The Project Gutenberg EBook of Chinese Painters, by Raphael Petrucci

This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere at no cost and with

almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or

re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included

with this eBook or online at www.gutenberg.net

Title: Chinese Painters

A Critical Study

Author: Raphael Petrucci

Commentator: Laurence Binyon

Translator: Frances Seaver

Release Date: August 9, 2007 [EBook #22288]

Language: English

Character set encoding: UTF-8

\*\*\* START OF THIS PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK CHINESE PAINTERS \*\*\*

Produced by Dave Morgan, Anne Storer and the Online

Distributed Proofreading Team at http://www.pgdp.net

Transcriber's Note: 1. There is one instance each of

Huang Yin-Piau and Huang Yin-Piao, and

Yün Shou-p'ing and Yün Chou-p'ing

so they have been left as printed.

\* \* \* \* \*

CHINESE PAINTERS

CHINESE PAINTERS

A CRITICAL STUDY

BY

RAPHAEL PETRUCCI

TRANSLATED BY

FRANCES SEAVER

WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE BY

LAURENCE BINYON

OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM

AND WITH TWENTY-FIVE ILLUSTRATIONS IN DUOTONE

NEW YORK

BRENTANO'S

PUBLISHERS

COPYRIGHT, 1920, BY

BRENTANO'S

\_All rights reserved\_

THE · PLIMPTON · PRESS

NORWOOD · MASS · U·S·A

\* \* \* \* \*

PREFACE

A translator can have but one aim--to present the thought of the author

faithfully. In this case an added responsibility is involved, since one

who had so much to give to the world has been taken in his prime. M.

Petrucci has written at length of art in the Far East in his exhaustive

work \_La Philosophie de la Nature dans l'Art d'Extrême Orient\_ and

elsewhere, and has demonstrated the wide scope of his thought and

learning. The form and style in \_Peintres Chinois\_ are the result of much

condensation of material and have thus presented problems in translation,

to which earnest thought has been given.

In deference to the author's wish the margin has not been overladen and

only a short tribute, by one able to speak of him from personal knowledge,

has been included, together with a few footnotes and a short bibliography

of works of reference indispensable to the student who will pursue this

absorbing study. The translator takes this opportunity to make grateful

acknowledgement of her debt to the authors named, who have made such

valuable information available, and to those friends who have read the

manuscript and made many helpful suggestions.

FRANCES SEAVER

\* \* \* \* \*

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

In Raphael Petrucci, who died early in 1917, the world has lost one of the

ablest and most devoted students and interpreters of the art of the Far

East. He was only forty-five years of age, in the prime of his powers,

brimming with energy and full of enterprises that promised richly. Though

he did not die in the field, he was none the less a victim of the war. He

had exhausted himself by his labours with the Belgian ambulances at La

Panne, for Belgium was his adopted country. He had a house in Brussels,

filled with a collection of Chinese and Japanese art, and a little cottage

near the coast just over the borders of Holland. He came of the great and

ancient Sienese family of the Petrucci, but his mother was French and he

spent much of his earlier life in Paris, before settling in Brussels and

marrying one of the daughters of the painter Verwée. He had also spent

some time in Russia. In Brussels he was attached to the Institut Solvay.

He was a man of science, a student of and writer on sociology and biology.

He lectured on art and had a knowledge of the art of the world which few

men in Europe rivalled. He wrote a philosophic novel, \_La Porte de l'Amour

et de la Mort\_, which has run through several editions. He published a

book on Michelangelo's poetry. At the same time he was a scientific

engineer. When war broke out Petrucci was on his way home from Italy,

where he had been engaged, I believe, on some large engineering project

and he only got out of Switzerland into France by the last train which

left Basle. He came to England for a time, looking after a number of

Belgian refugees, including some very distinguished artists. At the end of

1914 he was engaged by the India office to do some valuable work in London

on the collection of Chinese and Tibetan paintings brought back from

Tun-huang by Sir Aurel Stein. He then worked at La Panne for the Belgian

army hospital (he had had a medical training in his youth), went to

Provence for a rest, fell ill and died in Paris after an operation.

Raphael Petrucci was a man who seemed to reincarnate the boundless

curiosity and the various ability of the men of the Italian Renaissance.

But for some years before his death he had concentrated his powers chiefly

on the study of Oriental art, of the Chinese language, and of Buddhist

iconography. His most important work in this line is \_La Philosophie de la

Nature dans l'Art d'Extrême Orient\_, a sumptuously printed folio published

by Laurens in Paris, with illustrations by the \_Kokka\_ Company, and

written with as much charm as insight. Petrucci's knowledge of Chinese

gave him an authority in interpreting Chinese art which writers on the

subject have rarely combined with so much understanding of art in

general, though as a connoisseur he was sometimes over-sanguine. His

translation from a classic of Chinese art-criticism, originally published

in a learned magazine, has lately appeared in book form. With his friend,

Professor Chavannes, whose death, also in the prime of life, we have had

to deplore still more recently, Petrucci edited the first volume of the

splendid series \_Ars Asiatica\_. The present work, intended for the general

reader and lover of art, illustrates his gift for luminous condensation

and the happy treatment of a large theme.

A man of winning manners, a most generous and loyal friend, Petrucci wore

his manifold learning lightly; with immense energy and force of character,

he was simple and warm-hearted and interested in the small things as well

as the great things of life.

LAURENCE BINYON

BRITISH MUSEUM

October, 1919

\* \* \* \* \*

CONTENTS

PAGE

PREFACE BY THE TRANSLATOR 5

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE BY LAURENCE BINYON 7

INTRODUCTION 15

PART ONE. TECHNIQUE

I. EQUIPMENT OF THE PAINTER 21

II. REPRESENTATION OF FORMS 26

III. DIVISION OF SUBJECTS 33

IV. INSPIRATION 38

PART TWO. THE EVOLUTION OF CHINESE PAINTING

I. ORIGINS 45

II. BEFORE THE INTERVENTION OF BUDDHISM 46

III. THE INTERVENTION OF BUDDHISM 54

IV. THE T'ANG PERIOD--7TH TO 10TH CENTURIES 58

V. THE SUNG PERIOD--10TH TO 13TH CENTURIES 72

VI. THE YÜAN PERIOD--13TH AND 14TH CENTURIES 92

VII. THE MING PERIOD--14TH TO 17TH CENTURIES 114

VIII. THE CH'ING PERIOD--17TH TO 20TH CENTURIES 131

CONCLUSION 140

BIBLIOGRAPHY 149

INDEX OF PAINTERS AND PERIODS 151

\* \* \* \* \*

ILLUSTRATIONS

PAGE

I. Sculptured stones of the Han dynasty. Second to

third centuries. Rubbings taken by the

Chavannes expedition 23

II. Portion of a scroll by Ku K'ai-chih. British

Museum, London 27

III. Kwanyin. Eighth to tenth centuries. Painting

brought from Tun-huang by the Pelliot expedition.

The Louvre, Paris 31

IV. Palace of Kiu Cheng-kung by Li Chao-tao. T'ang

period. Collection of V. Goloubew 34

V. Portrait of Lü Tung-ping by T'êng Ch'ang-yu.

T'ang period. Collection of August Jaccaci.

Lent to the Metropolitan Museum, New York.[A] 39

VI. Painting by an unknown artist. T'ang period.

Collection of R. Petrucci 47

VII. Geese. Sung period. British Museum, London 51

VIII. White Eagle. Sung period. Collection of R. Petrucci 59

IX. Horseman followed by two attendants. Sung

period. Collection of A. Stoclet 63

X. Landscape in the style of Hsia Kuei. Sung period.

Collection of Martin White 67

XI. Landscape by Ma Lin. Sung period. Collection

of R. Petrucci 73

XII. Mongol horseman returning from the Hunt, by Chao

Mêng-fu. Yüan period. Doucet collection 77

XIII. Pigeons by Ch'ien Hsüan. Yüan period. Collection

of R. Petrucci 85

XIV. Bamboos in monochrome by Wu Chên. Yüan

period. Musée Guimet 93

XV. Paintings of the Yüan or early Ming period. Style

of the Northern School. Collection of R. Petrucci 97

XVI. Portrait of a priest. Yüan or early Ming period.

Collection of H. Rivière 101

XVII. Horse. Painting by an unknown artist. Yüan or

early Ming period. Doucet collection 105

XVIII. Visit to the Emperor by the Immortals from on

high. Ming period. British Museum, London 109

XIX. Egrets by Lin Liang. Ming period. Collection of

Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Junior 115

XX. Flowers and Insects. Ming period. Collection of

R. Petrucci 119

XXI. Landscape. Ming period. Bouasse-Lebel collection 125

XXII. Beauty inhaling the fragrance of a peony. Ming

period. Collection of V. Goloubew 133

XXIII. Halt of the Imperial Hunt. Ming period. Sixteenth

century. Collection of R. Petrucci 137

XXIV. Painting by Chang Cheng. Eighteenth century.

Collection of M. Worch 141

XXV. Tiger in a Pine Forest. Eighteenth to nineteenth

centuries. Collection of V. Goloubew 145

[A] Now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss.

\* \* \* \* \*

INTRODUCTION

Whatever its outward expression, human thought remains essentially

unchanged and, throughout all of its manifestations, is fundamentally the

same. Varying phases are but accidents and underneath the divers wrappings

of historic periods or different civilizations, the heart as well as the

mind of man has been moved by the same desires.

Art possesses a unity like that of nature. It is profound and stirring,

precisely because it blends and perpetuates feeling and intelligence by

means of outward expressions. Of all human achievements art is the most

vital, the one that is dowered with eternal youth, for it awakens in the

soul emotions which neither time nor civilization has ever radically

altered. Therefore, in commencing the study of an art of strange

appearance, what we must seek primarily is the exact nature of the

complexity of ideas and feelings upon which it is based. Such is the

task presented to us, and since the problem which we here approach is

the general study of Chinese painting, we must prepare ourselves first

to master the peculiarities of its appearance and technique, in order

to understand later on the motives which inspired it.

While the first part of this study will carry us far from our habitual

modes of thought, the second part will bring us back into a domain which

our own philosophies, sciences and arts have already made familiar.

Admittedly, Chinese painting is governed by distinctive ideas. Born of a

civilization vastly different from our own, it may at times appear in a

guise that seems incomprehensible. It would be astonishing, however, if

Western intelligence were unable to grasp an aesthetic code of a magnitude

which is too great to be ignored.

The progress of history and of criticism has given us the opportunity to

reach a comprehension of the most peculiar formulas. Our culture is

sufficiently broad to allow us to perceive the beauty of an Egyptian

fresco or an Assyrian bas-relief as well as of a Byzantine mosaic or a

painting of the Renaissance. We have therefore no excuse for remaining

inaccessible to the art of the Far East and we have surely all the mental

vigor that is requisite in order to accustom ourselves to the foreign

nature of its presentation. It is in the realm of painting that this

foreign element is most noticeable. This is due partly to a special

technique and partly to the nature of the doctrines which serve as its

inspiration.

It behooves us then to acquaint ourselves with these new aspects of the

human soul. That is the justification for this little book. It forms an

introduction in which gaps are shown without attempt at concealment and

is presented in all modesty.

\* \* \* \* \*

PART ONE

TECHNIQUE

I. EQUIPMENT OF THE PAINTER

Where our painters have chosen wood or canvas as a ground, the Chinese

have employed silk or paper. While our art recognizes that drawing itself,

quite apart from painting, is a sufficient objective, drawing and painting

have always been closely intermingled in the Far East. While the mediums

used in Europe for painting in color, distemper, tempera and oil, led to

an exact study of form, the colors employed by the Orientals--at times

brilliant, at times subdued with an almost studied restraint--preserved a

singular fluidity and lent themselves to undefined evanescences which gave

them a surprising charm.

The early paintings were generally done on cotton, coarse silk or paper.

In the eighth century, under the T'ang dynasty, the use of finer silk

began. The dressing was removed with boiling water, the silk was then

sized and smoothed with a paddle. The use of silken fabric of the finest

weave, prepared with a thick sizing, became general during the Sung

dynasty. Papers were made of vegetable fibres, principally of bamboo.

Being prepared, as was the silk, with a sizing of alum, they became

practically indestructible. Upon these silks and papers the painter

worked with brush and Chinese ink,[1] color being introduced with more

or less freedom or restraint.

The brushes are of different types. Each position of the brush conforms

to a specific quality of the line, either sharp and precise or broad and

quivering, the ink spreading in strong touches or thinning to delicate

shades.

The colors are simple, of mineral or vegetable origin. Chinese painters

have always avoided mixing colors so far as possible. From malachite they

obtained several shades of green, from cinnabar or sulphide of mercury, a

number of reds. They knew also how to combine mercury, sulphur and potash

to produce vermilion. From peroxide of mercury they drew coloring powders

which furnished shades ranging from brick red to orange yellow. During the

T'ang dynasty coral was ground to secure a special red, while white was

extracted from burnt oyster shells. White lead was later substituted for

this lime white. Carmine lake they obtained from madder, yellows from

the sap of the rattan, blues from indigo. To these must be added the

different shades of Chinese ink and lastly, gold in leaf and in powder.

[1] Chinese ink is a very different composition from the ink of

Western countries. It is a solid made of soot obtained by burning

certain plants, which is then combined with glue or oil and moulded

into a cake and dried. Other ingredients may be added to produce sheen

or a dead finish. It improves with age if properly kept. The cake is

moistened and rubbed on a slab, and the ink thus obtained must be used

in a special way and with special care to produce the full

effect.--TRANSLATOR.

[Illustration: PLATE I. SCULPTURED STONES OF THE HAN DYNASTY

Second to Third Centuries. Rubbings taken by the Chavannes Expedition.]

The brush-stroke in the painting of the Far East is of supreme importance.

We know that this could not be otherwise if we recall that the characters

in Chinese writing are ideographs, not actually \_written\_, but rather

\_drawn\_. The stroke is not a mere formal, lifeless sign. It is an

expression in which is reflected the beauty of the thought that inspired

it as well as the quality of the soul of him who gives it form. In

writing, as in painting, it reveals to us the character and the conception

of its author. Placed at the service of certain philosophical ideas, which

will be set forth later on, this technique was bound to lead to a special

code of Aesthetics. The painter seeks to suggest with an unbroken line the

fundamental character of a form. His endeavor, in this respect, is to

simplify the objective images of the world to the extreme, replacing them

with ideal images, which prolonged meditation shall have freed from every

non-essential. It may therefore be readily understood how the brush-stroke

becomes so personal a thing, that in itself it serves to reveal the hand

of the master. There is no Chinese book treating of painting which does

not discuss and lay stress upon the value of its aesthetic code.

