
Fūdo Begets Form

A Rereading of World Painting

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Prologue — When *Fūdo* Begets Form

1. The Hill

An old man stands on a hill.

A horse is beside him.

The sea is far. The wind is near.

The surface is the color of dry grass.

A few black lines pass across it.

Near the horizon a small boat floats.

There is no telling where the old man is looking.

His head is bowed a little.

His stick rests on the ground.

The horse wears no bridle.

It is not tied, and it does not leave.

Man and animal stand in the same wind.

A crow passes low.

No cry is heard.

More of the surface is unpainted than painted.

There are no clouds.

No house, no road.

What is absent makes the surface wide.

Before this painting people mostly ask the same things.

What is that color.

Why is it so empty.

I want to ask something else.

Why did this painting come only from here.

2. The Question

Look at the world's paintings long enough and one thing catches.

Some paintings could have been made anywhere.

Some could not have come from anywhere but that land.

Not a matter of technique.

Not of talent either.

Turner's light came from the damp of England.

That light erases outlines.

When there is water in the air, the edges of distant things loosen.

Levitan's horizon came from the breadth of Russia.

Where the land goes on without end, the ratio of sky to ground changes.

People grow small and lines grow long.

O'Keeffe's bones and sky came from the dryness of New Mexico.
Without moisture, color does not blur.
Edges stay knife-sharp.

Kiefer's surface is heavy.
The soil and ash of a land the war passed through have come up into it.

Sesshū's void is not empty.
In a land of much fog, what cannot be seen is also real.

Bada Shanren's bird is almost not there on the paper.
It sits in a few points of ink.
It is a void painted by a subject of a fallen country.

Tamayo's red is dark and deep.
The earth and sun of Mexico are inside it.

Emily Carr's forest rises.
That is how the conifer forest of a rainy coast grows.

Call this local color and the explanation ends there.
But it does not end.

Local color is a matter of subject.
It means the things of that land were painted.
Paint a palm and it is the south. Paint a birch and it is the north.

Subject can be moved.
A palm can be painted in a Paris studio.

What I mean is not subject.

It is form.

The angle at which the brush meets the surface.

Where a line is broken off.

What is left empty.

Where the horizon is placed.

These are hard to move.

The body of someone who has lived long in that land decides them.

A body does not change by learning.

It changes by enduring.

3. The Word *Fūdo*

風土, *fūdo*, is the title of a book published in 1935 by the Japanese philosopher Watsuji Tetsurō.

He did not use the word for climate or geography.

Climate is outside.

It can be measured in temperature and humidity.

Fūdo cannot be measured that way.

Fūdo is the place where a person discovers himself.

In cold, a person discovers the self that knows cold.

In wind, a person discovers the self that endures wind.

The moment one feels cold, the cold is no longer outside.

It has come inside that person.

Watsuji divided the world into three.

The monsoon, rainy and humid.

The desert, dry and hot.

The meadow, mild and regular.

The person of the monsoon endures.

Nature gives and takes away, so one accepts rather than opposes.

The person of the desert opposes.

The person of the meadow believes nature can be governed.

There is no need to accept this division as it stands.

It is too simple, and it carries the limits of its time.

But one thing remains.

The thought that land shapes a person's attitude.

And that the attitude comes out as form.

Heidegger arrived somewhere similar from another direction.

He did not separate building from dwelling.

A person does not build in order to live. A person lives in the way he builds.

Lay one bridge and the two sides of a river become this side and that side for the first time.

A relation that did not exist comes into being.

Building changes dwelling.

Deleuze used another word.

Territorialization.

A bird marks its place with a song.

Because of the song, the place becomes a territory.

Art does the same, he said.

The words of the three men differ.

Their philosophical lineages differ, and so do their times.

But they point one direction.

A person does not live on the land.

A person is with the land.

One thing should be stated here.

Reading a Korean painter through the concept of a Japanese philosopher requires care.

The concept must not cover the painting.

This book does not use *fūdo* as a frame.

It uses it as a word.

The painting came first.

It needed only a word to be called by.

There was no fitting word, so one was borrowed.

Since it is borrowed, it can be set down at any time.

The painting remains.

In Korean, *pungto* is commonly used to mean atmosphere.

It is the word in phrases like the climate of a discipline.

The *fūdo* used in this book is not that word.

It is *fūdo* as the place where a person discovers himself.

So the word is not rendered as regionalism, nor as local color.

The moment it is, the meaning narrows.

Regionalism is the claim of the periphery against the center.

Fūdo is not a claim.

It is a condition.

4. Not a Background

The word landscape holds a trap.

The thought that a background is there first and a person stands in front of it.

The thought that there is a stage and the acting happens upon it.

Fūdo is not a stage.

Where the wind is strong, trees lie down.
Lying down is the form of the tree.
Wind is not the background of the tree but its form.

The trees of Jeju grow to one side.
The branches on the windward side cannot grow.
The tree records the direction of the wind with its own body.

Houses too.
The thatched houses of Jeju are low.
The roofs are tied down and pressed with straw rope.

The stone walls are full of holes.
They let the wind pass through the gaps.
They do not block it. They let it through.

There are two ways of enduring.
Holding out, and letting through.
The island learned the second.

People are the same.
Someone who has lived long where the wind is strong walks differently.
The shoulders differ, and the angle of the head differs.

Paintings are the same.

In Byun Shi-Ji's pictures the figure is often bent.
The back curves and the head is lowered.

To read this only as posture is half of it.

That bending is the shape of the wind.

The wind is not painted.

The body of the person stands in the place of the wind.

The background has entered as form.

The bent body is old in his painting.

It is already in the nude study of 1945.

It is in the last painting of 2013.

The same curve continued for sixty-eight years.

Only the meaning changed.

At first it was the body of labor.

The body bearing a load, the working body, was bent.

The Tokyo studies and *Femme* are such.

In Seoul the carrier with his A-frame and the man splitting wood took that place.

In Jeju it became the horseman, the diving woman, the farmer.

Then the old man appears.

The old man's body carries no load.

And still it is bent.

It is the body of endurance.

Toward the late years the head bows lower.

That bowing is not fatigue.

It is closer to a rite of respect. 禮

This is interpretation.

There is no record of the painter saying so.

Only that the painting moved in one direction for sixty-eight years.

5. How Far Does *Fūdo* Reach

Here the range must be settled.

See *fūdo* only as climate and it is narrow.

Rain and wind and sun.

There are paintings not explained by those alone.

There is a child who grew up on ruins.

Grow up in a world where the collapsed is normal and one learns the intact later.

To that child ruins are not background.

They are the first world seen.

Nature makes wind and people make ruins.

But for a child there is no division.

Both were simply there.

So war too becomes *fūdo*.

When a generation is born and grows up on it, that is what it becomes.

One more is added.

A place many cultures have passed through also becomes *fūdo*.

There are places where buildings of several ages stand in one city.

There are places where ornament that makes no human figure stands beside the carving of a cathedral.

In the body of one who grew up in such a land there is more than one grammar.

It is not known by learning.

You just come to know it.

Then this question comes.

Is illness *fūdo*.

Is the death of a family *fūdo*.

Here we have to stop.

If everything becomes *fūdo*, *fūdo* explains nothing.

So a line is drawn.

***Fūdo* is what many undergo together.**

The wind strikes every islander.

A war is passed through by a generation together.

When many undergo the same thing, a common form comes out of it.

What one person undergoes is different.

Losing a mother is the affair of that household.

It is not the affair of everyone in a country.

That is not *fūdo*.

It is biography.

Fūdo and biography are not the same.

This distinction protects this book.

Without it the proposition grows large, and a proposition grown large reaches nowhere.

This widening is needed for reading Jeju as well.

Wind alone does not read all of it.

There was wind on the island, and there was something else.

There are those who did not return.

That too is something many underwent together.

So that too is *fūdo*.

6. Why *Beget*

The verb in the title of this book is *beget*.

It is not changed to *make*.

Making is done by the hand.

Begetting is done by the body.

The maker knows beforehand what will be made.

There is a design and there are tools.

When it is finished, the maker and the made are separated.

The one who begets does not know.

Does not know what will come.

And after the begetting the two do not wholly come apart.

To say that *fūdo* makes form is to say the land holds a blueprint.

It does not.

The land does not design.

It only makes one endure a long time.

Form comes out of the body that has endured.

Begetting takes time.

It also hurts.

And what is begotten resembles the one who begot it, but is not that person.

There is one more thing.

What is made can be made again.

What is begotten cannot be begotten again.

Even in the same *fūdo*, the same painting does not come twice.

So this book does not call *fūdo* a cause.

It calls it a condition.

A cause determines a result.

A condition only makes it possible.

Beget is the word that stands between.

It did not come from nothing, and it did not come as decided.

Byun Shi-Ji did not paint Jeju.

What a body that endured long in Jeju painted is what we call Jeju.

7. Five Gates

This book passes through five gates.

Color.

The light of a land sets the palette.

The color of a humid place and the color of a dry place are not the same.

Northern color runs low and toward gray.
Southern color runs high and toward the primary.

Color is not taste.
It is the result of what the eye has seen for a long time.

There is time inside color.
A color seen once is not yet a color.
What remains after seeing the same light for years is color.

Line.

The wind and terrain of a land set the speed of the brush.

There are lands from which fast lines come.
There are lands from which slow lines come.

A line is the trace of a hand and also the trace of time.
How long one hesitated stays in the line.

Void.

What is left empty tells more about a land than what is painted.

An empty place is not an absent place.
It is the place of what has not yet come.
Or the place of what has already left.

Paintings with wide voids mostly come from lands where the waiting is long.

Grammar.

The order and the relation in which things are set down.

Where the horizon is put.

Where in the picture a person is stood.

What is made large and what is made small.

This is not a rule but a habit.

And habit comes from the land.

Materiality.

What one paints with.

Soil and ash and lead.

Straw and stone and ice.

What the things within reach have left on the surface.

The material is often what was found in that land.

Look at what a painting was made with and you see where it was made.

Sometimes the material outlasts the painting.

Passing these five gates, sixteen painters are called.

Chusa, Bada Shanren, Sesshū, Van Gogh, Gauguin, Picasso, Kiefer, Turner, Levitan, O'Keeffe, Tamayo, Emily Carr, Fred Williams, Goldsworthy, Kapoor, Munch.

Who stands before which gate is stated at the head of each part.

And in the final chapter it reaches Byun Shi-Ji.

8. Three Witnesses for the Other Side

A proposition lives only if it survives what contradicts it.

If *fūdo* begets form, the cases where it does not must also be seen.

This book calls three men as witnesses for the other side.

Chusa.

He spent years of exile on Jeju.

In those years his calligraphy was completed.

Yet there is no Jeju landscape in that calligraphy.

Neither the sea nor the wind enters.

His body was on the island and his eyes were on the old characters.

Fūdo tempered him but did not beget his form.

It is the place where spirit passed *fūdo* by.

Munch.

His sky is red.

But that red did not come from the sky of Norway.
It went from inside to outside.

Fūdo did not beget the form. The inner life stained *fūdo*.
The direction is reversed.

Gauguin.

He went to Tahiti.
He painted the color and the bodies of that land.

But in the end he did not belong to it.
He remained in the place of the one who looks.

In his pictures Tahiti is not a place endured but a place gone to.
A painter present without belonging.

The three men shake the proposition of this book.
They should shake it.

Fūdo does not beget everything.

There are times when spirit passes beyond *fūdo*.
There are times when the inner life covers *fūdo*.
There are times when one paints with the feet not touching the ground.

Only this: some paintings cannot be explained without *fūdo*.

To see that difference is the work of this book.

9. Placed Side by Side

This book does not rank.

It is not a book that measures Byun Shi-Ji against the painters of the world to raise him.

It is a book that sets him at the same height and looks at them side by side.

Turner is not before and Byun Shi-Ji after.

Kiefer is not large and Byun Shi-Ji small.

Each begot his own form in his own land.

Gathering those events in one place is a way of reading differently.

There are two kinds of comparison.

One puts things on a scale.

It asks which side is heavier.

The other places them side by side.

It watches what passes between them.

This book takes the second.

Placed side by side, both are seen well.

Put on a scale, both grow dim.

While the weight is disputed, the paintings withdraw.

It is the same within Korea.

Dansaekhwa is a true achievement.
That place is whole as it is.
There is a place reached through repetition and restraint.

Byun Shi-Ji is not a competitor to that achievement.
He is another root.

Roots do not quarrel.
Each goes down its own way.
They cannot be seen under the ground, but they hold up the same tree.

10. *Fūdo* Is Not Fate

Care is needed in speaking of *fūdo*.

To say that land determines people turns easily into another saying.
That one people is like this and another people is like that.

There are such passages in Watsuji's book as well.
It was writing of the 1930s, and it carried the limits of its time.

This book does not go that way.

Fūdo is not the character of a group.
It is what remains in one person's body.

Not every painter who lived on Jeju painted the same painting.
Different lines come out of the same wind.

Fūdo does not give an answer.

It gives a question.

If it were fate, art would not be needed.

No one stakes a life on confirming what is already settled.

Byun Shi-Ji went to Jeju.

Going alone did not change the painting.

The color came later.

That he found it means it was not settled.

Fūdo is condition, and form is choice.

Without condition there is no choice, and without choice there is no form.

This book looks at both places together.

11. 1975, Seoul to Jeju

Byun Shi-Ji was born in 1926 in Seohong-dong, Seogwipo.

At five he went to Osaka.

He grew up in Japan and learned painting in Japan.

From 1942 to 1945 he attended the Osaka School of Art.

He studied under Terauchi Manjirō.

It was wartime.

How he passed his youth remains in the oral history.

(Korean Culture and Arts Foundation oral history, 2004–2005, pp. 27–30)

In 1947 *Femme* was accepted into the Nitten.

He was the first Korean.

The next year he received the top prize at the 34th Kōfūkai exhibition.

He was twenty-two.

In 1949 he held a solo exhibition at the Shiseido Gallery.

In Japan he was already a painter.

Had he stayed, another life was there.

On November 15, 1957, he returned.

He lived in Seoul.

He taught at Mapo High School and Sorabol Art College.

From 1964 he painted Biwon for a long time.

The Biwon paintings are composed.

The trees and walls and water of the old palace are set down in quiet color.

It is a scene inside a wall.

There is no place for the wind to enter.

He continued the series for more than ten years.

He taught and he painted.

Life in Seoul was settled.

But it was inside a wall.

And in 1975 he left Seoul and went to Jeju.

He took a post at Jeju National University.

One thing should be made clear here.

He did not go from Japan straight to Jeju.

From Osaka to Seoul, and from Seoul again to Jeju.

There were two moves.

And the second move changed his form.

He was forty-nine.

He had come back after forty-four years to the island he left at five.

The island did not welcome him.

There was wind, the sun was hard, the winter was long.

The colors he had used in Seoul did not fit the island.

The moisture differed, the light differed, the wind differed.

And then the color changed.

Later, in the oral history, he spoke of how he found that color.

(same record, pp. 293–294)

We call that color the color of dry grass.

It is not ochre.

It is not yellow.

It is the color of grass long dried by wind.

Not the green of summer, but the color of grass that has passed a winter.

Not a dead color, but a color that has endured.

In the same record he also spoke of the storm.

He said the storm was not weather but resistance.

(same record, p. 171)

So the wind in the paintings is not meteorology.

It is a name for endurance.

He called himself *pungunna* (風雲兒), a man of wind and cloud.

His pen name was Useong (宇城).

In 1991 he reached retirement at Jeju National University.

He died on June 8, 2013.

In 2016 a national cultural medal was conferred posthumously.

The paintings he left are catalogued from W001 to W110.

12. What Remains

Back to that hill.

The old man is still standing.

The horse is beside him.

Near the horizon a small boat floats.

There is no telling whether the boat is leaving or returning.

The painting does not say.

Jeju has the story of an island called Jeodo.

An island said to lie somewhere in the sea.

Those who go do not come back.

The painter left writing about Jeodo in his own hand.

(same record, pp. 23–26)

The island once lost many people.

That event is called 4·3.

He spoke of those years in the oral history.

(same record, pp. 241–243)

The departing boat touches the legend, and at the same time it touches that mourning.

The old man's head is bowed.

Not from sorrow.

It is the respect owed to those who did not return.

This too is interpretation.

Only that standing long before the painting, it reads that way.

This book will look for that posture again on hills around the world.

Under the damp light of England.

On the long horizon of Russia.

Under the dry sky of New Mexico.

The lands differ and the colors differ.

But that a body long enduring begets form is the same.

This book does not set down an answer.

It only passes sixteen hills.

On each hill one person stands.

We see what he endured, and see what form came out of it.

And on the last hill we meet this old man again.

He did not explain Jeju.

He looked at it a long time.

He drew one line where the wind had passed.

To see how that line came out.

This book begins there.

Part One

Color

Opening

The first gate.

Color comes first.

Walk into an exhibition and you see the color before you read the title.
Before you know what has been painted, the color is already in the eye.

And yet color is understood last.

Form can be carried over into words.
Say there is a hill and a person standing, and it more or less arrives.

Color does not carry over.

Say red and it does not arrive, which red.
Add dark red and it is the same.

Color is short of names.

We have a few dozen names for color.
The eye distinguishes far more.

So painters give color other names.
They take them from the things of the land.

Earth color.

Sky color.

Grass color.

That the name comes from a thing means the color came from a thing.

And the thing is in that land.

Three people stand before this gate.

Tamayo's color rose from the soil.

O'Keeffe's color came from dry air.

Munch's color came from within.

The first two came from the land. The last did not.

So Munch is the witness for the other side in this part.

A counter-instance is set beside the proposition before the proposition is raised.

Color does not necessarily come from the land.

But some color cannot be explained without it.

That difference is what this part looks at.

Chapter One — Tamayo, a Red that Rose from the Soil

O n e

It is red.

But it is not a primary.

Too dim to call scarlet, too red to call brown.

It is between the two.

There is no telling what was mixed into it.

There seems to be gray in it, and there seems to be soil.

Such a color has no name.

There is one figure in the middle of the surface.

Whether standing or seated is not clear.

The outline of the body is simple.

Shoulders and head and arms.

There is no detail.

Where the eyes should be there is one point each.

The background is color only.

Room or outdoors, there is no telling.

There is no depth.

Far and near are not stated in color.

What is in front and what is behind lie on the same plane.

And still it does not feel closed in.

Because the color is thick.

Color laid on thin feels like paper. Color laid on thick feels like a wall.

A wall has no depth, but it has weight.

Come close and the surface is rough.

It was not smoothed down.

The places the brush went and the places it was scraped remain.

What looked like one color from a distance divides into several.

Under the red there is another color.

It comes up through the gaps.

It was not made by mixing color but by laying color over color.

T w o

Rufino Tamayo was born in 1899 in southern Mexico.

In Oaxaca.

The family was of indigenous descent.
He lost his parents young and was raised by relatives.

He moved to Mexico City.

The household sold fruit.
He worked in the market.

He passed his boyhood where fruit was piled.

Later, fruit appears often on his surfaces.
Watermelon and melon and such.

He knew those colors first with his hands.
They were not colors learned from painting.

One thing should be seen here.

The color of a market is not arranged.

The ripe and the unripe are mixed together.
There are spoiled places too.

There is no clean primary in a market.

The color he learned was that kind of color.

When he was young there was a great current in Mexican art.

The murals.

Rivera and Orozco and Siqueiros.

Three men painted history and the people on large walls.

In a country after a revolution, this was needed work.

Those who could not read could still see a wall.

It was a true achievement.

But Tamayo did not go that way.

He painted on walls too, but not in the manner of the mural movement.

He did not put the story first.

