizontal and vertical prints provide an interesting social commentary of Nihonbashi district in 19th century Edo, Japan. Hiroshige's understanding of the area and his personal opinion of the area are clear in his prints and provide an interesting look into the past. In preparation for the exhibition two versions of this print present in the RISD Museum collection have been observed to better understand the qualities that make up a good, well preserved ukiyo-e woodblock print. Both of these prints are impressions of the same set of blocks, so they represent the same pictorial image. Which of the prints was printed earlier in the series can be determined by the quality of the line, wood grain impression, color saturation and alignment, and the amount of damage sustained by the print. The print considered here is an earlier and better preserved impression. This can be deduced from the vibrancy of the color, along with the smoothness with which the color is applied. The blacks of the line-work within the print are very dark and smooth. The registration of colors in the print also is better than in later prints of this series that were viewed. Even the type of paper used is of better quality and exhibits almost no damage or fold marks. By having this quality of a print to examine, we are able to observe and deduce much more about the artistry and history of the print itself and the culture it captures. When observing this vertical print of Nihonbashi, one can't help but be overwhelmed by the artistic ingenuity and skill that were put into creating of this print. The Nihonbashi print was produced using eight different color blocks. At first glance, one can immediately notice the mastery and smoothness of the gradients, known as bokashi, within the sky, river, and clouds on the top and bottom of the print. These gradients were created by carefully wiping the ink off the woodblock and smoothing out

the color transitions. The purple gradient within the clouds was made not only with this technique, but also by overlaying red ink on top of the blue ink in order to create a purple tone. Synthetic dyes were not invented in Europe until the end of 1850s, several years after this print was created; therefore we are safe assuming the purple color was achieved here by overlaying dyes. In later editions of the same print this is also obvious because the purple appears to be more reddish brown, showing a less successful use of this technique. We see another, brief use of this overlapping technique in the bottom right-hand corner of the print. In two spots, two packages being carried by men, we see the color green. It was highly unlikely another wood block would have been cut to create this small use of color, so we see another instance of the overlaying technique. Another small detail that is important to observe is the wood grain texture in the ink that is typical for ukiyo-e woodblock prints. It can be best seen within the blue sky at the upper half of the print.

All three prints representing Nihonbashi at the exhibition show the place at dawn. Dawn is arguably the most important part of the day in Nihonbashi area since it was the economic hub of Edo and commercial activities started early. Comparison of two horizontal prints from the Hoeido edition Morning Scene (Nihonbashi, asa no kei), co-published by Takenouchi Magohachi and Tsuruya Kiemon, and Nihonbashi: Daimyo Procession Setting Out (Nihonbashi, gyoretsu furidashi) published by Takenouchi Magohachi alone with the vertical Nihonbashi: View of Dawn Clouds (Nihonbashi, Shinonome no kei) convincingly shows that Hiroshige liked portraying the importance of the fishing culture in Nihonbashi. In the second state of the horizontal print Daimyo Procession Setting Out, the subject matter is broader, focusing more on the diversity of activities at Nihonbashi by portraying different people, actions, and residential scenes along with the fishermen. Here, as the title of this print suggests, particularly important is the daimyo procession marching forward across the bridge towards the viewer. Daimyo and their retinue in fulfillment of the alternate attendance policy started their journey to their domains from Nihonbashi early in the morning in order to cover longer distance during the day of travel. The spectacular sight of the daimyo procession moving orderly with a special gate and carrying characteristic objects became firmly associated with Nihonbashi. Thus horizontal prints capture the essence of Nihonbashi as the particular place in Edo with all its unique character. The vertical print, however, with its bird's eye view composition goes beyond this and symbolically represents the entire state of Japan flourishing under a good government of the Tokugawa shoguns – the country's home economy is thriving as shown in the busy activities of the fish market, shogunal administration oversees this prosperity in the presence of the castle and above the regal Mt. Fuji reigns.

Print No. 14

Hara Station, from the Hoeido Tokaido and vthe Vertical Tokaido

Alex Ju
Karnth Sombatsiri
Mina Park



Hiroshige, 1797-1858
Hara: Mount Fuji in the Morning

Hara was the thirteenth of the fifty-three stations of the Tokaido road. Within both the Hoeido and vertical sets of Hiroshige's Fifty Three Stations of the Tokaido Road, Hara is the fourteenth print, as the first print in both sets depicts Nihonbashi, which is not a station but rather the road's starting point. Today, the former post station of Hara is part of the city of Numazu, in the Shizuoka Prefecture of Japan. Hara was the station closest to Mount Fuji, and as such it was an important site of artworks, given Mount Fuji's importance in Japan. We will be closely examining and comparing Hiroshige's Mount Fuji in the Morning (Hara, asa no Fuji 原朝之富士) and View of Fuji and the Ashitaka Mountains (Hara, Ashitakayama Fuji chōbō 原あし鷹山不二眺望) — two very different prints created over twenty years apart, both framing the beauty of scenery in Hara.

The earlier print, Mount Fuji in the Morning, is done in the horizontally oriented ōban format (15 x 10"). This print comes from Hiroshige's first and most recognized Tokaido print set published in 1833–34 by the Hoeido publishing house of the publisher Takenouchi Magohachi. The title of the series Fifty-three Stations of the Tokaido Road (Tōkaidō gojūsan tsugi no uchi 東海道五拾三次之内) is written in the left-hand upper part of the print in three columns without any frame against the dawning skies. The fourth column to the left starts slightly lower and consists of the character for station's name "Hara" (原) written likewise without a frame and the title of the current print "Mount Fuji in the Morning" (Asa no Fuji -朝之富士) appears in white against the red gourd-shaped cartouche. Close to the print's right edge there is Hiroshige's signature with a publisher's seal "Take" from his name "Takenouchi" placed right below.

The print Mount Fuji in the Morning depicts three travelers, two women and one man, traveling along the road in front of the massive Mount Fuji. Mount Fuji rises past the shades of blue, white, and red—the chromatic span of the sky at dawn when night recedes at the first light. Mount Fuji breaks past the drawn border of the print, underscoring the mountain's immensity and dominance over the adjacent Ashitaka Mountains. It is likely also that it is so vast in the print because Hara was the station closest to Mount Fuji. The

cutting through the picture's upper edge in representations of Mt. Fuji at Hara comes from a long tradition of using this pictorial device to emphasize Fuji's importance in Japanese culture.

Two red-crowned cranes stand in the marshy area where reeds and reed-like grasses are growing. Red-crowned cranes are indigenous to the country. Many of these cranes are non-migratory birds preferring to stay in the marshes where they can obtain the necessary food; also, it is during the winter time that they are often dancing. Representation of cranes here might have seasonal connotation – as something one can expect to see in winter on the wetlands. Further seasonality comes through in the extensive white spaces of the print, depicting the snowy winter settling along the lines of Mount Fuji and the flatter land below in the fields. The tradition has it that the prints of the Hoeido edition were designed by Hiroshige after his participation in the shogunal delegation from Edo to Kyoto in 1831. This assumption is now put into question due to the scarcity of evidence and too short an interval between the journey and the prints' publication (T.Clark. 148). However, if it were true, it is interesting that the winter scene at the Hara station is preceded by the spring / summer views of Numazu and Yoshiwara stations while his travel transpired during only one season. Perhaps, Hiroshige plays to the tradition of trying to incorporate all four seasons into sets of prints. More birds fly around Mount Fuji, but the type of bird is ambiguous, as Hiroshige made their silhouettes extremely generalized. Vertical black marks on the geometric slopes of the Ashitaka Mountains imply vegetation –bushes or trees, together with adding texture to the rapid succession of the angular surfaces specific for this multi-peaked mountain ridge.

Three rather large-scale figures move along the road in the foreground of the Hoeido print, serving as the picture's focal point. The depiction of travelers plays to the “floating” aspect of ukiyo-e prints in depicting ephemeral, changeable elements on the road. These figures are also the key to understanding the cultural atmosphere of the Edo period. The style of drawing people in movement, either away or towards the viewer is prevalent in Hiroshige's earlier work. Here they are about to walk away from the viewer, though one woman is turning back to interact with her companions. Two travelers are women, dressed in many layers of robes and one is a man who accompanies them. All travelers have wide round traveling hats (*kasa* 笠) made either of sedge or bamboo skin – a necessary part of equipment for everyone on the road. One woman is holding her hat in the hands and the viewers see that her hair is nicely made into the Shimada (島田) style hairdo. The knot of her hair is held in place with the help of a comb, a ribbon and a hairpin. Hiroshige is quite remarkably attentive to details. The hairpin he shows is of a specific type – it has a cup for cleaning ears, called *mimikaki kanzashi*. The woman on the left is holding a pipe (*kiseru* 煙管) for smoking tobacco. During this time period, it was of utmost style and fashion to smoke tobacco, which had been introduced to Japan by Portuguese traders towards the end of the 16th century. The *kiseru* would be the only way to smoke tobacco for three centuries after that and until the Meiji Restoration (1868), when Japan switched to cigarettes. The woman is shown holding her *kiseru* in the manner associated with the samurai circles (at

least on the Kabuki theater stage). The women are accompanied by a man carrying two large boxes on a shoulder pole. The man is likely a servant or a hired porter, given the lesser quality of his shoes and clothing in the cold, and the fact he is carrying so much. The man is wearing straw sandals (*zōri* 草履), one of the main necessities for a traveler in the Edo period. All farmers made their own *zōri*, especially for the winter months when times were less busy. The women, on the other hand, are wearing wooden clogs, *geta* (下駄). Man servants were common to ensure the security of women traveling, and the man's sheath for a sword further suggests he was with the women to protect them if needed. However, travel along the Tokaido was generally quite safe. At the beginning of the 19th century, Jippensha Ikku wrote, “The highways seem like the hair of the head. Not a single hair is disturbed – a sign of the glorious times in which we live... ; when our bows and swords – even those made of wood – are hung up as an offering to the god of the thousand swift brandishing weapons”(C. Vaporis, *Breaking Barriers*, p. 219). Since only samurai had a right to carry two swords, this man must be a commoner. The sword that he carries is referred to as “the blade used while on the road” – *dōchūzashi* (道中差). These swords were short and were supposed to be used exclusively for self-defense. The man is also sporting gaiters (called *kyahan*), which were often worn by ordinary travelers for protection from the cold, insects, and underbrush; such gaiters were usually made from linen or cotton. Another interesting detail of the man's clothing is the unique textile pattern of his short coat *hanten* (裨纏) – this pattern is made up from the katakana signs for ‘hi’ and ‘ro’ (ヒロ) that form the first part of Hiroshige's name. This way, Hiroshige has managed to leave an additional veiled signature on his own work.

Altogether, the print creates a vivid image of the Tokaido highway station with its iconic view of Mt. Fuji and ever-present travelers, the scene that is at once casual and magnificent. The openness of the composition, placement of the figures at the very foreground of the print, immediacy of the scene and countless details available for scrutiny all draw the viewer into the image and creates the effect of presence.



Hiroshige, 1797-1858
No. 14, Hara: View of Fuji and the Ashitaka Mountains

Print No. 14

No. 14, Hara: View of Fuji and the Ashitaka Mountains, from the Vertical Tokaido

Alex Ju
Karnth Sombatsiri
Mina Park

Quite different from this print is the upright View of Fuji and the Ashitaka Mountains published within the so-called Vertical Tokaido set in 1855. Its vertical orientation right away suggests that it is a later print of Hiroshige because he became interested in the formal possibilities of the upright format later in his life.

As a part of a series, the print has elements present on all sheets constituting it. The red rectangular cartouche in the upper right-hand corner of the print contains the title of the series, Famous Sights of the Fifty-three Stations (Gojūsan tsugi meisho zue 五十三次名所圖會). In the adjacent yellow square cartouche the name of the print proper, Hara: View of Fuji and the Ashitaka Mountains (Hara Ashitakayama Fuji chōbō 原あし鷹山不二眺望) is written. Hiroshige's signature is to be found in the red rectangular cartouche at the print's lower right edge. Above the artist's signature there is a round seal of censorship approval aratame (改); below the signature are two more stamps – the mark of the of the publishing house Kōeidō (葛屋吉蔵), of the publisher Tsutaya Kichizō, and the date seal above it, saying Month 7 of the Year of the Hare, which corresponds to the summer of 1855.

