



Looking East Vincent van Gogh and Japan





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JAPANESE STUDY

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CONCLUSION



Vincent compared Arles to be “as beautiful as Japan as far as the limpidity of the atmosphere and gay color effects are concerned. [Here] water forms patches of a beautiful emerald or a rich blue in the landscape, just as we see it in the crépons [A type of Japanese woodblock prints].”



INTRODUCTION

- Start from Antwerp.
- Van Gogh's golden "Japanese Era" in Arles, France.
- Japanese painting study.
- Life with Japanese elements.
- Vincent's private own Japanese utopia.
- The oriental dream faded away.

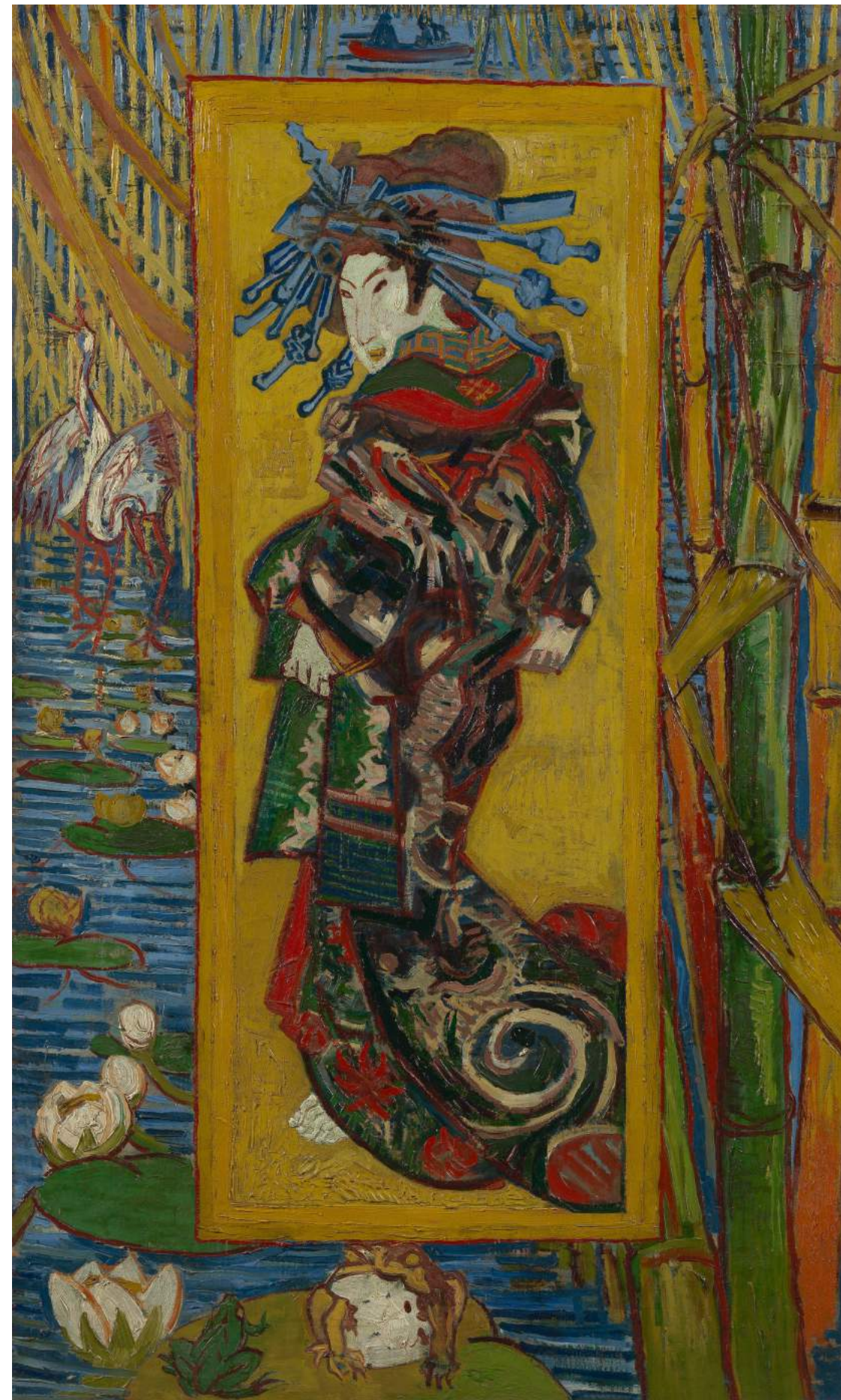


JAPANESE STUDY

- Courtesan (after Eisen)
- Bridge in the Rain (after Hiroshige)
- Plum Trees in Bloom (after Hiroshige)

