

Mōko shūrai ekotoba (“Illustrated Account of the Mongol Invasions”): A Case Study of Encounter with the Other in Japan

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Abstract. This paper is a study of a Japanese illustrated handscroll produced in the late Kamakura period (1185-1333), the *Mōko Shūrai Ekotoba*, that provides an invaluable pictorial account of the two attempted Mongol invasions of Japan in the years 1274 and 1281. It was copied and restored, with some images significantly altered, during the Edo period (1615-1868). While in the original handscroll the appearances of the foreign Mongols were depicted as accurately as possible, the figures added later show exaggerated features and distortions that correspond to new modes of imagining and representing peoples reflecting a new language and the shifting cosmologies brought about by the Japanese encounter with more “different” Others (Europeans).

Keywords: Mongol; Emaki; Handscroll; Japan; Other.

[es] *Mōko shūrai ekotoba* (“Manuscrito ilustrado de las invasiones mongolas”): un estudio de caso de encuentro con El Otro en Japón

Resumen. Este artículo resulta del estudio de un manuscrito ilustrado japonés, producido a finales del periodo Kamakura (1185-1333), el *Mōko Shūrai Ekotoba*, que proporciona un valioso relato pictórico de las dos tentativas de invasión mongola de Japón en los años 1274 y 1281. Fue copiado y restaurado, con algunas imágenes significativamente alteradas, durante el período Edo (1615-1868). Mientras que en el manuscrito original las apariciones de los mongoles extranjeros fueron representadas con la mayor precisión posible, las figuras que se añadieron más tarde muestran rasgos exagerados y algo distorsionados que corresponden a los nuevos modos de imaginar y representar a los pueblos reflejando un nuevo lenguaje y las cosmologías cambiantes producidas por el encuentro japonés con otros más “diferentes” (europeos).

Palabras clave: Mongol; emaki; pergamino; Japón; otro.

Summary. 1. Introduction. 2. Patronage and transmission of the *Mōko Shūrai Ekotoba*. 3. Representation of the Mongols as foreign enemies: the original scrolls and the added images. 4. Representations of Otherness during the Edo period (1615-1868). 5. The Hairy Barbarians. 6. Conclusion. 7. Written sources and bibliographical references.

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1. Introduction

The illustrated handscroll (*emaki*, or *emakimono*, “picture scroll”) is a unique – intimate and dynamic– format, very well suited for narrative painting. This form of art captured the imagination of many artists –and patrons– for centuries in Japan², where it became the major vehicle for the rich and lyrical *yamato-e* (“Japanese painting”) style³.

Among the hundreds of *emaki* produced mainly from between the twelfth and sixteenth century in Japan, and still existing today, there is a relatively less known set of two scrolls, known as *Mōko Shūrai Ekotoba* (“Illustrated Handscrolls –or Account– of the Mongol Invasions”), dating from the Kamakura period (1185-1333), most probably between the second half of the thirteenth century and the beginning of the fourteenth. Illustrated scrolls, that all constitute invaluable social historical documents for studying the life and customs of medieval Japanese, were commissioned only by people of high rank: the shogun, elite samurai, monks from wealthy temples, and members of the court. This set of scrolls was commissioned by the warrior Takezaki Suenaga (1246-1324 ca.) from Higo province (northern Kyūshū) in order to provide a pictorial account and chronicle his valor and battles against the Mongols during their invasions of Japan of the years 1274 and 1281, and to give praise to his commanders, and the gods, for his success in both campaigns. The *emaki* is divided into three parts: a depiction of Suenaga’s triumphs, scenes in which Suenaga reports his success to the Kamakura government, and illustrations of the battle of 1281. The narrative is occasionally interrupted by accompanying text⁴.

The scrolls have a long and complex history. Known to only a few military families from Kyūshū before becoming widely disseminated in Japan during the Edo period (1615-1868), when a new appreciation for the format of picture scrolls as historical sources supplementing written texts emerged, they changed hands several times. Some figures and objects were added to some scenes sometime during the eighteenth century⁵, and the scrolls were copied repeatedly starting from

² In the East Asian cultural tradition, the handscroll was a major format for painting and writing. The tradition of Japanese illustrated handscrolls, or *emaki* (picture scroll) goes back to the eighth century in Japan and reaches maturity in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries when this becomes a highly developed format for narrative presentation. The form lent itself to all sorts of stories, from religious to secular, including military tales. Handscrolls are about 30 cm high and can extend for more than 10 meters. They are meant to be unrolled horizontally and read in temporally and spatially sequenced segments. For more details on this format see Hideo Okudaira, *Narrative Picture Scrolls (Arts of Japan 5)*, trans. by Elizabeth ten Grotenhuis, (New York: Weatherhill, 1973), 9-11; see also Masako Watanabe, and Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Storytelling in Japanese art* (New York: New Haven: Metropolitan Museum of Art; distributed by Yale University Press, 2011), 28-29.

³ The *emaki* format is perhaps the most representative expression of *yamato-e*, a rather vague term referring to paintings, often done in color, depicting Japanese subject and concerns.

⁴ For a thorough translation of the textual parts of the scrolls, see Thomas Conlan, *In little need of divine intervention: Takezaki Suenaga’s scrolls of the Mongol invasions of Japan (Cornell East Asia series 113)*, (Ithaca: East Asia Program, Cornell University, 2001).

⁵ For example, the representation of an explosive iron shell (*teppō*) was, most probably, added in the mid-eighteenth century. Nevertheless, the existence of these weapons was confirmed both by literary and archaeological evidences. See Thomas Conlan “Myth, Memory and the Scrolls of the Mongol Invasions of

the late eighteenth century. The earliest surviving reproduction dates to 1795, and in it –as in all subsequent versions– we see images of fearsome bearded Mongol warriors, that have been thought to constitute part of the original scrolls. Due to increased interest in them, in 1797 their images were restored as part of two scrolls, and it is in this format that they survive today. However, it seems that the textual passages reflected the state of the scrolls before the addition (or alteration) of images over the centuries. Copies of how he perceived the scrolls to have originally appeared were made also by the painter Fukuda Taka (1795-1854) from Higo province. Fukuda created six copies of the scrolls, and one of these reproductions became widely disseminated. His copies reveal a new sense of respect for the images and the *emaki* format and, according to some scholars, correspond more closely to the written narrative than does the current reconstruction of the original⁶.

The original work was presented to the Meiji emperor by one of the last families who owned it, the Ōyano, in 1890, and is currently stored at the Museum of the Imperial Collections (Tokyo Imperial Palace).

