The Making of a Mountain: Mount Fuji, Miniature Fujis and the Cultural Narrative of Edo

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INTRODUCTION

The Mountain and the Myth

Mount Fuji—the majestic mountain has been prized since ancient times, particularly as a site of spiritual and cultural significance, and its lofty, snow-capped peak has captured the imagination of Japanese and foreigners alike. Representations and conceptions of the mountain have changed throughout history, from a center of religion and spirituality, to a modern and secular image exploited for commercialization, shaping Mount Fuji into the singular symbol of Japan that it is today.

From early times, Mount Fuji has been an integral part of the Japanese landscape. A famous poem written by Yamabe no Akahito from the Manyōshū, an 8th century poetry collection known for its exaltations of nature, reads:

Since that ancient time
when heaven and earth were sundered,
like a god soaring
in high towering majesty
over Suruga
has stood Fuji’s lofty peak.¹

Poems within the Manyōshū seamlessly weave Mount Fuji’s natural beauty with its spiritual power, and it is this idealization of Fuji that is most common in early representations of the mountain. Within the Manyōshū, however, Mount Fuji was only one of many sacred mountains, and it was only later that the mountain evolved to become a national symbol.² While some claim that the prominence of Mount Fuji itself, as well as its central location within the main island of Japan, has led to a particular affinity for nature that is distinct to the Japanese people, throughout history the mountain has been

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celebrated particularly for its idealized nature, as an artistic, spiritual and cultural ideal, as opposed to merely the natural or geographic space itself.³

At 3,776 meters (12,388 feet), Mount Fuji is the highest mountain in a land of mountains. Mountains account for over 80% of Japan’s landmass, and many of these mountains, such as the Japanese Alps, were created through the collision of the Pacific Ocean crust and the continental crust of Asia. Because Japan is located in the Pacific “Ring of Fire,” many of Japan’s mountains are volcanoes; there are currently 186 volcanoes, sixty of which are active.⁴

Mount Fuji is one of these volcanoes. Fuji itself is thought to have formed in the past 2.6 million years on top of a base that is far older, about 65 million years old. The present-day Mount Fuji is actually a combination of three successive volcanoes. The oldest, Komitake, comprises the bottom, though it was later covered by lava from Ko Fuji (“Old Fuji”). Komitake’s cone still protrudes from the slope of Ko Fuji. Shin Fuji, or “New Fuji,” makes up the top of the volcano as the newest addition to the mountain.

Shin Fuji first became active around 10,000 years ago and, as an active volcano, occasionally smolders or erupts. The fusing and eruptions of these three distinct formations shaped the slope of the mountain and created the conical, tapered form for which Fuji is known. The base of Fuji is about 125 km in circumference, while the crater at the summit has a surface diameter of about 500 meters, and sinks to a depth of 250

³ Earhart, Mount Fuji, 4.
D. T. Suzuki, known for spreading Zen and Eastern philosophy to the West, credits Mount Fuji for the Japanese’s intrinsic “love of nature” that he describes: “Japanese love of Nature…owes much to the presence of Mount Fuji in the middle part of the main island of Japan.”
meters. Although there are eight jagged peaks around the crater, Mount Fuji is often represented with three distinct peaks.

Mount Fuji is an active volcano; while the last eruption from the summit crater occurred over two thousand years ago, there has been activity from the flank since then. The most recent mountainside eruption occurred in 1707 when the volcano produced lava flows from the flank. The Hoei eruption—named after the time period in which it occurred—lasted 16 days and caused damage to immediate downwind areas. It also had more distant impacts, such as respiratory problems from the inhalation of ash for residents of the city Edo (present-day Tokyo), about 100 km east of Fuji.

Despite the mountain’s dominance as a geographic feature, in 2013 Mount Fuji was designated as a cultural—as opposed to a natural—UNESCO Heritage site, named “Fujisan: Sacred Place and Source of Artistic Inspiration.” A former prime minister of Japan, Yasuhiro Nakasone, argued for the mountain’s inclusion as a World Heritage site stating, “Mount Fuji has been not merely a natural object, but…a spiritual home and a source of courage for all Japanese people throughout Japan’s history.” Makoto Motonaka, Agency for Cultural Affairs, also pointed to Mount Fuji’s cultural and symbolic influence over Japan: “Mount Fuji is indeed the most representative symbol of Japan…rooted in the deepest foundations of the uniqueness of the Japanese culture.”

The concept of an idealized nature holds true, particularly in the Edo, or Tokugawa,
period (1603-1868) when images, representations and replications of the famous mountain abounded.

As the city of Edo developed and flourished in the shadow of Fuji’s soaring peak, the mountain became a key image within the city. The city of Edo, built by warlord Tokusawa Ieyasu as a castle town in the late 16th century, became the center of political power within Japan. A system of alternate attendance (*sankin kōtai*), wherein daimyō lords were required to build mansions within the city and leave their families in Edo as they returned to their own home domains for periods of time, assured loyalty to the shogunate. The system also formalized set trade routes and attracted people of various classes—peasants, artisans and merchants, in addition to samurai—to the area, gradually creating a city out of a previously tiny village. The city expanded, spiraling outward from the castle at its center as population increased. By 1700, the population had reached around one million; although three-quarters of the city was devoted to the warrior class and their residents, artisans and merchants, collectively known as *chōnin* or townspeople, made up almost half of the population.10

The Edo period ushered in great change, particularly within the city that became the new capital. The transition from the medieval to the early modern period saw a decline in the popularity of Buddhism, particularly among intellectual circles, replaced by an interest in Neo-Confucianism.11 There was a general trend of secularization, too, as many institutions fell under Tokugawa control. One of the most striking changes, however, was the flourishing of a unique popular culture. The increasing prosperity and

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leisure time of the townspeople allowed them to seek out new forms of popular entertainment. Theater, artistic prints and prose fiction, for example, were common forms of entertainment of this “floating world.”\textsuperscript{12} As Edo soon became a stronghold of political and cultural prowess, visual images and representations of the nearby mountains—particularly Mount Fuji—appeared throughout the city in a variety of mediums.

One particularly intriguing representation that flourished within the city was the construction of miniature mountains, known as *fujizuka* (富士塚). *Fujizuka*, also referred to in this paper as “Fuji replicas” or “miniature Fujis,” were constructed in the mid-to-late Edo period as unique miniature representations of the famous and sacred Mount Fuji. Members of a religious cult centered around Mount Fuji, called “Fujikō,” began constructing the first miniature Fuji in 1765.\textsuperscript{13} This religious confraternity gained popularity in the late Edo period, and it is this group that was responsible for the widespread construction of *fujizuka* across the city of Edo and the surrounding regions. In total, over one hundred miniature Fujis were built from the late 18\textsuperscript{th} century onward, and although many have been destroyed since then, over fifty *fujizuka* can still be seen around Tokyo today.\textsuperscript{14}

Members of Fujikō originally constructed miniature Fujis as a means of enshrining Mount Fuji as an object of worship, making the mountain’s sacred powers and Fuji worship more accessible to its members. Yet, as this thesis argues, *fujizuka* soon became sites that transcended a purely religious significance. People of all ages and

\textsuperscript{12} Naito, *Edo, the City That Became Tokyo*, 12.
\textsuperscript{13} Earhart, *Mount Fuji*, 90, 95.
genders visited the miniature Fujis for recreational as well as religious purposes. Major
artists, such as Utagawa Hiroshige (1797-1858) and Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849),
depicted these replicas in famous woodblock prints as parts of the Edo cityscape, in
addition to depicting Mount Fuji itself.\footnote{Chris Uhlenbeck and Merel Molenaar, Mount Fuji: Sacred Mountain of Japan (Hotei Pub., 2000), 12.}

With this proliferation of representations and reconstructions, Mount Fuji
transcended its identity as a mere mountain, and the various representations of the
mountain provide insight into the significance of this change. Representations and
reconstructions of Fuji then demonstrate how different people viewed and conceptualized
the sacred mountain in their choosing of what to include, prioritize or omit. As distinct
recreations of Fuji, there is a link between miniature Fuji replicas and artistic depictions
of Fuji (and even representations of the miniature Fujis themselves) in prints. Mount
Fuji, as a topographical feature, has been shaped by natural processes over the last
millions of years, but it has also been shaped culturally by the people themselves.
Therefore it is critical to study representations and reconstructions of the mountain; the
mountain itself cannot be divorced from its refashionings and portrayals. Fujizuka
embedded themselves within the city’s cultural and geographic landscape and became an
important feature of the city, just as the original Mount Fuji became an important feature
to the city and region. Fujizuka are a unique feature of the city of Edo and Edo’s popular
culture.

This paper examines the relationship between fujizuka as they were constructed
and used in Edo, and explores larger issues of Mount Fuji as related to the physical city
and culture of Edo. The first chapter introduces the Fujikō, the religious mountain cult
that formed around Mount Fuji and its founding, beliefs and worship practices. The history of Fujikō contextualizes the practice of constructing miniature Fujis throughout the city, providing a religious and historical basis for the birth of *fujizuka*. The chapter also presents examples of the first Fuji replicas built throughout the city and the religious motivations underlying their construction. Understanding the religious dimensions of the sacred Mount Fuji and the motivations prompting the miniaturization and replication of Fuji within the city sets the foundation for a more complex understanding of the underpinnings of the relationship between Mount Fuji and Edo.

The second chapter argues for similarities between Japanese gardens and miniature Fujis, as both share features such as religious motivations in construction, common design techniques, and use by the public. The chapter presents a brief overview of Japan’s garden history in order to elucidate the similarities and differences between gardens and *fujizuka*, coming to a broader understanding of how miniature Fujis were used popularly, beyond their religious origins. Simply put, this chapter asks if fujizuka resemble gardens, and if so, what this resemblance can tell us about fujizuka as a non-religious phenomenon.

The third chapter analyzes representations of *fujizuka* and Mount Fuji in popular print media, such as woodblock prints and gazetteers. The chapter presents the background and work of two prolific woodblock artists of the time, Hokusai and Hiroshige, and analyzes their depictions of the mountain as artists with perspectives that are unique to Edo. The chapter also examines more general representations of Mount Fuji itself in order to grasp the deeper significance of the relationship between the mountain and the city.
By exploring the many facets of fujizuka—religious, as gardens, and artistic—we can come to a fuller understanding of the complex relationship between the Fuji replicas and the city, the replicas and the original and, thus, the relationship between Mount Fuji and the city of Edo.
CHAPTER ONE

Transposing the Mountain to the City: The Fujikō Cult and the Origin of Fujizuka

Because miniature Fujis were originally conceived of and created by Fujikō cults, it is important to narrate a brief history of the religious group and its practices in order to contextualize Fuji replications as they appeared within the city. The origin of Fujikō, and mountain cults in general, dates back to early times. Throughout history, Japanese have considered mountains to be sacred spaces, and they were often associated with ancestral spirits. Historian Allen Grapard identifies three distinct categories of mountains considered by Shinto (the indigenous religion of Japan) to be sacred: mountains of agricultural importance, particularly as a water source, mountains that were considered contact places for the divine, and mountains as a realm of the deceased.16 The notion of mountains as a divine space stemmed not only from Shinto, but also from Buddhism and Taoist thought. Mountain areas in Japan became popular training grounds for early followers of Esoteric Buddhism and were seen as sites where one could attain Buddhahood.17

From early on in Japanese history, Mount Fuji has been a site of Asama (also known as Sengen) shrines, and offerings were given to the Asama Kami, or god, at these shrines in order to prevent disasters.18 Asama shrines are linked to volcanoes and over a thousand of them have been built throughout Japan, the most famous of which were located at the base of Mount Fuji. These shrines from the ninth century show an early

