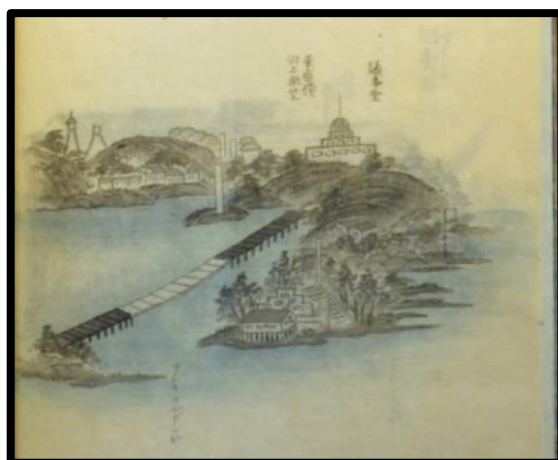


An Act of Remembrance:  
Process and Perception in a Diary of the  
First Japanese Delegation to the United States (1860)



Kristi Jamrisko Gross  
University of Maryland  
Department of Art History and Archaeology  
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In 1858, five short years after Commodore Matthew Perry's "Black Ships" anchored near Edo, auguring an end to Japan's two centuries of seclusion, Consul-General to the Empire of Japan Townsend Harris (1804-1878) succeeded in negotiating The Treaty of Amity and Commerce with the Tokugawa shogunate (fig. 1).<sup>1</sup>

Included in the document was a clause mandating that Japanese representatives travel to Washington, D.C. to present the treaty to the U.S. president for ratification. In addition to this practical purpose, Harris also wished to expose the Japanese to "the strength and greatness of the United States."<sup>2</sup> On January 22, 1860, an embassy of seventy-seven men, sailing aboard the *USS Powhatan* and escorted by the Japanese warship *Kanrin Maru*, left Yokohama Harbor for the United States (fig. 2).

The expedition, which symbolized the beginning of a new economic and cultural relationship, was a welcome distraction from the domestic strife that was rattling both Japan and the United States at the time. In San Francisco, Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, and New York, the Japanese were greeted by their American hosts with curiosity and spectacle, abiding omnipresent photographers throughout an itinerary replete with balls, receptions, and even a parade down Broadway (figs. 3-5). The *New York Times*, *Washington Evening Star*, and other major newspapers sent special reporters to follow the envoys' every move and write lengthy articles with overblown titles.<sup>3</sup>

The 1860 delegation also produced fascinating objects of Japanese and American visual culture that reflect each side's perceptions of "the other." While engravings in weekly periodicals

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<sup>1</sup> Masao Miyoshi, *As We Saw Them: The First Japanese Embassy to the United States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979) 2 ff., 21.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, 21.

<sup>3</sup> For example: "The Japanese in America.; Arrival of the United States Steam Frigate off this Port. The Ambassadors in Oriental Waters. The Transit of the Isthmus. First Experience of Railway Traveling. Courtesies of the New-Grenadian Authorities. Reception of the Strangers On Board the Roanoke. The Steamer to Proceed This Morning to Hampton Roads. From Our Special Reporter. United States Steam Frigate Roanoke." *The New York Times*, 10 May 1860.

(fig. 6) and Mathew Brady's photographic portraits (fig. 7) pulse with information and significance, the primary focus of this paper is the Japanese *Meriken kōkai nikki ryakuzu* 米利堅航海日記略圖 (Journal and Sketches from the Voyage to America), an unassuming book of watercolor drawings in the collection of the Library of Congress (fig. 8).

## Documentation

My own exploration parallels, in an admittedly much less significant and momentous way, the experience of this diary's author and the other Japanese delegates: each journey is characterized by an undercurrent of mystery and full of numerous surprises. As they crossed the Pacific, when not concentrating on immediate concerns like seasickness and water shortages, the Japanese likely pondered the *terra incognita* that lay ahead. What is America? My main research question was simply, what is this object?

The Library of Congress record is brief, listing the book's title, number of pages (fifty-eight), size (twenty-seven centimeters in length), call number, and a few notes such as "Shahon [hand-written copy]." The author is unknown, the date "not before 1860."<sup>4</sup> The sense of mystery that surrounds the charming illustrations truly captures the imagination of the researcher.

About forty of the almost 200 travelers kept journals to chronicle their adventure.<sup>5</sup> Two of these, by Vice-Ambassador Muragaki Norimasa (1813-1880) and attendant Yanagawa Masakiyo, have been translated into English. Fukuzawa Yukichi (1835-1901), a sailor aboard the *Kanrin Maru*, would offer a vibrant account of the voyage in his enthralling autobiography published in 1899. By engaging in this documentary activity, the Japanese continued a long

<sup>4</sup> "Meriken kōkai nikki ryakuzu," Library of Congress, accessed 18 Feb 2015, <http://lccn.loc.gov/98847638>.

<sup>5</sup> There were seventy-seven men on the *USS Powhatan* and 125 (114 Japanese, 11 Americans) aboard the *Kanrin Maru*, which sailed as far as San Francisco and subsequently returned to Japan. Masakiyo Yanagawa, *The First Japanese Mission to America (1860), Being a Diary Kept by a Member of the Embassy*, trans. Junichi Fukuyama and Roderick H. Jackson (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1938) 82-84.

tradition that harkened back to Heian-era works such as Murasaki Shikibu's eleventh-century diary (fig. 9) and Ki no Tsurayuki's tenth-century travelogue (fig. 10).

The textual accounts of their journey were often accompanied by informative sketches – views of foreign harbors annotated with latitude and longitude, native peoples, a pictorial list of men's and women's hats (figs. 11-13). At least one member of the delegation had experience with visual traveloguing – Nakahama Manjirō (1827-1898), or John Mung, whose remarkable life story included six months stranded on the island of Torishima after the shipwreck of his fishing vessel in 1842 (fig. 14).<sup>6</sup>

Of the scholarship on Japanese perceptions of their journey, Miyoshi Masao's *As We Saw Them* (1979) is the most thought-provoking and relevant to this research project. Miyoshi highlights the impersonal quality of the Japanese diaries, which abound in factual, external data like the daily location of their ship and the square footage of their hotel rooms, but lack the internal impressions that we might expect from the diary of such a monumental expedition.<sup>7</sup>

Miyoshi argues that much of this tone is reflective of Japanese disorientation. Back in Japan, the delegates would have been accustomed to defined spaces and hierarchies, modes of organization radically different from the experience of navigating the open sea or a foreign country. Miyoshi states that the writers' gravitation towards the factual allowed them to grasp this experience in a way that was familiar and absolute, "as if to avoid the challenge of the unknown, they seek protection in clichés and numbers and measurements."<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Miyoshi, 9.