II. REPRESENTATION OF FORMS

It has often been said that in Chinese painting, as in Japanese painting,

perspective is ignored. Nothing is further from the truth. This error

arises from the fact that we have confused one system of perspective with

perspective as a whole. There are as many systems of perspective as there

are conventional laws for the representation of space.

The practice of drawing and painting offers the student the following

problem in descriptive geometry: \_to represent the three dimensions of

space by means of a plane surface of two dimensions\_. The Egyptians and

Assyrians solved this problem by throwing down vertical objects upon one

plane, which demands a great effort of abstraction on the part of the

observer. European perspective, built up in the fifteenth century upon

the remains of the geometric knowledge of the Greeks, is based on the

monocular theory used by the latter. In this system, it is assumed that

the picture is viewed with the eye fixed on a single point. Therefore

the conditions of foreshortening--or distorting the actual dimensions

according to the angle from which they are seen--are governed by placing

in harmony the distance of the eye from the scheme of the picture, the

height of the eye in relation to the objects to be depicted, and the

relative position of these objects with reference to the surface employed.

[Illustration: PLATE II. PORTION OF A SCROLL BY KU K'AI-CHIH

British Museum, London.]

But, in assuming that the picture is viewed with the eye fixed on a single

point, we put ourselves in conditions which are not those of nature. The

European painter must therefore compromise with the exigencies of

binocular vision, modify the too abrupt fading of forms and, in fine,

evade over-exact principles. Thus he arrives at a \_perspective de

sentiment\_, which is the one used by our masters.

Chinese perspective was formulated long before that of the Europeans and

its origins are therefore different. It was evolved in an age when the

method of superimposing different registers to indicate different planes

was still being practiced in bas-reliefs. The succession of planes, one

above the other, when codified, led to a system that was totally different

from our monocular perspective. It resulted in a perspective as seen from

a height. No account is taken of the habitual height of the eye in

relation to the picture. The line of the horizon is placed very high,

parallel lines, instead of joining at the horizon, remain parallel, and

the different planes range one above the other in such a way that the

glance embraces a vast space. Under these conditions, the picture becomes

either high and narrow--a hanging picture--to show the successive planes,

or broad in the form of a scroll, unrolling to reveal an endless

panorama. These are the two forms best known under their Japanese names

of \_kakemono\_ and \_makimono\_.[2]

But the Chinese painter must attenuate the forms where they are parallel,

give a natural appearance to their position on different levels and

consider the degree of their reduction demanded by the various planes.

Even he must compromise with binocular vision and arrive at a \_perspective

de sentiment\_ which, like our own, while scientifically false, is

artistically true. To this linear perspective is added moreover an

atmospheric perspective.

Having elected from a very early time to paint in monochrome, Chinese

painters were led by the nature of this medium to seek to express

atmospheric perspective by means of tone values and harmony of shading

instead of by color. Thus they were familiar with chiaroscuro before the

European painters. Wang Wei established the principles of atmospheric

perspective in the eighth century. He explains how tints are graded, how

the increasing thickness of layers of air deprives distant objects of

their true coloring, substituting a bluish tinge, and how forms become

indistinct in proportion as their distance from the observer increases.

His testimony in this respect is similar to that of Leonardo da Vinci in

his "Treatise on Painting."

[2] The Chinese terms are \_Li Chou\_ for a vertical painting and

\_Hêng P'i\_ for a horizontal painting.--TRANSLATOR.

[Illustration: PLATE III. KWANYIN. EIGHTH TO TENTH CENTURIES

Painting brought from Tun-huang by the Pelliot Expedition.

The Louvre, Paris.]

III. DIVISION OF SUBJECTS

The Chinese divide the subjects of painting into four principal classes,

as follows:

Landscape.

Man and Objects.

Flowers and Birds.

Plants and Insects.

Nowhere do we see a predominant place assigned to the drawing or painting

of the human figure. This alone is sufficient to mark the wide difference

between Chinese and European painting.

The exact name for \_Landscape\_ is translated by the words \_mountain and

water picture\_. They recall the ancient conception of Creation on which

the Oriental system of the world is founded. The mountain exemplifies the

teeming life of the earth. It is threaded by veins wherein waters

continuously flow. Cascades, brooks and torrents are the outward evidence

of this inner travail. By its own superabundance of life, it brings forth

clouds and arrays itself in mists, thus being a manifestation of the two

principles which rule the life of the universe.

The second class, \_Man and Objects\_, must be understood principally as

concerning man, his works, his belongings, and, in a general sense, all

things created by the hand of man, in combination with landscape. This was

the convention in early times when the first painters whose artistic

purpose can be formulated with certainty, portrayed the history of the

legendary beings of Taoism,--the genii and fairies dwelling amidst an

imaginary Nature. The records tell us, to be sure, that the early masters

painted portraits, but it was at a later period that \_Man and Objects\_

composed a class distinct from \_Landscape\_, a period responsible for those

ancestral portraits painted after death, which are almost always

attributable to ordinary artisans. Earlier they endeavored to apply to

figure painting the methods, technique and laws established for an

ensemble in which the thought of nature predominated. Special rules

bearing on this subject are sometimes found of a very early date but there

is no indication that they were collected into a definite system until the

end of the seventeenth century. Up to the present time our only knowledge

of their content is through a small treatise published at the beginning of

the nineteenth century.

The third class, \_Flowers and Birds\_, deals with those paintings wherein

the Chinese gave rein to their fancy for painting the bird in conjunction

with the plant life associated with its home and habits. The bird is

treated with a full understanding of its life, and flowers are studied

with such a comprehension of their essential structure that a botanist

can readily detect the characteristics typical of a species, despite the

simplifications which an artist always imposes on the complexity of forms.

[Illustration: PLATE IV. PALACE OF KIU CHENG-KUNG BY LI CHAO-TAO

T'ang Period. Collection of V. Goloubew.]

This general class is subdivided. The epidendrum, the iris, the orchis

and the chrysanthemum became special studies each of which had its own

masters, both from the standpoint of painting itself, and of the

application of the aesthetic rules which govern this art. The bamboo and

the plum tree are also allied to this class. Under the influence of

philosophic and symbolic ideas they furnished a special category of

subjects to the imagination of the painter and form a division apart which

has its own laws and methods, regarding which the Chinese treatises on

Aesthetics inform us fully.

Finally, the fourth class, \_Plants and Insects\_, is based upon the same

conception as that of \_Flowers and Birds\_. The insect is represented with

the plant which is his habitat when in the stage of caterpillar and larva,

or flying above the flowers and plants upon which he subsists on reaching

the stage of butterfly and insect. Certain books add to this fourth class

a subdivision comprising fishes.

Lastly we must note that in the Far East, as in Europe, there is a special

class to be taken into consideration, \_Religious paintings\_. In China,

this refers almost exclusively to Buddhist paintings.

IV. INSPIRATION

The aesthetic conceptions of the Far East have been deeply influenced by a

special philosophy of nature. The Chinese consider the relation of the two

principles, male and female, the \_yang\_ and the \_yin\_, as the source of

the universe. Detached from the primordial unity, they give birth to the

forms of this world by ever varying degrees of combination. Heaven

corresponds to the male principle, earth to the female principle.

Everything upon the earth, beings, plants, animals or man is formed by the

mingling of \_yang\_ and \_yin\_. While the mountain, enveloped in mists,

recalls the union of these two principles, the legend of forces thus

revealed by no means pauses here. Fabulous or real, the animals and plants

habitually seen in Chinese paintings express a like conception.

The dragon is the ancestor of everything that bears feathers or scales. He

represents the element of water, the waters of the earth, the mists of the

air, the heavenly principle. He is seen breaking through the clouds like

some monstrous apparition, unveiling for an instant the greatness of a

mystery barely discerned. The tiger is the symbol of the earthly

principle, a personification of quadrupeds as distinct from birds and

reptiles. His ferocious form lurks in the tempest. Defying the hurricane

which bends the bamboos and uproots trees, he challenges the furies of

nature that are hostile to the expression of the universal soul. The

bamboo is the symbol of wisdom, the pine is the emblem of will-power and

life. The plum tree in flower is a harmonious combination of the two

principles. It symbolizes virginal purity.

[Illustration: PLATE V. PORTRAIT OF LÜ TUNG-PING BY T'ÊNG CH'ANG-YU

T'ang Period. Collection of August Jaccaci. Lent to the Metropolitan

Museum, New York.]

Thus is built up a complete system of allusions similar to the allegories

of our own classics but superior in that they never degenerate into frozen

symbols, but on the contrary keep in close touch with nature, investing

her with a vibrant life, in which human consciousness vanishes making way

for the dawning consciousness of infinitude.

Buddhism goes still further. It does not even believe in the reality of

the world. In this belief, forms are but transitory, the universe an

illusion forever flowing into an unending future. Outside of the supreme

repose, in the six worlds of desire,[3] the things that are susceptible to

pain and death pursue their evolution. Souls travel this closed cycle

under the most diverse forms, from hell to the gods, advancing or

retreating, in accordance with the good deeds or errors committed in

previous existences. A stone, a plant, an insect, a demon, or a god are

only illusory forms, each encompassing an identical soul on its way to

deliverance, as it is caught at different stages of its long calvary and

imprisoned through original sin and the instinctive desire for life.

Whence we see emerging a new feeling of charity which embraces all beings.

Their moral character is felt to be the same as that of man, their goal is

the same, and in the vast world of illusion each seeks to fulfill the same

destiny.

[3] These are: the worlds of animals, of man, of gods or \_dêvas\_, of

giants or \_asuras\_, of \_prêtas\_ or wandering spirits, and of hells.

Freedom from perpetual transmigration in these six worlds is attained

only through the extinction of desire.

Behind the changes of the universe the Buddhist perceives the primal

substance that pervades all creation. There results from this an intimacy

with things which exists in no other creed. From inert matter to the most

highly organized being, all creation is thus endowed with a sense of

kinship that is destined to make a tender and stirring appeal in the

artist's interpretation of nature.

\* \* \* \* \*

PART TWO

THE EVOLUTION OF CHINESE PAINTING

I. ORIGINS

The origins of painting in China are mingled with the origins of writing.

Written characters are, in fact, derived from pictography or picture

writing, those in use at the present time being only developed and

conventionalized forms of primitive drawings. The early books and

dictionaries give us definite information regarding this evolution. But

while history bears witness to this ancient connection, we do not come

into contact with actual evidence until the third century of our era,

through the bas-reliefs of the Han dynasty, and in the fourth century

through the paintings of Ku K'ai-chih. Here we find by no means the origin

of an evolution but, on the contrary, the last traces of an expiring

tradition.

II. BEFORE THE INTERVENTION OF BUDDHISM

The bas-reliefs of the Han dynasty are almost all comprised in the

sculptured stone slabs embellishing mortuary chambers and of these the

artistic merit is most unequal.[4] Their technique is primitive. It

consists in making the contours of figures by cutting away the stone in

grooves with softened angles, leaving the figure in silhouette. Engraved

lines complete the drawing.

The subjects are sometimes mythical and sometimes legendary. There are

representations of divinities, fabulous animals, scenes of war and of the

chase and processions of people bearing tribute. At times the great

compositions display imposing spectacles, a luxurious and refined array.

Now and then attempts at pictorial perspective are joined to some

unrelated scene.

All this is in direct conflict with the technique of bas-reliefs and leads

to the surmise that the models were drawn by painters and copied with

more or less skill by makers of funeral monuments.

[4] These bas-reliefs have been studied by M. Chavannes in "La

sculpture sur pierre en Chine au temps des deux dynasties Han," Paris,

1893; also in "Mission archéologique en Chine," Paris, 1910. Rubbings

taken from the sculptured slabs are reproduced here in full.

[Illustration: PLATE VI. PAINTING BY AN UNKNOWN ARTIST

T'ang Period. Collection of R. Petrucci.]

This impression is confirmed if certain carved slabs are compared with a

painting by Ku K'ai-chih, of which we can judge by means of a copy made in

the Sung period.[5] One of the scenes of this long scroll leaves no

possible misapprehension as to the pictorial origin of the Han

bas-reliefs. Its subject, a river god on a chariot drawn by dragons, is

similar in composition to the models used by the artisans of the third

century.

We have, however, better testimony than a copy made at a later period. The

British Museum, in London, is the owner of a painting attributed to Ku

K'ai-chih. The reasons impelling us to believe in its authenticity are

weighty, almost indisputable.[6][B] We therefore accept it here and will

endeavor to define the work of one of the greatest painters of China in

the fourth and the beginning of the fifth century.

[5] This painting formed part of the collection of the ex-viceroy Tuan

Fang, killed in 1911, during the revolution. It was published in 1911

by the Japanese archeologist, Mr. Taki.

[6] These reasons are set forth in a work which Mr. Laurence Binyon is

preparing, to accompany a reproduction engraved by Japanese artists

for the British Museum.

[B] The preceding footnote refers to a work published in 1913 by the

Trustees of the British Museum, containing a reproduction of the

painting in its entirety and giving a full description.--TRANSLATOR.

The painted scenes are inspired by a work of the third century containing

admonitions addressed to the ladies of the imperial palace. The striking

characteristics of these compositions are the lightness and delicacy of

style, the poetry of the attitudes and the supreme elegance of the forms.

Heavy black tresses frame the ivory faces with refined and subtle charm.

The voluptuous caprice of garments in long floating folds, the extreme

perfection of the figures and the grace of gestures make this painting a

thing of unique beauty. Only through the cultivation of centuries could

such spiritual insight be attained.

If the copy from the collection of Tuan Fang recalls the bas-reliefs of

the Han period, the painting in the British Museum is related to the

bas-reliefs of Long-men, which date from the seventh century and of which

M. Chavannes has published photographs. Therefore we may say that the

style of Ku K'ai-chih exemplifies the distinctive features of Chinese

painting at a period extending from the third to the seventh centuries.[7]

[7] A copy of an engraving on stone of the year 1095, representing

"Confucius sitting amidst his disciples" and another representing

"Confucius walking, followed by one of his disciples," dated 1118,

have been published by M. de Chavannes ("Mission archéologique en

Chine," Nos. 869 and 871). The latter is considered as having been

undoubtedly executed after a painting by Ku K'ai-chih.

It should also be noted that toward the end of the fifth or the beginning

of the sixth century, the painter and critic Hsieh Ho formulated the

Six Canons[8] upon which the far-eastern code of Aesthetics is founded.

These Canons introduce philosophical conceptions and technical knowledge

which also presuppose long cultivation, for it is only after rules have

been brought to reality in a work of art that they are formulated into a

code. Therefore when Buddhism appeared in China it found there a native

art whose value was proved beyond question by a long succession of

masterpieces. After having exhausted every manifestation of strength and

vigor, this art had arrived at expressions of extreme refinement and

profound and appealing charm, closely verging on the disquieting dreams of

decadence.