He put color and form first.

This choice left him alone for a long time.

Inside Mexico he was not the mainstream.

He was criticized as well.

Something needs care here.

It is not that the three muralists are low and Tamayo high.

Nor the reverse.

There were two roads.

One tried to speak with painting. The other tried to make one see with painting.

A painting that speaks can be translated.

A painting that makes one see cannot.

Take the side that cannot be translated and it is hard to travel far.

But what remains is different.

He went to New York and later lived a long time in Paris.

While he was away from Mexico the color did not change.

He did not paint by the light of Paris.

He went on painting by the light of Oaxaca.

The body left. The eyes did not.

T h r e e

Here is the argument of this chapter.

Tamayo's color is the color of Mexico.

But not the color of Mexico we commonly know.

Say Mexico and one thinks of strong primaries.

Red walls and yellow walls, bright textiles.

That is the color of tourist photographs.

Tamayo's color is not that.

It is muddied.

Why.

Because the ground of Oaxaca is so.

It is dry and red.

Where there is much iron in the soil, the soil turns red.

There is pottery fired from that soil.

Some of it black, some of it red.

Color that comes out of a kiln cannot be a primary.

Fire changes the color.

The colors of the textiles are the same.

Dye drawn from plants and insects is not as bright as chemical dye.

Wash it and a little goes out each time.

The color that has gone out is the color of that land.

Here the first answer to this part's question appears.

Where does color come from.

It comes from the things of that land.

And the color of a thing is a color that has passed through time.

Not the color of new paint but the color of paint that has been used.

Seen this way, three things follow.

First, muddiness is not a lack.

Making a color dim looks easily like failure.

It looks like the result of not managing to be brighter.

But a color with soil in it is accurate to the degree that soil is in it.

If there is no pure color in that land, pure color becomes a lie.

Second, color makes the plane.

Depth is usually made with color.

The far is made faint and the near is made strong.

When there is moisture in the air, it actually looks that way.

On dry ground it does not.

The far is also sharp.

Then distance cannot be made with color.

The surface becomes a plane.

That Tamayo's surface has no depth is not only because of the flattening of modern Western painting.

It is also because the land he saw was so.

Third, color demands thickness.

If depth cannot be made, weight takes its place.

Thin color grows light on a plane.

Thick color is heavy even on a plane.

So he stacked color.

Later he took part in developing a printmaking technique that carried relief.

It was a way of making thickness on flat paper.

The work of getting weight out of a plane went on.

F o u r

Stand before Byun Shi-Ji's surface.

Set the two colors side by side and what is alike is seen first.

Neither used primaries.

Both used colors with soil in them.

As Tamayo's red has no name, the color of dry grass has no fitting name either.

It is not ochre.

It is not yellow.

It is the color of grass long dried by wind.

In being a color that has to be newly named, the two men stand in the same place.

A color without a name is made only in that land.

A color with a name can be bought anywhere.

There is one more likeness.

Both stood beside the great current of their time.

In Tamayo's time there were the murals in Mexico.

In Byun Shi-Ji's time there were other roads in Korea.

Dansaekhwa is one of them.

A true achievement reached through repetition and restraint.

That place is whole as it is.

Byun Shi-Ji was not a competitor to that achievement.

He was someone who went in another direction.

Neither man stood on the opposite side of the mainstream.

They went the way the mainstream did not go.

Opposite and different are not the same.

Now look at the difference.

The direction is reversed.

Tamayo left and kept the color.

Even in Paris he painted with the color of Oaxaca.

Byun Shi-Ji returned and found the color.
A color that was not there in Seoul came out on Jeju.

One carried it out. The other went and got it.

This difference comes from the shape of the lives.

Tamayo was born in that land and grew up in it.
The color was already in the body.

Byun Shi-Ji left the island at five.
The color was not in the body.

He learned in Osaka and painted in Seoul.
He painted Biwon for more than ten years.

The color of that period is composed and quiet.

At forty-nine he went to Jeju.
And the color changed.

Later, in the oral history, he spoke of how he found that color.
(Korean Culture and Arts Foundation oral history, 2004–2005, pp. 293–294)

The word *found* matters.

It was not something held.
It was found.

There is one more difference.

On Tamayo's surface there is fruit.

Ripe, cut open, seeds showing.

Things that can be eaten.

On Byun Shi-Ji's surface there is almost nothing that can be eaten.

Dry grass and stone and sea.

And an old man.

Cut a watermelon and the red inside comes out.

Split dry grass and nothing comes out.

One land gives.

The other makes one endure.

The same earth tone, and the meaning differs.

The red of Oaxaca is a ripened color.

The color of dry grass on Jeju is a color that has passed.

A ripened color has a next.

A color that has passed has no next.

So Tamayo's surface is heavy but not dark, and Byun Shi-Ji's surface is light but dark.

F i v e

In a market fruit is sold or it spoils.

Sold, it is gone. Spoiled, the color turns.

Either way it does not stay that color long.

Tamayo carried that short color over into something that lasts.

On the island the grass dries and scatters.

After a winter, not even the place remains.

Byun Shi-Ji carried that short color over into something that lasts.

The two men did the same work.

Keeping a color that disappears from disappearing.

The red is still on the surface.

It still has no name.

Chapter Two — O'Keeffe, the Outline of Dry Air

O n e

One bone fills the whole surface.

A pelvis.

From a cow.

There is a hole in the middle.

A hole the bone has of itself.

Through that hole the sky is seen.

It is blue.

Very blue.

Nowhere muddied.

The bone is white.

But not only white.

There are places where blue runs through it and places where yellow runs through it.

It differs with the angle the light comes from.

There is no background.

No ground and no horizon.

Only bone and sky.

It is large.

Far larger than a real bone.

About the size of a person's upper body.

With no standard of scale, there is no telling how large.

The bone can look like a mountain.

The outline is sharp.

There is nowhere faint.

The line where bone meets sky stands like a knife.

The opposite of the surface in the last chapter.

Tamayo's surface was rough.

This surface is smooth.

The marks of the brush are barely visible.

Color is set down evenly as planes.

Come close and the surface does not change.

What was seen from far and what is seen from near are the same.

It is a surface with nothing hidden.

T w o

Georgia O'Keeffe was born in 1887 in Wisconsin, in the United States.

On a farm.

She learned painting in Chicago and New York.

For a time she taught at schools.

There was a period when she taught in Texas.

It was plains.

Land that hid nothing.

That was when she first knew wide country.

She returned to New York and made a name.

She painted flowers large.

She filled the surface with a small flower.

Because she thought people passed flowers by.

Made large, they are seen.

She painted the buildings of the city as well.

She was a successful painter.

There is something to note here.

She learned the method of painting large in the city.
Before she went to the desert.

And in the desert that method fitted the land.

Erasing the background and setting one thing large.
That was exactly how that land is seen.

The method came first, and the land made it right.

Fūdo begets form, and it also sets a form that already exists into its proper place.

In 1929 she went to New Mexico for the first time.
She was forty-one.

And she went every summer after that.

In 1940 she took a house at a ranch in the desert.
Some years later she took another nearby.

In 1949 she moved for good.
She was sixty-two.

A late move.

She already had a name and already had a manner.
It was an age with no reason to change.

And she changed.

Out the window there was a mountain.
A mountain with a flat crown.

She painted that mountain for a long time.

She painted it many times and in many seasons.

She gathered bones in the desert.

Cow skulls, pelvises, vertebrae.
She collected them and kept them at the house.

People read them as symbols of death.
Desert and bone and skull.

She did not think so.

She saw bone as what remains.
What still has form after the flesh is gone.

Flesh rots and bone remains.

That remaining was her interest.

T h r e e

Here is the argument of this chapter.

Dryness begets outline.

When there is water in the air, distant things grow faint.
Boundaries loosen and color thins.

Painting uses this.
The far faint, the near strong.

Then depth appears on a plane.

In the desert it does not work that way.

When the air is clear, a distant mountain is also sharp.
A rock miles off keeps its outline.

Then distance cannot be made with faintness.

Here we arrive at the same place as the last chapter.

Tamayo's surface had no depth.
O'Keeffe's surface has no depth.

Because both lands are dry.

But what comes next differs.

Tamayo got weight out of the plane.
He stacked color and made it a wall.

O'Keeffe got outline out of the plane.
She divided color into planes and raised the boundaries.

Two answers came out of the same condition.

Four things follow.

First, color divides into planes.

When the outline is clear, color takes territory.

This side is white and that side is blue.

The place where they mix is narrow.

Colors do not seep into one another.

In a humid place color seeps.

In a dry place color collides.

Second, there is less reason to paint shadow.

Soft shadow is made by air.

When light strikes moisture and scatters, the edge of a shadow loosens.

In clear air the edge of a shadow stands like a knife.

A shadow with a sharp edge is close to a form.

Then, instead of painting a shadow, one paints one more form.

That there is little soft shading on her surface is not a matter of skill.

It is because what she saw was so.

Third, the standard of scale disappears.

With no background there is nothing to compare against.

Palm-sized or house-sized, there is no telling.

The desert is actually like that.

There is nothing to serve as a standard.

No tree, no house, no person.

Whether a far rock is large or a near stone is small becomes confused.

Dry land erases the standard of scale.

So she could paint a bone as large as a mountain.

The land permitted it first.

Fourth, the sky becomes an object.

The sky of a humid place is air.

Far, thin, without boundary.

The sky of a dry place is a plane.

The color is even and the edge is definite.

The blue that has come into the hole in the bone does not look like air.

It looks like blue paper pasted on.

The sky has become a form, not a background.

Then sky and bone are set down with equal standing.
Which is in front and which behind is not decided.

Dry land erases above and below.

F o u r

Stand before Byun Shi-Ji's surface.

First look at what is alike.

Both went late to that land.

O'Keeffe first went at forty-one and moved at sixty-two.

Byun Shi-Ji went at forty-nine.

Both were already painters.

It was not an age for learning.

And in that land the form changed.

Going late has a different force.

One who goes young learns the land.

One who goes late is startled by it.

Being startled changes form.

There is one more likeness.

Both painted what is dry.

O'Keeffe painted bone.

Byun Shi-Ji painted dry grass.

But the kind of dryness differs.

The dryness of bone is dryness with the flesh gone.

It is a dryness that remains.

The dryness of grass is dryness with the season past.

It is a dryness that scatters.

Bone lasts a hundred years.

Dry grass does not get through one winter.

So there is something solid on O'Keeffe's surface, and something about to
vanish on Byun Shi-Ji's.

Now look at the difference.

The largest difference is the air.

Both lands are dry.

But the clarity of the air is reversed.

The desert is dry and clear.

With no wind the dust settles.

Jeju is not dry.

The sea is beside it, so it is humid.

And the wind is strong, so it dries.

Wet air and drying wind are there together.

Wind lifts dust and moisture.

Then the air grows dim.

The same dryness, and one is clear and one is dim.

So the brightness of the void differs.

O'Keeffe's empty surface is bright.

The blue sky is simply there.

Byun Shi-Ji's empty surface is low.

The color has settled.

The void of a dry place is bright, and the void of a windy place is dim.

The outline differs too.

O'Keeffe's outline is smooth.

It looks like a line drawn in one pass.

Byun Shi-Ji's line trembles.

It goes straight and then wavers.

That is how an outline in clear air and an outline in wind differ.

There is one more large difference.

O'Keeffe almost never painted people.

Bone and mountain and flower and sky.
No people.

Byun Shi-Ji almost always painted people.

One old man is standing.

On dry ground with no people, bone becomes the subject.
With people, the old man becomes the subject.

And yet the two are alike.

Bone is a body that remains.
An old man is a person who remains.

Both are what remains.

One painted what remains after the person is gone. The other painted the person still remaining.

What they painted for a long time also differs.

O'Keeffe painted the mountain for a long time.
That mountain out the window, many times over.

Byun Shi-Ji painted the horizon for a long time.

A mountain is a thing that exists.

One can go and touch it.

A horizon is a thing that does not exist.

Go near and it disappears.

One who looked long at an object and one who looked long at a boundary.

That difference stayed on the surface.

F i v e

Through the hole in the bone the sky is seen.

The hole is the place that is not bone.

An absent place.

Through that absent place something is seen.

On the island's surface, wind is seen through the void.

The wind is not painted.

It is seen in the place that was not painted.

Both made one see through what is absent.

The sky is still blue.

The hole is still empty.

Chapter Three — Munch, a Red that Came from Within

O n e

The sky is red.

Too red to be called evening light.

Closer to blood.

The red lies in bands.

Several layers, long and horizontal.

Between them a yellow band is mixed in.

Below it is blue and black.

It is water. A fjord.

In front there is a bridge.

The rail runs at a slant and goes out of the surface.

That line is abrupt.

It does not go straight; it cuts the surface.

On the bridge there is a person.

The face is not a person's face.

It looks like bone only, and it looks flayed.

Two hands are held to the cheeks.

The mouth is open.

No sound is heard.

Far off two people are standing.

Black shapes. They show their backs.

They are not looking this way.

Every line on the surface flows.

The bands of sky flow, the lines of the water flow, the body of the person flows.

Only the rail of the bridge is straight.

One straight thing and everything flowing collide.

Look at the color.

The red is thin.

Unlike the last two chapters.

Tamayo stacked color and O'Keeffe set color down as planes.

Here the color has been made to flow.

It looks smeared rather than painted.

T w o

Edvard Munch was born in 1863 in Norway.

His father was a doctor.

It was a house of strict faith.

At five he lost his mother.

It was tuberculosis.

At thirteen he lost his sister.

The same illness.

Illness was in the house a long time.

From childhood he saw illness.

The one lying down and the one sitting and watching.

After he began painting he painted that room many times.

A bed and a window and a person sitting.

He painted the same scene again all his life.

He travelled and stayed in many countries.

He spent time in Paris and Berlin.

There he saw new painting and stood at the center of argument.

For a period his body and mind gave way.

He took treatment.

After that he returned to Norway and lived there a long time.

He had a house near Oslo.

Here one thing is startling.

He put his paintings outside.

He stood them in the yard and let the rain fall on them.

Snow as well.

He did it on purpose.

He called it the rough cure.

The canvas was damaged and the paint came away.

He continued anyway.

He held that once a painting had endured the weather, something in it was different.

This story cannot be passed over in this book.

It is a case of *fūdo* touching a painting directly.

Not a figure of speech. Rain actually fell on the surface.

But what became different.

The surface became different.

The paint was damaged and a grain appeared.

The color did not become different.

Fūdo touched his surface but did not beget his color.

This is the heart of the chapter.

T h r e e

Here is the argument of this chapter.

Munch's color did not come from the land.

The winter of Norway is long.

The sun is low and the day is short.

The light of that land leans toward gray and blue.

And his surface is red.

It is not that there was no red in that land.

Evening light is everywhere.

There is something to know here.

There is a hypothesis about the red sky of *The Scream*.

In 1883 a great volcano erupted in Indonesia.

Its ash circled the atmosphere and made the world's sunsets red for several years.

There are records that the skies of Europe were in fact strangely red then.

The hypothesis is that Munch may have seen that sky.

It is an interesting story.

And it is a story favorable to the proposition of this book.

Because it would mean that *fūdo* begot the color.

But care is needed.

A hypothesis is a hypothesis.

It is not settled.

And there is something more important.

Hundreds of thousands of people saw the same sky.

Not many painted it.

He alone painted it that way.

In the writing he left he did not speak of that sky as weather.

He wrote that he stopped while walking, that the sky turned red, that he heard a sound passing through nature.

It is not a record of weather.

It is a record of the body.

So even if the red came from outside, it was made again inside.

The direction is reversed.

The two painters before him received color from the land.

Tamayo received the red of soil.

O'Keeffe received the blue of dry air.

Munch pushed color out from within.

Two things follow.

First, color does not follow form.

O'Keeffe's color was attached to form.

Bone is white and sky is blue.

Munch's color leaves form.

There is no reason within the surface for the sky to be red.

There is no explanation.

Color becomes the name of a state rather than the property of a thing.

Second, color makes a sound.

In *The Scream* sound cannot be painted.

And yet the surface is loud.

The red stands in for sound.

Color has moved the seat of a sense.

It made one hear with the eyes.

This is a large invention.

And it is not something *fūdo* taught.

Here the distinction made in the Prologue has to be brought back.

Fūdo is what many undergo together.

The wind strikes every islander.

A war is passed through by a generation together.

So a common form comes out of it.

Munch's loss belonged to one household.

Losing a mother and a sister was the affair of him and his siblings.

It was not the affair of all Norwegians.

Therefore it is not *fūdo*.

It is biography.

Fūdo and biography are not the same.

This distinction protects this book.

Here is why Munch is a witness for the other side.

His color came out of biography.

It did not come out of the land.

And that is not a defect.

It is testimony that there is also a road on which color comes from within.

On that road he went very far.

F o u r

Stand before Byun Shi-Ji's surface.

Both men painted loss.

But the size of the loss differs.

Munch's loss belongs to one house.

A mother and a sister.

The loss on Byun Shi-Ji's surface belongs to an island.

Those who did not return.

The island once lost many people.

That event is called 4·3.

The painter spoke of those years in the oral history.

(Korean Culture and Arts Foundation oral history, 2004–2005, pp. 241–243)

The old man's bowed head is the respect owed to those who did not return.

This is interpretation.

Only that standing long before the painting, it reads that way.

One is a private loss and the other a shared one.

So the form differs.

Private loss goes outward.

It cries out.

Shared loss goes inward.

It reduces speech.

When many lose the same thing there is no need to explain.

Everyone already knows.

Not speaking becomes the rite of respect.

Color is the same.

Munch's red makes a sound.

Byun Shi-Ji's color of dry grass lowers the sound.

One cried out in color and the other kept silent in color.

The posture of the figure is also reversed.

The person in *The Scream* faces front.

He looks at us.

Byun Shi-Ji's old man lowers his head.

He does not look at us.

And yet neither figure has a face.

Munch's figure has a face, but it is not a person's face.

Byun Shi-Ji's old man's face is not visible.

One removed it by erasing. The other removed it by hiding.

Both ceased to be any particular person.

So both surfaces stand in for us.

Now it must be said without hierarchy.

Munch's direction is not wrong.

A painting whose color came from within holds its own truth.

That truth reaches people regardless of land.

That is why *The Scream* is read across the world.

Because it is no land's story, it can be read in any land.

Byun Shi-Ji's painting is the reverse.

It is one island's story.

So knowing that island lets it be read more deeply.

Painting is whole only when both exist.

Color that came from the land and color that came from within.

This book follows the first without saying the second is not there.

One thing remains at the end.

Munch put his paintings outside and let the weather strike them.

Byun Shi-Ji painted his indoors.

But he let the wind into the surface.

One put the painting out into *fūdo*. The other brought *fūdo* into the painting.

The direction is reversed.

And both met *fūdo*.

That there are several ways of meeting is the finding of this book.

F i v e

The red is still in the sky.

The fjord is dark and the bridge is empty.
Far off the two people still show their backs.

No sound is heard.

On the surface of a distant island an old man lowers his head.
There too no sound is heard.

One cries out and the other holds it in.

To us both are quiet.

Where does color come from.

It comes from the land, and it comes from within.

The first gate closes this way.
It closes without making the answer one.

P a r t T w o

Line

Opening

The second gate.

If color is surface, line is time.

Color has no beginning and no end.

There is only the place where it was laid.

A line has a beginning and an end.

Where the brush was set down and where it was lifted remains.

Where pressure was given and where it quickened remains as well.

One can tell how many seconds a stroke took.

Color can be corrected.

Paint over it and the color beneath is covered.

Correct a line and there are two.

The erased place is visible, and the redrawn place is visible.

