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EAST ASIAN HISTORY AND CULTURE REVIEW

***Meisho Zue* and the Mapping of Prosperity in Late Tokugawa Japan**

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Abstract

The cartographic history of Japan is remarkable for the sophistication, variety, and ingenuity of its maps. It is also remarkable for its many modes of spatial representation, which might not immediately seem cartographic but could very well be thought of as such. To understand the alterity of these cartographic modes and write Japanese map history for what it is, rather than what it is not, scholars need to be equipped with capacious definitions of maps not limited by modern Eurocentric expectations. This article explores such classificatory flexibility through an analysis of the mapping function of *meisho zue*, popular multivolume geographic encyclopedias published in Japan during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The article's central contention is that the illustrations in *meisho zue* function as pictorial maps, both as individual compositions and in the aggregate. The main example offered is *Miyako meisho zue* (1780), which is shown to function like a map on account of its instrumental pictorial representation of landscape, virtual wayfinding capacity, spatial layout as a book, and biased selection of sites that contribute to a vision of prosperity. This last claim about site selection exposes the depiction of *meisho* as a means by which the editors of *meisho zue* recorded a version of cultural geography that normalized this vision of prosperity.

Keywords: Japan, cartography, Akisato Ritō, *meisho zue*, illustrated book, map, prosperity

Entertaining exhibitions arrayed on the dry bed of the Kamo River distracted throngs of people seeking relief from the summer heat in Tokugawa-era Kyoto.¹ By the time Osaka-based *ukiyo-e* artist Takehara Shunchōsai 竹原春朝齋 (fl. 1772–1801) depicted this phenomenon in the illustrated book *Miyako meisho zue* 都名所図会 (1780), the site had become especially popular for whiling away muggy nights between the seventh and eighteenth days of the sixth month (figure 1). Titled *Shijō kawara yū suzumi* 四条河原夕涼 (View of night cooling at the Fourth Avenue riverbed), the scene teems with activity under a sky brightened by a full moon. Two ticket takers sit at the entrance of a tall tent below a banner that advertises *kyokumochi*, a kind of acrobatic show in which performers use their hands, feet, and heads to manipulate objects such

as bales of rice in the air. An audience has gathered inside a roofless makeshift theater to watch an entertainer perform with a samisen on stage. Someone has paid for the fun of shooting arrows at a target stabilized by a boulder. Groups of people lounge around chatting, drinking, and gesticulating on raised platforms above the flowing river. Other groups find relief in luxurious rooms raised on taller stilts directly above the cool current. Akisato Ritō 秋里籬島 (dates unknown), the editor of *Miyako meisho zue*, provides commentary about the site for the benefit of viewers who might not grasp all there is to do in the picture. In simple prose, he describes some of the many entertainments to be found here, including storytellers, mimics, dogs engaged in sumo wrestling, monkeys performing theater, freely flowing sake, and wild animals from deep within the mountains—all against a background of “lanterns sparkling like stars, purple banners waving in the wind, the youthful moon shining bright, and countless fans waving” (Ritō 1981a, 33–34).

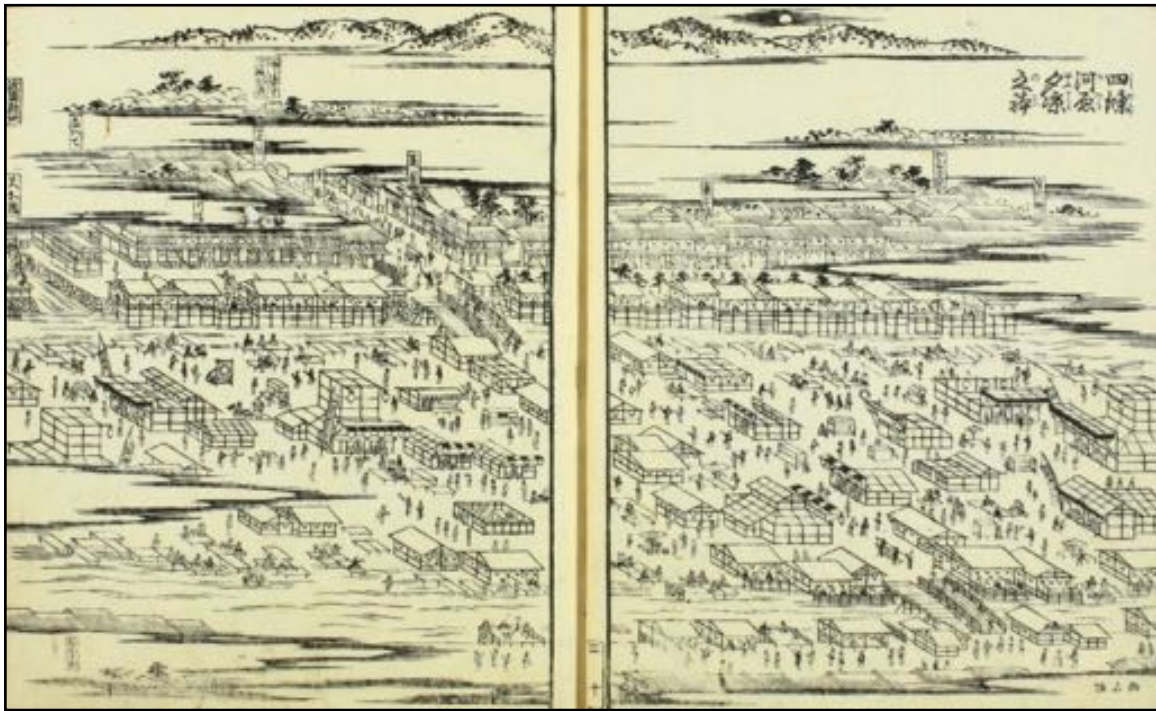


Figure 1. Takehara Shunchōsai, *Shijō kawara yū suzumi*. Source: Akisato (1981a).²

This lively image is but one of hundreds composing Shunchōsai’s pictorial survey of *meisho* 名所 (famous places) and their locations relative to one another in the imperial capital and its surroundings. In *Miyako meisho zue*’s six volumes, Shunchōsai treats the reader to

lovingly detailed compositions of culturally notable built and natural environments that range from the broad and sweeping to the circumscribed and focused. Owing to this range of geographical coverage, many scholars, most notably Nishiyama Matsunosuke, have characterized *Miyako meisho zue* and other books in the genre of *meisho zue* as guides to the cities and other kinds of topographies they feature (Nishiyama 1997, 107–108).

The characterization is apt, since the books provided readers with visual and textual information about places, but only up to a point because it begs a question about the function, form, and effects of the guidance on offer. Moreover, characterizing *meisho zue* as guidebooks inaccurately implies that a book such as *Miyako meisho zue* was used for portable reference while traveling. The multivolume scope of the book, not to mention its large format (27.2 cm by 18.8 cm) and cost, would have made it impractical for travelers to use for the purpose of wayfinding and planning during journeys. For that purpose, much smaller, less expensive travel guidebooks, chock-full of practical information, were widely available.

If our characterizations of *meisho zue* are to shed light on these works' historical particularity as distinct material objects of sophisticated print culture, we must start with their historical readership. As I have shown elsewhere (Goree 2010), consumers of *meisho zue* did not use them as travel guidebooks, but rather as stimulants to engage in a premodern mode of virtual travel, by which they enjoyed vicarious experiences of place without the attendant corporeal and economic drawbacks of physical travel. Such book-based experiences of geography were essential to the considerable commercial success of *Miyako meisho zue* because they satisfied a desire for leisurely accumulation of geographical fluency among a truly diverse readership, which ranged from samurai to commoners, townspeople to villagers, old to young, and men to women.³ Shunchōsai's depiction of the Fourth Avenue Riverbed was meant to transport the reader to this place, not actually but virtually. But how did it and the other pictures in *Miyako meisho zue* do this?

This article provides an answer to this question about the visual language of *meisho zue* by arguing specifically and at length that the *zu* 図 (graphics) in *meisho zue* are, in essence, pictorial maps—both as individual compositions and in the aggregate. These images' visual language is most closely associated with *ezu* 絵図, the term generally used to designate maps in the Tokugawa period and more generally to refer to any picture with an explanatory function,

often owing to its incorporation of text (Smith 2001, 103–104). In making this claim that *meisho zue* are pictorial maps, which has not yet been made in such an explicit and thorough way in the secondary literature, I am guided by a general set of interrelated extrinsic characteristics of maps, as articulated by James Akerman and Robert Karrow (2007): scale, selection, generalization, and textual signs. Seen in this light, *meisho zue* can be thought of as pictorial atlases of famous places. My analysis therefore focuses on the extrinsic characteristics of the *zu* as well as comments made about the *zu* in paratexts, with *Miyako meisho zue* being my primary case study, since its commercial success as the first *meisho zue* ever published made it the model for all subsequent examples of the genre. What can be theorized about the formal properties of the visual language in this pioneering book by Ritō and Shunchōsai can be applied to other *meisho zue* in a way that accounts for general features as well as particular variations throughout the corpus.⁴

Developing a capacious, flexible, and yet meaningfully specific conceptual apparatus for understanding the *zu* is methodologically critical to understanding the geographical meaning-making properties of all *meisho zue*; at the same time, it must be narrow enough to elucidate the particularity of *meisho zue* as a distinct genre within the broader category of *chishi*.⁵ This admittedly formalist attempt to claim a uniting quality of “mapness” for *meisho zue* is a worthwhile endeavor insofar as it demonstrates that cartographic representation in early modern Japan need not conform to Eurocentric notions of what qualifies as a map, and thereby opens the global history of cartography to even more generous assumptions.⁶ But it is doubly worthwhile as a heuristic way to expose the depiction of *meisho* as a means by which their editors were engaged in a larger project of cultural geography that normalizes a vision of prosperity. Representations of landscape in the East Asian tradition tend to be auspicious, and this is certainly true for the *zu* in *meisho zue*, but in this case the defining sensibility not only draws on but also exceeds inherited perceptions of what makes a place significant since it belongs to commoners such as Ritō, who were motivated by profit and the burgeoning confidence to call places famous as they saw fit. *Meisho zue*, in effect, constitute evidence of erudite and entrepreneurial commoners laying claim to the prerogative of encoding cultural geography for all, including commoners and elites, and with a dogged determination that continues to dazzle readers today.

