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IMAGINING PLACE:

HOW DO KATSUSHIKA HOKUSAI'S LANDSCAPE PRINTS COMBINE LOCAL AND TRANSCULTURAL ELEMENTS?

A CONSIDERATION OF CULTURAL APPROPRIATION

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ABSTRACT

Katsushika Hokusai, one of the most influential reformers of Japanese popular art, contributed towards the formation of landscape genre within the ukiyo-e aesthetic. Hokusai's vision of space reflects his Edokko understanding of place, which he filled with cultural references towards his contemporary identity and Japanese belonging. Furthermore, his genius lies in his enthusiastic, restless spirit that paved his life-long learning and experimentations in multiple stylistic traditions. Influences of Western style and technique can be discovered throughout his 'early' woodblock print designs, which marks one of the earliest traces of his tendency of appropriation.

His mature landscape designs in the *Thirty-Six Views of Mt Fuji* series reflect a synthesis of such appropriations. The forty-six prints of this specific series fuses Western concepts of perspective, colour and shade with famous spaces within Japan that are connected with a common direction towards Mt Fuji. *Under the Wave off Kanagawa*, also known as the *Great Wave*, also incorporates such elements, and in addition to the established recognition of Mt Fuji, popularizes the animated wave motif at the same time.

This particular design of Hokusai is re-imagined throughout the course of the artist's lifetime, then in the context of Japonisme, post-war Japan, and through other modern and contemporary re-appropriations. Hokusai's characteristic landscape of appropriated fusion of influences embarks on the journey of transcultural appropriation that elevates the *Wave*'s status from a Japanese symbol of identity to that of a global icon. Hokusai's idea of landscape exemplified in the *Great Wave* is re-interpreted in multiple contexts, receiving new meanings through appropriations continuously.

INTRODUCTION

Japanese print artist Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849) had an extensive career that witnessed a multiplicity of artistic impacts deriving from both Japanese ideals and non-Japanese innovations. While Japanese inspirational sources were crucial to his artistic self-cultivation, Hokusai's development as an artist is also closely tied with the regulated flow of Western-European and Chinese arts to Japan throughout the Tokugawa period (1603-1868) that have been incorporated and consciously appropriated to Japanese visual arts. My research centres on Hokusai's landscape art from his whole artistic oeuvre, based on which I intend to explore the degree of Japanese characteristics – both urban and transregional –, and global traces of influences the artist merged and appropriated. I argue that by incorporating foreign elements to his artistic character, Hokusai created a hybrid mixture of ideals that are built on traces of traditional Japanese arts and appropriated western techniques.

It is essential to characterize Hokusai's personal understanding of landscape, which is not based on the visuality of art historically pre-defined origins. Hokusai's interpretation of space was an idea influenced by his imagination and continuous visual manipulation. Hokusai's understanding of place enabled continuous experimentations with a variety of transcultural and re-appropriated formal arrangements that were added to local themes. Besides Hokusai's understanding of landscape, the term of appropriation, the conscious borrowing from someone else's work, is another key word that will be examined within this thesis. Furthermore, the process of transculturation through multiple levels of cultural exchanges will also be analysed.

Through combinations of local, national and global traces, Hokusai linked his own identity as a contemporary citizen of Edo (modern-day Tokyo) with an expanded sense of national sentiment of Japanese tradition, while he also demonstrated awareness of Japan

being part of global flow of exchanges, including artistic knowledge. The multiplicity of local and transcultural elements have formed into a new hybrid art that demonstrates Hokusai's vision, which is supported by not his own travels, but developed through his knowledge of the outside world coming from imported goods.

My interest lies in demonstrating how Hokusai's landscape prints show an evolution and a successful incorporation of both foreign and Japanese elements, through which the artist has created original and unique compositions that reflect his ambitious, overachieving personality that is very open-minded towards experimentation and inventing. It is important to note that while these prints are considered well-known examples of early modern Japanese art today, in reality, they heavily utilise non-Japanese techniques and styles, which make them into objects of global artistic impacts. The blending of foreign and local cultures is significant, due to Japan's closed port policy in the Tokugawa era and the limitations for the Japanese to travel abroad. While Hokusai was based within Edo throughout his life, he utilised knowledge gained from imported products. Furthermore, Hokusai relied on his imagination to create worlds exceeding his immediate realities and to overcome boundaries posed by his Edokko ('son of Edo') character.

Methodology

A selection of landscape prints from Hokusai considered as primary sources provide the base of my argumentation throughout the thesis. Their visual analysis on formal and iconographic grounds demonstrate how these prints connect multiple identities on local, national and global levels. Furthermore, taking into consideration the influences posed by historical and cultural contexts is equally significant and will be scrutinised through sources

of literature on the modern understanding, interpretation and reception of Hokusai in present times.

Through the analysis of these sources, I will demonstrate a study on Hokusai's landscape art that entangles multiple layers of culturally appropriated characteristics of various origins. These specificities are viewed as representations of Japanese artistic heritage, however, in fact, they follow global artistic concepts, techniques and ideals influenced by exchanges. To broaden my art-history-based approach to answer the above questions, I will draw on insights taken from modern heritage scholarship to highlight certain ambiguities within the appropriation–transculturation discourse. These aspects shall question the complete understanding of Hokusai's heritage that outgrew its Japanese roots and incorporated the foreign during Hokusai's lifetime and even more increasingly after his death.

Thesis Structure

In order to provide a cohesive structure, it is essential to integrate my argument and analysis of images into a historical background and examine Hokusai's age through the developments in contemporary Edo culture. Chapter I focuses on Hokusai's 'early' career, which I end with the publication of the *Thirty-Six Views of Mount Fuji* series (c. 1830-1832). I argue that the first six decades of Hokusai's extensive career marks the formation of his artistic self that is heavily influenced by his cultural origins and a thrive for artistic experimentations with new styles and techniques. I will include contextual information that enhances the connections between mass-culture, Edo society, National Learning, foreign studies, and Hokusai's identity. The analysis of prints will elaborate on the foreign techniques, such as perspective, shading and colour, appropriated into a Japanese context.

Chapter II introduces a broadening stance exploring the socio-cultural aspects of Edo-period travel culture and a national sentiment exemplified via repeated depictions of Mt Fuji. Images of Japan's sacred mountain will provide the base for my discussion, which centres on the exploration of traces of Japanese identity combined with transcultural perspectives in Hokusai's *Thirty-Six Views of Mt Fuji* series. The examination of novel ways of seeing and understanding space will be analysed in a case study of the above series in consideration of relevant contexts.

Chapter III takes a differing approach in examining Hokusai's global significance by focusing on solely his *Under the Wave off Kanagawa* (1830). This final section reflects on the global identities of this print and examines how it has been re-appropriated multiple times in Eastern and Western artistic traditions during the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first centuries respectively. Through the process of iconisation the print transformed into a globally recognized emblem born out of Japanese origin that is combined with westernising methods, which result in a transcultural identity. This part of my thesis reflects on notions of Japonisme and explores how modern artists incorporated and transformed the Japanese artwork through cultural appropriation.

CHAPTER I.

Hokusai's Landscape Art Before 1830: How Hokusai's Early Experimentations Blend Traces of Multiple Origins?

The first chapter of my dissertation examines Hokusai's early landscape prints from the first sixty years of his artistic production through the visual analysis of selection of woodblock prints. Due to the expansive length of his career, Hokusai's early period features a huge number of artistic experimentations and an elaborate network of impacts and influences that formed the master's style that resulted in his culminating piece of the *Thirty-Six Views of Mt Fuji* in the 1830s.

Firstly, I intend to introduce the impacts prominent during Hokusai's lifetime and their backgrounds in social development from a historical viewpoint. Secondly, this chapter will focus on the broader factors linking Hokusai's Edo-based and national influences with foreign sources of information. I will elaborate on the variety non-Japanese elements that have been present in Hokusai's early years and proved to be a lasting sources of information throughout his lifetime. This argument will be supported by the analysis of selected artworks produced between 1797 and 1826.

Part 1.

The Base for Hokusai's Artistic Identity: Influences within Japan

Hokusai's era was the early modern period, often labelled as Kinsei, Tokugawa or Edo period (1615-1868). This era marked the end of civil unrest due to the unification of Japan and establishment of shogunate system by the Tokugawa family. Prosperity became

the key factor to several transformations in society, including the increasing urbanisation that included most importantly the foundation of Edo, modern-day Tokyo, and the developments toward a nation-wide infrastructure that enabled inland mobility and trade. The establishment of cities created the social layer of wealthy townspeople, who initiated a demand towards extensive leisurely activities related to pleasure quarters and theatre.

Early Tokugawa society was restricted to a medieval status system based on birth that favoured the elite. This fixed status system featured a massive class division regarding a horizontal segregation of class. Japanese society was strictly divided into sharply defined estates of farmers, artisans and merchants, which made up over ninety percent of the population, and the minority of the samurai elite, who ruled over them.[1] This strictly defined society, however, experienced changes in the enforcement of such divisions, which was partly due to an age of relative prosperity, the growth of the merchant class, and the nationwide urbanization and road-building. Inland travel increased that enabled the bonding of regionally defined people, and due to the enhanced function and wealth of the merchants, class divisions were gradually neglected. Peace resulted in the downfall of the samurai, who, without their drive to protect their military leaders and feudal lords, lost their original functions and were forced to look for other means of occupation.

These major changes gradually shifted towards a recognition of collective consciousness and sense of belonging, which first manifested itself within densely populated areas of cities. Developments resulted in the emergence of an early concept of nationalistic feeling driven by three key aspects. These are the presence of a patriotic sentiment that enables an emotional bond between the people and nation, the second is linked to political and social developments in the establishment of shared cultural values, common language

[1] Fujitani, Takashi. "Inventing, Forgetting, Remembering: Toward a Historical Ethnography of the Nation-State," in *Cultural Nationalism in East Asia,* ed. Harumi Befu (Berkeley: University of California, 1993), 98.

and institutions and a unified religion, while the third is a collective identity of people promoting a sense of belonging.[2] I argue that these notions had their early roots in Tokugawa Japan and Hokusai's artistic values also promote nationalistic statements.

Developments on social level resulted in a national consciousness and Japanese cultural identity, which emerged during the Tokugawa period and had its complete understanding and nation-wide practise applied as part of a state-sponsored inventing of the Japanese nation in the Meiji era (1868-1912).[3] Confucian notions on class divisions regarding the ruler and the ruled were challenged by a newly-formed nativist thinking, which, for instance, initiated a common Japanese sensibility that is different from the 'Other', the Chinese and the foreign in general.[4] Strong local and regional ties existed among the people of certain domains for centuries, however, these expanded into national ties by the second half of the Tokugawa era due to increased travel and mobility.[5]

The culture of artisans and merchants living in urban centres flourished during the Tokugawa period, resulting in a mass-oriented popular culture circulating both within cities and regionally. The primary medium of this pop-culture was the coloured woodblock print that followed an aesthetic standard re-introduced in the era: ukiyo. Prints of ukiyo (ukiyo-e) were images of the floating world, created to commemorate the beauty and fame of courtesans and actors, and famous places (meisho). Hokusai's print aesthetic also belong to the genre of ukiyo-e, furthermore, his prints also celebrate the culture and everyday life of the common folk with whom the artist also associated himself with.

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[2] Befu, Harumi. "Nationalism and Nihonjinron," in *Cultural Nationalism in East Asia,* ed. Harumi Befu (Berkeley: University of California, 1993), 107-108.

[3] Beasley, W. G., "The Edo Experience and Japanese Nationalism," *Modern Asian Studies* 18, no. 4 (1984): 556.

[4] Fujitani, "Inventing," 84.

[5] Ibid. 87.

While ukiyo has a long history dating back to Heian Buddhist philosophy (794–1192), its rather positive associations are recently developed phenomena that include opposing meanings to its earliest interpretations. Early meanings had ukiyo associated with a Buddhist world of suffering, distress and gloom, which is contradictory to its Edo period equivalent focusing on a stronger erotic aspect, a carpe diem philosophy, and an indulgence into the pleasurable realities of the present. This change of etymological background is traceable to the social shifts within contemporary Tokugawa society, reflecting a celebratory stance for the empowering growth and broadening consciousness of the plebeian class.[6]

Ukiyo-e prints and paintings originated from the Kyōto-Osaka region, however, by the mid-eighteenth century Edo has outmatched them in production and diversity. Changing into symbols of Edo's distinguishable cultural identity as Edo-e (pictures of Edo), ukiyo-e prints became fashionable mass-products of the city that were not restricted to their initial townspeople audiences but gained wider recognition nation-wide.[7] These polychrome prints (nishiki-e or brocade prints) created by Edo-based artists were produced at low price but in high number, which enabled the production and consumption on a previously unknown scale.[8]

[6] Domiková-Hashimoto, Dana, "Development of Interpretation of the Word Ukiyo in relation with Structural Changes in Japanese Society," *Asian and African Studies* 5 (1996, 2): 171-182.

[7] Akai, Tatsuro, "The Common People and Painting," in *Tokugawa Japan: The Social and Economic Antecedents of Modern Japan*, ed. Chie Nakane and Shinzaburo Oishi (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1990), 183, 190-191.

[8] Ibid. 189.

Part 2.