Hesitation cannot hide.

So a line is honest.

The question of this part is this.

What sets the speed of the brush.

Answer that the hand sets it and that is half.

The hand holds the brush.

But what lies under the brush sets the speed.

On wet paper one cannot linger.

On dry paper one can.

The speed of cutting into stone and the speed of drawing on paper are not the same.

Material sets speed, and material comes from that land.

Three people stand before this gate.

But the order differs from the last part.

In the last part the witness for the other side came at the end.

The proposition was raised and then shaken.

In this part the witness for the other side comes first.

Chusa.

Because the man who went furthest in line is at the same time the counter-evidence to this proposition.

There are cases where the strongest example is the strongest counter-example.
When that happens, better to say so first.

Then comes Sesshū.
The speed of wet paper.

Last comes Emily Carr.
The brush that rises.

The three men held different relations to the continent.

Chusa saw the writing of the continent and stayed with the continent.
Sesshū saw the landscape of the continent and came back to his own land.
Emily Carr learned in Europe and went into the forest of her own land.

They did the same thing and went elsewhere.

Chapter Four — Chusa, Spirit without *Fūdo*

O n e

A long horizontal sheet.

On the right there is one house.

The roof is low.

A round window is cut into the wall.

There is no person.

To the left of the house there are trees.

Pine and juniper.

About four of them.

Old trees.

The branches on one side are dead and only one side lives.

And the rest is empty.

More than half the paper has nothing on it.

There is no ground.

There is no telling where the house sits.

There is no sky either.

The upper boundary is simply paper.

The ink was used very sparingly.

There is almost no dense ink.

The house was raised with a few thin lines.

There are places the brush passed while dry.

Dry brush.

The grain of the paper is visible.

This picture was made on Jeju.

In 1844, at Daejeong.

While he was in exile.

And there is no Jeju on this surface.

No sea.

No wind.

No stone wall and no thatched roof.

No horse and no crow.

This chapter begins here.

T w o

Kim Jeong-hui was born in 1786.

He had several names.

Chusa and Wandang are the ones widely used.

Around twenty-four he went to Yanjing.

He went with his father's embassy.

There he met the scholars of the Qing.

Weng Fanggang and Ruan Yuan.

Great scholars of the day.

A young Joseon scholar met them and was recognized.

That meeting decided his life.

What he saw there was not painting.

It was writing, and more exactly, old characters.

It is called epigraphy.

The study of gathering and comparing characters cut into steles and bronzes.

Characters cut in stone are not like characters written with a brush.

They must be dug with a blade, so the strokes are thick and angular.

Time wears them and the ends crumble.

That crumbled place becomes force.

Chusa tried to carry that force over into the brush.

He returned to Joseon and studied for a long time.

He went to the stele on Bukhansan, read the characters, and established the record.

He showed who had raised it and when.

It was not scholarship at a desk.

It was scholarship that climbed a mountain and touched stone.

He wrote a great deal.

The story goes that he wore through ten inkstones and used up a thousand brushes.

People say it was his own remark.

There is no verifying it.

Only that the surviving writing proves he wrote that much.

In 1840 he was exiled to Jeju.

The sentence set him at Daejeong within a fence of thorns.

He was there more than eight years.

He was released in 1848.

Even after release he was not at ease.

Some years later he was exiled again, to Bukcheong.

He died in 1856.

T h r e e

Here is the argument of this chapter.

Chusa completed his calligraphy on Jeju.

And there is no Jeju in that calligraphy.

This sentence must be divided in two.

The first half is close to fact.

Eight years of isolation kept him seated before the brush.

There was nothing to do and few people to meet.

There was nothing but writing.

So it is true that exile tempered him.

The second half is also fact.

There is not one thing of Jeju in *Sehando*.

Nor in his calligraphy.

The thick and thin of the stroke change abruptly.

The turns are angular.

That is the speed of stone.

The speed of a blade digging stone.

It is not the speed of wind.

So it can be put this way.

Exile was the condition. But Jeju was not the condition.

What he needed was not some particular land but no land at all.

He needed isolation, and isolation is possible anywhere.

He wrote at Bukcheong too.

He wrote at Gwacheon.

The land changed and the writing went in the same direction.

Three things follow.

First, a line crosses media.

Carrying the speed of stone into paper is translation.

Blade and brush are different tools.

Stone and paper are different grounds.

And he remade the force of the first in the material of the second.

Here the line does not come from that land.
It comes from another material in another age.

It is a line that crossed time.

Second, the void is not a place.

The void of *Sehando* is wide.
More than half the surface.

And that void is not the void of Jeju.

It is not sea and it is not field.
It is paper.

The void of literati painting is a place where there is no thing, not a place where something is.

This distinction will be taken up again in Part Three.
For now only this is set down.

An empty area of the same width is a place on one surface and paper on another.

Third, the absence of *fūdo* can be a condition.

This is the most important.

This book says that *fūdo* begets form.

Chusa is the opposite case.

Form came out of a place where *fūdo* was cut off.

Inside the fence of thorns he did not look at the island.

He looked at books and paper and old characters.

When the outside is blocked, the inside deepens.

This too is a road.

And this road does not break the proposition of this book.

It shows the proposition's range.

Fūdo begets form.

Only, not every form comes out of *fūdo*.

F O U R

Stand before Byun Shi-Ji's surface.

This encounter is special.

Because it is the same island.

In the last part we set distant lands beside one another.

Mexico and Jeju, New Mexico and Jeju.

Here it is the same land.

Chusa spent eight years on Jeju.

Byun Shi-Ji spent thirty-eight years on Jeju.

They met the same wind and saw the same sea.

And the result is the exact opposite.

On one surface there is no island, and on the other there is nothing but island.

Where does this difference come from.

First, the reason for going differs.

Chusa was sent.

Byun Shi-Ji went.

To one who is sent, the land is punishment.

Punishment is endured, not looked at.

One who endures closes his eyes.

He wishes it past quickly.

To one who goes, the land is a purpose.

A purpose is looked at a long time.

Second, whether there was somewhere to return to differs.

Chusa had somewhere to return to.

There was Seoul and there was a place in scholarship.

He was passing through Jeju.

For Byun Shi-Ji, Jeju was where he had returned.

He left at five and came back at forty-nine.

There was nowhere further to go.

One passing through and one who has arrived see the same land differently.

Here the word exile must be looked at again.

The root sentence of this book is this.

Life is exile. Art is blessing.

Chusa's exile was handed down by an institution.

There is a document, there is a term, there is amnesty.

Byun Shi-Ji's exile is not that.

It is the recognition that life is so to begin with.

There is no amnesty.

Institutional exile ends.

The exile of a life does not.

To endure what does not end, you have to look at the place.

So one man did not look at the island and the other did.

The line differs too.

Chusa's line stops.

When a stroke ends it is complete.

The next stroke does not touch it.

Between stroke and stroke there is an empty area, and that area is exact.

Byun Shi-Ji's line trembles.

It goes straight and then wavers.

The end can go faint.

That is how a line that digs stone and a line drawn in wind differ.

The void differs too.

Both surfaces have a wide void.

In that they are alike.

But in the empty area of *Sehando* there is nothing.

Not that what should be there is absent, but that nothing needs to be there.

In Byun Shi-Ji's empty area there is wind.

It was not painted, and it is there.

One void is empty and the other is full.

Now it must be said without hierarchy.

That Chusa did not look at the island was not a fault.

He looked at something else and reached the highest point in that something else.

His calligraphy is still hard to surpass.

It is testimony that spirit can pass beyond land.

And this testimony is what keeps this book humble.

Say that *fūdo* begets everything and a person becomes the product of a land.
Then art is not needed.

Chusa says it is not so.

On the same island one man painted the island and one did not.

Both were right.

F i v e

Inside a fence of thorns a man sits.

Outside there is sea and there is wind.

He does not paint them.

He spreads the paper and grinds the ink.

The brush passes while dry.

One house and a few trees come into being.

The rest is left empty.

Into that emptied area the island does not enter.

Eight years passed and he left the island.

After he left, only that picture remained.

A hundred and some years later a man came back to the same island.

He painted the sea.

He painted the wind.

On the same land two men saw different things.

The land said nothing.

Chapter Five — Sesshū, the Speed of Wet Paper

O n e

A long vertical sheet.

Ink only.

No color.

One line divides the middle of the surface from top to bottom.

Thick and black.

A line drawn very fast.

There is no telling what it is.

The edge of a rock, the crack of a cliff — it is not clear.

It could be both.

A line drawn in haste does not declare its identity.

Around that line forms are attached.

Something like rock, something like tree.

Something like a roof as well.

Below there is a small figure.

Very small.

The size of a fingernail.

He is walking.

Above it is empty.

Mist.

Or paper.

There is no telling them apart.

Look at the gradations of ink.

Dense ink and thin ink lie against each other.

Between them it has bled.

The bled place does not look like a mistake.

Rather, form came into being there.

The speed at which the brush passed differs everywhere.

Some places are fast and some places stopped.

Where it stopped the ink pooled.

The pooled place becomes weight.

Compare with the surface in the last chapter.

The brush of *Sehando* was dry.
The grain of the paper was visible.

Here the brush is wet.
The paper eats the ink.

One is on top of the paper and the other goes into it.

T W O

Sesshū was born in 1420 in western Japan.

He entered a temple young.
He became a monk.

He went to Kyoto.
He stayed at a large temple there.

The story goes that he learned painting from a monk-painter of the day.

There are few certain records.
There are many stories.

In his young years his name was not large.

Kyoto was the center of painting.
At the center he was one among many.

In 1467 he went to Ming China.

He went attached to an embassy.

He was around forty-seven.

Remember this year.

In the same year a great disturbance broke out in Kyoto.

A civil war that lasted more than ten years.

Kyoto burned.

Temples and houses and paintings burned together.

In the year he boarded a ship and left, his city began to fall.

In China he stayed about two years.

They say he went looking for a master.

And that he did not find one.

Instead he saw mountains and rivers.

He confirmed with his own eyes how the landscape he had seen in books actually looked.

When he returned Kyoto was still a battlefield.

He did not go back to Kyoto.

He stayed in the western provinces.

He kept a studio near Yamaguchi.

He left the center.

His painting came out there.

He painted until past seventy.

Late in life he made a broken-ink landscape and gave it to a pupil.

He attached his own writing above the picture.

Also late in life he painted an actual place.

A place where a long sandbar reaches into the sea.

Pines stand in a row.

He went, looked, and painted.

T h r e e

Here is the argument of this chapter.

Japan is humid.

In the Prologue we saw Watsuji's division.

Monsoon, desert, meadow.

Japan is monsoon.

There is much rain and there is water in the air.

This condition acts directly on paper.

When paper takes in moisture, ink bleeds.

Hold the brush there and the ink keeps spreading.

Stop and it clots.

So the brush has to pass quickly.

Here a method appears.

A method that does not try to stop the bleeding but uses it.

Ink is set down as if thrown.

It is left to bleed.

The bled shape becomes form.

It is called *haboku*.

It means broken ink.

This is not the abandonment of control.

It is the transfer of control.

The paper takes over part of what the brush was doing.

Recall what Watsuji said about the person of the monsoon.

Nature gives and takes away, so one accepts rather than opposes.

Haboku is exactly that attitude.

It does not stop the paper from doing its work.

Three things follow.

First, speed sets form.

A line drawn slowly tells you what it is.

If it is rock it looks like rock; if it is tree it looks like tree.

A line drawn fast does not tell.

Only the thickness remains. The identity does not.

Then the viewer fills it in.

We cannot settle what that line in the middle of the surface is.

We look at it unsettled.

A fast line leaves the meaning open.

Second, the void becomes matter.

In the last chapter the void of *Sehando* was paper.

It was a place where there was nothing.

Sesshū's void is different.

It is mist.

In a humid land mist is a daily matter.

In the morning the mountain is gone and by midday it is back.

So the white area is not an empty area.

It is an area where something is.

There is a thick white thing.

Something should be stated at this point.

Sesshū is a painter who could be placed in Part Three, the void.

His void is that important.

This book placed him in the part on line.

Because his void came out of the speed of the brush.

The area left by a brush that passed quickly became mist.

The void was not there first; speed made the void.

He was placed on the side of the cause.

Third, painting an actual place does not make a map.

He painted an actual place.

He went and looked and painted, so it should be close to fact.

And that surface is not a map.

It looks as though seen from high above and also as though seen from the side.

The viewpoint is not one.

Why.

In a land of frequent mist the whole is not seen at once.

Now this much is visible, and a little later that much.

Several viewings must be joined to make one place.

So his actual place is several times laid over one another.

The actual place of a humid land is made that way to begin with.

F o u r

Stand before Byun Shi-Ji's surface.

In this encounter the conditions are alike.

Both lands are monsoon.

There is much rain in Japan and much rain on Jeju.

Both are surrounded by sea.

And both men used a black line.

Sesshū drew with ink and Byun Shi-Ji drew with black paint.

The material differs, but that it is black is the same.

And yet the nature of the line is reversed.

Sesshū's line bleeds.

Byun Shi-Ji's line dries.

In the same humid land, why the reverse.

Because of the wind.

The moisture of Japan settles.

There are many basins and the mountains hold it in.

Settled moisture makes things bleed.

The moisture of Jeju does not settle.

It is carried on the wind and passes.

Passing moisture makes things dry.

It is humid because the sea is beside it, and it dries because the wind is strong.

This contradiction is the condition of Jeju.

It is a land that dries while wet.

So Byun Shi-Ji's surface is not wet.

It is a painting of a humid land, and it is a dry painting.

The color of dry grass is the result.

The grass grew in rain.

And it dried in wind.

It is the color of what was wet and then dried.

Different from the color of a desert dry from the beginning.

Here it parts from O'Keeffe's dryness, seen in the last part.

One stayed dry. The other was wet and then dried.

There is a second likeness.

Both learned outside and came back inside.

Sesshū went to China, saw the landscape, and returned.

Byun Shi-Ji learned painting in Japan and returned.

Chusa, in the last chapter, learned outside and stayed outside.

The three men form a triangle.

What does one do with what was learned outside.

Chusa kept it.

Sesshū and Byun Shi-Ji poured it into their own land.

The form of the one who kept it crosses time; the form of those who poured it takes root in a place.

There is a third likeness.

Both left the center.

Sesshū did not return to Kyoto and stayed in the west.
War was the reason.

Byun Shi-Ji left Seoul and went to Jeju.

At the center one is measured against others.
At the edge one faces the land.

When the measuring stops, something becomes visible.

Now look at the difference.

The size of the figure differs.

On Sesshū's surface the person is very small.
The mountain is large and the person is small.

The person is inside the landscape.

On Byun Shi-Ji's surface the person is large.
He is at the center of the surface.

The landscape withdraws and the person remains.

What does this difference mean.

The person in a landscape painting belongs to that landscape.
He is part of nature.

Byun Shi-Ji's old man does not belong to the landscape.

He is enduring it.

One who belongs and one who endures hold themselves differently.

One who belongs walks.

One who endures stands.

Sesshū's figure is in the middle of passing and Byun Shi-Ji's old man is in the middle of staying.

And there is one more.

Sesshū was a monk.

In his painting there is a place that looks at the world from slightly apart.
Sorrow does not stay long.

Byun Shi-Ji was not a monk.

On his surface the mourning remains.

In the same monsoon land, one let go and the other held on.

F i v e

The paper is wet.

Set the brush down and the ink bleeds.

So the brush cannot rest there long.

Pass once and wait for the next.

While waiting, the paper works.

On the surface of a distant island the wind passes.

That too is a thing one has to wait for.

After it passes, a mark remains.

Neither man did all of it himself.

One left it to what was wet and the other to what was dry.

The bleeding is still spreading.

Chapter Six — Emily Carr, the Brush that Rises

O n e

A tall vertical surface.

A forest.

The trees stand straight.

Very high.

They go to the top of the surface and are cut off there.

The ends are not visible.

The thickness of a trunk is nearly the same top and bottom.

They are not trees thick below and thin above.

They are like columns.

The color is green.

But not a bright green.

Green with blue running through it, green with black running through it.

A wet green.

Below it is dark.

Almost black.

The floor is not visible.

Above it is bright.

Between the trees the sky is seen in pieces.

Those pieces are not joined.

Each is separate.

Look at the brushwork.

It swept up and down.

There is almost nowhere it went side to side.

It swept once and then swept the next.

The same direction repeats.

The paint is thin.

Unlike the last two chapters.

It is not stacked paint.

There are places where it ran.

Because it was thinned before use.

It is paint that dries fast.

The sky flows as well.

The rhythm of the trees carries up into the sky.

The sky turns in a spiral.

The background does not hold still.

T w o

Emily Carr was born in 1871 on the west coast of Canada.

In Victoria, British Columbia.

A city on an island.

The family had come from England.

She lost her parents young.

She was raised by her older sisters.

She went far away to learn painting.

First to San Francisco and then to London.

She stayed some years.

Later she went to Paris as well.

There she saw new painting.

She learned how to use color strongly.

She came back.

And she took a boat along the northern coast.

There were Indigenous villages there.

Wooden posts stood in front of the villages.
Figures of people and animals were carved into them.

She painted them.

Over several years she went to many villages.

She believed those posts were disappearing.
So she tried to record them.

Care is needed here.

Those posts were not hers.

They belonged to other people, and to them they held a meaning heavier than painting.

There is no reason to think ill of her wish to record.
But whether that was her *fūdo* is a separate matter.

This ground is still under discussion.

This book does not rule on it.
It only sets it down.

There are cases of living in the same land and painting another people's form.

After that she put painting aside for a long time.

Nearly fifteen years.

She ran a boarding house.

She cleaned rooms and collected rent and raised dogs.

The paintings did not sell and no one recognized them.

She lived that way past fifty.

In 1927 she met painters from the east.

They were people who wanted to paint the land of Canada.

One of them saw her painting and recognized it.

She was fifty-six then.

She began painting again.

And in the ten and some years remaining, all her major work came out.

She went into the forest.

She hauled a small caravan and stayed for days at a time.

With a dog and a monkey.

She painted there.

She thinned oil paint with gasoline and painted on paper.

Paint was expensive and paper was cheap.

And thinned paint dries fast.

It suited painting outdoors.

Late in life she also wrote.
She was given a prize for the writing.

T h r e e

Here is the argument of this chapter.

In a forest of much rain the line goes up.

The coast of British Columbia has much rain.
It is temperate rainforest.

The trees of that forest are very high and straight.

Why.

Because the light is only above.

Where trees are dense, light does not come below.
So they go up.

There is no room to reach sideways.

Rising straight is the form of that forest.

In the Prologue we saw the trees of Jeju.
Trees that lie to one side because of wind.

Here it is the reverse.

Trees that stand straight because of light.

Wind lays down and light raises up.

Then the direction of the surface is set.

Vertical.

And the brushwork becomes vertical too.

Three things follow.

First, material sets speed.

The question of this part is answered most directly here.

She thinned oil paint with gasoline.

Thinned paint dries fast.

Drying fast, it cannot be worked long.

So the stroke has to go down in one pass.

And thinned paint lets the brush run.

There is little resistance.

One can sweep fast.

Thick paint holds the brush.

Thin paint pushes it along.

The brush of Kiefer, whom we will see later, is heavy and hers is light.

Material set the speed, and speed set the form.

She chose this material at first because of money.

And the material fitted that forest.

Poverty happened to be right.

Second, direction makes rhythm.

Draw many times in the same direction and rhythm appears.

Once is a stroke and ten times is a rhythm.

On her surface the trees are not counted one by one.

Many of them are bound into one flow.

That is how a forest looks to begin with.

