Reproduction of the Damaged Area on the Second Panel of the Right-hand Screen of a Pair of Folding Screens of Scenes In and Around Kyoto (Rekihaku A Version)

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Japanese paintings on fragile materials such as paper and silk have been restored periodically to be handed down to today’s generation. While passed down, however, many of them have been not only restored but also given alterations. In the present restoration works, some of such alterations are removed while others are not. Even when it is obvious that some alterations were given, they are sometimes left as they were. This is for fear that removing alterations may significantly change the impression of the work or for a reason that the alterations themselves should be valuable as historical materials.

The present article covers the second panel of the right-hand screen of a pair of Folding Screens of Rekihaku A Version of Scenes In and Around Kyoto (Rakuchu-Rakugai-Zu). The panel has a large trapezoid of damaged area that has been revised so drastically in terms of technique, depiction, and style as to affect the appreciation. However, the alteration to the damaged area was left as it had been when the folding screens were restored in 1997. This study is aimed at reproducing the original image of the damaged area to confirm the possibility of restoring artistry.

The reproduction work started with investigating the original part and copying the present image. Similar contemporary works such as Tohaku Replica in the possession of the Tokyo National Museum, Rekihaku B Version of the National Museum of Japanese History, and Uesugi Version of the Yonezawa City Uesugi Museum were also studied in terms of architectures, entertainment activities, costumes, customs, business practices, and other viewpoints. The study was conducted in a more objective manner, using the author’s experience as a painter to create and reproduce art works.

This reproduced image was completed by drawing and coloring a picture in the copied image of the present version in a way similar to the original painting. The lack of the original design makes it impossible to confirm how similar the reproduction is to the original painting, but it is considered that the reproduction can provide an example that fills an academic gap between the original and present paintings.

Keywords: Replacement, Copy, Reproduction, Funehoko Festival Car, Artistry restoration