

***SENSÔ SAKUSEN KIROKUGA (WAR CAMPAIGN DOCUMENTARY PAINTING):
JAPAN'S NATIONAL IMAGERY OF THE "HOLY WAR," 1937-1945***

by

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Sensô Sakusen Kirokuga (War Campaign Documentary Painting):
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This dissertation is the first monographic study in any language of Japan's official war painting produced during the second Sino-Japanese War in 1937 through the Pacific War in 1945. This genre is known as *sensô sakusen kirokuga* (war campaign documentary painting). Japan's army and navy commissioned noted Japanese painters to record war campaigns on a monumental scale. Military officials favored *yôga* (Western-style painting) for its strength in depicting scenes in realistic detail over *nihonga* (Japanese-style painting). The military gave unprecedented commissions to *yôga* painters despite the fact that Japan was fighting the "materialist" West. Large military exhibitions exposed these paintings to civilians. Officials attached national importance to war documentary paintings by publicizing that the emperor had inspected them in the Imperial Palace.

This study attempts to analyze postwar Japanese reluctance to tackle war documentary painting by examining its controversial and unsettling nature. The art community has been hesitant to reflect on its alliance with the regime by relegating responsibility for wartime collaboration to individual artists. That hesitance has resulted in a critical gap in the history of modern Japanese art. This study attempts to fill the void by examining artistic and political circumstances surrounding war documentary painting from three perspectives as follows.

(1) Art historical significance: *Yôga* war documentary paintings offer a record of *yôga*'s development since the Meiji period. Critics say that *yôga*'s expression during the war was exceptional, but I show it was consistent with *yôga*'s history.

(2) Nationalistic pragmatism toward art: Modern Japanese leaders were often motivated by nationalism. This study illustrates that the alliance forged between the wartime regime and the art community was a continuation of Meiji governing tradition.

(3) Ideological and propaganda aspects: By analyzing documentary paintings of what officials called the "Holy War" (*Seisen*) of 1937-1945, this study demonstrates central propaganda mechanisms in the images. Without a single portrayal of the Emperor, Japanese war documentary painting expressed the absolute importance of the imperial order over the individual.

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INTRODUCTION

I. About This Study¹

The subject of this dissertation is the new genre of painting in Japanese art that emerged during the second Sino-Japanese War in 1937,² and disappeared with the end of the Pacific War in 1945. The genre of art is known as “*sensô sakusen kirokuga*” (war campaign documentary painting).³ The work was commissioned by Japan’s wartime military regime. Today it is often referred to as *sensô kirokuga* (war documentary painting). Public exposure to these works in the postwar period has been minimal because of their controversial association with the regime. As a result, this culturally potent work has attracted little scholarly attention in Japan. The standard evaluation of these official war paintings is largely delegated to the issue of war responsibility on the part of the work’s creators. People tend to dismiss war documentary art altogether as mere propaganda. In an attempt to take a comprehensive look at Japan’s official war documentary painting, this study provides the first monographic examination of it in any language. This study introduces new material including U.S. Occupation documents collected at the American National Archives. Also uncovered are commission letters preserved at Koiso Memorial Museum in Kobe, Japan. Moreover, this study relies heavily on an official war artist dispatch kept in the personal possession of Sasaki Shigeru, an independent researcher. This study revises the conventional view of Japan’s war art as a historically outlandish diversion that took place

¹ Japanese names traditionally present the surname or family name first, followed by the first or given name. The full reference to a Japanese person’s name in this study will follow that order.

² The second Sino-Japanese War was called *Shina jihen* (China Incident) in Japan during the conflict, and *Nicchû sensô* (China War) after the Second World War.

³ This study derives its translation of “*sakusen kirokuga*” from Bert Winther-Tamaki’s earlier reference to “campaign documentary painting.” See his “Embodiment/Disembodiment: Japanese Painting during the Fifteen-Year War,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 52:2 (1997): 145-180.

under the national emergency of war. Further, this study explains some important propaganda mechanisms present in war documentary painting.

The following curatorial definition of the work is used internally by the Tokyo National Museum of Modern Art, which houses the largest collection of war documentary paintings totaling 128 works.⁴ Its description represents the prevailing view of this work:

Sensô kirokuga (war documentary painting) made beginning in 1937 through the end of the war in 1945 was intended to foster a fighting spirit among the Japanese people, as well as document the war. The Imperial Army and Navy commissioned painters who were *chûken* (the mainstay of the art community, or rank-and-file professionals) to create the paintings. The military designated these painters as *jûgungaka* (military-service painters) or *hôdôhan'in* (war correspondents), and sent them to the front to observe the war, and to paint. As the production spanned the course of the war, and took place at various war fronts, there are some variations. According to Kuroda Senkichiro, a member of the Army Press Division of the Imperial Headquarters who was involved in plans creating a series of imperial offering paintings (*kennôga*) in 1940, war documentary paintings can be divided into the following categories:

- A) Works by painters dispatched by the Army Press Division of the Imperial Headquarters and the Press Division of the Army Ministry to Manchuria and China in the fall of 1940, and to Southeast Asia in the summer of 1942. The work was intended as an offering to the Kenchufu Hall in the Imperial Palace.
- B) Works by painters dispatched by the army's Central China Division from 1937 to 1938.
- C) Works by war correspondent painters organized by the army and navy in the southern Pacific.
- D) Works by painters dispatched by the Army Press Division of the Imperial Headquarters to meet the needs of their campaigns. Also included is the work by unmustered painters who strongly desired to be dispatched.
- E) Works by painters assisted by military units originating in their home prefectures.

⁴ *Shozôhin mokuroku: Suisai, sobyô, sho, chôkoku, shiryô, sensô kirokuga* (Museum Collection Catalog: Watercolor, Calligraphy, Sculpture, Documentation, and War Painting) (Tokyo: National Museum of Modern Art, 1992).

- F) Works created by soldiers at the front.
- G) Works created by artists who remained in the Japanese homeland.

Many of these paintings were shown at exhibitions throughout the war years, such as the Holy War Art Exhibition, the Great East Asia War Art Exhibition, the Marine Art Exhibition, and the Aerial Art Exhibition. They were circulated in different venues around the nation. The *Asahi* newspaper supported these exhibitions and their circulation in major cities.⁵ (The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo)

This study will extend and revise the museum's curatorial synopsis given above. This study will name war documentary artists, and show that the works involved were created by some of Japan's best talents of the time. This study will reveal the basic planning and production of the works, identify their cultural significance, and elaborate on how they were presented to mass Japanese audiences. Further, this study will explore how the paintings communicated nationalistic ideas to their audiences.

War documentary painting emerged as part of a military propaganda strategy for bolstering public support of the protracted war, and creating a permanent legacy for the imperial forces. Both the Imperial Army and Navy dispatched their war painters to observe the war and paint; and many of the resulting paintings depicted battles in the air, at sea, and on the ground, among other subjects. With war documentary painting, the military sought a way to document its military accomplishments in realistic detail. It was this emphasis on documentary quality that caused the military to prefer the Japanese version of Western oil painting on canvas called *yōga* (Western-style painting) over Japan's traditional watercolor painting on paper or silk called *nihonga* (Japanese-style painting). The *yōga* style of painting, practiced by artists in Japan since

its official introduction in the Meiji period (1868-1912), is known for its advantageous techniques for persuasive realism, which had been perfected in Western art. As a result, most war documentary painting is in oil. Thus, the study has a clear focus on this foreign painting medium, and its implications.

The war documentary images are monumental in size. They usually adhere to the Japanese canvas size of 200 (roughly 72 x 100 inches), and came to about two hundred pieces through the war years. They decorated the walls of military-sponsored war art exhibitions, which traveled not only inside the country but also to Japanese-occupied Manchuria and Korea. Besides the official war paintings, the war art exhibitions displayed hundreds of war-theme paintings submitted by patriotic artists eager to participate in this national artistic movement. War pictures enticed the curious public to imagine the war fought in distant lands and seas, drawing upon their knowledge of the war from the state-controlled news media, which also publicized the shows. In fact, the *Asahi* newspaper, a major national news daily, cosponsored war art exhibitions and promoted the events in the paper. The *Asahi* newspaper did this in much the same way as today's major Japanese newspapers promote the blockbuster art exhibitions that they sponsor: by printing reproductions of the official war paintings and exhibition reviews in its pages.

The circulating war art exhibition was designed to be a mass-mobilizing national event. They were scheduled to mark a military anniversary such as the onset of the second Sino-Japanese War (July 7, 1937), and later that of the Pacific War (December 8, 1941, in Japan time). For example, the First Holy War Art Exhibition (*Daiikkai seisen bijutsu tenrankai*) of 1939 celebrated the second anniversary of the most recent Sino-Japanese War. In addition, the First

⁵ *Sensô kirokuga shûfuku hôkoku 1977* (War Documentary Painting Restoration Report 1977) (Tokyo: National Museum of Modern Art, 1977). This museum report was compiled for internal use and

Great East Asia War Art Exhibition (*Daiikkai daitôa sensô bijutsu tenrankai*) of 1942 observed the first anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor. This particular exhibition counted 3,854,000 visitors, which was about ten times the number of visitors to the annual Ministry of Education Art Exhibition of the same year, an official salon exhibition popular since its inception in 1907.⁶ The national importance of these exhibitions was also reinforced by news of the specially arranged advance viewing of the state-commissioned war documentary paintings by the emperor at the Imperial Palace. The citizen's act of attending a war art exhibition and viewing a painting was considered as patriotic as the artist's effort that had gone into the work itself. The audience considered going to a war art exhibition as "an act of national pride," according to art historian Tanaka Hisao, who had seen these exhibitions as a boy.⁷ Art critic Oda Tatsuo, who also visited a war art exhibition on a field trip organized by his elementary school art teacher, recalls that the exhibition audience appeared exhilarated.⁸

Such popular images of strife and martial glory quickly faded from the Japanese memory in the postwar era following the nation's defeat, and the entry of the Allied Occupation Army into the homeland. Anything that was closely associated with the totalitarian military regime became stigmatized and was considered best to be avoided. Also, those in the art community who had advocated patriotism in art during the war and who continued to hold prominent

thus is not commercially available.

⁶ "Daitôa sensô kirokuga seisaku no tame gaka genchi haken keikaku" (Plans to Dispatch Painters for Great East Asia War documentary painting). This document bears neither the issue date nor an issuing organization, but its detailed content indicates that the army composed it in preparation for the 1943 military-sponsored painting trip to the southern Pacific regions. The entire text is reprinted in Sasaki Shigeo, "'Sensô to bijutsu' kankei bunken shiryô mokuroku" (Bibliography Relating to 'War and Art'), *Kaizô* 12 (1997): 182-5.

⁷ Hisao Tanaka, *Nihon no sensôga: sono keifu to tokushitsu* (Japan's War Painting: Its Genealogy and Characteristics) (Tokyo: Perikansha, 1985), 15.

⁸ Tatsuo Oda, "Sensô kirokuga saiken" (Revisiting War Documentary Painting), Okudera, Kiichi, et al., *Taiheiyô sensô meigashû* (Masterpieces of the Pacific War Painting) (Tokyo: Nôberu shobô, 1967), 112-3.

positions in the postwar art world were reluctant to address the issue. Painters who worked as official war artists largely fell into silence after some debate about painters' war responsibility were featured in the pages of the *Asahi* newspaper in 1945. Then, Fujita Tsuguji (1886-1968), the most prominent and prolific war painter and thus the most criticized by his colleagues, voluntarily expatriated himself, first to New York in 1949 and finally to Paris in 1950. His departure seems to have put an end to the anxiety surrounding this topic among Japanese painters.

In available studies of Japanese art, scholars have only discussed war documentary painting on rare occasions. Many of the painters who produced these official war paintings were accomplished artists of the time, whose other works continue to attract audiences today at various museums in Japan, but their wartime output still lacks the treatment of serious scholarship. The lack of attention to the subject is also noteworthy given the unprecedented scale of state support that *yōga* painters received. For example, there is no mention of war documentary painting and its military patronage in the authoritative *Modern Currents in Japanese Art*. The publisher claims it is “one of the 30-odd volumes in the famous series...covering the entire range of Japanese art.”⁹ This survey was originally written in 1965 by Kawakita Michiaki, an authority of Japanese art, and translated into English in 1974. The author relegated the art made during the eight-year war to the final paragraph of the section discussing modern Japanese painting in the fifth chapter “From Modern to Contemporary.”

It is only in recent years that scholars both in Japan and abroad have begun to pay attention to this long elided subject. The conspicuous lack of basic research on the subject has caused some confusion. In the specific case of the 1937-1945 war, there is no consistency in the

⁹ Kawakita Michiaki, Charles S. Terry trans., *Modern Currents in Japanese Art* (New York: Weatherhill; Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1974).

use of the term *sakusen kirokuga* (campaign documentary paintings) used to describe official war paintings among Japanese art experts. They often refer to *sakusen kirokuga* as “*sensôga*” (war painting), but they also use the term “*sensôga*” in the broader sense of referring to any war-theme paintings. A distinction in terminology is important because war documentary paintings comprise a specific genre that was directly linked to the military’s domestic ideological warfare.

Such scholarly misconceptions and indifference warrant this study. Some findings are fascinating. First, the state war art program offered an unprecedented opportunity for Japanese artists to participate in the national affairs of war. The dedication of these artists proved to be contrary to a widely held impression that Japan’s art community was sluggish or nonfunctioning during the war. *Yôga* painters had been traditionally seen as unpatriotic for their artistic style’s origin in the West, but to their surprise, they received many military commissions for their painting style’s realism itself.

Second, this study demonstrates that war documentary painting had evolved from and was informed by the Japanese art of the preceding periods, by which time Japanese artists became aware of the importance of mass audiences in art. This study identifies war panorama painting of the late nineteenth century, and socially concerned art movements in the prewar years as significant artistic precursors to war documentary painting. Panorama painting introduced a modern Japanese audience to a monumental visual format for entertainment; war was often the theme that was depicted and popularized. The prewar social concerns shared by Japanese artists manifested themselves in various developments in form that they considered useful for reaching wider and wider audiences. These included the deployment of mural painting, the proletarian art movement, and the advocacy of exhibition-hall art by *nihonga* painter Kawabata Ryûshi. Panorama painting, mural painting, and the exhibition-hall art all employed a large painting

format in their attempt to promote art among Japanese people. On the other hand, proletarian artists tried to have their ideas come across to the public directly through their painting.

Third, the military regime's sponsorship of *yōga* reveals historical continuity in pragmatic and nationalistic aspects of Japan's officialdom and governing culture since the beginning of Japan's Meiji era. *Yōga*'s historical development in modern Japan is closely linked with the official view of it as a superior technique from the West that could depict objects in a photographically realistic manner. *Yōga* did not offer Japanese officials an aesthetic mode of expression that was agreeable to their understanding of art. Later, Japanese policy leaders endorsed *yōga* when they realized they could make use of this technique for nationalistic ends. The military's endorsement of *yōga* in the midst of war against the West is consistent with the traditional, official understanding of this Western-originated painting medium.

Finally, this study explains how the imagery of war documentary painting was designed to contribute to state war propaganda as an effective persuasion tool. Two important persuasion elements it harnessed were the nonfiction portrayal of hardships that imperial soldiers faced, and a consistent emphasis on selflessness. Many war paintings show the ordinary and mundane routines in the lives of soldiers in the front. This seemingly unimpressive imagery was designed to invite empathy from the audience toward their fellow citizens. Also, the pictures should have reminded viewers of their own duties to the nation.

The militaristic and propagandistic potential of war documentary painting attracted the sharp attention of the American-led occupation army. The Occupation army would become directly responsible for rescuing many war documentary paintings from possible destruction or loss in the confusion of the war's aftermath.¹⁰ Because of the occupation army's collection

¹⁰ The OCE's memorandum that summarized the early part of the confiscation operation clearly indicates that the target of procurement was Japan's official military war paintings, although it does not

effort, 128 war documentary paintings (in addition to 25 unofficial war paintings) have survived intact. These paintings were kept in American custody until 1970 when they were returned on indefinite loan to Japan. Before 1970, the Japanese public had no knowledge of the postwar whereabouts of these paintings, and this temporary loss of war art no doubt robbed Japanese people of the opportunity to reflect on their content.

In my view, the treatment and evaluation of confiscated war paintings by American art officials also cast a shadow on how the Japanese would think about them. Thus, a brief description of the American combat art program, which differs from Japan's in significant ways, will be useful for understanding its conception of the role of war art. As part of this discussion, I will also refer to Nazi Germany's state war art program because Japanese and German war art operations were similar to each other. Either state had an official need to integrate art into its war propaganda machinery. In addition, the history of this confiscation itself is important background information for the reader to understand before I address how the subject of war documentary painting has been discussed in postwar Japan.

II. Comparative Perspective: War Art Programs in the US and Nazi Germany

Japan's national war art program was not unique in terms of the ruling officials' need to record the scene of historic moments. There are countless images of military victories from ancient times in many cultures, and this practice had continued into the modern era. During the Second World War, many countries had their own national war art programs. Although the ways

use a specific term referring to war documentary painting. Chief Engineer, Hugh J. Casey, "*Japanese War Art*," February 26, 1946, Library of Congress Microfilm Publication GHQ/SCAP CIE (C) 06719, reprinted in Kawata, 32-5 and Hirase, 6-7.

these programs operated varied, a universal purpose was to create a historical record of the war, much as it always had been. However, the nature of the art produced during this modern war is fundamentally different from that of past wars in significant ways. Modern war art was not exclusively for the elite and privileged to reflect on as artistic commemoration and celebration of victories, but was organized by nation states as part of their military public relations efforts.

Hanson W. Baldwin, a U.S. Navy officer who supervised the Navy's combat artists during the Second World War, clarifies the aims of the modern navy war art program:

[War paintings were] not only valuable for the historical record and for the information of the public, but also used as industrial incentive, in factories turning out Navy material for war; recruiting purpose; and for the morale of the men in the fleet, who like to see, in the various publications reaching them, that the work they are doing and the sacrifices they are making are being brought before the public eye.¹¹

With advances in mass media, reproductions of war images could easily reach a wider audience, even including military strategists outside of the nation. In the case of Japanese art, the military issued a number of postcards using war imagery made by war painters, and disseminated them to both fighting men and people at home.¹² Creating war pictures became more important in sustaining the morale of the people at home and soldiers on the front as the war progressed.

Certain elements characterize the three state-sponsored war art programs of the Japanese, American, and German governments; their differences are also important. First, Japanese official war artists were not conscript soldiers, meaning that they were not combat artists. The state art commissions they received made them a part of the privileged class that was exempted from military service, but eligible for special military support. For example, they were given

¹¹ Hanson W. Baldwin, *The Navy at War: Paintings and Drawings by Combat Artists* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1943), 5.

preferential treatment in getting art supplies, which became gradually scarcer during the war. Military artists enjoyed the relatively comfortable accommodations normally reserved for military officers while on tour to observe the war, as well as similar attendant care. The high social status and artistic reputation of Japanese official war artists are similar to those who enjoyed the patronage of the German Nazi regime. German official war artists did not need to engage in military service to receive state sponsorship, although some considered being a soldier an important qualification for being a good war artist.¹³ Coincidentally, the number of official war artists in Japan and that in Germany were close: Hitler's government appointed about eighty painters, while Japan's military government commissioned a total of seventy-nine painters.¹⁴ In contrast, American war painters were combat artists who had already been enlisted in military service. For example, in the American Navy, the combat artist's primary job was to record, but he had battle stations and junior officer duties.¹⁵

Second, the Japanese official war art program sought out the distinguished talents of the day who held leadership positions in the art community, including those who served as judges for the official art salons. Since the military patrons recognized detailed accuracy as the most important quality for war painting, they favored the naturalistic representation that could be furnished by Western-style oil painting. Many of the official war painters were educated at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, Japan's official art school, and had studied in Europe to acquire authentic Western painting techniques. In Nazi Germany, the totalitarian official war art program also embraced noted artists of the time, who exhibited at the state-run Great German Art

¹² Ann Nishimura Morse, et al., *Art of the Japanese Postcard* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 2004).

¹³ For German official war artists, see Peter Adam, *Art of the Third Reich* (New York: H. N. Abrams, 1992), 163-5

¹⁴ The German number is taken from Adam, 163, and the Japanese number is based on my own count from surveying war art exhibition catalogs.

Exhibition set up by Adolf Hitler in 1937. They were accomplished academic painters who created large works in oil depicting a variety of nationalistic subject matter beyond a purely martial theme; themes of the German motherland (figure 1) and family (figure 2) were often depicted.¹⁶ These renowned Nazi painters include Werner Peiner, Adolf Wissel, Elk Eber, and Franz Eichhorst. While war painters of Japan and Germany can be categorically called academic practitioners, the definitions of “academic” style differed because Japanese Western-style oil painting took its own course of development in a radically different cultural environment from Europe. I will explore the issue with more detail in the first chapter. In America, the painters active as combat artists were not necessarily academic oil painters, nor were they people whose names would be notable in American art history, although many of them were trained in art schools. In fact, some were water colorists and illustrators. Images of war recorded by American combat artists are most often small-size drawings and sketches, executed while they were on duty (figure 3). Commissions to create larger works in oil or in murals went to some of the combat artists after the war, including Griffith Baily Coale, William Franklin Draper, Kerr Eby, and Edward Reep.

Differences in a conscript’s status, the artist’s required training background, the choice of artistic medium, and size of painting each attest to what kind of painting was desired and defined as war art in these countries. Although it possessed influential capacity, American combat artwork is a straightforward, on-the-spot record of events seen through the eyes of the artist. In contrast, the large canvases made by Japanese and German war artists were more than a document of personal experience of war; they were elaborate reconstructions of war narrative reflecting the state sponsor’s taste and propaganda needs. To illustrate these differences, here are

¹⁵ Baldwin, 6.

two sets of three paintings showing aircraft engineers on the deck of a ship, one by Japanese war painter Arai Shôri, and the other by American Navy painter Mitchell Jamieson. Arai's work, entitled *Maintenance Work aboard Aircraft Carrier* (Kôkû bokanjô ni okeru seibi sagyô, 1943, figure 4), shows the passage of time during a typical sequence of events on an aircraft carrier as a visual narrative. It starts with soldiers working on the maintenance of an aircraft, progressing to the aircraft taking off from the deck, and ending with the scene of farewell. One might develop a sense of sentimentality looking at these paintings in order. On the other hand, Jamieson's three pictures, *Escort Carriers* (figure 5) are straightforward representations of similar work performed by American soldiers in a rather emotionally detached manner.

In describing American combat artist Donald Dickson (figure 6), John Hersey succinctly defines two types of representation exemplified by the two painting examples in the previous paragraph. "Dickson," Hersey wrote, was "attempting in his serious drawings and paintings to represent things as they really were, not as they ought to be."¹⁷ Jamieson's work emulates what Dickson was doing ("things as they really are"). But the large oil canvases created by Japanese and German artists, including the example of Arai's painting, belong to Hersey's latter category of "[things] as they ought to be." The war art of Axis nations glorifies its own soldiers to justify the continuing struggle. Considering the totalitarian character of the war governments in Japan and Germany, art could not escape state control any more than other fields of industry or professions could. However, Japanese and German subject matter, and the way that it was conveyed in the work differ according to their wartime ideologies and cultural patterns. These

¹⁶ Both Japanese and German governments' liking of traditional academic art resulted in their oppression of avant-garde artists in each country, although to differing degrees.

¹⁷ Ken McCormick and Hamilton Darby Perry, *Images of War: the Artist's Vision of World War II*, foreword by John Hersey (New York: Orion Books, 1990), xiv.

significant distinctions between imperial Japanese and Nazi German war art are topics that I will explore in this study.

III. Postwar Confiscation of Japan's War Paintings by the U.S. Occupation Army

The 1944-1946 edition of *Japanese Art Yearbooks* (Nihon bijutsu nenkan), an official chronicle of events and news in Japanese art, describes the confiscation:

There are many great war paintings produced by Japanese painters who were mobilized to the front during the war. These documentary paintings [called *kirokuga*] that the Army and Navy commissioned totaled over one hundred including some of high artistic value. The General Headquarters, Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers has collected these paintings at the Ueno [Tokyo Municipal] Art Museum intending to ship superior works among them to the United States for exhibition in various venues.¹⁸

This brief entry represents the extent of general knowledge of this event in postwar Japan.

The impression this *Japanese Art Yearbooks* entry conveys is that the occupying forces were interested in Japanese war paintings for their artistic value, and that the collecting of war paintings was part of the formal occupation policy. However, recent examinations of GHQ/SCAP (General Headquarters, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers) documents by Japanese art historians Hirase Reita and Kawata Akihisa reveal that the truth concerning the motivation and method for confiscating and evaluating the collected art works was more complex.¹⁹ Also, artist Yamada Shin'ichi (1899-1991), who had assisted American officers in

¹⁸ *Nihon bijutsu nenkan: 1946* (Japanese Art Yearbooks) (Tokyo: National Research Institute of Cultural Properties 1946; reprint, Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 1996), 5.

¹⁹ Hirase Reita, "Sensōga to America" (War Painting and America), *Bulletin of Himeji City Museum of Art* 3 (1999): 1-45. Kawata Akihisa, "What Is to be Done with Them: Process of the Procurement of War Paintings Seen in American National Archives," *Kindai Gasetu* 8 (1999): 1-41.

obtaining Japanese war art, left observational notes that become public at his 1995 retrospective exhibition at Aoki Gallery in Miyazaki City. These supplement the Occupation archives by providing a Japanese perspective on the issue.²⁰ The following history of the confiscation is based on these materials.

As the American army undertook its mission to demilitarize and democratize various aspects of Japanese society after the Occupation, which began in late August 1945, Japan's war documentary painting caught the attention of the Americans. The Combat Artists Section in the Office of Chief Engineers (from now on referred to as OCE) had started to investigate Japan's wartime art production at its own discretion without acting on the orders of higher authorities. Central to this investigation were American combat artist officers, Major Barse Miller (in the early stages), and Captain Leslie Anderson after the departure of Miller in late October. Major General Hugh J. Casey, Chief Engineer of the OCE, oversaw both men's work. Army documents suggest that the collection effort was begun "on a more or less informal and personal basis" by Major Miller, who had been acquainted with Fujita Tsuguji while both were expatriate painters in Paris.²¹ Fujita was one of the foremost official painters of the war and the leader of Japan's Army Art Association (Rikugun bijutsu kyôkai), a military affiliated group of patriotic painters.

In late September 1945, Major Miller (and his Japanese-American translator) visited Matsugami Tomoyoshi, deputy chief of the Planning Division at the *Asahi* newspaper, to investigate Japan's war art. *Asahi's* Planning Division had been in charge of cultural events including official war art exhibitions that the military and the newspaper cosponsored during the

²⁰ Excerpts of Yamada's notes are reprinted in Sasaki Shigeo, "Sensôga no sengo shori" (Postwar Treatment of War Paintings), *Live and Review* 17 (2000): 46-55.

war years, when numerous war paintings were displayed to the Japanese public. During the three-day investigation, Matsugami gave a detailed inventory of artists who had painted war paintings for the military, and where the resulting works were stored or hidden. Matsugami also helped to put Miller in touch with Fujita Tsuguji for consultation.

In addition to Fujita's help, the Combat Artists Section enlisted the assistance of Sumi Kiyoshi, Secretary of the Army Art Association, and painter Yamada Shin'ichi, art chief of the imperial forces' press division in Korea.²² During the war, Yamada had been involved in the preparation of the fifth exhibition of Japanese war art scheduled for exhibition in Seoul, Korea. War paintings had arrived at the Seoul train station, but in the wake of Japan's defeat, he had been unable to send the paintings back to the country, and instead privately entrusted their safety to his Korean artist friends. Thus, Yamada's involvement was invaluable in procuring the war documentary paintings left in Seoul. Yamada assembled war paintings at military facilities in Japan proper²³ and traveled to Seoul with Captain Anderson in May of 1946 to recover the paintings that he had left behind. Their return from a month-long trip marked the completion of the American forces' physical confiscation, which took about six months and yielded 153 paintings.²⁴

²¹ "Japanese War Propaganda Paintings," February 21, 1946, Library of Congress Microfilm Publication GHQ/SCAP CIE (A) 08145, Library of Congress, Washington DC, reprinted in Kawata, 30-31.

²² Yamada was an accomplished painter, whose works won entry to annual official art exhibitions sponsored by the Ministry of Education. Since the Kantô Earthquake in 1923, he had lived in Korea until the end of the war. During the war, he produced war paintings, although not commissioned by the military. Two of his works are included among the returned 153 war paintings, *British and Australian Captives Work at Inch'on, Korea* (Inchon furyo syûyôjo ni okeru eigôhei no sagyô, 1943) and *Field Gun Firing at Dawn near Nantai University in Tianjin* (Tenshin Nankai daigaku fukin futsugyô yahô sentô zu, 1944).

²³ Hirase, 40-45. "Sensôga no yukue wa ikani" (Where Did War Paintings Go), *Sansai* 1-2 (1946) 52, reprinted in Sasaki, "Postwar Treatment," 50.

²⁴ Sasaki "Postwar Treatment," 48-50. The number of confiscated pictures reported at times differs from source to source. I suspect that this might be partly due to different counting methods used, for example, for a pair or a triptych painting.

There was a need “to secure the paintings as samples of Japanese propaganda for the information of the War department.”²⁵ In letters dated November 8 and November 21, 1945, the Historical Properties Section of the War Department sent requests to the Combat Artists Section for samples of war art materials produced in Japan to be included in two American exhibitions. The first showing was scheduled at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York on the theme of the occupation of Japan for early January 1946. The other was planned for the projected National Military Museum, which wanted Japanese war art samples to “supplement” the work done by American combat artists.²⁶ By the time the War Department’s request for Japanese war art samples reached the Combat Artists Section, the confiscation operation was already under way and Major Miller had left the section for an assignment in China. Without further documents suggesting Miller’s pre-September knowledge of these art exhibitions, it is not clear how the War Department’s request played a role in Miller’s “actual intention” in collecting war art. Yet the enthusiastic requests for Japan’s war art for exhibitions in the United States might have further validated the urgency of the collecting operation in the mind of the combat artist officer.

It was in early 1946 that General Douglas MacArthur, who as Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers had broad authority directing occupation policy, learned about the ongoing procurement activity. MacArthur expressed concerns over the procurement in his meeting on February 2, 1946 with Major General Hugh J. Casey, Chief Engineer of the OCE. The

²⁵ “Japanese War Propaganda Paintings.” Regarding the identity of the author of the document who signed only his initials “LS,” Kawata suspects that he could be Laurence Sickman, previously an East Asian art curator at Nelson Art Gallery, or Major G. L. Stout, both at the Arts and Monuments Division of the CIE. Kawata, 13 footnote 8.

²⁶ Washington (Historical Property Section) to Commander in Chief, Army Forces in Pacific (Combat Art Section), untitled report 18893, November 7, 1945, Library of Congress Microfilm Publication GHQ/SCAP AG (C) 00090; Library of Congress, Washington DC, reprinted in Kawata, 18. Also, see “Japanese War Art.”

commander was most troubled with two interrelated problems. First, who could claim the right to these pictures, America alone, or other allied nations as well? Second, what were they, cultural properties of artistic importance to be protected, war booty to be divided by allied nations under reparation settlements, or merely propaganda to be treated without discretion? It was difficult for General MacArthur or anyone else to make a judgment as to how to deal with these paintings at a time when no art experts had filed any formal assessments. The commander tentatively allowed General Casey to continue collecting, but urged him to arrange to assess the value of the works. He also prohibited any of the works to be sent to the United States until further deliberations were made.²⁷ It was clear to these army officers that “all such paintings which glorify Japanese war operations should be secured and taken from the Japanese” as part of the ongoing elimination of militarism and nationalism.²⁸

To mark the completion of the collection phase, the Occupying Army held an exclusive exhibition of 151 war paintings for its personnel at the Tokyo Municipal Art Museum in Ueno between August 21 and September 2, 1946.²⁹ This show had provided an opportunity to examine the collection of confiscated Japanese official war paintings. It would have been an ideal time for American officers with a proper knowledge of art to give an assessment of the works’ value and recommend their future treatment. Unfortunately, there is no evidence at this time to indicate that American army officers composed such a study. However, some military documents give us a glimpse at certain responses by those in the American military to the body of the work. Currently available documents do not detail the occupying army’s process for determining the final disposition of the paintings.

²⁷ “Japanese War Art”; see also, “Japanese War Propaganda Paintings.”

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ The museum is referred to as the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Gallery in Occupation documents.

Yamada wrote in his personal notes of 1946 that an unnamed chief officer who was involved in the exhibition had emphasized the war paintings' "cultural value" as the most significant aspect to study. And Yamada wrote that the cultural value of the works was the topic most discussed among American military visitors to the show. The term "cultural value" may implicitly speak for the foreignness that those American audiences naturally felt in facing culturally unfamiliar Japanese art works, even though they depicted another side to the same war that these men had fought. It would be understandable if the sense of unfamiliarity made them suspect an invisible link between the war pictures and Japanese cultural patterns and ideas, although they had few clues as to what such a link might be.

The Arts and Monuments Division of the Civil Information and Education Section (CIE) was another Occupational government office that came to be involved in the task of evaluating the procured war paintings. The CIE oversaw the demilitarization and democratization of cultural life in Japan and the civil education of the Japanese people. The CIE's subordinate office of Arts and Monuments Division was specifically in charge of art-related matters, enlisting on historians on its staff. When the Combat Artists Section sought advice from the Arts and Monuments Division, it agreed to help assess the works in question.³⁰ I have so far found no document to suggest that the division issued a formal assessment of the Occupation-collected war paintings. But a public account made by Sherman Lee, one of its staff members, informs us about the nature of the division's verdict on the war pictures.³¹ Interviewed by the *Asahi* newspaper, Lee suggested that he saw little artistic merit in these paintings and trivialized the

³⁰ "Japanese War Propaganda Paintings."

³¹ Sherman Lee was previously curator of East Asian art at the Detroit Museum of Art. After the war he became curator of East Asian art at the Cleveland Museum of Art and authored the book entitled *A History of Far Eastern Art*, 5th ed. (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1994). Another Asian art specialist Howard Hollis, who had been curator at the Cleveland Museum of Art, joined the Arts and Monuments Division about the same time.

works stating he “would predict that these paintings would soon pass into oblivion among Japanese artists.”³²

Records show that American occupational authorities left the war paintings stored until the spring of 1950 when the Japanese art community contacted the CIE about them.³³ After the end of the 1946 exhibition, the war paintings had occupied five rooms at the Tokyo Municipal Art Museum. As Japanese artists resumed their public exhibitions after the war, there was a growing need for the release of those rooms to expand the museum’s usable floor space. The museum was one of the most desirable and rare public art spaces in Tokyo, and had been used as a site for military art exhibitions during the war. During the occupation, the space was used for the annual Joint Exhibition of Art Groups (*Bijutsu dantai rengôten*), and is still used for various group art shows. To remedy this lack of floor space imposed by the war art storage, the *Mainichi* newspaper acted on behalf of Japanese artists by contacting George N. Kates, Fine Arts Advisor of the Religions and Cultural Resources Division of the CIE. Carrying on the traditional relationship between the press and art, the *Mainichi* newspaper was a sponsor of this joint show. Responding to the plea, Kates began to look into the paintings in question and the condition of the storage facility. After visiting the museum for inspection with a procurement officer, he concluded that the assembled war paintings were “of indifferent artistic value...but nevertheless important because of their strong anti-American flavor and propaganda bias.”³⁴ He also acknowledged that the Japanese artists’ demand for the release of the museum rooms was justifiable.³⁵

³² “War Painting Seen by an American,” *Asahi shinbun* September 16, 1946.

³³ Hirase observes a lapse in Occupation documents that mention the war paintings between 1947 and 1950. Hirase, 22.

³⁴ Hirase, 26-7. I would like to thank Hirase for providing me the original English document from which to quote directly.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

In May 1951 Lieutenant Colonel Nugent, Chief of the CIE, wrote to the Chief of Staff of the American Army to give his recommendation as to how to deal with the war paintings. Nugent was anticipating the approaching conclusion of the San Francisco Peace Treaty between the Allied Powers and Japan scheduled for April 1952. If the Occupation administration took no action on this matter, the treaty would essentially end the Occupation and automatically authorize the transfer of the ownership of the paintings from the Occupation forces to the Japanese government. The problem of the requisitioned space occupied by the war paintings also prompted him to take action. In his letter, Nugent reiterates the conclusion that his subordinates, Lee in the Monuments and Arts Division and Kates in the Religions and Cultural Resources Division, had reached. The confiscated war paintings were not serious art, he writes:

In reference to justification for seizure, subject paintings may be considered war booty. They have only a propaganda value and do not qualify for consideration as works of art. Their disposition may therefore be determined without reference to provisions in post-surrender policy documents, in the Rules of Land Warfare, and in international law which requires the protection, preservation, and restitution of cultural property in areas under military occupation.³⁶

By dismissing the artistic property of the paintings, the American army could avoid any possible multilateral negotiation needed for a distribution of the war paintings among the Allied Powers.³⁷ Because of their potential as militaristic propaganda, Nugent also advised against returning the paintings to Japanese possession, fearing the works might be used to reverse the effect of the Occupation's reforms.

³⁶ Chief of the CIE, Lieutenant Colonel D. R. Nugent to the Chief of Staff, "Disposition of Japanese War Art," May 28, 1951, GHQ/SCAP Record Group 331, National Archives at College Park, MD.

³⁷ The governments of Australia and the Netherlands had inquired about Japan's war paintings depicting their former territories. Also, the representation of the Soviet Union and China in war paintings was a concern for possible political negotiation needed for an allocation of the works. "Disposition of Japanese War Art."

If the procured war paintings were deemed dangerous as militaristic and nationalistic propaganda undesirable for the Japanese to possess rather than as cultural assets to be protected, American military authorities could safely remove the works from Japan. This entailed two different scenarios. One was to destroy the dangerous works so no one would ever be able to access them. The other was to forward them to the United States and put them in American custody. Receiving background information from the CIE on the procured works, the Secretary of the American Army opted for preservation of the paintings over destruction. On July 26, 1951, the 153 procured paintings were then shipped to the Historical Properties Branch, Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, in Washington D.C.³⁸ As a result, the requisitioned rooms at the Tokyo Municipal Art Museum were released for use by Japanese artists.

The centennial anniversary of the US-Japan treaty of commerce³⁹ stimulated a new interest in Japan about the war paintings taken by the occupying army to the United States. The treaty was signed in 1858, and the Japanese envoy sailed to San Francisco in 1860 with the ratification paper. In 1962, the *Asahi* newspaper, wartime cosponsor of many military war art exhibitions, called for the return of the paintings by approaching the American government through the American Cultural Center. The Tokyo National Museum of Modern Art sided with the daily paper, arguing that the absence of these war pictures had left a significant vacuum in the history of Japanese modern art.⁴⁰ In November 1964, the museum and the newspaper jointly submitted a formal request for the expedited return of the confiscated works to the Ministry of

³⁸ The signal corps of the occupying American army photographed the 153 confiscated works on November 18, 1947. I have found four sets of copies of these photographs at the National Archives at College Park, MD.

³⁹ The Treaty of Amity and Commerce between the United States and Japan is also known as The Harris Treaty since it was facilitated by Townsend Harris, the first American consul to Japan.

⁴⁰ *Shûfuku hôkoku*, 6.

Foreign Affairs.⁴¹ In 1968, the two countries agreed that the United States would return the paintings to Japan on indefinite loan, and thereafter Japan would be permitted to treat them at its own discretion. In April 1970, the works came under the care of the Tokyo National Museum of Modern Art as the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Education reached a consensus in designating the museum as the sole custodian.

In the postwar period, there were two occasions when these confiscated war paintings sparked intense public interest. The first time was in 1967 when Japanese photographer Nakagawa Ichirô discovered by chance the whereabouts of the confiscated war paintings. The storage location of the works in America had long been unknown to the Japanese public, so his discovery spurred an interest in the long-lost art. Nakagawa obtained permission from the American Department of Defense, under whose jurisdiction Japan's war paintings had been kept, to take photographs of the paintings. He exhibited his photographs at the Seibu department store in Ikebukuro, Tokyo. The second time was when the Tokyo National Museum of Modern Art, abruptly cancelled an exhibition of the returned war paintings in March 1977 out of a national desire to avoid stirring up angry sentiments among the people of Asian countries occupied by Japan. The museum had completed extensive restoration work on the paintings, and had planned to display about a third of them among other recent acquisitions. Since July 1977, the museum has shown the returned war paintings only a few pieces at a time by rotating them in and out of its permanent exhibit area as an opportunity for the public to see the paintings.

⁴¹ Ibid.

IV. Overview of Debate and Research on Japan's War Art

Historically, postwar Japanese art professionals have avoided mentioning Japanese war art, and thus there is little consensus on the importance or meaning of war documentary paintings. When critics refer to the pictures, they tend to dismiss them as mere propaganda of no artistic merit, as exemplified by the comments made by American art official Sherman Lee in the *Asahi* newspaper. This general avoidance and dismissal tend to substantiate the view that war painting was an aberration that existed outside the course of modern Japanese art. This led to the conclusion that documentary war art was only the result of a dubious militarism that swept the nation. Some felt that the war painters were simply accomplices of the military government and were even culpable as war criminals.

In fact, this dismissive attitude toward war documentary painting was set in motion earlier by an essay written by artist Miyata Shigeo, entitled, “Gaka no sessô” (The Morals of the Artists), which appeared in the *Asahi* newspaper on October 14, 1945. Reflecting a fear of war crimes prosecution lurking in the art world, Miyata had called on his fellow painters, naming a few who had served the military as official war painters, to lay down their brushes for a while to demonstrate their conscience as artists.⁴² Miyata himself had gone to the front as a volunteer painter, but he had not been considered good enough to receive a military commission. Strict standards for judging artists excluded the majority of the art community. Overnight, a military commission, which had been highly praised during the war, suddenly turned into a liability for the artist under the democratic reforms instituted by the Occupation. Tsuruta Gorô (1890-1969)

⁴² Miyata Shigeo, “Gaka no sessô” (The Morals of the Artists), *Asahi shinbun* October 14, 1945.

and Fujita Tsuguji, who had both served in the Japanese military as official painters, and who were mentioned by name in Miyata's essay, defended their wartime service to the nation in the October 25, 1945 issue of the newspaper. Tsuruta cited his own independence from political ideology while Fujita justified his service as his patriotic duty as a Japanese citizen.⁴³ This debate revealed the need for artists to recalibrate their positions in a postwar society, and the stakes were enormous for those who had benefited from a close association with the military during the war. Unfortunately, no one wanted to carry this debate beyond superficial moralizing, as people were eager to put the war behind them and move on.

After the Tokyo National Museum of Modern Art withdrew its scheduled exhibition of about 50 returned war paintings in March 1977, the art press rebuked the action. The *Bijutsu techô*'s special September issue "Sensô to bijutsu: sensôga no rekishi teki dojô" (War and Art: the Historical Ground of War Painting) aimed to explore the sociopolitical environment that was making war paintings a taboo issue in postwar Japan.⁴⁴ The journal provides several articles, which summarily mention important and informative developments of wartime art production. Also included is Yoshida Yoshie's essay, "Tennô, kenryoku, sensôga" (Emperor, Power, and War Painting), in which she argues that the subjugation of art to Japanese government authorities since the late nineteenth century became the foundation for the modern alliance between the military and war painters. Yoshida argues that this history of subjugation was at the root of the shared reluctance of the postwar government and those painters to show war art.⁴⁵

⁴³ Tsuruta Gorô, "Gaka no tachiba" (The Standing of the Artists), *Asahi shinbun* October 25, 1945; Fujita Tsuguji, "Gaka no ryôshin" (The Conscience of the Artists), *Asahi shinbun* October 25, 1945.

⁴⁴ Sensô to bijutsu: sensôga no rekishi teki dojô (War and Art: Historical Ground of War Painting), *Bijutsu techô* 424 (1977).

⁴⁵ Yoshida Yoshie, "Tennô, kenryoku, sensôga" (Emperor, Power, and War Painting), *Bijutsu techô* (June 1977): 82-96.

Yoshida underlined the role of governmental patronage in the development of modern art in Japan as the basis for the collusion of war painters and the regime. She is echoed by Kikuhata Mokuma in his book titled *Tennô no bijutsu: Kindai shisô to sensôga* (The Emperor's Art: Modern Ideology and War Painting, 1978).⁴⁶ Tanaka Hisao offered similar ideas in his book titled *Nihon no sensôga: sono keifu to tokushitsu* (Japan's War Painting: Its Lineage and Characteristics, 1985).⁴⁷ Both Kikuhata and Tanaka share the view that the regulating of cultural initiatives begun by the government in the Meiji period (1868-1912) undermined the independence of Japanese artists and impeded their creative drive over the following decades. I am indebted to the analysis of these three authors, which is reflected in this study's examination of the impact of ruling authorities on *yôga* artists.

Kikuhata also makes the provocative suggestion that wartime art manifested an ethnocentrism pivoting around the emperor, which had been the continuing fundamental ideology characterizing modern Japan. This point is well documented by John W. Dower's exhaustive treatment of propagandistic aspects of wartime Japanese graphic media in his book *War without Mercy*.⁴⁸ Dower's study has been an instructive resource in my investigation of the ideological expressions to be found in war documentary painting.

Tanaka as an art historian is more interested in examining the artistic precedents of war documentary painting than Kikuhata. Tanaka has remarked that before the Meiji era, it was not common for artists in Japan to depict contemporary battles in painting, sculpture, or public monuments in order to glorify recent victories. The Mongol invasion scroll depicting combat with foreigners is one notable exception. When Japanese artists painted war or warrior heroes,

⁴⁶ Mokuma Kikuhata, *Tennô no bijutsu: Kindai shisô to sensôga* (The Emperor's Art: Modern Ideology and War Painting) (Tokyo: Firumuâtosha, 1978)

⁴⁷ Tanaka, *Nihon no sensôga*.

they took their subjects from myth and earlier history. Such paintings are called “*rekishiga*” (history painting), but not “*sensôga*” (war painting). How did Japanese official war painters understand the importance of the task of documenting the ongoing war? *Yôga* painters were inspired by their exposure to the well-established and highly lauded Western history painting genre, but Kawata Akihisa laments the conceptual weakness found in the large canvases of war documentary painting.⁴⁹ I intend to examine the question raised by Tanaka about the concept of visualization of contemporary events in Japanese art with a focus on the modern representation of war and war heroes.

Kikuhata and Tanaka also point to the promotion of realism by the proletarian art movement in the prewar years; they describe this as an important precursor to the artistic execution of war documentary painting. Most war painters had no affiliation with this movement, which ended quickly without producing any significant number of memorable images. However, a shift in the relationship of art to the people was taking place in the prewar years as Japan experienced urbanization and the rise of a middle class. This dissertation assesses the impact of an unexplored connection between war documentary painting and the proletarian art movement. The origins of the war documentary painting genre are found in earlier efforts to reach wider audiences with the subject of current affairs; in other words, this new genre is something other than a simple appropriation of Western history painting.

Scholarship on Japanese war art increased in the 1990s, stimulated in part by two events in the art world. In 1991, Miyagi Prefectural Art Museum mounted the *Sensô to bijutsu* (War and Art) exhibition as the second installment of its ten-year anniversary exhibition series, *Shôwa*

⁴⁸ John W. Dower, *War without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (New York: Pantheon, 1986).

⁴⁹ Kawata Akihisa, “Jûgonen sensô to ‘daikôzu’ no seiritsu” (The Fifteen-Year War and the Establishment of ‘Large-Composition’), *Bijutsushi* 44:2 (March 1995): 248-51.

no kaiga (Painting of the Shôwa Era). The exhibition catalog included an informative chronology of events in the Japanese art world during the war years, and reproduced a collection of wartime essays highlighting the wartime discourse on art.⁵⁰ In 1994, Japan's Art Historical Association held a symposium on war and art.⁵¹ A couple of years later, Tan'ô Yasunori and Kawata Akihisa, central participants of the symposium, coauthored *Wars in the Images*, a broad survey of war art production in modern Japan covering the period ranging from the first Sino-Japanese War to the Pacific War.⁵²

A rare, feature-length television treatment of war documentary painting aired in 2003 on Japan's NHK BS-Hi (Nihon hôsô kyôkai high definition) channel. BS-Hi requires satellite reception equipment, and thus the program's audience penetration was limited. The program was titled *Samayoeru sensôga, Jugungaka to izokutachi no shôgen* (War Painting Adrift: The Testimony of War Painters and Their Family). It features interview footage of Ogawara Shû, the last war painter who was alive at the time of the production. He outlines his involvement with war painting, and speaks his mind about his part in the war effort. Willing family members of

⁵⁰ Sakai Tetsuo and Nishimura Isaharu eds., "Sensô to bijutsu, kanren nenpyô, shiryô" (World War II and Art: Chronology and Source Material), *Shôwa no kaiga: Dai-nibu, sensô to bijutsu ten* (Exhibition of Shôwa-era Art, Part Two, War and Art) (Sendai: Miyagi Prefectural Museum, 1991).

⁵¹ Symposium summary was reproduced in Tan'ô Yasunori and Chino Kaori, "Sinpojiumu, 'Sensô to bijutsu': Gaiyô oyobi tôgi hôkoku" (Summary of a Symposium on War and Art), *Bijutsushi* 44:2 (March 1995) 263-65. For those interested in the issue of gender and war, one of the presenters of the symposium, Wakakuwa Midori, has examined mass-produced images of women in magazines targeting housewives. See her expanded version of the presentation, *Sensô ga tsukuru joseizô: dainiji sekai taisenka no Nihon josei dôin no shikaku propaganda* (Images of the Women Shaped by The Second World War: Visual Propaganda for Mobilization) (Tokyo: Chikuma shobô, 1995).

⁵² Tan'ô Yasunori and Kawata Akihisa, *Imeiji no naka no sensô: Nisshin Nichiro kara Seisen made* (War in Image: War Art from the Sino-Japanese War and Russo-Japanese War to the Holy War) (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1996).

war painters also share their thoughts. The program is weak in providing the historical circumstances in which painting production emerged, and lacks critical insight.⁵³

The increasing attention given to the subject of war art by Japanese scholars has fostered interest abroad. John Clark has shown an early interest in this subject in his book *Modernity in Asian Art* (1993). He finds that the representation of nationalism in Asian art often takes the form of allegory.⁵⁴ Bert Winther-Tamaki offers a provocative analysis of collective Japanese identity through the representation of the human body in war painting in his monograph “Embodiment/Disembodiment: Japanese Painting during the Fifteen-Year War.” He suggests that Japanese beliefs regarding death were manifested in the insignificance of the physicality he observed in hand-to-hand combat paintings, which portray the uniformed bodies of Japanese soldiers battling enemies to the death.⁵⁵ This study will also take a close look at this type of death-match representation with consideration to wartime rhetoric of sacrifice, and Japanese cultural attitudes toward death. Among the many official war painters, Fujita Tsuguji has been the most intriguing to many researchers for various reasons, including his international reputation, artistic talent, and his creative composition of hand-to-hand combat pictures. Mark Sandler has written a focused study of the artist entitled “A Painter of the ‘Holy War’: Fujita Tsuguji and the Japanese Military.”⁵⁶ Sandler offers a complex description of the highly skilled

⁵³ *Samayoeru sensôga, Jugungaka to izokutachi no shôgen* (War Painting Adrift: The Testimony of War Painters and Their Family), produced by NHK Enterprise 21, 120 min., (Tokyo: NHK-BS-High Definition television, 2003).

⁵⁴ John Clark, *Modernity in Asian Art* (Broadway, NSW, Australia: Wild Peony, 1993).

⁵⁵ Winther-Tamaki, “Embodiment/Disembodiment.”

⁵⁶ Mark H Sandler, “A Painter of the ‘Holy War’: Fujita Tsuguji and the Japanese Military,” Marlene J. Mayo and J. Thomas Rimer, eds., *War, Occupation, and Creativity: Japan and East Asia, 1920-1960* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001), 188-211. He previously wrote about a Japanese painter known for his dissent during the war. Sandler, Mark H, “The Living Artist: Matsumoto Shunsuke’s Reply to the State,” *Art Journal* 55:3 (Fall 1996): 74-82.

painter's artistic response to the war in his detailed examination of Fujita's career during the war years.

In the late 1990s, researchers continued painstaking archival research, following the example of the Miyagi Museum exhibition catalog. Kawata Akihisa and Hirase Reita turned their eyes to the U.S. Occupation army's wartime papers archived in the United States. Their attempt to recount the process of American confiscation of Japanese war paintings resulted in Hirase's "*Sensôga to Amerika*" (War Painting and America, 1999) and Kawata's "*Sorera wo dôsureba yoinoka?*" (What is to be done with them?, 1999). These studies refuted the notion that the confiscation was part of the occupational administration's strategic plan to demilitarize Japan. Sasaki Shigeo, an independent researcher, made another scrupulous documenting effort. He compiled a bibliography of published materials concerning war art that appeared in the art magazine, *Kôzô*, a tremendous asset for future researchers.

Getting access to good graphic reproductions of war paintings is a challenging problem because of the lack of such images. Moreover, direct physical access to the war paintings at the Tokyo National Museum of Modern Art is limited. Many war art exhibition catalogs published during the war years are available at libraries in Japan, but the quality of the reproduced images is often unsatisfactory. Quality graphic resources published in the postwar period include *Taiheiyô sensô meigashû* (Masterpieces of the Pacific War Painting, 1967), a compilation of the photographs of war paintings Nakagawa took in the United States,⁵⁷ and *Asahi bijutsukan (têma hen 1): Sensô to kaiga* (Asahi Museum by Theme 1: War and Painting, 1996)⁵⁸ featuring images

⁵⁷ Okudera Kiichi et al., *Taiheiyô sensô meigashû* (Masterpieces of the Pacific War Painting) (Tokyo: Nôberu shobô, 1967).

⁵⁸ *Asahi bijutsukan (têma hen 1) sensô to kaiga* (Asahi Museum by theme 1: War and Painting) (Tokyo: Asahi shinbunsha, 1996)

of restored war paintings. The monthly art magazine *Geijutsu shinchô*'s August 1995 issue also provides many reproduced images of war paintings in color.⁵⁹

V. Chapter Summaries

The present study intends to provide basic, comprehensive research on official war painting for the first time in any language. I propose to reexamine the assumption that war art does not belong on the officially delineated course taken by modern Japanese art because it was a simple diversion misguided by nationalists of the military regime. This misperception is begotten from a general lack of study of this subject. Therefore, the primary goal of this study is to show how this controversial group of art works fits into the continuum of Japanese modern art. I attempt to provide narratives contextualized to the historical conditions influencing the creation and delivery of these works with three perspectives for analyzing the significance of war documentary painting in Japan's ideological campaign during the war. The first requisite was the relationship between the Japanese state and the artist. The second requisite was the significance of the depiction of war in Japanese art. Finally, I demonstrate that the styles and content presented in war art were known to comprise an effective vehicle for reinforcing state-sanctioned ideology, ensuring its deployment by the military state. This study also refutes the American Occupation's convenient conclusion that Japan's war documentary painting had no cultural value, by illustrating the work's unique emphasis on the suffering and self-effacement of the Japanese combatant on behalf of the nation.

⁵⁹ "Gakatachi no sensô" (Painters' War), *Geijutsu shinchô* 548 (August 1995).

The first chapter provides preparatory discussions concerning Japanese Western-style painting, since the oil painting medium dominated the production of campaign documentary painting for its ability to “record” war in realistic detail. I will survey the development of Western-style painting in Japan from its onset in the mid-1850s to the establishment of an academic painting mode around 1900. Then I will address unsuccessful attempts by *yōga* painters to create Western-type history painting culturally and technically. Both would have enormous implications when a later generation of *yōga* artists faced the challenge of creating monumental scenes of war on canvases.

The second chapter traces the affinity cultivated between modern political authorities and artists dating back to the beginning of the Meiji era, in order to understand the nature of the military’s mobilization of artists to create national art genres during the war. Japan’s modern art policy and institutional apparatus evolved in parallel with the adoption of Western painting techniques and the resulting changes in the larger arena of Japanese art. Thus, I integrate into the investigation the emergence of the two currents in modern Japanese painting: *yōga* and *nihonga*. I wish to illuminate how the authorities’ approach to *yōga* and *nihonga* at times shaped the environment that resulted in fostering a comfortable alliance between the military and war painters during the 1937-1945 war.

In chapter three, I investigate the artistic sources that might have contributed to the creation of war documentary painting. I begin with a historical overview of war art in premodern and modern Japanese art prior to the second Sino-Japanese War. Then, I focus on the main topic of this chapter, which is to examine the preceding artistic elements unique to war documentary painting. These evolved in a radically different cultural context from that of the West, where masterpieces of war art belong to the historical painting genre. I argue that war

documentary painting is a form of mass propaganda that emerged from two elements judged as improper by Japan's academic standards in the prewar years: the entertainment medium of war panorama painting and the socialist art movement.

The fourth chapter analyzes the style and content of representation in war documentary painting and its association with wartime ideology. First, I provide an overview of the genre in terms of visual trends and characteristics, and subject matter. Then, I discuss the contemporary ideological relevance in certain types of images that were used for popular war propaganda. I reveal manifestations of the internal Japanese debate over what is Eastern and what is Western in certain images. I locate specific instances of wartime imperial ideology in the paintings, which served as the foundation for Japan's effort to instill a sense of self-worth in its citizens. In particular, I am interested in the imagery of the soldier as an embodiment of the concept of national polity (*kokutai*).

In the conclusion, I clarify some generally assumed aspects of war documentary painting by offering a fuller description of the genre based on this research. This rewrite intends to replace the current curatorial text.

CHAPTER ONE

DEVELOPMENT OF *YÔGA* IN MODERN JAPAN

In this chapter, I will provide a brief history of *yôga* (Western-style painting) from the second half of the eighteenth century to the 1890s during which time Japan began to assimilate Western oil painting and establish its own academic mode. In the process, I will emphasize events that would have important ramifications for the involvement of *yôga* in national policy and in the business of depicting war. I will address four issues involving *yôga*'s troubled rise. First, I outline the historical basis for the late nineteenth century onset of the study of Western art as a superior scientific technique. Second, I characterize the cultural rivalry between Western-style painting and traditional Japanese-style painting. Third, I discuss certain *yôga* artists' attempts to "Japanize" (*nihonka*) their art under the nationalistic climate of Meiji. Finally, I trace the establishment of academic style in *yôga* and its implications for war documentary painting.

Western-style painting's most praised attribute was its realism in the view of Japanese authorities as they evaluated the importance of this foreign art from its official introduction in the late Edo period. This attribute, which had direct application to the practical sciences, motivated authorities to fund and promote the study of Western-style painting. Emphasis on the realistic depiction of objects was problematic since it caused the Japanese version of Western-style painting to be categorized as a technique rather than a mode of aesthetic expression. Also, Japanese people were not used to artistic representation that was truthful to nature, and tended to see the motifs depicted in oil painting in very literal, secular terms. Japanese audiences saw oil paintings more as they did photographs: they had no inherent spiritual content.