[8] Interpretations of the Six Canons by five authorities are

accessible in a very convenient form for comparison in Mr. Laurence

Binyon's "Flight of the Dragon," p. 12.--TRANSLATOR.

[Illustration: PLATE VII. GEESE

Sung Period. British Museum, London.]

III. THE INTERVENTION OF BUDDHISM

Chinese books state that between the fourth and the eighth centuries "the

art of painting \_man and things\_ underwent a vital change." By this they

alluded to the intervention of Buddhist art, which made its appearance in

China toward the fifth century in the form of the Graeco-Indian art of

Gandhara, already modified by its transit across Eastern Turkestan. This

by no means indicates that purely Indian origins might not be found for

it. At Sanchi, as well as in Central India and at Ajantâ such

characteristics are preserved. But the Greek dynasties which had settled

in northwestern India in the train of Alexander, had carried with them the

canons of Hellenistic art. The technique and methods of this art were

placed at the service of the new religion. They gave to Buddhist

art--which was just beginning to appear in the Gandharian provinces--its

outward form, its type of figures, its range of personages and the greater

part of its ornamentation.[9]

[9] See Foucher, "L'Art gréco-bouddique du Gandhara." Paris, Leroux.

Buddhism found the expiring Hellenistic formula which had been swept

beyond its borders, ready at hand at the very moment the new religion was

gathering itself together for that prodigious journey which, traversing

the entire Far East, was to lead it to the shores of the Pacific. Once

outside of India, it came into contact with Sassanian Persia and Bactria.

With Hellenistic influences were mingled confused elements springing from

the scattered civilizations which had reigned over the Near East. Thence

it spread to the byways of Eastern Turkestan.

We know today, thanks to excavations of the German expeditions of

Grünwedel and von Lecoq, the two English expeditions of Sir Aurel Stein

and the French expedition of M. Pelliot, that in that long chain of oases

filled with busy cities, Buddhist art was gradually formed into the

likeness under which it was to appear as a finished product in the Far

East. Here it developed magnificently. The enormous frescoes of Murtuq

display imposing arrangements of those figures of Buddhas and Bôdhisatvas

which were to remain unchanged in the plastic formulas of China and Japan.

Meanwhile conflicting influences continued to be felt. Sometimes the

Indian types prevailed, as at Khotan, at others there were Semitic types

and elements originating in Asia Minor, such as were found at Miran, and

at length, as at Tun-huang, types that were almost entirely Chinese

appeared.

The paintings brought from Tun-huang by the Stein and Pelliot expeditions

enable us to realize the nature of the characteristics which contact with

China imposed upon Buddhist art. It had no choice but to combine with the

tendencies revealed in the painting of Ku K'ai-chih. The painter trained

in the school of Hellenistic technique drew with the brush. He delighted

in the rhythmic movement of the line and the display of a transcendent

harmony and elegance of proportion such as are seen in the frescoes of

Eastern Turkestan. Perhaps through contact with China--herself searching

for new expressions--but probably through a combination of the two

influences, Buddhist painting, at the opening of the T'ang dynasty, gives

us heavier types in which compact and powerful figures take on a new

character.

From then on we perceive the nature of the great change to which the early

books refer. Chinese painting had already known the genii and fairies of

Taoism, the Rishi or wizards living in mountain solitudes, the Immortals

dwelling in distant isles beyond the sea. It now knew gods wrapped in the

ecstatic contemplation of Nirvana, with smiling mouth and half-closed

eyes, revealing mystic symbols in a broad and apostolic gesture. It had

more life-like figures, attendants, benign and malignant, terrifying

demons. Before these impassive gods, in a fervor of devotion it bent the

figures of donors, men and women, sometimes veritable portraits. With even

greater breadth it portrayed the disciples of Sakyamuni, those anchorites

and hermits who under the name of Lohan[10] have entered into Chinese

Buddhist legend. Indian priests with harsh, strongly marked features and

wrinkled faces, preachers of a foreign race, disfigured by scourging or

else the calm full visage of the ecstatic in contemplation,--such are the

types that appeared. Chinese painters took up the new subjects and treated

them with a freedom, an ease, and a vitality which at once added an

admirable chapter to the history of art.

[10] Indian \_Arhat\_; Japanese \_Rakan\_.--TRANSLATOR.

IV. THE T'ANG PERIOD--SEVENTH TO TENTH CENTURIES

The T'ang dynasty was the really vital period of Chinese Buddhism. Among

the painters who gave it its highest expression Wu Tao-tzŭ holds first

place. His memory dwells in history as that of one of the greatest masters

in China and legend has still further enhanced the might of his genius. It

is highly probable that his work is entirely destroyed, but by the aid of

copies, incised stones and wood engravings of the twelfth century, an idea

of the painter's conception can be formed. He seems to have been the

creator of a Chinese type of Kwanyin, the Buddhist incarnation of mercy

and charity. Drapery covers the high drawn hair. She is attired in the

harmonious folds of a plain and ample garment and expresses supreme

authority, the sublimity of divine love.

If to these fragments of an immense plastic production is added the

analysis furnished by the written records, we can define with some degree

of certitude the place occupied by Wu Tao-tzŭ in the history of Chinese

painting. The books state that the lines from his brush fairly vibrated;

all united in marvelling at the spirituality emanating from forms thus

defined. He adhered almost exclusively to the use of powerful ink-lines

and denied himself the use of any color, whether scattered or prominent,

which would have robbed his painting of the austerity which was the source

of its surpassing feeling. But in order to appreciate the full value of

the new ideas introduced by Wu into Chinese painting, it is necessary to

understand the exact nature of the technique that was in practice up to

the seventh and eighth centuries, at the opening of the T'ang dynasty.

[Illustration: PLATE VIII. WHITE EAGLE. SUNG PERIOD

Collection of R. Petrucci.]

At that time there prevailed the analytic, painstaking, detailed and very

considered drawing that is common to all periods preceding great

constructive work. This technique admitted the use of two fundamental

methods: one called \_double contour\_, the other \_contour\_ or \_single

contour\_. The method of \_double contour\_ was applied chiefly to the

drawing of plant life in landscape. It consisted in outlining leaves or

branches by means of two lines of ink placed in apposition. The space thus

enclosed was filled with color. Any peculiarities of formation, knots in

wood and veins in leaves were added subsequently. The name of \_single

contour\_ was applied to drawings wherein a single ink line outlined the

object, the space enclosed being then filled with color.

If the application of these analytic methods was sometimes carried to the

extreme of delicacy it never became labored. Throughout its entire

evolution the art of the T'ang period is characterized by a sense of the

magnificent. Once the study of forms was exhausted, this type of work was

bound to be superceded. Wu Tao-tzŭ profited by the work of his

predecessors. Combining in a single stroke of the brush, vigor and an

eclectic character of line, with values and fluidity of tone, he brought

to a supreme unity the two great principles by which things are made

manifest in all the magic of their essential structure. But it must be

understood that this patient investigation of forms was not limited to

preparing the way for a single master. The logical outcome was an

independent movement to which the origin of modern Chinese painting can be

traced.

"Painting has two branches," the books say, "that of the North and that of

the South; the separation occurred in the T'ang period." These terms

\_Northern School\_ and \_Southern School\_ must not be taken literally. They

serve merely to characterize styles which, in the eighth century,

liberated themselves from methods demanding such close study and exact

definition of forms. The style of the Northern School is strong, vehement

and bold; the style of the Southern School is melancholy and dreamy. The

ideal of Northern China, impregnated with barbarian elements, is brought

into contrast with that of Southern China, heir to an already ancient

civilization, and under the spell of Taoist legends and the bewildered

dreams of its philosophers.[11]

[11] These divisions of Northern and Southern Schools do not

correspond, as might be imagined, to geographical limitations.

Painters of the South worked in the style of the North and painters of

the North likewise used the Southern style. Moreover the same master

was able to employ one or the other according to the inspiration of

the moment. These works were produced for a receptive people capable

of understanding both styles.

[Illustration: PLATE IX. HORSEMAN FOLLOWED BY TWO ATTENDANTS

Sung Period. Collection of A. Stoclet.]

Li Ssu-hsün and his son Li Chao-tao (eighth century) are considered to be

the founders of the Northern School. The paintings attributed to them show

the character which the Northern style preserved up to the Ming period and

which was to be emphasized to the point of brutality at the hands of

certain masters in the Yüan period. At the outset, in its brilliancy and

precision, the Northern style held to a certain refinement of line; later

the line is drawn with a firm and powerful brush and strong colors are

applied almost pure.

In direct contrast the Southern style is made up of half-tints, with a

feeling of reserve and intentional restraint, which gives it, with equal

power, at times a more appealing charm. The lines are pliant, immersed in

shading, color is suggested in a subtle fashion and, in contrast to the

almost brutal emphasis of the North, it finds expression in chiaroscuro

and concealed harmonies.

The foundation of the Southern School is attributed to a great landscape

painter of the eighth century, Wang Wei. Nothing could better determine

his tendencies than monochrome[12] painting in Chinese ink. According to

the records, this was first practiced by him. It constitutes what in

China, as well as in Japan, is called the \_literary man's painting\_ and

is, in reality, quite closely related to calligraphy. The variety of

shadings and relative colors of objects depend entirely upon the tones of

ink washes. Wang Wei seems to have treated monochrome mainly from the

standpoint of chiaroscuro, in his search for an atmospheric perspective

which should be both fluid and ethereal. It appears that the accentuation

of lines according to rule that is seen later on, where forms are

synthetized--sometimes to an excessive degree--was only a derivation of

the work of Wang Wei and caused by the intrusion of calligraphic

virtuosity into the domain of painting.

[12] "Monochrome is a starved and lifeless term to express the

marvellous range and subtlety of tones of which the preparation of

black soot known as Chinese ink is capable." Laurence Binyon in "The

Flight of the Dragon."--TRANSLATOR.

When we arrive at Wang Wei, landscape is treated as a special subject and

with its own resources. It was he who discovered the principles which

govern the fading of colors and forms in the distance, and who formulated

the laws of atmospheric perspective. Paintings in his style are all

executed in a predominating color which the Chinese call \_luo-ts'ing\_, a

mineral color of varying shades ranging from a malachite green to a

lapis-lazuli blue. It will be seen why \_luo-ts'ing\_ gave its name to the

style of Wang Wei.

By means of bluish tints he painted the distant expanse of landscape.

Mountains forming screens in the backgrounds and masses of trees lost in

the distance, are all indicated by the azure tints which intervening

layers of air give to remote objects. But as the foreground is approached,

rightful colors begin to prevail and the azure tints are subtly graded,

passing into a fresh and brilliant green amongst wooded declivities, and

into the natural hue in the foliage of trees. Often heavy mists, spreading

at the foot of high mountains, veil the outlines and still further

emphasize the feeling of limitless space.[13]

[13] I have not seen nor do I know of any paintings which can be said

with certainty to be from the hand of Wang Wei. But from the records

as well as from works directly inspired by him, an idea of his style

and technique can be formed. Ancient paintings in \_luo-ts'ing\_ are

found in Japan as well as in China. The British Museum of London has a

scroll painted by Chao Mêng-fu, in the manner of Wang Wei, dated 1309.

[Illustration: PLATE X. LANDSCAPE IN THE STYLE OF HSIA KUEI

Sung Period. Collection of Martin White.]

But when a master has carried his study of the fading of colors and of

their relative values thus far, he must have considered not only the

element of color itself, but also the collective tones which color is

capable of expressing. From this to monochrome painting in Chinese ink is

but a step; historical testimony shows that Wang Wei took this step. By

the simple opposition of black and white, and through tone values and

gradations of shades, he endeavored to create the same feeling of

atmosphere and space which he had been able to express with \_luo-ts'ing\_.

No original picture remains to inform us to what extent he succeeded, but

by means of monochrome paintings of the Sung period which owe their

inspiration to him, the importance of the reform accomplished, and the

tendencies manifested in those lost works of art may be divined.

Another master whose work can be defined with sufficient accuracy to cite

as an illustration of a different aspect of the history of painting during

the T'ang period, is Han Kan, who lived in the middle of the eighth

century and who is celebrated as a painter of horses.

The sculptured stones of the Han dynasty, especially the admirable

bas-reliefs of the tomb of Chao-ling, representing the favorite coursers

of the emperor T'ai-tsung, show the manner in which artists, from the

third to the seventh centuries, were capable of studying and delineating

the postures of the horse. It is therefore not surprising to find a great

animal painter in the eighth century. Beyond question he was not the

first. The written records have preserved the names of several of his

predecessors and while the honor of having been the great founder of a

school was attributed to him, it is possible that this refers only to an

artistic movement bearing his name, of which he was not the sole

representative.

But the work of Han Kan and the unknown artists grouped around him,

proclaims a powerful tradition, a well grounded school of animal painters

which had attained the highest eminence. It was destined to exert a

strong influence upon painters of horses in the Yüan epoch and even when,

later on, this great tradition is seen disappearing, cloying and insipid,

amidst the mannerisms of the Ming period, it will still retain sufficient

power to carry thus far a reflection of the vigor and vitality attained in

the great periods.

The painting of \_Flowers and Birds\_, and \_Plants and Insects\_ appears to

have been already established at this time. The flowers and plants are

drawn according to the methods of \_double contour\_ and \_single contour\_,

worked over and brought out with that intensity of analysis to which

allusion has been made. The bird is caught in its most subtle movement,

the insect studied in its essential structure.

Thus we see that Chinese painting had extended its investigations in every

direction and had solved the problems found along its path. It had

absorbed foreign influences, altered its conception of the divine and

found a new type of figure. It had endowed landscape painting with all the

resources of atmospheric perspective and had established the two essential

styles of the North and the South. The painter was master of the visible;

his thought dominated form and was able to express itself with freedom.

V. THE SUNG PERIOD--TENTH TO THIRTEENTH CENTURIES

The T'ang period had been the golden age of Chinese poetry. It had

witnessed an extraordinary outburst of religious fervor, and the

overwhelming domination of Buddhism. It had, moreover, triumphantly

re-established the unity of the empire and to the pride of intellectual

activity it could add the pride of might and dominion. But the same cannot

be said for the Sung period. From a political standpoint its history is

one of cumulative disaster. Ancient China retreated by degrees before the

thrusts of the barbarians, until the great thunderbolt of Genghis Khan's

conquest, reverberating with formidable echoes throughout all Asia,

announced the approaching downfall of culture in the red dawn of a new

era.

