

## *Landscape Paintings Influenced by the Climate of Noto Peninsula in Japan*

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The IAFOR International Conference on Arts & Humanities in Hawaii 2023  
Official Conference Proceedings

### **Abstract**

Pine Trees screen by Hasegawa Tohaku (1539–1610) is considered as the one of the most famous landscape ink (wash) paintings in Japan, and also known as the first original ink paintings ever made in Japan. Ink painting was introduced in the 14th century in Japan, and traditionally many of Japanese painters are influenced by Chinese ink painting style. One of the reasons that Pine Trees by Tohaku considered as the only original is the representation of the actual Japanese climatic landscape. Typically landscape ink paintings are depicted imaginary scenes, and rarely adapt the actual views in his time. Especially the mountain landscapes are the one of the most common themes for ink paintings, however depicted mountains are highly deformed the actual mountain or represented the ideal shape. On the other hand, Pine Trees screen by Tohaku gives us the impression of naturalistic landscape which no other painters could not succeed in his life time. Many scholars are questioning that where the depicted place could be, if the painting represents the actual landscape somewhere in Japan. Some researchers say that the painting represents his hometown landscape. Unfortunately, there is not enough personal records of him exist, and the painting itself is poorly documented, leaving the results unclear. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore how he insisted the tradition of ink painting and the possibility of landscape he might have seen and painted based on geographical and climatic features of his hometown.

Keywords: Hasegawa Tohaku, Pine Trees Screen, Noto Peninsula

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## 1. Introduction

Pine Trees screen by Hasegawa Tohaku (1539–1610) is considered as the one of the most famous landscape ink (wash) paintings in Japan, and also known as the first original ink paintings ever made in Japan. However, unfortunately, there is not enough personal records of him exist, and the painting itself is poorly documented, as a result, details remain unknown such as how the painting was drawn or where it was drawn. In this research paper in chapter two, the brief history of Ink wash painting flourished from China and Japan is overviewed to understand the general historical background, and in chapter three, brief career of Hasegawa Tohaku as a painter, is introduced mainly divided into two periods, which are his hometown as the Noto period and his later work city as the Kyoto period. In chapter four, focused on the three main subject matters of Pine Trees screen to explore how he insisted the tradition of ink painting and the possibility of landscape he might have seen and painted based on geographical and climatic features of his hometown.

## 2. Over view of ink wash paintings

Pine Trees screen by Tohaku Hasegawa (1539-1610) is the one of the most famous landscape ink wash paintings (known as *Suiboku-ga*) in Japan (Figure 1). This Painting (Hasegawa, 1539–1610) is known as the first original ink painting ever made in Japan because the painting represents the Japanese landscape.



Figure 1: Tohaku Hasegawa. (16 Century). *Pine Trees screen*. [A pair of six-fold screens, Ink on paper]. Tokyo National Museum, Tokyo, Japan

In China, landscape painting, called *Shanshui hua* (mountain-water paintings) became popular during the Tang dynasty (618-907) and ink wash painting was established as a technique of landscape painting in the late Tang dynasty. Continuously, ink wash painting flourished during the Song dynasty in China (960-1279). In Japan, landscape painting was introduced by Zen Buddhist monks in the 14th century. After that many Japanese painters learned the Chinese technique and the related philosophy from Chinese Buddhist monk painter with imported Chinese landscape paintings.

The most popular subject matter of ink wash paintings is representing landscape, but in landscape ink wash painting the depicted scenes are typically imaginary or idealization of actual views. Typically, Chinese painters preferred to depict the idealized landscape because they are more interested in conveying emotion or atmosphere. This trend can be seen especially in the *Shanshui hua* style of mountain landscapes are one of the most common. For example, “Eight views of the Xiao and Xiang Rivers” are most commonly depicted both in China and Japan. However, the scenery is from a perspective above or very distant and it usually from a considerable distance, called Bird's-eye view.

In the beginning, Japanese painters learned the Chinese style and imitated the imported Chinese ink was paintings, therefore Japanese painters did not tend to have their originality. Even the depicted scenes were originated from China, such as “Eight views of the Xiao and Xiang Rivers”, and this movement remained strongly to the Tohaku’s life period. Therefore, Pine trees by Tohaku Hasegawa was unprecedented in Japanese art history.

### 3. About Tohaku Hasegawa

Hasegawa Tohaku was born in 1539 in Nanao, a town in Noto province, and spent his early years in Noto province. Then he moved to Kyoto in 1571 and spent an important formative period. He spent his final years in Edo (Tokyo), but less than a year he passed away since he left Kyoto. So, his career is mainly divided between Noto and Kyoto. In this paper we call his early career, Noto period and his later career, Kyoto period (Figure 2). In this chapter, his brief historical career and influenced people are introduced to discuss how he established his painting style in the following chapter.