While the research on this topic carried out by Japanese scholars is relatively rich, with several works examining the scrolls' creation and transmission, or their reliability as documentary sources of this war, and the organization of the Mongol army, the only extensive English-language scholarship about the Mongol scrolls, particularly on its historical value, has been carried out by Thomas Conlan who, among many other things, worked for the Japanese Scroll Project at the Bowdoin College Museum of Art, where full digitized scans of the scrolls (all versions), including commentary and translations, are available⁷. The whole *Mōko Shūrai Ekotoba* (images and text) is also included in *Nihon emakimono zenshu*, and the *Nihon emaki taisei* comprehensive *corpus* of Japanese handscrolls⁸.

In the present paper my approach to the study of the Mongol scrolls intends to focus on the issue of representation of the 'other' (*ikai*, or *ikoku*, in this case foreign enemies) in Japan at different times in history. After a brief presentation of the scrolls' main characteristics and long history of transmission and copies, I will first single out a few elements (attributes, and postures) used, in medieval Japan, as conventions to indicate "otherness" (or "strangeness") in visual representations of foreigners who, at the time, were exclusively people from the proximate continent. To my knowledge, Wakabayashi Haruko has been the only scholar who has tried to tackle this issue, presenting and interpreting these early modes and conventions for

Japan", in *Archaisms and Antiquarianism in Korean and Japanese Art*, ed. Elizabeth Lillehoj (Chicago: Center for the Art of East Asia, University of Chicago and Art Media Resources, 2013), 54-73; 62-63.

⁶ Among other things, Fukuda also omitted a large Mongol general, that was out of proportion, in the penultimate scene of the scrolls, for he thought this was a later addition. For this and all other information on the scrolls' copies and restorations, see Conlan, "Myth, Memory", 65-66.

⁷ "Scrolls of the Mongol Invasions of Japan 1274 and 1281", Bowdoin College Museum of Art, accessed May 20, 2020, <http://learn.bowdoin.edu/asian-studies/mongol-invasions/>

⁸ See Ichimatsu Tanaka, "*Heiji monogatari emaki*" ("The Illustrated Tale of Heiji") and "*Mōko shūrai ekotoba*" ("The Mongol Invasions scrolls"), in *Nihon emakimono zenshū* ("Survey of Japanese Handscroll Paintings"), ed. Ichimatsu Tanaka (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1958-1969), 9; Shigemi Komatsu, "*Mōko shūrai ekotoba*", in *Nihon emaki taisei*, ed. Shigemi Komatsu et al. (Tōkyō: Chūō Kōronsha, 1977-1979), 14.

representing otherness, as seen in a series of fourteenth-and-fifteenth century *emaki* paintings, including the Mongol scrolls.

In the original handscroll the appearances of the foreign Mongols were depicted as accurately (or “realistically”) as possible; however, some figures were added later, most probably during the late Edo period, that show exaggerated features and distortions corresponding, in my opinion, not only to the perceptions of Mongols as ruthless invaders that inform the post Yuan (1279-1368) narrative of that invasion, but to new modes of imagining and representing peoples in general, domestic and foreign. I will argue that these new modes reflect the same new language (and shifting cosmologies) brought about in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by the Japanese encounter with new, more “different” –and geographically distant– Others (Europeans), and the resulting need to more sharply differentiate themselves from the old Others (China, or more correctly the Continent). The last chapter will examine in detail this new iconography, and the new set of conventions that emerged in Japan during the Edo period in the representation of foreigners.

2. Patronage and transmission of the *Mōko Shūrai Ekotoba*

The scrolls were commissioned by Takezaki Suenaga, who was a *gokenin*, or vassal, from the old province of Higo (in Kyūshū), of the Kamakura military government (*bakufu*). He was wounded while fighting against the Mongol invaders when they landed in Hakata (northern Kyūshū) the first time, in 1274. For this reason, the Kamakura *bakufu* gave him lands (*jitō shiki*) in Higo province, and a horse. Higo warriors were with him in battle during the second Mongol invasion in 1281, when he was able to capture some enemies before a typhoon destroyed the Mongol ships and saved Japan from this invasion. The gained wealth and influence enabled him to solidify his control over his new lands through the Kaitō shrine where he stored the two copies of the scrolls he had commissioned a group of artists, whose identities are still debated, to create. The people who were involved in producing this work most probably had access to first-hand accounts of this invasion, resulting in a life-like depiction of the Mongol warriors as the foreign enemy. In these scrolls we see an “amalgamation of courtly and provincial painting styles”⁹.

After the political eclipse of Suenaga’s descendants, the scrolls were confiscated from the Kaitō shrine by the Nawa family: since then, they changed hands many times, with images preserved in no clear order and textual passages stored separately from the painted scenes¹⁰. According to one legend, the scrolls were even once dropped into the sea, suffering extensive damage.

⁹ According to some theories, based on the Oyano’s history of the scrolls, court painters Tosa Nagataka and his son Nagaaki created them. In fact, five different painting styles are recognizable in these scrolls. See Yōko Ikeda, “*Mōko Shūrai Ekotoba* gamen kōsei no tokushitsu” (“The Pictorial Construction of *Mōko Shūrai Ekotoba*”), *Nagoya zōkei daigaku kiyō* (“Bulletin, Nagoya Zokei University of Art and Design”) 20 (2014): 31.

¹⁰ For a summary of the transmission of these scrolls through the various families over the centuries, see Conlan, “Myth, Memory”, 56-58, 73.

Recent scholarship has brought to attention how some scenes have been significantly altered (sometimes to better reflect textual sources, as in the case of the famous exploding shell, or *teppō*), most probably in the mid-eighteenth century, with objects, a tree, and images of Mongol soldiers drawn in the scrolls¹¹.

The most widely used Japanese source on the invasions appears to have been the *Hachiman gudōkun*, surely the most famous Hachiman *engi* (Japanese source dedicated to the miraculous activities of the Hachiman deity) from the post-Mongol invasions, written in the late thirteenth to early fourteenth centuries. Its author is believed to have been closely associated with the Iwashimizu Hachiman shrine and its involvement in the war efforts against the Mongols¹².

3. Representation of the Mongols as foreign enemies: the original scrolls and the added images



Figure 1. *Mōko Shūrai Ekotoba*, detail: Suenaga and escaping Mongols. Handscroll, ink and color on paper. Kamakura period. Source: Wikimedia Commons.



Figure 1a. Digitally altered version of the *Mōko Shūrai Ekotoba*, ink and color on paper, 21st cent. Source: “Scrolls of the Mongol Invasions of Japan 1274 and 1281”, Bowdoin College Museum of Art. <http://learn.bowdoin.edu/asian-studies/mongol-invasions/>

¹¹ Whoever altered the scrolls did not always understand the unfolding of the visual narrative. See Conlan, “Myth, Memory”, 64.

