

Kumārajīva renders the same epithet in two of his translations as follows:

- (1) 其心調柔軟摩訶那伽 "his heart is subdued to softness (like the) Mahānāga,⁴⁷ translated in A.D. 403.
- (2) [諸漏已盡] 如調象王 "[All the afflictions (āsrava) have been eliminated] like the subdued elephant king",⁴⁸ translated in A.D. 408.

It is clear in the last quotations that the forming period of the "jargon" passed on to the stage of consolidation at the time of Kumārajīva and the verb *tyau* (shortened form of *tyaufwu*) has been forced into a function not in current use in non-Buddhist Chinese syntax. It is used here to translate the past participle, "subdued" in the passive sense. Apart from giving the meaning of *sudānta* as "well tamed, well restrained" (as horses), adj., Monier-Williams notes (from lexicographical sources) that this is the name of a Pratyeka Buddha, meaning "very self controlled". According to Professor F. Edgerton⁴⁹ this name occurs in the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*.⁵⁰ It is therefore reasonable to surmise that Yih Jinq meant *tyau-fwu* to translate *dānta* "subdued" and *neng shann* to translate *su-*, "entirely and perfectly" (making up a four-syllable phrase as required by the style), since the translation of *neng* as "to be able" would not render correctly the meaning of *su-*. A similar use of an adverbial "prefix" before a "past participle" in the passive sense can be observed also in a line of verse in Yih Jinq's translation of the *Śatapañcāśatka* of Mātṛceta 善斷諸惑種 "(From whom) all the kleśas have been completely cut off",⁵¹ whereas an ordinary reader would have taken the line to mean "(He) is skilled in cutting off all (seeds of) evil".

In order to show the process of this development twelve epithets which are frequently used to describe the Arhats have been listed on pages 204 and 205 in a tabulated form⁵² which sets out their various translations in chronological order.

⁴⁷ 摩訶般若波羅蜜經, *TT*, Vol. VIII, No. 223, p. 217(a).

⁴⁸ 摩訶般若波羅蜜經 (小品), *TT*, Vol. VIII, No. 227, p. 537(a), l. 2.

⁴⁹ *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*, Vol. 2 (1953), p. 598.

⁵⁰ *Ārya-Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*, ed. Gaṇapat Śāstri, Vol. I, Trivandrum, 1920, p. 42, l. 5.

⁵¹ *Sarvadā sarvathā sarve yasya doṣā na santi ha*. Tibetan translation: *gañ zhig la ni ñes pa kun // gtan nas yon ye mi mñah zhiñ/* (Ed. by D. R. Shackleton Bailey, Cambridge University Press, 1957, p. 28).

⁵² For the sake of convenience I have followed the sequence of the epithets as they occur in the *Mahāvīyūtpatti* in Chapter 48 (see editions of Sakaki and Wogihara). *Sudānta* is placed at the end of the list since it is not included in the *Mahāvīyūtpatti*.

INSCRIPTIONS, STYLISTIC ANALYSIS, AND TRADITIONAL JUDGMENT IN YÜAN, MING AND CH'ING PAINTING

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The student of Yüan, Ming, and Ch'ing painting is less troubled by problems of historical development than the student of earlier Chinese painting. Whereas Sung and earlier pictures were as often unsigned as signed, the artist is seldom anonymous from the Yüan period onwards,¹ and his signature and inscription form part of the picture itself. Artists' activities are well documented; their localities, schools and artistic genealogies are clearly differentiated; their respective manners are known. Of the work of the Yüan masters, Huang Kung-wang, Ni Tsan, Wu Chen, Wang Meng, and their Ming and Ch'ing followers, Wang Fu, Shen Chou, Wen Cheng-ming, Tung Ch'ü-ch'ang, the four Wang, Wu Li, K'un-ts'an and Tao-chi, many specimens are preserved the relative authenticity of which is undoubted. Detailed study of individual painters is possible, and the student is often only concerned to relate a single picture to the entire output of an artist, to see whether it conforms to the standard set by his accepted works. There are few puzzles of identity—of person or of style, certainly none so enigmatic as, for instance: What was Wang Wei's work really like?

These considerations are reflected in a change of plan in Part Two of Professor O. Sirén's *Chinese Painting, Leading Masters and Principles*.² In Part One (Vols. i-iii) of this work, dealing with painting down to the Sung, the emphasis was on the tradition of painting found in literary sources, of which surviving pictures were, in the main, regarded as illustrations. But the wealth of material from the later period makes it possible for the author

¹ See, e.g., Ch'ien Tu, *Sung-hu hua-i* 錢杜, 松壺畫憶 and Cheng Chi, *Meng-huan-ch'ü hua-hsüeh chien-ming* 鄭績, 夢幻居畫學簡明 in *Chung-kuo hua-lun lei-pien*, ii, 937; 973; also *Chinese Painting*, iv, 52. The statement is best verified through reference to a standard catalogue, e.g., *Ku-kung shu-hua lu*. Dr. Sirén's *Annotated Lists* (in *Chinese Painting*, ii and vii) include sections on anonymous pictures.

² *Chinese Painting, Leading Masters and Principles*. Part II, The Later Centuries, Vols. iv-vii, 1958. Vol. iv, *The Yüan and Early Ming Masters*; Vol. v, *The Later Ming and Leading Ch'ing Masters*; Vol. vi, *Plates*; Vol. vii, *Annotated Lists of Paintings and Reproductions of Paintings by Chinese Artists*. There are 464 plates in Vol. vi; in addition, 12 plates accompany the text of Vols. iv and v, each of which has a coloured frontispiece. But the abundance of the material on "The Later Centuries" is most clearly indicated by the *Annotated Lists*, which now form a separate volume.

to attempt, in Part Two, a "stylistic analysis of the development of Chinese painting" during the five centuries from the Yüan to the eighteenth century. In this analysis, though Dr. Sirén continues to make rather full use of literary sources, he "has no longer been obliged to follow in the footsteps of the Chinese critics and historians so closely. He has been able to take a more independent view of problems and personalities now known through the medium of their pictorial productions rather than simply through more or less vague accounts by native critics".³ This approach is indeed inevitable. Nevertheless, aesthetic appreciation may benefit from the close study of tradition. The very presence of the inscription is a reminder of certain things, viz.,

1. The painter is at the same time a calligrapher. His brushstrokes are the brushstrokes of calligraphy, which have followed the same principles since the time of Wang Hsi-chih, of the T'ang calligraphers, and of Su Tung-p'o and Mi Fei.
2. His own personality is meant to be part of the picture. His aim is in fact self-revelation. Many artists even create their own cult through writing elaborate inscriptions on their pictures, e.g., Hsü Wei, Tao-chi, and Chin Nung, but even the briefest inscription acknowledges the presence of the painter himself. One cannot have the picture without something of the man.
3. When he chooses to, the artist will state his aims and the standards by which he expects to be judged.