In this print from the so-called Vertical Tokaido set, a wide road, running through the town, opens the composition. The road is lined by a row of houses — obviously, they are shops, tea-shops, inns and the like: their facades have extended roofs and are open for the customers. Travelers are streaming up and down the road. Behind the houses rises the verdant Ashitaka Mountains, and then Mount Fuji. Here, Mount Fuji also breaks the drawn border, like in the earlier print. The bold smoothness of Mt. Fuji's expanse accentuates its hugeness, together with the asymmetrical truncation of its both slopes, with just a hint of texture detailing and traces of snow in the cracks at the very top. The print focuses mainly on the view of nature, with a sense of space running across the valley traversed by a winding path to a village at the very foot of the green hills in front of Mt. Fuji, then across the multiple peaks of Mt. Ashitaka and a misty gap up to the magnificent Fuji. The many sharp summits of Ashitaka Mountains further attest to Hiroshige's strong sense of accuracy. The distinct diagonals created through the lines of the mountains from

foreground to background create excitement as viewer moves the eye quickly across the surface of the picture. Several blues and greens saturate the print, in contrast to the Hoeido edition where just one blue and one green were used. Colors are thoughtfully layered, particularly interestingly in the mountains where the yellow and purple-grey overlap on the Ashitaka Mountains, on the right side. Besides some vegetation suggested with short black marks similar to how this was done in the Hoeido print, here fully rendered trees appear next to the houses of the station, in the distant village and along the edge of the closest hills.

The use of bright yellow accentuates the presence of the town of Hara in the print, necessarily rendered as small in comparison to the sweeping landscape. Several figures are out and about, as one would expect to see on the road of station towns. The trees and greenery are lusciously depicted. The trees along the buildings may have been planted by the bakufu (shogunal administration), who would order to plant Japanese cedar and hackberry trees along the roads to prevent erosion and help clearly mark them (J. Traganou 38).

Hiroshige does not go into great detail when representing the figures, nor does he individualize them, keeping the landscape the true focal point, unlike the view of Hara in the Hoeido edition where people don't yield to nature in significance. Certain details can be identified, however. Two women, distinguishable by the flatter shape of their hats and their blue kimonos, can be seen walking, similar to those in the Hoeido edition. A man on a horse approaches the town. The horse bears luggage as well as the rider. The triangular way in which the rider is rendered mimics the shape of Mount Fuji, creating a visual parallel.

It is important to note that Mount Fuji in the Morning was created twenty years earlier than View of Fuji and the Ashitaka Mountains, before the Tokugawa period entered its final stage. With the approaching close of the entire period, a cultural shift was under way in Japan. Hiroshige's Hoeido print shows a hint of glamour that is less apparent in his print of the Vertical Tokaido set; the stylishness of the women in the Hoeido print is arguably a focal point of the composition while the Mount Fuji landscape acts more as a background; the landscape mainly compliments the figures within it. The foreground in this horizontal print is underscored through the choice of color and its saturation in the women's kimonos. There is a sense of prosperity and fortune not only in the women's garments but subtly so in the landscape; the presence of the cranes and the flock of birds represent naturalistic bounty and richness. Hiroshige's print from the Vertical Tokaido set, on the other hand, emphasizes the landscape and focuses less on its inhabitants. The scale of nature here is breathtaking and formidable. Though human figures are tiny in the vertical print and the magnificence of nature is really breathtaking, it shows that man's presence is an essential component of the overall harmony of the world. The roofs of the houses on the foreground and of the rest-station (the small village in the depth) resonate with the forms of nature suggesting such unity.

In summary, the colors and printing techniques used in these two prints vary to create a dialog about Hara as a beautiful landscape of both people and mountains, depicting life itself traveling on the road. These two prints construct two visual concepts of the place, complementing each other — the horizontal one focuses on the fleeting moment of human

actions occurring against the backdrop of the landscape, while the vertical one emphasizes the eternity and magnificence of nature with people appearing as constituents of its timeless existence.

Examination of the condition of the discussed prints in the RISD Museum collection served as a starting point for their exploration.

The Hoeido print of the Hara station in the RISD collection has visible stains on its top portion, along with the crease visible down the center, indicating use and casual treatment of the print in the past. The colors in the print seem somewhat light, with fading in areas such as the male figure's shirt. The lines lack sharpness, as is particularly apparent in the long straight lines of the print's border and the outlines of Mt. Fuji. Furthermore, the gourd-shaped seal is nearly illegible, and the red of the other seal similarly lacks sharpness. All these qualities indicate that this print was made from worn and tired blocks; therefore it was likely a later impression made from the original blocks after their moderate to heavy use.

In the print of the Hara station from the Vertical Tokaido in the collection of the RISD Museum, the colors all seem strong and saturated, as is particularly apparent in the richness of the red labels. Imprints of all color blocks can be discerned, including the overprinting of yellow on the purple of the mountain peaks. The fine lines seem sharp and clear, and the wood grain is clearly visible, with its ripples running vertically in the road and horizontally through the mountains. Overall, the print seems to be an early impression.



Hiroshige, 1797-1858
No. 15 Yoshiwara: Left-side Mt. Fuji

Print No. 15

Yoshiwara: Left-side Mt. Fuji, from the Hoeido Tokaido

Joseph Sands

Ukiyo-e prints were created as a commodity for the commoner. The process of printing inks with wood blocks allowed for the production and distribution of these images that became ubiquitous as they were consumed by the average resident of Japan in the Edo era. The ability to replicate an image multiple times across multiple editions made it so that prints became a very visible part of the Japanese experience. It is through these images that we can develop a perspective on popular culture during the rule of the Tokugawa Shogunate. The content of each print went through a process of approval by censors according to the requirement of the government. Each approved print has a seal that marks its authorization from an endorsed individual or organization. In this process, the government by means of the censors formed a method of public taste-making that disseminated and encouraged certain ideals over others. With all this in mind, we can form a more animated and vivid vignette of Edo society. In Utagawa Hiroshige's many versions of the Fifty-three Stations of the Tōkaidō, we can see and study the nuances of Japanese culture through the medium of image. Through these prints we can see the reverence of nature, the sensitivity to seasons, the attention paid to landmarks, etc. These series of prints represent the Tōkaidō road in a careful manner that suggests the narrative of the traveler's journey while giving attention to each individual station.

Yoshiwara-juku was the fourteenth station on the Tōkaidō, preceded by Hara-juku and followed by Kanbara-juku. In the present-day, the post town would be around the same area as the city of Fuji in the Shizuoka Prefecture. The location of the post town was moved further inland on two occasions after devastation caused by tsunamis. This seaside region enjoys an oceanic climate, warm summers and mild winters. When comparing the Hoeidō Tōkaidō (1833-34) with the Tate-e or Vertical Tōkaidō (1855), it is readily apparent that Hiroshige represents the station in two very different ways. The Hoeidō version feels more personal than that of the Vertical Tōkaidō. It appears that Hiroshige is concerned here with the people traveling through the landscape. Our field of view is parallel with the level that a real traveler would have, and we would be able to see the same scenery. In a way, we are on

this route with the figures that populate the picture plane. We are involved in their journey as we partake in our own while leafing through the stations represented in the prints. In the fore, a male leads a horse along the road away from the viewer. The horse is carrying three passengers sitting upon a special saddle, called *sanbō kōjin*, designed to support three individual riders. The identity of these travelers is elusive. Perhaps these are three females, or maybe they are three children (as suggested by the blue color upon their heads, meant to render stubble.) They pass by a road marker that must denote their location on the Tōkaidō. One passenger's clothing is embellished with shapes that resemble family crests, a detail that serves to characterize his/her social status. Further up the road, a shirtless man leads another traveler upon a horse. The horses both carry loads upon their saddles in addition to their passengers. A saddlebag and three hats flank the horse that carries three riders. The further horse transports a large box or trunk that perhaps belongs to its passenger.

The fact that both horses are being led by the attendants might suggest that these men are taxiing the travelers and their belongings along this leg of the road. It is these attendants who are leading the horses; the passengers are not in control of the horse's bridle. This practice speaks to the opening up of travel for leisure in Edo society. Their inclusion in this print illustrates the services rendered between post stations on the Tōkaidō. Workers traveled on a circuit between stations, offering their services to commoners and affluent people alike. Further up the road, we can see a man traveling alone on foot. He carries his load upon his back. His presence also contributes to the kinds of travelers one could witness on the Tōkaidō. Other details of this print serve to convey the artist's sensitivity to the specific characteristics of place and time with regard to the station at Yoshiwara. The yellow *bokashi* on the horizon shows that we are viewing this station at sunset, further evidenced by the dark shape of Mount Fuji in the background; the sun is behind the horizon. From the lack of snow on Mount Fuji, we can infer that this view is in the summer. The compositional placement of this famous Japanese landmark is also important to Yoshiwara-juku. *Hidari Fuji*, or *Fuji to the Left*, is indicative of the direction that travelers would turn towards as they move along this leg of the Tōkaidō. For the first few stations from Edo, the general flow of travel was towards the sea and so Fuji would be on the right. At this point in the road, travel would flow inland and so Fuji would be visible on the left. We can also see that the road is lined with iconic Japanese pine trees, an addition made on governmental orders to give pleasure to travelers journeying on the road. Marshes flank the road on either side, a feature of Yoshiwara that Hiroshige reproduces in this print. This print from the *Hoeidō Tōkaidō* illustrates Hiroshige's sensitivity to the peculiarities of types of people on this road while also showing the attention paid to the importance of place.



Hiroshige, 1797-1858
No. 14, Hara: View of Fuji and the Ashitaka Mountains

Print No. 15

No. 15, Yoshiwara: Floating Islands in Fuji Marsh

Joseph Sands

In Yoshiwara: Floating Islands in Fuji Marsh, the landscape is paramount. In this vertically oriented print our window into the floating world is captured from a far angle, perhaps from out above the waters of the Fuji River. We can see the vast marshlands of this region set against Mount Fuji. The fishermen in the foreground appear very small in comparison to all other elements of the composition. Mount Fuji occupies more than two thirds of the print. In this way, Hiroshige illuminates the significance of this mountain to Japanese culture. The flock of birds flying across the landscape leads our attention from the summit of Fuji down into the marshes that characterize the area around Yoshiwara-juku. We can see the roofs of a small settlement surrounded by iconic Japanese pine trees, also present in the Hoeidō Tōkaidō. Collectively, this piece's imagery provides a wealth of knowledge about Edo society. The reverence of nature is obvious. The awareness of time and place and the detail-oriented choices about the use of certain images to illustrate Yoshiwara station exhibits the Japanese method of thinking about landscape. The choice to include the fishermen in the foreground demonstrates the vital role their occupation plays in Edo society. Seafood was a staple of the Japanese diet that did not include meat of terrestrial animals. Hiroshige pays special attention to the methods of fishing that these men employed. We can see two men fish with (presumably) bamboo fishing poles, probably catching a variety of saltwater inlet fish. We can also see a fisherman using a hand-cast net, commonly used to catch small shrimp. The vividness of the blue of the skies and of the waters as well as of the green of the marsh grasses together with the fact that people are out fishing clearly indicates that this view is from midday. This depiction of Yoshiwara in the Vertical Tōkaidō provides opportunities to discuss some of the major aspects of Japanese popular culture during the Edo period. These two prints in addition to all the pieces in their respective pairings exemplify societal ideas that were celebrated in Japanese popular culture. Hiroshige's illustrations of the stations on the Tōkaidō act as cultural artifacts that enable the analysis and study of the ideas and concepts shared by the commoners living under the Tokugawa Shogunate. Hiroshige's ukiyo-e prints function not only as aesthetic works of art but also as documentation of culture during the Edo period in Japan.

*** Both prints present a view of well-maintained land and the measured pace of peaceful daily life, be it travel or work. This ordered life is portrayed against the view of Mt. Fuji, Japan's foremost symbol, endowing the scenes with the sense of national awareness and country's timeless stability and abundance. The similar message, however, is communicated in the two prints by quite dissimilar artistic approaches. In his earliest horizontal view of Yoshiwara from the Hoeido edition Hiroshige brings the on-lookers into the very midst of the scene while in his latest Yoshiwara print from the Vertical Tokaido set Hiroshige shows the site from distance in a more generalized, maybe even emblematic way.

Print No. 20

Fuchū: The Abe River, from the Hoeido Tokaido

Yi Bin Liang
Jacqueline Lin



Hiroshige, 1797-1858
No. 47. Kameyama: Clear Weather after Snow

Here we are comparing the Fuchu prints from Hiroshige's first and last Tokaido series. Fuchu was the nineteenth of the fifty-three stations of the Tōkaidō, and is located in what is now part of the Aoi-ku area of Shizuoka City. The post station of Fuchū-shuku was also a castle town for Sunpu Castle in the former Suruga Province, where Tokugawa Ieyasu had been held hostage in his youth by Imagawa Yoshimoto. The area is also known for high-quality bamboo goods.

The scene itself depicts travelers crossing the Abe River to the west of the post station. The approach of evening is indicated by the dark blue strip along the top of the print. A woman is carried in a kago, while one of her companions is riding on an uncovered platform. Kago were Japanese type of sedan chair, carriage, suspended by a single crossbeam, carried by two men, usually used to transport one person at a time. The front and back of the kago is always covered; the sides can be left open, or encased by folding screens. It was the custom for a person of some means to ride in a kago, while ordinary people rode on the shoulders of waders across the rivers. The group of men across from the travelers seem to be moving in the opposite direction with a horse carrying some luggage (the yellow boxes), which is a common sight in Hiroshige's prints of travelers and horses. Some dialogue between the two parties is indicated through hand gestures and expressions.

