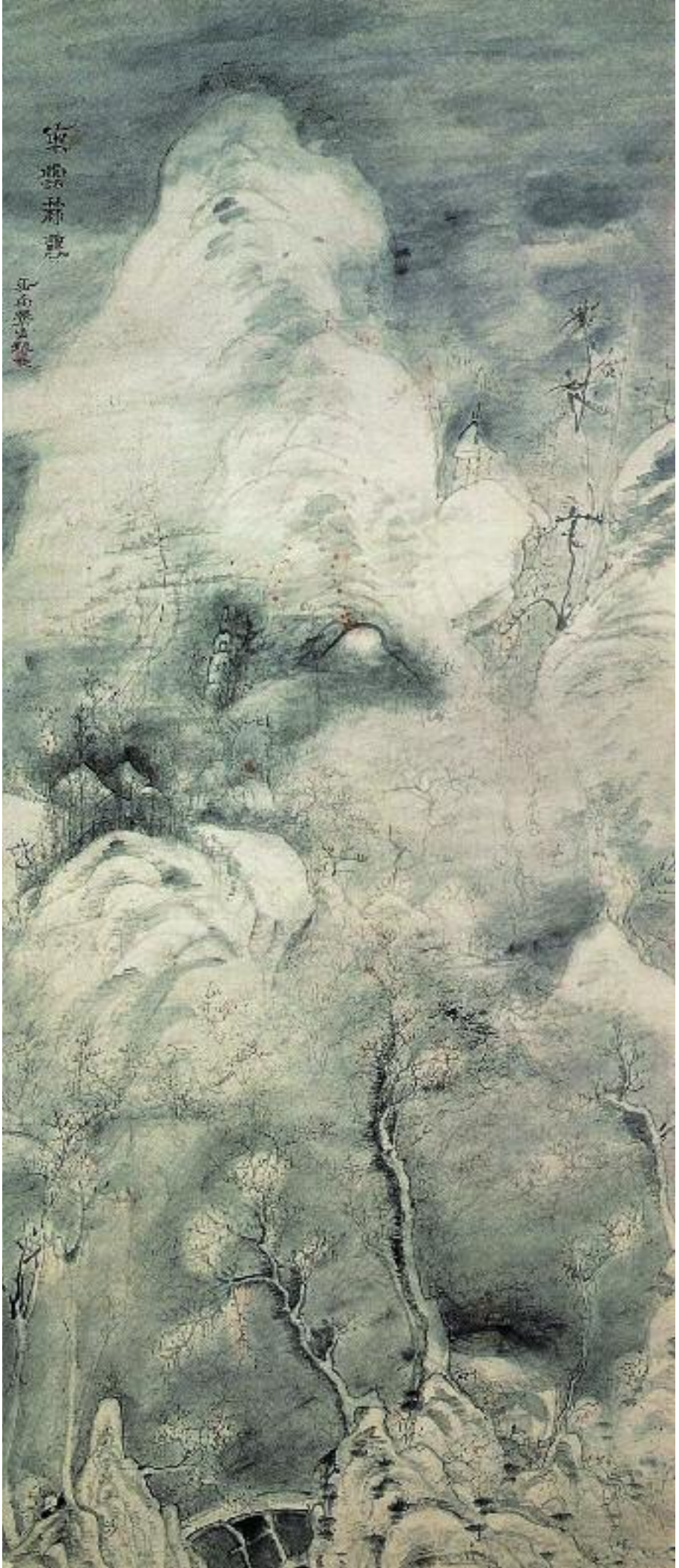

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Urakami Gyokudō: An Intoxicology of Japanese Literati Painting

For some time now it has been difficult to make sweeping statements about the nature and history of literati painting in East Asia. Scholarly inquiry of the past several decades has balkanized what was once comfortably viewed as a self-contained tradition of painting by scholar-amateurs with shared principles. According to the once-prevailing view, literati painting originated among Chinese scholar-officials of the eleventh century and was centered on the ideals of friendship, classical learning, and naturalness of expression, pictorially expressed through a circumscribed menu of allegorical subjects and an array of unpolished brush effects, the corollary of which was an aversion to so-called courtly or professional modes of pictorial representation. Now this putative tradition tends to be understood as a constellation of individual and local practices that were only loosely related and all significantly marked by differing historical and regional contingencies.[1] Compared to a generation ago, there is now a much greater awareness of the constructedness of the literati canon, with regard to not only the "Southern School" genealogy outlined by the influential scholar-official and aesthetician Dong Qichang (1555–1636), but also the pan-Asian literati tradition formulated in the 1910s and 1920s by Chinese and Japanese painter-intellectuals.[2]

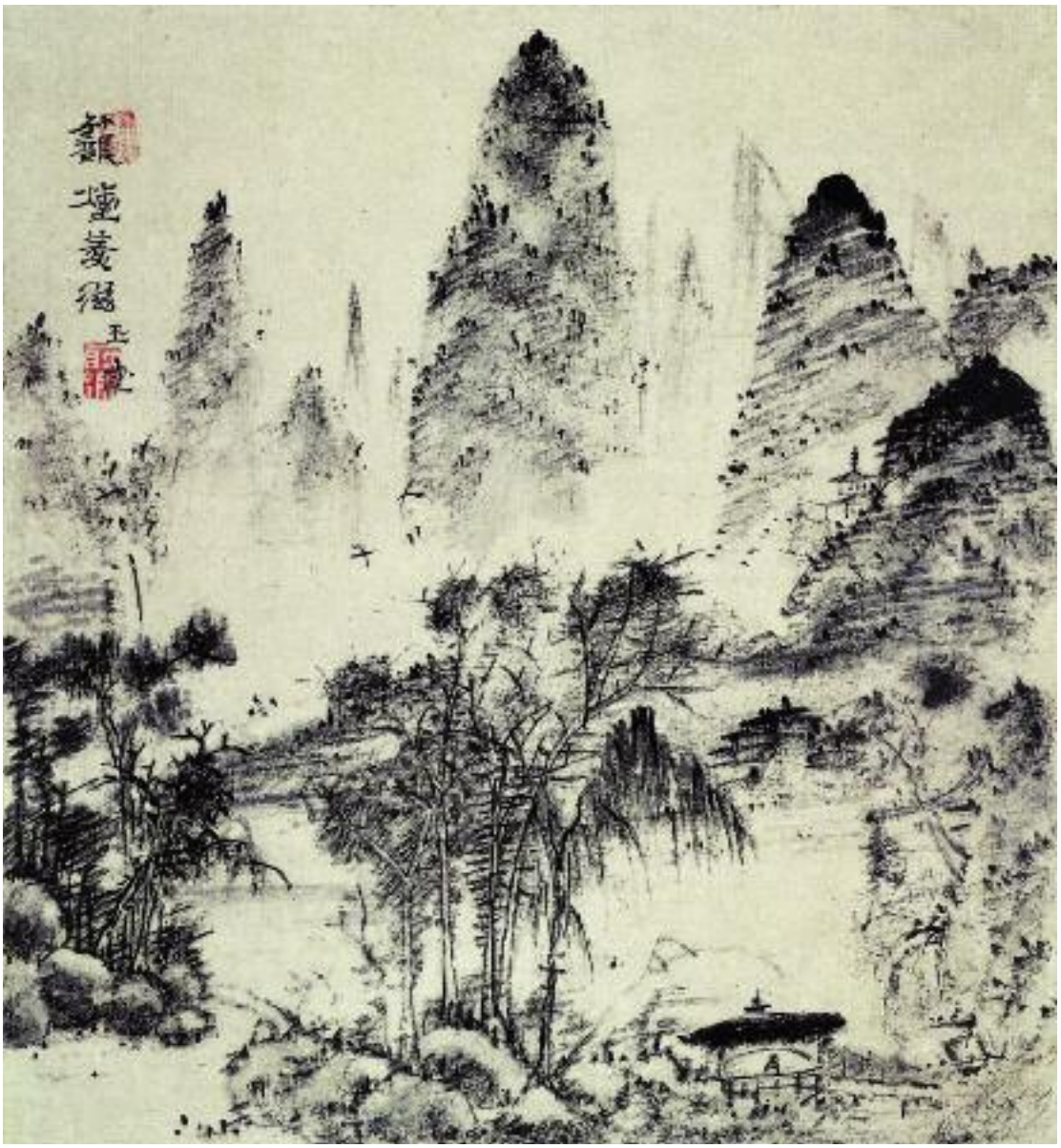
Considerable effort has also been devoted to local excavations of the socioeconomic conditions and commercial nature of literati cultural transactions.[3] These conditions were frequently masked by the rhetoric of lofty amateurism, the conceit that the literati painter painted only for his or her own enjoyment or that of friends. Long accepted at face value, this rhetoric was especially well received in the English-language sphere during the early postwar period, when the Cold War provided a framework within which the literati ideal of autonomous artistic production was overvalorized.[4] Greater sensitivity to the gaps between this posture and the circumstances of livelihood and exchange that underpinned it has enabled a vastly more nuanced understanding of literati subjectivity and sociality.[5] Moreover, the mode of painting with which this layered subjectivity is associated can now be more precisely understood as merely one of several spheres —along with poetry, calligraphy, and the authorship of specific categories of texts—in which this particular form of selfhood was performed and maintained.[6] Such insights also go a long way toward illuminating the complex economies of obligation and exchange within which literati artifacts acquired meaning and value.

This essay attempts to build on this new awareness in the study of literati painting by further exploring the inner mechanics of the newly articulated performative aspect of literati cultural production through an examination of the paintings of the Japanese

1. Urakami Gyokudō, *Eastern Clouds, Sifted Snow* (*Tōun shisetsu zu*), c. 1811–1812, vertical hanging scroll, ink and light colors on paper
Kawabata Foundation, Kanagawa Prefecture

artist Urakami Gyokudō (1745–1820).[7] More famous in his own time as a musician and poet, Gyokudō was rediscovered early in the twentieth century for his small corpus of landscape paintings, remarkable in their sketchy and brooding appeal (fig. 1). Executed on paper in mostly monochrome ink, these paintings are typically accompanied by poetic inscriptions and signatures in Gyokudō's inimitable seal-script calligraphy. Most are landscapes conjured up through an accumulation of rapid, horizontal, and abbreviated brushstrokes combined with rhythmically peppered dabs that result in shimmering, kinetically charged representations (fig. 2). Gyokudō's oeuvre departs so dramatically from anything else in the literati canon that this alterity alone would suffice to render him deserving of sustained critical examination. In this instance, however, it is Gyokudō's reputation as the drunken painter par excellence that makes him such an intriguing case study in literati pictorialism.

The relationship of Gyokudō's art to alcohol has until now been assumed rather than assessed. But a proper assessment is crucial, if only because the trope of the drunken artist had a long history in East Asian cul-



2. Urakami Gyokudō, *Hazy Mist Captured amid Mountains* (*Rōen jakuji zu*), c. 1815, vertical hanging scroll, ink on paper
Idemitsu Art Museum, Tokyo

tural production; Gyokudō's instantiation of it needs at least to be brought into consideration as the primary context for his reception, both in his own time and later on, as a scholar-amateur unfettered by convention. If literati cultural production was meant in large part to authenticate the fidelity of its creators and recipients to the ideals cherished by the imagined community to which they claimed membership—erudition, autonomy, friendship, and amateurism—the converse was also true: the cultural authenticity of a literati artifact had to be guaranteed by the social reputations of its creator and owner. Oftentimes their good standing was attested to by the work's textual enclosures, including its title, occasional and signatorial inscription, and, most important, its colophons.

In the realm of painting, however, inscriptive accoutrements could only do so much. The general principles of literati identity always had to be somehow manifest in the pictorial representation itself. The role of literatus was a mode of being that was continuously performed through, among other things, specific pictorial strategies and brush effects. Although textual enclosures could provide more specific information concerning the circumstances of exchange and situate the work more precisely in accordance with any local consensus governing the protocols of scholar-official production, the morphology of a painted object was ultimately what rendered it legible as an artifact of literati aspirations.