These points are related and bear upon what follows. In this article I shall try to show how, in the study of Yüan, Ming and Ch'ing painting, inscriptions and other written records may supplement and guide the analysis of specific pictures and, further, how the traditional judgment contained in such written records may really provide the clue to the style of certain masters. The completion of Dr. Sirén's monumental study has made such a task easy, and I shall mostly use examples already taken up in his pages. My search for evidence has also been facilitated by the publication of two Chinese works, *Ku-kung shu-hua lu* (Catalogue of the Palace Museum Collection 故宮書畫錄)⁴ and Yü Chien-hua, ed., *Chung-kuo hua-lun lei-pien* (Classified Extracts from Chinese Treatises on Painting 俞劍華, 中國畫論類編).⁵

An inscription interesting for its own sake, in addition to being a

³ *Chinese Painting*, IV, Preface, viii.

⁴ *Ku-kung shu-hua lu*, 3 vols., Taipei, 1956. Hereafter referred to as *Ku-kung s.h.l.*; references are to *chüan* and page, not to volume.

⁵ *Chung-kuo hua-lun lei-pien*, 2 vols., Peking, 1957. For convenience of reference I have given, where possible, the page numbers of this collection for passages from Chinese treatises. Hereafter referred to as *C.k. hua-lun l.p.*

comment on the picture, is that by Chao Meng-fu on his handscroll, *Two Pines in Flat Landscape*, quoted by Dr. Sirén,⁶ who reproduces the picture in his Vol. vi, pl. 23. I here give a fresh translation of it:

From my childhood onwards, I would constantly play with the brush after my exercises in calligraphy. Yet in landscape alone I could not attain skill. For one could hardly see even one or two of the wonderful works of the T'ang masters, Wang Wei, the two Li, and Cheng Ch'ien. As to Ching Hao, Kuan T'ung, Tung Yüan, Fan K'uan, and others of the Five Dynasties, the manner of painting of all of them differs completely from that of recent times. Though I dare not compare my own work with the ancients, I would regard it as somewhat different from that of painters today. . . .

The inscription is easily read from the reproduction. Nevertheless, it is reassuring to find the whole of it transcribed in *Mo-yüan hui-kuan lu* 安岐, 墨緣彙觀錄 (Preface 1742), in which the compiler, An Ch'i, declares the picture to be after the manner of the Sung master, Kuo Hsi.⁷ An Ch'i's comments, also quoted by Dr. Sirén, serve further to confirm the value of the picture:

The landscape is painted in the style of Ho-yang (Kuo Hsi), the brush work is pure and vigorous. The scenery is rendered in a simple and summary manner. There are two tall pine-trees, some strangely shaped stones, thorns and brambles, a sandy shore, and minor stones, all wonderfully painted. The opposite shore is composed of a mountain ridge and stretches of flat country, and far out on the river is a single boat with an angler, which produces an air of calmness and distance.⁸

But, apart from the information that the picture was painted in the traditional manner, one would infer from the inscription that at the time Chao had little first-hand knowledge of the great T'ang masters, though he was quite familiar with works of the Five Dynasties (and, naturally, Sung). Further, by his own account, his skill in other branches of painting had been unquestioned from the start, but his mastery of landscapes came only after a great deal of practice. The admission is significant. Landscape painting would seem to demand other qualities than facility, which Chao possessed in abundance, and in spite of some inspired efforts in this branch of painting, he was not perhaps perfectly at home in it. The traditional estimate which places him somewhat lower than Ni Tsan or Huang Kung-wang is more easily understood if we try to visualize Chao's horsemen and their steeds galloping across Ni's desolate landscapes. That Ni and the other Yüan masters, however, did not despise Chao is proved by the

⁶ *Chinese Painting*, iv, 23.

⁷ *Mo-yüan hui-kuan lu*, Ts'ung-shu chi-ch'eng ed., c. 3, 145-6.

⁸ *Chinese Painting*, iv, 23.

inscriptions and colophons they wrote on his pictures. I quote Ni's colophon on Chao's Bamboos and Stone:

Chao Meng-fu's wonderful skill in calligraphy and painting was acquired unusually early. Even in his youth, whatever he painted was an accomplished work. With the passing of years, his painting became mellower and even more marvellous. . . .⁹

The Two Pines would seem an early work if we refer to Chao's comparatively early handscroll, Ch'iao and Hua Mountains in Autumn. Since the time of Tung Ch'ü-ch'ang, this picture has been regarded as an example of Chao's imitation of Wang Wei. Tung says in one of his colophons, dated 1605, on the scroll:

This picture by Chao Meng-fu combines the methods of Wang Wei and Tung Yüan. It possesses the delicate beauty of the T'ang masters without their effeminacy; it possesses the masculine vigour of the Northern Sung masters without their rudeness.¹⁰

And this is echoed by his contemporaries, Ch'en Chi-ju¹¹ 陳繼儒 and Chang Ch'ou 張丑, who describes the picture in *Ch'ing-ho shu-hua fang* 清河書畫舫 (Preface 1616):

I once saw Chao's handscroll, Ch'iao and Hua Mountains in Autumn, which, according to the inscription, he did for Chou Kung-chin. The mountains were coloured green in the manner transmitted by Wang Wei. Though only a picture of over a foot, it possessed inexhaustible interest.¹²

The opinion is accepted also by Dr. Sirén:

It is well known that Chao Meng-fu painted a free version in colour of Wang Wei's Wang-ch'uan scroll and also that he based himself on the T'ang master's works in other landscape-paintings, such as the one called "Ch'iao and Hua Mountains in Autumn Colours" and the "Village by the Water".¹³

Tung's opinion is in fact supported by information arising from Chao's own inscription on the picture, which he painted for Chou Mi early in 1296:

Old Mr. Kung-chin is a man from Ch'i. Having retired from my period of office in Ch'i, I give him upon my return an account of its rivers and mountains, among which the most celebrated is Hua-pu-chu, being found in Tso's *Commentary*. Besides, its shape causes much

⁹ *Ku-kung s.h.l.*, c. 5, 147. Colophon dated 1365.

¹⁰ *Ku-kung s.h.l.*, c. 4, 106.

¹¹ *Ni-ku lu* 妮古錄 c. 2, Mei-shu ts'ung-shu, I, x, 240; *Shu-hua shih* 書畫史, Mei-shu ts'ung-shu, I, x, 128.

¹² *Ch'ing-ho shu-hua fang* [Hereafter, *Ch'ing-ho s.h.f.*], Reprint of 1763, x, 47 a-b. The actual size of the picture is 28.4 cm. × 93.2 cm. See *Ku-kung s.h.l.*, c. 4, 104.

¹³ *Chinese Painting*, iv, 19.

wonder, rising as it does sheer out of the earth to a great height. I have therefore painted this picture for him. The mountain to its east being the Ch'iao, I have called the picture "Ch'iao and Hua Mountains in Autumn". By Chao Meng-fu of Wu-hsing in the twelfth month of the first year of Yüan-chen.¹⁴

Now Chou Mi (Kung-chin) was also a Wu-hsing resident.¹⁵ Though Ch'i was his ancestral home, he had actually lived in Hang-chou under the Sung and subsequently retired to Wu-hsing, where he had relatives. He was the author of one of the now famous accounts of Hang-chou, *Wu-lin chiu-shih* 周密, 武林舊事, as well as of numerous other works. Chou was also a collector; his notes on works of art he had seen were gathered together in his *Yün-yen kuo-yen lu* 雲煙過眼錄 and *Chih-ya-t'ang tsa-ch'ao* 志雅堂雜鈔, in each of which he refers to Chao.