Among the third group of people farther back, there is a hikyaku (literally 'flying foot'), an express messenger that carried important packages on the end of a stick. The inclusion of a hikyaku suggests that these travelers could be in a rush to get to the other side because express messengers using the Tokaido were supposed to travel from Edo to Kyoto in just 6 days (Frédéric, 312).

This print uses a lot of blue and white in the landscape and the figures, which ties the whole picture together very well. The sky and the river are printed using bokashi, the color gradation technique that Hiroshige frequently relied upon. The three distinct groups of figures help lead the eye into the picture, and their interaction provides interest and tension. The grayness of the landscape at the far side of the river contributes to a sense of distance.

The landscape features are very well defined using linework and texture, so despite them being similar colors, the mountains, ground, and trees are clearly distinguishable from each other.

The Abe River is known for its clear stream, and the abekawamochi (a rice cake dusted with soybean flour) from the Mirokujaya teahouse on the eastern bank which remains a popular souvenir among Japanese travelers even today.

During the Edo period, the Tokugawa shogunate wanted to improve transportation and therefore encouraged the building of bridges. However, such expensive investments could be easily washed away by sudden floods so not all rivers were bridged. As in the case of the Abe River, travelers had to either negotiate the crossing themselves or seek help from local people. Since the locals had better knowledge of the idiosyncrasies of their particular crossing area, travelers often preferred to rely on them. The busiest crossings had a regular group of men who offered their services to travelers for cash. The prices were fixed and posted on kosatsuba (official proclamation boards) at post-towns. The porters often took advantage of bad weather, however, to negotiate a higher fee. There was a major incentive for the river porters to protect their customers. If a customer died because of his negligence, the porter was executed.

The following excerpt from *Literary Creations on the Road: Women's Travel Diaries in Early Modern Japan* by Keiko Shiba tells of a traveler's experience with river crossing (77-78):

Soon after passing Kikukawa I arrived at the Ōi River, The ferry had been halted until yesterday due to the high water level caused by the recent heavy rain. Luckily, they resumed service today. I was very glad. When my turn came, I was hoisted up on an interestingly arranged board. Several porters carried the board along, while the tall waves washed their shoulders. I was frightened to death and was chanting sutras with my eyes tightly shut until reaching the other shore.

The post stations near the river would be swollen with travelers, including daimyo alternate-attendance processions, when the ferry services were closed. Often, travelers were stopped for more than ten days during the rainy season, which would upset their itineraries and cost them extra money for the prolonged stay. They were indeed at a loss for what to do when faced with "the frightening waters of the Ōi River." What Shoyu-ni describes as "an interestingly arranged board" above refers to a kind of a litter called a *rendai*, whose structure varied depending on the fees charged: some without handrails, some with handrails on one side, and others on all four sides. Daimyo typically used the ones with handrails on all four sides. In addition to *rendai* was the piggyback ferry, both conducted by ferry porters. The river's normal level of water was said to be about 75 centimeters deep; crossing on horseback was stopped when the water reached the level of 105 centimeters and crossing on foot at 135 centimeters. Travelers were often terrified in the shallows, too, where the porters would carry them while running as fast as flying birds. Following are the impressions of the river recorded in Tsuchiya Ayako's diary "Tabi no inochige" (A Journey with a Writing Brush):

I crossed the Ōi River around two o'clock in the afternoon. It was indeed the largest river on the Tokaido as I had been told, an intimidating site. The water level had decreased recently. On the vast shallows were scary, coarse looking men, half naked, gathering around me. They quickly roped my palanquin, held it above their shoulders, shouted "Yo-ho!" and sped across the dry riverbed like flying birds. It felt as if I was half dreaming, with my head and feet swinging around, feeling dizzy and having difficulty breathing. I was worried about how my children were coping with this but could do nothing. ... Presently they ran ashore, then rotated my palanquin and quickly lowered it. I felt as if I had been pushed back to fall into a ravine thousands of meters deep. When the river crossing had been completed, the women were all so pale that the people around us laughed loudly.

There are two versions of the Hoeido Fuchū in the RISD collection, and both appear to have been printed from different blocks (there are some differences in the key lines). The older print appears to have been printed with more care as there is less color bleeding, subtler gradation in the blue, more accurate registration, and crisper lines. In the newer print, some details in the waves are completely faded, and it is clear that the red ink overlaps where it shouldn't – on the female sitting in the kago. However, there are also some imperfections in the registration of the older print. The decision was made to use the older version for this exhibition.



Abe River Bridge today



Left: older print
Right: newer print



Hiroshige, 1797-1858
No. 20, Fuchū: Miroku 2-Chōme, Abekawa

Print No. 20

Fuchū: Miroku 2-Chōme, Abekawa, from the Vertical Tokaido

Yi Bin Liang
Jacqueline Lin

This vertical print shows a scene from above looking down at a pleasure quarter near Fuchū station, as is evident from the nature of activities seen through the open doors. For example, on the balcony to the left we see a woman standing, as if tending to the man sitting down - one can even discern a large grin on his face as he looks up at the woman. Furthermore, on the other balcony, it seems the people inside the room are dining, while food is being brought inside the building through the door in the bottom right hand corner with the noren. Noren were curtains put in the doorway of shop to show they were open for business. The ivy from the publisher's seal (Tsutaya) is on the noren here. Also, outside the gates of the pleasure quarter, there is a man on horseback, waving goodbye to a lady holding a lamp who is bent forward as if bowing and saying farewell. There is also an empty kago, next to which a man with bare legs stands, suggesting that he is a kago bearer as they usually wore only a coat and loincloth. It is also possible that he had been wading through the Abe River.

The print shows a crescent moon, *mika no tsuki* or *mikazuki* (literally, third day moon) which traditionally signifies autumn. Underneath are the mountains and hovering over the pleasure quarter are clouds that dominate the center of the composition. *Kumo-gata* was a traditional technique of using clouds or fog to cover parts of the picture to leave room to the imagination (Frédéric, 574). The reddened clouds suggest a setting sun whilst the approach of night is suggested by the moon and the dark strip along the upper edge of a blue sky. Sometimes, clouds are specifically used in Japanese prints to organize the composition. For instance, dating back to the 1680s, Hishikawa Moronobu's *The Yoshiwara Pleasure Quarter* includes clouds that are used to separate and distinguish higher class courtesans from regular ones. Similarly, Hiroshige utilizes clouds to separate the pleasure quarter from reality, parting the mountains and sky from the people that allows them to be in another world. The architecture is drawn with much less variation in line weight than the mountains to suggest the difference between man-made structures and natural landforms, indicating the artist's and carver's great control over their tools.

Miroku was a licensed pleasure quarter which lay in direct proximity to the Abe river. It is no coincidence that most of these places were in proximity to water, an element of relaxation but also a symbol of the 'other world' (Traganou, 236). The idea of the pleasure quarter as a fantastic space was excellent publicity for brothel keepers, who needed to entice customers to make the journey to the outer edge of the city. But from the perspective of those who lived in the quarter, the neighborhood was an everyday space that functioned according to the same hierarchical principles that structured life in other areas. Nevertheless, Stanley suggests, the physical barrier formed by the walls of pleasure quarters made it possible to imagine the space inside the quarter as an inversion of the city outside, and it also invited men to categorize women in diametrically opposed groups: those inside were prostitutes, while those outside were wives, mothers, and daughters. The walls separated fantasy from reality, pleasure from reproduction, and prostitutes from wives (Stanley 53).

Traganou's book includes a translated excerpt from Jippensha Ikku's *Hizakurige*, which describes two travelers' experience with Miroku (108-109):

Whatever happened Yaji and Kita felt that they must spend the night at Abekawa-chō, of which they had heard so much. ... This Abekawa-chō is in front of the Abekawa Miroku. Turning off the main road you come to two big gates, where you must alight from your horse. Inside are rows of houses, from each of which comes a lively sound of music, meant to attract people to the house. In fact it is much the same as in the Yoshiwara quarter in Edo. Visitors to the town were walking about in cotton kimono with crests and with towels laid loosely on their heads, accompanied by teahouse maids, whose clogs made a loud sound as they dragged them along. These all looked very respectable, as most of them wore wide skirts and all had cloaks. But among the townsmen, those who had only come to look on, there seemed to be a competition as to which should wear most stylish aprons. ... Moving in a constant stream as they did, they looked like people who were going to worship an image of Buddha. It was impossible to know to what class they belonged or to tell the state of their fortune.

Again, the RISD collection has two copies of this print, but the better one is bound in a book and thus unsuitable for use in this exhibition. When comparing the two prints, we noticed that some colors and details are different. For instance, in the print from the book, the mist and shadows on the ground are much more evident than the individual print where the ground looks as if it is one completely solid color. Furthermore, the colors of the roofs at the bottom right-hand corner of the two prints are different shades of green, suggesting that the individual print may have faded over time. It is also possible that the two prints were made on different surfaces - possibly the book version had a more yellow tint to the paper. It seems once again that the older print was made with more care, as the details of each individual leaf at the bottom right corner can be seen in the book version, whereas in the individual print's version the green leaves are combined into one blob.

The most obvious difference between the two prints is their orientation, as the nicknames of the two sets suggest. This influenced the composition and content of the

prints, and gives us an idea of how Hiroshige's artistic vision had changed in the time between the production of the two designs.

The upright composition helps create a greater sense of depth in the Vertical Fuchu, emphasizing the viewer's downward perspective. Even though we are also looking down at the Hoeido Fuchu, the simpler figures of the later design suggest that they are much further away, creating a greater sense of drama. Hiroshige also employs other compositional techniques to create distance - the cloud separates the scene into far and near, the trees diminish in size as we move into the picture, and the less detailed mountain suggests atmospheric perspective as well. In the Hoeido Fuchu, there is also a sense of distance though it seems limited to lateral space, with the three groups of people arranged to bring us from one side of the river to the other.

In terms of content, the Hoeido Fuchu gives greater attention to the figures, while the environment seems to be the main subject of the Vertical Fuchu (where all the people are described with much simpler lines). This trend appears throughout all the pairings, possibly indicating Hiroshige's increasing skill and focus in depicting places and settings. He still has the same interest in describing everyday human activities though, among both upper and lower classes and through their interactions. Furthermore, the Vertical Fuchu, in featuring Miroku-chome, focuses more on the architecture of the area rather than the landscape - the mountain is drawn much more simply, but still using the same markmaking techniques.

The same bokashi technique is used for various elements in both pictures, creating a painterly effect with the subtle gradations. According to Clark, this may have been the influence of the Maruyama-Shijō school's style, which Hiroshige would have been exposed to during his time in Kyoto (Clark 143). They used a technique called tsuke-tate where they would draw with a brush that had been charged with two different colors or tones of ink, thus creating a gradation. In printing, this could be done in different ways, such as by wiping away some of the ink or splashing the color on to the print surface. In both these prints, Hiroshige employs both ichimonji-bokashi which creates a very sharp delineation between the two colors, and ōbokashi which creates a more uniform fade into another color (Newland, 424).

In both prints, it is obvious that the earlier versions were printed more carefully due to the subtler use of colors and gradations, as well as better registration. Part of the reason was probably because the printing blocks suffered wear and tear and some of the finer details, like the shadow on the ground in the Vertical Fuchu, were lost. As for Hiroshige's choice to sacrifice the details of his figures to show more of their environment, it is really difficult to rationalize, as he did the exact opposite in two of his previous Tokaido series (namely, the Jimbutsu and Fujikei editions). Perhaps he was just trying to find a new interesting way of developing compositions.

Print No. 22

Okabe Station, from the Hoeido Tokaido

Jacob Reeves
Alexander Mattaway



Hiroshige, 1797-1858
No. 22 Okabe: Utsu Mountain

These two prints illustrate Okabe, the 21st station on the Tokaido road, which connects Edo, the seat of the Tokugawa shoguns, and the imperial capital in Kyoto. One in the network of five governmental routes across Japan's main island of Honshu, Tokaido highway was the main line for travel and trade in old Japan. The travel boom of Edo period included commoners for the first time in history, so it is only natural that views of the road stations became an important theme in the popular art of ukiyo-e. Fascination with the travel as a subject matter in ukiyo-e started with Hiroshige's first Tokaido set published in 1833-34 by the Hoeido publishing house. This set of large size oban prints (10x15") oriented horizontally became known as the Hoeido Tokaido or the Great Tokaido, and remains the artist's recognized masterpiece. In the course of his career Hiroshige created over twenty woodcut sets based on the Tokaido, the last one dating to 1855. Published by a well-established publishing house of Tsutaya Kichizo, the oban-size prints of this set are oriented vertically, giving the set its nickname of the Vertical Tokaido or Tate-e Tokaido in Japanese. This essay is a study of two views of Okabe, one taken from Hiroshige's earliest Tokaido set and the other – from the latest. Both show pathways cutting across through mountains, which are fitting, as Okabe translates to "the hill section." Separated by twenty years of continuous elaboration of the theme, these prints reflect the evolution of Hiroshige's artistic vision.

