The Evolution of Drawing Education in Modern Japan
The Impact of Traditional and Introduced Methods on the Artworks of Elementary Students in the Meiji Era

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The Meiji era: days of westernization

Contemporary Japan is said to have started in 1868 when Meiji Emperor declared the founding of a new government following the termination of Tokugawa *Shoguns*' sovereignty since the beginning of the seventeenth century. Subsequently, extensive policies in order to replace social organizations of the 'ancien regime' with those in the Western style were announced and carried out in very rapid succession. Academic researchers review the series of historic events around this change under the title of the Meiji, or Imperial, Restoration, though people of those days just simply called it *go-isshin*, or renewals.

While, in our previous paper, *Drawing Education in the late 19th Century: The Case of Japan*,[1] discussions were centered on the introduction of such renewals to the art world by giving prominence to leading art educators or teaching-system organizers, the primary focus of this article is set in the opposite orientation: the ways and reasons they were accepted by the population, with particular attention being given to artworks of ordinary elementary students.

Before starting further discussion, brief and general explanations should be given about the Meiji era, around which our historical examinations are to be made. The

1 Akagi/Yamaguchi 2015.

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era initiated on October 23, 1868 when the newly enthroned Emperor proclaimed its beginning, and lasted until July 30, 1912, or the day of his death. Along the Imperial Court's expectations toward a new age, the era name, written in Japanese as 明 (*mei*) and 治 (*ji*), was carefully chosen, with specific meanings original to each of the Chinese characters being considered, as the former (明) implies brightness or enlightenment while the latter (治) is used to describe governance or well-orderedness. In effect, the era was to witness the most massive and fundamental changes in Japan's history of social administration. In the beginning, modern systems of the then Great Powers were quickly imported to more critical fields, such as law, medicine, and engineering as well as education, and finally the scope of the renewals was expanded so far as to cover almost entire domains of social life. It would show how successfully the government ran through the initial phase for catching up with the West, however, as told in historical records of other developing countries, a more difficult phase was always imminent after new institutions were launched, that is, the phase of running them properly.

The Meiji government, proficient in seeing the future, had been well aware that the smooth passing of the subsequent phase should depend on the realization of a properly trained workforce available in modern organizations to be newly built. Thus as early as at its starting point, an unconventional principle in assigning professional functions had been announced. The principle, seen by the government as favorable in the new phase, is described as "meritocracy" by sociologists today.[2] In the period preceding the Meiji era, named historically as Edo, the lifelong career of a person was largely determined by which family he had been born into, without sufficient attention to his ability or merit, in the same way as in the medieval period in Europe. This rule of occupational succession was strictest in the case of *samurai*, whose duty was inherited by generations, and the classification and rank of their assigned job was usually unchanged. The title of *samurai*, as well known even by foreign researchers, was traditionally given to military officers, but a more precise understanding of their functions is now necessary that they were also assigned tasks of peacetime administration, given primary importance in the seventeenth-nineteenth centuries when no large-scale battle occurred in Japan.

Using a sociological idea again, the government's new assignment principle is explained as an introduction of the "rule of achievement" in filling a post, which can be rephrased, from a viewpoint of applicants, that they could attain an upper rank of social position according to their skills worthy in the new age. And thereafter, Japanese people were heated up to acquire "modern" skills, and quickly opened schools of Western studies abounded with the aspired youth.

2 The term *meritocracy* was coined by Young 1958. Although Young himself described the world of "meritocracy" with harmful implications, the word is today used as more neutral terminology, usually without negative nuances.

Focusing on art education, as early as in 1876 the government launched a professional art institute, named Kobu Bijutsu Gakko, as a branch of the National Ministry of Industry,[3] with a painter and a sculptor being invited from Italy to instruct the authentic style of the European academy, besides private Western-art studios then appearing countrywide. Students of such new schools, many of whom were not born into artists' family, entertained a strong sense of mission to fulfill a role through art in the days of renewals, while, in the preceding Edo period, picture making was mostly regarded as mere accomplishments or hobbies in high society.

And in the arena of elementary education, the government announced a plan via the 1872's decree entitled 学制 (*Gakusei* or The Education System) to spread a two-stage system of schooling nationwide, with the lower, and obligatory, elementary schools being built for the 1st–4th graders and the upper ones for the 5th–8th graders. Referring to art education, the decree also provides that drawing instruction be mandatory in the upper schools, though optional in the lower ones. Nonetheless, whatever its stipulations might say magnificently, there still remained many difficulties toward their realization. Above all, some good fee was charged for elementary schooling because of the limited budget of the then local governments, and thus, even in the second decade of the Meiji era (1878–1887), its official enrollment rate was stagnating on the level of 40 to 50%, which suggests, as a matter of fact, that the real attenders' rate was much lower, reported around 30%. That is to say the obligatory schooling system was being gradually established through the end of the Meiji era (1912), when the enrollment rate finally reached nearly 100%.