***Meisho* and *Meisho Zue*: Defining Terms**

The publication of *Miyako meisho zue* in 1780 launched one of the most popular, distinctive, and enduring book genres produced for commercial profit during the Tokugawa period. Compiled by the entrepreneurial literatus Ritō, the book improved upon the limited scope and quality of guidebooks published during the previous several decades (Ritō 1981a). The topic was still Kyoto's rich assortment of *meisho*, but the monumental scope of Ritō's book was new, since it attempted exhaustiveness and went well beyond the capital proper in its encyclopedic coverage. Ritō based his *mondan* 文談 (textual commentary) on archival research informed by site visits, which lent an air of authority to what was nevertheless accessible prose. The *zu* designed by Takehara Shunchōsai were decidedly fresh in their dependence on on-site sketching, their realism matched by an elegance of style and studied variety that found immediate favor with readers. The many hoary *meisho* featured seemed different enough according to this new style of textual description and visual depiction, but it was also the many newfangled kinds of *meisho* included that made for a novel and hence marketable vision of cultural geography for such a tried and true geographic topic. The animating features of the *zu* and *mondan* constituted a popular enough formula for recording the textual and visual features of notable places to merit the publication of a sequel, *Shūi Miyako meisho zue* 拾遺都名所図会 (1787), just as soon as Ritō and Shunchōsai could augment their previous work with another ambitious compendium of temples, shrines, gardens, mountains, rivers, shops, and many more places they deemed culturally significant. Nearly one hundred more of these large multivolume books in the mode of *Miyako meisho zue* were made during the next century, rivaling well-known literary genres of the period in popular staying power. Today, the many extant editions of *meisho zue* housed in libraries all over the world testify to that popular appeal. They also provide us with one of the richest historical text-image databases of cultural geography for premodern Japan.

Meisho had held cultural currency in Japan since long before the early modern period as a category of codified place names associated with specific references in traditional poetry. A place was known as a *meisho* by virtue of its appearance in a work of poetry or some other literary work, or as a site of historical importance, and poets frequently deployed set poetic tropes called *utamakura* 歌枕 (poem pillows) in conjunction with *meisho* as a way to create

allusive resonance in a poem. As *meisho* developed as an element in Japanese poetics, they were also given treatment in visual art as early as the Heian period (794–1185). *Meisho-e* 名所絵, as paintings featuring *meisho* are broadly known, take many compositional formats, but most depict a series of places that may or may not be geographically contiguous. Some of the best-known formats for painted *meisho* are *byōbu-e* 屏風絵 (screen paintings), *shōji-e* 障子絵 (panel paintings), and *emakimono* 絵巻物 (illustrated hand scrolls), all of which, like *waka* composition and appreciation, figured prominently in the lives and tastes of aristocrats at court (Sei 1997; Chiba 2007). In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, *meisho-e* contributed to the development of elaborate screen paintings of *meisho* located in and around Kyoto called *Rakuchū rakugai zu* 洛中洛外図, which depict places of cultural renown among the everyday contexts of Kyoto (McKelway 2006; Itō 2005, 186–196. In due time, the tradition of using *meisho* in visual languages influenced early modern artists, most famously Utagawa Hiroshige 歌川広重 (1797–1858) and Katsushika Hokusai 葛飾北斎 (1760–1849), both of whom used *meisho* as subjects for *ukiyo-e* featuring different cities, roads, and sightseeing areas around Japan. Just prior to *meisho* appearing everywhere in the polychromatic world of early nineteenth-century *ukiyo-e*, they made their appearance in the monochromatic *zu* of *meisho zue*, which were designed by some of the same artists who designed *ukiyo-e* featuring *meisho* later on.

In Japanese, *meisho zue* are categorized as *chishi* 地誌 (regional geography), but they have come to be translated in English most frequently as “illustrated gazetteers.” If a gazetteer is, at its most basic level, a geographical dictionary or index, then the designation is apt. But given the long-standing status of gazetteers in East Asia as bureaucratic tools of the state for understanding and thereby administering far-flung territories, the designation is not so apt. The Japanese term for gazetteer understood in this sense is generally *fudoki* 風土記, which were produced in the Nara and Heian periods, and then resurfaced again by shogunal order only in the eighteenth century. By contrast, *meisho zue* were published commercially for a broad audience made up in large part by commoners as a form of entertainment and edification on the open market. The designation “illustrated gazetteer” is also problematic since the term “illustrated” implies that the graphic content in the *zu* occupies a position of supplementary functionality in relation to the *mondan*. Nothing could be further from the truth, since the graphic content and textual content of *meisho zue* run parallel to each other, covering the same trajectory through a

given region, with limited cross-referencing. If anything, the graphic material is primary, with the *mondan* playing a supporting role. The *zu* almost always precede *mondan* as the first entry or series of entries in each volume of a *meisho zue* edition. Contemporary commentators in the nineteenth century, such as the writer and scholar Kyokutei Bakin 曲亭馬琴 (1767–1848), consistently singled out the *zu* as distinguishing the books formally and in the marketplace. A translation for *meisho zue* that comes closer to capturing their function, but not their pictorial characteristics, is “popular encyclopedic geographies,” which is the English term offered by Kazutaka Unno in *The History of Cartography* (Unno 1994, 416).

A literal translation for *meisho zue*—“graphic collection of famous places”—is perhaps best, since it clearly calls attention to the graphic material at the expense of the written content, while also connoting an encyclopedic purview. My preference for using the term “graphic” in this formulation and my decision not to translate *zu* in this article is therefore intentional, since I wish to exercise caution in describing the visual content of the books and avoid the reasonable but unilluminating observation that this visual language takes the form it does simply owing to convention.⁷ This is critical since the argument at hand advocates regarding the *zu* in *meisho zue* as pictorial maps rather than mere pictorial book illustrations. Moreover, leaving *meisho zue* untranslated is helpful for our purposes here, since doing so forestalls hasty conclusions about the characteristics and function of the books based on assumptions about their identification with relatively more stable genres such as gazetteers and encyclopedias. *Meisho zue* may have much in common with these and other genres, but they also constitute a genre in their own right precisely because of their hybridity.

The Individual *Zu* as Map

There are very few bona fide ground-view maps in the corpus of *meisho zue*. One occasionally comes across an orthogonal map with a ground-view perspective, such as the one by Hasegawa Settan 長谷川雪旦 (1778–1843) depicting Asakusa Bridge in *Edo meisho zue* 江戸名所図会 (1834, 1836) (figure 2) (Saitō, et al. 1980, 32). *Morokoshi meishō zue* 唐土名勝図会 (1802), featuring sites in the Chinese capital of Beijing and its surroundings, begins with a series of ground-view maps introducing the areas that the subsequent *zu* and *mondan* treat more narrowly; for example, the first map is titled *Morokoshi kōyo zenzu* 唐土皇輿全図 (Complete

map of the Chinese capital) (figure 3) (Okada 1806).⁸ More often than not, one finds in *meisho zue* pictorial maps combining orthogonal ground views with oblique pictorial views and, sometimes, indications of cardinal directions, as in the *Ōno hikata zenzu* 大野日方全図 (Complete map of Ōno) in *Kii no kuni meisho zue* 紀伊国名所図会 (1811–1851) (figure 4) (Takechi 1981, 319). More frequently, one encounters landscape views of an even greater pictorial quality, as with Shunchōsai's *zu* depicting Lake Biwa in *Miyako meisho zue* (figure 5). To be sure, this composition does not combine a ground-view plan with pictorial profiles of topographic features: it does not contain indications of cardinal directions, nor does it generalize topographic features into symbols such as lines for roads or rivers—all features we might expect in a map. Even so, might this *zu* still be considered a kind of map?



Figure 2. Hasegawa Settan, map of Asakusa Bridge and surroundings. *Source*: Saitō, et al. (1980).

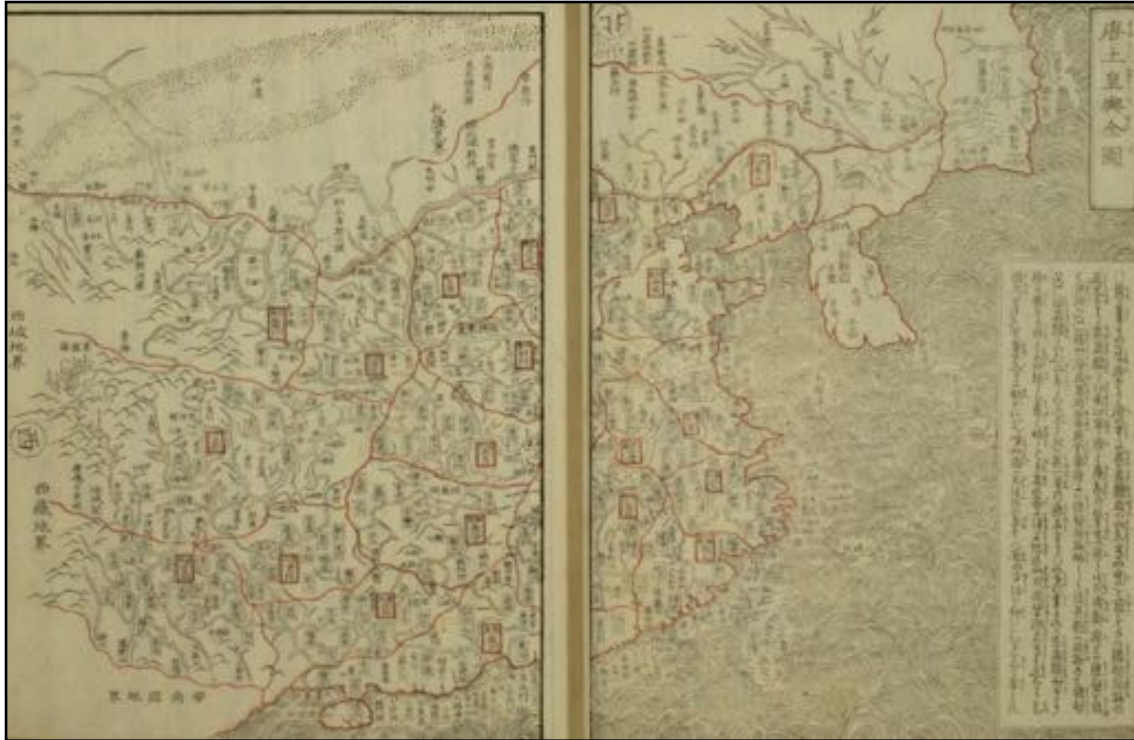


Figure 3. Okada Gyokuzan, *Morokoshi kōyo zenzu*. Source: Okada (1806).