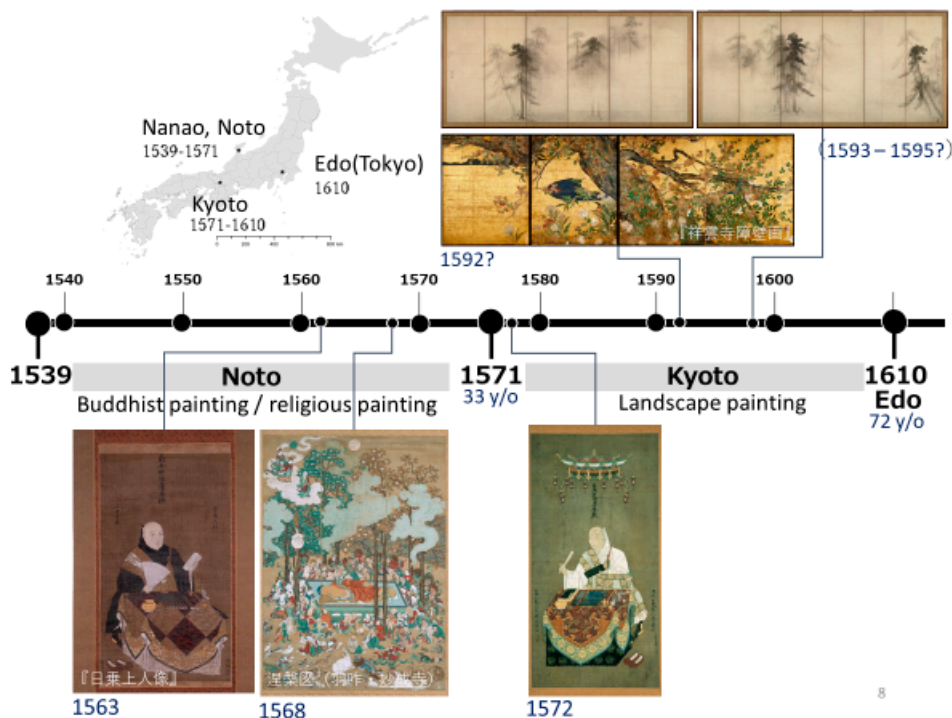


Figure 2: Timeline of Hasegawa Tohaku

#### 3.1 Tohaku’s career in Noto Period from 1539-1571

He started his career as a Buddhist painter and most of his work is religious, but also painted portraits when he lived in Noto province since. After moving to Kyoto in 1571, he developed his career and gradually became famous and the most of his representational works were created in the Kyoto period. So little is known of his early life in Noto and less documented. However, there are some his Buddhist paintings can be found in temple in the former Noto province. According to (Nanao Art Foundation, 2016) 14 paintings are found around the Noto province (Table 1). Figure 2 shows that the distribution of his works in Noto province. His works are found in the limited area in the Noto province, however, this suggests that he may have a chance to visit the indicated temples or travel around the places.

### 3.2 Tohaku's career in Kyoto period from 1571-1610

As previously mentioned, He moved to Kyoto in 1571 and stayed until in 1610. Then he moved to Edo (Tokyo) in 1610, but less than a year after he left Kyoto, he passed away in 1610. He spent almost his later career in Kyoto and he became one of the most famous painters in Kyoto. When he moved to Kyoto, he was enormously influenced by two painters, one is Chinese Zen priest painter, Muqi (Mu Xi), and another painter is Japanese Zen priest painter, Sesshu Toyo.

Table 1: Hasegawa Tohaku's work in the Noto period

ID	Year	City	Name of Temple	Title
1	1554	Wajima	Seiryuji Temple	Nichirensōninzō (Saint Nichiren)
2	1563	Hakui	Myoji Temple	Nichijōshōnin-zō (Saint Nichijo)
3	1564	Hakui	Shokaku-in Temple	Jūniten-zu (Twelve Heavenly Maps)
4	1564	Takaoka	Daihoji Temple	Nichirensōninzō (Saint Nichiren) Kishibojin Jyurasetu nyoza Shaka Taho butu-zu (Buddha)
5	1564	Nanao	Honenji Temple	Nichirensōninzō (Saint Nichiren)
6	1565	Nanao	Jisso-ji Temple	Nichirensōninzō (Saint Nichiren)
7	1566	Takaoka	Daihoji Temple	Sanjyubanjin-zu (Thirty gods)
8	1568	Hakui	Myoji Temple	Nehan-zu (Figure of nirvana)
9	1568	Takaoka	Myodenji Temple	Nichirensōnin gazō (Saint Nichiren)
10	1571	Takaoka	Myodenji Temple	Kishimojin jūrasetsunyo zō
11	?	Nanao	Chouji Temple	Nehan-zu (Figure of nirvana)
12	?	Himi	Renjoji Temple	Kishimojin jūrasetsunyo zō
13	?	Nanao	Ryumonji Temple	Daruma-zu (Bodhidharma)
14	?	Nanao	Reisenji Temple	Jūrokanzan-zu (Sixteen Arhats)