In this paper, two sets of elementary-level artworks are introduced: those in the early Meiji era and those in its last stage, examined in chapters 2 and 3 respectively. A comparison of the two would be a meaningful illustration of the progress in art education of the era as the former consists of pictures made when elementary schooling was a privilege for a small number of children, in contrast to those within the latter, representing the realization of the 'universal' elementary education.

Aspirations of art learners in the Early Meiji era

The over-expecting youth of early maturity in Eisai Shin-shi

A major focus of this chapter is set on 穎才新誌 (*Eisai Shin-shi* or New Journal for the Excellent), first published in 1877. It is a unique journal in that almost all the pages were devoted to print literal and visual works contributed by the underage, which were various enough to comprehend such essays from recommendations for urgent social

3 The most elaborate article in English was made on the institute in Amagai 2003. Also, in Japanese: Kaneko 1997.

problems and down to reports of striking experiences in their school and family life, as well as creations in literature and art.[4] Out of the twenty-four-year span of its publication, our attention is narrowed toward its earliest six years (1877–1882) as those years were a period when the first generation was enrolled in newly launched elementary schools of the Western style.

The journal's mission statement, printed in its first number, says as follows:

> Recently, the progress of civilization is accelerated by an increasing number of schools, and much more diligent students everywhere in the country, both male and female, are being encouraged by decent teachers to make public their works, such as essays, opinions, poems, or the like, some of which catch discerning eyes of adults. Thus the journal shall take a mission in the nationwide discovery of those children with amazing excellence, thereby proving a far-reaching glorious influence of the Emperor's reign.[5]

A specific investigation into the journal should be started with a remark sent by a thirteen-year-old contributor named Okuda Kan'nosuke complaining that too much importance was given to visual works in the journal:

> Writing predominates over making calligraphies and images… Pictures are nothing but copies of things… Thus, even if it is appreciated that the journal is pursuing various educational goals, what benefit should be found in calligraphies and pictures on the journal in order to promote the growth of the youth? Literal works are always useful in that they enlighten readers and help writers improve their skills of expression, but you could get nothing from its visual

4 The first publication of 穎才新誌 (*Eisai Shin-shi* or New Journal for the Excellent) was made by a company located in Tokyo, named *Seishi-bunsha*, in March, 1877, with four pages of nearly A4 size folded like a tabloid journal today, though the name of the publisher, the size and the number of pages were to change later. The journal had been issued almost weekly for about twenty years since its start, but afterward, faded gradually through the final issue, in June, 1901, no. 1, 149. Little exact proof remains to tell how many copies were sold, however, its entrenched popularity among the youth was witnessed by its many contemporaries, and records show that many copies were ordered countrywide by mail. Owing to its uniqueness, many researchers are continually studying the journal, some examples of whom are shown in Note 9. The set of photo reprints of the almost whole numbers, published by *Fuji-shuppan* in 1991–1993, are now available, with their extra volume remarking on its general historical significance.

5 方今學校ノ盛ナル開明ノ速ナル教師訓導ノ方正生徒男女ノ勉勵日ニ月ニ増進シ作文問題詩歌等識見人ノ意表ニ出テ穎才眞ニ可驚者往々諸方ニ輩出駢布セリ遍ク之ヲ全國ニ求メ聖代ノ光輝ヲ無疆ニ徇トス, Anonymous 1877. Unfortunately, no texts of the journal are available in foreign languages, thus all the articles shown here are translated from Japanese by the authors.

> contributions other than obscure impressions that it might be well made considering the age of the creator.[6]

Although this attack by Okuda against the significance of artworks by the amateur youth caused major refutations in the journal, investigated in the next section, our discussion should be continued on the journal itself.

A distinct feature is that its many young contributors' behavior, including that of Okuda, showed more maturity than is expected for their age.[7] For example, if no information was given about the age of the writer of the text above, it would be easily misunderstood as having been written by an adult as it is a respectable manifestation of the writer's belief on fairly public affairs rather than a simple impression on daily commonplace events, as often found in essays assigned in elementary schools today. And that is also true in the images submitted to the journal, the creators of which were obviously rivaling with adults in showing their skills in pictures (see the images in the next section). In addition, considering the fact that certain school names are found more frequently in the profiles of its contributors, it is suggested that their early maturities were cherished consistently by ambitious school teachers and other adults, who might have been seeking chances to show their excellence to the public.