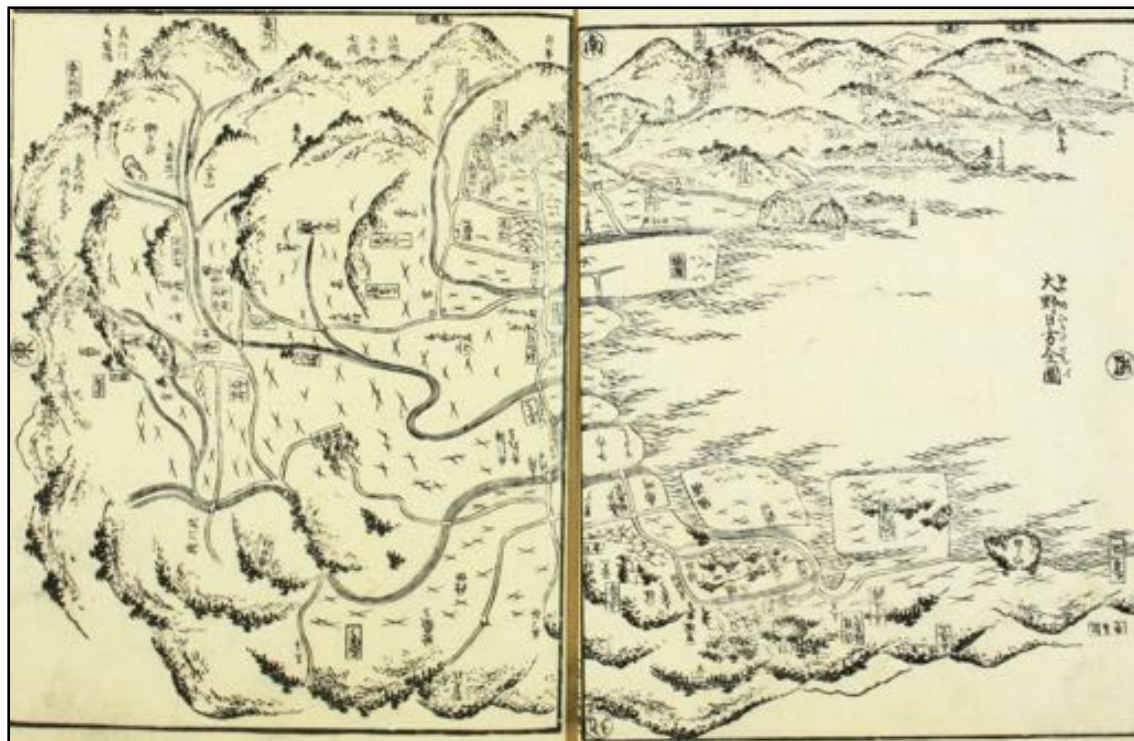


Figure 4. Nishimura Chūwa, *Ōno hikata zenzu*. Source: Takechi (1981).

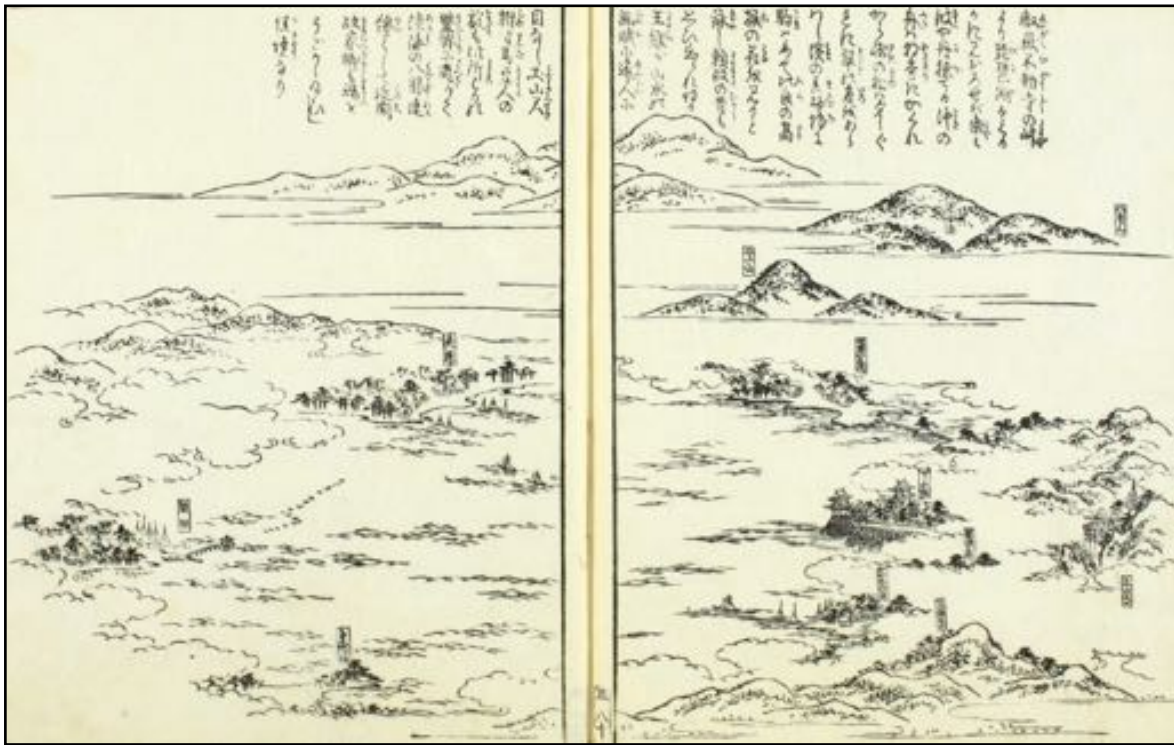


Figure 5. Takehara Shunchōsai, view of Lake Biwa. *Source*: Akisato (1981a).

The answer is yes, at least according to J. B. Harley and David Woodward’s well-known, capacious definition: “Maps are graphic representations that facilitate a spatial understanding of things, concepts, conditions, processes, or events in the human world” (Harley and Woodward 1987, xvi). Shunchōsai’s view of Lake Biwa may hold aesthetic appeal as an artful composition, but it also employs a pictorial idiom to facilitate an understanding of how certain “things” relate to one another within a circumscribed space. The “things” in question are several *meisho*, conveyed in pictorial shorthand and located around the lake, as well as the lake itself, shown from a vantage point on Mount Hiei looking southeast. Rather than filling the composition with everything identifiable in this circumscribed space, Shunchōsai focuses on the *meisho* located therein: Mikamiyama, Seta Village, Zeze Castle, Mii-dera, Karata, and several other *meisho* of long-standing renown.⁹ Clouds and mist conceal and thereby deselect parts of the topography that would otherwise undermine an understanding of the space as one notable for its *meisho* and therefore are not merely artistic conventions devoid of functional meaning. Since Shunchōsai makes *meisho* conspicuously stand out as discrete and locatable features of the topography, the

view fulfills an essential function of maps as noted by Akerman and Karrow, which is “to define and demarcate precise places” (2007, 139). Moreover, if the hallmark of a successful *pictorial* map is to convey a sense of place with accessible topographical information, as Nigel Holmes suggests, then the view is a worthy specimen since the *meisho* are defined and demarcated with sensitivity to the surrounding topography (Holmes 1991, 12–15).

We can now observe Akerman and Karrow’s set of map characteristics in a *zu*. To begin with, Shunchōsai’s pictorial map of Lake Biwa is drawn with a *scale* roughly uniform for the bottom two-third register, with the view of distant mountains in the upper third register rendered at a much smaller scale with much lighter strokes.¹⁰ The result is an isometric depiction of the space mapped within a larger contextual field free of projection techniques. This mixed scale is enabled by the forty-five degree aerial perspective, which results in the oblique depiction of depth and a distant horizon line. This perspective dictates the *selection* of topography depicted, and the uniform scale of the depiction, for the bottom two-thirds is crucial to an accurate understanding of the quantity of space occupied by the selected features of the topography (i.e., *meisho*) and their actual distances from one another.¹¹ The use of clouds and mist to offset the particularity of the *meisho* is a form of *generalization*, or abstraction, since these meteorological features contain no topographical information. One might even argue that the distant mountains are a pictorial ornament that provides a sort of abstract ground to the mapped portion of the composition. And a consistent and simple system of sign language is evident in the liberal use of cartouches labeling each of the selected *meisho*. In sum, these characteristics impart to the *zu* enough cartographic information to make it theoretically usable as a crude tool for actually locating *meisho* around this section of Lake Biwa.

The first *zu* in *Miyako meisho zue*, titled *Dairi no zu* 内裏の図 (Map of the Imperial Palace), also defines and demarcates place in a pictorial idiom, but at a larger scale than the *zu* of Lake Biwa (figure 6) (Ritō 1981a, 9). Rather than mapping several *meisho*, however, here Shunchōsai maps a single *meisho* in terms of its constituent parts. By using a picture to map out one *meisho* rather than several, Shunchōsai makes available to himself a degree of resolution, and therefore pictorial particularity, with which to map various elements composing the built environment of the palace. This may be a pretty picture, but it is also a visual analysis of architectural configurations detailing the palace’s individual structures, thus forming an

informative overall generalized plan of a large section of the palace in pictorial profile.¹² The spatial lesson being taught is reinforced with an abundance of cartouches that name prominent elements of the built environment. Shunchōsai's *zu* of the Imperial Palace is therefore an instrumental rendering of topography that uses realistically rendered depictions embedded with explanatory text to diagram the anatomy of a place in a way that conveys a sense of that place's parts. Though a ground-view map would have been more efficient and comprehensive, this pictorial map would not be useless for navigating the palace grounds on a virtual visit.

