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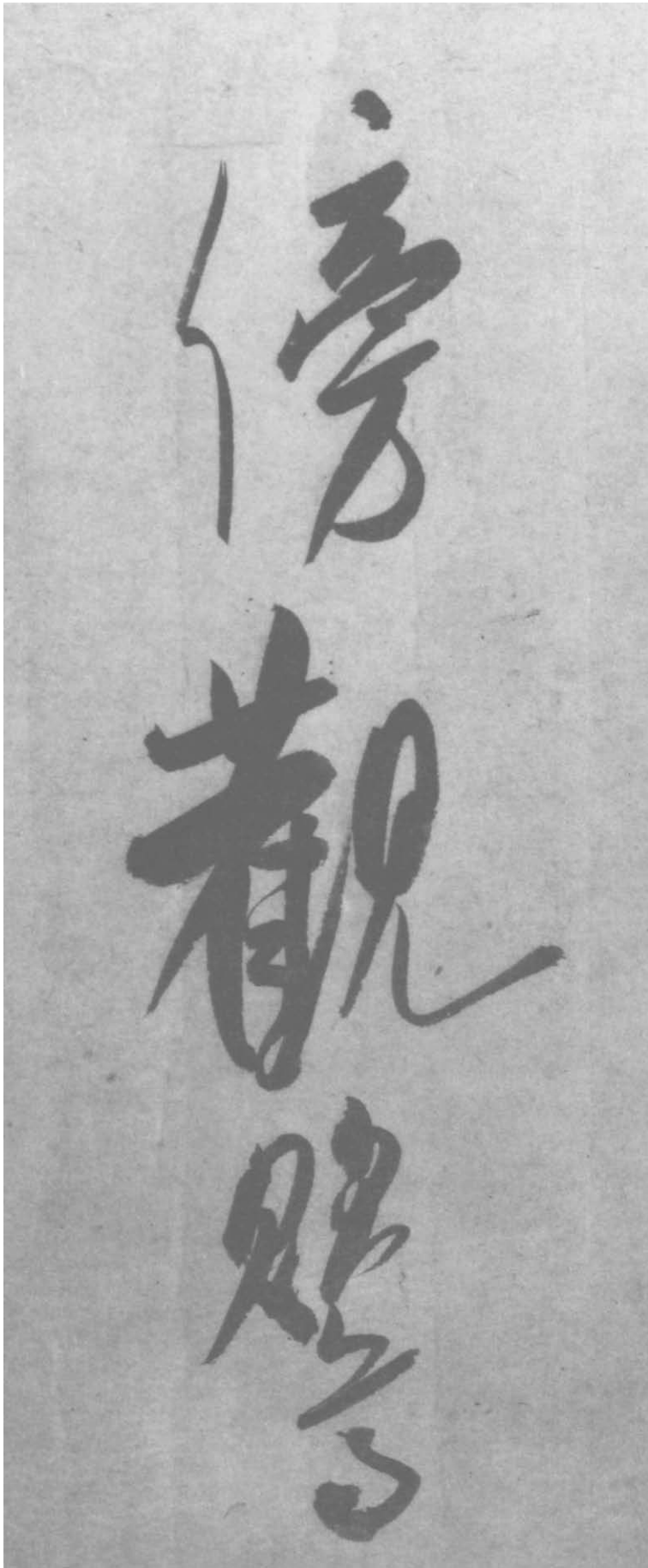
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Words  
and  
Images

Chinese  
Poetry,  
Calligraphy,  
and  
Painting

Edited by  
ALFREDA MURCK  
and  
WEN C. FONG

Words  
and  
Images



Frontispiece. Mi Fu, detail of  
*Sailing on the Wu River*. See figs. 22, 23.

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This book is dedicated  
to the memory of  
JOHN M. CRAWFORD, JR.,  
collector,  
connoisseur,  
friend,  
and benefactor



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## Foreword

In the 1950s John M. Crawford, Jr., began to collect in the then little-understood fields of Chinese calligraphy and painting. Relying on an eye for graphic design developed during years of collecting fine Western books and other examples of printing, he plunged into a field known for its differences of opinion. With the aid of the dealer Joseph Seo, John Crawford succeeded in forming an unparalleled collection of Chinese calligraphy and painting, with an emphasis on the art of the scholarly elite.

In 1984 it was the Metropolitan's good fortune to become the repository for John Crawford's treasures. His unprecedented promised gift required an event of significant—if not commensurate—proportions to acknowledge our debt of gratitude. In 1985, during the two-part exhibition of the Crawford Collection, the Museum convened an international symposium to discuss the relationships between Chinese poetry, calligraphy, and painting. Scholars from China, Japan, Taiwan, and the United States gathered to present their research over a three-day period. Representing many disciplines and cultural backgrounds, they brought a new level of understanding to a complicated subject and to our appreciation of the Crawford Collection.

John, who died in 1988, was an eager participant at the symposium. He was excited by the new insights generated by careful research. He appreciated the illumination that scholarship can bring to both enigmatic and well-known works of art. Over the decades the scholarly scrutiny of the Crawford Collection has revealed that John Crawford's judgments were remarkably prescient. His generosity in sharing his collection with students and his keenness in seeing it understood in the widest possible cultural context make this publication a particularly appropriate memorial.

The Museum takes pride in publishing this volume of multidisciplinary essays. Without the kind of research exhibited in these pages, nothing the Museum does for the public—from gallery talks, to labels, to installations—would be authoritative. The knowledgeable interpretation of any work of art rests directly on such a foundation of informed scholarship. We wish to thank the participating scholars for their stimulating essays and the editors, Alfreda Murck and Wen Fong, for the care they have lavished in the preparation of this book.

Finally I wish to acknowledge the enlightened leadership of Douglas Dillon in the field of Chinese painting at the Metropolitan. With his far-sighted initiatives over the last two decades, the Museum's collections of Chinese painting and calligraphy have grown dramatically. Our thanks go as well to The Dillon Fund, whose generous support made possible the symposium in 1985 as well as this publication in 1991.

*Philippe de Montebello*

DIRECTOR, THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART



## Preface

John M. Crawford, Jr.'s pledge of his renowned collection of Chinese calligraphy and scholars' painting to The Metropolitan Museum of Art stimulated discussion among the Asian Art curators on the interplay of words and images. Many of the artists represented in the Crawford Collection were deeply influenced by the aesthetics of literature and drew upon China's rich tradition of verbal imagery in creating their paintings. Through masterful calligraphy, vivid depictions of historical narrative, and subtle images containing personal allusions, the Crawford Collection illustrates the affinities that painting shares with calligraphy and poetry, most evident visually in the supple brush line that gives formal expression to all. A conference on the relationships between words and images seemed a most appropriate way to celebrate Mr. Crawford's promised gift. This volume, dedicated to the memory of John M. Crawford, Jr., is a record of the papers presented at an international symposium held at the Metropolitan Museum in May 1985.

Many of the twenty-three papers that were presented at the symposium have been significantly changed. Some revisions reflect the comments of the discussants who participated in the proceedings: Wen Fong, of Princeton University and The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Roger Goepfer, of the Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst, Cologne; Thomas Lawton, of the Freer Gallery of Art; Lothar Ledderose, of the University of Heidelberg; Per-Olow Leijon, of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm; Wan-go Weng, of Lyme, New Hampshire; Michael Sullivan, now of St. Catherine's College, Oxford University; and Roderick Whitfield, of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. We wish to thank them for their thoughtful contributions. Two authors—Yu-kung Kao and Wai-kam Ho—chose to write new essays based on the ones they delivered at the symposium. Papers by seven Chinese and four Japanese scholars were translated before the symposium by those whose names appear at the end of the respective papers. The original translations, which were prepared under considerable time pressure, were checked for accuracy and felicity of expression by T'ang Hai-t'ao, Linda Penkower, and Masako Watanabe. Wade-Giles romanization has been used throughout the volume except for familiar cities, where postal spelling is used, and for Beijing (Peking), for which the now-familiar *pinyin* is given. The earlier Chin dynasties (265–420) are spelled Tsin to avoid confusion with the Chin dynasty of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Besides those named above, thanks are owed to dozens of people who helped to turn the manuscript into a book. First among them are the authors, who patiently responded to our queries. The task of creating character lists was ably accomplished by graduate summer assistants Ho-ping Liu, Anning Jing, and Flora Fu, who also checked, and in many instances created, endnotes for our far-flung authors. Similar tasks were handled by Yang-ming Chu, Sally Wang Fu, David Huang, Noëlle O'Connor, and Anita Siu. Anita Christy and Richard Pegg organized photograph requests. Our gratitude is extended to the museums, libraries, temples, and individuals who kindly supplied photographs and permission to publish their objects and to the designer Greer Allen, who so

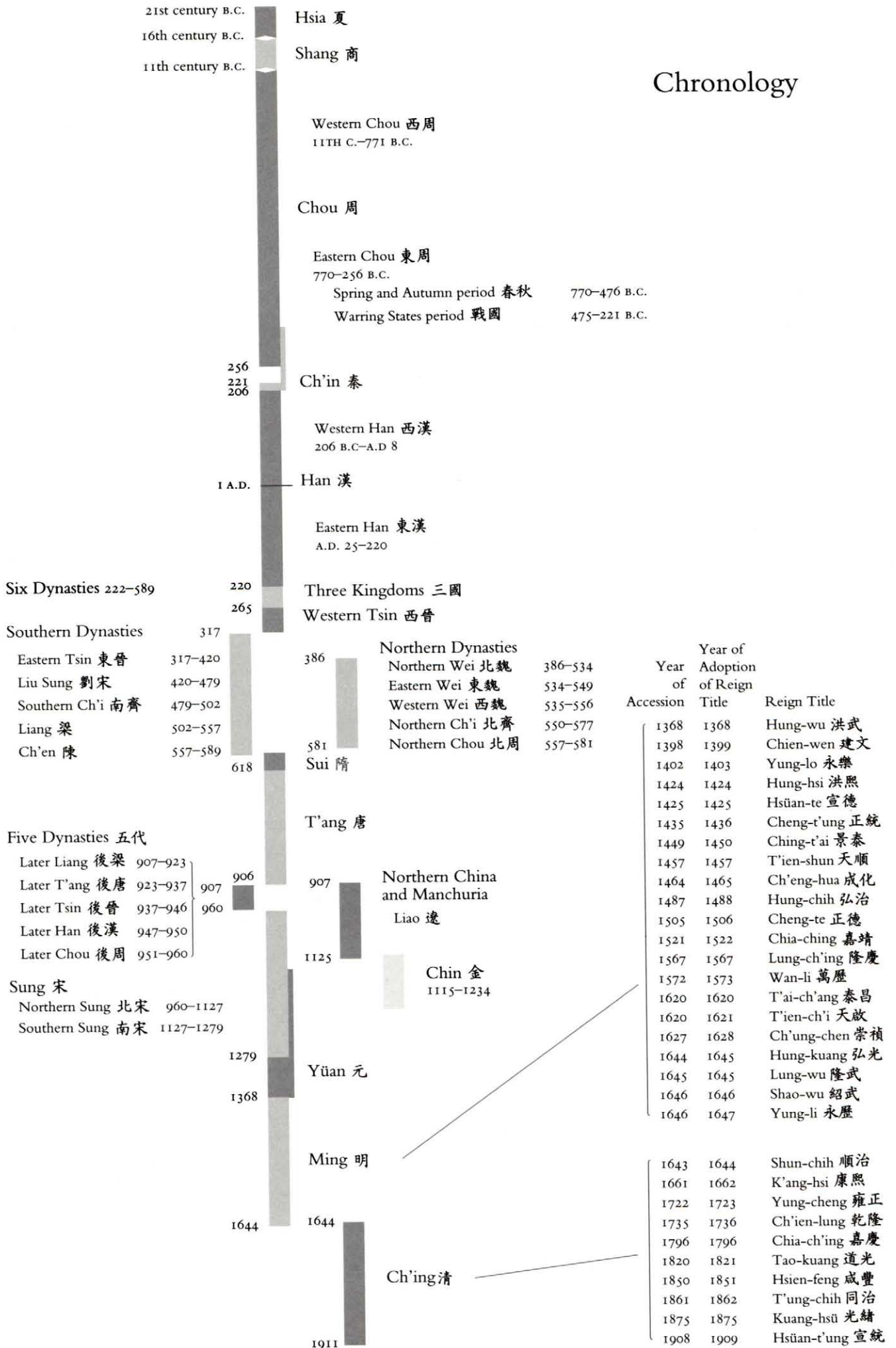
artfully integrated images with words. Our thanks also go to Robert Palmer, who created the index. Following initial edits conscientiously performed by May Wu and Chou Shan, Ann Lucke guided the book through the complex editorial process. Undaunted by myriad details, Ann diligently ordered the project with precision and good cheer.

The efforts of those enumerated above would have been to no avail without the kind indulgence of The Dillon Fund. The editors wish to express their unbounded thanks to Douglas Dillon, whose personal interest throughout the project has been an inspiration, and to the board members of The Dillon Fund, who generously supported both the symposium and the publication of this volume.

*Alfreda Murck*

ASSOCIATE CURATOR AND ADMINISTRATOR

# Chronology



# Abbreviations

CKMSTS	<i>Chung-kuo mei-shu ts'ung-shu</i>
CSH	<i>Ch'ing shih-hua</i>
CSHHP	<i>Ch'ing shih-hua hsü-pien</i>
CSSHSP	<i>Chang shih shu-hua ssu-piao</i>
HSTS	<i>Hua-shih ts'ung-shu</i>
ISSCHC	<i>I-shu shang-chien hsüan-chen</i>
ISTP	<i>I-shu ts'ung-pien</i>
MSTK	<i>Mei-shu ts'ung k'an</i>
MSTS	<i>Mei-shu ts'ung-shu</i>
SKCS	<i>Ssu-k'u ch'üan-shu</i>
SPPY	<i>Ssu-pu pei-yao</i>
SPTK	<i>Ssu-pu ts'ung-k'an</i>
TSCC	<i>Ts'ung-shu chi-ch'eng</i>

## INTRODUCTION

### *The Three Perfections: Poetry, Calligraphy, and Painting*

WEN C. FONG AND ALFREDA MURCK

Although it is common knowledge that Chinese poetry, calligraphy, and painting, known as *san-chüeh*, or the three perfections, have been practiced together in single works of art, the precise relationship between them has yet to be fully explored. The ideas that painting and poetry are interchangeable modes of expression and that an artist can readily transpose his creative impulse from one mode to the other tend to obscure their true relationship and their respective functions. Language and visual images are two distinct forms of expression; the imposition of one upon the other can either enhance or detract from their individual contributions.

The symposium at which the papers in this volume were delivered was held to examine the relationships between the three modes. The papers, grouped by subject matter in a roughly chronological order, cumulatively suggest that the relationship between words and images in Chinese art developed from one of complementary illustration to one of complex integration—with a major shift occurring during the late Sung and the early Yüan dynasties, in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. After the development of realistic representation in painting reached its full flowering during the late Sung, early Yüan painters turned increasingly to symbolism. When eventually the image became overladen with symbolic meaning, it could no longer be expressed without the help of language. By brushing in a poem on his painting and thus using both word and image, the artist created a verbal discourse and a broader context in which to express himself.

#### *Three Views of Unity*

It was Su Shih (1037–1101), the leading scholar-artist of the late Northern Sung dynasty, who first advocated that there is “poetry in painting and painting in poetry.” In an effort to represent true landscape, early Northern Sung painters first concentrated on capturing the principles of nature. As the painter felt the increasing need to express emotional response in his landscape, he turned to poetry for inspiration. In the second half of the eleventh century, the leading landscape master, Kuo Hsi, for example, regularly studied T’ang-dynasty landscape poems because they “create vivid scenes before one’s eyes.”

Three views of the unity of poetry, calligraphy, and painting are presented by three papers in this volume. Xie Zhiliu analyzes the Northern Sung landscape handscroll *Summer Mountains*, attributed to Ch’ü Ting, juxtaposing the painted imagery with quotations from the famous fourth-century poet Hsieh Ling-yün. He sees the relationship between painting and poetry as one of shared “visual thinking,” and concludes that the two arts



proceed from the same intellectual focus and emotional experience. Most landscape painters preferred the concise vision of five- or seven-word quatrains or couplets. Strung together with few grammatical connectives, Hsieh Ling-yün's five-word lines present a continuous series of concentrated images that readily translate into a landscape handscroll. The handscroll in turn unfolds with a moving focus that reads very much like lines of poetry. To read Hsieh Ling-yün's poem along with Ch'ü Ting's landscape painting, one might imagine that the painter had composed his landscape while reading such a poem.

Qi Gong in his paper, "Relationships between Poetry, Calligraphy, and Painting," takes us one step further, arguing that only those works that combine the artist's own poetry, calligraphy, and painting attain the highest form of artistic expression. Using both theoretical statements and concrete examples, Qi discusses the ability of each art form to enhance and to extend the expressive properties of the other two.

Yang Renkai analyzes three calligraphic masterworks by Huang T'ing-chien (1045-1105), Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai (1190-1254), and Chao Meng-fu (1254-1322). He first discusses the controversy over Huang T'ing-chien's cursive script, its modernity and its varying degrees of vulgarity and elegance, and then goes on to relate the circumstances behind the bold standard-script *Poem of Farewell to Liu Man* by Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai, the sole extant example of Yeh-lü's calligraphy. In his discussion of the work of Chao Meng-fu, Yang describes a particularly intricate set of interrelationships between poetry, calligraphy, and painting. In a large running-script calligraphic handscroll now in the Liaoning Provincial Museum, Chao Meng-fu wrote out a poem by Su Shih that was originally inspired by a landscape painting by Su's contemporary Wang Shen. Chao's bold transcription of Su Shih's immensely popular poem in turn inspired the fifteenth-century Ming artists Shen Chou and Wen Cheng-ming to create the landscapes that are now mounted together with Chao's calligraphy in the same scroll. This sequence of artworks constitutes not only a short history of art, but also documents a centuries-long discourse between poet, painters, calligrapher, and viewers.

### *Lyric Aesthetics*

In the late eleventh century, during the Northern Sung dynasty, Chinese calligraphy and painting came increasingly under the domination of the imperial court, which resulted in their being threatened by academicism and denigrated as mere decoration. Confucian scholar-officials, the most cultured class in society, having been frustrated in their political endeavors, turned their energies to literature and art. Combining painting with poetry and calligraphy, they produced a new kind of art known as amateur scholar painting, which, unlike the realistic narrative mode of the artisan or professional court painters, was an evocation of reality as perceived through the emotional being of the artist. It was an expression of individuality hitherto reserved only for literature and calligraphy.

In "Chinese Lyric Aesthetics," Yu-kung Kao traces the theoretical basis for the origins of the three perfections to the importance of inner-directed experience. Kao uses the term "lyric aesthetics" to describe the underlying principles which are basic to all presentational art, that is, art that aims to present mental images and emotional states rather than to represent the physical world realistically. He describes how music, prose, poetry, and calligraphy were transformed for lyrically expressive ends through two essential processes. The first, internalization, is the process by which the artist reflects simultaneously

on an experience and on himself to crystallize a response. The second, symbolization, turns signs—whether oral, written, or painted—into symbols to preserve and transmit the significance of meaningful experience. The merging of the exterior object with the interior mental state of the artist results in an artistic creation that embodies harmony and fluidity, the highest ideals of lyrical style. Painting as a scholarly pursuit, Kao explains, evolved from the same lyric impulses.

The symbolization of calligraphy—transforming it from a functional tool into an almost abstract expressive medium—is further studied by Nakata Yūjirō, who uses the traditional Chinese designations “innovative” and “modern” for the style that emerges. In his paper, “Calligraphic Style and Poetry Handscrolls,” Nakata sees the eighth century as a watershed in the history of calligraphy during which large-size characters supplanted the small-size informal cursive and semicursive calligraphy of the classic mode, which had been used primarily for personal notation and correspondence; the practice of transcribing literary classics became widespread; and the handscroll format was introduced. The nonconformist, wine-inspired wild-cursive styles of the eighth-century sages Chang Hsü and Huai-su were to serve as models for the Northern Sung practitioners of free-wheeling, self-expressive “modern” calligraphy. The zenith of such calligraphy, Nakata concludes, was reached with the eleventh-century master Mi Fu, who created a highly idiosyncratic style based on the T’ang cursive-script masters, incorporating elements from the archaic styles of the fourth-century Eastern Tsin.

The questions of originality and authenticity of expression are recurring subtexts in any scholarly discussion of Chinese painting and calligraphy. In this volume, Shen Fu examines the long calligraphic handscroll *Biographies of Lien P’o and Lin Hsiang-ju*, an unsigned and undated masterpiece by Huang T’ing-chien, in the light of five other cursive works by Huang. The text of the *Biographies* was taken from *Records of the Grand Historian* (*Shih-chi*), by the great Han-dynasty scholar Ssu-ma Ch’ien (145–86 B.C.), which tells of the political rivalry between two ministers during the Warring States period. Using style, content, and historical circumstances to support his argument, Fu dates the *Biographies* scroll to 1095, the time of Huang T’ing-chien’s exile in Szechwan Province. Fu posits that Huang transcribed the historical text having in mind the bitter factional struggles at court, of which he himself was a victim. He then traces the record of ownership and analyzes Huang’s influence in the Ming dynasty, particularly as it pertains to the art of Wen Cheng-ming.

The landscapes and inscriptions of Mi Yu-jen, the most innovative of the twelfth-century scholar-officials, are the subject of Ogawa Hiromitsu’s study. In “The Relationship between Landscape Representations and Self-Inscriptions in the Works of Mi Yu-jen,” Ogawa postulates that the low-lying landscape forms of the Chiang-nan school are not representational images, but configurations of a visual vocabulary of schematic forms. Ogawa views the building of space from a prototype that can be subdivided and reconfigured as a central feature of the Chiang-nan school of landscape painting. Using Mi Yu-jen’s *Cloudy Mountains* handscroll of 1130, which Ogawa believes was designed as a prototype, he shows how it may be divided into four units that can be recombined to form twenty-eight spatial constructs which, in turn, can be reversed to create mirror images, for a potential total of fifty-six compositions. The versatility and universality of the *Cloudy Mountains* composition stands in opposition to the specificity of Mi’s inscription, which names the place and circumstances of his painting. Ogawa speculates that

this disparity between word and image was intentional: the words provided the particular and the system of replicating provided the universal, allowing the artist to emphasize his place in the time-space continuum. He further suggests that this system relates to larger issues of imitation and creativity in painting.

The influence of the lyric aesthetics of the late Northern Sung continued to be felt after the geopolitical division of China into the northern Chin state and the Southern Sung. Marilyn Wong-Gleysteen reveals parallels in the painting and calligraphy of artists from both the north and the south. Utilizing formal analysis, she demonstrates that the dominant influences on these scholars were the traditions of the late Northern Sung individualist calligraphers Su Shih, Huang T'ing-chien, and Mi Fu, as well as the landscape style associated with the Chiang-nan region, which features level-distance views, the predominance of ink wash over line, asymmetry over symmetry, and—most important—the liberating example of the idiosyncratic Mi Fu, the father of Mi Yu-jen.

Gravitation away from representation and toward the symbolic is evident in the transformation of the spatial organization of thirteenth-century landscape painting, when the realistically represented space of Academy landscapes gave way to the flat surfaces seen in the paintings of Ch'ien Hsüan (ca. 1235–ca. 1300). In "Poetic Space: Ch'ien Hsüan and the Association of Painting and Poetry," John Hay considers how the addition of calligraphic inscriptions changed pictorial representation. One of the first artists to unite his own poetry, painting, and calligraphy into a single expressive entity, Ch'ien Hsüan used generic cultural symbols together with intensely personal reflections. Hay points out that the relationship between word and image is necessarily asymmetrical, since images can only be described by language. Indeed, it is through words, not images, that Ch'ien Hsüan's meanings are comprehended. Serving as silent prefaces to his poems, Ch'ien's subtle paintings render more poignant his poetic expressions of grief in reaction to the Mongol conquest of China.

The tantalizing ambiguities John Hay describes in Ch'ien Hsüan's art are present as well in the works of Ch'ien's younger contemporary Chao Meng-fu. Chao's career was not ended by the conquest that so devastated Ch'ien Hsüan; rather, it was actually made at the court of Khubilai Khan (r. 1260–94). But Chao's service at the Mongol court necessitates a cautious reading of his imagery. The tradition of horse imagery and its associations with human talent do not necessarily lie behind the handscroll with paintings of horses by Chao, his son Chao Yung, and his grandson Chao Lin, according to Chu-tsing Li. Chao Meng-fu's *Horse and Groom*, the first of the three, was executed in 1296 after he had completed nearly ten years in the service of the Mongols. The carefully composed picture, painted for another official in Mongol service, reverberates with personal meanings that Chao Meng-fu does little to clarify. The paintings by his son and grandson that are mounted with this picture were commissioned in 1359 at the initiative of a collector. Together the works represent the efforts of three generations of one family in one handscroll.

### *Art of the Imperial Academy*

Unlike scholar's painting, which was regarded primarily as a means of self-expression, the art of the Imperial Academy was an expression not only of poetry and beauty but also of moral and political ideology. The Imperial Painting Academy of the Northern and

Southern Sung was a government institution through which the court promulgated an orthodox painting style that was conservative in both content and technique.

Richard Barnhart in his paper deals with the problem of dating the landscape handscroll *Streams and Hills under Fresh Snow*, formerly attributed to the early eleventh-century court painter Kao K'o-ming. He reviews the history of the scroll, examines previously unnoticed seals, compares the landscape composition to the popular Sung subjects the eight views of Hsiao and Hsiang and the four seasons, and relates the painting both to the work of the eleventh-century painter Kao K'o-ming and to that of the later Southern Sung academician Liu Sung-nien (ca. 1150–after 1225). Barnhart argues that *Streams and Hills under Fresh Snow* is an early twelfth-century Academy copy of a Northern Sung palace wall painting originally executed by Kao K'o-ming in the 1030s, probably from a cycle of the four seasons.

After retreating to the south following the invasion of the Jurchen Chin and establishing a stable Southern Sung court in Lin-an in 1138, Emperor Kao-tsung (r. 1127–62) sponsored a program of narrative history paintings in support of his so-called Dynastic Revival. Several of these imperially sponsored narrative handscrolls are studied by Kohara Hironobu, who compares the traditions of Chinese and Japanese handscroll illustration. Kohara sees in the Chinese tradition a mistrust of fantasy and a rejection of novelistic narrative drama. The Chinese artist, even when he illustrated texts of dramatic events, tended to treat his subject with formality and restraint. The Japanese *emaki* artist, in contrast, reveled in a more theatrical narrative presentation. Providing vivid examples from both cultures, Kohara points out that the technique of showing “disparate moments in the same scene,” used so effectively in *emaki* illustration, is rarely seen in the more rational context of Chinese illustration. And when it was used in China, the artist took care to distinguish, by temporal and spatial demarcations, one moment from another.

A series of paintings sponsored by Emperor Kao-tsung illustrating the Confucian classic the *Mao Shih*, or the *Book of Poetry*, is an example of a restrained narrative approach. On the basis of twenty-two extant *Mao Shih* scrolls, Xu Bangda explores such issues as dating, including the observation of taboos against writing imperial personal names, quality, and authenticity. Reviewing the calligraphic styles of Kao-tsung and Hsiao-tsung (r. 1163–89), he concludes that the transcriptions of the *Mao Shih* texts, which exhibit a broad range of mannerisms, were written by court scribes working in the calligraphic styles of their imperial sponsors. Reassessing the paintings of the *Mao Shih*, traditionally attributed to the twelfth-century artist Ma Ho-chih, Xu finds only three of the scrolls to be of the highest quality, and thus presumably by Ma himself. The other nineteen he believes either were produced by painters of the Imperial Painting Academy under Ma's guidance or were later copies.

One objective of the Southern Sung imperial ruling house was the creation of a dynastic style in calligraphy. As Chu Hui-liang shows, Emperor Kao-tsung's enthusiastic promotion of the calligraphic styles of the fourth-century masters Wang Hsi-chih and Wang Hsien-chih resulted in a strikingly homogeneous imperial calligraphy that was practiced over four generations. In her effort to untangle the stylistic differences in the work of the Southern Sung imperial calligraphers, Chu deftly sifts through historical evidence, seal legends, and commentaries to draw subtle distinctions between the styles of the emperors Kao-tsung, Hsiao-tsung, Ning-tsung (r. 1195–1224), his empress Yang Mei-tzu (1162–1232), and Li-tsung (r. 1225–64).

The use of gold in Southern Sung Academy paintings is the subject of Toda Teisuke's paper. Gold is commonly found in religious icons, where the dazzling color symbolizes spirituality and evokes reverence, but its subtle use in Academy works has long been neglected. In religious paintings flat gold surfaces tend to negate the illusion of reality; in Academy paintings, notes Toda, gold is typically used to enhance naturalistic representation. Toda finds the refined use of gold characteristic of the subtly attuned sensibilities of aristocratic Southern Sung court art.

Although the history of the Sung Painting Academy is well recorded, little is known of its organizational structure. Basing his paper on palace archives never before studied, Yang Boda explores the locations and organization of the Imperial Painting Academy in the Forbidden City and other palaces under the eighteenth-century Ch'ing emperor Ch'ien-lung. He mentions the studios where luxury objects were produced and scrolls were mounted and goes on to describe the painting studios that supplied both architectural decoration and artworks for the palace collection. Yang further provides a roster of 110 Academy artists, information on how they were ranked, and the emoluments they received.

### *Poetry into Painting*

The remaining papers are devoted to a closer examination of the relationship between poetry, calligraphy, and painting. Wai-kam Ho, in his paper, "The Literary Concepts of 'Picture-like' (*Ju-hua*) and 'Picture-Idea' (*Hua-i*)," discusses the ways in which poets and painters thought about verbal and visual description. Ho notes that the term "picture-like," which was first used to describe a swaggering, swashbuckling male, was transformed in the fourth century to describe an elegant, aristocratic gentleman of refinement and social grace. It was not until the eleventh century that the term was applied to the beauty of nature, at about the same time that the limitations of realistic representation in painting were being articulated. Ho demonstrates the importance in the lives of T'ang- and Sung-dynasty poets of the practice of Buddhist and Taoist meditative contemplation, a practice that strove to achieve the elimination of all distinctions between object and self. He shows how beauty is often emotionally linked to recollections of past times and places; thus the skillful use of key words and images to trigger intense feeling is considered a defining characteristic of the Chinese poetic tradition. Further, Ho illustrates how identical imagery often has different readings in different contexts: images so powerfully affecting in China, for example, took on new meanings when exported to Japan.

Richard Edwards points out in his study of Southern Sung poetry and painting that while there was a tension between naturalism on the one hand and giving free rein to poetic imagination on the other, the vision of the Sung painter was dominated by a fidelity to nature. If the equivalence between the poetic image and the painted image appears elusive in the Southern Sung, Edwards suggests that it may be because poets and painters purposely avoided such literal equations. Only when the objective of truth to nature was set aside during the Yüan dynasty could painting finally achieve the profundity of expression already possible in poetry and calligraphy.

Jonathan Chaves, in "'Meaning beyond the Painting': The Chinese Painter as Poet," explains that the integration of poetry and painting during the Yüan dynasty was preceded not only by Su Shih's theory of the unity of the two arts, but also by the still-

earlier practice of the T'ang poet Tu Fu of writing poems about paintings. In a special genre of poetry called *t'i-hua-shih*, Tu Fu and others, in celebrating particular qualities of painting in poetry, established a pattern of thinking about painting in poetic terms. As a rule, Tu Fu began by describing a painting, then went on to comment on the implications of its contents in the real world. This distinction between the painted and the real world was disregarded, however, by later poets writing about paintings. Chaves notes that it is paradoxically through the suppression of overt references to a painting that poems refer to the same reality as the painting, thus making possible the creation of an integrated poem-painting. Conversely, poems that are merely descriptive and therefore easily transposed into visual form are by definition inferior. To provide information commensurate with the visual impact of a painting, a poem must embrace sensory experiences inaccessible to the painted image.

Equal accomplishment in the three perfections was highly demanding and beyond the capacity of most scholars. One of the rare geniuses who mastered poetry, calligraphy, and painting is described by Chiang Chao-shen in his paper, "T'ang Yin's Poetry, Painting, and Calligraphy in Light of Critical Biographical Events." Chiang's reevaluation of the life and art of the early sixteenth-century artist, including his more than nine hundred extant poems, allows Chiang to relate many undated poems and paintings to biographical events. His study is facilitated by the notorious examination scandal of 1499, which ruined T'ang Yin's prospects for an official career, an embittering experience that colored his work thereafter. Chiang's paper suggests that stylistic analysis, when limited to tracing models and influences without a knowledge of the broader context, is insufficient to deal adequately with the complexities of artistic activity.

In "The Aesthetics of Irony in Late Ming Literature and Painting," Andrew Plaks examines the emergence of irony in the newly popular vernacular literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Plaks explores the techniques of ironic discourse—inflection, unusual syntax or visual double entendre (the equivalent of a wink)—by which an author or a painter shifts our attention from the object or event depicted to the mode of depiction and alerts us to clues to alternative meanings. Ironic meaning is never fully articulated; by its very nature, Plaks points out, irony, by undermining surface meaning, implies that there is always more than meets the eye and thus invites us to read the painter rather than the painting.

Wen Fong, in "Words and Images in Late Ming and Early Ch'ing Painting," recounts the sixteenth-century literary debates over the role of imitation and the use of ancient models and discusses the work of two leading seventeenth-century painters, Chu Ta and Shih-t'ao. Fong shows how we can approach an understanding of seventeenth-century painting through an understanding of the painter. A case in point is an album of flower paintings by Chu Ta. Through a careful reading of the artist's cryptic poems on these paintings, Fong analyzes them in light of what is known about Chu's life. He then interprets Shih-t'ao's paintings of Su Shih's poems in the context of Shih-t'ao's life. Both Chu Ta and Shih-t'ao, in combining calligraphic brushwork with verbal allusions and visual puns, attained new heights in painting with words and images.

Rivaling Chu Ta's intense but laconic mode of expression is his more loquacious contemporary, the seventeenth-century Buddhist monk K'un-ts'an. It was K'un-ts'an's habit to fill in much of the sky of his paintings with dense and lengthy inscriptions laden with Buddhist and Taoist allusions in a quirky, blunt calligraphy. James Cahill in his

paper deciphers and decodes these difficult inscriptions. K'un-ts'an used inscriptions to record sensations that he could not express with painted images: temperature, sound, dreams, motion, and change. K'un-ts'an's best paintings, which date from the early 1660s, express his joy and fascination with nature on his long walks through the mountain wilderness.

The broad interdisciplinary approaches in these papers suggest further directions for the study of Chinese art history. In China, where the conceptual unity between poetry, calligraphy, and painting derived from a holistic view of culture, the tension between word and image characteristic of the West did not exist. The richness and complexity of the three perfections are lent a new significance by recent Western scholarly analysis of communication and meaning. Chinese artworks, as products of different value and thought systems, invite us to think about them in new ways. And it is through such interdisciplinary and collaborative efforts that we can begin to decipher the subtle messages of both words and images.



PART I

*Three Views  
of  
Unity*

Figure 1. Huang T'ing-chien (1045-1105). *Biographies of Lien P'o and Lin Hsiang-ju*. Detail of handscroll, ink on paper, H. 32.5 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Bequest of John M. Crawford, Jr., 1988





# Reflections on the Poetic Quality and Artistic Origins of Ch'ü Ting's *Summer Mountains*

XIE ZHILIU

Paintings attributed to the Northern Sung painter Ch'ü Ting 屈鼎, active at the court of Emperor Jen-tsung 仁宗 (r. 1023–63), are as rare as phoenix plumage and unicorn horns. The handscroll *Summer Mountains* (*Hsia-shan t'u* 夏山圖), in The Metropolitan Museum of Art, is generally regarded as his sole surviving work (fig. 2). As descriptions of this artist are as rare as his paintings, even specialists in the history of Chinese painting may feel his name is obscure.

*The Imperial Painting Catalogue of the Hsüan-ho Era* (*Hsüan-ho hua-p'u* 宣和畫譜), compiled around 1120, contains a brief entry stating that Ch'ü Ting was from Kaifeng Prefecture, excelled at landscape painting, served as painter-in-attendance (*chih-hou* 祗候) in the Painting Academy under Emperor Jen-tsung, and was a follower of Yen Wen-kuei 燕文貴 (active ca. 1000–ca. 1025). *Experiences in Painting* (*T'u-hua chien-wen-chih* 圖畫見聞志), compiled around 1080, records the same information. An equally early work, *Inscriptions of Su Tung-p'o* (*Tung-p'o t'i-pa* 東坡題跋), says only that Ch'ü was the teacher of Hsü Tao-ning 許道寧 (ca. 970–1051/52).<sup>1</sup> And that is all we know about Ch'ü Ting's history.

After Ching Hao 荆浩 (active ca. 870–930) and Kuan T'ung 關仝 (active ca. 907–23) of the late T'ang and Five Dynasties, the leading painters of the Northern Sung were Li Ch'eng 李成 (919–67) and Fan K'uan 范寬 (ca. 960–ca. 1030). Considered on a par with Fan K'uan was Yen Wen-kuei, whose “beautiful scenery with myriad interconnections made viewers [feel as if they were] seeing actual landscape.”<sup>2</sup>

By the Northern Sung, monochromatic landscape painting had superseded the polychromatic, establishing a new aesthetic. Poets and painters elevated monochromatic landscape painting to a fine art, ranking it with poetry. Su Shih 蘇軾 (1037–1101) said of Wang Wei's 王維 (701–61) painting and poetry that “there is poetry in his painting, and painting in his poetry” 詩中有畫，畫中有詩。<sup>3</sup> Since Wang Wei's paintings have long since been lost, one cannot testify to their poetic content. But many of his poems describing his thoughts on landscape painting remain. In one poem, Wang went as far as to write: “In mountains and woods I lose myself” 山林吾喪我。<sup>4</sup> Elated by mountains and woods, the poet is drawn into both the poetic and pictorial qualities of the scenery depicted. On another occasion, Wang Wei said of himself: “In this world, wrongly am I a poet; / in a former life, I must have been a painter” 宿世謬詞客，前生應畫師。<sup>5</sup>

Poetry and painting both served the same master—the man of letters. Poets, immersed in the beauty of scenery, transformed authentic visual observations into pure and polished phrases, while painters transformed inspiring poems into pictures. Thus the aspects of poetry and painting are inextricably connected.



<p>On the river—a melancholy heart, a thousand layers of mountains, Floating sky, accumulated green like clouds and mists.<sup>6</sup></p>	<p>江上愁心千疊山 淨空積翠如雲烟</p>
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These lines by Su Shih similarly express elation at the merging of object and emotion in a painting, the unconscious feeling that the viewer is actually in a landscape. Thus, the relationship of poetry to painting and vice versa is one of sharing the same object and feeling. Although poetry uses language to describe an object while painting directly depicts the object, both focus on the same object and derive from the same process of visual thinking. They also share the same artistic vision. Thus painting can be called “silent poetry” (*wu-yen-shih* 無言詩).

Tung Ch’i-ch’ang 董其昌 (1555–1636) was elated by painting and saw landscape as true painting, yet he found it insufficient. He described how landscape painting affected him in his colophon to the handscroll *Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers* (*Hsiao Hsiang t’u* 瀟湘圖) by Tung Yüan 董源 (d. 962):

I recall that when I was in office in Ch’ang-sha in 1596 I travelled the Hsiao-Hsiang road. The reeds, the fishing nets, the sand banks and clustered trees, the simple cottages and woodcutters’ paths, clear hills, distant dikes—each was exactly as in this picture. It makes one once again a guest of the lakes and rivers without even taking a step. Someone once said that painting is false landscape, while landscape itself is true painting. What a crazy upside-down view!<sup>7</sup>



Figure 2. Attributed to Ch'ü Ting  
(active ca. 1023–63), *Summer Mountains*.  
Handscroll, ink and light color on silk, H. 46.5 cm.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York;  
Gift of The Dillon Fund, 1973

The Northern Sung poet Lin Pu 林逋 (957–1028) wrote:

Recalling Chiang-nan which I once saw,  
Like a superb Chü-jan painting on a screen.<sup>8</sup>

憶得江南會看看  
巨然名畫在屏風

And the famous bamboo painter Wen T'ung 文同 (1019–79) wrote:

If you, Sir, want to understand the painting of Li Ch'eng,  
Please look at the fifth peak to the east.<sup>9</sup>

如要識營丘畫  
請看東頭第五重

If a painting gives poets a sense that they are losing themselves among mountains and woods, as though they are facing a real landscape, then it is the merging of object and feeling in painting that inspires the molding and fashioning of poems.

Ch'ü Ting's painting style continued the lineage of Yen-school scenery 燕家景. Its characteristic features—innumerable peaks and cliffs, misty vapors and cloudy caverns, distant mountains and nearby waters, pavilions and terraces, dense forests and deep groves—allow viewers to travel and even live in the landscape (fig. 3). Such landscapes call to mind the poetry of Hsieh Ling-yün 謝靈運 (385–433):

An unbroken barrier piling cliffs upon crags,  
Where the deep blues darken, and sink away.<sup>10</sup>

連障疊巖嶠  
青翠杳深沈

A dense grove hides my purity,  
Distant peaks half conceal the view.<sup>11</sup>

密林含餘清  
遠峯隱半規

Sparse peaks support lofty halls  
Facing a range, bordering streams which double back.<sup>12</sup>

疏峰抗高館  
對嶺臨迴溪

Crooked path already secluded,  
Encircling islands finely wrought,  
I gaze down on the tips of high branches,  
I raise my head to hear a roaring torrent,  
Crosswise rocks, water flows divided,  
Dense trees, streams lost without a trace.<sup>13</sup>

側逕既窈窕  
環洲亦玲瓏  
俯視喬木杪  
仰聆大壑淙  
石橫水分流  
林密蹊絕蹤

Trekking these hills, I comb their heights and depths,  
Crossing rivers, I exhaust their courses upstream and down—  
Cliffs sheer down from the closely layered ranges,  
Islets weave round the endless line of shoals;  
White clouds enfold dark boulders,  
Green bamboos bewitch clear ripples.

山行窮登頓  
水涉盡洄沿  
巖峭嶺稠疊  
洲縈渚連綿  
白雲抱幽石  
綠篠媚清漣

I'll rethatch the roof overlooking the winding river,  
And raise a belvedere among the storied peaks.<sup>14</sup>

葺宇臨迴江  
築觀基曾巔

Hsieh's lucid phrases and subtle language are a measure of the beauty of landscape; they are virtually the painted scenery in Ch'ü Ting's *Summer Mountains*. Thus, poetry is not only poetry, but painting, and painting is not only painting, but poetry. This is what Su Shih called "painting in poetry and poetry in painting."

The catalogue of painting and calligraphy in the Ch'ien-lung emperor's (r. 1736–95) collection lists a scroll by Yen Wen-kuei with the title *Summer Mountains*. The description reads:

Silk ground, 1 foot 4 inches high, 3 feet 6 inches wide, monochromatic painting. Peaks with clouds, lush and humid, twin waterfalls; amid mountains four or five groups of buildings in precise outline; at the foot of the mountains are clustered villages, bridges, sails, and masts. No signature.<sup>15</sup>

This description certainly fits the scroll which is now in the Metropolitan Museum. Yet from before the Ming dynasty and until the time it entered the museum's collection, *Summer Mountains* was attributed to Yen Wen-kuei. Wen Fong was the first to authenticate the painting as Ch'ü Ting's. From his examination of its descriptive qualities, Fong concluded that *Summer Mountains* was not the work of Yen Wen-kuei but of Ch'ü Ting.<sup>16</sup>

In *Record of Famous Paintings of All the Dynasties* (*Li-tai ming-hua chi* 歷代名畫記), the T'ang author Chang Yen-yüan 張彥遠 (ca. 815–after 875) stated an unalterable principle of traditional painting:

Now, the representation of things necessarily consists in formal likeness [*hsing-ssu* 形似], but likeness of form requires completion by a noble vitality [*ku-ch'i* 骨氣]. Noble vitality and formal likeness both originate in the definition of a conception [*li-i* 立意] and derive from the use of the brush.<sup>17</sup>



Figure 3. Attributed to Ch'ü Ting, detail of *Summer Mountains*

This “definition of a conception” is actually visual thinking and artistic vision. In terms of visual thinking and artistic vision, all masterworks painted between the tenth and the early eleventh centuries—whether they have signatures, firm attributions, or are anonymous—manifest in some way the noble vitality and formal likeness that derive from the use of the brush. In *Summer Mountains* the forms of the landscape and trees, the irregular rocks at the water’s edge, the arrangement of the “springs and jagged rocks,” and the ordering of buildings can be said to resemble those in Yen Wen-kuei’s paintings (fig. 4). Traditional scholarship has sought to explain “the transmission of a master’s characteristics” 師資傳授. Distinct painting currents and period styles are said to be formed through transmission from father to son or master to pupil, through direct instruction or indirect influence. Still, ideas about painting and styles of painting are not like formulas which can be duplicated, except in the case of actual copies. Nor does the style of one period conform to that of another. Rather, it is artistic creation that places a school within a certain current. In terms of its descriptive and formal qualities, *Summer Mountains* belongs to the Yen school. Its noble vitality and use of the brush clearly correspond to Yen Wen-kuei’s. Historical records show that Ch’ü Ting studied Yen’s landscapes and tried to emulate Yen in painting the seasonal aspects of mountains and woods, mists and clouds, the humble and the expansive, springs and jagged rocks. He achieved his goal. The Hsüan-ho Imperial Palace collection had three handscrolls by Ch’ü Ting, each titled *Summer Mountains*. From a comparison of their descriptions, we can confirm that the scroll in the Metropolitan Museum is by Ch’ü Ting, not Yen Wen-kuei.

The T’ang poet Meng Hao-jan 孟浩然 (689–740) wrote:

Rivers and mountains give memories of superb scenery,  
My generation again ascends and gazes out.<sup>18</sup>

江山留勝跡  
我輩復登臨

On viewing the beauty of the rivers and mountains in *Summer Mountains*, the painter’s intention and the poet’s feeling, one can unconsciously enter the poetic world of Meng Hao-jan.

Translated by Alfreda Murck

#### NOTES

- The notes were compiled by the editors.
- For various Sung references to Ch’ü Ting, see *Hsüan-ho hua-p’u*, ISTP (Taipei: Shih-chieh, 1968), vol. 9, *chüan* 11, pp. 308–9; Kuo Jo-hsü, comp., *T’u-hua chien-wen-chih*, HSTS (Shanghai: Jen-min mei-shu, 1963), vol. 1, *chüan* 4, p. 53; Su Shih, “Shu Hsü Tao-ning hua” (Colophon on a painting by Hsü Tao-ning), in *Tung-p’o t’i-pa* (Inscriptions of Su Tung-p’o [Su Shih]), ISTP, vol. 22, *chüan* 5, p. 100.
  - Liu Tao-ch’un, *Sheng-ch’ao ming-hua p’ing* (Critique of famous painters of the present dynasty), *chüan* 2, quoted in Ch’en Kao-hua, ed., *Sung Liao Chin hua-chia shih-liao* (Historical material for Sung, Liao, and Chin painters) (Beijing: Wenwu, 1984), p. 254.
  - Su Shih, “Shu Wang Mo-chieh Lan-kuan yen-yü t’u” (Colophon on painting of mist and rain in the Blue Barrier by Wang Mo-chieh [Wei]), in *Tung-p’o t’i-pa*, vol. 22, *chüan* 5, p. 94.
  - From his poem “Shan-chung shih ti” 山中示弟 (To see my brother in the mountains), in *Ch’üan T’ang shih* (Complete poems of the T’ang) (Beijing: Chung-hua, 1979), vol. 4, p. 1290.
  - From one of a group of six poems with the common title “Ou-jan tso” 偶然作 (Occasional poems), in Hsü Cho, ed., *Ch’üan T’ang shih lu* (Complete recorded poems of the T’ang) (Taipei: Hua-yeh, 1965), vol. 1, pp. 542–44.
  - Su Shih, “Shu Wang Ting-kuo suo ts’ang yen-chiang t’u” (Colophon on a painting of a misty river and layered peaks in the collec-

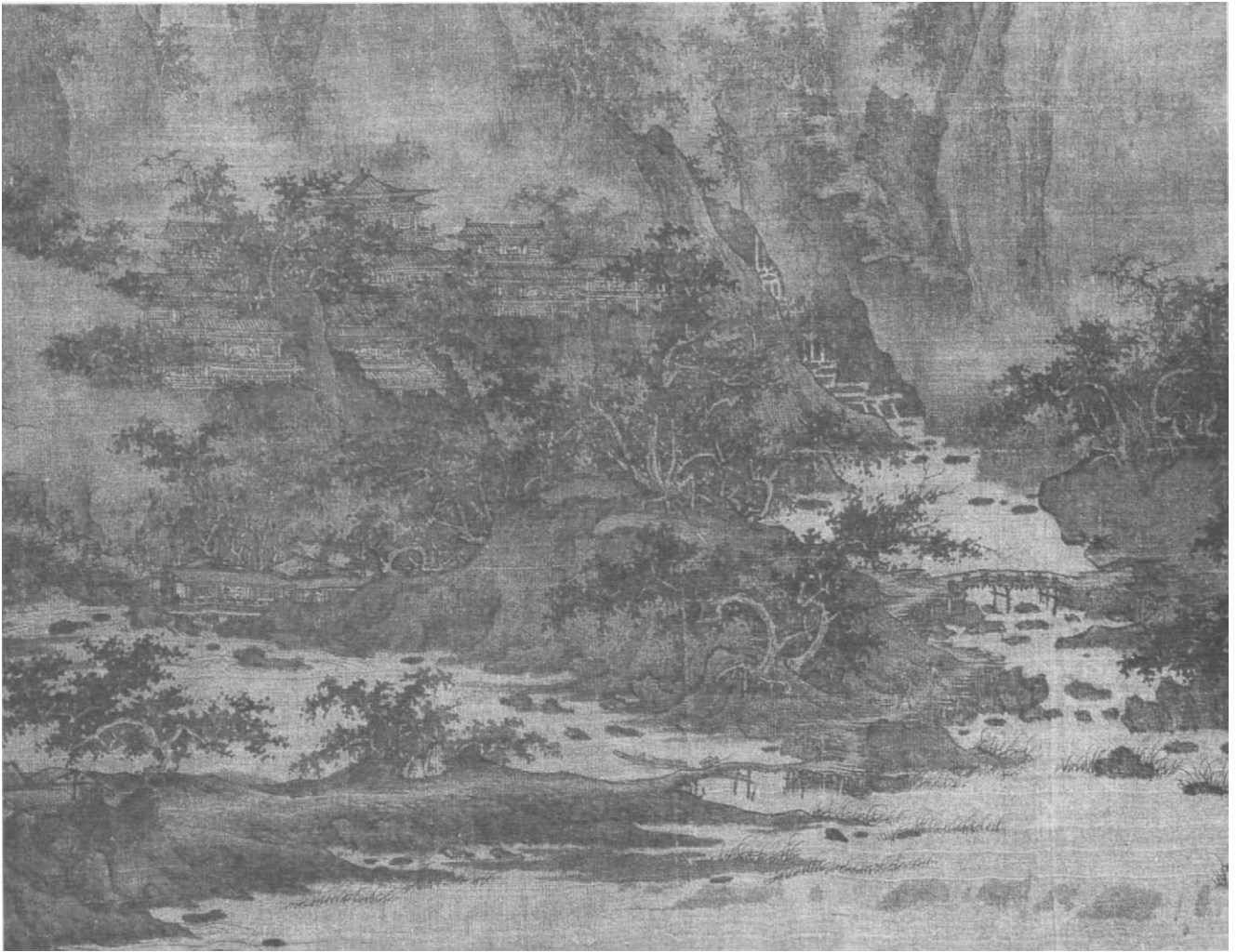


Figure 4.  
Attributed to Ch'ü Ting,  
detail of *Summer Mountains*



- tion of Wang Ting-kuo), in Wang Wen-kao, ed., *Su Shih shih-chi* (Collection of poems by Su Shih) (Beijing: Chung-hua, 1982), *chüan* 30, p. 1607.
- 7 Translated by Richard Barnhart, in *Marriage of the Lord of the River: A Lost Landscape by Ting Yüan* (Ascona, Switz.: Artibus Asiae, 1970), p. 12.
- 8 Lin Pu, "Ch'eng kung-tso ch'iao" 乘公作橋 (Written on a bridge), in *Lin Ho-ching*, translated and annotated by Max Perleberg (Hong Kong: K. Weiss, 1952), p. 106.
- 9 Wen T'ung, "Ch'ang-chü i-lou" 長舉驛樓 (Pavilion at the Ch'ang-chü Station), in *Tan-yüan chi* (Collection of Cinnabar Well), SPTK (Taipei: Shang-wu, 1965-67), pp. 7-8.
- 10 Hsieh Ling-yün, "Wan ch'u hsi-she-t'ang" 晚出西射堂 (Leaving West Archery Hall at dusk), trans. Francis Westbrook, in Wu-chi Liu and Irving Yucheng Lo, eds., *Sunflower Splendor: Three Thousand Years of Chinese Poetry* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975), p. 59.
- 11 Hsieh, "Yu Nan-t'ing" 遊南亭 (Passing time at the Southern Pavilion), in Ting Fu-pao, ed., *Ch'üan Han San-kuo Tsin Nan-pei-ch'ao shih* (Complete poems of the Han, Three Kingdoms, Tsin, and Northern and Southern dynasties) (Taipei: I-wen, 1968), vol. 2, pp. 811-12.
- 12 Hsieh, "Teng Shih-men tsui kao ting" 登石門最高頂 (Climbing the topmost peak of the Stone Gate Mountain), in Ting, ed., *Ch'üan Han San-kuo Tsin Nan-pei-ch'ao shih*, p. 817.
- 13 Hsieh, "Yü Nan-shan wang Pei-shan ching hu chung chan-t'iao" 於南山往北山經湖中瞻眺 (Looking across a lake from the southern mountains to the distant northern mountains), in Ting, ed., *Ch'üan Han San-kuo Tsin Nan-pei-ch'ao shih*, p. 818.
- 14 Hsieh, "Kuo Shih-ning shu" 過始寧塾 (Passing through my Shih-ning estate), trans. Francis Westbrook, in Liu and Lo, eds., *Sunflower Splendor*, pp. 58-59.
- 15 *Shih-ch'ü pao-chi hsü-pien* (Imperial catalogue of painting and calligraphy, second series) (Taipei: Palace Museum, 1969-71), vol. 2, p. 931.
- 16 See Wen Fong and Marilyn Fu, *Sung and Yuan Paintings* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1973), pp. 23-25.
- 17 Chang Yen-yüan, "Lun hua liu fa" (On the six laws of painting), in *Li-tai ming-hua chi* (Record of famous paintings of all the dynasties), in Yü, ed., HSTS, vol. 1, *chüan* 1, p. 15; translation from Susan Bush and H. Y. Shih, eds., *Early Chinese Texts on Painting* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985), p. 54.
- 18 Meng Hao-jan, "Yü chu tzu teng Hsien-shan tso" (Written while climbing Hsien Mountain with some gentlemen), in Hsü, ed., *Ch'üan T'ang shih lu*, vol. 1, p. 451.

# The Relationships between Poetry, Calligraphy, and Painting

QI GONG

The term “the three perfections” (*san-chüeh* 三絕) was coined during the eighth century in praise of the T’ang poet-painter Cheng Ch’ien 鄭虔 (d. 764), who excelled in poetry, calligraphy, and painting.<sup>1</sup> The term simply denotes an artist’s ability in the three art forms, however; it does not clarify the relationships between them. In the Sung, Su Shih 蘇軾 (1037–1101) went one step further when he praised the T’ang poet-painter Wang Wei 王維 (701–61), saying, “There is poetry in his painting and painting in his poetry” (*shih chung yu hua, hua chung yu shih* 詩中有畫, 畫中有詩).<sup>2</sup> In this paper, I shall examine the relationships between poetry, calligraphy, and painting from a number of different perspectives.

## *The Nature of Poetry*

In ancient times, poetry was merely a type of folk song or chant closely associated with daily life. Later it came to have many uses in politics and diplomacy. Still later, theoreticians with political ambitions and a desire to rule imposed their interpretations on the ancient songs, turning them into “subtle words with profound meanings” (*wei-yen ta-i* 微言大義) for the purpose of instruction. Eventually these songs were recorded in the Confucian classic the *Book of Poetry* (*Shih-ching* 詩經).

From the perspective of philosophy or aesthetics, however, poetry may be viewed as the epitome of beauty. Landscape vistas, the changing seasons, imposing buildings, graceful movements, emotional scenes of parting or reunion, and heroic deeds can all be described appreciatively as being “poemlike” (*shih-i-pan-te* 詩一般的). In this respect, poetry can be said to encompass calligraphy and painting. In this paper, however, I will discuss poetry strictly as literature.

## *The Relationship between Poetry and Calligraphy*

Broadly speaking, one can express appreciation for a piece of beautiful calligraphy by describing it as poemlike. But the relationship between poetry and calligraphy is far less close than that between poetry and painting. Calligraphy cannot exist without words, and a word—any word—must have a meaning. For example, writing the word “joy” (*hsi* 喜) or the word “fortune” (*fu* 福) is an expression of the universal longing for joy or fortune. The Chinese character for “Buddha” (*fo* 佛) is the transcription of a foreign sound and is, therefore, only the symbol of a sound. But if the character for “Buddha” is written on a piece of paper that is hung on a wall, passersby will bow. Their bowing does not signify worship of brush-and-ink technique, but worship of the meaning that has been given to the character. Thus calligraphy, because of its literary content, is a

vehicle of literature. Recently some people have suggested that calligraphic technique exists independently of literary content. After much thought, I have concluded that this notion is unacceptable.

Still, the relationship between calligraphic technique and literary content should not be taken lightly. Just as one would not use a tiger-shaped ewer (possibly used as a urinal in ancient times) as a container for flowers because it would be in poor taste, so one would not choose a style of calligraphy that is inappropriate to a given text. Every vessel has its proper use; the vehicle of literature must bear some relationship to the literary content.

In his *Manual of Calligraphy* (*Shu-p'u* 書譜), the T'ang calligrapher Sun Kuo-t'ing 孫過庭 (ca. 648–before 703) made the following observation about Wang Hsi-chih 王羲之 (ca. 307–ca. 365):

When writing *On Master Yüeh I* (*Yüeh I lun* 樂毅論), his feelings were despondent, and when writing *The Painting Command* (*Hua-tsan* 畫贊), his thoughts were on extraordinary things; in *The Yellow Court Scripture* (*Huang-t'ing ching* 黃庭經), he achieved a joyful emptiness, and in *The Great Historian's Admonitions* (*T'ai-shih-chen* 太師箴), he cut through crisscrossing arguments. In [his] *Preface to the Orchid Pavilion* (*Lan-t'ing hsing-chi* 蘭亭興集), his spirits were high and his thoughts were exceptional, but his feelings were restrained or sad in family contracts and personal admonitions. This [sensitivity] may be described as laughing when on the brink of joy, sighing before a sad word is spoken.<sup>3</sup>

Did Wang Hsi-chih really express such emotions in these pieces of calligraphy? Apart from Sun's subjective opinion, we have evidence from thousands of stone engravings that Wang chose calligraphic styles that seem appropriate to the particular emotions he experienced at the time of writing. This is an illustration of a writer's feelings exerting an influence on his calligraphy.

Then there is the question of whether the writer's style is appropriate to the content of a particular text. For example, it would be considered in poor taste to use Yen Chen-ch'ing's 顏真卿 (709–85) round, full characters and substantial strokes to transcribe a subtle line of poetry, such as "Last night's stars, last night's wind" ("Tso-yeh hsing chen tso-yeh feng" 昨夜星辰昨夜風) from an untitled poem by Li Shang-yin 李商隱 (ca. 813–58), or to use Ch'u Sui-liang's 褚遂良 (596–658) graceful characters and delicate strokes to transcribe the coarse utterances of a scoundrel in a drama.

While poetry and calligraphy are linked in some way, the relationship between them is neither as close nor as complex as the relationship between poetry and painting.

### *The Relationship between Calligraphy and Painting*

The relationship between calligraphy and painting is a huge hornet's nest that should be approached gingerly, for even the slightest touch is likely to stir up endless trouble. I merely wish to air my personal views on the subject and do not expect others to agree with me.

In good calligraphy, each character is full of strength and vitality and accommodates changes within a limited space. Each section of the character is completed stroke by



Figure 5. K'ō Chiu-ssu (1290–1343),  
*A Branch of Bamboo*.  
Detail of handscroll, ink on silk, H. 44 cm.  
Shanghai Museum



Figure 6. Ni Tsan (1301–74),  
*The Purple Fungus Mountain Lodge*, ca. 1370?  
Hanging scroll, ink on paper, 80.5 × 34.8 cm.  
Palace Museum, Taipei

stroke to form a larger design. The brush, the instrument of the calligrapher, is also used by the painter, and the results produced by the use of dots and strokes are similar. The best examples are the works of the Yüan artists K'ō Chiu-ssu 柯九思 (1290–1343; fig. 5) and Wu Chen 吳鎮 (1280–1354) and the Ch'ing artists Kung Hsien 龔賢 (ca. 1618–89) and Hung-jen 弘仁 (1610–63). Their bamboo leaves and tree branches and the outlines and texture-strokes of their mountains and rocks are virtually identical to the brushstrokes used in calligraphy. Still, this does not imply that calligraphy and painting are fundamentally the same.

The saying “Calligraphy and painting have the same source” (*shu hua t'ung yüan* 書畫同源) is often cited as evidence that the two arts are closely related. But are streams—or, in this case, traditions—flowing from the same source necessarily the same? If, as some believe, human beings are fundamentally the same, having all descended from Adam and Eve, then why do we have conflicts between countries, distinctions between

ances, and different languages requiring translation? Inasmuch as we do “discuss tradition(s) within tradition,” it is clear that a stream is not the same as its source and cannot represent it.

Although calligraphy and painting differ as art forms, they serve somewhat similar purposes in daily life: they both give pleasure. I used to think that people with little education who were unskilled in calligraphy could appreciate only paintings and not calligraphy. But that is not the case. People appreciate good calligraphy just as much as they appreciate good painting.

After thousands of years the Chinese still value calligraphy. Furthermore, the appreciation of calligraphy is not limited to those who use this type of writing; it has spread to many countries and influenced artists who do not write Chinese. How does one explain calligraphy’s appeal and influence?

I believe that if we can determine the causes for calligraphy’s appeal and influence and compare them with the causes for the development of painting, we might be able to understand the true relationship between the two arts. Those causes lie at the core of the relationship, going beyond the shared elements of utensils, brushstrokes, forms, and styles. For this reason, I think the saying “Calligraphy and painting have the same source” is less accurate a characterization of the relationship than the saying “Calligraphy and painting have the same core” (*shu hua t’ung ho* 書畫同核), or central idea.

### *The Relationship between Poetry and Painting*

Poetry and painting are siblings from the same womb; both emerge from the emotions and the environment of daily life, and both must have beauty and the power to move people. If one’s surroundings are insipid and one’s emotions are not aroused, then the poem or painting that is produced will inevitably be dull or commonplace. A poem or a painting lacking in beauty cannot possibly have the power to move people; the reader or the viewer will find it as flavorless as chewing wax.

Of course, not every painter is a poet, nor every poet a painter. Still, every good poem or painting must possess a certain quality that calls forth admiration. The elements of a good poem may not be those of a good painting, and vice versa, but the qualities which constitute excellence are fundamentally the same for both. Thus, there are dissimilarities as well as underlying similarities between the two arts.

Su Shih’s famous saying with respect to Wang Wei—“there is poetry in his painting and painting in his poetry”—actually trivializes the relationship between poetry and painting. Some of Wang Wei’s well-known “painterly” phrases are merely expressions that fuse scene and mood or vivid descriptions of scenery:

And in those hills half is all rain  
Streaming off branches to multiply the springs.<sup>4</sup>

山中一夜雨  
樹杪百重泉

Bamboos clatter—the washerwoman goes home  
Lotuses shift—the fisherman’s boat floats down.<sup>5</sup>

竹喧歸浣女  
蓮動下漁舟

Grass dead—the falcons’ sight is sharper  
Snow gone—the horses’ tread light.<sup>6</sup>

草枯鷹眼疾  
雪盡馬蹄輕

He sat and looked at the red trees  
 not knowing how far he was  
 And he neared the head of the green stream  
 seeing no one . . .<sup>7</sup>

坐看紅樹不知遠  
 行盡青谿不見人

But such phrases and verses, rich in scenes and moods, are not unique to Wang Wei's poetry. Other T'ang poets, such as Li Po 李白 (701–62) and Tu Fu 杜甫 (712–70), composed lines that are even more beautiful. Surely the comment “there is painting in his poetry” would apply to these lines from Li Po's poem “Leaving Pai-ti City in the Morning” (“Chao fa Pai-ti ch'eng” 朝發白帝城):

In the early morning I left Pai-ti City under rosy clouds,  
 The T'ien-men Mountains are cleaved  
 and the Ch'u River opens up.<sup>8</sup>

朝辭白帝彩雲間  
 天門中斷楚江開

Or consider these lines by Tu Fu:

The lake cleaves the lands of Wu and Ch'u  
 to east and south.<sup>9</sup>

吳楚東南坼

An infinity of trees bleakly divest themselves,  
 their leaves falling, falling.<sup>10</sup>

無邊落木蕭蕭下

It is only because Wang Wei was a painter as well as a poet that Su Shih could say “there is poetry in his painting,” thus singling him out as special.

One commentator, writing in the *Old T'ang Dynastic History* (*Chiu T'ang shu* 舊唐書), described Wang Wei's paintings in these words:

Brushstrokes and thoughts  
 participate in Creation;  
 Cloudy peaks and color of rocks  
 surpass the secrets of Heaven.<sup>11</sup>

筆思縱橫  
 參乎造化  
 雲峯石迹  
 迥出天機

This couplet suggests an extraordinary degree of harmony between Wang's poetry and painting. Such excellence is difficult to imagine. How does one verify “the secrets of Heaven” or evaluate “participat[ion] in Creation”? Since Wang Wei's paintings are no longer extant, we have no proof of their quality. Thus, with no concrete evidence, his painting will forever be upheld as the epitome of “poemlike” painting.

Painting, by its nature, has limitations. An unidentified portrait does not tell the viewer who is depicted. An unidentified landscape does not tell the viewer where the scene is located. In these cases, information to supplement the painting is needed. One way of supplying such information might be to attach a note to the painting, but a note could identify only the person, place, or type of subject that is depicted; it could not convey the artist's feelings about the subject. Inscribing a few words or a poem on the painting could serve to clarify what the painter had in mind. By the Yüan dynasty, it was common practice to give paintings titles that would stimulate the viewer's imagination and enrich the meaning of the paintings. Thus, a painting of a man on horseback might be titled *Going on an Outing*, *Reciting Poetry*, *Visiting a Friend*, or simply *Returning Home*. Poetic inscriptions were even better than titles for this purpose. However, five- or

seven-character verses that merely list the contents of a painting like a bill of goods are not worth mentioning.

Tu Fu's "Ten Rhymes Presented on Viewing the Painting *Min Mountains and the T'o River* in Master Yen's Courtroom" ("Feng kuan Yen Cheng-kung t'ing shih *Min-shan T'o-chiang hua t'u*" 奉觀嚴鄭公廳事岷山沱江畫圖十韻) contains the following couplet:

T'o waters flowing to the central seat,	沱水流中座
Min Mountains reaching to the northern hall. <sup>12</sup>	岷山到北堂

Although the mural in question is no longer extant, we can be sure that the mountains were not labeled "Min Mountains" nor the water "T'o River." Even if the painter had labeled the mountains and river thus, he would not have written out the characters for "flowing" and "reaching." To put it differently, it is conceivable that one might paint patterns in the water to suggest that the river is flowing, but one would hardly paint two legs to show the mountains "reaching." Clearly, Tu Fu wrote the poem to arouse the viewer's emotions. Thus, the poem and the painting enhance each other. When we read the poem today, we can see the painting in our mind's eye. Indeed, the image evoked by the poem may be even more beautiful than the original painting.

Consider also Su Shih's "Inscription on *Eight Scenes of Ch'ien-chou*" ("T'i Ch'ien-chou *pa-ching t'u*" 題虔州八境圖), which contains the following quatrain:

Forlorn waves break against the city walls and recede,	濤頭寂寞打城還
A chill evening mist at the Chang-kung Terrace;	章貢臺前暮靄寒
A tired traveler climbs hills and follows waterways	倦客登臨無限思
with endless thoughts,	
Solitary cloud, setting sun: this was Ch'ang-an. <sup>13</sup>	孤雲落日是長安

The elements mentioned in the poem—the waves, the city walls, the terrace, the solitary cloud, the setting sun—are not difficult to paint, but the desolate mood of the poem could not possibly be depicted in a painting.

Another quatrain from the same poem reads:

The sun dimly illuminates the inner corner of a red pavilion,	朱樓深處日微明
Under the black canopy of a carriage I return half-sobered;	早蓋歸來酒半醒
In the evening fishermen and woodcutters are all gone,	薄暮漁樵人盡去
Blue streams and green mountains surround	碧溪青嶂繞螺亭
the Spiral Shell Pavilion. <sup>14</sup>	

Again, it would not be difficult to depict the motifs, but even the masters Ching Hao 荆浩 (active ca. 870–930), Kuan T'ung 關仝 (active ca. 907–23), Li Ch'eng 李成 (919–67), and Fan K'uan 范寬 (ca. 960–ca. 1030) could not have painted the desolate mood evoked by these lines. We know that Su Shih composed the poem after his emotions were aroused by seeing the painting. Surely the artist whose work elicited the poem ought to receive some credit. After all, a painting is not just a surface for an inscription, like a piece of stationery. A painting that can inspire a good poem is surely not a common thing.

For another example of the mutual enhancement of poetry and painting, consider the Southern Sung fan (fig. 7), in the Cleveland Museum of Art.<sup>15</sup> On one side of the fan are painted two rather large boats moored by a riverbank, a city wall on the shore, and a bright moon in the sky. On the obverse is inscribed the couplet:



Figure 7. Anonymous (Southern Song),  
*Boats at Anchor*.  
Fan painting mounted as album leaf,  
Ink and color on silk, 25 × 19.2 cm.  
The Cleveland Museum of Art;  
John L. Severance Fund

Infinite space, a bright moon night,  
Pale light, the early autumn sky.

沉寥明月夜  
淡泊早秋天

We do not know who composed the couplet, nor we do know whether the poem was inscribed before the painting was done or vice versa. But both the poem and the painting evoke a mood of profound stillness and solitude. The words, related to the images, make it possible for the viewer to apprehend subject matter that is extremely difficult to depict—infinite space, bright moon night, pale light, an early autumn sky. No viewer reading the lines can help but perceive these four elements in the painting. If the couplet was inscribed before the fan was painted, then the painter definitely understood the poet's sentiments, for he was able to depict them. If the painting came first, then the person who wrote the couplet grasped the mood of the painting and used language with poetic skill. If the calligrapher did not compose the lines, he had to be someone with a talent for selecting phrases. The ultimate result is that the poet or calligrapher understood the painter's perceptions, and the painter captured the feelings expressed in the poem.

Most Sung paintings, especially fans and other small-scale works, tend to arouse the viewer's emotions, making him want to look again. As the saying goes, "A beautiful



woman has a pair of speaking eyes." Borrowing this conceit, I would describe the fan I have discussed as having "scenery that speaks and recites poetry."

By the Yüan dynasty, the relationship between poetry and painting took on new forms when "literati painting" (*wen-jen-hua* 文人畫) became the dominant tradition. In terms of methods and media, the hanging scroll of silk was giving way to the handscroll of paper. The Yüan artist still painted landscapes, boulders, leafless trees, bamboo, and rocks, but he was less concerned with depicting the reality of the object represented than with the appropriateness of his dots and strokes. In other words, painters during the Yüan concentrated on perfecting their ink-and-brush technique rather than on capturing "formal likeness" (*hsing-ssu* 形似). Indeed, representational subject matter virtually became the vehicle of suitable brush technique. Yüan artists had a mental image of their subject before they started to paint, and the images created by the appropriate technique were imbued with the artists' feelings to produce something entirely new.

In a famous colophon to his painting of bamboo dated 1368, *Sparse Bamboo* (*Sheng-shu lin t'u* 生疏林圖), Ni Tsan 倪瓚 (1301-74) wrote:

I do bamboo simply to express the untrammelled spirit in my breast. Then how can I judge whether it is like something or not, whether its leaves are luxuriant or sparse, its branches slanting or straight? Often, when I have daubed and rubbed awhile, others seeing this may take it to be hemp or rushes. Since I cannot bring myself to argue that it is truly bamboo, then what of the onlookers?<sup>16</sup>

This notion was not unique to Ni Tsan; it was the thinking of his time. An artist who espoused this philosophy would not care whether the poem inscribed on his painting bore any resemblance to the scenery depicted or not.

Ni Tsan's inscription on his painting *The Purple Fungus Mountain Lodge* (*Tzu-chih shan-fang t'u* 紫芝山房圖; fig. 6), now in the Palace Museum, Taipei, mentions a mountain lodge facing a blue sea, wild geese flying overhead, and smoke rising from a wood fire. The painting, however, shows only two trees, an empty thatched hut, and a stretch of desert. One would be justified in saying that the painting represents the ruins of a mountain lodge, yet there is no mention in catalogues or in the annals of criticism of a Ni Tsan painting entitled *Ruins*, and no one doubts that the poem on the painting has been correctly recorded.

For the Ch'ing painter Chu Ta 朱牽 (1626-1705), also known as Pa-ta-shan-jen 八大山人, the representational content of a painting was even less important. Not only did Chu Ta not concern himself with depicting likeness; one might even say that he aimed to depict nonlikeness. Like Juan Chi 阮籍 (210-63), Chu Ta painted deer, cats, fish, and birds with the whites of their eyes showing, symbolizing his disdain for the world.<sup>17</sup> As for the poems inscribed on his paintings, they can hardly be considered good poetry, for Chu's poems, like his paintings, are enigmatic, leaving people to guess at their meanings. The kindest thing one can say about his poetry is that it is like a riddle or an oracle delivered by a medium.

Yet when Ni Tsan and Chu Ta inscribed their own poems on their paintings, the results were original and truly exceptional. These works, which integrate poetry, calligraphy, and painting by the same artist, neither deceive the viewer nor steal unmerited fame. They are considered priceless and without peer because all the elements—poem,

calligraphy, and painting—are infused with their maker's inspiration, personality, and cultivation. An artist's ability to express his inspiration, personality, and cultivation is a reflection of the highest culture. This is part of what I mean by the “core,” or central idea.

The integration of poetry and painting also has its vulgar aspects. For example, the Imperial Painting Academy examined painters on their ability to depict poetic topics. If the subject assigned was “mountains in confusion, hiding an ancient monastery,” candidates who depicted a temple in the mountains did not pass, whereas those who depicted a Buddhist flagpole or temple eaves half-hidden in the hills did. If the topic assigned was “masses of green, a spot of red,” those who painted green leaves and red flowers failed, whereas those who depicted a beautiful woman amid a bamboo grove had their work accepted. On one occasion, when court painters were stymied by the topic “the horse's hooves are fragrant from trampling flowers on the way home,” one artist won acclaim for his painting of a horse with bees and butterflies swarming around its hooves. If these stories are not apocryphal, then painting was indeed a game—a game ostensibly about painting but actually about poetry. Such nonsense can hardly be considered cultivated. If these stories were made up, the writers who recorded them for posterity were “definitely not poets”—to use Su Shih's phrase.<sup>18</sup>

This survey of the relationships between poetry, calligraphy, and painting may make it clear why critics in the past avoided the terms “poetry,” “calligraphy,” and “painting” as such, but spoke of “poetry meditation” (*shih-ch'an* 詩禪), “calligraphy meditation” (*shu-ch'an* 書禪), and “painting meditation” (*hua-ch'an* 畫禪). The term “meditation” may be abstract, but it provides a generalization that can serve as the basis for comparing the three arts. This is the “core” of the relationship among the three arts. To undertake the study of their relationship, I believe it is necessary first to understand these arts as a whole and to become so deeply immersed in them that they become part of oneself. Only then will it be possible to understand both the integrated constructions in the poetry and painting of the T'ang and Sung masters and the disjunctive styles in the poetry and painting of Ni Tsan and Chu Ta.

Translated by Susan Bush and Lucy Altree

#### NOTES

The notes were compiled by the editors.

- 1 For biographical data on Cheng Ch'ien, see Chang Yen-yüan, *Li-tai ming-hua chi* (Record of famous paintings of all the dynasties), HSTS (Shanghai: Jen-min mei-shu, 1963), vol. 1, *chüan* 9, p. 114.
- 2 See *Tung-p'o t'i-pa* (Inscriptions of [Su] Tung-p'o [Su Shih]), ISTP (Taipei: Shih-chieh, 1967), ser. 1, vol. 22, *chüan* 5, p. 94.
- 3 Sun Kuo-t'ing, *Shu-p'u* (Manual of calligraphy), ISTP, no. 1, vol. 1.
- 4 From the poem “Sung Tzu-chou Li shih-chün” 送梓州李使君 (Good-bye to Li, prefect of Tzu-chou), in *Yü-ting ch'üan T'ang shih lu* (Imperial edition of the complete T'ang poems), *Ssu-ku*

- chüan-shu chen-pen* (photoreprint of the Wen Yun Wu ed. [Taipei, 1958]), *chi* 8, vol. 3, *chüan* 13, p. 22b. English translation by G. W. Robinson, *Wang Wei Poems* (Harmondsworth, U.K.: Penguin Books, 1973; reprint, 1982), p. 106.
- 5 From the poem “Shan-chu ch'iu ming” 山居秋暝 (In the hills at nightfall in autumn), in *Yü-ting ch'üan T'ang shih lu*, p. 25a. English translation by Robinson, *Wang Wei Poems*, p. 75.
  - 6 From the poem “Kuan lieh” 觀獵 (With the hunt), in *Yü-ting ch'üan T'ang shih lu*, p. 26b. English translation by Robinson, *Wang Wei Poems*, p. 43.
  - 7 From the poem “T'ao-yüan hsing” 桃源行 (Song of the peach-tree spring), in *Yü-ting ch'üan*

- T'ang shih lu*, pp. 15b–16a. English translation by Robinson, *Wang Wei Poems*, p. 34.
- 8 From the poem “Tsao fa Pai-ti ch’eng 早發白帝城 (Leaving Pai-ti City in the morning), in *Yü-ting ch’üan T’ang shih lu*, *chüan* 23, p. 24b.
- 9 From the poem “Teng Yüeh-yang lou” 登岳陽樓 (On Yo-yang Tower), in *Yü-ting ch’üan T’ang shih lu*, *chüan* 30, p. 30a. English translation by David Hawkes, *A Little Primer of Tu Fu* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), p. 209.
- 10 From the poem “Teng kao” 登高 (From a height), in *Yü-ting ch’üan T’ang shih lu*, *chüan* 32, pp. 14b–15a. English translation by Hawkes, *Primer*, p. 205.
- 11 This evaluation appears in *Lieh-chuan* (Biographies), in *Chiu T’ang shu* (Old T’ang dynastic history), in *Erh-shih-wu shih* (History of twenty-five dynasties) (Shanghai: K’ai-ming shu-chü, 1934), *chüan* 140, p. 36. It is interesting that this paragraph was dropped from the *Hsin T’ang shu* (New T’ang dynastic history).
- 12 Tu Fu’s inscription is reproduced in *Yü-ting ch’üan T’ang shih lu*, *chüan* 31, p. 17b.
- 13 Wang Shih-ming, ed., *Su Tung-p’o shih-chi chu* (Collected poems of Su Tung-p’o [Su Shih]) (Shanghai: Tsao-yeh chan fang, 1922), *chüan* 4, pp. 11a ff.
- 14 *Ibid.*
- 15 The fan is discussed in *Kokka*, no. 537 (August 1935), pp. 216–19. The article attributes the calligraphy to Sung emperor Ning-tsung 寧宗 (r. 1195–1224).
- 16 See Pien Yung-yü, comp., *Shih-ku-t’ang shu-hua hui-k’ao* (Classified record of calligraphy and painting in Shih-ku Hall) (Taipei: Shang-wu, 1976), painting section, *chüan* 20. This excerpt was translated by and published in Susan Bush and Hsio-yen Shih, comps. and eds., *Early Chinese Texts on Painting* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press for the Harvard-Yenching Institute, 1985), p. 280.
- 17 Juan Chi, one of the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove, was said to have received those he liked “with blue eyes” and those he disliked “with white eyes.” See *San Kuo chih* (Records of the Three Kingdoms), *chüan* 21, and *Tsin shu* (History of the Tsin dynasty), *chüan* 49; both reproduced in *Erh-shih-wu shih*.
- 18 Su Shih’s expression “ting chih fei shih-jen” 定知非詩人 (“definitely not a poet”) comes from his *Colophon to a Painting*, “The Cut Branch,” by the Secretary to the Prince of Yen-ling (Shu Yen-ling wang chu-pu shuo hua che-chih 書鄢陵王主簿所畫折枝), in *Tung-p’o ch’ien-chi* (The former edition of writing by Su Tung-p’o [Su Shih]), a photoreprint of *Su Tung-p’o ch’üan-chi* (Su Tung-p’o’s collected works) (Shanghai: Tsao-yeh chan fang, 1922), *chüan* 17.

# Masterpieces by Three Calligraphers: Huang T'ing-chien, Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai, and Chao Meng-fu

YANG RENKAI

Chinese calligraphy is a unique art form which followed its own patterns of development as Chinese culture evolved. Written characters emerged over five thousand years ago, by about 3000 B.C. A number of pictographic characters have been discovered in the archaeologically excavated remains of the Neolithic societies of the Honan Yang-shao 仰韶 and Shantung Lung-shan 龍山 cultures. Based on the archaeological retrieval of large numbers of characters on bones and shells (oracle-bone characters) from Hsiao-t'un 小屯 in Honan, the Chou plain 周原 in Shensi, and other excavated Shang- and Chou-dynasty remains, we can see that writing by then already possessed the basis for the complete evolutionary sequence that followed. The six scripts of calligraphy that developed were to continue to embody the two general types of characters established early on, characters that gave a visual form to sounds and characters that borrowed sounds.<sup>1</sup>

In the Shang period characters were used only for recording the private matters of kings. As writing advanced, however, it came to be used by the entire society. During the Western Chou dynasty, the Spring and Autumn period, and the Warring States period, the characters' forms evolved from the shell-and-bone script to large seal script (*ta-chuan* 大篆; also known as bronze *ting* [tripod] script [*chin-ting-wen* 金鼎文] or *chou* seal script [*chou-wen* 籀文]; these are known together as bronze script [*chin-wen* 金文]). This coincided with the gradual disappearance of the more rudimentary forms of the shell-and-bone script. In the third century B.C., Ch'in Shih-huang 秦始皇 (d. 210 B.C.) conquered and united the six states, and because of both political and economic factors there followed the unification of the six states' writing systems. On the basis of the large seal script, the small seal script (*hsiao-chuan* 小篆) was created; this then became current throughout China.

The revolution in the characters' forms consisted in part of a tendency toward simplification; this is still apparent in calligraphy's applications. Whether in shell-and-bone or bronze scripts, the process of change also led to an appreciation among writers of the beauty of calligraphic composition. On the basis of aesthetic theory alone, it would not be difficult to select several examples of outstanding calligraphers' works for discussion. However, I will not discuss shell-and-bone or bronze scripts, which reached the highest point of elegant refinement during the Warring States and Ch'in periods. Seal-script technique can be characterized by what has been termed "bending the straight with swift movements as if engraving in iron, so that the proper shape will spread untrammelled with a graceful richness."<sup>2</sup> This expresses the distinctive features of what constitutes beauty in all calligraphy.

Those who inherited the large seal script developed the characteristics of small seal script. In the period of Ch'in Shih-huang, the stones carved at T'ai-shan 泰山, Chih-fu

芝罘, and K'uai-chi 會稽 utilized the newly created small seal script. Even though the intention was to simplify the characters' forms, they retained an equal structural weight, balanced between square and round, resulting in an elegant beauty. In the late Ch'in period clerical script (*li-shu* 隸書) appeared, and during the Han dynasty this form was used throughout China. The newly transformed characters were described as "silkworm heads" (*ts'an t'ou* 蠶頭) and "phoenix tails" (*feng wei* 鳳尾). They were dignified and refined, with the proportions of a square tablet. The clerical script of the Han provided the conditions for the creation of the standard (*k'ai* 楷) script of the Wei and Tsin dynasties. Between these two were the draft-cursive (*chang-ts'ao* 章草) or the cursive-clerical (*ts'ao-li* 草隸). Thus began the brilliance of Chinese calligraphy's fluid beauty. Each of these calligraphic forms had its own special characteristics that governed its composition. In general, their forms are characterized by square and well-composed shapes, and although there are exceptions, these are still limited by the basic structure that has endured with certain fixed restrictions.

Calligraphy obtained its complete development only after the Wei and Tsin dynasties with the evolution of standard, running (*hsing* 行), and modern cursive (*chin-ts'ao* 今草) scripts. Although originally these scripts functioned as a social tool, their value went beyond mere usefulness, acquiring appreciation as an art form.

From as early as the fourth century fine calligraphy was widely valued as art, and during the Eastern Tsin and Six Dynasties periods it was at its height. After this it continued to flourish without decline, constituting a key factor in the formation of the national culture. If one were to speak of calligraphy simply as a tool for communication, it would be regarded as a symbol of language and would not have an aesthetic impact on people. But as Chinese calligraphy is also regarded as one of the visual arts, it has much in common with all the plastic arts. It may inspire various degrees of sympathetic response in those who look at it, and for many it has a magnetic attraction, so much so that it relaxes the mind and frees the spirit. So great indeed is its influence that one can forget food and sleep; thus it is both satisfying and enlightening. The reasons for this lie in certain special characteristics of calligraphy. As an art unique to the Chinese people, calligraphy is deeply rooted and widespread in the culture, and it is not surprising that it is greatly treasured.

Not only has calligraphy been valued by the Chinese people, but for historical reasons it also influenced neighboring countries in the Far East. More remarkably, over the last thirty years an interest in Chinese painting has developed in the West, and now Chinese calligraphy is increasingly being regarded as worthy of serious research. According to one view, every culture should belong to the treasure house of world culture. Since literature and art are characteristic of a culture, and since artistic talent is readily recognized by the world, the West has increasingly come to be interested in Chinese calligraphy.

When I first visited the Freer Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., in 1981, I was astonished to see a huge *chung-t'ang* 中堂 (central hall) hanging scroll in large running-script characters by the Ming-dynasty calligrapher Wen P'eng 文彭 (1498–1573). Moreover, later at Princeton University I saw Huang T'ing-chien's 黃庭堅 (1045–1105) handscroll in large running-script characters entitled *Scroll for Chang Ta-t'ung* (*Tseng Chang Ta-t'ung ku-wen t'i-chi* 贈張大同古文題記). I also saw three letters by Mi Fu 米芾 (1052–1107) (see fig. 60) and Chang Chi-chih's 張即之 (1186–1266) *Diamond Sutra* (*Chin-kang ching* 金剛經) albums (see fig. 8); my eyes opened wide upon seeing these. Following

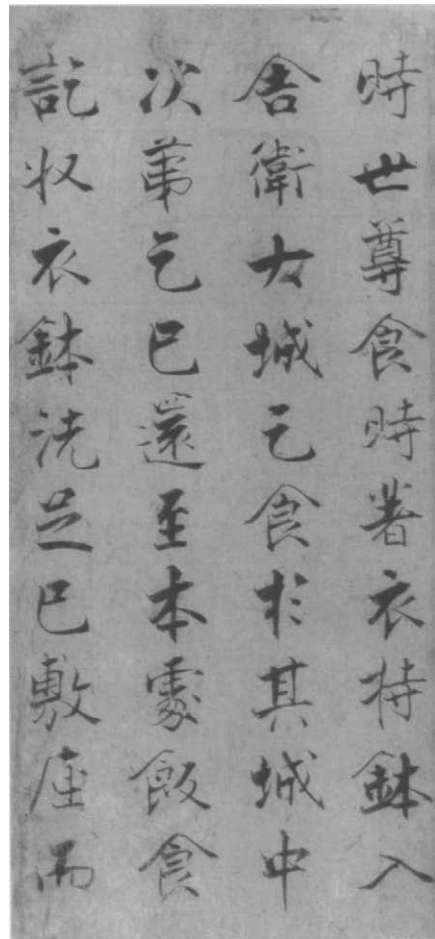


Figure 8. Chang Chi-chih (1186–1266),  
*Diamond Sutra*, dated 1246.  
 Album leaf, ink on paper, 29.1 × 13.4 cm.  
 The Art Museum, Princeton University;  
 lent by John B. Elliott

this I visited the home of Mr. John Crawford to see his collection, which contained calligraphy and painting; it was a feast for the eyes. I regarded Mr. Crawford as a Western connoisseur who had not suffered from the usual limitations. On the contrary, he valued Chinese calligraphy, and this indicated that his achievements were profound. For this I had great respect. I also met a French exchange student in China who was studying the history of Chinese calligraphy in preparation for an exhibition of ancient and modern calligraphy in Paris. It will not be long before an understanding of the influence of Chinese calligraphy develops in the West.

It is fortunate that Mr. Crawford donated a group of the best Sung- and Yüan-dynasty treasures, which are engraved on my mind, to The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Among these are included the handscroll in cursive script by one of the Four Great Calligraphers of the Northern Sung dynasty, Huang T'ing-chien's *Biographies of Lien P'o and Lin Hsiang-ju* (*Lien P'o Lin Hsiang-ju chuan* 廉頗藺相如傳; fig. 9; see also fig. 26), and the great early Yüan official Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai's 耶律楚材 (1190–1244) *Poem of Farewell to Liu Man* (*Sung Liu Man shih* 送劉滿詩; fig. 10), a handscroll in large standard-script characters. Their artistic value has long since received public acclaim, and they have been prized like a jade disk. The present paper will concentrate on the handscrolls by Huang and Yeh-lü. I will also give a brief summary and explanation of

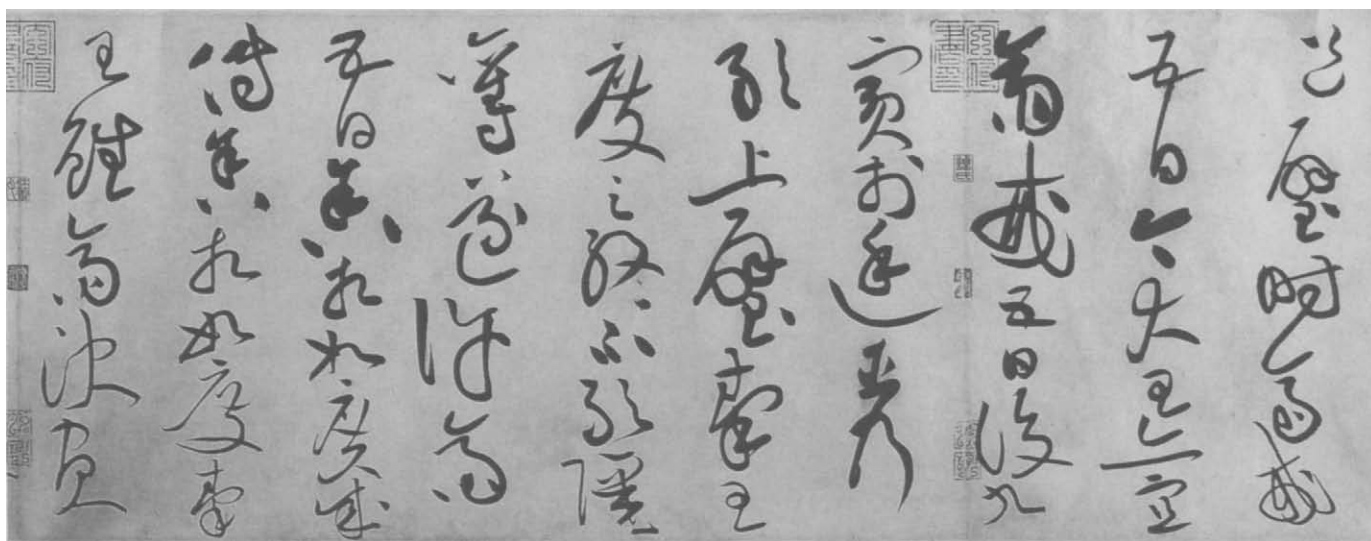


Figure 9. Huang T'ing-chien (1045–1105), *Biographies of Lien P'o and Lin Hsiang-ju*.  
Detail of handscroll, ink on paper, H. 32.5 cm.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Bequest of John M. Crawford, Jr., 1988

the Liaoning Museum's calligraphy handscroll by Chao Meng-fu 趙孟頫 (1254–1322) entitled *Su Shih's "Song on a Painting of Misty River and Layered Hills"* (Su Shih "Yen-chiang t'ieh-chang ko" 蘇軾煙江疊嶂歌; fig. 11). I regard this as "attracting jade with a brick"; this I have combined with my improvised thoughts.

#### *Huang T'ing-chien's Cursive-Script* *Biographies of Lien P'o and Lin Hsiang-ju*

A special characteristic of Chinese calligraphy is that one must examine each example's style, composition, brush movement, and spacing of individual elements; one must also examine the degree of calligraphic ability. Further to take into consideration are the writing's contents, which resemble themes in painting. Thus before introducing the artist of this handscroll, it is essential to explain the theme and content of the writing. The text is a biography, quoted from a famous work that is over two thousand years old, the great historian Ssu-ma Ch'ien's 司馬遷 (145–86 B.C.) *Records of the Historian* (*Shih-chi* 史記), chapter 81.<sup>3</sup> Due to the story's vivid detail and style, and the wealth of traditional virtues displayed, it possesses the deepest significance for social instruction.

The story is set in the year 283 B.C., during the reign of King Hui-wen 惠文王 of Chao 趙 (r. 298–266 B.C.). It recounts three events. In the first, King Hui-wen obtained the jade *pi* 碧 disk—an emblem of authority—that had belonged to Pien Ho 卞和 of Ch'u 楚. King Chao 昭王 of Ch'in 秦 (r. 306–251 B.C.) learned of this and sent a letter to the king of Chao vowing to exchange the *pi* for fifteen cities. The king of Chao summoned the great general Lien P'o and all his great ministers to deliberate. They pondered the fact that Ch'in was a strong state and realized that if they did not go along with the exchange, their situation would be untenable; indeed, they would be humiliated. If they did carry out the exchange, there was no assurance that they would obtain the fifteen

cities. It was a difficult situation. Finally they agreed to give in to Ch'in's intimidation. They then had to appoint a man to announce the gift to Ch'in. No one was willing to take charge of this affair. Finally the overseer of eunuchs (*huan-che ling* 宦者令), Miao Hsien 繆賢, recommended that his retainer, Lin Hsiang-ju, take the *pi* and go west to offer it to Ch'in. Upon receiving the jade disk, the king of Ch'in was very happy and assembled all his officials, who cried out, "May you live ten thousand years!" The king, however, gave no indication that he would turn over the cities. Lin, in a moment of desperation, cleverly hit upon the idea of saying that there was a flaw in the jade. He took the *pi* back from the king of Ch'in and, grasping it, leaned against one of the palace's columns, so angry that his hair raised up his cap. Maneuvering for time, he proposed that after five days a formal presentation would take place in a solemn ceremony. If there had been any move against him, he had made up his mind to smash both his head and the *pi* against the column, destroying both. The king of Ch'in had no alternative but to obey him. Lin then had one of his retainers secretly return to Chao with the *pi* by a roundabout way. As there was nothing the king of Ch'in could do, he let Lin go without harm. This story indicates Lin's wisdom and resourcefulness. When he faced difficulty, his heroic spirit was unflinching, and this portrayal is vividly conveyed. From the circumstances one can fairly sense the man.

The second story tells of Ch'in's attack on Chao, in which it seized Shih-ch'eng 石城. The following year Ch'in again sent troops against Chao and killed twenty thousand men. Ch'in took this opportunity to meet with the king of Chao at Min-ch'ih 澠池 (in modern Honan Province). The king of Chao was afraid of Ch'in and did not dare to go, but Lien P'o and Lin Hsiang-ju advised him that not going was a bad idea as it would reveal his own weakness in the face of the great strength of the enemy. Hence Lin accompanied the king to the meeting. At the banquet the king of Ch'in asked the king of Chao to play the *se* 瑟 as a way of humiliating him. Lin then offered a jar to the king of Ch'in and demanded that he tap on it, but the king refused until Lin threatened to kill someone. The assembled officials of Ch'in wanted Chao to present fifteen cities to the Ch'in king, but Lin immediately retorted that Hsien-yang 咸陽 (the Ch'in capital) should be presented as a gift to the king of Chao. Lin countered each assault of Ch'in with equal harshness. Upon their return home, the king of Chao promoted Lin, giving him the rank of senior minister, thus placing him above Lien P'o.

The third story developed from the previous situation. Lien P'o was an old general of the state of Chao with distinguished service in war. He was considered the defender of the state. When Lin Hsiang-ju was placed above him, Lien P'o became deeply resentful and threatened to insult Lin if he saw him. Because of this Lin avoided him and had no desire to come face to face with him. Lin's retainers tried to incite him, saying: "Powerful and prestigious as the king of Ch'in was, you dared risk insulting him. You faced the danger without fear; then why instead do you fear Lien P'o? Everyone considers this a great injustice." Lin replied: "If two tigers fight each other, they cannot both survive. I have behaved this way because I put the needs of the state first and personal enmity last." When Lien P'o heard these words, he was deeply ashamed and offered a humble apology.

These three stories share an abundance of vivid details and for over two thousand years were used in the world of literature and art to suggest a model character. Traditional themes, such as Lin Hsiang-ju returning the unbroken *pi* to Chao, pleased all tastes and were familiar to everyone by their titles alone. Huang T'ing-chien chose this theme in



creating this cursive-script handscroll. Beyond the beauty of the writing, however, there may be a hidden meaning. Following the Yüan-yü 元祐 period (1086–93) Huang suffered political misfortune and was exiled far from the capital.<sup>4</sup> He had already written the *Biography of Fan P'ang* (*Fan P'ang chuan* 范滂傳; see fig. 33), which can only be taken as an indirect rebuke to Ts'ai Ching's 蔡京 clique.<sup>5</sup> In his writing of the *Biographies of Lien P'o and Lin Hsiang-ju* I believe that there is a similar intent.

Huang T'ing-chien was from Hsiu-shui 修水 in Kiangsi Province. He attained great fame in Chinese literature and calligraphy as, among his other accomplishments, the founder of the Kiangsi school of poetry and an extraordinary calligrapher. He was never satisfied with his official career, in which he continuously met with misfortune and exile from court; over this he experienced a keen sense of regret like the slandered minister Ch'ü Yüan 屈原 (343–278 B.C.). Consequently, he lived in seclusion among the people, a situation in which he was able to observe public sentiments directly, and this contributed to his creative undertakings.

In calligraphy Huang excelled in the standard, running, and cursive forms. He began by studying Ch'u Sui-liang 褚遂良 (596–658), Yen Chen-ch'ing 顏真卿 (709–85), Liu Kung-ch'üan 柳公權 (778–865), Yang Ning-shih 楊凝式 (873–957), and the *Eulogy for a Dead Crane* (*I-ho ming* 瘞鶴銘). In standard and running scripts he formed his own school with a unique style. The famous Southern Sung master Fan Ch'eng-ta 范成大 (1126–93), in inscribing Huang's handscroll *Liu Yü-hsi Chu-chih tz'u* 劉禹錫竹枝詞 (*Liu Yü-hsi's Lyric: A Branch of Bamboo*; see fig. 31), said: "In his late years Shan-ku 山谷 [Huang T'ing-chien] achieved a great synthesis. As in this work, there is nothing the brush regrets."<sup>6</sup> These are not empty words, and it is no wonder that Chang Hsiao-hsiang 張孝祥 (1132–70), uncle of the famous Southern Sung calligrapher Chang Chi-chih, considered that "indeed, he was the most outstanding calligrapher of his generation."<sup>7</sup> Among successive critics, there are differences of opinion only with respect to his cursive script. Huang, in his own composition entitled *Che-hsien ch'iu-p'u ko* 謫仙秋浦歌 (*Banished Immortal on an Autumn Bank*), wrote:

Before when I wrote cursive script, the whole world said that it was excellent; only Ch'ien Mu-fu 錢穆父 [Ch'ien Hsieh 錢勰; 1034–97] considered it vulgar. Later I thought it over and totally corrected and removed the vulgar elements, and when the world sees it, everyone says that it is no good. Alas!—as for those works in which I have moved away from vulgarity—how could I expect vulgar people to appreciate them? It is better that they do not recognize its excellence. Wang Tzu-ching 王子敬 [Wang Hsien-chih 王獻之; 344–86] said, "Where could outsiders attain any knowledge of it?" This is quite true!<sup>8</sup>

Huang's writing brings up a problem with regard to the criteria used in the evaluation of calligraphy, that is, the discrimination between what is elegant and what is vulgar. Unfortunately one cannot adopt the means of a democratic election and let the majority pick the candidate. Appreciation for a work of art differs from appreciation for a work of craft. The former must reach a definite attainment, and this particular accomplishment relies on accumulated studies. As for the model for Huang's cursive script, the majority believe that it emerged from Huai-su 懷素 (ca. 735–800?). Huang's surviving works, entitled *Chu-shang-tso* 諸上座 (*Sayings of a Ch'an Buddhist Monk*; see fig. 30), *Li Po I chiu-*

yu 李白憶舊遊 (Poem by Li Po: Remembering a Former Journey; see fig. 28), the Liu Yü-hsi *Chu-chih tz'u* mentioned above, along with the cursive script of this handscroll, are all thought by those who have studied them to be influenced by Huai-su, and this is creditable. In the Yüan dynasty Yü Chi 虞集 (1272–1348), along with Chao Meng-fu, viewed a cursive-script scroll by Huang and wrote, “Shan-ku obtained the spirit of Chang Ch’ang-shih’s 張長史 [Chang Hsü 張旭; ca. 700–750] circular and flying movements. Now viewing this scroll, truly this is not mistaken.”<sup>9</sup> There is truth in these masters’ words, for Huai-su’s origins are to be found in Chang Hsü; the two are organically connected. When Huang’s brush is coarse, he approaches Chang Hsü; when it is fine, he approaches Huai-su. It is not as if the two can be clearly separated, however. In this case Huang employed a pliant goat-hair brush to write in the style of both Chang and Huai-su; the type of cursive script characterized by “circular and flying movements” is not at all easy.

It is recorded that when Huang was exiled during the Shao-sheng 紹聖 period (1094–97) in Ch’ien-chou 黔州, he was able for the first time to see Huai-su’s *Autobiography* (*Tzu-hsü t’ieh* 自敘帖; see figs. 17, 20): “I allowed myself to examine it incessantly, and suddenly awakened to its transcendent quality.”<sup>10</sup> Moreover, according to the *Shu-shih hui-yao* 書史彙要 (*Compilation of the Essentials of the History of Calligraphy*), he said:

I studied calligraphy for thirty years, first taking the style of Chou Yüeh 周越 [active 1023–48] as my teacher. For the next twenty years I tried to shake off his vulgarity, but did not succeed. In my late years I obtained calligraphy by Su Ts’ai-weng 蘇才翁 [Su Shun-yüan 蘇舜元; 1006–54] and Su Tzu-mei 蘇子美 [Su Shun-ch’in 蘇舜欽; 1008–48], and having seen it I obtained the brush spirit of the ancients. Later I acquired the ink traces of Chang Ch’ang-shih and the monks Huai-su and Kao-hsien 高閑 [active 845–60], and only then did I understand the wonders of brushwork. In Po-tao 樊道 [modern I-pin 宜賓 in Szechwan] in a boat I observed the long sweep of the oars in the water, and by extracting this into my hand’s movements I felt I had made some progress. If in spirit I could do this, then I could do it with my brush.<sup>11</sup>

In the evolution of this tradition observations of images and experiences from life are significant. Just as the sword dance of Kung-sun Ta-niang 公孫大娘 (active first half of the eighth century) influenced the calligraphy of Chang Hsü, so Huang took inspiration from such phenomena in daily life as the sweep of oars in the water.

Of these several surviving works by Huang T’ing-chien, the *Biographies of Lien P’o and Lin Hsiang-ju* offers the most magnificent sight. In the Ming dynasty the scroll was recorded in Chan Ching-feng’s 詹景鳳 (active ca. 1570–95) *Tung-t’u hsüan-lan pien* 東圖玄覽編 (*Tung-t’u’s Record of Paintings Seen*):

Shan-ku’s cursive-script *Biography of Lin Hsiang-ju* [leaving out Lien P’o’s name], one scroll. The paper shines white like new. This was written by Shan-ku after he had seen Ch’ang-sha’s [Huai-su’s] *Autobiography*. This rough cursive script has attained the marvelous, and is as deep and profound as his running script. When Chu Ching-chao 祝京兆 [Chu Yün-ming 祝允明; 1461–1527] wrote in cursive script, the brushwork and forms were completely drawn from this style. While Chu was somewhat coarse but heroic, Huang had superior freedom; his spirit was strong and his brush powerful.<sup>12</sup>

Chan is correct in his assessment of Chu and Huang. Although Chu did not necessarily possess “heroic” spirit, when his calligraphy is compared with the recently discovered *Liu Yü-hsi Chu-chih tz’u* by Huang, there is a close resemblance. Chan habitually elevated Su Shih 蘇軾 (1037–1101) over Huang, and only with respect to this handscroll does he comment, “This rough cursive script has attained the marvelous, and is as deep and profound as his running script.” And his comment “Huang had superior freedom; his spirit was strong and his brush powerful” captures the characteristics of Huang’s calligraphy. Huang’s cursive script achieves the realm of perfect ease and freedom, something truly difficult to accomplish. There have been many calligraphers who lacked precisely this quality. The sentence “Shan-ku achieved enlightenment in the Nirvana Hall” 山谷真涅槃堂裏禪 has a deep significance. The statements “His spirit was strong and his brush powerful” and “He effortlessly makes a display” clearly distinguish Huang’s style. Calligraphers must not only possess skill in their art from constant practice, they must also be learned and have moral character, for these are sources of strength in every field. If they do not possess these, it is difficult to achieve strength and vigor, which are two of the important criteria by which cursive script is evaluated.

When the early Ch’ing writer Ku Fu 顧復 (active second half of the seventeenth century) recorded this scroll in his *Magnificent Things Seen in My Life (P’ing-sheng chuang-kuan 平生狀觀)*, he wrote: “The *Biographies of Lien and Lin* is on white Sung paper in large cursive-script characters; its length is over fifty feet. There is no signature, although later men falsely added one. It must be promptly removed, so that the jade disk will not be stained by flies. In this work he has studied Huai-su.”<sup>13</sup> From the remarks in his notes on the various works by Huang he had seen, it becomes evident that Ku Fu had his own opinion with regard to Huang’s study of Huai-su’s cursive script:

Ch’ien Mu-fu remarked that Shan-ku said, “Before I saw the *Autobiography* [by Huai-su], my mind was not at peace with itself.” Hsien-yü Po-chi 鮮于伯機 [Hsien-yü Shu 鮮于樞; 1257?–1302] said: “Kao-hsien learned sixty or seventy percent of Huai-su’s cursive script. Shan-ku failed completely.” Thus these two masters presented their cases. In all his long handscrolls Shan-ku modeled at least half his characters on Huai-su. These were done after the second year of the Shao-sheng period, when he was able to see the *Autobiography* in his exile at Ch’ien-chou. They are works from his late years. In my opinion the large standard-script characters of the *Lun shu-fa 論書法* [Discussion of Calligraphy], the small standard-script characters of Chao Ching-tao 趙景道 [Chao Chih; d. 1202], and the running script of various letters all share the superior qualities of established masters. Mi Yüan-chang 米元章 [Mi Fu] loved to collect old calligraphy, but Ch’ien Mu-fu chastised him, saying that characters should aim to have strength; thereafter Yüan-chang’s calligraphy approached this goal. Later men can take this as a precept. By studying Huai-su alone Shan-ku was harmed. How could this have happened?<sup>14</sup>

Ku first uses the arguments of Ch’ien Mu-fu of the Sung and Hsien-yü Shu of the Yüan, and concludes that it was a mistake to study Huai-su, thus presenting an unresolved problem. On the other hand, his contemporary Wu Ch’i-chen 吳其貞 (1607–after 1677), in recording this handscroll in his *Notes on Calligraphy and Painting (Shu-hua chi 書畫記)*,

wrote: "In the *Biographies of Lien and Lin*, the paper and ink are excellent and the calligraphy is unconventional. When it is connected, he has cut it off; where it is cut off, he has connected it. This is Shan-ku's finest work."<sup>15</sup> There is no doubt that each critic had his own opinion. Although Ku Fu saw very few cursive works by Huang, he felt that there was a clear distinction between the refined works done before the Shao-sheng period and the vulgar ones after. Most of the works he saw were probably from Huang's early period, or perhaps his was a case of "fish eyes being confused for pearls." Consequently, his preconceived ideas had a strong hold, resulting in contrary impressions.

Of all the forms of calligraphy, cursive script is the most difficult. First of all, one must operate within established parameters. To ignore this is to be absurdly mistaken and violates the original intent of cursive script. Second, one must pay attention to momentum. As the great poet Lu Yu 陸遊 (1125-1210) said, "It has the boldness of a great ship cutting through the waves." Third, the movements of the brush must have the proper degree of force; in pausing and modulating the strokes, one should not rush about without restraint. In this way one will achieve that which Huang spoke of: "In the center of a character is the brush, like the point of a Ch'an [Zen] master's phrase" 字中有筆, 如禪家句中有眼.<sup>16</sup> Finally, it should have sufficient spirit, with the characters arranged in a natural and graceful manner and elegantly spaced. It should possess the rhythmic vitality of music, with the composition bringing up the rear, thus giving expression to the special features of cursive writing.

Throughout Chinese history treatises on calligraphy have been like a forest; from each point of view come additional discussions that elaborate on important practical points. Each makes a distinct contribution. In this paper I have attempted to synthesize each writer's arguments with regard to cursive script, summarizing them in order to make the above-mentioned points useful in judging Huang's handscroll. Since instruction should fit with practice, there is no need to pile up ornate words to help the viewer dispel the mists in order to see "the true features of Mount Lu."

As I have already mentioned, there exist different views with regard to Huang's cursive script. I have also touched on the problem of his early and late periods, his refined and vulgar works. Here I will compare Huang's other surviving cursive-script works, taking the *Biographies* as a model. To begin with, there is no calligrapher whose works are all refined, and in a lifetime of artistic practice there are inevitable changes. The majority become more mature with age, although there are a few exceptions. The cursive script of Huang's late years attained the ultimate peak of achievement. This scroll is consistent with the *Chu-shang-tso* and the *Li Po I chiu-yu*, both of which are definitely works of his late years. Thus they share certain key characteristics. Among Huang's surviving cursive-script works one can also cite the type seen in the *Liu Yü-hsi Chu-chih tz'u*.<sup>17</sup> This specimen is in the collection of the Cultural Department of Ningpo City, Chekiang Province. I have seen only photographs of it, which indicate that it is written on somewhat damaged silk and that the tonality of the ink is faint. Both the calligraphy of the text and the calligraphy of the note that follows in several columns of running script differ from that of the Crawford scroll. Perhaps it is an earlier work. If this is the case, it may present a basis for the "vulgar spirit" in Huang's work remarked on by Ch'ien Mu-fu. It is also difficult to find works that are similar to the *Liu Yü-hsi Chu-chih tz'u*. It is quite different, for example, from the *Tu Fu chi Ho-lan Hsien shih* 杜甫寄賀蘭銛詩 (Poem by Tu Fu: Sent to Ho-lan Hsien; see fig. 29) and the *Ch'i-lü-shih chüan*

七律詩卷 (*Seven-Word Poem*).<sup>18</sup> Is it possible that all of these are late works? The brushwork and compositional construction of the *Chu-chih tz'u* are unique, and in the late works there is a very different quality, which is odd. Most of the surviving works are thus quite different from the *Chu-chih tz'u*: is it an authentic example of Huang's "vulgar" cursive script? We must keep this in mind as something to be verified. It is certainly the case that for every master there are forgeries which appear, and Huang is no exception. The surviving *Eight Immortals of Wine* (*Yin-chung pa-hsien ko* 飲中八仙歌), in the Beijing Palace Museum, which is matched with a title inscription (*yin-shou* 引首) by Wen Cheng-ming 文徵明 (1470-1559) and a colophon by Tung Ch'i-ch'ang 董其昌 (1555-1636), is considered to be an example of Huang's cursive script, but after a comparison it is evident that it is a copy. In general, many forgers follow the style of Chu Yün-ming, and straightaway with a glance it is not difficult to distinguish them.

The important position of the *Biographies of Lien P'o and Lin Hsiang-ju* is not something I can completely articulate. Thus I will here borrow the original text of the Ch'ing writer Wu Ch'i-chen's record of Huang T'ing-chien's *Poem on Singing and Drinking above Lake Ying-ch'ang* (*Ying-ch'ang-hu shang ch'ang-ch'ou shih t'ieh* 穎昌湖上唱酬詩帖) in order to set it against other critical appraisals of this scroll:

Observe how the upright brush resembles a hanging needle, and the slanted brush resembles drawing in sand; now it creates waves of flowing water. The compositional construction is solid, and his abilities are majestic, like a keen sword cutting through the battlefield. It is certainly different from the ordinary. Some believe this was because of inspiration from wine; otherwise how could something so marvelous come to this? I have always said that in calligraphy after the Tsin and the T'ang, Mi Yüan-chang should be considered the pinnacle, but now that is no longer so. This calligraphy should be prized like the *Preface to the Orchid Pavilion* (*Lan-t'ing chi* 蘭亭記), which has been passed down since antiquity.<sup>19</sup>

Although there are places where Wu exaggerates and his writing is rather deficient in smoothness and fluency, one can nevertheless cite it as evidence of Huang's distinctive character, and as such it forms a fitting end to this section.

#### *Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai's Poem of Farewell to Liu Man*

In the region of Yün and Hsüan, half of the black-haired multitudes have fled  
from their homes;

Only the one thousand people under your jurisdiction are living safely and  
securely.

You are now among the finest administrators in our dynasty;

Your fame is as high as Mount T'ai.

On the day after the full moon of the tenth month of winter in the year *keng-tzu* [1240], I wrote this poem on behalf of Liu Man of Yang-men, who has requested a poem from me as he was about to leave. I am here commending him for his able administration. May despotic officials and corrupt underofficials feel ashamed.

Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai was a great statesman who helped Chinggis Khan (r. 1206–27) and his son establish the Yüan dynasty.<sup>21</sup> His merit was outstanding, and historically he can be classed with the Han-dynasty prime minister Hsiao Ho 蕭何. Yeh-lü's family was originally of the Khitan clan that formed the imperial house of the Liao dynasty. He was the eighth-generation descendant of Yeh-lü Pei 耶律倍 (*tzu* T'u-yü 突欲 [899–936], enfeoffed as the prince of Tung-tan 東丹). Yeh-lü Pei excelled in the study of both Confucius and Mencius and learned from the *Book of Poetry* (*Shih-ching* 詩經), dynastic histories, and the classics. He was also skilled in music and well-learned in medicine and in painting; he was an extraordinary personage among the Khitan aristocracy. Yeh-lü's father, Yeh-lü Lü 耶律履, was a great scholar, and because of this he became an official under the Chin emperor Shih-tsung 世宗 (Wan-yen Yung 完顏雍; r. 1161–88), serving as assistant to the Right in the Imperial Council. When Yeh-lü was three *sui* 歲 his father died, and while he was young he was taught by his mother, née Yang.<sup>22</sup> The *Yüan shih* 元史 (*Yüan History*) relates that his mother was from an elite Chinese family, so she was able to educate her son in Han learning. In this way he became extremely well read and carried out the family tradition. His biography in the *Yüan shih* (section three) tells us that "he thoroughly penetrated the fields of astronomy, geography, music, mathematics, Buddhism, Taoism, medicine, and divination." He also had a profound understanding of Confucianism, which gave him the prerequisite training for his later career as prime minister.

Chinggis Khan came originally from a nomadic clan among the northern Mongols and through his military accomplishments established a number of khanates stretching from Europe to Asia. Nevertheless, when after invading the Hsi-hsia 西夏 kingdom and toppling the Chin dynasty he established an imperial Mongol dynasty, he could not easily rely on force alone to govern. Thus it was said, "While we have conquered the world on horseback, we cannot rule on horseback." Chinggis Khan's obtaining the services of Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai was parallel to Liu Pei's 劉備 (161–223) obtaining Chu-ko K'ung-ming 諸葛孔明 (Liang 亮; 184–234) in the Three Kingdoms period. Yeh-lü assisted the Mongols in devising strategies to extend their rule; in this way he had a significant effect on history. Chinggis Khan, having heard of the latter's great talent, summoned Yeh-lü and, upon meeting him, beheld a tall, strong man with a magnificent beard and a sonorous voice. Chinggis Khan tested Yeh-lü by saying, "Liao and Chin have been enemies for generations; I have taken revenge for you." His aim was to provoke Yeh-lü's deep regret over the subjugation of his nation, thereby seeing if he could be trusted as a completely loyal servant. With complete awareness of what was happening, however, Yeh-lü replied, "My father and grandfather have both served Chin respectfully; how could I, as a subject, dare consider my lord as an enemy?" Chinggis Khan was extremely pleased with this and shouted, "Wu-t'u ch'e-ho-li," without addressing Yeh-lü by name. The sounds he uttered in Mongolian mean "The Long-bearded One."

Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai was a virtuous prime minister of the early Yüan dynasty, and governed using Confucian principles. His contributions were outstanding, and his administrative achievement was brilliant. From his biography in the *Yüan shih* one can obtain a realistic image of him. Here I will only analyze his poem on the Crawford handscroll to corroborate my understanding of his character (fig. 10).

It has been over seven hundred years since the early Yüan period. A good number of known artists' works have been handed down since the thirteenth century and are considered treasures. This scroll, however, is a special example: an original calligraphy

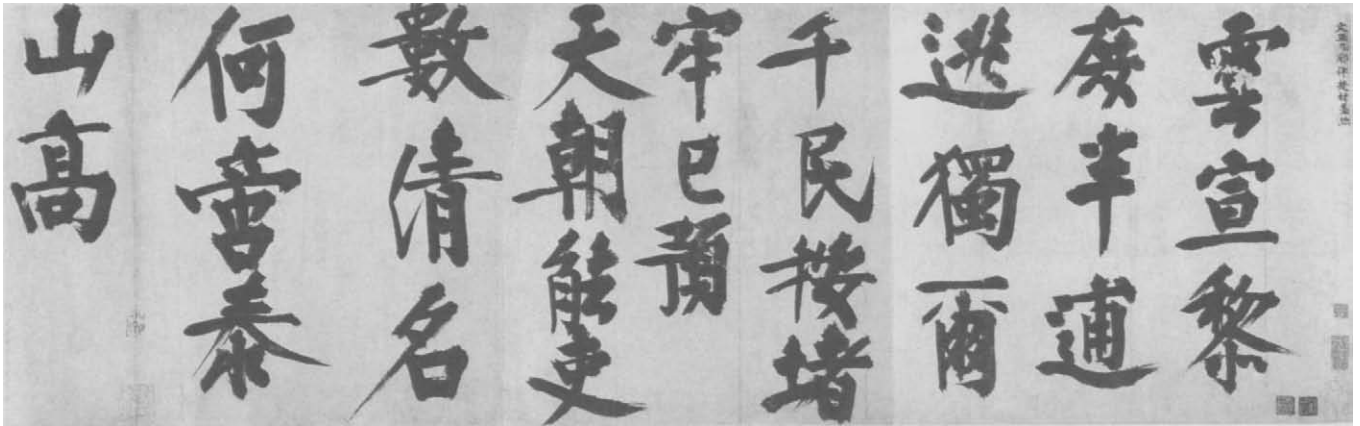


Figure 10. Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai (1190–1244), *Poem of Farewell to Liu Man*, dated 1240.  
Detail of handscroll, ink on paper, H. 36.5 cm.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Bequest of John M. Crawford, Jr., 1988

by a statesman active at the founding of a dynasty. Moreover, the poem was composed by the same man. It is therefore an extraordinary historical document that represents both his literary and artistic achievements. Indeed, it should be highly treasured. On the other hand, since Yeh-lü was not known as a poet or calligrapher, why should one prize this? Earlier in this paper I discussed Chinese calligraphy's special character but did not raise the question of the relationship between calligraphy and a man's life. The significance of this, however, is a universal truth. If one spoke, for example, of surviving autographs by America's first president, Washington, objects not necessarily even two hundred years old, their historical value would clearly be different from that of other objects. Similarly, if in Japan original writings by Itō Hirobumi 伊藤博文 (1841–1909) were to be uncovered, they would certainly be prized like rare gold. Through these analogies one can see the importance of such authentic documents. This handscroll is especially rare, however, as it is the only surviving work by Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai.

Despite Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai's amateur standing as a calligrapher, one can still learn a profound lesson from his large-scale standard script. His calligraphy takes as its models Yen Chen-ch'ing and Chang Chi-chih (fig. 8). Chang was a great master of the Southern Sung dynasty, but his calligraphic works were scattered to the north of China in areas controlled by the Chin dynasty. They were able to avoid destruction and were recorded by later men, as seen in various documents.<sup>23</sup> Chang's calligraphy derives in turn from Yen Chen-ch'ing's, and yet they are not completely the same. They share features of brushwork, including vertical strokes (*shu* 豎), which are thick, horizontal strokes (*heng* 橫), which are fine, similar hooks (*kou* 鉤) and right-descending diagonal (*na* 捺) strokes. Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai's calligraphy employs the structural principles of Yen Chen-ch'ing's writing, yet on careful observation each is different. In comparing Yeh-lü's scroll with work by Chang Chi-chih, it is clear that they both emerge from one tradition and that in general they belong to the same genre. This is because their compositional construction is quite similar. Nevertheless, among Yeh-lü's written characters the horizontal, vertical, right-descending diagonal strokes, and dots (*tien* 點) are all heavily brushed with thick ink; the left-descending diagonal strokes (*p'ieh* 撇) emerge in a straight line; the right-

descending diagonal strokes do not have a break in their curve; and there is hardly any use of the “flying white” (*fei-pai* 飛白) technique. He rarely makes use of the “pauses and transitions” in the path of the brush that allow a writer to give full expression to his calm sincerity. In Chang’s writing the brush tip is fully revealed, and there is some disparity in the quality of the brushwork. When he applies the brush the pressure goes from light to heavy, giving free play to his character as a practiced calligrapher. Some characters begin with strokes that have sharp corners, and the force that follows through is strong and expressive; the forms of these characters are clear and distinct. In spite of these differences, one would still maintain that in this scroll Yeh-lü models himself on Chang, since, regardless of the model unless it is merely a tracing copy (*k’uo-t’ien* 廓填), there will inevitably be differences. Because each man has his own particular traits, and calligraphy being what it is, if one did not see the writer’s individual character in it, it would not deserve to be called art. Moreover, Chang was a brilliant calligrapher of the Southern Sung dynasty. His contemporaries under the Chin thought so highly of him that they claimed his work could prevent fires.

Yeh-lü was born and grew up in the Chin capital of Chung-ching 中京 (the Yüan Tatu 大都, now Beijing). He was twenty-six *sui* when he met Chinggis Khan. In his youth he must have come into contact with Chang’s calligraphy and to a certain degree followed his example. Among the Chin poets and literati there were those like Jen Hsün 任洵 (active 1150–88) and Chao Ping-wen 趙秉文 (1159–1232) who also followed the style of Yen Chen-ch’ing. The effect of this period style’s subtle influence should not be underestimated. Therefore, while we emphasize individual calligraphic style, we must not neglect the effect of overall period styles.

In China there is a saying: “Literature reflects the writer.” Since literature is an edifice of the upper levels of society, such a statement necessarily belongs to the realm of ideology. As a result, it is invariably deduced that “calligraphy reflects the calligrapher” and “painting reflects the painter.” While the root of this inference cannot be proved in pure theory with any certainty, there are at least some examples in which a fundamental correspondence can be observed. This handscroll with Yeh-lü’s calligraphy and poetry reflects every aspect of his character, including his service under Chinggis Khan and Ögödei (r. 1229–41) in politics, economics, and administration, his scholarly research, his easy interaction with people, his scrupulous service as prime minister, his severe self-discipline, and the long duration of his public loyalty to his dynasty. The precise construction of his calligraphy embodies his dignified and honest spirit, and one senses the perfect integration of his moral character with his writing.

Now let us turn to a discussion of Yeh-lü’s poem. Its form is a seven-word quatrain (*chüeh-chü* 絕句) consisting of four lines with a total of twenty-eight characters. In it, he adheres to the rhyme category of *hao* and essentially fulfills the *p’ing-tse* 平仄 (level and oblique tonal pattern) requirements. The poem is a lofty appraisal of the meritorious achievements of the Yang-men official Liu Man and, at the same time, a portrayal of the contemporary scene, in which officials and the common people were forced to flee their homes because of warfare. In praising Liu Man, Yeh-lü implores all civil and military officials to put compassion for the people first. Reading his deeply felt words today still prompts our respect. The first line of the poem refers to the people dwelling in Hsüan-te chou 宣德州 (northeast of Huai-an 懷安, in modern Hopeh Province) and Ying-chou 營州 (east of Ch’ih-ch’eng 赤城, in the same province), many of whom were displaced



refugees who had already lost their homes. The second line points out that only the households in Yang-men County (established as a commandery during the Chin), over which Liu Man had jurisdiction, were secure and at peace. The third line commends Liu Man for being among the best officials of the Yüan dynasty. The fourth line goes a step further, emphasizing that this kind of fine official achievement can be compared to the heights of Mount T'ai. Although the leadership position in Yang-men County and the post of prime minister were very different, Yeh-lü showed no arrogance. He felt that those who had rendered great service should be praised, while those who had committed wrongs should be punished. Furthermore, to be strict and impartial in the meting out of rewards and punishments is easier said than done. In his note following the poem, he dates the writing to the fifteenth day of the tenth month of the year *keng-tzu* 庚子 (1240); this corresponds to the twelfth year of the reign of Ögödei, when Yeh-lü was fifty-five *sui*. There are two possible interpretations of the words "about to leave" (*chiang hsing* 將行) in the clause "Liu Man of Yang-men, who has requested a poem from me as he was about to leave." One is that he was returning to Yang-men; the other is that he had been commanded to go on a punitive expedition. The key line of the passage is "I am here commending him for his able administration." Thus the poem complements the words "May despotic officials and corrupt underofficials feel ashamed." From this one knows that the author deeply despised cruel and corrupt officials, as these feelings are clearly evident in his words. The writing also extends our knowledge of the extreme misery suffered by the common people of the time. What fine models of capable, virtuous, and compassionate officials were Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai and Liu Man of Yang-men!

Although I have not seen records of this poetic handscroll in historical or literary sources, there do exist colophons by famous figures.<sup>24</sup> These unanimously praise Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai's meritorious character and virtuous behavior, and their beauty is unsurpassed. Unrecorded in the *Yüan shih*, Liu Man is known to us only from this poem. We can also rely on the information contained in the Yüan writer Tai Liang's 戴良 (1317-83) long colophon, dated to the ninth year of Chih-cheng (1349): "Later Liu-hou 劉侯 [Man] served as a commander, conquered Pien[-liang 汴涼], and defeated the Chin. He was a famous official of the period." Liu's great-grandson Chih-tso 之佐 was at that time an official at P'u-chiang 浦江, and his ancestor's handscroll was still a treasure of his. Therefore he successively requested the Yüan writers Kung Su 龔璠 (1266-1331), Tai Liang, Cheng T'ao 鄭濤 (1315-ca. 1380), and Sung Lien 宋濂 (1310-81), all great men, to inscribe it. Based on the fact that Sung's colophon has no precise date and yet contains the sentence "Ch'u-ts'ai began to serve our dynasty in his twenty-sixth year," we know that this colophon was inscribed in the late Yüan and definitely not in the early Ming. Since Sung Lien was the historian in charge of the compilation of the *Yüan shih*, it is unfortunate that there is only a brief mention of Yeh-lü's origins and poetry in the colophon, and that it does not include information on Liu Man and his descendants; this is a regrettable flaw in an otherwise perfect thing.

There is no documentation of the transmission of this handscroll in the Ming dynasty, and it is not certain that it continued to be kept by Liu's descendants. The seals in relief on the paper join reading "Liu-shih Ching-an" 劉氏靜安 and "Hsiao-chai" 小齋 have the appearance of typical Yüan seals. According to the Ch'ing writer Li Shih-cho's 李世倬 (1673-1744) colophon, these are seals of Liu Man's great-grandson, and Tai Liang, in his colophon, states, "Liu-hou's great-grandson [Liu] Chih-tso came to serve in my

city [P'u-chiang]." The seal nevertheless reads "Liu-shih Ching-an." Whether this refers to father, son, or grandson is not precisely clear, but there is no doubt that it must be a descendant of Liu Man. The "Hsiao-chai" seal perhaps belongs to another Yüan-dynasty figure; this remains to be verified. Its placement suggests that it is probably later than "Ching-an."

In the Ch'ing dynasty the scroll entered the collection of Li Shih-cho, who inscribed it twice; this supplies a trustworthy point of reference. At the end of the scroll are seals of the famous modern figures Shen Pao-hsi 沈寶熙 (1871–after 1940), Chin Kung-pei 金鞏北, and Feng Kung-tu 馮公度 (twentieth century), through whose collections the scroll passed. Around 1910, Lo Chen-yü 羅振玉 (1866–1940) recorded having seen the scroll:

Yeh-lü Wen-cheng's 耶律文正 calligraphy scroll for Liu Yang-men is in the collection of someone from Shansi. This summer I was able to see the paper scroll through a roundabout course. The calligraphic style is square and energetic, close to the style of Yen T'ai-shih 顏太師 [Yen Chen-ch'ing] and Huang Shan-ku [Huang T'ing-chien]. The poem was not in his collection of poems [*Chan-jan chü-shih chi* 澹然居士集]. I asked Chin Kung-pei to take pictures of it so that I could send them to my friends in Shanghai to make reproductions. I had never seen Yeh-lü's calligraphy before. It is something to be treasured.<sup>25</sup>

Also, according to Wang Kuo-wei's 王國維 (1877–1927) *Yeh-lü Wen-cheng-kung nien-p'u* 耶律文正公年譜 (*Chronological Biography of Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai*), the scroll was recorded as in the collection of Yüan Li-chun 袁勵準 (1875–1936) of Wu-chin 武進 in Kiangsu.<sup>26</sup> In about the third decade of this century the scroll left China. Since it is now in a permanent location, it is possible that one of the older generation will be able to provide some first-hand information about it; this would be fortunate indeed.

In the poem several characters are miswritten: *an-tu* 安堵 is written 按堵; *i-yü* 已預 is written *Ssu-yü* 巳預; and *wang* 望 is written 望. These are minor flaws, and one should not be overly exacting of an ancient statesman whose origins were among a minority people. The Yüan poet Kung Su's colophon states, "It causes one to imagine the men of that time. Nothing they did was not based on kind-heartedness and benevolent rule. They chanted poetry and wrote calligraphy to express it." Today when I face Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai's calligraphy and poem, my heart is filled with admiration as I recall virtues and great historical achievements. These inspire in me a deep veneration so that there is no time for trivial things.

### *Chao Meng-fu's* Su Shih's "Song on a Painting of Misty River and Layered Hills"

As a genre of classical Chinese literature, nature poetry emerged in the period between the fourth and fifth centuries. Its historical background is truly complex. It appeared in a period of social turmoil during which the literati class was permeated with the influences of Buddhism and Taoism; many of the literati had eremitic tendencies. Besides Juan Chi 阮籍 (210–63), Hsi K'ang 嵇康 (223–62), and the other members of the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove, the most clearly representative was T'ao Ch'ien 陶潛 (365–427). This

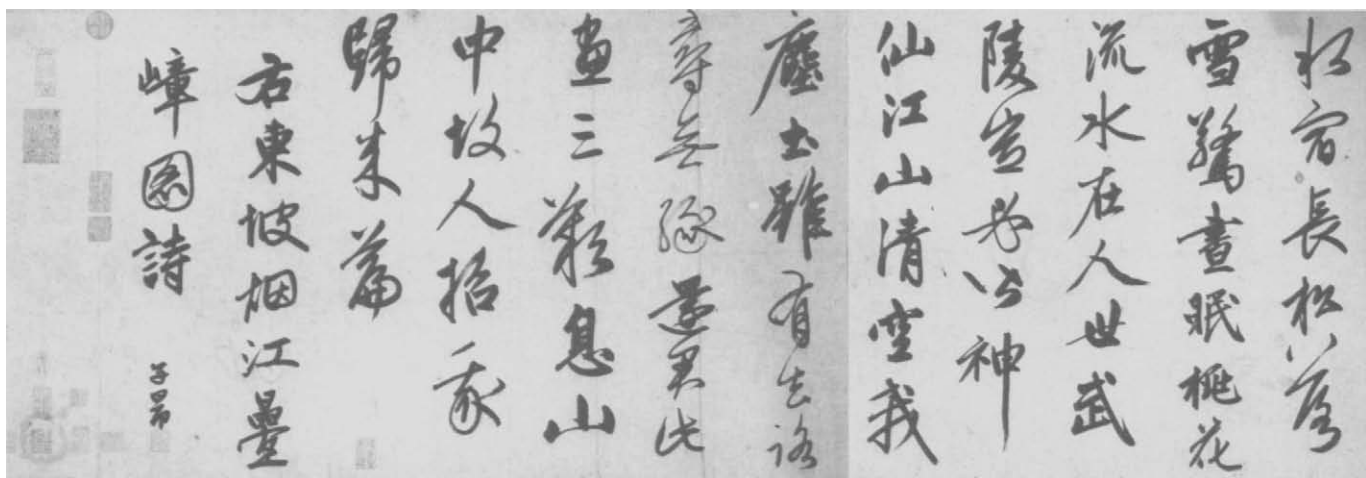
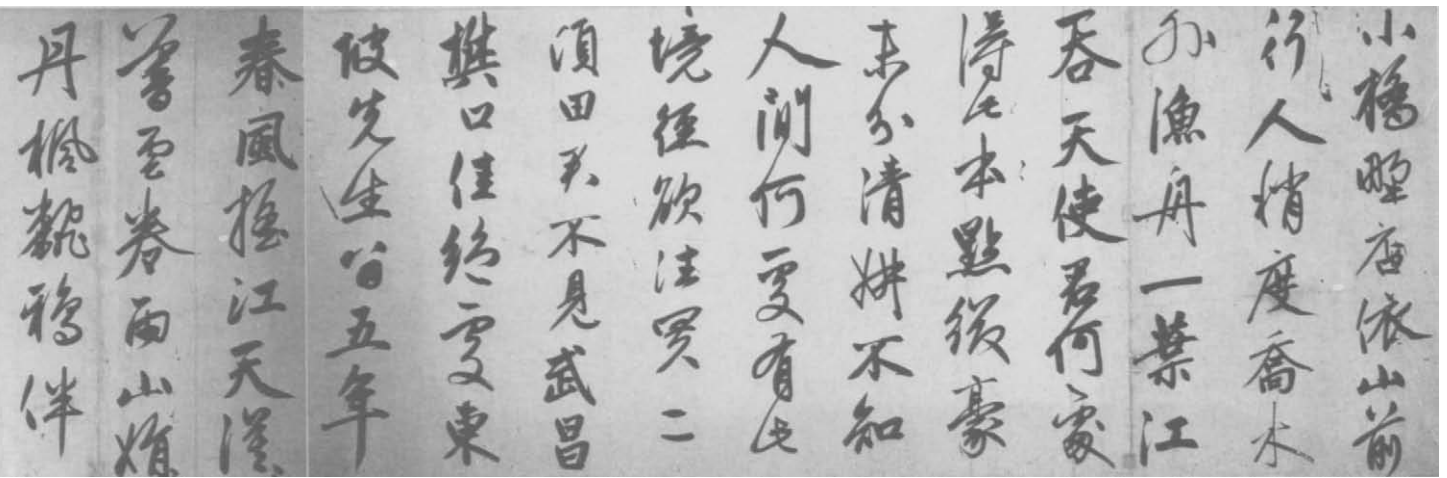


Figure 11. Chao Meng-fu (1254–1322),  
*Su Shih's "Song on a Painting of Misty River and Layered Hills."*  
 Detail of handscroll, ink on paper, H. 47 cm.  
 Liaoning Provincial Museum, Shenyang

master's "Homecoming" poem abundantly conveys his thoughts on withdrawing from the world. The lines "Picking chrysanthemums by the eastern hedge / I catch sight of the distant southern hills" truly express the idyllic poet's situation.<sup>27</sup> Once this genre was established, it evolved to form a school in which the next leading figure was the great T'ang poet Wang Wei 王維 (701–61). The Northern and Southern Sung dynasties had no lack of famous masters, and among them Su Shih was the leading artistic talent. Indeed, he was the most outstanding poet of his day. His "Song on a Painting of Misty River and Layered Hills" was written for a handscroll by Wang Shen 王詵 (active second half of the eleventh century). Wang's painting was highly valued, and Su inscribed the poem after the painting, resulting in two pieces of silk in a single scroll—a joint work by two great Northern Sung masters of poetry and painting which was highly celebrated. Su Shih's poem became very popular and widely known, while at the same time, since Wang's painting could not be reproduced, its image was less familiar. Because of this, Yüan and Ming painters and calligraphers were limited to chanting Su Shih's poem, and a powerful resonance was created about it. Chanting it alone, however, seemed insufficient, so calligraphers wrote it out (fig. 11). This too seemed insufficient, so painters gave it form. All of this was due to the almost magical artistic power of the original work, which prompted others to attempt to capture the natural and hidden beauty of this immortal's realm.

Since the Sung and Yüan dynasties, Chinese landscape painting has always emphasized poetic feeling, and this became a standard for evaluating a work's quality. Indeed, this was what the literati considered the dividing line between elegance and vulgarity. Su Shih vigorously promoted literati painting and personally put it into practice. So deep and far-reaching was his influence that one cannot really calculate it.

The great early Yüan-dynasty calligrapher and painter Chao Meng-fu inherited the Northern Sung tradition of Su Shih. He advocated that in painting one should bypass the Southern Sung academic style and study instead the painting techniques of the T'ang



masters and the Northern Sung literati. With regard to calligraphy, in his early years he studied Sung emperor Kao-tsung 高宗 (Chao Kou 趙構; r. 1127–62) as well as Chang Chi-chih. In the early Ming period Sung Lien wrote: “This master’s calligraphy was always changing. At first he imitated Ssu-ling 思陵 [Chao Kou]; later he adopted the styles of Chung Yu 鍾繇 [151–230], Wang Hsi-chih 王羲之 [ca. 307–ca. 365], and Wang Hsien-chih. In his later years he carefully studied Li Pei-hai 李北海 [Li Yung 李邕; 678–747].”<sup>28</sup> Yang Shih-ch’i 楊士奇 (1365–1444), in his inscription on Chao’s *Four Poems on Autumn Feelings* (*Ch’iu-hsing ssu-shou* 秋興四首), wrote: “Previous generations said that when Chao Meng-fu practiced calligraphy, he first modeled himself on Chung Yüan-ch’ang 鍾元常 [Chung Yu], later preferring large-size characters. Then he studied the style of Li Pei-hai, and in the end followed Yu-chün 右軍 [Wang Hsi-chih].”<sup>29</sup> Yang’s statement is closer to the truth. The *Tung-t’u hsüan-lan pien* furnishes another bit of information:

After Sung-hsüeh’s 松雪 [Chao’s] *Thousand-Character Classic* in running script is Hsien-yü T’ai-ch’ang’s 鮮于太常 [Hsien-yü Shu’s] inscription, in which he states that Chao studied the style of Shen Fu 沈馥 [active in the early sixth century]. Sung-hsüeh himself wrote, “Shen Fu was from Wu-hsing. He was an official, and a preeminent Wei calligrapher who received imperial commissions to write the texts for . . . stelae. His brush technique has an antique elegance. Many have not recognized its quality, but T’ai-ch’ang did. I was so pleased that I wrote this note.”<sup>30</sup>

Clearly Chao’s calligraphy was successfully modeled on many sources; this is what is known as merging one hundred streams into a great river. In this manner he developed his own style of writing.

Among the great masters of calligraphy in history, those who attained skill in every form were few, whereas those who specialized in one form were in the majority. Chao

alone was skilled in seal, clerical, cursive, standard, and running forms; in each he was brilliantly accomplished. His friend Hsien-yü Shu said, "In seal, clerical, standard, running, and cursive scripts, Tzu-ang 子昂 [Chao] is preeminent in the present age, and of all the scripts, he is best in small standard script." This statement is contained in a colophon to small standard-script calligraphy by Chao and therefore stresses that script type.<sup>31</sup> In fact, Chao was accomplished in every script; therefore his talent was a model for both his contemporaries and later followers. For those in China who study calligraphy, Yen Chen-ch'ing, Liu Kung-ch'üan, Ou-yang Hsiu 歐陽修 (1007–72), and Chao are held as the models. In fact, these are not the only four masters, but from among them the majority select one as a point of departure, later studying others. Each period also has a particular trend. For example, in the Yüan dynasty, once Chao's style was fashionable it became the mainstream. This situation, however, was rare in the T'ang and Sung dynasties. Not only did Chao influence his own period, but his style continued into the Ming and Ch'ing dynasties.

Chao's calligraphic style became widespread as it prevailed throughout all levels of society and was accordingly established as a fixed aesthetic mode. The compositional structure of Chao's calligraphy is pure and elegant; his forms both depart from and adhere to the rules, with no loss of propriety. Glancing to left and right, there is an abundance of graceful beauty; its achievements are profound. Even though words praising him cannot adequately describe his calligraphy, in all fairness they can give expression to his individual character and reveal his unrestrained talent.

Chao attempted to continue the achievements of his predecessors, but he held back somewhat and thus cannot but be compared with a beautiful but flawed piece of jade. But his caution in no way inhibited the loud praise he received from all sides. For example, in the *Ch'ing-ho shu-hua fang* 清河書畫舫 (*The Boat of Calligraphy and Painting on the Ch'ing River*), Chang Ch'ou 張丑 (1577–1643), in commenting on Chao's transcription of T'ao Ch'ien's *Homecoming*, said: "His brushwork is earnest and round, and the spirit of his ink is free of inhibitions. He is worthy of being considered 'a brush without regrets,' and one who creates great waves, and yet he alone is experienced."<sup>32</sup> A famous connoisseur of the late Ming dynasty, Chang had an excellent eye. While his comments reveal a sense of propriety, they also contain a measure of overstatement. "His brushwork is earnest and round" and "the spirit of his ink is free of inhibitions"—these are applicable to all of Chao's calligraphy. As for his statement "a brush without regrets"—this goes beyond overstatement. Similarly, while the phrase "great waves" is unnecessary, "he . . . is experienced" is quite true. From all of this one fact emerges, namely that Chao's tendency to standardize his calligraphy overshadowed his other varied talents.

With regard to the last of the above points, one can compare Chao's calligraphy with that of his cousin Chao Meng-chien 趙孟堅 (1199–1267?). While Chao Meng-chien's calligraphy is much more open and has more strength, it is not easy to learn, and its popularity was therefore short-lived. Examples of his calligraphy include the *Painting of Hsü Yü-kung in the Snow with Blossoming Plum and Bamboo* (*Hsü Yü-kung hsüeh-chung mei chu t'u* 徐禹功雪中梅竹圖; Liaoning Museum), the *Poems and Painting* (*Tzu-shu shih-hua chüan* 自書詩畫卷) handscroll (Beijing Palace Museum), the *Poems* (*Tzu-shu shih chüan* 自書詩卷) handscroll (Shanghai Museum), and the Crawford Collection's *Three Poems on the Painting of Ink Plum Blossoms and Bamboo* (*Tzu-shu mei chu san shih* 自書梅竹三詩; fig. 12). These all belong to the category of running-cursive script in which the running

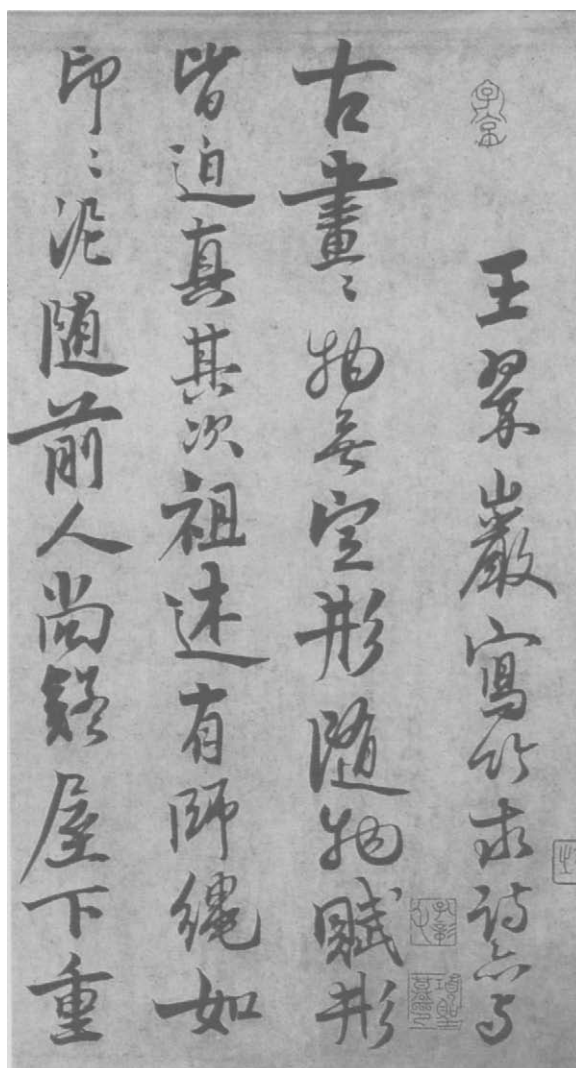


Figure 12. Chao Meng-chien (1199–1267?),  
*Three Poems on the Painting  
 of Ink Plum Blossoms and Bamboo*, dated 1260.  
 Detail of handscroll, ink on paper, H. 33.5 cm.  
 The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York;  
 Bequest of John M. Crawford, Jr., 1988

script is predominant. Chao Meng-chien was influenced by the styles of Ou-yang Hsün 歐陽詢 (557–641), Ou-yang T'ung 歐陽通 (d. 691), Su Shih, Mi Fu, and Yang Wu-chiu 楊無咎 (1098–1169). He succeeded in blending these together into one style without leaving any element unintegrated. He was thus adept at studying the great masters of calligraphy. The Yüan writer Lu Hsiung 盧熊, in inscribing Chao Meng-fu's *Hsi-wei t'ieh* 希魏帖, said:

In calligraphy since the time of the T'ang masters Yen Chen-ch'ing and Liu Kung-ch'üan, many have set great store by inner strength ["muscle and bone"], yet they are lacking in stylistic resonance. Indeed, those who merely pursue inner strength are impetuous, while those who delight in stylistic resonance are excessively supple and seductive. It is truly difficult to combine both aims in appropriate balance. . . . In this dynasty Chao Wei-kung 趙魏公 [Meng-fu] is considered lofty, surpassing the ancients. His roots lie in Chung



Figure 13. Wen Cheng-ming (1470–1559), *Landscape Inspired by Su Shih's "Song on a Painting of Misty River and Layered Hills,"* dated 1508 (see fig. 11)

Yu and Wang Hsi-chih, and he is completely conversant with the Tsin and T'ang masters. Unlike modern men, he does not esteem that which might hold him back. His calligraphy has influenced the entire nation.<sup>33</sup>

Although Lu Hsiung felt that only Chao Meng-fu was capable of uniting inner strength with stylistic resonance, in actuality Chao had more of the latter. The colophon might have been more appropriate for Chao Meng-chien's calligraphy. For those who might disagree, I must concede that Chao Meng-fu's calligraphy is still superior to Chao Meng-chien's in its attention to every detail.

Of the numerous surviving examples of Chao Meng-fu's seal, clerical, standard, cursive, and running scripts in museum collections, the seal and clerical scripts are rare, while the standard and running are common, with the cursive in between. His small standard characters are modeled after the *Huang-t'ing ching* 黃庭經 (*Yellow Court Scripture* by Wang Hsi-chih). I have seen his handscroll of the *Tao-te ching* 道德經 in narrow outlined columns of small standard script, and it supports Hsien-yü Shu's statement that this was the best of all of Chao's script forms. It is the work of a righteous mind and calm hand with no sign of labor. As for the normal-size standard script as seen in the *Tan-pa Stele of the Lung-hsing Temple* 龍興寺膽巴碑, the *Fu-shen kuan Stele* 福神觀碑, and the *Record of the Huai-yün Temple* 淮雲院記, it both departs from and adheres to the rules and is a profound achievement. As the forms are restricted, it is difficult to see its refined excellence. Chao's running script is more prevalent, and here it is easy to see his brilliant skill. In his late years, during which his technique emerged from that of Wang Hsi-chih, the spirit-resonance has a lasting and satisfying elegance. Only the large-scale running script is truly rare. In *Su Shih's "Song on a Painting of Misty River and Layered Hills,"* the large running-script characters are as big as the palm of a hand. This large and long handscroll is the only surviving example of Chao's large-scale characters. As the Ming calligrapher Li Tung-yang 李東陽 (1447–1516) states in his seal-script colophon to this work, "Sung-hsüeh's large-scale calligraphy is extremely rare."<sup>34</sup> Precisely because it is so rare, when this handscroll entered the Ch'ing palace collection, the Ch'ien-lung emperor had the effrontery to inscribe six characters at the beginning of the scroll reading,



Figure 14. Shen Chou (1427–1509), *Landscape Inspired by Su Shih's*  
 “Song on a Painting of Misty River and Layered Hills,” dated 1507 (see fig. 11)

“Shuang-kou yen-tso chia-che” 雙鉤贗作佳者 (“Excellent double-outline [tracing] copy”). Astonishingly, the scroll was then consigned to limbo for over two hundred years.

The large characters in this scroll are written with a worn-out brush and in the initial columns are somewhat reserved. Soon after, however, the brush is wielded with great confidence, moving smoothly with complete mastery of the Tsin and T’ang methods. The left- and right-descending diagonal strokes are long and thin, completely absorbing the approach of Huang T’ing-chien; later Wen Cheng-ming would achieve the same. The compositional construction reveals a refined spacing, bearing to an extent the mark of the T’ang calligrapher Li Yung. It is most likely a product of Chao’s mature years. This handscroll is especially rare because it combines Su Shih’s poetry, Chao’s large-scale calligraphy, and two paintings added to it by the Ming Soochow masters Shen Chou 沈周 (1427–1509) and Wen Cheng-ming (figs. 13, 14), which is like “adding flowers to brocade,” forming an excellent match. The poetry, calligraphy, and paintings are inseparably joined, adding still more to its artistic value.

The two paintings added by Shen and Wen are both based on the poem’s theme and content. In giving visual form to the poem, neither painting’s composition is excessive, and the specific depiction of the scenery differs in myriad ways. The result emerges from these great masters’ spirits like no ordinary fragrance. When Shen painted his work he was already over eighty-one *sui*, and yet he was still full of vigor. The “thousand blue-green peaks,” small bridges and country inns, hundred paths and flying springs, opening valleys and coursing streams, as well as the line “A fishing boat like a single leaf, the river swallowing the sky” 漁舟一葉江吞天, all are marvelously depicted. In transforming the poem into their paintings, the artists have truly invested the landscape with great beauty. It is as the poet wrote: “How is it that at Wu-ling all are immortals?” 武陵豈必皆神仙. In leading the viewer through the marvelous scenery, they have achieved the aim of capturing the poem’s feeling in the paintings, while the paintings transform the artistic effect of the poem. Wen Cheng-ming added his painting when he was thirty-nine *sui*. It is painted in monochrome ink with blue washes and follows the Mi style of painting mountains now and then accentuated with horizontal dotting and a few texture strokes on each hill. The forests and trees are thin and delicate, and the brushwork is strong and



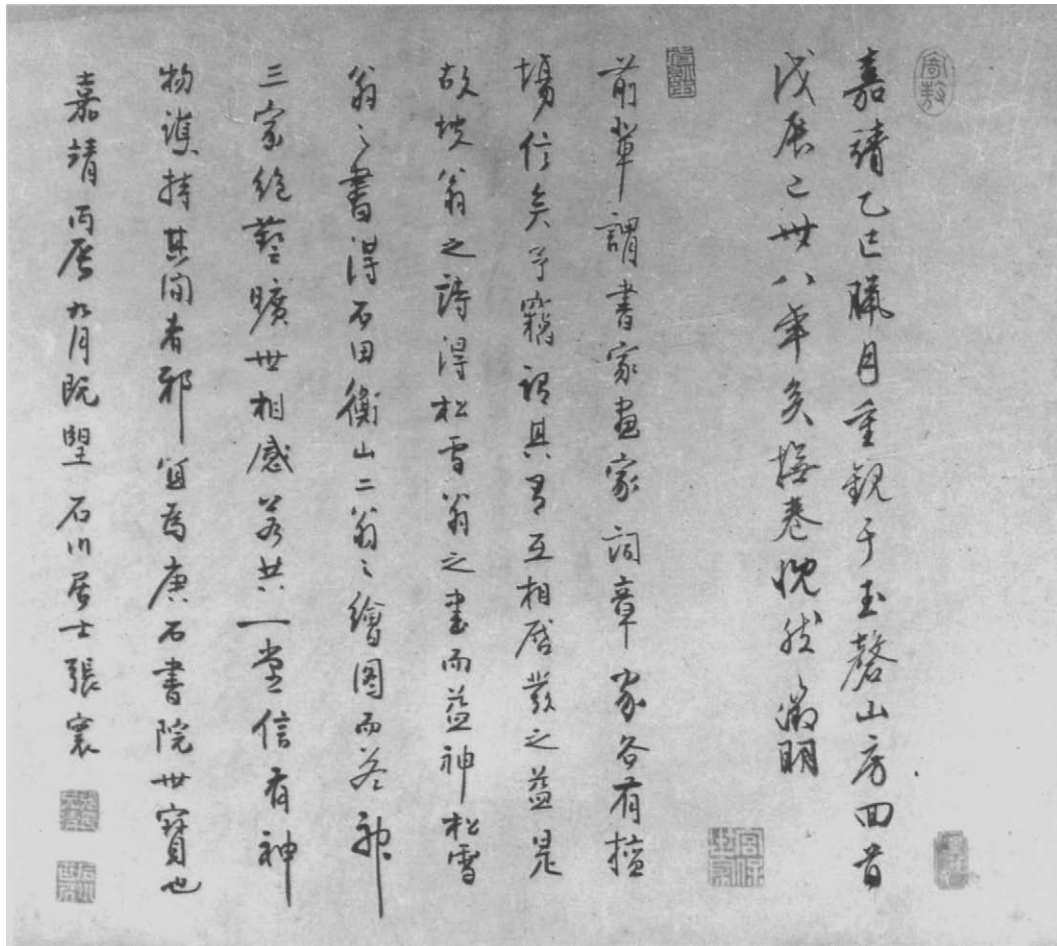


Figure 15. Wen Cheng-ming and Chang Huan (active mid-16th c.), colophons dated 1545 and 1556, respectively, on *Su Shih's* "Song on a Painting of Misty River and Layered Hills"

beautiful. But in actual delineation one sees some of the incongruities of a young artist. The paintings of Wen and Shen present a clear example of the saying "Great success comes late in life." Wen's surviving early works are very rare, and thus the historical significance of this painting goes beyond its aesthetic value. When he himself had the painting remounted thirty-eight years later, at the age of seventy-seven *sui*, and examined the scroll again, he wrote, "How dearly I cherish this scroll." How true were his words!

A colophon (fig. 15) by the Ming writer Chang Huan 張寰 (active in the mid-sixteenth century) at the end of this handscroll, in which the work of four great masters is united, reads:

When former generations spoke of calligraphers, painters, and poets, it is true that each had his expertise. In my opinion this had the advantage of inspiring every other aspect of their art. For this reason P'o-weng's 坡翁 [Su Shih's] poem obtained Sung-hsüeh's calligraphy and thus benefited; Sung-hsüeh's calligraphy then benefited by obtaining the paintings of Shen Chou and Wen

Cheng-ming. The arts of the three masters resonate across distant generations as if they were gathered in one hall. Indeed, can it be that there was a protecting spirit among them?

In the process of being handed down intact over a period of seven hundred years, this scroll has passed through the collections of connoisseurs who have cherished its content like an intact jade *pi*, and their intense admiration inspires later men's respect.

Translated by Stephen Little

#### NOTES

The notes were compiled by the editors.

- 1 According to the archaeologist Yü Hsing-wu's *Chia-ku wen-tzu shih-lin* (Annotations to the characters on oracle bones [Beijing: Chung-hua, 1979]), about 4,500 different rudimentary characters had been discovered by 1978, yet those that could be deciphered amounted to less than one third of the total.
- 2 Chang Huai-kuan, *Shu-tuan* (Opinion on calligraphy), in Chang Yen-yüan, *Fa-shu yao-lu* (Essential record of calligraphy exemplars), *chüan* 8, p. 120, ISTP (Taipei: Shih-chieh, 1971), ser. 1, vol. 1.
- 3 Ssu-ma Ch'ien, *Shih-chi* (Records of the historian) (Beijing: Chung-hua, 1959), vol. 8, *chüan* 81, pp. 2439-44.
- 4 See Huang Tien, ed., "Shan-ku nien-p'u" (A chronological biography of Shan-ku [Huang T'ing-chien]; preface 1199), in *Shan-ku shih ch'üan-chi* (The complete collected poetry of Shan-ku) (1876 ed.).
- 5 The scroll is reproduced in *Shoseki meihin sōkan* (Compendium of masterpiece calligraphy) (Tokyo: Nigensha, 1971), no. 162. Fan P'ang, of the Eastern Han period, died A.D. 169 in the struggle between two factions.
- 6 Fan Ch'eng-ta's colophon on Huang T'ing-chien's handscroll and two other colophons are recorded in Chang Ch'ou, *Ch'ing-ho shu-hua fang* (The boat of calligraphy and painting on the Ch'ing River) (reprint, Taipei: Hsüeh-hai, 1975), vol. 3, p. 14.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 The inscription is recorded in Pien Yung-yü, comp., *Shih-ku-t'ang shu-hua hui-k'ao* (Classified record of calligraphy and painting in Shih-ku Hall) (Wu-hsing: Chien-ku shu-she, 1921), *chüan* 11, pp. 17a-b.
- 9 Pien, comp., *Shih-ku-t'ang shu-hua hui-k'ao*, *chüan* 11, pp. 6b-7a.
- 10 Pien, comp., *Shih-ku-t'ang shu-hua hui-k'ao*, *chüan* 11, p. 13b.
- 11 T'ao Tsung-i, *Shu-shih hui-yao*, *chüan* 6, in Wang Yün-wu, ed., *Ssu-ku ch'üan-shu chen-pen* (Taipei: Shang-wu, 1982), vol. 167, p. 10.
- 12 Chan Ching-feng, *Tung-t'u hsüan-lan pien* (preface dated 1591) (Beijing: Palace Museum, 1907), *chüan* 4, p. 6b.
- 13 Ku Fu, *P'ing-sheng chuang-kuan* (The magnificent things seen in my life) (reprint, Taipei: Han-hua, 1971), *chüan* 2, p. 59.
- 14 Ibid., *chüan* 2, pp. 62-63.
- 15 Wu Ch'i-chen, *Shu-hua chi* (Notes on calligraphy and painting) (Taipei: Wen-shih-che, 1971), *chüan* 3, pp. 251-52.
- 16 See "Shu tzu tso ts'ao ho" (Writings after my work of cursive calligraphy), in *Shan-ku t'i-pa* (Inscriptions and colophons by Shan-ku), ISTP, vol. 22, *chüan* 5, pp. 48-49.
- 17 The scroll is published in *Chung-kuo wen-wu*, no. 2 (1980).
- 18 *Shih-ch'ü pao-chi san-pien* (Imperial catalogue of painting and calligraphy, series three) (Taipei: Palace Museum, 1969), *chüan* 3, p. 1426.
- 19 Wu Ch'i-chen, "Huang Shan-ku ying-ch'ang-hu shang ch'ang-ch'ou shih t'ieh" (Huang Shan-ku's calligraphy of the *Poem on Singing and Drinking above Lake Ying-ch'ang*), in Wu, *Shu-hua chi*, *chüan* 6, pp. 728-30.
- 20 A slightly different version of the translation, by Achilles Fang, is published in Laurence Sickman, ed., *Chinese Calligraphy and Painting in the Collection of John M. Crawford, Jr.* (New York: Pierpont Morgan Library, 1962), pp. 93-94.
- 21 Sung Lien, ed., *Lieh-chuan* (Collection of biographies), *chüan* 33, in *Yüan shih* (Beijing: Chung-hua, 1981), vol. 11, pp. 3455-65.
- 22 *Sui* is used when Chinese reckoning of age is followed. According to the Chinese system, a person is considered to be one year old at birth and becomes one *sui* older every lunar New Year.
- 23 For a discussion of Chang Chi-chih's calligraphy, see T'ao, *Shu-shih hui-yao*, *chüan* 6, p. 38.
- 24 For a list of people who wrote colophons on this scroll, see Sickman, ed., *Chinese Calligraphy and Painting*, pp. 93-94.

- 25 Lo Chen-yü, "Yung-lu jih-cha shan-yü-ka'o" (Deletions from correspondence), *Chung-kuo li-shih wen-hsien chi-k'an* (ca. 1910). I am very grateful to Lo Chen-yü's descendant Lo Chi-tzu, who copied the text for me.
- 26 See Wang Kuo-wei, *Yeh-lü wen-cheng-kung nien-p'u* (Chronological biography of Yeh-lü Ch'uts'ai) (Taipei: Wen-hua, 1968), vol. 9, no. 22, p. 3738. But Achilles Fang points out that Yüan Li-chun, who also wrote a colophon on this scroll, was a native of Wan-p'ing, that is, Beijing (Sickman, ed., *Chinese Calligraphy and Painting*, p. 94).
- 27 T'ao Ch'ien, from "Twenty Poems after Drinking Wine," English translation from James Hightower, *The Poetry of T'ao Ch'ien* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), p. 130.
- 28 Ma Tsang-ho, comp., *Shu Lin tsao chien* (Reflective critiques on calligraphy), *chüan* 10, p. 259, ISTP, vol. 5.
- 29 Yang Shih-ch'i's colophon is recorded in Pien, comp., *Shi-ku-t'ang shu-hua hui-k'ao*, *chüan* 16, pp. 67b-68a.
- 30 Chan, *Tung-t'u hsüan-lan pien*, *chüan* 2, p. 144.
- 31 The colophon, which is on a transcription of the *Kuo Ch'in lun* (A discussion of passing Ch'in), is recorded in Chang, *Ch'ing-ho shu-hua fang*, *chüan* 3, pp. 40a-b.
- 32 *Ibid.*, *chüan* 3, pp. 44b-45a.
- 33 Lu Hsiung's colophon is recorded in Pien, comp., *Shi-ku-t'ang shu-hua hui-k'ao*, *chüan* 16, pp. 45b-46a.
- 34 Li Tung-yang's colophon, along with his title inscription, is reproduced in *Chügoku shoseki taikan: Ryönei-sho Hakubutsukan* (General survey of Chinese calligraphy: Liaoning Provincial Museum) (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1986), p. 256.



## PART II

### *Lyric Aesthetics*

Figure 16. Ch'iao Chung-ch'ang (active first half 12th c.), *Latter Red Cliff Ode*. Detail of handscroll, ink on paper, H. 29.5 cm. The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri; Nelson Gallery Foundation Purchase



# Chinese Lyric Aesthetics

YU-KUNG KAO

## *Lyric Aesthetics: Definition and Scope*

The Chinese aesthetic tradition, which has successively focused on music, on poetry, and then on painting, has revealed, despite the great diversity of genres and many controversies in interpretation, certain consistent characteristics that epitomize what I shall call lyric aesthetics. In a general sense, because lyric aesthetics consists of a set of basic, often implicit, concepts concerning the many diverse components of the creative process, the term should be applicable to issues in all aesthetic activities in all cultures. What interests me, however, is not a general theory and application of these concepts but, rather, the historical process by which certain simple underlying aesthetics developed into comprehensive and highly complex repertoires of artistic principles and technical rules, principles and rules that influenced and shaped almost all major art forms and artistic products in early China. The purpose of my study, therefore, is to trace the evolution of five such repertoires, in music, literature, poetry, calligraphy, and painting.

The evolution of the repertoires that constitute the major legacies of Chinese lyric aesthetics took place in four stages: inception, refinement (of which there were two stages), and canonization. Music was the first focus of this aesthetic. In the pre-Ch'in period a theory of music emerged for the first time from the broader cultural framework, and its evolution set the foundation for the future development of aesthetics. The onset of the second stage in the third century raised issues which were first clearly stated in Lu Chi's 陸機 (261–303) important theory of literature and which were extended and found mature expression in Liu Hsieh's 劉勰 (ca. 465–ca. 522) masterwork, the *Wen-hsin tiao-lung* 文心雕龍 (*The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*), in the early sixth century. The third and most crucial stage took place in the eighth and ninth centuries and saw the theoretical framework of the earlier stages refined and applied to actual artistic productions. A poetics centering on the new verse form, regulated verse (*lü-shih* 律詩), was created, as well as a new theory of calligraphy that justified calligraphy as a major art form. These new directions taken in T'ang times led to the ultimate achievement of the fourth and final stage: the culmination of lyric aesthetics in the Northern Sung in the synthesis of the diverse schools of aesthetics into an integral theory of painting. From the tenth century onward the gradual assimilation of concepts drawn from the aesthetics of "landscape painting" (*shan-shui hua* 山水畫) and "literati painting" (*wen-jen hua* 文人畫) led to the eventual dominance of an orthodox theory of painting, which did not end until the end of the classical period at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Needless to say, no single study can do justice to such a vast topic. In this essay, I propose to identify some of the major trends by discussing representative texts from each stage in the development of lyric aesthetics. Although the structure of this paper may thus appear to be defined by periodization, my main concern is to bring out the continuity that underlies the many changes in artistic materials, techniques, and cultural milieus

over time. To give a more complete picture of the central spirit of this aesthetic continuity, I shall begin with a brief definition of lyric aesthetics.

The emphasis of lyric aesthetics is revealed by the choice of the word *aesthetics*. Some readers may question the use of *aesthetics*, arguing that *theory of art* is a better term, particularly since the texts I discuss are drawn chiefly from critical writings on works of art. However, I believe that aesthetics—in the sense of an artistically integrated code underlying the creation of various works of art—may give us a better opportunity of coming up with a unified theory that integrates the many diverse art forms of the classical Chinese tradition. Aesthetics centers on the individual's experience of creativity, whereas a theory of art is concerned with the study of the nature of art. Roger Scruton, in another context, has made a similar distinction between a theory of art and the experience of art:

It seems to me that too much of contemporary analytical aesthetics has focused on questions concerning the nature of art, at the expense of more basic questions considered by Kant, the question of the nature and value of aesthetic interest.<sup>1</sup>

This “aesthetic interest,” in the sense of aesthetic understanding or experience, is precisely the object of my study.

Of course, a theory of art and aesthetics are by no means unrelated; their close affinity cannot be overstated, but the difference of focus between the two disciplines is equally important: the former dwells on the independent nature of the art object, whereas the latter takes the creative experience as its primary concern. In a theory of art, the existence of the artist is a necessary condition for art, but he can remain separate from the work of art itself, whereas the creative experience is the focus of lyric aesthetics. Within the scope of art theory, the usually opposed interpretations of art as representation and art as expression can be seen as two sides of the same coin: they are premised on the same distinction between the artist and his work; and thus self-expression can be treated as a special kind of representation, in which the artist's inner states are the objects of his observation. The theory of art by this redefinition is the natural and appropriate forum for a discussion of representation theory and acts as a unified contrast to aesthetic theory, which is concerned with modes of presentation.

Theories of representation contrast with the theories about the creative artist that are the focus of lyric aesthetics. It is in the artist himself as much as in the art object that answers concerning the creative process can be discovered, for artists in nearly all cultures tend to see their work as inseparable from the creative act: the art object, though independent in its material mode, is to the artist an extension or a repetition of his inner expression. With the art object placed in this perspective, our attention naturally shifts to the creative experience itself and to the artist's understanding of it, which leads us to consider not a theory of art but a study of aesthetics.

Aesthetics, in its more traditional sense, is the study of aesthetic experience in a theoretical context, but here we will study creative experience in personal and historical contexts. In other words, the object of study is defined as whatever an artist believes to be his experience—primarily what the artist has written about his or another's creative efforts and products. These fundamental attitudes, though sometimes only vaguely implied in the texts, can directly answer such simple questions as “Why do I create this work?” and “How do I accomplish my artistic purpose?” Most interpreters of art, who

are interested in the artist's intentions as a guide to the formation of their own interpretation, would rephrase these questions and ask: "What did the artist try to do in this work?" "How did he achieve (or fail to achieve) his goal?" In other words, to many interpreters, the ideal aesthetic experience is one which re-creates the experience that had first led to the production of the art object.

In the study of aesthetics, two aspects of creative experience can be taken as focal points: the creative act and the creative medium. I propose to concentrate on these two points and occasionally to compare them with their counterparts in what I shall call narrative aesthetics, which emphasizes the construction of a world. It goes without saying that lyric and narrative aesthetics are by no means the only explanations for the creative impulse. Another prominent one is the didactic view that art is created for the purpose of revealing moral truth, and according to this view, to create is to instruct. Yet another is the sensualist theory that art exists to give pleasure, and in this view, to create is to delight the senses. It is possible, however, to consider the didactic view part of a functional theory that is an extension of narrative aesthetics. Sensory gratification, too, is subsumable as one of the origins of lyric aesthetics (although lyric aesthetics eventually transcends the limits of its origins). My discussion, therefore, will be confined to only two types of aesthetics, the lyric and the narrative.

#### INTERPRETATION OF THE HUMAN ACT

To understand lyric aesthetics and how it differs from narrative aesthetics, it is necessary to consider first the different philosophical interpretations of the human act which form their premises. A human act can be either an external act performed by a person or an internal act occurring within his mind. Depending on whether the person's attention is turned outward or inward, he may produce two completely different interpretations of life: a centrifugal interpretation, which focuses away from the self and sees a web of actions culminating in the one at issue, or a centripetal one, which centers on the mental state as the total experience. Thus, how a person proceeds to interpret the human act depends upon how he structures the course of his personal development and where he places the ultimate purpose of his acts.

The centrifugal interpretation of life may be seen as a theory of action according to which every act is seen as part of a chain or hierarchy of actions, including not only one's own external actions but also one's interactions with others. The ultimate purpose of a person's acts can then be determined by his motivation or the destination of the course of his actions. In other words, to interpret an action is simply to place it in the larger, proper context and to assess its contribution with regard to its final goal. Viewed in this light, the private and mental components of the experience, which may exist before or after the external acts, are subsidiary only to the central course of action.

By contrast, the centripetal interpretation views the human act as converging in and centering on the inner experience, which is composed of the mental act or state supported and supplemented by other kinds of human acts or states. No matter how complex the peripheral acts, the focus is still on the point of convergence of the multiple layers and streams of acts, where such convergence has its own intrinsic purposes and values. In other words, the inner experience is a self-directed and self-contained act or state, and its purpose lies in the completion of the process itself.



How one interprets one's acts is always determined by the circumstances of cultural factors, especially those related to fundamental philosophical questions. Thus in the analytical tradition, an extroversive theory of action would perhaps dominate the interpretation of human acts, to the exclusion of any introversive interpretation of experience. Such a one-sided perspective is inevitable when the only interest is knowledge and knowledge is held to be based upon directly observable facts and verifiable principles. A typical example is the reality-oriented Western tradition, in which an experience cannot exist as an end in itself, but must be incorporated in a larger framework of outer-directed actions, and this in spite of the fact that self-reflection has been an important philosophical concern in this tradition at least since the time of Descartes (1596–1650). To take another example, an experience considered within a hermeneutic framework can become centrifugal if its meaning is oriented toward the grand scheme of human action rather than the pure experience of the act itself. The defense of the centripetal experience in the Western tradition is thus left mainly to maverick thinkers and artists. By contrast, in the Chinese tradition, centripetal experiences constitute a major element of cultural expression. A closer examination of the structure and meaning of the inner-directed experience as an end may help us to see its close relationship with lyric aesthetics.

To appreciate fully the role of experience in the overall picture of human acts, we need a centripetal interpretation, for in such an interpretation every act is considered self-contained and inherently meaningful. In this interpretation, an experience begins with an act of consciousness, which may be internal or external, as simple as the awareness of certain sensations or as complex as a long series of mental acts. By itself, however, this preliminary stage cannot yet be called an experience, for an experience requires a further act of reflection upon this inceptive personal state or act. That is to say, the initial act becomes an object of reflection. (When this initial act is external, it must be internalized in order to be an object of reflection, a mental mode.) The act of reflection is not a passive observation which produces a copy of the preliminary act; it is rather an integrative mental force that selects and reshapes the internalized impression of the preliminary act and transforms it into a new, highly edited version of mental reflection. At this juncture, another step of condensation is still required before an experience can be stored away in the memory for the future. This final stage is a reflection of reflection, a step which captures in the mind a succinct and total view of the entire process. Only after this reviewing vision can fragments of earlier experience be accessible at a later time.

Such are the stages in the progression from the concrete and discrete sense-data absorbed by the sensory organs to the abstract vision held in the mind. The receptive stage defines the inputs of perception prior to reflection itself, and the finishing stage extracts essences from the transforming reflection so that the perceptual inflow can crystallize into lapidary residues to be stored in the memory.

This process of transformation also involves the two strata of experience: a superstratum of cognitive surface and a substratum of instinctive depth. The superstratum constitutes the conscious surface (exteriority), while the substratum, not directly observable, is the psychological depth where instinct, emotion, and judgment dwell (interiority). It is the interaction between these two strata that makes the act of reflection possible. While impression proceeds to evolve into expression, the surface of this impression interacts with the inner psychological depth to continuously refashion the matrix of expres-

sion. This inner depth can be variously identified as a person's disposition, temperament, character, ideology, or, simply, personality, mostly buried in the area of the unknowable. Although it holds the key to an understanding of most of the surface phenomena, it nevertheless eludes direct investigation. For this reason, we can control only the perceptible surface, through which we hope to recover at least the central reflective act and perhaps, obliquely, part of the deep mental states.

Synchronically, experience is the interaction between cognizable surface and inaccessible depth, and diachronically, experience is the reflective act mediating between impression and expression. One can perhaps schematically structure a three-stage process of experience, with the central act of reflection preceded by inceptive sensuous impression and followed by retrospective total vision. Such an experience can be broken down further into three strata: the conscious surface, the mediating interaction, and the unconscious depth. But in reality, the tripartite design can often be collapsed or abbreviated into one simple act or state of mind.

Complex, inner-directed, and volatile in nature, the act of reflection is full of paradoxes. This is because the self is both the observing subject and the object that is observed, and because both the subject and the object are in turn the objects of yet another reflection, a reflection of reflection. Furthermore, the object is active and is continuously changing, as is the subject. One may be tempted to ask questions about the nature of these various elements: Can any of these phases be considered an entity, an act, or a process, or even a state of mind? Can the subject really be differentiated from the active act? Is the moment of the act in the present, and is reflection in the present moment identical with contemplation of a past act? Is the surface simply a mirror image of the inner depth? As I shall demonstrate below, however, one need not be troubled by such fine distinctions when considering the spirit of lyric aesthetics.

Before I go on, I would like to emphasize that the sense-data received from outside are generally associated with particular and discrete objects belonging to the determinable and phenomenal temporal-spatial framework. Inputs, even when internalized, tend to maintain this discreteness and objectivity, approximating what we may call the scientific. On the other hand, the content within the mind seems elusive and volatile and is definitely more abstract than the external sense-data. Drives and responses from this inner depth generate a powerful integrative force when interacting with the distinct impressions of the surface. During this important transformation from impression to expression, there is generally a conflict between the less-formulated abstract force of mental integration and the more easily identified objective information from the outside. At this point, one could conceivably determine whether the experience should be one of interiority or exteriority. I will discuss this issue later on in this essay, but at present we should look at certain minimal conditions for the process of internalization, as it is central to the spirit of lyric aesthetics.

Among the unknown and uncertain elements in the deep interiority, two unchanging elements deserve some comment. These are the self as a structural frame and the element of temporality, each of which defines experience subjectively. As it is generally understood, experience is structured first of all from the point of view of self. Although self may appear to be far removed from the act, it always asserts itself as an omnipresent spectator, actor, or speaker by its bracketing of the whole structure of experience. Self is really a

structural force that accompanies the act of experience. In other words, every act within experience could always be prefaced with the remark, "I perceive, imagine, and present. . . ."

In contrast to the self, temporality may not seem as important a factor in the subjectivity of experience. In fact, however, the complexity of time in the structure of experience is even more tantalizing than that of self. The moment of the present emerges as the dominant time frame. But this moment is not static: it extends into the past and future in order to accommodate the continual internal evolution of an experience moving from one stage to another, and it is in addition a sustaining moment which may last a long time. In other words, the sense of the present is always imminent. Viewed in this light, time is no longer an objective measure but a subjective quality belonging intimately to experience.

Self and the present generate as well as delimit the structure of experience. These two points of reference can converge in a single focal point, as an independent state of mind within the frame of experience, or they may paint a complex, multidimensional canvas. In the most abbreviated experience, the minimal lasting component will be the inner surface—that is, the completed formation in the mind of the work of art—of the final mental state which is a reflection of reflection. Such a mental state exemplifies a complex of qualities, which may be multilayered and convoluted but nevertheless remains unified as one totality. It is this state of mind that brings an experience to its temporary conclusion. But it must not be forgotten that each stage of experience is both a repetition and an extension of the previous stage and of the stratum underneath. Because the final stage of the development and the conscious surface eventually will be one, there is, in expression, at least a tangible key to the whole experience.

An aesthetic experience is always self-contained, possessing its intrinsic values and purposes. Of course, it is extremely difficult to identify these attributes because immediate ulterior motives are absent and because the aesthetic experience is resistant to verbal description. However, I would like to suggest that an experience, most typically the aesthetic experience, can be intrinsically satisfactory on at least three levels.

First, an experience can in itself give pleasure. To be sure, since strong sensory pleasure depends upon direct stimulation of the senses, it follows that in mental reflection, sensation is a diluted version of the original. But the fact that everyone may enjoy aesthetic experience through the imagination and may introduce imaginary elements into reflection causes many to desire to return to an experience for its own sake. However, it should be noted that this kind of pleasure touches only the surface level of an experience.

Second, some experiences can create a sense of completeness and perfection. This is because in the process of reflection, all actions and mental states are placed within the frame of self and the present, and constitute a formal perfection which reaches deeply into the creative act itself. Eventually experience is elevated to the level of aesthetic fulfillment, which renders a more satisfactory pleasure than sensuous pleasure alone.

Beyond the levels of sensory pleasure and structural fulfillment, there is a third kind of satisfaction which is far more complex and important. It is this third kind of experience which expresses most pertinently what I mean by "lyric experience." Central to this experience is the concept of intuitive living: if one can accept that to experience is to live intuitively through a form pregnant with meanings, then the experience of reflection will contain elements both of living and of understanding. This dual function of reflection

affords us a way by which we may attempt to solve one of the profound dilemmas in life, the communication of experience.

A common, troubling dilemma is that some experiences appear to be meaningful for those who undergo them, but the verbal communication of these meanings can never fully convey (or perhaps effectively dissipate) what the meanings seemed to mean in the first place. Language is inadequate to grasp and to transmit these significances, and their totality is too elusive to be disassembled and reconstructed. It seems clear that the impediment lies in the experiences: in their final condensed state in the mind, some experiences tend to embody certain meanings impossible to articulate. The problem of the inadequacy of language is especially severe with ordinary language. Some may feel no qualm about stating ontological truth in propositional terms, but most of us have found ourselves confronted with this dilemma in articulation. Charles Taylor has suggested that the human agency is unique in its ability to undertake self-interpretation; and it is extremely interesting to observe that what he says about man's self-interpreting capacity approximates what we mean by the aesthetic experience.<sup>2</sup> Distillation and crystallization of an experience, not in words but in form, frequently manifest the truth for which we cannot otherwise find expression. It is in this form that experience is incorporated into our memory, later to resurface and shape the experiencing self. Truth, however profound, if stated in ordinary language, will always appear to be a reductionist platitude. If the meanings of existence can be demonstrated only through intuitive living, how should this demonstration be conducted effectively? Perhaps by living an experience with an acute awareness of aesthetic form, one may come closest to understanding meanings intuitively. Rightly or wrongly, some can attain a level of contentment or enlightenment only through an experience which touches the recesses of their unconscious mind.

THEORIES OF LANGUAGE:  
PRESENTATIONAL AND REPRESENTATIONAL

Among all kinds of signs, language is no doubt the most efficient in communication, and for this reason it best illustrates some of the prejudices in the general theory of signs that favor representational functions over presentational functions. Personal experience shows that in presentation language may not be as powerful as some other media in directness and immediacy, while in representation it is superior to all others in flexibility and versatility. Representational theories of language, stressing communication, accordingly predominate. At the same time, the overwhelming predilection of modern linguists to favor action theory means that the speech act has been frequently interpreted as action itself. In this way, the spoken language, which is often present in actions only as a supplement, has become a privileged mode of language at the expense of written language. An internal mental state often depends upon speech acts for its expression. And more often than not, a speech act is pivotal to interpretations of an action, for it is through speech that the referential context becomes known. It follows naturally in this view that the function of language, as modern linguists repeatedly tell us, is communication.

The problem is that in this communication-oriented theory of language, we have nearly forgotten written language. Among Western linguists, the writing system is usually considered to be a mere transcription of spoken words, an understandable prejudice for those whose mother tongues are phonetically represented. Some of the recent doubts

cast on communication theory certainly raise this very important issue, but they have not touched on the real problem, written language as memory.

Many linguists seem to have forgotten that the invention of written language was likely motivated by the need for a mnemonic device. In treating writing as a mere supplement to the speech act, they have thus obscured its more essential function of preservation, from documentation of public deeds to perpetuation of private memory. Many cases cannot be explained away as an aberration of communication theory. For example, when someone keeps a diary of his plans and memories, dreams and fantasies, which no one else is allowed to read and which is to be destroyed after his death, it is obvious that he writes for reflection and memorization rather than for communication. Writing is a recording device to preserve the past and the present. For preservation and as an aid to memorization, no material code is more reliable than writing. In fact, the written language in general is the most versatile graphic system (or was before the invention of electronic recording instruments).

Language should be viewed as an instrument capable of simultaneously performing the functions of communication and of documentation, though these two functions may overlap and are sometimes the same. To recognize memorization as a function of language provides a new perspective by which to view the human act introspectively, in particular the content of experience, be it ordinary or aesthetic. Obviously, in writing a poem, a poet may want to convey certain specific thoughts to others. But a poet may also use a poem as a means of introspection, through which he hopes to understand the present and recover the past. In such a poem, the poet does not leave hints to the addressee; nor does the reader address himself to deciphering the poet's intention or to discovering the external context. Such a poem is simply a retrospective act for the subject himself; in the case of literary writings, readers, too, participate in this retrospective act. Written language may not be as convenient as spoken language in maintaining the simultaneity of communication, but its ability to transcend time makes it the privileged mode of language for those who want to reflect on and recover experience for the future. The same is true with other mnemonic media besides written language, and what I mean by "lyric aesthetics" is relevant in these other media as well.

Language, like most artistic media, exists both as an external material phenomenon and as an internal mental phenomenon. As a physical mode, its transient sound and its more enduring graph can be perceived as a presentation of auditory and visual signs. But its range of expression is limited when compared with such media as painting and music. As a mental mode, language can of course convey ideas, images, and propositions with greater complexity and subtlety than the other media can. But on the matter of interpretation, it does not offer a universal applicability, as would the other media. This is because language is primarily a representational medium, with a rather limited presentational power. As a result, many tend to think that language exists only as a mental mode, that its material form is a subsidiary aspect. This appears to be opposite, and complementary, to the general belief that in the nonlinguistic media of painting and music the material aspect is the predominant one and our mental realization of them remains a superfluous component. In both cases we see the general tendency to reduce everything to either a presentational or a representational mode—that is, either the physical or the mental mode. We must be more sensitive to the capacity for both presentational and representational modes in a medium. Although one mode may be favored, each medium

has to have the dual modes of existence in order to perform its dual functions of communication and memorization. Language is no exception.

Within the representational framework of language, there is a further demarcation between two modes of interpretation: extension and intension. These are the two modes employed to direct our responses to the uses of linguistic signs. *Extension* and *intension* roughly correspond to what Gottlob Frege long ago said about the differences between *referent* and *meaning*: In answering queries on one's use of a word, one may illustrate it by two means, by relating to the object in the actual context or by enumerating the meanings of the word itself.<sup>3</sup> The former performs a referential act that leads the attention out to the appropriate object located in the outside world. In this operation, the meaning is often seen as the signified and prepares the interpreter to properly decode the word. The second method, enumerating the meanings of the word itself, leads one to reflect inwardly, to unfold one's understanding of the meanings of the word on the mental screen. Cut loose from its connection with the context, meaning is nothing but a series of qualifications drawn from qualities, relations, actions, and processes that are mostly associated with residues from our past experiences. In fact, even references can be turned inward to add to the meaning of a word, for its referential contents can be introduced as further specific qualifications.

In interpretation directed outwardly, centrifugally, one may follow the extension to the representational world, which is objectively projected in a realistic setting in the mental frame. In a centripetal interpretation, the inner interpretation of the language code conjures up the intension of the word in the imagination. While the extensional mode effectively facilitates and implements human communication, the intensional mode makes reflection of human experience a richer internalized act.

#### LYRIC AESTHETICS

From this preliminary discussion, we are now ready to return to the topic of lyric aesthetics. In the simplest terms, a lyric artist is one for whom creativity is the expression of one's internal mental states through the structuring of symbols. By contrast, a narrative artist is committed to projecting his created worlds externally through the uses of referential signs. A lyric artist is preoccupied with the internal creative act, of which the art object is simply the extension and repetition; a narrative artist is primarily concerned with the external creative product, to which the creative process is relevant only when it can promote its explication. In the terms of my earlier discussion, it can be said that a narrative artist is one who treats the creative act as a human action not fundamentally different from other actions, whereas a lyric artist views the creative act as experience par excellence. For a narrative artist, all media, including language, are simply referential instruments; for a lyric artist, a medium is always integrated into the creative experience as an indispensable part of its surface.

In the following discussion, I shall introduce the concept of mental mode and concentrate on two aspects of lyric aesthetics: internalization and symbolization. Occasionally I will touch upon their counterparts in narrative aesthetics—projection and referentiality, respectively. Literally, internalization means simply the process of incorporating external data, and symbolization the use of symbols as artistic expression. That aesthetic experience is in the end externalized in the material form of an art object may appear to

contradict the nonacting function of consciousness. However, for the lyric artist, the final step of artistic manifestation is really already completed within the mind; it is this final mental expression which can be converted to physical expression. Theoretically, the physical expression may be said to be identical to the internal vision. This explains why in lyric aesthetics one can emphasize inner expression without distorting the relationship between inner and outer expressions.

Central to lyric aesthetics is the process of internalization, a process in which both the object of reflection and the act of reflection participate in the consciousness of self. It is this internalization which brings out the indispensable role played by what I shall call the mental mode. A narrative artist will treat the internal working of his imagination simply as a preparation for the eventual projection of his personal world onto the external objective coordinates. He can never take the mental mode seriously. By contrast, a lyric artist not only looks upon this internalized world as an inspiration and a surface of sense-inputs but also makes the internal working itself the object of his expression. In other words, instead of projecting his inner world onto an external foreign territory, a lyric artist's mental world constitutes the purpose. In this case, the mental mode may be said to be a privileged mode around which the aesthetic experience operates.

The privileged role played by the mental mode may be easy to accept in the literary arts, but when it comes to other presentational art forms, such as music and the visual arts, the concept will probably encounter a certain resistance. One may well ask: Is not the material mode of a work of art the basis of aesthetic experience? Can any mental impression be more powerful than direct sensation? One may doubt the suggestion that presentation itself is inadequate to complete an aesthetic experience, especially given the fact that the direct sensory impact of music and the visual arts has always been the envy of literary artists. However, an artist can seldom create unless his personal vision is first formulated in his mind. Indeed, we may say that the degree of dependence on one's inner vision perhaps indicates the degree of one's commitment to lyric aesthetics. Most of the distinguished masters of lyric arts took great pride in their ability to formulate artistic expressions prior to their realization in the material mode. Certainly eidetic vision is one of the endowments of the lyric genius: even when such artists later lose their hearing or eyesight, they can still continue to create their works.

From the interpreter's point of view, the mental mode is equally important. A complete artistic experience is composed of many layers: a direct sensory impression may be a necessary condition, but it is definitely not a sufficient one. Even a sensualist will want to go beyond the temporary effects of sensation. And any serious connoisseur knows that the contemplation of an object or a performance is not confined to the moment of actual contact. From this I would like to claim that the judgment of a lyric work of art is more often than not based upon an impression which lasts long after the experience itself, in contrast to the sensualist's reliance on immediate sensation.

The uniqueness of the mental mode in creativity lies in its strong integrative blending of different streams of ideas into a unified matrix. At this level, not only is it impossible to identify the separate components, but it is also against the grain of lyricism to distinguish them. The result of such an integration very much sets the tone for internalization in the creative act, which is the first characteristic of a lyrical style.

Symbolization, the other important element of lyric aesthetics, uses symbols in the preservation of experience. Whereas a sign, using its arbitrarily designated signifiers,

refers to relevant components in an act, a symbol preserves experience through the use of multiple systems of underlying quality. For a narrative artist, any sign is adequately differentiated from other signs and is also adequate in its ability to refer to the proper meaning or referent. For a lyric artist, however, a sign has to be turned into a symbol in order to effectively preserve the original experience. This is because a symbol has the power to transfer the material quality of an object into a mental mode which is in keeping with the basic spirit of the artist's act of interiorization.

I would like to argue further that without the process of interiorization, a linguistic sign cannot function as a symbol, because the material qualities of a sign are often too minimal and thus irrelevant to the represented meaning. It is the intension of a sign which turns it into a symbol. Typically, the intension of a lexical word is a collection of qualities which are essentially adjectives. Even a substantive can be stripped of its referential claim and can be conceived of as a class or an entity with certain qualities. On this level, the intension of a word becomes compatible with other art forms: the visual and auditory arts surely do not have intension as in language, but the qualities connoted in these media are common to intension of language. This holds true for both artist and interpreter. For the artist, when perception is registered in the mind, the artistic surface will be composed of infinite combinations of basic qualities. And the interpreter of visual arts, too, sorts out his sensory inputs through a system that understands abstract form in qualitative terms. This prism is structured according to his understanding of the system of the minimal essences associated with the genre and accommodates an infinite number of gradations and combinations.

The world outside may be variegated and multifarious, but it can become relatively limited when rendered as certain common physical properties. The inner world of our mind is complex and convoluted, intangible and inarticulable; but it still emerges as an integral system of mental states, as interrelated affective attributes. The two systems, the mental and the material, appear to be parallel, but they do merge in the process of symbolization. The efficacy of symbol relies upon the overlaid multilevel structures that relate systems of physical attributes and the affective mental states. In this process, outside objects and inner mental states converge and join together in a framework of symbolic systems.

System is the pivotal concept in this process of symbolization. David Prall observed long ago that all artistic media possess a certain internal order in different aspects of their surfaces. Some show complex, multivalent color systems or tone and spatial systems, and many others possess one-dimensional systems. Light and shadow in visual arts, volume and speed in music, and time in temporal arts were his examples.<sup>4</sup> To interpret the world in qualitative terms is first to interpret it according to, not just the quality, but the quality in a system. From there, its relationship with the corresponding qualities in many parallel systems may be grasped. This correspondence is not direct substitution but derives from the resonance between two independent systems, each active in its own force. It is in this sense that systematization characterizes the creative medium of lyrical style.



## LYRICAL STYLE

Internalization and symbolization passively perform the functions of integration and structuralization; allied to the central power of the imagination, they can actively shape and transform the reflective matrix into a formative one and, in this way, produce the expression of the artist's interiority. The word *imagination* obviously refers first to the specific ability to conjure up situations not directly perceived or remembered. But its broader sense emphasizes the fact that the perception, once internalized, has to be sustained by a powerful imagination. In a creative act, imagination further refers to the structural faculty functioning in the mental mode as well as to the stylized form emerging as the surface of symbolic materials.

Imagination, as used here, is a complex phenomenon which is active in the artist's strategy and competence. To the artist, imagination is the creative act to be performed according to a plan—it is a strategy for the creative act. The strategy can be implicit or explicit, simple or complicated, but it should cover the artist's intent; the process of preserving, creating, and incorporating his personal responses; and his vision of the intended expression. Imagination in the context of the artistic product raises the issue of competence. Here the artist's competence in the creative medium—his use of structural design, conventions, and formal manipulations—must be internalized as an aesthetic code. This aesthetic code is not limited to artistic materials, for it includes the artist's training and skill. The end purpose of an internalized code is that in his strategy the artist can naturalize his materials as an extension of himself. In the collusion (and sometimes collision) of strategy and competence, imagination is a powerful active force in the creation of an art object and a lyrical style.

When the artist gradually moves from impression to expression, he also imperceptibly steps away from the strategy phase into the phase of the aesthetic code. The force of concentration accordingly shifts to the force of stylization. The content, determined and formed by impressions, is now transformed into the vocabulary and formal style of the artistic medium. The shift from the external, referential layer of reality to the inner, abstract depth also brings a new focus on qualities, now completely divorced from connections with the external entities. As a result, disparate objects may now be seen as one through the association of their shared common qualities. Finally, these newly emerging qualities also stand out as the formal elements which, taken together, form a stylized surface. Hence, the lyrical style at its fullest expression is both concentrated and stylized.

Theoretically, the concentrative integrative force and stylized formalized surface should adequately define the pure lyrical style, but the central compelling requirement is still to produce a unified lyrical voice. After all, the defining framework of a lyric experience remains to be coordinated by the right person and time—that is, by the self and the present. The artist is one who zeroes in on the converging point of self and the present, zeroes in on a particular subjective momentariness. Structurally, all the characteristics of the outside world—controlling organizational principles, the hierarchy of subordination, the time-space coordinate—will give way to the simple juxtaposition of the self and the present. Every component is weighted equally; only the relevance of its formal attributes to the emerging lyrical quality determines its share in the overall structure. Under this principle of coordination, form is both simple and complex: simple because all elements are condensed into one, complex because the underlying structure may be composed of multiple layers and streams. This oneness of interior and exterior is the

realization in the artistic creation of the highest ideals of lyrical style, harmony and fluidity. Harmony describes the perfect blending of various qualities into a unified vision; fluidity underlines the constant fusion and interpenetration of diverse qualities and systems during the creative and interpretative acts. Such a lyrical style is most typically manifested in the abstract and formal expression of the artist's interiority.

Lyrical quality, created in the convergence of self and moment, is endowed with the depth and complexity of a person's history and sustained by memory and imagination. This lyrical quality is far from ordinary and resists analytical and disjunctive analysis. Roger Scruton calls it a "tertiary" quality, "observable only to beings possessing certain intellectual and emotional capacities."<sup>5</sup> Frequently, this lyrical quality is treated anthropomorphically as spirit, understood to hold both the essence of the object under observation and the essence of the subject at the creative moment. Because this spirit seems to be out of reach for most of us, we feel that its engraving in the physical mode is divinely inspired and spiritually revelatory. This impressionistic and indeterminate spirit is precisely the utmost goal a lyric artist tries to attain.

### *The Early Orientation of Music Theory*

One may imagine that a sense of beauty in its most primitive form came first from the experience of sensory pleasures, and indeed scholars have shown that the earliest interest in aesthetics in China did center on the culinary art.<sup>6</sup> The interest in the "five tastes" (*wu-wei* 五味), however, seems never to have risen to the challenge of structural complexity and material permanence demanded by bona fide artistic media like music. Music, on the other hand, was early able to develop into a formal and highly symbolic medium that fulfilled artistic ideals rather than sensory pleasure. That music is generally recognized as the purest lyric genre can probably be explained by the fundamentally abstract nature of the medium; it is easily observed to be functioning simultaneously on all three levels: sensory, structural, and symbolic. For this reason, it is not surprising to see that the earliest Chinese writings on art occur in the area of music.

The music discussed in these earlier writings includes vocal music with poetry and is frequently accompanied by movement and dance, the whole forming a ritual performance. Early writings about music, therefore, are concerned with the relation between music as art and music as rite. In addition, they deal with the artistic meanings of music not simply as pure form but also as the base of a complex artistic expression. The earliest and definitely the most influential statement on the nature of this music comes from the *Book of Documents* (*Shu-ching* 書經), possibly dating to before the fourth century B.C.:

Poetry speaks intent, singing extends speech, and sound follows that extension. The pitches make sound harmonious. When eight kinds of instrumental timbres are in accord, one does not encroach upon the place of another. Thus spirit and men are also in accord.<sup>7</sup>

The first phrase, "poetry speaks intent" (*shih yen chih* 詩言志), is readily identifiable as the most famous line in Chinese poetics, but this is at the expense of the equally important second phrase, "singing extends speech" (*ko yung yen* 歌詠言), which reminds us that the first line can be understood properly only in the context of music theory. The word *yung* 詠, to be sure, is difficult to interpret, but the gist of its meaning is that the ordinary

words of communication need to be transformed into something more intensive and formal. In the case of language, this can be done by repetition, prolongation, and other formal variations. Taken together, these two phrases became the core of later music theory, most prominently in the "Treatise on Music" ("Yüeh-chi" 樂記) in another classic, the *Book of Rites* (*Li-chi* 禮記), probably dated no later than the first century after Christ.<sup>8</sup> My observations here are based primarily on the "Treatise on Music," although some earlier or contemporary texts, such as the chapter on music from the *Hsün-tzu* 荀子 and the "Treatise on Music" from Ssu-ma Ch'ien's 司馬遷 (145–86 B.C.) *Records of the Historian* (*Shih-chi* 史記), contain similar or identical passages. One may safely say that by the second century at the latest, the groundwork of the future development of lyric aesthetics was already well under way in the early theory of music.

The early theory of music is embedded in the larger framework of cultural and political theories, for it is concerned with ritual and music, which served two closely related functions. Superficially, one may interpret ritual and music as the products of conventions, which are in turn representations of some social phenomena. But it is far more important to understand that the theory of music is predicated upon a crucial distinction between the interiority (*nei* 內) and exteriority (*wai* 外) of an experience, and that it is the internal experience which is the key to the whole musical experience.

Chinese thinkers from the earliest times were already beginning to shift their interest from the outside world, be it "heaven" (*t'ien* 天) or "object" (*wu* 物), to the interior, to the "mind" (*hsin* 心). They gradually came to recognize that the ultimate goal does not necessarily lie in the discovery of truth, but in the personal realization of an ideal. In other words, it is when experience is understood as action and as reflection at the same time that human aspiration is realized. In this century, Mou Tsung-san 牟宗三 has repeatedly pointed out that in the Chinese tradition attaining an understanding of life often depends upon "practice" (*shih-chien* 實踐), and this is especially true in the attainment of *ching-chieh* 境界, a concept difficult to translate but which denotes a particular state of mind arrived at through personal experience.<sup>9</sup> Much of Chinese art theory is concerned with the operation of this interior mind or experience.

An aesthetic experience takes place in the last of the stages of creativity in the conscious mind. To become an aesthetic object, the aesthetic experience has to acquire a surface in a material mode. Music has this material aspect, which not only freely blends with other sense-stimulants but also performs many public functions in society. It is the actual aesthetic object, but nonetheless it is not the chief focus of theoretical speculation. Right up to the brink of its externalization, an experience remains entirely in its mental mode. This mental process and its realization in the mind—the creative process—are the focus of attention in Chinese music theory. The exterior and interior aspects are parallel and interactive, but they are not causally related in a simple way. It is important to see this. Take, for example, the "Treatise on Music" definition, "Music is what palpitates inside; ritual, what palpitates outside."<sup>10</sup> Here the two aspects of music and ritual are not causally related, but are juxtaposed and parallel components with different sources. Hence the statement "Music is born from interiority and ritual is produced from exteriority" is repeated many times in the *Book of Rites*.<sup>11</sup> These two aspects interact with each other, but each possesses its own fluid condition. Furthermore, since "music is the harmony of heaven and earth, and ritual the ordering of them," many other finely distinguished

categories also correspond and resound: “The Great Music harmonizes with heaven and earth; the Great Ritual pulses with heaven and earth.”<sup>12</sup>

In lyric aesthetics, the quality of exteriority is dictated or at least influenced by the interiority of self. Hence the nature of the internal mind must be investigated in order to grasp better the complete picture of creativity. “Intent” (*chih* 志) no doubt is the first term of immediate relevance in this context. The uses of *chih* in early texts leave room to support many possible interpretations, but the “Great Preface” to *Mao’s Commentary to the Book of Poetry* (*Shih-ching Mao Shih ch’uan* 詩經毛氏傳), written in the first or second century after Christ, contains what became the standard statement on *chih*:

Poetry is where the intent of mind goes. Lying in the mind, it is “intent”; when uttered in words, it is “poetry.” When an emotion stirs inside, one expresses it in words; finding this inadequate, one intones and exclaims; not content with this, one chants and sings it in poetry; still not satisfied, one unconsciously waves hands, gesturing, and moves feet, dancing.<sup>13</sup>

This passage can be taken as the manifesto of Chinese lyric aesthetics, particularly in its clear enunciation of the impact of intent upon the total realization of lyric art. We should not fail to see the broad possibilities in the concept of intent and its continuous relation with exteriority.

In a centrifugal context, intent is simply a goal set by the artist to carry through his plan of action. In a centripetal context, intent becomes part of the experience, and is both the catalyst and the final realization of the creative act. The Chinese literary tradition certainly has been most sympathetic to the latter interpretation and often identifies intent broadly with all interiority. The T’ang commentator K’ung Ying-ta 孔穎達 (574–648) authoritatively remarks: “The mind encompasses a milliard inner components, but when it is stirred and activated by external objects, it is called ‘intent.’”<sup>14</sup> This may be translated into modern terms to mean that intent is the constantly changing and transforming aspect of mind. In this view, the creative act is not static and mechanical but volatile and fluctuating. In this particular context, intent is identified with the movement of mind from its dormant state to a readiness to follow “where intent goes.” To think of intent as “purpose” alone or “feeling” alone—both frequent translations—tends to diminish its potential power. Rather, the term undergoes transformations as the artist’s mental process proceeds.

The “Great Preface” passage, in describing a progression from words to movement, is often read as questioning the adequacy of language. Such a view, however, misconceives the general sense of the passage. First, complaints about the inadequacy of ordinary language, which is quite standard in Chinese philosophical writings, is quickly mitigated by the satisfaction obtained from artistic language. But more important, when this passage is read in the context of music theory, what initially seems a vision of a satisfactory realization of intent becomes more an idealized description of the genesis of a total music performance. Creativity is a complex process, which begins with linguistic expression in the mode of representation but eventually culminates in mostly abstract expression in the mode of presentation. It is in fact a process which moves toward formalization and includes either instinctive responses or premeditated interpretation. In each stage—the prolongation of the sounds of words, their transfiguration into musical and gestural

expressions—the original intent assumes different new forms. The transpositions of the original intent into different forms are all variations in formal presentation based on principles of repetition and of the extension of the inner qualities. The successive transformations signal a correspondingly diminishing role for the referential component as formal presentations take over.

That music may be solely formal and structural certainly makes it the central and exemplary medium in the hierarchy of Chinese lyrical texts. Historians have pointed out that early Chinese aesthetic inquiries began with taste: taste in cuisine, color in fabric, and tone in music were ranked together as the greatest stimulating media which gave people pleasure.<sup>15</sup> Each of the three possesses its own powerful intrinsic order, consisting of independent qualities arranged in a polyvalent system. Among them, however, color had to wait for the rise of painting to assert its ascendancy, and taste quietly disappeared from contention as a genuine art form once a further distinction was made between art for pleasure alone and art for beauty.

From the beginning, music was defined as an art form; it did not simply exist as a series of pleasing sounds. Thus in the “Treatise on Music,” a critic expounded, in reply to a ruler: “Now you asked me about ‘music’ (*yüeh* 樂), but what you love is simply ‘euphonic sound’ (*yin* 音); music is similar to euphonic sounds, but more.”<sup>16</sup> This early treatise on music was greatly concerned with the differentiation of two levels of sound: sound in its most elementary state (*sheng* 聲) and sound organized as tone (*yin*), governed by the rules of tonal structure (*lü* 律). But even musical sound is not yet music, for “euphony is born in the human mind; music is directly traceable to the universal meaning of life.”<sup>17</sup> This distinction elevates music from a structural level to a level intrinsically capable of realizing profound meaning. Since the art in question is music, meaning can be conducted not through representation (at least not alone) but through formal presentation. Thus a strong tendency in later aesthetic theory to rely on an abstract but material quality to convey mental states was seeded in the earliest music theory.

In intent, in feeling, and in the final realized form—the continuous transition from interior to exterior and the continuous interaction with the external world—are constituted the lyrical quality which music seeks. But because music embodies meaning through an abstract form, the relation between the internal act and the external phenomena also depends upon a quality held in common. This universal quality is more or less dictated by the broader cultural and intellectual framework; we might say it is an accord which harmonizes all life forces in the self and in creativity. The philosophical background, however, is beyond the scope of this essay. The elevation of a principle of metaphorical power to be the key to understanding certainly speaks for an interpretation not only of our experience but also of many aspects of the world that is centered on lyrical quality.

The affinity between the “Treatise on Music” in the *Book of Rites* and the “Great Commentary” in the *Book of Changes* (*I ching* 易經) is apparent in more than one way. The many direct quotations in the “Treatise on Music” from the “Great Commentary” provide the most obvious evidence, but more fundamental are the two interpretative principles concerning the world and man which are held to be fundamental qualities in music. The first principle is movement, a characteristic essential to all objects in this world, including the world itself. Motion and animation are qualities attributed to both animate and inanimate entities, for “the heaven moves vigorously” and “men through self-strengthening evolve ceaselessly.”<sup>18</sup> This spirit of life defines the creative act and is

immanent in the art object itself; there are numerous references to “movement” and “awakening” in the “Treatise on Music,” summed up by the statement “Music is the movement of mind.” The creative act in fact becomes a perfect example of a self-perpetuating inner movement. Equally important is the other principle, interaction, which strongly suggests the empathetic resonance that exists between different entities, particularly between those which share common qualities. Parallelism, for example, contains a metaphorical power which links discrete elements from different spheres. Because these elements are distinct, their joint action is probably due more to resonance than to causality. Many early texts make a subtle distinction which supports this idea of resonance. They distinguish “sameness” (*t'ung* 同) from “harmony” (*ho* 和), for the latter brings different elements together and blends them into a harmonious one. Only in harmonious coexistence, not in uniform assemblage, can minds vibrate with life and reflect each other.