17 Ibid., 203.
18 Earhart, “Mount Fuji and Shugendo,” 206.
form of Fuji religion, a form where the mountain was worshipped from afar rather than up close via climbing.¹⁹

Shugendō emerged in the 12th century as a religion of mountain worship that combined Shinto, Taoist and Buddhist elements.²⁰ The climbing of Fuji is closely related to the introduction of Buddhism to Japan, and the notion of the mountain as the abode of the kami was interwoven with ideas of the Taoist immortals. As lore has it, En no Gyōja, the legendary founder of Shugendō, completed an “aerial ascent” of the mountain in the seventh century, flying to the summit in a way similar to that of a Taoist wizard. Although Shugendō practitioners began to climb mountains without En no Gyōja’s powers of flight, they performed rituals and devotions related to sacred mountains, including purification and the ceremonial “opening” and “entering” of mountains.²¹

In the late 15th century, climbers ascended Mount Fuji as a form of worship from June 1st to late August in what eventually became a ritual practice of Fujikō. The cult formalized in the early 17th century and combined both Buddhist and Shinto elements with Fuji worship. The founder of Fujikō, a man named Kakugyō (1541-1646), proclaimed the cosmic power of Mount Fuji and promoted large-scale Fuji pilgrimages to his followers.²² Kakugyō often drew diagrams depicting the mountain as a sort of “cosmic mandala.”²³ Even though many of Kakugyō’s beliefs were influenced strongly by Shugendō and Buddhist belief, he reverted to secular language when discussing Mount Fuji: “This mountain was born from between Heaven and Earth. It is the source

¹⁹ Ibid., 207.
²⁰ Uhlenbeck and Molenaar, Mount Fuji, 12.
²¹ Earhart, “Mount Fuji and Shugendo,” 211–212.
²² Earhart, Mount Fuji, 46; Uhlenbeck and Molenaar, Mount Fuji, 12.
of yin and yang. It is the in-breath and the out-breath of the Great and Perfect One, of the Sun and the Moon.”

Kakugyō had not amassed a large following by the time he died in 1646. Rather, one of his spiritual successors is credited with transforming the cult into a widespread, popular religion within Edo. This follower, Jikigyō Miroku (1671-1733), traveled from his birthplace in Ise to Edo at age thirteen to be apprenticed to a merchant and became a successful and honest oil merchant. He became a Fujikō disciple when he was seventeen, most likely building on religious notions of Fuji nurtured as a child in Ise where Fuji belief was widespread.

After completing many Fuji pilgrimages, Jikigyō had a vision of the deity Sengen at the summit of the mountain in 1730, received the name *Miroku* from Sengen, and began preaching Fujikō faith as the voice of Sengen. He gave away most of his fortune but continued to be a peddler as he proselytized. He witnessed tragedy when his house burned down, in addition to the experience of injustice and famine that was rampant throughout the city and the surrounding areas. Jikigyō preached to disciples not only about Fuji-belief but also about ethics for daily life. His teachings were based on the ideas of frugality, honesty and hard work. While working hard rewarded one with health, prosperity and a long life, laziness led to sickness, poverty and an untimely death. Jikigyō also sought to improve the status of women within society, perhaps influenced by his wife and three daughters, and criticized the feudal government for the injustice and

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24 Ibid.  
26 Ibid., 50.  
misrule he saw throughout society.\textsuperscript{28} Because Mount Fuji was tied to the idea of agriculture, as well as likened to a “Mountain of Heaped-Up Grain,” Jikigyō believed that he, as possessed by Sengen, could offer up his own body to feed the people and bring about a renewal of the world.\textsuperscript{29}

Following the Kyōhō famine of 1732, on the thirteenth day of the sixth month in 1733, Jikigyō climbed the mountain and placed a portable shrine near a large rock near the seventh station on the mountain’s north trail.\textsuperscript{30} The leader fasted within the shrine, just big enough inside for him to sit, and gave teachings to devotees. After thirty-one days, on the thirteenth day of the seventh month, he gave up his body. After that, the spiritual leader’s teachings and sacrifice became crucial in Fujikō doctrine and the cult expanded rapidly.\textsuperscript{31}

Drawing on the mythical ascensions of Mount Fuji by En no Gyōja and other legendary figures, as well as “mountain entry” practices of Shugendō, pilgrimage to the mountain itself was a key practice for followers of Fujikō.\textsuperscript{32} Jikigyō claimed to have climbed Mount Fuji forty-five times, in addition to having circled the mountain three times in a dangerous mid-level circuit from the fifth station.\textsuperscript{33} While there were many sites and mountains throughout Japan worthy of a pilgrimage experience, Mount Fuji proved extremely popular. In the early 19\textsuperscript{th} century, as many as ten thousand pilgrims

\textsuperscript{28} Earhart, \textit{Mount Fuji}, 51, 53.
\textsuperscript{29} Tyler, “A Glimpse of Mt. Fuji in Legend and Cult,” 156.
\textsuperscript{31} Tyler, “A Glimpse of Mt. Fuji in Legend and Cult,” 157.
\textsuperscript{32} Earhart, \textit{Mount Fuji}, 71.
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., 49.
flocked to Fuji during the summer climbing season.\textsuperscript{34} Shugendō in particular helped to establish routes and routines for the Fuji pilgrims, as well as guides, fees, rites and instructions so that devotees could make the climb a group ascetic experience. Despite prevailing customs, there was a great diversification of practices among pilgrimage groups, with each route having its own preferred selection of temples and shrines.\textsuperscript{35}

While religious pilgrimages by Fujikō members were modeled after the experiences of the great spiritual leaders Kakugyō and Jikigyō, the journeys and growth of these groups were also influenced by the “culture of movement” that arose in the Edo period. As the Tokugawa government loosened restrictions on travel for the lower classes, these classes flocked to pilgrimage sites and famous places previously reserved for the elite. Thus, while ascending Mount Fuji was primarily a religious experience, pilgrimage in the Edo period was integrated with recreation as townspeople gained access to travel. This access was accompanied by many forms of mass-produced travel literature, from guides to woodblock prints, as will be explored in later chapters. Excursions to Fuji grew increasingly popular as mass media spread and popularized both the image and cultural significance of Mount Fuji.\textsuperscript{36}

Although both men and women were full members of Fuji cults, only male pilgrims were permitted to make the journey to the summit. Women were prohibited from entering sacred spaces, particularly mountains, since early times, and this restriction became widespread during the Edo period.\textsuperscript{37} The exclusion of women matches notions of gender hierarchy of the time: both the idea that women were impure because of blood

\textsuperscript{34} Fumiko Miyazaki, “Female Pilgrims and Mt. Fuji: Changing Perspectives on the Exclusion of Women,” \textit{Monumenta Nipponica} 60, no. 3 (October 1, 2005): 339.
\textsuperscript{35} Earhart, \textit{Mount Fuji}, 71.
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., 72.
\textsuperscript{37} Miyazaki, “Female Pilgrims and Mt. Fuji,” 340.
shed during menstruation and childbirth, and Buddhist ideas that women were too weak to reach the highest stages of enlightenment, including Buddhahood, without first being reborn as a man.\textsuperscript{38} Despite prevailing gender norms, Fujikō doctrine preached equality between men and women.\textsuperscript{39} Jikigyō affirmed that menstruation does not make women impure, and encouraged full equality of women as participants of Fujikō. He also downplayed the importance of purification for all pilgrims.\textsuperscript{40} Despite Jikigyō’s proclamation, women rarely climbed Mount Fuji. While many Fujikō members were active in their involvement to promote gender equality and sought to overturn the prohibition on women climbers, they were largely unsuccessful in allowing large numbers of women to make the ascent. Professional religionists, who lived near the paths of Fuji and were responsible for guiding and lodging pilgrims, developed their own set of rules for pilgrims to obey. The codes prohibiting women were most likely a combination of Shinto regulations on purity and Shugendō mountain codes, and these practitioners were able to enforce rules among groups of climbing pilgrims.

In autumn of 1823, however, a woman pilgrim disguised as a man secretly climbed in the wind and snow with five other Fujikō devotees, becoming the first woman to reach the summit of Mount Fuji. Right before she reached the summit, the twenty-five year-old said, “I want to climb up to the summit even if I should die at the moment when I reach it. ... If I can return home after reaching the summit, I will tell [my experience] to many women. I want to encourage all women to climb the mountain.”\textsuperscript{41} Even though women were not able to climb the mountain openly until the good-karmic year of 1860,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{38} Ibid., 342.
\item \textsuperscript{39} Ibid., 351.
\item \textsuperscript{40} Earhart, \textit{Mount Fuji}, 54.
\item \textsuperscript{41} Miyazaki, “Female Pilgrims and Mt. Fuji,” 353.
\end{itemize}
and then officially in 1872 when the Meiji government overturned the prohibition, many women attempted to climb as high as they could before they were turned away. 42 Still, the prohibition of female Fuji pilgrims was one factor that prompted the creation of *fujizuka* that spread throughout Edo.

The male and female members that made up Fujikō cults were primarily townspeople—workmen, laborers, merchants—and these members mingled with the few from the warrior class who joined them. 43 The cult’s rejection of the government’s carefully demarcated social structure, as well as the notions of equality of the classes and genders, caused the Tokugawa government to ban Fujikō ten times between 1742 and 1850. Their effort was unsuccessful and branches of the cult continued to spread throughout the city. 44

Fujikō’s popularity soared during the Edo period, growing from a mere handful of devotees, to over 400 organized *kō* (branches) by 1830 and a reported 808 different Fuji pilgrimage associations within the period. 45 Byron Earhart in *Mount Fuji: Icon of Japan* argues the key link between the religious group and the space in which it existed: “If Fuji pilgrimage is Fuji-centric, then Fujikō meetings are Edo-centric or Tokyo-centric: as Edo became central to Japan and Fuji became Japan’s central or “number one” sacred mountain, Fujikō arose primarily in Edo and the surrounding area but also arose in more distant regions. Conspicuous by their absence are Fujikō in other large cities such as Osaka and Kyoto, which have no counterpart to the “eight hundred and eight *kō* of

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42 Ibid., 373.
44 Ibid.
The centralization of Fujikō’s meetings and practices within Edo gives insight into the city’s unique relationship with Mount Fuji, an idea to which I will return in an exploration of the relationship between the mountain and the geographic and cultural construction of the city in later chapters. For now this link between the religious confraternities and the city of Edo provides justification for confining the scope of this project to the city of Edo within the Tokugawa period. The construction of fujizuka around Edo was a phenomenon unique to the time period and geographic space of the city, and their representations in visual media can provide insight into the cultural conception of the city and its relationship to Mount Fuji.

The construction of fujizuka transformed the Fuji faith within the city. Before their construction, pilgrims had to make the arduous trek up the mountain which was limited to only a small number of dedicated, able-bodied pilgrims; the elderly and anyone with a physical disability could not make the trek, and women, as mentioned previously, were forbidden to climb the mountain altogether. In constructing fujizuka, Fujikō aimed to create miniature Fujis that were not mere replications of Mount Fuji but simulacra imbued with the mountain’s mystical power. Miniature Fujis existed within the city not only to be viewed, but also to be climbed and worshipped, just like the original. In this way, members of Fujikō created access to Fuji, urbanizing the mountain for their own purposes by constructing Fujis within the city. The cult was so industrious in doing so that it built around sixty fujizuka in Edo for a total of around 200 in the Kanto Plain.