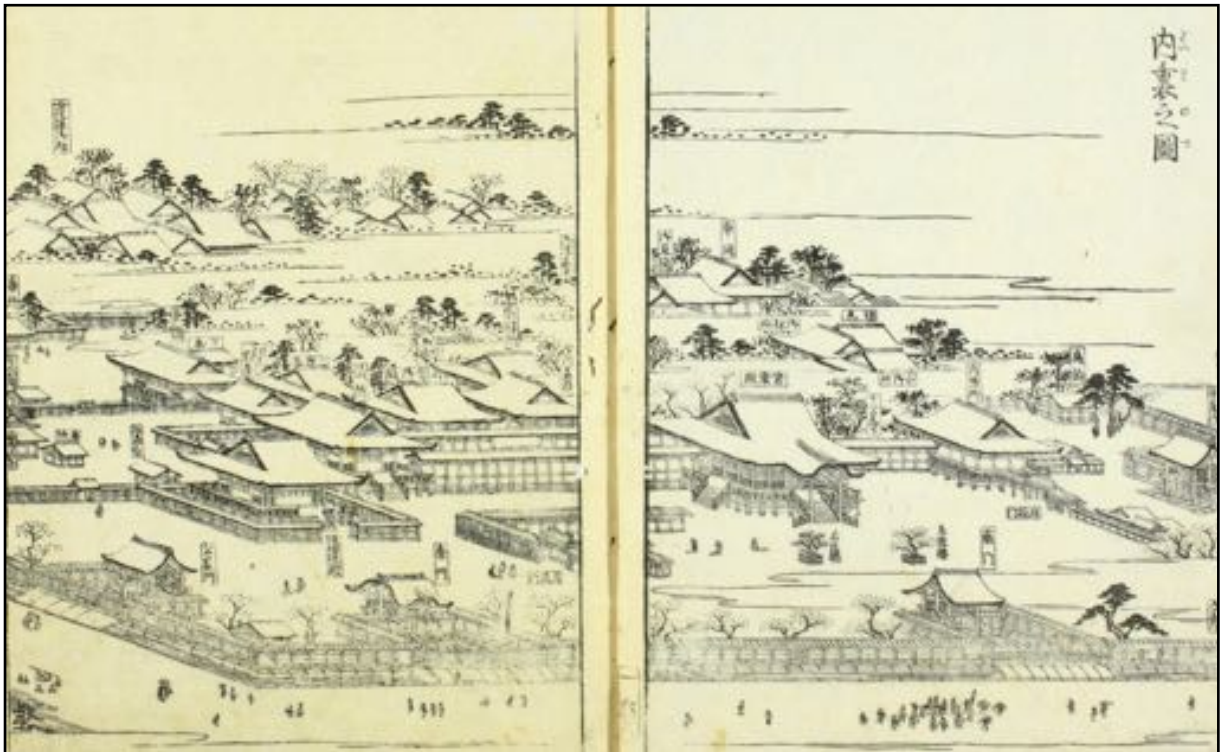


Figure 6. Takehara Shunchōsai, *Dairi no zu*. The central buildings that make up the palace, most notably the Shishin-den 紫宸殿 on the right and the Seiryō-den 清涼殿 on the left, are prominently displayed with as much resolution in the architectural detail as possible given the limitations in woodblock printing technology. Four of the twelve gates providing passage in and out of the palace are featured prominently; they are, from bottom right to left, Jikka-mon 日華門, Minami-mon 南門, Kara-mon 唐門, and Kuge-mon 公家門. Smaller details of the built space, such as the cherry and orange trees in front of the Shishin-den, as well as several hallways and checkpoints, are also included. *Source*: Akisato (1981a).

The combination of pictorial profiling and explanatory labels, as seen in the view of Lake Biwa and the Imperial Palace, or in the depiction of the Fourth Avenue Riverbed, occurs to

varying degrees in *zu* throughout the corpus of *meisho zue*. This feature is reason enough to think of them as maps, especially since it distinguishes them from the unlabeled landscape views generally associated with works categorized as fine art. But *zu* in *meisho zue* not only use image and text within the graphic frame to convey a sense of *meisho* as place; they also reveal a tendency to balance particular *meisho* attributes against a more generalized pictorial context, with the result that the depiction of *meisho* comes with a high degree of concrete pictorial information. We see the specificity of *meisho* defined and demarcated, but we also see this in relation to environmental features, such as flora, roads, watercourses, mountains, and atmospheric phenomena such as clouds and mist.

Another way to ascertain the productive tension between particularization and generalization is to compare the *zu* in *Miyako meisho zue* to those contained in its only acknowledged visual model, *Karaku saiken zu* 花洛細見図 (1704), edited and illustrated by Kanaya Heiemon 金屋平右衛門 (dates unknown).¹³ In the *hanrei* 凡例 (legend) to *Miyako meisho zue*, Ritō writes that Shunchōsai improves on Kanaya insofar as Shunchōsai “sketches present-day scenery exactly as is” (Ritō 1981a, 7). This promise of accurate, up-to-date recording of geographical phenomena is made repeatedly in the prefaces and legends of *meisho zue*. Capturing the look and feel of a *meisho* in such a dutiful way contributes to spatial legibility and believability. Kanaya’s compositions in *Karaku saiken zu* are detailed renderings of built environments in their own right, but those by Shunchōsai represent a refinement in granular depiction that might also be thought of as documentary recording.

Consider the way in which the *zu* in *Miyako meisho zue* for the well-known temple Kiyomizu-dera includes greater granularity of detail than the *zu* of the same temple in *Karaku saiken zu* (figures 7 and 8, respectively). Both Shunchōsai and Kanaya depict the temple with emphasis on the particularities of its built environment, including the different kinds of structures, terrain, and even vegetation composing it, as well as the attributes of those individual elements. Two different kinds of rooftops are dutifully pictured, one a smoothly thatched roof represented as a solid field of color, such as the Main Hall at the center of both compositions. The other kind is made with ceramic tiles represented with lines rising up from the eaves, such as the Asakura-dō to the left of the Main Hall. Various kinds of trees, including cedar, willow, flowering cherry, and bamboo, appear in both *zu*, each one detailed enough to be individuated

from the others and not simply a repeated motif. In both *zu*, the stones in the retaining walls are geometrically distinct from one another, and other features are rendered with careful attention to detail, such as the Twelve-tier Pagoda at the far right, and, to the right of the Main Hall, the *torii* with a dark-colored top beam in contrast to the lighter shade of the supporting beams and base. With Shunchōsai's depiction of the temple, the viewer can enjoy the elements of the composition as aesthetic objects divorced from referentiality to a single verifiable place on earth, but she is also given enough pictorial data to become convinced that this is the way the place might look in person.



Figure 7. Takehara Shunchōsai, *Otowa yama Kiyomizudera*. The cartouches contain the following texts, beginning with the far right: Otowa no taki 音羽の滝; Oku no in 奥の院; Amida-dō 阿弥陀堂; Shaka-dō 釈迦堂; Jūni-tō 十二塔; Haiden はいでん [拜殿]; Jinushi Gongen 地主権現; Asakura-dō 朝倉堂; Hondō 本堂; Nanzō-in 南蔵院. Left side: Tamura-dō 田村堂; Daikoku-dō 大こく堂; Kyō-dō 経堂; Sanjū no tō 三重塔; Todoroki hashi とどろき橋 (轟橋); Fukuro no mizu 梟の水; Sai-mon 西門; Shikama-zuka 鹿間塚; Niō-mon 仁王門; Todorokibi 轟坊; Kasuga-sha 春日社; Shugyō 執行; Kuruma yadori・Uma todome 車やどり・馬とどめ; Koyasu no tō 子安塔; Ennen-ji 延年寺; Rokubō 六坊; Kakere ni kazekaze Shaka かけれに風々釈迦; Benten 弁天; Zuigu-dō 随求堂; 詞貫社; Jōju-in 成就院. *Source*: Akisato (1981a).



Figure 8. Kanaya Heiemon, *Otowa yama Seisuiji*. Source: Kanaya (1704). Used with the permission of the National Diet Library.

Despite these similarities, Ritō is justified in calling Shunchōsai’s *zu* an improvement over Kanaya’s compositions, since Shunchōsai’s rendering is even more granular in its visual detail and hence more particularized. As Ritō puts it in the *hanrei*: “Exceedingly detailed pictures occur in the *zu* of places that have extensive boundaries” (Ritō 1981a, 7). For example, Shunchōsai more than triples the number of buildings Kanaya had selected for his composition by widening the perspective, which highlights each structure as an important detail for inspection. The large pagoda at the left in Shunchōsai’s composition not only reveals the three-tier structure of its rooftop, for which it was named (*Sanjū no tō*), but also clearly shows two lanyards, replete with dangling ornaments securing the relatively delicate finial in place against the wind and elements. Similarly, the depiction of the structure built to direct the flow of Otowa Falls into a shallow ablution pool at the bottom right is detailed in both *zu* down to the three elevated gutters carrying the water, but Shunchōsai improves on Kanaya by tracing the sacred falls all the way into the pool, where it emerges again as a single spout below. Such attention to detail is in keeping with a pledge made by Ritō in the *hanrei* of *Shūi Miyako meisho zue*:

“Extreme care was taken to avoid overlooking even one auxiliary shrine or grass hut” (Ritō 1981b, 7). In effect, Shunchōsai’s *zu* of Kiyomizu-dera exhibits greater concern for mapping out the distinctive qualities of the temple, but, unlike a more abstract ground-view map, it does this by way of a straightforward pictorial mode that is anything but abstract. And yet it also depicts a lived and accessible environment, thereby inviting the viewer to imagine herself as a visitor.

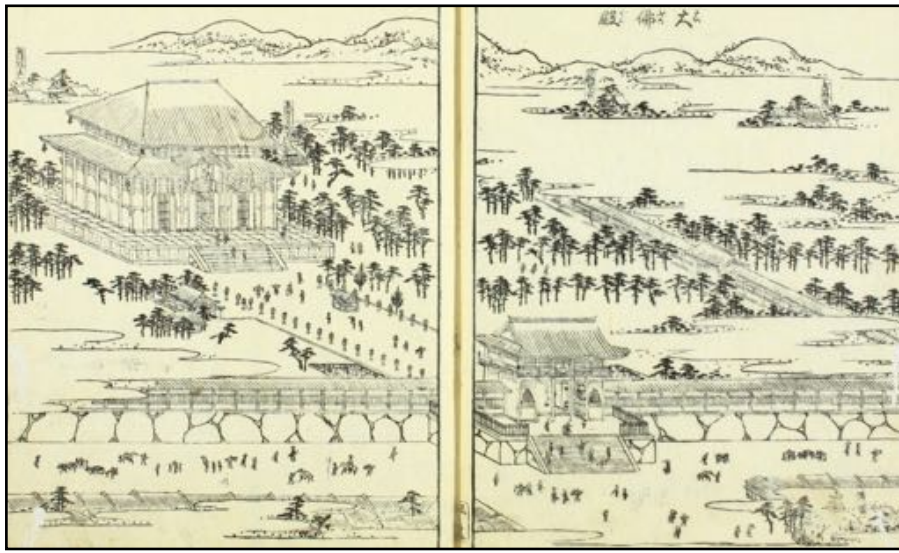


Figure 9. Takehara Shunchōsai, *Daibutsu den*. Source: Akisato (1981a).

A less obvious method used to load *zu* with pictorially defined particularity about place was the manipulation of the reader’s perception through perspectival techniques. For example, consider the *zu* titled *Daibutsu den* 大佛殿 (Great Buddha Hall) in *Miyako meisho zue* (figure 9) (Ritō 1981a, 62). Prompted by the title, if not by foreknowledge of the site, most readers would have searched for and located the seated Vairocana Buddha peering out from the main hall, concealed though it may be in partial view. Its placid expression is just detectable, even though the face is only as tall as one of the stone lanterns or human figures below. Shunchōsai does not waste the opportunity to provide a glimpse of the Buddha’s folded robe, either, even though this runs the risk of inserting visual noise into the rendering of the wooden latticework in front of the statue. All of this is to be expected, but in order to make the famous icon visible in this way, Shunchōsai must engage in a compositional sleight of hand. The angle of the aerial vantage point should make this statue invisible, since the statue in reality would be located directly behind the middle door (figure 10). However, Shunchōsai made the statue visible to the reader by

repositioning it to the right by a couple of meters behind a wall. In other words, the main attraction of the place has been made legible with a perspectival trick.¹⁴ Such is the strength of the imperative to define and demarcate place in as revealing a manner as possible, even if doing so means sacrificing the integrity of that place.