The Base for Hokusai's Artistic Identity: Influences from outside Japan

Interactions with the West existed in the early phase of the Tokugawa period (mid-sixteenth–early seventeenth centuries) between the Japanese and Southern-Europeans, especially the Portuguese, Spanish and Italian. Artistic forms have been introduced to the Japanese elite in formats of Christian artistic tradition. This early influence deriving from overly-religious Catholic artistic pieces initiated the Nanban artistic tradition among recently converted Japanese artists. However, strict persecutions of Christians by shogunate-supported authorities followed, which, alongside with a sequence of natural disasters, resulted in the almost complete eradication of the Nanban artistic trait.[9]

While a seclusion policy banned foreign travel and large-scale import-export between Japan and the world, on the artificial island of Deshima in Nagasaki harbour, interaction with Dutch and Chinese traders enabled a limited flow of products to and from Japan, including art objects and ideas on artistic techniques. These interactions resulted in a regulated but existing flow of artistic exchanges and the emergence of a lasting Kōmo-style tradition of primarily Dutch artistic trait. This was due to the lack of religious content introduced to Japan via these interactions, and especially the import of scientific research materials promoting foreign learning via sources of natural history books and illustrations, including etchings, prints and oil paintings.[10]

The early modern Japanese theoretical knowledge demonstrated wide, sometimes opposing aspects of learning motivations, such as through initiatives supporting national

[9] Toyama, Usaburo, *The Western-style Colour-prints in Japan* (Tokyo: Daiichi-shōbo, 1936), 1-3.

[10] Ibid. 4.

learning (kokugaku) and foreign learning (rangaku). Scholarships on kokugaku and rangaku existed side by side in the same period, deriving from the mutual aim to learn and educate. Intellectual progress of nativist scholarship was driven as a reaction against Chinese Confucian thought, and aimed to emphasize the greatness of Japanese cultural values through a nationalistic sentiment supported by the promotion of a Japanese cultural identity.[11]

An open-mindedness towards cultural diversity in relation to Chinese cultural traits in Japan had a long history that often viewed the Japanese as 'barbarian' or 'primitive', while Chinese standards represented 'civilization'. This approach became reversed by promoters of nativist thinking, such as Kamo Mabuchi and Motoori Norinaga, in the favour of a Japanese cultural primacy. Their approach of Japanese superiority was a tool in establishing nationalistic sentiments in people and promoting an awareness towards Japan's cultural distinctiveness. [12] While the kokugakusha emphasized the superiority of the Japanese over the Chinese in terms of art and culture within Japan, rangaku scholarships recognised the value of Western learning, particularly Dutch. The importance of Western learning became prominent during the late decades of the Tokugawa era when contacts with western values became more frequent until the point when the seclusion policy was forcefully eliminated in the 1850s.[13]

The emergence of Dutch studies (foreign studies) or rangaku, performed by enthusiastic scholars (rangakusha), was sponsored by the shogunate. Scientific researches influenced landscape art, primarily promoted by incoming scholarship on geography, medical botany, astronomy, zoology and geometry. Imported illustrations followed western

[11] Befu, "Nationalism," 122.

[12] Beasley, "Edo Experience", 558.

[13] Befu, "Nationalism," 122.

artistic trends to depict the reality of objects faithfully, and this placed the base for scientific investigation discovered by the Japanese. The curiosity towards Western learning resulted in scientific research that utilised illustrations in western style, which was incorporated by Japanese artists. [14] These were the research into pigment studies, such as that of the Prussian or Berlin blue. Furthermore, studies in scientific perspective were undertaken, resulting in the emergence of perspective-print tradition. Further inclusion of geometrical forms (triangles, squares, circles) into a regulated, ordered compositions was also introduced, as well as the depiction of shadows and shading was practised to initiate western-style aesthetics.[15]

Hokusai had indirect contacts with images, objects, and ideas that arrived to Japan from Western-Europe, as well as from the many Europe-originated artefacts and visual materials that reached China beforehand and then travelled to Japan as artworks with traces of not only western but Chinese influences simultaneously. It is important to note that western illustrative materials often came through Chinese re-appropriations. Since China absorbed western learning prior to Japan, many Western books were translated into Chinese then re-translated into Japanese. Nevertheless, illustrations were important sources of information being originally western or mere Chinese-made copies.[16]

[14] Toyama, *Western-style*, 6-9, 14-18.

[15] Ibid. 18-23.

[16] Ibid. 9-14.

Part 3.

The Analysis of Selected Prints from Hokusai's Early Career

In this section a selection of prints will emphasize how Hokusai re-worked, altered and re-fashioned space in a fluid, malleable manner to adopt foreign and local ideals of spatial themes in his designs. Hokusai's early prints demonstrate a synthesis of both Japanese and European pictorial ideas and techniques related to the spatial organization of the picture plane in nature-oriented landscapes and architectural designs. The artist's deep interest in western spatial organization and its devices utilised in art largely derive from his Japanese predecessors, Okumura Masanobu, Torii Kiyotada, Maruyama Ōkyo and Utagawa Toyoharu, who first created landscape art in uki-e (perspective print) artistic tradition.[17]

Furthermore, Hokusai was inspired by Shiba Kōkan's incorporation of the western aesthetic into his engravings and oil paintings. Kōkan was primarily influenced by the realistic quality of European illustrations and became the foremost promoter of western painting by Hokusai's time. Significantly, Kōkan's oil painting of *The Seven League Beach at Shichirihagama* (1796; **Fig. 1**), had multiple novel features related to western art, which left lasting impacts on Hokusai's re-working of similar scenic views.[18] Kōkan's use of pigments resembling the quality of western oil paintings features the beach at Kamakura through a deeply receding perspectival view. The low horizon depicts a vast scenery that shows the softly moving flow of waves washing the shore where two figures are placed.[19]

[17] Masatomo, Kawai, "Hokusai and Western-style Painting," in *Hokusai Paintings: Selected Essays*, ed. Calza, Gian Carlo and Carpenter, John T. (Venice: University of Venice, 1994), 151.

[18] Forrer, Matthi. *Hokusai: Prints and Drawings* (Munich: Prestel, 1991), 15-18.

[19] Clark, Timothy, "Late Hokusai, backwards," in *Hokusai: Beyond the Great Wave*, ed. Timothy Clark (London: Thames & Hudson and the British Museum, 2017), 76.

Through Kōkan's influence, Hokusai has created *Spring at Enoshima* (1797; **Fig. 2**), which imitates his predecessor's subject matter and placement of figures to a certain degree. A differing factor is the inclusion of travellers, who replace Kōkan's figures of a fisherman and his wife. The characters' travelling outfit and mannerisms suggest the possibility that they are not locals but arrived from a city environment, perhaps that of Edo. This possibility of urban connection could demonstrate a link towards Hokusai's personal circumstances of an Edokko background. Significantly, *Spring at Enoshima* also depicts how a wave dynamically breaks on the shore, which is a theme repeatedly re-used and re-invented throughout Hokusai's entire career.[20] Hokusai's early design of this wave motif culminated in his *Under the Wave off Kanagawa* print (**Fig. 18**) that brought the artist lasting recognition[21], as demonstrated in Chapter III of this thesis.

The print titled *Express Delivery Boats Rowing through Waves* (1800-1805; **Fig. 3**) also utilises features known in the *Great Wave*, including the wave motif and the rowing people, however, it lacks the reference towards Mt Fuji that was included in the *Spring at Enoshima* print, though not to a significant degree. This specific print includes the dominating wave as the protagonist that threatens the human figures rowing in the boats. Kōkan's European-style influence contributed towards Hokusai's enthusiastic experiments in western artistic tradition, as included also in this particular print of the untitled series of landscapes in Western style.

Prints that belong to this series have common motifs that can be demonstrated in the *Express Delivery Boats* and the *Ushigafuchi at Kudan* (1800-1805) prints. These works show creative experimentations of landscape design, including the decorative borders that

[20] Forrer, *Hokusai*, 18-19.

[21] Clark, "Late Hokusai", 78.

were added to them to imitate the western frame. Furthermore, the titles, inscriptions and signatures were added not in Asian vertical order, but were written horizontally to imitate western handwriting. Importantly, these prints also utilise western shading techniques to create the effect of casted shadows. These elements of design were innovative in Japanese pictorial tradition and consciously imitated western artistic trends, which resulted in a unique blend of multiple sources.[22]

Contrary to the sea-based scenery of the above print, *Ushigafuchi at Kudan* (**Fig. 4**) utilizes the cautious application of western perspective in the surroundings of Edo. Through the inclusion of a framing device Hokusai included an element that is specific to a European aesthetic. The casted shadows of figures suggest a chiaroscuro effect that imitates western oil paintings. This derives from Hokusai's application of darker pigments over lighter shades on the surface that resulted in blurred outlines, especially in the realistic colouring of the static and unmoving wave and more promisingly in the foliage of the trees. Furthermore, the landscape print also features realistic clouds and sky-impressions influenced by western art, which is in opposition to the traditional Japanese depictions of clouds made of accumulations of mist suggestive of Chinese literati tradition. In addition, Hokusai attempted the inclusion of title and signature in horizontal, syllabic script that intended to imitate western writing.[23]

Hokusai's *Eight Views of Edo* (1802) simultaneously feature landscapes embedded into the fusion of western and Japanese pictorial tradition, such as the *Shinobazu* and *Suruga Chō* (**Figs. 5-6**). These miniature prints include landscapes within or close to Edo placed in wooden frame-like structures. The western-oriented parallel hatching-like lines are

[22] Forrer, *Hokusai*, 17.

[23] Ibid. 36.

prominent features in the materialization of sky and water elements, which is furthermore enhanced by the occasional inclusion of rising cumulus clouds. The shading of river banks, trees and buildings with a sombre colour tone of deep earthly colours add to the imitated chiaroscuro effect to create spatial depth.[24] Importantly, Hokusai's interest towards experimentation can also be discovered, here, he combines western-techniques-infused landscapes of Japanese scenes with western modes of viewing. As one can observe from the small scale of these images, these were meant to be viewed via the recently-introduced peepbox-devices coming from Europe.[25]

Hokusai also looked into other sources of western artistic trends, such as that of the linear perspective, which he appropriated into his oeuvre by blending it with Japanese sources of artistic tradition. The artist's combination of new and exotic with the traditionally Japanese resulted in pieces of art of a hybrid design, as in case of his reinterpretation of one-point perspective that he bended to his own senses. Hokusai utilised the technique of triple division, a division of the horizontal-rectangular picture plane into three equal horizontal sections.[26]

Hokusai's re-appropriation of linear perspective is traceable in his uki-e-based prints in his series of *Newly Published Perspective Pictures of Loyal Retainers* (1801-1804). Prints of *Act I, the Tsurugaoka Shrine* (**Fig. 7**), and *Act IX* (**Fig. 8**) include architectural formations and interior designs that provide aids in defining pictorial depth.[27] Architecture strictly frames *Act IX* through the utilisation of the straight lines of walls, sliding doors and roof,

[24] Lee, Julian, "The Origin and Development of Japanese Landscape Prints" (PhD diss., University of Washington, 1977), 473-474.

[25] Screech, Timon, "Hokusai and the Microscope," in *Hokusai and His Age: Ukiyo-e Painting, Printmaking and Book Illustration in Late Edo Japan*, ed. Carpenter, John T., (Amsterdam: Hotei, 2005), 337.

[26] Lee, "Origin," 482.

[27] Ibid. 483.

which overpower the natural elements included in the curvy vegetation and the three figures in the foreground. However, the orthogonal lining initiated by the positions of the buildings point towards two different vanishing points in *Act I*, in addition to the not correct recession of the size of the figures who are placed in the foreground and middle-ground of the picture plane. Here Hokusai's triple division divides the space into spheres of primary foreground, middle- and background, which are not correctly depicted in terms of size and placement following the western principles of perspective. The traditional bird's-eye-view technique adds a further dimension to the print, resulting in the fusion of two distinct principles of spatial organization. The combination of western and Japanese pictorial devices makes Hokusai's print a hybrid combination of different aesthetic approaches.[28]

In contrast to the above examples that have been created for local Japanese audiences that favoured the exotic, unusual feel of a foreign artistic tradition, the prints (1824-1826) currently at the National Museum of Ethnology in Leiden were commissioned for Dutch audiences. While the above prints include a Japanese sentiment, prints from the Leiden collection show artificial, overly westernised, exaggerated expressions to both the characters and compositions. The *Kiting on New Year's Day* (**Fig. 9**) and the *Sudden rain in the countryside* (**Fig. 10**) were made on imported Dutch paper that was less absorbent and more smooth, which encouraged more precise application of paint. Volumes and internal shadows were added to one side of the featured figures to emphasize the deep colouring and the internal lighting. The New Year scene depicts a western perspective-based cityscape with a recessive progression of buildings, while the rural landscape depicts the skilful movement of figures in a low horizontal setting. The colouring is similarly significant in the enhanced suggestion of three dimensional quality.

[28] Ibid. 483.

Conclusively, Hokusai's early prints explore a multiplicity of influences that derive not only from Japanese cultural traditions, but include innovations that are non-Japanese. These foreign elements are deliberately fused with Hokusai's Edo-based training and artistic character, thus create images that have multiple identities ranging from the local Japanese to more alien ideals from abroad. Through experimentation with the foreign techniques of perspective, shading and colouring, Hokusai exoticised Japanese subject matters to appeal to wider ranges of audiences. Hokusai's way of depiction suggests that the blending of foreign devices with Japanese techniques and themes was more of a significant achievement than the nature of these landscapes.

Part 4.