<sup>7</sup> The last third of Yanagawa Masakiyo's diary, covering the voyage from New York to Japan via Cape Horn, is dominated by succinct, factual entries: "July 21<sup>st</sup>. Cloudy. Southeast wind. We saw land on our right after 10:00 AM and anchored in St. Paul de Loanda harbor after 5:00 PM. The harbor is guarded by a fort on the right. Latitude S. 8° 20'. Longitude E. 13° 01'. Temperature 72° F." Masakiyo Yanagawa, *The First Japanese Mission to America (1860), Being a Diary Kept by a Member of the Embassy*, trans. Junichi Fukuyama and Roderick H. Jackson (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1938) 79.

<sup>8</sup> Miyoshi, 107.

This tendency is evident in many of the images in *Meriken kōkai nikki ryakuzu*. The artist drew several “views,” akin to the familiar tradition of pictures of famous places in Japan. These include Mare Island Naval Base in San Francisco (fig. 15), where the *USS Powhatan*’s escort *Kanrin Maru* underwent extensive repairs before returning to Japan, and bird’s-eye views of Washington D.C. and New York City (fig. 16, 17). There are several detailed, linear depictions of objects of craft and industry – the interior of the artist’s room in the Willard Hotel, for example, and the train ferryboat on which they crossed the Delaware River (figs. 18, 19).

Perhaps the image that most supports Miyoshi’s argument is a floorplan of the White House (fig. 20). The Japanese met President James Buchanan in the East Room on the morning of April 28, exchanging speeches of goodwill and friendship before presenting him with the Treaty of Amity and Commerce in an exquisite lacquered box (fig. 21).<sup>9</sup> The *Meriken* artist’s portrayal of the event is reduced to a flat diagram.

Nevertheless, while Miyoshi’s conclusion is compelling, it is also overly simplistic, and perhaps even condescending. A striking photograph of Fukuzawa Yukichi and a young American girl in a polka-dotted dress is a clear example of a Japanese delegate taking the initiative, thus countering Miyoshi’s characterization of the Japanese as passive and vulnerable (fig. 22). In his autobiography, Fukuzawa wrote of the photograph’s creation and the commotion it caused on the *Kanrin Maru*’s return trip:

The girl was really the daughter of the photographer; she was fifteen, as I remember hearing... As I was going to sit, I saw the girl in the studio. I said suddenly, “Let us have our picture taken together.” She immediately said, “All right,” being an American girl and thinking nothing of it. So she came and stood by me. You may be sure the young officers of the *Kanrin-maru* were taken aback. Some of them showed extreme envy, but all too late. I knew that I had showed my photograph in San Francisco, many would have followed my trick, so if I kept it unseen until our boat had left Hawaii and there was absolutely no more chance, before I produced it.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> “The Japanese Embassy.” *New-York Daily Tribune*. 17 May 1860: 6.

<sup>10</sup> Fukuzawa, 119-20.

Fukuzawa's natural confidence and open-mindedness propelled him to achieve a wealth of accomplishments back in Japan, including founding the Institute of Infectious Diseases (伝染病研究所), the newspaper *Jiji-Shimpo* (時事新報), and Keio University (慶應義塾大学).<sup>11</sup>

In the same way that Fukuzawa Yukichi initiated the creation of a key object of the delegation's documentary material culture, the many diarists' illustrations reflect the artists' agency in the choices of subject matter, thus demonstrating control over their own narratives and providing a view into subjective Japanese perceptions even in the depiction of "objective" subjects like hotel furniture and palm trees.

### Process

Another important research question deals with artistic process; in short, how was the *Meriken kokai nikki ryakuzu* made? Several American newspaper accounts relate the Japanese visitors' propensity for sketching their surroundings. The *New-York Daily Tribune* offers a description of the Japanese artists' materials: "a book filled with the usual soft, strong Japanese paper, upon which he drew with a fine brush, carrying his ink with the same hand that held his book."<sup>12</sup>

The *Tribune* also relates an amusing anecdote in which the reporter, impressed by the talent of one of the artists, requests permission to publish one of his sketches in the newspaper. The Japanese delegate is curious but lacks confidence, and "retiring for a moment, drew with lightning-like touches this representation of a Japanese plant, which he brought me with the assurance that it was intended especially for the newspaper of which I had told him. So you have here the first work of Japanese art ever contributed to an American publication (fig. 23)."<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 321-23, 386. "Keio Founder Yukichi Fukuzawa," Keio University, accessed 14 May 2015, [http://www.keio.ac.jp/en/about\\_keio/fukuzawa.html](http://www.keio.ac.jp/en/about_keio/fukuzawa.html).

<sup>12</sup> "The Japanese Embassy: The Arrival at Washington," *The New-York Daily Tribune*, 14 May 1860: 6.

<sup>13</sup> "The Japanese Embassy, Its Arrival at Washington," *The New-York Daily Tribune*, 17 May 1860, 6.

In the May 17, 1860 edition of the *New-York Daily Tribune*, the reporter gives a vivid account of the making of one of the bird's-eye views of Hampton Roads: "One prompt artist, of whose talent and industry I was afterward convinced, sprang high upon the hammock-settings, and set to work in the most vigorous manner of the *Philadelphia's* approach (fig. 24)."<sup>14</sup> The angle of the *Meriken* artist's drawing of Fort Monroe and the USS *Philadelphia* is such that he could have been the intrepid climber described in the newspaper article.