¹² Haruko Wakabayashi, “The Mongol Invasion and the Making of Iconography of Foreign Enemies: the case of *Shikaumi jinjia engi*”, in *Tools of Culture: Japan’s Cultural, Intellectual, Medical, and Technological Contacts in East Asia, 1000s-1500s*, ed. Andrew Edmund Goble, Kenneth R. Robinson and Haruko Wakabayashi (Ann Arbor: Association for Asian Studies, 2009), 107.

The Mongol Scrolls represent an invaluable pictorial account of the invasions, with scenes of battle on land and sea. They depict the tactics, the armor and the facial features of the invaders. In the first scroll we see Mongols on foot, portrayed in a variety of skin colors and facial types reflecting the multi-ethnic components of their population¹³, mostly in keeping with the description of the *Hachiman gudōkun*, and differing from some of the men on the elaborately decorated Mongol ship of the second scroll. They wear a heavy garment (not a piece of armor) and a distinctive helmet with a fur-like decoration on the sides, and a featherlike ornament on the top (fig. 1). In other terms, the artists tried to represent their appearances as accurately as possible; some of the Mongol soldiers looked ultimately not too different from the Japanese themselves. This trait was in keeping with the type of detailed realism seen on handscrolls produced during the Kamakura period (1185-1333).

In her detailed study on a fourteenth-century painting known as *Shikaumi jinjia engi*, that depicts the legendary conquest of the Three Kingdoms of Korea by empress Jingū in the third century, Wakabayashi Haruko finds that the Korean enemy warriors depicted in the scrolls are strikingly similar to the Mongol troops who invaded Japan in the late thirteenth century, as in both paintings they are depicted “accurately” as humans, or foreign soldiers¹⁴. This is very different from what we see in other *Hachiman engi* scrolls (like the later *Hachiman engi-e* produced in Central Japan) where foreign enemies were disfigured into demonic figures. Wakabayashi suggests that this direct confrontation with vivid images of foreign soldiers the Japanese experienced in Kyūshū during the Mongol invasions led to the construction of an iconographic tradition of “foreign aggressors” that had never been visualized before, and to create timeless images –almost fixed icons– for depicting them, against a backdrop featuring the power of the military god Hachiman enshrined in the temple¹⁵. In this respect, she points out the significance of the production and transmission site, Kyūshū, where the alien aggressors were first met (and actual battles took place), and where their imagery was first produced, and then transmitted to the capital¹⁶.

And yet, in these scenes so “realistically” depicted, we can single out a few specific elements that were aimed at highlighting the “foreignness” of the figures portrayed. An interesting study on the historical and documentary value (especially from the point of view of the Mongol army and its organization, or type of combat) of the original *Mōko Shūrai Ekotoba* scrolls, published by Shimizu Hisao in 1991, points out the detail of a particular type of uniquely shaped short bow many of the Mongol soldiers depicted in some scenes hold in their hands. As the author

¹³ The Mongols who invaded Japan were a combined force consisting of Mongols, Chinese, and Koreans. See Wakabayashi, “The Mongol Invasion”, 131.

¹⁴ Takezaki Suenaga himself laconically refers to the Mongols as “rebels”, or “foreign pirates”, never to their barbarity in his comments. See Hisao Shimizu, “*Mōko shūrai ekotoba* no rekishi shiryō to shite no kachi: Yumi no keitai o megutte”, *Hosei shigaku* (“Journal of Hosei Historical Society”) 43, no.3 (1991): 6.

¹⁵ Wakabayashi, “The Mongol Invasion”, 117-122

¹⁶ However, as Wakabayashi notes with regard to illustrated *Hachiman engi* of slightly later periods (in which the standard codes for foreignness came to be more widely applied), “this image of the Mongols will be transformed into the conventional Japanese image of the foreign other, in a process of gradual demonization of alien enemies”. This, according to the author, happened especially when the center of the production of these scrolls shifted from Kyūshū to Central Japan, and as the experience of the battle became an event of the remote past. See Wakabayashi, “The Mongol Invasion”, 133.

explains, the Japanese used a different type of bow, the so-called longbow. Long bows were used as well by the Mongols, but their main weapons were the Song-style recurve short bows with a grip in the middle, typically associated to the nomadic people of Asia¹⁷. However, as the scrolls' main purpose was to celebrate the military exploits of Takezaki Suenaga against the Mongols rather than being an historically accurate record of that battle¹⁸, of the Mongols and their weapons, the bows depicted in the *Mōko Shūrai Ekotoba* may indeed be related to a Buddhist iconographic tradition of depicting “foreignness”. To prove this point Shimizu analyzes and compares a series of *emaki* produced between the end of the Heian period (794-1185) and the Muromachi period (1336-1573), in which the short bow is not only mentioned in the textual passages but depicted in some scenes, and always associated with particular personages or situations related to foreign lands or the otherworld.



Figure 2. Scene from the *Taishokan*, handscroll, ink and color on paper, 17th cent. (Edo period). Source: Masako Watanabe. *Storytelling in Japanese Art* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, and Yale University Press, 2011), 62.

In his first example, the *Kibi Daijin Nittō emaki*, for instance, this type of recurve short bow is held by a Tang official in China¹⁹. From the *Jigoku zoshi* (“Hell scrolls”) comes, instead, an image of Bishamonten holding a similar bow²⁰. To these, I could add many more examples, including an *emaki*, in three scrolls,

¹⁷ The Emishi from present-day Hokkaido, portrayed in the *Kiyomizudera engi emaki* have armors and weapons very similar to those portrayed in the Mongol scrolls. Shimizu, “Mōko shūrai ekotoba no rekishi”, 28.

¹⁸ Because Takezaki Suenaga commissioned this work to commemorate his courageous deeds in this war, the paintings focus on him rather than on the whole offensive. For this reason, these scrolls were also known under the title of *Takezaki Suenaga ekotoba*. See Shimizu, “Mōko shūrai ekotoba no rekishi”, 28; Okudaira, *Narrative Picture Scrolls*, 104.

¹⁹ Shimizu, “Mōko shūrai ekotoba no rekishi”, fig. 3 on p. 14.

