

Ishimaru SHŌUN 石丸正運 et al. *Ōtsu-e: Kaidō ni umareta minga* 大津絵—
—街道に生まれた民画 [*Ōtsu-e: Folk pictures born along the road-
way*]. Kyoto: Kōrinsha, 1991. 315 pages. 129 color plates, 230 b/w
illustrations, notes, historical table, bibliography. Hardcover
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The postscript to the 1987 edition of *Ōtsu-e: Kaidō ni umareta minga* commented that, despite the illuminating insights offered in the many works on *ōtsu-e* paintings, an overall view of this artistic tradition had yet to appear. The present volume, a deluxe edition of the 1987 work, is an attempt to answer this need. Photographs of *ōtsu-e* images from collections throughout Japan were combined with essays on the genre by seven researchers to produce an impressive volume containing 129 full-color plates and 230 black-and-white images. All color plates are accompanied by captions, transcribed inscriptions, and explanatory notes. The black-and-white illustrations have short captions; the inscriptions are transcribed in a separate section.

The articles are of two types. One type is rather general in nature, while the other deals with more specific topics. The general essays are: Ono Tadashige's "Ōtsu-e kō" [*Ōtsu-e* research], 222-42; Katagiri Shūzō's "Ōtsu-e no shokenkyū" [Various studies on *ōtsu-e*], 243-56; and Ishimaru Shōun's "Ōtsu-e no furusato" [The homeland of *ōtsu-e*], 257-62. The shorter articles on specific topics are: Katagiri Shūzō's "Ōtsu-e bi kōsetsu" [Considerations on the beauty of *ōtsu-e*], 264-67; Makioka Ashihira's "Ōtsu-e o miru mikata" [How to view *ōtsu-e*], 268-72; Suehiro Yukiyo's "Ōtsu-e no 'jūsanbutsu' ni tsuite" [The *ōtsu-e* thirteen Buddha pictures], 273-76; Tokuriki Tomikichirō's "Ōtsu-e no gihō" [The technique of *ōtsu-e*], 277-80; Makioka Ashihira's "Yashinaigusa to *ōtsu-e*" [Educational cartoons and *ōtsu-e*], 281-82; and Nakagami Ryōta's "Ukiyo-e hanga to *ōtsu-e*" [Ukiyo painting and *ōtsu-e*], 283-86.

Ono Tadashige discusses the background and development of the *ōtsu-e* from the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries. The name *ōtsu-e* derives from the town of Ōtsu, a community at the southern tip of Lake Biwa that was the last station on the old Tōkaidō before one reached Kyoto. On the outskirts of the town the road forked, with one branch leading to Kyoto and the other to the more southerly area of Fushimi. It was in shops near this fork that the *ōtsu-e* paintings were produced, giving rise to an earlier alternative name of *oiwaake-e* (fork pictures). The place is still marked by a sign. These shops are already mentioned in the *Ōmi yochi shiryaku* of 1734, and pictures of them appear in early- and mid-Edo illustrative scrolls, such as the *Ise sangū meisho zue* of 1797.

The first *ōtsu-e* are believed to have been produced in the middle of the seventeenth century or slightly earlier, but some writers place the date as late as the second half of the seventeenth century (243). Dated prints from this early period are not extant, however. It is generally agreed that the early *ōtsu* images were largely Buddhist in content. It is hard to imagine that *giga* or *manga* (cartoon) images might have preceded these Buddhist images (244-45). Some scholars have suggested that the appearance of these popular, quickly produced Buddhist images was connected with the persecution of Christianity—house searches for hidden Christians supposedly made it necessary to display Buddhist images to prove one's Buddhist faith. But there is little evidence to support such a Christian connection, and the earliest records of *ōtsu* Buddhist images are from no earlier than the 1660s, decades after the Christian persecution.

Three basic features characterized the *ōtsu-e*. First, they were a mass-produced local product sold, as mentioned above, at a well-known intersection near Ōtsu. Second, their subject matter was characterized in the early phase by an emphasis on Buddhist themes, and later by a wide variety of folk heroes, Shinto kami, sages, and demons; popular women appearing in ukiyo-e became part of the *ōtsu-e* repertoire in the eighteenth century, and didactic poems were added in the genre's final phase. Thirdly, throughout the history of the

ōtsu-e there is a consistency in the manner of production. One or more sheets of handmade paper (called *amakotorinoko* or *maniaigami*) were used, and stencils were employed for areas of color. At times the images were partially wood-block printed, but final finishing was almost always done with brush and ink to add lively strokes emphasizing shape and outline.

It remains difficult to explain the apparently sudden rise of *ōtsu-e* in the middle of the seventeenth century. There may be a connection between the *ōtsu* images and those produced for pilgrims in the *monzenmachi* (temple neighborhoods) outside the gates of large Buddhist complexes like Higashi Hongan-ji in Kyoto. During the construction of this temple certain of its tradesmen were relocated to the Ōtsu Domain under the direct control of the Bakufu (269). Known for their use of stencils, these craftsmen may have had an impact on *ōtsu-e* production.

Attempts have been made to connect the *ōtsu-e* pictorial tradition with such well-known schools of painting as the Kanō, Tosa, and Rinpa traditions, and it has been suggested — apparently without foundation — that Iwata Matabei (1578–1650) originated the genre. It is difficult, however, to link any of the established schools of painting with the *ōtsu-e*, given the latter's mixed use of media (from stencils to block printing to brush and ink) and its great variety of subject matter. Neither can a single founder be credited with this mass product.

Judging from the available images, it is clear that the makers had contact with a wide variety of traditions. They used and popularized Buddhist imagery and vividly depicted the heroes of Japanese folklore. The *ōtsu-e* tradition also shares with other Japanese schools a derivation from Yamato painting, and it is upon the classical Yamato style more than any other that the *ōtsu-e* prints rely in their popular and humorous presentation of many of the formal themes of Japanese painting. Indeed, the steady popularity of the *ōtsu-e* over a period of some two hundred years may have been due to the printmakers' skill in utilizing so many readily recognized traditions. A good number of the *ōtsu-e*, especially in the later period of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, were copied from the popular and widely distributed printed cartoons and caricatures (*ga* and *manga*).

At the end of the nineteenth century the traffic patterns changed — the shops at the intersection were bypassed by the railroad and there were no longer any buyers for the *ōtsu-e*. Like so many other local customs, the *ōtsu-e* became the victim of trains and highways.

The book ends with a very useful calendar of important events in the history of the *ōtsu-e* and an extended bibliography. Altogether the contributors succeed admirably in their effort to provide an overall view of the history and significance of the *ōtsu-e*. This is a volume that should be on the shelves of every library and serious collector of *ōtsu-e*.

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KAYANO, SHIGERU. *Our Land Was a Forest: An Ainu Memoir*. Translated by Kyoko Selden and Lili Selden. Transitions: Asia and Asian America. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1994. xv + 172 pages. Maps, figures, photographs, glossary. Hardcover US\$44.95; ISBN 0-8133-1707-X. Paper US\$14.95; ISBN 0-8133-1880-7.

Kayano Shigeru, the author of *Our Land Was a Forest: An Ainu Memoir*, is a member of the Japanese Parliament. An Ainu himself, he is regarded not only as an authority on Ainu matters but as a virtual embodiment of the Ainu culture — he is the “Ainu personified.” His book constitutes an important document on Ainu material culture, life-styles, beliefs, and ideologies, and is a most fascinating account of a people and their ways. This translation now provides the English-speaking student of the Ainu people with a unique opportunity to