Summary of Chapter I

Hokusai's age have been marked by the emergence of a national consciousness due to the prosperous, flourishing age of lower social classes. The artist's Edokko sentiment manifested itself in mass-circulated prints of the ukiyo-e aesthetic that was primarily intended for bourgeoisie audiences. Simultaneously, Hokusai's era of production was exemplified by the trend of foreign learning, which focused on the import and understanding of western artefacts, as well as artistic stylistic features and techniques of spatial depictions. The synthesis of these opposing trends manifested itself in Hokusai's early works, particularly paying tribute to experimentations with artistic techniques of foreign origin. The formal attributes of such techniques were incorporated into Japanese themes of everyday life, placed in familiar spaces within the country, often in the urban settings of Edo, towards which Hokusai had a special bond. Western elements made the familiar Japanese spaces

seem exotic, marking Hokusai's early phase of career as a period of sequential appropriations.

Hokusai's major sources of visual depictions relied on appropriated western materials that sometimes have also been infused with Chinese characteristics. Hokusai was at liberty to bend the rules of western elements to suit his particular taste that was embedded in a Japanese artistic tradition, and motivated by the demand of his publishers and audiences. Hokusai's reapplied techniques previously appropriated by the Chinese, and re-introduced the originally western-centred ideals into a Japanese context that reflected his own cultural tradition and aesthetic sensibilities. [29] Hokusai's not complete comprehension of perspectival devices can be interpreted as a way towards creative expression, which was motivated by the aim to demonstrate his foreign and unique designs as something novel.

The above works, however, fuse foreign techniques with Japanese subject matters on a superficial level, without proper, in-depth training and actual understanding of the means of their use. Due to the limited availability of foreign artistic materials, Hokusai have not yet fully mastered the mechanics of European art production, which relied on an extended sense of realism through its range of colours, perspective-based illustrations and techniques that make the works typical of the Western aesthetic. These features have not been completely integrated into Hokusai's own style yet; however, a more internalized synthesis has been reached by the 1830s' famous series of the *Thirty-Six Views of Mt Fuji*, which will be explored more in the following chapter at great depth.

[29] Ibid. 484.

CHAPTER II.

Landscape as a Cultural Construct: Hokusai's Vision of Place examined through the *Thirty-Six Views of Mt Fuji* series

While Chapter I provided in-depth insight into Hokusai's early phase of artistic production, this chapter examines the series of *Thirty-Six Views on Mt Fuji* (c. 1830-1832) as a case study reflecting a mature synthesis within the artist's concept of space. The series consists of forty-six prints of a common theme of the Japanese symbol of identity, Mt Fuji. The series is also a landmark in Hokusai's career and provides him with everlasting fame and prestige. As explored previously, Hokusai's peculiar style derives from his blending of influences and excessive experimentation. However, the *Thirty-Six Views* provides a more knowledgeable understanding of landscape varieties important to Hokusai: the balance of Japanese and foreign influences, and the fusion of the human presence and natural and architecture-based backgrounds.

In order to get a full understanding of Hokusai's mature landscape-art, it is essential to look into his Japanese base of meisho-e tradition that the artist appropriated with his own perceptions on contemporary Edo-based culture. Edo-period travel culture will be analysed in relation to the development of landscape genre in Japanese artistic production. This will be supported with insights on the incorporation of western techniques that have been introduced to the Japanese way of looking. The analysis of a selection of Hokusai's prints from the *Thirty-Six Views* will examine the degree of westernized and Japanese elements, which are either rooted in Japanese local consciousness of travel and sightseeing, or deliberately infused with techniques of foreign backgrounds.

Part 1.

Edo-Period Travel Culture and the Evolution of Japanese Landscape Art

The Edo period was an age of movement: a vertical motion through the different strata of social hierarchy and a horizontal journey in terms of geographical areas.[30] This section will examine the horizontal movement exemplified via an intensifying travel culture by the second half of the Tokugawa era, and its close connections to the mass-culture and woodblock-print circulation. Travel initiated a rediscovery of space, which also manifested itself through enhanced depictions of landscape-focused themes in popular art. Landscape gained important evaluation in people's journeys by becoming a major element of influence. Human interactions with the landscape became prominent, which resulted in their appreciation, commemoration, and re-interpretation through various artistic forms.[31]

Travel culture was rather limited before and during the early Tokugawa years, largely focusing on trade from one major city to another urban centre. The pre-Tokugawa sources of landscape prints often derived from literary texts, such as prose and poetry of classical Japanese origin. The inclusion of poetry-based subject has been common in East-Asian tradition and created the aesthetic concept of shi-sho-ga itchi, a "triple synthesis of painting, poetry and calligraphy" on a visual surface. [32] Paintings and prints displaying a text-based subject matter accompanied by calligraphic extracts from the original source and embedded into a visual narrative scenery were frequently applied. Early Tokugawa images had the function to show literary subject matters visualized in order to make them accessible

[30] Fujitani, "Inventing," 82-83.

[31] Nenzi, Laura. *Excursions in Identity* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008), 3.

[32] Lee, "Origin," 32-34.

to wider ranges of audiences, including the common folk. Arguably, the shi-sho-ga itchi aesthetic was a medium that familiarized the plebeians with their cultural heritage of literary kind, which were re-appropriated into modern visions of interpretations.

The early decades of the Tokugawa period had limited encouragement for travel, thus landscape paintings and prints followed more of a shi-sho-ga itchi aesthetic, while the second half of the era demonstrated more visual interpretations of landscapes that were actual inspirations of inland travel.[33] Gradually, travel became viewed as a sociocultural act to which more people gained access. Their primary aim was to experience movement, and gain expertise in the liberating tendencies of self-discovery initiated by recreational travel. People of high social standing often had more freedom in experiencing travel during the previous centuries, while the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries onward commoners also had similar opportunities. The wide circulation of popular media helped in developing a growing consciousness and enhanced self-discovery of the individual, who collectively developed a nationalistic sentiment by becoming more aware of spatial boundaries.[34]

Recreational travel, religious pilgrimages, trade-focused initiatives supported travel and its commodification that resulted in expanding numbers of consumer goods, including woodblock prints, travel guides, and souvenirs. This materialistic stance served the purpose to commemorate one's pleasant interaction with the landscape and project a lasting memory through the purchase of objects.[35] Printed materials and tangible merchandise provided a staged authenticity and eliminated the hardships that a traveller might go through while reaching their destinations. Furthermore, city-dwellers had their pride and emotional attachment directed towards their hometowns primarily, however, they also wished to

[33] Ibid. 36.

[34] Nenzi, *Excursions*, 1-3.

[35] Ibid. 4-5.

elevate their urban location to the significant level of famous sights, including that of the sacred peak of Fuji. Consequently, print artists often included in their depictions a combination of cityscapes and Mt Fuji.

Landscape prints were also inspired by pre-existing exemplars of meisho-e. These illustrated books belonging to the genre of meisho zue (graphic collections of famous places) are pictorial maps to landmarks throughout Japan. With the combination of both textual and visual forms, these guidebooks had their upmost function in stimulating the readers' imagination towards a virtual travel, rather than being practically used as guides.[36] Meisho had its earliest origins in classical poetry describing sights of historical importance. Furthermore, meisho-e were originally works featuring famous places on screen- and panel-paintings and illustrated hand-scrolls, however, by the eighteenth century, famous sights were often featured on woodblock prints. Meisho became a subgenre in ukiyo-e to depict famous spots and sightseeing areas of contemporary significance, and it was often combined with depictions of figures.[37]

These illustrative guidebooks paved the genre of scenic appreciation of landscapes, which gave space for the solely visual popular nature of the woodblock print format. While guidebooks combined visuality and text, prints utilised elements appealing to the commoners' eye to draw attention.[38] While meisho had traditional connotations that link it with Heian literature, the contemporary Edo re-appropriation gave further meaning to the genre through the inclusion of leisurely activities of the common folk. The new meisho became a tool in the empowerment of the lower social classes, since it emphasized a nouveau

[36] Goree, Robert, "'Meisho Zue' and the Mapping of Prosperity in Late Tokugawa Japan," *Cross-Currents: East Asian History and Culture Review*, no. 23 (2017): 75-76.

[37] Ibid. 78.

[38] Nenzi, *Excursions*, 137.

understanding towards space and reflected on how the plebeian mass interpreted it differently from past perspectives. This revitalized significance can be seen as an influence to a broadening national consciousness advocated by the movement of National Learning. Japanese paces of significance were emphasized on a national level to promote a sense of pride though the natural heritage embodied in landscapes. These famous sights emphasize the history of the Japanese by promoting their natural and culturally formed sights of fame, including that of Mt Fuji.[39]

A further link can be observed in the propagation of the landscape genre in Tokugawa Japan, which is of a political significance that frequently censored the depiction of bijin-e and yakusha-e (images of beautiful women and actors). Commercial print industry experienced a shift from the usual themes of courtesans and actors of the ukiyo-e repertoire towards scenes of landscapes of cities and the countryside. While the human element almost always remained the centre of focus in these landscape-oriented prints, they also materialized a link towards a booming travel culture and its connections to how commoners re-discovered space.[40] Nevertheless, by the early nineteenth century, there was an increasing appeal towards landscape depictions that do not merely consist of additional background scenes, but a unifying synthesis between figures and space.[41]

To summarize, the late-Edo period artistic climate enabled the emergence of landscape genre in the artistic repertoire of print artists, including that of Hokusai. Travel culture was encouraged among common folk, which created a growing awareness of national space and a demand towards commemorating objects. Meisho subjects have been re-appropriated into

[39] Traganou, Jilly, *The Tōkaidō Road: Travelling and Representation in Edo and Meiji Japan* (London: Routledge, 2004), 178-179.

[40] Nenzi, *Excursions*, 121.

[41] Traganou, *Tōkaidō Road*, 159.

mass-oriented visual genres that reached broader audiences. Since common ukiyo-e themes were frequently censored, it created a trend towards experimentation with landscapes.[42] These factors combined with the foreign artistic influences were the major impacts that influenced Hokusai in his drive to explore new possibilities within the landscape genre.

Part 2.

Appropriated Western Techniques in Japanese Landscape Prints

This section will consider the changes of perceptions how Japanese developed a different kind of seeing as an impact of foreign devices and techniques in art. As briefly referred to in Chapter I, uki-e, or otherwise called kubomi-e (floating pictures or sunken pictures), were early experimentations that showed traces of western linear perspective. Uki-e suggested a three-dimensional effect that displayed the image as if it was 'floating' from the background. The genre of uki-e can be regarded as a European-Japanese hybrid that combined western notions on perspective into Japanese spatial arrangements to emphasize depth.[43]

This three-dimensional quality was absent in Japanese pictorial tradition before the first appearance of uki-e style receding pictures in the 1730s. In earlier eras, for instance, buildings and interior areas have often been depicted without the inclusion of roofs in a compositional style known as 'fukinuki yatai', or blown-off roof.[44] This changed by the

[42] Ibid. 160.

[43] Masatomo, "Hokusai," 151.

[44] Screech, Timon, "The Meaning of Western Perspective in Edo Popular Culture," *Archives of Asian Art* 47 (1994): 58.

discovery of perspective, which enabled the inclusion of a more realistic rendering of space that stopped relying on bird's-eye view seeing. Furthermore, the centuries-old traditions have been re-used, since the Japanese architectural elements of guiding straight lines were favourable for the adaptation of western linear perspective. The pre-existing guiding lines enabled the first experimentations on interior spaces that included roof and a recession, especially in theatre interiors of kabuki plays, sumo tournaments and brothels.[45]

By the 1760s artists also experimented with nozoki karakuri, or peep-show devices and produced prints that needed to be viewed through nozoki megane (peep-show lenses) in order to completely absorb the heightened effects of depth. These prints of nozoki-e (peeping pictures), or vues d'optique, are perspectival images that relied on a viewing apparatus known as the optique or zograscope. These devices projected three-dimensional reflections with perspectival panorama views that appealed to many Japanese audiences, who were fascinated by their unique exoticism.[46] Their often foreign quality can be attributed to their inspiring sources of Western-European copperplates or their adopted variations of Suchow woodblock prints.[47]

Western perspective was primarily experimented with in print mediums, since it was more widely available to townspeople due its mass-produced quality. European oil paints were too costly to transport, which initiated a demand for copperplates and easel works. The majority of exported goods were single-sheet cityscapes, known as veduta or topographical prints. Similarly to woodblock prints, the genre of veduta attracted the ordinary plebeians with their brightly coloured and inexpensive assets.[48] Their colouring and shading

[45] Ibid. 59.

[46] Ibid. 62.

[47] Masatomo, "Hokusai," 151.

[48] Screech, "Meaning," 60.

characteristics provided novel experiences for the Japanese, since East-Asian tradition often neglected using blue as primary colour for sky or water. Shadows were also absent in non-Western artistic tradition, and thus were incorporated into the Japanese artistic repertoire for the first time.[49] Veduta were re-appropriated in many Japanese variations, including the early experimentations of Hokusai, in which the demonstration of skills were superior to realistic likeness.[50]

Uki-e are images that reflect a different approach how the artists shaped his renewed understanding of space based on a western pattern. The artists, including Hokusai, deployed trends of western perspective, colour and shade, to create spaces resembling external reality as it has been shown it western artworks. The enhanced mechanization and preference for precision proposed the elimination of any emotional trait, sensual experience or thought on behalf of the artist.[51] The elimination of artistic personality was in accordance with the mechanized modes of vision advocated by the scientific optical devices of peep-boxes. However, telescopes and lenses were viewed primarily as entertaining devices that created illusions and transformed realistic seeing through wit.