The Sung culture, totally different from that of the T'ang period, was,

however, swept forward to its culmination. It would seem as if, under the

menace of the barbarians, the mind had set for its goal the development of

ideas embryonic in earlier work, formulating them in haste and arresting

them finally in perfect yet sad images, in which the heights attained were

haunted by the shadow of impending ruin.

[Illustration: PLATE XI. LANDSCAPE BY MA LIN

Sung Period. Collection of R. Petrucci.]

The dynasty opened with a classical reaction against new ideas and

witnessed a return to Confucian philosophy, with its conception of the

State. But centuries of history had not rolled by without effect. In the

tenth and eleventh centuries the ancient writings were no longer

understood with their original meaning. A whole series of philosophers, of

whom the last is Chu Hsi (thirteenth century), had formulated a composite

doctrine resulting in what might be called an official philosophy, which

has dominated to the present day. Some bold spirits, however, opposed this

reactionary codification, struggling in vain to give a positive and firm

structure to the doomed empire. Their influence appears to have been

considerable. Just as the old heterodox philosophy was being stifled by

the dry and colorless metaphysics of the conservatives, it was awakened to

new life by the painters, who gave it a stirring interpretation in their

work.

The period of technical research was past. At first, with care and

patience, forms had been determined by drawing. Color had remained a thing

apart, regarded as a work of illumination and quite distinct from drawing.

Then study was extended still further. Color came to be viewed in the

light of shades and tones and became one of the means for the expression

of form; it became the very drawing itself,--that which reveals the basic

structure.

Wang Wei represents the moment when art, emancipating itself from problems

already solved, had conquered every medium of expression. Such is the

tradition which he bequeathed to the Sung artists, who were destined to

add thereto such supreme masterpieces.

The Sung painters were haunted by the old philosophical beliefs as to the

formation of the universe. Beyond the actual surroundings they dimly

perceived a magic world made up of perfect forms. Appearances were but the

visible covering of the two great principles whose combination engendered

life. They believed that, in painting, they did more than to reproduce the

external form of things. They labored with the conviction that they were

wresting the soul from objects, in order to transfer it to the painted

silk. Thus they created something new, an imaginary world more beautiful

than the real world, wherein the intimate relation of beings and things

was disclosed,--a world pervaded by pure spirit and one which was revealed

only to those whose thought was sufficiently enlightened, and whose

sympathies were sufficiently broad, to understand and to be stirred.

The painters of the line of Wang Wei during the Sung period, devoted

themselves chiefly to the development of painting in monochrome. They

pursued the study of relations of tones and values of shading up to the

limit of extreme delicacy, and if they mingled color at all with their

subtle evocations, it was with a feeling of unequalled restraint. They

dwelt for the most part in intimacy with Nature. Fleeing from the cares

of court and city, they retired into mountain solitudes, meditating for

long periods before taking up the brush to paint. Thus they portrayed

those mountains enveloped in mists, wherein was revealed the harmony of

the two principles which control the universe. From the depths of valleys

misty vapors arose and cedars and gigantic pines reared their majestic

forms, while, on the threshold of a thatched cabin upon some rocky

plateau, a hermit deep in meditation contemplated the vast expanse of a

landscape of august grandeur.

[Illustration: PLATE XII. MONGOL HORSEMAN RETURNING FROM THE HUNT

By Chao Mêng-fu. Yüan Period. Doucet Collection.]

Sometimes, turning to plant forms, they painted the bamboo in black and

white. A single masterly stroke sufficed to draw the cylindrical stalk

from one joint to another, or the pointed leaves which are so quivering

with life that we seem to hear the plaintive voice of the wind "combed,"

as the Chinese writings express it, "by the reeds." Or again, when a

flower was the subject, they suggested it with a simplicity that

presupposes a scientifically exact study of forms. It was by no means the

splendid image which they sought to grasp but the soul itself; at one time

the flower barely open in all its enchanting freshness, at another the

softened petals drooping in languid fashion, revealing a splendor still

present but soon to fade; at times the dew moistening the leaves, the snow

shrouding them with its purity, or the slow monotonous rain beneath which

they drip, motionless. These paintings are always instinct with deep

poetic feeling.

At the hands of the Sung painters the school of landscape and monochrome

technique attained a level which will never be exceeded. The masters of

this period are numerous and are frequently represented by works of almost

certain authenticity. It seems useless to assemble here names which will

convey no meaning to the European reader. It will suffice to illustrate by

a few great figures the three centuries of history during which Chinese

landscape painting reached its culminating point.

Tung Yüan and Chü Jan are considered by the critics as having founded a

special school in the great tradition of Wang Wei. Their paintings were

quiet in coloring and were executed with broad strokes in an impressionist

style. These works must be viewed from a distance to see their apparent

violence merge into extreme elegance. They furnish a complete

demonstration of the laws of atmospheric perspective, with its feeling of

distance and infinite space, in which forms are immersed. Here we find

evidence that these painters were the first to attempt the arrangement of

lines according to rule, which led ultimately to calligraphic painting.

Among the heads of schools cited in the Chinese writings Ma Yüan and Hsia

Kuei of the Sung dynasty must be placed in a class by themselves. Both of

these masters lived at the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the

thirteenth centuries. Their style can be described with accuracy since

original examples are extant--both by themselves and by their

disciples--in which their characteristics are fully revealed.

Ma Yüan is classed with the Southern School by reason of his restraint in

the use of color, his greatness of conception and his technical treatment

of forms. But he brings to his work a virility in which the influence of

the Northern School is plainly discerned. He has a broad stroke and a

masterful manner which place his works in the front rank of all Chinese

painting. His mountainous backgrounds rear themselves with fierce energy.

His old pines, with branches wreathed in vines, would suffice alone to

define his style, so freely do they express the force of plant life and

the proud defiance of the aged tree. He loved the mountain solitudes to

which he gave a new imagery, so authoritative and so perfect that it

served to create a school.

The influence of Ma Yüan was felt by his brother and by his son, Ma Lin.

Although the death of the latter occurred under the Mongolian dynasty, he

was an exponent of Sung art. The fierce energy of the old master gives way

to a somewhat more melancholy and gentle quality in his son. There is the

same restraint in the handling of the brush, the same reserve in the use

of color, but the landscape stretches out into deep and dreamy vistas that

are indescribably poetic. The melancholy of autumn, the sadness of flights

of birds that circle in the evening light, the feeling of seclusion and

silence, such are the things in which this poetic spirit finds its joy,

true heir of the master mind whose genius found expression in the wild

aspects of nature.

The school of Ma dominated the entire subsequent period and his influence

extended as far as Korea, where traces of it were still to be found as

late as the fifteenth century. As the history of Korean painting becomes

better known, we shall be able to say with more accuracy what it owes to

other Chinese masters; but in so far as those mentioned are concerned,

their influence appears to have been sufficiently strong to impress a

certain type on fragmentary works from Korea which have become known to us

recently.

We are far from being as well informed regarding Hsia Kuei, but we have

that which is worth more than written records, a few paintings preserved

in Japanese collections, which it seems legitimate to attribute to him

without reservation. It is readily seen why his name is always linked with

that of Ma Yüan. His work shows the same energy and power and discloses an

ideal which is similar to that of his confrère. He seems to have

penetrated even further than Ma Yüan along the path of daring

simplifications, and to have approached at times the calligraphic style.

He painted both landscape and figures and was skilled in obtaining strange

effects, as if of color, through his use of monochrome.

Another painter whose name dominates the history of this time and whose

work serves to characterize a special aspect is Li Lung-mien. It is

naturally difficult to prove that all the works attributed to him are

authentic. However, collections in Japanese temples or privately owned,

possess paintings which passed as his at a very early date and in which at

least we can recognize his style. In reviewing the centuries of history,

it is interesting to note that the work of Li Lung-mien is not without

similarity, in certain of its elements, to the paintings of Ku K'ai-chih.

His line is delicate and flexible and he draws his outlines with the same

subtlety, the same grace and the same instinct for harmonious curves and

an extraordinary rhythm.

The tradition which arose in a period antedating the T'ang epoch was

therefore still unbroken in the Sung period, and I am sure that proofs of

this will increase in number as our information becomes more accurate. New

evidence furnished by the paintings found at Tun-huang and certain

frescoes at Murtuq has recently shown that the type of Buddhist

hermit--the Lohan meditating in solitude--whose inception had, until these

discoveries, been attributed to Li Lung-mien, in reality dated much

further back and originated in the Buddhist art of Eastern Turkestan,

perhaps even in India. From those regions are derived the magnificent

subjects of which Li Lung-mien made use to express meditation. Sometimes

there are emaciated faces, withered bodies with protruding tendons that

outline deep hollows, and again rotund and peaceful figures meditating in

tranquil seclusion. From the written records as well as in his works,

there is every evidence that he was one of those who revived Buddhist

painting. No matter what models he chose to follow, he always gave them a

stress and a peculiar distinction, while from the standpoint of pure art

he had the ability to portray them with finished elegance and majestic

dignity.

Li Lung-mien was not content to paint Buddhist figures only. He painted

landscape also, and in his youth he had painted horses. A great critic of

the Sung period said of him that "his soul entered into communion with all

things, his spirit penetrated the mysteries and the secrets of nature."

This critic added that one day he saw Li Lung-mien painting a Buddhist

divinity. The words of the god fairly leapt from the lines; it seemed as

if the brush of the master summoned them one by one into being. Like all

the masters of his time, Li Lung-mien sought to free the spirit from its

outward semblance. Beyond the material, he perceived the immaterial force

which animates the world. As a landscape painter his conception of Nature

was broad and majestic. His graceful and harmonious line recalls the

happiest moments in the history of plastic art, and he challenges

comparison with a facile genius like Raphael. But he includes the whole

realm of nature in his subjects, and in his work we find traces, expressed

with greater breadth, but with quite as keen an insight, of an ancient

and noble art, such as was found almost extinct in the work of Ku

K'ai-chih.

[Illustration: PLATE XIII. PIGEONS BY CH'IEN HSÜAN

Yüan Period. Collection of R. Petrucci.]

We cannot leave the Sung painters without devoting some attention to Mi

Fei and his son. The two Mi's, indeed, accomplished a far-reaching reform

in Chinese technique; they enriched painting with a new imagery and

founded a school which, like that of Ma, exerted an influence on later

periods and was strongly felt in Korea.

In addition to being a great painter, Mi Fei was a great calligraphist.

This is apparent however little one may have seen of work in his style. He

possesses in the highest degree what the Chinese describe as the "handling

of flowing ink." He used the technique of monochrome almost exclusively,

and so closely related tone values to the line, or rather to the

brush-stroke, that it is difficult to decide whether he paints rather than

draws, or draws rather than paints. Properly speaking, he does not employ

the line at all but works by masses, by broad, heavily inked touches,

without pausing to emphasize the deep warm blacks provided by Chinese ink.

His manner recalls certain drawings by Rembrandt, also produced by strong

inking, which evoke a strange and magical effect of light. Such was the

spirit in which Mi Fei treated landscape. This technique marks his style

and gives it an individuality that is indisputable. The vehemence with

which he attacks forms, the rapidity of his brush-stroke, the way in which

things spring from such energy, call to mind pictures by European

masters, painted in full color, and it may be said of the paintings of Mi

Fei that they are fairly \_colored\_ by their tremendous vitality, if the

quality of the materials he employed permits the use of such a term.

Therefore Mi Fei and his son are responsible for a new technique, a

strongly individual work, and the creation of a style which marks the

highest achievement in monochrome. The trend which impelled them was,

however, general. Carried to its extreme it led to the style of painting

called calligraphic, of which there has been occasion to speak several

times.

Calligraphic painting, or the \_literary style\_, has its origin in the

studies of Wang Wei when, renouncing the aid of colour, he strove by

harmony of shading and by tone values, to reproduce the vast reaches of

space and all the shifting subtlety of atmospheric perspective. The

exclusive use of Chinese ink necessitated special studies since thus

calligraphy was directly approached. The different styles of writing are

almost drawing in themselves. Each style of writing has its own rules for

dissecting the written character and making the stroke. Now, as is known,

the Chinese painters attached supreme importance to the line and to the

brush-stroke. This was due in part to their equipment and in part to the

fact that the amateurs of art were prepared by their classical studies to

appreciate the strength or the delicacy of a line judged for itself, quite

independently of the forms represented. We must also bear in mind that

all of the Chinese painters were scholars, belonging to the class of the

literati.[14] Writers, poets, statesmen, soldiers, Buddhist or Taoist

priests, and philosophers have all furnished the greatest names in art.

Under such conditions the technical relationship between the line of the

painter and that of the calligraphist was closer, since painter and

calligraphist were frequently united in one and the same person. Thence

came the early tendency to use monochrome and to represent forms in the

abstract, rendering them more and more as mere themes, thus reducing the

subject to a few simple calligraphic strokes.

[14] The literati, or lettered class, were the aristocracy in what

was the most democratic of absolute monarchies. No matter how humble

his origin, anyone of the male sex was eligible to compete in the

examinations which were based upon literary knowledge and memory of

the classics. Proficiency in handwriting was a natural result. The

successful candidate might aspire to any post in the empire, as

official positions were bestowed through literary merit. During three

days and two nights at the time of examination the candidate was not

allowed to leave his tiny box-like cell, lacking even space to lie

down. Cases of death during the examinations were not infrequent. The

examination halls in Peking are now destroyed and those in Nanking

with 20,000 cells are crumbling away.--TRANSLATOR.

It is difficult for a European to follow the thought of the Chinese

painters in these daring simplifications. Sometimes they are carried to

such an extreme as to leave us with a feeling of perplexity. Often however

they give rise to mighty conceptions and paintings whose essential

character impresses us as a unique product of genius. Calligraphic

painting reached its highest level during the Sung and Yüan periods. It

was so closely allied to painting that the Emperor Hui Tsung, who ascended

the throne in 1100, founded the Imperial Academy of Calligraphy and

Painting in the first year of his reign. Hui Tsung was himself a painter.

The books credit him with especial mastery in the representation of birds

of prey, eagles, falcons and hawks, which seems to be sufficient reason

for deliberately attributing to him every painting of a bird of prey, even

when there is evidence that it was painted two or three centuries later

than his time. Perhaps before long we shall find authentic paintings by

Hui Tsung. A painting belonging to the Musée Guimet, which comes from the

collection of Tuan Fang, is the one which by its annotations bears the

greatest guaranty of authenticity, but it is a representation of a figure

painting of the T'ang dynasty and gives us no information as to the manner

in which Hui Tsung painted eagles. However, certain paintings from his

collections have come down to us. Whether or not by the imperial hand they

proclaim a virile art, an instinct for the grandiose and a majestic

character which are the qualities of which the eagle is a symbol.

