The Potentiality of Line-drawing using the Brush

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This essay considers how we can overcome the dead-end of modern Western rationalism with the values and aesthetics that are rooted in Japanese culture.

Firstly, I address the worldwide cultural homogenization caused by modern Western rationalism. I suggest that people can only feel the reality of their lives in an environment where culture has been developing for a long time. As a sense of reality in life gets weaker, it becomes necessary to reconsider the values and aesthetics that are deeply rooted in the cultural climate.

Next I look at shifts in society from the viewpoint of Painting, and explore how they have changed our lifestyle and sense of values. I focus on line-drawing applied by brush. Although it is now uncommon after radical changes in society during the Meiji era, brush line-drawing played a big part in building Japanese culture. As examples, I look at the brush line-work of Kataoka Tamako and Nobori Gaigi.

I conclude that line is the foundation of Japanese paintings and also that lines drawn by brush are drawn with the artist’s breath. Even today, with less chances to feel something through the body, I affirm the great meaning and effect of the line-drawing applied by brush.