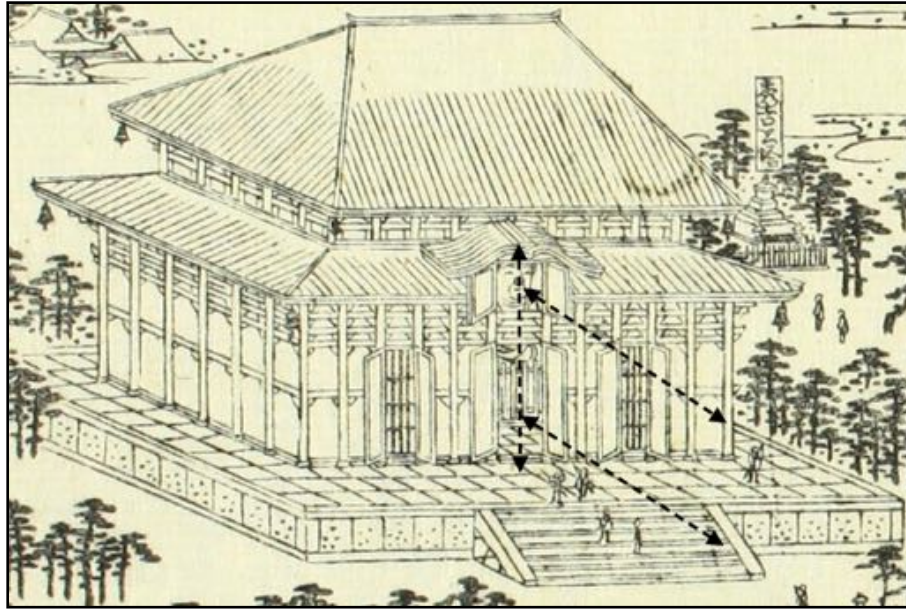


Figure 10. Takehara Shunchōsai, detail of *Daibutsu den*. Source: Akisato (1981a).

The impulse to load compositions with an abundance of visual information in a pictorially efficient if perceptually manipulative way is also made manifest through a technique of spatial bifurcation I call telescopic perspective. This technique enables the mapping of two or more distinct places, at two different depths of field, within a single compositional frame. My inspiration for calling this technique telescopic perspective is Shunchōsai's *zu* titled *Konryūji yama matsutake gari* 金竜寺山松茸狩 (Matsutake mushroom hunting on Konryū-ji Mountain) in *Settsu meisho zue* 撰津名所図会 (1796–1798), which depicts a field glass in the foreground to see another group of mushroom hunters (including another figure with a field glass) in the distance (figure 11) (Ritō 1980, 201). The telescopic magnification we can imagine the figure seeing is demonstrated compositionally to the reader by splitting the proximal and distal views into two distinct depths of field, the transition between which is concealed by decorative clouds.¹⁵ For example, in the *zu* titled *Shinsen* 神泉苑 (Shinsen Garden) in *Miyako meisho*

zue, Shunchōsai maps out the grounds of the famous garden in the foreground but also includes a view of Nijō Castle in the upper left (figure 12) (Ritō 1981a, 28). As in the case of the *zu* of Lake Biwa, but on a greater scale, the demarcation of the two places is achieved through the boundary-defining use of concealing clouds, which serve to filter out objects in the topography inessential to a visual understanding of Shinsen-en and Nijō Castle as distinct places adjacently located.¹⁶ Nevertheless, the technique does not entail foreshortening perspective, judging from the accuracy with which the spatial distances and directions between the places are depicted. The two sites are still represented in their precise relative locations.



Figure 11. Takehara Shunchōsai, *Konryūji yama matsutake gari*. Source: Akisato (1980).

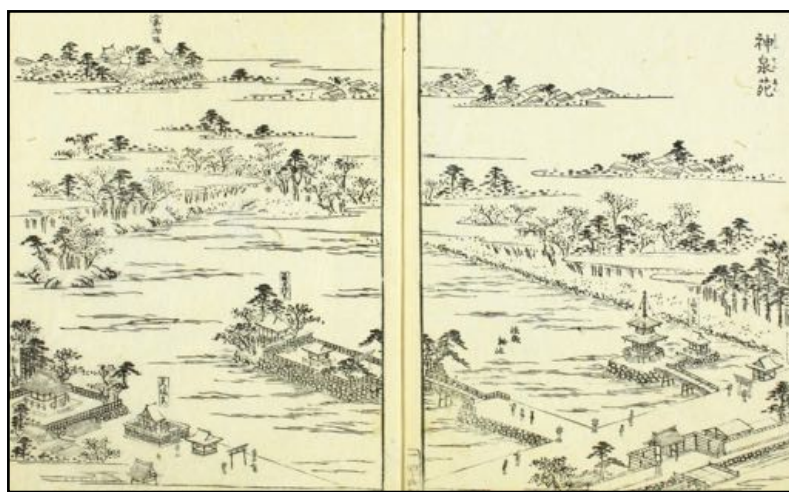


Figure 12. Takehara Shunchōsai, *Shinsen-en*. Source: Akisato (1981a).

In addition to conveying place-based information, the mapping function of individual *zu* in *meisho zue* is inseparable from using the human figure for accurately rendering spatial relations between and within places. In Kanaya's *zu* of Kiyomizu-dera in *Karaku saiken zu*, there are no human figures, whereas Shunchōsai's *zu* contains over thirty figures spaced at regular intervals, in clusters or alone.¹⁷ Ritō gives a very specific reason for the presence of all of these figures in the *hanrei*: they are used to define scale. In his words, the “diminutive human figures indicate the large size of places. Large figures indicate small places” (1981a, 7). Accuracy is thus achieved through the careful depiction of correct proportions between human figures and the topographic features of their environments. Ritō also concedes that some small buildings might be missing, but only in order to free up space for the human figures. In other words, some details of *meisho* are withheld so that many human figures can appear instead. Paradoxically, then, places might be represented inaccurately owing to the deliberate suppression of some features, but only as a way to introduce a variable with which to achieve another kind of accuracy: measurement of the relative size of topographic features. Since they are drawn in proportion to the spaces they inhabit, the small figures in the *zu* of Kiyomizu-dera imply the large size of the complex and the size of the elements in its built environment. By contrast, in the *zu* in *Karaku saiken zu*, the size of the main hall is ambiguous, owing to the absence of scale-defining human figures.

Rendering spatial relations accurately with the deliberate indication of scale is critical to the wayfinding function of any map. This holds true for the *zu* in *meisho zue*, especially since there is a wide range of scales at which *meisho* are depicted, ranging from the relatively small scale used for Lake Biwa to the relatively large scale used for scenes of everyday life, as in Shunchōsai's depiction of a shop selling Great Buddha rice cakes in *Miyako meisho zue* (figure 13). But the wayfinding in this case is not the typical sort, in which one uses a map to guide oneself through space, but rather an imaginative experience of the mind, as explained by Ritō in the *hanrei* at the beginning of the book. This experience nevertheless requires a geographic simulacrum made believable through the correct proportionality of objects in space. Consistent use of scale within the individual composition contributes to this spatial believability and is part of a broader promise of objectivity made repeatedly in the prefaces and legends of *meisho zue*. Though this effort at verisimilitude contributes to the charm of the *zu* as artful pictures, it also underpins their mapping capacity. The same legends and prefaces in *meisho zue* use one term in

particular to justify this objectivity as a mode of representation that facilitates a particular kind of reading experience: *gayū* 臥遊 (dream travel). One does not merely appreciate the landscapes in *meisho zue*, but rather imagines oneself moving through them, taking a cue from the many travelers depicted. In other words, the *zu* are not designed to activate the imagination in a completely open-ended way, but rather to choreograph its movement according to spatial patterns. If the *meisho* looked unreal because of inaccurate depiction, and if the places did not have enough useful visual information with which to grasp their distinctiveness, then the dream traveler would not have the optical stimulus to go anywhere. It is as if the viewer of the *zu* encounters landscape through an oblique view made possible by a telescope that registers accurate scale, explanatory labels, a directional logic, and spatial coordinates by way of accurate positioning of sites relative to one another and to the broader context. At play here is a cultural mind-set about what maps and the human imagination can accomplish together—a mind-set we cannot fully appreciate without regarding the *zu* in *meisho zue* as cartographically active.



Figure 13. Takehara Shunchōsai, depiction of a Great Buddha rice cake shop. *Source*: Akisato (1981a).

***Meisho* and the Depiction of Prosperity**

Because all maps operate according to principles of selection that emphasize and deemphasize certain features of a circumscribed area, thinking of the *zu* in *Miyako meisho zue* as maps is useful because it prompts us to consider the question of deliberate selection for one of Tokugawa Japan's most popular print forms of geography. It would seem that the compilation of *meisho zue* in general and the representational goals of its *zu* in particular are organized around the mapping of *meisho*. Indeed, traditional *utamakura meisho* of a poetic valence are dutifully included in *Miyako meisho zue*, as we would expect with a region rich in place names that appear in imperial poetic anthologies throughout the centuries—for example, with the *zu* titled *Arashiyama, Hōrinji, Togetsukyō* 嵐山・法輪寺・渡月橋 (Mount Arashi, Hōrin Temple, Togetsu Bridge) (figure 14) (Ritō 1981a, 111). *Meisho* of religious significance, such as Kiyomizu-dera and the Daibutsu-den, form the largest category of *meisho* in *Miyako meisho zue*, with hundreds of *zu* featuring temples and shrines. The *meisho* status of these revered places and of many others with historical and scenic significance would have been widely agreed upon by the late eighteenth century, when the book was published. In this regard, *Miyako meisho zue* maps the conventional cultural geography of the capital.