I. Inception of Western-Style Painting

Familiarity with European art forms dated back several centuries in Japanese history. Catholic missionaries began to arrive in Japan in the second half of the sixteenth century, bringing with them information and images from Europe. The first European painter to teach in Japan was Italian Jesuit Giovanni Niccolò, who established a painting studio in Nagasaki on the southernmost island of Kyushu to instruct Japanese converts in oil and fresco painting.⁶⁰ European artistic technique and media were different from the traditional way of Japanese painting, which was devoid of three-dimensionality, and used black ink (*sumi*) and natural mineral pigments (*iwa enogu*) mixed with water. Japanese used the binding medium of animal glue (*nikawa*) for application onto paper or silk. This painting tradition originally came from China along with Buddhism during the Asuka period in the mid-seventh century. Instead of framing, Japanese paintings normally require mounting into hanging scrolls, hand scrolls, folding screens, or standing panels. There are different schools by painting style and themes or motifs ranging from nature, native literature, Chinese Classics, to Zen philosophy.

However, the period of welcoming Catholic missionaries was short: in fear of the religion's potential to undermine national stability, the government banned Christianity in 1612 and limited foreign trade. Since only the Protestant Dutch were then permitted to trade with Japan, books and prints relating to practical sciences such as medicine, mathematics, and engineering were imported by way of Holland from Europe. Among the wondrous novelties imported from European civilization, the accuracy of the Western methods for depicting three-

⁶⁰ Michael Sullivan, *The Meeting of Eastern and Western Art* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 8.

dimensional depth and precise detail were among the most remarkable discoveries in the eyes of the Japanese viewers.

This astonishing power of the Western technique to illustrate depth and detail was succinctly stated by Satake Shozan (1748-1785). He was a scholar of Dutch Studies who wrote two painting treatises entitled *Gahô kôryô* (Principles of Painting) and *Gato rikai* (Understanding Pictures and Diagrams) in the late eighteenth century. He placed value on the practical nature of the new Western painting technique, stating in the latter document: “the usefulness of painting lies in its ability to represent things in their likeness.”⁶¹ To demonstrate the superiority of Western painting for rendering the three-dimensional object, he pointed out that Japanese-style painting, which relies primarily on line drawing, could not distinguish between a circle, sphere, and the curved surface of a semi-sphere.⁶² Japanese traditional painting, which had assimilated the techniques of Chinese ink and brush painting over hundreds of years, focused on representing the artist’s inner grasp of the subject through mastery of line drawing. Traditional Japanese and Chinese painting also valued brushwork as the manifestation of the painter’s character.⁶³ In contrast, Western artists since the Renaissance had explored the material world from an objective viewpoint and perfected the depiction of spatial depth and volume based on the scientific principles of perspective and chiaroscuro (light and dark contrast).

⁶¹ Quoted in Hirayama Mikiko, *Restoration of Realism: Kojima Kikuo (1887-1950) and the Growth of Art Criticism in Modern Japan* (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 2001), 67. Chapter 1, Section 3 and Chapter 2, Section 2 in Hirayama’s dissertation examine how Japanese artists were trying to understand and appropriate Western-style painting on their own terms. They tried to mediate Western-style painting with the concepts of Chinese and Japanese painting long familiar to them.

⁶² Kaneko Kazuo, *Kindai nihon bijutsu kyôiku no kenkyû: Meiji jidai* (A Study of Art Education in Modern Japan: Meiji Period) (Tokyo: Chûôkôron bijutsu shuppan, 1992), 24.

⁶³ Generally the focus on line and brushwork has remained unchanged among painters in the school of traditional painting in the modern period, although some painters have experimented with Western painting principles, which will be mentioned later in this section.

Shiba Kōkan (1747-1818) was another advocate of Western painting in the second half of the eighteenth century in Japan. He published an important painting treatise, *Seiyō gadan* (Discussions of Western Painting) in 1799.⁶⁴ Kōkan was aware that the uniqueness of Western painting involved more than its superior craftsmanship, and its ability to render realistic detail. The most critical difference was in its system of thought, Western rationalism. Kōkan wrote, “The Western method of painting is based on the profound understanding of rational principles.”⁶⁵ This Western alternative for depicting things preoccupied the inquisitive minds of progressive Japanese scholars like Shozan and Kōkan. Although people like Kōkan did not relegate Western painting to a mere technique, Western painting was nevertheless commonly viewed and appreciated as a superior method of representation rather than a vehicle of aesthetic expression, and this perception was subsequently fostered.

In the mid-nineteenth century, Japan abolished a self-imposed seclusion policy and opened its ports to international commerce after being directly confronted by a fleet of vessels led by Commodore Matthew Perry of the United States. Witnessing the imposing industrial power of America, Japanese leaders felt a strong need to modernize the nation. The new Western method of “realistic” depiction based on empirical objectivity thus came to be considered indispensable for Japan’s effort to catch up with the Western powers, and to strengthen its industry and military. The career of Kawakami Tōgai (1827-1881) attests to a close link that developed between Western art and the practical sciences around the time of the Meiji Restoration of 1868. Kawakami, who had formerly trained in traditional Japanese-style painting, studied the materials and techniques of Western painting from a broad range of

⁶⁴ Satake Shozan and Shiba Kōkan were indirectly associated with one another through Hiraga Gennai (1726-1779), who was a well-known botanist and amateur painter.

Western books housed in the Institute for the Study of Western Books (Bansho shirabesho) while he was working there. The institute had been established by the Tokugawa shogunate in 1856 to sponsor Western studies in fields such as language, sciences, military skills, engineering, architecture, and cartography.⁶⁶ With his self-taught knowledge of Western painting, Kawakami was appointed head of the Painting Bureau (Gagakukyoku) at the Institute.

After the fall of the shogunate, Kawakami Tôgai continued his career under the Meiji government which he served by teaching Western Studies at the Military Academy (Heigakuryô) under the auspices of the Ministry of Education (Monbushô). He later managed the Army Land Survey Department. He also taught Western-style painting at his private studio in Tokyo,⁶⁷ where he trained young painters including Koyama Shôtarô (1857-1916). Koyama himself later became a drawing instructor at the Military Academy. He is remembered as one of the first modern-era Japanese war painters during the first Sino-Japanese War (1894-95).

The Meiji government established Japan's first art school, the Technical Art School (Kôbu bijutsu gakkô), in 1876 with two departments, painting and sculpture, both in Western style. The painting teacher, who was invited from Italy, was Antonio Fontanesi (1818-1882), a well-established landscape painter in the naturalistic Barbizon School style and formerly a professor at the Royal Academy of Art in Turin (figure 7). He afforded Japanese young painters their first opportunity to learn solid painting skills from a teacher well versed in the European academic tradition. Many leading *yôga* artists of the Meiji period came from Fontanesi's class,

⁶⁵ Quoted in Hirayama, *Restoration of Realism*, 69. For a study of Shiba Kôkan in English, see Calvin French, *Shiba Kôkan: Artist, Innovator, and Pioneer in the Westernization of Japan* (New York and Tokyo: Weatherhill, 1974).

⁶⁶ The forerunner of this institute was opened in 1855 as the Institute for Western Studies (Yôgakusho), and was later expanded and renamed the Institute for Development (Kaiseijo).

⁶⁷ Kawakami Tôgai's studio was one of the four private painting studios in Tokyo at the beginning of the Meiji period; the others were run by Takahashi Yuichi (1828-1894), Kunisawa Shinkurô

including Koyama Shôtarô, Asai Chû (1856-1907), Goseda Yoshimatsu (1855-1915), Harada Naojirô (1863-1899), Matsuoka Hisashi (1862-1943), and Yamamoto Hôsui (1850-1906).

Although the Technical Art School facilitated the learning of Western painting with instruction provided by an authentic foreign teacher, the government's underlying motive was to use the study of Western art as a way to foster the transfer of scientific and practical knowledge to Japan from the West. The school was operated as part of the Imperial College of Technology under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Industry and Technology (Kôbushô). This particular ministry played a central role in the government's economic policy under the official slogan "enrich the nation, strengthen the army" (*fukoku kyôhei*) and "foster industry, promote production" (*shokusan kôgyô*).⁶⁸ Thus the purpose of the art school was, as suggested by the school's name and affiliation, to train young Japanese to become competent technicians who would devote their skills towards Japan's industrialization. From the perspective of the government, art and industry were undifferentiated in their common requirement for increased technical sophistication, and therefore the boundary between them was blurred at this time.⁶⁹ Indeed, the domestic industrial fairs sponsored by the government in the first decade of Meiji demonstrated an affinity among the skills of engineers, inventors, and artists by displaying not only industrial commodities but also art and craft works.

Emphasis on the utilitarian benefit of learning Western methods of painting was mostly derived from the government's pragmatic appreciation of this new art. Aesthetic considerations now took a distant second place, but Western-style painting was still uncharted territory for

(1847-1877), and Yokoyama Matsusaburô (1834-1884). Goseda Hôryû (1827-1892) also had an art studio in Yokohama until he moved to Tokyo in Meiji 6.

⁶⁸ This will be further discussed in Chapter 3.

⁶⁹ The concept of "*bijutsu*" (fine arts) was newly introduced to Japan from Europe. For an analysis of the formulation and transformation of Japanese terminology relating to the arts, including

Japanese painters themselves; realism was certainly the attribute they praised the most and thus was the most salient feature for promoting it. The early Meiji oil painting pioneer Takahashi Yuichi (1828-1894) was representative of this point of view, having actively pursued and advocated the study of realism in Western art. He had worked with Kawakami Tôgai at the Painting Bureau in the Institute for the Study of Western Books, and had written painting treatises incorporating ideas of predecessors like Shiba Kôkan. He wanted to promote Western-style painting and elevate society's regard for the *yôga* painter who was then considered frivolous or carefree. He was in agreement with the official view of Western-style painting in terms of its utilitarian potential to assist the national endeavor toward modernization. Takahashi believed that Western-style painting could serve the nation's modernization needs, especially because of its ability to deliver naturalistic representation.⁷⁰

This period when students were rapidly assimilating and developing draftsmanship skills along with the fundamentals of artistic realism came to an abrupt halt in 1883 when a shortage of government funds forced the Technical Art School to close its doors. The brief lifetime of this Western-art educational institute signified a reversal of government policy from the pursuit of what the conservatives perceived as excessive westernization toward a new emphasis on traditional Japanese ways of life. Nationalist sentiments swept the nation during the ensuing decade.

“bijutsu,” during the Meiji period, see Satô Dôshin, *Nihon bijutsu tanjô* (The Birth of Japanese Art) (Tokyo: Kôdansha, 1997), 32-66.

⁷⁰ Hirayama, 114.

II. Two Factions in Modern Painting: *Yōga* and *Nihonga*

The emergence of *yōga* as a new form of painting based on Western pictorial principles had major repercussions in traditional Japanese art. During the decade when the Meiji oligarchs were intent on steering the nation toward modernization, they grew increasingly anxious about the resulting erosion of traditional values. For example, the rising popularity of Western-style painting manifested itself in the second Domestic Industrial Exhibition (*Naikoku kangyō hakurankai*) held in 1881 (Meiji 14). In this government-sponsored exhibition of industrial products, handicrafts, and art, the number of participants painting in the Western manner exceeded those working in the traditional Japanese painting style.

One should bear in mind that in the early years of the Meiji period, Western painting introduced the Japanese people to rationalism. The new artistic medium and style therefore revealed an alternative way of seeing and experiencing the world. As Shiba Kōkan had keenly observed nearly a century earlier, rationalism had played no small part in leading the Western world to the Enlightenment. Exposure to Western-style painting thus signified a sense of progressiveness and carried the potential for inspiring people to question tradition. The conservatives realized that new ways of thinking, if not put to use for official purposes, could be dangerous, and undermine policies set by the government. In particular, the idea of individual freedom associated with Western culture was a serious concern to conservative bureaucrats, compelling them to implement measures in support of traditional Japanese-style painting, and to

suppress the new zeal for Western oil painting. Some government officials labeled *yōga* painters as traitors.⁷¹

Central to the new nationalism in art was the Dragon Pond Society (Ryūchikai), a conservative art group founded in 1879 composed of government bureaucrats, connoisseurs, and artists. The society purported to foster the study of Japan's native art, and held its own exhibitions. Members of the Dragon Pond Society had close ties to government agencies that oversaw exposition activities, both domestic and international. For example, Sano Tsunetami (president of the Dragon Pond Society, 1822-1902) was a senator who later became the head of the Ministry of Finance (Ôkurashô). Kawase Hideharu (vice president of the Dragon Pond Society, 1839-1928) was head of the Commercial Affairs Bureau (Shômukyoku) in the Ministry of Finance. Kuki Ryūichi would later become head of exhibitions at the Imperial Museum (Teishitsu hakubutsukan). Yamataka Nobutsura was an influential exposition official from the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce (Nôshômushô).

A memorable event that helped turn the tide away from broad support of Western-style art in favor of a revival of traditional styles was a speech that Ernest Fenollosa (1853-1908) delivered to the Dragon Pond Society in 1882 in which he asserted the superiority of Japanese-style painting over its Western counterpart.⁷² Fenollosa came to Japan with many foreign experts invited by the Meiji government in various Western fields to educate young Japanese. He initially taught political economics and philosophy at Tokyo Imperial University. During his

⁷¹ Hijikata Teiichi, *Kindai nihon yōgashi* (History of modern Japanese Western-style painting) (Tokyo: Hōunsha, 1947), 69.

⁷² It seems that the term "*nihonga*" appeared for the first time as a translation of "Japanese painting" in Fenollosa's speech entitled *Bijutsu shinsetsu*, (The Truth of Art) which was published as a pamphlet. Satō, 77. For a study in English of Fenollosa's speech, see J. Thomas Rimer, "Hegel in Tokyo: Ernest Fenollosa and his 1882 Lecture on the Truth of Art," in *Japanese Hermeneutics: Current Debates on Aesthetics and Interpretation*, Michael F. Marra ed. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press 2002), 97-108.

tenure, his intense interest in Japanese art made him a noted connoisseur and collector, and led him to become involved in the Meiji government's art policy as a researcher and adviser. In his speech, Fenollosa criticized realism in Western art, arguing that Western painting was in decline due to its single-minded pursuit and subsequent conventionalization of realistic representation.⁷³ Since realism was the characteristic of Western painting which the Japanese praised most, Fenollosa's statement effectively invalidated the merits of learning Western-style art and reawakened people's minds to Japan's traditional art.

One further effect of Fenollosa's speech was to articulate a distinction between Western-style painting and traditional Japanese painting within the sphere of Japanese art.⁷⁴ The term *yōga* designated the Japanese version of Western oil painting, while *nihonga* (Japanese painting) began to be used to encompass all contemporary painting done in a traditional medium, regardless of painting school or style. Valid forms of *nihonga* included the colorful native style of *yamatōe* and the Chinese style of monochrome ink painting. The art press, which was forming around the late 1880s, helped to disseminate these terms and their implication of contrasting technical styles between Japan and the west in critical thought, thereby pigeonholing them by culture.

Among the promoters of traditional Japanese painting, some were interested in adhering to tradition, and others wanted to revitalize it by incorporating certain formal elements of Western painting such as shading and perspective, while still preserving the unique character of the native tradition. The most prominent leader in this reform movement was Okakura Tenshin

⁷³ Kaneko, 45.

⁷⁴ Satō, Chapter 3, Section 2 "Tsuigainen to shite no nihonga yōga" (Nihonga and yōga as contrasting concepts), 76-104.

(1862-1913), art administrator of the Ministry of Education, and an art theorist.⁷⁵ He worked with Fenollosa and traditional Japanese-style painters such as Hashimoto Gahô (1835-1908) and Kanô Hôgai (1828-1888) to create a painting style suited for the modern era. Okakura continued to pursue his passion for reform within the established traditions of Japanese painting, and his protégés who subscribed to the ideal of conceiving a new Japanese painting style became influential leaders in the field. They included Yokoyama Taikan (1868-1958), Hishida Shunsô (1874-1911), and Shimomura Kanzan (1878-1930). Okakura was also involved in establishing a new art school in 1887, when the Ministry of Education founded the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tokyo bijutsu gakkô). It had sections for Japanese painting, sculpture, and traditional craft. At first, the new institution entirely disregarded the option of teaching Western-style painting. It took seven years for the school to add a Western-style painting section to its curriculum.⁷⁶

III. *Yôga*'s Search for Its Identity

The reactionary nationalism that swept the nation during the 1880s began to subside in 1890 when the third Domestic Industrial Exhibition was held. Western-style oil painters gathered to launch the Meiji Art Society (Meiji bijutsukai) in 1889, and the *yôga* community began to revive. The Society was the earliest organization of *yôga* painters in Japan, and was established under the leadership of former students of Fontanesi at the defunct Technical Art

⁷⁵ Okakura Tenshin wrote *The Ideals of the East* (New York: Dutton, 1904; reprinted, Rutland and Tokyo: Tuttle, 1970). He also contributed to the early formation of the Asian art collection at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

⁷⁶ Taki Teizô documented the chronological development of the negotiations concerning the establishment of the school in his *Nihon kindai bijutsu jikenshi* (History of Affairs in Modern Japanese Art) (Osaka: Tôhō shuppan, 1993), 378-393. For a discussion of the school and its curriculum under

School. It boasted more than 300 members, and enlisted progressive politicians and scholars as supporters. The Meiji Art Society also held its own private art exhibition. In its mission to advance *yōga*, the organization aimed at fostering art that was free from the old ways and suitable to new modern Meiji sensibilities.⁷⁷ Coincidentally, it was around this time that a new contingent of Japanese artists who had studied abroad with academic painters in Europe began to return home. Those returnees included Yamamoto Hōsui (1850-1906) from Paris, Harada Naojirō (1863-1899) from Munich, and Kawamura Kiyoo (1852-1934) from Italy. These new talents helped renew interest in *yōga*, further energizing the Meiji Art Society. During a period when opportunities to study Western-style painting formally had been curtailed, instruction was given in the private studios of these *yōga* painters freshly back from Europe.

The third Domestic Industrial Exhibition of 1890 once again gave *yōga* painters a legitimate, official playing field for public display after the decade-long interval since its second show. For the exhibition, *yōga* artists dealt with themes from Japanese history and religion with an enthusiasm never before seen. It was a clear effort to make *yōga* relevant to the mood of a transitional era that was witness to the nation forming a new identity. Historical and religious themes were common in traditional Japanese-style painting, but they signified a paramount challenge for modern *yōga*. This is evidenced by works like *Kannon Riding on a Dragon* (Kiryū kannon zu, figure 8) by Harada Naojirō, and *Winged Heavenly Maiden* (Hagoromo tennyō, figure 9) by Honda Kinkichirō. Harada and Honda dealt with fanciful and symbolic religious figures familiar to Japanese viewers. Nevertheless, the execution of these native motifs in Western oil techniques appeared odd to some viewers. The realistically rendered physique and

Okakura Tenshin, see Victoria Weston's *Japanese Painting and National Identity: Okakura Tenshin and his Circle* (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 2004).

⁷⁷ An excerpt of the Meiji Art Society's mission statement can be found in Moriguchi Tari, *Bijutsu hachijū-nen shi* (Eighty-years of Japanese Art) (Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppan, 1954), 78.

detail of Harada's Buddhist deity and Honda's heavenly maiden made these figures look too fleshy and worldly to people for whom those figures should have been ethereal and supernatural. Moreover, Japanese viewers at this time were not accustomed to "look[ing] at the [realistically rendered] figures in oil paintings as symbols," but instead likely "saw/read the depiction of oil painting literally."⁷⁸ In other words, if a figure were supposed to symbolize a deity, it seemed strange to give it the body of a real human. The Kannon in Harada's work was too realistic and led viewers to regard her simply as a woman riding on a dragon, making it impossible for the image to evoke any spiritual resonance. As a result, this oddity spurred a debate among intellectuals over what subject matter contemporary Japanese artists should paint.

In April 1890 Toyama Masakazu (1848-1900), a professor at the Tokyo Imperial University and a progressive intellectual and a member of the Meiji Society, initiated debate about appropriate subject matter for painting. In his speech at the Society entitled "Nihon kaiga no mirai" (The Future of Japanese Painting), Toyama urged Japanese artists regardless of their stylistic affiliations to strive to create art that would represent the nation and its people. Whether the subjects were religion, nature, or portraiture, he advocated what he called "*shisôga*" (thought painting) as the most fitting approach to accomplish that task. The term "*shisôga*" in his definition referred to paintings that expressed invisible concepts or ideas in the guise of genre painting. In response, literary giant and art theorist Mori Ôgai (1862-1922) joined the dialogue by placing the word *shisôga* in the context of Western art and equating it to "*rekishiga*," or

⁷⁸ Yamanashi Emiko, "Konpojishon kara "kôsôga" e: Kuroda Seiki ni yoru nôkô shudai no sakuhin wo chûshin ni" (From composition to "kôsôga": Problems of the late works of Kuroda Seiki involving rural subjects), in Takashina Shûji ed., *Bijutsushi ni okeru nihon to seiyô* (Japan and Europe in art history) (Tokyo: Chûôkôron bijutsu shuppan, 1995), 118.

history painting, the noblest subject in European painting.⁷⁹ Japanese artists who had studied in Europe were familiar with the esteem granted to history painting in Europe, and the religious works created by Harada and Honda were clear attempts at approaching this genre.

The *nihonga* community also felt that history painting was significant and timely. In 1889, Okakura Tenshin identified the need for historical painting in his inaugural address as an editor of the newly founded art journal *Kokka*, which was devoted to the study of East Asian art and antiquities. He wrote, “Thinking of the future of painting...historical painting should be promoted as the idea of national polity (*kokutai shisô*) develops in our country.”⁸⁰ The subject of history painting was on the mind of Fenollosa, too. He referred to the historical scene of the burning of the Sanjô Palace in the late thirteenth century depicted in *The Tale of the Heiji Scroll* (Heiji monogatari emaki, figure 10) as one of the world’s premier painting treasures. He envisioned the lofty cultural heights that Japanese painting could reach by mastering the history genre. Meiji intellectuals knew that aristocrats and political leaders in the West had traditionally used historical painting to evoke nationalistic pride and sentiment. They understood the importance for Japan to have suitable counterpart images for its new status as a modern state.

However, it was painfully clear that the Meiji Art Society artists had not yet lived up to their own aesthetic expectations, and had instead resorted to a simple eclecticism of native subjects and Western painting techniques. By acquiring the techniques of oil painting, they strove to create a painting style that would resonate cognitively and emotionally with their fellow Japanese. Nevertheless, this was not an easy task. The nationalistic climate of the time lured these artists into taking a shortcut on the path toward “Japanizing” *yôga* by selecting native

⁷⁹ For the debate between Toyama and Mori, see Mikiko Hirayama trans., “Ôgai Mori ‘On Toyama Masakazu,’” J. Thomas Rimer ed., *Not a Song Like Any Other: Anthology of Writings by Mori Ôgai* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004), 104-119.

⁸⁰ Quoted in Satô, 104-105.

motifs to depict through the techniques of Western realism. This merely gave *yōga* the appearance of integration. Shōwa-era art critic Hijikata Teiichi considered this shortcut to have been superficial and regressive, and lamented the decline of *yōga* into a mere technique used for the sake of realism without creative conception.⁸¹ However, for the survival of their art form, *yōga* artists believed they had to prove that they were not blind pursuers of Western culture or, worse, traitors. Since *yōga* carried the association of the West, it could easily have been interpreted as being opposed to Japanese cultural aesthetics. Meanwhile, mere eclecticism might have been the bitter medicine that *yōga* artists believed they had to swallow in order to advance their art and their careers in accordance with the nationalistic sentiment of the government.

IV. Kuroda Seiki and the Academic Style in *Yōga*

The return of Kuroda Seiki (1866-1924) in 1893 after his nine-year stay in France marked a pivotal change in *yōga*'s development. He came back with a new painting style that he had learned in Paris through his studies with the academic painter Raphael Collin.⁸² Collin worked in the *plein-air* style, which was an eclectic mix of naturalistic representations based on academic training and impressionistic concerns with the effect of natural light (figure 11). Collin's style mirrored the crossroads where European painting stood in the late nineteenth century. At this time in European art, a historical shift from the tradition of objective naturalism with solid brushwork was giving way to an emerging impressionism. There was a new effort by impressionists to capture the constant optical flux of physical reality using looser brushwork.

⁸¹ Hijikata, 137.

⁸² Collin studied in the studios of the French academicians William Bouguereau and Alexandre Cabanel. He became a professor at the Academie des Beaux-art in 1902.

Impressionist artists were living in a rapidly changing society under the sway of industrialization and urbanization. They believed in the ephemeral nature of things. They challenged conventional beliefs in any sort of permanence.

The bright, cheerful color of the *plein-air* style and the freer impressionistic brushwork of Kuroda together introduced a new kind of visual representation to the Japanese art world (figure 12). It appeared fresh to the eyes of Japanese people who had become used to the calmer sepia tones and more constrained brushwork used by artists of the Meiji Art Society based on Fontanesi's tradition. The painting style of the Society mirrored what many of its member artists had learned in Europe during the period before the ascendancy of impressionism. The differences in philosophy and visual effects between Kuroda's new approach and the Meiji Art Society's old approach reflected the fundamental change brought by the impressionists in Europe. Kuroda said, "...the old school approaches a landscape with the idea of recording its exact appearance. The new school, however, tries to paint the feelings inspired by the landscape..."⁸³

In 1896, Kuroda organized a group of painters called the White Horse Society (Hakubakai). In the same year, he was appointed to head the newly added Western-style painting department at the Tokyo School of Art, and his *plein-air* style became the mainstream in Japan.⁸⁴ Japan's state-run art school adopted the *plein-air* style rather than the European academic style, creating a peculiar situation. As Kawakita points out, "the Japanese 'impressionist' movement was not a revolt against academicism. Instead, it became a type of

⁸³ Quoted in Kawakita, 57.

⁸⁴ Kuroda's descent from a distinguished family in the Satsuma region probably helped raise his social standing in Japanese society during his time. He was adopted by his uncle, Viscount Kuroda Kiyotsuna. For a discussion about the political association of the family and the artist, see Satô, 158-170.

academicism in its own right.”⁸⁵ In other words, after the long absence of official instruction in oil painting, dating from the closing of the Technical Art School and the departure of Fontanesi, Japanese artists resumed their training in Western-style painting with the impressionistic method under Kuroda’s direction without acquiring complete knowledge or skill in classic academicism. It is important to note that Japanese academicism in painting did not follow the same progressive sequence as had developed in Europe before artists there arrived at the Impressionistic style.

It seems that Kuroda, who came into firsthand contact with European art, was aware of the lack of academic training in Western realism, and its potential ill effect on the future of *yōga*. He was not going to neglect the task of mastering the classic skills required for producing large compositions of figures as demanded by historical or religious work. In the year of his school appointment, Kuroda emphasized the importance of subject matter, and expressed his aspiration to train his students to formulate ideas for historical or allegorical painting. Kaneko Kazuo, a researcher of art education in Meiji Japan, stated that when Kuroda became responsible for educating young painters at the official art school, he felt the necessity of widening his scope beyond expression of the individual’s emotion to encompass expression of a higher concept.⁸⁶ However, his ambition seems to have waned. In a statement Kuroda made regarding his thoughts about art education in the journal *Imperial Education* (Teikoku kyōiku) in 1911, Kuroda conceded that the Japanese were unsuited to formulating and executing an abstract concept in painting. He would let his students freely choose their own subject matter.⁸⁷ Kaneko suggested three reasons for Kuroda’s failure in teaching historical painting.⁸⁸ First, Kuroda himself did not study historical painting in Europe. After all, his teacher Collin was not a

⁸⁵ Kawakita, 59.

⁸⁶ Kaneko, 321.

⁸⁷ Quoted in Kaneko, 322.

⁸⁸ Kaneko, 319-324.

traditional historical painter. Second, Kuroda's artistic temperament sought a more subjective expression. Third, Japanese art works had always been viewed by small circles of people in private settings, since there was no tradition of historical image making for the public.

We shall revisit this third point later, since it is related to the question of how to situate war painting in the history of Japanese art. In this study, I limit myself to addressing the ways in which Kuroda approached the visualization of intangible ideas or thoughts, not as a teacher, but as a painter himself. Kuroda's goal in painting can be understood as almost identical with what Toyama and Mori advocated earlier by the terms *shisôga* (thought painting) and *rekishiga* (history painting) respectively. Other art historians have come up with yet another term, *kôsôga* (concept painting), as the ideal painting Kuroda had envisioned specifically to describe his actual work. Kuroda exhibited *Telling of an Ancient Romance* (Mukashi gatari, figure 13) at the White Horse Society exhibition in 1896, referring to the medieval Japanese classic, *The Tale of the Heike*. The painting shows a monk reciting the tale to an audience in a contemporary setting. However, his intention to relate this image to the classical tale was not easy for the viewer to grasp. Instead, this painting was accepted as a simple genre painting.⁸⁹ Two years later Kuroda again attempted to create a painting that represented a more abstract theme with three nude female figures standing in various poses to symbolize *Wisdom, Impression, Sentiment* (Chi, kan, jô, figure 14). This painting proved to be difficult for art critics, his fellow artists, and lay audiences alike to decipher and appreciate.⁹⁰

Kuroda's experiments with *kôsôga* seem to have failed to communicate their invisible concepts to the intended audience. Kuroda was himself struggling to find the appropriate visual

⁸⁹ Takashina Shûji and Yamanashi Emiko use the term *kôsôga*.

⁹⁰ Yamanashi, 117-8. Mori Ôgai made comments on this painting, which are translated by Miki Hirayama, in *Not a Song like Any Other*, 120-122.

vocabulary to represent his ideas.⁹¹ His failure should not be attributed to a lack of creative ability or skills on his part alone. As we have seen in the case of earlier attempts to paint religious figures by Harada Naojirô or Honda Kinkichirô, symbolism in painting perplexed Japanese audiences who had only been exposed to traditional art. Before Kuroda's return from Europe, it was difficult for Japanese audiences to understand the symbolic, hidden meaning beyond what was literally depicted in a painting. People assumed that oil paintings were true and accurate renderings of nature, and they expected the objects found in the paintings to be direct reflections of the real world.⁹² Nevertheless, Kuroda's paintings did at least present Japanese oil painters with examples of large compositions of figures in groups, which had not been commonly attempted by *yôga* painters in Japan. Moreover, his pursuit of a higher form of visual expression demonstrated the possibility for painting to function as a vehicle for expressing the intangible in the guise of the tangible, if anyone had been perceptive and ambitious enough to carry out what Kuroda had left unaccomplished.

⁹¹ Kuroda did not articulate his thinking regarding these paintings in writing. The meaning of *Chi, kan, jô* (Wisdom, Impression, Sentiment) still remains largely unsolved, according to Yamanashi.

⁹² Yamanashi, 118.

CHAPTER TWO

ALLIANCE OF STATE AND ART IN MODERN JAPAN

During the war, the Japanese government mobilized all aspects of the nation's material and human resources to its war effort, and called on citizens to express their patriotism by serving the nation to each individual's maximum capacity. As many Japanese artists desired to continue working in their profession and at the same time to be useful in applying their talent and skills, they responded to this call by producing hundreds of paintings on war-related themes. The successful mobilization of artists by the government into national service was in part due to their professional interest, and in part due to widespread enthusiasm for the war. Moreover, the military government's control and censorship of the press and visual media was often advantageous to those who were involved with mass communications. There was cooperation and interdependency between the military government and people who were engaged in war propaganda in the media. This cooperation was exemplified in the war painting operation.

As far as the art community was concerned, the imperial regime took advantage of the ways that artists worked their way up the hierarchy of the artistic institutions that had been established by the Meiji government. Meiji art bureaucrats understood the value of art as an indispensable policy tool for defining national identity. They selectively endorsed certain types of art that could fit their contemporary agenda. In turn, artists favored by the government received the benefit of a state mandate, and thus a reciprocal relationship was nurtured between them and the government.

In this chapter, I begin by outlining the involvement of art in the modernization process initiated by the Meiji government in order to show how governmental bodies had historically attempted to control art production and taste in Japan. This first section describes the pre-history

that later enabled wartime military bureaucrats to control art production and artists. I discuss three important policy decisions made by the Meiji government for institutionalizing art: promotion and export of arts and crafts as part of the nurturing of industry and production; protection and preservation of antiques; and establishment of art educational institutions.⁹³

These three issues are all closely related to the Meiji government's national strategy for coping with the domestic and international situations that Japan was facing in the second half of the nineteenth century, according to art historian Satô Dôshin, who has written extensively on Meiji art policy.

In the second section, I describe and analyze the state war art program's development, how it functioned, and how it ultimately affected the art community. This section falls short of providing the full picture of the war art program, largely due to a lack of original source material. For this study, there were few documents originally issued by the military government still available. Nevertheless, this section's goal is to suggest a historical framework for future research by illustrating the continuity of government control of art as institutionalized by the Meiji government. I will show that there was already a foundation for a mutually beneficial relationship between government and the benefactors of the government's support and trust forged during the Meiji era. Despite the intense official interest in the West in the early Meiji period, the *nihonga* community had a historic advantage over the *yôga* circle. Nationalistic policy makers intrinsically trusted *nihonga* with its roots in traditional Japanese art over *yôga* with its association with the West. However, when the wartime military government launched its war art program, *yôga* painters won state favor over *nihonga* artists, because military officials sought realism in war imagery. I argue that this ironic shift in state endorsement is further

⁹³ Satô, 171.

evidence of the pragmatic as opposed to aesthetic view of art long held by Japanese political leadership.

I. Pre-History: Nationalistic Art Policy from Meiji to Prewar Shōwa Era

A. Exporting Arts and Crafts for Economic Growth

With the Meiji Restoration of 1868 ending two centuries of self-imposed isolation, Japan opened itself to the international community in commerce and trade. Japan began to build a modern nation state equipped with industrial and military capabilities that could match the Western powers. In order to carry out its national modernization projects, the government needed a large source of capital and was eager to "foster industry, promote production," as the famous Meiji slogan advocated. As part of its trading strategy the government involved itself in promoting and exporting Japan's traditional arts and crafts to Europe as valuable commodities that represented its distinctive culture and taste to the outside world.

At the Vienna World Exposition in 1873, Japanese delegates discovered the potential value of Japan's traditional arts and crafts as economic commodities.⁹⁴ In the second half of the nineteenth century, world expositions were the showplaces for Western nations to display their advances in technology spurred by the Industrial Revolution. They provided occasions for the display of national identity and pride as each nation presented its finest products. When compared with the industrialized West, Japan at this time was technologically undeveloped and

⁹⁴ The Tokugawa government had earlier participated in the Paris World Exposition in 1867, but this was the first time for the Meiji government to participate in a world exposition. The Japanese delegation to Vienna was made up of bureaucrats from the Ministries of Home Affairs and of Finance; later those exposition responsibilities were transferred to the Ministry of Agricultural and Commerce founded in 1881.

did not have many commodities that could attract trading interest from its Western counterparts. The world exposition thus served as a critical learning opportunity for the emerging nation-state of Japan since it afforded firsthand access to a significant amount of information about Western industrialization and technology.

Traditional handicrafts were the central feature in Japanese booths on the exposition floors. Much to the surprise of the Japanese delegates, European audiences who were then enamored by the fashionable trend of *Japonisme* reacted enthusiastically to the displays featuring decorative wares in ceramic, metal, cloisonné, and lacquer.⁹⁵ This favorable reaction led the officials to speculate on the potential value these handicrafts could carry as economic commodities to foreign markets. They acted on their anticipation of big foreign demand for Japanese items of art, and the resulting export business brought much-needed revenue to the Meiji government for funding its industrialization efforts. Moreover, it provided desperately needed jobs to artists and artisans who had previously served the samurai class, but who lost their livelihoods after the fall of the shogunate.

To stimulate national creativity and boost production of domestic goods, the exposition officials from the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce (Nôshômushô) gathered information at the international expositions for their domestic equivalent, the Domestic Industrial Exposition (*Naikoku kangyô hakurankai*). The first Domestic Industrial Exposition was held in 1877, and the fifth and final one took place in 1903.⁹⁶ These expositions showcased domestically produced mechanical, agricultural, gardening equipment, and handicrafts. As I have mentioned in the previous chapter, the definition of industry was broad, extending to handicrafts and objects of art

⁹⁵ In early Meiji, some notable French intelligentsia had visited Japan to collect art, including the art merchant Samuel Bing, art critic Theodore Duret, and art collector Émile Guimet.

⁹⁶ The second exposition was held in 1881, the third in 1890, and the fourth in 1895.

in the early Meiji period. These first domestic expositions combined the content of today's industrial fair and art exhibition.

In addition to domestic expositions, another important operative arm of Japan's export business was the semi-official (*hankan-hanmin*) export company *Kiritsu kôshô kaisha* (Industry and Commerce Company).⁹⁷ The founders of this trading company were businessmen Matsuo Gisuke (1837-1902, a tea merchant) and Wakai Kenzaburô (an antique merchant). Earlier, they had joined the government delegation to the Vienna World Exposition, and both were members of the Dragon Pond Society, a private art study group composed of many government bureaucrats. It was no accident that the Dragon Pond Society and the exposition endeavor were closely associated with each other and with the government's interest in maximizing foreign trade opportunities for handicrafts.⁹⁸ The Dragon Pond Society had a founding purpose to foster the study of Japan's native arts and crafts, as well.

B. Preservation of the Past through Support of Traditional Arts

Foreign trade drew attention to the significance of Japanese cultural assets. The Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce grew increasingly aware of the need to protect Japanese antiquities as representative of the history of the nation. Within the ministry, the agency that was directly in charge of managing the preservation of antiquities was the Museum Bureau (*Hakubutsukankyoku*). Moreover, rampant destruction of Buddhist temples, iconic images, and attendant artifacts further propelled the government to take preservation work seriously. An anti-

⁹⁷ The company, with headquarters in Shinbashi, Tokyo, and artisan factories in Asakusa and Tsukiji, was placed under the supervision of the Ministry of Home Affairs. Sales peaked around 1882 and the company was dissolved in 1891.

Buddhist movement had emerged in 1868 when the Meiji government implemented a policy to separate Shintoism and Buddhism in order to establish a Shintô nation under the reign of the emperor, and the policy spurred the destruction of religious objects (known as *haibutsu kishaku undô*).⁹⁹ Making the matter worse for the government, a number of these Buddhist objects found their way into the hands of wealthy foreign buyers who were interested in Japanese art and culture. In addition, members of the fallen samurai class were selling artworks in their possession due to dire financial straits. The cultural loss and exodus of these objects thus prompted the government to establish an institution for their preservation.

In 1886, the Museum Bureau was transferred out of the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce to become part of the Ministry of Imperial Household (Kunaishô). Removed from the government's sphere of business interests to the purview of the imperial household, the bureau's preservation operations gradually changed to facilitate a linkage between the imperial lineage and Japan's national history. In 1888, the National Treasure Office (Hômotsu torishirabekyoku) was set up under the supervision of the Museum Bureau¹⁰⁰ to investigate artifacts and monuments owned by temples and shrines, and to document, rank, and preserve those of the highest national importance. Central to this operation were museum director Kuki Ryûichi and art division chief Okakura Tenshin.¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ Taki has emphasized the importance of the Dragon Pond Society in the governmental handling of art in early Meiji.

⁹⁹ The syncretism of Shintoism and Buddhism began in the ninth century during the Heian period based on the theory of *honji suijaku* claiming that Shintô deities native to Japan were incarnations of Buddhas. Although this theory was denounced officially in the Meiji period, the coexistence of the two religions continues today in Japan.

¹⁰⁰ Public display of art objects began at Daigaku Nankô, the forerunner of the Imperial Museum.

¹⁰¹ Okakura Tenshin had engaged in some art historical investigation earlier with Ernest Fenollosa in 1884 and 1886. It is well known that their demand to open the long-closed Dream Hall (Yumedono) at the Hôryûji Temple in Nara led them to discover a legendary Kannon statue, which is now called *Yumedono Kannon*. Satô Dôshin wonders if a more encompassing approach to antiquities research would be more effective. He worries that ranking artistic treasures by rigorous methodologies has limited art

By the end of the second decade of Meiji (in the late 1880s and the early 1890s), the government had put its essential governing systems and institutions into place. In 1889, the Meiji Constitution was promulgated, and the next year the Imperial Diet (*Teikoku gikai*) began. The Meiji government's strong interest in national treasures, as was demonstrated by its establishment of the Museum Bureau, and by the conduct of temple-shrine research, was related to a rising nationalistic sentiment after more than a decade of intense Westernization. There was a strong interest in articulating national history among intellectuals and officials in an attempt to define Japan's identity as a modern nation, while retaining its unique traditional characteristics. In 1889, the Imperial Tokyo University established a department of Japanese history, and the Imperial Museum in Tokyo was founded.¹⁰²

While art officials saw antiquities as valuable representatives of Japan's distinctive history, they understood that contemporary artists and artisans who worked in traditional styles were equally important as keepers of national culture. In 1890, the Ministry of the Imperial Household instituted the Imperial Household Artists and Artisans System (*Teishitsu gigeiin seido*) in order to grant special honors to artists and artisans working in traditional styles as a means of protecting and preserving their skills. This official honor system was the brainchild of conservatives at the Japanese Art Association (*Nihon bijutsu kyōkai*), formerly known as the Dragon Pond Society. The renamed Japanese Art Association, which invited Prince Arisugawa Taruhito (1835-1895) to be president, successfully used its strengthened ties to the imperial family to propose this system to the Ministry of the Imperial Household.

historical research perspectives in modern Japan. An emphasis on hard data collection and monographic studies made of single objects has certain advantages, but can narrow the researcher's focus too strictly.

¹⁰² Imperial Museum in Nara opened in 1895 and Imperial Museum in Kyoto opened in 1897.

C. Control of Artistic Taste by the State Art School and Exhibitions

In the second half of the Meiji period, art officials turned their attention to art education policy in order to ensure the continuation of Japanese artistic traditions. As in the case of the national museums and systems for honoring artists, they felt the need to preserve the nation's heritage in art by establishing a national art academy to keep the influence of Western art at bay. The Ministry of Education opened the Tokyo School of Fine Arts in 1889 with a Japanese painting section in addition to sculpture, architecture, and design; it began with no option for learning Western-style painting, as was mentioned in chapter one. The preferential treatment of traditional Japanese painting as embodying national values was a tendency that had already begun to surface in governmental measures. An example was the exclusion of Western-style works from entry in the Domestic Painting Exhibition (*Naikoku kaiga kyôshinkai*), which was instituted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce. Western-style works were kept out during its first and second exhibitions (1882 and 1884). It is no surprise that members of the pro-Japanese-art Dragon Pond Society occupied about half of the seats on the exhibition's selection committee and ran the show in support of traditional painting.

Meanwhile in 1885, the Ministry of Education debated the worth of Western-style pencil drawing in elementary school art training that had been initiated in 1872. It decided to replace the drawing program with brush and *sumi* ink painting in the traditional calligraphic style.¹⁰³ The Pictorial Research Committee of the Ministry of Education, dominated by proponents of *nihonga* around Okakura Tenshin, was responsible for this policy. The committee passed this measure with a nine-to-one vote with the only opposition coming from *yôga* artist Koyama

¹⁰³ Kaneko, 42.

Shôtarô, who was an art instructor at the National Teachers College (Kôtô shihan gakkô).¹⁰⁴

With this reform, many graduates from the *nihonga* section of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts later became teachers at elementary schools. Thus, *nihonga* had dominance over the short-lived *yôga* training, and became compulsory in the art educational curriculum.

In 1907, the government inaugurated an annual art show under the official supervision of the Ministry of Education that focused solely on the category of fine arts. Among the many exhibitions inaugurated by the government during the Meiji period this one had the most lasting effect on the Japanese art world, and continues to hold a position of respect in certain quarters of that community today. The Ministry of Education Art Exhibition (*Monbushô bijutsu tenrankai*), commonly known as Bunten, displayed about 200 contemporary paintings of the jury's choice and became an important place for artists to gain publicity and public recognition. The Bunten followed the model of the official French Salon of the nineteenth century: it set up a panel of senior members from the art world to judge works in the categories of *yôga*, *nihonga*, and sculpture.¹⁰⁵ Winning exhibition entry at the Bunten generally meant earning the seal of official sanction. It also enhanced an artist's potential to sustain a livelihood as a professional artist in Japanese society where other exhibition opportunities at commercial art venues were yet to be developed. Therefore, artists since the Meiji period had to make personal decisions concerning the extent to which they wanted to participate in the government-sponsored art apparatus. The Bunten would later provide a prototype for military-sponsored art exhibitions targeting mass audiences during the Pacific conflicts, when there would be much less professional flexibility for artists.

¹⁰⁴ Okakura and Koyama earlier clashed over whether calligraphy should be considered as art or not.

¹⁰⁵ The category of craft was added to the annual official art exhibition in 1927.

The Bunten was also instrumental in making the experience of art a form of mass entertainment, and encouraged the growth of a middle-class audience for art exhibitions. Here again, tradition set by Meiji bureaucrats became the blueprint for the military's need to provide popular access to war painting. By following the model of the official annual art show and mobilizing mass audiences to art shows with fanfare provided by the government-controlled press, the military conveyed their vision of the war to the Japanese people.

D. Prewar Consolidation of the Art Community by the Shōwa Government

Art institutions established by the Meiji government continued to serve their original nationalistic purposes into the next decades of Taishō and the prewar years of the Shōwa period (an imperial era that lasted 1926 – 1989, well beyond the war). The prestige and respect afforded by admission to the official art academy or to the Bunten created a hierarchy in the art community where artists in traditional styles often benefited the most. There was the sense that acceptance by the Bunten jury regardless of an artist's working style was equivalent to gaining state endorsement and support. These consequences generated a feeling of dissatisfaction among some artists.

The Bunten became a particular problem for the changing landscape in art in the early twentieth century. During this time, Japan won victories in the first Sino-Japanese War (1894-95) and the ensuing Russo-Japanese War (1904-5), and the war economy stimulated industry and commerce. As a result, Japanese society during the new era of Taishō (1912-26) saw an emerging bourgeois class, increasing urbanization, and a sense of renewed vitality. In the art world, some artists had begun to experiment with avant-garde artistic styles that had developed in Europe, ranging from Impressionism and Post-Impressionism, to Fauvism and Cubism.

Groups based on members' shared interests in an artistic style sprang up. However, the conservative authorities behind the government-sponsored exhibition system were unwilling to embrace these modern stylistic trends.

Dissatisfied with the reactionary jury of the Bunten, however, some *yōga* and *nihonga* artists formed their own societies in protest. Most notable among them were the Second Division Society (Nikakai), a *yōga* group which was interested in new European styles,¹⁰⁶ and the Japan Art Institute (Nihon bijutsuin, founded by Okakura Tenshin), which attempted to reform *nihonga* by incorporating certain visual elements found in Western art. Both were formed in 1914. In 1919, the Ministry of Education reacted by reforming the Bunten. It created the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts (Teikoku bijutsuin) as a separate state art institution to run the annual exhibition. However, the Academy was placed under the Education Ministry's supervision and a new panel of jurists were elected. Under the new institution, the annual exhibition was renamed the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts Exhibition (*Teikoku bijutsuin tenrankai* or "Teiten" in its shortened form).

The sense of freedom that Japanese felt during the Taishō Modernism period around the 1920s did not last long. The authorities sensed a mounting threat from the ideas of individualism and freedom of expression that were gaining a foothold in Japanese society. Officials grew alarmed at the license taken by members of the public for advocating anarchy, socialism, and communism. In 1925, the government embarked on a program of thought control through the Public Safety Preservation Act (*Chian ijihō*) to suppress free speech. The military was also nurturing ambitions to expand its influence in Asia, and it embarked in what was to become the

¹⁰⁶ Among the Nikakai members were Ishii Hakutei (1882-1958), Umehara Ryūzaburō (1888-1986), and Yamashita Shintarō (1881-1966).

Fifteen-Year War after the Manchurian Incident erupted in northern China in 1931. Thus, a new tide of nationalism emerged that was to vex the *yōga* community once again.

A portent of the forthcoming military control over artistic production occurred in the Matsuda Reorganization (*Matsuda kaiso*). The government attempted to consolidate national unity in art by bringing leaders of diverse artists' factions under the umbrella of the national authority once again. As I mentioned, some artists had cut their ties with the official art exhibition system to express their opposition during the Taishō period. Even after the formation of the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts and Teiten, concerned artists, as well as some government officials, had noticed a need for further reform. In their view, the lack of clear guidelines in the Academy's selection process, and the favoritism exercised by Academy-appointed judges threatened to undermine the future of the official exhibition as a place to display the nation's highest artistic talents. Vocal artists urged the government to act, and in 1935, Minister of Education Matsuda Genji carried out the second reorganization of the official exhibition system in order to reenergize the art world in an attempt to quell the long-standing disputes. His strategy was to appoint new Academy members from leading factions in *yōga* and *nihonga*, namely from the Second Division Society and the Japan Art Institute among others. These were the very groups that had previously been critical of the privileged official art institution, and had chosen not to take part in the government-sponsored exhibitions. This had the dual effect of diminishing the power of factions favoring the stagnant status quo in the Academy, while appeasing the antiauthority groups. The more ominous effect was to absorb influential opposition forces so they were nearly eliminated. Matsuda successfully incorporated the former dissident elements into the government-sponsored art exhibition. In the official view, he had laid the foundation for

solidarity within the art community, a foreshadowing of more severe totalitarian activities yet to come.

II. State-Run War Art Program during the Second Sino-Japanese and Pacific Wars

A. Inception: The Second Sino-Japanese War and the Rush of Volunteer War Painters

Shortly after the second Sino-Japanese War broke out in 1937, a large number of ambitious, patriotic painters voluntarily began to travel to China seeking creative opportunities and logistical support from the local army authorities. In September 1937, three *yôga* artists made their way to northern China with permission from the navy to paint the conflict.¹⁰⁷ Through the rest of that year, more *yôga* painters followed in the footsteps of the first three, traveling to the Shanghai and Nanjing regions.¹⁰⁸ Therefore, the inception of the military art program emerged in part out of the enthusiasm of volunteer painters who dared to travel in growing numbers to the front on their own. Responding to the phenomenon, the army and the navy began to dispatch a group of artists to China on a military-funded tour in 1938. These painters, whether their trips were supported by military authorities or not, were then called *jûgungaka* (military-service painters) or eventually *sensôgaka* (war painters), and were not conscripted as combatants.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ They were Kobayakawa Tokushirô, Yoshiwara Yoshi, and Iwakura Tomokata. Iwakura died at the front from an enemy bullet. *Nihon bijutsu nenkan: 1937*, 83.

¹⁰⁸ Since this study's focus is on *yôga* painting, *nihonga*'s early appearance in war art is left for other investigations.

¹⁰⁹ Later in the war, the army began a combat artist program. In January 1943, the Army Art Association and the army's press division co-hosted a youth painter brigade to send young emerging artists to the front to live with the soldiers and paint their activities. *Nihon bijutsu nenkan: 1943-45*, 1.

In the beginning years of the war when volunteer painters started flocking to China, the artists had little official support. The volunteers were forced to raise funds by themselves to cover their own expenses. Moreover, they did not necessarily obtain military permission to paint in battle zones or receive any assurance of military protection before they landed in China. These volunteer painters had to rely on a variety of sources for assistance. Some found support from army divisions and brigades originating in the home prefectures where the artists were born, since the Japanese army formed units out of provincial sectors. Others like Tsuruta Gorô, who later produced several war documentary paintings, were granted assistance from media outlets. Tsuruta had initially applied to the army for permission to make a painting trip to China, but an army press officer told him the army could not grant official military-service status to artists. The officer advised the painter that seeking a newspaper sponsor to provide him with press correspondent status would work best. After raising funds for his trip to China from local papers,¹¹⁰ Tsuruta arrived at Tengshin in November 1937 and visited the local imperial army division to ask for further support. There, he received an armband on which an army officer jotted “military-service painter” (*jûgungaka*) and stamped it with the seal of the Imperial Commander in Northern China (Hokushi teikoku shireibu).¹¹¹

Returning home, these volunteer military-service artists brought back their sketches and drawings. Although they had rarely witnessed battles in person, these war painters produced images of the imperial soldiers engaging in routine, non-combat activities, as well as foreign people and landscapes of the distant land. Meanwhile, other artists who stayed at home chose to depict familiar scenes and events in wartime civilian life. One such example was a

¹¹⁰ Another war campaign record painter Mukai Junkichi also recalls that this was the case for his trip to China between October and November 1937. Quoted in Tan’o, 60.

¹¹¹ Tsuruta Gorô, *Hanseiki no sobyô* (A Half-Century of Sketching) (Chûôkôron bijutsu shuppan, 1982), 133.

neighborhood farewell for a soldier who was heading to the front (Izawa Masatoshi, *A Soldier Going to the Front* (Shusseï), shown in 1939, figure 15). These works of various war themes were shown to the public in private exhibitions at commercial galleries and in department stores. The majority of these works were small in comparison to the standard war documentary painting dimensions of 72 x 100 inches. Due in part to the novelty of the subject matter, these early works of war art received popular attention from gallery goers.

B. An Alliance of the Military Regime and Artists

The number of Japanese war painters grew quickly and rose to about two hundred by early 1939.¹¹² Soon, taking care of the growing number of such volunteers became overwhelming to the local troops. Also, the fact that many paintings depicted local scenery and the aftermath of battles made the military reevaluate the merit of only supporting volunteer artists on an ad hoc basis as they flocked to the front. These were inherently interesting but hardly inspiring to the martial spirit. Instead of stopping the artists from traveling to paint the war altogether, the military decided to nurture and control this artistic war enthusiasm by formally taking those painters under its wing. There was a need for a centralized command to steer human and material resources more effectively toward the production of war art. To support patriotic painters and conduct their painting missions smoothly, the military helped to establish military-affiliated art organizations. One of the first such organizations was the Marine Art Group (Kaiyô bijutsukai) composed of six *yôga* painters. It came into being in June 1937 with the support of the Military Supply Division (Gunji fukyûbu) of the navy and the Navy Association. In April 1938, a group of *yôga* painters who had returned from China joined with

the Newspaper Unit (Shinbunhan) of the army to establish the Great Japan Army Military-Service Painters Association (Dainippon rikugun jûgungaka kyôkai). The Newspaper Unit was the predecessor of the Press Division, which would become the central operator of the war painting program.

In the *Great East Asia War: Southern Campaign Picture Book* (Nanpô gashin) of 1942, army art official Lieutenant Kuroda Senkichirô of the Army Press Division stated that the army understood the significance of war art. The army had planned to sponsor war campaign documentary paintings immediately after the outbreak of the conflict in China, according to Kuroda. The enthusiasm of the growing number of these volunteer painters played a part in encouraging military officials to establish their own war art programs in both the army and navy. Japan's local army division in Shanghai took notice of the growing number of Japanese patriotic artists flocking to China. The Imperial Army's Shanghai Division was responsible for officially organizing painters on the first military-sponsored trip to the continent. This division made the first dispatch of ten *yôga* painters to the China front in May 1938 with the assignment of documenting "the extremely intense battles in Shanghai and Nanjing" between Japanese and Chinese troops.¹¹³ The division was later expanded and renamed to the Central China Division. The Shanghai Division called its commissioned work *Shina jihen kinenga* (China Incident commemorative painting), deriving from the expression *Shina jihen* (China Incident) by which the Japanese referred to the second Sino-Japanese War. The *jihenga*'s objectives were "to commemorate the *Jihen* eternally and serve as a material for popular education of future generations."

¹¹² Tan'ô, 77.

¹¹³ Kuroda, 6

Among the ten painters was Koiso Ryôhei, who had kept a commission letter ordering his dispatch to central China. The recruiting letter dated April 9, 1938 was written by Kimura Matsujirô, who was press chief for the Army's Central China Division (Chushi hakengun hôdôbu) covering the Shanghai and Nanjing areas. In the letter, Kimura instructed Koiso to visit and receive instructions from Major Shibano of the Newspaper Unit of the Army prior to his trip to Shanghai.¹¹⁴ This letter reveals that the Shanghai Division's commemorative painting project was supported by the Army Headquarters. Another document sent to Koiso from the army emphasizes the importance of the ten military-sponsored painters. It distinguishes them from other artists whom Kimura termed *imon gaka* (comfort painters), who were not mustered into formal service in the war documentary art program.¹¹⁵

Ten paintings resulting from this commission were shown at the First Holy War Art Exhibition in 1939 sponsored by the Army Art Association and the *Asahi* newspaper. Following the Shanghai division's dispatch, the navy followed suit in September by launching its own first dispatch of six painters to China. From the beginning, the war art program was not a closely concerted effort by the two military entities, which maintained independence from each other and often competed for resources and influence during the war. The army and navy sometimes jointly sponsored war art exhibitions, but operated their own programs separately, for the most part.

The major organizations to which *yôga* war artists belonged were restructured over the next couple of years. They as a whole became a nucleus for the production of war paintings. This was accomplished by fostering reciprocal relationships between painters and military

¹¹⁴ Kimura Matsujirô to Koiso Ryôhei, "Jihen kaiga sakusei irai no ken" (Regarding the Request for Creating China Incident Painting), April 9, 1938, Koiso Memorial Museum at Kobe, Japan.

¹¹⁵ Chushi hakengun shireibu jihenga seisaku-han to Koiso, May 15, 1938, Koiso Memorial Museum at Kobe, Japan.

officials. In April 1939, the Great Japan Army Military-Service Painters Association shrank its membership from one hundred to seventy to improve artistic quality, and renamed itself the Army Art Association (Rikugun bijutsu kyôkai). The restructuring enabled the association members and the army to develop a closer relationship, since the army had been demanding better paintings.¹¹⁶ The new organization elected Army General Matsui Iwane (1878-1948), who had commanded Japanese troops in the Shanghai and Nanjing regions,¹¹⁷ as president, and renowned oil painter Fujishima Takeji as vice president. Fujita Tsuguji would play a leading role in the association. In December 1940, about sixty painters gathered to form the Navy Military-Service Artists Club (Kaigun jûgun gaka kurabu). In February 1941, the Marine Art Group expanded to become the Great Japan Marine Art Association (Dainippon kaiyô bijutsu kyôkai) by accepting Japanese-style painters. Later that month the Great Japan Aerial Art Association (Dainippon kôkû bijutsu kyôkai) also commenced with a membership of both *yôga* and *nihonga* painters.

The finer details of the inner operational workings of the war art program are unknown. Japan's war art program is similar to Nazi Germany's in terms of the sponsorship provided by the authoritarian regime, and the program's role as an integral part of a larger system for providing national propaganda. However, little on the subject of how Germany's war art program might have influenced Japan's has been revealed or studied. Japan's military leaders and nationalist intellectuals certainly admired Nazi Germany's enforcement of a centralized policy that included the arts.¹¹⁸ But I have not located any evidence suggesting that the Japanese

¹¹⁶ Nihon bijutsu nenkan: 1939, 112.

¹¹⁷ He was commander of the Imperial Army in Central China when Japanese troops captured Nanjing, and slaughtered Chinese troops and civilians in 1937. After Japan's defeat in the war, he was executed by hanging as an A-level war criminal for his part in this atrocity known as the Nanjing Massacre.