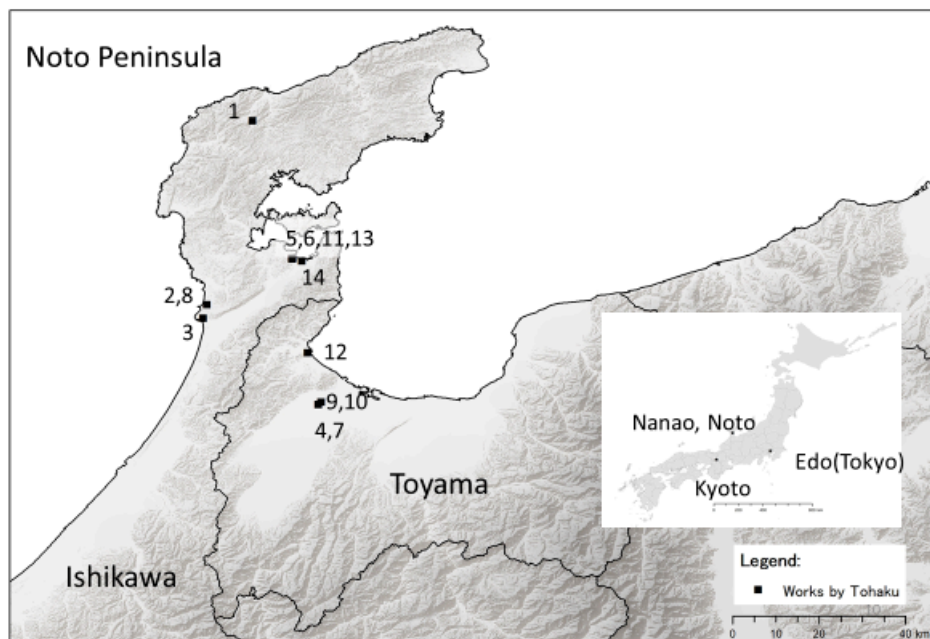


Figure 3: Tohaku Hasegawa's artworks of in Noto (1539-1571)

### 3.2.1 Influenced Chinese painter, Muqi

Muqi was one of the most celebrated Chinese painters during the beginning of 14th century in Japan. His activity period is considered during the Southern Song Dynasty in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, but little is known of his lives, because his reputation later declined and he was virtually almost forgotten in China. According to *Kundaikan sō chōki*<sup>1</sup> (Hayashiya, 2016) and *Tohaku-gasetsu*<sup>2</sup> (Hayashiya, 2016) and his paintings are highly valued in Japan and most of his works are well preserved in Japan. The reason that his paintings are valued is he has outstanding technique of atmospheric perspective. Particularly, his technique of atmosphere of dampness and deep mist and fogs is admired by many Japanese painters. Figure 4 shows his original painting, called “Returning Sails off Distant Shore” of Eight views of the Xiao and Xiang Rivers (Muqi, Southern Song Dynasty). This unique technique gives viewer a sense of the moist air, and a sense of the depth of space.

And also, monkeys are extremely popular motif of Muqi’s paintings (Muqi, Yuan period/14th century)(Figure 5), so many Japanese painters made a copy of his monkey drawings. Tohaku was one of the painters who studied him most enthusiastically. Figure 6 is the copy of Muqi’s Monkey drawing which Tohaku painted (Hasegawa, Azuchi Momoyama period). This has been discovered in recent years in the private collection in the Kyoto city<sup>3</sup> and revealed to the public.



Figure 4: Muqi. (Southern Song Dynasty). *Returning Sails off a Distant Shore* (from *Eight Views of the Xiao and Xiang Rivers*). [Hanging scroll, ink on paper].  
Kyoto National Museum, Kyoto, Japan

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<sup>1</sup> A secret book on the appreciation and appreciation of Chinese art that was completed in the Muromachi period.

<sup>2</sup> Nittsu Shonin (1551-1608), the 10th head of the Kyoto Honpo-ji Temple, wrote down what Hasegawa Tohaku, a painter of the Momoyama period, talked about the painters of the previous generation, his paintings, and the methods of appreciation.

<sup>3</sup>長谷川等伯作とみられる水墨画発見: 日本経済新聞 (nikkei.com) 長谷川等伯作とみられる水墨画発見: 日本経済新聞 (nikkei.com)



Figure 5: Muqi. (Yuan period/14th century). *Monkeys on rocks* (Hikkō-en Attributed to Muqi). [Ink on silk]. Tokyo National Museum, Tokyo, Japan.  
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### 3.2.2 Influenced Japanese painter, Sesshu Toyo (1420-1506)

The secondly influenced painter is *Sesshu Toyo* (1420-1506?), who was the most prominent painters as known as Japanese master of ink painting and became one of the most important artists of his time. He was versatile and prolific, although he was a Rinzai Zen Buddhist priest. He voyaged to Ming China between 1468 to 1469, and was influenced by Chinese Song dynasty landscape painting. After he came back to Japan, he produced a large number and variety of ink paintings. Among those paintings, one distinctive and unique painting is remained, called “*View of Amanohashidate*” (Toyo, 1420-1506?). This ink painting is depicted the actual landscape in northern part of Kyoto province (Figure 7) in his later years.



Figure 6: Tohaku Hasegawa. (1539-1610). *Enkozu byobu*. [ink on paper].  
Ishikawa Nanao Art Museum, Nanao, Japan



Figure 7: Sesshu Toyo. (1420-1506?). *View of Amanohashidate*. [Ink and light colors on paper]. Kyoto National Museum, Kyoto, Japan

### **Subjects of “*View of Amanohashidate*”**

Amanohashidate is a name of place in the northern part of Kyoto province and “*View of Amanohashidate*” has been famous as one of the three most scenic spots in Japan since 8th century. According to an excerpt from “*Tango no kuni Fudoki*”(Uegaki, 1997), it appears to be a place of heaven, and in the middle of the Heian period (794-1185) it was known as a place of scenic beauty.

In the foreground, the uniquely formed shoreline and a sandbar are depicted. On the sandbar, white sands and pine trees are depicted. In the background, the mountains shrouded in a layered fog behind many temples are depicted with his extreme skillful brushwork. Sesshu carefully juxtaposed the unique landform and existing temple buildings with surrounding nature. People can easily recognize the depicted place and may believe that almost the same scenery can be seen now in the past.