A key question that governs this inquiry is in what balance the rules of literati mark making operated alongside the narrative frames that enabled its acceptance as somehow authentic. Gyokudō's case is a reminder that these frames could contribute to the overall semantic agenda of a literati painting by conveying a complementary rhetorical structure emphasizing certain dispositions—including drunkenness, playfulness, reclusion, unwillingness, or even madness—to facilitate the recognition of the work as a properly literati representation. Although such dispositions are not reflected in all literati paintings, or perhaps even in the majority, where they do appear they offer insight into the ways a communicative agenda could be crafted through the careful symbiosis of word and image. With regard to Gyokudō, these insights are all the more trenchant for the way in which facture and rhetoric were so thoroughly imbricated. Thus a sober examination of his self-representation facilitates a heightened sensitivity not only to his brush dynamics but also, more generally, to patterns of personification in literati visual representation as a whole.

Such an inquiry is best prefaced by a consideration of the rules of amateur painterly expression on which Gyokudō's painting was generally premised. It was axiomatic that a literati painter cultivate the appearance of amateurishness in his or her work in order to distinguish it from what the Chinese scholar-official and literati aesthetic theorist Dong Qichang (1555–1636) called "the demon world" of professional painting.[8] Doing so was, however, a much trickier proposition than might be supposed, for there was never any clear consensus as to what an authentically amateur painting looked like, or how a lack of professional skill should be communicated in the ink-painting medium. Indeed, in the history of literati painting, a wide range of painterly effects were coded as nonprofessional over the centuries. Most painters who assumed the ideals of the scholar-official class in fact usually had some facility with the painter's brush and developed sophisticated techniques of de-skilling in order to cultivate an amateurity of expression. Some turned to the ancients for models of a primitive pictorial appearance; others transposed the brush habits of calligraphic handwriting to the realm of painting; and still others defined their amateurism in consistently negative terms simply as nonprofessional painting, consisting primarily of absences: the absence of expensive materials such as silk or mineral pigments, of elaborate compositions or minute details, and of otherwise prettifying gestures. It helped that there emerged a wide-ranging menu of allegorical subjects, including bamboo, orchids, and withered trees, all part of an iconography of literati virtue, that lent itself well to the demonstration of purposeful undercrafting.

As mentioned above, the adoption of semifictitious personas also enhanced the

reception of a painting as a reflection of the unadorned self. But eventually the most common method by which to achieve the appearance of the dilettante who painted only for friends was to mimic the approaches of earlier exemplars of the genre. Ironically, over time those qualities most prized in literati discourse, such as clumsiness, awkwardness, and blandness, came to be most readily captured through the attributes of proficiency, facility, and dexterity. The widespread dissemination and extreme conventionalization of literati methods over the centuries thus gave rise to an orthodoxy of expression and a chronic condition of professional amateurism.

In China by the seventeenth century, the pretence of amateurism in the literati tradition was nearly defunct. As Richard Vinograd has written, "What [remained] of the original impulse [was] largely the association with educated artists and the embellishment of paintings with texts."[9] This was the state in which literati painting was first practiced as a significant mode of pictorial representation in Korea in the seventeenth century and Japan in the eighteenth century. In all three countries, painting in the scholar-amateur mode was carried out under conditions that might be understood as highly inauthentic, even fraudulent, with regard to its initial rhetorical axioms. But it is not as if all painters employing this idiom were unaware of their bad faith. Indeed, those painters for whom the practice of a reified mode of literati painting was a source of anxiety have almost without exception earned a place in the modern art historical canon. In China, there emerged among the more ambitious of artists a variety of visual and rhetorical approaches for overcoming the literati dilemma that took as their point of departure this conventionalized pictorial idiom. Some of the most startling new forms of pictorial expression to emerge during this period can be understood under the rubric of a quixotic search for an authentically amateur form of literati pictorial expression, as reflected in the Chinese painter Shitao (1642–1707) and his concept of the One-stroke (*yihua*).[10] It is within this trajectory of the pursuit of skill-lessness that Gyokudō can most profitably be situated when examining his unique brush effects and intoxicated personations.

Gyokudō was a samurai official from the Kamogata Ikeda domain of Bizen Province, located in what is now Okayama Prefecture in the western part of Japan's main island. He was most famous during his own lifetime as a practitioner and instructor of the *qin,* or seven-stringed Chinese zither, an instrument with a small but committed following among intellectuals of the Edo period (1615–1868). After the age of forty-nine, however, when he requested and received a release from his administrative duties and domainal affiliation, Gyokudō pursued a mostly itinerant lifestyle, traveling up and down the archipelago with his two sons, teaching music, composing poetry, and fraternizing with a countrywide network of sinophile friends and patrons. Even after settling down in Kyoto for the last decade of his life, Gyokudō continued to engage literati peers and secured a singular, if minor, presence in the world of letters. It was a by-product of these pursuits, a small corpus of landscape paintings dating almost entirely to his late years, that ensured Gyokudō's posthumous fame. Admiration of these works was initially limited to a small group of cognoscenti, including fellow literati such as Tanomura Chikuden (1777–1835). During Gyokudō's lifetime, his precocious son Shunkin (1779–1846) was in fact more widely recognized as a painter than his father.[11] And because Gyokudō did not take on painting students, he lacked an artistic lineage that could carry his legacy into the modern era, unlike other literati painters such as Ikeno Taiga (1723–1776) and Tani Bunchō (1761–1840).

Instead, Gyokudō was rediscovered in the twentieth century primarily as a painter rather than a litterateur or musician. The contours of this reception were shaped by painters such as Tomioka Tessai (1836–1924), an early enthusiast who so admired Gyokudō that he is known to have repeatedly and ritually transcribed a short autobiographical text by his predecessor titled *Mizukara Gyokudō no kabe ni shirusu* (Gyokudō's wall writing).[12] By the 1920s, when the literati painting tradition was receiving renewed

attention, many Japanese painters embraced Gyokudō as an important early example of an East Asian painter who worked through the traditional literati idiom to achieve a strikingly modern pictorial expression. The artists Hashimoto Kansetsu (1883–1944) and Yano Kyōson (1890–1965) inaugurated the scholarly study of Gyokudō by authoring the first book-length monographs on his painting, both published in 1926.[13]

Practitioners were not the only ones engendering the production of knowledge about Gyokudō: a market for his paintings quickly emerged, attracting prominent Japanese industrialist collectors of the prewar period. Ohara Magosaburō (1880–1943), who founded Japan's earliest museum of Western art in 1930, was so enamored of the painter that he sponsored the publication of Gyokudō's first catalogue raisonné in 1939.[14] As the catalogue reveals, however, by this time the painter's reputation as an authentic Japanese literatus and modernist avant la lettre was so well entrenched that a small cottage industry of Gyokudō forgeries striving for a "Gyokudō effect" had emerged, mediating and compromising the ever-expanding awareness of his work (a problem that continues to plague his commentators today). Gyokudō's reputation was even internationalized in the prewar era through the efforts of the German architect Bruno Taut (1880–1938), an enthusiast of Japanese artistic traditions who was already familiar through his designation of the Katsura Villa as an icon of functionalist architecture. Taut championed Gyokudō as yet another product of premodern Japanese culture that anticipated a modernist movement, in this case impressionism.[15] The high regard for Gyokudō continued after the war, when he served as inspiration for writers such as Yoshikawa Eiji (1892–1962) and Kawabata Yasunari (1899–1972), who modeled protagonists after him and infused their stories with what they imagined to be his worldview.[16]

The image of Gyokudō shared by the artists and collectors responsible for his twentieth-century reception was of an individualist and idealist who abandoned the tedium of bureaucracy to lead a life devoted to friends, travel, poetry, music, and painting, the pursuit of which was lubricated by a relentless affinity for alcohol. The basic facts of his life and few surviving accounts of his character do not contradict this profile. The same is true of the considerable amount of new material about Gyokudō brought to light after World War II, this time by professional scholars and curators.[17] The emphasis in the postwar literature on the introduction of new works and biographical information, however, has resulted more in the accumulation of entries on his timeline than in a meaningful alteration of the architecture of his identity, already firmly established by commentators in the 1920s and 1930s.

This is not to say, however, that raw material is lacking for the presentation of a less romanticized assessment of Gyokudō's cultural production and historical profile. In this regard, recent explorations of Gyokudō's social networks and musical practice provide the most significant vectors of future inquiry. Sugimoto Yoshihisa has illuminated the complexity of the relationships Gyokudō formed as a young domainal official during his frequent stays in Edo during the 1770s and 80s, as well as their effect on his intellectual formation.[18] His encounter and lasting friendship with the Confucian scholar Tamada Mokuō (1697–1785) and his circle in 1774, for example, drew Gyokudō to a vigorously practical form of neo-Confucian philosophy embraced by mercantile intellectuals of the eighteenth century.[19] At the same time, Gyokudō developed his practice of Chinese-style poetry through friendships with Mōri Kokyū (1730–1786) and other second-generation disciples of the philologically oriented Confucianist Ogyū Sorai (1666–1729).[20] Versifying peers also included scholars associated with the Nobeoka domain in Hyūga Province (present-day Miyazaki Prefecture in Kyūshū), whose lord Naitō Seiyō (1737–1781) studied the *qin* with Gyokudō in Edo.[21] These overlapping but semi-discrete groups provided a social matrix within which the samurai-official gained access to national networks of meaning and sinophile cultural practice. The rich horizontal associations formed in Edo would also provide Gyokudō with his first exposure to intellectual movements that later infused his own musical and painterly practice, such as Wang Yangming philosophy (Ōyōmei in

Japanese) and the National Learning (Kokugaku) movement.[22]

Of equal interest and closely related to these scholarly networks are Gyokudō's activities in Sino-Japanese musicology.[23] He studied the *qin* with the Edo scholar Taki Rankei (1732–1801). Because Rankei was an official physician to the shogunate, Gyokudō may also have studied Chinese medicine with him and may have earned income himself as a physician and herbalist.[24] Although Gyokudō's interests in Chinese pharmacology demonstrate that medical and musical knowledge were to some extent intertwined during the Edo period, it was his interest in reviving a tradition of early Japanese court song known as *saibara* that makes his musicianship historically significant.[25] Remarkably, his study of ancient *saibara* involved their transcription into the notational system and scale structure employed for the *qin*, leading to a novel, disjunctive musical expression that was not without its critics.[26]

Gyokudō's study of court music of the Heian period (794–1185) was closely related to his association with leading members of the National Learning movement, which grew out of Shinto scholarship and revived interest in so-called nativist cultural traditions while asserting the political centrality of the imperial court. It has also been argued, however, that his interest in *saibara* reflected the strong influence of Ogyū Sorai's philological approach to classical texts, applied to music. According to this thesis, Gyokudō's study of long-extinct indigenous musical traditions reflected his desire to reconstruct the aural environment of wise rulers in early Japan, so that rulers in the present could better follow their example. Gyokudō's seventeen-year period of itinerancy between his retirement from domainal responsibilities and settlement in Kyoto (1794–1811), moreover, has been attributed to his single-minded pursuit of musical study and revival, which involved visits to numerous shrines around the archipelago.[27]

Whatever the merits of this argument, in its very overdetermination, the intellectual genealogy of Gyokudō's nativist musicology reflects the rich and diverse world of letters in which he moved from the early part of his administrative career. And what is now known about his intellectual formation and ideological commitments provides a more precise and animated interpretative framework for his ink paintings and painterly dispositions.