In particular, *Yün-yen kuo-yen lu* includes a section of several pages entitled "Writings, Paintings and Antiques shown to me from his collection by Chao Meng-fu upon his return from Peking in I-wei year [1295]".¹⁶ Under this heading may be found among other pictures: a small unspecified landscape by Wang Wei; Li Ssü-hsün's Plucking the Melons, with Hui-tsung's inscription; Han Kan's Knights-errant, with (Sung) Kao-tsung's inscription; Chou Fang's Evening in Spring; a Kuan-yin picture by Wu Tao-tzü, on which Chao himself wrote an inscription; Han Huang's Five Buffaloes; Li Ch'eng's Reading the Stone Tablet (commemorating the filial daughter, Ts'ao O); Tung Yüan's Bride of the River God, a very long handscroll of landscape with small human figures in colour; another landscape by Tung Yüan with Kao-tsung's inscription; Li Kung-lin's Examples of Gracious Parents and Filial Children. Thus, by the time Chao came to do his Ch'iao and Hua Mountains in Autumn, he himself possessed a Wang Wei landscape and the work of a number of other T'ang and later masters.

Chao Meng-fu, of course, would have had opportunities of seeing such works in the capital. This is proved by Wang Yün's *Shu-hua mu-lu* 王惲, 書畫目錄 or Catalogue of Writings and Paintings sent up early in 1277 from Hang-chou after its conquest.¹⁷ The Catalogue includes three Wang Wei pictures: an unspecified landscape; the Wang-ch'uan picture; picture of Li-shan. It also includes two works by Ku K'ai-chih, the Lo-shen scroll, and Taoist on Buffalo; Yen Li-pen's scroll of Fourteen Emperors (*sic*), and

¹⁴ *Ku-kung s.h.l.*, c. 4, 104. See *Chinese Painting*, iv, 22.

¹⁵ See the Preface to *Chih-ya-t'ang tsa-ch'ao*, Mei-shu ts'ung-shu, III, iii, 175-6, and Notes on *Wu-lin chiu-shih* accompanying the reprint in *Tung-ching meng-hua lu* (wai ssü-chung), Shanghai, 1956, pp. 520-6; also Editors' Introduction, p. 5. The account of Chou Mi in *Hsin Yüan shih*, c. 237, is sketchy.

¹⁶ *Yün-yen kuo-yen lu*, Mei-shu ts'ung-shu, II, ii, 87-93. Many of the pictures in Chao's collection can be identified from the catalogues.

¹⁷ *Mei-shu ts'ung-shu*, IV, vi, 21-39. The text is corrupt.

three other pictures; a Buddhist picture by Wu Tao-tzū; a landscape by Li Ssū-hsün; two pictures of palaces by Li Chao-tao; and four pictures of horses by Han Kan. The collection was on view to court officials, and Wang, who was in the Han-lin Academy, recorded 147 pieces of writing and 81 pictures,¹⁸ so that his Catalogue is an important document, though it has so far received little attention.

Chao was first summoned to the capital in 1286 at the age of thirty-two.¹⁹ He was despatched to the south the following year and seemed fully occupied with official business until in 1290 he became Scholar-in-attendance 直學士 at the Chi-hsien-yüan 集賢院, the Academy or Department dealing with cultural and religious affairs. His acquaintance with the works of art at the Yüan court would begin then, if not before. Certainly in 1291 he was presented with Han Huang's Five Buffaloes, which, as noted above, formed part of his collection in 1295. On this picture Chao wrote the following colophon:

In travelling north and south as an official, I have seen several pictures by Han Huang in the homes of collectors. The official collection in the Chi-hsien-yüan also includes An Abundant Harvest, and The Drunk Taoist, which are extremely lively. In Chi-jang-t'u, belonging to Chang K'o-yü, the brushstrokes are very fine. The Drunk Taoist, belonging to Hsien-yü Po-chi, and this picture of Five Buffaloes are also genuine works. When T'ien Shih-men first showed me this scroll, I loved it and, when later I learned that it belonged to Chao Po-ang, I sought it through Liu Yen-fang, whereupon Po-ang presented it to me. It was then the seventh month of the twenty-eighth year of Chih-yüan [1291]. In the sixth month of the following year [1292] I brought it back to Wu-hsing and had it re-mounted. The year after [1293], at the full moon in the second month, I write this in the official residence at Tung-ts'ang, Chi-nan.²⁰

A second colophon was not dated. In 1314 Chao came across the picture in the study of the Crown prince; he had lost, or parted with, the picture and, being glad to unroll it again, wrote an additional colophon.

In 1292 Chao was transferred to Chi-nan to serve in the office of the military governor there: hence the allusion to "Ch'i" in his Ch'iao and Hua Mountains picture. He must, however, as appears from the colophon on the Five Buffaloes scroll, have obtained leave to visit his home town before taking up his new post. His stay in Chi-nan terminated in the latter half of 1294, when he was recalled to the capital to assist in the compilation of the

¹⁸ See Wang's Preface. Wang's life is recorded in *Yüan shih*. c. 167, and *Hsin Yüan shih*, c. 188. Neglect of his Catalogue is evidenced by the corrupt text and the paucity of reference by other writers to it.

¹⁹ For Chao's life, see *Yüan shih*, c. 172; *Hsin Yüan shih*, c. 190.

²⁰ *Ch'ing-ho s.h.f.*, iv, 55a-56a.

Shih-tsu shih-lu 世祖實錄.²¹ This was completed in the sixth month of the following year, 1295, upon which Chao again returned to Wu-hsing, where he remained for three years before he was appointed to another post in 1298.²²

Of the other two pictures mentioned in the quotation from Dr. Sirén, the Village by the Water was, according to Ch'en Chi-ju,²³ based on Wang Wei. The British Museum scroll, though only a copy, is perhaps sufficient evidence that Chao had made a version of Wang Wei's Wang-ch'uan picture,²⁴ though Chao's version is not recorded in the catalogues.²⁵ It is recorded that Chao had vouched for (most likely in a colophon) the authenticity of Wang Wei's snow picture, Chiang-shan hsüeh-chi.²⁶ And Tung Ch'i-ch'ang refers to a snow scene by Chao based on Wang Wei.²⁷ Tung, whose enthusiasm for Wang Wei knew no bounds, indeed admits that he himself came to recognize the work of Wang Wei through Chao's pictures;²⁷ Tung even acquired the small landscape by Wang Wei once in Chao's possession.²⁸ Of Chao's other recorded works, Yüan An lying in the Snow had been the subject of a picture by Wang Wei as well as Chou Fang;²⁹ Chao's version seems to have been based on Chou Fang's.³⁰ The pictures of Śakyamuni, of the Dragon King paying homage to Buddha, and of the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove were all regarded as being in the manner of the T'ang painters.³¹ Further, Chao painted in 1304 a Lo-han picture, and in his inscription on it sixteen years later, in 1320, he claims that he had caught something of the spirit of a Lo-han painting by Lu Leng-chia he had once seen.³²

Chao's traditionalism has already been dwelt upon by Dr. Sirén,³³ but his passion for T'ang works is the more readily understood in view of the regret for the unknown works of the T'ang masters expressed in his inscription on the Two Pines. A distinction must of course be made between landscapes and other pictures, for it was the dearth of T'ang models in landscape painting that was regretted. But it was natural that Chao should become a confirmed traditionalist once the works of Wang Wei, the two Li,

²¹ Dates of compilation and completion of *Shih-tsu shih-lu* according to *Yüan shih*, c. 18, Po-na ed., 5b; 16b.