One does not see each tree; the whole arrives at once.

Third, the background follows the form.

The sky turns in a spiral.

The upward movement of the trees passes over into the sky.

This is not observation but extension.

In a forest the sky is seen only in pieces.

It is seen through the gaps between branches.

Then the sky becomes several forms rather than a wide background.

In the last part O'Keeffe's sky became a plane.

Here the sky becomes pieces.

On dry ground the sky is one sheet, and in a forest the sky is many pieces.

The land sets the shape of the sky.

F o u r

Stand before Byun Shi-Ji's surface.

First look at what is alike.

Both began again late.

Emily Carr took up the brush again at fifty-six.

Byun Shi-Ji went to the island at forty-nine.

Both were already painters before that.

For both, the painting before and the painting after are not the same.

And for both, the major work came late.

In work that comes late there is no hurry.

Knowing the time left is short, they still do not rush.
Because they already know it is not a thing that hurrying helps.

There is a second likeness.

Both went about alone.

Emily Carr hauled a caravan into the forest.
Byun Shi-Ji walked the island.

Stay alone a long time and human speech grows less.
Then the speech of things is heard.

There is a third likeness.

Both touched a community that had vanished.

Emily Carr painted the posts of Indigenous villages.
On Byun Shi-Ji's surface there are those who did not return.

The island once lost many people.
That event is called 4·3.

The painter spoke of those years in the oral history.
(Korean Culture and Arts Foundation oral history, 2004–2005, pp. 241–243)

But the position of the two differs.

Emily Carr looked from outside.
She recorded another people's loss.

Byun Shi-Ji was inside.

He mourned the loss of his own community.

Recording and mourning are not the same.

Recording tries to preserve.

Mourning tries to observe.

Recording must be accurate and mourning must be quiet.

In the last part we divided *fūdo* from biography.

What many undergo together and what one person undergoes.

Here a different line is needed.

The case where many underwent it and I do not belong to that many.

What is a painting made then.

Honestly, this book has no answer.

Only that the two paintings can be seen to have come out differently.

On the surface that paints the posts, the posts stand facing front.

They were painted to be seen well.

On the surface that paints the old man, he shows his back or lowers his head.

He was painted not to be seen well.

A painting that shows and a painting that covers.

Now look at the difference.

The largest difference is direction.

Emily Carr's line goes up.

Byun Shi-Ji's line lies sideways.

The line of a forest and the line of a field.

Where trees grow high, the vertical is the master.

Where trees cannot grow, the horizontal is the master.

On Jeju the trees lie down in the wind.

So the longest line on the surface is the horizon.

That one line where sea and sky meet.

A surface ruled by the vertical makes one look up.

A surface ruled by the horizontal makes one look far.

Looking up means there is something above.

Looking far means there is something over there.

The forest points at the sky and the island points at the horizon.

The sky cannot be reached and the horizon cannot be reached either.

Both paintings point at what cannot be reached.

Only the direction of the pointing differs.

The sky differs too.

Emily Carr's sky turns in a spiral.

It moves.

Byun Shi-Ji's sky is empty.

It does not move.

In a forest the trees sway, so the sky looks as though it sways.

In an empty field there is nothing to sway, so the sky holds still.

The sky where the wind is stronger is the quieter one.

Strange to say, but so it is.

Where the wind is strong, everything that could sway is already lying down.

F i v e

In the forest one looks up.

The trees go up and the sky is seen in pieces.

The pieces move.

The neck aches.

On a distant island one looks ahead.

There is the horizon and above it nothing.

One small boat floats.

The neck does not ache.

One looks up and the other looks straight across.

Both stood for a long time.

The brush went up in one place and sideways in the other.

The land set the direction.

Part Three

Void

Opening

The third gate.

The void is the place that was not painted.

But what was not painted and what was left empty are not the same.

A place that could not be painted is unfinished.

A place left empty is form.

How does one tell them apart.

Look at the rest.

If the painted part is exact, it was left empty.

If the painted part is vague, it could not be painted.

The void is proved by what stands beside it.

The question of this part is this.

What is the empty place the place of.

If the empty place were nothing, the question would not hold.

But the empty place is usually something.

The place of what has not yet come, or the place of what has already left.
Or the place of what is there and not seen.

Four people stand in this part.

One more than in the other parts.

Because the void has many kinds.

Color comes in one way.

It enters the eye.

The void comes into being in several ways.

The void left empty.

Bada Shanren.

A place made by not setting the brush down.

The void filled.

Fred Williams.

A place filled to the edge with ground and still looking empty.

The void erased.

Turner.

A place painted and then dissolved away.

The void manufactured.

Kapoor.

A place designed and built.

The first three came out of conditions.
Paper and ground and air made them so.

The last did not come out of a condition.

So Kapoor is the witness for the other side in this part.

A void can be made without *fūdo*.

Only after confirming that does it become clear what the first three were.

Chapter Seven — Bada Shanren, a Few Points of Ink and the Rest of the Paper

O n e

The paper is tall.

Low in the middle there is one fish.

It was made with a few passes of ink.

One stroke for the body, two or so for the fins.

There are no scales.

There is an eye.

Inside a round rim there is one point.

That point is not in the middle.

It is pushed upward.

So it looks as if it is glancing sideways.

The fish is looking at a person.

There is no water.

No ripple and no weed.

No floor.

The fish is simply on the paper.

It is neither floating nor lying.

The rest is all empty.

Nine tenths of the upper part is empty.

The lower part is empty too.

High on one side there is a little writing.

It is a signature.

The characters of that signature are strange.

Read, it is a name; in shape it looks like something else.

It looks like laughing, and it looks like weeping.

There is very little gradation in the ink.

A few places of dense ink and a few of thin.

Almost nothing in between.

There is little bleeding.

It is not a wet brush.

It is a brush suitably dry.

Different from Sesshū's surface in the last part.

Sesshū let it bleed.

Here it was kept from bleeding.

The same ink, used differently.

T w o

Bada Shanren was born in 1626 in China.

He was a descendant of the Ming royal house.

A distant branch, but royal.

There were paintings and calligraphy in the house.

He composed poems young and wrote characters.

In 1644 the Ming fell.

He was eighteen or nineteen.

At that age he watched a dynasty disappear.

He went into the mountains and became a monk.

He stayed in temples more than twenty years.

He used many names.

He had a great many sobriquets.

The name Bada Shanren was one he used late.

Before he used it there were several other names.

That he kept changing his name is itself a record.

They say that for a time he did not speak.

It is said he pasted the character for mute on his door.

It is also said he only laughed or wept.

There are stories that he lived for a period like a madman.

Much of this was written afterward.

How much of it is fact, no one knows.

Only one thing is clear.

He did not take office under the new dynasty.

He might have been able to.

He did not.

Not speaking and not holding office are the same act.

Late in life he painted a great deal.

Bird and fish and lotus and stone.

He did not paint large.

He did not paint many things.

He set one thing on one surface.

He died in 1705.

He was around eighty.

T h r e e

Here is the argument of this chapter.

His void is both a void left empty and a void emptied.

Two things are laid over one another.

Left empty is method.

Literati painting has a tradition of the void.

Not painting everything was held to be the higher grade.

He was inside that tradition.

Emptied is circumstance.

The fish has no water.

This cannot be seen as technique alone.

A fish without water is a fish with nowhere to live.

A bird without a branch to sit on is a bird with nowhere to go.

He was a man without a country.

The dynasty he lived under vanished and another country stood in its place.
He did not become a person of that country.

This void is the form of a man with nowhere to belong.

It is not that the background was not painted. The background was gone.

Three things follow.

First, when one thing remains, that one grows large.

There is only a fish on the surface.

Its size is small.

And it is heavy.

With nothing beside it there is nothing to measure against.

With nothing to measure against, it becomes everything.

The void makes the one remaining thing large.

This resembles O'Keeffe's case in Part One.

With no background the standard of scale disappears.

But the direction differs.

O'Keeffe painted a bone as large as a mountain.

She painted it large and so made it large.

Bada Shanren painted small.

He painted small and emptied the rest and so made it large.

One enlarges by filling and the other by emptying.

Second, the void makes time.

With one fish on empty paper the eye stays a long while.

It seems there is little to see and so it would be quick, and the reverse is true.

When there is much to see the eye moves about.

When there is one thing to see the eye stays there.

The time of staying grows longer.

The void makes a painting slow.

Before a slow painting the mind of the viewer moves.

It is like a person who does not speak being long remembered.

Third, the signature becomes a form.

His signature is both read and seen.

It is a character and it looks like a picture.

He hid the name in the writing of the name.

On a surface with a wide void a signature is easily noticed.
Because there is nowhere to hide.

So he made the signature itself part of the surface.

Writing set in an empty place becomes picture.

F o u r

Stand before Byun Shi-Ji's surface.

First look at what is alike.

Both have a very wide void.

Both leave only one thing.

One fish.

One old man.

They set nothing beside it.

And both paint that one thing small.

They do not fill the surface.

There is a second likeness.

Both passed through an age in which one could not speak.

Bada Shanren lived after the dynasty changed.
What could a descendant of the former house have said.

Byun Shi-Ji passed through another kind of age.

He painted the storm.

And later, in the oral history, he said the storm was not weather but resistance.
(Korean Culture and Arts Foundation oral history, 2004–2005, p. 171)

He did it with a painting instead of with speech.

In a time when speech is dangerous, painting takes the place of speech.

The two men used the same method.

There is a third likeness.

Both made separate names for themselves.

Bada Shanren made many sobriquets and kept changing them.

Byun Shi-Ji called himself a man of wind and cloud.

His pen name was Useong.

Making a name and attaching it is a way of setting oneself down again.

Now look at the difference.

The nature of the void is reversed.

In Bada Shanren's void there is nothing.

There is no water.

That is the point.

It is the void of what is absent.

In Byun Shi-Ji's void there is wind.

It is not painted, and it is there.

It is the void of what is present.

One empty area points at loss and the other points at force.

Where does this difference come from.

What Bada Shanren lost was an institution.

Dynasty and station and place.

When an institution vanishes, its place goes empty.

What Byun Shi-Ji faced was nature.

Wind and sea.

Nature does not vanish.

It is only not seen.

The absence of an institution and the invisibility of nature are not the same.

In the last part we saw Chusa.

Chusa too was in exile, and Bada Shanren lost a dynasty.
Both had loss.

And in Chusa's void that loss is not there.
It is only paper.

In Bada Shanren's void the loss is there.

The same literati void, and one is form and the other circumstance.

This distinction is the heart of this part.

The bearing of the figure differs too.

Bada Shanren's birds and fish glance sideways.

The pupil is pushed off center.
They look at a person without facing him.

It is the resistance of a glare.

Byun Shi-Ji's old man lowers his head.

He does not look at us.
He looks at the ground.

It is the resistance of a bow.

Both postures are resistance.

One does it with the eyes and one with the neck.

The glare looks stronger, and it is not.

Bowing can be done a long time.

Glaring cannot.

The length of the endurance differs.

F i v e

There is a fish on the paper.

There is no water.

What should be there is not.

The fish glances sideways.

On the surface of a distant island there is an old man.

There is no wind.

What is there is not seen.

The old man lowers his head.

In both, the rest is empty.

The meaning of that emptiness differs.

Empty because absent, and empty because unseen.

The two surfaces do not explain each other.

Only that, set side by side, one sees that the void has kinds.

The ink is not yet dry.

Chapter Eight — Fred Williams, the Void Filled

O n e

A very wide horizontal surface.

The height is short.

The color is a yellow-brown.

A dry color with gray in it.

Nearly the whole surface is one color.

On it there are dots.

Small dots, short strokes.

Black ones and dark green.

They are trees.

But they do not look like trees.

There is no trunk and no branch.

One dot is one tree.

The dots are scattered evenly.

There are places where they gather and places where they thin.
But there is no rule.

Look for the horizon.

There is none.

At the very top of the surface there is a thin band.
That may be sky.

Sometimes there is none.

Without sky, above and below disappear.

Is this surface a landscape seen from in front or ground seen from above.

It cannot be settled.

It may be both.

Come close and the surface is thin.

The paint is not thick.
There are many places rubbed.

Only the dots are a little thick.

The dots were set by pressing the brush.

From far off the dots look like rhythm.
Close up each dot differs from the next.

No two dots are the same.

T w o

Fred Williams was born in 1927 in Australia.

In Melbourne.

He learned painting there.

In 1952 he went to London.

He stayed about four years.

In the museums he saw the paintings of Europe.

He saw the long tradition of landscape.

And he came back.

Coming back, he ran into a problem.

The method he had learned in Europe could not paint the ground of Australia.

European landscape has a focus.

There is a church tower or a large tree or a road.

There is somewhere for the eye to go.

And there is a vanishing point.

The road narrows as it goes away.

Depth is made with that.

In the Australian bush there is none of this.

No large tree, no road, no tower.

Wherever one looks it is similar.

Look ahead, the same. Look behind, the same.

It is a land without focus.

He did not see this as a lack.

He saw it as a character.

So he decided to paint a surface without focus.

He painted the low hills near Melbourne for several years.

He went to the same place many times.

Later he went to the mining country in the west.

It was red ground.

Soil with much iron.

The surfaces painted there differ in color.

Redder and hotter.

He died in 1982.

He did not live long.

Three

Here is the argument of this chapter.

On the empty ground of Australia the void is not sky but ground.

This is the particular place of this chapter.

Bada Shanren, in the last chapter, emptied paper.

He did not set the brush down.

Williams did not empty.

He painted the whole surface.

He painted yellow-brown to the edges.

And it looks empty.

It is filled and it is empty.

Why.

Because it was filled with the same thing.

A width with nothing else mixed into it looks empty.

The sea is so and the desert is so.

Full of water and looking empty; full of sand and looking empty.

The void is not absence but sameness.

This finding is needed in this part.

There are two ways to make a void.

Erasing and repeating.

Three things follow.

First, having no focus becomes form.

On a surface with a focus the eye has a destination.

It sees the focus first and then the surroundings.

On a surface without a focus the eye wanders.

Where to look first is not settled.

Then the order of looking differs from person to person.

The surface is not read one way.

What happens when one loses the way in that land happens inside the surface.

Second, dots become rhythm.

One dot is one tree.

But a hundred dots are not a hundred trees.

They are rhythm.

From far off the dots arrange themselves like music.

Close up they become trees again.

Different things are seen at two distances.

This resembles Sesshū in the last part.

Sesshū's hurried line also did not declare its identity.

What does not declare its identity becomes something else.

Third, remove the horizon and the surface becomes ground.

With a horizon we look while standing.

The ground is below and the sky is above.

We stand between them.

Remove the horizon and that relation disappears.

The ground is no longer in front of us but as if beneath us.

It becomes an eye that looks down.

The interior of Australia is in fact often seen from a plane.

Wide country cannot be seen on foot.

So the eye that looks from above is the eye of that land.

One thing must be added here.

The interior of Australia is old ground.

The mountains have been worn down and the soil is thin.

Nothing has newly risen.

Ground without high and low is old ground.

On old ground events do not happen.

They have all happened already.

So there is nothing dramatic on that surface.

Having nothing dramatic is the character of that land.

And to paint it it has to be painted undramatically.

F o u r

Stand before Byun Shi-Ji's surface.

First look at what is alike.

Both lands are empty.

There are no large trees in the Australian bush.

Large trees are rare in the fields of Jeju as well.

Both surfaces are a dry color.

Yellow-brown and the color of dry grass.

That both are colors hard to name is also the same.

There is a second likeness.

Both learned outside and came back.

Williams spent four years in London and returned.

Byun Shi-Ji grew up in Osaka and returned by way of Seoul.

Both ran into a problem after returning.

The method they had learned did not fit that land.

And both changed the method.

In the last part we saw that Sesshū did the same.

The path of learning outside and coming back inside appears several times in this book.

This will not be a coincidence.

One who grew up only in that land does not know its strangeness.

One who has seen the outside must return for the strangeness to be visible.

Now look at the difference.

The largest difference is the horizon.

Williams removed the horizon.

Byun Shi-Ji kept it.

Not kept it, but made it the master.

The longest line on his surface is usually the horizon.

Why the reverse.

Because of the sea.

The empty ground of a continent has no end.

Walk and the same thing keeps coming.

There is no telling where it ends.

With no end, the horizon is an arbitrary place.

It can be erased.

The empty ground of an island has an end.

Walk and the sea appears.

It always appears.

With an end, that end becomes the master of the surface.

It cannot be erased.

So the painter of a continent erases the horizon and the painter of an island raises it.

There is a second difference.

There are no people on Williams's surface.

The dots are trees and the trees are many.

There are people on Byun Shi-Ji's surface.

One old man.

That they are small is the same.

On both surfaces the figure or the thing is small.

But the smallness of many and the smallness of one are not the same.

When many are small it is a crowd.

When one is small it is loneliness.

A hundred dots endure one another.

One old man endures alone.

There is a third difference.

Williams's eye is above.

It looks down.

Byun Shi-Ji's eye is at the side.

It looks across.

The eye that looks down does not see people well.

They become too small.

The eye that looks across sees people.

Where the height is set decides what will be seen.

F i v e

I am standing before a wide surface.

Yellow-brown runs to the edges.

Dots are scattered.

I do not know where to look.

So I look a long time.

On the surface of a distant island there is a horizon.

I know where to look.

I look at that line.

And then at the small boat above it.

One gives no place to go and the other gives a place to go.

Both surfaces are empty.

One is empty because it has no end and one is empty because it has one.

Chapter Nine — Turner, the Void Erased

O n e

There is no telling what has been painted.

The middle of the surface is bright.

A yellow light.

From that light a spiral spreads outward.

Dark gray and brown turn around it.

The brush passed drawing circles.

Below there is something black.

It will be a ship.

A line like a mast stands at a slant.

Something like smoke lies sideways.

But it is not certain.

There is no telling where the ship's outline ends and the water begins.

There is no boundary.

Water and air and ship are mixed into one mass.

Come close.

The paint is thin.

There are many rubbed places.

It looks rubbed with a hand or a cloth rather than a brush.

There are scraped places too.

The color beneath is showing.

It is not a surface only laid on.

It is a surface laid on and taken away.

The bright places are bright because paint was lifted off.

White was not put on.

It was made bright by subtraction.

Different from the earlier chapters.

Bada Shanren emptied by not setting the brush down.

Williams emptied by filling with the same thing.

Here it was painted and then removed.

It was emptied by erasing.

T w o

Joseph Mallord William Turner was born in 1775 in London.

He was a barber's son.

The house was not well off.

He had a gift for drawing young.

It is said his father hung the boy's drawings in the shop and sold them.

At fourteen he entered the Royal Academy.

Very early.

He was recognized while still young.

He began with watercolor.

He drew buildings and landscapes accurately.

He travelled a great deal.

He walked England, crossed the Alps, went to Italy many times.

He painted Venice for a long time.

He liked places with water.

Sea and river and lake.

As he aged the painting changed.

Form steadily lessened.

When young he painted a ship like a ship.

Later one had to search for where the ship was.

Light increased and objects decreased.

There was argument in his own time.

There were people who said it was too vague, that it was unfinished.

He kept going in that direction.

Once he painted a steamboat in a snowstorm.

The story goes that he had himself lashed to a mast and watched the storm.

There is no verifying it.

Only that, looking at the surface, it looks like a storm seen from inside rather than from outside.

Late in life he painted a train as well.

A train running over a bridge on a rainy day.

He did not refuse what was newly made.

He died in 1851.

He left most of his work to the nation.

What he left was a great deal.

Oils and watercolors and sketches numbered in the tens of thousands.

Many of them were in an unfinished state.

He did not throw them away.