Here, however, it is at an operational register that Gyokudō's artistic persona will be examined, more specifically his drunken comportment. With regard to most of his cultural production, especially his poetry and painting, Gyokudō's indulgence in wine is not only a continuously sounded theme but the announced precondition of representation. The retired samurai-official expressed his allegiance to states of inebriation directly on the surfaces of his paintings, not only in seals that read *Suisen* (Drunken Immortal) and *Suikyō* (Drunkenville) but also in signatorial inscriptions such as *Gyokudō* (*kinshi*) *suisaku* (drunkenly painted by Gyokudō).[28] Much of his poetry is also suffused with a drowsy stupor, at times rapturous and at times melancholic, induced by the emptying of wine cups. A poem from the *Sankō* (Mountain travels) section of his first poetry anthology, *Gyokudō kinshi shū* (Collection of Gyokudō the *qin* player, 1794), is one among many examples that could be cited:[29]

Tipsy among the trees and flowers, I fell asleep by a pond;
Amid the fragrant grasses, a golden butterfly fluttered.
Now, waking up sober at dawn, where is the springtime?
Its fragrance remains in the grasses caught in the teeth of my clogs.[30]

Other poems were less indirect:

At dawn I drink three or four cups of sake,
At dusk I chew on a piece of meat.
Cool wind comes to fan my face,
The flavor of the wine is rich and mellow.[31]

Gyokudō's fondness for wine was mentioned in virtually every surviving contemporary account of him. Chikuden, for example, featured Gyokudō's "intoxicated brush" (*suiyo no fude*) in his colophon to *Enkachō* (Album of fog and mist, 1811), and provided the following account of his older friend in his diary, *Sanchūjin jōzetsu* (Prattlings of a mountain hermit, 1814):

Among the Ancients were those who borrowed inspiration from wine to produce paintings

and calligraphies. Ki Gyokudō too followed this course. Intoxication bears within it an experience of the heavens themselves and is thus quite unlike the concerted action of mortals. Gyokudō would first begin to enter into the appropriate spirit when drinking, and once he lowered his brush to paper it would not stay still. When the inspiration lessened, he would desist. In such a manner, for a single scroll, he would sometimes repeat the cycle over ten times. Works thus inspired attracted all who saw them, and were brimming with flavor no matter how much one partook of them. When he became too drunk, however, his brushwork devolved, and his buildings, trees, and rocks would become undistinguishable.[32]

Or, as follows in Section 84 of *Chikudensō shiyū garoku* (Old Man Chikuden's record of paintings by teachers and friends):

Each morning Gyokudō would rise early, clean up the room, burn incense, and play the *qin.* Between five and seven in the morning he would drink three cups of sake and often say, "It is as if I had the Emperor's Imperial order to adjust the musical pitch, and being in that situation I must devote myself to it."[33]

Finally, in *Chikudensō shiwa* (Old Man Chikuden's discussions of poetry), the literatus described Gyokudō as follows:

In the winter of 1807, Gyokudō, who was skilled at the *qin,* met with me at the Jimyō-in and we lived there, eating and sleeping, for more than forty days. He was then in his sixties; his hair was white and his beard long. Yet he still looked young and sang quite well; he was not bothered by the hollows where his teeth had fallen out. It was marvelous. He enjoyed wine in particular, and when he became drunk would compose short poems, each of which would always mention the *qin.* Gyokudō would also compose small landscape scenes, the brushwork of which was highly textured. Neither [poetry nor painting] would conform to convention but were excellent and full of charm (*omomuki*).[34]

The artist's relationship to alcohol described here was confirmed in his epitaph, authored by the famous poet Rai San'yō (1780–1832), a close friend of Shunkin: "When someone requested a painting, he would drink before taking up the brush, and then joyously paint with great refinement."[35]

As San'yō's epitaph and the numerous accounts of Chikuden demonstrate, Gyokudō's drunken persona provided the framework through which his contemporaries understood and appreciated his artistry. Conversely, and in keeping with the literati cult of personality, Gyokudō's artistry was also a means through which his contemporaries could appreciate his drunken persona, the behavioral enactment of the ideal of naturalness. In the modern era, however, Gyokudō's fondness for alcohol came to be interpreted as paradigmatic of the unfettered condition of the authentic literatus.[36] Some recent commentators have added to this view an additional diagnostic register by ascribing psychobiographical symptoms to his intemperance: according to this understanding, Gyokudō's "alcoholic indulgence" was "incurred by his resignation, perhaps, but also related to other besetting problems that caused him discouragement and anguish," such as his later disaffection with his domainal lord and the death of his wife in 1792 and daughter in 1795.[37] In this view, Gyokudō's autonomy came to be shadowed by an escapist urge, his bacchanalianism rediagnosed as alcoholism. Whether the subject is his painting or his personality, Gyokudō's modern historiography has been so conditioned by his reputation for inebriety that it has overlooked an obvious first line of interrogation: a clearheaded examination of Gyokudō's wine and ink. Until now this relationship has been taken at face value. At the level of visual analysis, the sketchiness and abbreviation of Gyokudō's brushwork has been understood as a trace or manifestation of his tipsiness, instead of as an analogy.

We should be wary, however, of reading too much into accounts of Gyokudō's bibulousness, or of understanding his facture as the consequence of an alcohol-induced motor incoordination. The primary reason for such skepticism stems from the prevalence of the trope of the drunken painter in East Asia, which in the Chinese context dates back to as early as the ninth century but is borrowed from the much earlier trope of the intoxicated poet. The sage-philosophers Confucius and Zhuangzi offered two important models for the enjoyment of wine. The former is recorded in the *Analects* as asserting that although there are no limits on the consumption of wine, it should not be indulged

to the point where one loses control. The principle reflected here is that there is no absolute template for social behavior, but that ideally one should adjust one's actions to suit the occasion, taking care never to tilt into excess.[38]

The *Zhuangzi,* however, proved to be even more influential in its championing of "wholeness from wine" as a master metaphor for spontaneity of mind, harmony with the Way, and the condition of the enlightened man.[39] This idea provided the philosophical foundation for a long-standing cultural tradition in which intoxication was viewed as a primary characteristic of the Daoist sage, as well as the best catalyst for those hoping to approximate or achieve sagehood.[40] Accordingly, many poets reddened their voices just enough to gain a measure of exhilaration, along the way shifting the context of ingestion to the realm of reclusion. Celebrated recluses such as Ruan Ji (210–263), Ji Kang (223–262), and other members of the "Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove" were exemplary of a counterculture ideal that inspired the flushed approach to versification practiced by poets such as Tao Qian (365–427).[41] The protagonist of Tao's poetry was often a farmer-scholar or mountain hermit who experienced sweet drunkenness in solitude, as witnessed in his celebrated "Drinking Wine" poems.[42] The intoxication therein reflected a philosophical outlook emphasizing a release from mundane preoccupations and a concomitant privileging of the carefree man and the here-and-now. During the Tang period, poets such as Du Fu (712–770) and Li Bai (701–762) followed in this disposition but with even less restraint to their topery, their poetic metabolisms consistently stimulated by "the long ecstasy of wine" and their works defining the more inspired pole of a Chinese poetics of intoxication that would last well over a millennium.

It was under the sway of this tradition that descriptions of calligraphers creating under the influence first began to appear. Most often these accounts were linked to practitioners of "wild-cursive" (*kuang cao*) calligraphy, in which characters were brushed in a highly cursive and barely legible manner, incorporating radical disparities in scale and abbreviations of form. Early calligraphers associated with this mode, such as Zhang Xu (675–759) and Huaisu (c. 735–c. 800), attempted to convey through it an effect of eccentricity and expressiveness. The impression made by their calligraphy corresponded well with their portrayals in contemporary and slightly later texts. Zhang Xu, for example, was included among the "Eight Drunken Immortals" versified by Du Fu:

> In Zhang Xu, three cups summon forth the Cursive Script Sage:
> He strips off his cap and bares his head before princes and lords,
> Wielding his brush over the paper like clouds and mist.[43]

Another description of Zhang Xu, in Li Zhao's ninth-century *Tang guo shi bu* (Supplement to the history of the Tang dynasty), was later canonized as emblematic of his method: "Xu would drink wine and then execute his cursive script, wielding the brush and shouting, or dip his head into the ink and write with it, so that the whole world referred to him as Crazy Zhang. After he had sobered up, he would look at what he had done. He pronounced it demonic and prodigious, and he was never able to reproduce it."[44]

Implicit in such accounts was the belief that alcohol could transform an individual into a medium through which the cosmic forces of creation could be embodied. As Peter Sturman has noted, however, the wild-cursive tradition represented a contradiction between the ideals of an alcohol-induced erasure of subjectivity and the boldly energetic appearance of the writing itself.[45] In other words, the highs and lows of wild-cursive calligraphy were disjunctive with the calm and equanimity of the selflessness that was understood to be brought on by the intake of spirits.[46]

A similar paradox informs the trope of the drunken painter, which emerged from anecdotes about Zhang Xu's calligraphic performances. A memorable entry concerning the Chinese painter Wang Mo ("Ink Wang") is found in Zhu Jingxuan's *Tangchao minghua lu* (Celebrated painters of the Tang dynasty), a compilation of painters' biographies from the ninth century:

> Whenever he wanted to paint a picture, Wang Mo would first drink wine, and when he was sufficiently drunk, would splash the ink onto the painting surface. Then, laughing and singing all the while, he would stamp on it with his feet and smear it with his hands, besides swashing and sweeping it with the brush. The ink would be thin in some places, rich in others; he would follow the shapes which brush and ink had produced, making these into mountains, rocks, clouds and mists, wash in wind and rain, with the suddenness of Creation. It was exactly like the cunning of a deity; when one examined the painting after it was finished he could see no traces of the puddles of ink.[47]

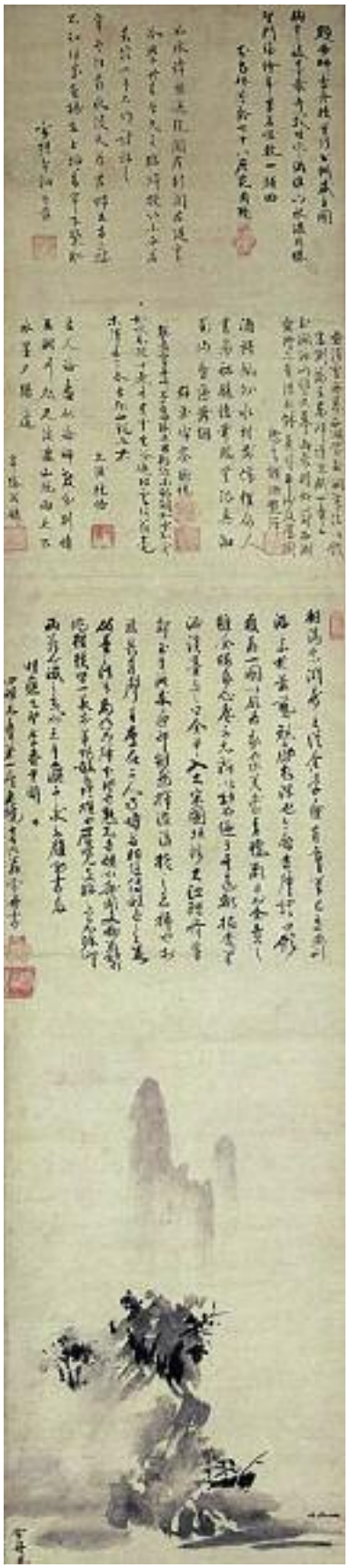
Another account of Wang Mo describes him using his hair to spread ink much in the manner of Zhang Xu. Given these similarities with corresponding descriptions of wild-cursive practitioners, it is reasonable to assume that they are at least partially constructed, conjured up because they were believed to resonate with the splashed-ink forms and performative persona associated with Wang Mo.[48] Although neither Wang Mo nor calligraphers in the mold of Zhang Xu were favored by later influential literati such as Su Shi (1037–1101) and Huang Tingjian (1045–1105), their intense focus on naturalness of expression ensured that alcohol continued to play a significant role in the discourse on transparency and self-effacement in the brush arts.[49] Thus the rhetoric of the intoxicated brush remained in the arsenal of later literati painters, especially those whose work was characterized by loose brush effects. Xu Wei (1521–1593), for example, who practiced a "boneless" (contourless) mode of painting based on a planar and laissez-faire use of ink, embraced indulgence in spirits as a central part of his self-presentation. Accordingly, he was often associated with the splashed-ink tradition that reached back to Wang Mo, and he viewed himself as a follower of Zhang Xu, occasionally employing the seal-name Kuang Mo (Crazy Ink) and using colophons to his own works to narrate their origins in drunken revelry.[50]

