

Ming Idealism and Landscape Painting

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From the outset, the reader would do well to heed the warning that most of the ideas presented below are tentative at best. The aim here is to explore and to provoke, not to reach for definite conclusions. In point of fact, there are far too many unresolved problems to hope for certainty. Chief among these problems is the lack of consensus regarding Ming style in landscape painting. So far, few have agreed on either the characteristics or the range of this style, let alone its philosophical implications. For the time being, however, these considerations will have to be put aside; mainly, it will be this author's idea of Ming style that will count here.¹

Having so qualified the issue, we can now proceed to the topic of "Ming Idealism and Landscape Painting." With respect to the first half of this topic, namely, Ming idealism, those who are familiar with the intellectual tradition of Ming China (1368-1644) would instantly point to Wang Yang-ming (1472-1528), easily the most

influential thinker of the time. In fact, this article will begin with the thought of Wang Yang-ming, though in no way does it wish to suggest that Wang Yang-ming is the *cause* of Ming style in landscape painting. A simple point to keep in mind is that he is roughly contemporaneous with Wen Cheng-ming (1470-1559), but later than Shen Chou (1427-1509) and Tai Chin (active 1420-1450),² at whose time the generic Ming style was already evident. Even though Wang Yang-ming did exert a measurable degree of impact on art after his thought had attained wide acceptance, the chronology alone should lead us away from the simplistic notion that all Ming painters did was to paint his "ideas." Instead, one must consider the alternative that, since Wang Yang-ming came *after* the onset of the Ming style, he was in all probability expressing, as well as sharpening, a point of view which these painters, e.g., Shen Chou and Tai Chin, had already shared — and voiced — to some degree.³ We may

indeed have to characterize him as a thinker who articulated the sentiment of the time even though he also contributed enormously to it.

Notwithstanding the priority — in time, not in significance — of art over philosophy, we may still opt to begin with the latter, for it communicates so much more readily and explicitly. The following passage, which is cited from “recorded sayings” by this Ming thinker, may serve as a convenient point of departure:

The Teacher was roaming in Nan-chen. A friend (a disciple)⁴ pointed to the flowering trees on a cliff and said, “You said there is nothing under heaven external to the mind. These flowering trees on the high mountain blossom and drop their blossoms of themselves. What have they to do with my mind?”

The Teacher said, “Before you look at these flowers, they and your mind are in the silent vacancy. As you come to look at them, their colors at once show up clearly.

From this you can know that these flowers are not external to your mind.

The “Teacher” mentioned above is of course Wang Yang-ming himself, who was being taken to task by one of his disciples. The latter, it is evident, had not fully succumbed to the force of Wang’s thought, and was questioning him by referring to something near at hand. What indeed have the flowering trees on the high cliff — trees that “blossom” and “drop their blossoms” by themselves — to do with one’s mind? Do they not exist independently of it?

In more than one way, this stands as a typical — and classic — confrontation between a realist and an idealist. The realist has posed a problem, and the idealist “subverts” it to suit his own mode of thought. The conclusion Wang Yang-ming reaches here, “that these flowers are not external to your mind” is less a conclusion drawn from a commonly agreed set of facts than an affirmation, or confirmation, of his own beliefs. The general train of thought here is that, to him, reality is nothing but mind’s reality, and that the mind and reality are co-extensive. “Before you look at these flowers,” he said, “they and your mind are in silent vacancy. As you come to look at them, their colors at once show up clearly.” This is a virtual rejection of the time-honored dichotomy of subject-object, perceiver-perceived, upon which most of the theories about perception and cognition stand and for which, in this instance at least, the disciple acts as its spokesman. For Wang Yang-ming, however, the flowering trees and the mind have never been apart: they are one. Perception occurs when the mind decides to single out, focus upon, or illuminate a given section of that “silent vacancy,” and brings the flowering trees out of the original dimness. It is not unlike a journey into the unconscious, where the unknown and the alien are not really unknown and alien at all, but are there all the time.