²² *Hsin Yüan shih*. c. 190.

²³ *Ni-ku lu*, c. 2, Mei-shu ts'ung-shu, I, x, 234.

²⁴ *Chinese Painting*, iv, 19, n. 2.

²⁵ E.g., *Ch'ing-ho s.h.f.*, x, 39a-61a; *Shih-ku-t'ang shu-hua 'hui-k'ao* 式古堂書畫彙考 [Hereafter, *Shih-ku-t'ang s.h.h.k.*], Facsimile Reproduction, c. 1921, Painting, xvi, Chao Meng-fu, 1a-59a; *P'ei-wen-chai shu-hua p'u*, 佩文齋書畫譜, c. 98.

²⁶ *Ch'ing-ho s.h.f.*, iii, 52b.

²⁷ *Hua-hsüeh hsin-yin* 畫學心印, Lithographic Reprint of 1936, c. 3, 6a-b.

²⁸ *Hua-hsüeh hsin-yin*, c. 3, 5a-b.

²⁹ *Ch'ing-ho s.h.f.*, iii, 78b; iv, 52b; *Shih-ku-t'ang s.h.h.k.*, Painting, xvi, Chao Meng-fu, 1a-59a. Chao's version was dated 1303.

³⁰ *Ch'ing-ho s.h.f.*, iv, 81b-82a.

³¹ *Mo-yüan hui-kuan lu*, c. 3, 146-7; *Chinese Painting*, iv, 22.

³² *Ch'ing-ho s.h.f.*, x, 53a.

³³ *Chinese Painting*, iv, 19-23.

and others became available for study. On the strength of Chao's inscriptions on the two pictures and a few written records, therefore, I would date the Two Pines early, earlier than 1290, possibly even before his first visit to the capital in 1286, since all accounts agree upon the early maturity of his writing and painting. I have also shown that the Ch'iao and Hua Mountains done early in 1296 could well have been based on Wang Wei. Certainly Chao had opportunities to see and handle T'ang pictures surviving from the Sung, and the evidence for this supplied by inscriptions and written records is confirmed by details from Chao's life. What is more, the judgment of the Ming critics Tung, Ch'en Chi-ju, and Chang Ch'ou regarding Chao's indebtedness to Wang Wei and others would appear to be well founded. And this also is reassuring, for Tung at least has been the spokesman of the traditional view of painting for the past three and a half centuries.

In his discussion of Huang Kung-wang's two Fu-ch'un scrolls, Professor Sirén himself provides an excellent example of the use of inscriptions and colophons in stylistic analysis. His concise and accurate summary of the known evidence in favour of the authenticity of the Master Wu-yung scroll (which he terms Version B) leads up to his description and analysis of the two versions of the picture.³⁴ The same method may be applied to other pictures. In discussing the works attributed to Kao K'o-kung in the Palace Museum Collection, for instance, Dr. Sirén notes two stylistic tendencies,³⁵ the one "characterized by excessive softness and a fluffy brushwork by which the forms are dissolved in blotchy spots" and the other showing "more of the structural character of mountains and rocks in contradistinction to the vaporous mist by which they are encircled". As examples of the more structural type of painting, he cites Cloud-encircled Luxuriant Mountains (pl. 57) and another picture. He cites a third picture, Clearing after a Spring Rain over the Mountains (pl. 58) as also an example of this type though possessing points of contact with pictures of the blotchy ink type. He further remarks that "the preponderance of stylistic and historical evidence is certainly in favour of the more structural paintings, which stylistically are more akin to the works of Tung Yüan than to the so-called Mi Fei paintings".

Now both Cloud-encircled Luxuriant Mountains, and Clearing after a Spring Rain over the Mountains contain inscriptions by Li K'an. About Clearing after Spring Rain, Dr. Sirén writes:

... it is ascribed to the master by Li K'an and dated 1299 . . . Li K'an, who seems to have been a good friend of Kao K'o-kung, would hardly have added his testimony to the picture if he had not been convinced of its authenticity.³⁶

³⁴ *Chinese Painting*, iv, 60-5; vi, Plates 64-72. See *Ku-kung s.h.l.*, c. 4, 130-41.

³⁵ *Chinese Painting*, iv, 55-6.

³⁶ *Chinese Painting*, iv, 56.

In fact, Li K'an's inscription, barely legible in the reproduction but recorded in *Ku-kung shu-hua lu*,³⁷ states expressly: "Yen-ching (Kao K'o-kung) did this picture for me". This is followed by a poem by Li and the signature and date (1299).

But it is Li's inscription on Cloud-encircled Luxuriant Mountains that is significant. It had the date 1309:

I regard Yen-ching's landscapes as excelling in refinement and lustre but somewhat lacking in the strength of the brush, and often wanted to tell him this. But I have been moving from one official post to another in the south and in the north, and have not had a chance to meet him for ten years now. In this picture, the trees and the stones show a mature vigour. The effect is clear and beautiful and quite untrammelled, indeed a work possessing both brush and ink, as the old saying goes. The gazer can allege nothing against it and admires in complete humility. It is to be treasured.³⁸

Ten years earlier, in 1299, Kao had done Clearing after Spring Rain for Li. Then in 1309 Li came across Cloud-encircled Luxuriant Mountains, apparently a recent work by Kao, and was pleased by the gain in strength and vigour he detected. The authenticity of both pictures is thus assured by Li's two inscriptions, which tally in date; or, if there are grounds for doubt at all, the two pictures stand or fall together.

Though the divergence noted by Li between Kao's earlier work and the Luxuriant Mountains does not necessarily correspond to the two stylistic tendencies found by Dr. Sirén, it warrants the assumption that Kao's earlier pictures were done in a flowing or fluffy manner which occasioned copies or loose imitations now passing under his name. This would account for the two pictures in the Palace Museum collection which are in manner "akin to what is usually called the Mi Fei style" but which Dr. Sirén rejects as later imitations.³⁹ It would also explain why Clearing after Spring Rain shows some resemblance to these rejected pictures.³⁹ That Kao in fact started painting, rather late in his life, by adopting the style of Mi Fei is borne out by the testimony of Chao Meng-fu. Chao's colophon of 1321 on a scroll of ink bamboos by Kao reads:

In the Chih-yüan period I served as *lang-chung* in the War Ministry [*i.e.*, 1287-90]. When I completed my term, Yen-ching took my place. We were the best of friends. At the time he had not begun to paint much. Later he came to love Mi's landscapes, which he imitated with great care, so that he finally established his own style and won lasting fame. For his high character and his unclouded bosom may be

³⁷ *Ku-kung s.h.l.*, c. 5, 156.