The considerable commentarial literature on Gyokudō has underemphasized the extent to which he and members of his circle were aware of this long tradition of rhetorical revelry in both Chinese painting and poetry. In the Japanese context it was already deeply ingrained in the Five Mountains (Gozan) communities of Zen Buddhist monks in medieval Kyoto, who were well versed in continental art criticism and frequently inscribed or commented on ink paintings in the form of poetry. One of the best-known works by the fifteenth-century monk-painter Sesshū Tōyō, *Splashed-Ink Landscape* (*Haboku sansui zu*) (1495) (fig. 3), is accompanied by a poetic encomium by the monk Gettō Shūkyō (d. 1500) that declares that "the intoxicated ink within one's heart is the most outstanding." Another monk and scribe, Shōjū Ryūtō (1429–1498), adds, "Limitless is the joy of landscapes that emanate from the tips of inebriated brushes," indicating the degree to which knowledgeable commentators at this time were cognizant of the proper descriptive protocols for open-ended brushwork.[51]

By Gyokudō's own time, the idea that wine enabled the transcendence of artistic convention, along with an awareness of the genealogy of artists who practiced it, was widely shared among the literati community. In his treatise *Kaiji higen* (Humble words on painting), published 1800, the painter Kuwayama Gyokushū (1746–1799) described the manner in which his contemporaries used a straw or reed brush (*warafude*) in order to achieve certain unusual pictorial effects evocative of Wang Mo.[52] Chikuden, meanwhile, also made reference to Wang Mo in his *Sanchūjin jōzetsu* (Prattlings of a mountain hermit), contrasting his liberal use of ink with the sparseness with which the painter Li Cheng applied his pigments.[53] And the same author invoked Wang Mo when he stated in the passage previously cited that "among the Ancients were those who borrowed inspiration from wine." Passages such as these suggest that the example of this early Chinese painter was not unfamiliar in Japanese literati culture and that his highly performative suspension of sobriety may have provided a specific point of reference for those painters—ranging from Ikeno Taiga to Tachihara Kyōsho (1785–1840)—who occasionally indicated on their scrolls that their works were the result of a wine-induced carouse.

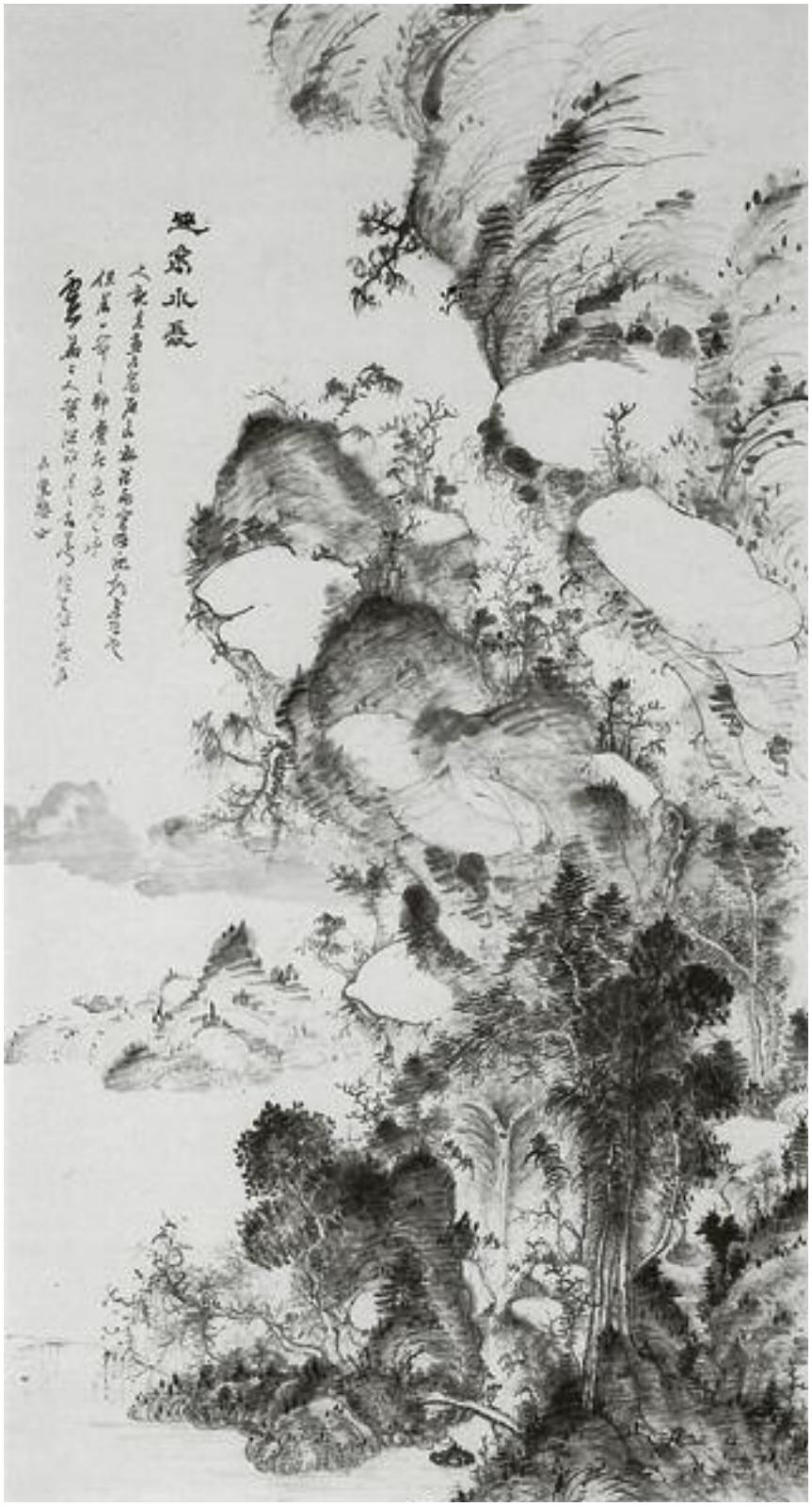
No Japanese painter, however, came close to matching the frequency of Gyokudō's claims to tipsification, whether in signatures, seals, painting inscriptions, or poetry. Chikuden, a close friend of Gyokudō and the most important of his commentators, no doubt played a significant role in instilling Gyokudō's circle with an awareness of the pedigree of drunken pictorial representation in Chinese letters. Shunkin, for instance, followed Chikuden's opposition between Li Cheng and Wang Mo when he mentioned the latter and his splashed-ink technique in a colophon to *Enkachō* (Album of fog and mist).[54] Given the frequency with which the latter is invoked either directly or indirectly in treatises of the period, it is clear that an awareness of a genealogy of tippler-painters suffused the environment in which Gyokudō's own drunkenness became the object of discourse. Yet the most decisive example of Gyokudō's consciousness of this tradition lies in the sobriquet *Suikyō* (Drunkenville) that he used from approximately 1804 until his death in 1820. This sobriquet makes specific reference to a prose essay authored by the early Tang poet Wang Ji (590–644), titled *Zuixiang ji* (The story of Drunkenville).[55] Wang Ji is recognized as the Chinese drunken poet par excellence, the "tippler-hermit" whose oeuvre is replete with references to the emptying of cups and the sweet stupefaction that follows. The story describes a Daoist-inspired allegory of a paradisiacal polity whose rulers and citizens are free of desire and have achieved harmony with the Way. Making many specific references to early texts of philosophical Daoism, its opening describes this land as follows:

> I don't know how far it is from Drunkenville to the Middle Kingdom. Its land is vast and boundless; there are no hills or steep slopes. The climate there is always calm and stable; the sky is never too gloomy or too bright, and the weather never too cold or hot. The way of life there is the Grand Harmony; there are no townships or settlements. People there are very free of desire, and they lack the emotions of love, hate, joy, and rage. They inhale wind and drink dew and eat none of the five grains. When lying down, they sleep undisturbed; when up, they move about unconcerned. They mingle with fish, turtles, birds, and beasts; they are ignorant of the use of boats, carriages, instruments, and tools.[56]



3. Sesshū Tōyō, *Splashed-Ink Landscape* (*Haboku sansui zu*), 1495, vertical hanging scroll, ink on paper
Tokyo National Museum

4. Urakami Gyokudō, *Tall Mountains and Expansive Waters* (*Sankō suichō zu*), c. 1812, vertical hanging scroll, ink and light colors on paper
Okayama Prefectural Museum



As Ding Xiang Warner has observed, Drunkenville "is not a place but a state of mind," whose citizens "occupy themselves in the aimless naturalness of the animal kingdom rather than in human social institutions," and whose rulers "govern by paying proper respect to the power of wine."[57]

In adopting the title of Wang Ji's essay as one of his most prominent seal names, Gyokudō signaled his awareness of a powerful, centuries-long tradition of employing drunkenness as a metaphor for philosophical ideals, and thereby provided an implicit framework within which his persona and brushwork were to be received. Accordingly, his paintings can unambiguously be understood as highly rhetorical and self-conscious performances of drunken mark making. From inscriptions on the works it can be determined that the audience for these performances ranged from anonymous recipients to celebrated members of a growing nationwide community of Japanese literati. The well-known poet-monk Unge (1773–1850), for example, was the recipient in 1812 of *Tall Mountains and Expansive Waters* (*Sankō suichō zu*) (fig. 4), a work in which Gyokudō added an inscription referring to himself as a "drunken ogre," stating that the painting was executed "in exchange for *sake* brought by Unge." On another occasion, in 1805, Gyokudō painted *Seeking Inspiration amid Mountains and Rivers* (*Kōzan bekku zu*) for Ota Nanpo (1749–1823), the noted specialist of light satirical fiction, and inscribed a self-referential verse on its surface:

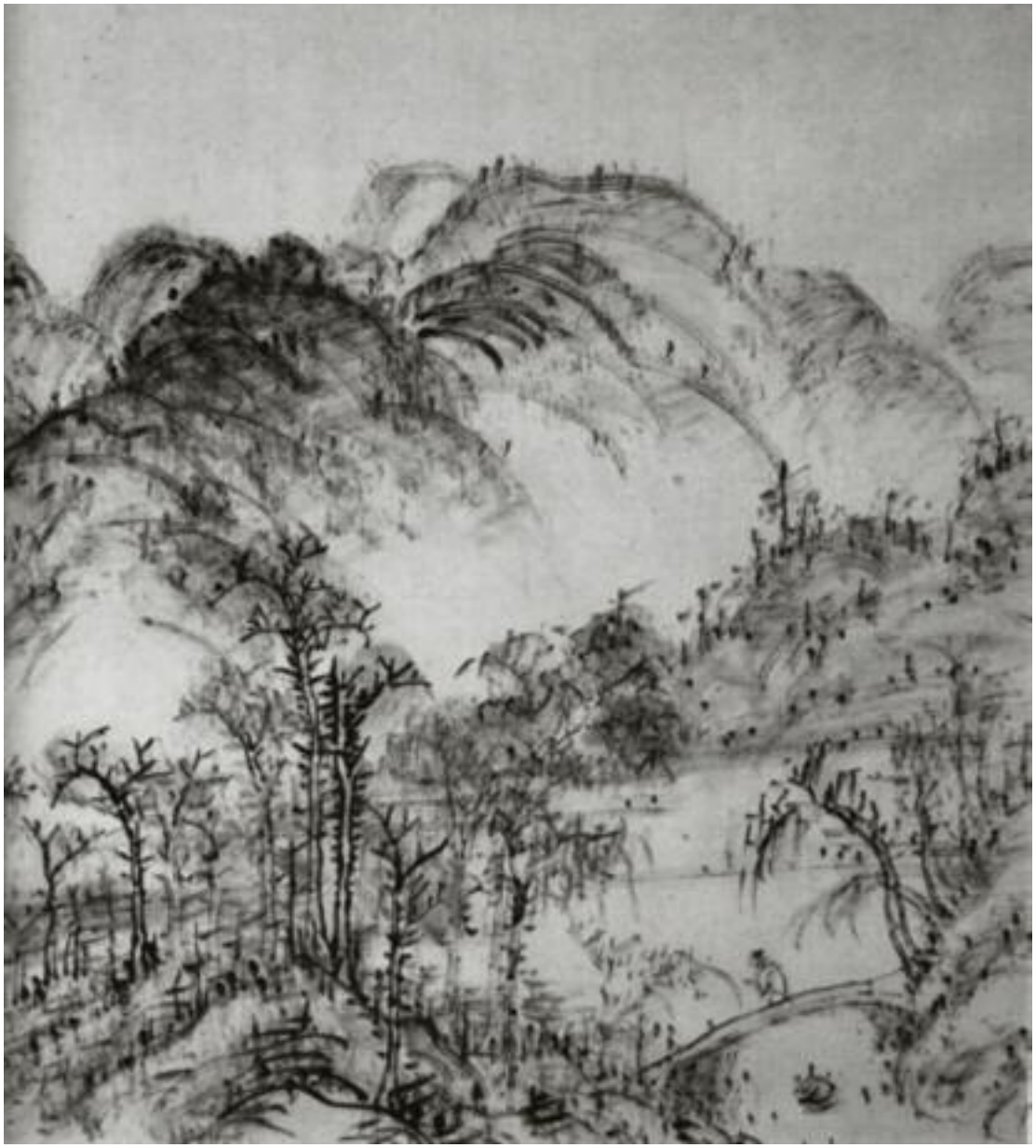
A solitary old man arrives, with no apparent abode of his own,
The sun is already low when he staggers away drunkenly singing.
Embracing his zither, he visits the mountains and waters west of Kyushu[58]