The foundation of the Academy of Calligraphy and Painting had results

quite other than those hoped for by its founder. It became imbued with the

evils of formalism. It was established in the imperial capital in court

surroundings, in other words, in an atmosphere from which true artists

depart with all possible speed. It suffered inevitably through the

influences of a taste, refined it is true, but which already inclined

toward mannerisms and preciosity. Conventions were established, subjects

became stereotyped, the taste for brilliant colors developed and, even

before the end of the Sung period, there was a marked division between

academic and national art. Pedantry and affectation began to take the

place of boldness and strength.

Doubtless this tendency would have developed still further but for a

series of disasters and the menace of a new dynasty looming on the horizon

of Central Asia, which was already resounding with the clash of Mongol

arms.

VI. THE YÜAN PERIOD--THIRTEENTH AND FOURTEENTH CENTURIES

From the standpoint of civilization the Mongolian dynasty of Yüan brought

nothing to China. On the contrary, the foreign elements were absorbed by

the ancient culture for, in the final summing-up, the mind will always be

stronger than weapons. From the standpoint of painting, however, this

period has marked individuality.

The Sung period had been distinctly dominated by the ideals of Southern

China. Philosophical inspiration had proven too strong to permit the style

of the Northern School to assert absolute sway. In this we must make an

exception of Buddhist painting, which,--save in the work of a few chance

painters of religious subjects--continues the traditions of the T'ang

period, preserving the original character of its coloring. It is true that

there were masterpieces to the credit of the Northern School but it had by

no means kept to the style of vivid illumination which marked its

inception.[15] It had yielded to the influence of the Southern style,

was simplified by this contact and took on the austerity and proportion of

the South. It would seem as if the painters hastened to add their

testimony before the philosophy of the ancient sages should disappear.

They strove to give the world perfect images in which the great principles

of the universe could be felt vibrating. The only suitable medium for such

expression was the technique of the Southern School which they followed

with more or less fidelity.

[15] It should be borne in mind that the author uses the term

illumination in the sense of color applied within a distinct and

limiting outline. This is illustrated in the definitions of single and

double contour.--TRANSLATOR.

[Illustration: PLATE XIV. BAMBOOS IN MONOCHROME BY WU CHÊN

Yüan Period. Musée Guimet.]

Southern China was at that time the scene of awakened faculties. Shaken to

its foundations by the mystic movement--both Taoist and Buddhist--of the

T'ang period, the Confucian doctrine had lost ground but had not yet

congealed into the rigid official code of a Chu Hsi. While heterodox

beliefs still prevailed, all were free to borrow their prophetic and

poetic meaning.

When the Mongols came into power, they only carried to completion the work

of conservation begun by the Sung emperors. In their contact with China

they resembled timid pupils quite as much as conquerors. Once emperor of

China, the Mongol Kublai Khan could not but remember his purely Chinese

education. Moreover it was quite the Tartar custom to extend their

conquests to administrative organization, by establishing a hierarchy of

functionaries. The conception of a supreme and autocratic State, paternal

in its absolutism, intervening even to the details of private life in

order to assure the happiness of the people,--this idea, dear to the

literary conservators of the Confucian School during the Sung period, was

also too similar to the Tartar ideal to be denied immediate adoption.

Heterodox doctrines were formally banished from schools. Rejected with

scorn as being corrupt and dangerous, there remained of these doctrines

only such residuum as might be found in the independent thought of

artists, who were more difficult to control. The magnificent movement of

the Sung period began to abate; it produced its last master pieces and

gradually waned, until under Ming rule it was to die out completely.

The Yüan epoch, therefore, appears in the light of a transition period

connecting the fifteenth century of Ming with the thirteenth century of

Sung. From the point of view which interests us, it did nothing but

complete a work which had been carried on with energy and success by

adherents in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. It strove to reduce

China to a severely regulated State in which all great movements and

impulses should be under strict control. It succeeded. It succeeded so

well, indeed, that the Europeans who came to know China in the seventeenth

century and who rediscovered it so unnecessarily in the nineteenth

century, believed it to have been motionless for two thousand years. There

is no need to lay stress here upon the absurdity of this prevalent

opinion. It has been seen in the past and will be seen in modern times,

that the inner travail, the evolution and the diversity are by no means

arrested. Like the nations of Europe, China has had its evolution; the

causes were analagous, its destiny the same. This is especially felt in

the history of its painting. When the potent inspiration of the Southern

School began to wane, the style of the North took the upper hand for

obvious reasons.

[Illustration: PLATE XV. PAINTINGS OF THE YÜAN OR EARLY MING PERIOD

Style of the Northern School. Collection of R. Petrucci.]

Partially civilized barbarians occupied the highest places in the State.

They were the controlling party at the imperial court and had usurped the

place of the old society, refined, subtle and perhaps too studied, which

formed the environment of the last Sung emperors. Despite their naïve

efforts and good will, these barbarians could not fathom an art so

austere, enlightened and balanced. They were utterly ignorant of such a

masterly conception of nature as was evoked in Chinese painting.

Monochrome to them was dull. They could admire on trust, but they could

not understand. On the other hand, the Northern style with its bold

assurance, strong coloring and drawing positive almost to the point of

seeming sculptural, was more akin to their mental outlook. There at least

they found something which recalled those rugs on which they appear to

have exhausted their artistic resources. In a word, they were more

accustomed to the Northern style and had brought with them from the

Northern regions their own artists, both Chinese and barbarian.

The Northern temperament, reflective, strong and positive, now began to

assume mastery over the bewildered reveries of the Southern nature. Things

are seen to change. Even the masters who continue the Sung tradition

infuse a somewhat more robust quality into their works, but, in so doing,

they lose a certain stirring depth which gave the work of their

predecessors such an exceptional character. Caught between these two

tendencies, Yüan painting takes on new traits, which are perhaps more

accessible to European mentality because they are more simple and direct.

These observations apply to the general evolution of Chinese painting from

the end of the thirteenth to the end of the fourteenth centuries. We must

now consider it more in detail, citing by way of illustration a few of the

painters who expressed the spirit of the time.

At its inception the Yüan dynasty had inherited the last masters of the

Sung period, among them two artists who are recognized as of the first

rank. Chao Mêng-fu--known also under the appellation of Tzŭ-ang--was

born in 1254. He was a descendant of the first Sung emperor and held an

hereditary post which he resigned at the time the Yüan dynasty came into

power. He retired into private life until 1286, then when called back to

court as a high functionary, he became a supporter of the new dynasty.

Chao Mêng-fu painted landscape as well as figures, flowers and the bamboo,

but he is most celebrated for his horses. Numberless paintings of

horses are attributed to this master; needless to say the great majority

of these are not by his hand.

[Illustration: PLATE XVI. PORTRAIT OF A PRIEST

Yüan or Early Ming Period. Collection of H. Rivière.]

As a landscape painter he seems to have worked in the style of the

Southern School, with a fine, simple line in which may still be seen

traces of the ancient tradition that extends back to Ku K'ai-chih. This

characteristic line is found in the paintings of men and horses where the

hand of Chao Mêng-fu is distinguishable. He bequeaths it to the large

school which he founded, and, through his pupils, it becomes the

inheritance of his imitators in the Ming period. It is more than probable

that almost all of the paintings by his pupils, bearing the signature

Tzŭ-ang, are attributed to the master, while his own paintings are

ascribed to Han Kan, painter of horses in the T'ang period. However, among

the numerous works attributed to Chao Mêng-fu, there are a few in which we

recognize the vibrant and flexible line which is seen in his landscapes.

These paintings bear the signature of Tzŭ-ang, in all probability a

false one, but the work of art itself will always be of greater value in

determining its authenticity than the most impressive of inscriptions. If

the technique and the quality of the line are sufficiently similar to

warrant attributing to the same hand the landscape in the British Museum,

and any particular painting of horses, this may be regarded as sufficient

evidence on which to base our own opinion as to his style.

Amongst his grooms and mounted soldiers, Chao Mêng-fu painted the

different races which the wave of Mongolian invasion had swept into China:

Chinese from the central provinces, Tartars, Mongols with fur caps,

Moslems of a Semitic type from Turkestan, with white turbans and heavy

earrings. Whether his subject was the little Tartar horse from the

Mongolian plains or the beautiful steeds of ancient Transoxiana, always

brought as tribute by way of Khotan to the Chinese court, he gave the life

of the horse a singular beauty, portraying him in an equally happy manner

whether in the act of racing or in the attitudes of repose. In his mind

still dwelt the vision of Sung ideals, which proclaimed the hidden soul of

things and valued spirituality and life in a painting. Although we see

marked evidence of the Southern style in his work, his paintings are more

strongly colored than are those of that school. The influence of the Yüan

period begins to make itself felt. It brings out values in colored

pigment, emphasizes its violence and paves the way for a new tradition.

Chao Mêng-fu has been compared by Chinese critics to his great predecessor

Han Kan. The writings, however, are unanimous in stating that,

notwithstanding his undeniable mastery, he lacked something of the vigor

of the earlier master. When we attempt to compare the two styles through

the aid of paintings of the T'ang period, wherein a reflection of the

great animal painter may be sought, the writings appear to be confirmed

in attributing a more positive and forceful character to the work of Han

Kan or the unknown group of painters around him. But Chao Mêng-fu seems to

have possessed in a higher degree the feeling of movement and life, and to

have been less hampered in his choice of poses. Centuries of study and of

observation had intervened between the great animal painter of the T'ang

epoch and his worthy rival of a later period.

[Illustration: PLATE XVII. HORSE

Painting by an unknown artist. Yüan or Early Ming Period.

Doucet Collection.]

Like Chao Mêng-fu, Ch'ien Hsüan, or Ch'ien Shun-chü, retired from public

life at the downfall of the Sung dynasty. He was a member of a group of

the faithful over which Chao presided, but, more decided than the latter

in his opposition to the new dynasty, he was indignant at his confrère's

defection and refused to follow his example. He lived in retirement,

devoting himself to painting and to poetry up to the time of his death. He

also continued the Sung tradition under the Yüan dynasty to which, as a

matter of fact, he belonged only during the second part of his life. He

painted figures, landscape, flowers and birds. His delicate line is not

lacking in strength, and he seems to have been especially endowed with a

sense of form which approached greatness in its simplicity. Whether the

subject is a young prince or a pigeon perched on the summit of a rock from

which chrysanthemums are springing, the same dignified and tranquil

nobility is asserted with ease. He still used the quiet and restrained

coloring of the Sung period and prolonged, without impairing it, the

great tradition that a century and a half could not quite efface.

Of Yen Hui we know almost nothing; the books state briefly that he painted

Buddhist figures, birds and flowers, and that he was past master in the

painting of demons. Nothing is known of the date of his birth or if, by

his age and training, he could be classed in the Sung period, but several

admirable paintings by him are extant which serve to show how Sung art was

still interpreted by exceptional masters in the Yüan period. His line is

strong, broader, fuller and more abrupt than that of Chao Mêng-fu or

Ch'ien Shun-chü. The quivering vitality that emanates from his pictures is

thrilling. Whether the subject is a peony heavy with dew, whose drooping

petals presage the approaching end, or a Buddhist monk patching his

mantle, the fleeting moment is seized with such intuitive power that

prolonged contemplation of the painting creates the impression that it is

suddenly about to come to life. There is something sturdier, more

startling, less dreamy in these great painters who continue the traditions

of Sung art; their work alone demonstrated that tradition could be revived

and that ancient China, under the Mongolian dynasty, was still preserving

its creative spirit and advancing resolutely into fertile fields.

In Huang Kung-wang and Ni Tsan, we approach a different order of things.

Lines began to take on a classical character, to be divided into a

series of different types, which painters adopted according to their

temperament and requirements, and finally became impersonal and academic.

Both of these painters, nevertheless, were under the spell of early

influences extending back to the T'ang artists. Through study of these old

masters they returned to the use of a full and sometimes vivid color, but

kept a profound love of nature, and a fresh and original vision, by which

they still perpetuated the inspiration of Sung painting in a new form.

With these painters, however, new features appeared. Reds and purples

became dominant notes amidst rich greens which set them off and enhanced

their brilliancy. The vision of landscape itself is somewhat more

realistic and less subtle. In all of these essentials Ni Tsan, who died in

1374, brings us nearer to the Ming period.

[Illustration: PLATE XVIII. VISIT TO THE EMPEROR BY THE IMMORTALS FROM

ON HIGH Ming Period. British Museum, London.]

Simultaneously, though quite apart, marked tendencies of a different

character were evident. The old masters of the T'ang period had again

returned to favor. The vivid illumination and color distinct from drawing,

in these firm and vigorous works appealed to the untutored barbarian. On

the other hand, the studies of the Sung period had not been fruitless;

therefore when, under these influences, the use of color was resumed, the

painters profited by what the practice of monochrome had taught meanwhile.

In the Yüan period appear those paintings which are attacked directly with

a dripping brush without preliminary drawing, the forms being modeled in

the color itself. The Chinese called this painting "without bones," in

other words, deprived of the assistance of line. This procedure was first

used by a painter of the Sung period, but it did not take root definitely

until the time when the practice of using Chinese ink as a medium to

express tones had taught painters how to model forms in color itself,

making the structure depend upon color.

Seen as a whole, the Yüan period witnessed the assembling, the

concentration, so to speak, of the ardent but scattered inspirations of

the great masters of the preceding school. It produced splendid

compositions in which the golden age of Chinese painting continued to be

manifest. Masters arose and if, in spite of all, they mark a reaction

toward the Northern style, seeking rich and vivid color, they give us a

vision of beauty that is equal to the work of their predecessors.

Meanwhile grave signs of decadence were apparent. Composition became

overladen and complex and began to lose something of the noble simplicity,

greatness and supreme charm of the old masters. It was evident that the

Yüan painters were working under the eye of the barbarians. They yielded

to the taste of the latter for anecdote, for surmounting difficulties and

for sentimental detail. Thus far there were only scarcely perceptible

shadows and momentary weaknesses, warning signs of decadence; but when

such signs are evident, decadence is at hand, and that which the virility

of the barbarians had preserved was to be lost through the creed-bound

dignity of an academic China, which was imprisoned in a rigid system of

rules.

VII. THE MING PERIOD--FOURTEENTH TO SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES

The Ming dynasty came into power on the wings of national feeling. China

rallied her forces and expelled the foreign tyrants. Without doubt the

nation cherished the illusion of rebuilding itself upon the model of the

past, and the first emperors of the dynasty believed that the empire could

be re-established upon an unshakable foundation. But the Ming dynasty, in

reality, was but the heir and follower of Yüan. The latter itself had been

only a connecting link. It had changed nothing, but had tended rather to

absorb into the Chinese system the Northern barbarians, who up to that

time had been foreigners. It had unwittingly achieved unity for China,

despite itself and against its own inclination. In the administration of

the empire, it had finished the program of conservation which the Sung

dynasty, through impotence, had been unable to carry to completion.