### **Composition of “*View of Amanohashidate*”**

On the other hand, this painting is the reflection of the actual Japanese landscape however the depicted scenery is composed by the bird’s-eye view, which was influenced by Chinese depictions, which means that the painting is the representation of actual Japanese landscape, but the composition remains closer to the Chinese tradition.

## **4. Overview of “Pine trees screen”**

“Pine trees screen” is known as the Hasegawa Tohaku’s representative work and considered as the first Japanese landscape ink painting (Figure 1). It is generally considered to have been produced in Kyoto in his later years. However, little is known about the painting, and there is often dispute about the attribution of his work, and even some researchers questioned the painting is certainly by his hand because of unsigned. More over Some researchers concern that the painting is intended as a preparatory sketch rather than as a finished product.

In this chapter, focused on three main subject matters of Pine Trees Screen, which are pines, snow mountain, and fog are discussed based on the geological and climate facts.

## 4.1 Pines as a subject matter

A pine tree is one of the favorite painting subject matter in Japan, because the Japanese people believed that a pine tree is the symbol of gods, longevity, celebration, permanence, and immutability from the ancient time. As Figure 8 (Toyo, Muromachi period) shows, when pine trees are generally drawn together with plums and bamboo, or flowers and birds. Therefore, it can be said that it was very unusual for only pine to be drawn (Figure 1).



Figure 8: Sesshu Toyo. (Muromachi period). *Flowers and Birds of the Four Season*. [Pair of folding screens, coloring on silk]. Kyoto National Museum, Kyoto, Japan<sup>4</sup>.  
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### Plant community of Pine

Plant community is A group of plants of the same or different species that grow close to each other and have a cohesive structure as a whole. Usually each community has a distinctive characteristic based on the environmental conditions such as temperature, moisture, light and shade, and soil, etc. In nature, generally a plant community consists of a multiple species in a particular habitat. However, a plant community rarely consists of a single species due to the sever environment. On the other words, growing trees without associated shrubs or herbs is rare in nature, but not impossible to find (Robinson & Wu, 2016).

Pine is approximately 90 species are distributed through the northern hemisphere and generally pines are considered more tolerant of adverse soil and climatic conditions (Dirr, 1998). In Japan, seven species of pine can be found in natural or semi-natural environment, which are (1) Japanese red pine (*Pinus densiflora*), (2) Black pine (*Pinus thunbergii*), (3) Goyo pine (*Pinus parviflora*), (4) Korean pine (*Pinus koraiensis*), (5) Hai pine, or Siberian dwarf pine (*Pinus pumila*), and (6) Ryukyu pine or Okinawa pine (*Pinus luchuensis*) (7), Amami pine (*Pinus amamiana*)<sup>5</sup>.

Among them, Japanese red pine and black pine are dominant species and widely distributed in Japan(Tsujii, 2003), and both have characteristics not found in other species. One characteristic is that they can survive in areas directly exposed to sea breezes. First, both pine trees grow well in rocky or sandy wastelands where other trees cannot survive (Fukushima, 2017). So many pine tree groves which only consist of red pines and black pines can be seen in coastal area in Japan.

<sup>4</sup>[https://emuseum.nich.go.jp/detail?langId=ja&webView=&content\\_base\\_id=101001&content\\_part\\_id=001&content\\_pict\\_id=001&x=-178&y=-144&s=1](https://emuseum.nich.go.jp/detail?langId=ja&webView=&content_base_id=101001&content_part_id=001&content_pict_id=001&x=-178&y=-144&s=1)

<sup>5</sup> "マツ", 日本大百科全書 (ニッポニカ) , JapanKnowledge, <https://japanknowledge-com.stri.toyo.ac.jp> , (参照 2023-02-03)



The second characteristic is that pine tree forests have relatively little understory vegetation, because they tend to have a close canopy and pine needles that fall under the trees decompose very slowly. This thick layer of pine needles is another factor that reduces the understory vegetation. Therefore, a pine tree community often consists of solely in coastal area.

Thirdly, even in coastal areas, it is sometimes a priority species, and the beauty of the contrast between the white sand and the lush pine tree crown is called the white sand green pine. This is especially popular in Japan, where *Matsushima*, *Amanohashidate*, *Katsurahama*, and *Nijinomatsubara* are the most famous places for pines with white sand.

The figure 9 (Tosa, fl. 1390-1394) is the representation of typical Japanese coastal landscape with a pine tree grove in coastal area. Pine trees are depicted with the ocean. Similarly, when you look at the Pine Trees Screen by Tohaku, only pine trees are depicted and there is no other plant species and no understory vegetation. It is possible that this suggests that Tohaku painted pine grove in coastal areas.



Figure 9: Tosa Mitsushige. (fl. 1390-1394). *Pines on the Shore*. [Pair of six-panel folding screens, Color on paper]. Tokyo National Museum, Tokyo, Japan<sup>6</sup>.

## 4.2 Mountain as a subject matter

### Geological and climate fact about snow mountain

Painting mountain is also the most favorite subject matter of all kind of paintings in Japan because Japanese people believed that mountain as a sacred place and where gods live from the ancient time. On Pine Trees Screen, a mountain is depicted, and usually researchers believe that it is a snow mountain. Contradictorily, there is no snow in the painting except on the mountain. If Tohaku painted a winter landscape, then it should be possible to paint the ground covered with snow and the snow falling and piling up on the pine branches. In consequence, this indicates that the painting may not represent winter landscape.