Again, such inscriptions facilitated a reading of Gyokudō's work as exemplary of negative craftsmanship and of the painter himself as the paragon of a modus vivendi embodying literati ideals. Intriguingly, however, in Gyokudō's case the fashioning of this persona was apparently a group effort, with members of his circle echoing and expanding on Gyokudō's own descriptions of his deportment. Unge reciprocated Gyokudō's gift of a painting with a poem titled

"Gyokudō rōjin no sansui o miru" (On viewing a landscape by Old Man Gyokudō) that describes him as a "drunken zither player" before proceeding to discuss the "pure workings" of his "meandering brush."[59] Chikuden's various accounts of Gyokudō were so lavishly embellished that focusing solely on those passages that concern his love of spirits does not do them justice. Indeed, in a prefatory description to the passage quoted earlier that recounted Gyokudō's morning drinking habits, Chikuden describes his subject as "white-haired and yet youthful in his complexion, wearing white clothes as though trimmed with the down from cranes," and carrying "the *qin* on his shoulders with great dignity." Chikuden concludes, "Gazing at him I knew he was not an ordinary person."[60] In the hands of Chikuden, Gyokudō's inspiration from spirits was part of a more general portrayal in which he was cast as a radiant, auratic figure, a kind of Daoist immortal. Gyokudō himself was therefore only one, albeit a primary, voice in this presentation. The accounts by Chikuden, along with those of San'yō, Shunkin, and others, clearly demonstrate that this was a case of personation by committee.[61]

A proper intoxicology of Gyokudō's artistry, however, cannot end here, with an assessment of his self-presentation as so much rhetorical posturing. Despite Gyokudō's deployment of a poetics of intoxication, it would be nonsensical to claim that he never actually partook of wine, and that inebriation was never incorporated into his art making in a meaningful way. The focus here on the constructedness of Gyokudō's drunken persona is in no way meant to imply total abstention. Far from it; judging by the nature and specificity of those few surviving accounts of his habits of ingestion, it seems reasonable to assume that the appetite for alcohol consistently described by contemporaries, especially those in his own circle, had some basis in reality. This appears to be the case throughout the history of rhetorical inebriation: that its greatest partakers were oftentimes actually partaking, that there was some substance to their abuse. The crucial distinction, however, lies between any actual habits of alcoholic consumption, which in Gyokudō's case are impossible to determine, and the way they are communicated as a physical and spiritual condition for artistic production. In the realm of painting, as in calligraphy, although there were general parameters that governed the rules of drunken facture—loose and rapid (spontaneous) brushwork, an emphasis on range in liquidity, disregard for conventions of composition, and so forth—many of its most distinguished examples vary widely in their final appearance. The way in which Gyokudō's characteristic mode of landscape painting, executed under the sign of intoxication, signals a suspension of sobriety requires a careful reading of his works in relation to the patterns of literati pictorialism from which his later brush habits emerged.

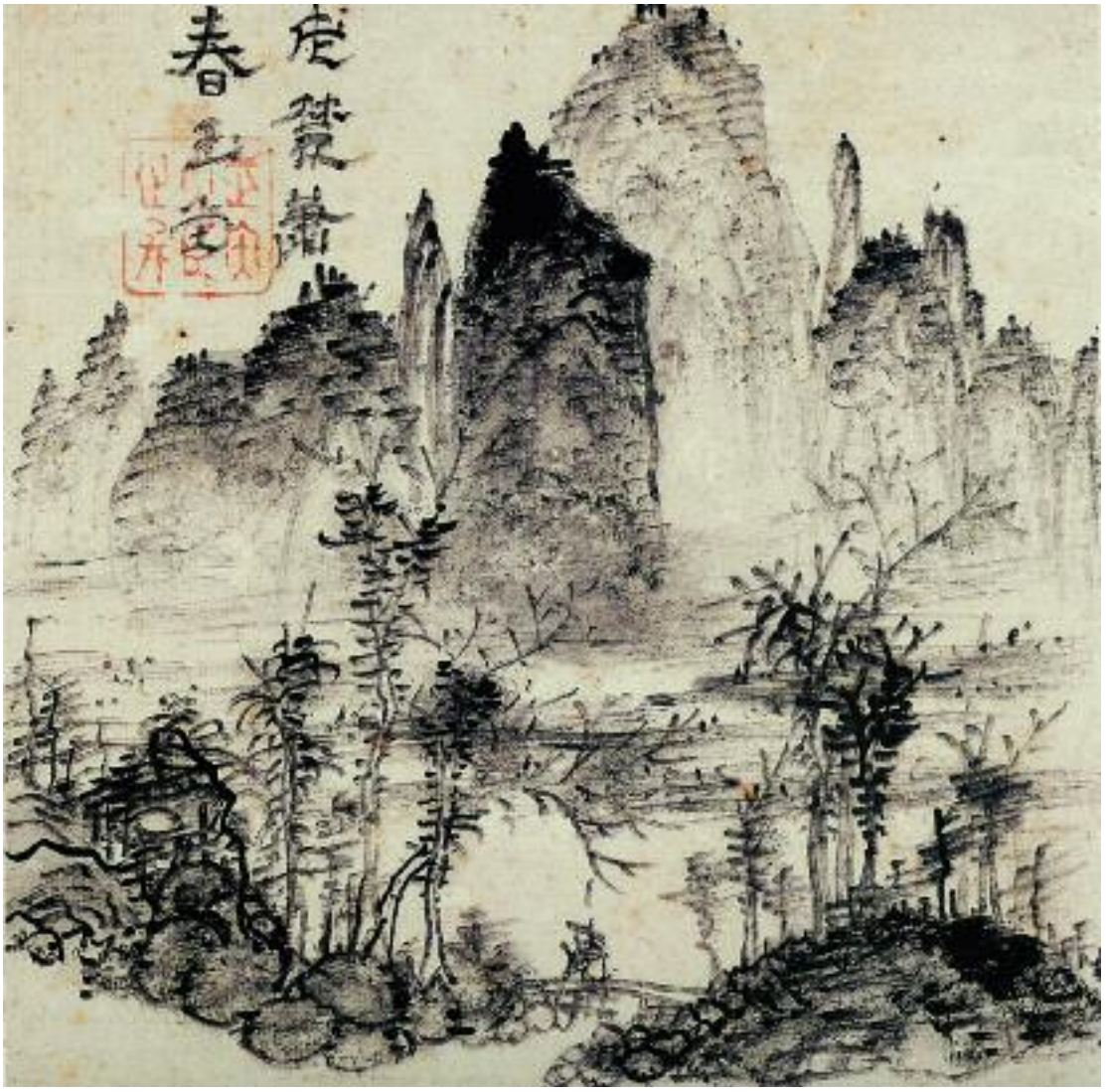
Contrary to what one might expect from a "drunken ogre," Gyokudō's landscapes are often densely textured compositions that aim to evoke the atmospheric and poetic effects suggested by their title inscriptions. These works typically depict moments of seasonal transition suffused with soft mist or rain (see fig. 2), and are either devoid of human presence or inhabited by a solitary figure found crossing a bridge or seated in one of the fanciful pavilions situated on a mountainside; when finally located, these miniature figures provide a sense of scale for the entire scene. Although the landscapes are usually monochrome, occasional touches of red and yellow are employed to depict autumn foliage, the color pigments floating on the surface as if on a scrim (fig. 5). The smaller works follow a basic "hills beyond a river" composition in which the land masses are grouped all across the foreground and background, separated by a flat plain or body of water (fig. 6). The larger works often reveal a lack of surety, a precarious piling on of forms that results in a top-heavy master mountain. Certain motifs are manically repeated or exaggerated within Gyokudō's landscapes, such as the flat hilltop clearing, which is often abstracted into curious circular areas of untouched white paper (see fig. 4). The most common feature of his work, however, is its shimmering, kinetic quality, introduced by the overlay of dry, short, horizontal strokes that characteristically



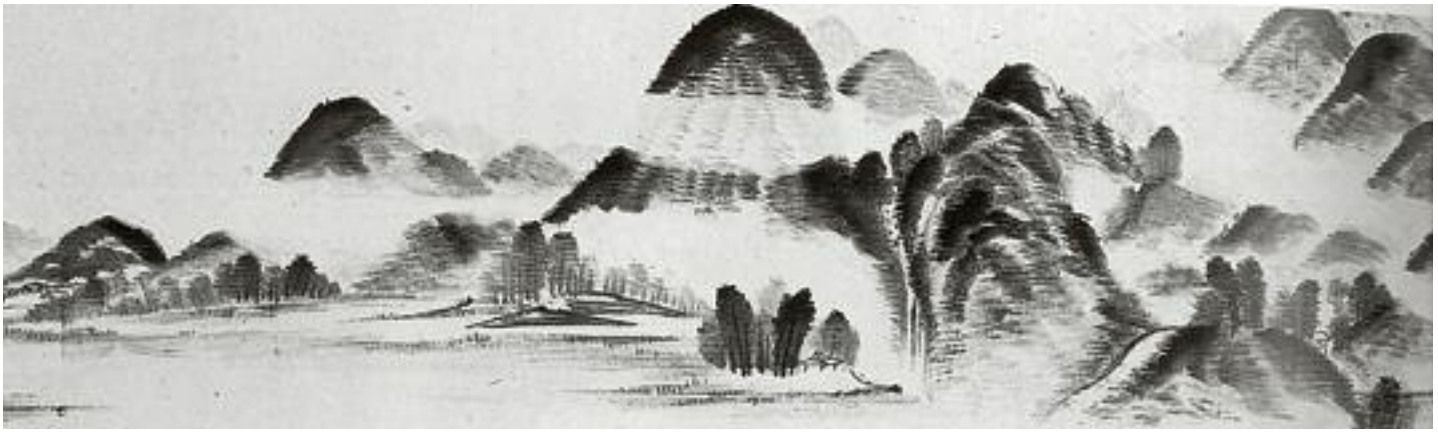
5. Urakami Gyokudō, *Mountains Dyed Scarlet* (*Sankō osen zu*), detail, c. 1815–1820, vertical hanging scroll, ink and light colors on paper
Private collection

angle slightly upward to the right on diluted planes of lighter ink. This characteristic effect, as if the landscape is perpetually in a state of settling into view, results from Gyokudō's highly self-conscious and ambivalent relationship to conventional modes of literati pictorial representation, which he relied on and discursively negated at the same time.

