

Appendix E

The Tokyo Fūkei Series

E.1 The “Tokyo Views” Series — Kōitsu’s Series of 12 Prints Completed in November, 1935

To date we have been able to confirm that Doi Sadaichi (or Doi Hangaten) published as many as 47 oban, 11 chuban and 3 mitsugiri-sized landscape prints for Tsuchiya Kōitsu during the period January 1933 to July 1941. Among these there are a group of prints that are especially sought-after by Kōitsu collectors – those of the “Tokyo Views” series, also known as the “Tokyo Fūkei” series (東京風景). The prints of this series are of particular interest to collectors because of their scenic beauty, their rarity, and because of the excellent carving and printing skills that went into their production. Prints from this series can be identified by a blue seal placed in the right margin (see Figure E.1), and were undoubtedly printed and published under Tsuchiya Kōitsu’s direct instruction.



Some collectors have suggested that the Tokyo Views series might not have been a *planned* production. They suggest that the formation of the series was possibly an afterthought, with the characteristic blue series seal being placed on a selection of 12 popular prints after the prints had already been on sale for some time. As one collector eloquently wrote:

Figure E.1: Tokyo Fūkei seal

“My current understanding is that the ‘Tokyo Views’ margin seal (indicating a series) was probably applied after all or most of the prints were released. Because the dates of these prints span some years, this suggests that the prints were not originally commissioned and produced as a unified series. Rather, these prints were probably grouped together and marketed as a series, by applying this margin seal to prints already in inventory (still perhaps early edition) or reprinted for this purpose. In other words, to me a Tokyo Views margin seal does not by itself indicate the very earliest edition.”

This reasoning is quite sound, as indeed it is unusual for a series to have been produced over such a long period of time, if it really had been pre-planned. Fortunately, thanks to the efforts of Tosh Doi, we can present here some very persuasive evidences which surely confirms that the Tokyo Views series of prints was planned by Doi Sadaichi in as early as April of 1933.