In Japan, there are some perpetual snow mountains, which means permanent snow and ice can be seen throughout year. According to GSI (Geospatial Information Authority of Japan),<sup>7</sup> permanent snow refers to snow and ice masses that remain on high mountains all year round.

<sup>6</sup> Attributed to Tosa Mitsushige Pair of six-panel folding screens

Color on paper Image: 160.4 cm x 355.4 cm each Muromachi period, 15th century Tokyo National Museum  
[https://emuseum.nich.go.jp/detail?langId=en&webView=&content\\_base\\_id=101385&content\\_part\\_id=001&content\\_pict\\_id=001&x=-195&y=-154&s=1](https://emuseum.nich.go.jp/detail?langId=en&webView=&content_base_id=101385&content_part_id=001&content_pict_id=001&x=-195&y=-154&s=1)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gsi.go.jp/KIDS/map-sign-tizukigou-2022-mannenyuki.htm>

I investigated that perpetual snow mountains. First, picked up 9 mountain and mountain range which are Taisetsuzan, Chokaisan, Gassan, Iide mountains, tanigawadake, Fujisan, Hidasanmyaku, Tateyama range, Ushiroateyama range, Hakusan, Oyama, which are generally famous for perpetual mountains in Japan, and the total 151 mountains are identified from those mountain range. After that each mountain was checked whether a perpetual snow symbol<sup>8</sup> is indicated on a GSI map or not. As a result, 38 perpetual snow mountains are found (Table). The perpetual snow mountains are plotted on the map. Figure 10 is the distribution of the perpetual snow mountain in Japan. The perpetual snow mountain can be seen only the northern part of Japan. This indicates that the mountains which Tohaku can views in his lifetime is only Tateyama mountain.

Table 2: Perpetual snow mountains in Japan.

ID	Name	Prefecture	ELEV.	Y	X	Mountain range
1	Daisetsuzan <Kuro dake>	Hokkaido	1984m	43.6975	142.920278	Ishikari mountains
2	Daisetsuzan <Hokuchin dake>	Hokkaido	2244m	43.692778	142.879722	Ishikari mountains
3	Daisetsuzan <Mt. Asahi dake>	Hokkaido	2291m	43.663611	142.854167	Ishikari mountains
4	Daisetsuzan <Mt. Aibetsu>	Hokkaido	2113m	43.707778	142.857222	Ishikari mountains
5	Daisetsuzan <Shiraun dake>	Hokkaido	2230m	43.661111	142.905833	Ishikari mountains
6	Mt. Chokai<Shinzan>	Yamagata	2236m	39.099167	140.048889	Ishikari mountains
7	Gassan	Yamagata	1984m	38.548889	140.026944	Ishikari mountains
8	Tanigawa dake <Mogura dake>	Gunma Niigata	1978m	36.849167	138.916667	Dewa mountains
9	Tanigawa dake <Ichinokura dake>	Gunma Niigata	1974m	36.847222	138.924444	Asahi Mountains
10	Mount Fuji <Kengamine>	Shizuoka	3776m	35.360833	138.7275	-
11	Norikura dake	Niigata Nagano	2469m	36.788611	137.799167	Iide mountains
12	Shirouma dake	Toyama Nagano	2932m	36.758611	137.758611	Iide mountains
13	Asahi dake	Toyama	2867m	36.757778	137.745833	Iide mountains
14	Shakushi dake	Toyama Nagano	2812m	36.740556	137.759167	Iide mountains
15	Yari gatake	Toyama Nagano	2903m	36.731389	137.755278	Iide mountains
16	Karamatsu dake	Toyama Nagano	2696m	36.687222	137.754722	Iide mountains
17	Goryu dake	Toyama	2814m	36.658333	137.752778	Iide mountains
18	Shima yari gatake	Toyama Nagano	2889m	36.624444	137.746944	Echigo Mountains
19	Subari dake	Toyama Nagano	2752m	36.544167	137.685	Echigo Mountains
20	Harinoki dake	Toyama Nagano	2821m	36.538056	137.684444	Echigo Mountains
21	Katsu yama	Toyama	2415m	36.701111	137.590833	North Hida mountains
22	Nekomata yama	Toyama	2378m	36.681111	137.590278	North Hida mountains
23	Ikenodaira yama	Toyama	2561m	36.641111	137.625833	North Hida mountains
24	Tsurugi dake	Toyama	2999m	36.623333	137.616944	North Hida mountains
25	Bessan	Toyama	2880m	36.5975	137.620278	North Hida mountains
26	Tsurugigozen	Toyama	2777m	36.6025	137.608889	North Hida mountains
27	Masago dake	Toyama	2861m	36.586667	137.62	North Hida mountains
28	Tate yama <Onanji yama >	Toyama	3015m	36.575833	137.619722	North Hida mountains
29	Yakushi dake	Toyama	2926m	36.468889	137.544722	North Hida mountains
30	Yari Gatake	Nagano	3180m	36.341944	137.6475	North Hida mountains
31	Obami dake	Nagano Gifu	3101m	36.335833	137.645833	North Hida mountains
32	Naka dake	Nagano Gifu	3084m	36.329722	137.646667	North Hida mountains
33	Minami dake	Nagano Gifu	3033m	36.318889	137.650833	North Hida mountains
34	Kita Hotaka dake	Nagano Gifu	3106m	36.3025	137.651944	North Hida mountains
35	Karasawa dake	Nagano Gifu	3110m	36.295833	137.646944	North Hida mountains
36	Oku Hotaka dake	Nagano Gifu	3190m	36.289167	137.648056	North Hida mountains
37	Mae Hotaka dake	Nagano	3090m	36.281944	137.660556	North Hida mountains
38	Norikura dake < Ken Ga Mine >	Gifu Nagano	3026m	36.106389	137.553611	North Hida mountains

<sup>8</sup> The perpetual snow symbol indicates a snowfall of 50m x 50m or more when there is little snow around September.