The boundary between finished and unfinished was vague for him.

A person who makes boundaries vague leaves the boundary of his own work vague as well.

T h r e e

Here is the argument of this chapter.

The damp of England dissolves form.

In Part One we saw O'Keeffe.

In dry air the outline stood like a knife.

The far was also sharp.

Here it is the exact opposite.

When there is much water in the air, light strikes that water and scatters.

Then the boundary of a distant thing loosens.

The color thins too.

The air of an island country is so.

Surrounded by sea, the moisture does not dry.

There is much mist and rain and overcast.

To an eye that has looked long in that land, an outline is vague to begin with.

He did not see that vagueness as a defect.

He pushed it further.

He painted it vaguer than it was.

Here is the heart of this chapter.

What *fūdo* gave him he exaggerated.

To say that *fūdo* begets form does not mean the painter takes dictation.

He receives and then pushes.

If the land shows things slightly vague, the painter makes them very vague.

The condition sets the direction and the painter sets the distance.

Three things follow.

First, the void is bright.

Bada Shanren's void is white paper.

And it is quiet.

Williams's void is yellow-brown.

It is quiet.

Turner's void is light.

Bright and loud.

The empty place becomes the strongest place.

Usually a void withdraws.

Here the void comes forward.

Second, the void moves.

Because of the spiral.

The brush passed drawing circles, so the eye turns as well.

A void that holds still and a void that turns are different things.

A void that holds still is waiting.

A void that turns is an event.

Third, the void has a center.

This is the most particular.

The two earlier voids had no center.

Paper is the same everywhere and yellow-brown ground is the same everywhere.

Turner's void has a center.

There is one place where the light is brightest and everything spreads from that place.

So this void is empty and it is something.

The light is at that place.

The empty place has become the fullest place.

F o u r

Stand before Byun Shi-Ji's surface.

First look at what is alike.

Both looked at the sea a long time.

Turner lived in an island country.

Byun Shi-Ji lived on an island.

Both are places surrounded by water.

Both are painters of a humid land.

And both made what cannot be seen into a void.

Turner's void is light.

Byun Shi-Ji's void is wind.

Light is not seen and wind is not seen.

We do not see light; we see what light has touched.

We do not see wind; we see what wind has shaken.

Both let it be there without painting it.

Now look at the difference.

The largest difference is the distance to the sea.

Turner's sea swallows the surface.

The water is close.

Very close.

We might be in the water.

Byun Shi-Ji's sea is far.

It is near the horizon.

Thin, at the top of the surface.

Why so different.

The place of standing differs.

Turner looked from on board a ship.
Or from standing very near the water.

Byun Shi-Ji looked from a hill.

The sea seen from inside the sea and the sea that is looked at are different things.

Then the nature of the void changes as well.

Turner's void surrounds me.

Front and back and above and below are all of it.
There is nowhere to get out.

Byun Shi-Ji's void is in front of me.

It is over there.
I am standing here.

A void that surrounds is frightening.
A void in front is lonely.

Fear and loneliness are different feelings.

Fear is a matter of now and loneliness is an old matter.

So Turner's surface looks like a moment and Byun Shi-Ji's looks like a long time.

There is a second difference.

The boats differ.

Turner painted a steamboat.

It gives off smoke and cuts the water and goes forward.

It is a moving ship.

Byun Shi-Ji painted a small boat.

Even the sail is hard to see.

It is a floating boat.

Turner's ship fights the storm.

Byun Shi-Ji's boat does not fight.

Nor is there any telling whether it is leaving or returning.

In the Prologue we saw the stone walls of Jeju.

Walls that do not block but let through.

Turner's ship is on the side of blocking and Byun Shi-Ji's boat on the side of letting through.

There is a third difference.

People are hard to see on Turner's surface.

The light eats them.

There are people on Byun Shi-Ji's surface.

However strong the wind, the person remains.

A person erased and a person remaining.

On one side nature swallows the person and on the other nature makes the person endure.

There is no ranking here.

Painting what is swallowed is truth and painting what endures is truth.

F i v e

The light is in the middle.

The surroundings turn.

Where the ship is I cannot quite tell.

Step back and it is the same.

On the surface of a distant island there is a hill.

The sea is over there and the old man is here.

A small boat floats near the horizon.

Step back and it is seen better.

One stays vague when you step back and the other grows clear.

What about coming close.

Come close to Turner's surface and the paint is visible.

The rubbed places and the scraped places.

Come close to Byun Shi-Ji's surface and the line is visible.

The trembling places and the broken places.

On one side the trace of erasing remains and on the other the trace of drawing remains.

Both surfaces painted what cannot be seen.

One painted it by erasing and one by leaving.

Chapter Ten — Kapoor, a Manufactured Emptiness

O n e

There is one circle on the wall.

It is red.

Very red.

Redder than any red seen so far.

Tamayo's red had soil mixed into it.

Munch's red flowed.

This red is not mixed with anything.

It is pure.

Come close and the surface is powder.

It was not painted but scattered.

Pigment powder sits on it as it is.

Touch it and it would come off.

The middle of the circle is strange.

It is darker.

It seems deep.

But there is no telling whether it is shadow or hole.

Step one pace to the side.

Seen from the side it is the same.

If it were shadow it would change with the angle.

It does not change.

It is a hole.

The wall was cut into and the inside was made dark.

It was made so that the depth cannot be judged.

In another room there is a black circle on the floor.

It looks like a carpet.

It looks flat.

In fact it is a hole cut into the floor.

A hole made to look flat.

People often mistake such work for shadow.

It is built so that they cannot help mistaking it.

This chapter begins here.

This emptiness is exact.

T w o

Anish Kapoor was born in 1954 in India.

In Mumbai.

His father was Indian and his mother was from a Jewish family that had come from Iraq.

In 1973 he went to London.

He was about twenty.

He studied art there and stayed there.

He still works in London.

In the early period he worked with pigment powder.

He made small forms and scattered colored powder over them.

He scattered it on the floor as well.

Red, yellow, blue.

Very intense color.

India has a long custom of using colored powder.

It is used in rites, pressed to the forehead, scattered.

His color is not unrelated to that.

After that he went to emptiness.

He cut holes in stone.

He cut into walls and cut into floors.

He made the inside very dark and erased the depth.

He used mirrors as well.

Concave mirrors, convex mirrors.

There are enormous mirror pieces set in city squares.

People look at themselves in front of them.

For a period he stood at the center of a discussion over a very black material.

It was a substance that ate almost all light.

He held the exclusive right to use it in the field of art.

Other artists raised an objection.

The question was whether one person can hold a color exclusively.

That argument is not yet settled.

This book does not rule on it.

It only sets it down.

In his work color and emptiness are made, and what is made can be owned.

Three

Here is the argument of this chapter.

His emptiness is designed.

Look back at the three before him.

Bada Shanren's void was paper.

A place that comes into being when the brush is not set down.

Williams's void was ground.

A place that comes into being when the same thing runs wide.

Turner's void was air.

A place that comes into being when moisture dissolves form.

All three voids came out of conditions.

They were already in that land before the painter did anything.

Kapoor's emptiness is not so.

It was calculated.

The angle is measured, the depth is set, the reflectance is matched.

It has to be exactly that dark for the depth to disappear.

A little brighter and it looks like a hole; a little darker and it looks like a stain.

He finds and fits the narrow place between.

This is close to engineering.

And it is no land's emptiness.

It is not London's emptiness and not Mumbai's.

Set it anywhere and it is the same.

This is the counter-evidence of this part.

A void can be made without *fūdo*.

Two things follow.

First, material and form come apart.

His pigment touches what is Indian.

And he does not live in India.

The material comes from one land and the form from elsewhere.

This separation is his position.

It resembles Gauguin, whom we will see later, and is not the same.

Gauguin goes to another people's land and paints that land.

Kapoor takes the material of his own land and lives in another's.

The direction is reversed.

Second, emptiness becomes a matter of perception.

The void of *fūdo* says where.

This void is paper.

This void is mist.

This void is wind.

Kapoor's emptiness says nothing of that kind.

It asks what we are looking at.

Shadow or hole.

Plane or depth.

It shows that the eye can be wrong.

The question is not place. It is perception.

So his work lies outside the frame of this book.

Better not to pull what is outside inside.

Only one thing can be said.

Rootlessness too becomes a condition.

In the last part we saw Chusa.

Form came out of a place where *fūdo* was cut off.

Kapoor's case is of another kind.

He stands across two lands and belongs wholly to neither.

That is his condition.

And out of that condition came an emptiness belonging nowhere.

It is not that there is no condition. The condition is of that kind.

F o u r

Stand before Byun Shi-Ji's surface.

This encounter is different in character from the earlier ones.

What is alike is hard to find.

One man made sculpture and the other painted.

One is precise and the other drew by hand.

So look at the difference first.

A manufactured emptiness and a void left behind.

Kapoor's emptiness is perfect.

There is no gap.

The calculation holds.

Byun Shi-Ji's void is rough.

The places the brush passed remain and the color is uneven.

Before a perfect emptiness, what does a person see.

He sees himself.

If it is a mirror he sees his face; if it is a hole he learns his eye was wrong.

Either way it returns to himself.

Before a rough void, what does a person see.

He sees wind.

It does not return to him.

He looks over there.

One turns inward and the other sends outward.

There is a second difference.

Kapoor's work can be set anywhere.

It can be set in London, in Chicago, in Seoul.

The place is not inside the work.

So it is read anywhere.

Byun Shi-Ji's surface carries Jeju with it.

Hung in Seoul it is Jeju; hung in Tokyo it is Jeju.

The place is inside the work.

So knowing that place lets it be read further.

Here one may recall Munch from Part One.

The Scream was no land's story, so it was read in every land.

The same structure.

Art without place goes wide and art with place goes deep.

Which is better, going wide or going deep, need not be asked.

Both have to exist.

There is a third difference.

Kapoor's emptiness does not let a person inside.

One can look in.

One cannot enter.

Enter and it is no longer emptiness.

In Byun Shi-Ji's void a person is already inside.

An old man stands within it.

There is a person in the place where the wind blows.

A surface with no person in the empty place and a surface with a person in it.

This is the largest difference in this part.

With no person in the void, the void is the master.

With a person in the void, the person is the master.

Kapoor's emptiness is the work itself.

Byun Shi-Ji's void is a place for the old man to stand in.

The purpose differs.

F i v e

The middle of the red circle is dark.

There is no telling how deep it goes.

Look in and there is nothing.

Only that there is nothing is exactly there.

On the surface of a distant island there is an empty field.

Look in and there is wind.

And an old man is standing.

It is not that there is nothing.

The two emptinesses are different things.

A made emptiness and a left void.

What is the empty place the place of.

Four answers came out of this part.

The place of what is gone.

The place where the same thing repeated.

The place of what was erased.

The place that was made.

The third gate closes this way.

The empty place also has kinds.

Part Four

Grammar

Opening

The fourth gate.

This gate is the hardest.

The first three were visible.

Color is seen.

Line is seen.

The void is seen as something empty.

Grammar is not seen.

Grammar is not a thing but a relation.

What is placed where.

What is made large and what is made small.

Which is put in front and which behind.

These are on the surface and are not seen.

It is like the grammar of speech.

We speak without thinking about grammar.

We do not settle the word order separately.

It simply comes out that way.

It is not known by learning but taken in while growing.

So grammar is the deepest place.

Color can be changed.

Change the paint.

Line can be changed.

Change the brush.

Grammar is hard to change.

Because it is inside the body.

The question of this part is this.

What is placed where.

And where did that way of placing come from.

Three people stand before this gate.

Picasso broke the grammar and put it together again.

Levitan settled the meaning with the height of a single horizon.

Gauguin placed things exactly and belonged nowhere.

So Gauguin is the witness for the other side in this part.

A case where the grammar did not come out of that land.

In the earlier parts the witness for the other side shook one place in the proposition.

Munch said color comes from within.

Chusa said form comes out even when *fūdo* is cut off.

Kapoor said a void can be manufactured.

Gauguin says something else.

One can live in that land and the grammar of that land may still not come.

It is the most painful counter-evidence.

Chapter Eleven — Picasso, Breaking and Setting Down Again

O n e

One face.

A woman's face.

And it is strange.

Both eyes are on the same side.

They are both round, as eyes seen from the front, and the face is looking sideways.

The nose is the shape seen from the side.

The ridge is drawn as a line.

The mouth is frontal.

Two directions are inside one face.

What is seen from the front and what is seen from the side are in the same place.

The color is divided into planes.

One cheek is yellow and the other is gray.

The boundary is clear.

They are not divided by shadow.

They are simply divided.

A thick black line separates the planes.

It is an outline.

A real face has no outline.

This one has one.

There is no depth.

The nose does not come forward.

It is on the same plane.

The background is one color.

Room or outdoors, there is no telling.

Come close and the paint is laid on evenly.

It is not thick.

There are no rubbed places.

It was painted fast and it is exact.

The exact opposite of Turner's surface in the last part.

Turner erased the boundary.

Here the boundary was drawn.

T w o

Pablo Picasso was born in 1881 in southern Spain.

In Málaga.

A city on the Mediterranean.

His father was a man who taught drawing.

He drew from childhood.

He drew very well.

By his early teens he already drew like an adult.

He went to Barcelona and was in Madrid as well.

Around 1900 he went to Paris.

He was poor.

There was a period he painted in blue.

He painted thin and hungry people.

After that there was a period with pink mixed in.

In 1907 he painted one large surface.

A picture with five women in it.

Several of the faces are made like masks.

Around that time he saw African and Iberian sculpture.

He saw it in museums and kept some in the studio.

Those carvings did not make a person resemble a person.

They made a person different.

The eyes are large, the nose is straight, the face is flat.

He knew that this was not clumsiness but another grammar.

For some years after that he broke form into pieces.

He split a thing into many planes and set it down again.

He laid one thing seen from several angles onto one surface.

Later people called this Cubism.

He lived a long time.

He lived past ninety and painted until he died.

He changed his manner many times.

There was a period he painted classically and a period he broke things again.

In 1937 he painted a large gray surface.

It was of the bombing of a village in Spain.

A bull and a horse and people are tangled together and there is a lamp above.

There is no color.

Only gray and black and white.

In his late years he lived in the south of France.

He made pottery and pulled prints.

He died in 1973.

T h r e e

Here is the argument of this chapter.

This chapter needs care.

Explain Picasso by *fūdo* and the argument strains.

He made his painting in Paris.

Paris, not Spain.

And his manner spread across the world.

It was not tied to any one land.

So it is more exact to ask this.

What were the conditions under which he could break a grammar.

There are two.

The first is light.

The light of the Mediterranean is strong.

When light is strong, shadow deepens.

Then the lit plane and the dark plane divide cleanly.

The middle grows thin.

Under strong noon light a person's face does not look solid.

It looks cut into planes.

In the overcast light of the north it is different.

The light is soft, so it passes slowly from bright to dark.

That becomes solidity.

Here is why northern painting is strong in modelling and volume.

Turner, in the last part, dissolved form in that overcast light.

In the south form does not dissolve.

It is cut.

Rearranging cut planes is natural to a southern eye.

The second is layering.

This is the more important.

Southern Spain is a land many cultures passed through.

Rome was there, Islam was there a long time, Jews lived there.

Africa is close across the sea.

Inside one city there are buildings of several ages.

Islamic ornament did not make the human figure.

It went to geometry.

Beside it there is the carving of a cathedral.

Two grammars are in the same place.

Someone who grew up in such a land knows that grammar is not one thing.

It is not known by learning.

You just come to know it.

A person who believes there is only one grammar cannot break it.

He cannot think there is anything to break.

Only one who knows there are several breaks them.

Three things follow.

First, strong light begets the plane.

In the earlier parts we met this argument several times.

Tamayo's surface had no depth.

O'Keeffe's had none either.

Both lands were dry and the light was strong.

Picasso is in that line.

The Mediterranean and Mexico and New Mexico are set on one row.

The painting of strong light goes toward the plane.

Second, layered cultures beget plural grammars.

In the Prologue the range of *fūdo* was settled.

War too becomes *fūdo*, and a place many cultures have passed through also becomes *fūdo*.

This chapter is the second case.

In the body of one who grew up there is more than one grammar.

Third, breaking requires a grammar.

He could draw very well.

By his early teens he already drew exactly.

That exactness is what makes breaking possible.

When one who does not know the grammar uses it wrongly, it is a mistake.

When one who knows the grammar uses it wrongly, it is form.

The same surface can be a mistake or a form.

What divides them.

Whether what stands beside it is exact.

At the head of Part Three we said the same thing.

The void is proved by what stands beside it.

A broken grammar is also proved by what stands beside it.

F o u r

Stand before Byun Shi-Ji's surface.

In this encounter the opposition is sharp.

Picasso broke the grammar.

Byun Shi-Ji kept it.

The grammar of Byun Shi-Ji's surface is very simple.

One horizon divides the surface into above and below.

Below is ground and above is sky.

The person usually stands in the lower part.

What is far is small and what is near is large.

There is nothing broken.

It was not broken. It was reduced.

Here is the heart of this encounter.

Breaking and reducing are both roads toward simplicity.

And the results are opposite.

Break it and it becomes strange.

A face with both eyes on one side is strange.

It becomes something seen for the first time.

Reduce it and it becomes familiar.

A surface with only a horizon and one person is familiar.

It is an arrangement anyone knows.

Make it strange and one looks again; make it familiar and one looks long.

Looking again and looking long are different things.

Why did one man break and the other reduce.

Because the land differed.

In Picasso's land several grammars were layered.

Where they are layered one can break.

There are several things to break, so one is not bound to any.

On the island Byun Shi-Ji returned to there was one grammar.

One wind, one sea, one horizon.

In a land without several, one cannot break.

Break it and nothing is left.

So the way left is to reduce.

Toward setting the only thing there is more exactly.

There is a second difference.

Picasso changed his manner many times.

The blue period and Cubism and the classical period and the pottery of his late years.

Different enough that it is hard to see as one man's work.

Byun Shi-Ji kept one manner a long time.

After going to Jeju he went in the same direction for thirty-eight years.

One who changes and one who keeps.

There is no ranking here.

One who changes grows wide and one who keeps grows deep.

Growing wide takes courage and growing deep takes courage.

There is a third thing to look at.

Both painted violence.

Picasso painted a bombed village.

It is an event with a date.

It happened in a certain month of a certain year.

Byun Shi-Ji painted the storm.

And later, in the oral history, he said the storm was not weather but resistance.

(Korean Culture and Arts Foundation oral history, 2004–2005, p. 171)

There is no date.

It is not an event but a state.

Paint an event and those who know that event read it.

Paint a state and those who undergo that state read it.

An event ends and a state continues.

So one surface becomes testimony and the other becomes endurance.

Both are needed.

Without testimony it is forgotten, and without endurance one cannot live.

F i v e

There are two directions in a face.

What is seen from the front and what is seen from the side are together.

He tried to see one person all at once.

On the surface of a distant island an old man shows his back.

There is only one direction.

The front is not seen.

One tried to show all and the other showed less.

See all and you know; see less and it stays.

Both surfaces painted a person.

The way of placing differed.

Chapter Twelve — Levitan, the Height of the Horizon

O n e

A wide horizontal surface.

Below there is a road.

A wide dirt road.

Two wheel ruts run along it.

Beside it another narrow path is attached.

A path made by people walking.

The road begins at the lower left of the surface and recedes to the upper right.

It narrows as it goes.

And it disappears at the horizon.

The horizon is low.

It is about a third of the way up the surface.

Above it is all sky.

The sky is most of the surface.

There are clouds.

Heavy.

Gray and white mixed.

It looks as though rain is coming, and as though it has just stopped.