The uniqueness of the journal was so proudly recognized by the Meiji government that it was exhibited in 1878's World Exposition held in Paris, in order to demonstrate educational improvements in Japan.[8] And even to this day, the journal attracts many researchers, most of whom study it in relation to a prevalent fashion of discourse in the early Meiji era.[9] Further, the fact should be also emphasized that the government was then relatively tolerant in the freedom of speech, though watchful for excessive denials of its legitimacy. More precisely, the government is seen to have been determining its orientation with careful attention to those political opinions formed even in a private world. Accordingly, people of those days, both upper and lower, were enthusiastic in stating and exchanging their expectations toward the age of renewals, the bases of

6 文章ハ大事ナリ書画ハ小事ナリ[...]画ノ如キハ物形ヲ模寫スルニ過キス[...]穎才新誌ノ趣意ハ數件アリト雖モ[...]要スルニ兒童ノ教育ヲ裨補セント欲スルニ出テズ然ルニ書画ノ如キ者ヲ載セテ何ノ益カアル文章ノ如キハ一讀スレバ必ス一讀ノ功アリテ文章ノ才ヲ増益シ且知識ヲ開導ス書画ニ至テハ唯年齢不相應ニ巧ミナリト賞スルニ過サルノミ, Okuda 1878. Okuda's original Japanese text is written in such a highly rhetorical style that it is very hard to translate it with the delicate aura, which is also true in the other contributor's essays quoted later in this chapter.

7 Speaking additionally, careful attention is required concerning the age of Okuda and other contributors of the journal as the traditional way of counting a person's age is different from the universal one known today by which a newborn child is aged one, instead of zero, and he or she gets one year older on every New Year's Day. Thus, Okuda, stated to be 13 years old in the journal, might be around 11 years old conforming to today's practice.

8 A report of the Paris Exposition is found in Kuki 1878.

9 Two names are noteworthy among researchers today: a distinguished sociologist, Takeuchi 2005, and a pioneer in Japan's social history of literature, Maeda 2001.

which were usually drawn from spoken or written comments of forerunners, readily accessible in commoners' daily life. It is in such historical backgrounds that the journal was welcomed by many ambitious young readers, who were given the chance to appeal the potentials of their knowledge and skills. Generally speaking, in a society where various and sometimes contradicting alternatives are possible in its future, foreseeing visions must be more necessary for the youth as more uncertainty awaits them than adults. It is stated, thus, that readers of the journal were quite seriously arguing the desired futures in the age of renewals, just because they were young, rather than saying "although they were young."

Foreseen values in creating pictures

Now a specific inspection should be offered of the artworks in 穎才新誌 (*Eisai Shin-shi* or New Journal for the Excellent). The most frequently depicted objects are plants, among which the traditional "four nobles" (orchid, chrysanthemum, plum blossom, and bamboo) are especially favored, while other motifs are also found, such as human figures, landscapes, animals, or the like. In most of them, the styles and techniques taken over from the periods prior to the Westernization are emphasized, as 173 out of 191 images printed between 1877 and 1882 can be classified as traditional ink paintings or drawings, three examples of which are shown as *» Figures 1, 2 and 3*.

Their maturity is quite distinctive,[10] which would be partly explained, here again, by the fact that a choice of attending elementary schools was allowed only for a selected class of children.

In Figure 1, a boy is depicted as he is about to draw something, perhaps a self-portrait of the creator. Furthermore, it is an example of a traditional combination-work of an image and a poem, both of which had been regarded to be equally indispensable for genuine *literati*.[11] Then, a notable virtue of the journal should be mentioned that

10 Two difficulties should be noted in discussing the originality of the pictures in 穎才新誌 (*Eisai Shin-shi* or New Journal for the Excellent): first, art beginners of those days, including the journal's contributors of artworks, must have usually been provided with printed or depicted models to be copied through which they were expected to learn established styles and techniques. In the Meiji era, such copying practices, developed in the long history of teaching art in Japan, were still respected in instructing not only traditional pictures but those Westernized. Secondly, the images on the journal were reproduced by woodblock printing, thus it is correct that they are not true images made by children's own hand, with skills of woodcutters involved. Despite the difficulties, the significance of the journal's artworks is seen to be nevertheless unquestioned as no more vivid artworks made by the unnamed skillful youth of those days can easily be found today.

11 More precisely speaking, *literati,* distinguished as orthodox in those areas under the influence of the pan-Chinese tradition, including Japan, Korea or the like, were required to cultivate such compound competence as to express an aesthetic inspiration with well depicted pictures

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Fig. 1 Drawing Child, created by a 7-year-old resident of Hyogo Prefecture named Kuroda Risaburo, in: 穎才新誌 (*Eisai Shin-shi* or New Journal for the Excellent), 121 (June 28, 1879), p. 1.

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Fig. 2 Bamboo, created by an 11-year-old named Fukuda (no information on the given name and residence), in: 穎才新誌 (*Eisai Shin-shi* or New Journal for the Excellent), 77 (August 24, 1878), p. 1.