³⁸ *Ku-kung s.h.l.*, c. 5, 155.

³⁹ *Chinese Painting*, iv, 55.

seen through his brush and ink, which thus differed completely from the work of the common crowd. As for his ink bamboos, trees, and stones, he did them at random when playing with the brush. . . .⁴⁰

Thus the careful imitations of Mi existed at one time⁴¹ even if they are now only to be seen in later copies. According to this colophon also, in 1290 Kao had not begun to paint in earnest. Relatively speaking, then, his *Clearing after Spring Rain* of 1299 would be beginner's work, and there would still be room for improvement in Kao's painting: hence the criticism of his earlier work contained in Li K'an's inscription of 1309. It is a happy thought that even by Li K'an's standards the *Luxuriant Mountains*, on which he wrote the inscription, was a consummate work of art, for Kao died in the following year, 1310.⁴²

As has been mentioned, inscriptions often reflect the personality of the artist. T'ang Yin's poem included in the inscription on his picture, *Talking to Hsi-chou about Old Times*, is well known.⁴³ I translate the first two lines:

Drunk and in ecstasy, I have danced and sung these fifty years,
Making merry amidst the blossoms, sleeping under the moon.

It is of course a characteristic account of his own Bohemian life, not a description of his friend. T'ang Yin, ageing and seemingly repentant, would thus be about fifty at the time he did the picture, having been separated from the friend of his youth for nearly thirty years. Shen Chou's essay "Sitting up at Night", which accompanied his picture of the same title, is no less characteristic;⁴⁴ it reveals indeed one secret of his art. The essay echoes Ou-yang Hsiu's *fu* "Sounds of Autumn". After a brief sleep, the artist gets up in the cold night. He tries to read under the lamp, but, tiring of this, puts down his book, folds his hands together and sits up straight. A pale moon has risen after days of rain, and it lights up his window. He hears noises, confusedly at first, then more distinctly. The wind is shaking the trees and bamboos. The sound awakens in him the wish to be staunch and resolute. The dogs howl. The noise conjures up evil-doers and bandits, and the determination to resist them. Drums are beating. In the distance the taps are continuous and awaken thoughts of melancholy and discontent. Nearer, the town's drummer gives the watch—third, fourth, and finally fifth, the closer to dawn, the faster the beat. And then the temple bell rings clear and sharp in the cold air before daybreak, and its sound brings forward plans for the coming day. For the artist, the vigil has been a discipline. He

⁴⁰ *Shih-ku-t'ang s.h.h.k.*, Painting, xvii, Kao K'o-kung, 25b-26a.

⁴¹ *Shih-ku-t'ang s.h.h.k.*, Painting, xvii, Kao, 1a, records, for instance, Kao's undated picture, *Clouds and Mountains after the older Mi*.

⁴² *Hsin Yüan shih*, c. 188. According to Chang Wei-hsiang, *I-nien lu hui-pien* 張惟 謙年錄彙編, 1925, c. 5, 10^b, Kao was born in 1248.

⁴³ *Ku-kung s.h.l.*, c. 5, 319. See *Chinese Painting*, iv, 200-1; vi, Plate 228.

⁴⁴ *Ku-kung s.h.l.*, c. 5, 295-6. See *Chinese Painting*, iv, 156-7.

realizes how in the stillness each sound has produced a different state of mind in him. He speculates on the enslaving of the mind by the senses and observes how the mind is on the alert in the stillness of the night (an idea taken from Chu Hsi). Hence the virtue of the vigil. I quote a passage:

I am fond of sitting up at night. I would spread out my books under the lamp, turning them over until the second watch. But people would still be making noises and my mind would be pre-occupied with words, so that I never attained a state of silence without and stillness within. Tonight, however, all sounds and sights have reached me through silence and stillness. They have thus cleared my mind and awakened my aspirations.⁴⁵

This artist sought inspiration in nocturnal stillness, not merely from solitude in the mountains. He consciously disciplined his senses and aimed at reducing their impressions to some order; he did not merely rely upon intuition. *Observation*, then, including the recording of auditory sensations, would certainly be one of Shen Chou's outstanding qualities. And indeed Professor Sirén has underlined the motif of the "sounds of nature" in the Ming painters, e.g., T'ang Yin in his *Listening to Pine-trees on a Mountain Path*, and other pictures.⁴⁶ I have dwelt at some length on Shen's inscription to bring out the point more fully.

But apart from their relevance to individual pictures and artists, inscriptions and other written records tend to re-affirm certain traditional views on painting as a basis for the assessment of the picture or artist in question. It is here that critics of today, including Professor Sirén, feel obliged to make a more independent appraisal, not necessarily in harmony with traditional views. Yet it is easy to err in this direction. If, as in Part One of *Chinese Painting*, verbal tradition is treasured even when its subject is often unknown to us, then surely it is the more precious when its subject survives more or less intact, as in Part Two of this work. The question would appear to be not so much one of individual judgment as of acceptance of certain agreed standards set up by the painters themselves. To follow standards other than these, however convenient or satisfying to the critic himself, can only result in discussions contrary to the very spirit of Chinese painting.

The charge of arbitrariness could never be levelled against Professor Sirén, who abandons traditional pronouncements only when they cease to be helpful to him. Indeed Dr. Sirén is at times so moved by his subject that he writes almost like a Ming or Ch'ing critic. I quote a sample:

No painter has to the same extent as Wang Meng been able to utilize and . . . transform such gigantic formations, no one has interpreted the inspiration of the mountains in a more monumental fashion.

⁴⁵ *Ku-kung s.h.l.*, c. 5, 296.

⁴⁶ *Chinese Painting*, iv, 198-9.

His heart was attuned to them; he felt the cosmic pulse and made it comprehensible in pictorial form. When other painters tried to do the same thing, they exaggerated the windings and bulgings to the detriment of the nerves and the "dragon-veins", and created soft and structureless masses in place of petrified but still living grandeur.⁴⁷

Nevertheless, Dr. Sirén has his difficulties. Some of these stand out in his discussion of Wang Shih-min. They arise through his finding the artist's surviving work falling short somehow of expectations raised by the praise of his contemporaries and followers. In this passage Dr. Sirén seeks some explanation for the high place accorded by tradition to Wang:

The extraordinary praise bestowed on Wang Shih-min by contemporary as well as later critics may seem to us exaggerated when we consider him at the present distance of time in relation to the preceding evolution. But it should be remembered that in his case, as in relation to so many others of the famous painters, the praise was not due merely to his artistic accomplishments but also to his character and intellectual personality. He formed an important link with the past, and what he said and painted carried a repercussion of the great ideals of classic times. He assumed the attitude of a humble scholar towards the old masters, as may be realized from some of [his inscriptions], and characterized himself as a servant of the great painters of old.⁴⁸

But this explanation is, in fact, a hint of the inadequacies of traditional criticism. It brings out two apparent shortcomings in that criticism, a confusion of the artist's life with his work, and a confusion of fidelity to the ancients with great art. Since these confusions recur and prove to be difficulties in the study of more than one painter, I shall deal with them separately.