The field is dry and yellowed.

The grass is low.

Far off there is something very small.

It could be a church roof. It could be a tree.

There are no people.

There is a road and no one walking on it.

That is the strangest thing on this surface.

A road comes into being from people walking.

If no one walks, the road disappears.

So there were people on this road.

They are only not here now.

T w o

Isaac Levitan was born in 1860.

In what is now Lithuania.

At the time it was the western part of the Russian Empire.

The family was Jewish.

They were poor.

They moved to Moscow.

In his early teens his mother died, and after that his father died.

He was left alone.

He attended the school of painting.

There is a story that he could not pay the fees and was excused.

There were times he had nothing to eat and nowhere to sleep.

The story goes that he slept in the school without permission.

He had a gift for painting.

He painted landscape.

He painted the fields and rivers and forests of Russia.

He was a friend of the writer Chekhov.

The two men knew each other's work.

In 1892 he was expelled from Moscow.

There was a measure to remove Jews from the city.

It happened even though he was a known painter.

He stayed in the country and returned later.

Around that time he painted a road.

It was the road to Siberia.

The road that people being exiled walked.

He did not paint people in that picture.

He painted only the road.

He died in 1900.

He was forty.

His heart was not good.

He lived briefly and painted a great deal.

T h r e e

Here is the argument of this chapter.

On wide flat ground the height of the horizon becomes the grammar.

Much of Russia is flat.

There are no mountains.

There is nothing to block the sight.

Then what has to be decided on the surface reduces to one thing.

Where to put the horizon.

This one thing settles the meaning of the picture.

Raise the horizon and the ground widens.

The affairs of the ground become the center.

Walking and working and living.

Lower the horizon and the sky widens.

The affairs of the sky become the center.

Weather and time and passing.

He usually lowered it.

He left the sky large.

Here we need to look again at Williams in Chapter Eight.

Williams was also a painter of wide country.

And he removed the horizon.

On the same wide ground one man lowered the horizon and the other erased it.

Why the difference.

Because the sky differs.

The sky of the Australian interior is mostly bright and unchanging.

There are few clouds and the color does not shift.

It is a sky without speech.

Where there is no speech there is nothing to paint.

So it is erased.

The sky of Russia changes.

Clouds gather thickly and the seasons turn greatly.

The winter is long and the spring comes suddenly.

Things happen in the sky.

Where things happen is painted large.

A land where the sky speaks and a land where the sky is silent.

The same width begets a different grammar.

Three things follow.

First, the height of the horizon becomes the meaning.

This is a very small decision.

It is a question of raising one line or lowering it.

And that decision settles the whole of the picture.

Grammar is like that.

Small and unseen, and it settles everything.

Second, a road becomes time.

A road is space and it is also time.

To go to the far end takes days.

So paint a road and you have painted days.

And if that road is the road of exile, the meaning of the time changes.

It becomes time from which one does not return.

Third, one can speak of people without people.

This is his strongest method.

There are no people on the road.

And the people who walked that road are seen.

He said what is present by way of what is absent.

In Part Three we looked at the void.

Here it is not void but absence.

Not an empty place but an absent person.

He could have painted them if he wished.

He decided not to.

Paint them and it becomes those people's story; do not paint them and it becomes the story of everyone who walked.

F o u r

Stand before Byun Shi-Ji's surface.

First look at what is alike.

Both made one line the master of the surface.

For Levitan it is the horizon of land and for Byun Shi-Ji the horizon of sea.

On both surfaces that one line divides above from below.

And both often set that line low.

They leave the sky large.

There is a second likeness.

Both handled exile.

Levitan painted the road the exiled walked.

And he himself had been expelled from a city.

Painting another's exile, he may have been painting his own place.

Byun Shi-Ji's root sentence is this.

Life is exile. Art is blessing.

Not institutional exile but exile as the condition of a life.

Both painted from a place they had been driven out of.

There is a third likeness.

Both used dry color.

The dry fields of Russia and the dry grass of Jeju.

A low color with yellow running through it.

Now look at the difference.

The largest difference is the nature of that line.

Levitan's horizon is the end of the ground.

The place where the ground goes on and passes out of sight.

One can walk to that place.

Walk there and there is another horizon at that place.

Byun Shi-Ji's horizon is the end of the sea.

One cannot walk to it.

You have to take a boat, and even in a boat you do not reach that line.

The end of a continent and the end of an island are that different.

The horizon of a continent is a promise.

There is something over there and one can go.

Even if the going takes days, one can go.

The horizon of an island is a wall.

There is something over there and one cannot go.

But here one thing is laid over another.

Jeju has the story of Jeodo.

An island said to lie somewhere in the sea.

Those who go do not come back.

The painter left writing about that island in his own hand.

(Korean Culture and Arts Foundation oral history, 2004–2005, pp. 23–26)

So that horizon is a wall and a promise at once.

One cannot go, and one believes something is over there.

This overlay is the condition of an island.

The exile of a continent is walking and the exile of an island is staying.

There is a second difference.

Levitan erased the people.

He left only the road and took the people out.

Byun Shi-Ji raised a person.

He set one old man in an empty field.

The methods are opposite.

One speaks by removing and the other by leaving.

Remove and it becomes everyone's story; leave and it becomes one person's story.

And the results come close.

In Levitan's empty road we see the people who walked.

In Byun Shi-Ji's old man we see the people who remained.

One person was painted and many are seen.

Because there is no face.

There is a third difference.

The length of time the two men had differed.

Levitan died at forty.

Byun Shi-Ji lived to eighty-seven.

On Jeju alone he painted for thirty-eight years.

What is reached in a short time and what is reached in a long time differ in kind.

Short makes density and long makes layers.

Levitan's surface arrives at once.

Byun Shi-Ji's surface has to be come to several times.

There is no ranking here.

The time given differed.

F i v e

The road recedes and disappears.

There is no one walking.

And the people who walked are seen.

On the surface of a distant island there is a horizon.

Above it one small boat floats.

Whoever is aboard is not seen.

On one side there is a road and no people.

On the other there is a boat and no people.

Both surfaces are the place of someone who has left.

One line settled it.

Chapter Thirteen — Gauguin, an Arrangement without Belonging

O n e

Two women are seated.

They are seated on the ground.

The bodies are large.

The arms and legs are thick.

The clothing is red or white cloth.

Look at the background.

It is flat.

There are trees and they do not stand like trees.

They are set down like pattern.

The ground is pink.

Real ground is not pink.

The grass has red running through it.

There is no depth.

The figures in front and the trees behind are on the same plane.

Thick outlines surround the forms.

Between one color plane and the next there is a black or blue line.

It resembles Picasso's surface in the last chapter.

Outline and plane.

But there is a difference.

Picasso split the form.

Here nothing was split.

The form is whole.

It is simply flat.

Look at the bearing of the figures.

One faces front.

She looks at us.

The eyes are large and there is no expression.

There is no telling what she is thinking.

The other looks to the side.

Both are still.

They do not move.

Time might have stopped.

T w o

Paul Gauguin was born in 1848 in Paris.

His father died early.

He spent some years of childhood in Peru.

There were relatives on his mother's side.

He returned to France and grew up there.

He went to sea when young.

He was in the merchant marine and the navy.

After that he worked in stocks in Paris.

He earned money, married, and had several children.

He bought paintings and painted as a pastime.

In his thirties he gave that work up.

He decided to do only painting.

That the economy worsened and the position became unsteady was also a reason.

He grew distant from his family.

He went to Brittany.

The countryside of western France.

Painters had gathered in a village called Pont-Aven.

His manner was made there.

This must be remembered.

Flat color planes, thick outlines, color unlike the real.

This grammar came out of Brittany.

Before he went to Tahiti.

For a time he stayed with Van Gogh in Arles.

About two months.

It did not end well.

In 1891 he went to Tahiti.

He was forty-three.

He stayed about two years and returned to France.

Back in France it did not go well.

In 1895 he left again.

This time he did not return.

Later he moved to a more distant island.

He died there in 1903.

T h r e e

Here is the argument of this chapter.

He was in that land.

And that land did not beget his grammar.

Why is this a problem.

This book says that *fūdo* begets form.

Gauguin lived in the South Pacific more than ten years.

He died there.

By length of stay it is enough.

And his grammar did not come out of there.

It was already made in Brittany.

Flat color planes and thick outlines.

He carried it with him.

Tahiti gave that grammar new subject matter.

It did not give the grammar.

This distinction is the heart of the chapter.

Subject and grammar come apart.

Paint a palm and the subject is the tropics.

But how the palm is placed is another matter.

In the Prologue we divided local color from form.

Local color, we said, is a matter of subject.

Gauguin shows why that distinction is needed.

He changed the subject and did not change the grammar.

Why did he not change it.

Because he did not endure.

This is the second argument of the chapter.

He went looking for that land.

One who goes looking has a choice.

He went because he wanted to go, returned because he wanted to return, went again because he wanted to go again.

He came and went twice.

Endurance has no choice.

Someone who lives where the wind blows does not choose the wind.

What cannot be chosen changes the body.

What can be chosen does not change the body.

Care is needed here.

The Tahiti he painted was not the actual Tahiti.

By the time he went it had long been a colony.

There were churches and there were government offices and disease had spread.

The untouched paradise he was looking for was not there.

He painted what was not there.

Or he painted what he wished were there.

So his surface is not a picture of that land but a picture of what he wanted.

This book is not the place to rule on it.

It is a ground still under discussion.

Only the structure can be set down.

What is looked at and what is undergone are not the same.

A land looked at comes out beautiful and a land undergone comes out dry.

Three things follow.

First, subject and grammar separate.

Subject can be moved.

Grammar is hard to move.

But the reverse also holds.

One can carry a grammar and lay it over a new subject.

Then it looks like a picture of that land and is not.

Second, residence is not endurance.

Not the length of time but the presence or absence of choice decides endurance.

Live ten years and, if one can leave at any time, one has not endured.

Third, great form comes out without belonging.

This must be said clearly.

His grammar is a true achievement.

Flat color planes and thick outlines changed the painting that came after.

Picasso, in the last chapter, saw it too.

Without him the painting of the next generation would have been different.

Great form comes out without *fūdo* as well.

Chusa in Part Two stood in the same place.

Only the manner differs.

Chusa went by cutting *fūdo* off.

Gauguin went by moving from *fūdo* to *fūdo*.

One closed inward and the other opened outward.

Both roads hold outside the proposition of this book.

Knowing there is an outside is the honest part.

F o u r

Stand before Byun Shi-Ji's surface.

This encounter is the sharpest in this book.

Both men went to an island.

Both went in middle age.

Gauguin went to Tahiti at forty-three.

Byun Shi-Ji went to Jeju at forty-nine.

Both had been painters elsewhere before that.

And the result is the exact opposite.

First, another's island and one's own island.

Gauguin went to another's island.

His ancestors were not there.

He did not know all of the language there.

Byun Shi-Ji came back to his own island.

He was born there.

He left at five and came back forty-four years later.

He returned; he did not go.

Second, going to look for and going to accept.

Gauguin went to look for a paradise.

He went looking for something that was not there.

One who looks is disappointed.

If what he sought is not there, he leaves again.

So he moved to a more distant island.

Byun Shi-Ji did not go looking.

That was where he had to return.

One who accepts is not disappointed.

Because there is no expectation.

Without expectation, what is there becomes visible.

Third, the color is opposite.

Gauguin's Tahiti is bright.

Pink and red and green are strong.

Byun Shi-Ji's Jeju is low.

It is the color of dry grass.

The same island, and why so different.

One is an island wished for and one is an island lived in.

An island wished for is brilliant in color.

A place not yet seen is always brilliant.

An island lived in is low in color.

What is seen every day cannot be brilliant.

This is the most important contrast in the chapter.

Fourth, the direction of the figure is opposite.

Gauguin's figures look at us.

They sit facing front with their eyes open wide.

It is a position set to be looked at.

Who looks.

The people of Paris who would buy the picture.

Byun Shi-Ji's old man shows his back.

Or lowers his head.

He is not looked at.

It is a position set without thinking of a viewer.

A figure shown and a figure turned away.

That difference states where the two painters stood.

One had to send paintings from that island.

The other had nowhere to send them.

Fifth, the ending differs.

Gauguin meant to return and could not.

He died on a distant island.

Byun Shi-Ji returned and stayed.

He died on the same island.

One did not get back and the other had come back.

Now it must be said without hierarchy.

That Gauguin did not belong to that land is fact.

It was not his fault alone.

Belonging does not happen at will.

If it is not the place one was born, belonging is hard.

And painting comes out of a place one does not belong to as well.

Only a different painting comes out.

A painting of what was looked at.

There is truth in a painting of what was looked at too.

It is the truth of one who did not find.

That is also a human matter.

F i v e

Two women are seated.

The ground is pink and the trees stand like pattern.

One of them looks at us.

The eyes seem to ask something, and to ask nothing.

The man who painted it died on that island.

He meant to go back and could not.

On the surface of a distant island an old man shows his back.

The man who painted it died on that island.

He came back and stayed.

Both men ended on an island.

One stayed because he could not return and the other stayed because he had returned.

What is placed where.

Whether the hand that places belongs to that land settles the grammar.

The fourth gate closes this way.

Part Five

Materiality

Opening

The fifth gate.

The first four gates were passed with the eyes.
We looked at color and line and void and arrangement.

This gate is passed with the hands.

What was it painted with.
That is the question.

Paint is color and it is matter.

Seen as color it lies thinly on the surface.
Seen as matter it is stacked on the surface.

What is stacked has thickness.
Thickness makes shadow.

The painting begins to catch light on its own.

Material is usually got from that land.
There is paint bought from far away, but what a painter's hand learned was what
lay near.

Soil and ash.
Straw and stone.

Lead and ice.

Three people stand before this gate.

Kiefer carried the ground onto the surface.

Goldsworthy set the surface on the ground.

Van Gogh made the paint itself into matter.

Three directions part.

And all three touch *fūdo*.

This part has no witness for the other side.

In the four earlier parts there was one person who shook the proposition.

Color had Munch and line had Chusa.

The void had Kapoor and grammar had Gauguin.

Here there is none.

Because matter does not lie.

Soil is soil and lead is lead.

It cannot hide where it came from.

Chapter Fourteen — Kiefer, Ground Turned to Ash

O n e

A large surface.

Taller than a person and wider than outstretched arms.
Stand close and it feels like a wall rather than a surface.

You have to step back to see the whole.
And stepping back, the surface is no longer visible.

This painting demands two distances.
The distance for looking from far and the distance for looking near.

Look from far first.

A field is visible.
Furrows narrow and recede from the bottom of the surface upward.

And nothing has grown.
There are only furrows and no crop.

There is no sky.
Soil has come up to the top of the surface.

What is seen in the distance is not a horizon but the end of the soil.

Now come close.

Straw is attached to the surface.

Dry straw.

The color has gone out and it looks about to crumble.

It is not straw stuck onto a painting but straw that has become the painting.

Beneath it ash is spread.

Gray, and not only gray.

It is the color of what has burned.

The paint is thick.

There are places that have split.

It cracked by itself as it dried.

The cracks were not drawn by the painter.

The material made them.

Seen from the side the surface is uneven.

The lighting of the gallery makes small shadows on it.

The shadows are not painted.

They were made by the light of this present place.

Move the lighting and the shadows move.

So this painting is a little different every time.

The painting already carries the trace of having endured time.
And it is enduring still.

T w o

Anselm Kiefer was born in 1945.

The year the war ended.
In a small city in southwestern Germany.

The first world he saw was ruins.
Collapsed buildings, cleared heaps of stone, empty lots.

A child does not call that ruins.
He simply calls it the world.

There is a child who grew up in a world where the collapsed is normal.
That child learns the intact later.

Something has to be thought through here.

Read *fūdo* as natural condition alone and there is no explaining Kiefer.
The climate and terrain of Germany have little to do with his surface.

His ground is ground that history passed through.

Fūdo has two layers.
The layer nature made and the layer people made.

Nature makes wind.

People make ruins.

But for a child there is no division.

Both were simply there.

War too becomes *fūdo*.

When a generation is born and grows up on it, that is what it becomes.

The proposition widened in the Prologue is clearest here.

What happened on that land is also *fūdo*.

This widening is needed for reading Jeju as well.

Wind alone does not read all of it.

Kiefer first studied law.

Then he moved to painting.

In his young years he made photographic work.

He photographed himself in various places making the salute of a former era.

It was 1969.

Many people were uncomfortable with it.

That work is still argued over.

What he meant to do is read in several ways.

Only one thing is clear.

He walked into a place German art had long avoided.

In Germany at that time myth and history were difficult material.
Because everyone knew who had used them and how.

Kiefer chose not to avoid.

It was not an easy road.
He was not only praised.

In the generation before him there was Joseph Beuys.
Beuys used felt and fat.
He first opened a road of working with what is not paint.

Kiefer went further on that road.

If Beuys chose materials, Kiefer moved a land with materials.

He read poetry for a long time.

From the poetry of Paul Celan he took the names of two women.
Margarete and Shulamith.

One has golden hair and the other ashen hair.

Celan wrote in German.
He could not write in any other language, and writing in it was not easy either.

Kiefer attached straw where the gold was.
Where the ash was he laid ash.

He turned the figure into matter.

He made what he read in a poem into something the hand can touch.

This is his method.

He returns what was made of words back into matter.

Later he moved his workplace to France.

On wide ground he built structures and passages and set the work inside them.

He did not make a place to hang paintings but a place for paintings to live.

T h r e e

Here is the argument of this chapter.

Kiefer did not paint the ground.

He moved it.

He spread soil on the surface.

He attached straw.

He melted lead and laid it on.

He scattered ash.

Not representation but transfer.

Landscape painting looks at ground and paints it.

The ground is outside the surface, and inside the surface there is only its appearance.

On Kiefer's surface there is not an appearance but a thing.
Not the appearance of soil but soil.

What changes when this is done.
Four things change.

First, time enters the surface.

Paint stops when it dries.
Soil and straw keep changing after they dry.

The color goes out, it crumbles, it falls off.

The painting ages.
It ages like a person.

In an ordinary painting time is something painted.
It is evening or winter or old age.

On Kiefer's surface time is not painted.
It happens.

Second, weight appears.

A large surface is hard to move.
A surface with lead on it is harder.

The painting comes to have a place.
It cannot be moved easily, so it stays where it is.

A light painting travels the world.
A heavy painting makes people come.

The direction is reversed.

Third, the material carries meaning.

Lead is heavy and poisonous.
In alchemy lead is the matter before it becomes gold.
What has not yet become, what is waiting.

Ash is evidence that something was there.
Without something burned there is no ash.
Ash is the material form of absence.

Straw is what is left of grain.
What remains after the ear is taken.
The body remaining after its use is done.

That these materials were chosen is itself a sentence.

Fourth, the painting makes one want to touch it.

A museum forbids touching.
And the surface calls the hand.

A painting to look at and a painting one wants to touch are different kinds.

The moment one wants to touch it the painting becomes a thing.
Becoming a thing, it is set in the same place as us.

Instead of looking up at the painting one stands beside it.

So for Kiefer materiality is not technique.

It is a way of speaking.

What did the ground of Germany burn and what did it bury.

The painting asks that back with material.

Ask with words and it becomes argument.

Ask with material and it remains.

Argument ends and ash remains.

F o u r

Stand before Byun Shi-Ji's surface.

The size differs from Kiefer's.

Mostly smaller than a person's height.

Many can be held in the arms.

The thickness differs too.

Kiefer's surface is thick and Byun Shi-Ji's is thin.

And the two men handle the same thing.

Endurance.

Kiefer carried the ground that endured onto the surface.