To sum up then, it is clear that, to this Ming thinker, perception is introspection. One looks outward, but sees the image within; the characteristics and appearance of the image are as much a property of the object as they are of the mind. This is the quintessential Wang Yang-ming, who,

as it is well known, advocates that the mind is the sole source of reason and that things by themselves are devoid of such, except when they come into contact with the mind. It is the mind that imparts its reality to them, infuses its own essence into them and, for all practical purposes, supplies them with their *raison d'être*.

To put it in another way, it is tantamount to a declaration of the victory of spirit over matter, and mind over Nature. Matter, or Nature, is inert and neutral, without principle and essence of its own, a state which Wang Yang-ming was wont to call, "beyond good and evil." The spirit, or the mind, however, can activate it, bring it out of its inertia and neutrality, as well as bestow upon it — momentarily at least — with a sense of order and coherence, which is not inherent. In the end, all forms of understanding, all forms of cognition, must revert back to a primeval intelligence, an intelligence which is known in Wang Yang-ming's doctrine as *liang-chih* 良知 and which is variously rendered as "intuition," "conscience" or "clear intelligence."

Substituting "mountain-water" for "flowering trees," the pattern should remain intact. The next questions then become: Can we discern the same mind-supremacy at work in landscape painting of the Ming period? Or alternatively, is it possible to find there a receptive Nature, one which is without principles of her own, but is given principles? Inasmuch that these questions run contrary to the conventional ideas about Chinese landscape painting, which hold that Nature is supreme and that man desires only to be in communion with her, we must examine the problem with extra care.

Indeed, the evidence is encouraging.

Art theory supplies one clue, that very medium between art and philosophy, where, from the mid-fourteenth century onward, few treatises of painting would, as those in the Five Dynasties (907-960) and Sung-Yuan time (960-1279, 1280-1368 respectively), endeavor to treat Nature and her "order."⁵ The silence here is conspicuous as it testifies for changing priorities. The only consistent and innovative efforts in theoretical realm lie in the emergence of *ch'ü* 氣 as a key concept in art,⁶ which, as it pertains to a subjective state, a state of subtle excitement and exhilaration caused possibly by external stimuli, fits quite well into the context. As for the other major current, namely Tung Ch'ich'ang's (1555-1636) Ch'an analogy and mimetic theory of painting, it is so patently under the influence of Wang Yang-ming's thought that we need not concern ourselves here.⁷

Paintings also exhibit traits from which we may infer a similar, subjective bent. Especially after the sixteenth century, the instances where painters indulged themselves in willful transformation, distortion, not to say refinement of Nature, are too numerous to recount in full. A random selection should suffice for the time being:

Item: In *Old Trees and Cold Stream*, Wen Cheng-ming, the master from Suchou, visualizes a highly restricted vista within the tall and narrow frame so typical of the Ming period. While depriving trees and rocks of much of their volume and mass, he also reduces their intervals to such an extent that they are pressed closely to each other, so closely as to be, one might say, "unnatural."⁸

Item: Shao Mi, a late Ming painter (active 1620-1640), conjures up a landscape which is noted for its velvety



Fig. 1. Shao Mi, *Album of Landscapes and Figures*, Leaf d. Collection of the National Palace Museum, Taiwan, Republic of China.

and lush texture, a transparency of tone, and a curious silence that is made almost tangible. One is tempted to describe this painting by a term derived from Western art, that is, "surreal" (fig. 1).

Item: Wu Pin's (ca. 1568-1626) mountainscape shows seasaw ridges and curious perforations that are cut less by natural forces than by the artist's own will. So persistent is his style that he has often been described as "manneristic."⁹

Item: Wen Chia (1501-1583), the son of Wen Cheng-ming, takes his point of departure from two lines of Tu Fu's verse and arrives at an image that is as unique as it is, for want of a better term, elegant (fig. 2). Aside from his "archaic" mode of rendering trees and peaks, Wen Chia purposefully mismatches the two halves of the painting by means of a discrepancy in levels and grades. In this way, the left side is made to illustrate: "Blue water flows from afar and falls in a thousand torrents" and the right side pictorializes: "Jade mountains stand in a lofty array, cold on their summits."¹⁰

There is no doubt that the above selections, particularly the last, will lend substantial support to the theme of Mind-over-Nature in Ming landscape painting. However, this author will willingly acknowledge that the above approach cannot but be regarded as haphazard and fragmented. An inquisitive reader may wish to ask: 1) Is there not a similar symptom, or symptoms, in periods other than the Ming? Could the Sung and Yuan painters, of whom so little are known, have done the same? 2) Even if the painters discussed above indulged in the transformation of Nature, are they not perhaps unusual cases, singled out of many more who did not share

the same beliefs and same attitudes?