Figure 10: Distribution of perpetual snow mountain in Japan

Tateyama mountain locates in the Toyama prefecture, which is adjacent to Ishikawa prefecture. Most of the Noto Peninsula belongs to Ishikawa Prefecture, but part of it belongs to Toyama prefecture. Tateyama mountains is known as one of the highest and snow mountains in Japan. In addition to the characteristics, Tateyama mountain has a quite unique landscape, which is both sea and mountains can be seen together. In Japan such scenery can be seen in only two places. One is the scenery from Noto peninsula to Tateyama mountain, and another is the scenery from Izu peninsula to Mt. Fuji. Viewing of over 3,000 meter high mountain and sea landscape together is quite rare in the world.

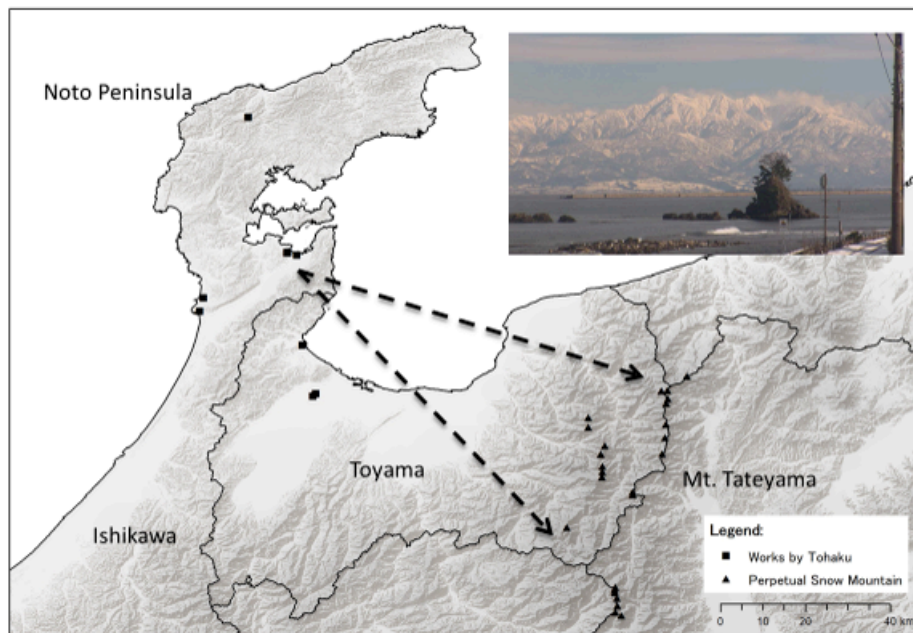


Figure 11: Landscape of Mt. Tateyama range from the Noto peninsula

Seeing Tateyama mountain from Noto peninsula is very important to know the weather for fishermen and sailors, and such custom became aesthetical scenery. For example, Kaneko

Kakuson (1759-1841), who is a Confucianism and painter in the late Edo period, wrote his travel diary called “Noto Yuki”(Kaneko & Tsurugi Town Museum, 1993) and sketched several landscapes of Tateyama mountain from Noto peninsula. Among all, Tateyama mountain and pine trees are depicted together in all of seven sketches. This indicates that he Noto peninsula has many places to see pine trees and mountain together, and also Tohaku had opportunities to see Tateyama mountain from the Noto peninsula in his life time.