¹¹⁸ The Tokyo publisher Arusu published a series of books on various aspects of Nazi Germany.

army or navy followed the Nazi model in establishing their own art programs. Japanese artists had become acquainted with contemporary Nazi art through the art press, which occasionally featured examples of artwork created by contemporary German artists.¹¹⁹ However, the art press concentrated more heavily on Western European war art of the past as exemplary of war painting, and extensive discussion about contemporary Nazi artwork was rare.

Useful knowledge of the workings of Japan's war art program can be deduced from studying strategies that the government used to control the mass media during the war. The aims of imperial unification and indoctrination in selflessness were common. The government was initially much more interested in the mass media of the printed press, radio broadcasting, and films for their far-reaching effects than the visual medium of painting. It was common for the government to mobilize communications professionals in the guise of giving guidance, rather than orders. The government used consultants without formal constraints, through quasi-official industry-specific groups, to articulate their messages through the mass media.¹²⁰ For example, the film industry formed the Great Japan Film Association (Dainippon eiga kyôkai, founded in 1935), and professionals in journalism and publishing established the Japan Publishing Culture Association (Nihon shuppan bunka kyôkai, founded in 1940).¹²¹

Central to the government's mass media propaganda control was the Cabinet Information Bureau (Naikaku jôhokyoku). The Bureau was formed in December 1940 as an expansion of the

¹¹⁹ Kamon Yasuo, *Natisu no bijutsu kikô* (The Art Organization of the Nazi Regime) (Tokyo: Arusu, 1941). The book discusses organizational charts and regulations concerning disciplines in the arts, based on Hans Hinkel: *Handbuch der Reichskulturkammer*. In the closing of the book, Kamon emphasizes the state's cultural control (*bunka tôsei*) does not necessary means imposing restrictions on the content of creative activity by quoting the Nazi authority, who said that culture should come from people and not be handed down to people by the nation. Tominaga Sôichirô, who provided source materials to Kamon for preparation of his book, also published a shorter article on the subject earlier, "Natisu Doitsu no bijutsu kikô" (The Art Organization of Nazi Germany), *Mizue* 1942 436: 262-266.

¹²⁰ Gregory J. Kasza, *The State and the Mass Media in Japan, 1918-1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 173.

Cabinet Information Division (Naikaku jôhôbu) put into effect in September 1937 by consolidating regulatory responsibilities of four separate organs. These had previously shared the task of supervising the dissemination of information. These subsumed media organs were the Press Division of the Foreign Affairs Ministry, the Press Division of the Army, the Military Supply Division of the Navy, and the Police Bureau of the Home Affairs Ministry. They were all now handled by the Cabinet Information Division from September 1940. The new propaganda apparatus was equipped with a staff of about 600 drawn from these previously organized governmental and military bodies. The Bureau supervised the membership of journalists, writers, and filmmakers in these industry-specific organizations to ensure that they acted in alignment with specified nationalist ideology. Although media professionals were now more constrained, they still were still able to work in their chosen professions. These groups had routine meetings with officials to receive guidance. The Bureau was composed of five divisions. These were separate units for planning, information, overseas operations, censorship,¹²² and culture. The war art program was put in the culture division's third section (*bungeika*). The culture division was called *bunkabu*, and it supervised the cultural organizations in fine art, literature, and music, and their activity. Military art bureaucrats of the Army Press Division and the Navy Military Supply Division were also involved in the war art program. The army's Press Division handled the financing of official war painters.¹²³ Division officers Yamanouchi Ichirô, Akiyama Kunio, Kuroda Senkichirô, and Suzuki Kurazô¹²⁴ occasionally voiced strong opinions

¹²¹ Kasza, 121-265.

¹²² Besides the Censorship Division of the Cabinet Information Bureau, responsibility to control the press was shared by the Censorship Department (Ken'etsuka) of the Home Affairs Ministry's Police Bureau (Keihokyoku).

¹²³ Kuroda Senkichirô to Koiso Ryôhei, August 16, 1940, Koiso Memorial Museum at Kobe, Japan.

¹²⁴ Suzuki Kurazo graduated from the Military Academy (Rikugun shikan gakkô) in 1921, and was eventually promoted to the rank of army Lieutenant Colonel (*rikugun chûsa*). During the war, he

about the wartime role of art, and commented on war documentary painting in the art press that was aimed at a general readership. Inoue Shirô, third section (*bungeika*) chief of the culture division of the Cabinet Information Bureau, also published his views in *Mizue*, a popular art magazine, outlining what art would be appropriate for the nation at war. I will introduce their commentary in later sections of this manuscript.

Judging from these officials' published statements, clearly they were not necessarily art experts, although some appeared more knowledgeable than others; only Kuroda had an academic background in art and design. Moreover, the role played by these army officials in state propaganda was not limited to art policy. They seem to have had a wider area of oversight that extended to many aspects of culture and public expression of thought. For example, on February 26, 1941 Army Major Suzuki Kurazô, who also belonged to the Cabinet Information Bureau, provided editorial direction to the major monthly current-affairs magazine *Chûô kôron* (Central review).¹²⁵ On December 4, 1942, Lieutenant Colonel Akiyama Kunio spoke in a radio broadcast, rebuking a Tokyo woman who had exclaimed “*kawaisô*” (poor fellows) when she saw American prisoners of war being led down the street.¹²⁶ In contrast to the visibility of these army art officials in the public press, I have not encountered the names of individuals who were managing the war art program on the navy side.

Military-affiliated art groups probably functioned in the same way as the industry groups that had formed in different branches of the mass media. Artists belonging to these military-

served in the Regulatory Committee of Paperstock for Newspapers and Magazines (Shinbun zasshi yôshi tôsei iinkai), and the Cabinet Information Bureau. I have been unsuccessful in finding biographical information for the other officers.

¹²⁵ Kasza, 186-7. He cites the incident as an example of the occasional confrontations that took place at consultation meetings.

¹²⁶ Ben-Ami Shillony, *Politics and Culture in Wartime Japan* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 147.

affiliated groups had a greater access to resources that were controlled by the military, including materials and financing.

As the war progressed, the art community made further effort to consolidate and direct its members into activities providing even greater war support. One important turning point came with Prime Minister Konoe Fumimaro's declaration of the "New Order" (*Shintaisei*) policy in August 1940, soon after he took a second term of office in July. The New Order aimed to strengthen national unity, and envisioned the birth of a new totalitarian Japan by establishing a "national defense state" (*kokubô kokka*). The policy called for consolidating all sorts of public and citizen organizations. In response to Prime Minister Konoe's message, political parties voluntarily dissolved themselves. Under the New Order policy, the Imperial Rule Assistance Association (Taisei yokusankai) was formed in October 1940. This organization absorbed civilian patriotic groups, and extended its grassroots control throughout the system of neighborhood units called *tonarigumi*. These low-level control networks were created to support the New Order throughout Japanese towns and villages. The neighborhood units were collectives constituted of several households that shared rationed goods and food.

In response to the new policy, the military sought the consolidation of the art community to keep it in step with the regime's militarist objectives. Just as *tonarigumi* had provided grassroots control for common civic functions, some artists responded by reorganizing themselves to form several of their own military-affiliated art groups. One example was the Navy Military-Service Artists Club founded in December 1940. Another example was the Marine Art Group, which expanded to become the Great Japan Marine Art Association with a larger membership in February 1941. Also, the *saikan hôkoku undô* (literally, painting brush patriotic movement) began to develop. "*Saikan hôkoku*," referring to the painter's service to the

nation, was a phrase ubiquitous in the art community during the war. In December 1941, immediately after the outbreak of the Pacific War, the government issued new regulations to limit freedom of speech, tighten official control over the media, and restrict the civilian right of assembly. The art press was accordingly reorganized, and thirty-eight magazines published in the capital of Tokyo were all dissolved, and eight new magazines were established.¹²⁷ In March 1942, *nihonga* artists founded the Nihonga Painters Patriotic Society (Nihongaka hôkokukai). They sold their work at an art exhibition to raise funds for military airplanes, which was a popular expression of patriotism routinely made by artists on an individual or group basis. Following their example, the *yôga* painters group, Artists Federation (Bijutsuka renmei), convened in May 1942 to vote unanimously in favor of using their work to raise funds.

In addition to *yôga* and *nihonga* painters, artists active in sculpture, handcrafts, printmaking, and illustration consolidated to found the Japan Patriotic Art Association (Nihon bijutsu hôkokukai) in May 1943. They had the endorsements of the Ministry of Education and the Cabinet Information Bureau. *Nihonga* painter Yokoyama Taikan became president of the association. At the same time, the members agreed to set up an administrative arm to oversee material distribution, implement a certification system for artists and artisans, and determine guidelines for ranking and pricing craftwork. This new organization was called the Japan Regulatory Association of Art and Crafts (Nihon bijutsu oyobi kôgei tōsei kyōkai). In the later phases of the war, no art exhibition could be held without the permission of the Japan Patriotic Art Association. This closed most exhibitions other than those sponsored by the state.

¹²⁷ These eight magazines are *Shin-bijutsu* (western art for professionals), *Seikatsu bijutsu* (western art for the general public), *Kokuga* (Japanese art for professionals), *Kokumin bijutsu* (Japanese art for the general public), *Garon* (critical review of all art), *Kikan bijutsu* (seasonal), *Junkan bijutsu shinpo* (every-ten-days), and *Bijutsu bunka shinbun* (weekly). The second consolidation of the art press was ordered in late 1943. All the eight magazines dissolved and the single new publication *Bijutsu* (for art professionals) was inaugurated in January 1944.

C. Objectives of War Documentary Painting

The military had two reasons for producing war campaign record painting: to document the war and to raise the Japanese people's morale in support of the military regime's war effort. The former was concerned with production and the latter with public exhibitions. Lieutenant Colonel Akiyama Kunio in the Army Press Division opened his short 1944 essay "Honnendo kirokuga ni tsuite" (About This Year's Record Paintings) with a summary of these objectives in concise and at the same time grandiose terms:

War campaign record paintings hold the historical significance of documenting and preserving the army's military campaigns forever. These paintings convey the glorious military achievements of the imperial soldiers, who fought with fierce conviction to destroy the enemy and win victory in order to protect our national polity illuminated under great imperial authority. The works also play an important role in handing down to posterity for hundreds and thousands of years to come how we fought at this time and on this day.¹²⁸

Captain Yamanouchi Ichirô, the Army Press Division officer, echoed the same need to document and preserve army history for generations in the future, in his 1944 essay "Sakusen kirokuga no arikata" (War Campaign Record Painting as It Ought to Be). According to him, the purpose of such commemoration was not only to dwell on the "glorious" past, but also to nurture and strengthen the faith of prospective soldiers in the army. Yamanouchi, citing the third principle in the Army's Disciplinary Manual (*Tenpanrei*), referred to the educational purpose of

¹²⁸ Akiyama Kunio, "Honnendo kirokuga ni tsuite" (About This Year's Record Paintings), *Bijutsu* 5 (May 1944), 2.

war documentary painting: “the conviction of sure victory primarily derives from a soldier’s knowledge of the glorious history of the army...”¹²⁹

In the making of war documentary painting, the army decided that war imagery had to be an accurate portrayal of military campaigns in realistic detail, and the imagery should be more than a mere photographic copy of the subject. War imagery should embrace martial ideology and offer engrossing content. In the army’s vocabulary, these two essential elements were documentary quality (*kirokusei*) and artistic expression (*geijutsusei*). Artistic expression (*geijutsusei*) was at different times stated as feeling (*kanjô*) and ideas (*shisô*).¹³⁰ Above all, they stressed the importance of maintaining a balance between the two. Moreover, army art officer Kuroda Senkichirô discussed the requirements of war campaign record painting in his essay, “Sensôga ni tsuite” (About War Painting) in the inaugural issue of *Daitôa sensô: Nanpô gashin* (Illustrated Journal of the Great East Asia War: Southern Campaign) published by the Army Art Association for the general public on September 15, 1942. He listed three fundamentals that the army would expect to find in the ideal war documentary painting: realism (*shajitsu*), group composition of figures, and facility with drawing. To reproduce military events as faithfully as possible, Kuroda emphasized the need for accuracy, calling on painters to examine the scenes that they were portraying closely. He demanded attention to details such as the weaponry used in the battle, the troops visible in the scene, the geographical features, and the weather.¹³¹

The military’s emphasis on documentary quality (*kirokusei*) and artistic expression (*geijutsusei*) caused confusion among some Japanese artists who were enthusiastic about creating war painting, but who did not have the proper methodologies for executing them. Moreover, the

¹²⁹ Yamanouchi Ichirô, “Sakusen kirokuga no arikata” (War Campaign Record Painting as It Ought to Be), *Bijutsu* 5 (May 1944): 3.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 3.

official designation of documentary painting or “*kirokuga*” might have been somewhat misleading because it appeared to emphasize the documentary quality over the artistic, and any other. Art critic Miwa Rin echoes this confusion in his blunt statement that war painters were not supposed to be “*ashi no haeta shashinki*” (a camera with human legs). He wrote, “[P]hotography and newsreels have sufficiently fulfilled that role; it would be a shame for painters to have their work simply compared with photographic representation.” He continued to state the obvious, “*jûgunga* (war paintings) first and foremost have to be ‘*geijutsu*’ (art).”¹³²

Frustrated by military art officers who spoke about war painting often in abstract terms without articulating the desired visual effect, art critics participated in debates on the subject of documentary quality (*kirokusei*) and artistic expression (*geijutsusei*) in the art press.¹³³

However, the art critics’ statements also substituted the phrases used by military art officers with equally abstract expressions. For example, art critic Yanagi Ryô wrote, “the fundamental quality in painting which cannot be found in photography is spiritual phenomena (*seishin genshō*).”¹³⁴

Elsewhere in his essay, Yanagi reworded “spiritual phenomena” as emotional resonance or subjective contemplation in contrast to the objectivity of photographic realism. Some critics like Uemura Takachiyo and Yanagi, too, conceded that the lack of proper training in the past was responsible for the confusion.¹³⁵ Indeed, the problem caused by the lack of proper training in Western-style painting handicapped Japanese war painters on many levels, which I will discuss in the section devoted to a close study of the imagery in war painting.

¹³¹ Kuroda Senkichirô, “Sensôga ni tsuite” (About war painting), *Daitôa Sensô: Nanpô gashin* (Illustrated Journal of the Great East Asia War: Southern Campaign) 5 (September 15, 1942): 6-7.

¹³² Miwa Rin, “Jûgunga heno kôsatsumi” (Some thoughts on war painting), *Bi no kukuri* 14-8 (August 1938): 11.

¹³³ “Zadankai: Sensôga to geijutsusei” (Roundtable discussion: War painting and artistic quality), *Bijutsu* 9 (1944): 9-17.

¹³⁴ Yanagi Ryô “Ôinaru yashin wo mote” (Be ambitious), *Bijutsu* 5 (1944): 10.

While documenting the war was the army's foremost objective for commissioning war campaign record painting, raising the morale of the Japanese people was another aim associated with the army's strategy for exposing the public to war pictures. Army art officers repeatedly emphasized the need for Japanese civilians at home to grasp the "actual conditions" (*jissô*) of the war. "Plans to Dispatch Painters for Great East Asia War Documentary Painting" (*Daitôa sensô kirokuga seisaku no tame gaka genchi haken keikaku*) was an instructive letter that the army distributed to its commissioned painters in preparation for the 1943 dispatch. The letter defines the term "actual condition of war" in terms of the soldiers themselves. It narrows the primary items of interest as being "how the front-line soldiers were enduring hardships and privations, and how bravely they were fighting."¹³⁶ With paintings emphasizing the suffering incurred by troops in the course of their military service, the army expected that the scenes would intensify homeland civilians' gratitude for the soldiers as well as for those fallen. Even more than depictions of courage, war documentary art administrators hoped empathy would strengthen the citizen's own sense of public duty.¹³⁷ In this way, the display of war paintings was expected to educate people about the ongoing war, and improve their understanding of the experience of their fellow citizens in the front.

The military circulated the war campaign record paintings it had sponsored to major cities in Japan, as well as to areas Japan occupied in Asia, such as Manchuria and Korea. Although Japan's military propaganda policy toward other peoples in Asia is beyond the scope of this study, but the military also expected war documentary paintings to function as an educational tool for non-Japanese audiences. The goals were to have the people of Asia

¹³⁵ Uemura Takachiyo, "Kirokuga to geijutsusei" (War documentary painting and artistic quality), *Bijutsu* 5 (May 1944): 18-21.

¹³⁶ "Haken keikaku," 182-5.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 184.

recognize “the truth in Japan’s victory over the British and American and the great virility of the imperial forces.”¹³⁸ I suspect that “the truth” in this context refers to Japan’s self-assumed role as a liberator of Asia from the hands of the Western imperialists. Hence, the army was interested in emphasizing a lofty image of the imperial forces to its Asian neighbors, as opposed to the hardship of the soldiers’ lives, which the military believed would be an important mechanism for indoctrinating the domestic Japanese audience.

D. Dispatch of Official War Painters

I have identified eight dispatches of artists in the war documentary painting program; these painters were all sent to one or more battlefronts to sketch and paint.¹³⁹ The dispatches are as follows:

1. Army (10 painters to China), May 1938
2. Navy (6 painters to China), September 1938
3. Army (12 painters to China), April 1940
4. Army (16 painters to the South Pacific and Southeast Asia) in March-April 1942
5. Navy (15 painters and 1 sculptor to the South Pacific) May 1942
6. Navy (22 painters and 3 sculptors to the South Pacific) May 1943
7. Army (25 painters and 1 sculptor to the South Pacific and Burma), announced in May 1943
8. Army (some of 30 to the South Pacific), 1944

As I have mentioned, there were two dispatches of war painters in 1938. The first

¹³⁸ Ibid., 184.

¹³⁹ “Saikan senshi no kinjitô: Hôdanka ni seisaku ’jûninsyû” (Monumental work by soldiers with the painting brush: a series of twelve paintings made under the rain of shells), *Asahi shinbun* July 10, 1938. “Umi no Kankô kôryakuga: Fujishima shi ra roku gahaku jûgun” (Imagery of Hankou conquest: Six painters including Fujishima go on military service) *Asahi shinbun* September 28, 1938. “Zensen he jûni gahaku Rikugun kara hatsuno haken” (The First Dispatch by the Imperial Army of Twelve Painters to the Front) *Asahi shinbun* April 29, 1940. Gahitsu nimo daisenka wo (Brilliant Military Achievements with the Paint Brush) *Asahi shinbun* March 25, 1942. “Umi no yûsen wo egaku” (Painting Brave Naval Warfare) *Asahi shinbun* May 5, 1942. “Rekishiteki kaisen wo saigen: bijutsuka 25 shi wo zensen e” (25 Artists Sent to the Front to Reproduce Historical Naval Campaigns) *Asahi shinbun* May 5, 1943. “Heken keikaku.”

dispatch was composed of ten painters sent by the Imperial Army's Shanghai Division to create *Shina jihenga* (China Incident commemorative painting); the second dispatch was made by the navy with six painters. The *Asahi* newspaper article announcing this dispatch described the selected six painters bound for China as “*ôgoshô*,” which means the *doyen* of the art community, or the most senior.¹⁴⁰ They were Fujishima Takeji, Ishii Hakutei, Ishikawa Toraji, Tanabe Itaru, Fujita Tsuguji, and Nakamura Kenichi, all of whom were accomplished artists of the day.

In the spring of 1940, the Press Division of the Army Headquarters dispatched the third group of twelve painters to China to take up the historical subject of war in that region. Their topics ranged from the Manchurian Incident of 1931 to the period before the Pearl Harbor attack. The group was composed of nine *yôga* painters and three *nihonga* painters. The army wanted to emphasize the historic continuity of the current conflict in Manchuria by illustrating former battles that occurred in the same area.¹⁴¹

Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 and its mounting military successes in the Pacific theater from late 1941 prompted both the army and navy to increase the number of painting commissions. The army sent the fourth group of sixteen artists to the South Pacific campaign, which the press characterized “*ichiryû*,” meaning the first-rate.¹⁴² These were in addition to six military correspondent (*hôdôhan'in*) artists who had already been stationed at military outposts

¹⁴⁰ “Umi no Kankô kôryakuga: Fujishima shi ra roku gahaku jûgun.” Umehara Ryûzaburô and Yasui Sôtârô were notably absent from the list of official war art painters. They could be counted as *ôgoshô*, or highest ranking masters of the *yôga* community, and these two artists were immensely popular with audiences. However, their Fauvist style was not capable of providing realistic detail, and therefore could not be considered suitable for war documentary painting. Yet they did paint Chinese motifs specific to their war experience, such as happy Asian women in Chinese garb, and idyllic regional landscapes.

¹⁴¹ “Zensen he jûni gahaku.”

¹⁴² “Gahitsu nimo daisenka wo.”

there.¹⁴³ About the same time, the navy dispatched the fifth group including fifteen painters and one sculptor to the South Pacific. An *Asahi* newspaper article reporting the dispatch described the make-up of this navy-commissioned artist entourage as involving both “*jûchin*” (prominent artists) such as Yasuda Yukihiro, who was a member of the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts, and “*shinshin*” (emerging artists).¹⁴⁴

Even after it became clear that the military could not sustain the pace of its initial victories, and Japan began to experience heavy casualties in the Pacific, the government continued its support of the war documentary painting program. In 1943, both the navy and army sent even larger groups of their own artists, marking the sixth and seventh dispatches. The navy commissioned twenty-two painters and three sculptors, while the army sent twenty-five painters and one sculptor. Both dispatches were to cover campaigns in the Pacific islands and Southeast Asia. The seventh dispatch was made by the army in 1944. This dispatch named thirty artists to paint subject matter ranging from China and Manchuria to Burma, the Philippines, and the South Pacific. Only some of these painters were sent to the front to gather material for painting because of deteriorating battlefield conditions that Japanese forces were then facing. Apparent from the exhibition catalogs and newspaper reports, it is surprising that the number of official artists sent to document the war increased after the situation worsened. It is unclear whether this was a proactive response to the crisis, or part of a larger pattern of concealing setbacks in official war news reports. Future study of this relationship between worsening wartime conditions and increasing support for war art production is warranted.

Japan’s wartime publications made for military art exhibitions available today suggest

¹⁴³ The nature of and specific duty assigned for military correspondents (*hōdōhan’in*) are not yet clear to the author of this study. Some of the correspondents’ work was designated as war documentary painting and shown at war art exhibitions along with the work created by the other official war painters.

¹⁴⁴ “Umi no yûsen wo egaku.”

that eighty-five painters created 189 war documentary paintings.¹⁴⁵ Of these painters, seventy were *yôga* painters while only fifteen worked in the *nihonga* style. The dominance of *yôga* is more dramatic when one counts the number of works created in each medium. Of the 189 war paintings, the 164 oil on canvas works easily outnumber the twenty-five works executed in the traditional medium of color on paper or silk.

Among the eighty-five officially commissioned painters, a handful of artists won the favor and trust of the army and navy over the course of the war, and received multiple painting assignments. In the *yôga* community the most prolific war artist, was Fujita Tsuguji (1886-1968), who earned commissions for sixteen works. He was followed in yield by Nakamura Ken'ichi (1895-1967; eleven works), Miyamoto Saburô (1905-1974; seven works), Koiso Ryôhei (1903-1988; six works), Kurihara Shin (1894-1966; six works), and Tamura Kônosuke (1903-1986; six works). These artists were among the leading *yôga* painters. They were junior to some members of the art community, where seniority often meant more authority, yet they were already well positioned to replace those of the highest rank in the future based on merit. For the record, the most prolific war artist in the *nihonga* camp was Yoshioka Kenji (1906-1990; four works), followed by Kawabata Ryûshi (1885-1966; three works). Ryûshi was the artist who had advocated exhibition-hall art for mass civilian audiences. The majority of the artists who received any commission from the army or navy produced only one or two paintings.

Little is known about how the army and navy individually managed the administrative process of dispatching war painters to foreign posts. The aforementioned “Plans to Dispatch

¹⁴⁵ Japanese researcher Kawata Akihisa has said that he counted 214 “*sensôga*” (war paintings) in his essay on the subject. I believe, from the context of his essay, that his use of the term “*sensôga*” is not applied exclusively to the strict definition of state-commissioned war documentary paintings. In addition, the US Occupation Army reported that about two hundred official war paintings were made.

Painters for Great East Asia War Documentary Painting” blueprint for the 1943 dispatch of artists at least gives us a glimpse of an official communication with recruited painters.

The blueprint contains these headings:¹⁴⁶

1. Objectives for Creating War Documentary Paintings
2. Dispatch of Artists
3. Objectives for Publicly Exhibiting War Documentary Paintings:
 - 1) Domestic
 - 2) In the Great East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere
 - 3) (No title: the Section deals with the possibility of exchanging war art with the Axis nations in the future)
4. Intent of This Painting Assignment
5. Battles and Subject Matter to be Documented
6. Titles and Assigned Painters
7. Standards for Painting Formats
 - 1) Size
 - 2) Framing
8. Dispatch Period and Due Date
9. Additional Notes

This pamphlet states that the artists must request guidance regarding subject matter with the Imperial Headquarters.¹⁴⁷ The plan lists painting subjects and assigns artists to each. In retrospect, the cited artists did accommodate the military's blueprint for subject matter, as mentioned in this blueprint. In the strict context of this plan, precise titles of the final paintings that appeared in the Second Army Art Exhibition between March 8 and April 5, 1944 at Tokyo Metropolitan Museum in Ueno occasionally differed from the dispatch-assigned titles. However, almost all paintings that differed slightly by title followed the blueprint's specification for subject matter to the letter. It was rare that a resulting work depicted differing subject matter from that which the blueprint had initially assigned. For example, Koiso's given subject matter assignment in the above plan was *President Barmo and the Building of Independent Burma* (Bâmo chôkan to dokuriitius Biruma no kensetsu). His result is entitled *Independence Ceremony of Burma* (Biruma dokuritsu shikiten zu), and depicted the ceremony in which Burma declared its "independence" from Britain under Japan's imperial direction. The requested portrait

¹⁴⁶ "Haken keikaku," 182-5.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 184.

includes Barmo's face, but it is so small that it is barely discernible among the other pictured attendees. Another artist, Ihara Usaburo incidentally has a work treating Barmo as a solitary sitter, entitled *Portrait of President Barmo of Burma* (Bâmo Biruma kokka daihyou zu 1943). Ihara showed this work at Sixth Shin-Bunten in 1943.

Certain discretion was given to the painters. According to multicommissioned veteran painters Ihara Usaburô, Tamura Kônosuke, and Miyamoto Saburô, the army allowed some freedom for the artist to modify his blueprint-assigned subject. One such case involved Miyamoto's highly acclaimed painting of the Generals Yamashita and Percival created in 1943. Artist Miyamoto was in fact not present at the meeting; instead, Kurihara Shin, another commissioned war painter, attended. Miyamoto recalls that while he was in Singapore on his war art painting mission, artist colleagues persuaded him to take on the subject of the Yamashita-Percival surrender meeting.¹⁴⁸

Other documents from the Army Press Division of the Imperial Headquarters give us a glimpse of the remuneration received by commissioned artists during the war. Some commissioned civilian painters were given the level of treatment equivalent to "*sakan*" (officers) that include the three ranks of *taisa* (Colonel), *chûsa* (Lieutenant Colonel), and *shôsa* (Major).¹⁴⁹ The allowance paid to each painter that the army dispatched in 1940 was 1800 yen.¹⁵⁰ Other artists recall that their allowance was somewhere between 1000 and 2000 yen. It seems to have

¹⁴⁸ "Seiyaku no naka deno geijutsu" (Creative work within given limitations), *Mainichi graphu* November 3, 1967: 86-91.

¹⁴⁹ The Army to Koiso Ryôhei, "Shômeisho" (Identification paper), August 28, 1940, Koiso Memorial Museum at Kobe, Japan.

¹⁵⁰ Kuroda Senkichirô to Koiso Ryôhei, August 16, 1940, Koiso Memorial Museum at Kobe, Japan.

been a good compensation for one mission. In comparison, the annual salary of Lieutenant Colonel Suzuki Kurazo of the Army Press Division in 1941 was 3000 yen.¹⁵¹

E. Military-Sponsored War Art Exhibitions

During most of the war years, Japanese artists continued to enjoy exhibition opportunities.¹⁵² Among those opportunities, the largest and most prestigious venues were war art shows sponsored by the military, and circulated to major cities in Japan such as Tokyo, Osaka, and Kyoto. The exhibits were presented to the Japanese people as a token of successful military operations by the imperial troops. In addition to commissioned war campaign documentary paintings, the shows accepted numerous general war-theme paintings and sculptures selected by a jury of civilian artists and military officials. War documentary paintings and some other exhibited works were also reproduced in large, folio sized exhibition catalogs or picture books to be disseminated to a wider audience. Most catalogs paid special respect to war documentary paintings by allocating one full page for one or two paintings, while other works were printed in reduced size.

¹⁵¹ Naikaku sôridaijin kanbô jinjika (Human Resource Section of the Prime Minister's Secretariat), *Kyû gunjin rireki: Suzuki no 2 ka-ko* (Directory of Veterans: Part 2 of Suzuki from ka-ko) (Tokyo: National Archives of Japan, no date), no page.

¹⁵² With the issuing of the Art Exhibition Handling Plan (*Bijutsu tenrankai toriatsukai yôkô*) in 1944, exhibition activity was drastically curtailed due to the cited difficulties in obtaining painting materials, and moving artwork on the domestic transportation system. Henceforth all exhibition activity had to be approved by the Patriotic Society of Japanese Art.

The breakdown of the numbers of war documentary paintings shown to the public at state-sponsored war art exhibitions is as follows:

Date	Exhibition	Army sponsored		Navy sponsored	
		<i>Yôga</i>	<i>nihonga</i>	<i>Yôga</i>	<i>nihonga</i>
July 1939	First Holy War Art Exhibition	10			
June 1941	Fifth Great Japan Marine Art Exhibition			12	
July 1941	Second Holy War Art Exhibition	13	3		
Dec. 1942	First Great East Asia War Art Exhibition	19	4	13	3
May 1943	Seventh Great Japan Marine Art Exhibition			18	
Sept. 1943	National Total War Art Exhibition	1			
Dec. 1943	Second Great East Asia War Art Exhibition			13	8
March 1944	Second Army Art Exhibition	27	2		
Nov. 1944	War Time Special Ministry of Education Art Exhibition	14	4	1	1
March 1945	War Documentary Painting Exhibition	20	3		

Table 1. The number of war documentary paintings at major military war art exhibitions.

War art exhibitions were open competitions. Works in painting, sculpture, and sometimes posters were submitted to the judges who supervised the selection. Exceptions allowed were state-commissioned war documentary paintings and works by certain senior members of the art community who participated by invitation. This exhibition system, characterized by open competition, jury selection, and special treatment for high-ranking artists, was derived from the long-running official annual art exhibition (Bunten and later renamed Teiten). Since the Meiji period, the official annual art exhibitions had been used by the state as a guidance apparatus for channeling official taste in art to general audiences in Japan. By the time

of the Pacific War, the Japanese people were already accustomed to government controls over their consumption of art. Benefiting from the public's familiarity with this established exhibition system, military war art shows drew a number of submissions from artists and attracted large audiences.

The First Holy War Art Exhibition (*Daiikkai seisen bijutsu tenrankai*) of 1939 was the first large-scale war art exhibition organized by the army. It featured ten war documentary paintings done by the painters who had been dispatched to Central China by the Army's Shanghai Division. The show was held at the Tokyo Municipal Art Museum in Ueno, which was the most prestigious public exhibition space in Tokyo between July 6 and 23. The show commemorated the second anniversary of the China War that had begun on July 7, 1937. Of the 1200 art works submitted, over 300 appeared in the show. Some came directly from soldiers in active service or in hospitals. Separately, fifty works came from the invited artists. In terms of artistic medium, there were 307 *yôga* paintings, sixteen *nihonga* works, and forty-two sculptures. The show was successful in attracting a public curious about the war, but the uneven quality of the work was a problem. The Second Holy War Art Exhibition (*Dainikai seisen bijutsu tenrankai*) of 1941 reduced the number of works to be exhibited to 247, which included sixteen war documentary paintings and forty-five works from the invited artists. The breakdown of works by artistic medium shows the unchanging dominance of *yôga*, and the small numbers represented by *nihonga* and sculpture, which were respectively twelve and thirty.

The first and only war art show sponsored jointly by the army and navy was held to mark the first anniversary of the Pearl Harbor attack. This coincided with a time when the Japanese people were welcoming the news of imperial victories in Southeast Asia with enthusiasm. In December 1942, the First Great East Asia War Art Exhibition (*Dai'ikkai daitôa sensô bijutsu*

tenrankai) opened in Tokyo, and then traveling to Osaka and Nagoya. The works totaling 314 included 39 state-commissioned items: 23 paintings by army-commissioned artists and 16 works by navy-dispatched painters. This was also the largest number of such paintings to appear together in any of the war exhibitions. Military war art shows drew submissions from artists and attracted large audiences. About 3,854,000 visitors came to the exhibition by the army's count, which was about ten times the number of visitors to the annual official exhibition, which continued to be held even during the war.¹⁵³

Such mobilizations of mass audiences stemmed in part from the public's familiarity with the art exhibition format. Nevertheless, the huge attendance figures were also the result of fanfare created by the government-controlled press, which printed pictures of exhibited works as well as exhibition reviews. One of the three national newspapers, the *Asahi* was the primary cosponsor for the military art exhibitions throughout the war years. The *Asahi* newspaper provided publicity for the exhibitions by running a series that published one picture a day of the state-commissioned war documentary paintings. An explanatory article about the daily picture that sometimes included an interview with the painter accompanied each reproduced image. The paper also reported when dignitaries, large groups of returned soldiers, or schoolchildren visited the show.

The nationally circulated daily *Asahi* newspaper cosponsored these military war art exhibitions. The *Asahi* newspaper had been involved in sponsoring civilian art exhibitions in the prewar years as part of its educational mission.¹⁵⁴ The *Asahi* newspaper's involvement as a sponsor of art exhibitions dated back to the early 1900s in the Osaka area, where the paper was

¹⁵³ "Haken keikaku," 184.

¹⁵⁴ For more information about the newspaper's role in art sponsorship, see Hidetsugu Yamano, "Jânarizumu to bijutsu" (Journalism and art), Toshihiro Tsuganezawa ed., *Kindai nihon no media evento* (Media events in modern Japan) (Tokyo: Dôbunkan shuppan, 1996).

originally established in 1879. The paper's first show, an exhibit of copied images from India's famous Ajanta cave paintings, was held in 1919 followed by a modern French art exhibition including one hundred pieces of painting and sculpture. These exhibitions took place in an auditorium on the premises of the newspaper, and entrance was free. The *Asahi* newspaper considered these shows to be educational undertakings, rather than direct revenue opportunities. Hybrid operations teaming the publicity of journalism with art and culture generate what has come to be known as an "*evento*" (event). The *evento* is a unique format born in modern Japan, and has become common.¹⁵⁵ The Osaka *Asahi* newspaper also was associated with leading artist groups like the Second Division Society composed of *yōga* painters, and the Japan Art Institute for *nihonga* artists. The newspaper provided them with a venue in Osaka for their annual touring exhibitions in the prewar years. Therefore, the *Asahi* newspaper's enterprising contribution to the war art exhibitions was multifaceted. It exerted a much wider influence on people's entertainment choices than it would have by simply publishing news of the events, making it an essential partner for the military in promoting the war art exhibitions.

By 1944, increasing scarcity of materials and logistical problems compelled the Japanese government to halt its exhibition programming, which it outlined in the "Art Exhibition Handling Plan" (Bijutsu tenrankai toriatsukai yōkō). The government also suspended the annual Ministry of Education Art Exhibition, which had kept its doors open to artists throughout the war years, replacing the Bunten with a special wartime version of the exhibition to show war documentary paintings. The year 1945 saw only a few public presentation activities, including for the War Documentary Painting Exhibition in April 1945. After the fall of Saipan in July 1944, Japan's war prospects decreased considerably, and Japan began to organize military suicide units in October 1944. The American air raids against Japanese cities that began in late 1944 added

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

physical disruption to the increasing shortages in the homeland. American planes dropped incendiary bombs in Tokyo, and by the end of the war, sixty-three other cities were devastated by fire-bombings.¹⁵⁶ Nevertheless, Japan's military government gave strong bureaucratic support for the production and public exhibition of war campaign documentary paintings to the very end of the war.

F. Imperial Inspection of War Documentary Painting

The press played an enormous role in publicizing war documentary paintings. As has been mentioned, the *Asahi* newspaper serialized a daily special feature of reproduced images and accompanying commentary, as well as publishing high quality exhibition catalogs. However, what raised these war images to the level of national significance was the venerable treatment they received from the imperial household. Prince Takeda Tsuneyoshi (1909-1978), who was an army officer, attended the opening ceremony of the First Holy War Art Exhibition in 1939, and other members of the imperial family came to the show in person. Arrangements for the imperial inspection were promoted to an even more prestigious level when the Second Holy War Art Exhibition was held in 1941. On that occasion, war documentary paintings were brought to the imperial palace for the emperor and empress to view privately, before the show's public opening. While some members of the imperial household visited the show, this intimate approach of an inspection by the imperial couple at the palace became the norm after the Second Holy War Art show. These were called "*tenran*" when the viewings were conducted by the emperor, and "*tairan*" when the inspections were made by the empress and other members of the imperial family. The Japanese people then regarded the emperor to be a living god. Therefore,

¹⁵⁶ Dower, *War without Mercy*, 298.

gaining public access to paintings that had received a private inspection from him and the empress was an unparalleled honor in the eyes of ordinary people. Therefore, the public took the news of the imperial inspections of war documentary paintings as evidence of their paramount significance.¹⁵⁷

Officially sanctioned war documentary paintings were destined to become national treasures, at least in the minds of some military art officials and artists. In sponsoring war campaign documentary painting, the army entertained the idea of presenting the paintings as imperial offerings. The army intended to rank them as national treasures (*kokuhô*). The works would be given the highest position of honor in the hierarchy of Japanese art. It is not clear from available sources at what point during the war these grand motives might have arisen, nor do we know how they might have influenced the army's national war art program. But the postwar comments of Lieutenant Kuroda Senkichirô support the claim that these motives were part of the army's plan for the war paintings. According to Kuroda, the army conceived the idea of sponsoring war campaign record painting when the need to present an offering to the imperial household had arisen.

In the fall of 1939, Kuroda proposed that the army send a delegation of painters on a painting assignment to the front in China, but no action was taken. In 1940, Kuroda reintroduced the proposal for war campaign record painting when the army had to assemble gifts for the emperor in preparation for the celebration of the 2,600-year anniversary of the imperial origin. Wartime Japanese education policy claimed that the ascension of Emperor Jinmu to the throne in 660 BCE marked the beginning of the imperial household, as stated in Japan's ancient text *Nihon shoki* (Chronicles of Japan, written in 720 CE). Taking this mythical foundation of the nation as

¹⁵⁷ Yamada Shinichi's personal notes, in Sasaki Shigeo, "Sensôga no sengo shori" (Postwar treatment of war paintings), *Live and Review* 17 (2000), 50.

historical fact, the Japanese people enthusiastically celebrated the year 1940 with various national and local events. The Army Press Division formed an imperial gift committee by appointing four officers, including Kuroda; this time he successfully convinced the imperial authorities through this gift committee to sponsor war pictures and offer them to the emperor.¹⁵⁸ In 1940, the army headquarters issued its first request for war campaign documentary paintings. The completed paintings were then shown at the Second Holy War Art Exhibition in 1941. If any war documentary paintings did enter the imperial art collection, I was not able to discover which ones. This is a question remaining to be investigated. However, it is safe to say based on Kuroda's account that the need to make an imperial offering at the 2,600-year anniversary celebration had become the occasion on which the army headquarters considered becoming a serious war art sponsor.

Other evidence indicating that the army envisioned war campaign record paintings as national treasures can be found in the "Plans to Dispatch Painters for Great East Asia War Documentary Painting." The pamphlet equated military-sponsored war pictures with highly acclaimed art works. Mentioned is *Admiral Tôgô and His Officers on the Bridge of the Battleship Mikasa* (Mikasa kankyô no Tôgô taishô ika, figure 16) from the Russo-Japanese War by *yôga* painter Tôjô Shôtarô. It also cites *Illustrated History of the Mongol Invasions* (Môko shûrai ekotoba, figure 17) from the late thirteenth century in the imperial household collection.¹⁵⁹ Similarly, Fujita Tsuguji expressed his devotion to creating war paintings that would be worthy of becoming national treasures and inspiring the Japanese soul everlastingly.¹⁶⁰ To ensure the physical longevity of war documentary paintings, which would necessary for long-lasting

¹⁵⁸ "Zadankai: Ushinawareta sensôga" (Round table discussion: Lost war paintings), *Shûkan Yomiuri* (Weekly Yomiuri) 18 August 1967. Quoted in Tan'ô, 118.

¹⁵⁹ "Haken keikaku," 185.

appreciation, the Army Press Division officer, Captain Yamanouchi advised that proper measures should be taken to prevent damage and accidental loss. In the May 1944 issue of *Mizue* magazine, he emphasized requirements for a large picture surface, and forbade the use of painting materials that could cause discoloration over time.¹⁶¹ More precisely, the army's dispatch plan letter set the standard format for war documentary painting to be the Japanese canvas size of 200 (around 72 x 100 inches), although allowing for some alteration in length and width. As a result, war documentary paintings stand unusually large in the context of Japanese modern painting.

G. Militarists View of Art and its Role

No doubt, painters were driven in part by a sense of patriotism and in part by the prospect of fame and prestige that could stem from their artistic service to the military. We can ask: were they also motivated by fear of the consequences should they appear to be not patriotic enough in the eyes of the military? Although the war art program forged an alliance between the military and artists, it was capable of fraying at the whim of the authoritarian military patrons, who could accuse anyone in the art community of disloyalty. The intent of the military art bureaucrats to influence and control art production in support of the war effort was publicized in the press. Articles indicating their aims appeared in the Army Art Association's own publications and *Mizue*, a popular art magazine for artists and art lovers.

One of the most notorious press articles displaying the military's jingoistic art policy appeared in the January 1941 issue of *Mizue*. The article's title is "Kokubô kokka to bijutsu:

¹⁶⁰ Fujita Tsuguji, "Aratani kokuhô wo tsukurau" (Let's Make New National Treasures), *Mainichi shinbun*, reprinted in *Bijutsu Shinpô* 74 (October 1, 1943).

Gaka wa nani o nasubekika” (The National Defense State and the Fine Art: What Should the Artist Do?)¹⁶² The piece was a detailed transcription of a roundtable discussion sponsored by the magazine and held in November 1940. This discussion took place in response to the invocation of the New Order policy by the second Konoe Cabinet, and was in essence an official announcement of its implications to the art community. In their discussion, the panelists, including three military art officers from the Army Press Division, outlined the government's view of the role of art and artists during wartime. The three officers were Lieutenant Colonels Suzuki Kurazô and Akiyama Kunio, and Lieutenant Kuroda Senkichirô. The panel's civilian participants were the nationalist art critic Araki Hideo, who specialized in nineteenth-century French painting and was a frequent commentator on art in the *Asahi* newspaper, and Kamigôri Takashi, who served as the editor of the discussion transcript.

In the discussion, the military panelists stressed the importance of ideological warfare in military strategy and the critical role of artists, contending that modern warfare required the mobilization of all material and human resources available to the nation. Lieutenant Colonel Suzuki, the most forceful of the three military bureaucrats, attempted to suppress potential resistance by artists, reminding readers that art supplies were ideological munitions under military control. Suzuki knew the effect of such rationing of industry-specific material well, as he was also involved in controlling paper rations to the printed media outlets. Material shortages were a serious concern among painters, since canvas and oil pigments were mostly imported. Domestic art products were available, but their quality was not yet to the level of their Western counterparts. Moreover, raw materials required to produce pigments had to be imported. The panelists repeatedly criticized the Western notions of individualism and freedom as the sources

¹⁶¹ Yamanouchi, 4.

of justification for an artist's pursuit of fame and money out of self-interest. Targeting the *yôga* community, the critics lamented how little the Japanese racial character was reflected in the art of the day, which, in their view, was "a glorious time" for the nation. Suzuki remarked that there was an alarming lack of national consciousness evident in the Second Division Society (Nikakai), which remained a leading independent association of Western-style painters even after the Matsuda Reorganization of 1935. He said, "If we visit the Nikakai art show full of French-style paintings, we would see a French colony in Japan."¹⁶³ Although the Nikakai was not the only artists' group that was attracted to new styles developed in Europe, the military art bureaucrats who were eager to see solidarity in the art community did not easily forget its past antiauthority stance. Moreover, in the eyes of the panelists, the lack of racial and national values in contemporary *yôga* signified a lost opportunity to pass on then contemporary Japanese culture to future generations as tradition. These military bureaucrats also lashed out at avant-garde artists, calling their art "self-righteous" in its concern, catering merely to styles fashionable at the time, such as Surrealism or Expressionism.¹⁶⁴ In their estimation, artists should demonstrate a unified effort in generating a sense of national identity through their work.

The same view was echoed by chief of the culture section of the Cabinet Information Bureau, Inoue Shirô in the March-April issue of *Mizue*, which was by then renamed *Bijutsu* (Art). In late 1940, the publishing world underwent a consolidation under official guidance, and Tokyo's wide range of almost forty art magazines was reduced to eight titles.¹⁶⁵ Inoue in his essay "Kôkoku bijutsu kakuritsu no michi" (The Way toward Establishing the Art of the Imperial

¹⁶² "Kokubô kokka to bijutsu: Gaka wa nani o nasubekika" (National defense state and the fine art: What should the artist do), *Mizue* 434 (January 1941): 129-39.

¹⁶³ "Kokubô kokka."

¹⁶⁴ Kuroda, 6.

¹⁶⁵ This consolidation did not touch publications focusing on Japanese and East Asian art and antiques such as *Kokka*.

Nation) criticized the notion of art for the sake of art, and stressed its social role. He wrote, “Beauty is power (*Bi wa chikara de aru*)...Beauty is not for entertainment. Rather than consoling people, beauty is essentially to strengthen them.” He continues, saying that the purpose of art is to strengthen the national spirit of the people from the inside.¹⁶⁶

Japan’s military officials thought that art could only be valuable if it addressed overarching social and national issues. The regime’s view had incidental affinity with the idea of art for the masses, which had become popular within the cultural landscape of the prewar years. Mass art had been manifested in murals, exhibition-hall art, and proletarian art. Although the government’s militarists did not consider themselves socialists, their desire to harness mass art as propaganda mechanism was directly met by the emerging socialist art movements. I will explore this affinity in the next chapter.

¹⁶⁶ Inoue Shirô, “Kôkoku bijutsu kakuritsu no michi,” *Bijutsu* 3-4 (1944): 4.

CHAPTER THREE

THE ARTISTIC ORIGINS OF WAR DOCUMENTARY PAINTING

Although I will show otherwise in this chapter, there is a critical notion among Japanese art historians that war painters had few stylistic and compositional models to use in making war documentary painting.¹⁶⁷ Moreover, Japanese scholars often point out that even knowledge of Western war painting masterpieces could not adequately prepare them for depicting modern war. The nature of conflict had changed with the prevalent use of technology such as machineguns, battleships, and fighter airplanes. Indeed, many have recognized that *nihonga* painters had particular difficulty rendering these objects.¹⁶⁸ Nevertheless, these explanations have discouraged efforts to search for formal and conceptual precedents that might have informed war painters in their creation of war documentary painting, whether they fully digested them or not. As a result, the view continues to be held that war documentary painting was something of a historical anomaly in the development of Japanese art during the prewar years. The purpose of this chapter is to trace earlier developments in Japanese art with an emphasis on *yōga*. The historical context that produced war imagery in the modern era was drastically different from that in the premodern era. More than the technological advances in weaponry, the emergence of mass audiences changed the nature of art by adding ever-larger social and political dimensions to it. At the time of war, political leaders needed a vehicle for disseminating war information to a large public, and for mobilizing the population as the war effort progressed. Therefore, mass media such as woodcut prints, and later lithography, became increasingly valuable as tools for

¹⁶⁷ Takashina Shūji, *Nihon bijutsu no nagare* (Currents in Japanese Art) vol. 6 *Jūkyū-seiki to Nijū-seiki no bijutsu: Higashi to Nishi no deai* (Art of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: A Meeting of East and West) (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1991), 122.

¹⁶⁸ Tanaka Hisao has mentioned this.

providing news about current affairs quickly to larger groups of citizens. For the public, the more accurate the rendering of war imagery the better, and the more truthful it appeared — regardless of the facts. In the modern Japanese context of *yôga*, its capacity for realistic representation became the catalyst for its journalistic deployment in disseminating war information during the first Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese Wars. By the time of the Pacific War when acceptance of *yôga* had become widespread, and photography had become more available, war documentary painting emerged as a medium of great utility. It was expected to play a double role as a pliable medium for the state-manipulated news documentary effort, and as a sacred vessel of nationalist artistic expression.

In this chapter, I first examine Japanese medieval war scrolls as indirect precursors to modern war painting in terms of their role for disseminating literature, education, and religion, and I then identify their patrons and audiences. Next, I trace the development of *yôga* as it was fueled by Japan's modern wars. As a suitable medium for war portrayal, *yôga* gained an advantage over *nihonga* for its strength in realism. Moreover, I compare painting with other visual media used in depicting war, as popular demand for such images continued to increase in a rapidly changing mass society, and as the state realized a greater need to indoctrinate the public. I pay special attention to the significance of monumental panorama painting that was popularized around the time of the first Sino-Japanese War. Finally, I argue that war documentary painting was a mass art form that emerged in the confluence of prewar cultural trends. Artists were prepared with new styles just when an increasingly heightened popular demand for mass culture was manifesting itself. I argue that the wartime government recognized this emerging potential for using mass art as an effective propaganda tool, and seized the opportunity. Artistic techniques for mass audience penetration manifested themselves in murals,

proletarian art, and what was then called exhibition-hall art (*kaijô geijutsu*). While these media were under spontaneous development within the art community, the state began to harness them immediately. One important example of this union of new artistic media capabilities with government demand for mass communications was the project to represent the life of the Meiji emperor. Shôwa-era art critic and historian Moriguchi Tari states that the “Pacific War made Japanese artists conscious of sharing the common goals with the populace in their creative process, even though the goals of the war proved to be wrong.”¹⁶⁹ I argue that what enabled them to make a transition from self-expressive work to war painting was the social consciousness of the mass audiences that arose in the prewar years. This trend toward mass art forms was incited by the antiauthoritarian movements of anarchism and proletarianism. The migration to a public style of art stood in stark contrast to a tendency toward self-expression that was nurtured by the subjective nature of painting that Kuroda Seiki advocated.

I. Imagery of War in Pre-Meiji Japanese Art

In Japanese culture, the depiction of war emerged as a theme in art and literature at the end of the Heian period (794-1185). The war scroll painting was the primary means for dramatizing and commemorating great battles, and was proliferated by both the duplicating of the existing scrolls, and the production of originals during the Kamakura period (1185-1333). War scroll paintings show both text and images. Some war scroll paintings were created based on existing tales that were already standardized in written form. War scrolls added illustrations to fresh calligraphy. It is difficult to relate the political, religious, educational, and martial

¹⁶⁹ Moriguchi, 355.

significance of Japanese war scroll paintings to later forms of official war documentary painting, but they may not be ignored when considering Japan's modern military art. One scroll, the *Illustrated History of the Mongol Invasions* (Môko shûrai ekotoba) (figure 17), proves to have a more obvious relationship to the more modern forms because of its contemporaneous documentary qualities. The commissioner was on hand at the actual event, and supervised the scroll's creation, making it a visual and calligraphic telling of his own eyewitness account.

As an island nation, Japan had seldom faced an enemy from the outside, and thus most wars of the medieval period were domestic conflicts. This was a time when the ruling aristocracy was usurped by a newly emerging class of warriors, who controlled provincial farmlands on behalf of their aristocratic owners. The aristocracy gradually gained enough economic and military power to pitch themselves against the landowners. This time of change, beginning in the late twelfth century, was marked by many bloody wars over the issue of territorial control fought among warriors siding with various aristocrats and imperial members. The first of this sort of conflict was the rebellion of Taira no Masakado in the tenth century, followed by the Early Nine Years War between 1051 and 1062, and the Later Three Years War between 1083-1087. The subsequent Hôgen War of 1156 and the following Heiji War of 1159 was a pair of watershed events involving two powerful warrior families of the time, the Taira and Minamoto. Epic tales of heroes who fought in those wars provided inspiration for artists of later eras. They led to a new literary genre called "*gunki monogatari*" (war tales) in the thirteenth century; and then to another genre of painting in the handscroll format, called "*kassen emaki*" (war scrolls).

These war tales depicted memorable characters, and dramatic lives of the victorious and defeated. The narratives were based on actual insurgencies bearing the same names, but in

Edwin Reischauer's words, they were "romanticized and idealized accounts."¹⁷⁰ Among the most famous of the stories are *The Tale of the Heiji* and *The Tale of the Hôgen*. Both of these tales resulted in divergent tellings (the dates of the original creations are still unknown). War tales were recited in towns and villages to ordinary people by "*biwa hôshi*," blind monks who accompanied their tales with music on the lute (*biwa*). Thus, by the end of the thirteenth century a wide-ranging audience composed of illiterate commoners in addition to the educated classes was familiar with these tales.¹⁷¹ The popularity of the war tales fueled an identical phenomenon in the realm of pictorial art; *kassen emaki* (war scrolls) emerged to illustrate the tales of famous wars and rebellions. The handscroll format allowed the reader to enjoy both imagery and text somewhat like modern moving pictures because the reader unrolled the scroll from right to left. The tale would unfold with a steady progression of pictures and words. Both the warrior class and the aristocracy patronized war scrolls by commissioning professional painters in Kyoto. For example, the *Masakado War Scroll* (*Masakado kassen emaki*) was commissioned by shogun Minamoto Sanetomo. Copying war scrolls was common. Retired emperor Go-shirakawa (1127-1192) ordered the creation of the *Later Three Years War Scroll* (*Go-san'nen kassen emaki*) depicting the war of 1083-1087) in 1171.¹⁷²

¹⁷⁰ Edwin O. Reischauer, "Heiji Monogatari," *Early Japanese Literature* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951), 380.

¹⁷¹ Komatsu Shigeru ed., *Heiji monogatari ekotoba* (The Tale of the Heiji Scroll), vol. 12 of *Nihon no Emaki* (Tokyo: Chûôkôronsha, 1988), 86-87.

¹⁷² The agent for the retired emperor who handled this order was a monk named Jôken (the son of Fujiwara Shinzei, a tragic figure of the Heiji War), and the painter was a monk named Myôjitsu (1028-1093). This scroll was stored in the Lotus Repository (*Renge ôin*) donated by Taira no Kiyomori in 1164 within the property of the Shichijô Palace of the retired emperor and administered by the monk Jôken.

One of the most famous war scrolls is the thirteenth century *The Tale of the Heiji Scroll* (Heiji monogatari emaki), which recounts stories of the Heiji Civil War of 1159.¹⁷³ It is known for its fine artwork, as well as its telling of an important historical event. Among the handscrolls that remain in existence, *The Sanjô Palace* is known to be one of the most dramatic representations of battle in Japanese medieval art (figure 10). It shows a scene in which the retired emperor's residence, the Sanjô Palace, was set on fire and warriors of two factions clash. The scroll is painted in the colorful *yamatoe* style, and the figures are delineated in black ink line typical of traditional Japanese painting. The brutality of war is captured in vivid illustrations of suffering combatants and courtiers. The raging fires and smoke depicted in vermilion and black are ominous and violent, echoing the chaos on the ground; courtiers are fleeing in fear for their lives, and warriors are killing each other and courtiers. These figures are depicted in various postures with limbs and necks convincingly turned or lifted, creating a meshed cluster of bodies.

In addition to providing entertainment to viewers with their pictorial accounts dramatizing notable conflicts, war scrolls produced in the Kamakura period were made for the self-gratification of the warrior class. In this role, they were often used as a vehicle for educating young sons of the shogun's families and the warrior class. *Azuma kagami*, a historical account of the Kamakura shogunate by an unknown author, has entries that give us a glimpse into this pedagogic practice.¹⁷⁴ It was conventional to select a person of calligraphic skill to read the

¹⁷³ The *Burning of the Sanjô Palace* scroll is in the Boston Museum of Fine Art. The *Shinzei* scroll is in the Seikadô in Kyoto, and the *Rokuhara Procession* scroll is in the Tokyo National Museum of Art.

¹⁷⁴ The entry for the twenty-sixth day of the eleventh month of 1204 recounts that young shogun Minamoto no Sanetomo viewed the twenty-scroll set of the *Masakado War Scroll* (Masakado kassen emaki) illustrating the rebellion of Taira no Masakado in the tenth century. Another entry for the twenty-third day of the eleventh month of 1210 documents that the same young shogun Sanetomo, then nineteen years old, enjoyed the *Early Nine Year War Scroll* (Zen-kunen kassen emaki depicting the war of 1051-1062) with a famous calligrapher reciting the text. Komatsu Shigemi ed., *Zen-kunen kassen ekotoba, heiji*

story of a scroll painting aloud to a high-ranking viewer. Another entry of *Azuma kagami* shows us how young a child could receive this special education using war scrolls. On the eleventh day of the tenth month of 1245, another set of scrolls depicting the Masakado War was commissioned for the fifth Kamakura shogun Fujiwara (Kujô) Yoritsugu. When the scrolls were presented to him, he was only seven years old. It is not difficult to imagine how exciting it would have been for children to view the scenes of legendary battles and warriors famous for martial deeds so far in the past.

In addition to their obvious historic and martial content, some scholars have asserted the religious significance of the war scrolls, arguing that their production may well have been a reaction to the horrors of the bloody battles. Art historian Miya Tsugio contends, "The war scroll was meant neither to promote a fighting spirit nor to praise wars. There is a sense of the evanescence of life which is shared with the war novels."¹⁷⁵ Another scholar, Ienaga Saburô, links the role of religion with the war scroll by equating the cruelty of war to hell. He focuses particularly on "*rokudôe*" (Buddhist pictures depicting the six stages of life: hell, hungry ghosts, animals, demigods, people, and heaven). He argues that the war scroll could have paradoxically functioned to promote a desire to pursue Buddha's quest for paradise.¹⁷⁶ The Pure Land sect (*Jôdoshû*) had already promoted the matched concepts of hell and Buddha's paradise in the Heian period. In the late twelfth century, the common people blamed an evil spirit for the suffering caused by the Hôgen and Heiji Wars. In order to appease the spirit, they believed there

monogatari ekotoba, and yûki kassen ekotoba (Scrolls of the Early Nine Year War, the Tale of the Heiji, and the Yûki War), vol. 17 of *Zoku nihon no emaki* (Tokyo: Chûôkôronsha, 1992), 126-7.

¹⁷⁵ Miya Tsugio ed., *Kamakura no kaiga: Emaki to shôzô* (Painting of the Kamakura Period: War Scrolls and Portraiture), vol. 10 of *Nihon bijutsu zenshû* (Tokyo: Gakushû kenkyûsha, 1979), 155.