Other bird's-eye images likely required some imagination. The Washington, D.C. cityscape (fig. 16), for example, is a view seemingly rendered from a great height, as if the artist was (quite implausibly) observing the scene from a one-hundred-story tower across the river in Virginia. The angle recalls the Japanese convention of *fukinuki yatai* (吹抜屋台), literally "blown-off roof," which Heian artists famously employed in luminous folding screens and which was still prevalent in art of the late Edo period (figs. 25, 26). Interestingly, this angle also became popular in American cartography of the late nineteenth century (fig. 27). The perspective of the artist's image of the United States capital was thus both fundamentally Japanese and characteristically American.

Sometimes the Japanese delegates used American print sources as models for their artistic impressions, especially in cases in which drawing on the spot would have been impractical or improper. For example, Yanagawa Masakiyo's diary includes a detailed sketch of a White House East Room chandelier (fig. 28). It is highly unlikely that he drew this object during the presidential ceremony. Instead, as Dallas Finn indicates, it appears that Yanagawa copied the chandeliers from an engraving published in *Harper's Weekly*.<sup>15</sup> The Japanese would

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<sup>14</sup> "The Japanese Embassy, Its Arrival at Washington," *The New-York Daily Tribune*, 17 May 1860, 6.

<sup>15</sup> Dallas Finn, "Guests of the Nation: The Japanese Delegation to the Buchanan White House," *White House History* 12 (1994): 26.

have likely viewed such imitation of American sources as an authentic method of filling in gaps in their own visual records.

Another curious aspect of the *Meriken* is the finished quality of many of its illustrations. The packed itinerary would not have allowed this artist the kind of time necessary to craft his beautiful ink-and-watercolor drawings from life. It also seems unlikely that he had much energy at the end of the day, back in the confines of his ship cabin or hotel room, to work on such a project. The discovery of another primary source connected to this voyage, to be discussed in the next section, helps explain the polished nature of the *Meriken*'s images.

### **Attribution**

As mentioned above, the Library of Congress record on *Meriken kōkai nikki ryakuzu* does not include a known author, so its attribution is another mystery to solve. Visual similarities to the Kimura Tetsuta's *Kobeiki* (Journal of a Ship's Voyage to America) (fig. 29) initially prompted me to conclude Tetsuta, an attendant to mission supervisor Oguri Tadamasa, also authored the Library of Congress diary. Both are soft-cover books with similarly rendered ink drawings, but significant differences render a Tetsuta attribution implausible. The *Kobeiki* spans six volumes, but our object is a compact single volume covering the entire circumnavigation. Furthermore, the two artists often approached the same subject in different ways; for example, the *Kobeiki*'s Panamanian natives row a small sailboat in rough waters (fig. 12) while the *Meriken*'s stand under a small grass hut (fig. 30).

The most compelling argument against a Kimura attribution is the even stronger resemblance of the *Meriken kōkai nikki ryakuzu*'s images to those of Satō Tōshichi, who was a village headman back in Japan and who, like Tetsuta, was one of Oguri's attendants during the



voyage (fig. 31). Each watercolor in the Library of Congress book corresponds to a black-and-white sketch in Satō's *Sekai isshū* (Circumnavigation) (fig. 32).<sup>16</sup>

*Sekai isshu* is filled with text (fig. 33); it is clear that this was the journal that Satō kept while on the voyage, and that these are the sketches he created from life, or at the very least, from vivid memories of the day's experiences. The images in *Meriken kōkai nikki ryakuzu* have a more finished quality by sheer virtue of their medium but also the conditions under which they were likely made: these watercolors are cleaner and more deliberate, indicating that the artist made them during his leisure time once the mission was complete.

### Purpose

The purpose of *Meriken kōkai nikki ryakuzu* is tangentially related to the atmosphere that greeted the travelers upon their return to Japan. The *USS Niagara*, the return trip vessel, arrived back at Shinagawa harbor near Edo on September 28, 1860. Its passengers had played a critical role in the establishment of U.S.-Japan commercial relations during a voyage that spanned the globe. They had become minor celebrities in America, their appearance and activities meriting close observation and recording by the country's most esteemed reporters, photographers, and draughtsmen.<sup>17</sup> They had been feted at a Broadway parade that inspired Walt Whitman to write the poem "Errand Bearers," which reads in part:

<sup>16</sup> The complete title of a version of a Satō's diary published in 2001 is *Bakumatsu Kenbei Shisetsu Oguri Tadamasu jūsha no kiroku: Nanushi Satō Tōshichi no sekai isshū*, or Record of the Bakumatsu-period Embassy to America by an Attendant to Oguri Tadamasu: Village headman Satō Tōshichi's Circumnavigation. The inked title that Satō gave to his own work has suffered abrasion; only the word "America" is visible.

<sup>17</sup> The embassy's American documentarians included reporters from *The New York Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *New York Daily Tribune*, *San Francisco Daily Evening Bulletin*, and *Washington Evening Star*. Photographers Mathew Brady and Alexander Gardner; and draughtsmen from *Harper's Weekly* and *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*. The Broadway parade that celebrated the Japanese visitors inspired the poet Walt Whitman to write "The Errand-Bearers," which included the following lines: "Over sea, hither from Nippon,/Courteous, the Princes of Asia, swart-cheek'd princes,/First-comers, guests, two-sworded princes,/Lesson-giving princes, leaning back in their openbarouches, bare-headed, impassive,/This day they ride through Manhattan... Superb-faced Manhattan,/Comrade Americanos—to us, then, at last, the/Orient comes." Whitman, Walt, "The Errand-Bearers," *The New York Times*, 27 Jun 1860. <http://www.whitmanarchive.org/published/periodical/poems/per.00154>

Over sea, hither from Nippon,  
 Courteous, the Princes of Asia, swart-cheek'd princes,  
 First-comers, guests, two-sworded princes,  
 Lesson-giving princes, leaning back in their open barouches, bare-headed, impassive,  
 This day they ride through Manhattan [...]  
 Superb-faced Manhattan,  
 Comrade Americanos—to us, then, at last, the  
 Orient comes.<sup>18</sup>

The Japanese departure from New York Harbor had been one of tearful emotion and fanfare, yet their homecoming was greeted with silence and caution.<sup>19</sup> Between the time of *sakoku* (isolation), when returning from a trip abroad was punishable by death, and a future time when such international travel would be normalized, there lay the situation of 1860, when such travel was legal but controversial, and sometimes dangerous.