In the final analysis, the (inner) “music is the uniter,” the (external) “ritual is the distinguisher.” Music, through its external existence, reaches the listener’s mind and becomes internal again. The ultimate quality music strives to achieve is possibly the ultimate harmony which may be found in complete stillness. If this quest for “stillness” or “silence” (*ching* 靜) seems to contradict the principle of movement, its inclusion on the contrary expands the concept of motion: motion is not only agitation; it is more typically realized in the inner functioning of a vigorous life force, which may be more powerful in its silent pause. Stillness in the appropriate context is full of an immanent sense of living, which also permeates objects located in corresponding positions. This harmony embraces both “oneness” (*i* 一) and “simplicity” (*i* 易). “The ultimate music has to be simple,” and “it flows continuously without pause, unites, incorporates and transforms, finally gives rise to music.” It is this inner stillness of the life force, being one and simple, which resounds with the surrounding world and is called “great harmony.”<sup>19</sup> This also became the central idea of Chinese lyric aesthetics.

### *The Emergence of a Total Theory of Literature*

Four hundred years passed between the first serious interest in literary criticism in the second century and the completion in the sixth century of Liu Hsieh’s *Wen-hsin tiao-lung*. These centuries witnessed not only a proliferation of criticism in a range of new disciplines, such as calligraphy and painting, but also the emergence of an independent theory of literature, until then only an appendage of arts criticism. This new theory of literature marked the next stage in the development of lyric aesthetics.

Many cultural factors contributed to the burst of activity in criticism. The most important is the fact that the judgment of character became a central activity in the social and political structure of China. Before the establishment of the examination system, datable at the earliest to the seventh century, qualified candidates were chosen for political positions on the basis of the personal judgment of certain officials. Very early on, probably in the first century B.C., this judgment was made more official by setting up certain procedures. Character judgments performed by acknowledged local authorities came to be increasingly relied on. As personal name was of the greatest concern in this society, the social and political significance of such judgments is quite obvious. Judgment was frequently expressed in terms of rank and classification, but it could also be rendered, more variably, by an epithet and a comment. The latter method of delivering a rating

partly reflected a new attitude toward judgments: a thorough investigation of the candidate's personal history was replaced by a cursory but penetrating cameo sketch of character as revealed at a particular moment. The appearance of *A New Account of Tales of the World* (*Shih-shuo hsin-yü* 世說新語), a new type of history which emphasizes the moment of character revelation, demonstrates the interest in this swift, revealing form of character interpretation. Since artistic products are the natural extension and revelation of a person, the study of personality did a great deal to promote literary criticism and theory.

Equally decisive in the surge of interest in literary theory was the new intellectual climate as the various schools of thought began to relax their contentiousness. At this time, in philosophical speculation the personal aspect also began to separate from social and political issues. A new enthusiasm for self-reflection, for understanding the meaning and destiny of life, seems to have provided contemporary thinkers with a subject which could appropriately blend many strands of thought into an eclectic mainstream. This philosophical mainstream, with its emphasis on interior life, probably can be fully and effectively articulated only in terms of aesthetic experience. The experience of enlightenment also became more and more indistinguishable from an aesthetic experience. It is not accidental that in early literary theory, great interest was focused upon the creative act itself, and to read literature was thought a means to retrieve the experience of creating.

The arts, particularly music, are ideal media by which to seek to understand the interiority of the artist. But as a medium, music, with its technical and performance requirements, is more limited in its availability to the practitioner, especially when compared with the language which literature employs. Interest gradually shifted from music to literature, and literary theory came to dominate thinking. Two questions were now crucial: Can the representative impression that is the literary work be integrated with the instinctive and emotive responses that lie in the depth of a person? And can ordinary language be used as symbolic expression to equal effect as abstract music was? The first seemed to require a further development in the concept of interiority, and the second to require a concept of language as symbol rather than as reference, of a poem as presentation rather than representation. Both these steps were first taken during this period.

The first significant advance in the new direction was Lu Chi's "Rhyme-Prose on Literature" ("Wen-fu" 文賦), a work of the second half of the third century. This essay is without doubt an original and imaginative treatment of various problems concerning the creative act in literature. I shall note here only that, as in my model of lyric aesthetics, Lu Chi's discussion is concerned primarily with the creative act. The literary work itself is treated more as a record of that prior act. The development signified by Lu Chi finally culminated in the appearance of Liu Hsieh's *Wen-hsin tiao-lung*. Definitely the first monumental work on the theory of literature in China, it is, ironically, also the last. Its strength comes from its ambitious plan to treat the literary phenomenon as a totality which touches upon every conceivable problem in the author's time. Liu Hsieh focuses also upon creativity, and he most clearly articulates a theory of lyric aesthetics. I shall raise only two issues in this connection: on the creative mind and on creative language.

Liu Hsieh introduced the two pivotal terms, *shen-ssu* 神思 and *ch'ing-wen* 情文, as the bases for his theory of literature. The terms can be literally translated as "the thinking of the omnipotent mind" and "affective language." However, I would like to propose the two terms *lyrical mind* and *lyrical form* as being closest to what each connotes. These two terms succinctly contain the framework of Liu Hsieh's lyric aesthetics, for they

establish firmly the centrality of the creative act and the power of the creative form in the phenomenon of literature.

Liu Hsieh's conception of lyrical mind is distinguished by his grasp of the active and integrative nature of the mind in the creative act. To understand *shen-ssu*, one may compare it with Liu's use of *hsin*. He sometimes uses *hsin* interchangeably with *shen* (which has been translated as "spirit"). However, a contrast remains between the anchoring *hsin* and the volatile *shen*. The former is an innate essence in its stable state, potential to be activated; the latter is more an agent which actively and purposefully performs functions. In the term *shen-ssu*, Liu Hsieh uses *shen* mainly to convey this sense of activeness in contrast to the passive *hsin*. This spirit actively carries out the function of *ssu*. Thus, *ssu* should not be taken literally as "think"; even "imagine" cannot fully cover the total spectrum of the spirit's potential activities. Lacking a precise definition of *shen-ssu* from Liu Hsieh, my earlier discussion of the act of internalization probably comes the closest to this mental process of cogitation, imagination, interpretation, and expression.

Liu appears to have followed the traditional classification of the mind into the static categories of feeling, intellect, and perception. However, the mind in its creative aspect is seen by Liu as more flexible and imaginative than this static schema suggests, for the mechanical schematization reveals rich nuances in use when Liu's linguistic and stylistic features are carefully examined. The way he juxtaposes similar terms and opposes contrary ones and the shifting implications of a term through contextual changes often give us a fuller appreciation of the subtlety of his implicit theory of mind. Thus terms denoting intellect (*li* 理), feeling (*ch'ing* 情), and perception (*kan* 感) refer not so much to psychological faculties as to psychological functions. For example, in the creative act, the relevant mental faculties or dispositions which receive emphasis are the functional aspects of the mind or personality: vital force (*ch'i* 氣), innate skill (*ts'ai* 才), habit (*hsi* 習), and learning (*hsüeh* 學). Centrally situated in the creative act undoubtedly is the mental act of imagination (*ssu* 思), an active and free force originating from, but not limited by, the passive mind (*hsin* 心).

In the opening paragraph of chapter 26 of *Wen-hsin tiao-lung*, Liu expands upon the sense of *shen-ssu*:

An ancient said: "One may be on the rivers and sea in body, but his mind remains at the palace gate." This is what I mean by *shen-ssu*. One who is engaged in literary thought travels far in spirit. Quietly absorbed in contemplation, his thinking reaches back one thousand years; and with only the slightest movement of his countenance, his vision penetrates ten thousand *li*; he creates the music of pearls and jade between his poetic lines, and he witnesses the rolling of wind and clouds right before his brows and lashes. These things are possible because of the work of *shen-ssu*.<sup>20</sup>

In this description of the possible range of the mind, we see first the independence of the mental act from the physical body: a mental act transcends the limited physical range of the bodily senses, and imagination supersedes perception. The spirit's freedom of movement in time and space and its free transformation from one function to another encapsulate the author's endless admiration for the marvel of creativity. (Here Liu takes a cue from Lu Chi.) This prompts the translation of *ssu* in certain contexts as "imagination,"



though “perception” and “memory” are certainly implied as well. Second, and more important, we see that *ssu* is here the central mental force which combines impression and personal response into one, with eventual expression as the guiding purpose. In Liu Hsieh’s description, the force of *shen* is indeed everywhere within the interiority of the artist, and it performs nearly all functions which lead to the final artistic expression. This force of *shen* is a series of mental acts which structures, transforms, integrates, and formulates the content and readies it for presentation. The broad interpretation of *shen* sees the act of internalization as an integrative force. The procession from imagination to introspection in this passage sketches in one part of the concept of interiority as it received elaboration.

Another aspect of interiority is found in the word “idea” (*i* 意). *Idea* seems to meet the demand for a versatile and adaptable term which covers the many stages of metamorphosis in the creative process. The chain of action from initial impression through internalization to final expression has been described variously as “from physical object (*wu*) to literary product (*wen* 文)” or “from imagination (*ssu*) to word (*yen* 言).” *I* is always the mediating element: it is aroused by either outside or inside stimuli, it is organized and integrated by the imagination, and it evolves into the art object. In Liu Hsieh, *i* came to replace the more restricted term “intent” (*chih*). Furthermore, from the very beginning of the creative process, it is also the moldable substance of the mind. Most important, *i* refers also to the idea at the moment when it is ready to be presented in its final artistic form. I shall borrow the Kantian term *aesthetic idea* to differentiate *idea* at this stage, on the brink of presentation, from the more generalized *idea* that is found in the process of transformation.

*I* begins as something we may call perception and remains formless until it is shaped into a form commensurate with the medium the artist intends to employ. Aesthetic idea, on the brink of presentation, is associated with an “image” (*hsiang* 象) in the mind. In this sense *i* is the (internal) symbol before its manifestation. It is in this internal symbol that interiority and the external world are reconciled. The nature of this expression in the mental mode is very well stated in Liu Hsieh’s formulation. However, it first involves an understanding of Liu’s view of symbol.

In chapter 31, “Lyrical Expression,” Liu writes:

For the depiction of our inner spirits or the description of physical objects, one has to carve his mind with characters and weave his words on paper. Brilliance achieved in this way is due to the manifestation of the luxuriant artifact. Three principles are involved in the creation of artistic form: the visual form, made up of the five colors; the auditory form, made up of the five tones; and the affective form, made up of the five essences. It is the mixing of the five basic colors which produces elegant embroidery; it is the harmonizing of the five basic tones which creates the great ancient court music; and it is the expression of the five basic essences which brings forth literary compositions. All these are the complex object as a result of the operation of Divine Reason.<sup>21</sup>

Liu Hsieh seems to make two important distinctions which are keys to his theory of symbol. First is his explicit contrast between abstract form (in the passage, “visual and

auditory”) and symbolic form (in the passage, “affective form”—the term I had suggested should be called *lyrical form*). A second implicit contrast can be inferred between ordinary language and symbolic language. A careful reading of the passage shows that although the three forms are treated as grammatically parallel, Liu shifts the level of his interpretation when discussing the last form. For Liu, visual and auditory forms consist simply of their material components in the visual arts and music, whereas affective form refers directly to mental components in literature. In making this contrast, Liu does not consider the material form to be irrelevant in literature or music and the visual arts to have no affective content. Elsewhere in *Wen-hsin tiao-lung*, he has repeatedly demonstrated his keen interest in musicality and visual design when he writes of the auditory and visual surfaces of literary works. Furthermore, the visual form discussed here is related only to an applied art, embroidery, and the emphasis on its design. Possibly, Liu is more concerned with the visual arts as abstract form, and, hence, his interest is in design rather than in realistic depiction. Likewise, music is considered only in terms of its tonal design, not of its words. These reservations made, it is nonetheless clear that for Liu, literature is the paramount art of interiority. Literature is primarily designed to express an artist’s impression of the world and his personal responses; it functions directly as the affective expression. The difference for Liu between presentational art and representational art is brought out more sharply in the following passage:

When nature appears in physical shape, visual form is established; when nature expresses itself in sound, musical form is born. Now, if things which are devoid of consciousness express themselves so colorfully with artistic surface, can that which is endowed with mind lack a form proper to itself?<sup>22</sup>

Language, the unique medium of the human being, can directly represent human responses. At least in its surface manifestation, it is diametrically opposed to the abstract formal arts.

The second distinction which Liu Hsieh makes, between ordinary language and symbolic language, depends on our interpretation of his term “five essences,” which constitute affective form (*lyrical form*). The essences no doubt are human feelings or dispositions. The reduction of complicated human situations and affairs to emotions alone, and to only five of them—comparable to “five colors” and “five tones”—has some extraordinary implications. Language in ordinary uses is representational, that is, we use it to represent the complex phenomena of the world. This is functionally effective so far as our daily affairs are concerned. But it is also generally acknowledged that this language is inadequate to express one’s inner experience, particularly the feelings beneath experience. In turning away from realistic representation, the artist concentrates on the structuring of language’s formal qualities into a system that is really a symbolic form with human dispositions as its deep structure. In this way, literary language becomes inseparable from human feeling or human experience. Understanding language in this symbolic form, we can better appreciate Liu’s vehement attack on writers of his time for their “cleverness in structuring a verisimilitudinous world.” They used representational language and realistic structure “to manufacture feeling for the form.” In Liu’s view, they misused the formal aspect and abused the affective aspect of symbolic expression employed by the ancient poets “to create form for their feelings.”<sup>23</sup>

Liu Hsieh's primary interest in the *Wen-hsin tiao-lung*, the urgent interest which impelled him to deal with ideas about creativity, concerns literary technique and evaluation. His discussion of the technique of composition (*shu* 術) possibly was the major attraction of his work to his contemporaries. However, *shu* has to be seen on two different levels. On the technical level, Liu's chapters on "Euphony," "Parallelism," "Choices of Words," and so on give valuable advice on rhetorical rules to aspiring writers. However, it is his discussion of the specific theoretical problems concerning *shu* that intrigue and enlighten us. According to Liu, an artist is conditioned by certain external factors, such as genres (*t'i* 體) and period (*shih* 時), and by certain internal factors, such as innate skill, vital force, learning, and habit. These factors and others form the writer's competence, which is a constant in his style. This does not mean that a writer will be repeating himself: Liu frequently discusses "occasion" (*hui* 會) and "chance" (*shu* 數), variables which give the same personal style different faces and sometimes even cause a drastic reversal. How these variables influence the individual creative act in literature accounts for Liu's emphasis on creativity over execution.

Each creative act has its particular occasion, which is stimulated either internally or externally. The stimulus comes out of a concrete situation or event or from its psychic content; it forms a complete, unique experience and constitutes the initial idea in the creative act. To form these rudimentary ideas into aesthetic ideas is essentially the whole of the poetic act which Liu Hsieh meticulously describes. However, the faculty that allows one to complete a literary work solely in its mental formulation cannot be easily applied to the other art forms, in which the discrepancy between the conception of the work and its execution may be so great as to suggest two very different works. Therefore, in some art forms, particularly calligraphy, the creative act, though initiated by a particular occasion or state, places crucial emphasis on the second phase, that of execution. In such cases, the aesthetic ideas may be subordinate to the more permanent personal qualities of the artist. Among the many factors named by Liu Hsieh, the concept of vital force thrusts itself forward as the most powerful presence. This is partly due to the volatile nature of this force, which is most sensitive in responding to circumstances and most adaptable to various possibilities of formal expression. As a theorist of literature, Liu Hsieh places his emphasis on the first part of the creative act; nevertheless, his comprehensive theories of literature provide a sufficiently broad framework to allow later expansions on the second part, which he did not fully explore himself.

### *The Coming of Age of Lyric Aesthetics*

#### THE WRITTEN CHARACTER AS SYMBOLIC FORM

Beginning in the seventh century, the recognition of calligraphy as a serious, even leading, form of art and the acceptance of regulated verse as the officially sanctioned versification prompted the separate but complementary development of two types of aesthetics. In one, the poet is seen as someone who takes in perceptions and transforms them into aesthetic ideas, embodying them in a coherent inner world which exists beneath the poem, beneath the phenomena of the represented outside world. The calligrapher, on the other hand, focuses on the prospective release of his inner energy in material form and actively engages his technical competence in realizing its flow in response to an immediate inner state. While the emphasis of one is directed inward and the other outward, both views of creativity nonetheless center on the written character as a symbolic

medium. Language is no longer only a representative sign but also has a role as presentational form; both theories utilize the Chinese language as symbol. What this entails deserves some reflection and explanation.

The pictorial nature of the Chinese written character, possibly its most outstanding feature when compared with phonetic transcriptions, has elicited many provocative theories and many equally vehement rebuttals. Strangely, although this pictorial quality very likely affected Chinese lyrical arts and aesthetics, it did so in minimal and trivial ways, and the early art forms apparently were not influenced by this element. However, when certain qualities of the ideographic writing system were conjoined with larger intellectual and aesthetic developments in China, then the pictorial nature of Chinese writing did evolve into an influential force. In the shaping of the aesthetics of at least calligraphy and poetry, characters were not used simply as the unavoidable media but were also made use of as symbolic systems. To understand this point, it is necessary to consider the so-called symbolic status of Chinese characters in a fresh perspective.

One of the essential conditions for the realization of a lyrical symbol is that a qualitative relationship exist between the symbol and its symbolized content. This relationship is by definition the creative experience itself. Music clearly is the perfect lyrical symbol (except in the occasional representational piece, in which the form is itself meant to resemble the musical experience it evokes); but whatever the artistic medium, there has to be some qualitative connection (either equivalence or opposition) between physical form and content. Symbols used in writing or speech may seem to lack this kind of qualitative correspondence, and in fact in literature the symbolic aspect often operates only in the internal mode. But Chinese characters did gradually develop a specific symbolic status which had the consequence of shaping the aesthetic experience.

Two aspects of creation are closely integrated with the ultimate expression of a work of art: the act of composition and the act of execution. Naturally, creation, whether of poetry or calligraphy, should include both acts, but one can easily see that composition constitutes the central act in poetry-making, and execution the central act in calligraphy. For poets, physical characters are never in themselves as important as their mental counterparts. Poetic content cannot be limited to the represented contents alone, for the poetic act itself is an integral part of the total experience. The act of expression may itself be mentioned in writing, but more often attention is focused upon the poet's perception and response, thoughts, and dreams. It seems that the act of composition, that final phase of incubation when ideas are ready to be shuffled and structured into expression, cannot be fully represented in words. But the pictorially discrete nature of Chinese characters does create a system of modules which do not refer to the object but instead embody its quality. Readers of a poem are encouraged to envision an abstract design composed of the essences of the poet's ideas, which are structured according to the rhetorical rules governing these modules. It is the placement and the configuration of these module-characters that eventually realize a mental space that accommodates the poet's aesthetic ideas. Regulated verse is in fact a formulation which seeks to recover this act of accommodation. Through an elaborate design that employs characters in assigned roles, this verse form strives to embody a sense of self-containedness, in which the act of composition can be identified as the act of envisaging.

Is this a return to the discarded Fenellosa pictorial theory of the Chinese writing system?<sup>24</sup> Not at all, if we realize that the creative experience evoked by the manipulation of characters is not limited to the semantic content; it is not the same as describing

meanings on different levels of a character. Rather, the (unavoidable) use of characters became a part of the experience which cannot be disentangled from the form. If we remember that the primary premise of a lyric artist is the reluctance to let go of his artistic products, then it is equally valid to argue that to read lyric arts is to understand the creative act as part of the content.

In calligraphy, the represented content has never been a serious issue in the creative act; here apparently the physical presence of the words, not their content, is the object of appreciation. One may assume that on an abstract level, the form of calligraphy is its aesthetic quality, as in music and abstract painting. But just as the performance of music plays an important part in the aesthetic experience, calligraphy demands equal attention in its execution. The individual characters move toward standardization in script form and in artistic materials, and this uniform equipment actually helps the viewer steadily to cultivate a discriminating eye, to become sensitive to the minutest change of nuance in the artist's movement. In calligraphy, therefore, the characters have a symbolism beyond their formal qualities. Characters in calligraphy, as in regulated verse, capture the qualities of the artist's actions and even the entirely personal vital force that is behind those actions. The act of materialization on the artist's part becomes an act of identification for the reader, who, in his mental frame, reenacts the artist's flow of energy.

THEORY OF LYRIC:  
THE STRUCTURALIZATION OF AESTHETIC IDEA

Theorists have frequently characterized the calligraphy of the T'ang as the embodiment of the idea of *fā* 法, a word which has the meanings of "law," "model," "method," and "pedagogy" at the same time. The infatuation with *fā* was most evident in the consolidation of the regulated verse form. Regulated verse and the shorter "quatrain" (*chüeh-chü* 絕句) are called "recent-style poetry" (*chin-t'i shih* 近體詩) to indicate that they were the products of their time. They are forms which can be learned, and they are also believed to exemplify the ideal forms of poetry. Even the serious interest in the late T'ang in establishing a theory of poetry that would accommodate "ancient-style poetry" (*ku-t'i shih* 古體詩, anachronistically named) also reveals this concern with *fā*. Today, just to thumb through a handbook of poetry, for example, the collection *Wen-ching mi-fu* 文鏡秘府 (*The Secret Thesaurus of Literary Mirrors*), would provide us with many samples of this interest in *fā*.

In the evolution of the poetic genres and their aesthetics, the character, particularly some qualities unique in the mental mode relating to it, played a new role. No doubt the physical independence of the Chinese character was one aspect which opened up new possibilities for poetic forms. The graphic form of a character, uniquely designed for one specific etymological meaning and specifically assigned to one tonal monosyllable, is a basic module which can operate on its own. The self-contained graph suggests a sense of territorial autonomy, and the monosyllabic sound is further reinforced by the tone, which seems to apply to individual words the intonation that in most languages belongs to sentences. But none of these physical features would have been decisive if it were not for the unique way meanings in the Chinese language are organized.

The most relevant feature of the Chinese character is its qualitatively oriented meaning. This is the result of the independence enjoyed by the individual character even when combined as a lexical word. In a language with a strong syntactic structure, each word

is part of the larger unit of a hierarchy. But the meaning of each word is defined not simply by its representative meaning but also by the function it performs within the sentence hierarchy (generally marked as a word class). Although in the Chinese language the sentence is strictly structured, in poetic language the loosely connected phrase, which is an aggregation of lexical words, often prevails. Words are combined into phrases by either a concatenation of topic and comment or the juxtaposition of two parallel terms. The result is that the meanings of words turn their backs on the referential world, and their qualities are thrown into relief on a structural canvas.

Qualitative readings struggle against referential readings. In reading literature, one may be conscious that the referential function of language plays a secondary role, but one may not be aware that this reading (a centrifugal one) may nonetheless still dominate. Meanings of words, reference to the mental mode, may decisively tilt toward the construction of other worlds, as in narrative aesthetics. The qualitative reading of a word, on the other hand, is the introspection of a mind which goes to an internal source for an understanding of the meaning. Such a reading depends greatly upon a determination of the formal context rather than the realistic context. One can argue that in China, from the earliest times, the reading of poetry was already influenced by this approach to meaning, concerned not with its realistic environment but with its abstract quality. The consequent emphasis on the formation of formal structure in poetry may explain the great interest in regulated verse.

The evolution of the rules of regulated verse, making use of the character-form of the language, emphasized the poetic space of the form. Historically, monosyllabic characters steadily joined together to form disyllabic compounds; in addition, two free monosyllabic words, when placed next to each other, also tended to merge into one unit. By the first century, when the first major poetic forms began to surface, the language consisted basically of monosyllabic words and disyllabic compounds. As the metrical division invariably coincides with the semantic division, and two monosyllabic words also tend to join together whenever possible, the duple meter dominated—and dominates—poetry. An important metrical development occurred very soon after: the poetic meter shifted from an even-number beat line to an odd-number beat line. The predominant tetrasyllabic line of earlier poetry was replaced gradually by the pentasyllabic line by adding a syllable to the last duple meter of each line. Since then, the final trisyllable has been the privileged triple meter. Until the rise of the “irregular-line lyric” (*tz'u* 詞) at the end of the T'ang, a triple meter ended almost all lines of poetry. The pentasyllabic line verse and later the septasyllabic line verse were forms with very few rules. There were only two requirements: open form, which is to say the length of a poem is not set by rule, and couplet form, in which every two lines form a couplet, with a rhyme in the second line. These minimal requirements are in sharp contrast to the elaborate rules of the later regulated verse. Understanding why the intricate rules of regulated verse evolved from this free form may give us some insight into the lyric aesthetics of the time.

The change from an open form to a closed form is an extremely significant step. Before regulated verse, the poetic forms were all open-ended. That is to say, the poet could continue a poem for as long as he wanted to. Many of the formal rules of regulated verse had developed individually; of these, the number of lines apparently was fixed at eight only in the early seventh century. (An extended form of regulated verse—*p'ai-lü* 排律—remains an available open form. However, not only is it a far less important form,

but several variations of this extended form also became fixed when it was used for examination purposes.) The predictable closure of regulated verse gives poets a sense of poetic space, which is then further compartmentalized by the modular nature of characters. For this reason, “to set the limits” (*ting-hsien* 定限) and “to designate the positions” (*fen-wei* 分位) became the major concerns of poetry handbooks.

Each regulated poem in pentasyllabic line is a hierarchy of four couplets and eight lines, in which each line has five characters and is assigned a specific role in the poem. The formal rules for regulated verse are very complicated, and I will describe only enough to provide a picture of the potential effects of these rules on aesthetics. The formal rules fall into two categories: phonic and semantic. The primary goal is to construct a modular space through rules that govern the placement of equivalent (or opposite) qualities (of tone and of sense) in each character position. The units beyond the basic character are, first, the disyllabic and trisyllabic units and, second, the entire pentasyllabic line. But the most important unit is the couplet, which is self-contained in both phonic and semantic structures. The first principle in this modular version is to achieve symmetry, although the ways to achieve it can be quite varied. Phonic symmetry is based upon obtaining a maximum contrast between level and oblique (or “lax” and “tense”) tones, by alternating the tones within a line in sequence, as well as in a lateral order between couplet lines. The phonic design therefore does not have a continuous repeating rhythm but substitutes for repetition a perfectly complementary modular pattern. This weakens greatly the linear flow of the lines, but it establishes a structural symmetry which accommodates a variety of sound modules, comparable to a mental blueprint of spatiality.

Although the phonic pattern gives a shape to the modular design in the mind, it is not the determinative element in the whole design. That requires the symmetry of parallelism, in which the qualitative meanings of two words in corresponding positions within a couplet must belong to the same category. This category is not simply a syntactic word class, as it might be in a syntactic language; it is a class in which the words all relate to a specific quality (*lei* 類). The design of the whole structure of a regulated verse can be seen in terms of the qualitative configuration that results. This semantic design is really the mental structure most directly related to the poetic experience. While the principle of contrast that underlies the phonic rules confirms the individuality of each unit, parallelism is based on the principle of equivalence, which unifies diverse elements through common denominators. One essential semantic configuration is that of “concreteness” or “solidity” (*shih* 實) and “emptiness” (*hsü* 虛). In the classifications of words, a contrast between solid characters and empty characters was early established. The naming of these word classes is itself revealing, showing the psychological perception of words as ranging from the most concrete solid word (probably a tangible object) to the most transparent empty word (a particle, affix, or relational word). Extensions from this axis of classification include the criterion of motion and stillness: the distinction between word classes is realized in this instance as the contrast between nouns and verbs. The still, nominal world is the sphere containing the most concrete objects to our senses, and so it is the most meticulously classified according to qualitative criteria.

The pivotal category in semantic configurations lies in the small group of words denoting quality, commonly known as adjectives, which directly represent the essences of qualities in their purest states. Their frequent use (even overuse) testifies to the importance of qualities in lyric experience, in which all impressions are to be interpreted in

terms of these essences. The structure of a regulated verse, constructed with parallel images of qualities, ends as a total mental picture which is the core of the whole work.

Another configuration in parallelism affects the structure of a complete poem. In a regulated verse the phonic pattern runs throughout, but the parallelism rule is applied only to the two inner couplets. The two outer couplets may also be parallel, but in practice the last couplet seldom is. The design begins with an opening that introduces the themes of the poem and proceeds to develop them in a formal space structured by parallelism; it ends with a single statement in two lines that relates the central form to the general poetic context. This design is really an opposition between hypotaxis and parataxis. The quality of hypotaxis is continuous and determinate, moving forward using well-constructed sentences and a clearly defined context. The quality of parataxis, illustrated by the use of juxtaposition and parallelism, is balanced and introspective, with the emphasis on the interrelationships of its own constituent members and with less concern for temporal flow. In the earliest critical texts, each couplet was often given a functional name. In *Wen-ching mi-fu*, the four couplets are designated by function: “introducing the title” (*p'o-t'i* 破題), “development couplet” (*ch'eng-lien* 承聯), “focal couplet” (*ching-lien* 警聯), and, finally, “falling lines” (*luo-chü* 落句). Problems relating to the introduction of the title and the closure of the ending lines were so important that entire sections of the handbooks of this period are devoted to them. How to begin a poem and how to end a poem, however, depend on more than helpful hints. They seem to involve some profound questions concerning underlying aesthetics, which I would like to look at a little more closely.

It is generally agreed that the evolution of the “expressive-mode” (*yung-huai* 詠懷; more literally, “singing of [the] innermost”) form acted as an aesthetic predecessor of regulated verse. The rise of a new poetics for landscape poetry in the fourth century was another preparation for regulated verse. A descriptive middle taken from landscape poetry was inserted into a frame of the expressive mode, resulting in a rudimentary regulated verse. Seldom, however, have we paid serious attention to a third contributory factor, the emergence from the fifth century on of a minor subgenre called “poetry on objects” (*yung-wu shih* 詠物詩). The most unusual feature of this new genre was its playful attitude toward the writing of poetry. Each occasion of writing was treated as a game, and the participants were required to write on an assigned subject, generally but not always an object that was present. This approach recalled the playful elements in early folksong writing, but it clashed directly with the more ponderous *yung-huai* form, which saw the creative act as a revelation of one’s inner self. When *yung-wu* poetry was first devised, its popularity as a perfect pastime even among serious poets and the contemporary vogue for technical accomplishment attracted much attention to the form. In this form, writing poetry could be initiated by the assignment of a title. The handbook *Wen-ching mi-fu*, in calling the first couplet “introducing the title,” seems to imply that the naming of the title is the beginning of the poetic act.

The influence of *yung-wu* and *yung-huai* on regulated verse is in their conception of the poet. To suggest that the poetic act may begin with the first line of the poem separates the poem from an unequivocal link to the outside world and leads to a self-contained world, an assumption unique to poetry on objects. An expressive mode, in requiring the poet to be honest with himself and with his context, seems paradoxically to suggest an objective mode that leaves the poet entirely to his imagination. When perception gives



way completely to imagination, the act of composition holds absolute power in the organization of poetic content. This is indeed the playing of a game, in which everything begins afresh and only the player's technical competence and imagination are the controlling forces. Regulated verse devotes only the first three couplets to this objective mode. In the last couplet, there is a return to the more traditional expressive mode to bring the poetic act to an end that reverberates with the poet's actual surroundings. The ending couplet serves as the frame for the descriptive core of the first three (or two) couplets. At the same time as this pattern in regulated verse evolved, the concept of "inscape" (*ching* 境), or internal space, also began to evolve and to capture the imagination of poets.

The idea of inscape capped the shift of landscape poetry from external to internal description. With a configuration that strongly favored spatiality over temporality, early landscape poetry had used parallelism to greatly expand the description of "scenery," or "landscape" (*ching* 景). In such lines, the poet stops completely to contemplate simultaneously the different elements in his surroundings. The introduction of inscape in the eighth century again opened up new possibilities. Buddhists appropriated the term for the same meaning in its mental mode, and scholars were quick to see its usefulness in literary contexts. Wang Ch'ang-ling 王昌齡 (d. ca. 756) in his *Rules for Poetry* (*Shih-ke* 詩格) offers a sequence of three stages in the conception of the poetic world: "landscape" (*wu-ching* 物景), concerned with external objects; "affective state" (*ch'ing-ching* 情境), concerned with emotional state; and "inscape," or "ideational state" (*i-ching* 意境), concerned with aesthetic idea. It is for this last state, when the poet's aesthetic ideas fill and spread out in the imaginary space of his mind, that I suggest the translation "inscape."

The lyric experience begins with internalization and ends in symbolization. When realistic details are transformed in our minds into abstract qualities, the symbolic meaning is revealed not simply through the content of representation but in the form of presentation. Qualitative modules in one's mind are used symbolically in the construction of this mental space, this inscape. Of course, this poetic reality belongs only to the internalized world. In this world of imagination, the poet's personal understanding of the essences of the objects and the emotions of the self is the only valid material. To read the poet's words is to interpret them in terms of these essences as lyrical quality. It is this lyrical quality which makes up the poetic world in our imagination. Why is the act of visualization so important in the creative process and in the reading process? The answer should be self-apparent: it is because visualization is the most tangible part of the poetic imagination. To envisage the lyric space in the mind, the inscape, is to experience the poetic act.

THE THEORY OF CALLIGRAPHY:  
THE MATERIALIZATION OF INNER FORCE

The concept of *fa* originally was used to sum up the spirit of calligraphy rather than of poetry. Although in calligraphy one cannot see the comparable emergence of one perfect form as in poetry, there is no doubt of the enormous interest in the establishment of models and the exploration of methods during this period. The development of all the major script forms was completed during the T'ang; and the major theorists devoted considerable thought to the proper way to read calligraphy, centering their attention on the problem of "the art of the brush" (*pi-fa* 筆法).

Although early Chinese characters originated as pictograms, calligraphy criticism had long transcended the limited representative aspect of characters and had often used fanciful metaphors and hyperbole—the flying dragon, leaping tiger, circling eagle, for example—to symbolize the presence of a certain writing style. This prepared the way for the eventual transfer of interest to the abstract qualities of calligraphy, which became the pivotal concept in the new theory of calligraphy. In this new framework, the object of appreciation shifted from the form itself to the act. But unlike the concern in the poetical act with mental incubation and envisagement, the act of creativity in calligraphy is concerned more with the physical realization of an internal intention. This physical movement naturally is intimately bound up with the dynamics of intention and in turn with the personality and life force of the calligrapher himself. A new scheme to relate the form of calligraphy with complex human actions and intentions came into being during the T'ang, and the theory of calligraphy made great strides.

The distinction between the mental presence of a character and the physical presence of a character may be too obvious to call for any comment. But ordinarily, outside calligraphy, the physical character is seldom required to justify its existence without its literal meaning. The question, then, is what can be exploited in the separation between the literal meaning of a character in the mind and the formal qualities of a character on paper. Chang Huai-kuan 張懷瓘 of the eighth century who, together with Sun Kuo-t'ing 孫過庭 of the previous century, was responsible for laying the foundation for a broad-based theory of calligraphy, was the most perceptive voice in this particular aspect. He tried to revive and revise an ancient classification of characters into pictogram (*wen* 文), character (*tzu* 字), and calligraphy (*shu* 書). Though the distinction was an old one, in reviving it Chang emphasized the unique importance of the act of writing (*shu* 書), which was, in his words, the “indispensable act which truly realizes the potential of a character.”<sup>25</sup> In the most interesting aspect of his analysis, he gives the act of writing a status comparable to the revelation that saw the invention of the pictogram, when patterns were recorded which were perceivable only by the privileged few, the sages. Indeed, Chang placed the invention of the pictogram second only to the appearance of trigrams and hexagrams, which he saw as the most significant step in the evolution of the writing system. In such a historical view, the imitative component in pictograms and the dichotomy between pictograms (*wen*) and the derived characters (*tzu*) became less important than the direct revelation of the abstract structure of the cosmos composed in terms of fundamental essences. Each act of writing, like this earliest moment of enlightenment, is an independent act which constitutes the personal revelation of the writer at that particular moment and is comparable to the earlier revelations of the sages.

In his enthusiastic endorsement of calligraphy over literature, Chang Huai-kuan writes:

Literary composition needs several characters to complete the meaning [of a line], whereas calligraphy can reveal the mind with only one character. This is certainly the ultimate attainment of economy and simplicity [in art].<sup>26</sup>

A simple expressive power lies in a very simple medium, the monochromatic ink stroke, executed in lines conforming to the contour of a character. For the brushstroke to convincingly harbor such aesthetic potential, it has to meet two conditions: the medium within its limited vocabulary must have infinite possibilities in formal expression; and

this expression not only should be a technical tour de force, but must directly and effectively reflect the artist's mental and physical acts. On both counts, Chang presented some provocative thoughts.

To discover a simple medium with infinite expressive possibilities has always been the dream of lyric aesthetics. In this respect, music is again the ideal lyric art form because its vocabulary exemplifies simple and pure qualities which all belong to a coherent set of internal systems. In calligraphy, Chinese artists found a medium even simpler than music, for in the latter, representative and ritual interpretations could still interfere with the purity of expression. It is true that the utilitarian function and representational content of writing had often defeated its formal and abstract potential. Nevertheless, calligraphy began to move toward the independent status of an art object. Artists thought less of providing simple messages of communication in their calligraphy and more of leaving evidence of their mental states, which is not usually part of the representative content of the messages.

How can calligraphy remain faithful to its original communicative purpose if what characters denote becomes irrelevant? This objection can be dealt with in two ways. First, even in its early practice, the content of calligraphy may already have been divorced from the representative content. Second, the basic intention of a piece as a whole is still required to converge with the formal qualities associated with the physical presence of the work. I shall discuss both issues briefly.

Calligraphy in its earlier functional role was a means of writing down a message, probably by a trained scribe. When these scribes turned into craftsmen and when many literati very likely became calligraphers as well, they may have written down their own work, for example, their own letters, but they also continued to copy compositions by others. This separation of authorship from penmanship was a precursor of the separation of content from form. The abstraction of calligraphical art followed when content was no longer a contributing factor (at least not an essential one) to the overall artistic expression. It is illuminating to compare this with the performing arts, as many of the differences seem to point to the unique nature of calligraphy as an art. Music has the two phases of composition and performance; for most of us, only performance can turn a score into aesthetic experience. A calligrapher is a performer of another person's score when he copies the other's literary work. But how often does a calligrapher perform in front of an audience? Even if he does, his audience may miss a subtle expression perceptible only in a meticulous examination of the finished writing. In watching a dance, one concentrates on the movement performed; in listening to a concert, one concentrates on the music produced. Calligraphy in performance also requires its audience to concentrate on the writing produced, but that writing cannot be fully appreciated until afterward. All performers are at the service of the creative artists (composers, choreographers, or playwrights), but the calligrapher is both performer and creative artist, performing with no particular script. One may compare it to a dance improvisation, except that the art object is the footprints left by the dancer. Therefore, although the appreciation of calligraphy centers on the act of materialization, it is not the act itself which attracts the connoisseurs, but the mental conception of this act as discerned from the physical text.

Ideally, calligraphy aims for a convergence of the representational meaning and the formal meaning. Chang Huai-kuan points out that a character can be meaning alone (when it is *tzu*) and that in addition to this independence, the formal quality of each

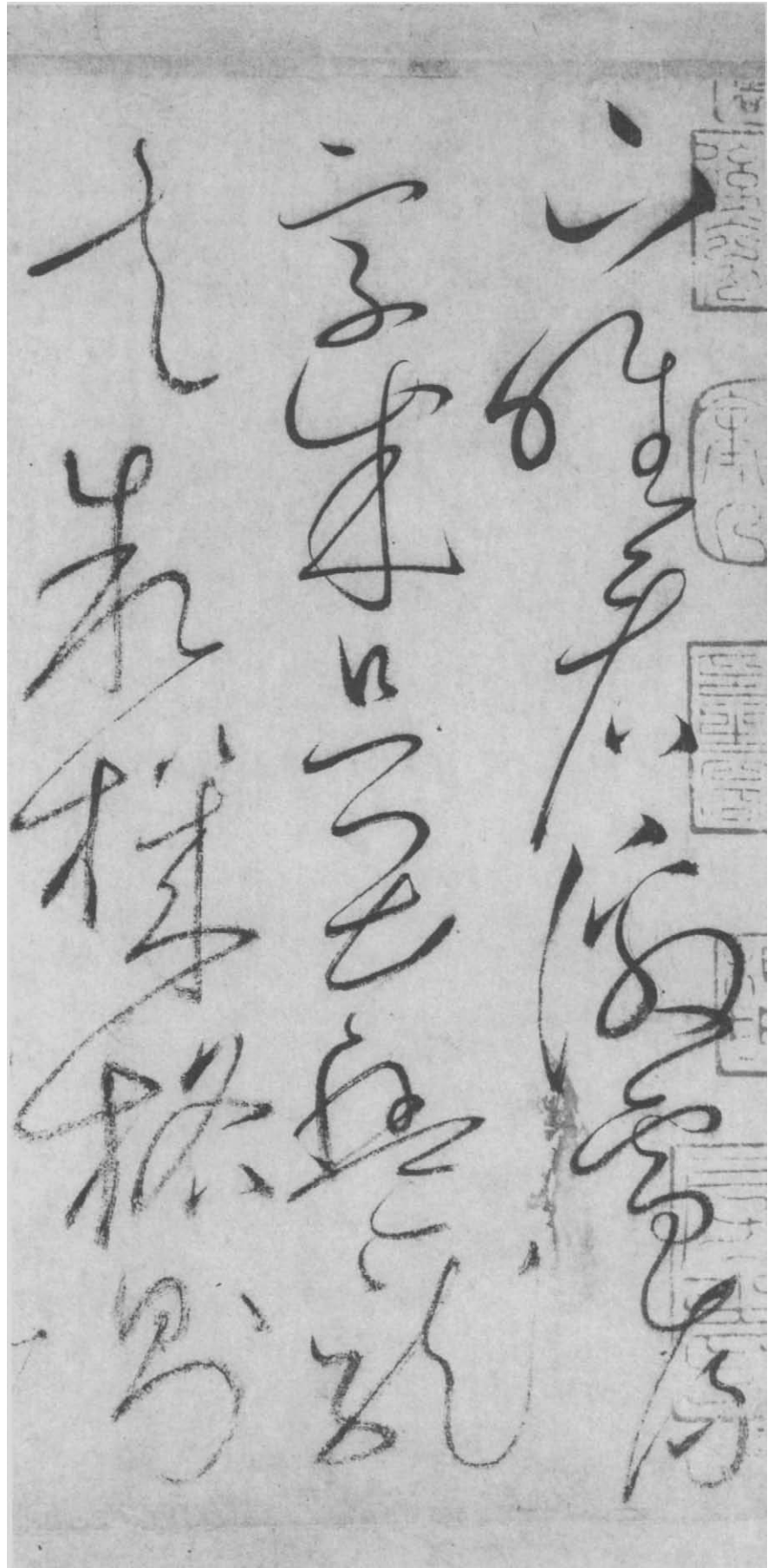


Figure 17. Huai-su (ca. 735–800?), *Autobiography*, dated 777. Detail of handscroll, ink on paper, H. 28.3 cm. Palace Museum, Taipei

character can have its own meaning, too, about which he speculates. Theoretically, the meaning of a Chinese character is etymologically closely allied to the graphic form. Consequently, the representative level is intrinsically related to the formal level of the character. For Chang, however, the more interesting question is the nature of this formal meaning. Is there an "inner force" within an artist which can be identified with what is after all an extremely simple form? Even in pre-T'ang writing on calligraphy, the simple quality of calligraphy has often been compared to that of "inner force" (*ch'i*). Chang's intense interest in early trigrams made the adoption of *ch'i* a logical step. This concept had been used extensively in early literary criticism, but it could not find a satisfactory interpretation in literary experience. The comparative simplicity of the calligraphical medium and of inner force invites its collaboration.

To define *ch'i* is even more difficult than to define *i* because of the former's philosophical implications and mysterious applications. But within the context of calligraphy, it is possible to identify several layers of interpretation for this inner force. On the level of physical action, *ch'i* is translatable as "kinetic force," which determines the bodily movement in the execution of writing. On the level of mental action, it is "intentional force," which directs the artist to fulfill his plan. But between these two ends one can also conceive of different frames of reference, such as the "pulsatile force," or "impulsive force," as the momentum moves upward from the physiological level to the intellectual level. Ultimately, on the highest interpretative level, all these forces join as "life force," to symbolize the personality as a whole. One must not forget that precisely this same *ch'i* is, in metaphysics, the "cosmic force" that informs the structure of all nature, including certainly the writing medium itself. It seems a natural step to use the calligraphical form to represent the different levels of interpretation for this inner force. The stark contrast between black ink and white background is the simplest metaphor for the forces of nature; the movement of this force is only minimally defined by a linear course with infinite possible variations in amplitude and direction.

To understand the possible variations in the basic form, we should briefly survey the development of the different script forms. These also differentiate a number of stylistic frameworks. The evolution of different types of scripts came to an end during the T'ang, when all the major scripts were stabilized. The central one, "standard script" (*k'ai-shu* 楷書), was firmly established during the seventh century, and "wild cursive" (*k'uang-ts'ao* 狂草), the last important variation of cursive script, came into being in the eighth century. The general practice of calligraphy was limited mainly to standard and wild scripts, with "running script" (*hsing-shu* 行書) covering the span between the two. The ancient scripts, such as "seal" (*chuan* 篆) and "clerical" (*li* 隸), were still widely used by calligraphers, although no longer used for practical purposes. (This strengthens our impression that writing was appreciated not for its communicative potential but for its artistic potential.) The important development in the T'ang dynasty was that each script had its own specific potential.

Standard script was considered to combine "the most advanced brush techniques of the different script types which had developed in the intervening years."<sup>27</sup> The repertory of writing had gradually been refined and codified. Now technically the writing was done with brush and ink on white paper, the focus being entirely on the linear design of each character, which had its own center of gravity within an imaginary square in a grid pattern. Simplification and standardization helped to develop a stylistic awareness which

became part of the artist's and reader's aesthetics. The most immediate physical action is holding the brush and manipulating it over paper. The numerous changes of nuance in the shape and shade of each character, which are dictated by the artist's act of writing, should convey to readers information concerning the physical actions and mental states which control the determined form.

Cursive script contrasts greatly with standard script. It "stressed the action of the brush-tip, abbreviating or linking several strokes into one or two movements" and later "gradually evolved into more sustained and carefully articulated brush movements."<sup>28</sup> Such brushwork results in the creation of the idiosyncratic wild-cursive script, with hardly recognizable characters vertically connected in one continuous line. Apparently, cursive script carries the idea of continuum to a physical realization. The concept of linearity, which was physically manifested as continuity, now comes into being at the expense of legibility. It is in the birth of wild cursive and in the use of ancient script forms that calligraphy can discard its label of minor functional art and claim to be a genuine and serious abstract art.

The different rationales that supported the contrasting styles of standard and cursive scripts were an important topic for contemporary critics. Sun Kuo-t'ing asserts:

In standard script, dots and lines are the form and substance (*hsing-chih* 形質), and movements and turnings are the disposition and essence (*ch'ing-hsing* 情性); in cursive script, movements and turnings are the form and substance, dots and lines its disposition and essence.<sup>29</sup>

This effectively sums up the different aesthetics developed through the two opposite styles. The "disposition and essence" of a character is the nature of a character in context and in use, which is the symbolic meaning in action. Sun wrote repeatedly about the symbolic; elsewhere he tried to define the interpretation of the various shades of shapes besides the standard dots and strokes, trying to find the key that would reveal the true nature of calligraphy. Standard script is based upon simple movements which construct the linear design of each character; the dynamic aspect of each stroke is what gives the form its extrainterpretative quality. Cursive script is from the beginning to the end completely the embodiment of movement; the static aspect must be responsible for revealing, beyond the perpetual movement, some of the formal qualities associated with the individual characters. A few decades later, Chang Huai-kuan carried Sun Kuo-t'ing's argument further by putting great emphasis on the role of cursive script. "In standard script," he wrote, "the meaning is completed when the character is completed; but in cursive script, the potency [of the kinetic force] will not finish, even at the end of a column." This is followed by a long passage of hyperbolic description that hints at the "mysterious beauty of cursive script," the subject probably foremost in his mind.<sup>30</sup>

The term "the art of the brush" (*pi-fa*) began in relation to the pedagogical study of the act of writing, but it developed into a guide for interpreting calligraphy. The "art of the brush" was during the T'ang a code for the symbolic interpretation of a brushstroke. In this code, the spatial and formal design of calligraphy is superseded by a one-dimensional line. Linearity is made the correlation of the actual movement of writing and then, by extension, the correlation of the movement of mind. In this way, a material of basically one quality is endowed with many possible dimensions of interpretation. In a sense, the infinite variations of quantitative nature are the barometer for the complex

qualitative changes of the inner force. The art of the brush is really the art of “modulation.”

In the reading of standard script, movement is as always the cause of all calligraphical actions; the movement is evenly distributed in the orderly progression of time. The momentum is controlled to obtain the equilibrium of each self-contained character. The modulation of the amplitude and directionality then defines the shaping of each piece of calligraphy. In cursive script, the momentum is transformed into a force of propulsion. The element of time also shifts from a leisurely and even pace to a propelling speed. The continuum of the calligraphical act centers on its forwardness and reversal, consequently on its release and contraction, with tension in the foreground. Cursive script becomes the modulation of the continuum and speed.

In the early criticism of calligraphy, *hsing* 形 refers to the static form, *shih* 勢 to the potential interaction between forms. But when movement is understood as an indispensable part of calligraphy, the controlled *shih* is then the configuration, analogous to a course through which the torrent flows. When finally movement is seen as propulsion, *shih* is the force itself with all its potential momentum ready to be released, for which I offer the translation “potency.” This powerful concept of potency is present in every script form, but it is most fully realized in the form of cursive script. It is not too much of an exaggeration to claim that T’ang criticism focused on the problem of realizing this potency, aware that it could be meaningful only within the symbolic framework of the underlying inner force.

As lyric experience, calligraphy concentrates on the phase of execution, which is the materialization of the physical power of the artist. Repeatedly, theorists warned the calligrapher to cleanse his mind before execution. It should not escape our attention that a completely cleansed mind may require the calligrapher to cut himself off from realistic experience. Divorce from the outside world is a necessary condition for great performance, completely dependent as performance is upon the inner reserve the artist can release at the moment. To appreciate calligraphy is to relive the physical action in one’s mind. Therefore even the physical aspect of calligraphy can be meaningful only in its mental mode. But it is necessary to identify with the operation of the multilayered energy in the artist’s mind. Critics of calligraphy are fundamentally interested in the dynamics of momentum.

#### TWO COMPLEMENTARY AESTHETICS

I would like to summarize the aesthetics of the T’ang dynasty in two short phrases: “to let the mind roam between spaces” (*yu-hsin k’ung-chi* 遊心空際) and “to express ideas outside the object itself” (*hsieh-i wu-wai* 寫意物外). The space between spaces can only be the mental space I have discussed, and the meaning beyond the object itself is probably equivalent to contextual meaning. This brings us back first to the internalized world, and second to symbolic meaning. Aesthetic ideas form an inscape, whereas the inner force reveals the transcendental meaning through the many variations of potency. This lyric experience is summed up in the formal terms of design: pattern in space and rhythm in time. Both the fluidity of quality and the indeterminacy of interpretation are fundamentally antithetical to the rigidity of pattern and rhythm. The two phrases point to the

need to create a volatile and variable world of the mind to accommodate lyrical qualities.

By the T'ang dynasty, the earlier lyricism had undergone considerable changes. The strong commitment to emotional outpouring in art subsided to make way for a more controlled presentation through technical mastery, a variation of *fa*. But in the new concept of the creative process, the artist is still the pivotal figure, and experience is still abstract quality to be structured in form. The earlier interpretation of poetic intent as the poet's personal feeling and responses was replaced by a more objectified version of intent, in which the artist is an objective performer who manipulates the utterances of passion or fantasy with technical competence. Temperament and emotion still manage to enter into this technical exercise, but the artist's self mainly exerts its presence through artistic form. Art is a game professional in its artistry, and artists bring to this play a literati mentality with which to denote their amateur status. For poets, the game is to structure their experience in a spatial dimension in the form of qualities, imagistic and impressionistic; for calligraphers, the game is to structure their experience in a temporal dimension in the form of one life force with infinite variations, kinetic and expressive. Though both experiences are of the present, poetry is retrospective in relation to its source, whereas calligraphy is prospective to the result. In other words, at the central moment of execution, the poet has already completed his lyric experience while the calligrapher has yet to launch into his. Naturally, two different aesthetics emerged from these different structures of the creative experience.

To arrest the progression of time, poetic space in the mind aims for an equilibrium, a moment lasting for eternity. Within this enclosed and permanent space, the highest ideal is to attain a state of centrality and harmony (*chung-ho* 中和). As in music, life is prized for intrinsic qualities now in perfect balance and harmony. This is the natural state (*tzu-jan* 自然) in which everything is simply itself. However, since life itself is in constant motion and acquires meanings through interaction with its surroundings, the meanings of poetic vision reside less in direct statement than in indirect revelation. Hence the critical term "resonance" (*yün* 韻) became the most widely used description of the responsiveness and interrelation that surround the seemingly dormant center.

When an artist looks forward to the movement to come, he concentrates on the constant moving, growing, and transforming of life projected into poetic time. As the pendulum swings back toward strangeness and variability (*ch'i-pien* 奇變), the artist searches for originality, as life force is urged to transform, in order to surprise us. Life therefore appears as a powerful momentum which unleashes the kinetic and vital *ch'i*, or force, within us. The poetic vision becomes poetic force, and the harmonic center of naturalness is replaced by different moods marked by complexity and intensity. This opposition between the tranquil self-containedness of ethos and the dynamic transformation of animus may reflect the different functions of a receptive mental state and an expressive mental act. The former depends on the operation of the aesthetic idea, and the latter on that of the life force.

So far I have dwelt on the contrasts between poetry and calligraphy. Neither art form, however, can be a pure embodiment of one set of ideas; within each art form, one may see dialectical opposition of the same kind as exists between the art forms. In poetry, regulated verse is sharply contrasted with ancient-style verse, which is strongly oriented



toward forward movement. The preference of the scholar-official Han Yü 韓愈 (768–824) for ancient-style verse can probably be justified by its formal qualities, which accommodate perfectly his theory of *ch'i* as adapted for poetry from prose. In calligraphy, the contrast lies between styles of script. The propelling force finds its realization in the ideal of cursive script, particularly in the newly developed wild-cursive script. Turning to standard script, can one not begin to see that the purposefulness of each stroke may retard the forward movement? May one choose equilibrium over continuum or momentum as the ideal in calligraphy?

I have concentrated on two phases of the creative act as the foci of two different art forms: the act of composition (or mental composition) and the act of execution (or physical execution). The forms of poetry and calligraphy exemplify the different ideals cultivated. The main operant in poetry, aesthetic idea, is replaced in calligraphy by kinetic force. The highest ideal in poetry, the attainment of inscape (*i-ching* 意境), appears to be irrelevant in calligraphy, in which the expression of potency (*ch'i-shih* 氣勢) becomes the urgent goal. Inscape is the realization in mental space of the design of aesthetic ideas, and potency embodies the rhythm of life force along a linear progression. In the eleventh century, basing itself on these two sources of inspiration, the theory of painting was able to build its more elaborate theory of lyric art.

### *The Culmination of Lyric Aesthetics*

#### PAINTING AS A LYRIC ART

By the ninth century, the various strains in the development of lyric aesthetics seemed to be on the verge of coming together as a comprehensive theory of art. No art form alone was sufficient; neither poetry nor calligraphy fit the requirements of a total art, for neither one covered a broad spectrum of form and content, and neither one encompassed all phases of the creative act. The emergence at this juncture of painting as a lyric art provided a focus for the gradual culmination of a lyric aesthetics.

Ironically, it was not initially apparent that painting was a suitable candidate as a lyric art. To be sure, the lyrical tradition had been indebted to art criticism from the very beginning. In the fourth century, it was in art criticism that such critical concepts as spirit (*shen*), resonance (*yün*), bone (*ku* 骨), and breath (*ch'i*) first reached full development. Ku K'ai-chih 顧愷之 (ca. 344–ca. 406), Tsung Ping 宗炳 (375–443), Hsieh Ho 謝赫 (active 500–ca. 535), and, in the T'ang, Wang Wei 王維 (701–61) all contributed important texts. Yet as important as these early writings were, they could not be considered a part of a lyrical tradition, mostly because artistic activities in painting had not yet become a genuine lyric art form. This view, which appears to contradict general thinking on the subject, requires some explanation.

Painting which falls short of being a lyric art form is here a narrowly construed category that includes only works produced in a mimetic tradition, whether depicting real or imaginary scenes. In the beginning these consisted primarily of figure paintings. Such paintings are above all a projection of an external world: the painter is expected to realize as close a transfer from model to painting as his technical competence permits. Its aesthetic is fundamentally a descriptive or narrative one. Painting at this stage could neither internalize nor symbolize, and so it fundamentally ran counter to lyric principles. A transformation on two levels was required to make painting lyrical: on the thematic

level, painting had to turn away from the basic function of external projection to introspection; on the formalistic level, it had to abandon realistic representation for abstract presentation. The cultural conditions of the Six Dynasties at least provided painters with enough impetus to use their medium as an expressive tool. However, it was only during the T'ang dynasty, when landscape painting gradually replaced figure painting as the prevailing form and when calligraphy began to exert its expressive power of abstract form, that the true transformation of painting began to develop a formal basis. In the eleventh century, the category of landscape painting reached its first great height, and it is only natural that, influenced by contemporary poetics, theory found in landscape painting an ideal form of self-expression. At the same time, in evolving the idea of literati painting, a unique concept—originally probably just an iconoclastic notion—rapidly established itself as a powerful aesthetic: here the formal and symbolic qualities of brush and ink were recognized and elaborated. Thus by the twelfth century, painting was ready to claim a leading role among the lyric arts.

Exactly what happened to landscape and literati painting during this time is a story for art historians to tell. I am concerned here simply with how the transformation of painting into a lyric art was achieved. How did landscape painting become an ideal form of self-expression, and how did literati painting create in brush and ink a symbolic system? The foundations had been laid in the other arts. Poets had earlier effected a transformation by defining personal interiority broadly to include the complete mental act and its content, inclusive of the sense perception of landscape. A second transformation was accomplished by the T'ang-dynasty theorists of calligraphy, who suggested that the power of the brush-stroke resides not in its representational content but in its symbolic form. Once landscape has been conceived of as part of the artist's interiority, and once abstract line has meaning without reference to the realistic context, then painting can incorporate these beliefs and even give them privileged roles.

#### LANDSCAPE PAINTING AND THREE TYPES OF DISTANCE

Two main styles of landscape painting developed along somewhat independent lines. The first was the monumental style which suddenly blossomed in the Northern Sung and which ever since has provided the artistic model for landscape artists. The second was a more intimate style which during the Southern Sung replaced the monumental style in vogue and even became dominant. The shift from monumental to intimate landscape may be compared, in size and in aesthetics, with a similar shift in the development of Chinese poetry.<sup>31</sup>

The connection between landscape and interiority which was made in painting aesthetics had been earlier established in poetry. The most elaborate and brilliant writings on landscape are found in Han-dynasty rhyme-prose (*fu* 賦) on imperial gardens, which were demonstrations of technical accomplishment and monumental scale. This form, however, was omitted from landscape poetry as the concept evolved, for the term came to be used only for poetry in which nature is seen as an indispensable prelude to self-cultivation. Hsieh Ling-yün's 謝靈運 (385-433) poems, which describe his travels through scenic land, illustrate perfectly this appreciation of nature's role: landscape has the prominent role, and the poet is obviously responding to its challenge. Yet great as many of

Hsieh's poems are, they resemble Han rhyme-prose in one respect: they are essentially descriptions of nature as an external object, and the relationship between the poet and his source of inspiration remains external. As critics have perceptively pointed out, there is in Hsieh's poems a separation between description and contemplation.<sup>32</sup> Thus, strictly speaking, Hsieh is not a lyrical poet, but a master of description who subscribes to the monumental rhyme-prose style. Though considerably reduced in scope and formalized in structure, his treatment of landscape is too elaborate and independent to be transformed into an internalized world.

The transformation of description of nature into introspection was a part of the slow evolution of regulated verse from the sixth through the eighth century. The external world now is conceived of as part of the potential object of the mental act; the highly schematized form of regulated verse, functioning as a mental frame, spontaneously integrates the diverse content and structures it into an artistic work. The new aesthetic associated with regulated verse not only powerfully shapes the creative stance of the poet but also provides a compact and finite form which acts as the perfect container of the particular moment captured by the poet. (This is not to say that the traditional landscape poetry descending from Hsieh Ling-yün disappeared. It continued in the T'ang dynasty in the so-called ancient-style verse form while also exhibiting the influence of the new aesthetic. In this continued tradition, most independent were the two leading poets, Li Po 李白 [701–62] and Tu Fu 杜甫 [712–70], who attempted in ancient-style verse to create a landscape poetry in monumental scale with a continual undercurrent of narrative aesthetics. Li Po's mixture of the real and the imaginary was ultimately brought back to reality, whereas Tu Fu based his imagination more often on his observation of painting.)

As nature increasingly became a focus in the process of self-cultivation and as the technique of creating naturalistic objects became available, landscape painting became more the object of attention. Possibly landscape painters were eager to use their technical abilities to compete in the capturing of realistic details—this certainly is reminiscent of rhyme-prose writers at the Northern Sung court who made a show of their wide vocabulary and knowledge. The painter of a magnificent vista intended to show both the beauty of nature and his prowess in verisimilitude. Although critics from Tsung Ping through Kuo Hsi 郭熙 (ca. 1010–ca. 1090) proposed that the landscape should be seen as a substitute for the real, it remained an external object. For example, Kuo Hsi wrote that paintings “through which you may travel . . . [or] wander” and “in which you may sightsee . . . [or] live” may achieve the same stature as real landscape.<sup>33</sup> Within these paintings, however, Kuo distinguished two levels of achievement, one of which gives a hint of the lyric potential of landscape: “Those [paintings] suitable for traveling and sightseeing are not as successful in achievement as those suitable for wandering and living.” His reason seems to be that it is rarer to find the latter; this seems to me to reveal a subtle desire to find a place where one can be absorbed completely by one's surroundings, which is another way to say internalization.

It would be futile to try to locate the exact moment when painters began to paint interior landscape. The claim certainly preceded the practice. Before this moment, painters had frequently asserted that they painted from memory, but copying from memory can still be done in the service of realistic projection. The story that Wu Tao-tzu 吳道子 (active ca. 710–60) painted the panoramic view of the Chia-ling River without making preliminary studies probably says more about his speed of execution than about

his reliance on memory. In his rapid movement, Wu, forgoing careful investigation, tried to capture the impression rather than the reality. Yet only by straining interpretation can one call the esteemed monumental style interior landscape. In truth, it was not until the Southern Sung and the ascendancy of the less-esteemed intimate style of landscape painting, with its more human scale, personal subject, and self-expressive undertone, that one can comfortably identify lyric aesthetics.

During this period, two subgenres in poetry began to be favored over regulated verse. These were the seven-character quatrain (*ch'i-yen chüeh-chü* 七言絕句) and the extended lyric song (*man-tz'u* 慢詞). The latter, though important in the development of Chinese poetry, does not have much bearing on our present subject. The former has been closely identified with painting as the form which most commonly appears in colophons. It seems that regulated verse had become a victim of its own success and had become artificial and stereotyped. The quatrain, only half the length of regulated verse and with optional rather than required parallelism, retains the propulsive flow of ancient-style verse. It was the form which perfectly reflected the mood at the beginning of the Southern Sung. The dynasty, newly resituated in the south, was about to reenact the history of eight hundred years earlier, the luxuriant land of the south serving as an ironic backdrop for the scholars fleeing the Tartar troops and trying to make new homes there. The quatrain, a piece of miniature landscape poetry, matched perfectly the landscape of the garden, where the distressed mind could occasionally find solace. This privatization also paved the way for internalization, of which the new trend of intimate landscape painting is the most perfect testimony.

However, the process of internalization did not occur suddenly in the early twelfth century, at the time of the transition to the Southern Sung. The preparation for this process had been continuous. Theorists in landscape painting, particularly through their discussion of space, had also contributed greatly to this change of aesthetics. It was the theoretical interpretation of space that made possible a symbolic rather than literal portrayal of landscape. Art historians have stressed that the use of perspective in Chinese painting is fundamentally different from that in the West, and that simply using the term *perspective* already implies the intention of making a projection of an external object which is faithful enough to allow an accurate reconstruction of the original model. Generally, this desire was wanting among Chinese painters. Their concern with "positioning" (*wei-chih* 位置) is more a problem of design than of perspective. Kuo Hsi observes that "the form of the mountain chang[es] with each step . . . viewed on every face." He notes that "the scenery of the four seasons is not the same" and a mountain also has "the changing aspects of different times." When he says, "one mountain combine[s] in itself the significant aspects ["intent" (*i* 意) and "attitude" (*t'ai* 態)] of several thousand mountains,"<sup>34</sup> he is suggesting that subjective impressions may contribute to a painter's observation of objective nature. Kuo clearly believes that this subjectivization of the inanimate object supersedes the naive mimetic tradition. In his suggestion of "three types of distance" in painting landscape, he formalized subjective impression as a structural scheme:

There are three types of distance in mountains. To look up to the mountain's peak from its foot is called high distance (*kao-yüan* 高遠). To look from in front of the mountain past it to beyond is called deep distance (*shen-yüan* 深遠). To look from a nearby mountain at more distant mountains is called level distance (*p'ing-yüan* 平遠).<sup>35</sup>

This scheme can be fully appreciated only if the mountain is not placed in and measured by objective spatial coordinates. It is really the mental impression of the mountains that determines the choice of spatial scheme: "high distances appear clear and bright; deep distances become steadily more obscure; level distances combine both qualities."<sup>36</sup> To the artist, distances are nothing but qualities.

Following Kuo Hsi's lead, Han Cho 韓拙, a critic active at the end of the Northern Sung, suggests another three distances:

When there is a wide stretch of water by the foreground shore and a spacious sweep to distant mountains, this is called "broad distance"; when there are mists and fog so thick and vast that streams in plains are interrupted and seem to disappear, this is called "hidden distance"; when scenery becomes obliterated in vagueness and mistiness, this is called "obscure distance."<sup>37</sup>

Han's three-distances concept has been criticized for being secondary and misleading, but Han has grasped the original purpose of these terms as a structural scheme and has used them to further define interior space by noting the types of border which surround the mental image. This speaks to the intense interest in the use of empty space in landscape painting. The blank space in the mind certainly could not have been treated in the then-prevailing realistic manner. The repertoire of Kuo Hsi's structure of space and of Han Cho's interpretation of border zones, together with the maxim to "use blank space as ink color" (*i po tang hei* 以白當黑), completes a topography of mental space which decisively shaped the evolution of landscape painting.

#### LITERATI PAINTING AND INK PAINTING

Literati painting evolved during the same period as landscape painting. The categorization of themes that prevailed in landscape painting was also a factor in the early evolution of literati painting, for the categories of landscape and literati painting were clearly adopted from the similar categories of landscape and lyric poetics. The term *literati painting* is a controversial one, but while it is hard to agree on a definition, everyone seems to agree on its existence. Recent scholarship on this issue gives an adequate framework for my purpose; I shall discuss only certain aspects relevant to the formation of lyric aesthetics. The central concern of the literati was with the capturing of *shen* 神, or spirit. When the literati shifted their attention from "why" to "how" to capture this spirit, a wide range of issues was drawn in.

Literati painters frequently stress the necessity of capturing the spirit of a subject in the artwork even if this is done at the expense of form-likeness. But this is not a preference original with literati painters. Capturing the spirit has been discussed by artists and critics of every genre since the earliest times. The confusion surrounding this problem probably can be traced to the multiple levels at which the word *shen* is used. At least three aspects are evident in the discussion of painting. First, *shen* refers to the intrinsic and innate qualities of the subject, which in its early application is primarily human or animate. Most typically, *shen* in a human is exemplified by one's character, be it in attitude (*t'ai*), emotion (*ch'ing*), or vital force (*ch'i*). *Shen* on this level is elusive because of its transitoriness, its complexity, and its subtlety; hence it may escape the average eye. The same spirit, when it is the essence of an inanimate object, challenges the artist to capture

its transitory quality. *Shen* is then used on a second level to describe the artist's genius in creating an impression or an idea and transmitting this idea through his art. Finally, this same *shen* as a matter of course should appear in the work of art itself. The spirit which is continuous from the subject through the artist to the object of art is in theory the same one, but each stage of transformation also has its own characteristics. One consistent element probably is the quality of elusiveness. The spirit in its final manifestation is considered "vulgar" (*su* 俗) if it appears obvious. The genuine spirit can only be hidden in and suggested by resonance (*yün*). Its relationships to its original model, the subject, and to its creator, the artist, remain inscrutable to the uninitiated. Literati painters were those who strove to capture the spirit on all three levels. It is important to see that this aesthetic is a formulation of the literati not only as artists but also as connoisseurs. It was a community of literati connoisseurs who since the eleventh century developed and refined a theory of painting which in many ways upheld lyric aesthetics.

One of the most articulate spokesmen and practitioners of this new theory during its formative stage was, of course, Su Shih 蘇軾 (1037–1101). Perhaps most controversial was his suggestion for the elevation of spirit at the expense of surface or form (*hsing*). But the relative importance of surface is really not an issue if we can understand that the complete shift proposed is in the mode of observation. Su Shih's jettisoning of surface reflects a dissatisfaction with the technique of "transposition of details of surface" (*hsieh chen* 寫真),<sup>38</sup> which he saw as connected to an underlying descriptive aesthetic. The new mode of perception his proposal entails is governed by the ultimate purpose of "expression of essences in the spirit" (*ch'uan shen* 傳神).<sup>39</sup> Instead of using a technique of referring to external features and representing them pictorially, a literati painter should try to reach a total understanding of his subject, penetrating the hidden spirit and revealing it with divine inspiration to a few privileged friends. The artist's spirit, or the middle-level *shen*, is undoubtedly the pivotal factor—as Lu Chi and Liu Hsieh of the Six Dynasties had posited for the creative process of literature.

This mind can be adequately explained by the same mode of thought common among the poets: the subject matter, whether landscape or object, makes up the content of the mind, which ultimately is concerned with the question of self-realization but also is shaped by the immediate moment of the artist himself. The creative channel in painting, however, cannot be as simple as in poetry and calligraphy. First, both aesthetic idea and life force play important creative roles. In addition, both representational image and presentational design contribute to the final artistic effect. The most revealing distinction, however, began to surface only with the discovery of the mutually supporting, but also competing, roles of brush and ink.

*Notes on Brush Method (Pi-fa chi* 筆法記), attributed to the tenth-century painter Ching Hao 荆浩 and certainly not dated later than the eleventh century, names the fifth and sixth essentials of painting as "brush" and "ink":

Brush is obtained when you handle the brush freely, applying all the varieties of strokes in accordance with your purpose, although you must follow certain basic rules of brushwork. Here you should regard brushwork neither as substance nor as form but rather as movement, like flying or driving. Ink is obtained when you distinguish between higher and lower parts of objects with a gradation of ink tones and represent clearly shallowness and depth, thus making them appear natural as if they had not been done with a brush.<sup>40</sup>

Until *Pi-fa chi*, ink was recognized as an important component, but it was secondary to the brush and served to reveal the mental and physical forces in control during the execution of the work of art. But *Pi-fa chi* clearly contrasts the use of brush to the use of ink: the former reveals the movement and achieves the purpose, while the latter conceals the movement, seeming to be placed on the painting surface without effort or purpose. The adoption by literati painters of the legacy of T'ang-dynasty calligraphy was a crucial step; indeed, the fact that they took ink painting seriously indicated already this particular allegiance. But they also recognized their own painterly needs; even if they used the simplest medium, monochromatic ink, representation still had its demands. It was important to convey besides an outline of shape, shadow and light, and, indirectly, mass and color. This concession to representation was by no means a return to realism. It in fact considerably strengthened the vocabulary of brush and ink and posited them as two different media, collaborating for the same purpose. This enriched repertoire has its own meaning, "brush meaning" (*pi-i* 筆意). Kuo Hsi wrote:

If brushstrokes are not blended together, they are called coarse, and if coarse they lack true significance. If ink tones are not moist and rich, they are called bone-dry, and if dry they do not come alive.<sup>41</sup>

Kuo Hsi draws a contrast between "brush trace" (*pi-chi* 筆跡) and "ink tone" (*mo-se* 墨色).

The former is a direct expression of the artist's inner forces, the latter a direct manifestation of the subject's innate qualities. What is here translated as "true significance" is literally "sincere intent" (*chen-i* 真意), and "to come alive" is a parallel phrase, literally "living quality" (*sheng-i* 生意). Brush and ink operate on two different levels: the brush continues to be an extension of the artist, showing linear movement and temporal dimension in its traces; the ink, applied without fixed direction and ordered sequence, reveals qualities inherent in its tones. Nevertheless, both "intent" and "quality" are "meaning" (*i* 意) and are without reference to the representational content.

Painters after the eleventh century may have discovered new techniques in the use of brush and ink, but none were completely free from the dichotomy established: the intentional, active manipulation of ink lines and the spontaneous, passive spread of ink water. The duality is symbolic of the artist's flow of energy on the one hand and of his innate nature on the other. The import of brush and ink can be seen in the host of terms that proliferated from the eleventh century to today. "Brush force" (*pi-shih* 筆勢) and "ink colors" (*mo-ts'ai* 墨彩) are the two most prominently in use. In the term "brush force," the character for "force" is identical to that for "potency." This force ceased to be the sole symbol of the vital force. Ching Hao and Han Cho after him had already pointed to the numerous possibilities in expression, under the headings of "sinew" (*chin* 筋), "flesh" (*jou* 肉), "bone" (*ku*), and "breathing" (*ch'i*).<sup>42</sup> The terms signify different possibilities of expression; particularly interesting is the suggestion that the brush when used to spread the ink should disappear entirely. "Ink colors" is another term for "ink tones." Kuo Hsi has discussed this extensively, positing "dense," "light," and "scorched" ink in conjunction with brush application, as well as "adding wash" (*hsüan* 渲) and "cleansing" (*shua* 刷).<sup>43</sup> The later system of "six colors," in which dry, light, and white are the prime colors and moistened, dense, and black are the secondary colors, is in the main an elaboration of this early development. Likewise, while later writings on painting did

improve and refine the theories of Ching Hao, Kuo Hsi, Han Cho, Su Shih, and Su's disciples, and while they did offer some comprehensive theoretical structures by which to encompass the fragmentary nature of eleventh-century statements, making many technical innovations and theoretical breakthroughs, nonetheless the fundamental underpinning was established by the twelfth century. Possibly, the next most important breakthrough in lyric aesthetics occurred in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but that development is definitely beyond the scope of this essay.

In conclusion, I would like to suggest that since the arts of poetry and calligraphy were the foundation for literati and landscape paintings, their incorporation into painting via the colophon is a logical consequence. An ideal realization of this lyrical vision probably is a literati landscape in ink, where the suggested content and the abstract design merge to make an unstated statement. For a literati connoisseur, the artist's inner forces join with the innate natures of the materials and with himself to create a complex form speaking through potency and emptiness. At the same time, the artist's aesthetic ideas, as a result of the direct realization, have to reach for a more meaningful subtext so that the visualized inscape may remain resonant. The struggles of later artists for such qualities as "balanced and uneventful" (*p'ing-tan* 平淡) and "ancient and clumsy" (*ku-chuo* 古拙) certainly find their seeds in this early aesthetic.

## NOTES

- I would like to thank Professor Frederick W. Mote for his suggestions concerning the direction of research for this essay, for his generous criticism during the initial stage of writing, and for his help in revision. As he has not read the final draft, any errors are my responsibility.
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  - 2 Charles Taylor, "Self-interpreting Animals," in *Human Agency and Language*, vol. 1 of *Philosophical Papers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 45-76.
  - 3 Gottlob Frege, "On Sense and Nominatum," in *Readings in Philosophical Analysis*, ed. Herbert Feigl and Wilfred Sellars (New York: Appleton Century Crofts, 1949), pp. 85-102.
  - 4 David Prall, *Aesthetic Judgment* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1929), especially chaps. 6, 7, 8 (pp. 76-137).
  - 5 Scruton, *Aesthetic Understanding*, pp. 28, 87.
  - 6 Yü Min, *Ch'un-ch'iu ch'ien shen-mei kuan-nien te fa-ch'an* (Development of aesthetic concepts before the "Spring and Autumn" Period) (Beijing: Chung-hua, 1984), pp. 118-22.
  - 7 Wang Shi-shun, ed., *Shang-shu yi-chu* (*Book of History: Translation and commentary*) (Ch'eng-tu: Szechwan Jen-min, 1982), p. 18; translations into English are mine here and throughout unless otherwise noted.
  - 8 Wang Meng-ou, ed., *Li-chi chin-chu chin-yi* (*Book of Rites: Modern translation and commentary*) (Taipei: Taiwan Shang-wu, 1970), pp. 489-526. See Kenneth J. DeWoskin, *A Song for One or Two: Music and the Concept of Art in Early China* (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 1982), for a detailed discussion of the "Treatise on Music." My translations are adopted from his whenever possible.
  - 9 Mou Tsung-san, *Chung-kuo che-hsüeh shih-chiu-chiang* (Nineteen lectures on Chinese philosophy) (Taipei: Hsüeh-sheng, 1983), p. 103.
  - 10 Wang, ed., *Li-chi*, p. 522.
  - 11 *Ibid.*, p. 495.
  - 12 *Ibid.*, pp. 495, 496.
  - 13 *Chung-kuo mei-hsüeh-shih tzu-liao hsüan-pien* (Anthology of documents in the history of Chinese aesthetics) (Beijing: Chung-hua, 1980), vol. 1, p. 130; hereafter *Hsüan-pien*.
  - 14 Kuo Shao-yü, *Chung-kuo li-tai wen-lun hsüan* (Selections of essays and texts through the Chinese ages) (Shanghai: Shanghai Ku-chi, 1979), vol. 1, pp. 5-6.
  - 15 *Hsüan-pien*, pp. 4-5. See also Yü, *Ch'un-ch'iu ch'ien shen-mei kuan-nien*.
  - 16 Wang, ed., *Li-chi*, p. 512.
  - 17 *Ibid.*, p. 492.
  - 18 Kao Heng, ed., *Chou-yi ta-chuan chin-chu* (Modern annotations on the "Great Commentaries" to the *Book of Changes*) (Shantung: Ch'i-lu Shu-she, 1974), p. 56.



- 19 Wang, ed., *Li-chi*, pp. 495, 521, 523.
- 20 Liu Hsieh, *Wen-hsin tiao-lung chu* (The literary mind and the carving of dragons), ed. Fan Wen-lan (Beijing: Jen-min Wen-hsüeh, 1978), p. 493.
- 21 Ibid., p. 537.
- 22 Ibid., pp. 1-2.
- 23 Ibid., p. 538.
- 24 See also my article, "Approaches to Chinese Poetic Language," in *Proceedings of the International Conference on Sinology* (Taipei: Academia Sinica, 1981), pp. 423-53.
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- 27 Shen C. Y. Fu et al., *Traces of the Brush* (New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1977), p. 138.
- 28 Ibid., p. 81.
- 29 Hsü et al., eds., *Li-tai shu-fa lun-wen hsüan*, p. 126.
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- 31 See Wen C. Fong et al., *Images of the Mind* (Princeton: Art Museum, Princeton University, 1984), especially pp. 27-60.
- 32 Kang-i Sun Chang, *Six Dynasties Poetry* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 51-53.
- 33 Kuo Hsi, "Advice on Landscape Painting," in *Lin-ch'üan kao-chih* (The lofty message of forest and streams), *Hua-lun ts'ung-k'an*, ed. Yü An-lan (Beijing: Jen-min mei-shu, 1960), vol. 1, p. 17. English translation from Susan Bush and Hsio-yen Shih, comps. and eds., *Early Chinese Texts on Painting* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press for the Harvard-Yenching Institute, 1985), pp. 151-52. All translations in this section are taken from the latter text whenever possible.
- 34 Kuo, "Advice on Landscape Painting," p. 20; Bush and Shih, *Early Chinese Texts*, p. 153.
- 35 Kuo, "Advice on Landscape Painting," p. 23.
- 36 Ibid.
- 37 Han Cho, "Concerning Mountains," in *Shan-shui Ch'un-ch'üan chi* (Ch'un-ch'üan's [harmonious and complete] compilation on landscapes), *Hua-lun ts'ung-k'an*, vol. 1, p. 36; Bush and Shih, *Early Chinese Texts*, p. 170.
- 38 Yen Chung-ch'i, *Su Shih lun wen-i* (Su Shih's essays on the arts) (Beijing, 1985), pp. 188, 205, 234.
- 39 See Susan Bush's *The Chinese Literati on Painting: Su Shih (1037-1107) to Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (1555-1636)*, Harvard-Yenching Institute Studies, no. 27 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971).
- 40 Ching Hao, *Pi-fa chi* (Notes on brush method), *Hua-lun ts'ung-k'an*, vol. 1, p. 8; Bush and Shih, *Early Chinese Texts*, p. 170.
- 41 Kuo, "Advice on Landscape Painting," p. 27.
- 42 Ching, *Pi-fa chi*, *Hua-lun ts'ung-k'an*, vol. 1, pp. 8, 38.
- 43 Kuo Hsi, "The Secrets of Painting," in *Lin-ch'üan kao-chih*, *Hua-lun ts'ung-k'an*, vol. 1, p. 43; Bush and Shih, *Early Chinese Texts*, p. 179.

# Calligraphic Style and Poetry Handscrolls: On Mi Fu's *Sailing on the Wu River*

NAKATA YŪJIRŌ

Chinese calligraphy has been divided roughly into two broad stylistic categories, traditional and innovative. The former, alternatively called the classic style, refers to works dating from before the mid-T'ang dynasty; the latter, also called the modern style, dates from that period onward. During the Six Dynasties period, traditional-style calligraphy came to be judged by the criteria of naturalness (*t'ien-jan* 天然) and craftsmanship (*kung-fu* 工夫). A perfect harmony between spontaneity of spirit, on the one hand, and skillful adherence to the techniques of the old masters, on the other, was considered the apex of classical excellence. By contrast, innovative calligraphy avoided direct imitation of the old masters. By seeking to create new art forms that expressed the triumph of the human spirit over conformity to traditional technique, it escaped mere formalism. It is this concern for the human element that gives this style its modern designation.

The shift from the traditional to the innovative began during the reign of Empress Wu 武后 (685–705) and culminated during the K'ai-yüan 開元 (713–41) and T'ien-pao 天寶 (742–56) eras of Emperor Hsüan-tsung's 玄宗 reign (712–55). This shift in style and subject matter corresponds to the period in which T'ang culture, in general, reached its most mature level of expression. (In Chinese the term for maturity, *lan-shou* 爛熟, also implies the sense of being overripe—of having just passed one's zenith—and is often compared to the confused state of a banquet table at the end of a feast.)

The trend in calligraphy had parallels in the literary and art worlds as well. It is believed that Wu Tao-tzu 吳道子 (active ca. 710–60), for example, borrowed the attenuated brush form in his paintings from the cursive-script calligraphy of Chang Hsü 張旭 (ca. 700–750) and Ho Chih-chang 賀知章 (659–744), who were famous for their wild-cursive script (*k'uang-ts'ao* 狂草) and with whom Wu had studied. Although Wu never mastered the art of calligraphy, he learned to share Chang Hsü's and Ho Chih-chang's fondness both for wild-cursive script and for alcohol. In fact, Wu was reputed never to have painted sober. The influence of Ho and Chang on Wu resulted in a new, abbreviated style of landscape painting, exemplified by Wu's depictions of precipitous mountain paths in the Shu region, or Szechwan Province. In addition, Wu is said to have worked in line drawings without pigment (*pai-miao* 白描). Later, during the K'ai-yüan era, he witnessed the double-sword dance of Fei Min 裴旻 (active first quarter of the eighth century), a general of unparalleled valor, and became captivated by the phantomlike flickering movements of that mysterious figure. It is said that those movements, too, were directly incorporated into Wu's paintings. Wu Tao-tzu clearly exemplifies the creative spirit of the period. He is an excellent example of the difference between the traditional and innovative styles. Such a change in technique, triggered by personal experience, never could have occurred among calligraphers of the classic school, in which imitation of the masters was the standard of excellence.

Other key figures were Wang Wei 王維 (701–61), who founded a new style of landscape painting that came to be known as literati painting (*wen-jen hua* 文人畫), and his contemporary Wang Mu 王默 (d. 805). Like Wu Tao-tzu, Wang Mu painted under the influence of alcohol; he was known for dipping his hair in ink and using it in lieu of a paintbrush. The calligrapher mentioned above, Chang Hsü, did likewise. This is why he is nicknamed “Upside-down Chang.” He was famous for his flamboyant style of writing when he was intoxicated. He would shout out a phrase and then write it horizontally or vertically on a wall in his wild-cursive script to the applause of appreciative onlookers. He was said to have been enlightened to the essence of calligraphy upon seeing the sword dance of Kung-sun Ta-niang 公孫大娘 (active first half of the eighth century).

In the literary field, there was the great poet Li Po 李白 (701–62), who was dubbed “the drunken immortal.” His old-style ballads (*ku-yüeh-fu* 古樂府) are free and uninhibited, often expressing a devil-may-care attitude that was in keeping with the style and atmosphere of his time. Li, Ho Chih-chang, and Chang Hsü are included among the Eight Immortals of Wine (*Yin-chung pa-hsien* 飲中八仙) in Tu Fu’s (712–70) poem of the same name. For best expressing the flavor and temperament of the K’ai-yüan and T’ien-pao eras, Li Po’s songs and poetry, Fei Min’s sword dances, and Chang Hsü’s wild-cursive calligraphy were hailed as “the three perfections” (*san-chüeh* 三絕) during the reign of the T’ang emperor Wen-tsung 文宗 (827–39).

Upon closer inspection of these immortals of wine of the K’ai-yüan–T’ien-pao era, however, a curious point emerges. Although Chang Hsü’s wild-cursive script had great mass appeal, it seems doubtful that Chang himself took it seriously. Considering that his *Lang-kuan shih-chi* 郎官石記 (*Stone Inscriptions of the Senior Secretaries of the Board*), dated 741, was executed in orthodox standard script (*k’ai-shu* 楷書) and that his many disciples included his celebrated contemporaries Yen Chen-ch’ing 顏真卿 (709–85), Li Po, Li Yang-ping 李陽冰 (dates unknown), Hsü Hao 徐浩 (703–82), and Chang Ts’ung-shen 張從申 (dates unknown), it would seem that his works in fantastic cursive script were done “for amusement” and were not intended as serious art. It was Han Yü 韓愈 (768–824) who first elevated wild-cursive script to such a distinction. As a master of old-style prose (*ku-wen* 古文)—a form which was revived in reaction to the artificial Six Dynasties-style of parallel prose—Han Yü ranks with Liu Tsung-yüan 柳宗元 (773–819). Han discusses Chang Hsü’s cursive script in the preface to his “Seeing Off the Monk Kao-hsien” (“Sung Kao-hsien shang-jen hsü” 送高閑上人序):

When he was moved by joy or anger, poverty, grief, sorrow or pleasure, resentment or longing, intoxication, boredom, or discontent, he would always express it in cursive script. Furthermore, he would create a calligraphic counterpart for what he saw in nature—mountains and rivers, valleys and cliffs, birds and animals, insects and fish, grass and trees, flowers and fruit, sun and moon, the constellations, wind and rain, water and fire, thunder and lightning, song and dance, and the vicissitudes of all things in heaven and earth. Rejoicing over them, amazed by them, he would express them through his calligraphy. Thus the variations in Chang Hsü’s calligraphy are as unfathomable as the motivations of gods and demons. For these reasons his name is known by later generations.<sup>1</sup>

In short, Han praises Chang for seeking subjects in nature to write about and for ex-

pressing the feelings in his heart when he writes about them. Han Yü had no interest in Chang Hsü's crazy behavior but, rather, in the intrinsic truth in the heart of the man. For Han Yü this was the essential lesson to be learned.

Han Yü's theory is rooted in the spirit of old-style prose composition, which takes the Original Way (*yüan-tao* 原道) as its essence: one seeks to learn not from a particular teacher but from the Way (*tao* 道) itself. In contrast to the luxurious dalliances of the parallel-prose writers, who had prevailed since the Six Dynasties period, the masters of old-style prose sought to strip away excess and return to the basic nature of things. Using as their model the prose style of the Ch'in and Han dynasties, they took as their standard a respect for simplicity and antique artlessness. And so was born a new prose style in harmony with the new age. In like fashion, in the sphere of calligraphy, Yen Chen-ch'ing created a new style based upon the ancient seal script (*chuan-shu* 篆書) and clerical script (*li-shu* 隸書). The special characteristics of Yen's cursive script can be seen in the spontaneously executed drafts of his compositions, which we can see today on stelae (fig. 18). Huai-su 懷素 (ca. 735–800?) studied calligraphy under Chang Hsü and excelled in wild-cursive script. He was universally praised and commemorated by the poets of his day in the "Poem on the Cursive Script of the Monk Huai-su" ("Huai-su shang-jen ts'ao-shu ko" 懷素上人草書歌). In this respect, Huai-su was representative of the same trend as Chang Hsü. In the Sung, however, Mi Fu 米芾 (1052–1107) commented: "In comparison with the work of Chang Hsü, Huai-su's calligraphy had a touch of simplicity (*p'ing-tan* 平淡) which approached spontaneity and naturalness. Unfortunately, this achievement was overpowered by the trend of his time. Thus Huai-su was unable to attain the quality of high antiquity in his calligraphy."<sup>2</sup> For Mi Fu, simplicity was the calligraphic ideal; it is noteworthy that he finds this quality in the works of Huai-su.

So far I have discussed the innovative calligraphers of the T'ang dynasty, Chang Hsü, Yen Chen-ch'ing, and Huai-su chief among them. Before I move into the following period, in which the accomplishments of these men bear fruit, one more point about their style of calligraphy needs to be addressed.

The Six Dynasties period is regarded as the high point of Chinese calligraphy. The school that developed around the calligraphic style of Wang Hsi-chih 王羲之 (ca. 307–ca. 365) and his son Wang Hsien-chih 王獻之 (344–86) largely defined the Six Dynasties calligraphic tradition that extended into the first half of the T'ang dynasty. The two Wangs were noted for their standard script, yet most of their extant work is in running and cursive scripts. Although correspondence was executed in standard (*k'ai* 楷), running (*hsing* 行), and cursive (*ts'ao* 草) scripts, the first type was usually reserved for addressing the emperor, the second for superiors, and the third—or a combination of the second and third—was used in ordinary correspondence dealing with daily life. Consequently, very few of the extant works of that period are written in standard script. Accordingly, the calligraphic works of the two Wangs are largely in running and cursive scripts. Their letters have been valued as the highest form of artistic calligraphy. Two examples are Wang Hsi-chih's *Sang-luan t'ieh* 喪亂帖 (*Letter Written in Deep Grief*), in the Imperial Household Collection, Tokyo (fig. 19), and his *K'ung Shih-chung t'ieh* 孔侍中帖 (*Letter to the Official K'ung Shih-chung*), in the Maeda Ikutokukai Collection, Tokyo, which came to Japan during the Nara period (710–94). Valued as among the best examples of his calligraphic style, the two works usually have eight columns per page, sheets of approximately the same dimensions, and characters of mostly medium size (none are large).

The two Wangs' calligraphy was much admired up until the eighth century, around the time of the K'ai-yüan reign of Emperor Hsüan-tsung. At that time there was a change in the content of calligraphy. While correspondence had provided the main texts for calligraphy before the mid-T'ang, thereafter the preference was for literary pieces, both poetry and prose. Also, large-size characters began to be used to write poetry and prose compositions on handscrolls.

Although we have no evidence today, it seems likely that Chang Hsü must have been among those who created poetry or prose handscrolls in large characters. Certainly what he wrote on walls while intoxicated was not correspondence; no doubt it was poetry or snatches of prose, probably the former. One of Li Po's old-style poems (*ku-shih* 古詩) or free-spirited ballads, for example, would have been most appropriate, providing the proper phrasing and easy to slap up any which way on a wall. Chang Hsü's *Ku-shih ssu t'ieh* 古詩四帖 (*Four Old-Style Poems*), an extant handscroll in cursive script, suggests how he must have worked.<sup>3</sup> Also, as Huai-su most closely followed Chang Hsü's free-spirited calligraphic style, we can gain insight into Chang by looking at Huai-su's works. Huai-su's famous *Autobiography* (*Tzu-hsü t'ieh* 自叙帖), dated 777, in the Palace Museum, Taipei, is the best extant example of poetry and prose executed in large-size characters in the handscroll format (figs. 17, 20). Unlike a passage of classical literature, which would have been executed in the small-size standard script of a book, this work of personal reflections is in bold wild-cursive script. It could have been executed only under the influence of alcohol. However, in later generations the *Autobiography* came to be regarded as an expression of art, and attempts were made to imitate it. These later imitations were no longer products of drunken fits. Instead they were executed in states of aberrant exultation. Such works of calligraphy as Chang Hsü's cursive script inspired by the sword dance of Kung-sun Ta-niang and the double-sword dance of Fei Min were fashionable during the K'ai-yüan and T'ien-pao eras. It is not unreasonable to suppose that out of such phenomena, as well as the production of poetic or prose texts in large-size characters, calligraphy moved in the direction of high artistic quality.

During the mid-T'ang, Po Chü-i's 白居易 (772–846) poems were in vogue. According to tradition they were often executed in cursive script. Two fragmentary examples, the *Ayaji-gire* 綾地切 and *Kinuji-gire* 絹地切, have been known in Japan since the Heian period (794–1192). As their names suggest, the first is a patterned damask fragment, and the second is a patterned silk fragment. Both bear Po Chü-i's "New Ballads" ("Hsin-yüeh fu" 新樂府). Traditionally attributed to Fujiwara no Sukemasa 藤原佐理 (944–98), the textile fragments are beautiful examples of poetry executed in cursive script. However, as their calligraphic style closely resembles that of Huai-su's *Shih yü t'ieh* 食魚帖 (*Eating the Fish*, a work executed on paper) and therefore is marked by a strong continental influence, it is questionable that the two fragments are in fact products of Japan. Another example in Japan is a handscroll of a Po Chü-i poem executed in drunken wild-cursive script and attributed to Emperor Daigo 醍醐天皇 (885–930). The final stroke in the cursive character for "wine" in this work extends upward like a dragon tail. This brush technique, known as broken hairpin prongs (*che ch'ai-ku* 折釵股), is identical to that of Chang Hsü. One look at the work immediately reminds us of Chang Hsü's wild-cursive script. This is obviously an imitation that was brought to Japan from the continent and thus is not a work of Emperor Daigo. Another wild-cursive handscroll of which only a fragment remains is a transcription of the *Tso-yu ming* 座右銘 (*Precepts*) by Ts'ui

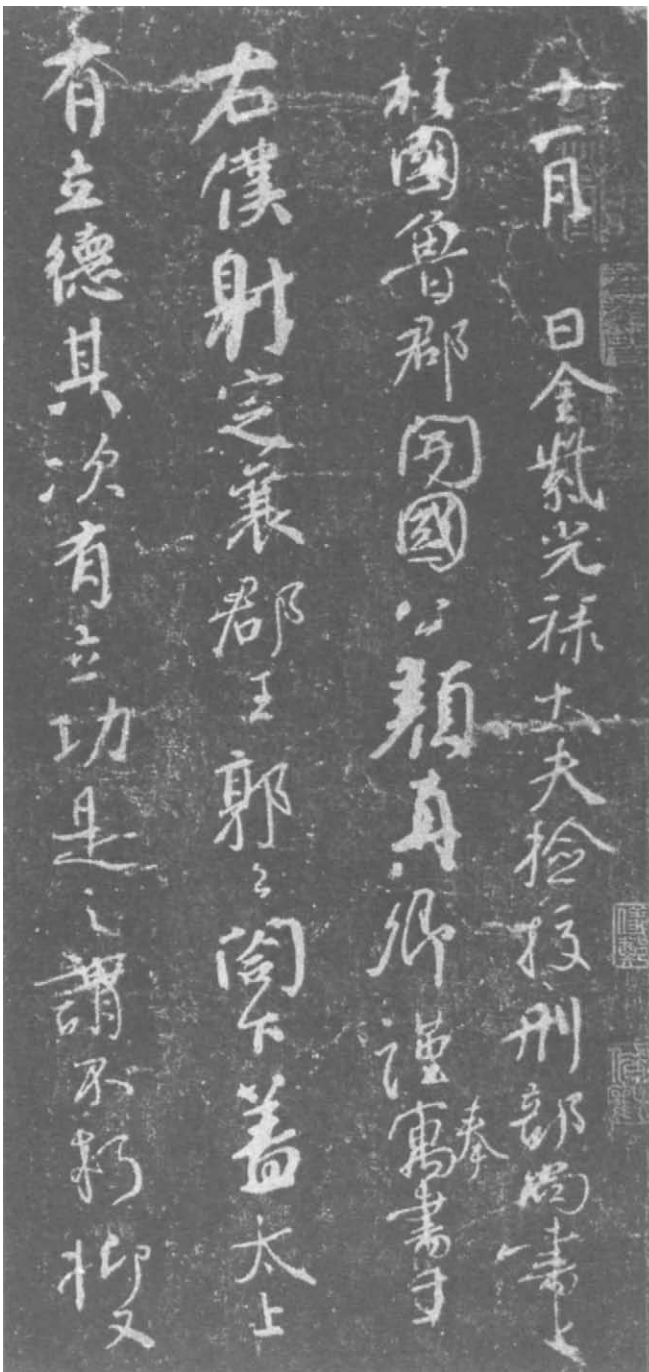


Figure 18.  
Yen Chen-ch'ing (709-85),  
*Cheng tso-wei t'ieh*, dated 764.  
Rubbing of inscription  
(from *Shodō zenshū*  
[Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1958-71],  
vol. 10, p. 24)

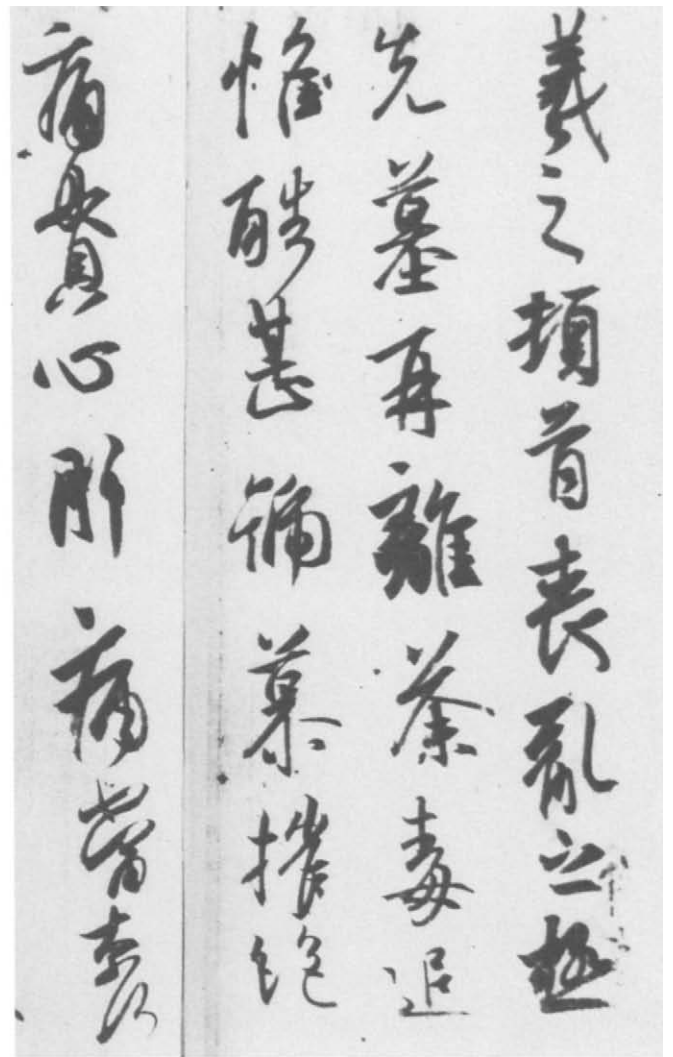


Figure 19.  
Wang Hsi-chih (ca. 307-ca. 365),  
*Sang-luan t'ieh*.  
Detail of handscroll (tracing copy).  
Imperial Household Collection, Tokyo

Yüan 崔援 of the Han (Hōki-in Collection, Wakayama Prefecture; fig. 21). The transcription was executed during the Chen-yüan 貞元 era of Emperor Te-tsung 德宗 (r. 780–804) of the mid-T'ang and has been known in Japan since the Heian period; by tradition, it is attributed to the monk Kūkai 空海 (Kōbō Daishi 弘法大師; 774–835). It is a handscroll with large-size characters; there are two characters per line, with an occasional single-character line. There is also a dot that looks as if it were made by dropping a brush from above, causing the ink to splatter in all directions. Then there is a stroke executed in a long and high-swept dragon-tail style similar to the broken-hairpin-prongs brush method described above. Thus borrowing from a variety of old techniques, this scroll has the characteristic flavor of Chang Hsü's wild-cursive style. Further, Chang Hsü was also an exponent of the traditional style, emulating the twelve brush methods of the Six Dynasties period. In the *Tso-yu ming* attributed to Kūkai, we find both the traditional cursive style and the newer calligraphic style. This corresponds with what we find in Chang Hsü's works. While in China examples of Chang Hsü's wild-cursive style are most commonly found as rubbings bound into albums, it may be possible to get a feeling for his original calligraphy from the examples transmitted to Japan.

The cursive style nurtured by the innovative calligraphers of the late T'ang bore fruit in the Northern Sung during the reign of Emperor Jen-tsung 仁宗 (r. 1023–63). Skilled calligraphers from the gentry class, such as Ou-yang Hsiu 歐陽修 (1007–72), Su Shih 蘇軾 (1037–1101), and Huang T'ing-chien 黃庭堅 (1045–1105), began to circulate writings on calligraphy and reintroduced the styles of Chang Hsü, Yen Chen-ch'ing, and Huai-su of the T'ang and of Yang Ning-shih 楊凝式 (873–957) of the Five Dynasties period. Ou-yang Hsiu held that Yen Chen-ch'ing's integrity was obvious in his calligraphy and tried to emulate Yen in his own works. Su Shih also sought to grasp Yen's spirit in his writing. For Su, calligraphy was a manifestation of human nature, the capturing of the five elements of spirit, breath, bones, flesh, and blood. Huang T'ing-chien's models were the Tsin masters. He also adopted the less vulgar qualities of Chang Hsü, Huai-su, and Yang Ning-shih, practicing cursive calligraphy for decades. In the end he achieved a marvelously lofty, transcendent style.

Mi Fu was heir to the radical calligraphy movement of the K'ai-yüan and T'ien-pao eras of the T'ang. A student of Su Shih and Huang T'ing-chien, he was interested especially in calligraphy and painting but also in writing implements and inkstones. His remarkable achievements as a calligrapher and painter were due, in part, to the depth of his powers as a connoisseur, in which respect he far surpassed both Su Shih and Huang T'ing-chien. Basing his aesthetic on the *Li-tai ming-hua chi* 歷代名畫記 (*Record of Famous Paintings of All the Dynasties*) by Chang Yen-yüan 張彥遠 (ca. 815–after 875), Mi devised a comprehensive system for evaluation. He became well known initially for his connoisseurship in calligraphy and painting, later extending his expertise to rubbings as well. Putting authenticity first, he personally examined the signatures, colophons, official seals, mountings, scroll rollers, and decorations on each piece. In addition he visited the major collectors of calligraphy throughout the realm. As a result, he was acquainted with almost all the famous works of calligraphy produced between the Tsin and T'ang dynasties extant in China during his time and wrote critical appreciations in addition to making freehand copies of them.

Mi's career began when he was a youth with his copying famous pieces of calligraphy by the old masters. He kept a collection of these copies, which he called "collected

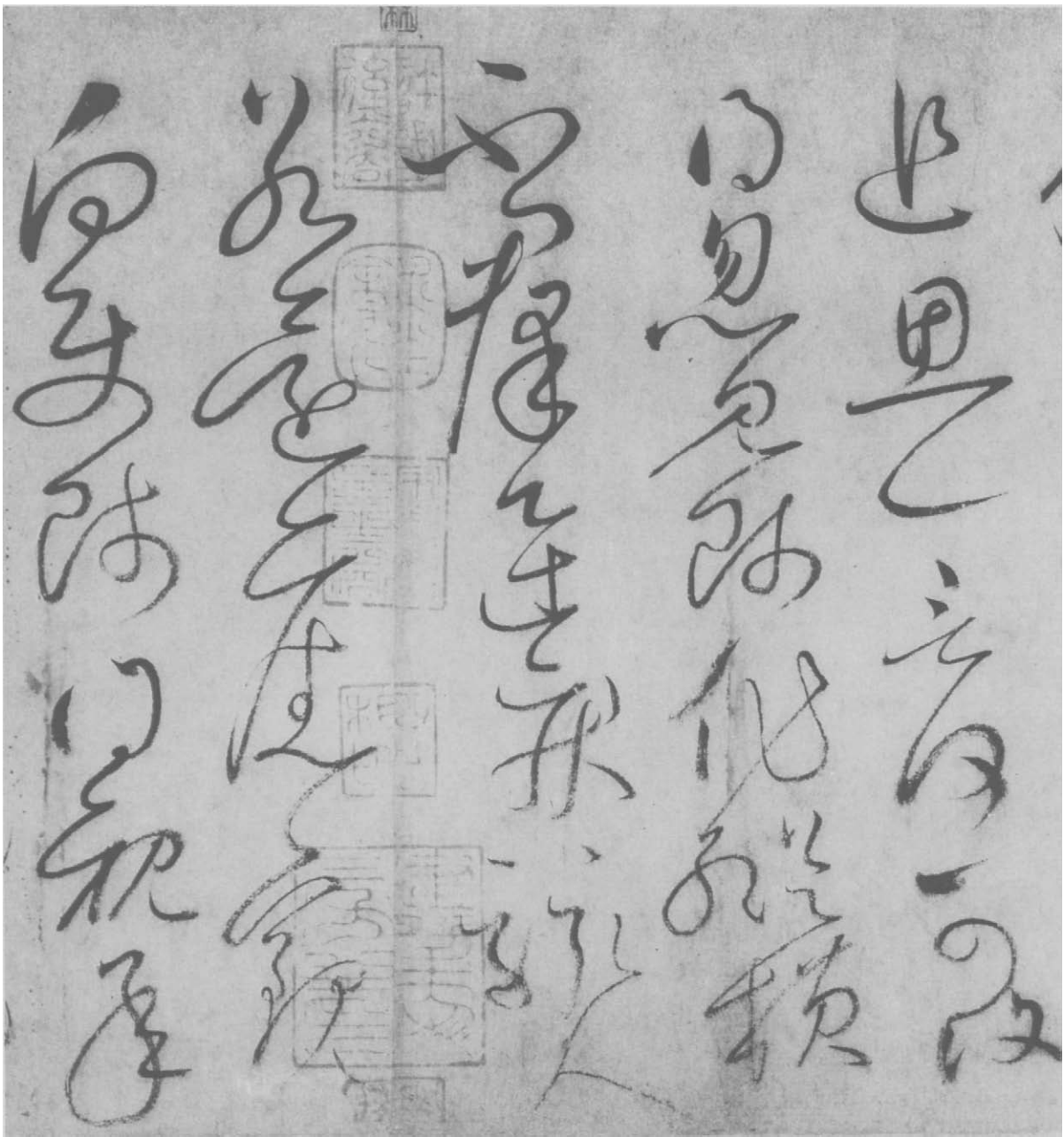


Figure 20. Huai-su (ca. 735–800?),  
*Autobiography*, dated 777.  
Detail of handscroll, ink on paper, H. 28.3 cm.  
Palace Museum, Taipei





Figure 21. Attributed to Kūkai, *Transcription of Ts'ui Yüan's "Tso-yu-ming."*  
 Fragment of handscroll, ink on paper, H. 28.5 cm.  
 Hōki-in Collection, Wakayama Prefecture (from *Shoseki meihin sōkan*  
 [Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1959], vol. 35, pp. 35–36)

characters.” Striving to emulate the Tsin masters, he sought out examples of genuine Tsin calligraphy and wrote appreciations of them. Later he managed to acquire a few choice pieces for his own collection housed in a studio which he called the Treasuring the Tsin Studio 寶晉齋. Only in his middle years, when he felt he had mastered the art of copying, did he begin to produce original works. In his own works, Mi aspired to and achieved not only the forms of Tsin calligraphy, but also the spirit of the Tsin masters. He called this spirit “simplicity and truth.”

Just as the calligraphic styles of Su Shih and Huang T'ing-chien differ from each other, so too did Mi's style differ substantially from his masters'. However, all three shared a respect for the old masters and the desire to grasp the essential element underlying their calligraphy. Su Shih was very insistent on this point. As we can see in his writings on painting, for him, spirit was more important than form. An error in form is correctable, but there is no remedy for a mistake about the principle of things.<sup>4</sup> Huang T'ing-chien is considered the founder of the Kiangsi school of poetry of the Sung dynasty. This school practiced recasting old poems in the creation of new ones, but for them, “exchanging the bones and seizing the womb” meant that one should grasp the spirit rather than the words or phrases of the old masters to create anew. In painting as well, Mi admired the “simplicity and truth” inherent in the brushwork of the Tsin masters. Although the mainstream painters of his time were Li Ch'eng 李成 (919–67), Fan K'uan 范寬 (ca. 960–ca. 1030), and Kuan T'ung 關仝 (active ca. 907–23), Mi favored the natural depiction of clouds and mists in the ink paintings of Tung Yüan 董源 (d. 962) and Chü-jan 巨然 (active ca. 960–80), which embodied for him truth, simplicity, and spontaneity—the same qualities he so admired in Tsin calligraphy.

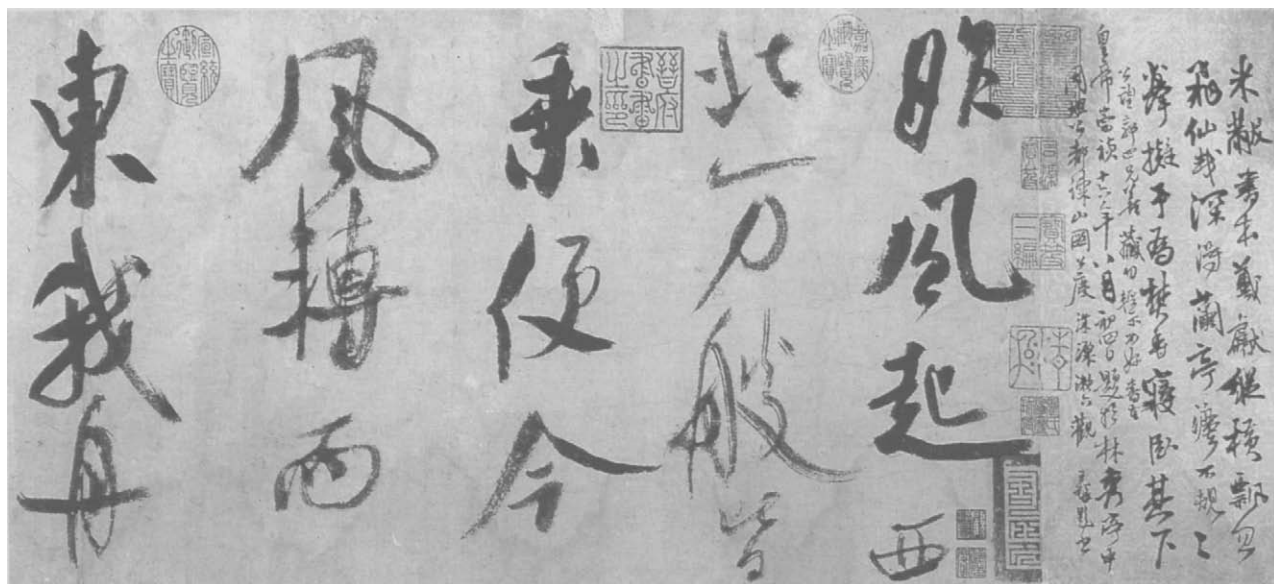


Figure 22. Mi Fu (1052–1107), detail, and Wang To (1592–1652), colophon, to *Sailing on the Wu River*. Handsroll, ink on paper, H. 31.3 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Gift of John M. Crawford, Jr., in honor of Professor Wen Fong, 1984

Mi was a literatus skilled in both calligraphy and painting. His numerous brushworks all fall under the category of calligraphy. Although many difficulties have beset the transmission of T'ang calligraphy, a relatively large number of Sung works have come down to us. Many works of calligraphy by or attributed to Mi have survived. They embrace a wide variety of styles. A large category of these works are literary pieces—transcriptions of poems (*shih* 詩), lyric songs (*tz'u* 詞), and rhyme-prose pieces (*fu* 賦)—which Su Shih and Huang T'ing-chien also produced in great numbers. Most of Mi's works of this type were executed in running script or a highly informal cursive script in the handsroll format stemming from the poetry and prose handsrolls executed in large-size characters of the post-mid-T'ang period. However, Mi usually used ordinary medium-size characters, and only on some handsrolls do we find a line consisting of one, two, or three large-size characters, an outstanding example of which is his *Sailing on the Wu River* (*Wu-chiang chou chung shih* 吳江舟中詩) handsroll in the John M. Crawford, Jr., Collection (figs. 22, 23). Note that writing poetry and prose in large-size characters on handsrolls brings out the poetic quality of a literary work. This type of calligraphy must be discussed in terms of art. This innovative calligraphy can be contrasted with traditional calligraphy, which consists mostly of correspondence, with virtually no literary texts written in large characters.

Mi's calligraphy is also found on stelae, grave markers, and other types of engravings—some of which exist as rubbings and others as brush-written copies. There is no question as to the authenticity of most of these. The brush-written copy of his inscription on the stele of the Ch'an master T'ien-i 天衣 (993–1064) is a noteworthy example. We also find numerous Mi inscriptions in small-size characters in eulogies, grave markers,

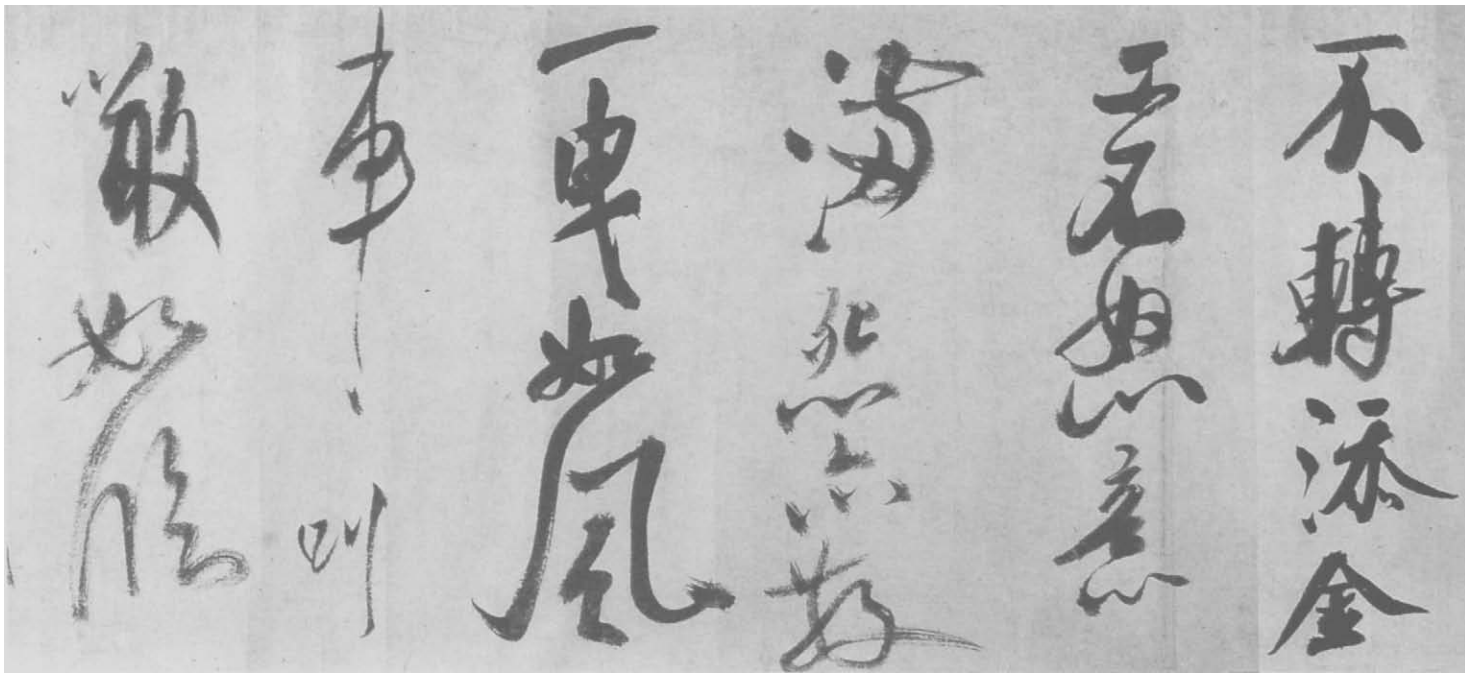


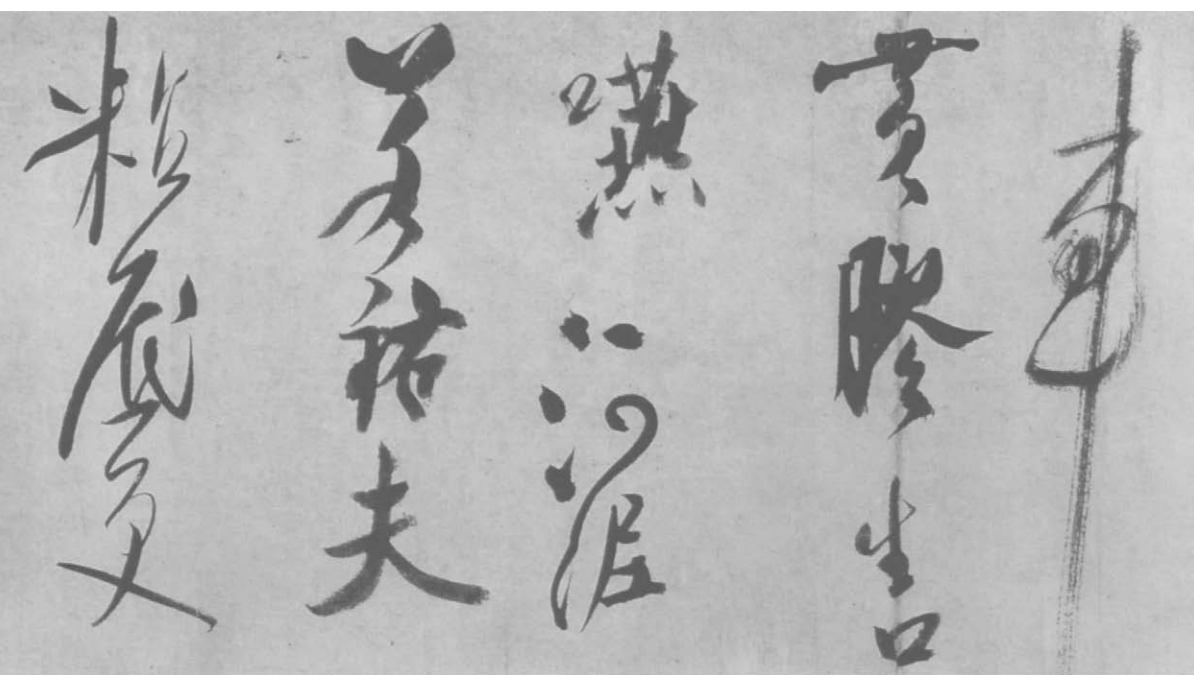
Figure 23. Mi Fu, detail of *Sailing on the Wu River*

and colophons. Some of these inscriptions were done in small standard script in the style of the T'ang calligrapher Ch'u Sui-liang 褚遂良 (596–658); others are in small running script. With respect to his small-size calligraphy, Mi was inspired by such works as Wang Hsi-chih's *Yüeh I lun* 樂毅論 (*On Master Yüeh I*) and *Huang-t'ing ching* 黃庭經 (*The Yellow Court Scripture*) and by the inscription on a painting ascribed to Tung-fang Shuo 東方朔 (ca. 187–161 B.C.).

The majority of Mi's extant work, however, takes the form of correspondence. Mi greatly admired the calligraphy in the letters of the Tsin masters and patterned his own writing after them. He not only adopted the outward form but also sought to capture the "simple and true" spirit of these earlier masters. It is in Mi's letters that we find the most perfect expression of his ideal style of calligraphy.

Mi's prose writings also include miscellaneous inscriptions, records, commentaries, and essays, most often executed in running and cursive scripts. Although the calligraphy in these works is considered good, it is artistically weaker than the calligraphy in his works of poetry. In this category of Mi's work, we find many faithful copies of the old masters. Mi was also expert at executing large-size characters with the brush held between the thumb and forefinger, the so-called thumbhole style, which originated with Yen Chen-ch'ing in the T'ang. Mi's large-character style was, in turn, followed by calligraphers of the Yüan and Ming dynasties.

Of the twenty some extant horizontal scrolls of poetry executed in large-size characters, *Sailing on the Wu River* is one of the two best. Ranked with it is the *Hung-hsien*



*Poem Scroll (Hung-hsien shih-chüan 虹縣詩卷; fig. 25).* Just below these two I would place *T'ien-ma fu 天馬賦 (Rhapsody to a Heavenly Horse)*. Because there are several renditions of the last, it is difficult to assess and will not be discussed in this paper.

The poem "Sailing on the Wu River" is an old-style five-character poem. The first couplet reads: "Yesterday's wind rose in the northwest; / All boats took advantage of the wind." Mi chose a long scroll and wrote in a free and easy style. He arranged the poem in thirty-six lines, with two or three characters—sometimes only one character—to a line. At the end he signed, "Written in a boat on the Wu River, on paper sent to me by Chu Pang-yen from Hsiu[-chou]. Mi Yüan-chang." Following the poem a Ming-dynasty colophon by Sun K'uang 孫鑾 (1542–1613) dated 1591 states that he had heard from Hsiang Tzu-ch'ang 項子長 (1521–86; older brother of Hsiang Yüan-pien 項元汴 [1525–90]) that the scroll was once owned by Li Po-yü 李伯玉 and that he had examined it twice (fig. 24). A 1643 inscription by Wang To 王鐸 (1592–1652) on the brocade mounting at the beginning of the scroll states that he and several others had viewed the scroll, which was then owned by a Kuo Kung-wang 郭公望 (see fig. 22). Sun K'uang's colophon comments on the calligraphy:

Recently I stayed at home for seven years and seriously studied calligraphic method. I came to realize that the calligraphy of the old masters depended exclusively on how they handled the brush. It reminded me often of the work of Mi Fu. Going up to the capital, I was able to see it [*Sailing on the Wu*

*River*]. It was truly enlightening. For the first time I understood the meaning of Huang Lu-chih's [Huang T'ing-chien's] statement about "a swift horse cutting through an encampment." The method of the old masters depends solely on one's arm and is strict about how one holds the brush. I have seen many old works of calligraphy but, until now, none could be considered genuine.

Sun K'uang was a student of Wang Shih-chen 王世貞 (1526–90) and the author of *Shu-hua pa-pa* 書畫跋跋, so named because it added "colophons to the colophons" of Wang Shih-chen's inscriptions. In chapter 1, entitled "Mi Nan-kung shu-hou" 米南宮書後 ("The Colophon Following Calligraphy by Mi Fu"), we read:

Among the calligraphy I have seen, there is a scroll owned by Li Po-yü [also known as Li] Yin-t'ai of the old poem which begins, "Yesterday's wind rose in the northwest." It is a genuine work [of Mi Fu] and is empowered with a divine presence. It does not have the sense of composure associated with the old masters nor does it "sink three inches into the wood" [a phrase used in conjunction with Wang Hsi-chih]. Its brushwork is similar to that of Su [Shih] and Huang [T'ing-chien]. I think that [it] is a product of the time.<sup>5</sup>

This comment can serve as a supplement to Sun's colophon.

We should note here that Sun K'uang's comment that Mi lacks the sense of composure of the old masters and the ability to "sink three inches into the wood" can be interpreted as praise for the marvelous lightness of the scroll. This is similar to how Su Shih assesses Mi's calligraphy:

The seal, clerical, standard, running, and cursive scripts used by Hai-yüeh [Mi Fu] for writing throughout his life are like a sail against the wind or a horse in battle; [they are] marked by both a sense of composure and exhilaration. Mi Fu should surely be ranked with Chung Yu 鍾繇 [151–230] and Wang Hsi-chih. He is in no way inferior to them.<sup>6</sup>

It is my opinion that this is the more appropriate appreciation of Mi's work. Mi was proud that his own calligraphy lacked the qualities associated with Wang Hsi-chih's works, which were essentially popular in their appeal. Although instruction in Wang-style calligraphy was widespread at that time, Mi consciously tried to avoid its common features while valuing the true elegance and style of the Tsin masters. Here again we can recognize Mi's concept of the revival of ancient ideals.

Mi's scroll *Sailing on the Wu River* must have entered the imperial collection during the Ch'ing dynasty, for it carries five palace seals of the Chia-ch'ing emperor (r. 1796–1820) and the Hsüan-t'ung emperor (r. 1909–11). The whereabouts of the scroll after the 1911 revolution are documented in Yeh Kung-ch'o's 葉公綽 commentary to a photographic reproduction of the scroll.<sup>7</sup> According to Yeh, the scroll was executed by Mi Fu when he was about forty-five years old, an estimate with which I concur. He points out that this scroll is stylistically similar to Mi's handscrolls *Shan-hu t'ieh* 珊瑚帖 (*Coral Tree*), *Hsüeh-shu kuei lung-han t'ieh* 學書貴弄翰帖 (*The Importance of Brush Techniques When Studying Calligraphy*), and *T'ien-i ch'an-shih pei-ka* 天衣禪師碑稿 (*Manuscript of the Monk*

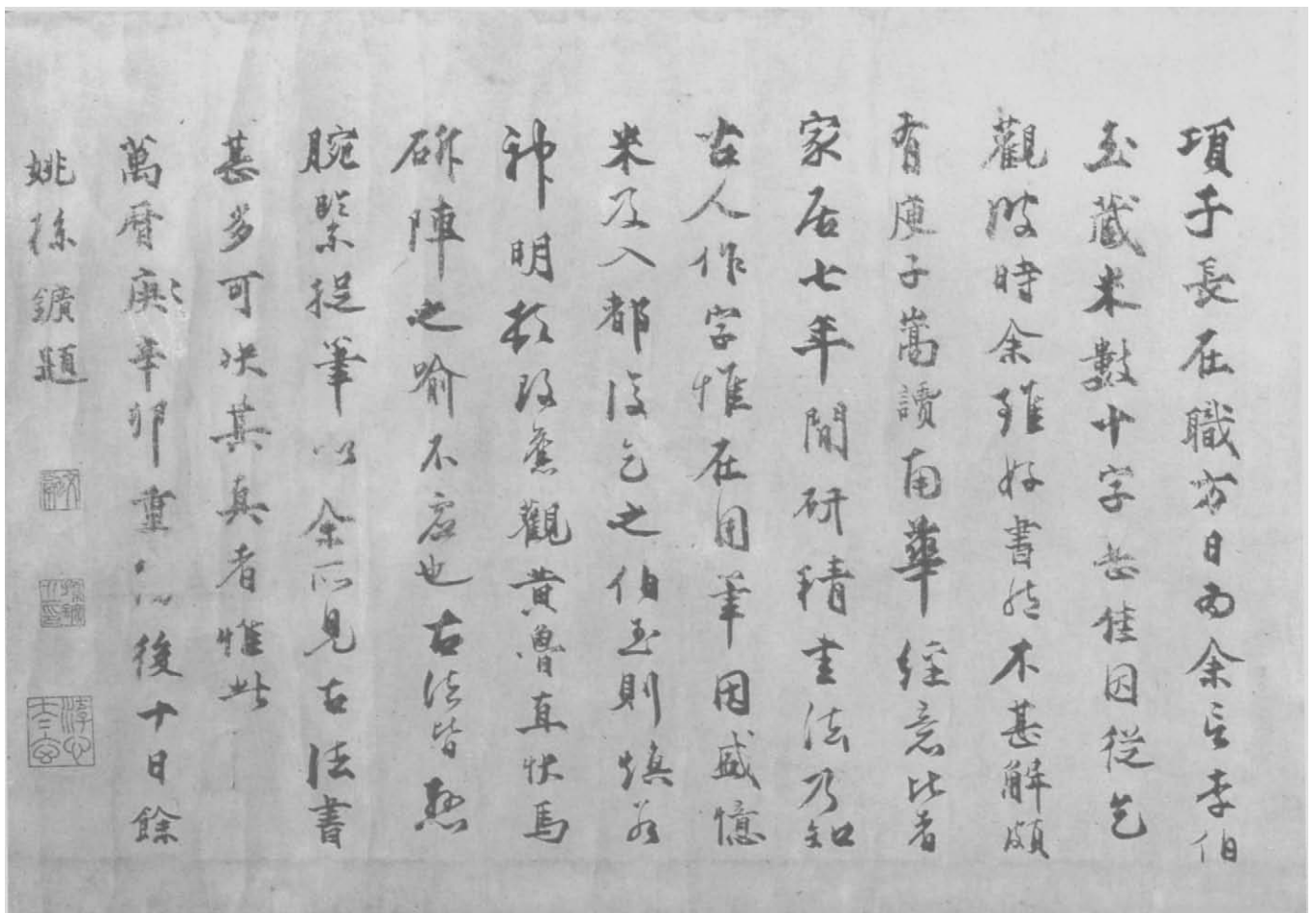


Figure 24. Sun K'uang (1542-1613),  
Colophon to Mi Fu's "Sailing on the Wu River,"  
dated 1591 (see figs. 22, 23)

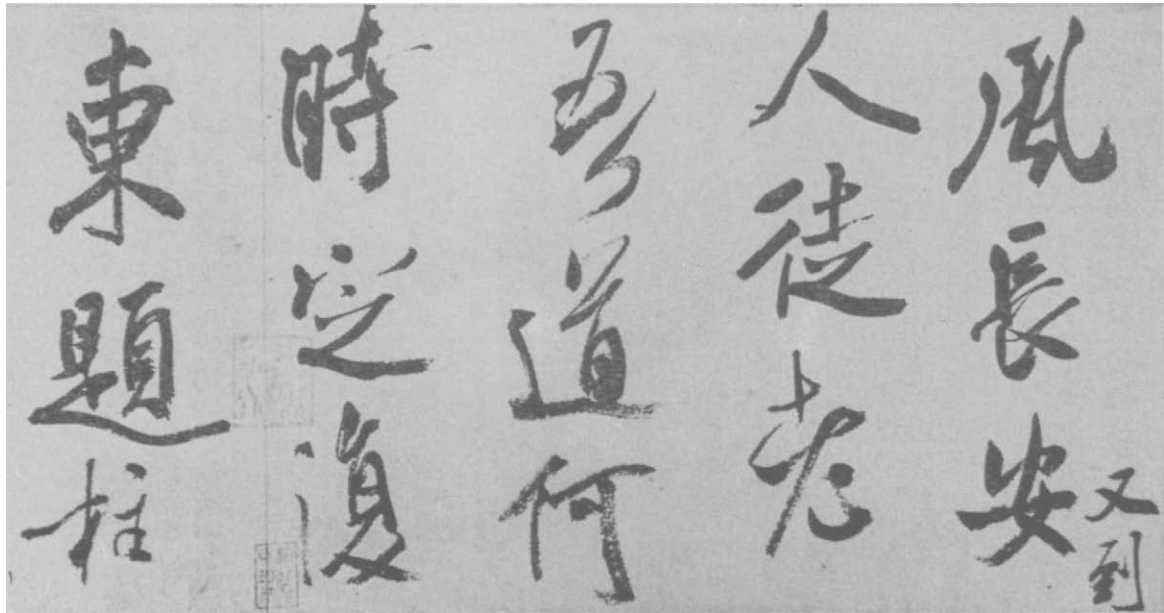


Figure 25.  
Mi Fu, *Hung-hsien Poem Scroll*.  
Detail of handscroll, ink on paper.  
Tokyo National Museum  
(from *Shoseki meihin sōkan*  
[Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1964],  
vol. 125, pp. 3–4)

*T'ien-i's Stele*), and calls it the crown jewel of all of Mi's handscrolls executed in large-size characters.

My main interest here is to discuss the significance of writing poetry in large-size characters in the handscroll format. I have gone back to the T'ang dynasty to consider the influence of the K'ai-yüan and T'ien-pao eras on the development of this new art form. To recapitulate, in the traditional school of calligraphy, following the two Wangs, daily correspondence—health inquiries and the like—was almost exclusively the subject matter of calligraphy. Out of the flourishing culture of the K'ai-yüan and T'ien-pao eras arose the revolutionary horizontal scroll of poetry and prose in large-character cursive script. This development marked the beginning of the liberation of calligraphic form from its traditional restrictions. Born out of drunken playfulness, this new calligraphic form's significance in the world of art was soon recognized, and, properly guided by such revivalist thinkers as Han Yü, it ultimately became a true and refined art form. We can compare this development with Li Hou-chu's 李後主 (937–78) elevating the small prose (*hsiao-tz'u* 小詞) of the official in charge of music (*ling-jen* 伶人) during the Five Dynasties period to an art form of the gentry class during the Later T'ang.

One difference, however, is that it appears that Mi's ideal is represented more by Huai-su than by his predecessor Chang Hsü of the K'ai-yüan and T'ien-pao eras. Yet we should remember that although Mi stated that Huai-su had more simplicity in his style than did Chang Hsü and that he reached a state of natural perfection, according to Mi, he still did not match the level set by the old masters. Thus Huai-su alone was not

enough for Mi, who aimed beyond, to high antiquity. Nevertheless it would not be wrong to assume that Mi's cursive script in general and his *Sailing on the Wu River* in particular are indebted to Huai-su's *Autobiography*. It is just that, in addition to Huai-su's influence, in the end, Mi attained "simplicity and naturalness" and "simplicity and truth" from the masters of high antiquity after a lifetime of struggling to understand the principles behind connoisseurship. Tung Ch'i-ch'ang 董其昌 (1555-1636) described the subtlety of these principles in Ch'an Buddhist terminology.

A work similar in concept to *Sailing on the Wu River* is the *Hung-hsien Poem Scroll*, which is in running script (see fig. 25). It, too, attains the natural perfection of the old masters. Nevertheless, from the standpoint of its protean mystery in the handling of cursive script, *Sailing on the Wu River* must still be regarded as unsurpassed.

In keeping with the dictum that Sung calligraphy emphasized meaning, the innovative style in calligraphy concerned itself with that which welled up from the depths of a personality and achieved expression. The use of large-size characters on handscrolls seemed to flow naturally out of the mind and poetic feeling. This can certainly be verified by the calligraphic works in that format produced by the gentry class during the Northern Sung dynasty as well as by the handscrolls left by Su Shih and Huang T'ing-chien. Huang T'ing-chien also produced many wonderful handscrolls using cursive script. Yet while Mi may have learned something from Huang T'ing-chien, their artistic intent differed. That fact, too, helps to confirm the importance of the human quality in works of that period.

Finally, calligraphy changed with the passage of time. Alongside the handscroll format appeared the hanging scroll, which became more and more prevalent as the Yüan dynasty progressed, finally, during the Ming, becoming the norm for calligraphy. Although the handscroll did not totally disappear with the dominance of the hanging scroll in the Ming, the poetry and prose handscrolls executed in large-size characters came to represent the fighting spirit of the Northern Sung. Su Shih, Huang T'ing-chien, and Mi Fu stand as magnificent guiding lights in the history of Chinese calligraphy. The incorporation of humanity into calligraphy reached its height among the gentry of that period, and it was Mi Fu who stood at the apex of it all. The importance of his position in the history of art in China is clear.

Translated by Fumiko E. Cranston

#### NOTES

The notes were compiled by the editors.

- 1 Han Yü, *Sung Kao-hsien shang-jen hsü* (Seeing off the monk Kao-hsien), in Ma Tsung-ho, comp., *Shu-lin tsao-chien* (Reflective critiques on calligraphy), ISTP (Taipei: Shih-chieh, 1968-71), *chüan* 8, p. 140b.
- 2 *Mi Nan-kung chiu t'ieh* (Nine leaves of cursive-script calligraphy by Mi Fu), in Pien Yung-yü, comp., *Shih-ku-t'ang shu-hua hui-k'ao, shu-k'ao* (Classified record of calligraphy and painting in Shih-ku Hall, calligraphy section) (Wu-hsing: Chien-ku, 1921), *chüan* 11, p. 44b.
- 3 Reproduced in *Shoseki meihin sōkan* (Compendium of masterpiece calligraphy) (Tokyo: Nigen-sha, 1971), vol. 168.
- 4 Su Shih, "Ching-yin yüan hua chi" (Record of the paintings in Abbot Ching-yin's room), in Yü Chien-hua, comp., *Chung-kuo hua-lun lei-pien* (Chinese painting theory by category) (Taipei: Hua-cheng, 1975), p. 47.
- 5 Sun K'uang, "Mi Nan-kung shu-hou" (The colophon following calligraphy by Mi Fu), in *Shu-hua pa-pa* (Colophons to the colophons) (reprint, Taipei: Han-hua, 1971), *chüan* 1, p. 6b.



- 6 Ma Tsung-ho, comp., *Shu-lin tsao-chien* (Compilation of comments on calligraphy), ISTP, *chüan* 9, p. 226b.
- 7 Yeh's reproduction was made after the scroll's

entrance into the Crawford Collection and was published in Taipei (*Mi Nan-kung shu* "Wu-chiang chou chung shih" *chen-chi* [Mi Fu's authentic calligraphy *Sailing on the Wu River*] [Taipei, 1972]).

# Huang T'ing-chien's Cursive Script and Its Influence

SHEN C. Y. FU

Huang T'ing-chien 黃庭堅 (*tzu* Lu-chih 魯直, *hao* Shan-ku 山谷, Fu-weng 涪翁; 1045–1105) was a native of Kiangsi Province. Founder of the Kiangsi school of poetry, Huang achieved fame as a poet equal to that of his mentor and close friend Su Shih 蘇軾 (Su Tung-p'ò 蘇東坡; 1037–1101). As a calligrapher, Huang was one of the Four Great Sung Masters, along with Ts'ai Hsiang 蔡襄 (1012–67), Su Shih, and Mi Fu 米芾 (1052–1107). It is difficult to say which of the four masters was supreme in running script (*hsing-shu* 行書), but in cursive, or draft, script (*ts'ao-shu* 草書), Huang T'ing-chien was the best and the most influential.<sup>1</sup>

Prior to 1977, four scrolls in cursive script had been attributed to Huang T'ing-chien:

*Biographies of Lien P'ò and Lin Hsiang-ju* (*Lien P'ò Lin Hsiang-ju chuan* 廉頗藺相如傳; fig. 26; see also fig. 9), in the John M. Crawford, Jr., Collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art

*Tu Fu chi Ho-lan Hsien shih* 杜甫寄賀蘭銛詩 (*Poem by Tu Fu: Sent to Ho-lan Hsien*; fig. 29), in the Palace Museum, Beijing<sup>2</sup>

*Hua-ch'i hsün jen* 花氣薰人 (*The Flowers Scent Us with Fragrance*; fig. 27), in the Palace Museum, Taipei<sup>3</sup>

*Li Po I chiu-yu* 李白憶舊遊 (*Poem by Li Po: Remembering a Former Journey*; fig. 28), in the Fujii Yürinkan Museum, Kyoto<sup>4</sup>

All are unsigned and undated, and the attributions are based on comments in traditional texts.

Modern scholars have been careful about attributing *Biographies of Lien P'ò and Lin Hsiang-ju* (hereafter *Biographies*) to Huang. In the catalogue of the Crawford Collection published in 1962, Achilles Fang's entry on *Biographies* noted, "The 'grass' [draft] style of the scroll is not as accomplished as the cursive style of the Han-shan poems attributed to the same master."<sup>5</sup> Fang had reservations about the authenticity of both scrolls, so he designated both as "attributed to Huang T'ing-chien." He was partially correct, for the *Han-shan* 寒山 scroll is a copy.<sup>6</sup> Tseng Yu-ho Ecke's entry on *Biographies* in her book *Chinese Calligraphy*, published in 1971, cautiously retains the Huang T'ing-chien attribution, but Ecke believed the scroll came from the hand that wrote *Li Po I chiu-yu*.<sup>7</sup> In *Traces of the Brush* and *Masterpieces of Chinese Calligraphy*, published in 1977 and 1981, respectively, I had identified *Biographies* as a genuine Huang T'ing-chien work, but in neither publication did I present all of the supporting evidence.<sup>8</sup>

After 1977, two other works in cursive script attributed to Huang T'ing-chien were published in China:

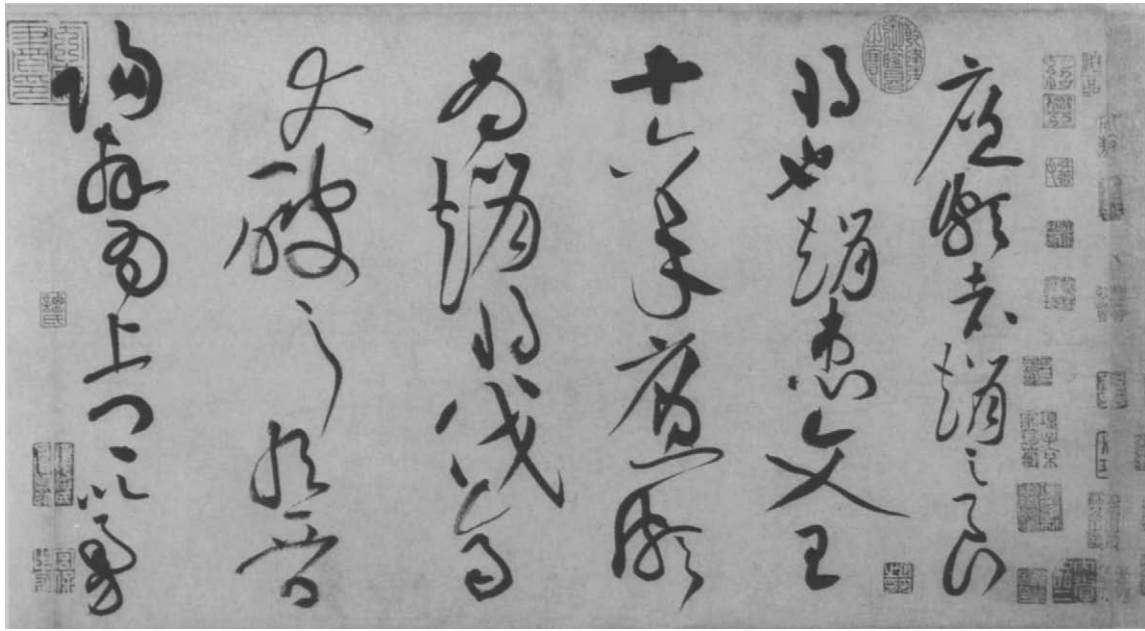


Figure 26. Huang T'ing-chien (1045-1105), *Biographies of Lien P'o and Lin Hsiang-ju*.  
Detail of handscroll, ink on paper, H. 32.5 cm.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York;  
Bequest of John M. Crawford, Jr., 1988

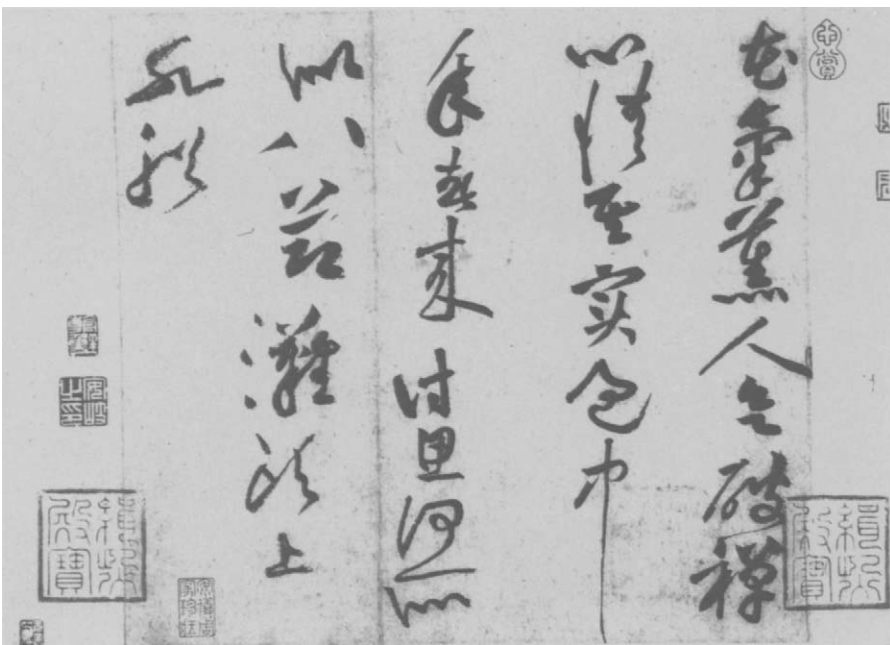


Figure 27. Attributed to Huang T'ing-chien, *Hua-ch'i hsün jen*.  
Detail of handscroll, ink on paper, H. 30.7 cm.  
Palace Museum, Taipei

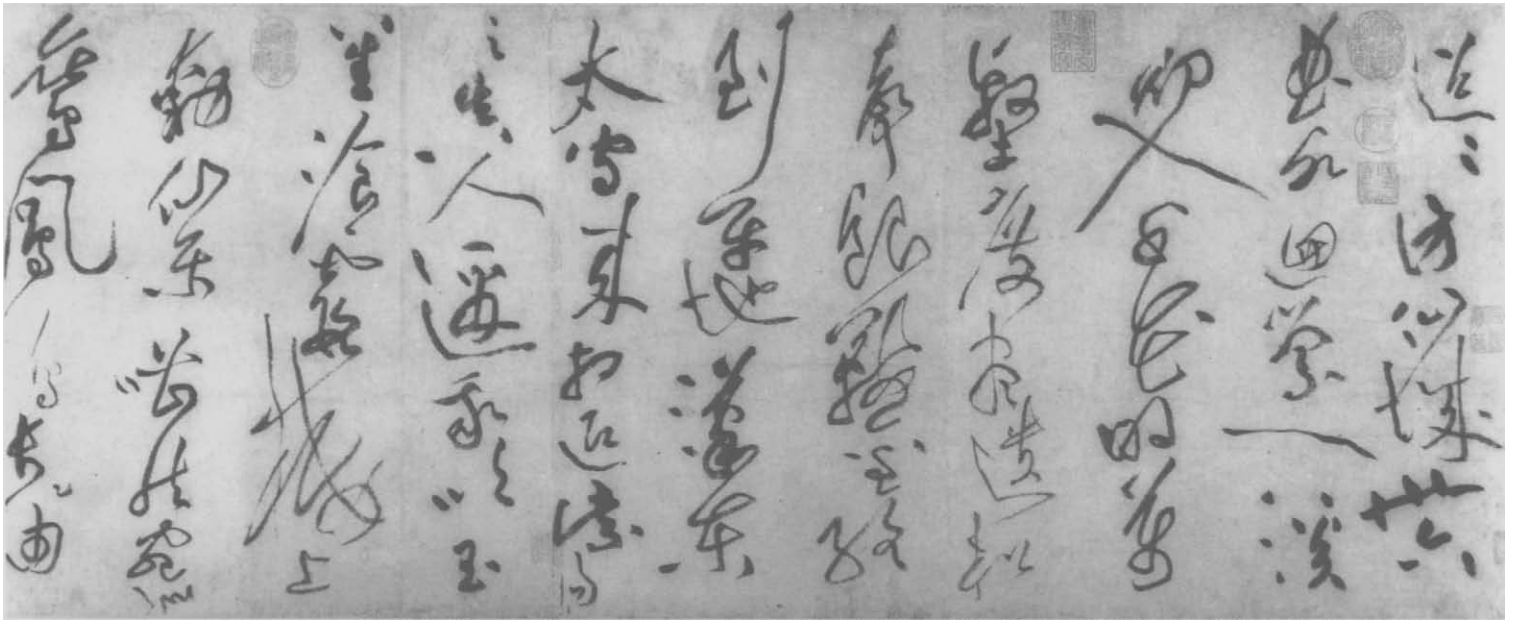


Figure 28. Attributed to Huang T'ing-chien, *Li Po I chiu-yu*.  
Detail of handscroll, ink on paper, H. 37 cm.  
Fujii Yürinkan Museum, Kyoto

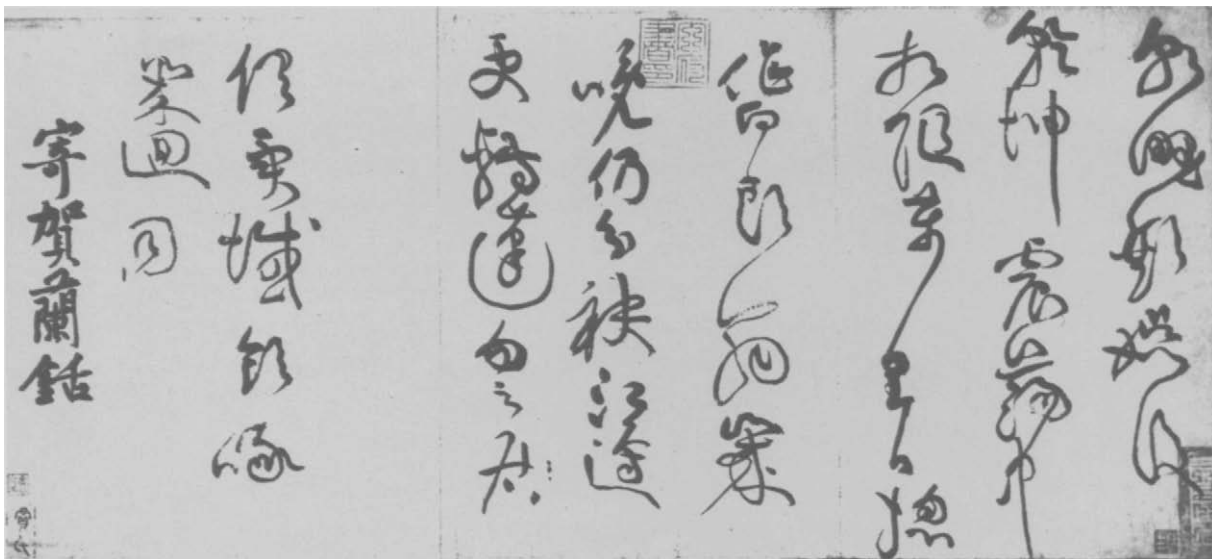


Figure 29. Attributed to Huang T'ing-chien, *Tu Fu chi Ho-lan Hsien shih*.  
Detail of handscroll, ink on paper, H. 34.7 cm. Palace Museum, Beijing  
(from *Chung-kuo mei-shu ch'üan-chi* [Beijing: Jen-min mei-shu, 1986],  
vol. 4, Calligraphy, p. 47)

*Chu-shang-tso* 諸上座 (*Sayings of a Ch'an Buddhist Monk*; fig. 30), in the Palace Museum, Beijing<sup>9</sup>

*Liu Yü-hsi Chu-chih tz'u* 劉禹錫竹枝詞 (*Liu Yü-hsi's Lyric: A Branch of Bamboo*; fig. 31), in the Cultural Department of Ningpo City, Chekiang Province<sup>10</sup>

Of the six works, only the *Chu-shang-tso* is signed. Huang's signature, "Old Man of the Valley" (*Shan-ku lao-jen* 山谷老人), and a thirteen-line colophon, both written in large running script, follow the seventy-two lines of cursive script. The running-script style of the signature and colophon is identical to that in two works known to have come from Huang's hand: *Fu-po shen-tz'u shih* 伏波神祠詩 (*Poem on the Shrine of the Queller of the Waves*; fig. 32), a scroll dated 1101 in the Hosokawa Collection, Kyoto; and *Fan P'ang chuan* 范滂傳 (*Biography of Fan P'ang*; fig. 33), an inscription dated 1104–5, a rubbing of which is reproduced in *Shoseki meihin sōkan*.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, *Chu-shang-tso* carries the genuine seals of a series of imperial owners—from Emperor Kao-tsung 高宗 (r. 1127–62) in the Sung to the Ch'ien-lung (r. 1736–95) and Hsüan-t'ung (r. 1909–11) emperors in the Ch'ing—as well as seals of numerous private collectors, including Chia Ssu-tao 賈似道 (1213–75), Li Ying-chen 李應禎 (1431–93), and Sun Ch'eng-tse 孫承澤 (1592–1676).

As there is no doubt that *Chu-shang-tso* is an authentic Huang T'ing-chien work in cursive script, one has only to compare the calligraphy in this scroll with that in the five unsigned works mentioned above to determine whether they were done by the same artist. I shall begin by comparing these works with one another and with Huang's other works, including his scroll for Chang Ta-t'ung 張大同 (1032–90), in the John B. Elliott Collection at the Art Museum, Princeton University. This comparison will allow me to present stylistic evidence that *Biographies* is a genuine Huang T'ing-chien work in cursive script. Then I shall discuss the content of the scroll and relate it to Huang's life, showing why he chose to transcribe this particular text and the probable date of its execution. From the seals and colophons on *Biographies* and from references to the scroll in historical documents, I shall then attempt to reconstruct the history of ownership of *Biographies* down to the present day. Finally, I shall discuss the influence of Huang T'ing-chien's cursive script, basing my comments on Wen Cheng-ming's 文徵明 (1470–1559) semi-cursive and cursive script in the poems mounted together with his painting *Summer Retreat in the Eastern Grove* (*Tung-lin pi-shu t'u* 東林避暑圖; figs. 41, 42, 43), in the John M. Crawford, Jr., Collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

In comparing the works in cursive script, I have focused on four distinctive features of Huang T'ing-chien's brush method: long upward hooks; the running radical; wavy diagonal strokes; and elongated, wavy vertical strokes. Huang tended to elongate the upward hooks in such characters as 見, 觀, 風, 執, 是, and 還 in their cursive form (fig. 34). He gave the running radical different forms in running, semicursive, and cursive script, even within the same scroll (fig. 35). He rendered the diagonal strokes in such characters as 人, 入, 文, and 使 in a slender wavy manner, sometimes making the end of the right-hand stroke twist back on itself (fig. 36). Finally, his elongated vertical strokes are, for the most part, wavy and end in a twist (fig. 37).

Each of these four characteristics may be illustrated by many other characters in the six works under discussion, convincing evidence that all six were written by Huang T'ing-chien. *Liu Yü-hsi Chu-chih tz'u* may be the one exception. From careful observation

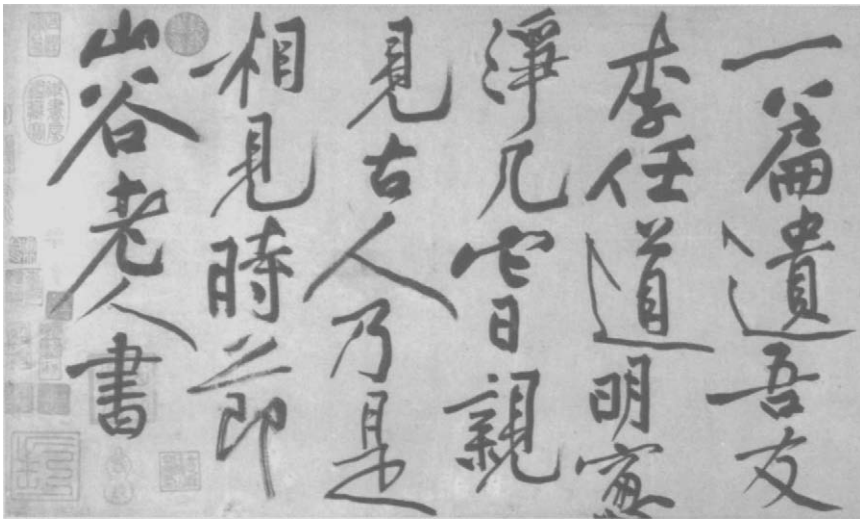


Figure 30. Huang T'ing-chien, *Chu-shang-tso*. Detail of handscroll, ink on paper, H. 33 cm. Palace Museum, Beijing

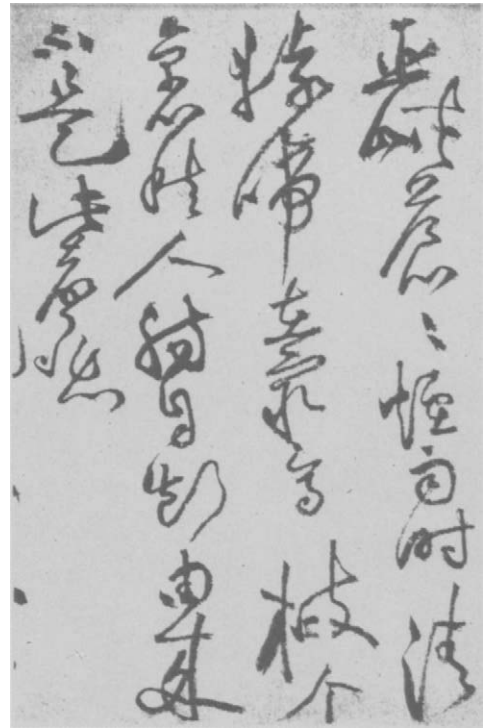


Figure 31. Attributed to Huang T'ing-chien, *Liu Yü-hsi Chu-chih tz'u*. Detail of handscroll, ink on silk, H. 30 cm. Cultural Department of Ningpo City, Chekiang Province (from *Chung-kuo mei-shu ch'üan chi* [Beijing: Jen-min mei-shu, 1986], vol. 4, pl. 28)

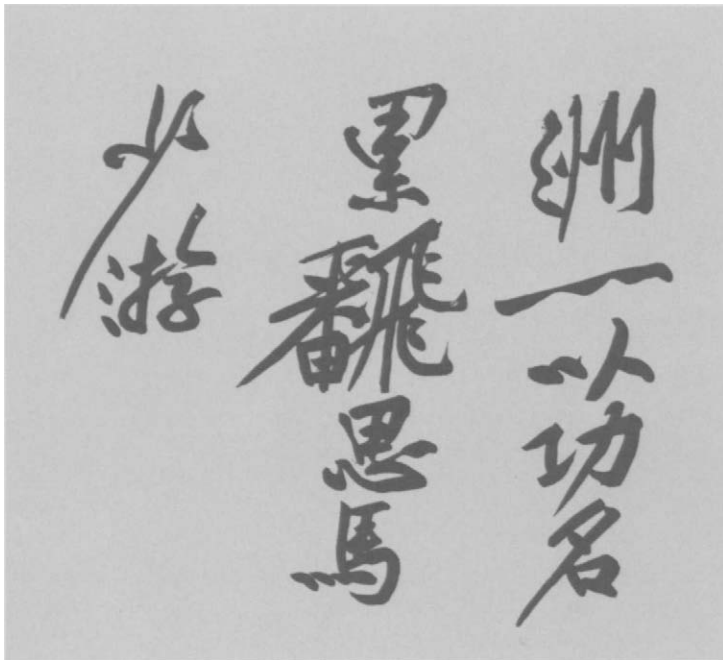


Figure 32. Huang T'ing-chien, *Fu-po shen-tz'u shih*, 1101. Detail of handscroll, ink on paper. Hosokawa Collection, Kyoto (from *Shodo zenshū* [Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1954], vol. 15, pl. 77)

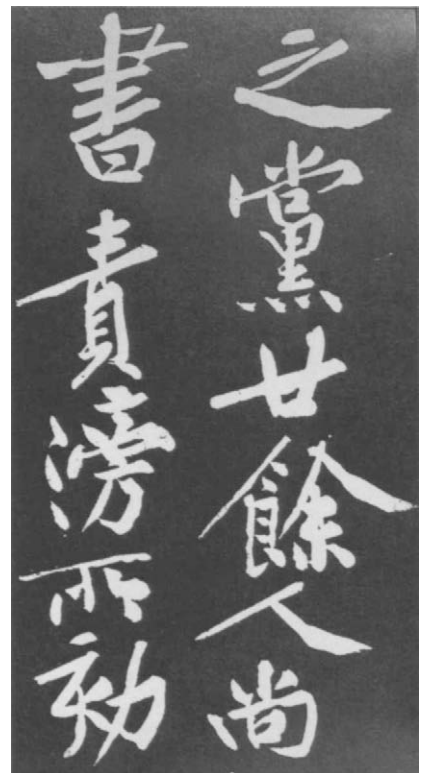


Figure 33. Huang T'ing-chien, *Fan P'ang chuan*, 1104-5. Detail of rubbing (from *Shoseki meihin sōkan* [Tokyo: Nigensha, 1971], vol. 162, pp. 18-19)

of the exaggerated “trembling” strokes, weak turnings, and overall appearance of coarseness and stiffness in the brushwork, I would say that *Liu Yü-hsi Chu-chih tz'u* is no more than a very good imitation.

On the basis of this stylistic comparison, I have tentatively dated *Biographies* and *Tu Fu chi Ho-lan Hsien shih* to the mid-1090s, *Hua-ch'i hsün jen* to around 1100, *Chu-shang-tso* to around 1102, and *Li Po I chiu-yu* to around 1104. Were *Liu Yü-hsi Chu-chih tz'u* genuine, I would assign it a date around 1103.

Having established the authenticity of *Biographies*, I will now turn to the text of the scroll and discuss its significance for the artist.

The original text of *Biographies of Lien P'o and Lin Hsiang-ju* was the work of the Han-dynasty historian Ssu-ma Ch'ien 司馬遷 (145–86 B.C.) and appears in his *Records of the Historian* (*Shih-chi* 史記).<sup>12</sup> It is an account of the rivalry between Lien P'o, a renowned general of Chao 趙 who was appointed chief minister after his great victory over Ch'i 齊, and Lin Hsiang-ju, who started out as the lowly steward to a chief eunuch of Chao but gained fame as a great tactician.

The story begins when King Hui-wen 惠文 of Chao (r. 298–266 B.C.) obtained a precious jade disk belonging to Pien Ho 卞和 of Ch'u 楚. Hearing about the jade disk, the powerful king of Ch'in 秦 offered King Hui-wen fifteen of his cities in exchange for it. The king of Chao suspected a ruse, but neither he nor his chief ministers knew how to respond to the proposal. The eunuch recommended his resourceful steward Lin Hsiang-ju to the king as an envoy to Ch'in. Before leaving on his mission, Lin took an oath before the king: “If the cities are given to Chao, the jade will remain in Ch'in. If no cities are given, I shall bring the jade back unscathed.”

After his arrival in Ch'in, Lin realized that the king of Ch'in had no intention of keeping his promise. So, using clever words, Lin managed to stall the king while he had the jade sent back to Chao. On his return to Chao, Lin was appointed a high councillor by his grateful monarch.

Some years later, during the famous confrontation between the kings of Chao and Ch'in, Lin Hsiang-ju's clever advice saved the king of Chao from humiliation. He was promoted again, this time to the rank of chief minister, taking precedence over General Lien. The general, who considered himself the true savior of the kingdom, objected to being subordinate to someone who could only use wiles and clever words. He swore publicly that he would humiliate Lin. Hearing of General Lien's intention, Lin assiduously avoided a confrontation. To his own staff, who expressed disappointment with his behavior and sought to resign, Lin said:

If, useless as I am, I lashed out at the mighty king of Ch'in, why should I be afraid of General Lien P'o? To my mind, however, were it not for the two of us, powerful Ch'in would not hesitate to invade Chao. When two tigers fight, one must perish. I behave as I do because I put our country's fate before private feuds.

In Ssu-ma Ch'ien's original text, there is a final paragraph which states that after General Lien heard what Lin said, he was deeply moved and apologized to Lin. Later the two men became close friends and worked together to defend Chao against Ch'in.<sup>13</sup>

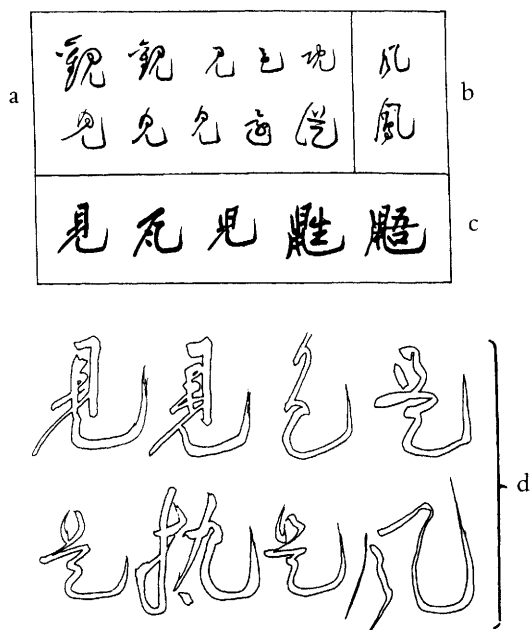


Figure 34. Sources from which samples are drawn: (a) *Biographies of Lien P'o and Lin Hsiang-ju* (see fig. 26); (b) *Li Po I chiu-yu* (see fig. 28); (c) *Chang Ta-t'ung*; and (d) *Chu-shang-tso* (see fig. 30)

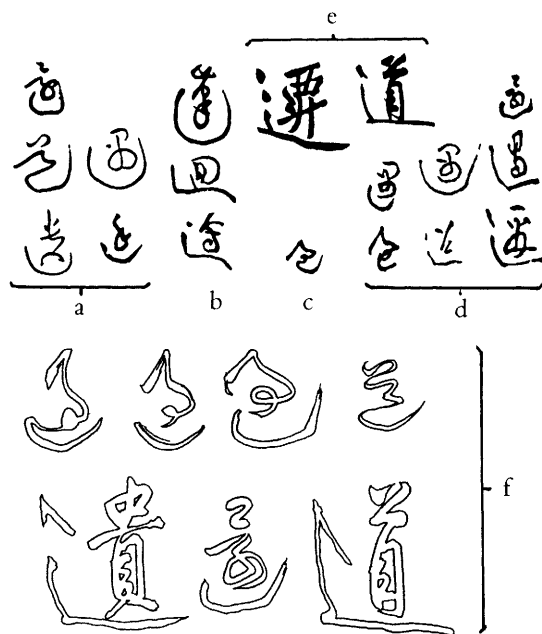


Figure 35. Sources from which samples are drawn: (a) *Biographies of Lien P'o and Lin Hsiang-ju* (see fig. 26); (b) *Tu Fu chi Ho-lan Hsien shih* (see fig. 29); (c) *Hua-ch'i hsün jen* (see fig. 27); (d) *Li Po I chiu-yu* (see fig. 28); (e) *Chang Ta-t'ung*; and (f) *Chu-shang-tso* (see fig. 30)

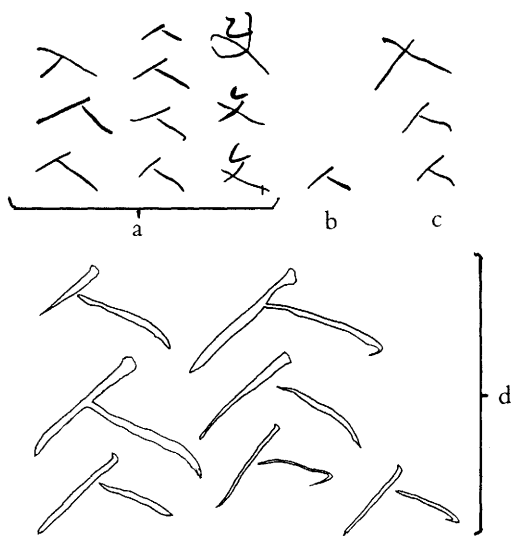


Figure 36. Sources from which samples are drawn: (a) *Biographies of Lien P'o and Lin Hsiang-ju* (see fig. 26); (b) *Hua-ch'i hsün jen* (see fig. 27); (c) *Li Po I chiu-yu* (see fig. 28); and (d) *Chu-shang-tso* (see fig. 30)

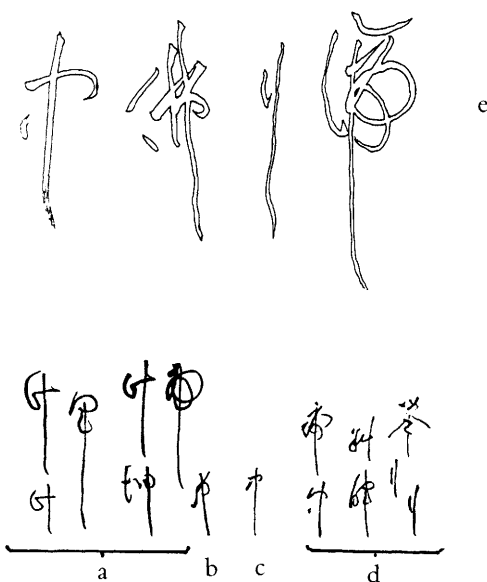


Figure 37. Sources from which samples are drawn: (a) *Biographies of Lien P'o and Lin Hsiang-ju* (see fig. 26); (b) *Tu Fu chi Ho-lan Hsien shih* (see fig. 29); (c) *Hua-ch'i hsün jen* (see fig. 27); (d) *Li Po I chiu-yu* (see fig. 28); and (e) *Chu-shang-tso* (see fig. 30)



Why did Huang T'ing-chien choose to transcribe this text, and why did he leave out the final paragraph of Ssu-ma Ch'ien's original, stopping after the sentence "I behave as I do because I put our country's fate before private feuds"? For the answers, we must turn to events in Huang's life.

Huang T'ing-chien had no political ambitions, but he had the misfortune to be serving as an official at the Northern Sung court during the period of factional struggles between the so-called Old and New Parties.<sup>14</sup> Because his close associates included leading scholars and officials who championed the Old Party, such as Ssu-ma Kuang 司馬光 (1019-86) and Su Shih, Huang could not avoid taking sides. In 1079, the New Party, led by Wang An-shih 王安石 (1021-86), accused Su Shih of ridiculing current policies and displaying his self-importance. Su attempted suicide, first by throwing himself into a river, then by going on a hunger strike. When he was exiled in 1080, his younger brother Su Ch'e 蘇轍 (1039-1112) and his friends, such as the painter Wang Shen 王詵 (active second half of the eleventh century), were banished as well. Thirty-two others, including Huang T'ing-chien, were fined. At the time, Huang and Su had not yet met; they had simply admired each other's work and had corresponded on a number of occasions. But factional struggles had become so bitter that anyone who possessed Su Shih's writings came under attack.<sup>15</sup>

In 1085, Su Shih was recalled to court when Ssu-ma Kuang recommended him as a compiler of *The Veritable Records of the Shen-tsung Emperor* (*Shen-tsung shih-lu* 神宗實錄). The following year, Ssu-ma Kuang was appointed chief editor of the project. He also recommended Huang T'ing-chien as a compiler of *The Veritable Records*. Thus, through their work in the capital, Su and Huang finally met.

When the project was completed in 1091, all of the compilers received promotions. Three years later, in 1094, the New Party once again brought charges against Su Shih. This time, Su was exiled to Hui-chou, Kwangtung Province. At the end of that year, New Party officials Chang Tun 章惇 (1035-1105) and Ts'ai Pien 蔡卞 (1058-1117) charged all of the compilers with making false statements and slandering New Party policies. It was then that Huang T'ing-chien was exiled to Ch'ien-chou, Szechwan Province.<sup>16</sup>

Huang's exile was clearly due to personal malice on the part of New Party officials, not to principles of good government. It is reasonable to assume that he was drawn to Ssu-ma Ch'ien's text because he empathized with Lin Hsiang-ju. That he did not choose to transcribe the final paragraph suggests that he did not care whether or not his enemies understood his meaning. As we follow the hasty, almost unbroken brushstrokes in the last line of *Biographies*, we can sense Huang's emotion. In the elongated last stroke, he seems to have poured out all of his grief for himself and for his close friends in exile (see fig. 1).

When Su Shih was found guilty, all of his friends who had samples of his writing were punished. Thus, when Su wrote his *Red Cliff* (*Ch'ih-pi fu* 赤壁賦) during his exile and sent it to a friend, he added this comment:

I composed this last year, yet seldom was it shown to others. . . . That is because I had so much trouble in the past and became so afraid of things [accusations]. I know you care for me; I trust you will hide this writing carefully and never show it to others.<sup>17</sup>

I believe Huang did not sign *Biographies* and many of his other works for the same reason. By choosing a famous historical text as the vehicle for his emotions rather than expressing resentment in his own words and by leaving out his signature, Huang was doubly protected.

By relating the content of the text with the facts of Huang's life and the development of his cursive script, one can establish a more precise date for *Biographies*. Before Huang took up his post as compiler of *The Veritable Records* in 1087, he was confident about his cursive script and practiced it diligently. But when friends, such as Wang Kung 王鞏 (active ca. 1070–ca. 1100) and Ch'ien Hsieh 錢勰 (1034–97), pointed out that his style was unrefined and vulgar, Huang became so discouraged that he virtually gave up writing in cursive script. By his own admission, it was during a stay at Mount Huang-lung, in Kiangsi Province, in 1094 that he suddenly received enlightenment about his calligraphy. With his confidence restored, he stated:

If there is a clean desk next to a bright window, and brush and ink are smooth and harmonized, I can write several thousand characters without tiring.<sup>18</sup>

*Biographies* contains nearly twelve hundred characters and measures fifty-nine feet in length. It is not only the longest of Huang T'ing-chien's extant works, but may well be the longest calligraphy scroll ever executed. By comparison with his other scrolls, the brushwork in *Biographies* is fresh and smooth: the strokes are less tremulous or wavy, the turns are less angular, the structure of the characters more stable and expansive, and the columns of calligraphy neater.

For all the above reasons—the choice of the text, the absence of a signature, and the quality of the calligraphy—I believe *Biographies* was written not long after Huang attained fresh understanding about his calligraphy and soon after he was banished to Ch'ien-chou, that is, in early 1095.

Because Huang T'ing-chien did not indicate to whom *Biographies* was dedicated, we do not know who the original owner was. But some thirty to forty years after Huang's death, the scroll entered the collection of Emperor Kao-tsung (r. 1127–62). One of the best imitators of Huang T'ing-chien's style, Kao-tsung also acquired Huang's *Chang Ta-t'ung*, *Chu-shang-tso*, and *Tu Fu chi Ho-lan Hsien shih* scrolls. All four works carry the "Nei-fu shu-yin" 內府書印, or palace collection, seal. Thirty impressions of this seal and twenty-nine impressions of Kao-tsung's double "Shao-hsing" 紹興 seal are distributed over the paper seams in *Biographies*.

The scroll also carries a seal reading "Ch'iu-ho t'u-shu" 秋壑圖書, indicating that it was at one time in the collection of the powerful prime minister Chia Ssu-tao, mentioned above, who was known by the name Ch'iu-ho. When Chia was exiled in March 1275 and his family property confiscated, the scroll was returned to the imperial collection, where it remained until the end of the Southern Sung.

In 1276, when the Southern Sung capital at Hangchow fell to the invading Mongol army, the imperial collection was transported to the Yüan-dynasty capital at Beijing. There, the scroll was seen by the famous collector Wang Yün 王惲 (1227–1304), who

recorded it in his *Catalogue of Calligraphies and Paintings* (*Shu-hua mu-lu* 書畫目錄).<sup>19</sup> In the mid-fourteenth century, *Biographies* was acquired by the Yüan scholar-official Ou-yang Hsüan 歐陽玄 (1283–1357), who affixed one seal. Not long after, the scroll was transferred to the famous Taoist painter Fang Tsung-i 方從義 (ca. 1315–85), who added his “Fang-hu shu-yin” 方壺書印 and “Mo-ch’ih ch’ing-hsing” 墨池清興 seals.

In the early years of the Ming dynasty, *Biographies* was acquired by Ku Lu 顧祿 (active ca. 1385), a scholar from the Sung-chiang region, near Shanghai. The history of the scroll over the next two hundred years is not clear, but the seals of Ts’ao Tzu-wen 曹子文 and Li T’ing-ching 李廷敬 (both active first half of the sixteenth century) were probably added during this period. In the late Ming, the connoisseur Chang Ch’ou 張丑 (1577–1643) noted that he saw *Biographies* in the collection of Hsiang Yüan-pien 項元汴 (1525–90).<sup>20</sup> A well-known collector, Hsiang affixed several dozen seals on the scroll and appended a one-line inscription at the end.

Following a gap of almost a century, the history of the scroll picks up in the Ch’ing dynasty. In 1652, Wu Ch’i-chen 吳其貞 (1607–after 1677), a connoisseur from Anhui Province, saw *Biographies* in the home of Shen Chung-mou 沈仲謀 (active mid-seventeenth century) in Chia-ho.<sup>21</sup> Fifteen years later, Wu saw the scroll again, this time in a hotel in Yangchow.<sup>22</sup>

Ku Fu 顧復 (active second half of the seventeenth century) describes a scroll very similar to *Biographies* in his *Magnificent Things Seen in My Life* (*P’ing-sheng chuang-kuan* 平生壯觀; preface 1692). He notes that someone had forged Huang T’ing-chien’s signature at the end of the scroll and recommends that the false signature be removed.<sup>23</sup> As there is no trace of a signature on *Biographies*, it is possible that Ku was referring to a different scroll or that someone took his advice.

Wu Sheng’s 吳升 (ca. 1660–after 1712) *Record of Magnificent Works of Art I Have Seen* (*Ta-kuan lu* 大觀錄; preface 1712) also mentions a scroll very similar to *Biographies*, with one discrepancy: Wu describes a scroll containing 110 columns of calligraphy, whereas *Biographies* contains 206 columns.<sup>24</sup> As everything else in Wu’s catalogue entry matches the details of the scroll now in the Crawford Collection, it is possible that the discrepancy was due to a miscount or a misprint.

*Biographies* carries three seals of the collector An Ch’i 安岐 (ca. 1683–after 1764) and is mentioned in An’s annotated catalogue, *Collected Records of Works in Ink I Have Had the Good Fortune to See* (*Mo-yüan hui-kuan* 墨緣彙觀; preface 1742). The entry mentions all the important seals on the scroll and notes “both the paper and ink are excellent.”<sup>25</sup> After An Ch’i’s death, many of the works in his collection entered the collection of the Ch’ien-lung emperor. *Biographies* carries Ch’ien-lung’s “Yü-lan chih pao” 御覽之寶 and “Shih-ch’ü pao-chi” 石渠寶笈 seals, but there is no record of the scroll in the catalogue of the imperial collection. One possible explanation for the omission is that the emperor gave the scroll to his eleventh son, Yung-hsing 永理 (1752–1823), before it could be catalogued. The impressions of Yung-hsing’s “Yung-hsing chih yin” 永理之印 and “I-chin-chai yin” 詒晉齋印 seals appear at the end of the scroll.

It is not known when *Biographies* left the imperial palace, but in the 1940s it turned up in the collection of T’an Ching 譚敬. T’an sold most of his collection in the 1950s, after his wife was in a car accident in Hong Kong. By 1956, *Biographies* was in the collection of the noted contemporary painter Chang Ta-ch’ien 張大千 (1899–1983). Chang added a short colophon and many seals. Shortly afterward, the scroll was acquired by

John M. Crawford, Jr. Despite the gaps in its nine-hundred-year history, *Biographies* can be regarded as one of the best documented of all Chinese scrolls.

Huang T'ing-chien's standard script (*k'ai-shu* 楷書) and running script greatly influenced calligraphers during the Southern Sung. During the Yüan dynasty, however, his influence was eclipsed by a growing interest in antiquity and the revival of Tsin and T'ang calligraphy models. Hsien-yü Shu 鮮于樞 (1257?–1302), a calligrapher of the orthodox school, severely criticized Huang's cursive script in these words:

Chang Hsü 張旭 [ca. 700–750], Huai-su 懷素 [ca. 735–800?], and Kao-hsien 高閑 [active 845–60] were all famous [T'ang] masters who excelled in cursive script. Chang Hsü's [style] was wild and untrammled, often exceeding [regular] methods. Huai-su's safeguarded method was rich in antique feeling. Kao-hsien's brushwork was too rough and grasped only sixty or seventy percent [of antique methods]. With Huang T'ing-chien, there was a great decline, and [both method and antique feeling] could not be recovered.<sup>26</sup>

The decline of Huang T'ing-chien's influence continued through the first half of the Ming. Even Hsü Yu-chen 徐有貞 (1407–72), the grandfather of the great calligrapher Chu Yün-ming 祝允明 (1461–1527), was still practicing the styles of Huai-su and Mi Fu. By the mid-Ming, however, Huang's influence began to reappear as part of a general revival of Sung-style calligraphy.<sup>27</sup> Renewed interest in Huang became obvious when the great painter Shen Chou 沈周 (1427–1509) patterned his running script exclusively on Huang's style. The influence of Huang's cursive script, however, did not peak until the following generation.

Shen Chou owned four of Huang T'ing-chien's works, one of which was the *Fu-po shen-tz'u shih*,<sup>28</sup> and Shen's colophon on another handscroll mentions that he had seen three more Huang T'ing-chien works in cursive script in the collections of friends in the Soochow area.<sup>29</sup> One that he said he saw in the collection of Hua Ch'eng 華瑛 (1418–1514) was probably *Li Po I chiu-yu*, which carries a colophon by Shen. The second scroll may have been *Song of Autumn Beach* (*Ch'iu-p'u ko* 秋浦歌), which carries two inscriptions by Shen's friend Wang Ao 王鏊 (1450–1524). And the third, which Shen reported seeing "in the collection of a Mr. Li," must have been the *Chu-shang-tso*, which was then in the collection of Li Ying-chen and bears a colophon written by Shen's close friend Wu K'uan 吳寬 (1435–1504).<sup>30</sup>

As these scrolls in Huang T'ing-chien's cursive script were circulating in the Soochow area, they must have been seen by Chu Yün-ming and Wen Cheng-ming. Chu was Li Ying-chen's son-in-law. Wen studied painting with Shen Chou and calligraphy with both Wu K'uan and Li Ying-chen. It is also very likely that Chu and Wen saw Huang's *Biographies*, whose owner at the time, Hsiang Yüan-pien, had very close ties with collectors in the Soochow area.

Wen Cheng-ming was an accomplished calligrapher who excelled in all the scripts. Although he followed mainly Tsin and T'ang traditions, he consistently followed Huang T'ing-chien in large running script. Having studied calligraphy with Wu K'uan, who followed Su Shih's style, Wen also became adept at Su's style. When he acquired Su's *Red*

Cliff, he was able to restore, in Su's style, the thirty-six missing characters at the beginning of the scroll.<sup>31</sup>

Wen Cheng-ming's thorough knowledge of Huang T'ing-chien's calligraphic development is clear from the long colophon that he inscribed on Huang's *Fu-po shen-tz'u shih*.<sup>32</sup> Other records show that he wrote colophons to two other Huang T'ing-chien works.<sup>33</sup> According to Chang Ch'ou, Wen was at one time the owner of Huang's *Poem by Ts'ao Chih* (*Ts'ao Chih shih* 曹植詩).<sup>34</sup> He even wrote like Huang, holding the brush perpendicularly with arm suspended, using only the brush tip.

Huang's influence on Wen Cheng-ming may be seen in two of the three poems attached to the latter's painting *Summer Retreat in the Eastern Grove*.<sup>35</sup> This relatively early work is datable to 1512, when Wen was forty-three.<sup>36</sup> The calligraphy in the first poem (fig. 42) captures both the form and the spirit of Huang T'ing-chien's script. The second poem (fig. 41), containing fifty-six characters arranged in seventeen columns, is based on Huang's wild-cursive (*k'uang-ts'ao* 狂草) script.<sup>37</sup>

Like Huang, Wen Cheng-ming writes the character 帶 *tai* large, so that it occupies the space of three characters. He renders the vertical stroke in 帶 and the character 插 *ch'a* with a long wavering brush movement and ends the stroke with a twist to the right in a manner very similar to Huang's.

The double circles in Wen's character 帶 closely resemble those in Huang's characters 虎 *hu* and 諦 *ti*.

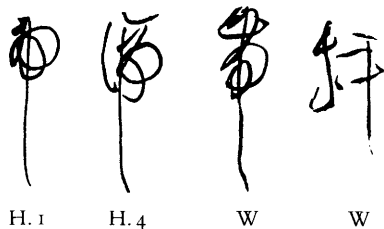


Figure 38. H = Huang T'ing-chien;  
W = Wen Cheng-ming.  
(H. 1) *Biographies of Lien P'o and Lin Hsiang-ju*  
(see fig. 26);  
(H. 4) *Chu-shang-tso* (see fig. 30)

The characters 人 *jen* and 迢 *t'iao* in the first two poems are executed with long wavy diagonal strokes very similar to Huang's in the scroll for Chang Ta-t'ung and in the *Fu-po shen-tz'u shih* scroll.

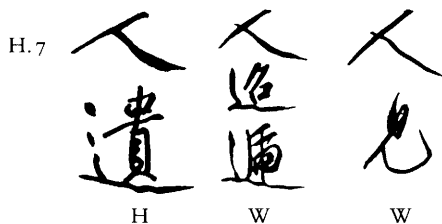


Figure 39. (H. 7) *Fu-po shen-tz'u shih* (see fig. 32)

Finally, Wen's long slashing diagonal stroke in the character 沙 *sha* and the spacing between the stroke and the next character in the column also recall Huang's style in the *Fu-po shen-tz'u shih* scroll.



Figure 40. (H. 7) *Fu-po shen-tz'u shih* (see fig. 32)

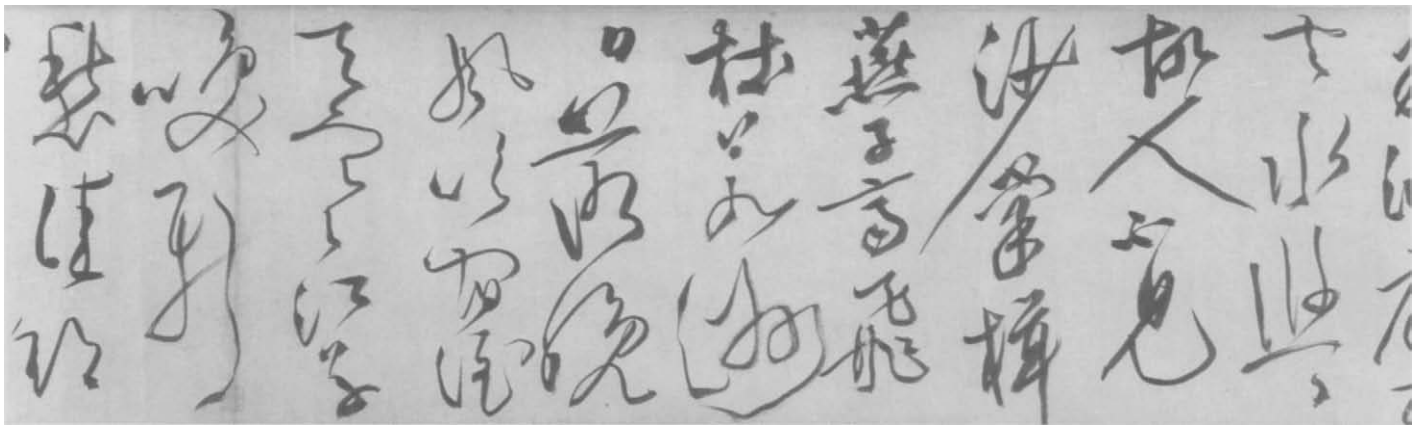


Figure 41. Wen Cheng-ming, section of second poem mounted with *Summer Retreat in the Eastern Grove*

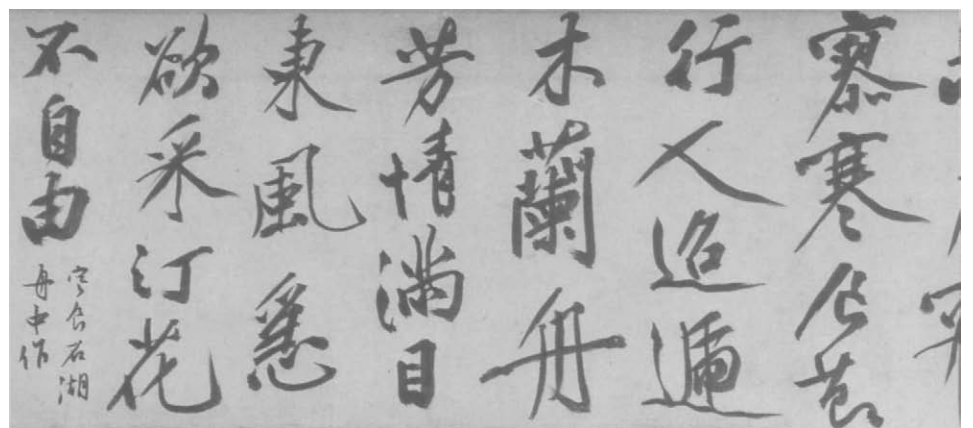


Figure 42. Wen Cheng-ming (1470–1559), first poem mounted with *Summer Retreat in the Eastern Grove*, 1512. Detail of handscroll, ink on paper, H. 32 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Bequest of John M. Crawford, Jr., 1988

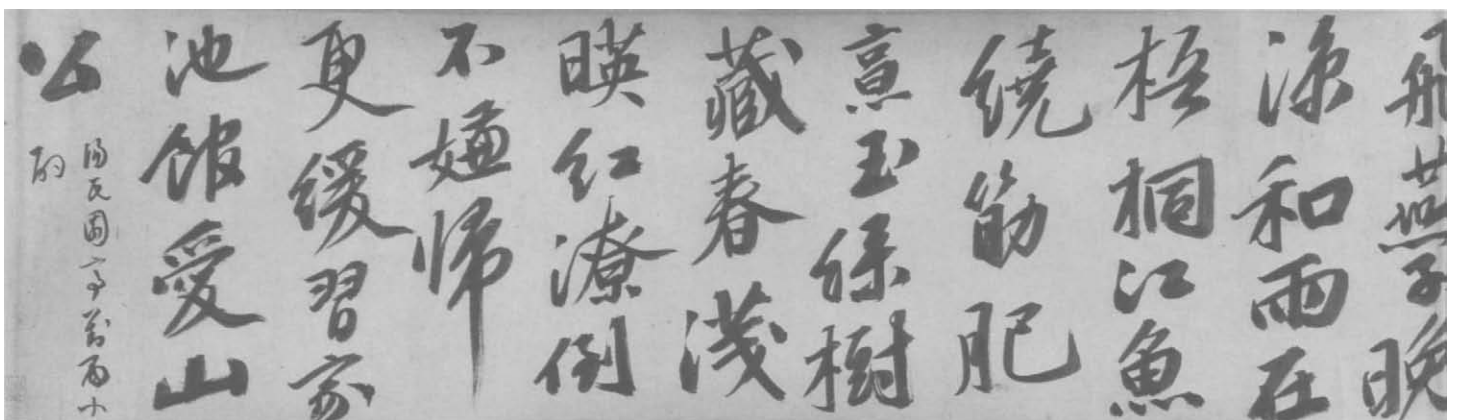


Figure 43. Wen Cheng-ming, section of third poem mounted with *Summer Retreat in the Eastern Grove*

The third poem (fig. 43), written in running script, closely follows Su Shih's style, but the brushwork is rather flat. That Wen Cheng-ming consciously switched styles from one poem to another clearly demonstrates his ability to imitate the styles of early masters. To judge from the calligraphy in these poems, his cursive script in Huang T'ing-chien's style is by no means inferior to his running script. It is regrettable that Wen did not continue to develop his large cursive script in Huang's style, thereby failing to achieve a more dynamic personal style.

I have used Wen Cheng-ming's handscroll as a particularly instructive example of the revival of Huang T'ing-chien's calligraphic style during the mid-Ming. Traces of Huang's influence are also visible in Chu Yün-ming's calligraphy handscroll *The Red Cliff* (*Ch'ih-pi fu* 赤壁賦; fig. 44), in the Shanghai Museum, a most exciting work in Chu's mature style. Chu, however, did not slavishly imitate the early masters and consciously tried to cast off their styles. Also, as he was said to be nearsighted,<sup>38</sup> he apparently could not write as Huang did, with his arm suspended and the brush held high.

Students of Chinese calligraphy, both in China and in the West, respect and admire the continuity of tradition and the ability of Chinese calligraphers through the ages to give new and fresh interpretations to the styles of earlier masters. Huang T'ing-chien is a notable example of an artist whose influence on the development of calligraphic styles continued long after his time.

## NOTES

- 1 For a comprehensive study of Huang T'ing-chien's standard and running script, see my dissertation (unpublished), "Huang T'ing-chien's Calligraphy and His Scroll for Chang Ta-tung: A Masterpiece Written in Exile" (Princeton University, 1976).
- 2 The poem is published in *Sung Huang T'ing-chien shih-kao erh-chung* (Two poetry drafts by Huang T'ing-chien of the Sung dynasty) (Beijing: Wenwu, 1959).
- 3 The poem is published in *Ku-kung fa-shu* (Calligraphy in the Palace Museum) (Taipei: Palace Museum, 1962), vol. 10A, pp. 33a-b.
- 4 The poem is published in *Shoseki meihin sōkan* (Compendium of masterpiece calligraphy) (Tokyo: Nigensha, 1964), no. 32.
- 5 Laurence Sickman, ed., *Chinese Calligraphy and Painting in the Collection of John M. Crawford, Jr.* (New York: Pierpont Morgan Library, 1962), p. 70.
- 6 The original handscroll of *Shu Han-shan-tzu P'ang-chü-shih shih* (Three poems by Han Shan and P'ang Yun) is in the Palace Museum, Taipei; see *Ku-kung fa-shu*, vol. 10B, pp. 17a-24b. A copy of it in the Crawford Collection is published in Sickman, ed., *Chinese Calligraphy*, pp. 67-69, no. 11. For a discussion of this scroll, see my dissertation, p. 181; and my *Traces of the Brush: Studies in Chinese Calligraphy* (New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1977), pp. 10-13.
- 7 Tseng Yu-ho Ecke, *Chinese Calligraphy* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1971), cat. no. 21.
- 8 See Fu et al., *Traces*, pp. 83, 98-99; and Yūjirō Nakata and Shen C. Y. Fu, *Chūgoku hōsho meisekishu* (Masterpieces of Chinese calligraphy in American and European collections) (Tokyo: Chūō-kōron-sha, 1981), vol. 1, pp. 48-65.
- 9 The poem is published in *Sung Huang T'ing-chien Chu-shang-tso* (The Chu-shang-tso calligraphy by Huang T'ing-chien of the Sung dynasty) (Beijing: Wenwu, 1977).
- 10 The poem is published in *Shu fa*, no. 1 (1979), pp. 40ff.
- 11 For the *Fu-po shen-tz'u shih*, see *Shoseki meihin sōkan*, no. 23; for the *Fan P'ang chuan*, see idem, no. 162.
- 12 Ssu-ma Ch'ien, *Shih-chi* (Records of the historian) (Beijing: Chung-hua, 1959), vol. 8, *chüan* 81, pp. 2439-44.
- 13 For a translation of the *Biographies*, see Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang, trans., *Selections from Records of the Historian* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1979), pp. 139-44.

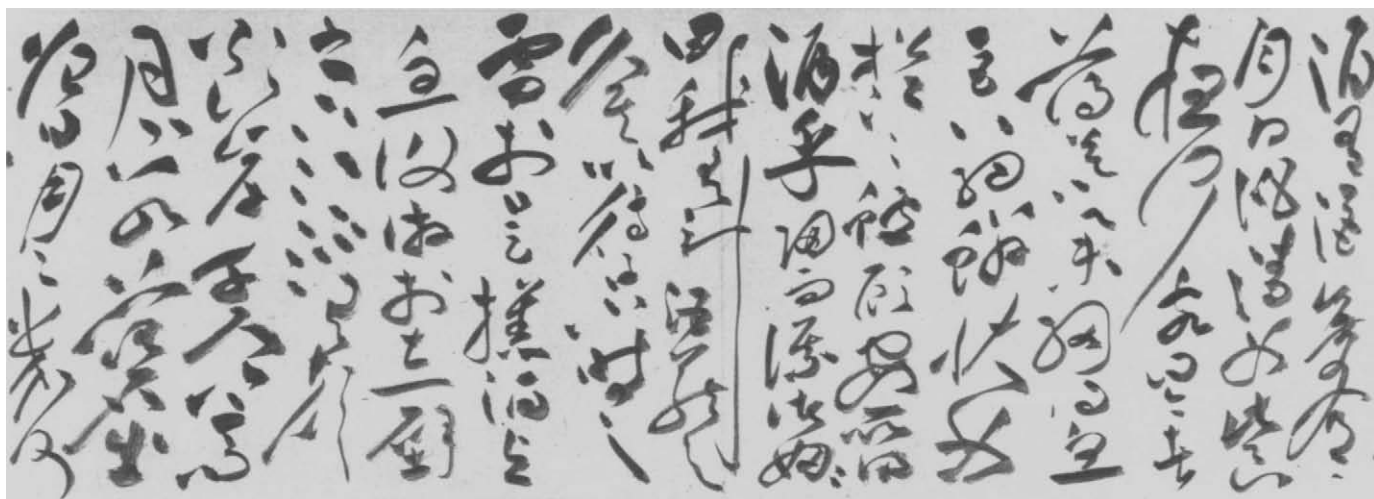


Figure 44. Chu Yün-ming (1461–1527), *The Red Cliff*.  
Detail of handscroll, ink on paper, H. 31.3 cm. Shanghai Museum

- 14 For historical background, see Ch'ien Mu, *Kuo-shih ta-kang* (Outline of Chinese history) (Taipei: Shang-wu, 1940), pp. 414–30; and James T. C. Liu, *Ou-yang Hsiu* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967), esp. pp. 40–84.
- 15 See Wang Pao-chen, *Tseng-pu Su Tung-p'o nien-p'u hui-cheng* (A chronological biography of Su Tung-p'o [Su Shih] with supplementary annotations) (Taipei: Taiwan University Press, 1969).
- 16 Huang's exile in Ch'ien-chou ended in 1100. In 1103 he was exiled again, to I-chou (Kwangsi Province). See Huang Tien, ed., "Shan-ku nien-p'u" (A chronological biography of Shan-ku [Huang T'ing-chien]; preface 1199), in *Shan-ku shih ch'üan-chi* (The complete collected poetry of Shan-ku [Huang T'ing-chien]) (1876 ed.).
- 17 For translations of this prose poem, see Burton Watson, trans., *Su Tung-p'o: Selections from a Sung Dynasty Poet* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), pp. 87–90; and Cyril Le Gros Clark, *The Prose-Poetry of Su Tung-p'o* (New York: Paragon, 1964), pp. 126–29, and n. 22, pp. 134–35. Su's poem is published in *Ku-kung shu-hua lu* (A descriptive catalogue of painting and calligraphy in the Palace and Central Museum) (Taipei: Palace Museum, 1965), vol. 1, p. 49; for plates, see *Ku-kung fa-shu*, vol. 9B, pp. 8–15.
- 18 See Huang's "Shu tzu-tso-ts'ao hou" (Postscript to a work of my own cursive calligraphy), in *Shan-ku t'i-pa* (The inscriptions and colophons of Shan-ku [Huang T'ing-chien]), ISTP (Taipei: Shih-chieh, 1968), vol. 22, *chüan* 5, p. 48.
- 19 Wang Yün, *Shu-hua mu-lu* (Catalogue of calligraphies and paintings), ISTP, vol. 17, p. 31.
- 20 Chang Ch'ou, *Chen-chi jih-lu* (Daily record of genuine works [seen by the author]) (manuscript edition, n.d.), p. 45a.
- 21 Wu Ch'i-chen, *Shu-hua chi* (Notes on calligraphy and painting) (Shanghai: Jen-min mei-shu, 1963), vol. 1, *chüan* 3, pp. 251–52.
- 22 Ibid., vol. 2, *chüan* 5, p. 559.
- 23 Ku Fu, *P'ing-sheng chuang-kuan* (Magnificent things seen in my life) (Shanghai: Jen-min mei-shu, 1962), vol. 1, *chüan* 2, p. 59.
- 24 Wu Sheng, *Ta-kuan lu* (A record of magnificent works of art I have seen) (Wu-chin: Li Shih Sheng-shih-lou-yin-mo-t'ang, 1920), *chüan* 6, p. 4a.
- 25 An Ch'i, *Mo-yüan hui-kuan* (Collected records of works in ink I have had the good fortune to see), ISTP, vol. 17, *chüan* 1, p. 31.
- 26 Fu et al., *Traces*, p. 87, fig. 46.
- 27 For further discussion of the revival of Sung styles, see *ibid.*, pp. 130–34.
- 28 See the last four columns of Wen Cheng-ming's colophon on the *Fu-po shen-tz'u shih* published in *Shoseki meihin sōkan*, no. 23.
- 29 Shen Chou's colophon on the *Shu shih-tien* (Transcription of a Buddhist text), by Huang T'ing-chien, is published in Pien Yung-yü, comp., *Shih-ku-t'ang shu-hua hui-k'ao* (Classified record of calligraphy and painting in Shih-ku Hall) (Wu-hsing: Chien-ku, 1921), calligraphy section, *chüan* 11, pp. 7b–8a.
- 30 For Shen Chou's colophon to the *Li Po I chiu-yu*,



- see *ibid.*, vol. 11, pp. 13b–14a. For Wang Ao's colophons to the *Ch'iu-p'u ko*, see *ibid.*, vol. 11, pp. 19a–b. For Wu K'uan's colophon to the *Chushang-tso*, see *Ku-kung Po-wu-yuan ts'ang li-tai fa-shu hsüan chi* (Selections of Chinese calligraphy in the Beijing Palace Museum) (Beijing: Wenwu, 1977), vol. 2, no. 9.
- 31 See note 17.
- 32 See note 28.
- 33 Wen Cheng-ming, *Fu-t'ien chi* (The collected works of Fu-t'ien [Wen Cheng-ming]) (Taipei: National Central Library, 1968), vol. 2, *chüan* 21, pp. 7a–b (pp. 491–92); and Pien, comp., *Shih-ku-t'ang*, *chüan* 11, pp. 22b–23a.
- 34 See Chang Ch'ou, *Ch'ing-ho shu-hua fang* (The boat of calligraphy and painting on the Ch'ing River) (Sun-hsi: Chu-shih-chia-shu, 1888), *chüan* 9, pp. 14b–15a; and quoted in Pien, comp., *Shih-ku-t'ang*, *chüan* 11, p. 2b.
- 35 The poems are not directly related to either the painting or the frontispiece. They are recorded in chronological order in Wen Cheng-ming's *Fu-t'ien chi*, vol. 1, *chüan* 4, p. 2a (p. 153). Partial illustrations of the scroll may be seen in Marc F. Wilson and Kwan S. Wong, *Friends of Wen Cheng-ming: A View from the Crawford Collection* (New York: China Institute in America, 1974), p. 81, no. 12; in Richard Edwards, *The Art of Wen Cheng-ming (1470–1559)* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1976), p. 69, no. 13; and Fu et al., *Traces*, p. 157, pl. 50b.
- 36 Wen's postscript on the scroll confirms the date of execution.
- 37 The cursive script in this poem was traditionally said to be in the style of Huai-su.
- 38 See comments of Chou T'ien-ch'iu recorded in Ma Tsung-huo, *Shu-lin tsao-chien* (Reflective critiques on calligraphy), ISTP, vol. 6, p. 310a.

# The Relationship between Landscape Representations and Self-Inscriptions in the Works of Mi Yu-jen

OGAWA HIROMITSU

In keeping with the theme of this volume, “Words and Images: Chinese Poetry, Calligraphy, and Painting,” this study will attempt to examine the relationship between the landscapes of Mi Yu-jen 米友仁 (1074–1151) and his inscriptions on them. The focus of the paper will be the earliest of a number of extant works by Mi, his *Cloudy Mountains* (*Yün-shan t'u* 雲山圖), dated 1130, in the Cleveland Museum of Art (fig. 45). As one contribution to a study of Mi Yu-jen’s painting and literature, this paper will not only assist in our understanding of the work of an artist belonging to the earliest period of literati painting in China, but also will serve as a stepping-stone in our broader investigation of the core issue in Chinese art: the relationship between words and images. *Cloudy Mountains* appears to be a straightforward depiction of a scene in Chiang-nan viewed from the opposite bank of a river. From the front of the picture plane, an expanse of water extends outward in either direction. A bridge connects a gently sloping mountain range with a small island to its left. Half-hidden dwellings dot the island. A sandbar stretches across the right of the painting. Just offshore, a man fishes from his boat. As I have demonstrated elsewhere, the primary characteristic of *Cloudy Mountains* is its extraordinarily simple and candid mode of natural depiction<sup>1</sup> in marked contrast to the constructed and artificial pictorial space created by Kuo Hsi 郭熙 (ca. 1010–ca. 1090) in his *Early Spring* (*Tsao-ch'un t'u* 早春圖) (Palace Museum, Taipei; fig. 52).<sup>2</sup> There, from the imagination of the artist alone sprang the squatting reptilian forms of the strangely shaped mountains billowing forth like cumulus clouds. While both paintings share the common theme of an early evening scene, they represent two extremes in the depiction of landscape.<sup>3</sup> Kuo Hsi’s work stands at the apex of the Hua-pei school 華北派 of landscape painting, the major landscape painting tradition from the end of the T’ang dynasty through the Five Dynasties period and into the Sung. Mi Yu-jen’s work, on the other hand, marks the turning point of the Chiang-nan, or southern, school of landscape painting, when it gained momentum propelling it beyond its hitherto subsidiary role.

Now, because *Early Spring* portrays a spatial composition that could not exist in reality, it would be tempting to conclude that *Cloudy Mountains*, as its antithesis, must be a realistic depiction of an actual shoreline. However, this is not the case. If we divide the pictorial space of *Cloudy Mountains* into four equal sections, we find that the second section from the right (fig. 47) exactly corresponds to the spatial composition of another Mi Yu-jen painting, *Distant Peaks and Clearing Clouds* (*Yüan-hsiu ch'ing-yün t'u* 遠岫晴雲圖), dated 1134 (Osaka Municipal Museum; fig. 46). In the latter painting, a waterway meanders leftward from the front of the picture plane into the innermost reaches of the landscape, ending finally at the base of a twin-peaked mountain range that stands



Figure 45. Mi Yu-jen (1074–1151), *Cloudy Mountains*, dated 1130. Handscroll, ink and color on silk, H. 43.4 cm. The Cleveland Museum of Art; Purchase from the J. H. Wade Fund



Figure 46. Mi Yu-jen, *Distant Peaks and Clearing Clouds*, dated 1134. Album leaf mounted as a hanging scroll, ink on paper, 24.6 × 28.6 cm. Osaka Municipal Museum of Art



Figure 47. Mi Yu-jen, detail of *Cloudy Mountains*

like a folding screen in the center of the frame. From the saddle between the two peaks, other mountains either peek out or thrust upward like the horns of an animal.