¹⁷⁶ Ienaga Saburô, *Yamatoe* (Yamatoe-Style Painting), *Nihon no bijutsu* vol. 10 (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1964), 127.

was a need to show repentance.¹⁷⁷ Thus, the scrolls illustrating these wars could have been created as a warning against misconduct and a reflection on the suffering that it caused.¹⁷⁸

Whether it was the attempt at using the horror of war as a metaphor or even a depiction of hell, or the belief that an evil spirit was the cause of the fighting, the association of the war scroll with religious injunctions against violence is convincing. Moreover, temples were active patrons of the arts of the Kamakura period, and scrolls were sometimes produced in them.

The *Illustrated History of the Mongol Invasions* (Môko shûrai ekotoba) created in the late thirteenth century (figure 17) is a rare example of a war scroll created immediately from a first hand account of battle. This set of scrolls depicted two encounters between Japanese and Mongolian armies that took place on Japan's southernmost island of Kyushu in 1274 and 1281 C.E. This is the only instance where Japanese forces had faced a foreign enemy in the pre-Meiji period; all the other military conflicts known in Japanese history through this period were of a domestic nature. Kubilai Khan (1215-1294), who founded the Yuan dynasty in China, dispatched his armies twice to Japan with expansionist ambitions. Weather over the Japan Sea conspired against Khan on both occasions, and his forces were defeated twice after typhoons sank most of his fleets. Japanese myth has it that the nation defended itself from this formidable adversary with the timely assistance of "god winds" or *kamikaze*.¹⁷⁹

Takezaki Suenaga, a warrior who fought against the Mongol armies in both battles, commissioned the scrolls over a period of years some time after the two events. The work was

¹⁷⁷ Satô Tetsuei, *Jôdokyô no kenkyû* (A Study of Jôdo Sect of Buddhism) (Kyoto: Hyakkaen, 1979), 475.

¹⁷⁸ Komatsu, *Heiji*, 101.

¹⁷⁹ Thomas D. Conlan, *In Little Need of Divine Intervention* (Ithaca, New York: East Asia Program, Cornell University, 2001). This book presents a revision of these campaigns by arguing that Japan actually had not needed the divine intervention.

completed perhaps between 1293 and 1324 before his death.¹⁸⁰ Like other examples of the medieval war scrolls, historical analysis of this work offers little direct visual or formal connection to the war documentary painting made centuries later in the foreign medium of oil. More study may reveal connections in the future. For example, the Mongol invasion scrolls offer none of the realistic detail afforded to modern war paintings. Suenaga's Mongol invasion scrolls have at least the eyewitness characteristic in common with modern war documentary painting of the Pacific War.

The role of the scrolls has been the subject of debate among scholars. Because of the work's documentary quality, and the fact that the veteran who commissioned them was a participating warrior, some think that the scrolls are meant to be pictorial proof of his deeds in the two invasions. During the Kamakura period, the military government was careful in deciding who would deserve an official allocation of a monetary reward offered by the state for warrior service in the conflict. Thus, the scrolls have been assessed as a potential visual aid to Suenaga's request to the Kamakura government.¹⁸¹ At the same time, the scrolls are seen as a document commemorating the historic battle, and in part are an effort to remember Suenaga's own martial accomplishments for posterity. This commemorative character of Suenaga's scrolls was accompanied by the religious importance attached to the first scroll as an offering to the Tofukuji temple in the Kaitô lands, when the temple was established as his own clan's.¹⁸²

Adding to the debate over the significance of the scrolls, Thomas D. Conlan makes a compelling argument that the scrolls could have been made in atonement to the individuals who had helped Suenaga to win recognition for his gallantry in battle. One of the men of concern is

¹⁸⁰ Conlan, 7.

¹⁸¹ Sherman E. Lee, *A History of Far Eastern Art* 5th ed. (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1994), 412,

¹⁸² Conlan, 6.

Shôni Kagesuke, who witnessed Suenaga's brave deeds. The other is government official Adachi Yasumori, who finally conferred an award for military service against the Mongol invasions to Suenaga. Conlan sees praise for these two individuals in the scrolls themselves. Considering that later these two individuals were killed for related political intrigue in 1285, and that Suenaga was incapable of acting on their behalf at that time, Conlan characterizes the scrolls as a memorial offering to the dead.¹⁸³ Suenaga's undertaking to commission the scrolls was unusual for a provincial warrior, since medieval scrolls had usually been patronized by the central elite in Heian and Kamakura era societies. The parties usually responsible for war scrolls included nobles in the capital, and the highest members of the warrior class of Kamakura. Sponsors required enough wealth to commission such work. In Conlan's judgment, Suenaga "possessed both the ambition and the financial resources" to execute such an elaborate artistic and calligraphic project. Even though Suenaga had no special linkage to the central elite, he patronized the Kaitô Shrine on his own land, and had its clergy pray for him, for the court in Kyoto, and for the Kamakura shogunate. He was clearly establishing a symbolic link between himself and the esteem of these central authorities. He also made money by lending seeds to farmers with interest, and by levying revenue from his lands.¹⁸⁴

During the more recent Pacific War, military officials would also deploy expensive and labor-intensive resources in pursuit of their national war art projects, although on a vaster scale for larger audiences. However, it may be possible to find more in common between the Mongol invasion scrolls and war documentary painting if we follow Conlan's argument identifying a

¹⁸³ Regarding this political situation and the involved individuals, see Conlan, 2-4.

¹⁸⁴ Conlan, 4-5.

memorial aspect of the Mongol invasion scrolls.¹⁸⁵ He thinks that Suenaga was attempting to calm the souls of his dead comrades with penance through his memorial war scrolls. A connection may exist because modern officials would deify the souls of dead soldiers during the Pacific War, and war documentary painting elicited prayerful homage to the warriors depicted in the art.

The *Illustrated History of the Mongol Invasions* scroll was deemed a significant record of the nation's history. Multiple copies were made in the late Tokugawa period, and Suenaga's original scrolls came into the possession of the Meiji government after the shogunate fell. They are now housed in the Museum of the Imperial Collections.¹⁸⁶ The defeat of the fearsome Mongol Empire on Japanese beaches, and the well-timed typhoons became legendary. The Japanese believed that the intervention of natural forces was a manifestation of the spirit of Japan, and they called it "divine wind" or *kamikaze*. Because of the legendary and supernatural implications that accumulated along with the stories they told, these scrolls became a favorite of the military and intellectuals during the time of first Sino-Japanese War. As the first foreign conflict that Japan had encountered in modern times, the first Sino-Japanese war evoked the legend of the *kamikaze* intervention. The Mongol invasion scrolls were cited as documentary evidence of Japan's superior spiritual power, and this invocation of their message of divine invincibility was made again when Japan fought foreign enemies in the second Sino-Japanese and Pacific Wars.

As we have seen, medieval war scrolls were created in retrospect to the battles they depict. In contrast, war documentary paintings portrayed an ongoing war. Moreover, modern

¹⁸⁵ Future investigation could consider Conlan's argument regarding the memorial aspect of Suenaga's scroll in reference to war documentary painting, since Kuroda Senkichirô also wanted to use painting as an imperial offering.

¹⁸⁶ For more on the provenance of the scrolls, see Conlan, 9-11.

bureaucratic structures that could mobilize major labor and material resources made the war paintings available to wider audiences. Government authorities believed that war paintings would stir the passions of large groups of people who would contribute to a given war effort following their exposure to the paintings. War paintings had a much larger format than war scrolls, and they were expected to capture the attention of mass audiences with their monumental scale, and their relative immediacy to events they portrayed. The portrayal of battle in war scroll paintings is commemorative of the past. War scrolls were deployed in the education of young warriors because of their perceived martial qualities. However, for religious and civilian audiences, war scrolls could evoke horror at the destructive forces of combat, and garnered strong feelings of trepidation toward military conflict. On the other hand, the lives of people who were exposed to war documentary painting were directly affected by the war that they depicted. Because the modern military leadership intended to bolster participation in war efforts, war documentary paintings were fashioned to be devoid of imagery that might have turned their contemporary audiences against the war they portray. Instead, the modern war paintings emphasize comradeship and self-sacrifice, irrespective of victory. In a later examination of the imagery of war documentary painting, I will analyze the propaganda nature of modern war paintings.

II. Imagery of War in Meiji and Post-Meiji Japanese Art

A. First Modern War Painters and the First Sino-Japanese War

Once the first Sino-Japanese War (1894-95) broke out, promoting a martial spirit in the populace became an ongoing national issue that would continue beyond that particular war, and

the significance of portraying martial themes in visual art increased accordingly. Japanese military and civilian authorities conceded a national need for documenting the war's progress in both text and image, and for disseminating information about the war to the public. The army dispatched a squad of photographers, although the use of photography in the press was still limited at this time. The newspapers sent well-known painters as special correspondents and employed print media for the mass-production of images. Out of the need for striking war imagery, the traditional woodblock printing technique that had been used in *ukiyo-e* was revived because lithography was available then only in monochrome, but *nishikie* (brocade woodblock prints) offered color. Ordinary people who wanted to know more about war could better learn from works that combined text with images. For example, the colorful images in *nishikie* became a primary medium for conveying war news to people in the countryside because of its popularity.¹⁸⁷

Among the print artists who continued to work in this traditional medium was Kobayashi Kiyochika (1847-1915). He created colorful *nishikie*¹⁸⁸ with a sense of spatial depth by incorporating the effects of light (figure 18).¹⁸⁹ The press also employed the newer and less-established print medium of lithography.¹⁹⁰ In pursuit of the convincing realism made possible by Western-style painting, *yōga* techniques came into increasing use. Publishers hired *yōga* painters to supply designs for war images of the first Sino-Japanese war, and the resulting printed images dominated journalistic pictorial magazines and newspaper inserts. The painters who

¹⁸⁷ Moriguchi, 285.

¹⁸⁸ For more on Meiji *nishikie*, see Julia Meech-Pekarik, *The World of the Meiji Print: Impressions of a New Civilization* (New York: Weatherhill, 1986).

¹⁸⁹ For more on war *nishikie*, see Donald Keene, "Prints of the Sino-Japanese War," *Impressions of the Front: Woodcuts of the Sino-Japanese War, 1894-95* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1983): 7-10.

provided cartoons for the lithographic images relied largely on second-hand descriptions of events, and their imagination for conveying narratives. Due to the lack of eyewitness experience of the scenes, some degree of fine detail and sophisticated spatial representation might have been sacrificed in these lithographic works. They usually had low quality when compared with today's printmaking standards. However, people liked them because of their illusion of photographic realism.¹⁹¹

In addition to the mass-produced images, a small number of painters traveled to China under the aegis of various sponsors to create war images based on their firsthand experiences of the first Sino-Japanese war. These artist-reporters were noted painters in both *yōga* and *nihonga* circles. Dispatched *yōga* painters were Asai Chū (1856-1907), Yamamoto Hōsui, Kuroda Seiki (1866-1924), and Koyama Shōtarō. Asai traveled as a media correspondent for the Japanese newspaper *Jiji shinpō*. Yamamoto was dispatched by imperial order, making him the first official war artist in Japan's modern history. Kuroda Seiki went to China as a foreign war correspondent for the French publication *Le Monde Illustré*. Koyama, after exploring his network of connections and advocating the need to document the war in works of art, succeeded in securing military permission for his painting trip.¹⁹²

All these *yōga* painters produced sketches and tableaux, but perhaps none of them had the opportunity to observe battles on the front in person.¹⁹³ Asai showed his two oil paintings made in 1895 at the fourth Domestic Industrial Exposition, which was held in that year to commemorate Japan's victory in the war. Also included were his following works: *Navy Officer*

¹⁹⁰ Kawakami Tōgai, pioneer *yōga* painter, studied lithography and put it into practice while he was working at the Military Academy in 1872. Early lithographic prints depicted natural scenery, everyday life of the people, and historical themes.

¹⁹¹ Hijikata, 46.

¹⁹² The press sponsored Kubota Beisen and his sons Kinsen and Beisai from the *nihonga* community to go to China on painting assignments.

Higuchi Helping a Child (Higuchi taii kodomo wo tasukuru zu, figure 19), *Search in the Aftermath of War* (Sengo no sôzaku, figure 20), and several watercolor paintings. Asai's images were noncombat scenes and were sentimental and theatrical in nature. The series of six war paintings by Japan's first official war artist Yamamoto were entered into the collection of Emperor Meiji. Art historian Moriguchi Tari designates Yamamoto's paintings as "*sensô kirokuga*" (war documentary painting) due to their documentary quality.¹⁹⁴

Victory in the first Sino-Japanese war also excited artists who had stayed at home, and inspired them to produce images in memory of the war. Those images include *An Attack of Lushun* (Ryojun kôgeki no zu) by Honda Kinkichirô, *A Battle of Pyongyang* (Heijô no tatakai) by Tôjô Shôtarô, and *Battlefield Death of Officer Hayashi* (Hayashi taii sensi no zu, figure 21) by Mitsutani Kunishirô. These were all imaginary scenes. Matsui Noboru also depicted an experience common to many military families in the homeland: *Mementoes* (Katami, figure 22) was a poignant image of the surviving members of a family grieving their war dead. This painting was also shown at the fourth Domestic Industrial Exposition, and was purchased by the Imperial Family.

Besides prints and paintings of the first Sino-Japanese War, panorama painting emerged as a new pictorial form effective for rendering evocative scenes of conflict. Panorama, which originated in Europe in the nineteenth century, was able to give its audiences a vicarious experience taken straight out of events from distant wars with its large, encircling format, and realistic rendering in Western-style painting. Moreover, political and financial leaders believed the Panorama medium to be useful for mass education. I contend that panorama is one of the important precedents for war documentary painting. It is most appropriate to examine war

¹⁹³ Kinoshita, 179.

¹⁹⁴ Moriguchi, 92.

documentary painting from the perspective of mass art along with other mass art forms of painting developed in the 1920s and 1930s. Therefore, I defer my discussion of this subject to a later section of this chapter.

B. War Painting and the Russo-Japanese War

During the time of the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905), the more frequent use of photography dominated the journalistic media and the role of *nishikie* woodblock prints declined considerably. By that time, color lithography became possible. Lithography was still in use mainly for postcards picturing war-related themes. Among the painters who were dispatched to the front was Yamamoto Hôsui again, accompanied by his student Kita Renzô, who would later engage in the Pacific War art program run by the state.¹⁹⁵

One of the most memorable paintings of the Russo-Japanese war is *Admiral Tôgô and His Officers on the Bridge of Battleship Mikasa* (Mikasa kankyô no Tôgô taishô ika, figure 16) by Tôjô Shôtarô. This *yôga* painting shows the war hero Admiral Tôgô Heihachirô (1847-1934) sailing to his victory over Russia's Baltic fleet in the Sea of Japan in May 1905.¹⁹⁶ Admiral Tôgô is standing on the bridge of the battleship Mikasa surrounded by his officers. This portrait of Admiral Tôgô became ubiquitous after the war when reproductions of the painting were displayed at public elementary schools nationwide to bolster martial spirit in a historical perspective.¹⁹⁷ The instruction manual for painters dispatched during the Pacific War, entitled

¹⁹⁵ The *nihonga* community was represented by Murata Tanryô, Kubota Kinsen, and Hashimoto Kansetsu, who went to paint the war.

¹⁹⁶ The original painting was destroyed by the Great Kantô Earthquake in 1923, and Tôjô himself made a reproduction, which is extant.

¹⁹⁷ Yamanouchi, 3.

“Plans to Dispatch Painters for Great East Asia War Documentary Painting,” applauded this painting as a model for war documentary painting for its communicative power:

This forty-year old painting still conveys the color of the sky, the proportions of the waves, and the roaring sound of gunfire in the sea battle. The image of the clear blue sky, fleeting scattered clouds, and waves breaking into white foam expresses the climate, weather, and temperature of the day in all sincerity. The complexion and expression of Admiral Tôgô and his staff contains the mystical power that takes us back in time to hear the thundering of guns and voices, seen against the backdrop of the grand sea battle.¹⁹⁸

Artists remaining at home also depicted familiar scenes of war both in the homeland. Among them, Mitsutani Kunishirô was active in this genre, and submitted his war-theme paintings at the annual Taiheiyô Painting Group shows in the consecutive years of 1904-1906. They are *The Wife of a Soldier* (Gunjin no tsuma) of 1904, a portrait of a wounded soldier in a field hospital entitled *A Glimpse of Victory* (Shôri no hen'ei) of 1905, and *Telling of a War Tale* (Ikusa no hanashi) of 1906.

III. War, Art, and the Masses

A. War Panorama as Mass Entertainment and an Educational Tool

In the last decade of the nineteenth century, another development that would test *yôga*'s aptness for history painting was taking shape in the arena of mass entertainment. In conjunction with the third Domestic Industrial Exposition held in Ueno Park, Japan's first panorama venue, the Ueno Panorama Theater (*Ueno panoramakan*), opened its doors to the public. The new visual medium of the panorama mural (*panorama* in Japanese) played an important but often

overlooked role in providing *yôga* an opportunity to demonstrate its power of persuasion through high-impact realism. In the following account of *yôga*'s place in panorama painting, I rely on information provided by two Japanese art historians. The first is Urasaki Eishaku, who has emphasized the relationship between panorama, war art, and *yôga*.¹⁹⁹ The second is Kinoshita Naoyuki, who has explored modern Japanese art from the unconventional angle of marginal forms, including panorama's link to war art.²⁰⁰ The subject of panorama painting demands more research in order for us to grasp its artistic and cultural influences better. Moreover, the documentation and examination of panorama as an entertainment medium provided by these two authors shed valuable light on its employment of *yôga*.

Panorama is one continuous picture applied to a large surface or adjacent walls, often encircling the area where the audience stands. This configuration enables the panorama artist to create the sense that the audience is standing within the picture they are viewing. An Englishman named Robert Barker is credited with originating the format, having received a British patent for his panorama in 1787; the new visual medium then enjoyed popularity in the West between the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries.²⁰¹ Today, panoramic murals are often employed at historical museums as part of dioramas and other educational displays representing events of the past in a true-to-life fashion. Soon after the opening of the Ueno Panorama Theater in 1890 (Meiji 23), another panorama facility, the Japan Panorama Theater (*Nihon panoramakan*), was built in Asakusa (figure 23). The following year, more panorama

¹⁹⁸ "Haken keikaku," 185.

¹⁹⁹ Urasaki Eishaku, *Nihon kindai bijutsu hattatsushi: Meiji hen* (Developmental history of modern Japanese art: Meiji period) (Tokyo: Tokyo bijutsu, 1974).

²⁰⁰ Kinoshita Naoyuki, *Bijutsu to iu misemono* (Visual spectacle called art) (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1993).

²⁰¹ For a general history of the development of panorama in the West, see Stephan Oettermann, *The Panorama: History of a Mass Medium*, trans. Deborah Lucas Schneider (New York: Zone Books, 1997).

theaters sprang up in other popular entertainment districts including Kanda in Tokyo, Nanba in Osaka, and Shinkyôgoku in Kyoto. One might imagine how exciting it was for Japanese audiences to view accurately rendered scenes of events in a lifelike scale, as though the action were unfolding before their eyes. The spectacle of the panorama predated the widespread presence of photography in the news media, let alone the motion picture experience.

The objectives of these facilities were to bring a new form of visual entertainment while also providing historical and artistic education to the masses. The promoters of panorama exhibitions, who came from the political and business communities, wanted to provide the public with visually striking educational experiences. As Japan's military leaders would later conclude, these businessmen believed that the combined impact of panorama and *yôga* could help large groups of Japanese citizens better learn the history of the events that were depicted at these theaters. When the Ueno Panorama Theater applied for permission to use the premises at Ueno Park as its site, its stated purpose was to contribute to art education, and on that merit, its application was approved. Moreover, the Ueno Park authorities permitted the facility to operate under the condition that panorama pictures be historical representations.²⁰² Businessman Ôkura Kihachirô (1837-1928),²⁰³ the representative of the Japan Panorama Theater,²⁰⁴ remarked that the panorama was “the essence of art and a shortcut for education.”²⁰⁵ His words might sound grandiose for describing mass amusement. However, Ôkura and his contemporary panorama advocates held the realistic nature of the panoramic depiction furnished by *yôga* in high regard, and for that reason, they recognised the value of the panorama for teaching history.

²⁰² Urasaki, 313.

²⁰³ Ôkura made his fortune in arms trading, which became the basis of the Ôkura conglomerate. He also founded Tokyo Economics University (Tokyo Keizai Daigaku).

²⁰⁴ Other supporters included financial tycoons Shibusawa Ei'ichi (1840-1931) and Yasuda Zenjirô (1838-1921).

Ôkura also defined the educational importance of the panorama for “promoting martial philosophy among the populace.”²⁰⁶ This remark keenly reflects the fact that in 1890, a universal conscription system had been put into effect, and war had become a national issue. War was a consistent theme employed in Japanese panorama painting because the unusually large format of the panorama was suited to spectacles such as battle scenes. Moreover, the Meiji oligarchy was becoming increasingly conscious of the importance of history in distinguishing Japan from the rest of the world after the nation had opened up to the international community. In their minds, abolishing the long, self-imposed isolation policy of the Edo period had brought with it a need to strengthen Japan’s sense of historical identity. The first panorama pictures, either imported or commissioned domestically, were of martial themes. The Japan Panorama Theater in Asakusa illustrated General Ulysses S. Grant’s army in the American Civil War with murals consisting of twenty-two separate scenes (figure 24). The Nanba Panorama Theater (*Nanba panoramakan*) depicted battles from the Franco-Prussian War. These two sets of panorama pictures came from artists working in the United States. The Kanda Panorama Theater displayed pictures illustrating the revenge of the forty-seven samurai from the well-known *Chûshingura* story, created in collaboration among several leading *yôga* painters including Asai Chû, Honda Kinkichirô, and Nakamura Fusetsu (1866-1943).

Nevertheless, the first Sino-Japanese War gave *yôga* painters a chance to illustrate a subject of historic importance to the nation without the risk of being criticized for “easy eclecticism” in blending a Japanese theme with a Western medium. *Yôga* painters got more visibility for their work because panorama theaters were ready to present the newly painted pictures of the war to public audiences thirsty for visual information. The Japan Panorama

²⁰⁵ The original quote in Japanese is “*bijutsu no shinzui nishite kyôiku no syôkei nari.*” Kinoshita, 170.

Theater commissioned Koyama Shôtarô to paint a picture of the Sino-Japanese War, and he produced *The Japanese Army's Attack on Pyongyang in the Sino-Japanese War* (Nisshin Sensô Heijô kôgeki zu, **Error! Reference source not found.**).²⁰⁷ Koyama was an established *yôga* painter, having studied under Kawakami Tôgai. He was trained at the Tokyo Technical Art School, and was recognized as a leading member of the Meiji Art Society. His reputation for equestrian painting and his experience as a war painter in China won him the commission. In preparation for his war panorama, Koyama often visited army field exercises to make studies of soldiers in action.

Koyama produced a full panoramic painting (380 feet long x 50 feet high) of a battle in Pyongyang. It took him about five months to produce, involved thirty of his pupils, and was completed in 1896. Attempting to be as faithful as possible to the actual event, he situated the vantage point to be the same as that of the Japanese army's headquarters at the front. The scene is rendered in realistic detail. Therefore, the audience would experience the same perspective of the action as had been seen by the Japanese commanders at the battle site. Koyama's insistence on historical accuracy compelled him to resist his patron's desire for certain dramatic effects. The Japan Panorama Theater had wanted the picture to include an officer riding on horseback, but Koyama refused to paint an equestrian pose since it was not historically true.²⁰⁸ Clearly, Koyama interpreted the mission of recording the war with veracity to an extreme that forfeited the chance to create any fictional elements in his composition for the sake of drama. Whether his stubbornness had artistic merit, the monumental painting drew curious crowds to the panorama

²⁰⁶ The original quote in Japanese is "*kokumin no kôbu shisô wo syôreisu.*" Kinoshita, 170.

²⁰⁷ Koyama's panorama painting and one of his sketches are reproduced in Kinoshita's book, 176-177.

²⁰⁸ Kinoshita, 175.

hall every day,²⁰⁹ and the success of his war panorama pictures demonstrated *yôga*'s capacity for disseminating the battlefield conditions to a larger public.

Through war imagery in panorama pictures, the Japanese public became more intimate with realistic depictions in Western-style painting, and it came to equate what was presented in such large formats with what had actually happened. As Kinoshita observed, “the popular amusement of the panorama provided the best vessel for war education,”²¹⁰ and perhaps functioned positively by imbuing martial spirit in its viewers. In this way, it seems that *yôga* had finally found its own distinctive territory in which to excel. During the subsequent Russo-Japanese War ten years later, photography emerged as a journalistic medium and played a much more dominant role in war reportage than it had during the first Sino-Japanese War. The prominence of panorama painting then virtually ended. However, its success in conveying to the public victorious feats of war paved the way to state sponsorship of *yôga* in the next wave of militarism during the Pacific War.

B. “Exhibition-Hall Art” (*kaijô geijutsu*) of Kawabata Ryûshi

In the late 1920s, maverick Japanese-style painter Kawabata Ryûshi (1885-1966) proposed “*kaijô geijutsu*,” or exhibition-hall art, in order to liberate the presentation of paintings from the confinement of traditional, residential display spaces. Japanese-style homes had presented artwork in the alcove (*tokonoma*) in a tatami-mat room (*zashiki*), which was also used

²⁰⁹ Urasaki, 329.

²¹⁰ Kinoshita, 172. Takeyama Akiko argues that another successor of war panorama painting is the documentary newsreel, which became a powerful, official propaganda tool during the Pacific War. Takeyama Akiko, “Media evento to shite no nyûsu eiga” (Newsreels as a media event), chapter 5 in Tuganesawa Toshihiro and Ariyama Teruo eds., *Senjiki nihon no media evento* (Media events in wartime Japan) (Tokyo: Sekai Shisôsha, 1998).

for presenting flower arrangements and calligraphy. Kawabata intended his art to be shared and experienced by ordinary people. His hope was that more people would see significant art works if they were not confined to exclusive residences of the wealthy, who were the only ones then able to afford them.²¹¹ Kawabata was one of the leading Japanese-style painters who received a military painting commission. He is known to have been an avid nationalist during the second Sino-Japanese and Pacific Wars. But in the prewar years, Kawabata was one of the artists who were increasingly frustrated by the rigid hierarchy of Japan's art establishment. The establishment relied on state approval conferred by the annual state art exhibition system to advance the careers of leading painters. He and his rebellious colleagues searched for ways to break the mold of conventionalism prevalent at the state art exhibition.

Kawabata was born in Wakayama Prefecture in western Japan. He received brief artistic training in Western-style painting at the White Horse Society (Hakubakai) and then the Pacific Painting Society (Taiheiyôgakai), both leading art studios that provided private training in Western-style painting. Kawabata made an early debut in the art community at the age of twenty-two, when his work was accepted by the prestigious Bunten in 1907. After making a living as an illustrator in the publishing business, he traveled to the United State in 1912. This trip became a catalyst for his artistic life and vision. When Kawabata saw the rich collection of Japanese art at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, he for the first time came to appreciate his own country's artistic tradition, and decided to study Japanese-style painting. It was common during this period for Japanese people not to know much about their native country's artistic accomplishments, since the institution of the art museum as a place for showing artifacts in a systematic fashion was still relatively new. Moreover, a number of masterpieces had left Japan during the Meiji period by way of foreign art collectors, who later donated their collections to

²¹¹ Moriguchi, 321.

local museums in their home countries, or established their own. The Boston Museum of Fine Arts was one such fortunate museum that came to hold a valuable collection of Japanese art. Kawabata also saw mural paintings by Pierre-Cécile Puvis de Chavannes (1824-1898) on the wall around the staircase at the Boston Public Library. The format of mural painting impressed Kawabata strongly, and this experience served to foster his vision of delivering art for ordinary people in later years.

Returning home, Kawabata achieved success as a Japanese-style painter quickly; in 1915 his submission to the annual art exhibition now known as Teiten (Imperial Academy of Fine Arts Exhibition, formerly known as Bunten) was accepted. Two years later, Kawabata was admitted to the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts, the honorary body overseeing the exhibition, which was considered an exceptionally fast track to legitimacy. However, his relationship with members of the Academy went sour, partly because his bold style did not match the more restrained mainstream type of painting. Their division also occurred because Kawabata became dissatisfied with the conventionalism and elitism of Japanese-style painters in the exhibition. In 1928 he parted from the Teiten, and formed a new art group called the Blue Dragon Society (*Seiryûsha*) the following year, when he was forty-four years old.

In the search for a style that could speak to the public, Kawabata painted subject matter closely associated with the land and people of contemporary Japan in large formats like mural painting. He exhibited the work at Blue Dragon Society shows. At the first exhibition of the society in 1929, Kawabata exhibited a close-up view of a swirling ocean entitled *The Naruto Channel* (simply Naruto in Japanese). Naruto Channel is a geographical location on Shikoku well known for a natural aquatic phenomenon where tides rush in and out between the island of Awaji and region of Naruto four times daily. The work incurred ridicule from art critics, who

called his painting “exhibition-hall art,” thus originating the term. He was sensitive to his times, attempting to make his motifs relevant to the people.²¹² For example, he painted *Those who Control the Ocean* (Kaiyô wo seisuru mono, figure 26) in 1936,²¹³ one year before the outbreak of the second Sino-Japanese War. *Those who Control the Ocean* reflected the new international situation spurred by the breakdown of negotiations at the London Naval Conference of 1935-1936 on limiting the number of battleships that participating countries could float. The picture depicted factory workers building a battleship, expressing Japan’s ambition to become a naval power in Asia. Kawabata’s desire to communicate with the common people, and his attention to current affairs inside and outside the country related to his earlier career as a newspaper illustrator. His vocation in the mass media taught him the importance of a wide audience in modern democratic societies. Kawabata’s dedication to art for the people found a peculiar resonance with the military government, which just then was engaged in mobilizing the people to forge a common goal of winning the war.

C. Mural Painting and Fujita Tsuguji

Kawabata’s *kaijô geijutsu* paralleled the mural painting (*hekiga*) movement that emerged in Japan in the 1930s. This development in Japan was contemporary with its flourishing popularity in Mexico, the United States, and Italy in association with the Marxist revolutionary vision. Murals allowed Japanese artists to go outside of the conventional exhibition space of the museum or private residence. Murals also let them deal with easily understood representations of form and content, as opposed to the flourishing trends in abstract art that originated from the

²¹² Moriguchi, 322.

²¹³ This painting belongs to his *Pacific Ocean* (Taiheiyô) series.

European art movements of Cubism, Expressionism, and Fauvism. The new exhibition sites were mostly in commercial spaces such as cafés and department stores, and the works created were not as political as their counterparts abroad. In this sense, the mural movement of Japan separated itself from similar trends in foreign countries. Artists were motivated to seek out the new format in part due to the conflict within the art community, as well as the exclusivity of the official annual exhibition. These two issues were both frustrating to painters like Kawabata.

One of the artists who vigorously engaged in making murals was Fujita Tsuguji.²¹⁴

Fujita was born in Tokyo in 1886, and he studied Western-style painting at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts. Soon after graduating from the school, he went to Paris to further his painting study. The first murals Fujita painted in Paris were a set of oil paintings with gold leaf on large canvases. He dedicated these to the Maison de Japon, a dormitory built by wealthy Japanese art patron Baron Satsuma Jirôhachi²¹⁵ for Japanese students studying in Paris.²¹⁶ These images were entitled *The Coming of Westerners to Japan* (Ôjin nihon e torai no zu, figure 27) and *Horses* (Uma no zu, figure 28), both dated 1929. According to Hayashi, who saw Fujita's paintings in Paris during her research, the former is an allegorical picture of foreigners, and the latter is an animal picture of horses both still and in motion, with some dogs. She also remarked that in these pictures Fujita began to show his progression from painting portraits of single subjects to composing group portraits,²¹⁷ which requires more complex organization.

²¹⁴ Hayashi Yôko, "Fujita Tsuguji no 1930 nendai: Rafu to sensôga wo tsunagu mono" (Fujita Tsuguji's 1930s: A link between his female nudes and war painting), Tsuji Nobuo sensei kanreki kinenkai ed., *Nihon bijutsushi no suimyaku* (Undercurrents in Japanese Art) (Tokyo: Pericansha, 1993), 621-648.

²¹⁵ For information about Baron Satsuma's patronage for Japanese painters in Paris in 1920s, including Fujita, see *Satsuma Jirôhachi to Pari no nihonjin gakatachi* (Jirôhachi Satsuma and Japanese painters in Paris) (Tokushima, Japan: Tokushima Prefectural Museum of Modern Art, 1998).

²¹⁶ As the confusion of the First World War had subsided, many Japanese painters headed to Paris for study. In the late 1920s, about 1500 Japanese lived in Paris, of which around one quarter is said to have been painters.

²¹⁷ Hayashi, 631.

Fujita's interest in murals was reinforced during his two-year trip to Latin America from 1931 to 1933. He visited multiple countries including Mexico, where the mural movement was developing under artists like Diego Rivera (1886-1957) and José Clemente Orozco (1883-1949). Fujita's Latin American experience inspired him to continue to experiment with the mural format. Leaving Latin America, Fujita went to Japan to see his elderly father instead of returning to Paris. He became a central figure in the mural movement taking place there, receiving mural commissions for private spaces such as cafés and department stores.²¹⁸ His first mural commission of 1934 came from a Brazilian coffee company that had opened a café in the Seishokan Building (today's Kyôbunkan Building) in Ginza, the toniest section of Tokyo. Fujita painted a picture of Brazilian people against an idyllic backdrop of Rio de Janeiro on the walls of the café (untitled, figure 29). Perhaps influenced by his exposure to Mexican murals, Fujita's palette in this Brazilian mural became brighter, and his figures gained monumentality in contrast to the delicate style that he had previously developed in Paris.²¹⁹

For the next three years, Fujita was active in creating murals, many of which are unfortunately not extant today. He welcomed this particular pictorial format for its potential to reach a wider audience than was possible with conventional exhibition spaces, such as that of the state-run annual art exhibition. Other notable artists also engaged in mural painting were Noda Hideo²²⁰ and Terada Takeo, who had been exposed to the mural movement in the United States and Mexico. Hayashi points out that contemporary critics had criticized Fujita for the lack of political and social awareness exhibited in his murals.²²¹ Although Fujita worked at places

²¹⁸ Fujita became an advisor to the Japan Mural Association (*Nihon hekiga kyôkai*) established in October 1936. Not much about this association is known, according to Hayashi.

²¹⁹ Hayashi, 634.

²²⁰ Noda was a member of the Communist Party in the United States.

²²¹ Hayashi, 640. For examples of murals made in the mid-1930s, see *Bijutsu nenkan* for the year 1935.

where the masses gathered, and he regarded the making of murals as serving the common people, his motivations were apolitical in the opinion of his contemporary critics.

Fujita had come to be known for his signature portraits of females.²²² Hayashi summarizes the importance of Fujita's involvement in murals as enabling his transition from portraiture of a single female in a bourgeois setting, to the depiction of multiple figures whose social and political status is undefined. Fujita's contemporary critics wondered whether the painter's commitment to social and political causes were genuine, or whether his mural representation succeeded by appealing to people who were uneasy about their prospects in an increasingly capitalistic society. Emphasizing the social characteristics of both murals and war documentary painting, Hayashi's examination of Fujita's murals suggests that the painter's real success as a cultural agent able to connect the state and the people would come with his painting of the Pacific War.²²³

D. Proletarian Art Movement and Social Realism

The proletarian art movement, which took place between 1925 and 1935 in Japan, is another important attempt made by artists to reach a broader audience in the prewar years. Some of the young *yōga* artists were inspired by Marxists' emphasis on collectivism, and they discovered the use of art as a political and educational means for mobilizing the masses. The philosophical focus on collective values over individual ones also shifted artistic concerns from

²²² In Paris, he developed his signature style of female portraits painted with delicate outlines and milky-white skin called "*Le Grand Fond Blanc*," which Fujita devised, and for which he won critical acclaim from the Paris art community.

²²³ Hayashi, 642.

an expression of individuality to an expression representative of the people as a whole.²²⁴

Gennifer Weisenfeld sums up the changes: “Artistic merit no longer hinged on individual expression or even formal innovation but on efficacy.”²²⁵ These artists measured their value by how well they could reflect and convey ideas to larger groups of people.

Proletarian artists aimed to create painting that was easily accessible to ordinary people in terms of style and subject matter. Okamoto Tōki, one of the founding members of Plastic Arts (Zōkei), a proletarian art group formed in late 1925, advocated paintings that would convey “the ingenuity of working peoples in groups.” Okamoto envisioned a type of work that could represent the inner desires of workers, and then communicate that to the masses (figures 30 and 31).²²⁶ Naturally, the effort to unite people over a shared goal became important subjects for his paintings, such as workers gathering in protest. Depicting multiple figures in painting was a new challenge for Japanese artists who had previously favored painting a single sitter, landscape, or still life. As a visual language, these artists rediscovered the usefulness of pictorial realism over the then-fashionable abstract art trends.²²⁷ The Proletarian Arts Federation (Puroretaria geijutsu renmei) was formed in 1925. When the First Great Proletarian Art Exhibition (*Daiikkai puroretaria bijutsu daitenrankai*) was held in 1928, the show drew more than 3000 viewers for its ten-day run.²²⁸

Despite the enthusiastic social consciousness exhibited by some artists, Japan’s proletarian art movement was short-lived and marginal. This occurred in part because these

²²⁴ Gennifer Weisenfeld, *Mavo: Japanese Artists and the Avant-garde 1905-1931* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002), 249.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, 250.

²²⁶ Quoted in Moriguchi from Okamoto Tōki, *Puroretaria ato toha nanika?* (What is Proletarian Art?).

²²⁷ There were artists who searched for alternative artistic languages such as Constructivism (e.g. Murayama Tomoyoshi and Yanase Masamu) and Futurism (e.g. Kanbara Tai) to express their revolutionary philosophies inspired by new social movements.

artists, who were enamored with Marxist ideas, did not have the right set of painting skills necessary for translating their lofty ideas into pictorial imagery that could speak with eloquence to their intended audience. Moreover, since the early 1920s the government had been tightening its grip on socialists and anarchists, whom the government had deemed as having a destabilizing effect on society. There were mass arrests of leftist activists and writers in 1928. As Japan became more ambitious in its expansionist policy in Asia, the tide turned to less tolerance of political dissent, which could undermine the regime's plans for a more centralized totalitarian government based on the imperial system. However, social themes brought to the fore by the proletarian art movement began to have some impact on the mainstream art community. At official art venues of Teiten, artists who were not associated with proletarian art groups submitted their own images representing the unity of contemporary people going about their lives in a straightforward fashion without the typical beautification. Some *yōga* painting examples of this form of realism can be found in works by Hashimoto Yaoji and Fujita Tsuguji, who would participate in the state war art program with enthusiasm in the 1940s. In the painting titled *New Shift* (*Kōtai jikan*, figure 32), Hashimoto Yaoji treated an everyday routine of factory workers during a shift change. The tired workers appear to be expressing a stifled and lethargic mood. Fujita submitted *One-Thousand Stitches* (*Sen'ninbari*, figure 33) at the Nikakai, which presents a familiar scene of women working together to stitch white cloth for a soldier as a talisman. Both works are a foreshadowing of the arrival of popular war painting for their effectiveness in conveying an inviting feeling of empathy for the women, as well as the unseen soldier for whom they work.

²²⁸ Weisenfeld, 250.

E. State-Sponsored Meiji Picture Gallery Project

Panorama art, exhibition-hall art, murals, and proletarian art all represent the increasing interest among painters in reaching out to a larger, popular audience during the prewar years of the 1920s and 1930s. By employing large painting surfaces, or depicting social themes shared by the workers, these stylistic trends helped develop a visual imagery that could offer a common experience among viewers. Such use of art as a vehicle to cultivate a sense of community at a specific location was not exclusive to the private sector. The state was also undertaking a historic project to foster Japanese nationalism with a unifying appreciation for the Meiji emperor in his own commemorative gallery. This official art project created a permanent site for a series of mural size paintings depicting the life of the Meiji emperor during various historic events. The project had a national prestige and prominence, and the paintings were documentary. The shrine was Japan's first official, permanent theme painting exhibition. It was a precursor to the itinerant, government-sponsored monumental war art presentations discussed in this study.

Emperor Meiji's adult life transpired during Japan's modernization, starting with the beginning of the Meiji Restoration when he was a teenager. During his reign, he witnessed Japan's victories over China and Russia before his death in 1912. When the construction of the Meiji Shrine in commemoration of the Meiji imperial couple began in 1915, the idea of creating an accompanying gallery to display a visual record of their accomplishments emerged. The Meiji Shrine was completed in 1920 at the former site of the Aoyama military field (Aoyama renpeijô), where the funeral of the Meiji emperor took place. The Meiji Shrine Seitoku Memorial Picture Gallery (Meiji jingû seitoku kinen kaigakan) was built in the outer garden of the Meiji Shrine (Meiji jingû) in 1926 with two elongated wings extending off the main entrance. Imperial authorities believed that the dignified, western-style concrete and stone building was

appropriate for celebrating the majesty of the Meiji emperor's history. While the Meiji Shrine was financed by the government, the picture gallery itself was funded by private donors from around the nation organized under the volunteer administrative organization called the Meiji Shrine Service Association (Meiji jingû hōsankai, 1915).²²⁹ The association oversaw the building project and, after the completion, the association dedicated it to the shrine.

At the time of the gallery's completion, eighty accomplished painters were selected from both *yōga* and *nihonga* circles in the equal number of forty for both painting styles. The painters finished their work in 1936. The size of each painting was designated to be of ten feet by nine feet, unusually large for modern Japanese painting. The museum's catalog characterizes the work as *hekiga*, or mural painting simply because of its monumental scale. Unlike ordinary murals, the pigment was applied to canvas, not directly to walls as with fresco painting. The series of paintings begins with a picture of the birth of the emperor in 1852, and ends with an image of his funeral in 1912. The catalog describes the series of paintings as a "faithful documentation of facts relating to the lives of the Emperor and Empress Meiji who, during his reign of forty-six years, enhanced the national power of Japan greatly."²³⁰ For the first forty works, *nihonga* painters dealt with themes in the chronological order of the emperor's life, and *yōga* painters handled the rest. This seems appropriate. The first forty images depicting his earlier life often required the artists to paint him and other figures in traditional Japanese attire, or in native Japanese architectural settings. These forty paintings span the first eleven years of the Meiji period. In contrast, in the forty works representing the later part of his life, he was dressed in either a Western-style suit or a military uniform when in public, and he lived and

²²⁹ The Association was headed by Tokugawa Iesato (1863-1940), a descendent of the Tokugawa family, who was chair of the Upper House (kizokuin) of the Imperial Diet between 1903 and 1933.

²³⁰ *Meiji jingû seitoku kinen kaigakan hekiga* (Meiji Shrine Memorial Picture Gallery Catalog) (Tokyo: Meiji jingû gaien, 2001), no page.

worked in interiors with Western-influenced decoration. These works span the years twelve to forty-five of the Meiji era.

There is no conventional close-up portrait of the emperor or the empress alone or together in the whole series. Moreover, some paintings do not show them at all, but instead only depict political or military leaders attending historically notable occasions. As represented in the painting *Restoration of Imperial Rule* (figure 34), the emperor was historically kept behind a curtain in the palace, and rarely showed his face to his retainers or guests. Symbolically, these pictures follow the convention of suggesting the presence of the emperor without his physical body being visible. Here when the emperor or the empress is depicted, their facial features are often obscured; this underscores the traditional deference associated with portraying the imperial family. In paintings where the facial features of the imperial couple are visible, those details seem to be modeled after the widely distributed images of them known as *goshin'ei* (venerable true shadow, figure 35). *Goshin'ei* was the official name for the government's specially processed series of images of the emperor and the empress, which were to be held in sacred esteem. The Meiji *goshin'ei* images were based on the original portraiture in *conté* crayon by Italian artist Edoardo Chiossone in 1888.²³¹ This singular portrait was then photographed by Maruki Riyô, and finally reproduced and distributed as an object of worship among the people.

Over all, the paintings in the picture gallery can be called genre scenes for documentary purposes. The *nihonga* painters appeared to be more comfortable with the historical theme and large size requirements than the *yôga* painters, since the *nihonga* tradition had established a precedent with its numerous large-format pictures painted on screens or sliding doors. On the other hand, some of the *yôga* painters with European backgrounds knew examples of Western

²³¹ Edoardo Chiossone (1832-1898), an expert in engraving and printing, had been invited by the Ministry of Finance in 1875 to help to design the bills for the nation's modern currency.

representations of kings and generals in a historical context, but they had rarely attempted to execute such types of painting. On the other hand, the *yōga* painters benefited from their artistic training, which was more attuned to Fontanesi's academicism than the surging popularity of Kuroda Seiki's impressionistic style. They displayed solid brushwork, stable composition, and skillful handling of detail in their work. They seem to have done their best, given their limited exposure to Western representations of kings and generals in a historical context. According to Matsuoka Hisashi, one of the commissioned painters who studied with Fontanesi, the Italian teacher had instructed his students on war painting composition.²³² However, many *yōga* painters had rarely attempted to execute types of painting similar to Europe's history genre on their own.

Since victories in modern wars were indispensable for illustrating the rise of Japan's national power, some of the Meiji memorial gallery pictures are of war-related themes ranging from imperial inspection of military practice to battles. Fine examples of war painting in oil include *The Battle of Mukden* (Nichiroeki Hōten sen, figure 36) by Kanokogi Takeshirō and *The Battle of the Japan Sea* (Nichiroeki Nihonkai kaisen, figure 37) by Nakamura Fusetsu, both of the Russo-Japanese War. *The Battle of Mukden* shows Japanese troops led by General Ōyama Iwao (1842-1916) marching into the northern Chinese city of Mukden, that fell to Ōyama's army in March 1895. The painter's use of the gate of the walled city as a compositional focal point creates a dramatic scene for the triumphant military advance. The figures and military horses are given sufficient substance to their appearance, and their facial expressions are delicately painted in detail. *The Battle of the Japan Sea* is a naval war picture featuring a close-up of a battleship firing shells on a billowing sea. Another war painting in the exhibit is *Shintenfu Hall* (Shintenfu, where various spoils of the Sino-Japanese War were collected on the grounds of the Palace,

²³² Ishii Hakutei, *Bijutsu no ikusa* (War in Art) (Tokyo: Jitsuunsha, 1943), 52-3.

figure 38) by Kawamura Kiyoo. The painting stood out for its original composition made up of three temporal and physical spaces: part of the war trophies inside the hall; the exterior view of the hall; and an imaginary young soldier or possibly an imperial prince wearing ancient official garb, seated on a white horse. Kawamura, who had studied painting in Italy, arguably tried to paint a *kôshôga* (Toyama Masakazu's notion of thought painting) with *Shintenfu Hall*. He did this by infusing conceptual components into this picture through the iconic presence of the young, princely figure on the top right. This attempt at *kôshôga* was seldom made by Japanese *yôga* painters, who knew of the high value placed on such paintings in the West, but who had settled for painting simple genre scenes in Japan. Their lack of boldness was in part due to *yôga* artists' lack of training in techniques that could help them to achieve greater feats of symbolic representation such as thought painting.

CHAPTER FOUR

IMAGERY AND IDEOLOGY OF WAR DOCUMENTARY PAINTING

I. Overview of Visual Characteristics

A. Medium, Style, and Format

The standard format of war documentary painting was the Japanese canvas size of 200 (approximately 72 inches high x 100 inches wide). These dimensions were fixed by military art bureaucrats, and they came with an allowance for some variation in height and width. These dimensions are smaller than the size used for works in the Seitoku Memorial Picture Gallery (imperial image shrine to Emperor Meiji, Meiji jingû Seitoku kaigakan), which was 120 inches high x 108 inches wide. Still, the war documentary painting canvas is unusually large in scale when compared with paintings made during the period since *yôga* was officially introduced to Japan. This in part reflects the assumption that the paintings would become national treasures, in addition to serving their intended purpose as commemorative works of public art. Moreover, the large format had the merit of deterring accidental loss.

This study stresses Western-style oil as the medium overwhelmingly dominant among the works of war documentary painting, primarily because military patrons had sought a presentation where realism could portray war in a precise visual and historically comprehensible manner. The difference between *yôga* and *nihonga* is clear in terms of visual characteristics. The most easily distinguishable element concerns the three-dimensionality and depth of field found in the represented objects and figures. Western oil painting also has the capacity to deliver a vast amount of visual detail. Figures of soldiers painted in Western-style oil painting tend to convey a truthful sense of body mass, although the degree of the artist's skillfulness varies. Contributing

to the unevenness one discovers in artistic skill was the art education environment out of which these Japanese war documentary painting artists emerged. Sketching from life and studying human anatomy was part of the academic approach of nineteenth century Italian landscape painter Antonio Fontanesi. His ideas had been deemphasized in the curriculum in favor of a looser, more interpretive method based on standards set by Kuroda Seiki's *plein-air* style.

Artists who had attempted to paint in the history genre were from an older generation of painters who had come from the Meiji Art Society. Their work was exemplified by the pieces displayed in the Seitoku Memorial Picture Gallery. They had established themselves before Kuroda Seiki had made his stylistic mark on *yōga*. With few exceptions, Kuroda's impressionistic, painterly style hindered the development of a whole generation of realist painters. One such exception was the Pacific Art Society (Taiheiyōgakai), which succeeded the Meiji Art Society, that maintained naturalistic tradition rather than converting to Kuroda's new style. Further, the rapid importation of new stylistic experiments from the European avant-garde during the Taishō and early Shōwa periods captivated younger painters who were eager to participate in the Western developments.

In terms of figure painting, Koiso Ryōhei was one of the most technically competent *yōga* painters who could impart a convincing sense of mass to his figures. The painting entitled *Marching through Niangzi-guan* (Shōshikan wo yuku, 1941, figure 39) is a fine example of his masterful rendering of the human form as well as animals, such as the horses present in this 1941 work. Koiso received the *Geijutsuinshō* (Imperial Arts Academy Award) for this painting in 1942. Fujishima Takeji, who was senior to Koiso and an authoritative voice in the *yōga* community, immediately praised Koiso's work for "the consistent sharpening of his training in

realistic depiction.”²³³ In contrast, some figures executed in *nihonga* painting generally look two-dimensional, as is exemplified by the soldiers depicted in *Capture of Guam* (Guamutô senryô, 1941, figure 40) by Ezaki Kôhei.

The background of the painting is another area where *yôga* painters could demonstrate their aptness for documenting war scenes with photographic realism. These techniques applied the rules of scientific perspective developed in Western art, and offered three-dimensional depth to artists employing the method. In contrast, *nihonga* artists avoided the single vanishing point in favor of the traditional Asian painting method using multiple perspectives. Ezaki Kôhei’s *Capture of Guam* is a case in point. The picture is composed of three separate motifs observed from different points of view. There is a squad of riflemen and a machine gunner in the prone position in the foreground, an advancing infantry in the middle ground, and a group of battleships on the ocean in the background. The distance between these grounds, and the comparative size of these figures and objects are arbitrary, and show disregard for optical reality. Even the synchronicity of these events is questionable. It is likely that these three motifs represent multiple spatial and temporal landscapes that were assembled into a single picture plane. Because of this disjointed nature, one can say that the Guam painting is rather symbolic in place and time. This is a manifestation of *nihonga*’s tendency to be less concerned with external reality. Similarly, some *nihonga* war paintings give few visual cues as to when and where the event is unfolding; they often show only selected objects in the background, or leave it blank.

The brushwork employed by *yôga* war painters is not the steadfast, solid kind that can be found in European academic painting, nor in the Social Realist painting of the Soviet Union. Instead, *yôga*’s brush strokes have a looser quality similar to those of the impressionists. This

²³³ Quoted in Hirota Ikuma, “Koiso Ryôhei kaikoten” (A Retrospect of Koiso Ryôhei), *Koiso Ryôhei* (Kobe: Koiso Ryôhei Memorial Museum, 2002), 165.

looser brush quality again is a product of the tendency established by Kuroda's *plein-air* style. Similarly, the general palette of *yôga* war paintings tends to be bright and airy, although that was to change significantly, later in the war. This early characteristic *yôga* brightness can be seen in the painting entitled *Paratroopers Descending on Palembang* (Shinpei Parenban ni kôkasu, 1942, figure 41) by Tsuruta Gorô. He was a leading member of the Army Art Association, and one of the early volunteer war painters before the official war program was set up by the military. The color palette of the painting, which depicts an attack on Palembang in the Sumatra islands on February 1942, is pleasant and optimistic. White parachutes are dotted against a brilliant blue sky flocked with huge clouds above the spread of a green meadow. He arrived at the site two months after the incident, and made sketches with the help of paratroopers equipped with the same gear. After the U.S. Occupation Army confiscated the Japanese war paintings, they presented the work to American officers in Tokyo in the immediate postwar period. The audience was said to take favorable notice of the bright soothing colors used in some of the paintings. Yamada Shinichi recalled that works that appealed to the U.S. officers included the following. *Patrol on the Russo-Manchurian Border* (Seibu soman kokkyô keibi, 1944, figure 42) was painted by Ishii Hakutei. *Transoceanic Aggression* (Toyô bakugeki, 1941, figure 43) was painted by Ishikawa Toraji. "*Houston*" *Sunk by a Destroyer off Batavia* (Waga kuchikukan tekisen "Hyûsuton" wo syûgeki, 1942, figure 44) was painted by Kobayakawa Tokushirô. *Railroad Construction in East Burma* (Biruma hômen tetsudô kensetsu, 1944) was painted by Inokuma Gen'ichirô. And *Banda Unit Fighting Fiercely off Philippines* (Bandatai firippintô oki ni funsensu, 1945) was painted by Miyamoto Saburô.²³⁴ Among the *nihonga* works, *Final Attack on Hong Kong Island* (Honkontô saigo no sôkôgeki zu, 1942, figure 45) by Yamaguchi

²³⁴ Quoted in Sasaki Shigeo, "Postwar Treatment of War Paintings," 53.

Hôshun received specific admiration for its use of a vivid cobalt blue.²³⁵ Indeed, the luminous quality of the water-based pigments in Yamaguchi's piece is breathtakingly beautiful.

As the war progressed, the palette of some war documentary painters began to shift to a monotonous, darker tone. Some representative works that mark this shift follow. The first is *Final Fighting on Attu*²³⁶ (Atsutô gyokusai, 1943, figure 46) by Fujita Tsuguji. The next painting is *Deadly Battle in New Guinea* (Nyûginia sensen-mitsurin no sitô, 1943, figure 47) by Satô Kei. Finally, I include *Desperate Fighting of Ôtsu Unit on Saipan* (Saipantô Ôtsu butai no funsen, 1944, figure 48) by Hashimoto Yaoji. These three examples depict close-range, hand-to-hand combat. Since this group of work is even more important to our discussion in terms of composition and ideological implications, I plan to discuss it further in sections below. For now, I limit my examination to the visual element of color. According to Yamada Shinichi, American officers called the group of works that encompasses these three combat scenes “tobacco juice paintings” for their distinctive sepia brown found across the entire composition.²³⁷ Yamada himself believed the use of this distinctive tobacco juice color was prompted in part by the nighttime setting of the events. The darker choice of colors was employed because these paintings were largely the product of the artist's imagination, rather than eyewitness accounts.²³⁸ Indeed no painter or photographer could have directly observed these mortal events and lived to come home and visually “recount” them.

²³⁵ Ibid., 54.

²³⁶ Although these are the museum's words, this is not a direct translation. See this paper's discussion of “gyokusai” (breaking jewel).

²³⁷ Ibid., 51.

²³⁸ Ibid., 51.

B. Subject Matter

Japan's nearly two hundred state-sponsored war paintings can be divided into six categories of subject matter. The largest group dominating more than half of the production depicts actual battles on the ground, on the sea, or in the air. This largest group was painted after direct or indirect observation of the scenes in which the events represented occurred by the painters. The realities of warfare therefore dictated who or what was present in the scenes. Largely, hand-to-hand combat had been replaced by exchanges of bullets or artillery fire, although physical prowess was of course not completely obsolete. Accordingly, the presence of soldiers in these war paintings differs greatly depending on whether they depict ground battles, or naval and aerial attacks. In depictions of ground battles employing infantry, the soldiers are often the central focus. In the case of naval or aerial warfare, where large military vehicles like naval warships or airplanes played a much greater role in destroying the enemy, heavy machinery are the centerpieces in the paintings. Dividing this group into the two subgroups of manpower versus machines, sixty-one paintings depict ground-battles (including soldiers advancing toward an enemy line) and thirty-six works focus on aerial warfare over the sea.

The second largest category represents Imperial soldiers engaging in noncombatant roles such as support work or savoring a respite from a march. This group contains twenty-eight works, and is considerably smaller than the first group comprising manpower or machines. The third most depicted subject, comprising only ten paintings, entails war-related diplomatic affairs such as negotiations between officers of both sides, and ceremonies marking the establishment of Japanese occupation in a foreign land. Next are eight portraits in which the artist paints either a single sitter or a group of sitters, all of whom are Japanese military officers. The fifth category

divides into two groups, where each contains five paintings depicting non-Japanese people in newly occupied territories in China and Southeast Asia: one group depicts the local populace, and the other shows foreign soldiers as prisoners of war. Lastly, there are some works that elude all of these five categories. They include two pictures of Japanese civilians at the home front and in Japanese occupied foreign territory, and seven paintings of what can best be described as landscape.

1. Depictions of Ground Battles

Among the number of works depicting ground battles, one of the most conspicuous compositions directs the gaze of the viewer over the backs of Japanese soldiers. The painter's visual perspective gives the illusion that he could have been right behind the action he was illustrating. We can call these arrangements "rear-view" paintings. This element is consistent among the works created in the earlier phase of the war. In rear-view works, the soldiers are often positioned in the front of the picture plane, bending low, crawling on the ground in cautious advance, or positioned to fire their arms. The enemy is usually not in sight, but his presence is implied across the battle line in the back of the painting, indicated by the direction of the gun sights or by patches of rising smoke caused by heavy artillery. The viewer can see neither the faces of the imperial soldiers nor those of enemy fighters.

Examples of this rear-view composition include Nakamura Ken'ichi's *T-Junction at the Shining Gate* (Kôkamon teijiro, 1937, figure 49), which was featured on the cover of the catalog of the First Holy War Art Exhibition of 1939. The First Holy War Art Exhibition displayed ten war documentary paintings made by ten painters who had been dispatched to China in May 1938 by the Imperial Army's Shanghai Division. Five of these ten works represent Japanese soldiers as the central focus, and most of them are seen from behind. Even when some soldiers were

pictured at an angle so that their faces are turned toward the viewer, their facial features are partially hidden under their helmets, or are obscured by a lack individual clarity.