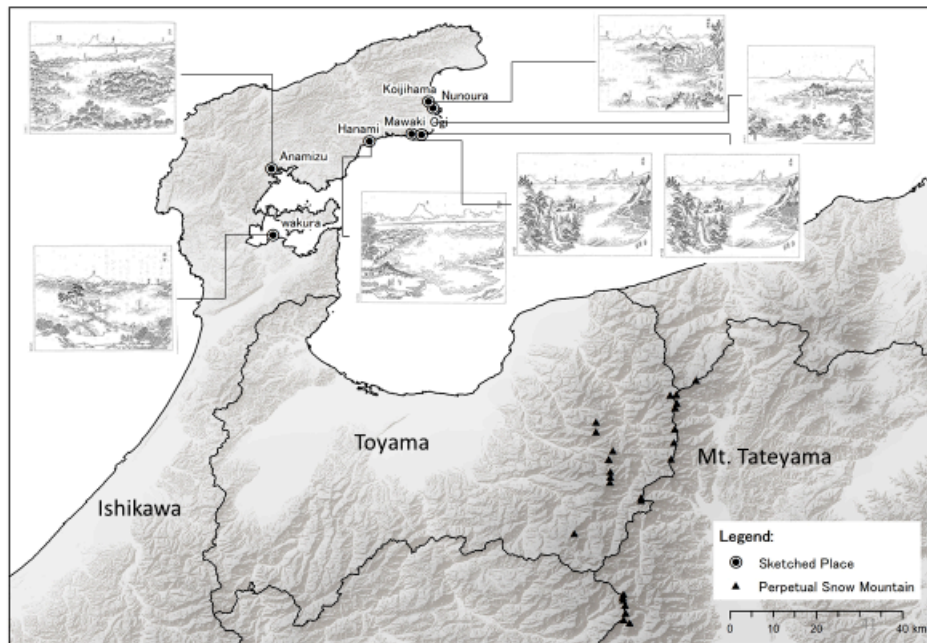


Figure 12: Sketched place by Kakuson Kaneko

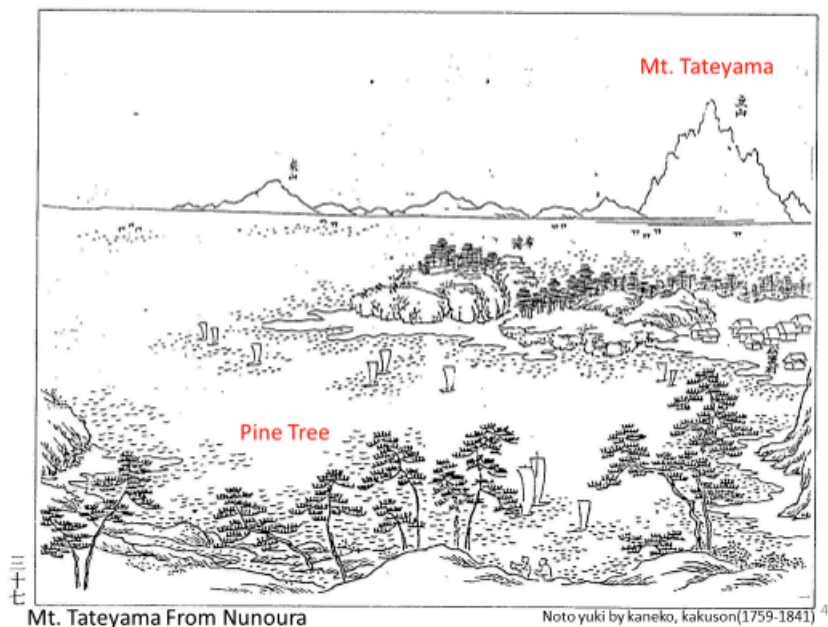


Figure 13: Mt. Tateyama from Nunoura From Noto Yuki (p. 37), by Kaneko Kakuson (1759-1841), Copyright [1993] by Ishikawa Prefecture Library

### 4.3 Subject matter as fog

Fog and mist are very important factor to convey the humid climate, but also to arrange composition and to represent aerial (atmospheric) perspective. In China, the principle of three

distance perspectives are established by Guo Xi (ca.1020?-ca.1090?). He is one of the most famous landscape painters of the Northern Song period and published essay on landscape painting, “*Linquan Gaozhi*” also called “Lofty Record of Forests and Streams”. In this essay, Three distance perspectives are described Three basic compositional arrangement of mountains on landscape painting, as follows;

- (1) Height (Vertical distance)
- (2) Depth (Horizontal distance)
- (3) Distance of flatness (Level distance)

To look up Figure 14, Guo Xi’s most famous masterpiece “Early Spring” (Guo, 1072), you can clearly understand how to express the depth of space with the mist. This composition is quite popular, and many of Japanese painter follows the technique and composition. Figure 15 is the landscape ink painting by Sesshu and almost the same composition can be observed(Touyou, 1495?)&(Touyou, Muromachi period).

In addition to the Three distances by Guo Xi, the new three distance are added by Han Cho active ca 1095-1125). Han Cho, who is a landscape painter in the late Northern Song dynasty, also proposed the three horizontal distances in terms of aerial perspective:

- (4) Broad distance: generally a wide stretch of water with a shore in the foreground and a spacious sweep to distant mountains;
  - (5) Hidden distance: thick mists and fogs that interrupt streams and plains, and cause them to disappear; and
  - (6) Obscure distance: scenery that becomes obliterated in vagueness and mistiness.
- Six types of distance in Chinese landscape painting

According to his three distance, the painting by Muqi (Muqi, Southern Song Dynasty) is clearly described (Figure 16). However, Tohaku’s Pine tree screen is not represented such composition. just only deep mist. Which means, he did not follow the tradition, he may express just they are.

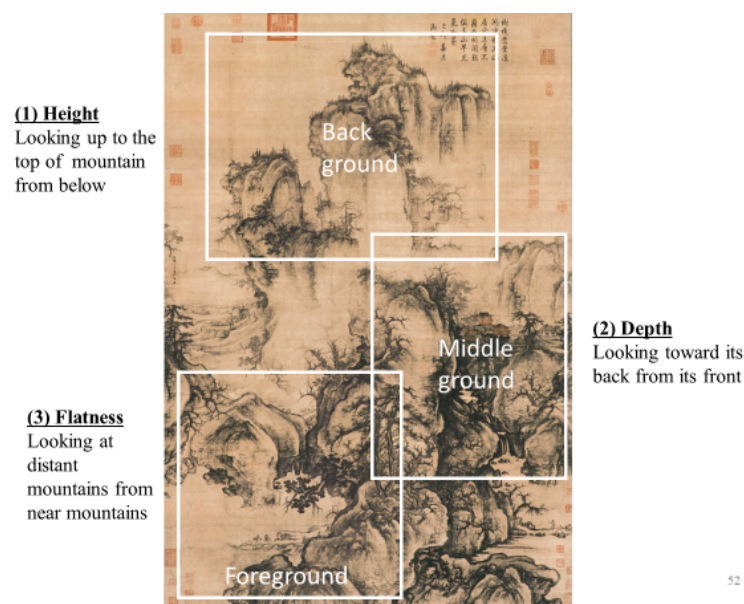


Figure 14: Guo Xi. (1072). *Early Spring*. National Palace Museum. Taipei, Taiwan.<sup>9</sup>  
(Text and figure are added by author)