*Cloudy Mountains* was painted in colors on silk, while *Distant Peaks* is a monochrome ink painting on paper. Being of different media, the two paintings naturally demonstrate varying degrees of delicacy, nuance, and detail in the rendering of mountain range and forest motifs. Nevertheless, the motifs are nearly identical, and both works give evidence of the same tradition of pictorial space formation.

What is more, the composition in *Distant Peaks* is the greatly reduced mirror image of that in *Hsiao I Steals the "Lan-t'ing Preface"* (*Hsiao I chuan Lan-t'ing t'u* 蕭翼賺蘭亭圖) (Palace Museum, Taipei; figs. 48, 49), attributed to Chü-jan 巨然 (active ca. 960–80), a disciple of Tung Yüan 董源 (d. 962), the accepted founder of the Chiang-nan school of landscape painting. Obviously, *Hsiao I Steals the "Lan-t'ing Preface,"* being approximately twelve times larger than *Distant Peaks*, is the more substantial of the two, both in its handling of mountain ranges and forests and in the inclusion of multitiered buildings and human figures absent in Mi's painting. Further, in telling the story of the official Hsiao I, who, acting on orders from the T'ang emperor T'ai-tsung 太宗 (r. 627–49), managed to trick the monk Pien-ts'ai 辨才 into parting with the original *Lan-t'ing Preface* of Wang Hsi-chih 王羲之 (ca. 307–ca. 365), the painting *Hsiao I* possesses the added attribute of a narrative theme. If we keep in mind the richness of representation lent by the narrative, the slight differences found between this painting and *Distant Peaks*—such as the latter's relatively vague far bank and its enlargement of the small mountain in the saddle into a major host peak—become acceptable variations within the same tradition of like forms.

In short, both *Cloudy Mountains* and *Distant Peaks* belong in whole or in part to the same tradition of pictorial space formation as *Hsiao I Steals the "Lan-t'ing Preface."* And all three substantiate the traditional understanding of the Chiang-nan school of landscape painting—from Tung Yüan and Chü-jan to Mi Fu 米芾 (1052–1107) and his son Mi Yu-jen—as one based on commonality of pictorial space and composition rather than on the less substantive identity of brush-texture strokes.

If we switch the right and left halves of *Cloudy Mountains*, reduce the right three-quarters of this new arrangement by fifty percent and consider this the right half of the composition, in turn coupling this with an enlargement of the remaining one-quarter on the left, which becomes the left half, the resulting composition is identical to that of "Evening Glow over a Fishing Village" ("Yü-ts'un hsi-chao t'u" 漁村夕照圖; fig. 50), a section of the *Eight Views of the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers*, attributed to Mu-ch'i 牧谿 (active mid-thirteenth century), in the Nezu Institute of Fine Arts. Of course, a difference in media exists between the two, the former being colors on silk, the latter, ink and wash on paper. Through his choice of medium, which allows for both a broad, continuous range of tonality and the ability to arrest and highlight these variations, Mu-ch'i is far and away more successful than is Mi Yu-jen at the natural representation of light and atmosphere. For an excellent example of this, one need only compare Mu-ch'i's use of light ink with Mi Yu-jen's stylized representation of clouds, created by outlining in lead white pigment shaded with light blue color. The distinctive three-band grouping of clouds which seems to fill the valleys in *Cloudy Mountains* becomes three patches of light which burst through the mist hanging above the water in "Evening Glow over a Fishing Village." Further, in the process of rearranging and unevenly expanding and contracting the Mi Yu-jen painting, the section with the small island, now on the right, has undergone



Figure 48.  
Attributed to Chü-jan (active ca. 960–80),  
*Hsiao I Steals the "Lan-t'ing Preface."*  
Hanging scroll, ink and light colors on silk,  
144.1 × 59.6 cm.  
Palace Museum, Taipei

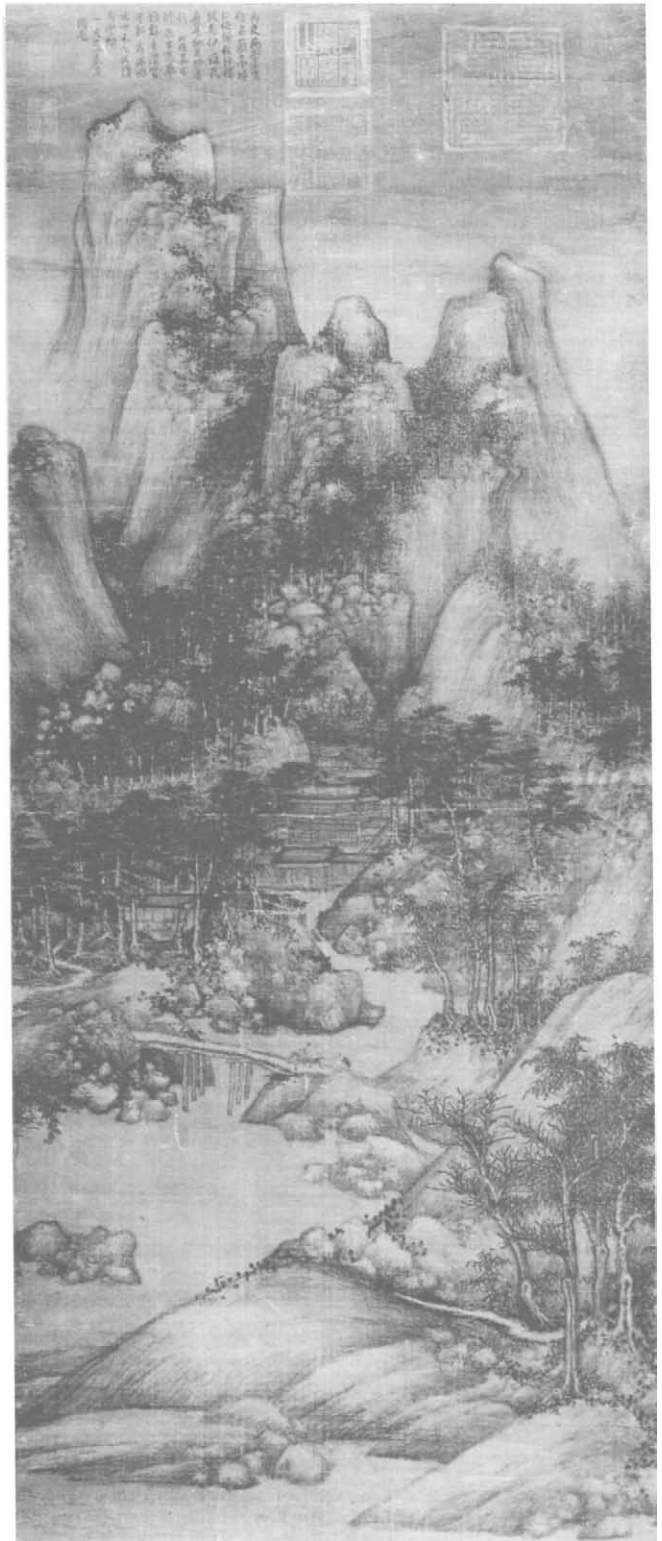


Figure 49.  
Attributed to Chü-jan,  
*Hsiao I Steals the "Lan-t'ing Preface"*  
(fig. 48, composition reversed)

such a change that it may not be immediately obvious that the two paintings belong to the same tradition of like forms. On the whole, however, the two paintings do correspond in terms of motifs and of their relative disposition on the picture plane. Each painting has a sandbar stretching from left to right across the center, a man fishing from a boat just offshore, a river winding from left to right into the picture plane, and a twin-peaked mountain range with additional mountains rising in front of and behind its saddle. The very fact that we can distinguish where change or devolution has occurred from where it has not demonstrates that the forms belong to a single tradition.

Thus, Mi Yu-jen's *Cloudy Mountains* and *Distant Peaks and Clearing Clouds* belong to the same tradition of pictorial space formation as *Hsiao I Steals the "Lan-t'ing Preface,"* attributed to Chü-jan, and "Evening Glow over a Fishing Village," attributed to Mu-ch'i. In particular, *Distant Peaks* and *Hsiao I Steals the "Lan-t'ing Preface"* are good examples of works belonging to a subdivision of like spatial formations within that tradition.

I would next like to take issue with Chao Hsi-ku 趙希鵠 (active ca. 1195–ca. 1242), who, in his "Discussion of Ancient Paintings" ("Ku-hua pien" 古畫辯) in the *Tung-t'ien ch'ing-lu chi* 洞天清祿集 (Compilation of Pure Earnings in the Realm of the Immortals), argues that the preferred medium of the father-and-son team of Mi Fu and Mi Yu-jen was paper and ink and that all works on silk ascribed to them are spurious.<sup>4</sup> *Distant Peaks and Clearing Clouds* is a typical Mi Yu-jen work. "Evening Glow over a Fishing Village" is usually attributed to Mu-ch'i or is at least acknowledged as a work of the Southern Sung dynasty. As I have demonstrated, *Cloudy Mountains* partially incorporates the former and is spatially related to the latter. Thus, it is an important work whose form, at the very least, derives from Mi Yu-jen. Moreover, as I have noted elsewhere, there is something extraordinary about the coloring techniques of *Cloudy Mountains*.<sup>5</sup> Consequently, concurring with what is generally accepted, I too recognize this painting as a work by Mi Yu-jen. The painting *Hsiao I Steals the "Lan-t'ing Preface"* shares the same construct of pictorial space with *Distant Peaks* and, in part, with "Evening Glow over a Fishing Village" and *Cloudy Mountains*, that is to say, with the Mi-family style of landscape painting of the Southern Sung, and at the same time preserves a form developed no later than the late Northern Sung. From the formalized handling of the riverbank and other characteristics, however, I believe it is a copy made in the late Northern Sung, a period in which the Chiang-nan school of landscape was being reevaluated.<sup>6</sup>

By forming a connection between the Chiang-nan school of landscape painting of the Northern Sung and the Mi-family landscape-painting style of the Southern Sung, the four above-mentioned paintings tangibly represent a turning point in the history of Chinese landscape painting. They all belong to the same tradition of spatial formation, and in composition they are wholly or in part the same. Thus, contrary to what might be assumed at first glance, they cannot be depictions of actual riverbank scenes. Their commonality dictates against it. The exception might be *Hsiao I Steals the "Lan-t'ing Preface,"* which, if not the depiction of an actual scene, at least gives the appearance of a narrative landscape story taken from reality. The other three are certainly not representations of reality.

Elsewhere I have shown how the composition of pictorial space in Kuo Hsi's *Early Spring* is constructed and artificial; a strange, cloudlike mountain—the pivot of the entire painting—stands at a point four times the depth of the twin pine trees occupying the

center of the foreground.<sup>7</sup> Although arrived at in a manner antithetical to Kuo Hsi's, the three works under discussion here—the two by Mi Yu-jen and the one attributed to Mu-ch'i—also present an artificial and constructed composition of pictorial space.

In the three works under discussion, the prototypical construct of space was cut up, reassembled, inverted, switched around, reduced, and enlarged. Thus, the space in *Cloudy Mountains* was inverted, reduced, and enlarged to create “Evening Glow over a Fishing Village.” This method of constructing space is representative of the Chiang-nan school of landscape painting after Mi Yu-jen's time. In fact, I am convinced that it is the distinctive feature of the Mi-family landscape style.<sup>8</sup> As described above, one section of *Cloudy Mountains* shares the same composition with *Distant Peaks and Clearing Clouds* and is, in turn, the inverted mirror image of the composition of *Hsiao I Steals the “Lan-t'ing Preface.”* This tells us that *Cloudy Mountains* or a composition of like formation must be the prototype used in the above compositional method. Moreover, the prototypical spatial composition of *Cloudy Mountains* derived in turn from various paintings that preceded it.

In the spatial composition of *Cloudy Mountains*, the water surface opens outward at both the extreme right and left. Thus, even if we attach the far right portion of the composition to the end of the scroll or, conversely, attach the far left portion to the beginning of the scroll, the new spatial composition is still a complete landscape representation. In other words, by dividing the spatial composition of *Cloudy Mountains* into four equal sections, we get the following right-to-left sectional scheme:

4    3    2    1

Continuing this four-part scheme in progressive order, we can arrive at three other modes of alignment, each of which is a landscape complete in itself:

1	4	3	2
2	1	4	3
3	2	1	4

It goes without saying that the third case, altered somewhat, corresponds to “Evening Glow over a Fishing Village”:

2    1    4    3

In other words, it is a diagrammatic scheme of the altered *Cloudy Mountains* composition described earlier: the left 4-3 is switched with the right 2-1 and then unevenly expanded or contracted.

Using only three sections of the four also yields a four-part series of pictorial space, each recognizable as a landscape representation:

3	2	1
4	3	2
1	4	3
2	1	4



Two sections will also yield a four-part series:

2	1
3	2
4	3
1	4

Even when using only one section, there are four possible arrangements:

1
2
3
4

The spatial construct of *Distant Peaks and Clearing Clouds*, of course, corresponds to [2] in the last series. *Hsiao I Steals the "Lan-t'ing Preface"* shares the same prototypical composition but in inverted form.

In contrast to the pictorial schemes of *Distant Peaks and Clearing Clouds* and "Evening Glow over a Fishing Village," other schemes, such as [1] and [4], taken individually or in combination [1-4], do not make for a very interesting landscape representation. This point aside, I have designed four series with four arrangements per series from a four-part scheme based on the prototype *Cloudy Mountains* for a total of sixteen possible formations of spatial composition.

These sixteen variations by no means exhaust all the possibilities. Halving a two-part scheme to make quarters is merely the simplest of possible manipulations. For example, between a complete formation 4-3-2-1 and a half-formation 2-1 exist spatial compositions of innumerable possible lengths, such as 3-2-1 and 4-3-2-1. The three-quarter-length 3-2-1 is only one among many possible permutations. Nevertheless, a painting's spatial composition is fundamentally grounded in a two-part scheme, a bisection of the surface area either on the central vertical axis or on a diagonal from corner to corner. From a historical perspective, the transition between the Northern Sung and the Southern Sung also marks a shift in the method of landscape-painting composition from a two-part scheme with a central vertical axis—represented by *Early Spring*—to a two-part scheme with a diagonal axis, commonly termed a "one-corner composition" (*i-chiao* 一角).<sup>9</sup>

It is certainly not a mere flight of fancy to look at *Cloudy Mountains* in the way I have outlined above. It is undeniable as historical fact. Taking into account the limited spatial composition of *Cloudy Mountains*, we see that all of the possible length options between the complete formation 4-3-2-1 and the half-formation 2-1 are closely represented by these two schemes plus an intermediate three-quarter composition 3-2-1. In practice, if we were to divide the composition into eight sections, none of the eight spatial constructs in itself would possess a sense of unity as a landscape representation. Thus, theoretical considerations aside, the sixteen possible subdivisions of spatial composition derived from a four-part scheme of *Cloudy Mountains* fully exhaust all possible compositional formations. Stated in another way, the four-part scheme produces two modes each of figure and ground: "figure" represented by parts [2] and [3] and "ground" by [1] and [4]. Also, from a practical and pictorial standpoint, because the method of a four-part scheme affords a detailed and easy investigation of *Cloudy Mountains* by clearly combining figure

and ground subdivisions of spatial composition, it is an excellent method. Conversely, the spatial composition of *Cloudy Mountains* was methodically and scrupulously assembled to produce a prototype that allows for these results.

*Landscape with Tu Kuan-tao's Inscriptions* (*Tu Kuan-tao tsan shan-shui t'u* 杜貫道贊山水圖), a pair of hanging scrolls by an anonymous painter (Tokyo National Museum; fig. 51), is a valuable example of the same spatial composition construction as that of the "figure" portion of *Cloudy Mountains*, corresponding to [3] and [2]. As in *Hsiao I Steals the "Lan-t'ing Preface,"* a central mountain peak straddling sections [3] and [2] was given extra height in proportion to the vertical thrust of the composition to become the host mountain. The height of the trees in the grove was increased for the same reason. A more significant transformation occurred on the left side of [3], where the bridge and small island have disappeared. These changes, however, arose from the compositional needs of the double hanging scroll format; the linking of two pictorial spaces demands a balance between the left and right halves. For this reason, despite differences in the forms of mountains and trees, the essential identity of form between the anonymous *Landscape with Tu Kuan-tao's Inscriptions* and the corresponding parts of *Cloudy Mountains* is preserved. *Landscape with Tu Kuan-tao's Inscriptions*, *Distant Peaks and Clearing Clouds*, and "Evening Glow over a Fishing Village" serve as proof that the composition of *Cloudy Mountains* contains within it the possibility of creating subdivisional formations of spatial composition through the appropriate rearrangement of its halved and quartered sections. Furthermore, *Landscape with Tu Kuan-tao's Inscriptions* suggests that Mi Yu-jen attempted not only the central two-part spatial construct representation 3-2 by joining sections [3] and [2], but also the double hanging scroll format 3-2.

Mi Fu writes in *Hua-shih* 畫史 (*History of Painting*): "Only in my Pao-Tsin Studio (Pao-Tsin chai 寶晉齋) are double scrolls hung, forming a pair. They do not exceed three feet (*ch'ih* 尺) in width."<sup>10</sup> It is acknowledged that Mi Fu adorned his studio with a pair of scrolls done by his own hand. Now, we know from a double hanging scroll entitled *Landscapes* (*Shan-shui* 山水) (Kōtō-in, Daitoku-ji, Kyoto; fig. 53) by Mi Yu-jen's contemporary Li T'ang 李唐 (ca. 1070–ca. 1150) that the so-called disjoined-united landscape of the same design as *Landscape with Tu Kuan-tao's Inscriptions* and our hypothetical pairing 3-2 was attempted at this time. Consequently, there is a strong probability that Mi Yu-jen had executed a painting with the same compositional formation as [2], corresponding to *Distant Peaks and Clearing Clouds*, and another painting of the same formation as [3], and had these paintings arranged to form a pair of hanging scrolls. In fact, it is even possible that sections [3] and [2], representing the "figure" portion of *Cloudy Mountains* and the prototype for *Landscape with Tu Kuan-tao's Inscriptions*, reflect the pair of hanging scrolls in Mi Fu's Pao-Tsin Studio. One reason for thinking this is so is that the link between *Hsiao I Steals the "Lan-t'ing Preface"* and *Distant Peaks and Clearing Clouds*, both of which have the compositional formation [2], is easily understandable once we posit the influence of Mi Fu, the leader of the reevaluation of the Chiang-nan school of landscape painting. Another reason is that *Cloudy Mountains* measures approximately six *ch'ih* (in the Sung dynasty, one *ch'ih* equaled 30.72 cm), three *ts'un* 寸, and two *fen* 分. The combined length of the two sections [3] and [2] equals one half of that, or approximately three *ch'ih*, one *ts'un*, and six *fen*, which matches almost perfectly Mi Fu's description of the hanging scrolls in his Pao-Tsin Studio: "They do not exceed three *ch'ih* in width." In other words, in addition to the sequential spatial compositions of the sixteen subdivisions



Figure 50. Attributed to Mu-ch'i (active mid-13th c.), "Evening Glow over a Fishing Village," from *Eight Views of the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers*. Section of handscroll, ink on paper, H. 33 cm. Nezu Institute of Fine Arts, Tokyo



Figure 51. Anonymous, *Landscape with Tu Kuan-tao's Inscriptions*. Pair of hanging scrolls, ink on paper, each 53.8 × 23.7 cm. Tokyo National Museum Collection

derived from *Cloudy Mountains*, we will now consider the linked spatial compositions formed by two constructs of disjointed space of equal size (paired hanging scrolls). Disregarding as before the issue of whether or not such compositions are pictorially interesting representations, we can represent them by the following twelve schemes:

4	3	·	2	1		2	1	·	4	3
1	4	·	3	2		3	2	·	1	4
	2	·	1				1	·	2	
	3	·	2				2	·	3	
	4	·	3				3	·	4	
	1	·	4				4	·	1	

Adding these twelve schemes to the earlier sixteen results in twenty-eight subdivisional formations of spatial composition.<sup>11</sup>

The possibilities inherent in *Cloudy Mountains* do not stop there. Because *Distant Peaks and Clearing Clouds* and *Hsiao I Steals the "Lan-t'ing Preface"* are mirror images of each other and correspond to scheme [2], it is possible to imagine an inverted spatial composition for each of the twenty-eight subdivisional compositional schemes, resulting in a total of fifty-six possibilities. Moreover, by adding to these possible compositional schemes the different shapes produced by the fanciful representation of the ink-and-brush method seen in *Distant Peaks*, "Evening Glow over a Fishing Village," and *Landscape with Tu Kuan-tao's Inscriptions*, one realizes that the landscape representations born of the variations stemming from *Cloudy Mountains* yield multifaceted, multilayered, and unlimited images.

Kung K'ai 龔開 (1222–1307), a follower of the Mi-family school of landscape painting active in the late Southern Sung–early Yüan, was a contemporary of Mu-ch'i. Writing about Kung K'ai in the *Hua-chien* 畫鑒 (*Mirror of Painting*; 1328), T'ang Hou 湯垕 (active early fourteenth century) says: "In his landscapes he followed Mi Yüan-hui 米元暉 [Yu-jen]." Farther on, T'ang notes, "[Kung K'ai] once painted five albums, the *Cloudy Mountain Sketches* (Yün-shan kao 雲山稿). They have been passed down in his family. I have seen these and other copies he has made [of *Cloudy Mountains*]. These are unusual works."<sup>12</sup> It would probably not be going too far to propose that Kung K'ai's five albums of sketches reflected to some degree the multifaceted, multilayered images latent in the fifty-six possible subdivisional formations derived from *Cloudy Mountains*. To put it another way, as Kung K'ai's sketches probably contained forms derived from *Cloudy Mountains*, they possibly also shared designs and formations present in *Distant Peaks and Clearing Clouds*, "Evening Glow over a Fishing Village," and the *Landscape with Tu Kuan-tao's Inscriptions*. Moreover, it is undeniable that the designs and formations in these three latter paintings were attempted by Mi Yu-jen because their compositional forms are similar, in whole or in part, to those in *Cloudy Mountains*. Actually, Mi Yu-jen's artistic activity around the time he painted *Cloudy Mountains* was itself the process which led to Kung K'ai's *Cloudy Mountain Sketches*. One need only look at *Distant Peaks and Clearing Clouds*, dated 1134, then at "Evening Glow over a Fishing Village," attributed to Mu-ch'i, and finally at *Landscape with Tu Kuan-tao's Inscriptions* to see the process that resulted in *Cloudy Mountain Sketches*. In short, *Cloudy Mountains* gave rise to *Cloudy Mountain Sketches*, and the latter completed *Cloudy Mountains*. If creativity is infused with imitation, and imi-

tation is inseparable from creativity, then *Cloudy Mountains* must be seen as the inspiration for an entire group of works which harbor within themselves such an opportunity.<sup>13</sup>

Thus, *Cloudy Mountains* and *Distant Peaks and Clearing Clouds* are not the straightforward representations they appear to be at first sight. *Cloudy Mountains* bears the following inscription:

Marvelous mountains, innumerable, touch the rim of Heaven,	好山無數接天涯
The obscuring and clearing of mists and haze are lovely	煙靄陰晴日夕佳
at the close of day.	
To make known that the gentleman once reached this place,	要識先生曾到此
I leave a play of my brush at the house of my host.	故留筆戲在君家
In the year <i>keng-hsü</i> , done at the place of refuge,	庚戌歲辟地
Hsin-ch'ang. Yüan-hui. <sup>14</sup>	新昌作 元暉

As the inscription indicates, this painting was done at Hsin-ch'ang Village (in Liyang County, Chen-chiang, Kiangsu Province) in the cyclical year *keng-hsü*, or 1130. The inscription on *Distant Peaks and Clearing Clouds* reads:

On the day before *yüan-hsi*, in the year *chia-yen* of Shao-hsing [1131-63], I have come here by boat from Hsin-ch'ang, en route to pay my respects at court. Residing at Ch'i-pao Mountain in Lin-an, I have playfully made . . . this small scroll. I give this to you. Please accept it. Hu.<sup>15</sup>

紹興甲寅元夕前一日，自新昌泛舟來赴朝參，居  
臨安七寶山戲作□□小卷付與廩收，虎。

Thus, *Distant Peaks and Clearing Clouds* was painted on the fourteenth day of the first month of 1134 at Lin-an (Hangchow, Chekiang Province). These Mi Yu-jen works are two of the earliest examples of extant Chinese paintings on which the date and place of execution have been clearly recorded. Although these paintings at first glance appear to be sketches of actual scenes, they bear no resemblance to the locales where they were supposedly painted. It is difficult to believe that a scene in Hsin-ch'ang Village actually corresponded to the scene depicted in *Cloudy Mountains* or that a scene on Ch'i-pao Mountain corresponded to *Distant Peaks and Clearing Clouds* and to the relevant one-quarter section of *Cloudy Mountains*. Even if these two paintings represent actual scenes, it is highly unlikely that there existed actual scenes corresponding to *Hsiao I Steals the "Lan-t'ing Preface,"* "Evening Glow over a Fishing Village," and *Landscape with Tü Kuan-tao's Inscriptions*, because *Distant Peaks and Clearing Clouds*, which is one-fourth of *Cloudy Mountains*, *Hsiao I Steals the "Lan-t'ing Preface,"* which is the enlarged, inverted image of *Distant Peaks and Clearing Clouds*, "Evening Glow over a Fishing Village," which is *Cloudy Mountains* after the left and right sides have been switched and disproportionately contracted and expanded, and *Landscape with Tü Kuan-tao's Inscriptions*, which is a simplified version of the center portion of *Cloudy Mountains*, all seem to be based on a preexisting composition. Logic dictates that at least some of the paintings within this group of five cannot be depictions of actual scenes. But it is inconsequential if actual scenes were depicted; far more essential is the fact that these five paintings are related to one another in terms of spatial formation and composition. As I suggested earlier, apart from *Hsiao I Steals the "Lan-t'ing Preface,"* the other four works were part of the process leading to *Cloudy Mountain Sketches* and were attempted by Mi Yu-jen. The various compositional



Figure 52. Kuo Hsi (ca. 1010–ca. 1090), *Early Spring*, dated 1072.  
Hanging scroll, ink and light color on silk, 158.3 × 108.1 cm.  
Palace Museum, Taipei

links between these four paintings make it highly improbable that each painting corresponded to an actual scene observed by Mi Yu-jen. Their significance lies in their being fabrications, that is, spatial compositions existing only in art.

But if *Cloudy Mountains* and *Distant Peaks and Clearing Clouds* are not representations of reality but merely repetitive exercises, why did Mi Yu-jen find it necessary to inscribe the dates and places of execution and thus draw attention to the disparity between representation and content? I believe Mi Yu-jen created a framework of representation and content in a spirit of playfulness. Nevertheless, by limiting his compositional schemes to those mentioned above and his motifs to sandbars, mountains, small islands, and bridges, and by preferring monochrome ink and paper over colors and silk as his medium, Mi Yu-jen defined the boundaries of his landscape representations. The disparity between representation and content is unquestionably linked to the aforementioned disparity between representation and form.

To be more precise, Mi Yu-jen's landscapes are not mere reproductions of actual scenes or actual spaces. Rather, they seek to create space through characteristics inherent in the pictorial space, which allow for dividing and uniting, inverting and switching, enlarging and contracting. It is a system which creates space that is different from actual space. This system makes it possible (1) to create fifty-six possible works from a single painting, *Cloudy Mountains*; (2) to imagine "actual scenes" corresponding to some of these paintings; and (3) to let the imagination run free to enjoy the characteristics inherent in pictorial space that make possible the cutting up and piecing together of compositions. These three sets of possibilities are the result of entering the visionary world through a system unique to pictorial space. In theory, this system should fully exploit the range of possibilities offered by the unique characteristics inherent in pictorial space. In fact, it allows a landscape representation to be repeated and continued within a fixed, circumscribed range. Consequently, the motifs chosen and placed within a pictorial composition are limited by set restrictions. And the medium chosen to visualize the entire composition is practically devoid of color. Certain difficulties arise as a result of the repetition and continuation of landscape representation within this circumscribed range. First, the dichotomy between the vast potential of the visionary world and the narrow results that are actually obtained constantly threatens to interrupt the process of continuation and repetition. Second, it is impossible to enter into the vastness of the potential visionary world except by achieving results through constant continuation and repetition. Thus, repetition and continuation are difficult precisely because the results must gradually and concretely bring to light the expanse of a vague and obscure world.

In addition to *Cloudy Mountains* and *Distant Peaks and Clearing Clouds*, almost all of Mi Yu-jen's works, extant or recorded in catalogues, are dated and their places of execution identified. This practice no doubt helped to minimize the confusion inherent in the process of continual repetition. The differences between *Cloudy Mountains*, painted in 1130 in Hsin-ch'ang Village, Li-yang County, in Chien-k'ang Prefecture, and *Distant Peaks*, painted at Ch'i-pao Mountain in Lin-an, some 150 kilometers away, are the result of choices made in pictorial composition (whether to use the entire composition or only a part of it), in the subtle execution of details in motifs, such as mountain ranges and trees, and in medium (whether to use colors on silk or ink on paper). These differences result in a delicate balance between imitation and innovation in the repetition and continuation of a landscape representation. The 150 kilometers and four years which separate

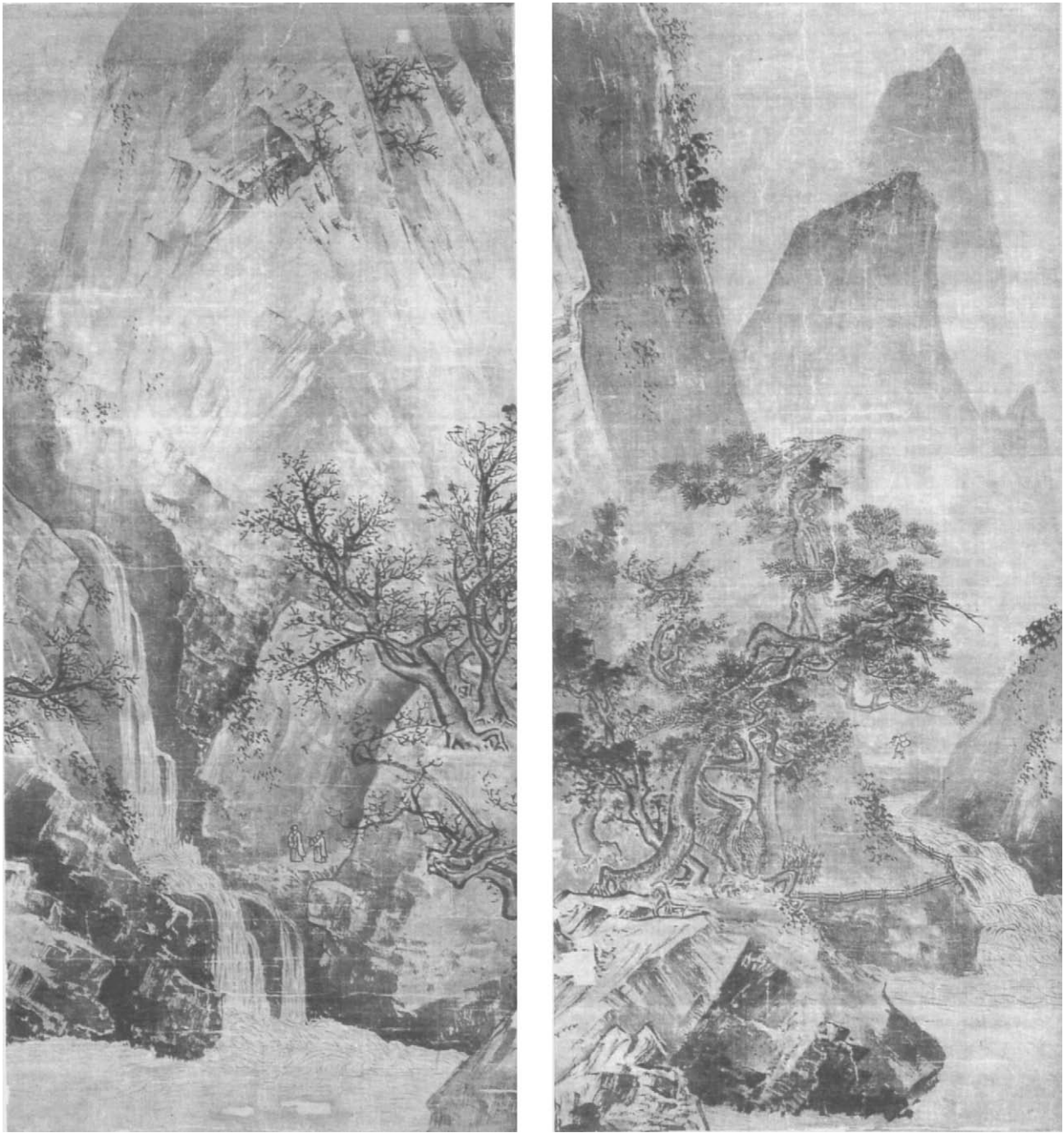


Figure 53. Li T'ang (ca. 1070–ca. 1150), *Landscapes*.  
Pair of hanging scrolls, ink on silk, each 98.1 × 43.4 cm. Kōtō-in, Daitoku-ji, Kyoto



these two paintings are expressed through the enlargement, projection, and rearrangement of the spatial composition. The greater the gap in time and space, the more readily it is impressed upon the artist, and the larger and more firmly fixed the delicate sway of a prototypical landscape representation created through projection and rearrangement becomes.

What Mi Yu-jen was trying to do in his paintings was to make a clear distinction between the self and a particular time and place. Because his landscape representations exist inherently and internally within a vast visionary world, they become easy to grasp once the viewer has a firm realization of his place in the continuum of time and space. Once the awareness of the time and space lapse is understood, the dominion of landscape representations at certain times and places presents no problem.

In light of the points examined in this paper thus far, I should now address the following issues in order to round out and complete my argument: Do the fifty-six possible subdivisional formations of spatial composition springing from *Cloudy Mountains* define the largest range within which this prototype can be contained? Furthermore, as a number of these fifty-six spatial compositions contain multifaceted, multilayered, limitless images, how much farther can the range be extended? This more complete perspective should then be connected to the larger issue of the inseparability of imitation and creativity that pertains to all Chinese painting. Contrary to popular opinion, this is easily done. From this more complete, relative, and enlarged perspective, the matter of thoroughly distinguishing landscape representations of different times and spaces becomes one of steady and assured repetition and continuation. As Mi Yu-jen expanded outward from himself, he arrived at a self bound by nationality and history. Coming back into himself, he returned to a self which gazed back at him from each stroke of the brush and each mark of ink made by his physical person. That Mi Yu-jen arranged his art according to date and place of execution is proof that he practiced this procedure which self-affirms both creation and body. The inscriptions on *Cloudy Mountains* and *Distant Peaks and Clearing Clouds* tangibly express the essence of Mi Yu-jen's art, an art in which imitation, creativity, and selfness are intricately intertwined.

From this perspective, when and where the paintings were done and for whom they were intended become fundamental questions. In Mi's time, the nation was facing destruction; with whom one associated was of paramount importance, as it could literally determine one's fate. For this reason, the demands of his situation must have influenced his decisions about what and for whom he painted.

For practical reasons, he would not have transported large numbers of painting drafts as he fled for safety. This consideration tends to support my contention that Mi Yu-jen's artistic activity during this period centered on the prototype of *Cloudy Mountains*. What prompted Mi Yu-jen's self-consciousness must have been the experience of fleeing from the ravages of war. Mi Yu-jen is remembered not because he practiced the sleight-of-hand trick whereby as many as fifty-six subdivisional formations of spatial composition could be conjured from a single prototype, nor because he safely escaped the dangers of a country in a state of collapse, as did many other able survivors of his time, but because his was practically the first systematic attempt in the history of Chinese painting to consciously seek creativity in imitation. This is not simply the copying of works done in the past and the consequent role of creativity, but the self-chosen process of self-imitation and the creativity which springs from it. In this way, Mi Yu-jen transcended

the difficult circumstances confronting him. Starting from these circumstances, he began an investigation into the universal subject of creativity, an investigation which was to become of great importance in the history of Chinese painting. It is precisely for this reason that the art form which Mi Yu-jen inherited from his father, Mi Fu, and developed later came to be known as the Mi-family landscape style—one of the traditional pillars of greatness in the history of Chinese painting.

Translated by Peter Sturman

#### NOTES

- 1 See my article "Essay on 'Cloudy Mountains' by Mi Yu-jen in the Cleveland Museum of Art," *Tōyō Bunka Kenkyūjo Kiyō*, no. 86 (1981).
- 2 See my article "Imagination in the History of T'ang and Sung Landscape Painting—From *P'o-mo* [the splattered-ink style] to the 'Early Spring' and the 'Dream Journey to the Rivers Hsiao and Hsiang'—III," *Kokka*, no. 1036 (1980). See also Wen C. Fong et al., "Images of the Mind," in *Images of the Mind: Selections from the Edward L. Elliott Family and John B. Elliott Collections of Chinese Calligraphy and Painting at The Art Museum, Princeton University* (Princeton: Art Museum, Princeton University, 1984).
- 3 See my articles "'Early Spring' by Kuo Hsi," *Kokka*, no. 1035 (1980); and "Essay on 'Cloudy Mountains'" (see note 1).
- 4 Chao Hsi-ku, "Discussion of Ancient Paintings," in *Tung-t'ien ch'ing-lu chi* (Compilation of pure earnings in the realm of the immortals), MSTS (Shanghai: Shen-chou kuo-kuang, 1928), ser. 1, vol. 9, *chüan* 4, p. 25b.—Ed.
- 5 Ogawa, "Essay on 'Cloudy Mountains.'"
  - 6 It is my contention that many paintings, both of the Hua-pei and Chiang-nan schools, in Emperor Hui-tsung's collection at the end of the Northern Sung may well have been copies, a considerable number having been in circulation at the time. Elsewhere, I have already demonstrated that this is consistent with textual evidence in China. Accordingly, I believe there is partial, yet adequate evidence to support the probability that *Hsiao I Steals the "Lan-t'ing Preface"* is one of those copies. See my article "Toward the Publication of a Comprehensive Catalogue of Chinese Painting—In the Course of the History of Textual Records," *Shuppan Daijestsō*, no. 1032 (July 1982).
  - 7 Ogawa, "'Early Spring' by Kuo Hsi."
  - 8 See my article "The Second Essay on 'Cloudy Mountains' by Mi Yu-jen in the Cleveland Museum of Art and Its Genealogy," *Kokka*, nos. 1096, 1097 (1986).
  - 9 Li Lin-ts'an, "Researches into Compositional Structures of Chinese Painting," in his *Chung-kuo ming-hua yen-chiu* (Studies of famous Chinese paintings), pt. 1 (Taipei: Yi-wen Yin-shu-kuan, 1973).
  - 10 Mi Fu, *Hua-shih* (History of painting), MSTS, ser. 2, vol. 9, no. 1, p. 11b.—Ed.
  - 11 It is obvious that reversing the order of a pair of hanging scrolls would result in a second combination, i.e., 3-2 becomes 2-3. Since I am attaching importance to the order of the compositions, these reversed combinations will be counted separately. In contrast to the so-called disjoined/united landscape formed by the combination 3-2, the reverse combination 2-3 seems at first glance to be disconnected. Li T'ang's *Landscapes*, the pair of hanging scrolls in the Kōtō-in, are a classic example of a "disjoined/united landscape." Yet the absence of agreement about which is the right and which is the left member of the pair proves that the combination 2-3 can also form a pair worthy of appreciation.
  - 12 T'ang Hou, *Hua-chien* (Mirror of painting), MSTS, ser. 3, vol. 2.1, p. 17b.—Ed.
  - 13 I am indebted to Toda Teisuke for some of my ideas regarding the importance of copying in Chinese painting. See his essays "Continuity of Form in Chinese Painting. I: Concerning the Unique Qualities of Copying," *Tōyō Bunka Kenkyūjo Kiyō*, no. 57 (1972); and "The Significance of Copying in Chinese Painting—Centering around Sung and Yüan Works," *Museum*, no. 380 (1982), pp. 23-31.
  - 14 Poem translation by Peter Sturman. There are two questions concerning this inscription. First, who is "the gentleman" mentioned in the third line of Mi Yu-jen's regulated verse? Second, where is Hsin-ch'ang? The answer to the second question may be found in Mi's inscription on the handscroll *Mist and Rain over Lakes and Mountains* (*Hu-shan yen-yü t'u* 湖山烟雨圖). The painting is now lost, but the inscription is recorded in Chang Ch'ou's *Ch'ing-ho shu-hua fang* (Jen-ho Wu-shih ch'ih-pei ts'ao t'ang ed., 1762-63). Part of the inscription reads: "Written on the ninth day of the eleventh month of the first year of the Shao-hsing period [1131], having drifted to

Hsin-ch'ang Village, Li-yang County, Chien-k'ang Prefecture." Thus, the location corresponds to present-day Hsin-ch'ang Village, Li-yang County, Chen-chiang District, Kiangsu Province. Chang Ch'ou also records a handscroll by Mi Yu-jen entitled *Play of the Brush at Hsin-ch'ang* (*Hsin-ch'ang hsi-pi t'u* 新昌戲筆圖) and the inscription, which reads in part: "In the year *i-yu* 乙酉 [1129], I fled from the fires of war to Chin-t'an [Chin-t'an County, Chen-chiang District, Kiangsu] and then continued on to the inn of the recluse Chiang Chung-yu at Hsin-ch'ang. . . ." The inscription includes a seven-character regulated verse (*lü-shih* 律詩), which differs from the one written on *Cloudy Mountains* by only a few characters. The verse reads:

In deep places of labyrinthine  
     mountains, here are mists and  
     haze,  
 Clarified radiance mixed with shades of  
     rain are lovely at dusk's beginning.  
 To make known that the gentleman has  
     once been here,  
 I thus leave a play of my brush at the  
     house of my host.

The poem is dated "the seventh day of the anniversary of Chien-yen, mid-autumn [eighth month], in the year *keng-hsü* [1130]." We thus know that in 1129 Mi Yu-jen fled from the Chin armies by escaping to Chin-t'an, and that in 1130 he moved to Hsin-ch'ang Village, Li-yang County, roughly 30 kilometers south of Chin-t'an. Since *Mist and Rain over Lakes and Mountains* was painted at Hsin-ch'ang in 1131, and *Distant Peaks and Clearing Clouds* was painted at Lin-an

in 1134, Mi presumably spent up to four years in Hsin-ch'ang. It is possible that in 1130 Mi Yu-jen painted *Cloudy Mountains* for the well-known scholar Chiang Chung-yu, who lived in Hsin-ch'ang Village.

As for the identity of "the gentleman" mentioned in the inscription, he must have visited Chiang Chung-yu and some anonymous scholar of Hsin-ch'ang. According to the literal usage of the word, "the gentleman" could have referred to Mi Yu-jen's father. In that case, the inscription can be understood as a record of Mi Fu's visit to the two local scholars. It is also possible that Mi Yu-jen was referring to himself. If so, the haughty designation of himself as "the gentleman" was self-mockery. As we have no firm proof that Mi Fu visited Hsin-ch'ang, and as there are other examples of Mi Yu-jen using self-deprecating designations, I lean toward the latter interpretation. See note 15 below.

- 15 The last character in the inscription, *Hu*, is a shortened version of Mi Yu-jen's childhood name, *Hu-erh* 虎兒. Considering that Mi Yu-jen was sixty-one years old at the time, the words "I have playfully made . . . this small scroll," combined with the use of his childhood name, lend a somewhat humorous air to the inscription. From this we may assume that the painting was presented to someone on very intimate terms with Mi Yu-jen.

I am much indebted to Suzuki Kei's *Chūgoku Kaigashi* (*A history of Chinese painting*) (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1984), vol. 2, pt. 1, nn. 54, 57, for the information in this and the preceding note.

# Calligraphy and Painting: Some Sung and Post-Sung Parallels in North and South— A Reassessment of the Chiang-nan Tradition

MARILYN WONG-GLEYSSTEEN

During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, China was divided at the Huai River, with the Jurchen 女真 nomads occupying North China as the Chin dynasty and the Sung reestablishing political power at Hangchow as the Southern Sung. This unusual geopolitical situation was not resolved until the reunification of China by the Mongols starting in the 1270s.<sup>1</sup> The north-south division of the country created a cultural bifurcation that affected the arts. However, at no other time in Chinese history did a divided China look to the dynasty preceding it the way both the Chin and the Southern Sung did to the cultural achievements of the Northern Sung for artistic standards and sources of inspiration. In both painting and calligraphy we can trace the influence of the Northern Sung on the subsequent Chin and Southern Sung dynasties. Indeed, while current scholarship has tended to depict Chin painting in the north as differing considerably from its Southern Sung counterpart, a deeper investigation into Chin aesthetics, calligraphy, and painting reveals that the differences were not that great. In fact, distinct parallels on a structural level, of spatial composition in painting, of brushwork styles and sources in calligraphy, and of taste in poetics can be found. These parallels demonstrate the continuity possible in formal structures when they derive from a single source and how they may evolve in a parallel manner in time, despite geographical distances. Furthermore, this investigation suggests how obvious similarities in compositional structure in painting are signs of the deeper question of aesthetics.

In the visual arts, the prevailing aesthetic has been known as the Chiang-nan 江南, or southern, tradition, as associated with the calligrapher-painter-critic Mi Fu 米芾 (1052–1107), its foremost champion, and as distinct from the Hua-pei 華北 tradition of northern China. In calligraphy, both Chin and Southern Sung masters imitated Northern Sung styles, especially that of Mi Fu. The assertion of his art in the north under the Chin after his demise meant the preservation of the aesthetics of the Chiang-nan tradition in painting, calligraphy, and poetics, which were eventually to reemerge in the Yüan, when China was again unified, and even to endure into subsequent periods. If the Chin masters had not maintained their interest in Chiang-nan aesthetics and models, the artistic synthesis of the major traditions in the Yüan could not have occurred. In a larger context, it becomes clear how the post-Sung artistic traditions in both the north and the south played a vital role in continuing the Northern Sung trend toward individualism, derived from the achievements of three of the Four Great Masters, in particular Mi Fu, reinforcing the subjective, imaginative, and spontaneous in art.

In painting, the dramatic change in landscape style from the monumental Hua-pei tradition of the Northern Sung to the more intimate style of the Southern Sung may be illustrated by comparing Fan K'uan's 范寬 (ca. 960–ca. 1030) masterwork, *Traveling among Mountains and Streams* (*Ch'i-shan hsing-lü t'u* 谿山行旅圖), in the Palace Museum, Taipei,

datable to about 1000 (fig. 54), with a fine anonymous Southern Sung Academy work, datable to about 1200, *Hermitage by a Pine-covered Bluff* (*Sung-ho yin-hsi t'u* 松壑隱棲圖), in The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (fig. 56). The monumental hanging scroll with its strongly centralized composition and macrocosmic vision gives way to the asymmetry of the fan and its focused, microcosmic view, its suggestive mists accentuated by the small format.

How did this striking asymmetrical composition evolve? Did it occur as a result of a change in format or a change in the painter's vision? Was it only a Southern Sung Academy phenomenon, or were similar changes taking place in the north under the Chin? An examination of some paintings of Chin attribution will bring these and other issues to light. It is known that the Jurchen made purposeful efforts to preserve and carry forward elements of Northern Sung literati culture, especially calligraphy and painting, because acting as the inheritors and perpetuators of the Sung was a means of achieving political legitimacy.<sup>2</sup> Susan Bush noted, for example, that a number of paintings in the "Li Ch'eng/Kuo Hsi" tradition may be of Chin origin.<sup>3</sup> The basis for this association is visual as well as documentary. For example, Kuo Hsi's 郭熙 (ca. 1010–ca. 1090) Northern Sung work *Early Spring* (*Tsao-ch'un t'u* 早春圖), dated to 1072, in the Palace Museum, Taipei (see fig. 52), was in the collection of the sixth Chin emperor, Chang-tsung 章宗 (r. 1190–1208), a patron of the arts who was the northern counterpart of Emperor Kao-tsung 高宗 (r. 1127–62) in the south. Because of its presence in the north, *Early Spring* can be accepted as a source of influence for such paintings of Chin origin as Li Shan's 李山 (ca. 1125–1205) *Wind and Snow in the Fir-Pines* (*Feng hsüeh shan-sung t'u* 風雪杉松圖), in the Freer (fig. 55). Another work discussed by Bush, *Clearing after Snow in the Min Mountains* (*Min-shan ch'ing-hsüeh t'u* 岷山晴雪圖), in the Palace Museum, Taipei, with its "crab-claw branches" (*hsieh-chao chih* 蟹爪枝) and "devil-faced rocks" (*kuei-mien ts'un* 鬼面皴), is even more derivative of Kuo Hsi's style (fig. 57). However, *Min Mountains* abandons the strongly centralized composition which is characteristic of Northern Sung compositions.<sup>4</sup> Instead, the painter has pushed the mountain masses to one side and set them against a background highly suggestive of mist and snow. The asymmetry and interest in atmosphere in this work has its parallel in the "one-corner" (*i-chiao* 一角) compositions of Southern Sung Academy paintings. The same departure from the centralized composition is found in another work with a Chin attribution, the large, unsigned *Mountains and Rivers* (*Shan-shui t'u* 山水圖) in the Freer (fig. 58). Its somber, ostensibly Kuo Hsi-influenced features are now off center, creating a true "deep distance" (*shen-yüan* 深遠) landscape. The equivalent in Southern Sung Academy painting would be the hanging scroll *Listening to the Wind in the Pines* (*Ching-t'ing sung-feng t'u* 靜聽松風圖) by Ma Lin 馬麟 (active ca. 1216–56) in the Palace Museum, Taipei, with its large foreground figures placed off center, which demonstrates a desire to explore a diagonal mass-space juxtaposition with a moderate suggestion of recession. The Northern Sung "ancestor" to this figure painting would be Sung emperor Hui-tsung's 徽宗 (r. 1101–25) *Literary Gathering* (*Wen-hui t'u* 文會圖), in the Palace Museum, Taipei, which presents the exquisite detail of Sung court life in a fully centralized composition exemplifying characteristic Northern Sung rationality and symmetry. Among its smaller-format descendants, analogous to the Ma Lin, are such works as Ma Yüan's 馬遠 (active ca. 1190–1225) *Watching Deer* (*Sung-hsi kuan-lu t'u* 松溪觀鹿圖) in the Cleveland Museum (see fig. 185).

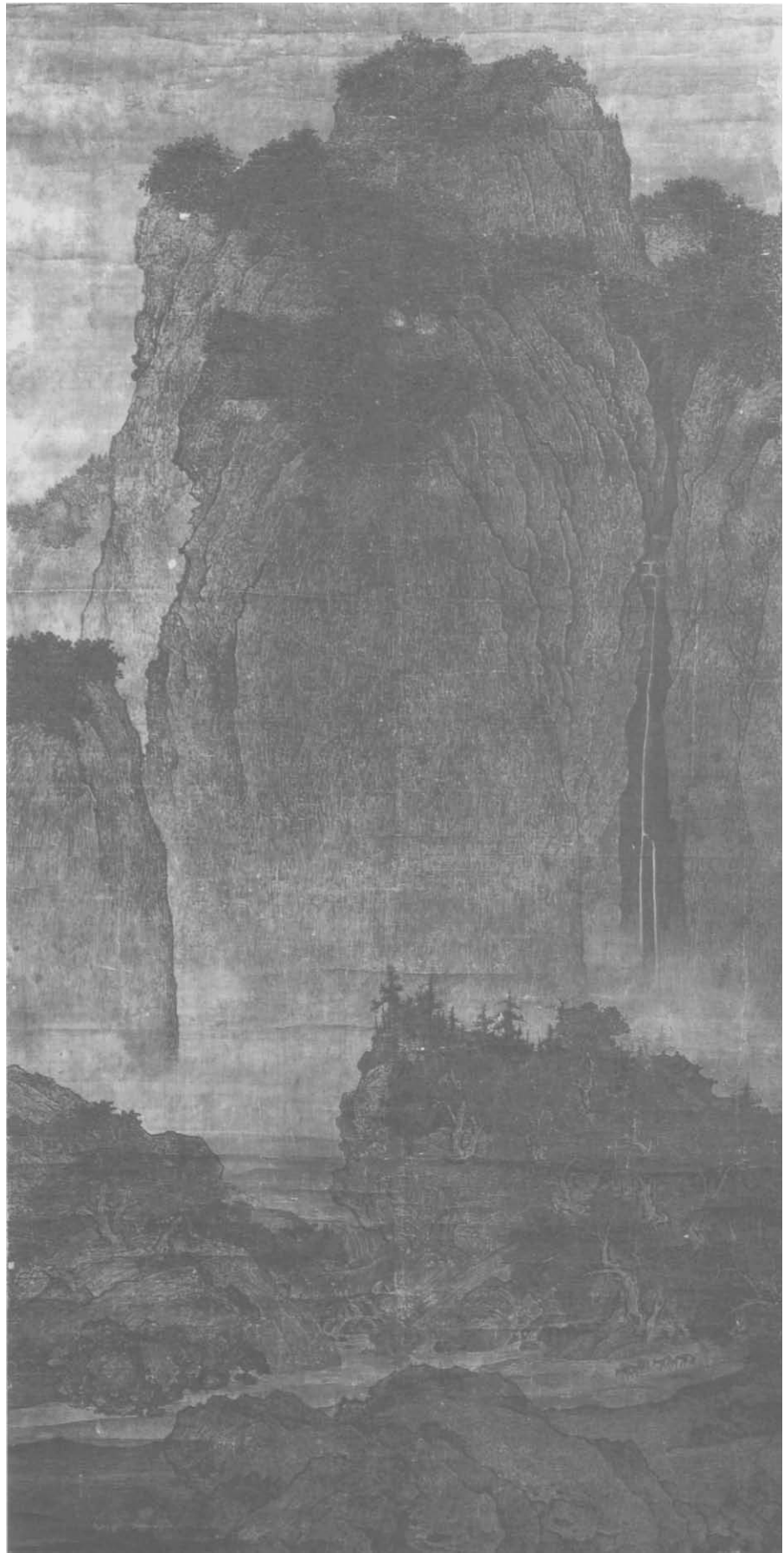


Figure 54.  
Fan K'uan (ca. 960–ca. 1030),  
*Traveling among  
Mountains and Streams*.  
Hanging scroll,  
ink and light color on  
silk, 206.3 × 103.3 cm.  
Palace Museum, Taipei



Figure 55. Li Shan (ca. 1125–1205), *Wind and Snow in the Fir-Pines*. Detail of handscroll, ink and color on silk, H. 29.7 cm. Courtesy of the Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.



Figure 56. Anonymous (Southern Song), *Hermitage by a Pine-covered Bluff*. Fan mounted as an album leaf, ink and light color on silk, 21.3 × 22.8 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Purchase, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Jeremiah Milbank and Gift of Mary Phelps Smith in memory of Howard Caswell Smith, by exchange, 1973

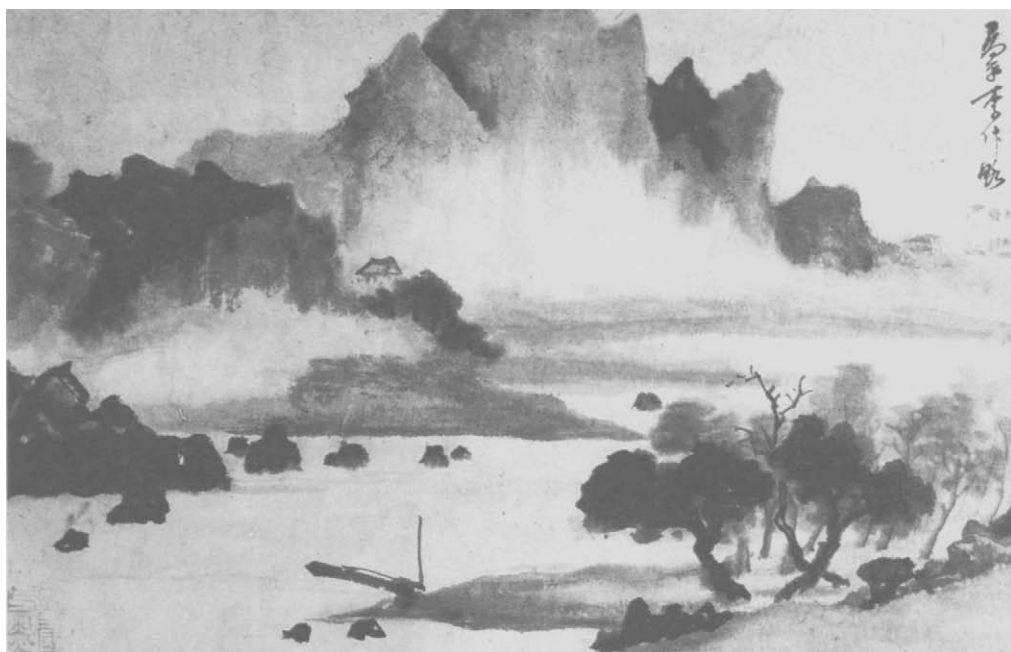


Figure 57. Anonymous (Chin dynasty), *Clearing after Snow in the Min Mountains*. Hanging scroll, ink and light color on silk, 115.1 × 100.7 cm. Palace Museum, Taipei



Figure 58. Anonymous (Chin dynasty), *Mountains and Rivers*. Hanging scroll, ink on silk, 163.6 × 107.2 cm. Courtesy of the Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

Figure 59. Li Chung-lüeh (active ca. 1160–90), *Cloudy Mountains*. Album leaf, ink on paper, 25 × 38.5 cm. John Yeon collection





Besides the asymmetrical composition, what is also notable in these Southern Sung and Chin works is the reliance on the same technique established by the painters of the monumental Hua-pei tradition of the Northern Sung to describe form: the linear brush outline (*lun-k'uo* 輪廓). Even in the mistiest of Southern Sung Academy paintings, one finds a highly vigorous outline. Occasionally, as in the album leaf *Watching Deer*, a tremulous line (*chan-pi* 戰筆) breaks the starkness, but in juxtaposition with the thick suggestive mists, the tremulous and linear outline conveys a paradoxical tension. This tension may be recognized as a distinctive feature of Southern Sung and Chin paintings, but it could not be sustained artistically without some aesthetic loss.<sup>5</sup>

The dominance of this linear and distinctly descriptive vision was to be challenged by a type of suggestive, spontaneous painting practiced by amateurs, which had begun to reach its maturity in the Southern Sung, but like its academic counterpart, had its roots in Northern Sung practitioners. This is the style of painting that Mi Fu first developed, and was then carried on by his son, Mi Yu-jen 米友仁 (1074–1151). An important work, *Distant Peaks and Clearing Clouds* (*Yüan-hsiu ch'ing-yün t'u* 遠岫晴雲圖), in Osaka (see fig. 46), dated to 1134, shows this extraordinarily innovative and expressive style combined with Yu-jen's calligraphy (to which we shall return). It raises painting to new expressive heights not only by literally destroying the boundary lines of the reigning Academy style, but also by relying on some of the same techniques of graded wash and ink used by those painters to suggest mist and recession. Last but not least, it also reflects the current interest in asymmetrical compositions. Its Chin-dynasty counterpart is a relatively little known but important work, *Cloudy Mountains* (*Yün-shan t'u* 雲山圖), with the signature of Li Chung-lüeh 李仲略 (active ca. 1160–90) in the John Yeon collection (fig. 59). Li was a scholar-painter contemporary with Mi Yu-jen and active in North China. His work illustrates the fact that Mi Fu's painterly influence was definitely being felt in the north at the same time.

The "Mi-family style," therefore, heralds several major features in painting that would present a challenge to the clearly articulated and linear, rational styles of the Northern Sung in both figure and landscape painting: (1) a desire to unify landscape masses in a move away from the distinctive centralized and "tripartite" (foreground, middle ground, and distant ground) compositions of the Northern Sung; (2) the increasing interest in the use of atmosphere (*yen-yün* 煙雲) to both unify and break forms apart and to occupy more of the depicted landscape; (3) the renewed awareness of the geography of South China and of the expressive potentials of "level-distance" (*p'ing-yüan* 平遠) compositions; and (4) the challenge to purely linear brushwork and colored forms to depict reality by introducing a greater use of graded ink wash (*p'o-mo* 潑墨) and other suggestive techniques of brushwork. All of these features presented rival means of expression to the dominant Hua-pei tradition.

Painting alternatives had appeared in the form of the amateur styles being practiced in the Northern Sung by such masters as Sung Ti 宋迪 (ca. 1015–ca. 1080), Chao Ling-jang 趙令穰 (active ca. 1070–1100), Su Shih 蘇軾 (1037–1101), and other members of his literary circle, as well as by Mi Fu, and were further transmitted in the Southern Sung by Mi Yu-jen and others. In calligraphy, Mi's style would command followers in both the north and the south for several generations. Before exploring the visual ramifications of this assertion, the literary basis should be clarified.

That painters in both North and South China were responding in interrelated ways

signifies a phenomenon that occurred not only in the visual arts but also in the more general cultural and aesthetic arena, and it is related to regionalism. In his study of Southern Sung poetry, Shuen-fu Lin makes a convincing case for the change in the lyric mode of expression at the end of the Northern Sung.<sup>6</sup> He attributes the change to, among other factors, what he has called the “retreat toward the object,” an attitude found particularly in “poems on objects,” a form of *tz'u* 詞 lyric in the *ying-wu* 詠物 mode. Another factor that Lin sees leading to this change of sensibilities is what he calls the new “aesthetic materialism” of Southern Sung literati. As a result, Lin, too, sees parallels between the change of vision in Southern Sung poetry and the tightly focused views in Southern Sung paintings. While such characteristics might be found in northern poetry, literary critics have identified modes of expression which would be more properly associated with the issue of regionalism.<sup>7</sup>

Chin and Yüan scholars were aware of a number of characteristics identifiable in ancient poetry which by their extensive criticism eventually became associated with northern geography and with certain northern poets. For example, two key phrases or poetic modes of expression were identified: *k'ang-k'ai* 慷慨, a magnanimous and expansive spirit, or stoutheartedness, and *hao-fang* 豪放, a sense of heroic abandon. The latter phrase was used as early as the late T'ang period by the poet-critic Ssu-k'ung T'u 司空圖 (837–908).<sup>8</sup> During the Chin period, the prominent poet and critic Yüan Hao-wen 元好問 (1190–1257) considered this heroic spirit as a prime desideratum of poetry.<sup>9</sup> He associated this quality with his homeland—China's heartland (Chung-chou 中州)—and with two other essentials of poetry, naturalness and spontaneity (*p'ing-tan* 平淡 and *t'ien-chen* 天真).<sup>10</sup> Indeed, naturalness and spontaneity can be identified as key elements in both poetry and calligraphy during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Mi Fu championed such qualities in both painting and calligraphy, and it was due in part to his powerful criticism and to the new vision which amateur-style painting techniques offered scholar-painters that this aesthetic took firm root. For in addition to some of the cultural factors noted above, the question of the visual mode itself is relevant. There is the art-historical formulation that “forms have a life of their own”—the notion that when one form or mode of expression has reached a horizon and exhausted itself, it will generate other forms to replace it. My hypothesis for the parallel changes seen in North and South China after the dominance of centrality, balance, and rationality during the Northern Sung is based on the fact that the changes derive from a common source, the Northern Sung itself. This internal development was stimulated by a number of favorable cultural factors in the direction of change.

### *The Crisis of Form in the Northern Sung*

A major controversy at the end of the Northern Sung centered on “form-likeness” (*hsing-szu* 形似) and the degree to which fidelity to the external qualities of an object should be the criterion of excellence in painting. Su Shih addresses the complex ramifications of this issue in both philosophic and artistic terms in his famous poem “On Secretary Wang's Painting of Cut Flowers”:

To discuss painting in terms of form-likeness,  
Is to show the understanding of a child;

論畫以形似  
見與兒童鄰

To write poetry to compose a certain poem,  
Is definitely not to know poetry.  
In both poetry and painting there is one rule:  
Natural gifts (*t'ien-kung*) and the pure and fresh.<sup>11</sup>

賦詩必此詩  
定非知詩人  
詩畫本一律  
天工與清新

Su implies, not without some derision, that those who claim to understand poetry and painting on the superficial basis of form-likeness fail to show any real understanding of essential criteria. He was not alone in deploring what were to become Hui-tsung's aesthetics.

In his text on painting, *Hua-chi* 畫繼 (*A Continuation of Painting History*), the twelfth-century critic Teng Ch'un 鄧椿 devotes his chapter "Discussing the Recent Past" ("Lun-chin" 論近) to describing the situation in the Painting Academy of Emperor Hui-tsung:

Painters were sought from the four corners of the empire, and many were considered unsuitable and asked to leave. This was because it was the trend to esteem only *form-likeness* (*hsing-ssu*) at the time. If one displayed individuality and let himself go with a freedom of expression, it was considered "incompatible with the rules and regulations," or "showing insufficient instruction."<sup>12</sup>

Thus by 1167, when Teng Ch'un completed his essay, the standard of form-likeness had become thoroughly institutionalized and was fundamentally affecting the painting produced at the Sung court. In the remainder of his text, in which he comments further on the standards and decorum expected of painters at court, Teng acknowledges the severe limitations of adherence to form-likeness. Indeed, he felt the imposition of this artistic criterion led to what he felt were "shallow, workmanlike" products.

If critics of the arts were sensitive to this issue, artists active during the last decades of the Northern Sung—and even earlier, in the Five Dynasties period—were even more keenly aware of the constraints imposed by the criterion of objective reality, or fidelity to the external form. Artists began to develop alternate modes of expression. One of these modes emphasized the artist's imagination, or "inner reality." There is no clear-cut Chinese term for this "other reality," but it became a significant alternative to the then-dominant mode emphasizing form-likeness. Without rejecting external fidelity, the new form of expression attempted to reach beyond mere form; it sought to imbue ordinary forms with an additional dimension, whether an atmosphere or a mood, which could communicate more of the painter's conception than mere outward form.

One of the key texts on this subject is Shen Kua's 沈括 (1029–93) famous observation on the painting of Tung Yüan 董源 and Chü-kan 巨然, the two masters from South China active during the Five Dynasties period:

Generally speaking, their paintings are meant to be seen from a distance, because *the brushwork is rather cursory* (*ch'i yung-pi shen ts'ao-ts'ao* 其用筆甚草草). When seen up close, there seem to be no recognizable objects; but when seen from a distance, the scenes and objects emerge clearly, *arousing deep feelings and distant thoughts, as though one were gazing upon a different world* (*yu-ch'ing yüan-ssu, ju tu i-ching* 幽情遠思, 如觀異境). Tung Yüan's *Sunset* (*Lo-chao t'u* 落照圖), when seen up close, does not seem to be successful, but

from a distance it shows a village lying quietly in the far distance at evening, and over the far peaks there are colors reflected off the setting sun. This is the mysterious aspect of their art.<sup>13</sup>

Shen Kua found in Tung Yüan's art a new and startling expressiveness, an unusual technique—impressionistic brushwork to achieve those effects—and an ability to arouse secondary associations or feelings in the viewer.

When we consider the several historical groupings of acknowledged masters of the Five Dynasties and Northern Sung periods, Ching Hao 荆浩 (active ca. 870–930), Kuan T'ung 關仝 (active ca. 907–23), Li Ch'eng 李成 (919–67), and Fan K'uan, we notice, as Wai-kam Ho has pointed out, that it was not until the twelfth century that Tung Yüan replaces Kuan T'ung as one of the “three legs of the tripod” (*san-chia ting-chih* 三家鼎峙).<sup>14</sup> But as Ho demonstrates, the key figure in this shift of perception is actually Li Ch'eng. Various forms of textual evidence credit Li with a new approach to landscape through his use of mist, snow, and the suggestion of atmosphere in association with his “level-distance” compositions (*p'ing-yuan*, *feng-yü* 風雨, *hui-ming* 晦明, *hsüeh-wu chih chuang* 雪霧之狀).<sup>15</sup> Li was acclaimed as the supreme master of landscape painting in Hui-tsung's imperial catalogue, *Hsüan-ho hua-p'u* 宣和畫譜, and his pivotal role and extraordinary influence were summed up in Kuo Jo-hsü's 郭若虛 (active ca. 1075) phrase, “Master to a Hundred Ages” (*pai-chia chih shih* 百家之師). What is significant about Li Ch'eng is that he opened up to subsequent generations the possibilities inherent in the use of changing mist, light, and snow in association with the “level-distance” landscape. He also sensitized painters and critics to other expressive modes.

In this context, one can mention two more painters from the late Northern Sung—other than Kuo Hsi—who further developed one or more aspects of Li Ch'eng's innovations, Chao Ling-jang and Sung Ti. Chao's *River Village in Clear Summer* (*Chiang-hsiang ch'ing-hsia t'u* 江鄉清夏圖) in Boston, a remarkable work dated to 1100, reflects a loss of interest in the monumental approaches of the Hua-pei tradition, picks up the aesthetic potential of Li Ch'eng's “level-distance” composition, and anticipates a quiet revolution on a number of levels, technical as well as aesthetic. Its gentle lyricism, suggestive atmosphere, and low-lying, diagonal composition, should link it as well to the Chiang-nan tradition and to that of the Mi-family style, as Robert Maeda has indicated.<sup>16</sup> As Shimada Shujirō has shown, the poet-painter Sung Ti helped to consolidate the relationship between poetry and painting in his “invention” of the *Eight Views of the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers* (*Hsiao-Hsiang pa-ching t'u* 瀟湘八景圖). While no paintings are extant, he left his influence on the circle of his literary friends, Shen Kua, Su Shih, and Wen T'ung 文同 (1019–79). Both Shimada's study on Sung Ti and Alfreda Murck's essay on the late Southern Sung painter Wang Hung 王洪 (active ca. 1131–61) indicate that Li Ch'eng's influence on Sung Ti was instrumental in the latter's integration of the idea of poetry and poetic form in landscape.<sup>17</sup>

Shen Kua's description of Sung Ti, the earliest reference to the complete cycle of eight poems, offers insight into the special quality that made Sung Ti's art so appealing to Northern Sung scholars. Shen first praises Sung's “level-distance landscapes” and his depictions of the “eight scenes,” naming the eight titles. These titles evoke some quality not represented by a fixed or tangible form: distance, wind, snow, moonlight, night rain, evening bell, and setting sun. Shen then goes on to quote the advice which Sung Ti

purportedly gave to an aspiring but dull-minded painter: spread some silk over an old crumbling wall and use its uneven surface to create the hills and valleys of a landscape, then stare day and night at this length of silk:

The high and flat, the crumpled and folded will all become images of landscape. The forms will reside in the mind and allow the eye to contemplate [their potential as landscape]: the high parts will serve as mountains, the low parts as water . . . the prominent places will become foreground, the shadowy places far distance. With the spirit leading, ideas are created, and the painter will suddenly see vividly before his eyes fleeting images of human figures, birds, grasses, and trees. At that point he can follow his ideas and command the brush, silently allowing the spirit to communicate; naturally, the scene will accord with heaven, and will not seem man-made. This is indeed the “living brush.”<sup>18</sup>

This bit of extraordinary counsel, which has been compared to both Kuo Hsi and Leonardo da Vinci, has to do with the interest that Sung Ti (and by extension, Shen Kua) had in developing methods to cultivate the imagination, and not in capturing the absolute correctness of an external reality. In making these observations, Sung Ti and Shen Kua are reiterating Su Shih’s observations on the creative process when he watched Wen T’ung paint bamboo. Su Shih, for his part, confirms Shen Kua’s keen observations on Sung Ti’s creative process in one of three poems on Sung Ti’s painting *Evening Scenes on the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers* (*Hsiao Hsiang wan-ching t’u* 瀟湘晚景圖):

With a look, the cloudy mountains emerge,	照眼雲山出
In floating space, the wilderness water is long.	浮空野水長
Formerly, my mind would wander and question myself,	舊游心自省
Trustingly, my hand and brush are forgotten. <sup>19</sup>	信手筆都忘

At the end of her essay on Wang Hung and his version of *Eight Views of the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers* in the Art Museum, Princeton University, Alfreda Murck poses the question: Why did the theme fail to inspire a longer tradition among Academy and independent scholar-painters? After all, such an inherently “poetic” and artistically challenging theme should have provided the ideal vehicle for a lengthy tradition. An answer might be found by studying the formal style of the Wang Hung paintings and comparing them, for example, with a later Southern Sung representation of the same scenes by Mu-ch’i 牧谿 (active mid-thirteenth century) in the Nezu Institute of Fine Arts, Tokyo, possibly the last well known example of the cycle by a Chinese painter (see fig. 50). One obvious difference in the two styles lies in the technique: Wang’s technique is descended from the Hua-pei, or northern monumental, tradition, with its emphasis on the outline, or *lun-k’uo*; Mu-ch’i’s is descended from the Chiang-nan and the Mi-family traditions, characterized by the absence of outlines and the use of mist, atmosphere, and graded ink (*p’o-mo*). Not quite a century separates these two masters, but what also separates them is the very source of Mu-ch’i’s style, the Mi-family tradition and all the aesthetic ramifications of Mi Fu’s interests, whether in the Tung Yüan/Chü-jan school of painting, or in the calligraphy of the Two Wangs, that is, Wang Hsi-chih 王羲之 (303?–361?) and his son Wang Hsien-chih 王獻之 (344–88).

*The Mi-Family  
and the Chiang-nan Traditions*

The merging of these two southern traditions into a coherent aesthetic philosophy incorporating the significant concepts of “the natural” (*t'ien-jan* 天然) and of “the plain and spontaneous” (*p'ing-tan t'ien-chen*) is surely one of the outstanding cultural phenomena of the Sung period.

Thus, the demise of the “Eight Views” theme after the Sung may be explained in part by the relation between the techniques transmitted through the poetic tradition itself and the institutionalization and apparent popularization of this tradition in the Painting Academy under the emperors Hui-tsung and Kao-tsung. In the Wang Hung version, there is a contradiction between the themes and the painting technique: the themes suggest shifting, ephemeral, mist-filled expanses, but the technique transmitted through the Li Ch'eng/Fan K'uan tradition relies almost exclusively on a strong and vigorous outline. On the other hand, the version by an independent monk-painter like Mu-ch'i, unpopular at court, but very much appreciated in Ch'an and Zen circles in China and Japan, presents a more harmonious relationship between themes and technique, the latter embodying the ambiguity and insubstantiality of the poetry by sensitive graded-ink washes. Thus we can understand how the cycle took on a second life in Japan.

An explanation based on technique may seem too simple. Nevertheless, it becomes apparent that the cycle of poems, when allied to the linear technique of the Hua-pei school, presented a paradox which could not be resolved until two developments had occurred: first, the use of mist (*yen-yün*), with all of its expressive potential in a composition, and second, the artistic tradition of the Mi family (*Mi-chia* 米家), with its new impressionistic technique and extension of the expressive Tung/Chü mode. The first development, that of mist and clouds, had begun in the Hua-pei school during the late Five Dynasties and became increasingly important in painters' conceptions of landscape, along with another expressive mode of major significance, the concept of dynamic, arterial energy coursing through the mountain chain (*ch'i-shih* 氣勢, *lung-mo* 龍脈).<sup>20</sup> While the presentation of arterial or dynamic energy in a landscape might depend on strong linear outlines, artists were conscious that the use of mist and clouds enhanced the atmosphere and mysterious reality of a mountain. Even before the end of the Northern Sung, this consciousness and its potentials were embodied in protean transformation in the work of Kuo Hsi, whether his painting of 1072, *Early Spring*, or his essay on landscape painting, *Lin-ch'üan kao-chih* 林泉高致.

These two developments—that of mist and space with their potential for ambiguity and that of the Mi-family style—clashed with the “crisis” of *hsing-ssu*. Mi Fu and his son, Yu-jen, were to “become” a tradition, to carry the standard for the Chiang-nan region, and to help resolve this crisis by creating a fresh new mode of expression in landscape, one which would present a worthy challenge and alternative to the reigning Hua-pei school. These changes in painting in North and South China, although previously overlooked, are quite logical if viewed against their common heritage in the Northern Sung. What is more, they were paralleled by changes in calligraphy, to which we now turn.

### *Calligraphy in North and South China after the Northern Sung*

The Northern Sung masters had left a two-fold legacy: one was formal, the other, spiritual. As Shen Fu points out in his study of Huang T'ing-chien 黃庭堅 (1045–1105), the formal legacy entailed close imitation of the styles of Su, Huang, or Mi, generally to the exclusion of other influences, with followers developing the particular calligraphic forms associated with those masters. The spiritual legacy left a climate of free-spirited individualism which encouraged the development of more independent styles and brushwork methods.<sup>21</sup>

In a recent study of Yen Chen-ch'ing 顏真卿 (709–85) and his influence, Fu states that there was a “decline of calligraphy both in the north and south, caused by the extreme freedom of individualism initiated by Su, Huang and Mi, [which] prompted a reactionist movement during the early Yüan dynasty.”<sup>22</sup> This is the traditional opinion of the state of calligraphy during the Chin and Southern Sung periods. While recent scholarship, particularly by the Japanese, has tried to redress this bias, Western scholarship still ignores the contributions of Chin and Southern Sung calligraphers. Better still to look at the question of Northern Sung influence from a different point of view, one which does not regard artistic activity in terms of ascendance and decline from a particular qualitative standard. To do this, we will certainly compare the “followers” with the “masters,” but we will also try to comprehend what these next few generations were trying to achieve, and why it was so compelling for them to make the choices they did. I shall focus on the Mi-family tradition, which was a dominant influence in both the north and the south.

#### *The Mi-Family Tradition*

In his essay “A Brief History of the Transmission of the Art of Calligraphy” (“Shu-hsüeh ch'uan-shou p'u” 書學傳授譜), the early Ming scholar Hsieh Chin 解縉 (1369–1415)<sup>23</sup> traced the development of Mi Fu's style in both North and South China. Hsieh traced Mi's lineage in the south through his son, Mi Yu-jen, then Chang Chi-chih 張即之 (1186–1266), down to Chao Meng-fu 趙孟頫 (1254–1322) in the Yüan. Hsieh traced Mi's lineage in the north through the Chin calligraphers Wang T'ing-yün 王庭筠 (1151–1202), Wang's adopted son Wang Wan-ch'ing 王萬慶 (active 1200–after 1262), and a certain Chang T'ien-hsi 張天錫 (active ca. 1190–1208), down to Hsien-yü Shu 鮮于樞 (1257?–1302) in the Yüan.<sup>24</sup> Though he offers a mere skeleton with no clear reasons for naming these particular calligraphers as Mi's heirs, it is significant that he did perceive the perpetuation of the tradition in both north and south. Using Hsieh's “lineage” as a framework, we shall assess the scope of Mi's influence, first in the Southern Sung, then under the Chin.

Mi Fu's style was arrived at after a long period of absorption and transformation of all the T'ang masters and, ultimately, the art of the Tsin period. His art can be appreciated in his informal correspondence, such as three letters in the John B. Elliott Collection at Princeton University (fig. 60), or as a tour de force of dramatic poetic and calligraphic expression in his handscroll *Sailing on the Wu River* (*Wu-chiang chou-chung shih* 吳江舟中詩) in the Metropolitan Museum (see frontispiece, figs. 22, 23). Not trusting to history's mischance, Mi left this account of his calligraphic training:

In the beginning I studied Yen Chen-ch'ing; I was then seven or eight *sui* [six or seven years old]. I practiced characters in a large format, and I was not able to do letter-size writings. Then I was attracted to the tight composition of Liu Kung-ch'üan 柳公權 [778–865], so I started to study his *Diamond Sutra* [*Chin-kang ching*]. After a while I realized that Liu had derived his style from Ou-yang Hsün 歐陽詢 [557–641], so I studied Ou-yang, but before long my writing looked like printed blocks or the sliding beads on an abacus. I then became enamored of the Ch'u Sui-liang 褚遂良 [596–658] style, which I studied the longest. I also admired the supple turns and folds of Tuan Chi 段季 [fl. ca. 806–20] and the multidimensional quality of his work, but, after a while, I discovered that Tuan had derived himself solely from [Wang Hsi-chih's] *Preface to the Orchid Pavilion Gathering*. So I went through all the anthologies of rubbings [of the Two Wangs' calligraphy]. Gradually I moved back to the [Western] Tsin and Wei styles, cultivating more and more the plain and light [*p'ing-tan*] taste, eventually passing over the method of Chung Yu 鍾繇 [A.D. 151–230] to study the *Stele of Liu K'uan* [*Liu K'uan pei* 劉寬碑] by Shih-i-kuan 師宜官 [ca. A.D. 168–88]. For seal script I loved *A Chant Cursing the Ch'u People* [*Tsu-Ch'u wen* 咀楚文; ca. 320 B.C.] and *The Stone Drum Inscription* [*Shih-ku wen* 石鼓文; ca. 420 B.C.]. I also gained insights into the writings on bamboo slips, done with a bamboo stylus dipped in lacquer, as well as the wonders of the archaic inscriptions on bronze vessels. . . .<sup>25</sup>

This passage gives us insight not only into Mi Fu's methods, but also into the precise models he studied. His method was characterized by an intensity and thoroughness rare in the history of calligraphy. He not only names the sources he explored in his search for a stylistic identity, but he also gives us the reasons for switching from one model to another. He exhibits a self-knowledge which is propelled by a single-mindedness of almost demonic proportions. It is a dynamic search; indeed, one which we might call a paradigm of transformation. Few artists in the history of art, whether painters or calligraphers, have subjected their creative growth to such rigorous self-examination.

If we take Mi Fu's artistic growth as a paradigm, or model of models, and the search for an artistic identity and personal style as an ideal, then we have a standard difficult to equal. Even the other great masters of the Sung could not measure up to his systematic thoroughness and knowledge of art history. With the individuality of the Sung firmly established by such creative giants, each of whom set a standard unto himself, any master would have difficulty measuring up. If we understand this point of view, then we can begin to understand the psychological challenge to subsequent calligraphers. The next generation resolved this problem in the time-honored manner: by emulation, both spiritual and formal. Through emulation and creative imitation (*fang* 倣), they hoped to achieve a measure of "spiritual communion" (*shen-hui* 神會) or "communion of form" (*hsing-hui* 形會) with the great masters.

Let us therefore proceed to the next generation. Mi Yu-jen's calligraphy gives evidence that he was the closest imitator of his father's style, inheriting the family legacy of talent, and receiving guidance with the original model present. Few examples of his calligraphic art are extant. In colophons on a T'ang copy of the *Shuo-wen Chieh-tzu* 說文解字 (*A Philological Dictionary of Chinese*) and on a manuscript of nine cursive-script writings by



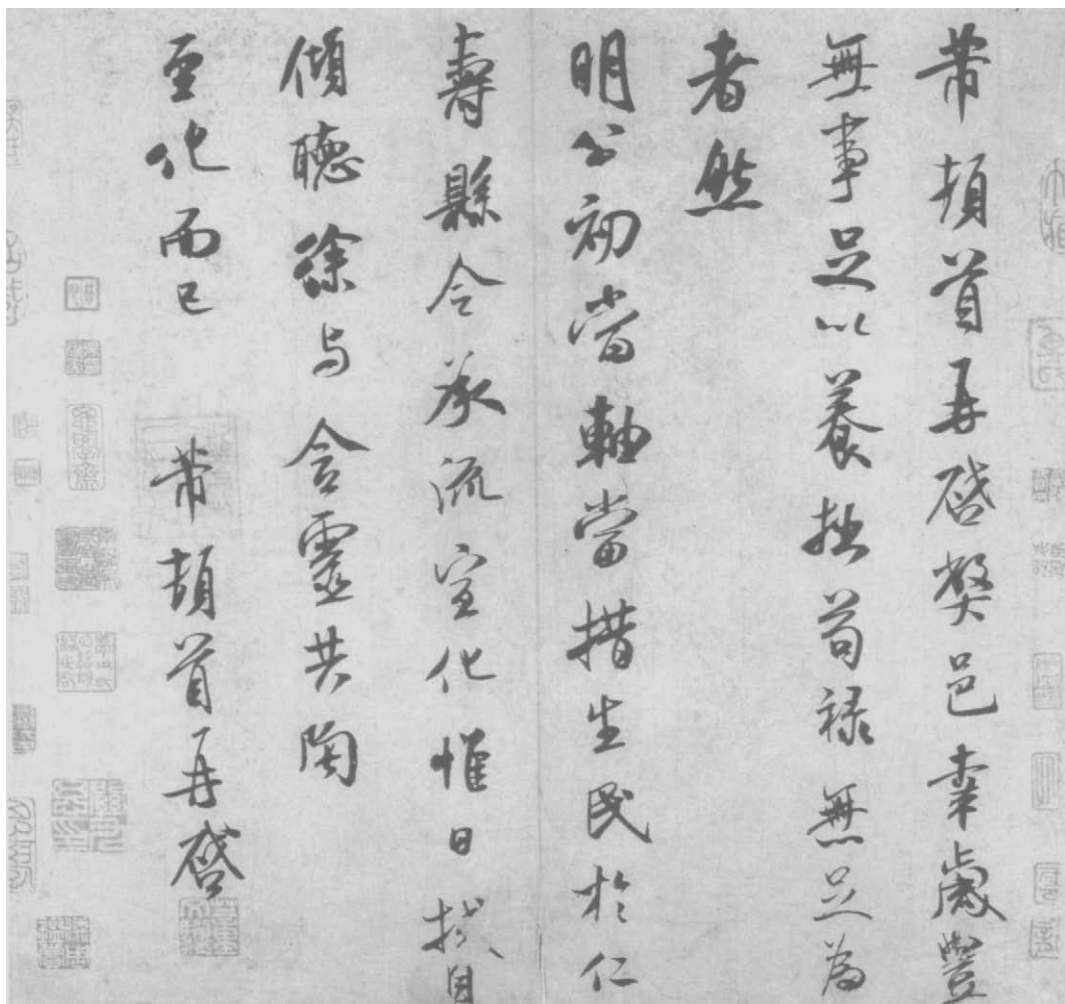


Figure 60. Mi Fu (1052–1107), “Abundant Harvest,” leaf A from *Three Letters*, ca. 1093–94. Album leaf, ink on paper, 31.7 × 33 cm. The Art Museum, Princeton University; lent by John B. Elliott

his father,<sup>26</sup> as well as a third example published by Nakata Yūjirō,<sup>27</sup> we see the rich ink-and-brushwork diversity which his father championed and Mi Yu-jen adopted. We recognize the elongated proportions, the swaying rhythms of characters tilting from side to side as they proceed down the column, and the impulsive variation of thick and thin brushwork. These characteristics derive, of course, from his father’s intense study of the Two Wangs and their art. As such, the style perpetuated by Mi Yu-jen represents in a sense the final “image” of his father’s style, but one that is also more limited in expressive range.

Comparing works by father and son, we see that the son tends to a tighter vertical composition of the characters and a heavier brush, with denser ink and less use of the brush tip. While his characters may appear remarkably similar in form to those of Mi Fu, Mi Yu-jen does not have the same concepts of “each character having eight sides” 字之八面 or of “the single brush capable of expressing four faces” 善書者，只得一筆，我獨有四面.<sup>28</sup> The elder Mi’s concept of the brush functioning almost like a gyroscope en-

gendered forms with a special inner dynamism and endlessly subtle transformations. By contrast, Mi Yu-jen's brushstrokes are flatter, more direct in their brush movement, and remarkably consistent. The younger Mi also does not have the overall range of his father: his style reveals none of his father's intense investigation into other scripts, ancient monuments, or masters, and varies little in function, whether writing a colophon, a letter, or lines for a stele.<sup>29</sup> By comparison, Mi Fu's calligraphy has a mercurial, almost protean quality, changing subtly from work to work within the parameters of a style recognizably his. Even within works that are similar in format, such as the several groups of letters in running-cursive script now in Princeton, Osaka, and Beijing, Mi Fu displays a range which reflects the sensitivity of his brush to moods, feelings, and emotions.<sup>30</sup> The son's more uniform individual style and limited range are characteristics typical of second-generation practitioners of a major master's style, and they appear in other post-Sung masters. Nonetheless, among Mi Fu's followers, there is no doubt that, despite the differences, Yu-jen was his father's most outstanding pupil. He was in a strong position to continue his father's legacy in every respect, both spiritually and formally.

Yu-jen was born when his father turned twenty-one, and evidently benefitted from strong paternal guidance for the next three decades of Mi Fu's own development. The son shared and immersed himself in all of his father's interests and developed his talent to the fullest. After all, when Sung emperor Hui-tsung appointed Mi Fu professor at the Institutes of Calligraphy and Painting in 1104, Mi proudly presented a painting by his son, *Clear Dawn in the Ch'u Mountains* (*Ch'u-shan ch'ing-hsiao t'u* 楚山清曉圖).<sup>31</sup>

What interests us about Mi Fu and Mi Yu-jen is not only the vital issue of the transmission of the Mi style and its accompanying aesthetic, but also the notion of one generation deriving its style from a previous one. If close emulation was the stated goal of a master, then how do we evaluate the younger master's artistic stature? What do we do with the concept of originality? And what becomes of the time-honored concept of reading a man's character in his art, the "heart print" or "image of the mind" (*hsin-yin* 心印)? Art historians have addressed these questions when dealing with later painting, such as that created by Tung Ch'i-ch'ang 董其昌 (1555-1636) and his followers, the Six Masters of the Ch'ing. Yet these questions are just as relevant for the Sung and post-Sung period. How we write the history of this period depends on our understanding and evaluation of these very masters and issues. In the present framework, these problems force us to look closer at this particular historical circumstance of mutual derivation in both the north and the south and the forces behind them.

Before proceeding to other masters of the Southern Sung, another aspect of Mi Yu-jen's art, his painting, ought to be considered in relation to his calligraphy and to the overall influence of his father's art. Two important paintings which bear Mi Yu-jen's inscriptions are the handscroll in a "blue-and-green" style dated to 1130 in Cleveland (see fig. 45) and his *Distant Peaks and Clearing Clouds* in Osaka, dated to 1134 (see fig. 46). His excellent calligraphy in these works, "playfully executed" (*pi-hsi* 筆戲, *hsi-tso* 戲作), is valuable not only for its intrinsic quality, but also because it verifies the authenticity of these two paintings. The paintings strengthen the argument that Mi Yu-jen, like Tung Yüan, painted in a number of modes or genres.<sup>32</sup> Unlike his calligraphy, he had no "fixed" style of painting, contrary to the perception of scholars and late Ming and early Ch'ing interpreters of the "Mi style." Rather, like Tung Yüan and other painters, Yu-jen drew from a repertory of established modes or genres.<sup>33</sup>

Note, too, that Mi Yu-jen, like Li T'ang 李唐 (ca. 1070–ca. 1150), was born and received his artistic training as a mature artist in the Northern Sung, a period of great artistic ferment and potential, even before the catastrophic changes of dynasty and geography.<sup>34</sup> No examples of Mi Yu-jen's paintings before the move south are extant. However, judging from his calligraphy, we would venture to say that, while he was a versatile painter, there were few radical developments in his later years, even though he was, indeed, a long-lived artist, reaching the age of seventy-nine (in contrast to his father's death at fifty-five). Since Mi Yu-jen was actually ten years older than Hui-tsung, but outlived the emperor by two decades, he is a critical transitional figure in the transmission of Northern Sung artistic values to the next generation of painters active in the south. Mi Yu-jen's art, and in particular his paintings, came to represent that of the Mi-family style, in some respects exceeding his father's influence.

Except for Mi Yu-jen, virtually all of the calligraphers of the "southern branch" whom we can identify as followers of Mi Fu were born or spent their mature years in the south during the Southern Sung: Wu Yüeh 吳說 (active ca. 1115–56), Fan Ch'eng-ta 范成大 (1126–93), Lu Yu 陸游 (1125–1210), Wu Chü 吳琚 (active ca. 1150–1200), Chao Meng-chien 趙孟堅 (1199–1267), and Chang Chi-chih. In the "northern branch," Mi's followers include Wang T'ing-yün and Wang Wan-ch'ing (previously mentioned by Hsieh Chin), Wu Chi 吳澈 (active ca. 1100–1142), Chao Ping-wen 趙秉文 (1159–1232), Jen Hsün 任詢 (active 1150–88), Chang T'ien-hsi, Li Chung-lüeh, Wan-yen Shou 完顏璫 (1171–1232), Shih I-sheng 施宜生 (active ca. 1120–60), Kao K'an 高衍 (active ca. 1130–67), and Liu Yi 劉沂 (active 1130–60). Works extant by Mi's followers in the Chin period are relatively rare. Let us survey the work of these masters to determine the scope of this following, and then pose a few questions regarding the nature of their relationships with their model.

### *The Mi Tradition in the Southern Sung*

Wu Yüeh, a distant relative of Wang An-shih 王安石 (1021–86), was active from the late years of Hui-tsung's reign into Kao-tsung's, serving his last post as grand custodian in Shang-jao, Kiangsi. Three major works reveal his versatility as a calligrapher. He mastered an elegant personal running hand with both Mi and Ts'ai Hsiang 蔡襄 (1012–67) elements, and an outstanding "draft-cursive" (*chang-ts'ao* 章草) as well (fig. 61). He is best known, however, for an eccentric form of free-cursive known as the "gossamer brush line" (*yu-ssu shu* 遊絲書; fig. 62). The mode was eccentric and apparently spawned no followers. Because it was not his signature handwriting, it does not properly belong with the individualistic "single-style" tradition of the monk-calligraphers. The gossamer line descends more naturally from the T'ang tradition of ornamental scripts, such as the "bird" or "flying-white writing" (*niao-shu wen* 鳥書文, *fei-pai shu* 飛白書) and other decorative forms.<sup>35</sup> Wu Yüeh was also one of the early Southern Sung calligraphers to append a colophon to the famous version of the *Orchid Pavilion Preface* (*Lan-t'ing hsü* 蘭亭序) owned by the monk Tu-ku 獨孤 that exerted a strong influence on such early Yüan calligraphers as Chao Meng-fu.<sup>36</sup>

Fan Ch'eng-ta, one of the four major poets of the Southern Sung, was related to the illustrious Sung Great Master Ts'ai Hsiang. He served in a number of high posts, including ambassador to the Chin court in 1170—a fact of no small interest, as he must

have had opportunities for artistic exchange with prominent calligrapher-statesmen in the north. Fan's colophon to the painting *Fishing Village at Mount Hsi-sai* (*Hsi-sai yü-she t'u* 西塞漁社圖) at the Metropolitan Museum is a rare work (fig. 64). In both content and style, the painting conveys something of the poetic Chiang-nan tone of Tung Yüan or Chao Ling-jang with its "level-distance" composition and lightly colored "blue-and-green" manner. The open stretch of water, thickly strewn with lotus pads and a lone boat with a fishing village on the far bank, is perfectly suited to the handscroll format and evokes an extraordinary range of subtle feelings.

Fan's indebtedness to Mi Fu shows itself primarily in the way he forms his characters. His brushwork method, as has been pointed out, shows some Mi characteristics in its variation of pace and pressure, but it is predominantly a "flat-brush" style, splaying openly in the diagonals, hooks, and verticals. Unlike Wu Yüeh, Fan cared little about perfection of individual stroke form. His work is marked by a consistent rhythm of similar-sized characters in a sweep of spacious columnar forms, often punctuated with textured "flying white" characters. What could be criticized as looseness in brushwork and lack of variety in composition by comparison with Mi Fu can be appreciated on another level as generosity of character and consistency of temperament. In this, Fan's counterpart in the north was Chao Ping-wen.<sup>37</sup>

Lu Yu, another of the major poets of the Southern Sung, left few examples of calligraphy, but what he did leave amply earns him the title he gave himself, the Old Man Who Does as He Pleases (*Fang-weng* 放翁).<sup>38</sup> Lu Yu's long handscroll in the Liaoning Provincial Museum, *My Poems* (*Tzu-shu shih* 自書詩; fig. 63), was executed when he was eighty. An exuberant celebration, it starts with a bold opening character and proceeds with an ever-changing variety of brushwork, small and fine alternating with plump and full, punctuated by sudden bursts of energy (see, for example, 糜、遠). Wet ink follows dry in natural succession, and large and small characters succeed each other in complexity of stroke and an internal pulse. All is in keeping with Mi's numerous injunctions about calligraphic method and is completely in the spirit of Mi's famous *Sailing on the Wu River*. Certainly Mi Fu would have been proud of this successor! As Yang Renkai points out in his publication of the scroll, Lu Yu disclaimed any deep study of Yen Chen-ch'ing and Liu Kung-ch'üan, and preferred to say he learned cursive script from Chang Hsü 張旭 (ca. 700–750) and Yang Ning-shih 楊凝式 (873–957). The poet was right, but Yang Renkai is correct in pointing out that Lu, like Ou-yang Hsiu, emulated the methods, not the form, of Yen and Liu. Lu Yu's spirit was in total communion with the cursive masters "Delirious Chang" (Chang Tien 張顛, or Chang Hsü) and "Crazy Yang" (Yang Feng-tzu 楊瘋子, or Yang Ning-shih), but he did not forget his T'ang methods. Perhaps one reason Lu Yu's work stands out so forcefully among the other Southern Sung masters is that his roots reached more deeply into the past, matching, if only partially, the pattern of Mi Fu himself.<sup>39</sup>

Next to Mi Yu-jen, Wu Chü was the Southern Sung master whose calligraphy style most resembled Mi Fu's. Wu Chü's works are also rare, surviving mostly in informal correspondence or short manuscript form (fig. 65). Like Mi Yu-jen, he was apparently a "one-style" calligrapher. While Yu-jen's forms tend to be tall, narrow rectangles with clean columnar spacing, Wu Chü's are broad in composition with tighter columnar spacing, and his brushwork is heavier, with much less use of the tip. There is a startling overall resemblance to the elder Mi's hand, but with less elegance and fluency.<sup>40</sup>

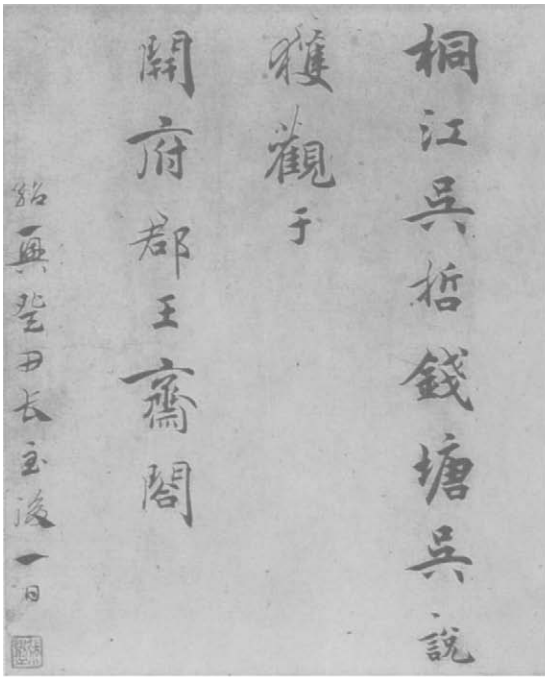


Figure 61. Wu Yüeh (active ca. 1115–56), detail of Colophon to Wang Wei's "Portrait of Fu Sheng," dated 1133. Handscroll, ink on paper, H. 24.8 cm. Osaka Municipal Museum of Art



Figure 62. Wu Yüeh, Calligraphy in Gossamer Script, dated 1145. Detail of handscroll, ink on paper, H. 31 cm. Fujii Yürinkan, Kyoto

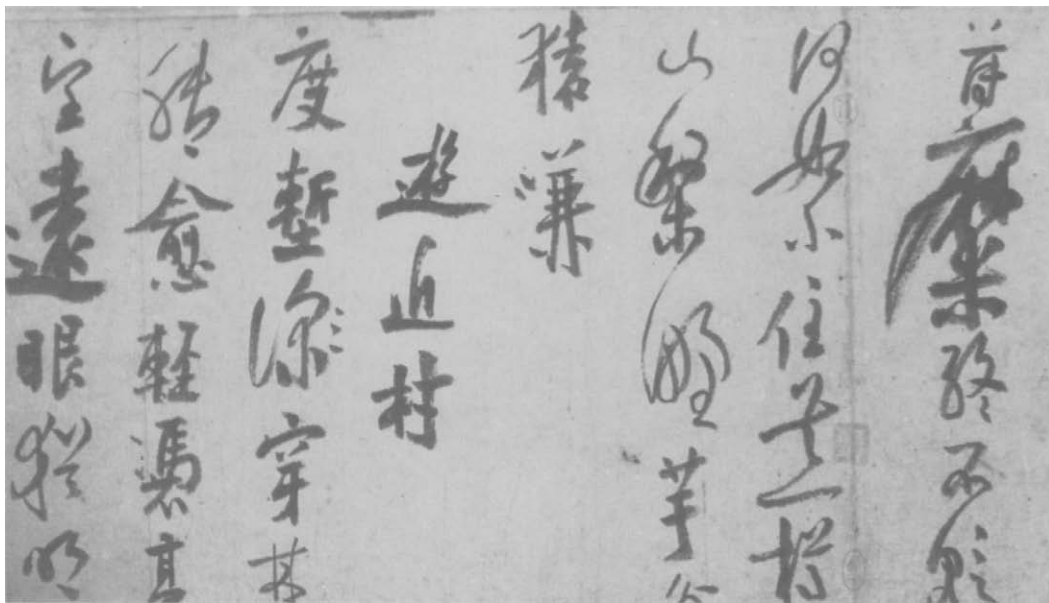


Figure 63. Lu Yu (1125–1210), *My Poems*, dated 1204. Detail of handscroll, ink on paper, H. 31 cm. Liaoning Provincial Museum, Shenyang

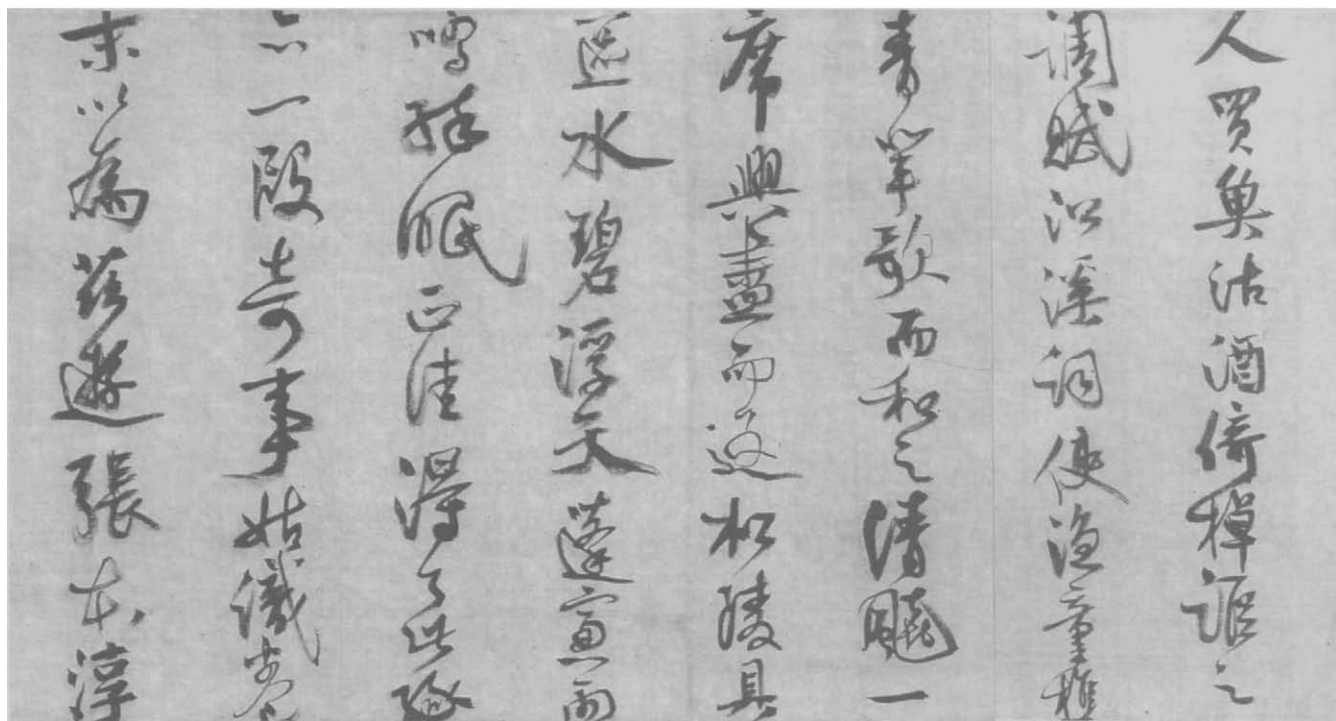
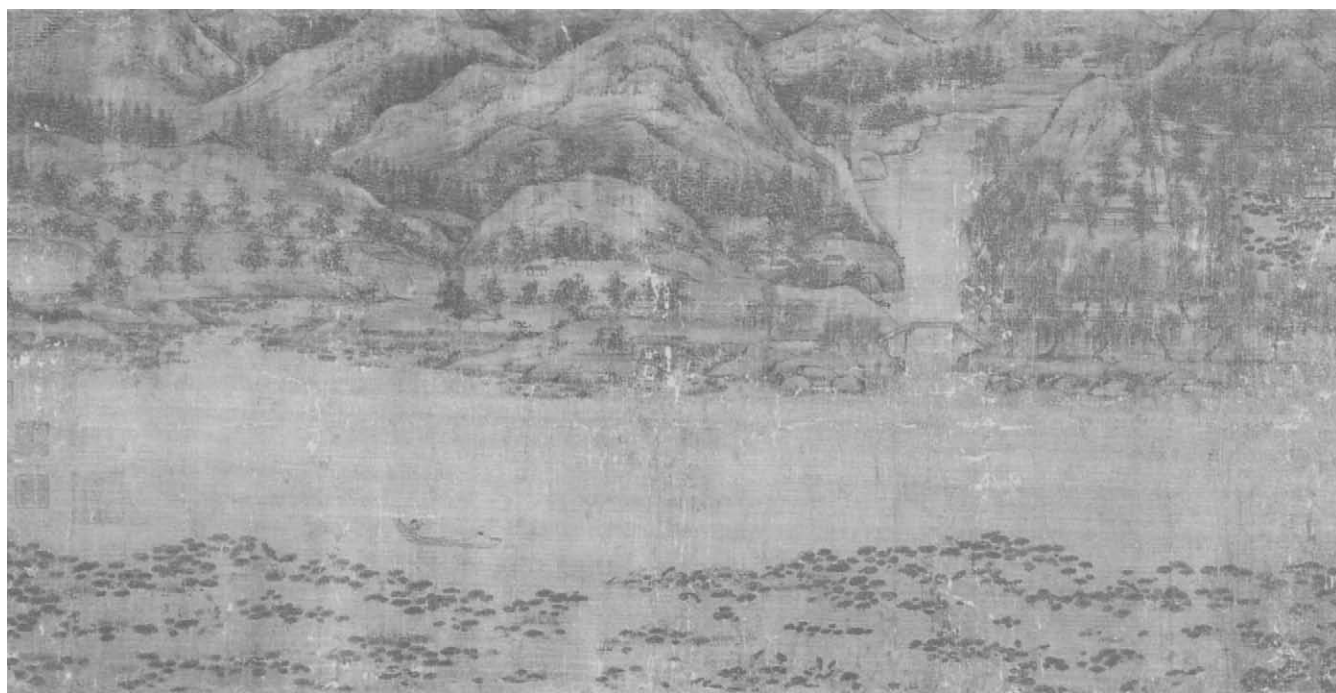


Figure 64. Anonymous, detail (above),  
and Fan Ch'eng-ta (1126-93),  
colophon, dated 1185 (below),  
to *Fishing Village at Mount Hsi-sai*.  
Handscroll, ink and color on silk, H. 40 cm.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York;  
Bequest of John M. Crawford, Jr., 1988

Chao Meng-chien, a member of the Sung royal family and cousin to Chao Meng-fu, is known as much for his outspoken comments and criticism of the state of calligraphy as for his extraordinary talent as a painter of flowers and bamboo. His calligraphy *Three Poems on the Painting of Ink Plum Blossoms and Bamboo* (*Tzu-shu mei chu san shih* 自書梅竹三詩), in the Metropolitan Museum (see fig. 12),<sup>41</sup> bears a spiritual rather than a formal resemblance to Mi Fu's calligraphy. His mature style is distinctive for its contrast between fine tip work and broad, flat, squarish strokes. These latter are especially prominent in the horizontals and verticals. His strokes enter at an angle to the paper and bear down directly without letting up until the final retracting stroke at the end. The overall effect is brisk in feeling, with a somewhat abrupt staccato rhythm. He was enamored of his Ting-wu 定武 version of the *Orchid Pavilion Preface* and carried it everywhere, even into the river one day—hence its nickname, the River-soaked Lan-t'ing (*Lo-shui Lan-t'ing* 落水蘭亭).<sup>42</sup> Probably the most outstanding characteristic Chao Meng-chien derived from this famous work was the lilting, swaying quality he gave his characters as they proceed down the columns, thin and thick, tilting from side to side.

Chang Chi-chih, the last of the major Southern Sung masters, wrote in two distinct sizes, a medium and large script (fig. 66).<sup>43</sup> His monumental script, often executed on plaques or wall hangings, reveals his stature and suggests a parallel with Chin calligraphers. As large writing was most often used for commemorative stelae or cliff writing, it came to be associated with the north and was considered virtually lost as a tradition during the Southern Sung. Chang Chi-chih was an exception to that notion and an important link to the northern tradition of monumental writing. His decisive style, often executed with a worn-out brush, shows some of same broad flatness and disregard for detail which is seen among northern calligraphers, especially Chao Ping-wen (see figs. 70, 71).

An early Southern Sung master to be considered in this context is Chu Hsi 朱熹 (1130–1200). A singular work by this major thinker and Neo-Confucian is his transcription of the *Commentary to the Book of Changes* (*I Hsi-tz'u* 易繫辭) in large characters, two per line, in a breathtaking and rare display (Palace Museum, Taipei; fig. 67). The work is a significant link to the monumental stela writing from the late T'ang and a precursor to Chang Chi-chih in the south and to Chao Ping-wen and others in the north. The forthright brush style and structure of the characters, while clearly showing their indebtedness to Yen Chen-ch'ing, also demonstrate the heroic spirit and naturalness which was to be admired in the north and associated with Mi-family aesthetics.<sup>44</sup>

### *The Mi Tradition in the North under the Chin*

Wang T'ing-yün and his son, Wan-ch'ing, seem to have held a special place in the minds of the next generation, especially for such Yüan critics as T'ang Hou 湯垕 (active early fourteenth century), who saw them as the true heirs to the Mi Fu tradition. Two important specimens of Wang T'ing-yün's brush writings exist in the form of colophons: one to his own painting, *Secluded Bamboo and Withered Tree* (*Yu-chu k'u-ch'a t'u* 幽竹枯槎圖), in the Fujii Yürinkan, Kyoto; the other to Li Shan's handscroll *Wind and Snow in the Fir-Pines* (figs. 55, 68).<sup>45</sup> An outstanding connoisseur and painter, and the leading poet of the time, Wang possessed all of the natural abilities to qualify as the heir to the Mi tradition in the north. His own inscription to *Secluded Bamboo* is particularly powerful,

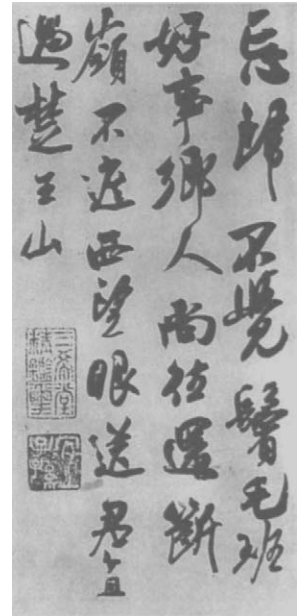


Figure 65. Wu Chü (active ca. 1150–1200), detail of *Letter*. Album leaf, ink on paper (from *Shodō zenshū*, vol. 16, pl. 62)

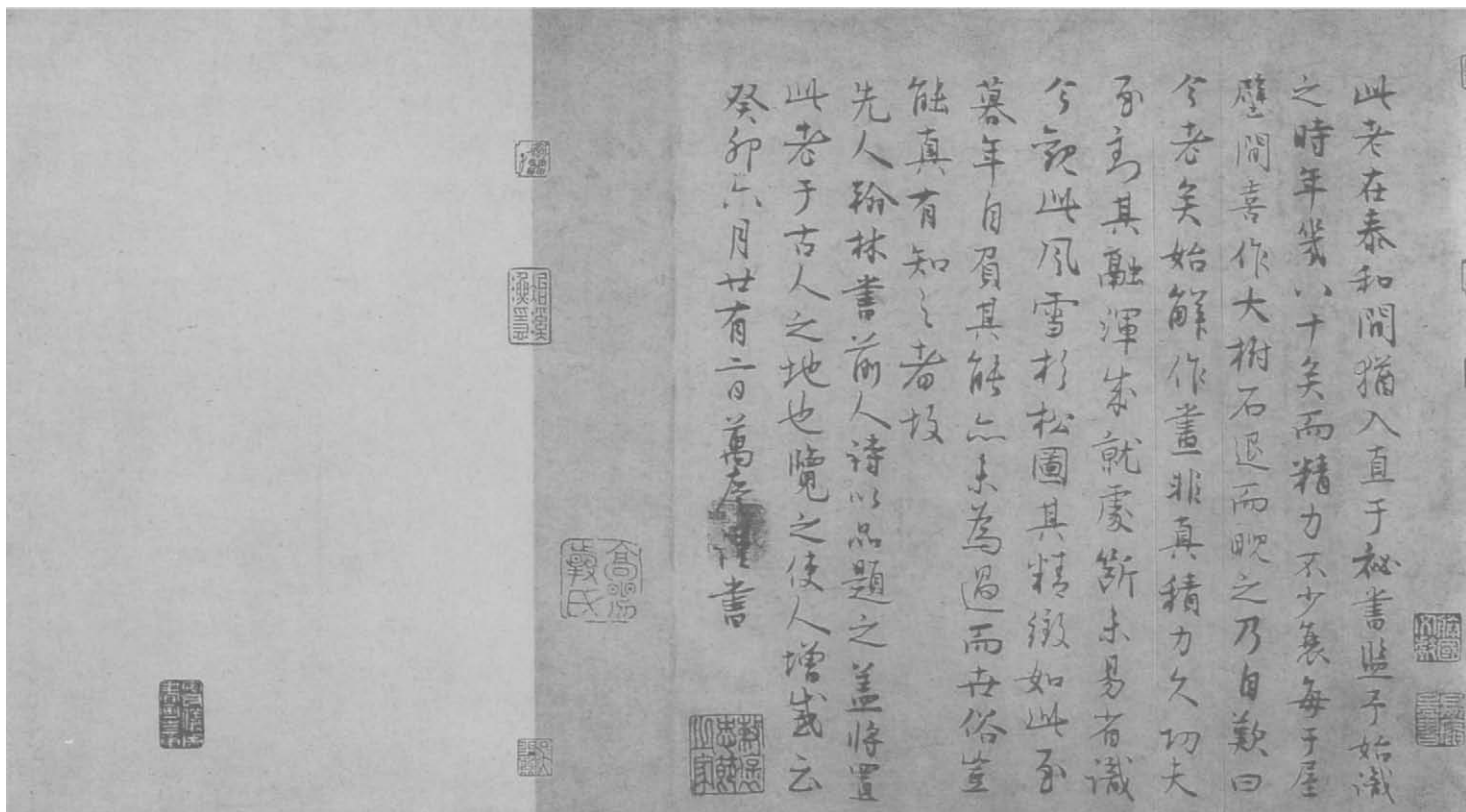


Figure 66. Chang Chi-chih (1186–1266), *Poems by Tū Fu*. Detail of handscroll, ink on paper, H. 30.8 cm. Enkaku-ji, Kyoto (from *Shodō zenshū*, vol. 16, pls. 71, 72)



Figure 67. Chu Hsi (1130–1200), leaf from *Transcription of Commentary to the "Book of Changes."* Album, ink on paper, 36.5 × 61.8 cm. Palace Museum, Taipei; Gift of Lin Tsung-i





as it combines all of the compositional features of Mi's tall structures with a crisp attack and a feeling for dense ink. His colophon to the Li Shan scroll gives evidence of remarkable tip work, the graceful turning and gliding of the brush, a feeling totally in keeping with Mi Fu's brush principles, plus an interest in contrasting the brush tip with both flattened and plumply rounded forms. Judging on the basis of these two works, Wang's brush movements have a lower "energy level" than Mi's, and his style has none of the protean sense of change implied in the work of the elder Mi.<sup>46</sup>

As for the son, Wan-ch'ing, two examples of his calligraphy exist as colophons; one, dated to 1243, follows his father's colophon to the Freer Li Shan handscroll (fig. 68); the other, dated to 1202, now in the Palace Museum, Beijing (fig. 69), is appended to Liu Kung-ch'üan's brushwritten copy of the *Orchid Pavilion Poems*. The smaller scale and neat lines of the writing give an immediate sense of the son's deference to his adoptive father. Although Hsieh Chin describes Wan-ch'ing as a follower of the Mi style, we see more of the influence of the "small running script" (*hsiao hsing-k'ai* 小行楷) of the Two Wangs, especially as transmitted through the Ting-wu rubbings of the *Orchid Pavilion Preface* that were in the north.<sup>47</sup>

Wu Chi received his *chin-shih* degree under Hui-tsung, but he is better remembered as Mi Fu's son-in-law, a fact recorded by Yüan Hao-wen in his *Chung-chou-chi* 中州集 (*Anthology of the Heartland*).<sup>48</sup> Yüan says that Wu excelled in calligraphy and painting and obtained the "brush ideas" (*pi-i* 筆意) of his father-in-law.<sup>49</sup> Since Yüan gives the



Figure 68. Wang T'ing-yün (1151-1202) and Wang Wan-ch'ing (active 1200-after 1262), Colophons to Li Shan's "Wind and Snow in the Fir-Pines" (fig. 55)

same high estimate to Wang T'ing-yün, we can conclude that Wu Chi, like Mi Yu-jen, had every opportunity to immerse himself in the elder Mi's methods and was a fitting, personally endorsed practitioner of the Mi-family style. One other important link between Wu Chi and the Mi tradition is the record of his colophon to a painting by Tung Yüan, along with the colophons written by a number of other prominent Chin scholars, including the Chin prime minister Ts'ai Sung-nien 蔡松年 (1107-59).<sup>50</sup>

Chao Ping-wen is best known for his exuberant colophon, dated 1232, to Wu Yüan-chih's 武元直 *Red Cliff* (*Ch'ih-pi t'u* 赤壁圖), one of the accepted classics of Chin painting, now in the Palace Museum, Taipei (fig. 71). The vivid descriptive power of Wu's painting is well matched by Chao's writing, which is imbued with the bold heroic quality so much admired by Yüan Hao-wen in poetry. The influence of the Northern Sung masters Su, Huang, and Mi, can be seen in the extreme contrasts of thick and thin, the flat and elongated brushstrokes, and in the uninhibited spirit of the whole. The impression of the brush on paper is direct, even harsh, with the worn-out brush tip exposed and a flailing motion given to the hooks and diagonals. Chao's strokes have exaggerated contrasts and a coarseness seldom seen except in Mi's late work. For Chao and other northern writers, an important source of influence was Mi's handscroll of large writing, the *Hung-hsien Poems* (*Hung-hsien shih* 虹縣詩; see fig. 25), which was in a Chin collection and bears a number of important colophons by Chin scholars, notably one by Yüan Hao-wen himself.<sup>51</sup>

Another important example of Chao's calligraphy is found as a colophon to Chao Lin's 趙霖 (active ca. 1135–49) interpretation in handscroll format of *T'ang T'ai-tsung's Six Chargers* (*Liu chün t'u* 六駿圖) in the Palace Museum, Beijing (fig. 70). Written again in a large, bold hand, the colophon, dated to 1220, gives us an earlier glimpse of Chao's style, but with a much stronger derivation from the Mi family, suggesting he shed softer qualities for the more heroic vigor which came to exemplify the northern spirit better than any other Chin master.<sup>52</sup> As for the calligraphic inscriptions found accompanying the paintings, they are a respectful presentation in two script sizes and show the writer, presumably the painter Chao Lin, to have thoroughly mastered a formal style of Mi Fu brushwork based on the severe structure of an Ou-yang Hsün model, possibly in homage to T'ang T'ai-tsung, who deeply admired the T'ang master. The characters, tall and narrow, with the strongly arched vertical hooks alluding to Mi's early style, display the regularity and discipline of close imitation of both T'ang and Sung masters. This little-known painting, with its important colophon, certainly deserves further study.

Kao K'an and Liu Yi are the last two northern masters identifiable as "followers" of Mi Fu. Each contributed a colophon to an important scroll circulating in the north, a transcription of a Li Po 李白 (701–62) poem by Su Shih, dated 1093, in Osaka.<sup>53</sup> Their colophons (Kao's dated to 1159) are two out of the five colophons appended to the scroll by Chin scholars, and are worthy of notice for the high quality of their calligraphy. Though nothing more is known about these gentlemen, the level of cultivation and discipline reflected in their writing testifies to the general thesis that the Chin literati in the north were not merely recipients of the older culture, but were preservers and transmitters of essential elements of the Northern Sung cultural legacy at a time when the makeup of that culture was undergoing fundamental change. From this point of view, the preservation of literati values by the Chin takes on added significance, for northerners traveling south in the early Yüan and southerners—such as Chao Meng-fu—traveling north served to retransmit these values to southern artists.<sup>54</sup>

### *Conclusion*

It is easy to see how the stature of each of the Sung Masters Su, Huang, and Mi could result in polarities in the succeeding generations. Each master had achieved his distinctive style by a different method of search, struggle, assimilation, and transformation, with Mi Fu's being the most systematic and intense. Later generations of calligraphers, particularly the one immediately following, developed under the shadow of these masters and seemed to have had little choice but to model their styles after them. But young calligraphers did have a choice. There were calligraphers in the north and south who struggled in silent rebellion and rejected the outright imitation of a previous model. These calligraphers, benefiting from the Northern Sung legacy of "spiritual freedom," sought to develop independent styles. However, masters practicing without affiliation were more difficult for critics to deal with, and those who chose to develop styles with no obvious stylistic origins were more easily overlooked. The highest praise was reserved for the most faithful followers of the Four Great Masters. This was particularly true of followers of the Mi tradition in the north. We have evidence that Yüan Hao-wen and other critics treated such masters as Wan-yen Shou, Wang T'ing-yün, and Li Chung-lüeh like members of a special club.

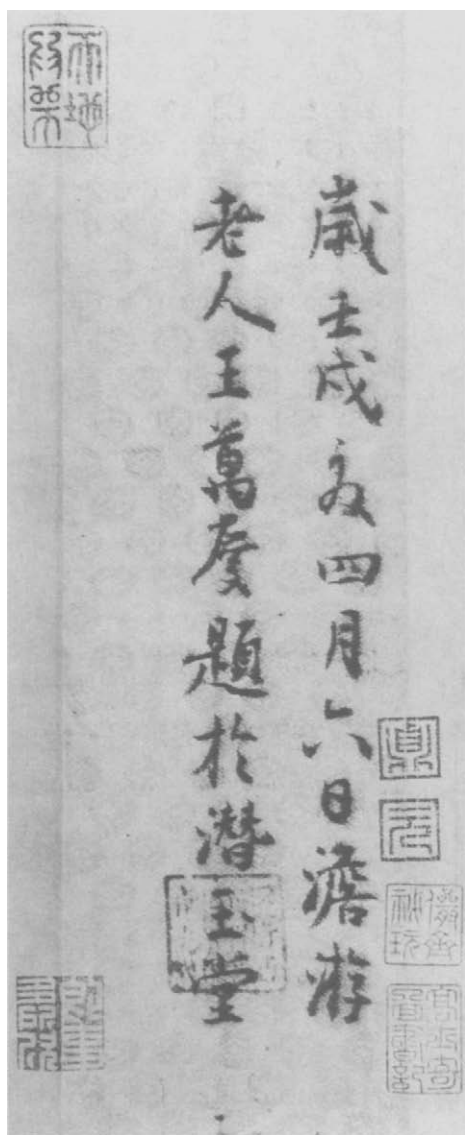


Figure 69. Wang Wan-ch'ing, detail of *Colophon to Liu Kung-ch'üan's "Orchid Pavilion Poems,"* dated 1202. Handscroll, ink on paper, H. 26.5 cm. Palace Museum, Beijing (from *Ku-kung po-wu-yüan ts'ang Li-tai-fa-shu hsüan-chi* [Beijing: Wenwu, 1963], vol. 1, pl. 2)

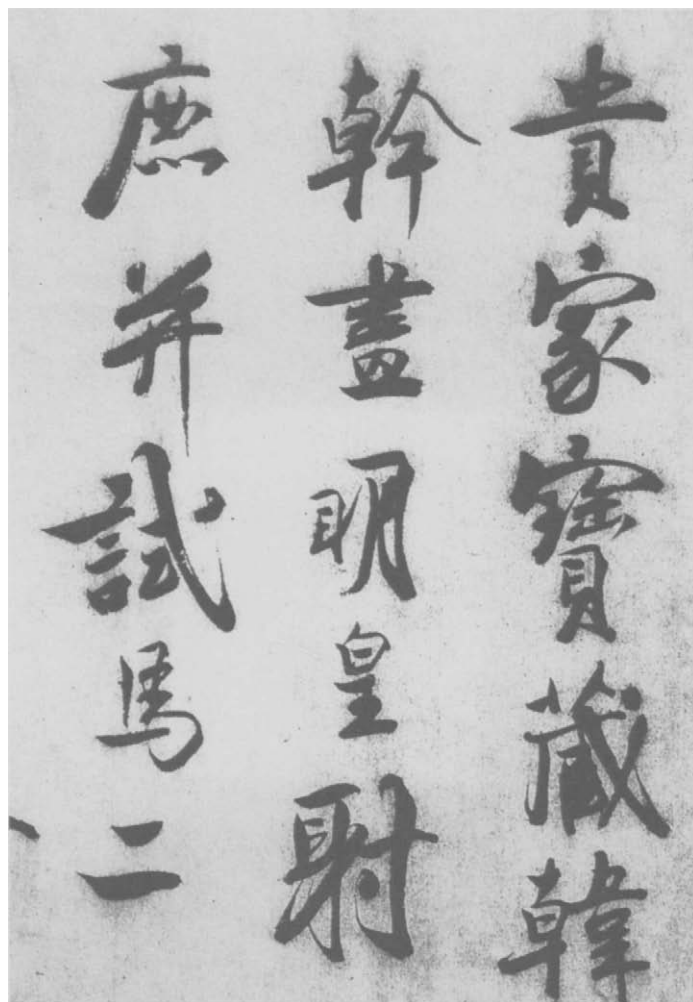


Figure 70. Chao Ping-wen, detail of *Colophon to Chao Lin's "T'ang T'ai-tsung's Six Chargers,"* dated 1220. Handscroll, ink on silk, H. 27.4 cm. Palace Museum, Beijing (from *Chung-kuo mei-shu ch'üan-chi* [Beijing: Chung-kuo chien-chu kung-yeh, 1988], vol. 4, p. 110, fig. 66)

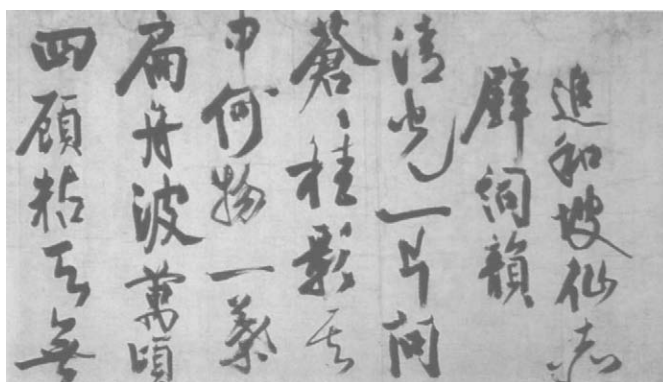


Figure 71. Chao Ping-wen (1159-1232), detail of *Colophon to Wu Yüan-chih's "Red Cliff,"* dated 1232. Handscroll, ink on paper, H. 50.8 cm. Palace Museum, Taipei

Tracing the obvious derivation of a master's style has its source at this juncture of early antiquarianism, and it differs in intent and partly by degree from the application of the concept of "imitation" (*fang*), practiced in the late Ming, when there was a distant past to look back upon and a large body of masters' works and styles upon which to draw. The cultural psychology in operation here—the close imitation of a major master by the generation or two immediately following—needs to be understood in this earlier historical context as a prelude to the later development of *fang* and not as a question of decline. Why would so many masters choose to follow Su, Huang, and Mi if they knew history would judge them to be inferior? Because there was no greater homage that one could pay than to imitate, successfully, a master's style. For the northern calligraphers, there were political and cultural gains to be had by perpetuating the art and acquiring the admired cultural symbols of the conquered dynasty, thereby strengthening the Chin claim to political legitimacy and recognition as proper heirs to the Sung. For the southerners, perpetuation of Sung culture assuaged wounded pride, restored some of the glory lost in the north, and continued Sung interests in the revival of antiquity, especially the Tsin and T'ang. Did not Chiang K'uei 姜夔 (ca. 1155–ca. 1221) write the *Sequel to the Treatise on Calligraphy* (*Hsü shu-p'u* 續書譜)?<sup>55</sup> Did he not transcribe the entire text of the *Investigation into the Orchid Pavilion Preface* (*Lan-t'ing k'ao* 蘭亭考) by Sang Shih-ch'ang 桑世昌 (active ca. 1224) of the Sung, thus providing a basis for continuity of interest in the tradition of the Two Wangs and its succession into the Yüan through calligraphers like Chao Meng-fu and Hsien-yü Shu? Was not Chao Meng-chien so totally enamored of Mi Fu and his ways that he was teased by Chou Mi 周密 (1232–98) in his informal record, *Ch'i-tung yeh-yü* 齊東野語 (*Informal Writings of the Man from Ch'i*), as "resembling Yüan-chang 元章 [i.e., Mi Fu]," filling his traveling boat with his collection of paintings and calligraphy so that it would be called "the painting and calligraphy boat of the Mi Family" (*Mi-chia shu-hua ch'uan* 米家書畫船)?<sup>56</sup>

If it were not for the efforts of these calligraphy zealots, later generations of scholars (like Chao Meng-fu and Hsien-yü Shu) would not have been able to undertake the personal collecting and synthesis of the past to the extent they did. The colophons to the monk Tu-ku's version of the *Orchid Pavilion Preface* testify to the intense interest of both northerners and southerners in that work. Hsien-yü Shu, with his northern origins, was especially proud to have owned a version of the *Orchid Pavilion Preface* that had once been part of Yüan Hao-wen's collection and bore three of Yüan's seals. This proved that, although Yüan was not known as an antiquarian or collector, he, too, continued, at least in a peripheral way, some of the Northern Sung interests in the past, extending to the famous Ting-wu version of the *Orchid Pavilion Preface*.<sup>57</sup>

The "integration" of calligraphy with painting, which art historians have recognized as the major component of the "Yüan revolution," could not have happened without the aesthetic force of the Chiang-nan tradition. Certainly Tung Ch'i-ch'ang understood (even if we protest today) the theoretical basis of his northern and southern lineages. This theory takes on new significance when we understand the pivotal, indeed crucial role which the Chiang-nan tradition played in the history of art in its gradual ascendancy as the *rival* to the Hua-pei monumental tradition. Without the Chiang-nan tradition, whether it was practiced in the north or in the south, by northerners or southerners, we would not have the subjective approach to art which allowed artists to explore their inner vision. Thus we have the recognition of the potential for a mode of expression, the validity of

which the artist himself would be the judge, a standard independent of external standards, whether of the court or of the Painting Academy, or even of peers. The southern tradition allowed the externalization of subjectivity in pictorial form. By subjectivity, we mean the externalization of the internal processes of creation and the creative act as they occur during the very process of enactment. And this process, once committed to paper, whether in the form of calligraphy or of painting (usually of a simple or "scholarly" subject, whether landscapes or rocks, flowers or bamboo) conveyed a mood or a state of being, the record of a psychic moment. This would be the thrust of Yüan painting once a generation of Sung artists threw off the shackles of the Academy's standards and rebelled against the criterion of form-likeness.

There is no doubt that the awareness of the potential of this aesthetic mode had already occurred among Northern Sung artists, whether only scholars with a yen to paint, or painters, such as Kuo Hsi, active at court, who were struggling against the limitations of the prevailing mode of seeing and representation. The chief characteristic of their art is something we might call a tentative or pregnant quality. This is by no means easy to recognize, nor is it necessarily a formal characteristic. It is an expressive quality which defies verbal analysis, but it is present in works as some form of ambiguity. That is because the work in question represents a particular phase in the artist's growth in which he is trying to get somewhere but has not yet arrived. We might cite two rather disparate examples, Kuo Hsi's *Early Spring*, and Chao Ling-jang's *River Village in Clear Summer*. Perhaps it is another way of recognizing that at the end of the Northern Sung, painters were aware that the tradition was on the threshold of change. In that sense, Kuo Hsi not only brought the development of earlier traditions to fruition, but also expanded the potential inherent in them. His sensitivity to the potentials of mist and deep space, of the energy and motion of forms in nature which cannot be confined within the painting, can all be sensed in his *Early Spring*. It is not merely his vision of nature which we sense "awakening" and writhing with potential dynamism, but it is the painter's experience in itself that cannot be contained within the confines of that universe. Hence, a "pregnant" quality informs the total expression.

With the Chao Ling-jang in Boston, there is no doubt about the expressive mood. What we find of interest is the sense of tentativeness; perhaps it is part and parcel of the quality of tenderness which informs the work, that lack of assertiveness in the expression. How the painter was able to achieve that mode of expression should surely strike us with the same wonder as Shen Kua, when he recorded his reaction to the paintings of Tung Yüan and Chü-jan as having "cursory brushwork," but when seen from a distance, to have the scene and objects emerge clearly, and to arouse "deep feelings and distant thoughts" in the viewer, as though one were "gazing upon a different world." This was the mysterious aspect of their art, and of Chao Ling-jang and Kuo Hsi's as well.

Shen Kua was recognizing not only a new quality of expression but also the ability of the painter to arouse subjective feelings in the viewer and to elicit recognition of mood and tone not explicitly present in the painting. Thus the phenomenon has several levels: in a literal sense, it has to do with the growing prominence of the "level-distance" landscape; in a technical sense, it has to do with the "cursory brushwork" which had to be seen from a distance and which would culminate in the most cursory brushwork of all, that of the Mi-family style; and, aesthetically, it has to do with the expressive power of the new landscape to arouse subtle feelings in the viewer.

It was this latter feature that Mi Fu recognized, as in an epiphany; for in touting the naturalness and charm of the southern landscape, he was also endorsing the artist's freedom to create with the eventuality of the work carrying a meaning above and beyond that implied in the mere forms. This indeed was the "mysterious quality" (*miao-ch'u* 妙處) which made it akin to poetry, and it was the Chiang-nan tradition that would be its standard-bearer. In poetry, this was the mysterious "flavor beyond flavor" (*wei-wai chih wei* 味外之味) that was regarded as the ineffable standard by poets since the T'ang and Ssu-k'ung T'u, and that was fully appreciated by Northern Sung literati, such as Su Shih and Yang Wan-li.<sup>58</sup> These qualities were incorporated into the aesthetics of the visual arts through Mi Fu's appreciation of the Chiang-nan tradition and were perpetuated in North China, during the Chin, and in South China, during the Southern Sung, through his son Mi Yu-chen and his circle, to emerge again in the Yüan synthesis of northern and southern aesthetic values.

## NOTES

- 1 For a study of this phenomenon, see J. D. Langlois, Jr., ed., *China under Mongol Rule* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), with contributions on art and literature by Professor C. T. Li and by myself (as Marilyn Wong Fu), "The Impact of the Re-unification: Northern Elements in the Life and Art of Hsien-yü Shu (1257?-1302) and Their Relation to Early Yüan Literati Culture," pp. 371-433.
- 2 For studies on Chin culture and the Jurchen, see H. L. Chan, *The Historiography of the Chin Dynasty: Three Studies* (Wiesbaden: F. Steiner, 1970); idem, *Legitimation in Imperial China: Discussions under the Jurchen-Chin Dynasty (1115-1234)* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1985); H. Franke, "Treaties between Sung and Chin," in *Études Song in memoriam Étienne Balazs*, ed. F. Aubin (Paris, 1970), pp. 55-84; G. Toyama, *Kinchōshi Kenkyū* (A study of the history of the Chin dynasty) (Kyoto, 1964); T'ao Ching-shen, *The Jurchen in Twelfth-Century China: A Study of Sinitization* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1976).
- 3 S. Bush, "'Clearing after Snow in the Min Mountains' and Chin Landscape Painting," *Oriental Art*, n.s., 11, no. 3 (1965), pp. 163-72; and "Literati Culture under the Chin," *Oriental Art*, n.s., 15, no. 2 (1969), pp. 103-12. See also Angela Li, "Notes on 'Wind and Snow in the Fir-pines' by Li Shan of the Chin Dynasty," *National Palace Museum Quarterly* 14, no. 4 (1980), pp. 19-47; idem, *National Palace Museum Bulletin* 15, nos. 1, 2, 3 (1980); and S. Little, "Travelers among Valleys and Peaks: A Reconsideration of Chin Landscape Painting," *Artibus Asiae* 41, no. 4 (1979), pp. 285-308.
- 4 Chiang Chao-shen has made a strong case for such a composition to be a criterion for dating by discussing the masterworks in the Taipei Palace Museum. See his "Three Sung Paintings in the National Palace Museum," *National Palace Museum Quarterly* 11, no. 4 (1977), pp. 1-32.
- 5 This loss can be seen in less talented contemporaries of the styles in question, as well as in later versions from the Yüan and Ming periods and in copies.
- 6 See Lin's *Transformation of the Chinese Lyrical Tradition: Chiang K'uei and Southern Sung "Tz'u" Poetry* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), introduction and especially pp. 36-43.
- 7 Regionalism has been noted as an issue in the history of Chinese calligraphy, especially in the work of the antiquarian and scholar Juan Yüan 阮元 (1764-1849). See A. Hummel, ed., *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period (1644-1912)* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943), pp. 399-402; L. Ledderose, *Die Siegel-schrift (Chuan-shu) in der Ch'ing-zeit* (Wiesbaden: F. Steiner, 1970), and Juan Yüan, "Nan-pei shu p'ai lun" (On the northern-southern schools' calligraphy theory), and "Pei-pei nan-t'ieh lun" (On northern stelae and southern manuscripts), in *Yen-ching Shih san-chi* (The Yen-ching Studio's collected works of poetry and prose), TSCC ed. (Shanghai: Shang-wu, 1935-37), *chüan* 1, pp. 1-10. Juan formulated the theory of the "northern pei" and "southern t'ieh," ostensibly on the basis of the fact that in the north, the majority of early

- calligraphy monuments survive in the form of stone stelae, or *pei*, and in the south, in the form of handwritten manuscripts, or *t'ieh*. This theory has some utility, because, as L. Ledderose has shown in his study of seal script, certain stylistic criteria adhere to medium and function. The significance which this theory has for the period in question has to do with the bifurcation of culture after the Northern Sung, with the Chin in the north and the Southern Sung in the south.
- 8 For Ssu-k'ung's "Twenty-four Modes" (*Erh-shih-ssu p'in*), see *Chinese Literature* 7 (1963), pp. 65-77; and M. Robertson, "To Convey What Is Precious . . .," in *Transition and Permanence: Chinese History and Culture*, ed. D. C. Buxbaum and F. W. Mote (Hong Kong: Cathay Press, 1972), pp. 323-57.
  - 9 On Yüan Hao-wen's poetry, see the exemplary study by J. Timothy Wixted, *Poems on Poetry: Literary Criticism by Yüan Hao-wen (1190-1257)* (Wiesbaden: F. Steiner, 1982), especially pp. 68-73.
  - 10 In Yüan Hao-wen's criticism, these topics are discussed especially in poems 6, 7, 9, 11, 13, 22, 26, and 28, in *ibid.* I relate them further to northern calligraphy and the Mi tradition in a paper presented at the American Council of Learned Societies Conference "Cultural Values in North China, 12th-13th Centuries," organized by Stephen H. West at the University of Arizona, December 1983.
  - 11 See Su Shih, "Shu Yen-ling Wang chu-pu suo hua che-chih erh shou" 書鄢陵王主簿所畫折枝二首, in *Chi-chu fen-lei Tung-p'o shih* (Collected poems of Su Shih by category), SPTK ed. (Taipei: Shang-wu, 1965), *chüan* 11, p. 29a (227); my translation. Compare translation in S. Bush, *The Chinese Literati on Painting: Su Shih (1037-1101) to Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (1555-1636)*, Harvard-Yenching Institute Studies, no. 27 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 26. For a contextual discussion of Su's aesthetics, see Peter K. Bol, "Culture and the Way in Eleventh-Century China" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1982).
  - 12 *Hua-chi*, CKMSTS ed. (Beijing, 1963), *chüan* 10, p. 125. My translation; italics mine. See also R. Maeda, *Two Twelfth Century Texts on Chinese Painting* (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, 1970), p. 63.
  - 13 As quoted in Hu Tao-ching, ed., *Hsin chiao-cheng Meng-ch'i pi-t'an* (Brush talks from Dream Brook) (Beijing, 1957), p. 176. My translation; italics mine.
  - 14 See Ho's study "Li Ch'eng and the Mainstream of Northern Sung Painting," in *Proceedings of the International Symposium on Chinese Painting* (Taipei: Palace Museum, 1970), pp. 251-82; and his Chinese version, "Li Ch'eng lüeh-chuan," *National Palace Museum Quarterly* 5, no. 3 (Spring 1971), pp. 33-62.
  - 15 As described in Li's biography in the *Hsüan-ho hua-p'u* (Imperial painting catalogue of the Hsüan-ho era; preface dated 1120), ISTP ed. (Taipei: Shih-chieh, 1962), *chüan* 11.
  - 16 See his "Chao Ta-nien Tradition," *Ars Orientalis* 8 (1970), pp. 243-53. That Chao Ta-nien was not working alone can be seen in his fan in the Yamato Bunkakan, Nara, which can be favorably compared to the leaf dated 1117 by Li An-chung 李安忠 in Cleveland, *Cottages in a Misty Grove in Autumn* (*Yen-ts'un ch'iu-ai t'u* 煙村秋菼圖). As Wai-kam Ho ("Li Ch'eng and the Mainstream of Northern Sung Painting") has pointed out, Li's dates belong in the late Northern Sung, and, as such, anticipate the "new southern aesthetic" sensed so poignantly by Chao Ta-nien.
  - 17 For Shimada, see *Nanga Kansho* 10, no. 4 (1941), pp. 6-13; and A. Murck, "Eight Views of the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers by Wang Hung," in Wen C. Fong et al., *Images of the Mind* (Princeton: Art Museum, Princeton University, 1984), pp. 214-35.
  - 18 As quoted in Hu, ed., *Meng-ch'i pi-t'an*, p. 76 (see n. 13). My translation.
  - 19 See "Sung Fu-ku hua Hsiao-Hsiang wan-ching t'u san shou" (Three poems on *Evening Scenes on the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers*), *Su Tung-p'o ch'üan-chi* (Su Tung-p'o's [Su Shih] collected works) (Taipei: Shih-chieh, 1964), *chüan* 2, p. 36; my translation.
  - 20 For a cogent presentation of this subject, see the work of Sofukawa Hiroshi, especially his "Study of the Landscape Painting of the Five Dynasties and Early Northern Sung . . .," *Tōhō Gakuhō* 49 (February 1977), pp. 123-214. I am indebted to my student Watanabe Masako for making this article accessible to me. See also John Hay, "Huang Kung-wang's 'Dwelling in the Fu-ch'un Mountains': Dimensions of a Landscape" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1978).
  - 21 See Shen Fu, "Huang T'ing-chien's Calligraphy and His *Scroll for Chang Ta-t'ung*: A Masterpiece Written in Exile" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1976), vol. 1, p. 240.
  - 22 See Shen Fu, "A Period Division and the Influence of Yen Chen-ch'ing's Calligraphy," paper written for the *International Seminar on Chinese Calligraphy in Memory of Yen Chen-ch'ing's 1200th Posthumous Anniversary* (Taipei: Palace Museum, 1985), p. 21.
  - 23 Hsieh Chin was from Chi-shui, Kiangsi, and served in the Wen-yüan-ko and as a censor under the Hung-wu emperor. See H. L. Chan, in L.



- Goodrich and C. Fang, eds., *Dictionary of Ming Biography: 1368–1644* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), vol. 1, pp. 554–58.
- 24 See Pien Yung-yü, comp., *Shih-ku-t'ang shu-hua hui-k'ao* (Classified record of calligraphy and painting in Shih-ku Hall; preface dated 1682) (1921; reprint, Taipei: Chang-chung Press, 1958), *chüan* 3, p. 127.
- 25 This search for Mi Fu's calligraphic "identity" is recorded in his *Pao-Tsin Ying-kuang chi* (Collections of Treasuring the Tsin and the Brilliant Lights [Mi Fu's studio]), TSCC ed., *chüan* 8, p. 66, and is extant as a rubbing in large running script in the Takashima collection, reproduced in *Shoseki meihin sōkan* (Compendium of masterpiece calligraphy) (Tokyo: Nigensha, 1964), vol. 43.
- The translation is by Wen Fong who, in his chapter on Sung calligraphy, gives a more accurate rendering of this same crucial passage than appears in L. Ledderose's study. Characters and interpolations have been added. For Fong, see *Images of the Mind*, p. 86; and Ledderose, *Mi Fu and the Classical Tradition of Chinese Calligraphy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), p. 64; see also my review of Ledderose in *Ars Orientalis* 12 (1981), pp. 77–80. For the three letters at Princeton, see Fong et al., *Images of the Mind*, pp. 262–64.
- 26 Collection unknown; see Kanda Kiichiro et al., *Shodō zenshū* (Complete encyclopedia of calligraphy) (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1958–71), vol. 16, pls. 28–29.
- 27 *Tung-chih ch'ih-fu t'ieh*, in Nakata Yūjirō, ed., *Chūgoku shoron taikai* (Complete series of Chinese calligraphy theory) (Tokyo: Nigensha, 1979), vol. 5, pl. 6.
- 28 *Hai-yüeh ming-yen* (Famous sayings of Hai-yüeh), ISTP ed., p. 1; *Hsüan-ho shu-p'u* (Imperial calligraphy catalogue of the Hsüan-ho era; preface dated 1120), ISTP ed., vol. 1, *chüan* 12, p. 282.
- 29 Such as the large stele, dated 1141, commemorating the renovation of a hall, *Wu-chün ch'ung-hsiu Tā-ch'eng-tien chi* 吳郡重修大成殿記 (Inscription commemorating the renovation of the Ta-ch'eng Hall in the Wu district), illustrated in *Shodō zenshū*, vol. 16, pls. 26–27, and p. 145.
- 30 For some examples, see S. Fu et al., *Traces of the Brush* (New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1977), no. 9, pp. 101, 148–49; *Shodō zenshū*, vol. 15, pls. 91–104; and especially Nakata Yūjirō, *Bei Futsu* (Tokyo: Nigensha, 1982), vol. 2, pls. 1–149.
- 31 See the biographical entry on Mi Fu in *Hsüan-ho shu-p'u*, ISTP ed., vol. 1, *chüan* 12, pp. 282–85.
- If that date is correct, Mi Yu-jen was then merely twenty-two. Thus any study of his paintings must take into account his long apprenticeship with his father and the transplantation to the south after 1126. Of his dated works, the few remaining appear to come from the later period of his career, after 1130.
- 32 On aspects of Tung Yüan's art and for relevant textual sources, see R. Barnhart, *Marriage of the Lord of the River: A Lost Landscape by Tung Yüan* (Ascona, Switz.: Artibus Asiae, 1970). In my opinion, the *Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers* in Beijing and the blue-and-green style *Lung-su chiao-min t'u* 龍宿郊民圖 (Residents of the capital city) in Taipei can be considered, along with the well-known Kurokawa painting, as representative of Tung's art.
- 33 In this respect, I believe it is important to avoid using the word *style* among painters who were as versatile as we see here. Art historians might usefully adopt instead the words *mode* or *genre* from literary and music critics.
- 34 We have tended to associate Mi Yu-jen too often with the Southern Sung, since he did hold numerous offices after the move south. And even if his painting output dates after 1127, we can see that the close association with his father during a period of intensive development for both made their relationship a rather special one. Unfortunately, though, unlike Li T'ang, no paintings seem to date from the Northern Sung.
- 35 For a brief biography by Nakata, see *Shodō zenshū*, vol. 16, p. 167, pls. 33–36, and fig. 8. For the ornamental scripts, see Nakata, *The Art of Japanese Calligraphy*, trans. A. Woodhull (New York: Weatherhill, 1973), esp. chap. 4, with some excellent examples preserved in Japan through Kūkai and his influence.
- 36 For the Tu-ku *Orchid Pavilion Preface*, now in the Tokyo National Museum, see *Illustrated Catalogues of the Tokyo National Museum: Chinese Calligraphies* (Tokyo: National Museum, 1980), no. 316, pp. 175–82.
- 37 See my discussion of Fan's style in Fu et al., *Traces of the Brush*, p. 129; and for a summary of his biography and translation of the colophon, K. S. Wong, *Masterpieces of Sung and Yüan Dynasty Calligraphy from the John M. Crawford Jr. Collection* (New York: China Institute in America, 1982), pp. 36–44; see also *Shodō zenshū*, vol. 16, pp. 45–46.
- 38 B. Watson's translation of Lu Yu's name, in *The Old Man Who Does as He Pleases: Selections from the Poetry and Prose of Lu Yu* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973).
- 39 For Yang Renkai's insightful discussion, see *I-yüan Tō-ying* 22 (1983), pp. 36–43.
- 40 See the biography and commentary by Nakata in *Shodō zenshū*, vol. 16, p. 170.
- 41 Published, translated, and discussed by Wong in *Masterpieces*, pp. 52–57.

- 42 See Chou Mi's account in *Ch'i-tung yeh-yü* (Informal writings of a man from Ch'i), TSCC ed., *chüan* 19, pp. 251-52. For a history of the prestigious Ting-wu version, see L. Ledderose, *Mi Fu and the Classical Tradition*, p. 24.
- 43 For a study of Chang's art, see Shen Fu, "Chang Chi-chih (1186-1266): The Last Great Calligrapher of the Sung and His 'Medium-Regular' Script," *National Palace Museum Quarterly* 10, no. 4 (Summer 1976), pp. 43-65, in English, pp. 21-36; and "Supplement," *Ku-kung hsiieh-shu chi-k'an* 1, no. 2 (Winter 1983), pp. 11-26. See also *Shodō zenshū*, vol. 16, pp. 71-88, and *Shodō geijutsu* (Tokyo: Chūō kōron, 1976), vol. 7, pp. 38-42.
- 44 Before this album was made available, Chu's work had been known only in the small informal standard script (*hsing-k'ai* 行楷) of his letters and manuscripts, especially those in the Palace Museum, Taipei. For illustrations of this album in large characters (five inches high), I am indebted to the collector Mr. Lin Tsung-i, who donated this work as one of seventy calligraphies and paintings to the Palace Museum on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of the late president Chiang Kai-shek. For publication, see *Ting-ching Tung-fang mei-shu-kuan, K'ai-kuan chi-nien mu-lu* (Commemorative catalogue of the Ting-ching Far Eastern Fine Arts Museum) (Tokyo, 1970), and recently, *Lin Tsung-i hsien-sheng chuan-tseng shu-hua mu-lu* (Catalogue of calligraphy and painting donated by Mr. Lin Tsung-i) (Taipei: Palace Museum, 1986), pls. 1-10, p. 111.
- This work was the subject of a background paper by Chiang Chao-shen delivered at the Palace Museum's sixtieth anniversary symposium in 1985, which I was unable to attend. According to Chiang's notes, the album bears seals by a number of major Yüan-dynasty calligraphers, among them Hsien-yü Shu, Yang Wei-chen 楊維楨 (1296-1370), and Sung K'o 宋克 (1327-87), with colophons by Yü Chi 虞集 (1272-1348) and K'o Chiu-ssu 柯九思 (1290-1343). Given the extraordinary nature of the calligraphy and Chu Hsi's stature in the Yüan, it stands to reason that it would have influenced the ranking practitioner of large script, Hsien-yü Shu. Here, then, is another major source for large writing. See my article, cited above in note 1, and my Ph.D. dissertation, "Hsien-yü Shu's Calligraphy and His 'Admonitions' Scroll of 1299" (Princeton University, 1983).
- 45 For two specimens in stele form, see Wang's *Ch'ung-hsiu Shu Hsien-chu miao-pei* (Stele commemorating the temple restoration dedicated to Liu Pei), dated 1199 (published Shanghai, 1978); and "Four Poems on Retirement," possibly a Ming recarving of a manuscript in cursive script, for which, see *Wenwu* 6 (1980), pp. 81-82. The former is in superb standard script (*k'ai-shu* 楷書), the only extant example to my knowledge. I am indebted to Susan Bush for the latter reference.
- These examples and all of the northern calligraphy cited in this section are discussed in a paper presented at the ACLS Conference on "Cultural Values in North China, 12th-13th Centuries," cited above.
- 46 For a discussion of Wang's painting, the important relation between calligraphy and painting which it represents, and the fourteen Yüan colophons attached to it, especially that of Hsien-yü Shu, see my "Impact of the Re-unification," pp. 409-16.
- 47 For background to Wan-ch'ing as the senior Wang's adopted son, see Bush, "Clearing after Snow," p. 169, n. 27. For Wan-ch'ing's colophon of 1202, see *Ku-kung po-wu-yüan ts'ang li-tai fa-shu hsüan-chi* (Selections of Chinese calligraphy in the Beijing Palace Museum) (Beijing: Wenwu, 1963), *chüan* 1, p. 2.
- 48 Yüan's compilation is priceless for its preservation of the poems of northern poets, each preceded by a brief biography and characterization of their art. Much of the material was reused in the subsequent official histories. Yüan lists the poets in chronological order, those born under the Sung first, so Wu is second, with twenty-five poems preserved. See *Chung-chou-chi* (Anthology of the heartland), SPTK ed., *chüan* 1, p. 26; see also *Chin shih* (History of the Chin dynasty), *chüan* 125.
- 49 Unfortunately there are no examples of Wu Chi's calligraphy known to me.
- 50 Recorded by Chou Mi as in the collection of Ma Shao, who seemed to have garnered the record in works bearing the imperial seals or inscriptions of Hui-tsung, Chang-tsung, and Kao-tsung; see his biography in *Hsin Yüan shih* (New Yüan history), *chüan* 188; and Chou's *Yün-yen kuo-yen lu* (Record of painting and calligraphy seen by the author), ISTP ed., *hsia*, pp. 84-86.
- 51 See *Shoseki meihin sōkan*, vol. 125, and the discussion of the history of the scroll by Toyama Gunji in *Kinchōshi Kenkyū*, pp. 655-59. I discuss this work and its influence in greater detail in my paper for the ACLS conference on "Cultural Values."
- 52 Recently illustrated in *Wenwu t'ien-ti*, no. 6 (1984), back cover and p. 37; and *I-yüan to-ying* 30 (1985), pp. 35-41 (issue commemorating the sixtieth anniversary of the Beijing Palace Museum). I viewed the painting and colophon in 1985 and am indebted to Susan Bush for calling this scroll and its colophon to my attention. The colophon authenticates the scroll and identifies

- Chao Lin as the author, as the painting bears no signature. Xu Bangda of the Palace Museum believes the inscriptions on the painting also to be by Chao Ping-wen, whereas Bush considers them most likely to have been written by the painter. I concur with Bush, as Chao Lin's active dates would have been too early for a collaboration with the calligrapher (oral communications from Xu Bangda and Susan Bush, 1984). See the recently published colophon in *Chung-kuo mei-shu ch'üan-chi* (Beijing: Chung-kuo chien-chu, 1988), vol. 4, p. 110.
- 53 See *Shoseki meihin sōkan*, vol. 97, also *Shodō zen-shū*, vol. 16, p. 30, and *Shodō geijutsu zoku*, vol. 3, p. 141.
- 54 See my "Impact of the Re-unification," p. 375. Other issues to be explored concern, for example, the influence of a Chiang-nan artist, such as Chü-jan, on northern artists, when he accompanied the Southern T'ang ruler Li Hou-chu 李後主 (937-78) to Kaifeng, as pointed out by Wai-kam Ho. For example, Chü-jan's influence can be seen in Chin painting, such as the Li Shan handscroll in the Freer, where the closing passage of snowy mountains bears a striking resemblance to the mountains in the Chü-jan hanging scroll in Cleveland, *Buddhist Retreat by Stream and Mountain* (*Ch'i-shan lan-jo t'u* 溪山蘭若圖). Such a resemblance points to reciprocal influences that need to be investigated further.
- 55 For the *Hsü shu-p'u*, see *Sung Yüan-jen shu-hsüeh lun-chu* (Annotated calligraphy theories of Sung and Yüan critics), ISTP ed., and the study by Shuen-fu Lin, "Chiang K'uei's Treatises on Poetry and Calligraphy," in S. Bush and C. Murck, eds., *Theories of the Arts in China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), pp. 293-316.
- 56 See Chou Mi, *Ch'i-tung yeh-yü*, *chüan* 19, pp. 251-52.
- 57 On this subject, see my "Impact of the Re-unification," esp. pp. 399ff. This important version of the *Preface* is published in *Shosoki meihin sōkan*, vol. 56. For the complex problems of the *Preface*, see L. Ledderose, *Mi Fu and the Classical Tradition*, esp. chaps. 1 and 3, and Jan Fontein and Tung Wu, *Unearthing China's Past* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1973), pp. 208-12, and the bibliographies cited therein.
- 58 See M. Robertson, "To Convey What Is Precious . . .," p. 324, n. 6; and T. Wixted, *Poems on Poetry*, pp. 158-60. For Yang Wan-li, see the study by J. Chaves, *Heaven My Blanket, Earth My Pillow: Poems by Yang Wan-li* (New York: Weatherhill, 1975).

# Poetic Space: Ch'ien Hsüan and the Association of Painting and Poetry

JOHN HAY

Much has been said about how painting and poetry may relate to each other, but their relationship often appears to be more of a special genre of theory than a phenomenon.<sup>1</sup> Although the theory might seem to lie fairly between the two arts, it is necessarily shifted far to the side of poetry, because it shares the same medium, language. It is impossible to pursue a discussion through the medium of painting, for painting does not discuss. It exemplifies and displays, always primarily to the visual sense. Painting, by virtue of its very existence, is concrete. Linguistic symbols, from the point of view of painting, are always abstract. In the world of language, painting is not concrete but, as the Chinese put it, mute. The relationship is therefore asymmetrical. The two sides are organically distinct and interpenetrate across ontological levels. Indeed, an early Greek formulation and its later Chinese equivalent, “silent poetry and sounding painting” (*wu-sheng-shih yu-sheng-hua* 無聲詩有聲畫), is wonderfully apt in placing the problem of their difference and therefore of their possible interaction where it is actualized, in the sensory system.<sup>2</sup> The neatness of the phrase disguises, however, that the ecology and hence the actual possibility of this interpenetration are subject to evolution.

The oeuvre of Ch'ien Hsüan 錢選 (ca. 1235–ca. 1300) occurs at a critical phase in the evolutionary relationship between painting and poetry. Ch'ien's role in this development has been studied in a recent Ph.D. dissertation by Shou-chien Shih.<sup>3</sup> Shih starts from the premise that Ch'ien Hsüan was the first major artist consistently to inscribe his paintings with his own poems, asserts that he forged a “new organic relationship between poetry and painting,” and thereby shows that through a system of “underlying emotional tension” this organic relationship made possible a “metaphorically personal expression” that had not been present in the eleventh century.<sup>4</sup>

Shih investigates at length Ch'ien Hsüan's view of classic symbols, such as T'ao Ch'ien 陶潛 (365–427), and discusses how a sense of pessimistic despair came to separate Ch'ien Hsüan both from the ideal of T'ao the hermit and from the optimism with which earlier literati had viewed him. In the case of the Metropolitan Museum's *Returning Home* (*Kuei-ch'ü-lai t'u* 歸去來圖; fig. 74), Shih suggests that Ch'ien Hsüan adapted the first section of the illustration of this poem (fig. 73) by Li Kung-lin 李公麟 (ca. 1049–1106) by moving the boat away from the riverbank, thus embodying the emotional tension of a paradise image that had retreated beyond the artist's own reach. He emphasizes how such a reading is possible only if we approach the poem as essential to the organic whole and read both poem and painting in the light of Ch'ien's disgust at his contemporaries and his withdrawal into professionalism. Shih also proposes a chronology for Ch'ien's landscapes based on a careful analysis of pictorial and calligraphic style. He dates *Returning Home*, for example, from the late 1270s to the early 1280s and *Wang Hsi-chih Watching Geese* (*Kuan-e t'u* 觀鵝圖), also in the Metropolitan Museum (fig. 72), to the late 1280s.



Figure 72. Ch'ien Hsüan, *Wang Hsi-chih Watching Geese*. Handscroll, ink and color on paper, H. 23.2 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Gift of The Dillon Fund, 1973

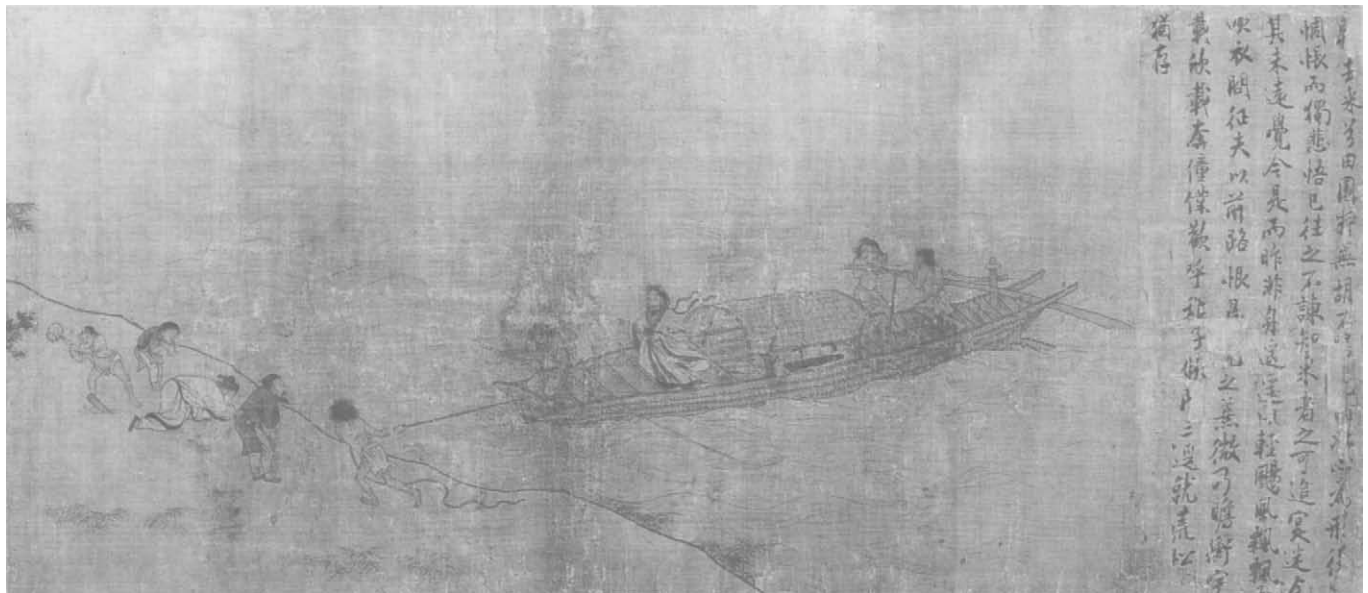




Figure 74. Ch'ien Hsüan (ca. 1235–ca. 1307), *Returning Home*.  
 Handscroll, ink and color on paper, H. 26 cm.  
 The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York;  
 Gift of John C. Ferguson, 1913

Figure 73. Attributed to Li Kung-lin (ca. 1049–1106),  
*Returning Home*. Detail of handscroll, ink and colors on silk, H. 37 cm.  
 Courtesy of the Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

Relying in good measure upon Shih's work, I shall concern myself mainly with these two works in relation to some issues of methodology that I hope are complementary.

Ch'ien Hsüan seems to have favored handscroll composition almost exclusively. He frequently added a poem, a place name (at first his native Wu-hsing 吳興 and later Chach'uan 霽川), and a signature, and consistently did so following the painting on the same sheet of paper. Although this hardly seems startling, in the context of the huge majority of paintings up to that time it is very distinctive. Mi Yu-jen 米友仁 (1074–1151), who wrote above the scenery of his handscrolls and, like the thirteenth-century lyricist Chiang K'uei 姜夔,<sup>5</sup> sometimes carefully dated his inscriptions, was his most obvious predecessor. Mi Yu-jen, like Ch'ien Hsüan, also preferred paper, at a time when this preference was even more distinctive. There are sufficient similarities in their approaches to painting, especially in such aspects as surface, to make Mi's prefiguration of Ch'ien in the matter of inscriptions more than coincidental.<sup>6</sup> What was the historical and personal significance of Ch'ien Hsüan's inscriptional habits?

There is a preliminary question concerning Shuen-fu Lin's intriguing comparison of Chiang K'uei's prefaces and poems with the *hsiang-sheng* 相生 (mutual generation) apropos of song and speech in Yüan-dynasty drama. Does the poetic "act" indeed retroflexively regenerate the poetic "situation" in the case of Chiang K'uei? Although they are mutually essential, Lin's analysis also seems to suggest that there is a significant degree of asymmetry, perhaps distinctive to that period. Such a suggestion seems helpful. The epistemological values of symmetry and asymmetry are quite different, and it may be suggested further that mature Southern Sung intellectual and artistic creativity as a whole was characterized by a powerful tendency to explore asymmetrical rather than symmetrical relationships.

In painting, the interaction of relationships is so complex that an analysis in terms of such interactions can easily get out of hand. The levels may multiply indefinitely. Nevertheless, we might ask whether the balance between representation and poetry in a painting, such as *Swallows at Dusk* (*Hsi-yang shan-shui t'u* 夕陽山水圖) by Ma Lin 馬麟 (active ca. 1216–56), inscribed by Emperor Li-tsung 理宗 (r. 1225–64), in the Nezu Institute of Fine Arts (fig. 75), is symmetrical or otherwise. Are the picture and couplet equivalent? Can they be mutually substituted? They appear to be symmetrical with respect to the viewer rather than with each other. To look ahead of ourselves for a moment, both calligraphy and painting are *first of all* subject to the viewer's perception. They lie in parallel, syntagmatic linkages between perceiver and perceived rather than facing each other. They are *perceived* as equivalent, or paradigmatic. This may be as near to a perfectly matched "silent poetry" and "sounding painting" as we should expect to come: two independent summations perfected in a twinned perception. And the time is historically right. Nevertheless, there is an important asymmetry in their nature. Their symmetry vis-à-vis the viewer is, indeed, subjected to the viewer and is therefore mutually asymmetrical. It is not the self-sustaining systematic symmetry of a Northern Sung landscape. It is, instead, sustained by an exquisitely calculated set of asymmetries, all of which are tied to the most fundamental asymmetry, the one-directional subordination of perceived to perceiver. The interaction of painting and poem is within the percept rather than between themselves.

The function of asymmetry may also be helpful in understanding Ch'ien Hsüan. His distinctiveness lay partly in bringing poetic inscription into a more highly reactive rela-

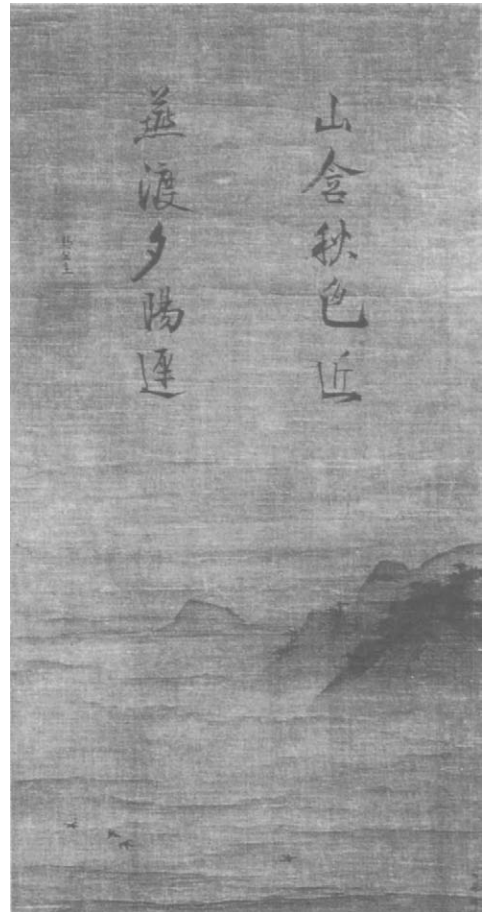


Figure 75. Ma Lin (active ca. 1216–56),  
*Swallows at Dusk*.  
 Hanging scroll, color on silk, 51.5 × 26.6 cm.  
 Nezu Institute of Fine Arts, Tokyo

tionship with painting, while still being attached to the characteristic asymmetry of the early thirteenth century. Symmetry from the point of view of the artist is not the same as that from the point of view of the viewer. Although the achievement of the thirteenth century in equating pictorial and poetic images was in some ways a fruition of eleventh-century ideals, in other ways it was quite different. Ch'ien Hsüan provided a bridge from the achievement of the Southern Sung to the realization of the Northern Sung ideal. This is made especially apparent by his preference for the handscroll format, which made it possible to experiment with the juxtaposition of text and picture without the asymmetries and tensions that had characterized most of the thirteenth century.

In Ch'ien's day, the association of the handscroll with narrative was still very much paramount. Most of his paintings are characterized by their sequential approach to content. The sequences within handscrolls, of course, were already capable of extraordinary complexity.<sup>7</sup>

We may pursue these analogies between Chiang K'uei and Ch'ien Hsüan along two lines of observation: first, that the types of reference between two parts of a complex work of art may be similar; and second, that the potential for these references arises out of a distinctly self-conscious awareness of the aesthetic object. I take the second point first, because the aesthetic attitudes of the Southern Sung court are a more straightforward issue of historical definition. Shuen-fu Lin (see n. 5) discusses at length the "crystallization of a new aesthetic spirit" as a feature of Chiang K'uei's period, and also notes that it is





Figure 76. Ma Yüan (active ca. 1190–1225),  
*Plum Blossoms by Moonlight*.  
Fan, ink and color on silk, 25.1 × 26.7 cm.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
New York; Gift of John M. Crawford, Jr.,  
in honor of Alfreda Murck, 1986



Figure 77. Ma Yüan,  
*Enjoying Plum Blossoms*.  
Fan, ink and color on silk, 25.1 × 27 cm.  
C. C. Wang family collection

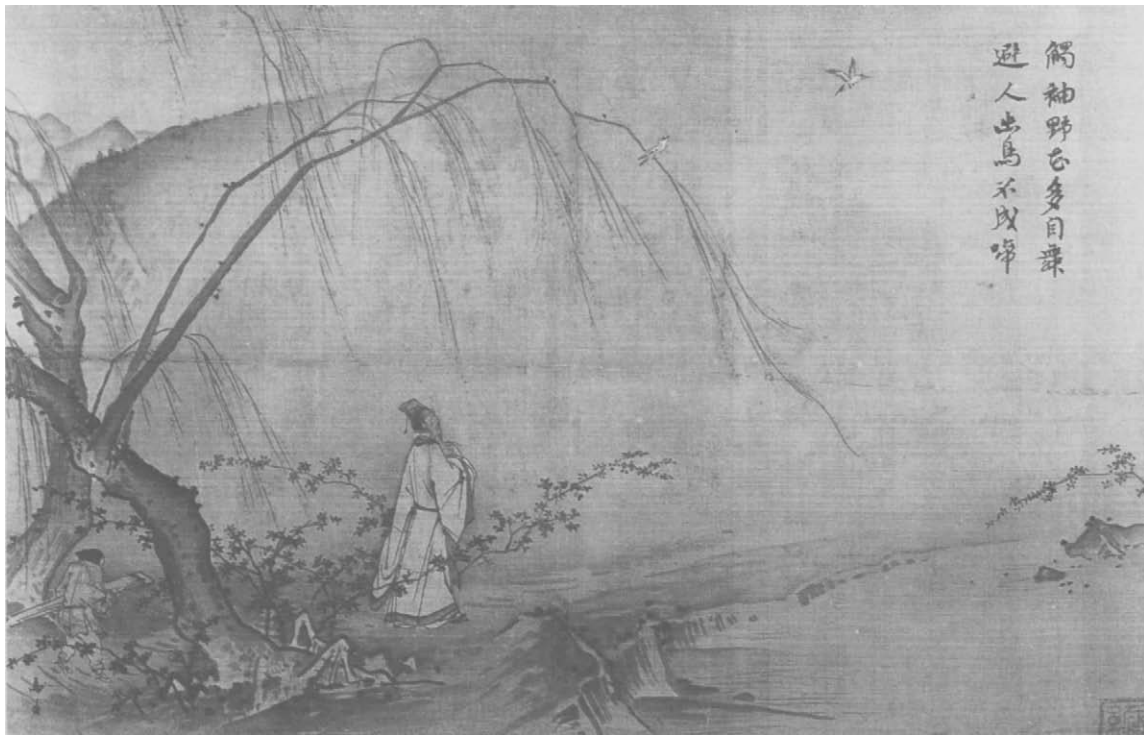


Figure 78. Ma Yüan, *On a Mountain Path in Spring*, with inscription by Yang Mei-tzu. Album leaf, ink and color on silk, 27.4 × 43.1 cm. Palace Museum, Taipei



Figure 79. Hsia Kuei (active first half 13th c.), *Twelve Views of Landscape*, with inscription by Yang Mei-tzu. Section of handscroll, ink on silk, H. 26.8 cm. The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri; Nelson Fund

a characteristic of court painting during the same period.<sup>8</sup> The meaning of “aesthetic” in this latter case, however, has not been properly defined.

In such paintings as *Plum Blossoms by Moonlight* (*Yüeh-yeh shang-mei t'u* 月夜賞梅圖; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, John M. Crawford, Jr., Collection) and *Enjoying Plum Blossoms* (*Shang-mei t'u* 賞梅圖; C. C. Wang family collection), both by Ma Yüan 馬遠 (active ca. 1190–1225), we can sense an aesthetic spirit operating at several levels (figs. 76, 77). Richard Barnhart has suggested that these two fans may have been associated with Chiang K'uei's friend Chang Tzu 張鑑 (1147–after 1201), a leading aesthete of the time. Barnhart adds that they seem to represent categories of plum-blossom appreciation, “perhaps in the framework of contemporary poetry.”<sup>9</sup> Such appreciation, characteristic of this period, was a self-reflexive refinement, a defining of the definition. It was, in part, the self-conscious aesthetic manipulation that characterized the art of the early thirteenth century.

The “new aesthetic spirit” is seen in a very objective form in fan painting. The format had an ancient history, but it was probably the most popular at this time. When stretched over its bamboo frame, a fan painting becomes even more clearly an object than does a scroll when mounted. The physical persona of a hanging scroll becomes subdued after it has been hung. That of a handscroll remains active as a viewer passes through the scroll, but the physical presence of the scroll may nevertheless be quite retiring. Its self-effacement varied historically, but before the thirteenth century it was probably the norm. A painting on a fan, in contrast, is seen only when the fan is held and the painting that ornaments it is noticed. This both trivializes and aestheticizes the painting. It must have made it more subject to taste, a function of aesthetic focus. Southern Sung fan painting responded to this taste, exploiting rather than resisting it. As a result of greater emphasis given to the boundary of the painting, namely the frame of the fan, the internal dynamics of the composition began to respond to it. In such works as the two Ma Yüan *Plum Blossoms*, such restructuring is very clear. In the Crawford fan, the rocks, banks, and mountain rise on the curve of the left-hand edge, and that curve is actively drawn into the structure. Rectilinear formats do not encourage this interaction nearly so readily. A right-angle corner tends to appear as an arbitrary and disjunctive imposition on a view of nature and cannot easily be integrated to the same depth. There are many paintings from this period with a small, squared format and a diagonally divided composition. Although their borders are invariably acknowledged, they are rarely as subtly implicated. On occasion we can see such great artists as Ma Yüan working with great ingenuity to achieve the ideal integration (figs. 78, 84).<sup>10</sup> In the *Plum Blossoms* fans, shapes of plum tree and mountain discover a shared level of existence in their response to the circular format. At the same time, the angular articulation enlivening these curves would lose much of its vivacity if contained within a square frame.

There is, simultaneously, a tendency that seems contrary to this integration. The frame of the fan is far more forward, both perceptually and aesthetically, than the borders of earlier hanging and handscrolls. It becomes a window, like that which frames an image in a poem by Chiang K'uei, “A light boat suddenly passes by the window, / Disturbing one or two green reeds.”<sup>11</sup> Such a view pushes the space outward, through the window, at the same time that the formal structure is pulled back toward the frame in another perceptual dimension. The seeming contradiction is absorbed into an oscillating perception between representational and structural space, which may be described as an aesthetic

definition in progress. The subliminal structure of paintings energizes the formulations of the aesthete.

Although the early thirteenth-century court, by historical convention, is seen as very different from the milieu of Northern Sung literati, we find at this court the first flowering of poetry *within* painting. Yang Mei-tzu 楊妹子 (1162–1232), the wife of Emperor Ning-tsung 寧宗 (r. 1195–1224), was the writer of several inscriptions that are so important a feature in the paintings of both Ma Yüan and Hsia Kuei 夏珪 (active first half of the thirteenth century).<sup>12</sup> As seen in an image of perfection in Hsia Kuei's *Twelve Views of Landscape* (*Shan-shui shih-erh ching* 山水十二景; fig. 79), in the Nelson-Atkins Museum, this cooperation appears to have been historically critical. We desperately need to know much more about the actual process of interaction. Who said what to whom, and who did what when? But even in ignorance of how these images were specifically generated, it seems likely that Yang Mei-tzu had an important role in the transformation of painting into aesthetic object. Before her time no scroll or fan was ever viewed as such an intimate union of word and image.

In thinking of both poem and painting as aesthetic object, we are already verging on the difficulties raised in the introduction to this paper. Is the object an abstract or a concrete entity? But by thinking of self-conscious aestheticism as an ecology common to both poetry and painting, the problem can be reduced. Organisms as different as poems and paintings were all generated in the same ecology. Many aspects of the environment that had been shared by Chiang K'uei, Ma Yüan, and Hsia Kuei changed drastically during Ch'ien Hsüan's early years. But values cannot be replaced by a vacuum, and the set of values that developed in the cultural heydays of Ning-tsung and Li-tsung was still not only a ready option but in part an inescapable model, even after the fall of the Sung. Feelings about the values must have changed much more quickly than the values themselves, and there is much of the Southern Sung in Ch'ien Hsüan, even if he feels very differently about it.

In addressing the first point made earlier, concerning the types of reference occurring within a complex work of art between its various parts, we find more basic difficulties. I suggested that these types of reference were comparable in poetry and painting, as in Lin's analysis of the "poetic situation" and the "poetic act." The creation of a painting certainly occurs within a "situation," which includes the identity of the artist and his place of origin or residence. But the differences between media can no longer be ignored.

Lin discusses the prose of Chiang K'uei's prefaces and the poetic language of his lyrics as being different media.<sup>13</sup> What can be stated in prose is certainly different from what can be conveyed in poetry. But I am concerned with media in a more substantial sense, as fundamentally differentiated through their appropriate sensory systems. The question of "what can be said?" involves a literary predilection that ignores this difference. Our questions must not lose sight of the connections between word and image, but they must also reveal the gulf.

In the case of a work by Ch'ien Hsüan bearing both image and word, what more specific analysis of the handscroll is possible? Which is the situation and which the act? Even the assumption of priority for either medium does not answer this question. If the painting has priority, then a text may be taken as the situation for the painterly act. But the painterly act can in turn contain a poem.

Ch'ien Hsüan's signature seems directly comparable to Chiang K'uei's authorial

presence in the prefaces. But the content of Ch'ien's own poems might seem more obviously equivalent to Chiang's lyrics. That inscribed after his *Returning Home* painting, for example, reads:

In front of his humble gate he planted five willows.	衡門植五柳
By the eastern fence of his garden he picked chrysanthemums.	東籬樂叢菊
In his long chant is a lingering purity—	長嘯有餘清
Alas, with never enough wine to sustain it.	無奈酒不足
To live in this world we must become deeply drunk,	當世宜沈酣
For to take office would only bring shame.	作邑召侮辱
Sailing on inspiration he composed <i>Returning Home</i> !	乘與賦歸歟
One poem alone in a thousand years. <sup>14</sup>	千載一辭獨

Shou-chien Shih nicely remarks that T'ao Ch'ien seems to be in the moment of composition. But do we see the picture and the poem as mirrors of each other, or expect a more complex and less symmetrical relationship? And if the latter is the case, is the pairing preface/poem to lyric/picture, or the reverse? I suspect the relationship is indeed more complex and that the first pairing is more appropriate. In theory, one can argue for either pairing. Lyric and painting can portray, while preface and artist's poem can be more linear statements. On the other hand, preface and painting can be descriptive, while both poems are necessarily poetic. An intrinsic difficulty is emerging in a comparison between fundamentally different media but, because the artist himself makes a connection, we have to pursue it.

The poems inscribed on both *Returning Home* and *Watching Geese* derive rather directly from literary traditions reaching back to T'ao Ch'ien and Wang Hsi-chih 王羲之 (ca. 307–ca. 365). The pictures also relate to Li Kung-lin.<sup>15</sup> But the poems are much more than a matter of derivation, for by literally drawing into themselves fragments from a complex and value-laden tradition, they re-create that tradition for their own purposes. The tradition is not itself the object of attention but becomes, like a microclimate, the environment of an organism. The organism is the painting. In this sense the poem is equivalent to the “poetic situation” established by Chiang K'uei's prefaces. A poem functioning in this way must be the painter's own, for someone else's poem would be another object and not an environment.

The sequence of painting and poem is not necessarily significant. This depends upon the particular habits involved, and whether the order results more from norm or choice. In the tradition of narrative scrolls, text sometimes preceded illustration, as in Li T'ang's 李唐 (ca. 1070–ca. 1150) *Duke Wen of Chin Recovering His State* (*Chin Wen-kung fu-kuo t'u* 晉文公復國圖), in the Metropolitan Museum (see figs. 102, 112), and sometimes followed it, as in Ma Ho-chih's 馬和之 (active second half of the twelfth century) *Odes of the State of Pin* (*Mao-shih Pin-feng t'u* 毛詩豳風圖), from the *Kuo-feng* section of the *Book of Poetry*, also in the Metropolitan Museum. Inscriptions of a documentary nature, other than titles, customarily followed the painting. Although the order may have been a norm, there was probably a factor of choice or at least a degree of manipulation.

It appears, in any case, that Ch'ien Hsüan calculated the juxtaposition of calligraphy and painting for visual effect. He was certainly sensitive to the way in which pictures and texts specify quite different matter, and to the wholly different expectancies with which a person approaches the two media. A text may reveal rather readily its symbolic

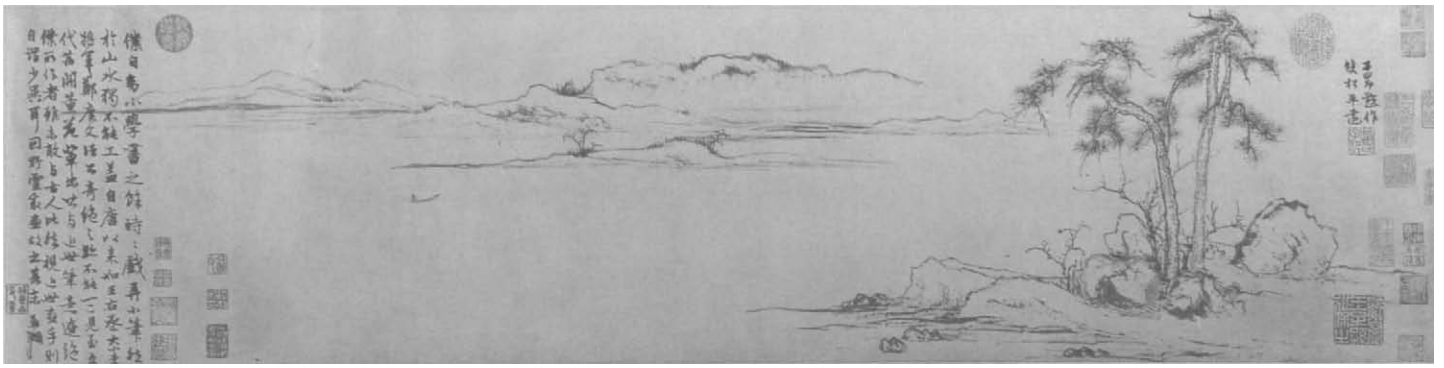


Figure 80. Chao Meng-fu (1254–1322), *Twin Pines against a Flat Vista*, 1300–1301. Handscroll, ink on paper, H. 25.4 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Gift of The Dillon Fund, 1973

associations and rhetorical purpose, unless it be either particularly prosaic or equally obscure. In contrast, a picture intended to reveal such content must often first reveal its intent precisely by tending to these same extremes. To read a text before looking at a picture, therefore, is like putting on a straitjacket before doing your aerobic dancing. Ch'ien Hsüan allows his paintings freedom to flex their structural and semantic muscles before the poems set their constraints. It is quite acceptable for the situation to be presented after the act, for at least two reasons. First, the conventional subjects of the paintings are not obscure. The acceptable viewer will have no problem identifying them. Second, as noted above, the handscroll's physical independence and coherence, its composition as an object, allows for perceptual dynamics that are at once controlled and free, instantaneous and cumulative. Perception will move back and forth as increasingly subtle relationships are discovered. "Dialogue" will develop.

Ch'ien Hsüan may well have contributed significantly to the development of the handscroll, to the ways in which it was exploited by both painter and viewer, and thus to its nature as an object.<sup>16</sup> Chao Meng-fu 趙孟頫 (1254–1322), Ch'ien's close friend, was also very creative and more experimental in his use of this format, especially in his inscriptions. In *Twin Pines against a Flat Vista* (*Shuang-sung p'ing-yüan t'u* 雙松平遠圖; fig. 80), datable to 1300–1301, in the Metropolitan Museum, Chao brackets the painting between a very personal identification, "Tzu-ang 子昂 playfully making 'Twin Pines and Flat Vista,'" and a severely objective statement of his historical circumstance, an explicit "aesthetic situation," which he signs "Meng-fu." But the second, more formal inscription looks paradoxically as though it grew out of the composition in response to the large pines, balancing and closing the structure. The painting thus generates an inscription that reflexively provides its context. This fully fledged pictorial *hsiang-sheng* is much in advance of its time.

The boldness of Chao's action in *Twin Pines* lies partly in his second inscription's startling encroachment on the painting. Its entire width runs through the baseline of the distant mountain. This provocative effect appears to have been calculated in the painter's finishing strokes. In contrast, Ch'ien Hsüan's inscriptions, though closely juxtaposed and on the same sheet of paper as the painting, are strictly demarcated. Ch'ien is interested in both continuities and discontinuities. His paintings stop abruptly at their left edge, and



Figure 81. Li T'ang (ca. 1070–ca. 1150), signature, from *Wind in the Pines of Myriad Valleys*. Hanging scroll, ink and color on silk, 188.7 × 139.8 cm. Palace Museum, Taipei (from *Li T'ang Wan-ho sung feng t'u* [Taipei: Palace Museum, 1982], p. 18)

the straightness of this edge is given considerable importance. It is emphasized by the close parallel of the inscription's first line. This careful demarcation, which imitates a join between two sheets of paper, is simultaneously undermined by a primary decision to use only a single sheet. The proportions of the inscription strengthen this primary unit by echoing those of the painted forms. At a subsidiary level, the formal vocabulary of the painting, especially in the trees, prefigures that of the written characters. The space between the painting and the inscription interpenetrates both. There is thus a continuity of medium and a mutual responsiveness of structure that demand, as a condition of their existence, a meeting in space. In passing between painting and inscription, whether or not we take intellectual note of the fact, our perceptual system seeks a spatial continuum and must adjust to the clarity or ambiguity of certain clues.

Both Chao and Ch'ien posit not only a documentary or literary connection between picture and text, but a perceptual relationship, a coexistence that demands and creates a space for experience. This space can be seen as an aspect of the new organic unity discussed by Lin in respect of Chiang K'uei and by Shih in respect of Ch'ien Hsüan. But it is with space that the problem of organic unity in the perception of a physical object, a painting, parts company from that problem in the reading of a text, an intellectual object having only limited connection with the physical extension of the printed page. Picture and text both become emotional objects.

We are so used to the association of calligraphy and painting that we tend to see it in terms of habit and genre, rather than of morphology. But a painting, such as the Metropolitan Museum's *Summer Mountains* (*Hsia-shan t'u* 夏山圖; see figs. 2–4), attributed to Ch'ü Ting 屈鼎 (active ca. 1023–63), creates a space that is incompatible with an inscription. The inscription by the Ch'ing emperor Ch'ien-lung 乾隆 (r. 1736–95) can only be described as some kind of UFO. It is totally alien. This is an ontological issue, of what is or is not, of what is possible or impossible. When earlier Sung painters wished

to add a signature, they had literally to incorporate it: as foliage in the case of Fan K'uan 范寬 (ca. 960–ca. 1030), or as carved on a cliff in the case of Li T'ang's *Wind in the Pines of Myriad Valleys* (*Wan-ho sung-feng t'u* 萬壑松風圖; fig. 81), in the Palace Museum, Taipei. Even the extraordinary *Latter Red Cliff Ode* (*Hou ch'ih-pi t'u* 後赤壁圖; see fig. 120) by Ch'iao Chung-ch'ang 喬仲常 (active first half of the twelfth century), in the Nelson-Atkins Museum, restrains its text within these limitations despite all its structural challenges.

The transition in the early thirteenth century is critical in a particular sense because the ontological status of inscriptions on works of this period is precariously balanced. In some cases, such as Hsia Kuei's *Boat Running in a Storm* (*Feng-yü chou hsing t'u* 風雨舟行圖) and its associated inscription by Hsiao-tsung 孝宗 (r. 1165–89), the parallel, either/or equivalence of the painting and poem was emphasized by their having been mounted back-to-back on the same fan.<sup>17</sup> In other cases, such as Hsia Kuei's *Twelve Views* and including all formats, the calligraphy is not merely an associated inscription but invades the represented, atmospheric space and hangs there as a challenge to its viability. Because Southern Sung represented space is so visually palpable, we are anticipating only palpably real objects. The calligraphy becomes palpably real, but representationally unreal. Its acceptability comes through qualities we analyzed in Ma Yüan's fan paintings. Even without the calligraphy, these early thirteenth-century paintings oscillate between two radically different kinds of space, aesthetic and illusionistic. The same factors that integrate the borders of the fan with the structure of the painting also integrate the conflict between calligraphic and representational space into a freshly expanded aesthetic totality.<sup>18</sup>

Invasive inscriptions are also found on paintings produced by painters other than the professional academicians. An obvious example is *Cloudy Mountains* (*Yün-shan t'u* 雲山圖; see fig. 45) by Mi Yu- jen, in the Cleveland Museum. Mi was also closely associated with the court in the last decade of his life. His role as a connoisseur may well have fostered the subsequent imperial taste for inscriptions, although the court of the emperor Hui-tsung 徽宗 (r. 1101–25) may well have been another source. Mi was experimental in his use of inscriptions, and there is a distinctly anomalous appearance to his writing on the Cleveland painting. It cannot be justified by either narrative inscriptions or the “labeling” inscriptions, such as those on the version of *Nymph of the Lo River* (*Lo-shen t'u* 洛神圖) in the Liaoning Provincial Museum (see fig. 113). Nor is it spatially integrated. If we came to this inscription out of the eleventh century, rather than looking back through later centuries, we might be outraged. But its oddity is historically appropriate. Both Mi Yu- jen and his father, Mi Fu 米芾 (1052–1107), were important progenitors of the thirteenth-century transition, though they worked on a very different basis from that of Ma Yüan and Hsia Kuei.<sup>19</sup>

An interesting comparison, from Ch'ien Hsüan's own time, is Chao Meng-fu's *Autumn Colors on the Ch'iao and Hua Mountains* (*Ch'iao-Hua ch'iu-se t'u* 鵲華秋色圖), dated 1296, in the Palace Museum, Taipei (fig. 82). The artist's inscription sits in the sky, to the right of Mount Ch'iao. It would probably look a trifle odd if left isolated by the disappearance of the four later inscriptions by the Ch'ien-lung emperor. There is something almost guilty, at the least nervous, in the way the lower border of the inscription withdraws from the trees below. It is a remarkable contrast to Chao's boldness in his *Twin Pines* of only four or five years later. Perhaps there was some accident of circumstances behind his inscription on *Autumn Colors*, such as a lack of further paper and an



urgent need to provide an inscription. Even if there were forces of circumstance, however, the painting was already set to accommodate them. A remarkable congruence of ground plane and painting ground extends to absorb the inscription without too much discomfort.

Ch'ien Hsüan's inscription on his own *Dwelling in the Floating Jade Mountains* (*Fou-yü-shan chü t'u* 浮玉山居圖), in the Shanghai Museum, provides another distinctive case (fig. 83). Shih has argued convincingly for the fascinating possibility that this painting was done for the reviled prime minister Chia Ssu-tao 費似道 (1213–75), in which case it must predate Chia's death in 1276.<sup>20</sup> This not only places the work very early in Ch'ien's oeuvre but also must affect our judgment of the inscription's role. The scroll should also be visualized without the Ch'ing-dynasty inscription and seals. The artist's own inscription comes near the opening of the picture and thus functions more like an introduction than do his inscriptions on *Returning Home* and *Watching Geese*. The unusual signature, "On the right is my titular inscription (*t'i* 題), to my own painting of 'Dwelling in Mountains,' Wu-hsing Ch'ien Hsüan, Shun-chü 舜舉," reinforces this impression. It is reminiscent of annotations found in literary works. The routing of the work's history through a patron complicates the possibilities. It is possible that the inscription was later imported, by Ch'ien or someone else. Shou-chien Shih accepts the calligraphy as genuine and cites its style as further evidence for the early date. The oddities, however, indicate either some irregularity in how the inscription came to be there, or some inherent ambiguities in the original status of such an inscription.

Ch'ien's mature practice is seen in his inscriptions on *Returning Home* and *Watching Geese*. The maturity is founded on the contribution made by the early thirteenth century to pictorial space, but achieved in a completely fresh perception. The compositions of the two scrolls retain close connections to the Southern Sung, but the links are across a rapidly widening gulf. The contrast between diagonally opposed corners remains, but the orientation has fundamentally shifted. In the courtly formula of Ma Yüan's *Scholar by a Waterfall* (*Kao-shih kuan-p'u t'u* 高士觀瀑圖) in the Metropolitan Museum, prominent foreground motifs press forward, hard against the windowlike border (fig. 84). Space moves back from the opposite foreground corner and slides diagonally behind the foreground motif. Every element in the composition reinforces this diagonal orientation, and the gentleman, even as he looks down into a corner, directs his view along a diagonal. In Ch'ien Hsüan's composition the diagonal is either fossilized, as in *Returning Home*, or suppressed, as in *Watching Geese*. Although still pushed to one side, the orientation of the foreground motifs is now lateral. The distant mountains have abandoned the diagonal even more completely and have regained the symmetry of Northern Sung mountains, thus becoming reoriented along the normal axes of the horizontal and vertical. There is no longer any diagonal flow of space between far and near motifs, only a remarkable division to either side of a vertical axis. In both paintings this nearly central axis is marked by a total emptiness. The inscriptions and seals of the Ch'ien-lung emperor are a miserable disaster in this connection. Shou-chien Shih has suggested that the manner in which Ch'ien, in comparison to the Li Kung-lin prototype, has enlarged the boat and moved it back from its incipient landing reflects his own sense of isolation and the unattainability of T'ao's retreat. While I find this intriguing, I am also chary of such psychologism in this context. There is a more straightforward image of separation in the last line of Ch'ien's own poem, "One poem alone in a thousand years." Such a line, which suggests



Figure 82. Chao Meng-fu, *Autumn Colors on the Ch'iao and Hua Mountains*, dated 1296. Detail of handscroll, ink and color on paper, H. 28.4 cm. Palace Museum, Taipei



Figure 83. Ch'ien Hsüan, *Dwelling in the Floating Jade Mountains*. Handscroll, ink and colors on paper, H. 29.6 cm. Shanghai Museum

mutual identification rather than alienation, would be meaningless in relation to Li Kung-lin's version, which shows a boat being hauled ashore. This is not to say that psychological factors are irrelevant, only that we need not expect that a biographical circumstance, translated into a psychic state, will be directly embodied in a work of art. Feelings of "isolation" and "deprivation" need to be transfigured, and the outcome does not necessarily figure on a scale of happiness. However, neither of these explanations is as important as the structural necessity. To have allowed the boat a more tangible landing would have destroyed the highly distinctive space of the painting.

The left side of *Watching Geese* is a remarkable achievement. All the elements are pressed closely together in a way that may seem to be quintessentially thirteenth century. But the quintessentially thirteenth-century space has been squeezed out of existence. At



Figure 84. Ma Yüan,  
*Scholar by a Waterfall*.  
Album leaf, ink and color on silk,  
23.3 × 25.9 cm.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art;  
Gift of The Dillon Fund, 1973

the beginning of his development as a painter, Ch'ien Hsüan, who possessed great technical skill, must have explored that space with consistency but to extreme ends. Paintings of the mid-thirteenth century, even when in distinct technical modes, share in an exquisitely refined exploration of increasingly highly compressed and subtly graduated space.<sup>21</sup> In *Watching Geese*, however, all the palpable, breathable space has been dried out. Brush-stroke touches brush mark in a dry surface that is seeking a life of its own. A sudden materialization of texture orders and reorders itself through fascinating shifts of pattern. This is not abstract in the sense of any withdrawal from sensual quality. Quite the opposite. The tactile experience is greatly enhanced as we explore the patterns almost actually as if feeling our way through the dense leaves of a shrubbery.

Something extraordinary has also happened to Wang Hsi-chih's elegant pavilion (see fig. 72). Does it have two rooms, or has the roof fallen apart? If it has two sections, why does the right section have no farther finial and the left no nearer? A magical transformation has been wrought within the foliage patterns. The shifting pattern has incorporated the pavilion, which has been transposed into a space where its parts are connected in quite unexpected ways. That this may be paradise gives us a description but not an explanation.

The outcome, which unifies all these peculiarities and others that I have not detailed, is a tangible medium, or substrate, which runs through the entire work, including the inscription. This substrate is, quite concretely, the surface on which Ch'ien Hsüan paints his forms, writes his poem, and in which he leaves his voids. His medium is the paper,

and its surface is consistently and uninterruptedly present. A diagonal would work against this presence, but normal axes emphasize it. The patterns of his foliage cling to this surface. If Wang Hsi-chih's pavilion were to be geometrically reassembled, it would either stand out from this surface or puncture it.

Chao Meng-fu's *Autumn Colors* offers another, though less-startling example of such architecture. The small farmhouses on the left of this composition have been flattened by a gentle but irresistible pressure, and the concurrence of ground and surface is not disturbed. Their quiet absorption into this new space has much to do with the final acceptability of the inscription. In Chao's case, we might call these houses ideographic, as their transformation allows them correspondingly to swell with meaning. But in Ch'ien Hsüan's case, I doubt whether this would be appropriate. Sufficient to itself is their transmutation into a fresh world. Chao was predominantly a painter of ideas, while Ch'ien was a painter of feelings. But they were both painters, and this set them off from those who were only poets.

The transformation achieved by Ch'ien Hsüan enabled his poetry to inhabit the same space as the painting and was a major milestone in a long evolution. His grounds were quite different from those of the early thirteenth century. The earlier quality lay in an exquisite sharpness of a conflict that was absent from the later resolution. The conflict lay both in the dominance of systematic atmospheric space over floating inscription, and in the incompatibility between illusionistic representation and the fabric of the silk. The reversal of this conflict lay in the reduction of atmospheric space from a system to a motif, and in the purposeful revelation, through paper, of the commonality of surface and space. This revelation was of such complexity, involving the very nature of artistic creation itself, that there were to be many further milestones. Some of these were soon provided by Chao Meng-fu, whose *Twin Pines* was a visionary work that required centuries fully to reveal itself.

These are issues that live within the work of painting, not of poetry. They are therefore mute for the most part until pried loose by an analytic curiosity that was no part of their original existence. But I would like to try and bring them back nearer the central tension between poetry and painting. Several authors have commented on the importance of the "blue-and-green" style of painting to Ch'ien Hsüan.<sup>22</sup> There is no doubt as to his predilection for it, nor as to its association with themes of immortality. But there are many examples from other times and artists that do not share his spatial peculiarities. Wang Hsi-meng 王希孟 (ca. 1096–ca. 1120), for example, who submitted his astoundingly ambitious *Thousand Li of Rivers and Mountains* (*Ch'ien-li Chiang-shan t'u* 千里江山圖; Palace Museum, Beijing; see fig. 176) to Emperor Hui-tsung around 1113, must have been reflecting the emperor's obsession with Taoist paradises, as embodied in the man-assembled splendors of the famous garden, the Ken-yüeh-yüan 艮嶽園. But the brilliant greens and blues of Wang's painting overlies a painting of unforgiving rationality. There is much cartography and little poetry. With Ch'ien we must confront the poetical issue.

Although Shou-chien Shih makes a strong case for the disjunctive quality in Ch'ien's compositions being an expression of his despair, I think the explanation may lie as much in more generic issues. Shuen-fu Lin discusses the development of Chiang K'uei's poetry in terms of a "retreat toward the object," which he relates in a general way to the Neo-Confucianism of Chu Hsi 朱熹 (1130–1200).<sup>23</sup> It would be fascinating to pursue in detail

the possible implications of this for painting, since they are not necessarily what one might expect. But I will confine myself to one aspect that is especially relevant to this discussion. Lin's deliberately provocative usage, "retreat toward" the object, gives us an important clue, for we normally think of retreating *from* the objective. Lin sees Chiang's later lyrics as increasingly omitting the explicit experiencing subject, retreating toward the object until, quite startlingly, the lost subject is revealed within the object:

In the lyric songs of Chiang K'uei, one usually hears the "voices of feeling" but not the actual mention of the "I." Paradoxically, these "voices of feeling" represent the omnipresence of the lyrical self.<sup>24</sup>

Lin discusses this both as a general quality of the lyrical form and as a wider feature of the thirteenth century. The distinctive relationship that we see in such paintings as Ma Yüan's *On a Mountain Path in Spring* (*Shan-ching ch'un-hsing t'u* 山徑春行圖), in the Palace Museum, Taipei, may be analyzed in this light (see fig. 78). The object of the scholar's gaze is as much the poetic couplet as the bird: "Brushing sleeves, wild flowers dance; / Flying from man, a hidden bird cuts short its song." The nature of the subject is a different problem in painting from that in poetry. Is the scholar an "I" or a "he"? Or even a "him"? Is the scholar the object? Or is the bird, or the poem? When is the painter an "I" within his own painting? More basically, how can we decide? The painting, in fact, cannot be reduced to a linguistic statement. On the other hand, analogous relationships can be exemplified. The "I," in the sense of a personal identity, is barely present in courtly painting of Ma Yüan's time. The act of observation is more highly objectified than in any period of Chinese art. It is exemplified within the painting, but it also attaches itself very strongly to the person looking at the painting. This attachment, however, maintains its distance, since it emphasizes relationships of sight and of generalized sentiment rather than of individual inner feeling. In the *Mountain Path* there is an elegant reverberation within the painting, bracketed by the scholar and the poem but including the flowers and the bird. This structure may be analogous to Lin's "voices of feeling." But there is also a primarily linear or syntagmatic relationship linking the viewer, the scholar, the flowers, the bird, and the couplet. The whole structure is a play on such perceptual linkage, through which the lyrical self is revealed. But in later thirteenth-century painting, and to an extreme degree in Ch'ien Hsüan's oeuvre, the link between external and internal observer is severed. For reasons that are partially explained by our earlier analysis, we have no syntagmatic link with T'ao Ch'ien or Wang Hsi-chih. We are not part of the same perceptual statement, and the axes of the structure do not acknowledge our presence. It might seem fair to describe such a painting as having wholly retreated into the object. But it is probably more correct to say that a sudden reversal has occurred and that the object has retreated into the subject, which has now found an existence of its own.<sup>25</sup> Its relationship to us is paradigmatic. If we do not respond to the paradigm, if we do not hear the invitation to substitute T'ao's experience for our own (rather than the painting for the poem), then we are left out of the picture.<sup>26</sup>

The "voices of feeling" in Ch'ien's painting are inseparable from his use of color. Although the brilliant colors of his landscapes are closely linked with immortality, we should not ignore a persistent attraction to bright hues that is widespread in the Chinese tradition, including poetry and painting. Even in the Sung, the fashions in such objects as ceramics and rocks make it clear that the scholar's taste was far from monotonous.

Shuen-fu Lin, in analyzing Chiang K'uei's lyrics, remarks how he attaches colors to things in constructing his "morphology of feeling" (an even better term for our purposes). Lin specifies the "dazzling sensory quality" of Chiang's later lyrics and those of his successors as a particular feature of the "imagistic language [, which] has the virtue of the vividness and immediacy of experience, but at the same time . . . suffers from the effect of fragmentation."<sup>27</sup> This description brings us closer to Ch'ien Hsüan. The quality is an outcome of the "retreat toward the object," but, at the same time, it entices the senses into a dreamworld. Not only do the brilliant colors immediately set themselves off from their surroundings, but also the "fragmentation" that Lin refers to is a necessary prelude to reconstruction.

"Dream" is a term with a natural affinity for Ch'ien Hsüan. Shou-chien Shih writes that the "paradise [of eremitism] was unattainable. He could not help but lock himself within his own dream world."<sup>28</sup> Richard Barnhart perceptively writes of *Returning Home* that "the painting's world is neither here nor anywhere else that can be specified, except in the peculiar, dreamlike, and dazzling mind of the artist."<sup>29</sup> Reverie needs to break free from the rigid triangulation of time and space. Ch'ien's own poems certainly dream, so much so that they do not need to mention the fact. On *Watching Geese* he writes:

Such pleasure in that grove of elegant bamboos,	脩竹林間爽致多
In a peaceful pavilion, with stomach bare,	閑亭坦腹意如何
how wonderful it feels!	
Writing the <i>Tao-te-ching</i> for a Taoist friend,	為書道德遺方士
Leaving a romantic image, the one who loves geese. . . . <sup>30</sup>	留得風流一愛鵝

In his poem on *Returning Home* we have already read: "In his long chant is a lingering purity— / Alas, with never enough wine to sustain it. . . ." On his *Pear Blossoms* (*Li-hua t'u* 梨花圖), in the Metropolitan Museum, he writes: "All alone by the veranda railing, her teardrops drench the branches, / Her face is unadorned, but her old beauty remains. . . ."<sup>31</sup> The lingering image is persistent, and its lingering is a dream. It is also unmistakable in the representation. Wang Hsi-chih's love of geese has become a vehicle for a more extended flight of the imagination. His eyes have lifted from the geese and are drawn to the vision of a dream hut at the foot of distant hills. T'ao Ch'ien, still afloat on wide waters, is dreaming toward his rural paradise. Even the peach blossoms dream in the quietude of their intimate space.