Although compositions of rear-viewed, faceless soldiers continued to be popular among Japanese war painters throughout the war years, some artists broke away from these anonymous compositions, giving detailed expressions to depicted soldiers. Japanese warriors did begin to show their faces. We see individual faces in two works by Fujita Tsuguji's *Battle on the Bank of the Haluha* and *Nomonhan* (Haruha kahan no sentô, 1941, **Error! Reference source not found.**). Other artists composed paintings with Japanese faces, as well. Nakamura Ken'ichi's *Kota Baru* (Kota baru, 1942, figure 51)²³⁹ and Miyamoto Saburô's *Fierce Fighting near Nicholson, Hong Kong* (Honkon nikoruson fukin no gekisen, 1942, figure 52) both have the countenances of imperial troops. These three paintings present Japanese soldiers frontally at close range with more clarity in facial expression. By the effective use of foreshortening, the artists made their images more memorable and compelling. Standing in front of the images, the viewer would feel more involved in the combat scene, rather than observing it from behind, as was the case with the rear-viewed composition for presenting comrade combatants. After these clear frontal views were introduced at war art exhibitions, other war painters began to experiment with compositions that were more personal, as well. However, the enemy remains largely impersonal or absent from most Japanese war paintings featuring combat, since this frontal, close-up composition assumes the enemy's viewpoint in observing the pictured Japanese soldiers. War painters have said that it was mostly impossible to see the enemy afar,²⁴⁰ but the implication of the enemy's absence has drawn attention from researchers as a curious phenomenon found in Japan's wartime visual representation. We must consider the difference

²³⁹ The Kota Baru landing occurred on Malay December 8, 1941. Nakamura visited the site six months after the event he would paint. See *Shinchô*'s article, 62.

among types of media when we regard the nature of propaganda, but the issue of enemy impersonality is one of the more compelling characteristics found in many works of Japan's war documentary painting. According to John W. Dower, many Japanese war films also lack explicit enemies. The decision not to include the enemy's presence was arguably intentional rather than a situation forced by battleground reality. Dower believes that the presence of the enemy is conveyed indirectly using camera position and the gaze of the actors in these films, despite the visible absence of the enemy.²⁴¹

Finally, the most revolutionary type of composition in war documentary painting arguably evolved from the frontal composition. In this startling development, Imperial soldiers and enemy soldiers fill the picture plane in close hand-to-hand combat, employing various movements. The works made with a sepia color palette belong to this group, including *Final Fighting on Attu* by Fujita Tsuguji (figure 46), *Deadly Battle in New Guinea* (figure 47) by Satô Kei, and *Desperate Fighting of Ôtsu Unit on Saipan* (figure 48) by Hashimoto Yaoji. Hand-to-hand combat is called “*hakuheisen*” in Japanese, which means a close-range fight with bladed weapons such as swords, spears, or bayonets (*hakuhei* or *hakujin* means “white blade”). In the painting of Attu, Fujita portrayed a desperate fight in May 1943 between Japanese and American troops on the remote Aleutian island of Attu. The encounter led to the annihilation of the Japanese forces that were defending what they had captured earlier in June of 1942. Fujita created a striking image of deadly combat by filling the canvas with the mingling bodies of soldiers from both sides, both dead and alive. The faces of the Japanese soldiers express determination and fierceness, while those of the Americans are notably expressionless. Fujita gave a wide variety of theatrical gestures and movements to his subjects, particularly portraying

²⁴⁰ Fujita is quoted in Tsukasa Osamu, 53; Miyamoto in a roundtable discussion.

²⁴¹ John W. Dower, *War and Peace* (New York: New Press, 1993), 39.

the Japanese soldiers' vigorous and dramatic handling of their bayonets aimed toward the enemy soldiers. Fujita himself repeated his hand-to-hand combat composition in works like *Desperate Struggle of a Unit in New Guinea* (Aru butai no sitô-Nyûginia sensen, 1943, figure 53) and *Fierce Fighting on Guadalcanal* (Kessen Gadarukanaru, 1944).

Many war documentary paintings depicting ground battles bear macabre or martial expressions in their titles to describe the violent nature of combat, such as *shitô* (deadly fight), *senmetsu* (extermination), *funsen* (desperate battle), *gekitô* (fierce fight), and *kessen* (decisive battle). Similarly, words such as *kôgeki* (attack) and *totsugeki* (charge) are often used to help the viewer to imagine the vigorous offensives initiated by Japanese troops. Aside from what these titles may imply, the actual images often show Japanese soldiers in less dramatic or striking acts, such as advancing toward a distant enemy or in position to discharge their guns. Giving inflated titles to war paintings in order to compensate for weak visual content in a work was commonplace. Berthold Hinz observed a similar tendency in his iconographic study of state-sponsored Nazi art. He refers to this practice as “dressing up” the subject.²⁴²

2. Depictions of Naval and Aerial Battles

Pictures of naval and aerial combat shifted the war artist's focus from people to gigantic battle ships and swift fighter aircraft. The main action depicted in almost all the works of this type is a bombing attack by airplanes whose targets were military facilities on the ground, or battleships on the sea. The bird's eye view was the most often employed perspective so that the viewer could get a panoramic view of these thrilling scenes. Examples include *Sea Battle off Malaya* (Marê oki kaisen, 1942, figure 54) by Nakamura Ken'ichi, showing the moment when a bomb dropped by a fighter aircraft hit the front of the target battleship. Another thrilling

composition is *Bombing Chengdu Airfield* (Seito bakugeki, 1945, figure 55) by Ogawara Shû, showing the successful bombing of an enemy ground military installation. Ogawara states that he used aerial photographs that were often supplied by the army.

In order to express the enormity of the damage inflicted by Japanese forces onto enemy ships, painters both in *yôga* and *nihonga* styles employed devices such as flaming smoke rising from attacked ships, and water columns reaching into the air from missed bombs. Miwa Chôsei used these devices to an almost exaggerated degree in his *nihonga* work entitled *Attack on Cavite Naval Base* (Kyabite gunkô kôgeki, 1942, figure 56). Three pillars of black smoke rising high in the sky from tiny enemy ships dominate the picture, and three much smaller columns of water splashing up from the ocean repeat a rhythmical pattern of smoke. Japan's war documentary works depicting sea battles look more or less the same, as noted by art critic Araki Hideo, who was disappointed earlier by "the repetition of banal panoramic composition," when he saw the Marine Art Exhibition of 1939.²⁴³ In addition, many of these works are in essence landscapes in which human figures are scarce.

Wartime art critic Yanagi Ryô remarked that many marine paintings functioned largely as photographic records, and he expressed his concern about their lack of merit as artwork for future generations. He questioned the enduring value of paintings that were impressive only because they referred to historic campaigns, but that lacked inherent artistic qualities.²⁴⁴ He felt that once the contemporary aura of significance receded, the artistic quality of the work would matter more than the importance of the campaign. Yanagi desired to see the inclusion of dramatic effects that only painting could create. Indeed, some exceptions can be found which

²⁴² Berthold Hinz, *Art in the Third Reich*, Robert and Rita Kimber trans. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1979), 79.

²⁴³ Araki Hideo, "Igi aru kuwadate: kaiyôbijutsuten wo miru" (Meaningful undertaking: review of the Naval Art Exhibition), *Asahi Shinbun* May 27, 1939.

demonstrate artistic ingenuity. One of Kobayakawa Tokushirô's naval paintings shows sailors firing artillery from the deck of their ship at close-range. This work entitled "*Houston*" *Sunk by a Destroyer off Batavia* (figure 44) clusters the sailors, who are seen from behind, around the artillery piece on the right side in the foreground, dividing the picture diagonally. This three-dimensional composition creates a sense of spatial depth that panoramic compositions often failed to articulate, and heightens the feeling of immediacy for the viewer.

When bombers are the central motif in the pictures, the painters tend to emphasize their speed and agility by means of trailing smoke streams emanating from the rear of the aircraft. One example is Mikuriya Jun'ichi's *Air Battle off New Guinea* (Nyûginia oki tohôteki kidôbutai kyôsyû, 1942, figure 57). Another method for dramatizing aerial missions was to place aircraft on a background of swirling clouds and sea. One such example is Ishikawa Toraji's *Transoceanic Aggression* (Toyô bakugeki, 1941, figure 43). Many aerial paintings suffer from the same problem as marine painting, offering little more than a straightforward graphic record of aerial events as the artist had been told of them. Again, Yanagi, who found few good works in this category, complained that the subject matter is too mechanical to infuse any sort of feeling in the painting.²⁴⁵

3. Depictions of Non-Combat Engagements

A small number of paintings depict support activities delivered by military personnel including aircraft maintenance crews, supply corps, medical corps, engineering corps, and sentinels at the frontier. These images provided views of soldiers engaging in less dangerous duties, though still expressing the same devotion as any combat soldiers. Such devotion is visible through the calmness conveyed by a lone, patrolling sentinel in Ishii Hakutei's *Patrol on*

²⁴⁴ Yanagi, 20.

the Russo-Manchurian Border (figure 42). Sincerity is communicated by the focused attention of Medical Corps members attending to the wounded in Suzuki Ryôzô's *Evacuation of the Wounded and the Hardworking Relief Unit* (Kanja gosô to kyûgohan no kushin, 1943, figure 58). Shimizu Toshi's *Engineer's Bridge Construction in Malaya* (Kôheitai kakyô sagyô, 1944, figure 59) also shows a group of engineering troops enduring the physical demands of construction in jungle waters. By demonstrating the ability of Japanese soldiers to withstand unusual circumstances, all these paintings are intended to teach homeland audiences the virtues of their soldiers and to urge them to share the burden and hardships of the war.

4. Portraits of Military Officers

A little more than a dozen works can loosely be termed portraits in that they depict military officers and state dignitaries. The only one of these devoted to a single sitter is the portrait of Admiral Yamamoto Isoroku painted by *nihonga* master Yasuda Yukihiro. The portrait is entitled *Admiral Yamamoto on December 8, 1941* (Jûnigatsu yôka no Yamamoto gensui, 1944, figure 60). The veteran *nihonga* painter Yasuda rendered the admiral standing resolutely on the bridge of his warship with his hands holding his binoculars across his chest on the historic day of the Pearl Harbor attack. He is gazing into the distance with an expression of strong conviction on his face. There is no hint in the painting of the complex thoughts he might have been having concerning Japan's surprise attack, which would soon launch the United States into the Second World War. Possibly Yasuda made this painting after being inspired by the portrait of another admiral famous for his historic role in the earlier Russo-Japanese War, naval hero Tôgô Heihachirô. As I have mentioned in the third chapter, Admiral Tôgô was painted by Tôjô Shôtarô (figure 16). The portrait of Admiral Tôgô was seen by Japan's military art officials

²⁴⁵ Yanagi, 15.

as one of the finest examples of war paintings leading up to the Pacific War. Tôjô Shôtârô also captured a victorious officer earlier in the day of a historic attack on the enemy, in this case the Russian fleet. The date of May 27 was designated to commemorate the Imperial Navy victory (*kaigun kinenbi*). Tôgô was also pictured standing on the bridge of his ship surrounded by his officers. Since no other Japanese war documentary painting portrait shows a single subject, this picture of Admiral Yamamoto must reflect the importance of his place in Japan's military history.

Other paintings in this category depicted official diplomatic meetings involving military generals and state dignitaries, and inspections of the front by military officers. The setting of the former is generally the interior of buildings, while that of the latter is outdoors. The most famous painting of surrender negotiations was a depiction of the meeting between a Japanese general and his European counterpart. The piece is named *The Meeting of General Yamashita and General Percival* (Yamashita Pâsibaru ryôshireikan kaiken zu, 1942, figure 61), and it was painted by Miyamoto Saburô. The work represents one of the most memorable moments etched in the minds of the Japanese people during the long war. The picture shows the scene where defeated British generals capitulated to the victorious Japanese at Ford Motor Company's Bukitama factory site on February 15, 1942. This meeting determined the wartime fate of Singapore, and it concluded after about an hour with the British acceptance of a total surrender of the British colony,

The diagonal composition of this painting created a sense of tension between the two generals by arranging them with their surrounding officers in a confined interior space, and by depicting only their upper bodies in a confined composition. The individual characteristics of the sitters were well rendered with clear facial features based on sketches that the artist made

(figure 62). What gave the painter more compositional help than anything else was a photograph of this meeting published in the press. The front page of the *Asahi* newspaper on February 20, 1942 carried a picture almost identical to Miyamoto's painting (figure 63). Obviously, Miyamoto based his composition on the photograph, but then made pictorial alternations to enhance the theme of Japan's victory. To explain the purpose of the meeting the painter added both the Union Jack flag and the white flag as a sign of surrender. Miyamoto also decreased the body sizes of the British officers, which were larger than the Japanese in the photograph. He did this to diminish their presence in his painting because the British had been closer to the camera in the *Asahi* newspaper composition. Miyamoto also depicted the profile of British officer Percival's face, an element not shown in the photograph.

Koiso Ryôhei produced the most paintings in the category of official ceremonial occasions. While they contained documentary qualities, they lacked the artistic impact of Miyamoto's Yamashita-Percival painting in terms of composition, expression of the sitters' characters, and conveyance of the event's importance. As usual, Koiso is good at rendering the human form in works like *Independence Ceremony of Burma* (Biruma dokuritsu shikiten zu, 1944, figure 64). His figures pose rather passively in part due to the solemnity accompanying the diplomatic ceremonies. The Singapore surrender painting features the most accurate portrayal of Japanese official faces. In Japan's war documentary painting, ranking officials are sometimes depicted with greater clarity and detail. It could have been easier for painters to achieve greater sophistication with subjects of high military or political position because of photographic examples that might have been available. This study did not locate photographs with which to compare accuracy of officials other than those depicted in the Singapore surrender. The result is that anonymous soldiers depicted in battle were painted with less facial detail. It is

possible that the artist was not given sufficient opportunity to make sketches of the participants, and perhaps he had to rely on photographs provided by the military, as often was the case with war documentary painting.

5. Newly Occupied Japanese Territories

Depictions of foreigners in newly occupied Japanese territories constitute a small number of war documentary paintings. These foreigners are either members of the local civilian population or prisoners of war from Allied nations. A rare depiction of prisoners of war (POWs) is *Capture of Wake Island II* (Uêkitô kôryakusen, 1942, figure 65) by Matsuzaka Kô. American soldiers in captivity, some standing on the back of a truck, and some on foot, are waving their hands to Japanese soldiers nearby. There is no sign of animosity or discomfort expressed by the POWs. A sunny tropical environment seems to amplify this cheerful, friendly occasion. This is evidently a false representation designed to convey the benevolent nature of imperial forces, perhaps even suggesting that the Americans appreciated being captured Allied soldiers. Particularly dishonest in this picture are the healthy physiques and complexions of the captured Caucasian soldiers, who would have in reality been exhausted from days of bitter combat. Anyway, it is unlikely that trucks were used in evacuating the captured American Marines from Wake Island.

Similarly, depictions of civilians in newly occupied areas represent their positive sentiments toward Japanese forces, who claimed to be liberators as opposed to new occupiers replacing the colonial European governments. Ihara Usaburô painted crowds of Burmese people welcoming Japanese forces in *Japanese Marching into Mandalay and Burmese Corporation* (Mandarê nyûjô to Birumajin no kyôryoku, 1942, figure 66). Ihara's straightforward representation of the joy of the Burmese civilian population might have been heartwarming to

Japanese audiences, who had been imbued with the mission of Japan as liberator of the colonized peoples of Asia.

II. Analysis of Ideological Elements

A. Absence of Imagery of the Emperor

I have remarked on the absence of the emperor's imagery in war documentary painting.²⁴⁶ These pictures were intended to record the military accomplishments of the Imperial troops. On the other hand, the emperor's absence is odd, since he was designated the Commander in Chief by Japan's prewar constitution. The omission of the head of state from paintings depicting the war should be understood in the context of Japan's worship of the emperor as the embodiment of the nation. He was seen as the sovereign of Japan, and his family was believed to have descended in an unbroken line from the ancient Sun Goddess, Amaterasu Ōmikami's.²⁴⁷ The emperor was thought to be the direct descendent of the goddess, and his relationship to Amaterasu was a sacred symbol of Japan's nationhood.

For a mere civilian to be in the presence of His Majesty the Emperor was so precious and exceptional that capturing his image directly with artistic media was uncommon for artists, who could not usually visit him for a personal sitting. Moreover, distribution of his images in the

²⁴⁶ In 1943, the *Asahi* newspaper commissioned three imperial portraits in oil: *His Majesty as Grand Marshall at the Imperial Headquarters* (Daihonei shinrin no daigensui heika) by Miyamoto Saburō, *His Majesty Visiting the Ise Shrine* (Tennō heika Isa no jingū ni gosannpai) by Fujita Tsuguji, and *Her Majesty Visiting the Army Hospital* (Kōgō heika rikugun byōin gyōkei) by Koiso Ryōhei. The artists created these pictures from photographic imperial portraits, and from sketches they made while visiting the settings by special arrangement. These paintings were shown at the Second Great East Asia War Art Exhibition in 1943 with war documentary paintings. "San gahaku no kinsaku" (The work of three painters completed in service to the emperor), *Asahi shinbun* December 6, 1943. Their paintings appeared in *Asahi shinbun* December 6-7, 9, 1943.

²⁴⁷ Amaterasu Ōmikami's name means great goddess who shines in the heavens.

commercial media such as newspapers was severely limited by government regulation. This restriction of mass publication of the emperor's likeness was a public relations tradition established in the middle of the Meiji era. During the war, the supreme importance of the emperor was enforced in even more overt ways. The idea of the emperor was intended to be spiritually and symbolically ubiquitous in the minds of the Japanese people through the enforced teaching of imperial ideology. An essential aspect of this official reverence was through the emperor's officially mass-produced and distributed photographic image called *goshin'ei* (venerable true shadow, figure 35). Extreme care and attention were given even to the word *tennô* (emperor) when it was printed: there needed to be one blank space above the word, because nothing should come above him. Despite the invisibility of the emperor in war documentary paintings, I argue that they conveyed the imperial ideology to audiences through other iconographic elements. The foundation for wartime attitudes of the Japanese people toward the emperor and his likeness was already well established. Prior to an iconographic analysis of the work based on this hypothesis, I would like to clarify the significance of the prewar emperor system in the Japanese psyche.

The emperor's legitimacy in prewar Japan was based on a national mythology that recounted the story of the nation's ancient formation. Japan's indigenous Shintô religion has a pantheon of gods just like its Greek counterpart. Stories of Shintô gods are recorded primarily in two ancient books *Kojiki* (Record of Ancient Matters), and *Nihon shoki* (Chronicles of Japan) written in 712 and 720 C.E. respectively. According to these books, the most exalted figure in the pantheon, the Sun Goddess Amaterasu, sent her grandson *Ninigi* to the land of "luxuriant rice fields." She bestowed upon him the sacred regalia of three objects: a bronze mirror, a sword, and a jewel. Amaterasu is thus regarded as the ancestor of the imperial family. It was her grandson

Ninigi's great-grandson Jinmu who ascended to the imperial throne in about 660 B.C.E. Japan's origin myth served as the basis for the nation's interpretation of its own history, or *Kôkoku shikan* (literally, the historical view of the Imperial nation). The myth emphasizes an unbroken lineage of the Imperial house from its origins with the goddess Amaterasu. Counting Emperor Jinmu as the first of the imperial line, Emperor Hirohito (1901-1989) was considered 124th in the imperial genealogy.

The nature of Japan's imperial ruler was unique. Chinese idea of an imperial system is one of many traditions that Japan imported and modified to its own ends throughout its premodern history. However, Japan substantially changed the Chinese idea of monarchy by interweaving it with the native religion of Shintô. In China, Confucianism taught that the emperor ruled as a virtuous person through a mandate from heaven. Chinese emperors secured their position on this premise, which also served as a pretext for eliminating an emperor should he prove to be immoral. The Japanese did not adopt this aspect of the Confucian concept, but instead asserted that the Sun Goddess had given an eternal mandate to the imperial family to rule the country. Therefore, imperial rule could remain unbroken and infallible throughout history.²⁴⁸

The Japanese emperor's role in history was usually religious rather than secular. The primary role that the emperor played was that of ritual head of state. Nevertheless, political matters were often left to the ruling aristocracy, whose daughters married into the imperial family, and then later to the shogun who replaced the nobility. The most significant imperial ritual symbolically attests to the nature of the emperor as an agent of the Sun Goddess. This ritual is called *daijôsai* (Great Thanksgiving service), which celebrates the first crop of rice after a new emperor ascends the throne, and continues to the present day. The site for this ritual is within the Ise Shintô Shrine, whose structure has been renewed every twenty years in a tradition

going back to antiquity (with some noted exceptions in medieval times). At the spectacle of the *daijôsai*, the emperor enters a small house alone to achieve communion with the Sun Goddess. This ceremony is performed in complete secrecy out of view from participants, including the attendant Shintô priests, and takes place from midnight to dawn. What the emperor does inside the house is not disclosed in public. Invisibility strengthens the mystical nature of the ritual and the emperor who performs it.

Public appearances of the emperor have been historically limited. In the premodern era, the emperor sat behind a curtain when he granted audience to both his court and dignified guests in the city of Kyoto. Kyoto was Japan's ancient capital and longtime imperial seat before the Meiji Restoration (figure 34). By showing his face only to selected courtiers, he preserved his importance and sacredness. After the Meiji Restoration, the Meiji emperor exchanged his court robes for a Western-style military uniform. This suited his newly fashioned persona as Supreme Commander of the modern Japanese military state. This change literally pulled him out from behind the curtain into open public view. Meiji leaders considered it politically important to raise the emperor's visual recognition by fostering familiarity with him among his people. This increased access to the emperor was a novelty for many Japanese who had not had a chance to see him before. Government officials capitalized on this in their effort to cultivate a strong sense of nationalism among the people. The new display of the emperor began with him paying official visits to various cities to observe civilian developments, and military fields to inspect forces marshaled for exercises.²⁴⁹ His excursions, called *junkô* (imperial tour), helped the people

²⁴⁸ H. Paul Varley, *Japanese Culture* 3rd ed. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1984), 18.

²⁴⁹ The emperor paid the first visit of this kind in 1868 while still attired in his court robe, and afterward, beginning in 1873, he dressed in a military uniform. Nakamura Ikuo, *Nihon no kami to ôken* (Kingship and God of Japan) (Kyoto: Hôzôkan, 1994), 252.

recognize him as their sovereign power.²⁵⁰ His public appearances were also depicted in *nishikie* woodblock prints, a popular and colorful mass-production medium which played a journalistic role at that time.

The emperor's public appearances tapered off during the mid-Meiji years, and *goshin'ei* or the photographic reproduction of his image began to be used. The curtailment of imperial display was part of a symbolic policy that Meiji leaders began to adopt when they reversed their strong interest in westernization. Instead, they wanted to evoke Japan's unique character by creating a national identity based on their interpretation of its history. The government devised and established its institutional apparatus during the mid-Meiji years, including the promulgation of the Meiji Constitution (1890). The same year the *Kyôiku chokugo* (Imperial Rescript on Education) was also issued, stating the moral and educational principles under the imperial institution. Around this time, official support of traditional arts began to distress the *yôga* community. The next phase of the public policy for dealing with imperial imagery deployed the new technique of photography, which promised to reach a wide audience. How photography would be used revealed that the government still appeared to be more interested in limiting, rather than expanding circulation of such imagery. The *goshin'ei* was mass produced with ritual indirection from the photographic image of a painted portrait of the emperor and empress. Under the revised policy of tightened control, the government became the sole proprietor of imperial imagery by distributing *goshin'ei* only to certain official institutions and selected elementary schools. It made sure that the reproduced imagery was treated with care and venerated as if it were the emperor himself. *Goshin'ei* thus found its way to more schools and private homes. This wider distribution enabled each citizen to establish his or her own symbolic relationship with the emperor through the reproduced image. The controlled use of the *goshin'ei* helped

²⁵⁰ Nakamura, 258-9. See footnote 6.

induce a feeling of reverence toward a highly symbolic presence of the emperor among the Japanese people.²⁵¹

The Meiji government also implemented the system of imperial era naming, which John W. Dower defines as “a highly modern way of engaging in symbolic politics.”²⁵² The imperial calendar system imbued citizens with a symbolic sense of being Japanese. The imperial era system is the way the Japanese count years within a period denoted by the name of the currently ruling emperor. When a new emperor assumes the throne, a new auspicious era name is chosen and used until his death. Thus, the era is closely associated with the emperor’s reign. The emperor is posthumously referred to by his era name, such as Emperor Meiji (although his given name was Mutsuhito) or Emperor Shōwa (who likewise had the given name of Hirohito).²⁵³ However, before the Meiji period, an era name did not directly correspond to the emperor. Instead, the era name would change after natural or man-made disasters occurred, symbolizing a new beginning.

The official apparatus of this symbolic form of politics became more pronounced the more Japan became aggressive about its expansionist ambitions. In 1937, Japanese political leaders articulated the official imperial ideology to the people in a handbook called *Kokutai no hongii* (Cardinal Principles of the National Polity). The booklet, published by the Ministry of Education, presented the *kōkoku shikan*, the official view of national history based on the imperial myth. *Goshin’ei* and the *Kokutai no hongii* were the two pillars used in educating the Japanese people of their place in the imperial structure. The emperor was defined as a living god descended from *Amaterasu*, and the Japanese people were defined as his “subjects.” The

²⁵¹ Taki Kōji, *Tennō no shōzō*, chapter 4 “goshin’ei no tanjō” (The birth of the *goshin’ei*).

²⁵² Dower, *Japan in War and Peace*, 1-2.

²⁵³ Japan has so far had four emperors since the Meiji Restoration, and thus four era names have been in use: Meiji, Taishō, Shōwa, and Heisei.

Kokutai no hongî handbook emphasized the divine origins of the Japanese nation, and it mandated the absolute subjugation of the people to their emperor. Japanese were each inborn with complete servitude to the emperor, according to the *Kokutai no hongî* material.²⁵⁴ The principal teaching was focused on how to conduct a righteous life as a subject of the emperor. The booklet rejected individualism while it promoted admiration of the emperor, loyalty, and patriotism. The Ministry distributed the first 200,000 copies of this booklet for school use at elementary, junior, and high schools, colleges and universities, libraries, and government offices nationwide.

B. Self-Effacement: Imagery of Imperial Soldiers

Imperial soldiers, who are the central focus in war documentary paintings, appear demure and modest in disposition. They are portrayed as faithfully engaged in their duties whether those were fighting, tactical advancement, or support work in the rear. Even fighting scenes rarely show exaggerated facial expressions of rigor, virility, or dramatic action, which had been conventional components of heroic imagery in the Western oil painting that might have otherwise influenced Japan's war art to a greater extent. Some *yôga* painters, who had personal experience with the Western art tradition while studying in Europe, attempted to emulate a Western-style heroic imagery in their work. Miyamoto Saburô is successful in giving his combat scenes a sense of action with *Attack on Nanyuan, Beijing* (Nan'en kôgeki, 1941, figure 67); he also adds intense facial expressions to the Japanese soldiers whom he depicts.

²⁵⁴ Irie Yôko, *Nihon ga kami no kuni datta jidai* (When Japan was called a Divine Nation) (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2001), 15. Dower, *War without Mercy*, 221.

A noticeable exception to the reserved appearance of soldiers in most war documentary painting is the type with gory, hand-to-hand combat scenes. These represent soldiers with theatrical, dynamic facial gestures and fighting motions. The majority of the work shows rather unexciting and mundane scenes from the typical soldier's life. These images might appear to fall short of the propaganda message of martial spirit that the military sponsors were eager to impart to Japanese viewers. One explanation for this lack of excitement is that the training that *yōga* painters received at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts was not oriented toward the skills necessary for composing a complex picture with multiple figures, especially the depiction of vigorous movements. I have stressed that before. However, another explanation exists: the Japanese people have traditionally admired personal qualities of inconspicuousness and unobtrusiveness in their legendary heroes and beloved historic figures. Consider the eighteenth-century tale of the forty-seven samurai from the *Chūshingura* story, in which ranking warriors accepted years of service in humble disguises to fulfill their oaths of fealty to their unjustly executed lord.²⁵⁵ Loyal subjects had virtues that could be judged by their internal fortitude and their capacity to endure hardship, not by superficial expressions of fidelity. These paintings tried to mirror the ideal of the understated hero in the eyes of the Japanese people.

Japanese traditional values contain a core tenet of Confucian moral teaching: submission to a higher authority in exchange for protection is an expected and honorable role. This includes the obedience of a child to his parents, of a wife to her husband, a student to his teacher, and a man to his country. Filial piety is demanded and celebrated in order to maintain peaceful stability in the family, in social organizations, and within the nation. Relationships at every level define an individual's proper role. Each person must fulfill the responsibility incurred by these

²⁵⁵ The tale of the forty-seven samurai was depicted at the Kanda Panorama Theater by Asai Chū, Honda Kinkichirō, and Nakamura Fusetsu around the time of the first Sino-Japanese war. This

relationships. Mundane war paintings featuring the understated hero must be viewed in the context of Japan's Confucian value for submission. Young, obedient, and hardworking soldiers perfectly represent the consensual social scheme of which they are depicted as an integral part.

With these moral codes integrated into a worldview which placed the emperor at the center of everything, the nation was modeled as one big family with him on the top as the supreme protector. This coded imperial hierarchy treated the general populace as his children. In return, the country was expected to serve the emperor, and as I have said, the Japanese people were called subjects (*shinka*) or children (*sekishi*) in relation to the emperor. Examples in war documentary paintings of this implied relationship with the emperor follow. The soldiers in respite from advancement in *Marching through Niangzi-guan* (figure 39) display a quiet, respectful humility. The lone border guard in *Patrol on the Russo-Manchurian Border* (figure 42) stands in a silent vigil under massive skies. An engineering corps endures hard physical labor in *Engineer's Bridge Construction in Malaya* (figure 59). These are all paintings that feature loyal subjects of the emperor. There are many other soldiers depicted in war paintings who exhibit similar expressions of implied subservience to imperial authority. The images described here illustrate the idea that these soldiers' devotion to their duties rightly occupies their minds, and that a sense of fulfillment of duty alone should be reward enough for them. Without question, the ubiquitous presence of the emperor is implicit in these images.

Placing an overriding priority on subservience to a central imperial figure is oppressive. Japan's prewar philosophy of the divine nation did not allow room for the individual to pursue personal interests, or assert his or herself against the higher authorities. On this issue, Katô Shûichi, one of the foremost postwar cultural critics, has an insight that puts this homage to the emperor into cultural context. He believes he can explain just how collectively oriented

work was mentioned in conjunction with panorama painting in chapter three.

Japanese society traditionally is. Katô suggests that wartime imperial ideology was an idea that had to be imposed, because otherwise it would have been dismissed as an aberration by the people busy living their own lives.

In Japan, the existence of a minority opinion or dissident voice is looked on as an unhappy accident...Those who hold a minority view [are expected] to compromise, so that they will conform to at least the outlines of the majority view. The social pressure within a particular group can be very strong indeed, so some apparent consensus is almost always produced...the idea is for everyone to have the same opinion. This conviction reveals a fundamental difference between Western and Japanese society.²⁵⁶

The emphasis is clearly on the Japanese as one big family. The idea of an innate sense of filial duty central to the imperial ideology was most favorable for the military government when it came time to justify its grand expansionist ambitions to the people. The imperial family structure had laid the foundation for the authoritarianism of the Meiji through the Shôwa eras. Blame was hard to assign within this system, but the authoritarianism and the dissipation of culpability could both make bearing acceptance of military setbacks easier for the government to demand. Katô explains this referring to the social custom of the community assuming responsibility for an individual member's improper actions or misbehavior. For example, a family might atone for the wrongdoing of one of its members. He argued that this hampers the effort to locate the origin of a problem. Therefore, Katô argues that even though the Japanese people were not happy about the war at a personal level (perhaps because of all sorts of hardships), they complied with the official line of thoughts and opinions as a group.²⁵⁷

²⁵⁶ Katô Shûichi, "Mechanisms of Ideas: Society, Intellectuals, and Literature in the Postwar Period in Japan," Ernestine Schlant and J. Thomas Rimer eds., *Legacies and Ambiguities: Postwar Fiction and Culture in West Germany and Japan* (Washington D.C., Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1991), 245.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 255.

Since Japan began to assimilate Western culture in the Meiji era, officials had considered the Western notion of individualism as a threat to their efforts to unite and advance the nation's power and reach. The Meiji Restoration had seemingly liberated the people from a rigid class system imposed by the feudal samurai government. A small number of the samurai at the top of the social hierarchy had controlled the rest of the population of farmers, manufacturers, and merchants. These long-oppressed classes believed that the new government that had abolished the system of feudalism would bring democracy as part of its Westernization policy. They regarded the Restoration as a movement toward equality. This expectation resulted in the People's Rights Movement (*Jiyu minken undō*) that demanded guaranteed human rights. The movement was led by Itagaki Taisuke (1837-1919) and culminated in the late 1870s. Itagaki was a politician, born to a samurai family. However, the government viewed this push for human rights as undermining to their goals for selective Westernization of particular policies, and they eventually suppressed the movement. Japanese authorities soon went further in reaction to the dangers they saw in blind Westernization. They reverted to the past by promoting a revival of traditional values, including Confucian feudal morals.²⁵⁸ This would in turn lead the government to produce not only “an emperor-centered absolutist constitution” but also a standardized and antidemocratic system of compulsory education.²⁵⁹

The 1937 publication *Cardinal Principles of the National Polity* (Kokutai no hongī) is clear in expressing the official aversion to individualism. The booklet describes the divine nation of Japan as “cloudless, pure, and honest,” while it criticizes Western culture for its focus

²⁵⁸ Ienaga Saburō, *Pacific War: World War II and the Japanese, 1931-1945* (New York: Pantheon, 1978), 20.

²⁵⁹ Ienaga, 21. The enrollment rate in the six-year compulsory education system was more than 90% by just after 1900. The Imperial Rescript on Education was issued in 1890, and the solemn reading of this for the purpose of memorization was practiced in the classroom. At the same time, children were required to venerate the imperial photograph.

on the individual. It characterizes individualism as a potential danger that could lead the nation to “the corruption of true spirit and the clouding of knowledge.”²⁶⁰ In August 1941, the Ministry of Education issued a manifesto entitled *The Way of the Subject* (Shinmin no michi), in which the government again denounces the value system of the modern West, which it characterized by individualism, selfishness, and materialism. The need for these repeated official warnings about the corrupting influences of Western values shows that the Japanese authorities feared continued Westernization. They clearly believed that the Japanese people remained susceptible to the cohesive poverty of Western individualism, and would rather pursue their personal ambitions in life at the expense of state dictated goals, if possible. Japanese officials were perhaps aware of the inborn human desire for freedom, and thus continued to wield repressive policies they hoped would thwart that urge which they believed to be selfish. As John W. Dower insightfully suggests, the government recognized that a potential enemy of the enforced emperor-centric value system was lurking within the mind of every Japanese subject, for the threat was human nature itself.²⁶¹ Therefore, Japanese military propagandists were required to promote the fixed place of the citizen in the imperial family as an ideological inoculation against the allure of western individualism.

The virtue of the collective that was inculcated and enforced during wartime was plain even on a superficial level. Cartoonist Yokoyama Ryûichi, the creator of the popular comic *Dear Fuku* (Fuku-chan), recalls that he changed the title of his comic strip from *Dear Fuku* to *The Dear Fuku Unit* (Fuku-chan butai). His *Dear Fuku Unit* comic ran in the *Asahi* newspaper from 1936 until almost the end of the war. He explains the change, saying, “a unit meant a group activity. The popularity of individual action declined. As a whole, individualistic things met

²⁶⁰ Dower, *War without Mercy*, 221.

²⁶¹ Dower, *Japan in War and Peace*, 42.

increasing disapproval from immediate group members, as well as higher authorities. Organized behavior, such as neighborhood associations, was unit behavior. It had nothing to do with the contents of the cartoon, but it made a good title.”²⁶² Neighborhood associations, called *tonarigumi* (neighborhood units) were formed nationwide to ensure the thorough dissemination of official information to every corner of towns and villages. People circulated communal notices to all the members of their neighborhood.

The anti-individualist quality found in war documentary painting may be called “self-effacement,” to borrow the term used in a contemporary American military intelligence analysis made of Japanese wartime propaganda films to describe the persona desired by prewar Japanese society. This research was documented in a paper entitled *Japanese Films: A Phase of Psychological Warfare*. It was prepared by the Research and Analysis Branch of the Office of Strategic Services (from now on referred to as OSS) of the United States in March 1944. It studied twenty Japanese films sponsored by the Japanese military to understand how the enemy’s brain was wired.²⁶³ Film became an important propaganda tool for the military to use in disseminating imperial ideology to the populace because of its capacity to develop a plot in an engaging, visual manner. The *Japanese Films: A Phase of Psychological Warfare* study praised the artistic and technical quality of the Japanese productions. In terms of symbolism, the study noted “an underlying unity manifested in all the films” was “the spirit of sacrifice or subjection of self to pattern.” The American study found that the virtues of filial piety, fidelity, and patriotism were dominant themes. The study described the mechanism for stimulating wartime cohesion found in these films in terms of their ability to “effect emotional identification of the

²⁶² Haruko Taya-Cooks and Theodore F. Cooks, eds., *Japan at War: An Oral History* (New York: New Press, 1992), 98.

²⁶³ Office of Strategic Services, Research and Analysis Branch, “*Japanese Films: A Phase of Psychological Warfare*,” Record Group 226, National Archives at College Park, MD.

audience with the film heroes.” The study recognized that the humble and simple heroes portrayed in these movies were the essential cultural mechanism on which the propaganda was based. By performing their duties obediently and without question, the cinematic characters were intended to strike a resonant cultural chord in Japanese wartime audiences. One illustrating example is found in the OSS description of scenes from *Earth and Soldiers* (Tsuchi to heitai), made in 1940 based on a best-selling novel with the same title by Hino Ashihei. The film illustrates the life story of an infantry squad in a distinctively uneventful manner. It shows “dull days on the transport, landing at dawn, days of marching in the mud, nights in the trenches soaked in water and drenched by pouring rain, cold food, cold lodging, monotony, hardship, blisters, lice, dirt.”²⁶⁴ These descriptions are remarkably similar to the soldiers’ routines depicted in war painting.

Dower reveals in his study of Japanese war films that he was also struck by their true-to-life portrayals. His analysis of the effect of this type of realism is essentially the same as the OSS’s conclusion: Dower recognizes its “ability to strike a resonant chord in the hearts of Japanese viewers.”²⁶⁵ Because painting was just another visual medium that the military employed for its propaganda purposes under its guidance, it is arguably valid to apply these observations to the portrayal of the soldier in war documentary painting. Their lives are likewise unexaggerated and unromanticized. Although the painting medium does not have the advantage of being able to develop a cinematic plot through to a persuasive conclusion, the painted image could still arouse empathy among Japanese viewers by showing their fellow soldiers in their routines.

²⁶⁴ Ibid., 12.

²⁶⁵ Dower, *Japan in War and Peace*, 37. Haruko Taya-Cooks is another historian who makes the same observation. Taya-Cooks, 242.

War documentary paintings that depicted the mundane aspects of military life plainly “record” the truth about the lives of the dutiful and humble soldier, airman, or sailor as it was in their stations of duty. The narratives in these paintings are based on available commentary, and were validated by the powerful draw these works had on domestic audiences. We know the paintings were successful in developing strong feelings of filial empathy from contemporary and postwar reviews. There is a Japanese tendency to shy away from the superhero or personal prominence, because theatrical heroism as is often depicted in western art is rare in reality. These humble images allowed Japanese audiences to take part in personal experiences of the war, and although hard and unpleasant in essence, they brought the suffering of Japan’s revered troops into focus. If my propositions stand, I would call this tactic employed by Japanese military propagandists an “inoculation” mechanism by which viewers were asked to become immune to their apprehensive human nature. Japanese propagandists were trying to immunize audiences against a natural dislike of war, or the inborn desire for personal fulfillment, by imprinting a feeling shame for their selfish thoughts after viewing examples of others working hard for collective goals.

Another important aspect of the prewar emphasis on Confucian subservience and restraint on individualism was reflected in the official distrust of intellectuals. A day after the Pearl Harbor attack, the Cabinet Board of Information (Jôhôkyoku) called a meeting with major publishers to give some editorial instructions. According to one participant, *Chûô kôron* editor Hatanaka Shigeo, they were told to criticize intellectuals who unlike the masses “change the color of their coats depending on how they calculate their immediate advantage.”²⁶⁶ Meanwhile, the government was applying a double standard by embracing cultural intellectuals into the war effort. It gave them incentives to keep practicing in their specialties, such as painting and

writing, only as long as they were willing to serve the nation at war. War painters and writers were dispatched to foreign lands to observe the war on military tours. Their war reportage and painting were publicized in the media as a patriotic service, and these artists gained wide recognition, and raised their social status.

The military's assimilation of intellectuals was strategic in that it pitted one group of intellectuals who accepted nationalism against another, which harbored western-leaning ideas. How does one account for the fact that many official war painters were from the Western-infused *yōga* community? Since the Meiji period, *yōga* painters were self-appointed purveyors of Western culture, and they took pride in assimilating the "advanced" knowledge and techniques of European art, in particular French. The same was true for Japanese intellectuals in other disciplines in the cultural arena. For Japanese writers, French culture became the standard for gauging cultural accomplishment and sophistication after the First World War. Japanese playwright Kishida Kunio was one of the intellectuals whom the military dispatched to China on writing assignments. J. Thomas Rimer observes in his study of Kishida: "so many writers, artists, and intellectuals of his generation were struggling to amalgamate their talents with what they took to be world standards and currents of excellence based on European model."²⁶⁷ Had the honor of receiving state sponsorship not appeased their feeling of having lost true intellectual freedom, these potential dissidents could have caused greater division in society. Japanese militarist officials wanted consensus as well as authority. Instead, the opportunity to use the expertise of the intellectuals subdued some of their misgivings, while the prospect of turning intellectual energies into a constructive war effort was more appealing to the government than leaving them to languish in isolation. After all, in official thinking, intellectuals were capable of

²⁶⁶ Taya-Cooks, 66.

²⁶⁷ Rimer, 176-7.

changing “the color of their coats depending on how they calculate their immediate advantage.” If the government had a way to harness intellectual energies, officials believed they could better control the flow of ideas.

In terms of the visual quality of war art, the military decision in favor of realism is one manifestation of anti-intellectualism. The authorities demanded a style of painting that would be easily comprehensible to ordinary Japanese viewers. They preferred that the common people would recognize the messages contained in the paintings without special knowledge or refined appreciation of abstract types of modern art. Ambiguities that the painting might contain had to be avoided so that authorities could make sure they were ideologically correct. Officials wanted to be able to identify the meaning of the artwork, as well. In turn, the people could relate to artwork without feeling intimidated. This official dislike for the intellectual was also seen in France during the First World War²⁶⁸ and Nazi Germany during the Second World War.²⁶⁹ When authorities invoked nationalism for the sake of victory, they also sought an “art for the people” that would use clear and straightforward styles. With French nationalism during the First World War, the avant-garde art of cubism was criticized for its elitism. In Germany, Nazi officials dismissed modern art as degenerate for similar reasons. In both societies, conventional, naturalistic representation replaced the artistic experiments that had preceded the wars. Many painters had to choose to comply with the newly sanctioned painting style, or stop painting altogether.

²⁶⁸ Kenneth E. Silver, *Esprit de Corps: The Art of the Parisian Avant-Garde and the First World War, 1914-1925* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989).

²⁶⁹ Adam, *Art of the Third Reich*.

C. East versus West: Supremacy of Japan and its Spiritualism

Tension between Western analytical values and Japan's reliance on mythology was a primary factor in war documentary painting's evolution. The official pragmatism toward the benefits of Westernization did not change during wartime, because the military had to continue to employ Western models to achieve the engineering and technological advancement that was essential for fighting modern warfare. An early Meiji slogan "*wakon yōsai*" (native spirit, Western technology) demonstrates the official Japanese ambivalence toward the cultural implications of the West to the nation. The slogan also reveals their solution, which was to adopt Western science and technology to strengthen the nation's industrial and military might, while eliding Western ideas that could contaminate certain aspects of the Japanese way of life. In official rhetoric, all things originating from the West were to be rejected altogether; yet convenient exceptions persisted. Hatred of the West was pronounced during the Pacific War, which pitched Japan directly against America and Britain. A cartoon from the officially sponsored humor magazine *Manga* (Comics) illustrates the Japanese obsession with denouncing inessential western enticements which Japanese people were urged to reject and do without (figure 68). The May 1942 image shows a woman intently combing her hair to get rid of symbolic dandruff, whose falling particles are equated to Anglo-American values and ideas namely "extravagance, selfishness, hedonism, liberalism, materialism, money worship, individualism, Anglo-American ideas."²⁷⁰

Fujita Tsuguji's painting entitled *Battle on the Bank of the Haluha, Nomonhan* (**Error! Reference source not found.**) illustrates Japan's fight against the West in allegory. The right

half of the horizontally elongated picture shows a huge Soviet tank captured by Japanese soldiers in an offensive. The action consists of these soldiers thrusting their bayonets to destroy the enemy trapped inside. The contrast of human against machine represents the fighting spirit of imperial soldiers as a manifestation of Japanese superiority on the one hand, and the tank on the other as a symbol of contemptible Western materialism. The Nomonhan Battle took place in the summer of 1939 in northern Manchuria. It was fought between the twenty-third infantry division of the Japanese Kwantung army led by General Komatsubara Michitarô under the command of General Ueda Kenkichi, and Soviet forces led by the now famous Russian, General Georgi Zhukov. The artist apparently chose to overlook the animosities that the U.S. and Europe harbored against the communist U.S.S.R, and instead viewed the Caucasians among the Soviets as Westerners. The Soviet troops attempted to capture part of a disputed area between Japanese-occupied Manchuria and the Soviet Union. Japan's forces were spoiling for action, and the ensuing clash along the Mongolian border lasted from July to September. Hostilities ended in a stalemate considered disgraceful for the immediate Japanese commanders, and left more than 20,000 Japanese dead.

Fujita's tank painting was shown to the public at the Second Holy War Art Exhibit in July 1941. Prior to the exhibition, the *Asahi* newspaper had announced the completion of the work with an accompanying photograph of the painting and the painter standing by it.²⁷¹ The article carries the headline reading "*sensha to ningen no monosugoi sitô*" (The Terrible Life and Death Struggle between a Tank and Human Beings).²⁷² The article also used the term "*nikudan*," literally meaning flesh bomb, which had been added to the wartime lexicon during

²⁷⁰ Dower, *War without Mercy*, 191. The translation is his.

²⁷¹ *Asahi shinbun*, April 22, 1941.

²⁷² The translation of the headline is by Mark Sandler, "A Painter of the 'Holy War,'" 200.

the second Sino-Japanese War.²⁷³ The term signifies both the physical frailty and spiritual strength of human beings, and thus amplifies the enormity of the spiritual bravery exhibited by the soldier who is not daunted by powerful weaponry. The soldiers who were attacking the tank are described as being “like *ashura*.” *Ashura* (*Asura* in Sanskrit) is a Buddhist deity who protects the Law of Buddha, and is known for his martial behavior. The powerful assertion of man’s willpower over machine might was intensely stirring to some soldiers who saw this painting. In praising the power of the painting, army art official Kuroda Senkichirô discloses that Fujita’s image had inspired other soldiers to engage in a flesh-bomb attack on the enemy.²⁷⁴

Intellectuals continued to argue that the assertion of spiritual strength was a distinctive mark of the Japanese people. In art, no lesser a figure than the prominent Japanese-style painter Yokoyama Taikan could have been a more suitable spokesman to address this issue.²⁷⁵ He had proved his patriotism by creating highly symbolic images of the sun and raising funds for the military by selling his paintings. In September 27 1938, Taikan delivered a speech on the subject of “*Nihon bijutsu no seishin*” (The Spirit of Japanese Art) to a group of Hitler Youth touring in Japan. After touting the admirable characteristics of traditional Japanese art, he closed his speech with his observation of the larger importance of Japanese cultural supremacy. Here is a summary of his closing statement:

Today many Japanese subjects of the emperor are fighting a holy war in China to bring peace to Asia. This is a manifestation of our *yamato damashii* (Japan’s native spirit, a reference to the birthplace of imperial reign in the *Yamato* region), and the same spirit must also be true for art. What are known as artistic treasures of this country are the incarnations of the noble and

²⁷³ The term *nikudan* became famous during the 1931 Manchurian Incident when three infantrymen carried out a suicide attack on Chinese troops that was called “*nikudan sanyûshi*” (Three gallant flesh bombers).

²⁷⁴ Kuroda, *Daitôa sensô nanzô gashin*.

²⁷⁵ For more information about Taikan’s wartime painting, see Bert Winther-Tamaki, “Embodiment/Disembodiment: Japanese Painting during the Fifteen-Year War,” 159-163.

strong souls of our predecessors. Thus, their art is indestructible. We are proud of our soul-infused righteous art. Yet, the materialism of the West has enveloped our spirit for the last sixty to seventy years. At this time of incomparable emergency, we are shedding off this envelope to let our native *yamato* spirit reclaim our souls.²⁷⁶

The spiritualism of the Japanese people that Taikan regards as a supreme quality distinguishing them from the rest of the world originated from the belief that Japan was a divine country (*shinkoku* or god's nation). This sense of exclusivity therefore leads to the reasoning that the emperor, who was the divine originator of the spiritual fortitude of the Japanese people, warranted the supremacy of Japan in Asia. This extended even beyond Manchuria and China, which had been colonized by the West. The Japanese military justified its aggression into Asia by claiming that it was liberating the region and framing a new global order on behalf of its people. This doctrine, the *daitôa kyôeiken* (Great East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere), aimed at assuring Japan's dominance over Asia in the guise of endorsing coexistence and wealth sharing among all the nations of the region. This political philosophy led the Japanese people to believe in their benevolence as a saving force, although in reality they were to become the new colonizer.

No war painting better expressed the supremacy of Japan in this new global order than *The Meeting of General Yamashita and General Percival* by Miyamoto Saburô (figure 61). As I have explained, the painting depicted the historical moment that marked the fall of Singapore, which was then a British colony, when General Yamashita forced the British general to accept

²⁷⁶ A transcribed manuscript of Taikan's speech was published by *Asahi shinbun* on September 28 and 29, 1938.

terms of total surrender. This historical moment proceeded with the following dialogue, according to an account in the February 15, 1942 issue of the *Asahi* newspaper:²⁷⁷

Yamashita: “Are you willing to surrender? Yes or no?”

Percival: “Would you give me until tomorrow morning?”

Yamashita: “Tomorrow? Absolutely not. Otherwise, Japanese troops will carry out a night attack. Do you understand?”

Percival: “Could you wait till eleven thirty tonight?”

Yamashita: “Eleven thirty? We might well engage in an attack before that time.”

Percival: (no answer)

Yamashita: “Do you accept the proposition? Let me ask you. Will you accept unconditional surrender, yes or no?”

Percival: “Yes.”

This surrender meeting was heavily publicized in the national press and became known to virtually all Japanese people. It was a triumphant moment for them to see the predominant power that Yamashita exerted over the representative of the once mighty British. The meaning of this painting was self-evident to viewers: Japan had rightly prevailed. Arguably, this is the most successful war documentary piece made as a history painting. Art historian Kawata Akihisa suggests that this work demonstrated both technical mastery of Western oil painting, and embodied a compelling idea. He thought it symbolized the inevitable end of white control over Asia, which was the primary objective of the Great East Asia War as it was stated to the Japanese.²⁷⁸ With General Yamashita symbolizing the rising empire of Japan in Asia, and General Percival representing the declining power of the West, Miyamoto succeeded in creating a historical painting. For Asians, and especially the Japanese who believed in the imperial ideology, it was far more than a genre scene that simply incorporated a group of figures in color

²⁷⁷ Quoted in Mizusawa Tsutomu, 116.

and form. Miyamoto's work appeared to bolster the military government's position that the Pacific War could deliver the results Japanese officials were promising.

A painting like Miyamoto Saburô's *The Meeting of General Yamashita and General Percival* functioned to confirm reports about important events in the war that the audience had already read in the newspaper. This caused the impression of veracity in the government-controlled press to become more powerful and lasting in the minds of the people. Art historian Kawata believes this is what the military patrons expected, that painting would "be a vehicle of transforming an event in progress into the historical moment of a 'holy war.'" The task was to give historical significance to an ongoing war, simultaneous to events as they unfolded. Thus, a painting would be not a mere visual narrative of war, but an expression of the meaning of war that would be permanently engraved in the national history.²⁷⁹

D. *Gyokusai* (Breaking Jewel) and Celebrated Death

The Yamashita-Percival painting marked the zenith of Japanese victory in the war. After Japan's defeat in the Battle of Midway in June 1942, the war situation quickly shifted in favor of the Allies. For a while, the Imperial General Headquarters controlling war information withheld negative news from the public. Moreover, in February 1943 when the Japanese retreated from Guadalcanal, the military leadership avoided referring to the event as a defeat by using the euphemistic term "*tenshin*" (changing course). Parallel to the external events of losing strategic military advantage, the imagery in war documentary painting also began to shift. I have discussed this transition earlier in terms of the pictorial elements of color and composition. I

²⁷⁸ Kawata Akihisa, "Jûgonen sensô to 'daikôzu' no seiritu" (The Fifteen-Year War and the establishment of 'grand composition'), *Bijutsushi* 44:2 (March 1995): 248-51.

again refer to the night combat pictures such as Satô Kei's *Deadly Battle in New Guinea* (Nyûginia sensen-mitsurin no sitô, 1943, figure 47). Some Americans had described as being among the tobacco juice paintings for its dark sepia tone. These more recent works stand out in somber contrast to the brighter scenes emerging from Japan's early victories such as Tsuruta Gorô's *Paratroopers Descending on Palembang* (Shinpei Parenban ni kôkasu, 1942, figure 41). The transition is clearly typified by Fujita Tsuguji's death-match painting, *Atsutô gyokusai* (Final Fighting on Attu, 1943, figure 46). The most ideologically significant component of this painting of the Attu suicide combat is its embodied acceptance of death as the supreme sacrifice by the emperor's children.

The Battle of Attu in the Aleutian Islands took place in May 1943. In this clash, twenty-five hundred Japanese of the 301st Independent Infantry (and support troops) garrisoned on Attu fought almost to the last man against an American force that outnumbered them five to one. The Japanese occupation force was led by Colonel Yamazaki Yasuo, who eventually launched a suicide assault himself on the American troops to retake the island, and who became famous even to American soldiers for his extreme gallantry.²⁸⁰ According to Dower, this desperate suicidal attack "stunned westerners by its spectacle of Japanese fanaticism, and was used by many of them as proof of the irrational and subhuman nature of the enemy." Dower further notes that the Japanese military leadership, in its attempt to manipulate the nature of the horrible defeat, coined the new expression "*gyokusai*" to refer to a mass death resulting from a refusal to accept the dishonor of defeat.²⁸¹ The term *gyokusai* literally means "breaking jewel," a term taken out of a sixth-century Chinese story involving the Northern Qi defeating the Western Wei. Yuan Jinghao, a Western Wei prince, chose not to betray his filial obligation to the Wei royal

²⁷⁹ Kawata, "Sensôga to wa nanika?," 80.

²⁸⁰ Robert Sherrod, "The Nature of the Enemy," *TIME* August 7, 1944: 27.

family by accepting the surname of the conquering Gao clan of the Northern Qi. In choosing death instead of the disgrace of surrender, he said that real men would rather be shattered jade than intact pottery clay, referring to a superior strength of character that refuses to compromise on issues of integrity.²⁸² The Chinese valued jade as highly as the most precious of jewels. Like the Japanese on Attu, Yuan Jinghao and his entire clan were slaughtered rather than accept an inglorious defeat.

In the context of the battle deaths similar to the Attu suicides, the Japanese military came to adopt the poetic term *gyokusai* because it carried the symbolic message of “dying like breaking jewel.” This poignant analogy meant “choosing to die heroically in battle rather than surrender.”²⁸³ Referring to a jewel could beautify or aggrandize the action. Moreover, the phrase reflects the Japanese acknowledgment of death as a heroic and honorable act; it signals a solemn commitment to death before dishonor. In fact, men who died in distinguished military service were deified and called “*gunshin*,” or war gods. Captain Yamazaki posthumously received the *gunshin* title. A statue of his likeness was enshrined at the Yamazaki Shrine in his hometown in Yamanashi Prefecture. The statue was referred to as a *goshintai* (literally meaning the venerable body of a god, similar to sainthood in Catholicism).

For these reasons, Fujita’s Attu painting has been one of the war paintings that are most frequently discussed by art historians and critics in discourse on Japanese art of the war years.

²⁸¹ Dower, *War without Mercy*, 231.

²⁸² Yanshou, Li, *Bei shi* (History of the Northern Dynasties), vol. 53, (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1974), 1928-29. The original text in Chinese is “大丈夫寧可玉碎、不能瓦全。” I thank Professor Jonathan Pease of Portland State University in Oregon for helping me with the ancient Chinese origin of the term *gyokusai* for this citation. Any mistakes in the details are mine.

²⁸³ For more about the issue of *gyokusai*, see Yasuda Takeshi, “Kaisetsu: shûdanshi no imi” (The Significance of mass death), Yasuda Takeshi and Fukushima Tetsurô eds. *Senjika no nihonjin: jiketsu to gyokusai* (The Japanese People during the War: Suicide and Mass Death): 352-360. A fictional account of the Attu *gyokusai* is told by Oda Makoto and translated by Donald Keene in *The Breaking Jewel* (Columbia University Press, 2003).

Some people have found a silent message of war-weariness embedded in this painting. In fact, Fujita made other complex images that might arouse ambivalent feelings among viewers in terms of his sentiment toward the war. John Clark has written “Only rarely, such as in 1944-45 in Japan, has there been representation of the nihilist waste of war, almost devoid of tragedy, or of the brief beauty of futile sacrifice.”²⁸⁴ This fascinating question calls for an in-depth examination of a larger output of Fujita’s war painting, and is beyond the scope of the present study.²⁸⁵ As far as his Attu painting is concerned, I believe that it should be taken within the context of the imperial ideology: the image operates on the euphemism established by the military use of the term *gyokusai*. The officially intended meaning of *gyokusai* was deceptive; nevertheless, the publicly accepted premise for images like this to function must have been clear to Japanese viewers. Moreover, regardless of the true nature of any given event, all the news Japanese people heard and read came from the official source of the Imperial General Headquarters via the state-controlled media outlets. Audiences were encouraged to see in the paintings only what they already knew.²⁸⁶

A contemporary observer and painter, Ishii Hakutei reported that Fujita’s Attu painting had an effect that would have pleased his military sponsor. When Ishii saw some audiences bowing in reverence to the painting, he realized with a sense of astonishment that the war art exhibition carried special significance for the public.²⁸⁷ The painting evoked a sense of presence that created a hallowed place in which the people could honor the dead, and it appeared to strengthen their resolution to prevail in the war. In a September 2, 1943 *Asahi* newspaper article, Yamagiwa Yasushi of Nihon University expressed his admiration of “the power of Attu

²⁸⁴ John Clark, *Modern Asian Art*, 1998, 247.

²⁸⁵ Mark Sandler made such an attempt in his monographic study of Fujita’s war paintings.

²⁸⁶ Kawata, 83.

²⁸⁷ Quoted in Kikuhata 275-6.

gyokusai” in the painting.²⁸⁸ Art historian Kawata Akihisa, acknowledging the religious effect that death paintings like the Attu image wielded, calls them “pictures of martyrdom” (*junkyôzu*).