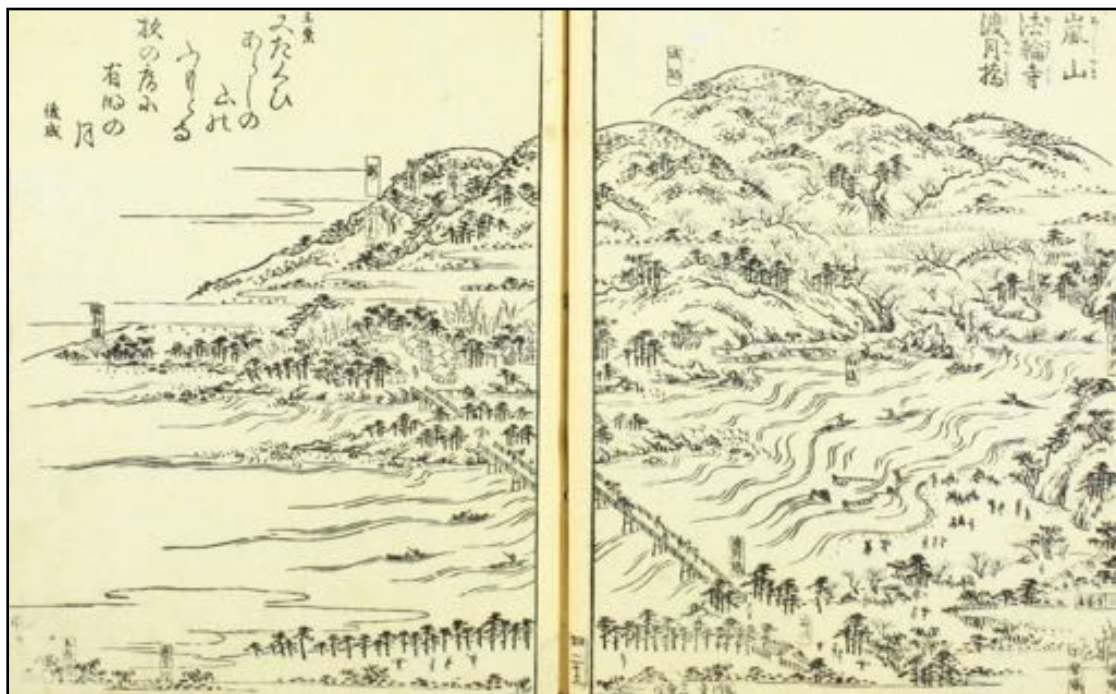


Figure 14. Takehara Shunchōsai, *Arashiyama, Hōrinji, Togetsukyō*. Source: Akisato (1981a).

But the *meisho* status of other featured sites in *Miyako meisho zue* would seem to have been less fixed in the popular imagination. Sites of a political nature, such as the Imperial Palace and Nijō Castle, were certainly well known, but were they readily regarded as *meisho*? The same question could be asked of the many sites with commercial links, such as farms, bathhouses, rock quarries, teahouses, and shops. If anything, claiming *meisho* status for sites such as these was aspirational on the part of Ritō, but not a surprise, since he was a commercially minded *chōnin* 町人 (townsman). Readers of *Miyako meisho zue* probably would not have noticed the absence of a shop, whereas omitting Kiyomizu-dera would have raised eyebrows. The same could be said for the handful of *zu* featuring non-specific places on account of the way they show off seasonal activities to advantage in a general area, such as Shunchōsai's view of firefly catching near the shop selling Great Buddha rice cakes (Ritō 1981a, 63). How do we account for illustrated compendia of *meisho* that include places whose status as *meisho* is questionable or aspirational?

Many of the *zu* in *Miyako meisho zue* focus not on one particular *meisho*, but on several, and take in their sweep elements of the built and natural environments that Shunchōsai selects for informational or aesthetic reasons. Since it is therefore difficult to isolate a single *meisho* as the subject of any given *zu*, I have found it useful to postulate five overlapping thematic modes of cultural geography present in any given *zu* in *Miyako meisho zue*. In the first mode, there are well-ordered and robust built environments, including palaces, temples, shrines, residences, and gardens, as well as infrastructure such as bridges, roads, and wells. The second mode is naturally occurring topographic features, such as mountains, rivers, and flora, which designate anything from the sublime to the strange and titillating. Within this mode are meteorological conditions and physical manifestations of temporal phenomena. The third mode is antiquarian richness, as registered by historical figures, events, and important dates in cultural, literary, and political history. The fourth mode is commercial phenomena, which include everything from shops to the production and consumption of goods. The fifth mode is people of different social statuses interacting in displays of social harmony, often engaged in the experience of leisure and cultural refinements. One or more of these modes may be dominant in a given *zu*, but all of them are present in each *zu* to some extent.

So while Ritō ostensibly uses the rubric of *meisho* to organize *Miyako meisho zue*, this modally shifting view of landscape effectively renders the capital a simulacrum of prosperity.

Depicting *meisho*, whether traditional or newfangled, is a means to this implicit end. By prosperity, I draw on the term *hanjō* 繁昌, which was operative in the period, often in application to Edo, to mean abundance, wealth, luxury, leisure, and surplus—indeed, anything natural or man-made in the topography, whether humble or elegant, that contributes to a thriving image. This is why the government-made category of *akusho* 悪所 (bad places), which included theaters and districts licensed for prostitution, is also selected. This is also why politically elevated places, such as the Imperial Palace and Nijō Castle, are selected. Mountains, lakes, rivers, temples, shrines, gardens, wells, roads, bridges, boats, shops, teahouses, restaurants, bathhouses, brothels, theaters, swimming holes, horse tracks, villages, farms, and religious festivals, leisure pastimes such as firefly catching, and samurai processions in situ: such a variety of places can exist in the same book, regardless of their claim to *meisho* status, provided they advertise the economic prosperity, cultural bounty, and social bustle of a city, province, region, country, or road.¹⁸ As a microcosm of this, Shunchōsai's *zu* titled Kitashirakawa 北白川 (Kitashira River) in *Miyako meisho zue* advertises prosperity in economic, cultural, and social terms by combining places of uneven cultural significance—a productive rock quarry and a waterfall made famous in courtly poetry—together with travelers gazing at both parts of the topography with equal enthusiasm (figure 15) (Ritō 1981a, 88).¹⁹



Figure 15. Takehara Shunchōsai, *Kitashirakawa*. Source: Akisato (1981a).

In other words, *Miyako meisho zue* may dutifully document the *meisho* in Yamashiro, but given the selected topographies in the *zu* and how they are depicted, it is more accurate to claim that the book leverages *meisho* as a topographical category for constructing a complex yet accessible map of prosperity. What this map leaves out is anything running counter to this image of prosperity. Ritō does not include any place closely associated with the more sober realities of everyday life. Execution grounds, prisons, infirmaries, burial grounds, travel checkpoints, moneylending shops—such places are nowhere to be found in *Miyako meisho zue*. Moreover, the everyday quality of Shunchōsai's depictions of place, which reveal bustling activity during the day, night, and in different seasons, is not so quotidian as to include buildings in disrepair, natural disasters, criminal activity, or rabid dogs. So while the purported objective of the *meisho zue* editors is to provide readers with a virtual way of experiencing the celebrated sites of the capital, the net effect of the *zu*, as map, is to woo them with a seductive vision of prosperity as conceived by the editors and anyone in the shadows who may have sponsored their efforts. Dream travel through this version of the capital depends on a necessarily skewed map that is all the more effective for appearing to be realistic, objective, and thematically comprehensive. As we have learned from Mark Monmonier and H. J. de Blij (1996), this sort of willful distortion in the guise of truth is precisely the kind of prevarication common to all maps, insofar as they insist, with great rhetorical force, that what you see in the map is actually out there in the world. Ritō and Shunchōsai depend on the readers of *Miyako meisho zue* to believe this lie.

Zu in the Aggregate as Map

The argument for characterizing *meisho zue* as pictorial maps is strengthened considerably when one steps back from analyzing individual compositions to consider how *zu* in the aggregate function as a system of cartographic representation. To begin with, the editors of *meisho zue* consistently arrange the *zu* into a viable itinerary, rather than according to an abstract logic based on *meisho* type or a lexical scheme, as in a dictionary. Each of the six volumes of *Miyako meisho zue*, for example, charts a sequence of *meisho* along a continuous trajectory that one could actually travel.²⁰ As a result, the books are not readily usable as reference books, but this very lack of practical usability, which Bakin criticized in his assessment of *Edo meisho zue*, seems critical for promoting an experience of dream travel. As we turn the pages of any volume in a *meisho zue*, we move from one *meisho* to another nearby, since the layout of *zu* follows a

spatial sequence conforming to actual geography. The *zu* of the Daibutsu-den, for example, comes after the *zu* of Sanjūsangen-dō, thus charting a south-to-north movement along the street called Yamato-ōji Dōri. Given this itinerant logic for *zu* layout, even the more purely pictorial scenes of everyday life, which lack any obvious map-like properties, assume a mapping function in context. The *zu* following the Great Buddha Hall depicts the shop selling Great Buddha rice cakes mentioned earlier (figure 13).²¹ On its own, this *zu* does not function as a map; instead, like a street view in Google Maps, it makes visible a specific part of the topography by shifting scale dramatically as one moves along the trajectory prescribed by the editor, Ritō. In other words, each *zu* functions as a pictorial map, while the book as a whole is organized like an itinerary map.

Various formal properties within individual compositions reinforce this spatial sequencing of places. The oblique aerial view seen in much of two-dimensional Japanese art continues consistently from *zu* to *zu*, even when the scale changes. It is as though the editor cut up a single-sheet pictorial map (*ezu*) or a *Rakuchū Rakugai zu* screen painting and distributed the cutouts on different pages in between pages filled with *mondan*.²² To maintain at least a semblance of the geographical continuity in the original format, *meisho zue* illustrators depicted sites with consistent aerial perspective at oblique angles. This regular aerial perspective makes the *zu* seem as though they were parts of a larger whole. In the same spirit of formal cohesiveness from *zu* to *zu*, actual and not merely implied geographic continuity is registered through compositions comprised of several *zu* across separate pages. For example, Nishi Hongan-ji in *Miyako meisho zue* is represented as a triptych, inviting us to see topographical continuity across the page break (figure 16) (Ritō 1981a, 47–50). The *zu* of Atago Shrine in *Edo meisho zue* does the same thing, but captures continuity along a vertical axis, too (figure 17) (Saitō, et al. 1980, 65–66). In some *meisho zue*, such multi-*zu* compositions stretch on for many pages and begin to look like pictorial itinerary maps. Dividing compositions this way makes for a necessarily interrupted viewing experience since the viewer must turn the page to see the next part of the view, but the technique reinforces an experience of contiguous topography within the limitations of the book format. In the same spirit, some *zu* work against the limitations of the compositional frame to give the impression of topographical expansiveness: through cropping, the horizontal continuation of streets, mountains, and buildings is implied. Vertical continuation is achieved through the consistent inclusion of distant views of named or unnamed topographies

in the broader environment, as with the distant trees in the *zu* of the Imperial Palace. My point is that the formal properties of individual *zu* complement the sequencing system uniting *zu* in the aggregate and thereby remind the reader that the *meisho* have been selected from a broader geography.