3

Fig. 3 Landscape,created by an 11-year-old resident of Tokyo Prefecture named Yoshikawa, Takezo, in: 穎才新誌 (*Eisai Shin-shi* or New Journal for the Excellent), 225 (September 17, 1881), p. 1.

many artworks by girls were picked up, among which Figure 2 is a superior one (see note 10 again). And it is also noticeable proof showing the survival of a usual custom in old art studios where young disciples were assigned plants as the first training subjects, with the "four nobles" being listed top. Figure 3 reflects a familiar taste in traditional landscapes, whose style, called *Nan-ga*, was most favored in the previous Edo period, with a thrifty and quiet life of noblemen nested in the grandeur of nature being appre-

and well written words at a time. It would be difficult for Western people to understand how closely the skill in making pictures was intertwined with that of making poems and calligraphy in Japan's tradition of *ars*. Thus, the arguments on art in 穎才新誌 (*Eisai Shin-shi* or New Journal for the Excellent), investigated in chap. 2, should be read with the tradition in mind, in which pictures are often paralleled with writings.

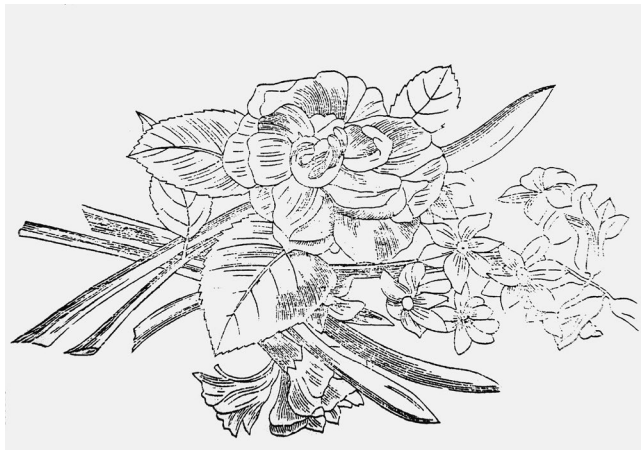

Fig. 4 Still Life, created by a 14-year-old resident of Kagoshima Prefecture named Watabe, Masami, in: 穎才新誌 (*Eisai Shin-shi* or New Journal for the Excellent), 140 (November 8, 1879), p. 1.

ciated as a prime motif. Finally, a Western-style drawing should be also introduced as » *Figure 4*, however small the number of contributions may be in the journal.

Its skillfulness is by no means inferior to the three traditional works mentioned above as a variety of flowers and leaves in a stable composition is well depicted with some shading by hatched lines.

With these and other unmentioned well-made artworks in mind, a controversy among readers of the journal arose about the significance of young people's studies in art. It was triggered by the aforementioned attack by a reader named Okuda. Three counter remarks to him are quoted as representative:

> The term of excellence generally refers to unrivaled skills or knowledge in whatever field they may be celebrated, […] and thus it is quite natural that calligraphies, pictures and essays on the consummate level be equally presented in 穎才新誌 [*Eisai Shin-shi* or New Journal for the Excellent].[12]

> Calligraphy is traditionally listed in "the six arts" [the six types of skill required for the educated in the pan-Chinese tradition], and likewise drawing

12 穎才トハ何ヲカ云フ曰ク總テ事物ヲ能クシ才知衆人ニ勝レテ大ニ穎怜ヲ極ムルノ故ニ非ズヤ[…]而ラハ穎才新誌ト云ヘハ書ニ因ラス画ニ依ラス文ニ依ラス總而事物ノ妙ヲ盡シタル者ヲ編成セシ新誌ヲ云フニ非ラズシテ何ゾヤ, Tatenaka 1878.

> is a universally esteemed skill. Therefore I insist that neither be neglected as much usefulness is found in them.[13]

> Nothing but pictures can allow correct imagination for unknown objects or visions. That is why images are printed in elementary textbooks […] in such subjects as literal practice, and further, reading, geography, and history. And that is also why drawing is taught in upper elementary schools.[14]

Two assumptions can be gained through examining these remarks. First the readers were probably arguing with recognition that a certain number of competent young art makers existed around them, whose talents are hardly believed to have been nurtured only through the then "modern" elementary-school curricula as the arrangements in teaching art were usually imperfect. It implies that the profuseness of the skilled youth is seen to have rather been owed to the legacy originating in the preceding Edo period, when private art instructors, either professional or amateur, had been so flourishing as to attract many underage art learners. Besides, the fact should be again emphasized that most of the journal's images are classified as traditional brush-and-ink works, in which many of young instructors trained in newly built Normal Schools might have seen a minor significance, compared to Western-style art making.

However, secondly, the reasons the readers mentioned in order to appeal the value in creating pictures are stated to have been absolutely novel, whose justifications often came down not only from the new government's statements on art instruction (see again the third remark above) but also from major art books published at the beginning of the Meiji era. As a historical truth, the youth of those days were eagerly exploring their potentials, as shown previously, and they were mature enough to approach those writings of brand-new opinion leaders, most of which were published toward adults. Another comment, showing the point well, is quoted:

> Without pictures you could not be fully trained in such advanced skills as dissecting human bodies, taking a right geographical direction, or drawing copies of a machine. If you are not proficient in making pictures by your own hand, nothing could be worked under your command without depending on others' pictures, which would also irritate you enough.[15]

13 書ハ六藝ノ一ナリ画モ天下ノ一技ナリ何レモ捨ツ可カラス予ハ書画ヲ掲載スルハ大ニ益アリトス, Matsumoto 1878.