Portrait
Landscape
Landscape





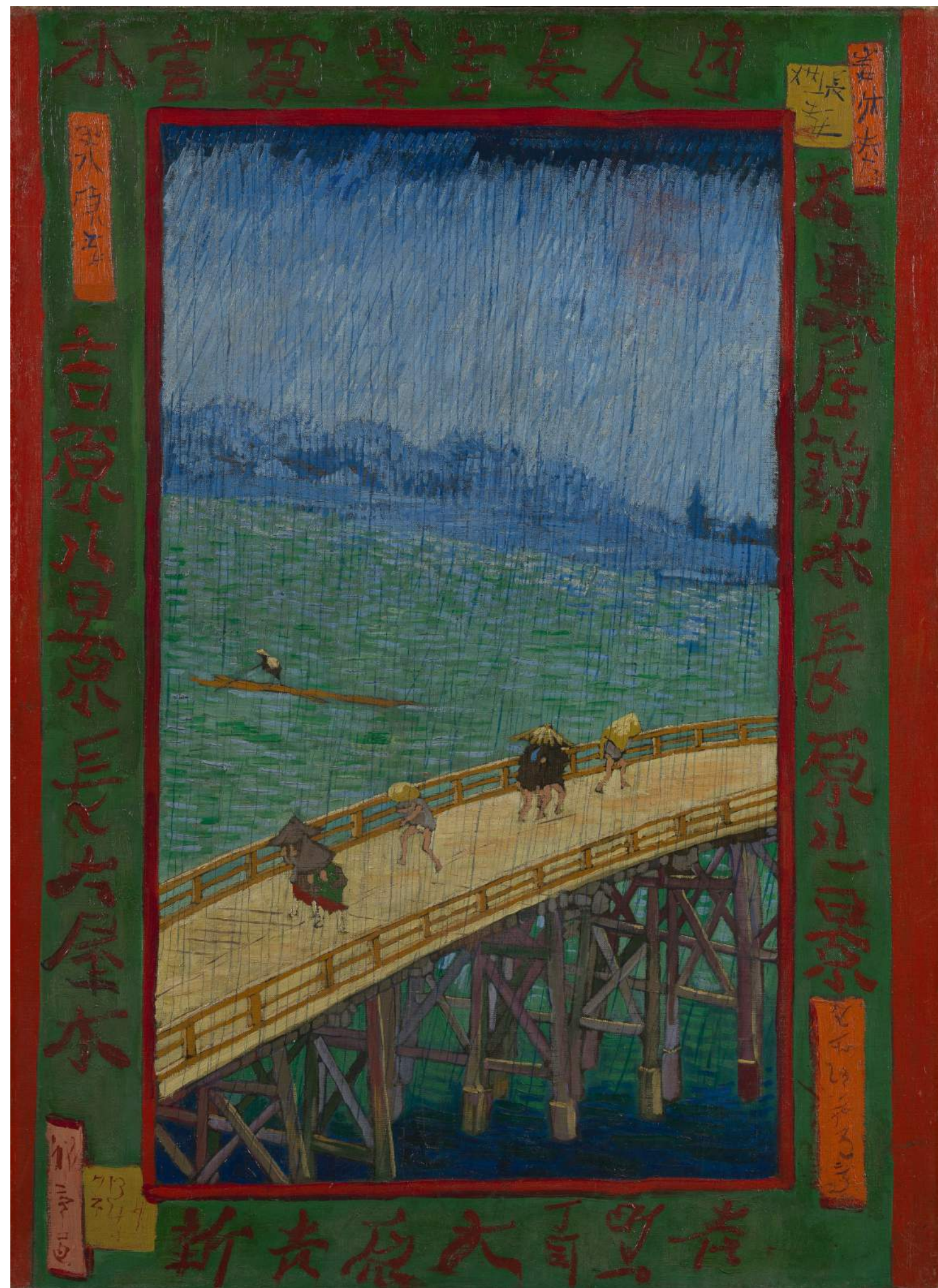
1
 Vincent van Gogh (1853 - 1890)
Courtesan (after Eisen)
 Paris, October - November 1887
 Oil on canvas, 100.7 cm x 60.7 cm
 Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation)