Western art was viewed as something that captures reality, in other words, it employed techniques that made the image into copies of the real world. Linear perspective was generally supported by other stylistic conventions deriving from European Renaissance tradition, such as the play of light and shadow (chiaroscuro) and perceptions on colour. Interestingly, these western ideals that first reached Japan were not of contemporary innovations of visual depictions, but rather traditional, centuries-old technical devices dating

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[49] Screech, Timon, *Obtaining Images* (London: Reaktion Books, 2012), 323.

[50] Screech, "Meaning," 61.

[51] Screech, Timon, *The Lens within the Heart* (Richmond: Curzon Press, 2002), 56.

back to the Italian Renaissance. These values of spatial designs arrived to Japan instead of contemporary visions and innovations of the eighteenth-nineteenth centuries.[52]

Many Japanese print artists inspired by the exaggerated perspective of the West were not to depict foreign subject matters though, but local themes and places that, in fact, awoke a western design and way of looking.[53] Artists freely utilised sights of fame within Japan that could provide a greater appeal to audiences, and consciously merged these into spatial arrangements that did not strictly follow realistic depictions. This liberty of choosing what and how to depict opposes the laws of realism and gives space to experimentation and the commercial motivation to appeal more diversely to audiences.

Part 3.

The Analysis of Selected Prints from the *Thirty-Six Views of Mount Fuji*

Hokusai's prints from the *Thirty-Six Views of Mt Fuji* features the mountain diversely from various angles, in different seasons and time periods. The series is a culminating synthesis of what Hokusai learnt from both eastern and western artistic styles and techniques that combines the artist's Edokko identity with an essentially national sense of belonging and the awareness of Japan being part of a global order. The series demonstrates Hokusai's idea of landscape based on the artist's imaginative powers inspired by meisho travel guides. In the following discussion I intend to elaborate on how the landscapes featured in the series demonstrate Hokusai's idea of place that belonged to the people, and how the artist successfully merged local meisho-e with western elements. The

[52] Traganou, *Tōkaidō Road*, 200.

[53] Screech, "Meaning," 66.

analysed images will show a conceptual leap in Hokusai's understanding of landscape compared to his earlier works; here, he created a complete blending of the local and the foreign. Furthermore, these prints equally rely on two opposing styles, that of the Japanese tradition which shows landscapes heavily intervened with imagination, and of western landscapes, which primary feature is the precision and realistic depiction.[54]

With the exception of two prints that deal entirely with the majesty of the mountain (*Red Fuji* (**Fig. 11**) and *Rainstorm beneath the Summit* (**Fig. 12**) from 1831, the remaining prints focus on particular places well-known among the Japanese. These specific views are combined with the artistic free will of re-imagination that suits Hokusai's taste and idea of design. Importantly, these prints generally include contemporary Japanese common folk during their every-day activities of work and leisure, either in Edo or in the countryside. Belonging to the ukiyo-e aesthetic, the human element plays a key role in Hokusai's artistic identity, which is being integrated here into his concept of landscape that reflects a synthesis of nature and man.

Having its early traces in the yamato-e tradition, landscapes traditionally included a combination of human and social elements. As for meisho zue illustrations, it was a common mapping function to include human figures into the landscapes to give an approximate suggestion for the real dimensions of space between and within places. These factors were influential for Hokusai's concept of place that dismisses the artist's preference towards ukiyo genre scenes to create a new understanding of the relationship between people and nature. Prints have a theatrical dimension, as if they stage people in scenic spheres of nature where both background and characters play equally important roles.

[54] Hillier, Jack. *Hokusai: Paintings, Drawings and Woodcuts* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1978), 68.

Hokusai felt a strong sense of belonging to the community of low social classes within Edo and beyond; in his prints he also depicted the humble, simple spirit that exemplified the plebeians. Significantly, Hokusai's prints of people, including the *Thirty-Six Views*, represent human figures idealistically, without the sign of hardships deriving from starvation, or any references to natural disasters of the past years. Hokusai deliberately focuses on the positive aspects of labour and the carefree activities during leisurely pastimes, demonstrating a humanist perspective of an Edoite, which positive approach celebrates life and the cultural identity of the plebeian class.

To begin the analysis of certain prints, one aspect I would like to highlight is the precise, structured order of places that emphasizes geometrical patterns and shapes. In the *Mountains of Tōtōmi Province* (**Fig. 13**), *Fuji View Plain in Owari Province* (**Fig. 14**) and *Sunset over Ryōgoku Bridge* (**Fig. 15**), geometrical shapes can be discovered as dominant features of the structuring space. In Figure 13 the triangular arrangement is repeated through Mt Fuji's iconic shape and the man-made supporting framework constructed in the foreground. Movement is suggested via the labour of two men at the timber structure, another repairing a saw, a woman with a child on her back and a boy warming himself at the fire. Furthermore, the smoke of the fire connects with the cloud pattern around the background mountain and softens the dominant angularity of the diagonal lines depicted in the foreground. These geometrical shapes and defining lines suggest a detailed composition that is influenced by Western compositional devices of precision.

Hokusai's fascination with geometry can be observed also in his *Fuji View Plain in Owari Province* print. This print depicts an imagined landscape since the mountain would not be visible from such an angle in real life. A circular geometrical form of a barrel dominates the picture plane, in which a man constructs a barrel. The significance of Mt Fuji is overpowered by the labouring man in the foreground, thus it is evident that the artist

deliberately shifted the balance of nature and man in favour of the latter. Hokusai's western-inspired idea that all figures, animals and natural forms can be depicted through geometrical structures of circle, triangle and square can be observed here: the round shape of the barrel-maker's head echoes the circular barrel, while the head itself rests on the triangular angle of arm and body, which suggests a repetition towards Mt Fuji's iconic shape.[55]

While Figures 13 and 14 demonstrate a dominating aspect towards the human realm through the depiction of people, *Sunset over Ryōgoku Bridge* features more of a synthesis between man and nature. The curving S shapes of the flowing water suggestive of motion are repeated again in the design of the bridge in the background and curves of the boat in the foreground. This dynamism is tamed by the slashing line of the fishing rod that defines the central focus of the composition, which is Mt Fuji in a dark blue silhouette that echoes the foreground colours of the waves. These geometrical shapes of western influence are well-integrated into this exemplary Japanese landscape, however, the fusion of the European compositional devices with the Japanese space do not follow a scientifically realistic depiction. Hokusai defies and bends the rules of scientific objectivity and does not utilise western logic to create the essence and uniqueness of his print.[56]

As exemplified in the above prints, Hokusai's rural landscapes are depicted through the lens of the urban observer, often relying on his imagination and not own perceptions. Hokusai had an Edo-centric perspective that did not merely show landscape with additional people in them, but introduced an opposing stance with a reverse role and significance. While natural elements are often viewed at primary importance in the landscape genre, Hokusai added the human presence as an elevated concept that overpowers nature. His prints

[55] Kondo, Ichitaro. *The Thirty-Six Views of Mount Fuji by Hokusai* (Honolulu: East-West Center Press, 1966), Plate 40.

[56] Lane, Richard. *Hokusai, Life and Work* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1989), 194.

can be regarded as genre scenes embedded in a landscape format, representing a key significance of people. In his urban settings Hokusai's passion towards Edo culture is more traceable, as in *Nihonbashi Bridge in Edo* (1830-1831).

The *Nihonbashi Bridge in Edo* (**Fig. 16**) features the downtown of Edo where the townsfolk are depicted in the foreground on top of the Nihonbashi. The Sumida River is lined with warehouses, following the western influenced linear perspective. These buildings are in a repeated sequence of ordered architectural space, exemplified by straight lines and unifying colours. The rear of the print does not follow the perspectival conventions of the foreground, thus deliberately disrupts the flow of artificial orderliness. The shogunal residential area and palace, as well as Fuji Mountain, represent a higher, elevated contrast to the ordinary common folk, since they project the aura of majestic superiority by representing the nation. While these specifically Japanese elements of authority and heritage are relatively smaller in scale, they carry more significant meanings as a whole. While the merchants and their dwellings are depicted in a foreign-influenced manner exemplified by linear perspective, the Japanese sentiment does not follow such trends but conveys a national artistic tradition. The print successfully fuses two spheres of influences and incorporates them into a balanced and harmonious synthesis.[57] Compared to the artist's early landscapes that heavily rely on exaggerated western perspective inspired by the uki-e tradition, Hokusai's scene of *Nihonbashi* represents successful assimilation of the uki-e approach with Hokusai's native style. The print shows a realistic approach that depicts life and space without distortion, however, the artist's strive for realism is not entirely successful to western standards. For trained eyes, the print has a distinctive Western appearance, however,

[57] Screech, "Meaning," 67.

for others, Hokusai's print looks completely Japanese based on its subject matter of Edo-based landscape.[58]

The print titled *Yoshida on the Tōkaidō* (**Fig. 17**) shows a scene of a teahouse alongside the Tōkaidō road that looks at the Fuji Mountain. Here the landscape is viewed from an interior space resembling the uki-e tradition of structured lines that compose perspectival depth. Hokusai's teahouse scene promotes a further function to the mountain by emphasizing its recently-developed touristic commodity as a prime destination for leisurely activities. In this print a re-interpreted function of the mountain can be observed that goes further from its traditional cultural interpretations of poetry and aesthetic appreciation and gives Fuji an economic significance.[59] As discussed before, Hokusai's landscape art has been influenced by local meisho-e tradition, which has its main visual themes rooted in famous scenic spots within Edo and its surroundings along the Tōkaidō. Hokusai consciously used these Japanese themes already existing in travel guides and combined theme with Western techniques of perspective, geometry and spatial design. These appropriations give a distinctive nature to Hokusai's prints that transcended the conventions of meisho-e and previous appropriations attempting to blend perspective into Japanese uki-e. Hokusai went beyond to define space and freely incorporated western influences into his local understanding.

Hokusai's mature landscape art exemplified in the above prints is based on a more complete synthesis of the transcultural elements and local themes. Besides geometrical structure and receding perspective, another defining aspect was the novel colouring with the inclusion of Berlin or Prussian blue (berorin). Scientific analysis identified that the *Thirty-*

[58] Kondo, *Thirty-Six Views,* Plate 1.

[59] Nenzi, *Excursions*, 136.

Six Views prints were printed with the use of different blue colours, including predominantly the Prussian blue, a chemical pigment imported from China, and traditional indigo. Blue was generously applied in sky-, water-, and cloud-depictions throughout the series, through which the national landscape was blended with the foreign to its core. The bright blue colour was viewed as extraordinarily unique and exotic and could be immediately linked to foreign advancement that awakened a general curiosity towards western novelty nationwide.[60] Berorin was critical in the composition to all prints belonging to Hokusai's series, especially its aizuri mode of usage that utilised multiple shades of blue colour. The prints can be also distinguished based on their complete palette of colours, being either 'pure aizuri' or 'semi-aizuri', whether they use only blue or add pink, green, or black colours to the compositions.[61]

To summarize, the *Thirty-Six Views of Mt Fuji* has been a pioneer within the large-scale prints in Edo period Japan that depicted landscape. While Hokusai's previously discussed early experimentations displayed an exaggerated manner of western styles and techniques that suggested an unbalanced feel, this mature series shows a balance between local tradition and foreign influences. Mt Fuji has been explored repeatedly in Hokusai's career, however, by the end of the 1820s, it took a central role. The *Thirty-Six Views* demonstrates a synthesis of how Hokusai integrated the foreign with local elements. The artist's approach to the western method based on realism and precision is often bent to suit his ideal of landscape. For instance, linear perspective was primarily considered as stylistic feature that conveyed more of an exotic feel than a necessity towards realistic depiction. Geometry and spatial devices discussed above have also deepened this aspect. Finally,

[60] Smith, Henry D. II., "Hokusai and the Blue Revolution in Edo Prints," in *Hokusai and His Age: Ukiyo-e Painting, Printmaking and Book Illustration in Late Edo Japan*, ed. Carpenter, John T. (Amsterdam: Hotei, 2005), 261.

[61] Ibid. 257.

Prussian blue was added to deepen the synthesis of foreign and local. By carefully selecting and appropriating western devices, Hokusai created a novel combination of Japanese and European modes of perceiving space.

Part 4.

Summary of Chapter II

This chapter functioned to introduce Hokusai's vision of space based on the visual analysis of prints taken from the *Thirty-Six Views of Mt Fuji* as a case study. Through the introduction of the traditional Japanese understanding of landscape exemplified in the meisho-e tradition, I introduced the historical aspect of the formation of travel culture as a leisurely pastime and religious excursion among late Edo-period commoners. While travel guides were literary forms of exclusively Japanese origins, foreign aspects have been incorporated into the visual spheres how Japanese print artists perceived space. Besides the appropriated perspective pictures of the uki-e tradition, western scientific devices changed the Japanese way of looking. For instance, western perspective introduced a different way to perceive reality, and even to understand the world differently.