Early in his career, Gyokudō took as his point of departure one of the most standard models for brushwork in the literati canon, the "Mi dot," a short horizontal brushstroke associated with the early Chinese literatus Mi Fu (1051–1107). It is formed by laying the thickest part of the brush sideways on the paper and pressing slowly, as if applying a thumbprint. This technique was employed to build up mountainous forms in one of Gyokudō's earliest surviving works, *Southern Mountains* (*Nanzan jukan*), a horizontal handscroll dated to 1787 (fig. 7).[62] The subsequent development of Gyokudō's brushwork can be understood as a slow meditation



6. Urakami Gyokudō, *Old Trees in Lonely Springtime* (*Rōju shūshun zu*), c. 1815–1820, vertical hanging scroll, ink on paper
Dr. and Mrs. Robert Feinberg Collection



7. Urakami Gyokudō, *Southern Mountains* (*Nanzan jukan*), detail, 1787, horizontal handscroll, ink and light colors on paper
Private collection, Japan

on and elaboration of the Mi dot into a more dynamic and malleable unit with which to mediate his landscapes. In later works he includes a layering of drier, darker Mi dots over moister, lighter ones, varying their length and combining them with other types of dots and slashes to form a textural skin for the scene at hand. Although Gyokudō's brushwork is thus rooted in traditional literati technique, it quickly departs from such norms, reflecting his anxiety about a close relationship to convention that is manifest in his few recorded views concerning his own craft. A poem published as part of an anthology to mark his retirement from domainal administrative duties, for example, declares:

I am too lazy and obstinate to paint small scenes;
I can wet the black ink and grind the red, but ideas are difficult.
Why busy myself to death with my small talents?
Better to discard the brush and face the true mountains.[63]

In *Mizukara Gyokudō no kabe ni shirusu* (Gyokudō's wall writing), the autobiographical text mentioned above, Gyokudō states: "I paint without knowledge of the ancient Six Laws; it is all done at random and I detest being a 'painter.'" The Six Laws of Painting of which he professes ignorance are the classical foundation of all East Asian painting technique, formulated by Xie He in the mid-sixth century.[64] Although the claim to methodlessness was by this time a common refrain among East Asian literati painters, its presence in Gyokudō's text should not be dismissed lightly, for it provides an unambiguous articulation of his pursuit of negative facture, along with a context in which to assess the role of inebrious inspiration.

In this regard, Chikuden's eyewitness account of Gyokudō's approach to painting, recorded in *Sanchūjin jōzetsu* (Prattlings of a mountain hermit) and cited earlier, merits close attention. Chikuden describes an unexpected process whereby Gyokudō *methodically* creates under the influence: "Gyokudō would first begin to enter into the appropriate spirit when drinking, and once he lowered his brush to paper it would not stay still. When the inspiration lessened he would desist. In such a manner, for a single scroll he would sometimes repeat the cycle more than ten times."

Although this passage should be viewed with some skepticism, it nevertheless provides a description of Gyokudō's actual practice. What differentiates it most dramatically from accounts of Zhang Xu and Wang Mo at work is the cyclical nature of Gyokudō's engagement with wine. Chikuden describes a peculiar process whereby Gyokudō would imbibe alcohol and then wait for its effects to take hold before taking up his brush, then proceed to paint until the high wore off, repeating the process ten or more times in order to complete a painting.[65] This process is less one of unbridled spontaneity than of premeditated insobriety, a somewhat forced manner of inducing the proper state of heightened sensitivity or liberated awareness with which to execute a literati painting. Gyokudō appears to be embodying the rhetorical trope of the drunken painter, earnestly performing the role of the untrammeled artist. He is here practicing a form of method acting.

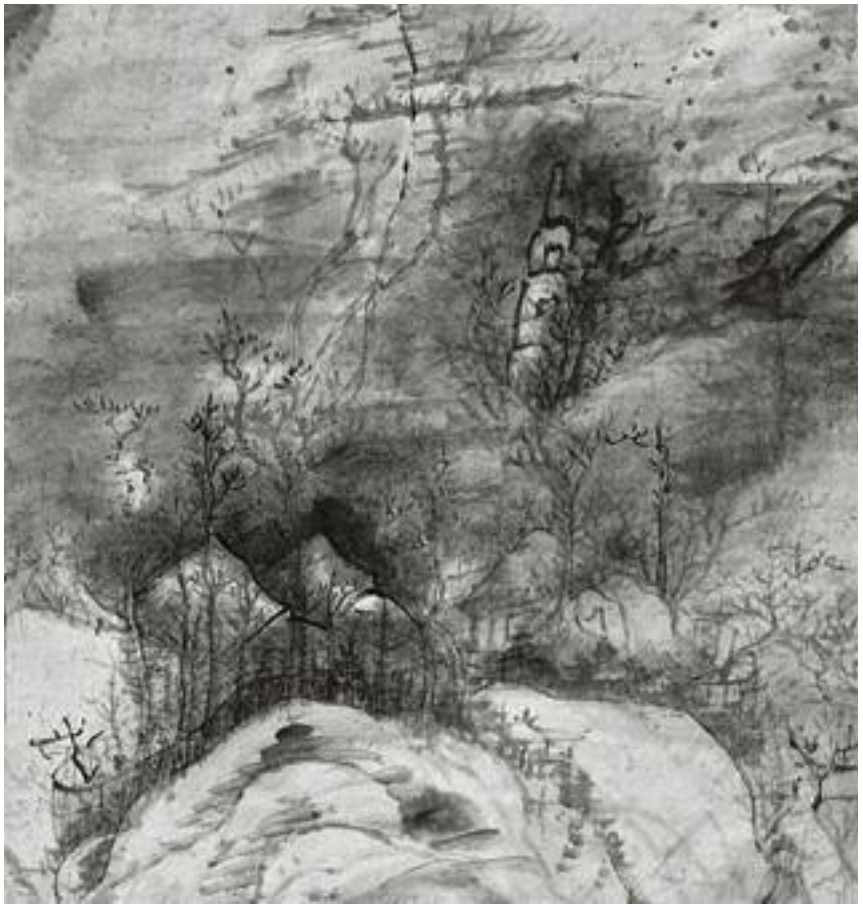
More significantly, Chikuden's account spells out a dialectic of sobriety and inebriation that corresponds to the dialogic relationship between exquisite craft and clumsiness in much of Gyokudō's output. The most impressive manifestation of this relationship is *Eastern Clouds, Sifted Snow* (*Tōun shisetsu zu*) (see fig. 1), a landscape scroll whose signature states that it was painted by the artist in a state of intoxication. Commonly dated to around 1811/1812, when Gyokudō settled in Kyoto and was entering the final decade of his life, this is widely considered to be the most remarkable work in a remarkable oeuvre.[66] This large and intricately structured scroll, depicting a snowy mountainside at dawn, resembles a pictorial negative of Gyokudō's other landscapes. Tall trees in the lower foreground, perched on two landmasses connected by a bridge, establish the upward trajectory of numerous snow-capped mountain forms and areas shrouded in powdery mist, the latter depicted with a soft, highly diluted gray wash. The mountainscape is punctuated with areas of dark wash that surround architectural forms, such as a pair of rooftops

and a pagoda in the middle left. Much of the surface is covered with Gyokudō's trademark horizontal and right- and upward-leaning strokes, in this case thickly and moistly applied. Remarkably, however, these strokes are also employed to fill in the dark, bruised sky, especially around the main snow-covered peak at the top, transforming the void or negative space around the snow-capped mountain into its textural echo. In addition, the surface is selectively defined by the spidery, lacelike branch systems of mostly leafless trees, while spattered red pigment is used to depict what appears to be the remains of autumn foliage and possibly intimations of emerging sunlight at dawn. The overall effect is one of a brooding, dramatic, hoary yet somehow vibrant snowscape. The subject matter is unclear; the significance of *Eastern Clouds, Sifted Snow* centers on the interpretation of its title, inscribed to the left of its main mountain peak. Although the title could be understood as descriptive of a specific atmospheric condition, one theory proposes that it makes reference to an erotic Chinese legend about a mountain goddess.[67]

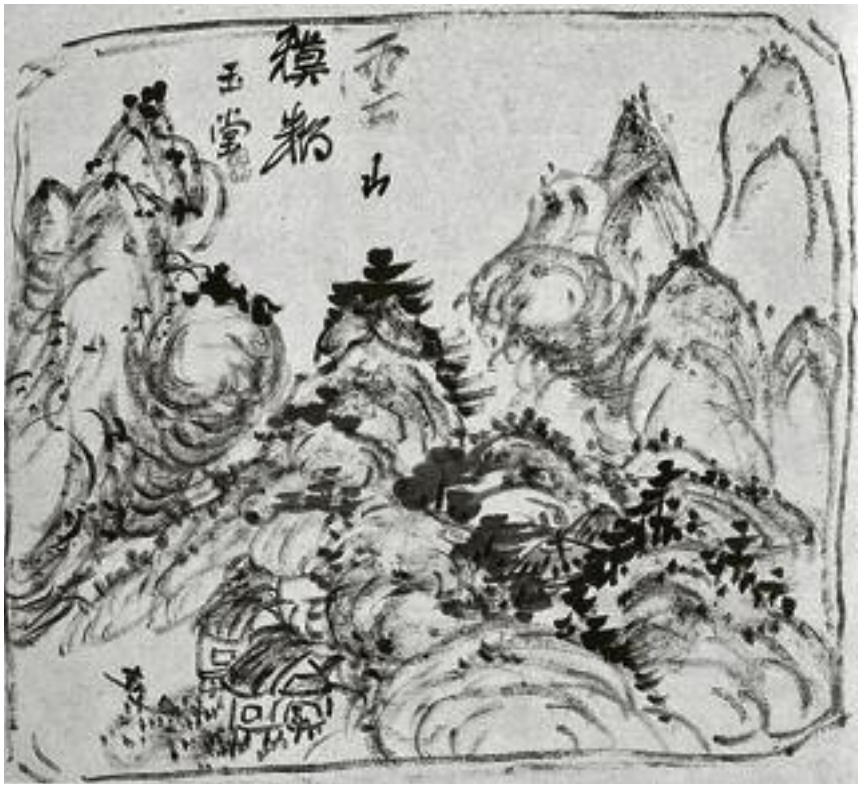
Whatever the resonances of its title, *Eastern Clouds, Sifted Snow* represents a carefully constructed snowscape in which patches of unpainted surface are reserved and set off by their inked surroundings. Layers of wash, horizontal texture strokes, and shadowy, filigreed tree branches form a uniquely textured membrane over the entire scroll. The distribution of motifs and forms is judicious, while the calibration of gradation, liquidity, and saturation is measured. Locally, however, individual brushstrokes can appear slapdash, as in the graffiti-like, crosshatched trees of the middle portion of the scroll (fig. 8). The burnished, darkly inked patches around the architectural forms consist of frenetically applied brushwork, while the red dots of autumn foliage are flung across the surface, spattering well beyond the vicinity of the trees they were meant to adorn. Such free play at the local level is effective only because of the orderliness of the entire pictorial structure. The looseness of microfacture here is enabled by the composure of composition and tonal distribution. In this sense, *Eastern Clouds, Sifted Snow* serves as an embodiment of Gyokudō's method of syncopated painting and drinking, as described by Chikuden: its brushwork is only locally and occasionally intoxicated.

Eastern Clouds, Sifted Snow represents the most accomplished expression of a pictorial persona that Gyokudō struggled to develop and inhabited uneasily during the last decade of his life. Its ability to hold up to characterological analysis is based on the notion that traces and patterns of nonintention are most legible as such when played out within a highly conventional field of representation. This strategy of embedding expressions of exhilarated brush dynamics within received structures of literati picture making —including compositional templates, protocols of brushwork, and iconographies of virtue—places in high relief the representational role of any putative intoxicants, and was explored by Gyokudō with more and more frequency from 1811–1812 onward.

