Outlines of Chinese art

John Calvin Ferguson

OUTLINES OF CHINESE ART

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

THE BAKER & TAYLOR COMPANY
NEW YORK

THE CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON

THE MARUZEN-KABUSHIKI-KAISHA
TOKYO, OSAKA, KYOTO, FUKUOKA, SENDAI

THE MISSION BOOK COMPANY
SHANGHAI

OUTLINES OF CHINESE ART

BY JOHN C. FERGUSON

THE SCAMMON LECTURES FOR 1918
PUBLISHED FOR THE ART INSTITUTE
OF CHICAGO BY THE UNIVERSITY OF
CHICAGO PRESS, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Published November 1919
Second Impression March 1920

Composed and Printed By
The University of Chicago Press
Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A.

CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

LECTURE I

LECTURE II

ILLUSTRATIONS

LECTURE III

ILLUSTRATIONS

LECTURE IV

LECTURE V

ILLUSTRATIONS

LECTURE VI

THE CHINESE DYNASTIES

Hsia Dynasty	2205–1766 B.C.
Shang Dynasty	1766–1122 B.C.
Chow Dynasty	1122–255 B.C.
Ts'in Dynasty	255–206 B.C.
Han Dynasty	206 B.C.–220 A.D.
Wei Dynasty	220–264 A.D.
Tsin Dynasty	265–420 A.D.
Six Dynasties	420–618 A.D.
T'ang Dynasty	618–906 A.D.
Five Dynasties	907–960 A.D.
Sung Dynasty	960–1277 A.D.
Chin Dynasty	1115–1260 A.D.
Yüan Dynasty	1277–1368 A.D.
Ming Dynasty	1368–1644 A.D.
Ch'ing Dynasty	1644–1912 A.D.
Republic of China	1912—

ENTRANCE TO GOVERNMENT MUSEUM, PEKING
WU YING TIEN

CENTRAL ENTRANCE TO GOVERNMENT PALACE, PEKING

I

INTRODUCTION

The Government Museum at Peking, containing some of the best art treasures of China, is unique among the museums of the world. In architectural design and detail and in historical surroundings, as well as in the examples of art products stored within its walls, this Museum is exclusively and characteristically Chinese. The bronzes and jades, paintings and manuscripts, pottery and porcelain, inks and writing-brushes, all owe their common origin to the genius of the Chinese race. This Museum has not needed to borrow from other nations examples of an earlier art, out of which its own development has directly or indirectly sprung; on the contrary, the art spirit which found its expression in these various forms during the historic period joins hands even with the earliest mythological and legendary traditions of the country.

There can be no doubt of the inherent right of an artistic people to interpret its own art and to determine its own standards of relative values. It is naturally of some concern for us to know what impression Chinese art objects have made upon

neighboring nations, upon western students and western art critics, but such opinions as may have been expressed in these quarters have no finality, except in so far as they are based upon accepted canons found in the extensive art literature of China. It is quite right for other nations to decide upon the importance of Chinese art in comparison with that of other ancient nations, such as Greece, Rome, or Egypt, and to assign to it only such moiety of consideration as its previously determined relative merit justifies. This is a comparative study of art; but in the realm of Chinese art studied by itself, its own standards must prevail. The explorer in this new world, if indeed it is a new world to him, must not carry the ready-made compass perfected by his own countrymen; for the divergent currents of wind and water will so distort its guiding needle that it will prove useless to him. His compass must be obtained in the country whose art product he studies, so that it may be fully corrected and adjusted. It must not be taken for granted that what is new to the explorer has been unknown or unstudied by the age-long inhabitants of the country, especially as the race with which he is dealing in this instance has been devoted to cultural pursuits during the whole of its long history. Though his methods of observation may be more

scientific and accurate than those of the people whose product he is studying, an explorer, if wise, will give his first attention to the classification and elucidation of such facts as are disclosed to him by those whose opportunity of observation has been earlier and wider than his own.

The art of China is interesting to students of other countries in proportion as it is entirely national and expresses the ideals and spirit of this ancient people. It cannot properly be classified as one division of a widely pervading art of Asia, for the interaction of outside forces which have resulted from intercourse with other nations has had relatively small influence upon its evolution. One cannot use the phrase "Art of Asia" with the same freedom as in the use of the generic term "European Art," for all art in Europe leads back during an authentic period of history to common sources in Greece and Rome. In Asia the earliest historical records carry us back to several civilizations which had already existed long enough to have been moulded into distinct types, but leave us only to conjecture, when we attempt to trace their sources or inter-relations. It is, however, fairly clear that China, at least, has a civilization and an art the fountains of which bubble forth from her own territory. In order to understand Chinese art, a knowledge of that of India, Japan,

or Persia is not necessary, no matter how desirable it may be as throwing side-lights upon the subject. The only accurate viewpoint for the study of the art of China is from the center of its own cultural development.

In China art is the expression of culture. What was known by the Greeks as *paideia* and by the Romans as *humanitas* is known to the Chinese as *hsioh* or *wên*, meaning thereby the refinement in manners and taste acquired by mental and moral training. While they have never underestimated the value of technique, there has been no thought of making manual dexterity the central principle of art. Conformity to culture has been the first essential of art expression, and culture is the outgrowth of noble national ideals. Technique has been given credit for the clever products of artistic workmen, even when these products have been denied a place in the temple of art. In this temple, only that which is in accord with, and contributes to, the spirit of culture finds a place, no matter how beautiful or aesthetic it may be in itself. There has never been an attempt to train a painter, for example, by teaching him a clever method of performance; the aim has always been to fill the soul with spiritual culture, before training the hand to be expert in the use of expressive materials. In some instances, such as in the production of

bronzes and jades, even the personality of the artist has been entirely subservient to the supreme demand that his product should conform to national ideals. The greatest skill of an artist consisted not infrequently in so effacing his own individuality that the first thought of a beholder was not of the skill of the artist, but of the beauty, grace, or dignity of the object and of its place in the accumulating culture of his race.

What is, and has been, the culture of China which has determined its art life? It has been, for one thing, a devotion to ceremony—family and tribal. Respect for rulers, reverence for parents and seniors—these two principles were the foundation upon which the family and the state rested. They were responsible for the occasions which caused to be produced the earliest Chinese art objects of which we have any knowledge. These are bronze vessels which were used at family or tribal gatherings. On all such occasions, ceremonial observances were carefully prescribed in minute detail. We know from the accounts of the Shang dynasty (B.C. 1766–1122), as found in the *Shu King*, that there was careful regulation of ceremonies prescribed for the emperor, his officers of state, and all others associated with the court. These became fixed during the Chow dynasty (B.C. 1122–255) with

such rigidity that they have controlled the ceremonial and ritualistic life of the Chinese down to the present time. During the attempt to revive monarchical government in 1915, the ceremonial rites which were introduced were based upon those of the Chow dynasty, even to the style of garments worn by the participants in the worship at the Altar of Heaven.

This devotion to ceremonial observance has been even trajected into the legendary period of the Three Emperors and Five Sovereigns, San Huang, Wu Ti. There were three races of emperors—the heavenly, the earthly, and the human—and each received its due proportion of respect. The five houses of sovereigns had fanciful names, such as the Nest-Builders, Yu-ch'ao, and the Fire-Producers, Sui-jên. These imaginary creatures were fabricated by the Chinese, so as to account for the culture which the earliest literary records found existing. They are the evident invention of later times and are valuable only as showing the stage of advancement reached in China at the beginning of the historical period. The interest in this present discussion in them is the light they throw upon the ceremonial observances which must have been well established among the Chinese in ancient times, since we find them in full force at the dawn of authentic

history. The only way in which Chinese historians have been able to account for them has been by the manufacture of mythological and legendary creations.

The Nine Tripods, *chiu ting*, said to have been cast by the emperor Yü out of metal sent to him from the nine divisions of the empire, are the earliest bronze vessels mentioned. The *Tso Chuan*, in its comments on the *Ch'un Ts'iu*, says: "When the virtue of Chieh, the last emperor of the Hsia dynasty, was obscured, the tripods were transferred to Shang for 600 years. Chow Sin (the last emperor of the Shang dynasty) proved cruel and oppressive, and they were transferred to Chow. Ch'êng Wang fixed the tripods in Chia-yu and divined that his dynasty should extend through thirty reigns, over 700 years." In this account we have all that is known of the location and use of these bronze tripods, and I fully agree with Legge and Hirth as to the genuineness of the records. The ascription of their casting to Yü may be considered doubtful or be rejected entirely, but the use of these tripods in the Hsia, Shang, and Chow dynasties is well established. They were the central objects of the grand ceremonial observances of the state, as well as the symbol of the possession of the imperial power.

The family life was also carefully regulated as to ceremonial observances. We learn from inscriptions on early bronzes that in some cases they were presented by sons to fathers, probably on the occasion of the anniversary of birthdays, and they were used in offering sacrifices and libations to the spirits of ancestors. Exploits in war and celebration of special honors received by a member of the family are recorded in these inscriptions on vessels, so that confirmation is given of the earliest literary references to the elaborate and minute ceremonial observed in the family. The higher the status of the family, the more precise the ceremonial. The daily routine of the emperor was so carefully laid out and the observances so onerous that no leisure time could have been left to him if he faithfully performed his prescribed duties.

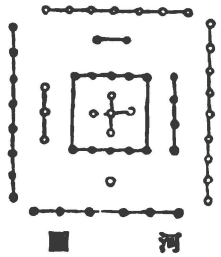
Associated with ceremonial observances was the practice of divination, by which it was attempted to discover the will of High Heaven and to know in advance the events of life. The instruments of divination were the carapace of the tortoise, animal bones, and stalks of milfoil. The tortoise shells or bones were subjected to heat, and then portents were read from the designs of the resultant cracks; the milfoil was observed as to the direction in which it swayed. Divination must have begun very early, as we find it at the

beginning of literary records. In the *Counsels of Yü*, the great emperor Shun is credited with having performed its rites and is said to have warned his successor Yü that divination, even when fortunate, must not be repeated. It was practiced in the Shang dynasty by P'an Kêng, and the palace of the Chow dynasty had a full staff of diviners attached to it. These augurs had a high standing among the officers of the state, just as in Rome after Caesar's time the sixteen members of the college of augurs ranked next after the pontifical college. The reading of portents, omens, and collocation of signs became the subject of careful study by the most learned men. Its greatest treasure-house of lore is found in the "Book of Changes"—*I King*. The influence of this little-understood classic upon Chinese life and thought is one of the most important factors in any investigation of the origin of art in China and of its inspiration. It is indissolubly connected with the doctrines and practices of Taoism, founded by Laotse.

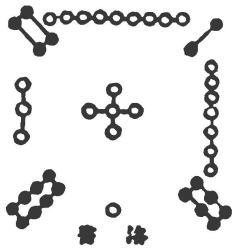
Ceremonies and portents represent the essential spirit of the culture of the people of ancient China, out of which art first developed. There was some scope for the creation of objects of imagination and taste, but never without reference to their utility on ceremonial or divining occasions. Art,

from the first, struggled against the restraints of its surrounding cultural life. Its first reputed results were in the decoration of the Nine Tripods with "remarkable objects," designed to teach the people to recognize the sprites of the hills and rivers, and thus not be injured by their malign influences. Then came representation of the phoenix, the dragon, clouds and thunder, ox-heads and ogres, *t'ao-t'ieh*, used in decorating bronze vessels and jade objects, and along with these the beginnings of ideographs, which later developed into written language. There seems to have been no difference between the early use of pictographs and ideographs. Both were used for decorating objects. Their artistic quality lay in their being works of imagination and not tracings of known objects. The distinction between the representation of objects and of ideas is expressed in geometric terms as that between the round and the square. In the "Book of Changes" it is said the round, *t'u*, came from Ho and the square, *shu*, from Lo. The "round" refers to the marks which the mythological Fu Hsi is reputed to have found on the back of a dragon horse and from which he evolved the Eight Diagrams. These diagrams were found in circles, and from them came the principles of map-drawing, decoration, and imaginative designs. The "square" forms evolved

from the signs found on the shell of a tortoise, when the mythical emperor Yü was engaged in his great work of regulating the waters of the empire, and are the reputed prototypes of ideographs. They were the numbers from one to nine arranged in an order which he used in fixing the nine divisions of his work or the nine provinces. Each



HO T'U



LO SHU

portion of each number is said to have been an ideograph, and there was much discussion among early Chinese scholars as to the number of these characters found. The *Han Shu* mentions the fact that characters were found on tortoise shells by Yü, but gives no number. The use of shells with inscriptions of characters in prehistoric days is confirmed by the finds in Ho-nan province of similar bones and shells in recent years. One need not stretch his credulity to the point of believing in these extraordinary accounts of the origin of pictographs and ideographs. It is only

necessary to realize that both appeared so early in the cultural life of China that the first literary records found it necessary to assign some method of their first production. The fanciful tales of their origin may be discarded, but the fact of their existence at the dawn of history must be admitted. Thus the roots of art in China strike deep into a time when the processes of divination and the ceremonial life of family and tribe were inseparably joined.