Japanese reaction to the Attu painting is possibly related to the Japanese attitude toward suffering. The OSS report observed that imagery of suffering is dominant in Japanese wartime propaganda films. When American movie directors watched a sample of Japanese films, one of the viewers, movie director Frank R. Capra, thought the films were antiwar. Ruth Benedict, a cultural anthropologist known for her study of Japanese culture, *Chrysanthemum and Sword*, then corrected him, explaining, “Japanese people think that they owe an infinite debt of gratitude to the emperor. The more they suffer, the more they repay for his kindness. Thus, a film that might appear antiwar at a glance could function to uplift war spirit.”²⁸⁹ In this context, Fujita’s Attu painting can be understood to have a powerful capacity to arouse Japanese empathy to the dead and suffering troops, engaging them directly in the mourning process. We can speculate that this sympathetic response could also stimulate civilian hostility toward the adversaries facing imperial troops. Furthermore, the military need for popular acceptance of this painting reflects the difficult situation Japan was facing where the prevailing-mood of defeat called for the beautification of death.²⁹⁰ It is possible that the military was attempting to prepare civilians for their own suicidal defense of the homeland with this type of *gyokusai* work.

In studying a group of combat scenes depicted during the later phase of the war, Bert Winther-Tamaki makes a penetrating observation. In the *gyokusai*-type depiction exemplified by Fujita’s work, he observes, “human bodies became virtually indistinguishable from one another and from their perilous environment.”²⁹¹ He describes these fighting and tangling Japanese

²⁸⁸ Quoted in Sandler, 202.

²⁸⁹ Quoted in Tsukasa, 110, from Satô Tadao, *Sensô to nihon eiga* (War and Japanese Cinema).

²⁹⁰ Tsukasa, 111-2.

²⁹¹ Winther-Tamaki, 174.

soldiers as not representing gallantry in the conventional sense, but dissolving into one chaotic mass of fighting spirit without individual distinction. Winther-Tamaki characterizes this effect “the negation of the integrity of the physical body”²⁹² or “painterly disembodiment”²⁹³ or “obliteration”²⁹⁴ of the individual. Winther-Tamaki correctly identifies this inherent disregard for individual life with the volunteer suicide attackers of *kamikaze tokubetsu kôgekitai* (divine wind special attack flying units mobilized in 1944), or *tokkôtai* in its shortened form. The term *kamikaze* referred to typhoons that repelled the Mongol two invasions in the thirteenth century. Moreover, his analysis leads to the recognition that the war documentary painting depictions of humble soldiers engaged in military routines, and fierce fighters in *gyokusai* attacks both signify the identical concept of self-effacement.

What Winther-Tamaki characterizes as a disregard for individual life as displayed by Japan’s military suicide corps appears in other aspects of Japanese cultural traditions. Forlorn or tragic heroes have been valued in Japan for centuries. Ivan Morris explains that the Japanese heroic tradition attributed nobility to desperate ventures inspired by sincerity.²⁹⁵ Japanese narrative history offers heroes whose stature was elevated by their commitment to a daunting objective even when they were destined to fail. The lauding of these heroes stresses the importance of spirit over a more practical path to victory. *Kamikaze* fighters are one example among several that Ivan Morris discusses in his analysis of Japan’s heroic tradition. He reminds us that these pilots were usually educated young men who volunteered for fierce suicide attacks even after completing university and flight training. The youths would have been steeped in the tradition of the forlorn Japanese hero, which could have helped persuade them to such sacrifice.

²⁹² Ibid., 178.

²⁹³ Ibid., 179.

²⁹⁴ Ibid., 178.

Ivan Morris believes that “the psychological groundwork had been laid during many centuries” by the traditional praise of forlorn heroes.²⁹⁶ Many of the young fighters strove to overcome their fears by speaking and writing about the nobility of offering their lives in service to their nation, no matter how futile that might be. Ivan Morris’ analysis of letters, diaries, and poems written by *kamikaze* fighters reveals that these young men were not motivated by hatred for the enemy. They were driven by “a keen sense of obligation to repay the favors bestowed on them since their birth.” They felt they were expressing their gratitude toward the nation, to the emperor and to their families through these final acts.²⁹⁷ In turn, the “state Shintô religion promised that those who had given their lives in the service of the emperor would return as divine spirits to be worshipped in Yasukuni Shrine.”²⁹⁸ The Yasukuni Shrine, originally known as the Tokyo Shôkônsha, was founded in June of 1869 by imperial command. The word *shôkôn* describes a place for invited divine spirits, and *yasukuni* means “peaceful country.” All the deities worshipped here are the war dead in Japan’s modern military engagements, both internal and external. The number of spirits now worshipped amounts to some 2,500,000; their names are kept at the shrine. During the war, the spiritual beliefs symbolized by this shrine might have helped doomed warriors face their fears with greater reassurance and determination.

Kusunoki Masashige (1294-1336) is a famous example of a forlorn hero in Japanese history. He earned particular relevance to modern wartime propaganda because of his unswerving fealty to his medieval emperor. In 1336, he fought the Battle of Minato River as an imperial loyalist against Ashikaga Takauji, Emperor Godaigo’s enemy, but Kusunoki’s army lost the war, and he committed suicide in the traditional disembowelment. In the Japanese warrior

²⁹⁵ Ivan Morris, *The Nobility of Failure: Tragic Heroes in the History of Japan* (New York: Noonday Press, 1975), 277.

²⁹⁶ Morris, 283.

²⁹⁷ Morris, 308-309.

culture, one dies a bad death if he is captured and executed by the enemy. Even though he is certain about his defeat, his keen sense of obligation and willingness to perform his duty keeps him sincere to the mission: fight or die. During the Meiji period, Kusunoki's devotion to the emperor resulted in raising his reputation, and until the end of the Pacific War, he occupied a prominent position in the pantheon of Japanese heroes.²⁹⁹

The horrific *gyokusai* rhetoric of “breaking jewel” was eventually adopted beyond the realm of the Japanese military. Officials wanted civilians to absorb the spirit of *gyokusai*. In war documentary art, this theme emerged with a specific painting made well after the war had turned against Japan. We can see it manifested in the 1945 painting of a mass civilian suicide that had occurred the previous year on Saipan, made by Fujita Tsuguji. This disturbing work is entitled *Compatriots on Saipan Island Remain Faithful to the End* (Saipantô dôhō shinsetsu wo mattôsu, 1945, figure 69). Before this Fujita issued this painting, we had only seen death-match compositions signalling the military's readiness for suicidal combat. The painting shows the last days of the Japanese civilians who populated Saipan after the Japanese occupation. In July 1944 when American troops invaded the island, as many as 10,000 Japanese civilians perished, with about 5000 of the dead having committed suicide on Marpi Point on the northern edge of the island. American soldiers who witnessed their suicide called the place “the banzai cliff” referring to the celebratory shout of *banzai* with the accompanying gesture of raised arms (long live the emperor) as the last word uttered by the victims.

²⁹⁸ Morris, 317.

²⁹⁹ Japan's warrior heroes of the past were a favorite theme depicted by many *nihonga* painters during the Pacific war. The heroes were presented as role models for their martial spirit and loyalty. For example, Kikuchi Keigetsu (1879-1955) portrayed Kusunoki Masashige in his *Welcoming the Imperial Carriage* (Geihôren, 1943). Kawabata Ryûshi depicted Minamoto Yoshitsune, another forlorn hero, in *Minamoto Yoshitsune (Genghis Khan)*, 1938.

The annihilation of the Japanese on the island on July 7, 1944 was reported in the Japanese news media of July 19, 1944 without detail. An article with the headline reading “*Saipan no waga butai zen’in sôzetsuna senshi*” (Our Saipan Troops’ Heroic Combat Death) mentions that the island’s civilian population cooperated with the troops, and that some even fought together to their deaths. As with other *gyokusai* pictures, the painter did not witness the mass suicide, nor did he have official photographs to guide his composition. This Saipan painting is an imaginary representation, but its content was guided by a narrative. When more about the event was revealed about one month later, Fujita along with other Japanese newspaper readers learned details relating to the horrific incidents of the last days on the island. In its August 19, 1944 edition, the *Asahi* newspaper featured an article written by its correspondent stationed in Stockholm, Watanabe (first name unspecified). With editorial notes in addition to excerpts, the article introduced a report by *TIME* magazine correspondent Robert Sherrod on the Japanese mass suicide in Saipan.³⁰⁰ The original *TIME* article, “The Nature of the Enemy,” was published in the August 7 issue of the magazine.³⁰¹ Art historian Tanaka Hisao seems to be the first one to suggest that the details described in the *Asahi* translation of the *TIME* article inspired Fujita’s painting.³⁰²

The Saipan painting shows a number of Japanese civilians, men, women and children, in the last moments of their lives, or already dead. The picture is painted in a morose, dark, and almost monochromatic sepia just like the painter’s other works on the *gyokusai* theme. The tempestuous atmosphere embraces the figures in the painting. Some victims described in the *TIME* article are discernible. Comparing the article’s text to the painting’s composition displays

³⁰⁰ “Ganjô, dainisshôki no mae jûyô fujoshi mo jiketsu” (Women and children following suit with their own suicide in front of the great Japanese flag on a cliff), *Asahi shinbun* August 19, 1944.

³⁰¹ Robert Sherrod, “The Nature of the Enemy,” *TIME* August 7, 1944.

a close but not identical parallel between the two. Sherrod's quotes include a description of "three women [who] sat on the rocks leisurely, deliberately combing their long black hair." Sherrod mentions a sniper who "was an exceptional marksman." He mentions people who "jump off the cliff." Sherrod refers to a pair consisting of a small boy and a soldier. He points out that many children and babies were put to death at the hands of their parents before they committed suicide themselves.

The significance of this *Asahi* article goes beyond the role it played as a source of inspiration to the artist. A close examination of the *Asahi* article in comparison with the original *TIME* report also indicates that the *Asahi* newspaper correspondent omitted certain details in order to amplify the propaganda effects of this mass suicide to Japanese readers. Even so, the *Asahi* correspondent warns Japanese readers to be aware of the American reporter's bias and possible alteration of the true events. The Japanese correspondent takes that advice for himself by leaving out details that could display the American attackers in a positive light. For example, the *Asahi* newspaper excerpts ignore the fact that American Marines interned half of the 20,000 civilians on the island, and instead the excerpts assert that these people all died an honorable death. According to the *TIME* report, the Japanese sniper Fujita depicted in his painting was shooting those among his own people who were showing hesitation to take their own lives. The sniper worked from the relative safety of a cave. When a Japanese woman tried to save some children from the sniper's bullets, he emerged from the cave to pursue them. He was eventually shot down by the American Marines. The *Asahi* newspaper correspondent closes his article on Saipan by emphasizing that death does not mean the end but the beginning for Japanese people.

³⁰² Tanaka Hisao, "Sensô to kaiga" (War and Painting) *Asahi bijutsu kan (têma-hen 1) sensô to kaiga* (Asahi Museum 1: War and Painting) (Tokyo: Asahi shinbunsha, 1996), 88-9.

He continues by arguing that these people “would dwell within their fellow countrymen’s souls and burst out as a new life one hundred million times stronger.”³⁰³

The *Asahi* article reflects the official stance at the time when the Saipan suicides occurred regarding the readiness for civilians to end their lives. This line of thinking had in fact already been advocated with the release of the slogan “*Uchiteshi yamamu*” by the military after the defeat on Attu Island. The phrase *Uchiteshi yamamu* was taken from a martial song included in the *Kojiki* (Record of Ancient Matters) meaning, “we’ll never cease to fight till our enemies cease to be.” This phrase signifies the will to keep fighting to the end of one’s own life.³⁰⁴ Clearly, the military propaganda machine intended to prepare the Japanese people to brace themselves for the possibility that the war could well reach the point of no return. The promotional campaign was sweeping. In early 1943 the army distributed 50,000 copies of a poster by Miyamoto Saburô bearing the slogan “*Uchiteshi yamamu*” (figure 70) nationwide and abroad to Manchuria, China, and the Southern Pacific to commemorate Army Day on March 10. All Japanese magazines were also asked to put the slogan on the covers of their March issues.³⁰⁵

The official policy of mass death was further articulated on July 7, 1944 when the Information Bureau released a sweeping new set of media guidelines. It was entitled, “Summary of Essential Points on News and Propaganda to Cope with the Current State of War” (*Senkyoku no genkyô ni sokuô suru hôdô senden yôryô*). The document expounded the doctrine of *ichioku gyokusai* (one hundred million deaths), or the breaking of a hundred million jewels. It commanded the people to “fight to the end and be ready to die if necessary, in order to retain the

³⁰³ “Ganjô, dainisshôki no mae jûyô fujoshi mo jiketsu.”

³⁰⁴ Yamanaka Atsushi, *Shinbun wa sensô wo bika seyo* (Newspaper Ought to Beautify the War) (Tokyo: Shôgakkan, 2001), 651-2.

³⁰⁵ Taya-Cooks, 67.

fundamental characteristics of the state and the national defense.”³⁰⁶ The document again invoked the need for supreme sacrifice for the sake of the emperor.

³⁰⁶ Iritani Toshio, *Group Psychology of the Japanese in Wartime* (London; New York: Kegan Paul International, 1991), 58.

CONCLUSION

We are now ready to rewrite the museum's curatorial description of *sensô sakusen kirokuga* (war campaign documentary painting). Before proceeding, I will summarize my general findings, and then I will identify the specific additions and clarifications in the new description. The historical significance of war documentary painting is manifold. This study has concentrated on three interconnected aspects: *yôga*'s impact, political reasons for *yôga*'s surprising selection, and war documentary painting's massive ideological capacity. I will now summarize those three findings.

First, in terms of challenging earlier notions of Japan's recent art history, these official war paintings represent an important consequence of the development of *yôga*, rather than representing a deviation from it. *Yôga* war painters were unsuccessful in producing history painting (*rekishiga*) or what Japanese artists and critics had termed "concept painting" (*kôsôga*). They had difficulty creating those pictures that visualize higher abstract ideas through realistic representations of figures and objects from the physical world. Although some *yôga* war painters were students of European art, many were unable to achieve similarly complex history paintings, despite their aspirations. A minor exception is Miyamoto Saburô who created a memorable image of Japan's rising power over the West in his portrayal of General Yamashita and British General Percival after the fall of Singapore. However, even this painting must be seen as something other than a sign of Japanese art fully mastering the Western-style history painting genre. The composition is not original to the artist, due to his heavy reliance on a famous photograph of the surrender meeting.

The inability to create history painting when it was required as war documentary painting lies in the unique development of *yôga* in modern Japan. There, the environment was drastically

different from the West where Western-style painting had originated as the prototype of *yōga*. Western-style painting was nurtured for centuries before it was transplanted to Japan. Japan's academic standard for painting was molded by the impressionistic style established by Kuroda Seiki in the late Meiji. Without mastery of realism, against which the Impressionist movement emerged in Europe, many Japanese artists, who would become official war painters, began their artistic training with Kuroda's academic style. While they were informed about most current European avant-garde movements, they had no other effective counter-models that they could use with ease and confidence. Considering this background, it seems to me that war painters did their best as far as their imaginations allowed. For example, most of the resulting work can be best described as genre scenes: simple assemblages of figures and objects without any underlying conceptual meaning.

However, it should also be noted that the simplicity of genre painting was satisfactory for the purpose of propaganda required by military officials, because images of the war had to be instantly readable and understood by ordinary audiences. In this respect, war documentary painting is in essence an art for the masses. By the time of the war, people who enjoyed looking at *yōga* and supported the movement were no longer restricted to a group of intellectuals with international interests, but included an ever-increasing number of ordinary people as well.

Many factors made the availability of art more inclusive in modern Japan. They are peculiar to Japan's modernization, and go beyond the phenomenon of the emergence of the middle class. Late in the Meiji period, the government launched the state-sponsored art salon system, Bunten. During the war, the military utilized this exhibition system as part of its broader effort to disseminate state propaganda to the people with the effect of blurring the boundary between entertainment and indoctrination. Also during the Meiji period, civilian leaders

introduced monumental panorama paintings of historical scenes as a new form of mass entertainment with educational potential. Panorama's close association with the first Sino-Japanese War established the potential for a large format picture in *yōga* realism to function as war propaganda. Painters also realized that the people were becoming important art enthusiasts in the prewar years through their experience with new styles that offered greater access for audiences. These include both the mural painting and *kaijō geijutsu* (exhibition-hall art) movements in the 1930s. Moreover, a brief surge of interest among Japanese artists in the proletarian art movement of the 1920s taught the art community and the authorities alike that art could be an effective communication medium for mobilizing the public.

Second, the political significance of war documentary painting concerns the pragmatism of state authorities in modern Japan, and points to a pattern of forming art policy to meet official needs. As they weighed the benefits of adopting elements of Western civilization for national purposes, Japanese officials first encouraged the learning of realistic representation in Western-style painting. Then in their pursuit of shaping Japan's national identity, they withdrew their enthusiasm and tended to see *yōga* as a foreign style of art. They believed *yōga* was inherently opposed to the traditional Japanese aesthetics as carried in the painting of *nihonga*, and all the traditional values it would embody. Meanwhile, the *yōga* community had continued to develop in its own direction. The initial desire *yōga* artists had to establish their branch of art as a legitimate form of Japanese expression was difficult to fulfill, because of *yōga*'s close association with the West, which nationalist policy makers had considered anti-Japanese. Surviving the vicissitudes of state policy, finally *yōga* attained a troubled success when the state commissioned *yōga* painters to record Japan's military strengths as the country pursued its course of aggression in Asia. For cultural reasons, *Yōga* was selected by the more practical military

regime for its sterile ability to represent photographic realism. The military preferred realism over the aspects of stylistic alternatives such as *nihonga*. This choice was based on a pragmatic view of the role of art as a means for advancing national goals. Realism in *yôga*, which *nihonga* could not adequately provide, was seen as indispensable for the documentary purpose of war painting.

The third historical significance of war documentary painting is ideological, because it imparts state propaganda. War documentary painting carries an embedded message that envisioned the Japanese as a big family under the patriarchal emperor or *kokutai* (national polity), based on belief in Japan's imperial mythology. The imagery in war documentary painting mirrors Japanese people's personal and unarticulated adoration for the emperor, the empire, and its trappings. Japan's wartime imperial ideology, which nationalists fervently promoted, was ubiquitous and inscribed in the mind of each Japanese person. This imperial ideology defined the people as the children of the emperor, who was the divine manifestation of the nation. It promoted individual sacrifice for the emperor and celebrated sacrificial death. Suffering was equated with the beauty of selfless devotion. Under this ideology, the state of selflessness represented a high spirituality, and death became the supreme form of heroism.

Thus, it is a mistake to interpret the countless common-looking soldiers depicted in the war paintings as insignificant, or to suppose that the painters failed to make compelling images for the wartime Japanese audiences. I maintain that the war painters could not create history painting as their admired Western predecessors had done. However, when they painted genre scenes of war with anonymous soldiers, the pictures captured the reality in which the soldiers and the painters alike lived, that is, a world defined by the imperial ideology. The imagery of selfless soldiers was quite different from the conventional model of the individualistic hero seen

in Western art, but it nonetheless constituted heroism in the context of wartime Japan. The war propaganda machine gave the insignificant Japanese person a chance to become sublime through the act of self-sacrifice. In this way, the soldiers in the true-to-life representations of the misery and routine of war seen through the perspective of monumental canvases were truly heroic. Moreover, these images functioned as state propaganda in support of the war by reiterating to the viewers their own duty to accept privation on behalf of the nation.

I must now clarify the definition of Japanese war documentary painting based on this study. In doing so, I will challenge the generally adopted descriptions exemplified by the one from the Tokyo Museum of Modern Art or the Japan Art Yearbooks. I have quoted extensively from both in this study. Those existing descriptions are outdated and in part mistaken, and more importantly, were written partly by people who have yet to scrutinize the subject objectively. In clarifying the definition of war documentary painting, I argue that we need to pay attention to the following seven points, on which I will elaborate starting in the next paragraph, and which this study has argued in detail. First, the designation for war campaign documentary painting must be more specific. Second, some documentary painters were the very best Japan had to offer, not just *chûken* (mainstay). Third, the deployment of *yôga* was an effective if surprising choice, given its western origins. Fourth, audiences were exhilarated by the opportunity to see works inspected by the emperor. Fifth, the works carried a propaganda message urging self-effacement and obeisance to the emperor. Sixth, the intertwined military presentation and newspaper support for these works were critical for mass propaganda. The seventh and final addition is that America's confiscation was a significant event in the history of this body of work.

I will now elaborate on these seven critical changes to the curatorial definition before presenting it. First, we must be mindful of the term "*kiroku*" or documentary in the official

designation “*sensô sakusen kirokuga*” (war campaign documentary painting). The Japanese term *sensô sakusen kirokuga* is misleading since it implies that the paintings were expected to function like the imagery captured by the mechanical medium of photography. On the contrary, the military sponsors clearly understood that these images were a form of artistic expression. That is why the military patrons separated the commissions for painting from journalistic photography, and offered the work for imperial inspection. I argue that the work was also intended to commemorate (*kinen*) the war. The first group of official war paintings was indeed termed *Shina jihen kinenga* (China Incident commemorative painting) by its military sponsor, thus conveying the true purpose of the work.

Second, the term *chûken* (the mainstay of the art community) used in the description given by the Tokyo National Museum of Modern Art to characterize the commissioned painters is not accurate. War documentary painters were actually the most talented of their day at creating paintings in a realistic manner, a challenge that most Japanese artists could not meet.

Third, *yôga*'s selection was surprising but inevitable. As this study has detailed, modern Japanese authorities had supported *nihonga* as a method that was ideal for representing the nation in artistic expression. This aesthetic consideration kept *yôga* at bay for a time. As the import and adoption of technology progressed, masses of people had greater and greater access to visual information in color and realistic detail. When it came to presenting combat-oriented content in painting, *nihonga* could not fulfill the new expectations. By then, the usefulness of *yôga* was self-evident to military authorities, who selected it as the primary method for war campaign documentary painting.

Fourth, imperial inspections were exhilarating to Japanese audiences, who had been well conditioned to love and respect the emperor, to whom they were obligated in a deep Confucian

sense of filial piety. The integration of imperial inspection was a critical propaganda strategy to consecrate war documentary paintings.

Fifth, many representative paintings of troops urged a subtle but profound self-effacement of the individual in deference to the imperial hierarchy. This highlights the most important propaganda message contained in these works. My study proved that these war paintings could achieve this symbolic meaning without specific visual reference to the emperor himself. In this sense, these paintings differ significantly from the western model of history painting, which expresses meaning through objects to which the concepts are attributed. From a Western perspective, the war documentary work would be seen as a simple genre painting. Nonetheless, it clearly conveys a message signaling the primacy of the emperor, and carrying powerful triggers of empathy toward pictured troops, who are themselves sacrificing their individuality for the emperor.

Sixth, how the work was shown to the public should continue to be included, since the public display of the work completed the work's function as a form of mass propaganda. As the current curatorial description indicates, we must mention the war art exhibitions and the involvement of the *Asahi* newspaper media sponsor.

Seventh, America's confiscation was a critical event setting the tone for Japan's postwar treatment of this body of work. The Occupation's dismissal of the work as mere propaganda without artistic merit established a precedent for setting it aside. Moreover, the works were unavailable for Japanese scholars and critics to examine and discuss directly, further discouraging postwar critical discussion.

Reflecting these alterations, I now propose to rewrite the description of war documentary painting as follows:

Sensô sakusen kirokuga (war campaign documentary painting) was made during the war years between 1937 and 1945. Japanese painters were commissioned by the Army Press Division of the Imperial Headquarters, the Press Division of the Army Ministry, the army's Central China Division, and the Military Supply Division of the Navy. The objective was to create painting that would document and commemorate the ongoing second Sino-Japanese and Pacific Wars, and to foster a fighting spirit in the Japanese people. This state war art is distinguished from other war pictures (*sensôga*), and it carried elements of official mass propaganda. To achieve clarity as a public art, a realistic method of representation was required, and because of *yôga*'s (Western-style oil) ability to show precise detail and spatial depth, the military gave *yôga* painters an unprecedented number of state commissions. Only a small number went to the *nihonga* (traditional watercolor) circle. Commissioned were accomplished artists, including the most talented. The military designated these painters as *jûngûgaka* (military-service painters) or *hôdôhan'in* (war correspondents), and dispatched them to the front in China, Southeast Asia, and the South Pacific to observe the war and paint. After first being inspected by the emperor in his palace, the paintings of both battle and non-battle scenes were exhibited to the public in events (*evento*). The exhibits were cosponsored by the military and the *Asahi* newspaper, and circulated in major cities in the country. Many paintings depicting imperial troops visualized an ideology that emphasized the supreme importance of the emperor, and the superiority of Japanese spiritualism. In the immediate postwar period, the U.S. Occupation Army collected many of these paintings as military propaganda, and took them to the United States. The collected works were returned to Japan in 1970, and have since been housed in the Tokyo National Museum of Modern Art on indefinite loan.

With this fresh understanding of the war documentary work, it is clear that the challenges *yôga* documentary painters faced with the onset of war were enormous. This opportunity could have signified a new beginning for *yôga* artists, but Japan's defeat shifted national priorities abruptly away from that path. However, once the war was over, war painting was condemned as having been a terrible mistake mainly for what was then denounced as a political collaboration between artists and the military regime. Artists and critics have eschewed the issue of the art of the war years. Japanese critic Katô Shûichi laments the Japanese people's refusal to take a

serious look back at the war in the postwar era. He declares, “It is impossible to decide anything important about the future without defining clearly the meaning of the past.”³⁰⁷ Indeed, it seems to me that *yôga*’s development became suspended. Historical painting never reemerged as a contemporary pursuit of the *yôga* community, and even genre painting in a realistic manner vanished. Instead, younger artists have chosen to look beyond national borders for their subject matter and inspiration, exploring international artistic styles such as abstract art and multimedia art. It appears that *yôga* might have ceased to evolve with end the war.

³⁰⁷ Katô, 255.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Illustrations

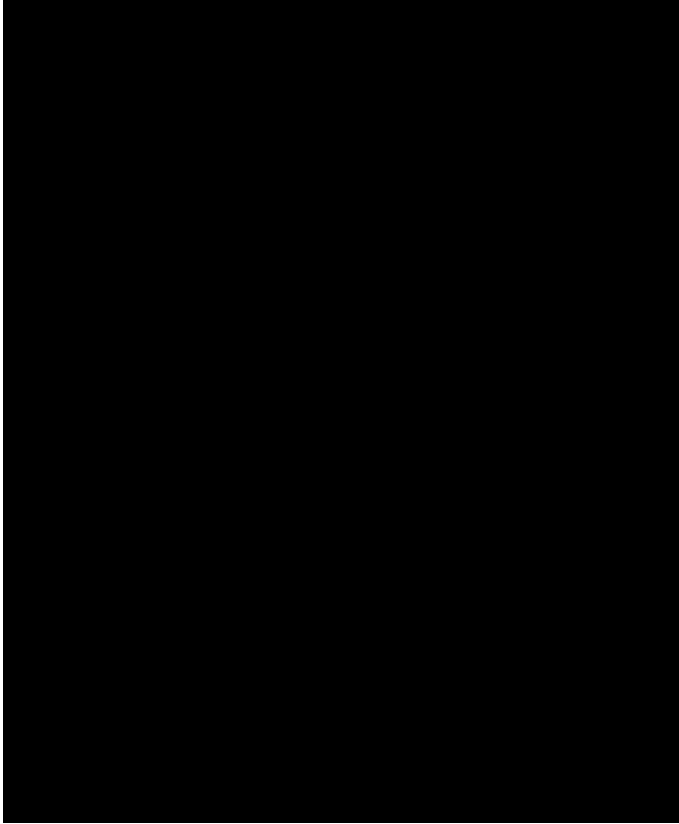


Figure 1. Werner Peiner, *German Soil*, oil on canvas, 1930s.

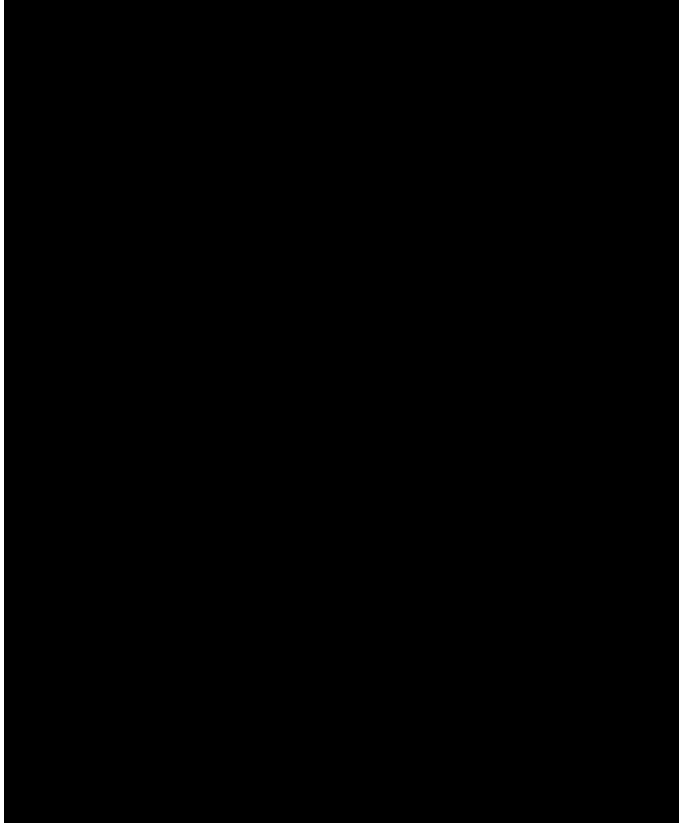


Figure 2. Adolf Wissel, *Farm Family from Kahlenberg*, oil on canvas, 1939.



Figure 3. Donald L. Dickson, *Naval Gunfire*, pencil on paper, 1942-44. U.S. Navy Combat Art Collection.

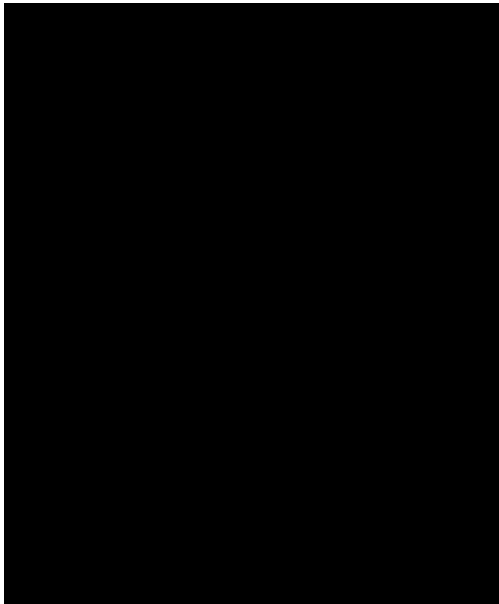
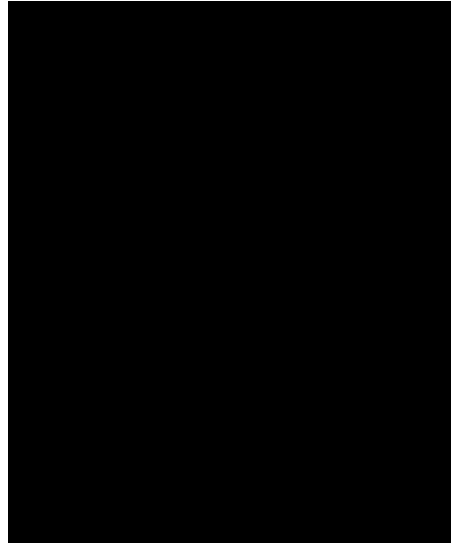
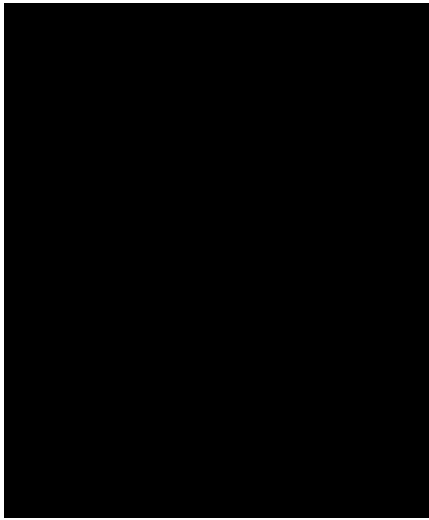


Figure 4. Arai Shôri, *Maintenance Work aboard Aircraft Carrier (#1-3)* (Kôkû bokanjô ni okeru seibi sagyô), color on paper, 1943. National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Indefinite loan).

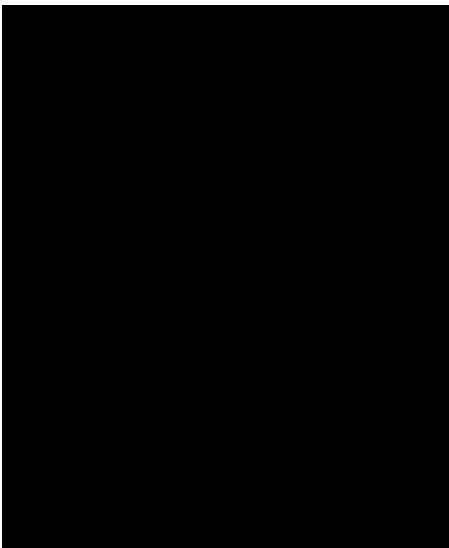
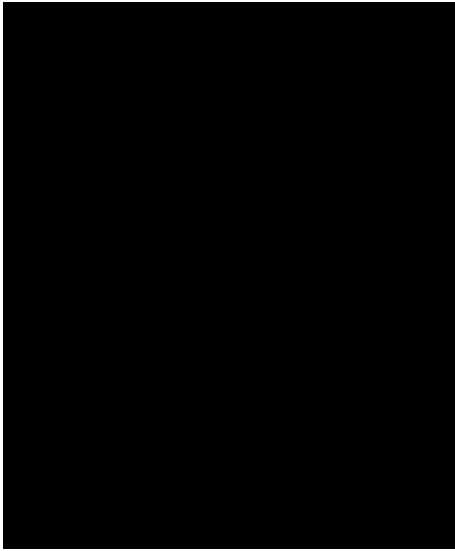


Figure 5. Mitchell Jamieson, *Escort Carriers* (#1-3), pastel on paper (?), WWII. U.S. Navy Combat Art Collection.

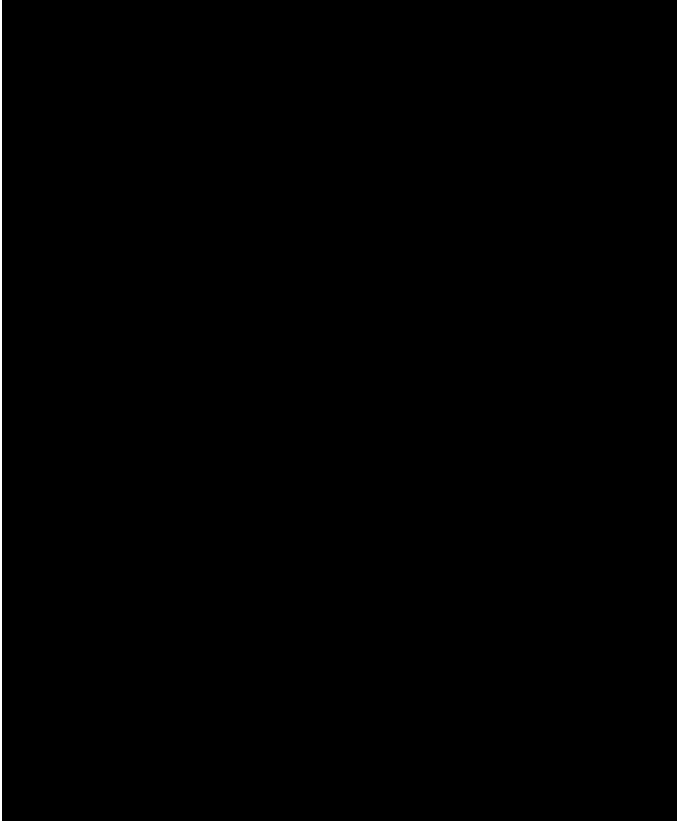


Figure 6. Donald L. Dickson, *Stretcher Party*, watercolor on paper (?), WWII. U.S. Navy Combat Art Collection.

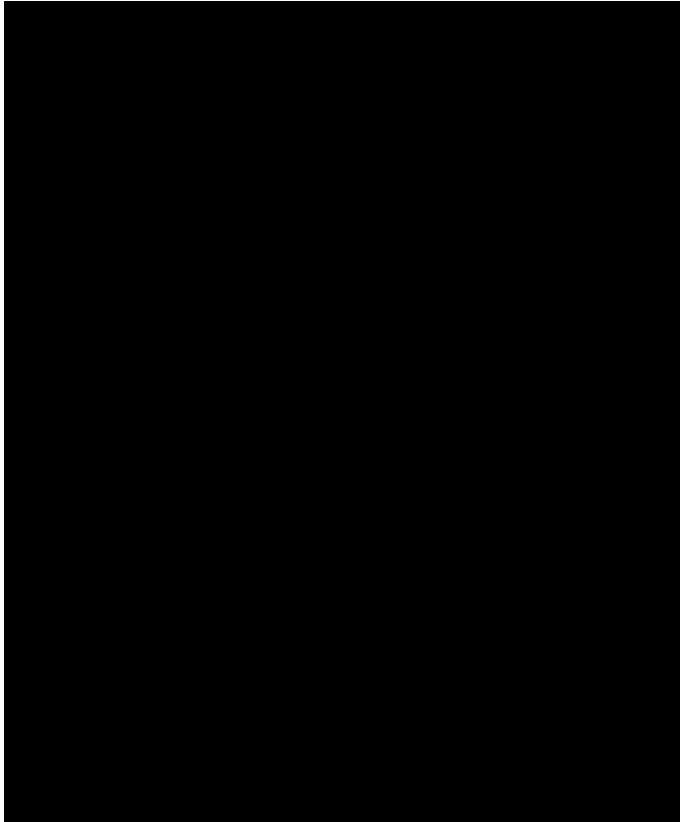


Figure 7. Antonio Fontanesi, *Shinobazu Pond* (Shinobazu no ike), oil on canvas, 1876-78. Tokyo National Museum.

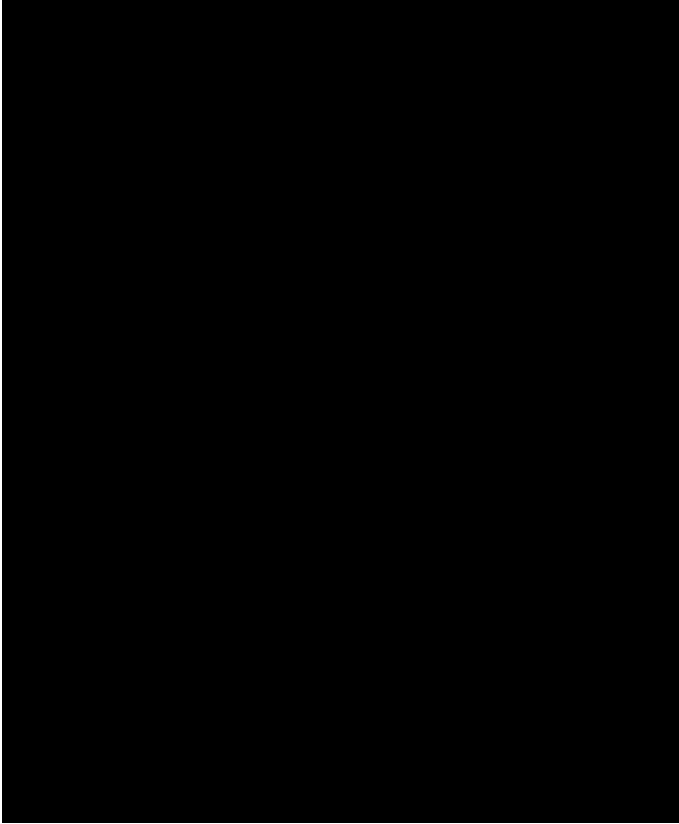


Figure 8. Harada Naojirô, *Kannon Riding on a Dragon* (Kiryû kannon zu), oil on canvas, 1890. Gokokuji, Tokyo.

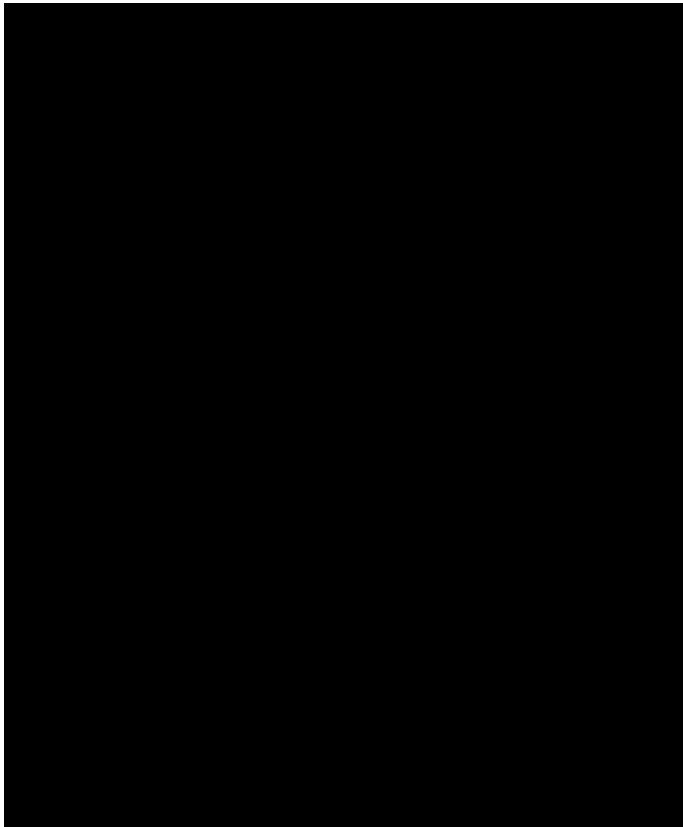


Figure 9. Honda Kinkichirô, *Winged Heavenly Maiden* (Hagoromo tennyo), oil on canvas, 1890. Hyôgo Prefectural Museum of Art

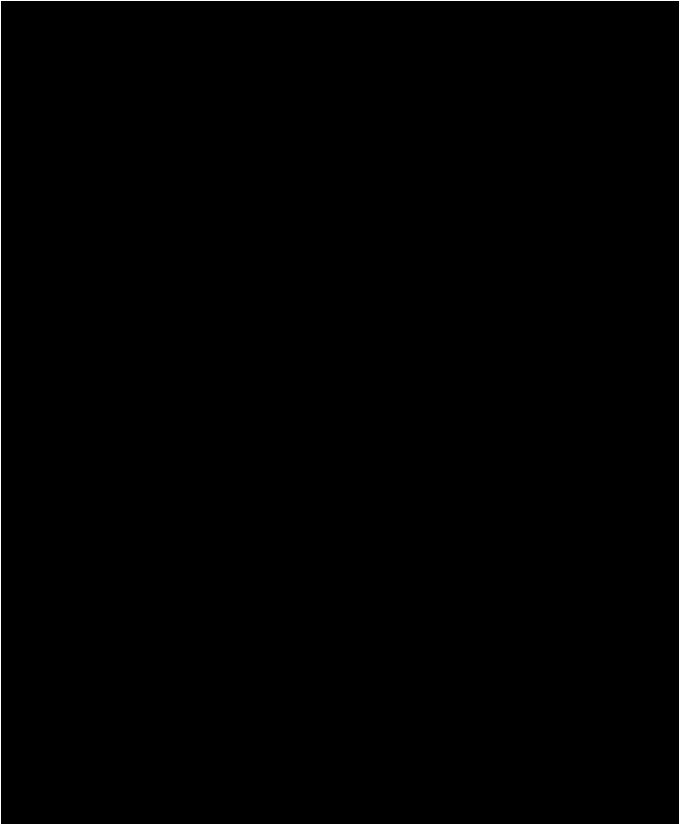


Figure 10. *The Burning of the Sanjō Palace* from *The Tale of the Heiji Scroll* (Heiji monogatari emaki), ink and color on paper, the late 13th century. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

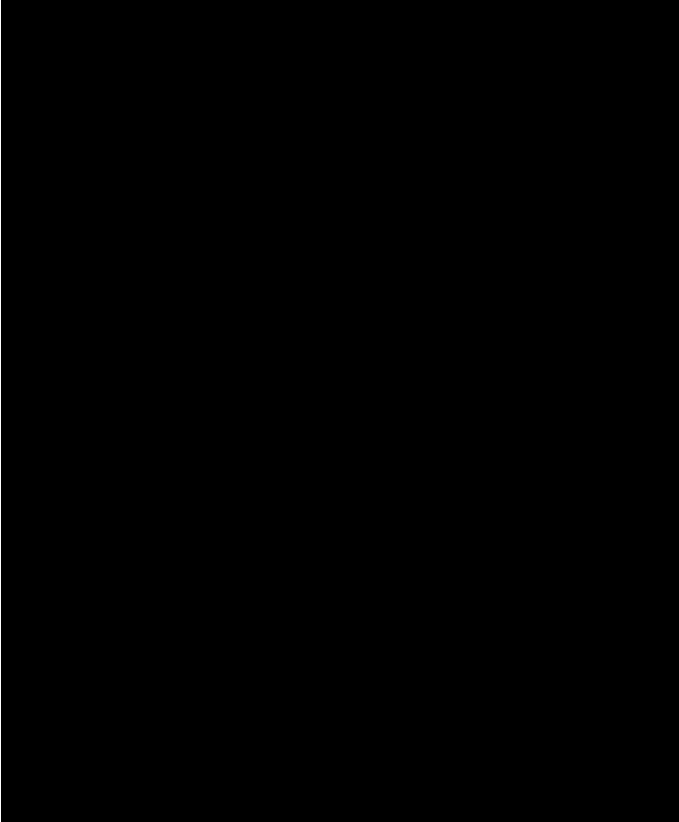


Figure 11. Raphael Collin, *Floréal*, oil on canvas, 1886. Museum of Fine Arts, Palais Saint-Vaast, Arras.

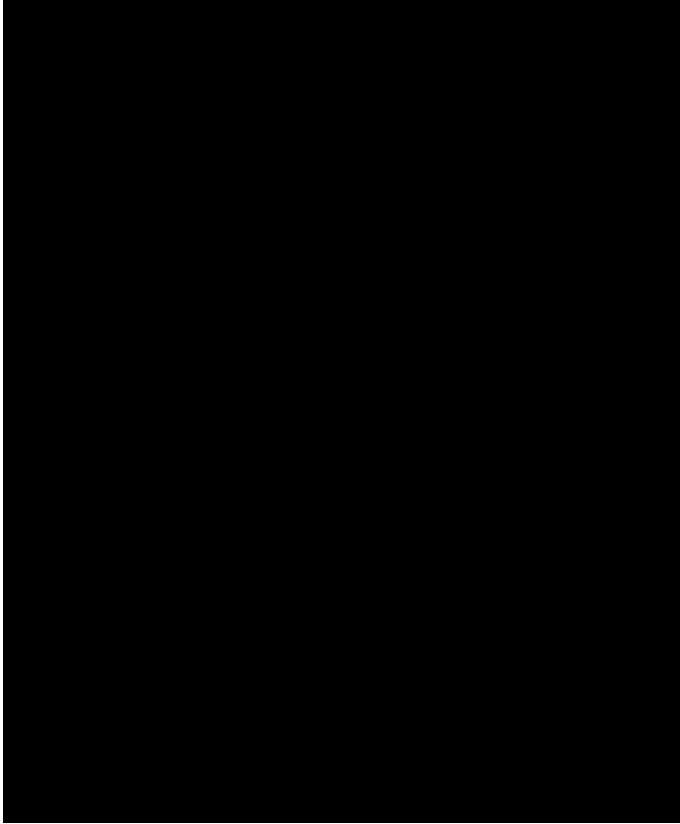


Figure 12. Kuroda Seiki, *By the Lake (Kohan)*, oil on canvas, 1897. National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo.

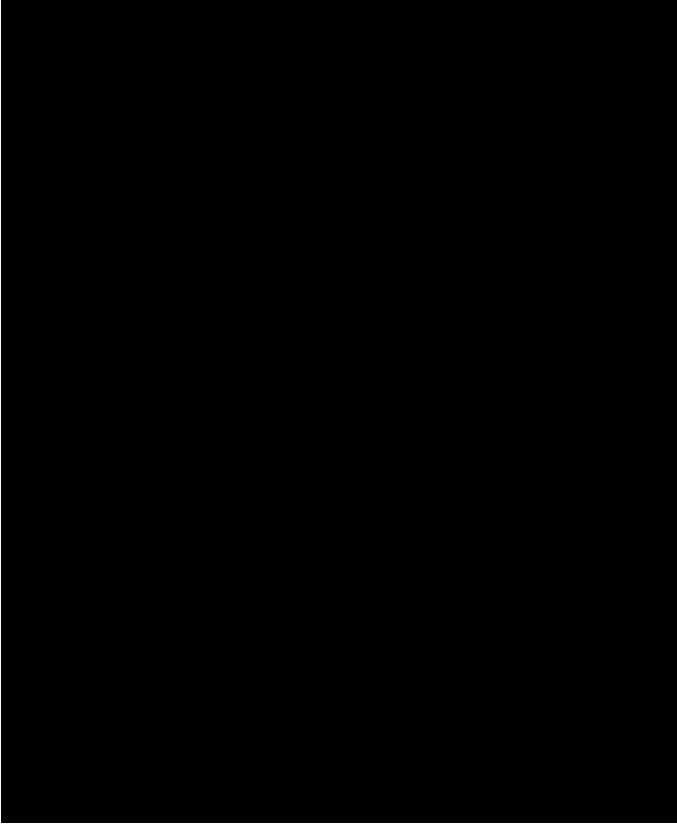


Figure 13. Kuroda Seiki, *Telling an Ancient Romance* (Mukashi gatari), oil on canvas, 1896. Original destroyed.

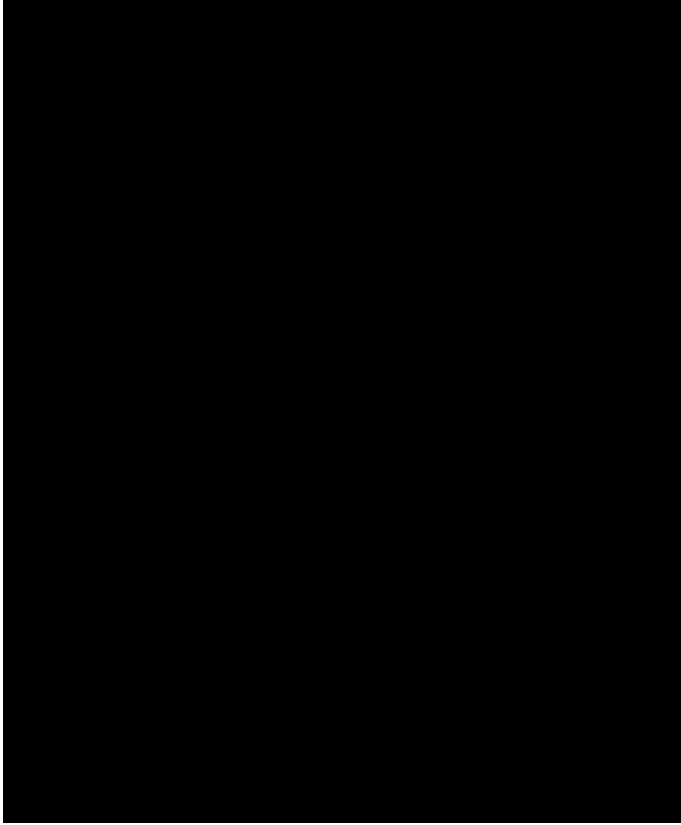


Figure 14. Kuroda Seiki, *Wisdom, Impression, Sentiment* (Chi, kan, jô), oil on canvas, 1899. National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo.

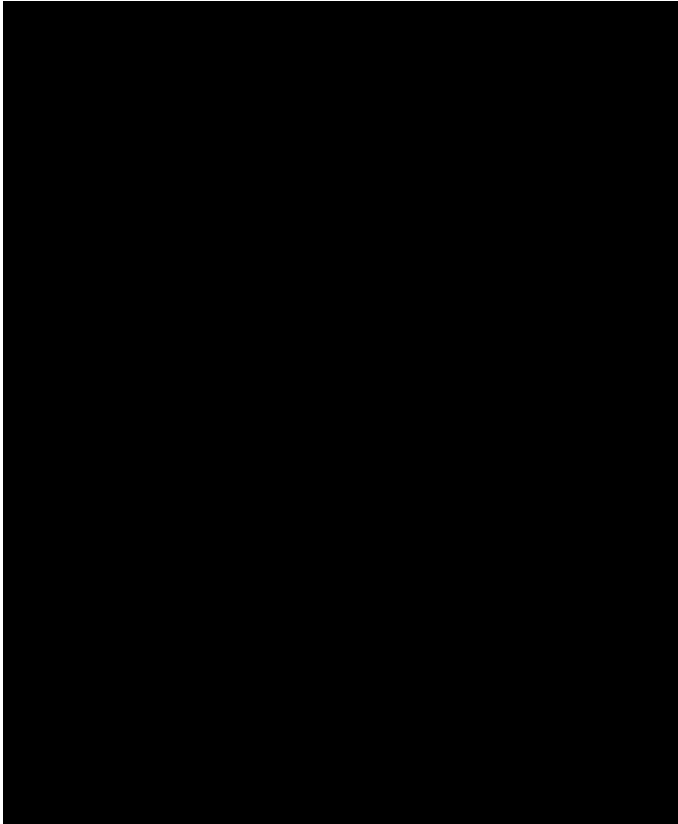


Figure 15. Izawa Masatoshi, *A solder going to the front* (Shusseï), 1939, oil on canvas, shown at the First Holy War Art Exhibition in 1939.

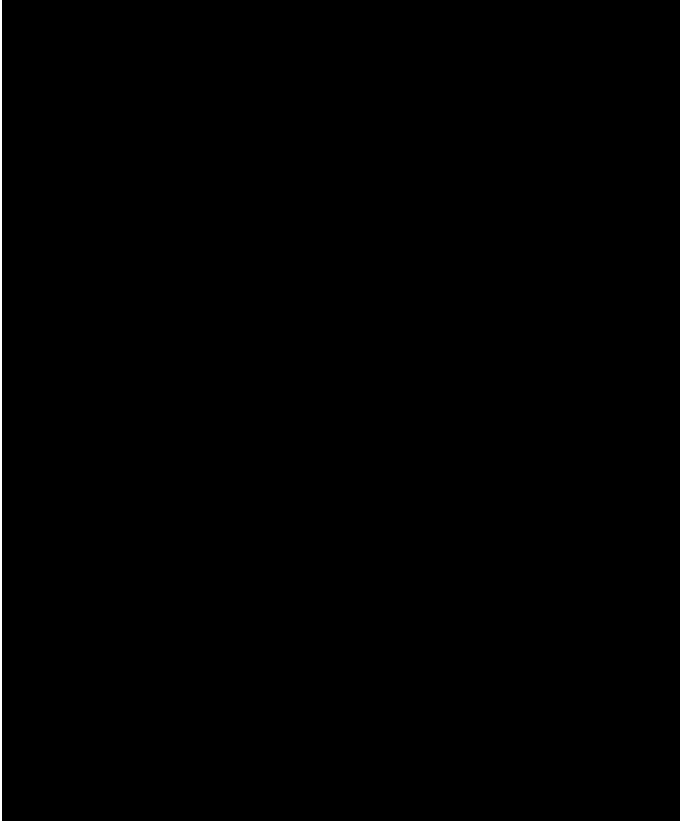


Figure 16. Tôjô Shôtarô, *Admiral Tôgô and His Officers on the Bridge of Battleship Mikasa* (Mikasa kankyô no Tôgô taishô ika), oil on canvas, 1905. Mikasa Preservation Society.

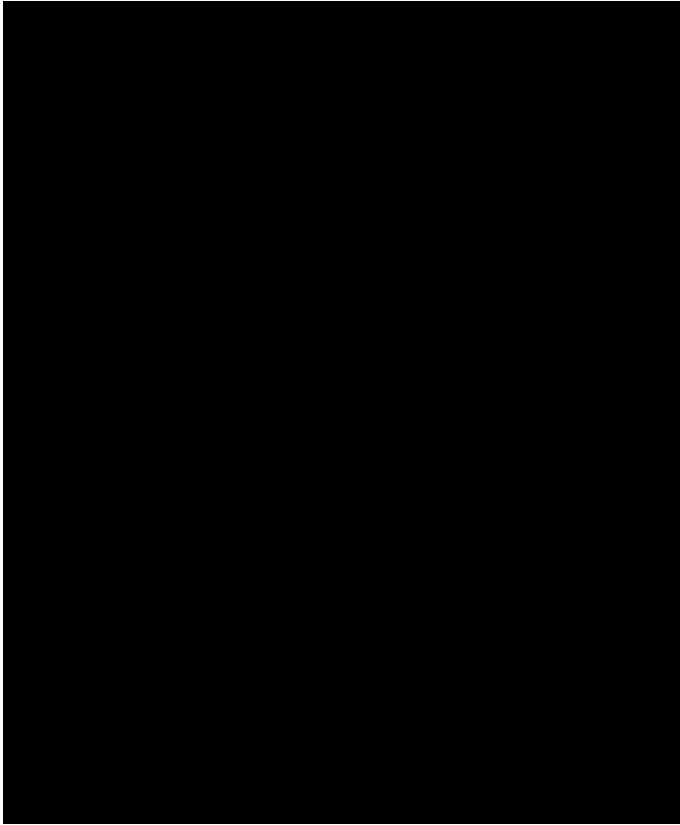


Figure 17. *Illustrated History of the Mongol Invasions* (Môko shûrai ekotoba), ink and color on paper, late 13th century. Museum of the Imperial Collections, Sannomaru Shôzôkan, Tokyo.