The view of Okabe station from the Hoeido edition is mostly a landscape shown at a very close distance from the onlooker. A path is running next to a speedy stream squeezed in-between two rather sharply sloping hills. Wedged in the rolling hills before rather high mountains in the distance is a small village. Several people are walking along the path, both towards and away from the viewer. Most of those on the road – four out of five – carry some kindling material. A woman in the foreground bears a bundle of brushwood on her back whereas the first of the oncoming men has two brushwood bundles balanced on a pole across his left shoulder; two men behind him carry huge woven baskets of hemp husk. They must be local commoners that make a living by selling bunches of kindling. Their low

economic status is further suggested by their plain clothing. Men are dressed in just short coats happi worn next to the skin without any undergarment. The headgear of the man and the woman with the brushwood is also typical for those involved in menial labor – a multi-purpose hand-towel tenugui is tied around their heads, albeit in a different fashion on him and on her. Only one person on the print is a true traveler – the man in a broad traveler's sedge hat kasa, his luggage in a wrapping cloth furoshiki tied across his back. This scene makes us witness exactly what was specific for the road stations: encounters (even if limited to just momentarily visual experience) of local people with those from afar, contributing to the formation of the sense of territorial and national unity.

The landscape setting is rather intense here with a quick succession of powerful natural forms from the close-up foreground hills to the mighty mountains in the distance. The print does several things to show the viewer the steep incline of the environment. The speed at which the current is flowing indicates the rapid change in elevation at this part of the mountain pass. The steepness of this path is also evident in the depiction of people within the surrounding terrain. For example, people walking up the path are just entering the print's frame; their figures are cut off by the composition's lower edge suggesting being blocked by the steepness of the hill. People coming towards the viewer are emerging from behind of the crest of the pass in a similar manner, getting visibly larger as they advance. The stream becomes increasingly more abrupt as it gushes down in three distinct rapids around the curve of the foothill. The stream's bed is also getting deeper, testifying to the eroding power of the speedy flow. A detail of note is that the wall of the stream bed looks flattened out and fortified by man. Maintenance of the environment is not only a feature of Japanese culture on the whole but was an obligation of the Tokaido stations imposed upon the residents by the government. The angle of the hills is very sharp and the trees appear to be growing at a very acute angle.

Emphasis is also placed here on the depth of space – an effect created by the juxtaposition of the very near foreground with the mountains in the background of the print. These mountains are quite far away from us and are printed with grey ink rather than green to give the viewer a sense of distance through atmospheric perspective.

Though the habitable space here is compressed between the closely spaced hills, making the place always shaded, the color of the print scheme is rather vivid. The hills are verdant, the stream is bright blue, as also is the sky above the horizon and at the top of the composition; the pink is introduced in the foliage of a maple tree and is supported in the garments of some of the travelers. Gradation of color is used throughout the print, adding subtlety to the rendering of the natural world.

The fading colors either suggest that this is evening or indicate the gloominess of the spot. We can speculate that the season is fall based on the sparseness of the vegetation in the foreground and due to the reds and grays used to depict the foliage of the trees.

The composition of the print is perfectly balanced with every form receiving its counterpart. This refers not only to the pictorial elements but also to the writings. In the lower right part of the print written directly on the image is the set's title Fifty-

three Stations of the Tokaido Road and the depicted place's name Okabe, both in black characters in the semi-cursive script. The location is further specified by the inscription made in white color inside an elongated red cartouche, which says, Utsu Mountain (Utsu no yama). These writings are matched by the inscriptions in the print's lower left – Hiroshige's signature written similarly in black semi-cursive characters, and a square red seal inscribed in white color with the name of the publishing house. An interesting detail that will need further investigation is that though it is believed that the print was a collaboration of two publishing houses, the Hoeido and the Senkakudo, the publisher's seal includes the name of just one publishing house, Senkakudo. The censorship seal of approval (kiwame,) is done in black. Whereas in this Hoeido edition of the Okabe station the viewer is assumed to be next to the travelers, sharing their viewpoint and experience of the place, the Okabe from the Vertical Tokaido series presents the site from far off and achieves a very different effect.



Hiroshige, 1797-1858
 No. 22, Okabe: The Narrow Ivy-Covered Road at Mt. Utsu

Print No. 22

Okabe: The Narrow Ivy-Covered Road at Mt. Utsu, from the Vertical Tokaido

Rachael Whitely

This vertical print is Hiroshige's latest depiction of Okabe station. The print is titled Okabe: The Narrow Ivy-Covered Road at Mt. Utsu (Okabe, Utsu no yama tsuta no hosomichi). The onlooker is offered here a wide sweeping view of a mountainous landscape, grand and majestic yet hospitable. The steep hills split up for a broad road, walked with a measured tread by just few travelers. We don't see a point of their destination as the road turns to the right and continues behind the hill. The direct view, however, opens up to a magnificently high mountain with its broad assertive summit rising above the clouds. A wide gap – perhaps a valley – separates this big mountain from the road. This gap is suggested by the strong line demarcating the farther edge of the road, by the clouds floating somewhat above the road level, and by the pronounced but delicate gradations of color indicative of the mist over lowland. Though the road is wide, the elevation is significant. The depiction of the sky and the placement of clouds in this print suggest that the travelers are at much higher elevation than in the horizontal print. All those walking are bound uphill; two travelers are supporting themselves with canes. Obviously, the climb was considered to be strenuous since we see some facilities put up there to restore energies of the weary travelers. From above we see a succession of stall-roofs jutting over the road along the stream. A tea house stands at the bend of the road. One traveler is sitting inside the shop with a cup in front of him; two from among those approaching the tea house seem to lean towards stopping by.

Though the figures in this print are much smaller than those in the horizontal one due to the perspective chosen by the artist, their variety is greater and as a group they appear more representative of those who were typically trekking Tokaido. The last person in the single-row sequence of travelers is a pilgrim. This man is carrying a long-nosed Sarutahiko mask on his back, and is wearing white cotton under-kimono, typical for such cases. He is making the pilgrimage to the Konpira shrine, a practice that became popular in the Muromachi period (1338-1573), some 400 or so years before the print came out, and is still done in modern times. The man ahead of him could possibly be a monk, as his head

is shaved and he is dressed in a jikitotsu, or robe worn when traveling. He also carries on his back a characteristic package wrapped in cloth and held to his back by what is usually a cloth strap, an atozuke-no-kōri. Further along the road is a man wearing his traveling hat kasa and red kimono. This man appears to be a samurai as he has a pair of swords stuck into his belt. It is difficult to comment on the status of the two travelers shown before and inside the tea shop for the lack of specific details, though both are supplied with traveling hats visible on very careful observation. The farthest man from the viewer is wearing a mino, a straw coat, and a traveling hat; both were typical for peasant garb but many on the road used those inexpensive and convenient objects. Miniscule as the people on this print are, none of the definitive features is omitted, resulting in the comprehensive picture of the Tokaido's "fluid population."

The landscape is rendered with Hiroshige's typical equilibrium between generalization and precise detailing. The steep hills are depicted collectively as solid grey shapes but the delicate line-work and relatively small amount of objects and figures make representation light and spacious. The clusters of trees on the hills' abrupt slopes and the solitary pine trees on their tops are all portrayed in rather loose manner, adding to the overall airy feel dominating this view. The trees in this print seem barer as compared to the trees in the Hoeido print with a scene near the village. This could be due to a change in season or because the vertical print locates the view much higher up the path.

The color palette of this print varies greatly from the earlier one. The mountains depicted in the vertical *The Narrow Ivy-Covered Road* are a cool, almost blue grey while the mountains in the horizontal *Utsu Mountain* are green and of a much warmer hue. The coolness and the uniformity of the color palette of the vertical print also suggest that this part of the path is much higher in altitude than the part of the path in the early print. Color is also used more sparingly here. While the Berlin blue is used quite liberally throughout the Hoeido piece in the vertical print, blue is used lightly and only pale yellow and dashes of thinned carmine red appear on the print.

The brightest spots on the print are cartouches with the writings. The title of the print series *Famous Sights of the Fifty-three Stations* is written in black within the red rectangle in the print's top right corner. Next to it, in a yellow square the name of the place and the title of the print are inscribed. On the bottom left in a simple red box Hiroshige's name appears in black print. Above it there is a censor's seal, an aratame, indicating that the print was inspected and approved. Below that, at the very bottom is the publishing house's trademark, which shows a mountain over an ivy leaf.

A prominent feature of this print is a masterful integration of a wood grain pattern within the print, the mokumetsubushi, as well as application of bokashi, color gradation. The particular print in the collection of the RISD Museum allows full appreciation of the wood grain effect. The wood grain appears in the mountain peeking through the mist in the middle of the print, and spreads into the blue sky below it, ending before the path through the mountains. The wood grain also shows through in the bokashi along the top of the print where it graduates from white to grey. With the sensitive incorporation of wood grain

mokumetsubushi into the visual fabric of the print, the workings of nature itself become a factor of the design, fostering our perception of the universality of the world.

The Okabe station, specifically the narrow path that travels through it, is a prime example of a meisho, a site famous for its literary associations. It appears as both a setting and subject of many poems and books of the time. The most well-known work of literature involving the road would be *The Tales of Ise*, a collection of poems and narratives written by Ki no Tsurayuki (872-945), although the authorship is a topic of debate. Utsuyama of the title, the mountain through which the road wound, is the setting in section 9. Four poems are featured in this section, although only one specifically mentions Utsu. The story follows a lonely man wandering along the path, who eventually comes across a monk he knows. He asks him to deliver a message to his wife, whom he had to leave behind. He then transcribed the poem presented here:

Amid the sad hills
of Mount Utsu
in Suruga province,
I can no longer see my lover,
not even in my dreams. (Translation John T. Carpenter, 1-5)

The poem puns on the meaning of the name of Mt. Utsu, which translates to Mt. Reality. Thus the author parallels the reality and the dream and laments the impossibility to see his beloved in either. This is arguably the most famous literary reference to Mt. Utsu. However, there are also numerous haikus, both classical and contemporary, which have the mountain and its pass as the subject. Both the print and the literature related to it give the chance for people to experience and connect with the region, even if they were unable to travel there. While the print alone could achieve this, the combination created by pairing the print with poetry enriches the experience and to this day allows us to journey along the Tokaido Road towards Mt. Utsu right into the depths of Japan's culture.

Okabe station is located now in Shida District, Shizuoka prefecture. The portion of the Utsunoya-tōge Pass that Hiroshige's designs show incidentally is the only surviving portion of the road that had existed already in Heian period (8-12cc) when the poem quoted above was written; it is now a National Historic Site. This connection of times across centuries of national cultural legacy is manifested in every feature of Okabe print from the Vertical Tokaido set. It alludes to Heian period poetry in its title and references universality of the medieval monochromatic philosophic landscape scrolls of Muromachi age. If the horizontal print by the young artist focuses on the viewers' immediate presence at the place depicted, the vertical one by the older master becomes an all-inclusive picture of Japan and its culture.



Hiroshige, 1797-1858
No. 47. Kameyama: Clear Weather after Snow

Print No. 47

Kameyama: Clear Weather after Snow, from the Hoeido Tokaido

by Jonathan Rinker
Chaoqun Wang

The daimyo procession is about to reach Kameyama, a castle-town nestled in snow covered mountains. It is this scene that Hiroshige chose to represent in the Kameyama print for his series *Fifty-three Stations of the Tokaido*, which depicts all stations on this official highway, including its starting point in Edo and ending point in Kyoto. Kameyama is the 46th station of the route, so it is much closer to the end of the 300 miles-long highway, mere 50 miles away from Kyoto. Though the stations of the Tokaido road have been redrawn and reissued numerous times by many ukiyo-e artists, this research focuses on a print from Hiroshige's Hoeido edition, the first series of over twenty devoted by Hiroshige to the Tokaido theme over years. Known by the name of the publishing house that issued it, this set gained immediate and immense popularity and generated a real craze for the traveling topic in ukiyo-e. Hiroshige's view of Kameyama station is unanimously regarded as a great example of the artwork of the unsurpassed ukiyo-e landscape master.

The print of Kameyama called *Clear Weather after Snow* (*Kameyama, yukibare* - 亀山雪晴) shows peaceful silver world at dawn. The weather is fair with no clouds; the night is receding as the sun is rising, and the snow is covering the dawn landscape. The daimyo procession is about to enter the Kameyama Castle, located in the top right corner of the print. The snowy landscape is almost monochromatic with the single dotted line of color in the marching up file of the procession. All men in the company are wearing dark blue coats and straw hats. The daimyo himself must be traveling in the palanquin carried by two bearers, as was the tradition. Their group can be seen towards the end of the procession – the mountain climb is steep and the roof of the palanquin has just become visible. Most men in the procession are walking on foot but there is also a horse with a load, a usual feature of a daimyo procession that carried a lot of the household belongings and sought to show off the wealth of the lord.