The impress of this union is seen in the combination of invention, science, literature, and art which came to be known as the "Six Arts," *luh i*. These were ritual, music, archery, charioteering, writing, and calculation. Of these there are only three which agree with our conception of the essentials of artistic production. They are ritual, music, and writing. Ritual can properly occupy the same place among the fine arts which we give to dancing, while writing can be substituted for our drawing. Thus in comparison with our western conception of the fine arts as consisting of painting, drawing, architecture, and sculpture, with the addition of poetry, music, dancing, and dramatic art, the ancient Chinese omitted all but the three already mentioned and added in their stead the arts of archery, charioteering, and calculation. Archery was not only

connected with skill in hitting a mark, but with graceful movements of the body, as was fitting to the exercise of a gentleman. This allies archery to the movements of formal dancing. Charioteering offered a fine chance for ornamental decoration of chariots and equipage, all of which should be suited to the occasion on which it was displayed and to the rank of the owner. This could be done only by one who possessed an artistic spirit. Calculation was originally associated with land-plotting and map-drawing. The *Li Ki* has a passage in which it is said, "The question as to the wealth of a sovereign can be answered by a calculation of the size of his territory." The implication of this passage, considered in the light of the inclusion of calculation as one of the six arts, seems to me to be that the amount of territory could be calculated as the result of maps made from surveys and that in this connection calculation really meant mensuration. This is the only explanation which allows for artistic expression in the process of calculation. In modern times a new term, *mei shu*, has been introduced into Chinese literature to express the idea of the "fine arts," and the phrase has been generally adopted. It conforms to our western idea of including music, poetry, sculpture, and architecture with painting as the fine arts and is a

useful nomenclature. It must, however, be recognized as a modern term used to explain the art of western countries and more or less at variance with early Chinese usage.

The original point of divergence of Chinese art from that of Greece and Rome is found in the contrasting type of their civilizations. China found her ideals in the filial piety of the home and the fidelity of the people to their ruler. This accounted for ceremony as the correct regulation of the relations of life, in accordance with the will of the all-dominating High Heaven, and for divination as a natural desire to know how future events would affect these relations. Greece and Rome, on the other hand, had ideals of political freedom and of the importance of individual men in the scheme of the universe. In a word, the early civilization of China centered around the gentleman, *chün*, while that of Greece and Rome placed man, *homo*, at the center.

In view of the foregoing, it will be readily conceded that Chinese art is indigenous. It could not have had its origin in a culture other than that found on the soil of China. The similarities which it bears to that of other countries are accounted for by the common traits shared alike by all nations. This culture was in close touch with surrounding nature. Just as to ancient shepherd

peoples the starry firmament took on the animal shapes of the zodiac, such as taurus, leo, scorpio, etc., so to the agricultural race of ancient Chinese the powers of nature which controlled their fortunes resolved themselves into animal forms. The clouds gathering before a summer thundershower took on the form of a dragon with huge

IDEOGRAPH LUNG, MEANING DRAGON

IDEOGRAPH LU, MEANING DEER

head, wide-spreading feet, and elongated tail. This was the spirit of the wind and the rain, which brought productivity to their soil. Thus the dragon was included among the four beneficent animals—unicorn, phoenix, turtle, and dragon. The first two were associated with the coming of spring life and the last two with fructifying summer rains. These four animal shapes were among the first used in decoration of bronzes, and they

were intended as stimulus to good thoughts. I cannot agree with Professor Hirth that "the names of dragon and phoenix occur in the oldest literature, but the shapes in which they are represented in these older works of art are quite different from the elaborate pictures made of them by later artists," nor with Chavannes that "this group of fantastic conventionalization [i.e., of dragons and phoenix] is perhaps not Chinese at all, from the outset, and, in any case, not so old as one would feel tempted to believe. I find before the Han period nothing that resembles the phoenix." These opinions are not in accord with the best authorities in Chinese archeology. Yüan Yüan, in Volume V, notes a libation cup, *tsioh*, with an inscription of one character, which represents a phoenix perching on a tree. This cup now belongs to the Ch'ên family, at Wei-hsien. Hsieh Shan-kung, in Volume V, mentions a vase, *ku*, with the inscription of an ideograph in the shape of a dragon, and assigns the vase to the Shang dynasty. This vase was owned in recent years by the Yeh family, of Han-yang, opposite Hankow. I have seen a vessel which has been assigned to the Shang dynasty by Wu Chung-hsi, on which is a decoration of phoenix cast in delicate, fine lines.

With these kindly creatures were associated in decoration other objects of frightful mien and

sinister purpose, which were meant as a warning against evil deeds. One of these, found most frequently, is the ogre, *t'ao-t'ieh*, which Hirth allows to be a Chinese invention. It has large protruding eyes and a terrifying face, thus warning

BRONZE VESSEL DECORATED
WITH FACE OF OGRE T'AO-T'IEH

the beholder against greed and gluttony. It is among the earliest decorative motives. Whether malevolent or benevolent, the creatures used for decorative purposes on the earliest bronzes are in every instance products of Chinese imagination based upon the type of life which prevailed in the ancient life of the country.

Apart from bronzes and jades, which carry us back to the culture of the Shang dynasty, and the inscriptions on bone, which possibly carry us a

BRONZE VESSEL WITH DECORATION OF PHOENIX

little farther, there is as yet no external evidence confirming the accounts found in the "Book of History"—*Shu King*. The records of Yao and Shun, as well as of the engineering works of the great Yü, must for the present be considered as

the afterthoughts of a later age, which sought to deduce the civilization known to it from some earlier source with which it could find itself in agreement. The discovery of the "Bamboo Books," about A.D. 280, confirmed the records of Ssŭ-ma Ch'ien but added little to the information found in this author's *Shi Ki*. Compared with the ruins of the ancient cities of Egypt or Assyria, China is lacking in monumental remains of her civilization, which must have been coeval with, or prior to, that of these other ancient races. This is accounted for, in large measure, by the unfavorable climatic and soil conditions of China as compared with those of these two countries.

There are no authentic stone tablets earlier than the Han dynasty. An ancient tablet at Yung-ning, Kuei-chow province, without date, has been assigned, but on doubtful authority, to the Chow dynasty. Another tablet at Tan-yang, Kiang-su province, has an inscription in seal characters which were supposed to have been written originally by Confucius. This tablet bears on its face the record that the inscription was recut in A.D. 799, during the reign of Ta Li, of the T'ang dynasty, and it is impossible to confirm from any existing records the genuineness of the statement which alleges that Confucius wrote the characters which were thereon inscribed. There is also a

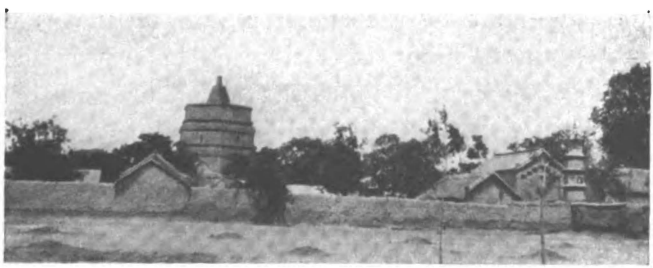
tablet at Tsan-huang, Chih-li province, which is supposed to have been written by Mu Wang, of the Chow dynasty, and others at Chi hsien, Ho-nan province, and Ta-hsing, Chih-li province, which are similarly ascribed to the Chow dynasty. In addition to these, there are some brick tiles of the Ts'in dynasty (B.C. 255–206) the genuineness of which seems to be undoubted. There are also four stone monuments assigned to the Ts'in dynasty in the well-known "Records of Tablets," *Fang Pei Lu.* The most famous of these tablets is the one located on the top of T'ai-shan, which is usually spoken of as *Wu-tzŭ pei.* This is reputed to have been set up by the emperor Shih Huang. The other three monuments ascribed to this period are located at Chu-ch'êng, Shan-tung province, at Hsi-an, Shen-si province, and at Kuei-chi, Cheh-kiang province. There is a stone of the Han dynasty ascribed to B.C. 143, but there has been much discussion as to the correctness of this claim. The earliest authentic stone tablet is that found at Ch'ü-fu, Shan-tung province, the birthplace of Confucius, and is dated the sixth month of the second year of Wu Fêng, i.e., B.C. 56. It must be frankly admitted that it is disappointing to the student of Chinese art-archeology that he can find no earlier remains in stone than are at present known to Chinese scholars.

The earliest historical stone relics are the Stone Drums, *Shih Ku*, now located on either side of the main entrance to the Confucian Temple, Kuo-tzŭ Chien, Peking. These were discovered in the seventh century, in the prefecture of Fêng-hsiang, Shen-si province, and set up in the Confucian Temple of this city in the ninth century. They were removed to K'ai-fêng, Ho-nan, by the Sung emperors, who filled the incisions of the characters with pure gold. When the Nü-chên Tartars captured the Sung capital, these drums were carried off to Peking, where they were installed in their present position in 1307 by Kuo Shou-ching. There are ten of these drums, and on each one an ode is inscribed. These odes celebrate a hunting and fishing expedition to Mount Ch'i, located in the district where the drums were exhumed. They describe the elaborate preparations made for a grand military review, by the leveling of roads and deepening of water courses. There is no internal evidence by which these drums can be assigned to a definite date, but the consensus of opinion among Chinese scholars—with which I fully agree—refers them to the reign of Hsüan Wang (B.C. 827–782), of the Chow dynasty. Bushell is inclined to place them even as early as the reign of Ch'êng Wang (B.C 1115–1079), while Chavannes would assign them

to a king of the Ts'in state, about B.C. 300. Their only decoration is the inscriptions, and their artistic appeal is in their shape. They are primarily of interest to archeologists and philologists, but by the Chinese are reckoned as part of the art product of their country.