The comment that the artist's fame depended in part at least upon his life is made also in Dr. Sirén's discussion of Shen Chou and Tung Ch'ang:

The biographical accounts of Shen Chou's life make it evident that the great fame which he earned among his contemporaries was based on his life and personality as a whole and not only on his genius as a painter. He was the perfect example of a scholarly gentleman, high-minded and noble-hearted, learned, and accomplished in all the arts, and yet very simple and genuine in his daily life as well as in his painting.⁴⁹

Judging by the records about Tung Ch'ang's life and his activity as a painter, critic, writer and official, it seems evident that his

great influence in matters of art was the result of his general aesthetic culture, his connoisseurship and well-balanced character rather than of his accomplishment as a painter.⁵⁰

Similar comments might be made of others, such as Kao K'o-kung, or even Huang Kung-wang and Ni Tsan. The justification for such comments is to be found in Dr. Sirén's short introduction to Chang Keng's remarks on the Yüan painters in *P'u-shan lun-hua* 張庚, 浦山論畫:

Chinese critics who in later times extolled and appreciated the painters of the Yüan period (and earlier times) often insist on the correspondence between the personal character or temperament of the artists and their manner of painting. This may seem strange to western art-historians, but it is worth remembering as a leading idea of the Chinese historians and also as a help for a better understanding of the intimate connection between the principles and the personalities.⁵¹

This "leading idea", however, must not be taken to mean that an honoured place would be given, say, to Tung Ch'ang or Wang Shih-min on the grounds of intellectual attainments and personality rather than of art. Shen Chou, for all his high character, was not placed as a painter above Chao Meng-fu, who had been subservient to the Yüan conquerors. The lives of the scholar-painters were remarkably uniform, and it was the quality of the man that mattered, not his actions and their moral consequences. Praise for the spontaneity and skill in painting of a profligate like T'ang Yin from contemporaries and later men was quite unstinted, but there is something decorative and worldly about T'ang's work even in his most detached moods which will perpetually deny him the highest rank in Chinese painting.⁵²

The correspondence between personal character and art is to be interpreted in a narrower sense—of the one being a clue to the other. Moral censure and the artist's fame are extraneous to it. And it is in this narrower sense of temperamental affinity that Chang Keng discusses the correspondence between the Yüan painters and their work:

Huang Ta-ch'ih was an open and easy-going nature, free from every trammel, consequently his manner of painting was tranquil and light, but also dashing and soaking. He was the most generous among all these painters. Mei-hua tao-jen was a great solitary, pure and resolute; consequently his paintings were bold, lofty and beautifully refined. Ni Yün-lin was entirely free from the vulgar; consequently his paintings express loneliness (detachedness), and stern emotions. He

⁴⁷ *Chinese Painting*, iv, 90-1.

⁴⁸ *Chinese Painting*, v, 97.

⁴⁹ *Chinese Painting*, iv, 150-1.

⁵⁰ *Chinese Painting*, v, 5.

⁵¹ *Chinese Painting*, iv, 96.

⁵² Two Old Men drinking Tea, reproduced in *Chinese Painting*, vi, Plates 226-7, and iv, coloured frontispiece, shows T'ang's work at its best and well illustrates this point.

cut out everything ornamental. Wang Shu-ming could not entirely abstain from coveting honours or free himself from feelings of anxiety; consequently his pictures approach a state of agitation. Chao Meng-fu did not hold to the great principles (of loyalty); consequently his writings and paintings are graceful and attractive, but have something of a vulgar spirit.⁵³

Perhaps it is sheer prejudice that regards the tone of the hermit's life as higher than that of the courtier, or the mood of solitude in a landscape as nobler than the warmth and conviviality of the human scene. If so, the prejudice has existed since Ching Hao and earlier. It pervades the tradition, and its ill effects upon individual painters are in that way vitiated. Though to Chang Keng, Wang Meng may seem restless and over-anxious to please, and Chao Meng-fu, facile and yielding, he never denies their achievements as painters nor their right to keep company with Huang and Ni. Ultimately the picture is the man: the critic accepts this canon when he recognizes a kindred spirit in the artist. Certainly Dr. Sirén would seem to do so when he writes thus about Ni's landscapes:

Somehow they seemed to reveal a singularly attractive, yet unattainable spirit of aloofness or detachedness, a genius for whom the stones and the trees and the mountain ranges beyond the quiet waters were simply symbols for his meditative moods and deepest thoughts.⁵⁴

Or when he writes about Wang Meng:

In contemplating some of his most dramatic compositions it may seem as if the painter had been struggling or competing with the creative forces of nature and tried to wrest from them the secret of their organic growth. One may indeed be impressed by the moral quality of some of his great landscapes, which bear witness to a tremendous concentration of the creative will as well as a consummate mastery of the means of expression.⁵⁵

I now come to the second difficulty, the apparent confusion between fidelity to the ancients and great art. The observation was made in the quotation about Wang Shih-min, that he formed an important link with the past and characterized himself as a servant of the great painters of old. But this would be true of a great many others also. Fidelity to old masters took the form of imitation, which was a necessary discipline to all painters and became an end in itself to some. It is clear, however, that to Professor Sirén, imitation is a defect rather than a virtue, as may be seen from his discussion of Wu Chen's early rival, Sheng Mou:

⁵³ *Chinese Painting*, iv, 97; *C.k. hua-lun* l.p., i, 225-6.

⁵⁴ *Chinese Painting*, iv, 79.

⁵⁵ *Chinese Painting*, iv, 85.

He was one of the not uncommon Chinese painters whose fidelity to the models of old was stronger than his own ideas or needs for pictorial expression. And as he was able to transmit the old models without a flaw, it should not surprise us that his works became appreciated by the connoisseurs of the time.⁵⁶

The point of view is emphatically stated in the discussion of the eclectic master, Wang Hui:

Few painters have been as highly extolled and eulogized by their contemporaries as he, few have corresponded as completely to the ideals prevailing among the leading critics of the time. From their point of view he was the greatest artist that had appeared for a hundred years. . . . But if we consider Wang Hui's artistic personality and enormous output of painting from a more detached viewpoint, in relation to the whole history of Chinese painting, the conclusions must be different; he can hardly be placed among the greatest creative personalities or those who have contributed important new elements to the development of painting. He lived largely on the inspiration of his predecessors, and transmitted their ideas with remarkable success.⁵⁷

To this, Dr. Sirén adds that the Chinese found the transmission of old ideas quite acceptable "as long as it could be admitted that the transcriptions of earlier models reflected the spirit of the old masters as well as their formal manners" whereas, to the western art-historian, "it may be more difficult to discover the merits of an artist who is striving for perfection within the accepted limits of established schools of patterns than of one who introduces new modes of expression and does not hesitate to give vent to his own temperament". It is just here that the confusion seems worst, for the difference between Wang Hui, whom Dr. Sirén disparages, and a master of acknowledged greatness like Huang Kung-wang is not really brought out.