The Ming dynasty inherited the work of the Mongols and consolidated it. It

survived under their reign and under that of the Ch'ing rulers until the

final disintegration, of which we have but recently seen the results.

The peaceful ideals of the Ming dynasty, the marked predominance of

Confucianism as a code of ethics, with certain modifications by Chu Hsi,

combined to form an ensemble that was apparently perfect and which made it

possible to have faith in the excellence of the principles laid down by

the monarchy. Thus a school was formed which had its own philosophy,

manners and ideals, all of them cold, stiff and without spontaneity. It

was an over-perfect machine which went like clockwork. The world was

judged with a narrow and somewhat stupid self-confidence. The ideal dwelt

in the word of Confucian writings, divorced from their true meaning, and

so badly interpreted that they ceased to be understood aright. The

meticulous, bureaucratic and hieratic administration of the Tartars was a

perfect system of government. The machine was still new and worked well,

whence arose a false impression of permanence which added still further to

the complacency of the conservative mind. An art was necessary to this

China. She had it. It was academic painting.

[Illustration: PLATE XIX. EGRETS BY LIN LIANG

Ming Period. Collection of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Junior.]

Side by side with this and yet apart, other influences were at work.

Notwithstanding the prohibition of books on heterodox philosophies in

schools, accompanied by the widespread decadence of Buddhism, and the

complete downfall of Taoism owing to gross practices in popular magic, and

despite the disdain of the official world, another element in China was

preserving the spirit of the past, the restless spirit that craved

novelty. In all probability its obscure workings did not appear

immediately upon the surface, concealed as they were by the strictly

prescribed screen of official China. They were sufficiently strong,

however, to give rise to an art which differed essentially from academic

art, and which numbered masters who were comparable with those of the

past. In spite of adverse circumstances and the weight under which these

movements were buried, they made themselves felt in violent upheavals.

First let us draw a picture of the decadence of an art and later we shall

return to activity and life.

Official painting in the Ming period rapidly stiffened into convention. To

understand how it took shape, we must go back to the time of Hui Tsung and

observe the method of recruiting talent in the Academy which he founded.

That painting was allied to philosophic and poetic thought is already

known. It was always a refined diversion of poets and painters to unite in

a quest for the beautiful. The poet wrote verses and the painter painted a

picture suggesting, sometimes remotely, the thought enshrined in the poem.

Such were the conditions upon which Hui Tsung instituted examinations,

following which the doors of the Academy were open to the victor. He gave,

for example, as subject for a competition a verse saying, "The bamboos

envelop the inn beyond the bridge," which suggested a landscape with

flowing water, a rustic bridge thrown across the stream, a cluster of

bamboos on the bank, a "winehouse" half hidden in the verdure. All the

competitors, the records say, set to work drawing with minute care the inn

which they made the essential feature of the picture. Only one implied its

presence by showing, above a dense cluster of bamboos, the little banner

which in China denotes the presence of a "winehouse." Two verses of

another poem in which allusion was made to the red flowers of spring were

interpreted by the representation of a beautiful young girl dressed in

red, leaning on a balustrade, for according to Chinese ideas, the thoughts

of young men in spring turn there, as elsewhere, toward thoughts of love.

[Illustration: PLATE XX. FLOWERS AND INSECTS

Ming Period. Collection of R. Petrucci.]

We have here an example of the subtle allusions, at times profoundly

poetic, with which Chinese painting abounds. But these things retain their

value and charm only in so far as they depend on a free play of mind or

upon personal, living sentiments. As accepted conventions regulated in an

academic competition, repeated with sustained effort and without

enthusiasm, their rigid monotony becomes intolerable. Such was the

ultimate fate of that ability to express by half meanings, to suggest

without directly stating, to which the Sung painters attached so great an

importance. The day it was understood that a little banner fluttering over

bamboos indicated the presence of a "winehouse" in a sylvan retreat, or

that a young girl dressed in red symbolized the crimson blooming of a

garden pink in springtime, banners and young girls dressed in red were

seen in paintings innumerable to the point of satiety.

Thus were established those dry conventions of a somewhat stupid erudition

which were so much the fashion in the academic painting of the Ming and

the Ch'ing periods, and whose great success repressed the artistic

aspirations of a people. Under these influences was rapidly assembled a

complete arsenal of allegories, allusions and symbols that gave birth to

an art which was possibly very learned, but which was inartistic to the

last degree. An academician of the Ming period would have thought himself

disgraced if he had not proven by complicated compositions the extent of

his knowledge of things of this character. Art was no longer anything but

a kind of puzzle. Furthermore, the decadence of eye and hand followed that

of the mind, and there next appeared a taste for brilliant colors,

overladen compositions, and fine and meticulous lines, culminating in an

unbearable nicety. The work of the Academy is summed up in these words.

Let us turn aside from an art that is inert. It robbed things of the

creative spirit that animated them. We shall now see what was achieved by

those who followed in the steps of the old masters.

The fifteenth century in China witnessed a continuance of the style

prevalent during the Sung and Yüan periods. Chou Chih-mien, for example,

was true to that profound feeling for form, that delicacy of coloring,

and rhythm in composition which were the endowment of the greatest

masters. Shên Chou belonged entirely to the Yüan school, and to prove that

the old ideals were not dead, we have in the fifteenth century the

magnificent group of painters of the plum tree, with Lu Fu and Wang

Yüan-chang at their head.

As before stated, a special philosophy was associated with this tree and

its flowers. The white petals scattered on vigorous branches had long

typified an inner soul, whose purity was the very likeness of virtue and

of tenderness. Chung Jen, who in the eleventh century wrote a treatise on

the painting of the plum tree, explains in his chapter on "the derivation

of forms" that it is a symbol, a concentrated form, a likeness of the

universe. The great fundamental principles mingle harmoniously within it;

they express themselves in its shape and reveal themselves through its

beauty. Similar to this was the philosophy associated with the bamboo,

which endured up to the fifteenth century. The subtle monochromes of Lu Fu

show branches of flowering plum swaying in the breeze. In the great works

of Wang Yüan-chang trunks of old trees, still bearing hardy blossoms,

stand proudly in the magical radiance of the moon. Vibration and power,

grandeur and majesty, such are the qualities which were still sought

amidst the severe conditions imposed by the use of black and white. Here

we feel that the creative force is not yet spent. We find it equally

fresh and vigorous in the ink bamboos of Wên Chêng-ming in the sixteenth

century.

In landscape, however, new elements appear which mark a decline. I have

already laid stress on the overladen composition which developed in the

Yüan epoch. This was still more noticeable in the Ming period. When

pictorial art has had a long series of masters, a certain eclecticism is

infallibly produced. This leads to the rejection of the direct study of

nature, in favor of viewing it only through the eyes of the old masters.

This phenomenon appeared in China as well as in Europe. The landscape

painters of the Ming period studied the technique of the T'ang and the

Sung epochs and codified their system of lines, arranging them in series

according to types and schools; in short, they drew from these a

ready-made technique by which they were controlled. Turning from nature

they yielded to imagination. They delighted in painting fanciful

landscapes and were inclined toward images that were more external and

less inspired than in the past. Their works, however, were invested with

great charm, and the impossible disposition of their clustering peaks and

oddly cleft rocks cannot but appeal to the imagination.

In these overladen compositions the unity of the picture is lost. We are

no longer in the presence of a simple and forceful idea, but behold a

thousand incidents, a thousand little details, exquisite in themselves,

but which require a search. It is a new conception of landscape. We may

possibly prefer the gripping formula of Sung and Yüan art, but we are

forced to acknowledge that this later work has great charm and extreme

refinement.

[Illustration: PLATE XXI. LANDSCAPE

Ming Period. Bouasse-Lebel Collection.]

To this general trend was added a new taste in color, which became

brilliant and complex like the composition itself, harmonious and graceful

in the paintings of the masters and always charming in the work of

painters of the second rank; but this was the herald of a blatant and

vulgar manner which gradually gained ground until it came to be generally

adopted by the artisans of the Ch'ing period.

While landscape under the Ming painters was assuming a different guise,

and, forgetful of the observances of the past, was beguiling the mind by

its charm and delicacy, a new type of figure was also developing. Here we

must pause for a moment.

We have seen that figures were treated before landscape by the painters of

periods preceding the T'ang dynasty. This early tradition had submitted to

the influence of Buddhist art and, while certain of its elements were

revived in the work of a few masters, there is no doubt that figure

painting from the seventh and eighth centuries on, was absolutely

revolutionized. The inevitable result was a new type in the sixteenth

century. Painters studied the line for itself, determined its proportions,

and analyzed features and drapery. As far as our present knowledge

extends, their observations were not collected and codified until the end

of the nineteenth century, but the assembled writings testify that the

result of their studies was expressed along the lines indicated from the

end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries. Their

ideal was totally different from that of the old masters. The figure

treated for itself with but few accessories became the sole aim of the

painter. He endeavored to show the charm of a woman's face, the dainty and

elegant gestures, the supple and voluptuous gait, and he grasped the

characteristics and peculiarities of a man's figure by means of an

intensified drawing. At times, the influence of analysis was so objective

that it resulted in a painting closely approaching European standards. The

taste expressed in landscape was likewise evident in figures. There were

brilliant and harmonious colors, a charm which became exquisite in the

coquettish and vivacious faces of women with ivory skin and brilliant

eyes, of graceful movements, and with long, slender, delicate hands,

incarnations of the fairies of ancient legend or historic beauties whose

memory still lived.

In a word, the philosophical inspiration to which the Sung dynasty owed

its glory was discarded to make way for the painting of everyday life, a

realistic representation of the world and its activities, which in Japan

gave rise to the Ukioyoyé school, and in China recruited a series of

painters of the first rank outside the limits of academic tradition.

It would be interesting to study the influence of this movement of the

China of the time of Ming upon the originators of the Ukioyoyé in Japan.

It is certain that the movement on the continent preceded similar

manifestations in the island empire by a century, and it is also certain

that the Japanese empire was directly influenced by the China of the Ming

period. Chinese painters were established in Japan as early as the

fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. There is one of whose family name we

are ignorant and who is known only under the appellation of Ju-sue,--in

Japanese Josetsu. He left China, where the domination of official art

stood in the way of an independent career, carried the traditions of Sung

and Yüan art to Japan, gathered pupils about him there, and had the glory

of being the founder of that magnificent school of which Sesshiu is the

leading exponent. There is only one small painting which can be attributed

to Ju-sue with certainty. This is preserved in a Japanese temple.

Unfortunately it is a work of small importance which, notwithstanding its

intrinsic value, by no means furnishes sufficient information to enable us

to pronounce on the authenticity of several other works which are said to

be by his hand. We find in the latter an extremely individual art, in

accordance with early traditions, but with the addition of something

fanciful and unexpected which gives this painter marked distinction.

Having worked outside of China, however, his influence was not felt in the

evolution of Chinese painting.

In the seventeenth century Ming art came in contact with the art of the

Europeans. The methods and rules of the Italian ateliers of the end of the

Renaissance were brought to China by missionary painters whose talent was

of a secondary order. The system of monocular perspective and modeling,

strongly accentuated by the opposition of light and shade, made a forcible

impression on the Chinese mind. Indications of this are found in the

Chinese books on art. But the technical methods were too different and the

systems too much at variance to meet on any common ground. Notwithstanding

its effect upon certain painters, the influence of European painting was

on the whole negligible. Father Matteo Ricci worked at the end of the Ming

period under the Chinese name of Li Ma-tu and Father Castiglione, at the

beginning of the Ch'ing dynasty, used the name of Lang Chü-ning, but,

although the former continued to use European methods, while the latter

adopted the Chinese procedure, these were only isolated efforts submerged

in the great wave of Asiatic evolution.

VIII. THE CH'ING PERIOD--SEVENTEENTH TO TWENTIETH CENTURIES

The Ch'ing or Manchu dynasty, whose downfall we have recently witnessed,

brought no new vigor to China. Barbarians once again invaded the aged and

enfeebled empire usurping the methods, history and organization of the

preceding periods. The change in China at the end of the seventeenth

century was only dynastic. The evolution of Ming tendencies continued, and

despite the reorganization undertaken by Kang Hsi and maintained by his

two successors, the excessive requirements of the old system, which had

been formulated during the Sung epoch and definitely established in the

Yüan and Ming periods, were so exacting that irremediable decadence was

inevitable. Thenceforward no great changes in the realm of painting need

be expected. It only continued its logical evolution.

It is necessary, nevertheless, to lay stress on the value of Chinese

painting from the seventeenth to the twentieth century, for an opinion is

current that, while there might still be something of value under the Ming

dynasty, nothing good was produced under the Ch'ing. It is undeniable that

marked signs of decadence are seen in the latter period, but by the side

of some inferior works, others exist which maintain the vitality of the

past and the hope of a renaissance.

In refutation of such hasty and ill informed opinion, it is sufficient to

recall a number of paintings, signed and dated, of the eighteenth and

nineteenth centuries, which dealers or collectors calmly attribute to the

eleventh and twelfth.

Chinese painting at the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the

eighteenth century was still full of vitality. The taste for brilliant

color gradually diminished, and the composition became broader and more

noble at the hands of certain painters, in whom is seen the revival of the

vigorous race of yore. This was the time when Yün Shou-p'ing, more

commonly known under the name of Nan-t'ien, painted landscape and flowers

with the restraint and power of the old style, and when Shen Nan-p'ing set

out for Japan to found a modern Chinese school which was to rival the

Ukioyoyé in importance and activity. About them was grouped a large

following, foretelling fresh developments.

No support was given to this movement by the new government, which was

infatuated with the academic style of the earlier reigns and becoming more

and more ignorant as the last years of the nineteenth century approached.

In the eighteenth century a comparatively large number of Chinese painters

settled in Japan, where they continued the traditions of Ming art. The

observation of a Nan-t'ien or of a Shen Nan-p'ing was keen and

painstaking, but the objectivity and realism now coming to the fore, were

conspicuous in their works. No longer was it the world of pure substance

and abstract principle that was sought, but the real, everyday world, the

world of objective forms studied for themselves, living their own life, on

the threshold of which the spirit halted, no longer guided by the old

philosophies.

[Illustration: PLATE XXII. BEAUTY INHALING THE FRAGRANCE OF A PEONY

Ming Period. Collection of V. Goloubew.]