Significantly, Hokusai's understanding of landscape is fused with a humanist spirit and the basic understating of the ukiyo-e tradition that celebrates commoner culture. Hokusai's space is a blend of nature and everyday life of the common folk, and his depictions of Fuji generally show the cultural dimensions of natural places.[62] In his *Thirty-Six Views*, the artist repeatedly connects the symbolic Fuji Mountain to human presence, either in the countryside of in urban settlement of Edo. While this notion reflects a humanistic, open-

[62] Earhart, H. Byron. *Mount Fuji: Icon of Japan* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2011), 101.

minded personality, it also shows that Hokusai was keen to include his personal up-bringing and sense of social belonging to a settlement where the human presence was fundamental. Hokusai's Edoite character is present in his depictions of townspeople merchants, prostitutes or artists, and also the farmers in the rural countryside.

Compared to his early prints, Hokusai's *Thirty-Six Views* prints highlight the importance of landscapes instead of the previous standard of exaggerating western technical devices. In the mature prints, space claims a primary role over perspective or foreign compositional structure. These prints demonstrate the full appropriation and complete integration of western spatial arrangements, which do not deduct from the overall unity of the images. The unity of local and foreign elements makes the series into an appropriated product, which is viewed as distinctively Japanese though. Hokusai's appropriation and integration of western formal devices into his Edoite understanding of space is often seen as essentially Japanese today. In spite of their traces of obvious foreign influences, prints of the *Thirty-Six Views* are important tangible traces of Edo-based folk heritage today.

CHAPTER III.

Iconicity of Place:
Legacies of Hokusai's Vision of Landscape

While the previous chapters explored Hokusai's early artworks and a selection of prints from the peak of his career, this chapter focuses on one print that has been deliberately neglected so far. It is the *Under the Wave off Kanagawa* (1831), or more commonly called *Great Wave,* or *Wave*. The image's long title has been transformed into more catchy and memorisable names during its course of transculturation. Today, due to its globalized image, the *Wave* bears similar connotations as the Great Wall of China.[63]

Chapter III provides a culminating understanding of Hokusai's multiple identities explored earlier through the discourse of landscape, which also has traces of various origins embedded through formal and iconographic dimensions. Firstly, I will reflect on the intriguing dimensions of the original design that is a complete fusion of Japanese and Western considerations of style. This will lead to a discussion of the major characteristics of Hokusai's idea of landscape, the wave, Mt Fuji and the rowing figures, which are re-integrated selectively to various re-interpretations by Hokusai's contemporaries.

In order to create the sense of a globalized, internationally-recognized and transcultural entity, this chapter will also reflect on the *Great Wave*'s arrival to the West at its earliest occasion during the nineteenth century, exploring the ways how Europeans experienced Japanese artistic influences in the movement of Japonisme. Leaving the nineteenth century I will explore how modern and contemporary artists in recent history

[63] Guth, Christine. *Hokusai's Great Wave: Biography of a Global Icon* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2015), 100.

utilised and re-interpreted Hokusai's *Wave* and integrated it into their own iconography through cultural appropriation. Conclusively, this chapter will introduce the *Wave*'s journey of multi-layered appropriations in the context of transculturation.

Part 1.

The *Great Wave* in Nineteenth Century Japanese Re-Imagination

Hokusai's *Under the Wave off Kanagawa* (**Fig. 18**) is one of the forty-six prints among the *Thirty-Six Views of Mount Fuji* series. Considering its formal characteristics, it displays a synthesis of western and Japanese stylistic influences similar to the previously discussed prints in Chapter II. The picture plane is defined by the prominent diagonal position of a huge wave, which expressive movement and dynamism embraces the other two important elements, the unmoving presence of Mt Fuji in the background and the rowing boats in the foreground. The viewer's low point of view is characteristic of a western tradition, while the expressive manifestation of water and the almost personified, claw-like representation of the wave shows traces of Japanese ideals.[64] The striking blue colouring, the gradation of shades, and the shapes of circles and S-curves within the flowing water, as well as the triangular mountain suggestive of a geometrical structure reflect European influences.

Further western impacts can be observed in the cloud formation in the print. Hokusai's current design is integrated more efficiently into the *Great Wave* than in one of his early examples of discussed in detail in Chapter I, *Shinobazu* (**Fig. 5**), in which the strongly defined dark contour highlights the unique shape of the cumulonimbus cloud. Furthermore, the western impact can be observed from the direction of the wave that is from left to right,

[64] Kondo, *Thirty-Six Views*, Plate 21.

which is unnatural for Japanese audiences, who traditionally read, write and observe imagery from right-to-left direction. Lastly, one of the most striking uniqueness of the print is the actual viewpoint: the viewer looks towards Mt Fuji from seawater, observing the Japanese shores from an outsider's perspective.[65] This significant shift of perspective is depicted only in this particular print from the entire series of *Thirty-Six Views*. Importantly, this unique way of seeing reflects Hokusai's awareness of Japan being part of a broader world from where multiple impacts can influence the cultural spheres of the Japanese.

The artist's fascination with the formal attributes of waves can be observed throughout his career, since he explored this signature wave motif in visual forms repeatedly. His early experimentations of wave patterns in *Spring at Enoshima* (**Fig. 2**) and *Express Delivery Boats* (**Fig. 3**) reflect an exaggerated, not fulfilled adaptation of western techniques into local landscapes. However, the *Great Wave* and the later re-use of the motif, for instance in his *Mount Fuji Viewed from the Sea* (1834-1835; **Fig. 19**), reflect Hokusai's mature, more complete understanding, and achievement of balance between foreign and local aspects of design. Nevertheless, the fusion of western and eastern stylistic features makes the print into a hybrid piece of art that shows the artist's passion for experimentation and interest in exploring the boundaries of foreign and local styles and techniques. The theme and iconographical meanings of the *Great Wave* reflect a truly Japanese sentiment that is based on Hokusai's Edokko belonging, nationalistic consciousness and spiritual association linked to the sacred peak of Mt Fuji.

Hokusai's Edo-based identity is best represented with the inclusion of figures in the print. Edo print-culture of the ukiyo-e aesthetic celebrated the mass of people through the representation of low-class commoners in woodblock-prints. Furthermore, as it has been

[65] Guth, Christine, "Hokusai's Great Waves in Nineteenth-Century Japanese Visual Culture," *The Art Bulletin* 93, no. 4 (2011): 473.

discussed prior, the inclusion of figures in Hokusai's landscapes created a new genre focusing on space in which a balance of man and nature is achieved. The human element accompanied by the mountain, as it is represented in almost all prints of the *Thirty-Six Views,* suggests the broadening consciousness and nationalistic sentiment of the plebeian class where Hokusai also belonged to. Furthermore, by the late Edo-period, Mt Fuji has been considered as the national emblem of the Japanese. Its popularity has been captured through the visual medium of prints to suit the increasing trend of commodification that is still present today both within Japan and world-wide. Hokusai's iconic *Great Wave* has played a role in establishing the reputation of Fuji, the symbol of the Japanese nation, on an international scale.[66] Alongside the approach of re-appropriation of the mountain through commodification and secularization, the sacred peak has long centuries of religious connotations that link the mountain with pilgrimages and spiritual dimensions of Shugendō and Fujikō.[67] Its static, eternal composure that overlooks all Japanese had its special meanings for Hokusai, who often linked the immortal mountain to his aging identity: in the prints of the "towering Fuji, […] Hokusai himself resides."[68] Hokusai's obsession with Mt Fuji has its connection with the artist's intense preoccupation with aging and search for prolonging his life.[69]

Besides the attractive design of the *Wave* and the iconic symbolism of Mt Fuji, the success of the *Thirty-Six Views* was based on its advertisement strategy of Hokusai's publisher, Nishimura Yōhachi, whose efforts made the series, and especially the *Great Wave*,

[66] Earhart, *Fuji*, 100-102.

[67] Smith, Henry D. II. *Hokusai: One Hundred Views of Mt. Fuji* (New York: Braziller, 1988), 9.

[68] Lane, *Hokusai*, 187.

Earhart, *Fuji*, 101.

[69] Smith II, *Hokusai*, 10-13.

into well-marketed and widely-circulated objects of inquiry that sold well.[70] This recognized success within Japan stimulated Hokusai's contemporary artists to imitate, copy and re-imagine the signature wave design. During the Edo period, artistic collaborations, imitations and cross-fertilizations were accepted and even favoured since visual artists frequently utilised common motifs and designs that they considered to be common property.[71] Plagiarism issues were non-existent; thus, the successful *Great Wave* was quickly re-used and re-interpreted. Consequently, already in Hokusai's lifetime, the journey of the *Wave*'s cultural appropriation has begun.

For instance, Utagawa Hiroshige's *The Sea at Satta in Suruga Province* (c. 1858; **Fig. 20**) has been clearly influenced by Hokusai's *Great Wave*. As it belongs to Hiroshige's version of the *Thirty-Six Views of Mt Fuji*, it demonstrates a lasting enthusiasm for the same subject matter. The reversely-positioned massive wave, the peak of Mt Fuji, and the few ships show a landscape of coastal waters, depicted closer to land than in Hokusai's original version where a farther viewpoint is emphasized. Since Hiroshige was the junior of Hokusai, his more recent publications of landscape prints and variations of the wave motif were more readily available for export when the trading ports across Japan opened up in the 1850s. Hiroshige's appropriations of Hokusai's original therefore were crucial in the *Great Wave*'s popular recognition and artistic dissemination beyond Japan.[72]

Kitagawa Toyohide's *Kataoka Gadō II as Chishima Kanja Yoshihiro* (c. 1841; **Fig. 21**) similarly exploits the wave motif to enhance the appeal and theatrical composition through the juxtaposition of the famous wave and a well-known kabuki actor in a dynamic arrangement. Here the wave has been re-used to provide a suitable background for a

[70] Guth, *Hokusai*, 17.

[71] Traganou, *Tōkaidō Road*, 167-168.

[72] Guth, *Hokusai*, 32-34.

promotion of a new play in this particular advertising print. While this re-appropriation reflects a contemporary event, Utagawa Kuniyoshi's *On the Waves at Kakuda on the Way to Sado Island* (c. 1835; **Fig. 22**) pictorializes elements from Japanese history and places the wave into contexts of divine interventions that eliminated opposing fleets during the Mongol invasion (1274 and 1281). Kuniyoshi's print emphasizes Mt Fuji similarly to Hokusai and Hiroshige to trigger a sense of nationalistic belonging and common heritage among the Japanese community, while Toyohide's contemporary actor-wave combination relies on the common consciousness and culture of contemporary Japanese commoners.[73]

Part 2.

The *Wave* Abroad:
Cultural Appropriation in the Context of Japonisme

The cultural appropriation of Hokusai's *Great Wave* was continued in the second half of the nineteenth century in Western-Europe, especially in France. This century introduced many technical, stylistic and even thematic innovations in western artistic trends, as it was an era of crisis in terms of breaking with the conventions of academic rigour of visuality and searching for new ways of looking and interpreting the world. This atmosphere of tension among artists initiated change, and the stimulus arrived from the flow of imported items from Japan.[74] The discovery of such masters as Hokusai and Hiroshige resulted in a general fascination for Japanese prints, which were imitated by artists, purchased by museums, and featured in expositions.[75] These cultural advancements paved the way for

[73] Ibid. 42, 50.

[74] Earhart, *Fuji*, 112.

[75] Clark, "Late Hokusai," 26.

Japonisme, a movement inspired by an enthusiastic spirit and appreciation towards Japanese arts. It had political factors of influence as well, since the French favoured escapism and exoticism that that elevated them from their every-day consciousness.[76] Hokusai's prints were influential for such artists who also belonged to Impressionist and Post-impressionist styles, as well as a multitude of artists seeking for something different in the following decades to modern times.

Interestingly, the western, renaissance-inspired Japanese prints are the objects that have reached Western-Europe during the nineteenth century that consequently initiated the Japonisme movement. For instance, Hokusai's *Thirty-Six Views* also merged these references of early western techniques of space with the Japanese concepts of place. Thus, arguably, Hokusai's appropriation and fusion of western impacts in his landscapes has been an influential force for western artists in their modernist movements in the decades from 1860 to 1920. Western artists re-interpreted and re-evaluated Hokusai's vision of space that was already an appropriated assemblage of western stylistic elements incorporated to represent Japanese themes.[77] Furthermore, Hokusai's ukiyo-e artistic tradition can be viewed in contradictory ways based on the Japanese and western point of views: for the Japanese, the medium was embedded with experimentations with western notions of perspective and style of an exotic and novel kind. However, for Europeans it was considered a modern Japanese artistic medium that they considered a unique influence worthy to acknowledge.

Consequently, while Hokusai has appropriated western techniques in his creation of *The Wave*, the print was viewed as a representative piece of Japanese cultural heritage by western critics and artists of the Japonisme movement. However, this notion is in opposition

[76] Mix, Elizabeth K., "Japonisme and Cultural Appropriation," in *The Orient Expressed: Japan's Influence on Western Art, 1854-1918*, ed. Weisberg, Gabriel P. and Chu, Petra ten-Doesschate, (Jackson: Mississippi Museum of Art, 2011), 129.