The implications of the dream should be pursued. Its delicate trails through art offer a rewarding journey. The theme of *wo-yu* 卧遊 (dream-wandering) is often glimpsed, and this term is itself an essential guide. The dream is distinctively a daydream, a reverie, and a flight of the imagination. It is utterly different from the disconnected irrationality of the night. Poems arise from reverie, not from the night dream.

Important though this theme be, it presents great difficulties to our necessarily more pedestrian methodologies. The circumstance has been explored by one scholar in particular, Gaston Bachelard. His oeuvre is a gold mine of perceptions in this elusive region.<sup>32</sup> Because of both the elusiveness of these issues and also some remarkable universalities that emerge from Bachelard's work, I will depend on him explicitly. He is deeply thoughtful about the *image* in a poetic sense, that which emerges uniquely in a moment of creation, not that which carries a cultural symbol, and writes:

I propose . . . to consider the imagination as a major power of human nature. To be sure, there is nothing to be gained by saying that the imagination is the faculty of producing images. But this tautology has at least the virtue of putting an end to comparisons of images with memories.<sup>33</sup>

In the tail of this remark lies a sting for overoptimistic iconographers.<sup>34</sup> But our optimism may be twice removed. Not only is Bachelard shifting the discussion of poetry into a world where language loses many of its customary linguistic assumptions, but it is also in this world that we may find Ch'ien Hsüan at home. Bachelard later remarks:

If I were asked to name the chief benefit of [the image of] the house, I should say: the house shelters daydreaming. . . . Thought and experience are not the only things that sanction human values. The values that belong to daydreaming mark humanity in its depths. Daydreaming even has a privilege of autovalorization. It derives direct pleasure from its own being. Therefore, the places in which we have *experienced daydreaming* reconstitute themselves in a new daydream.<sup>35</sup>

Such homes have a special place in the paintings of Ch'ien Hsüan. In *Watching Geese* he dreams of both a pavilion facing outward into the dream and a cottage turning inward into the dreamer. Daydreaming offers entry into the wellsprings of human creativity, the power of making poetic images. When Bachelard writes of them that "the entire life of the image is in its dazzling splendor, in the fact that an image is a transcending of all the premises of sensibility," he seems to have been sharing Ch'ien Hsüan's daydream.<sup>36</sup> Although he is a long way from China and the Yüan dynasty, the phenomenology he offers is helpful to us. But at this moment I wish only to rely on his support for some very limited suggestions, for fear that, in his words, we risk "explaining the flower by the fertilizer."

Bachelard repeatedly emphasizes that "the poetic image places us at the origin of the speaking being," and that "poetry is a soul inaugurating a form."<sup>37</sup> If, therefore, we take seriously the poetic quality of Ch'ien Hsüan's imagery, vibrating with the freshness of daydreams, we should be careful not to overemphasize their archaism or their psychology. As Bachelard writes, in a passage full of wonder:

The poetic image is not subject to an inner thrust. It is not an echo of the past. On the contrary: through the brilliance of an image, the distant past resounds with echoes, and it is hard to know at what depth these echoes will reverberate and die away.<sup>38</sup>

Thus echoes of the Eastern Chin, summoned into the air by Ch'ien's poems, resound within the "felicitous places" of his paintings. Bachelard's most valuable contribution to our discussion is his concern for the particular nature of the space that poetry creates and inhabits. To quote him again:

The images I want to examine are the quite simple images of *felicitous space*. . . . these investigations . . . seek to determine the human value of the sorts of space that may be grasped. . . . For diverse reasons, and with the differences entailed by poetic shadings, this is eulogized space. Attached to its

protective value, which can be a positive one, are also imagined values, which soon become dominant. Space that has been seized upon by the imagination cannot remain indifferent space subject to the measures and estimates of the surveyor. It has been lived in, not in its positivity, but with all the partiality of the imagination.<sup>39</sup>

We must take especial note of the way in which this space is dissociated from geometry: "A house that has been experienced is not an inert box. Inhabited space transcends geometrical space."<sup>40</sup> Metaphysics, which Bachelard considers close to poetry, "should beware of the privileges of evidence that are the property of geometrical intuition."<sup>41</sup> It is exactly de-geometrization, not only of his pavilion but of his entire space, that enables Ch'ien Hsüan to bring the worlds of poetry and painting together.<sup>42</sup> The fact that this achievement was part of the discovery of surface invokes the same universal values. Bachelard writes:

The phenomenology of the poetic imagination allows us to explore the being of man considered as the being of a *surface*, of the surface that separates the region of the same from the region of the other. It should not be forgotten that in this zone of sensitized surface, before being, one must speak, if not to others, at least to oneself.<sup>43</sup>

The surface of the material is where all of the painter's work takes place. To hide it is to disguise that work, to preserve it is to reveal. On the level of period style, the artist has no choice. Perception of space in Northern Sung painting is incompatible with perception of surface. The period of Ma Yüan and Hsia Kuei embraces this incompatibility as a renewed source of energy in landscape painting. The period of Ch'ien Hsüan and Chao Meng-fu seeks to dissolve the incompatibility in a common ground. On the level of personal style, there is choice. Mi Yu-jen seeks this choice, while Ch'iao Chung-ch'ang reaches such visionary acceptance of it that he is almost indigestible in his own period style.<sup>44</sup>

For Ch'ien Hsüan and Chao Meng-fu, it was a question of both period style and choice. What was the meaning of the choice? It is possible that Ch'ien was explicitly concerned with the unification of painting and poetry, but I rather doubt this. I think that this unification was contained by a more general impetus, the search for expression of the self. The physical structure of the handscroll, its inscriptions and its painting, had already gone a long way to establishing this context as an artistic persona, within which the self-image might be expressed. But the medium for selfness was surface. The surface is where the meaning of inner and outer takes physical form, and it thus became a defining factor in Yüan-dynasty painting. An artist's revelation of surface is a revelation of self. It represents, in Bachelard's words, "the being of man considered as the being of a *surface*, of the surface that separates the region of the same from the region of the other." In keeping with both the tentative state of the development in general and of the isolated nature of Ch'ien's aesthetic object in particular, in his paintings this surface is quite reticent. But it is indeed the surface of his being.

It is important to realize the universality of this choice, as shown by its appearance as far afield as Bachelard. But the viability of the choice is culturally determined, and it is remarkable how early it became viable in China. The reasons are demonstrated by the



philosophical tradition, especially in Sung Neo-Confucianism. There was an almost obsessive concentration on the problem and the psychology of mind. The great debate between Chu Hsi and Lu Hsiang-shan 陸象山 (1139–93), held at the Goose Lake Temple in 1175, was over the definition of mind. Chu Hsi's own views are perhaps the most relevant to us, for he was convinced of its material aspect. In Tu Wei-ming's account:

Since *li* as the ultimate ground of existence is being and not activity, the energy of cosmic activity is assigned to the concept of *ch'i* (material or vital force). When *li* and *ch'i* are described as two mutually interacting and yet discrete realities, the ultimate ground of existence (being) no longer identifies with the principle of actualization (activity). As a result, despite its having the potentiality of conforming itself to *li*, the mind is essentially the delicate stuff, *ch'i*.<sup>45</sup>

Mind and *ch'i* had already converged, and paper, with its highly entropic texture, was about to join them. The surface became mind, and the being of the painting became *li*, as Huang Kung-wang 黃公望 (1269–1354) stated.<sup>46</sup>

It might be possible to track the various lines of Neo-Confucianism and affiliate them to Yüan-dynasty painters.<sup>47</sup> This could conceivably result in stylistic categories equivalent to, for example, the schools of Chu Hsi, Lu Hsiang-shan, and various syncretic thinkers. I haven't tried to do this, but, whatever might be the result, one fact must be emphasized: I am not talking about *influences* here, but about paradigms and analogies. As J. H. van den Berg has remarked, "Poets and painters are born phenomenologists,"<sup>48</sup> and philosophers can just as well be influenced by artists. The coin of philosophical articulation, however, enters into the intellectual exchange of scholarship much more readily than do the ephemeral jewels of imagery. As I remarked at the beginning, simply by discussing these questions, we distort the answers. Balancing our investigation involves contortions that are shamed by the elegance and freshness of the original achievements that we admire and study, but we must still try.

#### NOTES

- 1 I am particularly grateful to editors Alfreda Murck and May Wu for their extensive and patient efforts in turning a very discursive paper into a more readable essay. I took many of their suggestions but not all, so they may disclaim responsibility for incomprehensibilities remaining. The original paper was meant to persuade rather than to analyze, as an exercise in what one might call methodological impressionism, to convey the shape and proximity of certain problems, and not to offer answers, let alone models. The notations now added should not be taken even as analytical dicta, but only as indications concerning the sources of these impressions and an occasional suggestion as to a line of inquiry.
- 2 *Yu-sheng-hua* (attributed in *Chung-wen ta-tz'u-tien* [The encyclopedic dictionary of the Chinese language] [Taipei: China Academy, 1973], vol. 16, p. 217, to a poem by Huang Chin 黃潛 [1277–1357], "Wind and Rain on Reedy Stream": "I have left for you this sounding painting / as an inscription on a picture of a skiff in mist and rain") was probably formulated in imitation of the earlier *wu-sheng-shih* (attributed in *ibid.*, vol. 20, p. 369, to Huang T'ing-chien 黃庭堅 [1045–1105], "On Inscriptions by Tzu-chan 子瞻 and Tzu-yu 子由 [Su Shih 蘇軾 (1037–1101) and Su Ch'e 蘇轍 (1039–1112)] on [Li Kung-lin's] Picture 'Resting in Contemplation'": "Master Li had a line he couldn't spit out / with pale ink he wrote out a soundless poem"). The priority seems right, for a "sounding painting" is the more precious conceit and more acceptable after the aestheticism of the thirteenth century. It is significant that both phrases are used in relation to specifically associated paintings and poems

- and that Huang T'ing-chien gives a vividly physical description. These are sensory rather than theoretical links. Susan Bush discusses the development of both terminology and concept in *The Chinese Literati on Painting: Su Shih (1037-1101) to Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (1555-1636)*, Harvard-Yenching Institute Studies, no. 27 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), pp. 22-28. Su Shih said of Wang Wei 王維 (701-61) that there are paintings in his poems and poems in his paintings (ibid., p. 25), of Tu Fu 杜甫 (712-70) that his poems were paintings without shapes, and of Han Kan 韓幹 (mid-8th c.) that his paintings were "unspoken poems" (ibid., p. 25). Su indicates ("When one savors Mo-chieh's [Wang Wei] poems, . . . / When one looks at Mo-chieh's pictures") that the matrix for all these formulations was a sensory one. The same was true in some of the classical sources of very similar Western terminology. Understanding of this matrix, of course, has changed to a degree that radically complicates the historical account. Both in the West and in China, the most usual early use of the comparison was in respect of poetry's descriptive powers. The famous simile of Horace (65-8 B.C.), "as is painting so is poetry," was expressly in relation to perception. Simonides' remark, as quoted by Plutarch around the year 100, that "painting is mute poetry, poetry a speaking picture," was a remarkably exact predecessor of Huang T'ing-chien and Huang Chin (see Rensselaer W. Lee, *Ut Pictura Poesis: The Humanistic Theory of Painting* [New York: W. W. Norton, 1967], pp. 3-5). Theoretical elaboration followed the recovery of these sources by European critics of the sixteenth century. The use of literary theory to model a theory of painting, in both the West and China, inexorably skewed subsequent discussion, as some realized. La Fontaine (1621-95) complained that "les mots et les couleurs ne sont choses pareilles / Ni les yeux ne sont les oreilles" (ibid., pp. 8-9). Lessing (1729-81) wrote powerfully against what he saw as the resulting confusion. His *Laokoon* (xvi-xx) has perhaps been neither fully acknowledged nor fully answered. In China, the theory did not have the same systematic and abstract development and did not arouse the same opposition. See also below, n. 15.
- 3 Shou-chien Shih, "Eremitism in Landscape Paintings by Ch'ien Hsüan (ca. 1235-before 1307)" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1984).
  - 4 Ibid., p. 266.
  - 5 For Chiang K'uei's meticulous dating, see Shuen-fu Lin, *The Transformation of the Chinese Lyrical Tradition: Chiang K'uei and Southern Sung "Tz'u" Poetry* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), p. 71. Ch'ien Hsüan did not date his paintings. Although such dating was not yet the norm, this was possibly a significant omission. He may not have considered it a relevant aspect of the "situation."
  - 6 The importance of Mi Yu-jen in the development of the relationship between painting and poetry is confirmed by Ogawa Hiromitsu's fascinating paper contained in this volume.
  - 7 Shih discusses a movement from opening lower right to center left and back to upper right as common in thirteenth-century handscrolls ("Eremitism in Landscape," p. 191). We may note the Crawford handscroll by Kuo Hsi 郭熙 (ca. 1010-ca. 1090), *Trees against a Flat Vista* (see fig. 175), as a fine example of this in the eleventh century. What may be generically more important is the function of retroactive movement. In the Nelson-Atkins Museum *Fishermen* handscroll by Hsü Tao-ning 許道寧 (ca. 970-1051/52), both narrative and structural functions of a bridge, barely noticed at its first occurrence in the middle ground of the opening section, become more apparent only when we have passed by another bridge in the center section, and are fully revealed only when we eventually see the travelers, foreign bodies in the fishermen's world, crossing yet another bridge in the closing section. At this point, whether literally or only in reminiscence, there is a retroactive return to the first bridge that energizes an arterial axis through the entire composition. The sequentiality along the horizontal axis of the handscroll is vitally important, and through it one may say, precisely, that the narrative evolves. But it can also present relationships of containment, both prospectively and retrospectively.
  - 8 Lin, *Transformation*, pp. 36ff.
  - 9 Richard M. Barnhart, *Peach Blossom Spring: Gardens and Flowers in Chinese Paintings* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1983), pp. 128-29; see also in this connection, idem, "Lyric Moments," in *Along the Border of Heaven: Sung and Yüan Paintings from the C. C. Wang Family Collection* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1983), pp. 77-94.
  - 10 In the sixteenth century, rectilinear formats became deeply implicated in pictorial structure. This was an aspect of both the aesthetic taste of that time and the treatment of depth in painting.
  - 11 "Written at Lakeside Residence," translated by Chiang Yee, in Wu-chi Liu and Irving Yucheng Lo, eds., *Sunflower Splendor: Three Thousand Years of Chinese Poetry* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1975), p. 401.
  - 12 See Chiang Chao-shen, "The Identity of Yang Mei-tzu and the Paintings of Ma Yüan," *National*

*Palace Museum Bulletin* 2, nos. 2 (May 1967), pp. 1–14, and 3 (July 1967), pp. 9–14; see also Marc Wilson in relation to Hsia Kuei, in Wai-kam Ho et al., *Eight Dynasties of Chinese Painting: The Collections of the Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum, Kansas City, and The Cleveland Museum of Art* (Cleveland: Cleveland Museum of Art, 1980), pp. 72–76.

13 Lin, *Transformation*, p. 75.

14 Translation slightly adapted from Barnhart, *Peach Blossom Spring*, p. 42, in turn modified from one by Wai-kam Ho.

15 See section 1 of the *Returning Home* attributed to Li Kung-lin, now in the Freer Gallery of Art (fig. 73). This attribution is illustrated and discussed by Thomas Lawton in *Chinese Figure Painting*, exh. cat. (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1973), pp. 38–41; and the relationship to Ch'ien's painting is discussed by Shih, "Eremitism in Landscape," cited above.

I have changed the term "quotation" used in the paper in order to acknowledge difficulties that I am sliding over here. "Quotation," as a category of relationships between a work of art and its replications and between different works of art, raises key problems in some basic definitions in the arts. See Nelson Goodman, *Ways of Worldmaking* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1978), chap. 3, for "some questions concerning quotation," and other discussions in his earlier *Structure of Appearance* (1951) and *Languages of Art* (1968). These problems are especially appropriate to the Chinese circumstances, due to both the exceptional value placed upon references made by one work to others, and to explicit connections between poetic and pictorial art that certainly invite the term "quotation."

Goodman distinguishes "mention" and "use" and discusses "reference" and "containment" as two necessary conditions for quotation, strictly considered. The nature of the problem is glimpsed in a comparison of Su Shih's formulation "within poem is painting" (*shih-chung yu-hua* 詩中有畫) and "within painting is poem" (*hua-chung yu-shih* 畫中有詩) with Goodman's statement: "Plainly, sound can be contained in a picture, a picture contained in a sound, only if the nature of containment is stretched beyond any pertinent limit" (*Worldmaking*, p. 55).

The notion of "reference" is less troublesome than that of "containment." If Ch'ien were not purposefully referring to T'ao and Li, then the relationship would merely be one of stylistic development and not cultural meaning. But reference by itself is not enough, and some form of incorporation is necessary. Goodman shows that "containment" is the problem in pictorial rela-

tionships (*ibid.*, pp. 47–50), and all his points are analytically useful. But the same problem does not seem to apply to the Chinese term *chung*. Goodman's systematic logic commits him not only to a distinct idea of relationship, but also to a particular view of objects. *Chung* may not share either his relationships or his objects. As an impressionistic response, we might ask how Goodman would analyze a digestive process capable of reflection, and suggest that objects (and therefore relationships) in the Chinese case were more analogous to such a process. Goodman adds: "But auditory and pictorial symbols in general stand in no such relation to one another [as do inscriptions and utterances of the same expression]" (p. 55). Consideration of the two arts as abstract symbolic systems necessitates such a split. As experience, it may not be necessary. But their connection will also have to be differently framed. See above, n. 2.

16 He certainly exploited the handscroll format in an original way. Whether he influenced its historical development is a more difficult question. It would be valuable to know whether there were any contemporary changes in mounting practices that might have reflected the increasingly aesthetic status of the painting, and whether any such changes were instigated by mounters, collectors, or the painters themselves.

17 In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Reproduced in Kojiro Tomita, *Portfolio of Chinese Paintings in the Museum (Han to Sung Periods)*, 2d ed. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press for the Museum of Fine Arts, 1938), pls. 85–86. Painting and calligraphy need not be exactly contemporary. I thank Freda Murck for pointing out to me the peculiar interest of this practice. The mode of association was surely much more than conventional and deserves careful attention. Its whimsical nature, reversible by a mere twirl of the fingers, emphasizes again the importance of the physical nature of the fan in integrating both painting and poetry with their environment.

This question relates to the highly characteristic emphasis of early thirteenth-century court painting on particular conditions of time, place, weather, and so forth. In this connection, an interesting candidate for an inscription that was probably once mounted on a fan with a painting is a piece of calligraphy by Li-tsung, from the John M. Crawford, Jr., Collection. It is a couplet taken from Wang Wei's poem on "Retirement in Chung-nan Mountain": "Walk to where the waters end, / Watch when clouds rise." The whole poem was translated into French by François Cheng, author of *Chinese Poetic Writing: With an Anthology of T'ang Poetry*, trans. Donald A.

- Riggs and Jerome P. Seaton (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), p. 135. Cheng's note on the rich polarity of these two lines is excellent. He adds: "The true way of life is not to choose one or the other exclusively, but rather to embrace the Void between the two . . . and thus to participate in the universal transformation." I would add that there is a large gap between the entire eighth-century poem and the thirteenth-century quotation of this couplet. Although the influence of Ch'an at the Southern Sung court must have encouraged the ideal to "sunder neither action nor contemplation nor time and space," their mutual distinction had by now become the primary condition for their conjunction, a necessity prior to the ideal of an increasingly illusory participation. The twirl of a fan provided just such a coincidence of time and space. But it was an intersection rather than a polarity, and the specific quality of its moment was crucial to the aesthetic sense.
- 18 I say "integrate the conflict" intentionally. The conflict is exploited, not resolved, and its survival is one of the qualities distinguishing paintings of this period from that of others.
- 19 See Ogawa Hiromitsu's paper in this volume. Another important aspect of this question is the development of poetry in response to painting. Shou-chien Shih has an initial discussion of this, and there is an excellent article by Ronald Egan, "Poems on Paintings: Su Shih and Huang T'ing-chien," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 43, no. 2 (December 1983), pp. 413-51.
- 20 Shih, "Eremitism in Landscape," pp. 55ff., prompted by Richard Barnhart's note of a half-seal of Chia Ssu-tao on the painting in his review of *The Great Painters of China* by Max Loehr, *Ars Orientalis* 12 (1981), pp. 80-81.
- 21 See, for example, Chao Meng-chien 趙孟堅 (1199-1267?), *Narissi* (*Shui-hsien t'u* 水仙圖), The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Mu-ch'i 牧谿 (ca. 1200-1270), triptych in the Daitoku-ji, Kyoto; and the *Early Autumn* (*Ts'ao-ch'ung t'u* 草蟲圖), in the Detroit Institute of Arts, bearing an inscription purporting to be from Ch'ien's hand and surely a work of ca. 1250-75. *Early Autumn* has been the subject of lengthy analysis and argument. See Richard Edwards, "Ch'ien Hsüan and 'Early Autumn,'" *Archives of the Chinese Art Society of America* 7 (1953), pp. 71-83, and Wen Fong, "The Problem of Ch'ien Hsüan," *Art Bulletin* 42 (September 1960), pp. 173-89. Despite the problems and even if the current signature is an addition, the value of this scroll should be reexamined.
- 22 See Chu-ting Li on its historical aspects, "The Role of Wu-hsing in Early Yüan Artistic Development under Mongol Rule," in John D. Langlois, Jr., ed., *China under Mongol Rule* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), pp. 348-59; Shou-chien Shih on its relation to Ch'ien Hsüan and eremitism, "Eremitism in Landscape," pp. 279ff.; Richard Vinograd on stylistic lineages, "Some Landscapes Related to the Blue-and-Green Manner from the Early Yüan Period," *Artibus Asiae* 41, no. 2/3 (1979), pp. 101-31; John Hay, in relation to the iconography of immortality in Ch'ien Hsüan and elsewhere, "Huang Kung-wang's 'Dwelling in the Fu-ch'un Mountains': The Dimensions of a Landscape" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1977), pp. 283-95.
- 23 Lin, *Transformation*, pp. 9-12, 142-85.
- 24 *Ibid.*, p. 150.
- 25 I have changed my original view of this relationship, as given at the symposium in 1985. A problem here is that this analysis is verging on a game of words, in a specific sense. The function of sayer and said is analogous to, but not the same as, perceiver and perceived. When we discuss the perceiver and perceived, we are turning the relationship into the subject/object of sayer and said. I am still unsatisfied by this formulation.
- The difference is important at two levels. Painting is not speaking, and a painting is not a "sentence" as required for the methodology of structuralism, which has become the critical methodology of linguistic analysis. There are large problems lurking behind much of what is being said, since discussion of word and image owes so much to structuralism. Possible responses may not seem immediately compatible. Many people do not wish to view painting as communication, as *stating* something. But semiological acts, as defined by many semiologists, are not communication either. Thus painting is open to semiological, if not strictly structural analysis (see Philip Pettit, *The Concept of Structuralism: A Critical Analysis* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977], p. 55). Less conventionally, we might try to reverse the normal circumstances of a "sentence" and consider it in visual art as the linkage established by the perceiver in the act of perception (but not the percept). In schemata, such as Goodman's, that most strongly deny the possibility of a "statement that" in visual art, such linkage is generally ignored in favor of symbolic systems. It is, however, this set of relationships that I consider as typically "syntagmatic" in Southern Sung painting. See next footnote.
- 26 The contrast of paradigmatic and syntagmatic comes also, of course, from linguistics and structuralism. See, for example, Pettit, in *Structuralism*: "The syntagmatic relationships of a word are those it has with words which can occur in its

- neighborhood in a sentence . . ." (p. 8); "In the syntagm a term acquires its value only because it stands in opposition to everything that precedes or follows it, or both" (quoting from Saussure, p. 9); "It is usual to think of the paradigmatic relationships of a word as those it has with words which may replace it in some sentence without making the sentence syntagmatically unacceptable; these relationships are non-syntagmatic since words which may replace one another do not occur in the neighborhood of one another" (p. 8). The syntactical nature of language is, obviously enough, syntagmatic, and hence this kind of relationship is often to the fore when an analysis is in terms of linguistic structure. But the models of syntagm and paradigm, although articulated in Saussurian linguistics, have strongly spatial aspects extending into the foundations of many fields of inquiry. They seem particularly useful.
- 27 Lin, *Transformation*, p. 182.
- 28 Shih, "Eremitism in Landscape," p. 77.
- 29 Barnhart, *Peach Blossom Spring*, p. 42.
- 30 Translation adapted from Wen Fong and Marilyn Fu, *Sung and Yuan Paintings* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1973), p. 87.
- 31 Barnhart, *Peach Blossom Spring*, p. 40.
- 32 See especially *The Poetics of Space*, originally published in French as *La Poétique de l'espace* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1958; translation in Beacon paperback edition, Boston, 1969); and *La Poétique de la rêverie* (Paris, 1968; translation in Beacon paperback edition, 1971). For our present purposes, *The Poetics of Space* is more useful. His book, of course, was the source of my title for this paper.
- 33 Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, p. xxx.
- 34 This idea receives extensive comment in *The Poetics of Reverie*: "Memory and Imagination rival each other in giving us back the images which pertain to our lives" (p. 105).
- 35 Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, p. 6.
- 36 Ibid., p. xxix.
- 37 Ibid., p. xix; quotation from Pierre-Jean Jouve (*En miroir*), on p. xviii.
- 38 Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, p. xii.
- 39 Ibid., pp. xxxi-xxxii.
- 40 Ibid., p. 47.
- 41 Ibid., pp. 214-15.
- 42 I say "de-geometrization" in a comparative sense, for neither thought nor painting in China were fundamentally geometric, in the sense in which much of European civilization has been. It was this latter mode of thought against which Bachelard was reacting. In Chinese landscape, however, comparatively speaking, it is probably the space of Southern Sung painting that is most susceptible to a geometric analysis.
- 43 Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, p. 222.
- 44 For a preliminary approach to this problem, see John Hay, "Surface and the Chinese Painter: The Discovery of Surface," *Archives of Asian Art* 38 (1985), pp. 95-123.
- 45 Tu Wei-ming, "Mind and Human Nature," a review of *Hsin-t'i yü hsing-t'i* (The substance of the mind and the substance of human nature) by Mou Tsung-san, in Tu, *Humanity and Self-Cultivation: Essays in Confucian Thought* (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1979), p. 115.
- 46 "In doing a painting, *li* is the one word that matters." In his collected comments, *Hsieh shan-shui chüeh* (Secrets of describing landscape; see *Chung-kuo hua-lun hui-pien* [Taipei: Tung-fang shu-tien, 1962], p. 57).
- 47 Chu-tsing Li has discussed the importance of Ao Chi-kung 教繼公, who lived in Wu-hsing, to painters such as Ch'ien Hsüan and Chao Meng-fu; see his "Role of Wu-hsing," pp. 340-41.
- 48 J. H. van den Berg, *The Phenomenological Approach to Psychiatry: An Introduction to Recent Phenomenological Psychopathology* (Springfield: Charles C. Thomas, 1955), p. 61.

## *Grooms and Horses* by Three Members of the Chao Family

CHU-TSING LI

During the Yüan dynasty, the preeminence of Chao Meng-fu 趙孟頫 (1254–1322) and his family in painting was already recognized by their contemporaries, which helped bring about the phenomenon of gathering works by several family members in one handscroll. One example is the three bamboos handscroll now in the Palace Museum, Beijing, by Chao, his wife Kuan Tao-sheng 管道昇 (1262–1319), and his son Chao Yung 趙雍 (1289–after 1360).<sup>1</sup> There are also two handscrolls of horses and grooms by three generations of the Chao family, Chao Meng-fu, his son Chao Yung, and his grandson Chao Lin 趙麟 (d. ca. 1367). *Grooms and Horses* (*Wu-hsing Chao-shih san shih jen ma t'u* 吳興趙氏三世人馬圖), with a painting by Meng-fu executed in 1296, paintings by both his son and grandson dating from 1359, many colophons by Ming connoisseurs, and seals of the Ch'ien-lung emperor, is now in the John M. Crawford, Jr., Collection in the Metropolitan Museum (figs. 85, 86, 87).<sup>2</sup> The other handscroll, the *Three Horses*, which combines Chao Meng-fu's work done in 1318 with Chao Yung's of 1359 and Chao Lin's of 1360, and which carries colophons by Yüan, Ming, and Ch'ing connoisseurs, including those of Wang Meng 王蒙 (ca. 1308–85) and Wen Cheng-ming 文徵明 (1470–1559), is now in the Yale University Art Gallery.<sup>3</sup> The present paper will concentrate on the handscroll in the Crawford Collection.

The Crawford scroll was recorded in a number of Ming and Ch'ing catalogues. It has been discussed recently by Hsieh Chih-liu 謝稚柳 (1957), Laurence Sickman (1962), and Wan-go Weng (1978).<sup>4</sup> Although these scholars have considered some of the interesting features of this scroll, it still has many challenging aspects that require our further exploration. The present paper attempts to pursue a number of the complex problems connected with the paintings on this scroll.

Horses were an important subject in the history of Chinese painting, especially during the T'ang and Yüan dynasties. According to the records, horse painting can be traced all the way back to King Mu 穆王 (r. 1001–947 B.C.) of the Western Chou dynasty.<sup>5</sup> Although his painting has not survived the vicissitudes of time, Shih Tao-shih 史道碩 of the late third century after Christ was said to have made a copy for Emperor Wu 武帝 (r. 281–89) of the Tsin dynasty, which was regarded as a great treasure from the Southern Dynasties to the Sui.<sup>6</sup> In turn Chao Meng-fu reputedly made a copy of Shih's painting, although it too has disappeared.<sup>7</sup> This recorded history alone would make the tradition of horse painting almost a thousand years old by Chao's time, when he infused new life into the tradition.

The most important aspect of horse painting is the magnificent beauty and the physical power of the horses themselves, which is best captured in a direct, realistic depiction. By contrast, portraits of emperors and other important personalities, especially those of the T'ang period, not only had to render an actual likeness but also sought to capture

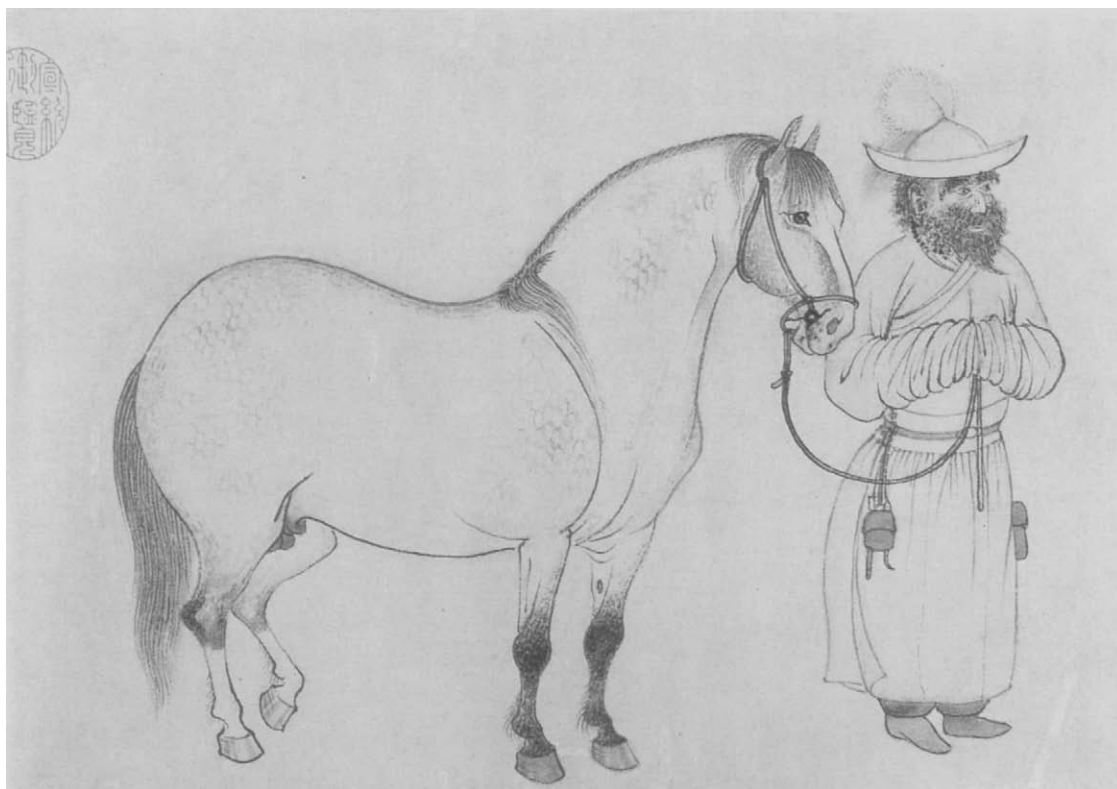


Figure 85. Chao Yung (1289–after 1360), “Horse and Groom,” dated 1359, section from *Grooms and Horses*

Figure 86. Chao Lin (d. ca. 1367), “Horse and Groom,” dated 1359, section from *Grooms and Horses*





Figure 87. Chao Meng-fu (1254–1322), "Horse and Groom," dated 1296, from *Grooms and Horses*. Section of handscroll, ink and colors on paper, H. 30.3 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Bequest of John M. Crawford, Jr., 1988



Figure 88. Chao Meng-fu, *Man on Horseback*, dated 1296. Handscroll. Palace Museum, Beijing (from *Chao Meng-fu Jen-ch'i-t'u* [Beijing: Wenwu, 1959])



some inner feeling, psychological expression, and historical and other associations. This is to say that in horse painting the appeal is strongly visual. Literary associations were negligible, as horse themes are rare in Chinese literature. As we will see, however, the theme of the horse had gained certain associations in both painting and literature by the Yüan dynasty, during which time such associations further evolved, thanks to Chao Meng-fu and the literati culture.

Forming one single piece of work from paintings by several artists related to one another was uncommon before the fourteenth century. Most such albums of Sung and Yüan fan paintings were actually put together in later periods, primarily in the Ming and Ch'ing dynasties. Well-known families of painters, such as the brothers Yen Li-pen 閻立本 (600–74) and Li-te 立德 and their father in the T'ang or the several generations of Ma Yüan's 馬遠 family in the Southern Sung, are not known to have collaborated on any works. In the case of Chao Meng-fu's family members, however, there are paintings presumably executed by him together with his wife Kuan Tao-sheng.<sup>8</sup> Yet it was on the collector's initiative that paintings of several members of the Chao family were put together in single scrolls.

As mentioned above, *Grooms and Horses* in the Crawford Collection consists of three sections, each section painted separately by father, son, and grandson at different times and different places. On each of the three sections of this scroll, the artist painted a horse and a groom and wrote an inscription referring to the occasion of the painting. Thus the three should be discussed separately first, and then together as one object.

As Chao Meng-fu's painting comes first not only in sequence but also in date and quality, it will be the focus of our discussion. The painting was done in the first month of 1296, the same year as the *Man on Horseback* (*Jen-ch'i t'u* 人騎圖) in the Palace Museum, Beijing (fig. 88).<sup>9</sup> These two paintings bear comparison with each other. They are almost identical in format and style and related in conception and execution. The Beijing painting depicts a man in a deep red robe and an official hat on a brown horse facing to the right. One wonders whether the *Man on Horseback* was a self-portrait, since Chao was a prominent official of that time, and the face has some resemblance to a portrait by which he was generally known in later periods.<sup>10</sup> At the upper right corner Chao wrote the title, "Man on Horseback," and at the upper left, an inscription, "Done in the year *ping-shen* 丙申 of Yüan-chen 元貞 [1296]." This painting was done simply for his own pleasure and was not dedicated to anyone. On the other hand, the Crawford painting by Chao Meng-fu portrays a white horse with a groom in pale red dress. On the left edge he wrote the following sentence:

On the tenth day of the first month of the second year of Yüan-chen [1296] I painted this *Man and Horse* for the pure enjoyment of Surveillance Commissioner Fei-ch'ing 飛卿. Chao Meng-fu of Wu-hsing.

Thus this painting differs from the *Man on Horseback* in its purpose—it was painted for Fei-ch'ing,<sup>11</sup> who must have been a friend of his—as well as in subject—a horse and groom instead of an official on horseback. Although this groom also has been seen as a possible self-portrait, since the painting was presented to an official of a rank higher than Chao's own, there seems to be no reason to assume that Chao, who was always very proud of himself, would depict himself in such a humble position in order to flatter a high official.

It is interesting to note that the date of execution of this *Horse and Groom* in the Crawford Collection was only about a month later than Chao's *Autumn Colors on the Ch'iao and Hua Mountains* (*Ch'iao-Hua ch'iu-se t'u* 鶴華秋色圖) in the Palace Museum, Taipei (see fig. 82).<sup>12</sup> These two paintings and the *Man on Horseback* were products of the period following Chao Meng-fu's return to his native Wu-hsing after almost ten years in North China in response to the call of the emperor Khubilai Khan (r. 1260–94) to go to Beijing in 1286. During those nine-plus years, Chao had the opportunity to travel in many parts of the north and was able to collect a number of scrolls of the T'ang and Sung periods. This group of paintings, which he brought back to Wu-hsing in 1295 and which were recorded by Chou Mi 周密 (1232–98), had a great impact on his own artistic development.<sup>13</sup> Some of the effects have been published before by this author and other scholars. They seem to have shaped Chao's ideas of the importance of the "spirit of antiquity" (*ku-i* 古意) in his own works.

As both Richard Barnhart and I have shown, one painting in the collection owned by Chao Meng-fu, Tung Yüan's 董源 (d. 962) *Marriage of the Lord of the River* (*Ho-po ch'ü-fu t'u* 河伯娶婦圖), now called *Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers* (*Hsiao-Hsiang t'u* 瀟湘圖), in the Palace Museum, Beijing, was extremely influential in Chao's *Autumn Colors on the Ch'iao and Hua Mountains* of 1296 and the *Water Village* (*Shui-ts'un t'u* 水村圖) of 1302, in the Palace Museum, Beijing (fig. 90).<sup>14</sup> Moreover, as I have shown before, Chao's *Sheep and Goat* (*Erh yang t'u* 二羊圖) at the Freer Gallery (fig. 91) was strongly influenced by his study of Han Huang's 韓滉 (723–87) *Five Oxen* (*Wu niu t'u* 五牛圖), now in the Palace Museum, Beijing.<sup>15</sup> In the same category should be included Chao's *Old Trees and Unfettered Horses* (*Ku-mu san-ma t'u* 古木散馬圖), dated 1301, in the Palace Museum, Taipei (fig. 89).<sup>16</sup> It is also possible, though hard, to prove that Chao's *Mind Landscape of Hsieh Yu-yü* (*Yu-yü ch'iu-ho t'u* 幼輿丘壑圖) in the Edward L. Elliott Family Collection at the Art Museum, Princeton University, derived some ideas from a painting that he brought back from Beijing, namely *Monk in a Cave* (*Yen-chü seng* 巖居僧) by Wang Ch'i-han 王齊翰 (active second half of the tenth century) of the Five Dynasties period.<sup>17</sup> Specifically with regard to both the present painting in the Crawford scroll and to the *Man on Horseback*, Chao seems to have been influenced by another painting that he brought back, the *Knights of Wu-ling* (*Wu-ling yu-hsia t'u* 五陵遊俠圖) by Han Kan 韓幹 (active ca. 740–56) of the T'ang dynasty.<sup>18</sup> Chou Mi in his account mentions only that this painting had an inscription by Emperor Kao-tsung 高宗 (r. 1127–62) of the Southern Sung. Although the painting is lost, we can mention a number of connections between Chao and Han Kan that shore up our argument for Han Kan's influence on the Crawford scroll. In his *Man on Horseback*, Chao wrote in one inscription:

From my childhood I have loved painting horses. Recently I have been able to see three authentic scrolls by Han Kan and have begun to grasp his ideas.<sup>19</sup>

Although the style of this inscription suggests that it may have been done a few years later than 1296, it expresses how deeply Chao was still affected by the works of Han Kan. Because the inscription itself is not written on the painting, like the two other inscriptions by Chao, but instead is on the piece of mounting silk (*ke-shui* 隔水) between the painting and the colophons, it could have been detached from another painting and mounted on the scroll. Indeed, to judge from the many seals of the Ming collector Hsiang Yüan-pien 項元汴 (1525–90) on the joining areas, it may have been Hsiang who had the

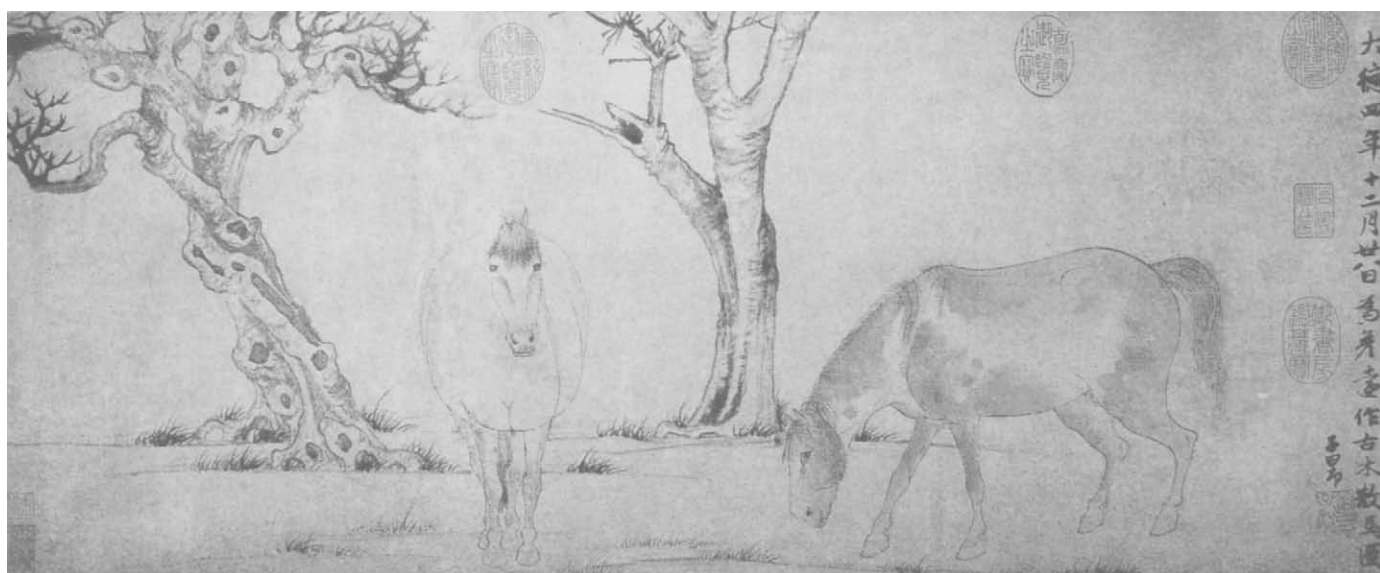


Figure 89. Chao Meng-fu, *Old Trees and Unfettered Horses*, dated 1301. Handscroll, ink on paper, H. 29.8 cm. Palace Museum, Taipei



Figure 90. Chao Meng-fu, *Water Village*, dated 1302. Handscroll, ink on paper, H. 24.9 cm. Palace Museum, Beijing (from Chu-ting Li, *The Autumn Colors on the Ch'iao and Hua Mountains* [Ascona, Switz.: Artibus Asiae, 1965], fig. 8)



Figure 91. Chao Meng-fu, *Sheep and Goat*. Handscroll, ink on paper, H. 25.2 cm. Courtesy of the Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

remounting done with this additional inscription. Actually, there is a record of an identical inscription by Chao on another of Han Kan's paintings mentioned in the *Shih-ku-t'ang shu-hua hui-k'ao* 式古堂書畫彙考 (*Classified Record of Calligraphy and Painting in Shih-ku Hall*).<sup>20</sup> Since this painting is not extant, there is no way to confirm this. Whatever the case, Chao's interest in Han Kan's works seems indisputable, and Chou Mi's documentation of Chao's having brought the *Knights of Wu-ling* to Wu-hsing in 1295 is an indication of his having contact with one of Han's works by the time he got back to his hometown.

*Knights of Wu-ling*, a typical T'ang subject with elegant aristocratic youths and gentlemen of the Wu-ling district near the capital, Ch'ang-an,<sup>21</sup> seems to have left a strong impact on Han Kan's admirers in the Yüan period. It may have had a considerable influence not only on Chao, but on his son and grandson as well. The *Man on Horseback*, with a gentleman in a red coat elegantly riding on horseback, is evidence of this influence on Chao Meng-fu. Then two paintings by Chao Yung of an almost identical subject depicting a youth in red riding on horseback, shooting at birds on a tree, one in the Palace Museum, Beijing, the other one in Taipei, can be related (fig. 92).<sup>22</sup> A painting, *Judging the Horse* (*Hsiang-ma t'u* 相馬圖), by Chao Lin, in the Palace Museum, Taipei, also depicts a man in red seated on a tree looking at a horse in front of him (fig. 93). Here Chao Lin also refers to Han Kan in his poem written above the painting.<sup>23</sup> Despite their differences in dates, these paintings, in depicting—albeit with a number of variations—either a gentleman or a youth wearing a red coat, either riding a horse or in the proximity of one, seem to have derived from Han Kan.

The subject differs somewhat in Chao Meng-fu's painting in the Crawford scroll. Rather than a gentleman rider, it depicts a horse and a groom, which is also typical of T'ang horse paintings, but here the groom wears a light red garment, and the treatment is quite similar to that of the riders in the other paintings. There is a painting by Chao Yung, now in the Freer Gallery, which depicts an identical subject of horse and groom, in which the groom is in a bright red coat (fig. 94).<sup>24</sup> There seems not to have been much distinction between paintings of these two subjects. Whether they all came from the model of Han Kan mentioned by Chou Mi or not cannot be proven definitively. Chao Meng-fu's painting, done shortly after his return to Wu-hsing with Han Kan's work, suggests some kind of connection.

A recently published painting in the Shanghai Museum, *Horse and Groom* (*T'iao-ma t'u* 調馬圖) by Chao Yen 趙巖 (d. 923) of the Five Dynasties period, can also cast some light in this connection. The painting has a long colophon by Chao Meng-fu, quoting a poem by Tu Fu 杜甫 (712–70; actually Su Shih 蘇軾 [1037–1101]) to the effect that Chao Yen captured the method of Han Kan and Ts'ao Pa 曹霸 (active early eighth century).<sup>25</sup> The inscription is dated 1301, five years later than the Crawford painting. Again we have evidence of how deeply affected Chao Meng-fu continued to be by Han Kan.

T'ang Hou 湯垕 (active early fourteenth century), a good friend of Chao Meng-fu, documents the interest felt in his own time for the early horse painters, which in turn reflects the taste and ideas of Chao Meng-fu, for whom T'ang had the greatest respect as both a painter and a theorist. Here is what T'ang says about Ts'ao Pa:

In his paintings of men and horses, Ts'ao Pa handled his brush and ink subtly, showing great liveliness in their facial and bodily expression. In my



Figure 92. Chao Yung, *Equestrian*. Hanging scroll, ink and color on paper, 109 × 46.3 cm. Palace Museum, Beijing (from *Chung-kuo li-tai hui-hua: Ku-kung po-wu-yüan ts'ang-hua-chi* [Beijing: Wenwu, 1984], vol. 4, *Yüan*, pls. 82, 83)



Figure 93. Chao Lin, *Judging the Horse*. Hanging scroll, ink and color on paper, 95.7 × 30.1 cm. Palace Museum, Taipei

life I have seen four authentic paintings by him. One is *A Groom Testing His Horse* 奚官試馬圖 in the house of Official Shen-t'u [Ta-yung]. One is *Training Horses* 調馬圖 in the house of Li Shih-hung, with a colophon and seal of Emperor Kao-tsung of the Sung. Another is *Horses in the Lower Stable*, 下槽馬圖, with one in black and the other in reddish brown and with the groom shown from the back, his brows and beard barely visible, a very distinctive painting. Another, in my own collection, is *Men and Horses*, with the red-coated and fine-bearded groom leading Jade-faced Red 玉面騾 and the green-dressed attendant leading Shining White of the Night (Chao-yeh-pai 照夜白). The handling of the brush and the expression of the men and horses are the same as those in the other three paintings. The Academician of Scholarly Worthies Chao Meng-fu inscribed a colophon on that painting, saying: "Among T'ang painters there were many who were skillful in painting horses. Among them Ts'ao [Pa] and Han [Kan] were the best, for their conceptions are lofty and antique and do not seek form-likeness. This is why they are superior to mere artisans. This scroll is no doubt from the brush of Ts'ao. The groom and horse officer have a spirit of their own which the vulgar will not appreciate."<sup>26</sup>

In his discussion of Han Kan, T'ang Hou also mentions a number of paintings he had seen:

Han Kan first studied under Ch'en Hung 陳閔 [active early eighth century], and later under Ts'ao Pa, grasping the method of balancing flesh and bone in horse painting, thus becoming abreast of and competing with Ts'ao and Wei [Yen 韋偃; active late seventh–early eighth century]. He also did paintings of aristocratic personages at play, all attaining the same marvelous expression. In applying colors, he seemed to have penetrated the silk. I have seen his *Men and Horses* in the house of Wang in Ch'ien-t'ang 錢塘 [near Hangchow]. Two grooms are leading the Coin-chained Piebald 連錢驄 [probably a "thousand-li horse"] and the Swallow-flying Chiao 燕支驕 [a six-foot-tall horse]. I have seen another scroll depicting a red-coated and white-hatted man riding on a date-colored Five Bright Horse 五明馬, with the four hooves broken, as if walking on water, formerly in the collection of Li Po-shih 李伯時 [Kung-lin 公麟; ca. 1049–1106]. In the capital I saw *Emperor Ming-huang Testing His Horse* 明皇試馬圖, *Training Horses*, and *Knights of Wu-ling*. . . . Although there were many painters of horses in T'ang times, Ts'ao, Wei, and Han were the most famous. Later Li Kung-lin, Po-shih, followed them in painting horses. He can be said to be so superior as to be included among those in the divine realm.<sup>27</sup>

From these two comments, T'ang Hou thus established a lineage of horse painting from Ts'ao Pa, Wei Yen, and Han Kan in the T'ang, to Li Kung-lin in the Northern Sung and to Chao Meng-fu in the Yüan. In both texts paintings of grooms and horses are mentioned as among those that Chao Meng-fu might have seen before executing his own work in 1296, since he was well acquainted with all these collectors cited as well as with Chou Mi. In at least one of Chao's paintings he mentioned Han Kan and T'ang

painters as his sources. From his poems we also know that he was a great admirer of the Sung literati horse painter Li Kung-lin.<sup>28</sup>

All this is intended to show that in Chao Meng-fu's painting after his return from Beijing to Wu-hsing in 1295 there was a period in which the "spirit of antiquity" was predominant. If we add to the list above the recently published self-portrait by Chao Meng-fu, dated 1299 (fig. 95), in which he depicted himself as a middle-aged hermit standing by a stream in a bamboo grove, with some rocks in the foreground depicted in the standard blue-and-green manner, we have another example of Chao's outlook in that period, showing how deeply he was under the influence of the T'ang and Sung paintings he had collected in Beijing.<sup>29</sup>

The statement that I have quoted many times epitomizes the theory central to Chao's painting, especially during this period. This statement was from a work by Chao now lost, but the date of 1301 fits in very well with the epoch under discussion. The statement says:

What is precious in a painting is the spirit of antiquity; without it, skill is wasted. Nowadays men who know how to draw at fine scale and lay on rich and brilliant colors consider themselves competent. They totally ignore the fact that a lack of the spirit of antiquity will create so many faults that the result will not be worth looking at. My own paintings seem to be quite simply and carelessly done, but connoisseurs will realize that they are close to the past and so may be considered superior. This is said for the cognoscenti, not for ignoramuses.<sup>30</sup>

The *Horse and Groom* in the Crawford Collection, together with the *Man on Horseback* in the Palace Museum, Beijing, is thus very consistent with a whole group of works which Chao executed during the several years after his return to Wu-hsing in 1295. While taking the T'ang and Northern Sung horse painters as his models, he did not simply copy or closely imitate, but explored new territory as an expression of his free literati spirit.

In his painting Chao arranged the horse and groom in ways quite different from the tradition. The groom is shown entirely in a frontal manner, while the horse is seen in a three-quarter view, which is rather unusual in the way of depiction. In brushwork he depended mostly on pure line, but still used light colors, especially in the garment of the groom. The readiness of the horse and the eagerness of the groom to serve must have pleased Fei-ch'ing, to whom the painting was dedicated. The inscription, which was quoted above, is also a sharp departure from those of T'ang and Sung horse paintings. While painters of T'ang and Sung horse paintings often wrote inscriptions recording the names of the horses, their measurements in height and length, their origins in Central Asia, and the dates of their entering the imperial stables, thus making those paintings almost official portraits and documentation of the horses, Chao Meng-fu made a radical departure in inscribing a personal note, the dedication of the painting to a friend for his "pure enjoyment." This is definitely a new literati spirit.

It has often been said that one reason horse painting became popular again during the early Yüan dynasty was the predilection of the Mongol rulers and officials for horses. This can be accepted, for the major Yüan horse painters, including the three generations of the Chao family and Jen Jen-fa 任仁發 (1255-1328) and his two sons, all served as officials in the Yüan government. However, in Chao Meng-fu's case, as indicated in his



Figure 94. Chao Yung,  
*A Horse and a Groom  
in a Red Coat*, dated 1347.  
Handscroll, ink and color  
on paper, H. 31.7 cm.  
Courtesy of the  
Freer Gallery of Art,  
Smithsonian Institution,  
Washington, D.C.



Figure 95. Chao Meng-fu,  
*Small Self-Portrait*, dated 1299.  
Album leaf,  
ink and color on silk,  
23 × 24 cm.  
Palace Museum, Beijing  
(from *Ku-kung po-wu-yüan  
yüan-k'an*, no. 1 [1984], pl. 4)



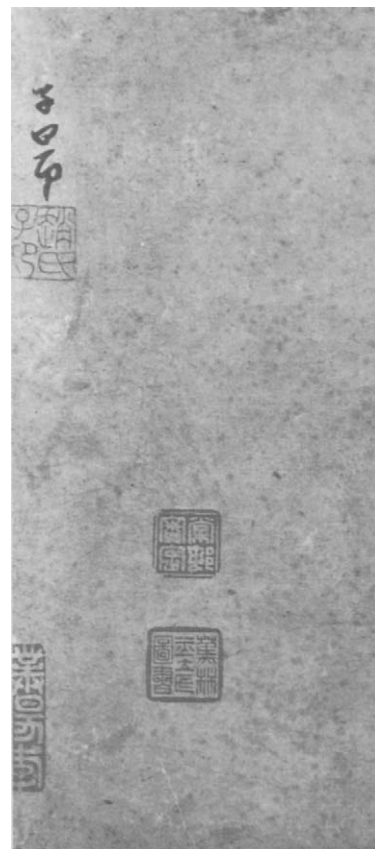


Figure 96. Chao Meng-fu, *Horse and Groom in the Wind*.  
Album leaf, ink on silk, 22.7 × 49 cm. Palace Museum, Taipei

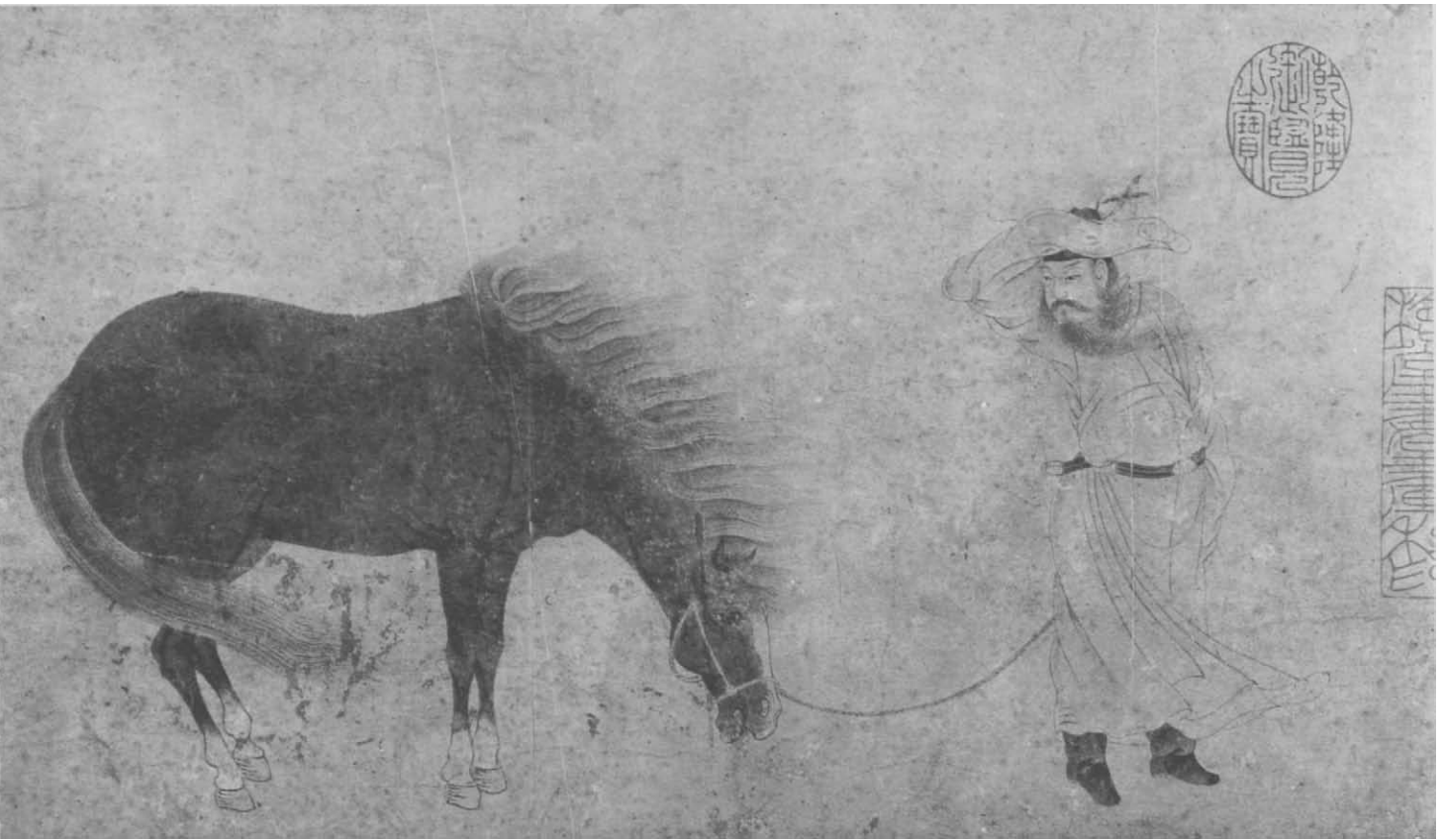
inscription on *Man on Horseback*, his interest in painting horses began when he was quite young, definitely before the Mongol conquest of the Southern Sung dynasty. This fact can be confirmed by a number of other statements made by some of his friends as well as by contemporary critics. During the Southern Sung, when horse painting was not at all common, it was Chao's own curiosity, not the Mongols, that led him to paint horses.

After he had entered the service of Khubilai Khan, Chao became recognized in the court for his horse paintings. This is confirmed by his younger friend and protégé, Yü Chi 虞集 (1272–1348), in the following poems:

I remember when I served under you at the imperial library  
Many horses from the imperial stables ran before our eyes like lightning.  
Even though there were many painters around the imperial pond,  
Who else could claim to be able to paint the divine steeds better.

In court when no state affairs disrupted the easy days  
The imperial attendants rode the horses out of the nine gates.  
The scion of the previous dynasty is now an elderly official in court,  
To paint only the eight-foot dragons of the imperial stables.<sup>31</sup>

From these poems there seems to be no question that he had a reputation as a horse painter in court circles. However, among the paintings either extant or recorded in catalogues, none can be identified as having been done for emperors or high officials. Significantly, both the paintings of horses of 1296 were done not in Beijing but in Wu-hsing or Hangchow.



Three stages are apparent in Chao Meng-fu's horse paintings. First, in his early years, he seems to have developed a special skill in painting horses. His friend Tai Piao-yüan 戴表元 (1244-1310) indicated that he got the talent for painting "from heaven" and achieved great technical mastery.<sup>32</sup> An example of his early work is the small painting of a horse and groom, in the Palace Museum, Taipei, showing both of the subjects in the wind (fig. 96).<sup>33</sup> The firm, fine lines and the intricate but ingenious composition of the horse and groom, with the wind blowing the tail and mane of the horse and the sleeve and lower part of the garment of the man more or less counterbalanced by the backward glance of the groom, are indications of Chao's treatment of this kind of subject in his early years. Second, in his middle years—his forties—after his long stay in the north, he was deeply affected by the many masterpieces of early painters he had seen. Becoming intensely interested in the past, he collected a number of paintings by old masters including Hsieh Chih 謝稚 (active fifth century), Wang Wei 王維 (701-61), Han Kan, Han Huang, Tung Yüan, and Wang Ch'i-han, and possibly others, which inspired his own works. Taking ideas from these classical painters and reworking them as a way to understand their art was the most exciting period of Chao's development. Some of the statements he made in this period show that he took great pleasure in approaching the ancients (see his 1296 quotation on Han Kan above).

A few years later, in 1299, Chao was more sure of himself when he wrote on the *Man on Horseback* another revealing statement:

It is not just difficult to paint, it is even more difficult to understand painting. I like to paint horses, for I have talent and can depict them with the greatest skill. In this painting I do feel that I can match the T'ang artists.

Chao's attempt to understand the old masters is recorded by T'ao Tsung-i 陶宗儀 (ca. 1320–after 1402), a relative of his grandchildren's generation, in the *Cho-keng lu* 輟耕錄 (*Notes Taken after Setting Aside the Plow*):

I have seen an inscription on a horse painting by the master [Chao Meng-fu] himself: "Since my childhood I have loved to paint horses, believing that I was exploring their objective qualities to the full. My friend Kuo Yu-chih 郭祐之 once wrote me a poem, saying: 'People only realize that you are comparable to Lung-mien 龍眠 [Li Kung-lin], without knowing that you already excel Ts'ao [Pa] and Han [Kan].' Although the comparison with Ts'ao and Han is an exaggeration, if Lung-mien were still living, I should be riding abreast with him."<sup>34</sup>

Similar ideas are found in a colophon on his *Man on Horseback* by Chao Meng-kua 趙孟頫, who must have been one of his cousins.<sup>35</sup> All these show that during this period his main purpose seems to have been a desire to understand the ideas of the old masters and to try to come close to them as an expression of the "spirit of antiquity."

The third stage of Chao's development in horse painting took place after 1300, after his appointment as an Academician of Scholarly Worthies (*chi-hsien chih-hsüeh-shih* 集賢直學士), an official of the fourth rank, and director of Confucian schools of the Chiang-che region (*Chiang-che Ju-hsüeh t'i-chü* 江浙儒學提舉). This was the most creative period of his life, reflecting a new happy mood after several years of frustration at home. Although not a horse painting, the *Sheep and Goat* (fig. 91) is most typical of the works of this period. As I have demonstrated before, this painting shows his transformation from the old to the new, achieving something entirely subtle and expressive with the simplest means.<sup>36</sup> One has only to compare this painting with the *Old Trees and Unfettered Horses* of 1301 (fig. 89) to understand the difference.<sup>37</sup> The latter depicts two horses, one in strict side view and the other in strict frontal view, under two old, dry trees. Although the painting is done entirely in ink, which is the approach of Li Kung-lin, the strict side and frontal views of the two horses are reminiscent of the *Five Oxen* of Han Huang that Chao brought back from Beijing in 1295.<sup>38</sup> The two old and knotty trees are also derived from some T'ang paintings. This combination of T'ang and Sung ideas was typical of Chao's second period, in spite of the date of this painting. But in the *Sheep and Goat* he was completely on his own. Even though the two animals still remotely recall the oxen of Han Huang, Chao has transformed them into his own idiom. In the same way, as I have also demonstrated before, this development can be seen in his landscape painting *Water Village*, of 1302 (fig. 90).<sup>39</sup> No wonder close to fifty literati of the Soochow area wrote colophons on this latter painting to express their marvel at Chao's innovation. Something of this enthusiasm is suggested in a statement by a Yüan connoisseur, Liu Min-chung 劉敏中 (1243–1318):

In painting spirit is first and form-likeness last. When spirit is won, but the last is not sufficient, the painter does not understand painting. If he gains form-likeness but forgets the first, his work is not a true painting. He should have both before he can fully attain the marvels of painting. I believe that Chao Tzu-ang's 趙子昂 [Meng-fu's] paintings have captured both of these qualities.<sup>40</sup>

Beyond the matter of style, Chao's *Horse and Groom* also embodies subtle meaning typical of Yüan literati painting. Interpreting its significance was already anticipated in the following statement on the horse paintings of Prince Li Hsü 李緒 (seventh century) of the T'ang in the *Imperial Painting Catalogue of the Hsüan-ho [1119-25] Era (Hsüan-ho hua-p'u 宣和畫譜)*:

It has been said that literati gentlemen were often fond of painting horses because they served as an analogy for all sorts of careers those gentlemen might have in the world, through being innately a worn-out nag or a thoroughbred, slow or quick, retiring or distinguished, fortunate or unlucky in their encounters.<sup>41</sup>

On the meaning of some of Chao's horse paintings, some of the connoisseurs close to his own time also had something to say. An early Yüan poet and friend of Chao's, Fang Hui 方回 (1227-1307), wrote the following poem for one of Chao's horse paintings:

To judge horses there was Po-lo 伯樂; to paint horses there was Po-shih [Li Kung-lin].

Po-lo died long ago, but Po-shih's paintings can still be seen.

No flourishing grass grows under tall trees; these horses seem to be only half-fed.

One with his back on the tree seems to be scratching itches; the other with his head hanging low is eating dry leaves.

Mr. Chao must have something to say in painting them: men with noble ideals are grieving over the loss of their jobs.

Fat horses, in my way of thinking, cannot be controlled; they are no match for the poor lean ones which are easy to ride.

How do these two horses fare in life? Like me, they are old and weak.<sup>42</sup>

A somewhat similar colophon by Wang Pin 王賓, who was probably a literatus of the early Ming period, is attached to Chao's painting *Old Trees and Unfettered Horses*, of 1301, mentioned above:

A poet once said, "Inside the city they pull chariots for kings and emperors; outside they sweep over fields and wilderness with generals." These are the adventures of horses, with all their winnings, prancings, and glories. This ink play of Chao Wen-min 趙文敏 [Meng-fu] depicts horses galloping leisurely under the lonely, barren, and old trees over plains without exerting themselves and feeding on wild grass. No one beats them with a whip; no one harnesses them with a halter. Is Wen-min here probably using this as a parable to say something? When scholar-gentlemen are overburdened with worldly problems, will they wish to retire to be completely free?<sup>43</sup>

With all this as a background, we can go back to look at Chao's *Horse and Groom* in the Crawford Collection as a work of his second period, when he was intensely preoccupied with the "spirit of antiquity." As a gift to a high official, this kind of painting derived from T'ang models seems to be appropriate. The inscription is also quite direct and straightforward. However, behind this simple composition, does Chao Meng-fu conceal some of his meaning?

As mentioned above, the period just after his return to Wu-hsing from Beijing in 1295 was not a happy one for Chao. For almost ten years he had served in both Beijing and Shantung and some other places under the emperor Khubilai Khan, who was impressed by his ability. Now, with a new emperor, he felt left out and returned to his home at Wu-hsing without an appointment. Claiming illness, he retired to his home, but actually was still quite active in the literati circles of Hangchow and had time to complete a volume of commentaries on the *Shang-shu* 尚書 (*Book of History*), an early text. Is it possible that in a painting to a high official he was expressing the frustration of a gentleman not finding proper use of his talents? Here Chao does not leave any clues for us.

Between 1296 and 1359 Chao Meng-fu's painting must have passed from the hands of Fei-ch'ing to some others. However, the painting seems to have remained in the Chiang-nan area. If Fei-ch'ing had been a Mongol official or some northerner, it probably would have been taken to Beijing or to the north. The fact that it stayed in the south is interesting, although we do not know in whose hands it was during those sixty years. In 1359 it came into the possession of Hsieh Po-li 謝伯理, who was the deputy prefect of Sung-chiang 松江 and who, apparently knowing the reputation of the Chao family, formed the scroll with paintings by the three generations of the family.

The year 1359 was an important juncture in Yüan history in the area of Chiang-nan. The Yüan court in Beijing was losing its hold on the country since rebellions had broken out in many parts of China. The rich area of Chiang-nan was the central stage for the contending rebels Chu Yüan-chang 朱元璋 (1328–98), Chang Shih-ch'eng 張士誠 (1321–67), Ch'en Yu-liang, and Fang Kuo-chen. The area of Wu-hsing, where Chao Meng-fu's descendants were living, was an area of contention between the forces of Chu Yüan-chang, who had his base in Nanking, and Chang Shih-ch'eng, who established his headquarters in Soochow. Chang, however, after a defeat by Chu, decided to serve the Yüan in 1357 and was appointed commander-in-chief, with his office still in Soochow. Both Chao Meng-fu's son Chao Yung and grandson Chao Lin were serving as Yüan officials in this region, the former as the route commander of the Hu-chou Route (*Hu-chou-lu tsung-kuan fu-shih* 湖州路總管府事), which covers the area of Wu-hsing, and the latter as a proofreader in the Branch Secretariat of Chiang-che Province (*Chiang-che hsing-sheng chien-chiao* 江浙行省檢校).<sup>44</sup> It was during this period that Hsieh Po-li, after getting hold of Chao Meng-fu's painting, came upon the idea of asking both Chao Yung and Chao Lin for paintings of similar subjects to form one single scroll, although he did not know either of them directly. The circumstances of Hsieh's request were recorded by both painters in their own inscriptions:

One day in the eighth month of the autumn of the nineteenth year of Chih-cheng [1359], when I was living in Wu-lin 武林 [Hangchow], Han Chieh-shih 韓介石 [a cousin] came to see me and tell me about the exquisite idea of Hsieh Po-li, vice-prefect of Sung-chiang. He asked Chieh-shih to bring the *Horse and Groom* done by my father the administrator in his collection to show me and to ask for a painting from me of the same horse and groom subject to be attached to my father's work as a continuation of the painting. When I looked at this painting, I was filled with a mixture of joy and sorrow, reluctant to let it go. Although I do not know Po-li, I quite appreciate his high taste and thus did this for Chieh-shih to bring to him. Chao Yung.

On the third painting the following inscription is written to the left of the horse and groom (fig. 86):

This *Horse and Groom* executed by my grandfather the duke of Wei 魏 was mounted as a handscroll [by Hsieh Po-li]. He [Hsieh] then asked my father to paint another piece after it, and further requested one from me, too. I guess that Po-li's intention is to be able to boast a work by three generations of my family. If he had not been so dedicated to elegant taste he would not have set his mind so firmly on this. Therefore I accepted his request without any reservation. This is the fifteenth day of the tenth month in the winter of the year *chi-hai* [1359]. Gentleman of Managing Affairs (*ch'eng-shih lang* 承事郎), Proofreader of the Branch Secretariat of Chiang-che, Chao Lin.<sup>45</sup>

It appears that Hsieh Po-li was acquainted with Chao Lin, who was a lower-ranking official in the same region. With this connection, he made a request to Chao Yung through Han Chieh-shih, Chao's cousin. As a result, he got all three paintings of the same subject together into one handscroll.

As the older son of Chao Meng-fu, Chao Yung was always very close to his father. When he was young, he was already moving in the circle of officials and literati around his father. Because of the prominence of his father, he was given official appointments both in the court and in his home area. Following his father's interests, he also became an able painter of figures, horses, flowers and birds, landscape, and boundary paintings as well as a calligrapher. Thus it seems to be quite appropriate for Hsieh Po-li to have asked him to do a painting of the same subject as his father's to make up an interesting scroll.

It was perhaps in reaction to his father's use of a Chinese groom that Chao Yung by way of contrast chose to depict a groom of a Central Asian type, with high nose and long brows and bushy beard (fig. 85). Wearing a hat with a high tassel and a long robe with two leather cases hanging from his belt, the groom holds the reins of a beautiful, dappled horse. The horse is mainly done in profile, while the groom is in three-quarter view. This is the more standard treatment, which probably came from such T'ang horse painters as Ts'ao Pa and Han Kan, although the more direct prototype was one of the horse and groom pairs in Li Kung-lin's *Five Horses and Grooms* (*Wu ma t'u* 五馬圖) scroll, which was well known in the Yüan period and which Chao Yung must have seen.<sup>46</sup> In fact, Chao Meng-fu had written a poem praising this painting as a masterpiece. With his *Horse and Groom* Chao Yung was demonstrating his skill in handling the subject. Like Li Kung-lin, he did not use color but confined himself more or less to the *pai-miao* 白描 (pure line) style.

The artistic talents of Chao Meng-fu and his wife Kuan Tao-sheng can also be found in the third generation, in the painters Wang Meng and Chao Lin, the younger son of Chao Yung. While the former developed mainly into a landscape painter and was one of the great innovators of the late Yüan, the latter continued the family tradition in a variety of subjects, especially horses and figures. Again owing to the prominence of his grandfather and father, he also served as an official, eventually as prefect of Chü-chou 莒州, in Shantung, although during 1359, when he did the third section of this scroll, he was still only a proofreader.

Chao Lin's painting is closer to Chao Yung's in arrangement and composition, except

that the groom is Chinese rather than Central Asian. His horse is also in profile, with one of the front legs lifted as if to begin walking. Different from the other two horses, this horse is mainly white, with a number of dark spots on the neck, chest, and back. The groom, in a dress like that of his grandfather's figure, is in a three-quarter view, with both hands holding the reins of the horse.

While it was Hsieh Po-li who had conceived the idea of including all three generations in one scroll, the burden of tying all three compositions into one fell to Chao Lin. He had the benefit of seeing the works of his grandfather and father, and was in the best position to unify all three into a single composition, and he succeeded admirably. As the scroll now stands the frontal pose of Chao Meng-fu's groom at the beginning acts much as one of the flanking figures in T'ang compositions. The figure turns slightly toward the left, anticipating the others to come. The second section has as a variation the Central Asian groom, while the third section echoes back to the first. The three horses also show an interesting variety, again very much as in a T'ang painting. The first horse, in a three-quarter view, is pure white, the second is dappled, and the third bears a number of dark dots. As a whole, the three parts harmonize into a kind of unity reminiscent of that of T'ang works. The result is a unique and memorable handscroll.

In looking at this scroll, we can find a complex web of meaning. As we have discussed above, originally Chao Meng-fu created his horse and groom painting as an independent entity, without any consideration of the other two to come. He was well aware of the great horse paintings of the past, such as those by Ts'ao Pa, Han Kan, Wei Yen, Li Kung-lin, and some others. But as a creative artist he wanted to be different. As shown in the several horse paintings by Chao mentioned above, each was innovative in composition and expression. His painting in the Crawford handscroll is no exception. It represented his attempt in 1296 to capture something new in horse painting and eventually led to the *Sheep and Goat* of the Freer Gallery, a culminating point in Chao's animal painting in the near perfection it attains in technique, composition, and meaning.

In contrast, the paintings of Chao Yung and Chao Lin in the handscroll seem to reflect Hsieh Po-li's innovative idea of including the horses of three generations in one single handscroll. In this, Hsieh Po-li may have had in mind the example of the *Five Horses* handscroll by Li Kung-lin, which in all likelihood was known to him then. The eagerness with which the son and grandson accepted Hsieh Po-li's idea of combining the work of three generations in one handscroll that echoes T'ang and Sung horse-painting traditions seems to indicate that they also had Li Kung-lin's example in mind. In painting their horses and grooms in the manner of some of the tribute horse paintings of the past, however, they also express their respect for their current rulers. While these three people wanted to approximate the manner of Li Kung-lin's handscroll of the five horses, Chao Meng-fu, as mentioned before, did something different, seeking to reflect more subtly his inner feeling rather than simply to imitate the T'ang and Sung masters. In that context he was a true literati painter, capable of expressing deep feeling in a variety of genres, such as figure, horse, bird-and-flower, bamboo and orchid, and landscape paintings.

The intent of Chao Meng-fu's descendants may have been quite different. A recent study by Jerome Silbergeld on Chao Yung's painting of elegant horses in a blue-and-green landscape, in the Palace Museum, Taipei, suggests that the artist seems to have dedicated that painting to a Mongol general.<sup>47</sup> Although we are not sure about Hsieh Po-li's background, he may have been a northern Chinese very close to the Mongol rulers

and serving in the south at that time. Both Chao Yung and Chao Lin were still serving the Mongols loyally even though the Mongol empire was already in sharp decline. In painting their sections in this scroll, both artists seem to express this sense of loyalty in the depiction of the horses and grooms. In so doing, they also have drawn Chao Meng-fu into the same mode, although the latter may have had quite different ideas. Interestingly, such a difference can be seen in the style of the three paintings. The images express the meanings quite effectively, without depending on the use of words.

It is clear from these examples by Chao and his descendants that horse paintings held symbolic meaning of different kinds. On the more positive side, they were seen, in their following T'ang models, as embodiments of the glory of T'ang, when China was at the height of its power. Thus, as in the paintings of Ts'ao Pa and Han Kan, the power, majesty, and elegance of the horses were symbolic of the Chinese cultural tradition at its best. This seems to be part of Chao Meng-fu's attitude with respect to T'ang horse paintings, reflecting his ideal, "the spirit of antiquity." In turn, the horses also came to symbolize the literati gentlemen, with their beauty, elegance, and high breeding. On its more official side, horses were seen, in terms of tribute horses, as an expression of respect for and loyalty toward the ruler. On its more negative side, in line with the Yüan cultural development, horses could symbolize the plight of the literati in a world of declining values, such as the early Yüan. But in the Yüan period, there was an added element, which came from the literati tradition of the Northern Sung. From the work of Li Kung-lin, horse painting came to be admired for its sheer sense of beauty expressed in pure ink and brushwork. In other words, Yüan literati painters treated horses just as they would bamboo. To them, both types of paintings were symbolic of the literati spirit, with their elegance, taste, and style. However, under the special circumstances of the political and cultural environment of Yüan, there were different attitudes toward horse paintings even among the literati themselves. For Chao Meng-fu, horse painting was one kind of literati painting, possessing the spirit of antiquity and the elegant taste of the perfect gentleman. On the other hand, the Mongol love of horses may have caused a strong antipathy among some literati for horse paintings. This became serious when both Chao Meng-fu and Jen Jen-fa's family members were recognized as serving under the Yüan. As a result, horse painting, though rather popular in the Yüan dynasty, went into a sharp decline with the fall of the Yüan. From then on, there was almost no well-known literati painter specializing in horse paintings.

*Grooms and Horses* thus gives us a glimpse into the complexity of meaning in Yüan horse painting. To those who cherished a return to the past and who represented a majority of the Yüan literati, this scroll was filled with the antique spirit and conveyed a nostalgia for the glorious past as a sharp contrast to the social disruptions in the Yüan period. This was more of Chao Meng-fu's intention. Yet to the Mongols and those close to the Yüan court, horse paintings like this demonstrated their love of those beasts that through conquest had brought them to power. To them, these paintings expressed a strong sense of loyalty from Chinese painters. This was probably the intention of both Chao Yung and Chao Lin. However, as a whole, to the three generations of the Chao family, horses seem to have possessed exactly the qualities, attractiveness, gentleness, elegance, and strength, that they liked to see in themselves. Even though the artists did not make this explicit by inscribing poems on their paintings, many of the literati would see the images of horses and understand their subtle underlying meanings.



## NOTES

- 1 This painting has recently been published by the author in an article entitled "The Three Bamboos Handscroll by Three Members of Chao Meng-fu's Family," *New Asia Academic Bulletin* 4 (Special Issue on Chinese Art) (1983), pp. 259-78.
- 2 This handscroll was first published by Hsieh Chih-liu in *T'ang Wu-tai Sung Yüan ming-chi* (Famous paintings of the T'ang, Five Dynasties, Sung, and Yüan) (Shanghai: Ku-tien wen-hsüeh, 1957), pp. 95-97; and more extensively by Laurence Sickman in *Chinese Calligraphy and Painting in the Collection of John M. Crawford, Jr.* (New York: Pierpont Morgan Library, 1962), pp. 101-4. In Wan-go Weng's book, *Chinese Painting and Calligraphy: A Pictorial Survey* (New York: Dover, 1978), the section with Chao Meng-fu's painting is reproduced and discussed under no. 21, pp. xxxi-xxxii, and on pp. xx, 44-45. Most of the basic information and documentation of this scroll, including summaries of colophons and identifications of the seals, are discussed in Sickman's essay. Readers are referred to all three of these sources for these materials, which will not be repeated here. For a discussion of Chao Meng-fu's horse paintings, see this author's article "The Freer *Sheep and Goat* and Chao Meng-fu's Horse Paintings," *Artibus Asiae* 30, no. 4 (1968), pp. 279-326. It must be pointed out here that after studying in detail all the paintings by Chao Meng-fu in various museums in China during recent years, especially the Palace Museum in Beijing, the author has revised some of the attributions of Chao's works, including a number of the horse paintings mentioned in that early study.
- 3 This painting is published in Louise W. Hackney and Yau Chang-foo, *A Study of Chinese Paintings in the Collection of Ada Small Moore* (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1940), no. 16.
- 4 For references on these discussions of this painting, see note 2 above.
- 5 Some of the early history of horse painting is given by Cheng Ch'ang, in his *Chung-kuo hua-hsüeh ch'üan-shih* (Complete history of Chinese painting) (Shanghai, 1928; reprint, Taipei: Chung-hua, 1959), pp. 14, 126. Cheng developed his ideas by compiling materials from early sources, especially Chang Yen-yüan's *Li-tai ming-hua chi* (Record of famous paintings of all the dynasties), annotated by Yu Chien-hua (Hong Kong: Nantung t'u-shu, 1973).
- 6 See Chang's *Li-tai ming-hua chi*, *chüan* 5, p. 120; *chüan* 9, p. 189.
- 7 This painting is listed in Pien Yung-yü, comp., *Shih-ku-t'ang shu-hua hui-k'ao* (Classified record of calligraphy and painting in Shih-ku Hall) (Taipei: Cheng-chung, 1958), vol. 3, *chüan* 8, p. 348, and some other sources.
- 8 A number of these pieces are listed in John Ferguson, *Li-tai chu-lu hua-mu* (Compilation of Chinese painters) (Nanking: University of Nanking, 1934; reprint, Taipei: Chung-hua, 1968), p. 472. Two of them are recorded in An Ch'i, *Mo-yüan hui-kuan* (Collected records of works in ink I have had the good fortune to see) (Taipei: Commercial Press, 1956), pp. 233-35.
- 9 This scroll was published in its full length, including all the colophons, in *Chao Meng-fu jen-ch'i t'u* (Beijing: Wenwu, 1959), in portfolio format.
- 10 Two portraits of Chao Meng-fu have recently been published, both in the Palace Museum, Beijing. One is the *Small Self-Portrait of Chao Meng-fu*, published in *Ku-kung po-wu-yüan yüan-k'an*, no. 23 (1984/1), pl. 4, in an article about this painting by Mu I-ch'in, pp. 37-40 and 58. The other is an anonymous work, *Portrait of Chao Meng-fu*, said to be a late Ch'ing copy, used as an illustration accompanying Chao's calligraphy in Wan-go Weng and Yang Boda, *The Palace Museum, Peking: Treasures of the Forbidden City* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1982), p. 225. Both of these show Chao with a long beard and a mustache, while the *Man on Horseback* shows its subject with a short beard and a mustache and some whiskers; nevertheless there is some resemblance between them. According to tradition there are some other portraits of Chao, but there is no need to mention them here.
- 11 Nothing seems to have been recorded about Feich'ing, which must have been the intimate name of a Yüan-dynasty official. In a special paper entitled "The Rhetoric of Alignment and the Role of the Groom," presented at the Workshop on Chinese Figure Painting at the Metropolitan Museum on 16 February 1986, Jonathan Hay first pointed out that the Surveillance Commissioner ranked 3a, higher than the rank of Chao Meng-fu at that time. He also went on to suggest that, due to the very distinctive demeanor of the groom in this painting, Chao Meng-fu may have painted a self-portrait (see Jonathan Hay, "Khubilai's Groom," *RES* 17-18 [Spring-Autumn 1989], pp. 117-39).
- 12 For an extensive discussion of this painting, see this author's publication *The Autumn Colors on the Ch'iao and Hua Mountains: A Landscape by Chao Meng-fu*, *Artibus Asiae Supplementum* 21 (Ascona, Switz.: Artibus Asiae, 1965).
- 13 The list of paintings and other art works brought

- back by Chao Meng-fu from Beijing is recorded in Chou Mi, *Yün-yen kuo-yen-lu* (Record of painting and calligraphy seen by the author), MSTS (Shanghai: Shen-chou kuo-kuang she, 1928), *chi* 2, *chüan* 2. More recently, this list is placed under the year 1295 in Jen Tao-pin, *Chao Meng-fu hsi-nien* (A chronological biography of Chao Meng-fu) (Cheng-chou: Honan Jen-min, 1984), p. 69.
- 14 Barnhart's book *Marriage of the Lord of the River: A Lost Landscape by Tung Yüan*, *Artibus Asiae Supplementum* 27 (Ascona, Switz.: Artibus Asiae, 1970), mentions the impact of Tung's painting on Chao's own *Autumn Colors* mentioned above. Both the *Autumn Colors* and the *Water Village* by Chao Meng-fu are discussed in detail in the book by this author mentioned in note 12 above.
- 15 This is discussed in my "Freer Sheep and Goat" article mentioned in note 2 above, pp. 291-97.
- 16 This painting is published in *Ku-kung ming-hua* (Famous paintings in the Palace Museum) (Taipei: Palace Museum, 1966), vol. 5, no. 4.
- 17 For an extensive discussion of this painting, see Shou-chien Shih, "The Mind Landscape of Hsieh Yu-yü by Chao Meng-fu," in Wen Fong et al., *Images of the Mind* (Princeton: Art Museum, Princeton University, 1984), pp. 237-54. Here Shih dates Chao's work to the period after he had accepted Khubilai Khan's call to Beijing.
- Wang Ch'i-han's painting is mentioned in Chou Mi's list of works brought back to Wu-hsing by Chao Meng-fu in 1295 (see note 13 above). Chou states that "the painting was quite antique, with an inscription by Emperor Hui-tsung. It depicts one barbarian monk cleaning his ear. Both his mouth and nose are slanted according to the tipping of his ear, showing him very happy in expression." This description seems to compare well with the posture of Hsieh Yu-yü in Chao's painting. Shih's dating of Chao's work fits into our proposed situation, for it should be the product of Chao after he had acquired the Wang Ch'i-han painting in Beijing, as it reflects some of his misgivings about serving in the court. However, the painting could have been done when Chao was still in Beijing or Shan-tung. In any case, it was a painting based on some works of the past, though the stylistic elements of that painting point more to a prototype by Ku K'ai-chih (ca. 344-ca. 406) or those of his time rather than Wang Ch'i-han of the Five Dynasties. But the borrowing of a few ideas from Wang's painting to make up Chao's own painting is still quite possible.
- 18 Han Kan's painting is also mentioned in Chou Mi's list referred to in note 13.
- 19 See note 9 above concerning the reference on this painting; all translations in this paper, unless otherwise indicated, are mine.
- 20 In this catalogue compiled by Pien Yung-yü (Taipei: Cheng-chung, 1958), vol. 3, *chüan* 9, p. 391.
- 21 During both the Han and the T'ang periods, many of the aristocratic families were assigned to live in the area of the five imperial mausoleums near the capital, Ch'ang-an. As a result, the term *Wu-ling* has had the connotation of elegance and stylishness.
- 22 The one in Beijing is published in *Chung-kuo li-tai hui-hua: Ku-kung po-wu-yüan ts'ang-hua-chi* (Collection of Chinese paintings through successive dynasties at the Palace Museum in China) (Beijing: Wenwu, 1984), vol. 4, *Yüan*, pls. 82-83, while the one in Taipei is available in the Palace Museum Photographic Archive, no. YV9. It is dated 1347 by Chao Yung's inscription.
- 23 This is published in *Ku-kung ming-hua*, vol. 5, pl. 16.
- 24 For a discussion of this painting, see Thomas Lawton, *Freer Gallery of Art Fiftieth Anniversary Exhibition: II. Chinese Figure Painting* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1973), pp. 174-77.
- 25 See Cheng Wei, "Hou-Liang Chao Yen T'iao-ma t'u-chüan," *Journal of the Shanghai Museum*, no. 2 (1982), pp. 239-59.
- 26 See T'ang Hou, *Hua-chien* (Mirror of painting) (Beijing: Jen-min mei-shu, 1959), pp. 9-10.
- 27 *Ibid.*, p. 11.
- 28 Concerning the various aspects of Li Kung-lin, see the following discussions by both Chinese and Western scholars: A. E. Meyer, *Chinese Painting as Reflected in the Thought and Art of Li Lung-mien, 1070-1106* (New York: Duffield, 1923); Osvald Sirén, *Chinese Painting: Leading Masters and Principles* (New York: Ronald Press, 1956-58), vol. 2, pp. 39-52; Richard Barnhart, "Li Kung-lin's *Hsiao Ching t'u*: Illustrations of the *Classic of Filial Piety*" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1967); Chou Wu, *Li Kung-lin*, Chinese Painters Series (Shanghai: Jen-min mei-shu, 1982). His influence in the development of Yüan painting is widely recognized. Among the various publications on this topic, see especially Richard Barnhart's "Survivals, Revivals, and the Classical Tradition of Chinese Figure Painting," in *Proceedings of the International Symposium on Chinese Painting* (Taipei: Palace Museum, 1970), pp. 143-210. Chao Meng-fu is known to have been deeply influenced by Li Kung-lin. Part of this can be seen in this author's discussion of Chao's horse paintings in the article mentioned in note 2 above.

- 29 See Mu I-ch'in, "Chao Meng-fu tzu-hsieh hsiao-hsiang" (The small self-portrait of Chao Meng-fu), *Ku-kung po-wu-yüan yüan-k'an*, no. 23 (1984/1), pp. 37-40, 58.
- 30 This inscription was first recorded in Chang Ch'ou, *Ch'ing-ho shu-hua fang* (The boat of calligraphy and painting on the Ch'ing River) (Shanghai: Chin-wen-t'ang), vol. *yu*, p. 19b. The translation is based on Osvald Sirén, *The Chinese on the Art of Painting: Translations and Comments* (Beijing: Henri Vetch, 1936), p. 110.
- 31 Both of these poems by Yü Chi are quoted in Ch'en Kao-hua, *Yüan-tai hua-chia shih-liao* (Historical data of Yüan artists) (Shanghai: Jen-min, 1980), pp. 56-57.
- 32 *Ibid.*, p. 55.
- 33 This painting is discussed and reproduced in my "Freer Sheep and Goat" article mentioned above in note 2, p. 304, fig. 11.
- 34 This is also quoted in Ch'en, *Yüan-tai hua-chia shih-liao*, p. 52.
- 35 Although the character for *kua* in his name here looks somewhat like *yü*, the former should be the correct reading. The seal given for both of his colophons here, one dated 1299, is "Chao Tzu-chun yin," which is the *hao* of his brother. The colophons are reproduced in the portfolio mentioned in note 9 above.
- 36 This is thoroughly discussed in my article on that painting mentioned in note 2 above.
- 37 See note 16 above for the reference of this painting.
- 38 See note 2 above.
- 39 The significance of the *Water Village* in Chao's career and in the development of Yüan painting has been extensively discussed in my book on the *Autumn Colors*. See the reference in note 12 above, especially pp. 53-69.
- 40 This is in his *Chung-an chi*, which is quoted by Ch'en, *Yüan-tai hua-chia shih-liao*, p. 59.
- 41 See *Hsüan-ho hua-p'u*, annotated by Yü Chien-hua (Beijing: Jen-min, 1964), p. 218, and my discussion of this passage in my article "The Freer Sheep and Goat," p. 299 (see note 2 above).
- 42 Fang Hui's poem is quoted in Jen, *Chao Meng-fu*, p. 66 (see note 13).
- 43 This painting is recorded in *Ku-kung shu-hua lu* (A descriptive catalogue of the painting and calligraphy in the Palace and Central Museum) (Taipei: Palace Museum, 1965), pp. 109-10, but without the whole text of Wang Pin's colophon. This colophon was first recorded in Chang, *Ch'ing-ho shu-hua fang*, vol. *yu*, p. 20.
- 44 Some of the changes in Wu-hsing and the surrounding areas during the Yüan period have been discussed in a number of articles, including this author's "Role of Wu-hsing in Early Yüan Artistic Development under Mongol Rule," in John Langlois, Jr., ed., *China under Mongol Rule* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), pp. 331-70; and Jerome Silbergeld, "In Praise of Government: Chao Yung's Painting, *Noble Steeds*, and Late Yüan Politics," *Artibus Asiae* 46, no. 3 (1985), pp. 159-98.
- 45 Both of these inscriptions were written by the two Chao and have been recorded in a number of Ming and Ch'ing catalogues.
- 46 This painting is discussed and reproduced in Osvald Sirén, *Chinese Painting: Leading Masters and Principles*, vol. 2, pp. 42-43, vol. 3, pls. 191, 192. It has been reproduced in many other publications.
- 47 See Silbergeld, "In Praise of Government," pp. 178-92.

PART III

*Art  
of the  
Imperial  
Academy*



Figure 97. Ma Ho-chih (active latter half 12th c.), "Broken Axes," from *Odes of Pin*. Section of handscroll, ink and color on silk, H. 25.7 cm. Palace Museum, Beijing



## *Streams and Hills under Fresh Snow* Attributed to Kao K'o-ming

RICHARD BARNHART

Since the publication of the Crawford catalogue in 1962,<sup>1</sup> international scholarly study of the collection has clarified and confirmed many of the opinions proposed at that time by the authors of the catalogue. In the case of *Streams and Hills under Fresh Snow* (*Hsi-shan hsüeh-i t'u* 溪山雪意圖; fig. 98), attributed to Kao K'o-ming 高克明 (active first half of the eleventh century), however, there has been another, and curious, development: the painting has largely been neglected in scholarly publications since then. For example, Max Loehr, the author of the catalogue entry for the painting, did not mention Kao K'o-ming or the Crawford scroll in his 1980 book, *The Great Painters of China*;<sup>2</sup> James Cahill, who was among the first to publish the picture,<sup>3</sup> neither comments on the painting nor bestows on it the mark that denotes a work of particular interest or importance in his more recent *Index of Early Chinese Painters and Paintings* (1980).<sup>4</sup> Rather than influencing the ways we understand Sung painting, as Loehr in 1962 suggested the painting might do, *Streams and Hills* apparently has failed to conform to the ways in which we think of Sung painting and has therefore drifted into a state of benign neglect.

*Streams and Hills* nonetheless commands interest and remains among the most beautiful handscrolls attributed to any Sung master. Apparently, it has become one of those paintings that continue to attract admiring attention from nearly all viewers but that are something of an embarrassment to art historians, who do not quite understand them or who have not yet found contexts into which they fit. If we do not know what the painting is, how can we talk about it? What can we say to our students or to more general audiences?

This preliminary study was undertaken out of curiosity—do we know any more now than we did then?—and out of my own long admiration for *Streams and Hills under Fresh Snow*. It was one of the first Chinese paintings I was able to see and hold in my hands many years ago, at the home of John M. Crawford, Jr., when I was a graduate student.

### *Documentation and History of Ownership*

The earliest certain reference to the Kao K'o-ming scroll in any printed text is in Tu Mu's 都穆 (1459–1525) *Yü-i pien* 寓意篇 (*The Dwelling of Ideas: Notes on Painting and Calligraphy*).<sup>5</sup> Under the collection of Liu Chüeh 劉珪 (1410–72), Tu lists “a landscape handscroll by Kao K'o-ming; an object from the Sung Imperial collection . . . [it] now belongs to Mr. Shen.” Mr. Shen is Shen Chou 沈周 (1427–1509), the greatest painter of Soochow and a distinguished collector. Tu Mu adds a note to the effect that Liu Chüeh's eldest son became the son-in-law of Shen Chou, suggesting that it was through this intermediary that Shen acquired the painting from Liu.

The only colophon still attached to the scroll was written for Shen Chou by his friend and patron Wu K'uan 吳寬 (1435–1504) (fig. 99). From Wu's colophon we learn that



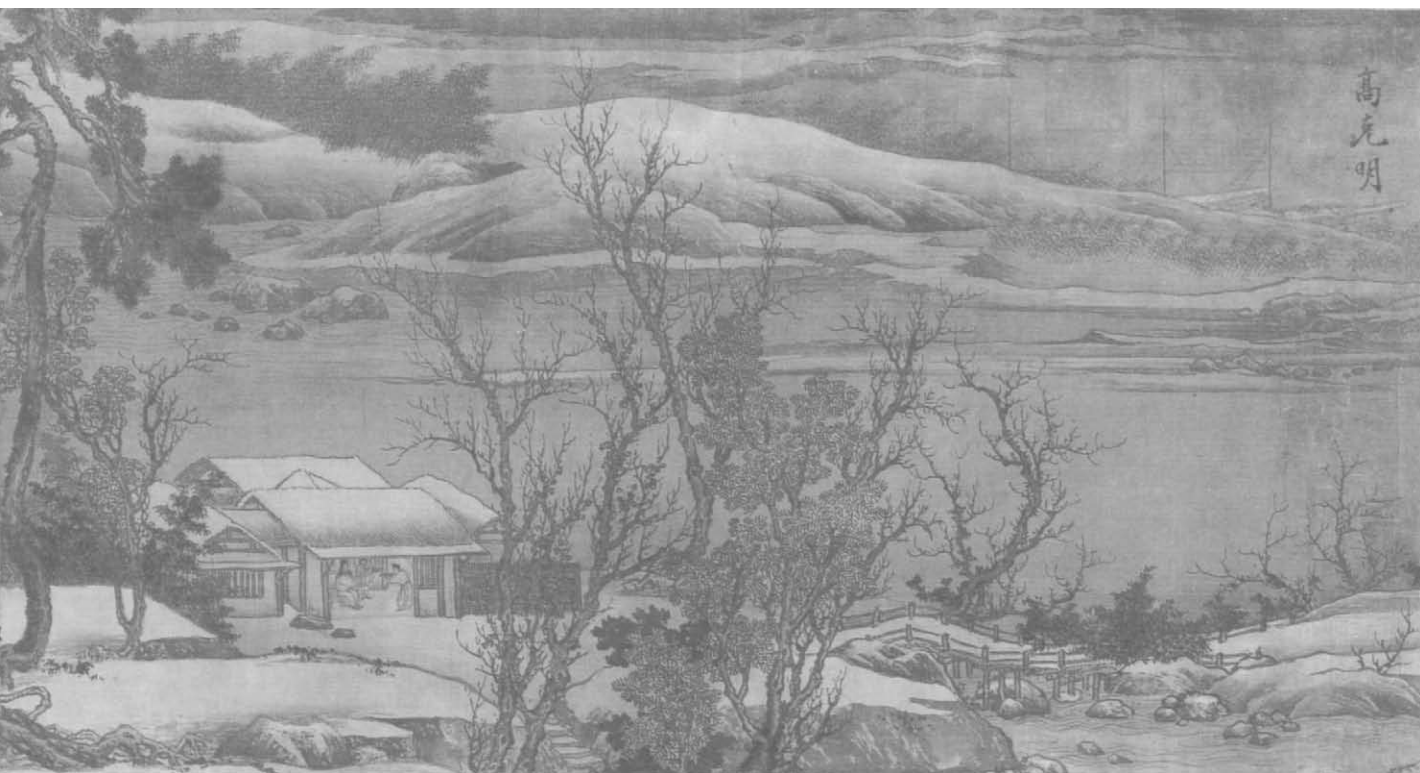


Figure 98. After Kao K'o-ming  
(active first half 11th c.),  
*Streams and Hills under Fresh Snow*.  
Handscroll, ink and color on silk, H. 41.7 cm.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York;  
Gift of John M. Crawford, Jr., 1984



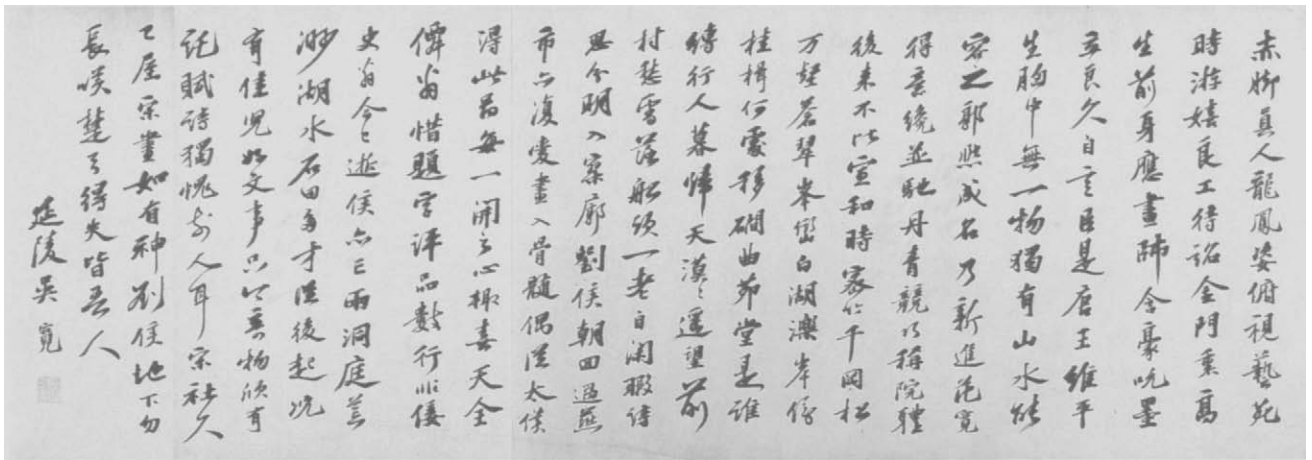


Figure 99. Wu K'uan (1435-1504), Colophon to "Streams and Hills under Fresh Snow"

it was preceded by another colophon, written in 1469 by the scholar Hsü Yu-ch'en 徐有貞 (1407-72) for Liu Chüeh. Now separated from the painting, Hsü's colophon is recorded in many texts, among them Wang K'o-yü's 汪珂玉 (active ca. 1640) *Shan-hu-wang hua-lu* 珊瑚網畫錄 (*Painting Records of the Studio of Netted Corals*) of 1643.<sup>6</sup> Both Hsü Yu-ch'en and Wu K'uan refer to the owner preceding Liu Chüeh as the court official Jen Tao-hsün 任道遜 (1422-1503), from whom Liu acquired the painting in Beijing.

After Shen Chou's death, the painting was acquired by Wang Shih-chen 王世貞 (1526-90), whose seal is on the scroll. Wang's own colophon, written before 1577, when the scroll was included in his collected works, *Yen-chou shan-jen kao* 弇州山人稿,<sup>7</sup> followed those of Hsü Yu-ch'en and Wu K'uan, to which it refers.

By 1662, when the connoisseur Wu Ch'i-chen 吳其貞 (1607-after 1677) saw the scroll in the collection of Ku Wei-yüeh 顧維岳, it had gained ten additional colophons following those of Hsü Yu-ch'en, Wu K'uan, and Wang Shih-chen.<sup>8</sup> Of the total of thirteen colophon writers Wu mentions only Hsü Yu-ch'en. However, Ku Wei-yüeh's brother, Ku Fu 顧復 (active second half of the seventeenth century), another distinguished connoisseur, mentions in his *P'ing-sheng chuang-kuan* 平生壯觀 (*Magnificent Things Seen in My Life*) of 1692<sup>9</sup> that other colophon writers included Wang Shih-mou 王世懋 (1536-88), Chou T'ien-ch'iu 周天球 (1514-95), and Wang Chih-teng 王穉登 (1534-1612).

With the exception of Jen Tao-hsün, the first owner known from these records, all of the owners and colophon writers in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries were closely associated with Soochow and its distinctive artistic tradition. In Soochow, *Streams and Hills under Fresh Snow* was a celebrated work of art, owned, esteemed, and highly influential among four generations of artists and scholars. A study devoted to the role of *Streams and Hills* in transmitting the Sung Academy style to the artists of Soochow, and especially to its influence on Shen Chou and T'ang Yin 唐寅 (1470-1524), would be of interest. While that is not within the limits of this paper, we may note that Shen Chou not only admired the painting more than a Hsü Tao-ning 許道寧 (ca. 970-1051/52) hand-



Figure 100. Attributed to Sung Emperor Hui-tsung (r. 1101–25), "Sparrows and Winter Plum," from *Small Birds on Branches of Blossoming Trees*. Section of handscroll, ink on paper, H. 26 cm. Private collection (from *Bones of Jade, Soul of Ice* [New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1985], fig. 20)

scroll in his collection, but obviously studied it carefully and absorbed many of its features into the structure of his own art.<sup>10</sup> T'ang Yin's well-known affection for the style of Li T'ang 李唐 (ca. 1070–ca. 1150) may be based more closely upon the Kao K'o-ming scroll than upon any Li T'ang work that we can identify.

The later history of the scroll can be quickly summarized. In 1712 Wu Sheng 吳升 (ca. 1660–after 1712) recorded it in his *Ta-kuan lu* 大觀錄 (*A Record of Magnificent Works of Art I Have Seen*),<sup>11</sup> without adding anything to our knowledge, and later in the century the painting entered the Manchu imperial collection (the scroll bears the seals of the Ch'ien-lung [r. 1736–95] and Chia-ch'ing [r. 1796–1820] emperors, and a record of the scroll in its present form appears in the third issue of the 1816 imperial catalogue, *Shih-ch'ü pao-chi* 石渠寶笈),<sup>12</sup> where it remained until the end of the Ch'ing period. I have not studied its history in this century.

Of greater interest is the earlier history of the painting, which is not quite securely established, judging from published scholarship.

Highly visible on the scroll are seals of the Ming prince of Chin, Chu Kang 朱桐 (1358–98). Three of them, reading "Chin-fu t'u-shu" 晉府圖書, "Chin-fu shu-hua chih yin" 晉府書畫之印, and "Ch'ien-k'un ch'ing-wan" 乾坤清玩, correspond to examples reproduced in *Signatures and Seals on Painting and Calligraphy*.<sup>13</sup> A fourth seal, near the upper left corner, reading "Ch'ing-ho-t'ang chang" 清和堂章, was not associated with Chu Kang in the 1962 Crawford catalogue but is clearly his; the same seal appears also, for example, on Hui-tsung's 徽宗 (r. 1101–25) *Finches and Bamboo* (*Ts'ui chu shuang ch'in t'u* 翠竹雙禽圖; see fig. 177) in the Crawford Collection.

Still another seal, placed below the center along the left border, reads "Ch'i-hsi ching-chih" 緝熙敬止. The legend is a quotation from the Ta-ya 大雅 section of the *Book of Poetry* (*Shih-ching* 詩經), referring to Wen Wang 文王: "Oh, to be revered in his glittering light!"<sup>14</sup> The style of the script suggests a relationship to other seals of Chu Kang, and the seal is found among a number of other Chu Kang seals on the set of four

bird paintings attributed to Hui-tsung (fig. 100). The rather pious and filial phrase might suggest that the seal was used by Chu Kang during the period when he was disenfranchised of his principedom and reduced to the status of commoner by his father, Chu Yüan-chang 朱元璋 (r. 1368–98), the first emperor of the Ming dynasty. Only after establishing anew his loyalty, virtue, and dedication was his princely position restored to him.

Chu Kang's extraordinary collection is of considerable importance for our knowledge of early Chinese painting and calligraphy, since it has been inferred that the bulk of the collection came to him as a group from the treasury of the Ming government, a gift to him from his father on the occasion of his enfeoffment as prince of Chin.<sup>15</sup> That event took place in 1378, when Chu Kang was just twenty years old (or 21 *sui* 歲). Chiang I-han's study of Chu Kang's collection lists a total of thirty-two works bearing Chu's seals.<sup>16</sup> To Chiang's list can be added eleven works, including the Kao K'o-ming scroll; scrolls of calligraphy by Wang Hsi-chih, Yen Chen-ch'ing, and Ts'ai Hsiang 蔡襄 (1012–67); Mi Fu's 米芾 (1052–1107) *Sailing on the Wu River* (*Wu-chiang chou chung shih chüan* 吳江舟中詩卷; see figs. 22, 23); *Small Birds on Branches of Blossoming Trees*, attributed to Hui-tsung; the *Flour Mill* (*Cha-k'ou p'an-ch'e t'u* 閘口盤車圖) handscroll attributed to Wei Hsien 衛賢 (active ca. 961–75); and five others. These additions bring Chiang I-han's total to forty-three. Among them, however, further distinctions can be made. One anonymous Sung work (no. 25 on Chiang's list) has not been published and so cannot be evaluated. Another (no. 31), by Ch'ien Hsüan 錢選 (ca. 1235–ca. 1300), is known only through an old, indistinct reproduction and must be set aside for the present. Of the remaining works on Chiang's list, five (nos. 2, 3, 7, 9, and 24) are clearly later, spurious paintings with spurious seals. Three (nos. 10, 11, and 12) appear to be late-fourteenth-century works, contemporary with Chu Kang, and were perhaps painted for his palace as decorative pictures by artists employed by him or by the court. The remaining thirty-three works form one of the most impressive groups of pre-Ming painting and calligraphy owned by one individual that has been identified.

### *Chu Kang's Collection of Ancient Painting and Calligraphy*

1. Wang Hsi-chih 王羲之 (ca. 307–ca. 365), *Shang-yü t'ieh* 上虞帖, Shanghai Museum
2. Wang Hsi-chih, *Copying Chung Yu's Thousand-Character Essay* (*Lin Chung Yu chien-tzu wen* 臨鍾繇千字文), Palace Museum, Beijing<sup>17</sup>
3. Wang Hsien-chih 王獻之 (344–86), *Thirteen Lines of the "Lo-shen fu"* (*Lo-shen shih-san hang* 洛神十三行), rubbing sold at Sotheby's, New York, 6 December 1989
4. Emperor Hsüan-tsung 玄宗 (T'ang, r. 712–55), *Eulogy for a Pied-Wagtail* (*Chi-ling sung* 鶴鶩頌), Palace Museum, Taipei
5. Yen Chen-ch'ing 顏真卿 (709–85), *Chu-shan-t'ang lien chü* 竹山堂連句 (*Linked Sentences on the Bamboo Mountain Hall*), Palace Museum, Beijing<sup>18</sup>
6. Liu Kung-ch'üan 柳公權 (778–865), *Shen-ts'e-chun pei* 神策軍碑 (rubbing, collection unknown)
7. Attributed to Wei Hsien, *Flour Mill*, Shanghai Museum
8. Ts'ai Hsiang, *A Letter and Poem of Resignation* (*Tzu-shu hsieh-piao ping shih chüan* 自書謝表並詩卷), Palace Museum, Taipei

9. Kuan T'ung 關仝 (active ca. 907–23), *Travelers by a Mountain Pass* (*Kuan-shan hsing-lü* 關山行旅圖), Palace Museum, Taipei
10. Chü-jan 巨然 (active ca. 960–80), *Buddhist Retreat by Stream and Mountain* (*Ch'i-shan lan-jo t'u* 溪山蘭若圖), Cleveland Museum
11. Kao K'o-ming, *Streams and Hills under Fresh Snow*, Crawford Collection, Metropolitan Museum
12. Ts'ui Po 崔白 (active 1023–85), *Magpies and Hare* (*Shuang-hsi t'u* 雙喜圖), Palace Museum, Taipei
13. Ts'ui Po, *Wild Goose and Reeds* (*Lu yen t'u* 蘆雁圖), Palace Museum, Taipei
14. Kuo Hsi 郭熙 (ca. 1010–ca. 1090), *Early Spring* (*Tsao-ch'un t'u* 早春圖), Palace Museum, Taipei (see fig. 52)
15. Kuo Hsi, *Eroded Rocks and Trees on a Plain* (*K'o-shih p'ing-yüan t'u* 窠石平遠圖), Palace Museum, Beijing
16. Hui-tsung, *Finches and Bamboo*, Crawford Collection, Metropolitan Museum
17. Attributed to Hui-tsung, *Small Birds on Branches of Blossoming Trees*, private collection
18. Hui-tsung, *Autumn Birds by a Pool* (*Chin-ying ch'iu ch'in t'u* 金英秋禽圖), collection unknown
19. Li T'ang, *Temple in Misty Mountains* (*Yen-lan hsiao-ssu t'u* 煙嵐蕭寺圖), Palace Museum, Taipei
20. Mi Fu, *Sailing on the Wu River*, Crawford Collection, Metropolitan Museum
21. Ma Yüan 馬遠 (active ca. 1190–1225), *Playing the Lute by Moonlight* (*Yüeh-yeh po-yüan t'u* 月夜撥阮圖), Palace Museum, Taipei
22. Ma Lin 馬麟 (active ca. 1216–56), *Waiting for Guests by Lamplight* (*Hua-teng shih-yen t'u* 華燈侍宴圖), Palace Museum, Taipei (see fig. 182)
23. Ma Lin, *Birds in Evening Snow* (*Mu-hsüeh han-ch'in t'u* 暮雪寒禽圖), also known as *Egrets on a Snowy Bank*, Palace Museum, Taipei
24. Lin Ch'un 林椿 (active ca. 1174–89), *Camelias in Snow* (*Shan-ch'a chi-hsüeh t'u* 山茶霽雪圖), Palace Museum, Taipei
25. Li Ti 李迪 (active late twelfth–early thirteenth century), *Herdboys Returning Home in a Rainstorm* (*Feng-yü kuei-mu t'u* 風雨歸牧圖), Palace Museum, Taipei
26. Attributed to Ch'en Chü-chung 陳居中 (active early thirteenth century), *Falconer and Horse* (*Ch'u lieh t'u* 出獵圖), sold at Sotheby's, New York, 13 June 1984<sup>19</sup>
27. Anonymous Sung, *Whiling Away the Summer in a Lotus Pavilion* (*Ho-t'ing hsiao-hsia t'u* 荷亭銷夏圖), Palace Museum, Taipei
28. Anonymous Sung, *Birds in Green Bamboo* (*Ts'ui-chu ling-mao t'u* 翠竹翎毛圖), Palace Museum, Taipei
29. Anonymous, copy after Kuo Chung-shu 郭忠恕 (ca. 910–77), *Riverboats in Clearing Snow* (*Hsüeh-chi Chiang-hsing t'u* 雪霽江行圖), Nelson-Atkins Museum, Kansas City
30. Li K'an 李衍 (1245–1320), *Two Pines* (*Shuang-sung t'u* 雙松圖), Palace Museum, Taipei

31. Chao Meng-fu 趙孟頫 (1254–1322), *Record of the Repairs to the San-ch'ing Hall of the Hsüan-miao Monastery* (*Hsüan-miao-kuan ch'ung-hsiu San-ch'ing-tien chih chi* 玄妙觀重脩三清殿之記), sold at Sotheby's, New York, 3 June 1985
32. Liu Kuan-tao 劉貫道 (active ca. 1339–56), *Whiling Away the Summer* (*Hsiao-hsia t'u* 銷夏圖), Nelson-Atkins Museum
33. Chao Yung 趙雍 (1289–after 1360), *Noble Steeds* (*Chün-ma t'u* 駿馬圖), Palace Museum, Taipei

Aside from the picture-book perfection of this collection in terms of historical range, subject matter, and distribution of artists, the most remarkable documentary fact about Chu Kang's collection is that fifteen items bear the "Ssu-yin" 司印 half-seal of the early Ming government (nos. 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 19, 20, 21, 23, 25, 27, 28, and 29). Three other items (nos. 4, 7, and 8) bear seals of the Yüan government, and five others bear seals of the Sung and/or Chin governments (nos. 1, 2, 5, 16, and 18).

*Streams and Hills under Fresh Snow* does not bear the usual "Ssu-yin" half-seal. Instead, in the lower right corner of the scroll, where the familiar half-seal usually appears, is another half-seal, with exactly the same legend: "Ssu-yin." This seal is damaged and difficult to read; it has a thin frame instead of the wide frame of the other and appears to be carved in a slightly different style. Since Chu Kang's seals are unquestionably genuine, there is no reason to doubt that the scroll came from the same source as the others, namely, the Ming government collection. Therefore, we can only conclude that the name of the office had changed and that a slightly different seal of registration was used. The seal on the Kao K'o-ming scroll may be the left half of a seal reading "Chi-ch'a ssu-yin" 紀察司印, the seal of the Chi-ch'a ssu office, which was formed on 23 December 1374 to replace the Tien-li chi-ch'a ssu 典禮紀察司.

The lower left corner of the scroll bears another incomplete seal that can be read only partially: ". . . pao shu-hua yin" □□保書畫印. The seal, cut off at the bottom and left, cannot be identified with certainty; it does not resemble any known seal and appears to correspond to the half-seal in the lower right corner in date. Since it requires only the discovery of one additional such seal to provide certainty and a full reading, I am confident that the seals will eventually be identified and that they are the legitimate seals of the early Ming government. The identity and authenticity of the seals, however, do not bear importantly upon the early history of *Streams and Hills*, since there is one earlier piece of evidence on the painting that traces its history back to the Sung dynasty.

The three large characters reading Kao K'o-ming, written near the beginning of the scroll in the style of the Southern Sung emperors, are clear evidence that the scroll was seen and enjoyed by an emperor of the Southern Sung. Beneath the inscription are traces of a square seal, the size and shape of which correspond approximately to Emperor Li-tsung's 理宗 (r. 1225–64) square seal, which reads "Imperial Calligraphy" (*Yü-shu* 御書).<sup>20</sup> To date, it can only be suggested that the inscription was written either by Emperor Ning-tsung 寧宗 (r. 1195–1224) or by his successor, Emperor Li-tsung. Ning-tsung's calligraphy has not been clearly identified as yet, but the style of the inscription closely approximates that of the couplet written by an unknown imperial writer, possibly Ning-tsung, on a silk fan (fig. 101), also in the Crawford Collection.



Figure 101. Anonymous  
 (formerly attributed  
 to Sung Emperor Ning-tsung),  
*Couplet by Han Yü.*  
 Round fan mounted as an album leaf,  
 ink on silk, 21.3 × 21 cm.  
 The Metropolitan Museum of Art;  
 Bequest of John M. Crawford, Jr., 1988

### *Style and Dating*

Through the study of Sung painting in recent years, it has become evident that the documents on or associated with any given painting will take us quite close to the time it was painted. Close is, of course, relative; but virtually all extant Sung paintings bear some documents of the Sung, Chin, Yüan, and early Ming governments. The successive collections of Hui-tsung, Kao-tsung 高宗 (r. 1127-62), Li-tsung, Chin Chang-tsung 金章宗 (r. 1190-1208), Chia Ssu-tao 費似道 (1213-75), the government bureaus of the Yüan and early Ming, and the early Ming princes, such as Chu Kang and Mu Ying 沐英 (1345-92), preserved the vast majority of all known Sung paintings.

*Streams and Hills under Fresh Snow* belongs to this group. It is securely documented back through the Ch'ing imperial collection to the Chin-fu Palace and the early Ming government, back to the Southern Sung emperors. Documenting the painting beyond Emperors Li-tsung or Ning-tsung, however, proves more difficult. There is little doubt that it is a Sung painting, but what kind of Sung painting, painted when, and by whom?

There is, of course, a signature, but the signature in its present form was not written by Kao K'o-ming. To write the official title *shao-fu-chien chu-pu* 少府監主簿 (registrar in the Government Work Bureau), Kao's actual title, as *shao-chien pu-chu* 少監簿主 is equivalent to writing Chief of Accounting as Account of Chief.<sup>21</sup> Kao K'o-ming therefore did not write the signature, but who may have done so and why is a matter that will be returned to later.

Since seals and inscriptions take us back with certainty only to the late Sung period, we approach the style with caution. It seems difficult at the outset to justify a strong

association with Northern Sung landscape painting during Kao K'o-ming's lifetime. *Streams and Hills* does not rest easily among a small but adequate number of landscape paintings dating to the period of about 1000 to 1050, the era when Kao was active. The paintings to which I refer include:

1. Fan K'uan 范寬 (ca. 960–ca. 1030), *Traveling among Mountains and Streams* (*Ch'i-shan hsing-lü t'u* 溪山行旅圖), Palace Museum, Taipei (see fig. 54)
2. Yen Wen-kuei 燕文貴 (active ca. 1000–ca. 1025), *Palaces and Pavilions by a River* (*Chiang-shan lou-kuan t'u* 江山樓觀圖), Abe Collection, Osaka Municipal Museum
3. Yen Wen-kuei, *Pavilions by a River* (*Ch'i-shan lou-kuan t'u* 溪山樓觀圖), Palace Museum, Taipei
4. Ch'ü Ting 屈鼎 (active ca. 1023–63), *Summer Mountains* (*Hsia-shan t'u* 夏山圖), Metropolitan Museum (see figs. 2–4)
5. Hsü Tao-ning, *Fishermen Singing Evening Song* (*Yü-ko ch'ang-wan t'u* 漁歌唱晚圖), Nelson-Atkins Museum

All of these paintings, we may safely assume, date to the period between 1000 and 1050, and all but the first are products of the Academy, to which Kao belonged. Perhaps the primary reason why *Streams and Hills* rarely appears in histories of art is that it seems so clearly the product of another time and place. Compared with the five above-mentioned paintings, it would appear to have prefigured much of what would happen to landscape painting during the next century and a half. Nor is the comparison group, even given its small size, without relevance of another kind to Kao K'o-ming, since Yen Wen-kuei was Kao's close friend and associate.

The details of execution that seem to me most telling in suggesting an approximate date for *Streams and Hills* are the advanced “ax-cut texture stroke” (*fu-pi ts'un* 斧劈皴) and the seemingly effortless achievement of a strong sense of visual unification in complex tree groups, bamboo groves, and broken rock formations. Despite their innate differences of intention and style, the Metropolitan Museum's *Duke Wen of Chin Recovering His State* (*Chin Wen-kung fu-kuo t'u* 晉文公復國圖; fig. 102), attributed to Li T'ang, provides one of the most intriguing parallels to *Streams and Hills*. There, for example, one finds richly striated evergreen trunks like those in *Streams and Hills*, and large, jagged rock formations swept into coherence with broad, unifying ax-cut strokes—fluid, structural, and vigorous. Other features common to the two works are the emphasis given to deciduous, leafed trees among leafless trees and evergreens, and the strong, open, and inviting clarity of architectural forms. *Duke Wen of Chin* is a colorful historical pageant, *Streams and Hills* an atmospheric landscape setting; but for all their differences, they have a great deal in common.

I think, however, that the only logical conclusion one could draw about the *chronological* relationship between the two works is that *Streams and Hills* precedes *Duke Wen of Chin*. Since the date of the latter is not secure, the date of the former, too, can be only approximate and relative. Nonetheless, only through these small assumptions and equivocal generalities can we proceed.

*Streams and Hills* bears evidence of styles earlier even than those of the late Northern and early Southern Sung academies. Particularly telling is the motif of large trees rising



Figure 102. Attributed to Li T'ang (ca. 1070–ca. 1150), "Departure from Ch'u," from *Duke Wen of Chin Recovering His State*. Section of handscroll, ink and color on silk, H. 29.5 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Gift of The Dillon Fund, 1973

from the bottom to the top of the scroll with a low-lying landscape unfolding behind and beyond them.<sup>22</sup> This design is prominent especially in two early examples of Sung landscape painting: Chao Kan's 趙幹 (active 961–75) *Early Snow on the River* (*Chiang-hsing ch'u-hsüeh t'u* 江行初雪圖), in the Taipei Palace Museum, a painting contemporaneous with the early Sung, although painted in the Southern T'ang kingdom; and Juan Kao's 阮郛 (907–60) *Women Immortals in Elysium* (*Lang-yüan nü-hsien t'u* 閩苑女仙圖), now in the Beijing Palace Museum, also a work from the mid-tenth century or soon thereafter. Both pictures were in Hui-tsung's collection, and both make strong claims to be as early as the tenth century in date. In fact, the convention of which I speak has T'ang origins and can be seen in earlier form in early eighth-century wall paintings.<sup>23</sup> In another form it continues as late as the date of the beautiful *Tall Pines and Level Plain* (*Ch'iao-sung p'ing-yüan t'u* 喬松平遠圖; fig. 103), which bears the signature of Li Ch'eng 李成 (919–67) but dates from around the third quarter of the eleventh century.

The convention is rarely used in the Southern Sung period. In *Streams and Hills*, it is a striking and telling characteristic which argues, I believe, that the composition is related to early Sung art in important ways not yet altogether clear. Even the shadowy, darkening far reaches of the scroll suggest an affinity with the Northern rather than the Southern Sung, recalling, for example, Ch'ü Ting's *Summer Mountains*. Could it therefore be a sophisticated, mature, late Northern Sung interpretation of an early eleventh-century prototype? This is neither an easy nor a clear solution, and it does not answer all the questions that arise, but it is my opinion that that is exactly what the Crawford scroll is.

I am convinced that important elements of Kao K'o-ming's art, and probably his original composition, are indeed preserved in *Streams and Hills*. I will return to this possibility after considering some aspects of *Streams and Hills* that relate it to the popular practice of painting linked groups of landscapes in the Sung period.



### *Composition and Sequence*

The composition of *Streams and Hills under Fresh Snow* has been the subject of discussion primarily with regard to the question of whether the present scroll is only a part of an originally longer scroll. There is no textual evidence that would suggest this conclusion, since all records use measurements which could be applied to a scroll measuring one inch short of eight feet in length. Furthermore, the Sung imperial inscription at the right end and the signature along the left border prove that by the late Sung period the scroll was in its present form. Substantial trimming did occur over the years, as is indicated by the loss of seal sections and of the upper portion of Mr. Mou's inscription at the end, but the scroll has been approximately its present length since the Sung period.

Nonetheless, the evidence of the composition suggests that the scroll is incomplete: it appears to be one section, coherent and uniform, of a sequential structure, a single movement from a suite. *Streams and Hills* is the end of something, not the beginning or development. It speaks only of evening, winter, rest, quiet, returning, and of impending night. The mood is uniform and consistent, like the final, quiet approach of a winter's night.

That this was both an uncommon structure for handscrolls in general and a common structural ending for sequential landscapes in the Sung period can be established, but only with difficulty, and with what might seem to be a digression—although I believe it is not in fact. Our knowledge of landscape sequences in the Sung can at present come from only one source, namely, the most popular and celebrated sequence of Sung landscape views, the *Eight Views of the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers* (*Hsiao-Hsiang pa-ching t'u* 瀟湘八景圖). Since Kao K'o-ming was already dead by the time that theme was painted in China, around 1070, by Sung Ti 宋迪 (ca. 1015–ca. 1080), we can approach sequentially structured landscapes only circuitously, by making the assumption that their conventions drew broadly on conventions used in other themes, for example, landscapes of the four seasons—a subject we know to have been painted by Kao K'o-ming—which sometimes were also sequential.

Probably not by chance, we can in fact explore this matter through yet another painting attributed to Kao K'o-ming, an album leaf in the Palace Museum, Taipei, with Kao's purported signature, called *Mountains in Snow* (*Ch'i-shan chi-hsüeh t'u* 谿山積雪圖; fig. 104)—a theme not unrelated to the Crawford scroll. The Taipei album leaf may not have been painted in the Sung period but sometime later, on the basis of a lost Sung original. There are several other more-or-less identical compositions, attributed, for example, to Hsia Kuei 夏珪 (active first half of the thirteenth century; fig. 105) and Hsiao Chao 蕭照 (active mid-twelfth century; fig. 106), and an important copy in Japan, attributed to Shūbun 周文 (active 1423–60), considered to have been painted around 1420 on the basis of a Chinese model (fig. 107). The matter has been studied thoroughly by both Richard Stanley Baker<sup>24</sup> and Shoji Jun'ichi.<sup>25</sup>

Briefly, this material posits a Sung prototype, now lost, but similar to the three Chinese paintings presently known. It is a mountainous winter landscape. A boat has drifted to shore—a common motif in evening scenes—and a figure with an umbrella walks slowly along a pathway as if returning to his home, just ahead, at the end of the day. The scene takes place in gathering darkness. The wintry mood is like that of *Streams and Hills*.



Figure 103. Attributed to Li Ch'eng (919-67), *Tall Pines and Level Plain*. Hanging scroll, ink on silk, 205.6 × 126.1 cm. Chokaido Bunko, Mie Prefecture; Inokuma Zenju Collection (from *Bunjinga Suihen* [Tokyo, 1967], vol. 2, pl. 18)

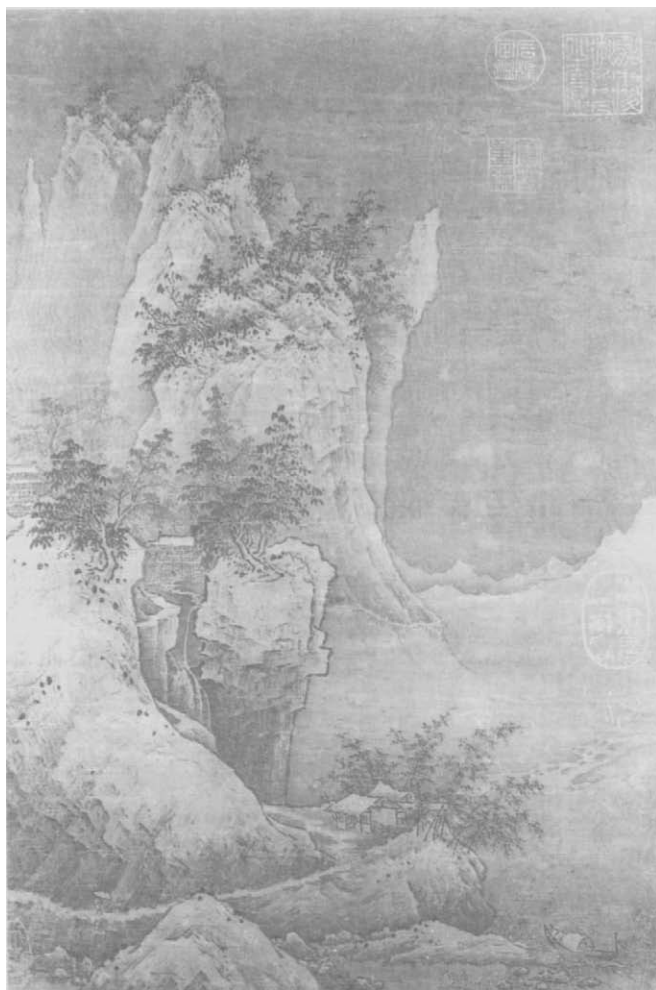


Figure 104. Attributed to Kao K'o-ming, *Mountains in Snow*. Album leaf, ink on silk, 45.1 × 30 cm. Palace Museum, Taipei



Figure 105. Attributed to Hsia Kuei (active first half 13th c.), *Winter Landscape*. Hanging scroll, ink on silk, 47.6 × 32.5 cm. Palace Museum, Taipei

What the title of the composition may have been in the Sung period is not known. Leaving that question for the moment, it is important to observe that when the same composition appeared in Japan in the early fifteenth century, it is as the leftmost, closing section of a wall-sized composition that obviously continued far to the right, a winter landscape that functions as the end of a sequence. Suggesting that the now-fragmentary Japanese composition was originally “Evening Snow” from a set of the *Eight Views* is the continued appearance of essentially the same design as the leftmost, closing section of Hasegawa Tohaku’s 長谷川等伯 (1539–1610) large set of screens illustrating the *Eight Views of the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers* (fig. 108).

Is, then, the Kao K'o-ming/Hsia Kuei/Hsiao Chao “Evening Snow” composition from a set of the *Eight Views*? Establishing this would require only demonstrating a chain of such identifications, something that I have been doing elsewhere in connection with a study of Sung Ti and the original *Eight Views*, and which Richard Stanley Baker has been doing for some years in seeking to establish the roots of Muromachi (1392–1568)

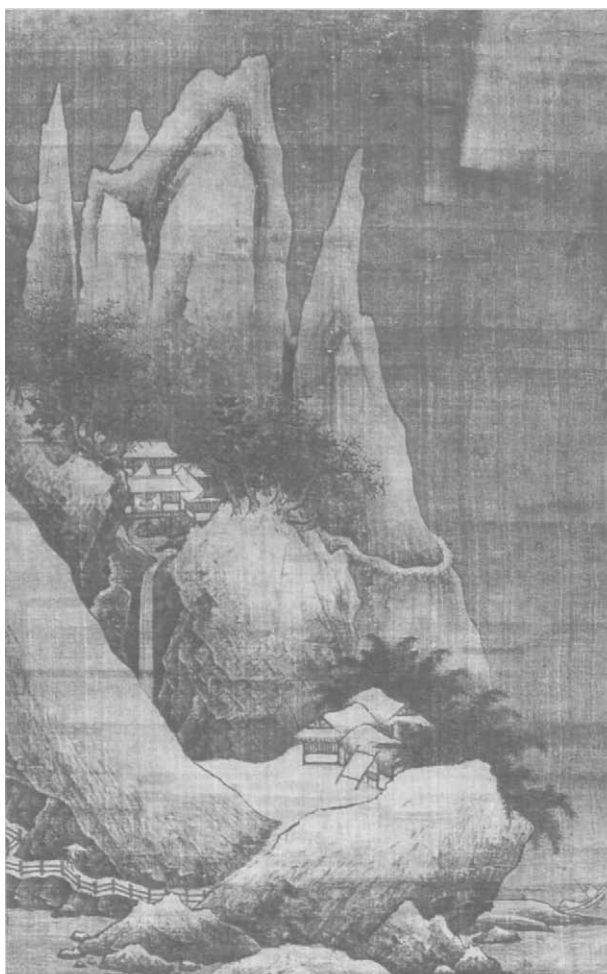


Figure 106. Attributed to Hsiao Chao (active mid-12th c.), *Winter Landscape*. Hanging scroll, ink and color on silk, 39.4 × 24.4 cm. C. C. Wang family collection



Figure 107. Attributed to Shūbun (active 1423–60), *Winter Landscape*, ca. 1420. Screen, ink on paper, 163.5 × 86.4 cm. Tokyo National Museum (from *Kokka*, no. 1035 [1980])

painting. There is no doubt whatsoever that a great many Sung paintings heretofore called simply *Landscape* or *Boats on a Lake* are, in fact, examples of the familiar themes of the *Eight Views*, such as "Evening Glow over a Fishing Village" or "Returning Sail off Distant Shore."

For present purposes, it will suffice to look at the earliest-known Chinese version of the *Eight Views*, Wang Hung's 王洪 (active ca. 1131–61) mid-twelfth-century set now in the Elliott Collection in the Art Museum, Princeton University (fig. 109). Here, in Wang's "Evening Snow," are the same snow-covered hills, the same boat pulled to shore, the same pathways leading back to a settlement, the same mood of stillness and impending night. Each composition in this set is characterized by the singularity of mood that we see in Kao K'o-ming's *Streams and Hills*. Each represents a single moment or brief passage of time, and each is related to those that precede and follow, the set comprising a succession of times marking the end of day, evening, and then nightfall.

In the Sung, the *Eight Views* existed in many forms, sizes, and formats. There were

groups of eight horizontal compositions, as in the Wang Hung, the Mu-ch'i 牧谿 (active mid-thirteenth century), and Yü-chien 玉澗 (active mid-thirteenth century) sets. There were groups of album-sized leaves or fan paintings; and there were sets of individual hanging scrolls, such as Boston's large Hsia Kuei,<sup>26</sup> which is actually "Evening Glow over a Fishing Village." Were any of these sets of hanging scrolls made as continuous compositions? While the evidence is yet only suggestive, we can assume that continuous compositions including all of the eight views were painted in the Sung. Tung Pang-ta's 董邦達 (1699–1769) copy of a famous version in handscroll format by Ma Yüan is now in the N. P. Wong collection (fig. 110).<sup>27</sup> In a composition similar to Hsia Kuei's *Twelve Views of Landscape* (*Shan-shui shih-erh-ching* 山水十二景) in the Nelson-Atkins Museum, Ma Yüan presented eight views in a unified succession.

In Ma Yüan's composition, most importantly, "Evening Snow" is the concluding section. Similarly, in most Japanese sets of the views, the final segment is "Evening Snow." It is a natural conclusion, just as in a set of *Four Seasons* landscapes winter is the natural concluding section. We observe in Ma Yüan's scroll (as copied by Tung Pang-ta) that in the final, snow scene there are familiar identifying elements: a boat has pulled to shore, and a man with a protective umbrella walks in toward the house compound in which, presumably, he lives and to which he is returning at the end of day. Beyond are snow-covered hills, and overall, a mood of white silence.

With the evidence of Ma Yüan's "Evening Snow" at one end and the anonymous Japanese version of about 1420 at the other, we can only conclude that the various paintings attributed to Kao K'o-ming, Hsia Kuei, Hsiao Chao, and Shūbun are, indeed, reflections of a Southern Sung painting of "Evening Snow" from a set of paintings of the *Eight Views of the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers*.

This means, of course, that the subject was not painted by Kao K'o-ming, since, as we have observed, he had died before the subject of the *Eight Views* was painted. The point is not to connect Kao to the *Eight Views*, but to observe how a winter scene fits into a sequence of landscape paintings on a broader theme, such as the *Eight Views*.

*Streams and Hills under Fresh Snow* functions in much the same way. Especially when compared with the earliest version of the *Eight Views*, that of Wang Hung, we will observe striking similarities of composition and motif. They are reversed in emphasis, but in both scrolls we see a strongly defined group of foreground trees and a boat or boats by the nearby shore; beyond are a stream or river and snow-covered rocks and hills on its far side. In both, pathways lead back to shadowed clusters of buildings. In both, furthermore, a man sits in a boat at the near shore and gazes across the snowy hills. We can only be struck by the similarities between the Kao K'o-ming landscape and Wang Hung's "Evening Snow" from the set of *Eight Views of the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers*.

While I cannot rule out entirely the possibility that *Streams and Hills under Fresh Snow* is actually "Evening Snow" from a set of paintings on the theme of "Eight Views," I am inclined toward another explanation of the similarity. I believe that *Streams and Hills* is the winter landscape from a set of four seasonal pictures. The evidence for the popularity of such paintings in the Sung is not hard to find. The wall paintings in the tomb of the Liao emperor buried at Ch'ing-ling 慶陵 are landscapes of the four seasons.<sup>28</sup> Li T'ang's Kōtō-in landscapes are another example.<sup>29</sup> Three of a set of four seasonal landscapes attributed to both Hui-tsung and Hu Chih-fu 胡直夫 (twelfth–thirteenth century?) remain in Japan and have recently been associated by Toda Teisuke with the time and

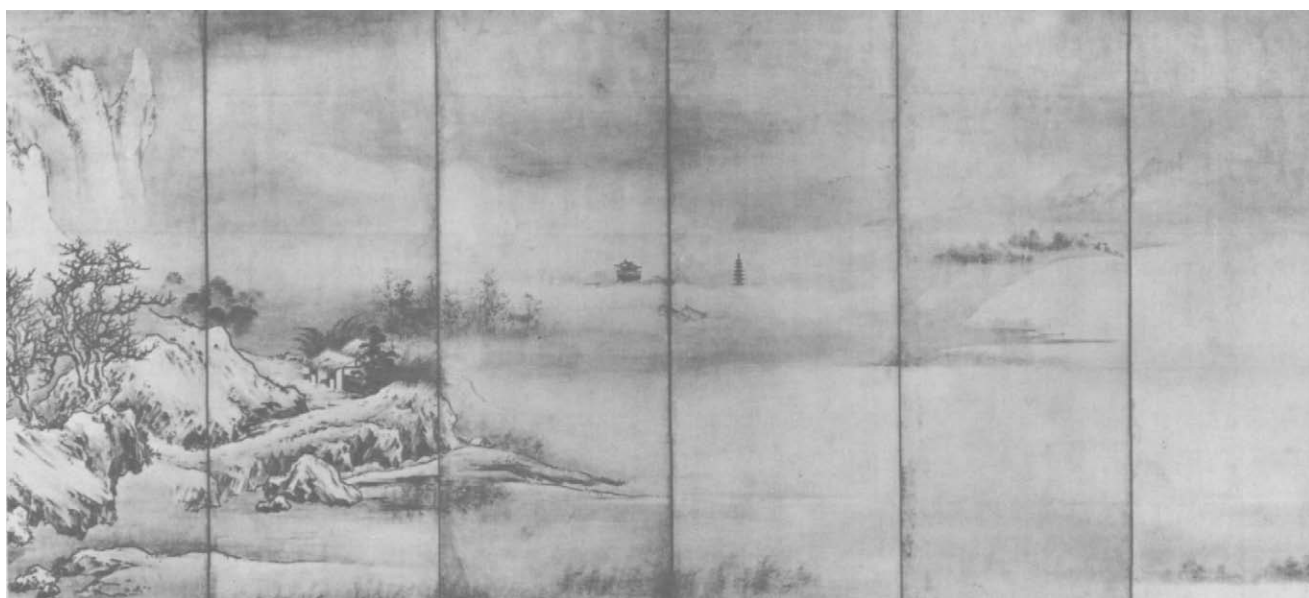


Figure 108. Hasegawa Tōhaku (1539–1610), left screen from *Eight Views of the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers*. Pair of screens, ink and color on paper, 162 × 357 cm. Collection unknown (from *Sansuiga, Suiboku Sansui*, vol. 2 of *Nihon Byōbu Shusei* [Kodansha, 1978], pls. 93, 94)



Figure 109. Wang Hung (active ca. 1131–61), "River and Sky in Evening Snow," from *Eight Views of the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers*, ca. 1156. Section of handscroll, ink on silk, H. 23.4 cm. The Art Museum, Princeton University; Edward L. Elliott Family Collection, The Fowler McCormick Fund

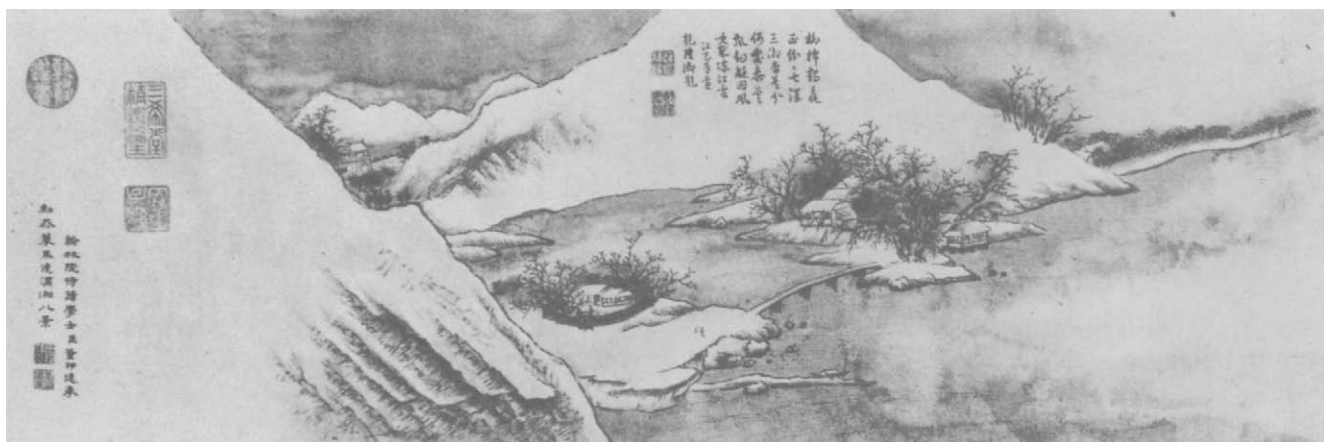


Figure 110. Tung Pang-ta (1699–1769), "River and Sky in Evening Snow," from *Eight Views of the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers*. Section of handscroll, ink and light color on paper, H. 23.1 cm. Wong Nan Ping collection

the style of Liu Sung-nien 劉松年 (ca. 1150–after 1225).<sup>30</sup> Attributed to Liu himself is a set of four seasonal landscape paintings now owned by the Palace Museum in Beijing (fig. 111).

These last are of particular interest in a study of Kao K'o-ming's *Streams and Hills*, since many who have studied the Liu Sung-nien pictures have been struck by their resemblance to the Crawford scroll. In fact, the winter landscape from the Liu set and the Crawford scroll are acutely similar. It is as if many of the same elements had been gathered and arrayed, but with a different emphasis and placement, to form winter landscapes. The Liu Sung-nien set is not an *Eight Views* fragment: there are no boats, and other key elements are missing. However, we see our familiar figure with the umbrella—now on a donkey and going off on a path; and we see a strikingly similar group of buildings, open and inviting, painted with a sharp eye to accessibility and plausibility. We see, too, a similar group of tall, twisting pines and a similarly sharp, structural treatment of rocks covered with snow.

The Crawford scroll is painted with more freedom and variation in formal subtleties; the Liu pictures are tighter, harder, more densely compact—but they have so much in common that we must assume a connection. The precise nature of their relationship may be beyond my ability and knowledge at this time to clarify further. If, as some have maintained, the Liu Sung-nien paintings are Ming copies of lost works by Liu, then it could be argued that the Crawford scroll is the original Liu Sung-nien. If, on the other hand, the Liu Sung-nien pictures were painted by Liu toward the end of the twelfth century, then the Crawford scroll would have to be an earlier work in the tradition of the Academy to which Liu, too, adheres.

In my view, the Beijing paintings are Sung in date, and are probably late Sung replicas of paintings by Liu Sung-nien. They are surely not Ming. I regard them in the same way I regard the extant version of Li T'ang's *Duke Wen of Chin Recovering His State* (see fig. 102). The latter is less likely to be by Li T'ang than by another, unknown member of the Academy whose job it was to copy Li's original paintings. The making of such replicas within the Academy—and probably outside it also—is well established, beginning with Hui-tsung, whose every work soon existed in numerous copies, and is most effectively illustrated today by the replicas of contemporary date which exist of Ma Ho-chih's 馬和之 (active second half of the twelfth century) popular paintings for the *Book of Poetry*. We waste a good deal of time and energy in assuming that there can be only one Sung original. In all probability, every successful and admired painting of the Sung Academy soon existed in more than one version. The Beijing Liu Sung-nien *Landscapes of the Four Seasons* (*Ssu-ching t'u* 四景圖) belongs to this category in my opinion.

Two conclusions can be suggested tentatively. First, Liu Sung-nien's landscape art is based upon an academic model that is most clearly preserved in *Streams and Hills under Fresh Snow* attributed to Kao K'o-ming. Second, and returning now to the question of continuous yet separable landscape compositions in the Sung period, Liu Sung-nien's are precisely a demonstration of this practice. Each is a separate composition and separately mounted, yet each is sequentially related to the next in such a way that a continuous compositional panorama is created by joining the four pictures from right to left in the sequence Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter. Although there is no exact join between them, only a few details and a little space would connect them directly, and they are conceived in such a way that they can function both separately and as a linked group.

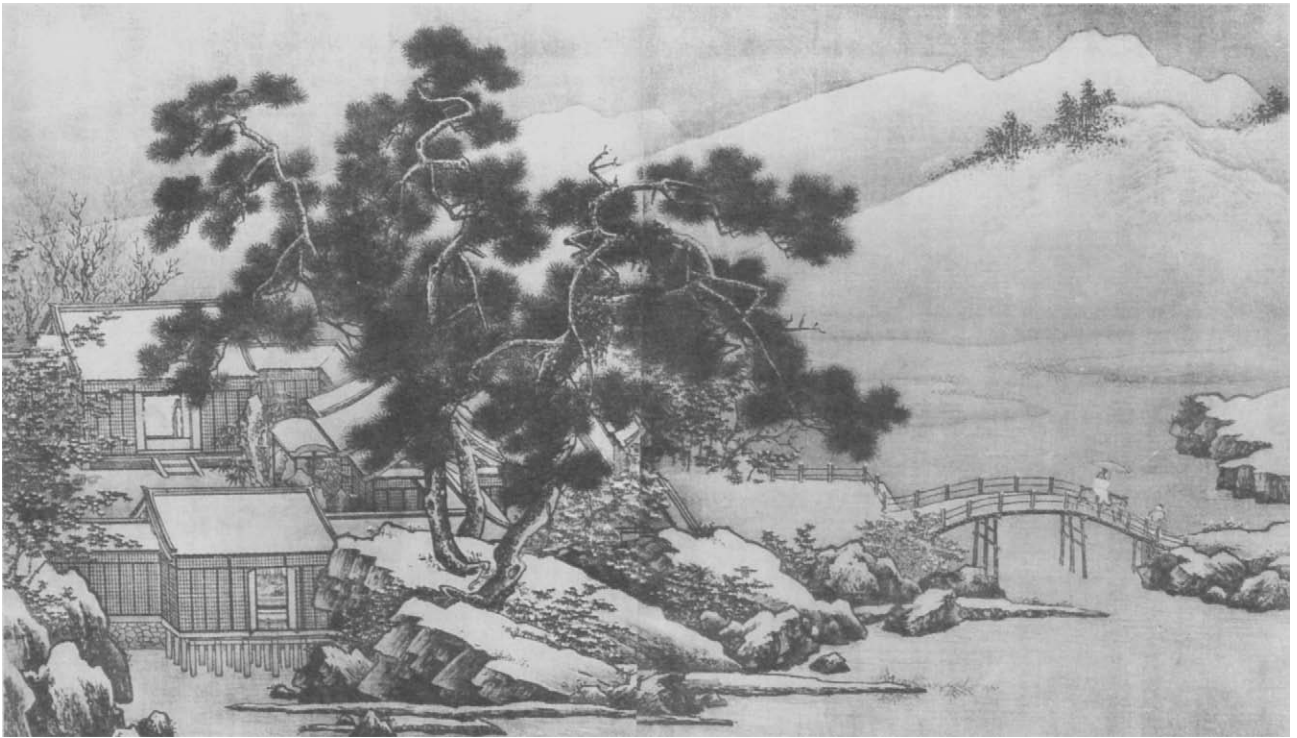


Figure 111. Liu Sung-nien (ca. 1150–after 1225), “Winter,” from *Landscapes of the Four Seasons*. Section of handscroll, ink and color on silk, H. 31.3 cm. Palace Museum, Beijing (from *Ku-kung po-wu-yüan yüan-k’an*, no. 2 [1980], pl. 7)

Since the implications of this observation are that *Streams and Hills* may have been just such a final composition from a sequence of seasonal landscape paintings, and that the academic manner continued by Liu Sung-nien was the academic manner essentially formulated by Kao K'o-ming a century and a half earlier, it will be helpful to examine briefly the historical evidence for Kao's role in formulating the precedent for the Sung Painting Academy.

### *Kao K'o-ming's Influence on the Sung Imperial Painting Academy*

During the eleventh century the two primary, continuing models for the painters of the Imperial Painting Academy were Yen Wen-kuei and Kao K'o-ming.<sup>31</sup> Kao's own activity within the Academy spanned about forty years. He arrived in Kaifeng 開封 during the Ching-te period 景德 (1004–7), entered the Academy during the Ta-chung hsiang-fu period 大中祥符 (1008–16), became *tai-chao* 待詔 (court painter) during the reign of Jen-tsung 仁宗 (r. 1023–63), and was still active at the beginning of the Huang-yu period 皇祐 (1049–54). His lifetime therefore spanned approximately the period from about 980 until about 1050, making him a contemporary of both Yen Wen-kuei and Hsü Tao-ning. His name was often linked with Yen Wen-kuei, Wang Tuan 王端 (active early eleventh century), and Ch'en Yung-chih 陳用志 (active ca. 1023–38) as the four “Painting Friends” (*hua-yu* 畫友). A number of Northern Sung academicians imitated Kao's style, among



them Liang Chung-hsin 梁忠信 (active ca. 1023–63), “close in form to Kao K’o-ming”; Ning T’ao 寧濤 (eleventh century), “exactly like Kao K’o-ming”; Ho Yüan 何淵 (eleventh century), who “exclusively imitated Kao K’o-ming”; and Kao Hsün 高洵, active during Hui-tsung’s reign, who was “a follower of Kao K’o-ming.”<sup>32</sup>

Kao Hsün’s biography is particularly informative concerning Kao K’o-ming’s popularity. In it we learn that during Hui-tsung’s reign (1101–25), so many members of the Painting Academy imitated Kao K’o-ming that Kao Hsün instead imitated Fan K’uan. Kao Hsün’s nephew, during the Chia-ting period 嘉定 (1208–24), became a follower of Li T’ang.<sup>33</sup>

Thus, from the reign of Jen-tsung through the reign of Hui-tsung, Kao K’o-ming was a powerful force within the Academy, the popularity of his style reaching a peak in the early twelfth century. Only at the very end of the Northern Sung period was the dominance of his art beginning to be challenged.

We know, of course, that after the reestablishment of the Sung court in Hangchow following the Chin destruction of Kaifeng, Li T’ang emerged as the most influential master of the Academy. Liu Sung-nien, Ma Yüan, and Hsia Kuei are the products of this shift, and were followers of Li T’ang, as were most of the lesser masters of the Southern Sung Academy. In this new environment, the popularity of the great masters of the Northern Sung declined, and with it the influence of Kao K’o-ming. It can be argued, however, that the influence of Kao K’o-ming was so deep-seated within the Academy that the art of the Academy itself bore his stamp, that whatever the art of the Academy was, it was in part Kao K’o-ming. Even Li T’ang’s work is likely to have begun as a product of Kao’s influence, and we might well understand his development in exactly the terms we can use for one of his contemporaries, Kao Hsün. Kao Hsün had begun, probably like many, if not most, members of the Academy, as a follower of Kao K’o-ming. Out of dissatisfaction with the popularity of that tradition, “since so many in the Academy imitated Kao,” he switched his allegiance to Fan K’uan, who had been neglected for some time. Li T’ang, we believe, did the same thing, at least in his absorption of Fan K’uan into his own art, judging from his masterpiece, *Whispering Pines in the Mountains*, of 1124. Since the two major models of the Academy throughout the eleventh century had been Kao and Yen Wen-kuei, it is easier to imagine Li following Kao rather than Yen.

Let us put it that Li may have begun with Kao, turned to Fan, become Li, and then produced his own powerful tradition. Kao was, then, a fundamental part of that tradition.

I would not be engaging in this rudimentary reconstruction if I did not think that we can still find something of Kao K’o-ming in *Streams and Hills under Fresh Snow*. Kao was by no means forgotten in the Southern Sung period.

In 1187, the scholar Chou Pi-ta 周必大 (1126–1204) was asked by a friend to write a colophon for a painting he owned attributed to Wang Wei 王維 (701–61). Chou’s colophon, which bears upon Kao K’o-ming, is of some interest:

Since the Painting Academy began to flourish in the Ch’ung-ning period [1102–6], among the famous masters who have appeared was Kao K’o-ming, who was awarded the Purple Sash. He succeeded in attaining the style of Wang Wei, and was highly esteemed in his time. Today it has become very difficult to obtain his works; how much more so genuine works of the T’ang!<sup>34</sup>

Chou seems to be suggesting that the painting was actually the work of Kao K'o-ming, not Wang Wei.

Shimada Hidemasa has very recently made the fascinating suggestion that the painting referred to by Chou Pi-ta may in fact be closely related to a painting now in the Palace Museum, Taipei, attributed to Wang Wei, called *Snow along the Riverbank* (*Chiang-kan hsüeh-i t'u* 江幹雪意圖).<sup>35</sup> This is indeed one of the few extant works that can be said to be similar in style to *Streams and Hills*, although Chao Ling-jang 趙令穰 (active ca. 1070–1100) is also recalled. Like *Streams and Hills*, *Snow along the Riverbank* appears to be one section in a longer sequence of compositions from which it is now separated.

In any case, it is clear that Chou thought highly of Kao K'o-ming's work and held it to be within the broad tradition of Wang Wei. Chou's confusion of dates is interesting, indicating that when he saw a painting by Kao, or close to it, he mistakenly related it to the Academy during Hui-tsung's reign, in the period of the young Li T'ang. Wu K'uan, too, in his colophon to *Streams and Hills*, seems to hint that he also believed the painting to be a product of Hui-tsung's Academy. Thus, the confusion of Kao K'o-ming's art with that of the early twelfth century is of long standing, and may be explained by the fact that the very structure of academic landscape painting in the Sung was the art of either Yen Wen-kuei or Kao K'o-ming.

I would like, finally, to be more specific. I have suggested that the Crawford scroll has the structural, design, and lyrical qualities of a final winter section in a series of landscape paintings. The prototype for that analysis was the composition "Evening Snow" in the set of *Eight Views*. But I am reluctant to make the association closer than that of approximate parallel because I believe that *Streams and Hills* is more likely to have been the final, winter composition in a set of landscapes of the four seasons. Such sets, we have observed, were very popular in the Sung. Hui-tsung painted one himself, and also painted a set of the *Eight Views*.<sup>36</sup> The two themes undoubtedly had close connections, using similar motifs and moods with which to convey the sights and sounds of the changing seasons. And within both sets, winter was the natural conclusion. *Streams and Hills* has the appearance of a conclusion.

We must return to the question of the "signature" written along the left border of *Streams and Hills*. The mistake made was so basic that it proves that Kao K'o-ming was not the writer. Furthermore, the date of the painting appears to be somewhat later than the time of Kao K'o-ming. It has been suggested that the signature was added long after the painting itself was done, since it is not mentioned in full until the seventeenth century. This would seem to be an easy and a logical conclusion, but it is one which I do not wish to draw for two reasons. First, the Sung imperial inscription at the beginning of the scroll has been there since at least the thirteenth century. There would be no point in adding a lengthy signature at the end. Second, the "signature" is beautifully written and looks almost as old as the painting itself. It is subtly a part of the painting, not as if added by a later hand. It can almost not be seen, in fact, and has to be studied carefully in order to be read. It might have been covered up by mounting during much of its history, as was the case with the *Flour Mill* in Shanghai, attributed to Wei Hsien, which only recently revealed a long-hidden inscription at the end.<sup>37</sup>

The inscription, or signature, furthermore, is interesting because of what it says: "In the second year of Ching-yu [1035] . . . submitted to the court by Kao K'o-ming." In

the rather detailed biography of Kao in Liu Tao-ch'un's 劉道醇 (active mid-eleventh century) *Sheng-ch'ao ming-hua p'ing* 聖朝名畫評 (*Critique of Famous Painters of the Present Dynasty*),<sup>38</sup> compiled around 1060, just a few years after the painter's death, we read that early in the Ching-yu period (1034–38)—that is, in a year corresponding to the date of the Crawford scroll—Kao K'o-ming was ordered to execute a series of wall paintings for the Chang-sheng Pavilion 彰聖閣 of the imperial palace. The subject of the paintings was to be “scenery and objects of the four seasons” (*ssu-shih ching-wu* 四時景物). I find this correspondence of painting and text to be far more persuasive than might be accounted for by mere coincidence, or even by imaginative manipulation on the part of some intelligent forger or dealer.

Furthermore, in the partial inventory of the Southern Sung imperial collection compiled in the year 1199, and extant today under the title *Sung Chung-hsing-kuan-ko ch'u-t's'ang t'u-hua chi* 宋中興館閣儲藏圖書記, under the heading “Anonymous works, a total of fifteen” are listed “Landscapes copied after Kao K'o-ming, two scrolls” (*Hsüeh Kao K'o-ming shan-shui erh-chüan* 學高克明山水二卷).<sup>39</sup> Another coincidence? The Crawford scroll was in the Southern Sung treasury. The only partial catalogue of that collection lists no work by Kao but instead two copies after his work, one of which (no titles are given) must correspond to *Streams and Hills under Fresh Snow*.

Now we can attempt to reconstruct a hypothetical sequence of activities which may account for the complexity we have explored. First, Kao K'o-ming was ordered to paint landscapes of the four seasons for the walls of the imperial palace in the period 1034–35. He executed a series of designs on the theme of the seasons and submitted them to the throne. They were approved and transferred to the walls of the Chang-sheng Pavilion. Kao continued to be a primary model for landscape painting in the Academy for the remainder of the Northern Sung period, and his works were copied and emulated by a large group of followers. His original designs were therefore preserved within the Academy and copied by three generations of academic professionals who were instructed to emulate his work. One of those followers copied *Hills and Streams* of 1034–35 even to the original signature, and that copy (the Crawford painting) was preserved by the court until the end of the dynasty.

Perhaps the original design was physically dilapidated. In any case, only the copy survived, and the wall paintings of the Chang-sheng Pavilion were destroyed in the fires of 1126 that obliterated the palaces of the Northern Sung. Even following that conflagration, however, Kao K'o-ming's art was an inspirational force within the resurrected Academy, and latent reflections of his style persisted through the generation of Liu Sung-nien.

It is clear that *Streams and Hills under Fresh Snow* occupies a unique position in the history of Sung painting. No lifeless and slavish copy, it is a free, strong re-creation by an immediate follower of a lost work by a powerfully influential master whose art cannot be otherwise known today. Its physical identity may be with the Academy of the late Northern Sung, but its roots and primary historical identity lie deep in the origins of that Academy and on the walls of the lost palaces of the Sung.

## NOTES

- 1 Laurence Sickman, ed., *Chinese Calligraphy and Painting in the Collection of John M. Crawford, Jr.* (New York: Pierpont Morgan Library, 1962).
- 2 Max Loehr, *The Great Painters of China* (Oxford: Phaidon Press, 1980).
- 3 James Cahill, *Chinese Painting* (Geneva?: Skira, 1960), pp. 38, 41.
- 4 James Cahill, *An Index of Early Chinese Painters and Paintings* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), pp. 105-6. Two Japanese studies of the Kao K'o-ming scroll became available to me after the first version of this article was written, and I have incorporated their contributions in this revised version. Suzuki Kei discusses the scroll as a late Southern Sung copy of an earlier work; see *Chūgoku Kaigashi* (A history of Chinese painting) (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1985), vol. 3, pp. 104-9. See also Shimada Hidemasa's important work on Kao K'o-ming and his role in the Sung Academy, "On Kao K'o-ming and His School," *Journal of the Atomi Women's University*, no. 18 (1985), pp. 27-48. I am especially indebted to Professor Shimada for his studies of the Sung Painting Academy. I heard him present material on Kao K'o-ming and Li T'ang at the Second International Symposium on Art Historical Studies sponsored by the Taniguchi Foundation in October 1983. His study of Yen Wen-kuei is published in *Bijutsushi* 101 (November 1976), pp. 39-52.
- 5 Tu Mu, *Yü-i pien*, ISTP (Taipei, 1962), p. 283.
- 6 Wang K'o-yü, *Shan-hu-wang hua-lu* (Painting records of the Studio of Netted Corals; preface dated 1643), MSTS (reprint [of the 1947 enlarged edition], Taipei: I-wen, 1975), ser. 2, vol. 1, p. 283.
- 7 Wang Shih-chen, *Yen-chou shan-jen kao* (compiled in 1577), as quoted in *P'ei-wen-chai shu-hua p'u* (Catalogue of painting and calligraphy in the P'ei-wen Studio) (reprint, Taipei, 1969), *chüan* 82, under Kao K'o-ming.
- 8 Wu Ch'i-chen, *Shu-hua chi* (Notes on calligraphy and painting) (1677; reprint, Shanghai, 1962), *chüan* 5, p. 471.
- 9 Ku Fu, *P'ing-sheng chuang-kuan* (Magnificent things seen in my life) (1692; reprint, Shanghai: Jen-min mei-shu, 1962), *chüan* 7, pp. 39-40.
- 10 Shen Chou's attitude and comments, based upon a colophon written by Wu K'uan, are recorded in *ibid.*, pp. 40, 41.
- 11 Wu Sheng, *Ta-kuan lu* (1712; reprint, Taipei, 1970), *chüan* 3, p. 8.
- 12 See *Shih-ch'ü pao-chi san-pien* (Imperial catalogue of painting and calligraphy, third series) (1816; reprint, Taipei: Palace Museum, 1969), pp. 1388-89.
- 13 *Signatures and Seals on Painting and Calligraphy* (Hong Kong: Arts and Literature Press, 1964), vol. 2, pp. 80-81.
- 14 Arthur Waley, trans., *The Book of Songs* (New York: Grove Press, 1960), p. 250.
- 15 For this discussion of the early Ming government offices and seals and the collection of Chu Kang, I am deeply indebted to the research of Chiang Chao-shen as included in his article "Three Sung Paintings in the National Palace Museum," *National Palace Museum Quarterly* 11, no. 4 (Summer 1977), pp. 13-23 (Chinese text) and pp. 1-31 (English trans. by Robert D. Mowry), especially pp. 9-10 of the latter. I am equally indebted to Chiang I-han's fundamental research into the Yüan and early Ming government collections: "Yüan nei-fu chih shou-ts'ang" (Yüan court collections of painting and calligraphy), *National Palace Museum Quarterly* 14, no. 3 (Spring 1980), pp. 1-36, especially pp. 29-30.
- 16 Chiang, "Yüan nei-fu chih shou-ts'ang," pp. 1-36.
- 17 Reproduced and discussed in Xu Bangda, *Ku shu-hua wei-t'o k'ao-pien* (Authentication of ancient calligraphy and painting), 4 vols. (Nanching: Chiang-su ku-chi, 1984), vol. 1, pp. 8-11 n. 1; pp. 9-12 n. 2.
- 18 Published in *Chung-hua wu-ch'ien nien wen-wu chik'an, fa-shu p'ien* (Encyclopedia of five thousand years of Chinese cultural relics: calligraphy) (Taipei: Palace Museum, 1984), pp. 148-49, 177-78, 309-10. Stephen Little brought this to my attention.
- 19 Thanks to Tom Ebrey for this reference.
- 20 The seal is reproduced in *Signatures and Seals on Painting and Calligraphy*, vol. 1, p. 143.
- 21 This has been clearly established by Sherman E. Lee and Wai-kam Ho; see Lee's review of the Crawford catalogue in *Artibus Asiae* 26, no. 3/4 (1963), p. 341.
- 22 In the book cited in note 4 above, Suzuki Kei also draws attention to this feature.
- 23 For example, the tomb of Li Hsien, Prince Chang-huai, dated 706: Jan Fontein and Wu Tung, *Han and T'ang Murals* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1976), fig. 112.
- 24 See especially Richard Stanley Baker, "Gakuō's Eight Views of Hsiao and Hsiang," *Oriental Art*, n.s., 20, no. 3 (Autumn 1974), pp. 284-303; and his more recent "New Initiatives in Late Fifteenth-Century Japanese Ink Painting," in Proc. 5th ISCRCP, Interregional Influences in East Asian Art History (1982), pp. 199-211. I have depended heavily upon Stanley Baker's painstaking research.
- 25 Shoji Jun'ichi, "Tokyo Kokoritsu Hakubutsukan-

- zō 'Sekkei sansui zu' megutte (Around the "Snow Landscape" in the collection of the Tokyo National Museum), *Kokka*, no. 1035 (1980), pp. 7-13.
- 26 Registration number 14.54; reproduced in Kōjirō Tomita, *Portfolio of Chinese Paintings in the Museum (Han to Sung Periods)*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, for the Museum of Fine Arts, 1938), pl. 87.
- 27 The entire scroll is reproduced in Ju-hsi Chou and Claudia Brown, *The Elegant Brush* (Phoenix: Phoenix Art Museum, 1985), no. 26.
- 28 J. Tamura and Y. Kobayashi, *Tomb and Mural Paintings of Ch'ing-ling* (Kyoto: Kyoto University, 1952-53); and R. Torii, "On the Wall Painting of the Liao Dynasty," *Kokka*, nos. 490-93 (1931). It has apparently not been observed that the Ch'ing-ling paintings form a roughly continuous panorama if read left to right in the sequence *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter*. The effect is as if looking out of four windows spaced slightly apart, an effect that is highly suggestive in the context of the excavators' comments that the landscape of the wall paintings is (or was) very much like the landscape outside the tomb.
- 29 The Kōtō-in landscapes have most recently been discussed again by Suzuki Kei (in the work cited in note 4, 1985). What is of most interest in the present context is not, of course, their authorship, but the fact that they are now widely recognized as rare examples of Sung compositions that were painted in such a way that they can function either as separate panels or as a continuous, joined unit of two. Ogawa Hiromitsu's comment on the matter, in note 11 of the article he prepared for this symposium, was perhaps made in jest: there is no doubt whatever about the sequence of the Kōtō-in pictures.
- 30 Toda Teisuke, "Ryū Shōnen no shūhen" (Liu Sung-nien and his environs), *Tōyo Bunka kenkyūjo Kiyō*, no. 86 (1981), pp. 337-66. The very loose but insistent way in which the three surviving pictures from this set seem to function both separately and in related pairs suggests to me the following conclusion: every set of seasonal landscapes surviving from the Sung period (of which we have at least two scrolls) appears to conform to the principle of group composition by which each panel can function individually, as one of a joined pair, or as one of a set of four.
- 31 Shimada Hidemasa has demonstrated this in the studies of Yen Wen-kuei and Kao K'o-ming cited in note 4.
- 32 For Liang Chung-hsin, see Kuo Jo-hsü, *T'u-hua chien-wen chih* (Experiences in painting), trans. A. C. Soper (Washington, D.C.: American Council of Learned Societies, 1951), p. 60. For Ning T'ao, Ho Yüan, and Kao Hsün, see the biographies from Teng Ch'un's *Hua chi* (A continuation of painting history; 1167) quoted in Ch'en Kao-hua, *Sung Liao Chin hua-chia shih-liao* (Historical material for Sung, Liao, and Chin painters) (Beijing: Wenwu, 1984), pp. 259-62, where the other sources are cited as well. Shimada's study, cited in note 4, also includes all of this material. It was through Shimada that I first became aware of these texts and their significance, and his study of Kao's role in the Academy certainly takes precedence over mine, which is now no more than a summary of research he has been doing for several years.
- 33 The nephew, Kao Ssu-ch'ang 高嗣昌, is discussed in Chu Chu-yü and Li Shih-sun, comps., *T'ang Sung hua-chia jen-ming ts'e-tien* (Dictionary of T'ang and Sung painters) (Shanghai, 1958), p. 171, quoting Hsia Wen-yen's *T'u-hui pao-chien* (Treasured mirror of painting).
- 34 Chou Pi-ta, quoted in Shimada, "On Kao K'o-ming" (see n. 4), p. 33; and in Ch'en Kao-hua, *Sung Liao* (see n. 30), p. 261.
- 35 Shimada's suggestion, perhaps more like a vague hint than an overt suggestion of actual relationship, is made in the study of Kao K'o-ming cited in note 4, in which the Wang Wei attribution is also presented. The painting is also reproduced and discussed by Wen Fong, in "*Rivers and Mountains after Snow (Chiang-shan hsüeh-chi)*: Attributed to Wang Wei (A.D. 699-759)," *Archives of Asian Art* 30 (1976-77), pp. 6-33. Fong, however, declines to support the opinion of others that the Taipei scroll is related to the Ogawa family composition.
- 36 The *Winter Landscape* from Hui-tsung's set of four seasonal pictures survives under the title *Returning Oars on a Snowy River (Hsüeh-chiang kuei-chao t'u 雪江歸棹圖)*, and is now in the Palace Museum, Beijing. For references, see the translations of documents on the exact replica of the scroll in the Yale University Art Gallery in Louise Wallace Hackney and Yau Chang-foo, *A Study of Chinese Paintings in the Collection of Ada Small Moore* (London/New York/Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1940), pp. 51-56.
- 37 Cheng Wei, "*Cha-k'ou p'an-ch'e t'u*" (*Flour Mill*), *I-yüan to-ying*, no. 2 (1978), pp. 18-19.
- 38 Liu Tao-ch'un, *Sheng-ch'ao ming-hua p'ing* (Critique of famous painters of the present dynasty), *Hua-p'in ts'ung-shu*, ed. Yü An-lan (Shanghai: Jen-min mei-shu, 1982), pp. 132-33.
- 39 Yang Wang-hsiu 楊王休 (1135-1200), *Sung Chung-hsing-kuan-ko ch'u-ts'ang t'u-hua chi* (Inventory of the Sung imperial painting collection; 1199), as included in *P'ei-wen-chai shu-hua p'u, chüan* 97.

# Narrative Illustration in the Handscroll Format

KOHARA HIRONOBU

The goal of this essay is to clarify the distinctive characteristics of Chinese narrative illustration by comparing Chinese narrative and history paintings in handscroll format with similar Japanese works—the so-called picture scrolls, or *emaki* 繪卷.<sup>1</sup>

## *Subject Matter*

By far the greatest difference between Chinese and Japanese narrative paintings in handscroll format lies in the nature of their subject matter. Japanese scrolls, of which some 600 are extant, illustrate 120 different subjects.<sup>2</sup> In 400 scrolls that have been lost and are known to us now only through literary documents, another 100 different types of subjects are represented. Of these 220 different types of *emaki*, the most important, both in number and in quality, are the scrolls that narrate the lives of Buddhist patriarchs who were the founders of religious schools and the *engi* 緣起, or scrolls narrating the origins and establishment of specific Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples and describing the miracles that were performed by the Buddha to whom the buildings are dedicated. This type of subject matter is not represented by even one work among Chinese narrative paintings.

The biographical *emaki* are mostly limited to the representation of the lives of eminent Japanese, Chinese, and Korean monks. These include the forty-eight scrolls that document the life of Hōnen 法然 (1133–1212) and the twelve scrolls that document the life of Ippen 一遍 (1239–89), as well as portrayals of the lives of Kūkai 空海 (774–835), Shinran 親鸞 (1173–1262), and Kakunyo 覺如 (1270–1351). Despite their biographical content, these *emaki* are sometimes also called *engi*. Examples include *Yūzūnenbutsu engi* 融通念佛緣起, which describes the life of Ryōnin 良忍 (1073–1132); *Tōsei eden* 東征繪傳, which describes the life of Chien-chen 鑑真 (688–763); and *Kitano tenjin engi* 北野天神緣起 and *Matsuzaki tenjin engi* 松崎天神緣起, both of which document the life of Sugawara no Michizane 菅原道真 (845–903). These pictorial biographies relate stories about the mystery of their subjects' births, the extraordinary abilities evident in their mature years, and their proselytizing activities.

By contrast, Chinese paintings in which eminent monks are represented do not narrate stories about the lives of their subjects; they are simple compositions in which sitting and standing figures are arranged in rows. This compositional scheme is exemplified by the handscroll *Bodhidharma and the Six Patriarchs* (*Tā-mo liu-tzu t'u* 達摩六祖圖), now in the Liaoning Provincial Museum. Such handscrolls as *The Five Elders of Sui-yang* (*Sui-yang wu-lao t'u* 睢陽五老圖), examples of which are in the Yale University Art Gallery, the Metropolitan Museum, and the Freer Gallery of Art, and Ch'en Hung's 陳閎 (active 725–after 756) *Eight Noble Officials* (*Pa-kung hsiang* 八公像), in the Nelson-Atkins Museum, are similarly non-narrative. Even such works as *The White Lotus Society* (*Pai-lien*

*she t'u* 白蓮社圖), in the Liaoning Provincial Museum, which portrays that fifth-century Buddhist group, and *The Literary Gathering at the Western Garden* (*Hsi-yüan ya-chi t'u* 西園雅集圖), a representation of a meeting of sixteen poets, artists, and monks that took place in 1091, are no more than tableaux.

There are Chinese handscrolls that depict episodes from the lives of Confucius 孔子 (551–479 B.C.), Li Po 李白 (701–62), and T'ao Ch'ien 陶潛 (365–427), but the paintings were done after the biographical texts were established as literary works. These works should be classified as literature. There is only one work in the Chinese tradition, *Han Hsi-tsai's Night Revels* (*Han Hsi-tsai yeh-yen t'u* 韓熙載夜宴圖), in the Palace Museum, Beijing, that can be taken as a pictorial biography of a man who was the artist's contemporary. The painting is like a portrait and in this respect resembles *Ippen Shōnin eden* 一遍上人繪傳 (*The Life of Ippen*), the Japanese *emaki* that was painted to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the death of Ippen. *Han Hsi-tsai's Night Revels* has a lifelike quality that leads us to assume that the legend about its making must be true. It is said that the emperor wanted to know what went on at Han Hsi-tsai's scandalous parties and had a painter sneak into one of them.

Representations of the origins and the lives of eminent monks in Japanese *emaki* all evince a narrative interest and a surprising suspensefulness and in so doing resemble the group of two hundred scrolls that illustrate the *otogi zōshi* お伽草子, or folktales popular in Japan after the fifteenth century. Paintings that depict folk stories are rare in China. They include several versions of *Sweeping Out a Mountain Forest* (*Sou-shan t'u* 搜山圖) (in the Freer Gallery of Art; the Art Museum, Princeton University; the University Art Museum, University of California at Berkeley; Beijing; and Yunnan) and the painting *Liu and Juan Entering the T'ien-t'ai Mountains* (*Liu Juan T'ien-t'ai t'u* 劉阮天台圖), in the C. C. Wang collection. The latter represents the story of two men, Liu Ch'en 劉晨 and Juan Chao 阮肇, who were said to have been lost in the mountains in A.D. 62. After what seemed like months, they finally found their way home. On their return, however, they discovered that they had been away for centuries, time enough for seven generations of sons and grandsons to have been born. Other examples of Chinese handscrolls that illustrate folktales are *Chung K'uei with a Procession of Demons* (*Chung K'uei ch'u-hsing t'u* 鍾馗出行圖), *Ko Chih-ch'uan Moving His Dwelling* (*Ko Chih-ch'uan i-chü t'u* 葛稚川移居圖), *The Conversion of Hārītī* (*Chieh-po t'u* 揭鉢圖), and *Yang P'u Moving His Family* (*Yang P'u i-chü t'u* 楊璞移居圖).<sup>3</sup> Except for the painting of Liu Ch'en and Juan Chao, however, none of these works describes the development of a narrative. Each represents only a single event.

On the other hand, it is only in Chinese pictorial scrolls that one finds illustrations of topics from the Confucian classics, such as *The Book of Poetry* (*Shih-ching* 詩經), *The Classic of Filial Piety* (*Hsiao-ching* 孝經), and *The Spring and Autumn Annals* (*Ch'un-ch'iu* 春秋)—books that were respected in China as eternal standards for human life. These and other ancient classics, such as the *Rituals of Chou* (*Chou-li* 周禮), the *Rituals of I* (*I-li* 儀禮), the *Erh-ya* 爾雅, and *Records of the Historian* (*Shih-chi* 史記), were unknown in early Japan, and even though they were later imported, they never became subjects for Japanese paintings in the handscroll format or, for that matter, in any other format.

The *emaki* illustrating classical Buddhist scriptures, such as *Ingakyō* 因果經 (*The Sutra of Cause and Effect*), *Jigoku zōshi* 地獄草紙 (*Hell*), and *Yamai no sōshi* 病草紙 (*Diseases*), together with the *emaki* representations of the lives of eminent monks and the *engi*,

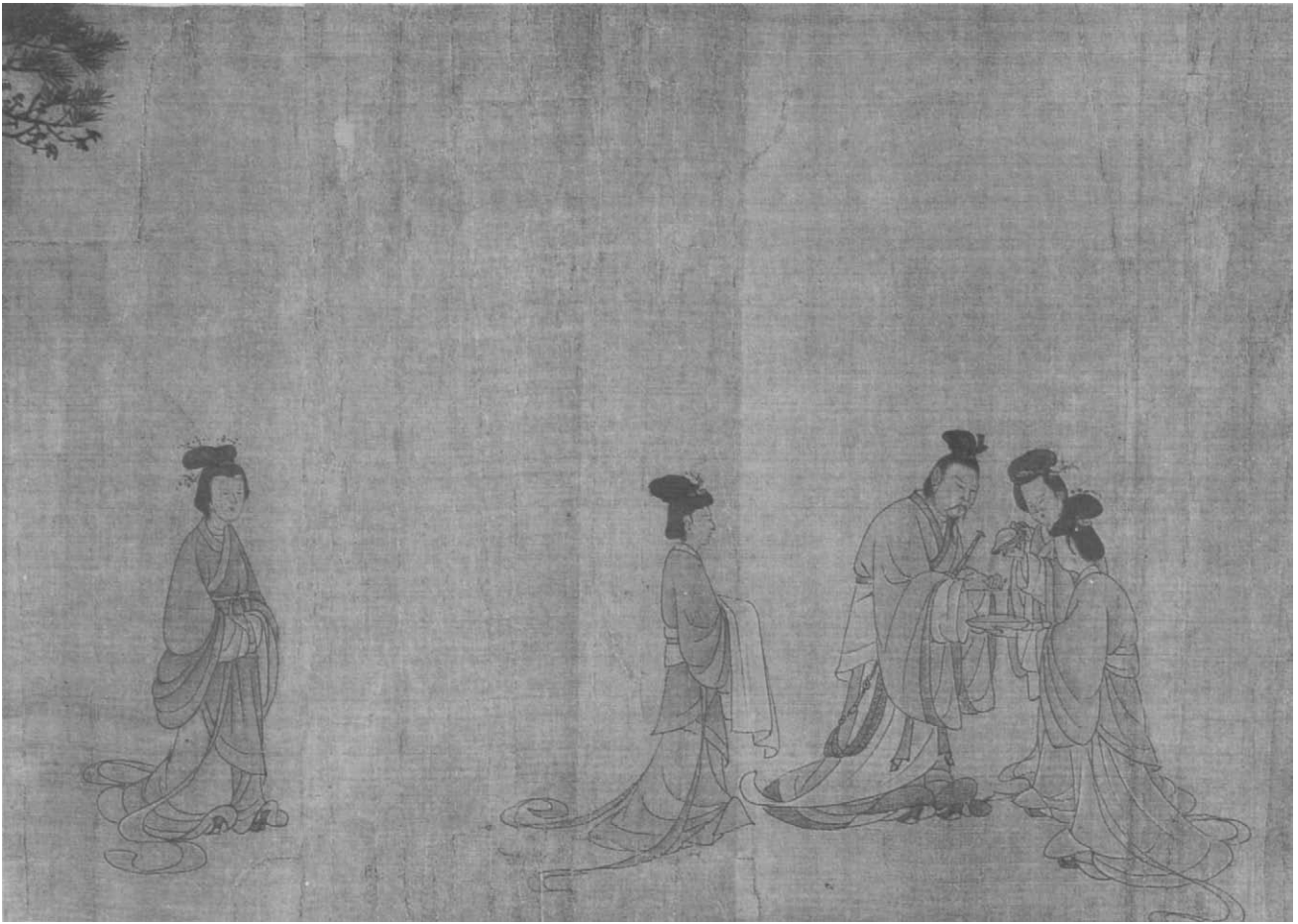


Figure 112. Li T'ang (ca. 1070–ca. 1150), “Received by the Ladies of Ch'in,” from *Duke Wen of Chin Recovering His State*. Section of handscroll, ink and colors on silk, H. 29.4 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Gift of The Dillon Fund, 1973

indicate that Buddhist culture heavily influenced narrative painting in Japan. In China, on the other hand, illustrations of classical texts are imbued with Confucian philosophy and culture. A significant reason for the differences in the subject matter of China's and Japan's narrative scrolls lies in these historical and cultural differences.

What is striking in China is the pictorial transformation of classical literature. Examples of literary works that were illustrated include the *Songs of the South* (*Ch'u-tz'u* 楚辭; third century B.C.), *The Biographies of Virtuous Women* (*Lieh-nü chuan* 列女傳; first century after Christ), the *fu* 賦 (rhyme-prose) “Nymph of the Lo River” (“Lo-shen fu” 洛神賦), “Returning Home” (“Kuei-ch'ü-lai” 歸去來辭), “Admonitions of the Court Instructress” (“Nü-shih chen” 女史箴; third century), “Eighteen Songs of a Nomad Flute” (“Hu-ch'ieh shih-pa p'ai” 胡笳十八拍; eighth century), “A Song of Unending Sorrow” (“Ch'ang-heng ko” 長恨歌; ninth century), and “The Red Cliff” (“Ch'ih-pi fu” 赤壁賦; eleventh century).

To be sure, literary works were important subjects of the *emaki*. Novels, such as *Genji monogatari* 源氏物語 (*The Tale of Genji*), casual writings, such as *Makura no sōshi* 枕草子 (*The Pillow Book*), and diaries, such as *Murasaki Shikibu nikki* 紫式部日記 (*The*



*Diary of Lady Murasaki*)—all written in the eleventh century—inspired many masterpieces. In Japan, however, the literary work was transformed into a picture shortly after it was written: there is no time gap between the literary work and the *emaki*. The Japanese did not consciously yearn for ancient traditions as did the Chinese. Several Japanese *emaki* describe specific historical incidents. *Shigisan engi* 信貴山緣起 (*The Miraculous Tales of Mount Shigi*) describes how an ailing emperor was cured by the dispatch of a flying boy; *Kibi Daijin Nittō ekotoba* 吉備大臣入唐繪詞 (*Kibi's Adventure in China*) relates how a demon helped solve difficult problems. *Ban Dainagon ekotoba* 伴大納言繪詞 (*The Story of Ban Dainagon*) documents the destruction by fire of a palace gate in 866 (fig. 116). When these events and legends became the subjects of literary texts in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, *emaki* illustrations were quickly created. The *Genji monogatari emaki* was created sometime around 1120, about a century after the novel was written. But we know that at least two different series of illustrations existed prior to the extant *Genji monogatari emaki*. While a period of 250 years separates the literary texts *Makura no sōshi* and *Murasaki Shikibu nikki*, and their respective *emaki*, in China the texts often predated the illustrations by eight hundred or even a thousand years. Conversely, Chinese artists rarely illustrated contemporary literary texts.

In *emaki*, such as the thirteenth-century *Saigyō monogatari emaki* 西行物語繪卷, which describes the life of the poet Saigyō 西行 (1118–90), and the thirteenth-century *Obusuma Saburō ekotoba* 男衾三郎繪詞, which deals with the marital problems of a soldier, real people are the subject matter. Even in the *Yamai no sōshi* and *Gaki zōshi* 餓鬼草紙 (*Hungry Ghosts*) handscrolls, which deal with Buddhist scriptures, the artists take their material from ordinary, everyday life and customs. *Engi* that record contemporary events, such as the *Kasuga gongen reigenki ekotoba* 春日權現靈驗記繪詞 (*Miracles of the Kasuga Shrine Divinities*; 1309; Japanese Imperial Collection), and battle-scene *emaki*, including *Heiji monogatari emaki* 平治物語繪卷 (*Tales of the Heiji Rebellion*; 1193), are rich in documentary value. The Chinese handscroll *Invasions of the Japanese* (*Wo-k'ou t'u* 倭寇圖卷; The Institute for Japanese History at Tokyo University), a pictorial representation of contemporary events, is the only one of its kind from China. It is surprising that, even though a duty of the court painters in each dynasty was to record real events, battles, ceremonies, starvation, and construction, virtually no examples remain. We have to wait until paintings by Ch'ing court painters to find such scrolls, except for the paintings of the so-called tributes from barbarians. Narrative paintings in handscroll format were plentiful in China; their pictorial conventions were perfected in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. But no painter adopted as a subject any of the stories or folktales in the *Extensive Records of the Grand Tranquillity Reign* (*T'ai-p'ing kuang chi* 太平廣記), an early Sung text in five hundred volumes, compiled by imperial edict in 976. No illustrations of this text were made, and examples of works that depict contemporary literary topics are exceptional in China. They include Ch'iao Chung-ch'ang's 喬仲常 (active first half of the twelfth century) *Red Cliff*, an early twelfth-century painting in the Nelson-Atkins Museum (figs. 16, 120); Hsiao Chao's 蕭照 (active mid-twelfth century) *Auspicious Omens of Dynastic Revival* (*Chung-hsing jui-ying t'u* 中興瑞應圖), with an example in the Tientsin Art Museum and one at an unknown location (see fig. 121), a work that describes the good omens and miracles that occurred before the accession to the throne of the Southern Sung emperor Kao-tsung 高宗 (r. 1127–62);<sup>4</sup> and the anonymous Sung-period painting entitled *Four Events in the Ching-te Period* (*Ching-te ssu t'u* 景德四圖; 1007), now in the Palace Museum,



Figure 113. Anonymous (Sung dynasty), copy of Ku K'ai-chih's *Nymph of the Lo River*. Detail of handscroll, ink and color on silk, H. 26.3 cm. Liaoning Provincial Museum, Shenyang

Taipei, which depicts events from Sung diplomatic relations with the Khitan during the reign of Chen-tsung 真宗 (r. 997–1022).

The varied nature and richness of the Japanese *emaki* tradition can be attributed to the narrative qualities that every genre of the art contains, as well as to their having been imbued with the dramatic excitement of a novel. Considered from the point of view of the content, the element that is ubiquitous in the Japanese *emaki* and remarkably absent in the Chinese is the development of a narrative interest. In Japan, narrative interest was welcomed without exception; in China, it was rejected, producing a dramatic difference in subject matter. For example, the painting *Duke Wen of Chin Recovering His State* (*Chin Wen-kung fu-kuo t'u* 晉文公復國圖), based on a work that is rich in novelistic episodes, represents events in a way that eschews narrative development. In addition, emotions are dealt with in a restrained manner. In the passage describing Duke Wen washing his hands, one of the ladies holding the utensils becomes angry when she is splashed with water. She demands to know why she is forced to suffer such an indignity when both her country, Ch'in, and Chin are equal; the duke apologizes profusely in gracious response. However, the artist avoided any dramatic confrontation in his depiction, which shows only placid ladies surrounding the duke (fig. 112). Significant events are not even remotely described. In the "Departure from Ch'u" (see fig. 102), perhaps the finest painting of the scroll, the painter once again ignored a significant part of the text from the *Spring and Autumn Annals*. While the text describes the efforts of a retainer of Ch'u to kill the duke and the king who opposed him, the painting shows only a grand parade through the rocky countryside.

In China, the novel lacked the status that it had in Europe, America, and Japan. Not a thing of value, the novel was contrary to value; not a part of the culture, it was viewed as anticultural. It was considered a product of fantasy; fantasy is not the stuff of ethics.

The foundation of Chinese morality in the past was sought in the process of realizing ethical values; for some reason the entirety of past reality was taken as the standard of human morality. In a society in which ethical values and historical facts adhered tightly, the act of recording fantastic things was unethical because it was fantasy, and this is why novels had to be denied.

To deny fantasy and to reject the novel was to reject the topical interest inherent in narrative painting. It was also utter rejection of the extraordinary, the mysterious, and the unusual. The contrasting approaches of letting or not letting a story develop like a novelistic drama is what led to the choice of topics in Japanese and Chinese narrative painting and what produced differences in their conventions of representational form and method, which will be discussed below.

After the third century, an enormous number of books were imported into Japan from China, and until the latter part of the nineteenth century, Japan was completely under the influence of Chinese culture. Nonetheless, neither *The Book of Poetry* nor *The Classic of Filial Piety* nor *The Analects* (*Lun-yü* 論語) was ever illustrated in Japan. An important reason can be found in the lack of narrative development in these ancient classics.

The eleventh-century painter Li Kung-lin 李公麟 (ca. 1049–1106) is said to have invented handscroll illustrations for *The Classic of Filial Piety*, “The Nine Songs” (“Chiu-ko” 九歌), and “Returning Home,” as well as pictorial representations of the White Lotus Society and the Literary Gathering in the Western Garden. But he does not take any of the charming tales from the biographies of the T’ang period as subjects of his paintings. This is characteristic of the attitude of the Chinese literatus-artist toward making art. In Li’s *Nine Songs* scroll, in the Fujita Museum of Art, Osaka, the illustrations do not even follow the annotations of the Han-period commentator Wang I 王逸 (active 110–20).<sup>5</sup> The poems were transformed into pictorial images according to an independent interpretation. Illustrating “The Nine Songs” required intelligence and a sophisticated education, which the professional painters who painted the Japanese *emaki* basically did not have. The same intelligence and education is also required of any viewer of the *Nine Songs* in the Fujita Museum. Such a painting was appreciated within an extremely limited circle of the intelligentsia. In contrast, the Japanese *emaki* painters realized a rapid development in their art when their audience extended beyond eleventh-century aristocratic society to include ordinary people. Moreover, because *emaki* were directed toward commoners, there was an urgent necessity to make the content of the paintings more interesting.

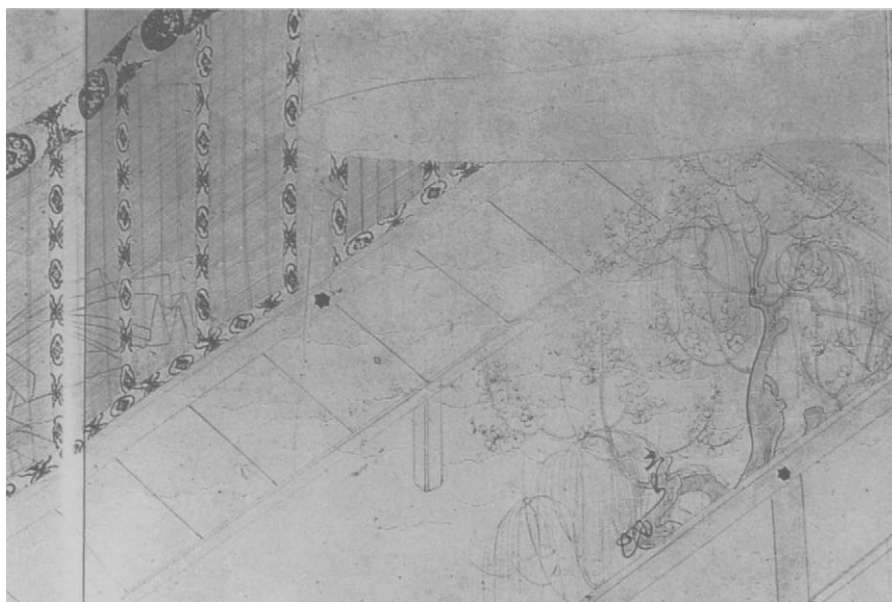
### *Conventions of Representation*

When Japanese *emaki* include a transcription, the text usually precedes the painting. In China, this order is not absolutely fixed. Even among paintings of the same subject, the order of text and painting can be reversed, with the painting preceding the text. In such paintings as *The Admonitions of the Court Instructress*, now in the British Museum, the version of *The Nymph of the Lo River* in the Liaoning Provincial Museum (fig. 113), and *The Latter Red Cliff Ode* in the Nelson-Atkins Museum (figs. 16, 120), the text is written directly onto the painting itself. In Japan there is no similar instance of inserting a text into the painting itself. The text of the first scroll of the *Shigisan engi*, for example, is



Figure 114. Anonymous (14th c.),  
*Zegaibō emaki*. Detail of handscroll,  
ink and color on paper, H. 24.2 cm.  
Manshu-in, Kyoto

Figure 115. Anonymous (14th c.),  
*In no Dainagon ekotoba*.  
Detail of handscroll, ink on paper,  
H. 19.3 cm.  
Fukuoka Art Museum, Kyoto



written at the beginning of the second scroll so as not to break the flowing pictorial composition of the first scroll.

Some *emaki* contain no text at all. Instead, the artist may write explanations of short scenes onto the painting, as in, for example, the *Kegon engi* 華嚴緣起 (*Patriarchs of the Kegon Sect*). In other cases, the artist will convey the divisions of the story only through dialogue. The passages of dialogue are numbered to provide the viewer with a guide to the development of the story. Compare, for example, the *In no Dainagon ekotoba* 尹大納言繪詞 (*Story of In no Dainagon*) in the Fukuoka Art Museum (fig. 115) with the *Zegaibō emaki* 是害房繪卷 (*Story of Zegaibō*) in the Manshu-in, Kyoto (fig. 114). In the former, the artist wrote short phrases on the trees in the picture to aid in the explanation of the story. Among the cherry blossoms may be found the word “calmly,” among the

Figure 116. Anonymous (12th c.),  
*Ban Dainagon ekotoba*.  
 Detail of handscroll,  
 color on paper, H. 31.6 cm.  
 Idemitsu Museum of Arts, Tokyo



wisteria, “loftily,” and among the plum trees and willows, the phrase “time has passed.” Examples of this kind of text find no parallel in the form or the content of Chinese scrolls. In China, an abbreviated version of the original text is recorded after the painting even if remaining space in the scroll is limited, reflecting a high regard for the integrity of the literary text. The conscious attempt to restore the lost authority of ancient classical literature by writing it on a painting demonstrates that the text was considered as important as, if not more important than, the painting. On the other hand, in Japan the text was thought of as only a helpful addition to the painting. Thus, the amount of text in the *emaki* was relatively small and its written form very free.

As can be seen in *The Book of Poetry* and *The Classic of Filial Piety*, as well as in the painting *Eighteen Songs of a Nomad Flute*, each component illustration is set between passages of text, which act as frames enclosing both the left and right sides and dividing the sections of the painting. Chinese narrative illustration led to the development of a beautiful handscroll format that opens with a title in large characters, which is followed by text written on the silk immediately preceding the picture, while colophons bring up the rear. Thus both the beginning and the end are framed by texts. This format is simply an extension of the narrative handscroll format that has paintings in short sections bounded by text. The *Genji monogatari emaki* (the Goto Museum, Tokyo, and Tokugawa Museum, Nagoya) closely resembles Chinese narrative scrolls in that a single scene is shown in each section; for this reason it is considered unique among Japanese scrolls.



When Chinese scrolls are copied without text, they are considered to have been abridged. In painted handscrolls without texts, such as the version of *Returning Home* now in the Chi-lin Museum and the version of the *Nymph of the Lo River* in the Freer Gallery of Art, the division of the picture is eliminated along with the words of the text. As the motifs of each of the pictorial sections line up sequentially, the scrolls exhibit a compositional structure that resembles the convention of “disparate moments in the same picture” (*ijidōzuhō* 異時同図法), so often seen in Japanese *emaki*.

The phrase “disparate moments in the same picture” describes the convention by which an artist depicts the same figure in different moments of time against the same background. In the third scroll of the *Shigisan engi*, for example, a nun is represented seven times in six scenes that are arranged consecutively from the right to the left: (1) in front of the Great Buddha, the nun prays that she may meet her younger brother, a monk, from whom she has been separated for twenty years; (2) the nun is stretched out asleep; (3) the nun is aroused from a dream in which the Great Buddha has made a revelation to her, and she makes obeisance to him; (4) the nun stands up and departs from the Great Buddha. In *Ban Dainagon ekotoba*, one scene encompasses the following four actions (fig. 116): (1) movement occurs in the direction of two children who are fighting; (2) the father of one of the children hastens; (3) the father kicks the other child away; (4) his wife departs, leading their young child by the hand. These individual events are arranged in a semicircle. From top to bottom, they represent the linked actions of the story.

The nature of illustration in China is different. It cannot be described in terms of “disparate moments in the same picture.” An exception is a handscroll in the Crawford Collection illustrating the poem known as “The Seventh Month” (*Ch’i-yüeh t’u* 七月圖) from *The Odes of the State of Pin* (*Mao Shih Pin-feng t’u* 毛詩豳風圖) in *The Book of Poetry* (fig. 117). The text of the poem reads in part:

In the fifth month the locust moves its legs;  
 In the sixth month the grasshopper shakes its wings;  
 In the seventh month it is out in the grounds;  
 In the eighth month it is under the roof;  
 In the ninth month it is in the doorway;  
 In the tenth month the cricket is under our bed.<sup>6</sup>

In exact correspondence to the text, the forms of the insects are depicted consecutively. This method of depiction, showing a character’s actions one by one within the same composition, was rarely used in China but is the norm in Japanese *emaki*. For example, in the *Tōsei eden emaki*, which illustrates the life of the Chinese priest Chien-chen, or Ganjin in Japanese, who came to Japan in the eighth century, Ganjin is shown looking at Buddhist images, listening to the words of the chief priest, and finally shaving his head to become a monk himself. Both Ganjin and the chief priest are depicted three times each, a method extremely common in Japanese narrative art but apparently used in China only in the Crawford scroll. The resemblance to Japanese *emaki* techniques may well be a coincidence resulting from repetitions within the *Odes of the State of Pin* text forcing continuity upon the picture.

Let us look at *Nymph of the Lo River* once again. At the beginning of this scroll, there is a scene in which Ts’ao Chih 曹植 (192–232) meets Fu Fei 宓妃, “Consort Fu.” Fu Fei stands at the edge of a river, her clothes fluttering in the wind. She steps into the scene with a gesture of turning around casually to look at Ts’ao Chih. All around her are depicted metaphors for her beauty: large birds, dragons, chrysanthemums, pine trees, the moon, the sun, and lotus flowers. As we move our eyes to the left, across a small mountain and a grove of trees, Fu Fei again appears, standing at the water’s edge (fig. 113). With her right hand, she holds back the left sleeve of her dress; her left hand is extended toward the water as she casts her eyes down slightly. Nearby at the upper left, however, the woman standing between two flags is Fu Fei as well. These scenes represent the passages “The white arms appear at the side of the divine waterway where she picks purple fungi” and “To the left, she draws near a colorful flag; to the right, she hides in the shadow of a flag on a cinnamon-wood pole.” The Fu Fei who stands next to the river and the Fu Fei who stands between the two flags are described upon the same background and are not placed far apart. However, the two are not connected in a temporal sense. What is perceived as a connection results from the artist’s having depicted consecutive passages literally, arranging them side by side.

This convention of representation, by which consecutive phrases of the text are raised and put directly into painted imagery, is the most ancient and fundamental mode of pictorialization in Chinese narrative painting. In the fourth and fifth sections of the Nelson-Atkins Museum’s *Red Cliff*, this method of pictorialization is faithfully maintained. After drinking wine with friends at the foot of a steep cliff, Su Shih 蘇軾 (1037–1101) takes the hem of his robe in hand to climb a rocky mountain that is covered with

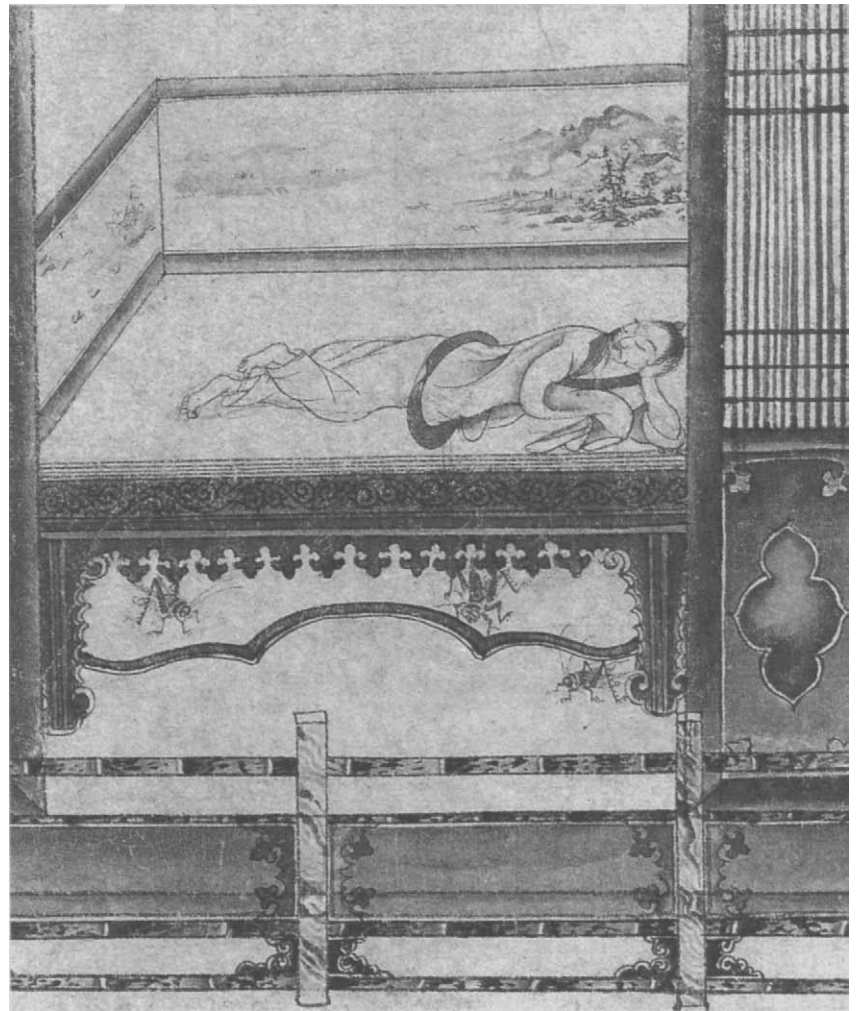


Figure 117. Anonymous (13th c.),  
 "The Seventh Month,"  
 from *Odes of the State of Pin*.  
 Section of handscroll,  
 ink on paper, H. 29.7 cm.  
 The Metropolitan Museum of Art;  
 John M. Crawford Jr. Collection,  
 Gift of The Dillon Fund, 1982

thick grass. Following this, a tiger-shaped face of a mountain, a twisted tree, and a bird's nest on a treetop are represented, lined up one by one, following the phrases of the text. But the actions of Su Shih leaning against a rock, climbing the tree, and extending his hand to the nest are not represented.

An example more easily understood appears in the third section of *Admonitions of the Court Instructress*, showing a mountain on which wild animals dwell. Above the mountain the sun and the moon are placed symmetrically on either side, while to the left a hunter draws his bow. The grouping of these motifs has no special significance. They merely represent separate passages from the text which describe the sun and the moon, the mountain, and the hunter, respectively: "As the sun climbs high, it inclines to the west, and the full moon lessens"; "So high that it is difficult for dust to accumulate there"; "The quickness of loss is equal to the quickness of the shot of his bow." The hunter looks as though he has aimed his arrow to take flight over the mountain, but this is coincidental.

In the version of *The Nine Songs* now in the Fujita Museum (fig. 119), this method is especially evident and used repeatedly. For example, the "God of the River" section is divided into four parts. Two people converse together at the summit of Mount K'un-lun 崑崙山 at the center of the composition. A palace is portrayed in the midst of clouds at



its base. In the lower right of the painting, there is a parade, which includes the dragon chariots that carry the god of the river and Ch'ü Yüan 屈原 (343–278 B.C.); in the lower left, two figures exchange greetings. These four small scenes are arranged in such a way that they do not interrelate. It is unclear which one constitutes the central theme. In the center of another section of the same scroll, Ch'ü Yüan is shown facing a god inside a hall. At the upper right, the poet holds a banner and rides on a whirlwind; at the upper left, he drives away the Brown Star with a long sword. In the middle of the central mountain, a woman washes her hair as the poet sings beside her. These four unrelated scenes have been combined into a single picture to illustrate lines of a song, but it is impossible to determine what story is unfolding without consulting the text. Such a pictorial formulation does not occur in Japanese narrative illustration.