14 物体及景色ノ實物ニ就カスシテ之ヲ想像セシムルヲ得ル画ニ非ンハ能ハス是ヲ以テ小學ニ於テ[...]單語連語ヨリ讀本地誌歴史皆圖画ヲ挿入ス且上等小學ニ画學アリ, Okada 1878.

15 夫レ人体ノ解剖地理ノ方位器械ノ形模皆圖画ニ因ラザレバ得テ知ルコヲ得可カラザルナリ今若シ自ラ圖画ヲ作ルコヲ知ザレバ必ズ手ヲ他人ニ假ラザルヲ得ズ手ヲ他人ニ假ラバ己ガ意ノ如クナラザルノミナラズ其憂煩モ亦甚シ, Asahi 1878.

Obviously, most of the text is drawn directly from the introductory section of 図法階梯 (*Zu-hou Kaitei* or Steps in Drawing Method).[16] An odd facet to be noted is that those words originally used in order to assert the prime significance of the Western-style art were re-interpreted so broadly as to justify even Eastern-style images in the journal.

Now, remembering our two assumptions at one time, it is concluded that young art learners were struggling to re-activate those drawing skills bequeathed from the ancien regime, as favorable weapons in a world of renewals. And thus the pictures in穎才新誌 (*Eisai Shin-shi* or New Journal for the Excellent) are seen to be historical proof how stubbornly the then youth were swimming with the tide of a new age.

An art world of the local youth in the last stage of Meiji: the case of Tojo Town

Elementary art education in Tojo Town

Akagi Rikako discovered a set of students' artworks of the Elementary School of Tojo, presumably made by its graduating 8th graders in 1912 (the final year of the Meiji era), and first introduced at a conference held in 2013.[17] The pictures within it would vividly represent an art world of the youth in the last stage of the Meiji era. In the history of elementary education, the period around the time when the works were made can be seen highly critically, primarily because the span of mandatory schooling was officially extended from four to six years in 1907 in response to the rising enrollment rate of elementary schools, then reaching to nearly 100%. And still more important for us is that the subject of drawing was simultaneously stipulated as a mandatory subject for

16 Kaisei Gakko 1872. Besides, some of its images are found to have been copied in artworks contributed to 穎才新誌 (*Eisai Shin-shi* or New Journal for the Excellent), including Figure 4. Some characteristics of the textbook and other influential ones for Western-style drawing are discussed in our previous paper (Akagi/Yamaguchi 2015), as significant achievements in the "dawning" phase of Japan's art education. The mentioned artworks in 穎才新誌 (*Eisai Shin-shi* or New Journal for the Excellent) were created in that phase when following the West was seen a superior goal. But before long, as also discussed in our paper, major protests against uncritical Westernizations were to appear, evoked by those trying to re-establish the Eastern values. In contrast, the pictures to be shown in the next chapter were made by those elementary students born almost 30 years later than the journal's contributors, when the question of the West vs. the East was almost solved, with a natural conclusion that each had its own advantage.

17 The set was donated by a resident of Tojo Town to Akagi, and its first presentation was made in a research session on art education history on March 27, 2013, held along the 34th Annual Conference of the Association of Art Education at Shimane University, see: Akagi 2014. Recently, artworks by unnamed, and usually unskilled, persons are being re-evaluated as historical evidence in the academic societies in Japan, partly owing to the growing influence of 'social history'.

all the elementary graders, which represents the decision of the government to universalize art instruction for all children. While specific investigations into the pictures are shown in the next section, more general explanations should be made on the historical conditions producing such artworks.

Tojo Town, reached by an approximately 100-kilometer-long railway trip from Okayama City, locates in a valley surrounded by mountains, close to the northeast edge of Hiroshima Prefecture. Today the town, with no large city nearby, is depopulating rapidly, however, a long history of its prosperities should not be forgotten as a commercial heartland of distributions of "modern" goods, among which cattle and cast-iron products were seen as illustrative of its Westernizing days.[18] Historical records on the town say that, as soon as the Meiji government announced the first vision of elementary schooling via 1872's decree (see chap. 1), many organizations for training children appeared, most of which originated from private learning houses of the former period. Besides them, the Elementary School of Tojo was established in 1879 by unifying its two predecessors, namely Seishin-sha and Teisei-sha, which had been opened in 1874 for boys' education, and in 1875 for girls' respectively. The fact that an official elementary school was started at such an early time shows that the town's leading persons were endowed with a highly progressive spirit, as funds for running local schools were then mostly raised by private benefactors. Subsequently in 1886, nearly midway point of the Meiji era (1868–1912), the government declared a new set of realistic ordinances on the school system, abolishing the preceding orders, which opened an epoch in elementary instruction with a phase of establishment after that of trial and error. Owing to the accounts made in our previous paper on the general progress in art education around the time,[19] further discussions can be allowed on daily drawing materials in that new phase.