The history of fujizuka dates back before the Edo period, but the miniature Fujis constructed within Edo represent an entirely unique form of fujizuka. In folk customs,

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46 Earhart, Mount Fuji, 93.
47 Ibid., 94.
pilgrims in Ise piled up clumps of sand on the beach temporarily and called it “fujizuka” in order to worship Fuji as a particular kind of send-off ritual.⁴⁸ A practice in the Kamakura period (1185-1333) enshrined a form of Sengen at a small mountain called fujizuka, but these shrines were only used to worship Sengen and did not attempt to miniaturize or replicate Mount Fuji.⁴⁹ Despite their shared name, fujizuka erected in the Edo period by Fujikō are distinct from these earlier creations. Earlier forms were not built with the same motivations or replication strategy as those built by Fujikō, and their use in religious rituals were distinct from the pilgrimage, and later touristic, uses that characterized miniature Fujis within Edo.

The first miniature Fuji was built in 1765 by Takada Tōshirō, along with other members of Fujikō, in order to commemorate the 33rd anniversary of Fujikō leader Jikigyō Miroku’s death.⁵⁰ In order to combat the restrictions placed upon pilgrims, specifically women, Jikigyō had instructed his followers, saying, “A miniature of Mt. Fuji must be built in Edo. Let men and women climb both mountains [the real Mt. Fuji and its replica] as long as the world exists.”⁵¹ Following the leader’s teachings, Tōshirō began building a six meter high Fuji in 1779 on the site of an ancient burial mound at Mizu Inari Shrine, within the complex of Hosenji, a Tendai temple at Takatanobaba in Edo.⁵²

⁴⁸ Ibid., 94–95.
⁴⁹ Ibid., 94.
⁵¹ Miyazaki, “Female Pilgrims and Mt. Fuji,” 49–50.
Tōshirō, employed as a landscape gardener, aimed to construct a mountain that looked exactly like Mount Fuji. With that ideal in mind, he constructed his fujizuka, shaped by his participation in Fujikō and his own religious experiences and pilgrimages to the mountain. Tōshirō collected porous, hardened lava from the base of Mount Fuji, called kuroboku, and used this to pack the body of the mountain, trying to create the rugged, angular rock face present above the 5th station. The use of kuroboku after Tōshirō became common, and those creating fujizuka attempted to instantiate the integrity of the mountain by sending away for the same kuroboku material found on Mount Fuji.

A different material—soil from the summit of Mount Fuji—was used for the peak of the fujizuka, and the builders created realistic landmarks from the mountain, such as a tiny shrine at the 5th station, to be used in devotional practices. Tōshirō also used a number of distinct Fuji landmarks to increase the authenticity of the replica and capture the full pilgrimage experience that he hoped to recreate. He constructed the Womb cave (Taini), a sacred cavern atop Mount Fuji, as well as a zigzag route with nine turns with markers for the ten stations of the Mountain. In addition, Tōshirō added the eboshi iwa, or hat rock, near the seventh station as a memorial plaque to commemorate the same eboshi rock where Jikigyō sacrificed himself and fasted to death on the mountain. Tōshirō and fellow disciples called the mountain “Azuma Miroku Mountain” in honor of their leader, but the people of Edo referred to it by the name of its creator: “Takada New

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53 Iwashina, Fujikō no rekishi, 269.
Fuji” (Takada Shinfuji), showing a separation in perspective between cult members and the broader Edo public.55

Like the original Mount Fuji, the constructed fujizuka also had “mountain opening” ceremonies between the end of the fifth lunar month and the beginning of the sixth to mark the start of the climbing and pilgrimage season. City-goers flocked to the Takada New Fuji for these festivities.56 Takada Tōshirō died three years after the construction of the miniature Fuji and he received permission from his own family Buddhist temple to be buried instead at a grave below the New Fuji so he could keep watch over it.57 Tōshirō’s hopes and ambitions for the miniature Fuji came true; the Fuji acted as a memorial for the esteemed leader Jikigyō Miroku and also served as a site where anyone—men and women, children and the elderly, healthy and disabled people—could climb the mountain. The first fujizuka remained an integral part of the cityscape all throughout the Edo period, serving as a model for future replications.58

Following the popularity of Takada New Fuji, Fujikō members continued to construct fujizuka on the grounds of various temples and shrines throughout the city. The second miniature Fuji to be built was “Sendagaya Fuji” in 1789, followed by a Fuji at Tsukiji Teppōzu Inari Shrine in 1790.59 Fuzjuka continued to be built every few years in different parts of the city, perhaps to satisfy the needs of both the kō that inhabited the

55 Iwashina, Fujikō no rekishi, 270.
57 Earhart, Mount Fuji, 96.
58 Iwashina, Fujikō no rekishi, 271. The nearby Waseda University bought the site of the Takeda Fuji in 1964. To create a new school building, the mound was demolished and Takada Tōshirō’s grave was relocated.
59 Iwashina, Fujikō no rekishi, 272.
many districts of Edo, as well as the popularity of the mountains with the general populace who were not associated with the cult directly.

The miniature Fuji constructed throughout the city became integrated with seasonal festivals observed annually by Edo citizens. Scholar and guidebook author Saito Gesshin (1804 – 1878) attempted to visit as many observances around the city as he could and recorded them in his voluminous works, such as the 1838 “Record of Annual Events of the Eastern Metropolis” (Tōto Saijiki). In his record, he makes note of at least fourteen miniature Fujis that had been constructed since the Takada New Fuji. Gesshin himself attended ritual mountain opening celebrations at three different miniature Fujis before making a pilgrimage to the original Fuji. Gesshin observes that these Fuji replications had “recently become quite popular.” In bringing the mystical power of Mount Fuji within the city through “constructed nature,” fujizuka urbanized the experience of pilgrimage, as well as recreational travel, for both Fujikō members and city-dwellers alike.

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60 Takeuchi, “Making Mountains: Mini-Fujis, Edo Popular Religion and Hiroshige’s ’One Hundred Famous Views of Edo’,” 41.
CHAPTER TWO

Intersections of the Natural and the Spiritual: Gardens and Fujizuka

Looking at fujizuka as creations for and by members of Fujikō means that fujizuka are often understood as purely religious phenomena. Looking at miniature Fujis in an entirely religious context, however, only reveals a fraction of the complex history of fujizuka and is insufficient on its own. To explore how these constructed Fujis were used by both Fujikō members and the unaffiliated populace, in addition to how they were represented in media and fit into the urban environment, fujizuka can be examined in not only a religious, but a broader social, historical and geographic context. While the religious origins of fujizuka are undoubtedly essential in understanding their conception and construction, miniature Fujis can helpfully be explored from a secular lens as well, and in a variety of contexts, to fully understand their significance in the cultural narrative of Edo.

The Japanese garden, in comparison with fujizuka, provides a lens through which we can explore fujizuka beyond their religious associations. Japanese gardens and gardening practices can only be understood in context and, even though they are intimately tied to Japanese religion throughout their history, they can also be understood from a social and geographic (and even a natural or environmental) standpoint, among others. In order to use the category of Japanese gardens as a basis for comparison (and ultimately place fujizuka within this category), I briefly explore this larger context.

Gunter Nitschke describes the history of the Japanese garden as history of man’s search for his place within nature and thus the search for himself. For him, the Japanese garden is a space that combines nature, man, architecture and art; a garden isolates certain
forms of nature from their natural context and provides a setting for them to be experienced in an “unnatural, intellectually-imposed” space. The earliest forms of gardens emerged with the creation of the first urban settlements and palaces as a byproduct of material affluence and leisure.61 Although there are a few features of gardens that share elements found in prehistoric settlements, the Japanese garden was introduced from China and Korea in the six and seventh centuries, and it developed into a robust and established art form. Although garden construction, techniques and design evolved throughout the centuries in changing religious, social and urban contexts, key principles, such as the balance of natural and man-made beauty, have remained constant.62

In the Heian period (794-1185), when power was concentrated in the Kyoto capital by the imperial family and the powerful aristocratic Fujiwara clan, gardens served as a vital space within the court, particularly as a stage for grand celebrations and festivals. For the court, gardens were not an external or separate space, but were simply an extension of the palaces where residents of the court spent their days. Gardens were linked to poetry which was, in Heian times, an essential form of communication. Poetry was not only required for proper etiquette, but was the ideal medium for expressing human emotions.63

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While the gardens of the early Heian period were modeled on those found in China and Korea, towards the end of the Heian period, Japanese nobles began designing their own gardens, creating a garden form that was uniquely Japanese.\(^{64}\) Imperial pleasure gardens, once covering an area of two by four city blocks, provided an environment for courtly entertainment, including imperial poetry competitions, banquets, festivals and boating trips on large artificial lakes.\(^{65}\) Gardens, elegant and colorful, invited the winners of these contests to express their love of nature, as well as their own emotion, through poetry and music. The Heian Court was finely attuned to the changing of the seasons, and recurring seasonal events served as a cornerstone for Heian immersion in nature.\(^{66}\)

The intersection of built space and nature was important as well. Ladies of court whose rooms faced the small courts of *tsuboniwa* (courtyard gardens) were often called by the name of the flower that was most prevalent within that small garden space, and the same flower was sometimes used as a design within the rooms. One example of this is Fujitsubo, the “Lady of the Wisteria Court,” who appears in the *Tale of Genji*, demonstrating how architecture, gardens and court life were closely intertwined.\(^{67}\)

Aristocrats had their own residences, primarily in the northern and eastern sections of city and built gardens within these spaces. Although the location and size of these properties varied among courtiers, most residences had similar features. These elements included a *shinden*, or sleeping hall, two smaller and symmetrical *tainoya* (subsidiary living quarters) and many roofed corridors that connected the various halls.

\(^{64}\) Keane and Haruzo, *Japanese Garden Design*, 27.
\(^{66}\) Ibid., 53.
\(^{67}\) Ibid., 38.
There were also pavilions built into the garden; the *tsuridono* (small pavilion) was often used for musical performances or for viewing the garden, and the *izumidono*, another pavilion, was built above a spring that fed into the garden pond. The entire complex was constructed so that the various halls would look over the garden and the garden may have made up about one third of the entire walled property. While the buildings were primarily symmetrical in the early Heian period, there was a shift towards asymmetrical and freer building design by the end of the period, though garden design remained a vital aspect of residences.

Unlike gardens in Korea at the time, which were built in the countryside in the context of the larger landscape, Heian residence gardens were built, presumably by and for courtiers, in enclosed properties and had to attempt to fit “nature” into a specific urban framework. Heian gardens made extensive use of water, often constructing artificial ponds as a garden’s center with winding streams, or *yarimizu*, which would feed into the pond from the eastern edge. Plantings of deciduous and perennial plants, in addition to ever-present shrubs and rocks, allowed the gardens to change with the seasons.

Gardens also emerged within temples during the Heian period. In the urban temple complexes of earlier periods, central temple courtyards lacked gardens, but as the powerful Fujiwara family began to fund the building of Pure Land temples around the capital, the new temples constructed gardens similar to those at private residences. These temples designed pond and island gardens that were seen as representations of the Pure

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71 Ibid., 37.
Land Buddhist paradise that existed in the West. Byōdō-in, a temple built in 1052 by Fujiwara no Yorimichi, is centered around the famous Phoenix Hall with a pond and island garden. Since many of the same ceremonial festivities of the court were held in temple gardens in front of the main hall, Buddha statues overlooked the pond and island of the garden, and so the ambiance of these activities tended to be different than those taking place near residences.  