To the first question, our answer is: even though there could be painters of a similar bent in the Five Dynasties, Sung and Yuan periods, they would not find themselves in the mainstream. The categories of excellence, such as, say, those postulated by Ching Hao 荆浩 (ca. 900-60), specifically "down-grade" these painters.¹¹ They cannot, therefore, belong to the *shen* 神 or "divine class," where the master-painter is said to accomplish his task without deliberation, act without action, but, akin to the creative forces of Nature, "follow the flow to evoke images."¹² Nor will they be grouped under the *miao* 妙 or "wondrous" category, the criterion for which reads: "His thought penetrates heaven and earth as well as the sentiment and disposition of myriad things."¹³ They may fall into the level of *ch'i* 奇 or the "distinctive," whose art embodies the unexpected and the unusual and is often contrary to "true sceneries," so stated Ching Hao. And he sums up this group by saying that while they "may possess the skill of brushwork, but are lacking in thought."¹⁴ The lowest, of course, is the *ch'iao* 巧 class, the "precious," which is precious but without truth and which twists the pictorial composition in order to augment atmosphere and movement.¹⁵ It is not the purpose here to intimate that the Ming painters discussed above belong to the inferior classes. On the contrary, the salient fact that emerges from this discussion is that Ming painting has changed markedly from its predecessors in attitude and in orientation. Moreover, it is important to stress that if the kind of pictorial phenomena we witnessed above had not been in the mainstream in the earlier periods, it clearly became



Fig. 2. Wen Chia, *Landscape Illustrating Tu Fu's Verse*. Collection of the National Palace Museum, Taiwan, Republic of China.

so in the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This is true with respect to Wen Cheng-ming and Wen Chia, who are the pivotal figures in the Wu school, and therefore the very backbone of Ming painting.

To the second question, our answer will be: While these painters do seem to have gone on to a degree of subjectivity that was rare even among contemporaries, one can nevertheless suggest that Ming painting in general — that is, the developed Ming painting from the fifteenth century onward — inheres an idealistic core and its generic structure indeed is analogous to that of Wang Yang-ming's philosophy. In short, while we accentuated the extreme tendencies, we did not do so at the expense of other, less radical expressions, which after all would have been the norm. Indeed, with few exceptions, the evidence points to an ordering intelligence at work, one which exerts its will over a receptive Nature.

How could this be substantiated? The answer, first of all, is that the Ming style *is* unique, as it sets its own pattern and its own modality. It was first developed, as far as we can ascertain, in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, around or shortly before the time of Tai Chin, the so-called "founder" of the Che school, and continued into the seventeenth-century before its expiration. The Wu school also adhered to it, though with significant variances in lineage and tradition. Thus, it followed initially the art of the Yuan masters and then extended itself into the T'ang and Sung models; whereas the Che, the earlier of the two schools, revived the Southern Sung academic tradition. Regardless, the two schools are fundamentally alike, and a comparative study bet-

ween Tai Chin's *Homeward Bound in a Storm* (fig. 3) and the Wu master, Shen Chou's *Landscape in the style of Ni Tsan* (fig. 4) will bring out their kinship. Fortuitous it is not, for there is in both works the same diagonal movement or recession into depth, the same arrangement of planes along a steep grade, and the same inexorable flow across the surface. Between these examples, it is apparent that the two schools, however different they are in style, outlook, or even social status,¹⁶ could at times speak with a common voice and partake in the same generic structure in one of its manifestations.