In his late works, however, the scale of the visual field was drastically diminished: in contrast to the expansive, vertically oriented



8. Urakami Gyokudō, *Eastern Clouds, Sifted Snow* (*Tōun shisetsu zu*), detail, c. 1811–1812, vertical hanging scroll, ink and light colors on paper
Kawabata Foundation, Kanagawa Prefecture



9. Urakami Gyokudō, *Clouds and Mountains Dimly Discerned* (*Unzan moko zu*), c. 1815–1820, vertical hanging scroll, ink on paper
Private collection, Japan

surface of *Eastern Clouds, Sifted Snow,* Gyokudō increasingly preferred small rectangular and roundel formats. The small, squarish frame of *Clouds and Mountains Dimly Discerned* (*Unzan moko zu*) (fig. 9), for example, measures only some thirty centimeters on a side, greatly condensing the pictorial qualities that characterized earlier scrolls. In this work, the conceit of stupefied artistry—the "Drunkenville" seal is impressed here as well—mediates the entire image, blurring motifs into semi-indistinguishability. As the title indicates, clouds and mountains appear to fuse into one another, achieving an ideal pictorial expression of the cosmic forces that generate natural phenomena. Yet the painting maintains a crucial, if threadbare, legibility as a landscape, acknowledging the limits of any utopian pursuit of naturalness and skill-lessness.

Gyokudō did not always observe these limits, as Chikuden notes: "When he became too drunk, however, his brushwork devolved, and his buildings, trees, and rocks would become undistinguishable." As *Clouds and Mountains Dimly Discerned* appears to demonstrate, then, it was only when a certain measure of *detoxication* was maintained that the trope of the drunken painter was most successfully activated. The difference between an undistinguishable and undistinguished painting was located in its ability to intimate a transcendence of subjectivity, or to preview a condition of artlessness, while still moored in a mundane state of selfhood.

Gyokudō's actuation of the tradition of the drunken painter ultimately provides insight into the nature of literati pictorialism, predicated as it was on a fundamental contradiction: In order to make literati ideals pictorially legible to the appropriate communities, one had to have "skills"; but these skills betrayed the very ideals they were mobilized to convey. The most ambitious projections of literati identity recognized the artistic fecundity of this dilemma. And a wide array of solutions, of which Gyokudō's was one inimitable example, were arrived at over the centuries to give expression to this state of negative facture. In this sense, literati painting can be understood as aspiring to a craft of perpetual self-erasure, in which the foregrounding of the process of auto-effacement itself became the precondition and focus of viewer empathy. And, ideally, it triggered a recognition on the part of the beholder that the painting was participating in a project that was shared, and bound for failure, but that the painter would try and try again.

NOTES

1. Although employed throughout this essay as a matter of convenience, the term *literati painting,* derived from the Chinese term *wenren,* which became widely used only during the Ming period (1368–1644), may not be the most appropriate to describe a body of work that, in its various incarnations, has also been referred to as the painting of scholar-amateurs or scholar-officials (Chinese *shidafu*), or as is common in Japan, "Southern School painting" (*Nanga*). The terms *idealist painting* and *gentlemanly painting* have also been used. In the Japanese scholarly community, debate continues over what to call this general category of works. For key arguments in this debate, see Kōno Motoaki, "Nihon bunjinga shiron" (An essay on Japanese literati painting), *Kokka* 1207 (1996): 5–13.

2. See, for example, Aida-Yuen Wong, "A New Life for Literati Painting in the Early Twentieth Century: Eastern Art and Modernity, a Transcultural Narrative?" *Artibus Asiae* 60, no. 2 (2000): 297–326.

3. Such studies are too numerous to list here, but two book-length publications worthy of special mention are Chu-tsing Li et al., eds., *Artists and Patrons: Some Social and Economic Aspects of Chinese Painting* (Lawrence, Kans., 1989), and James Cahill, *The Painter's Practice: How Artists Lived and Worked in Traditional China* (New York, 1994).

4. This point is made in the introductory chapter of Craig Clunas, *Elegant Debts: The Social Art of Wen Zhengming* (Honolulu, 2004).

5. Jonathan Hay, *Shitao: Painting and Modernity in Early Qing China* (Cambridge, 2001).

6. Clunas 2004.

7. Gyokudō's surname has traditionally been phoneticized as *Uragami* in English, thus applying a voiced consonant mark to the third phoneme. Premodern Japanese surnames, however, rarely included such diacritical changes, and at least one descendant of Gyokudō's family in the twentieth century has insisted that *Urakami* is the proper pronunciation. For a brief discussion, see the unpaginated preface by Nakamura Akira in Ryūkawa Kiyoshi, *Urakami Gyokudō—hito to geijutsu* (Urakami Gyokudō: The man and his art) (Tokyo, 1976).

8. Cited in John M. Rosenfield, *Mynah Birds and Flying Rocks: Word and Image in the Art of Yosa Buson* (Lawrence, Kans., 2003), 9.

9. Robert L. Thorpe and Richard Ellis Vinograd, eds., *Chinese Art and Culture* (New York, 2001), 325.

10. Hay 2001, 272–277.

11. On the comparative receptions of father and son see Taketani Chōjirō, *Bunjin garon—Urakami Shunkin 'Rongashi' hyōshaku* (Literati painting theory: An annotated translation of Urakami Shunkin's *Rongashi*) (Tokyo, 1988), 24–27. In later Edo-period painting treatises, such as *Gajō yōryaku* (Abbreviated essentials of the vehicle of painting, 1833), it was not uncommon for Gyokudō to be denied his own biographical entry and instead given brief mention in an entry devoted to Shunkin.

12. Stephen Addiss, *Tall Mountains and Flowing Waters: The Arts of Uragami Gyokudō* (Honolulu, 1987), 17. One of these transcriptions appears as the preface to Gyokudō's *Kokin yoji chō* (Album of leisurely playing the zither, 1817), which Tessai appears to have owned; he inscribes the title label, box, preface, and colophon. See Kōno Motoaki, ed., *Gyokudō, Chikuden, Beisanjin,* vol. 2 of *Edo meisaku gachō zenshū* (Compendium of famous Edo painting albums) (Tokyo, 1993), 24.

13. Hashimoto Kansetsu, *Urakami Gyokudō* (Tokyo, 1926); Yano Kyōson, *Urakami Gyokudō* (Tokyo, 1926).

14. See Ohara Magosaburō, ed., *Uragami Gyokudō gafu* (Paintings by Urakami Gyokudō) (Kurashiki City, 1933). Although known primarily as a collector of Western oil painting, Ohara Magosaburō had an interest in Gyokudō that stemmed from the facts that Magosaburō also hailed from Okayama, and that his maternal great-grandfather was a friend of the painter. On Magosaburō, see Tanaka Hisayo, *Bijutsuhin no idōshi—Kindai Nihon no korekutaa-tachi* (The history of the movement of art objects: Collectors of modern Japan) (Tokyo, 1981), 224–259; Burijisuton Bijutsukan, ed., *Seiyō bijutsu ni miserareta jūgonin no korekutaa 1890–1940 / Captivated by Western Art: Fifteen Japanese Art Collectors 1890–1940* [exh. cat., Bridgestone Museum of Art] (Tokyo, 1997), 19–22.

15. Bruno Taut, *Houses and People of Japan* (Tokyo, 1937).

16. See, for example, Yoshikawa's "Gyokudō kinshi" (Gyokudō the *qin* player, 1934), in *Yoshikawa Eiji zenshū* (The complete works of Yoshikawa Eiji) (Tokyo, 1970), 45:114. The relationship of Kawabata's literature to Gyokudō is explored in Hatori Tetsuya, "Urakami Gyokudō to Kawabata Yasunari—'Koto wo idaite,' 'Tenju no ko,' 'Itsumo hanasu hito,' Shōwa nijūkyūnen no tenki," "Urakami Gyokudō and Kawabata Yasunari: The turning point of 1954 and 'Embracing the zither,' 'Heaven-bestowed child,' and 'The person always talked about,'" *Seikei daigaku bungakubu kiyō* (Journal of the literature department of Seikei University) 38 (2003): 1–33.

17. Early postwar research on Gyokudō was galvanized by a major exhibition on the artist in 1954 and culminated in a special issue of the journal *Kobijutsu* (Antique art), vol. 30 (1970), devoted to his life and work.

18. See Sugimoto Yoshihisa, "Urakami Gyokudō no sansuiga to sakuga seishin" (Urakami Gyokudō's landscapes and approach to painting), *Kobunka kenkyū* (Studies in antique culture) 4 (2005): 31–96.

19. Tamada was a disciple of Miyake Shōsai (1662–1741), who in turn studied with the famous scholar Yamazaki Ansai (1618–1682). Tamada's ideas have much in common with thinkers associated with the Kaitokudō Merchant Academy in Osaka; see Tetsuo Najita, *Visions of Virtue in Tokugawa Japan: The Kaitokudō Merchant Academy of Osaka* (Chicago, 1987).

Tamada's practical learning also came to be closely associated with the Tatsuno domain (Harima Province, present-day Hyōgo Prefecture) from where he hailed, and Tatsuno scholars formed one important fraternal community for Gyokudō in Edo. Sugimoto's discovery of numerous references to him in the diary of one such scholar, Matano Gyokusen (1730–1806), demonstrates the degree to which Gyokudō's cultural formation was indebted to the members of this network, which also included the influential Edo literati painters Kitayama Kangan (1767–1801) and Nakayama Kōyō (1717–1780). See Sugimoto 2005, 37–40.

20. These other scholars included Ouchi Ranshitsu and Udono Shinei. Kokyū authored the preface for *Gyokudō kinpu* (Gyokudō's *qin* music, published in 1789 and 1791), which is discussed further below.

21. See Sugimoto 2005, 40–45. Gyokudō's poetic development is discussed in Ikezawa Ichirō, *Edo bunjin ron—Ota Nanpo wo chūshin ni* (A theory of Edo literati, with a focus on Ota Nanpo) (Tokyo, 2000), 40–82 and 382–405.

22. Wang Yangming (1472–1529) was a Ming dynasty scholar who espoused an idealist form of neo-Confucian teaching popularized in Japan by Kumazawa Banzan (1619–1691) and other scholars in the seventeenth century. Ōyōmei philosophy was viewed by the Tokugawa shogunate as a radical and subversive alternative to the officially embraced Zhu Xi brand of neo-Confucianism and thus was periodically suppressed. For a good introduction to Banzan and Ōyōmei thought in Japan, see James McMullen, *Idealism, Protest, and the Tale of Genji: The Confucianism of Kumazawa Banzan (1619–1691)* (Oxford, 1999).

On the National Learning movement, see Harry H. Harootunian, *Things Seen and Unseen: Discourse and Ideology in Tokugawa Nativism* (Chicago, 1988), and Susan L. Burns, *Before the Nation: Kokugaku and the Imagining of Community in Early Modern Japan* (Durham, N.C., 2003). As Suzuki Susumu has pointed out, however, Gyokudō's interest with both Wang Yangming philosophy and the National Learning movement was concurrently developed through his close contact with members of his home domain, especially the Kōmoto family of merchants. See Suzuki, *Urakami Gyokudō* (Tokyo, 1978), 19.

23. The most important studies of Gyokudō's music to date are by Stephen Addiss. See "Uragami Gyokudō: The Complete Literati Artist" (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1977); "Gyokudō no ongaku" (The music of Gyokudō), in Sasaki Jōhei, ed., *Urakami Gyokudō* (Tokyo, 1980), 90–96; and Addiss 1987. Also useful are recent studies that provide a fuller picture of *qin* culture during the Edo period. See the various articles found in *Gyokudō to Shunkin, Shūkin: Uragami Gyokudō fushi no geijutsu* (Gyokudō, Shunkin, and Shūkin: The art of Urakami Gyokudō and his sons) [exh. cat., Fukushima Prefectural Museum] (Aizu Wakamatsu, 1994), especially Kishibe Shigeo, "Urakami Gyokudō to shigenkin" (Urakami Gyokudō and the seven-stringed zither), 107–116; Sakata Shin'ichi, "Gyokudō no kinpu" (Gyokudō's zither manuals), 124–137; and Kaketa Hironori, "Aizu ni okeru Urakami Gyokudō fushi no geinō saikō" (A reconsideration of the artistic activities of Urakami Gyokudō and his son in Aizu), 138–142.