In the Kamakura (1185-1336) and Muromachi (1386-1565) eras, a second wave of Chinese cultural influence, particularly Zen Buddhism and Chinese landscape painting, spurred the creation of karesansui, or dry landscape gardens. Priests, first from the esoteric Shingon sect and later Zen, laid out these gardens using basic natural materials such as rocks and gravel. Within the dry landscape garden, natural form was reduced to the bare minimum; the garden was an abstraction of nature rather than a faithful recreation. Because karesansui developed alongside Zen Buddhism and were constructed within temple complexes, gardens were shaped to aid in meditation and contemplation. These gardens were most often viewed from a particular vantage point outside the garden—on the veranda of a nearby building, for example—and acted as a vehicle for reaching enlightenment and transcending everyday life.

One of the most well known of karesansui gardens is located at the Zen temple Ryoanji. The garden, located in northwest Kyoto, is comprised of meticulously raked sand and fifteen rocks grouped into clusters of seven, five and three. Gunter Nitschke describes Ryoanji as a garden intended to induce Zen meditation for its viewers: “Meditational techniques serve to divert man’s energy from flowing outwards towards

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73 Nitschke, Japanese Gardens, 65.
other objects to flowing inwards towards his center. In Ryoanji, objects (the rocks) are so perfectly arranged in space (the raked sand) that the viewer eventually ceases to experience them separately. Outward energy reverses to inward energy as the viewer’s concentration now turns to focus upon his own consciousness. This is the ‘experience’ of nothingness, of the void, emptiness, impartial awareness…”75 Based on this description, it seems that this sort of interaction between the viewer and the garden transcends the natural forms and confines of the garden, and leads the viewer into a rich, meaningful experience.

An illustration of Ryoanji appears in garden maker Akisato Ritō’s *Celebrated Gardens and Sights of Kyoto (Miyako rinsen meishō zue)* and shows four priests and one samurai wandering through the garden and discussing the various rocks (figure 3).76 As a major tourist attraction today, visitors stepping foot inside the meticulously raked gravel seems unthinkable. Still, the emphasis on a viewer’s experience of the garden is important in both historical times—as visitors wandered through and discussed rocks—and today, as viewers sit alongside the temple veranda in meditation, gazing upon the jagged rocks, the sculpted gravel and the form and space of the garden. In the case of Ryoanji, and many different kinds of gardens, the experience of the visitor is an important aspect of the garden that both complements and shapes the design of a space.

During the Edo period a number of different gardening styles arose, including an Edo-style stroll garden that was favored by daimyō. Daimyō gardens built both within the city of Edo and at residences in a daimyō’s home province, drew on the rich garden traditions of the past, while also incorporating new and innovative techniques into the

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design characteristic of the Edo period. The sprawling stroll gardens were much larger than many of the other gardens that were wedged between temple buildings or complexes; some of the gardens, either within the city or in the provinces, were 50,000 to 10,000 square meters or larger. Designers often incorporated or, alternatively, absorbed the surrounding countryside as part of the expanse of the garden when constructing these spaces, particularly when designing gardens in a home province as opposed to Edo. Often, local deities or shrines from the countryside were absorbed into these types of gardens, so on certain occasions, small groups of locals were allowed to enter into the garden and offer up prayers to these deities. The majority of the time, however, daimyō used these gardens for their own amusement and for impressing and entertaining political guests.

While the gardens of each daimyō were constructed with his particular tastes in mind, there were a number of design techniques that rose to prominence in this period. Returning to the traditions of earlier periods, these stroll gardens aimed for a realistic, but selective, imitation of the outer forms of nature, and combined various elements from many forms of gardens, including the ponds, islands and waterfalls of Heian gardens and the paths and hills of small-scale Kamakura and Muromachi strolling gardens. These stroll gardens flattered daimyō palaces, suiting his needs and pleasures and reflecting his grand tastes.

The daimyō garden style of the period often combined a traditional stroll garden with a “picture garden,” which revealed to the strolling viewer a constant and fluid

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78 Ibid., 101, 104.
succession of new, scenic views.° Gardens in this period began to incorporate meisho, famous views from literature or actual geography of both Japan and China. These gardens blended together many different images and guided visitors past these meisho in succession. Famous views were either created on a smaller scale or indicated by other means, and viewers were greeted with a continuum of features as they moved through the garden’s path. In order to control the visitor’s visual experience, paths were constructed to be winding, directing a viewer to be parallel or diagonal to a certain sight rather than walking straight through or across it. Garden designers used the “hide and reveal” technique extensively for visual manipulation within the garden.  

Additionally, designers made new use of techniques like shakkei, incorporating distant elements of the surrounding landscape into the design of the garden, to help with this visual manipulation. Distant views of mountain scenery and country vistas were commonly integrated into the visual layout of the garden, but designers also used shakkei to borrow from nearby scenery from both high and vantage points closer to the ground. The use of techniques such as this showed that designers were conscious of a viewer’s experience of a garden.

With the inclusion of meisho in the physical space of the garden, gardens enabled visitors to reimagine notions of pilgrimage and travel. These new forms of gardens emerged as a substitute for travel. Suizenji in Kumamoto, shown in its present-day form in figure 4, was also known as Jōjuen and is one such Edo-period stroll garden that

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80 Ibid., 122.
82 Nitschke, Japanese Gardens, 169.
84 Nitschke, Japanese Gardens, 169.
emerged as a substitute for travel. The garden, covering about 15 acres, was originally constructed under the authority of Hosokawa Tadatoshi (1586-1641). After Tadatoshi was assigned control of Higo province (modern-day Kumamoto) in 1632, he invited the head priest from a temple of his former home in Fukuoka; together, the two founded the temple of Suizenji. Tadatoshi later had the temple moved to a nearby property and built a villa for himself on the land with a garden designed by tea masters who were associated with the Hosokawa family.

Transformed into a park today, the garden features carefully manicured shrubbery and large expanses of grass to represent mountains. The most famous of these constructed hills, or *tsukiyama*, is a representation of Mount Fuji. The garden itself was said to evoke the images of the Tōkaidō highway, a popular route that connected Edo with Kyoto, as visitors strolled through and Mount Fuji was one of these prominent images. The garden also recreated other landscapes found along this route and made frequent use of natural spring water in streams and ponds alongside the wide expanses of the garden.86 Because of this, the garden was also called “Garden of Fifty-three Stations.”87

While a visitor’s experience of a garden was one of the features of gardens in earlier periods, it became an overriding ideal for daimyō gardens. Gardens, with their carefully managed views, recreations of famous sites, and elaborately designed natural features made a daimyō and his visitors’ experience of his garden paramount to the function of the garden.

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Fujizuka, as built environments with a specific set of structural parameters in mind and constructed with religious intent, share many similarities with gardens; in fact, it can be argued that fujizuka not only function like gardens but can be considered gardens themselves. Originally, many of the aesthetics of gardens, such as miniaturization, notions of space, and replications of nature, parallel those of fujizuka. Japanese gardens are often described as a kind of idealized version of nature, a vision of harmony and balance. The same could be said about fujizuka. The notion of reconstructing or reimagining nature in a setting removed from the original rings true for both gardens and fujizuka. Members of Fujikō had similar motivations to those of garden designers when they constructed miniature Fujis within Edo. They did not want to capture the essence of the mountain, but rather the mountain itself, and so cult devotees transferred Fuji to an urban setting, complete with mystical powers and the benefits of pilgrimage. Fujikō members imbued miniature Fujis with authenticity by using materials from the original mountain, including boulders, sand, and hardened lava. Japanese gardens in the Edo period, including scenic and stroll gardens, also used materials to suggest the natural world. These forms are not intended to be a realistic simulacrum or imitation of natural forms, but rather a suggestion, such as in the use of one or two stones to suggest the scene of a mountain. Gardens frequently made use of other natural materials, including shrubs, trimmed trees, and ponds, and also used the landscape surrounding the area as a way to extend the view of the garden.

It is important to note how mini Fujis were used popularly as sites to which commoners, with newfound wealth and leisure time, flocked. Whereas daimyō in the

89 Kuitert, Themes in the History of Japanese Garden Art, 128.
period constructed stroll gardens for themselves, imitating natural forms and famous
views from around the region, *fujizuka* became gardens for the masses. These sites
offered everyone—man and woman, young and old alike—the chance to experience the
mystical powers of the mountain and then, even beyond that, a place for leisure and
sightseeing within the city limits.

Fujikō members originally constructed *fujizuka* in religious complexes for the
devotions of cult members, particularly women and the young, old and infirm. Gardens,
like *fujizuka*, were constructed in religious spaces such as temple complexes, but
gradually drifted from their religious origins. This shift from religious to secular is
characteristic of the Edo period, yet miniature Fujis straddled the blurry line between
these two poles. While Fuji replicas began to be used popularly and visited as tourist
sites, they were never entirely divorced from their religious origins as sites of devotion
for Fujikō.
CHAPTER THREE

For the Love of Fuji: Edo artists, popular media and depictions of the mountains

Complementary to understanding miniature Fujis as popular gardens is the exploration of fujizuka as represented in print media. Much like today, Mount Fuji was an image ubiquitous and commercially viable for artists of the Edo period. The majestic mountain alone has been the source of inspiration for a myriad of different woodblock prints, including Katsushika Hokusai’s enormously popular collection of woodblock prints, Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji and his One Hundred Views of Mount Fuji series that followed. The mountain’s miniature counterparts, too, became a source of artistic inspiration and were featured in views from around the city.

The goals of this chapter are several. First, it is important to look at depictions of fujizuka to see if, in fact, their representations support their aforementioned popular use and confirm the hypothesis regarding their use as gardens. Secondly, images of fujizuka show how they were imagined and represented by artists. Specifically, the chapter explores prints by two woodblock print masters, Utagawa Hiroshige and Katsushika Hokusai, for whom Mount Fuji (and even fujizuka) was a popular subject. Both of these artists, as people living and working in the city of Edo, are examples of unique and telling viewpoints for the city of Edo as a whole. Mount Fuji frequently appears in their works, establishing a link between the mountain and the city. Additionally, other forms of print media corroborate the Fuji-Edo connection. In order to accomplish these goals, it is first necessary to briefly describe print culture in the Edo period, the process of woodblock printing, and information about the artists’ own lives in Edo.
With the advancement of woodblock printing techniques, print culture flourished in the Edo period. While early woodblock prints took the form of simple Buddhist devotional prints, technology and artistry allowed for the development of more complex and elaborate prints in this time period. Many of these prints were *ukiyo-e*, or pictures of the floating world, depicting the pleasures of the kabuki theater and pleasure quarters.90

The creation of a woodblock print was a multistage process that required collaboration between a variety of artists and workers. First, the artist drew a design with an inked brush on a thin sheet of paper and indicated desired colors through writing or by drawing light color washes over the design. Next, an engraver pasted a design onto wood blocks and incised outlines by carving in the same direction as the original brush strokes of the designer. The black outline prints from the resulting block, called a key block, were pasted on individual blocks for printing individual colors, with any unneeded areas cut away. Finally, in the last stage of the printmaking process, the printer washed the blocks and placed them on low stands at a slight downward slope to transfer and print the image.91

The publisher was responsible for an entire collection of prints, or group of prints, and it was the publisher’s duty to coordinate among the different talents. Publishers had to be sensitive to market demands and anticipate the desires and fluctuating tastes of consumers, and so the popularity of a collection of prints was highly dependent on its

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91 Stephen Addiss and Helen Foresman, eds., *Tōkaidō: Adventures on the Road in Old Japan* (Lawrence: Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas, 1980), xvi.
With the exception of *surimono*, or prints specially commissioned by a patron or group, prints were sold in shops and traveling carts or racks. Prints were especially popular with travelers who wanted souvenirs to commemorate their journeys. The flourishing of woodblock prints made them both cheap—at roughly the cost of a bowl of noodles—and accessible to not only rich private commissioners, but to the general population of Edo. Woodblock prints, then, in conjunction with other print culture in the period, provide an ideal frame through which to explore the landscape of Edo and the tastes and desires of consumers, specifically in relation to Mount Fuji and its miniatures.