Secondly, what is this generic structure? Broadly speaking, the Ming style, as we have seen in our comparison above, is "planar." That is to say, it organizes its motifs along a series of planes which, by and large, are parallel to the picture surface. In this sense and in this sense only, Ming painting displays a fundamental kinship to other phases of Chinese painting. The Sung, for example, has its parallel planes.¹⁷ The Yuan and sometimes the Ch'ing (1644-1911), too, have their parallel planes. However, the Ming planes differ from those above in that they are much more insistent, much more forceful, and much more compelling. At times they are not only seen as inherent in given landscape motifs, say a mountain or a peak, but tend to supplant them and reduce them from their former, corporeal state to "paper-thinness" (fig. 3). In addition, unlike all other planar systems used in pre- or post-Ming time, the Ming planes can at times be actually described as "serial," with regulated intervals and a strong sense of direction. The Sung planes, for instance, are unpredictable: they may shift to the left or to the right,



Fig. 3. Tai Chin, *Homeward Bound in a Storm*. Collection of the National Palace Museum, Taiwan, Republic of China.



Fig. 4. Shen Chou, *Landscape in the Style of Ni Tsan*. Saito Collection, Sumiyoshi, Japan (?)



Fig. 5. Wen Cheng-ming, *Resting in the Sound of the Pines*. Collection of the National Palace Museum, Taiwan, Republic of China.

sometimes oppose one another, and frequently change between major and minor steps and/or grades.¹⁸ In comparison, the Ming system plots the planes along at an even pace, which, though falling short of mathematical exactitude, does manage to take on a reasonable and foreseeable momentum, plus a directional thrust that can, as in Tai Chin's case, anchor the diffused presentation of landscape elements. In that sense, the Ming style is "structured," and this structure, seemingly simple enough, could yield a fairly wide range of variations.

In point of fact, the range is quite impressive indeed. It can, as Tai Chin and Shen Chou have already demonstrated, pursue a diagonal recession. It can, as Li Tsai (Early 15th-century) has done in his *Landscape*, plan a frontal assault.¹⁹ It can also make a high to low movement, so that the distant mountains or hills sink below the "horizon."²⁰ It can also build up height by piling forms on top of one another, the only sustaining factor being its consistency and continuity (fig. 5). This is different from the Yuan version, where it is the internal flow and flux, the serpentine winding of the peaks and pinnacles themselves that are salient.²¹ Meanwhile, the series of planes can augment in number, or be reduced to one or two (fig. 6); and their intervals can lengthen as well as shorten. Sometimes, dictated either by whim or by some other considerations, a painter might intentionally defy the paralleling structure and install, in the foreground, a series of angular movements (fig. 7). However, as one will find out, all of these are of short duration; soon they will be reinstated within the ordered sequence as parallelism wins out in the end.

Whatever the case, the key is this: this structure is not the structure derived from Nature. Nothing in Nature proceeds along so smoothly, so measuredly, and so intelligibly. The tall format compresses the landscape, its tallness substitutes for the height of the mountain, which is illusory (fig. 5). The planes and intervals introduce "thin" and "emaciated" shapes and at times, induce conflict of "space" and "volume."²² And in one case at least, the distant hill moves in line with the determined direction of the serial structure, so much so that it too begins to turn upward and upward until it is in a ludicrous position for not being able to descend at all.²³ In all of these instances, the Ming planar system exercises its own logic, above and superseding physical laws, and is willful, arbitrary, but nonetheless,

orderly and coherent. By extension, it also makes Nature orderly and coherent.

If this structure is not inherent in Nature, then whence does it come? The conclusion is easy to draw: it must be inherent in the collective psyche of Ming painters, who semi-consciously or unconsciously — as this structure has never been articulated — pave the sequence and instill reason during the creative act. As a matter of fact, even as late as Tung Ch'i-ch'ang, at the time when the gradual transition away from Wang Yang-ming's thought had already begun, the pattern remained intact for that artist.²⁴ Parenthetically, as this structure always presumes a directional emphasis, which might be interpreted to be away from a given source, a given position, or a given point of view, it also implies an in-



Fig. 6. Ch'en Shun, *Landscape Album*, Leaf n. Collection of the National Palace Museum, Taiwan, Republic of China.



Fig. 7. Wen Cheng-ming, *Spring Trees after the Rain*. Collection of the National Palace Museum, Taiwan, Republic of China.

telligence that coordinates the network of planes and regulates its rhythm. This further strengthens our argument for the mind's embodiment of landscape — a segment of Nature, of which it has become aware.