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.comuseum.com/painting/masters/guo-xi/early-spring/>

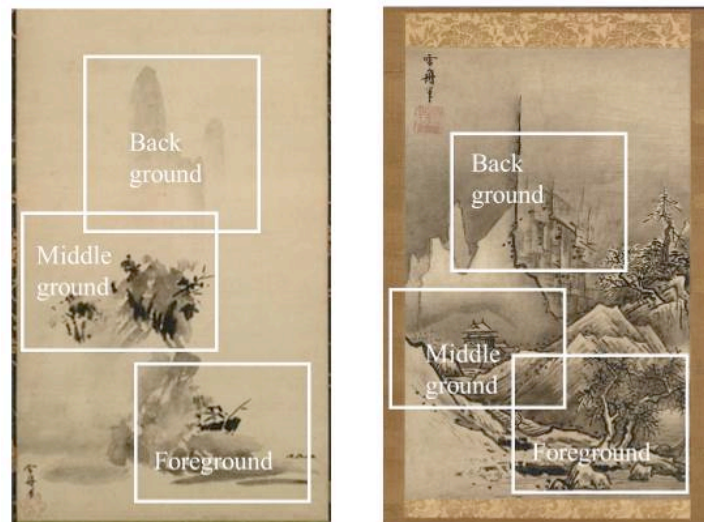
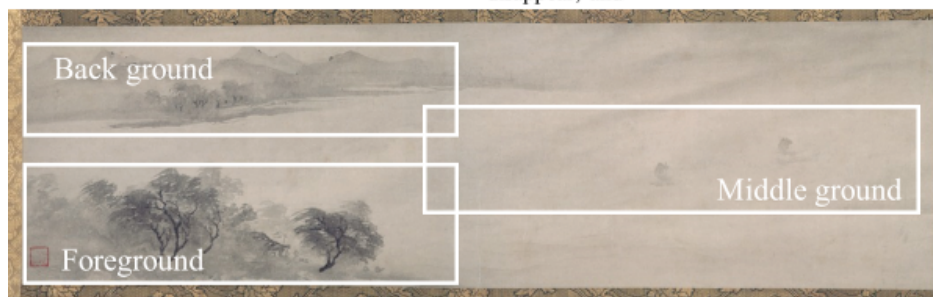


Figure 15: Typical Landscape ink painting composition by Sesshu  
(Text and figure are added by author)<sup>10</sup>

**(6) Obscure distance:** scenery that becomes obliterated in vagueness and mistiness.

**(5) Hidden distance:** thick mists and fogs that interrupt streams and plains, and cause them to disappear; and



**(4) Broad distance:** generally a wide stretch of water with a shore in the foreground and a spacious sweep to distant mountains;

Figure 16: Typical Landscape composition of aerial perspective.

Text is added by author to Muqi. (ca. Southern Song Dynasty).

*Returning Sails off a Distant Shore (from Eight Views of the Xiao and Xiang Rivers).*

[Hanging scroll, ink on paper]. Kyoto National Museum, Kyoto, Japan

(Text and figure are added by author)

## 5. Conclusion

Pine Trees screen by Hasegawa Tohaku is the one of the most famous landscape ink wash paintings in Japan and considered as the only original is the representation of the actual Japanese landscape. However, Little research has been done due to lack of historical and personal document. Therefore, in this research some investigation has been don based on geographical and climatic approach. As a result, the following are identified;

- To explore the characteristics of the landscape of his homeland.
- To identify the uniqueness of the painting.

<sup>10</sup> By Sesshū Touyou. Preface by Sesshū, praises by Gettō Shūkyō and other five monks 1 hanging scroll, Ink on paper 148.6x32.7 Muromachi period/Meiou 4(1495) Tokyo National Museum.  
[https://emuseum.nich.go.jp/detail?langId=en&webView=&content\\_base\\_id=101224&content\\_part\\_id=001&content\\_pict\\_id=001&x=-301&y=-90&s=1](https://emuseum.nich.go.jp/detail?langId=en&webView=&content_base_id=101224&content_part_id=001&content_pict_id=001&x=-301&y=-90&s=1)

Some specific pine tree species are generally grown in the coastal area in Japan, and under such condition, pine tree grove tend to consists of homogeneous community. This suggests that depicted pine trees are more likely to be in coastal area.

Secondly, since there is no snow other than mountains in the painting, it is more likely that the snowy mountains in the picture are perpetual snow mountains. According to the investigation of the distribution of perpetual snow in Japan, Tateyama mountain was the only possible mountain that Tohaku could see in his lifetime. In addition to the fact, Tateyama mountain is the only mountain which can be seen with sea or seashore in Japan. The unique landscape can be seen only on the Noto Peninsula and its surroundings.

Thirdly, depicting fog was essential to convince a sense of three-dimensional space from the Chinese principle of aerial-perspective, so the composition is typically stereotyped. However, There is no such stereotyped composition in Pine Trees screen by Hasegawa (Figure 1), and one gets the impression that the scenery was painted as it was.

All things considered on the above three subject matters, it is extremely likely that the Pine Trees screen was a view from his hometown of Noto Peninsula, and I could say that it was a work of art that was born because he was able to see such a landscape during his lifetime.

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