In the early 1800s, the development of the *ukiyo-e* genre as well as the increasing commercialization of the woodblock industry, allowed two Edo artists, Hokusai and Hiroshige, to develop and popularize a new landscape genre. Whereas landscape had been previously treated as a secondary aspect of *ukiyo-e* composition—as a backdrop for a scene or portrait, for example—Hiroshige and Hokusai developed works of art where natural scenes were worthy subjects in and of themselves. As the shogunal government in Edo loosened travel restrictions, Edoites found themselves able to explore beyond the limits of the city, and they flocked to distant destinations. This popularization and accessibility of recreational travel and pilgrimage increased the demand for both travel guides and souvenirs. Publishers responded to this demand, commissioning artists to

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93 Addiss and Foresman, *Tōkaidō*, xvi.
94 Uhlenbeck and Molenaar, *Mount Fuji*, 16.
portray picturesque landscapes and famous views of the city and provinces. Because the prints were inexpensive, these images became accessible to a wide audience.

As an artist of the city of Edo, it is important to understand the background of the artists to better understand them as a case study for representations of Fuji. Utagawa Hiroshige was born in 1797 in the Yaesugashi district of Edo to a low-ranking samurai family. His father, Andō Genemon, was the warden of the Edo fire brigade, a post that Hiroshige inherited when he lost both of his parents in 1809 at age 13. A few years later, in 1810 or 1811, Hiroshige tried to study the art of ukiyo-e under Utagawa Toyokuni (1769-1825) who was renowned for his portraits of Kabuki actors. Because this master already had too many students, Hiroshige instead learned under Utagawa Toyohiro (1773-1829). Toyohiro had an interest in landscape prints—only a minor genre at the time compared to depictions of Kabuki actors and beautiful women—and this interest most likely inspired Hiroshige to develop the landscape genre; today, Hiroshige’s most famous prints belong to the landscape genre. Hiroshige worked, at first, on inexpensive prints such as book illustrations and designs of women, but in 1822 he retired from his position as fire warden to devote himself to prints fulltime. Over the course of his career, Hiroshige is estimated to have created between 4000 and 4500 designs ranging from Kabuki actors, to beautiful women, to historical figures and birds and flowers. What Hiroshige is most known for today, however, is his contribution to the

96 Ibid., 7.
98 Ibid 42, 43.
development of landscape prints; three-quarters of his designs are in this genre.\textsuperscript{99} He produced his first landscape prints in 1825 for the collection \textit{Famous Places in the Eastern Capital}. In 1832 he traveled the Tōkaidō Road to Kyoto; upon his return to the capital Hiroshige published his famous project, \textit{Fifty-three Stations of the Tōkaidō Road}.\textsuperscript{100} Another collection focused on travel was entitled \textit{Sixty-nine Stations of the Kiso Road} and was published in 1835.\textsuperscript{101} Hiroshige’s largest and most famous series, \textit{One Hundred Views of Edo}, was produced from 1856 to 1858. The series, which actually contains 118 prints rather than the aforementioned 100, was enormously popular and was reprinted multiple times.\textsuperscript{102}

Within Hiroshige’s famous series, Fuji emerges as an epitomic image of Edo, and the artist captures a southwest view of the peak in 19 prints. The recurring image of the majestic Fuji not only served to orient a viewer as to the geographic whereabouts of the scene that was portrayed in the print, but also served as a “symbolic guardian” of the city of Edo.\textsuperscript{103} While Mount Fuji features heavily within Hiroshige’s prints, Fuji replicas appear as well. Two \textit{fujizuka} are referred to by name in the title of the prints (“New Fuji, Meguro” and “Original Fuji, Meguro”) while another is featured within a print of a famous site, “Open Garden at Fukugawa Hachiman Shrine.”

Hiroshige’s “New Fuji, Meguro (4th Month, 1857)” shows a large, grassy miniature Fuji towering over a base of blooming cherry trees and a river (figure 6). This


\textsuperscript{100} White et al., \textit{Hokusai and Hiroshige}, 42.

\textsuperscript{101} Ibid., 43.

\textsuperscript{102} Takeuchi, “Making Mountains: Mini-Fujis, Edo Popular Religion and Hiroshige’s ‘One Hundred Famous Views of Edo,’” 25.

“New Fuji” was built in 1829 on the estate of Kondō Jūzō, a retainer of the Shogun. Although the idea for the miniature Fuji was supposedly Kondō’s own, local Fujikō organizations helped with constructing the miniature. The Kondō Fuji came to be known as the “New Fuji,” distinguishing it from its neighbor the “Original Fuji” in Meguro which appears next in the One Hundred Views series. The hill pictured in this print is smoother and more uniform than most other mini Fujis that were constructed out of rock. Several features, however, confirm its authenticity as a fujizuka: the zigzag path that leads to the summit and the iconic eboshi rock and shrine halfway up the mountain. In the image, figures stroll among the trees at the base, admiring the spring blossoms; three figures ascend the mountain via its switchback route, while three have already reached the summit. The Mita Aqueduct winds along the base of the fujizuka and the shrine—the popular Meguro Fudō—hidden in the middle of the distant trees was likely a common destination for people visiting the New Fuji.

The New Fuji at Meguro afforded visitors not only a climbing experience, but also a splendid view of the actual Mount Fuji, which, in the print, looms in the distance with its peak rising majestically above the clouds. In this image, there is a direct comparison with the large fujizuka in the foreground and the peak of the original Mount Fuji rising in the upper left corner. The placement of the two Fujis draws the viewer’s attention to the parallels between the two; the large Fuji, perhaps the ultimate target of both the climbers of the mini Fuji and the artist, both inspires and legitimizes the construction of its miniature.

104 Smith and Hiroshige, Hiroshige, n.p.

Seven years after the New Fuji was built in Meguro, there was an uprising at the site when Kondō Jūzō’s son killed a neighboring farmer and his family over a dispute regarding the right to sell souvenirs to tourists visiting the mini Fuji. This resulted in the disgrace of the Kondō family.

The image following “New Fuji” in the collection is the “Original Fuji” print (figure 5), which is similar in both subject matter and composition. Geographically, it was located just 500 yards north of the “New Fuji” and was constructed in 1812. The dramatic vistas of the location earned this miniature Fuji a reputation for its scenery, and this was one of the miniature Fujis that was most frequently visited by the general populace of Edo, as opposed to purely religious devotees. The “Original Fuji” miniature does not display any devotional or authentic features of a *fujizuka* besides the curving path. The print, however, does reveal features that would please the public, including benches set up by the owner of a teahouse, as well as colorful trees planted for the pleasure of patrons.  

Henry Smith describes Hiroshige’s artistic style and particularly the relationship between objects in the foreground and background by saying that the relationship between objects that are near and far in Hiroshige’s prints are never formal or mechanical. Relationships, instead, are suggestive and allow the foreground and background to play off one another in diverse and provocative ways. This interplay draws attention to the relationship between the foreground, typically more symbolic, active and personal, and the background, a more neutral, passive and public space, according to Smith. While this technique is found throughout Hiroshige’s prints, it is particularly useful with respect to the *fujizuka* prints for parsing out the relationship between the distant original mountain and its foreground replica. With this analysis, *fujizuka* emerge as a sort of personalized symbol of Fuji used actively by the populace, as

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107 Ibid., 13.
can be seen in the many figures climbing and enjoying the mountains. The deliberate placement of the Mount Fuji as distant yet similar legitimizes the construction of the mini mountains but also makes them feel more intimate.

The third fujizuka pictured in One Hundred Famous Views is different from its predecessors. “Open Garden at Fukugawa Hachiman Shrine (8/1857)” (figure 7) depicts Eitaiji, one of the most famous temple gardens of Edo, and a miniature Fuji tucked away within the grounds. Eitaiji, together with Tomioka Hachiman Shrine, constituted the largest and most popular religious complex east of the Sumida River, and the print shows this popularity with throngs of people flocking to the garden’s blossoms. Although the Fuji replica is not as obvious or distinct as the fujizuka in Meguro, particularly in terms of the focus of the print, the switchback path of the hill in the upper left corner of the print mimics the design of the Meguro Fuji, as do its grassy slope and group of visitors gathered on top of the hill. Moreover, scholar Iwashina Koichirō confirms that there was a Fuji replica built by Fujikō at the site in 1820. In this print, there is no Mount Fuji hovering in the distance, confirming and legitimizing the fujizuka. Instead, the miniature Fuji is placed within the context of a garden and becomes part of the garden itself, substantiating the earlier claim regarding the similarity between fujizuka and gardens. Although not pictured in the print, major shrine and temple precincts often contained attractions such as teahouses, restaurants, and souvenir shops. These areas accounted for about 15 percent of the land of Edo, and the fujizuka constructed in these spaces would have been both popular and accessible attractions within this area acting as natural sites of entertainment—gardens—for the masses.

109 Ibid., 11.
Outside of Hiroshige’s *One Hundred Famous Views of Edo* collection, *fujizuka* appear in a variety of his other prints, including on fans, in the collection *Souvenirs of Edo* and in commissioned prints for private collections. In the *uchiwa-e*, or woodblock printed fan, “The Plum Garden at Omurai” (figure 15), a *fujizuka* in the background looks similar to the rounded grassy slopes portrayed in *One Hundred Famous Views*. The miniature Fuji is in the background of the print, partially obscured by the three women in the foreground, is seamlessly integrated into the temple and plum trees. This integration reinforces the idea of *fujizuka* being used as a garden, or as one interactive feature within a larger garden space. Just as many miniature figures are viewing and walking among the plum trees in the background, there are equally as many figures climbing the miniature Fuji and enjoying the view from its peak. As shown in this fan print, visitors are able to enjoy both the blossoms and the experience of ascending Fuji within the temple gardens.

While many of Hiroshige’s *fujizuka* appear as grassy and sloped hills, some of his other works portray miniature Fujis closer to their Fujikō roots as rocky and tall constructed mountains. In a *surimono* print “Pilgrimage to Teppozu Inari Fuji Shrine” by Hiroshige and Utagawa Toyokuni (figure 14), a rocky and jagged *fujizuka* looms in the background of the print. In this print, the viewer gets an idea of the scale of the miniature Fuji as it towers in the background of the print. Although this *fujizuka* looks to conform to Fujikō religious ideals, with rocks from the base of Mount Fuji, the people climbing and resting on the mountain also show how it was used secularly by the masses. The scale in the background of the print, too, emphasizes the size of some of these *fujizuka*. The size of the two figures resting on the edge of the mountain in comparison to the
fujizuka itself shows its height and proves how large a shadow these “miniature” Fujis cast over Edo.