The “disparate moments in the same picture” method—the bringing together of events that could not occur in one place or that are separated by time and representing them together in a single picture—originated in China as an effort to pictorialize faithfully the phrases of a text. Although this ancient form of narrative illustration greatly influenced the representational conventions of the Japanese *emaki*, it is rare in Chinese painting. Aside from the scene from *The Odes of the State of Pin* mentioned above, the following examples are exceptions to the rule: In the seventeenth section of the illustrations to *The Classic of Filial Piety*, where upper and lower registers are divided by a cloud or a fence, above, a man is paying obeisance to a ruler; below, the same man has returned home and is reflecting upon the sincerity of his work. Similarly, in the ninth section of the illustrations to *The Classic of Filial Piety for Women* (*Nu hsiao-ching* 女孝經), the king's consort criticizes a retainer whom the king had praised for wisdom; in a second scene, the retainer leaves home to seek exemplary persons (fig. 118). A two-level pictorial composition results from combining scenes, one painted larger than the other.

In these two examples, not only are two different moments combined in one scene, but two different spaces are combined as well. This is the earliest form of the “disparate moments in the same picture” convention. Compositions combining events from two different places in a single scene are not found in Japanese painting because it was possible to represent different events by separating them horizontally rather than by combining them in a single picture. Early Chinese narrative scrolls did not use horizontal separation because the picture was framed at left and right by the text.

The convention of “disparate moments in the same picture” is also used to represent dreams, a subject which occurs repeatedly in Ming book illustrations. From the sleeping protagonist emerge two lines that form a V inclined on its side. Within this shape the artist describes a faraway event. In the Ming period, this convention was extremely popular; in Japan, it was never used. In the *Kasuga gongen reigenki ekotoba*, thirty-six dreams are described. The artist uses the figure of a sleeping person to suggest that the scene is a dream. Next, the artist describes a situation that is indistinguishable from reality. Elsewhere, the artist encircles an empty space with a wavering line that forms a cloud-like shape within which he draws dreams of hell. Three examples of this convention of dream representation occur in this *emaki*. In any case, the representation of dreams in *emaki* was not given definite form as it was in the Chinese woodblock tradition.

The concluding section of *Auspicious Omens of Dynastic Revival* (location unknown) depicts two situations: a soldier of the Chin army who is searching for Sung Emperor Kao-tsung questions an old woman standing in front of a small house; tricked by the old



Figure 118. Anonymous, *The Classic of Filial Piety for Women*.  
Detail of handscroll. Location unknown

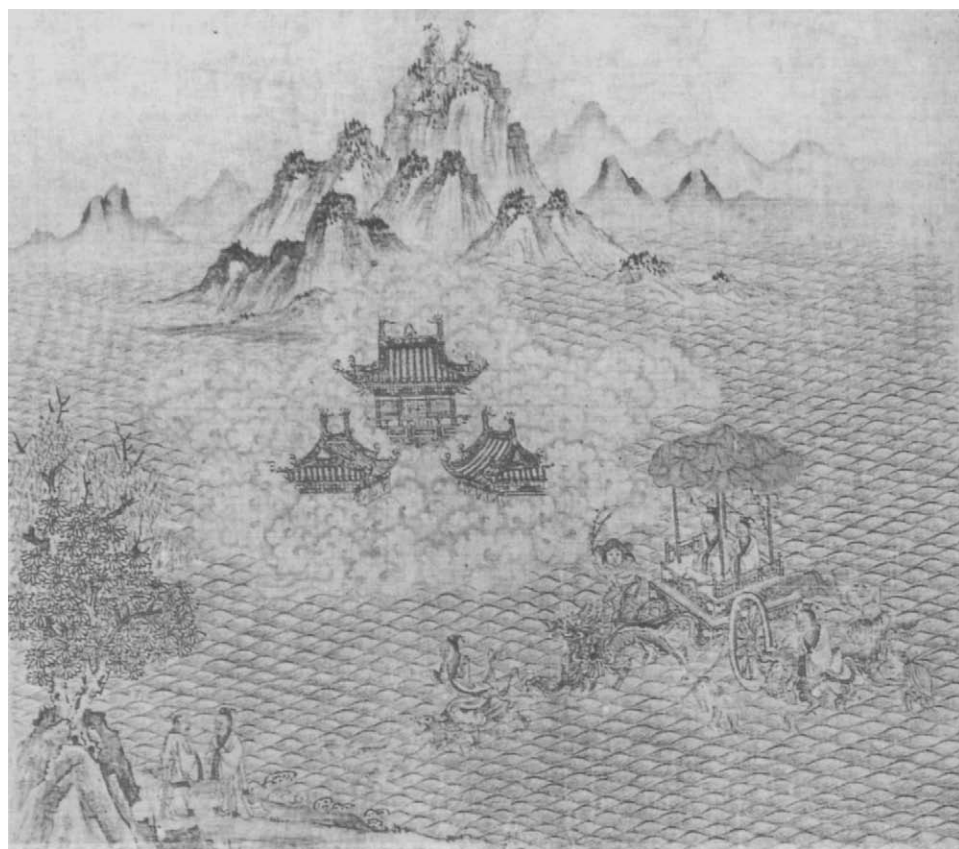


Figure 119. Li Kung-lin (ca. 1049–1106), “The God of the River,”  
from *The Nine Songs*. Section of handscroll. Fujita Art Museum, Osaka

woman, the soldier gallops away (fig. 121). Other sections of *Auspicious Omens of Dynastic Revival* share some interesting features with the *emaki* in conventions of representation as well as in length of narrative sections, which are the longest of any Chinese scroll.

Toward the end of Ch'iao Chung-ch'ang's *Latter Red Cliff Ode*, a dream situation is described (fig. 120). Su Shih is shown bundled up asleep in bed. Just in front of him sit two Taoists—the transformed body of a crane that Su Shih had seen that day. The conversation is an event from Su Shih's dream. The method of describing events that occur in successive moments in both *Auspicious Omens* and *The Red Cliff* has been further refined in *Biographies of Dutiful Children* (*Hsiao-tzu shih-kuan t'u* 孝子石棺圖), an engraving on a stone sarcophagus of the Six Dynasties period, now in the Nelson-Atkins Museum.

The method of “disparate moments in the same picture” was perfected in China but did not become popular and was not further developed there. As far as I know, the only examples of the method are those described above. They do not compare in number to the many instances in the *emaki*. Moreover, in Japan the convention was developed in ways not seen in Chinese painting.

As Chino Kaori clearly points out, an innovative Japanese use of the convention can be seen in *Tobikura no maki* 飛倉の巻 (*The Flying Granary*), the first scroll of the twelfth-century work *Shigisan engi*.<sup>7</sup> In the latter half of the scroll, the monk Myōren 妙蓮 uses a magic begging bowl to return sacks of rice belonging to the wealthy man in the story. At the right edge of the picture, Myōren gives instructions to a servant to load a rice sack into his begging bowl while the wealthy man looks on. Although there is nothing especially strange, two attendants to the left of the wealthy man are watching with their mouths open and their hands outspread, as though extremely surprised. The line of vision established by the composition clearly leads to the left, where other attendants watch with expressions of even greater surprise. The line of vision then leads to a single sack of rice in the lower part of the painting. Just above it and slightly to the left, the artist has drawn another rice sack. A third rice sack points more strongly to the upper left. Then rice sacks overlap one another in a row as they rise to the left and, at a stroke, fly into the air. Gradually growing smaller, the procession of rice sacks flows to the left to the upper register of the painting. They disappear from the painting, then reappear, with the begging bowl flying at the head of the procession. Up to this point, the viewer does not know that the begging bowl, which was lying at Myōren's feet awhile ago, has led the procession of rice sacks through the sky.

The *Kegon engi* is another example of this kind of continuous Japanese narrative illustration. One section of *Kegon engi emaki* shows the heroine in despair as she realizes that the ship carrying her beloved has left without her. The text written on the picture reads: “Throwing away the box of gifts, she wept with sorrow,” and, indeed, at the left, she is shown hurling the box into the sea. Next, the heroine throws herself into the wild sea, and a black cloud is already wrapped around the fingers of her right hand. In the next instant, she is enveloped in the black cloud and is transformed into a gigantic dragon. With breathtaking speed, the story progresses to the dramatic scene in which she conveys the ship carrying the man she loves safely to Korea. This type of continuity in narrative illustration is not seen in Chinese painting.

In these cases the moments in time that overlap form compositional conclusions that do not surprise us. Similar to the way in which time is represented in the “disparate moments in the same picture” convention, the picture does not end in a gathering of

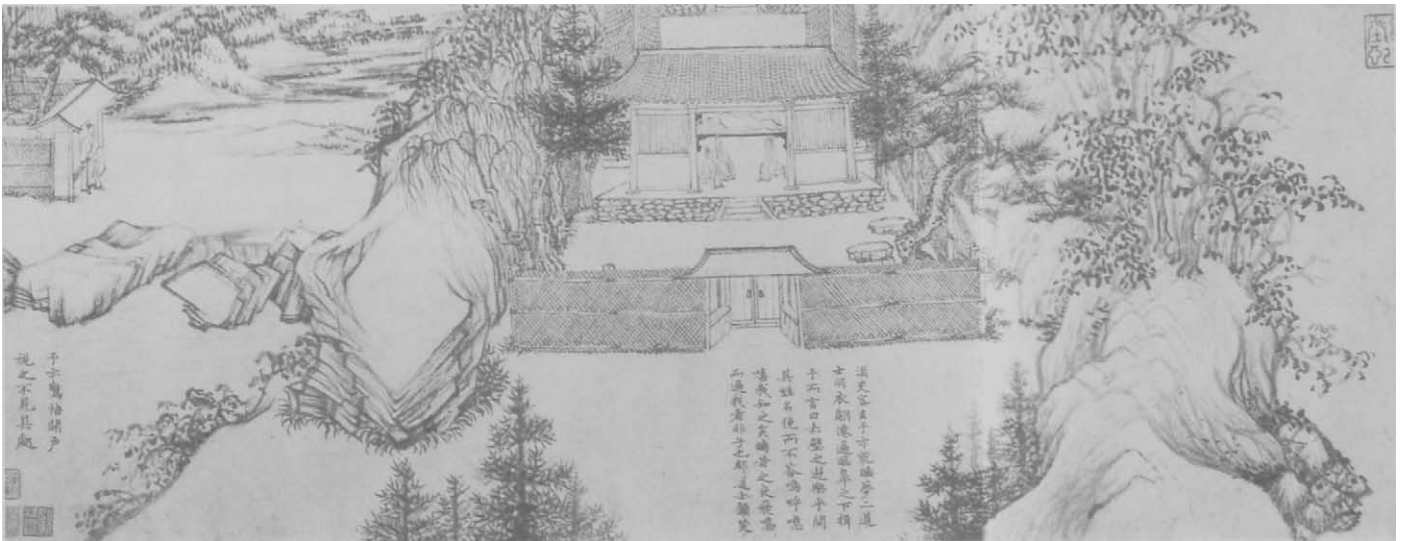


Figure 120. Ch'iao Chung-ch'ang (active first half 12th c.), *The Latter Red Cliff Ode*.  
Detail of handscroll, ink on paper, H. 29.5 cm.  
The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri;  
Nelson Gallery Foundation Purchase



Figure 121. Hsiao Chao (active mid-12th c.), *Auspicious Omens of Dynastic Revival*.  
Detail of handscroll. Location unknown

incompatible moments. In this method, moments of time are piled up toward the left; the space between each moment of time becomes increasingly short, indicating that the elapsed time is brief. Even the image of the event itself—namely, the spatial distance that it occupies—is small. Thus, the artist abbreviates the lapse between moments of time to almost nothing. By utilizing the method of overlapping moments of time and moving them as much as possible toward the left, the artist is able to represent in the painting not one moment in time, but a continuous flow of time.

A major reason for the widespread use of the “disparate moments in the same picture” convention in Japan lies in how the *emaki* was seen and appreciated. The portion of the Japanese *emaki* viewed at one time is as wide as two comfortably spread hands, about 50

to 60 centimeters. As the *emaki* is unrolled, the picture widens. In short, seeing the picture as the scroll is moving is an element of its appreciation. As far as narrative development is concerned, the section of the handscroll that is yet to be unrolled is the future, while the section in front of the viewer becomes the present, and the part already rolled up is the past. The Japanese *emaki* formula makes the progress of the story coincide with the rolling of the scroll from right to left. Following the flow of time, consecutive events are manifested in the picture. This is the chief reason why an unrestrained freedom to work with many sophisticated representational conventions was born in Japan. The situation in China was different. Long, continuous compositions are not seen in Chinese narrative handscrolls in which the relatively small picture, sandwiched between passages of text, stands as an independent unit.

In the painting *Duke Wen of Chin Recovering His State*, the procession of chariots and horses begins by moving from right to left. In the last section of the painting, however, the same party of chariots and horses finishes its procession by going from left to right. Similarly, in the fourth section of Ch'iao Chung-ch'ang's *Red Cliff*, the movement of the handscroll that opens from right to left is contradicted by the movement of Su Shih, who climbs the mountain path from left to right. In a handscroll of the same subject painted by Wen Cheng-ming 文徵明 (1470–1559), now in the Palace Museum, Taipei, the figures progress from right to left. Ch'iao Chung-ch'ang's version, which does not represent the flow of events in order, reflects an ancient formula.

In the fourteenth section of *Eighteen Songs of a Nomad Flute*, the procession of the female protagonist, who is returning home to China, progresses from right to left. But in the fifteenth section, the chief of the Hsiung-nu 匈奴, who sees his wife off, reverts to a left-to-right direction. In the sixteenth section of the painting, again the protagonist and her party proceed from right to left. Some may interpret this device differently, but I think that, at least in this case, the artist has linked events untidily, interrupting the flow of the progression of the scroll. In the *emaki* a switch in direction is not remotely possible.

Differences between Chinese and Japanese handscroll compositions can also be seen in the approach to viewpoint. One representational convention of Japanese narrative painting is the so-called *fukinuki-yatai* 吹抜屋台, or "blown-off roof." Buildings are painted without roofs so that the interior is seen from an oblique angle above. This method transforms the arrangement of figures and articles of furniture. The complex linear structure that is produced with architectural details—pillars, bamboo curtains, draperies, and corridors—and articles of furniture creates a beautiful effect. Moreover, peering in upon a private interior, the unknown inner part of the house where events proceed in secret, and in such a way that the figures who are onstage are not aware of it, lends an interest to the painting. This viewpoint, which is often employed in the *emaki*, was not used in China, possibly because the Chinese sense of rationality could not accept a building without a roof.

In China, the distance between the painted images and the beholder appears to be fixed. Because the size of figures in sequential scenes rarely changes, the viewpoint of the beholder remains parallel to the scene as the handscroll is unrolled. In the *emaki* the point of view is unrestricted. The figures are made distant or close, large or small. A scene appears in *Kitano tenjin engi* in which the protagonist complains to heaven for being accused of a crime he did not commit. His figure on the mountaintop is remarkably

large, without regard to the proportions of the surroundings. The painter of *Shigisan engi* expresses a distance covered by travelers by merging the figures, which are as small as beans, into the landscape. At the beginning of *Chigo Kannon engi* 稚兒觀音緣起 (*The Legend of Kannon as a Youth*), to indicate that the Hase Temple is on top of a high, steep mountain, the pilgrims at the lower right are drawn very small. However, when the hero, a monk, appears, his figure suddenly becomes larger. In the next scene, in which the two protagonists, the monk and the child, meet and converse, the figures are drawn much larger. This “close-up” device would have no effect if it were not for the continuous movement of the pictorial surface.

The beginning section of Ch'iao Chung-ch'ang's *Red Cliff* is an example of how the Chinese artist links time and space in a way that is unlike the free transformation of the *emaki*. The yellow mud slope on which Su Shih and his friends are walking at one point disappears from the space of the picture and reappears as a wavering line. Then, in the next section up to which time and space have moved, a small earthen bridge that no one crosses juts across an inlet of the Yangtze River. The vast flow of the great river changes into a fine rippling in the area of the bridge. The viewpoint is made closer, and the stage of the narrative action is moved to the center of the painting. The pilings of the bridge are washed by circling eddies, while long, draping willow branches sweep the ground. The lonely bridge and the willow are incongruous, they alone of all the images in the scroll violating the principle that things not in the text should not be represented. Compared with later sections that are organized with minor motifs and that develop with a fast tempo, the blank spaces of this section are too broad. A compositional transition such as this section is extremely rare in Chinese painting.

I shall raise one more example of a representational convention that is used more abundantly in the Japanese *emaki* than in Chinese narrative painting: that of repeated images. Taking advantage of the nature of the handscroll, whereby moving the scroll changes the scene, the *emaki* artists had their protagonists and their retinues return to climb the stage. Moreover, not only human figures but even buildings return to the picture.

In *Kokawadera engi e* 粉河寺緣起繪, the thatched hall in which rites are held to honor Kannon is repeated six times; in *Kibi Daijin Nittō ekotoba*, a group of three structures, including a tall loft building in which the protagonist was imprisoned, a palace gate, and a palace courtyard, is repeated six times. Each structure returns to the picture in the same position, at the same angle, and in the same size. This convention provokes curiosity about how an event will be further developed on the same stage. It has, moreover, the simple intimacy of a child's story. This frequent repetition does not occur in Chinese narrative handscrolls. In *Nymph of the Lo River* and in *Eighteen Songs of a Nomad Flute*, the same scene is repeated at the beginning and at the end of the respective scrolls; however, a scene repeated six times in one work is unknown.

Let us consider once more what may have caused the difference between representational conventions that were developed by the Japanese for the *emaki* and generally ignored in the Chinese narrative handscroll. Were not the Japanese and Chinese attitudes toward the handscroll fundamentally different?

Let us consider two formats of Chinese painting: the vertical hanging scroll and the horizontal handscroll.<sup>8</sup> The hanging scroll is fully unrolled so that the entire picture is revealed for enjoyment. The handscroll, spread out on a level surface, takes the form of

a hanging scroll laid down. The way to appreciate both the vertical hanging scroll and the horizontal handscroll is to see the entire picture. *Emaki* are too long to be viewed all at once. Therefore, the picture is seen a little at a time as the scroll is unrolled.

Even with a large landscape handscroll, such as Hsü Tao-ning's 許道寧 (ca. 970–ca. 1051) *Fishermen Singing Evening Song* (*Yü-ko ch'ang-wan t'u* 漁歌唱晚圖) in the Nelson-Atkins Museum, it is correct to spread out the entire picture for viewing. We can see this in the fact that there are figures drinking a toast in the boats at the foot of the central mountain. The same is true of Ch'ien Hsüan's 錢選 (ca. 1235–ca. 1300) *Wang Hsi-chih Watching Geese* (*Kuan-e t'u* 觀鵝圖) and *Returning Home*, both of which are in the Metropolitan Museum (see figs. 72, 74). The pictures must be seen in their entirety to be fully appreciated.

Some scholars have argued that the drama and power of the handscroll composition are diminished by unrolling it completely. However, even in such long handscrolls as *Sweeping Out a Mountain Forest* and *The Conversion of Hārītī*, in which we see only scenes of spirits and Buddhas pouncing upon a crowd of apparitions, is it not correct to see the picture fully spread out? From the point of view of subject matter, should not the spirits and Buddhas be placed at the left end of the scroll and the army of apparitions move from the beginning of the scroll toward the left? Yet in both *Sweeping Out a Mountain Forest* and *The Conversion of Hārītī*, the spirits and Buddhas are depicted at the beginning of the scroll, while the apparitions are depicted at the end, attacking from left to right. This formula, I feel, suggests that these scrolls may be variations on the original compositions after the one-scene formula was established. Even so, the Chinese handscroll is best appreciated when completely unrolled.

There are many Chinese paintings in which one subject is represented in one scroll. Examples include *Lady Wen-chi Returning to China* (*Wen-chi kwei Han t'u* 文姬歸漢圖) (in the Chi-lin Museum and Osaka Municipal Museum), which describes the advancing procession of the female protagonist; *Gathering Ferns* (*Ts'ai-wei t'u* 采薇圖) (versions of which are in the Palace Museum, Beijing, and in the Fujii Yūrinkan Museum), in which two brothers conceal themselves in the mountains, where they starve to death; *Kuo Tzu-i Receiving Homage from the Uighurs* (*Mien-chou t'u* 免胄圖) (now in the Palace Museum, Taipei), in which the T'ang general Kuo Tzu-i is shown conquering the Uighurs; *Hsiao I Steals the "Lan-t'ing Preface"* (*Hsiao I chuan Lan-t'ing t'u* 蕭翼賺蘭亭圖), in which Hsiao I is commanded by the emperor to steal Wang Hsi-chih's 王羲之 (ca. 307–ca. 365) coveted calligraphy; and *Ko Chih-ch'uan Moving His Dwelling*, which describes the procession that a Taoist transcendent brings about. In all these paintings, the artist has described only one event on one scroll; none of them features continuous scenes.

The painting entitled *Truce at Pien Bridge* (*Pien-ch'iao hui-meng t'u* 便橋會盟圖), which depicts T'ang T'ai-tsung 唐太宗 (r. 627–49) as he concludes a treaty with a band of Uighurs on a bridge, is an exception. There are versions of this painting in Beijing and in the Fujita Museum of Art, Osaka. The painting begins with small figures coming from a distance; the parade slowly approaches the protagonist, who is in the foreground. However, there is no change in subject; only the one event of T'ai-tsung meeting the surrendering Uighur armies is represented. The convention of "one scroll, one event" does not appear in the Japanese *emaki*. Conceiving of the picture as a narrative did not lead Chinese painters toward the conventions of representation that were developed in the *emaki*.

### *Copies and Traditional Representations*

There is no Chinese narrative handscroll that has not been copied, and copied in great numbers. For example, more than fifty copies of *The Nine Songs* and more than forty copies of *Episodes from the Life of T'ao Yüan-ming* (T'ao Yüan-ming shih-chi t'u 陶淵明事蹟圖) are recognized. The number of copies of the *Wang-ch'uan Villa* (Wang-ch'uan t'u 網川圖) and *Ch'ing-ming Festival on the River* (Ch'ing-ming shang-ho t'u 清明上河圖) rivals them. Moreover, the names of the great artists Li Kung-lin and Chao Meng-fu 趙孟頫 (1254–1322) are attached to copies of both *The Nine Songs* and *Episodes from the Life of T'ao Yüan-ming*. The same tendency is adduced in the many copies of *Ch'ing-ming Festival on the River* attributed to Chang Tse-tuan 張擇端 (active early twelfth century) and Ch'iu Ying 仇英 (ca. 1495–1552), and in the many copies of the *Wang-ch'uan Villa* attributed to Wang Wei 王維 (701–61) and Kuo Chung-shu 郭忠恕 (ca. 910–77). The painters of *The Nine Songs* whose names are known, such as the Yüan-period artists Chang Wu 張渥 (active mid-fourteenth century), Chang Hung 章洪, and Chao Chung 趙衷 (active mid-fourteenth century), are exceptions. In short, many copies were made as forgeries in response to the wish of collectors to own illustrations by great artists of famous literary pieces. Although some are magnificent interpretations of literary works, such as the *Odes of the State of Pin* in the Crawford Collection, over half of such copies are essentially bad paintings, which perpetuate mistakes that occurred when the original version was copied.

In Japan, *emaki* that were copied were mostly religious *emaki*, instruments of the Way, designed for proselytizing religious teachings. They were not made as forgeries. Consequently, the names of the *emaki* artists are generally not known. There is only one exception: the twenty-eight copies of the *Yüzūnenbutsu engi*. A monk desired to make one hundred copies of the scroll to distribute one or two to each of the provinces of the country, in order to spread the Buddhist faith. *Kitano tenjin engi* was copied most frequently; six copies of the scroll are extant. There are no more than three copies of other religious *emaki*.

When Chinese narrative handscrolls were copied, the climax of the painting, the most famous event of the story, was excerpted from the scroll and represented as an independent painting. Examples include the scene from *The Red Cliff* in which figures in a boat look up to see a crane flying overhead; the scene from *Returning Home* in which T'ao Yüan-ming, standing at the front of a boat, arrives home; and the scene from *Eighteen Songs of a Nomad Flute* in which the mother parts from her children. Other examples include about thirty independent paintings of the scene "The Seventh Month" taken from the *Odes of the State of Pin*. As with the practice of copying, excerpting does not occur in the Japanese *emaki* tradition.

Japanese handscrolls that depict beggars or other members of the lower classes are linked to literature, but in a different sense from such Chinese paintings with beggars as subject matter as those by Chou Ch'en 周臣 (ca. 1460–ca. 1536), in the collections of the Cleveland Museum of Art and the Honolulu Academy of Arts. In the *Tōhokuin Utaawase* 東北院歌合 (*The Poetry Contest Concerning Craftsmen at the Palace of Tōhokuin*) in the Tokyo National Museum, each figure is accompanied by a poem describing his occupation, and the *emaki* offers a judgment as to which poem is superior. In one of the sections of the scroll, a *miko*, or Shinto priestess, is depicted on the right, and a gambler who has lost everything, even his clothes, is depicted on the left. In this case, the gambler's poem is said to be the better one. Thus, Japanese narrative illustration and Chinese painting may be regarded as literary in completely different ways.



Kurt Weitzmann does not distinguish between Chinese and Japanese narrative handscrolls in his article “The Art of Ancient and Medieval Book Illumination.”<sup>9</sup> However, what was a notable trend in one country was a rarity in the other. A phenomenon exhibited in one may have been absent in the other. The two painting traditions at times possessed absolutely opposite elements. The Japanese *emaki* was established under the influence of the Chinese handscroll, but it developed in other, complex directions. These distinctions relate not merely to the narrative handscrolls of the two countries, but also to the essence of their art and culture.

*Translated by Anne Burkus*

#### NOTES

- 1 In 1978 narrative illustration was the topic of a symposium of the Association of Art Historians in Japan at Tokyo University. I was very impressed with Professor Suzuki Kei's keynote speech on Chinese and Japanese narrative scrolls. Although I had written three articles on the Chinese narrative scrolls, “Han Hsi-tsai's Night Revels” (*Kokka*, nos. 884 [1965], 888 [1966]), “The Admonitions of the Court Instructress” (*Kokka*, nos. 908, 909 [1967]), and “Illustrations of *The Book of Songs* and *Filial Piety*” (*Bijutsushi*, no. 72 [1969]), there were still very few monographs on Chinese illustrations by Japanese scholars. Research on Japanese narrative scrolls, however, was extensive. I have continued to study this field and have published the following articles: “On ‘Scroll Paintings of Chinese Poet T'ao Yüan-ming's Deeds’ by Li Tsung-mo,” *Yamato Bunka*, no. 67 (1981); “Nine Songs Attributed to Li Kung-lin,” in *Treatise on Chinese Painting on the Anniversary of Prof. Suzuki Kei's Sixtieth Birthday* (1981); “The Second Trip to the Red Cliff by Ch'iao Chung-ch'ang,” *Shoron*, no. 20 (1982); “The Originality of Hsiao Yun-ts'ung's *Asking by Heaven*,” *Shoron*, no. 22 (1983); and “Sweeping Out a Mountain” (Paper presented at the Eighth International Symposium on Art Historical Studies sponsored by the Taniguchi Foundation, Kyoto, 1989).
- 2 Okudaira Hideo, “Emakimono,” *Nippon no Bijutsu*, no. 6 (1966), p. 17.
- 3 A copy of *Yang P'u Moving His Family* is in the Art Institute, Chicago. On the Hāriti scrolls, see Yoshiho Yonezawa, “Ri Shin hitsu Kishimo kyo hachi zukan ni tsuite” (On “A Picture of *Hāriti* Striving to Snatch Away the Bowl” by Li Sen), *Kokka*, no. 921 (1968); and Julia K. Murray, “Representations of Hāriti, the Mother of Demons, and the Theme of ‘Raising the Alms-Bowl’ in Chinese Painting,” *Artibus Asiae* 43, no. 4 (1981/82).
- 4 Julia K. Murray concludes that the “work must have stifled any lingering doubts Kao-tsung might have had that Heaven had blessed his succession.” See “Ts'ao Hsün and Two Southern Sung History Scrolls,” *Ars Orientalis* 15 (1985), p. 11.
- 5 Kohara, “Nine Songs Attributed to Li Kung-lin,” p. 100.
- 6 Translation by Bernhard Karlgren, *The Book of Odes: Chinese Text, Transcription and Translation* (Stockholm: Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, 1950), p. 98—ED.
- 7 Chino Kaori, “Emaki no Jikan hyōgen” (Expression of time in *emaki*), *Nippon no Bigaku* 2 (1984), pp. 86–87.
- 8 Illustrations of sutras and folktales in Tun-huang wall paintings and banners have compositions that are more complicated and problematic. This is a subject that I am currently researching.
- 9 Kurt Weitzmann, “The Art of Ancient and Medieval Book Illumination,” *Studia Artium Orientalis et Occidentalis* 1 (1982), p. 9.

# The *Mao Shih* Scrolls: Authenticity and Other Issues

XU BANGDA

The *Mao Shih* 毛詩 scrolls—illustrated transcriptions of the Mao arrangement of chapters from the *Book of Poetry* (*Shih-ching* 詩經)—which have been passed down through the centuries as specimens of the calligraphy of the Sung emperor Kao-tsung 高宗 (r. 1127–62) or his successor, Hsiao-tsung 孝宗 (r. 1163–89), and of the painting of Ma Ho-chih 馬和之 (active second half of the twelfth century), were first recorded in the *Gazetteer of Hangchow* (*Hang-chou fu-chih* 杭州府志) by Ch'en Shan 陳善 (active 1131–62) of the Southern Sung.<sup>1</sup>

In the Ch'ing dynasty, a total of seventeen *Mao Shih* scrolls were collected in the palace of the Ch'ien-lung emperor (r. 1736–95) and recorded in the imperial catalogue *Shih-ch'ü pao-chi ch'u-pien* 石渠寶笈初編 (hereafter *Ch'u-pien*), *Shih-ch'ü pao-chi hsü-pien* (hereafter *Hsü-pien* 續編), and *Shih-ch'ü pao-chi san-pien* (hereafter *San-pien* 三編).<sup>2</sup> In 1770, the Ch'ien-lung emperor selected fourteen scrolls which he believed to be genuine, inscribed a colophon on each, and had them stored in the rear hall of the Ching-yang 景陽 Palace, which he renamed the Hall for Studying the Odes (*Hsüeh-shih-t'ang* 學詩堂). To commemorate these events, the Ch'ien-lung emperor wrote an essay entitled "Record of the Hall for Studying the Odes" ("Hsüeh-shih-t'ang chi" 學詩堂記; see Appendix).<sup>3</sup>

The *Book of Poetry* is divided into different parts called "Lessons from the States" (*Kuo feng* 國風), "Minor Odes of the Kingdom" (*Hsiao-ya* 小雅), "Greater Odes of the Kingdom" (*Ta-ya* 大雅), and "Hymns" (*Sung* 頌). The fourteen scrolls collected in the Hall for Studying the Odes were: *Odes of P'ei* (*P'ei feng* 邶風) in seven sections, *Odes of Cheng* (*Cheng feng* 鄭風) in five sections, *Odes of Ch'i* (*Ch'i feng* 齊風) in five sections, *Odes of T'ang* (*T'ang feng* 唐風), *Odes of Ch'en* (*Ch'en feng* 陳風), *Odes of Pin* (*Pin feng* 豳風), *Odes from the Hsiao-ya Starting with "Deer Cry"* (*Hsiao-ya lu ming chih shih* 小雅鹿鳴之什), *Odes from the Hsiao-ya Starting with "In the South Are Fine Fish"* (*Hsiao-ya nan yu chia yü chih shih* 小雅南有嘉魚之什), *Odes from the Hsiao-ya Starting with "Wild Geese"* (*Hsiao-ya hung-yen chih shih* 小雅鴻雁之什) in six sections, *Odes from the Hsiao-ya Starting with "Lofty Is the Southern Mountain"* (*Hsiao-ya chieh nan-shan chih shih* 小雅節南山之什), *Hymns of Chou Starting with "Pure Temple"* (*Chou sung ch'ing miao chih shih* 周頌清廟之什), *Hymns of Chou Starting with "Pitiable Am I, a Small Child"* (*Chou sung min yü hsiao-tzu chih shih* 周頌閔予小子之什), *Hymns of Lu* (*Lu sung* 魯頌), and *Hymns of Shang* (*Shang sung* 商頌).

After the collapse of the Ch'ing dynasty in 1911, P'u-yi 溥儀 (1906–67), the deposed Hsüan-t'ung emperor (r. 1909–11), made an inventory of the painting and calligraphy scrolls in the palace and affixed his imperial seal on them. In 1922, on the pretext of giving the scrolls to his brother P'u-chieh 溥傑, P'u-yi gradually removed them from Beijing to his palace at Ch'ang-ch'un 長春, where he sat as head of the puppet state of Manchukuo. Upon the collapse of Manchukuo in 1945, the scrolls were scattered in the

city of Ch'ang-ch'un and beyond; some were taken out of the country. Of the fourteen scrolls that were collected in the Hall for Studying the Odes, only the *Odes of Cheng* remain unaccounted for. This scroll is said to have been destroyed by fire, but we do not know whether this is true. P'u-yi also had removed to Ch'ang-ch'un a scroll entitled *Four Odes from the Mao Shih* (*Mao Shih ssu-p'ien* 毛詩四篇), which had entered the palace collection during the reign of the Chia-ch'ing emperor (r. 1796–1820) and was recorded in the *San-pien*. With the forged signature “Ch'en Ma Ho-chih chin” 臣馬和之進 at its end, this scroll has no text, only four illustrations: “Young Millet” (“Shu miao” 黍苗; no. 227 in the Mao arrangement), “A Cove of the Ch'i River” (“Ch'i ao” 淇奧; Mao, no. 55), “Reeds and Rushes” (“Chien chia” 蒹葭; Mao, no. 129), and “Whirling Wind” (“Fei feng” 匪風; Mao, no. 149). Now in the Liaoning Provincial Museum, this scroll has been confirmed as a Ming copy.

To date, I have seen twenty-two of the extant *Mao Shih* scrolls (some in photographs and reproductions), of which six are duplicate or triplicate versions of the same subjects. I will first briefly describe each of the scrolls.

### *Summary Descriptions of Extant Scrolls*

Color is used in all the scrolls except the first. Only the first three are signed.

1. *Odes of Shao and the South* (*Shao Nan* 召南), now in the Shanghai Museum.<sup>4</sup> Handscroll in eight sections. Silk. All original calligraphy of the poems has been lost. Extant paintings: “Lambs” (“Kao-yang” 羔羊), “Grandly Rolls the Thunder” (“Yin ch'i lei” 殷其雷), “Shedding Is the Plum Tree” (“Piao yu mei” 標有梅), “Little Stars” (“Hsiao-hsing” 小星), “The Chiang [Yangtze River] Has Branches” (“Chiang yu ssu” 江有汜), “In the Wilderness Is a Dead Deer” (“Yeh yu ssu ch'ün” 野有死麇), “How Rich They Are” (“Ho pi nung i” 何彼穠矣), and “Grooms” (“Tsou-yü erh chang” 騶虞二章). Missing sections: “Magpie's Nest” (“Ch'üeh ch'ao” 鵲巢), “Picking Southernwood” (“Ts'ai fan” 采芣), “Grass Insects” (“Ts'ao ch'ung” 草蟲), “Gathering Duckweed” (“Ts'ai p'in” 采蘋), “Sweet-Pear Tree” (“Kan t'ang” 甘棠), and “Dew on the Road” (“Hsing lu” 行露). To the right of each illustration is the text of the appropriate poem, filled in by the Ch'ien-lung emperor, who also added a colophon. On the scroll are seals of the Ch'ing-dynasty collector Liang Ch'ing-piao 梁清標 (1620–91) and palace seals of the Ch'ien-lung and Chia-ch'ing emperors.

*Remarks:* The Ch'ien-lung emperor thought this scroll was spurious and therefore did not include it among the scrolls collected in the Hall for Studying the Odes. This scroll left the Ch'ing palace collection before the fall of the dynasty.

2. *Odes of P'ei*, formerly in the Shanghai Museum, present location unknown.<sup>5</sup> One of the scrolls collected in the Hall for Studying the Odes. Handscroll in seven sections; dimensions unknown. All original calligraphy has been lost. The calligraphy for the texts of the seven poems was filled in by the Ch'ien-lung emperor. Extant paintings: “It Is No Use” (“Shih wei” 式微), “The Sloping Hill” (“Mao ch'iu” 旄丘), “Spring Water” (“Ch'üan shui” 泉水), “Northern Gate” (“Pei men” 北門), “Fair Maiden” (“Ching nü” 靜女), “New Tower” (“Hsin t'ai” 新台), and “Two Youths Embark in a Boat” (“Erh tzu ch'eng chou” 二子乘舟). Missing sections: “Cypress Boat” (“Po chou” 柏舟), “Green Robe” (“Lü i” 綠衣), “Swallows” (“Yen-yen” 燕燕), “Sun and Moon” (“Jih yüeh” 日月), “Wild Wind” (“Chung feng” 終風), “Strike the Drum” (“Chi ku” 擊

鼓), "Joyous Wind" ("K'ai feng" 凱風), "Pheasant Cock" ("Hsiung chih" 雄雉), "The Gourd Has Bitter Leaves" ("P'ao yu k'u yeh" 匏有苦葉), "East Wind" ("Ku feng" 谷風), "Great, Great" ("Chien hsi" 簡兮), and "North Wind" ("Pei feng" 北風). On a piece of paper attached to the end of the scroll are colophons by Lu Shih-tao 陸師道 (*chin-shih* 1538) and Chang Feng-i 張鳳翼 (1527-1613) of the Ming. Seals reading "Ta Ming An Kuo chien-ting chen-chi" 大明安國鑒定真跡 and "Chang Po-ch'i shih" 張伯起氏 from the Ming, two seals of Liang Ch'ing-piao, and palace seals of the Ch'ien-lung, Chia-ch'ing, and Hsüan-t'ung emperors are on the scroll.

3. *Odes of Yung* (*Yung feng* 鄘風), now in the Kwangsi Chuang Autonomous Region Museum.<sup>6</sup> Handscroll with four sections measuring 27.5 × 43.5 cm, 27.5 × 37 cm, 27.5 × 37 cm, and 27.5 × 38.5 cm. All original calligraphy has been lost. Extant paintings: "Cypress Boat," "On the Wall There Is Tribulus" ("Ch'iang yu ts'u" 牆有茨), "Among the Mulberries" ("Sang chung" 桑中), and "The Quail Are Ardent" ("Ch'un chih pen-pen" 鶉之透透). Missing sections: "To Grow Old with the Lord" ("Chün-tzu hsieh lao" 君子偕老), "The Ting Star at Its Zenith" ("Ting chih fang chung" 定之方中), "Rainbow" ("Ti-tung" 蝦蟆), "Oxtail Flag" ("Kan mao" 干旄), "Watching a Mouse" ("Hsiang shu" 相鼠), and "I Galloped My Horses" ("Ts'ai ch'ih" 載馳). Each section has a title written in small seal script (*hsiao-chuan shu* 小篆書). The texts of the four poems, written by Chang Ying 張英 (1638-1708) in 1677 at the request of Liang Ch'ing-piao, are on a separate sheet of paper. On the scroll are two seals of Yang Shih-ch'i 楊士奇 (1365-1444), a seal reading "Chang Liu" 張鏐, various seals of the Ming-dynasty collector Hsiang Yüan-pien 項元汴 (1525-90), seals of Liang Ch'ing-piao, and palace seals of the Ch'ien-lung, Chia-ch'ing, and Hsüan-t'ung emperors.

4. *Odes of Ch'i*, formerly in Beijing, now said to be outside China.<sup>7</sup> One of the scrolls from the Hall for Studying the Odes collection. Handscroll in six sections; dimensions unknown. Extant calligraphy and paintings: "Cock Crow" ("Chi ming" 鷄鳴), "How Agile" ("Hsüan" 還), "Between Screen and Gate" ("Chu" 著), "Broken Fish Traps" ("Pi kou" 敝筍), "They Drive the Horses" ("Ts'ai ch'ü" 載驅), and "Lo!" ("I ch'ieh" 猗嗟). Missing sections: "The Sun Is in the East" ("Tung-fang chih jih" 東方之日), "The Sun Is Not Yet Bright" ("Tung-fang wei ming" 東方未明), "Southern Mountain" ("Nan-shan" 南山), "Large Fields" ("Fu t'ien" 甫田), and "Hound Bells" ("Lu ling" 盧令). In each section the painting is on the right, followed by the calligraphy on the left; each section is continuous. In his colophon on a piece of paper attached to the end of the scroll, the Ch'ien-lung emperor states that "the characters do not resemble those of Sung Kao-tsung." He attributes the calligraphy to Hsiao-tsung but offers no supporting evidence. On the scroll are seals of Liang Ch'ing-piao, palace seals of the Ch'ien-lung, Chia-ch'ing, and Hsüan-t'ung emperors, and the seal of the Hall for Studying the Odes.

5. *Odes of T'ang*, now in the Liaoning Provincial Museum.<sup>8</sup> One of the scrolls from the Hall for Studying the Odes collection. Handscroll, 28.7 × 827.1 cm. Calligraphy and painting complete in twelve sections: "Cricket" ("Hsi-shuo" 蟋蟀), "On the Mountain Are Thorny Elms" ("Shan yu shu" 山有樞), "Stirred Waters" ("Yang chih shui" 揚之水), "Pepper Plant" ("Chiao-liao" 椒聊), "Tied Round" ("Chou miu" 綯繆), "Russet Pear" ("Ti-tu" 枳杜), "Lamb Fur" ("Kao ch'iu" 羔裘), "Bustard Plumes" ("Pao yu" 鴉羽), "Without the Robe" ("Wu i" 無衣), "There Is a Solitary Russet Pear" ("Yu ti chih tu" 有枳之杜), "Dolichos Grow" ("Ko sheng" 葛生), and "Gathering Fungus"

(“Ts'ai ling” 采苓). The Ch'ien-lung emperor's colophon is on a piece of paper mounted at the end of the scroll. On the scroll are two Sung seals “Tseng Ti ssu-yin” 曾覲私印 and “Ch'un fu” 純父; seals of Hsiang Yüan-pien and seals from the Ming reading “Hsiang Chih-ch'ang yin” 項熾昌印, “Hsüan-tu shih” 玄度氏, and “Hui-mu tao-jen” 慧目道人; seals of Keng Chao-chung 耿昭忠 (1640–86) and his son Keng Chia-tso 耿嘉祚, and of the Manchu connoisseur A-erh-hsi-p'u 阿爾喜普 from the early Ch'ing; palace seals of the Ch'ien-lung, Chia-ch'ing, and Hsüan-t'ung emperors; and the seal of the Hall for Studying the Odes.

6. *Odes of T'ang* (a second version), now in the Palace Museum, Beijing. Handscroll mounted as an album; each leaf 27 × 44.7 cm. Calligraphy and painting complete in twelve sections, as in the above scroll (No. 5). A colophon by Ch'en Tai-ch'ing 陳代卿 from the Ch'ing is on a separate leaf. The paintings carry a Sung seal reading “Yü-fu t'u shu” 御府圖書, various seals of Hsiang Yüan-pien, seals from the Ming reading “Hsü Shih-ch'i yin” 徐石麒印 and “Chien-ting” 鑑定, and the Ch'ing seal reading “Ho-peï T'ang ts'un” 河北崇邨. This scroll is not recorded.

7. *Odes of T'ang* (a third version), formerly in the collection of Lo Chen-yü 羅振玉 (1866–1940), now in the Kyoto National Museum.<sup>9</sup> Handscroll, 26.7 × 831 cm. Calligraphy and painting complete in twelve sections. Seals on the scroll include those of the Ming collector Yüan Chung-ch'e 袁忠徹 (1376–1458).

8. *Odes of Ch'en*, now in the British Museum.<sup>10</sup> One of the scrolls from the Hall for Studying the Odes collection. Handscroll; 26.8 × 731.5 cm. Calligraphy and painting complete in ten sections: “The Mound” (“Yüan ch'iu” 宛丘), “White Elms at the Eastern Gate” (“Tung-men chih fen” 東門之粉), “Beam Gate” (“Heng men” 衡門), “Moat at the Eastern Gate” (“Tung-men chih ch'ih” 東門之池), “Willows at the Eastern Gate” (“Tung-men chih yang” 東門之楊), “Tomb Gate” (“Mu men” 墓門), “The Embankment Has Magpie Nests” (“Fang yu ch'üeh ch'ao” 防有鵲巢), “The Moon Comes Out” (“Yüeh ch'u” 月出), “Chu Forest” (“Chu-lin” 株林), and “Shore of the Marsh” (“Tse p'o” 澤陂). A colophon by Tung Ch'i-ch'ang 董其昌 (1555–1636), dated 1602, is mounted on a piece of paper attached to the end of the scroll. On the scroll itself are a colophon by the Ch'ien-lung emperor; the Southern Sung imperial seal “Nei-fu shu hua” 內府書畫; the early Ming imperial half-seal “Ssu-yin” (the complete seal text should read “Ssu-li chi ch'a ssu-yin” 司禮紀察司印); seals of Han Shih-neng 韓世能 (*chin-shih* 1568) and his son Han Feng-hsi 韓逢禧; seals reading “Ch'ao yen shih” 朝廷氏, “Liu Ch'eng-hsi yin” 劉承禧印, “Wu-cheng chü-shih” 無諍居士, “Shih-chieh” 士介, “Ch'i-yung pao-yung” 其永寶用, “Ku-chou Cheng Hsia-ju yin” 古州鄭俠如印, “Cheng Hsia-ju shu hua yin” 鄭俠如書畫印, “Wu T'ing chih yin” 吳廷之印, “Yung-ch'ing” 用卿, and “Wu T'ing shu hua chih yin” 吳廷書畫之印; seals of Hsiao Yün-tsung 蕭雲從 (1596–1673) and Sung Lo 宋犖 (1634–1713); palace seals of the Ch'ien-lung, Chia-ch'ing, and Hsüan-t'ung emperors; and the seal of the Hall for Studying the Odes.

9. *Odes of Ch'en* (a second version), now in the Shanghai Museum. Handscroll. Calligraphy and painting complete in ten sections, as in the scroll described above (No. 8). Not recorded.

10. *Odes of Ch'en* (a third version), now in the Liaoning Provincial Museum. Handscroll; 26.5 × 713 cm. Calligraphy and painting complete in ten sections, as in the two preceding scrolls. Attached to the scroll is a forgery of the Tung Ch'i-ch'ang colophon that is on the *Odes of Ch'en* scroll in the British Museum (No. 8).

*Remarks:* To judge from the quality of the silk, the scroll dates from the Southern Sung. If the dating is correct, the spurious Tung Ch'i-ch'ang colophon must have been copied by a later writer. If the calligraphy, painting, and colophon were all done at the same time, however, the entire scroll must be a forgery from the late Ming or early Ch'ing. The scroll is known to have entered the Ch'ing palace collection, but it bears no palace seals and is not recorded in *Shih-ch'ü pao-chi*.

11. *Odes of Pin*, now in the Palace Museum, Beijing (see fig. 97).<sup>11</sup> One of the scrolls from the Hall for Studying the Odes collection. Handscroll; 25.7 × 557.5 cm. Calligraphy and painting complete in seven sections: "Seventh Month" ("Ch'i-yüeh" 七月), "Owl" ("Ch'ih-hsiao" 鷓鴣), "Eastern Mountains" ("Tung shan" 東山), "Broken Axes" ("P'o fu" 破斧), "Hewing Ax Handles" ("Fa k'o" 伐柯), "Fishnets" ("Chiu-yü" 九罟), and "The Wolf's Dewlap" ("Lang pa" 狼跋). The "Broken Axes" section was at one time cut out to form a separate scroll. When this section and the scroll with the other six sections entered the Ch'ing imperial collection, the Ch'ien-lung emperor had them remounted as a single scroll. At that time, two colophons by Tung Ch'i-ch'ang and three colophons by the Ch'ing-dynasty collector Kao Shih-ch'i 高士奇 (1645-1703) that originally were on the "Broken Axes" section were remounted on a piece of paper attached to the end of the scroll. In one colophon, Tung mistakenly attributes the painting "Broken Axes" to Chao Meng-fu 趙孟頫 (1254-1322) of the Yüan. These details are recounted in the Ch'ien-lung emperor's colophon. The "Broken Axes" section carries two seals of Chao Meng-fu, which appear to be forgeries, a seal of Kao Shih-ch'i reading "Kao Shih-ch'i chih yin" 高士奇之印, and various seals of Hsiang Yüan-pien. On the other six sections are seals of Hsiang Yüan-pien and his elder brother Hsiang Tu-shou 項篤壽 (1521-86); the seals "Hsiang Hung chih yin" 項竑之印, "Hsiang Te-fen yin" 項德粉印, "Tsui-li lan-tao-jen shang-chien t'u shu" 樵李懶道人賞鑑圖書, "Wu-i ch'ien shih" 五一倩士, "Wan-wei-t'ang yin" 宛委堂印, and "Lü Chung" 呂中; seals of Liang Ch'ing-piao; the seal "Chiang ts'un pi-ts'ang" 江村秘藏; palace seals of the Ch'ien-lung, Chia-ch'ing, and Hsüan-t'ung emperors; and the seal of the Hall for Studying the Odes.

*Remarks:* In the *Mao Shih* scrolls, taboo characters (characters appearing in the personal names of the Sung emperors and of certain imperial ancestors, or exact homophones written with different characters) are avoided by leaving off the final stroke or strokes. In the poem "Seventh Month," the character 筐 *k'uang* lacks its final two strokes and is written 筐, avoiding the taboo homophone of Sung T'ai-tsu's 太祖 (r. 960-68) personal name, K'uang 匡. In the same poem, the characters 桓 *huan* and 玄 *hsüan* lack their final strokes to avoid the taboo homophone of Emperor Ch'in-tsung's 欽宗 (r. 1126-27) personal name, Huan 桓, and the taboo homophone of Hsüan in Hsüan-lang 玄朗, the personal name of Shih-tsu 始祖 (fig. 122). In the poem "Eastern Mountains," the character 完 *huan*, also *wan*, lacks its final stroke, observing the taboo for Ch'in-tsung's personal name, but the character 敦 *tun* is written in full even though it is a taboo homophone of Emperor Kuang-tsung's 光宗 (r. 1190-94) personal name, Tun 惇. And in the poems "Hewing Ax Handles" and "Fishnets," the character 覯 *kou* lacks its final stroke, avoiding the taboo homophone of Emperor Kao-tsung's personal name, Kou 構.

12. *Odes of Pin* (a second version), now in The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Handscroll; 27.7 × 673.5 cm. Calligraphy and painting complete in seven sections, as in the above scroll. On the scroll is an old seal reading "Shan-yü ch'ing shang" 禪餘清賞, a seal of the Ming official Li T'ing-hsiang 李廷相 (1481-1544), reading "P'u-yang Li

T'ing-hsiang shuang-k'uai-t'ang shu hua ssu-yin" 濮陽李廷相雙榆堂書畫私印, and seals of Liang Ch'ing-piao and of the modern collector Wang Chi-ch'ien 王季遷 (C. C. Wang, b. 1906). Like the preceding scroll, this scroll observes the taboo for the characters *k'uang*, *huan*, *hsüan*, *wan*, and *kou*, but not for the character *tun*. This scroll is not recorded.

13. *Odes from the Hsiao-ya Starting with "Deer Cry,"* now in the Palace Museum, Beijing.<sup>12</sup> One of the scrolls from the Hall for Studying the Odes collection. Handscroll; 28 × 864 cm. Calligraphy and painting complete in ten sections: "Deer Cry," "Four Stallions" ("Ssu mu" 四牡), "Brilliant Are the Flowers" ("Huang-huang che hua" 皇皇者華), "Ch'ang Trees" ("Ch'ang ti" 常棣), "Hewing Trees" ("Fa mu" 伐木), "Heaven Protects" ("T'ien pao" 天保), "Plucking Ferns" ("Ts'ai wei" 采薇), "We Bring Out Our Carriage" ("Ch'u ch'e" 出車), "Russet-Pear Tree" ("Ti tu" 杖杜), and "Fish Traps" ("Yü li" 魚麗). At the end of the scroll appear the prefaces for three odes: "Southern Slope" ("Nan-kai" 南陔), "White Blossoms" ("Pai hua" 白華), and "Flowering Millet" ("Hua shu" 華黍). The Ch'ien-lung emperor's colophon, which is on a separate sheet of paper mounted at the end of the scroll, explains that because the *Mao Shih* gives these poems only as titles, no illustrations were made. On the scroll are the ancient seal reading "Yeh-fang-t'ing ch'ing shang" 野芳亭清賞; seals of Mu Lin 沐璘 (Prince Ch'ien of Ning, d. ca. 1457-64) and Ch'ien Su-hsüan 錢素軒 of the Ming; palace seals of the Ch'ien-lung, Chia-ch'ing, and Hsüan-t'ung emperors; and the seal of the Hall for Studying the Odes.

*Remarks:* In the poem "Deer Cry" the character 筐 *k'uang*, the taboo homophone of Sung T'ai-tsu's personal name, is written without its two final horizontal strokes. In the poem "Heaven Protects," the character 恒 *heng* lacks its final stroke, avoiding the taboo homophone of the personal name of Emperor Chen-tsung 真宗 (r. 997-1022), Heng 恒.

14. *Odes from the Hsiao-ya Starting with "In the South Are Fine Fish,"* now in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.<sup>13</sup> One of the scrolls from the Hall for Studying the Odes collection. Handscroll in six (originally ten) sections. Extant calligraphy and painting: "In the South Are Fine Fish," "On the Southern Mountains Are T'ai Plants" ("Nan-shan yu t'ai" 南山有台), "Tall Southernwood" ("Liao hsiao" 蓼蕭), "Soaking Dew" ("Chan lu" 湛露), "Red Bows" ("T'ung kung" 彤弓), "Bright Grows the Tarragon" ("Ch'ing-ch'ing che e" 菁菁者莪), and the preface to the poem "Yu-keng" 由庚 with no painting. Missing sections: "Sixth Month" ("Liu-yüeh" 六月), "Gathering White Millet" ("Ts'ai ch'i" 采芑), "Our Chariots Are Well Wrought" ("Ch'e kung" 車攻), and "Auspicious Day" ("Chi jih" 吉日). On a sheet of paper attached to the end of the scroll is a colophon by the Ming painter Wen Cheng-ming 文徵明 (1470-1559), dated 1547, which states: "These six paintings are all there are." From this we know that four of the ten sections were already missing before the middle of the Chia-ch'ing era (1522-66). The colophon by the Ch'ien-lung emperor also mentions the missing sections. The scroll carries seals of Liang Ch'ing-piao, palace seals of the Ch'ien-lung, Chia-ch'ing, and Hsüan-t'ung emperors, and the seal of the Hall for Studying the Odes.

15. *Odes from the Hsiao-ya Starting with "Wild Geese,"* now in the Douglas Dillon Collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art.<sup>14</sup> One of the scrolls from the Hall for Studying the Odes collection. Handscroll; 32.3 × 697.6 cm.; with extant calligraphy and painting in six sections: "Wild Geese," "Courtyard Torches" ("T'ing liao" 庭燎),

"White Colt" ("Pai chü" 白駒), "Yellow Bird" ("Huang niao" 黃鳥), "I Walk This Wilderness" ("Wo hsing ch'i yeh" 我行其野), and "No Sheep" ("Wu yang" 無羊). Missing sections: "Swelling Water" ("Mien shui" 沔水), "Crane Cry" ("Ho ming" 鶴鳴), and "Minister of War" ("Ch'i fu" 祈父). In his colophon on a separate piece of paper mounted at the end of the sixth section, the Ch'ien-lung emperor mentions that originally "Yellow Bird" was incorrectly mounted after "No Sheep," and was only moved to its correct position upon his orders. On the scroll are palace seals of the Ch'ien-lung, Chia-ch'ing, and Hsüan-t'ung emperors and the seal of the Hall for Studying the Odes.

*Remarks:* In the poem "Wild Geese," the character 桓 *huan* lacks its final stroke, observing the taboo for the personal name of Emperor Ch'in-tsung. In the poem "White Colt," the character 慎 *shen* is lacking its final three strokes, avoiding the taboo homophone of Hsiao-tsung's personal name, Chao Shen 趙慎. In the poem "I Walk This Wilderness," the *hsüan* element 玄 in the character 畜 *hsü* lacks its final stroke, observing the taboo for the personal name of Shih-tsu, Hsüan-lang.

16. *Odes from the Hsiao-ya Starting with "Lofty Is the Southern Mountain,"* now in the Palace Museum, Beijing.<sup>15</sup> One of the scrolls from the Hall for Studying the Odes collection. Handscroll; 26.2 × 857.6 cm. Calligraphy and painting complete in ten sections: "Lofty Is the Southern Mountain," "The First Month" ("Cheng-yüeh" 正月), "Conjunction in the Tenth Month" ("Shih-yüeh chih chiao" 十月之交), "Rains Have No Regularity" ("Yü wu cheng" 雨無正), "Small Yüan" ("Hsiao yüan" 小宛), "Small Min" ("Hsiao min" 小旻), "Small P'an" ("Hsiao p'an" 小弁), "Marvelous Speech" ("Ch'iao yen" 巧言), "What Man Is That?" ("Ho jen ssu" 何人斯), and "Hsiang po" 巷伯. Attached to the scroll is a colophon by the Ch'ien-lung emperor. On the scroll are three old seals reading "Nan-yang Sung shih" 南陽宋氏, "Tzu-chang" 子章, and "Lu-yeh" 魯野; a Ming seal reading "Wang Ling-wen shih pi-ts'ang" 汪令聞氏秘藏; palace seals of the Ch'ien-lung, Chia-ch'ing, and Hsüan-t'ung emperors; and the seal of the Hall for Studying the Odes.

*Remarks:* In the poem "Lofty Is the Southern Mountain," the character 弘 *hung* lacks its final stroke to avoid the taboo homophone of Hung in Hung-yin 弘殷, the personal name of Hsüan-tsu 宣祖 (act. mid-tenth c.), father of Sung T'ai-tsu. In the same poem the element 攴 *p'u* in the character 懲 *ch'eng* lacks its final stroke on two occurrences, avoiding the taboo homophone of Ch'eng in Tzu-ch'eng 子偁, the personal name of Prince Hsi of Hsiu-an 秀安 (d. 1144), father of Emperor Hsiao-tsung. In the poem "The First Month," the element 攴 *shu* in the character 懲 *yin* lacks its final stroke, avoiding the taboo homophone of Yin in Hung-yin, the personal name of Hsüan-tsu, and the character *ch'eng* is treated in the manner described above. In the poem "Small P'an," final strokes are missing from the two *huan* characters 桓 and 完, respecting the taboo for the personal name of Emperor Ch'in-tsung, and the character 覲 *kou* is missing its final stroke, avoiding the taboo homophone for Kao-tsung's personal name. In the poem "Marvelous Speech," the character 慎 *shen* appears twice, each time missing its final three strokes (*Shih-ch'ü sui-pi* incorrectly states that only one stroke is missing), respecting the taboo for Hsiao-tsung's personal name. In the same poem, the character 樹 *shu* lacks its final stroke, avoiding the taboo homophone of Shu 曙, the personal name of Emperor Ying-tsung 英宗 (r. 1064–68). And in the poem "Hsiang po," the character *shen* lacks its final stroke for the reason given above. The scroll carries two Sung seals from the Shao-hsing era (1131–62), reading "Ch'ien-kua" 乾卦 and "Yü-shu chih pao" 御書之寶, but because





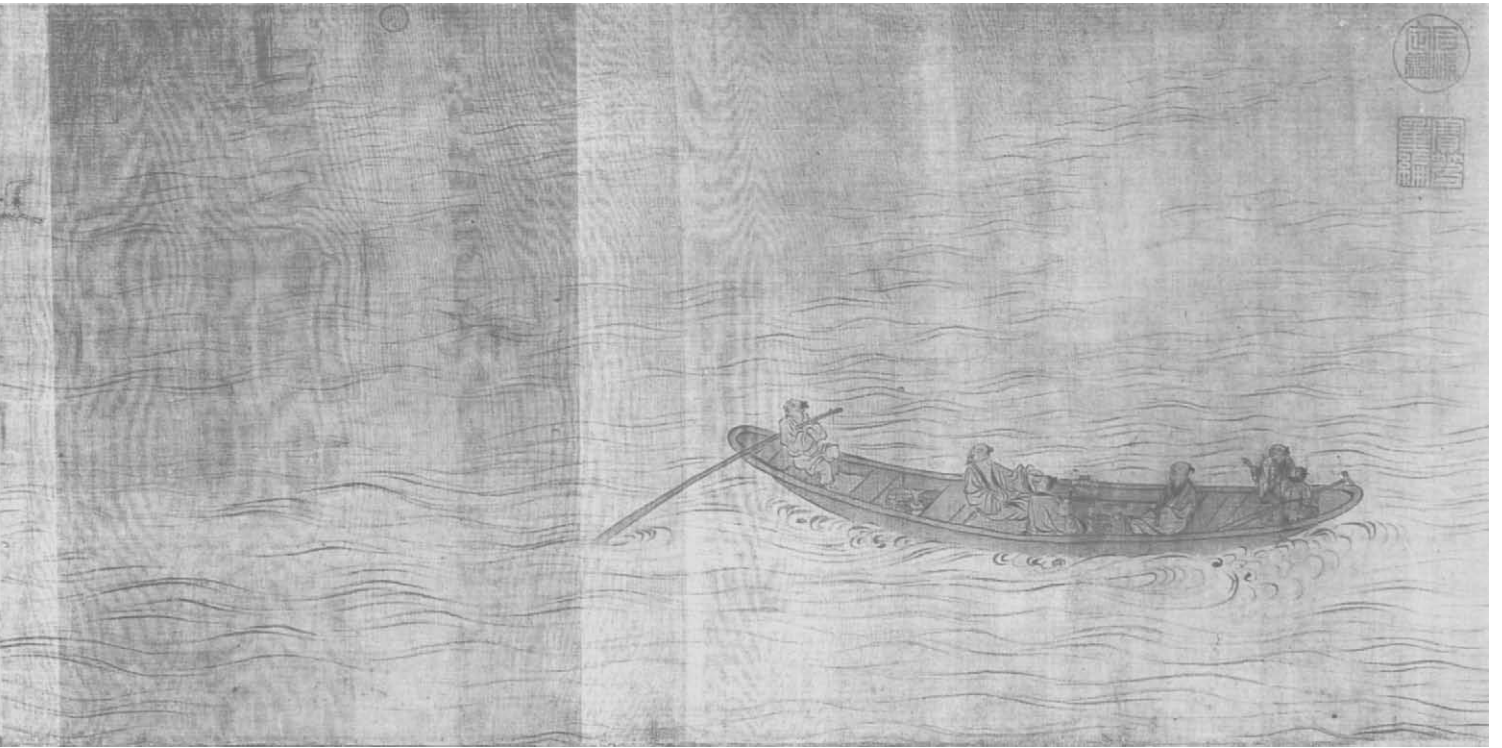
Figure 122. Ma Ho-chih (active latter half 12th c.), *Latter Outing to the Red Cliff*. Detail of handscroll, ink and color on silk, H. 25.8 cm. Palace Museum, Beijing. And detail of transcription of “Seventh Month,” from *Odes of Pin*, with taboo characters in first and last lines. Section of handscroll, ink on silk, H. 25.7 cm. Palace Museum, Beijing

the writing in the scroll observes the taboo for Emperor Hsiao-tsung’s personal name, the seals must have been applied after the Shao-hsing era, probably in the late Sung or even in the early Yüan.

17. *Odes from the Ta-ya Starting with “Great”* (*Ta-ya Tang chih shih* 大雅蕩之什), now in the Fujii Yürinkan, Kyoto.<sup>16</sup> Handscroll; 26 × 867 cm. Calligraphy and painting complete in eleven sections: “Great,” “Restrained” (“I” 抑), “Young Mulberries” (“Sang jou” 桑柔), “Milky Way” (“Yün-han” 雲漢), “Lofty Sacred Peak” (“Sung kao” 崧高), “The Multitude of People” (“Ch’eng min” 烝民), “Han Is Great” (“Han i” 韓奕), “The Chiang [Yang-tze] and Han Rivers” (“Chiang Han” 江漢), “Constantly Martial” (“Ch’ang wu” 常武), “I Look Up” (“Chan ang” 瞻仰), and “Shao Min” 召旻. The scroll carries the seals “[P’u] yang Li T’ing-hsiang shuang-k’uai-t’ang shu hua ssu-yin” [濮]陽李廷相雙榭堂書畫私印, “Li Meng-pi shih t’u shu” 李夢弼氏圖書, “Yen-sheng-kung Yü-ch’i chien-shang chang” 衍聖公毓圻鑒賞章, “Fu-ching t’ing” 頴鏡亭, and “Chi-yün shen-ting chen-chi” 季雲審定真跡.

*Remarks:* The silk is heavily damaged, so that many characters and portions of paintings have been obliterated. The observance of taboo characters is as follows: in the poem “Restrained,” the character 慎 *shen* lacks its last two strokes on each of three occurrences, and the character 觀 *kou* lacks its final stroke; in the poem “Young Mulberries,” the element 又 *yu* in the character 慙 *yin* lacks its final stroke on two occurrences; in the poem “Han Is Great,” the characters 玄 *hsüan* and 完 *huan* lack their final strokes; and in the poem “Shao Min,” the character 弘 *hung* is missing its final stroke.

18. *Hymns of Chou Starting with “Pure Temple,”* now in the Liaoning Provincial Mu-



seum.<sup>17</sup> One of the scrolls from the Hall for Studying the Odes collection. Handscroll; 27.5 × 743 cm. Calligraphy and painting complete in ten sections: "Pure Temple," "The Ordinance of Heaven" ("Wei t'ien chih ming" 維天之命), "Clear and Bright" ("Wei ch'ing" 維清), "Brilliant and Accomplished" ("Lieh wen" 烈文), "Heaven Made" ("T'ien tso" 天作), "Grand Heaven Has Fulfilled Its Ordinance" ("Hao t'ien yu ch'eng ming" 昊天有成命), "We Present" ("Wo chiang" 我將), "Seasonal Tour" ("Shih mai" 時邁), "Grasp Strength" ("Chih ching" 執競), and "Accomplished" ("Ssu wen" 思文). The scroll carries the old seal reading "Ch'an-yü ch'ing-shang"; the Ming half-seal "Ssu-yin"; seals reading "Chin-fu shu hua chih yin" 晉府書畫之印 and "Ch'ing-ho chün" 清河郡; seals of Hsiang Yüan-pien, An Ch'i, and Liang Ch'ing-piao; palace seals of the Ch'ien-lung, Chia-ch'ing, and Hsüan-t'ung emperors; and the seal of the Hall for Studying the Odes. The Ch'ien-lung emperor's colophon is mounted as the frontispiece to the scroll.

*Remarks:* In the poem "Clear and Bright," the character 禎 *chen* is written without its final stroke to avoid the taboo homophone for the personal name of Emperor Jen-tsung 仁宗 (r. 1023–63), Chao Chen 趙禎.

19. *Hymns of Chou Starting with "Pitiable Am I, a Small Child,"* now in the Palace Museum, Beijing.<sup>18</sup> One of the scrolls from the Hall for Studying the Odes collection. Handscroll; 27.7 × 713 cm. Calligraphy and painting complete in eleven sections: "Pitiable Am I, a Small Child," "Taking Counsel" ("Fang lo" 訪落), "Beware" ("Ching-chih" 敬之), "I Will Be Careful" ("Hsiao p'i" 小毖), "Clearing the Grass" ("Tsai shan" 載芟), "Excellent Plows" ("Liang ssu" 良耜), "Silken Robes" ("Ssu i" 絲衣), "Cho"

酌, “Martial” (“Huan” 桓), “Bestowing” (“Lao” 賚), and “Moving” (“Pan” 般). The Ch’ien-lung emperor’s colophon is on a piece of paper mounted at the end of the scroll. On the scroll are seals reading “Ming An Kuo wan” 明安國玩 and “[Ta] Ming An Kuo chien-ting chen chi,” various seals of Hsiang Yüan-pien, and palace seals of the Ch’ien-lung, Chia-ch’ing, and Hsüan-t’ung emperors.

*Remarks:* In the poem “I Will Be Careful,” the 攵 *p’u* element in the character 懲 *ch’eng* lacks its final stroke. In the poem “Excellent Plows,” the character 筐 *k’uang* lacks its two final horizontal strokes. In the poem “Martial,” the character 桓 *huan* lacks its final stroke on four occurrences. The reasons for these omissions were given above. The original calligraphy for “Pitiable Am I, a Small Child” was lost long ago. A later writer provided the calligraphy now seen in the scroll.

20. *Hymns of Chou Starting with “Pitiable Am I, a Small Child,”* second version, now in the Shanghai Museum. Handscroll complete in eleven sections, as in the scroll described above. At the end of the scroll are two colophons purported to be by Pien Jung 卞榮 (1419–87; *chin-shih* 1445) and Wen P’eng 文彭 (1498–1573). Both are spurious. A third colophon, by Wang Chih-teng 王穉登 (1535–1612), is genuine. The scroll carries three forged seals: “K’uei chang” 奎章, “K’o Chiu-ssu [1290–1343]” 柯九思, and “Ch’ien-shan-t’ang” 鈐山堂. The taboo characters in this scroll are the same as those in the scroll described above.

21. *Hymns of Lu*, now in the Liaoning Provincial Museum.<sup>19</sup> One of the scrolls from the Hall for Studying the Odes collection. Handscroll; 28 cm high, horizontal dimensions lost. Extant calligraphy and painting in three sections: “Sturdy Horses” (“Chiung” 駟), “Well-fed” (“Yu-pi” 有駟), and “Closed Temple” (“Pi kung” 闕宮). Missing section: “Half-circling Water” (“P’an shui” 泮水). The Ch’ien-lung emperor’s colophon is on a piece of paper mounted at the end of the scroll. On the scroll are Ch’ing dynasty seals reading “Pei-p’ing Sun shih” 北平孫氏, “Ku-hang” 古杭, and “Jui-nan Kao shih” 瑞南高氏; seals of Liang Ch’ing-piao; palace seals of the Ch’ien-lung, Chia-ch’ing, and Hsüan-t’ung emperors; and the seal of the Hall for Studying the Odes.

*Remarks:* The character 懲 *ch’eng*, the taboo homophone in the personal name of Prince Hsi of Hsiu-an, is here written in full, which must have been an oversight. A note in *Hsü-pien* states that at one time the scroll’s three extant sections were mounted with the *Hymns of Shang* (described below) to form a single scroll which was mistakenly recorded in *Ch’u-pien* under the title *Painting of the Three Hymns* (*San sung t’u* 三頌圖), and that the Ch’ien-lung emperor had the scrolls remounted separately.

22. *Hymns of Shang*, said to be in a collection in Hong Kong.<sup>20</sup> One of the scrolls in the Hall for Studying the Odes collection. Handscroll; record of dimensions lost. Calligraphy and painting complete in five sections: “Ample” (“No” 那), “Illustrious Ancestors” (“Lieh tsu” 列祖), “Black Bird” (“Hsüan niao” 玄鳥), “Always Furthering” (“Ch’ang fa” 長發), and “Wu of Yin” (“Yin Wu” 殷武).

### *Authenticated Works of Kao-tsung, Hsiao-tsung, and Ma Ho-chih*

#### THE CALLIGRAPHY OF KAO-TSUNG

Kao-tsung was enthroned as the first emperor of the Southern Sung in 1127 and ruled for thirty-six years. In 1162, when he was fifty-six, he abdicated in favor of his adopted heir, Chao Shen (Hsiao-tsung), and retired to the Te-shou tien 德壽殿 (Palace of

Virtuous Longevity) with the title of Supreme Emperor (*t'ai-shang huang-ti* 太上皇帝). There he died in 1187 at the age of eighty-one *sui*.<sup>21</sup>

Until the age of thirty, Kao-tsung modeled his calligraphy after Huang T'ing-chien 黃庭堅 (1045–1105) and Mi Fu 米芾 (1052–1107).<sup>22</sup> A passage in the *Yü-hai* 玉海 (*Sea of Jade*) by the Southern Sung scholar Wang Ying-lin 王應麟 (1223–96) discusses Kao-tsung's calligraphy:

When Kao-tsung first "flew like a dragon" [ascended the throne], he was very fond of the style of Huang T'ing-chien. Later he turned to Mi Fu. In the end he put them both aside to concentrate on Hsi and Hsien, father and son [Wang Hsi-chih 王羲之 (ca. 307–ca. 365) and Wang Hsien-chih 王獻之 (344–86)].<sup>23</sup>

In *Shu-shih hui-yao* 書史會要 (*Compilation of the Essentials of the History of Calligraphy*), T'ao Tsung-i 陶宗儀 (ca. 1320–after 1402) of the Yüan gives the reason for Kao-tsung's change in style:

Li Hsin-ch'uan 李心傳 [1167–1244] felt that Ssu-ling 思陵 [posthumous name of Kao-tsung] originally studied the calligraphy of Huang T'ing-chien. Later, because the pretender [Liu] Yü [劉] 豫 dispatched someone who also was good at Huang T'ing-chien's style to cause confusion, [Kao-tsung] changed and followed Yu-chün 右軍 [Wang Hsi-chih].<sup>24</sup>

To facilitate our comparison of Kao-tsung's calligraphy with the style in the various *Mao Shih* scrolls, I have selected a number of works that are either accepted as authentic or old works so close to the originals as to be taken for authentic works. All the works were done after Kao-tsung changed from the style of Huang T'ing-chien and Mi Fu to a style close to that of Wang Hsi-chih and even closer to that of the monk Fa-chi 法極 (Chih-yung; late sixth to early seventh century). The earliest piece, dated 1137, is the *Letter to Yüeh Fei* (*Tz'u Yüeh Fei sheng-ch'iu ch'ih* 賜岳飛盛秋勅), now in the Palace Museum, Taipei.<sup>25</sup> Here, although the basic forms are fully developed, the brushwork is slightly timid, leading me to believe that the work is an excellent old copy, not an original. An authentic work in small standard script (*hsiao-k'ai* 小楷) is the handscroll *Preface to Hui-tsung's Collected Imperial Writings* (*Hui-tsung wen-chi hsü* 徽宗文集序), now in a private collection in Japan (see fig. 126).<sup>26</sup> Although Kao-tsung was forty-eight when he wrote this piece, the style is fundamentally the same as that of works done in his old age: the brushwork and composition are not very strict, but the brush conception and spirit are substantial and the style is elegant. It is not the work of a mediocre calligrapher.

A colophon by Kao-tsung on the *Hsiao-nü Ts'ao O pei* 孝女曹娥碑 (*Stele of the Filial Daughter Ts'ao O*), the work of a Tsin writer, is worthy of being called a representative piece.<sup>27</sup> It was written after Kao-tsung had retired at the age of fifty-four *sui*. The piece is signed "Sun-chai shu" 損齋書 and stamped with a square seal reading "Sun-chai shu-yin" 損齋書印. (Toward the end of his reign, Kao-tsung took Sun-chai as his *hao* and built the Sun-chai Studio.) In this piece, the composition is stricter, and the spacing of lines and individual characters is regular and well balanced but not stiff. The brushwork is mature and strong, round and thick, achieving a sense of animation lodged within rules. The characteristic forms of the brushstrokes are the same as those in the earlier *Preface to Hui-tsung's Collected Imperial Writings*.

Two other works from Kao-tsung's late period are the transcription in cursive script

(*ts'ao-shu* 草書) of Su Shih's 蘇軾 (1037–1101) *Latter Red Cliff Ode* (*Hou Ch'ih-pi fu* 後赤壁賦), now in the Palace Museum, Beijing,<sup>28</sup> and the transcription of Ts'ao Chih's 曹植 (192–232) *Nymph of the Lo River* (*Lo-shen fu* 洛神賦), now in the Liaoning Provincial Museum.<sup>29</sup> The calligraphy in the first scroll, mounted after a Ma Ho-chih painting titled *Latter Outing to the Red Cliff* (*Ch'ih-pi hou-yu t'u* 赤壁後游圖; fig. 122), is generally emaciated. The calligraphy in the second scroll is rather smooth and glossy, and the brushwork characteristics resemble those in the earlier *Preface to Hui-tsung's Collected Imperial Writings* and in the colophon to *Hsiao-nü Ts'ao O pei*.

All these pieces can be taken as exemplars of Kao-tsung's calligraphy and may be reliably used to determine the authenticity of other writings. The frequently recorded and reproduced transcription of the *Thousand-Character Classic* (*Ch'ien-tzu wen* 千字文), in the Palace Museum, Taipei,<sup>30</sup> and the four letters that constitute the scroll *Missives to Liang Ju-chia* (*Tz'u Liang Ju-chia ch'ih shu* 賜梁汝嘉勅書), in a private collection in Japan,<sup>31</sup> both done in running script (*hsing-shu* 行書), cannot be used as a basis for comparison: the first is misattributed, and the second is a forgery dating from the Ming.

#### THE CALLIGRAPHY OF HSIAO-TSUNG

Examples of Hsiao-tsung's calligraphy are rare. The two works in running-standard script mentioned here constitute eighty to ninety percent of Hsiao-tsung's extant calligraphy. The first is an inscription on a fan now in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. The two-line inscription, taken from a seven-character couplet, reads: "The rain over the long river always brings sleep / The wind beating against the cliffs all day wafts the boat on." On the fan is a gourd-shaped relief seal reading "Yü-shu" 御書.<sup>32</sup> Formerly attributed to Kao-tsung, this inscription has been confirmed as an authentic work of Hsiao-tsung.

The second example is a square album leaf inscribed with a quatrain in seven-character meter.<sup>33</sup> This leaf is stamped with a relief seal reading "Hsüan-te-tien shu" 選德殿書 ("inscribed in the Hsüan-te Palace"; the palace was built in Hsiao-tsung's time). A careful examination of the calligraphy on this leaf shows that it is similar to the calligraphy on the fan described above. However, the use of the brush in the album leaf is slightly weak, and the color of the seal lacks antiquity. Although this must be an excellent copy of an authentic work by Hsiao-tsung, ranking just below an authentic work, it can be used as corroborating evidence for our purpose here.

#### THE PAINTINGS OF MA HO-CHIH

Ma Ho-chih was a native of Ch'ien-t'ang 錢唐 (present-day Hangchow). His biography in *T'u-hui pao-chien* 圖繪寶鑑 (*Treasured Mirror of Painting*) by the Yüan historian Hsia Wen-yen 夏文彥 (active fourteenth century) reads:

During the Shao-hsing era [1131–62], he passed the *chin-shih* examination. He excelled at painting. In figures, Buddhist images, and landscapes, he imitated Wu [Tao-tzu 吳道子; active ca. 710–60]. His brushwork was fluttering (*p'iao-i* 飄逸) and unrestrained. He concentrated on eliminating excessive adornment and created his own style. The emperors Kao-tsung and Hsiao-tsung deeply admired his painting. When they wrote out the three hundred odes of the

*Mao Shih*, they ordered Ho-chih to paint illustrations. He rose to the rank of vice president of the Board of Works (*kung-pu shih-lang* 工部侍郎).<sup>34</sup>

A passage in the survey of painting *Hua-chien* 畫鑑 (*Mirror of Painting*) by T'ang Hou 湯垕 (active early fourteenth century) states:

Ma Ho-chih did figures beautifully. His running brush was fluttering and unrestrained. Contemporaries regarded him as a "Little Master Wu." He was able to cast off vulgar habits and concentrate on lofty antiquity. Other men could not easily reach this.<sup>35</sup>

It is not clear whether Ma Ho-chih was a member of the Sung Imperial Painting Academy. To judge from the arrangement of the biographies of painters in *T'u-hui pao-chien*, Hsia Wen-yen did not consider him one; Ma is listed among the painter-scholar class, along with Chiang Shen 江參 (ca. 1090–1138) and Ch'en Jung 陳容 (d. after 1262), and not among such Academy men as Li T'ang 李唐 (ca. 1070–ca. 1150). On the other hand, a note in *Record of Southern Sung Academy Painters* (*Nan Sung yüan hua lu* 南宋院畫錄), compiled by Li O 厲鶚 (1692–1752) during the Ch'ing dynasty, reads:

In my opinion, it is because Ho-chih rose in rank to vice president of the Board of Works that Hsia [Wen-yen] did not place him among the Academy painters. [But] according to the *Wu-lin chiu shih* 武林舊事 [*Reminiscences of Hangchow*] of Chou Ts'ao-ch'uang 周草窗 [also known as Chou Mi 周密; 1232–98], "there were only ten men in the Imperial Painting Academy (Yü-ch'ien hua yüan 御前畫院). Ho-chih was foremost among them." Perhaps it was because Ho-chih's art was the choicest of his age that he was ordered to take charge of the Painting Academy. [Chou] Ts'ao-ch'uang saw the earlier era of the Southern Sung and must have had a basis for saying what he said. Today I follow him.<sup>36</sup>

Thus, it was with some basis that Li O included Ma Ho-chih in his *Record of Southern Sung Academy Painters*.

Because most extant paintings attributed to Ma Ho-chih are unsigned,<sup>37</sup> it is rather difficult to obtain an example of Ma's painting which can serve as a standard for determining the authenticity of the *Mao Shih* scrolls. Of his works (aside from those in the *Mao Shih*) which I have seen and consider authentic, there is only the handscroll *Latter Outing to the Red Cliff* mentioned above. The authenticity of this painting is further confirmed by its being mounted together with Kao-tsung's authentic transcription of the *Latter Red Cliff Ode*. I have also seen two of Ma's small paintings—*Spring Clouds and Crane Flying* (*Ch'ün-hsiao ho-li t'u* 春霄鶴淚圖), also recorded as *Cranes Crying by the Clear Spring* (*Ch'ing ch'üan ming-ho t'u* 清泉鳴鶴圖; see fig. 187), and *Autumn Sky and Falcon Rising* (*Ch'iu-k'ung chun-chü t'u* 秋空隼舉圖), also recorded as *Old Tree by the Water* (*Ku-mu liu-ch'üan t'u* 古木流泉圖; see fig. 186), both in the Palace Museum, Taipei.<sup>38</sup> Unfortunately, too many years have passed since I saw these works, and my memory of them is not clear. Reproductions of both paintings are available, but they are too small and dim to be used as corroborating evidence.

Examining the *Latter Outing to the Red Cliff* in light of the literary records cited above, we can understand why Hsia Wen-yen said of Ma's painting style: "In figures, Buddhist

images, and landscapes, he imitated Wu [Tao-tzu]. His brushwork was fluttering and unrestrained. He concentrated on eliminating excessive adornment and created his own style." In *Latter Outing*, the trees, stones, and water patterns are smooth and fluent; the figures are detailed yet not too stiff. In this painting one finds the same marvelous quality one finds in "scholars' paintings" (*shih-tai-fu hua* 士大夫畫) by such men as Li Kung-lin 李公麟 (ca. 1049–1106)<sup>39</sup> and Ch'iao Chung-ch'ang 喬仲常 (active first half of the twelfth century), whose works exhibit both skillfulness and the spontaneous quality of sketches.

### *Quality and Authenticity of the Mao Shih Scrolls*

Using the calligraphy of Kao-tsung and Hsiao-tsung and the paintings of Ma Ho-chih discussed above as standards and comparing them with the *Mao Shih* scrolls I have seen, I would classify the scrolls into four groups according to their quality and authenticity.

In general, the calligraphy of the various *Mao Shih* scrolls is close in form to Kao-tsung's calligraphy and is unrelated to Hsiao-tsung's. The distinctive features of structure and brushwork in individual characters can be said to achieve seventy to eighty percent of the appearance of Kao-tsung's style, but the use of the brush in all the scrolls is relatively sharp and shallow and lacking in grace. Thus the spirit is different, and there is only a superficial likeness. Moreover, the writing varies in artistic quality. The classification of the scrolls according to calligraphy follows.

In the first class are six scrolls: *Hymns of Chou Starting with "Pure Temple"* (No. 18), *Odes from the Hsiao-ya Starting with "Deer Cry"* (No. 13), *Odes from the Hsiao-ya Starting with "Lofty Is the Southern Mountain"* (No. 16), *Odes from the Hsiao-ya Starting with "Wild Geese"* (No. 15), *Odes of Pin* (No. 12), and *Odes of T'ang* (No. 5). The forms in these scrolls bear a general resemblance to those of Kao-tsung's calligraphy, but the brushstrokes are somewhat weak and thin. Moreover, in the scrolls *Wild Geese* and *Lofty Is the Southern Mountain*, the character 慎 *shen* is written without its two final strokes, observing the taboo for Hsiao-tsung's personal name—a clear indication that the calligraphy could not have come from the hand of either emperor.

In the second class are six scrolls: *Odes of Pin* (No. 11), *Odes of Ch'en* (No. 9), *Odes of T'ang* (No. 6), *Hymns of Lu* (No. 21), *Odes from the Hsiao-ya Starting with "In the South Are Fine Fish"* (No. 14), and *Odes from the Ta-ya Starting with "Great"* (No. 17). The brushstrokes in these six scrolls, compared with those in the first group of scrolls, are thinner and weaker. Only in *Fine Fish* are the strokes somewhat plump. The structure of the characters is also more unstable.

In the third class are the two versions of *Hymns of Chou Starting with "Pitiable Am I, a Small Child"* (Nos. 19, 20). The brushwork is plump and soft, and the resemblance to Kao-tsung's calligraphy is remote.

In the fourth class are the *Odes of Ch'en* (No. 10) and the *Odes of Ch'i* (No. 4). The brushwork in both scrolls is extremely shallow and weak, appearing soft and exhausted.

When the calligraphy in all the scrolls is studied together, the characters do not look as if they came from the same hand. They must therefore be the work of various calligraphers in the Imperial Calligraphy Academy. This would explain why none of the scrolls carries the authentic "Yü-shu chih pao" (Treasure of Imperial Calligraphy) seal of either Kao-tsung or Hsiao-tsung.

The quality of the illustrations in the *Mao Shih* scrolls also can be divided into four classes, although the classification for painting is different from that for calligraphy. The

marvelous quality of Ma Ho-chih's painting *Latter Outing to the Red Cliff* lies in spirited and fluid brushwork, unrestricted by striving for form-likeness (*hsing-ssu* 形似). This quality appears with particular clarity in the depictions of mountains, stones, grass, and trees. To determine the relative quality of the various *Mao Shih* scrolls, we must first see whether or not they can match the standard of Ma's painting on this point. Then we may extend our examination to other aspects, such as the lines of buildings (some done without a ruler) and the drapery patterns on the figures. All must possess vitality and fluidity, even while exhibiting skillfulness in detail, and must not have the dull and restrained manner of contemporary Academy painting.

Three scrolls belong in the first class: *Odes of T'ang* (No. 5), *Odes from the Hsiao-ya Starting with "Deer Cry"* (No. 13), and *Odes from the Hsiao-ya Starting with "Lofty Is the Southern Mountain"* (No. 16). For the most part these scrolls show the fine characteristics of the *Latter Outing to the Red Cliff*. The "Hewing Trees" section of *Deer Cry* is especially outstanding. The scrolls *Deer Cry* and *Lofty Is the Southern Mountain* appear to come from the same hand and are close to *Latter Outing* in style—leading one to think that they were probably done by Ma Ho-chih. In *Odes of T'ang*, the drapery patterns and the ruled lines of the buildings are unusually detailed and lively, but the essential quality is unlike that of the scrolls *Deer Cry* and *Lofty Is the Southern Mountain*, suggesting a different painter for this work. Yet there are individual passages in all three scrolls in which the brushwork is somewhat hesitant—for example, the clouds in the "Heaven Protects" section of *Deer Cry* and the trunks, branches, and foliage layers of the large trees in the "Hsiang po" section of *Lofty Is the Southern Mountain*. These passages do not seem compatible with the overall style, but determining whether this is the result of occasional variation in the work of a single artist or of additions by another hand awaits further consideration.

In the second class are the two *Odes of Pin* scrolls (Nos. 11, 12). In the version now in the Palace Museum, Beijing (No. 11), the brushwork in the trees and rocks is dull and slightly hesitant, and the rendering of clouds, water, and ruled lines is unremarkable. The faces and drapery of the large figures, however, are skillfully done. In the version which is at the Metropolitan Museum (No. 12), the brushwork in the trees and rocks is light and capricious, though not monotonous. In both scrolls, the large figures in the "Broken Axes" section are painted with great skill and vitality, and the treatment of the drapery is extremely varied—the best feature in these scrolls. For these reasons, I doubt that the scrolls were all painted by one person. In *Hymns of Chou Starting with "Pure Temple"* (No. 18), the large figures in the "Accomplished" section are as skillfully done as those in the "Broken Axes" section of the *Odes of Pin* scrolls. The illustration for "Grand Heaven Has Fulfilled Its Ordinance" is also outstanding, but in overall quality it must rank below the three scrolls of the first class.

In the third class are seven scrolls: *Odes from the Hsiao-ya Starting with "Wild Geese"* (No. 15), *Odes of T'ang* (No. 7), the two versions of *Hymns of Chou Starting with "Pitiable Am I, a Small Child"* (Nos. 19, 20), *Odes of Ch'en* (No. 9), *Hymns of Lu* (No. 21), and *Odes of Shao and the South* (No. 1). For the most part, the brushwork is mediocre and hesitant. In *Odes of Shao and the South* are certain features which do not derive from the "Wu style" (the style of Wu Tao-tzu), but the overall artistic quality of this scroll is no higher or lower than that of another scroll in this class, *Odes from the Hsiao-ya Starting with "Wild Geese."*

In the fourth class are *Odes of Ch'i* (No. 4) and the version of *Odes of Ch'en* in the



Liaoning Provincial Museum (No. 10). In these scrolls the painting is even weaker and more frivolous. Compared with the scrolls above, there is nothing to discuss.

In summary, my belief is that only the three scrolls in the first class are probably original works by Ma Ho-chih, whereas the other scrolls are imitations done by members of the Imperial Painting Academy of the time. I have not discussed the paintings in *Odes of P'ei* (No. 2), *Odes of Yung* (No. 3), *Odes of Ch'en* in the British Museum (No. 8), *Odes from the Hsiao-ya Starting with "In the South Are Fine Fish"* (No. 14), *Odes from the Ta-ya Starting with "Great"* (No. 17), and *Hymns of Shang* (No. 22). Some I saw too long ago, so that my memory of them is not accurate; others I have seen only in photographs or reproductions that are not too clear. Thus there is no way to judge their quality or to make detailed evaluations (such as whether or not they observe the taboos).

### *Other Questions Relating to the Mao Shih Scrolls*

According to Ch'en Shan's account in the *Gazetteer of Hangchow*, Kao-tsung wrote out the *Mao Shih* and ordered Ma Ho-chih to add his illustrations. I have shown that in the twenty-two scrolls extant today, none of the texts is in the personal calligraphy of Kao-tsung or Hsiao-tsung, and only a few of the scrolls are by Ma Ho-chih himself. Now the question is, did Kao-tsung or Hsiao-tsung actually write, and Ma Ho-chih illustrate, a complete set of the *Mao Shih*? I believe that the answer is probably no for calligraphy and yes for painting. The calligraphy could have been produced in the emperor's name only. Most calligraphers in the Imperial Calligraphy Academy of that time studied Kao-tsung's style. They could readily have produced characters closely resembling the writing of Kao-tsung and did not need to copy from an original to achieve a close likeness. Hsiao-tsung's calligraphy is different from Kao-tsung's, but because many of the scrolls in which taboos are observed for Hsiao-tsung's personal name—scrolls we would expect to be in Hsiao-tsung's calligraphy—are paradoxically written in Kao-tsung's style, we know that they were not copied from Hsiao-tsung's calligraphy. If all the scrolls seen today are products of the Imperial Calligraphy Academy, proof is yet to be produced that Ch'en Shan's account has a basis in fact. Just because he was close in time to Kao-tsung and Hsiao-tsung does not mean that we can take his word. I would also point out that throughout the ages, there have been examples of calligraphy and painting issued in the emperor's name but actually done by others. Hui-tsung in the Sung and the Ch'ien-lung emperor in the Ch'ing are two well-known examples, which can help refute Ch'en Shan's account.

With Ma Ho-chih's painting the circumstances were different: Ma cultivated a personal style most unlike the Academy style of his time. Without a painting by Ma to imitate, masters in the Academy would not have been able to create one on their own. Moreover, comparing the duplicate and triplicate versions, we find passages that, because of their lack of variation, must have been almost slavishly imitated from a model. Therefore I would say that Ma Ho-chih must have done a complete set of *Mao Shih* paintings (we cannot know whether or not he illustrated all three hundred poems), but the poems were not written by either Kao-tsung or Hsiao-tsung.

Now, what might have been the purpose of issuing a series on *Mao Shih*? The answer is that the text was edited by Confucius, and the Sung emperors' veneration of Confucius must have led them to venerate the *Mao Shih*, Confucian classic that it was. In this classic

are many narrative and descriptive passages that are eminently suitable for illustration. Kao-tsung had the texts written out and illustrations added to propagate Confucian ideology. This is the meaning of Chang Yen-yüan's statement "Painting completes civilization and supports ethics."<sup>40</sup> This is just as Kuo Jo-hsü 郭若虛 (active ca. 1075) said: "Is it not true that what literature cannot express in classics and commentaries and what calligraphy cannot depict can be continued in painting? How fitting also is the saying that it ranks in achievement with the six classics and revolves with the seasons."<sup>41</sup> A passage in the Ch'ien-lung emperor's "Record of the Hall for Studying the Odes" further indicates the importance of the *Mao Shih* to the feudal ruling class:

[The *Odes* help one] to incite emotions, to observe, to join together, and to express resentment. The *Odes* are the great starting point for serving one's father and serving one's lord. Going into them deeply, one achieves self-satisfaction. Afterward, when held within, the mind and spirit will be peaceful; when applied outwardly, principles of affairs will be completely understood. Therefore speech will be elegant and actions will be far-ranging. If one does not read "The Osprey's Cry and the Unicorn's Hoof," one cannot practice the methods of the Chou officers. Thus it is especially one who possesses the world and the nation who cannot fail to study the *Odes*.

This text from an emperor's hand makes clear the value of *Mao Shih* to the ruler.

An analogy exists in connection with another classic. Kao-tsung wrote out the *Nine Classics* (*Chiu ching* 九經) and had them cut in stone and set up at the National University in Lin-an 臨安 (present-day Hangchow). There, on view to a host of scholars, they could propagate both the teachings and the virtues of the emperor who venerated Confucius and the Confucian classics. There was no way, however, to make scrolls of calligraphy and painting widely available; at most they could be bestowed as gifts on imperial in-laws, imperial relatives, nobles, and high officials. I believe the *Mao Shih* scrolls served essentially the same purpose as the large numbers of fans—which combined imperial calligraphy and Academy painting—that were distributed in the palace each year on the Tuan-wu 端午 Festival to those close to the emperor as an expression of favor. Of course, bestowal of a *Mao Shih* scroll was a weightier gesture because it carried more political significance.

A further example of the usefulness to the emperor of scrolls depicting certain subjects is the significantly named *Auspicious Omens of Dynastic Revival* (*Chung-hsing jui-ying t'u* 中興瑞應圖; see fig. 121), attributed to the Academy painter Hsiao Chao 蕭照 (active mid-twelfth century). The subject was a panegyric on Kao-tsung's imperial omens. It is likely that the multiple copies extant today resulted when the emperor ordered Academy painters to make reproductions that he could bestow as gifts to propagate tidings of the "return of the Mandate of Heaven" and to show that he, Kao-tsung, was indeed the "truly ordained Son of Heaven." In so doing, he hoped to prevent his imperial clansmen from claiming the throne. The function of the *Mao Shih* scrolls was similar.

Although the *Mao Shih* scrolls were produced essentially to propagate a political message, they were, after all, works of art to be unrolled on a table and enjoyed, not a classical text or an exhortation that had only to explain principles and origins to be considered satisfactory. The scrolls had to undergo a process of artistic formulation so that they would attract and inspire the viewer. Although the intellectual content of a work

of art can never be separated from its form, there are times when the expression of content through artistic form is achieved through very complex and subtle means. Take, for example, the “Wild Geese” section of *Odes from the Hsiao-ya Starting with “Wild Geese”* (No. 15). The poem (Mao, no. 181) is based on the principle of analogy (*hsing* 興). It begins with the analogy of wild geese peacefully gathering and concludes with praise for King Hsüan 宣 (r. 827–789 B.C.) of the Chou dynasty, who was able to peacefully unite his people. The artist who created this illustration avoided the main theme and painted only a flock of geese flying, calling, resting, and feeding among reeds and sandbars. Thus he created something concrete out of the abstract, replacing “analogy” with “comparison” (*pi* 比).

Another example is the “Broken Axes” section of *Odes of Pin* (Nos. 11, 12). Here the artist has painted two men who stand and face each other. One figure holds an ax-head in one hand and points to it with the other. The second figure leans to listen with his hands folded across his chest. Instead of a literal illustration of the duke of Chou handling affairs of state, as stated in the poem (Mao, no. 157), the artist has depicted a scholar giving an admonition.

This approach to illustration makes the viewer feel that the painting is more than a direct narration, that it has a “lingering flavor.” At the same time, this approach avoids the spectacle of feudal moralizing, which could put off the modern viewer, and allows the painting to be appreciated even today. Of course, the brushwork in Chinese painting has its own independent aesthetic value. And it, more than an intriguing compositional conception, can cause us to go on savoring a work indefinitely. For example, when we speak of the special style and achievement of Ma Ho-chih’s painting, there is no denying that his brushwork, with its considerable calligraphic flavor, is an essential feature. For this reason, even if certain paintings in the *Mao Shih* scrolls do show rather obviously the color of feudal moralizing, still we can look beyond the subject matter and derive enjoyment and artistic inspiration from the formal beauty of Ma’s brushwork.

In conclusion, I will say something about the relationship between poetry, painting, and calligraphy. In their execution, Chinese calligraphy and painting truly share the same principles and methods. The relationship is made clear in Chao Meng-fu’s colophon to his painting *Old Tree, Bamboo, and Rock* (*Ku-mu chu-shih t’u* 枯木竹石圖), now in the Palace Museum, Beijing:

Rocks as in flying white (*fei-pai* 飛白), trees as in seal script,  
To sketch bamboo one must understand the “spreading eight” (*pa-fa* 八法).  
If there is anyone who can grasp all this,  
He then knows that calligraphy and painting have always been the same.

To be more specific, works of calligraphy and painting must embody the artist’s personality and character—in short, his style. Even painting which emphasizes faithful depiction (*hsieh-chen* 寫真) is no exception. Style is embodied first in brushwork, then in composition. It must be virile, elegant, substantial yet dashing, coarse yet not rude, clever yet not frivolous, plain yet not flavorless, full-bodied yet not turbid, dignified yet not dull, eccentric yet not deformed. As to method (including brushwork and composition), there will be voids within solids and solids within voids. The lines, like an ash-colored snake’s traces in the grass, must seemingly be broken but actually connected. Left and right must complement each other, top and bottom must respond sympathetically; light

must be balanced by heavy, sparse by dense; and the proportions must be fitting. Both positive and negative evidence of all these qualities can be found in the *Mao Shih* scrolls. (So-called negative evidence refers to the calligraphy that is deficient in method and not elevated in style.)

As for poetry, it is an art that uses language to express meaning and, therefore, is not completely the same as calligraphy and painting. But in style and in the methods of sentence construction and overall structure, poetry must meet basically the criteria mentioned above. The knowledgeable will be able to understand this on their own.

*Translated by Robert Harrist*

#### APPENDIX

*The Ch'ien-lung Emperor's  
"Record of the Hall for Studying the Odes"*

The Master said, "Young ones, why is it that you do not study the *Odes*?" When Po-yü crossed the courtyard, the Master said, "If you do not study the *Odes* you will have nothing to say for yourself." Thus is the study of the *Odes* to be esteemed. But how can a student of the *Odes* merely consider the elegant pairing of four- and seven-word phrases or the perfecting of rhymes and polishing of ornate expressions as exhausting its great principle?

[The *Odes* help one] to incite emotions, to observe, to join together, and to express resentment. The *Odes* are the great starting point for serving one's father and serving one's lord. Going into them deeply, one achieves self-satisfaction. Afterward, when held within, the mind and spirit will be peaceful; when applied outwardly, principles of affairs will be completely understood. Therefore speech will be elegant and actions far-ranging. If one does not read "The Osprey's Cry and the Unicorn's Hoof," one cannot practice the methods of the Chou officers. Thus it is especially one who possesses the world and the nation who cannot fail to study the *Odes*.

Sung Kao-tsung ordered Ma Ho-chih to begin work during the Chien-yen era [1127-30], and the task was finished during the Ch'ien-tao era [1165-73]. When Fu-ling added the calligraphy, did he complete it? This was in the distant past, and many [scrolls] have since been lost and scattered. Those in the palace which have already been registered in the *Shih-ch'ü pao-chi* number altogether nine scrolls. After this catalogue was completed, I acquired eight more. Using the new to verify the old, I now know five scrolls were collected but not examined carefully. The authentic were already known for their purity, and the forgeries now can be properly put aside. Therefore, I gathered the reliable ones from both old and new collections<sup>42</sup> to store separately in the rear hall of Ching-yang Palace, renamed the Hall for Studying the *Odes*. If I should later obtain more scrolls, I will use these to verify the new ones and store them accordingly. I also wrote inscriptions on each scroll, [in order] to hand down the evidence to posterity. The order of the scrolls is *Feng*, *Ya*, *Sung*. They are not arranged in the order in which the odes were written. For the five that have already been registered in the *Shih-ch'ü pao-chi*<sup>43</sup> and today determined to be forgeries, I still follow the old order and also wrote inscriptions at the end of each one.

Sung Kao-tsung and Hsiao-tsung held authority only within the limiting border of the river. They lacked the will to recover [the north] and were mortified by the great lessons of the *Ya* Odes and of the Hymns [*Sung*]. For them, illustrating and writing out the classics was nothing more than an amusement of brush and ink. How can they truly be called students of the *Odes*? The *Odes* say: "The lofty mountain is revered, brilliant behavior is emulated." Alas, that I cannot bow in respect between the Pure Temple and the Bright Hall.

## NOTES

- 1 This work is now lost. The "Painters' Biographies" no. 7, in *chüan* 51 of the *P'ei-wen-chai shu-hua p'u* (Catalogue of painting and calligraphy in the P'ei-wen Studio) (reprint, Taipei, 1969), compiled in the palace by Sun Yüeh-pan and others during the K'ang-hsi period of the Ch'ing dynasty, states that the attribution of the *Mao Shih* scrolls is taken "from Ch'en Shan's *Hang-chou fu-chih* of the early Southern Sung." Because this statement agrees with what is recorded in Hsia Wen-yen's *T'u-hui pao-chien* (Treasured mirror of painting), we know that Hsia also quoted Ch'en's gazetteer.
- 2 All three portions of the *Shih-ch'ü pao-chi* (Imperial catalogue of painting and calligraphy) were published by the Palace Museum, Taipei, between 1969 and 1971.—ED.
- 3 The essay can be found in the *Hsü-pien*, *chüan* 47 (Palace Museum ed., vol. 5, p. 2400).—ED.
- 4 Recorded in *Ch'u-pien*, *chüan* 14 (Palace Museum ed., vol. 1, *chüan* 5, p. 566b).
- 5 Recorded in *Ch'u-pien*, *chüan* 41 (originally arranged in fascicles); *Hsü-pien* (Yü-shu-fang [Imperial calligraphy] 4), *chüan* 39 (Palace Museum ed., vol. 4, pp. 2026a–28a); and Juan Yüan, *Shih-ch'ü sui-pi* (Paintings and manuscripts in the Ch'ien-lung emperor's collection) (n.p.: Ao-ya T'ang, 1854), *chüan* 3, p. 8b.
- 6 Recorded in *Ch'u-pien*, *chüan* 14 (Palace Museum ed., vol. 1, *chüan* 5, p. 567), which states that this scroll is a Ming forgery and therefore was not part of the Hall for Studying the Odes collection.
- 7 Recorded in *Ch'u-pien*, *chüan* 36 (Palace Museum ed., vol. 2, *chüan* 8, p. 1076b); *Hsü-pien* (Yü-shu-fang 4), *chüan* 39 (Palace Museum ed., vol. 4, pp. 2029b–30b); and Juan, *Shih-ch'ü sui-pi*, *chüan* 3, p. 86.
- 8 Wen Chia, comp., *Ch'ien-shan-t'ang shu-hua chi* (Calligraphy and painting from the collection of Yen Sung; preface dated 1569), MSTS (Shanghai: Shen-chou kuo-kuang she, 1928), ser. 2, vol. 6, p. 9a; Chang Ch'ou, *Ch'ing-ho shu-hua fang* (The boat of calligraphy and painting on the Ch'ing River) (Taipei: Hsüeh-hai, 1975), *chüan* 7, p. 23b; *Hsü-pien* (Yü-shu-fang 4), *chüan* 39 (Palace Museum ed., vol. 4, pp. 2031–33a); and Juan, *Shih-ch'ü sui-pi*, *chüan* 3, p. 8b (where the scroll is listed as *Mao Shih t'u*).
- 9 Not recorded. Reproduced in Suzuki Kei, comp., *Chügoku kaiga sōgō zoroku* (Comprehensive illustrated catalogue of Chinese paintings) (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1982), vol. 3, pp. 204–5.
- 10 Recorded in Chang Ch'ou, *Nan-yang ming-hua piao* (Paintings in the collection of Han Shih-neng), CSSHSP (Taipei: National Central Library, 1970), *chüan* 7; *Hsü-pien* (Yü-shu-fang 4), *chüan* 39 (Palace Museum ed., vol. 4, pp. 2033b–34b); and Juan, *Shih-ch'ü sui-pi*, *chüan* 3, p. 8b. Reproduced in Suzuki, comp., *Chügoku kaiga sōgō zoroku*, vol. 2, pp. 212–13.
- 11 Recorded in Chang, *Ch'ing-ho shu-hua fang*, *chüan* 10; Chang Ch'ou, *Shu-hua chien-wen piao* (Painting and calligraphy seen by Chang Ch'ou), in *Ssu-k'u ch'üan-shu* (Collected works in the Ssu-k'u Library) (reprint, Taipei: Shang-wu, 1983), 5; Pien Yung-yü, comp., *Shih-ku-t'ang shu-hua hui-k'ao* (*hua-k'ao*) (Classified record of calligraphy and painting in Shih-ku Hall, painting section) (Taipei: Shang wu, 1976), *chüan* 14 (which also records a separate scroll, entitled *Broken Axes* [*P'o-fu t'u*]); Wu Sheng, *Ta-kuan lu* (A record of magnificent works of art I have seen) (reprint; Taipei, 1970), *chüan* 14 (which also records a separate scroll, entitled *Two Men* [*Erh-jen t'u*], actually the "Broken Axes" section in its separate mounting); *Ch'u-pien*, *chüan* 43 (Appendix in Palace Museum ed., vol. 2, p. 1179b); *Hsü-pien* (Yü-shu-fang 4), *chüan* 39 (Palace Museum ed., vol. 4, pp. 2035a–36b); and Juan, *Shih-ch'ü sui-pi*, *chüan* 3, pp. 8b–9a. Except for *Hsü-pien* and *Shih-ch'ü sui-pi*, the above all record a scroll with only six sections. A note in *Hsü-pien* explains:

- "Examining Sung and Yüan catalogues in which this scroll is recorded, we find that from 'Seventh Month' to 'The Wolf's Dewlap' there was a total of seven sections. In his [Mei-kung] *Pi-chi* [Confidential books of the author], Ch'en Chi-ju states: 'I saw "Broken Axes" at the home of Hsiang Yu-hsin.' Before the Yüan, this [section] probably was part of a complete *Odes of Pin*. In the Ming 'Broken Axes' was cut out to form a separate scroll. Only today are the two scrolls reunited to form a complete treasure."
- 12 Recorded in Sun Ch'eng-tse, *Keng-tzu hsiao-hsia chi* (Record of painting and calligraphy in the summer of 1660), ISSCHC (Taipei: Han-hua, 1970-), *chüan* 1; Wu, *Ta-kuan lu*, *chüan* 14; An C'hi, "Ming-hua hsü-lu" (Continuation of the record of famous paintings), in *Mo-yüan hui-kuan* (Collected records of works in ink I have had the good fortune to see), in *Ts'ung-shu chi-ch'eng hsin-pien* (reprint, Taipei: Hsin-wen-feng, 1985), vol. 51, *chüan* 4, p. 68a; *Hsü-pien* (Yü-shu-fang 4), *chüan* 39 (Palace Museum ed., vol. 4, pp. 2037a-38b); and Juan, *Shih-ch'ü sui-pi*, *chüan* 3, p. 9a.
  - 13 Recorded in Chang, *Ch'ing-ho shu-hua fang*, *chüan* 10; Chang, *Shu-hua chien-wen piao*, vol. 817, p. 615a; Sun, *Keng-tzu hsiao-hsia chi*, *chüan* 1; *Ch'u-pien*, *chüan* 8 (Palace Museum ed., vol. 2, pp. 1076b-77a, where the scroll is listed as *Six Chapters from the Hsiao-ya*); *Hsü-pien* (Yü-shu-fang 4), *chüan* 39 (Palace Museum ed., vol. 4, pp. 2039a-40a); and Juan, *Shih-ch'ü sui-pi*, *chüan* 3, p. 9a.
  - 14 Recorded in *Ch'u-pien*, *chüan* 8 (Palace Museum ed., vol. 2, p. 1077a), where it is called *Six Chapters from the Hsiao-ya*; *Hsü-pien* (Yü-shu-fang 4), *chüan* 39 (Palace Museum ed., vol. 4, pp. 2040b-41a); and Juan, *Shih-ch'ü sui-pi*, *chüan* 3, p. 9a.
  - 15 Recorded in Sun, *Keng-tzu hsiao-hsia chi*, *chüan* 1; Wu, *Ta-kuan lu*, *chüan* 14; An, *Mo-yüan hui-kuan*, *hsia-chüan*, p. 71b; *Hsü-pien* (Yü-shu-fang 4) (Palace Museum ed., vol. 4, pp. 2041b-42a); and Juan, *Shih-ch'ü sui-pi*, *chüan* 3, p. 9a.
  - 16 Recorded in Li Tso-hsien, *Shu-hua chien-ying* (Reflections on painting and calligraphy), ISSCHC, *chüan* 3. Reproduced in Suzuki, comp., *Chūgoku kaiga sōgō zoroku*, vol. 3, pp. 180-81.
  - 17 Recorded in Wu, *Ta-kuan lu*, *chüan* 14; *Hsü-pien* (Yü-shu-fang 4), *chüan* 39 (Palace Museum ed., vol. 4, pp. 2042b-43b); and Juan, *Shih-ch'ü sui-pi*, *chüan* 3, pp. 9a-9b.
  - 18 Recorded in *Hsü-pien* (Yü-shu-fang 4), *chüan* 39 (Palace Museum ed., vol. 4, pp. 2044a-45a).
  - 19 Recorded in Chang, *Ch'ing-ho shu-hua fang*, *chüan* 10; *Keng-tzu hsiao-hsia chi*, *chüan* 1; *Ch'u-pien*, *chüan* 5 (Palace Museum ed., vol. 1, p. 408b); *Hsü-pien* (Yü-shu-fang 4), *chüan* 39 (Palace Museum ed., vol. 4, pp. 2045b-46b); and Juan, *Shih-ch'ü sui-pi*, *chüan* 3, p. 9b.
  - 20 Recorded in the same sources listed for *Hymns of Lu* (No. 21); see note 19 above.
  - 21 Kao-tsung's biography appears in the "Basic Annals" of the *Sung shih* (Sung history) (Beijing: Chung-hua, shu-chü, 1981), *chüan* 24-33.—ED.
  - 22 Kao-tsung's *Fo-ting kuang-ming-t'a pei* (Stele of the Illuminated Buddha's Head Pagoda), dated 1133, is still in the style of Huang T'ing-chien, but his transcription of the *Nine Classics* (Chiu ching), done in 1135, is already in the school of Wang Hsi-chih. Thus, we know that Kao-tsung changed his style sometime during these two years. A rubbing of the *Fo-ting kuang-ming-t'a pei* is reproduced in *Shodō zenshū* (Complete encyclopedia of calligraphy) (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1958-71), vol. 16.
  - 23 Wang Ying-lin, *Yü-hai* (Sea of jade) (Beijing: Wenwu, 1987), *chüan* 34, p. 20.—ED.
  - 24 T'ao Tsung-i, *Shu-shih hui-yao* (Compilation of the essentials of the history of calligraphy), in Pien, comp., *Shih-ku-t'ang shu-hua hui-k'ao* (*shu-k'ao*) (Wu-hsing: Chien-ku shu-she, 1921), *chüan* 13, p. 6b.—ED.
  - 25 This old ink copy is recorded in *Ch'u-pien*, *chüan* 39, and is reproduced in *Ku-kung fa-shu* (Calligraphy in the Palace Museum) (Taipei: Palace Museum, 1962), vol. 12.
  - 26 Recorded in Chang, *Ch'ing-ho shu-hua fang*, *chüan* 10; Pien, comp., *Shih-ku-t'ang shu-hua hui-k'ao* (*shu-k'ao*), *chüan* 13; and Wu, *Ta-kuan lu*, *chüan* 3. Reproduced in *Shodō zenshū*, vol. 16.
  - 27 Recorded in Chan Ching-feng, *Tung-t'u hsüan-lan pien* (Tung-t'u's record of paintings seen), MSTs, vol. 21, *chüan* 3; Chang, *Ch'ing-ho shu-hua fang*, *chüan* 2; Chang Ch'ou, *Chen-chi jih-lu* (Daily record of genuine works [seen by the author]), *chüan* 2; *Nan-yang fa-shu piao*; Yü Feng-ch'ing, *Hsü shu-hua t'i-pa chi* (Continuation of inscriptions from calligraphy and painting), ISSCHC, *chüan* 1; Ku Fu, *P'ing-sheng chuang-kuan* (Magnificent things seen in my life) (Shanghai: Jenmin mei-shu, 1962); and *Ch'u-pien*, *chüan* 11. Reproduced in *Liaoning-sheng po-wu-kuan ts'ang fa-shu hsüan-chi* (Selection of calligraphy in the Liaoning Provincial Museum) (Shenyang: Liaoning Provincial Museum, 1962), vol. 4, pt. 1.
  - 28 Recorded in Wu, *Ta-kuan lu*, *chüan* 14; An, *Mo-yüan hui-kuan* (*hsü lu*); and *Hsü-pien* (Ch'ien-ch'ing-kung).
  - 29 Recorded in Chang, *Ch'ing-ho shu-hua fang*, *chüan* 10; Pien, comp., *Shih-ku-t'ang shu-hua hui-k'ao* (*shu-k'ao*), *chüan* 13; and *Ch'ü-pien*, *chüan* 29. Reproduced in *Liaoning-sheng ts'ang fa-shu*.
  - 30 Recorded in *Ch'ü-pien*, *chüan* 10. Reproduced by the Palace Museum, Beijing.
  - 31 Recorded in P'an Cheng-wei, *T'ing-fan-lou shu-hua chi* (Catalogue of paintings and calligraphy in the author's collection), ISTP, vol. 20, *chüan* 1,

- nos. 170–71; and P'ei Ching-fu, *Chuang-t'ao-ko shu-hua lu* (Catalogue of paintings and calligraphy owned by the author; preface dated 1924), ISSCHC, *chüan* 3. Reproduced in *Shodō zenshū*, vol. 16. In the discussion of Kao-tsung's calligraphy in my *Authentication of Ancient Calligraphy and Painting (Ku shu-hua wei-t'o k'ao-pien)* (Nanching: Chiang-su ku-chi, 1984), pt. 2, there is a detailed study of these two works. I explain their misattribution and the circumstances of their forgery. The latter, I feel, is a forgery by Chu Yün-ming.
- 32 Reproduced in Sun Kuo-t'ing, *Shu-p'u* (Manual of calligraphy) (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1936), 32. The translation of the couplet is from Kojiro Tomita, *Portfolio of Chinese Paintings in the Museum (Han to Sung Periods)* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1938), p. 13, which also reproduces the work (pl. 86).
- 33 See my *Authentication of Ancient Calligraphy and Painting*, pt. 2; and "Inscriptions of Southern Sung Emperors and Empresses on Painting and Calligraphy and the Painting of the Academy," *Wenwu*, no. 6 (1981), p. 55.
- 34 Hsia Wen-yen, *T'u-hui pao-chien*, ISTP (Taipei: Shih-chieh, 1967), ser. 1, vol. 11, p. 63.—ED.
- 35 T'ang Hou, *Hua-chien* (Mirror of painting), ISTP, ser. 1, vol. 11, p. 42.—ED.
- 36 Li O, comp., *Nan Sung yüan hua lu* (Record of Southern Sung Academy painters), ISTP, vol. 15, no. 128.—ED.
- 37 *Ch'u-pien*, *chüan* 39, records a horizontal scroll titled *Liu-hsi ch'un-fang t'u* (Willow stream, spring boat), which has a small signature reading "Ho-chih." This is a later addition and not credible. This scroll has its origin in the "Cypress Boat" section of the *Odes of Yung*, of which it is an enlarged imitation.
- 38 Recorded in Wang K'o-yü, *Shan-hu-wang hua-lu* (Painting records of the Studio of Netted Corals) (Shanghai: Shang-wu, 1933), vol. 12, *chüan* 23, p. 1367; Pien, comp., *Shih-ku-t'ang shu-hua hui-k'ao* (*hua-k'ao*), *chüan* 2; *Ch'u-pien*, *chüan* 22; and *Li-tai ming-hua* (Albums), in which they are called *Old Tree by the Water* and *Cranes Crying by the Clear Spring*.
- 39 I feel that among extant authentic works by Li Kung-lin, only *Copying Wei Yen's Pasturing Horses (Lin Wei Yen mu-fang t'u 臨韋僂牧放圖)* can represent the transcendent realm of early literati painting, or *wen-jen hua*. Its special characteristics are relatively clearly embodied in the brushwork, in which a sense of spontaneous sketching is present within skillful detail.
- 40 Chang Yen-yüan, "Hsü hua chih yüan-liu" (On the origins of painting), in *Li-tai ming-hua chi* (Record of famous paintings of all the dynasties), HSTS (Shanghai: Shanghai jen-min mei-shu, 1963), vol. 1, *chüan* 1, p. 1.
- 41 Kuo Jo-hsü, "Hsü hua-ming i" (On the meaning of painting titles), in *T'u-hua chien-wen chih* (Experiences in painting), HSTS, vol. 1, *chüan* 1, p. 4.
- 42 A total of fourteen scrolls, of which five are recorded in *Ch'u-pien* and *Hsü-pien*.
- 43 In fact *Ch'u-pien* records only two; another was entered later in *San-pien*.

# Imperial Calligraphy of the Southern Sung

CHU HUI-LIANG

The Southern Sung cannot be considered an outstanding period in the history of Chinese calligraphy, for it lacked the brilliant styles of the Tsin and T'ang dynasties, when the basic principles and models were created and established by such masters as Wang Hsi-chih 王羲之 (ca. 307-ca. 365) and his son Wang Hsien-chih 王獻之 (344-86), Ou-yang Hsün 歐陽詢 (557-641), and Yen Chen-ch'ing 顏真卿 (709-85). Nor did it possess the vigor of the Five Dynasties and Northern Sung periods, when Yang Ning-shih 楊凝式 (873-957), Su Shih 蘇軾 (1037-1101), Huang T'ing-chien 黃庭堅 (1045-1105), and Mi Fu 米芾 (1052-1107) broke the bounds of tradition. Nonetheless, in little more than 150 years, the calligraphers of the Southern Sung made an important contribution by their preservation and further development of the tradition of the two Wangs (i.e., Hsi-chih and Hsien-chih). It was in the Southern Sung that the calligraphic tradition which took as its center the two Wangs received its most notable impetus since its establishment in the early years of the T'ang.

The first ruler of the Southern Sung, Emperor Kao-tsung 高宗 (r. 1127-62), initiated this renaissance by devoting himself to the study of the two Wangs shortly after he ascended the throne. Kao-tsung spared no effort in his promotion of the two Wangs: not only did he imitate their style in spirit and in practice, but he also presented his officials with copies he made of the Wangs' calligraphy, urging them to follow these examples more closely. With the emperor taking the lead, and with the emulation of his officials, all calligraphers began to follow the tradition of the two Wangs. Kao-tsung's successors—Hsiao-tsung 孝宗 (r. 1163-89), Kuang-tsung 光宗 (r. 1190-94), Ning-tsung 寧宗 (r. 1195-1224), and Li-tsung 理宗 (r. 1225-64)—as well as the empresses and other imperial consorts all took the two Wangs as their guiding star. In this way, the tradition of the two Wangs became the model upon which the calligraphic style of the Southern Sung imperial house patterned itself.

Many emperors in the course of Chinese history have distinguished themselves in calligraphy: T'ai-tsung 太宗 (r. 627-49) and Hsüan-tsung 玄宗 (r. 712-55) of the T'ang, Chang-tsung 章宗 (r. 1190-1208) of the Chin, Wen-tsung 文宗 (r. 1328-32) of the Yüan, and Hsüan-tsung 宣宗 (r. 1426-35) of the Ming are examples. In general, however, only one or two emperors in each dynasty were notable calligraphers. By contrast, almost every generation of the Southern Sung imperial family produced a calligrapher of talent, a record unmatched by any other dynasty.

Many examples of the calligraphy of the Southern Sung imperial family have survived, but their attribution has been a major problem for collectors and connoisseurs for two reasons. First, the works are usually unsigned and are marked only with seals. Second, because all the writings derive from the two Wangs, they tend to be more similar than dissimilar in style. Consequently, the same handscroll, for example, that has been at one time ascribed to Kao-tsung at another time has been given to Hsiao-tsung.<sup>1</sup> The same fan has been attributed to Hsiao-tsung as well as to Ning-tsung.<sup>2</sup>



The two major points of controversy among connoisseurs are the differentiation of Kao-tsung's calligraphy from Hsiao-tsung's and the definition of the respective styles of Ning-tsung, Li-tsung, and Empress Yang 楊后 (1162–1232). In recent years, much progress has been made in the study of Southern Sung calligraphy,<sup>3</sup> and a certain amount of agreement has been reached concerning the problems mentioned here. Nonetheless, many other issues await resolution. This essay attempts to make a systematic survey of the extant pieces of Southern Sung imperial calligraphy and to assign every piece to an appropriate author, thus making possible a more thorough investigation of the stylistic evolution of each emperor and empress. The imperial calligraphic style of the Southern Sung may then acquire a generally acceptable shape.

### *The Calligraphy of Kao-tsung*

Kao-tsung ascended the throne in 1127 at the age of twenty, abdicated in 1162 when he was fifty-six, then lived in retirement for twenty-five years at the Te-shou Palace 德壽宮 with the title of Supreme Emperor (*t'ai-shang huang-ti* 太上皇帝) until his death in 1187 at the age of eighty-one. His calligraphic style may be divided into three periods. Before the age of thirty, Kao-tsung modeled his calligraphy upon Huang T'ing-chien and Mi Fu. From the age of thirty to fifty-six, he devoted himself to the imitation of the two Wangs, practicing exclusively the standard (*k'ai* 楷) and running (*hsing* 行) scripts. The period after his retirement saw the maturation of Kao-tsung's style, when he excelled equally in standard, running, and cursive (*ts'ao* 草) scripts.

Of the extant pieces of Southern Sung imperial calligraphy, some fifty are attributed to Kao-tsung. Of these, fourteen are signed and dated or may be dated from documents. The remainder carry either Kao-tsung's "Shao-hsing" 紹興, "Sun-chai shu-yin" 損齋書印, "Te-shou yü-shu" 德壽御書, "Te-shou shu-pao" 德壽書寶, or "T'ai-shang huang-shang chih pao" 太上皇上之寶 seals, or only an imperial seal reading "Yü-shu" 御書 or "Yü-shu chih pao" 御書之寶 ("Treasure of Imperial Calligraphy"). On the basis of stylistic analyses, contemporary documents, and colophons that have been transmitted with prefaces, scholars have determined that just over ten but fewer than twenty of the attributed pieces are actually from Kao-tsung's hand. These samples afford us a general outline of the evolution of Kao-tsung's style.

At the beginning of the Shao-hsing era (1131–62), Kao-tsung changed his style from Huang T'ing-chien's to Mi Fu's, apparently for political reasons. A passage from the *Kung-k'uei chi* 攻媿集 (*Collected Works of the Mending-Fault Studio*) by Lou Yüeh 樓鑰 (1137–1213; *chin-shih* 1162/63) explains:

Of the fine works from Emperor Kao-tsung's brush, the early ones were in Huang T'ing-chien's style. Today, the *Chieh shih ming* 戒石銘 [*Inscriptions on Stone*] is of this kind. At the time, however, the usurping kingdom of Ch'i (Wei Ch'i 偽齊) still existed, and so the official Cheng Yi-nien 鄭億年 [active early twelfth century] and others sent Kao-tsung a secret memorial. They warned that [the king of Wei Ch'i] Liu Yü 劉豫 [1074–1143] was having others learn Huang T'ing-chien's style, and that in an emergency, there could be confusion with the imperial hand. The emperor thereupon changed to Mi's style and learned the essence of it.<sup>4</sup>

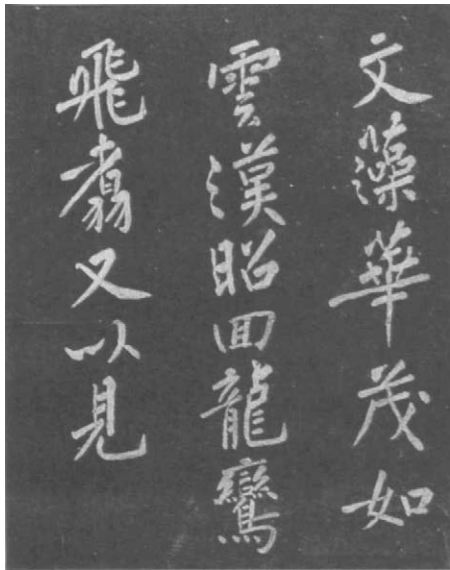


Figure 123. Sung Emperor Kao-tsung (r. 1127–62), *Fo-ting kuang-ming t'a pei*, dated 1133. Detail of a rubbing. Imperial Household Collection, Tokyo

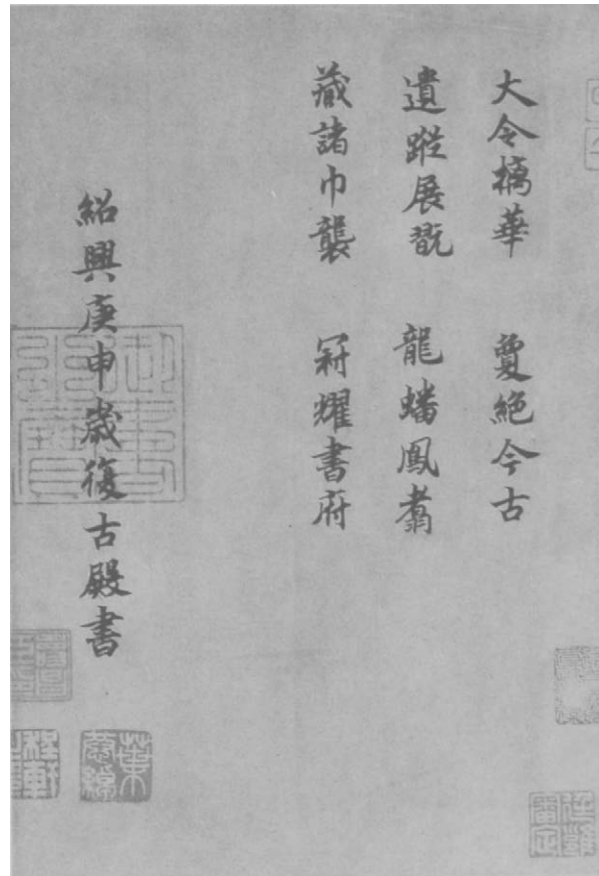


Figure 124. Sung Emperor Kao-tsung, *Inscription on Wang Hsien-chih's "Ya-t'ou-wan,"* dated 1140. Detail of handscroll, ink on silk, H. 26.1 cm. Shanghai Museum

Lou Yüeh's account can be taken as reliable, for Liu Yü did make his claim to the empire in 1130. Nevertheless, Kao-tsung's writing in the *Fo-ting kuang-ming t'a pei* 佛頂光明塔碑 (*Stele of the Illuminated Buddha's Head Pagoda*), dated 1133 (fig. 123), a rubbing of which is in the Kunaijō Shoryōbu, Kyoto, is still in Huang's style, indicating that the changeover to Mi's style must have occurred after this date.<sup>5</sup> Be that as it may, Kao-tsung followed Mi's style for only a brief period, for another passage by Lou Yüeh reports:

When Kao-tsung ascended the throne, the times were difficult and there were no diversions other than calligraphy. In the beginning, he wrote in Huang's style. Later he changed to Mi Fu's. He mastered the essence of both styles. By the beginning of the Shao-hsing era, he was taking the two Wangs exclusively as his model.<sup>6</sup>

This account is corroborated by Wang Ying-lin 王應麟 (1223–96), who reports in the *Yü-hai* 玉海 (*Sea of Jade*):

When Kao-tsung first "flew like a dragon" [ascended the throne], he was very fond of Huang T'ing-chien's style. Later he tried Mi Fu's. In the end, he put them both aside to concentrate on Hsi and Hsien, father and son [Wang Hsi-chih and Wang Hsien-chih]. Imitating with his hand and heart, he was able to rise to their level within just a few years.<sup>7</sup>

A later entry in the *Yü-hai*, dated 1137, records that Kao-tsung presented his transcription of Wang Hsi-chih's celebrated *Preface to the Orchid Pavilion* (*Lan-t'ing hsü* 蘭亭序) to his minister Liu Kuang-shih 劉光世 (1089–1142).<sup>8</sup> Kao-tsung must have switched to the style of the two Wangs sometime before 1137. Thus he could not have followed Mi's style for more than three or four years.

The reason for the second stylistic change is given in Kao-tsung's own *Han-mo chih* 翰墨志 (*Records of Calligraphy*) as follows:

Mi Fu was not extremely proficient in the standard, seal (*chuan* 篆), or clerical (*li* 隸) scripts; it was only in running and cursive scripts that he truly reached the rank of the accomplished.

Kao-tsung explained further:

All earlier calligraphers first mastered the standard script and then subsequently the cursive script. It is necessary to be skilled in both. . . . We know that one who would learn calligraphy must know both the standard and the cursive scripts, and not omit either. This is why in the time of Chung Yu 鍾繇 [151–230] and Wang Hsi-chih, all calligraphers were known for their proficiency in both. This is a point which one cannot afford to neglect.

Further on, he notes:

In calligraphy, one must first learn standard script. . . . Once the standard script has been mastered, and then the brush freed in running and cursive scripts, the two styles will naturally be at their zenith, brilliant in execution and splendid in manifestation, without the slightest measure lacking. If another course is followed, then all will become ordinary, and one cannot be counted as knowledgeable.<sup>9</sup>

From Kao-tsung's own testimony, therefore, we know that his second change of style was due to what he considered Mi Fu's lack of a solid foundation in standard script, which made Mi unsatisfactory as a model.

Extant works dating from before 1137 corroborate the textual record that Kao-tsung concentrated on the styles of Huang and Mi during his early period. The *Fo-ting kuang-ming t'a pei* inscription, written when Kao-tsung was twenty-seven, is, as noted above, in Huang's style. While the structure of the characters and the brush movement derive from Huang, the way the strokes begin and end and the integration of character with character lack the maturity and thorough incisiveness of Huang's calligraphy. The inscriptions that Kao-tsung wrote on Li T'ang's 李唐 (ca. 1070–ca. 1150) *Duke Wen of Chin Recovering His State* (*Chin Wen-kung fu-kuo t'u* 晉文公復國圖), now in The Metropolitan Museum of Art, are in a mixture of Huang's and Mi's styles. And the four letters that constitute *Missives to Liang Ju-chia* (*Tz'u Liang Ju-chia ch'ih shu* 賜梁汝嘉勅書), now in a private collection in Japan, recall both Huang and Mi.

*Missives to Liang Ju-chia* is the most controversial work from Kao-tsung's early period. Liang Ju-chia (1096–1154) was an official at Kao-tsung's court who reached the rank of president of the Ministry of Finance (Hu-pu shang-shu 戶部尚書). Liang was known as

a capable administrator, his tenure at Lin-an 臨安 Prefecture (present-day Hangchow) being especially noteworthy. His character, however, was somewhat deficient, and many of his contemporaries did not think well of him. The colophon at the end of the scroll indicates that originally there were twelve letters, and that the scroll had been cut apart in the Tao-kuang 道光 era (1821–50) of the Ch'ing dynasty, leaving only four letters. The four now extant are written on fine, gold-colored paper. The first letter, dated 1135, bestowed gifts upon Liang on the occasion of his birthday. The second, dated 1136, was a refusal of Liang's request to resign from his post. The third, dated 1141, appointed Liang a chief minister (*t'ung-p'ing-chang-shih* 同平章事). And the fourth, dated 1143, asked after Liang during an illness.

In the first and second letters, the structure of the characters recalls Huang T'ing-chien's style, while the fluency and intense variety of the brushwork resemble Mi Fu's. The writing in the third and fourth letters is more graceful than in the first and second but differs on many points from the style seen in another piece written by Kao-tsung in 1141, the *Letter to Yüeh Fei* (*Tz'u Yüeh Fei shou-ch'ih* 賜岳飛手勅), now in the Palace Museum, Taipei (see fig. 125).

Another problem with these four letters is that they give Liang Ju-chia's official titles as: president of the Ministry of Finance in 1135; governor (*ching-chih-shih* 經制使) of the Che 浙, Huai 淮, and Ching 荆 prefectures in 1136; and chief minister in both 1141 and 1143. These titles, however, do not agree with what is recorded in the histories of the period. For example, according to Li Hsin-ch'uan 李心傳 (1167–1244) in *Chien-yen i-lai hsi-nien yao-lu* 建炎以來繫年要錄 (*Annual Records since the Chien-yen Era*), the particular kind of governorship, *ching-chih-shih*, was abolished in the third month of 1132 and not reinstated until the first month of 1139.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, whereas the third letter indicates that in 1135 Liang was appointed to the governorship after serving as president of the Ministry of Finance, Liang's biography states that he was appointed to the presidency of the Ministry after serving as its vice president.<sup>11</sup> We know that in 1139 Liang was still the vice president of the Ministry of Finance,<sup>12</sup> therefore he could not have been president of the finance ministry before 1139, whereas the imperial letter gives the date as 1135. Finally, there is nothing in the histories to show that Liang Ju-chia ever held the office of chief minister. From the point of view of documentary records, therefore, the attribution of the four imperial letters to Kao-tsung poses some problems.

A work that has been said to be from Kao-tsung's early period is the first of Kao-tsung's imperial decrees (*shou-ch'ih* 手勅) in the *Sung Yüan mo-pao* 宋元墨寶 (*Precious Ink Calligraphies of the Sung and Yüan Periods*), now in the Palace Museum, Taipei. However, the style of this piece is inconsistent on many points with Kao-tsung's style in the *Fo-ting kuang-ming t'a pei* and in the inscriptions on Li T'ang's *Duke Wen of Chin Recovering His State*. In fact, the decree is rather similar in style to two pieces from the hand of the last Northern Sung emperor, Hui-tsung 徽宗 (r. 1101–25), the *Kung shih fang ch'iu ch'ih* 恭事方丘勅 (*Decree for Respectfully Offering Sacrifice to Heaven and Earth*) and the *Shu Ts'ai Hsing ch'ih* 書祭行勅 (*Decree to Ts'ai Hsing*), both now in the Liaoning Provincial Museum. The resemblance lies in the long, thin shapes of the characters, the continuous brushstrokes, and the compactness of vertical spacing. Furthermore, certain sentiments expressed in the decree—for example, "The former emperor was, like Heaven, absolutely benevolent. He loved the north and south equally and did not recklessly use military

force”—would not be applicable to Kao-tsung’s predecessor but are suitably descriptive of Hui-tsung’s predecessor, Emperor Shen-tsung 神宗 (r. 1068–85). For these reasons, the decree may be tentatively attributed to Hui-tsung.

Although Kao-tsung frequently changed the models for his calligraphic studies, he was truly fond of Wang Hsi-chih’s style and scarcely missed a day in copying examples of Wang’s work. When he was copying the *Preface to the Orchid Pavilion*, he made this entry in the *Han-mo chih*:

The more I plumb it, the deeper it is. The more I imitate it, the denser it is. Its beautiful style springs up on every side, yet none may arrive at its wellspring. I look closely at each stroke and each dot until I am thoroughly familiar with them.

Further on, Kao-tsung notes:

Each time I obtained some calligraphy by Yu-chün [Wang Hsi-chih], whether a few lines or a few characters, I studied them without ceasing, holding them without putting them down. The beginning of study is like eating olives and having the flavor in one’s throat—only a little of the sweetness is tasted. At length, the essential flavor intensifies as it lingers on. This is why my hand and heart cannot forget his style. Since the age when my hair was tied up, I have been fond of calligraphy. Even though I have changed my models several times, I truly appreciated only his style. For fifty years, unless some grave event prevented me, I have never for one day put aside my brush and ink.<sup>13</sup>

As for other models he used, Kao-tsung says:

There is no calligraphy from the Wei, Tsin, and Six Dynasties periods on that I do not copy.<sup>14</sup>

The diligence with which Kao-tsung practiced calligraphy is recorded in a passage written by Empress Wu in 1142, when she was still consort:

[Kao-tsung] in his spare time from government would take thirty or so pieces by calligraphers from Chung [Yu] and Wang onward and would personally apply brush to silk to make copies of them.<sup>15</sup>

The calligraphy of Kao-tsung’s middle period began with the style of the two Wangs and then gradually took on a more personal style. The evolution can be clearly seen in a comparison between the well-formed, orderly style of his inscription on Wang Hsien-chih’s *Ya-t’ou-wan* 鴨頭丸 (*Letter Beginning with Ya-t’ou-wan*), now in the Shanghai Museum (fig. 124), and the relaxed composition of his *Preface to Hui-tsung’s Collected Imperial Writings* (*Hui-tsung wen-chi hsü* 徽宗文集序), now in a private collection in Japan (fig. 126). The former piece, dated 1140, was written when Kao-tsung was age thirty-four; the latter, dated 1154, was written when he was age forty-eight. Aside from these two works, the important pieces from Kao-tsung’s middle period are the *Letter to Yüeh Fei* mentioned above, dated 1141; the *Yü-shu shih-ching* 御書石經 (*Imperial Calligraphy of the Classics Carved on Stone*), dated 1143, a rubbing of which is in the Museum of Calligraphy, Tokyo; and the colophon to a text by a Tsin writer, the *Hsiao-nü Ts’ao O pei* 孝女曹娥碑 (*Stele of the Filial Daughter Ts’ao O*), now in the Liaoning Provincial Museum.

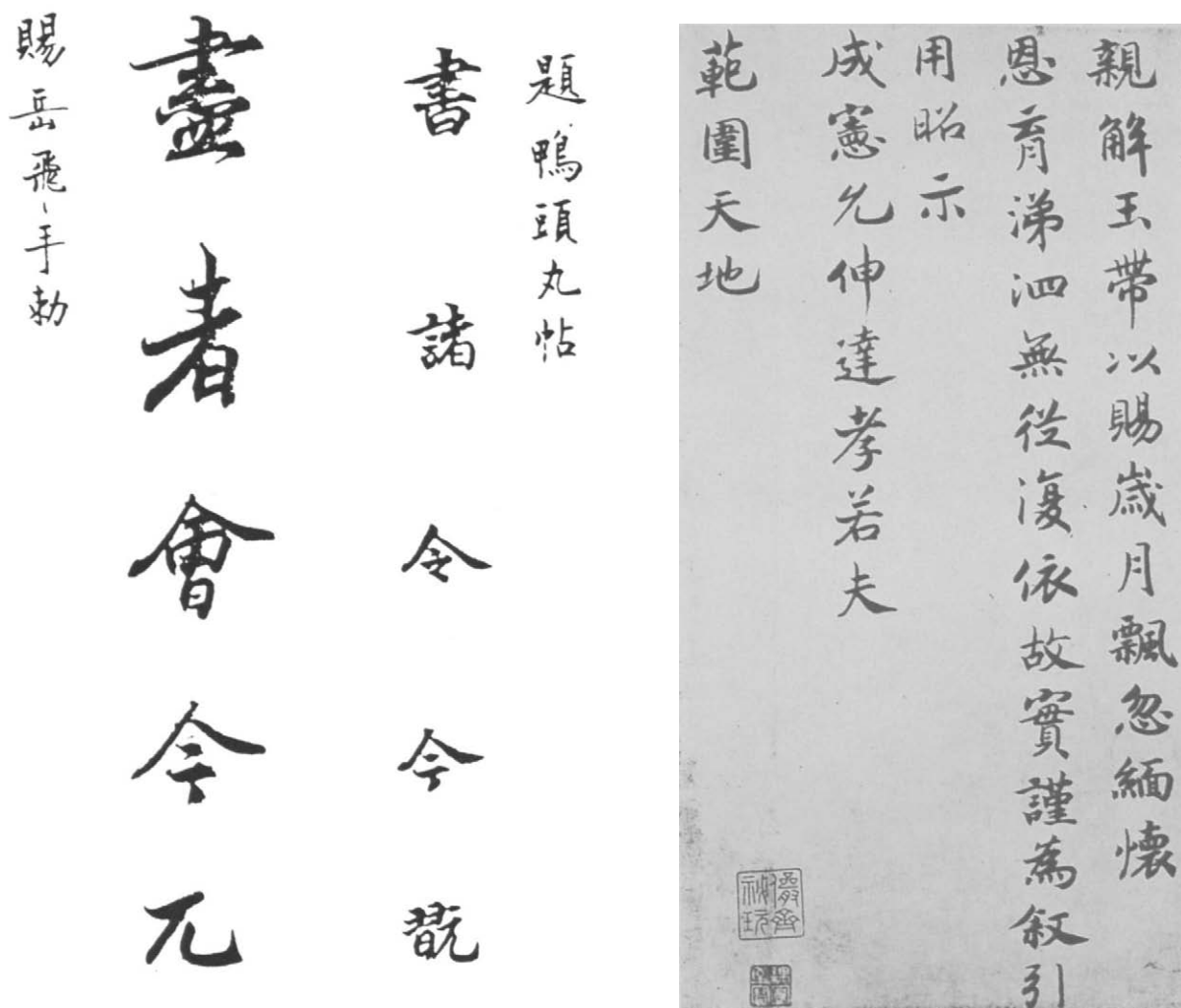


Figure 125. Comparison of characters by Sung Emperor Kao-tsung from the *Letter to Yüeh Fei*, dated 1141, detail of handscroll, ink on paper, H. 36.7 cm, Palace Museum, Taipei (left); and from the *Inscription on Wang Hsien-chih's "Ya-t'ou-wan"* (right; see fig. 124)

Figure 126. Sung Emperor Kao-tsung, *Preface to Hui-tsung's Collected Imperial Writings*, dated 1154. Detail of handscroll, ink on paper, H. 27.6 cm. Private collection, Japan (from *Shoseki meihin sōkan* [Tokyo, 1962], vol. 98, pp. 50–51)

The inscription on the *Ya-t'ou-wan* is in standard script, and the *Letters to Yüeh Fei* are in running script, but both show great care in the execution of each hook and stroke and in the overall conception of the piece. The style is characteristic of the early years of Kao-tsung's middle period, when he was still practicing the style of the two Wangs. The structure of the characters is compact; the horizontal strokes begin with the pointed brush tip and end with controlled brush pressure (*tun* 頓); the vertical strokes begin with an "exposed tip" (*lou-feng* 露鋒); the *p'ieh* 撇 (leftward descending diagonal) stroke ends with a slight pressure of the brush; and the *na* 捺 (rightward descending diagonal) stroke is drawn out (fig. 125). These characteristics are typical of one who has devoted much attention to achieving mastery.

In the *Yü-shu shih-ching*, the structure of Kao-tsung's small standard (*hsiao-k'ai* 小楷) script is regular and elegant. The transcriptions of the *Book of Poetry* (*Shih-ching*

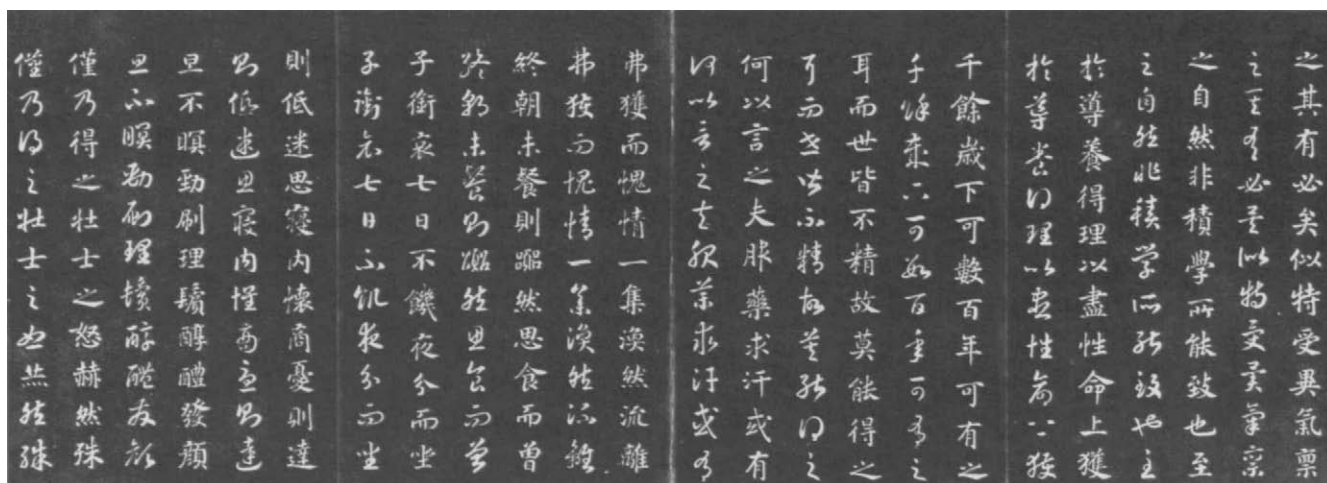


Figure 127. Sung Emperor Kao-tsung,  
 Transcription of Hsi K'ang's "Yang-sheng lun."  
 Detail of a rubbing from the *San-hsi t'ang fa-t'ieh*,  
 vol. 7. Palace Museum, Taipei

詩經) and of the *Tso-chuan* 左傳 (*Tso Ch'iu-ming's Commentary on the Spring and Autumn Annals*) closely follow the styles of Wang Hsi-chih's *Yüeh I lun* 樂毅論 (*On Master Yüeh I*) and *Huang-t'ing ching* 黃庭經 (*Yellow Court Scripture*). The transcriptions of the *Analects* (*Lun-yü* 論語) and *Mencius* (*Meng-tzu* 孟子) are done in a standard script which tends toward running script. Both pieces are very similar in style to the writing of Empress Wu in her inscription of a poem beginning "Green mountain . . . white clouds" ("Ch'ing-shan pai-yün" 青山白雲) on a silk fan in the Palace Museum, Beijing.

Yeh Shao-weng 葉紹翁 (active early thirteenth century), commenting on Kao-tsung's transcriptions of the classics, writes in *Ssu-ch'ao chien-wen lu* 四朝見聞錄 (*Record of the Four Eras*):

The six classics transcribed by Kao-tsung were presented to the Imperial Academy (Kuo-tzu-chien 國子監), and rubbings were given to the academies in each prefecture. His Majesty himself took up the brush, but when he felt fatigued he had Empress Wu continue. To this day, no one has been able to distinguish the two hands.<sup>16</sup>

It may be in the *Analects* and *Mencius* sections of the classics that we detect the hand of Empress Wu.

When Kao-tsung wrote the *Preface to Hui-tsung's Collected Imperial Writings* at the age of forty-eight, he had already developed his own relaxed and elegant style. The structure of the individual characters is looser, the brushwork subtle and refined. In each stroke, the variations in brush pressure are clearly visible, the distinctions between thick and

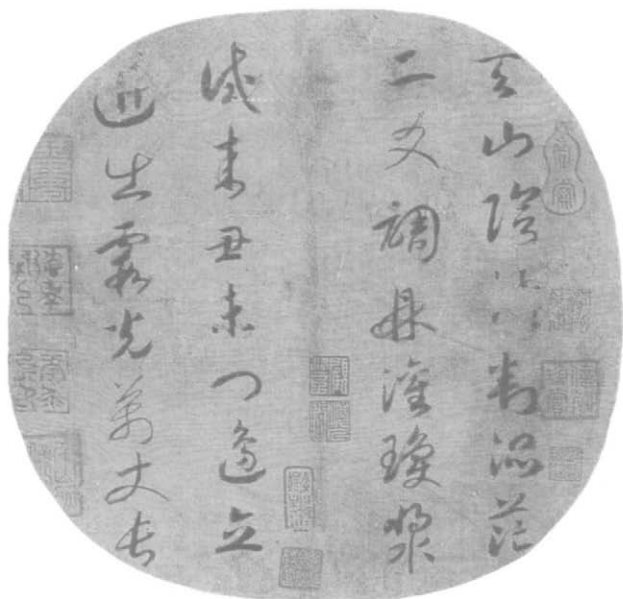


Figure 128. Sung Emperor Kao-tsung, *Inscription of Poem Entitled "Heavenly Mountain."* Round fan mounted as an album leaf, ink on silk, 23.5 × 24.5 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Bequest of John M. Crawford, Jr., 1988



Figure 129. Comparison of characters by Sung Emperor Kao-tsung from the *Preface to Hui-tsung's Collected Imperial Writings* (far left and middle right; see fig. 126) and from the *Transcription of Hsi Kang's "Yang-sheng lun"* (middle left and far right; see fig. 127)

thin are marked, and the sweep of the curves and hooks, of the *p'ieh* and *na* strokes, has become wider. The brush tip is "concealed," and the "corners" and overlap of stroke with stroke are natural.

The style of the colophon to *Hsiao-nü Ts'ao O pei* closely resembles that of the *Preface to Hui-tsung's Collected Imperial Writings*. At the end of the colophon are the words "Written at Sun-chai Studio" and the "Sun-chai shu-yin" seal. Since Kao-tsung had the Sun-chai Studio built toward the end of the Shao-hsing era, the colophon must date from the latter part of his middle period.

In the *Sung Yüan pao-han* 宋元寶翰 (*Precious Calligraphies of the Sung and Yüan Periods*), published by the Palace Museum, Taipei, the first of the works grouped under the heading of seven-character regulated verse is very close in style to Kao-tsung's late calligraphy. The brushwork is expert and even, and the strokes are smooth, with very little variation in brush pressure. Only the impression of the "Yü-shu chih pao" seal at the end indicates that this piece must have been written while Kao-tsung was still emperor, hence in his middle period.

After he retired, Kao-tsung practiced calligraphy even more diligently. Many samples of his calligraphy in standard, running, and cursive scripts from this period remain.<sup>17</sup> His standard script in his late period is refined and pliant. The brush is used in a balanced and harmonious manner, conveying a sense of relaxed lightness. His cursive script approaches the elegant style of the Tsin calligraphers, who achieved spontaneity within disciplined form. Avoiding the wild-cursive (*k'uang-ts'ao* 狂草) style of the T'ang calligraphers Chang Hsü 張旭 (ca. 700–750) and Huai-su 懷素 (ca. 735–800?), whose strokes



run together between characters, Kao-tsung achieved in his late period a mature, highly varied style without sacrificing steadfast calmness.

Kao-tsung's own assessment of his calligraphic achievements during the twenty-odd years of his retirement reads as follows:

In my late years I have achieved complete freedom. Whether the strokes are horizontal or slanting, level or straight, the result naturally follows the intention; even when the character is of gigantic size, it can be done easily by freeing the brush. Whether the style is heavy, lean, angular, or hard, after some wine I can produce the profundities of nature, the spirit of mountain woods and valleys. Is there any difficulty in arriving at the same level as the ancient masters?<sup>18</sup>

The calligraphy of Kao-tsung's last years may be represented by the following works: a transcription of Hsi K'ang's 嵇康 (active 223–62) *Yang-sheng lun* 養生論 (*Essay on Regimen*; fig. 127), reproduced in the *San-hsi t'ang fa-t'ieh* 三希堂法帖 (*Anthology of Calligraphies in the Three Treasures Hall*), volume 7; transcriptions of the *Ch'ien-wen* 千文 (*Thousand-Character Classic*) by the Sui-dynasty calligrapher Chih-yung 智永 (late sixth to early seventh century), done in both standard and cursive scripts, now in the Shanghai Museum; the transcription of the *Nymph of the Lo River* (*Lo-shen fu* 洛神賦) in cursive script, now in the Liaoning Provincial Museum; and a silk fan inscribed with the poem "Heavenly Mountain" ("Tien-shan" 天山; fig. 128) and another fan inscribed with a poem beginning "Small fishing boats" ("Ch'ing-jen" 輕軋), both in the John M. Crawford, Jr., Collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

The transcription of Hsi K'ang's *Yang-sheng lun*,<sup>19</sup> written in both standard and cursive scripts, is modeled after Chih-yung's style in the *Ch'ien-wen*. Compared to the *Preface to Hui-tsung's Collected Imperial Writings* (fig. 129), Kao-tsung's standard script in this late piece is even more spaciouly proportioned, the variations in brush pressure more restrained, and the "corners" of the characters rounder and subtler. The calligraphy is handsome and dignified. The "Te-shou yü-shu" seal at the end of the scroll indicates that this piece was written after Kao-tsung retired.

The *Nymph of the Lo River* transcription, which can be dated to the end of Kao-tsung's late period by the words "written at the Te-shou Palace," is representative of Kao-tsung's late cursive script. In this piece, each character stands alone, yet the whole is integrated. The brush appears to be moving rapidly, but actually does not—evidence of the writer's consummate skill. The writing is relaxed, yet not lacking in stability; it flows without losing its form. Such calligraphy recalls the style of the T'ang calligrapher Sun Kuo-t'ing 孫過庭 (ca. 648–before 703), of whom it was said: "He uses the dots and strokes to reveal the inner spirit; he uses the turning and twisting of the brush as the outer form."<sup>20</sup> Here, Kao-tsung's cursive brushwork differs from his standard script in the clarity of the changes in brush pressure; every movement of the brush, no matter what direction the stroke, is distinct and invites further contemplation.

In the fan inscribed with the poem "Heavenly Mountain," the structure of the characters and the brushstrokes is very similar to that in the *Nymph of the Lo River*. However, the use of the brush is somewhat looser, as though Kao-tsung wrote casually, without paying much attention. Finally, in the silk fan inscribed with the poem beginning "Small

fishing boats," the characters are widely spaced, the brush is worn, its point is "concealed," and the vertical strokes in the last two lines are tremulous and wavering. This writing, so unlike the standard and cursive scripts in the transcriptions of the *Yang-sheng lun* or the *Ch'ien-wen*, has led some to speculate that it must date from Kao-tsung's very last years.

### *The Calligraphy of Hsiao-tsung*

Hsiao-tsung ascended the throne in 1163 at the age of thirty-six. In 1189, he abdicated in favor of the heir apparent (who became Kuang-tsung), changed the name of Te-shou Palace to Ch'ung-hua Palace 重華宮, and retired there with the title of *chih-tsun shou-huang sheng-ti* 至尊壽皇聖帝 (Most Venerated Long-lived Sage Emperor).

Hsiao-tsung began to study calligraphy under the strict supervision of Kao-tsung, using the two Wangs as models. According to one anecdote, Kao-tsung once gave Hsiao-tsung a copy he had made of the *Preface to the Orchid Pavilion*, to which he appended the instruction: "This should be copied five hundred times."<sup>21</sup> Because information about Hsiao-tsung's study of calligraphy is scarce, we do not know whether he studied the two Wangs by copying either earlier copies of their calligraphy or Kao-tsung's copies.

Less than ten of the extant pieces of Southern Sung imperial calligraphy can be attributed with any certainty to Hsiao-tsung. Of the pieces that can be dated, the earliest is a transcription of the *Cheng-tao t'ieh* 政道帖 (*Essay on Statesmanship*), done in 1164, when Hsiao-tsung was thirty-eight (fig. 130). This piece, in the *San-hsi t'ang fa-t'ieh*, was done after Hsiao-tsung read in the *T'ang History* (*T'ang shih* 唐史) the passage in which Emperor T'ai-tsung discussed with Chang Yüan-su 張元素 (active early seventh century) the question of how the Sui emperor had arrogated all power to himself. Hsiao-tsung gave the transcription to Tseng Ti 曾覲 (1109–80), an official at the Imperial Library, saying, "If my conduct is lacking, you must immediately admonish me without concealing anything. This is why I have written this out to give to you."<sup>22</sup> The transcription shows the characteristics of Hsiao-tsung's style: the characters are rectangular in shape; many strokes are broad and heavy; the brush presses down heavily at the beginning of the horizontal stroke in the characters 一 *i*, 下 *hsia*, and 不 *pu*; the *na* stroke in such characters as 務 *wu*, 受 *shou*, and 奉 *feng* concludes with a downward drag of the brush tip, whereas the brush tip would normally be taken up. There is not a great deal of variation in brush pressure in individual strokes, yet from one character to the next, and sometimes within the same character, the heaviness or lightness of strokes varies considerably. Hsiao-tsung's calligraphy would retain all of these characteristics even into his later years.

Next in chronology are four inscriptions dating from Hsiao-tsung's late period, when he came to admire the practice of meditation and often discussed religious issues with monks. They are: the *Ho Ling-yin chang-lao chi* 和靈隱長老偈 (*Hymn Matching Monk Ling-yin's*); the *T'zu-wen Fo-chao ch'an-shih yü* 賜問佛照禪師語 (*Greetings to Monk Fo-chao*); the *T'zu Fo-chao ch'an-shih sung* 賜佛照禪師頌 (*Hymn in Praise of Monk Fo-chao*); and the *T'ai-po ming-shan pei* 太白名山碑 (*Stele of the Famous Mount T'ai-po*). The first three were written in 1176, when Hsiao-tsung was fifty; the fourth in 1178, when he was fifty-two. All were carved on stelae and presented to the Ling-yin 靈隱寺 and T'ien-t'ung 天童寺 temples in Chekiang Province. Rubbings taken from the stelae can be seen today in the

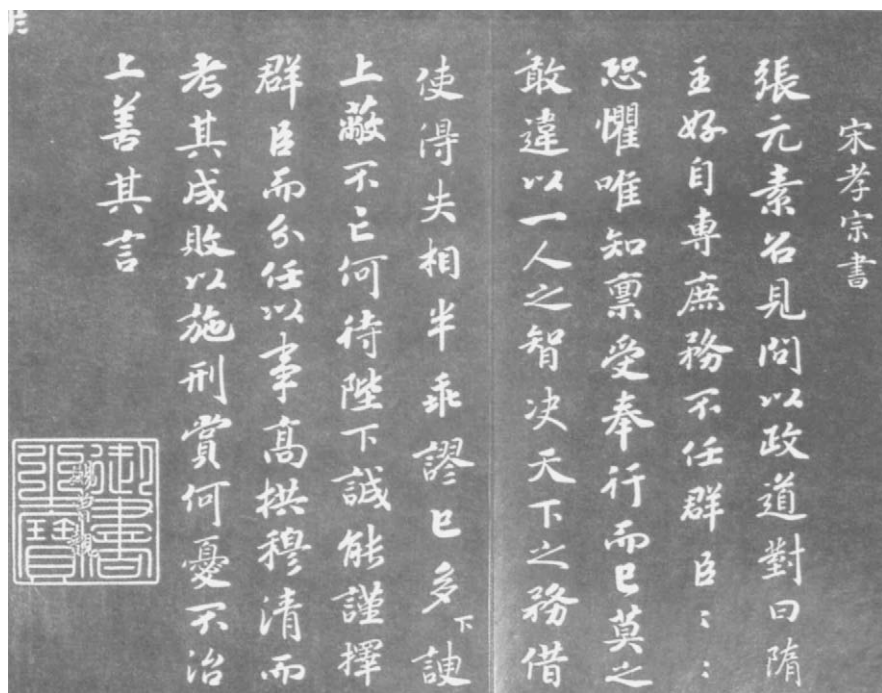


Figure 130. Sung Emperor Hsiao-tsung (r. 1163–89), *Transcription of the “Cheng-tao t’ieh,”* 1164. Detail of a rubbing from the *San-hsi t’ang fa-t’ieh*, vol. 7. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Gift of Marie-Hélène and Guy Weill, 1984

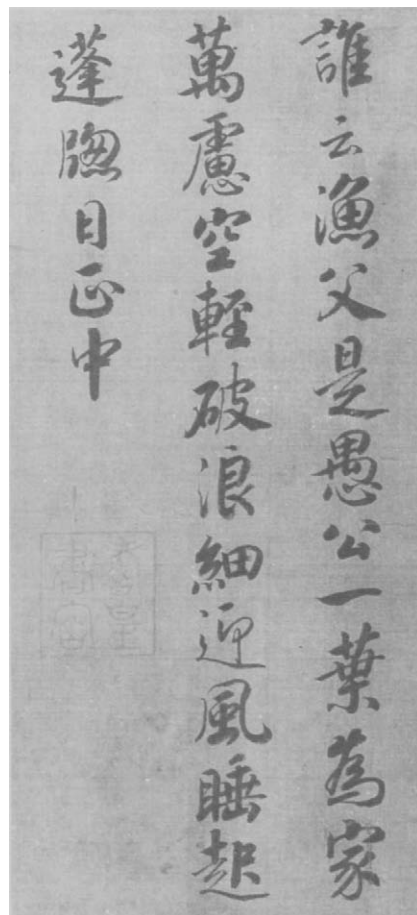


Figure 131. Attributed to Sung Emperor Kao-tsung (possibly by Hsiao-tsung), *Transcription of the “P’eng ch’uang shui-ch’i.”* Detail of an album leaf, ink on silk, 24.8 × 52.3 cm the leaf. Palace Museum, Taipei

Tōhoku-ji, Kyoto. Although the rubbings are partially effaced, they show the typical characteristics of brushwork and structure noted in the *Cheng-tao* piece, with somewhat greater spontaneity and naturalness.

The latest datable piece, the *P’eng ch’uang shui-ch’i* 篷窗睡起 (*Awakened in a Boat*), now in the Palace Museum, Taipei (fig. 131), was written after Hsiao-tsung abdicated. The piece has been attributed to Kao-tsung, but its style is closer to Hsiao-tsung’s. The misattribution had arisen out of confusion about the “Shou-huang shu-pao” 壽皇書寶 seal affixed to the end of the inscription. When Hsiao-tsung retired, he received the title *chih-tsun shou-huang sheng-ti* from Kuang-tsung and was referred to by all as *shou-huang*. After Kao-tsung had retired, he was referred to as *te-shou* because he had taken the Te-shou Palace as his residence. *Shou-huang* was confused with *te-shou*, and this piece of calligraphy was therefore attributed to Kao-tsung. Evidence that the “Shou-huang shu-pao” seal was used by Hsiao-tsung after his retirement is found in Yüeh K’o’s 岳珂 (1183–?) *Pao-chen chai fa-shu tsan* 寶真齋法書贊 (*Comments on the Calligraphies in the Pao-chen Studio*). Actually, Yüeh K’o records the seal in relation to a different work:

The above is a fan leaf with the poem “Kan-chü” 柑橘 written by Emperor Hsiao-tsung. It has the seal “Shou-huang shu-pao,” so it must be a work from the North Palace.

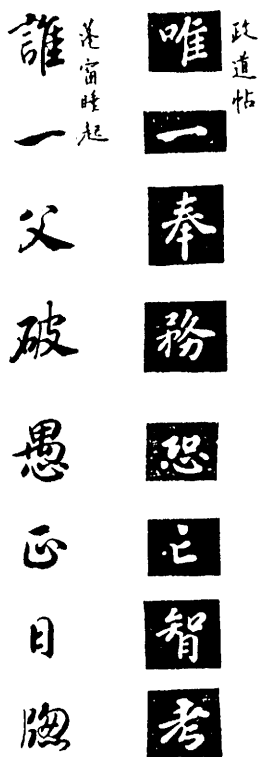


Figure 132. Comparison of characters by Hsiao-tsung from the *Transcription of the "P'eng ch'uang shui-ch'i"* (left; see fig. 131) and from the *Transcription of "Cheng-tao t'ieh"* (right; see fig. 130)



Figure 133. Sung Emperor Hsiao-tsung, *Inscription of Couplet Beginning "A Thin Mist over the Pond."* Round fan mounted as an album leaf, ink on silk, 24.8 × 23.2 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Bequest of John M. Crawford, Jr., 1988

Yüeh K'o came into possession of the "Kan-chü" album leaf in 1227, so his note on it must be fairly reliable.<sup>23</sup>

Having established the authorship of the *P'eng ch'uang shui-ch'i*, we can take this piece as a model of Hsiao-tsung's calligraphy in his later years. The continuous brushstrokes, the formation of the horizontal and *na* strokes, and the contrasting heavy and light strokes remain unchanged from the style of his earlier years, but the "corners" of the characters are now done with a "rounded" (*yüan* 圓) brush, and the vertical strokes take on a slight curve—all qualities which impart elegance and soft beauty to the calligraphy (fig. 132).

Another piece which has been attributed to Kao-tsung but which may now be reclassified as Hsiao-tsung's work through a comparison of styles is *A Poem by Su Shih* (*Su Shih shih* 蘇軾詩), published in the *San-hsi t'ang fa-t'ieh*, volume 7. Many of the stylistic features of this piece are identical to those in Hsiao-tsung's work: the thick brushstrokes, the heavy pressure of the brush at the beginning of horizontal strokes, the downward drag of the brush tip at the conclusion of the *na* stroke, and the contrast of heavy and light strokes within the same character and between characters. Furthermore, according to the *Yü-hai*, Hsiao-tsung transcribed about ten of Su Shih's poems, a larger number than that of works by any other noncontemporary poet.<sup>24</sup> Thus, although the piece is not signed and carries no seal, it seems appropriate to attribute this piece to Hsiao-tsung. Because few of the brushstrokes are continuous, the "corners" are relatively square, and

the brushwork lacks the softness and maturity of his later works, we may tentatively date this piece to Hsiao-tsung's middle period.

On the whole, Hsiao-tsung's calligraphy is not as varied as Kao-tsung's. There are few notable differences between his writing done at age thirty-eight and that done after the age of sixty.

Three other pieces that can be attributed to Hsiao-tsung on the basis of style are: the couplet beginning "A thin mist over the pond" ("Ch'ih-shang shu-yen" 池上疎煙) written on a silk fan in the John M. Crawford, Jr., Collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art (fig. 133); the couplet beginning "The rain over the long river" ("P'ing-sheng shui-tsu" 平生睡足) inscribed on a silk fan in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; and the transcription in cursive script of Su Shih's *Latter Red Cliff Ode* (*Hou Ch'ih-pi fu* 後赤壁賦), in the Liaoning Provincial Museum.

The fan in the Crawford Collection carries the inscription "Given to Chih-chung" (*Tz'u Chih-chung* 賜志忠) and the "Yü-shu chih pao" seal. Chao Chih-chung 趙志忠 (active late twelfth century) was chief intendant of the palace at Hsiao-tsung's inner court (*nei-shih* 內侍). Yüeh K'o records in *Pao-chen chai fa-shu tsan* that Hsiao-tsung gave Chao two pieces of calligraphy: a poem written in response to Chao's poem "On the Rhyme of Juan-lang Kuei" ("Juan-lang Kuei" 阮郎歸) and an "old-style poem written for Chao" (*Tz'u Chih-chung ku-t'i shih* 賜志忠古體詩). To this record, Yüeh K'o added the note:

Chao Chih-chung had free access to the inner court. The emperor asked him to practice calligraphy, thereby showing him favor. He gave Chih-chung his own calligraphy as an award for his diligence.<sup>25</sup>

The calligraphy on this fan, which probably dates from before Hsiao-tsung's retirement, has many of the stylistic traits discussed above: the continuous brushstrokes; the dragging brush tip at the conclusion of the *na* stroke in the character 煙 *t'ing*; the contrast of heavy and light strokes in the characters 疎 *shu*, 籠 *lung*, 邊 *pien*, and 遲 *ch'ih*; and the rough and heavy strokes in the characters 池 *ch'ih*, 翠 *ts'ui*, and 水 *shui*.

In the Boston fan inscribed with a couplet beginning "The rain over the long river," the writing is very close in style to that of the *Ho Ling-yin chang-lao chi*. The *na* strokes and the beginning of the horizontal strokes are distinctively Hsiao-tsung's. This couplet, too, was probably done after Hsiao-tsung turned fifty, but before his retirement at age sixty-two. The fan carries a gourd-shaped seal reading "Yü-shu."

The transcription of Su Shih's *Latter Red Cliff Ode* has been a subject of controversy among connoisseurs since the Yüan dynasty. Some hold that it is by Hui-tsung, others that it is by Kao-tsung, and yet others that it is Hsiao-tsung's calligraphy. Among the colophons at the end of the scroll, the one by Chang Shou 張壽 (active early thirteenth century) is most discerning:

After the dynasty moved south, only Hsiao-tsung among the emperors was especially fond of Su Shih's writing. During the Ch'ien-tao era [1165-73], Su Shih was given the posthumous rank of *t'ai-shih* 太史 [grand preceptor] and the epithet Wen-chung 文忠 [Literary and Loyal]. The preface that Hsiao-tsung wrote for Su Shih's collected works [*Tung-p'o ch'uan-ch'i* 東坡傳奇] contained such sentiments as: "Of the officials at court in his time, none surpassed him. I have read his works from morning to night, forgetful of



Figure 134. Comparison of characters by Hsiao-tsung from the *Transcription of the "Cheng-tao t'ieh"* (far left; see fig. 130) and the *Fa-shu tsan* (middle right; see fig. 135) and from the *Transcription of the "P'eng ch'uang shui-ch'i"* (middle left; see fig. 131) and by Kao-tsung from the *Preface to Hui-tsung's Collected Imperial Writings* (far right; see fig. 126)

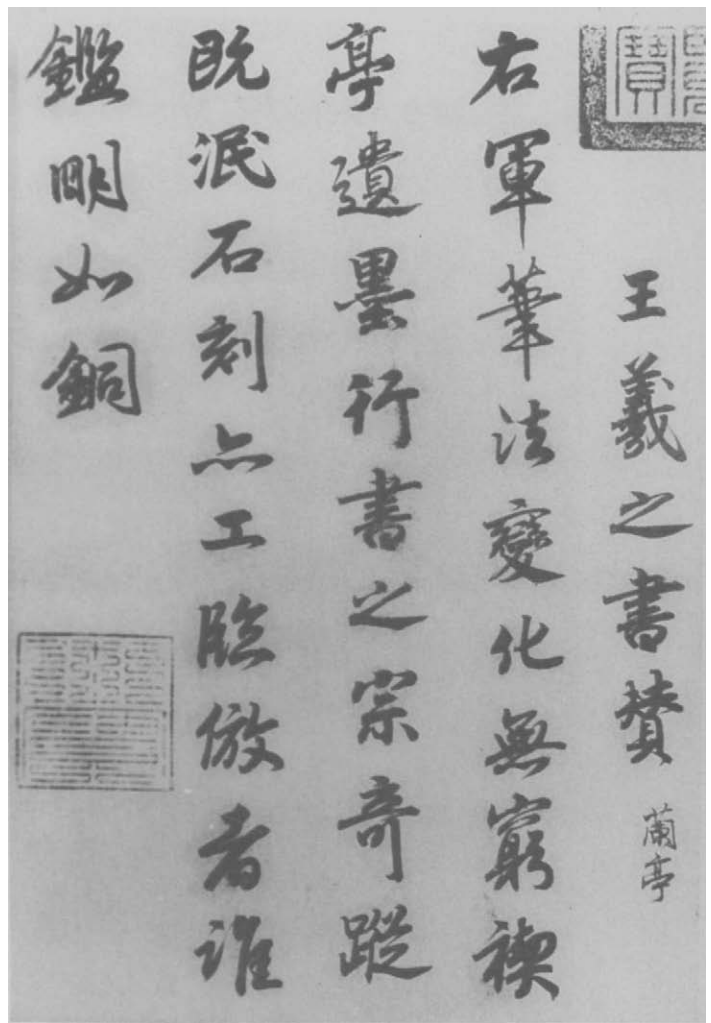


Figure 135. Attributed to Sung Emperor Hsiao-tsung (possibly by Kao-tsung), *Fa-shu tsan*. Detail of handscroll, ink on paper. Private collection, Japan (from *Shodō zenshū* [Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1955], vol. 16, pl. 41)

fatigue. I often place them by my side for emulation," and "I think with respect of his pure demeanor and regret that we are not alive in the same era." For this reason, this piece must be by Hsiao-tsung, and not Hui-tsung.

Chang Shou judged this piece to be Hsiao-tsung's solely on the basis of Hsiao-tsung's essay in praise of Su Shih's character. Another criterion may be calligraphic style. If we compare the transcription of *Latter Red Cliff Ode* to Kao-tsung's transcription of *Nymph of the Lo River*, it will be seen that the structure of the characters in the former is not as compact as in Kao-tsung's work. The brush pressure shows less variation, and the brush-strokes are not as richly varied as in Kao-tsung's calligraphy. Moreover, the spacing between characters is quite uniform, and both the vertical and horizontal lines are evenly formed, unlike the natural irregularities of Kao-tsung's style. From the gourd-shaped "Yü-shu" seal and the square "Yü-shu chih pao" seal at the end of the scroll, we may assume that Hsiao-tsung wrote this piece while he was still emperor.

A silk fan inscribed with a poem beginning “Downstairs” (“Lou-hsia” 樓下), in the Art Museum, Princeton University, was at one time attributed to Kao-tsung. On the basis of its stylistic similarities to *Latter Red Cliff Ode* this fan may now be tentatively placed among Hsiao-tsung’s work.

Scholars have always attributed to Hsiao-tsung the *Fa-shu tsan* 法書贊 (*Comments on Ancient Calligraphies*), in a private collection in Japan (fig. 135). Yet a comparison of this piece with Kao-tsung’s *Preface to Hui-tsung’s Collected Imperial Writings*, Hsiao-tsung’s *Cheng-tao*, and his *P’eng ch’uang shui-ch’i* (fig. 134) makes clear that the *Fa-shu tsan*, whether in the shape of the characters or in the brushwork, bears great resemblance to Kao-tsung’s preface and has virtually none of Hsiao-tsung’s stylistic characteristics. Only in the thickness of the strokes and their rounded softness is there some similarity to Hsiao-tsung’s calligraphy. The content of the *Fa-shu tsan* offers supporting evidence that the work came from Kao-tsung’s hand, for this piece includes appreciations of the calligraphy of Wang Hsi-chih, Ts’ao Chih 操之 (active late fourth century), Huai-jen 懷仁 (active mid-seventh century), Yü Shih-nan 虞世南 (558–638), and others. Because the textual records make no mention of Hsiao-tsung’s views on the calligraphic tradition that stemmed from the two Wangs, whereas documentation on Kao-tsung’s thorough familiarity with and promotion of the calligraphy of the two Wangs is copious, the chances are that Kao-tsung rather than Hsiao-tsung wrote the *Fa-shu tsan*.

### *The Calligraphy of Kuang-tsung*

Kuang-tsung succeeded Hsiao-tsung in 1190 and retired in favor of Ning-tsung in 1194. Possibly because his reign was so brief, the records of his calligraphy are very meager, and his work is seldom mentioned in scholarly research on the calligraphy of the Southern Sung imperial house. Still, Kuang-tsung was heir to his family’s calligraphic tradition and achieved a certain proficiency. We know that there were many pieces from his hand, for the *Yü-hai* records that in 1196 Ning-tsung compiled a collection of Kuang-tsung’s calligraphy totaling seventy-one album leaves (*ts’e* 冊) and sixty-five scrolls.<sup>26</sup> *Pao-chien chai fa-shu tsan* records three pieces by Kuang-tsung: *Double-headed Peony* (*Shuang-t’ou mu-tan fu* 雙頭牡丹賦) in standard script, the transcription of a couplet by the T’ang poet Tu Fu 杜甫 (712–70), and the transcription of a poem beginning “Waiting for the moon” (“Tai yüeh” 待月), both in cursive script. Of these, Yüeh K’o singled out for praise the couplet by Tu Fu: “The goslings are yellow as wine / Contemplating wine one loves the new-born geese.” He commented thus on the two occurrences of the character for geese, 鵞:

In forming their characters, calligraphers consider the *ke* 戈 stroke the most important. Emperor T’ai-tsung of the T’ang, vexed by its difficulty, once had Yü Shih-nan complete it [a word which required the *ke* stroke] and rewarded him for it. In the collection of the Imperial Library of the Ch’un-hua era [990–94], one could see in all the pieces by the two Wangs the different styles of the *ke* stroke, and among them would be the character 鵞, swift and light as an immortal. We see a verification of the tradition of the past in these ancient *t’ieh* 帖. In my opinion, though this is only one couplet of a poem, it begins and ends with the word 鵞. The artistry of the brush here truly comprehends



Figure 136. Sung Emperor Ning-tsung,  
detail of *Inscription on Ma Lin's*  
"Fragrant Spring after Rain."  
Album leaf, ink on silk,  
27.5 × 41.6 cm.  
Palace Museum, Taipei

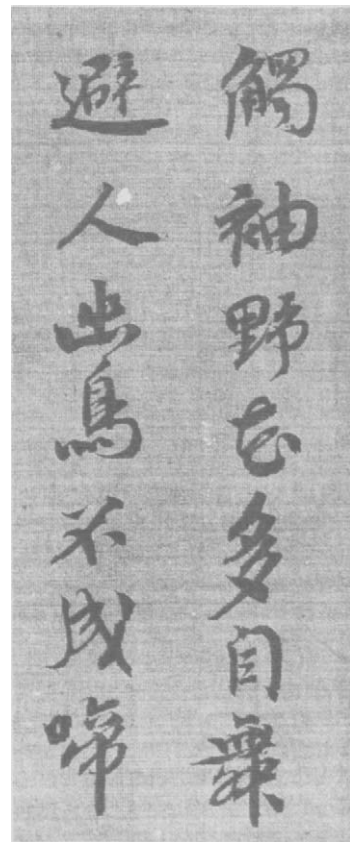


Figure 137. Sung Emperor Ning-tsung (r. 1195–1224),  
detail of *Inscription on Ma Yüan's* "On a Mountain Path in Spring."  
Album leaf, ink on silk, 27.4 × 43.1 cm. Palace Museum, Taipei

both the orthodox and the variation. It shows the spontaneity of the imperial hand; at the same time, it achieves an imitation of past models. The cursive script does not lose touch with the sage's [Wang's] style; nor does the running script. . . . This is why I say the emperor's calligraphy is pure as the heavens.<sup>27</sup>

Yüeh K'o's comments indicate that Kuang-tsung possessed a deep and penetrating understanding of Wang Hsi-chih's calligraphy and thus was able to write with the same spirit. Unfortunately, none of the extant pieces of imperial calligraphy can be attributed with certainty to Kuang-tsung. Still, we know from Yüeh K'o's praise that Kuang-tsung's *ke* stroke showed a particular flair, and we may take this as a starting point for an appreciation of Kuang-tsung's calligraphy at some future date.

### *The Calligraphy of Ning-tsung and Empress Yang*

Ning-tsung became emperor in 1195. Upon his death in 1224, at the age of fifty-seven, the throne passed to Li-tsung. Yüeh K'o's note to Ning-tsung's transcription of the *Book of Poetry* (*Shih-ching* 詩經) tells us that Ning-tsung practiced calligraphy with great application and transcribed tens of thousands of characters from the six classics. Yüeh K'o also praised Ning-tsung's calligraphy as being in the family style.<sup>28</sup> Unfortunately, very few pieces of Ning-tsung's calligraphy are recorded, and even fewer are extant.<sup>29</sup>

Only three pieces have been tentatively attributed to Ning-tsung. These are: an inscription in running script on the painting *On a Mountain Path in Spring* (*Shan-ching*



*ch'un-hsing* 山徑春行) by Ma Yüan 馬遠 (active ca. 1190–1225; fig. 137), an inscription on Ma Lin's 馬麟 (active ca. 1216–56) *Fragrant Spring after Rain* (*Fang-ch'un yü chi* 芳春雨霽; fig. 136), and an inscription on Ma Lin's *Egrets on a Snowy Bank* (*Mu-hsüeh han ch'in* 暮雪寒禽), all in the Palace Museum, Taipei. In all three pieces, the calligraphy shows the following characteristics: a great deal of variation in brush pressure; horizontal strokes beginning and ending vigorously; thinly connected strokes in the characters, with the brush sometimes completely leaving the silk; a slightly broken lower edge (*yen-wei* 雁尾) in the conclusion of the *na* stroke; and somewhat rounded "corners" in certain characters. The style has spontaneity and elegance, but it is neither as forceful nor as firm as Emperor Kao-tsung's. Since Ma Yüan held the position of editorial assistant (*tai-chao* 待詔) and Ma Lin that of painter-in-attendance (*chih-hou* 祇候) in the Imperial Painting Academy under Ning-tsung, it is very likely that Ning-tsung wrote these inscriptions. But none of the three carries an imperial seal. *Fragrant Spring after Rain* carries a square seal reading "K'un-kua" 坤卦 belonging to Empress Yang, but the style of the calligraphy in the inscription is not hers. While awaiting further evidence, these inscriptions may be tentatively attributed to Ning-tsung.

Installed as empress in 1202 at the age of forty-one, Empress Yang lived to the age of seventy-one. Because inscriptions by the empress were requested for many of the paintings in the imperial household, the greater part of Empress Yang's extant calligraphy consists of lines from poems inscribed on paintings. Of the extant pieces, only one is signed and dated—the inscription of 1222 on Ma Yüan's *Water Studies* (*Shui-t'u* 水圖), now in the Palace Museum, Beijing. Other pieces are either signed "Yang Mei-tzu" 楊妹子 (Empress Yang's maiden name), or carry the seals "K'un-kua," "K'un-ning chih tien" 坤寧之殿, or "Yang-hsing chih chang" 楊姓之章.

Three styles are evident in Empress Yang's calligraphy. In her early style, as exemplified by the inscription on the anonymous Sung painting *Peach Blossoms* (*T'ao-hua* 桃花) in the Palace Museum, Taipei, the structure of the characters is compact, the strokes are thin, and the brush is used in an angular fashion. The brush movement is fine and delicate, and each stroke is distinct, unconnected with the next, and most aptly placed. On this painting are two seals reading "K'un-kua" and "Yang-hsing han-mo" 楊姓翰墨.

The influence of the T'ang calligrapher Yen Chen-ch'ing is evident in Empress Yang's second style. The characters are structured and refined; the brushstrokes are somewhat thicker; both "rounded" and "square" strokes are used; and the concluding sweep of the *na* stroke breaks at the lower edge. Among the works written in the second style are the inscriptions on Ma Lin's *Layer upon Layer of Icy Tips* (*Ts'eng-tieh ping hsiao* 層疊冰屑), in the Palace Museum, Beijing; on Ma Yüan's *Great Master Yün-men* (*Yün-men ta-shih t'u* 雲門大師圖) and *The Ch'an Master Ch'ing-liang Fa-yen* (*Ch'ing-liang Fa-yen Ch'an-shih t'u* 清涼法眼禪師圖), both in the Tenryū-ji, Kyoto; and on Ma Yüan's *Tung-shan Fording a Stream* (*Tung-shan she-shui t'u* 洞山涉水圖; fig. 138), in the Tokyo National Museum. A piece that marks the transition between Empress Yang's first and second styles is the quatrain "Autumn," from "Ssu-shih chieh wu" 四時節物, inscribed on a square album leaf in the Art Museum, Princeton University. In this work, the characters are relatively weak, but their structure shows some of Yen Chen-ch'ing's style.

In the third style, which characterizes many of the works done in Empress Yang's late years, the characters are relatively squat, the horizontal strokes are given a slight

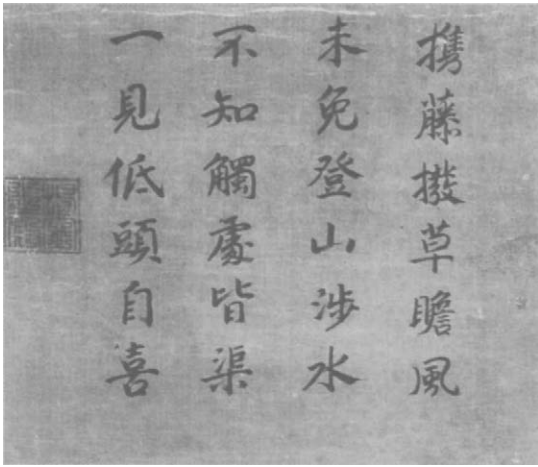


Figure 138. Sung Empress Yang (1162–1232), detail of *Inscription on "Tung-shan Forging a Stream,"* Attributed to Ma Yüan. Hanging scroll, ink and color on silk, 77.6 cm. × 33 cm. Tokyo National Museum Collection

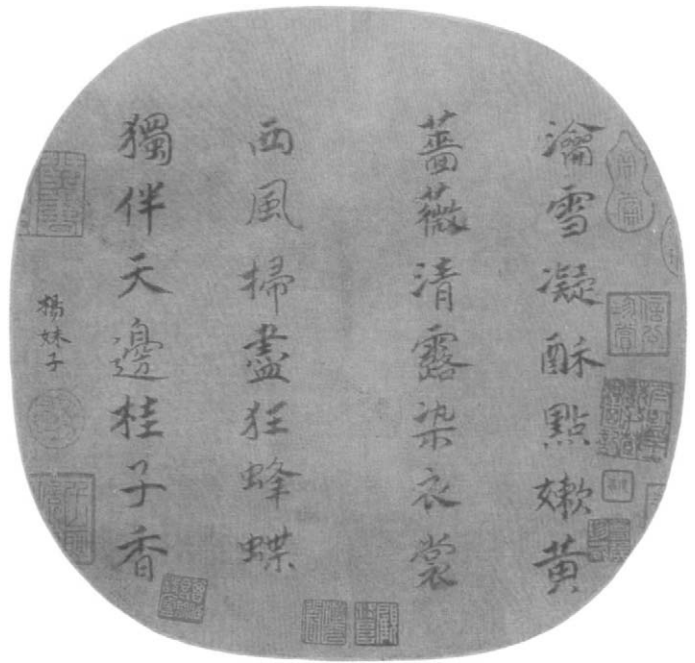


Figure 139. Sung Empress Yang, *Inscription of Seven-Character Poem Beginning "Washed with Snow."* Round fan, ink on silk, 23.5 × 24.5 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Bequest of John M. Crawford, Jr., 1988

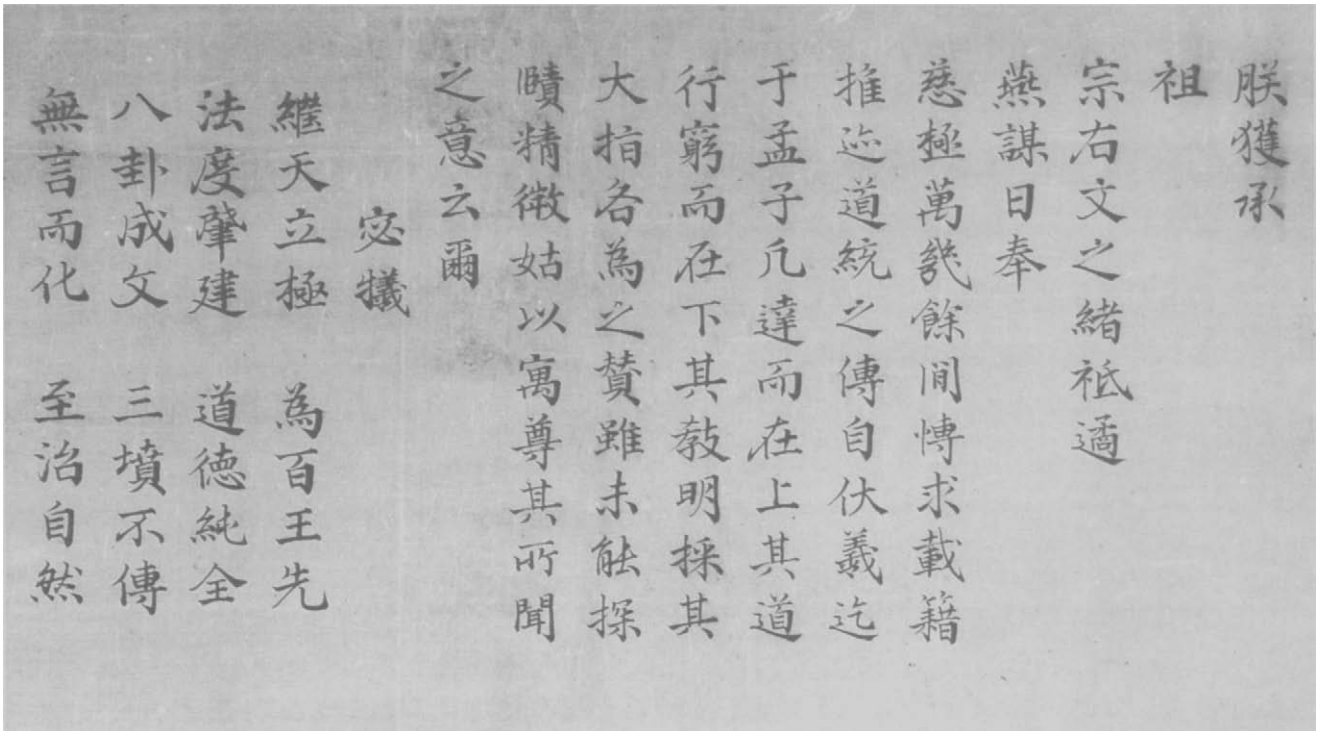


Figure 140. Sung Emperor Li-tsung (r. 1225–64), detail of *Inscription on Ma Lin's "Portrait of Fu-hsi,"* from the *Tao-t'ung shih-san tsan*. Hanging scroll, one of the set of five, ink and color on silk, 249.8 × 112 cm. Palace Museum, Taipei

curve, the lower edge of the *na* stroke is slightly broken, and all the “corners” of the characters are rounded. The simplicity and gentle awkwardness of this style gives a glimpse into the writer’s individual personality. Among the important pieces from the empress’s late period are the inscriptions on Ma Yüan’s *Water Studies*; a colophon on *A Banquet by Lantern Light* (*Hua-teng shih yen t’u* 華燈侍宴圖), a hanging scroll in the Palace Museum, Taipei; and a poem beginning “Washed with snow” (“Yüeh-hsüeh ning su” 淪雪凝酥) inscribed on a silk fan in the John M. Crawford, Jr., Collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art (fig. 139).<sup>30</sup> A piece that illustrates the transition between the empress’s second and third styles is the inscription on Ma Yüan’s *Apricot Blossoms* (*I-yün hsien-hsing* 倚雲仙杏), in the Palace Museum, Taipei. Here, the delicate strength of the brush movement and the squarish “corners” of the second style are seen, but the shapes of the characters resemble those of the empress’s third style.

### *The Calligraphy of Li-tsung*

Li-tsung, the last of the Southern Sung imperial calligraphers discussed here, ascended the throne in 1225. Upon his death at the age of sixty in 1264, the throne passed to Tu-tsung 度宗 (r. 1265–74).

Of all the calligraphers of the Southern Sung imperial family, Li-tsung developed the most strikingly individual style. He favored an angular brush movement and a tall upright shape for his characters—traits that appear to derive from Ou-yang Hsün and Ch’u Sui-liang 褚遂良 (596–658)—and his brushwork in standard script shows some of Yen Chen-ch’ing’s influence. Thus, Li-tsung diverged the furthest from the family calligraphic tradition that was modeled upon the two Wangs and Chih-yung and had been transmitted since Kao-tsung.

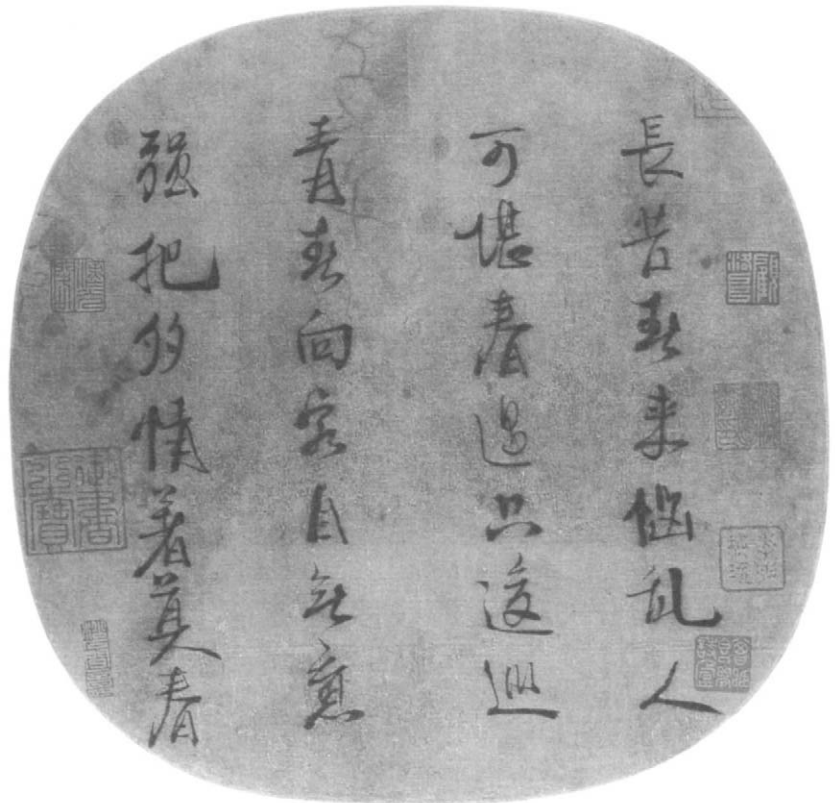
Among the twenty-odd extant pieces of Li-tsung’s calligraphy, running and cursive scripts predominate. Only two works are in standard script: his poetic inscriptions on the five hanging scrolls known as the *T’ao-t’ung shih-san tsan* 道統十三贊 (*Eulogy on Thirteen Ancient Sages*), in the Palace Museum, Taipei (fig. 140); and a couplet beginning “The sounds of the tide” (“Ch’ao sheng” 潮聲) inscribed on a silk fan in the Crawford Collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art. It is immediately apparent from these pieces that Li-tsung’s running and cursive scripts far excelled his standard script—possibly because he did not apply himself to the study of standard script, which is regarded as the foundation of calligraphic art. Ten of the extant pieces are either signed or dated, or may be dated from textual records. The others may be dated roughly on the basis of stylistic comparison with Li-tsung’s calligraphy from his early, middle, and late periods.

The five hanging scrolls of the *T’ao-t’ung shih-san tsan* were once part of a set of thirteen scrolls, each depicting an ancient king or emperor and inscribed with a poem in his honor. The five scrolls which survive commemorate the legendary emperors Fu-hsi 伏羲, Yao 堯, Yü 禹, T’ang 湯 (the traditional founder of the Shang dynasty), and King Wu 武王 of Chou (eleventh century B.C.). The poems were composed and inscribed in 1241, on the occasion of Li-tsung’s visit to the State Academy to honor the sages of the past. Li-tsung was thirty-seven at the time. His standard script is relatively weak and undeveloped: the curve in the *p’ieh* stroke is exaggerated; the end of the *na* stroke is choppy and shortened; and the beginning and ending of the horizontal strokes lack maturity. In spite of these shortcomings, however, the individuality of the writer is apparent.

Figure 141. Sung Emperor Li-tsung,  
*Inscription of Seven-Character Poem Beginning*  
*"Clear Sky over the Lake."*  
Round fan, ink on silk, 25.1 × 25.1 cm.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art;  
Bequest of John M. Crawford, Jr., 1988



Figure 142. Sung Emperor Li-tsung,  
*Inscription of Seven-Character Poem Beginning*  
*"Always Troubled by the Coming of Spring."*  
Round fan, ink on silk, 23.2 × 24.2 cm.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art;  
Bequest of John M. Crawford, Jr., 1988



Also from Li-tsung's early period is the inscription of the poem beginning "Yearning for the sight of parents" ("Lien-ch'in shih hsien" 戀親時見) on a silk fan in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Although the "corners" of the characters in this piece are shaped with a relatively rapid brush movement, the style of the writing is still close to standard script: the horizontal strokes are level, the vertical strokes upright, and no calligraphic principles are violated.

In Li-tsung's middle period, his brush movement becomes more rapid and the variations of brush pressure more noticeable. His brushwork gradually loses the smoothness of the early period, becoming more richly varied, mixing broad and thin, heavy and light strokes. The structure of the characters becomes freer and shows a graceful naturalness.

The earliest piece from Li-tsung's middle period is the inscription on Ma Lin's *Listening to the Wind in the Pines* (*Ching-t'ing sung-feng t'u* 靜聽松風圖), in the Palace Museum, Taipei. Li-tsung wrote it in 1246, at the age of forty-two. Then comes his inscription on Ma Lin's *Swallows at Dusk* (*Hsi-yang shan-shui t'u* 夕陽山水圖), in the Nezu Institute of Fine Arts, Tokyo (see fig. 75), followed by the poem beginning "Cloudy sun bright, pine snow" ("Yün-jih ming sung-hsüeh" 雲日明松雪), on a square album leaf in the Fujii Yürinkan Collection, Kyoto. Next comes the silk fan with a couplet from Wang Wei 王維 (701–61), which Li-tsung inscribed at the age of fifty-two, now in the Cleveland Museum of Art. Finally, there is the poem beginning "Clear sky over the lake" ("Hushang ch'ing yen" 湖上晴煙) on a silk fan in the Crawford Collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art (fig. 141).

Pieces from Li-tsung's late period include the previously discussed couplet in standard script beginning "The sounds of the tide," written at the age of fifty-seven, and the poems "Always Troubled by the Coming of Spring" ("Chang k'u ch'un lai" 長苦春來; fig. 142), "Zen Temple on the Mountaintop" ("Shan-t'ou ch'an-shih" 山頭禪室), "The Branches of Last Year" ("Ch'ü-nien chih-shang" 去年枝上), and "Late Autumn" ("Ch'iu shen" 秋深). All five are inscribed on silk fans in the Crawford Collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Yet another fine work from Li-tsung's late period is the inscription of a poem beginning "One moment in a spring evening" ("Ch'unhsiao i-k'e" 春宵一刻) on a silk fan in the Palace Museum, Taipei.

Li-tsung's standard script in his late period shows considerable improvement over that of his early period. Every stroke, whether horizontal, vertical, or a "corner," is given a slight curve, showing that the brush tip is used with gentle resilience. The *na* strokes are open and spacious, and the horizontal strokes begin and end naturally. But Li-tsung's individuality is best expressed in his running and cursive scripts. His characters are structured smaller in the upper part than the lower, and the upper right corners are abbreviated to a diagonal which, together with the vertical stroke on the left, forms a right angle in the shape of the character 八 *pa*. This characteristic, already seen in an inscription on a fan dating from Li-tsung's middle period (see fig. 141), becomes a unifying trait of his late period. In terms of brushstrokes, Li-tsung generally made the "corners" of the characters square in his middle period; in his late period, the "corners" are formed with a rapid curve. The forcefulness and variety of the brushstrokes of the late period far surpass those of the earlier periods.

### Conclusion

Of the imperial calligraphers of the Southern Sung, Kao-tsung had the deepest understanding of his art and was the most brilliant in expressing his true nature in his writing. His natural talent was augmented by great application. His brushwork was sometimes forceful, sometimes graceful, or again it could be free and spontaneous. One can find no fault with either the structure of his characters or his brushwork. In mastering and refining the art of calligraphy, one should still be able to recapture a certain lack of polish, or rawness, found in novice work. Emperor Kao-tsung reached the stage of mastery yet was unable to return to his early, raw style. However, when compared to the style of the great Yüan master Chao Meng-fu 趙孟頫 (1254–1322), which is extremely sweet and ripe, Kao-tsung's calligraphy remains preferable.

Hsiao-tsung was less diligent than Kao-tsung, and his calligraphy lacked the expressiveness of his father's. Still, he upheld the family tradition and imbued his calligraphy with the consciousness of his imperial status. For these reasons, he should be ranked among the competent.

Ning-tsung, Empress Yang, and Li-tsung not only continued the family tradition but also injected it with elements of Yen Chen-ch'ing's style. Each established his or her own personal style. Of the three, Li-tsung ranks as the most talented and the most individualistic, for, by developing his unique cursive script, he planted a distinctly different flag in the imperial style of the Southern Sung.

Translated by Chou Shan

### NOTES

- 1 The Hsiao-tsung *Hou Ch'ih-pi fu* (Latter Red Cliff ode) scroll in cursive script, Liaoning Provincial Museum, Shenyang.
- 2 The silk fan inscribed with the poem beginning "P'ing-sheng shui-tsu" (The rain over the long river), Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.
- 3 The following are recent works on the calligraphy of the Southern Sung imperial house: Naito Kenkichi, entries no. 1–25 in *Shodō zenshū* (Complete encyclopedia of calligraphy) (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1967), vol. 16, pp. 137–44; Nakata Yūjirō, "Sō Kōsō no kanboku shi" (Sung Emperor Kao-tsung's record on calligraphy), in *Nakata Yūjirō chōsa shū* (Collected works of Nakata Yūjirō) (Tokyo: Nigensha, 1985), vol. 4, pp. 95–101; Xu Bangda, "Nan-Sung ti hou t'i-hua shih-shu k'ao-pien" (A study of the inscriptions on paintings written by the Southern Sung emperors and empresses), *Wenwu* 301, no. 6 (June 1981), pp. 52–64; Julia K. Murray, "Sung Kao-tsung, Ma Hō-chih, and the Mao Shih Scrolls: Illustrations of the Classic of Poetry" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1981); and Shen C. Y. Fu, "Sung-tai ti-wang yü Nan-Sung Chin-jen chih shu-fa" (The calligraphy of Sung emperors, of the Southern Sung, and of the Chin), in Nakata Yūjirō and Shen C. Y. Fu, eds., *Obei shūzō Chūgoku hōsho meisekishu* (Masterpieces of Chinese calligraphy in American and European collections) (Tokyo: Chuokōronsha, 1981), vol. 2, pp. 127–33.
- 4 Lou Yüeh, *Kung-k'uei chi* (Collected works of the Mending-Fault Studio) (Taipei: Commercial Press, 1967), *chüan* 69, p. 632.
- 5 The inscription was engraved by the Buddhist monk Ching-t'an 淨曇 on Kao-tsung's order, and the rubbing was bestowed on the Kuang-li Monastery 廣利寺 in Chekiang by Kao-tsung in 1133.
- 6 Lou, *Kung-k'uei chi*, *chüan* 69, p. 633.
- 7 Wang Ying-lin, *Yü-hai* (Sea of jade) (Taipei: Hua-wen, 1967), *chüan* 34, p. 20.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Sung Kao-tsung, *Han-mo chih* (Records of calligraphy) (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1936), pp. 3–4.
- 10 Li Hsin-ch'uan, *Chien-yen i-lai hsi-nien yao-lu* (Annual records since the Chien-yen era) (Taipei: Wen-hai, 1968), *chüan* 125, p. 12.
- 11 See Liang Ju-chia's biography in *Sung shih* (Sung history) (Beijing: Chung-hua, 1981), *chüan* 38.
- 12 Li, *Yao-lu*, *chüan* 125, p. 12.
- 13 Kao-tsung, *Han-mo chih*, p. 1.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 Wang, *Yü-hai*, *chüan* 34, p. 27.

- 16 Yeh Shao-weng, *Ssu-ch'ao chien-wen lu* (Record of the four eras) (Taipei: I-wen yin-shu kuan, 1966), vol. 2, p. 9.
- 17 The *Yü-hai* records that in 1171, Hsiao-tsung showed his ministers and officials ten scrolls of Kao-tsung's calligraphy in these three scripts. Among them were transcriptions of Sung Yü's 宋玉 (ca. 290-ca. 223 B.C.) *Kao-t'ang fu* 高唐賦 (Rhyme-prose on the Kao-t'ang Taoist temple), Lu Chi's 陸機 (261-303) *Wen-fu* 文賦 (Rhyme-prose on literature), Ts'ao Chih's *Nymph of the Lo River*, Wang Ts'an's 王粲 (177-217) *T'eng-lou fu* 登樓賦 (Rhyme-prose on ascending to the upper floor), and Chou Hsing-ssu's 周興嗣 (active early 6th c.) *Ch'ien-tzu wen* 千字文 (The thousand-character classic). For the years 1176, 1178, and 1184, the *Yü-hai* records that Kao-tsung gave his officials samples of his calligraphy written on round fans as well as scrolls.
- 18 Kao-tsung, *Han-mo chih*, p. 1.
- 19 Another piece of Kao-tsung's calligraphy in standard and cursive script, *Ch'ien-wen mo-chi* 千文墨蹟 (The thousand-character classic), could stand as a representative of his late period, but I have not been able to obtain a reproduction of it for study. Hence, I have used *Yang-sheng lun* as a standard for discussion. Although this piece is a recarving made from Kao-tsung's calligraphy and probably contains some differences from the original, its deviations should not be very great.
- 20 Sun Kuo-t'ing, *Shu-p'u* (Manual of calligraphy) (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1936), p. 3.
- 21 *Sung-jen i-shih hui-pien* (Anecdotes of people in the Sung) (Beijing: Commercial Press, 1958), *chüan* 2, entry 23.
- 22 See the colophon written by Tseng Ti at the end of the *Cheng-tao t'ieh*.
- 23 Yüeh K'o, *Pao-chen chai fa-shu tsan* (Comments on the calligraphies in the Pao-chen Studio) (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1936), *chüan* 3, p. 40.
- 24 Wang, *Yü-hai*, *chüan* 34, p. 30.
- 25 Yüeh, *Fa-shu tsan*, *chüan* 3, pp. 38-39.
- 26 Wang, *Yü-hai*, *chüan* 34, p. 31.
- 27 Yüeh, *Fa-shu tsan*, *chüan* 3, pp. 41-43.
- 28 *Ibid.*, p. 44.
- 29 See Xu Bangda, "Shih-shu k'ao-pien," pp. 55-57; and Chiang Chao-shen, "Yang Mei-tzu" (Empress Yang), in *Shuang-hsi tu hua sui-pi* (Notes on paintings viewed at Shuang-hsi) (Taipei: Palace Museum, 1977), pp. 10-38.
- 30 In the Crawford Collection in the Metropolitan Museum, there is another silk fan inscribed with the poem beginning "Po-po ts'an-chuang" (Faintly remaining makeup), but the calligraphy is weak, and the signature added later. It may perhaps be a forgery.

# The Use of Gold in Southern Sung Academic Painting

TODA TEISUKE

The relationship enjoyed by Chinese poetry, calligraphy, and painting is a much-discussed topic. Nonetheless, a thorough investigation of the multidimensional aspects of this relationship has yet to be undertaken. In ink plays (*mo-hsi* 墨戲) of the Northern Sung and in literati paintings (*wen-jen hua* 文人畫) of the Yüan dynasty, calligraphy and painting share similar themes, media, and techniques. Yet in the intervening Southern Sung, painting, at least in terms of technique, developed according to a logic of its own exclusive of the other art forms.