Byun Shi-Ji raised the body that endures on the surface.

If Kiefer painted the ruins of Germany, Byun Shi-Ji painted the wind of Jeju.

The direction is reversed.

Kiefer stacks.

He puts on soil and ash and lead.

The surface grows heavy.

Byun Shi-Ji takes away.

He erases the clouds, erases the road, erases the house.

The surface grows light.

A surface made heavy and a surface made light say the same thing.

How is this to be understood.

Because the character of the ground differs.

The ruins of Germany are stacked.

What collapsed remained as layers.

Dig and it comes out.

The wind of Jeju does not stack.

It passes.

Passing, it wears things down.

From stacked ground a stacking form comes, and from worn ground a form of taking away comes.

Two answers to the same question.

One more thing must be seen.

Kiefer's material is what he brought.

He got straw and attached it.

Byun Shi-Ji's material is not what he brought.

He used oil paint and canvas.

Material that came from the West.

It was also the manner he learned in Japan.

The hand trained in Osaka moved the same way on Jeju.

Instead he changed the color.

The paint was bought, but the color of dry grass was not bought.

That color came from the island.

He did not change the material; he changed the color.

He did not move matter; he moved the name of matter.

Here is the difference in condition.

Kiefer grew up in his own land.

The material to use was underfoot.

Byun Shi-Ji left the island at five.

When he came back he was forty-nine.

The hand had already been made elsewhere.

So what he could change was not material but color.
He changed what could be changed.

There is no ranking between the two ways.
The conditions held were different.

Kiefer had ruins and Byun Shi-Ji had wind.

There is one more thing.

People rarely appear on Kiefer's surface.
Ground and buildings and names appear.

There are people on Byun Shi-Ji's surface.
Almost always.

One old man stands.

So there are two ways of painting ruin.

Showing what is gone.
Showing the person who remains.

Kiefer took the first and Byun Shi-Ji the second.

F i v e

The straw on Kiefer's surface will fall off some day.

The museum works to prevent it.

It matches temperature, matches humidity, forbids touching.

It will fall off anyway.

Kiefer knew that and chose the material.

The color of dry grass on Byun Shi-Ji's surface will not fall off.

It is paint, so it stays.

But the grass that color points to is already gone.

The grass that dried that winter scattered that year.

One said what remains with material that disappears.

The other said what has disappeared with material that remains.

Both men looked long at what goes away.

Step back from the large surface.

Straw is attached.

Ash is spread.

In the field nothing has grown yet.

Chapter Fifteen — Goldsworthy, What Was Got in That Place

O n e

One photograph.

Not a painting.

There is only a photograph.

In the middle stones are stacked.

The shape of an egg.

Wide below and narrowing upward.

There is no adhesive.

The stones stand pressing one another.

Around it is tidal flat.

A place the water has left.

The color of the stone and the color of the flat are nearly the same.

They came from the same place, so they are the same.

Below the photograph a date is written.

The place is written as well.

These two lines matter.

The title of the work is in effect the date and the place.

And these stones are not there now.

The water came in and brought them down.
It happened that afternoon.

There is another photograph.

On the ground the shape of a person remains.
The place where someone lay.

Around it is wet and only that place is dry.

He lay down when the rain began.
And he got up before the rain stopped.

The place that did not get wet remained in the shape of a person.

This too is not there now.
It dried soon, and drying, it disappeared.

There is another photograph.

Pieces of ice hold together in morning light.
Icicles were joined to make a curve.

Instead of adhesive he used water.
He froze them together.

When the sun comes up it melts.
So he made it before sunrise.

The lifespan of the work is a few hours.

T w o

Andy Goldsworthy was born in 1956 in England.

He grew up near Yorkshire.

As a boy he worked on a farm.

He moved stones and mended fences and stacked hay.

He later said that work was like his own.

Repeated labor, an order learned by the body, tasks fitted to the season.

Farming is not work that tries to defeat nature.

It is work that fits nature's order.

Seed is sown at the appointed time.

Miss that time and one waits a year.

This sense remains in his work.

Where he grew up there are many stone walls.

Walls that divide the fields of northern England and Scotland.

They are stacked without adhesive.

One looks at the shape of a stone and finds where it goes.

Walls hundreds of years old are still standing.
Where they collapse they are restacked as it happens.

The name of the person who made this technique does not survive.
Only a method long repeated in that land survives.

Goldsworthy is inside this tradition.
He did not invent it. He inherited it.

A person stacking a wall does not think he is making art.
He stacks it to divide a field.

And that wall is the form of that land.

Where there are many stones, stone walls come.
Where there are many trees, wooden fences come.

The oldest example of *fūdo* begetting form is the wall.

The wall came before the painting.

He attended an art school.
And he went to a small village in southern Scotland.

It was the middle of the 1980s.
He has lived there since.

He is an artist who stays long in one place.

This is not a coincidence.

It is a condition his method requires.

You have to watch the same land for years to know what is there and when.

Which tree's leaves redden first.

Which stream freezes when.

Which stone wall falls in which season.

Records will not tell you this.

One knows it by living.

He mostly works with his hands.

Often he uses no tools.

When the balance fails while stacking stone he starts again from the beginning.

Sometimes it stands only after collapsing many times.

Collapsing is part of the work.

There are two kinds in his work.

One soon disappears.

Ice and leaves and a dry patch.

The other remains long.

Walls stacked of stone, and cairns.

What disappears is better known.

But he keeps making what remains as well.

Disappearance alone is not his subject.

Time is his subject.

He handles the time of a few hours and the time of a few centuries together.

T h r e e

Here is the argument of this chapter.

Goldsworthy does not move material.

He gets it in that place.

He makes it in that place.

He leaves it in that place.

Kiefer, in the last chapter, carried the ground onto the surface.

Goldsworthy set the surface on the ground.

The opposite direction.

What changes when this is done.

Five things change.

First, the work does not come away from the place.

Those stones on that flat are that work only on that flat.

Bring the same stones to a museum and stack them the same way and it becomes another thing.

The light differs, there is no water, there is no smell.

Because *fūdo* is part of the work.

Not background but material.

Here the proposition of this book holds most literally.

That *fūdo* begets form stops being a figure of speech.

Second, disappearing becomes form.

Usually an artist wants the work to last.

Durability enters the standard for choosing materials.

Goldsworthy removes that standard.

Make it of ice and it melts.

Make it of leaves and it scatters.

He makes it knowing it will melt and scatter.

Then the work is not an object but an event.

It becomes something that happened.

Third, labor is visible.

Setting one stone and laying the next takes time.

That time remains in the result.

Done by machine it is fast and exact.

Done by hand it is slow and goes a little astray.

Where it goes astray is the trace of a person.

Fourth, failure is recorded.

What collapsed is also kept in photographs.

He does not hide the collapse.

Show only the finished and the work is a result.

Show the collapse as well and the work is a process.

Fifth, the viewer arrives late.

Almost no one is present when the work is made.

He mostly makes it alone.

What we see is always already past.

Painting is not so.

A picture waits for us.

Go a hundred years later and it is hanging in that place.

Goldsworthy's work does not wait.

It disappears first, and we arrive afterward.

Arriving late has mourning mixed into it.

But one question remains here.

The work disappears and the photograph remains.

Then what is it we are looking at.

Shall the photograph be seen as the work, or as testimony.

There is no right answer.

He would not have been known without photographs, and photographs alone do not become what was in that place.

Between what remains and what disappeared, the photograph hangs.

F o u r

Stand before Byun Shi-Ji's surface.

If Goldsworthy made works within nature, Byun Shi-Ji called the force of nature into the surface.

The direction differs.

Goldsworthy goes out and makes.

Byun Shi-Ji brings in and paints.

Goldsworthy's work cannot leave that land.

Byun Shi-Ji's painting leaves that land and hangs in Seoul and hangs in Tokyo.

And having left, it carries the island along.

This is what painting can do.
It moves a place while preserving the place.

Look at what the two men share.

Both stayed long in one place.

Goldsworthy has lived nearly forty years in one village in Scotland.
Byun Shi-Ji lived thirty-eight years on Jeju.

He went in 1975 and died in 2013.

There is a form that does not come out without staying long.
The two men prove it.

There are two kinds of staying.

Staying where one was born.
Leaving, returning, and staying.

Goldsworthy is closer to the first.
Born in England and gone to Scotland, so not wholly the first.
But it was movement inside the same culture.

Byun Shi-Ji is the second.
He left at five and returned at forty-nine.

The eye of one who returns is different.
It sees the familiar as strange.

Goldsworthy knows which tree's leaves redden first.
Byun Shi-Ji would not have known that.

Instead he knew the wind was strange.
One who grew up there does not find the wind strange.

Knowing and being startled are not the same.

In Goldsworthy's work what is known is stacked up.
On Byun Shi-Ji's surface what startled remains.

Both are possible only after staying long.
And what remained after staying long differs.

And there is the wind.

Goldsworthy has leaned on the wind.
He made work of tilting his body and giving it to the wind.

The wind pushes him and he holds.
At some angle between the two the body stops.

Byun Shi-Ji's old man stands at exactly that angle.

One made that angle with his own body.
The other painted that angle.

The dry patch is the same.

Where Goldsworthy lay down and got up, the shape of a person remained.
There is no person and only the shape.

There are people on Byun Shi-Ji's surface.
And often there is no face.

It is absent because he is far off, or hidden because he is bowed.

In both cases it is not any particular person.
Only that a person was there remains.

The difference is clear too.

There is no sorrow in Goldsworthy's work.
He accepts what disappears evenly.

There is sorrow on Byun Shi-Ji's surface.
More exactly, there is mourning.

The old man's bowed head is the respect owed to those who did not return.

This is interpretation.
Only that standing long before the painting, it reads that way.

Many did not return to the island.
That event is called 4·3.

The painter spoke of those years in the oral history.
(Korean Culture and Arts Foundation oral history, 2004–2005, pp. 241–243)

On Goldsworthy's land no such thing happened.

So his disappearing is nature's disappearing.

Byun Shi-Ji's disappearing is people's disappearing.

Standing before the same gate of materiality, if what disappeared differs, the form differs.

F i v e

The water comes in.

One stone moves, and then several move.

What was stacked scatters.

He steps back and watches.

He does not block it.

The stone walls of Jeju also stand by way of stepping back.

They let the wind through the gaps.

They do not block. They let through.

The two men do not know each other.

They never learned the same thing.

And they reached the same conclusion.

Endurance is not holding out.

It is letting through.

The stones scattered and the flat is as it was.

When the next tide goes out one can stack again.

Being able to stack and stacking the same thing are not the same.

The same thing does not come twice.

Chapter Sixteen — Van Gogh, the Thickness of Paint

O n e

Wheatfield with Crows.

Painted in July 1890, at Auvers-sur-Oise.

Not long before he died.

A small surface.

Different in size from what we saw in the last two chapters.

It is all visible without spreading the arms.

Only it is long sideways.

More than twice its height.

So the eye moves left and right.

Up and down there is nowhere to go.

This proportion is already a sentence.

It makes one see what is spread wide and keeps one from looking up.

A wheatfield.

Ripe wheat fills the lower half of the surface.

A road goes in between the fields and breaks off.

There is no telling where it goes.

The sky is dark.
Blue, and heavy.

Black points are scattered.
Birds. Crows.

Flying or falling, it is not clear.

Now look from the side.

The surface is not flat.
The paint has risen like ridges.

Wherever the brush passed a ridge was made.
On those ridges the light of this present room catches.

Small shadows appear.

The shadows are not painted.
The surface made them.

Move the head left and right and the picture changes a little.
Because the planes taking the light change.

This painting is not still.

Look at the yellow of the wheat.
It is not one layer.

There is another color beneath and the yellow went on above it.
The color beneath shows through the gaps.

The color was not made by mixing paint but by stacking paint.

T w o

Vincent van Gogh was born in 1853 in the Netherlands.

He was a pastor's son.

He did several kinds of work and failed in several places.

He began painting around twenty-seven.

He died at thirty-seven.

He lived as a painter for ten years.

These ten years can be divided in two.

The first half was spent in the north.

The Netherlands and Belgium.

Overcast sky, low light, wet ground.

The surfaces of that period are dark.

There is much brown and black and earth color.

The picture of the people eating potatoes is from that period.

One lamp barely lights a dark room.

That the color was dark was not taste.

The light he saw was so.

The miners and farmers of the north work in dark places.

Paint that darkness bright and it becomes a lie.

The second half was spent in the south.

He passed through Paris and went to the south of France.

To Arles.

It was 1888.

The light was different.

It was light he had never seen in the north.

The color rose.

Yellow and blue filled the surface.

This much is the well-known story.

From the darkness of the north to the brightness of the south.

But this chapter means to see something else.

It was not only the color that changed.

The thickness of the paint changed.

In the south his paint grew thick.

Why.

Because when the light is too strong, color alone cannot hold it.

Color is what is laid on a surface.

When the light is strong the color flies off.

What is needed then is not stronger color but surface.

Thick paint makes its own relief.

Relief takes real light.

Paint it and it becomes a picture of light; stack it and it becomes a thing that takes light.

He chose the second.

Arles has a wind.

It is called the mistral.

A dry, strong wind that comes down from the north.

It continues for days.

He painted outdoors.

The wind knocked the easel over.

The story remains in his letters.

He wrote that he drove pegs into the ground to hold the easel.

A painting made in wind carries the trace of wind.

The brushwork grows hurried.
There is no time to hesitate.

One draws in a single pass and moves on.

So his line is short and repeated.
He draws many times in the same direction.

This is not character but condition.

One cannot keep a brush on the surface long in the wind.

He used a great deal of paint.
Money was short.

He wrote to his brother many times asking for paint to be sent.

Painting thickly is an expensive matter.
He paid that price and painted thickly.

And thick paint does not dry well.

While waiting for it to dry the surfaces cannot be stacked.
Transport is difficult too.

Matter changes the conditions of a life.

T h r e e

Here is the argument of this chapter.

Van Gogh has been read as a painter of color.

The yellow of Arles comes with his name.

But color is half.

The other half is thickness.

This is why this book placed him in the part on materiality rather than the part on color.

Kiefer carried the ground onto the surface.

Goldsworthy set the surface on the ground.

Van Gogh moved nothing.

He painted with paint alone.

And he made that paint into matter.

He did not attach soil; he used paint like soil.

He did not attach leaves; he stood paint up like leaves.

He did another thing with the same material.

What changes when this is done.

Four things change.

First, the painting takes light twice.

Once it is painted light.

The sun and the lamp painted inside the surface.

Once again it is real light.

The lighting of this present room catches on the relief.

Two lights are laid over each other.

Second, time remains on the surface.

A thick stroke cannot be erased.

Thin paint disappears under overpainting, but thick paint leaves a trace.

So what was drawn once is visible to the end.

A surface without hesitation is a surface that could not hesitate.

Third, the painting becomes a thing.

A flat surface is close to a window.

One looks beyond it.

An uneven surface is close to a wall.

One stops at the surface.

Stopping, the painting looks like an object.

Fourth, *fūdo* appears as surface.

The strong light and strong wind of the south.

Those two demanded thickness.

The light demanded surface and the wind demanded speed.

Thick paint and fast brushwork.

His form came out of this.

This is not the result of temperament.

It is the result of condition.

Read him only as a painter of hot temperament and this place is not seen.

Temperament is the same anywhere.

Form differs from land to land.

In the north he painted dark and thin.

In the south he painted bright and thick.

He was the same man.

The land was different.

F o u r

Stand before Byun Shi-Ji's surface.

Both men painted in wind.

Van Gogh pegged his easel down in the mistral.
Byun Shi-Ji painted in the wind of Jeju.

And the response differs.

Van Gogh met the wind head on.
He fixed the easel and painted.
The wind was interference.

Byun Shi-Ji let the wind in.
He called it into the surface.
The wind was the subject.

One painted while enduring the wind, and the other painted the wind.

The thickness is opposite too.

Van Gogh stacked.
He put paint on and made a surface.

Byun Shi-Ji dried.
He kept the color thin and left a dry feeling.

The color of dry grass cannot be thick.
What is dry is thin.

Put paint on thickly and it looks moist.
Keep it thin and it looks dry.

So thinness is not a lack but a choice.

One stacked matter and took light.
The other reduced matter and got dryness.

Both ways are materiality.
Stacking is not the only materiality.

Look at the crows.

The crows of *Wheatfield with Crows* are in a dark sky.
They are scattered as black points.

There are crows on Byun Shi-Ji's surface as well.
They pass low.

Both are black points.
Both have no sound.

But the position differs.

Van Gogh's crows come from above.
They come from the side of the sky toward the person.

Byun Shi-Ji's crows are low.
They pass near a person's eye level.

Something needs care here.

On Byun Shi-Ji's surface the small black shapes near the horizon are not birds.
They are small boats.

What is far off is a boat, and what passes low and near is a crow.

Miss this distinction and the painting changes.

The boat is leaving and returning; the crow is what is beside one.

The lengths of time differ too.

Van Gogh painted for ten years.

The time in the south was a little over two.

Within two years the form was complete.

Byun Shi-Ji painted for sixty-eight years.

From the study of 1945 to the last painting of 2013.

On Jeju alone, thirty-eight.

One burned briefly and the other endured long.

There is no ranking here.

The speed differed.

There is *fūdo* that begets quickly and *fūdo* that begets slowly.

The sun of southern France arrives at once.

One knows it the moment it strikes.

The wind of Jeju does not arrive at once.

One has to take it for years to know.

Sun comes as intensity and wind comes as repetition.

So one brought out a form in two years and the other in decades.

One thing remains at the end.

Van Gogh was a stranger in the south of France.

He was not born there and did not become a person of that place.

Byun Shi-Ji was also a stranger in the place he returned to.

It was the island he was born on, and he had been away forty-four years.

Both men begot their own form in a land that was not their own.

Or it can be said this way.

Only in a land one has left and arrived at is that land visible.

To one who was there from the beginning, wind is only weather.

To one who returns, wind becomes an event.

F i v e

A small surface.

The paint is thick.

The wheat is ripe and the sky is heavy.

Crows are scattered.

Move the light and the shadows on the surface move.

The picture changes a little.

So this painting is not yet finished.

On another surface far away an old man stands.

That surface is thin and dry.

One stacked paint and took light.

The other dried color and took wind.

Both brought what was outside the surface into it.

That was the question of this gate.

What does one paint with.

The answer was not one.

Closing Chapter — *Jejuhwa*, When Wind Becomes Language

1. The Hill Again

An old man stands on a hill.

A horse is beside him.

The sea is far. The wind is near.

The surface is the color of dry grass.

Near the horizon a small boat floats.

A crow passes low.

In the Prologue we stood on this hill.

And we have passed sixteen hills.

The dry sun of Mexico and the clear air of New Mexico.

The red sky of Norway.

The inside of a thorn fence on Jeju and the wet paper of Japan.

The rising forest of the Canadian west coast.

The empty paper of the late Ming and the wide soil of Australia.

The damp of England and the manufactured hole of London.

The layered grammar of the Mediterranean and the low horizon of Russia.

The pink ground of Tahiti.

The ash of Germany and the stone of Scotland and the thick paint of Provence.

Now we are here again.

The painting is as it was.

The old man is as he was and the horse is as it was.

The small boat is in its place.

And it looks different.

What has changed.

It is not the painting that changed.

We passed through sixteen places.

Comparison does not change the object.

It changes the one looking.

That is what this book has done.

2. What We Passed

Of the sixteen, four were witnesses for the other side.

Their testimony has to be heard again.

Munch said color comes from within.

The winter of Norway is dark and his sky was red.

It was not a color the land gave.