Some of Hiroshige’s other prints show realistic miniature Fujis built among their natural, temple environments. In Hiroshige’s Souvenirs of Edo, a rocky Takada Fuji is integrated among the temple (figure 8). Although the mountain is in the background, the Fuji is the largest object in the frame, towering over buildings of the temple complex and numerous figures milling about the area. There are no religious markers on the mountain itself (except perhaps a small stone or shrine at the summit) and there are no people shown to be climbing the mountain. Still, the large number of figures passing through the scene shows how sites of fujizuka could easily be transformed into sites of popular entertainment. The inclusion of the Takada Fuji in a souvenir book, as well as the description at the top of the image that conveys the date of the opening of the mountain, shows that sites like this fujizuka were already well known.

Another one of Hiroshige’s prints from a similar collection shows a different fujizuka integrated among a forested religious complex (figure 9). The miniature Fuji, labeled as such, takes up a large portion of the print, yet it is of relatively simple design, with only a torii gate marking its entrance. The Fuji replica within this print also does not feature the familiar switchback route, or any religious indicators. Instead, it is largely devoid of design besides the subtle rocky patterning near the peak. The Fuji has an exaggerated shape that mimics the contours of the real Mount Fuji as found in many landscape prints, and, with the lack of climbers and a route, appears to be more akin to the real Fuji than a fujizuka, which makes it a particularly interesting representation.
Another fujizuka appears in the same collection, though its miniature Fuji appears quite different (figure 10). In a composition reminiscent of Hiroshige’s “New Fuji at Meguro,” the print shows a vista from the top of a fujizuka, including the nearby water, houses and a white Mount Fuji in the distance, as seen by the climbers who have reached the top. The fujizuka is both rocky and grassy and has its familiar zigzag path. The original Fuji, quite large in the background, parallels the shape of the Fuji replica, providing legitimacy and emphasizing the similarity between the two mountains.

Other realistic depictions of fujizuka appear in the popular travel gazetteers of the period, Edo meisho zue or Illustrated Gazetteers of Edo. These illustrated guides showcased popular sites from around the city and region, often with accompanying descriptive text or even poetry. Volumes of Edo meisho zue were compiled by Saito Gesshin and published in between 1834 and 1836. Fujizuka, as sites that held distinct religious, cultural and entertainment value for Edo citizens, appear in these gazetteers. While a few different miniature Fujis appear in Edo meisho zue, Takada Fuji, the first fujizuka built, is featured prominently in both illustration and textual description (figure 11). Takada Fuji appears as a distinct three-peaked mountain in the upper right corner of the two-page illustration. The mountain, labeled “Fuji-san” (富士山), is eye-catching and clearly distinguished from the rest of the temple complex. Unlike the mini Fujis portrayed in Hiroshige’s woodblock prints, Takada Fuji does not appear grassy or rounded but instead conforms to Fujikō’s ideals with rocks and building materials drawn from the base of the real mountain. The scene shows the entirety of the religious compound and the many small figures who seem to be enjoying the scenery. However,
there are no climbers shown ascending the Fuji replica, and it stands solemn in the back
of the print, almost in lieu of the real Mount Fuji.

The description that follows the illustration of the Takada Fuji is brief, yet
conveys essential points, such as the year in which it was constructed (1780) and the
name of the Fujikō leader who planned it. It also informs the readers of the dates of the
yearly mountain “opening” where pilgrimages up the mountain are permitted, and notes
the fact that there is a Sengen Shrine at the base of the mountain. The fact that the
Takada Fuji has a description in this widely read book speaks to its importance as a both
a Fujikō landmark and as a site of interest to the masses.

Other miniature Fujis that appear in Edo meisho zue are not accompanied by a
description but appear to have a shape similar to Takada. The Sendagaya Fuji appears in
the middle of a temple complex, though there are no markers or religious features shown
in the print on the zigzag path leading up to the top (figure 12). There is, however, a
Sengen shrine placed next to the foot of the mountain. Those climbing the mountain
would be able to worship here. The Sendagaya Fuji is clearly rocky, though it does not
appear as tall as Takada Fuji, nor does it have three clearly defined peaks. The
Sendagaya Fuji was constructed in 1789, ten years after the first fujizuka. Although the
visual depiction of the fujizuka is not detailed enough to show many religious features of
the mountain, the Sendagaya Fuji supposedly had many religious features, including a
main shrine, eboshi rocks and other famous landmark stones, and purification water
drawn from the Fuji lakes.110

110 Yukie Takeya, Fujizuka kō: Edo Takada Fuji chikuzō no nazo o toku (Tokyo: Iwata Shoin,
2009), 32.
Another Fuji replica, the Otowa Fuji, is integrated into the Gokokuji complex where many figures, old and young, are shown to be wandering around (figure 13). Like the other Fujis depicted in *meisho zue* there is no one climbing the Fuji replica. The *fujizuka* itself is more rounded at the top, with only a small indent for the three peaks. It is also not as rocky as the Sendagaya and Takada Fuji, which makes it more akin to the grassy *fujizuka* found in some of Hiroshige’s prints. The miniature Fuji does, however, have a small shrine about halfway up the mountain, serving as a place for Fujikō members to climb and worship.

Both visually and in the text, *fujizuka* were integrated into their surroundings as part of a larger religious complex. Interestingly, unlike many of the other depictions of *fujizuka*, the real Mount Fuji does not appear in the background. This could be attributed to the geographical accuracy of *Edo meisho zue*, as opposed to the symbolism present in some of Hiroshige’s woodblock prints. This also means that *fujizuka* stood alone as distinct entities within their allotted geographic and larger religious spaces. The distinction between religious and secular blurs, however, since many people flock to religious sites for ceremonies and festivities, as described in the text regarding Takada. The representations of *fujizuka* within *Edo meisho zue* allow us to see an accurate depiction of miniature Fujis within their larger urban context and also understand how they were used as gardens with both religious and secular significance.

Another Edo artist, Hokusai, emerged alongside Hiroshige as the master of the landscape woodblock print. He was born in Honjo, Edo, a flat area along the Sumida River, and was adopted as a child by a well-known family of artisans who supplied mirrors to the shogun. When he was a teenager, Hokusai worked as a delivery boy for a
shop that lent books and was also apprenticed to a woodblock carver, even though the designing and carving jobs remained divided when Hokusai became an artist. Both of these experiences were probably beneficial for Hokusai when he was a designer and book illustrator later in his career. Like Hiroshige, Hokusai began training as an artist under a master. In 1778, he began studying under Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792), a distinguished designer known for his prints of the theater and Kabuki actors. At this time, Hokusai illustrated storybooks and designed prints of beautiful women under the penname Shunrō. Hokusai experimented with many different styles during his early years and even studied western styles in 1804 by looking at Dutch copperplate prints. Because of his studies, many of his newer prints featured three-dimensional landscape elements and illusions of space created by light and dark shadows. 1831 began Hokusai’s most productive decade wherein he produced most of his masterpieces. In many of his well-known works, Mount Fuji plays a key role.

Hokusai was not a member of Fujikō (although his publisher, Nishimuraya, was thought to be a cult member) but Mount Fuji is nevertheless of great importance in Hokusai’s designs. David Bell describes this obsession as “an essentially religious preoccupation, a concern with life and death that absorbed Hokusai in a deeply personal

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111 White et al., Hokusai and Hiroshige, 40.
112 Ibid, 40. Hokusai used a variety of different names throughout his career as an artist. He first assumed the name Shunrō for illustrated books and prints of women. Between 1793 and 1796, he used Sōri and studied and experimented with the styles of different schools. In 1797, he began to use the name Hokusai, the name under which he is known today. He combined this name in later years with other names such as Taito in 1811 and Iitsu in 1820.
113 Ibid, 40.
way.” For Hokusai, the mountain may have been associated with immortality and, particularly towards the end of his career, he became obsessed with the idea of longevity and immortality. On his deathbed in 1849, Hokusai apparently begged for more time to master his craft: “If Heaven will grant me but ten more years of life…with even five more years—I could become a true artist.”

In addition to his fixation with immortality, Hokusai found Mount Fuji to be an appropriate subject through which he could refine his technique and imbue his prints with meaning—literary, historical and even spatial. Hokusai’s collection *Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji*, which he started around 1829 and completed around 1833, was novel in both its theme and manner of printing—large scale, horizontal format and incorporating prussian blue ink, designed for rather wealthy customers.

The risk paid off and the series proved enormously popular; the publisher issued ten more prints, after the original 36, because of the series’ popularity. Hokusai’s representation of Fuji both built on the existing cultural knowledge of the mountain while contributing directly to that same wealth of knowledge. (Hokusai’s “The Great Wave off Kanagawa” remains iconic today.) The subject of Fuji also facilitated Hokusai’s exploration of a variety of artistic techniques, including representations of spatial relationships for which he used a combination of Japanese, Chinese and Western

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116 White et al., *Hokusai and Hiroshige*, 42.
117 Bouquillard, *Hokusai’s Mount Fuji*, 8, 10. Prussian blue ink, a synthetic pigment imported from Holland, was used in Edo prints for fans and *surimono* from 1829 onwards. In *Thirty-six Views*, the blue ink was used in some of the critical blocks, such as for sky, oceans and rivers. This fresh blue ink, in combination with other pigments, helped contribute to the success of the landscape genre.
119 Bell, *Hokusai’s Project*, 74.
perspectives. These representations of a landscape were rendered in a naturalistic, and frequently idealized, manner.\(^{120}\)

Following the success of his first Fuji series, 1834, Hokusai worked on new, three-volume work starting in 1834: *One Hundred Views of Mount Fuji*.\(^{121}\) Because this new project was much larger than the previous, the prints, published in three volumes between 1830 and 1834, were in a small format and with tints of grey.\(^{122}\)

In his works, Hokusai pays tribute to Mount Fuji and depicts the sacred mountain in many different forms. Sometimes the mountain is featured up close, while at other times, it is placed—minuscule and barely noticeable—low near the horizon or background of a print.\(^{123}\) Additionally, it is notable that Hokusai does not merely study the topography and history of Fuji, but also considers “acts of looking, representing and reflecting it.”\(^{124}\)

In his prints, Hokusai portrays Mount Fuji from a variety of angles and viewpoints to achieve what Bell calls an “articulation of pictorial space.”\(^{125}\) Hokusai’s iconic “Red Fuji” print from his *Thirty-six Views* series (figure 17) shows the mountain at full scale, with its reddish color deriving from the way the mountain looks when viewed at dawn in the late summer or early fall.\(^{126}\) Unlike some of the other compositions including Mount Fuji, this representation of the mountain does not include any human figures. In the print, color is used to great advantage to set the mountain off against its background. The snow on Mount Fuji’s peak, for example, makes a sharp contrast to the

\(^{120}\) Ibid., 76.
\(^{122}\) Bouquillard, *Hokusai’s Mount Fuji*, 11.
\(^{123}\) Ibid., 8.
\(^{125}\) Bell, *Hokusai’s Project*, 77.
\(^{126}\) Bouquillard, *Hokusai’s Mount Fuji*, 16.
dark red summit and the reddish hue of the mountain. Additionally, Hokusai fills a blue sky with numerous clouds whose pattern probably developed from Dutch copperplate engravings. The strong coloring of this print—greater than usual for Hokusai—lends Mount Fuji a certain strength of presence.

In many of Hokusai’s other depictions of Fuji, however, the mountain is often miniaturized in the background, making use of the dramatic contrast of scale between the large objects that are close in the foreground and tiny features in the background. In this way, Bell writes, Hokusai achieves “representation of deep pictorial space.” Hokusai’s most famous example is his “Great Wave off Kanagawa” (figure 16). In this print, the wave looms large in the foreground, colored with striking prussian blue ink, while a tiny, pure white Fuji is relegated to the background, giving the appearance of far distance.