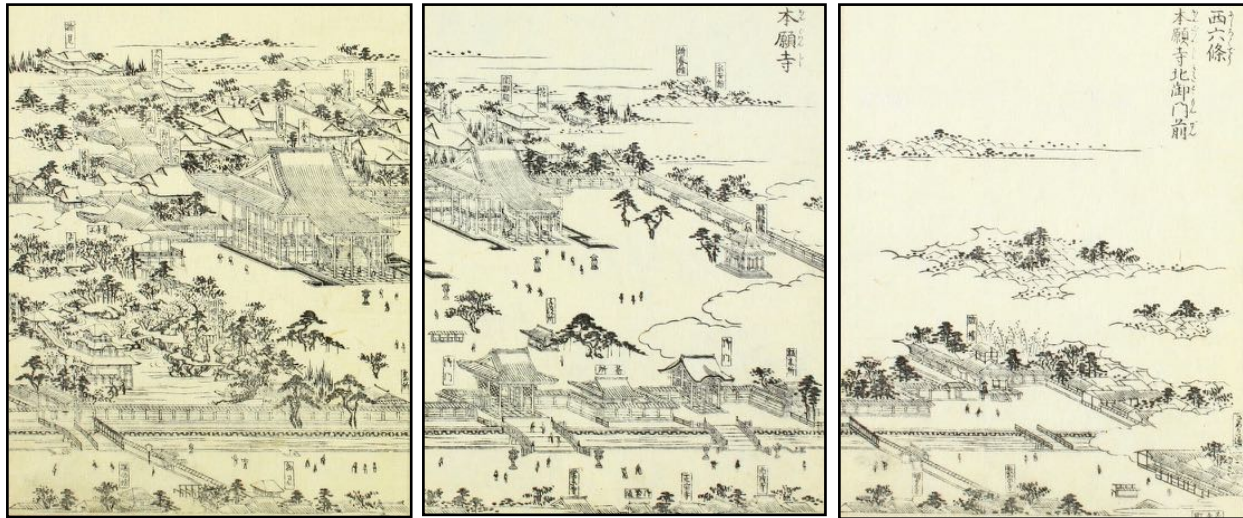


Figure 16. Takehara Shunchōsai, three-page composition of the Nishi Hongan-ji temple complex. *Source*: Akisato (1981a).

One possible weakness to the argument I am making about the sum total of *zu* in *meisho zue* constituting a map is that *zu* in the aggregate do not form a holistic and continuous representation of geography. Unlike a conventional ground-view map, the aggregate map I am describing cannot be taken in at a glance for expedient comprehension of how all the selected features fit together. As one turns the pages of *Miyako meisho zue*, one's comprehension of how the selected places fit together spatially is necessarily interrupted by pages of *mondan* that use the mode of textual description to complement the visuality of Shunchōsai. Many areas are not represented at all, in image or text, so one is hardly getting a complete picture of the capital even after taking in all the places featured in the *zu*. If we were to remove all the *zu* and arrange them where they belong on a very large and technically accurate ground-view map of the capital, the coverage would be spotty. However, this exercise would reveal something important about the *zu* in *Miyako meisho zue*. In addition to mapping *meisho* located in and immediately around the capital, they also map *meisho* located throughout Yamashiro Province. What we actually have in *Miyako meisho zue* is a pictorial *meisho* map of Yamashiro in its entirety. Moreover, some of the

places depicted lie beyond Yamashiro in abutting provinces, as in the *zu* of Lake Biwa, which lies in Ōmi Province. The map comprising the sum total of all the *zu* reveals as much geographic extension as possible, even if doing so contradicts the book's ostensible zone of coverage, i.e., the capital. There is a kind of abstraction involved in this geographical extension since not all the topography within this geographical range is included. The result is spotty coverage that nevertheless makes the region seem like a brimming treasury of *meisho* in all directions, the effect of which is to suggest prosperity by dint of the range and density of the region's rich cultural geography.

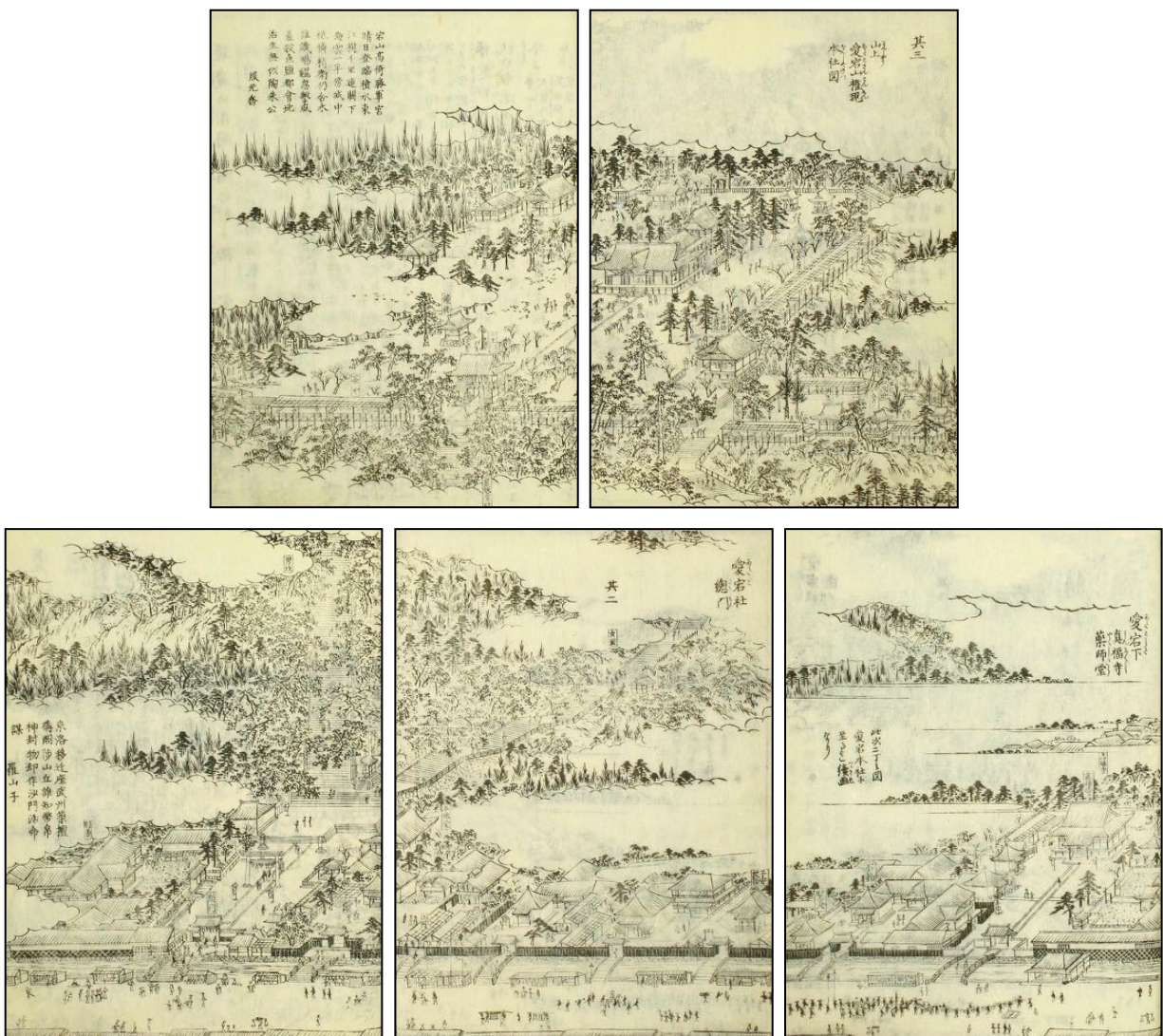


Figure 17. Hasegawa Settan, five-page composition of Atago Shrine. *Source*: Saitō, et al. (1980).

This tension between spotty coverage and broad geographic range is a direct function of the map's principle of selection; it is full of unseen gaps because it includes only places that conform to the ostensible rubric of *meisho* and the broader theme of prosperity. Using *zu* to perform a mapping function is therefore a solution to (a) a conceptual problem: how to visualize all the *meisho* in a very large area; (b) a methodological one: how to construct this map given the physical limitations of bound books; and (c) a marketing one: how to use the parameters of pagination in a multivolume print medium to facilitate a particular kind of reading experience. Given the editorial objective to provide the reader with an immersive guide to the *meisho* of the capital, it is only natural that the editors do not bother with including all features of the topography. To include all of Yamashiro in a holistic way, with the same level of pictorial detail found in each *zu* of *Miyako meisho zue*, would mean making a preposterously massive book. Such a book would lack the thematic focus of *Miyako meisho zue* to define and demarcate *meisho*. Ritō's solution to his conceptual, methodological, and marketing problems is thus to construct a thematic pictorial map of monumental proportions, which itself can be seen as the abstracting work of the cartographer. The book format ends up supporting an explicitly biased view of the capital's geography, but one that nevertheless suggests thematic comprehensiveness.

Conclusion

I have often wondered why *meisho zue* do not begin with all-inclusive overview maps of the “famous places” they feature. Such maps would have provided historical readers with a helpful orientation to the broader territory containing the hundreds, sometimes thousands, of place-based *zu* and *mondan* to come in subsequent pages. The reason they exist in *Morokoshi meishō zue* would seem to be that its editor, Okada Gyokuzan 岡田玉山 (1737–1808), figured such maps could increase the book's broad target readership, many of whom would have been unfamiliar with the geography of China. By contrast, this same readership would not have needed, to the same degree, such overview maps to *meisho zue* featuring Japanese lands, since domestic maps were widely available in a variety of inexpensive formats, often at the same bookshops selling *meisho zue*. And including them might have undermined the whole point of books such as *Miyako meisho zue*. If its painstakingly researched *zu* functioned as pictorial maps, then the reason why Ritō did not include overview maps, assuming the idea occurred to him, was

because half the book—the visual portion—constituted a map anyway. An overview map would have served as a visual table of contents for all the *meisho* featured, but why steal the thunder from the much bigger and more complex map rising through a veil of elegant pictures against the enabling constraints of a bound book?