Kōjirō Yoshikawa has pointed out that the setting sun (*lo-jih* 落日 or *hsi-yang* 夕陽) motif abounds in T'ang-dynasty poetry and that the rain (*yii* 雨) motif is often found in Sung poems.<sup>1</sup> According to Yoshikawa, it is those contrasting images of “the burning setting sun and incessant rain”<sup>2</sup> that help to distinguish T'ang and Sung poetry. Masahiko Yamanouchi develops this idea further in his article “Lo-jih and Hsi-yang,” which has been highly praised by Yoshikawa. According to Yamanouchi, although the poetic terms *lo-jih* and *hsi-yang* both mean “setting sun,” their connotations differ slightly: *lo-jih* appears more often in High T'ang poetry, while *hsi-yang* is more common to the late T'ang. Furthermore, *lo-jih* is “masculine and hard,” while *hsi-yang* suggests “sweetness and a far-off, rippling, and all-enveloping softness.”

In other words, in the High T'ang, a strong sense of personal autonomy resulted in a rational attitude by which man clearly distinguished himself from objects external to him, whereas in the late T'ang this attitude was obscured by a sensitivity which induced a trancelike state of subjective oneness with the world. To illustrate the difference between *lo-jih* and *hsi-yang*, Yamanouchi cites two couplets from Tu Fu 杜甫 (712–70) and Li Shang-yin 李商隱 (ca. 813–58), respectively.

In setting sun a heart still young, still strong,  
Through autumn's wind, my sickness growing better.<sup>3</sup>

落日心猶壯  
秋風病欲蘇

The beauty of the sunset is heart rending.  
The shadows of night come like remembered sorrow.<sup>4</sup>

夕陽無限好  
只是近黃昏

This observation by Yamanouchi is of particular interest to specialists of Chinese painting because the shift from the use of *lo-jih* to *hsi-yang* paralleled the rise and development of ink-wash painting (*shui-mo hua* 水墨畫). Painting in the ink-wash technique, with infinite gradations of monochrome ink as its principal mode of expression, is diametrically opposed to the technique of color and outline which predates it. According to Ching Hao 荆浩 (active ca. 870–930) in his *Notes on Brush Method* (*Pi-fa chi* 筆法記), the juxtaposition of brush and ink effects changes in our perceptions—that is, in the ways in which the mind and the senses grasp the world through its manifestations.<sup>5</sup>





Figure 143. Attributed to Emperor Hui-tsung (r. 1101–25),  
*Winter Landscape*.  
Hanging scroll, one of an original set of four,  
ink and color on silk, 128.2 × 55.2 cm.  
Konchi-in, Nanzen-ji, Kyoto



Figure 144. Attributed to Emperor Hui-tsung,  
*Autumn Landscape*.  
Hanging scroll, one of an original set of four,  
ink and color on silk, 128.2 × 55.2 cm.  
Konchi-in, Nanzen-ji, Kyoto

Examples in painting of *lo-jih* and *hsi-yang* setting suns can be found in the eighth-century *Foreign Musicians Riding an Elephant* (*Ch'i-hsiang hu-yüeh t'u* 騎象胡樂圖) on a Japanese lute housed at the Shōsō-in, Nara (see fig. 174), and in *Wintry Groves and Layered Banks* (*Han-lin ch'ung-ting t'u* 寒林重汀圖) attributed to Tung Yüan 董源 (d. 962), in the Kurokawa Institute of Ancient Culture, Ashiya (see fig. 172). It is not my intention in this paper, however, to correlate poetic images with painted motifs. What is more important is the question of what caused the concurrent transformations in poetic language and painting style.

Of course, it is likely that changes in the world of poetry exerted some influence on the selection of themes for paintings. In fact, the Sung emperor Hui-tsung's 徽宗 (r. 1101–25) practice of selecting poetic topics for painting themes was probably continued in the Southern Sung Painting Academy. Nonetheless, paintings done at the Academy represented a realm quite distinct from and independent of poetry. Their themes were developed through a logic internal to Academy painting alone, paralleling the equally autonomous development of the ink-wash painting technique. Therefore, I will exclude from this discussion paintings with a rain motif, the motif that Yoshikawa claims is characteristic of Sung-dynasty poetry. Rather, I will highlight certain experiments unique to Southern Sung Academy painting, using them as a means to better understand the painting of the period as an art form in its own right.

Although it was impossible for me to examine all original extant Southern Sung Academy paintings, I was able to investigate almost all those now in Japan. From them, I have made a valuable discovery. In many famous standard works of the Southern Sung Painting Academy, gold was used to achieve special effects. While gold as a medium is valued both for its color and brilliance, it is extremely difficult to blend with such other media as ink and color. And when gold does appear, in religious paintings or on decorative objects, it tends to diminish any illusion of naturalness. Moreover, although gold has a long history of use in Chinese painting in general, its use in Southern Sung painting exhibits characteristics unique to that period.

Among the most important of the Southern Sung Academy paintings that use gold is *Autumn Landscape* (*Ch'iu-ching shan-shui t'u* 秋景山水圖; fig. 144), one of a pair of hanging scrolls the other of which is *Winter Landscape* (*Tung-ching shan-shui t'u* 冬景山水圖; fig. 143) at the Konchi-in, Nanzen-ji, Kyoto. Together with *Summer Landscape* (*Hsia-ching shan-shui t'u* 夏景山水圖; fig. 145) at the Kuon-ji, Yamanashi Prefecture, and the long-lost *Spring Landscape* (*Ch'un-ching shan-shui t'u* 春景山水圖), these paintings once made up a set of landscapes of the four seasons. They are thought to be the four landscapes attributed to the Sung emperor Hui-tsung in the *Gyomotsu on'e mokuroku* 御物御繪目錄, a late-fifteenth-century catalogue of the Ashikaga shogunal collection. Each of the three extant paintings bears the Tenzan seal of Ashikaga Yoshimitsu 足利義滿 (1358–1408), as well as two other seals: that of a Chinese connoisseur which reads “Chung-ming chen-wan” 仲明珍玩 (A Treasure of Chung-ming) and another which reads “Lu-shih chia ts'ang” 廬氏家藏 (From the Lu Family Collection). Gold appears only in *Autumn*; the other two scenes are in ink and light color alone. In *Autumn*, a typical diagonally organized composition, a scholar reclining under a tree in the lower right of the painting looks up at geese frolicking in the sky in the upper left. Several streaks of gold are brushed horizontally across the vast empty sky, the true subject of the painting. White clouds float up from the lower reaches of the sky, making it difficult to determine whether the gold

streaks above them represent clouds or mist. What do these streaks of gold signify? In keeping with the artist's intent—to portray the limitless breadth of an autumn sky—perhaps they are a pictorialization of the phrase “golden sky” (*chin-t'ien* 金天) often used in poetry to signify autumn, as in the following couplet by Tu Fu:

The bracing air, the golden sky brightens;  
Pure and limpid, the jadelike drops of dew collect.<sup>6</sup>

爽氣金天豁  
清談玉露繁

Even if the use of gold in this painting were conditioned by the poetic phrase “golden sky” to connote an autumn sky, still the artist could have chosen to apply gold in any number of ways. For instance, he could have applied a broad wash of gold across the entire sky. By using touches of gold in horizontal strokes, however, he has achieved the extraordinary effect of a vast autumn sky lit by soft light. Most viewers today will hardly detect the presence of gold, which is nearly invisible due to changes in the color of the silk. Be that as it may, the gold itself was probably not significantly brighter at the time it was painted than it is today. Also, close examination reveals that the artist had originally applied a pale indigo color in the area of the gold to accentuate it. Had the artist wanted the gold to stand out even more, he would have painted the entire background a deep blue. In Emperor Hui-tsung's *Auspicious Cranes* (*Jui-ho t'u* 瑞鶴圖), now in the Liaoning Provincial Museum, a deep blue sky sets off and enhances the decorative beauty of the golden acroteria on the roof. In *Autumn*, however, there are no such sharp color contrasts. Rather, the effect of layering like colors—adding gold to the pale yellow silk background—is the realization of a deep brilliance accentuated by the pale blue. Even if the artist had felt bound by the poetic phrase “golden sky,” he purposely freed himself from the purely decorative, flattening qualities of gold color to create a naturalistic depiction of an autumn sky. In this regard, *Autumn* exemplifies Southern Sung Academy painting. Here the gold adds depth. Its horizontal placement demonstrates that despite the diagonal organization of Sung compositions, the Sung artist did not relentlessly adhere to dividing the painting surface on a slant. Later interpretations and copies of the Southern Sung Academy style were to lose the illusion of depth through the repetition of diagonal elements on the surface.

The use of gold raises an even more interesting question when we compare *Autumn* with *Summer* and *Winter*. I noted earlier that the latter two landscapes were painted primarily in ink and light colors. This is only natural, for neither a summer evening after a sudden storm nor a sunset in a valley in winter calls for strong colors. Instead, the lighting in both landscapes is weak. While the ink-bamboo technique was used for the snow-covered bamboo in *Winter Landscape*, the bamboo motif in *Autumn* was painted in color with outline. The use of different techniques for similar motifs within a single set of paintings by the same artist seems to suggest that the intention was to depict each object naturalistically. Taking into account the balance of the whole set, the lost *Spring* scene probably had as much color as does *Autumn*. As with the “golden sky” of *Autumn*, *Spring* no doubt also took the concept of naturalistic depiction as a condition of its execution. Were this work still extant, it could have lent some insight into our inquiry into Southern Sung painting, and we lament its loss. Yet even from the three surviving scrolls, we can see that the artist freely selected and combined traditional techniques—from ink wash to heavy pigments—to create the illusion of naturalness.

In my essay “Concerning Liu Sung-nien,” I contended that the above three landscapes



Figure 145.  
Attributed to Emperor Hui-tsung,  
*Summer Landscape*.  
Hanging scroll,  
one of an original set of four,  
ink and color on silk,  
118.5 × 52.8 cm.  
Kuon-ji, Yamanashi Prefecture

were executed at approximately the same time as the works of Liu Sung-nien 劉松年 (ca. 1150–after 1225), namely, between Ma Ho-chih 馬和之 (active latter half of the twelfth century) and Liang K'ai 梁楷 (active late twelfth–early thirteenth century). I based my contention in part on the fact that *Winter* is similar both in composition and motif to Liang K'ai's *Strolling by a Marshy Bank* (*Tse-p'an hsing yin* 澤畔行吟), now in the John M. Crawford, Jr., Collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and shares with the latter characteristics common to Southern Sung Academy painting in general.

*The Ch'an Master Ch'ing-liang Fa-yen* (*Ch'ing-liang Fa-yen Ch'an-shih t'u* 清涼法眼禪師圖; fig. 147) and *The Great Master Yün-men* (*Yün-men ta-shih t'u* 雲門大師圖; fig. 146), two paintings of Ch'an patriarchs attributed to Ma Yüan 馬遠 (active ca. 1190–1225) now at the Tenryū-ji, Kyoto, were part of a set of five, two of which are now lost. The third extant painting, *Tung-shan Fording a Stream* (*Tung-shan tu-shui t'u* 洞山渡水圖), is in the Tokyo National Museum. All three bear inscriptions by Empress Yang Mei-tzu 楊妹子 (1162–1232) and seal impressions which read: "K'un-ning chih tien" 坤寧之殿 (Temple of K'un-ning). The most expertly executed of all the works attributed to Ma Yüan, these paintings occupy a prominent position among that artist's body of work. Gold is used in the two paintings at the Tenryū-ji, whereas there is no apparent use of gold in the third, *Tung-shan Fording a Stream*. In *Ch'an Master Fa-yen*, gold adorns the disk to which the master's surplice is tied; in *Great Master Yün-men*, gold appears on the magical *ling-chih* 靈芝 mushroom behind the master and on the grass-mat seat. Yet the use of gold in this pair is so restrained that it often goes unnoticed. It is far less visible than in the above-mentioned *Autumn*. Even taking peeling and flaking into account, the gold was no doubt extremely subtle from the beginning. This selective use of gold within a single set of paintings parallels a similar practice in the landscapes of the three seasons, with gold apparent only in *Autumn*. Generalizing from this, we can deduce that for the Southern Sung Academy, the application of gold to certain paintings in a set was not simply for decorative purposes.

A profound understanding of the art of painting by both artist and audience at the Southern Sung court fostered this kind of refinement. All three paintings of Ch'an patriarchs exemplify the well-organized composition and distilled brushwork characteristic of Ma Yüan's style. The exceedingly restrained use of gold in such paintings is then both appropriate and natural. All the same, the use of gold in such paintings of the patriarchs was no doubt developed by specialists of Taoist and Buddhist painting from within the ranks of the Ma family. Thus, for example, we find no gold detail in the landscape paintings of Ma Yüan's contemporary Hsia Kuei 夏珪 (active first half of the thirteenth century). This is one point on which the two artists diverge.

A restrained use of gold comparable to the paintings of the Ch'an patriarchs can be seen in Liang K'ai's *Landscape in Snow* (*Hsüeh-ching shan-shui t'u* 雪景山水圖), in the Tokyo National Museum (fig. 148). The scene is set at the foot of a snowy mountain darkened by a cloudy sky. The individual motifs are arranged in collage fashion, giving the work a poetic feeling one step removed from a straightforward depiction of reality. Two foreigners on horseback travel through the pictorial space. They stand out in brilliant, dreamlike clarity—a concrete yet delicate illustration of Liang K'ai's "refined and marvelous" (*ching-miao* 精妙) brushwork.

Gold adorns the horses' bridles and the riders' sheepskin hats, but its presence could be easily overlooked. Indeed, the gold on the bridles looks as if it had been applied with



Figure 146. Attributed to Ma Yüan (active ca. 1190–1225),  
*The Great Master Yün-men*. Hanging scroll,  
one of an original set of five, color on silk,  
79.4 × 33 cm. Tenryūji, Kyoto



Figure 147. Attributed to Ma Yüan,  
*The Ch'an Master Ch'ing-liang Fa-yen*. Hanging scroll,  
one of an original set of five, color on silk,  
79.2 × 33 cm. Tenryūji, Kyoto



Figure 148. Liang K'ai  
(active late 12th–early 13th c.),  
*Landscape in Snow*.  
Hanging scroll,  
ink and color on silk,  
110.3 × 49.7 cm.  
Tokyo National Museum  
Collection



Figure 149. Attributed to Mao Sung  
(active early 12th c.),  
*The Monkey*. Hanging scroll,  
ink and color on silk, 47.1 × 36.7 cm.  
Tokyo National Museum Collection

the point of a needle. This minute, rather than indistinct, application of gold makes the artist's intention all the more apparent. Herein may lie the chief reason for Liang K'ai's reputation for "refined and marvelous" brushwork.

The two sets of works we have discussed so far were executed between the latter half of the twelfth century and the first half of the thirteenth century. Let us broaden our understanding by looking at other examples.

If I had to choose only one example of the refined use of gold in Southern Sung Academy painting, I would choose *The Monkey* (*Yüan t'u* 猿圖), in the Tokyo National Museum (fig. 149). This work is traditionally attributed to Mao Sung 毛松 (active early twelfth century), the father of Mao I 毛益, a Southern Sung Academy painter active during the latter half of the twelfth century (ca. 1165–73). If this attribution is correct, the painting would date from the earliest years of the Southern Sung. But this attribution was made by the early Edo-period connoisseur Kano Tan'yü 狩野探幽 (1602–74), who offered no substantiating evidence. For reasons which I will explain later, I think it is more appropriate to group this work with the bird, flower, and animal paintings popular in the Academy around 1200.

Concerning the history of *The Monkey* in Japan, one record mentions that the warlord



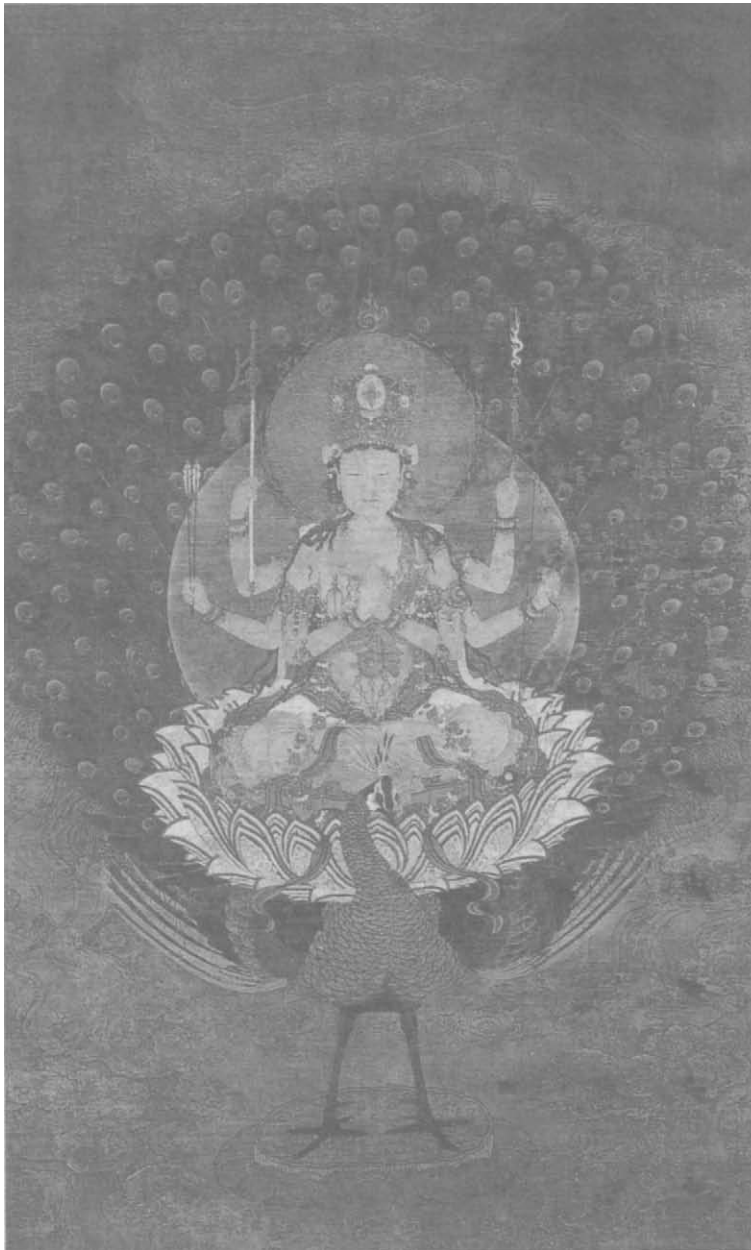


Figure 150. Attributed to Chang Ssu-kung (12th c.), *The Peacock King*. Hanging scroll, ink and color on silk, 168.7 × 103 cm. Ninna-ji, Kyoto



Figure 151. Anonymous (late 13th c.), *Arhats*. Hanging scroll, one of an original set of eight, ink and light color on silk, 120 × 54 cm. © 1989, Kyoto National Museum, all rights reserved

Takeda Shingen 武田信玄 (1521–73) presented the painting to the monk Kakujō 覺怒 of the Manshu-in upon the latter's installation as Tendai Abbot in 1570. The painting remained at the Manshu-in in Kyoto until it entered the collection of the Tokyo National Museum after World War II.

According to Japanese Emperor Akihito, who is a zoologist, the monkey depicted in the painting is actually indigenous to Japan. This discovery has led some to doubt that the work was executed in China, but such overly simplistic reasoning ought not to be taken seriously. It was in no way unusual for artists at the Academy to depict exotic imported plants and animals in their paintings.

The monkey's facial expression and its posture—one paw supporting its chin, the other clutching its knees—combine to give the impression of an elderly or sick man. A deep sense of melancholy pervades the painting, yet the sense of sadness seems to come from the painter's outlook rather than from his attempt to capture an objective, realistic depiction of his subject. The silk is heavily damaged. From photographs taken in 1932, we know that the surface in and around the monkey's face has been repaired. However, the repairs have done nothing to alter the painting's original flavor. The strands of hair surrounding the monkey's face are sharp and short and those on its back are long and sparse, while the hair on its shoulders and stomach is soft and dense. The varying thicknesses and lengths of the hairs, skillfully drawn in ink, give the monkey a three-dimensional and truly lifelike appearance. The gold etched on top of the ink imparts brilliance and color to the otherwise monochrome fur. I know of no other work in which gold has been blended so successfully with ink or color to convey such naturalism. Another distinction should be made between the use of gold in this painting and in the other paintings discussed above. This is neither the gold of a "golden sky" nor of a golden disk, nor of the *ling-chih* mushroom, believed to be an elixir of immortality. In the three earlier examples, reasons for using gold are obvious and integral to the subject matter. Indeed, an identical use of gold on a magic mushroom can be found in *Golden Towers among Myriad Pines* (*Wan-sung chin-chüeh t'u* 萬松金闕圖), an early Sung painting by Chao Po-su 趙伯驥 (1124–82), now in the Palace Museum, Beijing. In both paintings featuring a *ling-chih* mushroom, gold lends religious significance to an otherwise ordinary object. Unlike these examples, however, the object touched with gold in *The Monkey* is fur, which is neither naturally golden nor has any supernatural significance. According to European theories of naturalism, the brilliant effect of gold in this case could have been expressed without actually using gold. The *Monkey* is special in that the artist has used gold to depict something which is not actually gold and does so with such natural-appearing results.

Still, the use of gold in *The Monkey* is not an aberration. There are other works which use this technique. In religious paintings in both Eastern and Western art, the use of gold to invest otherwise ordinary objects with an aura of spirituality or majesty is common. The "golden" hairs in *The Monkey* must have been modeled after examples in Taoist and Buddhist paintings, although the use of gold in animal motifs is rare among Buddhist paintings.

*Arhats* (*Lo-han t'u* 羅漢圖), in the Kyoto National Museum (fig. 151), is the only surviving work from an original set of eight scrolls depicting sixteen arhats. The painting probably dates from the late thirteenth century. In conjunction with ink line only, and without color, gold and silver were applied over the entire painting surface, lending the work a refined and decorative beauty. A tiger in the foreground of the painting is of particular interest to our present discussion, for its fur, like that of the monkey, was first drawn in ink, then overlaid with gold lines. Distinguishing *Arhats* from *The Monkey*, however, are its layers of ink and gold, which appear to have been conceived independently, without regard for each other. At the same time the basic technique of drawing fur in gold on top of ink links the two works.

*The Peacock King* (*K'ung-ch'üeh ming-wang t'u* 孔雀明王圖), a late Northern Sung painting at the Ninna-ji, Kyoto, is a stunning work in color and gold (fig. 150). It is a Buddhist painting with a peacock drawn in intensely realistic detail. The feeling of

strength emanating from the area between the bird's breast and legs, in particular, reflects the level of maturity achieved in bird-and-flower paintings of the Northern Sung Academy. The gold which adorns the body of the peacock is clearly applied with an eye toward realism. This should immediately suggest a comparison with *The Monkey*. Yet the comparison would not be entirely appropriate. As a Buddhist painting, *The Peacock King* also functions as a devotional object. What we really need here are examples of the use of gold on peacocks in strictly secular and court paintings. Unfortunately, evidence of this type is insufficient and inconclusive. Still, in a broad sense, it is valid to say that the use of gold in *The Monkey* is derived from the same technique and prototype as that in *Arhats* or *The Peacock King*. This does not alter the fact that *The Monkey*, a work completely free of religious associations, holds a unique position among extant Southern Sung Academy paintings. Moreover, as we have seen, because there was a tendency in Southern Sung Academy painting to use gold sparingly rather than for decoration, the traditional technique found in Buddhist paintings is altered in *The Monkey* to accord with that preference. How complete was this alteration? In *Arhats*, the gold hairs of the tiger are generously applied in broad strokes. In *The Monkey*, the gold hairs are drawn one by one, carefully and deliberately interspersed with those drawn in ink, and they are all drawn on top of brown wash. The fine lines of gold in *The Monkey* retreat into the painting surface, appearing only to give natural highlights to the fur. These threadlike highlights in gold keep the monkey from completely disappearing into the dark background. Neither in *The Peacock King* nor in *Arhats* is gold used to this effect. In contrast to the monkey, which shrinks into the depths of the painting, the peacock in particular seems about to leap out of the painting surface. This basic difference in spatial design is indicative of the differing periods in which these two paintings were made. Sharing a similar feeling for solid structure with *The Peacock King*, although it is different in genre, is the *Ch'ing-ming Festival on the River* (*Ch'ing-ming shang-ho t'u* 清明上河圖), by Chang Tse-tuan 張擇端 (active early twelfth century), now in the Palace Museum, Beijing.

For another example, this time with space represented to the depth found in *The Monkey*, we may consider the triptych *Amitābha and Two Bodhisattvas* (*A-mi-t'o san-tsun t'u* 阿彌陀三尊圖), in the Shōjōke-in, Kyoto (figs. 152–154). Each painting in this set bears a minute signature in standard script reading “P'u-yüeh of Ssu-ming” 四明普悅. Apart from the fact that the artist apparently came from Chekiang Province, nothing more is known about P'u-yüeh. Yet this set is regarded as a major example of Buddhist painting of the Southern Sung. The influence of the late Northern Sung artist Li Kung-lin 李公麟 (ca. 1049–1106) can be seen in the refined brushwork and fluid, fine lines of these paintings. In their colors—which define a translucent bright space—can also be discerned the elegance characteristic of the Southern Sung Buddhist style. Most significant, however, are the overall obscure and almost indistinct gradations of values by which P'u-yüeh has merged the forms with the surrounding space. The hazy, lotus-leaf-shaped mandorla and the lotus pads supporting the figures' feet barely suggest three dimensions. Rather, they act to infuse the space with a depth wrapped in a soft dark glow. The exceedingly pale shadow of the lotus-leaf mandorla is so subtle that it is nearly impossible to discern the artist's technique. The refined atmosphere of this set of paintings contrasts with the majestic power of *The Peacock King* of the Northern Sung and with the sometimes garish, obvious character of Buddhist paintings during the Yüan. The mysterious brightness in which the central image of Amitābha is suspended may detract from his majesty.

Fine lines define the scarves, crown, and jewels. Like the refined, deliberate use of gold in *The Monkey*, for example, these lines do not detract from the overall beauty of the paintings. Although the actual circumstances of the creation of this set of paintings are unknown, the presence of the artist's signature makes one suspect that these works were painted for aesthetic appreciation rather than for devotional purposes. A Buddhist painting of this type would only have been possible as a response to the refined sensibilities of its audience. Here we can imagine a consensus between artist and audience similar to that which characterized Academy painting. Although we have no proof, the gap between this work and other Southern Sung Buddhist paintings in general makes it much closer to the spirit of Academy painting. Further, the mysterious space which envelops *Amitābha and Two Bodhisattvas* is basically the same as that in *The Monkey*, thus implying that their periods of execution were probably rather close together.

Compared to the mysterious atmosphere of P'u-yüeh's triptych, the *White-robed Kuan-yin* (*Pai-i Kuan-yin* 白衣觀音), in the Yabumoto Collection, Osaka, is a rather bright work (fig. 156). Judging from the sarcastic expression on the deity's face and the lifelike quality of the lotus flower on which she sits, this too is a Buddhist painting of extraordinary character. There are numerous devotional representations of Kuan-yin painted in color, and, almost without exception, each has a small image of Buddha in the crown—a detail lacking here. On the other hand, the small Buddha image is often absent from Kuan-yin paintings in monochrome ink intended as objects for aesthetic appreciation. However, there is a small Buddha in the famous monochrome ink *Kuan-yin* by Mu-ch'i 牧谿 (active mid-thirteenth century) at the Daitoku-ji, Kyoto, which is signed "respectfully executed by Monk Fa-ch'ang of Shu." Thus the presence or absence of the Buddha is not an absolute indicator of whether a work was intended for devotional use or for private enjoyment. In the *White-robed Kuan-yin* under discussion here, gold color barely accentuates the tips of the stamens and pistils of the lotus-flower throne on which the deity sits. We do not know for sure whether gold was used on flowers in like fashion in secular works of the Academy or whether this is peculiar only to Buddhist paintings. However, it seems that in such details this Buddhist painting is extremely close to bird-and-flower paintings of the Academy in general.

This study on the distinctive use of gold in Southern Sung paintings has been limited to those paintings at present housed in Japan and now needs to be extended to paintings outside the country. Also instructive would be comparisons with works from the periods immediately preceding and following the Southern Sung with respect to the treatment of gold. Such important works from the Northern Sung as *Auspicious Cranes* by Emperor Hui-tsung, *Golden Towers among Myriad Pines* by Chao Po-su, and *Autumn Colors on Rivers and Mountains* (*Chiang-shan ch'iu-se t'u* 江山秋色圖) by Chao Po-chü 趙伯駒 (active ca. 1120–62) must be included. In contrast to the Southern Sung works mentioned earlier in this essay, these paintings show little restraint in the application of gold; gold is plentiful and brings with it extraordinary decorative effects. During the Yüan dynasty, Ch'ien Hsüan 錢選 (ca. 1235–ca. 1300), in his *Dwelling in the Mountains* (*Shan-chü t'u* 山居圖), now in the Palace Museum, Beijing, perhaps aware of T'ang landscape painting in gold and mineral pigments, also used gold unsparingly. Thus, we can see that the situation in the painting world of the Southern Sung—sandwiched between the Northern Sung and the Yüan—was truly special. How do we account for it?

Criticism of the purely decorative use of gold appears during the Northern Sung. In

*Left*, Figure 152. P'u-yüeh, *Bodhisattva*.  
Hanging scroll, one of the set of three

*Center*, Figure 153. P'u-yüeh (active 12th c.),  
*Amitābha*. Hanging scroll,  
one of a set of three, color on silk,  
each 127.4 × 48.8 cm.  
Collection of Shōjōke-in, Kyoto

*Right*, Figure 154. P'u-yüeh, *Bodhisattva*.  
Hanging scroll, one of the set of three





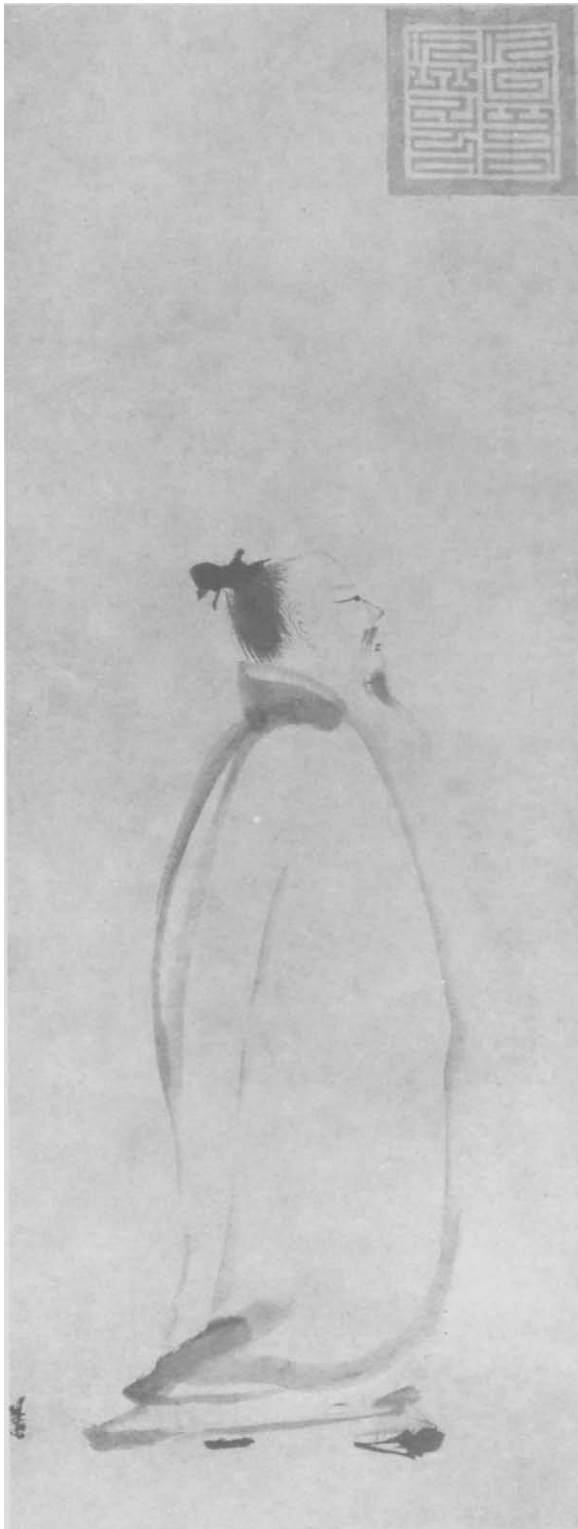


Figure 155. Liang K'ai, *Li Po Chanting Poetry*.  
Hanging scroll, ink on paper, 81.1 × 30.5 cm.  
Tokyo National Museum Collection

the catalogue of Emperor Hui-tsung's painting collection, the *Hsüan-ho hua-p'u* 宣和畫譜, compiled in 1120, Japanese landscape paintings are disparaged for the excessive use of gold and bright pigments:

Colors are applied quite thickly, and gold and green are used excessively. Rather than being concerned with truth, colorful brilliance is the desired effect. The idea is to emphasize the beautiful.<sup>7</sup>

These Japanese paintings continue the tradition of the T'ang landscapes, which were brightly colored with gold and mineral pigments. In his *History of Painting* (*Hua-shih* 畫史), Mi Fu 米芾 (1052–1107) notes that a Japanese colored landscape has been mistaken for a work by Li Ssu-hsün 李思訓 (651–716):

Feng Yung-kung, *tzü* Shih-chi, owned a Japanese landscape in color. During the Southern T'ang, it was attributed to Li Ssu-hsün.<sup>8</sup>

Such criticism of Japanese landscape paintings in gold and mineral pigments as being provincial developments or aberrations of T'ang landscapes suggests that, by contrast, the colored landscapes of the Northern Sung developed along far more refined lines. If we compare such works as Wang Hsi-meng's 王希孟 (ca. 1096–ca. 1120) *Thousand Li of Rivers and Mountains* (*Ch'ien-li Chiang-shan t'u* 千里江山圖), in the Palace Museum, Beijing (see fig. 176), or Chao Po-chü's *Autumn Colors on Rivers and Mountains*, we can clearly recognize a change in colored landscape style from old to new. In the Chao Po-chü painting, ink wash, color, and gold are subtly harmonized; Chao tends toward the use of lighter colors and a more elegant, refined atmosphere than is apparent in Wang's work. The characteristic appearance of gold in Southern Sung Academy painting developed from this new trend in the late Northern Sung.

One final, important example must be mentioned in this discussion on the use of gold: Li T'ang's 李唐 (ca. 1070–ca. 1150) *Small Views of Rivers and Mountains* (*Chiang-shan hsiao-ching t'u* 江山小景圖), in the Palace Museum, Taipei. Here is the same delicate, sparing use of gold we saw in the Southern Sung Academy paintings. Recently, Suzuki Kei has proposed that the restoration of the Southern Sung Academy by Li T'ang may have taken place as late as 1160. His theory provides a rational basis for the continuation and development of a Li T'ang school at the Southern Sung Academy.<sup>9</sup>

In pre-Northern Sung and post-Yüan painting, gold is used in a manner appropriate to its original, more decorative function. By contrast, there is a clear desire to control the special qualities of gold in the paintings of the Southern Sung Academy. As I have already suggested, this was probably done to create the illusion of natural appearances. Certainly the difficult task of blending a medium such as gold with ink or color was a challenge for the artist. While trying to solve this problem, the surface use of gold was avoided since it drew attention to its brilliance. Instead, gold was applied in thin lines or tiny dots. We should note, however, that this desire for restraint and control was not exclusive to this one medium. Rather it was a fundamental aim of Southern Sung painting. The subtle aesthetics of Southern Sung painting, particularly as regards the gradation of ink, is best understood by looking at a group of ink paintings known as apparition paintings (*wang-liang hua* 魑魅畫). Apparition paintings eschew extremes of dark and light, while exhibiting minute variations within an overall light ink tonality. Rather than merely being a variant form of ink-wash painting, they share a common ground with



paintings of the Southern Sung Academy, which, as they become more and more simplified, focus upon finer and finer brushwork. In such paintings, the matchless skill of the artist requires the mature eye of the connoisseur to be appreciated. The highly attuned aesthetic sensibilities of Southern Sung painting developed autonomously, with few direct ties to either language or poetry.

Of course, it is extremely difficult to prove exactly what the Southern Sung artist intended, but how else can we account for the dreamlike space with its subtle atmosphere? In Academy paintings this tendency was carried to an extreme under the influence of both the artist's environment and his audience.

We now come to a point in our discussion that goes beyond the presence or absence of gold. The depiction of the pale darkness of a spring dusk in Ma Lin's *Waiting for Guests by Lamplight* (*Hua-teng shih-yen t'u* 華燈待宴圖), in the Palace Museum, Taipei (see fig. 182), shares the same quiet aesthetic with *The Monkey* and P'u-yüeh's *Amitābha and Two Bodhisattvas*. Although I have not had the opportunity to carefully examine *Waiting for Guests*, it appears that no gold was used. Thus, the question here does not concern the narrow issue of gold, but rather the concept of a Southern Sung Academy aesthetic, the same aesthetic which is responsible for the controlled use of gold. This attitude leads to the successful expression of a very difficult night scene in *Waiting for Guests*. The trend toward subtle depiction of light extends of course to ink-wash painting. Liang K'ai's masterpiece, *Li Po Chanting Poetry* (*Li Po hsing yin t'u* 李白行吟圖), in the Tokyo National Museum, is a simple work executed in a few brushstrokes (fig. 155). By harmonizing the ink, a robe is blended into the background, and the faint shadow of Li Po walking on a dark evening is suggested. The nighttime atmosphere surrounding this ink-wash figure, stripped of all extraneous detail, is the product of the skill and the polished aesthetics of the artist, a Southern Sung Academy painter.

Within the Academy, under the watchful eye of its aristocratic audience, Southern Sung painting reached the height of refinement and became the most aesthetically subtle art form to appear in the metropolis of Hangchow. Although I am not a literary scholar and may be in danger of speaking out of turn, it seems to me that the literary form most closely related to Southern Sung Academy painting is the lyric song (*tz'u* 詞). Lyric songs also reached their peak during this period. And while the genre itself continued after that, no new lyrical development took place. In this it is like post-Yüan Academy painting. Chiang K'uei 姜夔 (ca. 1155–ca. 1221), the poet who best represents the lyric songs of this period, was a contemporary of Ma Yüan and Liang K'ai. Because it was customary when writing a lyric poem to set the words to a preexisting tune, the “music” did not necessarily fit the lyrics. Yet when “new” music was composed specifically for a lyric song, it combined with the words to produce a unified “original” work. Two representative works by Chiang K'uei of the latter type are “Secret Fragrance” (“An-hsiang” 暗香) and “Dappled Shadows” (“Shu-ying” 疎影), composed in 1191. In Southern Sung poetry set to newly composed music we can see the same aesthetic sensibilities we saw in the Academy paintings of the Southern Sung. Perhaps it is a sharpening of the Sung feeling toward rain, as pointed out by Kōjirō Yoshikawa.

Although many fine examples of Southern Sung paintings survive, research continues to focus primarily on Northern Sung and Yüan painting. This might be due, on the one hand, to the paucity of primary documentation relating to Southern Sung painting and, on the other, to the lack of an international consensus of what constitutes a representative



Figure 156. Anonymous,  
*White-robed Kuan-yin*. Hanging scroll, color on silk, diam. 40.4 cm.  
Yabumoto Collection, Osaka

painting. Although we cannot expect any major new discoveries of supporting documents, the large number of extant paintings can surely be used effectively in future research. There is a great deal to be learned from a detailed stylistic analysis of these works.

Of course, it is difficult to conduct research on paintings without having access to the originals, a problem of which I have been made keenly aware during this investigation on the use of gold. In my case, it was impossible to accurately determine the presence or absence of gold just from photographs or published illustrations of paintings I could not see firsthand. Thus, although I have personally examined all examples extant in Japan, there are still a few loose ends. Surely many of the works outside Japan which I have not yet seen will prove to either strengthen or modify my thesis.

*Translated by Karen L. Brock*

#### NOTES

The notes were compiled by the editors.

- 1 Kōjirō Yoshikawa, *An Introduction to Sung Poetry*, trans. Burton Watson (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), pp. 47–48.
- 2 *Ibid.*, p. 48.
- 3 Tu Fu, “Chiang Han” 江漢 (Yangtze and Han), in Stephen Owen, *The Great Age of Chinese Poetry: The High T’ang* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1981), pp. 215–16.
- 4 Li Shang-yin, “Lo-yu yüan” 樂遊原 (Evening

- comes), in Kenneth Rexroth, *Love and the Turning Year: One Hundred More Poems from the Chinese* (New York: New Directions, 1970), p. 78.
- 5 See Kiyohiko Munakata, *Ching Hao's "Pi-fa-chi": A Note on the Art of Brush* (Ascona, Switz.: Artibus Asiae, 1974), pp. 11-16.
- 6 Tu Fu, "Tseng Yü Shih-wu ssu-ma" 贈虞十五司馬 (Presented to the fifteenth adjutant Yü), *chüan* 232, *Ch'üan T'ang shih* (Beijing: Chung-hua, 1979), vol. 7, p. 2564.
- 7 *Hsüan-ho hua-p'u* (Imperial painting catalogue of the Hsüan-ho era), ISTP (Taipei: Shih-chieh, 1967), ser. 1, vol. 9, *chüan* 12, p. 347.
- 8 Mi Fu, *Hua-shih* (History of painting), MSTS (Shanghai: Shen-chou kuo-kuang she, 1928), ser. 2, vol. 9, no. 1, p. 15b.
- 9 Suzuki Kei, "Ri Tō no nanto fukuin to sono Yōshi-ki hensen ni tsuite no ichi-shiren" (A tentative theory concerning Li T'ang's moving to the south, and the change in [landscape] style after the reestablishment of the [Imperial Painting] Academy), *Kokka* 1047 (December 1981), pp. 5-20; 1053 (July 1981), pp. 13-23.

# The Development of the Ch'ien-lung Painting Academy

YANG BODA

Was there a Painting Academy (*hua-yüan* 畫院) in the Ch'ing palace? Opinion has been divided on the issue since the latter part of the Ch'ing dynasty. The focal point and cause of this division of opinion, which the author has discussed in a separate article,<sup>1</sup> can be resumed briefly as follows. In the past, scholars rarely had access to the necessary documents; and when they did have certain documents at their disposal, they placed too much store on titles to the detriment of the reality behind them. Above all, a lack of historical perspective as regards painting for imperial use has hindered understanding of the Ch'ing Painting Academy.

As early as the Chia-ch'ing period (1796–1820) Hu Ching 胡敬 (1769–1845) affirmed that the Ch'ing dynasty had established a Painting Academy.<sup>2</sup> The author has come to believe that Hu Ching's claim is well founded, following examination of a Ch'ing-dynasty text entitled *Official Ch'ing Records of the Activities of the Bureaus and Workshops in the Tsao-pan Ch'u in the Yang-hsin Tien* (*Yang-hsin Tien Tsao-pan ch'u ke-tso ch'eng-tso huo-chi Ch'ing tang* 養心殿造辦處各作成做活計清檔), hereafter referred to as the *Ch'ing Records*.<sup>3</sup> The *Ch'ing Records*, dated 1795, is almost complete. It is a source of information of the highest importance in understanding the establishment, development, and achievements of the Painting Academy. We learn that the Ch'ien-lung (r. 1736–95) Academy was the most important of the whole Ch'ing period, be it in scale, comprehensiveness, level of production, quality of work, or period of operation. It occupies a place in the Ch'ing dynasty similar to that of the Cheng-Hsüan (1111–25) Painting Academy (*t'u-hua yüan* 圖畫院) in the Northern Sung. However, the latter academy existed for only twenty years, whereas the former lasted all of sixty—unique in Chinese history. For this fact alone it merits the attention of art historians. The present article presents the author's understanding of the Ch'ien-lung Painting Academy from the evidence of the *Ch'ing Records*: the administrative names; the titles and treatment received by the Academy painters; the characteristics of painting production; and the relation of painter-officials (*han-lin hua-chia* 翰林畫家) to the Academy.

## *The Official Names of the Ch'ien-lung Painting Academy: Hua-yüan Ch'u and Ju-i Kuan*

The *Ch'ing Records* for 1736, the first year of Ch'ien-lung's reign (vol. 3, no. 3376 according to the present numbering) mentions the following six divisions: the Mounting Shop (*piao-tso* 裱作); the Hua-yüan ch'u 畫院處 (Painting Academy Office); the Archives Bureau (?) (*chi-shih lu* 記事錄); the Ju-i Kuan 如意館 (Hall of Fulfilled Wishes); the Storehouse (*k'u-chu* 庫貯); and the Clock Workshop (*tzu-ming chung* 自鳴鐘). Two of these divisions, the Hua-yüan ch'u and the Ju-i Kuan, are directly relevant to the present study.

The *Ch'ing Records* first mentions the Hua-yüan ch'u in 1736. Prior to that, during the Yung-cheng period, nothing is said of it (see below).<sup>4</sup> The first officials to be entrusted with its direction were the *yüan-wai lang* 員外郎 (assistant department secretary of the Six Boards) Ch'en Mei 陳枚 (active ca. 1720–1730) and a seventh-rank official, Ho Ta-tzu 赫達資. A *yüan-wai lang* (rank 5b in the official hierarchy)<sup>5</sup> was, like a seventh-rank official, usually of minor importance. However, this was not the case in the Tsao-pan ch'u 造辦處 (Palace Board of Works) of the Yang-hsin Tien, or Inner Palace. There, this *yüan-wai lang* of the Hua-yüan ch'u was subordinate only to the overall director of the Tsao-pan ch'u, a fourth-rank *lang-chung* 郎中 (department director of the Six Boards), and consequently may be considered an official of middle rank. The directors of the Hua-yüan ch'u were, moreover, of higher rank than the directors of other bureaus or workshops, who tended to be sixth-, or even eighth- or ninth-rank *chu-shih* 主事 (secretaries, rank 6a), *k'u-chang* 庫掌 (storehouse overseers), or *ts'ui-tsung* 催總 (foremen). Thus, although the Hua-yüan ch'u was under the jurisdiction of the Tsao-pan ch'u, like any other workshop, it nevertheless enjoyed higher status than the latter. At the time, the Tsao-pan ch'u was supervised by Prince I 怡親王 (d. 1730), and the directors included the *chien-ch'a yü-shih* 監察御史 (investigating censor) Shen Yü 沈瑜 (or 喻) (active 1710s–1740s) and the *yüan-wai lang* Man Pi 滿毗, San-yin-pao 三音保, and Ch'ang Pao 常保. The fact that the Hua-yüan ch'u's director was of the same rank as Man Pi and his colleagues further demonstrates the special position of the Hua-yüan ch'u among the other divisions within the Tsao-pan ch'u.

The records of the Hua-yüan ch'u include the orders in Chinese issued by the *yüan-wai lang* and the seventh-rank official during the course of the year in response to imperial commands transmitted by head eunuchs (*shou-ling t'ai-chien* 首領太監). They specify that the execution and completion of individual paintings need not be reviewed and approved by the Tsao-pan ch'u in each case. The Hua-yüan ch'u enjoyed a considerable degree of autonomy.

The *Ch'ing Records* lists scores of artists' names, including Ch'en Mei, Leng Mei 冷枚, Leng Chien 冷鑑, Chang Wei-pang 張為邦, T'ang Tai 唐岱 (1673–mid-eighteenth century), Lang Shih-ning 郎世寧 (Giuseppe Castiglione; 1688–1766), Wang Chih-ch'eng 王致誠 (Jean-Denis Attiret; 1702–68), Ai Ch'i-meng 艾啟蒙 (P. Ignace Sichelbarth; 1708–80), Ting Kuan-p'eng 丁觀鵬, Yao Wen-han 姚文翰, Yang Ta-chang 楊大章, Chin T'ing-piao 金廷標, and Liang Kuan 梁觀. All of these painters received orders from Ch'ien-lung to undertake paintings. Their activity was controlled by the Hua-yüan ch'u, which was not simply an administrative office as its name implies, but more precisely a Painting Academy.

The reason why the word *ch'u* 處 (office, department) appears in the name of the organization may be due to the fact that the Tsao-pan ch'u comprised various *ch'u*, of which the Hua-yüan ch'u was one. Other organizations under Tsao-pan ch'u jurisdiction that were also termed *ch'u* were the Ming-chung ch'u 鳴鐘處 (Department of Clocks, also known as the Tso-chung ch'u 做鐘處) and the Fa-lang ch'u 瑛瑯處 (Enamels Department, also known as the Fa-lang tso 瑛瑯作). All *ch'u* were on a larger scale than *tso* 作 (bureaus, workshops) and, moreover, received the emperor's special attention. The *Ch'ing Records* for the Yung-cheng period shows that a Hua-tso 畫作 existed during that time. We also come across the term *hua-hua ch'u* 畫畫處 (literally, "place for painting paintings"), but this is not an official administrative term. It denotes either a painting

studio belonging to the Hua-tso or, possibly, a gallery. The establishment of the Hua-yüan ch'u in the Ch'ien-lung period appears, therefore, to have formalized an already existing situation. I believe that the name Hua-yüan ch'u corresponds perfectly to the historical characteristics of the Ch'ing Imperial Painting Academy and to the tastes and wishes of the emperor.

If there was a Painting Academy in the Inner Palace, then where was it situated? From the *Ch'ing Records* one discovers that there were two sites. One was in the Tz'u-ning Kung 慈寧宮 (Palace of Benevolent Repose) in the far western part of the Forbidden City. During the K'ang-hsi period, this palace served as the residence of the empress dowager. During the Yung-cheng era it was given over to a studio for the use of artists painting under imperial command. After Ch'ien-lung acceded to the throne, the empress dowager took up residence there with the result that in 1737 the Hua-yüan ch'u moved to the Hsien-an Kung 咸安宮 (Palace of Complete Tranquillity) adjoining the Tz'u-ning Kung to the northeast. Later it moved again to the Nan-hsün Tien 南薰殿 (Hall of Southern Fragrance) and its related buildings to the southwest of the Wu-ying Tien 武英殿 (Hall of Martial Valor). The second site was in the northern part of the Yüan Ming Yüan 圓明園 (Garden of Total Clarity), the emperor's summer palace, specifically in the Chi Ho Hsiang 芰荷香 (Water Caltrop and Lotus Fragrance) and Shen Liu 深柳讀書處 (Deep Willows) retreats until 1739, when another studio was established in the part of the estate known as Ch'un-yü Shu-ho 春宇舒和 (Spring House of Leisurely Harmony). Subsequently, the studio moved to the Hua-jih Shu-ch'ang 化日舒長 (Days of Transformation Leisurely Extended) and the I-ch'ing Shu-shih 怡情書室 (Studio of Delighting the Mind).

Why was the Hua-yüan ch'u divided between the two sites? The answer lies in the Ch'ing emperors' customs of residence. The founder of the dynasty, Nurhachi (1559–1626), was originally a frontier general during the Ming dynasty. Having rebelled against the Ming emperors, he established himself in the northeast, and in 1616 established the Later Chin dynasty. In 1636 the dynasty's name was changed to the Great Ch'ing (Ta Ch'ing 大清). After the fall of the Ming in 1644, the Shun-chih emperor (r. 1644–61), with the help of Dorgon (1612–50), established his capital in Beijing, following Ming tradition, and subsequently united the country. Thus in less than thirty years the rulers of a scattered border people were transformed into the rulers of all of China. As the Ch'ing rulers owed much of their success to the use of mounted archers, they had a high respect for horsemanship and archery, skills that were retained as part of the Manchu education. Originally from the northeast, the Manchu rulers were fond of hunting in the wild in all conditions. Consequently, the custom of spring and autumn hunts was carried over into the Ch'ing era, with the emperors camping outdoors, hunting as mounted archers, engaging in organized weapons practice, and disciplining themselves in traditional military techniques. K'ang-hsi (r. 1662–1722), for example, lived in the Ch'ang-ch'un Yüan 暢春園 imperial park for many years. The Yung-cheng emperor began construction of the magnificent Yüan Ming Yüan estate, providing a refuge for the Ch'ing emperors from the summer heat in the Forbidden City. His son, the Ch'ien-lung emperor, not only continued work on the Yüan Ming Yüan, but also expanded the summer retreat at Ch'eng-te 承德.

As in the course of the year the emperor lived by turns in the Forbidden City and at the Yüan Ming Yüan, a second Tsao-pan ch'u was established at the latter location

in the first year of Yung-cheng's reign (1723). In 1725 the two *lang-chung* Chao Yüan 趙元 and Mu Sen 穆森 were entrusted with the direction of the Yüan Ming Yüan's Tsao-pan ch'u. Meanwhile, the Tsao-pan ch'u of the Yang-hsin Tien continued to operate within the Forbidden City. The two offices seem to have been complementary, much like a head office and a branch office. Hence, the Tsao-pan ch'u and the Hua-yüan ch'u were divided between two locations. This arrangement was retained in the Ch'ien-lung period. The Hua-yüan ch'u was in any case subject to changes of location according to the administrative needs of the palace, and in this respect, too, it resembles the Northern Sung Painting Academy.

The function of the Ju-i Kuan is difficult to deduce from its name. It was a four-courtyard building located in the Garden of Twenty Scenes near the east gate of the Yüan Ming Yüan, in the northeast corner of the Tung-t'ien Shen-ch'u 洞天深處 (Depth of the Heavenly Cave) section. In 1736 it was assigned as a workplace, mainly for painters, but the word *tso* was not added to the name of the building. Among the well-known artists attached to the Ju-i Kuan were Shen Yüan 沈源 (active second half of the eighteenth century), Leng Mei, T'ang Tai, Castiglione, Chin K'un 金昆 (active early eighteenth century), and Lu Chan 盧湛. Other personnel attached to the Ju-i Kuan included a number of famous craftsmen, such as the embroiderer (?) (*shang-ssu* 商絲) Han Ch'i-lung 韓起龍, the jade carver Yao Tsung-jen 姚宗仁, the ivory carver Huang Chen-hsiao 黃振效, the root carver Yang Wei-chan 楊維占, and the bamboo carver Feng Ch'i 封岐. It has been said, with some justice, that the Ju-i Kuan was a generalized workshop producing the finest craft objects, but it operated principally as a top-level painting academy, which brought together famous court painters. Here the *yüan-wai lang* Ch'en Mei of the Hua-yüan ch'u collaborated with T'ang Tai and Castiglione on the painting of an imperial audience on New Year's Day (*sui-ch'ao t'u* 歲朝圖).

The emperor's main residence within the Forbidden City was the Yang-hsin Tien palace (to which the Tsao-pan ch'u was attached). Thus, when Ch'ien-lung decided to establish in the Forbidden City another group of workshops similar to the Ju-i Kuan, incorporating both a painting academy and a high-level craft workshop, he chose the Ch'i-hsiang Kung 啟祥宮 (Palace of Beginning Auspiciousness), a palace no more than a hundred paces from the Yang-hsin Tien. The Ch'i-hsiang Kung was situated in the Western Six Palaces (T'ing-hsi liu kung 廷西六宮) complex, and we may consider it to have been comparable to the Tsao-pan ch'u, which was located to the north of the Wu-ying Tien.

From the end of spring to the end of autumn, when there were no ceremonies to conduct, Ch'ien-lung took up residence either at the Yüan Ming Yüan or at Pi-shu Shan-chuang 避暑山莊 (the summer retreat in the mountains). For the rest of the year, he resided in the Forbidden City or went on inspection tours around the country. In the third and the eighth month of each year, the Tsao-pan ch'u, Ch'i-hsiang Kung, and Hua-yüan ch'u would pack up and follow the emperor to the Yüan Ming Yüan and then back again to the Forbidden City. This, too, was in keeping with the Manchu tradition of a nomadic hunting life. The arrangement was retained until 1860, when the Anglo-French forces set fire to the Yüan Ming Yüan and Hsien-feng (r. 1851-61) fled in disarray to take refuge at Ch'eng-te. Thereafter, there is no record of the Tsao-pan ch'u leaving the Forbidden City. At that time the Ch'i-hsiang Kung was renamed the T'ai-chi Tien 太極殿 (Palace of the Absolute), and the Ju-i Kuan was relocated to the western part of the

five northern buildings in that palace. Subsequently, the Manchu rulers gave up their travels in the northeast, and their dynasty entered its decline. This, of course, falls outside the scope of the present article; on the other hand, this brief look at the Tsao-pan ch'u in the late Ch'ing helps us to understand the Painting Academy of the Ch'ien-lung period.

Scholars have long been misled by Ch'ing writers who sometimes confused the Ju-i Kuan with the Ch'i-hsiang Kung. Among these writers was a distant relative of the imperial family, the literary critic Chao Lien 昭楫, who was active during the reigns of Chia-ch'ing and Tao-kuang (1796–1850). In "Ju-i Kuan," the first chapter of his *Hsiao-t'ing hsü-lu* 嘯亭續錄 (*Continuation of Records for the Flute Pavilion*), Chao states:

The Ju-i Kuan is to the south of the Ch'i-hsiang Kung and comprises several buildings. All the craftsmen involved in painting, jade carving, and mounting are to be found there.

The "Biography of T'ang Tai," in the *Ch'ing-shih kao* 清史稿 (*Draft of Ch'ing History*), and "Western Painting and the Early Ch'ing Painting Academy," in Hsiang Ta's 向達 essay "Western Influence on Chinese Art in the Ming and Ch'ing," follow Chao on the matter.<sup>6</sup> What is more, Chao's account prevails among the current staff of the Palace Museum, causing the author no small difficulty in his research.

The name Ch'i-hsiang Kung is not in use today. During the Ming dynasty the palace was called the Wei-yang Kung 未央宮 (Palace of Not Yet Dawn). There the Cheng-te emperor Hsing-hsien 興獻 (r. 1506–21) was born. After Cheng-te's son the Chia-ching emperor (r. 1522–66) ascended the throne he changed the name to Ch'i-hsiang Kung in memory of his father.<sup>7</sup> The name was retained under the Ch'ing until the reign of T'ung-chih (1862–74), when it was renamed the T'ai-chi Tien. As noted earlier the Ch'i-hsiang Kung was no more than a hundred paces from the northeast gate (Chi-hsiang Men 吉祥門 [Gate of Auspiciousness]) of the emperor's principal residence, the Yang-hsin Tien, and was even closer to the northwest gate (Ju-i Men 如意門 [Gate of Fulfilled Wishes]). This was extremely convenient for Ch'ien-lung who, in his free moments, could leave the Yang-hsin Tien by the Ju-i gate and gain access to the Ch'i-hsiang Kung by a road six or seven meters wide. There he would inspect the state of the workshops and give instructions on the artwork. He could thus ensure that the paintings and craftwork satisfied his personal taste. His connoisseurship of calligraphy, painting, jade objects, and carvings in ivory and bamboo testified to his interest in literati art. His contact with painters and craftsmen is reflected in his poetry and prose. The *Ch'ing Records* has no dearth of information on the subject.

The special position of the Ju-i Kuan and the Ch'i-hsiang Kung among the other workplaces can also be seen at the directorial level. For example, Prince I and the chamberlain (*nei ta-ch'en* 內大臣) Hai Wang 海望 often intervened; imperial orders were transmitted to them by the head eunuch; and the directors, some of whom included Liu Shan-chiu 劉山久, T'u La 圖拉, and Lang Cheng-p'ei 郎正培, were Treasury supervisors (*ssu-k'u* 司庫), who ranked 6a on the official scale.

The Ch'ien-lung system of maintaining two painting academies is unusual in the history of imperial painting academies in China. The two were autonomous but complementary, with painters being able to move from one to the other. According to the pressure of work, one organization could temporarily call upon the painters of its counterpart.



Together the Hua-yüan ch'u and Ju-i Kuan boasted several painting studios. For example, in 1736 the Hua-yüan ch'u set up the Ku-wan-p'ien Studio 古玩片畫室 (Studio of Antiques) in the Shen Liu retreat on the grounds of the Yüan Ming Yüan. Four artists, including Chang Wei-pang, painted there for one or two years. Castiglione, who was attached to the Ju-i Kuan, also had his own painting studio at his residence in Hai-tien 海澱, near the Yüan Ming Yüan. It was, in fact, a classroom as well as a painting studio, where five students assigned to him by the Ch'ien-lung emperor studied painting. There was also a studio set up by the Tsao-pan ch'u exclusively for oil painting.

Under the direction of Ch'en Mei and Ho Ta-tzu, more than ten painters were active in the Ch'ien-lung Hua-yüan ch'u, regularly receiving assignments from the emperor himself. Although the Hua-yüan ch'u differed somewhat from Hui-tsung's 徽宗 (r. 1101-25) Painting Academy with its combination of a *hua-hsüeh* 畫學 (school of painting) and an academy, it did resemble the painting academies of the Western Shu and Southern T'ang during the Five Dynasties, as well as those of Chang I-ch'ao 張義潮 at Tun-huang, and of the Southern Sung.

This specifically Manchu double Painting Academy does not account for all the painters at court working to imperial command. There still existed a Hua-tso, which employed two painters to prepare designs for craft objects. And the Fa-lang ch'u (Enamels Department) could also draw on a pool of painters or artisan-painters whose painting was of rather high quality. In terms of the numbers of painters involved, the Fa-lang ch'u was second only to the Hua-yüan ch'u and Ju-i Kuan. During the K'ang-hsi period the palace had established its own cloisonné workshop (variously referred to then as the Fa-lang ch'ang 廠, Fa-lang tso, or Fa-lang ch'u), which continued to operate and even to expand its activities during the Yung-cheng, Ch'ien-lung, and Chia-ch'ing periods, as all the Ch'ing emperors had a particular fondness for cloisonné enamels. The Fa-lang ch'u also employed artists who specialized in enamel painting and were sometimes referred to within the palace as being "of the Painting Academy." For the most part, such artists were introduced into the workshop on the recommendation of officials in Kwang-tung or Chiang-nan. Castiglione, who as we recall belonged to the Ju-i Kuan, also painted in enamels. Tsou Wen-yü 鄒文玉 of the Hua-yüan ch'u was even assigned to the Fa-lang ch'u to specialize in enamel painting. Conversely, Lo Fu-min 羅福旼, an artist working in the Fa-lang ch'u, was assigned to the Hua-yüan ch'u to paint pictures of the "Hundred Objects" 百古圖 for the various palaces. There were, therefore, three concentrations of painters under Tsao-pan ch'u supervision. The painters could of course be moved from one division to another or be ordered to collaborate.

The overlapping of functions, with its consequent movements of painters, posed administrative difficulties. Finally in 1762 the seventh-rank official in charge of the Hua-yüan ch'u, Ho Ta-sai 赫達塞, was assigned to join Hua Shan 花善 in the direction of the Fa-lang ch'u. At the same time all the painters working in the Ch'un-yü Shu-ho (Hua-yüan ch'u) were brought under the Fa-lang ch'u to "work together" (with the Fa-lang ch'u painters). This amounted in fact to the incorporation of the Hua-yüan ch'u director, his subordinates, and the artists under their supervision into the Fa-lang ch'u, where they were given responsibility for executing albums of paintings and New Year's pictures. The Hua yüan-ch'u name abruptly disappears from the *Ch'ing Records* in 1767. It is still found here and there in the Chi-shih lu records for 1767 and even more infrequently in 1768.<sup>8</sup> Thereafter the direction of the Painting Academy was taken over by the

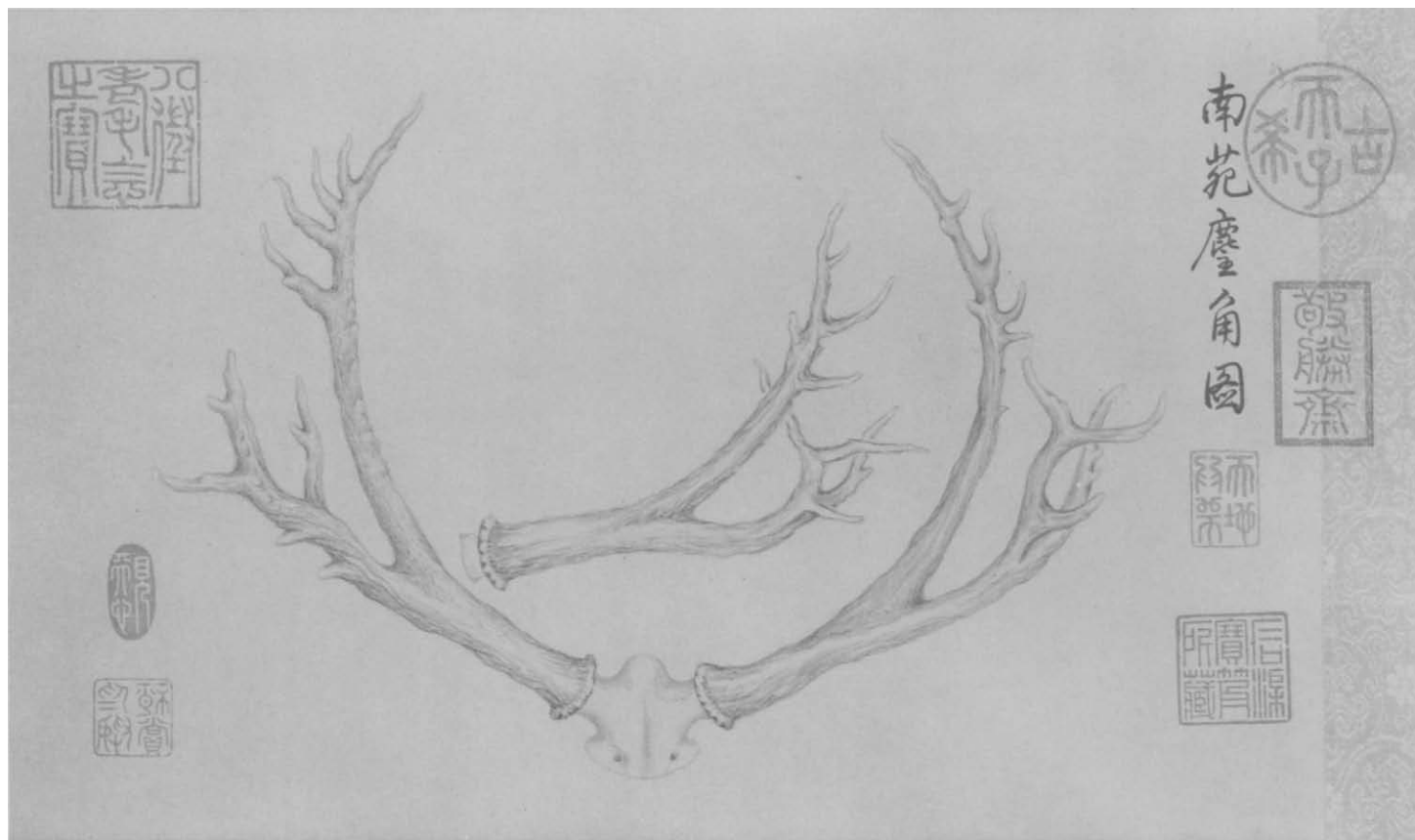


Figure 157. The Ch'ien-lung Emperor (r. 1736–95),  
*Antlers of Père David's Deer*, dated 1767.  
Detail of handscroll, ink and color on paper, H. 24.8 cm.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York;  
Gift of John C. Ferguson, 1913

Ju-i Kuan, at its site in the Ch'i-hsiang Kung. The best-known painters remained there, and over time it became the only Painting Academy. The Fa-lang ch'u played only a token role, painting a few New Year's pictures or helping out on particularly urgent painting projects.

Between 1736, when the Painting Academy's name and the reality it covered were in perfect concordance, and 1768, when the Academy was subsumed under another name, the crucial moment of the transition must have been around 1763. The restructuring and the consequent Painting Academy decline continued into the Chia-ch'ing, Tao-kuang, and Hsien-feng periods. In the first year of T'ung-chih's reign (1862-75) the Ju-i Kuan Painting Academy was transferred to the western end of the Five Northern Buildings 北五所 to the north of the Yen-hsi Kung 延禧宮 (Palace of Prolonging Jubilation), where it remained until the fall of the Ch'ing dynasty in 1911.

During the Ch'ien-lung period there also existed a Lamaist Painting Academy, the Chung-cheng Tien 中正殿 (Hall of Central Uprightness), intimately linked to the Tsao-pan ch'u. Like the Fan-hsiang t'i-chü ssu 梵像提舉司 (Buddhist Images Office) during the Yüan dynasty, it had the responsibility for religious painting and sculpture for the imperial family. From the administrative point of view, the Chung-cheng Tien was a special case and cooperated with the Hua-yüan ch'u and the Ju-i Kuan on certain projects.

To summarize, no clear evidence has yet been found for a Painting Academy during the Shun-chih, K'ang-hsi, or Yung-cheng periods, though it may have existed in practice if not in name. On the other hand, from the first to the twenty-seventh year of Ch'ien-lung's reign (1736-62) there existed a double Painting Academy in the form of the Hua-yüan ch'u and Ju-i Kuan. After the incorporation of the Hua-yüan ch'u into the Fa-lang ch'u, only the Ju-i Kuan was left, a Painting Academy in all but name. In 1860 the Ju-i Kuan Painting Academy was relocated to the Five Northern Buildings in the Forbidden City, where it remained until 1911. This, schematically, is the development of the Ch'ing-dynasty Painting Academy.

### *The Official Title of the Academy Painters—Hua-hua Jen*

During the Ch'ien-lung period, the painters of the Hua-yüan ch'u and Ju-i Kuan entered the Tsao-pan ch'u on the recommendation, to the Imperial Household and the emperor, of certain officials in the provinces. The few foreign missionary painters were an exception. The recommendations tended to come from officials in Kwangtung, Kiangsi, or Soochow: supervisors of customs, tolls, or textile manufacture, and governor-generals and governors. From the beginning of the Yung-cheng period onward, the painters recruited in the south were no longer referred to as *nan-chiang* 南匠 (southern craftsmen) but as *hua-hua jen* 畫畫人 (literally, painters of paintings). The name was retained in the Ch'ien-lung period.

The *hua-hua jen* did not usually belong to the official government hierarchy. In this respect they differed from the painters in the Sung Han-lin t'u-hua yüan 翰林圖畫院, with their red-and-purple robes and jade girdles, and from the Ming court painters, who were given military rank. From the administrative point of view the *hua-hua jen* were better treated than the *nan-chiang*, being painting officials in the service of the Painting Academy—neither artisans (*chi-shu-kuan* 技術官) nor Guards of the Embroidered Uniform (*chin-i wei-kuan yüan* 錦衣衛官員). It was as if they were master artists who sold

their skills in the form of objects presented to the emperor, who in turn bestowed upon them a fixed stipend or occasional favor.

The Ch'ien-lung Painting Academy inherited a number of its senior *hua-hua jen* from the Yung-cheng or even K'ang-hsi periods. Castiglione, T'ang Tai, Ch'en Mei, Shen Yüan, and Ting Kuan-p'eng all continued to be very active and were in high favor. In 1737 Yü Hsing 余省, Chou K'un 周覲, and Yü Chih 余穉 were summoned to the court from Soochow. Thereafter the number of artists was increased every few years.

In Yung-cheng the highest remuneration received by *hua-hua jen* was the 11 *liang* 兩 of silver per month that went to Ting Kuan-p'eng, who in 1726 was paid a *ch'ien-liang* 錢糧 (allowance) of 8 *liang* and a *kung-fei* 公費 (stipend) of 3 *liang*. Other artists got altogether 8 or 6 *liang*, and this salary level was the norm into the early years of Ch'ien-lung. In his sixth year (1741), the fifteen *hua-hua jen* in the Hua-yüan ch'u were classed into three grades. The first grade consisted of the six painters, Chin K'un, Sun Hu 孫祜, Ting Kuan-p'eng, Chang Yü-sen 張雨森, Yü Hsing, and Chou K'un, who were entitled to 11 *liang* per month, a *ch'ien-liang* of 8 and a *kung-fei* of 3. There were four painters in the second grade—Wu Kuei 吳桂, Yü Chih, Ch'eng Chih-tao 程志道, and Chang Wei-pang—whose salary came to 9 *liang*, 6 as *ch'ien-liang* and 3 as *kung-fei*. Finally, the five painters of the third grade, Tai Hung 戴洪, Lu Chan, Wu Yü 吳棫, Tai Cheng 戴正, and Hsü T'ao 徐燾, received a salary of 7 *liang*, 4 for the *ch'ien-liang* and 3 for the *kung-fei*. The salaries of *hua-hua jen* in both the Hua-yüan ch'u and the Ju-i Kuan were fixed according to this scale from then on.

From time to time Ch'ien-lung himself made an exception. For example, on the twenty-third day of the third month of the lunar year 1745, he reprimanded the chamberlain Hai Wang as follows: "What negligence! The *ch'ien-liang* of the *nan-chiang* [referring to the *hua-hua jen*] is even higher than the salary of the officials." On this occasion he lowered the monthly salary of the second-grade *hua-hua jen* Yü Chih and the third-grade Tai Hung and Wu Yü by 1 *liang* of both their *ch'ien-liang* and *kung-fei* payments. The reasons behind Ch'ien-lung's reprimand of Hai Wang are not directly relevant to the present article, but his comments on salaries seem to have some foundation. The *Ch'ing Records* for 1744 notes that Lang Cheng-p'ei, the Treasury supervisor (rank 6a) director of the Ju-i Kuan, received a salary for the year of 120 *liang*, made up of an official salary of 60 *liang* and a special supplement of the same amount. His monthly salary thus amounted to 10 *liang*, 1 *liang* less than a *hua-hua jen* of the first grade earned. To make another comparison, a Treasury supervisor as a rank 6a official would normally, according to the salary regulations of the Board of Revenue, receive 60 *liang* of silver and 60 *hu* 斛 of rice.<sup>9</sup> A rank-5 official received 80 *liang* and 80 *hu* of rice.<sup>10</sup> Given that 2 *hu* equal 1 *picul* (*tan* 石), and that 1 *picul* of rice was equivalent to 1 *liang* of silver (see below), the fifth-rank official in the capital had a yearly salary of 120 *liang*, i.e., again slightly less than a *hua-hua jen* of the first grade. Of course such comparisons are of only limited validity since it is difficult to know how much the two types of appointee received in practice.

However, as to whether the salary of the *hua-hua jen* was in the absolute high or low, comparisons can be made with the cost of living in town and country. There are some relevant descriptions in a novel of slightly earlier date, *The Dream of the Red Chamber* (*Hung-lou meng* 紅樓夢). We may also consult the *Ch'ing hui-tien shih-li* 清會典事例 (*Anthology of Ch'ing Laws and Institutions: Cases*), which records that during the Ch'ien-lung

period each province, prefecture, department, and district maintained a Yang-chi Yüan 養濟院 (Office of Charity) to aid the poor. The amount of aid given to each individual varied from place to place. For example, Anhui's extra aid to the poor in 1738 was set at 1 *fen* 分 of silver per head per day, giving a total of 3 *liang* and 6 *ch'ien* 錢 for the year, adjusted in event of irregular years. The whole country gradually adopted a single system and where necessary raised the aid to this level. There was, of course, an abyss separating the *hua-hua jen* from the destitute section of the population.

The price of rice mentioned above in reference to painters' salaries in fact varied during the Ch'ien-lung period according to the year and place. In 1736 a *picul* of rice in Fu-chou Prefecture in Fukien Province was worth 9 *ch'ien*; in the Chien-p'ing and Chien-ning prefectures, on the other hand, the price was 8 *ch'ien*. Three years later, in Ch'ang-p'u Prefecture in Chekiang Province, rice was being sold at 1 *liang* and 4 *ch'ien* a *picul*. In 1740 the price ranged from 6 *ch'ien* to 1 *liang* in the Hu-kuang region. In 1742 unhulled rice (*ku-mi* 穀米) in the official granary at Ch'ing-chou Prefecture was evaluated at 1 *liang* per *picul*. In the eastern provinces the price of unhulled rice rose consistently until the *picul* cost 6 or 7 *ch'ien* or more.<sup>11</sup> In the principal rice-producing areas of the early Ch'ien-lung period, unhulled rice was at 6 or 7 *ch'ien* per *picul*, while hulled rice varied from 8 *ch'ien* to 1 *liang* and 4 *ch'ien*. The price of rice can therefore be said to have turned around the 1-*liang* mark. However, in 1759 the selling price set by the granary of the provincial forces of Chih-li Province was 8 *ch'ien* for unhulled rice and 1 *liang*, 6 *ch'ien* for hulled rice.<sup>12</sup> Whereas a single *liang* of a *hua-hua jen*'s salary could buy a *picul* of rice in early Ch'ien-lung, by the middle of the reign, the price of rice had risen without a corresponding rise in a painter's salary to compensate for the decline in purchasing power.

From the above we can see that the *hua-hua jen* were, all things considered, rather well paid. Moreover, apart from their monthly salary, they were also eligible for supplementary rewards similar to today's bonuses. For example, if a painting was well done and particularly appreciated by Ch'ien-lung, he might award the painter a prize. Thus in the opening month of the lunar year 1741, the emperor awarded two pieces of *ta-tuan* 大緞 (fine) satin, sapphire blue in color, to Leng Mei, and two pieces of satin for official use to Shen Yüan. In the twelfth month Ch'en Mei, Sun Hu, and Chin K'un were each awarded one piece of *ta-tuan* satin, and Ch'eng Chih-tao and Tai Hung each one piece of satin for official use. In 1739 Ch'ien-lung awarded one piece of satin to Chang Yü-sen. On the most notable occasion Leng Mei received 50 *liang* of silver, and Castiglione received 100.

Cases of absence or illness were also taken into consideration. If a *hua-hua jen* was ill for a month, he had his *ch'ien-liang* cut by half. On the other hand, if he asked for leave of absence to return home he could in some cases retain his full *ch'ien-liang*. This was true in the case of Chin T'ing-piao. Chin entered the Ju-i Kuan in 1757 with a monthly salary made up of a *ch'ien-liang* of 3 *liang* and a *kung-fei* also of 3 *liang*. In 1761, because he was "talented and hard-working," he was promoted to first-grade *hua-hua jen*. On the death of his father in 1763, which required him to return home, "by the kindness of His Majesty, the *ch'ien-liang* continued to be issued."

Some *hua-hua jen* were able to benefit from official housing, as in the case of Leng Mei, Ch'eng Chih-tao, Wu Kuei, Yeh Lü-feng 葉履豐, and Ting Kuan-p'eng. There was also a regulation stipulating that the craftsmen in the various workshops of the Tsao-pan ch'u were entitled to a ration of forty meals (*fen-li-fan* 份例飯) per month for their

daily breakfast. During the period of the year when the Tsao-pan ch'u was installed at the Yüan Ming Yüan, twenty supplementary meals were added to enable the workmen to eat both a morning and evening meal. This "rice ration" must also have been available to the *hua-hua jen*.

If an artist turned out to be untalented or unproductive, became too old to work, or was bedridden from illness, then he was penalized or dismissed. In 1737 Ch'en Shan 陳善, Ch'en Min 陳敏, and Chin Chieh 金玠 were all dismissed. In 1746 the *hua-hua jen* Fu Wen 傅雯 lost his *kung-fei* for reason of laziness which rendered him "unworthy of his post." In 1759 Wu Kuei and two others were fined two months of their *ch'ien-liang*. The Ch'ien-lung emperor thus penalized as well as rewarded the *hua-hua jen*, but the latter treatment outweighed the former. There is no known record of the persecution of a *hua-hua jen*: certainly, there were no attacks on imperial painters of the kind engaged in by the founder of the Ming dynasty. During the reign of the latter emperor, Chao Yüan 趙原 (d. 1372), for example, was convicted for having disappointed the emperor; and Sheng Chu 盛著 (active late fourteenth century) was publicly executed because the emperor was unhappy with his wall painting *The Jellyfish Riding a Dragon* (*Shui-mu ch'eng lung* 水母乘龍) in the T'ien-chieh temple 天界寺.<sup>13</sup> Ch'ien-lung, on the other hand, was rather generous and tolerant in his treatment of the *hua-hua jen*.

In addition to the directors, their subordinates, and the *hua-hua jen* themselves, three other categories of personnel were attached to the Hua-yüan ch'u and the Ju-i Kuan: the *pai-t'ang-a* 栢唐阿 (apprentices), and two groups of trainees, the *hsüeh-shou pai-t'ang-a* 學手栢唐阿 and the *hsüeh-t'u*. *Pai-t'ang-a* is the Chinese transliteration of the Manchu term for office attendant without official rank,<sup>14</sup> *wu-p'in-chi t'ing-ch'ai jen* 無品級聽差人. *Pai-t'ang-a* were assigned to the different workshops in the Tsao-pan ch'u, where their duties varied. Some were responsible for supervising the craftsmen's work, but in the Painting Academy they were painters or apprentices. The *Ch'ing Records* for 1752 states that the *hua-hua pai-t'ang-a* 畫畫栢唐阿 (painter-apprentices) Chang Lien 張廉, Fu Hai 福海, I Lan-t'ai 伊蘭太, and Te Shu 德舒 were to be awarded an extra 2 *liang* per month. The six new *hua-hua pai-t'ang-a*, Ch'ang Sheng 常昇, Wang Ping 王炳, Wang Ju-hsüeh 王儒學, Man Tou 滿斗, Te Ch'ang 德昌, and A-k'o-chang-a 阿克章阿, were awarded 1 *liang*.

The apprentices were originally *su-la* 蘇拉 (workmen) in the households of the Three Banners (San-ch'i 三旗), who were chosen when young to enter the Hua-yüan ch'u or Ju-i Kuan. The *su-la* were general workmen, the lowest grade of bannermen (*ch'i-jen* 旗人), but once they were chosen to enter the Hua-yüan ch'u or Ju-i Kuan they were immediately promoted to *pai-t'ang-a* and became entitled to a humble salary. After a few years of apprenticeship those who succeeded were promoted to *hua-hua pai-t'ang-a* or *hua-hua jen*. Wang Ping was one such artist who received his training from Chang Tsung-ts'ang 張宗蒼 (1686-1756); however, he died young. Deeply affected by his death, Ch'ien-lung inscribed one of his paintings, *After Chao Po-chü's "Spring Mountains"* (*Fang Chao Po-chü "Ch'un-shan t'u"* 仿趙伯駒春山圖), with a poem and this note: "Wang Ping was an apprentice in the Painting Academy who had great potential but regrettably passed away just after finishing his training." Castiglione was ordered to train artists in oil painting, and over a period of time accepted more than ten apprentices chosen from the *su-la*. This group of artists also specialized in *hsien-fa hua* 線法畫 (perspective drawing). By the later Ch'ien-lung period, most of the trainee *pai-t'ang-a* and painter *pai-t'ang-a* had

become full *hua-hua jen* in the Ju-i Kuan. None of them, however, produced work of particularly high quality. On the other hand, the fact that Manchu bannermen were so well represented among the *hua-hua jen* in the Ju-i Kuan is a notable characteristic of the Ch'ien-lung Painting Academy.

The titles of the Academy painters thus include the two categories of *hua-hua jen* (itself divided into three grades) and *hua-hua pai-t'ang-a*. The trainee *pai-t'ang-a* and the apprentices were not considered full painters. This hierarchy is roughly similar to that of the Sung Painting Academy as can be seen from the following table:

Sung Han-lin t'u-hua yüan 宋翰林圖畫院 (Sung Han-lin Painting Academy)	Hua-yüan ch'u 畫院處 (Painting Academy Office)  Ju-i Kuan 如意館 (House of Fulfilled Wishes)
Tai-chao 待詔 (Painters-in-Attendance)	Hua-hua jen 畫畫人 (Painters; grades 1, 2)  Hua-yüan kung-feng 畫院供奉 (Attendants in the Painting Academy)
I-hsüeh 藝學 (Assistant Painters)	Hua-hua jen (Painters; grades 2, 3)  Hua-yüan kung-feng
Chih-hou 祇候 (Apprentices)	Hua-hua pai-t'ang-a 畫畫柏唐阿 (Painter-Apprentices)  Hua-yüan kung-feng hou-hsüan 畫院供奉候選 (Candidate Attendants in the Painting Academy)
Hsüeh-sheng 學生 (Trainees)	Hsüeh-shou pai-t'ang-a 學手柏唐阿 (Trainee pai-t'ang-a)  Hsüeh-t'u 學徒 (Trainee)

In both the Hua-yüan ch'u and the Ju-i Kuan, the *hua-hua jen* had no official government rank, nor was there any prescribed periodic advancement. But the emperor did make an exception in the case of some particularly excellent *hua-hua jen* by appointing them to nominal government posts. In the K'ang-hsi period T'ang Tai by imperial favor was granted the honor of *hua chuang-yüan* 畫狀元 (highest-ranking painter), and in Yung-cheng he was appointed commandant of cavalry (*chi tu-wei* 騎都尉), seventh-rank hereditary noble, rank 4 on the official scale. Ch'en Mei was a *yüan-wai lang* (rank 5b), and Chin K'un a rank-7 official. The custom continued into the Ch'ien-lung period, when it benefited a number of artists. In 1743, for example, Fu Wen became a specially appointed *hsiao-chi hsiao* 驍騎校 ([banner] lieutenant). Chang Tsung-ts'ang, who entered the Ju-i Kuan in 1751, was also appointed to a rank-6a position in 1754, that of *hu-pu chu-shih* 戶部主事 (secretary of the Board of Revenue). Chin T'ing-piao entered the Ju-i Kuan in 1757 and was posthumously given the post of a rank-7 official in 1765. The missionary Castiglione, as a *feng ch'en-yüan ch'ing* 奉宸苑卿 (director of imperial parks), was an official

of the third rank; after his death he was posthumously promoted to the even higher position of *shih-lang* 侍郎 (vice minister). In a letter Attiret mentions that Ch'ien-lung had spoken of appointing him to an official post, but that he had opposed the idea. This use of exceptional procedures differs from Hui-tsung's Painting Academy, where the ranks of *tai-chao*, *i-hsüeh*, and *chih-hou* were granted according to seniority.<sup>15</sup>

The European missionary painters in the Ch'ien-lung Painting Academy included Giuseppe Castiglione (Lang Shih-ning), Jean-Denis Attiret (Wang Chih-ch'eng), P. Ignace Sichelbarth (Ai Ch'i-meng), Joannes Damascenus (An Te-i 安德意), Joseph Panzi (P'an T'ing-chang 潘廷章), and Louis de Por (Ho Ch'ing-t'ai 賀清泰). The treatment of Western missionaries by the Ch'ing court was rather favorable. When the emperor gave them permission to enter the court, he at the same time made them a gift of a mouseskin gown, a gray mouseskin jacket, and a piece of Nanking silk. In the event of their death at court, 200 *liang* of silver and ten pieces of satin were allotted for the funeral arrangements. Within the Painting Academy, the European painters, too, were called *hua-hua jen*, but there is no record of their having received a *ch'ien-liang* or *kung-fei* paid in silver. The missionaries came to China with the aim of preaching Christianity and hoped, by their practice of science and art in the court, to win the favor of the emperor and thus facilitate and gain a privileged position for their missionary work. In this respect they all to one degree or another achieved their goal, while at the same time disseminating their scientific and artistic skills. Ch'ien-lung particularly appreciated the oil-painting techniques of Castiglione and Attiret, as well as a new technique that they developed for him, consisting of the use of Chinese brush and ink according to the methods of oil painting. The emperor regularly displayed his pleasure by gifts or by appointments to official positions.

If a painter was to become a *hua-hua jen* in the Painting Academy, he usually had to be officially recommended by the governor-general or governor of Kwangtung, the superintendent of customs for Kwangtung (appointed from the Imperial Household), the official responsible for the Chiu-chiang River toll in Kiangsi, or the superintendent of the Imperial Manufactory at Soochow (also appointed from the Imperial Household). This local nomination of *hua-hua jen* or *nan-chiang* generally followed an order from Ch'ien-lung. The nominee's case was then taken under consideration by the overall director of the Tsao-pan ch'u, following which the Academy placed him on probation. Finally, the official register of painters' names and examples of the painter's work were presented together to Ch'ien-lung for his consideration. Painters who were approved were given the *ch'ien-liang* of an ungraded *hua-hua jen*.

In other cases the Tsao-pan ch'u proposed the name of a son, brother, or student of a painter already in the Academy. Among the *hua-hua jen* who followed this path were Leng Mei's son Leng Chien, Wang Chieh's 王玠 son Wang Yu-hsüeh 王幼學, Shen Yüan's son Shen Pin 沈斌, Chin K'un's student Ch'eng Liang 程梁, Leng Mei's student Yao Wen-han, and Wang Yu-hsüeh's brother, Wang Ju-hsüeh. Yet others gained the emperor's permission to enter the court by directly presenting him with examples of their work. Chang Tsung-ts'ang, for example, submitted his *Sixteen Views of the Region of Wu* (*Wu-chung shih-liu ching* 吳中十六景) to Ch'ien-lung during the emperor's southern tour in 1751. The paintings met with approval, and Chang was summoned to court. Chin T'ing-piao seized the opportunity of Ch'ien-lung's southern tour to present a painting of lohans in the *pai-miao* 白描 (line-drawing) technique. The emperor appreciated



the painting and ordered Chin to enter the Ju-i Kuan. Finally, Hsü Yang 徐揚 submitted a painting and was also assigned to the Ju-i Kuan. All three painters were awarded the *chü-jen* 舉人 (provincial-graduate) degree and appointed to the position of *nei-ko chung-shu* 內閣中書 (secretary of the Grand Secretariat, rank 7b). This privileged treatment was intended to distinguish them as literati *hua-hua jen*. Ch'ien-lung was guided by a sense of propriety: he did not lightly make appointments to government posts.

### *The Hua-hua Jen at Work*

Painting for imperial use was the work of painters under the direct control of the emperor, who gave specific orders to have paintings undertaken. The artists strove to imbue their work with the intentions, wishes, and taste of a powerful ruler. It is in this sense that there is often said to be a strong courtly character to the paintings. The *Ch'ing Records* for the Ch'ien-lung period has preserved numerous accounts of the ways in which the emperor ensured that the *hua-hua jen* carried out his wishes and gave form to his ideas. A few examples will give a rough picture of the situation.

1a. On the nineteenth day of the opening month of 1737, the *hua-hua jen* Shen Yüan came and said: "The eunuch Hu Shih-chieh 胡世傑 has passed down an imperial order to have T'ang Tai and others paint a *Pin-feng t'u* 豳風圖 [illustrations to the 'Odes of Pin']. Respect these orders."

1b. On the twelfth day of the fourth month of the same year, the *hua-hua jen* Shen Yüan handed over the finished *Pin-feng t'u* to the eunuch Hu Shih-chieh for presentation to the throne.

2a. On the fourteenth day of the fourth month of the same year the eunuch Han Ko 憨格 handed over three poems from the imperial hand, with orders to illustrate the poems in a painting. Ch'en Mei was assigned to paint the figures, T'ang Tai the trees and rocks, and Sun Hu the architecture, using the ruled-line technique.

2b. On the eighth day of the sixth month of the same year, the illustration of the emperor's three poems was completed and handed over by T'ang Tai to the eunuch Han Ko for presentation to the throne.

3. On the first day of the second month of the third year of Ch'ien-lung [1738], the Hua-yüan ch'u handed over to the eunuchs Mao T'uan 毛團 and Hu Shih-chieh for inspection a preliminary version of twelve portraits of great kings and sagacious emperors (*sheng-ti ming-wang t'u* 聖帝明王圖) by Leng Mei. The paintings were approved, and permission given to proceed with the final version of the album. Respect these orders.

These records show that the *hua-hua jen* conformed to a three-stage procedure in their painting commissions: an order was given, the preliminary version was prepared and checked, and finally the completed painting was inspected.

When required to record a specific event, the *hua-hua jen* were sent to observe and make the necessary preliminary sketches. Ting Kuan-p'eng, for example, was sent in

1747 to Jehol, where, on the thirteenth day of the eighth month, he observed the important ceremonial banquet for Mongolian princes and nobles. Similarly, on the third day of the second month of the lunar year 1748, the Hua-yüan ch'u received orders to

assign Chin K'un and Ting Kuan-p'eng to paint handscrolls of the festivities on the ice which they observed today at Ying-t'ai 瀛臺. Each [artist] is to paint one handscroll, and submit a preliminary version for viewing. When permission has been given, they may continue with the paintings. Respect these orders.

Another example dates from the seventh day of the fifth month of 1754. On this occasion, the Ch'eng-en duke (Ch'eng-en *kung* 承恩公), Te Pao 德保, personally ordered Attiret to travel to Pi-shu Shan-chuang and take part in an important political event, a banquet for the Tu-er-po-t'e 杜爾伯特 special envoy, San-ch'e-ling 三車凌. The way that Attiret went about observing the event and noting his subject matter in sketches, together with Ch'ien-lung's requirements for his work, is discussed in some detail in the collected letters of the Jesuits.<sup>16</sup> The author has already presented this material in a separate article (see note 14). The documentary importance of this type of painting led the emperor to pay it particular attention. He made exceptional arrangements for its undertaking, both in terms of the number of artists involved and the facilities they were afforded.

In his attention to the work of the *hua-hua jen*, Ch'ien-lung exercised rather tight control. For portraits of the "imperial visage" (*yü-jung* 御容), the empress dowager, the empress, and the princesses, he generally assigned the responsibility to artists who excelled in portraiture: Castiglione, Attiret, Sichelbarth, de Por, Ting Kuan-p'eng, or Yao Wen-han. Only after inspection and approval of a preliminary version was the painter permitted to officially undertake the full painting. The portraits of the imperial visage in all sorts of contexts ordered by Ch'ien-lung during his lifetime number in the hundreds. They tend to show him participating in, for example, banquets for the nobility of the non-Han peoples, autumn hunts, military reviews, his southern tours, or ritual ceremonies. They are by no means restricted to the single genre of the *ying-hsiang* 影像 portrait (portrait with shadows).

Ch'ien-lung also took a special interest in the work of painters whom he particularly liked, examining both the preliminary and final versions himself. Of course, there are two sides to the examination of preliminary versions, and as yet we have only considered the question from the emperor's angle. From the point of view of the artist it is perfectly understandable that as a subject, deeply grateful for the emperor's kindness, he would have devoted all his energies to giving him satisfaction. He would willingly have presented his work for the "imperial viewing," and only after receiving the emperor's gracious approval would he have felt at ease to go on with the painting.

Although Ch'ien-lung was first and foremost an active politician, he also indulged his pleasures to the full. Temporary palaces, gardens, and temples were constructed in great numbers for the purposes of his wide-ranging inspection tours. In the Forbidden City, too, there was a flurry of construction and repairs, including the expansion of the Ning-shou Kung 寧壽宮 (Palace of Repose and Longevity) by a large complex of new buildings, the legacy of which is a treasure house of superb eighteenth-century architecture. The painters in the Hua-yüan ch'u and the Ju-i Kuan also expended enormous energy and care on painting for interior decoration. The following example, in no way

exceptional, comes from the *Ch'ing Records* of 1751 for the Mounting Shop. An order was sent down to "have the Tsao-pan ch'u prepare paintings on white silk for 586 panels in various parts of the T'ang-shan 湯山 temporary palace." The six halls of the palace required, respectively, 204 paintings for the Shui-ching Ch'iu-shuang 水鏡秋霜 (Water Mirror, Autumn Frost) Hall; 53 for the Ch'eng-huai Kuan-tao 澄懷觀道 (Cleansing the Mind, Observing the Tao) Hall; 73 for the Fan Lien Hui 汎連暉 (Overflowing Water Joining Brightness) Hall; 103 for the Sui An Shih 隨安室 (Studio of Feeling at Ease); 124 for the Yüan-shen Yü-ch'ing 淵深玉清 (Deep Water, Clear Jade) Hall; and 29 for the Lan Pi Tien 瀾碧殿 (Hall of Billowy Azure). The paintings were supplied by *hua-hua jen* in the Ch'un-yü Shu-ho studios of the Hua-yüan ch'u and the Ju-i Kuan. In such cases of paintings for wall decoration, the emperor gave the initial order but took no further interest.

There was another, more informal type of commission which gave the *hua-hua jen* a better chance to display their talents. On the ninth day of the first month of 1741, the eunuch Mao T'uan handed over a handscroll entitled *Early Morning in Spring at the Han Palace* (*Han-kung ch'un-hsiao t'u* 漢宮春曉圖), with the following orders: "To be given to Shen Yüan to copy in color. If there are features to be added or omitted he may make the required changes." This gave Shen Yüan the flexibility of making his own decisions in a painting that was not simply a tracing copy. Shen's handscroll is not at all the same as the original, and required almost nine months of work.

On the fifteenth day of the eleventh month in the same year, the eunuch Mao T'uan transmitted an order to T'ang Tai, Castiglione, and Ch'en Mei to deliberate over the painting of an imperial audience on New Year's Day. The preliminary version was not inspected, and on the twenty-fifth day of the following month Ch'en Mei submitted the finished painting, bringing the assignment to a close. Such a smooth passage of the whole process was possible because Ch'ien-lung had confidence in the exceptional abilities and experience of the three painters involved. They were thus able to complete the assignment without close supervision. Another similar example is recorded for the seventh day of the third month of 1736, when Mao T'uan transmitted the order to "give Leng Mei eight pieces of painting silk and have him paint them as he wishes." Leng Mei, deeply grateful, painted eight works with a range of different subjects.<sup>17</sup> Shen Yüan presented the paintings to the emperor as they were completed on five separate occasions.

Following Ch'ien-lung's accession to the throne, the *hua-hua jen* who had already become well known in the Yung-cheng period all took the initiative in seeking opportunities to serve him. When given assignments, therefore, they devoted all their energy to completing the imperial commissions as rapidly as possible. They also expressed at appropriate moments their desire to submit paintings to the emperor. The emperor's birthday fell on the thirteenth day of the eighth month and, under the name of the Festival of Infinite Longevity (*wan-shou chieh* 萬壽節), was the grandest celebration of the time. On the twenty-first of the preceding month, Commandant of Cavalry T'ang Tai, *yüan-wai lang* Ch'en Mei, and simple *hua-hua jen* Shen Yüan proposed, through the Ju-i Kuan, to execute three birthday paintings. The Ju-i Kuan informed the *chien-ch'a yü-shih* Shen Yü and *yüan-wai lang* Man Pi, directors of the Tsao-pan ch'u, who gave their permission. On the day of the festival the *yüan-wai lang* presented the three completed paintings for longevity (*wan-shou t'u* 萬壽圖).

Another important celebration was the Dragon-Boat Festival (fifth day of the fifth

month). On the fourteenth day of the fourth month, the Hua-yüan ch'u informed Shen Yü and another director of the Tsao-pan ch'u, San-yin-pao, that four of its *hua-hua jen*, including Chang Wei-pang and Ting Kuan-p'eng, wished to collaborate on a painting on silk 6 *ch'ih* 尺 high by 3 *ch'ih* wide for the festival. Permission was granted and the work was completed after only ten days, on the twenty-sixth of the month. Thereupon the *ling-ts'ui* 領催 (head foreman) Pai Shih-hsiu 白世秀 handed over the painting to the eunuch Mao T'uan for presentation to Ch'ien-lung. In a final example, T'ang Tai, Castiglione, and Shen Yüan informed the Ju-i Kuan that for the New Year's Festival each man wished to paint a work on silk to be presented to the throne. Permission to proceed was received from Shen Yü, Man Pi, and Ch'ang Pao in the Tsao-pan ch'u, and the paintings were presented on the twenty-seventh day of the same (twelfth) month. The first examples of this type of procedure can be seen in the *Ch'ing Records* for the Yung-cheng period, and it became all the more common in Ch'ien-lung, when the well-known *hua-hua jen* did not lightly let slip a good opportunity for serving the emperor.

Although constantly occupied with affairs of state, Ch'ien-lung still found time to appreciate painting, even taking up the brush himself for literary compositions and calligraphy. Furthermore, he set up the Hua-yüan ch'u and Ju-i Kuan to bring together numerous painters to create and copy paintings for his pleasure. Not only were the artists well treated but the emperor also maintained the initial momentum of his Painting Academy by regular recruitment of apprentices to expand and strengthen it. All of this merits admiration.

It has to be noted that Ch'ien-lung also meddled in the painters' work, which, nevertheless, could not have occurred without the emperor's direct encouragement. For example, when Ch'ien-lung held a banquet for three important officials at Jehol in 1754, he invited Attiret to participate in activities lasting about fifty days. While Attiret was working on sketches for a painting of the event, the *Ceremonial Banquet in the Garden of Ten Thousand Trees* (*Wan-shu yüan tz'u-yen t'u* 萬樹園賜宴圖), Ch'ien-lung visited him from time to time. He not only instructed and encouraged Attiret by his praise to overcome all the difficulties in completing the painting, but also posed as a model for him. That Ch'ien-lung had shown great concern for a foreign missionary painter and his work was widely remarked upon. In the case of oil painting, the emperor was both fascinated and put off by the effect of relief derived from the technique of chiaroscuro. He greatly appreciated the three-dimensionality it achieved but detested the strong contrasts of light and dark, particularly in the shadows of the face. He insisted that the Jesuit painters make changes in their technique, to the point of going to Castiglione's studio to watch him work and urge him to avoid a Western manner in his oil painting. In the face of this harsh and almost unreasonable demand, Castiglione had no choice but to obey if he was to maintain his foothold at court. He accommodated Ch'ien-lung's wishes and learned to use Chinese brush and ink, pigments, paper, and silk. By eliminating shadows, he reduced the strong contrasts of light and dark found in oil painting. A new technique, combining Chinese and Western elements, was thus invented. Not only did the innovation meet with Ch'ien-lung's approval, but it was subsequently established as the standard technique for Western missionary painters. Attiret, Sichelbarth, and the others were obliged to study and blindly imitate the technique, with the result that their works are stylistically almost identical. Ch'ien-lung also held Western perspective in great esteem. Under the name of *hsien-fa hua*, perspective drawing was widely used in decorating the

walls of ornamental rooms. The emperor even required the Chinese painters Ting Kuang-p'eng, Wang Yu-hsüeh, Tai Cheng, and Chang Wei-pang, and the young *su-la* apprentices to study both oil painting and perspective drawing. Consequently, the two techniques became a specialization within the Painting Academy, one which, moreover, endured.

Ch'ien-lung held the work of the painters, particularly the more famous *hua-hua jen* and the painter-officials, in rather high regard. The *Ch'ing Records* regularly includes examples of paintings by *hua-hua jen* which were mounted as handscrolls or hanging scrolls and carefully preserved. When the emperor liked a painting he would inscribe it a number of times and put it in the collection of the Ch'ien-ch'ing Kung 乾清宮 (Palace of Heavenly Purity), Yang-hsin Tien, or Ch'ung-hua Kung 重華宮 (Palace of Double Brilliance). His own poetry also included judgments and praise of works by such famous *hua-hua jen* as T'ang Tai, Ting Kuan-p'eng, Yü Hsing, Castiglione, Chang Yü-sen, Yao Wen-han, Ts'ao K'uei-yin 曹夔音, Chang Tsung-ts'ang, Chin T'ing-piao, Ku Ch'üan 顧誼, Chia Ch'üan 賈全, Hsü Yang, Fang Tsung 方琮 (ca. 1749–90), Yang Ta-chang, Wang Ping, and Huang Tseng 黃增.

A great many of these artists' paintings were used for interior decoration. To speak sweepingly of painting for interior decoration is perhaps overly pejorative. Although these innumerable works gave similar decorative results, the connotations of the imagery were far from homogeneous. There were insipid landscapes, auspicious "longevity" paintings, gorgeous images of plants and flowers, decadent "paintings of beauties," and so on. Some were from the hands of masters, but most were works of uneven artistic quality painted by the most average *hua-hua jen* or *pai-t'ang-a*. With the passage of time, most of the horizontal panels, paintings pasted to the wall, and the like have been thrown away. On the other hand, there are some well-preserved paintings which depict the imperial visage and are of great historical and documentary value. Examples include the *Ceremonial Banquet in the Garden of Ten Thousand Trees*, *Equestrian Games* (*Ma-chi t'u* 馬伎圖), *Hunting in the Snow* (*Hsüeh lieh t'u* 雪獵圖), *Illustrations to Ts'ung-po's Poems* (*Ts'ung-po shih-i t'u* 叢薄詩意圖), and paintings of the autumn hunts. The fact that these decorative works have managed to survive has to be related to instructions given by Ch'ien-lung himself. He noticed that the decorative paintings in the palaces, gardens, and parks often included works by deceased *hua-hua jen*, which risked damage if exposed for too long a period. He therefore ordered *hua-hua jen* of the time to paint replacement versions, retaining the original dimensions. The originals, meanwhile, were removed from the walls, remounted as scrolls, and carefully preserved. Some such paintings have survived to the present day as part of the collection of the Palace Museum.

The mention of the Ch'ing Painting Academy usually brings to mind the emperor's control over the painters and his treatment of their work as a simple diversion of ephemeral value. In the past little has been said of the other side of the question—the emperor's real concern for the Academy and Academy painting. Particularly in view of the Ch'ing dynasty's autocratic cultural policy, its huge "literary inquisition" and persecution of literati, one is all the more likely to pay attention to the oppressive and meddling aspect of Ch'ien-lung's activity and pass over his positive contribution. To do so, however, only hinders a full understanding of the Ch'ing Painting Academy.

*The Relation of Painter-Officials to the Painting Academy*

"Painter-officials" (the Chinese term *han-lin hua-chia* is explained below, toward the end of this final section) were civil officials of varying importance who had a talent for painting and came into contact with the emperor on this basis. They regularly presented their calligraphy and painting to the throne, either to seek favor or in response to an imperial command. From the administrative point of view they were under separate jurisdiction from the Painting Academy. On the other hand, they were not ordinary officials, in that they painted many works for the emperor, some of which have survived. These artists have sometimes been called "palace painters" (*kung-t'ing hua-chia* 宮廷畫家) or, as here, "painter-officials" to differentiate them from Academy painters. However, due to the limited source material previously available, their role as artists has never been very well understood. They were known to have been in close contact with the emperor, the eunuchs, and the officials of the Imperial Household, but the ways and means of this contact remained in the dark. Happily, the *Ch'ing Records* contains a considerable amount of material bearing on the painter-officials, from which the nature of their relationship with the emperor and the relevant palace organizations becomes clear. In fact, only after examining in detail the activity of painter-officials in the inner palace can we in turn fully assess the function and role of the Painting Academy.

The *Ch'ing Records* on the Mounting Shop, for example, states that works by the painter-officials Kao Ch'i-p'ei 高其佩 (1672-1734), Chiang T'ing-hsi 蔣廷錫 (1669-1732), and Chu Lun-han 朱倫翰 (1680-1760) were mounted as scrolls and albums. The paintings included such subjects as *Raising the Alms Bowl* (*Chieh po t'u* 揭鉢圖), *The Eight Prize Steeds* (*Pa chün t'u* 八駿圖), plants and flowers, and landscapes. They are likely to have been presented to Ch'ien-lung by the artists and then, after his viewing, sent down to the Mounting Shop. Numerous accounts of this sort demonstrate the close connection between such officials and the emperor.

Some records of the Ju-i Kuan and the Hua-yüan ch'u touch on relations between painter-officials and the emperor, and between the former and the two Academy institutions (including collaboration on paintings). The case of the censor Chu Lun-han is one example. The Hua-yüan ch'u records for 1741 state:

On the fifteenth day of the fourth month, Chamberlain Hai Wang handed over three completed paintings by the censor Chu Lun-han to the eunuch Wang Ch'ang-kuei 王長貴 for submission to the throne. The emperor orders: It is not necessary to have him come every day to paint. On the occasion of festivals he should paint a few sheets and submit them along with the work of the Tsao-pan ch'u. Respect these orders.

Here we have a high official, a censor, going to the Hua-yüan ch'u every day to paint. But Ch'ien-lung was concerned about a breach of decorum and sent a message to warn Chu Lun-han to be careful to act within the bounds of propriety. It was permissible to paint a few works to be presented on New Year's Day or some other festival, but not to go daily to the Hua-yüan ch'u, despite Chu's willingness to take on the role of a painter. Clearly the emperor made a sharp distinction, in his demands on artists, between the *hua-hua jen* on the one hand and painter-officials like Chu Lun-han in the government hierarchy on the other.

After this incident Ch'ien-lung continued to take the initiative occasionally in commanding paintings from Chu, who himself on many occasions submitted works to the throne. The *Ch'ing Records* on the Mounting Shop states, for example, that "on the fourteenth day of the sixth month an imperial order assigned Chu Lun-han to paint three handscrolls, each 9 *ts'un* 寸 high." On the eighth day of the following month the Treasury supervisor Pai Shih-hsiu handed over Chu's three paintings to the eunuch Kao Yü 高 玉 for presentation to the emperor. The emperor's response was: "The emperor orders: The handscrolls are too high. Have him paint three more handscrolls 9 *ts'un* high. For the existing paintings, disregard the measurements, and have them mounted and boxed as handscrolls of the top category." But the following day, after a second viewing, the emperor changed his mind. Two of the scrolls were sent for mounting as already decided, but the third, the *Hundred Deer* (*Pai-lu* 百鹿) scroll was simply to be backed with a single layer of paper. On the twenty-seventh day of the ninth month, Pai Shih-hsiu handed over three new handscrolls by Chu Lun-han to Kao Yü for presentation to the throne. This time, the emperor's order was to "have these three paintings mounted as 9-*ts'un*-high handscrolls and boxed. On completion, they are to be deposited in the top category of the Ch'ien-ch'ing Kung [collection]. Respect these orders."

Thereafter Ch'ien-lung sent yet other paintings by Chu Lun-han to have inscribed boxes made: on the fourteenth day of the sixth month a finger-painted landscape on silk; on the twenty-third day of the sixth month a pair of landscape hanging scrolls; on the twenty-fifth day of the seventh month two paintings on silk; on the eighth day of the tenth month two landscapes on silk; and on the eighteenth day of the eleventh month two finger-painted handscrolls. This amounts to fifteen paintings submitted over a period of some seven months, a high rate of production that attests to Chu's extreme attentiveness to the emperor.

Chu Lun-han was also ordered sometimes to collaborate on paintings with *hua-hua jen* in the Painting Academy. For example, the Ju-i Kuan records for the twenty-fifth day of the seventh month state that Head Eunuch K'ai Ch'i-li 開其里 transmitted the following order:

The sham door on the upper floor of the Tsao-yün Ch'i-ssu Lou 藻韻綺思樓 [Pavilion of Florid Rhyme and Beautiful Thought] requires two paintings, 5 *ch'ih*, 2 *ts'un*, 5 *fen* high by 2 *ch'ih*, 3 *ts'un* wide. The panel above the door in the wall of the Han-yüan Tien 涵元殿 [Hall of Harboring the First] also requires two paintings, 2 *ch'ih*, 6 *ts'un*, 5 *fen* high by 2 *ch'ih*, 2 *ts'un*, 2 *fen* wide. Chou K'un and Chu Lun-han are each assigned to execute two paintings. Respect these orders.

On the eighteenth day of the eleventh month another order was given through the eunuchs Mao T'uan and Hu Shih-chieh:

Chang Yü-sen and Chu Lun-han are each assigned to paint one of a pair of landscapes for the back of the table mirror in the Hsiang-luan Ko 翔鸞閣 [Pavilion of Flying Phoenix]. Respect these orders.

And the records of the Mounting Shop state:

On the thirtieth day of the eleventh month, the eunuch Kao Yü transmitted

the order to assign Chang Yü-sen and Chu Lun-han each to paint two works on silk. Respect these orders.

Chu received official orders to execute paintings for interior decoration just as did the *hua-hua jen*.

Other painter-officials were under the same obligation to paint for the emperor, with the difference that they were not as prolific as Chu Lun-han. A few excerpts from the *Ch'ing Records* will illustrate the situation. The 1742 records for the Mounting Shop include the following information. On the twenty-second day of the fifth month Head Eunuch K'ou Ming 寇明 came to the workshop to say that Kao Yü had submitted two hanging scrolls of plants and flowers by Tsou I-kuei 鄒一桂, and that bamboo slips were to be written for them. On the first day of the sixth month, Kao Yü handed over a painting on silk by Chiang T'ing-hsi with the imperial order to have it backed with a layer of paper. On the twelfth day of the tenth month, Head Eunuch K'ai Ch'i-li handed over a sheet of letter paper overpainted with mountains by Chang Chao 張照, to be backed with a layer of Korean paper, and a pair of paintings on silk by Chang Jo-ai 張若藹, to be backed with a layer of paper.

The records of the Archives Bureau for 1746 include the following order, transmitted by the eunuch Hu Shih-chieh on the first day of the seventh month:

For sixteen small paintings on a chest containing examples of the "four beauties," two paintings each are assigned to Tsou I-kuei, Chang Jo-ai, Tung Pang-ta 董邦達 [1699-1769], Ts'ao K'uei-yin, Chang Yü-sen, Chou K'un, Yü Hsing, and Li Shih-cho 李世倬. Respect these orders.

In this case, Ch'ien-lung deliberately divided the work equally between four painter-officials and four *hua-hua jen*, in a demonstration of the compatibility between them that is one of the characteristics of Ch'ien-lung Academy painting.

The Ju-i Kuan records for the same year describe another such collaboration:

On the nineteenth day of the fifth month, Foreman 67 brought a signed note to Treasury Supervisor Lang Cheng-p'ei and Commandant of Cavalry Pa-er-tang 巴爾黨. It turned out to be an imperial order of the fifteenth day of the second month, transmitted by the eunuch Hu Shih-chieh. "Shen Yüan and Tung Pang-ta are assigned to proceed together to Hsiang-shan, prepare the preliminary version of a painting, and submit their work for inspection. Respect these orders." Today a preliminary version 9 *ch'ih*, 4 *ts'un* high by 1 *chang* 丈, 4 *ch'ih* wide was submitted to the emperor. The emperor declared his wish that Tung Pang-ta and Shen Yüan continue with the painting and collaborate in its execution. Respect these orders.

Of course, in this collaboration Tung Pang-ta's name was placed first, as if to show that the painter-official had the major role. The position of painter-officials within the Painting Academy was in the end not the same as that of the *hua-hua jen*.

The few examples cited above give some idea of the participation of painter-officials in the Painting Academy. As in the case of the *hua-hua jen*, when painter-officials received orders from the emperor to execute a painting, they had to submit both the preliminary version and the finished work for approval. The painter-officials undertook paintings on



their own, independently within a project shared with *hua-hua jen*, or collaborated with *hua-hua jen* on the same painting. In this period they in fact acted as *hua-hua jen* in addition to their other duties. In all likelihood the painter-officials of the early Ch'ing Sun-chih and K'ang-hsi periods had been in the same, or at least a similar, position. In the eyes of the emperor, the painter-officials had a double status: they were both civil officials in the government and, at the same time, painters. They were, in other words, *hua-hua jen* with the status of government officials. Of course, when painter-officials were painting in the Academy buildings or collaborating with *hua-hua jen* on the same work, the latter would never have dared, given their position in the government hierarchy, to offend the painter-officials or treat them on equal terms.

At this point, it remains only to consider the question of the terminology employed in reference to the painter-officials. As we have seen, from the moment that such a painter undertook a painting for the emperor, his function corresponded to that of a *hua-hua jen*, and he became in fact an Academy painter. It was with some justice, therefore, that the work of painter-officials was called *ch'en-kung hua* 臣工畫 (painting by courtiers as artisans) within the palace. The term *ch'en* (subject) here denotes civil officials in the government hierarchy, though the more famous *hua-hua jen* could also sign themselves as *ch'en* in paintings for the emperor. The second term, *kung*, is short for *hua-kung* 畫工 (painting artisans) and refers here to the *hua-hua jen*. The two terms are associated but not interchangeable.

Less appropriate is the name "palace painters," which has usually been given to the painter-officials to distinguish them from Academy painters. To judge from the *Ch'ing Records* cited above, a painter-official working to imperial command followed exactly the same procedures as a *hua-hua jen*, to the point where he could be assigned to the same painting as the latter. If two painters of such different social status cooperated on a single work, it was necessarily in their common capacity as Academy painters. On the other hand, the painter-official who was not working to imperial command but executed a painting at home for some other person was acting as a literati painter (*wen-jen hua-chia* 文人畫家). The painter-official was by turns literati painter and Academy painter. In the name used by the author—*han-lin hua-chia* (here translated as "painter-official")—*han-lin* does not refer to the T'ang- or Sung-dynasty *han-lin tai-chao* post, nor to the Ch'ing Han-lin Academy in the Mao-ch'in Tien 懋勤殿 (Hall of Diligence). It denotes all literati painters among the government officials. These artists did not belong to the palace or Imperial Household hierarchy, but were full officials in government departments. To designate them as palace painters, therefore, is hardly appropriate. We may better call them painter-officials in contrast to the Academy painters proper.

Were we to apply the name of Academy painter also to these artists, as we do with the scholars in the Sung Painting Academy, it would be inaccurate in that, unlike their Sung predecessors, they had no place in the hierarchy of the Painting Academy. It is preferable to employ a name which makes clear the distinct status of a group of painters who, in the context of imperial commissions, took on the role of Academy painters while all the time remaining government officials.

It should be added, finally, that the Academy painters proper (i.e., the *hua-hua jen*), like the painter-officials, had one identity during the day in the Hua-yüan ch'u and Ju-i Kuan, and another—as professional painters (*chih-yeh hua-chia* 職業畫家)—at home in the evening.

It is clear from the above four-part analysis of the Ch'ien-lung Painting Academy and a comparison with the Sung Academy that the basic function of the former institution was the same as that of its Five Dynasties and Sung counterparts. However, it did not take responsibility for a school of painting, as had Hui-tsung's Academy, and differed again from the Northern Sung in matters of hierarchical structure, titles, and treatment of artists. This can be attributed to differences of historical context. However, there is no basis for the view that the Ch'ing dynasty did not have a Painting Academy with specific institutions and functions; nor should the painting of the Academy be reduced to a more general court painting by ignoring its destination for imperial use.

Translated by Jonathan Hay

#### NOTES

- 1 See the author's article, "Ch'ing-tai hua-yüan kuan" (Views on the Ch'ing-dynasty Painting Academy), *Ku-kung po-wu-yüan yüan-k'an*, no. 3 (1985), pp. 54-68.
- 2 Hu Ching, *Kuo-ch'ao yüan-hua lu hsü* (Preface to the record of paintings of the Ch'ing Painting Academy), HSTS (Shanghai: Jen-min mei-shu, 1963), vol. 5, pp. 1-4.
- 3 Now in the collection of the First China Historical Documents Library (*Chung-kuo ti-i li-shih tang-an kuan*).
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 See Huang Pen-chi, "Government Officials" and "The Imperial Household," chaps. 1, 4, in *Li-tai chih-kuan piao* (Tables of official positions through the dynasties) (Shanghai: Chung-hua, 1965).
- 6 Hsiang Ta, *T'ang tai Ch'ang-an yü hsi-yü wen-ming* (Western civilization in the T'ang capital, Ch'ang-an) (Beijing: San-lien, 1957), pp. 507-10.—ED.
- 7 Chu I-tsun, "Palaces," *chüan* 33 (Addendum), in *Jih-hsia chiu-wen k'ao* (Investigation of old news in Beijing) (Beijing: Beijing ku-chi, 1985).
- 8 The eighteenth day of the sixth month, the seventh day of the seventh month, and the twenty-sixth day of the eighth month: three times in all.
- 9 See the "Chüan-hsü" (Remission and indemnities) and "Hsü ku-p'in" (Relief for orphans and the poor) sections of "Hu pu" (The Board of Revenue), *chüan* 249 of *Ta-Ch'ing hui-tien shih-li* (Collected statutes and precedents of the Ch'ing dynasty) (Taiwan: Chung-wen, 1963).
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 See the "Feng-hsien" (Salary and provisions) and "Ko-sheng ping-hsiang" (Military provisions of each province) sections of "Hu pu," *chüan* 256 of *Ta-Ch'ing hui-tien shih-li*.
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 See Yü Chien-hua, "The Ming and Ch'ing Painting Academies," sec. 2 of "Painting of the Ming Dynasty," in *Chung-kuo hui-hua shih* (History of Chinese painting) (Taipei: Shang-wu, 1958), vol. 2, *chüan* 13.
- 14 See the author's article, "*Wan-shu yüan tz'u-yen t'u k'ao-hsi*" (A study of the painting *Ceremonial Banquet in the Garden of Ten Thousand Trees*), *Ku-kung po-wu-yüan yüan-k'an*, no. 4 (1982), n. 27.
- 15 See "Chih-kuan" (Official positions) 36, in *Sung hui-yao chi-kao* (Collected Sung records of social background) (Beijing: Beijing chung-hua, 1957).
- 16 "The Ch'ien-lung Period," no. 3 in *Selected Letters of the Jesuits in China* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1971).
- 17 Leng Mei's eight works included the following titles: *Pity Early Blooms of Spring* (Hsi hua ch'un tsao ch'i 惜花春早起), *Loving Moonlit Night—Sleep Comes Late* (Ai yüeh-ye mien-ch'ih 愛月夜眠遲), *Judging Horses* (Hsiang-ma t'u 相馬圖), *Longevity* (Wan-shou t'u), *Thick Snow* (Hsüeh-yen t'u 雪艷圖), and *Ocean Sunrise* (Hai-t'ien hsü-jih 海天旭日).

#### APPENDIX

##### Alphabetical List of Names

Stars denote painters of all kinds active at the Ch'ien-lung court: 65 names in all.

\*1 A-k'o-chang-a 阿克章阿  
\*2 Ai Ch'i-meng 艾啓蒙  
(P. Ignace Sichelbarth)

\*3 An Te-i 安德意  
(Johannes Damascenus)  
\*4 Chang Chao 張照

- |     |                                  |          |      |                        |           |
|-----|----------------------------------|----------|------|------------------------|-----------|
| 5   | Chang I-ch'ao                    | 張義潮      | *59  | Lang Shih-ning         | 郎世寧       |
| *6  | Chang Jo-ai                      | 張若藹      |      | (Giuseppe Castiglione) |           |
| *7  | Chang Lien                       | 張廉       | *60  | Leng Chien             | 冷鑑        |
| *8  | Chang Tsung-ts'ang               | 張宗蒼      | *61  | Leng Mei               | 冷枚        |
| *9  | Chang Wei-pang                   | 張為邦      | *62  | Li Shih-cho            | 李世倬       |
| *10 | Chang Yü-sen                     | 張雨森      | *63  | Liang Kuan             | 梁觀        |
| 11  | Ch'ang Pao                       | 常保       | 64   | Liu Shan-chiu          | 劉山久       |
| *12 | Ch'ang Sheng                     | 常昇       | *65  | Lo Fu-min              | 羅福旼       |
| 13  | Chao Lien                        | 昭楨       | *66  | Lu Chan                | 盧湛        |
| 14  | Chao Yüan                        | 趙原       | 67   | Man Pi                 | 滿毗        |
| 15  | Chao Yüan                        | 趙元       | *68  | Man Tou                | 滿斗        |
| *16 | Ch'en Mei                        | 陳枚       | 69   | Mao T'uan              | 毛團        |
| *17 | Ch'en Min                        | 陳敏       | 70   | Mu Sen                 | 穆森        |
| *18 | Ch'en Shan                       | 陳善       | 71   | Pa-er-tang             | 巴爾黨       |
| *19 | Ch'eng Chih-tao                  | 程志道      | 72   | Pai Shih-hsiu          | 白世秀       |
| *20 | Ch'eng Liang                     | 程梁       | *73  | P'an T'ing-chang       | 潘廷章       |
| *21 | Chia Ch'üan                      | 賈全       |      | (Joseph Panzi)         |           |
| *22 | Chiang T'ing-hsi                 | 蔣廷錫      | 74   | Prince of I            | 怡親王       |
| *23 | Chin Chieh                       | 金玠       | 75   | San-ch'e-ling          | 三車凌       |
| *24 | Chin K'un                        | 金昆       | 76   | San-yin-pao            | 三音保       |
| *25 | Chin T'ing-piao                  | 金廷標      | *77  | Shen Pin               | 沈斌        |
| *26 | Chou K'un                        | 周鯤       | 78   | Shen Yü                | 沈喻 (or 喻) |
| 27  | Chu Hou-ts'ung                   | 朱厚燠      | *79  | Shen Yüan              | 沈源        |
| *28 | Chu Lun-han                      | 朱倫瀚      | 80   | Sheng Chu              | 盛著        |
| *29 | Fang Tsung                       | 方琮       | *81  | Sun Hu                 | 孫祜        |
| 30  | Feng Ch'i                        | 封岐       | 82   | Ta-li                  | 大力        |
| *31 | Fu Hai                           | 福海       | *83  | Tai Cheng              | 戴正        |
| 32  | Fu-lin                           | 福臨       | *84  | Tai Hung               | 戴洪        |
| *33 | Fu Wen                           | 傅雯       | *85  | T'ang Tai              | 唐岱        |
| 34  | Hai Wang                         | 海望       | *86  | Te Ch'ang              | 德昌        |
| 35  | Han Ch'i-lung                    | 韓起龍      | 87   | Te Pao                 | 德保        |
| 36  | Han Ko                           | 憨格       | *88  | Te Shu                 | 德舒        |
| *37 | Ho Ch'ing-t'ai                   | 賀清泰      | *89  | Ting Kuan-p'eng        | 丁觀鵬       |
|     | (Louis de Por)                   |          | 90   | Tou-er-shuai           | 多爾袞       |
| 38  | Ho Ta-sai                        | 赫達塞      | *91  | Ts'ao K'uei-yin        | 曹夔音       |
| 39  | Ho Ta-tzu                        | 赫達資      | *92  | Tsou I-kuei            | 鄒一桂       |
| 40  | Hsiang Ta                        | 向達       | *93  | Tsou Wen-yü            | 鄒文玉       |
| 41  | Hsin-ssu chüeh-lo Nü-er-ha-ch'ih | 新斯覺羅女爾哈赤 | 94   | T'u La                 | 圖拉        |
| 42  | Hsing-hsien                      | 興獻       | *95  | Tung Pang-ta           | 董邦達       |
| *43 | Hsü T'ao                         | 徐燾       | 96   | Wang Ch'ang-kuei       | 王長貴       |
| *44 | Hsü Yang                         | 徐揚       | *97  | Wang Chieh             | 王玠        |
| 45  | Hu Ching                         | 胡敬       | *98  | Wang Chih-ch'eng       | 王致誠       |
| 46  | Hu Shih-chieh                    | 胡世傑      |      | (Jean-Denis Attiret)   |           |
| 47  | Hua Shan                         | 花善       | *99  | Wang Ju-hsüeh          | 王儒學       |
| 48  | Huang Chen-hsiao                 | 黃振效      | *100 | Wang Ping              | 王炳        |
| *49 | Huang Tseng                      | 黃增       | *101 | Wang Yu-hsüeh          | 王幼學       |
| 50  | Hung-li                          | 弘曆       | *102 | Wu Kuei                | 吳桂        |
| *51 | I Lan-t'ai                       | 伊蘭太      | *103 | Wu Yü                  | 吳棫        |
| 52  | I-ning                           | 奕訥       | *104 | Yang Ta-chang          | 楊大章       |
| 53  | K'ai Ch'i-li                     | 開其里      | 105  | Yang Wei-chan          | 楊維占       |
| *54 | Kao Ch'i-p'ei                    | 高其佩      | 106  | Yao Tsung-jen          | 姚宗仁       |
| 55  | Kao Yü                           | 高玉       | *107 | Yao Wen-han            | 姚文翰       |
| 56  | K'ou Ming                        | 寇明       | *108 | Yeh Lü-feng            | 葉履豐       |
| *57 | Ku Ch'üan                        | 顧詮       | *109 | Yü Chih                | 余穉        |
| 58  | Lang Cheng-p'ei                  | 郎正培      | *110 | Yü Hsing               | 余省        |



## PART IV

*Poetry  
into  
Painting*

Figure 158. T'ang Yin (1470–1524), *Drunken Fisherman by a Reed Bank*. Detail of hanging scroll, ink on paper, 72.4 × 36.8 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Bequest of John M. Crawford, Jr., 1988



# The Literary Concepts of “Picture-like” (*Ju-hua*) and “Picture-Idea” (*Hua-i*) in the Relationship between Poetry and Painting

WAI-KAM HO

In a colophon inscribed on *Lan-t'ien in Misty Rain* (*Lan-t'ien yen-yü t'u* 藍田煙雨圖), a painting attributed to Wang Wei 王維 (701–61), the Sung poet Su Shih 蘇軾 (1037–1101) expressed his great admiration for the T'ang poet-painter in these celebrated words: “There is painting in his poetry and poetry in his painting.”<sup>1</sup> The basic accuracy of this statement as a general observation and evaluation has seldom been challenged. Su Shih's statement has become a cornerstone for the literati theory of art. Since the end of the Northern Sung and the beginning of the Chin dynasties, the unity of painting and poetry, together with the aspiration toward mastering the three perfections of poetry, calligraphy, and painting, has been the unquestioned ideal for the literati tradition. Yet, on closer examination, Su Shih's statement reveals certain ambiguities that are somewhat disturbing in terms of their implications for a number of important issues in Chinese art history.

Can we really say that “painting and poetry are one” (*shih-hua i-t'i* 詩畫一體)? As means of representation and expression, are they comparable in their capacities? Are they equal in what John Locke (1632–1704) considered the two basic functions of language, recording and communication of thought? Can poetry and painting embrace each other in perfect harmony, or is the relationship more accurately summed up in André Gide's words, “One embraces one's rival in love, only to suffocate him”?

Even if we raise these questions merely for the sake of argument, we need to clarify two crucial points. First, can one apply to poetry and painting the same principles of criticism, scrutinizing and appraising both with the same critical apparatus? Second, if indeed one sees painting in poetry and poetry in painting, how does one define those “picture-like” and “poem-like” qualities? Can one relate the literary concept “picture-like,” or “picturesque” (*ju-hua* 如畫), to the visual arts, and particularly to the history of Chinese painting?

## *Poetry and Painting Are One?*

Unlike the long and complex history in the West, which reaches back from Gombrich and Goodman through Lessing and Burke to Plato and Aristotle, China does not have a critical tradition comparable to the Renaissance tradition of *ut pictura poesis*.<sup>2</sup> According to *The Book of Rites* (*Li-chi* 禮記), in ancient times poetry, music, and dance were essentially one art and supposedly were performed as an integrated entity. The highest state of accomplishment for these combined arts is the ideal of *chih chung-ho* 致中和 (toward an equilibrium-harmony).<sup>3</sup> That there can be such an ideal relationship among the arts has never been doubted by later Confucianists. However, when it comes to practice, the concept of “painting and poetry are one” has not been accepted without some form of skepticism. In modern times, Ch'ien Chung-shu 錢鍾書 seems to have been the first

scholar to express serious doubts about the ability of poetry and painting to accommodate and assimilate each other. Citing Wang Wei, Tu Fu 杜甫 (712–70), and Wu Tao-tzu 吳道子 (active ca. 710–60) as the primary examples epitomizing the High T'ang arts of poetry and painting, Ch'ien discusses what he calls “the law of antinomy of taste” and demonstrates how later critics have used two entirely different sets of criteria to measure the relative achievements of these three eminent T'ang masters.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, for the mysterious phenomenon of what we call taste, there is no lack of puzzling cases for which we have yet to come up with any satisfactory explanation from the point of view of socio-cultural history. In early Sung poetry, for instance, the followers of the Po Chü-i 白居易 (772–846) style, the supposedly plain and simple style for commoners, came mostly from the class of nobles and high officials. On the other hand, the devotees of the late T'ang tradition of poetry, which has been dubbed aestheticist, decadent, and aristocratic, were mostly Taoist recluses and Buddhist monks.<sup>5</sup> An equally illuminating example is the polarity between late Yüan painting and poetry.<sup>6</sup> While late Yüan painting strives for the literati effect of expressive spontaneity and technical economy or understatement, late Yüan poetry represented by many of the great painter-poets, such as Huang Kung-wang 黃公望 (1269–1354) and Ni Tsan 倪瓚 (1301–74), sounds like a strangely nostalgic echo of the elegant and exquisitely decorative poems of the late T'ang. In a singularly peculiar but comparable manner, the same contradiction can be found between Japanese literature and painting during the Ashikaga shogunate (1333–1467). Whereas Muromachi (1392–1568) ink-monochrome painting is known as a hieratic art under the direct influence of Zen Buddhism, Gozan literature practiced by the same group of Buddhist monks imitated the strictly regulated Chinese form of rhyme-prose characterized by highly embellished four- and six-word couplets, or *p'ien-wen* 駢文.<sup>7</sup> After Ch'ien Chung-shu, another modern critic, Ku Sui 顧隨 (1897–1960), has also tried to point out the half-truth of Su Shih's theory. He even goes so far as to quote Chang Tai 張岱 (1597–1684?), the late Ming essayist, who states that the application of “poetry-idea” in painting will certainly result in bad painting, and likewise the use of “picture-idea” in poetry will certainly result in bad poetry.<sup>8</sup> Given the dissimilar objectives and biases in critical standards of different historical periods or even of different intellectual and social circles during the same period, it is clear that poetry and painting have not always been accepted and treated as one and equal.

It is no secret that many poets of the East and West tend to entertain some sort of patronizing attitude toward the other arts. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832), for instance, believed that the musical speech (*Sprachmusik*) he created was a means of perfecting music. “The beauty of perfect human speech is far greater than that of song; its inflections and modulations in the expression of our feelings are infinite in number. Song must return to simple speech.”<sup>9</sup> The Chinese poets seem to have had much less need to be defensive than their European colleagues. Nonetheless, at about the time Su Shih and his followers were hailing the new literati theory putting forward that poetry and painting are one, at least three or four of the foremost Northern Sung scholars were quick to register their reservations about the capacity of painting to simulate and emulate poetry.<sup>10</sup> Ssu-ma Ch'ih 司馬池 (980–1041), father of the great historian Ssu-ma Kuang 司馬光 (1019–86), was probably the first to express such doubts. In a famous short poem entitled “The Aura of Departing” (“Hsing-se” 行色), which was engraved on a stone at a site in Anfeng 安豐, Honan Province, he writes:

Colder than lake water and paler than autumn,	冷于陂水淡于秋
At the far end of the field the ferry ford comes into view.	遠陌初窮見渡頭
Luckily there is no room for the "red and green."	賴是丹青不能畫
Could this be depicted in a painting, it would bring	畫成應遣一生愁
endless sorrow to our life.	

In the collected literary works of Chang Lei 張耒 (1054–1114), one of the Four Academicians among Su Shih's students, a note is found in praise of this poem: "It depicts sceneries that are difficult to depict, as if they are right in front of one's eyes; it conveys ideas that are inexhaustible, as if they can be detected outside of language."<sup>11</sup> The same statement was quoted by Ou-yang Hsiu 歐陽修 (1007–72) in his *Remarks on Poetry* (*Liu-i shih-hua* 六一詩話) and attributed to his friend, the early Sung poet Mei Yao-ch'en 梅堯臣 (1002–60).<sup>12</sup> Evidently, during the Sung dynasty most scholars agreed that the limitations of visual art lay mainly in its inability to express "ideas outside of language" (*yen-wai chih i* 言外之意). In a peculiar but limited way, this belief in the inability of art to go beyond the verbal foreshadowed a pet theory of the Post-Modernists, espousing the visual as a realm of experience that is inseparable from the verbal. Ou-yang Hsiu and Wang An-shih 王安石 (1021–86) seem to have shared the view that certain poetic feelings—feelings difficult to associate with any tangible forms of sensory reflections of the outer world, such as cold desolation (*huang-han* 荒寒)—were more suitably expressed in words, if only because the images that these feelings evoked were difficult to capture with the pictorial means available to even the best painters of their time.

This was on the eve of the big storm of reform that wreaked havoc in the political and social scene of the eleventh century. It was a time of ideological stagnation just before the wave of changes. Prior to the middle of the century there was a seemingly widespread skepticism about the ability of the court painters under the relatively conservative reigns of Emperors Jen-tsung 仁宗 (r. 1023–63) and Ying-tsung 英宗 (r. 1064–68) to comprehend and express a pervasive feeling of withdrawal and pessimism, a negative state of mind that was among the intelligentsia. The yearning for the visual arts to reach beyond superficial likeness was expressed by Ou-yang Hsiu:

Detachment and self-containment in a lonely state of desertion (*hsiao-t'iao tan-po* 蕭條澹泊) is a feeling most difficult to express in painting; [the painter may think he has captured such a feeling, but] the spectator does not necessarily recognize his intent. Similarly, it is easy to show familiar phenomena, such as the motion of flight and running, or the notion of slow and fast. On the other hand, leisure, peace, solemnity, and quietude (*hsien ho yen ching* 閑和嚴靜) are states of mind which hardly lend themselves to formal description. As for high, low, frontal, or back, far, near, or superimposed views (*kao-hsia hsiang-pei, yüan-chin ch'ung-fu* 高下向背, 遠近重覆), these are merely skills of the artisans (*hua-kung* 畫工). They are of no concern to true connoisseurs.<sup>13</sup>

In recognizing the limitations of the visual arts, Ou-yang Hsiu and Wang An-shih may have foreseen the inevitable development of literati painting that was coming shortly after the reform and that was designed as the ultimate solution for reconciling the ancient dichotomy between the landscape of the eye and the "inscape" of the mind.<sup>14</sup>





Figure 159. Anonymous (Han dynasty), *Meng Pin*.  
 Rubbing of stone engraving. Wu-liang Tz'u,  
 Shantung Province (from Toshio Nagahiro, ed.,  
*The Representational Art of the Han Dynasty*  
 [Tokyo: Chuo-koron Bijutsu Shuppan, 1965], fig. 11)

### *The Concept of Picture-like (Ju-hua)*

Any attempt to define the concept of picture-like, or picturesque, is bound to encounter difficulties stemming from various levels of historical, regional, and cultural conventions and prejudices. This is because a picture-like quality as a concept of value is basically a product of society. As such, it is dictated by tradition, colored by race- or class-consciousness, guided by myth and the politics of popular tastes, and ultimately determined by each individual's subjective judgment. Above all, the concept of looking like a picture closely reflects the prevailing ideal of physical beauty, which is one of the key indicators of social and cultural prejudices in every society.

In Chinese literature the term *ju-hua* appeared at least by the late Han (A.D. 25–220), and its denotations and connotations have since gone through stages of subtle changes and transformations. Tracing the semantic evolution of the term from its inception in the late Han through the Wei and Tsin dynasties, we find that *ju-hua* originally applied only to human beauty. Only later was it applied to the beauty of nature, thus the development of the quality “picture-like” corresponds almost exactly to the development of Chinese painting, in which figure painting preceded landscape painting. The term seems to have been used first by the authors of the *Han Record of the Eastern Tower* (*Tung-kuan Han-chi* 東觀漢記) in the first century to exalt one of the great military heroes, Ma Huan 馬援 (14 B.C.–A.D. 49). From that time, until perhaps some point during the Southern Dynasties, the expression “with eyebrows and eyes looking like a picture” (*mei-mu ju-hua* 眉目如畫)<sup>15</sup> was almost exclusively reserved for masculine beauty, and thus radically different from the later usage of the term denoting feminine beauty, as represented in paintings by Chou Fang 周昉 (ca. 730–90) or Chou Wen-chü 周文矩 (active 950–75).<sup>16</sup>

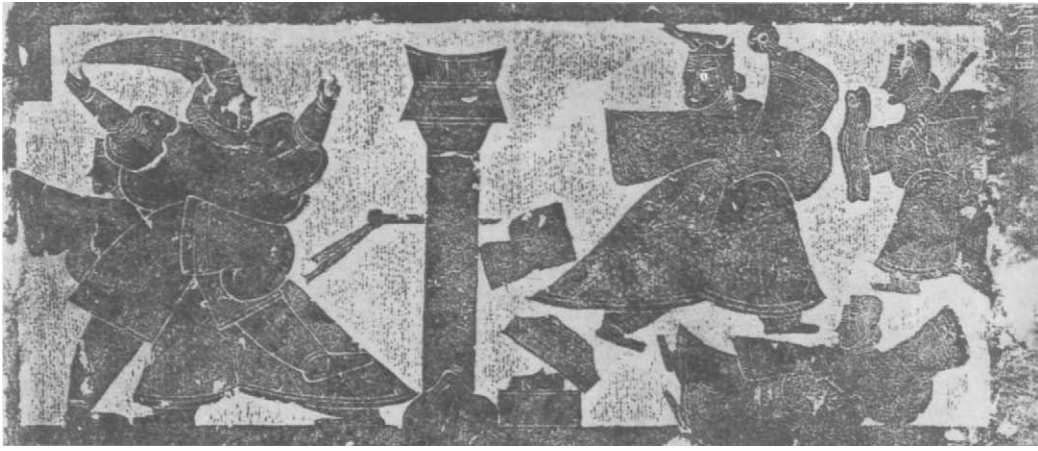


Figure 160. Anonymous (Han dynasty),  
*Ching K'o Attempting to Assassinate the First Emperor of Ch'in.*  
 Rubbing of stone engraving. Wu-liang Tz'u, Shantung Province  
 (from Université de Paris, *Corpus des Pierres Sculptées Han*  
 [Beijing: Centre d'Études Sinologiques, 1951], vol. 2, fig. 156)

In most cases before the T'ang dynasty, the term “picture-like” invoked in people’s minds the image of a muscular and bearded warrior, such as one might find depicted on the walls of a Han or Six Dynasties tomb: Meng Pin with big bulging eyes (fig. 159), the god of the ocean with an ugly face as described in *The Annotated Classic of Water* (*Shui-ching chu* 水經注), the tiger-killer Pien-chuang-tze portrayed in the rhyme-prose “On a Portrait Painting” (“Hua-hsiang fu” 畫像賦) by Fu Hsien 傅咸 (239–94) of the Tsin dynasty,<sup>17</sup> the mug shot of the fugitive Chi Pu posted at the city gate as described in the folklore from Tun-huang 敦煌, and the three warriors sacrificing their lives over two peaches as depicted in the tomb at Wang-tu 望都 in Lo-yang 洛陽.<sup>18</sup> By far the most moving and representative in either poetry or pictorial art is the familiar image of angry hairs bursting the cap off (*nu-fa ch'ung-kuan* 怒髮衝冠) of Ching K'o, the fierce assassin who was sent to kill the first emperor of Ch'in (fig. 160):

Here is the place Prince Tan of Yen bid his farewell.  
 Angry hairs of the heroic warrior burst his cap off.  
 Men of the past have since gone.  
 Water today is still cold.<sup>19</sup>

此地別燕丹  
 壯士髮衝冠  
 昔時人已沒  
 今日水猶寒

In this poem by the early T'ang poet Lo Pin-wang 駱賓王 (ca. 640–84), the image of Ching K'o with bulging eyes and raised hairs is based on a famous passage in the *Records of the Historian* (*Shih-chi* 史記), by Ssu-ma Ch'ien 司馬遷 (145–86 B.C.), recording the parting scene at the I River where Prince Tan of Yen and his party, all dressed in white, came to say farewell to Ching K'o:

After the sacrificial drinking, it was time to be on the way. Kao Chan-li beat the *chu* 筑, and Ching K'o marked time and sang in the key of *p'ien-chih* 變徵. All the warriors shed tears and wept. Then Ching K'o stepped forward and sang this song: "The wind is howling and the I River is cold, the heroic warrior once gone will never come back." When he changed to the key of *yü* 羽 his voice became so vigorously determined that all the warriors' eyes bulged and their hairs raised against their caps. Then Ching K'o boarded the carriage and was gone.

What should be noticed is not only this image of angry hairs bursting the cap off as a symbol for heroism or physical courage, which is represented repeatedly in the Han stone engravings of the Wu-liang Tz'u 武梁祠 in Shantung,<sup>20</sup> but also the highly stirring use of a color symbolically—the mournful white in memory of Ching K'o's suicidal mission, which inspired the Sung poet Hsin Ch'i-chi 辛棄疾 (1140–1207) to write, "Everyone in the party is dressed like snow"<sup>21</sup>—and the visually manifested emotional responses to some specific sounds or music—grief induced by the key of *p'ien-chih* and strong-willed determination with bulging eyes and raised hairs provoked by the key of *yü*.

After the Tsin dynasty moved to the south between 307 and 318 and the new immigrants were exposed to the romantic southern culture of the Wu-Yüeh and Ch'u people, we witness a subtle change in the ideal of physical beauty. Recalling the line from *Encountering Sorrow* (*Li Sao* 離騷), by Ch'ü Yüan 屈原 (ca. 343–ca. 278 B.C.), "Splendid is my inner beauty, and I double that with my instinct for makeup," the robust, fearless warriors of the late Han became elegantly dressed highborn gentlemen-scholars who were ever conscious of their own manner and appearance. Society during the Six Dynasties was dominated by eminent aristocratic families whose high hereditary positions in socio-political life were largely based on their monopoly of Confucian scholarship. Under the rule of the Wei Kingdom, recruits for government service were controlled by a system of nine grades of personality evaluation for official candidates (*chiu-p'in chung-cheng* 九品中正), which emphasized recommendations from local authorities, who ranked the candidate's family background and public image above anything else. Culture was bred by high birth, and the upper grades were seldom awarded to the son of a lowly family. As a result, the Six Dynasties was an age of individualism, in which personality was recognized ahead of substance, and achievement was classified and judged by codes for outward appearance, manners, speech, and other charismatic qualities. Liu Shao's 劉邵 (active ca. 196–219) *Compendium of Personalities* (*Jen-wu chih* 人物志) was probably the first book of psychological studies which tied man's personality to his physical characteristics.<sup>22</sup> Another important treatise that provided a theoretical foundation for the emphasis on appearance and decorum is Hsü Kan's 徐幹 (171–218) *Treatise on Equilibrium* (*Chung lun* 中論), which gave top significance to a cultivated countenance as a man's emblem of social distinction and the credential for his temperamental and moral worth.<sup>23</sup> Both the court poetry of the Ch'i and Liang dynasties (*Ch'i Liang kung-ti* 齊梁宮體)<sup>24</sup> and popular folk songs from the lower Yangtze Valley demonstrate an extraordinary sensibility to such intimate personal accessories as perfumes, anointments, cosmetics, and body and hair ornaments. In the famous anthology of anecdotes, *A New Account of Tales of the World* (*Shih-shuo hsin-yü* 世說新語), by Liu I-ch'ing 劉義慶 (403–44), a whole chapter ("Jung-chih pien" 容止篇) is devoted to countenance and manners.<sup>25</sup> A far cry from Han

ruggedness, an entirely new set of standards for male beauty was established by such celebrated dandies in Chinese history as P'an Yüeh 潘岳 (247-300) and Wei Chieh 衛玠 (286-312),<sup>26</sup> both of whom reputedly created traffic problems whenever they ventured into the streets, surrounded by a huge crowd of admiring ladies.

### *Picture-like (Ju-hua) in Landscape Painting*

Although landscape painting had been in existence for several centuries, it was not until the early Sung that the concept of picture-like became associated with beauty in nature. As picture-like is essentially a literary concept created by its own prerequisites and rules, natural scenery, however visually interesting or pictorially provocative, was not necessarily picture-like until certain developments took place. The first poet who sang "Rivers and mountains are picture-like" ("Chiang-shan ju-hua" 江山如畫) was, as far as I know, Sun Hao-jan 孫浩然 (active ca. 1070), the little-known author of the well-known *tz'u* 詞 to the tune of "Li-t'ing yen" 離亭燕 ("Parting Pavilion Swallow"), which is a deeply enchanted reminiscence of Nanking, the old capital of the Six Dynasties.<sup>27</sup> From a colophon published in the *Kung-k'uei chi* 攻媿集, the collected works of the Southern Sung scholar Lou Yüeh 樓鑰 (1137-1213), it is apparent that this poem, whose history and authorship have been established only recently, is the real source of poetic inspiration, or *hua-i* 畫意 (picture-idea), for a famous handscroll painting, *Late Autumn over Rivers and Mountains* (*Chiang-shan ch'iu-wan t'u* 江山秋晚圖), by Wang Shen 王詵 (active ca. 1069-1110), the Northern Sung master of landscape painting who was a close friend of Su Shih.<sup>28</sup> It appears most likely that when Su Shih wrote his immortal poem "Reminiscence of the Past at the Red Cliff" ("Ch'ih-pi huai-ku" 赤壁懷古) in the latter part of 1082, using exactly the same words, "rivers and mountains are picture-like,"<sup>29</sup> he must have had in mind not only the painting by his close friend Wang Shen but also the similar poetic image based on Sun Hao-jan's "Li-t'ing yen," in which the specific type of landscape around Nanking is identified as picture-like. One cannot help wondering why, of all ancient capitals, Nanking was singled out by Sung poets and painters to represent this new concept of picture-like in natural scenery. Certainly the great Yangtze River, a river vibrant with a romantic past in which heroic figures and their heroic deeds left lasting impressions, played a decisive role. In this marriage of images and words, the union of nature and man, space and time, and the communion of the present and the past occurred to evoke a compelling picture of lyrical and picturesque beauty. This was the poetic tradition of *huai-ku* 懷古 (yearning for the past), in which a number of T'ang and Sung poets, poets like Tu Fu, Liu Yü-hsi 劉禹錫 (772-842), Wang An-shih, Chou Pang-yen 周邦彥 (1056-1121), and Hsin Ch'i-chi, particularly excelled.

### *Huai-ku Poetry*

The mutability of nature and man highlighted by landscape motifs and visual images is a romantic equation which never failed to evoke the sentiment of melancholy. The simultaneity of beauty and sadness discovered behind picture-like rivers and mountains has always been the underlying spirit of *huai-ku* poetry. The simple keynote of this type of poetry is always the sublimity of time in contrast to the brevity and insignificance of human life. Time swallows everything, which seems to reduce the value of individuals

to practically nothing. In the West, the aesthetic notion of the sublime is mostly derived from spatial imagery; by contrast the ancient Chinese showed a greater awe of time. If the ancient Chinese seemed to maintain a love-and-fear relationship with nature, it was largely generated by the realization of the inevitability of time, over which even Confucius the Sage had to sigh, admitting his helplessness while watching the flow of a river: "Is this the way for everything that must pass away?—it never stops, regardless of day and night." History happens only once. What made *huai-ku* poetry popular during the T'ang and Sung dynasties was probably the universal desire to preserve in man's collective memory what had permanently perished from once-tangible reality, like Ching K'o's "once gone will never come back."

An obvious characteristic of *huai-ku* poetry is the use of the past as a metaphor for the present, and the relationship between the two is always personified and emotionally felt and explored with the poet's own subjective experiences. The shadow of the poet's self lurks in every corner of this time-space corridor. Unlike another form of history-oriented verse, the poetic commentaries on history (*yung-shih shih* 詠史詩), which have a tendency to be satiric or didactic, *huai-ku* poetry is by nature personal and lyrical. To quote an old saying, the essence of *huai-ku* poetry is "to water one's dry and bumpy field with the broadmindedness of the ancients." Man tends to see himself in the mirror of history. During such processes of self-rediscovery, a picture not always familiar to ourselves can be released in the emerging image by our own gaze. This is why we cannot help suspecting that in most *huai-ku* poetry there may be an element of narcissism.

George Kubler remarked on more than one occasion on the analogy between history-writing and painting.<sup>30</sup> In addition to both being subjective, intuitive, and selective, both also depend on the use of many schemes, conventions of representation, and modes of figuration. Such appraisal seems to speak perfectly well of the outstanding features of Chinese *huai-ku* poetry, as well as of all the related genres in pictorial art. The magic of literary icons to invoke pictorial images is derived from sociocultural conventions whose authority was established over a period of time by common acceptance, which is known as *yüeh-ting su-ch'eng* 約定俗成 (established by consensus and perfected by tradition). The source of inspiration for this kind of pictorial imagery usually came from a single famous line of poetry or a famous essay or rhyme-prose associated with certain historical characters or episodes. The image of T'eng-wang Tower 滕王閣 in Nan-ch'ang 南昌, immortalized since the seventh century (676) by the early T'ang poet Wang Po's 王勃 (ca. 650–76) poetic flight with the "evening clouds and a lonely wild goose" (*lo-hsia yü ku-wu ch'i-fei* 落霞與孤鶩齊飛), has always been associated with the unpredictability of fate awaiting an aspiring young scholar.<sup>31</sup> The misty willow trees at the Pa Bridge 灞橋 outside the T'ang capital Ch'ang-an 長安, serenaded first by Wang Wei's "Morning Rain over Wei River City" ("Wei-ch'eng chao-yü" 渭城朝雨), have always been accepted, without exception, as the synonym for parting sorrow.<sup>32</sup> Once the authority of these icons is established through the sociocultural process of *yüeh-ting su-cheng*, the mere mention of the name of the person or place, if manipulated skillfully and structured effectively, will immediately induce an irresistible lyrical empathy with the implied space and time, united by the human drama.



Figure 161. Cha Shih-piao (1615–98), “Pleasure in a Mountain Brook,”  
from *Landscape Album in Various Styles*. Album leaf, ink and light color on paper, 29.9 × 39.4 cm.  
The Cleveland Museum of Art; Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Severance A. Millikin

### *Visual Imagery and Auditory Imagery*

In traditional China, no image is more dreamy, seductive, and intoxicating than that of the Chiang-nan 江南 (south of the river) area, idealized in poetry and painting since the Six Dynasties, which has been comparable only to the Italy idealized by the nineteenth-century Romantics. If the song of Mignon could invoke the fragrant smell of the lemon blossoms in southern Italy, so the mere mention of the name Chiang-nan will immediately bring a picture of earthly paradise to most literati’s minds, a picture with such alluring colors and sounds as vividly remembered by the northerner Wei Chuang 韋莊 (ca. 836–910)<sup>33</sup> and interpreted in an album painting by Cha Shih-piao 查士標 (1615–98) in the Cleveland Museum of Art (fig. 161):<sup>34</sup>

The water in springtime is bluer than the sky.  
In a picture-boat, I fall asleep listening to the rain.

春水碧于天  
畫船聽雨眠

The literary imagery of Chiang-nan has always been characterized by the interplay and interweaving of colors and sounds. Under the ingenious brushes of such late T’ang poets as Wei Chuang and Wen T’ing-yün 溫庭筠 (812–70?), there emerged brilliantly painted tableaux dazzling with decorative patterns, vibrant with layers of covert connotations, and suffused with the moods of either autumn twilights or nostalgic rainy evenings. The delicate balance of two different sensory phenomena (colors and sounds, shadows and fragrance, and so forth) reflects the T’ang preference for formal parallelism. Formal parallelism is not simply characteristic of a literary style typified by essays in

couplets (*p'ien-wen*) and by regulated verses (*lü-shih* 律詩); it is indeed a thought pattern directly descended from the dominant principle of the opposition of *yin* and *yang* that, according to Chang Tung-sun 張東蓀, elegantly illuminates the traditional Chinese “logic of correlative duality.” From a historical perspective, the counterpoints of color and sound in T'ang literature are part of the ideological legacy inherited from the Southern Dynasties by way of the unified Sui period. For examples from the formulating days of this dualism, one can go back to the early T'ang, perhaps to the Lung-shuo period, between 661 and 663, when, one fine morning shortly before daybreak, Shang-kuan I 上官儀 (ca. 608–64), the powerful prime minister of Emperor Kao-tsung 高宗 (r. 650–84), was strolling under lantern light along the bank of the Lo River, waiting for the opening of the palace gate for a court audience. He left two famous lines to later generations:

Sparrows rise fluttering: mountain moon at dawn.	鶻飛山月曙
Cicadas chirp loudly: wilderness wind comes with autumn. <sup>35</sup>	蟬噪野風秋

This is a picture of the awakening of early autumn. The stir and commotion of the predawn hours and the pulse of a new day are perceived and felt through the interwoven movements of colors and sounds. The formal structure hardly lends itself to translation, as the two key words, “dawn” and “autumn,” are used as both nouns and verbs. The sparrows are startled into flight by the moon fading into the morning light; the noise of the cicadas, the last song of summer, brings autumnal chill to the windswept wilderness. Color and sound compete with and complete each other. In this tradition, from Lo Pin-wang's “shadows of dark locks against the cheeks” (*hsüan pin ying* 玄鬢影)<sup>36</sup> to Li Shang-yin's 李商隱 (ca. 813–58) “treeful of indifferent green” (*i shu pi wu ch'ing* 一樹碧無情),<sup>37</sup> the sound of cicadas echoed throughout the T'ang dynasty, dying down only after a last chorus by the early Sung poets of the Hsi-k'un 西崑 school.

This symmetrical relationship between two sensory variables is not evident in literature before the Six Dynasties. From the time of the *Book of Poetry* (*Shih-ching* 詩經) and the *Songs of the South* (*Ch'u-tz'u* 楚辭), to rhyme-prose of the Han dynasty, visual images were used, often alone, as a popular device for the heightening of poetic feeling:

In bygone days when I was leaving,  
Willow trees were young and lovely;  
Now I have returned and remember those days;  
Rain and snow are falling.<sup>38</sup>

In this well-known poem from the *Book of Poetry*, the familiar sentiment aroused by a comparison of the past and present is narrated in great simplicity. Yet underlying such a simple comparison, the fluctuation of the seasons, the capriciousness of friendship or love, and the loss and sadness in life are suggested in purely visual terms through the juxtaposition of color-invoked climatic emotions. The tender emergence of the new green of late spring is recalled in sharp contrast to the cold impassiveness of the grayish white of winter. The feeling of the morning breeze caressing the fresh willow leaves and the frozen rain hitting one's face are both tactile sensations hinted at in visual terms but not at all explicit in the poem. This was one of the favorite devices among Chinese poets from antiquity to the late Ch'ing dynasty. Among late Ch'ing poets, Kung Tzu-ch'en 龔自珍 (1792–1841), perhaps the most influential nineteenth-century master, was one of the

last "imagists" remembered for his visual sensibility. The following excerpt is a famous example:

Shouting at the moon to rise from beneath	叱起海紅簾底月
the cherry-apple curtain,	
Shadows of the flowers from surrounding verandas	四廂花影怒于潮
close in more fiercely than angry tides. <sup>39</sup>	

That the moon rose at oral command and shadows of flowers were stirred up like an angry sea are of course only illusions of a mind which seems possessed and agitated in a moment of powerful poetic excitement. This provocative use of a visual image as a vehicle leading directly to the aesthetic experience of the mutual generation of poetic feelings and visual images (*ch'ing-ching shuang-sheng* 情景雙生) has been an important principle behind the classification of picture-ideas that we find in many of the painting and poetry manuals after the T'ang dynasty.

From the beginning of the same period, however, we see the emergence of a much more sophisticated technique developed by such great poet-painters as Wang Wei, in which sensory experiences of different categories or sensations of different depths and intensities are played against each other, or even more intriguing, one type of experience is transformed all of a sudden into another. This is demonstrated, for example, in the lyrics to "Dreaming of Chiang-nan" ("Meng Chiang-nan" 夢江南), by Huang-p'u Sung 皇甫松 (ca. 880), whose approach seems more straightforward than most of his contemporaries in the late T'ang and Five Dynasties:

The orchid flames have fallen,	蘭燼落
On the screen the red of the banana plants	屏上暗紅蕉
is becoming dim;	
I am dreaming leisurely of Chiang-nan	閒夢江南梅熟日
in its plum-ripened days;	
Night boat, a flute is playing, and drizzling rain.	夜船吹笛雨蕭蕭
Someone's talking on the bridge near the riverside inn. <sup>40</sup>	人語驛邊橋

After the candle is extinguished, the vivid impression of Chiang-nan begins to fade from the burning red on the screen into a dreamland of sounds—the flute, the rain, and the conversation on a bridge overheard in the still of the night. This is stirring imagery not so much reproduced from visual experience but, rather, evoked by conscious memories of colors turned unconsciously (*hsien-meng* 閒夢, literally "dreaming leisurely") into sounds. The mutability of visual and auditory perceptions offers endless possibilities for the arts, particularly poetry. Some celebrated lines by Li Po 李白 (701–62) almost automatically come to mind to illustrate the nuances of such possibilities:

In the Yellow Crane Tower someone plays the jade flute,	黃鶴樓中吹玉笛
River town in the Fifth Moon,	江城五月落梅花
and plum blossoms are falling. <sup>41</sup>	

On the surface this seems to be a similar scheme, with the interplay of the perceptions of sound and color: the yearning of the jade flute for the distant past that has gone forever with the yellow crane; the poet's sojourn in a river town (Wu-ch'ang in Hupei Province in 758) where the falling plum blossoms in early summer are in reality out of season.



Every Chinese reader would immediately associate the second part of the second line with the famous tune “Mei-hua san-lung” 梅花三弄 (“Three Stanzas on Plum Blossoms”). He or she would no longer be sure, however, whether the poet is actually thinking of the flute music or of his personal experience with the late-blooming flowers. The Yellow Crane Tower, restored just several years ago by public demand, is one of the most universally accepted and beloved icons in China that was built not on any historical pretext but solely out of public admiration for a few powerful poetic conventions created by Ts’ui Hao 崔顥 (?–754) and Li Po. In Li Po’s poem, the uncertain boundary separating imagination and reality and the ambiguity between time and space and the visual and the audible are linked to the openness to various interpretations of the lines. Fine nuances of reading for many of the poetic themes, or picture-ideas, are conceivable, indeed were encouraged in painting contests periodically given by the Northern Sung Academy of Painting. An example is the following, by the Buddhist priest Wu-k’e 無可:

Listening to the rain, watches of the cold night have come to an end;	聽雨寒更盡
Opening the door, fallen leaves are found to be deep. <sup>42</sup>	開門落葉深

In this case, while the sound of rain in the fading night is the product of auditory cognition through time, the fallen leaves found outdoors are a visual discovery in space. The night rain turns out to be falling leaves in reality. The state of the imagined and the state of the real exist concurrently but are recognized in successive phases. This continuum of images tends to support the twentieth-century theory that the participation of time is necessary in all spatial perceptions that may be reproduced as representational images.

Some modern experimental psychologists seem to believe that, contrary to prevailing opinion, auditory imagery is not really that much rarer than eidetic imagery. These psychologists think that sound heard by the “mind’s ear” is usually more intentional, direct, and real for emotional or reflective contemplation. As noted above, auditory imagery often rises in conjunction with visual imagery, but in comparison with visual imagery, auditory imagery seems to have a more direct effect on the subconscious and is more capable of penetrating into the abstract or the transcendental. Chinese Buddhists were well aware of this idea as early as the fourth century, and a discussion of the importance of sound (along with spoken and written words) in Buddhist religious practice is found in the *Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa-sūtra* (*Wei-mo-chieh ching* 維摩詰經).<sup>43</sup> This is the scriptural source for a poem by Wang An-shih, the reformist prime minister under Emperor Shen-tsung 神宗 (r. 1068–85):

As always, sounds are used in Buddhist practices:	長以聲音為佛事
Wild wind is sighing, and water gurgling. <sup>44</sup>	野風蕭颯水潺湲

It is said that the transcendental truth of Buddhism can be contemplated through listening to natural sounds in a windswept wilderness or by a rain-flooded stream. The Buddhist logician makes a sharp distinction between two kinds of reality: the ultimate or absolute reality of *dharmakaya*, and, in the words of Fedor Shcherbatskoi, “the conditioned or empirical one, reflected in an objectivized image.”<sup>45</sup> The key phrase, “all phenomena are consciousness only” (*wan-fa wei-shih* 萬法唯識), epitomizes the essence of the *Vijnanavada* view on the nature of cognition and knowledge. In Chinese literature, there is certainly

no more inspiring adaptation of this theory than the two famous lines written by Huang T'ing-chien 黃庭堅 (1045–1105) around 1102 when he was exiled to I-chou 宜州, Kwangsi Province:

Mountains appear in pictorial images	山隨宴坐畫圖出
coming out of reflective contemplation ( <i>yen-tso</i> ),	
Water becomes wind and rain driving	水作夜窗風雨來
at the night window. <sup>46</sup>	

In his influential anthology of regulated verse, the *Essence of Regulated Verse* (*Ying-k'uei lü-sui* 瀛奎律髓), the thirteenth-century critic Fang Hui 方回 (1227–1307) extols these two lines as most remarkable, "extraordinary."<sup>47</sup> He fails to point out, however, that the images of mountains and the sounds of wind and rain are simply products of the imagination and are presented in such a way that the concrete (*shih* 實) is dissolved into the figurative (*hsü* 虛) and the static (*ching* 靜) is charged with imaging vitality (*tung* 動). Further, almost all literary critics after the Sung dynasty, Fang Hui included, have misinterpreted the term *yen-tso* 宴坐 as something like "to sit quietly," thus completely losing the specific meaning of the term which the poet tries to explain in the lines following the two quoted here.

#### *Internalization of Perception in Buddhist and Taoist Practices*

*Yen-tso* is a Buddhist term.<sup>48</sup> In Chinese translations of early Buddhist Pali texts, it is used for the noun *patissallāna*, and in translations of Mahāyāna Buddhist Sanskrit texts, it stands for *pratisamlayana*. In two related articles published in 1975, Takasaki Masayoshi succeeded in tracing the semantic evolution of the notion *pratisamlayana* by comparing the term as it appears in various texts, including the different Chinese versions of the *Lotus Sutra* (*Saddharmapundarīka*).<sup>49</sup> His conclusion is that *yen-tso* is simply an alternative translation for *tso-ch'an* 坐禪 (meditation). In a poem written "After Reading the *Wei-mo-chieh ching*," after he retired from politics to Nanking, Wang An-shih says:

My body, like a bubble, and a blow of wind,	身如泡沫亦如風
Cutting knife or scented ointment applies to nothing.	刀割香塗共一空
This I observe while contemplating ( <i>yen-tso</i> ) the world.	宴坐世間觀此理
In spite of his illness, Vimalakīrti is omnipotent. <sup>50</sup>	維摩雖病有神通

During the Sung dynasty, the term *yen-tso* was adopted by Taoism, although the Taoist sitting posture seems to have deviated from the orthodox Buddhist tradition associated with *yen-tso*. Apparently, the Buddhist and Taoist practice of *yen-tso*, or meditative contemplation, was much more widely accepted among T'ang and Sung poets and painters as an essential part of creative activity than I ever suspected. Major poets, such as Li Po and Po Chü-i, mention *yen-tso* repeatedly in their works. Particularly interesting is one experience by Li Po when he stayed overnight in the Tung-lin 東林 Monastery at Mount Lu 廬山:

Heavenly fragrance fills the sky;	天香生虛空
Heavenly music is played uninterruptedly.	天樂鳴不歇

Sitting *yen-tso* in the quietude of immobility,  
I observe, in one tiny hair, the whole universe.<sup>51</sup>

宴坐寂不動  
大千入毫髮

That the Great Chiliocosm (*ta-ch'ien* 大千) would manifest itself in a state of immobility is an idea widely quoted from the *Śūrangama-samadhi-sūtra* (*Leng-yen ching* 楞嚴經), in which the Buddha preaches:

In the enlightened state (*bodhimandala*) of immovable knowledge (*acala*), the Buddhalands of the Ten Directions are contained on the tip of one tiny hair.<sup>52</sup>

From the idealistic tenet that holds that all objects are merely ideations of the mind it would follow that the purest images of mountains and water could not have been formed by artificial design but from meditative contemplation, from a state of the mutual oblivion between object and self (*wu wo liang-wang* 物我兩忘). The central idea of Ku K'ai-chih's 顧愷之 (ca. 344–ca. 406) *Notes on the Painting of Mount Yün-t'ai* (*Hua Yün-t'ai-shan chi* 畫雲臺山記) is not so much the mountain, but how the image of the mountain is formed through the temptation and enlightenment of Wang Ch'ang 王長 and Chao Sheng 趙升, the leading disciples of the first patriarch of Taoism, Chang Tao-ling 張道陵 (first century B.C.).<sup>53</sup>

In Huang T'ing-chien's poem, two lines of which are quoted above, the hallucination of a mountain and the mistaken sounds of a rainstorm are both merely reflections of the mind. It makes very little difference what senses are involved, although from a psychological point of view, the auditory does seem to assert a more immediate and compelling imagery. In an article entitled "Listening,"<sup>54</sup> Roland Barthes begins with the statement "Hearing is a physiological phenomenon; *listening* is a psychological act." He then proceeds to classify three kinds of listening: alert, deciphering, and signifying. Of the last he remarks, "Such listening is supposed to develop in an intersubjective space where 'I am listening' also means 'listen to me.'" This is apt enough to serve as sympathetic commentary on the Sung poem. When Huang T'ing-chien listened to the rushing water and thought he heard the sound of wind and rain, he was listening to his own mind. He was, indeed, in the process of trying to reach the high ground of creative writing mapped out by Lu Chi 陸機 (261–303) in his "Rhyme-Prose on Literature" ("Wen-fu" 文賦), in which, as a first step, the mind must free itself from outward stimuli<sup>55</sup> through the internalization of perceptions, described as the withdrawal of the sense of seeing and the inward return of the sense of hearing (*shou-shih fan-t'ing* 收視返聽).<sup>56</sup> In early Taoism of the Eastern Han period, "the return of one's sight to inward contemplation" (*fan-kuan nei-chao* 返觀內照) was an important concept repeatedly stressed in the *T'ai-p'ing ching* 太平經. It seems that both Taoist and Confucian scholars have agreed that this process of perceptual internalization is perhaps the only viable passage leading to the rarefied height of the mutual oblivion between object and self, a goal thought to have been achieved by only a few of the truly great poets in Chinese history, such as T'ao Ch'ien 陶潛 (365–427).

It now seems not overly farfetched to say that the semioticians' emphasis on the intersubjective relationship between object and self, their refusal to consider the visual outside of language, and their consequent rejection of the purely formalistic approach to visual art, are, in a sense, the twentieth-century reiteration of some of the underlying principles of Chinese *huai-ku* poetry. *Huai-ku* poetry often expresses personal sentiment



Figure 162. Yosa Buson (1716–83), *The Homeward Path under the Shade of Willows*.  
 One of a pair of screens, ink and color on paper, 133.4 × 307.2 cm.  
 Private collection, Japan (from *Yosa Buson*, vol. 19 of *Nihon bijutsu kaiga zenshū*  
 [Tokyo: Shueisha, 1980], pl. 7)

evoked by the vision of some literary icon that has been deeply embedded in the collective memory of a culture. It presupposes an emotional give-and-take, or host-and-guest relationship between historical scenery and personal experience. In the best examples, the metaphorical power of the past is often identified with the picture-like quality of the present, not only in mood and atmosphere, but also in the scheme of representation and mode of figuration. One of the most remarkable characteristics of Wang Wei's poetry, according to his great admirer Wang Shih-chen 王士禛 (1634–1711), was Wang Wei's unequalled ability to convert visual images into names, titles, or other seemingly irrelevant linguistic signs without losing any of their original associative power.<sup>57</sup>

### *Linguistic and Cultural Conversion of Visual Imagery*

I have discussed on another occasion the magical abstraction of literary conventions into some seemingly insignificant geographical or personal names:

The use of geographical or personal names, phonetically selected and woven into the poetic fabric, had been a favorite device to give color and atmosphere to imagery, for example, in the following lines by a late Ming poet-painter, Ch'eng Chia-sui 程嘉燧 (1565–1643): “The river at Kua-pu is empty, barely recognizable are distant trees; the sky over Mo-ling seems so far away, it is not kind to autumn.” The effective use of these two seemingly unrelated and irrelevant geographical names in a poem is comparable to the use of a certain

carefully conceived and strategically placed motif to open, so to speak, the “eyes” of a painting. In the opinion of Li P’an-lung 李攀龍 [1514–70], “they are the words of *Samadhi* which definitely require sudden awakening.”<sup>58</sup>

The stimulation of one’s visual imagination by powerful verbal enforcers is the key to such a “sudden awakening.” Nanking left an especially rich legacy of literary icons for *huai-ku* poetry. In his celebrated suite “Autumn Willows” (“Ch’iu-liu” 秋柳), a group of four regulated verses that overnight brought him national fame as a great poet, or in the equally admired series of quatrains (*chüeh-chü* 絕句) in reminiscence of the Ch’in-huai River,<sup>59</sup> Wang Shih-chen repeatedly plays with Nanking-related imageries, as in “The City Gate of Pai-hsia” (“Pai-hsia men” 白下門), “The Boats in Mo-ling” (“Mo-ling chou” 秣陵舟), and so forth. In Ch’eng Chia-sui’s poem, the main picture-like theme is “Autumn over Mo-ling” (“Mo-ling ch’iu” 秣陵秋). The name Mo-ling alone is sufficient to make the educated reader emotionally identify with the imagined traveler waiting to cross the Yangtze River, who is inevitably moved by his own silent recitation of Chou Pang-yen’s “West River” (“Hsi-ho” 西河) or Hsin Ch’i-chi’s “Forever Encountering Joy” (“Yung-yü-lo” 永遇樂),<sup>60</sup> and whose heart is filled with the tender feelings associated with all the grief and joy buried in the green mountains of Mo-ling. These are instances of privileged sentimentality, absolutely inaccessible to the uninitiated.

At the same time that imagery itself may be transported intact cross-culturally, its allusive or allegorical meanings may change radically owing to different cultural and historical contexts. For example, one of the best-known works by Yosa Buson 与謝蕪村 (1716–83), the Japanese master of literati painting in the Edo period (1615–1867), has been regarded by some Japanese scholars as a realistic record of the scenery of Yodogawa, which is significant biographically in the artist’s career. Consequently, this famous pair of screens has been labeled *The Homeward Path under the Shade of Willows* (fig. 162).<sup>61</sup> The label would have appeared rather strange in the eyes of a Chinese spectator. To him or her, the subject matter is clearly identified by Buson’s own inscription of a late T’ang poem by Wei Chuang, again a *huai-ku* poem related to Nanking.<sup>62</sup> Accordingly, the proper title for the painting should read something like *The Misty Willows at T’ai-ch’eng* (*T’ai-ch’eng yen-liu* 臺城煙柳); and, although this familiar Chinese literary icon is rendered with a distinctly Japanese decorative charm and dreamy quality, the original intent of Buson undoubtedly has been misinterpreted.

The above is a case that illustrates how a literary convention whose specific picture-like signal is generally accepted in one culture could be totally lost in another. During the process of cultural transmission and transformation new meanings could also be picked up by foreign icons. Take, for example, the ancient motif of the skeleton or skull in Chinese literature and painting as a generally accepted symbol for the transient and illusory nature of human life. In the album leaf *Puppet Play of a Skeleton* (*Ku-lu huan-hsi* 骷髏幻戲), a small gem by the Southern Sung court painter Li Sung 李嵩 (active 1190–1230), now in Beijing’s Palace Museum (fig. 163), the provocative message is suggested

Figure 165. Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797–1861), *The Spirit of Sakura Sōgorō Haunting Hotta Kōzuke*. Ōban triptych of woodblock prints, overall 36.5 × 75.3 cm. The Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas, Lawrence; Gift of H. Lee Turner



Figure 163. Li Sung (active 1190–1230),  
*Puppet Play of a Skeleton*.  
 Album leaf, ink and colors on silk,  
 27 × 26.3 cm.  
 Palace Museum, Beijing  
 (from *Paintings of the Sung Dynasty*  
 [Beijing: Palace Museum],  
 vol. 4, pl. 10)



Figure 164. Itō Jakuchū (1716–1800), *A Skull Lying in the Weeds*, 1794. Hanging scroll, ink on paper, 100.8 × 58.3 cm. Saifuku-ji, Osaka Prefecture



by the interaction between the skeleton puppet and its intended audience, the little baby writhing impatiently in the arms of his mother and the child crawling toward the puppet with curiosity and anticipation. This mildly melancholic allusion to Buddhist world-weariness is given a cynical and humorous touch by the accompanying poem. It is the only known *san-ch'ü* 散曲 (individual song) surviving today by the late Yüan painting master Huang Kung-wang, written in 1354, the last year of his life:

With not a single bit of skin and flesh	沒半點兒皮和肉
But carrying a full load of grief and distress,	有一擔苦和愁
The puppeteer is pulling the string	傀儡兒還將絲線抽
To do a little trick to amuse you, little darling.	弄一個小樣子把冤家逗
You know it is a trick.	識破個羞的不羞
Aren't you ashamed?	呆
And still sit here waiting	你兀自五里單埃
Like a fool	
At the five-mile station. <sup>63</sup>	

In Japan, the same term for puppet (*kairai* 傀儡) as the Chinese (*k'uei-lei*), suggesting an origin in the Chinese theatrical tradition,<sup>64</sup> was used at times during the Edo period to refer to the geisha of the pleasure quarters.<sup>65</sup> This occasional usage probably also had a Chinese origin. In the *Yu-yang tsa-tsu* 酉陽雜俎, a late T'ang collection of miscellaneous tales and anecdotes compiled by Tuan Ch'eng-shih 段成式 (ca. 803–63), an incident is recounted about a high official, Chiang Chiao 姜皎 (d. 722), who was a frequent visitor to a Buddhist temple as an honored guest of the chief magistrate of the capital.<sup>66</sup> In one dinner party given by the chief magistrate, he was attracted to a courtesan of great beauty who puzzled everyone by not allowing her hands to be seen for any reason. One of the guests jokingly asked, “Could it be that you have six fingers?” He then forced her to show her hands. When her sleeves were lifted, the guests were utterly horrified to find that the courtesan was a skeleton. Although the urban culture of the Edo period has been described as a fitting tribute to the “floating world,” it somehow gives us the feeling of a forced smile disguised under the heavily powdered face of a geisha-skeleton (fig. 165). The picture-like quality, if there is any, in this image is devastating. There is a kind of decadent beauty reminiscent of Aubrey Beardsley's illustrations for *Salome* that seems conspicuously lacking in Chinese art. One looks in vain, even in Li Ho's 李賀 (791–817) poetry or Lo P'ing's 羅聘 (1733–99) painting, for the kind of childlike splendor of the decayed and the perished that sometimes glows under the somber colors of Toyokuni (1769–1825) or Yoshitoshi (1839–92). There is a certain union of beauty and death that underlies the uniquely martyrish spirit in the traditional culture of Japan. When the mildly didactic Chinese image of the skeleton or skull is imported to Japan and blended with Buddhist fantasy together with bizarre and dark elements, such as the decrepitude of a medieval ruin and vapors rising under moonlight from a marsh, then we suddenly seem to see the meaning behind *A Skull Lying in the Weeds*, a painting by Itō Jakuchū 伊藤若冲 (1716–1800), now in the collection of Saifuku-ji in Osaka Prefecture (fig. 164).<sup>67</sup> According to some opinions, Jakuchū's *Skull* is an illustration of the story “The Blue Hood” (“Aozukin”) from the *Ugetsu monogatari* 雨月物語 (*Tales of Moonlight and Rain*) by Ueda Akinari 上田秋成 (1734–1809).<sup>68</sup> The story tells of a monk in a mountain village who went mad because of the death of a good-looking novice who was “the jewel of the

abbot's heart." The monk turned into a mountain fiend and spread terror in the neighborhood. He was finally relieved from his ordeal by a Zen master who intoned a stanza from Hsüan-chüeh's 玄覺 "Song of Enlightenment" ("Yung-chia cheng-tao ko" 永嘉証道歌):

Upon the bay the moonlight grows,	江月照
Among the pines the breezes sigh,	松風吹
Through the night pure darkness froze.	永夜清宵
And who among us can tell how. <sup>69</sup>	何所爲

When it was understood by the crazy monk that salvation comes only through the destruction of illusion, he was finally able to overcome his attachment to evil, and "suddenly the ghostly figure vanished, leaving only the blue hood and the skeleton lying in the weeds."

Here in the *Ugetsu monogatari* the physical body is the obstacle to liberation. The skeleton finally separated from the ghostly figure is not just a symbol but salvation itself. Nirvana is the ultimate triumph. All these Chinese and Japanese imageries share a common iconographical origin in the Buddhist legend of the Great Triumph over Mara (*Chiang-mo pien* 降魔變), one of the Eight Scenes from Sakyamuni's Life (*Shih-chia pa-hsiang* 釋迦八相),<sup>70</sup> in which the beautiful daughters of the devil Mara who tried to seduce the meditating bodhisattva with their physical charms were turned, to their own horror, into skeletons. And in this sense, the skeleton can be both illusion and reality, depending on how one reflects on the imagery. A uniquely modern experience is described in a poem by the Japanese writer Natsume Sōseki 夏目漱石 (1867–1916), who once during his sleep felt the actual sensation of being a skeleton, which he identified with the feeling of lying on a bone-chilling stone bed surrounded by cold evening fog.<sup>71</sup> Such metamorphical experience, in the mode of Kafka, much too brutally realistic, would have been absolutely beyond comprehension for the Chinese scholars of the T'ang and Sung dynasties.

### *Visual Images in Cultural Divergence and Convergence*

Sometimes an image that is considered picture-like not only conveys a deep-rooted tribal obsession but also may serve as a kind of spectroscopy which fuses and separates many shades of cultural meanings. For example, the image of cows and sheep grazing in tall grass in the windblown wilderness under a low, gray sky must have seemed intensely picture-like to the eyes of the sixth-century Tartar poet of the Hsien-pi tribe who gave us the unforgettable "Song of Ch'ih-le" ("Ch'ih-le ko" 敕勒歌).<sup>72</sup> An immensely popular folk song frequently invoked by scholars from the two sides of the Great Wall for different reasons and with different interpretations, this is one of the most moving verbal pictures ever written of the vast grassland of Inner Mongolia. According to the *Dynastic History of Northern Ch'i* (*Pei-Ch'i shu* 北齊書), the song was first officially recorded in 546, one or two decades after the Ch'ih-le people migrated from their homeland south of Lake Baikal to the foothills of the Yin Mountains in Inner Mongolia. It is a song of nomads full of loving memories of their grassy homeland. Inside the Liao-dynasty mausoleum of Emperor Sheng-tsung 聖宗 (r. 982–1031) at Ch'ing-ling 慶陵 (dated 1031) in eastern Inner Mongolia, wall paintings of the nomads' seasonal camping sites (*na-po* 納鉢) attest that





Figure 166. Anonymous (Liao dynasty),  
*Autumn Mountains*. Wall painting.  
 East Mausoleum, Ch'ing-ling  
 (from J. Tamura and Y. Kobayashi,  
*Tombs and Mural Paintings of Ch'ing-ling*  
 [Kyoto: Kyoto University, 1952], vol. 2, pl. 59)

such prairie landscapes of “spring water” and “autumn mountains” (*ch'ün-shui ch'iu-shan* 春水秋山; fig. 166) were really dear to the heart of the tribal nobles and continued to haunt them even in the pictorial world re-created for their afterlife.<sup>73</sup>

However, as pointed out by Kuo Mao-ch'ien 郭茂倩 (active ca. 1080), the Sung compiler of the *Anthology of Yüeh-fu Poetry* (*Yüeh-fu shih-chi* 樂府詩集), as early as 546, when the “Song of Ch'ih-le” was sung by the Hsien-pi troops during the Northern Ch'i, it was already sung in Chinese, translated from the original language of the nomads. Unavoidably, this change of language brought gradual but wide-ranging transformations in the meaning of the visual images. The same subject—a grazing meadow or swamp for waterfowl hunting—which appears in the Liao tombs as tribal symbols, on the south side of the Great Wall was treated as iconographical background for narrative paintings depicting nomad life, such as *Eighteen Songs of a Nomad Flute* (*Hu-chia shih-pa p'ai* 胡笳十八拍; fig. 167).<sup>74</sup> Art historians classified such paintings of exotic themes in a separate category known as “barbarians and horses” (*fan-ma* 蕃馬). When being used extensively during the High T'ang period in the “border-pass poems” (*pien-sai shih* 邊塞詩) by a group of frontier poets, such as Kao Shih 高適 (702?–65) and Ts'en Shen 岑參 (715–70), the nomadic theme took on an often complicated semiautobiographical and semipolitical tone that made it a far cry from the original image of primitive grandeur and simplicity.

Nonetheless, the “Song of Ch'ih-le” as a cultural icon continued to appear in Sung

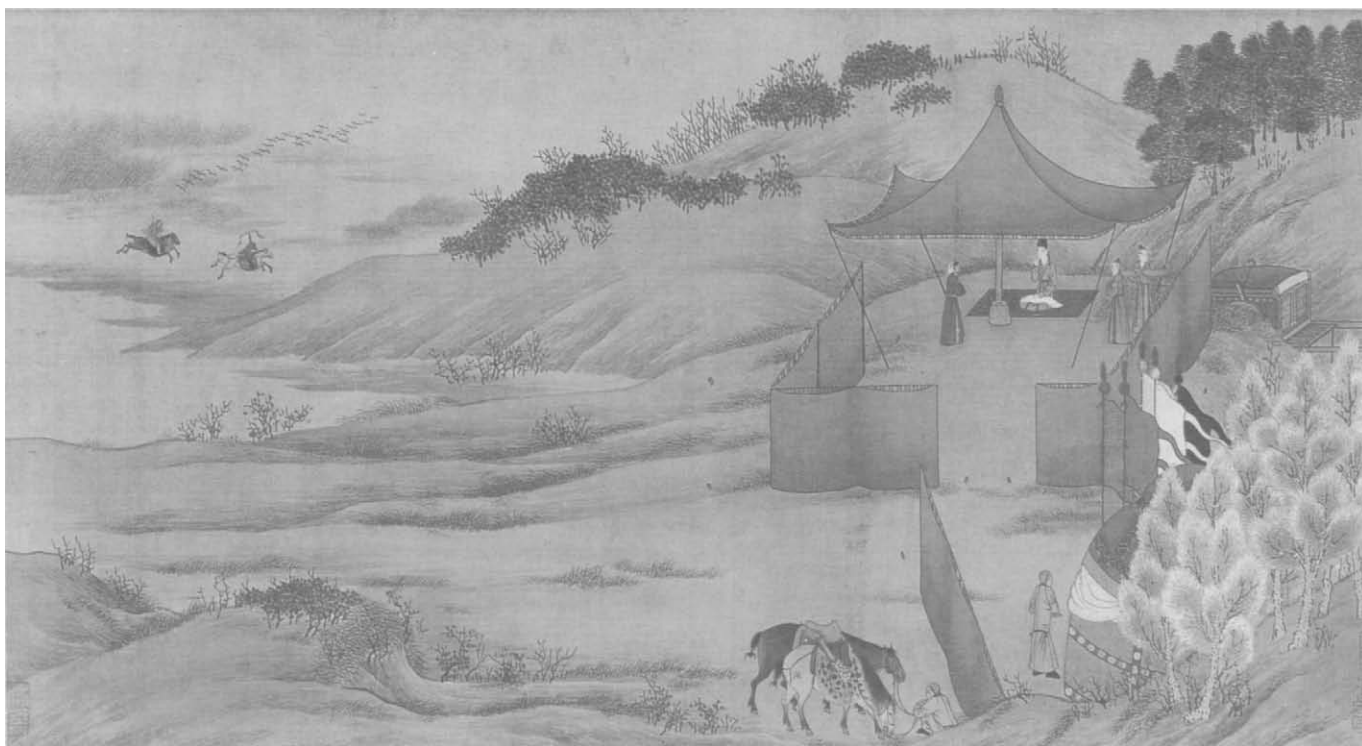


Figure 167. Anonymous (14th c.), “Writing Home,” from *Eighteen Songs of a Nomad Flute*.  
Section of a handscroll, ink, color, and gold on silk, H. 28.5 cm.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Gift of The Dillon Fund, 1973

painting and poetry, among which the best-known example is probably *Yang-kuan t'u* 陽關圖, painted in 1087 by Li Kung-lin 李公麟 (ca. 1049–1106). Li Kung-lin’s painting is a pictorial rendering of the musical tune “Yang-kuan san-tieh” 陽關三疊 (“Three Stanzas of Yang-kuan”), attributed to Wang Wei, and ever since its composition the border pass at Yang-kuan has been well established as the symbolic last station of civilization.<sup>75</sup> Once you step “outside this border pass” (*sai-wai* 塞外), you have left the civilized world (*hua-wai* 化外) behind forever. In a poem inscribed on Li Kung-lin’s painting, Huang T’ing-chien wrote:

In heartbroken music, there is no form or shadow;	斷腸聲裏無形影
In painting [poetry] without sound,	畫出無聲亦斷腸
the heart will be broken even more.	
Imagine the border pass at Yang-kuan,	想得陽關更西路
and the road farther west of it;	
Tall grass is swept low by a north wind,	北風低草見牛羊
exposing cows and sheep.	

The last line, of course, is an allusion to the “Song of Ch’ih-le.” The “Yang-kuan san-tieh” do not present any “form or shadow,” but once they are translated into painting, as Li Kung-lin did, they will “break the heart” just the same, whether by forms in the painting or by the soundless music. The impact of temporal art (the “Yang-kuan” tune)



Figure 168. Anonymous (Liao dynasty),  
*Bamboo, Sparrows, and Hares*.  
Hanging scroll, ink and colors on silk,  
114.3 × 56 cm.  
Liaoning Province Museum, Shenyang  
(from *Liaoning sheng po-wu-kuan*, vol. 3  
of *Chūgoku no hakubutsukan*  
[Tokyo: Kodansha, 1988])

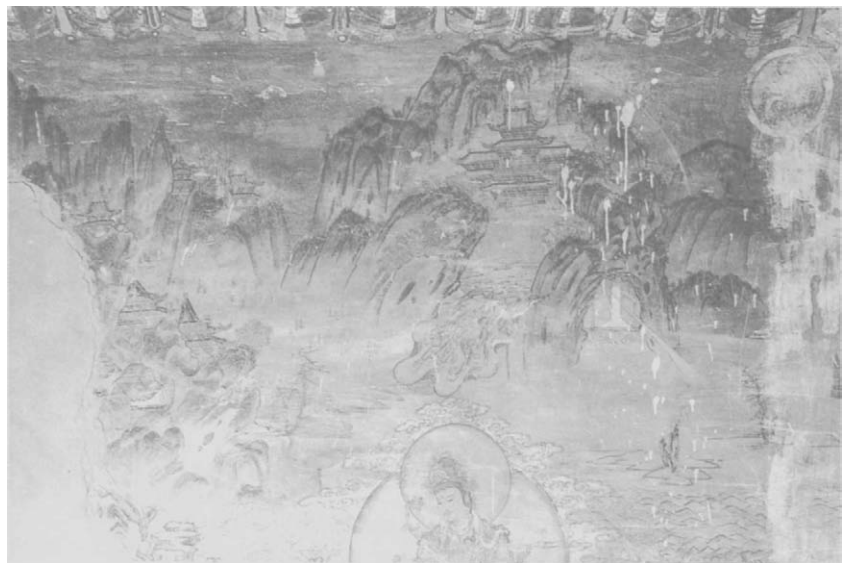


Figure 169. Anonymous (Liao dynasty),  
*A Chess Meet in Deep Mountain*.  
Hanging scroll, ink and colors on silk, 106.5 × 54 cm.  
Liaoning Provincial Museum, Shenyang  
(from *Liaoning sheng po-wu-kuan*)



Figure 170. Li Sung, *View of West Lake*. Handscroll, ink on paper, H. 27 cm. Shanghai Museum (from *Sung Li Sung Hsi-hu t'u* [Shanghai: Shanghai Museum, n.d.], pl. 8)

Figure 171. Anonymous (Hsi-hsia period?), detail of *Mañjuśrī and Samantabhadra Descending in State*. Wall painting. Cave 3, Yü-lin (from *Chung-kuo meishu ch'üan-chi* [Shanghai: Jen-min mei-shu, 1985], vol. 15)



turning into spatial art (*Yang-kuan t'u*) is what was probably in Huang T'ing-chien's mind; but in this crossroads of representation, the sorrow of a departing Chinese poet is already sublimated into the endless space of the nomad's grassland, and the time-space conflict is no longer valid.

Cultural transplantation and assimilation often imply the fascinating constant process of self-identification, redefinition, and renewal of a tribal society through what is called "fusion of horizons." In the late-tenth-century Liao tomb (no. 7) at Yeh-mao-t'ai 葉茂臺 in Liaoning Province, there were found a pair of hanging scrolls depicting entirely different subjects in entirely different styles.<sup>76</sup> One, entitled *Bamboo, Sparrows, and Hares*

(fig. 168), has a symmetrical composition consisting of Taoist symbols in the decorative tradition of T'ang textiles and silver and gold, which by that time had been made outdated by the vogue in the bird-and-flower genre of painting, the "cut-branch" (*che-chih* 折枝) style of Pien Luan 邊鸞 (active ca. 785–802) and his followers, but which was still rather faithfully carried on by the Khitan artists. The other, entitled *A Chess Meet in Deep Mountain* (*Shen-shan hui-ch'i t'u* 深山會棋圖; fig. 169), in an early Sung provincial style betraying obvious derivations from the Li Ch'eng 李成 (919–67) school with strong Taoist overtones, is some sort of a folk painting, the real subject of which may well be one of the thirty-six "grotto-heavens" (*tung-t'ien* 洞天), the mountain retreats of the Taoist immortals. A remarkable resemblance is found between this Taoist motif of the grotto-heaven in the Liao landscape and a very similar landscape motif in the Hsi-hsia 西夏 wall painting in Cave 3 in Yü-lin 榆林, representing the dramatic scene *Mañjuśrī and Samantabhadra Descending in State* (*Wen-shu P'u-hsien pien-hsiang* 文殊普賢變相; fig. 171).<sup>77</sup> The various motifs, the outthrusting cliff, the grotto, the grove of pine trees, and so forth, are comparable in their stylistic approach, with similar treatments of rock forms and *ts'un-fa* 皴法 (texture strokes), such that a common stylistic source in Sung China has to be assumed behind these paintings from two widely separated sites. The fact that an alien element from the Taoist iconography of sacred mountains was able to make inroads into the predominantly Buddhist world of the nomads from Tun-huang through Karakhoto to the Liaotung Peninsula seems to confirm our impression that visual images can be used effectively to overcome language and ideological barriers. In numerous other examples, the historical process of sinicization of the minority people along China's border bears ample witness to this phenomenon.

In one or two more extreme cases, a change in the ideal of natural beauty allegedly played a role in the making of history. The Liao kingdom was replaced in 1125 by the Jurchen, who established the Chin dynasty. Amazing was the radical change in the vision of a hunting people which, after just a few decades of direct cultural contact with the Chinese, shifted from images of wild geese and falcons (*hai-tung-ch'ing* 海東青) in the Manchurian marshes to images of the soft water and tender hills of southern China. In 1161, after twenty years of a shaky peaceful coexistence with the Southern Sung, the Chin emperor Wan-yen Liang 完顏亮 (r. 1149–61) suddenly decided to break the truce and personally led his Jurchen horsemen on a campaign to capture the Southern Sung capital of Hangchow 杭州. According to a rumor that was widely circulated at that time and reported in a number of such Southern Sung records as *Ho-lin yü-lu* 鶴林玉露 by Lo Ta-ching 羅大經 (d. after 1248), the true motivation behind the invasion was the Chin emperor's obsession with the beauty of Hangchow as described in "Watching the Tidal Bore" ("Wang hai-ch'ao" 望海潮), a famous *tz'u* by Liu Yung 柳永 (ca. 980–1053).<sup>78</sup> It was rumored that before the invasion the Jurchen emperor had secretly sent a painter to the south to try to capture Liu's poetic image of Hangchow's West Lake (fig. 170). Although the invasion was thwarted by the emperor's sudden death, the damage was devastating. In a poem commemorating the tragic event, the thirteenth-century poet Hsieh Ch'u-hou 謝處厚 wrote:

Who could have spread the song of Hangchow?  
Ten miles of lotus blossoms and cassia fragrance  
in every late autumn.

誰把杭州曲子謳  
荷花十里桂三秋

Who could have known that un sentient things  
 such as these plants and trees  
 Could have caused ten thousand miles of grief  
 along the Long River?<sup>79</sup>

那知草木無情物  
 牽動長江萬里愁

How much truth was in these rumors may never be known. The legend went on in popular literature and folk art long after the change of dynasties. The interesting question remains, however, of exactly what picture-like quality was underscored in the portrait of West Lake that seemed so provocative and irresistible to the Jurchen ruler. We have reached here a junction in Chinese art history where two major schools of painting sharply diverged in different directions. On the one hand, only a half-century before, Su Shih introduced his fundamental principle of the kinship between poetry and painting. That painting, like poetry, was for self-expression and the pleasure of the literati was accepted even by the *Imperial Painting Catalogue of the Hsüan-ho Era* (*Hsüan-ho hua-p'u* 宣和畫譜) as a basic postulate of art criticism and connoisseurship. At about the same time, the early Southern Sung court painters were searching for and exploring ways to consolidate a new mode of representation that embodied some aesthetic values distinctly different from the Northern Sung. Their new vision focused on the problem of *hsü* and *shih*, or the negative and positive functions of space interacting with the intervening atmosphere and light. This was designated by later historians *Nan-Sung yüan-t'i* 南宋院體, the Southern Sung "academic," or court, style. Since literature was the common source for poetic themes or picture-ideas, both inside and outside of the Academy, many of the pictorial images found in court paintings can also be found in contemporary poetry as the inspiring verbal leitmotifs. Our question thus remains—what are the most picture-like elements that can be readily identified, even by a layman, in a twelfth-century landscape painting that seems to evoke vividly the Southern Sung mood and reflect the changed concept of beauty from the sublime of northern landscape to the picturesque of southern landscape?

I must add a hasty note here to the effect that our use of the term "picturesque" is quite different from that used in late-eighteenth-century England. China never had a theory of the picturesque that singled out the virtues of roughness, irregularity, and variations as qualities enriching pictorial definition. Nor did it ever entertain the pessimistic outlook on nature, share the melancholic love of the ruined and dilapidated, nor was it redolent of an elegiac nostalgia for the legendary past. Picturesque beauty in China may have been an acquired taste through literary education and hence more accessible to the poet-scholar than to the lay person. The concept in China did not betray the class snobbery or the kind of social disdain that in England echoed the bias of an old agrarian order of gentlemen-farmers whose paradoxical notion of the picturesque was, according to some modern critics, the aestheticization of rural poverty and backwardness.<sup>80</sup>

The Chinese never defined the picturesque (*ju-hua*) in specific formal terms, such as ruggedness or irregularity, as did the English theorists William Gilpin (1724–1804), Uvedalé Price, or Richard Knight.<sup>81</sup> In fact, the pictorial images presented in landscape paintings by Mu Ch'i 牧溪 and Yü-chien 玉澗 in the thirteenth century often show a tendency toward ambiguity and disintegration of forms into the misty poetic mood and blurry atmosphere rather than emphasizing natural details in a landscape. In a well-known poem presented to Li Kung-lin, the younger scholar Ts'ai Chao 蔡肇 (?–1119) beseeches



Figure 172. Attributed to Tung Yüan (d. 962), *Wintry Groves and Layered Banks*.  
Hanging scroll, ink and light color on silk, 181.5 × 116.5 cm.  
Kurokawa Institute of Ancient Culture, Ashiya  
(from R. Barnhart, *Marriage of the Lord of the River* [Ascona, Switz.: Artibus Asiae, 1970], fig. 13)

the master to make sure to leave space in the painting for his fishing boat, so he can enjoy a good afternoon nap on the river. He begins the poem with this verbal image:

When the wild geese return, the water is touching the sky; 鴻雁歸時水拍天  
Still enveloped by mist are old trees on a low hill.<sup>82</sup> 平崗老木尚含烟

Compare the image "water is touching the sky" with the important spatial device of "sky and water sharing one color" (*t'ien shui t'ung-se* 天水通色), attributed to the Southern T'ang painter Hsü Hsi 徐熙 (d. before 975), and we realize that they are both describing a typical "level-distance" (*p'ing-yüan* 平遠) landscape in which either there is no clear-cut demarcation separating the water and sky, or the horizon is placed so high that it is implied somewhere outside the picture frame.<sup>83</sup> Some of the paintings attributed to Tung Yüan 董源 (d. 962), especially the *Wintry Groves and Layered Banks* (*Han-lin ch'ung-t'ing t'u* 寒林重汀圖), in the Kurokawa Institute (fig. 172), are examples of this type of landscape. In a similar way, one will immediately recognize the unmistakable traits of an early twelfth-century landscape from two lines of the contemporary poet Chou Pang-yen:

In the mist, the rows of peaks are countless in blue, 烟中列岫青無數  
On the backs of wild geese, the last light of sunset 雁背夕陽紅欲暮  
is approaching darkness with a glow of red.<sup>84</sup>

The composition and the color scheme visually suggested in the first line are reminiscent of a follower of Li T'ang 李唐 (ca. 1070–ca. 1150), while the second line makes one think of the exquisite lyricism of Ma Lin 馬麟 (active ca. 1216–56) from a later generation, such as is evident in his dated *Swallows at Dusk* (*Yen-tu hsi-yang t'u* 燕渡夕陽圖; 1254), in the Nezu Institute of Fine Arts in Tokyo (see fig. 75).

Out of curiosity I singled out from dated or datable poems of the twelfth century one small pictorial element that is either taken from a poem rhapsodizing on a painting, or otherwise identified explicitly by its author as a picture-like detail. The name that I give to this detail, *i-mo yao-ch'ing* 一抹遙青, or "a touch of distant blue," also appears in the poems. It fascinates me, as it seems to underline certain characteristics of the age—the brush abbreviations, the more relaxed and intimate view of nature, and the new awareness of atmospheric expression. When similar poetic fragments are arranged chronologically in sequence, one is amazed to see how close are the parallel developments in poetry and painting that are obviously based on the same set of picture-like definitions.

A small sampling of this parallelism: In about 1080, the poet Ch'in Kuan 秦觀 (1049–1100), a follower of Su Shih, was passing by Ssu-chou 泗州 in Kiangsu Province. His observation of the river town later appears in a series of poems. One example is:

Far, far is the lonely town surrounded by white water. 渺渺孤城白水環  
Among masts and pulleys, 舳艫人語夕霏間  
people are chatting in the sunset.  
Above the grove is a touch of blue 林梢一抹青如畫  
just like in painting [*ju-hua*],  
I bet they are the mountains at the turn of River Huai.<sup>85</sup> 應是淮流轉處山



It is indeed a familiar technique that one finds frequently in Southern Sung paintings in which the distant mountains or banks at the curve of a river are depicted by a touch of light wash in mineral blue. What seems surprising is that as early as the end of the eleventh century, even before the time of Emperor Hui-tsung 徽宗 (r. 1101–25), and much earlier than was once believed, such a technique of color wash for distant mountains had already made its debut in landscape painting.

A few decades later, in 1127, the minister Chao Ting 趙鼎 (1085–1147), fleeing with Emperor Kao-tsung 高宗 (r. 1127–62) from the invading Jurchen hordes, was on his way to Nanking. Before they crossed the Yangtze River at I-chen 儀真, Chao Ting made exactly the same observation as Ch'in Kuan:

Just a touch of the chilly blue	但一抹寒青
Coming and going in view—	有無中
Colors of the distant hills. <sup>86</sup>	遙山色

It appears that by this time, the pictorial convention of “a touch of distant blue” had already become an integral part of the collective visual memories, and it is difficult to decide who was the original inventor, the painter or the poet.

Evidently not all poetic images were continually recognized and depicted in consistently similar and predictable patterns. The progress of time, the acquisition of individual and local colors, and the advance of representational techniques in visual art all intervened to give the same poetic image a different form or a new look masking its metaphorical or lyrical content. The re-creation of these literary images in their geographical and historical contexts and the unveiling of the underlying transformations would make compelling studies in art and intellectual history. Consider, for example, the celebrated “Fisherman’s Song” (“Yü ko-tzu” 漁歌子) by the T’ang Taoist poet-painter Chang Chih-ho 張志和 (ca. 742–ca. 782). It is undoubtedly one of the most admired *tz’u* in the history of Chinese literature, being imitated by numerous later poets, including the Japanese emperor Saga 嵯峨 (r. 809–23), whose contribution graced *Ryōunshū* 凌雲集, the first collection of *kanshi* 漢詩 (Chinese poetry) by imperial command (814). Generations of schoolchildren have memorized and recited these enchanting lines:

Near the rim of Hsi-sai Mountain, white egrets fly;	西塞山前白鷺飛
Peach blossoms, flowing stream, and perches full grown.	桃花流水鱖魚肥
Oh, for a broad-brimmed bamboo hat,	青若笠，綠蓑衣
and a cloak of straw!	
Slanting wind, fine rain, one need not go home. <sup>87</sup>	斜風細雨不須歸

These lines inspired interpretations ranging from Su Shih’s elegant image:

Beyond the Island of Scattering Flowers	散花洲外片帆微
a lonely sail is going out of sight . . . <sup>88</sup>	

to the colorful rendering of the Yüan painting master Wu Chen 吳鎮 (1280–1354):

West of the Village in red leaves,	紅葉邨西夕照餘
the last light of sunset lingers on. . . .	

This is from The Metropolitan Museum of Art’s *Fisherman* (*Lu-t’an tiao-t’ing t’u* 蘆灘釣艇圖; see fig. 196), one of two versions by Wu Chen.<sup>89</sup> His gentle, wet-ink strokes,

shimmering under a slanting diffuse light, must be a far cry from Chang Chih-ho's original treatment of a comparable theme. For Chang, according to the eyewitness accounts of his contemporaries Yen Chen-ch'ing 顏真卿 (709–85) and the Buddhist poet-monk Chiao-jan 皎然, painting was an expressionistic "performance" done to the accompaniment of drums and flutes. While keeping time with the music, the master would execute the earliest form of texture strokes, his "brush jabbing down like a rain-storm in vertical and horizontal sweeps" (*tsuan feng jo yü tsung-heng sao* 攢鋒若雨縱橫掃).<sup>90</sup> This would become known in art history as the "broken-ink" (*p'o-mo* 破墨) technique, a revolutionary and prophetic innovation initiated by the eccentric group of hermit-artists centering around the great calligrapher Yen Chen-ch'ing.<sup>91</sup>

Through these variations of the theme of the "Fisherman's Song," one can trace the evolution of the poetic visions and representational means from the beginning of a movement of ink-monochrome landscape painting in the middle of the eighth century around the Lake T'ai 太湖 area, through Wang Shen, who married an imperial princess and was a close painter-friend of Su Shih, to the Four Masters of the late Yüan. The carefree image of a fisherman offers a prototype for the spirit of wanderlust, which is at the heart of any form of escapism. The untrammelled nature of the theme gives the artist a broad latitude of interpretation in his pursuit of a unique visual effect. However, the diversity of treatments of similar themes eventually led to the crucial stylistic problem of *ya* 雅 and *su* 俗, or the problem of the refined (or scholarly) tastes as against the popular (or vulgar) tastes. In Chinese art, some literary themes, such as the fisherman or the snowscape, have been more sensitive to the issue of this dichotomy of taste than others. The controversy was epitomized, for example, by Cheng Ku 鄭谷 (*chin-shih* ca. 886) in late T'ang poetry and the Che 浙 school in Ming painting. Even in the Northern Sung, some eyebrows were raised over a few unusual experiments with this seemingly inconsequential literary and pictorial convention of the fisherman. Thus, the image of a moonlit river in "Fisherman's Song" inspired Huang T'ing-chien to compare "a girl's flirtatious glance with autumn ripples in a river cove" (*nü-erh p'u-k'ou yen-p'o ch'iu* 女兒浦口眼波秋),<sup>92</sup> whereas some thirty years later, the same image inspired Emperor Kao-tsung to identify his secret yearning for a secluded, retired life with "fragments of clouds floating leisurely underwater" (*shui-ti hsien-yün p'ien-tuan fei* 水底閒雲片段飛).<sup>93</sup> Huang invited the good-natured ridicule of his friend Su Shih; the emperor was greeted by deferential praise belying the true puzzlement of the readers.