Because Japanese viewers read scrolls and paintings from right to left—rather than the Western convention of left to right—the wave was designed to tumble into the viewer’s face, rather than follow their gaze, giving the print a certain power. The miniature Mount Fuji in the distance is set off by the darkened skyline which remains shaded above the mountain’s peak. Indeed, the contrast between the great wave and the miniaturized Fuji emphasizes the pictorial depth of the scene. While other artists (Hiroshige, for example) may have likely chosen to make Fuji larger or higher in the scene, so that the mountain “floats above the wave,” Hokusai makes a conscious choice to miniaturize and relegate Fuji to the background, and his miniaturization here parallels the miniaturization of fujizuka. It seems as though the towering wave itself will tumble over and drown the great mountain.

128 Bell, Hokusai’s Project, 81.
This technique of Hokusai’s recurs throughout his prints, particularly those where Mount Fuji appears. His print “The Fujimi Fields in Owari Province,” (figure 18) reflects Hokusai’s stylistic tendencies where geometric composition is carefully articulated.129 The small Mount Fuji, although miniaturized in the background, is framed by the round form of the barrel. These inverted shapes—the rounded barrel and triangular Fuji, for example—establish a very close bond between foreground and background, a device that Hokusai uses to the fullest throughout his Thirty-six Views and beyond.130

Hiroshige, in contrast, does not use these same kinds of techniques despite the fact that Fuji appears as a background figure in many of his woodblock prints. Even though Mount Fuji appears in the distance, Hiroshige instead brings the mountain closer than it would ordinarily be in terms of geographic accuracy. In pictures where Mount Fuji is the primary subject, the stature of Mount Fuji is greatly exaggerated. In one of Hiroshige’s prints from his Fifty-three Stations of the Tōkaidō Road series, entitled “Hara—Mount Fuji in the Morning,” Mount Fuji’s height and presence is so exaggerated that the mountain’s form actually breaks through the edges of the print, extended outwards (figure 19). Although Hiroshige breaks the frame by having the pure white peak of the mountain transcend the borderlines, he uses divisions within the print to extend the frame as well. Hiroshige often uses asymmetry within a composition to achieve a similar extending of the frame. Stephen Addiss writes of this technique: “In our intuitive search for visual balance, we are obliged to imagine the continuation of forms that we cannot see.”131 In many of his prints, Hiroshige only presents half of a

129 Bouquillard, Hokusai’s Mount Fuji, 37.
130 Bell, Hokusai’s Project, 80.
131 Addiss and Foresman, Tōkaidō, 79.
form, an asymmetrical form, allowing the viewer to imagine the continuation of an object or feature, extending a prints’ frame in the imagination of the viewer.

Although Hiroshige and Hokusai often worked with similar subject matter, the two artists present different views of nature and thus different views of Mount Fuji. In his prints, Hiroshige represents nature in a naturalistic manner and celebrates man in harmony with nature throughout its changing seasons. Hokusai, on the other hand, takes a very subjective view of nature. As an artist, Hokusai consistently dissects nature into geometrical forms and then carefully reorganizes them into a composition. Hiroshige understood Hokusai’s artistic tendencies and remarked, “Hokusai seeks interesting compositions; thus even Mount Fuji is treated as an addition to his composition.”

Although Hiroshige and Hokusai’s views of nature differ, Mount Fuji still proved a worthy subject for both of them. Indeed, a subject as grand in scale as Mount Fuji provides ample opportunity for artists to depict Fuji in their own way, personalizing the mountain and adopting it as their own, not dissimilar from fujizuka which afforded builders and visitors the same opportunity.

These varied images presents a combination of the secular and religious features of fujizuka and confirms the idea that, although originally constructed for the purpose of cult worship by Fujikō members, the use of these mounds by the populace extended beyond the realm of religion. Despite these religious features, this woodblock image is lacking in other cult iconography that distinguished fujizuka when they were first created, and shows a widespread, secular use of the mountain as a leisure activity.

The distinction between religious use and leisure becomes even more apparent when looking at Hokusai’s “Groups of Mountain Climbers” (figure 20). This print is

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132 White et al., *Hokusai and Hiroshige*, 43.
distinct from others in the *Thirty-six Views* collection because it features the mountain up close rather than as a compositional or symbolic element in the background. The design shows Fuji devotees making the arduous trek up the mountain using staffs and ladders. The devotees, dressed in standard pilgrimage outfits including rounded hats and white robes, hike towards a cave on the inside of the mountain where many pilgrims are huddled inside. This cave likely represents the cave where cult leader Jikigyō fasted for 31 days.\(^{133}\) As the devotees huddle in a fetal position inside the “womb” of the mountain, they enact a ritual of rebirth.\(^{134}\)

The religious aspirations depicted in Hokusai’s work are far removed from the secularized use of Mount Fuji seen in some of its depictions. Compared to the climbers making the ascent to the peak of a *fujizuka* in Hiroshige’s prints, as in *New Fuji at Meguro*, the differences are striking: climbers lack pilgrimage clothing, particularly the conspicuous headgear of devotees, the blossoms in the foreground reveal the wrong season for ascending the mountain, the physical structure of the mound appears as grass rather than rock, and there are no distinguishing features on the summit, such as shrines or devotional objects. This mini Fuji, it seems, is a garden open to the public.

In print culture in the Edo period, both Fuji and its miniature counterparts appear as a popular subject. Hiroshige and Hokusai, as artists who lived and worked within the city of Edo, represent a distinct view of the city that incorporates the theme of Mount Fuji. The subject of Fuji in Edo prints presents a certain duality: Fuji and *fujizuka* appear in prints because Fuji was a popular subject of artistic and symbolic importance. And yet the wealth of Fuji depictions strengthens the connection between Edo and Fuji,

\(^{134}\) Takeuchi, “Making Mountains: Mini-Fujis, Edo Popular Religion and Hiroshige’s ‘One Hundred Famous Views of Edo’,” 36.
portraying Fuji as an overwhelming popular site of both artistic and symbolic importance, intimately linked to the city and its people. In this way, the subject of Fuji within Edo prints helped to create, cement, reaffirm and popularize Fuji as a symbol of Edo, imbedding the great mountain into both the physical setting and cultural imagination of the city.
CONCLUSION

Fuji in the City

Mount Fuji within the city of Edo has played many roles, from the highest object of devotion in a religious cult, to inspiring miniature replicas used as gardens, to a source of artistic inspiration for the major print artists of the Edo period. All of these facets of Fuji—Fujikō, fujizuka and Fuji in print culture—were uniquely centered on Edo. Mount Fuji strengthened as a symbol of the city over time, culturally legitimizing the new capital. This study has demonstrated that Mount Fuji in its many facets contributed to an urban experience unique to the city of Edo.

Embedded within this urban experience in Edo is Mount Fuji as both a physical mountain and a symbol. Mount Fuji’s miniature counterparts, as well, influenced the development of this particular urban experience by transposing the majestic Fuji to spaces within the city environment in such a way that commoners and cult members alike could experience them fully. While various print media, such as the woodblock prints by Hiroshige, demonstrated the experience of fujizuka for a broad population, the prints themselves influenced the same things that they were representing: namely, a particular experience of Edo, both for those who resided within the city and people from other provinces who were able to experience Edo vicariously through these media.

Beyond the religious and artistic aspects of the mountain, as discussed in previous chapters, Mount Fuji was integrated into the physical layout of the city of Edo. In the article “Encoding “the Capital” in Edo,” Timon Screech argues that, in order to justify the city as worthy of a shogunal regime to rival the previous capital of Kyoto, Edo used Mount Fuji, among other things, as a geographical feature with symbolic and literary
The Musashino Plain upon which Edo was built had little to offer in terms of historical or natural prowess besides a wide expanse of open land, but it did provide a dramatic view of Mount Fuji. Once the city of Edo began to grow, paintings of the previously bare Musashino Plain began to include Mount Fuji. Fuji soon became part of an “established poetic iconography” as a way of valorizing the new capital, since it was a mountain unique in shape, stature and location in Japan, and even among neighboring countries. Fuji, as Screech asserts, served as a symbol of Edo as an independent cultural space.

It was not only that Mount Fuji provided those in Edo with a historical and literary legitimacy. Mount Fuji also became inextricably tied to the experience of Edo as a city, capital and new urban environment, not merely as a substitute for Kyoto in a new place. Screech notes that Fuji came to be associated with New Years (one was supposed to dream of Fuji on New Years Day in order to have a successful year) with the warmer weather of spring, particularly in waka poetry.

Additionally, Edo used literary prestige in order to lift up both the mountain and Edo itself. In the great classical text Tales of Ise (Ise monogatari) the protagonist, travels through the region and notes that Mount Fuji is larger than Mount Hiei, the most widely known mountain near the capital. The main character writes of Fuji being “like as many as twenty Mt. Hieis piled up together” with its shape rounded and conical like a salt cake. Soon, this particular image of the tale’s protagonist passing under the mountain was a trope found frequently in many of the depictions of Mount Fuji. It was also a

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136 Ibid., 72.
137 Ibid., 73.
subject painted often on narrative scrolls. With this literary prestige, Mount Fuji began to be represented and visualized in regional contexts, eventually developing a relationship with Edo itself.

Along with Fuji holding prestigious cultural and literary significance, there is evidence that the new capital may have been planned and constructed with the location and views of Fuji in mind. In *Tokyo: A Spatial Anthropology*, Jinnai Hidenobu references a hypothesis of Kirishiki Shinjirō that shitamachi, the downtown area or “low city,” and the Nihonbashi Honchō area were designed in relation Mount Fuji, an argument that may extend to the “high city” as well. Shinjirō reconstructed old maps of the Nihonbashi Honchō area of the city and found that it was divided into sections so that it perfectly aligned with a view of Mount Fuji.\(^{138}\) An aerial view of the city suggests that Edo was built in relation to the mountain and its slopes. In this way, Mount Fuji became a frequent view for many inhabitants.

In 1603, the ruling Tokugawa family constructed a bridge in celebration of its new shogungate. The Nihonbashi Bridge—one of the largest and finest bridges in Japan at the time—marked the start of the Tōkaidō Road and became the center of Edo.\(^{139}\) The bridge was planned and constructed in such a way that standing on it led to two main views; one was a vista leading to the entrance of the castle, and the other was the looming form of majestic Mount Fuji. The view, depicted in Hokusai’s print “Fuji from Nihonbashi” shows the castle as not being aligned perfectly in the center of the view from the bridge but rather shifted slightly to the right in order have the castle complement

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\(^{138}\) Jinnai, *Tokyo, a Spatial Anthropology*, 120.

\(^{139}\) Screech, “Encoding ‘The Capital’ in Edo,” 76. Nihonbashi means “two-track bridge” but also has another meaning because *Nihon* is the name for Japan. The bridge was sometimes written as the “Bridge of Japan” and it became the center of not only Edo, but of the whole land of *Nihon* itself.
the rising peak.\textsuperscript{140} Although Hokusai may have altered the perspective to better suit his artistic composition, the location of the bridge still seems to favor the view of both the mountain and the castle. The fact that the view of Fuji is so clear from Nihonbashi—the center of Edo—solidifies the relationship between the mountain and the city.

A \textit{sugoroku} board game designed by Hiroshige in 1859 (figure 22) marks Nihonbashi at the center of the game and includes the famous mountain within the scene. In this particular game players travel around to different \textit{meisho}—famous temples, shrines and scenic spots—around the city, labeled in red on the print.\textsuperscript{141} This birds eye clearly includes Mount Fuji, which looms majestically over the city as if it were a watchful guardian. Even as the players travel around the city in a loop, the mountain is constantly present, visible throughout the city.