In a curious way, particularly when a frontal or diagonal recession is shown, there is an unmistakable resemblance between this structure and the perspectival system of the West. The latter, of course, entails such features as vanishing point, ground plane, geometrical precision and exactitude. The Ming system has none of these. Like Western perspective, however, its aim is also to measure, to ascertain, and to represent landscape/Nature along an intelligible line. Their differences — and these being differences of a cultural origin — lie, on the one hand, in the extended perception of the Ming system vis-à-vis the isolation or elimination of the time element in the perspective; and on the other, in the former's intuitive, rather than scientific approach, which is effective not in a visual, but in a spiritual sense.

So the Mind has won — at the expense of Nature, and only so when a given segment of Nature is seen or evoked. The continuum here is the continuum of the Mind, from which Nature accepts its dictates and receives its order, which then becomes her order.

Having concluded the structural analogy between Ming idealism and landscape painting, we can perhaps begin to explain some of the noted or notable phenomena in the latter sphere:

First, it concerns the impressionistic flavor in some of the Ming paintings, in part or in whole.²⁵ These are "impressions," marked not by solidity,

but by transiency, not by permanence, but by a sense of immediacy. That this should be a salient feature of Ming painting is perfectly logical, since it lays stress less on eternal verity than on the "instantaneous" response of the mind to a given situation and the quality associated thereof.

Second, we may point to the general surge of interest, particularly in the Wu school, for ethereal landscape, landscape of fantasy, or landscape of mythical origin.²⁶ We refer to the presentation of such themes as the "Peach-blossom Spring," the "Immortal Isles," etc., which had enjoyed vogue and was enjoying it all over again at this time. Indeed, in no other periods can we observe such a perfect wedding between form and content, representation and presentation, insomuch that the Ming style is inherently cerebral and immaterial. Could it be because the Ming painters seized upon these subjects as a way of fitting the content to form? One wonders. However, there is no doubt that, in the context of Ming idealism, which reduces things to mental phenomena, the distinction between the real and the imaginary is tenuous at best. The inverse is also true, for frequently the "real" landscape can be as imaginary as the imaginary landscapes.

Third, in line with the above, the Ming painters, again particularly those of the Wu school, were partial toward a poetic approach in the art of painting. Once more, this was not new, and T'ang (618-907) as well as pre-T'ang verses had served as inspiration for painters for centuries. However, in their espousal of this poetic tendency, the Ming painters, as in the case of the aforementioned Wen Chia, went so far that poetic sentiment virtually took

precedence over other, presumably more logical, considerations (fig. 2). Gone is the desire merely to elicit poetry from a given scene, or to maintain an equipoise between lyricism on the one hand and "natural laws" on the other. Here is none but an "inner vision," in which mountain-water is no longer the subject matter, but a metaphor. The same artist's treatment of Pai Chü-i's *The Song of P'i-p'a* is equally suggestive: from the landscape itself, we are led, through a process of transformation and sublimation and through the filter of a subtle and ineffable mind, to a world which is archaic, untrammelled, unreal, and therefore, all the more poignant and memorable.²⁷

Lastly, the Ming period witnessed archaistic survivals and revivals to a degree that was unusual when the dynastic and cultural heritage was so firmly set in the hand of the natives. Unlike the preceding Yuan dynasty or succeeding Ch'ing period, where archaism carried with it an urgency underscored, as it were, by the alien threats, the Ming archaism seemingly was little more than an expression of traditional leaning. Thus the Che school revived the Southern Sung style and the Wu school revived the Yuan and the T'ang-Sung. The key to remember is this: archaism, however it is practiced, represents a state of mind. If, indeed, as we have demonstrated above, there is little distinction between a real and an imagined landscape, then there is also very little distinction between a real and a painted landscape — painted, that is, by a past master. Why therefore should an artist not begin his creative venture with an imagined, or even painted, landscape rather than a real landscape, since it is not so much the

landscape per se, but the mind's contemplation of it, which gives substance to the painting. This is exactly what the last great Ming master, Tung Ch'i-Ch'ang, has advocated. By resorting to a continual process of imitation, or *fang* 仿, which demands that, in each and every instance, the artist contemplates either the works or schemata of past masters and then brings the weight of his "intuition" to bear on them.²⁸ In this way, as Tung Ch'i-ch'ang believes, the mind will create and recreate in an intensified pitch and confers upon the resultant work with its own luminous presence. Between imitation and non-imitation, the Ming archaism accepts both while denying none.