The country to which the Japanese delegation returned was even more fraught with tension than the one they had left. During their absence, the chief advisor to the shogun, Ii Naosuke (1815-1860), had been assassinated by xenophobic *rōnin*<sup>20</sup> and the battle cry of the anti-shogunal, pro-imperial group, “*Sonno joi!*” (“Revere the emperor, expel the Barbarians!”) had risen in volume (fig. 34). Attacks on foreigners and foreign sympathizers would continue throughout the decade; notable examples included the murder of Dutch-American interpreter Henry Heuksen (1832-1861) and the burning of the British legation at Shinagawa and an attack on Dutch and American ships in 1862 (fig. 35).<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Walt Whitman, “The Errand-Bearers,” *The New York Times*, 27 Jun 1860, <http://www.whitmanarchive.org/published/periodical/poems/per.00154>.

<sup>19</sup> Miyoshi notes that the travelers were ordered to leave the USS Niagara quietly, and that the *San Francisco Daily Evening Bulletin* explained that celebration would have signaled strong approval of the treaty and of America. Miyoshi, 146.

<sup>20</sup> Yanagawa, ii. Ii’s death caused much confusion in the United States, with preliminary Pony Express reports stating that the victim was the “Tycoon,” or shogun. “The Japanese in Philadelphia.; Where they Went and What they Saw Yesterday. Report of the Tycoon’s Death Discredited. The Japanese Game of Chess. The Japanese at Philadelphia. Effect of The News From Japan--Is It True? --The Japanese at Philadelphia Stores,” *The New York Times*, 12 Jun 1860.

<sup>21</sup> Yanagawa, ii. Miyoshi, 147.

Given this context, it is unsurprising that only one of the journals, Hirose Kakuzo's *Kankai koro nikki* (Diary Across the Oceans), was published contemporaneously – it would have been risky to advertise one's travel abroad.<sup>22</sup> Instead, the delegates' written and visual remembrances were intended as personal souvenirs of their journey, to be surreptitiously shared with the traveler's inner circle. While the situation in Japan had worsened while they were away, xenophobia was already raging before their departure, so it is unlikely that the chroniclers intended their creations for wide dissemination. An anecdote in Fukuzawa Yukichi's autobiography demonstrates the travelers' awareness of the rampant xenophobia back home:

In San Francisco Captain Kimura bought an umbrella as a curiosity – we called it *kōmorigasa* (bat-umbrella) because of its shape and to distinguish it from the Japanese umbrella. The officers of the ship had gathered around to look at it, and were discussing what might be the result, should the captain carry this strange object out in the streets of Yedo back in Japan. “There is no doubt about it,” said one of them. “He would be cut down by a *rōnin* before the captain could reach Nihombashi from his home in Shinsenza.”<sup>23</sup>

One possible exception to a diary remaining with its creator was its confiscation by government authorities. Shogunal advisors, who were essentially the embassy members' supervisors, would have greatly benefited from the content of these records, and might have treated them as small windows to the outside world. In this way the delegates fulfilled the role that the Dutch East India Company factory chief had played during his annual visit to pay tribute and convey world news to the shogun, a practice that had ended only a few years before.<sup>24</sup>

The shogunate would have been especially interested in obtaining intelligence about the United States, the country with which they had concluded a substantial commerce treaty and established a formal relationship against the wishes of the emperor and his sometimes violent defenders. The delegates seemed conscious of the possibility that their journals would be read,

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<sup>22</sup> Hirose Kakuzo's *Kankai koro nikki* (Diary Across the Oceans) was published in 1862. Miyoshi, 97.

<sup>23</sup> Yukichi Fukuzawa, *The Autobiography of Yukichi Fukuzawa*, trans. Eiichi Kiyooka (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966) 122.

<sup>24</sup> Adam Clulow, *The Company and the Shogun: The Dutch Encounter with Tokugawa Japan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014) 106.

perhaps without their permission, despite their efforts to keep them personal. Tamamushi Sadayu Yasushige, who seemed genuinely interested in learning about American culture and criticized some of the officers for “things being done in this voyage that disgrace our country,” including daily shopping sprees, labeled the eighth section of his *Ko-bei nichiroku* “not to be seen by anybody else.”<sup>25</sup>

It is possible that *Sekai isshū*, Satō’s “complete” diary, was confiscated by the government. The *Meriken kōkai nikki ryakuzu*, however, would have been of little use to shogunal officials. Without detailed descriptions and sometimes without captions altogether, how would the reader begin to understand or appreciate what Satō saw and experienced? It is thus unlikely that the Library of Congress book was seized by the government, and that it instead functioned solely as a personal souvenir. Perhaps Satō created it in the event in anticipation of his original diary becoming government property, or maybe he simply wished to create an aesthetically appealing visual aid to accompany oral narration of his adventure to trusted family members and friends. The focus on the image and the necessity of a “tour guide” made the *Meriken* a highly interactive object. For example, one might imagine Satō urging his viewer-listeners to guess the identities of the man dressed in a simple military uniform and woman wearing a plain dress and modest head scarf, then surprising them with the information that these were the king and queen of Hawaii (fig. 32, top).<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Among these “disgraceful” activities were the officers’ daily shopping sprees in search of goods that they could sell for profit back in Japan. Miyoshi, 35-36. Sadly, Tamamushi’s sense of caution did not prevent him from becoming a target of imperial forces, who arrested him as a traitor and forced him to commit *seppuku* in 1869. Miyoshi, 164.

<sup>26</sup> Astonishment at foreign leaders’ plain dress and down-to-earth personalities is a common theme in the delegates’ written accounts. In his autobiography, Fukuzawa Yukichi relates a conversation with an American about the first president of the United States: “One day, I asked a gentleman where the descendants of George Washington might be. He replied, ‘I think there is a woman who is directly descended from Washington. I don’t know where she is now, but I think I have heard she is married.’ His answer as so very casual that it shocked me. Of course, I knew that America was a republic with a new president every four years, but I could not help feeling that the family of Washington would be revered above all other families. My reasoning was based on the reverence in Japan for the

## Adaptation

An examination of Satō Tōshichi's complete diary reveals another compelling nugget: the Library of Congress object contains fewer images than the original, indicating that Satō selected highlights from his vast array of sketches in the same way that contemporary tourists in Japan assembled their own souvenir photo albums (fig. 36). Satō had cast a discerning eye upon the variety of visual stimuli he had encountered, encapsulating his around-the-world voyage in about fifty illustrations. In order to create the more compact *Meriken kōkai nikki ryakuzu*, Satō eliminated most of the text and slightly reduced the number of images. What did he leave out of this visual aid? What images did he feel would be most effective for sharing his experience?