If the pictorial map I am making a case for is tantamount to a highly curated simulacrum of prosperity, then, applying the cartographic theory of Denis Wood and John Fels (2008), it is also true that this map is a rhetorical construction that embodies various political, social, and cultural arguments.²³ For example, this map of prosperity might be read as an argument about cultural authority on the part of the publishers, editors, and illustrators who produced it. To the extent that the map engages the minds of readers and shapes how they see a particular geography, this argument proposes that merchants—that is, profit-minded commoners engaged in business—should be invested with the authority to influence popular opinion and perception about cultural geography. The very viewing of the pictorial map of prosperity that ran through *Miyako meisho zue* is itself a tacit endorsement of such merchants' power—as agents of commercial publishing—to encode the land with certain values and prerogatives. Nothing seems out of place with their picture of prosperity, so why not trust them to determine the cultural value of geography and the very definition of *meisho*?²⁴

There are certainly social and ideological implications to consider regarding a pictorial map performing a simulacrum of space defined according to a commercially motivated vision of prosperity. Such a map may have had the effect of training readers to see their environments as abundant and stable rather than deficient and unstable, which would have soothed them during times of economic instability, natural calamity, and political unrest. Indeed, the publication of *Miyako meisho zue* and its sequel coincide almost exactly with the Great Tenmei Famine, which lasted from 1782 to 1788 and was one of the most devastating famines of the Tokugawa period. The timing very well may have boosted their popularity. But, even if it did, it would be a mistake to think of this fictional balm as arising from social or political progressivism or being an act of altruism stemming solely from regional pride on the part of commercial publishers. This inspiring map of prosperity arose to a large extent from the desire to make money. This may suggest a rigid economic determinism on my part, but what I mean to emphasize is that economic calculation played a major role in dictating the form and content of *zu* in *meisho zue*. The map of prosperity that reveals itself to us through *Miyako meisho zue* may be an

unconventional mode of cartographic representation in the world history of maps, but its commercial impetus, innovative “mapness,” and auspicious tenor are wholly in keeping with the sophistication of print culture of Tokugawa Japan.

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Notes

- 1 These exhibitions were collectively known as *misemono* 見世物 during the Tokugawa period.
- 2 Unless otherwise noted, all figures in this article are used with the permission of Waseda University Library.
- 3 See Goree (2010, 95–146) for a thorough analysis of *meisho zue* readership.
- 4 Circumstantial evidence for Ritō’s own interest and skill in mapmaking is found in a map he made himself, titled *Dai Nihon dōchū hayabiki saiken zu* 大日本道中早引細見図 [Detailed and quickly discernible itinerary map of great Japan], published in 1830.
- 5 My interest in such a conceptual framework stems from my impulse—as a literary historian—to elucidate the characteristics and significance of symbolic representations by asking what they mean both now and in the past on the basis of their form and content.
- 6 Recent scholarship about maps and cartography has encouraged me in this critical direction. In particular, Akerman and Karrow (2007) have demonstrated the importance and value of writing marginal cartographic traditions into the world history of maps and mapmaking.
- 7 *Zu* can be translated as “map,” “diagram,” or “picture,” on account of the unfixed meaning for the term in premodern Japan (see Smith 2001, 103–104). In the corpus of *meisho zue*, *zu* and *ga* are used interchangeably to describe similar kinds of visual depiction. However, *ga*, rather than *zu*, is typically used when the name of the illustrator appears in the composition, and therefore may indicate artistic virtuosity. Nevertheless, the Japanese nomenclature used for illustrations does not offer much insight into whether the editors meant illustrations to function as maps or pictures.
- 8 The intention of the editor, Okada Gyokuzan, was for *Morokoshi meishō zue* to be the first installment in a long series of books covering all of China, hence the general map of China at the beginning. However, no other installments were subsequently published.
- 9 The text in the upper portion of the *zu* featuring Lake Biwa makes reference to this observation about pictorial perspective by the Chinese poet Wang Wei 王維 in his treatise on landscape painting *Shanshui lun* 山水論: “Distant people have no eyes.” The full passage from which this phrase was taken clarifies why it should be quoted: “Distant people have no eyes, distant trees have no branches, distant mountains have no rocks, shadowy they are like eyebrows. Distant water has no waves, tall things and clouds are

- the same.” The operative idea is that distant elements in a landscape are of necessity depicted sparsely, with the implication that those nearby are depicted more fully. Shunchōsai is thus clueing readers in to how to see the space by emphasizing the panoramic nature of the *zu*. In a subsequent *zu* depicting Enryaku-ji on Mount Hiei, there is a comment inscribed at lower right indicating that the spot is a vantage point from which the “Eight Views of Ōmi” can be seen.
- 10 The terms “large” and “small” for describing cartographic scale refer to the relative size of the ratio used to designate the relationship between area on a map and area on the ground. “Large-scale” refers to maps of small areas, such as cities, city blocks, or single buildings, while “small-scale” refers to maps of much larger areas, such as countries. A large-scale map therefore shows small areas of land on a large space and is considered large on account of the fraction used to represent this ratio.
- 11 Beth Berry (2007) has argued that early modern maps in Japan resemble diagrams that reflect hierarchical values between towns rather than real distances between them. The *zu* in *meisho zue* are an exception to this rule, since they are concerned with real distances in an effort to provide viewers with a believably objective simulacrum of space.
- 12 This *zu* of the official residence of the imperial institution sets the tone for the kind of visual language used throughout *Miyako meisho zue*. The oblique aerial view is used for all subsequent *zu*, enabling views whereby the illustrator features an abundance of visual information about the place depicted.
- 13 *Karaku saiken zu* is the only illustrated book mentioned by Ritō in the *hanrei* as a visual model for *Miyako meisho zue*. As indicated by its title, *Karaku saiken zu* features *saiken zu*. Ritō highlights this visual approach in the *hanrei*: “In the *zu*, places that cover large areas have exceedingly detailed pictures.” The phrase *saiken zu* appeared often in the titles of maps and guidebooks published throughout the Tokugawa period; in Edo, they were associated with minutely detailed illustrated guides to the Yoshiwara licensed district.
- 14 In the map *Sōho saihan Kyō ōezu* 増補京大絵図 (1686) in Moriya (1984), a more exacting faithfulness is evident, insofar as it employs the same aerial angle for depicting the Great Buddha Hall, but without showing the statue. Shunchōsai’s handling of the seated Buddha is more in keeping with and perhaps inspired by the depiction of the Great Buddha Hall in *Rakuchū rakugaizu* screen paintings. For example *Rakuchū rakugaizu byōbū rekihaku F bon* 洛中洛外図屏風歴博F本 [Collection of the National Museum of Japanese History] shows the seated Great Buddha Hall at a different aerial angle, but the compositional manipulation used to make the statue visible is similar to the sleight of hand used by Shunchōsai.
- 15 During the Song-Yuan periods, Chinese painters also used clouds and mist to fill the space between the middle ground and background.
- 16 It is worth considering whether this bifurcation of space suggests a political message in which the imperial prerogative is being privileged over that of the shogunate. Originally built as a palace and pleasure garden by Emperor Kammu in 794, Shinsen-en was closely associated with the imperial political order. In the *zu*, the garden dominates the composition and thereby dwarfs Nijō Castle, the shogunal seat of power in Kyoto. Interestingly, the left side of the *zu*, which shows Nijō Castle, is missing in some early

- editions of *Miyako meisho zue*. The feasibility of this political reading increases if we recall that *Miyako meisho zue* begins with a bold *zu* of the imperial palace, which positions the emperor's residence as the literal point of departure for a journey throughout the capital.
- 17 In fact, at least one person populates each *zu* in *Miyako meisho zue*. In this *zu*, most of the people have come to take in the attractions of the site, and, with the most minimal visual indications, Shunchōsai suggests demographic information about them. Groups of travelers, wearing packs and hats to the right of the Main Hall (lower right) and below the Three-tier Pagoda (lower left), are most likely pilgrims viewing the statue of Kannon, since Kiyomizu-dera was the sixteenth of a thirty-three station Kannon pilgrimage circuit originating in Shikoku. One of the pilgrims in the group below the Three-tier Pagoda may be elderly, judging from the way he or she stoops over a walking stick. Just below the Twelve-tier Pagoda (middle right), a man points out the Main Hall to another man with his fan. Perhaps he is a guide. Just above them to the left, there seem to be two women, judging from the *obi* bulging from their backs and the slightest indication of coiffed hairstyles. The figure with an umbrella raised below the Niō Gate (lower far left) seems to have a similar hairstyle and *obi*, too. Her umbrella indicates a daytime scene. The two figures on the high platform atop the latticework of the Main Hall may also very well be women.
- 18 My conception of a democratic leveling of *meisho* is in contrast with the view set forth by Laura Nenzi, for example, who argues for the uneasy tension between sites of high cultural value and lesser cultural value on account of their commercial ramifications. In making this claim, she adheres to a valuable analytic framework dominant in the study of Tokugawa culture, in which *ga* 雅 (the refined) is opposed to *zoku* 俗 (the commonplace) (see Nenzi 2004).
- 19 The text in the *zu* reads as follows: “The villagers of Kitashirakawa engage in the trade of stone cutting and have long ventured into the mountains to quarry rock. They make many different things, such as stone lanterns and washbasins.”
- 20 According to the *hanrei*, the first part of the book deals with Heian-jō, the spatial epicenter of Kyoto, and subsequent parts correspond to the cardinal directions indicated by *shijin* 四神 (the four imperial guardian deities). The first two volumes correspond to the northern and southern sections of the city's center, where the imperial and shogunate palaces were located. Volumes 3 through 6 each correspond to one of the four guardian deities in the following order: Seiryū 青龍 to the east, Byakko 白虎 to the west, Suzaku 朱雀 to the south, and Genbu 玄武 to the north. Moreover, the sequence of *meisho* for each of the book's six volumes comprises discrete winding routes: two circuits in the center and four radiating outward from it. In order to look up a particular *meisho*, one would need to know its general whereabouts to find it in the table of contents of the appropriate volume.
- 21 A visit to see the Great Buddha would not have been complete without the purchase of souvenirs—in this case, edible ones. In the *zu*, female clerks wrap the rice cakes in boxes and sell them to customers. Two men pound rice for the cakes (left), whose freshness is advertised in the vertical sign directly in front of them. The text in the *zu* provides information about the shop: “As for their origin, it was around the time when the Great

- Buddha Hall of Hōkō-ji was built that the Great Buddha rice cakes of the eastern part of the capital took their name and came to be sold widely. As for their flavor, the delectability comes from boiling without melting and a roasted aroma. It is a specialty unsurpassed even by braised miso *mochi* or boiled Tōba *mochi*. The store sign in the curved Chinese gable is written in the hand of Shōsui and for generations will reside here as an esteemed name known far and near.” Though difficult to prove, it is entirely possible that this *zu* and others depicting shops were advertisements, perhaps from merchants who helped to underwrite the publication of *Miyako meisho zue*.
- 22 Melinda Takeuchi (1992, 125) has observed that *meisho zue* resemble *rakuchū rakugaizu* paintings.
- 23 This notion of map as argument is inspired by the idea that maps function as languages that assert certain “truths” about the natural world.
- 24 Consider what would happen if a commercial publisher attempted to map an area according to his tastes by way of an orthogonal map. Such holism and comprehensiveness would create dilemmas for what to do about the depiction of political boundaries at the *kuni* (province) and *gun* (district) levels. It would also necessitate decisions about what to select and not select regarding places associated with the ruling samurai. With a pictorial map masquerading as a book, these problems are easily avoided. There are no boundaries to this topography except for the ones drawn around the very notion of prosperity. This is a subtle yet powerful way for the politically unfranchised to render the landscape according to their values.

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