

Okakura Tenshin vs. Yokoyama Taikan and Shunsō: Views on Western Modern Art History (Part 2)

Kazuo Amano

In this essay, I examine the views on Western art history that formed the foundation of 'Mōrō-tai' (Vagueness style) had at its core the painters Yokoyama Taikan and Hishida Shunsō. Starting off with an examination of the painting styles of the time, in an attempt to delve to the core of the matter, I then carry out a thorough chronological verification of the statements of Ernest Fenollosa and Okakura Tenshin, the two men who were the source, not only of everything these painters ever wrote about their work, but of all their information on Western art as well, and who were at the same time their closest critics.

To begin with, in the early period of Mōrō-tai when it first appeared in 1898, at that point in time, with the exception of Shimomura Kanzan, all its proponents, Yokoyama Taikan and Hishida Shunsō included, were focused primarily on developing monochromatic works with muted palettes. I have been able to ascertain that their affinities at that time lay not so much with the Gaikō-ha (pleinairiste) painters of Japan, who were more concerned with the use of color, but rather, as works such as Shunsō's *Kanrin* (The winter in the forest) illustrate most clearly, with the compositions found in the works of Theodore Rousseau and other artists of the Barbizon school.

Furthermore, as can be established from their writings, both Fenollosa and Okakura went through a complete about-face of opinion with regard to the Impressionists, from being decidedly negative around 1890, to an essentially positive view later on. At the time of the appearance of Mōrō-tai, Tenshin was even interpreting and criticizing the style, with its musenbyō-hō 'lineless' technique, as akin to Kōrin (Rimpa school); there was no discussion of it in terms of color issues. Indeed, as both men later acknowledged, the Impressionists had taken advantage of the effect of the brush stroke itself and developed a free use of color; they would even give definitive appraisals in which they regarded Impressionism and the school of Kōrin as equivalent, as both movements were producing paintings in which color was the primary subject. And then Taikan and Shunsō, in the 1905 publication of "*Kaiga ni Tsuite*" (On Painting) issued after their return from Europe and America, built on the viewpoints of Fenollosa and Tenshin and put forward their own overview of their new painting style.

For Tenshin had, in 1901, in his remarks on the 10th Nihon Kaiga Kyōkai (Japan Painting Association) / 15th Nihon Bijutsuin (Japan Art Institute) Joint Painting Competitive Exhibition, employed for the first time a rhetoric equating the Kōrin school to the Impressionists. It is likely that at that time, with his focus on overcoming what he saw as stagnation and darkness on the painted surface, he was already suggesting the equivalence of Impressionism and Kōrin. The change from works produced in the mode of bossen-byōhō ('line-absence' drawing technique) to color-as-subject paintings should, in fact, be seen as having begun already, prior to Taikan and Shunsō's departure for Europe and America. And that development was to continue, eventually leading to the color-as-subject paintings that are representative of the later-period works of both artists.

Tenshin and his colleagues, even when emphasizing the Impressionists' expression of color-as-subject in "*Kaiga ni Tsuite*" (On Painting), almost never made any mention of what we usually call a 'consciousness of light'. In fact, it should be understood that, at the time when the Mōrō-tai style first came into existence, the first instances of a consciousness of light were to be found only in reference to the paintings of the Barbizon school.

Haru and Ayako Miyawaki: The Couple and Their Work / Interviews with Masako Fukumoto

Miyuki Naruse

Toyota Municipal Museum of Art has in its possession various works by the Aichi Prefecture oil painter Haru Miyawaki (1902-1985) and his wife, the appliqué artist Ayako Miyawaki (1905-1995). Haru Miyawaki's work was accepted into the Teiten (the Imperial Art Academy Art Exhibition) while he was still in his teens, and he continued to be active as a painter in Nagoya throughout his life. He was also a high school art teacher, an educator who had a hand in nurturing a great many young artists. His wife, Ayako, began working as an artist after the age of forty, and her appliqué pieces made using old fabric were to receive international acclaim. To this day, people continue to be charmed by the unaffected beauty that abounds in her work.

On two occasions, June 2010 and November 2011, I visited with a long-time student of Haru Miyawaki, the artist Masako Fukumoto, and engaged her in conversations about the Miyawakis. A wide range of subjects were discussed, from the content of Haru's teaching, to Ayako's creative process, to their characters as people and the backgrounds of the production of their work. The period recounted by Fukumoto corresponds to the Miyawakis' old age, from the early 1960s when she first began studying painting, to 1985, the year of Haru's death. Fukumoto referred to them as "Haru-sensei" and "Ayako-sensei", and with her lively way of telling stories conveyed very powerfully her desire to communicate, both about the Miyawakis, for whom her affection remains undiminished, and about the comrades with whom she learned to paint.

This publication will feature edited texts prepared from the two interviews. The image that Fukumoto creates of the Miyawakis as educators through and through is intriguing.

Effects of Climate Change, as Seen in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Landscape Painting

Norie Nishizaki

Landscape painting is the most important genre of what is considered the golden age of Dutch painting, the seventeenth century. The genre flourished to an unprecedented degree, and all manner of specialist painters appeared, producers who focused exclusively on specific subjects, such as rural landscapes, seascapes, nocturnes or urban scenes. Many of these painters turned their eyes to the skies above their pastoral locales or rows of houses, and left behind innumerable depictions of altostratus, nimbostratus, stratocumulus and other types of clouds. Another defining characteristic of the landscape painting of this period is the preponderance of gloomy, severe wintry scenes these painters produced. This period of landscape painting in the Netherlands was blessed with an extremely unusual set of circumstances: it had a distinctively realistic style that was grounded by both a high level of concern for accurate geographic description and a superb sense of technique, and in addition, it was mass-produced in a concentrated manner and in a limited region and period of time. As such, seventeenth-century Dutch landscape painting has attracted a great deal of attention from researchers from diverse fields of study, and is often used as evidence to facilitate the visual recognition of climatic change and cooling.

I would like to touch briefly on those aspects that can be seen in the depictions of weather found in seventeenth-century Dutch landscape painting, and on that period's climatic changes and underlying factors as portrayed in the works of that time, which came to be known as the Little Ice Age.