Enormous as was the labor expended in the construction of the Great Wall, for a long period of time during the existence of the ancient states of Ts'in, Chou, and Yen down to its lengthening by the First Emperor of the Ts'in dynasty (B.C. 221–209), I do not remember to have seen it used as a motive in any early work of art, whether in stone, jade, or painting. Even the watch towers which have been preserved from the Han dynasty in pottery represent the type found throughout Shen-si rather than those of the Great Wall. There are many allusions to hunting trips and military excursions through the mountain passes, but none that I have discovered to the wall itself. It was considered wholly as a military necessity and not as an outcome of the genius or spirit of the people. Not so with early architectural structures. These have claimed a share in the artistic development of the nation. The mythological Huang Ti, of the twenty-seventh century B.C., is reputed to have taught the people to make bricks and build houses. He erected a sacrificial

T'IEH T'A, IRON PAGODA, K'AI-FÊNG, HO-NAN PROVINCE, BUILT A.D. 1396



FANG T'A, SQUARE PAGODA, K'AI-FÊNG, HO-NAN PROVINCE, ELEVENTH CENTURY

temple and a palace, around which a town was built. In the Chow dynasty "the imperial palace consisted of a vast inclosure, surrounded by high mud or brick walls, in which were the following: the dwelling-houses of the emperor, the empress, the concubines, and their servants; the offices of the ministers, reception halls, and temples; shops for weaving silk and hemp for the use of the court; treasuries for the preservation of the imperial archives, historical documents, jewelry, and other precious belongings of the state or the emperor; depositories for stores and all that was necessary for the maintenance of life. In other words, it was a walled city within the capital city, reserved for the emperor, his household, and his government; and the monarch seldom left it except in his official capacity." The palace—Ah Fang Kung, or Ah Pang Kung, as explained by Chavannes in *Se Ma Ts'ien* II, p. 174—built by the emperor Shih Huang (B.C. 221–209) at Ch'ang-an (Hsi-an), Shen-si province, was a work of magnificent grandeur and has frequently been portrayed in paintings and on porcelain, as well as praised in poetical allusions. According to the *Shi Ki*, it was 250 feet in length and 500 feet in width and was situated on the south bank of the Wei River in the Shang Lin park. Ten thousand persons could be seated

within its walls. Other famous palaces of early date were the Wei Yang Kung, built by Hsiao Ho (died B.C. 193) at the beginning of the Han dynasty, near Ch'ang-an, and the Kan Ch'üan Kung. These three palaces are well known in poetry and painting. There is a famous painting

TEMPLE AT GRAVE OF KUAN TI, LO-YANG, HO-NAN PROVINCE. REBUILT A.D. 1594

by Li T'ang (*circa* A.D. 1100), of the Sung dynasty, which gives a good idea of the beauty of the Ah Fang Kung. These palaces set the model for later dynasties, and their main architectural points may be seen in the present Peking palace. None of these palaces has survived the ravages of time, and we must trust to literary records to confirm the likeness of later palaces to the earlier ones.

This lack of survival of ancient art remains has never appeared to be disconcerting to native critics. It has been the genius of the Chinese to preserve unchanged the same art spirit from generation to generation, even though early examples might perish. It is safe to say that the same art motives which flourished in the Shang and Chow dynasties stirred the hearts of all kinds of artists in the Ming and Manchu dynasties. There has never been among the Chinese a dread of reproduction or copying, for this has not been a slavish exercise. Copyists do not follow in minute detail the chosen model, but each reproduction shows the individuality of the worker, even when following the same general lines of conformity to an original. This method has seemed to the Chinese to be a glorification of national consciousness and a preservation of precious tradition. The shapes of early bronzes were reproduced in pottery and then in porcelain, the crude drawings of dragon and phoenix on early castings were beautified in paintings, and yet each succeeding generation drew its artistic inspiration from the same unfailing sources. This often gives to the foreign student an impression of monotony, such as Bushell records in reference to Chinese architecture, but it also creates a profound admiration for the endless variety

evolved from such limited sources. In perpetuating the continuity of the art spirit, the Chinese have succeeded better than any other nation, for they have maintained a continuous succession for about four thousand years.

It is interesting to note also that art motives had become stabilized before China began to have much intercourse with outside nations and when her own territorial limits were confined to a small area in what is now the northwestern part of the country. It would be profitless to this discussion to attempt to trace the origin of the Chinese people. Lacouperie endeavored to prove that they were the Bak tribes, led by Nakhunte (Nai Huang Ti) through Chinese Turkestan and along the Kashgar River to the northwestern part of China, where we first find them. He thus gave a Babylonian origin to Chinese culture. His thesis has been successfully refuted on philological grounds by Hirth, and I must bear my testimony as to the unreliability of his theory, in so far as it regards artistic motives. The list of arts which, he says, the Chinese owed to their early civilizers contains a curious medley, early and late, of the cultural development of early China.

These early art motives and traditions were so firmly established before China began to have

communication with the surrounding peoples that they have been able not only to survive, but also to dominate, influences from without. Even allowing that there was an overland traffic with India through the Shu principality (Sze-ch'uan province), in the fifth century B.C., from the Ch'in principality (Shen-si province), we know that by this time there had been a development of artistic creations in bronze, jade, and ideographs which have continued to control the minds of artists down to the present time. Later there was frequent communication with the outside world. Chang Ch'ien was sent (B.C. 139) on a mission to the Indo-Scythians, whose capital was on the Oxus River. He traveled through eastern Turkestan, Ferghana, Bactria, and Khotan for thirteen years and brought back with him many new plants, such as the grape-vine and also alfalfa. He gave descriptions of the products and customs of the countries which he visited.

Buddhism was officially introduced into China in A.D. 67 by the emperor Ming Ti. The envoys whom this emperor sent brought back with them from India two monks with their Pali books, their pictures, and their customs. Their return was celebrated by the erection east of Lo-yang (Honan fu) of the White Horse Temple—Pai Ma Ssŭ. This temple has been frequently restored and is

preserved to the present time. The historian Ssŭ-ma Ch'ien (died B.C. 85) records in his History the relations of China with the Indo-Scythians, the Man barbarians to the southwest, and the people of Ta Wan (Ferghana). Pan Ch'ao, in A.D. 97, led an army to Antiochia Margiana and ordered one of his generals to take ship from the Persian Gulf westward toward Rome, of which China had begun to hear. The expedition never started on its journey, but before another century had passed Roman merchants found their way to Cochin-China and soon to Canton. The overland trade route through Parthia and Samarkand to Rome and northern India was also reopened, with the result that, during the period of division of northern and southern states which followed the Han dynasty, several of the small kingdoms had Turkic rulers. The Wei and the Northern Wei dynasties had their capital at P'ing-ch'êng (Ta-t'ung fu) until the middle of the latter dynasty, when it was removed to Lo-yang (Honan fu) by the emperor Hsiao Wên Ti. Both of these dynasties reflect the influence of Turkestan and Gandhara in their art products. The imperial extent of the domain of the T'ang dynasty brought under its control almost all of the neighboring states. Many of them on the northwest border appealed to China for protection against the

growth of Mohammedan power. Arabian ships reached Canton, Nestorian missionaries, Jews, and Manicheans came to the empire by the overland route, and the stronghold of Buddhism was removed from India to China. Art flourished during this period of general prosperity and, when foreign influences were stronger than at any other period of the history of China, continued to show an adherence to early indigenous tradition which refused to be perverted. Artistic motives introduced from outside sources were subjected to the domination of Chinese principles and, when used, were brought into harmony with existing canons.

The Yüan dynasty, founded by the Mongol warrior Kublai Khan in 1280, restored the empire, which had fallen into separate divisions under the Sung, but did little for art other than to release its spirit from the hidebound literalism of the conservative school. There was an immediate rebound into the freedom which had been known in the T'ang dynasty. The sway of the Mongols was over such a wide area that there was even an exchange of workmen between Persia and China. Persia felt the influence of these Chinese workmen, but the Persian workmen left no permanent impression on China. There was little or no outside influence during the Ming dynasty,

and in the past century western influences have not been able to penetrate deeply enough into the inner life of China to control, or even to influence, its art. China remains the only existing example of the persistence and continuance of an art life which connects itself with the earliest national traditions. Frequently beset with strong influences from outside sources, it has never been diverted from its characteristic type. On the contrary, it has always absorbed these influences and conformed them to its own uses. It has borrowed decorative forms and perhaps even technical methods, but has clung to its own principles.

China, therefore, must be studied as an artistic entity. The laws and principles which today control criticism or production are those which have come down from the earliest period of China's national life. Art is now decadent in China, as far as products are concerned, but considered in the light of adherence to principles it flourishes with a strength equal to that which characterized it in the golden age of the T'ang dynasty. It is found in every man of culture and struggles to assert itself in every new collector. Its sway is not even disturbed by the incoming of modern education.

The divisions of art products according to Chinese usage are *chin shih*—work in metals,

stone, or ceramics—and *shu hua*—calligraphy and painting. These may be roughly described as the plastic and graphic arts. The *chin shih* division is an inseparable mixture of art and archeology, or, in other words, it is archeological art or art-archeology. The *shu hua* division is entirely concerned with the fine arts. It is under these two divisions that the succeeding lectures will treat Chinese art.

II

BRONZES AND JADES

BRONZES

The study of *chin shih*—literally, metal and stone—has been confined to a comparatively small group of Chinese scholars. It is closely connected with the tracing of the origin and development of the form of the ideographs in which the Chinese language is written, but it also concerns itself with the examination of historical facts, as stated in inscriptions, and a comparison of them with later literary records. If this branch of expert knowledge stopped with these linguistic inquiries, it would not be necessary to include a reference to early bronzes, jades, or stone tablets in a review of the art of China. Fortunately, in addition to linguistic considerations, writers on *chin shih* have paid attention to art motives and their evolution, though it must be confessed that not so much study has been devoted to artistic as to linguistic problems. It has been left to students and collectors from Japan and the occident to emphasize the artistic qualities of these early art products, though perhaps somewhat at the expense, or to the neglect, of the

BRONZE TABLE WITH WINE VESSELS. EXCAVATED IN 1902. COLLECTION OF TUAN FANG

BRONZE TABLE WITH WINE VESSELS. ANOTHER VIEW OF THE COLLECTION SHOWN ABOVE

phase of the subject which has chiefly attracted Chinese experts.

The emperor Wu Ti (A.D. 502–550), of the short-lived Liang dynasty (A.D. 502–556), who had his capital at Nanking, was a devout adherent of Buddhism and is reputed to have made the first literary collection of inscriptions on stone tablets and grave monuments. His work, which is said to have been in one hundred and twenty volumes, was lost in the troublous times which followed his death. This collection seems to have been the beginning of art-archeological studies in China and was apparently pursued on lines different from those in the investigations of early remains by Hsü Shên, second century, which were concerned wholly with etymological research, in preparation of the famous glossary *Shuo Wên*.

Scholars of the T'ang dynasty did not concern themselves with this study, and interest in it was not revived until the tenth century A.D., when Nieh, of Ho-nan, brought out the *San Li T'u*. This was an illustrated description of the customs and manners of early China. The text is valuable, but the illustrations are crude and unreliable, having evidently been based upon written records rather than upon observation of existing objects. The first serious work was that of Ou-yang Hsiu, in the eleventh century A.D., in the compilation

of the *Tsih Ku Lu*, which was a treatise on early inscriptions. This was followed by that of Wang Fu, who edited the *Hsüan-Ho Po Ku T'u*—"Illustrated Description of Antiquities Contained in the Hsüan-ho Palace." The illustrations in this work were probably taken from drawings and rubbings of objects in the imperial collection and are therefore valuable. Its mistakes in interpretation of inscriptions and in historical statements have given rise to much literary controversy among later authors. The student using this valuable book must therefore be on his guard against inaccuracies.

A more scholarly and reliable book of the Sung dynasty is that of Hsieh Shan-kung, author of *Li Tai Chung Ting K'uan Chih*, in twenty volumes. This was written in the Shao Hsing period (A.D. 1131–1163) of the Southern Sung dynasty and is, in reality, the basis upon which all later scholars have built. Hsieh may be considered as the first thorough student of early bronzes, but his work is concerned exclusively with the study of inscriptions. It is, however, a mine of information also as to artistic matters, but this is always found in admixture with his discussion of linguistics. In the Sung dynasty there were also the artists Liu Sung-nien, Li Kung-lin, Chao Mêng-chien and the statesmen Lü Ta-fang, Wang

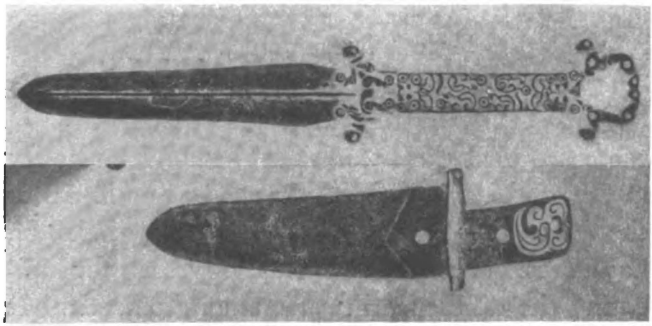
An-shih, and his brother, Wang An-kuo, who were all keenly interested in bronzes and jades and regarded them as objects of art.