²⁰ Shimizu, “Mōko shūrai ekotoba no rekishi”, fig. 4 on p. 18.

produced as late as the Edo period, known as the *Taishokan* (“The Great Woven Cap”): several demonic figures in a battle scene hold the same type of bow (fig. 2)²¹. Similarly, in a scene from the fourteenth-century *Jin’ōji engi emaki* (“Illustrated Scroll of the History of Jin’ōji Temple”)²² we see Hōshō Gongen with a recurve short bow in his hand, appearing as an armed guardian atop a pine tree, while one of En no Gyoja’s servant-demons kneels before him in adoration (fig. 3 and fig. 3a)²³.



Figure 3. Scene from *Jin’ōji engi emaki*, ink and color on paper, 14th century. Source: Masako Watanabe. *Storytelling in Japanese Art* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, and Yale University Press, 2011), 14.

Personages and situations the short bow appears to be associated with in the various *emaki* can be, more systematically, grouped into three main categories: foreign lands (i.e. China, or the continent), otherworldly creatures and realms (i.e. the Dragon King’s), and Buddhist deities connected to the underworld (i.e. Hells). In other terms, the presence of the recurve short bow in the hands of Mongol soldiers, more than being a faithful description of the weapons they used in reality, most probably have –instead– the meaning of a visual marker, or pictorial convention, widely used in medieval Japanese art as a symbol to represent people from foreign lands or the otherworld²⁴.

²¹ Watanabe, *Storytelling*, 61.

²² This scroll was also known as the *Kōnin Shōnin eden emaki* (“Illustrated Biography of the Eminent Monk Kōnin”).

²³ Watanabe, *Storytelling*, fig. 7 on p. 14.

²⁴ This association is evident not only on *emaki* painting, but also on paintings on folding screens (*byōbu*), as we see in a later example, attributed to the Kano school. For an example of a much later *emaki*, from the eighteenth century, attributed to the Kano school, see Shimizu, “Mōko shūrai ekotoba no rekishi”, 30.



Figure 3a. detail of figure 3. Source: Miyeko Murase. *Japanese Art. Selections from the Mary and Jackson Burke Collection* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1975), 80, fig. 24.

Shimizu identifies in religious painting, particularly in portrayals of esoteric deities, like the Myōō kings, the source of this association between the short bow and the representation of “foreign” or “otherworldly” atmosphere. In fact, the above-mentioned figures of Bishamonten (from the *Jigoku zoshi*) and Hōshō Gongen (from the *Jin’ōji engi emaki*, Fig. 3a and 3b) both hold the same type of short bow as seen in the hands of similar Buddhist deities depicted in other formats (i.e. hanging scrolls) of religious painting (see, for instance, the late-eleventh century painting of Gozanze Myōō from the Kiburiji temple in Gifu prefecture, Fig. 4)²⁵. The interrelation between Buddhist painting and *emaki* has been stressed by many authors, most particularly in regard to the representation of “foreign

²⁵ Shimizu quotes more examples, like a thirteenth-century painting of Kongō Yasha, from the Daigoji temple in Kyoto, and a Kaiyōsei (Hachiman Daibōsatsu?) painting from the second half of the Heian period (now stored in the New York Public Library). In particular, he notes, the short bows held by the deities he shows in figs. 17 and 18, with two nocks on the tip of their upper edge, are very similar to the Yuan soldiers’ bows we see in the Mongol scrolls. See Shimizu, “Mōko shūrai ekotoba no rekishi”, 24-25.

flavor” in the scenes²⁶. The depiction of armour in illustrated handscrolls, for instance, is based on the clothing of minor deities (like *devas*, or guardians) we see portrayed in Buddhist sculpture and painting. In Japanese painting and sculpture of the medieval period, that type of armor came to be associated with foreign people and lands, as the deities wearing it were mostly related to Esoteric Buddhism, that had incorporated Hindu deities in its pantheon, hence had to be represented with strong foreign features.



Figure 4. Gozanze Myōō, Kiburiji Temple (Gifu), hanging scroll, ink and color on silk, 11th century. Source: Wikipedia.

This certainly suggests that icons symbolizing “foreignness” or “otherness” that predate the Mongol invasions were used to depict the Mongols in the *Mōko Shūrai Ekotoba*²⁷. The recurve short bow element, found in earlier Buddhist paintings of esoteric deities, seemed an efficacious way to represent, or accentuate, these

²⁶ The inspiration for the “Chinese atmosphere” of the *Kibi Daijin Nittō emaki*, also, could have come from Buddhist narrative painting decorating Heian temples, or from secular painting in the *kara-e* style. See Shimizu, “Mōko shūrai ekotoba no rekishi”, 24; 26; 30.

²⁷ These same artistic conventions are used to represent the Korean forces in the legendary battle illustrated in the *Shikaumi jinjia engi-e*. See Wakabayashi, “The Mongol Invasion”, 121.

“other/different worlds” (*ikai*); therefore, it was introduced also into *emaki* painting where it came to be codified. The otherworldly atmosphere depicted in painting is often associated with “foreign lands”, that in medieval Japan experience were essentially the Tang world (China, or –more properly– “the continent”)²⁸. At the time, the dominant Japanese cosmology was one of “Three Realms” (*sangoku*): Our land (*Honchō*), China (*Shintan* or *Kara*), and “India” (*Tenjiku*), where Tenjiku was conceived more like “the land of the Buddha”, rather than geographical India²⁹. This cosmological frame derived from Buddhist cosmologies, where Kara was *ikoku*, the “other country”, while Tenjiku, by contrast, was part of *ikai*, “the other world”, inhabited by buddhas and demons alike³⁰.

Besides the short bow, how else was this Buddhist influence incorporated in the *Mōko Shūrai Ekotoba*? One of the most famous scenes of the scroll, illustrated in all history textbooks in Japan and representing an episode from the Bun’ei battle of October 19, 1274 when Suenaga and four companions met a detachment of Mongol troops west of Hakata in Kyūshū, shows three Mongol soldiers portrayed in what we may consider an “unnatural” posture and demeanor (Fig. 1). They have a fierce, foreign look, their body bent forward while drawing the bow. In fact, from looking at their faces only, it is impossible to determine whether they were Mongols or Koreans, or Chinese, and they look quite similar to the Japanese themselves, as it should be. The strange, exaggerated, posture of two of these soldiers can be compared with statues of guardians placed at the entrance of Buddhist temples from the Heian and Kamakura periods. The warrior at the bottom (fig. 5) is bending his bust forward while he draws the arrow, a radically different posture from what we see in traditional Japanese archery (as in the West). Moreover, the apparently unexplainable right-hand gesture of another warrior (fig. 5, above, right) is almost identical, as is his posture, to some portrayals of guardian statues seen at the entrance of Buddhist temples (fig. 6)³¹.