Castles as fortified residences of landed lords were very important in the feudal Japan, acting at once as strongholds and as visible expressions of their wealth and military power. The Tokugawa rulers, to preclude potential subversion, limited one daimyo to just one

castle. In the proximity of the Tokaido road only nine castles were allowed, all of them in possession of the most loyal daimyo. Kameyama castle, owned at the time by one such clan – the Ishikawa clan, is the only castle depicted by Hiroshige in the Hoeido print set – perhaps, because it was such a dominating visual landmark of the place. As always, Hiroshige is precise in rendering topography of the place and in each and every detail of things he portrays. Kameyama castle is known to have two entrances, the eastern one facing in the direction of Edo and known as Edo-gates (Edo-guchi) and the western one known as Kyoto-gates (Kyo-guchi). The western approach to the castle was steep and it is this one that is shown here with all its dynamic upward thrust.

Though the print features a daimyo's journey, most of the human elements are obscured by nature. The unequal levels of attention indicate that Hiroshige was primarily focused on the untouched landscape; even the human structures covered with snow appear merged with the natural forms. The print shows off a strong upward movement within the scene. There are five layers of mountains, with sparse tree cover, depicted at different scales across the print. In the foreground, three pine trees are intricately rendered. They set a distinct ascending rhythm that plays an important role in unifying of the print's composition. Incline of these large pine trees is repeated in the smaller trees to the left of them and in the graceful bend of the castle tower on the top of the hill on the right. At the bottom left of the print, in the reed-covered valley, there are numerous peasant houses, abstracted under snowfall. Woods and brush wrap around the entrance to the castle, and there is a unified treatment of snow-strewn beauty to the land.

Compositionally, the print can be divided into three parts, the sky in the background, the middle ground, and the foreground elements. Color gradations have been widely exploited within all three parts. There is a clear contrast between all three sections in terms of composition, scale and color. The sky is rendered with vivid colors whereas the rest of the print is less saturated with just a hint of bright colors. However, as many as six colors were used altogether in the printing: blue, red, brown, yellow, grey, and black, requiring a total of seven separate woodblocks.

Though we are afforded just a minimal glimpse of the daimyo procession, the overall solemnity of the image bespeaks the significance of the Tokaido in Edo period Japan.

One of a network of five governmental roads, the Tokaido road became vital as one the main transport routes of Japan, helping to unify the country, facilitating daimyo travels from Edo to their home provinces and back, promoting the flow of commodities into urban markets and contributing to the growth of castle towns as the economic centers of the domains. Road systems were devised, using main highways to connect the castle towns with all important points of communication, both within and outside the domain; secondary road systems branched off the main routes to reach even remote villages (Vaporis 37).

Tokaido, in Edo period Japan, has been considered a venue of Japan's national identity formation in that it linked Japan's main urban centers to suburban areas as well as strongly engaged in the domestic modernization, bringing about innovations and autonomy. (Traganou 4).

One other cultural role of the Tokaido is that it provided the subject matter for Hiroshige and other ukiyo-e artists. The representation of the Tokaido in its expansion is a topic of inquiry that bridges cartographic with artistic concerns; in other words, issues of national territoriality with cultural and individual interests (Traganou 4).

In later Meiji era and during Japan's modernization process, the Tokaido road, including the idea of *national land* signified not only historical and cultural notions, but also contained a productive potential that could head to prosperity and progress.

Beyond the content, the Kameyama print of RISD's collection has several notable physical characteristics. Unlike other prints in the series, there is an absence of clear wood-grain pattern in the imprint, which is likely a result of the large usage of white, negative space in the composition. Slight traces of wood-grain can be perceived through big empty spaces such as the top and bottom of the sky, the shades over the peasant huts on the bottom left corner and the mountain on the bottom right corner, but are generally absent. The printing quality is high. The cut lines are sharp; the details, including the texture of the tree bark and the castle wall masonry can be clearly observed, and the colors are vivid. In the bottom right of the image is the red seal of Hoeido, the printing house that produced the series of prints to which this design of Kameyama view belongs. Above this seal are several characters that credit the image to Hiroshige as they read "picture by Hiroshige." In the top left of the print, the title of the series, as well as the name of the place are written in characters and the name of the scene appears inscribed in white inside the red oval cartouche.

The entirety of Hiroshige's depiction of Kameyama inspires a feeling of serenity between man and nature. It has been long believed that Hiroshige's travel experience along the Tokaido has been the main contribution to the vividness of his road-scenes. Now it is put into question. There is only one source mentioning that Hiroshige participated in the official shogunal delegation from Edo to Kyoto in 1831 and this reference was made over thirty years after Hiroshige's death. Also, the Hoeido print series that is claimed to be have been inspired by that journey was published too soon after it for such huge project to be completed. (Clark 148). One should not underestimate the influence on Hiroshige's prints of the highly popular guidebooks and gazetteers that consisted of *meisho-e* – 'pictures of famous places' and *shiki-e* – 'pictures of the four seasons' Printed in black-and-white and widely available, they were often highly imaginative and sometimes have little to do with the visually observed reality (Traganou 170). Hiroshige's approach to portraying landscapes is artistic rather than strictly informative. Hiroshige felt free to not illustrate the scenery accurately though all objects with their countless details were at all times rendered by Hiroshige with quite extraordinary precision. If we accept the assumption that the Hoeido Tokaido set was inspired by Hiroshige's travel experience, it is important to remember that the journey he allegedly was a part of took place in the summertime when snow scenes were impossible; thus the Kameyama print reveals the artistic imagination of Hiroshige as print-designer.

From the slow progression of the men to the clean white of snow, Hiroshige gives a

vision of the undisturbed nature. Man is dwarfed by the scale of the nature around him, and the viewer is forced to admire the scale and beauty of the earth. Through Hiroshige's *Fifty-three Stations of the Tokaido*, "The Japanese were coming to know themselves and their land more fully. Through social intercourse between people from diverse localities, the exchange of idea and popular culture could take place, building the solid foundation which was necessary for the formation of a national identity" (Vaporis 261). Not only that, Hiroshige also provides us with more than just a break along the Tokaido road; he welcomes a personal rest and reflection on our own journey through the world around us.



Hiroshige, 1797-1858
No. 47, Kameyama: Wind, Rain and Thunder

Print No. 47

**Kameyama Station: Wind, Rain, and Thunder,
from the Vertical Tokaido**

by Jordan Hu,
Haesoo Ji

The print *Kameyama: Wind, Rain, and Thunder* by Utagawa Hiroshige derives from his series *Famous Views of the Fifty-three Stations of the Tokaido* published in the year 1855. This was the last of over twenty print sets devoted by Hiroshige to the Tokaido road at various times of his career. This series of woodcuts was issued by the publishing house Koeido of the publisher Tsutaya Kichizo. The images on the prints of the large 10" x 15" oban format are vertically-oriented, directly referring to the informal title of the Vertical Tokaido. *Famous Views of the Fifty-three Stations of the Tokaido* consists of fifty-five prints, including representations of fifty-three stations along the Tokaido highway, as well as two prints that mark the road's starting and ending points in Edo and Kyoto, respectively.

This print illustrates travelers at Kameyama, the forty-sixth station on the Tokaido road. It is the forty-seventh sheet within the series because the count of prints begins at the road's starting point in Edo, before the first station. The audience notices here a distant castle located at the top of the mountain, to which the broad road leads. This road is flanked by a grassy slope with scattered pine trees on one side and an orderly row of pine trees on the other. Six weary travelers are making their way through the harsh storm, enduring the slashing rain, gusty wind and the lightning flashing in the sky. Little as the travelers wear, they are able to shield themselves from the heavy rainfall. All the travelers except for one are equipped with a broad round traveling sedge hat called *kasa*. The remaining traveler is covering himself with a *mino*, a traditional straw raincoat, which he has pulled over his head and is holding with both hands to keep it in place. Rice straw was a commonly used material for raincoats because of its water repellent properties. As the rain makes contact with the woven straw surface, it tends to flow along the fibers, making it an ideal water repellent. Both the *kasa* and *mino* were lightweight, affordable, and easy to construct. The road is steep and two of the travelers going uphill are supporting themselves with walking sticks.

Hiroshige describes all objects within his prints with a remarkable level of authenticity, allowing their identification by means of extensive research. In the print, there are two

different types of trees illustrated – Japanese Red Pine and Japanese Black Pine. Japanese Red Pine the tall, straight trees, are widely cultivated in Japan for both timber production and as an ornamental tree. It also plays an imperative role in classic Japanese gardens. The Tokugawa government ordered to plant Japanese Red Pine along the Tokaido as shown in the orderly row of pine trees on the road’s right-hand side (Traganou. 38). Japanese Black Pines, the squiggly short trees located towards the bottom of the hill, are native to the coastal regions of Japan and are commonly used as a garden tree.

The castle tower, the landmark of the station, belongs to the Kameyama castle — Kameyama-jo. The castle that in various years was in the possession of different daimyo clans was first constructed in the mid-16th century. During the times concerned, it was owned by the Ishikawa family. Altogether, there were a total of nine castle towns on the Tokaido road (Vaporis. 24). Due to the status of the Tokaido as one of governmental highways, only the most trusted hereditary daimyo of the Tokugawa, the so-called fudai daimyo, could possess a castle near the road. (Traganou. 12). The Ishikawa family was among the fudai daimyo.

Kameyama or “Turtle Mountain” is a name that derives from the shape of the mountain ranges. Additionally, in East-Asian mythology, the turtle is known to be associated with longevity and prosperity—for these reasons, the name “Kameyama” was used for various castles in Japan.

The Kameyama-jo was one of the five fortifications that guarded the clan territories in the Ise Province. It was occasionally under attack and eventually was relocated towards the southeast where all the main structures were reconstructed. Known to be the headquarters of the Ise-Kameyama, the surrounding castle town became a post station on the Tokaido road. In modern time, Kameyama developed into the most prosperous town in the area. The Kameyama castle had two pairs of gates marked with towers. The eastern gate was facing east, the direction towards Edo, and thus was called Edo-guchi or the Edo entrance. The western gate gazed towards Kyoto, hence it was entitled Kyo-guchi. Approach to the castle from the western gate Kyo-guchi of the Kameyama castle was recognized for its steepness and we see its representation in the print. As always with Hiroshige, everything that he shows in his prints is historically accurate and rendered with remarkable precision. This applies not only to the objects or inhabitants but to rendering of the environment, ranging from seasonal characteristics to weather conditions. The season of the scene on this print implies summertime, as seen from the lush green grass on the hills and the scanty clothing the travelers are wearing. Additionally, a thunderstorm is typically a summer phenomenon that occurs in the summer.

Compositionally, *Wind, Rain, Thunder* places huge emphasis on depth and spatiality. From a distant viewpoint, there is a clear foreground, middle-ground, and background shown through the gesture of the road as well as through the weary travelers. Amongst the six travelers showcased, there are two that quite noticeably vary in terms of size. The size differentiation of these two characters frames both the middle-ground and background for the entire composition.

The color palette here is rather limited and consistent; it only uses several colors that work well together: light grey, palish yellow, green, blue and red. An important role in rendering of the atmospheric effects on colors is captured through a special printing technique of bokashi, the tonal gradation that creates a range of shading from dark to light. Application of bokashi is particularly noticeable at the lower edge of the hill as the green of the grass becomes more intensive and at the bottom of the print across its entire width of the sheet where bluish and greyish shades fade into each other responding to the swift diagonal movements of the baren.

A multitude of Hiroshige’s most admired masterpieces are images of rain that have a character of their own. Consequently, it might be interesting to compare the print under discussion with the famous *Sudden Shower Over Shin-Obashi Bridge and Atake* (1857, no. 58 from the “One Hundred Famous Views of Edo”). *Sudden Shower Over Shin-Obashi Bridge and Atake* fascinated Vincent van Gogh and was copied by him in oil. Both of the compared prints represent vertical landscape compositions and are only two years apart. There is an obvious distinction in the character of rainfall between *Kameyama: Wind, Rain, and Thunder* and *Sudden Shower over Shin-Obashi Bridge and Atake*. In the *Wind, Rain, Thunder*, there are but nineteen exaggerated violent rain lines. In comparison, it is merely impossible to count the innumerable lines of rain shown in the *Sudden Shower over Shin-Obashi Bridge print*. Dense lines of rain, mostly rather thin, are printed here from two separate woodblocks with the lines of torrents slanted at a slightly different angle on each of the blocks. The streams appear on the print as intersecting lines, forming rather a thick veil through which the view is rendered. We see here not only a more substantial rain, but a true downpour, as suggested in the title — a *yudaichi* or “an evening descent” of the thunder god—a summer rain in which the heavens suddenly darken late in the day, releasing torrents of rain in large drops that then quickly clears, as explained in the catalog of the Brooklyn Museum (website of the Brooklyn Museum). The strength of the downpour is also corroborated by the gestural body language of the travelers on the bridge. The comparison between the two views of summer rainfall vividly demonstrates Hiroshige’s celebrated sensibility towards the life of nature in all its variability and his unrivalled mastery in displaying this in his art.

