

Exotic Garden: *A Birds-and-Flowers Screen* and the Export of Japanese Folding Screens in the 17th century

Katsura Washizu, Kyushu National Museum

This paper will focus on the screen of *the Birds-and-Flowers* in Kyushu National Museum, for this singular work seems to be a perfect material for the theme of this symposium, "Global circulation and transformation: Art and textile in East Asia".

In the previous lecture, Dr. Misato Ido has shown us the outline of the history and its development of the birds-and-flower paintings in East Asia, and it is clear that the Kyuhaku screen partially inherits the traditional motifs and style of this subject. However, this birds-and-flower screen also incorporates unusual images and techniques, which make this object remarkably unique. For instance, the image of peacocks gathering close to a strange shaped rock is known to be a classic pattern for depicting this variety of birds in East Asian paintings, and a large phoenix with slit eyes resembles to those which appear frequently in Ming dynasty works. On the other hand, there are images of western origin on the screen, such as the pair of a fox and a stork which were clearly taken from the illustration of *Aesop's Fable*. Even a winged dragon, or probably a griffin, is depicted in the center of the screen. Thus, the iconography of the Western and Asian art coexist in this Kyuhaku screen.

Another distinctive feature of this work is the golden clouds. Some clouds are painted among the tree branches and animals with gold pigment, and others are the cloud-shaped reliefs mounted on the screen surface. While their decorative effect strongly reminds us of the Japanese folding screen paintings, the texture of the cloud reliefs look similar to *guadameci*, leather hangings and wall papers, or *kinkarakawa* (金唐皮), gilded leather which was introduced to Japan in the Edo Period.

Lastly, I will discuss about the possible place of production of the Kyuhaku screen. Although the screen is said to have been once in possession of a family in Normandy, there is no record about its provenance. In recent years, the biombos made in Nueva España and probably Macao in 17th to 18th centuries are receiving attention, and important researches by Sofia Sanabraís, Alexandra Curvelo and Alberto Baena Zapatero have greatly advanced the study of this field. Kyuhaku screen has the similar style to such works, suggesting that the screen might also have been come from one of the regions where the Japanese folding screens were exported to.