Evidently, the painter of these Mongol scrolls had a profound knowledge of Buddhist statuary and painting and based himself on some of their conventions to portray these soldiers. Rather than being a realistic depiction of the Mongol soldiers, the goal of these images was more to express that “feeling” (or atmosphere) of “strangeness” as the war was fought against enemies coming from a foreign land, for the first time depicted on Japanese soil.

²⁸ Of course, the depiction of the “Chinese” (or Tang) reality (peoples and landscape) we see in many Japanese paintings of the medieval period was not a realistic and objective one, but an embellished (or exaggerated), stratified construction of Japanese artistic and popular imagination, based either on Chinese-style painting (*kara-e*) or on hearsay (from those few Japanese who had actually set foot in China).

²⁹ Ronald Toby, *Engaging the Other: ‘Japan’ and its Alter Egos, 1550-1850* (Brill’s Japanese Studies Library 65) (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2019), 108. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004393516>

³⁰ In her poignant study on the iconography of Buddhist hells and its foreign symbolism, Wakabayashi Haruko points out how the Japanese, from a very early stage, used images (including weapons and tools) borrowed from *ikoku* (“other/foreign country”) in order to illustrate *ikai* (“the other world”). These Japanese methods or codes to express foreignness were fully developed by the twelfth century. See Haruko Wakabayashi, “Hell Illustrated: A Visual Image of *Ikai* that Came from *Ikoku*.”, in *Practicing the Afterlife: Perspectives from Japan*, ed. Susanne Formanek and William R. LaFleur (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2004), 309-14

³¹ Shimizu, “*Mōko shūrai ekotoba no rekishi*”, 26-27.



Figure 5. *Mōko shūrai ekotoba*, the Bun'ei battle (detail of fig. 1): three Mongol soldiers. Handscroll, ink and color on paper, Kamakura period. Source: Wikimedia Commons



Figure 6. Niō guardian, wood, with paint, Nandaimon (Great South Gate), Tōdaiji, 1203. Source: Digital Journal. <http://www.digitaljournal.com/image/144187>

However, it is important to note here that the three Mongol soldiers just analyzed and compared, placed near the exploding *teppō* in the most famous scene representing Suenaga falling off his horse in front of Mongol warriors (fig. 5), were depicted in a definitely different manner than the original, surrounding, bland-looking compatriots: larger in size, they are characterized by exaggerated –almost caricatural– features (unkempt beards, strange helmets, prominent black boots, and so on). The art historian Matsumoto Aya has tried to explain how these three figures were in fact later painted into the scroll, most probably in the mid-eighteenth century: they appear clearly drawn on top of the older figures and onto a seam where two scroll segments had been pasted together, combining what should have been two scenes which are now almost impossible to reconstruct in their original form³². A twenty-first-century reconstruction of the Mongol scrolls, that has a different ordering of the scene, reveals how it might be changed (fig. 1a)³³.

Besides the three fierce grimacing Mongol warriors, some roughly drawn arrows, a pine tree by Suenaga's horse, and the depiction of an exploding shell (*teppō*) were also added at the same time. Careful analysis of an arrow above the head of a Mongol warrior reveals that only the latter half of the shaft was drawn carefully. This arrow was retouched when two distinct pages were glued together. As Conlan, who viewed the original version of this scene, observes, also the rough outline brushstrokes, and the low quality of the ink all these additions were drawn with, differ from the surrounding figures. More tellingly, the paper surrounding these added images is smudged from the black ink of inferior quality, especially around the three Mongols' boots (although this is not really discernible in photographs of the scrolls)³⁴.

Although there are no conclusive proofs that these images were added in the mid-eighteenth century, several facts and considerations point into this direction. Besides the physical evidence presented in the previous paragraph, circumstantial evidence corroborates that the *teppō* of this altered scene, for instance, was added to the scrolls after 1709. In this respect, we have to remember that the Ōyano family was the last owner of the scrolls before they were committed to the Museum of the Imperial Collections at the end of the nineteenth century. While the scrolls were in their possession, they did not allow anyone to look at their images and textual passages, which had deteriorated over time and were preserved in no clear order. However, varied sources confirm that Arai Hakuseki (1657-1752) borrowed the scrolls early in the eighteenth century, as he referred to them in a treatise on weaponry he wrote in 1709, the *Honchō gunki kō* ("Thoughts on Japanese Military Equipment"), that contains the oldest surviving description of the scrolls. Even though his work, whose compilation relied upon visual sources to supplement written accounts, contains detailed descriptions of projectiles, he does not mention

³² Aya Matsumoto, "Mōko shūrai ekotoba ni tsuite no ichikōsatsu– arata na mondaiten o kuwaete" ("Analysis of the Mongol Invasions Scrolls– Reflection on a New Problem"), in *Emaki – Mōko shūrai ekotoba, Eshi no soshi, Kitano Tenjin engi* (Exhibition catalogue) (Tokyo: Sannomaru Shoōzōkan, 1994), 62-67.

³³ Noteworthy is the fact that, while Suenaga lead the charge in the original, in this twenty-first-century version his brother-in-law Mii Saburō Sukenaga leads instead.

³⁴ The same exaggerated features, we find in another couple of Mongols, larger in size, depicted in the second scroll. See Conlan, "Myth, Memory", 64; 70.

to have seen an image of the *teppō* in the Mongol scrolls³⁵. Thus, most likely, no image of an exploding shell existed when he viewed the scrolls. As we have mentioned, close inspection of the scrolls also seems to confirm that the *teppō* was added later, for it was drawn with rough brushstrokes, certainly in a bold and evocative manner, but in contrast to the technical skill of the original thirteenth-century artwork. Furthermore, the ink used to draw the *teppō* has smudged just as it has around the added Mongol figures.

It is difficult to know what happened to the Mongol Scrolls from 1709 until 1795, when the oldest surviving copy was created. According to Conlan, who quotes Kawazoe Shōji, in the mid-eighteenth century the Tsuda family of northern Kyūshū had access to the Mongol Scrolls and related textual sources that described *teppō* and barbaric Mongols. It seems likely that one, or more members, of the Tsuda house added the images of the exploding *teppō* and fierce-looking Mongols while compiling their *Sankō Mōko nyūkōki* (“A Mongol Invasions Chronicles Reference”), a 5 volumes corpus of sources regarding the invasions, published in 1758, and based upon the *Ishō Nihon den* and the *Hachiman gudōkun*³⁶.

