

Abstracts

Research Note: Concerning the Third Edition of 《Bird's eye view of Venice》 by Jacopo de' Barbari

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The Niigata Prefectural Museum of Modern Art and the Niigata Bandaijima Art Museum own print of the 3rd edition of “Bird's eye view of Venice” by Jacopo de' Barbari, which was published in the late 16th century, several decades after its first publication in 1500. The revisions made in each edition have pointed out the unique characteristics of each print. In particular, the third edition is clearly different from the previous editions in terms of the orientation of the revisions, and there is room to examine the intent of the production process. This essay attempts to explore the value of this work, which was emphasized in the late 16th century when the third edition was published, through an examination of bird's-eye views published after this work, after confirming the changes in the revisions leading up to the third edition.

Yorozu Tetsugoro's “One sphere”: Interpreted in the Context of Zen

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This paper attempts a new interpretation of the term “one sphere” used by Yorozu Tetsugoro (1885-1927) in a review he contributed to a newspaper from the perspective of “Zen,” which he experienced from his middle school years to after graduation. With this approach, we will explore the Zen philosophy related to Yorozu's words through the Rinzai-roku and the Hekigan-roku, two Buddhist texts that are important in the Rinzai sect of Zen Buddhism, which Yorozu studied. Through this, we will consider Zen ideas such as “one bright and shining sphere,” “the metaphor of the sun and clouds,” and “the bright and shining sphere in the palm of the hand” as relevant. We will also explore Yorozu's relationship with Hiratsuka Raicho (1886-1971), who studied Zen at the same time in the zendo where Yorozu studied. The essay will also discuss Yorozu's paintings of “one sphere” in connection with “Nude Beauty,” which was his starting point as a painter, “Self-portrait with a Cloud,” and his unfinished posthumous work, “Woman Holding a Sphere.”

Did Kusakabe Meikaku really refuse to be an Imperial Household Artist, saying that “Calligraphy is not arts and crafts” ? ——Several questions and notes about Meikaku.

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When discussing the history of Japan’s modern calligraphy, the name of Kusakabe Meikaku (1838-1922) is always mentioned. In 1880, Meikaku developed a style of calligraphy called “Six Dynasties Style” (Rikucho-fu) after receiving instruction in the writing and calligraphy techniques of the Kaiwan style by the Qing literati Yáng Shǒujìng (1839-1915), who had brought copybooks and stone-monument rubbed copy with Yáng when he first came to Japan. Meikaku’s calligraphy style dominated Japanese calligraphy world, and produced many disciples. Although his biography has been handed down to this day, there are a few questions in that. Some parts of his biography are anecdotal, and no written or recorded evidence has been found to support it.

This essay will examine the following stories related to Meikaku with researched materials, and record current outcomes:

1. Whether Meikaku inherited the calligraphic style of Maki Ryoko.
2. Whether Meikaku was acquainted with Koyama Shotaro.
3. Did Kusakabe Meikaku really refuse to be an Imperial Household Artist, saying that “Calligraphy is not arts and crafts” ?