One image that did not make the cut for the smaller version was a basic diagram of the Southern Cross (fig. 37). This is the type of factual image in which the Japanese travelers found solace, according to Masao Miyoshi. Satō might have felt it unnecessary to include pictures that could be found in Japanese references, and that it was more important to focus on the personal element of the voyage, and on images that could not readily be accessed by even the most educated Japanese citizen.

With the benefit of time not available when sketching on the spot, Satō was able to create cleaner, more elegant copies of his original drawings using ink and watercolor rather than a simple drawing pencil. He also added a delicate, light blue wash to more than half the images. This is the only color in the book, and it is used exclusively for water elements – harbors, seas, and rivers (fig. 38). Satō clearly intended to accentuate water, perhaps both to add some aesthetic flair and to highlight the concept of water itself.

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founders of the great lines of rulers -- like that for Ieyasu of the Tokugawa family of shoguns, really deified in the popular mind. As for scientific inventions and industrial machinery, there was not great novelty in them for me. It was rather in matters of life and social custom and ways of thinking that I found myself at a loss in America. I could not help feeling that the family of Washington would be revered above all other families." Fukuzawa, 116.

During the seclusion of the Edo period, the Japanese would have primarily viewed water as an impenetrable barrier to the world beyond their island nation. Satō's depiction of water subverts this idea; the numerous seaborne vessels (sailboats, frigates, a train ferryboat) and the extra attention denoted by the blue highlights encourage the viewer to see water as a connector, as the element that transported the delegation around the world and from city to city within the United States, allowing them to fulfill their diplomatic mission.

In addition to technical changes, Satō broadened the artistic license he had employed in his preliminary sketches. At one further remove from the subject matter, he apparently felt liberated to make more imaginative changes, further emphasizing the power of artist as creator. For example, in his first Washington cityscape, the Capitol dome is finished, albeit with some wires indicating lingering construction supports. In the watercolor version, Satō has gone one step further, omitting these extra lines to create a complete dome, a feat that in reality would not be achieved until 1866 (fig. 39).<sup>27</sup> In designing the *Meriken kōkai nikki ryakuzu*, therefore, Satō Tōshichi both simplified, by eliminating text and reducing the number of images, and embellished, by adding color and imaginative details, his earlier primary source.

The *Meriken kōkai nikki ryakuzu* offers a window into Japanese perceptions of America through its charming ink and watercolor drawings, thus providing a counterbalance to the images produced by artists in the host country. The diary opposes Miyoshi's description of the delegates as passive, disoriented, hapless wanderers – it is very much an active object. The artist, likely Satō Tōshichi, was savvy and resourceful, assembling his souvenir picture book from his own

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<sup>27</sup> "Capitol Dome," Architect of the Capitol, accessed 14 May 2015, <http://www.aoc.gov/capitol-buildings/capitol-dome>.

sketches and perhaps the artwork of others, and adapting his original diary to create an object more appropriate for intimate storytelling.

This diary is part of the visual culture of an event that suffered a kind of temporal misfortune from which it has never fully recovered. On the morning of April 28, 1860, the Japanese presented The Treaty of Amity and Commerce to President Buchanan. Less than one year later, on the morning of April 12, 1861, Confederate forces fired on the U.S. Army base at Fort Sumter, and the American Civil War erupted.<sup>28</sup> In Japan, 1860 also marked the beginning of a decade of civil strife, primarily between pro-imperial and pro-shogun forces. The role of the outside world in this newly “opened” country was very much a part of the discourse, and the journey of the first delegation to the United States was less a cause for celebration than a point for debate. In 1868, the emperor’s power was restored, and the treaty negotiated between the United States and Tokugawa shogunate was further undermined.<sup>29</sup>

By shedding some light on this critical artifact of early Japan-U.S. relations, I have sought to restore to the Japanese delegation a stronger visual agency that calls for reevaluation of the American gaze through which we typically view this critical nineteenth-century international encounter. I hope that this initial exploration of Satō Toschichi’s *Meriken kōkai nikki ryakuzu* will also direct some attention to a notable event that has been unjustly buried in the historical record, and to an artist-delegate whose name I have now reattached to his exquisite act of remembrance.

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<sup>28</sup> “Fort Sumter,” Civil War Trust, accessed 10 May 2015, <http://www.civilwar.org/battlefields/fort-sumter.html>.

<sup>29</sup> Sullivan, Michael. *The Meeting of Eastern and Western Art* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989) 119.

Figures



**Figure 1.** *Shinsei, America, Reduced Depiction of an American Ship [USS Powhatan] and Portraits of the First Ambassador Perry and the Deputy Ambassador Adams, 1854.* Asian Art Museum, San Francisco.



**Figure 2.** *Kanrin Maru, 1855.*

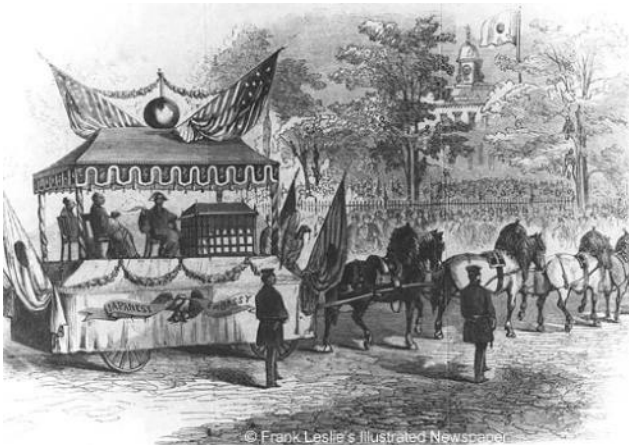


**Figure 3.** Alexander Gardner, *The Japanese Ambassadors, 1860.* From left to right: Muragaki Norimasa, Shimmi Masaoka, Oguri Tadamasa.