2
 Keisai Eisen (1790-1848)
Courtesan Wearing Uchikake with Dragon
 Design
 signed Keisai Eisen ga, with censor's seal
 Kiwame, and publisher's seal Ue, Kawaguchi
 (Kawaguchiya Uhei of Fukusendo), ca. 1830s
 kakemono-e (vertical oban diptych)
 29 by 9 5/8 in., 73.7 by 24.3 cm



3
 Title page of *Paris Illustré "Le Japon"* vol. 4, May 1886,
 no. 45-46.



4
 Vincent van Gogh (1853 - 1890)
Bridge in the Rain (after Hiroshige)
 Paris, October - November 1887
 oil on canvas, 73.3 cm x 53.8 cm
 Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation)



5
 Utagawa Hiroshige
Sudden Downpour on the Large Bridge near Atake,
 1857



6
 Vincent Van Gogh (1853 - 1890)
Plum Trees in Bloom (after Hiroshige), October 1887
 oil on canvas



7
 Utagawa Hiroshige
The Plum Trees Teahouse at Kameido, 1857
 Woodcut

JAPANESE PHILOSOPHY

Portrait of Père Tanguy

- Gesture
- Background
- Relationship with van Gogh





9
L. Gonse.
"Statuette de bonze,"
L' Art japonais, vol. 2, Paris 1883, p.60



8
Vincent van Gogh (1853 - 1890)
Portrait of Père Tanguy, 1887
Oil on canvas
65.0 cm × 51.0 cm (25.6 in × 20.0 in)
Musée Rodin, Paris



11
Utagawa Toyokuni III (1786-1865)
The Courtesan Takao of the Miuraya, 1861



8
Vincent van Gogh (1853 - 1890)
Portrait of Père Tanguy, 1887
Oil on canvas
65.0 cm × 51.0 cm (25.6 in × 20.0 in)
Musée Rodin, Paris



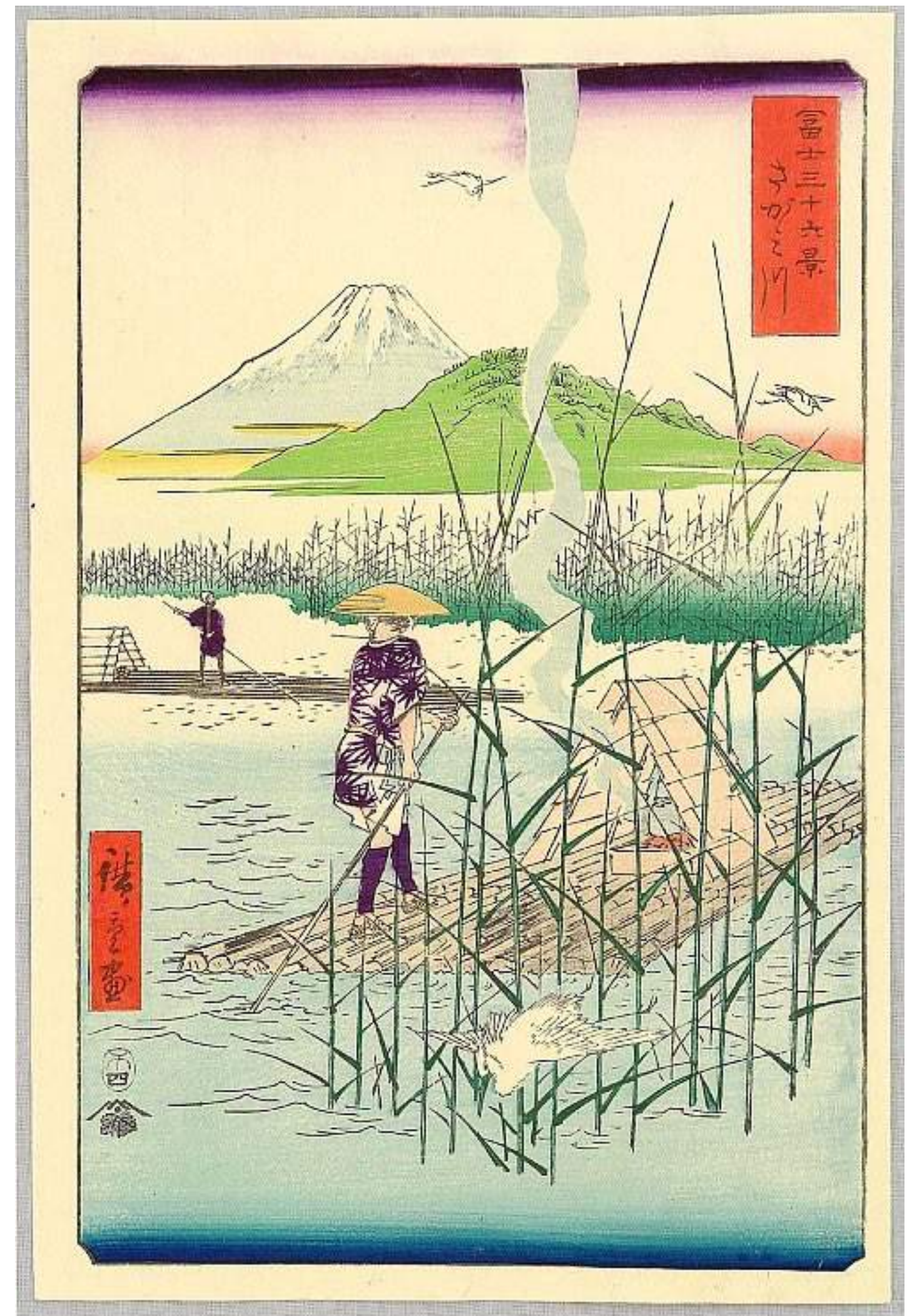
10
Utagawa Hiroshige
The Yoshitsune's Cherry Tree near the Noriyori shore, 1885
Museum of Fine Art, Boston.