Similar to Mount Fuji’s presence within the city is Mount Fuji’s presence within the region itself. In another \textit{sugoroku} game, Hokusai’s “Famous Places of the \textit{Tōkaidō},” (figure 23) players travel along the Tōkaidō, departing from the bottom right of the print and encircling Mount Fuji in the upper opposite corner before arriving in Kyoto.\textsuperscript{142} This print, too, presents a kind of bird’s eye view in which Mount Fuji rises up dramatically in the corner of the print and is distinguished from the myriad locations along the road. Although the player ultimately travels the length of the entire road, from Edo’s Nihonbashi to Kyoto, Mount Fuji is the most eye-catching of all the \textit{meisho} represented on the board, due to its sheer size and white coloring.

Designs for \textit{sugoroku} allowed players to participate in the experience of traveling, and their perspective—often a bird’s eye view—had more entertainment value than

\textsuperscript{140} Ibid., 77.  
\textsuperscript{141} Salter, \textit{Japanese Popular Prints}, 16.  
\textsuperscript{142} Ibid., 64.
geographic accuracy. Because artists were unable to see an entire landscape from this vantage point depictions like these reveal artist creativity. They were able to suspend geographic accuracy in favor of their own rendition of relationships between famous sites and destinations. 143 Mount Fuji, featuring prominently in many of these types of designs, must have held a considerable weight in the mind of artists insofar as they placed the mountain in prominent positions in depictions of both the city of Edo and the surrounding region.

Along with this integration into the city, there are numerous other features of the city that incorporate Fuji. There is a slope called Fujimizaka (Fuji-viewing hill) in the same area of the city. From here, where the main street of Ura Yonbanchō met the banks of the outer castle moat, Mount Fuji would have been clearly visible. Hidenobu asserts that, in fact, Edo, as with most Japanese cities, was organized with a strong centrifugal logic in relation to its natural surroundings and topography. In the same manner of shakkei, or borrowed scenery, Japanese cities made use of distant scenery, like mountains, and incorporated it into the cityscape as landmarks. 144

A natural feature with a commanding presence as well as symbolic meaning, Mount Fuji became a focal point beyond the city. In many prints by Hiroshige, for example, Mount Fuji’s size and proximity are exaggerated, almost as if the mountain is within the city itself. There were at least ten different parts of the city that were known for their views of Fuji. 145 Nihonbashi, as stated earlier, was one district with particular views of Fuji. Hiroshige’s “Suruga-chō” is probably one of the most prominent examples of this (figure 24). In the print, the perspective and parallel composition draw the

143 Ibid., 63.
144 Jinnai, Tokyo, a Spatial Anthropology, 41–42.
145 Uhlenbeck and Molenaar, Mount Fuji, 22.
viewer’s attention to the prominent form of Mount Fuji rising above the bustle of the street. The stylized clouds that separate the mountain from the city usually serve in Japanese paintings to separate scenes in pictorial narratives, yet the use of clouds in the woodblock print further blurs the distinction between city and mountain, thereby integrating Fuji within the city.

As Hidenobu writes, “Edo—a beautiful city integrated into the great natural world—is vividly described from the viewpoint of the low-city commoners as constituting a single, coherent universe.”\textsuperscript{146} The integration of Fuji into the geography and neighborhoods of the city placed the mountain at the forefront of the minds and cultural imagination of Edoites. Even though Mount Fuji was only a distant view from many parts of the city, the image and symbol of Edo loomed large in depictions, conceptions and the layout of the city.

While the view and presence of Mount Fuji can be felt within the neighborhoods and layout of the city, miniaturization through \textit{fujizuka} took this idea one step further. Instead of bringing Fuji closer through unobstructed and framed views or Fuji-viewing slopes, people brought the actual mountain itself into the city as simulacra. \textit{Fujizuka}, as miniaturized Fujis that dominated the urban landscape, provided personalized connections to the mountain experienced in various ways. Different groups found meaning in the mountain that symbolized and dominated their new urban environment.

The religious cults of Fujikō first emerged as a group centered around the mountain and its rich historical and religious significance. Participation in the various confraternities itself, however, was an experience that was uniquely linked to the city and its layout. Earhart discusses the linkage of Fujikō with both the mountain and the city:

\textsuperscript{146} Jinnai, \textit{Tokyo, a Spatial Anthropology}, 70.
“If Fuji pilgrimage is Fuji-centric, then Fujikō meetings are Edo-centric or Tokyo-centric: as Edo became central to Japan and Fuji became Japan’s central or “number one” sacred mountain…”

Although there were a few branches of Fujikō that arose in distant regions, the vast majority of confraternities existed and practiced within the city, spurring the development of fujizuka that gradually dotted the cityscape. For cult members, fujizuka were used to worship and provided a convenient, accessible and personalized worship experience equivalent to a pilgrimage to the summit of Fuji herself.

For those not associated with the Fuji cult, fujizuka had all the characteristics of an Edo period garden where visitors could interact with the mountain and its surroundings on a more personal level. The religious compounds inside which miniature Fujis were constructed were set in natural, often wooded areas, and they became sites where citygoers could relax and enjoy natural scenery. With festivals and seasonal delights, these spaces developed into places rife with commercialization, popular amusement and natural beauty. As temple and shrine spaces merged religion with entertainment for the masses, fujizuka straddled this same ambiguous line. Like gardens in religious spaces across Japan, fujizuka were constructed deliberately for religious worship with many of the same techniques and materials used in garden construction. Miniature Fujis, like gardens, were appropriated for popular use and entertainment beyond their original religious intent and visitors often appreciated natural beauty—tree blossoms and fine distant views—that surrounded the space of the mini-Fujis. Fujizuka emerged as gardens that were geographically and temporally specific, originating from the creation of Mount Fuji as a symbol of Edo.

147 Earhart, Mount Fuji, 93.
148 Jinnai, Tokyo, a Spatial Anthropology, 83.
Lastly, print media and print culture within the city, including woodblock print artists such as Hiroshige and Hokusai, spread the idea of Mount Fuji as integral to the urban experience of Edo, with *fujizuka* as one manifestation of a personalized and intimate relationship with the mountain. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Mount Fuji appears as a common theme in the works of Edo artists Hokusai and Hiroshige. 19 of out the 118 prints in Hiroshige’s *Famous Views of Edo* include Fuji as either a focal point in the background or as a dramatic central image. 12 out of 19 of these show the mountain from central locations in the city. Even though Mount Fuji was over 100 km away from the city, artists still considered the mountain a focal point in the landscape and tied Fuji to the city, even in places where it, geographically, would not be visible. 149 Similarly, both Hokusai and Hiroshige included ten scenes of Edo in their respective series, *Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji*. The constant pairing and connection of Edo and Mount Fuji helped turn Fuji into a symbol of the city.

Prints by Edo artists for a wide consumer base also developed Fuji as an essential part of the “Edo experience.” While Edoites experienced Fuji through vistas incorporated into the layout of city neighborhoods, through Fuji cults, *fujizuka*, and the sheer variety of Mount Fuji in print media, print media that spread outside of Edo also propagated this experience. Through prints, people far outside the city could experience Fuji themselves, thus participating in—or at least getting an idealized glimpse of—the unique urban experience of the mountain within Edo.

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Even today at 3,776 m, Mount Fuji stands as an enduring symbol of Japan, both domestically and abroad. The origin of that symbolism can be traced back centuries to 

149 Uhlenbeck and Molenaar, *Mount Fuji*, 22.
the classical periods, where it was first admired in poetry and art for its unique form and majestic stature. Representations of the mountain shifted in the Edo period as Fuji was popularized and integrated into the city. Earhart notes how Fuji imagery differs according to numerous factors, including time period, location, social class of people either creating or enjoying the imagery, and the artistic genre.150 Shifting depictions of Mount Fuji continue to this day. Whereas Mount Fuji was once considered a holy mountain, distinguishing Japan from nearby countries that lacked a towering conical mountain, Mount Fuji in the present day has become a site of rampant commercialization and a place where hundreds of thousands of tourists flock each year hoping to reach the summit. Today, replication and miniaturization of Fuji occurs, as it did in the Edo period, though it is through a more intensive marketing of souvenirs and commercial goods. Still, Mount Fuji is seen as a gateway through which to experience Japan, not unlike the way Fuji functioned for the city of Edo.

Geographers often consider the idea of the “mountain” to be a cultural creation in and of itself. The cultural creation of Mount Fuji was manipulated and strengthened for the sake of a city. Mount Fuji proved to be a complex and multi-faceted symbol that permeated the Edo experience. The people of Edo took possession of Fuji in a multitude of ways: as the central devotional object of Fujikō, as miniaturized and replicated fujizuka used as gardens throughout the city, and even as artistic representations that were conceived and consumed inside the city and beyond.

The story of Mount Fuji and fujizuka in the Edo period is, at its heart, the story of a mountain and its people. A closer look at these phenomena and their depictions provides an intimate look at the relationship between Mount Fuji and those residing in the

city of Edo, both in terms of how the mountain influenced the people and culture of Edo,
and how the people and their culture, in turn, influenced and shaped their beloved
mountain.
Bibliography


Appendix


Fig. 5: Utagawa Hiroshige. "Original Fuji, Meguro (4th Month, 1857)." In: One Hundred Famous Views of Edo. 1856–58. Woodblock print.
Fig. 6: Utagawa Hiroshige. "New Fuji, Meguro (4th Month, 1857)." In: *One Hundred Famous Views of Edo*. 1856–58. Woodblock print.
Fig. 7: Utagawa Hiroshige. "Open Garden at Fukagawa Hachiman Shrine (8th Month, 1857)." In: *One Hundred Famous Views of Edo*. 1856–58. Woodblock print.
Fig. 13: Saito Gasshin. "Gokokuji." In: *Edo meisho zue*. Waseda University Archives.
Fig. 14: Utagawa Toyokuni III and Utagawa Hiroshige. "Thirty-six Views of the Pride of Edo - Pilgrimage to Teppozu Inari Fuji Shrine." 1864.
Fig. 15: Utagawa Hiroshige. "The Plum Garden at Omurai; Flower Siblings at Famous Places." 1856
Fig. 16: Katsushika Hokusai, "Under the Wave off Kanagawa." In: *Thirty-Six Views of Mount Fuji*. 1831. Woodblock print.
Fig. 17: Katsushika Hokusai, "Red Fuji." In: Thirty-Six Views of Mount Fuji. Woodblock print.
Fig. 18: Katsushika Hokusai. "Fujimi Field in Owari Province." In: *Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji*. Woodblock print.
Fig. 19. Utagawa Hiroshige. "Mount Fuji in the Morning, Hara." In: The Fifty-three Views of the Tōkaidō. Woodblock print.
Fig. 20. Katsushika Hokusai. "Groups of Mountain Climbers." In *Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji*. Woodblock print.
Fig. 21. Katsushika Hokusai. "Nihonbashi Bridge in Edo." In: Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji. Woodblock print.
Fig. 22. Utagawa Hiroshige. "Board Game of the Famous Places in Edo in One View." 1859. Woodblock print. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.
Fig. 23. Katsushika Hokusai, “Famous Places of the Tōkaidō.” Woodblock
Fig. 24. Utagawa Hiroshige, “Suruga-cho.” In: One Hundred Famous Views of Edo. Woodblock print.