**Figure 4.** Sailors of the Kanrin Maru, the Embassy's escort; from right, Fukuzawa Yukichi, Okada Seizō, Hida Hamagorō, Konagai Gohachirō, Hamaguchi Yoemon, Nezu Kinjirō, 1860.



**Figure 5.** "The Pagoda Car containing the Japanese treaty box, as it appeared in the procession of the reception in New York, June 16, 1860," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, 1860.



**Figure 6.** "Group of principal officers of the Japanese Embassy in full costume," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, 1860.



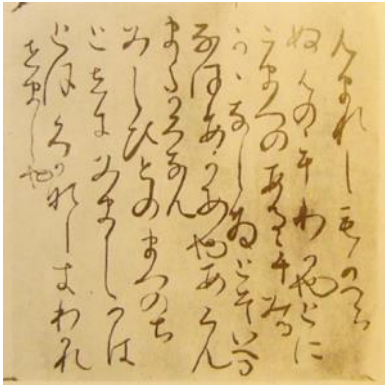
**Figure 7.** Mathew Brady, *The Embassy at the Washington DC Shipyard*, 1860. Vice-Ambassador Muragaki Norimasa (third from left), Ambassador Shimmi Masaoki (middle), Oguri Tadamasu (second from right).



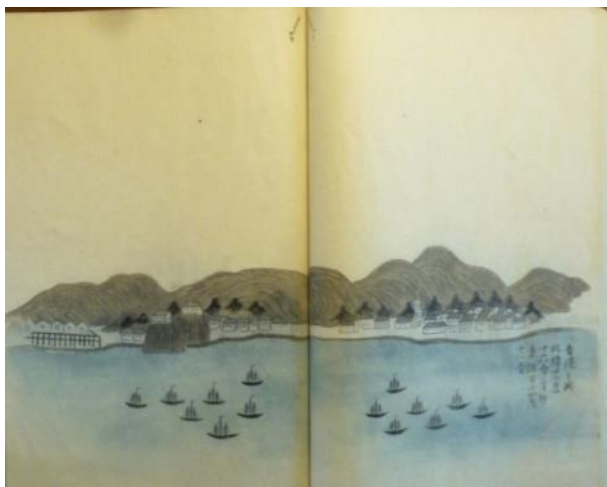
**Figure 8.** Cover, *Meriken kōkai nikki ryakuzū*, not before 1860. Library of Congress.



**Figure 9.** Komatsuken, *Murasaki Shikibu* [author of *Murasaki Shikibu Nikki*, *Diary of Lady Murasaki*], 1765. Ink and color. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.



**Figure 10.** Fujiwara no Teika, copy of Ki no Tsurayuki, *Tosa Nikki* (Tosa diary)(10th century), 13th century. Ink on paper. Museum of the Imperial Collections.



**Figure 11.** Hong Kong, *Meriken kōkai nikki ryakuzu*, not before 1860. Library of Congress.



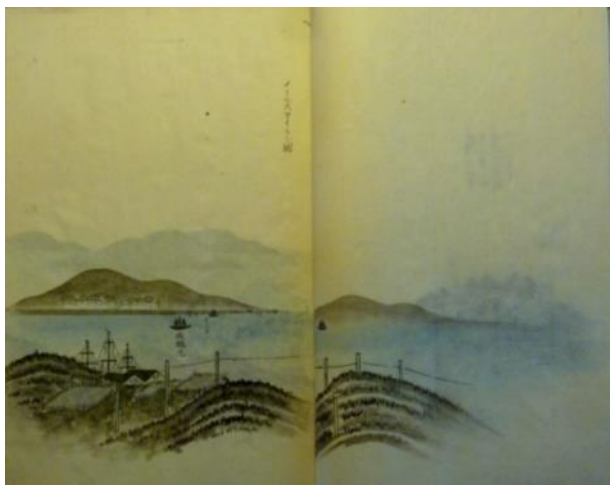
**Figure 12.** Panamanian natives from Kimura Tetsuta, *Kobeiki* (*Journal of a Ship's Voyage to America*), volume II, 1860. Ink on paper. Asian Art Museum, San Francisco.



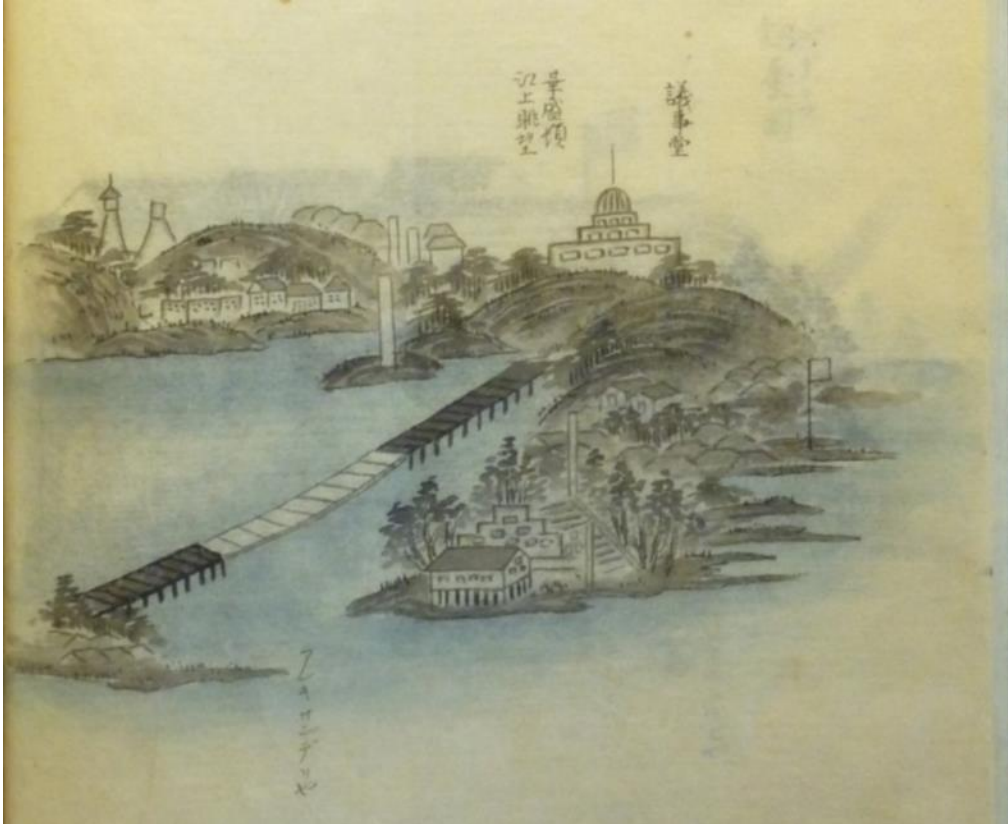
**Figure 13.** Hats and Caps, from Yanagawa Masakiyo, *Diary of a Voyage*, 1860.