This character was maintained up to the nineteenth century. It is seen in

the painting of flowers and landscape as well as in figure painting. These

traits are equally apparent in an iris by Nan t'ien and a personage by

Huang Yin-piao. The latter, working in the middle of the eighteenth

century, evoked the personages of Buddhist and Taoist legend with a

skillful brush, but his daring simplifications were more akin to

virtuosity than to that deep reflection and freedom from non-essentials

which were the glory of the early masters. Herein are discerned the

elements of decadence, which are wont to assume precisely this aspect of a

mastery over difficulties. For such ends genuine research and the true

grasp of form were gradually abandoned.

Calligraphy and the literary style were not overlooked, but they were

carried to a point of abstraction that is beyond the province of art. A

personage was represented by lines which formed characters in handwriting

and which, in drawing the figure, at the same time wrote a sentence.

Doubtless that is a proof of marvelous skill. I agree in assigning such

masterpieces to the realm of calligraphy but refuse to admit them to the

domain of painting.

This applies as well to the so-called \_thumb nail painting\_ held in high

repute under the last dynasty. In this the brush is abandoned and the line

is drawn by the finger dipped in ink or color. The painting is done on

modern paper of a special kind which partially absorbs the paint, in the

manner of blotting paper; this results in weak lines, and ink and color

schemes devoid of firmness, in short, in a lack of virility which places

such works, notwithstanding their virtuosity, in the category of artisan

achievements. These works are numerous in the modern period and constitute

what so many regard as Chinese painting. One cannot be too careful in

discarding them.

During every period decorative paintings, religious paintings and

ancestral paintings made after death, were executed in China by artisans,

ordinary workmen at the service of whosoever might engage them. Such work

should not be consulted in studying the styles of great periods or the

higher manifestations of an art. These paintings were the first to leave

China and find their way to Europe. There is no reason for analyzing them

here.

To sum up, Chinese painting of the last two centuries still numbers

masters of the first rank. This alone indicates that the sacred fire is by

no means extinct. Who shall say what future awaits it amidst the

profound changes of today? After a period of indecision which lasted for

twenty-five years, Japan has found herself anew and is seeking to revive

her artistic traditions. It is to be hoped that China will, at all costs,

avoid the same mistakes and that she will not be unmindful, as was her

neighbor, of the history of the old masters.

[Illustration: PLATE XXIII. HALT OF THE IMPERIAL HUNT

Ming Period. Sixteenth Century. Collection of R. Petrucci.]

\* \* \* \* \*

CONCLUSION

This brief survey has shown how the distinctive features of China's

artistic activity were distributed. Though subjected to varying

influences, this evolution possesses a unity which is quite as complete as

is that of our Western art. In the beginning there were studies, of which

we know only through written records. But the relationship existing

between writing and painting from the dawn of historic time, permits us to

carry our studies of primitive periods very far back, even earlier than

the times of the sculptured works. We thus witness the gradual development

of that philosophical ideal which has dominated the entire history of

Chinese painting, forcing it to search for abstract form, and which

averted for so long the advent of triviality and decadence.

The goal sought by Chinese thought had already been reached in painting

when, in the third and fourth centuries, we are vouchsafed a glimpse of

it. It is a vision of a high order, in which the subtle intellectuality

corresponds to a society of refinement whose desires have already assumed

extreme proportions. Like Byzantium, heir to Hellenistic art, the China

of the Han dynasty and of Ku K'ai-chih was already progressing toward bold

conventions and soft harmonies, in which could be felt both the pride of

an intelligence which imposed its will upon Nature, and the weariness

following its sustained effort.

[Illustration: PLATE XXIV. PAINTING BY CHANG CHENG

Eighteenth Century. Collection of M. Worch.]

This refinement, arising from the exhaustion of a world which even thus

retained a certain primitive ruggedness, was succeeded by a stupendous

movement which followed in the wake of the preaching of Buddhism. With the

new gods we see the first appearance of definite and long-continued

foreign influences. Civilization was transformed and took on new life.

Then, as in the days of the great forerunners of the Florentine

Renaissance, there appeared a whole group of artists, prepared by the art,

at once crude and refined, of an earlier people. This group set resolutely

to work at the close study of forms, ascertaining the laws of their

structure and the conditions of the environment which produced them. The

period in which the work of Li Ssŭ-hsün, Li Chao-tao and Wang Wei was

produced may be likened to the fifteenth century in Florence with

Pisanello, Verocchio, Ghirlandajo and Masaccio. Similar conditions gave

birth to a movement that is directly comparable with the Italian movement

for, no matter how varied the outward appearances due to differences of

race and civilization, the fundamentals of art are the same everywhere and

pertain to the same mental attitudes.

The great leaders in periods preceding the T'ang dynasty paved the way to

the culmination which took place in the Sung period, and thus the fruit of

that prolonged activity is seen ripening between the tenth and the

thirteenth centuries. Through the gropings of the primitive period, the

heterodox philosophies and the mystic stirrings of Buddhism, Eastern

thought had arrived at an unquestionably noble comprehension of existence.

The impersonal mystery of the universe, its mighty principle, its manifold

manifestations and the secret which unveils itself in the innermost soul

of things are the conceptions which form the inspiration of Chinese

painting. These lofty thoughts are the source of that spirituality which

declares itself therein with such nobility. The religion to which they are

due will seem perhaps, to certain people, to be broader and less trammeled

than our own. There is no doubt that the entire Far East was under the

spell of its grandeur.

Up to this point art had sounded every depth and attained the highest

summits of human achievement. Thenceforward it concerned itself with

varying manifestations which were only the different modes of a formula

that was still flexible, until the time when--the great inspirations of

the past forgotten--there appear signs of a spirit on the quest for

realism, emerging from the ancient tradition. This is the distinctive note

in the evolution of Chinese painting under the last two dynasties. It

would seem as if, even in this guise, a universal need of the mind is

being satisfied, a need which we, too, have known after experiencing a

chilling academicism, and when modern culture had overthrown the ancient

idols. Chinese painters have thus completed a round analogous to that

traveled by our own artists.

[Illustration: PLATE XXV. TIGER IN A PINE FOREST

Eighteenth to Nineteenth Centuries. Collection of V. Goloubew.]

For the Far East as for Europe, the problem now presented is that of a

revival. Bent beneath the weight of the prestige of the past, too learned

in the last word of culture, modern art is seeking to find itself, groping

blindly, full of promising but unfinished works. The time has come when

there are signs throughout the world of a desire for a universal

civilization, by the reconciling of ancient divergencies. Europe and the

Far East bring into contrast the most vigorous traditions in history.

Henceforward there is interest for both civilizations in studying and in

coming to understand a foreign ideal. Though incomplete, these pages will

perhaps help to show that such a mutual comprehension is not impossible

and that, if egotistic prejudices are overcome, apparent dissimilarities

will be resolved into a profound identity. Thus will arise the elements of

a new culture. In coming to understand a mood which so fully reflects an

unknown world, the European mind will discover principles which will make

it rise superior to itself. May this broad comprehension of human thought

lead Europe to estimate with greater justice a civilization numbering its

years by thousands, and to refrain from thwarting the fulfillment of its

destiny.

\* \* \* \* \*

BIBLIOGRAPHY

An Introduction to the Study of Chinese Pictorial Art. Herbert A.

Giles, M.A., LL.D., Professor of Chinese in the University of

Cambridge. Second Edition, revised and enlarged. London, Bernard

Quaritch. 1918.

Painting in the Far East. Laurence Binyon. Second Edition, revised.

London, Edward Arnold. 1913.

The Flight of the Dragon. Laurence Binyon. Wisdom of the East Series.

London, John Murray. 1911.

Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Art. Ernest F. Fenollosa. 2 volumes. F.

A. Stokes and Co., New York. 1912.

Scraps from a Collector's Note Book. F. Hirth. Leiden, New York. 1905.

Chinese Art. Stephen W. Bushell, C.M.G., B.Sc., M.D. Victoria and

Albert Museum Handbook. 2 volumes. London. 1910.

Chinese Painting. Mrs. Francis Ayscough. The \_Mentor\_ of Dec. 2, 1918,

Serial No. 168. New York.

\* \* \* \* \*

INDEX OF PAINTERS AND PERIODS

The following summary furnishes additional information regarding the

painters to whom reference has been made. Those to whom the subject is not

familiar will find this of assistance in placing in their proper

historical order the different trends which have been indicated elsewhere.

They will also find dates useful in comparing, if so desired, the artistic

evolution of China with that of Europe. This, however, is only an outline.

The names of some great masters are omitted, for I have no wish to

overload the margin of a statement which should be kept clear and

convenient of access. I trust nevertheless that these few notes in concise

form will be of use in connection with the preceding text.

I. BEFORE THE INTERVENTION OF BUDDHISM

The \_Bas-reliefs\_ of the second Han dynasty belong to the second and

third centuries of the Christian era.

\_Ku K'ai-chih\_, also called \_Chang-k'ang\_ and \_Hu-tou\_, was born in

Wu-hsi in the province of Kiang-su. He lived at the end of the

fourth and beginning of the fifth century. His style, resembling

that of the Han period, informs us as to the character of painting

from the second to the fifth century. It is such as to indicate a

long antecedent period of cultivation and development.

\_Hsieh Ho\_ (479-502), painter of the figure. He wrote a small book

setting forth the Six Canons or Requirements of painting. This work

informs us regarding the philosophy of art in China of the fifth

century.

II. THE INTERVENTION OF BUDDHISM

It is difficult to set an exact date for the first contact of Buddhist

with Chinese art. It may be assumed that the influence of Buddhist art

began to be felt noticeably in China in the fifth century. In the seventh

and eighth centuries it was so widespread as to be definitely established.

III. THE T'ANG DYNASTY

A.D. 618-905

\_Wu Tao-tzŭ\_, also called \_Wu Tao-yüan\_. Born in Honan toward the

end of the eighth century. His influence was felt in Japanese art

as well as in that of China. He painted landscape, figures and

Buddhist subjects.

\_Li Ssŭ-hsün\_ (651-715 or 720) is considered as the founder of the

Northern School. He appears to have felt the influence which

Buddhist art brought in its train.

\_Li Chao-tao\_, son of Li Ssŭ-hsün, lived at the end of the seventh

and beginning of the eighth centuries. He is said to have varied

from his father's style and even surpassed it.

\_Wang Wei\_, also called \_Wang Mo-k'i\_ (699-759), poet, painter and

critic. The great reformer of Chinese landscape painting.

Considered as the founder of the Southern School and the originator

of monochrome painting in Chinese ink.

\_Han Kan\_, renowned in the period \_t'ien-pao\_ (742-759). According to

tradition he was a pupil of Wang Wei. His school possessed in the

highest degree knowledge of the form, characteristics and movements

of the horse.

IV. THE SUNG DYNASTY

A.D. 960-1260

\_Tung Yüan.\_ Tenth century. Landscape painter. He worked in both the

Northern and Southern styles.

\_Chü Jan\_, Buddhist monk. Tenth century. He was at first influenced by

the work of Tung Yüan, but later created an individual style.

\_Ma Yüan.\_ End of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth century.

Member of the Academy of Painting. He was the author of a strong

and vigorous style which characterized the school founded by him.

\_Hsia Kuei\_ served in the college at Han-Lin in the reign of the

Emperor Ning Tsung (1195-1224). He was considered a master of

chiaroscuro and atmospheric perspective.

\_Ma Lin\_, son of Ma Yüan. Thirteenth century. His work shows that he

painted even more in the tradition of the Southern School than his

father and uncle.

\_Li Lung-mien\_ or \_Li Kung-lin\_. Born at Chou in Ngan-huei. He held

public offices, which he resigned in 1100 to retire to the mountain

of Lung-mien, where he died in 1106. Noted for his calligraphy as

well as for his painting. At one time in his life, under religious

influences, he painted a great number of Buddhist figures.

\_Mi Fei\_ or \_Mi Yüan-chang\_ or \_Mi Nan-kung\_ (1051-1107).

Calligraphist, painter and critic. He used strong inking in a style

in which the simplification of monochrome is carried to the

extreme. He had a son, \_Mi Yu-Jen\_, who painted in his father's

style and lived to an advanced age.

\_Hui Tsung\_, emperor, poet, painter and calligraphist. Born in 1082,

ascended the throne in 1100, lost his throne in 1125 and died in

captivity in 1135. In the first year of his reign he founded the

Academy of Calligraphy and Painting. He made a large collection of

valuable paintings and rare objects of art which was scattered at

the plundering of his capital by the Tartars in 1225.

V. YÜAN DYNASTY

A.D. 1260-1368

\_Chao Mêng-fu\_, also called \_Tsŭ-ang\_. Born in 1254. Man of

letters, painter and calligraphist. He was a great landscape

painter and in the first rank as a painter of horses.

\_Ch'ien Hsüan\_, also called \_Ch'ien Shun-chü\_, lived at the end of the

thirteenth and beginning of the fourteenth century. He painted

figures, landscape, flowers and birds. He employed the style and

methods of the Sung dynasty.

\_Yen Hui\_ lived in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. His

paintings were numerous and indicate a master of the first order.

He painted many Buddhist and Taoist subjects.

\_Huang Kung-wang.\_ Fourteenth century. At first influenced by the style

of Tung Yüan and Chü Jan, he later acquired an individual style and

was one of the great founders of schools in the Yüan period.

\_Ni Tsan\_, also called Yün-lin (1301-1374). Man of letters,

calligraphist, collector of books and paintings. He is considered

to be one of the greatest painters of his time.

VI. THE MING DYNASTY

A.D. 1368-1644

\_Chou Chih-mien\_ lived in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. His

subjects were principally birds and flowers.

\_Shên Chou\_, also called \_Shên Ki-nan\_ or \_Shên K'i\_ (1427-1507).

Landscape painter. His composition is at times overladen, as is

often seen in Ming art.

\_Lu Fu\_ lived in the fifteenth century. He made a special study of the

plum tree in monochrome. He is comparable to the great Sung

masters.

\_Wang Yüan-chang.\_ Died in 1407 at the age of 73. He painted the bamboo

and plum tree in monochrome. He carried on the Sung tradition,

with which he was directly connected, and was the founder of a

school.

\_Wên Chêng-ming\_ (1480-1559), painter, poet and calligraphist. He is

often compared with Chao Mêng-fu.

\_Ju-sue.\_ Known only under this appellation. He lived in the fifteenth

century and went to Japan, where his influence was marked.

(Japanese \_Josetsu\_.)

VII. THE CH'ING DYNASTY

1644-1912

\_Yün Chou-p'ing\_, appellation \_Nan-t'ien\_, true name \_Yün Ko\_

(1633-1690). He studied at first under the influence of Wang

Shu-ming and Siu Hi. He painted figures, flowers and landscape.

\_Shen Nan-p'ing\_ lived in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He

was called to Japan in 1720 and founded there the school of

Ming-Ch'ing or the modern Chinese school.