According to Matsumoto Aya, the pine tree drawn by the legs of Suenaga’s horse provides further evidence that this scene was altered in the mid-eighteenth century, rather than in 1790s, when a more sophisticated grasp of the narrative already existed and the oldest copy was made. Matsumoto has shown that this tree represents another addition to the scene where Suenaga confronts three Mongols and their *teppō*. Whoever altered the Mongol Scrolls did not understand the unfolding of the visual narrative, for pine trees only appear in what are now known to be the first scenes of the scroll, where Japanese forces mass in a wood. Once they launch an attack against the Mongols, however, no trees are evident. In all subsequent versions, images of grimacing bearded Mongols, a pine tree by Suenaga’s wounded horse, and an exploding *teppō* appear.

It has been argued that this new mode of representing the Mongols, in a manner that seems to exemplify the stereotypical characteristics of the “barbaric” aggressor, was related to a new perception of Mongol ruthlessness that became prominent after the Yuan dynasty (1279-1368) and is reflected in the vivid accounts of Mongol cruelty we read in the Chinese “official” dynastic histories, like the *Yuanshi* (“History of the Yuan Dynasty”), compiled approximately a century after the invasions, during the succeeding Ming dynasty (1368-1644) whose rulers were biased against the Mongols, hence had all the interest in emphasizing their brutality³⁷.

³⁵ Interestingly, even the textual passages of the scrolls, that received wider dissemination in the nineteenth century and most probably reflected the original state of the artwork, do not mention the word *teppō*, while we know that exploding shells were mentioned in the *Yuanshi* and the *Hachiman gudōkun*. See Conlan, “Myth, Memory”, 62-63

³⁶ Shōji Kawazoe, *Mōko shūrai kenkyū shiron* (“Analysis of the Research Concerning the Mongol invasions”) (Tōkyo: Yūzankaku, 1977), 67-71, 98, quoted in Conlan, “Myth, Memory”, 64. See also Matsumoto, “*Mōko shūrai ekotoba* ni suite no ichikōsatsu”, 62-77.

³⁷ Japanese treatises of history, like the *Ishō Nihon den* (“Treatise on Japan under Different Titles”), written in 1537, or the *Gyōjū gaigen* (“General Remarks on Mounted Defenses”) by Motoori Norinaga (1730-1801) refers almost exclusively to the *Yuanshi* to reconstruct the Mongol invasions of Japan. Another source was the Korean dynastic history *Goryeosa* (“History of the Goryeo Period”). See Conlan, “Myth, Memory”, 62; 71.

Although this explanation holds certainly true, I shall argue that the new manner to represent the foreign “enemies”, exemplified by the figures in the scroll added during the Edo period, showing somehow exaggerated features and distortions, also reflects the same new language and conception of the world brought about in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by the Japanese encounter with more “different” Others (Europeans).

4. Representations of Otherness during the Edo period (1615-1868)

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, during the so-called “age of encounter”, Japanese and Europeans (primarily Portuguese merchants, military and religious adventurers) met each other for the first time, initially in the waters of Southeast Asia, and later in the Japanese archipelago itself. This led to a variety of new modes of visual imaging and representing of peoples –domestic and foreign. In the sixteenth century the Jesuit order, starting with Francisco Javier himself, had begun to proselytize in Japan, establishing a church in Kyoto in 1560, thus making an alien presence in the very center of Japanese cultural production a vivid reality: Japanese artist soon began to represent these new “aliens” and to learn from their modes of representation.

Among the earliest representations of these “Southern Barbarians” (*nanban*), there is a form of vibrant genre paintings on large format folding screens (*byōbu*) known as *nanban byōbu*, depicting foreigners of all colors arriving in Japanese ports and walking in the streets of Japanese inland towns (Figs. 7 and 7a)³⁸. As Ronald Toby argues in his recent study on Japan and the Other in the pre-modern era, “the very presence of the new foreigners led not only to a refinement of the distinctions among the many varieties of Others, but also to a process of re-differentiating a collective “Japanese” identity from proximate Others, those felt most uncomfortably similar”³⁹.

Prior to the second half of the sixteenth century, the real world for the Japanese consisted essentially of two possible identities: people of “Our Land” (*Honchō*), and people from “China” (*Shintan* or *Kara*, the continent, including Korea)⁴⁰. Japan’s most significant Other (China), and other Others (Koreans, Mongols, etc.) from the continent had reached the archipelago from earliest times, as Japanese had visited foreign lands. However, the Others of Japanese representation were marked all as “Chinese” and, most importantly, almost always represented as being

³⁸ This type of genre painting flourished from the late sixteenth to the early seventeenth century. For an introduction to Nanban art and culture, see the authors listed in Toby, *Engaging the Other*, 78. Japanese adopted “Nanban” clothing styles, even masquerading as “Nanban-jin” in festivals and plays. This craze for Nanban fashion persisted for decades, especially in Kyoto.

³⁹ In fact, this newly discovered world was promptly organized and rationalized, as part of an encyclopedic movement that had roots in late sixteenth century China, and had spread broadly in East Asia, including Japan.

⁴⁰ This Japanese cosmological frame was known as *sangoku* (“three realms”). The third realm was *Tenjiku*, often rendered as “India”, but conceived as what lay beyond *Kara*. In the early modern era in Japan *Tenjiku* will be supplanted by “the West”, as a distant Other. It is difficult to find iconographic markers in Japanese painting and sculpture that clearly distinguish a “Korean” from a “Chinese” before the second decade of the seventeenth century. See Toby, *Engaging the Other*, 76.

offshore rather than in Japanese settings⁴¹. The major exceptions to this generalization were either portrayals of Other as invaders, or tributaries, or portraits of Chinese –or Indian– Buddhist monks on the other. One noteworthy exception, of course, are the Mongol scrolls of the late thirteenth century representing the Mongol invasions, object of this study.



Figure 7 (left) and 7a (right). Details from a *Nanban byōbu*, attributed to Kano Naizen, folding screen, color and gold leaf on paper, late 16th-early 17th cent. Source: Wikimedia Commons

All this changed in the age of encounter between Japan and Europe when, for the first time, in the late sixteenth century, Japanese artists started representing foreigners, initially only the radically different “Southern Barbarians” (*Nanban*, signifying mainly Portuguese and Spanish, who brought with them racially diverse crews) in the Japanese urban landscape. To put it in Toby’s words, “Other was no longer more or less safely ‘out there’ but invasively ‘here’”⁴².