This print studied in this paper, like the rest sheets in the set, includes some standardized writings and seals. The title of the series is written in red elongated rectangular cartouche in the upper right-hand corner of the print. The text within reads *Famous Sights of the Fifty-three Stations* (Gojusan tsugi meisho zue); it also indicates that this is the 47th print in the series. Adjacent to this cartouche is a small square inset with the title print that says *Kameyama. Wind, Rain and Thunder*. The red cartouche at the left edge of the print contains the signature of the artist “Hiroshige.” These colorful insets play a role in the overall compositional arrangements of the image. Red rectangular cartouches located at the right top and bottom left of the print balance each other while the distinctive shape of the square cartouche with the inverted rounded corners is echoed by the same kind of corners of the print itself.

Beneath Hiroshige’s signature, there are three differently shaped seals. The round seal

on the right is a censorship mark of *aratame* meaning “approved.” This kind of censorship approval was used together with the date seal occasionally from ca.1818 and regularly between 1853 and 1857. Indeed, to the left from this round seal there is an oval date seal, indicating that the print was issued in the Year of Hare, 7th month, corresponding to the year 1855. Below these two signs is the mark of the Koeido publishing house of the publisher Tsutaya Kichizo —the mark has a shape of a three-peaked mountain over a dot and an ivy leaf.

Despite *Wind, Rain, Thunder* lacking in the number of details displayed in Hiroshige’s other prints, each element within the print has significance to it. The print creates a vivid picture of a famous place that was well familiar to the contemporaries. Hiroshige includes the castle tower as the definitive landmark of the Kameyama station, describes its unique terrain, renders the ambience of traveling that comes along with facing harsh weather conditions, and captures the life of nature with its seasonal features. The viewer can learn a lot about this station and about life in Edo through careful observations of the image on the print and thorough research of its meticulously depicted details. Hiroshige’s *Famous Views of the Fifty-three Stations of the Tokaido* and other series of landscape prints introduced interesting ways of using perspective, technical innovations and his particular style to other Japanese artists, becoming a highly admired ukiyo-e master not only in Japan, but later in Western countries as well.



Hiroshige, 1797-1858
Seki: Early Departure of a Daimyō

Print No. 48

Seki: Early Departure of a Daimyō, from the Hoeido Tokaido

Hanyu Liu
Hanjie Bao
Emily Fang

Utagawa Hiroshige's print, *Early Departure of a Daimyō*, represents Seki, the 47th station on the Tokaido road, in its primary role of the communication artery for the daimyō processions traveling to or from Edo (modern Tokyo), the shogunal capital of the Tokugawa Japan. Political arrangement of the day known as *saikin kōtai* required landed lords – the daimyō – to alternate a year of residence in Edo in the direct service to the shogun with a year in their own domains. All of about 250 daimyō with their numerous retinues had to be provided accommodation worthy of their status on their “tour of duty.”

This print comes from the earliest of Hiroshige's woodcut sets dedicated to Tokaido road. Known as the *Hoeido Tokaido* by the name of Takenouchi Magohachi's publishing house, Hoeido, which issued the set in 1833-34, it remains the most recognized of over twenty Tokaido print series created by Hiroshige in various years. Prints of this series are horizontally oriented large format *ōban nishiki-e*.

The busy moment of preparation for a departure of a daimyō procession is captured in this print with remarkable exactitude both in spirit and letter. We will now examine the image closely while looking at each object from cultural and historic perspective. It is our hope that thus the print reveals the life of Edo period Japan in the most vivid and comprehensive way.

The place of action here is a *honjin*, a special kind of an inn designated for the accommodation of daimyō and other high-ranking travelers. On the Tokaido, the busiest road in Edo period, there were a total of 179 *honjin*. (Vaporis 27). Usually a *honjin* was the largest building in a post town. Always located in the center, *honjin* inns were provided by reputable families, temples and shrines, and the wealthy.

The viewer is witnessing the inner space of the *honjin*, sectioned off by the inn's buildings, running diagonally to the picture plane on left, and by the curtain stretched across the background. Thus what is happening within the is not visible to the people outside but is open for the scrutiny of the print's viewers. All human activity is happening next to the buildings. The curtain attached to the closest building's roof-edge is raised and

we see a man in a crested official garment kamishimo (袴) talking from the raised open gallery to someone of lower status standing on the ground in front of him.

The man in kamishimo must be one of the daimyo's chief retainers since during the Edo period garment of this kind was worn by high-ranking samurai. On the print both parts of kamishimo are clearly depicted – the sleeveless jacket kataginu (肩衣) and broad trousers hakama (袴). The Edo Period was an extremely status conscious time in Japanese history and compliance with regulations in one's attire was taken very seriously – more seriously than stylishness. The kamishimo was normally worn outside of the house, or when expecting visitors; otherwise, at home, casually, a kimono was worn. The man in the print is certainly a samurai on service and is dressed accordingly. A conspicuous white dot on the official's right sleeve most likely implies his family crest. The crests were traditionally represented on both sleeves, on both sides of the chest and under collar at the back. Preference for subdued colors is another important feature of samurai official clothing – wearing bold patterns and bright colors was considered inappropriate.

Next to the official and his subordinate receiving the orders there are three more people. They seem to be of even lower status, perhaps servants, who have finished their task and now are enjoying a break. Those two of them who are on the ground, are smoking – one with a pipe in his mouth, the other holding it with a special so-called 'samurai grip' (compare with the woman smoking on the Hoeido print of Hara station at this exhibition). Both smokers are wearing traveling straw hats, an indispensable attribute of those on the road. The third man from this group is sitting on the platform while affixing his own hat. Such straw hats were woven from sturdy bamboo skin or sedge; they reached 40 centimeters in diameter and were commonly used during travel for protection from rain or sunshine. More hats of this type are piled up on the platform next to the standing official soon to be used by other members of the procession.

We can now peep inside of the building: a glimpse of the interior is possible because the curtain attached to the eaves is partially raised. Right behind the standing official there is a palanquin, a box-like structure attached to a long pole, projecting here rather far forward. In the absence of wheeled transport in Japan palanquins were used for overland travel. A passenger would sit inside and two or three palanquin bearers at each side would carry it by placing the pole across their shoulders. There were several types of palanquins, some of them not much more than a suspended platform: known as kago, they were rode by the commoners; the house-like type of palanquin depicted here – with a roof and a window – is a norimono used by the samurai class and those with wealth. This norimono is ready to carry the daimyo on the march of the procession.

The wall behind the palanquin is decorated with the Japanese traditional fret pattern called sayagata. Against this wall at its upper part there are wooden plaques with inscriptions. These plaques look exactly like those typically placed by inns to announce the names of pilgrim groups staying there. Here, however, the plaques are advertising cosmetic products of the Sakamoto firm particularly famous for its whitening powder Senjoko. Moreover, even the address of the Sakamoto shop is inscribed directly on the patterned

Figure 1. Kamishimo – official dress of a samurai



wall beyond the wooden signs. Such masked product placement can be found also in other ukiyo-e prints – a kind of playful utilization of the commercial potential of the printed media.

Against the roof of the building two spears yari, of different type, are leaning. One of the basic types of weapons in medieval Japan, during Edo era the spear became an important status marker. According to C. Vaporis (97), the number of spears carried before and after the daimyo's palanquin in the procession was definitive for his status. Those related to the Tokugawa family were allowed to have four spears while lesser lords might have only one or two. Spears could have one straight-headed blade or two blades intersecting in a cross-like shape. Such spears are called jūmonji or 'spears shaped as the character for ten.' Here both types of spears are illustrated sheathed in wooden cases, as was the most usual practice for this kind of weapon.

The right part of the image is dominated by sekifuda – a large wooden plaque with the name of the daimyo stationed at that honjin. Sekifuda were usually attached to tall poles to be well seen from afar. The timetable of daimyo travel was set up well in advance so that all preparations could be made beforehand. The sekifuda name boards as well as the curtains with the daimyo family crest were put up at the inn prior to the daimyo arrival to prevent the potentially embarrassing situation of two or more high-ranking guests arriving at the same time from different directions.

Let's now return to the observation of people and move on further into the composition, following the pointing gesture of the man in front of the higher official. Everyone in the distant group of men appears fully absorbed in the act of communication. Unlike the people in the foreground in front of the man in kamishimo who are most likely either servants or retainers in charge of the task of a swift departure, those in the depth seem to be a mix of both. All three men in a line at the very back are shown with a pair of swords at their side, a sure sign of a samurai in Edo period. No detail is omitted – even the swords' hilts are distinctly visible.

All men in the print are shown with traditional topknots, the hairstyle by no means exclusive to the samurai. In Edo period nearly all men, except for Buddhist priests, wore topknots. Hair was also an important part of appearances in that time, making reference to codes and presentation of self.

The ten men depicted in this print serve one daimyo. This is certainly a small part of his retinue that is visible to us. Daimyo processions numbered hundreds and sometimes dozens of thousands of men, depending on their wealth. Passing through a station could take two or more days with daimyo traveling in a palanquin on the last day, attended by his numerous court. (Calhoun 225)

Hiroshige leaves no doubt that the scene is happening before the sunrise while it is still dark. It was usual for a daimyo procession to depart before dawn. This was done to maximize the distance covered by a procession in a day of travel to lessen the time on the road and thus to reduce the costs for food and lodging. (Vaporis 30). The skies are gray with even darker, almost black strip shown via gradation bokashi at the very top of the



Figure 2. Sekifuda – daimyo name board raised on a pole

Figure 3. Straw hat called kasa

Figure 4. Norimono

print, but it is primarily the abundance of lanterns throughout the image that attests to the time of the day. Lanterns are placed on the ground, held by people and are hanging from the poles in front of the gates. All these lanterns belong to the chochin type – they are made of mulberry paper glued over the light bamboo framework. At first such lanterns were rigid but towards the end of the 16th century collapsible lanterns like those shown in this print started to appear. Chochin lanterns could be of various shapes, for example, elliptical and cylindrical, as depicted here. Their structure was the same – a candle was placed on a baseboard within and a handle was attached at the top. All lanterns on the print are decorated with geometric designs that are, in fact, emblems related to Hiroshige's family lineage and to him personally. The design on all three elliptical lanterns coincides with bold compelling designs repeated in blue against the white curtains and in white against the gray ones.

This crest that Hiroshige is using here is the crest of the Tanaka family to which his father belonged. Though Hiroshige later married a daughter of a direct retainer of the Tokugawa shogun in Edo, took his name of Ando and became his heir as a minor administrator in a fire-fighting brigade, he still felt connection with his direct family's samurai legacy. Though Hiroshige became primarily ukiyo-e print designer and passed his firefighting post to his brother some ten years before the Hoeido Tokaido series was designed, he made a prominent visual reference to his samurai heritage in his representation of one of Japan's famous sites. Hiroshige is said to have retained a strong consciousness of his status, as indicated by his request three days before he died that 'the Funeral be in samurai style'. (Smith 37) Hiroshige's hybrid identity reveals itself explicitly here in the artist's usage of the "double" family insignia. Together with the Tanaka emblem, Hiroshige depicted his own monogram composed of the katakana signs of "hi" and "ro" () of his name.

The formal aspect of the image deserves special attention. The composition is masterfully balanced and unified. The image depicts two clusters of people in the foreground and the mid-ground, both located on the left side. This dense placement of visual elements is balanced by the objects on the left – a row of dark trees as well as the writings and the seals (the title of the series and of the station, signature of the artist, seal specifying the title of the piece, and the seal of the publisher). An extremely long pole of sekifuda (even protruding out of the top borderline) is echoed by the spear poles, almost equally thin and long.

One point perspective is adopted in this composition, regulating the general shape and size of the architecture and the characters. With all that, the large open area in the foreground and the placement of the sekifuda in the right foreground renders the spatial organization not entirely naturalistic. The image is thus flattened to a certain extent.

The chief dominating visual element in this image is the repeating family crest of Hiroshige's paternal clan, as discussed above. This crest appears in more than ten locations in this print; some of its depictions are larger than the size of the men. The circular shape of the crest contrasts with the hard, straight borderlines of the architecture and the



Figure 5. (above)
Above: Tanaka crest of Hiroshige's paternal clan
Below: Hiroshige's
personal crest "hi"
and "ro" (ヒロ) of his name

Figure 6.
(long horizontal image on the right) The daimyo
procession attended by his numerous court
(Newton 225)



angularity of the men's clothing. The key-block lines carry a life of its own, varied in their thickness and carved to retain fluidity and consistency in general.

Due to the aging of the image, the print has an overall yellow and green tone. Blue and green are the predominant colors, as shown in the family crests and the bokashi gradient of color on the ground. These cool colors are balanced by multiple pockets of bright red color of the lanterns and the warm yellowish light they give out.