In 1903 elementary students were obliged to use a common set of textbooks edited by the government itself, while prior to that, any books were given permission for use in classrooms as long as they were approved to conform to the official guidelines. Educational historians review it as the period of nationally edited textbooks, which lasted until 1949. As for drawing textbooks, the earliest editions were published by the Ministry of Education in 1904 under the titles of 小学鉛筆画手本 (*Shogaku Enpitsu-ga Tehon* or Copybook in Elementary Pencil Drawing) and 小学毛筆画手本 (*Shogaku Mohitsu-ga Tehon* or Copybook in Elementary Brush Drawing), and before long the definitive ones appeared: 新定画帖 (*Shin-tei Ga Cho* or New Standard Book in Drawing), with the subsets for the 3rd–6th graders being published in 1910 and those for the 7th and 8th graders in the next year.

18 Practices of eating beef were seldom found in the prior periods in Japan, and, as for ironmaking, casting technology was not so widespread in contrast to the rich tradition of hammering iron and steel.

19 Akagi/Yamaguchi 2015.

The series of 新定画帖 (*Shin-tei Ga Cho* or New Standard Book in Drawing) should be given special attention as an apex of the government's forty-year-long project in realizing the system of elementary art education, the topics of which comprehend all the significant domains of art making, that is, drawing techniques with the brush, the pencil, and other instrumental tools, watercolor painting, theories of colors and compositions, and decorative and mechanical designs. Absolutely, it is a crystallization of all the preceding attempts in the older textbooks, published both by the official and the private sectors,[20] the extensive influence of which was also to be found in the pictures examined in the next section.

Moving our focus onto those pictures discovered in Tojo Town in the next sections, the historical fact that they were created by the first generation of students in the period when an accomplished level of elementary art instruction was universalized to all the children should always be remembered.

Book-bound works entitled Manabi-no-tsue

The aforementioned gathering of works of the Elementary School of Tojo, presumably made by its graduating 8th graders in 1912, was discovered in bound form, with its title of 學之杖 (*Manabi-no-tsue*, or Props in Learning) written on the cover. Though little record remains on the course of making the book, they are probably to have been tied together as a classroom circulating book with no facsimiles made other than the originals. It was a usual custom of those days to bind works of classmates, including essays and calligraphies as well as pictures, in order to stimulate students to appreciate their own progress and thus to be more motivated.

Thirty-seven pictures within the book can be classified roughly into two types, that is, those made under minute instruction by classroom teachers and those produced for students' spontaneous fun. While most of the latter are likely to have been made after school or on holidays, the former are seen as assigned school work, more clearly influenced by 新定画帖 (*Shin-tei Ga Cho* or New Standard Book in Drawing). Besides direct copies based on images printed in the book (see *» Figs. 5 and 6*), a group of seven works is noteworthy, two of which are shown as *» Figures 7 and 8*.

It seems that the teacher set two goals in assigning the subject: the composition of a fair view with real objects, autumn leaves in this case, and its reproduction. And the creators of the two pictures are seen to have successfully responded to the lesson's aims, and probably, they must have been already given proper instructions in developing the

20 Among private publications, four textbooks were particularly investigated in Akagi/Yamaguchi 2015: Wakabayashi/Shirai 1883; Matsubara 1886–87, 1893, 1893–94. For Matsubara, also see note 24.

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Fig. 5 Pigeon, created by a student of the Elementary School of Tojo named Date, Yoshiko, in: 學之杖 (*Manabi-no-tsue*, or Props in Learning), no page number, c. 1912.

Fig. 6 Pigeon, in: Ministry of Education: 新定画帖 (*Shin-tei Ga Cho* or New Standard Book in Drawing), subset for the 7th graders, Tokyo 1911, Fig. 16.

Fig. 7 Autumn Leaves, created by a student of the Elementary School of Tojo named Mori, Umeyo, in: 學之杖 (*Manabi-no-tsue*, or Props in Learning), no page number, c. 1912.

Fig. 8 Autumn Leaves, created by a student of the Elementary School of Tojo named Yoshioka, Umeno: in: 學之杖 (*Manabi-no-tsue*, or Props in Learning), no page number, c. 1912.

sensitivity to the effect of light as well as the usage of watercolor paints, the large-scale production and distribution of which were then only recently under way in Japan.

The instructional method of this type of picture making, called *Ko'an-ga*, or devised pictures, was developed in the late Meiji era by those unsatisfied with older methods in the dawning stage of elementary art education, allegedly putting too much emphasis on the copying of printed images. 新定画帖 (*Shin-tei Ga Cho* or New Standard Book in Drawing), among editors of which Abe Shimekichi was an active advocate of devised pictures, also comprehended this new orientation, saying in its teachers' manual that certain images printed there should be used as a reference rather than a model to be copied. Lessons in devised pictures, as Abe's own claims,[21] should be given to elementary learners, unready to make authentic artworks, with proper supports. Thus, it is stated that the two images shown here were among the earliest results of the method,

21 Abe 1911.

the guidance to which was probably given by those teachers trained in newly launched Normal Schools and recently dispatched to Tojo Town.