Here is Dr. Sirén on Huang:

. . . Huang Kung-wang, in spite of his original spontaneity as a painter, had no ambition to overstep the great masters of antiquity or to discard their principles. He too remained fundamentally a traditionalist, though he infused new life into the old concepts and transmitted them with a brilliant mastery of the pictorial means.⁵⁸

Yet Wang Hui aimed also at infusing new life into the old models. About Wang Hui's renderings of pictures by earlier masters, Dr. Sirén says:

But there are wide differences in regard to the faithfulness of these "imitations". Some are evidently quite close copies painted after

⁵⁶ *Chinese Painting*, iv, 73.

⁵⁷ *Chinese Painting*, v, 177.

⁵⁸ *Chinese Painting*, iv, 68.

definite originals, others free rhapsodies or variations on the themes, or in the manners, of certain predecessors . . . We have seen that Wang Shih-min and Wang Chien did many pictures of this kind; they were, on the whole, more independent as artists in spite of their profound veneration for historical tradition. Wang Hui's penetration into the old models was more complete, his suppleness and versatility still greater, but whether he actually reached a higher standard as an artist (as asserted by his older contemporaries) seems to us less obvious.⁵⁹

Thus the faithfulness of Wang Hui's imitations of old masters was of various degrees; he often attempted free variations on certain themes after the respective manners of certain masters; nevertheless, he penetrated deeply into the old models—more completely than Wang Shih-min and Wang Chien, who relied more on their own ideas. But even this virtue is later denied him:

. . . it must be admitted that Wang Hui has rarely grasped as much of the individual significance or the spirit of the old masters as for instance Tung Ch'i-ch'ang. He gives the designs and general appearance of the models very carefully, but in a more or less undifferentiated manner which seldom serves to transmit the more intimate individual features of the models.⁶⁰

Whereas the previous quotation has suggested versatile and brilliant imitations of the old masters, the "undifferentiated manner" now suggests a uniform and somewhat pedestrian style of his own. It would be rash to conclude that Wang Hui's contemporaries were misled by "imitations" that were really so monotonous and lacking in significance. The idea of imitation was an old one, at least as old as Hsieh Ho, but the Ming and Ch'ing painters and critics are at one with Dr. Sirén in stressing the spirit rather than the outward form in imitation. I quote some examples:

On Imitating the Old⁶¹

The transmission and copying of models in painting was first formulated by Hsieh Ho. The method became a short cut for painters, since copying is very easy, though the spirit is not easily transmitted. True copying means following the intention of the old masters without following their actual footsteps. For example, Chü-jan, Mi Fei, Huang Kung-wang, and Ni Tsan all followed Tung Yüan. It was the same Tung Yüan that they followed, yet their work differed. If some vulgar person did it by insisting on having every brushstroke correspond to the one in the original, how could he attain fame?

⁵⁹ *Chinese Painting*, v, 178.

⁶⁰ *Chinese Painting*, v, 180.

⁶¹ T'ang Chih-ch'i, *Hui-shih wei-yen* 唐志契, 繪事微言, in *C.k. hua-lun l.p.*, ii, 736.

On Copying⁶²

The copying of old masters consists not so much in keeping the original in front of one as in endeavouring to meet it in spirit. Fix the mind's eye upon the idea without permitting the slightest distraction. Apparent similarity to the original may not be true similarity. Divergence from the original may yet contain similarity. It is not within the ken of ordinary thought.

But a sympathetic view of Wang Hui's "imitations", such as the view of Wang Shih-min, brings out other qualities than superficial fidelity to his models:

Then Shih-ku (Wang Hui) arose and revived the art of painting. He imitated closely, and with complete success, the T'ang, Sung, and Yüan masters. Whatever he attempted, resulted in a scroll mellow with the appearance of age. In composition and in method, it was as a work of the old masters. Further, in brushwork and ink-tones, in spirit and resonance, it reached the secret of old. If he happened to be imitating a particular master, he used only the methods of that master and no other.⁶³

It was said of Han Yü's prose and Tu Fu's verse that every single word in them could be traced to some classical origin. It is the same with Shih-ku's painting. Through studying the old masters he has acquired so rich a store of their work and what he has learned blends so completely with his great talents, that whatever he thinks of finds ready expression left and right. He is so well endowed that he need not even try to imitate the ancients: their spirit and resonance come naturally to his brush.⁶⁴

Over a dozen lengthy inscriptions and colophons by Wang Shih-min on Wang Hui are quoted in *Hua-hsieh hsin-yin*;⁶⁵ in each of these, Wang Hui is most enthusiastically praised for having caught the spirit and resonance (神韻) or the essence of the spirit (神髓) of the old masters. Fidelity to old masters can only be relative and, as the quotations about imitation and copying from the two Ming critics above show, is liable to many interpretations, but when a recognized master speaks of brushwork and spirit-resonance in such terms, there can be no ambiguity. Clearly, though Wang Hui used the idiom and compositional elements of the old masters, he himself excelled through the spirit-resonance that emerges from his brushwork and ink-tones.

⁶² Shen Hao, *Hua Chu*, 沈顗, 畫塵 in *C.k. hua-lun l.p.*, ii, 775. See O. Sirén, *The Chinese on the Art of Painting*, 179.

⁶³ *Hua-hsieh hsin-yin*, c. 3, 15b. See *Chinese Painting*, v, 103, where the entire passage is rather freely, but sympathetically, translated, though Dr. Sirén is not impressed by Wang Shih-min's testimony.

⁶⁴ *Hua-hsieh hsin-yin*, c. 3, 13b.

⁶⁵ c. 3, 13a-17b.

Indeed if the supreme accomplishment of the Chinese artist is in his brushwork, then "spirit" and "resonance" reveal themselves in the single stroke even more than in the entire composition. It is here that Wang Hui reigns supreme. On some of his handscrolls, he would paint a hundred identical trees or a thousand blades of grass or reeds in identical upward strokes, yet the effect would be, not monotony or affectation, but firmness, strength, confidence: his strokes quiver with life, and his trees and grass and reeds are repetitive only as nature is repetitive.⁶⁶ Wang Hui's brushwork has been the despair of all later painters even as it was the despair of his fellow student, Yün Shou-p'ing. It only remains to quote his own statement of his creed:

When I painted I always thought particularly of the points on which the old masters concentrated their minds. This deep and continuous thinking made me realize that every point and every stroke reflects the impetus of the style, that each stone and each watercourse has a proper place in the composition, that the ink-washes produce the distinction between *yin* and *yang* (light and shade), and that in the application of colours one may bring out the distinction between the ancient and the modern. . . .⁶⁷

The confusion is now brought to some order. Old and new alike, the painters sought spirit-resonance. For the newer (*i.e.*, later) painters, this indefinable quality seemed somehow to reside in the old masters. In addition to being a necessary discipline, therefore, imitation was a quest for spirit-resonance. It could result in pictures which rendered some features of the originals closely but also in pictures far from close to the originals. But spirit-resonance was the real criterion and, when the critic was struck by this quality in some picture, he would praise it as a successful imitation of the ancients generally, or of the particular master whose stylistic features it resembled in some way. Otherwise, the picture was a mere imitation, an example of following the footsteps but not the true intention of the old masters.