[77] Traganou, *Tōkaidō Road*, 201.

to the way how the Japanese nation wanted itself to be represented. Through the series of universal exhibitions, Meiji period Japan (1868-1912) intended to promote its traditional paintings, screens, lacquerware and ceramics as exceptional artworks of the country that date back to centuries and convey the concept of a majestic nation with exceptional art and valuable heritage. Ukiyo-e pieces were considered as representatives of low art made for commoners, and they were a relatively recent developments of the late Tokugawa era. Ironically, such low art was discovered first in the West as wrapping materials used for valued porcelain exported to promote the Japanese aesthetic.[78]

The craze for Japonaiserie manifested itself in three distinct types of cultural appropriations. Elizabeth K. Mix categorizes one as 'literal', a direct use of a work created by an artist and re-used through physical appropriation of creating direct copies and replicas. Another major category is of the 'transformative' appropriation, which includes the digitalization of tangible artworks, staging (through the use of props or other artificial materials in re-creating an object), and the transfer of an object of certain material to another, for instance, from print to painting. Lastly, 'referential' appropriation can occur when a gesture, stylistic element or thematic reference, or even a title, is re-used in another work.[79] This latter kind of appropriation can be observed in a multitude of re-workings of Hokusai's *Great Wave*, since the Japanese artist's formal mannerisms of distinctive lines, flat colours, croppings, and shifting perspective were appropriated by Westerners throughout Japonisme. More importantly, Hokusai's iconic wave design and majestic Mt Fuji were themes that stayed in the visual vocabulary of artists for an elongated period.

[78] Earhart, *Fuji*, 115.

[79] Mix, "Japonisme," 135-137.

The *Wave*'s re-appropriation did not merely reached the realm of visual culture but went beyond that. Maria Rilke's poem of *The Mountain* (1918; Appendix 1) and Claude Debussy's composition of *The Sea* (1905) were intangible attempts that utilised Hokusai's themes. Rilke's starting lines of "Thirty-six times and a hundred times the painter limned that mountain…" project a clear reference to Hokusai's series of the *Thirty-Six* and *One-Hundred Views of Mt Fuji*, while the parallels of neglecting the rigidity of realistic expression to focus on colour, dynamism and energetic expressiveness connects Hokusai's print to Debussy's music. Furthermore, the *Wave*'s influence is represented through Debussy's choice of cover design (**Fig. 23**) that makes a statement regarding Hokusai's influence.[80]

Further appropriations are featured in Georges Lacombe's *Blue seascape, Wave Effect* (1893; **Fig. 24**) and Henri Gustave Jossot's *The Wave* (1894; **Fig. 25**), each using different means to reflect on Hokusai's wave design. Lacombe uses expressive brushstrokes of dominant colours of a bright, limited palette to suggest the dynamism of moving water. His primary focus is not of a realistic representation but to convey the majestic beauty of nature exclusive of human presence. This approach, however, is opposite to Hokusai's, who was passionate about including individualized characters into his landscapes. Jossot's monochrome lithograph, though, emphasizes the human element through the depictions of a man's legs within a boat surrounded by engulfing waves. The repeated use of curving, wave-like lines and the exaggerated cropping references Hokusai, however, these direct appropriations are in fact tools of a caricature ridiculing the Japonisme-craze, making the work into a socio-cultural commentary.[81]

[80] Cirigliano, Michael II, "Hokusai and Debussy's Evocations of the Sea," Metropolitan Museum of Art, July 22, 2014, https://www.metmuseum.org/blogs/now-at-the-met/2014/debussy-la-mer.

[81] Guth, *Hokusai*, 75-76.

Finally, I intend to reflect on the representation – or its lack– of the other prominent theme of Hokusai's *Great Wave*: Mt Fuji. The mountain's appearance in Western art is quite rare since this symbol could not be properly adopted into non-Japanese works. This is due to the mountain's symbolic meaning that did not fit well into European imagery because of its associations to Japanese nationalism. As a prominent symbol of Japan, it could not be transferred to images of foreign places.[82] Vincent van Gogh's *Portrait of Père Tanguy* (1887; **Fig. 26**), however, features Mt Fuji in the background as a copied variation of a print purchased by the artist. Other Japanese prints are also represented in van Gogh's painting in similar fashion, which reflects the artist's pre-occupation with Japonisme.[83] Besides this painting, several Fuji-themed wallpapers, glass- and porcelain objects re-utilised the mountain motif, broadening the spheres and means of appropriation that continues up to current times. Japonisme can be regarded as first 'wave' of Japanese cultural appropriation that initiated the *Great Wave* to become a global icon.[84]

Part 3.

Modern and Contemporary Re-Appropriations of Hokusai's *Great Wave*

While the previous sections of this chapter introduced appropriations of Hokusai's design of the *Great Wave* within Japan and in late nineteenth-century Europe, this last subchapter aims to introduce a selected imagery from the twentieth century and contemporary period that have re-used the *Wave*. The print's original meaning became

[82] Earhart, *Fuji*, 114.

[83] Van Gogh Museum, *Van Gogh & Japan* (Amsterdam: Van Gogh Museum, 2018), 27.

[84] Guth, *Hokusai*, 76.

invested with new interpretations that made it into a global heritage owned by many. While the combined field of the wave and Mt Fuji and the synthesis of western and eastern stylistic features were emphasized previously, in the following images these two entities often become separated, transfigured or erased to elevate another chosen element of re-appropriation into iconic forms.

Followed by the first impressive wave of re-appropriations in the discourse of Japonisme, twentieth century wartime and post-war imagery re-used the national symbol of Mt Fuji repeatedly as an element of propaganda. When World War II ended and Japan was rehabilitated, humour became an element that characterized common imagery in the United States, as exemplified in Anatol Kovansky's re-use of the print (**Fig. 27**). Kovansky utilises a monochrome palette that includes a humorous addition to Hokusai's composition by replacing the rowing boats with two comic figures on a raft who recognize the wave's symbolic quality attributed to Japanese visual culture.

While Kovansky's design was influenced by recent post-war thought, Tom Herzberg's adaptation through a greeting card design (**Fig. 28**) is an innocent re-appropriation that is not fuelled by war-time guilt or repulsion. He approaches Hokusai's print through a commercial direction that plays on the global recognition and popularity of an icon. In his postcard design the Japanese symbolism is eradicated through acknowledged emblems of western popular culture: the activity of surfing and Santa Claus. Similarly to Kovansky's image, the original rowing figures present in the landscape are replaced by other features, here, the surfing Santa. The spaces in figures 27 and 28 transform into cultural reflections of the western audiences. In these images, Hokusai's fusion of western-eastern designs and Japanese subject matter is added to a further layer of western themes that provide the illustrations with multiple meanings.

While the above examples kept the combination of mountain and wave intact, Kozyndan, a graphic designer team of Kosue and Dan Kitchens, eliminated the human element, and transformed the foam-like characteristics of the wave design into a multitude of white rabbits, leaving only the Fuji Mountain in place in the cropped and re-arranged picture plane (**Fig. 29**). Simultaneously, Mohamed Kanoo's transformation of the original design replaced the iconic Mt Fuji with the famous and recognized symbol of his own origin, the Burj Al Arab hotel in Dubai (**Fig. 30**). This specific appropriation reflects the artist's pride in one of the famous sights of his country, which is similar to Hokusai's growing national consciousness that played a role in his creation of meisho-e related landscape prints. Kanoo's re-imagined landscape relies on the global iconicity of *The Wave* that the artist re-uses on his own terms to create a hybrid, individualistic representation which elevates the United Arab Emirates' popularity from the shadow caused by the international recognition of the *Wave*.

While the above examined artists, as well as the representatives of the Japonisme movement discussed previously, display the cultural appropriation from the Japanese icon from primarily French and American perspectives, the following two artists to be considered are of Japanese origin, thus obtain a somewhat closer link to Japanese culture and heritage. This may imply that both of them, Takashi Murakami and Yoshitomo Nara, understand Hokusai's artwork on a deeper level and can demonstrate a feeling of belonging to the imagined community of the Japanese who consider the iconic print on a similar level and with equal sentiment. In the following argument I shall observe how the Japanese national consciousness relates to the observation of such emblematic works, and reflect how these differ from the foreigners' perspectives demonstrated above.

Takashi Murakami's *Manji Fuji* (**Fig. 31**) depicts the artist's signature 'Oval' character seated on a tree with the background of Mt Fuji. Several elements of this particular

design reflects Murakami's relations towards landscape art of the traditionally Japanese style via the atmospheric depiction of a curvy pine, the scared peak of Mt Fuji surrounded by clouds of mist, and the enlarged, characteristic calligraphy on the left hand-side of the image. The colourful character shown through digital art shows a contemporary combination with the traditional style. This image displays a fusion of traditional and contemporary, however, in a well-balanced manner that does not create disruption. Oval's presence matches well with the distinctive Japanese landscape and symbolic Fuji Mountain, which suggest that the artist embraces his cultural heritage of the past and incorporates it successfully into his own mannerisms. Furthermore, a direct reference towards Hokusai is revealed by the title that refers to one of Hokusai's artist-names, 'Gakyō Rōjin Manji', or 'Old Man Mad about Painting'.[85]

Yoshitomo Nara's appropriation of the other main element of Hokusai's design, however, differs greatly from the approach of Murakami. Nara's *Slash with a Knife* (**Fig. 32**) depicts a disturbing female figure with a knife in her hand staring into nothingness, while the re-appropriated wave motif of Hokusai is represented in the figure's hair and within the ambiguous space in front of her. This approach of spatial representation and unbalanced, provocative subject matter is in deep contrast with Murakami's *Manji Fuji*, and suggests that Nara does not display such sentiments towards Japanese heritage as Murakami. Nara conveys a more internationalized approach through his art that is not defined by spatial boundaries or specific cultures; he aims to convey the fundamental meanings understood globally, such as that of sadness and anger.[86]

[85] Steinberg, Marc, "Otaku Consumption, Superflat Art and the Return to Edo," *Japan Forum* 16, no. 3 (2004): 463-465.

[86] Ibid. 462.

Slash with a Knife includes its protagonist without a clearly defined space, which also reflects the artist's refusal to conform to conventional boundaries of art that gives space to the superflat aesthetic also promoted by Murakami. Both artists reject the 'window-on-the-world' approach and promote the recognition and acceptance towards the two-dimensionality of the picture plane.[87] The clarity of spatial depth is simultaneously ambiguous in Murakami's traditional rendering, while in Nara's work no background is featured and the figure is largely disproportioned. This deliberate lack of depth is related to Nara's method how he created the piece: the artist utilised a copy of the *Great Wave*, painted over it in white, and then introduced his figure by transforming the wave into unique pattern embedded within the girl's figure.[88]

To conclude, Nara's approach transfigures the *Wave* without the consideration of feelings of pride, attachment or positive sentiment towards the design or for the iconic creator. He handles it disinterestedly and considers it only as something globally recognised. His approach is in contrast to Murakami's, who acknowledges the values of his legacy. Simultaneously, the other artists considered throughout this chapter projects celebratory re-imaginations of Hokusai's original. Importantly, the superflat trend in both Murakami's and Nara's artworks reflect a denial towards three-dimensionality and pictorial depth. Even though both artists have appropriated Hokusai's *Wave*, they considered it basically after its iconic significance. These superflat artists utilised the *Wave*'s thematic symbolism, but neglected the approach how Hokusai imagined his idea of space, which was through the incorporation of the Japanese and western attributes. Hokusai's achievement to blend these spatial definers into his landscape and create spaces where people can reside is not manifest

[87] Ibid. 462.

[88] Ibid. 462-463.

in Murakami's and Nara's appropriations. Both artists only draw from Hokusai's iconic work, but refuse to consider its fundamental principles and innovations.

Part 4.

Summary of Chapter III

This chapter explored variations of cultural appropriation of Hokusai's *Great Wave*. Firstly, it was re-considered in ukiyo-e prints created by Hokusai's contemporaries, who re-used the structure or re-imagined the specific elements of the original *Wave* design. Their primary aim was to reflect on the popularity of the already famous artwork and attract more audiences through their appropriations.

Japonisme initiated another wave of re-appropriations. While the Japanese artists' motivation of re-using the design was triggered by monetary factors, Western artists reflected on the contemporary craze towards the exoticised, unique identity of Japanese arts. As Impressionists and Post-Impressionists were searching for nouveau ways of representing space, they immediately found a differing approach and potential influence in ukiyo-e design. Re-appropriations of the *Wave* in the context of Japonisme were motivated by this general enthusiasm towards new ways of seeing. These artists acknowledged the spatial dimensions of Hokusai's print that they considered as entirely Japanese though, despite the traceable western techniques in the print.

While the nineteenth century re-appropriations recognised and valued Hokusai's pictorial achievements, modern re-imaginations generally abandoned and forgot the creator. Arguably, the *Great Wave* design outgrew its master and became an independent global icon that has a life on its own. Artworks of modern re-appropriations discussed in Part 3 largely

utilise the established popularity of the print itself and its still trackable associations with the Japanese aesthetic representation, that is, however, a transcultural blend of Western and Japanese. These most recent artworks, except for Figures 31-32 attributed to Japanese creators, abandon Hokusai's artistic impact and give space for the growth of an international icon.

To conclude, the *Great Wave* moved beyond Hokusai, its creator, and Japan, its country of origin. It became a global emblem that is continuously being appropriated into different contexts throughout the world. Its transcultural nature abandoned Hokusai's original meanings and turned flexible to suit the ongoing demands of contemporary popular culture.

CONCLUSION

Katsushika Hokusai's definition of landscape was a result of multiple influences, including that of Japanese, Chinese and European. He took inspiration from visual sources of local travel books and Chinese-style literati paintings to create his idea of space. His enthusiastic approach towards innovative representations made him experiment with Western spatial designs that infiltrated Japanese knowledge through Dutch trade during the late Tokugawa era.

Hokusai's character was a defining factor in his understanding of landscape. Belonging to the commoner class of the bustling capital of Edo resulted in his Edokko consciousness and humanist spirit that was influenced by a growing national sentiment among the plebeians who enjoyed the principles of the floating world of ukiyo. This specific belonging also defined the artist's idea of landscape, which he fused with human presence.