There was again a hiatus of scholarship in this subject, for no important contributions to it were made during the Yüan and Ming dynasties. The emperor Ch'ien Lung, in 1749, gave a new stimulus to it by ordering a group of distinguished scholars to prepare an illustrated catalogue of the imperial collection. This was published under the name of *Hsi Ch'ing Ku Chien*—"Mirror of the Antiquities of the Imperial Studio"—in forty-two splendid, large volumes, and was supplemented by the works *Hsi Ch'ing Hsü Chien* and *Ning Shou Chien Ku*, which have been published in recent years in volumes corresponding to the earlier one. The illustrations in these works can now be compared with the specimens themselves, as exhibited in the Government Museum, Peking.

Imperial patronage gave great encouragement to this branch of study. In 1804, Yüan Yüan published his scholarly work *Chi Ku Chai Chung Ting I Ch'i K'uan Chih*—"Inscriptions on Vessels by Chi Ku Chai," which is the studio name of Yüan Yüan. In this book the rubbings of 560 inscriptions are criticized and explained. This was followed, in 1822, by the publication of *Chin Shih So*—"Researches in Metal and Stone"—by

the scholarly brothers Fêng Yün-p'êng and Fêng Yün-yüan, who approached the subject more from the aesthetic side than from the literary. It is a most useful book to a foreign student. Other important contributions have been made since the publication of this work, but they have been devoted chiefly to discussions of linguistic problems. Only one work has been published in recent years which is a distinct contribution to the importance of the artistic qualities of early bronzes. It is called *T'ao Chai Chi Chin Lu*—"Records of the Bronze Vessels in the Collection of T'ao Chai." T'ao Chai is the literary name of the late Viceroy Tuan Fang, who was a good scholar and an unusually discriminating collector. This book gives illustrations of the most important specimens of bronze vessels in his great collection. It is a pity that similar publications were not issued in illustration of the collections of the P'an family, of Su-chow, or of the Ch'ên family, of Wei-hsien.

All historical records show that bronze vessels were held in high esteem during the Hsia, Shang, and Chow dynasties, which are usually classified together as the *San Tai* or Three Dynasties. The vessels were used on all important occasions in national and family life. Victory over enemies, prayers for blessings and favors, penitence for



BRONZE DAGGERS, CHOW DYNASTY

YOKE BELLS, SHANG DYNASTY

transgressions, memorials for deceased rulers and parents, birthdays of superiors—these were all celebrated in dignified ceremonies in which bronze vessels were used. There were nine vessels, *chiu ting*, used only by the ruler, and the retention of these signified the possession of kingly authority in the state. They were regarded as emblems of the *lex regis*. "The Ritual of Chow," *Chow Li*, has a section devoted to the use of vessels for indicating the difference in rank among officials. It is called *Fên Ch'i*. Officers of lower rank in performing sacrificial rites could not use the same number or size of vessels as those used by one of higher rank. Bronze vessels thus came to serve as insignia of office. They were also used as presents from princes to ministers to whom they had granted interviews, and much importance was attached by ministers to the kind of vessel presented, as a sure indication of the estimation in which the prince held them. In B.C. 672, Chêng Po had an audience with the King of Chow, after which he was presented with a mirror girdle which had belonged to the Queen. Shortly afterwards the Duke of Kuo was presented with a libation cup—at which Chêng Po took great offense, since the gift of the Prince to him had been only some trifling ornament worn by a woman, while that given to the Duke had been a vessel used in state ceremonies.

Another use was connected with dishonorable transactions, in which bronze vessels were presented as bribes by small states or by individuals who wished to acquire influence. The *Tso Chuan Commentary* gives many instances of this illegitimate use. The Marquis of Ch'i bribed the principality of Ts'in, in B.C. 589, by the gift of a bronze vessel, *hsien*. The men of the principality of Yen attempted to bribe the principality of Ch'i by the gift of a libation cup, *chia*. Large and small bells, tripods, and other sacrificial vessels are mentioned as having been perverted to this base purpose. These subsidiary uses of bronze vessels did not obscure their chief use for sacrificial and memorial purposes.

The dates to which bronze vessels are assigned by Chinese authorities are frequently stated in general terms. Bronzes of the earliest period are referred to as belonging to the San Tai, or previous to B.C. 255. Then follow the Ts'in-Han types, dated B.C. 255—A.D. 221. These are all ancient bronzes. The reproductions of the T'ang and Sung dynasties are not classed as "ancient." The style of decoration but more especially the ideographs used in inscriptions serve to divide the vessels of the San Tai into those of the Hsia, Shang, and Chow dynasties. This classification, based upon linguistic development, seems

trustworthy but is of slight value as to artistic differences. The motives, techinque, and form of vessels of these three dynasties are interchangeable, and for an art student there need be no subdivision of the period previous to B.C. 255. It is stated by Chinese authorities that in bronzes the Hsia dynasty was noted for reliability, the Shang for quality, and the Chow for display; but this is a general characterization of the manners and customs of these periods rather than of the artistic qualities of the bronzes which they produced.

The archaic ceremonial types of the San Tai were replaced by more utilitarian and decorative ones in the period of freedom which set in with the imperial sway of the Ts'in and Han dynasties. Few ancient vessels seem to have been recovered during this time from the safe hiding-places where they were buried to elude Shih Huang, the founder of the Ts'in dynasty, so that new types had a chance to be introduced. These were vases, bowls, lavers, sacrificial cooking utensils, girdle buckles, and articles of house decoration or of personal adornment. In general terms, it may be said that the vessels of the San Tai are of the severe ceremonial types, while those of the Han are of decorative forms.

So great have been the perils and difficulties through which these vessels have come down from

ancient times, that it is a matter of wonder that so many have survived. P'an Tsu-yin, in his *P'an Ku Lou I Ch'i K'uan Chih*—"Inscriptions on Vessels in the Collection of P'an Ku Lou"—speaks of seven great perils which have been encountered by bronze vessels since the end of the Chow dynasty, in B.C. 255. The first was when the founder of the Ts'in dynasty attempted to destroy all bronze vessels and military utensils with inscriptions, at the time of his burning of the books. His object was to destroy all the literary records of an earlier age and to commence a new era with his reign. After melting up these bronze objects, he cast them into twelve statues. The second peril was when Tung Cho (died A.D. 192), in his attempts to bolster up the waning fortunes of the Han dynasty, melted down the bronze statues which he found at the two capitals, Lo-yang (Ho-nan fu) and Ch'ang-an (Hsi-an fu), and also many bronze vessels, melting them into coins. The third occurred in A.D. 590, during the reign of the emperor Wen Ti, of the Sui dynasty, when three great bells and a large number of vessels of the Ts'in and Han dynasties captured from the Kingdom of Ch'ên were destroyed by melting. The fourth peril was in A.D. 955, during the reign of the emperor Shih Tsung, of the Later Chow dynasty, when an imperial decree was issued

BRONZE VASE, HAN DYNASTY

allowing a limit of fifty days within which all bronze figures, vessels, and other articles from the two capitals and from every district should be presented to local officials for destruction, with the exception of the ceremonial articles belonging to the court, articles used for military or official purposes, mirrors, and bells used in temples. The fifth was in A.D. 1158, during the reign of Chêng Lung, of the Chin dynasty, when an edict was issued ordering the destruction of all ancient vessels captured during the expeditions against the Liao and Sung dynasties. The sixth was during the reign of Kao Tsung (A.D. 1131–1163), of the Southern Sung dynasty, when bronze vessels in the possession of the people were collected and added to fifteen hundred vessels from the imperial collection. All were handed over to the keeper of the Mint and are said to have amounted to more than two million catties (three million pounds). The seventh peril was in the stripping of the palaces and temples at Pien-lo (K'ai-fêng fu), at the close of the Northern Sung dynasty, of all their bronze objects and the carrying them away to the capital of the Chin dynasty.

Much importance was attached in successive dynasties to the discovery of exhumed bronze vessels. The reigning sovereign has celebrated the event by a change in the name of his governing

title, *nien hao*, or the name of the place where the discovery was made has been changed in honor of it, or memorial temples have been built, in which the gods have been given special titles. One of the first recorded discoveries was during the reign of Yüan Ting (B.C. 116–110), of the Han dynasty, when the Pao tripod was found in the Fên River (Shan-si province). There are records of several similar discoveries during the Han dynasty and down through the periods of the smaller dynasties to the T'ang, when, in the reign of Hsüan Tsung (A.D. 713–742), several important finds were made. It is recorded that in 733 a vessel, *hsien*, was discovered at Mei-chow, the weight of which was 700 catties (more than 900 pounds). During the Northern Sung dynasty, ancient vessels were often discovered in the high lands and in ancient mounds. They became so numerous that the discovery of new vessels no longer was considered as a strange or portentous matter. The number of scholars who could decipher the inscriptions constantly increased. The *K'ao Ku T'u*—"Illustrated Examination of Antiquities"—contains accounts of the vessels in the possession of collectors of the Sung dynasty. The names of more than thirty collectors are given, together with a brief description of the vessels in their collections. Contrary to what has happened in the case of

BRONZE VESSEL, HAN DYNASTY. COLLECTION OF PAUL HO, PEKING

other art objects, it has thus transpired that there has been a gradual increase in the number of recognized examples of vessels belonging to the San Tai period. Excavations in building new houses or temples, changes in the face of the country due to floods or the drying-up of river beds, and the construction of railways in recent years have been responsible for many new finds, which have added much information to what was previously known.

As to the shapes of ancient bronzes—there is a great variety. The "Mirror of Antiquities of the Imperial Studio"—*Hsi Ch'ing Ku Chien*—gives seventy-one shapes, to which are appended various early coins. In addition to bronze vessels, this list includes bells, drums, daggers, crossbows, chariot ornaments, surveying instruments, staff-heads, spoons, mirrors, and other small articles. The number of the most important shapes of bronze vessels is interesting. There are 233 *ting* or tripods. A *ting* is a tripod or caldron, usually with three feet and two ears, though occasionally vessels with four feet are also included in this class. It was used to hold food offered in sacrificial ceremonies. The name is also used in a generic sense and is associated with *chung*, bells, in the phrase *chung ting*, which means simply ancient bronze vessels. Of vases—*p'ing*

BRONZE WINE VESSEL, CHOW DYNASTY. DECORATION INLAID WITH GOLD AND SILVER

and *hu*—there are 173, and these were used as wine receptacles. Wine-jars, *tsun*, number 148. Goblets, *ku*, include 116 specimens and cups, *chih*, 42. There are 95 *yu* or wine-jars with handles, 17 *lei* or wine-jars, 67 *i*, 49 *tun*, and 31 *yi*, all of which are wine receptacles of differing shapes. There are also 17 *p'an* or platters, and 40 lavers, *hsi*, for sacrificial ablutions. Besides these vessels, there are 46 bells, *chung*, 14 drums, *ku*, and 93 mirrors, *chien*, included among the bronze articles of antiquity.

As these vessels were all intended for sacrificial uses, the shapes are dignified and severe, but all have grace of form and purity of line. Bushell considers that the majority of these vessels "are heavy, barbaric, and of ill-balanced proportions and betray the absence of the free spirit and love of line which inspired the hand of the ancient Greek modeler in bronze." This is certainly true of many vessels and perhaps of the majority of those which have come down to the present time. The reason is that the large demand for these vessels in ancient times on the part of rulers and families not only must have employed the talents of all the available artists, but also must have attracted great numbers of ordinary artisans who were devoid of artistic spirit. However, in all shapes there may be selected, out of the whole

number, artistic specimens which compare favorably with the best Grecian ones in modeling, casting, and decoration. Every ancient bronze vessel is of archeological interest, though it may be devoid of artistic qualities; but there are enough examples of graceful forms to justify the statement that the ancient Chinese exhibited an excellent plastic sense. There are a decisiveness and a precision in their best bronze vessels which exhibit the truest understanding on the part of the artist of the material which he used. He fully understood that the demands of metal are different from those of wood or marble.