Next, an investigation should be made into the pictures of the second type, or those produced for students' fun. A characteristic, found at a glance, is the influence of pop culture, seen to have started growing in the late nineteenth century. Then, many mass-produced publications full of attractive illustrations came to be constantly distributed around children, to which a far origin of *Manga* culture in contemporary Japan is traced. In » *Figure 9*, a soldier in army uniform of the latest style is depicted with multiform small brush strokes with watercolor paints which might be copied from an image inserted in a military reader, then fascinating many boys.[22]

Another example can be shown as » *Figure 10*, depicting a girl wearing a pretty big ribbon on the crown and another on the braid. Similar images are easily found in girls' journals of those days, equivalent to fashion magazines nowadays, by which the trend of fancy goods, accessories, and costumes were introduced countrywide.

Alongside 'popful' pictures, it should also be noted that traditional Eastern images were still surviving in the set. The atmosphere of a raftsman in a straw coat in » *Figure 11* is instantly associated with that of traditional ink paintings, though it is made with the pencil and watercolor.

Its vision is seen to have been largely imaginary because wooden rafts were then becoming out of date even in Tojo, thus the creator must have referred to those pictures made after the classical works in Japan and China, which were still being produced by many local artists nationwide. Interestingly as well, an ink painting depicting persons mimicking a sparrow dance can be found (see » *Fig. 12*), an apparent copy of an image in 北斎漫画 (*Hokusai Manga*),[23] first published in 1814.

Katsushika Hokusai (1760–1849), needless to say, the most distinguished artist in the Edo period, was so appreciated by his contemporaries that 北斎漫画 (*Hokusai Manga*) was a best-seller among both professional and amateur art makers, and it is amazing even for Japanese researchers that his influence had remained strong among such remote young art learners for nearly a hundred years.

In concluding this chapter, another historical and more general account is necessary on the fact that the movement of "drawing education for all" was accelerated in Japan after the 1900's World Exposition in Paris. An international congress, held parallel to the Exposition, adopted a worldwide recommendation to promote general

22 Even in such a relaxed style of art making, the effect of instructions through pictures in 新定画帖 (*Shin-tei Ga Cho* or New Standard Book in Drawing) might be discerned, a page of which, introducing practices in drawing clothed human figures, is shown as » *Figure 14*.

23 Many pictures of Katsushika Hokusai are online. As for 北斎漫画 (*Hokusai Manga*), a full set of the 15 volumes, printed in 1878, is available in the National Diet Library Digital Collection, Japan (http://dl.ndl.go.jp/?__lang=en [23.3.2019]), which is accessed by typing "000000488231" (its Bibliographic ID) in the search box. And "sparrow dance", copied in 學之杖 (*Manabi-no-tsue*, or Props in Learning), is found in its third volume.

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Fig. 9 Soldier, created by a student of the Elementary School of Tojo named Takada, Toyoji, in: 學之杖 (*Manabi-no-tsue*, or Props in Learning), no page number, c. 1912.

Fig. 10 Girl, created by a student of the Elementary School of Tojo named Kondo (no information on the given name), in: 學之杖 (*Manabi-no-tsue*, or Props in Learning), no page number, c. 1912.

Fig. 11 Raftsman, created by a student of the Elementary School of Tojo (Anonymous), in: 學之杖 (*Manabi-no-tsue*, or Props in Learning), no page number, c. 1912.

Fig. 12 Persons Mimicking Sparrows' dance, created by a student of the Elementary School of Tojo (Anonymous), in: 學之杖 (Manabi-no-tsue, or Props in Learning), no page number, c. 1912.

art instruction for every child, not just for a small community of prospective artists. The issue must have been seen as more critical by art educators in Japan, who were then busy in preparing a new stage of 'universal' art education. Thus, the set of pictures shown in this section is stated to be a successful example of the movement, all of which reflect daily joys of making images, even if their perfections are never equal to those displayed in 穎才新誌 (*Eisai Shin-shi* or New Journal for the Excellent).