While his early prints exaggerated Western stylistic elements of linear perspective and shading to enhance an exotic appeal among the viewers, Hokusai's mature landscapes of the *Thirty-Six Views of Mt Fuji* introduced a differing approach that emphasized meaning and symbolism over formal content. While the early landscapes focus on appropriated western techniques, his later prints project a more synthetized balance of space.

Hokusai's successful fusion of Japanese and foreign elements in his landscape is achieved through the process of appropriation. His imagined places are cultural constructs that include human figures in well-known settlements and nature-based landmarks across Japan. As examined through prints taken from the *Thirty-Six Views* series, all works reflect Hokusai's humanist perspective that is further linked to the presence of Mt Fuji, which has personal connotations in the artist's life related to immortality.

While Hokusai's distinctive appropriations reflect a fusion of western and eastern artistic traditions, the globalization of the *Under the Wave off Kanagawa* print reflects a reversed appropriation, which is then turned into transcultural appropriation. Hokusai's iconic masterpiece was extremely influential in both Japanese and western artistic contexts that resulted in its global recognition and re-imagination. The *Wave* obtained multiple new identities that abandoned its original meanings that reflected Hokusai's imagination and a connection towards Japanese culture and heritage.

This particular print reflects on Hokusai's early designs of distinctive waves that utilise Western techniques incorporated through appropriations. Then, this early design is re-worked by 1830 in a landscape print that reflects a meaningful composition and not mere formalities, suggesting a kind of 'self-appropriation' on behalf of Hokusai. Then, the *Wave* proceeds through multiple phases of transcultural appropriation that incorporates Hokusai's fusion of European-Japanese design into western re-workings within the Japonisme- and contemporary contexts. This journey of transculturation is never-ending and continues even today through visual exchanges within popular culture.

As a final note, Hokusai's westernizing approach is often neglected. His prints, especially his most famous *Great Wave,* are considered as emblematic of Japanese cultural heritage, even though they incorporate appropriated references from different cultures. Appropriated elements are present in all works of art though, since nothing is specific to only one culture. The global dimensions of such transcultural icons as the *Wave* cannot be neglected, as they have been transformed to reflect an international consciousness independent of geographical or nationalistic belonging. Such deep levels of transcultural processes deprives Hokusai's *Great Wave* from its original meanings, and infuse them with new significance.

FIGURES

Figure 1. Shiba Kōkan (1747-1818). *The Seven League Beach at Shichirihagama* (1796). Two-panel folding screen (originally a votive painting); oil on paper. 95.7 x 178.4 cm. Kobe City Museum, Important Cultural Property.

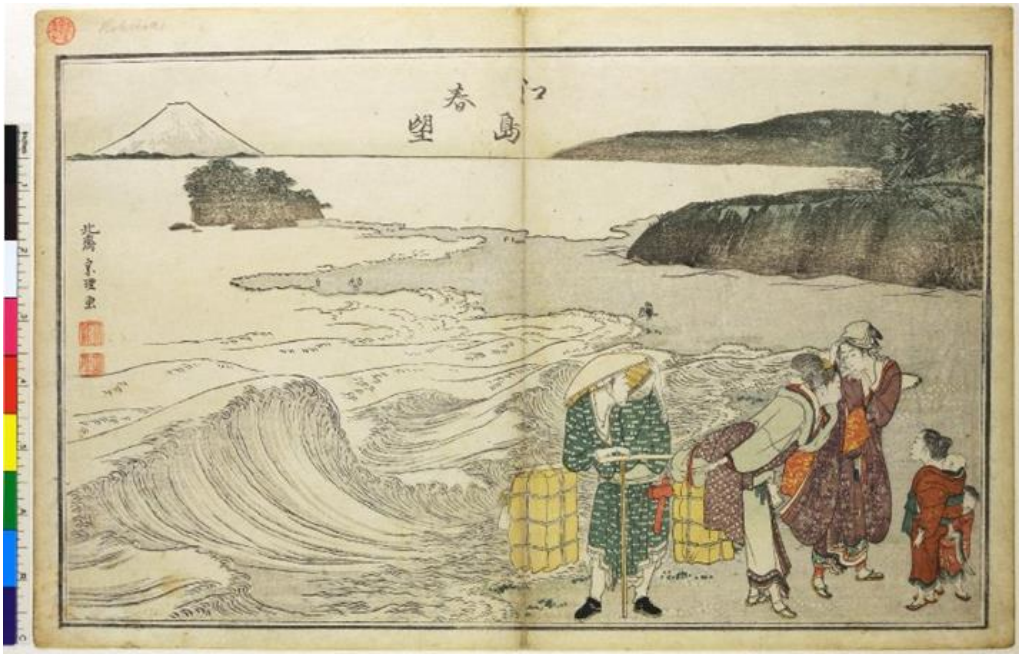

Figure 2. Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849). *Spring at Enoshima* (1797). Album leaf, woodblock print (nishiki-e), ink and colour on paper; published by Tsutaya Jūzaburō. Illustration from the book *Yanagi no ito*. 24.9 x 38 cm. British Museum, London.

Figure 3. Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849). *Express Delivery Boats Rowing through Waves*, from an untitled series of landscapes in Western style (1800-1805). Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and colour on paper. 18.5 x 24.5 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Figure 4. Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849). *Ushigafuchi at Kudan*, from an untitled series of landscapes in Western style (1800-1805). Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and colour on paper. 18.3 x 24.4 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Figure 5. Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849). *Shinobazu*, from the series *The Dutch Picture Lens: Eight Views of Edo* (1802). Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and colour on paper. 8.6 x 11.4 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Figure 6. Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849). *Suruga-chō*, from the series *The Dutch Picture Lens: Eight Views of Edo* (1802). Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and colour on paper. 8.6 x 11.4 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Figure 7. Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849). *Act I: Tsurugaoka*, from *Newly Published Perspective Picture of the Loyal Retainers* series (1801-1804). Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and colour on paper. 23.5 x 35.1 cm. British Museum, London.

Figure 8. Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849). *Act XI*, from *Newly Published Perspective Picture of the Loyal Retainers* series (1801-1804). Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and colour on paper. 23.5 x 35.1 cm. British Museum, London.

Figure 9. Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849). *Kiting on New Year's Day* (1824-1826). Sumi ink and pigments on Dutch paper. 39.8 x 28.4 cm. National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden.

Figure 10. Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849). *Sudden Rain in the Countryside* (1824-1826). Sumi ink and pigments on Dutch paper. 27.2 x 39.8 cm. National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden.

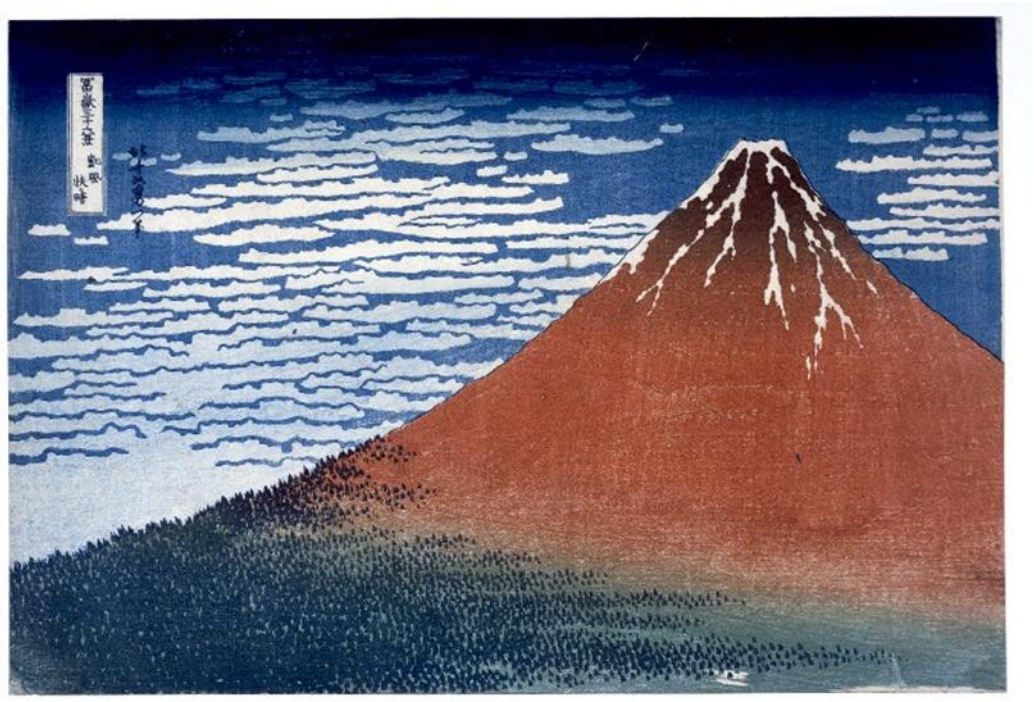

Figure 11. Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849). *Red Fuji* or *Clear Day with a Southern Breeze*, from the *Thirty-Six Views of Mount Fuji* series (c. 1830-1831). Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and colour on paper. 26.2 x 38.2 cm. British Museum, London.

Figure 12. Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849). *Rainstorm beneath the Summit*, from the *Thirty-Six Views of Mount Fuji* series (c. 1830-1831). Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and colour on paper. 26.2 x 38.2 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Figure 13. Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849). *In the Mountains of Tōtōmi Province,* from the *Thirty-Six Views of Mount Fuji* series (c. 1830-1831). Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and colour on paper. 25.7 x 38.5 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Figure 14. Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849). *Fuji View Plain in Owari Province,* from the *Thirty-Six Views of Mount Fuji* series (c. 1830-1831). Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and colour on paper. 25.5 x 38.5 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Figure 15. Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849). *Viewing Sunset over Ryōgoku Bridge from the Onmaya Embankment*, from the *Thirty-Six Views of Mount Fuji* series (c. 1830-1831). Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and colour on paper. 24.5 x 36 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Figure 16. Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849). *Nihonbashi Bridge in Edo*, from the *Thirty-Six Views of Mount Fuji* series (c. 1830-1831). Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and colour on paper. 25.9 x 38.3 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Figure 17. Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849). *Yoshida on the Tōkaidō,* from the *Thirty-Six Views of Mount Fuji* series (c. 1830-1831). Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and colour on paper. 25.8 x 38.4 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Figure 18. Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849). *Under the Wave off Kanagawa,* from the *Thirty-Six Views of Mount Fuji* series (c. 1830–1832). Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and colour on paper. 25.7 x 37.9 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

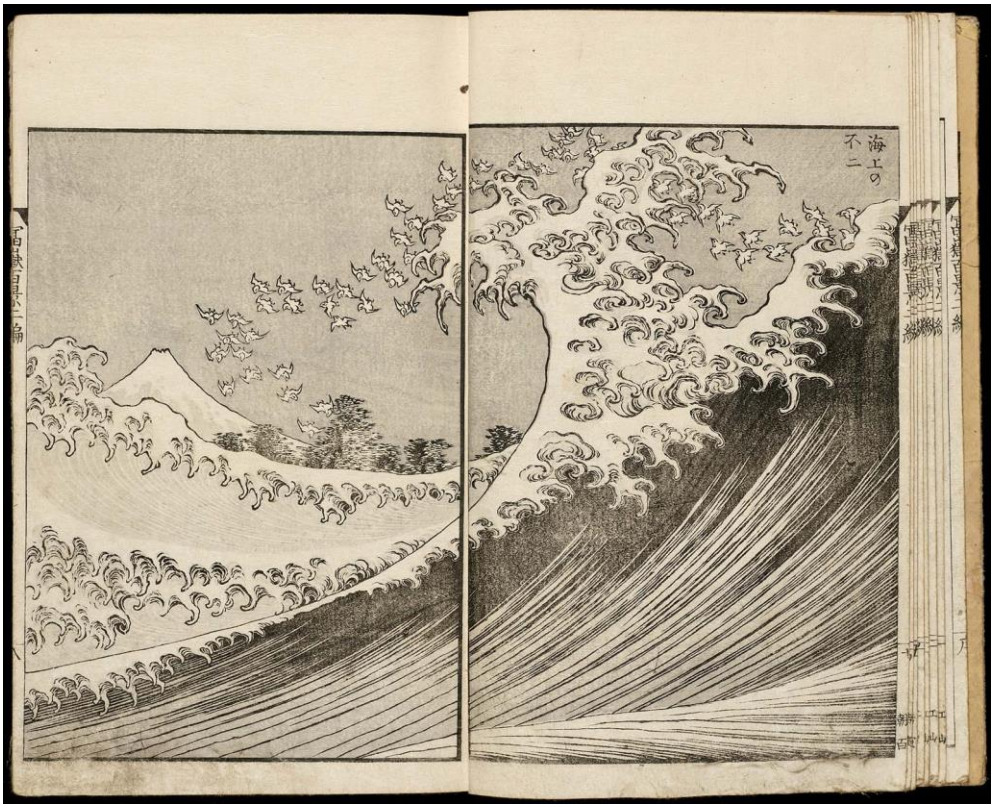

Figure 19. Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849). *Mount Fuji Viewed from the Sea*, double page illustration from *One Hundred Views of Mount Fuji,* (c. 1834-1835). Woodblock printed book; ink on paper. 22.7 x 15.8 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Figure 20. Utagawa Hiroshige (1797-1858). *The Sea at Satta in Suruga Province*, from the *Thirty-Six Views of Mt Fuji* (c. 1858). Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and colour on paper. 35.4 x 24.3 cm. British Museum, London.