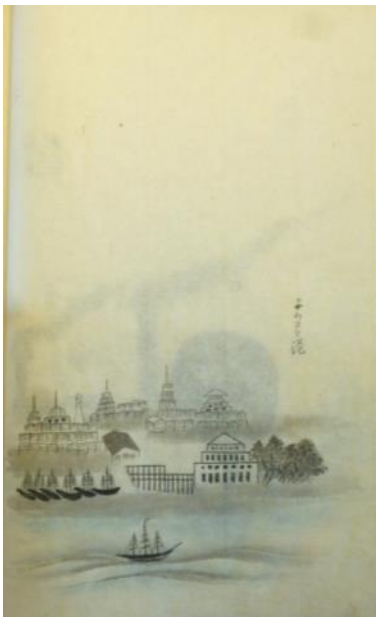
**Figure 14.** View of the Eastern Side of Torishima (Bird Island), from Nakahama Manjiro, "Drifting: An Edited and Abridged Account," a manuscript in four volumes, 1852.



**Figure 15.** Mare Island Naval Base, *Meriken kōkai nikki ryakuzu*, not before 1860. Library of Congress.



**Figure 16.** Washington, D.C., *Meriken kōkai nikki ryakuzu*, not before 1860. Library of Congress.



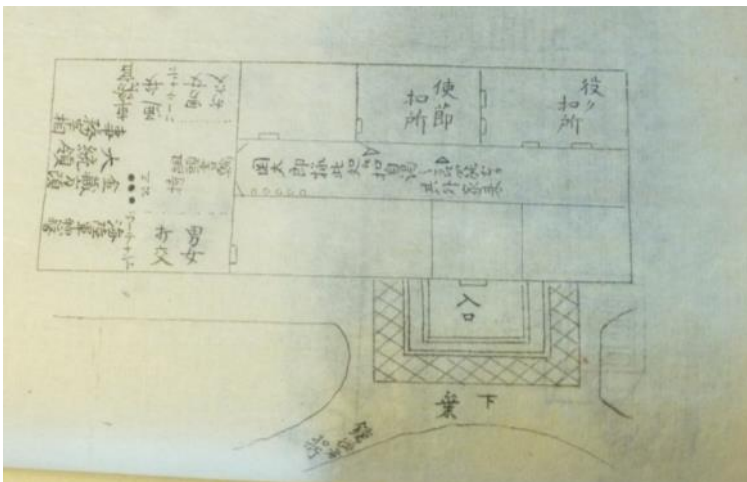
**Figure 17.** New York harbor, *Meriken kōkai nikki ryakuzu*, not before 1860. Library of Congress.



**Figure 18.** Hotel room interior, *Meriken kōkai nikki ryakuzu*, not before 1860. Library of Congress.



**Figure 19.** Train ferryboat, *Meriken kōkai nikki ryakuzu*, not before 1860. Library of Congress.



**Figure 20.** White House floor plan, *Meriken kōkai nikki ryakuzu*, not before 1860. Library of Congress.



**Figure 21.** “Members of the 1860 Japanese mission to exchange ratifications of the Harris Treaty meeting with President Buchanan at a gala celebration at the White House,” *Harper’s Weekly*, 26 May 1860.



**Figure 22.** Fukuzawa Yukichi with Theodora Alice in San Francisco, 1860.



**Figure 23.** Japanese delegate, Plant sketch, *New York Daily Tribune*, 17 May 1860.



**Figure 24.** Virginia [likely Fort Monroe], with the steamboat *Philadelphia*, *Meriken kōkai nikki ryakuzu*, not before 1860. Library of Congress.

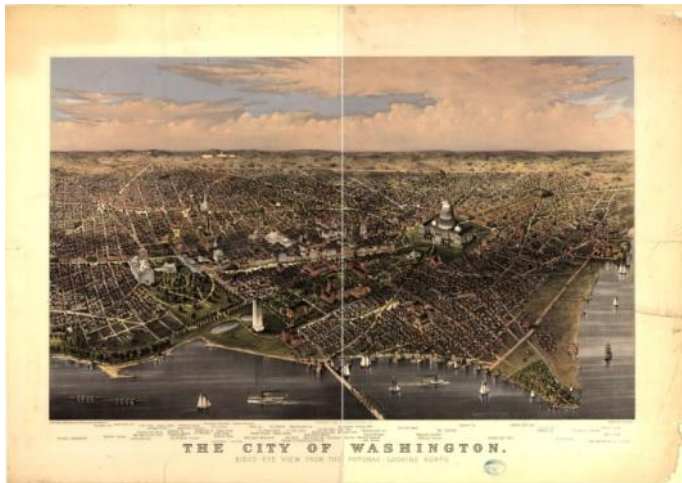


**Figure 25.** Detail from *Genji monogatari emaki*, first half of 12th century. Ink and color on paper. Tokugawa Art Museum, Nagoya.



**Figure 26.** Utagawa Yoshitsuna *Bird's eye view of Edo Fire Brigades*. Ca. 1848-1868. Ukiyo-e woodblock-printed oban triptych; ink and color on paper. Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, Eugene, Oregon.





**Figure 27.** C.R. Parsons, *The City of Washington birds-eye view from the Potomac-looking north*. C. 1880. Published by Currier and Ives. The Library of Congress.