To bring out this spirit-resonance, painters also thought, as did Wang Hui, in terms of brushstrokes, composition, ink-tones, and colour. The demand that each painter should contribute something of his own to the art is a wholly reasonable one, and it was satisfied by individual mastery of these aspects of painting. But for Dr. Sirén, individual contribution would seem to consist chiefly in new compositional elements and pictorial motifs.

⁶⁶ This may be seen even in some reproductions, *e.g.*, the Chung Hua album, Lin-an shan-se, in the manner of Chü-jan; but brushwork is naturally blurred in small reproductions.

⁶⁷ *Chinese Painting*, v, 175. See *Hua-hsieh hsin-yin*, c. 4, 10b; and Chou Liang-kung, *Tu hua lu* 周亮工讀畫錄, Ts'ung-shu chi-ch'eng ed., c. 2, 20-1, for the full text of Wang's inscription, which was written in an album he did for Chou.

Certainly his study of those masters who contributed to these aspects is the most sympathetic and valuable, *e.g.*, Wang Meng, who "opened other roads for landscape-painting than those which had been followed heretofore" (iv, 92):

His attitude towards nature is on the whole more realistic than that of the old masters; he is recording what he has seen and experienced. . . . The motifs had an objective existence as well as a subjective reality to him, and he approached them as a painter with the idea of recording them convincingly in a manner of his own . . . (iv, 89-90)

or Tao-chi, who was "continuously in search of fresh motifs, transmuting scenes that revealed to him new aspects of [nature's] activity" (v, 157). Dr. Sirén notes the "solution of the space problem" by Wen Cheng-ming, who "was here stepping out from the traditional principles of Chinese painting, abandoning them to some extent in his attempt to introduce a more realistic or objective method of representing space" (iv, 183). He points out how Pa-ta shan-jen "makes us realize the inherent fullness of empty space" and asserts, less convincingly, the importance of Pa-ta's landscape-studies (v, 153-5). Finally, he emphasizes "the ideas of space-construction which form the central problem in the artistic activity of Wang Yüan-ch'ü", whose manner of "moulding and designing the rocks" and whose use of "receding planes" are recognized as entirely new contributions (v, 205; 203).

Indeed Dr. Sirén has almost certainly realized the *intention* of each of these painters better than their traditional critics. And it is something to be proud of, even if in laying stress on originality, he has been somewhat unjust to traditionalists like Wang Shih-min and Wang Hui, and even Tung Ch'ü-ch'ang. To Tung, Dr. Sirén at least concedes some individuality as a calligrapher and painter:

Whatever he wrote or painted reflected the rhythm of his own mind and hand, and he was a true master of the brush . . . the fluent rhythm of his calligraphic specimens is sometimes evident also in the brushwork of his paintings. Tung Ch'ü-ch'ang was a true expressionist, in the proper sense of the word (v, 5).

But the rhythm of Tung's mind and hand is something alive: it is nothing less than spirit-resonance. No other Chinese painter has demonstrated so unmistakably that the whole of nature is one organic unit, vibrating with life. Tung's intense response to nature resulted also in a transformation of traditional motifs, but the transformation was effected through his brushwork (he was a great calligrapher) and his handling of ink, in which he was acknowledged as supreme. This tribute is recorded by Chang Keng:

Wang Yüan-ch'i said, "The brushwork of Tung Ch'i-ch'ang is still within man's reach. But the way his ink glows so freshly and splendidly, emitting the purest rays—that is something godlike, beyond human power".⁶⁸

To which Chang Keng, after quoting some sayings on the subject by Tung himself, adds this advice:

Therefore in the use of ink there is no need to reach back to the ancients. Simply grasp the idea of Tung and one will transcend other painters.

Tung's style is certainly extremely original, but analysis of his work, as indeed of the work of most Chinese painters, would be unrewarding unless guided by the standards and values of traditional criticism. Even the airy language of the account in *Wu-sheng shih-shih* 無聲詩史 may give a lead to the analysis of Tung's forms or rhythms:

Still, when approaching the age of 80, he could read by lamplight books with characters no larger than a fly's head, and write equally small characters. This was possible because he held the creative power of nature in his hand and was nourished by the mists and clouds. . . . His brush harmonized with the spirit of things and thus he reached the very essence of "life-breath and movement" (ch'i-yün sheng-tung) [*i.e.*, spirit-resonance]. Consequently it may be said that everything in his paintings, whether clouds, peaks or stones, was made as by the power of Heaven, his brushwork being quite unrestrained like the working of nature.⁶⁹

Ultimately traditional judgment is our only sure guide in the study of Chinese painting. For the Yüan, Ming, and Ch'ing periods, well authenticated pictures are still to be seen, and traditional criticism may best be tested on them, with our own powers of apprehension quickened in the process. For this criticism is not just to be tested: it is to be felt, even tasted. When a picture or its reproduction is before one, nothing could be more revealing of the facts or mood or art immediately associated with it than its inscriptions. And the very frequency of the occurrence in artists' recorded inscriptions of certain canons of judgment and the names of certain old masters must cause the student to pause and reflect on their significance. Humility is an ever growing virtue in the student of Chinese painting. Even Tao-chi, who claims to have established the "one-stroke painting", makes reference to Ni and Huang and others in his inscriptions. And Pa-ta shan-jen did not think it beneath him to *copy Tung's copy* of a picture by Ni down to Tung's inscription and signature.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ *P'u-shan lun-hua*, "On Ink", *C.k. hua-lun l.p.*, i, 224.

⁶⁹ *Chinese Painting*, v, 4; *Wu-sheng shih-shih*, Lithographic Reprint, c. 4, 1b-2a.

⁷⁰ *Chinese Painting*, vi, Plate 386.

Indeed, looking through Professor Sirén's fine album of plates (Vol. vi), one cannot help concluding that the best part of later Chinese painting is a commentary on the Yüan masters, on Huang Kung-wang's cheerful, whole-hearted acceptance of the world of rivers and mountains, on Ni Tsan's confident solitudes, on Wu Chen's half mystical gradations of ink, and on Wang Meng's restless, dynamic constructions. Here and there, one finds a concession to the eye, as in Shen Chou's sober colouring or in Wen Cheng-ming's and Wang Yüan-ch'i's spatial extension; or severe, monastic discipline in line and form, as in Tung Ch'i-ch'ang, Kung Hsien, and the figure-painter, Ch'en Hung-shou; or a cadenza in brushwork, as in Wang Hui. The two older Wang lack the expansive unrestraint of their master, Huang Kung-wang. Mei Ch'ing and Wu Li, though diverse in manner, each claim the heritage of their namesake Wu Chen (Mei-hua tao-jen). Cha Shih-piao's sketchy manner is derived from Ni, but it is somehow inarticulate. K'un-ts'an is a disciple of both Huang and Wang Meng, but his solitude is the solitude of a prince (he found refuge as an abbot), not that of a true hermit. Pa-ta shan-jen's sketches in landscape, rich with past heritage, show more promise than fulfilment. And in the most perfectly realized of Tao-chi's experiments one sees, in turn, Ni, Wu, and Wang Meng. The search, after all, was not for the new and untried, but for greater mastery of the medium of brush and ink, and complete blending with that spirit which informs nature, art, and life alike.