24. Gyokudō's medical instruments are illustrated in Takeda Kōichi, *Urakami Gyokudō* (Tokyo, 1993), 7.

25. On *saibara,* see Elizabeth J. Markham, *Saibara: Japanese Court Songs of the Heian Period* (Cambridge, 1983).

26. See Addiss 1987, 29–48, and Kishibe Shigeo, *Edo jidai no kinshi monogatari* (Zither masters of the Edo period) (Tokyo, 2000).

27. See Sugimoto 2005, 72–88.

28. This manner of signing his work already appears on one of Gyokudō's earliest known paintings, dated to 1786.

29. *Gyokudō kinshi shū* (Collection of Gyokudō the *qin* player) (Takamatsu, 1794) contains sixty-one Chinese-style poems and includes a preface by Minagawa Kien (1734–1807). A second anthology, *Gyokudō kinshi kōshū* (Later collection of Gyokudō the *qin* player), published in 1797, contains seventy-eight poems.

30. Translation by Stephen Addiss in Addiss 1987, 56, with minor adjustments. The first words, "totally drunk," were replaced here with "tipsy" as a more appropriate translation of the Japanese *issui,* which connotes a momentary state of stimulation.

31. Translation by Stephen Addiss in Addiss 1987, 17.

32. Although published posthumously in 1836, this text bears a preface dated to 1813 in which Chikuden writes that the work had already been completed more than ten years earlier, when he was in his mid-twenties. For the most reliable published edition, see Takahashi Hiromi, ed., *Sanchūjin jōzetsu, Jiga daigo, Chikudensō shiyū garoku* (Prattlings of a mountain hermit, collected painting inscriptions, and Old Man Chikuden's record of painting by teachers and friends), vol. 7 of *Teihon Nihon kaigaron taisei* (Standard editions of Japanese painting theory) (Tokyo, 1996), 7–47. See also Taketani Chōjirō, *Chikuden garon Sanchūjin jōzetsu yakkai* (Children's painting theory: An annotated translation of *Prattlings of a mountain hermit*) (Tokyo, 1990).

33. Translation in by Stephen Addiss in Addiss 1987, 22.

34. Translation adapted from Addiss 1987, 21–22. This text bears a preface dated 1810 (Bunka 7), 11.27, and was published the following year, while Chikuden was at Jimyō-in temple in Osaka.

35. Translation by Stephen Addiss in Addiss 1987, 28.

36. Here almost the entirety of the Gyokudō literature could be cited. See in particular Ryūkawa 1976, 351–357, and Kōno Motoaki, "Gyokudō to sake" (Gyokudō and alcohol), in Kōno 1993, 148–155.

37. See Yoshiho Yonezawa and Chu Yoshizawa, *Japanese Painting in the Literati Style,* trans. Betty Iverson Monroe (New York, 1974), 91. Similar speculation is found in Ryūkawa 1976.

38. See the discussion in Maeno, "Chūgoku no shijin to sake" (Chinese poets and alcohol), in *Sake* (Alcohol), ed. Hayashi Kentarō (Tokyo, 1976), 160.

39. See the passages on drunkenness in *Zhuangzi,* 2/19/674, and A. C. Graham, trans., *Chuang-tzu: The Seven Inner Chapters and Other Writings from the Book Chuang-tzu* (London, 1981), 137. These passages are cited along with a general discussion in Ding Xiang Warner, "Mr. Five Dippers of Drunkenville: The Representation of Enlightenment in Wang Ji's Drinking Poems," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 118, no. 3 (July–September 1998): 351.

40. For a sociological account of the theme of drunkenness in Chinese poetry, see Julia Lee, "Alcohol in Chinese Poems: References to Drunkenness, Flushing, and Drinking," *Contemporary Drug Problems* 13 (Summer 1986): 303–338.

41. On the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove, see Audrey Spiro, *Contemplating the Ancients* (Berkeley, 1991). A discussion of their importance to the later ideal of the scholar-drunkard is found in Wolfgang Bauer, *China and the Search for Happiness,* trans. Michael Shaw (New York, 1976), 150–151.

42. See James Hightower, "T'ao Ch'ien's 'Drinking Wine' Poems," in *Wen-lin: Studies in the Chinese Humanities,* ed. Chow Tse-tsung (Madison, Wis., 1968), 3–44; James Hightower, *The Poetry of T'ao Ch'ien* (Oxford, 1970).

43. Translation by Amy McNair in *The Upright Brush: Yan Zhenqing's Calligraphy and Song Literati Politics* (Honolulu, 1998), 22. For a discussion of Zhang Xu, see McNair 1998, 21–26.

44. Translation by Amy McNair in McNair 1998, 22. Eugene Wang has shared with me his observation that such drunken performances can be traced back to certain traditions of popular street performance from the Han dynasty.

45. See Peter C. Sturman, "Wine and Cursive: The Limits of Individualism in Northern Sung China," in Cary Y. Liu et al., eds., *Character and Context in Chinese Calligraphy* (Princeton, 1999), 200–231.

46. Sturman 1999, 216–219.

47. Translation by Alexander Soper in "*T'ang ch'ao ming hua lu:* Celebrated Painters of the T'ang Dynasty by Chu Ching-hsuan of T'ang," *Artibus Asiae* 31 (1958): 204–230. See also Shimada Shūjirō, "Concerning the I-p'in Style of Painting," trans. James Cahill, parts 1–3, *Oriental Art* 7, no. 2 (1961): 66–72; 8, no. 3 (1962): 130–137; 10, no. 1 (1964): 19–26. Originally published as "Ippin gafū ni tsuite," *Bijutsu kenkyū* (Journal of art studies) 161 (1950): 264–290.

48. The earliest extant examples of the splashed-ink landscape tradition that many scholars trace back to Wang Mo do not appear until the late thirteenth century, in four works in Japanese collections attributed to the Chinese monk-painter Yujian. They are discussed in Yukio Lippit, "Of Modes and Manners in Medieval Japanese Ink Painting: Sesshū's *Splashed Ink Landscape* of 1495," unpublished paper.

49. Sturman maps out the differing and complex ways in which scholar-officials of the Northern Song period (960–1127) assessed Zhang Xu's calligraphy and the role of wine in his writing. See Sturman 1999.

50. See, for example, Xu Wei's colophon to his *Scroll of Flowering Plants and Miscellaneous Subjects,* painted for his nephew in 1591. This inscription and other aspects of Xu Wei's drunken persona are discussed in Nishigami Minoru, "Hatsuboku kaki zu no tanjō—Jo'i to Min kōki no Sekkō bunjin gadan" (The birth of splashed-ink flowers-and-grasses paintings: Xu Wei and painting in the Zhejiang region during the late Ming period), in *Mindai kaiga to Sesshū* (Sesshū and Ming painting) [exh. cat., Nezu Institute of Fine Arts] (Tokyo, 2005), 25–29. See also Kathleen Ryor, "Bright Pearls Hanging in the Marketplace: Self-Expression and Commodification in the Painting of Xu Wei" (PhD diss., Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, 1998).

51. Lippit (unpublished). The inscriptions on *Splashed-Ink Landscape* are transcribed and discussed by Hoshiyama Shin'ya in Iriya Yoshitaka and Shimada Shūjirō, eds., *Zenrin gasan—chūsei suibokuga wo yomu* (Painting inscriptions of the Zen forest: Reading medieval ink painting) (Tokyo, 1987), 205–210.

52. See Sakazaki Shizuka, *Nihon kaigaron taikei* (Compendium of Japanese painting theory) (Tokyo: 1980), 1: 148. This passage is mentioned in Satō Yasuhiro, ed., *Urakami Gyokudō* (Tokyo, 1997), 82; I am indebted to Satō's discussion of the splashed-ink tradition (81–85).

53. For a translation of this passage, see Hugh Wylie, "Nanga Painting Treatises of Nineteenth-Century Japan: Translations, Commentary, and Analysis" (PhD diss., University of Kansas, 1991), 130; see also Satō 1997, 82.

54. See Kōno 1993, 163.

55. The sobriquet has been translated as "Drunken Rustic" by Addiss, but "Story of Drunkenville" acknowledges the allusion to Wang Ji. Its translation is taken from Warner 1998.

56. Translation by Ding Xiang Warner in Warner 1988, 353.

57. Warner 1988, 353. It is also likely that the title of Gyokudō's autobiographical essay, translated as "Gyokudō's Wall Writing," is modeled after Wang Ji's set of eight poems whose title translates as "Scribbled on a Tavern Wall."

58. See the discussion of this painting in Satō Yasuhiro, "Un'u no jōkei—Urakami Gyokudō no erochishizumu—" (The spectacle of clouds and rain: Urakami Gyokudō's eroticism), *Museum* 491 (1992): 27–38. That Gyokudō's poem for Nanpo is composed of stock elements is suggested by the fact that a separate poem by Gyokudō, one of three that accompanies his painting *Regretful Parting amid Mountains and Rivers* (*Obetsu kōzan zu*) (private collection), differs only in its third line. See Satō 1997, 44.

59. See Satō 1997, 32.

60. Translated by Stephen Addiss in Addiss 1987, 22. The passage is from section 84 of *Chikudensō shiyū garoku* (Old Man Chikuden's record of paintings by teachers and friends). It is interesting to observe the association between Chikuden's account and Gyokudō's often-used seal, *Hakuzen kinshi* (The white-bearded *qin* player).

61. Itakura Masa'aki discusses a similar phenomenon among fourteenth-century Chinese literati of the Jiangnan region in "Chō'u dai 'Geisan zō' (Taipei kokyū hakubutsuin) wo meguru shomondai" (Various issues related to *Portrait of Ni Zan inscribed by Zhang Yu [National Palace Museum, Taipei]*) *Bijutsushi ronsō* (Studies in art history) 17 (2001): 159–182.

62. *Southern Mountains* was painted for one of Gyokudō's major early patrons in Bizen, Kōmoto Ichia, to celebrate his seventieth birthday.

63. Translation by Stephen Addiss in Addiss 1987, 98.

64. Translation by Stephen Addiss in Addiss 1987, 17. For a discussion of Xie He's Six Laws, see John Hay, "Values and History in Chinese Painting, I: Hsieh Ho Revisited," *Res: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 6 (Autumn 1983): 72–111; "Values and History in Chinese Painting, II: The Hierarchic Evolution of Structure," *Res: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 7–8 (Spring–Autumn 1984): 103–136.

65. For a discussion of this process see Satō 1997, 38.

66. Numerous commentaries on the work have been authored over the years. A classic analysis by Yoshizawa Chū is found in "Urakami Gyokudō hitsu Tōun shisetsu zu" (*Eastern Clouds, Sifted Snow,* by Urakami Gyokudō), *Kokka* (Flowers of the nation) 706 (1951): 31–37. See also Satō 1997, 36–39, and Sugimoto 2005, 46–48.

67. Satō Yasuhiro has raised the possibility that the title refers to the legend of Yaoji, the daughter of a minor god in southern China. Having died at an early age, Yaoji was buried at Wushan Mountain, where her spirit continued to reside. One day the king of Chu traveled through the region and camped overnight at the base of the mountain. Yaoji visited him in his sleep, and, as she was about to take her leave in the morning, the king asked her where she lived. Yaoji answered that she lived on the peak of Wushan, where they could next meet: in the morning she took the form of clouds, in the evening that of misty rain. The imagery of "clouds and rain" has since become an erotic symbol in the Chinese poetic tradition. See Satō 1992, in which the author has traced the subtle infusion of this imagery into a number of Gyokudō's paintings, including *Eastern Clouds, Sifted Snow.*

The title *Eastern Clouds, Sifted Snow* is also a variation on the title of a painting in an album by the Chinese painter Li Chubo titled *Heavy Clouds About to Snow,* once owned by Gyokudō, and further includes several homonymic references. The characters for *Eastern Clouds* can also be understood as "overhanging clouds" or "daybreak" (*shinonome*). In addition, the character for "sifted" or "sieve" can be interpreted as "pouring," as in "pouring or serving wine." This image can refer both to Gyokudō's fondness for wine and to the merrymaking that is imagined to have taken place during Yaoji's evening with the king of Chu. See Kōno 1993, 152; Satō 1997, 36.