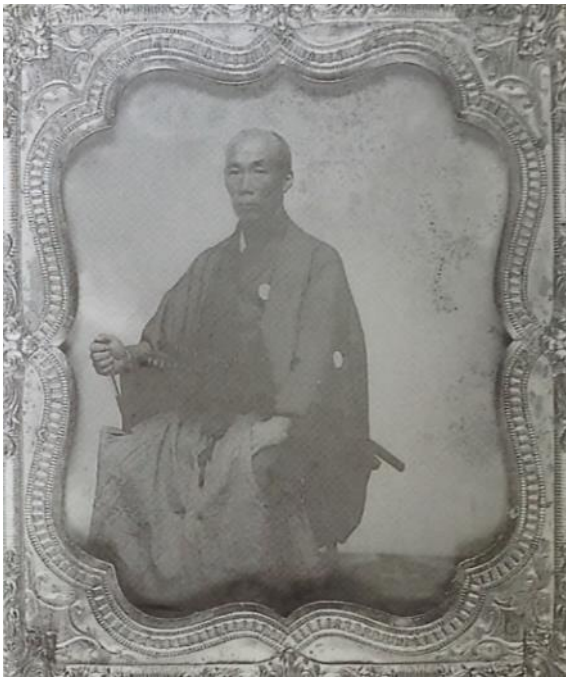
**Figure 28.** Chandelier from Yanagawa Masakiyo, *The First Japanese Mission to America (1860), Being a Diary Kept by a Member of the Embassy, 1938*.



**Figure 29.** Porto Bello [Panama], Kimura Tetsuta, *Kobeiki (Journal of a Ship's Voyage to America)*, volume II, 1860. Ink on paper. Asian Art Museum, San Francisco.



**Figure 30.** Panamanian native peoples, *Meriken kōkai nikki ryakuzu*, not before 1860. Library of Congress.



**Figure 31.** Satō Tōshichi, 13 April 1860. Washington, D.C.



Figure 32. Correspondences between *Sekai issshū* and *Meriken kōkai nikki ryakuzu*.

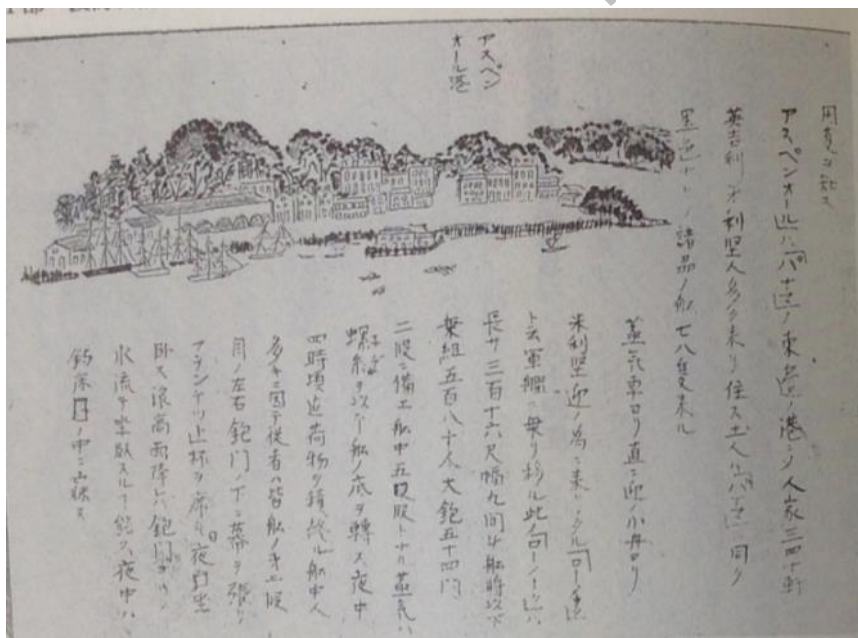


Figure 33. Aspinwall Harbor, Sato Toshichi, *Sekai issshū*, 1860.



**Figure 34.** Taiso Yoshitoshi (1839 - 1892) *The Assassination of Ii Naosuke [1860]*, 1873. Oban triptych.



**Figure 35.** “Attack of the British Legation in Edo [1861],” *The Illustrated London News*, 1861.



**Figure 36.** “Teahouse, Uyeno, Tokio” and “Grand Hotel, Yokohama” from *Japanese People and Views* by John Davis Batchelder, collector. Ca. 1890. hand-colored photographic prints. Library of Congress.

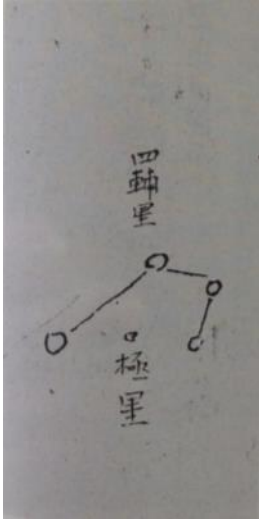


Figure 37. Southern Cross, Sato Toshichi, *Sekai issū*, 1860.

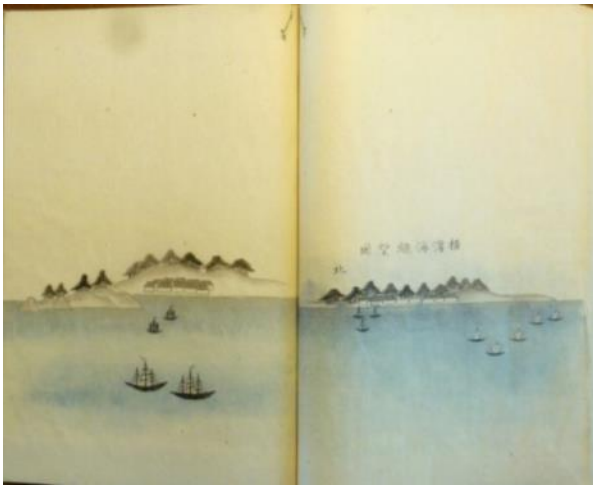


Figure 38. Yokohama Bay, *Meriken kōkai nikki ryakuzu*, not before 1860. Library of Congress.



Figure 39. Washington, D.C., in *Sekai issū* (left) and *Meriken kōkai nikki ryakuzu* (right).

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