Overall, this image is highly dynamic. Not only do the family crests create a distinct, visual rhythm, the samurai also form an organic, visual cue. The arrangements of the samurai, along with the architectural lines enhance the perspective of the picture. The black-to-gray sky and the lantern lights, aside from indicating the time of the scene, effectively generate a mood for the early departure. Characters in the image seem to be excited and alert. They have different physical gestures that suggest clearly ordered relationship within the clan, rapport and precise and efficient interaction between its members.

The current research is based on the investigation of this particular print from the collection of the RISD Museum. There is no standard, quantitative grading scale for ukiyo-e prints. Even the impressions from the same block in their earliest states can be different. This section thus can only provide a general description of studied print.

The print's overall condition is good. It does not have severe flaws such as soiling, creasing, or staining. It is neatly mounted on museum-grade frames and handled with professional care.

The impression of the print is still very sharp. The borderlines are almost consistently clean and unbroken, suggesting the woodblock was still at a very early stage of usage while this image was printed. Other contour lines within the image are also sharp and continuous even at very intricate parts, such as the men's hands and the pipe. The registration of the colors is generally good; the orange skin tone is a bit off.

The color in this print is retained fairly well; still there seem to be two flaws in the coloring. First is the overall fading. The paper has aged judging from its slight yellowish tone, and the pigments, affected by the paper and its translucent nature, appear to be warmer in tone than on the imprints still in pristine condition. Second refers to the bluish-green color used for the daimyo's kamishimo and the curtain at the camp gate has almost completely faded away. Comparing the print from the RISD collection with the one from the Bernard Buffet Museum (Shizuoka, Japan) collection, this difference in the color in areas mentioned previously is clear. In the Bernard Buffet Museum impression, the curtain's blue color is still as rich as the one used in the foreground. One might deduce that the same pigment was used to print this particular color. Whereas in the RISD impression, even though the foreground still retains its color well, the curtain of the camp gate and the kamishimo don't hold color anymore at all. More interestingly, the kamishimo and the curtain appear to bear different shades of gray. It is reasonable to suspect that these parts in the RISD impression are printed from separate blocks, which further suggests that this single print has multiple editions that involve different printing procedures.

Conclusively, this print is preserved in a very good condition despite the number of years. The rich details that call for a keen eye open up a window for us to look into the cultural practices in the Edo era. It is quite remarkable how just from small clues that Hiroshige lays out for the viewers there is so much to gain. Lesser details such as the style of dress reveal the identity of these people and their relationship; the setting plays the story of what the people are doing, and even the minor objects help tie in the cultural aspect and the scenario. Since the horizontal print of the set focuses on the interaction of people rather than scenic landscapes, the viewer is able to get a better sense of relationships of social classes, being transported straight into the intriguing life of Japan at the time. Thanks to the small visual cues, peculiarities of color, variety of objects present, distinctive architectural structures, and style of dress, all this shown with the unfailing attention to details, a careful eye can break the image into smaller components to truly understand the daily life during the Japanese Edo era.

This essay introduces the No.48 print, Seki: Early Departure of a Daimyō, among a series of ukiyo-e woodprints of the Fifty-Three Stations of the Tokaido Road designed by Utagawa Hiroshige. Together with the set print, Junction of the Side Road to the Shrine, they are depicting the 47th station Seki “the barrier”, placed after the Kameyama station on the Tokaido Road. Digested in the Japanese style, these two scenes hone in on the different aspects and allure of life in Japan. Junction of the Side Road to the Shrine utilizes an omniscient perspective for viewers to oversee the multi-layered landscape as the beautiful, steep, and majestic mountains pave way towards the Seki Station. The mystic effect produced through the blue gradient mountain along with the all-seeing perspective leaves the viewers in awe of the natural and monumental beauty. Meanwhile, the beauty of the Early Departure of a Daimyō is not placed in nature’s otherworldly beauty, but rather in the hustle and bustle of a common routine in everyday life.

The presence and details of the people are deliberately diminished in Junction of the Side Road to the Shrine while contrarily, no detail is omitted in Early Departure of a Daimyō from the sword hilt, hairstyle, and even the family crest printed on a sleeve. Both prints harbor a ceremonial atmosphere-- one through the religious and spiritual character of temples and rituals, the other by centering on the interaction of the social divisions and relationships of people. Small details such as the organic flow and curved shapes nicely contrast against the architectural and sharp lines of Early Departure of a Daimyō. As a pair, both of these prints contain Hiroshige’s personal touch, effectively reflecting the beauty of Japan.



Hiroshige, 1797-1858
No. 48, Seki: Junction of the Side Road to the Shrine

Print No. 48

Seki Station, from the Vertical Tokaido

Jimin Park
ChaeHyun Kim

This view of station Seki comes from the so-called Vertical Tokaido print series that was published in 1855 and was the last one from over twenty various sets of woodcuts dedicated by Hiroshige to this most important official highway of Edo period Japan.

Station Seki was the 47th station on the Tokaido and thus is the 48th print in the series (the discrepancy in numbering arises because the first print of the set shows Nihonbashi in Edo, Tokaido's starting point, which is technically not a station).

Seki is one of the most historical places on the Tokaido – it was one of three oldest barrier towns in Japan (*sankan*, 三関) first introduced in late 7th century in order to protect capital areas. Known in those times as Suzuka *seki* (鈴鹿関), Seki was established as a checkpoint in 701. (Yuko Marshall, p. 6). In the 8th century the temple of Jizo Bosatsu, one of Japan's most popular Buddhist deities, was founded there. With its oldest statue of Jizo, the temple became a notable pilgrimage destination, contributing to the development of the town next to it. In Edo period the station of Seki became a lively post town with numerous inns ready to accommodate all kinds of travelers. The traffic at this junction of the road was rather intensive since a way to Ise Jingu, Japan's main Shinto shrine dedicated to Amaterasu, the Sun Goddess, forked off close to Seki station. The pilgrimage to Ise shrine was at its height during Edo period so the numbers of those passing through Seki swelled significantly.

The station itself is not directly depicted on the print. However, we are given a glimpse of the road's portion with structures on its both sides and some travelers. A steep mountainous climb leads up to the station to the *torii* gates flanked by two stone lanterns. Though just several upper steps of the stone stairs cut into the rocky slope are depicted, the steepness of the approach is evident from how little is visible of the ascending travelers that have already almost made it to the top. The *torii* gate here is of the *shinmei* type with all elements straight. The *shinmei torii* stands usually in front of Shinto shrines, symbolizing the transition between the secular world and the sacred world. No shrine is shown here but one can assume there is one somewhere not far from the gates. Next to the *torii* there are

two Japanese traditional oil-light lanterns *jōyatō*, which were used in Buddhist temples as well as on the road. Religious groups initially donated the lanterns of the *jōyatō* type in order to lighten the paths to the sacred areas near the temples. The *jōyatō* lanterns were installed further away from the shrines to lead the people into the temples. As to the lanterns on the Tokaido road, from the edifying book by C. Vaporis “Breaking Barriers: Travel and the State in Early Modern Japan” we learn that they were usually erected by the locals on their own initiative, rather than on the government orders, for the convenience of the travelers. Some of such lanterns still can be seen at the sites of former Tokaido stations. Residents of post stations frequently put them at both ends of the settlement. (C. Vaporis, 45)

Hiroshige portrays a part of the main street of the station in great detail. This refers to all the buildings, their structure peculiarities, roof materials, etc.; even the masonry fortifying the sides of the earthen mounds are shown with remarkable precision. On close inspection one can discern that the stones used have hexagonal shape – this is *kikkōzumi* (亀甲積み), the tortoise shell masonry, one of the standard types of stonework in Japan. These stone walls were built in order to maintain the landscape neat and functional, since the stations of the Tokaido were controlled by the government as a part of the official governmental road. The areas surrounding the stations were maintained very well, always clean and repaired.

The composition of the print is carefully structured. This refers to the landscape elements as well as to all the details. The birds soaring upward from the peaks of the distant mountain align with the *torii* gate at the edge of the road in the middle ground, demarcating the print’s central axis and dividing the composition into two subtly balanced halves, ensuring the harmony of the entire scene.

The left part includes the mountain, a house with a thatched roof and some people. On the right side of the image, there are several houses that perhaps are business catering to the needs of those on the road – maybe, a shop, a tea house, or an inn. They are not identified by Hiroshige but an open public entrance to one of them can be seen.

All people shown in the print – those walking under the gate and to the sides of the *jōyatō* lanterns – can be immediately recognized as travelers since they wear Japanese traditional traveling hats *kasa*. The *kasa* were usually round large hats made of split bamboo or sedge and were used by everyone on the road.

The travelers on foot must be commoners judging by their travel mode and by the fact that most of them are carrying their luggage themselves either on their backs, across a shoulder or on shoulder-poles. A person of some importance is riding a sedan chair carried by the bearers. Travelers could rent such sedan chairs together with the service of those who carried them for a considerably modest price. On the roads, as at no other place in Japan, all social groups got to meet and interact and thus the road contributed greatly to the unity of the nation.

A woman, which is the only female figure in the print, walks in front of the palanquin. This woman does not seem like a traveler, since she does not carry a package or a bag so

she must have been from among service providers, maybe a waitress.

Hiroshige arranged people on the road in groups moving in the counter-flow — both on the main road and on the stairs. By doing so, he captured the atmosphere of traveling with its constant mobility that defined the life of the post stations.

This print represents a summer view of the Seki station on the Tokaido road. This can be easily inferred through the saturated green of leaves on the trees and of the grass on the hills. Japanese art in general was very sensitive to the seasonal changes. Hiroshige depicted the season, weather and the atmosphere through natural elements.

In the sky, a white wavy form reaches down to the lower part of the mountain. Hiroshige uses here Japanese traditional depiction of the clouds although western-style representation of clouds had become known in Japan several decades before the print was created. Hiroshige apparently had interest in rendering the depth of space using linear perspective familiar in Japan from the end of the 17th century. All structure are shown accordingly and lined up with the course of the road. The main road runs diagonally, which implies certain dynamism and suggests a direction of movement. The hill in the middle ground at the left forms the other diagonal that is opposite to the direction of the main road of the town.

Hiroshige typically gives particular attention to the atmospheric effects. The objects in front have more detail than the ones in the back. The hill in the middle ground has some details, which are less pronounced than those at the foreground, but obviously more numerous than those at the background. Also, the artist used black outlines to describe the distance difference; the blue mountain is not outlined but is rendered with gradation. However, the little hill and everything in front of it is done with outlines of various thicknesses. The foggy area beneath the mountain in the background suggests a significant gap between the mountain and the landscape elements in the middle and foreground. The blue color of the mountain also emphasizes the distance and endows it with a near mystical feeling.

An interesting feature of Hiroshige’s landscape prints is the usage of *mokumetsubushi*, the wood grain pattern of the woodblock. The *mokumetsubushi* is clearly visible in this print. This means that this is an early imprint within the edition, since later works contain less wood grain due to the layering of pigments and frequent application of pressure. *Bokashi* or color gradation is used liberally in the representation of the sky, mountain, and the hills. The *bokashi* printing technique is present in most of Hiroshige’s prints; here it is predominantly employed in the top part of the sky. *Bokashi* is particularly widely used in the wide uncarved areas that allow easy color manipulation.

All prints of the series contain recurring elements. The title of the series that reads *Famous Sights of the Fifty-three Stations* is put in red rectangular elongated cartouche in the upper right-hand corner of the print. Adjacent to this vertical cartouche, there is a smaller yellow square inset with the title of each individual print. It says: Junction of the Side Road to the Shrine. In the red rectangle close to the left edge of the print, Hiroshige’s signature is written.

In the bottom left corner of the print one can see three seals that are related to the print's publication. The publisher's seal looks like a three-peaked mountain with an ivy leaf lying underneath. This is the seal of a publisher Tsutaya Kichizō, whose firm Koeido belonged to Edo leading publishing houses of the time. Hiroshige's Vertical Tokaido set is one of its most famous publications. There are two oval shaped seals above the publisher's seal. The one on the right reads *aratame*, which means "examined" – this was a required censorship seal of approval. The seal on the left contains two characters – the one above is a sign for the Year of the Hare (one of the East Asian zodiac signs, corresponds to 1855), and the one below stands for seven and means the seventh month, which roughly corresponds to July. Therefore, the print was made and examined in the in the 7th Japanese calendar month of the Year of the Hare.

Altogether, this print shows a famous place of Japan and captures its eternal natural beauty together with rendering the specific atmosphere of traveling characteristic for a post station on the Tokaido road. Hiroshige achieves this by harmonious alignment of multiple representational techniques. They range from precise details such as the different buildings in the town and people on the road to the mountains and clouds in the background depicted in the abstracted style; correspondingly, meticulous linear descriptions are used side by side with the subtle tonal gradations of *bokashi*.