The decorations varied somewhat, according to the period in which they were produced. The earliest vessels have but little decoration, i.e., more of the surface is left plain than is covered with ornamentation. Such decoration as there is set the model for the bronzes of the rest of the period. It is a combination of geometric and animal motives. The geometric lines are developed into rectangular scrolls on the borders and in panels. These scrolls are called *lei wên*, "thunder pattern," and *yün wên*, "cloud pattern." With these are intermixed undeveloped animal forms, such as *k'uei wên* or "pinniped pattern," *p'an-k'uei wên* or "coiled pinniped pattern," *ch'an wên* or "cicada pattern." These partially developed

animal forms, as found in scrolls, are often in pairs on opposite sides of a central design in relief consisting of an ox-head or, as often, of a circle of geometric lines. In the scrolls are found fearsome ogre heads—*t'ao-t'ieh*. The *t'ao-t'ieh* comprises a variety of forms, of which the only essential element seems to be the large protruding eyes, which blend with the other lines of scroll patterns. There are also tiger heads, elephant heads, goat heads. The dragon is chiefly in an undeveloped form throughout the whole period of the San Tai. There are diapers, in the center of which are nipples. This is the only instance in ancient Chinese art where the motive seems to have been drawn from the body, and I am not sure that the Sung dynasty scholars were correct in interpreting this round, bulging shape as intended to represent a nipple. Many of the geometric forms are said to have symbolic meanings, but it is difficult to decide whether the symbolism is an interpretation of the forms or the forms an outgrowth of existing conceptions. At any rate, the artists exhibited a high degree of imagination in their depictions and avoided the pitfall of attempting to represent animal forms by crude designs.

The characters used in inscriptions may be divided into three classes. There are the early ideographs in the style of hieroglyphics, such as

are found on vessels of the Shang dynasty. Along with this class, there developed the fine spiral writing which is found on bone relics of this or an earlier period. The second class of writing is that found in the Chow dynasty, when the ideographs began to lose their pictorial character and assumed the square, regular forms. The number of ideographs also greatly increased, keeping pace with the greater complexity of daily life. Many of the inscriptions of this period show beautiful forms of characters which are still written in practically the same way but without so many flourishes. The Chow style of writing is reputed to have been systematized by Shih Chou into the style of the great seal characters—*ta chuan*. This style is the counterpart of that used in illuminated texts in Europe during the Middle Ages. The third style is that of the Han dynasty, when the number of ideographs had increased to such an extent as made the writing of books possible. This style of writing has been in continuous use, with some modifications and additions, down to the present time. These cast and incised inscriptions are sometimes records of noble deeds or of some historical facts; again, they are dedications from sons to fathers or glorification of the donor's own deeds; others record penitence and resolutions for a better life. They often confirm historical

TWO BRONZE VESSELS OF THE CH'I HOU SET. COLLECTION OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF NEW YORK

statements or shed new light upon otherwise obscure passages. The language used is so terse that it is not easy to interpret the meaning, if, indeed, at all times one can be sure of the correct identification of the ideographs. They vary in length from one to 497 characters, which is the number on the Mao-kung *ting* as interpreted by Wu Shih-fên in his *Chün Ku Lu*. This *ting* (tripod) is in the collection of Tuan Fang and on account of the length of its inscription is one of the best-known pieces in China.

Other noted pieces are the Wu-chuan *ting* in the temple on Silver Island (Chiao Shan), near Chinkiang, concerning which many learned books have been written. Another is the K'o *ting*, of which there were three specimens of different sizes, one belonging originally to the Ting family, of Weihsien, and sold to Tuan Fang, one belonging to P'an Tsu-yin, and one in the University Museum, Philadelphia. A famous set is that of the Ch'i Hou. Two *lei* (wine-jars) of this set were in the possession of Wu Yün, and from them he took his sobriquet of "Liang Lei Hsien." He also wrote, in 1872, a valuable book describing them. Four vessels of this famous set are in the Metropolitan Museum, New York. Ch'i Hou means "Marquis of Ch'i" and refers to Huan Kung (B.C. 684–642). With the aid of Kuan Chung, he succeeded

TWO BRONZE VESSELS OF THE CH'I HOU SET. COLLECTION OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, NEW YORK

to the rulership of Ch'i and managed the affairs of the kingdom with great wisdom. The inscriptions on these vessels tell of these events. Another well-known wine-vessel is the *Kung Fu Kêng Yu* in the Cleveland Museum. The name means that it is a jar shaped like a bow and dedicated to father Kêng. The handle of this jar is like a bow, having both ends decorated with animal heads. It was formerly in the collection of Liu, of Chu-ch'êng, Shan-tung, and is assigned to the Shang dynasty by Wu Shih-fên in his *Chün Ku Lu*. These latter are only a few of many beautiful and important specimens which may be found in American museums and private collections. Japanese collectors have been most active in recent years, so that, outside of those in the Government Museum, Peking, many of the noblest pieces may now be found in the Sumitomo and Fujita collections in Osaka or in the Nakura collection at Tokyo.

There were ten sacrificial vessels presented in 1771 by the emperor Ch'ien Lung to the temple built in honor of Confucius, during the Ming dynasty, at his birthplace in Ch'ü-fu, Shan-tung. These vessels are placed on a long rectangular table in front of a large statue of Confucius, which occupies the place taken by a tablet in other Confucian temples. The order in which they stand

on the table, right to left as one enters the central doors and looks north toward the altar, is as follows:

Back row: *tou, fu, i, tsun, tsun.*

Front row: *ting, yu, ko, tun, hsien.*

ARRANGEMENT OF SACRIFICIAL VESSELS ON ALTAR OF CONFUCIAN TEMPLE, CH'Ü-FU, SHAN-TUNG PROVINCE

These ritual vessels comprise those used for meat offerings, food, and wine.

In 1901 there was dug up about ten miles from Pao Chi, Shen-si province, a bronze table, *tsa chin*, with accompanying vessels. They passed into the possession of Tuan Fang. They are sacrificial wine-vessels and number eleven in all. There are one *tsun* (wine-vase), two *yu* (wine-jars with handles), one *ho* (wine-pot with handle and spout), one *chia* (large wine-cup), two *tsioh* (liba-

tion cups), three *chih* (cups), and one *ku* (goblet). These vessels and the table form the most interesting discovery in recent times of bronzes having an artistic interest. Their elaborate decoration shows good taste, but the casting is not so delicate as that of some other existing specimens.

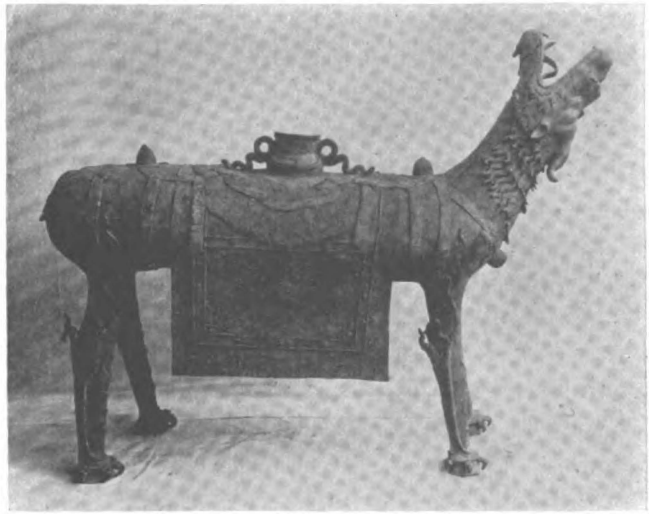
Two examples of gilded bronzes of the Chow dynasty have also been discovered in recent years. Both are *tsioh* (libation cups) and have answered to the description of literary records, which state that vessels made of the finest quality of bronze were later gilded with a cover of gold. The gold was beaten into gold-leaf and spread over the surface of the vessel, which was then gradually heated until the gold and bronze formed an amalgam. Both of these libation cups are beautiful in form and exquisite in workmanship. This process of gilding was afterward used during the period of the small contending states (A.D. 221–618) for a purpose directly opposite to the earlier one, viz., that of hiding blemishes in the casting. It is necessary to bear in mind this difference between early and later bronzes in the use of gilding.

Four examples of bronze statuary were discovered in 1915 by a farmer named Chiang. While he was in the process of digging a pond for irrigating purposes, he ran across an ancient grave and near it found four figures buried deep

in the loess. These were a unicorn, a statue of Wei T'o, and two statues of heavenly kings, *t'ien wang*, who are also known as guardians of Buddha. The place where they were found is on the border of San-yüan hsien, a city lying about twenty-five miles northwest of Hsi-an fu, the capital of Shen-si province. This is recorded in the Geography of the T'ang dynasty as having been the burial place of Ching Tsung (A.D. 825–827), fourteenth emperor of the T'ang dynasty. As the emperor died in A.D. 827, this tomb was probably completed a few years later—say about A.D. 830.

The unicorn appears to be earlier than this date and probably was cast during the later Han dynasty (second century A.D.) or during the revolutionary period of the Northern and Southern dynasties (fifth and sixth centuries A.D.) and removed to this site from some previous location. The bronze from which it was cast appears to be of the same quality as bronze vessels of the Han dynasty, which has led me to the belief that the figure was produced from bronze obtained by the melting down of early vessels. The original core over which this figure was cast remains inside. The framework is of reed grass closely packed and covered with core sand and clay. It was cast in a mould covered with wax. The chaplets used for separating the core from the mould are easily

seen. The dimensions of the unicorn are: from mouth to tail in straight line, 4′4″; height, 2′3″. The second figure is that of Wei T'o or Veda, described by Eitel as a fabulous bodhisattva, the



BRONZE FIGURE OF UNICORN, HAN DYNASTY

first general in command of the Chatur Maharajas. The measurements of this figure are as follows: height, 4′6″; circumference at waist, 3′1″; height of pedestal, 1′11″. The other two figures are those of two heavenly kings or guardians of Buddha. Buddha is represented as having four guardians, Devaraja. The dimensions of

these two figures are: height, 2′6″; height of base, 8″; circumference at girdle, 1′10½″. These three statues were probably cast at the time when the tomb was constructed.

In the casting of both vessels and statues, the cire perdue or waste-wax process was used. A model was constructed with a wax surface of suitable thickness. The outside mould was formed about this, the wax melted by heating, and the metal poured in. This gave precision to the edges of lines, not alone in decoration, but especially in ideographs. One of the unfailing tests of the genuineness of inscriptions is a careful microscopic examination of the edges of ideographs, to see whether or not they bear the marks of tools. If so, they have been incised at a later period and not cast in the wax mould with the rest of the vessel.

The proportions of copper and tin alloy used in the making of bronze objects have been carefully recorded in the sixth chapter, called *K'ao Kung Chi*, of the "Ritual of Chow" (*Chow Li*). This chapter is not part of the original work, but, though there has been much discussion as to whether it was added during the Han or the Ch'i dynasty (A.D. 479–501), its statements are undoubtedly reliable. Bells, tripods, vases, and measures contained one-sixth alloy, axes and

BRONZE FIGURE OF WEI T'O, T'ANG DYNASTY

hatchets one-fifth, lances and spears one-fourth, two-edged swords and agricultural implements one-third, and mirrors one-half. These proportions are only those fixed for the imperial workshops, and we know from actual examples that there were many variations from them. Good workmen in the earliest periods sought to give a silvery, iridescent color resembling mercury to their best fabrications. There is one example of this kind in the Metropolitan Museum. It is a covered tripod decorated with pinniped pattern and unquestionably belongs to the Shang dynasty. It formerly belonged to the noted scholar and collector Shen Po-hsi.

The patina of ancient bronzes differs according to the way in which they have been preserved. Those that come from the tombs of early emperors or kings, which were solidly built and in which the bronzes were placed on stone pedestals, were not in contact with surrounding earth or water. The influence of the air caused such bronzes to take on bluish tints, which are characteristic of the most beautiful type of patina. Vessels that have been buried in dry or wet soil have a patina varying according to the chemical elements surrounding them. The malachite green shades of such specimens are very beautiful and resemble the rind of a melon, *kua-p'i lü*. Sometimes many

colors are found on one vessel. Such are called five-colored, *wu sêh*. The thickness of the patina was influenced by surrounding conditions and varies from sub-surface changes of color to thick scales. Patina is, in reality, a new chemical composition and can rarely be separated from the original bronze, except in the case of gilded or lacquered objects.