Chusa said form comes out even when *fūdo* is cut off.

He spent eight years on this island and did not paint this island.

His eyes were on old characters.

Kapoor said a void can be manufactured.

Calculate and cut and coat, and an emptiness belonging to no land appears.

Gauguin said the most painful thing.

He said one can live in that land and the grammar of that land may still not come.

He lived ten years and painted with the grammar he carried in.

Hear all four testimonies and the proposition grows smaller.

That *fūdo* begets form does not hold for every painting.

Still something remains.

Some paintings are not explained without *fūdo*.

Try to explain them and gaps open.

One cannot say why this color, why this line, why it is empty this much.

Byun Shi-Ji is such a case.

This cannot be proved.

Proof narrows to one thing, and a painting does not narrow to one thing.

But it can be shown.

Passing the five gates again, it will be shown.

3. Color — What Was Wet and Then Dried

In Part One we asked where color comes from.

Tamayo's red had soil in it.

The dry ground of Oaxaca gave that color.

O'Keeffe's color came from dry air.

With no moisture the color did not blur.

The color of dry grass differs from both.

O'Keeffe's dryness was dry from the beginning.

The bone in the desert was never wet.

After the flesh was gone it stayed dry.

The color of dry grass was wet and then dried.

Jeju is humid.

It is surrounded by sea, so it is.

And the wind is strong.

Where the wind is strong, things dry.

It is a land that dries while wet.

This contradiction is the condition of that color.

The grass grew in rain.

In summer it was green.

And it dried in wind.

So there are two times inside that color.

The time of growing and the time of drying.

Not the green of summer but the color of grass that has passed a winter.

Not a dead color but a color that has endured.

He found this color.

Later, in the oral history, he spoke of how he found it.

(Korean Culture and Arts Foundation oral history, 2004–2005, pp. 293–294)

The word *found* has to be looked at a long time.

It was not something held.

He left the island at five, so it was not in the body.

He grew up in Osaka and painted in Seoul.

He painted Biwon for more than ten years.

The color of that time is composed and quiet.

He came back at forty-nine and found it.

So this color is not an inheritance.

It is a discovery.

Tamayo was born with that color.

Byun Shi-Ji found his.

Into a color that was found goes the time of the one who found it.

That it has no name should be seen as well.

It is not ochre.

It is not yellow.

It could not be called by an existing name, so a new one had to be made.

A color without a name is made only in that land.

A color with a name can be bought anywhere.

4. Line — What Lies Sideways

In Part Two we asked what sets the speed of the brush.

Chusa's line came from stone.

It was the speed of a blade digging stone.

Sesshū's line came from wet paper.

He had to pass before it bled.

Emily Carr's line went up.

Because the trees of a forest grow upward.

Byun Shi-Ji's line lies sideways.

Where the wind is strong, trees lie down.

The branches on the windward side cannot grow.

The tree records the direction of the wind with its own body.

People are the same.

The shoulders tilt and the head lowers.

On his surface the figure is often bent.

Since when has this bending been there.

It is already in the nude study of 1945.

It is in the last painting of 2013.

Sixty-eight years.

One curve continued for sixty-eight years.

Only the meaning changed.

At first it was the body of labor.

The Tokyo studies and *Femme* are such.

The body bearing a load, the working body, was bent.

In Seoul the carrier with his A-frame and the man splitting wood took that place.

In Jeju it became the horseman, the diving woman, the farmer.

The working people of three periods.

Then the old man appears.

The old man's body carries no load.

And still it is bent.

It is the body of endurance.

The working body turned into the enduring body.

Toward the late years the head bows lower.

That bowing is not fatigue.

It is closer to a rite of respect. 禮

This is interpretation.

There is no record of the painter saying so.

But one thing is fact.

The form went in one direction for sixty-eight years.

Go in one direction long enough and it becomes not a habit but a sentence.

5. Void — Empty in Two Layers

In Part Three we saw four kinds of void.

Bada Shanren's void had no water.

An empty place because something is absent.

Williams's void was filled with the same thing.

An empty place by repetition.

Turner's void was erased.

A place where moisture dissolved form.

Kapoor's emptiness was manufactured.

A designed place.

Where does Byun Shi-Ji's void belong.

It is empty because it is not seen.

There is wind.

It is not painted, and it is there.

Bada Shanren's void is the void of absence and this is the void of the unseen.

The place where an institution vanished and the place where nature is not seen
are different.

But here there is one more thing.

It is the place of those who did not return.

The island once lost many people.

That event is called 4·3.

The painter spoke of those years in the oral history.

(same record, pp. 241–243)

And Jeju has the story of Jeodo.

An island said to lie somewhere in the sea.

Those who go do not come back.

He left writing about that island in his own hand.

(same record, pp. 23–26)

So his void is in two layers.

Empty because nature is not seen.

And empty because people are gone.

These two layers lie over each other.

That is why the empty place is not bright.

Turner's void was bright.
Because the light was in that place.

This void is low.

A void with absent people in it cannot be bright.

The old man's bowed head is the respect owed toward that void.

This too is interpretation.

Only that standing long before the painting, it reads that way.

6. Grammar — One and One

In Part Four we asked what is placed where.

Picasso broke the grammar.
Because he grew up in a land where several grammars were layered.

Levitan settled the meaning with the height of a single horizon.
On flat ground that was the only thing to settle.

Gauguin placed things exactly and belonged nowhere.

Byun Shi-Ji reduced.

His grammar has only three elements.

One horizon.

One person.

And the void that is left.

Sometimes a horse is added, a crow is added, a small boat is added.

Beyond that there is almost nothing.

Why did he reduce.

Because there was nothing to break.

On layered ground one can break.

There are several, so one is not bound to any.

On the island he returned to there was one.

One wind, one sea, one horizon.

What there is only one of cannot be broken.

Break it and nothing is left.

So the way left is to place it more exactly.

Reduce, and the position of each element becomes decisive.

With only three, move one a little and the whole surface changes.

The height of the horizon settles the meaning.

Raise it and the sea widens; lower it and the sky widens.

Where the person is stood also settles the meaning.

His old man is usually in the lower part of the surface.

And a little off from the middle.

Put him at the exact center and he becomes a monument.

Set him off center and he becomes a person.

And he shows his back.

This is the last decision.

Gauguin's figures look at us.

They sit facing front with their eyes open wide.

It is a position set to be looked at.

Then we become viewers.

Byun Shi-Ji's old man shows his back.

He does not look at us.

He looks in the same direction we do.

Then we stop being viewers.

We come to stand beside that person.

We are set in the place that takes the same wind.

This is the purpose of this grammar.

Not to make one look but to make one stand.

7. Materiality — Keeping It Thin

In Part Five we asked what one paints with.

Kiefer carried the ground onto the surface.

He laid on soil and ash and lead and straw.

Goldsworthy set the surface on the ground.

He got it in that place and made it in that place.

Van Gogh made the paint itself into matter.

He took light with thickness.

Byun Shi-Ji kept it thin.

The three added and he did not add.

This can look like a lack.

It is not.

What is dry is thin.

Put paint on thickly and it looks moist.

Thickness has the feeling of moisture in it.

Paint the color of dry grass thickly and it stops being the color of dry grass.

So thinness is a choice made to protect the color.

He kept the material from betraying the color.

There is one more condition here.

His material is not of that land.

He used oil paint and canvas.

Material that came from the West.

The hand trained in Osaka moved the same way on Jeju.

Kiefer used the soil underfoot.

Goldsworthy used the stone of that place.

Byun Shi-Ji had nothing of the kind.

More exactly, he had not been trained that way.

He left at five and came back forty-four years later.

The hand had already been made elsewhere.

He could not change the material.

So he changed the color.

He changed what could be changed.

This too is endurance.

Work done with what one has is rarely given a name.

But that is mostly what people do.

8. The Name *Jejuhwa*

Now a name can be given.

Call it *Jejuhwa*.

It does not mean painting that depicts Jeju.

That would make it local color.

In the Prologue we divided the two.

Local color is a matter of subject.

It means the things of that land were painted.

Jejuhwa is not the name of a subject.

It is the name of a form.

What makes it hold.

Five things have to be there together.

Color that was wet and then dried.

Line that lies sideways.

A void empty in two layers.

The grammar of one and one.

A thin surface that protects the dryness.

These five apart are characteristics.

Together they are a form.

And all five came out of the same condition.

The wind.

The wind dries the grass, lays the trees down, carries the moisture away, tilts a person's shoulders.

When one condition appears in five places it becomes a style.

Here we have to be honest.

Can what one person made be called a style.

It can.

Only the lineage is still short.

A style becomes a style by being continued.

If it ends with one person it is an individual's manner.

If those who come after take it up it becomes a style.

That work is not this book's part.

This book goes only as far as setting the name down.

With a name it can be found.

If it can be found it can be taken up.

9. Exile and Blessing

The root sentence of this book is this.

Life is exile. Art is blessing.

Passing through this book, exile came up several times.

Chusa's exile was handed down by an institution.

There was a document, a term, an amnesty.

Bada Shanren lost a dynasty.

He had nowhere to belong.

Levitan was expelled from a city.

It happened even though he was a known painter.

Gauguin left of his own accord.

He left and returned and left again.

Kapoor stands across two lands.

He belongs wholly to neither.

Byun Shi-Ji's exile differs from these.

It is exile in the place one has returned to.

He came back to the island he was born on and was a stranger.

Away forty-four years, it could not have been otherwise.

The speech was different, what he had learned was different, few people knew him.

And there was nowhere further to go.

The place he returned to was the last place.

So his exile has no amnesty.

Institutional exile ends.

One who was expelled can return.

One who left can leave again.

Exile in the place one has returned to does not end.

What does not end can only be endured.

And the words he left do not end with exile.

Art is blessing.

Blessing is not rapture.

It is not a state of overflowing joy.

It is the light that comes after endurance.

What color is that light.

The color of dry grass.

Dry grass is not dead.

It has passed a winter.

What has passed through and remains has a color.

That color is the blessing.

Here the proposition of this book and that sentence meet.

Fūdo begets form.

And that form turns endurance into blessing.

The wind torments a person.

That is exile.

Color comes out of the place the wind has left.

That is blessing.

The same wind does both.

10. When Wind Becomes Language

Wind is not speech.

It makes a sound and has no meaning.

The same sound only repeats.

And take it long enough and meaning appears.

Because the body of a person records that meaning.

A tree lies to one side.

Holes appear in a stone wall.

The roof of a thatched house is held down with straw rope.

A person's shoulders tilt.

These are writing the wind has made.

What is written can be read.

If it can be read it is language.

What Byun Shi-Ji did was not to paint the wind.

Wind cannot be painted.

What he did was read what the wind left and write it again.

So his surface is a translation.

A translation carrying the speech of wind over into the eyes of a person.

A translation has an original.

The original of his painting is that island.

A translation can be read without knowing the original.

But knowing the original, it reads differently.

That is what this book has tried to do.

To go one step toward the original.

The hill again.

An old man stands.

A horse is beside him.

A small boat floats near the horizon.

A crow passes low.

The wind is not seen.

And now it can be read.

He did not explain Jeju.

He looked at it a long time.

He drew one line where the wind had passed.

That line we can now read.

And having read it, it grows quiet again.

An old man stands on a hill.

The wind passes.

Appendix — A Map of *Fūdo* Modernism

Outside Painting

Opening

This book has passed sixteen people.

Each begot his own form in his own land.

But one thing was not asked.

Did they know it.

Turner cannot have painted thinking he was painting the damp of England.

Levitan cannot have drawn while naming it the horizon of Russia.

Fūdo mostly enters without one knowing.

And there are those who went into it knowing.

People who made land their own task.

Setting down where they were is what this appendix is.

And one more thing is set down.

This work has a shadow.

Say the shadow first, or one falls at that place later.

One — Three Layers

The relation of *fūdo* and form is not one thing.

It divides into three layers.

First, the case of what has soaked in.

The person does not know it.

He was born and raised in that land and saw only that light.

Knowing no other light, there is nothing to compare.

Turner and Levitan and Sesshū are here.

Most of this book is this layer.

Second, the case made a task.

One person chooses a land.

And digs into it a long time.

He does not declare.

He only continues.

This layer has awareness and no programme.

Third, the case that became a programme.

Several gather and declare.

They say they will establish the art of this land.

They write, and they make a movement.

It is the strongest and the most dangerous.

This appendix looks at the second and the third.

Two — Architecture Already Had a Name

Here one thing must be granted.

What painting means to do, architecture did first.

It got a name first as well.

In 1981 two people first used a term.

Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre.

It was in an essay called “The Grid and the Pathway.”

Two years later Kenneth Frampton used the same words in a slightly different sense.

That was the essay of 1983.

It is called Critical Regionalism.

Frampton's essay opens with a question.

He took it from Paul Ricoeur.

How to become modern and to return to sources.

That question is the question of this book.

Then the argument runs like this.

The same buildings are going up everywhere in the world.

Boxes made of glass and steel.

That is the International Style.

That sameness has to be resisted.

But one must not go toward imitating old roofs.

That is nostalgia, not resistance.

Then what does one resist with.

One resists with light, with terrain, with wind, with what the hand touches.

At this point Frampton cited Heidegger.

“Building, Dwelling, Thinking.”

An essay of 1954.

He took one sentence from it.

A boundary is not that at which something stops, but that from which something begins its presencing.

The same place this book passed through in its Prologue.

And the same thing we said of the void in Part Three.

So it can be put this way.

What painting means to ask, architecture asked forty years ago.

This fact is not unfavorable to this book.

It is rather a footing.

Establish a new concept and there is much to prove.

Stand beside a lineage that already exists and the position is fixed at once.

The names belonging here are set down.

Alvar Aalto, Finland.

Jørn Utzon, Denmark.

Luis Barragán, Mexico.

Geoffrey Bawa, Sri Lanka.

Rifat Chadirji, Iraq.

Sverre Fehn, Norway.

Balkrishna Doshi and Charles Correa, India.

Peter Zumthor, Switzerland.

One more is looked at.

Glenn Murcutt built houses in Australia.

He said one touches that land lightly.

He did not cut the ground away; he set the house on it.

He let the wind pass through.

The same thought as the stone walls of Jeju.

Do not block. Let through.

The same answer came out in two places.

Three — Those Who Made It a Task

The second layer.

This place is closest to this book.

A m r i t a S h e r - G i l

Born in 1913.

Her father was Indian and her mother Hungarian.

She learned painting in Paris.

She was at the École des Beaux-Arts from 1930 to 1934.

And at the end of 1934 she went back to India.

After going back the painting changed.

The colors she had used in Paris did not fit in India.

She travelled the villages.

In 1937 she saw the wall paintings at Ajanta.

The color lowered and the forms grew simple.

She died at twenty-eight.

A short life.

There is something to note here.

She went out to learn, came back, and the color changed.

That curve is not unfamiliar.

Sesshū was so and Byun Shi-Ji was so.

Only Sher-Gil went earlier and left earlier.

J ó h a n n e s K j a r v a l

An Icclander.

He painted lava.

There are few trees in that land.

Instead there is hardened lava and moss.

Nothing anyone had painted.

He painted it all his life.

Of everything the land gave, he chose the least presentable and made it the subject of a life.

Fred Williams

An Australian.

He discovered that the continent is flat.

European landscape has a horizon and a front and a back.

That continent does not.

So he pushed the horizon up or removed it altogether.

He scattered single trees like dots.

The picture looks like a map.

Because that land actually looks that way.

Four — The Cases That Became Programmes

The third layer.

From here the force grows and the shadow darkens.

Canada, a Group of Seven

Around 1920.

Seven people gathered.

They held that Canadian art was imitating Europe.

They went north.

They painted lakes and rock and conifers.

They used strong color and thick line.

And they said this was the art of Canada.

They succeeded.

Those paintings are still national in Canada.

It was one of them who recognized Emily Carr.

South America, an Inverted Map

Joaquín Torres-García was Uruguayan.

He spent a long time in Europe and came back.

In 1934 he drew a map.

A map with South America upside down.

The south went to the top.

He said:

Our north is the south.

It was one small drawing.

And it became a programme.

Japan, the Nameless Hand

There was Yanagi Sōetsu.

He collected things made by nameless craftsmen.

Rice bowls and clothing and small tables.

He called it *mingei*.

He said those things were beautiful because they did not try to leave a name.

They were made by local clay and local hands.

There is force in this thought.

And the shadow to be seen below comes out of here as well.

Australia, the Painting of the Desert

It began at a school in 1971.

A place called Papunya.

There was a teacher named Geoffrey Bardon.

He asked the children to paint a mural.

The older men of the community saw it and took up the brush.

That is how Indigenous painters began painting with paint.

Before that they painted on sand and on the body.

The surface filled with dots.

It looks as though seen from above, and it looks like a map.

Westerners called it abstraction.

They were wrong.

It is not abstraction.

It is the structure of the land.

Watercourses and camps and the paths stories travelled became the surface directly.

This point matters.

It is a case of looking alike with a different source.

The surface looks similar to American abstract expressionism.

But one came from the painter's gesture and the other from the land.

The same structure as what this book said about Dansaekhwa and Byun Shi-Ji.

A similar surface does not mean the same root.

Egypt, Houses Built of Earth

There was Hassan Fathy.

He built with mud brick instead of concrete.

Material that was in that land.

It is cheap and it keeps out heat.

He tried to build houses for poor people.

Parts succeeded and parts failed.

Only the question was clear.

Can one build the houses of this land with the material of this land.

Five — The Shadow

Now the difficult place.

Make *fūdo* a programme and there is a place one must pass.

Speak of land and one comes to speak of belonging.

Speak of belonging and one comes to speak of who belongs and who does not.

Then exclusion follows.

Three things are set down.

One.

There are no people in the north the seven painted.

It is empty land.

And people were living on that land.

That it was painted as empty became a problem.

It is still under discussion.

Two.

The eye of *mingei* was beautiful.

But where that eye stood when it looked at the things of a colony is another matter.

There was a difference of power between the one looking and the one looked at.

This too is under discussion.

Three.

There is the worst case.

There was a phrase, Blood and Soil.

A phrase that bound land and lineage into one.

We know where that phrase went.

So it has to be said this way.

Fūdo can be used to bind people.

At that point *fūdo* stops being a condition and becomes a possession.

A condition is open to anyone.

A possession appoints an owner.

This book uses *fūdo* as a condition.

Not as a possession.

Miss this distinction and this book becomes dangerous.

Six — The Place of One Who Did Not Declare

Here Byun Shi-Ji is looked at again.

Which layer is he in.

Not the first.

He left the island at five.

The color was not in the body.

At forty-nine he decided to go back.

That was a choice.

Not the third either.

He made no group.

He wrote no programme.

He never said let us establish our art.

So it is the second.

Someone who decided alone and continued a long time.

Thirty-eight years.

And here one thing shows itself.

Not declaring protected him.

Declare and one represents.

Represent and there appear those who are not represented.

He never said he represented anyone.

So he never erased anyone.

What is on his surface is one old man.

Not the people of Jeju entire.

One person.

The aesthetic that does not fight was not passivity.

It is what kept him out of the shadow.

Closing

Draw the map and something becomes clear.

This question was not one person's question.

In Finland, in India, in Uruguay, in Iceland, in Egypt.

The same question arose separately in each.

Can what belongs to this land be made into what belongs to this age.

The answers differed.

In some places it became a building, in some a bowl, in some a painting.

In some places it became a programme and in some it passed quietly.

Byun Shi-Ji is the quiet side.

He established nothing.

He only went to the island and stayed a long time.

And he found one color.

If a point were marked on the map,
that point would make no sound.

Fūdo Begets Form
A Rereading of World Painting

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