### *Metaphysical Poetry, Pictorial Space, and the Rise of Landscape Painting*

Here we may pause and look back at the historical path of the interrelationship between poetry and painting and see how far we have traveled. By the time of the Northern Sung emperors Shen-tsung and Hui-tsung, Chinese painting in terms of technical sophistication and theoretical maturity was ready to accept a new historical challenge and choice. Following the general pattern of cultural development partially conditioned by a north-south polarity, Chinese painting had to grope its own way, from the fourth century onward, between two basically rival traditions, between the Confucian-Buddhist-oriented tradition of the court and the monasteries in the north and the Taoist-oriented "tradition of the mountains and woods" (*shan-lin ch'uan-t'ung* 山林傳統) in the south; between the

aristocratic, urban culture in Ch'ang-an and the unpretentious, antinormative taste of the commoner's society in the Lake T'ai and Mount T'ien-t'ai 天臺山 areas. Since the High T'ang, Chinese painting also had to reconcile the separate developments of *tan-ch'ing* 丹青 (red and green) and *shui-mo* 水墨 (water and ink); it had to deal with the critical disparity pointed out by Ching Hao 荆浩 (active ca. 870–930) between “Wu Tao-tzu [who] had brush [outline] but no ink, while Hsiang Yung had ink [texture strokes] but no brush.” It had to wait until the great age of landscape painting, when it was in the hands of the Great Synthesizer, Li Ch'eng, for this polarity between *pi* 筆 (brush) and *mo* 墨 (ink), between the “dark-ink tradition” of the north and the “pale-ink tradition” of the south to finally be resolved.<sup>94</sup> And then toward the end of the Northern Sung, after centuries of a frustrated and jealous partnership, the time was ripe for painting and poetry to come to terms under the theoretical and practical guidance of the inspired genius of Su Shih, who set forth, ordained, and personified the literati's ideal of the three perfections.

From the beginning, landscape painting in China suffered from its precarious position as a stepchild of ideology. The dawn of landscape painting only arrived after the long night of ideological clash over the critical problem of the relationship between *yen* 言 (word), *hsiang* 象 (image), and *i* 意 (idea),<sup>95</sup> a problem so momentous and central to medieval philosophy that it was passionately and rigorously debated throughout the whole Wei-Tsin period as one of the most prestigious of the Three Doctrines (*san-li* 三理) in Dark Learning (*hsüan-hsüeh* 玄學).<sup>96</sup> The dispute ended, somewhat inconclusively, with the temporary triumph of the Taoist philosophers represented by Wang Pi 王弼 (226–49) and Kuo Hsiang 郭象 (d. 312), whose main thesis was “words do not completely express the idea” (*yen pu chin i* 言不盡意) and that one should “discard . . . words after realization of the principle” (*te-i wang-yen* 得意忘言). In this respect, the emergence of “pure” landscape painting at the beginning of the Liu Sung dynasty can be regarded as closely tied to the decline of metaphysical poetry (*hsüan-yen shih* 玄言詩), which yielded to landscape poetry (*shan-shui shih* 山水詩) as the more expressive manifestation of inner reality and consequently a more direct intermediary for communion between man and the Tao.<sup>97</sup> But above all, from an art-historical point of view, the inception of landscape painting was not possible until the refining and focusing of poetic vision into the new awareness of a controlled space—pictorial space—took place.

The intellectuals of the Six Dynasties, having newly emancipated themselves from the totalitarian grip of the Confucian order of Han society, were distinguished by a self-consciousness of their individuality and a strong urge, as expressed by Hsi K'ang 稽康 (223–62), to totally transcend tradition, laws, rituals, and social duties, and to lead lives in accordance with nothing else but the dictates of nature. Philosophical pessimism accompanied the rise of medieval solitude and melancholy. Negation of traditional values inevitably led to the fear of a cultural vacuum, a spiritual limbo, and the search for a “peach blossom spring” on earth, or better still, immortality.

Nature was a new-found source of beauty and pleasure outside tradition and conformity. Southern landscapes, however, were not always soft and tender during the Six Dynasties. When nature first became an object of exploration and contemplation, at the time of the first nature poet, Hsieh Ling-yün 謝靈運 (385–433), it was still seen as full of awe-inspiring grandeur and unexpected danger. The era was one of political and social upheaval and, like all such eras, was characterized by a feeling of urgency, a sense of

crisis, and a demand for absolute spiritual freedom. Perhaps to meet this demand, the concept of a vast, unlimited pictorial space was discovered. The discovery was truly a major event in medieval China, as it freed man's spirit from the confines of the physical world into the boundless world of his own imagination.

The first step was the infinite expansion of poetic vision. A short rhymed piece, "Inscription on a Precious Jar" ("Pao-weng ming" 寶甕銘), probably written sometime in the Six Dynasties but carrying an attribution to the Han official-comedian Tung-fang Shuo 東方朔 (154-93 B.C.), presents perhaps the earliest recorded panoramic view taken from the top of a mountain.

I look at the Three Islands [Fang-hu],	望三壺如盈尺
which appear barely a foot long.	
I see the vast boundary of the Eight Quarters	視八鴻如縈帶
looking like an entwining scarf. <sup>98</sup>	

This bird's-eye view continued to serve as a stimulus to spatial imagination during the T'ang dynasty. Li Po seemed to be especially fond of such visual fantasies through the eyes of a bird of enormous size (*ta-p'eng* 大鵬); Po Chü-i imagined a Taoist immortal whom he encountered in a dream (*meng-hsien* 夢仙):

Looking down halfway from the sky,	半空直下視
Man's earth is obscured in dust.	人世塵冥冥
The Eastern Sea is no more than a stretch of white;	東海一片白
The Sacred Mountains are a few dots of blue. <sup>99</sup>	列嶽數點青

In the next step of the evolution, the visionary space must be put under control by mental enclosure in order to become a significant space. In other words, the open space must be visually enclosed and redefined as an illusion of coherent surface within the framework of an imagined composition. This was soon accomplished, and the process was richly illustrated in contemporary literature. In Hsieh Ling-yün's rhyme-prose "Mountain Dwelling" ("Shan-chü fu" 山居賦), for example, he describes how he "displays layers of cliffs inside the gate, and spreads mirrored ripples at the sill of his window."<sup>100</sup> Such a reference to the gate and window as some sort of compositional framework appears repeatedly in Hsieh Ling-yün's works and was echoed by another nature poet, Hsieh T'iao 謝朓 (464-99), who seemed equally attracted to similar composed views: "In front of the window, distant mountains parade" and so forth.<sup>101</sup>

Once the literary concept of a composed landscape was transferred to a painting, pictorial space was born. In principle, a man could now take a "dream journey" (*wo-yu* 卧游) in his studio; he could "unroll the scroll, contemplate the painting in solitude, and reach the four boundaries without leaving his seat" (Tsung Ping 宗炳; 375-443).<sup>102</sup> In practice, he could "draw a three-inch vertical line to stand for the height of eight thousand feet."<sup>103</sup> In this new-found visual freedom, imagination could no longer be held in bondage. The discovery of pictorial space at the beginning of the fifth century in South China is in every way equal in importance to the Renaissance invention of artificial perspective. The Renaissance gave birth to the cultural myth that the Europeans possessed an infallible method for representing the material world. The Chinese poets and painters of the Eastern Tsin and early Sung dynasties, on the other hand, were less concerned with the representation of nature than with communion with the Tao. To them, mountains and

water furnished the best entrance to the mind of the universe. Where metaphysical poetry had failed with language, they hoped landscape painting would have a better chance to succeed with visual imagery.<sup>104</sup>

By contrast, the earlier narrative painting of the Ch'in and Han dynasties appears to treat historical and mythological subjects as part of the wall, as decorative segments of flat surfaces. Landscape painting of the Six Dynasties, on the other hand, was an experiment, an attempt to open a window onto an idealized reality through a controlled vision of space. For the first time, nature was subject to pictorial configuration; it was defined and enticed and invited to permeate the threshold of man's mind-window. This is not a minor achievement. I have always admired Wang Wei's lines

The great valley turns, encompassing the stone steps;	大壑隨階轉
The numerous mountains climb, entering my gate <sup>105</sup>	群山入戶登

as an outstanding example of the representation of dynamic space. Not only is the unlimited space framed, so to speak, in the intimacy of a limited, imagined space, but also the subjectivized elements in nature, the valley and mountains, are imbued with such a sense of autokinetic movement that the total impression is indeed a poetic manifestation of Hsieh Ho's 謝赫 (active 500-ca. 535) first law of painting, "The movement of *ch'i* generates animation" (*Ch'i-yün sheng-tung* 氣運生動). I am amazed, however, to find that as early as the time of Hsieh Ling-yün, the feeling for the constant changes in nature and the projection of kinesthetic sensations onto natural objects were already practiced and appreciated. Quite in tune with the restless and urgent spirit of the time, both early nature poetry and landscape painting show a tendency to make sudden and radical shifts in space and time within a single poem or painting. In his book *Shadows of Books* (*Shu-ying* 書影), Chou Liang-kung 周亮工 (1612-77) makes the interesting observation that the essence of Hsieh Ling-yün's poetry can be summed up in four words, "climbing mountains and crossing water" (*TENG-shan SHE-shui* 登山涉水), with the up-and-down action emphatically emphasized.<sup>106</sup>

At the break of day I leave the southern cliffs;	朝旦發陽崖
As the sun sets, I rest on the northern peak.	景落憩陰峯
I abandon my boat, gazing at distant isles,	舍舟眺迴渚
And stop walking to lean on a luxuriant pine.	停策倚茂松
.....	
Below I see the tips of towering trees,	俯視喬木杪
And looking up hear the great valley's roar. <sup>107</sup>	仰聆大壑淙

In these lines, written in 425, the poet is at the top of a mountain at one moment and in the depth of a valley at the next. The quick and abrupt shift of spatial references—up and down, far and near—has been noted not only by Chou Liang-kung and other Chinese critics, but also by literary historians in the West, such as Francis Westbrook. It is ultimately this restless and compelling urge to explore and to discover, the desire to transcend the limits of time and space, to "forget verbal language" (*wang-yen* 忘言) so as "to entice the Tao with the forms of mountain and water" (*shan-shui i hsing mei tao* 山水以形媚道),<sup>108</sup> or "to transmit the form of the Ultimate Void with the capacity of a brush,"<sup>109</sup> that constitutes the rationale for the rise of early Chinese landscape painting. By representing multiple views in a single picture, such as in the early and High T'ang caves at Tun-



Figure 173. Anonymous (T'ang dynasty), *The First Meditation of Queen Vaidehi*.  
Wall painting, Cave 172, Tun-huang

huang, and by the juxtaposition of “the three distances”—level distance (*p'ing-yüan*), high distance (*kao-yüan* 高遠), and deep distance (*shen-yüan* 深遠)—in a single picture space to constitute a composite image, the painter employs the same principles of contrast and balance and the integration of two or more opposing or competing images which were prevalent in poetry during the Southern Dynasties and the early T'ang.

Such a complex concept of space appears to be deeply rooted in the southern tradition of *The Songs of the South*, as well as in the romantic cosmology of the early Taoists, both of which were rich in allusions to spatial transformations. From the point of view of formal structure and semiotic design, however, the abrupt shifts of spatial references bespeak an equally deep indebtedness to certain ideological and linguistic phenomena passed down from antiquity, as well as to the three governing principles of form from the preface to the *Book of Poetry*, particularly the third principle, *hsing* 興, which served as the theoretical basis for the sudden shift of time-space reference in a superimposing, or sequential, composite image.<sup>110</sup>

In both the *Book of Poetry* and the *Songs of the South*, such spatial concepts as “up and down,” “far and near,” “left and right,” and “front and back” often suggest a relative relationship in which relativity does not necessarily imply contradiction. Following this tradition, even the loci of the cardinal points are sometimes found to be relative and not fixed, as may be seen in Han and T'ang decorative arts. The sudden shift of point of view is a favorite narrative device in the eleven poems of the *Nine Songs* (*Chiu-ko* 九歌).<sup>111</sup> In the shamanistic world of hallucinations, there seemed to be no differentiation between the real and the imagined or between dichotomies of time and space. In the history of linguistic development, the neutralization of some of the relative terms has been explained as a vestige of an ancient tradition. Matteo Ricci (1552–1610), the first Jesuit missionary to China, made a special point in his *True Doctrine of the Lord in Heaven* (*T'ien-chu shih-i* 天主實義) that the well-known poem in the *Ta-ya* 大雅 section of the *Book of Poetry* describing “the ascending and descending of King Wen to be at the left and right of the Supreme God” is proof of the existence of heaven and hell.<sup>112</sup> This has been refuted by most Chinese scholars, including Wang Kuo-wei 王國維 (1877–1927), who agree that the ancient problem of simultaneity and choice involved in the interpretation of relative terms, such as *chih-chiang* 陟降 (ascending and descending), depends on a correct understanding of the context. Again, the relativity inherent in some of the early spatial concepts illuminates the deep-rooted influences of the traditional logic of correlative dualism.

In a poem dated 430, entitled “Around My New Lodge at Stone Gate on All Sides Are High Mountains, Winding Streams and Rocky Rapids, Lush Woods and Tall Bamboo,” Hsieh Ling-yün surprises his readers with two of the most wonderfully absurd lines:

Early in the morning I hear the rustle of evening's wind,	早聞夕飈急
Late at night I see the first light of the dawning sun. <sup>113</sup>	晚見朝日暎

This complete confusion of time can be read either as the poet's deliberate denial of the rationality and validity of reality, or, as understood by another critic, “usual distinctions being blurred in the topography of mountains.” In either case, it makes one think of the anachronistic image of archaism pictorially rendered in Ch'ien Hsüan's 錢選 (ca. 1235–ca. 1300) *Dwelling in the Floating Jade Mountains* (*Fou-yü-shan chü t'u* 浮玉山居圖) in the

Shanghai Museum (see fig. 83).<sup>114</sup> Among later poems, a comparable dislocation of time reference is found in Li Shang-yin's 李商隱 (ca. 813–58) *Four Yen-t'ai Poems* 燕臺 presented in a sharply different, urban setting:

Awakening from intoxication, when fading sunlight like early dawn,	醉起微陽若初曙
Shines on the curtain of broken dream— the whispering words I still hear. <sup>115</sup>	映簾夢斷聞殘語

According to Yeh Chia-ying, "Sunset is the reality, dawn, illusion. The broken dream is reality, the still audible voice illusion." Here the silent movement of light and shadows is a reflection of the intricate mosaic inlay of visual and audible imageries. The obliteration of time is benign and introspective, lacking the wild ecstasy of a Southern Dynasties vision of nature like Hsieh Ling-yün's.

The participation of time is necessary in the formation of visual imagery. Visual perception involves the enforced journey of the eyes over a visual field. Thus, it is entirely conceivable that a visual image is used as a tool for the measurement of both space and time. The Chinese poet has always been extremely sensitive to the change of seasons and the passage of the hours. Throughout the Six Dynasties, the T'ang, and the Sung, one of the most common expressions of sadness over the fleeting passage of time and the transience of life was the image of the setting sun "half-hidden by distant peaks" (*yüan-feng yin pan-kuei* 遠峯隱半規). The setting sun—"so infinitely beautiful despite the approach of evening" (Li Shang-yin)—is not only the signal of the end of a day but also of the end of the earth. This is an observation confirmed time and again in poetry, such as in Li Kou's 李覲 (1009–59) "Homesick":

People say the sunset is where the earth ends. I look and look at the end of the earth but cannot see my home—	人言落日是天涯 望極天涯不見家
Being hidden by the hateful blue mountains; The blue mountains, in turn, are obscured by the evening clouds. <sup>116</sup>	已恨碧山相掩映 碧山更被暮雲遮

Man is only a traveler, and the sunset at the end of the earth is a rest stop before the "long night." This image of the setting sun has been used extensively as an object for contemplation in the Buddhist cult of the Pure Land (*Sukhāvati*). Meditating before the setting sun (*jih hsiang kuan* 日想觀) is one of the sixteen meditations recommended to Queen Vaidehī by Amitābha Buddha. In Tun-huang, for example, on the wall of Cave 172 (fig. 173), this is represented on the upper left of a mandala as part of the "pictorial variation on the *Amitayur-dhyana-sūtra*" (*kuan-ching pien-hsiang* 觀經變相).<sup>117</sup> It was a popular subject in the High T'ang period, which is not only testified to by many examples in Tun-huang but also by the *biwa* plectrum guard in the Shōsō-in Treasury, Nara (fig. 174), and the early landscape screen in the Eastern Temple (Tōji), in Kyoto. In poetry, the setting sun is the imagined location of everybody's homestead; in painting, it is the "vanishing point" on the horizon which joins the sky and earth together in a typical level-distance landscape. On other occasions I have discussed the Confucian background for the development of the spatial concept of the level-distance point of view in





Figure 174. Anonymous (8th c.), detail of painting on a biwa plectrum guard.  
Shōsō-in Treasury, Nara  
(from *Paintings in the Shōsōin* [Tokyo: Shōsōin, 1968], pl. 34)

pictorial art. In its integration of height and depth and in its neutralization of the differentiation between time and space, the level-distance landscape represents the Confucian aesthetic ideal of equilibrium-harmony. It suggests a visual sensation of restfulness in the boundless expanse of space in which man will be able to find peace with himself and the universe, as against the Taoist penchant for the romance and drama of height.<sup>118</sup>

### Fusion of Senses

Long before the introduction of Mahāyāna Buddhism in China, the Chinese were well aware of the potential of a synthesis or integration of the senses in literature. The late Han writer Ma Jung 馬融 (79-166) was probably one of the first to try to describe musical sounds in visual terms. In a rhyme-prose devoted to the long flute ("Ch'ang-ti fu" 長笛賦), he states, "One can listen to the sounds and associate them with forms, forms in the likeness of flowing water, or in the image of a flight of wild geese."<sup>119</sup> The image of birds in flight was particularly favored by early Chinese poets. Hsi K'ang, leader of the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove, composed a series of fifteen poems to present to his older brother as the latter was about the leave for the army. In one of his most famous couplets, Hsi K'ang evokes the elegant image of a scholar-soldier who plays the *p'i-p'a* 琵琶 while contemplating the sky in a grand gesture symbolic of absolute freedom of spirit.<sup>120</sup>

When Ku K'ai-chih later read these poems, he was moved to make this famous comment:

To paint a man playing his five-stringed [*p'i-p'a*] is easy; to paint him  
keeping his eyes on wild geese in flight is hard.<sup>121</sup>

The difficulty seems to center on the single word *sung* 送, "to see off" or "to follow." Seeing off the wild geese implies that one's eyes are following rapid motion through space and time. To capture such an image would tax the imagination and technical proficiency of artists of even a much later age, such as the court painters of the Hsüan-ho Academy. Ku K'ai-chih saw no reason to expect better from the masters of the Eastern Tsin, including himself.

Despite the difficulties, however, a number of poets in the following centuries continued to put themselves to this test. The T'ang poet Ch'ien Ch'i 錢起 (ca. 710-80), for example, used the same image of birds in flight to evoke the sound of a temple bell fading in the evening air:

If you wish to know where the journey of the sounds ends,      欲知聲盡處  
Birds are disappearing in the vast sky, far, far away.<sup>122</sup>      鳥沒遙天遠

Ch'ien Ch'i's effort to integrate visual imagery with sound seems far less successful than Tu Mu's 杜牧 (803-52) use of the same image to suggest the impassive, eternal flow of time in which history is submerged and carried away:

The lonely bird is disappearing in the fading vast sky.      長空淡淡飛鳥沒  
So were myriad antiquities where they sank      萬古銷沈向此中  
and vanished.<sup>123</sup>

Here the vast sky is identified with the Ocean of Time, in the same manner as the setting sun is associated with both the end of the day and the end of the earth, or the flight of birds with the sounds of bells. The Buddhists firmly believe in the functional interchangeability of the senses (*liu ken hu-yung* 六根互用). The ability "to see colors with ears or to hear sounds with eyes" is immanent with bodhisattvas, lohans, and even ordinary devotees who are able to attain purification of the six sense organs (*liu ken ch'ing-ching* 六根清淨). This is at the heart of a famous exposition often quoted from the chapter

“The Merit of the Masters of Law” (“Fa-shih kung-te p’in” 法師功德品) in the *Lotus Sutra*.<sup>124</sup> The same thesis is elucidated in other major canonical works, such as the *Mahāparinirvāna* and the *Śūrangama-samadhi*. Presumably, many of the T’ang and Sung scholars, who were lay followers of the religion, were familiar with such foreign ideas.

And yet, this did not prevent the late Ming essayist Chang Tai from questioning the poem by Wang Wei on the basis of which Su Shih formed his painting-poetry theory:

On the mountain road there is actually no rain,	山路元無雨
The green in the air makes our clothes wet.	空翠濕人衣

Is it possible for a painter to express the physical sensation of wetness without any indication of rain or the presence of some kind of moisture? The early Ch’ing critic Yeh Hsieh 葉燮 (1627–1703) argued in his *Poetics* (*Yüan shih* 原詩) for an affirmative answer, and supported it with a controversial line by Tu Fu as evidence:

The morning bell beyond the clouds feels wet.	晨鐘雲外濕
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How could the sound of a bell feel wet? Yeh’s adversaries insisted that this was a typographical error. Yeh’s reply was that “the bell is *seen* from beyond the clouds, and the wetness is *heard* through the sound—this can only be understood intuitively from the highest of principle and the truest of fact.”<sup>125</sup> Clearly, Yeh’s thesis was directly derived from the Buddhist idea of the interchangeability of the senses. It is certainly possible to find other examples, other well-known picture-ideas in literature which are uniquely verbal and seem to defy visual representation. Among various sensory experiences, the sensation of smell is reputedly the most elusive of visual representation, presumably because of the absence of any image. This can no longer be sure, however, in light of investigations in modern psychology and physiology. Take, for example, the two lines from Lu Chao-lin 盧照鄰 (ca. 630–89) on the lotus blossom:

The floating fragrance drifts around the winding shore.	浮香遶曲岸
The round shapes superimpose each other	圓影覆華池
to shade the flower pond. <sup>126</sup>	

Here the floating fragrance is given spatial mobility by the word for “drift around” (*jao*), which is molded by the winding shore; the round leaves of the lotus plant are defined in three-dimensional terms by the word “superimpose,” suggesting many layers of geometrical forms. The associative power of smell in this case, as in many others, does not seem to invoke any memory of the odor but instead a clear image of the round forms of the lotus leaves. Like the smell of a campfire evoking a vivid Yellowstone or Alpine memory, here the smell of the lotus also sets off a train of visual associations of summer in Chiang-nan.

Lu’s couplet brings to mind the word-music of the nineteenth-century German Romanticist E. T. A. Hoffmann (1776–1822) from a sketch entitled “Kreislers musikalisch poetischer Klub”:

Its fragrance shimmered in flaming, mysteriously interwoven circles.<sup>127</sup>

As Lu’s fragrance of the lotus is perceived through other than odors, Hoffmann’s fragrance of the musical chords is also perceived through other than sounds, through the

geometric forms of circles. Here one cannot help looking back to ponder the problem of comparable experiments in China and in Europe to fuse the verbal or auditory with the visual or the more generally poetic with the five senses. There were, sure enough, Ludwig Tieck's (1773-1853) singing colors and scents; Novalis's (1772-1801) twilight poetry of *Hymns to Night*;<sup>128</sup> Dante Gabriel Rossetti's (1828-82) visual sonnets;<sup>129</sup> James McNeill Whistler's (1834-1903) Symphony in White and Nocturne series; Paul Klee's (1879-1940) Rhythmic Landscape series and his "operatic" paintings;<sup>130</sup> Erik Satie's (1866-1925) musical *Sports et divertissements*, which play with poetry, painting, and calligraphy;<sup>131</sup> and the modern Chinese poet Mu Tan's 穆旦 declaration:

Oh light, shadow, sound, color—all are stripped naked,  
Quivering with pain, waiting to enter new combinations.<sup>132</sup>

Only a few of these experiments can be considered wholly successful when measured by the original intentions of the artists. Their failure seems to have answered one of the points we set out to clarify. It appears that the relationship between Chinese poetry and painting can be productive and meaningful if it is based on the common ground of their shared characteristics. This common ground can be the picture-like concept, which highlighted some of the literary and artistic developments from the Han to Yüan dynasties; the picture-idea concept, which was a moving force behind the academic, or professional, tradition of painting from the Sung to the present day; the more recent concept of *ching-chieh* 景界, as conceived and defined by Wang Kuo-wei in *Jen-chien tz'u-hua* 人間詞話,<sup>133</sup> or, perhaps ultimately, the concept of *hsing*,<sup>134</sup> the classical high principle for both literature and art not yet fully understood.

#### NOTES

- 1 See Wang Yu-ch'eng *chi chien-chu* (Wang Wei's collected works), Chao Tien-ch'eng annotated edition (reprint, Shanghai: Ku-chi, 1961), *chüan* 15, pp. 271-72.
- 2 For Western theories on the painting-poetry relationship, cf. Nelson Goodman, *Languages of Art* (Indiana University Press, 1968); Wendy Steiner, *The Colors of Rhetoric* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982); W. J. T. Mitchell, ed., *The Language of Images* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974); Rensselaer W. Lee, *Ut Pictura Poesis: The Humanistic Theory of Painting* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1967). See especially W. J. T. Mitchell, *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986).
- 3 James Legge, trans., *The Doctrine of the Mean* (New York: Dover, 1971), p. 385.
- 4 See Ch'ien Chung-shu, "Chung-kuo shih yü Chung-kuo hua" (Chinese poetry and Chinese painting), in *Chiu-wen ssu-pien* (Four old essays) (Shanghai, 1979), pp. 1-25.
- 5 The divided taste in poetry at the beginning of the Northern Sung was first noted in *Ts'ai K'uan-fu shih-hua* (Remarks on poetry by Ts'ai K'uan-fu). See Kuo Shao-yü, comp., *Sung shih-hua chi-i* (reprint, Beijing: Chung-hua, 1987), vol. 2, pp. 398-99. It was also pointed out by the thirteenth-century critic Fang Hui. See Chao Ch'ang-p'ing, "The Trend of Poetic Style during the Late T'ang to Early Sung Dynasties as Seen from Cheng Ku and His Fellow Poets," *Wei-hsüeh i-ch'an*, no. 3 (1987), pp. 33-42.
- 6 See Ch'ien Chung-shu, *T'an-i lu* (reprint, Shanghai, 1979), pp. 111-12.
- 7 See Tamamura Takeji, *Gozan Bungaku* (Tokyo: Shibundo, 1962), chap. 6 (on the Muromachi

- "Zen style" of prose writing in four and six couplets), pp. 148-71.
- 8 Ku Sui, *Ku Sui wen-chi* (Ku Sui's collected works) (Shanghai: Ku-chi, 1986), appendix 1, "T'o-an shih-hua," pp. 678, 727-28. Chang Tai's comment on the poetry-painting theory is found in a letter to his friend Pao Yen-chieh. See *Lang-huan wen-chi* (Collected works of Lang-huan) (reprint, Changsha, 1985), p. 152. For a discussion on Chang Tai's objection to Su Shih's theory, see Hsia Hsien-ch'un, *Ming-mo ch'i-ts'ai: Chang Tai* (A late Ming genius: Chang Tai) (Shanghai, 1989), pp. 122-24.
  - 9 Romain Rolland, *Goethe and Beethoven*, trans. G. A. Pfister and E. S. Kemp (New York and London: Harper & Bros., 1931; reissued 1968), p. 156. See also nn. 211, 212.
  - 10 The Northern Sung tendency to exalt the verbal over the visual, or word over image, is vividly exemplified by Ti Ssu (ca. 1050-1102), who characterized painters' images as "fakes" in comparison with poets' faithful representations of nature. See Kung Fan-li, comp., *Sung-shih chi-shih hsü-pu* (Addendum to notes on Sung poetry) (Beijing: Beijing University Press, 1987), vol. 1, p. 157.
  - 11 Chang Lei, "Chi 'Hsing-se' shih" (A colophon on the poem "The Aura of Departing"), in *Chang Yu-shih wen-chi* (Collected works), SPTK (Shanghai: Shang-wu, 1967), vol. 55, *chüan* 48, p. 350; my translation here and throughout unless otherwise noted.
  - 12 The discussion between Mei Yao-ch'en and Ou-yang Hsiu on "ideas outside of language" can be found in *Liu-i shih-hua* (Remarks on poetry), as part of Ho Wen-huan, ed., *Li-tai shih-hua* (Comments on poetry through the ages) (reprint, Beijing: Chung-hua, 1981), vol. 1, p. 267.
  - 13 Chang Pang-chi, *Mo-chuang man-lu* (Informal records of the Ink Studio), TSCC (Taipei: Shang-wu, 1965), vol. 50, *chüan* 8, p. 95; Ou-yang Hsiu, *Ou-yang Wen-chung-kung ch'üan-chi* (The complete works), SPTK, *chüan* 130, cited in *Chung-kuo mei-hsüeh-shih tzu-liao hsüan-pien* (A selection of source materials for Chinese aesthetic history) (Beijing: Chung-hua, 1980), p. 9.
  - 14 Ch'ien Chung-shu compares Huai-nan Tzu's *nei-ching* with G. M. Hopkins's "inscape" and Tancred de Visan's "paysage introspectif" in Ch'ien, *T'an-i lu*, pp. 154-55. The term is used here to denote a vision of the mind, not quite the same as Hopkins's or de Visan's.
  - 15 "Ma Huan," no. 7 of the "Biographies," in *Tung-kuan Han-chi* (Han record of the Eastern Tower), TSCC, *chüan* 12, p. 93.
  - 16 See the late Northern Sung copy of Chou Wen-chü's *Kung-chung t'u* (The court ladies), in Wai-kam Ho, "T'an-yan lao-jen Chang Ch'eng k'ao-lüeh" (The identification of Chang Ch'eng, the old man of T'an-yan), *Shanghai po-wu-kuan chi-k'an*, no. 4 (1987), pp. 35-50.
  - 17 Fu Hsien, "Hua-hsiang fu" (On a portrait painting), *Ch'üan Tsin wen*, *chüan* 51, in Yen Ko-chun, comp., *Ch'üan shang-ku san-tai Ch'in Han San-kuo Liu-ch'ao wen* (reprint, Taipei: Shih-chieh, 1963), vol. 2, p. 1753.
  - 18 Wang Chung-shu, *Han Civilization*, trans. K. C. Chang et al. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1982), fig. 252.
  - 19 Lo Pin-wang, *Lo Lin-hai chi chien-chiu* (Lo Pin-wang's collected works), annotated by Chen Hsi-tsin (Hong Kong: Chung-hua, 1972), p. 178; *Ch'üan T'ang shih* (Complete T'ang poetry) (reprint, Shanghai: Ku-chi, 1986), vol. 1, p. 205.
  - 20 The famous scene of Ching K'o with "angry hairs" trying to kill the first emperor of Ch'in appears repeatedly at the Wu-liang Tz'u and other Han sites. See Osvald Sirén, *Kinas Konst under Tre Årtusenden* (Stockholm: Natur och Kultur, 1942), vol. 1, fig. 207; Université de Paris, *Corpus des pierres sculptées Han (Estampages)* (Beijing: Centre d'Études Sinologiques, 1951), vol. 2, pl. 116; Nagahiro Toshio, ed., *The Representational Art of the Han Dynasty* (Tokyo: Chuokoron, 1965), entry 37, fig. 16; Miyagawa Torao et al., *Chügoku no bijutsu: Kaiga* (The arts of China: Painting) (Kyoto: Tankōsha, 1982), vol. 3, pl. 5.
  - 21 From a lyric to the tune of *Ho-hsin-lang* bidding farewell to his younger brother Mou-chia. See Teng Kuang-ming, *Chia-hsüan tz'u p'ien-t'ien chien-chu* (A chronology and annotation of Hsin Ch'i-chi's *tz'u*) (Beijing: Chung-hua, 1962), p. 429. Tsai I-chiang and Tsai Kuo-huang date the poem to 1204, when Hsin Ch'i-chi was involved in the renewal of military planning against the Chin. See *Hsin Ch'i-chi nien-p'u* (A chronological biography of Hsin Ch'i-chi) (Chi-nan: Ch'i-lu, 1987), p. 27.
  - 22 Liu Shao, *Jen-wu chih* (Compendium of personalities), SPTK, vol. 25, *chüan shang*, pp. 4-9.
  - 23 Hsü Kan's theory of countenance as the emblem of personality is discussed in *chüan* 2 of his *Chung-lun* (Treatise on equilibrium), SPTK, vol. 1, pp. 8-9.
  - 24 See Ts'ao Hsü, "Lun Kung-t'i shih ti shen-mei i-shih hsin-pien" (On the change in the concept of beauty in the poetry of the court style), *Wen-hsüeh i-ch'an*, no. 6 (1988), pp. 66-74.
  - 25 Liu I-ch'ing, *Shih-shuo hsin-yü chiao-chien* (Collated and annotated edition of *A New Account of Tales of the World*) (Hong Kong: Chung-hua,

- 1987), *chüan* 5; *chüan* 14, pp. 333–42; 1973 ed., pp. 151–56.
- 26 *Ibid.*, pp. 335, 337.
- 27 T'ang Kuei-chang, comp., *Ch'üan Sung tz'u* (Complete collection of Sung lyrics) (Beijing: Chung-hua, 1965), vol. 1, pp. 271–72.
- 28 Lou Yüeh, "Wang Chin-ch'ing *Chiang-shan ch'iu-wan t'u*" (*Late Autumn over Rivers and Mountains* by Wang Shen), in *Kung-k'uei chi* (Complete works of Lou Yüeh), SPTK, vol. 61, *chüan* 70, p. 641.
- 29 T'ang, comp., *Ch'üan Sung tz'u*, vol. 1, p. 282.
- 30 George Kubler, "Style and the Representation of Historical Time," *Annals of the New York Academy of Science* 138 (1967), pp. 849–55. For the problem of spatial metaphors in the representation of historical time, see also the same author's "History—or Anthropology—of Art?" and "Toward a Reductive Theory of Visual Style," published in his collected essays *Studies in Ancient American and European Art*, ed. Thomas F. Reese (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985), pp. 406–12, 418–23.
- 31 Wang Po's rhyme-prose "T'eng-wang ko hsü" (Preface to the Tower of Prince T'eng) is one of the most widely memorized pieces in Chinese literature. See the popular prose anthology *Ku-wen kuan-chih*, annotated by Yang Chin-ting et al. (Anhui Educational Publishing House, 1982), vol. 2, p. 614.
- 32 *Wang Yu-ch'eng chi chien-chu*, p. 263.
- 33 Wei Chuang, *Wei-chuang tz'u chiao-chu* (Collected works), collated and annotated by Liu Chin-ch'eng (Beijing: Chung-kuo she-hui k'o-hsüeh, 1981), p. 19; the first of five lyrics to the tune of "P'u-sa meng."
- 34 Cha Shih-piao, *Landscape Album in Various Styles*, in Wai-kam Ho et al., *Eight Dynasties of Chinese Painting* (Cleveland: Cleveland Museum of Art, 1980), fig. 226 I, p. 304.
- 35 Shang-kuan I, "Ju-ch'ao Lo t'i pu-yüeh" (Walking under moonlight on the bank of Lo River on my way to court audience), in *Ch'üan T'ang shih*, vol. 1, p. 131.
- 36 Lo, *Lo Lin-hai chi chien-chu*, pp. 157–60 (with preface to the poem).
- 37 Li Shang-yin, *Li I-shan shih-chi* (Collected poetry), annotated by Chu Ho-ling (reprint, Hong Kong: Chung-hua, 1978), *chüan* 1, p. 9.
- 38 *Mao Shih*, SPTK, *chüan* 9, p. 68.
- 39 Kung Tzu-chen, *Kung Tzu-chen ch'üan-chi* (Complete works) (Hong Kong: Chung-hua, 1974), vol. 2, *chüan* 9, p. 496 ("Four *chieh-chü* composed in a dream"). Ch'ien Chung-shu has an extensive discussion on the image of the "furious shadows of flowers" in a miscellaneous collection of essays and notes, *Yeh-shih chi* (Hong Kong, 1984), pp. 102–3.
- 40 A different translation of this lyric, "Meng Chiang-nan," by D. C. Lau, is published in *Renditions*, nos. 21–22 (1984), p. 188.
- 41 Li Po, *Li T'ai-pai ch'üan-chi* (Complete works), edited and annotated by Wang Ch'i (reprint, Beijing: Chung-hua, 1977), *chüan* 23, p. 1077.
- 42 Sun Ch'ang-wu, "T'ang Wu-tai ti shih-sheng" (T'ang and Five Dynasties master poets), in *T'ang-tai wen-hsüeh yü fo-chiao* (T'ang literature and Buddhism) (Sian: Shensi jen-min, 1985), p. 171.
- 43 *Fo-shuo Wei-mo-chieh ching*, *Taishō Daizō kyō*, no. 474, vol. 1, p. 533.
- 44 *Lin-ch'uan hsien-sheng wen-chi* (Collected essays of Wang An-shih), SPTK, *chüan* 27, p. 187.
- 45 Fedor Shcherbatskoi, *Buddhist Logic*, *Bibliotheca Buddhica* 26 (Leningrad: Izd. Akademii Nauk SSR, 1932), vol. 1, p. 70.
- 46 Huang T'ing-chien, *Huang Shan-ku shih-chi chu* (Annotation to Huang's [T'ing-chien's] poetic works) (Taipei: Shih-chieh, 1967), *chüan* 16, p. 175.
- 47 Fang Hui, ed., Chi Yün, rev., *Ying-k'uei lü-sui k'an-wu*, TSCC *Hsü-pien*, vol. 114, *chüan* 25, p. 7. See original comment on the poem "T'i Hu I-lao chi-hsü an" (On Hu I-lao's retreat toward emptiness).
- 48 Strictly speaking, according to the *Yü-chia-shih ti-lun* (*Yogācārabhūmi sāstra*), *yen-tso* is *dhyāna* in the sitting posture of *paryāṅkāṣana*; or more informally speaking, according to the *Wei-mo-chieh ching* (*Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa-sūtra*), it makes no difference what position one takes as long as the mind is in absolute peace and quietude (*Fo-shuo Wei-mo-chieh ching*, *Taishō Daizō kyō*, no. 474, vol. 1, p. 521). In Hinayana practices of *yen-tso*, it seems obvious that greater emphasis has been placed on the technical aspect of the term. The *dhyāna* method introduced by the Central Asian An Shih-kao about the year 148 comprises such practices as breath control leading to mental concentration, known as *an-pan* (*ānāpānasmṛti*), the visualization of internal and external images. (The basic scripture for *dhyāna* practices of early Chinese Buddhism is the *An-pan shou-i ching*. See Erik Zürcher, *The Buddhist Conquest of China* [Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1972], vol. 1, pp. 32–34.) In this respect, *yen-tso* is also comparable to the early Taoist sitting technique of *tuan-tso*, as recorded in the earliest Taoist text, the *T'ai-p'ing ching*, which survives in part from the Eastern Han period. *Tuan-tso* is an element in the method of breath control and mental concentration in early Taoism known as *shou-i* (see Ting I-chuang

- et al., "T'ai-p'ing ching chung shou-i ch'ien-shih" [The meaning of *shou-i* in the Taoist scripture *T'ai-p'ing ching*], *Tsung-chiao hsüeh yen-chiu*, no. 2 [1986], pp. 67-73). According to a description given in the Southern Sung text *Tao shu* (The axis of Tao) by Tseng Tsao (in *Tao-tsang chi-yao* [reprint, Taipei, 1977], vol. 19, p. 8243), *yen-tso* in Taoist practice appears to be similar to the Buddhist posture of *yu-hsi tso* (*lalitasana*), a deviation most probably reflecting the popularity of Potalaka, or the Water-and-Moon Kuan-yin.
- 49 Takasaki Masayoshi, "The *Patisallāna* Concept and Its Functions," *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* 23, no. 2 (March 1975), pp. 407-710; idem, "Pratisamlayana in Mahayana Buddhism," *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* 24, no. 1 (December 1975), pp. 217-20.
- 50 Wang An-shih, *Wang Lin-ch'uan chi* (Complete works) (Hong Kong: Kuang-chih, 195?), vol. 1, p. 195; *Wang Wen-kung wen-chi* (Complete works) (Shanghai, 1974), vol. 1, p. 786.
- 51 Li Po, *Li T'ai-pai ch'üan chi*, *chüan* 23, p. 1075; *Ch'üan T'ang shih*, vol. 1, p. 425.
- 52 Hai-jen, "Tā-fo ting-shou jen yen ching" *chiang chi* (Lectures on the *Tā-fo ting-shou jen yen ching*) (Los Angeles: Mei-kuo Mei hsi fo-chiao hui, 1984), vol. 2, p. 705.
- 53 Yü Chien-hua et al., *Ku K'ai-chih yen-chiu tzuliao* (Source material for studies on Ku K'ai-chih) (Beijing, 1962), pp. 71-104.
- 54 Roland Barthes, "Listening," in *The Responsibility of Forms: Critical Essays on Music, Art, and Representation*, trans. R. Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1985), pp. 245-60.
- 55 In *T'an-i lu* (p. 346), Ch'ien Chung-shu comments on Li Po's poem ("Tung-lin Monastery") with a citation from Plotinus: "The Soul must forsake all that is external, and turn itself wholly to that which is within; it will not allow itself to be distracted by anything external . . . it will not even know itself" (William R. Inge, *The Philosophy of Plotinus* [London: Longmans, Green], vol. 2, p. 136).
- 56 In regard to *Shou-shih fan-t'ing*, see Chou Weimin and Hsiao Hua-jung, eds., *Wen-fu Shih p'in chu-i* (Annotation and translation of *Wen-fu* and *Shih p'in* [Classification of poetry]) (Chengchou, 1985), p. 29. For a complete translation of *Wen-fu*, see Achilles Fang, "Rhymeprose on Literature: The *Wen-fu* of Lu Chi (A.D. 261-303)," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 14 (1951), pp. 527-66.
- 57 Wang Shih-chen, *Tai-ching-t'ang shih-hua* (Remarks on poetry) (reprint, Beijing: Jen-min wen-hsüeh, 1982), vol. 1, *chüan* 3, p. 68.
- 58 See Wai-kam Ho, "Tung Ch'i-ch'ang's New Orthodoxy and the Southern School Theory," in Christian Murck, ed., *Artists and Traditions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 127. Changes have been made in the poetry translation by way of correction, and characters and dates have been added. Ch'eng Chia-sui's couplet comes from a regulated verse bidding farewell to an in-law who is boarding a boat on the Yangtze River. See his complete works, *Sung-Yüan Lang-t'ao chi*, in *Li-tai hua-chia shih-wen chi* (Literary works of artists through the dynasties) (Taipei: Hsüeh-sheng, 1975), vol. 13, pp. 417-18.
- 59 Wang Shih-chen, "Ch'iu-liu" (Autumn willows), and "Ch'in-huai tsa-shih" (Fourteen poems on the Ch'in-huai River), in *Yü-yang shan-jen ching-hua lu* (Selected works), SPTK, *chüan* 5, pp. 59, 64.
- 60 Chou Pang-yen, "Hsi-ho," in T'ang, comp., *Ch'üan Sung tz'u*, vol. 2, p. 612; Hsin Ch'i-chi, "Yung-yü-lo," *ibid.*, p. 1954.
- 61 Buson, in *Nihon no bunjinga* (Japanese literati school painting) (Tokyo: Nihon Keisaisha, 1971), pl. 5.
- 62 Wei Chuang, "T'ai-ch'eng," in *Ch'üan T'ang shih*, vol. 2, p. 1759.
- 63 This is a slightly modified version of the translation in Wai-kam Ho, "Religious Paintings," in Committee on Scholarly Communication with the People's Republic of China, *Traditional and Contemporary Painting in China* (Washington, D.C.: National Academy of Sciences, 1980), p. 30.
- 64 Cf. Sun K'ai-ti, *K'uei-lei hsi k'ao-yüan* (A study of the history of puppet play) (Shanghai: Shang-tsa, 1953); idem, *Ts'ang-chou chi* (Collected works of Sun K'ai-ti) (Beijing: Chung-hua, 1965); William Dolby, "The Origin of Chinese Puppetry," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 41, pt. 1 (1978), pp. 92-120.
- 65 Kitagawa Nobuyo, "Kairai Ko" (A note on the term *kairai*), in his collected essays on geisha and puppet shows and so forth, entitled *Gashoroku* (A record of testimonies from paintings), in *Nihon zuihitsu taisei* (Compilation of jottings of Japanese masters) (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1974), pp. 356-58.
- 66 Tuan Ch'eng-shih, *Yu-yang tsa-tsu* (Miscellanea of Yu-yang), collated edition (Beijing: Chung-hua, 1981), pt. 1, *chüan* 4, p. 50; *Yu-yang tsa-tsu*, TSCC, vol. 277, *chüan* 4, pp. 39-40. Cf. Tso Sze-bong, "The Secularization Policy of the Buddhist Monastic Order in China: A Historical Survey," in *Chung-hua Buddhist Journal*, no. 1 (March 1987), p. 160.
- 67 The painting is usually titled *Nozarashi*, or *Weather-worn in the Wilderness*. See entry no. 4 in the ex-

- hibition catalog *Jakuchū* (Tokyo: Tokyo National Museum, 1971), pl. 4.
- 68 For the story "Aozukin" see Leon Zolbrod's translation of *Ugetsu monogatari* (Tales of moonlight and rain) (London: Allen & Unwin, 1974), pp. 185-94. For Chinese influences see translator's introduction (p. 63) and nn. 509, 516, 524, and 533.
- 69 Hsüan-chüeh, *Yung-chia cheng-tao ko* (Song of enlightenment) (*Yoko shodoka* in Japanese), *Taishō Daizō kyō*, no. 2014, p. 396. The stanza is quoted here without any change from the translation by Leon Zolbrod in *Ugetsu monogatari*.
- 70 Cf. Takata Osamu, *Bukkyō no densetsu to bijutsu* (Buddhist legends and art) (Tokyo: Sanshodo, 1941), pp. 15-25, 59-85.
- 71 The poem by Sōseki is discussed in Yoshikawa Kōjirō, *Zoku Ningenshiwa* (Continuation of *Discussions of Poetry*) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1973), pp. 22-23.
- 72 See Lu Yü-min, "Ch'ih-le ko' erh-t'i" (Two topics on "Ch'ih-le ko"), *Hsüeh-lin man-lu* 10 (1985), pp. 63-67. See also Hsiao Ti-fei's note in *Han Wei Liu-ch'ao yüeh-fu wen-hsüeh shih* (A history of the yüeh-fu literature in the Han, Wei, and Six Dynasties) (Beijing: Jen-min wen-hsüeh, 1984), p. 281; and Jung An, "Concerning the Creation and Transmission of 'Ch'ih-le ko,'" *Wen-hsüeh i-ch'an*, no. 6 (1987), p. 42.
- 73 See wall paintings representing the two seasonal camping sites, Spring Water and Autumn Mountains, in the central chamber of the East Mausoleum. Jitsuzō Tamura and Yukio Kobayashi, *Tombs and Mural Paintings of Ch'ing-ling: Liao Imperial Mausoleums of Eleventh Century A.D. in Eastern Mongolia* (Kyoto: Kyoto University Department of Literature, 1952-53), pls. 45-51, figs. 86, 92 (Spring Water); pls. 59-66, figs. 88, 94 (Autumn Mountains).
- 74 The handscroll *Eighteen Songs of a Nomad Flute* in the collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Art is published by Shimada Shūjiro, "Lady Wen-chi's Captivity in Mongolia and Her Return to China," *Yamato bunka* 37 (May 1962), pp. 18-30. For the literary theme and the problem of authorship, see Hu Shih, "Hu-chia shih-pa p'ai," in *Hu Shih Ku-tien wen-hsüeh yen-chiu lun-chi* (Hu Shih's studies on classical literature) (Shanghai: Ku-chi, 1988), vol. 1, pp. 355-56; also Wang Yün-hsi, "Ts'ai Yen yü Hu-chia shih-pa-p'ai," in *Han Wei Liu-ch'ao T'ang-tai wen-hsüeh lun-t'ung* (Collected studies on literature of the Han, Wei, Six Dynasties, and T'ang) (Shanghai: Ku-chi, 1981), pp. 37-40.
- 75 For the "Three Stanzas of Yang-kuan," see Chao Tien-ch'eng's note on Wang Wei's poem "Wei-ch'eng ch'ü," in *Wang Yu-ch'eng chi chien-chu*, p. 263.
- 76 *Bamboo, Sparrows, and Hares* (114.3 × 56 cm; color on silk) and *A Chess Meet in Deep Mountain* (106.5 × 54 cm; color on silk) are two hanging scrolls unearthed in 1974 in Tomb no. 7 at Yeh-mao-t'ai, Fa-k'u hsien, Liaoning Province. For reproductions, see *Liaoning-sheng Po-wu-kuan* (Provincial Museum of Liaoning) (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1982), pls. 89, 90.
- 77 The Hsi-hsia wall painting on the west-side wall in Cave 3 in Yü-lin, datable to the early eleventh century, is reproduced in *Tun-huang pi-hua* (Mural paintings of Tun-huang), vol. 15 of *Chung-kuo mei-shu ch'üan-chi* (The complete series of Chinese art) (Shanghai: Jen-min mei-shu, 1985), pt. 2, pls. 186, 187.
- 78 Lo Ta-ching, *Ho-lin yü-lu*, collated edition (Beijing: Chung-hua, 1983), pt. 3, *chüan* 1, pp. 241-42. Also in TSCC, *chüan* 1, pp. 1-2.
- 79 Hsieh Ch'u-hou's poem was first recorded in the Southern Sung poet and art connoisseur Chou Mi's *K'uei-hsin tsa-chih* (Miscellaneous notes from *K'uei-hsin Street*). See Ch'en Yu-ch'in, *Wan-ch'ing hsüan wen-chi* (Selections of late clearing essays) (Ch'eng-tu, 1985), pp. 45-46.
- 80 Cf. Ann Bermingham, *Landscape and Ideology* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1986), pp. 57-85.
- 81 Picturesque theories and debates surrounding William Gilpin's *Observations Relative Chiefly to Picturesque Beauty in Several Parts of Great Britain*, Uvedale Price's *Essays on the Picturesque*, and Richard Payne Knight's *Analytical Inquiry into the Principles of Taste* are discussed in W. J. Hipple, Jr., *The Beautiful, The Sublime, and the Picturesque in Eighteenth-Century British Aesthetic Theory* (Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 1957).
- 82 Chang Pang-chi, *Mo-chuang man-lu*, cited in Li O, comp., *Sung-shih chi-shih* (Recording events connected with Sung-dynasty poetry), TSCC, *chüan* 27, p. 707.
- 83 See Kuo Jo-hsü, comp., *T'u-hua chien-wen-chih* (Experiences in painting), section on "Different Styles of Huang Ch'üan and Hsü Hsi," *chüan* 1, pp. 12-13, HSTS, 2nd ed. (Shanghai: Jen-min mei-shu, 1982), vol. 1.
- 84 Chou Pang-yen, "Yü-lou ch'un," in T'ang, comp., *Ch'üan Sung tz'u*, vol. 2, p. 617.
- 85 Ch'in Kuan, "Ssu-chou tung-ch'eng wan-wang" (Evening view of the eastern suburb of Ssu-chou), in *Huai-hai chi* (Collected works), SPTK, *chüan* 10, p. 36.



- 86 Chao Ting, "Man-chiang hung," in T'ang, comp., *Ch'üan Sung tz'u*, vol. 2, p. 944.
- 87 Chang Chih-ho, first from a series of five "Fisherman's Songs," trans. Irving Y. Lo, in *Sunflower Splendor*, ed. Wu-chi Liu and Irving Y. Lo (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1975), p. 155.
- 88 Su Shih, "Fisherman" to the tune of *Wan-hsi-sha*, in *Ch'üan Sung tz'u*, vol. 1, p. 314.
- 89 The other version, a handscroll also by Wu Chen, in the style of Ching Hao, is in the Freer Gallery of Art.
- 90 Cf. Yen Chen-ch'ing's epitaph of Hsüan-chen-tzu Chang Chih-ho in his collected works *Wen-chung chi*, TSCC, vol. 1849, *chüan* 9, pp. 71-72. For an eyewitness account of Chang Chih-ho's "musical-painting" performance, see Priest Chiao-jan, "In the Company of the Minister Yen Chen-ch'ing, I Watched Hsüan-chen-tzu Painting the Three Islands of Tung-t'ing to the Accompaniment of Wine, Music, and the Dance of 'Breaking up the Enemy's Battle Formation,'" in *Ch'üan T'ang shih*, vol. 2, p. 2013.
- 91 See Wai-kam Ho, "The Original Meaning of *P'o-mo* and Its Musical and Calligraphical Origins" (in Japanese), *Museum*, no. 379 (October 1982), pp. 4-13.
- 92 See Wu Chiung, *Wu-tsung chi* (Miscellaneous archives), in *Pi-chi hsiao-shuo ta-kuan* (reprint, Yangchow, 1984), vol. 3, p. 220.
- 93 Emperor Kao-tsung (Chao Kou), "Fisherman," number two in a series of fifteen, in T'ang, comp., *Ch'üan Sung tz'u*, vol. 2, p. 1291.
- 94 See Ho, "The Original Meaning," p. 10.
- 95 During the last decade, there have been a number of books and numerous articles published in China dealing with the problem of *yen*, *hsiang*, and *i*. One of the earliest such articles is Yüan Hsing-p'ei, "The Debate of *Yen* and *I* in Wei and Tsin '*Hsüan-hsüeh*' and Literary Theories of Ancient China," in *Ku-tai wen-hsüeh li-lun yen-chiu* (Studies of ancient literary theories) (Shanghai: Ku-chi, 1979), pt. 1, pp. 125-47. The most comprehensive treatment is probably given in two books: T'ang I-chieh, *Kuo Hsiang yü Wei Tsin hsüan-hsüeh* (Kuo Hsiang and the metaphysics of the Wei and Tsin dynasties) (Hupei: Hupei Jen-min, 1983); and Wang Pao-hsüan, *Cheng-shih hsüan-hsüeh* (Metaphysics of the Cheng-shih reign) (Chi-nan, 1987). Articles treating the problem more from the point of view of epistemology and methodology include Chen Lai, "Agnosticism and the Middle Road in the Wei and Tsin Philosophy: A Critical Comment on the Philosophical Ideas of Kuo Hsiang," *Chung-kuo che-hsüeh* 11 (1984), pp. 98-117. All these studies owe some of their ideas to the germinal study by T'ang Yung-t'ung, "Yen-i chih-pien," in his *Wei-Tsin hsüan-hsüeh lun-kao* (Drafts of studies in Wei and Tsin metaphysics) (Beijing, 1957), pp. 26-47.
- 96 Ch'en Chan-kuo, "Hsi K'ang and the 'San-li' in Wei and Tsin Metaphysics," in *Wei-Tsin hsüan-hsüeh lun-kao*, pp. 76-97.
- 97 There is a key statement in Liu Hsieh, "Ming-shih p'ien" (Understanding poetry), in his *Wen-hsin tiao-lung* (The literary mind and the carving of dragons) (Taipei: Shang-wu, 1972), *chüan* 2, p. 14: "In the prose and poetry of the early [Liu] Sung period, there was revolutionary transformation in content: the 'Chuang and Lao' withdrew, and 'Mountain and Water' flourished." For the interrelationship between metaphysical poetry and landscape poetry, see the first important treatment of the subject: Wang Yao, "Hsüan-yen shan-shui tien-yüan," in *Chung-kuo wen-hsüeh feng-mao* (Style and form of medieval literature) (Shanghai: T'ang-ti, 1953); also Wang Pao-hsüan, *Cheng-shih hsüan-hsüeh*, *chüan* 7, pp. 350-56. Attempts at linking the rise of landscape painting to the development of metaphysical study in the Wei and Tsin periods include Hsü Fu-kuan, *Chung-kuo i-shu ching-shen* (The spirit of Chinese art) (Tai-chung: University of Tung-hai, 1966), *chüan* 4, pp. 225-48; and some of the more recent examples, such as Shih Lan, "The Ideological Basis for the Rise of Landscape Painting," *Mei-shu yen-chiu*, no. 2 (1984), pp. 66-68.
- 98 Tung-fang Shuo, "Pao-weng ming," in *Ch'üan Han wen*, *chüan* 25, in Yen, comp., *Ch'üan shang-ku san-tai Ch'in Han San-kuo Liu-ch'ao wen*, vol. 1, p. 267.
- 99 Po Chü-i, "Meng hsien" (Dreaming of the immortals), in *Ch'üan T'ang shih*, vol. 2, p. 1035.
- 100 Hsieh Ling-yün, "Shan-chü fu" (Rhyme-prose on mountain dwelling), in *Ch'üan Sung wen* (Complete prose writings of the Liu Sung dynasty), *chüan* 31, in Yen, comp., *Ch'üan shang-ku san-tai Ch'in Han San-kuo Liu-ch'ao wen*, vol. 3, p. 2607.
- 101 See Hsieh T'iao, "Chun-nei kao-chai hsien-wang ta Lü Fa-ts'ao shih" (A leisurely view from the lofty hall in the prefect's official residence—a poem composed for Lü Sheng-chen, the judicial officer), in Lu Ch'in-li, comp., *Hsien-Ch'in Han Wei Tsin Nan-pei-ch'ao shih* (Complete poetry of pre-Ch'in, Han, Wei, Tsin, and Northern and Southern Dynasties) (Beijing: Chung-hua, 1983), vol. 2, p. 1427.
- 102 Tsung Ping, "Hua shan-shui hsü" (Preface to

- landscape painting), in *Ch'üan Sung wen*, in Yen, comp., *Ch'üan shang-ku san-tai Ch'in Han Liu-chao wen*, vol. 3, pp. 2545-46.
- 103 Ibid., p. 2546.
- 104 See Wang Yao's article cited in note 97.
- 105 Wang Yu-ch'eng *chi chien-chu*, *chüan* 7, p. 123; also in *Ch'üan T'ang shih*, vol. 1, p. 293.
- 106 Chou Liang-kung, *Shu-ying* (Shadows of books), ten-*chüan* edition, *Ming-Ch'ing pi-chi ts'ung-shu* (Series of literary jottings of the Ming and Ch'ing dynasties) (Shanghai: Ku-chi, 1981), *chüan* 10, p. 269.
- 107 This translation of the poem "The View as I Cross the Lake Going from South Mt. to North Mt." is by Francis Westbrook. See his article "Landscape Transformation in the Poetry of Hsieh Ling-yün," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 100, no. 3 (July-October 1980), pp. 237-54. For the geographical background of the original poem, see Ku Shao-po's comment in *Hsieh Ling-yün chi chiao-chu* (Collated and annotated edition of the collected works of Hsieh Ling-yün) (Chengchow, 1987), pp. 118-19.
- 108 Tsung Ping, "Hua shan-shui hsü," pp. 2545-46.
- 109 Wang Wei's "Hsü hua" (Introduction to painting) is an appendix to his biography in Chang Yen-yüan's *Li-tai ming-hua chi*. For an annotated text of "Hsü hua" and a biographical study of the author, see Nakamura Shigeo, *Chügoku Garon no tenkai* (Development of Chinese theories on painting) (Kyoto: Bunkado, 1965), pp. 81-97.
- 110 Mao Shih, SPTK, *chüan* 1, p. 1.
- 111 Hung Hsing-tsu, ed., *Ch'u-tz'u pu-chu* (Addendum to the annotated *Song of the South*) (Beijing: Chung-hua, 1983), *chüan* 2, pp. 54-84.
- 112 Matteo Ricci's interpretation of the *Book of Poetry* is cited in Sun Hsi, "Lun Li-i chih cheng" (On the dispute between the Vatican and the Ming and Ch'ing governments over ceremonies), *Chung-kuo shih yen-chiu*, no. 4 (1987), p. 104. For a Chinese scholar's elucidation of the same relative term *chi-chiang* (ascending and descending), see Ts'ao Chu-jen, "Shuo tzu pien" (On the semantic origins of words), from his collection of essays *Wen ssu* (Literary thoughts) (Hong Kong: Ch'uang-ken, 1956), pp. 156-57.
- 113 The two lines are a slightly altered adaptation of Francis Westbrook's translation from the article cited above, "Landscape Transformation," p. 249; his comment is on p. 250. Cf. Richard Mather, "The Landscape Buddhism of the Fifth-Century Poet Hsieh Ling-yün," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 18, no. 1 (November 1958), pp. 67-80; Ch'i Wen-pang, "Fo-chiao yü Hsieh Ling-yün chi ch'i shih" (Buddhism and Hsieh Ling-yün and his poetry), *Wen-hsüeh i-chan*, no. 2 (1988), pp. 49-56.
- 114 Cf. Wai-kam Ho, "Yüan-tai wen-jen-hua hsü-shuo" (An introductory essay on literati painting of the Yüan dynasty), in *Hsin-Ya hsüeh-shu chik'an* (Hong Kong: New Asia College, Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1983), vol. 4, pp. 243-58.
- 115 The translation is adapted from James R. Hightower with some modifications. See Yeh Chia-ying, "Li Shang-yin's Four Yen-t'ai Poems," *Renditions*, nos. 21-22 (1984), pp. 41-63. For a different interpretation, compare the argument presented in Ko Hsiao-yin, "Li Shang-yin Chiang-hsiang chih yu k'ao-pien," *Wen shih* 17 (1983), pp. 203-16.
- 116 For Li Kuo's "Hsiang ssu" (Homesickness), see Wu Chan-lü, ann., *Ch'ien-shou Sung-jen chüeh-chü chiao-chu* (Collated and annotated anthology of one thousand *chüeh-chü* by Sung poets) (Hangchow: Che-chiang Ku-chi, 1986), vol. 1, p. 145.
- 117 *Tun-huang pi-hua* (Mural paintings of Tun-huang), in *Chung-kuo mei-shu ch'üan-chi* (The complete series of Chinese art) (Shanghai: Jen-min mei-shu, 1985), pt. 2, vol. 15, pl. 77, p. 72.
- 118 Wai-kam Ho, "Li Ch'eng lüeh-chuan" (A biographical study of Li Ch'eng), *National Palace Museum Quarterly* 5, no. 3 (1971), pp. 17-20 (English), pp. 33-62; see p. 60 for a discussion of the Confucian background for the spatial concept of level distance.
- 119 Ma Jung, "Ch'ang-ti fu," in Ch'ien Chung-shu, *Kuan-chui pien* (Collected works) (Hong Kong: Chung-hua, 1979), vol. 3, p. 982.
- 120 Cf. Peter Rushton, "An Interpretation of Hsi K'ang's Eighteen Poems Presented to Hsi Hsi on His Entry into the Army," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 99, no. 2 (April-June 1979), pp. 175-90.
- 121 Liu I-ch'ing, *Shih-shuo hsün-yü chiao-chien*, *chüan* 21, p. 386; Chang Yen-yüan, *Li-tai ming-hua chi* (Record of famous paintings of all the dynasties), annotated ed. by Ono Shonen (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1938), p. 337.
- 122 Ch'ien Ch'i, "Ch'ien K'ao-kung chi" (Collected works), no. 6 of *T'ang wu-shih chia shih-chi* (Collected poetry of fifty T'ang poets) (reprint, Shanghai: Ku-chi, 1981), *chüan* 10, p. 3074.
- 123 Tu Mu, *Fan-ch'uan wen-chi* (Collected literary works) (Shanghai: Ku-chi, 1978), *chüan* 2, p. 28. Cf. Hsiao Ch'ih, "Ancient Chinese Poets' Concept of Time and Others," *Wen-hsüeh i-chan*, no. 6 (1986), pp. 16-23.
- 124 "Fa-shih kung-te p'in," *chüan* 19 of the *Lotus Sutra*, is a major exposition of the concept of liu

- ken *ch'ing-ching* and the interchangeability of their functions (*Taishō Daizō kyō*, no. 262, pp. 47-50. For commentary on this thesis, see *Fa-hua lun-shu*, *Taishō Daizō kyō*, no. 1818, pp. 824-25.
- 125 Yeh Hsieh, *Yüan shih* (Poetics) (Beijing, 1979), pp. 31-32. See also his collected literary works, *Chi-hsi chi*, in *Ts'ung-shu chi-ch'eng hsü-pien* (reprint, Taipei, 1989), *chüan* 2, p. 785.
- 126 Lu Chao-lin, "Ch'ü-ch'ih ho" (Lotus on irregular-shaped pond), in *T'ang wu-shih chia shih-chi*, *chüan hsia*, p. 311.
- 127 Georg Brandes, *Main Currents in Nineteenth-Century Literature* (London: William Heinemann, 1905-23), vol. 2, *The Romantic School in Germany*, p. 125.
- 128 For Tieck, see *Main Currents*, vol. 2, pp. 41, 114-27; for Novalis, see *Main Currents*, vol. 2, pp. 144-46.
- 129 David G. Riede, *Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Limits of Victorian Vision* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1983). See, for example, chap. 9, "The Feud of the Sister Arts," pp. 214-32.
- 130 Andrew Kagan, *Paul Klee: Art and Music* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1983), pp. 28-31, 95-117.
- 131 See Roger Shattuck, *The Banquet Years: The Origins of the Avant-Garde in France*, rev. ed. (New York: Vintage Books, 1968), pp. 156, 174-76.
- 132 Mu Tan (Cha Liang-cheng), "Spring," trans. Pang Bingjun, in "Eleven Poems by Mu Tan," *Renditions*, nos. 21-22 (1984), p. 257.
- 133 Cf. Fo Chou, "Two Criteria of Beauty in Wang Kuo-wei's Theory of *Ching-chieh*," in *Wang Kuo-wei hsüeh-shu yen-chiu lun-chi* (Shanghai: Huatung shih-fan ta-hsüeh, 1983), pt. 1, pp. 344-70; T'eng Hsien-hui's preface to his annotation of Wang Kuo-wei's *Jen-chien tz'u-hua* (Chi-nan, 1982), pp. 6-28. A much more critical view is presented in Wan Yün-chun, "Wang Kuo-wei *Jen-chien tz'u-hua* 'ching-chieh shuo' hsien-i" (Questions concerning the theory of *ching-chieh* in Wang Kuo-wei's *Jen-chien tz'u-hua*), *Wen-hsüeh i-ch'an*, no. 4 (1987), pp. 97-107.
- 134 Among numerous modern attempts toward a definition of the principle of *hsing*, see Mao Shih-chin, "Shih-hsüeh chih chen-yüan, fa-tu chih chun-che" (The fountainhead of all poetics, and the yardstick for all methods), in *Ku-tai wen-hsüeh li-lun yen-chiu ts'ung-k'an* (Shanghai: Kuchi, 1979), vol. 1, pp. 38-61; Lo Li-chien, "Ching-hsüeh chia pi hsing lun shu-p'ing" (A critical survey of the Classicists' views on the principles *pi* and *hsing*), *Ku-tai wen-hsüeh*, vol. 1, pp. 62-72; and Yü Ke-k'un, "Chung-kuo wen-hsüeh ti pi hsing yüan-che" (The principles of *pi* and *hsing* in Chinese literature), *Wen-hsüeh i-ch'an*, no. 2 (1988), pp. 21-29.

# Painting and Poetry in the Late Sung

RICHARD EDWARDS

In China, the significant joining of the arts of poetry and painting began in the eleventh century.<sup>1</sup> This was a time when painters' skills were increasingly turned toward goals of accurate physical representation. Accordingly, the poetry-painting link was intimately related to verisimilitude. Even Su Shih 蘇軾 (1037–1101), whose ideas were of such fundamental importance to post-Sung literati painting, was firmly locked into the significance of nature's appearance.<sup>2</sup> Both poets and painters were much concerned with what was around them, an attitude that was strongly developed in the twelfth century and extended well into the thirteenth. It is in this late Sung context that I wish to explore the bond between painting and poetry.

Because he embraced fully the joining of poetry and painting and his ideals as a painter were clearly written down, it is appropriate to start with Kuo Hsi 郭熙 (ca. 1010–ca. 1090), a leading artist of the second half of the eleventh century. In his essay on landscape painting (*Lin-ch'üan kao-chih* 林泉高致), compiled by the artist's son, Kuo Hsi quotes with approval what is described as “an earlier phrase”: “Poetry is painting without forms, painting is poetry with forms,” and goes on to claim the influence of ancient, that is, Tsin and T'ang, and of contemporary poems.<sup>3</sup> As the symmetry of the phrase implies, Kuo Hsi saw no contradiction in connecting the two arts; at the very least, he suggests a dialectic leading to easy harmony. Great poetry, he points out, springs from one's inner feelings and describes the scenery before one's eyes. Similarly, truly great painting must link the inner and outer man. Hence Kuo Hsi's cultivation of the inner man: the sitting quietly by a bright window, the burning of incense, the uncluttered desk, the washed hands, the rinsed inkwell. The entire harmony between self and surroundings draws one equally close to both poetry and painting.

In the essay, Kuo's son recommends his father's favorite themes from poetry and a few of his own. These lines, chosen from a total of sixteen poems, evoke but do not define imagery. It is possible to imagine many responses, not just one, to a given line or series of lines. Their evocative power appears to parallel Kuo Hsi's approach to painting—at least as we know it in his famous *Early Spring* (*Tsao-ch'un t'u* 早春圖) of 1072, in Taipei's Palace Museum, in which suggestion clearly plays a significant role (see fig. 52). Kuo shows himself to be the direct heir of Li Ch'eng 李成 (919–67), who, as Mi Fu 米芾 (1052–1107) describes him, created “rocks in a mist like moving clouds” and painted in “pale ink as if in a dream.”<sup>4</sup> The rock-cloud ambiguity is symptomatic of a more universal, multiple approach to landscape and thrusts us deeper into matters of style. Kuo Hsi was not interested in creating single-focused views of landscape. His handscroll *Trees against a Flat Vista* (*Shu-se p'ing-yüan t'u* 樹色平遠圖; fig. 175), in the John M. Crawford, Jr., Collection, though limited in length, reveals shifting prospects—accented by boat, bridge, pavilion, and figures—made less physically secure by suggestive passages of ink. Such implicitly indeterminate approaches to the act of seeing further affirm Kuo's insistence that a landscape “suitable for travelling in or gazing upon is not as successful

as one in which one may dwell or ramble,"<sup>5</sup> a statement that downgrades the immediate view or even a well-directed prospect, as goal-directed travel implies.

The painting of Kuo Hsi's contemporary Sung Ti 宋迪 (ca. 1015–ca. 1080), as pieced together by Alfreda Murck from the intimation of written sources, reflects an aesthetic completely consistent with Kuo Hsi's. Sung's art also stemmed from Li Ch'eng. His concern for the landscape as both evocative and related to immediate experience is most evident in the "invention" of *Eight Views of the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers* (*Hsiao-Hsiang pa-ching t'u* 瀟湘八景圖), first painted around 1060 on the walls of a terrace overlooking Ch'ang-sha.<sup>6</sup> Popular in China during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, this theme later spread to Japan and became one of the most famous subjects in the Far East. Although no works by Sung Ti survive, one can speculate that his *Eight Views* may have been structured something like Hsü Tao-ning's 許道寧 (ca. 970–1051/52) *Fishermen Singing Evening Song* (*Yü-ko ch'ang-wan t'u* 漁歌唱晚圖), an only slightly earlier work, now in the Nelson-Atkins Museum, Kansas City.<sup>7</sup> Hsü's style, like that of Kuo Hsi and Sung Ti, also grew out of Li Ch'eng.

In Sung Ti's work, as in Kuo Hsi's, the connection of painting with poetry is secure. The brief evocative titles first recorded around 1090 by Shen Kua 沈括 (1029–93) reinforce the idea that a painted scene transferred its meaning directly and naturally into the verbal imagery of the poet. That the poetic titles may have been added after the painting was done, rather than serving as inspiration for the painter, as with Kuo Hsi, only confirms the interchangeability of the two arts. And when Su Shih wrote poems about Sung Ti's painting, the latter returned the compliment: "You, Sir, are also a fine painter."<sup>8</sup>

Sung Ti, like Kuo Hsi, must have practiced an evocative style of painting, for to him is attributed the famous advice of throwing a piece of silk over a ruined wall so that through contemplation of accidental shapes a true landscape emerges.<sup>9</sup> Once again, it is the suggestion of imagery rather than its precise definition that appears to fit most comfortably into the poet's world with which Sung Ti can be so closely linked.

It is doubtless no accident that the increased importance of the poetry-painting link exactly parallels thematic and stylistic shifts in painting during the latter half of the eleventh century and on into the twelfth. This period saw the rapid rise of landscape painting, as opposed to traditional religious and figure subjects, and within its developing stages—as Wai-kam Ho has defined it—the overwhelming predominance of the Li Ch'eng mode.<sup>10</sup>

Taste, however, was to shift, at least in official circles. A well-known episode in Teng Ch'un's 鄧椿 *Hua-chi* 畫繼 (*A Continuation of Painting History*; preface dated 1167) tells of Teng's father obtaining from an imperial closet a roomful of Kuo Hsi paintings, some of which had been used for cleaning cloths. The incident is important in recording change from the time of Shen-tsung 神宗 (r. 1068–85) to Hui-tsung 徽宗 (r. 1101–25), when the visual realism of a precise imagery was demanded: a rose was praised for being "exactly like one seen at noon on a spring day," and since the peacock seen in nature "invariably raises its left foot first" when mounting a high place, it must be painted in this manner. A painting of a court lady, half-hidden behind a red gate, throwing away nutshells, was brushed so that each nut—ginkgo, litchi, walnut, yew, chestnut, and hazelnut—could be exactly distinguished. The claim is made that when the emperor Hui-tsung painted a fan, "several hundred copies" might be made—an explicit reinforcement of the practice of verisimilitude by extending the imitation of nature to the imitation of paintings of nature.



Figure 175. Kuo Hsi (ca. 1010–ca. 1090), *Trees against a Flat Vista*. Handscroll, ink on silk, H. 35.9 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Gift of John M. Crawford, Jr., in honor of Douglas Dillon, 1981

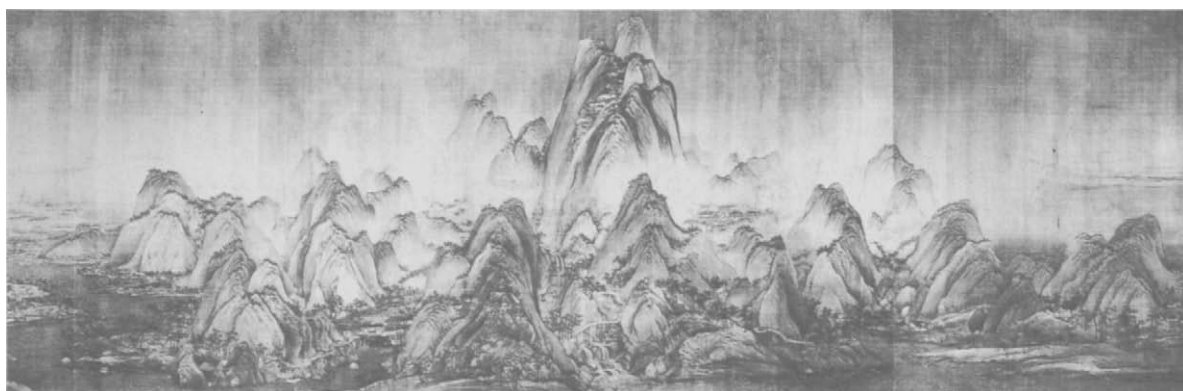
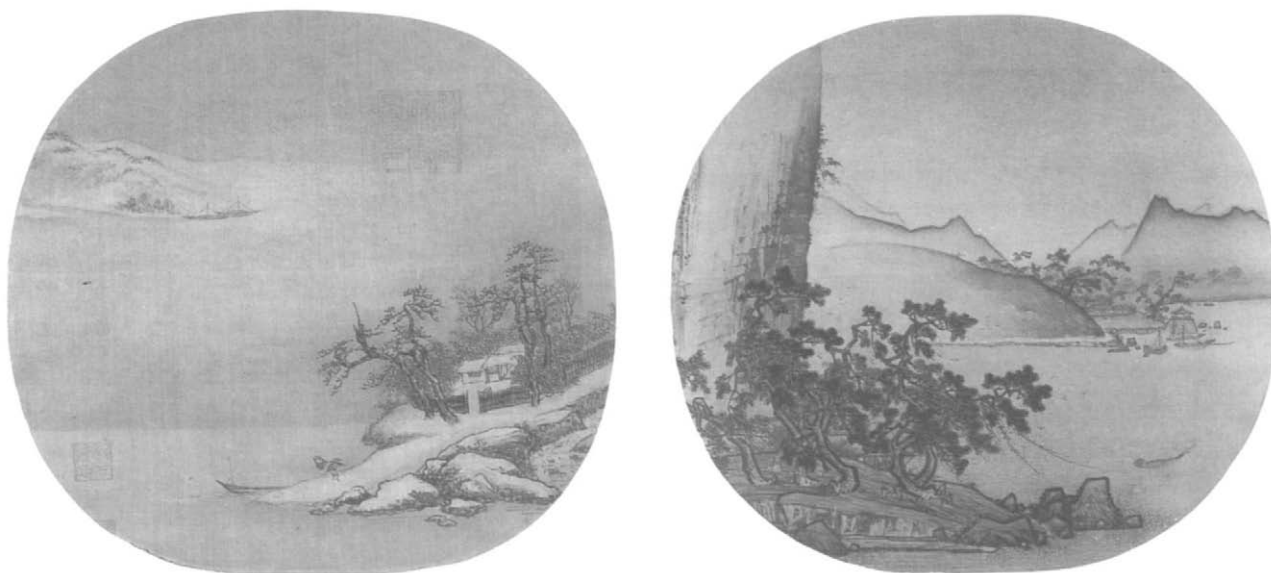


Figure 176. Wang Hsi-meng (ca. 1096–ca. 1120), *A Thousand Li of Rivers and Mountains*. Detail of handscroll, ink and colors on silk, H. 50.8 cm. Palace Museum, Beijing



Figure 177. Emperor Hui-tsung (r. 1101–25), *Finches and Bamboo*. Handscroll, ink and colors on silk, H. 27.9 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Purchase, Douglas Dillon Gift, 1981



Further, inspired by Sung Ti, Hui-tsung not only painted his own *Eight Views*, but he also sent the court painter Chang Ch'ien 張戡 (active early twelfth century) by boat through the region to record its scenery firsthand.<sup>11</sup>

With all this, it hardly seems possible that a well-instructed and controlled Academy artist, when illustrating poetry, would suddenly shift to the kind of “poetic” brush suggestion implicit in the Li Ch'eng-Kuo Hsi school of landscape. At least the norm would have been closer to the precision of Wang Hsi-meng's 王希孟 (ca. 1096–ca. 1120) imperially instructed *Thousand Li of Rivers and Mountains* (*Ch'ien-li Chiang-shan t'u* 千里江山圖), now in the Palace Museum, Beijing (fig. 176), extending at another level to the more sensitive but still direct and intimate views of Chao Ling-jang 趙令穰 (active ca. 1070–1100). In their genre these stand as just counterparts to the bird-and-flower theme as seen in the finest paintings with Hui-tsung's cipher, an outstanding example of which is *Finches and Bamboo* (*Ts'ui-chu shuang-ch'in t'u* 翠竹雙禽圖), in the John M. Crawford, Jr., Collection (fig. 177).

According to Wai-kam Ho, the criteria for the highest grade awarded in the competitive painting of poetic themes included the rejection of “imitating any ancient masters” and stipulated that “forms and colors are rendered naturally.”<sup>12</sup> That such paintings should also be “endowed with lofty concepts and archaic flavors” appears somewhat contradictory. However, from what we know of painting in Hui-tsung's court, “natural” precision apparently did not exclude allusions to antiquity, a fact that could be argued both for Wang Hsi-meng and Chao Ling-jang.

In the early twelfth century what came “naturally” rested in the precise “look” of nature—the accuracy both of forms and of the physical space surrounding them either up close in a bird or flower painting or to the farthest distance in landscape. Indeed, the history of the art of painting in China's twelfth and thirteenth centuries rested firmly on the foundation of physical likeness, extending all the way from the court of Hui-tsung through and including the art of Ma Yüan 馬遠 (active ca. 1190–1225), Hsia Kuei 夏珪 (active first half of the thirteenth century), Ma Lin 馬麟 (active ca. 1216–56), and Mu-ch'i 牧谿 (active mid-thirteenth century). It is true that there were variations in this commitment to “form-likeness” (*hsing-ssu* 形似): abbreviations, special tricks of the



Far left, Figure 178. Anonymous (13th c.), *River Hamlet*. Fan mounted as an album leaf, ink and color on silk, 24.3 × 25.4 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Bequest of John M. Crawford, Jr., 1988

Center, Figure 179. Anonymous (12th–13th c.), *Boats Moored in Wind and Rain*. Fan mounted as an album leaf, ink and colors on silk, 24.8 × 26.1 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Bequest of John M. Crawford, Jr., 1988

Right, Figure 180. Anonymous (12th c.), *Boating by a Willow Bank*. Fan mounted as an album leaf, ink and color on silk, 23.3 × 24.9 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Fletcher Fund, 1947

brush, detailed close-ups, and distant generalities. But the search for expression, for the “picture-idea” (*hua-i* 畫意), again for “lofty concepts and archaic flavors” (*kao-i ku-wei* 高意古味), was at its foundation dependent on the way things looked.

Indeed, it is the precise view—what is physically “seeable”—that lies at the heart of the popularity at this time of the small fan or album leaf. We can imagine a good deal going on beyond its borders, but, unlike Kuo Hsi’s ideal, we are asked only to look, not to wander and to dwell. And the looking is made comfortable because we do not have to shift psychologically from where we stand or sit. All is directly before us. Although the Crawford Collection’s sensitive *River Hamlet* (*Chiang ts’un t’u* 江村圖; fig. 178) may necessitate a modest shift of focus, we have little difficulty in seeing both the returning fisherman, with his rustic brushwood-fence dwelling beside a rushing stream, and the far, cold prospect of two stilled, anchored boats. Although more detailed, the distant motif in *Boats Moored in Wind and Rain* (*Feng yü wei chou t’u* 風雨維舟圖; fig. 179) is similar—two anchored ships. The lowering of the horizon line, however, gives an even more direct, or “deep-distance” (*shen-yüan* 深遠), prospect: pine trees and cliff loom in the foreground and, because they are in direct line of vision, screen or completely obscure what lies behind them. The more specific the view, the more limited the time: with all assurance of physical detail, the painting is of the ambiguous fragile moment, a moment that holds a windblown pine needle in midair. We may shift our view to the heights for the anonymous *Evening in Spring Hills* (*Ch’un-shan hsien-yin t’u* 春山仙隱圖) where time—now nighttime—is again linked to the meaning of a specific scene.

When one turns to the poet there is a parallel perception of the world. Kōjirō Yoshikawa has pointed out the close relation of the Sung poet to what was immediately around him. He tells us that Sung poetry is “intimately connected with the attitude of mind that seeks to treat and to capture all the manifold aspects of reality, leaving none forgotten and unsung.”<sup>13</sup> In 1178, the lyric poet Yang Wan-li 楊萬里 (1127–1206) wrote of this attitude as he discarded older models:

The ten thousand images of nature would present themselves to me as material for poems; I would motion them away but they kept coming, and



before I had written them down others would follow directly behind. I no longer felt that it was hard to write poetry.<sup>14</sup>

In actual practice, in the realization of the imagery of words, the poet—as the painter—might present those images with individual clarity whose truth depended on the physical act of seeing. Thus it is with Yang Wan-li's quatrain "Evening View from a Boat" ("Chou-chung wan-wang" 舟中晚望):

We sail past a pine-tree forest on the river bank.	河岸前頭松樹林
A man is walking where the trees end.	樹林盡處見行人
A mountain moves in front of the man, blocking our view.	行人又被山遮斷
The blue flag of a wine shop flutters in the wind. <sup>15</sup>	風颭酒家青布巾

Here are the clipped images of physical sight: the pine forest, the walking man after the trees, the mountain, the wineshop. In painting terms it is a handscroll rather than an album leaf. The suggestiveness of the poet's words parallel to, perhaps nurtured by, a painter's way of seeing, creates in the reader's or listener's mind discretely separated yet physically exact images framed by visible space and limited by moments of time.

In its attachment to the real world, this kind of seeing, so common in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, was quite literally focused on the "object" (*wu* 物). The importance of *wu* is manifest throughout Lu Yu's 陸游 (1125–1210) *Diary of a Trip to Shu* (*Ju-Shu chi* 入蜀記) of 1170, in which he describes a good many experiences that might well have been subjects for a painting. Perhaps the ultimate assurance of the equivalence that linked the in-the-world experience of the poet to the experience of a painter occurs in his entry of the twenty-second day of the seventh month: "All day was like travelling through a painting."<sup>16</sup>

We encounter problems when we try to find exact parallels between an existing poem and an existing painting. Although exact correspondence is rare, it can be found. To prove that such correspondence is possible, Richard Barnhart has written a T'ang-style poem to fit the album leaf *Boating by a Willow Bank* in the Metropolitan Museum (fig. 180):

Willows still by lotus bank  
 A boat drifts slowly by.  
 Ahead, tall grass, blue distant hills,  
 White moon in golden sky.<sup>17</sup>

In four different lines Barnhart gives exact expression to the four different images in this anonymous painting: willows and lotus; drifting boat; tall grass and distant hills; white moon. The link with the T'ang, however, rests only in the subject, not in the style. Indeed, judging from style alone, we can with some confidence date the painting no earlier than the second half of the twelfth century. Again we understand the painting through the direct act of seeing—at a level slightly raised so that we look down at the boat, down on the willow bank, across to the tall grass, across and gently up to the far hills and the moon. Details are exact, precise. There is no confusion in identifying each physical object. We find the spaces between and around these objects convincing, not because they are abstract voids helping to convert objects into symbolic presences but rather because space itself is an "object." We read space as an extension of calm water

melting into far haze, which in turn allows us to pick up only the crests of distant hills fusing with a moonlit sky.

Presumably the implications of realism should have limited poetic content, for by trapping the world in exact definition, the imagination has nowhere to wander. The fact is that in the golden time of the late Sung, the world itself was both poetry and painting. One catches this even in the eleventh century with Su Shih's description of a painting, *Misty River and Layered Hills* (*Yen-chiang tieh-chang* 煙江疊嶂), by his friend Wang Shen 王詵 (active second half of the eleventh century), to which he related his own experience as Master of the Eastern Slope:

Spring breezes stir the Yangtze, the sky is boundless.	春風搖江天漠漠
Sunset clouds collect the rain, the mountains are lovely.	暮雲捲雨山娟娟
Ravens fly from red maples to join who sleeps afloat.	丹楓翻鴉伴水宿
Snow falls from tall pines and startles morning slumber.	長松落雪驚醉眠
Peach blossoms and streams do occur in this life,	桃花流水在人世
Why must those of Wu-ling be immortals? <sup>18</sup>	武陵豈必皆神仙

For the painter—and often the poet—to describe the world was poetry enough.

In practice, however, judging from surviving paintings, working on the level of realism seldom brought the kind of exact correspondence between the two arts that I have cited above. Occasionally poets themselves may call attention to the painter's inadequacy. Thus Wang An-shih 王安石 (1021–86) wrote:

I climb up and look down, letting my eyes wander.	登臨送目
Just now it's late autumn in the old capital,	正故國晚秋
The weather is turning severe.	天氣初肅
For a thousand miles, the clear river is like silk	千里澄江似練
And the green peaks are like bamboo shoots.	翠峰如簇
The homebound sailboat rests its oars in the setting sun	歸帆去棹殘陽裡
And turns its back to the west wind.	背西風
The wineshop flag slants high;	酒旗斜矗
Above the painted boat the clouds are pale;	綠舟雲淡
On the River of Stars an egret rises.	星河鷺起
It would be hard to do justice to this in a painting. <sup>19</sup>	畫圖難足

The relation is seldom precise even in paintings for which the connection with poetry appears to be secure. In two important examples from the thirteenth century—one by Hsia Kuei, the other by Ma Lin—the artist can hardly be said to mirror the poetry or to mirror it in a consistent fashion. The relation can only be affirmed on the grounds of the poet's suggestion. A copy—apparently an accurate one—of Hsia Kuei's *Wind and Rain* (*Feng-yü shan-shui t'u* 風雨山水圖) in the Nezu Institute of Fine Arts, Tokyo (fig. 181), depicts Hsü Hun's 許渾 (ninth century) line:

With the mountain rain about to come wind fills the tower.<sup>20</sup> 山雨欲來風滿樓

And Ma Lin's impeccable *Waiting for Guests by Lamplight* (*Hua-teng shih-yen t'u* 華燈待宴圖) in the Palace Museum, Taipei (fig. 182), is a visualization of Su Shih's lines:

Fearing in the depths of night blossoms will close in sleep,	惟恐夜深花睡去
He has tall candles burned to light their fragile beauty. <sup>21</sup>	更燒高燭照紅粧



Figure 182. Ma Lin (active ca. 1216–56),  
*Waiting for Guests by Lamplight*.  
Fan mounted as an album leaf,  
ink and color on silk, 24.8 × 25.2 cm.  
Palace Museum, Taipei

Figure 181. Hsia Kuei (active first half 13th c.), copy after,  
*Wind and Rain*. Hanging scroll, ink on paper,  
87.5 × 35.5 cm. Nezu Institute of Fine Arts, Tokyo

In *Wind and Rain*, ink is freely used, and the “tower” (*lou* 樓) becomes a rustic open pavilion. In Ma Lin’s painting the imagery is a wealth of detail.

Indeed, the very suggestiveness of the poet—the uncertainties of verbalism—appears to challenge the painter’s brush. The painter must imagine what the poet saw and commit himself to the precision of his art—all the more so in an age of realism. The relation most readily becomes complementary rather than imitative: the suggestiveness of the poet necessitates the painter. It is the visual imprecision of the poetry that both allows and gives meaning to the precision of the painting.

If one starts with specific images in the search for poetic equivalence, one must expect the uncertainty of variables. Richard Barnhart has suggested a relationship between the Metropolitan Museum’s *Scholar by a Waterfall* (*Kao-shih kuan-pu t’u* 高士觀瀑圖; see fig. 84), signed “Ma Yüan,” and Li Po’s 李白 (701–62) “On Visiting a Taoist Master at the Tai-t’ien Mountains and Not Finding Him” (“Fang Tai-t’ien shan Tao-shih pu yü” 訪戴天山道士不遇).<sup>22</sup> The exact lines are:

Wild bamboo cuts across bright clouds,  
A flying cascade hangs from a green peak.

野竹分青靄  
飛泉挂碧峰

While the imagery is generally present, there are too many variables in the painting to be secure in the comparison. Bamboo is a minor feature, and it does not “cut” the clouds. Waterfalls or “cascades” are too frequently a component of Sung painting to be restricted to a specific poem. Indeed the final lines of the poem:

No one knows where you have gone,  
In my melancholy two, now three pines I have leant against

無人知所去  
愁倚兩三松

would appear to be more adequately illustrated in a section of a handscroll attributed to Fan Lung 梵隆 (first half of the twelfth century) now in the Freer Gallery (fig. 184).<sup>23</sup> There the solitary melancholy lohan leaning against a tree is confronting a deer, a component also found earlier in the poem: “Deep in the woods deer at times are seen.”

Less convincing is Barnhart’s association of this line with the companion album leaf, also signed Ma Yüan, now in the Perry Collection, Cleveland (fig. 185). While deer are present, the parklike setting hardly suggests “deep in the woods.” The point is that theme titles and specific lines from poetry were in the air. Painters and poets knew them from memory. The painter defined in part or in whole the “word-idea” triggered by experience or demand. Alternatively, the poet-connoisseur, confronted by a painting, could either invent or recall appropriate lines to restore to the concrete image the suggestiveness of the written word or its hummed sounds.

Indeed, the meaningful link between poetry and painting, in a somewhat contradictory fashion, appears to have been strengthened by the freedom of the poet to wander from the painting. Ronald Egan’s recent analysis of such poetry by Su Shih and Huang T’ing-chien 黃庭堅 (1045–1105) makes just this point, citing “the relative independence the poems enjoy from the paintings.” The painting becomes a focus for other matters. Thus Egan says of Su Shih, “He prefers to select just a few elements of the painting and then to explore or interpret them in his own novel way,” and claims that Huang’s concern is “less with the relationship of representation to reality than it is with the relationship of representation to the history of representation and its literary complement.” He further comments on “the relative independence the poems enjoy from the painting.”<sup>24</sup>

From this we may conclude that the poetry-painting link clings more to idea than to visible fact and is fed most comfortably at the ever-expanding borders of imagination. The poem that conformed to the painting endangered the richness of verbal ambiguity; the painting that surrendered to the poem compromised the clarity of seeing. Indeed, the fidelity to the real world that had captured the painter’s eye and hand in the twelfth century was sometimes at odds with a painting style that appeared to reach out for a poet’s free suggestive imagery. How else can we explain the curious mannerisms in the work of two prominent twelfth-century artists: Chiang Shen 江參 (ca. 1090–1138) and Ma Ho-chih 馬和之 (active second half of the twelfth century)? Chiang Shen was completely outside the court and the Academy, as the story of his dying the night before an initial audience with the emperor affirms.<sup>25</sup> The three surviving paintings associated with his name recall the style of the tenth-century master Chü-jan 巨然 (active ca. 960–80), who later was regarded as a fount of scholar-painting taste.

The result of Chiang Shen’s aims in what appears to be his most noble surviving painting—*A Thousand Li of Rivers and Mountains* (*Ch’ien-li Chiang-shan t’u* 千里江山圖) in the Palace Museum, Taipei (fig. 183)—is a selected series of type-forms drawn from the mind’s understanding of an ancient style: gently curving horizontal areas of land often extended to pointed land spits probing open flat areas of water; animated vertical rocks, boulders, and mountain peaks (sometimes combined with alum-headed forms), their lively contours touched within by soft parallel texture strokes. Interspersed with these strokes are unpainted surfaces that create the illusion of shining areas of light. Helping to join the above are carefully laid-out bands of repeated trees, the clustered repetition of ink dots, bright wandering paths, fingered mountaintop plateaus, the scattered presence of repeated tiny human figures, and the occasional focus of a contrasting accent, as with the angled spearlike thrusts of a mountain stream.



Figure 183. Chiang Shen (ca. 1090–1138), *A Thousand Li of Rivers and Mountains*. Detail of handscroll, ink on silk, H. 46.3 cm. Palace Museum, Taipei



Figure 184. Attributed to Fan Lung (first half 12th c.), *The Sixteen Lohans (Arhats)*. Detail of handscroll, ink on paper, H. 30.5 cm. Courtesy of the Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.



Figure 185. Ma Yüan,  
*Watching Deer by a Pine-shaded Stream.*  
 Album leaf, ink and light color on silk,  
 24.8 × 26 cm.  
 Intended gift to the  
 Cleveland Museum of Art;  
 Mr. and Mrs. A. Dean Perry Collection

The presence of similar forms in different combinations suggests the varied repetition of musical notes or the chanted rhythms of poetry. Still, there is an unmistakable conscious and disturbing restlessness that is at odds with the alleged theme of the painting, those clearly visible miles of river and mountain. In keeping with the style of his time, Chiang Shen was bound to present an accurate view. Despite the “play” of forms, he foreshortens a path, leads the viewer directly into a hollow, and makes his land spits recede and his endless mountain peaks fall back in disciplined ranks until their farthest summits meet in distant haze where the eye loses its power of definition.

To remain true to the view, the eye must reject the urge of mind and feeling to move freely and often in exaggerated contrast to what one physically sees or expects to see. Personal expression, stylistic antiquarianism, and the introspective world often must—as in the poems of Su Shih and Huang T'ing-chien—part company with the precise acceptance of the object and reliance on the accurate view. The attempt in the same painting to be true to what the eye sees and the mind feels is the source of an uneasy marriage that haunts the art of Chiang Shen. The result is an inescapable “mannerism,” and it is, indeed, appropriate to apply that Western stylistic term to his art.<sup>26</sup>

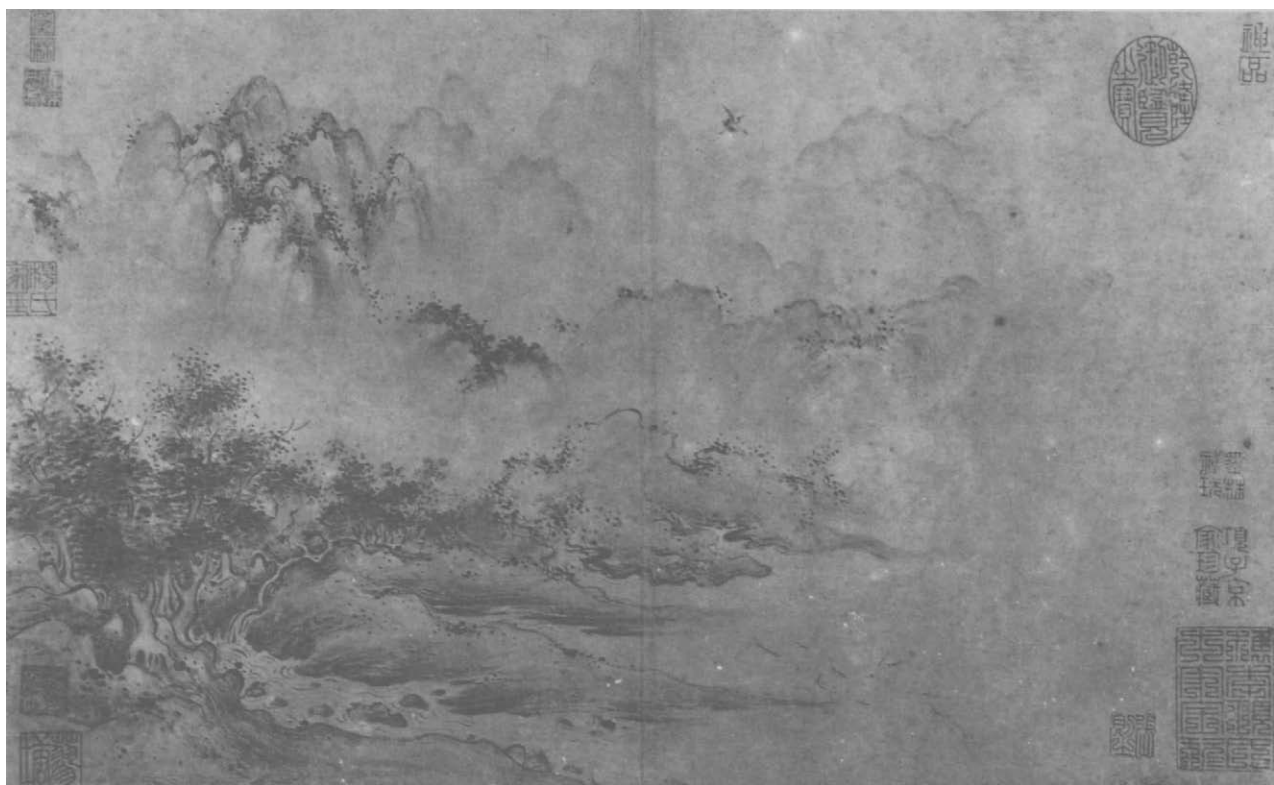
The same can be said of Ma Ho-chih. Ma's painting is closely associated with poetry, as affirmed by his famous illustrations to Emperor Kao-tsung's 高宗 (r. 1127–62) transcription of the *Book of Poetry* (*Shih-ching* 詩經), or by his illustration of Su Shih's *Red Cliff* (*Ch'ih-pi fu* 赤壁賦), now in the Palace Museum, Beijing.<sup>27</sup> As far as we can tell, Ma's relationship to the Academy was ambiguous. Ma Ho-chih appears at the top of Chou Mi's 周密 (1232–98) brief list of academicians,<sup>28</sup> and yet by virtue of rising to the official position of vice-minister of the Ministry of Works (*kung-pu shih-lang* 工部侍郎) outside the Academy, Ma was presumably removed from the limitations of the pure artist and able to partake of that noble scholar's world where learning (including poetry) played such a significant role. Thus, the early fourteenth-century advocate of scholar-painter virtues T'ang Hou 湯垕, like Chuang Su 莊肅 (active late thirteenth century) earlier, praised Ma but neglected to mention his possible Academy service. In his time, notes T'ang Hou, Ma was considered a “small Wu [Tao-tzu 吳道子; active ca. 710–60] . . . able to reject the accepted and preserve ideas of high antiquity. Thus his accomplishments were not those that others could easily attain.”<sup>29</sup> T'ang Hou is referring particularly to Ma's figure style, which James Cahill has aptly characterized as “drawn with smoothly tapering, curvilinear brushstrokes, in rhythmic patterns that take precedence over the descriptive function of the drawing,”<sup>30</sup> but the style extends to Ma's landscapes as well. Indeed, it is Ma's quarrel with “descriptive” values that establishes an unsettling dysfunction in his painting. Like Chiang Shen, Ma too may be termed a “mannerist.”

Ma's illustrations to the *Book of Poetry* and other surviving works by or attributed to him are limited in scope and are, as with so many other paintings of his time—the “accepted” of T'ang Hou's analysis—committed to the focused scene, often a nearby “single-corner” composition extending into far areas of space. Consider a well-known pair of album leaves from the Palace Museum in Taipei painted in ink on paper. In one painting, *Old Tree by the Water* (*Ku-mu liu-ch'üan t'u* 古木流泉圖; fig. 186), there is a reduction to a rock and a tree and a momentary bird in flight; in the other, *Cranes Crying by the Clear Spring* (*Ch'ing-ch'üan ming-ho t'u* 清泉鳴鶴圖; fig. 187), there is a grove of trees, a rushing stream, hidden cranes (one in flight), repeated land spits, and reverberating lines of mist-based peaks angled beyond the power of the eye to see. In the lower



Figure 186. Ma Ho-chih (active latter half 12th c.), *Old Tree by the Water*.  
Album leaf, ink on paper, 30 × 48.7 cm. Palace Museum, Taipei

Figure 187. Ma Ho-chih, *Cranes Crying by the Clear Spring*.  
Album leaf, ink on paper, 30 × 48.7 cm. Palace Museum, Taipei





left-hand corner of both paintings appear the signature of Ma Ho-chih and the seal “Smartweed Pond” (“Liao-t’ang” 蓼塘) of Chuang Su, the author of *Hua-chi pu-i* 畫繼補遺 (Supplement to the *Hua-chi*) of 1298. Aside from the restless play of the brush lines and the scattering of unattached ink dots, the most notable variant from a faithful depiction of an exact view in the latter album leaf is the cluster of tiny fish off a land spit in the foreground. The fish are not in one’s direct line of vision, but seen as though from above. This small but significant intrusion—the implantation of a symbolic idea within what, without looking closely, we accept as a normal landscape—is clearly a concession to the idea-imagery of poetry; it secures the painting as an illustration of lines from the *Hsiao-ya* section of the *Book of Poetry*:

The cranes cry over the nine marshes	鶴鳴于九臯聲聞于野
and their cry sounds over the waste.	
Fish go dark through the deep	魚潛在淵或在于渚
or lie at rest by the isles. <sup>31</sup>	

The “problem” posed by the painting of Chiang Shen and Ma Ho-chih is, in the widest sense, the problematic relationship of poetry and painting. As long as we are held by the painter’s objective eye to focus on what is “out there,” images can only “live” in such painting if they conform to natural appearances. The imagination is not free. Ideas drawn from sources other than the immediately perceivable world—whether antiquity or the individual mind—do not easily conform. Caged by the restraints of physical accuracy, the restless mind becomes the restless brush.

Nevertheless, there are ways in which the painter’s search for poetry could be more naturally reconciled to the Sung acceptance of the physical world. Given the tangible mist-filled air of southern China, a subtle softening, even a blurring of vision need not do violence to visual perception. This we find in *Dream Journey through the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers* (*Hsiao-Hsiang wo-yu t’u* 瀟湘卧遊圖) of ca. 1170 in the Tokyo Museum (fig. 188) and in *View of West Lake* (*Hsi-hu t’u* 西湖圖) attributed to Li Sung 李嵩 (active ca. 1190–1230) in the Shanghai Museum (see fig. 170). While beginning from concrete scenes, the painters each used delicate strokes and light ink, an understated personal touch, to transform specific landscapes, thus moving in the direction of literati taste. Such paintings appear to illustrate the term *soundless poem*. It is just such an effect that is suggested in Huang T’ing-chien’s praise of Li Kung-lin 李公麟 (ca. 1049–1106)—to whom, incidentally, the *Hsiao-Hsiang* scroll has sometimes been attributed:

Li had verses ready but would not utter them,	李侯有句不肯吐
With light ink he brought forth a soundless poem. <sup>32</sup>	淡墨寫出無聲詩

This kind of compromise, the light ink of a soundless poem, required special personal sensitivity. One finds it occasionally in Ma Ho-chih when he adopts a pointillist touch backed by a calmer structure of washes (see, for example, his “On the Southern Mountains Are T’ai Plants” [“Nan-shan yu t’ai” 南山有臺], in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts [fig. 189]). But it was with the Mi family, as we now can see the style in Mi Yu-jen 米友仁 (1074–1151), that the most convincing link between the freedoms of the scholar-poet and the objective truth of late Sung painting is to be found. The invention of the “Mi-dot” (*Mi-tien* 米點)—a nonlinear, unspecified, and thus essentially free and



Figure 188. Mr. Li (active ca. 1170), *Dream Journey through the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers*.  
Detail of handscroll, ink on paper, H. 30.4 cm. Tokyo National Museum Collection



Figure 189. Ma Ho-chih, "On the Southern Mountains Are T'ai Plants,"  
from *Six Odes of the Mao Shih*. Section of handscroll, ink and color on silk, H. 27 cm.  
Courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Marshall H. Gould Fund



spontaneous mark of the brush—in combination with sensitive wash, sometimes becoming itself a kind of wash, was at once a statement of personal freedom and a valid recorder of the physical world. As I have suggested elsewhere, the invention of the “Mi-dot,” although of different aesthetic import, was comparable in visual significance to Li T’ang’s 李唐 (ca. 1070–ca. 1150) contemporary “invention” of the “ax-cut texture stroke” (*fu-p’i ts’un* 斧劈皴). Tung Ch’i-ch’ang 董其昌 (1555–1636), the champion of all things spontaneous and “southern,” recognized this quality in quoting Mi Yu-jen’s inscription on *White Clouds over the Hsiao and Hsiang* (*Hsiao-Hsiang pai-yün t’u* 瀟湘白雲圖), now in the Shanghai Museum:

When the night rain has begun to clear and the dawn clouds emerge, this is the way it looks.<sup>33</sup>

In evaluating the late Sung we must constantly remind ourselves of the dominance of precise vision. Thus the desire for a poetry-painting unity was compelled to flourish within the acceptance of physical realism, not by its denial, and convertibility could not be exclusively the province of literati values. This convertibility was asserted as well in Hui-tsung’s court, where the *Imperial Painting Catalogue of the Hsüan-ho Era* [1119–25] (*Hsüan-ho hua-p’u* 宣和畫譜) pointed out that painting and poetry were “two sides of the same thing” (*hsiang piao li* 相表里).<sup>34</sup> Thus one could fully accept the reality of physical forms and yet find poetry in those forms or facts. One device was to conceal or, more accurately, to reveal the hidden image only partly. Thus, when an examination in Hui-tsung’s Academy required the illustration of a poetic theme “A Tavern in a Bamboo Grove by a Bridge,” success depended not on painting the tavern in its entirety, but on



Figure 190. Chao K'uei (1186–1266),  
*After a Poem by Tu Fu.*  
 Detail of handscroll, ink on silk,  
 H. 24.8 cm.  
 Shanghai Museum

recognizing the suggestive possibilities—presumably the poetry—by concentrating on the bamboo and reducing the tavern to a simple pole with a wine banner.<sup>35</sup>

A century later Chao K'uei 趙葵 (1186–1266) achieved something of the same effect in his finely wrought handscroll *After a Poem by Tu Fu* (*Tu Fu shih-i t'u* 杜甫詩意圖), now in the Shanghai Museum (fig. 190). The theme was Tu Fu's (712–70) couplet:

Bamboo depths are for the guest to linger;  
 The purity of lotus brings on a time of cool.<sup>36</sup>

竹深留客處  
 荷淨納涼時

The lines are exactly suited to the precision of late Sung painting, for the key words “place” (*ch'u* 處) in the first (not literally translated) and “time” (*shih* 時) in the second are much of what late Sung painting was about. Since the lines were written before the painting was done, they became the basis for painting bamboo as a rich, enclosing, concealing-revealing environment. “Depth” (*shen* 深), another key word, is also in complete harmony with late Sung vision. Chao K'uei draws the viewer into the landscape with his use of a “deep-distance” (*shen-yüan*) composition. The physical presence of this depth accents the scroll. We move through it as a traveler would—much as in Yang Wan-li's earlier quoted poem, “Evening View from a Boat”—here from one depth to the next: first as two empty streams flowing toward us, then as a foreshortened winding path that in turn disappears into a hidden distance; a traveler is dwarfed in bamboo's immensity; the top of a rustic shrine barely emerges. At the end, Chao K'uei paints “a time of cool” and “purity”: an open lotus pond, the iconography of a breeze-receptive house placed over water, a propped-up awning, and—in this aristocratic world—the inevitable servant with his attribute, an active fan. Both the scene, or scenes, and the brush which reveals

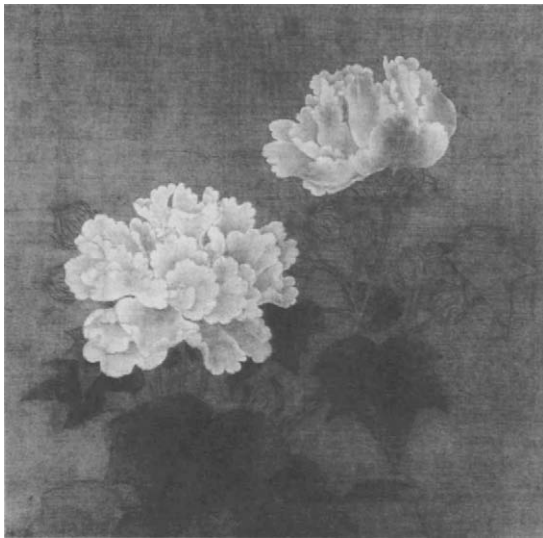


Figure 191. Li Ti (active late 12th–early 13th c.), *Red-and-White Hibiscus*, dated 1197. Hanging scroll, ink and colors on silk, 25.2 × 25.5 cm. Tokyo National Museum Collection



Figure 192. Wu Ping (active late 12th c.), *Oak Leaf and Bulbul*. Fan, ink and color on silk, 26.1 × 27.5 cm. Palace Museum, Taipei

it retain qualities equivalent to the poet's language. At the end of the scroll a stream and continuing path repeat the motif of "depth."

However, the most effective way to establish the poetry-painting bond within the strictures of late Sung realism was through a process of reduction or elimination. Completely at ease with the openness of space and confident in concentrating on a small fragment of nature, the painter did not need to show everything that lay at the tip of his skillful brush. On the one hand, painting became more exact—a flower, a tree, a promontory, a bird; on the other, by not revealing all that lies around the object, the painter leads the viewer to the world of imagination. At issue is not what lies beyond the painting—a poetic task<sup>37</sup>—but what lies beyond the image *in* the painting.

In exploiting the exactness of the image, the Sung painter created reverberations that lead the viewer beyond seeing and feed the other senses. This is the phenomenon of synesthesia: from one sense-impression creating an associated image of a different sense-impression. Hans Frankel, who pointed out its significance in the marriage of poetry and painting in the seventeenth-century West, found it also in Sung poetry.<sup>38</sup> Its existence in late Sung painting should not be surprising. In reproducing the nature of the world, the great painter is bound to reawaken in us sensations of being in that world. As Lu Yu said: "All day was like travelling in a painting." Fragrance, stirring the sense of smell, was of special importance. The most praised solution to Hui-tsung's poetry-painting puzzle: "The scent of trampled flowers follows the hooves of the returning horse" was to paint butterflies fluttering around the horse's hooves. Knowing Hui-tsung's taste for visual detail, such a picture need not contrast with it. Indeed, depicting the butterflies with precise brushstrokes would have shifted all the more securely the emphasis from the sense of sight to that of smell.<sup>39</sup> Similarly, a precisely painted flower cannot help but stir the sense of smell as well as the sense of sight, whether it is the complex petal-rich fragrance of Li Ti's 李迪 (active late twelfth–early thirteenth century) famous *Red-and-*

*White Hibiscus* (*Hung-pai fu-jung t'u* 紅白芙蓉圖) of 1197 in the Tokyo Museum (fig. 191), or the chilled, withdrawn fragrance of Ma Lin's plum blossoms in the Palace Museum, Beijing, complemented by the inscription "Layer upon Layer of Icy Tips" (*ts'eng-tieh ping-hsiao* 層疊冰銷).<sup>40</sup> The texture of blossom, branch, and leaf—a vital concern of late Sung painting—also stirs the sense of touch. So, too, perhaps the texture of a bird's feathers. But birds can do what many other living things cannot. They sing. In Wu Ping's 吳炳 (active late twelfth century) flawless rendering of feathered life, his tense and monumental *Oak Leaf and Bulbul* (*Ch'iu-yeh shan-ch'in* 秋葉山禽) now in the Palace Museum, Taipei, shape bursts into the ecstasy of song (fig. 192). The eye gives way to the ear in transmitting the essential meaning of the painting. Song is not only a key to meaning, it completely justifies the term *lyric*, an overused word to describe late Sung painting as a whole.

Lyric, of course, commonly refers to a special type of poetry. James Joyce writes:

The lyrical form is in fact the simplest verbal gesture of an instant of emotion, a rhythmical cry such as ages ago cheered on the man who pulled at the oar or dragged stones up a slope. He who utters it is more conscious of the instant of emotion than of himself as feeling emotion.<sup>41</sup>

Shuen-fu Lin, who has made a special study of the lyric song (*tz'u* 詞) in the late Sung period, continues with its complexities:

Despite its oneness, the creative act of a lyric poet has to gather up, through the medium of language, the disparate fragments and moments of experience into a coherent symbolic whole.<sup>42</sup>

In Wu Ping's *Oak Leaf and Bulbul* the medium is not language but shape. Nor is shape merely symbol: it is physical fact, form-likeness, which here assumes qualities of lyric poetry. However, we are confronted not with Joyce's "verbal gesture" but with a "gesture" of shape. As such, the painting becomes an exact expression of Professor Lin's main thesis about the lyric song in the late Sung, that "vision . . . has shifted from the omnipresent lyrical self to the object."<sup>43</sup> Wu Ping has completely surrendered his emotion to that of a bird.

While the process of reduction or elimination led to the enriched understanding of what was selected, thereby bringing the painting closer to particular types of poetry, another related, though seemingly contrary, aspect had to do with the spareness of the painting as a whole. There were still spaces and the continuing presence of forms based on direct perception of the physical world, but spareness is found in representation itself. Only the essential was retained—the selected line, the brief wash, perhaps the blush of color. Paradoxically, less is more.

An example of such a painting is Liang K'ai's 梁楷 (active late twelfth–early thirteenth century) round fan *Strolling by a Marshy Bank* (*Tse p'ang hsing yin* 澤旁行吟) in the John M. Crawford, Jr., Collection (fig. 193). Although no specific poem has been cited to describe the scene, one suspects a couplet would not be difficult to find. More significantly, Liang K'ai's style itself depends on the suggestion of the brush, as a poem relies on the suggestion of its words.

Like so many small, detailed paintings of the period, however, Liang K'ai's fan continues to exploit a focused vision. The lower part of the painting depicts a limited part

of the world, placed close to the dramatic overhanging cliff. We can see nothing behind or above it. The cliff and the illusion of cloud-mist permit only the suggestion of dark, low, mid-distance land spits, the shadowy growth of *lu* 蘆 grass, and cliff-hanging shrubbery. There is only one human figure, a staff-bearing scholar. Of this solitary vertical form, a core element amid horizontals and diagonals, Max Loehr has suggested: “However tiny, the man’s figure holds the entire design together.”<sup>44</sup> In the suggestive yet still-stable world, there is thus an even narrower focus—perhaps a pulling together in a lyric sense—gentler than the cry of a bird. This focus reinforces the act of looking, for that is exactly what the figure in the painting is doing. However, the pose indicates that what he sees lies beyond the picture. The line of vision is confirmed by the angled cliff-shape that draws our eye from left to right.

Although in what is most important about style—a painting’s basic structure—we are still committed to painting the image as a careful imitation of what the eye can see, an ideal so prized by Hui-tsung, brevities now reflect the ease with which such form-likeness can be accepted. They also draw us closer to poetry both in themselves and in pressing us to go outside the painting. To return to a late-eleventh-century idea:

Poetry conveys the meaning beyond the painting.<sup>45</sup>

Both in reducing a painting to the detail of a well-focused image and in employing suggested brevities, Ma Lin, at the very end of the late Sung, may be seen as a painter who emerged as a great poet. I have already cited the impeccable *Waiting for Guests* and *Icy Tips*. In his spare *Swallows at Dusk* (*Hsi-yang shan-shui t’u* 夕陽山水圖), a hanging scroll now in Tokyo’s Nezu Institute of Fine Arts (see fig. 75), what Max Loehr has called “a marvel of terse economy and tiny elegance” is complementary to the couplet that Emperor Li-tsung 理宗 (r. 1225–64) inscribed in 1254 when he presented the scroll to his ten-year-old daughter:<sup>46</sup>

Mountains hold autumn colors close  
Swallows cross the evening sun late.<sup>47</sup>

Returning to Kuo Hsi, with whom this essay begins, we are fortunate in finding two surviving paintings that define two of his favorite verses. One is a Ming painting, Wen Cheng-ming’s 文徵明 (1470–1559) *Storm over the River* (*Feng-yü ku-chou* 風雨孤舟), now in Kansas City (fig. 195). It is a Ming painting, however, that relies heavily on late Sung vision. It defines a couplet by the T’ang poet Wei Ying-wu 韋應物 (737–?):

The spring flood carries the rain, swifter by evening;                    春潮帶雨晚來急  
And at the wild ford, no one—only the empty angled boat.<sup>48</sup>        野渡無人舟自橫

The second such painting illustrating a Kuo Hsi poetry theme is securely from the late Sung. It is Ma Lin’s image (fig. 194) of Wang Wei’s 王維 (701–61) couplet:

Walking to where the waters end  
Sitting to watch the time the clouds arise.

The painting—now in Cleveland—in the form of a circular fan accompanies the verse written on a matching fan by Emperor Li-tsung dated 1256, two years after Ma Lin’s Nezu scroll.



Figure 193. Liang K'ai  
(active late 12th–early 13th c.),  
*Strolling by a Marshy Bank*.  
Fan mounted as an album leaf,  
ink on silk, 23.5 × 21.4 cm.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art;  
Bequest of John M. Crawford, Jr., 1988



Figure 194. Ma Lin,  
*Sitting to Watch the Time the Clouds Arise*.  
Fan mounted as an album leaf,  
ink and light color on silk,  
25.1 × 25.1 cm.  
The Cleveland Museum of Art;  
John L. Severance Fund



Figure 195. Wen Cheng-ming (1470–1559), *Storm over the River*.  
Album leaf mounted as a handscroll, ink and light color on paper, 38.7 × 60.2 cm.  
The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri; Nelson Fund



To understand what the painting has accomplished one needs to understand the whole poem, which is entitled “Chung-nan Retreat” (“Chung-nan pieh-yeh” 終南別業):

In middle years I grew to love the Tao	中歲頗好道
Late, a home at Southern Mountain's foot.	晚家南山陔
With feeling right, each time I go alone	興來每獨往
Splendid things, emptiness I know	勝事空自知
Walking to where the waters end	行到水窮處
Sitting to watch the time the clouds arise.	坐看雲起時
By chance meeting an old man of the forest	偶然值林叟
We chat and laugh—no date to return.	談笑無還期

Wang Wei's poem is autobiographical, describing his progress toward enlightenment. The first line refers to his absorption in Buddhism; the second his retreat to the famous Wang-ch'uan 韜川 villa some thirty miles south of the T'ang capital of Ch'ang-an. The rest is about his solitary communion with nature. The “old man of the forest” at the end is not “society,” but a personification of nature itself. The poem is intensely personal, and, as Pauline Yu, whose translation I have followed with slight alterations, tells us in her admirable discussion, the view of nature here is closely linked to Wang Wei's Buddhist faith.<sup>49</sup> “Emptiness” (*k'ung* 空), a favorite word with Wang Wei, is the Buddhist *śūnyatā*. Its contradictory reality is “explained” in the *Heart Sutra*:

Form is emptiness and the very emptiness is form; emptiness does not differ from form, form does not differ from emptiness; whatever is form, that is emptiness, whatever is emptiness, that is form, the same is true of feeling, perceptions, impulses, and consciousness.<sup>50</sup>

Emptiness (truth) thus is lodged in “splendid things,” which could be either the glitter of the world or the beauty of nature itself. Nature's experience leads to this enigmatic denial and yet certain affirmation. Thus, “Walking to where the waters end / Sitting to watch the time the clouds arise” presents a concrete image of nature. But—like the empty silk that represents the body of the clouds—the concreteness is illusory: waters come to an end, and the poet is watching not clouds but—in contrast to specific objects—something as enigmatic as time. These are key lines in the poem because they direct us to “emptiness”—the meaning of *śūnyatā*. As their selection by Li-tsung and Ma Lin affirms, they are also the lines that lend themselves most precisely to the painting that is in this Wang Wei poem.

Out of a short but complex T'ang poem, the painter (or perhaps the emperor) has made a selection that is a way—perhaps the only way—of painting the poem without destroying its poetry—poetry as we have been discussing it, especially poetry in the lyric sense. In a more diffuse approach, intensity would have been lost, and the imagination destroyed.

Consistent with his time, Ma Lin—despite brevities—precisely recorded the “world.” We have no difficulty recognizing foreground, background, and a logically receding physical space. Yet the very brevities of the recording imply its transience. “Time” and the truth that is in it lie somewhere between the scholar in the left foreground and the clouds in the distance. The dark line of his staff serves to point the direction. In this

there is also contradiction: the blunt, dark, angled figure and the soft, light, curling empty cloud about to engulf the certainty of the mountain.

Despite the ability of late Sung vision to establish the poetry-painting connection, the painter found the connection precarious. Too much loyalty to the eye does not permit freedom of the ear. The effect of converting painting into poetry has been eloquently described by a contemporary critic who observed a similar transformation in Western Mannerist painting:

Re-presented as language, the painting loses its edges and clearly marked borders; it surges into the unframed present, where it is now subject to the poet's unlimited speculation and the infinity of language. . . . It offers an analogy between poetry and painting in the tradition of *ut pictura poesis* but then questions the resemblance.<sup>51</sup>

The "infinity of language" was long recognized in China. Thus Lu Chi's 陸機 (261–303) "Rhyme-Prose on Literature" ("Wen-fu" 文賦) addresses the power of words:

We enclose boundless space in a square foot of paper; we pour out a deluge from the inch-space of the heart.

Language spreads wider and wider; thought probes deeper and deeper.<sup>52</sup>

In the late Sung, the "deluge" of language was challenged by the triumph of the eye. Although adjustments were made, it was not easy for the painter to find the poet's freedom. Only when the painter could adjust his painting, not only to complement, but actually to assume the qualities of poetic imagery, could the bond between poetry and painting be sealed.

This was precisely what happened in the Yüan dynasty, when verisimilitude surrendered to the expressive brush. As T'ang Hou stated in his *Mirror of Painting* (*Hua-chien* 畫鑑):

It is said that painting the plum-flower is to "write" the plum; painting bamboo is to "write" the bamboo; painting the orchid is to "write" the orchid. Why is this so? It is because of a flower's great purity. This cannot be found in likeness.<sup>53</sup>

Once "likeness"—the precisely delineated image—is no longer the vehicle of truth, a more illusive ideal takes over. The painting is unframed, its forms are released, and it joins the world of poetry. Untainted by matter, "purity" is within reach.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Hans H. Frankel, "Poetry and Painting: Chinese and Western Views of Their Convertibility," *Comparative Literature* 9, no. 4 (Fall 1957), pp. 303ff. The importance of the Sung dynasty in the rise of the poetry-painting connection does not mean it was unknown before this time, however. A historical assessment of extant poems written for paintings brings the following statis-

tics: Tsin: 4; Ch'i: 2; Liang: 1; Northern Ch'i: 1; Northern Chou: 25 poems by one writer; Sui: 1; T'ang: over 175; Sung: 1,085; Yüan: 3,798. See Liu Chi-ts'ai, "Tu Fu pu shih t'i-hua shih ti shou ch'uang che, chien lun t'i-hua ch'an-sheng yü fa-chan" (Tu Fu was not the originator of inscribed poems on paintings, and a discussion of the emergence and development of poetry colophons),

- Liao-ning ta-hsüeh hsüeh-pao*, no. 2 (1982), pp. 69–70.
- 2 Susan Bush, *The Chinese Literati on Painting: Su shih (1037–1101) to Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (1555–1636)*, Harvard-Yenching Institute Studies, no. 27 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), pp. 32–33.
  - 3 Kuo Hsi, *An Essay on Landscape Painting*, trans. Shio Sakanishi (London: John Murray, 1935; reprint, 1936), pp. 35, 49–52. For Chinese text as well as examples of painting style, see *Kuo Hsi Tsao-ch'un t'u* (Kuo Hsi's *Early Spring*) (Taipei: Palace Museum, 1979). The poetry lines are also translated in Arthur Waley, *An Introduction to the Study of Chinese Painting* (London: Ernest Benn, 1923; reprint, New York: Grove Press, 1958), pp. 193–94.
  - 4 Mi Fu, *Hua-shih* (History of painting), MSTK (Taipei: Chung-hua ts'ung-shu wei-yüan-hui, 1956), p. 110. Quoted by Richard Barnhart, "The 'Snowscape' Attributed to Chü-jan," *Archives of Asian Art* 24 (1970–71), p. 9. Huang Kung-wang 黄公望 (1269–1354) speaks in a similar vein when he instructs: "Look at the clouds—they have the appearance of mountain-tops! Li Ch'eng and Kuo Hsi both practiced this method; Kuo Hsi painted 'rocks like clouds'" (James Cahill, *Hills beyond a River: Chinese Painting of the Yüan Dynasty, 1279–1368* [New York and Tokyo: John Weatherhill, 1976], p. 87).
  - 5 Kuo Hsi, *An Essay*, p. 32.
  - 6 Alfreda Murck, "Eight Views of the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers by Wang Hung," in Wen C. Fong et al., *Images of the Mind* (Princeton: Art Museum, Princeton University, 1984), p. 216.
  - 7 Wai-kam Ho et al., *Eight Dynasties of Chinese Painting: The Collections of the Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum, Kansas City, and The Cleveland Museum of Art* (Cleveland: Cleveland Museum of Art, 1980), pp. 21–24. The general looseness (poetic suggestiveness?) according to which the *Eight Views* were conceived is pointed out by a somewhat unlikely source, namely Wu Chen, who complains that only two of the scenes were actually specific views. The remark introduces his *Eight Views of Chia-ho* (see *Kokka*, no. 500 [July 1932], p. 194).
  - 8 Murck, "Eight Views," p. 219. The Su Shih poems are found in *Tung-p'o hsü-chi* (Su Tung-p'o supplement), SPPY (Shanghai: Chung-hua, 1934–36), vol. 240, *chüan* 2, pp. 5b–6a.
  - 9 Shen Kua, *Meng-ch'i pi-t'an chiao-cheng* (Notes written in Meng-ch'i), 2 vols. (Shanghai: Shanghai ch'u-p'an, 1956), p. 549.
  - 10 Ho et al., *Eight Dynasties*, p. xxvi.
  - 11 For these anecdotes about painting in Hui-tsung's court, see Robert J. Maeda, *Two Twelfth Century Texts on Chinese Painting*, Michigan Papers in Chinese Studies, no. 8 (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 1970), pp. 60–62. For reference to the *Eight Views*, see Murck, "Eight Views," p. 217. Our brief knowledge about Chang Ch'ien is found in Hsia Wen-yen, *T'u-hui pao-chien* (Treasured mirror of painting; preface dated 1365), HSTS (Shanghai: Jen-min mei-shu, 1963), vol. 2, *chüan* 3, p. 89. Chang never returned from his trip, possibly because the capital had fallen to the Chin. See Chu Chu-yü and Li Shih-sun, *T'ang Sung hua-chia jen-ming tz'u-tien* (Dictionary of T'ang and Sung painters) (Beijing: Chung-kuo ku-tien i-shu, 1958), p. 252.
  - 12 *Eight Dynasties*, p. xxix.
  - 13 Kōjirō Yoshikawa, *An Introduction to Sung Poetry*, trans. Burton Watson (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), p. 14.
  - 14 Jonathan Chaves, trans., *Heaven My Blanket, Earth My Pillow: Poems from Sung-Dynasty China by Yang Wan-li* (New York and Tokyo: John Weatherhill, 1975), p. 18.
  - 15 *Ibid.*, p. 40.
  - 16 See Richard Edwards, "The Real World: Style and the Object (*Wu*) in Late Sung Painting," in *Kuo-chi Han-hsüeh hui-i lun-wen chi, I-shu-shih tsu* (Proceedings of the International Conference on Sinology, History of Art Section) (Taipei: Chung-yang yen-chiu yüan, 1980), pp. 37–72; see in particular p. 53.
  - 17 Richard Barnhart, *Peach Blossom Spring: Gardens and Flowers in Chinese Paintings* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1983), pp. 22–23, no. 5.
  - 18 Ronald C. Egan, "Poems on Paintings: Su Shih and Huang T'ing-chien," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 43, no. 2 (December 1983), pp. 428–29; Burton Watson, trans., *Su Tung-p'o* (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1965), pp. 110–11. In deference to the images as I understand them in the painting, I have somewhat combined the two translations.
  - 19 Hans H. Frankel, *The Flowering Plum and the Palace Lady: Interpretations of Chinese Poetry* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), p. 124.
  - 20 *Hsü Hun shih chiao-chu* (Annotated edition of Hsü Hun's poetry) (Taipei: Chung-hua, 1973), p. 5; my translation.
  - 21 The lines are from Su Shih, "Hai-t'ang shih" (Poem on the cherry-apple blossoms), cited in Yeh Ssu-fen, *Nan-Sung Ma Yüan shan-shui hua* (Landscape paintings by Ma Yüan of the Southern Sung) (Master's thesis, Taiwan University, 1975), p. 74.

- There is much confusion about the painting's title both in English and Chinese. The generally published title in Chinese is *Ping-chu yeh-yu t'u* 秉燭夜遊圖 (Holding candles to wander in the night). In this paper I have kept to the usual published English title and its direct Chinese equivalent. If one accepts Su's poetic couplet as the precise subject, however, the traditional Chinese version of the title might be stretched to fit; and a more appropriate English title would be *Burning Tall Candles*, taken directly from the poem, as would be the Chinese equivalent. All of which shows the ease with which words may deceive as conveyors of visual precision.
- The translation is slightly amended from that in *Chinese Art Treasures*, exh. cat., Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art (Geneva: Skira, 1961), p. 128 (insert).
- 22 The relation of the Ma Yüan paintings to the poetry is discussed in Richard M. Barnhart, *Along the Border of Heaven* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1983), pp. 83–85; English translation from Arthur Cooper, ed. and trans., *Li Po and Tu Fu* (Harmondsworth, U.K.: Penguin Books, 1973), p. 105.
  - 23 For the Freer Fan Lung, see James Cahill, *Chinese Painting* (Geneva: Skira, 1960), p. 94.
  - 24 Egan, "Poems," pp. 420, 441, 419.
  - 25 Ho et al., *Eight Dynasties*, p. 41.
  - 26 The authenticity of the painting has been questioned. See Peter C. Sturman, "A Reevaluation of Chiang Shen and Early Twelfth Century Landscape Painting," *National Palace Museum Research Quarterly* 3, no. 1 (Autumn 1985), pp. 1–34. In the still uncertain understanding of much Chinese painting, this is always a possible conclusion. However, discrepancies from expected performance may well rest in the idea-image conflict I am suggesting here. At any rate, despite some damage, it is a painting of considerable quality.
  - 27 For sources of reproductions of these scrolls, see James Cahill, *An Index of Early Chinese Painters and Paintings: T'ang, Sung, and Yüan* (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 1980), pp. 143–46.
  - 28 Chou Mi, *Wu-lin chiu shih* (Reminiscences of Hangchow), in *Tung-ching ming hua lu, wai ssu-chung* (Record of the dreamland of Kaifeng, with four additional texts) (Shanghai: Chung-hua, 1962), p. 453. The entry is under *Yü-ch'ien hua-yüan*, literally, "Painting Academy in the presence of the emperor."
  - 29 T'ang Hou, *Hua-chien* (Mirror of painting) (Beijing: Jen-min mei-shu, 1959), p. 53. He uses the term *hsing pi p'iao-i* 行筆飄逸 (gracefully moving brush). For Chuang Su, see his *Hua-chi pu-i* (Supplement to *A Continuation of Painting History*) (Beijing: Jen-min mei-shu, 1963), shang, p. 4.
  - 30 James Cahill, "Ma Ho-chih," in *Sung Biographies: Painters*, ed. Herbert W. Franke, Münchener Ostasiatische Studien, vol. 17 (Wiesbaden: F. Steiner, 1976), p. 104.
  - 31 Ezra Pound, trans., *The Confucian Odes: The Classic Anthology Defined by Confucius* (New York: New Directions, 1959), p. 98.
  - 32 *Yü-chang Huang hsien-sheng wen-chi* (The collected writings of Huang T'ing-chien), SPTK (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1929), *chüan* 5, p. 7a; quoted in Frankel, "Poetry and Painting," p. 306.
  - 33 Edwards, "The Real World," pp. 58–59; my translation.
  - 34 Yü Chien-hua, ed., *Hsüan-ho hua-p'u* (Imperial painting catalogue of the Hsüan-ho era) (Beijing: Jen-min mei-shu, 1964), p. 239 (*chüan* 15, p. 1). Wai-kam Ho emphasizes this point: "The sought-after objective was not so much the reality of life but the poetry of life" (Ho et al., *Eight Dynasties*, p. xxix).
  - 35 Osvald Sirén, *Chinese Painting: Leading Masters and Principles* (New York: Ronald Press, 1956), vol. 2, pp. 76–77.
  - 36 Hsü Shen-yü, comp., *Hua-yüan to-ying* (Gems of Chinese painting) (Shanghai: Committee for the Purchase and Examination of Art, 1955), vol. 2, no. 5; my translation.
  - 37 This was expressed in the late eleventh century: "Poetry conveys the meaning beyond the painting" (Ch'ao Pu-chih, *Chi-le chi* [The chicken-rib collection; 1094], SPTK, vol. 2, *chüan* 8, p. 2a).
  - 38 Frankel, "Poetry and Painting," pp. 299ff.
  - 39 Sirén, *Chinese Painting*, vol. 2, p. 77.
  - 40 In the language of poetry, "icy tips" may be translated "icy silk." See Robert E. Harrist, Jr., "Ch'ien Hsüan's *Pear Blossoms*: The Tradition of Flower Painting and Poetry from Sung to Yüan," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 22 (1987), pp. 58–59. If we are to put primary emphasis on Ma Lin's painting, however, "tips" is what we see. Silk is a secondary, analogous idea.
  - 41 James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (New York: Viking Press, 1964), p. 24.
  - 42 Shuen-fu Lin, *The Transformation of the Chinese Lyrical Tradition: Chiang K'uei and Southern Sung "Tz'u" Poetry* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), p. 151.
  - 43 Ibid.
  - 44 Laurence Sickman, ed., *Chinese Calligraphy and Painting in the Collection of John M. Crawford, Jr.* (New York: Pierpont Morgan Library, 1962), p. 88.
  - 45 See n. 37.

- 46 Max Loehr, "Chinese Paintings with Sung Dated Inscriptions," *Ars Orientalis* 4 (1961), p. 274.
- 47 My translation.
- 48 "Ch'u-chou hsi-chien" (The stream west of Ch'u-chou), in *Ch'üan T'ang shih* (Complete poems of the T'ang) (Beijing: Chung-hua, 1960), *chüan* 193, p. 1995; my translation.
- 49 Pauline Yu, *The Poetry of Wang Wei* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), pp. 157, 171. In the light of the importance of Ch'an Buddhism in Ma Lin's time, it is also of significance that the same two lines of Wang Wei's poem are cited in a Ch'an text, *Wu-teng hui-yüan* (Gathering of the sources of the five lamps), *chüan* 10. Compiled by P'u-chi, the text was printed in 1253, just three years before Ma Lin's painting.
- 50 Edward Conze, trans., *Buddhist Scriptures* (Harmondsworth, U.K.: Penguin, 1959; reprint, 1977), pp. 162-63.
- 51 Richard Stamelman, "Critical Reflections: Poetry and Art Criticism in Ashbery's 'Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror,'" *New Literary History* 15, no. 3 (Spring 1984), pp. 620-21.
- 52 Achilles Fang, trans., "Rhymeprose on Literature: The *Wen-fu* of Lu Chi (A.D. 261-303)," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 14, nos. 3, 4 (December 1951), p. 534.
- 53 T'ang Hou, *Hua-chien*, p. 70; my translation.

For a further analysis of the couplet, again pointing to the significance of "the void," see François Cheng, *Chinese Poetic Writing* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), p. 135.

## “Meaning beyond the Painting”: The Chinese Painter as Poet

JONATHAN CHAVES

The relationship between the visual, formal structure of a Chinese painting and the verbal, imagistic structure of the poem inscribed upon it is sometimes quite complex. When the artist who paints the picture composes the poem and personally inscribes the poem on the picture surface, the result is one of the most characteristic products of Chinese literati culture: the integral poem-painting. In the best examples of this genre, neither the poem nor the painting is considered primary; rather, the two are mutually complementary elements of a unified work of art with both pictorial and verbal components. The poem is not simply a verbal accompaniment to the painting (i.e., a variety of caption), nor the painting a pictorial accompaniment to the poem (i.e., an illustration). A subtle and sometimes quite elaborate and multileveled set of tensions is established between the imagistic sphere of the poem and that of the painting—spheres which at certain times overlap and at other times cover mutually exclusive ground. These latter cases are often the most interesting.

The practice of inscribing words on paintings has a long history in China. Archaeological material and literary records clearly demonstrate that at least by the Han dynasty exemplary figures in paintings (as well as in relief sculptures) were identified by the simple inscription of their names, as with the filial paragons on the famous lacquer-painted box from Lo-lang.<sup>1</sup> By the Six Dynasties, such inscriptions had developed into fairly lengthy texts relating the stories being illustrated. Examples include the Northern Wei lacquer-painted screen, dated 484, in Ta-t'ung,<sup>2</sup> and the well-known *Admonitions of the Court Instructress* (*Nü-shih chen* 女史箴), attributed to Ku K'ai-chih 顧愷之 (ca. 344–ca. 406), in the British Museum.<sup>3</sup> In these works, the pictorial section is clearly demarcated from the textual section; the text does not infringe upon the picture space. Moreover, the relationship between the two remains the simple one of text and illustration. This relationship continues to inform the Tun-huang wall paintings throughout the T'ang dynasty and into the Sung; inscriptions in cartouches either describe the events depicted in the paintings or simply name the participants or the locations.<sup>4</sup> In some of the later paintings, the cartouches disappear and the inscriptions take on the appearance of crude graffiti sketched right on the wall with no apparent thought given to compositional structure.<sup>5</sup>

According to Shen Fu, the first evidence for self-inscribed (*tzu-t'i* 自題) paintings appears in the T'ang, although “it is only from the Sung period onward that paintings with inscribed poems are extant.”<sup>6</sup> The evidence for the T'ang, therefore, consists only of certain brief and rather enigmatic references in the *Record of Famous Painters of the T'ang Dynasty* (*T'ang-ch'ao ming-hua lu* 唐朝名畫錄; ca. 840) by Chu Ching-hsüan 朱景玄 (ninth century) and in the more or less contemporary *Record of Famous Paintings of All the Dynasties* (*Li-tai ming-hua chi* 歷代名畫記) by Chang Yen-yüan 張彥遠 (ca. 815–after

875). Chang records without comment various wall paintings in Buddhist temples, most of them by Wu Tao-tzu 吳道子 (active ca. 710–60), and adds the phrase “with self-inscription” (*ping tzu-t’i* 并自題).<sup>7</sup> Given the nature of such paintings, it is hard to imagine that the inscriptions went beyond names or brief texts explicating the pictorial content. More relevant to later developments would be the entries on Chang Tsao 張藻 (active 766–78) and on Wang Wei 王維 (701–61) in the *T’ang-ch’ao ming-hua lu*. Chu tells us that Chang Tsao’s wall painting of “mountain and river, pine and rock” in the western hall of the Pao-ying Temple 寶應寺 “also had an inscribed account” (*i yü t’i-chi* 亦有題記).<sup>8</sup> This is the earliest evidence for an inscription on a landscape painting, however vague Chu is as to the author of the inscription and the location of the inscription in relation to the picture space. Chu uses the same phrase, “inscribed account” (*t’i-chi*), in reference to a Wang Wei landscape wall painting in a private home,<sup>9</sup> with the implication that Wang himself wrote the inscription. Finally, Chu implies yet more strongly that Wang’s masterpiece *The Wang-ch’uan Villa* (*Wang-ch’uan t’u* 輞川圖) bore the artist’s “self-inscription” of his famous poem that includes the couplet:

In this world, wrongly am I a poet;  
in a former life, I must have been a painter!<sup>10</sup>

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As this poem bears no imagistic relationship to the landscape scenes of the *Wang-ch’uan* scroll—unless it can be shown that Wang himself also inscribed the great series of twenty quatrains on scenes at Wang-ch’uan directly on the painted scenes—one must infer that “self-inscriptions” during the T’ang had not yet moved in the direction of overlapping imagistic worlds, which the Sung painter-poets were apparently to initiate.

The evidence thus points to the circle of literati around Su Shih 蘇軾 (1037–1101) as the true originators of the integral poem-painting as understood in this paper. To my knowledge, the handscroll *Cloudy Mountains* (*Yün-shan t’u* 雲山圖) attributed to Mi Yu-jen 米友仁 (1074–1151), in the Cleveland Museum of Art, is the sole surviving example of an integral poem-painting done by one of Su Shih’s circle (see fig. 45).<sup>11</sup> Inscribed on the picture space of the painting, dated 1130, is a quatrain with seven-character lines which may be translated as follows:

Marvelous mountains, innumerable, reach to heaven’s end;	好山無數接天涯
misty, clearing, dark or light, beautiful day or evening.	烟靄陰晴日夕佳
As a record that you, Sir, have visited this place,	要識先生曾到此
I leave this playful brushwork of mine here inside your home.	故留筆戲在君家

*Recording Matters Connected with Sung-Dynasty Poetry* (*Sung-shih chi shih* 宋詩紀事), compiled by Li O 厲鶚 (1692–1752), mentions a number of other poems by Mi Yu-jen inscribed on his own paintings, proving that Mi made a practice of inscribing his poems on his paintings.<sup>12</sup>

Other members of the Su Shih circle also created self-inscribed poem-paintings. Ch’ao Pu-chih 晁補之 (1053–1110) seems to have been particularly fond of this form. Three of his poems with titles employing the formula “I painted . . . and inscribed thereon” (*tzu-hua . . . t’i ch’i shang* 自畫 . . . 題其上) are given here in translation:

“I Painted a Landscape to Send to Wu-i  
[Ch’ao’s younger brother] and Inscribed This Thereon”

自畫山水寄  
无斁題其上

The Hsiang and Wu regions we thoroughly explored;  
 the memories are hard to forget!  
 Now with brush and silk let me open your dusty window  
 so those rivers and mountains can enter your thatched hut.  
 I'll send this to you in your county of flowers  
 while, empty, I'll stay beside the bamboo grove.  
 What do I ask you to send in return?  
 A bagful of your beautiful poems!<sup>13</sup>

湘吳昔窮覽  
 懷抱自難忘  
 毫素開塵牖  
 江山入草堂  
 寄君花縣裏  
 虛我竹林傍  
 何物酬斯贈  
 清詩要一囊

*"I Painted a Landscape on a Large Screen  
 in the Hall for Retaining Spring  
 and Inscribed This Thereon"*

自畫山水  
 留春[or 客]堂大屏  
 題其上

Your heart, big enough  
     to swallow Cloud-dream Marsh!  
 In your cups, a match for worthies and sages!  
 In case you should wish to take your cane  
     and visit Heng Mountain,  
 for you, Sir, I have painted this limitless sky  
     above the river.<sup>14</sup>

胸中正可吞雲夢

盞裏何妨對聖賢  
 有意扶筇入衡霍

為君無盡寫江天

*"I Painted a Landscape to Send to Cheng-shou  
 and Inscribed This Thereon"*

自畫山水寄正受  
 題其上

In years past, you were a scholar in White Tiger Hall;  
 now, white-haired, among the fields you simply cannot relax.  
 You feel regretful that you have no poetic thoughts  
     along the paths of wheat;  
 playfully I paint a hundred miles of mountains  
     for your southern studio.<sup>15</sup>

虎觀它年青汗手  
 白頭田畝未能閑  
 自嫌麥隴無佳思

戲作南齋百里山

In all four examples from the Sung—the three by Ch'ao Pu-chih and the one by Mi Yu-jen—the painter-poet includes some reference to his own agency in the creation of the work. The same is true of other Mi Yu-jen poems. Compared with Wang Wei, whose famous couplet is quoted above, Ch'ao and Mi are more interested in bringing landscape imagery into their poems, and relatively less interested in talking about themselves. Sometime during the Sung dynasty poems inscribed on paintings began to exclude any reference, however subtle, to the artist qua artist.

In describing certain works in his collection of calligraphies and paintings, the scholar Ch'in Yu-yen 秦酉巖 (second half of the sixteenth century) said the following about two items by T'ang Yin 唐寅 (1470–1524):

A painting of a little pine tree by T'ang Liu-ju [T'ang Yin] and a painting of a *wu-t'ung* tree with a little dog, both on silk. I regretted that the poetic inscriptions did not suit the paintings, so I gave the paintings to someone in exchange [for other paintings].<sup>16</sup>

唐六如小松一幀，又梧桐小犬一幀，皆絹素，惜其上題詩與畫不合，易與人去。



In what way did the poems “not suit the paintings” (*yü hua pu ho* 與畫不合)? Ch’ü Yu-yen does not tell us, and we must therefore look elsewhere for some articulation of what scholars considered to be the appropriate relationship between a painting and a poem inscribed upon it.

Ch’ao Pu-chih, who as we have seen liked to inscribe his poems on his paintings, also provides us with what could be considered a manifesto of the proper relationship between a painting and a poem as seen by the Su Shih circle. Ch’ao took as his starting point a pair of poems that Su Shih inscribed on a painting of wild geese by a certain Ch’en Chih-kung 陳直躬 (active eleventh century), who seems to have specialized in paintings of geese.<sup>17</sup> The first quatrain of Su’s first poem reads:

When wild geese catch sight of a man	野雁見人時
their attitude changes before they start to fly.	未起意先改
Where did you manage to watch them from	君從何處看
to capture their posture when no man is around? <sup>18</sup>	得此無人態

Centuries later, these lines will attract the admiration of the Ch’ing scholar Wu Ch’iao 吳喬 (late seventeenth century), who will quote them in his *Comments on Poetry from around the Brazier* (*Wei-lu shih-hua* 圍爐詩話), and then comment: “Although his diction here is not like that of the T’ang masters, he is able to make manifest beyond the painting 畫外 the painter’s inspired ability to refrain from startling fish or birds; hence these are ‘living lines 活句.’”<sup>19</sup> Whether he realizes it or not, Wu is here echoing Ch’ao Pu-chih’s poem “Harmonizing with Han-lin Scholar Su’s Poems Inscribed on a Painting of Wild Geese by Li Chia” (Chao seems to have made the error of confusing the painter, Ch’en Chih-kung, with Li Chia 李甲 [active eleventh century], another bird painter of the period):<sup>20</sup>

Painting depicts a form beyond the object,	畫寫物外形
and yet the form of the object must not be changed.	要物形不改
The poem expresses a meaning beyond the painting,	詩傳畫外意
but should still convey the pictured scene. <sup>21</sup>	貴有畫中態

Susan Bush has translated the first line as “Painting depicts the external shapes of things,”<sup>22</sup> making *wai-hsing* 外形 (external shapes) a phrase. This reading not only ruptures the natural rhythm of a five-character line, but also fails to take into account the frequent occurrences in Chinese literature of the phrase *wu-wai* 物外 (beyond physical phenomena). An example is Ch’ao Pu-chih’s colophon to a Huang T’ing-chien 黃庭堅 (1045–1105) transcription of poetry by T’ao Ch’ien 陶潛 (365–427): “T’ao Yüan-ming was serene, beyond the world of physical phenomena (*po-jan wu-wai* 泊然物外), hence his diction is filled with transcendent meaning (*ch’i yü to wu-wai i* 其語多物外意).”<sup>23</sup> If, as Bush informs us, Tung Ch’i-ch’ang 董其昌 (1555–1636) used Ch’ao’s poem to characterize what he considered the “Sung” style of painting,<sup>24</sup> he must have been forcing the first line out of its proper grammatical mold for his own polemical purpose. The unfortunate consensus that has apparently developed around the notion that Sung painting was more concerned with “objective realism” than later Chinese painting may obscure the fact that Su Shih and his circle, at least, had moved beyond this point in the realm of aesthetic theory. Ch’ao Pu-chih’s poem is essentially in agreement with Su’s famous

dictum that whoever discusses painting on the basis of outer form (*hsing-ssu* 形似) is a mere child.<sup>25</sup>

The second couplet of Ch'ao's poem is even more important for the present discussion. While retaining some relationship to the pictured scene, a poem inscribed on a painting must convey a meaning or feeling *beyond* the purely visual elements in the painting. In this particular case, in keeping with Wu Ch'iao, Ch'ao is saying that Su Shih's poem on Ch'en Chih-kung's painting of wild geese manages to convey a sense of the painter's inner tranquillity and the harmony between the painter's mood and his subject, which goes beyond anything in the painting itself.

It would be a mistake, however, to conclude that the literati painters considered poetry superior to painting. The converse idea—that painting can sometimes convey meaning beyond poetry—was also current in Sung China. This idea is particularly well expressed in the quatrain by Lü Pen-chung 呂本中 (1048–1145):

"Inscribed after a Scroll Painting by Fan Ts'ai-yüan"

題范才元畫軸後

In past years, together we traveled  
to the provinces of Ling-nan;  
we have seen the River Hsiang  
flowing ten thousand miles!  
Your inspired hand  
is able to transmit a meaning beyond poetry:  
wild clouds, cold trees, a solitary boat.<sup>26</sup>

昔年同過嶺南州  
曾見湘江萬里流  
妙手可傳詩外意  
亂雲寒木更孤舟

What is the "meaning beyond poetry" (*shih-wai i* 詩外意) which Fan is able to convey in his painting? The last line gives the answer in an oblique manner characteristic of the rhetoric of many quatrains, an answer consisting solely of concrete images. The emotional resonance of clouds, trees, and boat is ultimately best evoked by the direct rendering of their visual forms in inspired brushwork, or so Lü implies.

The Sung scholars' concern with the relationship between poetry and painting set the stage for more extensive explorations of this question by scholars in later dynasties. One issue which was debated in this context was the extent to which a poem inscribed on a painting ought to acknowledge that it is dealing with a painting and not with the real world—an issue that can be seen as an aspect of the larger problem of *human response* to the pictured scene, be it the response of a poet who is other than the painter, the painter-poet himself, or a created persona within the integral poem-painting. Different writers have arrived at different conclusions. When asked to give his opinion of *t'i-hua shih* 題畫詩, or poems inscribed on paintings, the late Ch'ing scholar Ch'en Chin 陳僅 (active 1839) responded:

Poems inscribed on paintings began with Old Tu [Tu Fu 杜甫; 712–70], and everybody reads these works [of his]. Now all poems inscribed on landscape paintings must refer to *real* landscape; anyone even a little conversant with the principles of poetry can explain this concept. But in such works, there must be a person [or people] present, otherwise, even if the water [is so well painted that it seems to] produce sound and the mountains have physical

substance, would there not be a problem of blindness and deafness [i.e., an absence of human response]?<sup>27</sup>

問：題畫詩何如？

題畫詩起於老杜，人人皆讀之。故凡題畫山水，必說到真山水，此法稍知詩理者皆能言之。然此中須有人在，否則雖水有聲，山有色，其如盲聵何！

Ch'en goes on to give examples from various of Tu Fu's *t'i-hua shih* to illustrate his point. Two of these are worth quoting here:

Please consider Old Tu's "[Song] Inscribed on the Landscape [Screen Newly Painted by the Shao-fu, Liu at Feng-hsien]," where he says, "Jo-yeh Stream! / Cloud-Gate Temple! / Straw sandals and plaincloth socks I'll start to wear right now!"<sup>28</sup>

In his inscribed poem "[Song Playfully Written for Wei Yen's] Painting [of Twin] Pines," he insists on saying, "I have a strip of fine eastern silk / which I treasure not less than exquisite embroidery / . . . Please, Sir, set brush to it and paint straight trunks for me!"<sup>29</sup>

試觀老杜題山水必曰：「若邪谿，雲門寺，青鞵布屨從此始。」題畫松必曰：「我有一匹好東絹，重之不減錦繡段，請君放筆爲直幹。」

In the first example, Tu Fu is so inspired by the landscape in the painting that he determines to don the footwear of a recluse and go into immediate retirement. In the second, he is inspired to ask the painter to do another painting of pine trees for him. In partial contrast to Wu Ch'iao, who saw Su Shih's poem as capturing the inner feelings of the *painter* (a man other than himself), Ch'en sees Tu (the poet) as expressing his own feelings in response to the scene. (The scene is acknowledged by Tu to be painted in both cases, but by the end of the first poem, he has leapt into the realm of actual nature.) For Ch'en, the "person" who "must be present" is the poet; the poem expresses his response or experience, rather than limiting itself to mere description of the scene. Ch'en might even have accepted William Blake's declaration "Where man is not, nature is barren,"<sup>30</sup> whether the nature in question is real or painted. And his idea stimulates further speculation: in the fully evolved poem-painting, where one man has created the entire work (as opposed to the situation in which a poet like Tu Fu writes a poem about someone else's painting), is it not even more the case that "there must be a person present"? It might be argued that in such works a single persona is created who is at one and the same time the speaker of the poem and the "eye" which "sees" the scene in the painting. The persona may not be entirely identical with the actual painter-poet, any more than the narrator of a work of fiction need be identical with the author. The presence of this persona's consciousness is often suggested most subtly, as in a Ni Tsan work to be discussed later, but it is there nevertheless. (Of course, once the integrated poem-painting concept is in existence, it is possible for one man to do a painting and a second to enter its world and to write a corresponding poem as if the same persona underlay both painting and poem, or indeed for the poem to come first. Such a work would presumably be structurally and aesthetically indistinguishable from one by a single painter-poet.) Ch'en Chin's insistence that a person be present in the landscape in the case of a poem-

painting could be considered fulfilled by the presence of this persona. In addition, the human presence may be further provided by other characters (to borrow another term from fiction), introduced either in the poem or the painting or both: a fisherman, another scholar, and so forth. There may even be a provocative ambiguity: is the fisherman, for example, to be identified with the narrator-perceiver or not?

Ch'en Chin was by no means the first to call attention to Tu Fu's crucially important role in the development of *t'i-hua shih*. A significant earlier statement on this matter is the one by the major Ch'ing poet and poetic theoretician Shen Te-ch'ien 沈德潛 (1673-1769). Writing in 1731, Shen says:

Prior to the T'ang dynasty, there did not appear poems inscribed on paintings. The one who initiated this genre was Old Tu. His method consists entirely in developing ideas without sticking to the surface of the painting. For example, in [his poems inscribed on] paintings of horses and of hawks, he inevitably ends up talking about real horses and real hawks, and furthermore from these real horses and hawks he develops discussions of ideas. Later writers have been able to use this [approach] as a model. In addition, in [his poems inscribed on] paintings of landscape, there are place names which can be verified, and he will inevitably describe the feelings of lamenting [for the past] while climbing and observing the view. In [his poems inscribed on] paintings of human figures, there are actual events which one can grab hold of, and he will inevitably develop ideas on understanding men and discussing their times. Only one who bases himself on Old Tu's method and expands upon it can be considered a master.<sup>31</sup>

唐以前未見題畫詩，開此體者，老杜也。其法全在不粘畫上發論，如題畫馬畫鷹，必說到真馬真鷹，復從真馬真鷹開出議論，後人可以爲式。又如題畫山水，有地名可按者，必寫出登臨憑弔之意，題畫人物，有事實可拈者，必發出知人論世之意，本老杜法推廣之，才是作手。

For Shen Te-ch'ien, as for Ch'en Chin, a lesson to be learned from Tu Fu's pioneering works in the *t'i-hua shih* genre is that the *poet's feelings and ideas* must be brought into the poem; the poem must provide what might be called the inner element to the experience of the work of art. Shen lays more stress than Ch'en on Tu Fu's characteristic technique of modulating from painted reality to actual reality. But what are we to make, then, of poems inscribed on paintings which appear to limit themselves to the description of elements within the painting as if a real scene were being depicted, at the same time neglecting to signal in any way that a painting is involved? Another Ch'ing critic, Huang Tzu-yün 黃子雲, writing in 1737, contributes one of the most thought-provoking statements on this subject in the literature:

Poems inscribed on paintings in the Sung, Yüan, and later dynasties cast off the word *painting* and merely describe mechanically the two elements of scenery and objects [shown in the painting]. But there is a distinction between nature's craftsmanship and man's craftsmanship! One ought not to confuse the two [i.e., real nature and painted nature] to such a degree. For if one bases [the poem] on real scenery, merely imitating this one aspect, it is easy to write, whereas if one simultaneously describes both the aspect of painting

and the aspect of scenery, it becomes difficult to structure one's diction. Hence everyone follows the practice [of only describing the scene as if it were real] until it becomes the fashion, thus eschewing the difficult in favor of the facile; although they inscribe poems, it is as if they were not inscribed at all [i.e., had no relationship to a painting]! Of course, there are certain writers who, in the middle of a poem, stick in such words as *painter* or *cinnabar-and-blue* [a common locution for painting], but still they have failed to capture the inner essence of the word *painting*. In all poems inscribed on paintings, one must determine to grasp firmly the word *painting* as one's starting point; only then will one be able to work properly. The *t'i-hua shih* of Huan-hua [Tu Fu] in both ancient and regulated forms do not number less than one hundred, and yet not one of them departs from the purport of its title.<sup>32</sup>

宋元後題圖畫者，撇去畫字，只呆狀景物兩端，有天工人工之別，不應茫味若是。蓋因真景，祇摹一面，易于下筆，畫景勢必並寫，難以構詞，故皆相習成風。去難而就易，雖題猶不題也，即或有作者，中間將畫工丹青等字略帶一語，究未能得畫字神髓，此等題全要作意擒定畫字發揮，方見手眼，浣花題畫詩古今體不下百篇，無一首脫卻題旨。

Huang Tzu-yün is the only writer known to me who has noticed what is probably a major development in the history of *t'i-hua shih*, already hinted at above: at some point certain *t'i-hua shih* actually departed from the Tu Fu model by removing any reference to the fact that a *work of art*, and not the real world, is being treated. Where I think Huang is mistaken, however, is in his assumption that the authors of these poems were simply taking the easy way out, avoiding the problem of balancing "painted world" and "real world" in their poems. Certainly, any number of inferior and mechanical *t'i-hua shih* were produced in the course of the centuries, and this unfortunate fact undoubtedly contributed to the equivocal reputation of *t'i-hua shih* in the history of Chinese poetry, a point to be discussed later on. But Huang fails to perceive that the removal of any overt reference to painting in such poems actually opened the door to a fascinating and often successful aesthetic experiment in Chinese culture: the creation of the integral poem-painting in which the generic distinctions of the two modes of expression are purposely suppressed in the interest of evoking a single experiential world to which both pictorial and verbal images contribute.

A near-contemporary of Huang Tzu-yün's, the scholar Chang Ch'ien-i 張謙宜 (b. 1639), writing in 1710, reached a conclusion opposite to that of Huang with regard to the relative difficulty of writing *t'i-hua shih* which do or do not refer to painting. In a discussion of seven poems on lotuses by Hsü Wei 徐渭 (1521-93), he writes:

These are inscribed on paintings of lotuses, and yet he does not conceptualize the lotus as painted. For when the principle of painting enters the spiritual realm, starting from the phantasmagoric, one transmits the real. When the thought of poetry enters the spiritual realm, one masters feelings and forgets outward form. This is the most difficult thing to accomplish.<sup>33</sup>

題畫荷却不作繪事想。蓋畫理入神，由幻傳真；詩思入神，得情忘相。此最爲難到。

Not only does Chang differ from Huang Tzu-yün in this regard, but he attributes his approach to Tu Fu, the same poet to whom Huang appealed as the source of *his* view! As Chang puts it, “The paintings are comprehended as reality [in certain poems by Hsü Wei]. This method is based on Shao-ling’s [Tu Fu’s] various poems on [paintings of] hawks and horses.”<sup>34</sup> Actually, of course, both men are right in their reading of Tu Fu; it is in emphasis that they differ. Tu in his poems on paintings often modulates from a discussion of the *painted* world into a discussion of this world as if it were real, or of the real world outside the painting altogether, as we have seen; therefore both approaches can be said to be present in Tu Fu, and both Huang and Chang are impressed by the way Tu brings in references to the real world. But Huang chooses to stress the fact that Tu *always* lets the reader know that a painting is, after all, involved, while Chang chooses to stress the modulation to reality. Where the two men totally part company, however, is in their evaluation of *t’i-hua shih* which suppress any allusion to painting: Huang considers such poems to be betrayals of Tu Fu’s example, the works of lazy poets unwilling or unable to maintain dual levels of reference to painting and to reality as Tu Fu did, while Chang considers that in the best cases, such as certain works by Hsü Wei, the poems are actually a natural outgrowth from Tu’s initiating efforts and represent a transcendent crystallization of the inner principle of a work of art.

Given Chang Ch’ien-i’s perspective, the question might be raised, “What can a poem contribute to the experience of a scene (assuming that it is a question of landscape, the major theme of Chinese painting) that might enhance the painted version? After all, if the poem is to be limited to treating the scene as if it were real, why have a poem at all? Why not limit oneself to the painting alone?” One answer to this question is suggested by another Ch’ing scholar, Lu Ying 陸瑩. In his *Comments on Poetry from the Tower of Asking about the Flowers* (*Wen-hua-lou shih-hua* 問花樓詩話; preface dated 1844), Lu comments on Su Shih’s famous statement of praise for Wang Wei:

A man of the past says, “In [Wang Wei’s] poetry there is painting, and in his painting there is poetry.” But there is that which the painter cannot attain.

My father, the late professor, once spoke as follows:

“Liu Wen-fang’s [Liu Chang-ch’ing 劉長卿; 709–80?] ‘Eight Poems on Dragon Gate’ [include these lines]:

As we enter night, among blue-green colors  
a thousand peaks glow with only one lamp.

His ‘Floating Rock Rapids’ [includes these lines]:

Over clustered ridges the gibbons’ wail weighs heavy;  
over the deserted river people’s voices echo.

His ‘Stone Bridge Lake’ [includes these lines]:

The lake’s color is limpid, with no flow;  
the sand gulls reach far—then disappear.

Ch’ien Chung-wen’s [Ch’ien Ch’i 錢起; active ca. 766] ‘South Mountain in Late Autumn’ [includes these lines]:

In slanting sunlight, the wild stream is brilliant;  
in chilly sky, a thousand peaks are calm.

The Libationer Li's 'Country Villa' [includes these lines]:

A strip of water illuminates sheer cliff;  
wispy dusk clouds enter the ancient temple.

Liu Tzu-hou's [Liu Tsung-yüan 柳宗元; 773-819] 'Living by a Stream'  
[includes these lines]:

Dawn plowing overturns dewy grass;  
night boating echoes off rocks in the stream.

His 'Farmers' [includes these lines]:

The cock crows, the village lane brightens;  
night colors return to evening fields.

How could a painter attain to these?"<sup>35</sup>

昔人謂「詩中有畫，畫中有詩」，然亦有畫手所不能到者。先廣文嘗言：「劉文房龍門八詠：『入夜翠微裏，千峯明一燈。』浮石瀨詩：『衆嶺猿嘯重，空江人語響。』石梁湖詩：『湖色澹不流，沙鷗遠還滅。』錢仲文秋杪南山詩：『反照亂流明，寒空千嶂淨。』李祭酒別業詩：『片水明斷崖，餘霞入古寺。』柳子厚溪居詩：『曉耕翻露草，夜榜響溪石。』田家詩：『雞鳴村巷白，夜色歸暮田。』此豈畫手所能到耶？」

For some of Lu's examples, we may assume that it is the aural aspects of the scenes which the painter would despair of capturing—the gibbons' wail, people's voices, the echoing of boats being rowed, the cock crowing. Indeed, as we shall see, aural images (for that matter, images appealing to any sense other than the visual) play a significant role in *t'i-hua shih*. For the other couplets, however, it is not entirely clear why the scene should not be accessible to a painter's brush. For Liu Chang-ch'ing's first couplet, it might be hard to capture in ink the atmospheric nuances; in his third, the gradual disappearance of the gulls implies the element of time (although the handscroll format can suggest passage of time). Ch'ien Ch'i's couplet brings in such elements as reflected light and coldness, which might be difficult to suggest in painting (but again, not impossible, especially if one leaves the realm of Chinese art and turns to such Western schools as Impressionism); the same could be said for the element of reflection in Libationer Li's couplet. On the whole, we may conclude that Lu Ying's father was probably referring almost at random to favorite couplets which his intuition told him would be hard to render as paintings.

For the most precise, carefully thought-out presentation of the idea that a poem can depict scenes in ways that painting cannot, even in the area of *visually* mediated experience, we must turn to probably the greatest thinker in the field of poetic theory in the Ch'ing dynasty, Yeh Hsieh 葉燮 (1627-1703), whose *To the Origins of Poetry* (*Yüan shih* 原詩) set new standards in the exposition of ideas and in precision of discourse for Chinese texts on aesthetic theory. In a passage of major importance, Yeh develops his argument as follows:

There must be principles which cannot be spoken of, or events which cannot be narrated, such that one encounters them at the edge of intuitively apprehended images, and yet in no aspect is the principle or event not clearly present before one! Permit me to use as examples certain famous lines from

Tu Fu's works so as to analyze and examine this for you, thus giving a general idea of what I mean. Take, for instance, the poem "[On a Winter Day, North of Loyang, Attending a Ceremony at] the Shrine of the Supreme Majesty of Primordial Mystery,"<sup>36</sup> which contains the line "Emerald rooftiles, beyond the early chill."

To discuss this line on the basis of the individual words, he speaks of "beyond," which is demarcated from "within." Now, what sort of thing is "early chill" that it can be demarcated in terms of "within" or "beyond"? Would there be no "early chill" *beyond* the emerald rooftiles? Cold is a vapor of heaven and earth, and this vapor fills the universe. There is no place it would not fill up. Would the emerald rooftiles alone be positioned beyond it, and the cold vapor accumulate only on *this* side of the emerald rooftiles? And when he speaks of "early" chill, is it the case that *severe* chill might be different from this? Early chill has no outer shape or form; emerald rooftiles do have a physical substance. He links the empty and the substantial in differentiating the within from the beyond. I do not know if he is describing the emerald rooftiles, or describing the early chill; describing what is near at hand, or describing what is remote. If one were to insist on explaining this on the basis of a definite principle being embodied in an actual event, I fear that even the ingenious discriminations of the [famous scholars of] Chi-hsia in discussing heaven would be exhausted here! But if one places oneself in the actual environment of that time [i.e., the moment of the poet's experience], one intuitively feels the emotion and scene in these five characters entirely as if heaven had created them and earth established them; they are presented in the images, perceived by the eye, intuited in the mind. They are words in the conscious mind, which the mouth cannot speak; even if the mouth could speak them, the meaning could not be understood. But with direct clarity he shows it to us at the edge of intuitively apprehended forms and images, and indeed it is just as if there existed "within" or "beyond," "chill" or "early chill"; he simply makes use of the concrete image "emerald rooftiles" to put this forth. There is a center and a periphery, emptiness and substance mutually complementing each other, being and nonbeing mutually establishing each other. He got this from what was right before him and mastered it himself. The principle is transparent and the event crystal clear. A man of past times said, "In Wang Wei's poetry there is painting." Now, poems which *can* be painted indicate a level of [mere] competence on the part of the poet. Even in the case of such supremely empty phenomena as wind, clouds, rain, and snow, there are none which a painter cannot suggest with his brush. But when it comes to characteristics of scenes such as "early chill," "within" and "beyond," even if Tung [Yüan 董源; d. 962] and Chü [-jan 巨然; active ca. 960-80] were to come back to life, I suspect they would put aside their brushes and fold their hands. It is precisely these principles and events of the world which infringe upon the spiritual realm, which of course cannot be imitated and mastered by mediocre men. . . . [Yeh goes on to quote other lines by Tu Fu.]<sup>37</sup>



必有不可言之理。不可述之事。遇之于默會意象之表。而理與事無不燦然于前者也。今試舉杜甫集中一二名句。爲子晰而剖之。以見其概。可乎。如元元皇帝廟作碧瓦初寒外句。逐字論之。言乎外。與內爲界也。初寒何物。可以內外界乎。將碧瓦之外。無初寒乎。寒者。天地之氣也。是氣也。盡宇宙之內。無處不充塞。而碧瓦獨居其外。寒氣獨盤踞于碧瓦之內乎。寒而曰初。將嚴寒或不如是乎。初寒無象無形。碧瓦有物有質。合虛實而分內外。吾不知其寫碧瓦乎。寫初寒乎。寫近乎。寫遠乎。使必以理而實諸事以解之。雖稷下談天之辯。恐至此亦窮矣。然設身而處當時之境會。覺此五字之情景。恍如天造地設。呈于象。感于目。會于心。意中之言。而口不能言。口能言之。而意又不可解。劃然示我以默會相象之表。竟若有內有外。有寒有初寒。特借碧瓦一實相發之。有中間。有邊際。虛實相成。有無互立。取之當前而自得。其理昭然。其事的然也。昔人云。王維詩中有畫。凡詩可入畫者。爲詩家能事。如風雲雨雪景象之至虛者。畫家無不可繪之于筆。若初寒內外之景色。即董巨復生。恐亦束手攔筆矣。天下惟理事之入神境者。固非庸凡人可摹擬而得也。

The single line by Tu Fu from which Yeh extrapolates his argument in this passage would appear to be primarily *visual* in sensory reference, although “chill” is, of course, experienced by the sense of touch. Nevertheless, Tu Fu’s line attempts to capture what might be called the *experiential texture* of a moment, in which a fusion of sense impressions takes place, and the viewer of the scene does, indeed, sense a *visual* borderline to the cold, beyond which the rooftiles rise to the sky. Yeh’s point is that Tu Fu, for him the supreme master poet, has managed in this line to convey the total feel of such an experiential moment. Now Yeh is not concerned here with the contribution of a *t’i-hua shih* to the overall experience of an integral poem-painting, but it is a very slight step indeed from his argument to the logical conclusion that in works in the fully integrated mode, the poem inscribed on a painting provides precisely the element of *felt experience* to the total work, and that this contribution need not be limited to the explicit articulation of feelings and thoughts but can actually represent a verbally carried enhancement of the visual world of the work. And given the explicitness and sophistication of passages such as this one by Yeh Hsieh, it is not unreasonable to speculate that this role of the *t’i-hua shih* was not only intuited but often *consciously striven for* by the painter-poets themselves.

In an atmosphere of such sophisticated discourse on the relationship between poetry and painting, it seems clear that when the modern student is confronted with a Chinese painting that has a poem inscribed upon it, it behooves him not only to read the poem, but to pay careful attention to the specific imagistic resonances between the verbal structure of the poem and the pictorial structure of the painting. As examples of the kind of analysis such attention might produce, I would like to refer to four actual paintings, three in the John M. Crawford, Jr., Collection at the Metropolitan Museum, and one in the Nelson-Atkins Museum. All four are examples of what I have been calling the fully integrated poem-painting, i.e., a work in which the painter himself calligraphs a poem of his own composition directly on the picture surface, and both components contribute to the evocation of a single experiential world. Aside from the Mi Yu-jen example noted earlier, extant works of this type appear to date from the Yüan and later. (Michael Sullivan



Figure 196. Wu Chen (1280–1354), *Fisherman*. Handscroll, ink on paper, H. 24.8 cm.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Bequest of John M. Crawford, Jr., 1988

has discussed the relationship between picture space and calligraphy, so I will not deal with that topic here.)<sup>38</sup>

Wu Chen 吳鎮 (1280–1354) and Ni Tsan 倪瓚 (1301–74) were both good poets, and the best examples of this kind of work in the Yüan dynasty are by them. Wu Chen's handscroll *Fisherman* (*Lu t'an tiao t'ing t'u* 蘆灘釣艇圖), in the Crawford Collection, is a good place to start (fig. 196).<sup>39</sup> The poem, a lyric (*tz'u* 詞; unusual for a poem on a painting), is in the pattern *yü ko-tz'u* 漁歌子 ("Song of the Fisherman"; also known by other names, including *yü-fu* 漁父, "The Fisherman"), with five lines of 7-7-3-3-7 characters. This pattern is associated with the T'ang-dynasty hermit-poet Chang Chih-ho 張志和 (ca. 742–ca. 782), who is said to have dubbed himself the Angler-Disciple of Misty Waves and to have fished without baiting his hook.<sup>40</sup> Wu Chen's poem follows closely in the footsteps of Chang's original works on the fisherman theme:<sup>41</sup>

<p>West of the village, evening rays linger on red leaves as the moon rises over yellow reeds on the sandbank. The fisherman moves his paddle, thinking of home— his pole, lying in its rack, will catch no more fish today.<sup>42</sup></p>	<p>紅葉村西夕照餘 黃蘆灘畔月痕初 輕撥棹 思歸歟 掛起漁竿不釣魚</p>
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Sullivan has analyzed the relationship of the calligraphy in which this poem is written to the picture space.<sup>43</sup> Here we are concerned with the question: What is the relationship between the verbal world created by the poem and the pictorial world of the painting itself? At the outset, we notice that a village is referred to in the poem, but that none is depicted in the painting. Immediately, then, a key aspect of the poetry-painting relation-



Figure 197. Ni Tsan (1301–74),  
*Wind among the Trees on the Riverbank*,  
dated 1363.  
Hanging scroll, ink on paper,  
59 × 31 cm.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art;  
Bequest of John M. Crawford, Jr., 1988

ship is revealed: the poem adds images to the total visual structure of the experience. What is more, we are told that the leaves are west of the village, so that we can imagine the village to be off to the right somewhere, in fact in the direction toward which the fisherman is facing—and we are soon to learn that he is thinking of going home, presumably to the village. Still in the first line of the poem, the leaves are described as red, giving us a setting in *time*—it is autumn—which could not have been deduced from the picture. We are further informed that it is evening. The red color of the leaves and the yellow of the reeds in line two have an additional dimension: the picture itself is painted entirely in shades of black ink, so that although the leaves and reeds are depicted, we learn their *color* from the words of the poem. If ever there was “word-painting,” this is it! The second line also mentions the moon, another image added by the poem; actually,



Figure 198. Shen Chou (1427–1509), *Poet on a Mountaintop*.  
Album leaf mounted as handscroll, ink on paper, 38.7 × 60.2 cm.  
The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri; Nelson Fund

“traces of the moon” is the phrase used, undoubtedly a reference to shadows of the reeds cast by the moonlight, so that the moon is brought into the picture through yet another layer of obliqueness. Finally, the last lines move from *ching* 景 (scene) to *ch'ing* 情 (feeling) by informing us of the fisherman's thoughts, which would otherwise have been unavailable to us: he wants to go home. In sum, then, the poem has expanded the visual world of the painting, given us a setting in time (both season and time of day) and a larger setting in space, and has also given some idea of the psychological state of the protagonist in the painting. These enhancements are consistent with Lu Ying's and Yeh Hsieh's views on ways in which poetry can convey the inner, experiential aspects of a scene while at the same time deepening even the purely visual aspects. It might also be noted that Wu Chen could easily have included some indication of a village in the painting. His choice,



Figure 199. T'ang Yin (1470–1524), *Ink Bamboo*. Handscroll, ink on paper, H. 28.6 cm.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Bequest of John M. Crawford, Jr., 1988

however, was to allow the *poem* to convey its presence to the viewer-reader, thereby creating in him a subtle psychological analogue to the fisherman's yearning for a place out of sight.

Ni Tsan actually had a greater reputation as a poet than did Wu Chen. A hanging scroll by him in the Metropolitan Museum's Crawford Collection, *Wind among the Trees on the Riverbank* (*Chiang-chu feng lin t'u* 江渚風林圖; fig. 197)<sup>44</sup> bears a quatrain by Ni in the relatively rare six-character meter:

Riverbank—the evening tides have started to ebb.	江渚暮潮初落
Windswept woods—frosty leaves are thinning out.	風林霜葉渾稀
I lean on my cane; the bramble gate is quiet.	倚杖柴門閤寂
I long for my friend; mountain colors—dim and faint. <sup>45</sup>	懷人山色依微

The “riverbank,” “woods,” “leaves,” and “mountain(s)” of the poem can all be seen in the painting (although the woods are only represented by four sparse trees). While in this case we could probably guess the autumnal season from the picture alone, we do depend on the poem for the knowledge that it is “evening,” as well as for the “tides” and the “wind.” The really interesting aspect of this work, however, is that whereas the Wu Chen painting provided us with a protagonist in the form of the fisherman, the Ni Tsan painting shows no sign of human presence whatsoever, not even the familiar empty pavilion. But there *is* human presence! The poem gently introduces the painter-poet in the final couplet (there are no first-person pronouns in the Chinese, but someone must “lean on the cane” and “long for a friend”). Thus, an apparently pure nature scene is transformed into an emotional moment expressive of human loneliness. We may recall



Ch'en Chin's insistence that "there must be a person present"; he was apparently referring to the poet himself—i.e., the poet should call attention to his reaction to the work in some manner, as did Tu Fu. Ni Tsan's use of the poem in the present work, however, is quite different. The human presence so delicately introduced in the poem is really that of the poetic persona discussed earlier, a participant in the created world of the poem-painting and the experiencer of that world rather than Ni Tsan himself qua Ni Tsan. Again, Blake's memorable phrase comes to mind: "Where man is not, nature is barren."

The literati tradition can be said to have reached its zenith with the Wu-school artists of the Ming dynasty. Of these, probably the finest poet is Shen Chou 沈周 (1427–1509). A well-known album leaf by him in the Nelson-Atkins Museum<sup>46</sup> gives a good indication of the success he achieved with the integral poem-painting (fig. 198). The poem, a quatrain with seven characters per line, may be translated:

White clouds like a scarf enfold the mountain's waist;	白雲如帶束山腰
stone steps hang in space—a long, narrow path.	石磴飛空細路遙
Alone, leaning on my cane, I gaze intently at the scene,	獨倚杖藜舒眺望
and feel like answering the murmuring brook	欲因鳴澗答吹簫
with the music of my flute.	

The first two lines add nothing which cannot be seen in the painting, except perhaps for the "stone steps." The final two lines introduce the poet-painter persona, for whom we are prepared in this instance since he appears as the figure in the painting "gazing intently at the scene." The last line, however, introduces the aural image of flute music, a concrete illustration of Lu Ying's implied point about sound imagery being accessible

to poetry but not to painting. Finally, the Shen Chou work provides images in the painting which the poem omits, such as the partially hidden temple buildings. (This may be one aspect of what Lü Pen-chung had in mind when he wrote his poem on the Fan Ts'ai-yüan scroll.) Thus, the imagistic worlds of poem and painting can be seen as overlapping circles: they share certain images, while other images are unique either to the poem or to the painting.

After Shen Chou, T'ang Yin is probably the best poet among the Wu-school painters, and his superb handscroll of bamboo in the Crawford Collection<sup>47</sup> adds yet another facet to the poetry-painting relationship (fig. 199). The poem, another quatrain with seven-character lines, may be rendered:

Fourth watch, the moon sinks, paper window calm.	四更月落紙窗虛
I sober up from wine, lean head on hand, read books for awhile.	酒醒扶頭暫讀書
But pure imagination presses upon me— I cannot stop it . . .	清思迫人禁不得
until ten stalks of cold blue-green spread their shadows!	十竿寒翠影扶疎

In this case, the single image in the painting is the bamboo, but the poem does not even name bamboo, only referring to it through a roundabout locution (including synecdoche) in the last line. The relationship between poem and painting here is not so much imagistic as it is narrative. The poem *narrates* the experience which led to the creation of the work of art or, in other words, it is about the process of creation. The first line immediately gives us a precise setting in time (the most precise we have yet encountered) and in space—the speaker is seated next to the moonlit window. In the second line, the actual narrative begins as the speaker does three things: sobers up, “leans head on hand,” and tries to read. We now have a little “slice-of-life” episode, complete in itself. In the third line, the speaker finds himself “pressed” upon by inspiration which he “cannot stop.” The notion that inspiration comes unbidden, or even undesired, is an old one found in many traditions. It was never so well expressed as by the Southern Sung poet Yang Wan-li 楊萬里 (1127–1206):

A man doesn't go in search of a poem—  
the poem comes in search of him.<sup>48</sup>

The last line of the poem conjures up for us the artist's vision of the bamboo, without naming it directly (“ten stalks,” “cold blue-green,” “shadows”). The actual image of bamboo, and in fact the completed work of art, is provided by the painting itself, whose haunting silver-gray tones (cold, but not “blue-green,” as in the poem) are now realized to convey the effect of moonlight. Again, the poem and painting here are the mutually complementary components in an integral work of art; each *could* stand on its own, yet together they resonate in such a way as to add extra dimensions to the total experience.

How distinguished was the poetry of the painter-poets in the eyes of traditional critics? On the whole it may be said that while certain of them were quite highly thought of, there was a more general tendency to be suspicious of their poetry, especially their *t'i-hua shih*. The relevant literature reveals fairly profound disagreement in this matter, as

with other important issues in the history of Chinese poetry, a disagreement which is actually an indication of a lively, vibrant intellectual atmosphere.

Of men who were important figures both as poets and painters, Wang Wei and Su Shih are really the only two who were nearly universally admired for their accomplishments in both arts. Even here, however, it should be noted that authentic paintings by both artists were hard to come by in later periods, and to a large extent their reputations as painters were very close to being legendary in character. It was their poetry which really kept their influence alive. Aside from them, there are two truly major groupings of painter-poets: the Yüan masters—Ni Tsan and Wu Chen (sometimes Huang Kung-wang 黃公望 [1269–1354] is added; Wang Meng 王蒙 [ca. 1308–85] is mentioned still more rarely as a poet)—and the Wu-school masters of the Ming—Shen Chou, T'ang Yin, Wen Cheng-ming 文徵明 (1470–1559), and others in their circle.

One of the most influential Ch'ing scholars and critics, Weng Fang-kang 翁方綱 (1733–1818), has a number of cogent comments on the Yüan masters:

The poems of the various Yüan painters, such as [those found in the] collected works of Yün-lin [Ni Tsan], Ta-ch'ih [Huang Kung-wang], and Chung-kuei [Wu Chen] belong for the most part to the category of poems-inscribed-on-paintings. Yün-lin has the purest tonality, and yet even he has not been able entirely to scrape off the gold dust [i.e., to get rid of a certain overly precious, exquisite quality].<sup>49</sup>

元時諸畫家詩，如雲林、大癡、仲珪集中，多屬題畫之作。雲林最有清韻，而尚不能剔去金粉。

Weng goes on to express somewhat more enthusiastic praise for the poetry of Wang Mien 王冕 (1287–1359), and then, unexpectedly, declares the great bamboo painter, K'ò Chiu-ssu 柯九思 (1290–1343), to be the best poet among the Yüan painters, although even here his praise is qualified:

K'ò Ching-chung's [K'ò Chiu-ssu] poetry is basically not that profound, but in certain extended passages there is often a mature, seasoned quality which he has borrowed from the pure realm of [his work as] a painter—[such passages] cannot be understood as if they were produced by a bookish student stringing together stanzas and lines. If we compare his work to that of Wang Yüan-chang [Wang Mien], then there are aspects which are quite shallow; but compared to Ni Yüan-chen [Ni Tsan], there are aspects which are quite profound. It occurs to me that when he entered service as literary and artistic adviser to the emperor and came into contact with Yü Po-sheng [Yü Chi 虞集; 1272–1348], he must have gained a few extra things in his writing. When it comes to poetry by the calligraphers and painters of the Yüan dynasty, this man must be considered the best.<sup>50</sup>

柯敬仲詩本不深，而隸逸處，時有醞釀，殆從畫家清境託來，非可以書生章句求也。較之王元章，則有極淺處；較之倪元鎮，則有極深處。想爾時入侍奎章，與虞伯生接近，筆札自當別有所得耳。元時書畫家之詩，以此人爲第一。



It is significant that Weng attributes the superior quality of K'o's poetry to the influence he presumably received from Yü Chi, one of the widely acknowledged leaders in Yüan poetry (and himself noted for his *t'i-hua shih*, including some on paintings by K'o). Weng also notes the key role played by the *chüeh-chü* 絕句, or quatrain, form in the *t'i-hua shih* of the Yüan masters, and shows why it appears to be a particularly appropriate form for this genre:

The Yüan masters, including K'o Ching-chung, Wang Yüan-chang, Ni Yüan-chen, Huang Tzu-chiu, and Wu Chung-kuei, frequently used short poems to inscribe on their own paintings, and many of these are fine works. Aside from these, good quatrains by various poets inscribed on paintings are beyond enumeration. . . . For although the territory of the quatrain is small, pure thoughts and marvelous diction emerge in them repeatedly, and they are convenient for the display of [the painter-poet's] talent.<sup>51</sup>

元人自柯敬仲、王元章、倪元鎮、黃子久、吳仲珪每用小詩自題其畫，極多佳製。此外諸家題畫絕句之佳者，指不勝屈。...而絕句境地差小，則清思妙語，層見疊出，易於發露本領。

Weng then expresses his desire to compile an anthology of *t'i-hua shih* in the *chüeh-chü* form by Yüan painter-poets.

Clearly, Weng Fang-kang has great affection for the poems of the Yüan painters but finds it necessary to qualify his praise; ultimately, these are minor works, and they transcend their ordinary level only under the pressure of influence from a truly major poet, such as Yü Chi. Other scholars, however, did not find it necessary to qualify their praise in this manner. Sung Lo 宋榮 (1634-1713), for example, in a general survey of poetic history includes Ni Tsan and another painter-poet, Chao Meng-fu 趙孟頫 (1254-1322), side by side with Yü Chi and other poets as major names in Yüan poetry;<sup>52</sup> he does not consider it necessary to establish a separate class of "painter-poets" for them. Interestingly enough, Sung Lo was "active in the artistic circle of Kiangsu," where he was appointed governor in 1692, and did some painting himself. A landscape of his in the Elliott Collection—a hanging scroll in ink on silk—shows stylistic affinities with the Yüan masters.<sup>53</sup>

Similar disagreements surround the reputations of the Wu-school masters as poets. A fairly typical appraisal is offered by the late Ch'ing scholar Chu T'ing-chen 朱庭珍 in his *Comments on Poetry from the Dwarf-Bamboo Garden* (*Hsiao-yüan shih-hua* 篔園詩話):

[The poetry of] Shen Shih-t'ien [Shen Chou], Wen Heng-shan [Wen Cheng-ming], and Li Chang-heng [Li Liu-fang 李流芳; 1575-1629] was obscured by their painting; all of them have poems worth looking at, with many fine lines. But poetry is not their specialty, so that their best poems are limited to a refined, easygoing quality. The tone is not that elevated, because their talent [in this area] is simply not that deep. But at least their poems belong in the category of elegant words, unlike [that of] T'ang Tzu-wei [T'ang Yin] and Chu Chih-shan [Chu Yün-ming 祝允明; 1461-1527, the great calligrapher], who simply let their brushes loose to do as they wish and end up falling into "wildcat Ch'an" [i.e., a wild unorthodoxy beyond the pale of respectable writing].<sup>54</sup>

沈石田、文衡山、李長蘅爲畫所掩，其詩皆有可觀，頗多佳句；但非專門，故佳作止於秀逸，氣格不大，力量不厚耳。然猶屬雅音，非如唐子畏、祝枝山輩，隨筆任意，墮落野狐禪也。

Elsewhere, Chu goes on to say of the Wu-school painters:

Of the painters of the past dynasty—the Ming—Wen, Shen, T'ang, and Ch'iu [Ch'iu Ying 仇英; ca. 1495–1552] are the best. Ch'iu Shih-chou [Ch'iu Ying] was skilled at human figures in the Northern school manner, as well as in landscapes and architecture, but he could not write poetry; he was simply a painter and nothing more. As for T'ang Tzu-wei, he was famous for his genius, and he published a collection of his poetry, as did Wen Heng-shan and Shen Shih-t'ien. But Tzu-wei in his poetry lets his brush go, saying whatever he wants; [his writing is] coarse, vulgar, and decadent. Like such men as Hsieh Ta-shen [Hsieh Chin 解縉; 1369–1415, a Grand Secretary and poet of the early Ming], he falls into the path of wildcat Ch'an and is not worthy of being spoken of as a poet. Heng-shan's poetry does contain fine lines, although one must regret that they are mostly in the flat-toned style of Chien-nan [Lu Yu 陸游, 1125–1210, one of the greatest Sung poets] and Shih-hu [Fan Ch'eng-ta 范成大, 1126–93, another major Sung poet]: the diction is refined but the tone is not elevated. His ancient-style verse merely apes the outer forms of the style of the [Wen-]hsüan [the *Anthology of Literature*, the most important literary compilation of the Six Dynasties period], and has very little life to it; it too is not consistent with the work of a specialist in poetry. Only Shih-t'ien can be considered outstanding and above the herd; his poetry is often rich in resonance. He is truly a painter capable of writing poetry.<sup>55</sup>

前明畫家，以文、沈、唐、仇爲最。仇十洲工北宗人物、山水樓閣，而不能詩，直一畫師耳。唐子畏則負才名，與文衡山、沈石田皆有詩集矣。然子畏詩縱筆率意，俚俗頹唐，與解大紳輩同墮野狐禪魔道中，不足言詩也。衡山詩有佳句，惜多劍南、石湖平調，語秀而格不高；古詩徒肖選體形貌，絕少生氣，亦非詩家當行。惟石田秀拔不羣，時饒格韻，洵畫家之能詩者矣。

Chu's concern with specialization in a particular mode of expression echoes the implication in an essay by one of the most important writers in the late Ming Kung-an school, Chiang Ying-k'o 江盈科 (1556–1605), that writers of prose should avoid dabbling in poetry.<sup>56</sup> Chiang's little essay on this theme is, significantly, entitled "Specialist" (*tang-hang* 當行), employing the phrase that also appears in Chu's text. The implication is that the literati ideal of "three perfections" may well have existed in an uneasy tension with the conflicting perception that most individuals tend to be particularly adept at certain modes of expression. Perhaps we might even go so far as to describe it as a prescriptive myth, rather than a descriptive characterization of common reality.

The idea that the fame of the painting of some of these men may have obscured their otherwise fine poetry is probably traceable to a comment by the scholar and connoisseur Ho Liang-chün 何良俊 (1506–73), who wrote, not long after Shen Chou's death, that "some of Shih-t'ien's poems are outstandingly fine, but they have been obscured by his painting, and so the world does not praise them." Ho's comment was quoted in what

was probably the most widely read Ch'ing anthology of Ming poetry, *A Compendium of Ming-Dynasty Poetry* (*Ming-shih tsung* 明詩綜) by Chu I-tsun 朱彝尊 (1629–1709);<sup>57</sup> Chu I-tsun himself liked Shen's poetry well enough to include twenty-one of his poems—a relatively high number—in *Ming-shih tsung*. Yüan Hung-tao 袁宏道 (1568–1610), the central figure in the Kung-an school, expanded Ho's idea when he declared, “Shen Shih-t'ien, T'ang Po-hu [T'ang Yin], Chu Hsi-che [Chu Yün-ming], and Wen Cheng-chung [Wen Cheng-ming] are men who were supreme in their time in the garden of painting and the realm of calligraphy, but the excellence of their poetry and prose was obscured as a result.”<sup>58</sup> Finally, the great Ch'ing poet Yüan Mei 袁枚 (1716–98), in his highly influential *Comments on Poetry from the “Follow” Garden* (*Sui-yüan shih-hua* 隨園詩話), expresses the view later to be echoed by Chu T'ing-chen that Shen Chou was the best poet of the group:

Wen, Shen, T'ang, and Ch'iu were famous for their poetry in the previous dynasty. Ch'iu's paintings never carried inscribed poems. T'ang was capable of writing poetry but happens not to have produced any good lines. Those equally skillful at poetry and painting were only the two gentlemen Wen and Shen, and when it comes to the feelings expressed by the [poet's] brush being transcendent and liberated, Shen is supreme.<sup>59</sup>

文沈唐仇，以畫名前朝，仇畫從無題詠，唐能詩恰無佳句。詩畫兼工者，惟文沈二公，而筆情超脫，則沈為獨絕。

(We may note, however, that despite his negative evaluation of T'ang Yin, Yüan Mei elsewhere includes a poem by him in a list of his favorite *t'i-hua shih*.)<sup>60</sup>

We have seen that Ho Liang-chün, Yüan Mei, and Chu T'ing-chen (in chronological order) all considered Shen Chou the best poet among the Wu-school painters. Not everyone agreed with their high evaluation of Shen, however. Mao Hsien-shu 毛先舒 (1620–88) ridiculed Ho Liang-chün for his praise of a particular couplet by Shen,<sup>61</sup> and P'an Te-yü 潘德輿 (1785–1839), after some grudging words of praise for two other Shen Chou couplets, goes on to lambaste a group of them: “Not only are the subjects petty and vulgar, the poems are also shallow and obvious, not the sort of works a great master should have [in his oeuvre].”<sup>62</sup>

But the consensus does seem to be that Shen Chou was a good poet, and probably the most authoritative opinion on the subject was that of Ch'ien Ch'ien-i 錢謙益 (1582–1664), whose *Brief Biographies for the Anthologies of Poetry from the Brilliant Dynasty* (*Lieh-ch'ao shih-chi hsiao-chuan* 列朝詩集小傳) treats Shen as a major poet:

When inspiration struck, right in the presence of guests he would let fly the moisture [of his brush]—mist and clouds would fill the paper, and when the painting was done, he would himself inscribe the surface, several hundreds of characters in an instant! His free-flowing literary skill illuminated his times. For a hundred years after, no one appeared in the flourishing southeast to surpass him. Since the master was famous in his generation for painting, scraps of paper or strips of silk painted by him were dispersed throughout the empire, and yet the great men and artistic spirits of the day all praised his poetry and prose. It was Li Pin-chih [Li Tung-yang 李東陽, 1447–1516, a major “orthodox” poet] and Wu Yüan-po [Wu K'uan 吳寬, 1435–1504, a

poet whose poems and colophons often appear on Shen Chou paintings] who declared that he only engaged in painting in his spare time after writing poetry, and that his painting *could not* obscure his poetry! It was Yang Chün-ch'ien [Yang Hsün-chi 楊循吉; 1458–1546] who declared point-blank that he was a major man of letters and that his landscapes and bamboos were extraneous affairs. It was Wang Chi-chih [Wang Ao 王鏊; 1450–1524, an influential Soochow connoisseur] and Wen Cheng-chung who declared that he based his poetry on feelings and actual events, depicting the forms of objects, manipulating his creative power so that divine wonders repeatedly appear [in his work]. It was Chu Hsi-che who declared that he pours for his own use all the streams [i.e., was master of all poetic styles], crisscrossing the world within the four seas, his essential style being based on Fang-weng [Lu Yu] while his spirit is that of Huan-hua [Tu Fu].<sup>63</sup>

興至，對客揮灑，煙雲盈紙，畫成自題其上，頃刻數百言，風流文翰，照映一時。百年來，東南之盛，蓋莫有過之者。先生既以畫擅名一代，片楮匹練，流傳遍天下，而一時鉅公勝流，則皆推挹其詩文，謂以詩餘發為圖繪，而畫不能掩其詩者，李賓之、吳原博也；斷以為文章大家，而山水竹樹，其餘事者，楊君謙也；謂其緣情隨事，因物賦形，開闢變化，神怪疊出者，王濟之、文徵仲也；謂其獨躡眾流，橫絕四海，家法在放翁，而風度主浣花者，祝希哲也。

Ch'ien goes on to quote from a preface he wrote to Shen's collected works; in it he too states that Shen Chou was influenced by Tu Fu and by such Sung poets as Su Shih and Lu Yu, as well as by Po Chü-i 白居易 (772–846). Ch'ien does not, however, refrain from criticizing some of Shen's poetry as being overly tinged with the flavor of the school of principle (*li-hsüeh* 理學) and approaching coarseness at times, "like the 'Rabbit Garden Primer' of some village pedant!"

That Shen himself was serious about the art of poetry there can be little doubt. Ch'ien Ch'ien-i relates that Shen burned his youthful poems as he considered them too derivative.<sup>64</sup> A passage by the great bibliophile and publisher Ku Yüan-ch'ing 顧元慶 (1487–1565) reveals that Shen Chou actually taught poetry to certain disciples, and was so painstaking and scholarly in his concern for his students' work that he sometimes made suggestions for changing a single word:

Nan-hao—Mr. Tu Mu [1495–1525, a poet, epigrapher, and scholar]—when young studied poetry under Mr. Shen Shih-t'ien. On one occasion, Shih-t'ien asked him whether he had written any works recently that he was satisfied with. Nan-hao responded by citing the opening couplet of his "Poem on the Chaste Wife," which reads:

White-haired, her chaste heart remains;  
blue lamp, her eyes wept dry of tears.

Shih-t'ien said, "The poem is certainly fine. But there is one character in it which is out of place." Nan-hao in consternation backed off the mat and begged to be instructed. Shih-t'ien said, "Have you not read the *Classic of Ritual*, where it says, 'A widow ought not to weep at night'? Why not substitute for the word *lamp* the word *spring* [so that the line would now read,

'blue springtime, her eyes wept dry of tears']?' Nan-hao, beside himself with joy, acquiesced.<sup>65</sup>

南濠都先生穆少嘗學詩沈石田先生之門。石田問近有何得意作。南濠以節婦詩首聯為對。詩云白髮貞心在。青燈淚眼枯。石田曰詩則佳矣。有一字未穩。南濠茫然避席請教。石田曰爾不讀禮經云寡婦不夜哭。何不以燈字為春字。南濠不覺悅服。

Another indication of the seriousness with which the Wu-school painter-poets—in this case, T'ang Yin, who is thus seen to have had his admirers as a poet—approached the art of poetry is an anecdote recorded by the Ming scholar Yü Pien 俞弁 (late fifteenth-early sixteenth century), a personal acquaintance of T'ang's. T'ang was willing, it seems, to change a single character in one of his *t'i-hua shih* when confronted with the fact that Tu Fu's usage of the word proved it to be properly a deflected-tone word. T'ang recognized his mistake, and immediately came up with an appropriate level-tone word as a substitute:

I once visited T'ang Tzu-wei at his residence, Peach Blossom Retreat, in the western part of the city [Soochow]. Tzu-wei painted a small landscape and inscribed on it this quatrain:

The places I go, leaning on my bramble cane, searching for poems  
are mostly bridges or among green trees,  
where red leaves bury your shins, and no one else comes,  
or wild pear flowers fall in a streamful of wind!<sup>66</sup>

I said, "This is a fine poem, but I wonder if *shins* is not unstable in a level-tone position?" Tzu-wei asked me what precedent I was basing myself on, and I replied, "Old Tu has this couplet:

There are no yam shoots, the mountains are buried in snow;  
no matter how I pull on my jacket it won't cover my shins."<sup>67</sup>

Tzu-wei promptly said, "I was wrong!" and changed the line to read, "Where red leaves bury your sandals, and no one else comes." Ah! Such was Tzu-wei's openness to good advice—the opposite of those who insist on defending their errors!<sup>68</sup>

余訪唐子畏於城西之桃花庵別業。子畏作山水小筆。遂題一絕句於其上云。青藜拄杖尋詩處。多在平橋綠樹中。紅葉沒脛人不到。野棠花落一溪風。余曰。詩固佳。但恐脛字押平聲未穩。子畏謂我何據。余曰。老杜有黃獨無苗山雪盛。短衣數挽不揜脛。子畏躍然曰。幾誤矣。遂改紅葉沒鞋人不到。吁。子畏之服善也如此。與世之強辯飾非者。殆逕庭矣。

The inconclusive debate as to the merits of Shen Chou's or T'ang Yin's poetry may actually have been simply one aspect of a far larger, ongoing debate in later Chinese literary criticism, namely the status in history of poetry whose diction was straightforward, even colloquial, and whose subject matter was frequently drawn from the intimate details of ordinary life. Such poetry is associated primarily with the name of Po Chü-i and with the many Sung poets who emulated these aspects of his style. The whole question is far too large and too complex for the scope of this paper, but Ch'ien Ch'ien-i's

linkage of Shen Chou's poetry with such Sung poets as Su Shih and Lu Yu—both of them profoundly indebted to the poetry of Po Chü-i—and with Po himself is a strong indication that much of the antipathy toward Shen's and T'ang Yin's poetry on the part of certain scholars may in fact have been related to their larger antipathy for the Po Chü-i/Sung style in general. We may recall that Chu T'ing-chen dismissed Wen Cheng-ming's poetry precisely because it reminded him of what he considered to be the "flat tone" of Lu Yu and Fan Ch'eng-ta, actually two of the greatest Sung poets. Even Ch'ien Ch'ien-i had his doubts about the "flavor of the school of principle" in some of Shen Chou's poetry, and this echoes one of the most common criticisms of the Sung style, namely that it is too discursive or proselike, too tinged with the character of Neo-Confucian philosophical discourse. The primary articulators of this view in the Ming were the so-called Former and Latter Seven Masters, the "orthodox" poets who believed that an aspiring poet should model his work on nothing later than the High T'ang, especially on Tu Fu. Judging from the poems they wrote about painting<sup>69</sup>—which do not depart in one stylistic detail from Tu Fu's poems on this subject—their primary interest was in the "professional" painters of their day (a number of whom were, ironically, considered by some to be "heterodox" in painting).<sup>70</sup> Further research needs to be done on the question of whether the "literati" painter-poets of the Ming dynasty were aligned with a generally Sung style of poetry, since the orthodox poets who tended to prefer the professional painters were T'ang-oriented in poetry. (Some of the professionals themselves did write their own poetry<sup>71</sup>—Ku Yüan-ch'ing, who, as we have seen, was also a great admirer of Shen Chou as a poet, expressed regret that he had seen so few poems by one of the greatest of these painters, Wu Wei 吳偉 [1459–1508].<sup>72</sup> The surviving poems by Wu and others suggest a quirky, eccentric, and expansive style associated with Li Po 李白 [701–62] or even Han Shan 寒山 [early ninth century], both of them, of course, T'ang poets.)

The negative attitude so many subsequent scholars held toward Sung poetry and Po Chü-i was grossly unfair. There was a vast variety in Sung poetry; the higher-toned, more rhetorically textured styles of diction associated in many minds with T'ang poetry continued to be evident in certain Sung writers, and the characteristic understated voice deserved a more sensitive hearing than it was given by many of these critics. By the same token, Shen Chou et al. were actually quite capable of writing in a denser, more flowery "T'ang" manner, as is implied by Chu Yün-ming when he associates Shen's poetry with Tu Fu as well as with, again, Lu Yu in the account by Ch'ien Ch'ien-i.

If it is true, however, that these painter-poets owed a particular debt to Sung poetry, that would also explain the fact that certain maverick scholars could always be counted on to admire their poetry, just as was the case with Sung poetry itself. And, just as we have rediscovered the riches of Sung poetry in the twentieth century, we should certainly feel at liberty to find treasure in the poetry of the painter-poets as well.

#### NOTES

1 Michael Sullivan, *The Arts of China*, rev. ed. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1973), fig. 58 on p. 80.