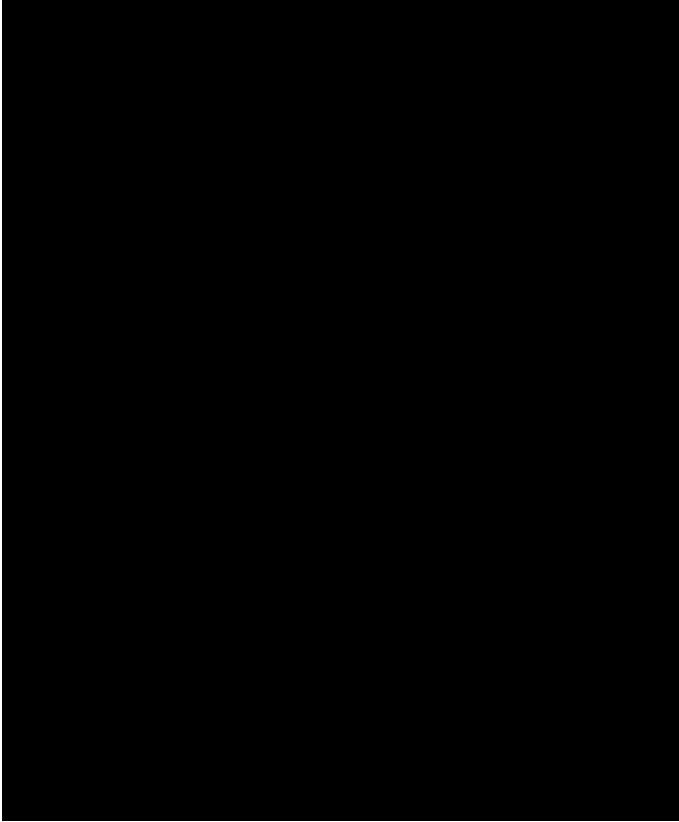


Figure 18. Kobayashi Kiyochika, *Second Army attacks Port Arthur* (Dainigun Ryojun-kô kôgeki no zu), woodblock, 1894. Collection Ruth Leserman, Beverly Hills, California

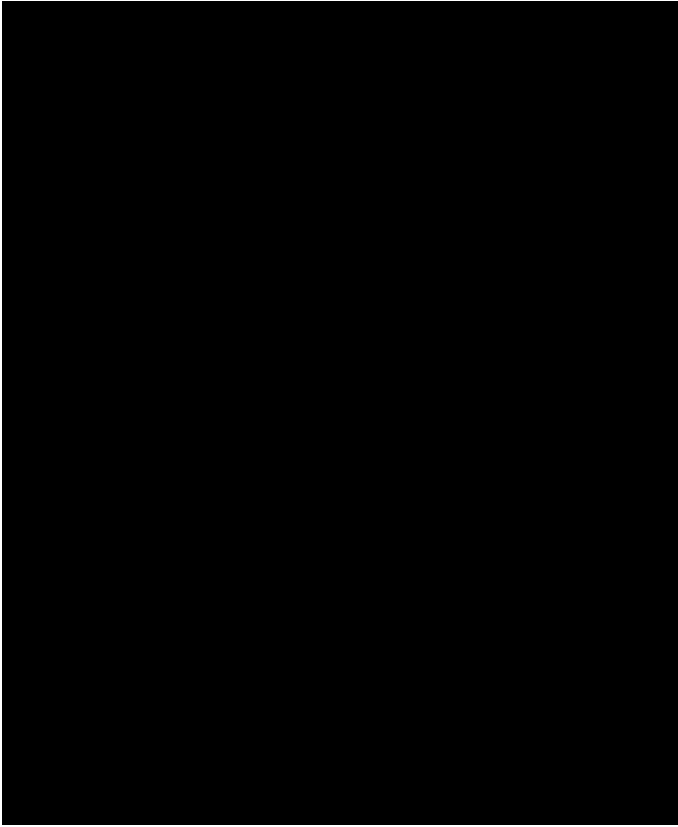


Figure 19. Asai Chû, *Navy Officer Higuchi Helping a Child* (Higuchi taii kodomo wo tasukuru), oil on canvas, 1895. National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo.

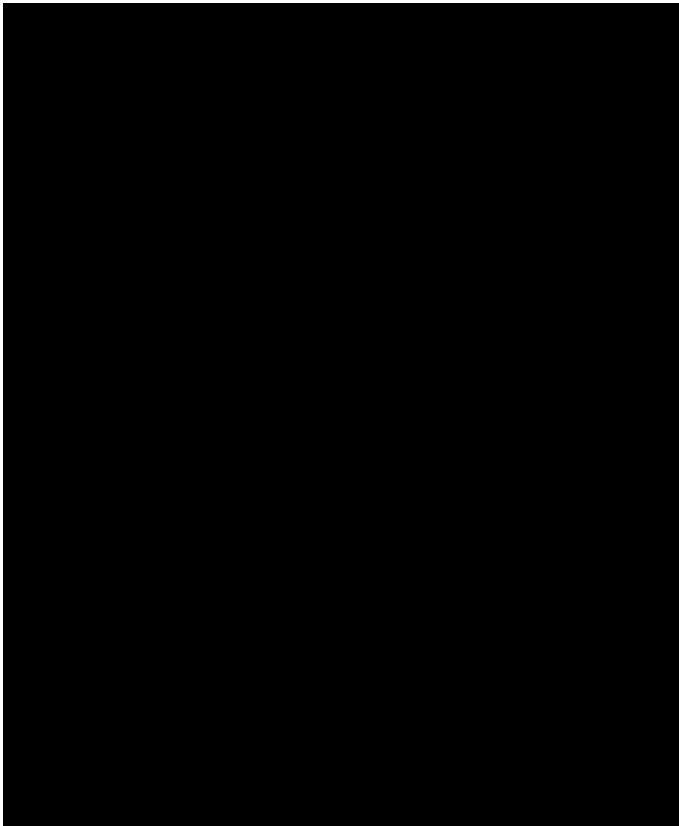


Figure 20. Asai Chû, *Search in the Aftermath of War* (Sengo no sôzaku), oil on canvas, 1895. Tokyo National Museum.

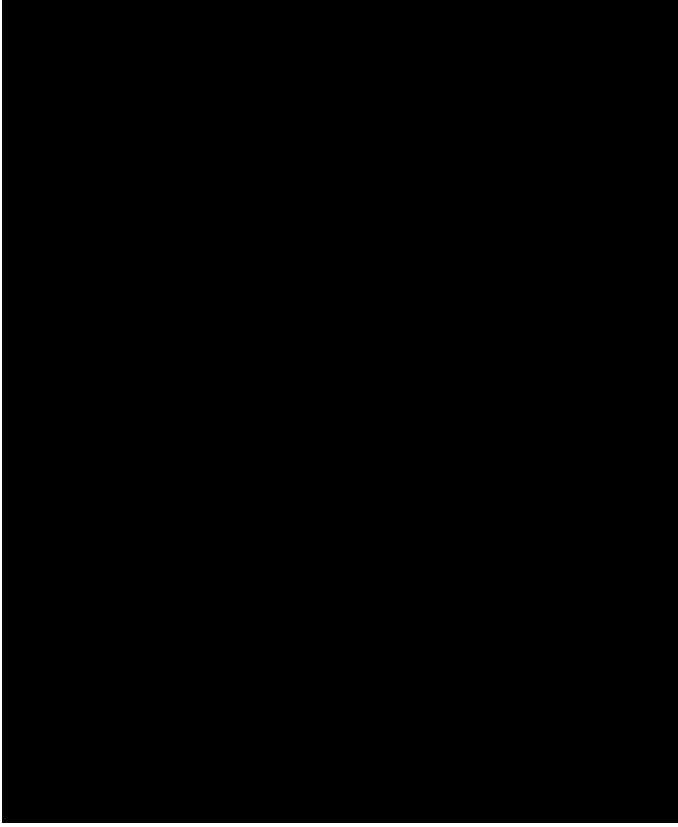


Figure 21. Mitsutani Kunishirô, *Death of Officer Hayashi* (Hayashi taii sensi no zu, figure), oil on canvas, 1897. Museum of the Imperial Collections, Sannomaru Shôzôkan, Tokyo.

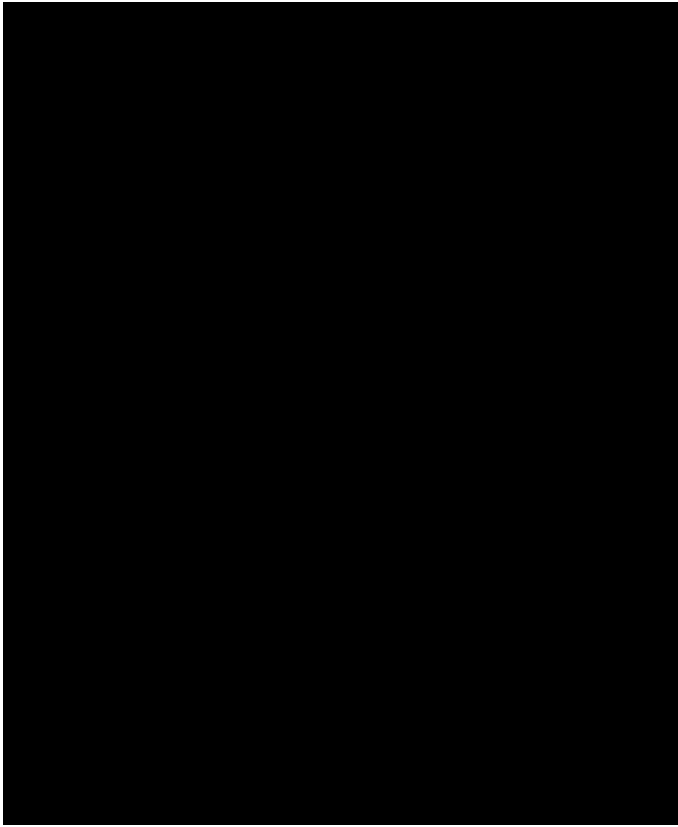


Figure 22. Matsui Noboru, *Mementoes (Katami)*, oil on canvas, 1895. Museum of the Imperial Collections, Sannomaru Shôzôkan, Tokyo.

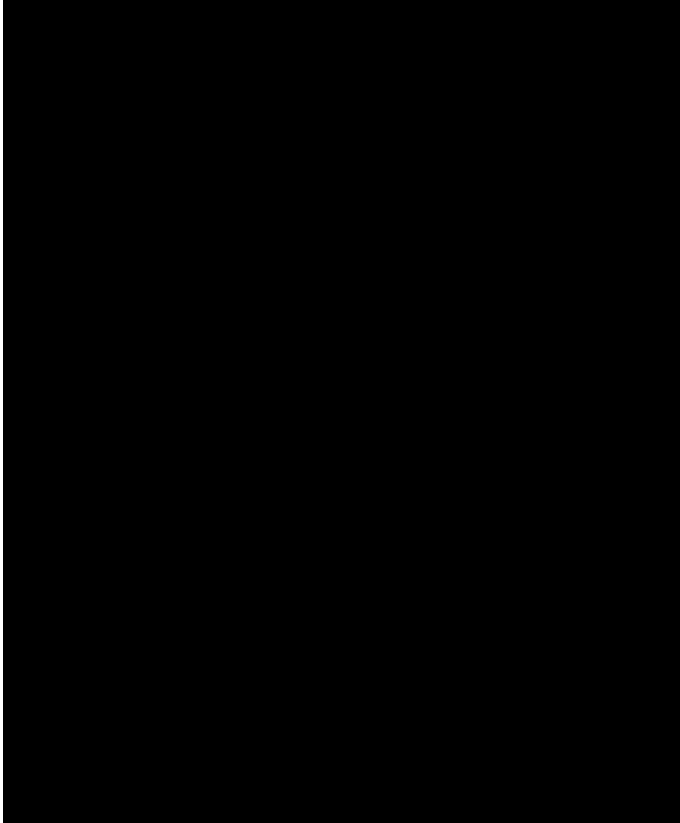


Figure 23. An printed image of the exterior of the Nihon Panoramakan in Asakusa.

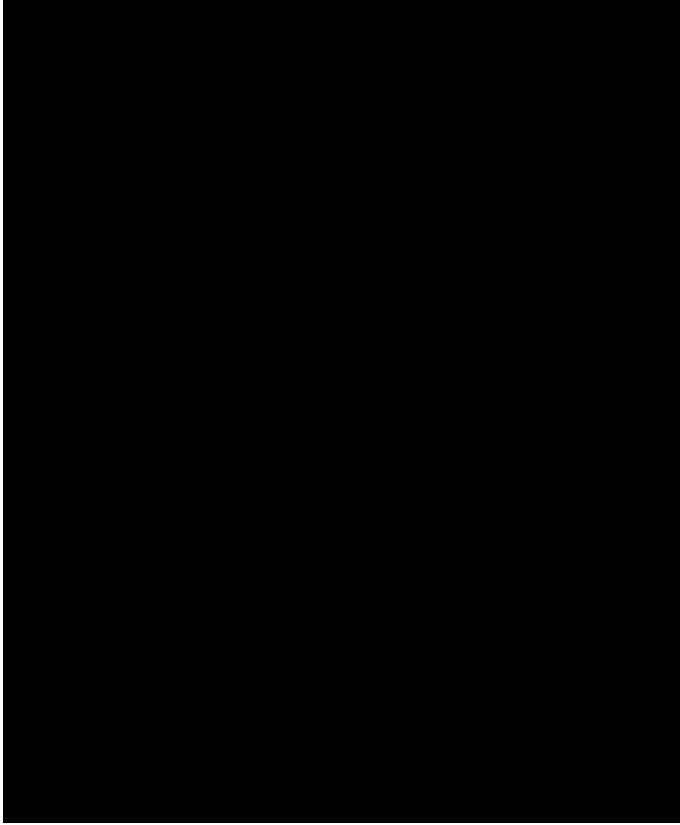


Figure 24. A leaflet for a Civil War panorama at the Nihon Panoramakan in Asakusa.

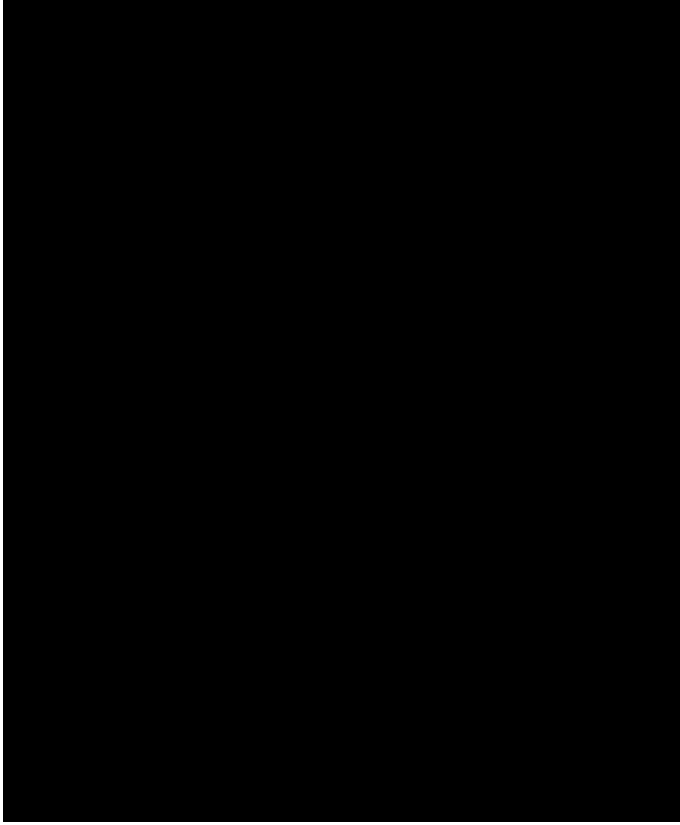


Figure 25. Koyama Shôtarô, part of *The Japanese Army's Attack on Pyongyang in the Sino-Japanese War* (Nisshin Sensô Heijô kôgeki no zu), panorama painting, 1896.

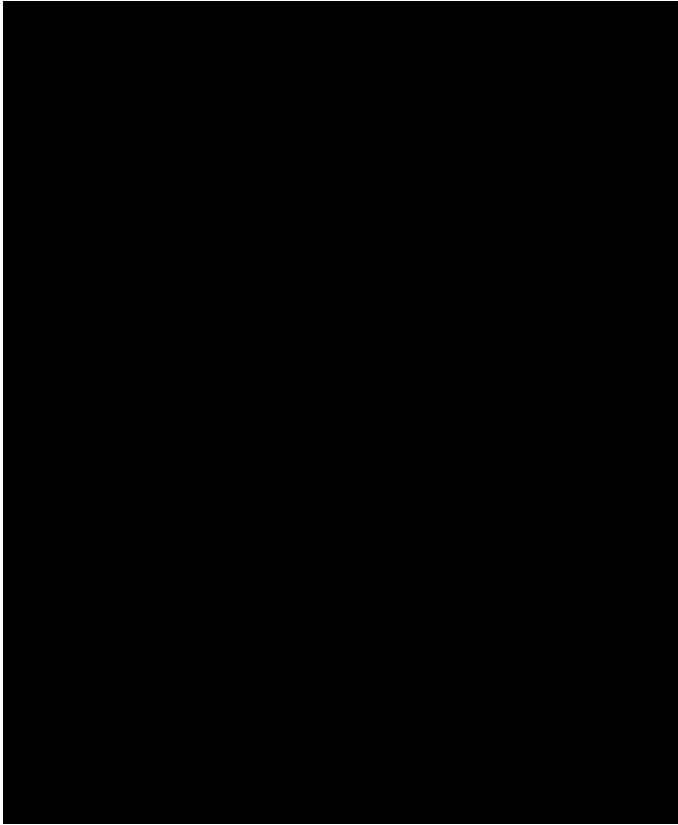


Figure 26. Kawabata Ryûshi, *Those who Control the Oceans* (*Kaiyô wo seisuru mono*), color on silk, 1936. Ryûshi Memorial Museum, Tokyo.

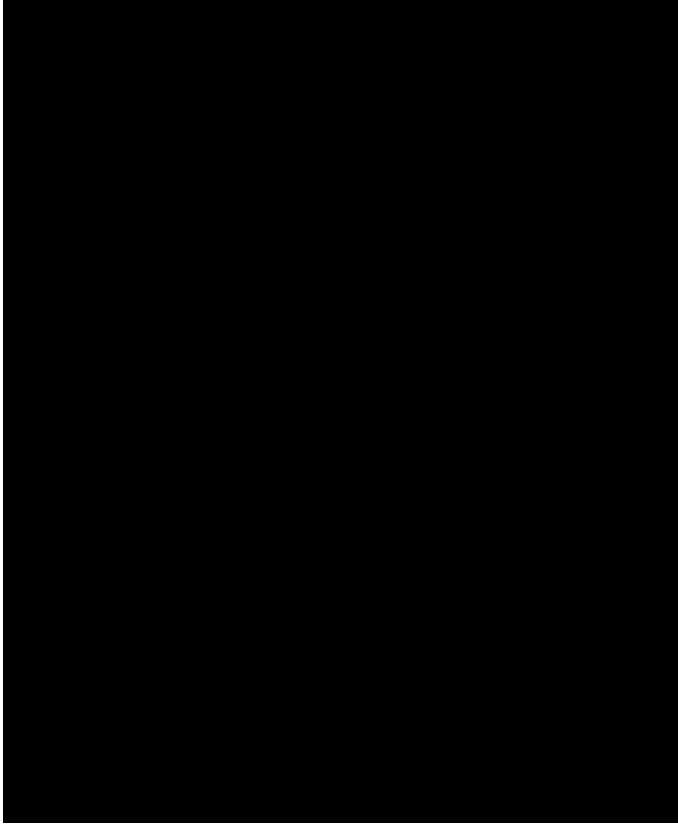


Figure 27. Fujita Tsuguji, *The Coming of Westerners to Japan* (Ôjin nihon e torai no zu), mural painting, 1929. Maison de Japon, Paris.

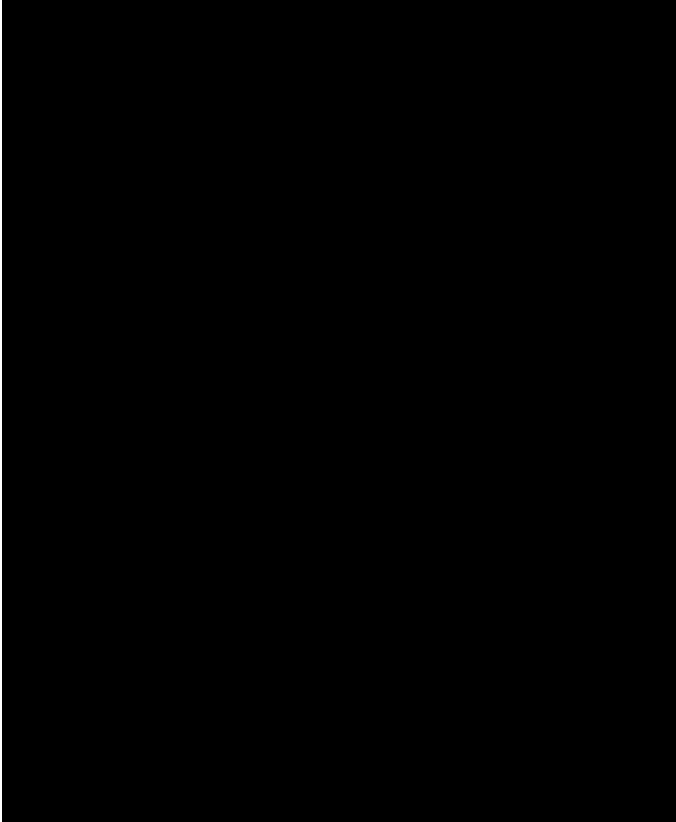


Figure 28. Fujita Tsuguji, *Horses* (Uma no zu), mural painting, 1929. Maison de Japon, Paris.

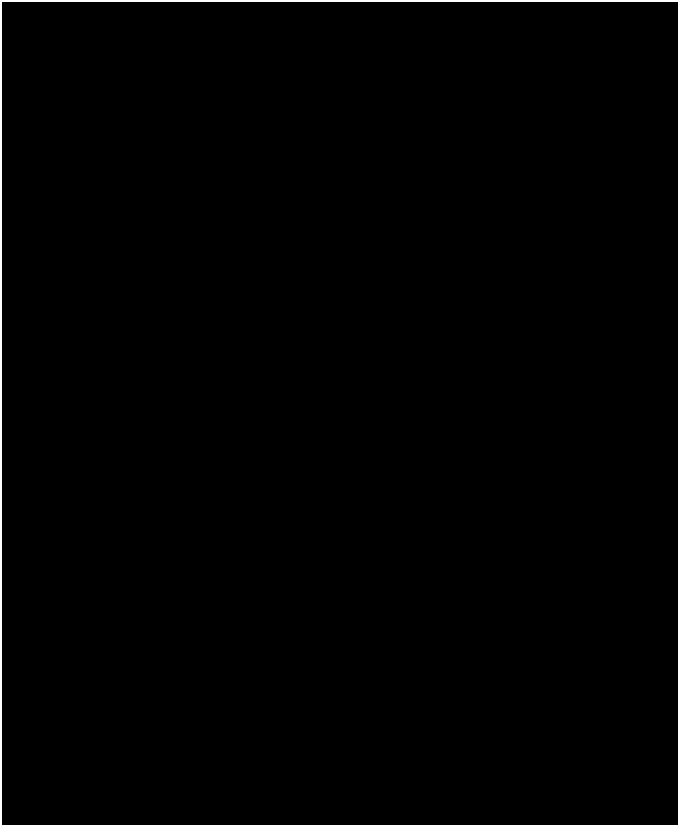


Figure 29. Interior view of the coffee shop with Fujita Tsuguji's mural painting, 1934. Original destroyed.

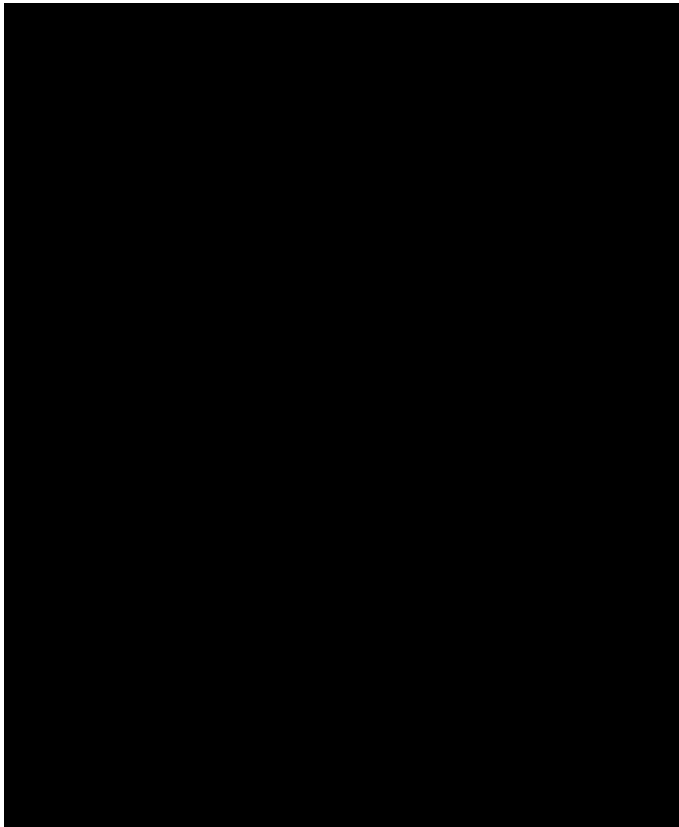


Figure 30. Okamoto Tōki, *Sōgidan no aru kōjō* (Strikers in a Factory), oil on canvas, shown in 1931.

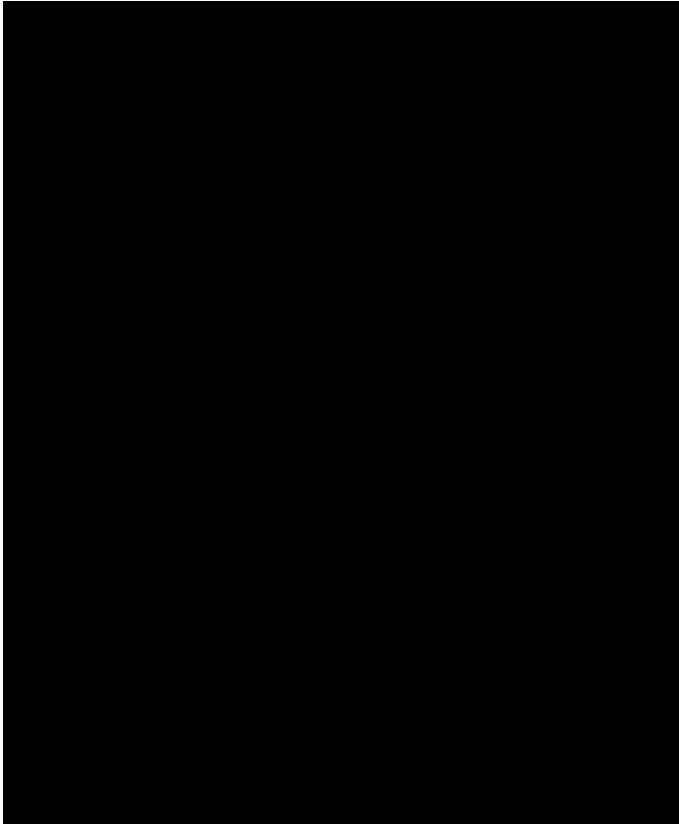


Figure 31. Yabe Tomoe, *Rôdôsô* (Labor funeral), oil on canvas, 1929.

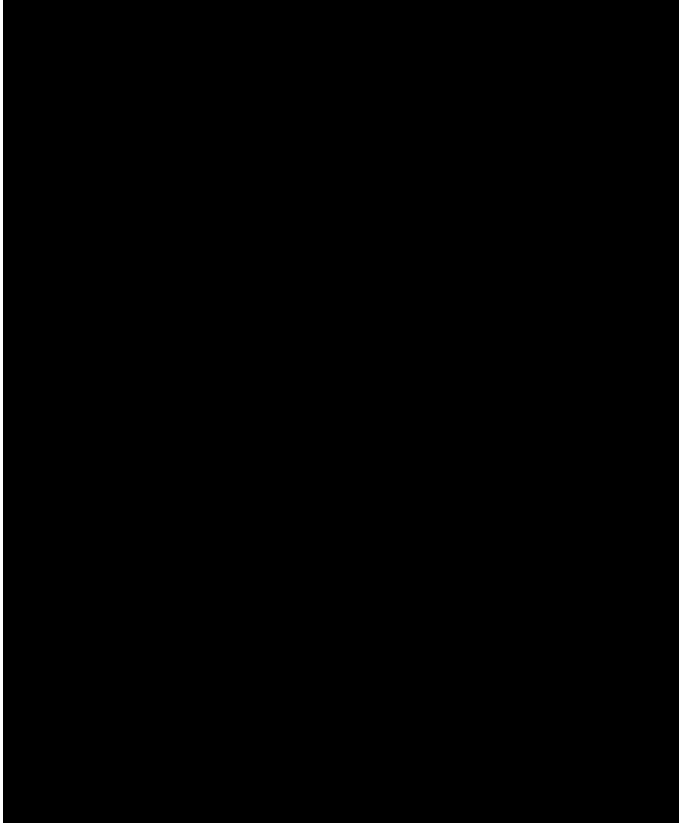


Figure 32. Hashimoto Yaoji, *Kôtai jikan* (New shift), oil on canvas, 1930, shown at *Teiten*. Iwate Museum of Art.

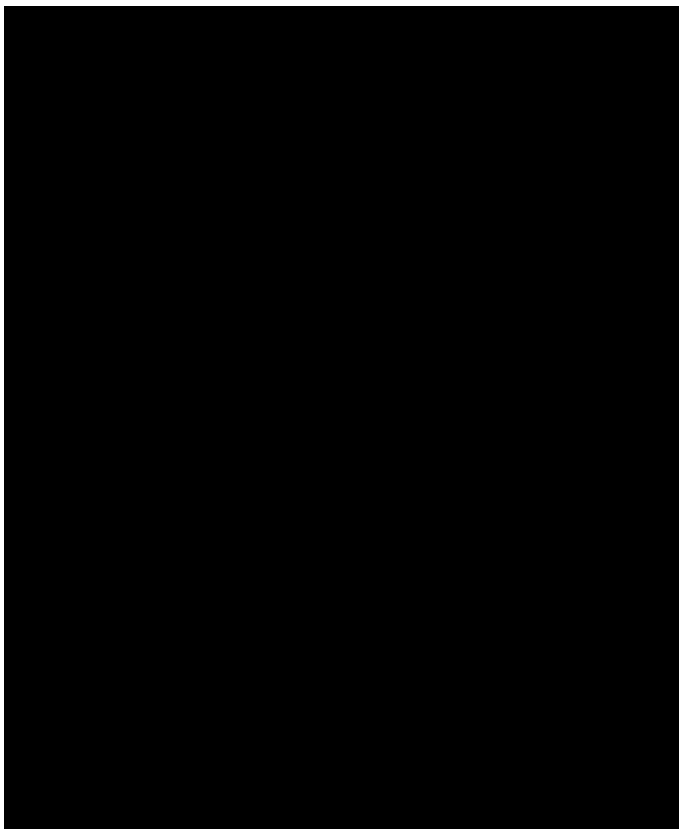


Figure 33. Fujita Tsuguji, *One-Thousand Stitches (Sen'ninbari)*, oil on canvas, 1937, shown at Nikakai exhibition.

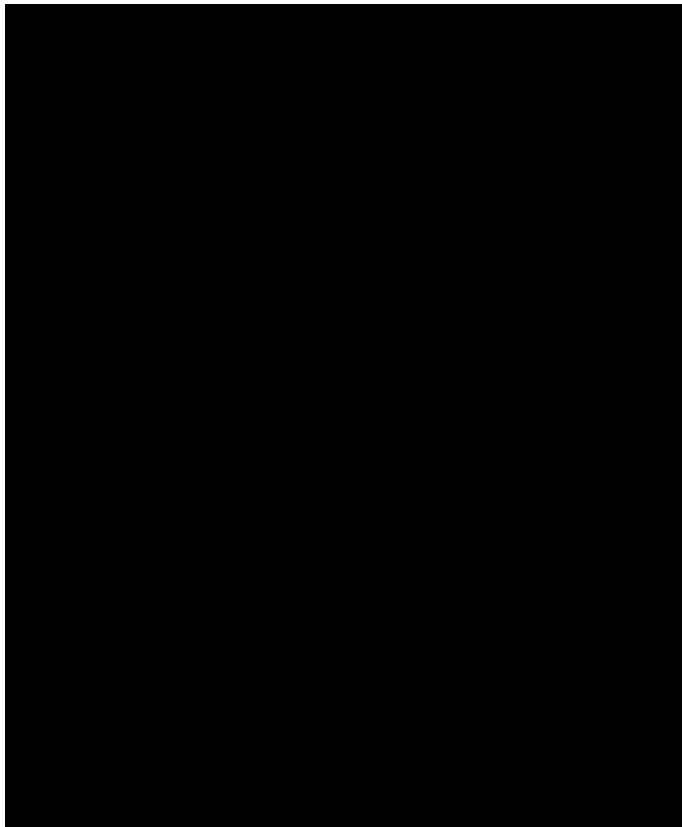


Figure 34. Shimada Bokusen, *Restoration of Imperial Rule* (Ôsei fukko), color on paper, 1931. Meiji Jingû Seitoku Memorial Picture Gallery.



Figure 35. *Goshin'ei* (venerable true shadow) of the Meiji emperor (right) and the empress (left), photographed images of their painted portraits, 1989. Meiji Jingû Seitoku Memorial Picture Gallery.



Figure 36. Kanokogi Takeshirô, *The Battle of Mukden* (Nichiroeki Hôten sen), oil on canvas, 1925. Meiji Jingû Seitoku Memorial Picture Gallery.

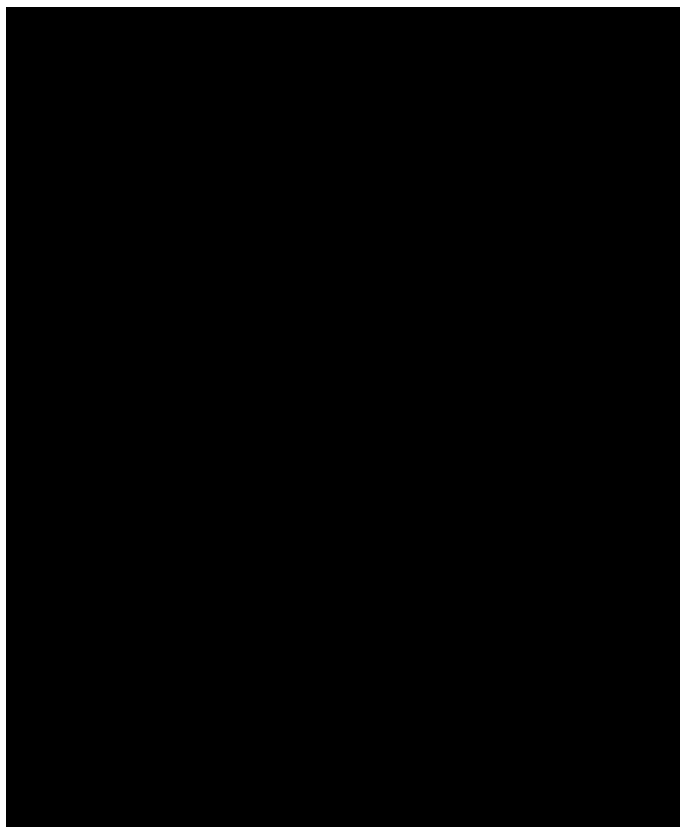


Figure 37. Nakamura Fusetsu, *The Battle of the Japan Sea* (Nichiroeki Nihonkai kaisen), oil on canvas, 1928. Meiji Jingû Seitoku Memorial Picture Gallery.



Figure 38. Kawamura Kiyoo, *Shintenfu Hall* (Shintenfu, where various spoils of the Sino-Japanese War were collected on the grounds of the Palace), oil on canvas, 1931. Meiji Jingû Seitoku Memorial Picture Gallery.

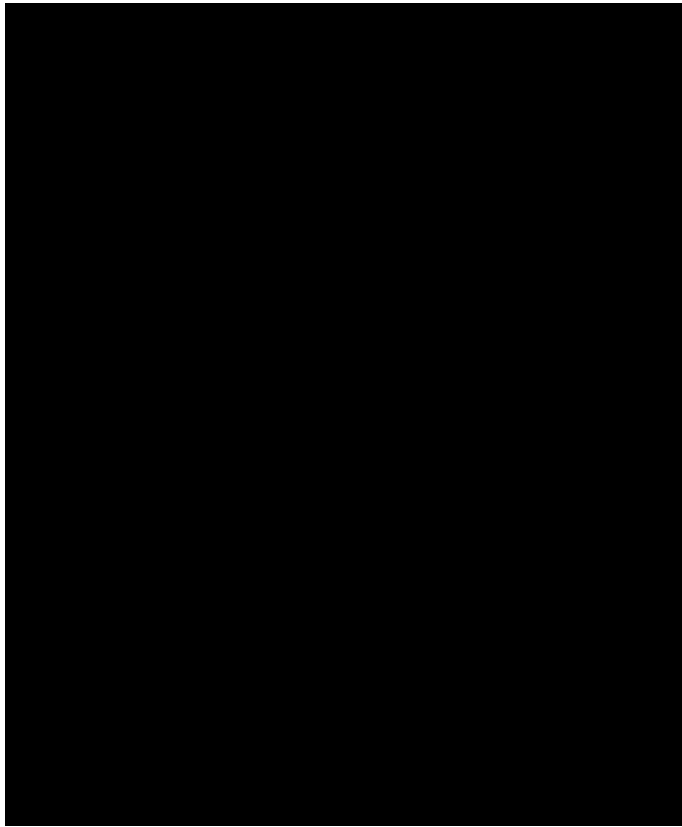


Figure 39. Koiso Ryôhei, *Marching through Niangzi-guan* (Shôshikan wo yuku), oil on canvas, 1941. National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Indefinite loan).

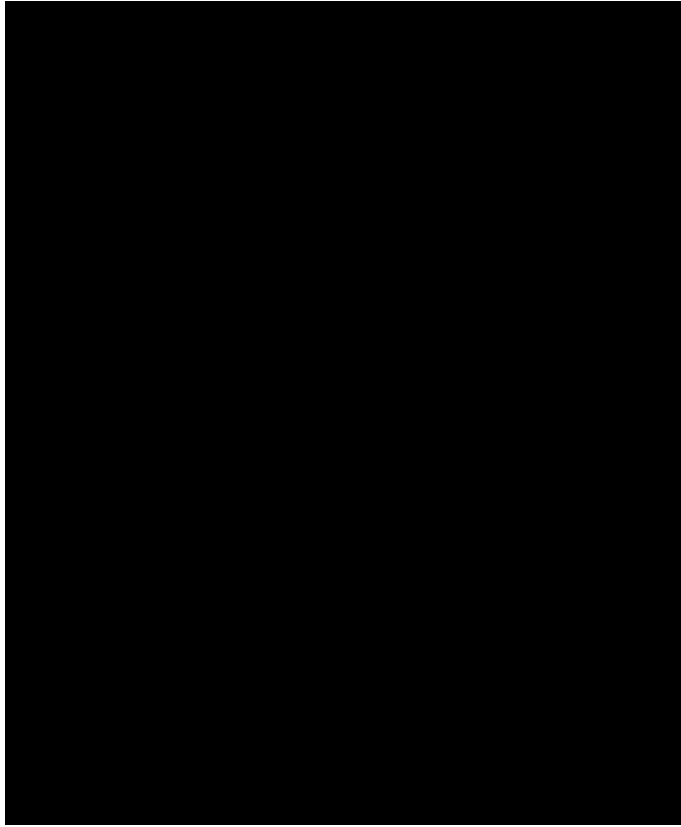


Figure 40. Ezaki Kôhei, *Capture of Guam* (Guamutô senryô), color on paper, 1941. National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Indefinite loan).

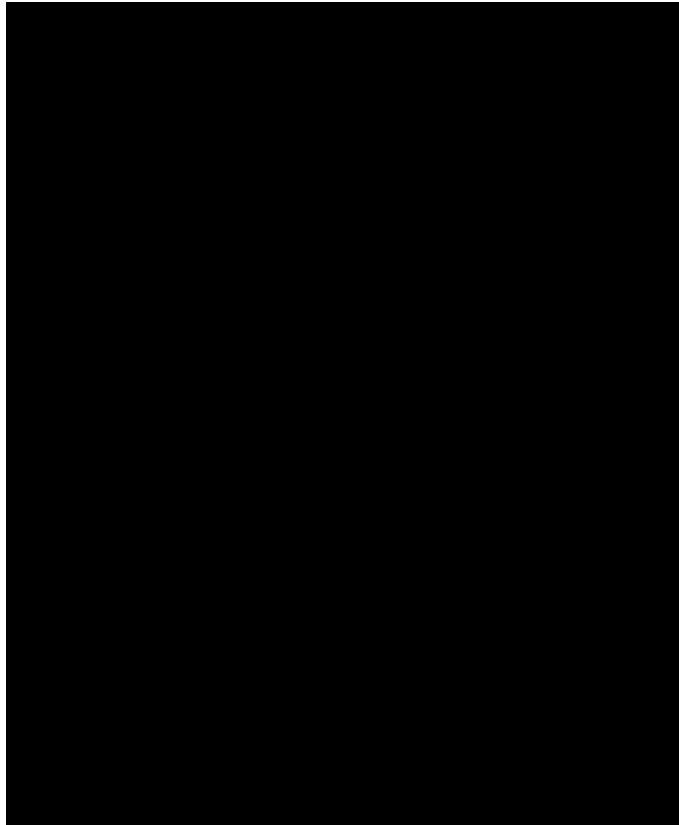


Figure 41. Tsuruta Gorô, *Paratroops Descending on Palembang* (Shinpei Parenban ni kôkasu), oil on canvas, 1942. National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Indefinite loan).

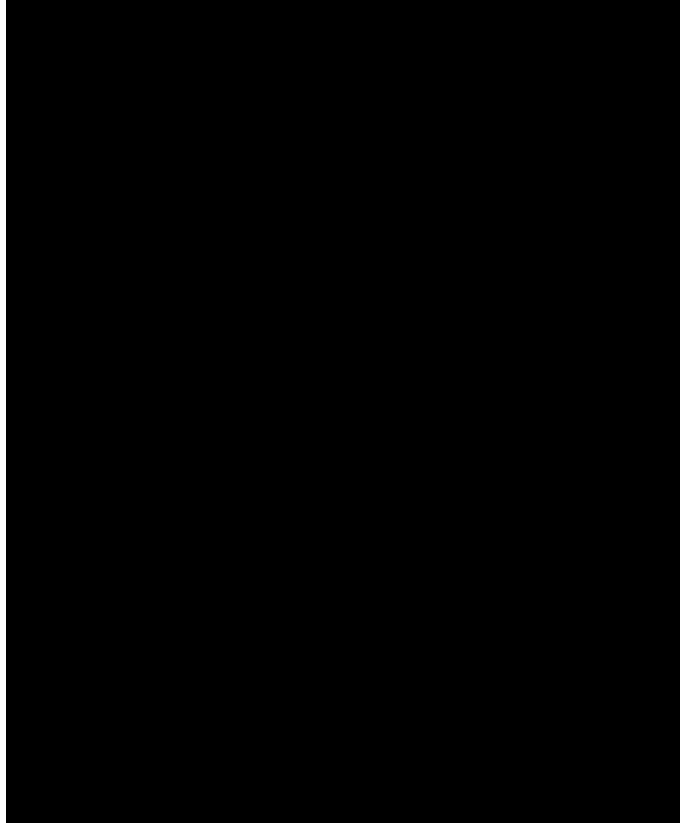


Figure 42. Ishii Hakutei, *Patrol on the Russo-Manchurian Border* (Seibu soman kokkyô keibi), oil on canvas, 1944. National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Indefinite loan).

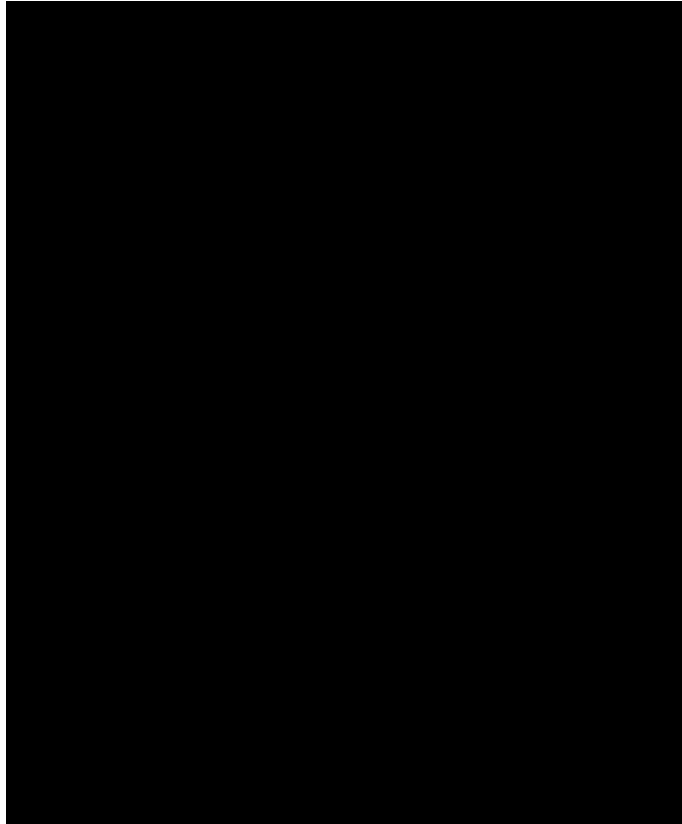


Figure 43. Ishikawa Toraji, Transoceanic Aggression (Toyô bakugeki), oil on canvas, 1941. National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Indefinite loan).

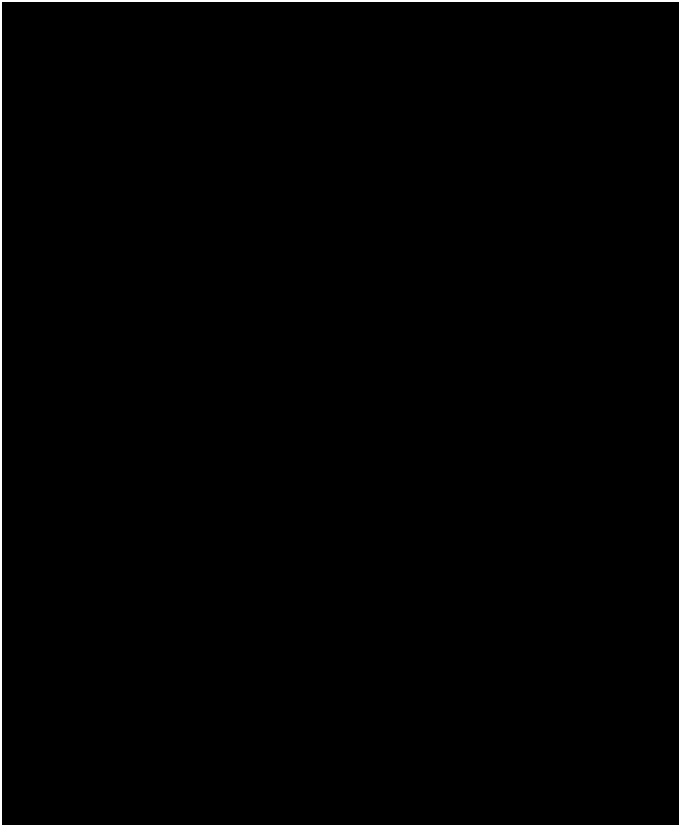


Figure 44. Kobayakawa Tokushirô, “Houston” Sunk by a Destroyer off Batavia (Waga kuchikukan tekisen “Hyûsuton” wo syûgeki), oil on canvas, 1942. National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Indefinite loan).

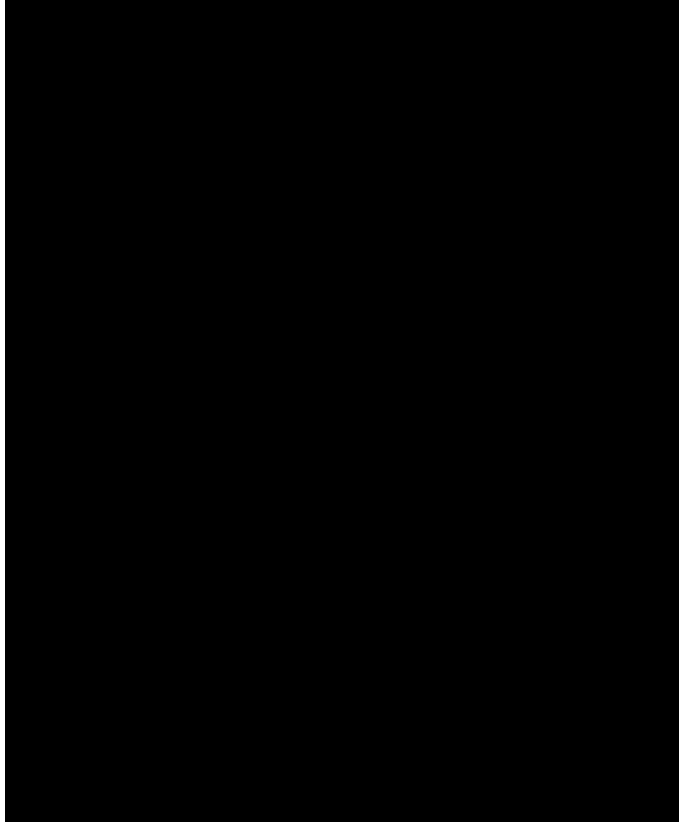


Figure 45. Yamaguchi Hôshun, *Final Attack on Hong Kong Island* (Honkontô saigo no sôkôgeki zu), color on paper, 1942. National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Indefinite loan).

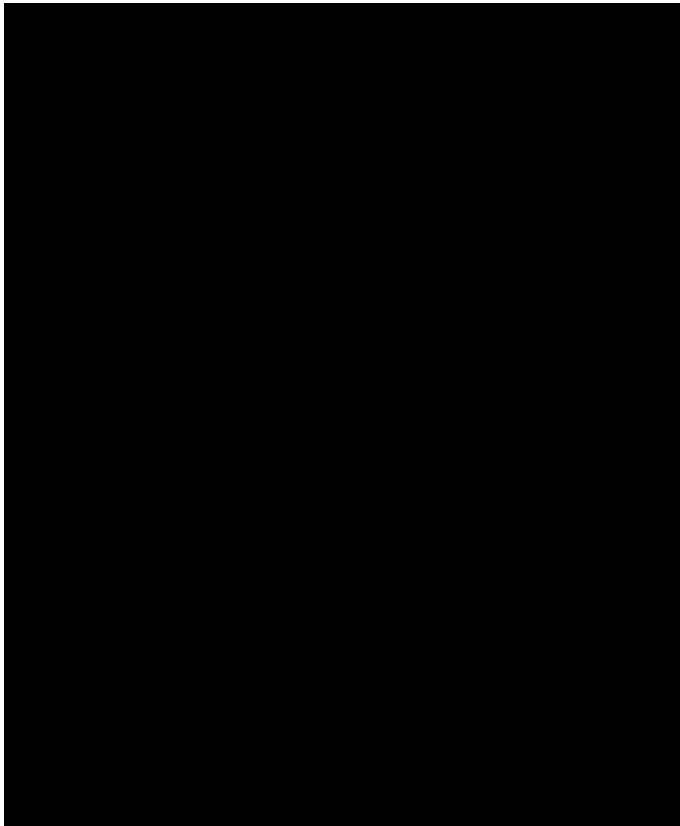


Figure 46. Fujita Tsuguji, *Final Fighting on Attu* (Atsutô gyokusai), oil on canvas, 1943. National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Indefinite loan).

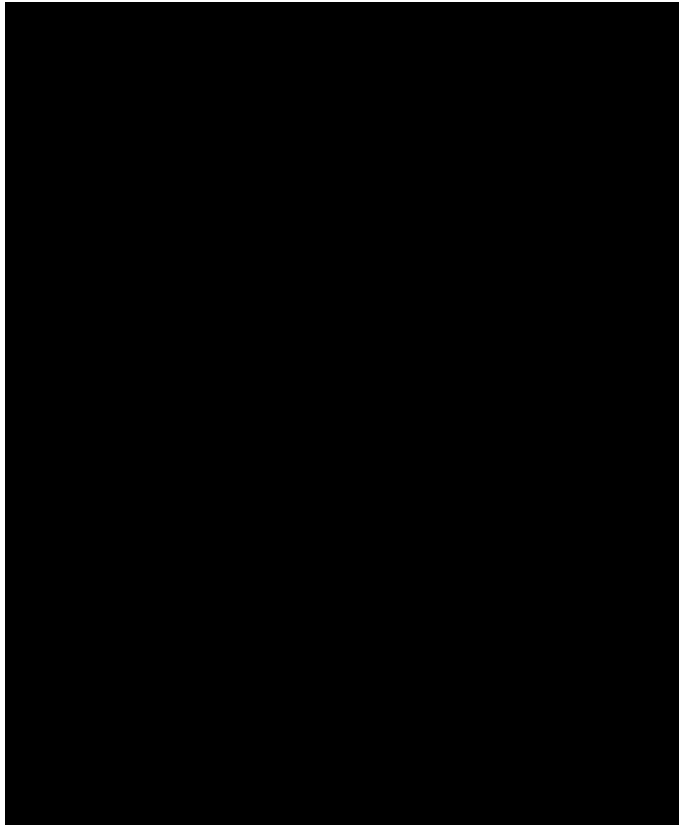


Figure 47. Satô Kei, *Deadly Battle in New Guinea* (Nyûginia sensen-mitsurin no sitô), oil on canvas, 1943. National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Indefinite loan).

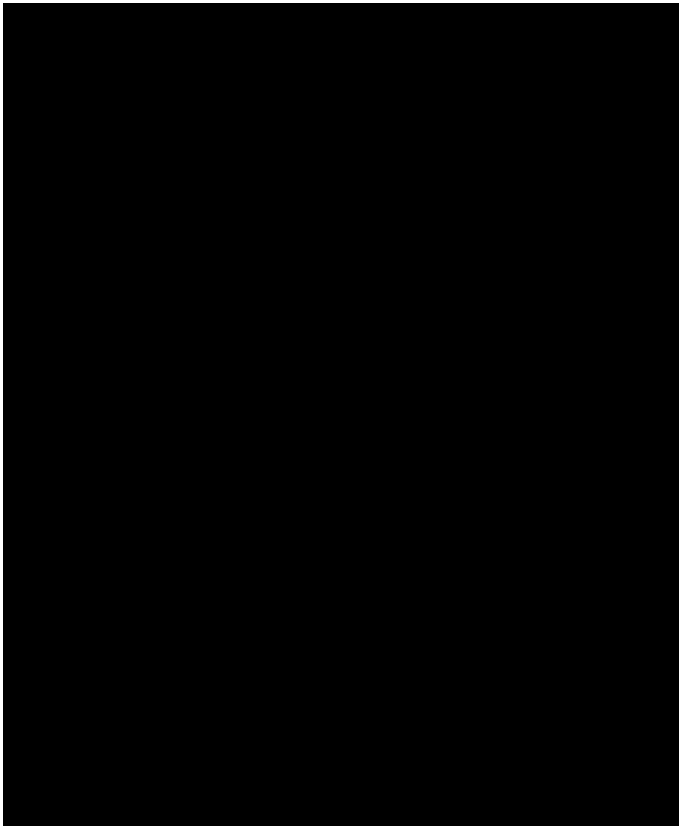


Figure 48. Hashimoto Yaoji, *Desperate Fighting of Ôtsu Unit on Saipan* (Saipantô Ôtsu butai no funsen), oil on canvas, 1944. National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Indefinite loan).

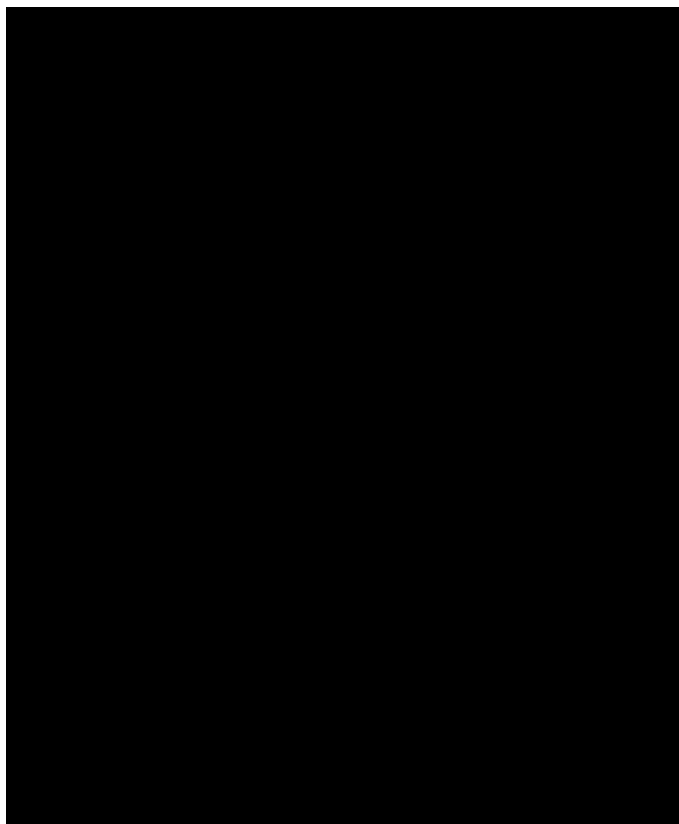


Figure 49. Nakamura Ken'ichi, *T-junction at the Shining Gate* (Kôkamon tejiro), oil on canvas, 1937, featured on the cover of the 1939 First Holy War Art Exhibition catalog.

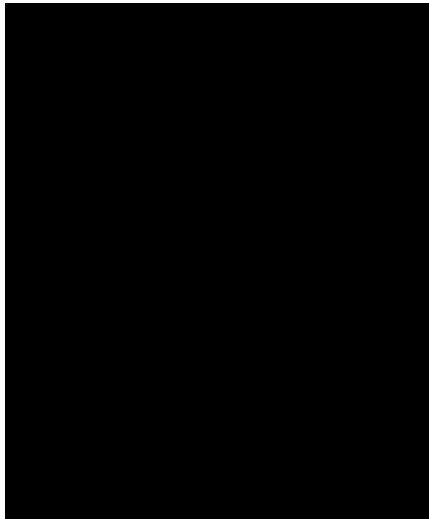
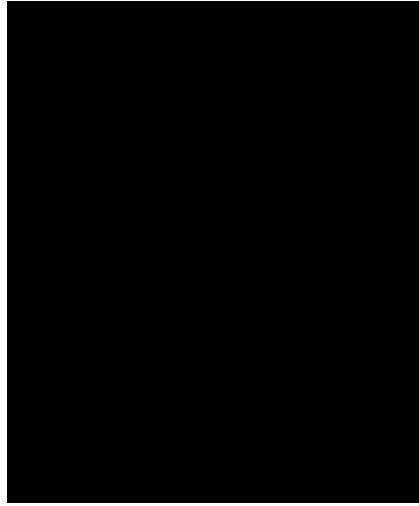


Figure 50. Fujita Tsuguji, Left half (above) and right half (below) of Battle on the Bank of the Haluha, Nomonhan (Haruha kahan no sentô), oil on canvas, 1941. National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Indefinite loan).



Figure 51. Nakamura Ken'ichi, *Kota Baru* (Kota baru), oil on canvas, 1942. National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Indefinite loan).