Meanwhile, landscape, or Nature herself, was not to remain suppressed for long, but ready to make a comeback. This she did, at the beginning of the Ch'ing dynasty, when a new style was born, a new consciousness was fashioned, one which operated under the assumption that Nature indeed can exist independently of our mind, that she herself indeed has her own law, her own order. Ironically enough, in painting this belief was first found among Tung Ch'i-ch'ang's disciples who, while retaining the *fang* practice, helped in other ways to dismantle the basis of their master's conviction, which is Ming idealism and Ming style.

NOTES

¹ There are two reasons for the lack of consensus among art historians with respect to the Ming style: (1) A dearth of documented works, and (2) a profusion of forgeries. Their combined impact renders uncertain the data situation, so much so that we cannot assume that a painting, if so attributed, would be definitely Ming in date. Deprived of a sound basis for scholarly inquiry, art historians have been led to express their opinions and preferences, which remain nothing more than just opinions and preferences. In my own case, I arrive at the Ming style through a process of elimination, which begins with a careful consideration of Ch'ing painting and Ch'ing style. By screening out Ch'ing fakes from the corpus of works known to be Ming, chances are that we can define the boundary of Ming painting in a more precise and objective way. See my unpublished article, "Methodology of Reversal in the Study of Wen Cheng-ming," which I delivered orally at the University of Michigan Symposium on Wen Cheng-ming, January 31, 1976.

² For readers who are unfamiliar with the history of Chinese painting, Shen Chou and Wen Cheng-ming were co-founders of the Wu school of painting, located in the famous city of Suchou. Tai Chin is generally thought to be the originator of the Che school, so named because his native place is in the province of Chekiang. These two schools, plus the later Sung-chiang school of painting, which revolved around Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (1555-1636), span nearly four-fifths of the Ming period.

³ We could, of course, bring up the case of Ch'en Hsien-chang (1428-1500), who, as a forerunner of Wang, could help to establish a better symmetry in the parallelism between Ming art and philosophy.

⁴ Parentheses mine. The "friend" mentioned here refers to the friend of Wang's disciple who helped to record the master's sayings and compiled them under the title of *Ch'uan-hsi Lu* 傳習錄, from which this passage is taken. See Chan Wing-tsit, *Instructions for Practical Living and Other Neo-Confucian Writings by Wang Yang-ming* (New York and London, 1963), sec. 275.

⁵ The exception perhaps is Wang Li's 1 屢 treatise on painting; see Yü Chien-hua 俞劍華, *Chung-kuo Hua-lun Lei-pien* 中國畫論輯編

(Peking, 1957), II, 703-704. Wang Li however was born in 1332, and he is too early for our purpose. See below, p. 81, where I consider the onset of the Ming style in painting as from the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century.

⁶ The most consistent, and the most thorough treatment of *ch'ü* can be seen in Kao Lien 高濂, *Yen-hsien Ch'ing-shang Chien* 燕閒清賞箋, included in Yang Chia-lo 楊家駱 ed., *I-shu Ts'ung-pien* 藝術叢編 (Taipei, 1967), Vol. XXVII. It is possible that the concept of *ch'ü*, as is contained there, emanated from the center of the Wu school, namely the group of painters surrounding the master, Wen Cheng-ming.

⁷ See my article, "The Cycle of Fang: Tung Ch'i-ch'ang's Mimetic Cult and Its Legacy," to be published in the coming issue of *Wen-lin* (Madison, Wisconsin).

⁸ This painting, which is dated in the year 1549, is an acclaimed masterpiece by Wen Cheng-ming. It has been published several times in the last decades, e.g., James Cahill, *Chinese Painting* (New York, 1960), p. 130; *Chinese Art Treasures* (New York and Washington, 1961). Pl. 98 and backcover; and Ann Clapp, *Wen Cheng-ming: The Ming Artist and Antiquity* (Ascona, 1975), fig. 35.

⁹ See Osvald Sirén, *Chinese Painting: Leading Masters and Principles* (New York, 1956-1958), Vol. VI, Pl. 298.