13
Utagawa Hiroshige II
Morning Glories at Iriya in the Eastern Capital
(Tōto Iriya asagao), 1866



8
Vincent van Gogh (1853 - 1890)
Portrait of Père Tanguy, 1887
Oil on canvas
65.0 cm × 51.0 cm (25.6 in × 20.0 in)
Musée Rodin, Paris



12
Utagawa Hiroshige
Mount Fuji from the Sagami River, 1858



14
Utagawa Hiroshige
The Nihon Embankment near the Yoshiwara,
from the series *Famous Places in Edo (Kōto meisho)*, 1835-1839



8
Vincent van Gogh (1853 - 1890)
Portrait of Père Tanguy, 1887
Oil on canvas
65.0 cm × 51.0 cm (25.6 in × 20.0 in)
Musée Rodin, Paris

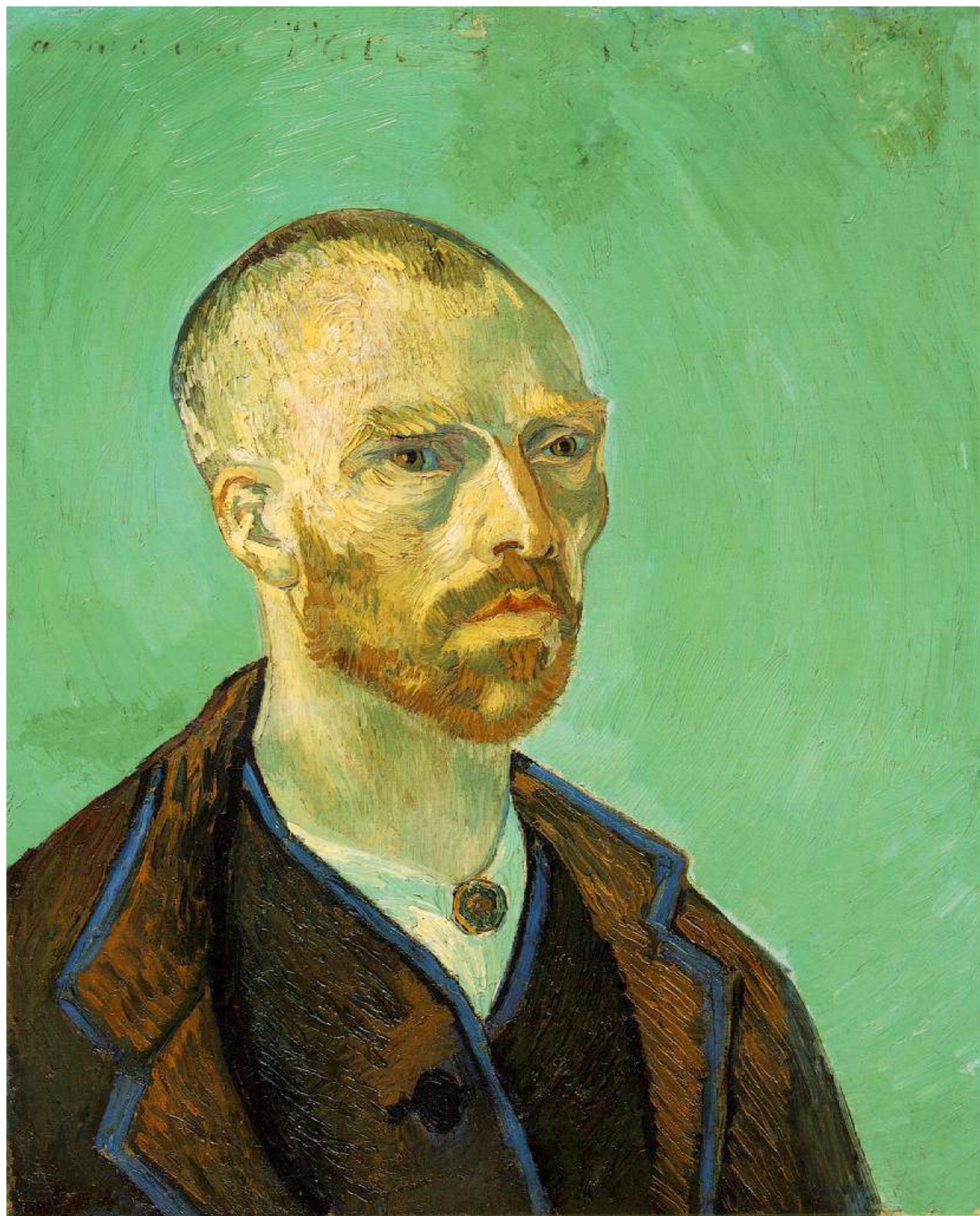


3
Title page of *Paris Illustré "Le Japon"* vol. 4, May 1886, no. 45-46.

JAPANESE UTOPIA

Self-portrait as bonze

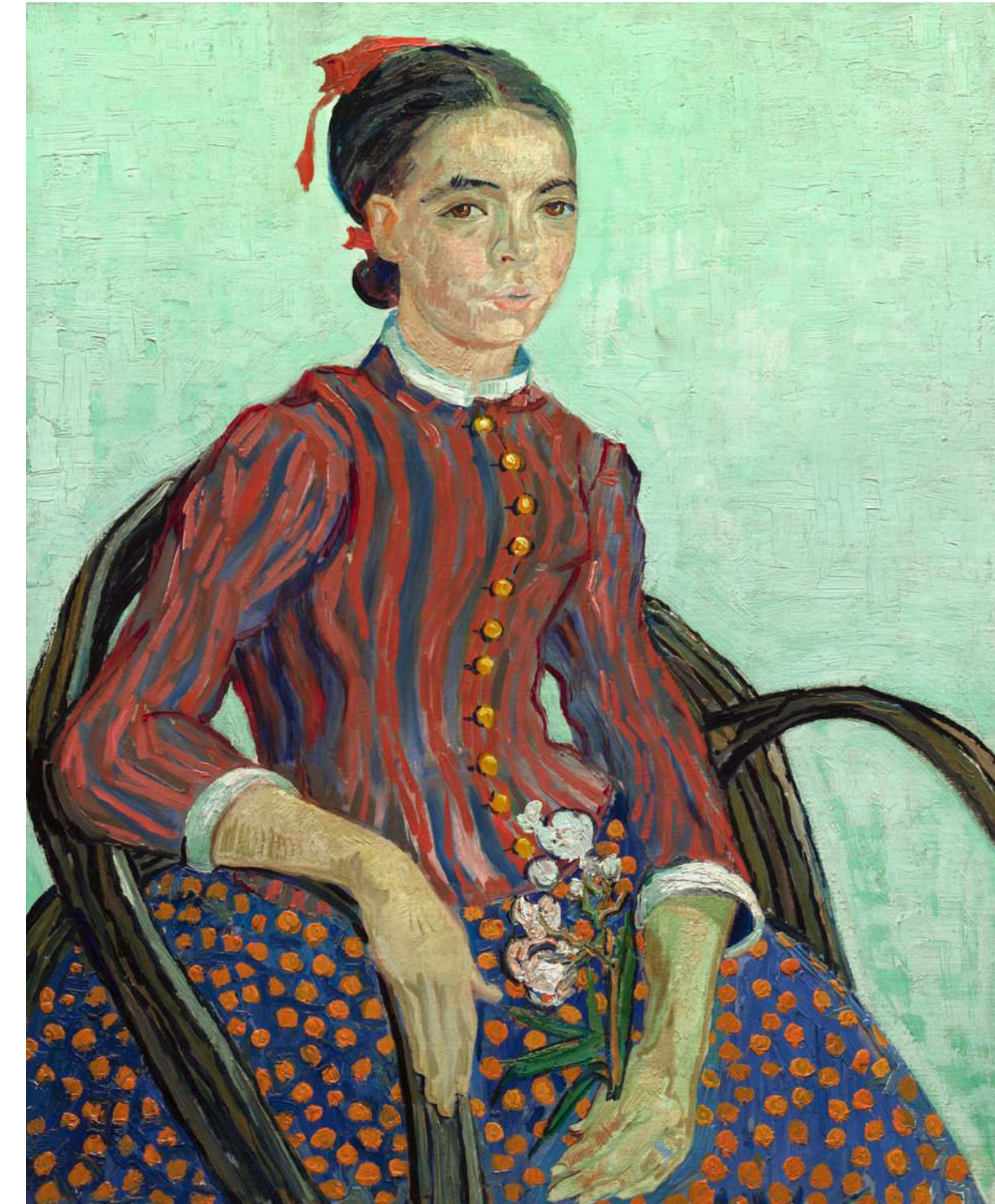




15
 Vincent Van Gogh (1853 - 1890)
Self-portrait as bonze, September 1888
 Oil on canvas, 62 × 52 cm
 Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, MA