This sketch of ancient bronzes has been so brief and incomplete that there has been no discussion of bronze military weapons, chariot and house decorations, surveying instruments, coins, or other objects for which we know this metal was used. Neither has there been space to discuss the many reproductions and imitations of the T'ang, Sung, and Yüan dynasties.

JADES

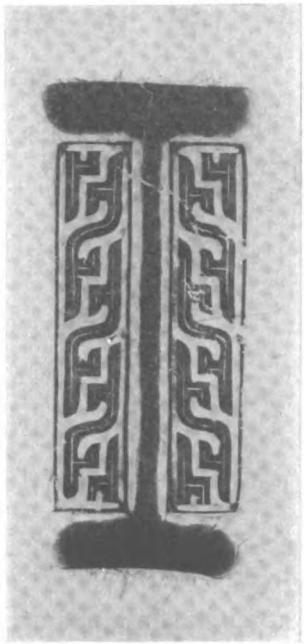
Jade is associated with bronze, not only as to similarity of use in ancient times, but also as to design and form. Jade carvings find their prototypes in bronze vessels and implements. Just as bronze vessels were sufficient to indicate the rank of their owner, and as they were used for ceremonial purposes, so also was jade used as an expression of the artistic experiences of an age controlled by considerations of rank and ceremony. As a symbol of the power of a ruler or a means of

recording his commands, as a warrant of office among officials, in semi-official or non-official religious worship, and for decorative purposes, jade was wrought into various shapes by skilled lapidaries. (These have been fully described by Laufer in his monumental work on jade.) It did not lend itself so readily to decorative designs as bronze, but it possessed more natural beauty. In ancient China it was considered the most precious stone, not only on account of its variety of color, but also for its delicacy of texture.

Using the term "jade" as inclusive of jadeite and nephrite, there is a great variety of coloration; the beauty of some of the colors is enhanced by the semi-transparency of the stone. There is black jade, in which the coloration is the result of the presence of large quantities of chromic iron; there is also pure, clear, white jade, which is compared to mutton fat. Between these extremes of color are found jades with red and brown veins caused by the action of iron peroxide. There are yellow jades in which the yellow is tinged with green, also gray jades with white or brown interlacings. The most common variety is green jade, in which color all shades may be found. This infinite variation of color makes its convincing appeal to the side of human nature which can be reached through vision.

Jade, however, has another and more subtle appeal. It is to the delicate sense of touch. Just as painting is appreciated by sight and music by

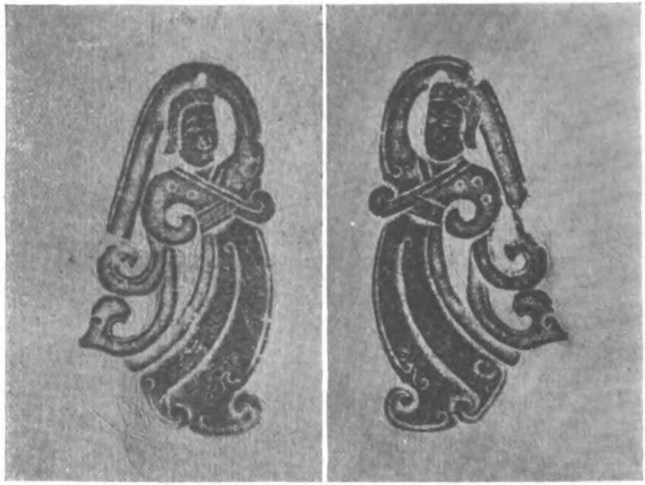
JADE TUBE, HAN DYNASTY



DETAIL OF DECORATION

hearing, so jade offers to its devotee the purest delights of the artistic sensation of touch. It is described as *jun*, which means soft, like morning dew or gentle rain; it also means an elegant, glossy surface. It is a quality which corresponds to

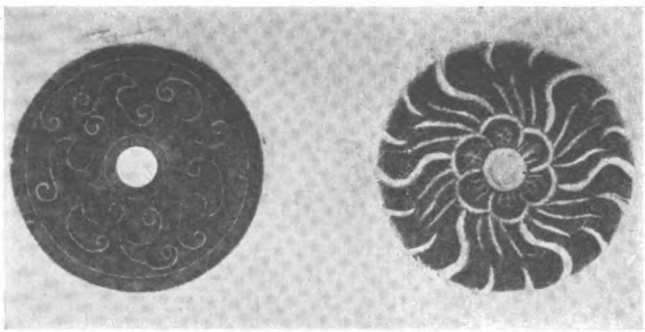
harmony in sound or to grace in movement. It is also defined as *wên*, i.e., warm and smooth, like the flesh of a child; again as *chên mi*, fine and close, like the texture of a delicate silk fabric. I venture



JADE CARVING OF DANCING WOMAN, CHOW DYNASTY

to claim that this artistic appreciation of a sensitive touch is peculiar to the Chinese race and that even among them it has been confined in its expression to this one medium of jade. Those who enjoy the beauty of form into which jade has been carved or its wonderful colorations have missed a good share of artistic enjoyment and appreciation if they have not also learned the delights of jade

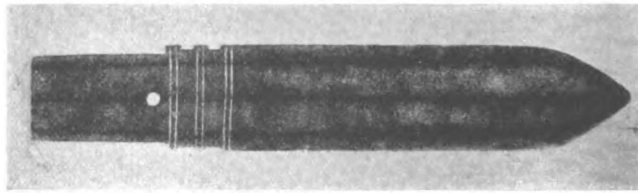
to a sensitive touch. This is a form of artistic feeling new to occidental consciousness, but it cannot fail of recognition, solely for the reason that it has never been applied to any of our art products. It is this peculiar quality of jade which always has been most prized in China.



JADE AMULET, HAN DYNASTY

Many of the pieces of ancient jade which have survived to our times are not decorated or inscribed. Those that are decorated have the same geometric and animal forms as are found on bronzes, and there is little new in artistic motives that can be learned from them. Perhaps the most characteristic decorative motives are taken from the starry firmament—the Great Dipper, groups of stars, and bands of united stars, *lien chu*. One can readily dismiss from consideration the

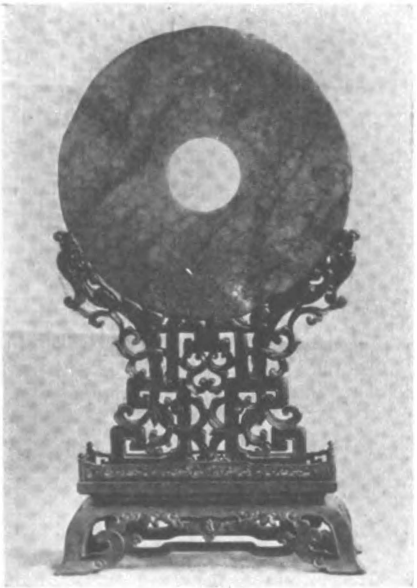
wonderful specimens portrayed in the *Ku Yü T'u P'u* and can assign them to the fertility of imaginative reproduction of the Sung artists, who furnished drawings for the lapidaries of their time. The fact that no such specimens have survived and that this book has never been quoted by later writers as an authority is sufficient to exclude consideration of types peculiar to it. Wu Ta-ch'êng



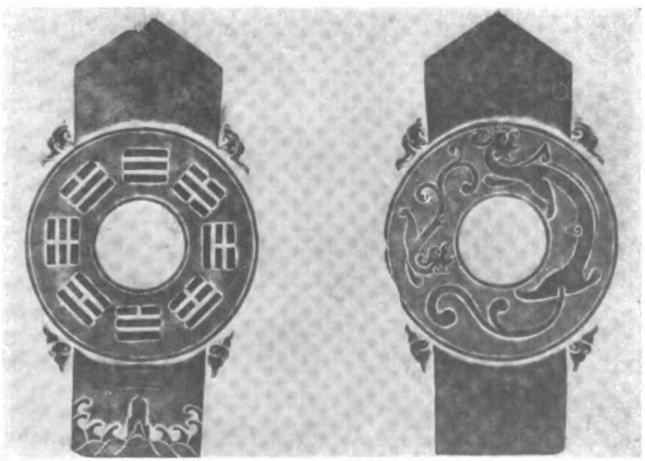
JADE DAGGER, HAN DYNASTY

says of this book that "it is vague, confused, and inaccurate." The only safe method of procedure is to follow the method of Wu Ta-ch'êng in *Ku Yü K'ao*, as adopted by Laufer. This is to work from existing specimens under the guidance of literary records. The sources of information in literature are fewer than in the case of bronzes, but are sufficient to serve as guides along true lines of investigation.

There are three great periods in which jade was especially prized and when jade objects were fabricated, viz., the San Tai and the Han (down



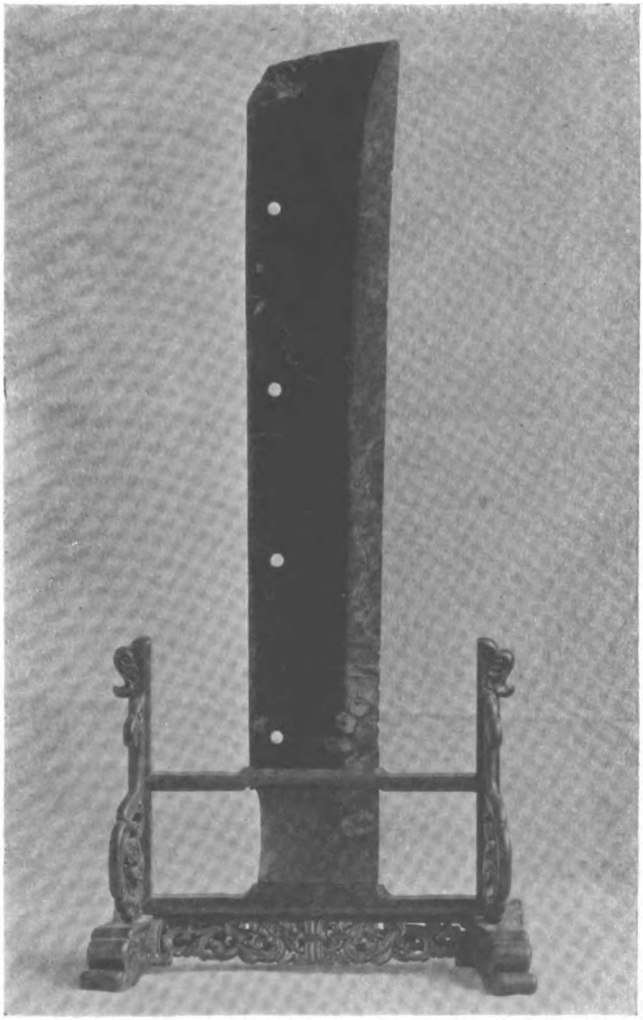
JADE DISK ON STAND, HAN DYNASTY



JADE DISK-TABLET, HAN DYNASTY

to A.D. 221), the T'ang-Sung (A.D. 618–1277), and pre-eminently the Ch'ien Lung period (A.D. 1736–1796). Reference to ancient jade means jade belonging to the dynasties precedent to A.D. 221, and reference to modern jades means those of the Ch'ien Lung or later periods. Some of the most beautiful specimens which are now known belong to the T'ang-Sung period, when jade was held in high esteem by the wealthy, influential classes and when artists of known repute furnished proofs for lapidaries, as they did for makers of ink and of bronze mirrors. Such proofs were called *p'u*, were painted on silk or paper, and may still be occasionally seen in collections.