¹⁰ Translated by James Cahill, *Chinese Painting*, p. 134.

¹¹ For the sake of convenience, I use Ching Hao's *Pi-fa-chi* 筆法記 ("Notes on Brushwork") as an example of art theory in the Five Dynasties and Sung periods. See Yü Chien-hua, *Chung-kuo Hua-lun Lei-pien*, I, 605-612 for the text; also Kiyohiko Munakata, *Ching Hao's Pi-fa-chi* (Ascona, 1974).

¹² Yü Chien-hua, I, 606; and Munakata, pp. 12-13. The original Chinese passage reads: "任運成象."

¹³ The original Chinese passage reads: "思經天地義類性情。" See Yü Chien-hua, *ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.* The Chinese passage reads: "有筆無思。"

¹⁵ I am paraphrasing the Chinese text, which reads: "徑寫文章增進氣象。"

¹⁶Painters of the Che school are, generally speaking, professional artists; those of the Wu school tend to be scholars.

¹⁷See for instance Li Kung-nien's *Landscape* in the collection of the Princeton University Museum. For reproduction, see George Rowley, *Principles of Chinese Painting* (Princeton, 1959), Pl. 19.

¹⁸See Li Kung-nien's *Landscape* cited in n. 17 above.

¹⁹Sirén, *Chinese Painting*, Vol. VI, Pl. 126.

²⁰As an example, we may cite the well-known leaf from the album by Shen Chou in the collection of the Nelson Gallery of Art. See Richard Edwards, ed., *The Art of Wen Cheng-ming* (Ann Arbor, 1976). Pl. II-B.

²¹See Wang Meng's *Elegant Gathering in Forest and Stream*, Pl. 24 in Rowley, *Principles of Chinese Painting*. The tall and narrow format, as far as we can ascertain, began in the Yuan period, with Wang Meng as a noted exponent. Then it remained relatively conservative, with an optimum ratio of 1:3 for the width and height. The Ming version went much further and ratios of 1:4 and 1:5 were not unknown. This format compels the landscape to follow its dictate, rather than allowing the latter to freely "move about" within the frame. Often, the appearance of height in the mountains is due to the format itself, presenting a contrast with, say, Fan K'uan's famous *Travellers in Mountains and Ravines* (*Chinese Art Treasures*, Pl. 18), where the height of the mountains is real and unmistakable.

²²In Leaf *n* of his *Landscape Album* (fig. 6), Ch'en Shun typically hangs the rocks and waterfall on the pine branch. Similarly, Chang Lu's *Old Fisherman* (Siren, *Chinese Painting*, Vol. VI, Pl. 158) is a study in paradox, where the fisherman is depicted volumetrically, but not the net; the boat is depicted volumetrically, but not the cliff in front of it. To a Sung or Yuan painter, this sort of spatial ambiguity and distortion is a glaring fault in representation. See Jao Tzu-jan's 饒自然 recounting of ten faults in landscape art, in Yü Chien-hua, II, 692.

²³See Ch'iu Ying's *T'ao-li Villa*, Pl. 8 in Tanaka Ichimatsu et al., *Toyo Bijutsu* 東洋美術, Vol. II (Tokyo, 1968).

²⁴See Tung Ch'i-ch'ang, *In the Shade of Summer Trees*, *Chinese Art Treasures*, Pl. 104. Precisely because of this, Tung

Ch'i-ch'ang must be considered as a conservative since other late Ming painters were in the process of evolving into the new tendency of stressing volume over plane, and internal growth over serial extension.

²⁵See Chang Lu's *Old Fisherman*, cited above in n. 22, where the fleeting touches of the brush contribute to a sense of transiency in the treatment of the foliage.

²⁶An example — and a fine one at that — is Wen Chia's *Immortals on the Island of Immortality* in the National Palace Museum, Taipei (MV 183). It is reproduced in *Ku-kung Min-hua* 故宮美術 (Taipei, 1968), Vol. VIII, Pl. 19.

²⁷See Pl. 215A in Sirén, *Chinese Painting*, Vol. VI.

²⁸See my article, "The Cycle of *Fang* in Later Chinese Painting" cited in n. 7 above.