16
 Myrbach
Funeral procession,
 illustration in : P. Loti,
Madame Chryanthème
 Paris 1888

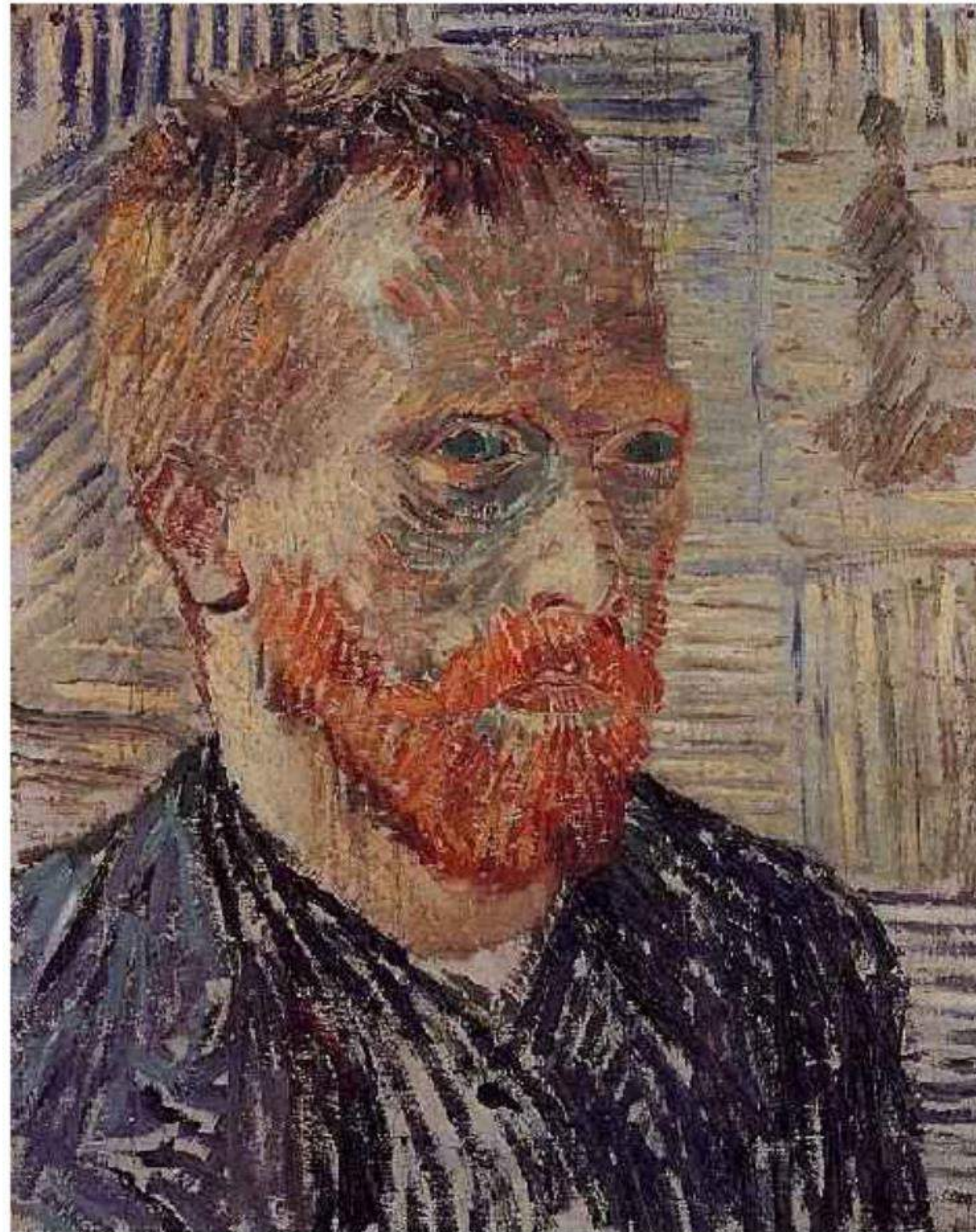


17
 Vincent Van Gogh (1853 -
 1890)
La Mousmé, 1888
 oil on canvas
 28.9 in × 23.7 in (73.3 cm
 × 60.3 cm) National
 Gallery of Art,
 Washington D.C.

THE ENDING OF THE STORY

Self-portrait with a Japanese print





18

Vincent van Gogh (1853 - 1890)
Self-Portrait with a Japanese Print
December 1887, Paris

Oil on canvas, 44 x 35 cm

Öffentliche Kunstsammlung, Basel





Claude Monet (French, 1840-1926)
La Japonaise (Camille Monet in Japanese Costume)
 1876
 Oil on canvas
 231.8 x 142.3 cm (91 1/4 x 56 in.)



Pierre Bonnard
La petite blanchisseuse
 1896
 Lithograph in deep red, orange yellow, bistre, gray-black, grayish beige, on China paper
 image: 11 3/8 x 7 11/16 in. (28.9 x 19.6 cm) sheet: 20 1/16 x 15 1/4 in. (51 x 38.8 cm)



Paul Gauguin (1848 - 1903)
Self-Portrait with Portrait of Émile Bernard (Les misérables)
 oil on canvas, 44.5 cm x 50.3 cm
 Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation)



CLIVEYOU

Thank You



Looking East - Vincent van Gogh and Japan

Clive You

Abstract

During the formative years of his life in Arles, France, Vincent van Gogh became deeply enamoured with the art of Japan. Although he never saw Japan for himself, in his head he imagined it as an oriental utopia. This vision, while short-lived, was crucial for the eventual flowering of his unique painting style. Therefore, it is vital for us to understand the Japanese aesthetics and philosophy hidden in his paintings.

The essay commences with a discussion on the origins of van Gogh's Japonism interests and then proceeds with an analysis of how this manifested itself in three periods of his "Japanese Era". The first period is the learning stage for van Gogh. Visually, his paintings are close to the original pieces, but they are not simply the copies as he normally intensified the colours and created additional borders. The second period mainly features the *Portrait of Père Tanguy*, indicating the Japanese art in his social and spiritual life. The peak was reached around 1888, *Self-portrait as bonze* is the one which reflects his Japanese preference most obviously, which is further discussed in the third part. The visual analysis technique is widely utilised in this paper to conduct the research of Vincent's paintings and select the representatives of three periods. A visual analysis addresses an artwork's formal elements—visual attributes such as color, line, texture, and size. It may also include historical context or interpretations of meaning.