An interesting example of ancient jade is the large scepter, *ta kuei*. It was the symbol of imperial sovereignty. It was carried by an emperor in his girdle, where it was attached by cords passing through the circular holes in the scepter. When he granted formal audiences, he held it in his right hand upright to the shoulder, where it rested comfortably on account of the smoothing-off of the upper edge near the end. This tablet is one of three that were taken, in 1902, from the grave of Shao Kung, who is said to have died in B.C. 1053. While Tuan Fang was governor of Shen-si province, he ordered the repairing of this grave, but in the process the masonry collapsed



JADE TABLET, TA KUEI, CHOW DYNASTY

and these scepters were found. One remains in the possession of Tuan Fang's family, one belongs to Fêng Kung-tu, of Peking, and the third is now in an American collection. It is not decorated or inscribed. The color is a combination of brown, yellow, and dark shades. Shao Kung was the link between the Shang and Chow dynasties, so that this is one of the earliest authenticated specimens of jade. A jade scepter with a phoenix on one side and a man's head on the other is owned by Huang Chung-hui and is by him attributed to the emperor Shao Hao (B.C. 2598–2514). Its form is that of the *hsin kuei*, which were carried by officers of the rank of marquis during audiences. It is a beautiful specimen, but there seems no good reason for assigning this piece to any special period, although I have no doubt that such work was done in very remote antiquity in China.

Other interesting examples are those of the figure of a lady from the collection of Wang I-jung and by him attributed to the Chow dynasty, of a man's face used as a cap ornament, of flat bells, of seals, and of spear heads. The decoration of a large disk, *pi*, is characteristic of the good work of ancient jade. The disk has a diameter of $8\frac{1}{16}$ inches and a bore of $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches. It has concentric, wide bands around the bore and outer

rim, both richly decorated with conventional scrolls. The outer scroll is of square geometric designs and the inner of interlacing lines. Two concentric bands divide the flat surface of the disk midway between the inner and outer bands. This division allows different decoration on the inner and outer halves of the disk. The outer half is a decoration of intertwining dragons, of which there are pairs. Each pair is separated from the adjoining one by a circular disk representing the sun. The decoration of the inner half is of cloud pattern scroll, *yün wên*. The reverse side of the disk has concentric bands around the bore and outer rim decorated in the same style as on the obverse. The flat surface, however, is not divided into inner and outer halves, but is covered with a bold design of *k'uei lung* or undeveloped dragon.

A curious example of the symbolism of the San Tai period is the fantastic creature made to serve as the neck of a violin, *yao ch'in*. The head of the creature is divided into four lobes as a reminder of the four classes of ancient music, viz., that which resembles the noise of a deer, the call of the fabulous beast, *tsou yu*, the beating of sandal-wood, and the voice of Wên Wang. There are perforations for five strings. The squatting posture makes possible the holding of this neck

in the hand so as to be comfortable and easy. More usual is the symbolism by which a round disk, *pi*, was used in the worship of earth, and other shapes for the four points of the compass.

JADE CUP ON STAND, SUNG DYNASTY

Jade was also the most precious gift to the dead. It was used in preparing the body for burial by providing a cover for the eyelids and mouth and a stopper for the nose and ears. It was also used

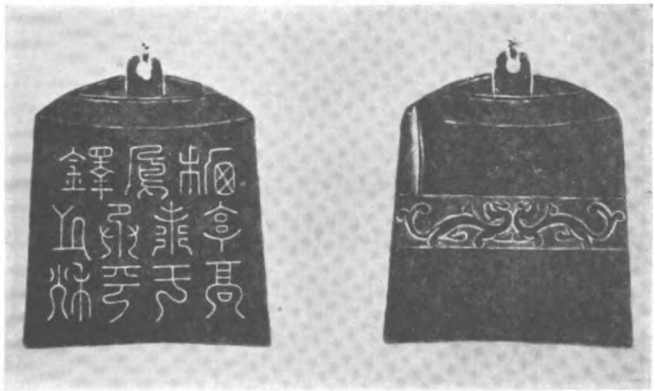
as weights for holding the burial clothes in place, and for this purpose small holes were bored in the

DETAIL OF ONE SECTION OF DECORATION ON JADE CUP ILLUSTRATED ON PAGE 76

reverse side through which the jade objects could be sewed on. For these purposes, jade of white color was preferred.

The uses of modern jades have been described by Bushell in a translation from a Chinese writer: "Among the large things carved in jade, we have all kinds of ornamental vases and receptacles for flowers, large round dishes for fruit, wide-mouthed bowls, and cisterns; among smaller objects, pendants for the girdle, hairpins, and rings. For the banquet table there are bowls, cups, and ewers for wine; as congratulatory gifts, a variety of round medallions and oblong talismans with inscriptions. Beakers and vases are provided, to be frequently replenished at wine-parties, a wine-pot with its prescribed set of three cups for bridal ceremonies. There is a statuette of the Buddha of long life to pray to for length of days, a screen carved with the eight immortal genii for Taoist worship. Ju-i scepters and fretwork mirror-stands are highly valued for betrothal gifts; hairpins, ear-rings, studs for the forehead, and bracelets for personal adornment. For the scholar's study the set of three, tripod, vase, and box, is at hand for burning incense; for more luxurious halls sculptured flowers of jade and jewels in jade pots are arranged in pairs, displaying flowers appropriate to the current season of the year. Combs of jade are used to dress the black tresses of beauty at dawn, pillows of jade for the divan, to snatch

"a dream of elegance at noon. Rests for the writer's wrist lie beside the ink pallet, weights are made for the tongue of the dead laid out for the funeral. Rouge-pots and powder-boxes provide the damsel with the bloom of the peach,

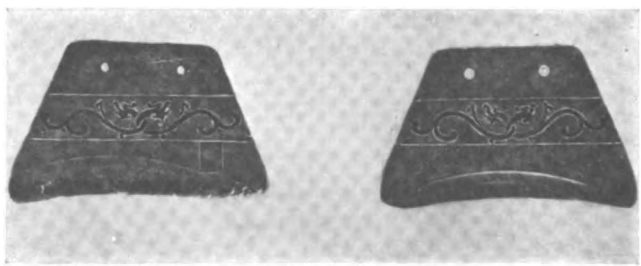


REVERSE OBVERSE

JADE BELL, SUNG DYNASTY

brush-pots and ink-rests hold the weapons of the scholar in his window. The eight precious emblems of good fortune—the wheel of the law, conch-shell, umbrella, canopy, lotus-flower, jar, pair of fish, and endless knot—are ranged on the altar of the Buddhist shrine; pomegranates bursting open to display the seeds, sacred peaches, and Buddha's hand citrons appear as symbols of the three all-prayed-for abundances—

JADE DRAGON CARVING, SUNG DYNASTY



JADE PENDANT, HAN DYNASTY

"of sons, of years, of happiness. Linked chains of jade are tokens of lasting friendship, jade seals attest the authenticity of important documents. There are beads for the rosary, to number the invocations of Buddha, paper-weights for the writing table of the scholar, tassel ornaments for the fan screen hiding the face of the coquette, and keyless locks of jade for clasping round the necks of children. Among other things may be mentioned mortars and pestles for pounding drugs, thumb-rings for protecting the hand of the archer from the recoil of the bowstring, jade mouthpieces for the pipes of tobacco smokers, and jade chopsticks for gourmands."

The beauty of good specimens of jade, especially of ancient jade, is not only appreciated by the eye, but also, as has been pointed out, by the sense of touch. It is unique in making this double appeal to the aesthetic taste. It may readily be granted that it is not a branch of art that can become popular with a large number of people. Its subtlety restricts its enjoyment to the few, but to them it provides, in every sense, the refinement of artistic feeling.

III

STONES AND CERAMICS

STONES

The paucity of ancient stone monuments cannot be accounted for by the difficulty of working in this hard material nor by any lack of suitable varieties of stone in the districts where civilization flourished. Jade is harder than stone, and it must also have been very scarce; yet it was fabricated into artistic shapes at the very dawn of Chinese life. One reason for the neglect of the use of stone is doubtless that its products did not fit into the ancient Chinese scheme of life, i.e., ceremonial vessels could not be fashioned from it with such perfect technique as from bronze; neither was there any place for stone in divination. Furthermore, stone is coarse of grain and cold. It breathes no warmth of feeling except in the hands of the greatest artists, and in China these all preferred to work in bronze and jade. Such materials did not require great muscular strength in the manipulation of tools and did not make it impossible for artists to turn their hands to the more delicate process of plying the stylus or writing-brush. From the earliest times, the

TABLET OF BUDDHA PREACHING

ability to write ideographs in an artistic fashion has been the beau-ideal of cultured Chinese, and anything which interfered with writing was to be strictly avoided. This calligraphy has required a careful development of muscular delicacy rather than strength, and artists have been unwilling to sacrifice the arm-power necessary for writing to that needed in sculpture. Another reason is that stone sculpture where it has chiefly flourished has devoted itself to human subjects, and in Chinese philosophy man stands at the end in the trinity of heaven, earth, and man. It was more important, in the opinion of the Chinese, that they should discover the will of Heaven and placate the powers of Earth through ceremony and divination than that they should busy themselves with perpetuating the figures of their fellow human beings.

The earliest stone remains, *k'o shih*, concern a student of art only to the extent of the beauty of the ideographs in the inscriptions; otherwise they are devoid of decoration or beauty of shape. Such early tablets as the Shang Shu or T'ai Shan are of profound interest to the student of epigraphy, for they form an essential link between the "tortoise-shell cracks and birds' tracks" writing found in inscriptions on bronze vessels or on oracular bones and the written characters of literature;

but their crudity makes it possible to pass them over in a study of the development of art in China, without making any break in continuity and without neglect of any influence which should be noted in later periods. Epigraphy is a fascinating study among Chinese savants. Tuan Fang made a wonderful collection of stones, but it was wholly intended as an aid in the decipherment and interpretation of ancient inscriptions. I have a complete set of rubbings of his best specimens, but have found in them no aid to artistic studies. The contents of this collection may be found in the publication *T'ao Chai Chi Shih Lu.*

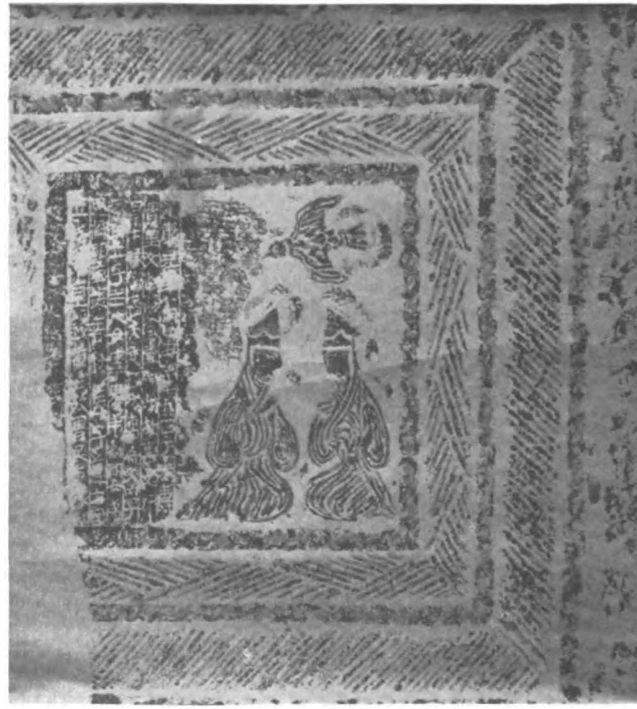
Fortunately, the process of making paper rubbings from monuments is coeval with the making of books and manuscripts. This has perpetuated these records. The method of making rubbings at the present time probably does not differ much from the original process. It is as follows: Thin white paper made of bamboo pulp is wetted with a solution of seaweed and then spread over the face of the object, where it is forced into all depressions by the use of a stiff brush. After the paper dries, it is inked, and the desired impression is obtained. Such rubbings have the great advantage of accuracy, as well as of convenience of transmission. Rubbings of all the ancient stone tablets of China have been made.