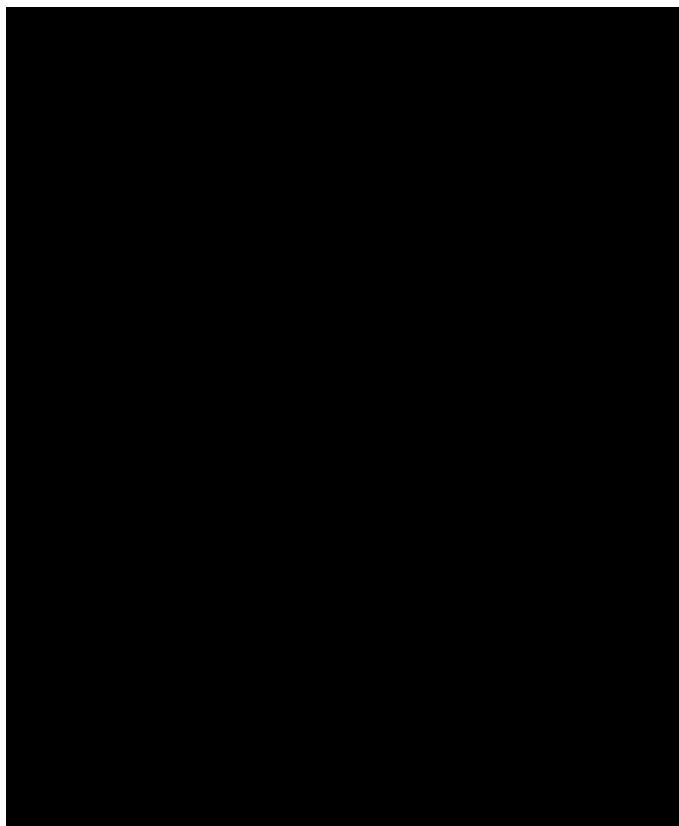


Figure 52. Miyamoto Saburô, *Fierce Fighting near Nicholson, Hong Kong* (Honkon nikoruson fukin no gekisen), oil on canvas, 1942. National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Indefinite loan).

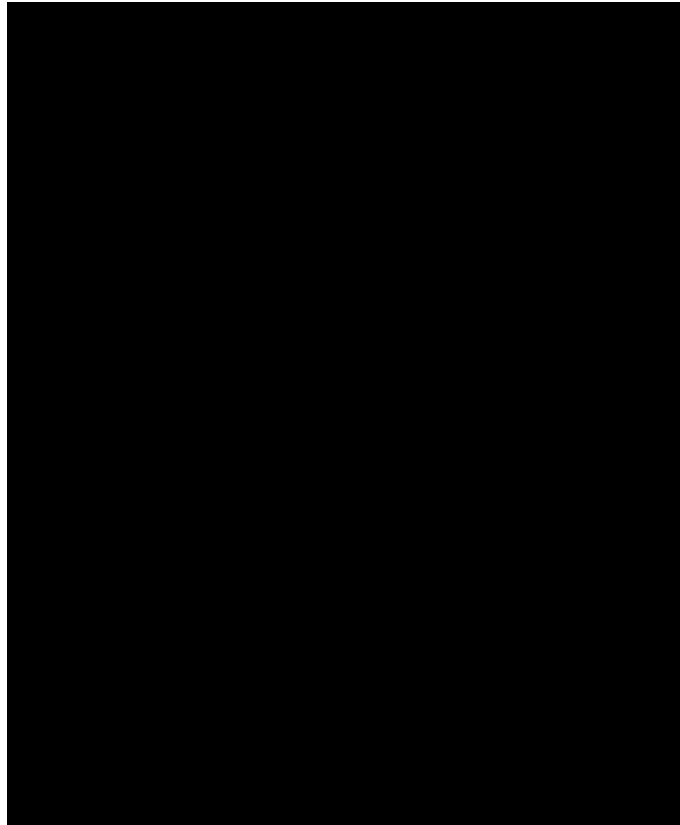


Figure 53. Fujita Tsuguji, *Desperate Struggle of a Unit in New Guinea* (Aru butai no sitô-Nyûginia sensen), oil on canvas, 1943. National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Indefinite loan).



Figure 54. Nakamura Ken'ichi, *Sea Battle off Malaya* (Marê oki kaisen), oil on canvas, 1942. National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Indefinite loan).



Figure 55. Ogawara Shû, *Bombing Chengdu Airfield* (Seito bakugeki), oil on canvas, 1945. National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Indefinite loan).

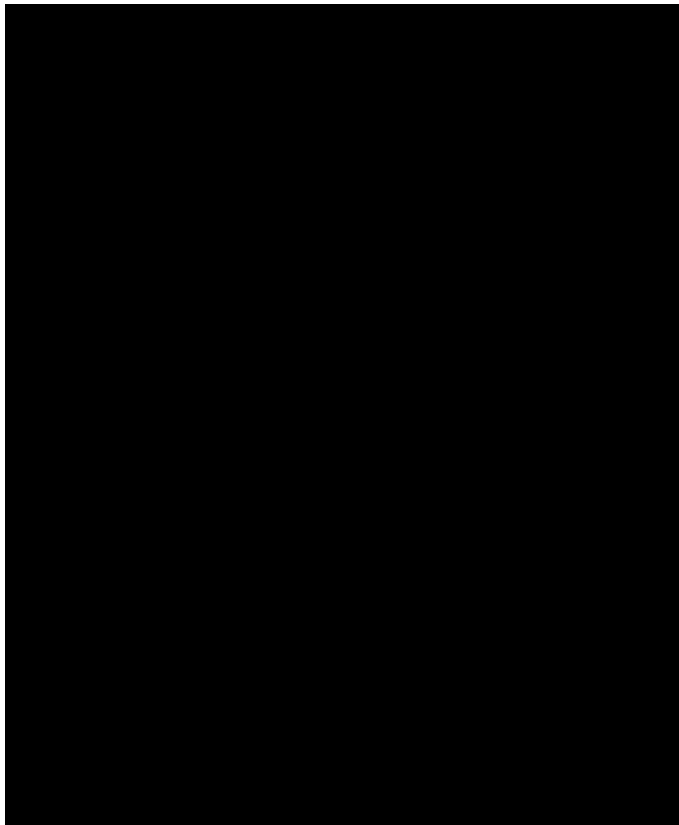


Figure 56. Miwa Chôsei , *Attack on Cavite Naval Base* (Kyabite gunkô kôgeki), color on paper, 1942. National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Indefinite loan).



Figure 57. Mikuriya Jun'ichi, Air Battle off New Guinea (Nyûginia oki tohôteki kidôbutai kyôsyû), oil on canvas, 1942. National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Indefinite loan).

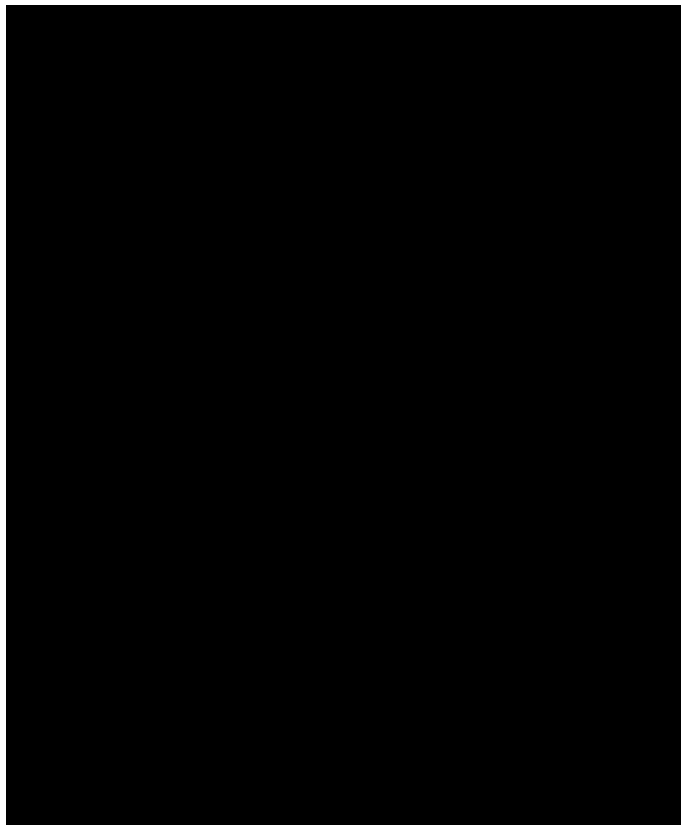


Figure 58. Suzuki Ryôzô, *Evacuation of the Wounded and the Hardworking Relief Unit* (Kanja gosô to kyûgohan no kusin), oil on canvas, 1943. National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Indefinite loan).

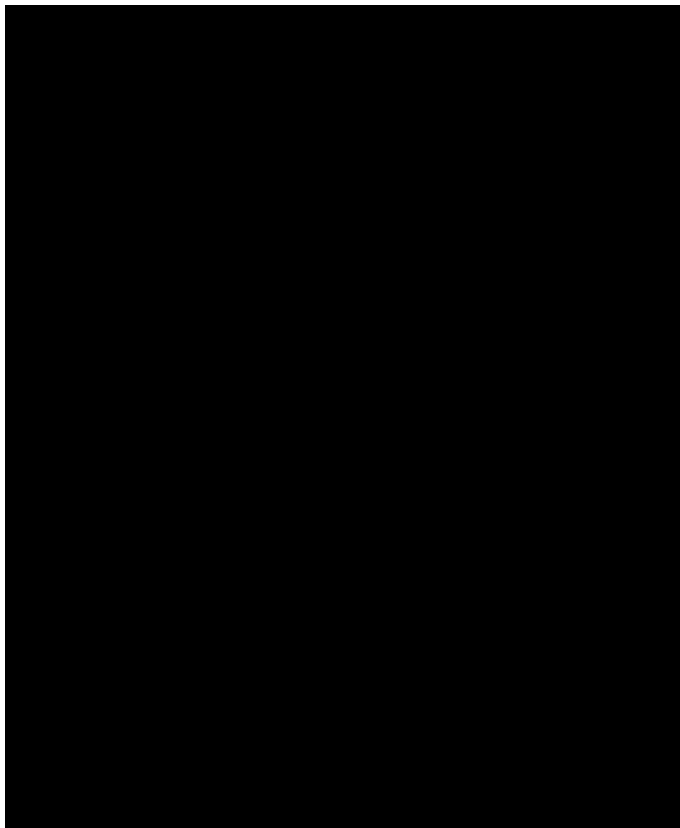


Figure 59. Shimizu Toshi, *Engineer's Bridge Construction in Malaya* (Kôheитай kakyô sagyô), oil on canvas, 1944. National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Indefinite loan).

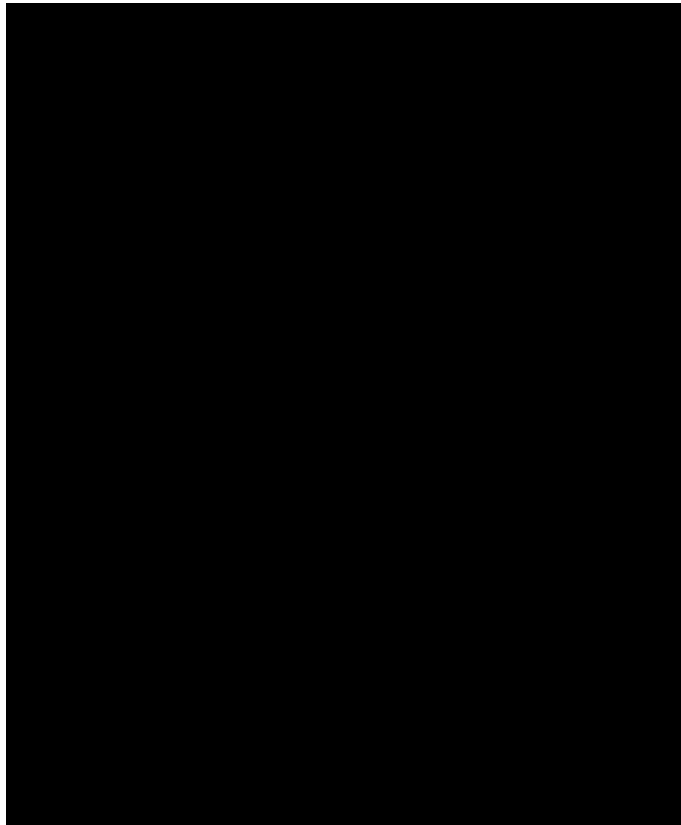


Figure 60. Yasuda Yukihiro, *Admiral Yamamoto on December 8, 1941* (Jûnigatsu yôka no Yamamoto gensui), color on paper, 1944. Art Museum, Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music.

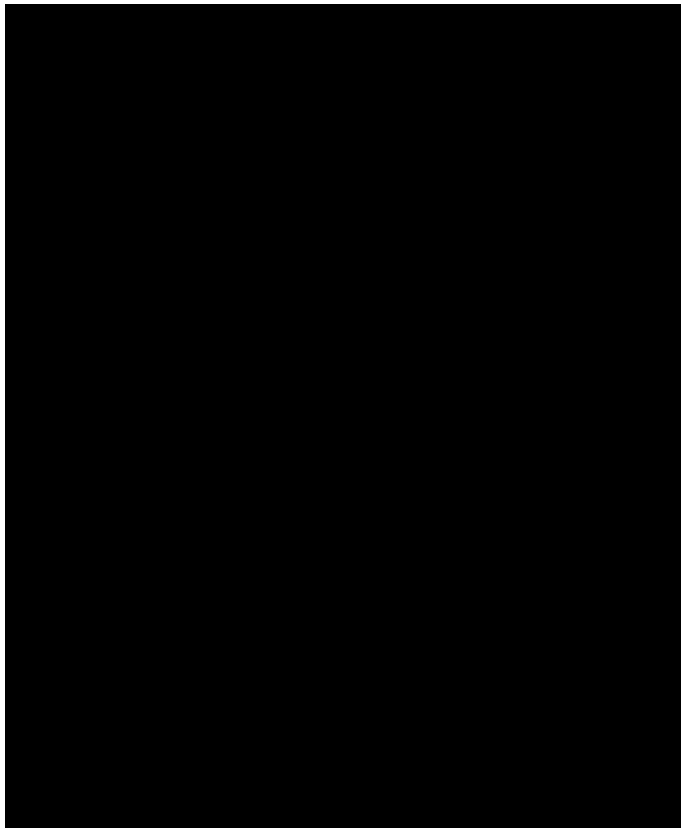


Figure 61. Miyamoto Saburô, *The Meeting of General Yamashita and General Percival* (Yamashita Pâsibaru ryôshireikan kaiken zu), oil on canvas, 1942. National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Indefinite loan).

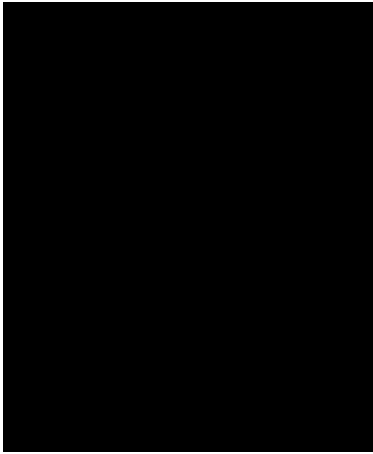


Figure 62. Miyamoto Saburô's sketches of Gen. Yamashita (left) and Gen. Percival (right), pencil on paper, 1942.

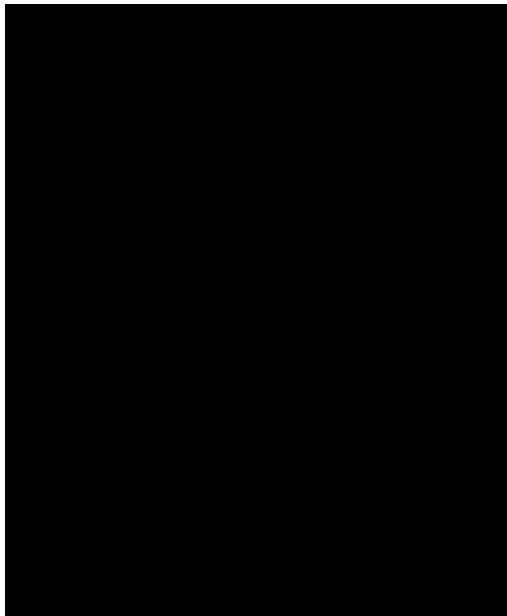


Figure 63. A photograph of the meeting taken used for publication.



Figure 64. Koiso Ryôhei, *Independence Ceremony of Burma* (Biruma dokuritsu shikiten zu), oil on canvas, 1944. National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Indefinite loan).

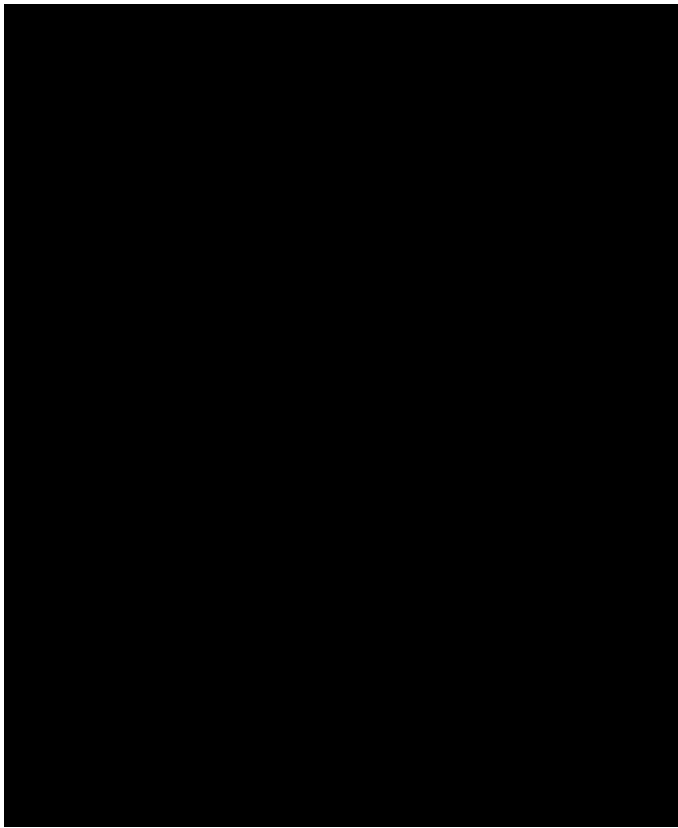


Figure 65. Matsuzaka Kô, *Capture of Wake Island II* (Uêkitô kôryakusen), oil on canvas, 1942. National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Indefinite loan).

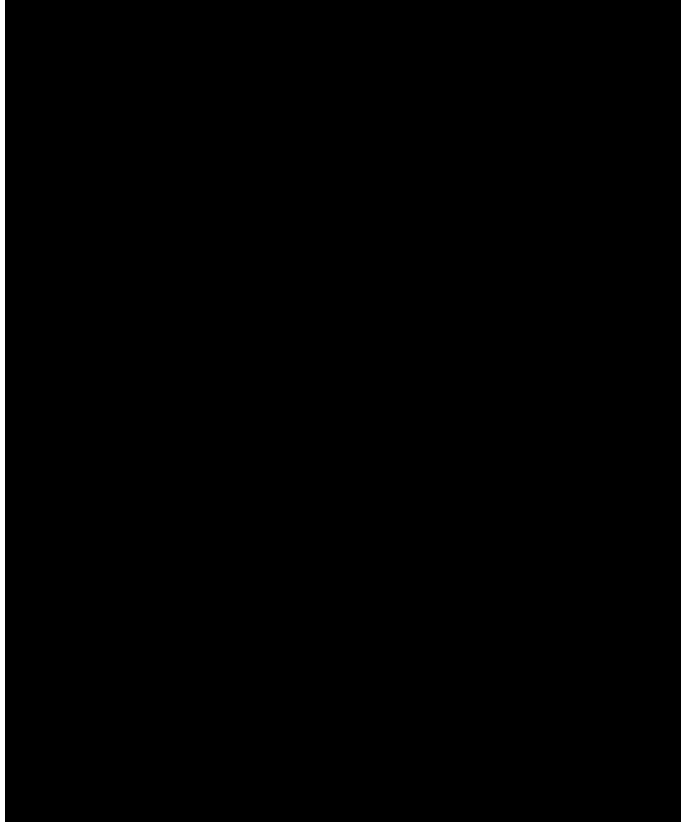


Figure 66. Ihara Usaburô, *Japanese Marching into Mandalay and Burmese Corporation* (Mandarê nyûjô to birumajin no kyôryoku), oil on canvas, 1942. Presumed lost.

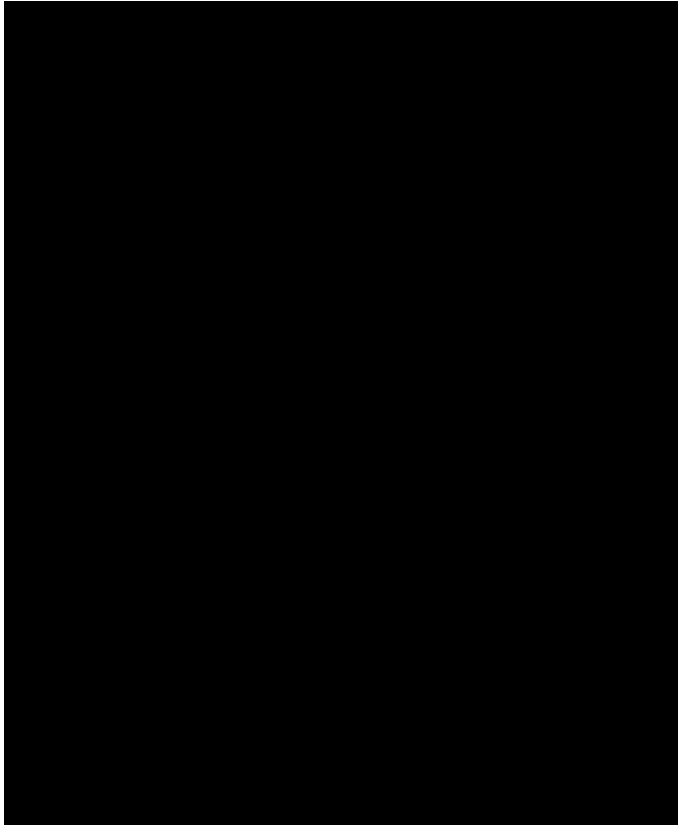


Figure 67. Miyamoto Saburô, *Attack on Nanyuan, Beijing* (Nan'en kôgeki), oil on canvas, 1941. National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Indefinite loan).

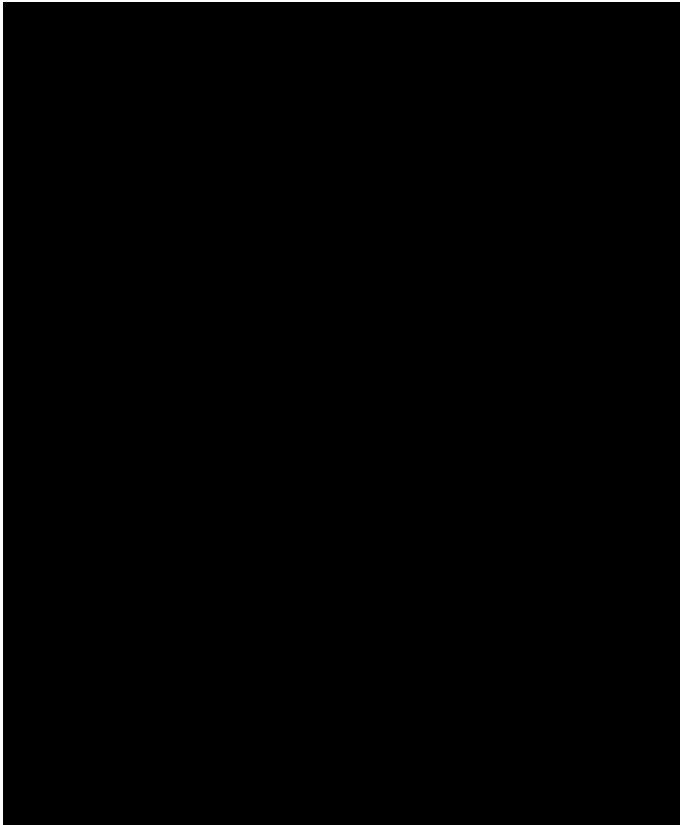


Figure 68. *Manga* (Comics) woman combing her hair to eliminate Western values.



Figure 69. Fujita Tsuguji, *Compatriots on Saipan Island Remain Faithful to the End* (Saipantô dôhô shinsetsu wo mattôsu), oil on canvas, 1945. National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Indefinite loan).

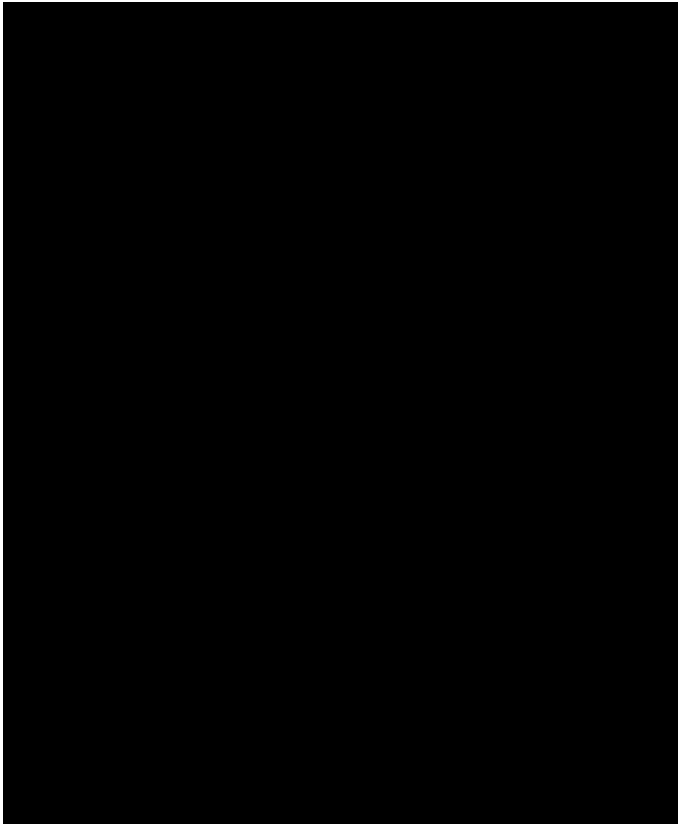


Figure 70. Miyamoto Saburô, *Uchiteshi yamamu* poster design shown in the February 24, 1943 *Asahi* newspaper.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

“Holy War” Painters’ Biographies

Arai Shôri (1895-1927, *nihonga*)

Arai was born in Tokyo, and became known for his painting of historical subjects. He began his artistic training with traditional-style painter Kajita Hanko and later studied under well-known master Yasuda Yukihiro. In 1930, he won his first entry to the government-sponsored art exhibition Teiten. After receiving prizes of distinction from the Japan Art Institute (Nihon bijutsuin), which was founded in 1914 by Okakura Tenshin, he was accepted as a member in 1941. In the postwar period, he assumed a post of councilor in the Japan Art Institute, and taught at Tama Art University.

Ezaki Kôhei (1904-1963, *nihonga*)

Ezaki was born in Nagano prefecture. He was a pupil of *nihonga* master Maeda Seison, and exhibited his work at official art exhibitions, where his talent was recognized with awards. After the war, Ezaki extended his artistic ambitions beyond the area of painting. For example, he was an illustrator to the popular period novel *Taikôki* written by Yoshikawa Eiji; he later served as historical consultant on the period clothing worn in *Seven Samurai* directed by Akira Kurosawa.

Fujita Tsuguji (Tsuguharu) (1886-1968, *yôga*)

Fujita was the son of a distinguished army doctor. He graduated from the Western Painting Section of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts in 1910, where he studied with Kuroda Seiki. Fujita went to France to continue his artistic training. He eventually achieved success in his career as a painter with the *École de Paris* artists. He was well acquainted with famed Parisian artists, including Picasso and Modigliani. Fujita is most well known for his elegantly delineated female portraits with porcelain-like complexions. By the time of the Pacific War, Fujita had returned to Japan where he was a leader in the Army Art Association. He created numerous images under military commission. One of his war paintings, *The Fall of Singapore* (Singapôru saigo no hi) won him an Asahi Cultural Award (*Asahi bunka shô* which was established in 1929 by the *Asahi* newspaper) in 1943. After the war, he left Japan for France for good, in part for having been ostracized from Japan’s art community due to his close association with Japan’s military regime.

Hashimoto Kansetsu (1883-1944, *nihonga*)

Born in Kobe, Hashimoto studied traditional-style painting with Takeuchi Seihô, a great master in the Kyoto and Osaka area. In his pursuit of his own artistic style, he studied different types of Japanese and Chinese paintings, as well as the history and literature of the both countries. He had participated in the Bunten since the opening of the official art

exhibition, and was awarded prizes in consecutive years. In 1934, he was appointed to the position of Imperial Household artisan (*Teishitsu gigeiin*), and the next year he became a member of the elite artistic organization Imperial Academy of Fine Arts (Teikoku bijutsuin). He was also known for his writing on art and poetry.

Hashimoto Yaoji (1903-1979, *yôga*)

Hashimoto was born in Iwate prefecture. After studying oil painting at the Kawabata Painting School (Kawabata gagakkô), he entered the Tokyo School of Fine Arts. His early entries into the annual official art exhibition Teiten led him to win prizes in 1930 and 1931. In particular, his group composition of factory workers submitted to the 1930 Teiten attracted a great deal of attention. After the war, he returned to his home prefecture where he was active in local politics and cultural scenes.

Ihara Usaburô (1894-1976, *yôga*)

Ihara was born in Tokushima prefecture, and graduated from the Tokyo School of Fine Arts in 1921. While at school, he had already won an entry to the Teiten. He went to France in 1925, where he continued his artistic training for four and a half years. During prewar and war years he was a faculty member at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts from 1932 and 1944. After the war, he continued to assume important posts in various art institutions, such as a director of Nitten, the postwar successor of Teiten.

Ishii Hakutei (1882-1958, *yôga*)

Ishii was born in Tokyo. He began his early artistic training in *nihonga* following in the steps of his painter father, but he later developed an interest in Western painting. He decided to study under Asai Chû, a pupil of Fontanesi, and won entry to the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, where studied with Kuroda Seiki and Fujishima Takeji. He went to Europe to study Western painting first in 1910, and again in 1922. He was a founding member of Nikakai. He was elected for membership of Imperial Academy of Fine Arts in 1935 and the expanded Imperial Arts Academy in 1937. He was also known for his prolific writing on art.

Ishikawa Toraji (1875-1964, *yôga*)

Ishikawa was born in Kôchi prefecture. He studied painting at the private art studio of Koyama Shôtârô, who was a pupil of Fontanesi. Ishikawa won his first entry to the Meiji Art Society exhibition in 1893. Then he went to America and Europe to further his study of Western painting. On his return to Japan, he helped found the influential *yôga* painters group Pacific Painting Society (Taiheiyôgakai) in 1910, which was the successor of the disbanded Meiji Art Society. He also served as a juror at government-sponsored art exhibitions. He acceded to his mentor Koyama's teaching post at the Tokyo Teachers College, and contributed to the promotion of art education in postwar Japan.

Kawabata Ryûshi (1885-1966, *nihonga*)

Kawabata was born in Wakayama prefecture. He first studied Western painting at the studios of the White Horse Society (Hakubakai) and Pacific Painting Society, both the most famous *yôga* groups of the time. After working as an illustrator for popular magazines and newspapers, he made a trip to America, where he discovered the richness

of Japanese traditional painting at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. This experience led him to convert to traditional painting. Known as an artistic innovator, he pursued fresher and newer styles appropriate to his era, and promoted the idea of *kaijō geijutsu* (exhibition-hall art) to release the discipline of painting from a perceived monopoly of the cultural elite. Once a member of *Inten*, Kawabata left that official art exhibition body, and founded his own group Blue Dragon Society (Seiryūsha). During the war, he created images that included patriotic motifs and themes. In 1959, he received an Order of Cultural Merit (*Bunka kunshō*).

Kita Renzō (1876-1949, *yōga*)

Kita was born in Gifu prefecture. He came to Tokyo to study Western painting under Yamamoto Hōsui, and then entered Tenshin dōjō, a private painting school run by Kuroda Seiki. He continued his education at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts. He became successful as a painter by winning prizes at the government sponsored exhibitions of Teiten and Shin-Bunten. He also worked as chief designer in painting backgrounds at the Imperial Theater (Teikoku gekijō), the first Japanese modern theater designed for Western drama and opera.

Kobayakawa Tokushirō (1893-1959, *yōga*)

Kobayakawa was born in Hiroshima. He studied watercolor with Ishikawa Kin'ichirō in Taiwan. He studied with Okada Saburōsuke at the Hongō Art Studio (Hongō kenkyūjo) established by Okada and Fujishima Takeji. In 1925 he won his first entry to Teiten.

Koiso Ryōhei (1903-1988, *yōga*)

Koiso was born in Kobe. Upon graduating from the Tokyo School of Fine Arts in 1927, he spent a couple of years in France studying Western painting. He established himself at Teiten, but parted ways with it in protest to the Matsuda Reorganization of the official art academy in 1935, and founded the New Creation Association (Shinseisakuha kyōkai) with his colleagues such as Satō Kei. As one of leading war painters, Koiso won prestigious awards for his war imagery: in 1940 he received an Asahi Cultural Prize with *Battle of the China Gate in Nanjing* (Nankin chūkamon no sentō) and in 1941, he took an Imperial Arts Academy Prize (*Teikoku geijutsuinshō*) for *Marching through Niangzi-guan* (Shōsikan wo yuku). He spent his postwar years as a teacher at the Tokyo Imperial Arts University, which was the postwar successor of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts.

Kurihara Shin (1894-1966, *yōga*)

Kurihara was born in Ibaraki prefecture, and graduated from Ibaraki Teachers School in 1912. He studied Western painting for a few years in France. After his return to Japan, he became a Nikakai member. During the war he served in Malay as an army war correspondent (*Rikugun hōdōhan'in*). After the war, in 1947, he helped found the Second Epoch Society (Dainikikai) with his former Nikakai colleagues such as Miyamoto Saburō. He also served as director of the Artists League of Japan (Nihon bijutsuka renmei).

Matsuzaka Kō (1905-unknown, *yōga*)

Matsuzaka was born in Kanagawa prefecture. He studied English literature at the Aoyama Gakuin University during his early years.

Mikuriya Jun'ichi (1882-1948, *yôga*)

Mikuriya was born in Saga prefecture in Kyushu Island. He graduated from the Tokyo School of Fine Arts in 1912, where he studied with Kuroda Seiki. He stayed in Europe to continue his study of Western painting between 1926 and 1928. During the war, he produced marine war paintings under the navy's commission.

Miwa Chôsei (1901-1983, *nihonga*)

Miwa was born in Niigata prefecture. He graduated from the Kyoto Arts and Crafts School (Kyoto bijutsu kôgei gakkô) and the Kyoto Painting Vocational School (Kyoto kaiga senmon gakkô). He received the tutelage of a Kyoto *nihonga* master Dômoto Inshô. Miwa became a prominent painter at Bunten. During the war he served as a Navy war art correspondent (*Kaigun hôdôhan'in*) in the Southern Pacific. In the postwar era, Miwa continued to have an influence in the art community by assuming several *Nitten* posts, and he was appointed to the membership of the Imperial Arts Academy in 1979.

Miyamoto Saburô (1905-1974, *yôga*)

Miyamoto was born in Ishikawa prefecture. In 1922, he came to Tokyo to study Western painting under Fujishima Takeji at the Kawabata Painting School. After the Great Kantô Earthquake of 1923 did severe damage to Tokyo, he moved to Kyoto, where he entered the Kansai Art Institute (Kansai bijutsuin), a *yôga* studio originally established by Asai Chû. Miyamoto received artistic guidance from Yasui Sôtarô, one of the most celebrated *yôga* painters of the interwar years, whom he greatly admired. Miyamoto went to France to study Western painting for a year in 1938. During the war, Miyamoto became one of the most famed war painters with recognition for his forceful image of General Yamashita portrayed in the historic meeting with British General Percival. In 1943, this painting won him an Imperial Arts Academy Prize. In 1944, his work *Surprise Attack of Naval Paratroops at Menado* (Kaigun rakkasan butai Menado kishû) also brought him an Asahi Cultural Prize. After the war, he founded Second Epoch Society and taught at Kanazawa Arts and Crafts University (Kanazawa bijutsu kôgei daigaku) in his home prefecture and at Tama Art University in Tokyo. He was granted membership in the Imperial Arts Academy in 1966.

Nakamura Ken'ichi (1895-1967, *yôga*)

Nakamura was born in Fukuoka prefecture. He studied under academic painter Kanokogi Takeshirô, and graduated from the Tokyo School of Fine Arts in 1920. Then he studied in France between 1923 and 1928. After returning to Japan, he found himself successful at government art exhibitions, and frequently served the events as a selecting committee member. Nakamura became a noted war painter; one of his war pictures *Kota Baru* (Kota baru), which he painted in Malay, won him an Asahi Cultural Prize in 1943. In 1950, he became a member of the Imperial Arts Academy.

Ogawara Shû (1911-2002, *yôga*)

Ogawara was born in Hokkaido, the northernmost island of Japan, and graduated from the Tokyo School of Fine Arts. While at school, he won entry to Teiten. He was recruited for a military art commission by his hometown acquaintance Yamauchi Ichirô, one of the Army art officers in charge of the war painting program. After the war, he returned to his native town of Kutchan in Hokkaido, where he remained active as a painter.

Satô Kei (1906-1978, *yôga*)

Born in Ôita prefecture in southern Japan, Satô began his painting training at the Kawabata Painting School, and continued his study at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts. While being an art student, he won entry to Teiten twice in 1929, and then in 1930. He spent the next few years in France. Upon his return to Japan, he helped found the New Creation Association and remained an active member of the group. In the postwar period after 1951, he lived in Paris showing his work at foreign exhibition venues.

Shimizu Toshi (1896-1945, *yôga*)

Shimizu was born in Tochigi prefecture. He studied between 1907 and 1925 at foreign institutions, including the Art Student League in New York. After returning to Japan, he won recognition from domestic art exhibitions such as Nikakai. He was a founding member of the Independent Art Association (Dokuritsu bijutsu kyôkai) in 1930, which became known for its members' inclination toward Fauvism. He was one of the early volunteer war painters.

Suzuki Ryôzô (1898-1996, *yôga*)

Suzuki was born in Mito of Ibaragi prefecture. In 1917, he entered the Medical School of the Jikei University (Tokyo Jikei ika daigaku), and in the same year began to take private painting instruction from Nakamura Tsune. He studied with Ishii Hakutei, a well-known oil painter and watercolorist, and went to Europe to further his artistic training between 1928 and 1930. His commissioned war paintings reflected his early training in medicine by depicting the activities of the medical corps.

Tamura Kônosuke (1903-1986, *yôga*)

Tamura was born in Osaka. He studied under Koide Narashige at the respected Shinanobashi *yôga* studio (Shinanobashi *yôga* kenkyûjo) in Osaka. He established himself as a painter at Nikakai. After the war, he founded the Second Epoch Society with his Nikakai colleagues such as Miyamoto Saburô. In 1974, he was appointed director of the society.

Tsuruta Gorô (1890-1969, *yôga*)

Tsuruta was born in Tokyo. He started his oil painting training at the ateliers of the White Horse Society and Pacific Painting Society. At the latter studio, Tsuruta studied with Nakamura Fusetsu, a prominent *yôga* painter. He also spent a year in 1930 in Europe to further his study of Western painting. During the war, he served as a faculty at the Shinkyô Art Institute (Shinkyô bijutsuin) in the capital of Manchukuo (today's Changchun) and as a director of the Munitions Production Art Volunteer Corps (Gunju seisan bijutsu teishintai).

Yamaguchi Hôshun (1893-1971, *nihonga*)

Yamaguchi was born in Hokkaido. He initially entered the Western Painting Section of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, and later transferred to the section for traditional painting there. He also took private instruction from *yamatoe* painter Matsuoka Eikyû. He received an award from the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts in 1925. During the war, a military art commission sent him to Hong Kong. His distinguished artistic career continued in the postwar era. In 1950, he was elected for membership in the Japan Arts Academy, and was decorated with the Order of Cultural Merit.

Yasuda Yukihiko (1884-1978, *nihonga*)

Born in Tokyo and known for his painting of historical subjects in a style based on the *yamatoe* style. This reflected his earlier study with Kobori Tomoto. In 1901, Yasuda was briefly enrolled at the Nihonga Division of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, but left the school without completing. With encouragement from Okakura Tenshin, he joined the Japan Art Institute. In 1934, he was elected Imperial Household artisan. In 1935, he became a member of the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts, and served as a faculty at the Tokyo Imperial Arts University between 1944 and 1951. In 1948, he was honored with the Order of Cultural Merit, and in 1958 assumed directorship of the Japan Art Institute.

Yoshioka Kenji (1906-1990, *nihonga*)

Yoshioka was born in Tokyo the son of *nihonga* painter Yoshioka Kadô. Yoshioka studied with Noda Kyûho. In his pursuit of stylistic experimentation in *nihonga*, he formed different artists groups at times with his artist colleagues. During the postwar period, he was a teacher at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts between 1959 and 1969, and in 1971, he received a prize from the Imperial Arts Academy

Appendix B

The Original Titles of the Modern Japanese War Painting Figures

The following list is sorted by artists' names in the alphabetical order.

Arai Shôri 新井勝利

Maintenance Work aboard Aircraft Carrier, 1943 (航空母艦上に於ける整備作業
Kôkû bokanjô ni okeru seibi sagyô)

Asai Chû 浅井忠

Navy Officer Higuchi Helping a Child, 1895 (樋口大尉小児を扶くる Higuchi taii
kodomo wo tasukuru)

Search in the Aftermath of War in Lushun, 1895 (旅順戦後の搜索 Ryojun sengo no
sôsaku)

Ezaki Kôhei 江崎孝坪

Capture of Guam, 1941 (グアム島占領 Guamutô senryô)

Fujita Tsuguji 藤田嗣治

Thousand-Stitch Belts, 1937 (千人針 Sen'ninbari)

Final Fighting on Attu, 1943(アッツ島玉砕 Atsutô gyokusai)

Battle on the Bank of the Haluha, Nomonhan, 1941 (哈爾哈河畔之戦闘 Haruha kahan
no sentô)

Desperate Struggle of an Unit in New Guinea, 1943 (〇〇部隊の死闘ニューギニア
Aru butai no sitô Nyûginia sensen)

Compatriots on Saipan Island Remain Faithful to the End, 1945 (サイパン島同胞臣節
を全うす Saipantô dôhō shinsetsu wo mattôsu)

Hashimoto Yaoji 橋本八百二

Kôtai jikan, 1930(交代時間 New shift)

Desperate Fighting of Ôtsu Unit on Saipan, 1944 (サイパン島大津部隊の奮戦
Saipantô Ôtsu butai no funsen)

Ihara Usaburô 伊原宇三郎

Japanese Marching into Mandalay and Burmese Corporation, 1942 (マンダレー入城と
ビルマ人の協力 Mandarê nyûjô to birumajin no kyôryoku)

Ishii Hakutei 石井柏亭

Patrol on the Russo-Manchurian Border, 1944 (西部蘇滿国境警備 Seibu soman kokkyô keibi)

Ishikawa Toraji 石川寅治

Transoceanic Aggression, 1941 (渡洋爆撃 Toyô bakugeki)

Kanokogi Takeshirô 鹿子木孟郎

The Battle of Mukden, 1925 (日露役奉天戦 Nichiroeki Hôten sen)

Kawabata Ryûshi 川端龍子

Those who Control the Oceans, 1936 (海洋を制するもの Kaiyô wo seisuru mono)

Kawamura Kiyoo 川村清雄

Shintenfu Hall, 1931 (振天府 Shintenfu)

Kobayakawa Tokushirô 小早川篤四郎

"Houston" Sunk by a Destroyer off Batavia, 1942 (我が駆逐艦敵重巡ヒューストンを襲撃 Waga kuchikukan tekisen "Hyûsuton" wo syûgeki)

Kobayashi Kiyochika 小林清親

Second Army attacks Port Arthur, 1894 (第二軍旅順港攻撃之図 Dainigun Ryojun-kô kôgeki no zu)

Koiso Ryôhei 小磯良平

Marching through Niangzi-guan, 1941 (娘子関を征く Shôshikan wo yuku)
Independence Ceremony of Burma, 1944 (ビルマ独立式典図 Biruma dokuritsu shikiten zu)

Koyama Shôtârô 小山正太郎

The Japanese Army's Attack on Pyongyang in the Sino-Japanese War, 1896 (日清戦争平壤攻撃図 Nisshin Sensô Heijô kôgeki zu)

Matsui Noboru 松井昇

Mementoes, 1895 (かたみ Katami)

Matsuzaka Kô 松坂康

Capture of Wake Island II, 1942 (ウェーキ島攻略戦 Uêkitô kôryakusen)

Mikuriya Jun'ichi 御厨純一

Air Battle off New Guinea, 1942 (ニューギニア沖東方敵機動部隊強襲 Nyûginia oki tohôteki kidôbutai kyôsyû)

Mitsutani Kunishirô 満谷国四郎

Battlefield Death of Officer Hayashi, 1897 (林大尉戦死 Hayashi taii sensi no zu, figure)

Miwa Chôsei 三輪晁勢

Attack on Cavite Naval Base, 1942 (キャビテ軍港攻撃 Kyabite gunkô kôgeki)

Miyamoto Saburô 宮本三郎

Fierce Fighting near Nicholson, Hong Kong, 1942 (香港ニコルソン附近の激戦 Honkon nikoruson fukin no gekisen)

The Meeting of General Yamashita and General Percival, 1942 (山下、パーシバル両司令官会見図 Yamashita Pâsibaru ryôshireikan kaiken zu)

Attack on Nanyuan, Beijing, 1941 (南苑攻撃 Nan'en kôgeki)

We'll Never Cease to Fight till Our Enemies Cease to Be, 1943 (撃ちてし止まむ Uchiteshi yamamu)

Nakamura Fusetsu 中村不折

The Battle of the Japan Sea, 1928 (日露役日本海海戦 Nichiroeki Nihonkai kaisen)

Nakamura Ken'ichi 中村研一

T-junction at the Shining Gate, 1937 (光華門丁字路 Kôkamon tejiro)

Kota Baru, 1942 (コタバル Kota baru)

Sea Battle off Malaya, 1942 (マレー沖海戦 Marê oki kaisen)

Ogawara Shû 小川原脩

Bombing Chengdu Airfield, 1945 (成都爆撃 Seito bakugeki)

Satô Kei 佐藤敬

Deadly Battle in New Guinea, 1943 (ニューギニア戦線密林の死闘 Nyûginia sensen-mitsurin no sitô)

Shimizu Toshi 清水登之

Engineer's Bridge Construction in Malaya, 1944 (工兵隊架橋作業 Kôheitai kakyô sagyô)

Suzuki Ryôzô 鈴木良三

Evacuation of the Wounded and the Hardworking Relief Unit, 1943 (患者護送と救護班の苦心 Kanja gosô to kyûgohan no kusin)

Tôjô Shôtârô 東城鉦太郎

Admiral Tôgô and His Officers on the Bridge of Battleship Mikasa, 1905 (三笠艦橋の東郷大将以下 Mikasa kankyô no Tôgô taishô ika)

Tsuruta Gorô 鶴田吾郎

Paratroops Descending on Palembang, 1942 (神兵パレンバンに降下す Shinpei Parenban ni kôkasu)

Yamaguchi Hôshun 山口蓬春

Final Attack on Hong Kong Island, 1942 (香港島最後の総攻撃図 Honkontô saigo no sôkôgeki zu)

Yasuda Yukihiro 安田靱彦

Admiral Yamamoto on December 8, 1941, 1944 (十二月八日の山本元帥 Jûnigatsu yôka no Yamamoto gensui)

GLOSSARY

Glossary

Akiyama Kunio 秋山邦雄
Amaterasu Omikami 天照大神
Arai Shôri 新井勝利
Araki Hideo 荒城季夫
Arisugawa Taruhito 有栖川熾仁
Asahi shinbun 朝日新聞
Asai Chû 浅井忠
Bansho shirabesho 蕃書調所
banzai 万歳
bijutsu 美術
Bijutsu shinsetsu 美術真説
Bijutsu tenrankai toriatsukai yôkô 美術展覧会取扱要綱
biwa hōshi 琵琶法師
bunka kunshō 文化勲章
Bungeika 文芸課
Bunkabu 文化部
Chian ijihō 治安維持法
chûi 中尉
chûken 中堅
Chûhō kōron 中央公論
chûsa 中佐
daijōsai 大嘗祭
Dainikikai 第二紀会
Dainippon eiga kyōkai 大日本映画協会
Dainippon kaiyō bijutsu kyōkai 大日本海洋美術協会
Dainippon kaiyō bijutsu tenrankai 大日本海洋美術展覧会
Dainippon kōkū bijutsu kyōkai 大日本航空美術協会
Dainippon rikugun jūgungaka kyōkai 大日本陸軍従軍画家協会
daitōa kyōeiken 大東亜共栄圏
Daitōa senshō bijutsu tenrankai 大東亜戦争美術展覧会
evento イベント
Ezaki Kōhei 江崎孝坪
Fujishima Takeji 藤島武二
Fujita Tsuguji 藤田嗣治

Fuku-chan フクちゃん
Fuku-chan butai フクちゃん部隊
funsen 奮戦
Gagakukyoku 画学局
Gahô kôryô 画法綱領
Gato rikai 画図理解
Geijutsuinshô 芸術院賞
geijutsusei 芸術性
gekitô 激闘
Goseda Hôryû 五姓田芳柳
Goseda Yoshimatsu 五姓田義松
goshin'ei 御真影
goshintai 御真体
gunki monogatari 軍紀物語
gyokusai 玉砕
Hakubakai 白馬会
Hakubutsukankyoku 博物館局
hakuheisen 白兵戦
hankan-hanmin 半官半民
Harada Naojirô 原田直次郎
Hashimoto Gahô 橋本雅邦
Hashimoto Kansetsu 橋本関雪
Hashimoto Yaoji 橋本八百二
Heigakuryô 兵学寮
Hino Ashihei 日野葦平
Hishida Shunsô 菱田春草
hôdôhan'in 報道班員
Hokushi teikoku shireibu 北支帝国司令部
Hômotsu torishirabekyoku 宝物取調局
Honda Kinkichirô 本多錦吉郎
ichioku gyokusai 一億玉砕
ichiryû 一流
Ihara Usaburô 伊原宇三郎
imon gaka 慰問画家
Inoue Shirô 井上司朗
Ishii Hakutei 石井柏亭
Ishikawa Toraji 石川寅治
Itagaki Taisuke 板垣退助
Jiji shinpô 時事新報
Jinmu tennô 神武天皇
jissô 実相

Jôdoshû 浄土宗
Jôhokyoku 情報局
jûchin 重鎮
jûgungaka 従軍画家
junkô 巡幸
Kaigun 海軍
Kaigun gunji fukyûbu 海軍軍事普及部
Kaigun jûgun gaka kurabu 海軍従軍画家倶楽部
kaijô geijutsu 会場芸術
Kaiyô bijutsukai 海洋美術会
Kamigôri Takashi 上郡卓
kamikaze 神風
Kamikaze tokubetsu kôgekitai 特別攻撃隊 abbreviated to Tokkôtai 特攻隊
Kanazawa bijutsu kôgei daigaku 金沢美術工芸大学
Kanda 神田
Kanô Hôgai 狩野芳崖
Kanokogi Takeshirô 鹿子木孟郎
Kansai bijutsuin 関西美術院
kassen emaki 合戦絵巻
Kawabata gagakkô Kawabata Painting School 川端画学校
Kawabata Ryûshi 川端龍子
Kawakami Tôgai 川上冬崖
Kawamura Kiyoo 川村清雄
Kawase Hideharu 河瀬秀治
Keihokyoku 警保局
Ken'etsuka 検閲課
kennôga 献納画
kessen 決戦
Kessen bijutsu tenrankai 決戦美術展覧会
Kigen nisen-roppyaku-nen hôshuku bijutsu tenrankai 紀元2600年奉祝美術展覧会
Kiritsu kôshô kaisha 起立工商会社
kirokusei 記録性
Kishida Kunio 岸田国土
Kita Renzô 北蓮蔵
Kobayakawa Tokushirô 小早川篤四郎
Kobayashi Kiyochika 小林清親
Kôbu bijutsu gakkô 工部美術学校
Kôbushô 工部省
kôgeki 攻撃
Koiso Ryôhei 小磯良平
Kojiki 古事記

kôkoku shikan 皇国史観
kokubô kokka 国防国家
kokuhô 国宝
kokutai 国体
Kokutai no hongî 国体の本義
Konoe Fumimaro 近衛文麿
kôsôga 構想画
Kôtô shihan gakkô 高等師範学校
Koyama Shôtarô 小山正太郎
Kuki Ryûichi 九鬼隆一
Kunaishô 宫内省
Kunisawa Shinkurô 国沢新九郎
Kurihara Shin 栗原信
Kuroda Seiki 黒田清輝
Kuroda Senkichirô 黒田千吉郎
Kusunoki Masashige 楠木正成
Kyôiku chokugo 教育勅語
Maruki Riyô 丸木利陽
Matsuda Genji 松田源治
Matsuda kaiso 松田改組
Matsui Iwane 松井石根
Matsui Noboru 松井昇
Matsuoka Hisashi 松岡寿
Matsuzaka Kô 松坂康
Meiji bijutsukai 明治美術会
Meiji jingû seitoku kinen kaigakan 明治神宮聖徳記念絵画館
Mikuriya Jun'ichi 御厨純一
Mitsutani Kunishirô 満谷国四郎
Miwa Chôsei 三輪晁勢
Miwa Rin 三輪鄰
Miyamoto Saburô 宮本三郎
Monbushô 文部省
Monbushô bijutsu tenrankai 文部省美術展覧会 abbreviated to Bunten 文展
Mori Ôgai 森鷗外
Naikaku jôhokyoku 内閣情報局
Naikaku jôhobu 内閣情報部
Naikoku kaiga kyôshinkai 内国絵画共進会
Naikoku kangyô hakurankai 内国勸業博覧会
Nakamura Fusetsu 中村不折
Nakamura Ken'ichi 中村研一
Nanba 難波

nihonga 日本画
nihonka 日本化
Nihongaka hôkokukai 日本画家報国会
Nihon bijutsu hôkokukai 日本美術報国会
Nihon bijutsu oyobi kôgei tōsei kyōkai 日本美術及び工芸統制協会
Nihon bijutsuin 日本美術院
Nihon shoki 日本書紀
Nihon shuppan bunka kyōkai 日本出版文化協会
Nikakai 二科会
nikawa 膠
nikudan 肉弾
Ninigi no Mikoto 瓊瓊杵尊
nishikie 錦絵
Noda Hideo 野田英夫
Nōshōmushō 農商務省
Ogawara Shū 小川原脩
ōgoshō 大御所
Okakura Tenshin 岡倉天心
Okamoto Tōki 岡本唐貴
Ōkura Kihachirō 大蔵喜八郎
Ōkurashō 大蔵省
panorama パノラマ
puroretaria bijutsu プロレタリア美術
puroretaria bijutsu daitenrankai プロレタリア美術大展覧会
Puroretaria geijutsu renmei プロレタリア芸術連盟
rekishiga 歴史画
Rikugun 陸軍
Rikugun bijutsu kyōkai 陸軍美術協会
Rikugun bijutsu tenrankai 陸軍美術展覧会
Rikugun hōdōbu 陸軍報道部
Rikugun sakusen kirokuga tenrankai 陸軍作戦記録画展覧会
rokudō-e 六道絵
Ryūchikai 龍池会
saikan hōkoku undō 彩管報国運動
Satake Shozan 佐竹曙山
Satō Kei 佐藤敬
Seiryūsha 青龍社
seisen 聖戦
Seisen bijutsu tenrankai 聖戦美術展覧会
Seiyō gadan 西洋画談
sekishi 赤子

Senji tokubetsu bunten 戦時特別文展
Senkyoku no genkyô ni sokuô suru hôdô senden yôryô 戦局の現況に即応する報道宣伝要領
senmetsu 殲滅
senninbari 千人針
sensô sakusen kirokuga 戦争作戦記録画
sensôga 戦争画
shajitsu 写真
Shiba Kôkan 司馬江漢
Shimada Bokusen 島田墨仙
Shimizu Toshi 清水登之
Shimomura Kanzan 下村観山
Shina jihen 支那事変
Shina jihen kinenga 支那事変記念画
Shinanobashi yôga kenkyûjo 信濃橋洋画研究所
shinbunhan 新聞班
shinka 臣下
shinkoku 神国
Shinkyô bijutsuin 新京美術院
Shinkyôgoku 新京極
Shinmin no michi 臣民の道
Shinseisakuha kyôkai 新制作派協会
Shintaisei 新体制
shisôga 思想画
shokusan kôgyô 殖産興業
Shômukyoku 商務局
sitô 死闘
Sumi Kiyoshi 住喜代志
Suzuki Kurazô 鈴木庫三
Suzuki Ryôzô 鈴木良三
Taiheiyôgakai 大平洋画会
taii 大尉
tairan 台覧
Taisei yokusan-kai 大政翼賛会
Takahashi Yuichi 高橋由一
Takezaki Suenaga 竹崎季長
Tamura Kônosuke 田村孝之介
Teikoku bijutsuin 帝国美術院
Teikoku bijutsuin tenrankai 帝国美術展覧会 abbreviated to Teiten 帝展
Teikoku geijutsuin 帝国芸術院
Teikoku gekijô 帝国劇場
Teikoku gikai 帝国議会

Teikoku kyôiku 帝国教育
Teishitsu gigeiin seido 帝室技芸員制度
Teishitsu hakubutsukan 帝室博物館
tennô 天皇
Tenpanrei 典範令
tenran 天覧
tenshin” 転進
Tenshin dôjô 天真道場
Tôgô Heihachirô 東郷平八郎
Tôjô Shôtarô 東城鈺太郎
tokonoma 床の間
Tokugawa Iesato 徳川家達
Tokyo bijutsu gakkô 東京美術学校
tonarigumi 隣組
totsugeki 突撃
Toyama Masakazu 戸山正一
Tsuruta Gorô 鶴田吾郎
Uchiteshi yamamu 撃ちてし止まむ
Ueno 上野
ukiyoe 浮世絵
wakon yôsai 和魂洋才
Yabe Tomoe 矢部友衛
Yamada Shin'ichi 山田新一
Yamaguchi Hôshun 山口蓬春
Yamamoto Hôsui 山本芳翠
Yamanouchi Ichirô 山内一郎
Yamataka Nobutsura 山高信離
Yanagi Ryô 柳亮
Yanase Masamu 柳瀬正夢
Yasuda Yukihiko 安田靫彦
yôga 洋画
Yokoyama Matsusaburô 横山松三郎
Yokoyama Taikan 横山大観
Yoshioka Kenji 吉岡堅二
zashiki 座敷
Zôkei 造型

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