At the same time, Koreans and other more familiar, geographically closer Others, previously almost indistinct within the *sangoku* cosmology, were represented in a differentiated –and visible– form in Japanese art for the first time. Another stimulus into this direction was the invasion of the Korean peninsula by Toyotomi Hideyoshi’s army in the 1590s, and the resulting confrontation with “Korean” difference. As we have seen in the previous chapters of this study, Japanese iconographies of Otherness had developed, over centuries, a set of markers for the other peoples of continental northeast Asia. In the “age of encounter”, the discovery of new Others became the catalyst for further articulation of those codes. However, it was not until the middle of the seventeenth century that

⁴¹ Generally speaking, foreigners, with a few rare exceptions, were portrayed only abroad before the sixteenth century, in China or India, and not in Japanese settings.

⁴² Toby, *Engaging the Other*, 112-114. Toby also notes that portraits of Buddhist monks had generally no “setting”, so they were decontextualized.

Japanese elaborated an appropriate set of visual codes to distinguish, for instance, “Koreans” from “Chinese”⁴³, or Mongols, as at the beginning, artists rather assembled various explicit markers (like frilled collars, hats, shoes or boots) taken from the portrayal of new Others (the Iberians) in their attempts to represent other East Asian peoples as distinct from Chinese, with almost comic (or caricatural) results at times.

With the wave of xenophobia that characterized the first half of the seventeenth century, and consequent disappearance of the Iberians⁴⁴ (also from Japanese art) the space that the new Others had made for themselves in the Japanese landscape and representational realm was filled by the old, more familiar Others of the continent and archipelago (primarily Korea and Ryūkyū, but also Manchu China and the Mongols)⁴⁵.

At least by the early 1620s, Kyoto artists filled the urban landscape with members of the Korean embassies parading in the streets of the city. The Koreans we see depicted, for instance, in the Burke *rakuchū rakugai* screens⁴⁶ are easily distinguishable from the Japanese around them. At that time, in the absence of more specific pictorial codes for representing Koreans (or other East Asians), the artists have used a combination of markers for Chinese and Nanban, in particular feathered hats, frilled costumes, boots, very wide trousers, and the like. Through this incorporation of Iberian costume and role, the old Others, now represented in Japanese settings, reminded viewers of the intrusive new Others, feeding fear, along with fascination and excitement. The Iberian intrusion created in Japan a sense of vulnerability to the foreign, that undermined the evocative power of the god Hachiman, and the “divine wind” (*kamikaze*) that, according to a cherished legend, had twice protected Japan from the Mongol aggression.

5. The Hairy Barbarians

The figures of Mongol warriors added over the original Mongol scrolls during the Edo period are larger than the surrounding soldiers, and appear heavily bearded, wearing furred hats and black boots (fig. 5)⁴⁷. The same can be said of the Mongol soldiers painted in the eighteenth-century copy of

⁴³ As for Koreans, it was only in the second half of the seventeenth century that Japanese artists began to elaborate artistic conventions specific to their representation, displaying more explicit documentary character, although clothing and hairstyle, and regalia were often intentionally exaggerated. See Toby, *Engaging the Others*, 79.

⁴⁴ After implementing severe restrictions on their secular activities, and very strict proscriptions on Christianity, Portuguese were expelled entirely in 1639.

⁴⁵ This is also suggested by the appellative *Tojin*. See Toby, *Engaging the Others*, 118.

⁴⁶ For a detailed presentation of the structure of one of such screens, see Miyeko Murase, *Japanese Art. Selections from the Mary and Jackson Burke Collection* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1975), 154-59. Scenes are evocative of the Nanban-screens of a few decades before, and strikingly different from the Japanese urban landscapes, totally devoid of foreign presence, that preceded the Iberian encounter.

⁴⁷ On the symbolic meaning of black in early Edo Japan, see Hideo Kuroda, *Kyōkai no chūsei, shōchō no chūsei* (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1986).

the scroll now viewable in high resolution scan in the digital archives of Kyūshū University (fig. 8)⁴⁸.



Figure 8. *Mōko shūrai ekotoba*: the Bun'ei battle, 18th century copy of the original handscroll. Source: Kyūshū University Digital Archives.

https://web.archive.org/web/20131031190626/http://record.museum.kyushu-u.ac.jp/mouko/e_04.html

The notion, and the epithet, of “hairy barbarian” as one of the many Japanese pejoratives for foreigners, later used to signify “Euro-Americans”⁴⁹, emerged in a cultural context connected, ironically, to neighboring peoples of East Asia, particularly Koreans and Chinese. Therefore, the representation of difference by reference to hair was established in East Asia long before the arrival of the Iberians. Although the Tenjikujin as “Southern Barbarians” were often pictured as heavily bearded in the so-called Nanban art, hirsuteness was not a major marker for portraying Europeans, at least not initially.

In fact, the term used in the Edo period, *ketōjin*, literally means “hairy Chinese” (from *ke*, “hair”, and *tō*, which is one of the Japanese pronunciations of the Chinese character for the Tang dynasty –618-907 AD– that had become a generic Japanese term for “China” and, by extension, for the continent, long before the seventeenth century)⁵⁰.

As we have seen, the encounter with Europeans and their new Otherness in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries fundamentally challenged the earlier *sangoku* (“tree realms”) cosmological frame, that was replaced by a cosmology of “myriad

⁴⁸ Images available in “Mōko shūrai ekotoba”, Kyūshū University Digital Archives, accessed May 19, 2002, <https://web.archive.org/web/20131019155043/http://record.museum.kyushu-u.ac.jp/mouko/index.html>

⁴⁹ Widely used dictionaries like *Kenkyūsha's New Japanese-English Dictionary* and Morohashi Tetsuji's dictionary both define *ketōjin* as “a white person, a Westerner” (Kenkyūsha), or “a deprecativ term for foreigners, so called because they are hairy”. See Tetsuji Morohashi, ed., *Dai Kan-Wa jiten* (Tokyo: Taishūkan, 1955-1960), 6: 816.

⁵⁰ The earliest written example of the term is found in the script for a puppet play (*jōruri*) of 1665. The term *ketōjin/ketō* did not refer to Europeans until at least the late eighteenth century. See Toby, *Engaging the Other*, 204; 218.

realms” (*bankoku*). In this profoundly altered reality, the re-affirmation and differentiation of Japanese ethnic and cultural identity against all “myriad realms” became more than ever a necessity. But why the Japanese produced this representation of otherness through difference in hairiness at that particular historical moment?