Glossary

by Tiara Little

While Hiroshige's prints are a great visual representation of the Tokaido road, they are also an extremely valuable historical document, an abundant source of information about the vanished age. Hiroshige's prints are packed with details rendered with great love, absolute knowledge and outstanding mastery. They intrigue the viewer, compelling curious onlookers to search for their meaning. It is the glossary commenting on historic objects, customs and manners captured by Hiroshige in his travel-related prints that will play an important role in understanding daily life in Edo Japan. The following glossary is a collection of terms defining culture-specific phenomena that have been mustered from Hiroshige's prints selected for the exhibition. These terms vary in the subject matter and work together to form a clearer, more precise and authentic picture of Edo Japan and travel along the Tokaido road. Through the explanation of these terms, the viewer can learn more about Japan's political and cultural structure during the Edo period. The glossary terms reflect the continuity of Japanese tradition from its ancient roots to the early modern popular culture of commoners celebrated through the purchase of woodblock prints. When used alongside the prints reproduced in the catalogue, the glossary acts as a guide to help direct the viewer through Hiroshige's Tokaido.

To begin, the glossary covers a variety of terms that relate to the political climate of Edo Japan. One such term is Sankin Kōtai, literally "the alternate attendance," a policy instituted by the third Tokugawa shogun, Iemitsu (1604-1651). The Sankin Kōtai required all the daimyo (about 300 altogether) who were the landed military lords in service to the shogun, to live in Edo every other year while spending the intermediate years in their own domains. Due to this political arrangement, the daimyō proceeded along the Tokaido either from Edo towards their land or from their land towards Edo in a big spectacular procession accompanied by a vast retinue. Two prints at the exhibition provide us with

the glimpse of the spectacle of the daimyo procession – the Nihonbashi (print No. 1) and Kameyama (print 47), both from the Hoeido edition, the so-called Great Tokaido, the first of more than twenty Hiroshige's print sets devoted to the Tokaido road. At the designated Tokaido post stations the daimyō and his attendants would stay at a honjin, an inn reserved for those of high class. Honjin with many features unique for this type of high-status accommodation can be seen on the print Seki (No. 48), also from the Hoeido edition. Due to the Sakoku or “closed country” policy, Japan became isolated from the Western world, thus limiting Western ideas from coming into the country. However, the limited trade with China and the Netherlands allowed for some Western philosophies to immigrate into the Eastern world. The sudden interest in Western knowledge led to the opening of Rangaku – the Dutch Studies School. It was from Rangaku that ideas, such as perspective were introduced into the Ukiyo-e prints. The Western principle of perspective is demonstrated in Hiroshige's Kameyama (No. 47) as the figures become smaller in the distance the farther away they move from the viewer.

Many distinctive Edo-period objects further the real feel in the viewers' experience of the prints. With the help of the jōyatō, stone lanterns, stationed at the entrance of each of the fifty-three stations on the Tokaido, travelers could be guided into the main street with shops, inns and small businesses catering to the needs of those on the road. The influx of travelers increased the merchants' wealth, thus leading some of them, who were from the middle-class, to begin copying the life style of the upper class in various pursuits, including leisure travel.

With the introduction and popularity of woodblock prints, many of those who couldn't afford actual travel were able to live through these images as if truly present in distant famous places. The prints made people virtually travel despite the restrictions that were put up against them. For instance, women often traveled with a male attendant. The purpose of having the attendant was for protection, and he, as a commoner, was permitted to carry just one short sword dochuzashi, a term that literally means “sword to be used while on the road.” Only samurai's were allowed to carry two swords with one of them being a long sword. However despite those limitations that were based on class, there were a few objects that all travelers used. For example, it was common to have a kasa, round sedge traveling hat; men wore kyahan, the gaiters – all this was used to protect the travelers' bodies from the weather. People traveled either on foot or by horse that was hired at the post stations. A horse driver always accompanied the rider; sometimes a horse would carry three riders simultaneously and then a special saddle would be used called a sambō kōjīn. Another very important mode of transportation was the palanquin, a box used to carry people along the

road and through the towns. The style of palanquin depended on who was riding inside of it. It was a distinctive feature of Edo period society deep-rooted in strict class stratification to have objects that openly showed where in social hierarchy the person belonged. Even the courtesan system had a ranking to it, which is important to understanding the bigger picture of Edo Japan.

Women of fashion from among the commoners used kiseru pipes to smoke tobacco and look stylish. They also followed special ways of holding the pipe to demonstrate their expertise in the matter. Daimyō wore their ceremonial two-piece garment kamishimo for all official occasions (for these details see, respectively, prints No. 14 and No. 48 from the Hoeido edition).

Although at a first glance, some of these objects and terms may have went unnoticed when looking at the prints, it is vital to understand their meaning and context. Even if the object is something as small as a smoking pipe, it still has a role in explaining the social and cultural side of the Edo period. It is through a thorough examination of the prints with the help of the glossary that one can discover truly insightful things about life in early modern Japan. Hiroshige includes a vast amount of details in his images that should inspire and lead to further research on the part of the viewer. By showing so much detail, Hiroshige gives the viewer the opportunity to be a part of daily life in Edo Japan. The purpose of the glossary is to help make his vision a bit clearer for those who are unfamiliar with the context of that time period.

Bandai	A round tub used to store fish in the marketplace.
Bokashi	A technique to produce a color gradation in the print. The gradation could be achieved through various means such as, using brushes, rubbing a damp cloth on the block before applying ink, or wiping the block after the ink has been applied.
Chōnin	A term used to refer to the commoner-townsmen class or the merchants and artisans. Despite the hierarchy put into place by Shi-nō-kō-shō, the chonin gradually became wealthy and cultivated their own brand of culture, which included kabuki theatre and the pleasure quarters in Yoshiwara.
Daimyō	Local military lords that addressed regional administrations and owned sections of land in Japan. As part of the Sankin Kotai that was instituted by the third Tokugawa Shogun, the Daimyō had to live in Edo for every other part of the year. When the Daimyō traveled along the road they chose to go in a large, elaborate procession.
Dochuzashi	A short sword that was carried by both commoners and samurai, it served as a means of protection while they traveled on the road. Since commoners weren't permitted to carry long swords like the samurai, their only permitted weapon was the Dochuzashi.
Giboshi	A bridge railing decoration that is typically in the form of an onion bulb, it can be made out of bronze, wood, tile, brass, shinchuu, and iron. When a railing is adorned by a Giboshi it is then called giboshi kouran. The Giboshi can also be found on top of portable shrines and lanterns.
Hanauri	Hanauri is the term used to describe the flower vendors during the Edo period.
Hikyaku	Currency, letters, and packages were all transported on the Tokaido through the use of messengers or Hikyaku. Some messengers were employed by shogunates or daimyo, while others may have worked independently. The express messengers were able to deliver their items within six days, and they traveled on foot or by horses. However, once the economy boomed and river and road traffic increased, the delivery time extended to about 12 days.
Hi-no-mi-yagura	A fire tower that was about 9 meters high, which would be erected in large cities during the Edo Period. The purpose of these watchtowers was to locate and watch over the progress of fires in the city.

Honjin	An inn that was designated for travelers of high social rank. Some of the people who would come to stay at these inns were aristocrats, daimyo, messengers of the shogun, or imperial messengers. However, at the end of the Edo period, the inns were allowed to accommodate common folk when it wasn't in use by a person of high society.
Hyōga-mage	An upswept hairstyle knotted into a loop that is worn by the Courtesans in Yoshiwara
Jōyatō	Stone lanterns that appeared at the entrance of the station towns along the Tokaido. The lanterns were used to help guide any late coming travellers on the road to lead them to some of the many inns and amenities the town had to offer.
Kamishimo	A formal, ceremonial garment worn by Samurai that consisted of a large sleeveless jacket (katanagi) over a kimono (kosode) with hakama pants.
Kasa	A Kasa is a traditional hat worn by Japanese travelers. The Sandogasa is a light, bamboo type of Kasa that protects travelers from rain and other elements
Kashihon'ya	Also known as book lenders or lending libraries, conducted their business by delivering books directly to the homes of their customers, peddling on the street, or by opening a storefront in the city. They played a major role in the publishing and distribution industry by allowing all customers, even those living in rural communities, to have access to the books being printed. The prices were also cheaper when a customer bought from a Kashi-hon-ya instead of purchasing the book outright.
Kiseru	A long, thin pipe used to smoke tobacco during the Edo period. It became a very popular device to use because it was a sign of social status for high society, and in some cases, could be used as weapon.
Kyahan	Gaiters or leg protectors that were used by Samurai to go under their armor in order to protect their shins. Kyahan was also used by travellers to protect them from the weather.
Mimikaki Kanzashi	Kanzashi is a traditional hair ornament that became popular for women to use during the Edo period. As people became more interested in hairstyling, more variations of the Kanzashi began to appear, which is where the Mimikaki Kanzashi originates. Mimikaki Kanzashi is an ear pick with a decorative handle that was popular among the commoners since expensive Kanzashis tended to be more for those of a samurai class or higher.

Mokumetsubushi	The wood grain pattern, which is what the woodblock printers cut along when recreating the artist's drawing on the block.
Nihonbashi	Nihonbashi, a fish market, is one of the fifty-three stations on the Tokaido road. It is also well known for the Nihonbashi Bridge or "Edo Bridge" which can be seen in a few of Hiroshige's prints.
Nishiki-e	Also known as brocade pictures, these woodblock prints resembled embroidered silk brocade. The first images of this style were displayed in Suzuki Harunobu's picture calendars, which was printed with multiple colors.
Oban	A large format image that was sized at 15 by 10 inches. It became the most common print size after the 1780s since it allowed for more drawing space both vertically and horizontally.
Palanquins	Carried upon the shoulders of four to eight bearers, palanquins were large boxes that were used for overland travel in Japan. It came in two different styles in order to accommodate the class and rank of the person riding inside. A norimono style was an enclosed version used for daimyo because it had a plush interior. While the kago style was a half-box used for the economy class and made of woven bamboo pieces.
Rangaku	Known as "Western Learning," it was the study of the natural sciences taught from Dutch and European languages. Rangaku was the influence for the Western techniques being used in drawings for prints. For example, perspective and three-dimensional modeling came out of Rangaku.
Sakoku	"Closed country" Refers to a time in 1633 when Shogun Tokugawa Iemitsu closed off the borders of Japan to foreigners, except for the Chinese, Koreans, and the Dutch. This policy also forbade citizens from going abroad.
Sambō Kōjin	The triangular formation that appeared when travellers sat on the saddle of a pack horse that carried loads on both sides of it. The term also translates to "three-treasure-God"

Sarutahiko Mask	Inspired by the Shinto deity Sarutahiko, these long-nosed masks were used in religious festivals by Buddhist priests. The human design of the face is based on a deity transformation called the Tengu. The Tengu was originally seen as an enemy of Buddhism in the beginning, but during the Edo era it was portrayed in a more positive light. The long nose of the mask would be interpreted in Ukiyo-e prints as both comical and sexual.
Sekifuda (yadofuda)	A sign that would be put up at the entrance of an inn to let the people know someone important was currently staying there. The signs were typically used for the Daimyō and their procession when they came in from traveling on the Tokaido road.
Shi-nō-kō-shō	An early term used to describe the four estates. "Shi" or samurai were ranked at the top followed by "nō" farmer, "kō" craftsmen, and "shō" merchants at the bottom. By the end of the seventeenth century, citizens were still referring to this ranking of estates, even though the commercial success of the business men altered the hierarchy.
Sayagata	A design pattern of interlocking swastikas that would be paired up with other motifs such as, plum blossoms, chrysanthemum, bamboo and orchids. The design would appear on satin fabric and would be used on the border of rugs, blankets, and tablecloths.
Sumiyoshi Odori	Originating at the Sumiyoshi Shrine, the Sumiyoshi Odori is a production that consists of various traditional folk dances. The production originally would be displayed during the Sumiyoshi Rice Planting Festival as a means to bless the crops. Eventually, the dance became popular enough to be performed at other shrines.
Tate-ōban	A vertically oriented large format print.
Tokaido	The Tokaido is a road that consisted of fifty-three stations, which connected Kyoto and Edo together during the Edo period. Along this road, travelers could stop by shops and inns to purchase various amenities made specifically for them. Daimyo processions would also travel along this road as they travelled to the various stations.

- Ukiyo-e** Translated literally means ‘pictures of the floating world’ however within the context of the prints it is meant to describe the subject matter depicted in the images. Ukiyo-e prints reflect the daily life of early Japan. The subjects range from pleasurable entertainment to farmers working in a field. Ukiyo-e prints have a strong sense of Japanese nationalism within them.
- Yoshiwara** Edo’s licensed quarter for prostitution. It was in this area that the Courtesans or “yūjo” entertained their clients with activities that ranged from sex to intellectual conversation. There was a level of sophistication upheld in the brothels described as tsūiki. Many of the women from the Yoshiwara district are depicted in woodblock prints by artists, such as Hiroshige.
- Yoko-ōban** A horizontally oriented large format print.

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