Elementary school days of a professional artist

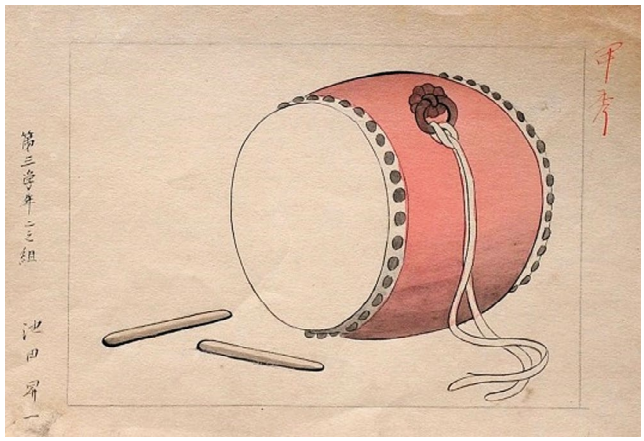
Only a few graduates of upper elementary schools in the late Meiji era are assumed to have made their occupational living in art making as the schools were then expected to supply middle-class general workers, especially in such a remote town as Tojo, with the system of secondary education being so poorly established except in large cities. More than forty years having passed since the beginning of renewals, social organizations were already so stably fixed nationwide that many of Tojo's competent young art learners must have willingly chosen a realistic career in various fields which were, at best, slightly related to the art world, in contrast to those readers of 穎才新誌 (Eisai Shin-shi or New Journal for the Excellent) with over-confidence that they could be a pioneering person armed with skills in pictures.

In this final section, an eminent professional success named Ikeda Yoson (1895–1988) should be introduced, who grew up in the elementary school system in the late Meiji era. He is one of the most celebrated artists in the genre of *Nihon-ga*, or the painting of Japan, the style of which was newly invented by early leaders attempting to re-establish the tradition of Japan's art, with Ernest Fenollosa (1853–1908) and Okakura Tenshin (1862–1913) listed first. Ikeda was born in Okayama Prefecture, the birth place of Matsubara Sangoro (1864–1946),[24] who was the first to give professional-level instruction to Ikeda, then aged sixteen, at his private school in Osaka City.

Fortunately, fifteen school works made by Ikeda at the age of twelve and thirteen remain today in the collection donated by his descendants to Kurashiki City Art Museum. Among them, » *Figure 13*, graded as "specially excellent" by the teacher in charge, is the most elaborated one.

It is obviously based on an image printed in 小学鉛筆画手本 (*Shogaku Enpitsu-ga Tehon* or Copybook in Elementary Pencil Drawing, see chap. 3.a), probably used as a textbook in his upper elementary lessons. The skillfulness of young Ikeda never fails to catch serious attention, as » *Figure 13* is trying to achieve more truthful nuance to life with faint colors, lacking in the original. While, in the previous chapter, the policy of

24 In Akagi/Yamaguchi 2015, the life and achievements of Matsubara Sangoro, painter and educator, was distinguished as a significant leader in the establishment phase of Japan's art instruction.



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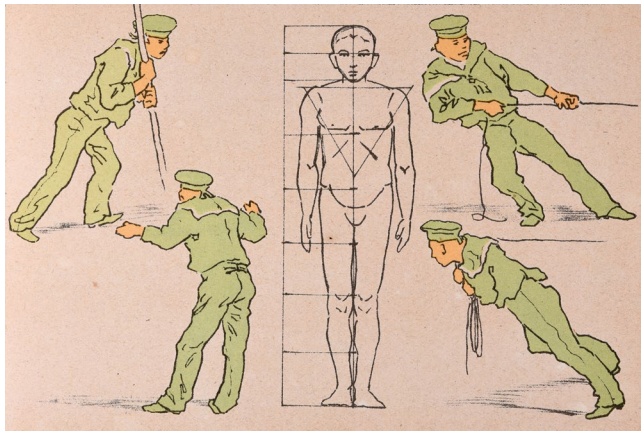

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Fig. 13 Ikeda Yoson's drawing of a drum (Kurashiki City Art Museum, c. 1908).

Fig. 14 Human figures (in: Ministry of Education: 新定画帖 (*Shin-tei Ga Cho* or New Standard Book in Drawing), subset for the 8th graders, Tokyo 1911, Fig. 14).

"drawing education for all" was noted in describing the joy of local middle-elite students in art making, Ikeda, who was to keep his name in the center of the art world, is stated to be another success of the policy, whose young life, told in the biography on his elementary-school days, is full of episodes of how favorably his skills were praised and cherished by teachers.

Recently, a harmonious reconciliation between professional and general art education are becoming a more difficult task as the former emphasizes more authentic techniques in contrast to the latter's inclinations to find more values in childlike unmolded pictures. Therefore, the fact that both amateur and professional art seekers were properly brought up in the same elementary instruction system should be highly appreciated as a major achievement of the Meiji government, though the success never lasted long, with new art-instruction policies of different kinds continuously replacing older ones in the forthcoming period of "free drawing" and after.[25]

Note: The names of Japanese, including those of the authors of this paper, are always written with the family name first, conforming to the Japanese standard practice.

25 In the history of Japan's elementary art instruction, the movement of "free drawing", the precise implication of which is "drawing without copying a printed model", is said to have been initiated when Yamamoto Kanae (1882–1946) pushed the considerable results of free-drawing instruction widely open to the public in a remote elementary school in Nagano Prefecture in 1919. On the other hand, however, it should not be neglected that many children had already been drawing "freely" since the much earlier time, assumedly with some support by teachers. As proof of that, pictures in the free-drawing style are also found in 學之杖 (*Manabi-no-tsue*, or Props in Learning), examined in chap. 3.

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