Figure 21. Kitagawa Toyohide (dates unknown). *Kataoka Gadō II as Chishima Kanja Yoshihiro in the play Keisei Satsumagushi* (c. 1841). Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and colour on paper. 38 x 26 cm. Mike Lyon Collection, Kansas.

Figure 22. Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1798-1861). *On the Waves at Kakuda on the way to Sado Island*, from the *Concise Illustrated Biography of Monk Nichiren* series (c. 1835).Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and colour on paper. 25.4 x 37.8 cm. British Museum, London.

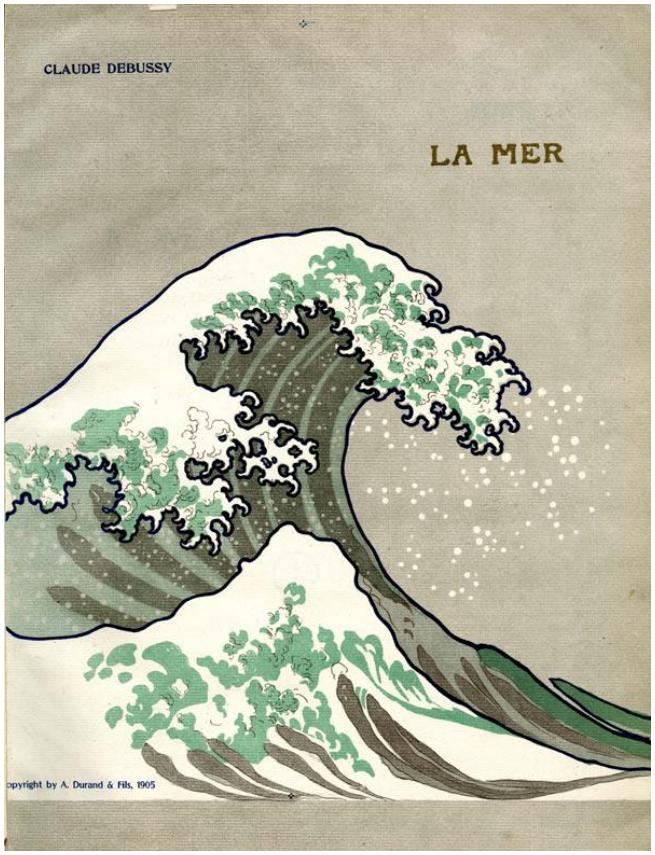

Figure 23. A. Durand & Fils. Cover design of the first edition of Claude Debussy's (1862-1918) *The Sea* (1905). Sibley Music Library, Eastman School of Music, New York.

Figure 24. Georges Lacombe (1868-1916). *Blue seascape, Wave Effect* (1893). Oil on canvas. 65 x 43 cm. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rennes.

Figure 25. Henri Gustave Jossot (1866–1951). *The Wave* (1894). Lithograph printed in olive green on laid paper. Sheet: 61 x 42.9 cm. Image: 52.5 x 35.1 cm. Minneapolis Institute of Art.

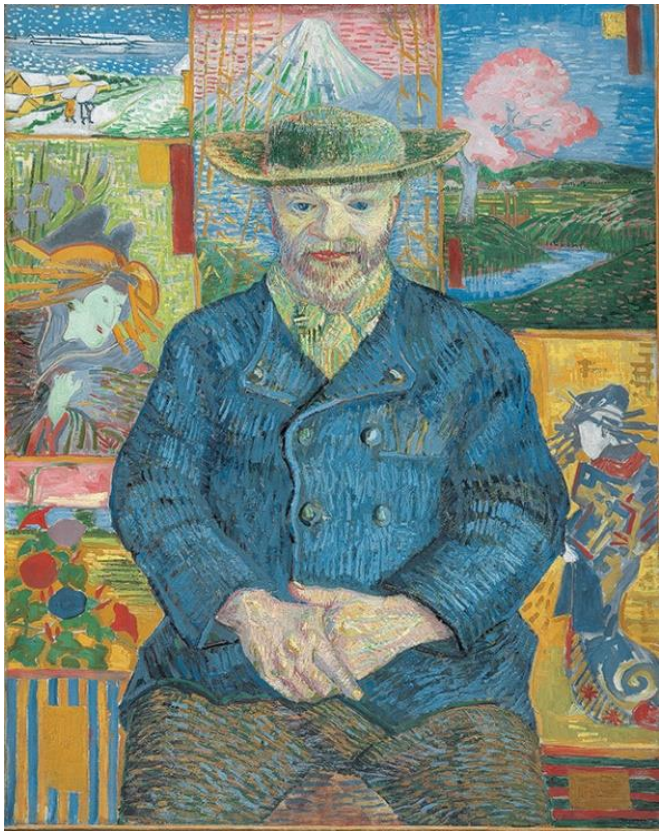

Figure 26. Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890). *Portrait of Père Tanguy* (1887). Oil on canvas. 92 x 75 cm. Musée Rodin, Paris.

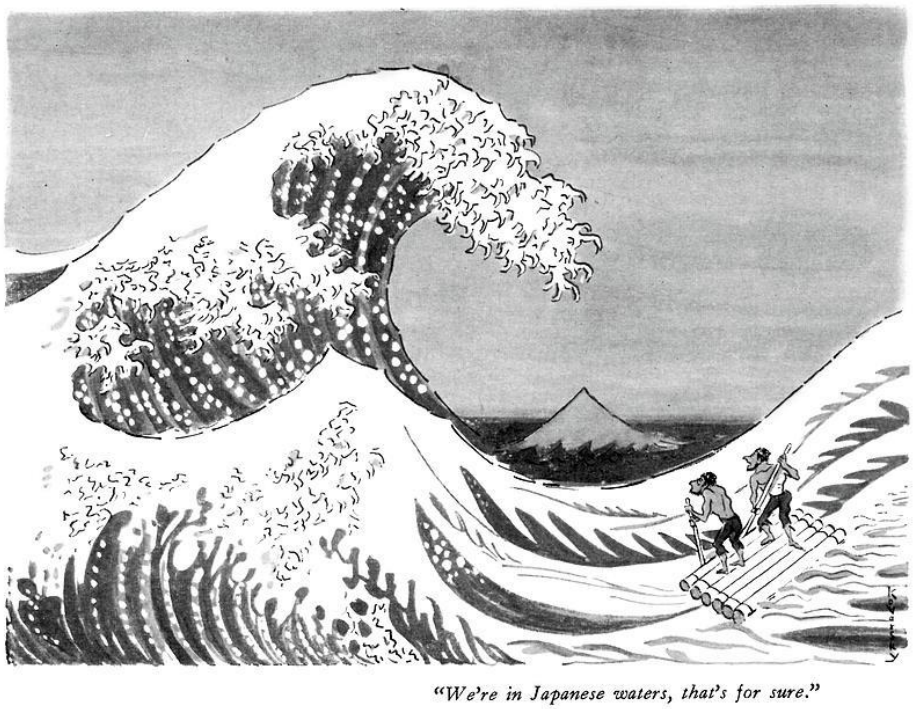

Figure 27. Anatol Kovarsky. *We're in Japanese Waters, that's for sure.* New Yorker, September 26, 1959.

Figure 28. Tom Herzberg. Christmas card with Hokusai parody, 2000. Digital Print. Image courtesy Tom Herzberg.

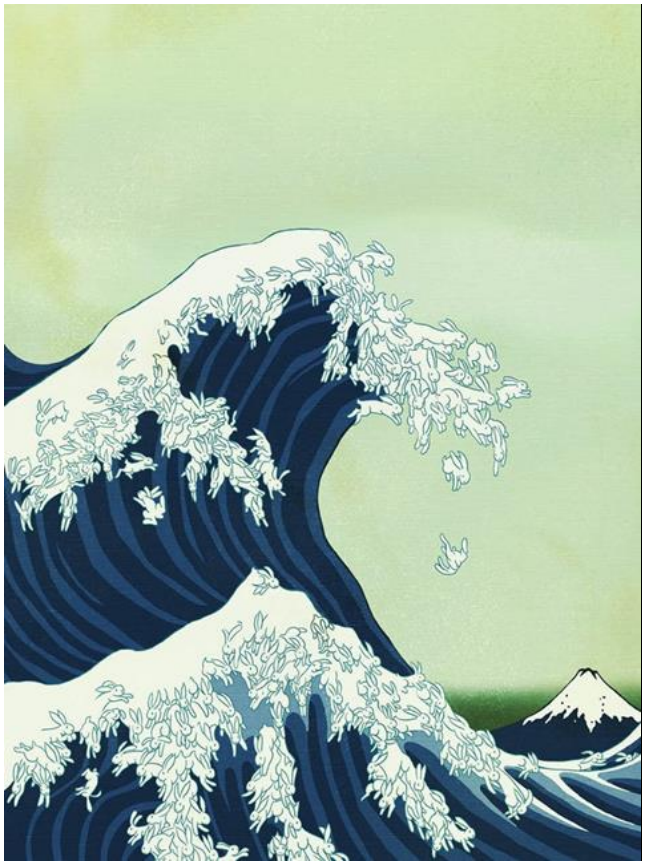

Figure 29. Kozyndan. *Uprisings*, 2007. Digital print. 57 x 42.5 cm. Image courtesy Kozyndan.

Figure 30. Mohamed Kanoo. *Great Wave of Dubai*, 2012. Digital print. 130 x 80 cm. Meem Gallery, Dubai.

Figure 31. Takashi Murakami. *Manji Fuji*, 2001. Colour laser print. 22.4 x 29.8 cm. Takashi Murakami/Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd.

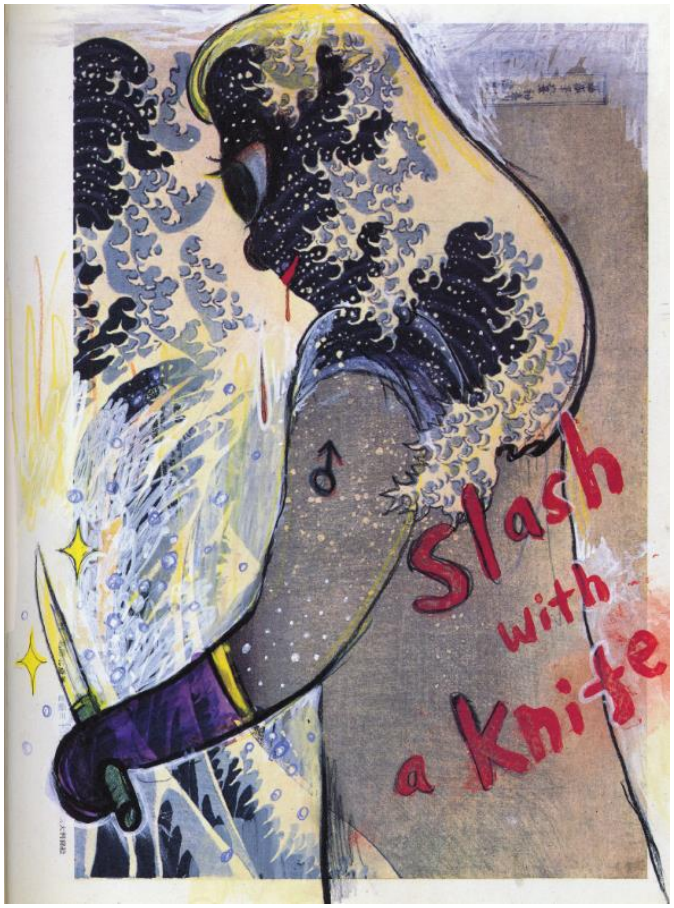

Figure 32. Yoshitomo Nara. *Slash with a Knife*, 1999. Colour Xerox print. 42 x 29.8 cm. Tomio Koyama Gallery, Tokyo.

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APPENDIX I.

Maria Rilke: *Der Berg* (1918)

Sechsunddreißig Mal und hundert Mal
hat der Maler jenen Berg geschrieben,
weggerissen, wieder hingetrieben
(sechsunddreißig Mal und hundert Mal)

zu dem unbegreiflichen Vulkane,
selig, voll Versuchung, ohne Rat,—
während der mit Umriß Angetane
seiner Herrlichkeit nicht Einhalt tat:

tausendmal aus allen Tagen tauchend,
Nächte ohne gleichen von sich ab
fallen lassend, alle wie zu knapp;
jedes Bild im Augenblick verbrauchend,
von Gestalt gesteigert zu Gestalt,
teilnahmslos und weit und ohne
Meinung—,
um auf einmal wissend, wie Erscheinung,
sich zu heben hinter jedem Spalt.

aus: Der neuen Gedichte, anderer Teil

The Mountain

Thirty-six times and a hundred times the
painter limned that mountain, each time
torn away, then driven back there; each
time borne (thirty-six times and a
hundred times)

back to that blank, volcanic, deadpan
face. Blissful, wholly tempted, free from
thought. whereas, within its silhouetted
grace, splendour held back nothing —
not a jot —,

a thousand dawns emerging, to allow
matchless nights at dusk, so it could
slough them as if they all were not
enough; consuming every image in the
now, rising from every mounting shape,
re-shaped; indifferent, distant, stripped of
any views, and then . . . omniscient,
ghostly as a muse — rising up from every
cleft that gaped.

from: The New Poems: The Other Part

Translated by Len Krisak.