\_Huang Yin-piau\_ or \_Huang-shên\_. At the height of his career between

1727 and 1746. He painted landscape and, toward the end of his

life, legendary figures of Buddhism and Taoism with a technique

that was skillful but often precise and somewhat weak.

End of the Project Gutenberg EBook of Chinese Painters, by

\*\*\* END OF THIS PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK CHINESE PAINTERS \*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\* This file should be named 22288-0.txt or 22288-0.zip \*\*\*\*\*

This and all associated files of various formats will be found in:

http://www.gutenberg.org/2/2/2/8/22288/

Produced by Dave Morgan, Anne Storer and the Online

Distributed Proofreading Team at http://www.pgdp.net

Updated editions will replace the previous one--the old editions

will be renamed.

Creating the works from public domain print editions means that no

one owns a United States copyright in these works, so the Foundation

(and you!) can copy and distribute it in the United States without

permission and without paying copyright royalties. Special rules,

set forth in the General Terms of Use part of this license, apply to

copying and distributing Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works to

protect the PROJECT GUTENBERG-tm concept and trademark. Project

Gutenberg is a registered trademark, and may not be used if you

charge for the eBooks, unless you receive specific permission. If you

do not charge anything for copies of this eBook, complying with the

rules is very easy. You may use this eBook for nearly any purpose

such as creation of derivative works, reports, performances and

research. They may be modified and printed and given away--you may do

practically ANYTHING with public domain eBooks. Redistribution is

subject to the trademark license, especially commercial

redistribution.

\*\*\* START: FULL LICENSE \*\*\*

THE FULL PROJECT GUTENBERG LICENSE

PLEASE READ THIS BEFORE YOU DISTRIBUTE OR USE THIS WORK

To protect the Project Gutenberg-tm mission of promoting the free

distribution of electronic works, by using or distributing this work

(or any other work associated in any way with the phrase "Project

Gutenberg"), you agree to comply with all the terms of the Full Project

Gutenberg-tm License (available with this file or online at

http://gutenberg.net/license).

Section 1. General Terms of Use and Redistributing Project Gutenberg-tm

electronic works

1.A. By reading or using any part of this Project Gutenberg-tm

electronic work, you indicate that you have read, understand, agree to

and accept all the terms of this license and intellectual property

(trademark/copyright) agreement. If you do not agree to abide by all

the terms of this agreement, you must cease using and return or destroy

all copies of Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works in your possession.

If you paid a fee for obtaining a copy of or access to a Project

Gutenberg-tm electronic work and you do not agree to be bound by the

terms of this agreement, you may obtain a refund from the person or

entity to whom you paid the fee as set forth in paragraph 1.E.8.

1.B. "Project Gutenberg" is a registered trademark. It may only be

used on or associated in any way with an electronic work by people who

agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement. There are a few

things that you can do with most Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works

even without complying with the full terms of this agreement. See

paragraph 1.C below. There are a lot of things you can do with Project

Gutenberg-tm electronic works if you follow the terms of this agreement

and help preserve free future access to Project Gutenberg-tm electronic

works. See paragraph 1.E below.

1.C. The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation ("the Foundation"

or PGLAF), owns a compilation copyright in the collection of Project

Gutenberg-tm electronic works. Nearly all the individual works in the

collection are in the public domain in the United States. If an

individual work is in the public domain in the United States and you are

located in the United States, we do not claim a right to prevent you from

copying, distributing, performing, displaying or creating derivative

works based on the work as long as all references to Project Gutenberg

are removed. Of course, we hope that you will support the Project

Gutenberg-tm mission of promoting free access to electronic works by

freely sharing Project Gutenberg-tm works in compliance with the terms of

this agreement for keeping the Project Gutenberg-tm name associated with

the work. You can easily comply with the terms of this agreement by

keeping this work in the same format with its attached full Project

Gutenberg-tm License when you share it without charge with others.

1.D. The copyright laws of the place where you are located also govern

what you can do with this work. Copyright laws in most countries are in

a constant state of change. If you are outside the United States, check

the laws of your country in addition to the terms of this agreement

before downloading, copying, displaying, performing, distributing or

creating derivative works based on this work or any other Project

Gutenberg-tm work. The Foundation makes no representations concerning

the copyright status of any work in any country outside the United

States.

1.E. Unless you have removed all references to Project Gutenberg:

1.E.1. The following sentence, with active links to, or other immediate

access to, the full Project Gutenberg-tm License must appear prominently

whenever any copy of a Project Gutenberg-tm work (any work on which the

phrase "Project Gutenberg" appears, or with which the phrase "Project

Gutenberg" is associated) is accessed, displayed, performed, viewed,

copied or distributed:

This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere at no cost and with

almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or

re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included

with this eBook or online at www.gutenberg.net

1.E.2. If an individual Project Gutenberg-tm electronic work is derived

from the public domain (does not contain a notice indicating that it is

posted with permission of the copyright holder), the work can be copied

and distributed to anyone in the United States without paying any fees

or charges. If you are redistributing or providing access to a work

with the phrase "Project Gutenberg" associated with or appearing on the

work, you must comply either with the requirements of paragraphs 1.E.1

through 1.E.7 or obtain permission for the use of the work and the

Project Gutenberg-tm trademark as set forth in paragraphs 1.E.8 or

1.E.9.

1.E.3. If an individual Project Gutenberg-tm electronic work is posted

with the permission of the copyright holder, your use and distribution

must comply with both paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 and any additional

terms imposed by the copyright holder. Additional terms will be linked

to the Project Gutenberg-tm License for all works posted with the

permission of the copyright holder found at the beginning of this work.

1.E.4. Do not unlink or detach or remove the full Project Gutenberg-tm

License terms from this work, or any files containing a part of this

work or any other work associated with Project Gutenberg-tm.

1.E.5. Do not copy, display, perform, distribute or redistribute this

electronic work, or any part of this electronic work, without

prominently displaying the sentence set forth in paragraph 1.E.1 with

active links or immediate access to the full terms of the Project

Gutenberg-tm License.

1.E.6. You may convert to and distribute this work in any binary,

compressed, marked up, nonproprietary or proprietary form, including any

word processing or hypertext form. However, if you provide access to or

distribute copies of a Project Gutenberg-tm work in a format other than

"Plain Vanilla ASCII" or other format used in the official version

posted on the official Project Gutenberg-tm web site (www.gutenberg.net),

you must, at no additional cost, fee or expense to the user, provide a

copy, a means of exporting a copy, or a means of obtaining a copy upon

request, of the work in its original "Plain Vanilla ASCII" or other

form. Any alternate format must include the full Project Gutenberg-tm

License as specified in paragraph 1.E.1.

1.E.7. Do not charge a fee for access to, viewing, displaying,

performing, copying or distributing any Project Gutenberg-tm works

unless you comply with paragraph 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.8. You may charge a reasonable fee for copies of or providing

access to or distributing Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works provided

that

- You pay a royalty fee of 20% of the gross profits you derive from

the use of Project Gutenberg-tm works calculated using the method

you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. The fee is

owed to the owner of the Project Gutenberg-tm trademark, but he

has agreed to donate royalties under this paragraph to the

Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation. Royalty payments

must be paid within 60 days following each date on which you

prepare (or are legally required to prepare) your periodic tax

returns. Royalty payments should be clearly marked as such and

sent to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation at the

address specified in Section 4, "Information about donations to

the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation."

- You provide a full refund of any money paid by a user who notifies

you in writing (or by e-mail) within 30 days of receipt that s/he

does not agree to the terms of the full Project Gutenberg-tm

License. You must require such a user to return or

destroy all copies of the works possessed in a physical medium

and discontinue all use of and all access to other copies of

Project Gutenberg-tm works.

- You provide, in accordance with paragraph 1.F.3, a full refund of any

money paid for a work or a replacement copy, if a defect in the

electronic work is discovered and reported to you within 90 days

of receipt of the work.

- You comply with all other terms of this agreement for free

distribution of Project Gutenberg-tm works.

1.E.9. If you wish to charge a fee or distribute a Project Gutenberg-tm

electronic work or group of works on different terms than are set

forth in this agreement, you must obtain permission in writing from

both the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation and Michael

Hart, the owner of the Project Gutenberg-tm trademark. Contact the

Foundation as set forth in Section 3 below.

1.F.

1.F.1. Project Gutenberg volunteers and employees expend considerable

effort to identify, do copyright research on, transcribe and proofread

public domain works in creating the Project Gutenberg-tm

collection. Despite these efforts, Project Gutenberg-tm electronic

works, and the medium on which they may be stored, may contain

"Defects," such as, but not limited to, incomplete, inaccurate or

corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual

property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other medium, a

computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by

your equipment.

1.F.2. LIMITED WARRANTY, DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES - Except for the "Right

of Replacement or Refund" described in paragraph 1.F.3, the Project

Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the owner of the Project

Gutenberg-tm trademark, and any other party distributing a Project

Gutenberg-tm electronic work under this agreement, disclaim all

liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal

fees. YOU AGREE THAT YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE, STRICT

LIABILITY, BREACH OF WARRANTY OR BREACH OF CONTRACT EXCEPT THOSE

PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH F3. YOU AGREE THAT THE FOUNDATION, THE

TRADEMARK OWNER, AND ANY DISTRIBUTOR UNDER THIS AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE

LIABLE TO YOU FOR ACTUAL, DIRECT, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR

INCIDENTAL DAMAGES EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH

DAMAGE.

1.F.3. LIMITED RIGHT OF REPLACEMENT OR REFUND - If you discover a

defect in this electronic work within 90 days of receiving it, you can

receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending a

written explanation to the person you received the work from. If you

received the work on a physical medium, you must return the medium with

your written explanation. The person or entity that provided you with

the defective work may elect to provide a replacement copy in lieu of a

refund. If you received the work electronically, the person or entity

providing it to you may choose to give you a second opportunity to

receive the work electronically in lieu of a refund. If the second copy

is also defective, you may demand a refund in writing without further

opportunities to fix the problem.

1.F.4. Except for the limited right of replacement or refund set forth

in paragraph 1.F.3, this work is provided to you 'AS-IS' WITH NO OTHER

WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO

WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTIBILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PURPOSE.

1.F.5. Some states do not allow disclaimers of certain implied

warranties or the exclusion or limitation of certain types of damages.

If any disclaimer or limitation set forth in this agreement violates the

law of the state applicable to this agreement, the agreement shall be

interpreted to make the maximum disclaimer or limitation permitted by

the applicable state law. The invalidity or unenforceability of any

provision of this agreement shall not void the remaining provisions.

1.F.6. INDEMNITY - You agree to indemnify and hold the Foundation, the

trademark owner, any agent or employee of the Foundation, anyone

providing copies of Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works in accordance

with this agreement, and any volunteers associated with the production,

promotion and distribution of Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works,

harmless from all liability, costs and expenses, including legal fees,

that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following which you do

or cause to occur: (a) distribution of this or any Project Gutenberg-tm

work, (b) alteration, modification, or additions or deletions to any

Project Gutenberg-tm work, and (c) any Defect you cause.

Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg-tm

Project Gutenberg-tm is synonymous with the free distribution of

electronic works in formats readable by the widest variety of computers

including obsolete, old, middle-aged and new computers. It exists

because of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and donations from

people in all walks of life.

Volunteers and financial support to provide volunteers with the

assistance they need, is critical to reaching Project Gutenberg-tm's

goals and ensuring that the Project Gutenberg-tm collection will

remain freely available for generations to come. In 2001, the Project

Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation was created to provide a secure

and permanent future for Project Gutenberg-tm and future generations.

To learn more about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

and how your efforts and donations can help, see Sections 3 and 4

and the Foundation web page at http://www.pglaf.org.

Section 3. Information about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive

Foundation

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a non profit

501(c)(3) educational corporation organized under the laws of the

state of Mississippi and granted tax exempt status by the Internal

Revenue Service. The Foundation's EIN or federal tax identification

number is 64-6221541. Its 501(c)(3) letter is posted at

http://pglaf.org/fundraising. Contributions to the Project Gutenberg

Literary Archive Foundation are tax deductible to the full extent

permitted by U.S. federal laws and your state's laws.

The Foundation's principal office is located at 4557 Melan Dr. S.

Fairbanks, AK, 99712., but its volunteers and employees are scattered

throughout numerous locations. Its business office is located at

809 North 1500 West, Salt Lake City, UT 84116, (801) 596-1887, email

business@pglaf.org. Email contact links and up to date contact

information can be found at the Foundation's web site and official

page at http://pglaf.org

For additional contact information:

Dr. Gregory B. Newby

Chief Executive and Director

gbnewby@pglaf.org

Section 4. Information about Donations to the Project Gutenberg

Literary Archive Foundation

Project Gutenberg-tm depends upon and cannot survive without wide

spread public support and donations to carry out its mission of

increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can be

freely distributed in machine readable form accessible by the widest

array of equipment including outdated equipment. Many small donations

($1 to $5,000) are particularly important to maintaining tax exempt

status with the IRS.

The Foundation is committed to complying with the laws regulating

charities and charitable donations in all 50 states of the United

States. Compliance requirements are not uniform and it takes a

considerable effort, much paperwork and many fees to meet and keep up

with these requirements. We do not solicit donations in locations

where we have not received written confirmation of compliance. To

SEND DONATIONS or determine the status of compliance for any

particular state visit http://pglaf.org

While we cannot and do not solicit contributions from states where we

have not met the solicitation requirements, we know of no prohibition

against accepting unsolicited donations from donors in such states who

approach us with offers to donate.

International donations are gratefully accepted, but we cannot make

any statements concerning tax treatment of donations received from

outside the United States. U.S. laws alone swamp our small staff.

Please check the Project Gutenberg Web pages for current donation

methods and addresses. Donations are accepted in a number of other

ways including including checks, online payments and credit card

donations. To donate, please visit: http://pglaf.org/donate

Section 5. General Information About Project Gutenberg-tm electronic

works.

Professor Michael S. Hart is the originator of the Project Gutenberg-tm

concept of a library of electronic works that could be freely shared

with anyone. For thirty years, he produced and distributed Project

Gutenberg-tm eBooks with only a loose network of volunteer support.

Project Gutenberg-tm eBooks are often created from several printed

editions, all of which are confirmed as Public Domain in the U.S.

unless a copyright notice is included. Thus, we do not necessarily

keep eBooks in compliance with any particular paper edition.

Most people start at our Web site which has the main PG search facility:

http://www.gutenberg.net

This Web site includes information about Project Gutenberg-tm,

including how to make donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary

Archive Foundation, how to help produce our new eBooks, and how to

subscribe to our email newsletter to hear about new eBooks.