2 Ibid., fig. 72 on p. 95.

3 Ibid., fig. 71 on p. 94.

4 Anil De Silva, *The Art of Chinese Landscape Painting: In the Caves of Tun-huang* (New York: Crown, 1967), ill. on pp. 92–97, 139, 142, 155, 162–63,

- 195, 197, etc.
- 5 See, for example, Basil Gray, *Buddhist Cave Paintings at Tun-huang* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959), pl. 62.
- 6 Shen C. Y. Fu et al., *Traces of the Brush* (New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1977), pp. 181, 303 n. 10.
- 7 Chang Yen-yüan, *Li-tai ming-hua chi* (Record of famous paintings of all the dynasties), MSTK (Taipei: Chung-hua ts'ung-shu wei-yüan-hui, 1964), vol. 2, pp. 31, 33, 34.
- 8 Chu Ching-hsüan, *T'ang-ch'ao ming-hua lu* (Record of famous painters of the T'ang dynasty), MSTK (Taipei: Chung-hua ts'ung-shu wei-yüan-hui, 1956), vol. 1, p. 27.
- 9 Ibid., p. 29.
- 10 Ibid., pp. 28–29. That this poem was in fact inscribed on the *Wang-ch'uan* scroll is corroborated by the title given to it by the Sung scholar Hung Mai 洪邁 (1123–1202) in his anthology, *Wan-shou T'ang-jen chüeh-chü* (Ten thousand quatrains by T'ang poets), where it is called “Inscribed on the Wang-ch'uan Painting.” In its original form, it is an eight-line poem, number six in the series “Written at Random, Six Poems.” Hung simply extracted a quatrain from the full version of the poem. For the poem and the Hung Mai reference, see *Wang Mo-ch'i ch'üan-chi chien-chu* (Annotated collected works of Wang Wei) (reprint, Hong Kong: Kwong Chi, n.d.), p. 58; my translation here and throughout unless otherwise indicated.
- 11 Wai-kam Ho et al., *Eight Dynasties of Chinese Paintings: The Collections of the Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum, Kansas City, and The Cleveland Museum of Art* (Cleveland: Cleveland Museum of Art, 1980), cat. 24, pp. 42–44. Max Loehr accepted the painting as authentic in his article “Chinese Paintings with Sung Dated Inscriptions,” *Ars Orientalis* 4 (1961), p. 247. I am indebted to Susan Bush for calling to my attention another possibly related example, reproduced by Hsieh Chih-liu in his book, *Tang Wu-tai Sung Yüan ming-chi* (Famous paintings of the T'ang, Five Dynasties, Sung, and Yüan) (Shanghai: Ktien wen-hsüeh, 1957), no. 17, pls. 59–64. It is a handscroll with two separate landscape scenes, one by Mi Yu-jen and one by Ssu-ma Huai 司馬槐 (first half of the twelfth century), a descendant of Ssu-ma Kuang 司馬光 (1019–86). Each scene is preceded by a single line of poetry by Tu Fu and followed by a four-line poem by the painter of that scene. Neither the Tu Fu lines nor the artists' own poems clearly infringe upon the picture space. I suspect that this work may be seen as an intermediary between the courtly tra-
- dition of executing paintings to illustrate set poetic lines and couplets and the literati tradition of the integral poem-painting which is the concern of this paper.
- 12 Li O, *Sung-shih chi-shih* (Recording matters connected with Sung-dynasty poetry) (Shanghai: Ku-chi, 1983), vol. 1, pp. 1155–57.
- 13 Ch'ao Pu-chih, *Chi-le chi* (The chicken-rib collection), SKCS (Taipei: Shang-wu, 1983), *ts'e* 1118. *chüan* 15, pp. 7b–8a.
- 14 Ibid., *chüan* 22, p. 6a.
- 15 Ibid., *chüan* 22, p. 6a.
- 16 Ch'in Yu-yen, *Ku-chien pien* (The ancient sword compilation), as quoted in Ho Ch'eng-ta, comp., *T'ang Po-hu hsien-sheng ch'üan-chi* (1614; reprint, Taipei: Hsüeh-sheng, 1970), vol. 1, p. 253.
- 17 For Ch'en, see Ch'ang Pi-te et al., *Sung-jen chuan-chi tzu-liao so-yin* (An index to Sung biographical materials) (Taipei: Ting-wen, 1975), vol. 3, p. 2589.
- 18 Su Shih, *Tung-p'o chi*, *chüan* 14, p. 7b, in *Tung-p'o ch'i-chi* (Seven anthologies by Su Shih), in SPPY (Shanghai: Chung-hua, 1934–36), vols. 237–40.
- 19 Wu Ch'iao, *Wei-lu shih-hua*, CSHHP (Shanghai: Ku-chi, 1983), vol. 1, p. 504.
- 20 For Li Chia, see Ch'ang et al., *Sung-jen* (Taipei: Ting-wen, 1974), vol. 2, p. 822.
- 21 Ch'ao Pu-chih, *Chi-le chi*, *chüan* 8, p. 2a.
- 22 Susan Bush, *The Chinese Literati on Painting: Su Shih (1037–1101) to Tung Ch'i-chang (1555–1636)*, Harvard-Yenching Institute Studies, no. 23 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 26. More recently, Bush has changed her translation to read:
- Painting depicts the shapes outside of things;  
It is essential that these shapes be not altered.
- See Susan Bush and Hsio-yen Shih, comps. and eds., *Early Chinese Texts on Painting* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press for the Harvard-Yenching Institute, 1985), p. 204. This takes care of the rhythmic problem, but still misconstrues the meaning of *wu-wai*, as explained in the subsequent text of the present article.
- 23 Ch'ao Pu-chih, *Chi-le chi*, *chüan* 33, p. 12a.
- 24 Bush, *Chinese Literati*, p. 26.
- 25 Su Shih, *Tung-p'o chi*, *chüan* 16, p. 10b.
- 26 Kao Yüeh-t'ien, *Sung-shih ch'i-pai shou* (Seven hundred Sung poems) (Taipei: Chung-kuo shih chi-k'an, 1975), p. 82.
- 27 Ch'en Chin, *Chu-lin ta-wen* (Answers to questions in the bamboo grove), CSHHP, vol. 2, pp. 2245–46.
- 28 Tu Fu, *Tü Shao-ling chi hsiang-chu* (Works of Tu Fu with detailed annotations), annotated by

- Ch'iu Chao-ao (reprint, Hong Kong: T'ai-p'ing, 1966), vol. 1, *chüan* 4, pp. 12-13.
- 29 Ibid., vol. 1, *chüan* 9, pp. 120-21.
- 30 William Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, in Geoffrey Keynes, ed., *Blake: Complete Writings* (London/Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), pl. 10, p. 152.
- 31 Shen Te-ch'ien, *Shuo-shih tsui-yü* (Comments explaining poetry through the cycle of years), CSH (Taipei: I-wen yin-shu kuan, n.d.), vol. 2, *hsia*, p. 6a. It is important to note, as Shen Fu points out (*Traces of the Brush*, p. 181), that Tu Fu's poems about paintings "are not known to have been inscribed onto the paintings."
- 32 Huang Tzu-yün, *Yeh-hung shih-ti* (The wild goose and the target of poetry), CSH, vol. 2, p. 7b.
- 33 Chang Ch'ien-i, *Chien-chai shih-t'an* (Chats on poetry from the Cocoon Studio), CSHHP, vol. 1, p. 870.
- 34 Ibid.
- 35 Lu Ying, *Wen-hua-lou shih-hua*, CSHHP, vol. 2, p. 2293.
- 36 Tu, *Tu Shao-ling chi hsiang-chu*, vol. 1, *chüan* 2, p. 51.
- 37 Yeh Hsieh, *Yüan shih*, CSH, vol. 2, pp. 16b-17a.
- 38 Michael Sullivan, *The Three Perfections: Chinese Painting, Poetry, and Calligraphy* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1974).
- 39 Laurence Sickman, ed., *Chinese Calligraphy and Painting in the Collection of John M. Crawford, Jr.* (New York: Pierpont Morgan Library, 1962), pp. 107-8, pl. 29. See my earlier discussion of this and other examples in my article "Some Relationships between Poetry and Painting in China," *Renditions*, no. 6 (Spring 1976), pp. 85-91.
- 40 Wu Ou-t'ing, *Tz'u-ming so-yin* (Index to titles of lyrics) (Hong Kong: T'ai-p'ing, 1966), p. 148.
- 41 For three examples of Chang's poems on the fisherman theme, see Wu-chi Liu and Irving Yucheng Lo, eds., *K'uei-yeh chi* (Sunflower splendor) (Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1976), p. 70, and the translations in Liu and Lo, eds., *Sunflower Splendor: Three Thousand Years of Chinese Poetry* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1975), pp. 155-56.
- 42 The poem is recorded in Wu Chen, *Mei Tao-jen i-mo* (Bequeathed ink of the Plum Blossom Taoist), MSTK, vol. 2, p. 215.
- 43 Sullivan, *The Three Perfections*, p. 7.
- 44 Sickman, ed., *Chinese Calligraphy and Painting*, pp. 113-14. Reproduced in Wan-go Weng, *Chinese Painting and Calligraphy: A Pictorial Survey* (New York: Dover, 1978), no. 26.
- 45 The poem is recorded in Ni Tsan, *Ch'ing-pi-ko ch'üan-chi* (Complete works of the chamber of pure withdrawal) (Taipei: National Central Library, 1970), p. 138.
- 46 Richard Edwards, *The Field of Stones: A Study of the Art of Shen Chou (1427-1509)* (Washington, D.C.: Freer Gallery of Art, 1962), p. 40, pl. 18, A. The poem is apparently not recorded in Shen Chou, *Shih-t'ien hsien-sheng chi* (Works of Master Stone Field) (Taipei: National Central Library, 1968), although the copy I have access to is lacking pp. 739-40 in the section on quatrains with seven-character lines.
- 47 Sickman, ed., *Chinese Calligraphy and Painting*, pp. 139-40; Marc F. Wilson and Kwan S. Wong, *Friends of Wen Cheng-ming: A View from the Crawford Collection* (New York: China Institute in America, 1974), pp. 54-57. The poem is apparently not recorded in the *T'ang Po-hu hsien-sheng ch'üan-chi*.
- 48 Jonathan Chaves, trans., *Heaven My Blanket, Earth My Pillow: Poems from Sung-Dynasty China by Yang Wan-li* (New York and Tokyo: Weatherhill, 1975), p. 39.
- 49 Weng Fang-kang, *Shih-chou shih-hua* (Comments on poetry from Stone Isle), CSHHP, vol. 2, p. 1468.
- 50 Ibid., pp. 1470-71.
- 51 Ibid., p. 1471.
- 52 Sung Lo, *Man-t'ang shih-hua* (Comments on poetry from the Hall of Informality), CSH, vol. 2, p. 4a.
- 53 Wen C. Fong et al., *Images of the Mind* (Princeton: Art Museum, Princeton University, 1984), pp. 426-27. The quotation is from Pao-chen Ch'en's essay on p. 427.
- 54 Chu T'ing-chen, *Hsiao-yüan shih-hua* (Comments on poetry from the dwarf-bamboo garden), CSHHP, vol. 2, p. 2362.
- 55 Ibid., pp. 2409-10.
- 56 Chiang Ying-k'o, *Hsüeh-t'ao hsiao-shu* (A little book of snowy waves) (Shanghai: Chung-yang shu-tien, 1948), pp. 29-30; and see Jonathan Chaves, "The Panoply of Images: A Reconsideration of the Literary Theory of the Kung-an School," in Susan Bush and Christian Murck, eds., *Theories of the Arts in China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), p. 360.
- 57 Chu I-tsun, *Ming-shih tsung* (Taipei: Shih-chieh, 1962), vol. 1, *chüan* 26, p. 1a.
- 58 Yüan Hung-tao, *Yüan Chung-lang ch'üan-chi* (The complete works of Yüan Chung-lang) (Taipei: Shih-chieh, 1964), *wen-ch'ao*, p. 8.
- 59 Yüan Mei, *Sui-yüan shih-hua* (Comments on poetry from the "Follow" Garden), in *Sui-yüan ch'üan-chi* (reprint, Hong Kong: Kwong Chi, n.d.), p. 146.



- 60 Ibid., p. 211.
- 61 Mao Hsien-shu, *Shih-pien ch'ih* (The islet of poetic explanation), CSHHP, vol. 1, p. 60.
- 62 P'an Te-yü, *Yang-i-chai shih-hua* (Comments on poetry from the Studio for Nurturing Oneness), CSHHP, vol. 2, p. 2059.
- 63 Ch'ien Ch'ien-i, *Lieh-ch'ao shih-chi hsiao-chuan* (Brief biographies for the anthologies of poetry from the brilliant dynasty) (Beijing: Chung-hua, 1959), vol. 1, pp. 289-91.
- 64 Ibid., p. 290.
- 65 Ku Yüan-ch'ing, *I-po-chai shih-hua* (Comments on poetry from the Studio of Tranquil Plainness), in Helmut Martin, ed., *Index to the Ho Collection of Twenty-Eight Shih-hua* (Taipei: Chinese Materials and Research Aids Service Center, 1973), vol. 1, p. 518.
- 66 This poem is recorded in T'ang Yin, *T'ang Po-hu hsien-sheng ch'üan-chi*, vol. 2, p. 384, with several alternate readings. For the problem of recorded texts of *t'i-hua shih* which differ from the versions on actual paintings, see my communication to *Renditions* as quoted in *Renditions*, no. 7 (Spring 1977), pp. 4, 162.
- 67 For this couplet, see Tu Fu, *Tu Shao-ling chi hsiang-chu*, vol. 1, *chüan* 8, p. 87.
- 68 Yü Pien, *I-lao-t'ang shih-hua* (Comments on poetry from the Studio of the Untrammled Old Man), in Ting Fu-pao, ed., *Li-tai shih-hua hsü-pien* (Continuation of comments on poetry through the ages) (Taipei: I-wen yin-shu kuan, n.d.), vol. 5, *shang*, p. 5b.
- 69 See, for example, the many examples quoted in Suzuki Kei, *Mindai kaiga shi kenkyū: Seppa* (A study of the history of Ming-dynasty painting: The Che school) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1968), pp. 237ff., *passim*.
- 70 Richard Barnhart, "The 'Wild and Heterodox School' of Ming Painting," in Bush and Murck, eds., *Theories*, pp. 365-96.
- 71 Ibid., pp. 370, 372.
- 72 Ku, *I-po-chai shih-hua*, p. 518.

# T'ang Yin's Poetry, Painting, and Calligraphy in Light of Critical Biographical Events

CHIANG CHAO-SHEN

The events that stand out in the adult life of the Soochow painter T'ang Yin 唐寅 (*tzu* Po-hu 伯虎, *Tzu-wei* 子畏; *hao* Liu-ju chü-shih 六如居士; 1470-1524) are as follows:

1493: T'ang was twenty-four (all ages are given according to Chinese reckoning). In late fall, his father, T'ang Kuang-te 唐廣德, died, followed closely by T'ang's first wife, née Hsü.

1494: T'ang's mother, née Ch'iu, fell ill and died; soon after, his younger sister committed suicide.

1495: T'ang's first gray hairs appeared, an event that prompted him to write a melancholy poem.

1496: Still in mourning, T'ang journeyed to the Shrine of the Nine Immortals at Nine Carp Lake in Hsing-hua County, Fukien Province, to seek communication with the spirits.

1498: In the eighth lunar month, T'ang placed first in the Provincial Examination in Nanking. He carved a seal reading "Nan-ching chieh-yüan" 南京解元, the title awarded the highest-ranking candidate. Late in the year, in the company of Hsü Ching 徐經 (active ca. 1490s), a *chü-jen* 舉人 (second-degree graduate) from Chiang-yin, T'ang traveled to Beijing to take part in the Metropolitan Examination to be held in the following spring.

1499: Upon arriving in the capital, Hsü Ching called on Examiner Ch'eng Min-cheng 程敏政 (active ca. 1466-99) to discuss the classics. On the basis of this conversation, Hsü and T'ang speculated about possible examination questions. T'ang related the story to his longtime friend Tu Mu 都穆 (1459-1525), who repeated it in public. Fu Han 傅瀚 (1435-1502), an official who longed to replace Ch'eng as examiner, reported the incident to Supervising Secretary (*chi-shih-chung* 給事中) Hua Ch'ang 華臬 (active ca. 1490s), who began a covert investigation.

Following the second examination session, on the twenty-seventh day of the second lunar month, Hua Ch'ang impeached Ch'eng Min-cheng for leaking the examination questions. On the seventh of the third lunar month, Ch'eng, Hsü, and T'ang were arrested. Using his political influence, Ch'eng was able to obtain his freedom and have Hua Ch'ang imprisoned.

On the twenty-second of the fourth month, the Three Judicial Offices (*San-fa-ssu* 三法司) and the Embroidered Uniform Palace Guard (*Chin-i wei* 錦衣衛) jointly tried Hsü and T'ang and had them tortured. On the first day of the sixth month, T'ang and Hsü were convicted of seeking unfair advantage through personal connections and fined. After the fines were paid, the Bureau of Rites (*Li-pu* 禮部), which administered the examinations, demoted Hsü and T'ang to the rank of lesser functionaries, thus barring

them forever from advancement in the civil service. T'ang was assigned to a minor post in Chekiang Province, but he was unwilling to serve in that capacity and returned home.

Back in Soochow, T'ang received a harsh letter from his childhood friend Wen Cheng-ming 文徵明 (1470–1559). At the time, rumors were rife, and the facts of the examination scandal were not clear. Wen apparently believed his friend was guilty of cheating and had compounded his guilt by refusing to take up the assignment in Chekiang. Although Wen was in Soochow at the time, he did not bother to see T'ang to hear his side of the story. T'ang responded with a letter severing their relationship.<sup>1</sup> T'ang also terminated his friendship with Tu Mu. He began to study Buddhism, fortune-telling, and prognostication—subjects that he planned to write about.

1500: T'ang took up painting for a living and was probably studying under Chou Ch'en 周臣 (ca. 1460–ca. 1536) by this time. He divorced his second wife for nagging him about his heavy drinking and squandering of family resources.

1514: T'ang, now forty-five, accepted the offer of a generous stipend from Chu Ch'en-hao 朱宸濠 (d. 1521), prince of Ning, to come to the court at Nan-ch'ang, Kiangsi Province. He journeyed to Nan-ch'ang via Mount Lu and Lake P'eng-li. When T'ang realized that Chu was plotting rebellion, he feigned madness in order to depart. With money from the sale of his paintings, he paid for his journey home, arriving back in Soochow in the ninth month of the following year.

1524: T'ang Yin died in the twelfth lunar month of *kuei-wei* at the age of fifty-four.

In his epitaph for T'ang Yin, Chu Yün-ming 祝允明 (1461–1527) relates the events surrounding the examination scandal in some detail. He states that T'ang took up the study of Buddhism after his return from the capital and adopted the sobriquet Liu-ju chü-shih at that time. Liu-ju, which means the Six Similarities, comes from the Vajracchedika-prajnaparamita (*chin-kang* 金剛), or Diamond sutra, in which human perception is likened to six phenomena: dreams, phantasms, bubbles, shadows, dew, and lightning. Chu does not mention T'ang's sojourn in Nan-ch'ang, possibly because the repercussions of Chu Ch'en-hao's rebellion were still being felt at the time of T'ang's death; he merely notes that T'ang visited Mount Lu and Lake P'eng-li during his lifetime. The epitaph mentions that T'ang was ill for a long time after he returned from his travels, and that when his health had improved slightly, he began to set his affairs in order. Chu also states that T'ang's scholarly pursuits at the time included the study of creation, the symbolism of the trigrams, the calculation of musical pitch and of the calendar, and the principles of literature and phonetics. Finally, Chu relates that T'ang wished to found a school of learning based on his profound knowledge of occult lore, but died before the project could be completed.<sup>2</sup>

The original edition of *T'ang Yin's Collected Writings* (*T'ang Po-hu chi* 唐伯虎集), compiled by Yüan Chih 袁袞 (1502–47), had only two chapters containing thirty-two poems and songs, two *fu* 賦 (rhyme-prose), and fifteen miscellaneous writings, all early works based on the styles of the Six Dynasties.<sup>3</sup> Yüan's preface noted that T'ang had written much more, but that most of his writings were in forms incompatible with those chosen for inclusion. Yüan considered it appropriate to append only five poems and a preface from T'ang's middle years. He also added a critical evaluation of T'ang's middle-period writings, suggesting that because T'ang had abandoned his literary ambitions after the examination scandal, these writings seem shallow and commonplace. T'ang Yin himself

had admitted that the harsh criticism he endured following the scandal discouraged him. He saw no reason to labor over his writings if no one would appreciate his efforts. Thus, he would write as he pleased, when he pleased.

Later in the Ming dynasty, during the reign of the Wan-li emperor (r. 1573–1619), Ho Ch'eng-ta 何成大 (active ca. 1592–1614) of Soochow expanded the collection of T'ang Yin's writings on three occasions (in 1592, 1607, and 1614).<sup>4</sup> In 1801, T'ang Chung-mien 唐仲冕 (1753–1827) of Ch'ang-sha assembled a wider variety of T'ang Yin's works for an edition with sixteen chapters containing over 490 poems.<sup>5</sup>

In 1967–68, while I was compiling materials for my *Study of T'ang Yin* (*Kuan-yü T'ang Yin te yen-chiu 關於唐寅的研究*), I came across another 111 poems and two letters, which I included in that publication.<sup>6</sup> In 1982, Professor Cheng Ch'ien of National Taiwan University brought to light another 302 poems in his *Notes on Unrecorded Poems by T'ang Yin* (*T'ang Po-hu shih-chi-i chien-chu 唐伯虎詩輯逸箋注*).<sup>7</sup>

Judging from T'ang's extant writings, he probably devoted a good deal of time in his youth to the study of Hsiao-t'ung's 蕭統 (501–31) *Anthology of Literature* (*Wen-hsüan 文選*), a Liang-dynasty compilation of writings in many forms from the Han, Wei, and Six Dynasties periods.<sup>8</sup> Han poetry (*shih* 詩) and *fu*, works which stress diction and choice vocabulary, are beautifully phrased and rich in allusions. The poems of the Six Dynasties are similar to Han *fu* in their narrative and descriptive emphasis, but they employ language that is even more highly embellished and complex. Allusions are often used simply for the beauty of the language rather than to extend the meaning of the poem. Yet once the words and their allusions are understood, the meaning of the poem stands fully revealed.

T'ang poetry, on the other hand, with its origins in the folk songs of the *Kuo-feng* 國風 section of the *Book of Poetry* and the musical forms of the Han and Six Dynasties, is full of overtones and permits many interpretations. It has the haunting quality of the songs of the woman Erh, which according to the *Lieh-tzu* 列子 “curled round the beams of the gate and did not die away for three days.”<sup>9</sup> This remark aptly describes the effect of T'ang poetry: the words linger in the mind long after they have been read. Sung poetry seems to differ little from T'ang poetry in basic elements, but on close reading it will be seen that T'ang poetry tends toward subjective description, while Sung poetry is more objective and theoretical.

Professor Cheng mentions that T'ang Yin's poetry, which is based on Six Dynasties models, has none of the characteristics of T'ang or Sung styles. In his opinion, T'ang's poetry is not as good as that of Shen Chou 沈周 (1427–1509) or Wen Cheng-ming. In his preface to *Notes on Unrecorded Poems by T'ang Yin*, Professor Cheng writes:

When I was twenty-one or twenty-two, I saw . . . a seven-character *lü* poem (*lü-shih* 律詩) by T'ang Yin. . . .

The tonal contrasts in the poem were very different from the T'ang and Sung *lü* poems I was accustomed to reading, and I felt that T'ang Yin had established a distinctly original style. Naturally, given the excellence of this poem, I hoped to read many more of similar quality, and to this end I purchased a copy of *T'ang Po-hu ch'üan-chi* [*The collected works of T'ang Yin*]. I discovered, however, that although it contained a few seven-character *lü* poems which were fresh and original, these numbered only around ten, and

the poems in other forms were very ordinary, not worthy of comparison with the T'ang and Sung masters. . . .

In the fall of 1975, the National Palace Museum organized an exhibition entitled "Ninety Years of Wu-School Painting," emphasizing the works of Shen Chou, Wen Cheng-ming, T'ang Yin, and Ch'iu Ying 仇英 [ca. 1495–1552]. I went to see it and purchased a copy of the catalogue. About forty works by T'ang Yin were included. Among them [I was most impressed by] a seven-character quatrain (*chüeh-chü* 絕句) [on the fan painting *Traveling in Autumn Mountains*] and a seven-character *lü* poem [on the fan *Autumn Day by the Western Wall*]. . . .

Although neither poem equaled in quality the first poem by T'ang that I had read, both must certainly be considered good poems. I had no memory of them from my reading of T'ang's collected works, and it seemed to me that perhaps they had not been included. That reading had occurred some fifty years earlier, and . . . I had no idea what had become of my copy of the collected works. For the express purpose of looking for the poems, I purchased the Student Bookstore reprint of the Wan-li edition and borrowed the complete T'ang Chung-mien edition from the National Taiwan University Library. I examined both from beginning to end but did not find the two poems.

. . . In Wu Sheng's 吳升 [ca. 1660–after 1712] *Ta-kuan lu* 大觀錄 [*A Record of Magnificent Works of Art I Have Seen*], I came across a seven-character *lü* poem which T'ang Yin had inscribed on a painting by Shen Chou entitled *Clearing Skies over Mount K'uang* (*K'uang-shan hsin-chi t'u* 匡山新霽圖) . . . which seemed to me as beautiful as that first poem I had read and shared Po-hu's unique style. Returning to the collected works, I found that it, too, was not recorded. . . .

Of the Four Great Masters of Wu-school painting, only Ch'iu Ying's achievements were confined to painting. Shen, Wen, and T'ang were all literati; all are praised for the "three perfections" of poetry, painting, and calligraphy; and each has left a collection of poetry. As I was compiling T'ang Yin's poems, I discovered that many poems by Shen Chou and Wen Cheng-ming are also missing from their collected works. Since Shen and Wen must be considered more important poets than T'ang, perhaps it is even more important to compile their poems.<sup>10</sup>

Cheng nevertheless concedes that T'ang Yin wrote some fine seven-character regulated verse in a distinctive personal style. He praises in particular T'ang's poem on Shen Chou's painting *Clearing Skies over Mount K'uang*, now in the Shanghai Museum.

An unsigned, undated seven-character *lü* that has traditionally been attributed to T'ang Yin is *Letter to Li Tzu-yüan* (*Chi-ta men-sheng Li Tzu-yüan* 寄答門生李子元; fig. 200), in the John M. Crawford, Jr., Collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art. The poem reads:

In a plain white cottage in the green mountains,  
long ago we discussed the literary arts;

青山白屋舊論文

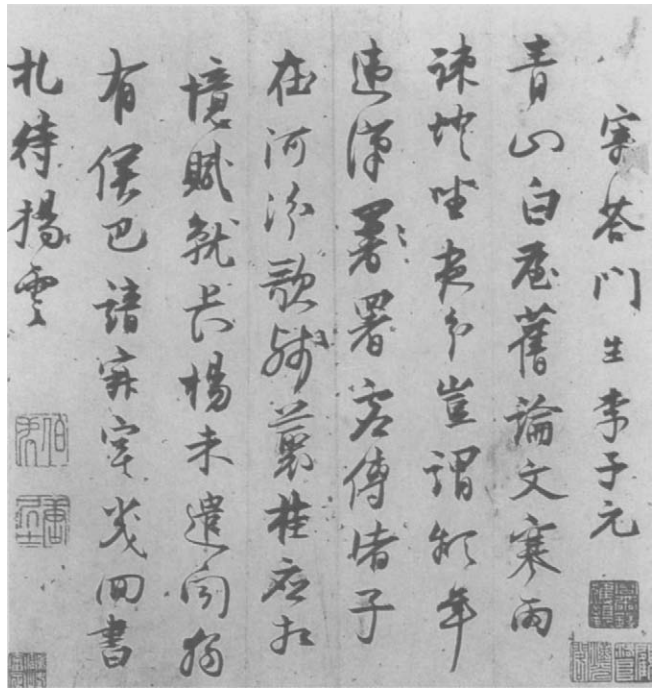


Figure 200. Attributed to T'ang Yin (1470–1524),  
*Letter to Li Tzu-yüan*. Album leaf, ink on gold-flecked paper,  
 27.1 × 25.2 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art;  
 Bequest of John M. Crawford, Jr., 1988

In cold and rain, by the light of dying lamps, we talked the night away.	寒雨疏燈坐夜分
Who would have said that after all these years I would still languish far from the power of Han, Spreading empty teachings to my students at Ho-fen.	豈謂頻年遠漢署 虛傳諸子在河汾
I have sung to distraction of cassia groves, hoping that someone would think of you; Already I have written my "Ch'ang-yang fu,"	歌殘叢桂應相憶 賦就長楊未遣聞
but no one summons me to court because of it! Only you, like Hou-pa, have not shunned me in my isolation,	獨有侯巴諳寂寞
Always awaiting a reply from your Yang Yün.	幾回書札待揚雲

Every phrase in this complex poem trembles with life and expands with repeated reading. Most of the allusions are to the Han dynasty. The "power of Han" in the third line refers to the imperial capital, Ch'ang-an. Ho-fen in line four brings to mind not only Wang T'ung 王通 (ca. early seventh century), who taught there during the Sui dynasty, but also the Han scholar Yang Hsiung 楊雄 (ca. 53 B.C.–A.D. 18), who, according to his biography in Pan Ku's 班固 (A.D. 32–92) *History of the Former Han* (*Han-shu* 漢書), spent time there.<sup>11</sup> The last three lines of the poem contain further allusions to Yang Hsiung.

"Cassia groves" in line five alludes to a line from the poem "Summoning Retired Scholars" ("Chao yin-shih shih" 招隱士詩) by the Han prince of Huai-an Liu An 劉安 (d. 122 B.C.), who sought to lure scholars from their retreats to serve at his court.



Figure 201. T'ang Yin,  
*Traveling by Donkey, Thinking of Returning Home.*  
 Hanging scroll, ink and colors on silk,  
 77.7 × 37.5 cm.  
 Shanghai Museum

“Ch’ang-yang fu” 長楊賦, mentioned in line six, was one of several *fu* that Yang Hsiung wrote at the court of Han Emperor Ch’eng-ti 成帝 (r. 39–7 B.C.). Yang was summoned to court after his *fu* were recommended to the emperor as being equal to those of Ssu-ma Hsiang-ju 司馬相如 (ca. 179–117 B.C.). Although Yang’s *fu* were written to admonish the emperor against improper behavior, they were so beautifully written that they had the effect of glamorizing the very behavior their author sought to condemn. Seeing that his *fu* had failed to achieve their didactic purpose, Yang abandoned this form for prose. But his essays “T’ai-hsüan” 太玄 and “Fa-yen” 法言 (studies of the *Book of Changes* [*I-ching* 易經] and of the *Analects* [*Lun-yü* 論語], respectively) were ridiculed for being incomprehensible. Bitter at being misunderstood and shunned by the world (*wei-chi wei-mo* 惟寂惟寞)—the expression is alluded to in line seven of the poem—Yang could only cultivate virtue in his own house. Hou-pa was the only pupil who Yang felt understood him, and to Hou-pa alone Yang taught the “T’ai-hsüan” and “Fa-yen.”

The author of *Letter to Li Tzu-yüan* appears to be a fairly low-ranking official who, although he would like to advance the career of his pupil, has not had the opportunity



Figure 202. T'ang Yin and Chu Yao (active ca. 1500), poems inscribed on T'ang Yin's *Traveling by Donkey, Thinking of Returning Home*

to do so because he has not been summoned to court in many years. His social position is different from T'ang Yin's. Careful reading of the poem leads me to conclude that the author's poetic diction is also different from T'ang's. Yet *Letter to Li Tzu-yüan* carries two of T'ang Yin's seals.

In trying to determine who might have written the poem, I compared T'ang's poem on his painting *Traveling by Donkey, Thinking of Returning Home* (*Ch'i-lü kuei-ssu t'u* 騎驢歸思圖), in the Shanghai Museum, with Chu Yao's 朱曜 (active ca. 1500) poem on the same painting (figs. 201, 202). T'ang's poem reads:

Having sought but not obtained, I pack my books and head for home ( <i>kuei</i> );	乞求無得束書歸
As before, I ride my donkey toward the distant hills ( <i>ts'ui-wei</i> ).	依舊騎驢向翠微
But now the icy wind blows dirt in my face, And my wife confronts me with a bed of ox blankets ( <i>i</i> ).	滿面風霜塵土氣 山妻相對有牛衣



The poem alludes to the story of Wang Chang 王章 (d. 24 B.C.), as recorded in the *History of the Former Han*. In his student days, Wang was extremely poor and lived with his wife near Ch'ang-an. When he fell ill, there was nothing with which to cover him except the straw blankets intended for oxen. When he wept at the prospect of his impending death, his wife scolded him harshly. Much later, when he had become an influential official but hungered for even more power, his wife admonished him, saying, "Do you not remember the time when you wept in your bed of animal covers?"

Chu Yao's poem follows T'ang Yin's rhyme scheme, but is much more subtle and intricate and has a very different effect:

What good news that the Son of Heaven	喜聞天子駕新歸
is newly returned ( <i>kuei</i> );	
I wanted to halt his chariot as it passed	欲控應慚一蟻微
but felt antlike in my insignificance ( <i>wei</i> ).	
The cloud-dwelling dragon wrongfully	誤入雲龍山下路
has been cast down onto the road	
at the base of the mountains;	
[But] the apricot blossoms are still beautiful	杏花妍映綠羅衣
against a green silk robe ( <i>i</i> ).	

The poem is about T'ang Yin and the examination scandal, but Chu catches the reader's attention in the first line by mentioning the emperor. Why is the emperor's return good news? Because only the emperor can reverse a decision made in the context of a power struggle between two such important officials as Fu Han and Ch'eng Min-cheng. Ordinarily the emperor is inaccessible, hidden deep within the Forbidden City. However, on those rare occasions when he returns from performing state rituals, those with grievances may wait by the roadside and attempt to halt his chariot as it passes. The second line suggests that T'ang Yin could have done so but did not. Why? Because next to powerful officials and influential figures, the individual is as weak and insignificant as an ant.

The third line of the poem employs an inverted word order of a type used by the T'ang poet Tu Fu 杜甫 (712-70) in his "Autumn Meditations" ("Ch'iu-hsing pa-shou" 秋興八首). The line, which literally reads "error enter cloud dragon mountain beneath road," is meant to be read as "cloud dragon error enter road beneath mountain." The "road at the base of the mountains" alludes to the dirt of the examination scandal, and the "cloud-dwelling dragon" wrongfully dragged into the dirt is, of course, T'ang Yin. Chu's use of this device cannot equal Tu Fu's, in part because he is constrained by the tonal requirements of the form. Moreover, his choice of the words "road at the base of the mountains" to suggest the dirt of scandal is not quite appropriate. On the other hand, the word "mountains" does recall the second line in T'ang Yin's poem, "As before, I ride my donkey toward the distant hills."

Chu alludes further to the examinations in the last line. The apricot blossom is the symbolic flower of the second lunar month, when the Metropolitan Examination, or "Spring Portal" (*ch'un-wei* 春闈), is traditionally held. The Provincial Examinations, called the "Autumn Portal" (*ch'iu-wei* 秋闈) are traditionally held during the eighth lunar month, whose symbolic flower is the cassia. The candidate who takes first place in the Metropolitan Examination is designated *chuang-yüan* 狀元, and is entitled to wear a red



Figure 203. T'ang Yin,  
*Beauty Holding a Fan in the Autumn Wind*.  
Hanging scroll, ink on paper, 77.1 × 39.3 cm.  
Shanghai Museum



Figure 204. T'ang Yin,  
*The Moon Goddess Ch'ang O*.  
Hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper,  
135.3 × 58.4 cm.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York;  
Gift of Douglas Dillon, 1981

robe. T'ang, who was only a *chieh-yüan*, was not entitled to wear red. Thus, Chu Yao seems to be consoling T'ang when he says that apricot blossoms are still beautiful against a green silk robe.

Although the poem in *Letter to Li Tzu-yüan* is better than Chu Yao's poem on *Traveling by Donkey*, it is closer to Chu's style than to T'ang Yin's. I believe therefore that *Letter to Li Tzu-yüan* should be attributed to Chu Yao rather than to T'ang Yin. But if Chu wrote *Letter to Li Tzu-yüan*, how does one explain T'ang Yin's seals on the scroll? My hypothesis is that sometime after Chu had composed the poem, he wrote a draft for T'ang to read during one of their discussions on poetry. As a draft, the scroll would not carry Chu's signature or seals. And if the draft were left at T'ang's for some time, it is quite possible that T'ang appropriated it for his collection and put his seals on it.

It is difficult to compare the calligraphy in *Letter to Li Tzu-yüan* with Chu Yao's calligraphy on *Traveling by Donkey*, partly because the characters differ in size. Furthermore, Chu's calligraphy for an inscription on a painting would have been done with greater care than his calligraphy in a rough draft. In any event, I find it difficult to place the calligraphy in *Letter to Li Tzu-yüan* among T'ang Yin's oeuvre.

Just as the style and expression of a work can establish its authorship, it can help to date the work. Consider, for example, T'ang Yin's poem on *Traveling by Donkey*. T'ang may have alluded to Wang Chang's story primarily for the rhyming value of the word *i*. On the other hand, it is also possible that he was alluding to difficulties in his personal life at the time of writing. In light of the events in T'ang's life, one may speculate that *Traveling by Donkey* was painted in the period between his return from the capital and his divorce in 1500. Chu Yao's poem on the painting seems to confirm this date. Chu's poem indicates that he knew not only the facts of T'ang's case, but also the circumstances leading up to the examination scandal. It would have taken some time for this information to surface. Unlike Wen Cheng-ming's letter castigating T'ang, which was written immediately after T'ang's return to Soochow, Chu's poem seems to have been written from a perspective gained from the passage of time. Moreover, if Chu were writing in 1499, it is unlikely that he would have mentioned apricot blossoms, which were flowering at precisely the time when T'ang was under interrogation by the Embroidered Uniform Palace Guard. The allusion would surely have angered T'ang. Considering the content of the two poems, I feel that *Traveling by Donkey* must have been painted in 1500, the year following the examination scandal.

As a second example of dating a work on the basis of style and expression, consider T'ang's poem on the painting *Beauty Holding a Fan in the Autumn Wind* (*Ch'iu-feng wan-shan t'u* 秋風紈扇圖; fig. 203) in the Shanghai Museum. The subject of both poem and painting is Lady Pan Chi 班姬 (ca. 48–after 6 B.C.), the favorite concubine of Han Emperor Ch'eng-ti at the time of his accession to the throne. When she was displaced in the emperor's affection by Chao Fei-yen 趙飛燕 (second half of the first century B.C.), Lady Pan expressed her bitterness in the following poem:

Open the new silk from Ch'i;  
It sparkles like new-fallen snow.  
Cut it to face two sides of a fan,  
Round and perfect as the full moon.

新裂齊紈素  
皎潔如霜雪  
裁為合歡扇  
團圓似明月

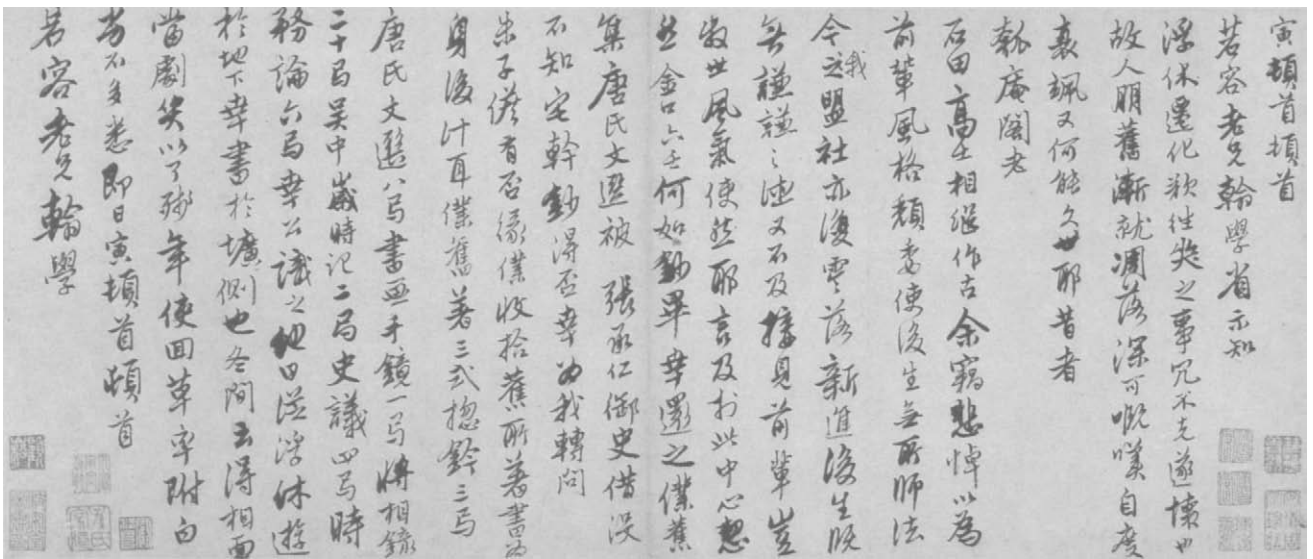


Figure 205. T'ang Yin, *Letter to Hsü Shang-te*. Double album leaf, ink on paper, 26.7 × 64 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Bequest of John M. Crawford, Jr., 1988

My lord keeps it always close at hand;  
 It creates a gentle breeze with the slightest movement.  
 But I dread the coming of autumn,  
 When chilly winds replace the summer's heat:  
 Then the fan lies forgotten in a chest,  
 And the affection lavished on it is no more.

出入君懷袖  
 動搖微風發  
 常恐秋節至  
 涼風奪炎熱  
 棄捐篋笥中  
 恩情中道絕

T'ang Yin's seven-character quatrain on the painting reads:

When autumn comes the fans of summer are packed away;  
 Why should the lady be offended by this treatment?  
 Look closely at the world around you:  
 Is there anyone whose affections do not turn warm  
 or cool with the prevailing winds?

秋來紈扇合收藏  
 何事佳人重怨傷  
 請把世情詳細看  
 大都誰不逐炎涼

The bitter tone of this poem is similar to that of T'ang's response to Wen Cheng-ming. Moreover, the second of the artist's seals placed beneath his signature on the scroll reads, "First on the Dragon/Tiger lists; Drunk a thousand times amidst the evanescent flowers of the night" (龍虎榜中名第一; 煙花隊裏醉千場). The unmistakable anger and resentment in *Beauty Holding a Fan in Autumn Wind* lead me to conclude that T'ang Yin probably painted it in the fall of 1499, soon after his return from Beijing.

By contrast, *The Moon Goddess Ch'ang O* (*Ch'ang O t'u* 嫦娥圖; fig. 204), in The Metropolitan Museum of Art, must have been painted long after the examination scandal. The poem T'ang inscribed on this painting is the expression of an old man reminiscing about the events of his youth:



Figure 206. T'ang Yin, *Contemplating Bamboo*. Handscroll, ink and colors on silk, H. 37.7 cm. Palace Museum, Taipei

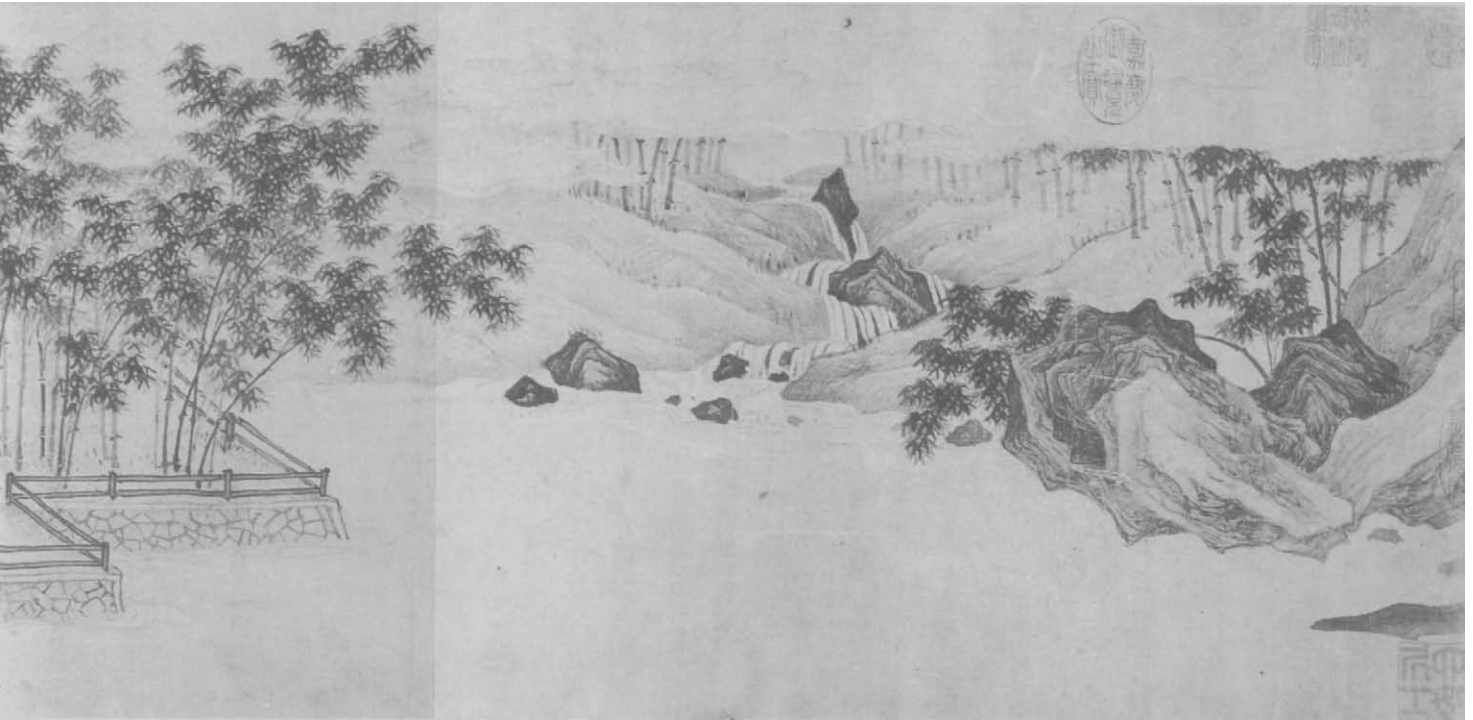
Long ago when I journeyed to the towers  
of the Kuang-han Palace,  
The magical birds and immortal flowers unfurled  
like embroidered banners.  
Because Ch'ang O loved the man of talent,  
She broke off the highest branch of cassia for him.

廣寒宮闕舊遊時  
鸞鶴天香捲繡旗  
自是嫦娥愛才子  
桂花折與最高枝

In Chinese mythology, the Kuang-han Palace is the abode of Ch'ang O on the moon. Within the palace walls is said to grow a huge cassia tree which Wu Kang 吳剛 was unable to damage after a thousand years of hacking at it with a giant ax. The journey to the Kuang-han Palace clearly alludes to T'ang Yin's participation in the Nanking Provincial Examination of 1498. The "magical birds and immortal flowers" are his fellow candidates, and the unfurling of "embroidered banners" symbolizes the scholars' efforts to produce their finest and most beautiful writing. Ch'ang O, who presides over the Kuang-han Palace, refers to none other than the examiner Liang Ch'u 梁儲, while the "man of talent" who receives the "highest branch of cassia" alludes to T'ang's taking first place in the Provincial Examination, or Autumn Portal.

T'ang's undated *Letter to Hsü Shang-te* (*Jo-jung t'ieh* 若容帖; fig. 205), in the John M. Crawford, Jr., Collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, is an important work not only for the high quality of the calligraphy, but also for the listing of books that the artist wrote in his lifetime.<sup>12</sup> The scroll reads:

I learned [from your letter] that Fou-hsiu 浮休 [Hsüeh Chang-hsien, an acquaintance from Chiang-yin] has died; I would like to go to his funeral,



but the press of affairs does not allow me to fulfill my wish. How deeply lamentable it is that old friends are dying one by one. As I reflect upon my own decline I wonder how much longer I can remain in this world. When Wu K'uan 吳寬 [1435-1504] and Shen Chou died in rapid succession, I grieved that their styles would no longer be seen and that those who came after them would have no teachers to follow. Not only does the younger generation lack the virtue of humility, but it is also out of contact with its forebears. The degenerate conditions of recent years must have produced this state! Having said this, I am at a loss [as to what can be done].

What do you think of the *Chin-k'ou liu-jen* 金口六壬 [*Treasury of Methods of Divination*, a work on practices using the six cardinal points]? Please return it when you have finished copying it. Some time ago, I edited a collection of my papers, the *T'ang-shih wen-hsüan* 唐氏文選 [*Selected Essays of Mr. T'ang*], but the censor Chang Ch'eng-jen 張承仁 borrowed it and has not returned it. I do not know whether or not he had it copied. Could you please ask Chu Tzu-tan 朱子儋 for me, as I am putting together my past writings in order that I might be remembered after my death.

In anticipation of my death, I have compiled a list of my works. I hope that all my writings—the three volumes of the *San-shih tsung-ch'ien* 三式總鈐 [*Three Methods of Divination*], the *T'ang-shih wen-hsüan*, one volume of *Shu-hua shou-ching* 書畫手鏡 [*Reflections on Painting and Calligraphy*], twenty volumes of *Chiang-hsiang lu* 將相錄 [*Biographies of Generals and Ministers*], two volumes of *Wu-chung sui-shih chi* 吳中歲時記 [*Annual Festivals of the Wu Region*], four

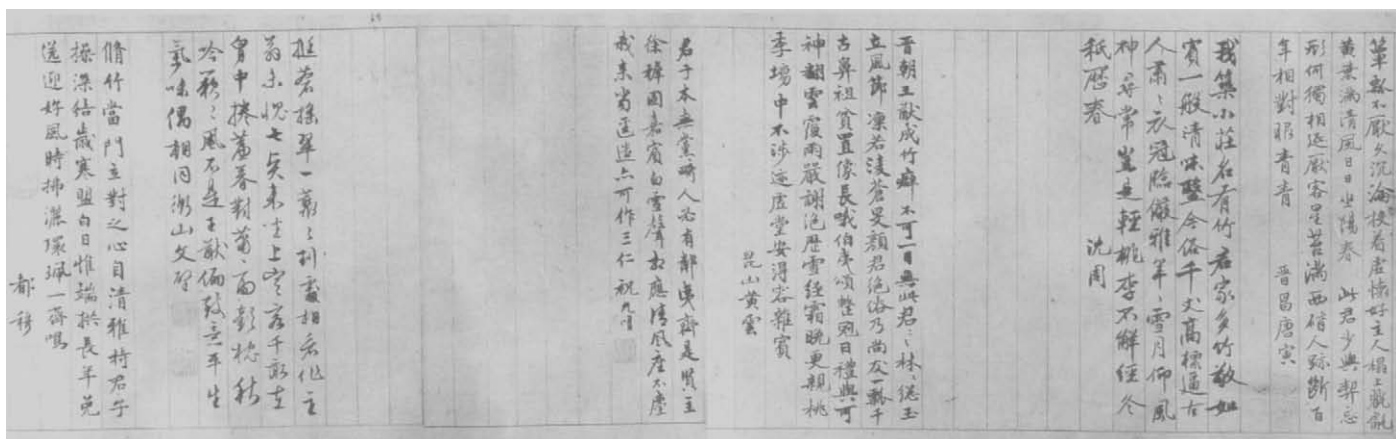


Figure 207. Colophons by T'ang Yin, Shen Chou (1427-1509), Huang Yün (active ca. 1490s), Chu Yün-ming (1461-1527), Wen Cheng-ming (1470-1559), and Tu Mu (1459-1525) on T'ang Yin's *Contemplating Bamboo* (fig. 206)

volumes of *Shih-i* 史議 [*Observations on History*], and the *Shih-wu lun* 時務論 [*Essays on Current Affairs*] in six volumes—are remembered. Some day, when I have followed Fou-hsiu into the ground, I hope you will have these inscribed on my tombstone.

If we should get to meet this winter, we ought to close out the year in merry laughter.

I write this in haste to send back with the messenger who brought your letter. I shall not relate anything further as I am in such a bad mood.

[Written] on the same day, Yin greets his fraternal friend the scholar Jo-jung 若容 [Hsü Shang-te's alternate name].<sup>13</sup>

The letter lists a total of forty-four volumes that T'ang claims to have written in the course of his life. Today, all that remains of his writings is a fragment of his selected essays. For T'ang to say that Wu K'uan and Shen Chou died in rapid succession—in fact, they died within five years of each other—suggests that considerable time had passed since these deaths occurred. As the rest of the letter makes clear, he was setting his affairs in order in anticipation of his own death. Considering that T'ang died in the twelfth month of *kuei-wei* (1523/24), it is very likely that the *Letter to Hsü Shang-te* was written sometime that year. At the earliest, the *Letter to Hsü Shang-te* would date from a year or two before T'ang Yin's death.

When I wrote my *Study of T'ang Yin*, I had not seen the handscroll *Contemplating Bamboo* (*Tui-chu t'u* 對竹圖; fig. 206), in the Palace Museum, Taipei. I knew of the painting only from Yao Chi-heng's 姚際恆 (1647-1701) *Records of the Paintings and Calligraphies in the Family Collection of Antiquity Hall* (*Hao ku-t'ang chia-ts'ang shu-hua chi* 好古堂家藏書畫記), which gives an account of the colophons written by T'ang Yin himself, Shen Chou, Huang Yün 黃雲 (active ca. 1490s), Chu Yün-ming, Wen Cheng-ming, and Tu Mu.<sup>14</sup> Knowing that T'ang had terminated his friendship with Tu Mu after the examination scandal, I inferred from the presence of Tu's colophon that *Contemplating Bamboo* was probably painted before 1499. From this early date, I also inferred that the style of the painting was influenced by Shen Chou and Wen Cheng-ming.

Since that time, I have seen the painting. The composition is organized with the forms concentrated mainly on the left and the voids on the right. At the extreme left of the scroll, one sees a rocky bank with several miniature trees. To the right, facing the bank, is a large rock, from which two pines twist upward until they are cut off by the top edge of the scroll. Between the bank and the large rock, the base of a mountain is faintly visible beneath some clouds. A stream winds down from the middle distance and flows to the right. To the right of the pines, nestled in their shadow, is a thatched house in which a man sits quietly gazing out at a bamboo grove. Beyond the bamboo grove is a riverbank sloping down to a rock-strewn stream. At the extreme right, the focus shifts to more rocks and bamboo in the foreground. A band of clouds outlined in pale ink extends across the upper part of the scroll. Echoing the cloud band above is the stream running across the bottom of the scroll. The trees and bamboo fading in and out of the clouds balance the solids and voids. The overall effect of the painting is one of refined understatement combined with elegant strength.

As I had suspected, the pines in the painting are similar to those of Wen Cheng-ming's middle period; the small trees resemble those in Wen's early works; and the rocks are finely textured. The painting style is typical of what Wu I-p'eng 吳一鵬 (1460-1542) called "painting rocks and branches like seal script" (*shang-shih shu-chih ju chuan-chou* 山石樹枝如篆籀).<sup>15</sup>

The scroll bears a round seal with the characters "Wu Ch'ü" 吳趨 on the title page, a square seal reading "T'ang Po-hu" below the artist's signature, and the partial impression of a seal with T'ang's sobriquet "Liu-ju chü-shih" in the lower right corner of the painting.

The colophons are inscribed on two sheets of black-bordered *Chin-su shan* 金粟山 sutra paper (see fig. 207). On one sheet appear the colophons by T'ang Yin, Shen Chou, Huang Yün, and Chu Yün-ming; on the other, those by Wen Cheng-ming and Tu Mu. Several blank lines separate the end of the first sheet from the beginning of the second, and where the two sheets are joined the black borders at the bottom do not quite meet.

Huang Yün's colophon makes clear that the painting was done for a certain Master Yen. That Yen was apparently a great admirer of the filial brothers Po I 伯夷 and Shu Ch'i 叔齊 and hung a picture of them in his house is indicated by a line from Chu Yün-ming's colophon, "I and Ch'i are worthy hosts, Hsü Chih the honored guest."<sup>16</sup> Since the host was surnamed Yen, T'ang Yin's poem draws on Confucius's description of his disciple Yen Hui 顏回: "Living in a mean dwelling on a bowlful of rice and a ladleful of water is a hardship most men would find intolerable, but Hui does not allow this to affect his joy."<sup>17</sup> T'ang's poem reads:

Not despising bamboo bowls or gourd cups, he has long lived in seclusion;	簞瓢不厭久沈淪
I have found an open-minded, ideal host.	投著虛懷好主人
The cover on the couch is piled high with yellow leaves;	榻上氈觀黃葉滿
But day after day I bask in the springlike warmth of his personality.	清風日日坐陽春

These lines indicate that T'ang must have been a guest for some time at Yen's and that the painting was done in gratitude for Yen's hospitality. Below the poem T'ang had affixed his "Nan-ching chieh-yüan" seal, indicating that the inscription could not have



been written before T'ang took first place in the Provincial Examination of 1498. In all likelihood, Yen was T'ang's host during his sojourn in Nanking. The circulation of two colophon papers that were later joined would have saved time, suggesting that the painting and the inscriptions were done in a rush. These details lead me to conclude that *Contemplating Bamboo* must date from the interval between T'ang's return from Nanking and his departure for Beijing at the end of 1498, most likely in the ninth month.

As I noted earlier, Chu Yün-ming's epitaph for T'ang states that T'ang adopted the sobriquet Liu-ju chü-shih only upon his return from the capital in 1499, at the time he took up the study of Buddhism. Now the worn impression of the "Liu-ju chü-shih" seal on *Contemplating Bamboo* suggests that the seal had been used for some time. Assuming that Chu's account is accurate, the date I have proposed for the painting would be wrong. On the other hand, Chu wrote T'ang Yin's epitaph at least twenty-four years after the events in question, so it is possible that he misrecorded the date. I find no inconsistencies between the style of the painting, T'ang's signature and seals, and the colophons. In light of the events of T'ang's life, I find it plausible that he would have adopted the sobriquet as early as 1494, the year of his mother's illness and death and of his sister's suicide. These tragic events, closely following the death of his father and of his first wife the preceding fall, might well have made T'ang turn to Buddhism for solace.<sup>18</sup>

At the time of the Taipei Palace Museum's exhibition "Ninety Years of Wu-School Painting," materials about T'ang Yin were not as plentiful as they are today. Originally scheduled for 1976, the exhibition was to have included not only paintings by the Four Great Ming Masters—Shen Chou, Wen Cheng-ming, T'ang Yin, and Ch'iu Ying—but also books, ceramics, lacquerware, and literati paraphernalia of the period. When the exhibition was moved up a year, the decision was made to focus only on painting. In the catalogue for the exhibition, I dated T'ang Yin's fan painting *Brewing Tea* (*Hun-ch'a t'u* 烹茶圖), in the Palace Museum, Taipei, to around 1513.<sup>19</sup> Yet both the style of the painting and the calligraphy in T'ang's signature are close to those of *Contemplating Bamboo*, which I now date to 1498. Based on what is now known about T'ang Yin, I feel that a number of his paintings in the Palace Museum, Taipei, should be considered works from his early period. These are: *Farming in Chiang-nan* (*Chiang-nan nung-shih* 江南農事; fig. 208), *Thatched Pavilion by a Deep River* (*Chiang-shen ts'ao-ko t'u* 江深草閣圖), *Landscape Fan* (*Shan-shui shan* 山水扇), *Tending the Fields* (*Shou-keng t'u* 守耕圖), *Walking with a Staff among Towering Peaks* (*Ts'eng-yen ts'e-chang t'u* 層巖策杖圖), and *T'ao Ku Presents a Poem* (*T'ao Ku tseng-tz'u* 陶穀贈詞; fig. 209).

In terms of painting style and signature, *Farming in Chiang-nan* has little in common with works from T'ang's middle and late periods. At the time of the Wu-school painting exhibition, however, the mature brushwork, extremely precise composition, and finely textured mountains in this painting reminded me of T'ang's *Journey to the South* (*Nan-yu t'u* 南遊圖), in the Freer Gallery of Art, so I assigned it to the same period. In fact, the texturing of mountains and the treatment of trees in *Farming* more closely resemble those in T'ang's *Lantern Festival in the Capital* (*Shang-yüan k'an-teng t'u* 上元看燈圖; figs. 210, 212), in the Palace Museum, Taipei. T'ang's brushwork in *Farming* and *Lantern Festival*, both works on paper, seems rougher and more forceful than that in *Contemplating Bamboo*, which is painted on the finest silk. Yet all three paintings are clearly related in style, indicating that they must have been done about the same time.



Figure 208. T'ang Yin, *Farming in Chiang-nan*. Hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 74.4 × 28.1 cm. Palace Museum, Taipei

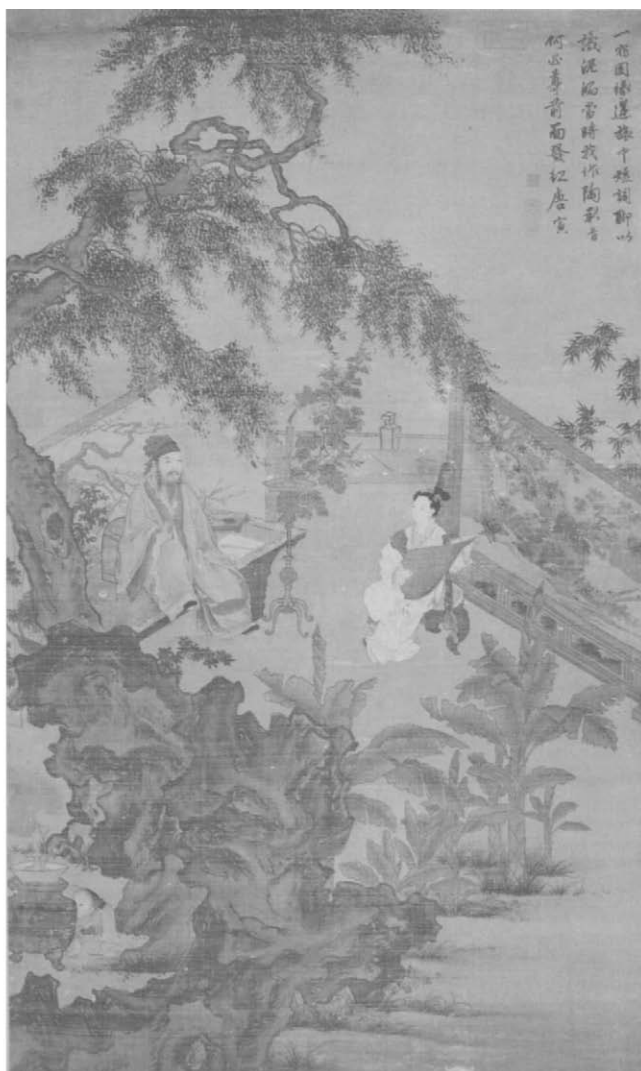


Figure 209. T'ang Yin, *T'ao Ku Presents a Poem*. Hanging scroll, ink and color on silk, 168.8 × 102.1 cm. Palace Museum, Taipei

Although *Lantern Festival* is a tracing copy (or “split copy”), which is made by peeling off a layer of paper from the back of the original painting, it must be quite faithful to the original. The version in the Palace Museum carries only the “T’ang Po-hu” seal.<sup>20</sup> The absence of the “Nan-ching chieh-yüan” seal suggests that at the time the painting was done, T’ang was already looking ahead to the Metropolitan Examination. Since T’ang visited the capital only once in his life, at the time of the Metropolitan Examination, I would date *Lantern Festival* to the fifteenth day of the first lunar month of 1499.

Working from the signature on *Contemplating Bamboo* to related works, we come to *Lantern Festival* and *Tending the Fields* (fig. 211). And starting from the signature on *Farming in Chiang-nan* (see fig. 208), we are led to *Walking with a Staff among Towering Peaks*, *Ink Bamboo* (*Mo-chu* 墨竹; see fig. 199), and *Drunken Fisherman by a Reed Bank*

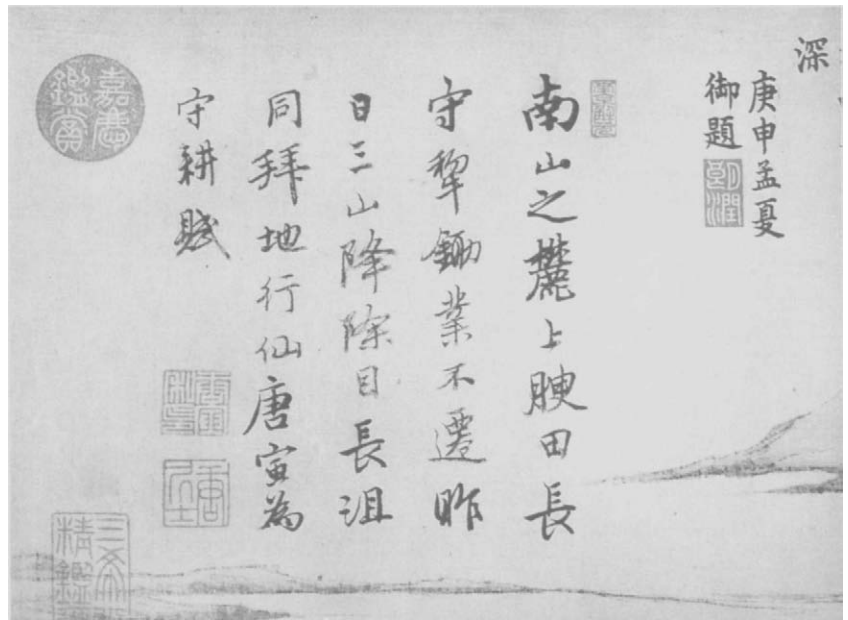


Figure 211. T'ang Yin, signature, from *Tending the Fields*. Detail of handscroll, ink on silk. H. 32.2 cm. Palace Museum, Taipei



Figure 212. T'ang Yin, detail from *Lantern Festival in the Capital* (fig. 210)

Figure 210. After T'ang Yin, *Lantern Festival in the Capital*. Hanging scroll (tracing copy), ink on paper. Palace Museum, Taipei



Figure 213. T'ang Yin,  
*Lady Pan Holding a Fan*.  
Hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper,  
150.4 × 63.6 cm.  
Palace Museum, Taipei



Figure 214. T'ang Yin,  
*Drunken Fisherman by a Reed Bank*.  
Hanging scroll, ink on paper, 72.4 × 36.8 cm.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York;  
Bequest of John M. Crawford, Jr., 1988

(*Wei-chu tsui-yü t'u* 葦渚醉漁圖; figs. 158, 214), the latter two of which are in the John M. Crawford, Jr., Collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

T'ang Yin's calligraphy from this period is a somewhat broader, looser version of Chao Meng-fu's 趙孟頫 (1254–1322). The broad, loose character of his calligraphy finds an echo in his painting style, which is characterized by pale ink tones, dark ink accents, and an emphasis on voids. These features are found in all the above-mentioned paintings, leading me to speculate that they all date from the years between 1494 and 1499.

In my discussion of dating T'ang Yin's poetry on the basis of style and expression, I had speculated that the poem on *Beauty Holding a Fan in the Autumn Wind* (fig. 203) was written soon after T'ang's return from the Metropolitan Examination in 1499. Judging by the woman's face, which is very simply painted, and the drapery of her robe, which is executed with rapid strokes, T'ang could not be considered an expert at painting women at the time.

In *Woman Sleeping on a Banana Leaf* (*Chiao-yeh shih-nü t'u* 蕉葉仕女圖; fig. 216), in The Metropolitan Museum of Art, T'ang's brushwork is rather similar to that in *Beauty Holding a Fan*. The brushwork in the banana leaf shows traces of Shen Chou's influence. The woman's figure is awkwardly rendered, and neither the position of the fan under her arm nor the depiction of the fan is very accurate. For these reasons, I would date this painting to a year or two before *Beauty Holding a Fan*.

In *T'ao Ku Presents a Poem*, a large painting on silk, the drapery lines are steady, the contours of the woman's face are outlined with great care, and the face itself is painted pink with the details of eyebrows and eyes gone over in ink (see fig. 209). In the catalogue for the Wu-school painting exhibition, I dated this painting to around 1517. In my *Study of T'ang Yin*, I noted that the painting showed the influence of Tu Chin 杜堇 (active ca. 1465–1500) and included several details to demonstrate the similarities. I have not changed my opinion on this point. Now, T'ang met Tu Chin in Beijing in late 1498 or early 1499. Even if he became seriously interested in painting women only at that time, surely it would not have taken him eighteen years to perfect his skill! A more logical date for *T'ao Ku Presents a Poem* might be around 1503.

*Lady Pan Holding a Fan* (*Pan Chi t'uan-shan t'u* 班姬團扇圖; fig. 213), in the Palace Museum, Taipei, gives evidence of further improvement in T'ang's technique. The treatment of the drapery is more animated; the face is no longer painted pink with the features gone over a second time in ink. At the time of the Wu-school painting exhibition, I dated this painting to around 1509 because Wen Cheng-ming signed his poem on the painting "Cheng-ming" rather than "Wen Pi" 文璧 (he changed his signature in 1509, at the age of forty). I still feel that a date around 1509 is appropriate for this painting.

Of the five paintings of women which I have chosen to discuss here, *The Moon Goddess Ch'ang O* (see fig. 204) is the most mature. T'ang renders Ch'ang O's face with more attention to expression than technique. Every brushstroke flutters and dances yet remains under control. The calligraphy in his signature also flutters and dances, displaying a vitality similar to that seen in *Letter to Hsü Shang-te* (see fig. 205).

The composition of T'ang's hanging scroll *Landscape*, in the Palace Museum, Taipei (fig. 215), is almost identical to that of his *Reminiscing in a Thatched Pavilion* (*Ts'ao-t'ang hua-chiu* 草堂話舊), recorded in Ho Cheng-kuang's *Paintings by T'ang Yin* (*T'ang Liu-ju hua-chi* 唐六如畫集), except that the youth shown in the lower right corner of *Landscape* is

Figure 215. T'ang Yin, *Landscape*.  
Hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 139.4 × 47.5 cm.  
Palace Museum, Taipei



Figure 216. T'ang Yin,  
*Woman Sleeping on a Banana Leaf*.  
Handscroll, ink on silk, H. 20.5 cm.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art;  
Fletcher Fund, 1947





Figure 218.  
T'ang Yin, poem  
and signature on  
*Whispering Pines  
on a Mountain Path*

Figure 217. T'ang Yin,  
*Whispering Pines on a Mountain Path*, dated 1516.  
Hanging scroll, ink and colors on silk,  
194.5 × 102.8 cm.  
Palace Museum, Taipei

missing from *Reminiscing*. The composition is based on Chou Ch'en's *Guest Arriving at the Mountain Studio* (*Shan-chai k'o-chih* 山齋客至), now in the Palace Museum, Taipei. In my *Study of T'ang Yin*, I dated *Landscape* to between 1500 and 1505, and in the catalogue *Ninety Years of Wu-School Painting*, I placed it in 1504.

T'ang inscribed a seven-character quatrain on *Landscape*. The calligraphy here incorporates some elements of the style of Yen Chen-ch'ing 顏真卿 (709–85). (The classic example of T'ang Yin writing in the style of Yen Chen-ch'ing is his signature on the handscroll *Landscape* [*Shan-shui chen-chi* 山水真跡], a work which I dated to 1499 in the Wu-school catalogue, and which is also in the Palace Museum, Taipei.) Some connois-

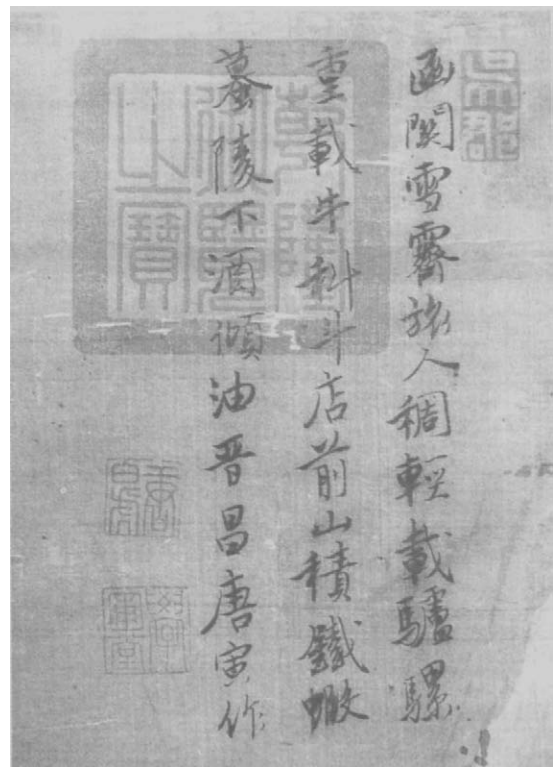


Figure 220. T'ang Yin, poem and signature on *Mountain Pass after Snow*

Figure 219. T'ang Yin, *Mountain Pass after Snow*. Hanging scroll, ink and colors on silk, 69.9 × 37.3 cm. Palace Museum, Taipei

seurs do not recognize the calligraphy in *Landscape* as T'ang Yin's; they accept only the style of his inscription on *Whispering Pines on a Mountain Path* (*Shan-lu sung-sheng* 山路松聲; figs. 217, 218), dated 1516, in the Palace Museum, Taipei. Whether the inscription on the *Landscape* was done by one or two hands is a matter still open to debate, but I find similarities between the calligraphy on the *Landscape* and *Whispering Pines* and the calligraphy on *T'ao Ku Presents a Poem*.

*Mountain Pass after Snow* (*Han-kuan hsüeh-chi t'u* 函關雪霽圖; figs. 219, 220) and *Parting at Chin-ch'ang* (*Chin-ch'ang pieh-yi* 金閭別意; fig. 221), both in the Palace Museum, Taipei, are two paintings which seem to be building momentum toward a turning point





in T'ang Yin's style. Both works also show the strong influence of the Che 浙 school. For these reasons, I dated both to around 1507 in the Wu-school catalogue. In the *Study of T'ang Yin*, I wrote:

*Parting at Chin-ch'ang* is a painting in which the Che-school flavor is particularly strong. It can be described as follows: in the foreground the bare branches are done with short, fragmented strokes, while the texturing of the rock forms is more fluid and relaxed. However, brushstrokes appear only on the mountain peaks; the slopes of the mountains are done exclusively with a dry wash.

In parentheses, I added: "The acceptance or rejection of this painting is closely related to one's opinion of its signature; colleagues who have not studied [T'ang Yin's] signatures carefully might at first doubt the [authenticity of this] painting."<sup>21</sup> In fact, the brushwork in *Parting at Chin-ch'ang* and in *Mountain Pass after Snow* reveals many similarities with that in *Whispering Pines*.

Another work from T'ang Yin's prime is the fan painting *Bamboo in a Spring Thunderstorm* (*Mo-chu* 墨竹; fig. 223), in The Metropolitan Museum of Art. T'ang's signature on this fan is similar to his signature on *Mountain Pass after Snow*.

*Reminiscing with Hsi-chou* (*Hsi-chou hua-chiu* 西洲話舊; fig. 222), in the Palace Museum, Taipei, was painted in 1519, when T'ang was fifty. Although he was ill at the time, he infused the work with his usual imaginative power. The texturing of the rocks



Figure 221. T'ang Yin,  
*Parting at Chin-ch'ang*.  
Detail of handscroll, ink on silk,  
H. 28.5 cm.  
Palace Museum, Taipei



Figure 222. T'ang Yin,  
*Reminiscing with Hsi-chou*.  
Hanging scroll, ink on paper,  
110.7 × 52.3 cm.  
Palace Museum, Taipei



Figure 223. T'ang Yin, *Bamboo in a Spring Thunderstorm*.  
Folding fan mounted as album leaf, ink on gold-flecked paper, 22.8 × 50.1 cm.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York;  
Gift of Douglas Dillon, 1988



Figure 224. T'ang Yin, *Song of One Year*, dated 1522.  
Folding fan mounted as album leaf, ink on gold-flecked paper, 22.2 × 50.1 cm.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York;  
Gift of Douglas Dillon, 1988

recalls the style of his early period, but the brushwork is more deliberate and forceful. T'ang inscribed this painting with a poem in blunt, vigorous calligraphy that incorporates the square corners characteristic of Yen Chen-ch'ing's style and tends toward the early style of Mi Fu 米芾 (1052–1107). The poem is an honest portrayal of the artist's nature:

Drunkenly dancing and madly singing for these fifty years,	醉舞狂歌五十年
Seeking pleasure among the flowers	花中行樂月中眠
and sleeping in the moonlight.	
For some reason my name is known throughout the land;	漫勞海內傳名字
Who would believe I don't even have money for wine?	誰信腰間沒酒錢
I am ashamed to call myself a scholar,	書本自慚稱學者
But others seem to think I am a divine immortal.	衆人疑道是神仙
If perhaps my works achieve small passages of quality,	些須做得工夫處
It is because I have not lost the tranquillity	不損胸前一片天
which lodges in my heart.	

In *Song of One Year* (*I-nien ko* 一年歌; fig. 224), inscribed on a fan in The Metropolitan Museum of Art, we have an example of T'ang Yin's calligraphy from the last years of his life. T'ang wrote the poem in 1522 at the age of fifty-three. His calligraphy here is similar in style to that in *Letter to Hsü Shang-te*, which I have dated to between 1521 and 1523 on the basis of its contents. Yet the emphatic modulations and rather square corners of the characters on the fan are closer to Yen Chen-ch'ing's style, while the characters in *Letter to Hsü Shang-te* show less modulation and rounder corners, recalling the style of Li Yung 李邕 (678–747). Nonetheless, the brushwork and the structure of the characters in both works are fundamentally the same.

To summarize, T'ang Yin's calligraphy in his early works seems to look back through Chao Meng-fu to Wang Hsi-chih 王羲之 (ca. 307–ca. 365). Later he patterned his calligraphy on Yen Chen-ch'ing. Still later, T'ang seemed to look back through Chao Meng-fu to Li Yung. At times, he would practice two styles contemporaneously, but he gave all his works his unique flavor. His writing continued to improve throughout his life, and his late works are among the best.

In painting, T'ang was influenced by Shen Chou, yet even his earliest landscapes give evidence of a distinctive creativity. As a result of studying with Chou Ch'en, T'ang incorporated certain elements of Chou's style. Although works by the two are related, each maintains his particularity. T'ang Yin often practiced two styles during the same period, and even combined different styles in a single work. Whatever the mode, his works are impetuous, aggressive, and powerful. His late works revive features of his early period but give evidence of increased skill and maturity.

T'ang's early paintings of women fall somewhere between the styles of Shen Chou and Tai Chin 戴進 (1388–1462). For a time, he was also strongly influenced by Tu Chin. Having studied both ancient and modern masters, he blended their characteristics into his own unique style. His monochrome flower paintings, which are not discussed here, are broadly based on Shen Chou's, but are more beautiful than Shen's.

T'ang Yin suffered a great deal in his youth and endured scorn and humiliation following the examination scandal. Had he been less resolute in character, he might have

wandered through life without direction. On the other hand, had he not encountered obstacles to an official career, or had he been willing to serve as a minor functionary after his conviction, he might not have nurtured his art to such extraordinary heights.

Translated by Louise Yuhas

#### NOTES

The notes were compiled by the editors.

- 1 Wen Cheng-ming's letter has not survived, but T'ang Yin's response to Wen is in T'ang Chung-mien, comp., *T'ang Po-hu ch'üan-chi* (Collected works of T'ang Po-hu [Yin]) (1801; reprint, Shanghai: Kuang-i, 1918), *chüan* 5, pp. 1b-4a.
- 2 See Chu Yün-ming, *T'ang Po-hu mu-chih-ming* (Epitaph for T'ang Yin), in his *Chu-shih shih-wen-chi* (Collected poems and prose by Chu Yün-ming), in *Ming-tai i-shu chia hui-k'an hsü-chi* (Collected works of Ming artists, second series) (Taipei: National Central Library, 1971), no. 4, vol. 2, *chüan* 17, pp. 1222-27.
- 3 Yüan Chih's edition of T'ang's collected works is reproduced in the prefaces to *T'ang Po-hu ch'üan-chi*, pp. 1a-1b.
- 4 Ho Ch'eng-ta, comp., *T'ang Po-hu hsien-sheng chüan-chi* (Complete works of Master T'ang Yin) (1615; reprint, Taipei: Hsüeh-sheng, 1970), vols. 1, 2.
- 5 T'ang, comp., *T'ang Po-hu ch'üan-chi*.
- 6 Chiang Chao-shen, *Kuan-yü T'ang Yin te yen-chiu* (Study of T'ang Yin) (Taipei: Palace Museum, 1976).
- 7 Cheng Ch'ien, *T'ang Po-hu shih-chi-i chien-chu* (Notes on unrecorded poems by T'ang Yin) (Taipei: Lien-ching, 1982).
- 8 Hsiao T'ung, comp., *Wen-hsüan* (Anthology of literature), annotated by Li Shan (reprint, Beijing: Shang-wu, 1959).
- 9 A. C. Graham, trans., *The Book of Lieh-tzu: A New Translation* (London: John Murray, 1960), p. 109.
- 10 See Cheng, *T'ang Po-hu shih-chi-i chien-chu*, preface, pp. 1-5.
- 11 Pan Ku, *Han-shu* (History of the former Han), 4th ed. (Beijing: Chung-hua, 1983), vol. 11, *chüan* 87, pp. 3513-87.
- 12 The letter lists a total of forty-four volumes. Today, only a fragment of the eight-chapter *T'ang-shih wen-hsüan* remains. The loss of *Shu-hua shou-ching*, which probably contained the sum of T'ang Yin's experiences in painting and calligraphy, is a great pity. When I first read the passage in Chu Yün-ming's epitaph for T'ang describing the subjects that T'ang was studying in his last years, I had not come across any of T'ang's writings, so I did not give it much credence and did not include it in my *Study of T'ang Yin*. Now, having seen *Letter to Hsü Shang-te*, I believe Chu's account is accurate. T'ang had probably already assembled the materials into a book a short time before he died, but because Chu did not actually see the manuscript, he could only describe its contents in the most general terms.
- 13 For the identification of Hsü Shang-te as Jo-jung, see Marc F. Wilson and Kwan S. Wong, *Friends of Wen Cheng-ming: A View from the Crawford Collection* (New York: China Institute in America, 1974), pp. 72-75.
- 14 Yao Chi-heng, *Hao-ku-t'ang chia-ts'ang shu-hua chi* (Records of the paintings and calligraphies in the family collection of Antiquity Hall), MSTS (Shanghai: Shen-chou kuo-kuang she, 1928), vol. 3, no. 8.
- 15 I used to think this technique of painting mountains dated to T'ang Yin's middle and late periods, yet *Contemplating Bamboo* was painted in 1498.
- 16 These men were recluses who shunned office (see Herbert A. Giles, *A Chinese Biographical Dictionary* [London: Bernard Quaritch, 1898], pp. 301, 631).
- 17 Confucius, *The Analects (Lun-yü)*, trans. D. C. Lau (Harmondsworth, U.K.: Penguin Books, 1979), p. 82 (Confucius *Analects* 6.11).
- 18 If this line of thinking is accepted, then T'ang's *Landscape Album* (eight album leaves mounted as a handscroll), in The Metropolitan Museum of Art, should be pushed back in time as well. The handscroll carries on the title page Wen Cheng-ming's inscription "Liu-ju's Ink Masterpieces" (*Liu-ju mo-miao* 六如墨妙).
- 19 The catalogue, *Wu-p'ai hua chiu-shih-nien chan* (Ninety years of Wu-school painting) (Taipei: Palace Museum, 1975), was completed in a rush. During the exhibition, Professor Richard Edwards made a number of corrections to my dating of Shen Chou's paintings. While I was reviewing the material recently, I found many other questions that need further discussion.
- 20 The characters in the artist's inscription seem to have been outlined first, then filled in, or perhaps touched up, after the paper was split. All the seals on this painting, with the exception of the Ch'ing palace collection seals, are copies.
- 21 Chiang, *Kuan-yü T'ang Yin te yen-chiu*, p. 121.

# The Aesthetics of Irony in Late Ming Literature and Painting

ANDREW H. PLAKS

It is something of an anomaly for this essay to be included among the learned studies on Chinese art gathered in this volume. This is not simply an apology for my own lack of expertise in the field of art history, but, more important, a recognition of the fact that my particular area of interest, the vernacular novels of the Ming and Ch'ing periods, would seem to be far removed from the concerns of this collection. True, the papers brought together here have been dedicated to the notion of combining studies of Chinese art and literature under the rubric of "Words and Images." But, of course, what we generally mean by such formulations is the generative interplay of the "images" of painting and calligraphy with the "words" of lyric verse—as spelled out in the subtitle of the conference for which these papers were originally prepared. Even if one exercises a bit of poetic license and stretches the scope of these "words" to include the full range of verbal patterning taken in by the Chinese terms *wen-chang* 文章 (literary composition) or *wen* (literary expression), it must still be acknowledged that the colloquial novels and stories of the Ming and Ch'ing periods remain somewhere outside of the conceptual boundaries governed by the aesthetic canons of verbal and visual lyricism in China. In spite of this, however, I would like to suggest here that certain aspects of the critical theory developed in conjunction with traditional Chinese prose fiction may not be as entirely unrelated to the aesthetics of these other, perhaps finer, arts as we ordinarily imagine.

Probably the easiest justification for speaking of the aesthetics of Ming-Ch'ing fiction in the same breath as those of painting and calligraphy would be to recall the simple fact that the rise of the novel as a major literary form in China occurred during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—a period of great cultural and intellectual creativity that also saw remarkable achievements in Chinese painting theory and practice. In a recent study on the principal examples of this literary development, the so-called four masterworks (*ssu ta ch'i-shu* 四大奇書; i.e., *San-kuo chih yen-i* 三國志演義, *Shui-hu chuan* 水滸傳, *Hsi-yu chi* 西遊記, and *Chin P'ing Mei* 金瓶梅), I have argued that these books ought to be read and interpreted as immediate reflections of the particular intellectual currents of the Chia-ching and Wan-li reigns.<sup>1</sup> This view, of course, diverges sharply from the prevailing opinion, which takes these texts primarily as the culmination of much earlier narrative traditions, with written antecedents going back as far as the Sung and Yüan periods. In taking an opposite line of reasoning, to emphasize instead the radical transformation of these narrative materials when they are recast into this new literary form—a development which by all available evidence took place only around the sixteenth century—I rely on both internal analysis of the structural and rhetorical conventions of the emerging genre of full-length "novels" (*hsiao-shuo* 小說) and on external information regarding the publishing histories of the earliest full recensions of the works in question.<sup>2</sup> The argument,

in short, is that these literary monuments sprang from very much the same cultural milieu as that which spawned the great literati paintings of the time. For this reason, I speak of these four and of certain other major examples of the new genre as “literati novels” (*wen-jen hsiao-shuo* 文人小說), in order to emphasize the common ground they share with certain aesthetic directions taken by literati painting in the same period.<sup>3</sup>

In an introductory essay to my study on the four “masterworks,” I have attempted to account for the emergence of a sophisticated new genre of prose fiction at precisely this time in terms of the sense of a new beginning—or, at least, an upsurge in creativity—across practically the entire spectrum of cultural life from, let us say, the Hung-chih through the K’ang-hsi reigns, or, roughly speaking, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by Western reckoning.<sup>4</sup> As we have learned from a large number of recent studies, this happens to have been a rather heady time in Chinese history, marked by profound political, social, and economic changes, such as the progressive deepening of faults in the monolith of dynastic rule, the blurring of class affinities through sharply increased social mobility, an uneasy stalemate in border and coastal defenses, and economic dislocations attendant upon the rapid shift to a money economy.<sup>5</sup> It is, of course, difficult to insist on a causal connection between these developments and the new trends in cultural activity, but it becomes just as difficult to resist drawing such conclusions when one notes that this same span of time was also a period of unprecedented intellectual ferment. This was, after all, the age of Wang Yang-ming 王陽明 (1472–1529), whose model career in the early Chia-ching reign caused an immediate sensation, and sent out ripples of influence triggering waves of response and counter-response, conditioning intellectual life well into the next century.<sup>6</sup> It was also a period of notable resurgence in Buddhist and Taoist thought, as well as the elevation of “three teachings” (*san-chiao* 三教) syncretism from the level of popular religious teachings to a pervasive mode of philosophical discourse.<sup>7</sup>

To say that all or any of these factors may have led to a kind of “crisis of consciousness,” as has been suggested, is probably an overstatement.<sup>8</sup> However, it is not only recent scholars who have by hindsight identified the significance of these developments. Observers of the time also attested to the new winds which were beginning to blow into view a wide range of unaccustomed intellectual attitudes, from vague malaise to something not far short of what we now call alienation. At least, in the literature of the period we seem to find an unmistakable gauge of varying degrees of heightened self-consciousness about the role of the literati (*wen-jen*), if a commodity as elusive as self-consciousness can in fact be calibrated and compared. And it is precisely this critical sensibility which I believe informs the consolidation of full-length vernacular fiction as well, and is responsible for the emergence of this genre in China a century or two before the rise of a parallel literary phenomenon in Europe.<sup>9</sup>

When one speaks of painting and calligraphy within this historical and cultural context, many of the same factors ring a familiar bell. This should not be surprising, since sixteenth-century Chinese colloquial literature and painting are linked in a rather concrete way: the same sort of *wen-jen*—in fact many of the same individuals—were at least tangentially involved in both of these endeavors. To give just a few examples, the names of Wen Cheng-ming 文徵明 (1470–1559) and Li K’ai-hsien 李開先 (1502–68) are linked to the early publishing history of the full recension (the so-called *fan-pen* 繁本) of the *Shui-hu chuan*, and later in the century no less a literati figure than Tung Ch’i-ch’ang

董其昌 (1555–1636) plays a role in the story of the earliest circulation of the *Chin P'ing Mei*.<sup>10</sup> By the same token, the eccentric talents of Hsü Wei 徐渭 (1521–93) extend from painting and calligraphy to the area of innovative dramatic art. Meanwhile, influential critics and connoisseurs, such as Chou Liang-kung 周亮工 (1612–77), showed special interest in both these ends of the artistic spectrum.<sup>11</sup> But the real point I wish to pursue here is not that of personal interrelations, but rather the sense of novelty or “newness” which accrues to certain aesthetic tendencies in nonverbal as well as verbal representation at this time.

In so many scrolls of the late Ming period there is a certain novelty at work that immediately strikes the viewer as somehow familiar, vaguely consonant with the modern expectations of pictorial art. If this were just the impression of nonexperts such as myself—who may often fail to appreciate the subtle continuities and internal allusions that bind Ming-Ch'ing artifacts to their ongoing tradition—it could easily be dismissed. But very similar ideas find expression in the writings of virtually all of the art historians on the painting of the period, who regularly employ such adjectives as “eccentric,” “iconoclastic,” “heterodox,” and “individualist” in a manner that accentuates the unconventional side of these developments.<sup>12</sup> In saying as much, the modern critics are also following the path of Ch'ing scholars, whose application of epithets such as “wild” or “heterodox” to these tendencies is not always fully derogatory.<sup>13</sup> Coming from the study of comparable tendencies in the literature of the period, I find such characterizations quite compatible with the label of *ch'i* 奇, which is applied regularly to works of vernacular fiction as well as to pieces of classical prose and poetry, so that the designation of “remarkable” or “amazing,” as in *ch'i-shu* 奇書, comes to carry, at least by implication, some of the same range of meaning.<sup>14</sup>

In the remainder of this essay, I will explore one side of the semantic range of this notion of novelty in fiction and painting with respect to a particular quality of prose literature: that of irony.

The concept of irony as a critical tool is probably one of the least well defined of all the ill-defined terms of literary scholarship. Its usage in critical writings is most often limited to a fairly mechanical description of figures of speech, but it is at times elevated to function in far-reaching speculation on the nature of reality. On the more mechanical side, the history of the term in classical rhetoric has been traced to Aristotle's reference to the stock figure of the self-deprecating *eirone* on the ancient stage as an example of one extreme type of character (*Nicomachean Ethics* 2.7.12), and this is later applied by Plato to characterize Socrates in the *Republic*.<sup>15</sup> Eventually, irony becomes a fixed rhetorical category, appearing, among other places, in the writings of Cicero and, later, Quintilian, where its meaning is essentially restricted to that of an utterance whose meaning is the opposite of what it literally states. This sense is not too far removed from our common-sense understanding of the idea, and also underlies the majority of recent critical attempts at its definition.<sup>16</sup>

It is only with the consolidation of the Western novel form in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, against the background of Romantic and post-Romantic movements in criticism, that the notion of irony is brought forward as a central pillar of aesthetic theory, and is now expanded to take on much heavier conceptual baggage. In the context of the novel, the earlier sense of saying one thing and meaning another is applied not only to various types of indirect signification per se, but is now turned in upon itself to



expose the core of subjectivity underlying the assumed objectivity of mimetic narrative. Thus the rhetoric of irony in the novel form calls into question the pretense of representing actual experience in all its fullness through fictional mimesis, thereby raising even larger questions about the nature of reality itself. This new understanding of the role of ironic discourse follows the lead of a number of nineteenth-century philosophers, notably Søren Kierkegaard, whose 1841 dissertation on irony in Socrates stands as a classic statement of this view (see the following definition: “a subjectivity raised in the second power, a subjectivity of subjectivity, corresponding to reflection on reflection”).<sup>17</sup> This particular interpretation is picked up by more recent theorists of the Western novel, among them Georg Lukacs, who sees in irony a measure of the state of artistic consciousness grappling with the meaning of the “problematic individual” in a “contingent world.” The extreme position of Lukacs regarding irony may be seen in the following representative passages:

The writer’s irony is a negative mysticism to be found in times without a god. . . . That is why irony is the objectivity of the novel.

. . . the self-recognition and, with it, self-abolition of subjectivity.

In the novel the subject . . . is compelled by irony to apply its recognition of the world to itself and to treat itself, like its own creatures, as a free object of free irony.<sup>18</sup>

The degree of abstraction to which the concept of irony is taken in such formulations would seem to put it beyond the bounds of usefulness as a critical tool. But at least one implication of such speculation may be of relevance to my discussion here. That is the manner in which the essentially ironic perspective of the novel shifts its main aesthetic ground from direct or even indirect representation of reality toward reflection on the subjectivity of the author himself as the central focus of narrative art. To put it a bit more simply, just as in common speech an ironic remark—or the implication of irony through gesture or tone of voice—turns our attention from positive or negative signification to a revelation of the attitude of the speaker toward his subject, so, too, in ironic discourse in narrative fiction the focus of attention shifts from the objects and events depicted to the *mode* of their depiction, and in particular to the voice of the author and his implied narrator speaking to us through the text.<sup>19</sup> I will come back to this notion of ironic voice in considering the expressivity of certain kinds of Chinese painting below.

Coming from the critical perspective of this recent reappraisal of the aesthetic underpinnings of the European novel, I find myself reading certain works of Chinese prose fiction, such as the “four masterworks,” in the same way: as essentially ironic revisions, rather than straightforward elaborations, of their respective narrative materials. Obviously, this attempt to bring a critical concept so deeply conditioned by Western philosophical predispositions to bear on a Chinese narrative genre immediately lays one open to the charge of imposing an alien category of analysis on an unwilling subject. But I believe this approach can be defended on a number of grounds. First, it can be demonstrated that many of the other literary pieces of this same period composed in different genres are also shot through with ironic modes of discourse. Examples of this are not hard to come by in formal *ku-wen* 古文 essays, informal *hsiao-p’in* 小品 prose pieces, various types of poetry, and especially in *ch’uan-ch’i* 傳奇 drama, which often share a common element of wit turning upon ironic expression.<sup>20</sup> In addition, one may note that

the critical commentators on the major fictional works, whose marginal notes and prefatory essays accompany many of the earliest editions, consistently enjoin their readers to look beyond the surface meaning, to avoid being taken in by either an apparently simplistic moral message or an ostensible lack of seriousness.<sup>21</sup>

My own close readings of the four Ming masterworks have convinced me that such advice on the part of the commentators is well taken, that the proper interpretation of the books must take into account the presence of a heavy overlay of irony in each case. However, the particular workings of irony are not uniform; they vary from work to work. Thus, where *Shui-hu chuan*, in my reading, is primarily concerned with the deflation of popular myths and stereotypes, *San-kuo chih yen-i* is more an indirect critique on the order of the classical historian's practice of employing "pointed rhetoric" (*ch'ü-pi* 曲筆) to bring out his intended reassessment of historical figures and events.<sup>22</sup> In *Hsi-yu chi* we see irony shade over into the area of allegory, masking its serious message under a veil of humorous episodes; while in *Chin P'ing Mei* we observe the weaving of a tissue of ironic reflection based on a pastiche of allusions from drama, popular song, and other materials that consistently place the actions of the characters in an ironic light.<sup>23</sup>

What all these various degrees of ironic treatment have in common is the aesthetic expectation of the undermining of mimetic surface, but this causticity cuts in two directions. On the one hand the reader is encouraged thereby not to take the recounting of well-known narrative materials at face value. The other side of the coin is the constant implication that the author does have his eye on some level of substantive meaning not directly presented. This ironic undercutting in the Ming novel takes a number of specific forms, from the introduction of puns and other jokes, to far more serious instances of textual manipulation. In traditional Chinese fiction, of course, the entire rhetorical apparatus revolves around the patent charade of an oral narrator spinning a yarn for his streetside audience. In the more sophisticated examples of the genre, this rhetoric of the "simulated narrator," as Patrick Hanan has termed it, offers considerable possibilities for ironic manipulation.<sup>24</sup> In fact, these rhetorical tags become more and more subject to pointed variation as time goes on, so that by the seventeenth century the conventional storytelling terms are quite routinely altered, or even parodied.<sup>25</sup>

At a more abstract level of analysis, one may also perceive the presence of ironic reflection in certain other textual dimensions. These include "dramatic irony," the highlighting of discrepancies between one character's knowledge and another's ignorance or between what the audience has been given to understand and what characters fail to see.<sup>26</sup> Or there are what we might call "compositional ironies": the incongruous combination of textual elements, the deliberate variation of expectations based on distortion of conventional character types, stock allusions, or idealized conceptions of behavior.<sup>27</sup> In some cases we can even perceive a measure of irony in the manipulation of structure, whereby narrative material is fashioned into patterns of contrived symmetry such that it is the shaping hand of the novelist that now becomes the primary object of the reader's contemplation.

In all of these instances, the net aesthetic effect of ironic deflation is one of provocative demystification—essentially a challenge to interpretation on the part of the perceptive reader. At the same time irony, by its very nature, can never deliver a neat interpretive scheme; it is limited to the undermining of surface meanings and the open-ended implication that there is more to the truth than meets the eye. That is why even the more



Figure 225. Hung-jen (1610–63),  
 “Cliff-hanging Old Pine,”  
 leaf J, dated 1660, from *Feng River Landscapes*.  
 Album of ten leaves, ink on paper,  
 each leaf 21.4 × 12.9 cm.  
 Courtesy of the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery,  
 Smithsonian Institution,  
 Washington, D.C.

serious examples of ironic fiction often seem to provide nothing more than a kind of mock seriousness, or a pseudodidacticism, which may leave the reader at something of a loss as to what to make of his reading experience.

Now what, one may ask, can all this have to do with the aesthetics of Chinese painting and calligraphy? Even if one is prepared to accept the above argument about the function of ironic rhetoric in the classic Chinese novels, how can we speak of irony, which is essentially a verbal trope, in the context of nonverbal art forms? As suggested earlier, there is something about the persistent quality of *ch'i* shared by late Ming fiction and painting which seems to point in this direction. But I would not be willing to go out on a limb here in defense of this idea were it not for James Cahill's interesting appeal to the notion of irony in certain passages of his writings on late Ming painters, particularly Ch'en Hung-shou 陳洪綬 (1598–1652).<sup>28</sup> With this inspiration, I wish to take a closer look in the remainder of this essay at certain aspects of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Chinese painting for which the term *irony* is perhaps not entirely inappropriate. For my own convenience, I will take most of my examples—which are probably well known to

all readers of this volume—from the catalogue of the Arthur M. Sackler collection by Marilyn Fu and Shen Fu and published under the title *Studies in Connoisseurship*. Similar examples may be found in Cahill's *Fantastics and Eccentrics in Chinese Painting*, in his *Compelling Image* and other volumes, and in many other studies and catalogues.<sup>29</sup>

First of all, let us review some of the special features of late Ming painting which suggest the sort of self-conscious manipulation of medium and “message” which I have described above as characteristic of irony. I have in mind here a wide range of compositional techniques that strike the viewer as at the very least unconventional, and in many cases downright bizarre.

First, at the level of primary components of composition, let us consider the distortion which frequently takes place in the basic shapes: the rocks, mountains, trees, and the like which go to form landscape compositions. I am thinking of such examples as the squared-off treatment of rock-masses in Hung-jen's 弘仁 (1610–64) “Cottages below Mountainous Bluffs” (Leaf H from the *Feng River Landscapes* album, *Studies in Connoisseurship* [hereafter SC], p. 142), the whimsical peach-shaped boulder sprouting a tuft of vegetation in Shih-t'ao's 石濤 (1642–1707) *Orchid, Bamboo, and Rock* (SC, p. 265), his almost geometrical reduction of rock masses in “Cliffs” (Leaf D from the *Album of Landscapes*, SC, p. 251), or Chang Chi-su's 張積素 (active ca. 1620?–1670) transformation of a central rock form into an almost abstract diagonal band slicing across his scroll *Snow-capped Peaks* (SC, p. 135). The same holds true for the treatment of trees, as in the cartoonlike perpendicular angle of Hung-jen's “Cliff-hanging Old Pine” (Leaf J from the *Feng River Landscapes* album, SC, p. 145; fig. 225), the curlicue loop of a plum branch executed by Shih-t'ao in his *Ting-ch'iu Album of Flowers* (SC, p. 299), or the oversized, half-rotted tree that dominates his “Old Gingko at Mount Ch'ing-lung” (“Ch'ing-lung-shan ku-yin-hsing” 青龍山古銀杏) (Leaf K from *Reminiscences of Nanking* [*Chin-ling huai-ku ts'e* 金陵懷古冊], SC, p. 307).

Sometimes the element of ironic distortion may manifest itself at the level of the overall arrangement of a composition. This may involve the positioning and proportioning of specific images, as in the slightly vertiginous tilt of a ledge in Wan Shou-ch'i's 萬壽祺 (1603–52) “Leaning on a Staff in an Autumn Grove” (Leaf D from the *Landscapes, Flowers, and Calligraphy* album, SC, p. 125), the obtrusive angular tree stealing the foreground of Cha Shih-piao's 查士標 (1615–98) *River Landscape in Rain* (SC, p. 153), and Shih-t'ao's disproportionate enlargement of a human figure to half the height of nearby trees (themselves oversized and dwarfing a bluff directly behind), in “Bird Watching” (Leaf E from the *Landscapes, Vegetables, and Flowers* album, SC, p. 207; fig. 226).

Or, ironic distortion may take effect in the overall balancing of larger compositional elements, such as the hourglass counterposition of two convex landmasses in Kung Hsien's 龔賢 (ca. 1618–89) “Mountains and Clouds” (Leaf B from the *Landscapes* album, SC, p. 165), the trompe l'oeil ambiguity of the axis of a jutting headland in Fan Ch'i's 樊圻 (1616–94) “Promontory and View of Junks on the Horizon” (Leaf H from the *Landscapes* album, SC, p. 159), and the schematization of two shoulder-bluffs into the two leaves of a gate in Shih-t'ao's “Passing through the Gorge” (Leaf F from the *Album of Landscapes*, SC, p. 253). Similarly, we get a sense of the reduction of landscape elements to abstract forms in the parallel bands of blue mountains and multicolored shoreline in Shih-t'ao's “River Bank of Peach Blossoms” (Leaf C from the *Landscapes, Vegetables, and Flowers* album, SC, p. 205, and frontispiece), or in his “Moonlit Geese” (Leaf A, SC,



Figure 226. Shih-t'ao (1642–1707),  
 “Bird Watching,”  
 leaf E from *Landscapes, Vegetables, and Flowers*.  
 Album of twelve leaves, ink and colors  
 on paper, each leaf 27.6 × 21.5 cm.  
 The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
 New York; The Sackler Fund, 1972

p. 205), where a flight of geese seems to be defying nature and winging its way underneath a hovering shoreline. An analogous sense of floating mass provides a striking departure in Ch'en Hung-shou's figure painting *Scholar and Priest*.<sup>30</sup> By the same token, we may take as evidence of self-conscious manipulation the exaggerated use of blank spaces—going beyond the conventional juxtaposition of mass and void in the Chinese landscape tradition—in such examples as Shih-t'ao's *Echo* (*K'ung-shan hsiao-yü* 空山小語; SC, p. 169), or his nearly empty Leaf B from the *Eight-Leaf Album of Landscapes* (SC, p. 247). The same may be said of the extreme contrasts of light and dark in such works as Kung Hsien's *A Thousand Peaks and Myriad Ravines* (*Ch'ien-yen wan-ho* 千巖萬壑; Cahill, *Fantastics and Eccentrics*, pp. 70ff.) and Sheng Mao-yeh's 盛茂燁 (active ca. 1615–ca. 1640) *Landscapes after T'ang Poems* album (SC, pp. 103–5), or of the teasing revelation of hidden worlds in Hung-jen's “Stone Grotto and Thatched Hut” (Leaf D from the *Feng River Landscapes* album, SC, p. 143), Tai Pen-hsiao's 戴本孝 (1621–93) “Man in Cave” (Leaf A from the *Album of Landscapes*, Cahill, *Fantastics and Eccentrics*, p. 51), or the surrealistic paysage tucked away behind a central bluff in Wu Pin's 吳彬 (active ca. 1568–1621) *A Thousand Peaks and Myriad Ravines* (Cahill, *Fantastics and Eccentrics*, p. 30). I might add to this list various eccentricities or innovations in the use of color, the application of ink (e.g., Shih-t'ao's *Ten Thousand Ugly Inkblots*, SC, p. 177), experiments in perspective and chiaroscuro revealing the incipient influence of Western painting, and other idiosyncratic features in the works of such painters as Fu Shan 傅山 (1602–83), Chu Ta 朱牽 (1626–1705), Mei Ch'ing 梅清 (1623–97), K'un-ts'an 髡殘 (1612–ca. 1674), and many more.<sup>31</sup>

In all of these examples, there is clearly a measure of something approximating the “bizarre wantonness” described by Wolfgang Kayser in *The Grottesque in Art and Literature*.<sup>32</sup> But in what sense can any of this be called “ironic”? Of course, this is above all a question of degree; in fact most, if not all, of these tendencies have their precedents in earlier Chinese painting. But the extent to which these exercises in wit or whimsy on the part of the artist seem to suggest a kind of “wink” to the appreciative viewer, a warning not to take his images at face value and an invitation to think about possible further dimensions of meaning, brings us back once again to the notion of irony.

This may become a bit clearer if we consider certain variations in subject matter observable in the works of this period. The overwhelming bulk of the late Ming painters are still working with the perennial elements of landscape composition, flowers and birds, or conventional human figures. But within this limited range of subjects, what we quite often get now is a kind of inversion of expectations. As one type of example, I would cite Shih-t’ao’s “Clouds Blocked by a Mountain” (Leaf J from the *Landscapes, Vegetables, and Flowers* album, SC, p. 207; fig. 228), in which the expected use of blank space suggesting clouds cutting across a solid mountain mass is turned around, so that it is a strip of mountain which now breaks up a mass of cloud.

One other step taken by some artists in the direction of ironic deliricizing involves the injection of what I would call a “narrative” dimension into certain pieces. That is, I find in a number of examples the implication that something is about to happen within the given scene. This impression may arise from such small-scale details as apprehensive facial expressions, as on the faces of some of Chu Ta’s well-known birds (fig. 227),<sup>33</sup> or it may be suggested more substantively in groupings of figures apparently interacting with one another. We can almost hear the whispering that transpires in such examples as Ch’en Hung-shou’s *Scholar Instructing Girl Pupils in the Arts* (Cahill, *Fantastics and Eccentrics*, p. 34) or Ts’ui Tzu-chung’s 崔子忠 (d. 1644) *Entertaining a Guest in the Apricot Garden* (Cahill, *Fantastics and Eccentrics*, p. 40). Even more pointed are those examples in which the depiction of a particularly bizarre subject suggests that the painter must be concealing some kind of “story” behind the scene presented. This feeling is inescapable in a work such as Shih-t’ao’s and Chiang Chi’s *Landscape and Portrait of Hung Cheng-chih* (SC, p. 287), which practically cries out for a discursive explanation. It is less obtrusive but still quite perceptible in the enigmatic expressions on the faces of many of Ch’en Hung-shou’s figures—the examples for which Cahill originally suggested the epithet “ironic.”

This unaccustomed role of the artist-as-narrator or the artist-as-commentator brings me back to my attempt to justify the use of the concept of irony as a key to the “rhetoric” of late Ming painting. It seems to me that the heightened sense of individualized perspective in these works is not simply a stylistic aberration, but signals significant changes in the perception of the role of the literati artist in this period. In so many of these scrolls and album leaves, at least the more extreme examples, it almost seems as if the painter were making some kind of self-conscious point in each composition, what in traditional aesthetic terms might be called *yu-i* 有意 (purposeful) or *yu-hsin* 有心 (mindful), in contrast to the more prized state of submerged subjectivity (*wu-hsin* 無心) that we ideally get in pure lyricism. As a result the viewer of such works, in turn, no longer simply enters into the vision of the painting, but rather is induced to try to interpret it, to figure out what the artist might be getting at—something we have been taught not to do in

appreciating Chinese landscape paintings. It is this impulse to read the painter rather than the painting, to “listen,” as it were, for the artist’s “voice,” which brings to mind the parallel aesthetic effect of ironic discourse in narrative literature.

If we can perceive a certain quality of “pointedness” in some of these examples, we still must consider for a moment, before concluding, what the “point” in such cases might actually be. As I have suggested in the above discussion, irony generally points to a hypothetical dimension of signification beyond the level of surface presentation; but by its very nature irony also refuses to articulate that potential meaning, instead leaving it in a state of provocative indeterminacy. We do occasionally get a whiff of some sort of “ideas” that may correspond to various kinds of conventional wisdom: Confucian harmony, Buddhist-Taoist withdrawal, or some such; or we may perhaps decide that the point of certain pieces lies in the conscious rejection of discursive meaning in visual forms. Of course, any sort of articulation of ideas in paraphrasable terms is rare and at best inconsequential in the aesthetic medium of painting.

Although by and large any attempt to pin down the implied signification of irony is by very definition pointless (indeed, such a possibility would push us over into the neighboring territory of allegory), I would still like to suggest certain directions in which this ironic implication of indeterminate meaning may point. One such area of potential significance has to do with the critical attitudes seen to go hand in hand with the developing aesthetics of irony in prose fiction. It is to my mind no accident that the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in China comprised not only a period of great artistic creativity, but also a time of remarkable advances in Chinese critical writings, associated with virtually every field of culture: literature (poetry, classical prose, drama, fiction), aesthetics (painting, calligraphy, and various minor arts), as well as historical criticism. Of particular interest is the fact that the critical writings of the time pay greater attention to problems of structure and rhetoric, while also putting considerable effort into the act of line-by-line textual interpretation. With this in mind, one might perhaps say that what some of our painters are “talking about” is precisely this new critical sensibility of medium, subject, and signification.

Perhaps even more to the point, however, is the fact that this heightened critical awareness is generally directed toward the perennial issue of the relation between artistic creativity and the past tradition. This is another obvious area of linkage between late Ming literature and painting, since the polemics in these two fields are couched in much the same terminology, and reflect some of the same personal and even political alignments. In painting as in poetics, however, the entire question of the uses of the past is far more complex than the simplistic picture we sometimes get of a neat opposition between the so-called “archaism” of the various restoration (*fu-ku* 復古) movements and the proponents of individual expression associated with the Kung-an and Ching-ling literary cliques, for example. In fact, the advocates of both sides are neither unequivocal nor consistent, because they are all enmeshed in contradictions which go right to the heart of the matter.

One of these contradictions arises from the fact that the renewed commitment at this point to the revitalization of the past comes at a time when the sheer accumulation of cultural accomplishments (what William T. de Bary has referred to as the “burden of culture”) makes the precise choice of models more problematic than ever before.<sup>34</sup> Perhaps for this very reason, the understanding of the conception of models (*fa* 法) itself takes a

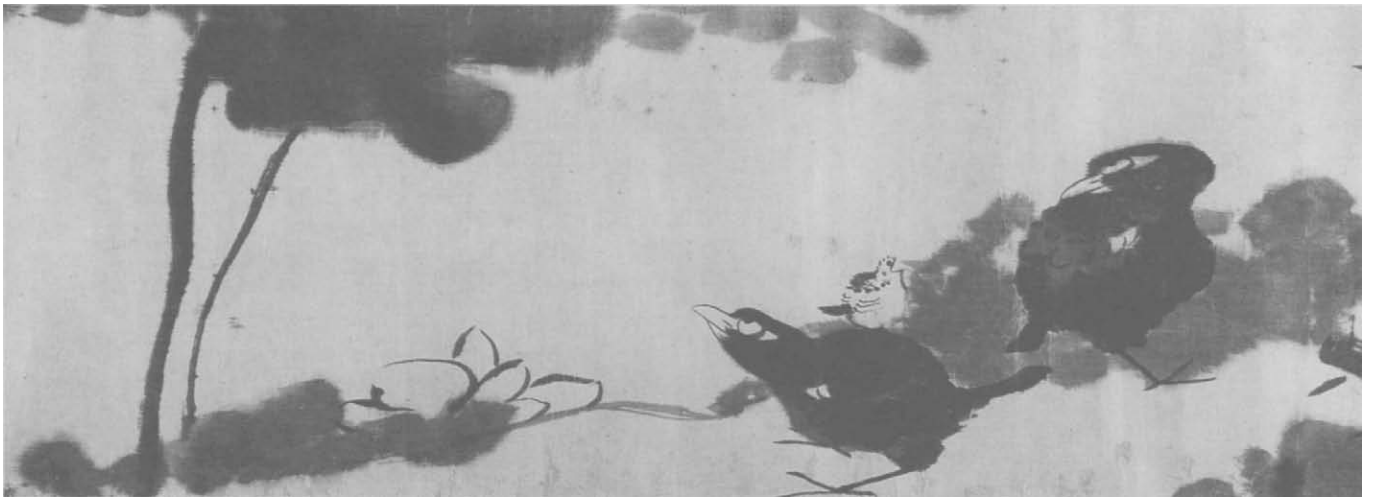


Figure 227. Chu Ta (1626–1705), *Birds in a Lotus Pond*. Detail of handscroll, ink on silk, H. 27.2 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Bequest of John M. Crawford, Jr., 1988

Figure 228. Shih-t'ao,  
“Clouds Blocked by a Mountain,”  
leaf J from *Landscapes, Vegetables,  
and Flowers* (see fig. 226)





somewhat unexpected turn. To be sure, the advocates of faithfulness to past models in art and literature rarely, if ever, envision any kind of slavish imitation, as alleged by their detractors, aiming instead at recapturing the underlying spirit or vision of the great masters. But in pursuing this line of reasoning, many of them find themselves saying that the primary quality to be emulated in the works of the “ancients” is precisely the originality, or pristine freshness, afforded by their chronological position in earlier, less-cluttered ages.<sup>35</sup> As a result, the very insistence on cleaving to past models often comes around, by a circuitous route, to a kind of affirmation of spontaneity and originality. This understanding finds expression in critical statements by a number of leading artists of the late Ming period, although now it is a more studied, self-conscious kind of spontaneity that is being cultivated.

This brings us back, finally, to the definitions of irony proposed earlier, particularly the notion that the logical conclusion of irony seems to be the turning of ironic reflection back upon itself (Kierkegaard’s “subjectivity of subjectivity”). In the context of painting theory and practice, what this means is that the ultimate focus of ironic reflection comes to rest on the inherent contradictions of the *wen-jen* enterprise itself. In other words, what the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century painters may be expressing through their various devices of ironic suggestiveness can be defined as a self-conscious contemplation of their own role as literati artists. That is perhaps why one sometimes gets the impression that the Ming literati are trying too hard to fulfill a notion of what *wen-jen* should be, rather than simply embodying the ideal spontaneously, in the way that the Sung masters seemed to have done. This, in turn, may be responsible for some of their more flagrant affectations in subject and style, not to mention the supreme pretentiousness of those who aspire to a personal “grand synthesis.” In the eyes of many early Ch’ing critics, these tendencies were symptomatic of late Ming decadence and inevitable decline, but at the same time they are also part of what makes these works so accessible to our modern sensibility.

#### NOTES

- 1 This volume is entitled *The Four Masterworks of the Ming Novel: Ssu ta ch’i-shu* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987). An outline of its basic argument appeared in my article “*Shui-hu chuan* and the Sixteenth-Century Novel Form: An Interpretive Reappraisal,” *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews* 2 (1980), pp. 3–53. All four works are available in English translation. *San-kuo chih yen-i* has been translated as *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. *Shui-hu chuan* has been translated as *Watermargin*, as well as under the titles *All Men Are Brothers* and *Outlaws of the Marsh*. *Hsi-yu chi* has been translated as *Journey to the West*, and in Arthur Waley’s abridged version entitled *Monkey*. *Chin P’ing Mei* has been translated as *Golden Lotus*.
- 2 I am speaking here, of course, of the full recensions (*fan-pen*) of each of these works, as opposed to their hypothetical antecedent versions. The earliest extant complete text of *San-kuo chih yen-i* is dated 1522 (including an earlier preface dated 1494); the earliest-known full text of *Shui-hu chuan* is put at 1589, on the basis of a preface appearing in a K’ang-hsi reprint; the 1592 Shih-te t’ang edition of *Hsi-yu chi* is taken by a majority of scholars as the earliest of the known editions; and *Chin P’ing Mei*, probably first printed by 1617, was circulating in manuscript by at least 1595–96.
- 3 This notion of the “literati novel” is somewhat different from the concept of the “scholar novel” developed by C. T. Hsia in “The Scholar-Novelist and Chinese Culture: A Reappraisal of *Ching-hua yuan*,” in A. Plaks, ed., *Chinese Narrative: Critical and Theoretical Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), pp. 266–305.

- Observe the comparable position of literati drama, notably in the works of T'ang Hsien-tsu 湯顯祖 (1550-1616).
- 4 This sense of a new beginning around the turn of the sixteenth century might be described negatively in terms of a "slack period" in many fields of activity during the early and middle parts of the fifteenth century. This gap is particularly clear in the field of literature, less so in the visual arts.
  - 5 See, for example, such studies as Ray Huang, 1587, *A Year of No Significance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981); Mark Elvin, *The Pattern of the Chinese Past* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1973); Ho Ping-ti, *The Ladder of Success in Imperial China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962); Evelyn Rawski, "Economic and Social Foundations of Ming and Ch'ing Culture," *Ming Studies* 2 (1978); Richard Shek, "Religion and Society in the Late Ming: Sectarianism and Popular Thought in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century China" (Ph.D. diss., University of California at Berkeley, 1980); and Frederick W. Mote and Denis Twitchett, eds., *The Ming Dynasty, 1368-1644, Part I*, vol. 7 of *The Cambridge History of China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).
  - 6 See, for example, Julia Ching, *To Acquire Wisdom: The Way of Wang Yang-ming* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976); Araki Kengo, *Mindai shisō kenkyū* (Studies in Ming intellectual history) (Tokyo: Sobunsha, 1972); Tu Wei-ming, *Neo-Confucian Thought in Action: Wang Yang-ming's Youth (1472-1509)* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976).
  - 7 See, for example, studies on late Ming Buddhist and Taoist revivals in William T. de Bary, ed., *Self and Society in Ming Thought* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), pp. 291-330, 451-531.
  - 8 This sort of view is expressed in Frederic Wakeman, "The Price of Autonomy: Intellectuals in Ming and Ch'ing Politics," *Daedalus* 101 (Spring 1972), pp. 35-70; Thomas Metzger, *Escape from Predicament: Neo-Confucianism and China's Evolving Political Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977); Shimada Kenji, *Chūgoku ni okeru kindai shii no zasetsu* (The frustration of modern thought in China) (Tokyo: Chikuma, 1949); Chi Wen-fu, *Wan Ming ssu-hsiang shih-lun* (Late Ming intellectual history) (Ch'ung-ch'ing: Shang-wu, 1944).
  - 9 I have explained this comparison in "Full-Length Hsiao-shuo and the Western Novel: A Generic Reappraisal," *New Asia Academic Bulletin* 1 (1978), pp. 163-76.
  - 10 For details on these connections, see my "Shui-hu chuan" (above, n. 1), p. 15; and *Four Masterworks*, chap. 2, pp. 58, 67, chap. 4, pp. 282f., 305. On the role of Tung Ch'i-ch'ang in the circulation of *Chin P'ing Mei*, see Patrick Hanan, "The Text of the *Chin P'ing Mei*," *Asia Major* n.s. 9, pt. 1 (1962), pp. 39-49.
  - 11 See, for example, Chou Liang-kung's comments on the *Shui-hu chuan* in his *Yin-shu-wu shu-ying* (Shadows of books from the Hall among the Trees) (Shanghai: Ku-tien wen-hsüeh, 1957), *chüan* 1.
  - 12 Characterizations of this sort are prominent in such studies as the following:
 

Richard Barnhart, "The 'Wild and Heterodox School' of Ming Painting," in Susan Bush and Christian Murck, eds., *Theories of the Arts in China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), pp. 365-96.

James Cahill, *The Compelling Image: Nature and Style in Seventeenth-Century Chinese Painting* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982); idem, *Fantastics and Eccentrics in Chinese Painting* (New York: Asia Society, 1967); idem, *The Restless Landscape: Chinese Painting of the Late Ming Period* (Berkeley: University Art Museum, 1971).

Wen Fong, "Archaism as a 'Primitive' Style," in Christian Murck, ed., *Artists and Traditions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), pp. 89-109.

Hsio-yen Shih, "Mad Ming Monks and Eccentric Exiles," *Art News* 66, no. 2 (April 1967), pp. 36-39, 72-74.

Harrie A. Vanderstappen, "The Style of Some Seventeenth-Century Chinese Paintings," in Murck, *Artists and Traditions*, pp. 149-68.

Roderick Whitfield, *In Pursuit of Antiquity* (Princeton: Art Museum, Princeton University, 1969).

Nelson Wu, "The Toleration of Eccentrics," *Art News* 56, no. 3 (May 1957), pp. 26-29, 52-54.
  - 13 See Barnhart, "Wild and Heterodox," within preceding note.
  - 14 On the use of the term *ch'i* in Chinese literary theory, see my "Issues in Chinese Narrative Theory in the Perspective of the Western Tradition," *PTL: A Journal of Descriptive Poetics and Theory of Literature* 2, no. 2 (1977), pp. 339-66, esp. pp. 363ff.
  - 15 For a good review of the history of the term *irony*, see D. C. Muecke, *Irony and the Ironic* (London and New York: Methuen, 1970), pp. 14-32. On the significance of the *eironeia* figure, see Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 40.

- 16 Cf. the following definitions of *irony*: Northrop Frye (*Anatomy*, p. 40): "a technique of saying as little and meaning as much as possible."
- Cleanth Brooks ("Irony as a Principle of Structure," in *Literary Opinion in America*, ed. Morton D. Zabel [New York: Harper, 1951], pp. 729-41): "the warping of a statement by its context."
- See also Wayne Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974); and Marianne Shapiro, "The Status of Irony," *Stanford Literary Review* (Spring 1985), pp. 5-26.
- 17 Kierkegaard's study of irony is translated as *The Concept of Irony*, trans. Lee M. Capel (reprint, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1965). See esp. pp. 257ff.
- 18 Georg Lukacs, *The Theory of the Novel*, trans. Anna Bostock (1920; reprint, Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1971), esp. pp. 70-93.
- 19 See Marianne Shapiro's definition of irony as "an utterance commenting upon itself," in "The Status of Irony," p. 11.
- 20 For examples, see my *Four Masterworks*, chap. 1, pp. 25, 42ff.
- 21 For a review of the concepts and terminology of traditional Chinese fiction criticism, see *How to Read the Chinese Novel*, ed. David Rolston (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), Introduction.
- 22 The notion of *ch'ü-pi*, of course, is most often applied to the characteristic style of Ssu-ma Ch'ien. It also has a close connection to the term *Ch'un-ch'iu pi-fa* 春秋筆法, applied to the use of suggestively charged terms in the style of the *Spring and Autumn Annals*.
- 23 On the varying uses of irony in these four novels, see *Four Masterworks*, chaps. 2, 3, 4, 5. See also "Full-Length *Hsiao-shuo*," pp. 111ff.
- 24 See Patrick Hanan, "The Nature of Ling Meng-ch'u's Fiction," in Plaks, *Chinese Narrative*, pp. 85-114.
- 25 For examples, see my "After the Fall: *Hsing-shih yin-yüan chuan* and the Seventeenth-Century Chinese Novel," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 45, no. 2 (December 1985), pp. 543-80.
- 26 On the workings of "dramatic irony," see Jonathan Culler, *Structuralist Poetics* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1975), pp. 154ff.
- 27 See Wayne Booth's notion of "clashes of style" in his *Rhetoric of Irony* (see above, n. 16).
- 28 Cahill introduces the idea of irony in *Compelling Image*, pp. 133f., and *Fantastics and Eccentrics*, pp. 36, 38.
- 29 See Marilyn Fu and Shen Fu, *Studies in Connoisseurship: Chinese Paintings from the Arthur M. Sackler Collection in New York and Princeton* (Princeton: Art Museum, Princeton University, 1973), and studies listed above, note 12.
- 30 See Wen Fong, "Archaism as a 'Primitive' Style," p. 102.
- 31 On the manifestation of Western influence in certain late Ming paintings, see Cahill, *Compelling Image*, pp. 170ff., among others.
- 32 Wolfgang Kayser, *The Grottesque in Art and Literature*, trans. Ulrich Weisstein (1957; reprint, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966).
- 33 See Cahill, *Compelling Image*, pp. 124, 126.
- 34 De Bary, *Self and Society* (see above, n. 7), Introduction, pp. 8-12.
- 35 On this new sense of originality within traditionalism, see Wai-kam Ho, "Tung Ch'i-ch'ang's New Orthodoxy and the Southern School Theory," pp. 113-30; F. W. Mote, "The Arts and the 'Theorizing Mode' of the Civilization," pp. 3-8; Wen Fong, "Archaism as a 'Primitive' Style"; all in Murck, *Artists and Traditions*.

# Words and Images in Late Ming and Early Ch'ing Painting

WEN C. FONG

After the Mongol conquest of Southern Sung China in 1279, Chinese painting changed so radically that post-Sung painting could well be considered a new, and different, kind of pictorial art. While Sung painting took the representation of the objective world as its subject, the real subject of a post-Sung painting is the artist's inner response to the landscape or flower represented.<sup>1</sup> The post-Sung literati painter explored his own personal feelings (*i* 意) in painting in search of self-knowledge. As the meaning of a painted subject enriched by symbolic and personal associations could no longer be expressed without the help of language, the painter readily turned to inscribing poems on his works. In a poem-painting, words and images resonate and extend each other's meanings with the help of revealing gestures from the calligraphic picture-writing. The multiple relationships between words, images, and calligraphy formed the basis of a new art, in which there is a fusion of picture and thought, the concrete and the abstract.

Yüan, Ming, and Ch'ing artists commonly practiced poetry, calligraphy, and painting—the “three perfections” (*san-chüeh* 三絕)—in a single work of art. Since a fully realized poem-painting represents the unified conception of a single creative mind, our interpretation of such paintings must begin with the literary and cultural milieu of the artist. Throughout the Ming period, revivalism dominated both poetry and painting, and the development of painting criticism followed closely that of literary criticism. As the study of ancient models inspired a deep concern with methods (*fā* 法), resulting in both the establishment of a canon of great masters and the codification of techniques, some late Ming critics reacted strongly against imitation, causing intensive debates over such issues as style versus content and self-expression.

In prose writing and poetry, the revivalist tone was set at the beginning of the Ming, when such scholar-officials as Sung Lien 宋濂 (1310–81) and Fang Hsiao-ju 方孝儒 (1357–1402) upheld the Confucian didactic view that art must “illuminate the Tao” (*ming Tao* 明道).<sup>2</sup> After a quiet period during much of the fifteenth century, the pace of literary and critical activities quickened during the Hung-chih era (1488–1505), then exploded into a succession of contentious rival schools and theories during the Chia-ching (1522–66), Lung-ch'ing (1567–72), and Wan-li (1573–1619) eras. First, in the early sixteenth century, the Early Seven Masters (*Ch'ien ch'i-tzu* 前七子), rebelling against the ornate style and convention of contemporary poetry and the “chancellery style” (*t'ai-ko-t'i* 臺閣體) in prose writing, advocated the revival of the ancient Ch'in-Han prose style and the High T'ang poetic style for their plain and uncluttered directness of expression. Then, around the middle of the century, the T'ang-Sung school argued that the language of T'ang and Sung models was smoother, more natural, and closer to contemporary usage. In the second half of the century, a younger generation led by the Later Seven Masters (*Hou ch'i-tzu* 後七子) again championed the earlier Ch'in-Han model. Finally, toward

the end of the century, the Later Seven Masters were vigorously attacked by the anti-revivalists, led by the Yüan brothers of the Kung-an 公安 (Hupei) school, who favored individual expression over imitation.

Although Ming writers were not always consistent in their various literary positions, and their partisan polemics reflected more of the general disputatious spirit and factionalism in Ming society and politics than pure intellectual argument, they nevertheless shared certain critical concerns. For instance, a major preoccupation of all Ming critics was the artist's method (*fa*) and style (*ko-tiao* 格調), which compelled the critics to confront—to support or condemn—the relationship of the artist to past models. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, for instance, Li Tung-yang 李東陽 (1447–1516) first tried to describe the High T'ang poetic style in concrete technical terms, such as poetic rhythm, tonal pattern and structural pattern, and the problems of opening, turning, and ending. However, Li Tung-yang's follower Li Meng-yang 李夢陽 (1473–1529), the leader of the Early Seven Masters, preferred to speak of the right method as an abstract concept of fundamental standards, such as “the ruler and the compass” (*kuei-chü* 規矩). Li Meng-yang, like the Southern Sung critic Yen Yü 嚴羽 (1180–1235), compared High T'ang poetry to Buddhism's Primary Principle (*ti-i i* 第一義), the Mahayanist Great Vehicle. For Li the choice of the right model, like that of the Primary Principle, was simply a matter of setting for oneself the highest possible standard. Seeing method as a standard rather than a technique, Li Meng-yang explained the function of method in a paradoxical manner: “If someone can do without the ruler and the compass, he must still be able to execute the square and the circle; then he may forget about them [the ruler and the compass].”<sup>3</sup> Throughout history, Li Meng-yang pointed out, styles have always “shifted and changed . . . such is the essence of individual metamorphosis (*pien-hua* 變化).” But, he argued, by keeping the same standards “without being stuck to the same method, methods shall prevail, even as people, without trying to be different, shall always speak in distinct voices.”<sup>4</sup>

Influenced by Wang Yang-ming 王陽明 (1472–1529) and his Neo-Confucian School of the Mind, which upheld the belief that truth is discovered only in one's own mind, the Later Seven Masters in the second half of the sixteenth century commonly accepted the view that the proper way to imitate an ancient model was through individual metamorphosis. As the Ming writer Wang Shih-chen 王世貞 (1526–90) explained, “when there is departure (*li* 離) in correspondence (*ho* 合), and correspondence in departure, one will then attain awakening (*wu* 悟).”<sup>5</sup> But the antirevivalists at the end of the sixteenth century went even further. For Yüan Hung-tao 袁宏道 (1568–1610), for instance, change did not imply returning to ancient verities, but a totally new and unique expression of the individual's self. Echoing the idealistic pronouncements on the nature of self-realization current in the late Ming, Yüan Hung-tao and his two brothers insisted on the importance of being true or authentic (*chen* 真) to one's self, to one's own time, to one's own personal style.<sup>6</sup>

Behind the many voices of this quarrelsome critical debate we sense the desperate earnestness of the late Ming search for new form and vision in art. It was during this time, the most intensely self-conscious of all periods in Chinese art history, that the ancient formula of rebirth through revival was put to its final crucial test. In the struggle against banality and emptiness, Ming critics seem to argue in circles: art must express intent (*shih yen chih* 詩言志), yet the artist must also reach beyond form and expression

for the ineffable; art must have substance and express moral and social commitment, yet the artist must also grapple with the problem of self; art must exhibit good form—thus the poet must emulate the perfect form of High T'ang poetry—yet the late Ming poet was increasingly drawn to Sung models in the search for spontaneous expressivity and flexibility in speech. Never before in history had there been so much talk about what to imitate, how to imitate, and whether or not to imitate, in order to create good art. It was as though late Ming artists were convinced that only through talking and intellectualizing could an artistic breakthrough be achieved. Regardless of the positions they assumed, moreover, both the revivalists and the antirevivalists used the same terminology and had the same view of history as earlier critics. As Jonathan Chaves has pointed out, the radical Kung-an writers never completely rejected the principle of learning from the past;<sup>7</sup> like the revivalists, they accepted the same historical canon of great ancient masters and, equally paradoxically, defined creativity through imitation rather than through the development of the artist's own voice.

Late Ming painters actually put literary theories to work in painting. In an early album by Ch'en Hung-shou 陳洪綬 (1598–1652), dated between 1618 and 1622, the precocious young artist (then between twenty and twenty-four years of age) directly equates his painting with prose writing. On one of the leaves, dated 1619, *Dry Trees, Rocks, and Bamboo* (fig. 229), he writes:

My recent prose writing looks like this painting. People know about my purity and nobility (*ch'ing-kuei*), but are less aware of the depth and remoteness (*sheng-yüan*) in my work.

近來為文亦如此，人知我清貴，不知我深遠。

Purity, nobility, depth, and aloofness were qualities cultivated and admired by upright Confucian gentlemen-scholars, who witnessed the moral degeneration in the late Ming. Ch'en's idea of looking for such qualities in painting and literature came from Li Tung-yang, who had written: "poetry is valued for its ideas (*kuei-i* 貴意), which must always place remoteness (*kuei-yüan* 貴遠) over immediacy, and lightness (*kuei-tan* 貴淡) over colorfulness (*nung* 濃)."<sup>8</sup> In this painting, Ch'en achieves this purity and aloofness with a dry and sparse brushwork. On another leaf, also dated 1619, *Man in a Garden* (fig. 230), his commentary reads:

In this painting I have achieved optimal effects in the use of the brush (*pi*), the use of style (*ko*), and the use of conception (*ssu*). As for the wonderful use of ink (*mo*), it must lie in the lack of ink. Those who excel [in this art] will agree.

此為用筆用格用思之至也，若用墨之妙，在無墨處，解者當首肯。

Here, Ch'en combines three of Ching Hao's 荆浩 (active ca. 870–930) "Six Essentials"—brush (*pi*), ink (*mo*), and conception (*ssu*)—with his own critical concern about style (*ko*), by which he again means a pure, noble, and remote quality.

But, in the intensely troubled days of the late Ming, when traditional values were often subverted, artists felt the need to express a great deal more than just their aesthetic concern with style. In this early album of 1618–22, the young Ch'en Hung-shou also boldly experimented with expressions of pathos and realism, as well as bizarrely archaic forms and techniques. By then, the meaning of a work of art had become so complicated,



Figure 229. Ch'en Hung-shou (1598–1652), *Dry Trees, Rocks, and Bamboo*, dated 1619. Album leaf, ink and color on paper, 22.2 × 9.1 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Purchase, Friends of Far Eastern Art Gifts, 1985

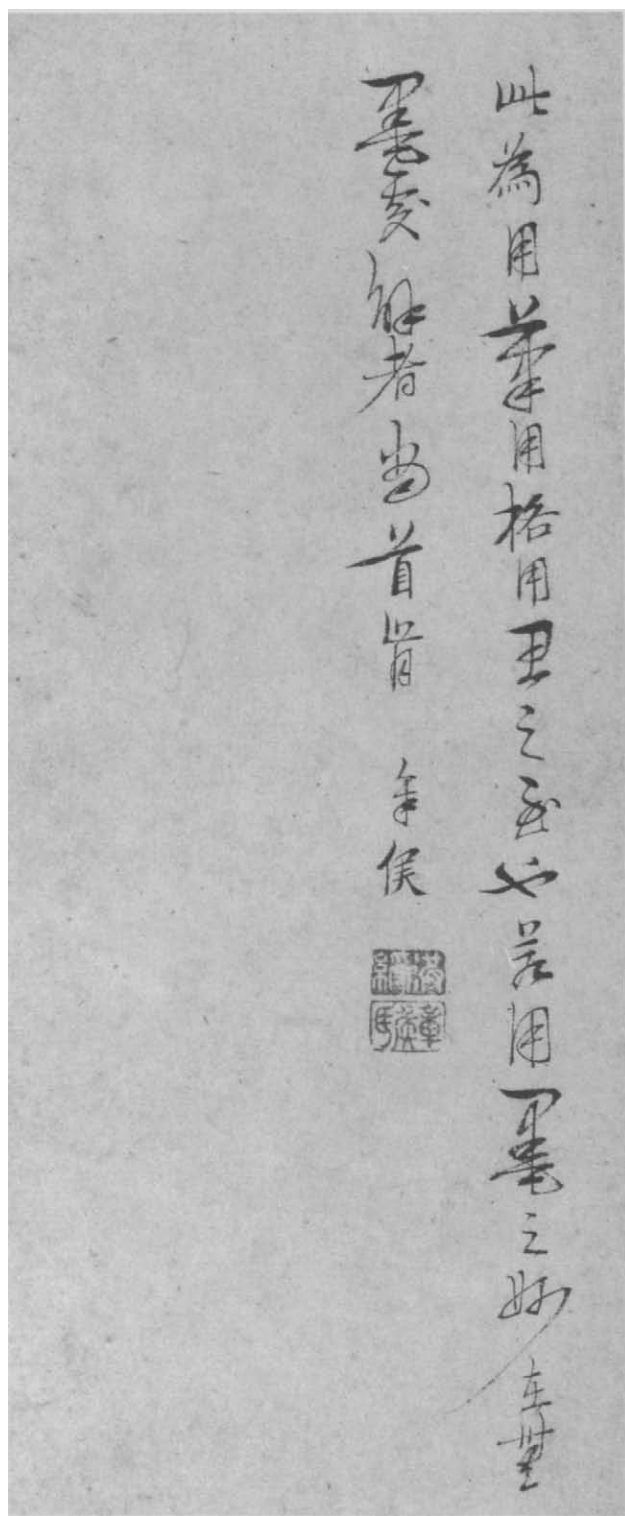


Figure 230. Ch'en Hung-shou, *Man in a Garden*, dated 1619.

Album leaf, ink and color on paper, 22.2 × 9.1 cm.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Purchase, Friends of Far Eastern Art Gifts, 1985



and methods of presentation so complex, that to understand the painting of the time we must learn to interpret the painter, the situation, or thing that stimulated his work, as well as the forms and techniques of his painting.

The second half of the seventeenth century saw a dramatic breakthrough in both form and content in painting as a new generation of painters achieved a new creative synthesis of painting, calligraphy, and poetry. It was Tung Ch'i-ch'ang 董其昌 (1555–1636) who, through applying calligraphic techniques and principles to painting, first reconstructed landscape forms, freeing them from the late Ming, two-dimensional pictorial surface and giving them a dynamic calligraphic structure.<sup>9</sup> In content, the displaced early Ch'ing scholar-artists in expressing grief over their losses scaled new heights in painting with words and images.

After the fall of the Ming dynasty in 1644, many loyalists changed their names and identities and escaped to the mountains as Buddhist recluses and poet-painters. According to Huang Tsung-hsi 黄宗羲 (1610–95), himself a “leftover-citizen” (*i-min* 遺民), the recluses used poetry as “an instrument of mourning . . . to satisfy their urge to sing and lament.”<sup>10</sup> Among leading masters of the time, Chu Ta 朱牽 (Pa-ta-shan-jen 八大山人; 1626–1705) and Shih-t'ao 石濤 (Tao-chi 道濟; 1642–1707) achieved unparalleled success in combining poetry and painting not only to illustrate poetic feelings, but also to evoke associations and agitate consciousness in the viewers through purely formal and abstract means.

Born in 1626 in Nan-ch'ang, Kiangsi Province, and a descendant of the prince of I-yang 弋陽 (enfeoffed 1451) of the Ming imperial family, Chu Ta escaped to the mountains outside Nan-ch'ang after the Ming fell in 1644, and, between 1657 and 1677, became a well-known Buddhist master under the name Ch'uan-ch'i 傳綦.<sup>11</sup> In 1677 Chu Ta left his monastery and went to the provincial city of Lin-ch'uan 臨川, where he was a guest of the city's magistrate Hu I-t'ang 胡亦堂.<sup>12</sup> While in Lin-ch'uan, he suffered from fits of moodiness. One day in the winter of 1680, he suddenly “went mad”; tearing and burning his priest's robe, he laughed and cried all day long. Returning to his native city of Nan-ch'ang, he settled down as a “dumb” artist, using a number of pen names including Lü 驢 (Donkey or Ass), Lü-wu (Donkey House 驢屋), and after 1684, Pa-ta-shan-jen (Mountain Man within Eight Greatnesses), and painted hauntingly expressive images of flowers, birds, and landscapes in a bold, calligraphic brush style. He died in 1705 at the age of eighty.

Because of the need for secrecy and anonymity, contemporary accounts of the lives of such late Ming recluses as Chu Ta are understandably sketchy, confusing, and mysterious. Only recently through scholarly research have we been able to piece together enough factual information to gain a sense of their true stories. The traumatic return to secular life Chu Ta experienced in 1680 was repeated in 1696 by his distant cousin Shih-t'ao, another member of the Ming imperial family who turned Buddhist monk and painter. In both cases, the cause of the trauma was not simply breaking away from the Buddhist faith; it was also, after having lost their family names under the conquest, once again losing the identities they had gained under the priesthood. Despite all this, the Confucian belief in family duty had been so strongly ingrained in the men that it finally prevailed. To have to “return home” when there was no home was the fate shared by these two outstanding early Ch'ing artists.<sup>13</sup>

After the fall of the Ming, resistance forces organized around members of the imperial family lingered on for several decades in Kiangsi Province. As late as 1674, Lin-ch'uan

was sacked by the forces of the former Ming general Keng Ching-chung 耿精忠 (d. 1682). By 1680, however, the Manchus had already ruled thirty-five years, and the vigorous young K'ang-hsi emperor was coming into his full powers. In 1679, while Chu Ta was in Lin-ch'uan, the emperor decreed a special examination, the *po-hsüeh hung-ju* 博學鴻儒 (a title borrowed from T'ang history), to recruit able scholars to work on the official Ming history. It was a project designed to attract even the most stubborn of Ming loyalist diehards. By that time, only a madman would have still clung to the dream of a Ming restoration; it was time for all to "return home."

An album of Chu Ta's paintings of flowers and insects with self-inscribed poems, datable to 1681, when the artist was in his fifty-fifth year, clearly shows the conflicting emotions that beset him at a crucial turning point in his life.<sup>14</sup> These album paintings, executed with sprightly and sensitive brushwork, are brilliantly lifelike. The crisply angular calligraphy is neat and controlled; and the poems, though intentionally made cryptic and difficult with obscure puns and allusions, are proselike and, when decoded, extremely revealing. On one of the leaves, *Branches of Magnolia* (fig. 231), for instance, there is a five-word quatrain:

This brush stirs my spring thoughts,  
I dream of making flowers at dawn.  
The judge cannot decide:  
Who should be awarded the Golden Horse?

是筆搖春思  
平明夢作花  
判官把不定  
金馬賦誰家

The first line opens with the magnolia blossom, which is poetically referred to as the "wooden brush" (*mu-pi* 木筆) because it looks like a writing brush. The second line, "I dream of making flowers at dawn," alludes to stories about the ancient writer Chiang Yen 江淹 (444–505) and the poet Li Po 李白 (701–62), both of whom were said to have "dreamt of growing flowers from the writing brush" (*meng-pi sheng-hua* 夢筆生花).<sup>15</sup> This phrase, literally "dream-brush-grow-flower," was the real subject of this poem-painting. After many long winter's nights, the sight of magnolia buds opening stirred "spring thoughts" in the artist (now no longer a monk), but it was the remembered story of an animated brush sprouting blossoms which infused his picture-writing—of flowers like brushes executed by a brush—with such irrepressible longing and feelings of joy.

Then the mood darkens in the third and fourth lines, as the poet's thoughts turn to his own precarious circumstances. The "Golden Horse" (*chin-ma* 金馬), referring to the Han emperor Wu-ti's 武帝 (r. 140–88 B.C.) Golden Horse Gate, where scholars were assigned to attend to imperial literary needs, may allude to the K'ang-hsi emperor's *po-hsüeh hung-ju* examination of 1679. Here, with one stroke of the writing brush, the imperial examiner could decidedly judge and fix the fate of a candidate. Had he not been a descendant of the Ming, Chu Ta, at this point, might well have been tempted to stand for the special 1679 examination. But there is a possible alternative reading of these two lines, which would have Chu Ta ponder over the intentions of a higher judge, who may yet decide "who should be awarded" the prize of the empire! This reading would reinforce the theory that the artist either was involved in or was at least sympathetic to lingering Ming resistance movements in the late 1670s and throughout the 1680s.<sup>16</sup>

If the poem on the *Branches of Magnolia* leaves us in doubt as to Chu Ta's true feelings about serving the new regime, an unambiguous answer in the negative is found in another leaf, *Epidendrum and Bamboo* (fig. 232), which exhibits a high degree of emotionalism:



Figure 231. Chu Ta (1626–1705),  
*Branches of Magnolia*.  
Album leaf, ink on paper, 30.2 × 30.2 cm.  
The Art Museum, Princeton University;  
Gift of Mrs. George Rowley,  
in memory of George Rowley



Figure 232. Chu Ta,  
*Epidendrum and Bamboo*.  
Album leaf, ink on paper, 30.2 × 30.2 cm.  
The Art Museum, Princeton University;  
Gift of Mrs. George Rowley,  
in memory of George Rowley

In paintings of bamboo and epidendrum by Wu Chen,  
How the epidendrum leaves are worn short  
and the bamboos are blunt-ended!  
Returning home, Sung is far away,  
how I think of our young boys.  
Arriving in Wei, Confucius turned back, singing madly,  
listening to the sound of the galloping hooves.

寫竹寫蘭吳仲圭  
蘭何佩短竹葉齊  
還家宋遠思童子  
衛適狂歌聽馬蹄

Epidendrum and bamboos, as symbols of recluse-scholars flourishing in the wilderness, were first made popular by such recluse-painters as Wu Chen 吳鎮 (1280–1354) under the Mongol conquest in the fourteenth century. The words *lan-p'ei* 蘭佩 “epidendrum is worn” in the second line are taken from a phrase found in the fourth-century B.C. *Songs of the South* (*Ch'u-tz'u* 楚辭): *jen ch'iu-lan i wei p'ei* 纫秋蘭以為佩 (“I pick autumn epidendrum leaves for wearing”), which describes the demeanor of a recluse-scholar.<sup>17</sup> In the third line, beginning with “returning home,” the phrase “Sung is far away” comes from the *Book of Poetry* (*Shih-ching* 詩經; written before the sixth century B.C.), in which we hear an ancient poet lament: “Who says Sung is far away? I look for it standing on my toes” (*shei wei Sung yüan, ch'i yü wang chih* 誰謂宋遠，跂予望之).<sup>18</sup> Here we see Chu Ta express his feelings as a displaced person who longs for “returning home.” The reference to “young boys” recalls another passage in the *Book of Poetry*: “The tender leaves of the creeping orchid are the *i* ornament worn by young boys” (*wan-lan chih chih, t'ung-tzu p'ei i* 芄蘭之支，童子佩觿).<sup>19</sup> By “our young boys,” Chu Ta probably meant the remnants of the Ming resistance forces who, alas, he realized, could hardly be relied upon for returning him to his real home. In the final line, Chu remembers how the sage Confucius, unable to function in the kingdom of Wei, turned his carriage around, sang his lament, and left. The description of Confucius “singing madly” clearly corresponds to the artist’s own fit of laughing and crying when he went “mad.” In the painting, the calligraphic brushwork fairly throbs with the frenzy of “singing madly” and the sound of “galloping hooves.”

In these album leaves, *Branches of Magnolia* and *Epidendrum and Bamboo*, we see Chu Ta’s two different approaches to flower painting. *Branches of Magnolia* is typical of his earlier style, which harks back to the traditional flower painting of the Ming period: the brushwork is precisely descriptive, with the forms and textures of the petals, calyxes, and branches carefully differentiated and represented; and the composition of the cut branch is carefully articulated and built. In *Epidendrum and Bamboo*, the brushwork is round and abstract: the rapidly executed composition is conceived as a single calligraphic design, which, though charged with an emotional force that stimulates immediate viewer response, nevertheless keeps an overall equilibrium between the vigorously interacting and countervailing forces. This calligraphic approach anticipates the increasingly abstract brush paintings of the artist’s later years.

Shih-t’ao, a tenth-generation descendant of Tsan 贊, the prince of Ching-chiang 靖江 (enfeoffed 1409), was born in 1642 in Kuei-lin 桂林, Kwangsi Province, as Chu Jo-chi 朱若極.<sup>20</sup> Escaping in his youth to a Buddhist monastery in Ch’üan-chou 全州 in northern Kwangsi in 1647, he took the Buddhist names Yüan-chi 原濟 and Shih-t’ao. In 1650, he traveled north to Wu-ch’ang 武昌, Hupei Province, where, around 1655, he first studied painting orchids and bamboos with someone named Ch’en Chen-an 陳貞庵.<sup>21</sup> After moving to the Chiang-nan area in the early 1660s, Shih-t’ao (around 1664) became a disciple of a powerful Ch’an Buddhist master, Lü-an Pen-yüeh 旅庵本月 (d. 1676), who, in 1666, sent him to live in Hsüan-ch’eng 宣城, Anhui Province, where he remained until 1680.

For the young monk-recluse Shih-t’ao, the years in Hsüan-ch’eng were a time of artistic and intellectual maturation. Accompanied by his old family retainer, Ho-t’ao 喝濤, he “lived with only the lonely clouds” in an old temple at the foot of the Ching-t’ing Mountains 敬亭山. A passionate lover of flowers and an inveterate rambler, the artist

would trek countless miles in the mountains on “plum-blossom walks” to look for ideas for painting and poetry. In an album painting dated 1673 (fig. 233), by adapting a stock formula of a walking poet from an old woodblock illustration, he shows himself striding up a mountain path on one such excursion with a branch of newly opened blossoms held close to his nose.<sup>22</sup> In the upper right corner of the painting, he inscribes a line from a poem by T’an Yüan-ch’un 譚元春 (d. 1637), a late Ming Ching-ling 竟陵 (Hupei) school poet, which, in five words, reads literally as:

*Hsiang tsai mei hua shang*

香 在 梅 花 上

*Fragrance located plum blossoms above*

Translated, the line simply means: “The fragrance comes from the plum blossoms.” But in illustrating this line in his painting, the humorous painter has decided to play with the words in his image. By adding two flower branches with blossoms in the foreground under the walking poet’s feet, he shows himself as the “fragrance”—“located” “above” the “plum blossoms.”

Thus Shih-t’ao shows his uncommon gift for combining words and images, by setting up dialogues between them, to say things, evoke feelings, and agitate and stir viewer responses. In an album dated 1677–78 illustrating poems by the famous Sung poet Su Shih 蘇軾 (1037–1101),<sup>23</sup> the painter depicts Su’s visit to Ku-shan 孤山, the Lone Mountain, in Hangchow, Chekiang, as a self-portrait (fig. 234). Like himself, Su spent his life journeying from place to place as an exile. A brilliant essayist and poet, Su had an ego that was overinflated by early recognition of his talent at the court; with his demotion to Hangchow in 1071, at age thirty-five, he entered into a period of self-reflection and spiritual maturation. In 1677, Shih-t’ao was thirty-four and, living alone, had time enough for self-reflection. From his early years in Hupei, he had developed an appreciation for Su Shih’s natural, colloquial poetic style. In illustrating Su’s visit to Ku-shan, he found Su’s poem a perfect statement of his own mind. On his painting he transcribes four of the twenty lines of Su’s poem “On the Winter Solstice, Visiting [Buddhist monks] Hui-ch’in and Hui-ssu” 臘日遊孤山訪惠勤惠思二僧:

The sky is snowy, with clouds filling the lake,  
Buildings, terraces, visible or indistinct,  
in mountains emerging and disappearing;  
The streams are clear, with rocks standing out,  
and fishes countable,  
The forest is deep, with no one about,  
only birds calling to each other.<sup>24</sup>

天欲雪，雲滿湖  
樓臺明滅山有無  
水清石出魚可數  
林深無人鳥相呼

Clearly the painter is less concerned with the words than the spirit of the poem, which, in spite of its title, “Visiting Hui-ch’in and Hui-ssu,” is about loneliness and solitary reflection. As lines 5 and 6 (not transcribed) continue:

On this winter solstice, I do not return to my family,  
Using visiting two men of Tao as excuse,  
I seek to amuse myself.

臘日不歸對妻孥  
名尋道人實自娛



Figure 233. Shih-t'ao (1642–1707),  
*In Search of Plum Blossoms*,  
dated 1673. Album leaf.  
Collection unknown (from Xie Zhihliu, ed.,  
*Shih-t'ao hua-chi* [Shanghai:  
Jen-min mei-shu, 1960], pl. 39)



Figure 234. Shih-t'ao, *Su Shih's Visit to Ku-shan*.  
Album leaf, ink on paper, 23.5 × 30 cm.  
P. C. Wong collection, Hong Kong

And in lines 9 and 10, Su Shih meditates on being alone:

In the Lone Mountain, where loneliness is absolute,  
who would abide there?  
Only when a man of Tao has Tao,  
no mountain will be lonely.

孤山孤絕誰肯廬

道人有道山不孤

Using the same formula of the walking poet, the painter shows the hooded figure looming large on the mountain path, which seems mysteriously blocked by an animated tree and white clouds in the distance. All the elements in the painting—human, tree, rock, and cloud—are executed in the same abstract, rounded calligraphic brushwork, making all their shapes and rhythms echo and resonate against one another—a perfect metaphor for the line: “When a man of Tao has Tao, no mountain will be lonely.”

The last two lines of Su’s poem sum up the moment of truth for the poet:

Writing the poem down, quickly as fire,  
to seize the fleeting image,  
A clear vision, once gone, cannot be imitated.

作詩火急追亡逋

清景一失後難摹

It remains for Shih-t'ao, with his painterly magic, to translate Su Shih’s fleeting poetic imagination into a clear pictorial vision.

## NOTES

- 1 See Wen C. Fong, "Words and Images in Sung and Yuan Paintings," in *Landscape Painting of the Far East, II*, the Third International Symposium on Art Historical Studies organized by the Society for International Exchange of Art Historical Studies and sponsored by the Taniguchi Foundation (Kyoto, 1984), pp. 1-10.
- 2 See Kuo Shao-yü, *Chung-kuo wen-hsüeh p'i-p'ing shih* (History of Chinese literary criticism) (Shanghai: Chung-hua, 1961), p. 281.
- 3 See *ibid.*, p. 301. My translation here and throughout unless otherwise noted.
- 4 *Ibid.*, p. 302.
- 5 *Ibid.*, p. 323.
- 6 *Ibid.*, pp. 348-79.
- 7 See Jonathan Chaves, "The Panoply of Images: A Reconsideration of the Literary Theory of the Kung-an School," in Susan Bush and Christian Murck, eds., *Theories of the Arts in China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), pp. 341-64.
- 8 See Kuo, *Chung-kuo wen-hsüeh*, p. 295.
- 9 See Wen C. Fong et al., *Images of the Mind* (Princeton: Art Museum, Princeton University, 1984), pp. 166-77.
- 10 See Kuo, *Chung-kuo wen-hsüeh*, p. 412.
- 11 See Wen C. Fong, "Stages in the Life and Art of Chu Ta (A.D. 1626-1705)," *Archives of Asian Art* 40 (1987), pp. 6-23. For biographical information on Chu Ta, see Wang Fang-yü, ed., *Pa-ta-shan-jen lun-chi* (An anthology of essays on Pa-ta-shan-jen) (Taipei: Kuo li pien i kuan chung-hua ts'ung-shu pien shen wei yüan hui, 1984), vol. 1, pp. 527-28, 531-32.
- 12 See Yeh-yeh (Wu T'ung), "Lun Hu I-t'ang shih-pien chi ch'i tui Pa-ta-shan-jen ti ying-hsiang" (On the so-called Hu I-t'ang Affair and its effect on Pa-ta-shan-jen), in Wang, ed., *Pa-ta-shan-jen*, vol. 1, pp. 1-40.
- 13 See Wen C. Fong, *Returning Home: Tao-chi's Album of Landscapes and Flowers* (New York: Braziller, 1976), esp. pp. 25-26, and Commentaries, no. 1.
- 14 In my earlier study of this album (now at the Art Museum, Princeton University), published many years ago, I dated it to the late 1670s (see Wen Fong, "A Letter from Shih-t'ao to Pa-ta-shan-jen and the Problem of Shih-t'ao's Chronology," *Archives of the Chinese Art Society of America* 13 [1959], p. 42). On the painting of a bamboo, leaf 9 of the album, the second of the two poems inscribed by Chu Ta ends with the line, "Now, the magistrate insists that I paint this blasted bamboo," which I took as a reference to the Hu I-t'ang Affair, which would date the painting to 1679, just before he went mad. Wang Shih-ch'ing of Beijing has persuaded me that the album was actually painted in 1681 after Chu Ta returned to Nan-ch'ang. The two works dated most closely to the Princeton album are: the earliest-extant landscape painting hanging scroll, dated 1681 and signed "Lü" ("Pa-ta-shan-jen shu-hua chi," pt. 2 of *T'ai-shan ts'an-shih lou*, pl. 6); and an album of eleven leaves in Mr. Kanaoka's collection in Tokyo, dated 1683 (see Jao Tsung-i, "Ko-shan kwei-nien hua-ts'e pa" [Notes on the painting album of *kwei-nien* by Ko-shan], *Wenwu*, no. 10 [1983], pp. 47-50, in which the author dates the album to 1673; however, Wang Shih-ch'ing proves the date to be 1683).
- 15 For a transcription of the poems on the Princeton album, see Wang Fang-yü, "Ku-kung Ch'uan-ch'i hsieh-sheng-ts'e yü Pa-ta-shan-jen tsao-ch'i tso-p'in" (Ch'uan-ch'i's album of still lifes in the Palace Museum and other early works by Pa-ta-shan-jen), in Wang, ed., *Pa-ta-shan-jen*, pp. 327-28.
- 16 See Chang Yü-shu, ed., *P'ei-wen yüan-fu* (P'ei-wen rhyme encyclopedia) (1711; reprint, Taipei: Shang-wu, 1966), p. 358ob.
- 17 See Fong, "Stages in the Life and Art . . .," pp. 12-13.
- 18 Chang, ed., *P'ei-wen yüan-fu*, p. 2842c.
- 19 *Ibid.*, p. 1827c.
- 20 *Ibid.*, p. 2842c.
- 21 For Shih-t'ao's biography, see Fong, *Returning Home*, esp. pp. 15-26. Important documentary evidence establishing Shih-t'ao's birthdate as 1642 was published in Wang Shih-ch'ing, "Tsa-feng wen-chi chung yu kuan Shih-t'ao ti shih-wen" (Texts bearing upon Shih-t'ao in the Tsa-feng literary collection), *Wenwu*, no. 12 (1979), pp. 43-48; see also Xu Bangda, "Shih-t'ao sheng-tsu hsin ting" (Newly determined birth and death dates for Shih-t'ao), *Mei-shu-chia* 2 (1978), pp. 2-8.
- 22 See Shih-t'ao's own inscription on *Epidendrum, Bamboo, and Rock*, datable to the 1690s, on loan to the Art Museum, Princeton University.
- 23 For discussion of a similar composition, *Searching for Plum Blossoms*, dated 1682-83, see Fong et al., *Images of the Mind*, pp. 202-3.
- 24 A tenth leaf of the same album, *The Echo*, is now at the Art Museum, Princeton University.
- 25 Su Shih, "La-jih yü Ku-shan fang Hui-ch'ün in Hui-ssu erh-seng," in Wang Wen-kao, ed., *Su Shih shih-chi* (Collection of poems by Su Shih) (Beijing: Chung-hua, 1982), vol. 2, *chüan* 7, pp. 316-19.

# K'un-ts'an and His Inscriptions

JAMES CAHILL

The long, difficult inscriptions that the early Ch'ing-period landscapist K'un-ts'an 髡殘 (or Shih-ch'i 石谿; 1612–ca. 1674) wrote on most of his paintings stand, if not like walls, at least like very dense hedges before anyone attempting a serious study of his works: one cannot simply go around them, but it is not at all easy to get *through* them. The inscriptions present difficulties at several stages of our dealing with them: first, in deciphering K'un-ts'an's stubby handwriting;<sup>1</sup> then, in understanding the often cryptic texts after they have been deciphered; and finally, in interpreting them in the broad context of K'un-ts'an's life and works. I decided to use the occasion of the Crawford symposium to confront these problems directly, in at least a preliminary way, using as a focus the landscape titled *Wooded Mountains at Dusk* (*Huang-shan tao chung t'u* 黃山道中圖), with its long inscription dated to the eighth month of 1666, in the John M. Crawford, Jr., Collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art (fig. 235).

When the collaborative work began around 1960 that led to the publication of the Crawford catalogue in 1962, I was glad that this entry was not assigned to me, much as I admired the painting. Aschwin Lippe took it on and produced a thoroughly creditable first attempt at an English rendering of the inscription—which he introduced, however, with these diffident words: “The long poetic inscription by the artist reads about as follows. . . .”<sup>2</sup> I cannot claim to have advanced much beyond Lippe's understanding, but have attempted another translation. K'un-ts'an's inscription, then, reads about as follows:

Rising beyond the charms of hills and valleys  
The moon hangs cold above the precipice.  
Crisp weather, but with steamy mountain mists—  
I will not try for the Hung-men confrontation [?].  
Startled by twilight, I walk on with my staff,  
Leaping along, engaged in idle dreams,  
[illegible] . . . an old monkey calls.  
I rise and stare into the fading light.  
All day I've traveled, no one for companion,  
Excited by hidden and perilous places.  
Distant peaks and nearby mountaintops,  
Behind, in front, in orderly relations.  
A strange sense pervades the firmament  
As flying green [leaves] hit against my face.  
The sun descends, as though approaching man;  
Combed mists engender utmost loveliness.  
As I walk on, they clear before me;  
But my legs are seized suddenly with cramps.  
I hold a stone, bony as if pared,

凝出丘壑姿  
巖額懸月□  
爽氣與蒸嵐  
不將鴻門撞  
驚昏忽策杖  
跳躑成夢想  
□□老猿啼  
起視光睽睽  
鎮日□□行  
發興在幽險  
遙巒與近巘  
后先共立儀  
瑰情出天表  
飛翠撲人臉  
日脚欲近人  
梳雲生絕艷  
吾行即清之  
決股廢拘遍  
檢石骨如削



Regard a pine, its green moss looking dyed.  
 I sit myself down, like a small bird,  
 And the crowd of peaks falls suddenly into place.  
 Having climbed high, now at the brink of depths,  
 Holding fast, I ponder my pettiness.  
 The road ends; I plant myself firmly there.  
 Where a spring issues, I set up shelter beneath the cliff.  
 All this suffices for nourishing my eyes,  
 Suffices also just to rest my feet.  
 With one large piece of rattan paper from [Yen-]ch'i,  
 I draw this, and the *ch'i* infuses it.

有松髮如染  
 身坐如小鳥  
 群峯忽然歛  
 登高而臨深  
 拳拳當謙貶  
 路窮剛置我  
 源開輒架廠  
 既足供吾目  
 又足息吾跣  
 一幅溪藤紙  
 寫此氣染染

We should note immediately that the significance of this long inscription is not limited to its meaning as a text; the weight of its physical presence on the painting also affects our experience of the whole work. K'un-ts'an's inscriptions occupy or even fill the areas of sky in his landscapes, with the tight knots of brushline that make up individual characters arranged into vertical columns, typically uneven in length. The inscriptions are perceived as dense patterns that partly offer, partly withhold meaning. Reading the paintings upward, as one ordinarily does with Chinese landscape pictures, one is confronted at last with the inscriptions—which, we may fairly assume, were not easy reading even for K'un-ts'an's more learned contemporaries. If the composition and execution of his pictures seem at times designed to slow the viewer's progress through them (an aspect of them that we will consider below), denying the smooth passage from part to part and the quick readings that other kinds of paintings allow, the inscriptions further slow the viewer's advance toward comprehension of the whole. These are not works that are quickly exhausted.

To understand better the Crawford painting and its inscription, I want to consider a few of K'un-ts'an's works from the years preceding it. He had begun painting around 1657, when he was (by Chinese reckoning) forty-six years old.<sup>3</sup> He had left his parents to become a Ch'an Buddhist monk in 1638, and had studied Ch'an with several masters, mostly in the Nanking region. The years from 1654 to 1658 he spent at the Pao-en Temple 報恩寺 near Nanking. Around 1657 he met the painter Ch'eng Cheng-k'uei 程正揆 (1604–76), who retired from official service in that year, and who became his close friend. Sometime in 1658 or 1659 K'un-ts'an became the abbot of another temple in the vicinity of Nanking. The death of one of his most revered Buddhist masters in 1659 may have released him to travel: whatever the reason, he seems to have spent over a year at Huang-shan in southern Anhui Province, probably in the company of Ch'eng Cheng-k'uei for part of the time. It was immediately after his return to the Nanking region in 1660 that he entered his most intense period of creativity. Joseph Chang (Chang Tsenti 張增弟) states that no less than seven extant works, all embodying somehow his memories of Huang-shan scenery, date from the period from the eighth to the twelfth month of 1660 alone.<sup>4</sup> Most of K'un-ts'an's finest surviving works were painted in the few years from this time until 1663. It is the inscriptions on a few of the paintings from these crucial years, along with the paintings themselves, that I want to consider briefly now.

*Flowing Stream at the Heavenly Citadel* (*T'ien-tu sheng ching t'u* 天都勝境圖), a landscape painted in the eighth month of 1660, presently in the collection of Liu Tso-ch'ou (Lok



Figure 235. K'un-ts'an (1612–ca. 1674), *Wooded Mountains at Dusk*, dated 1666. Hanging scroll, ink and color on paper, 124.4 × 60 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Bequest of John M. Crawford, Jr., 1988

Chuck-tiew), Hong Kong (fig. 236), is a good starting point. In his inscription K'un-ts'an tells of discussing painting with Ch'eng Cheng-k'uei: Every morning and evening he climbs the peaks and gazes into the distance in order to comprehend the true aspects of mountains as seen from afar. He quotes the common saying that unless one has read many books and walked many miles, what he sees isn't worth talking about, and continues:

It is like the old Buddhist saying: "You have to give and receive personally [i.e., engage yourself with the world] if you are to unlock the secret of the rush mat [Ch'an meditation]." I came back from the T'ien-tu Peak [the Heavenly Citadel, grandest of the Huang-shan peaks] and have been painting the beauties of rivers and streams, the luxuriant shade of groves and trees—all of it scenery unlike any that the old masters ever depicted.

如古德云：爾當親授受，得彼破了蒲團訣。時余歸天都，寫溪河之勝，林木茂鬱，總非前輩所作之境界耶。

Several observations can be made about the painting in relation to what K'un-ts'an wrote on it. First, although he mentions Huang-shan, and memories of its awe-inspiring scenery must still remain in his mind, the scenery that he depicts, apart from the distant peaks, appears to be the earthier, more richly vegetated terrain of the Nanking region, the familiar scenery of his everyday life, with roads, dwellings, a fisherman in his boat on the river, and secluded scholars in a thatched house. Second, although he quotes the saying about the necessity of reading many books and walking many miles before one's observation of the world will have lasting value, the two parts of this formula do not seem equally applied to his own practice. There is nothing at all bookish about his paintings of this period, which are relatively free of the style-conscious overlays of culture typical of painting in his time. The experience of walking many miles, on the other hand, is the very theme of many of his inscriptions and paintings, signifying a close engagement with the physical world. That engagement is the central subject of his early works, which present themselves as direct, impassioned revelations of personal experience. We cannot, of course, simply accept them as that; the *effect* of avoiding established conventions does not in fact free either poems or paintings from convention, and they cannot be taken as simple reports of what he saw and felt. What K'un-ts'an offers in these early works is a private version of the old theme of ideal involvement with nature as a source of spiritual strength and stability. His quotation of the Buddhist saying suggests that such an involvement was for him a necessary grounding for "unlock[ing] the secret of the rush mat," or Ch'an enlightenment. We will see later how this sequence, first experiencing nature to the fullest and then practicing quiet meditation, supplied the underlying structure for some of his best inscriptions and paintings.

The painting itself seems to confirm his claim: in its tactile richness, its profusion of mundane detail, most of all in its refusal to reduce nature to a neat system of forms, *Flowing Stream at the Heavenly Citadel* represents a highly personal engagement both with natural landscape and with painting as a medium of expression. For most of K'un-ts'an's contemporaries and immediate predecessors, including the best of them—Tung Ch'i-ch'ang 董其昌 (1555–1636), the Orthodox masters, Hung-jen 弘仁 (1610–64) and most other Anhui artists, Kung Hsien 龔賢 (ca. 1618–89)—the limitations of style that were



Figure 236. K'un-ts'an, *Flowing Stream at the Heavenly Citadel*, dated 1660. Hanging scroll, 111.5 × 38.5 cm. Xubaizhai-Lok Chuck-tiew collection, Hong Kong



Figure 237. K'un-ts'an, *The Dwelling of the Immortals*, dated 1660. Hanging scroll, 310 × 127.5 cm. Private collection, China (from Victoria Contag, *Chinese Masters of the Seventeenth Century*, trans. Michael Bullock [London: Lund Humphries, 1969], pl. 35)

imposed by the extreme conventionalization of most later Chinese landscape painting were embraced as strengths. Turning the materials of nature into a system of stylistically consistent forms was basic to the formation of an individual style, and manipulating these forms and playing against established conventions were basic to the creation of a painting. K'un-ts'an's powerful reaction against the tendency toward conventionalization was never formulated in words so clearly as it was later to be by Shih-t'ao 石濤 (1642–1707), but it is expressed powerfully, through counterexample, in the paintings of his early period, in the long inscriptions that he wrote on them, and in the relationships between the two.

K'un-ts'an's inscriptions on paintings of this period mostly have a quasi-narrative character, with a first-person subject understood, as if he were setting forth personal experience both inner and outer; and they seem to concentrate on experiences of a kind that painting cannot render—sounds, sensations of warmth and cold, dreams and idle fancies, phenomena of change—as well as on the rich colors that he perceives but chooses not to reproduce in his paintings. In the poem inscribed on a landscape dated to the fourth month of 1660, now in the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, he writes of living alone by a blue cliff with groves of green pines; of a spring breeze and a calm sea, with no howling of dragons; of dreaming of visiting his friend and walking barefoot on mossy stones; of being awakened by a gusty wind, to return home by moonlight.<sup>5</sup>

The inscription on a landscape from the autumn of the same year, 1660, *The Dwelling of the Immortals* (*Ch'iu shan hsien-ching t'u* 秋山仙境圖; fig. 237), speaks of autumn mountains tranquil like the dwellings of immortals and of red-leafed trees in cold weather awaiting the coming of crows. Boats homeward-bound in evening are reflected in the lake; when he rolls up his window blinds, the artist sees the red of sunset in the autumn wind. He refers to a “lofty-minded man” (*kao-shih* 高士), presumably the recipient of the painting, and expresses his hope to see him again next year, when spring comes.

In a poem inscribed on a landscape dated to the eighth month of 1661, now in the Palace Museum, Beijing, he writes of a gushing stream with green waves through which the shimmering scales of fish can be glimpsed; stones in the stream turn into sheep or pigs. Mist arises from the waterfall; wind rustles in the fir trees; the bright moon is reflected in the green of the waves. Where, he concludes by asking, shall he row today in his boat, with countless valleys beckoning?<sup>6</sup>

The inscription on *Landscape with Secluded Dwelling* (*Ts'eng-yen t'ieh-ho t'u* 層壑壑圖), in the Palace Museum, Beijing, painted in the ninth month of 1663 (fig. 238), begins with familiar images of peaks and valleys, mists and forests, a waterfall, solitary monkeys and cranes—conventional imagery of a kind which, as we noted before, K'un-ts'an often uses in his poems, along with the more personal. In the midst of all this a recluse dwells by a stream, engaged from morning to evening in good conversation with a friend. He likes to go out and play with the deer and pigs. Where river and sky meet in a line, the merchants' boats come and go. How, he asks, can one tell one's purpose? To be without purpose: that would be real freedom from care.

We can note in these inscriptions a few recurrent motifs and images, but more importantly, the recurrence of certain *types* of motifs and images, especially those that are transitory or otherwise unrepresentable in painting. The imagery of the inscriptions corresponds at only a few points to that of the paintings; the paintings can never be read simply as illustrations to the poems or the poems as simply descriptive of the paintings. We can note also a constant alternation of lines and couplets describing outer phenomena,

as perceived through his senses, with others reporting subjective experience and introspection, an in-and-out shifting of focus that is, of course, common enough in Chinese poetry, but that here suggests a Ch'an-like fusion of outer and inner that K'un-ts'an also, I believe, attempts to express in his painting—in this, at least, paintings and inscriptions correspond.

As does Ch'an Buddhism, so do both K'un-ts'an's paintings and inscriptions from this period reflect a dissatisfaction with intellectual formulations, with following established precedent, and with the conventional process of transmuting raw experience into cultural patterns. The act of painting landscape pictures that present themselves as embodiments of his experiences in nature, and of composing these poems to accompany them, is for K'un-ts'an a means of defining his place in the world, of coming to terms with it. And the program that we will find to underlie both inscriptions and paintings, in which, typically, the artist-poet ventures forth from his secluded house to participate in the sensorily rich phenomena of nature, with all their attendant uncertainties, finds these phenomena exciting but somewhat unsettling, and arrives at last back to a situation of security, must represent K'un-ts'an's personal program for attaining spiritual enlightenment and emotional peace.

An inscription written on a painting of 1662 is an especially clear statement of that program:

Living in the world while renouncing the world is something I cannot do.	住世出世我不能
Painting mountains while in the mountains: just that is enough.	在山畫山聊爾爾
A vegetable diet, a patched robe, don't cost anything— For four years now I have been smearing and rubbing [i.e., painting on] these pieces of paper.	蔬齋破衲非用錢 四年塗抹這張紙
One or two brushstrokes make nothing to be looked at, But with a thousand or myriad brushstrokes I can create something like this.	一筆兩筆看不得 千筆萬筆方如此
Where in the universe is there any such scene? This old monk can produce things that pertain to nature's order!	乾坤何處有此境 老僧弄出寧關理
Although the working of creation is beyond hearing, When observed by an enlightened man, how can it be trivial?	造物雖然不尋問 至人看見豈鄙里
I want only to complete [the expression of] a moment's feeling—	只知了我一時情
I care nothing about the startings and endings of this piece of paper.	不管此紙何終結
With the painting finished I go out the gate for a short climb up the hill,	畫畢出門小躋攀
Briskly, in good spirits, to gaze off at the mountains. In this mood, seeing the mountain, I can watch mists arise from the peak,	爽爽精神看看山 有情看見雲出岫
Or listen unconsciously to a bell sounding from the pass. Wind blows through the forest, like a tiger's roar,	無心聞知鐘度關 風來千林如虎嘯

<p>Frightening this monk, making him jump.          Who would guess that my foot would land on a sharp-          pointed stone?          So I limp back on my wounded paw, bearing the pain,          still smiling.          Reaching my meditation hut, I face my painting again—          There is something special about it, hard to          communicate.          From now on I needn't travel to far mountain temples,          But can splash the ink and suck the brush, exhausting          nature's deepest wonders.<sup>7</sup></p>	<p>嚇得僧人一大跳          足下誰知觸石尖          跛跛蹣跚忍且笑          歸到禪房對圖畫          別有一番難報告          從茲不必踰出門          澄墨吮毫窮奧妙</p>
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Another major and recurrent theme in these early inscriptions is K'un-ts'an's deep satisfaction over reaching a state of harmony with his world—standing, as he puts it in one of them, with his feet firmly planted. That inscription is on a landscape in the Lok Chuck-tiew collection, Hong Kong, a painting done in the tenth month of 1660, soon after K'un-ts'an's return from Huang-shan (fig. 239):

<p>Excited peaks stand steep against the sky,          The vast ocean rolls around the earth,          Mists arise from the river, pale and thin,          Wind in the pines makes a sighing sound.          I set my will and pleasure among these,          Going and coming unhurriedly,          Wearing a pair of green-grass sandals,          Living in a few rooms of a yellow-thatched house.          Smiling as I look at the layered groves,          Or walk to the Thirty-six Peaks [of Huang-shan].          I can stand with my feet firmly planted          And face, from here, the bases of the hills.</p>	<p>聳峻轟天表          浩翰匝地岫          溪雲起淡淡          松風吹謖謖          樂志於其間          徜徉不受促          兩隻青草鞋          幾間黃茆屋          笑看樹重重          行到峯六六          可以立腳根          方此面山麓</p>
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In considering K'un-ts'an's inscriptions up to now, we may have paid insufficient attention to the paintings and to what he is attempting to accomplish in them. In this work, once more, he seems to merge recollections of the grandeur of the scenery of his Huang-shan travels (in the distant peaks as well as in the brief allusion in the poem) with the more mundane and immediate experience of living among the wooded hills and rivers of the Nanking region, in an idealized fusion of memory and present reality. Moreover, in avoiding the consistent formal systems of most of his contemporaries and predecessors, he presents a world that is unruly, too diverse in its sensory material to be comprehended within the ordinary limits of a style. The effect parallels that of his poems, with their rich successions of shifting sensations, but the imagery and sensations of paintings and inscriptions, as we noted earlier, do not neatly correspond—it is no more true here than elsewhere that words and images can be regarded as virtual equivalents, as the over-familiar assertion that paintings are soundless poems and poems paintings in sound would have us believe. On the contrary, K'un-ts'an's poems, as we have seen, describe phenomena that painting cannot depict, and his paintings convey visual impressions beyond the descriptive and evocative power of words. On one level, then, the paintings and their



Figure 238. K'un-ts'an, *Landscape with Secluded Dwelling*, dated 1663. Hanging scroll, ink and light color on paper, 107 × 41.4 cm. Palace Museum, Beijing



Figure 239. K'un-ts'an, *Landscape*, dated 1660. Hanging scroll, 118.5 × 40 cm. Xubaizhai-Lok Chuck-tiew collection, Hong Kong



inscriptions complement each other, each concentrated on communicating what the other cannot.

But K'un-ts'an seems not to be satisfied even with the combined expressive and representational capacities of words and images. Some of the difficulty in understanding his poems arises from their transcending the limits of what can be lucidly stated or even poetically suggested, in an attempt to stretch the limits of communication of thought and feeling; and his paintings seem similarly to be straining to incorporate somehow in their imagery what paintings properly cannot depict—change, process, erosion, the interpenetration of matter and atmosphere—to represent, that is, the unrepresentable. If we search for earlier attempts of a similar kind in Chinese painting, we may think of some paintings by Wang Meng 王蒙 (ca. 1308–85), whom K'un-ts'an sometimes invokes in his inscriptions, or, still further back, some paintings of the Southern Sung period, in which the artists, drawing on newly developed powers of painting to evoke what could not be pictorially described, expanded the boundaries of what could be conveyed in a picture to include ephemeral phenomena of light, weather, atmosphere, even sound. We know of these attempts not only from extant paintings, such as the *Dream Journey through the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers* (*Hsiao-Hsiang wo-yu t'u* 瀟湘臥遊圖) in the Tokyo National Museum (see fig. 188) or the landscapes attributed to Mu-ch'i 牧谿 and Yü-chien 玉澗 (both active mid-thirteenth century), but also from writings of the time. The scholar Teng Ch'un 鄧椿, in his *Continuation of Painting History* (*Hua-chi* 畫繼; preface 1167), writes disparagingly of painters who try to represent “An Evening Bell from a Mist-shrouded Monastery,” or “Night Rain on the Hsiao and Hsiang”; it is obviously impossible, he points out, to depict the sound of a bell, or scenery at night, least of all rainy scenery.<sup>8</sup> And Li Ch'eng-sou 李澄叟 (b. ca. 1150), in the introductory comments to his essay on landscape painting (*Hua shan-shui chüeh* 畫山水訣; preface 1221), writes: “It used to be that what couldn't be recorded in words was recorded in painting. Now it's the reverse: what can't be expressed in painting is returned to words [i.e., put into inscriptions]. This is what is called ‘a saying that is hard to say, but one wants to say it.’”<sup>9</sup>

Li Ch'eng-sou states here the same conviction that seems to underlie K'un-ts'an's best paintings and their inscriptions: that after the limits of pictorial representation have been stretched to their utmost, other impressions of the outside world can be reported, and further aspects of subjective experience expressed, in an accompanying inscription. But the relationship is not simply supplementary, with content of painting plus content of inscription constituting total content of work. The painter-poet's apparent straining against the boundaries of each medium, as though to push each some way into the other, is itself part of the content—perhaps a metaphor, as I suggested earlier, for the fusion of psychological states and sensory impressions that makes up the experience K'un-ts'an wants to transmit as fully as he can. And we may suspect that the points at which painting and poem converge or overlap are the points to which we should pay special attention.

With this in mind, we might consider how far our readings of K'un-ts'an's paintings are congruent with our readings of his inscriptions, looking at two more of the finest of his early works: *Clear Sky over Verdant Hills* (*Ts'ang-ts'ui ling-t'ien t'u* 蒼翠凌天圖), a 1660 landscape in the Nanking Museum (fig. 240), and *A Thatched House in Wooded Hills* (*Ts'ang-shan chieh-mao t'u* 蒼山結茅圖), the superb landscape of 1663 in the Shanghai



Figure 240. K'un-ts'an, *Clear Sky over Verdant Hills*, dated 1660. Hanging scroll, ink and light color on paper, 85 × 40.1 cm. Nanking Museum (from *Nan-ching Po-wu-yüan*, Museums in China series [Tokyo: Kodansha, 1982?], vol. 4, pl. 156)



Figure 241. K'un-ts'an, *A Thatched House in Wooded Hills*, dated 1663. Hanging scroll, ink and color on paper, 89.6 × 33.9 cm. Shanghai Museum

Museum (fig. 241). I am using these only as examples of his paintings, and will not treat their inscriptions.

The forms in these works are not distinctly demarcated, as in most landscape pictures by other artists of the time, but merge into continuums of space and matter, substance and texture, which interact in dynamic processes of transformation and flow. To move through these painted worlds, along the paths that signify passage upward and into depth, is to experience emphatically something more akin than is usual to the experience of walking in nature and absorbing impressions through one's senses—changing atmospheric conditions, the profusion and multiplicity of natural forms, moments of disorientation followed by moments of reorientation to the spaces traversed. One may be reminded of the experience of moving in imagination through the fog-hung hollows of Kuo Hsi's 郭熙 (ca. 1010–ca. 1090) great *Early Spring* (*Tsao-ch'un t'u* 早春圖; see fig. 52).

To read K'un-ts'an's paintings in this way, as imagined passages through nature that parallel his own walks in the mountains, is to experience also something of the kind of exaltation that he transmits in his poems; paintings and poems are alike in their sheer intensity of response to sensory stimuli. It is also to partake of the feeling of security that K'un-ts'an reached in nature, as one penetrates to recessed, protected places. The compositions of the paintings often, as in these examples, echo structurally the quasi-narrative accounts in the poems: one leaves a house in the foreground and walks upward into the mountains along the well-marked paths to a pass signifying the possibility of further penetration to wilder, more remote realms. Paralleling the human ascent is the descent of the stream, pouring from misty spaces to flow out into the foreground.

But to speak of exaltation and security is not to exhaust the effect of paintings and poems. In reaching such heights of intensity, the feeling can become unstable; some unsettling sight or sound can turn the experience into one of unease or even fear. Nature is not wholly benign, and its imagery can be employed as a metaphor for states of insecurity as well as of security. We can recall the familiar passage in Su Shih's 蘇軾 (1037–1101) "Latter Red Cliff Ode" ("Hou Ch'ih-pi fu" 後赤壁賦) in which he climbs the cliff alone at night, and in his excitement emits "a long, shrill whoop" (as Burton Watson renders it), upon which "trees and grass shook and swayed, the mountains rang, the valley echoed. A wind came up, roiling the water, and I felt a chill of sadness, a shrinking fear. I knew with a shudder that I couldn't stay there any longer."<sup>10</sup> The inscriptions on K'un-ts'an's paintings sometimes transmit experiences of a similar kind: the roar of the wind in the forest makes him jump with alarm; he stubs his foot against a sharp stone, and limps back to the security of his house.

The goal is to find ultimate refuge in nature, the still point where nothing threatens and man can be at rest, only nourished by his natural surroundings. In the poem on the Beijing Palace Museum landscape of 1663 (see fig. 238), the recluse (K'un-ts'an) dwells by the stream, spending his days talking with a good friend; after venturing out to "play with the deer and pigs" he reaches, at the end, a point of tranquillity: "To be without purpose: that would be real freedom from care." He appears perhaps twice in the painting: in the lower left in his house, talking with his friend, and again above to the right (detail, fig. 242), seated in meditation in the hollow of a cliff, below which a stream issues. It is the latter image that must correspond, I think, to the state of repose, without purpose, reached at the end of the poem.

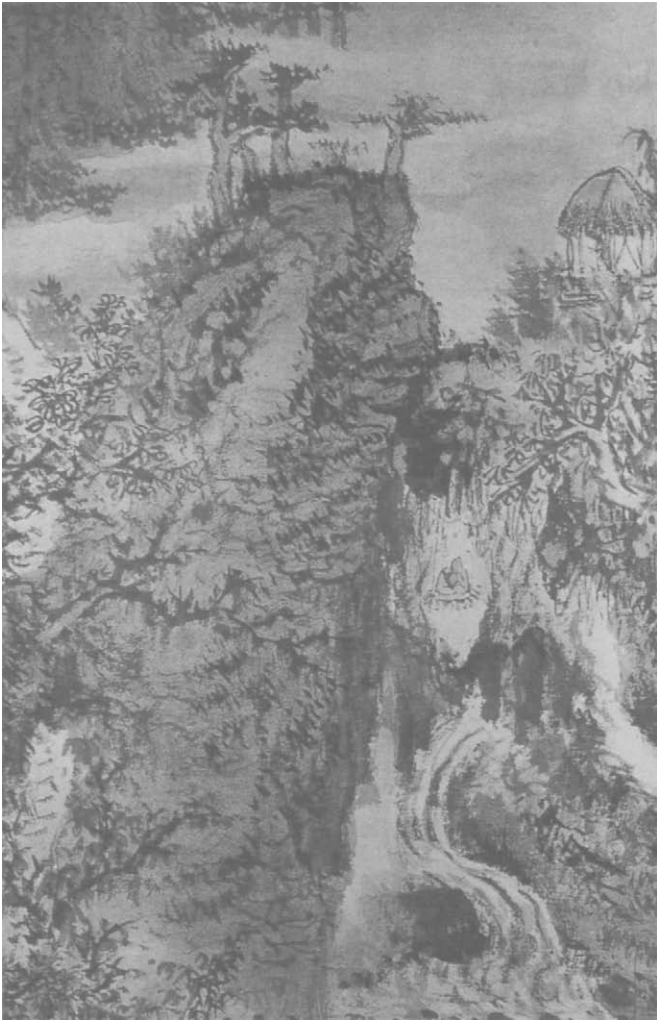


Figure 242.  
K'un-ts'an,  
detail of *Landscape  
with Secluded Dwelling*  
(fig. 238)



Figure 243. K'un-ts'an,  
*Man Meditating in a Cave*.  
Leaf from an album dated 1661  
(from *Sekkei Dojin sanzui-satsu*  
[Osaka: Hakubundo, 1921])

The same motif had appeared in 1661 in *Man Meditating in a Cave* (fig. 243), a leaf in an album the present whereabouts of which are unknown, making judgment about authenticity difficult. But even if it is a copy, the leaf suggests that the image of the man meditating in a hollow of earth above a stream was part of K'un-ts'an's private iconography. The same image, filled out and greatly enriched as a painting, is central to another album leaf (fig. 244), which is undated but apparently from the same series as the well-known leaves in the Cleveland Museum, the British Museum, and the Berlin Museum, completed for Ch'eng Cheng-k'uei in the autumn of 1666.<sup>11</sup> The inscription on this leaf, only partly legible in the old reproduction, includes these lines:

White fog spreads over the sea,  
 [Illegible line]  
 A single line divides heaven and earth,  
 Myriad valleys resound with wind in pines.  
 Precipitous, a cave in a western cliff,  
 And seated in it, an old man.  
 He is unaware of the passage of years,  
 [Meditating] on his rush mat the inexhaustible Way.  
 All four seasons, cold . . .  
 . . . all around unexpectedly vague and misty.

白雲鋪海□  
 □□□□□  
 一線界天地  
 萬壑響松風  
 險仄西岩洞  
 老人坐其中  
 不知歲幾何  
 蒲團道不究  
 四時寒暑□  
 沙境詎朦朧

The earth arches over the seated figure, walls of earth protect him on each side, and water flows in front of him. Here, I believe, we are confronted with K'un-ts'an's private image of nature as refuge. In saying "private" I am not denying the derivation of the image, in part, from established imagery of Ch'an meditation or from geomantic theory, the *feng-shui* 風水 understanding of geological formations and phenomena that, as John Hay has persuasively argued, can be an aid to understanding some of the configurations of Chinese landscape painting. K'un-ts'an's representation of the ultimate refuge may correspond to the "dragon cavity" (*lung-hsüeh* 龍穴) where, as Hay puts it, "the dynamic dragon-in-motion stops and all the landscape forces stabilize into a coherent pattern that prevents the dispersal of the life-breath and ensures its preservation." It is a place "at once open, at the junction of mountain and water, and well protected so that the weather will not blow the accumulating life-breath away."<sup>12</sup>

But whatever Ch'an or geomantic references may be implicit in it, the image belongs to K'un-ts'an's personal iconography and must be in some sense an outward manifestation of some recurring inner vision. It appears also in *Wooded Mountains at Dusk*, the Crawford landscape painted around the same time, the autumn of 1666 (see fig. 235): we see once more the small meditating seated figure, with earth arching over him and water flowing out below, a still point in a ceaselessly vibrant world (detail, fig. 245).

With these perspectives on other, mostly earlier paintings by K'un-ts'an and their inscriptions, we can return to the Crawford landscape to reach, I think, a deeper understanding of its meaning. The inscription takes the quasi-narrative form of the earlier ones we considered, mixing description with introspection. The poet-artist, "startled by twilight," walks with his staff; he has traveled alone all day, "excited by hidden and perilous places." He rises and stares into the fading light; the near and far mountain peaks appear "in orderly relations. A strange sense pervades the firmament." As he walks on, the sun descends as if approaching him, and the mist clears; he is suddenly seized with leg cramps. He grasps a stone and gazes at a pine tree, evidently feeling the need for constants to hold onto; he sits down, "like a small bird," and "the crowd of peaks falls suddenly into place." "Having climbed high," he continues, "now at the brink of depths, / Holding fast, I ponder my pettiness. / The road ends; I plant myself firmly there. / Where a spring issues, I set up shelter beneath the cliff." Finally, he paints the landscape "and the *ch'i* infuses it."

The poem follows loosely the pattern we noted for the earlier ones: beginning with a relatively straightforward description of what he sees as he walks, it rises to a height



Figure 244. Kun-ts'an, *Man Meditating in a Cave*. Album leaf (from *Shen-chou ta-kuan*, vol. 3)

Figure 245. K'un-ts'an, detail of *Wooded Mountains at Dusk* (fig. 235)



of metaphysical exaltation in which sensory and religious experience coalesce. This moment of high intensity is followed by a feeling of discomfort (leg cramps this time) and a return to the earthly condition. And he arrives at the end of the road, plants himself firmly there, and finds shelter. The correspondence between this passage near the end of the poem and the image of the artist in the painting is striking; it is exactly because such clear convergences are uncommon in his paintings and poems that we should take special note of them when they do occur.

The rest of the painting parallels the poem only in the loosest sense. As a whole it is concerned, like K'un-ts'an's earlier landscapes, with the grand themes of natural phenomena: transformation and dissolution of earth forms, the exuberant life of vegetation, mists as the exhalations of mountains. A returning farmer in the foreground, thatched houses in a sheltered valley, a Buddhist temple above at center right, the meditating figure still farther up: these represent successive stages of remove from mundane cares, physical and spiritual engagement with the dynamic processes of nature, and the attainment at last of a state of security. How far K'un-ts'an attained this ideal state in his life, and how far it represented only a longing, is a separate question that I would not attempt to answer without knowing a great deal more about him. But we can recall, as a further indication of his own perception, K'un-ts'an's 1662 painting of himself in a tree, in which he casts himself in the role of the T'ang period Ch'an master known as Niao-ch'ao 鳥巢, or "Bird's Nest," who, when asked by the poet Po Chü-i 白居易 (772–846) whether it wasn't dangerous up there, pointed out sensibly how much more dangerous it was down below. K'un-ts'an's inscription on the painting reads in part:

The question is how to find peace in a world of suffering. You ask me why I came hither; I cannot tell the reason. I am living high up in a tree and looking down. Here I can rest free from all trouble, like a bird in its nest. People say I am in a dangerous situation, but I answer, "You are Mara [the Destroyer, or Devil]." <sup>13</sup>

世界婆婆，安居是他。問我來甚，不說云何。  
處上視下，身寄高柯。人說我險，我說你魔。

K'un-ts'an was willing to risk discomfort or even injury in nature, for the refuge it could ultimately afford; the dangers of human society were subtler, in the end more fearsome, and these he would not risk. We can recall also Ch'eng Cheng-k'uei's account of how K'un-ts'an lived alone on the mountaintop above his monastery, passing long stretches of time without seeing anyone.<sup>14</sup> Whether it corresponds to aspiration or reality, or however much of each, *Wooded Mountains at Dusk* presents K'un-ts'an's understanding of the place in the world he desires: at the still and secure center of an active field of matter and energy.

K'un-ts'an's most creative and productive period, as I noted earlier, seems to have been from 1660 to 1663—or perhaps 1664, to include the great Pao-en Temple painting in the Sumitomo collection, Ōiso.<sup>15</sup> After that, both quality and productivity appear to fall off somewhat. Exceptions are the Crawford landscape and the series of album leaves painted for Ch'eng Cheng-k'uei—all presumably done in the autumn of 1666—paintings that preserve or revive the excitement and engagement of the landscapes of the early 1660s.

Works of later years, from 1667 through 1671 (with a single problematic work in the



Figure 246. K'un-ts'an, *Landscape in the Manner of Tung Ch'i-ch'ang*, dated 1667. Hanging scroll (from Fumio Omura, comp., *Chūgoku meigashū* [n.p., 1930], vol. 7)



Figure 247. K'un-ts'an, *Landscape in the Manner of Wang Meng*, dated 1667. Hanging scroll, ink and light color on paper, 41.8 × 30.3 cm. Nanking Museum

Fogg Art Museum dated to 1674 to complicate the unresolved question of his death date), tend to exhibit on the whole a looser, flatter style in the paintings and a more intellectualized tone—often with allusions to the old masters—in the inscriptions, which are mostly in prose instead of poetry. A marked change in the nature of the paintings is accompanied by an equally sharp change in the nature of the inscriptions, revealing how closely they had been bound together in general character if not in precise content.

Two landscapes from 1667, with their inscriptions, show K'un-ts'an joining other seventeenth-century artists in the espousal of what Max Loehr has called "art-historical art." One, *Landscape in the Manner of Tung Ch'i-ch'ang* (fig. 246), follows closely the style of the great proponent of that kind of painting, an artist, one may feel, whom K'un-ts'an would have been better advised to steer clear of. Tung is invoked in the inscription, and, except for the fisherman placed incongruously in the foreground (there are no fish in a Tung Ch'i-ch'ang river), quite successfully imitated in the painting—few early Ch'ing masters could have done it so well. But good Tung Ch'i-ch'ang is decidedly bad K'un-ts'an: virtually everything that made the earlier landscapes vital and original has been sacrificed in this pursuit of Southern-school formalism. The other, *Landscape in the*





Figure 248. K'un-ts'an,  
*Landscape with Figure*.  
Hanging scroll. Soochow Museum



Figure 249. K'un-ts'an,  
*Rain-Flowers on Twigs of Trees*, dated 1670.  
Hanging scroll, ink and light colors on paper,  
87 × 47 cm.  
Ho Yao-kuang collection, Hong Kong

*Manner of Wang Meng* in the Nanking Museum (fig. 247), is in a free, spontaneous manner that anticipates some paintings by Shih-t'ao. The inscription, however, suggests (somewhat surprisingly) that Wang Meng was the model. It reads:

In the collection of the minister of works Ch'eng Ch'ing-ch'i [Cheng-k'uei] is Wang Meng's *Purple Fungus Mountain* [Abode], and the circuit intendant of Lai Yang Li Shang-sung [Sung Li-shang; 1614-73] has his [Wang's] *So-hsing Studio* picture. The texture strokes and washes of these two are quite unlike; but both are among Wang's most successful works. So we know that when you "dance to the great shout" [?] your divine transformations are beyond fathoming [i.e., no one can fathom the diversity of your work]. When Hua-t'ing [Tung Ch'i-ch'ang] asserts that painting is like the principles of Ch'an, this is his meaning. Ch'an requires enlightenment, and no deliberate effort can produce it. Yüan critics write about criteria of quality (*p'in-ko*); Sung critics write about spirit-resonance (*ch'i-yün*). Criteria of quality can be attained by study, reached by effort; spirit-resonance can be attained only if you have achieved enlightenment. Like-minded friends [like Ch'eng] are few. The opportunity to meet those who can truly understand [the *samadhi*] is rare.

吾鄉青溪程司空，藏有紫芝山房圖，萊陽荔裳宋觀察亦有所性齋圖，而皴染各不相同，皆山樵得意筆，乃知舞大呵者神變莫測。華亭所謂畫如禪理，其旨亦然。禪須悟，非工力使然。故元人論品格，宋人論氣韻，品格可學，力而至，氣韻非妙悟，則未能也。嘗與青溪論筆墨三昧，知己寥寥，知其解者，真旦暮遇之耳。

The rather facile and conventional theorizing of this text and the sensorily disengaged manner of the painting seem to betray a different artistic personality from the one we have been considering. Moreover, K'un-ts'an seems more than before to be addressing his words outward—arguing, convincing instead of presenting personal experience. And the relative weighting of painting and inscription has changed: the painting is simpler, the inscription even heavier than before, in both its physical appearance and its didactic tone, so that it seems to outweigh the picture without contributing much to our understanding of it. Inscriptions on Ming and Ch'ing paintings often seem intended to compensate for, or explain away, some thinness in the style and content of the picture. Sung paintings had no need for such supplements to their physical and expressive substance. It is this looser kind of relationship that some of the late works of K'un-ts'an exhibit in place of the balance and close integration of text and picture that had characterized his earlier works.

Still later works exhibit the same direction. A similar combination of loose brushwork and simplified composition in the painting with a less personal, more theoretical content in the inscription is to be found, for instance, in a 1668 landscape in the Lok Chuck-tiew collection.<sup>16</sup> Two leaves by K'un-ts'an in a collective album done for Chou Liang-kung 周亮工 (1612–77), now in the Palace Musum, Taipei, datable (by association with other leaves) to around 1669, follow the styles of Wang Meng and Mi Fu 米芾 (1052–1107) as the inscriptions state.<sup>17</sup> The inscription on the leaf in Mi Fu's style, moreover, reveals K'un-ts'an following Tung Ch'i-ch'ang's practice of looking at nature and seeing the styles of old painters: "As I emerge from the Ox-head Peak, I turn back to gaze at it, and [realize that] it is in the manner of old Mi." From an artist who had once opposed such interposition of cultural filters between percipient and perceived nature, the inscription (as well as the painting) represents a sharp and disturbing turnabout.

Two paintings from the year 1670, *Landscape with Figure* in the Soochow Museum (fig. 248) and *Rain-Flowers on Twigs of Trees* (*Yü-hua mu-mo t'u* 雨花木末圖), in the collection of Ho Yao-kuang, Hong Kong (fig. 249), display other aspects of the artist's late style: they are made up of flat, angular, textured forms that segment the compositions, preventing the effect of fluid space and interpenetrating masses characteristic of the earlier pictures, as well as blocking any penetration into depth. K'un-ts'an now seems to present his paintings less as records of personal experience than as objects of style, a bit remote, products of a cultured mind conscious of precedents in earlier painting, and of an amateurish hand. Recollections of his rambles in Huang-shan or in the hills of the Nanking region now seem distant memories. The inscriptions on both paintings refer to Tsung Ping 宗炳, the early fifth-century artist who in old age depicted the landscapes recalled from his youth on the walls of his house and, as he put it, did his roaming from his bed.<sup>18</sup> The inscription on the Soochow Museum picture begins: "My clumsy painting doesn't come up to the ancients, but it also isn't necessarily anything that the ancients could have done. I always make paintings only to please myself. . . ." K'un-ts'an, like



Figure 250. K'un-ts'an, *Landscape*.  
Leaf from an album dated 1670, ink and color on paper,  
22.8 × 15.3 cm. Shanghai Museum (from *Ch'ing shih  
Shih-ch'i shan-shui ts'e* [Shanghai: Mei-i She, 1930])



Figure 251. K'un-ts'an, *Landscape*.  
Leaf from an album dated 1670

too many others of his time, seems here to have succumbed to the expedient of invoking the ideals of amateurism and awkwardness as justification for paintings that did not merely seem to be sloppily done, but really were.

But we must, in the end, view this decline sympathetically, since it seems to have been brought on by age and illness. An album of landscapes painted in 1670, now in the Shanghai Museum (figs. 250, 251), made up of pictures in the flat, diffuse late manner with references to Huang Kung-wang 黄公望 (1269–1354) and other old masters in their inscriptions and styles, ends with a page of calligraphy written in a hand so loose as to be scarcely legible (fig. 252). In it, K'un-ts'an, after beginning with the statement that painting is for him a means of “roaming in the world” (*t'ien-yu* 天遊), continues with a reference to “ten years of destruction [literally ‘fire’] by soldiers and ten years of sickness.” He was only fifty-eight, an age when many artists and others were reaching the peak of their creativity. But prolonged illness, aggravated perhaps by some debilitating psychological state, had reduced his energies to a level at which he seems to be thinking more than feeling, and painting landscapes that were diluted more than enriched by derivations

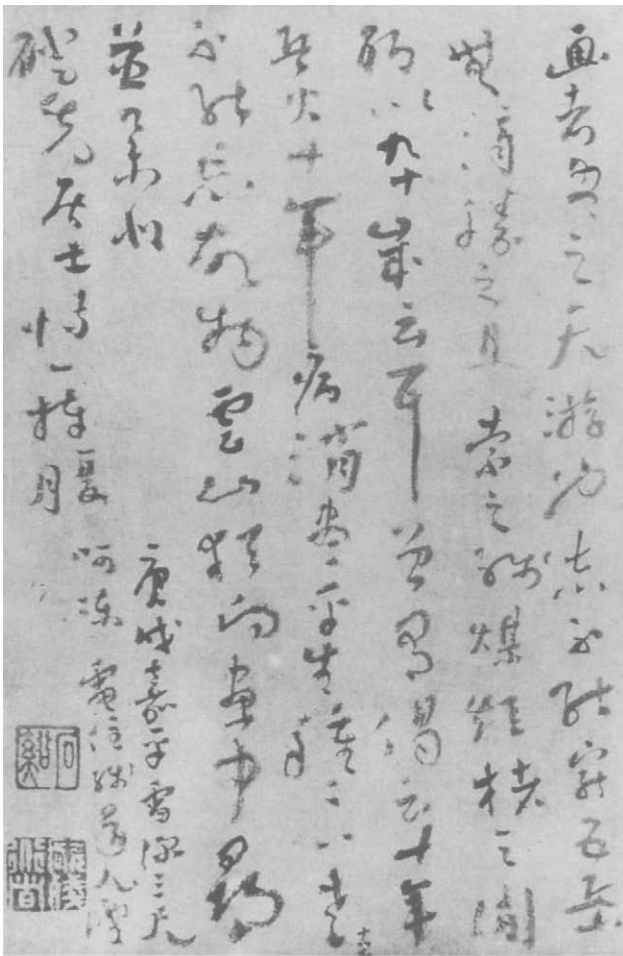


Figure 252. K'un-ts'an,  
*Inscription*.  
Leaf from an album  
dated 1670

from old styles, landscapes that echo only faintly the spiritual fervor and intense engagement with sensory experience of nature that had once charged his paintings.

### *Postscript*

I am acutely aware that the readings of K'un-ts'an's paintings and inscriptions proposed here are partial and not entirely adequate. I have dealt with only a fraction of his works, and failed to take into account important aspects of them that further thought, research, and observation would reveal: allusions to Ch'an Buddhist or Taoist thought, to geomantic theory, to history and literature and artistic style, to the circumstances of his life, as well as revelations of further depths in his conveying of his own emotional and religious experience. I have tried only to suggest how we can discover in a few of his works some elements of the meaning of his paintings and inscriptions, and how we can understand, in a preliminary way, the relationship between them.

## NOTES

- 1 I am grateful here for the transcriptions made by Joseph Chang and others, and for the invaluable help of my student Scarlett Jang.
- 2 Laurence Sickman, ed., *Chinese Calligraphy and Painting in the Collection of John M. Crawford, Jr.* (New York: Pierpont Morgan Library, 1962), pp. 151–52.
- 3 For this brief biographical note I am indebted to Ho Chuan-hsing's article "Shih-ch'i hsing shih k'ao" (The facts of Shi-ch'i's life), *Shih yüan*, no. 12 (November 1982).
- 4 Information from Chang Tsenti (Joseph Chang), "K'un-ts'an ti Huang-shan chih lü" (K'un-ts'an's journey to Huang-shan), unpublished paper prepared for the International Symposium on Huang-shan School Painting, Hefei, 1984.
- 5 See Mae Anna Pang, *An Album of Chinese Art from the National Gallery of Victoria* (Melbourne: National Gallery of Victoria, 1983), pp. 140–41. The poem is translated completely there.
- 6 Victoria Contag, *Chinese Masters of the Seventeenth Century*, trans. Michael Bullock (London: Lund Humphries, 1969), pl. 33.
- 7 The inscription appears on two paintings, both dated 1662 and both of uncertain authenticity: one in the former Chiang Er-shih collection, sold at auction at Sotheby's, New York, 1971; the other in the collection of S. H. Hwa, Taipei, reproduced in the catalogue *Special Exhibition of Paintings from the Ming and Ch'ing Dynasties* (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 1970), pl. 30.
- 8 Teng Ch'un, *Hua-chi*, in the section on Wang K'o-hsün 王可訓 (Beijing annotated reprint, 1963), *chüan* 6, p. 80.
- 9 Li Ch'eng-sou, *Hua shan-shui chüeh* (Secrets of painting landscapes; preface 1221), MSTS (Shanghai: Shen-chou, 1947), pt. 3, no. 9, p. 49.
- 10 Burton Watson, trans., *Su Tung-p'o: Selections from a Sung Dynasty Poet* (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1965), p. 92.
- 11 The Cleveland Museum leaf is reproduced and discussed in Wai-kam Ho et al., *Eight Dynasties of Chinese Painting* (Cleveland: Cleveland Museum of Art, 1980), no. 233; references to the other three leaves are included in the catalogue entry for that one.
- 12 John Hay, "Elements in a Definition of Landscape Painting," unpublished paper given at the Western Conference of the Association for Asian Studies, Flagstaff, 1976, pp. 10, 14.
- 13 For K'un-ts'an's 1662 painting of Niao-ch'ao, see Osvald Sirén, *Chinese Painting: Leading Masters and Principles* (New York: Ronald Press, 1956–58), vol. 6, pl. 378; the inscription is translated in vol. 5, p. 147. I have altered Sirén's rendering slightly, especially in the last sentence quoted.
- 14 Ch'eng Cheng-k'uei's account is translated in Sirén, *Chinese Painting*, vol. 5, p. 143.
- 15 Reproduced in Sirén, *Chinese Painting*, vol. 6, pl. 374.
- 16 The 1668 painting in the Lok Chuck-tiew collection is unpublished. The oddness of both painting and inscription has raised some question about its authenticity, but I am inclined to accept it as genuine, executed perhaps during a time of illness or physical weakness.
- 17 The album painted for Chou Liang-kung, consisting of forty leaves of paintings and calligraphy, is in the Palace Museum, Taipei (VA 39). It was published as *Chou Li-yüan Tu-hua-lu shu-hua chi-ts'ui* (Paintings and calligraphy in the Tu-hua-lu Collection of Chou Li-yüan) (Beijing: Palace Museum, 1931). The tenth and twelfth of the painting leaves are by K'un-ts'an.
- 18 See Susan Bush, "Tsong Ping's Essay on Painting Landscape and the 'Landscape Buddhism' of Mount Lu," in Susan Bush and Christian Murck, eds., *Theories of the Arts in China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), p. 137.

(Note: In addition to the other secondary sources cited above, I have made use of the translation of K'un-ts'an's inscriptions in Contag, *Chinese Masters of the Seventeenth Century*, pp. 25–30.)

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## Note:

Alphabetization of this index is word by word, with hyphens counting as blank spaces. A Chinese romanization with an apostrophe will follow the same romanization without an apostrophe.  
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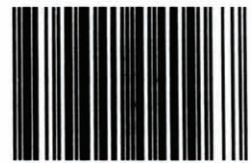
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