While portraits of emperors, male courtiers, shoguns and samurai, from the late Heian period to the beginning of the seventeenth century, usually depicted their subjects with beards and moustaches, this was not the case for members of the court and military aristocracy after the 1630s, when facial hair had come to be viewed as a sign of resistance to authority. During the Tokugawa –or Edo– period, more precisely from the seventeenth century to the mid-nineteenth, most Japanese adult males were required to shave the center of their heads, leaving the sides long, and were prohibited from wearing facial hair⁵¹. Similarly –and ironically– the Manchu rulers of China during the Qing dynasty, too, imposed constraints on male hairstyles requiring Chinese men to shave their foreheads, and grow a braid down the back, signaling with their bodies their submission to the Qing rule. By contrast, the adult male practice of Chosŏn Korea prescribed to keep both hair and beard, according to the tenets of the Confucian *Classic of Filial Piety*. It was precisely at this moment, and because of these tonsorial prescriptions and changes, that the epithet and notion of the “hairy barbarian” emerged⁵².



Figure 9. Hishikawa Moronobu, *Korean Embassy Procession*, woodblock print, 1682.
Source: Art Institute Chicago. <https://www.artic.edu/artworks/19055/korean-embassy-parade>

Therefore, in the representation of Other, hair became increasingly a marker of difference and distinction, in sharp contrast with much less hirsute Japanese. In early-seventeenth-century representations of Korean, Chinese, and other Asian visitors to Japan, the iconographic markers of alterity still focused on clothing (and headwear) rather than on physical characteristics. However, already at mid-century, or soon after, with the beginning of this sort of Japanese “tonsorial castration”, we can see an increasing emphasis on foreign beards and hairy eyebrows, but also

⁵¹ These prescriptions were articulated from at least the Genna era (1615-1623). Toby, 211.

⁵² As Toby (226) points out, before the early Edo period, almost all adult Japanese males always wore *eboshi* (court caps) that differed according to status and occupation. By the seventeenth century, however, Japanese men no longer wore *eboshi* and so hair became a visible sign.

foreign hats in contrast to bareheaded Japanese (fig. 9)⁵³. By the mid-eighteenth century, hirsuteness becomes undoubtedly one of the major iconographic codes for representing otherness in Japan: not only full heads of hair and beards, but also fur in their garments. These, too, are the markers we see in the figures of Mongols later added to the original Mongol scrolls and, of course, similar hairy Mongol soldiers appear in the copies produced during the final years of the Edo period, like one of the six reproductions of the scrolls made by Fukuda Taka, which had become widely disseminated in the nineteenth century, and was included in the famous *Tankaku sōsho* (“Tankaku Series”) compiled by Mizuno Tadanaka (1814-1865), *daimyō* of Kii province (fig. 10).



Figure 10. *Mōko shūrai ekotoba*: the Bun’ei battle (detail). *Tankaku sōsho* copy. Color woodblock print, 1916. Source: “Scrolls of the Mongol Invasions of Japan 1274 and 1281”, Bowdoin College Museum of Art.

<http://learn.bowdoin.edu/asian-studies/mongol-invasions/>

In his *Wakan sansei zue* (“Illustrated Sino-Japanese Encyclopedia”, 1712), which is a domesticated version of the Chinese encyclopedia *Sancai tuhui*, Terajima Ryōan describes and illustrates various activities of daily life of the people of “different/strange lands” (*ikoku*) and “outer barbarian peoples”. His almost decontextualized “Chinese”, as the Tartar example, is shown unshaven, as are the people from Ryūkyū, the Jurchen, and most other foreign types.

⁵³ As early as the first decade of the seventeenth century, bearded faces started to be likened to “northern barbarians”, in what Toby incisively calls “bearding of the Other”. See Toby, 216-17; 228.



Figure 11. *First Westerners in Japan*, by Katsushika Hokusai, 1817. Source: Wikipedia.

6. Conclusion

This study has explored the significance of the handscroll *Mōko Shūrai Ekotoba* as an example of how medieval Japanese perceptions of the foreign Other were constructed after the Mongol invasions.

This set of scrolls is historically notable for many reasons: it is an accurate (although not always historically reliable) illustration of an aggression of Japan by foreign enemies, for the first time depicted on Japanese soil; it established the conventions for the representation of alien enemies, but also used old ones; it disappeared for centuries, suffering extensive damages, until it resurfaced during the Edo –or Tokugawa– period, when a new mode of representing the other had emerged.

The Mongol scrolls were repeatedly copied during the Edo period, and eventually restored –and reconstructed– into what was thought to have been their original form. The new interest that developed at the end of the Edo period towards visual images as sources of the past and important artifacts is connected to the antiquarian tendencies of the time, exemplified by the work of the Tokugawa official Matsudaira Sadanobu (1759-1829), and the copies of the scrolls made by the painter Fukuda Taka (1795-1854). Later in the nineteenth century, also woodblock prints of the Mongol scrolls would become widely disseminated, while *emaki* became treasured, unchanging –and unchanged– objects allowing a glimpse into the past in popular imagination.

I have made frequent references, in the course of this study, to the speculative, and yet very suggestive discussion carried out by Ronald Toby in his recent essay, *Engaging the Other: 'Japan' and its Alter Egos, 1550-1850*, where he explores how the Japanese/Iberian initial encounter, in the middle of the sixteenth century, brought about important changes in Japanese notions of ethnic Self and in their iconography of Others. As the cosmology of “three realms” was quickly displaced by a world of “myriad countries”, Japan had the necessity to formulate new Japanese identities and new distances (expressed in art through a marked “othering” of the Others –their faces, bodies, clothes– as equating hairiness to barbarous foreignness) between itself and the new universe of numerous exotic others, including the old, more proximate “others” of the continent. It is exactly this process we see in display in the later manipulations of the original Mongol scrolls during the Edo period.

It is in the extraordinary that the ‘other’ gains its expression, thus in almost all cases which involve depictions of the “other”, fantasy appears to be an important underlying element. In fact, it is that crystallized fantasy that, while representing the ‘other’ or what is not sanctioned by a society, gives us a view into the very structure of that society.

In the second half of the eighteenth century, Japanese started feeling increasingly pressured by the threat of new “barbarians” (from Europe and America) (fig.11). Noteworthy in the climate of fascination and fear of foreign presence in Japan that characterize the final years of the Tokugawa shogunate, is the *Mōzokki* (“Record of the Mongol Pirates”, 1858) by Ishikawa Masumi. Its text and illustrations follow closely the *Mōko Shūrai Ekotoba*. An interesting addition by Ishikawa, though, is the image of an episode referring to an incident of 1275, when the Kamakura government executed five Mongol ambassadors. The reworking of this theme had for Ishikawa a special value: it was a return to a moment in the past when the gods had saved Japan from an earlier foreign threat (in the *Mōzokki* illustration though, sacred Mount Fuji –visible in the background– has the power to protect Japan from barbarian attack)⁵⁴.

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