

BIJUTSUSHI

Journal of Japan Art History Society

185 Vol. 68 No. 1 pp. 66–83

FUJIKI, Akiko. TAKEUCHI Seihō's Later Ink Landscape Paintings: His Innovation of *Suiboku Sansui* and Subjective Expression Using the *Hatsuboku* Technique

TAKEUCHI Seihō (1864–1942), well-known as the artist who painted from life, brought innovation to the tradition of the Maruyama Shijo school in the modern Kyoto art world. In his later years, from the end of the Taisho period to the early Showa period, he produced many monochrome ink landscape paintings. The blurring of the ink without the use of a brush, a technique known as *hatsuboku*, is often seen in these works. However, his later ink landscapes have not been researched comprehensively.

This essay asserts that the monochrome ink landscape paintings he produced around 1933, including *Ban'a* (A Crow in the Evening), are a landmark among his creations. In these works, the seemingly accidental blurring of ink at the center of the image actually represents a tree. These works were mainly showcased in the Tanko-kai exhibition, and whereas other participants in the exhibition depicted mountainous landscapes, Seihō devoted himself to novel landscapes featuring flat plains arranged in a horizontal oblong frame. He depicted the riverside district of Itako on the Kanto Plain, a region geographically similar to Yangzhou in China, where he once visited. The sketchbooks Seihō produced in Itako reveal that he observed objects with scrupulous care and sketched them carefully in meticulous detail. I show how his sketches are markedly different from his finished works, where the lyrical expressions of the ink blurs and light lines take center stage. I also confirm that he often depicted the characteristic motifs of Itako in his finished works; for example, the wooden bridge with a single parapet, the wooden boat, and the poplar tree, which he sketched there on many occasions. Examination of all of Seihō's Itako landscapes, not only those painted in ink monochrome, reveal that he created color landscapes of Itako after his first visit in 1927, before he created the monochrome ink paintings. In short, he likely created the monochrome ink paintings of Itako around 1933, after visiting the place and recalling the scenic views in his mind's eye.

Moreover, Seihō believed that drawing paper was a suitable material for lyrical pictures. In the Japanese art world of those days, paper was preferred over silk as the base material and ink paintings were undergoing reevaluation. In the context of this shift in the Japanese art world, a new type of drawing paper called "Seihō-shi," which a papermaker developed for Seihō, was particularly suitable for the *hatsuboku* technique. In addition, examination of the fiber composition of this paper reveals that the blur seen in the monochrome ink landscapes of his later years was due to its permeability and degree of absorption. Seihō pursued not only what he considered the most appropriate technique, but also the most appropriate base material to depict Itako in his own particular, subjective way.

Earlier studies on Seihō have argued that his greatest achievement was the introduction of Western realism into Japanese-style paintings, following a visit to Europe. His monochrome ink paintings have been discussed uniformly based on *Benisu no Tsuki* (Moon over Venice) which is considered the epitome of this achievement. The monochrome ink landscapes of Seihō's later years have not been researched sufficiently in earlier studies because these works are markedly different from his most typical style of "painting from life." However, my study demonstrates how Seihō broke new ground with his ink monochrome landscape paintings. It should be noted that along with depicting the plains of the riverside district of Japan, which he compared to that of China, through the *hatsuboku* technique of the Chinese *sansui-ga* (paintings of mountains and water) Seihō presented a fresh perspective on both the subject and the composition of the traditional *suiboku sansui* (monochrome ink paintings of mountains and water). It is clear that in his later years, Seihō took subjective expression beyond his pursuit of realism when he shifted from Western realism to Eastern expression in his paintings.

THE JAPAN ART HISTORY SOCIETY

October 2018

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