These have been collected into books, commencing with the Sung dynasty, during which period Ou-Yang Hsiu and Hung Kua were pioneers in examining and commenting upon these records. Whenever a new tablet has been discovered, it has been carefully noted in revisions of early books or by later publications. It can be said with accuracy that there is in China practically no stone monument of artistic or literary importance of which one cannot obtain information in books that have been written on this general subject. Western students have been slow to avail themselves of the information contained in these scholarly books. The first to lead the way in this, as in so many other directions, was Bushell, who read a paper before the Oriental Congress assembled in Berlin in 1881 on "Inscriptions from the Tombs of the Wu Family, Located at Tzu-yün Mountain, 28 *li* South of Chia-hsiang, Shan-tung Province." Chavannes followed up this work by making two extended tours in China in the investigation of monuments. After his first journey, he published *La sculpture sur pierre en Chine au temps des deux dynasties Han* (Paris, 1893) and, after the second, his monumental illustrated *Mission archéologique dans la Chine septentrionale.* In both of these books Chavannes has made large use of rubbings,

and most of his illustrations are photographs of them.

The earliest stone shaped into the form of a tablet, *pei*, is at Pao-ch'êng, Shen-si province, and is dated A.D. 63, the sixth year of the famous emperor Ming Ti, who introduced Buddhism into China. This tablet commemorates in an inscription the completion of a section of the Great Wall, built to check the ravages of the Hsiung-nu. Another early stone is found at Hsin-tu, Sze-ch'uan province, and is dated A.D. 105. There are also five stones on the famous Sung Mountain in Têng-fêng, Ho-nan province, which I have had no opportunity to examine either by visiting the site or by seeing rubbings. The earliest stone with decorative design is usually considered to be the burial stone of Wên Shu-yang at Yü-t'ai, Shan-tung province. It is dated A.D. 144, the first year of the emperor Chien K'ang. The design is that of two figures squatting on their knees and sitting tête-à-tête. Both wear the high official head-gear and wide-flowing robes, and both have their arms folded within their spacious sleeves. Over their heads auspiciously hovers a bird in flight. To the left is an inscription in six lines. Around the outside of the design and inscription is a series of three squares resembling frames. On account of this tablet having

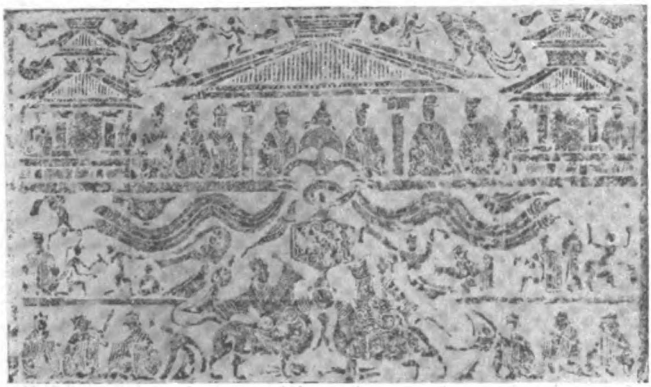
a design of human figures, it belongs to the class of *hua hsiang*, i.e., tablets with figures, as distinguished from *pei*, tablets.



WÊN SHU-YANG STONE, A.D. 144

There is a similar stone, of which I obtained a rubbing, at T'ai-an fu, but the location of which I have not been able to learn definitely, though

it is said to have come from Chia-hsiang, Shantung province. It has figures similar in dress and position of body to those of the Wên Shu-yang stone, but the design is much more elaborate. It is a bout between two mounted knights, with musicians on either side in the lowest panel



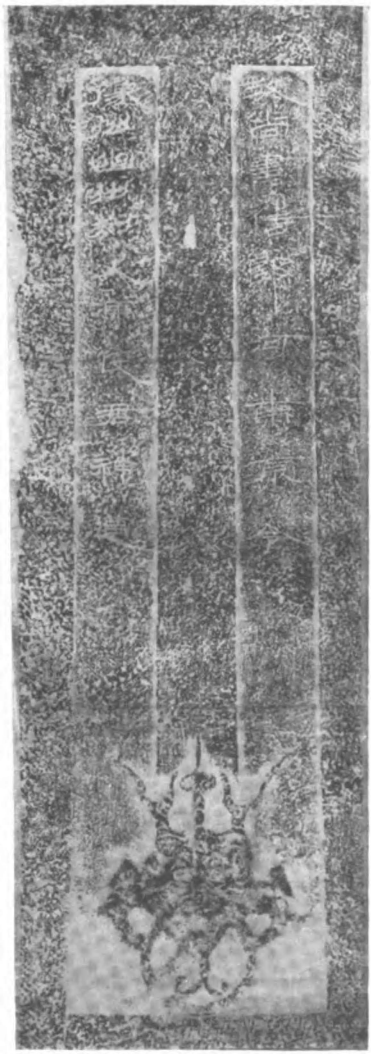
FUNERARY-CHAMBER DECORATION, SECOND CENTURY

and gymnastic performances in the panel above. The architectural designs of the central and two side pavilions correspond with the detailed description found in literary records. On the roof of the main pavilion, a male and a female phoenix have alighted from opposite directions and are being welcomed by an attendant. There are also several pairs of swallows. This stone, together with the Wên Shu-yang stone, doubtless

represents the type of work which was later copied at Lo-yang in the Lung Mên grottoes, when Buddhistic scenes came to replace those taken from history or tradition. As examples of this earlier type these stones are of great importance.

A paper published in the *Journal of the North China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Shanghai, 1917, by Victor Segalen, assigns the Fêng pillars at Ch'ü-hsien, Sze-ch'uan province, to the year A.D. 121. He does not state on what authority this date has been chosen, and I have not been able to find any date on the rubbings of the stone. *Fang Pei Lu* classifies it among undated stones, but assigns it to the Han period. It is a splendid specimen of early work. It has a rectangular base. This base supports a shaft crowned with a corbel over which is a roof. The shaft is inscribed with ideographs beautifully written and giving the titles of the man Fêng, at the entrance to whose grave this pillar was erected. Such cemetery pillars are called *shên tao ch'üeh*, "pillars of the spirit's pathway." At the base of the shaft is a strange design, resembling a crab spider, which is not mentioned by Segalen and the use of which is peculiar to this one tablet, as far as is known to me.

The best-known of the early stones are those of the Wu Liang Tz'ŭ at Chia-hsiang, Shan-tung



FÊNG STONE PILLARS, A.D. 121, CH'Ü-
HSIEN, SZE-CH'UAN PROVINCE

province. About ten miles south of the city of Chia-hsiang, at the foot of the Tzu-yün Mountain, funerary chambers were erected by the Wu family. There are inscriptions in honor of various members of the family, four of which have been preserved, viz., those of Wu K'ai-ming, who died A.D. 148, of his brother, Wu Liang (died A.D. 151), and of the two sons of Wu K'ai-ming,

CONFUCIUS MEETING LAOTSE (FROM WU LIANG TZ'U)

Wu Pan (died A.D. 145) and Wu Jung, who died A.D. 167. Wu Pan, whose death occurred before the others, at the early age of twenty-five had already been Lieutenant-Governor of Tun-huang, now in Kan-su province, the place at which Stein discovered his stone house. Wu Jung was an officer in the palace at Lo-yang (Ho-nan fu). Both of these brothers, therefore, had come in contact with the influences of the western part of their country. It would be interesting to know if those who erected the earlier tablet of Wên Shu-yang had also traveled in western China, for in that case it would be easy to come

to the conclusion that stone monuments originated in the Shu district, which comprised all of western China. This is suggested by Segalen, but no such theory has been advanced by any Chinese critic, and it is safer to assert as a working hypothesis that the imperial conquests of the Ts'in and Han dynasties allowed such freedom of intercommunication as to cause simultaneous development of new methods.

These funerary chambers of the Wu family, with their two pillars of approach, have been fully described, in their minutest details, by Chinese authors. Rubbings of them have been taken, of which Chavannes has given a complete photographic reproduction in his *Mission archéologique.* There were an anterior and a posterior chamber, also one to the right and another to the left, thus forming the usual arrangement of a Chinese residence around a rectangular courtyard. Ancient legendary scenes were represented, commencing with Fu Hsi and extending down through the period of the Five Emperors. These were succeeded chronologically by historical and classical scenes, such as Confucius meeting Laotse, which in their turn were followed by illustrations of domestic life in the Wu family. These pictographs are executed in low relief. They are full of life and show a good degree of artistic taste.

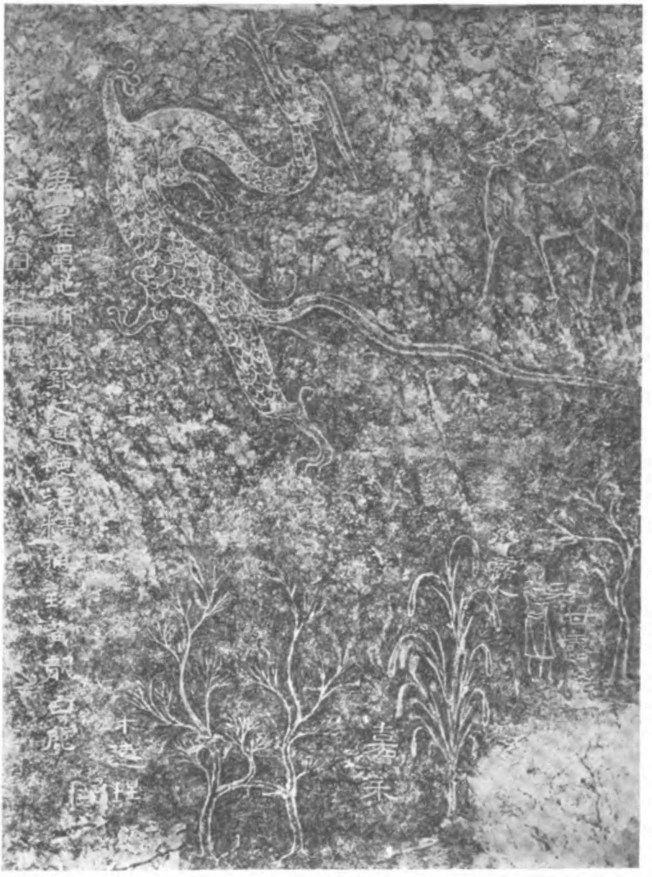
They exhibit two conventions which are common to the metopes and friezes of Greece. The heads of the persons portrayed are kept as far as possible on the same level, whether they are seated in a chariot, are walking, or are on horseback. Another convention is the adaptation of the size of the figure to the relative importance of the person represented. A servant is always smaller in size than his master, an animal smaller in proportion than a human being. This is the artist's tribute to the idealist spirit which placed moral considerations on a higher plane than visible effects. The technique of these tablets is not equal to that found on similar work of earlier origin in Greece, but rivals it in the vigor of life-movement and in harmony of conception. It is worthy of note that the name of the sculptor, Li Ti-mao, is inscribed on one of the pillars. As a rule, nothing is known of the names of sculptors, and no mention is made of them on their works. There are other remains in Shan-tung—notably on Hsiao-t'ang Mountain in Fei-ch'êng—which are carved in the same style of work as that found in the Wu family chambers.

Two memorial pillars erected in honor of Shên at Ch'ü-hsien, Sze-ch'uan, belong to the Han dynasty and probably to the second century A.D. One has an inscription of four ideographs and

SHÊN MEMORIAL PILLARS, SECOND CENTURY, AT CH'Ü-HSIEN, SZE-CH'UAN PROVINCE

the other of seven, over which, in both cases, is a fine figure of a phoenix. These are the noblest examples of early Chinese sculpture. The design is strong, and the figures are full of nervous energy, especially in the long neck. The extended wings also add life to the figures. These birds compare favorably with the sculptural designs of any country and make these pillars one of the great art treasures of China.

Another stone of great importance is located at Ch'ên hsien, Kan-su province. It bears no date, but a short distance behind it is another stone which refers to Li Hsi and which is dated A.D. 171, fourth year of Chien Ning. This is the earliest attempt to represent landscape on stone. At the top of the stone to the right there is a deer and to the left a dragon. At the bottom are two trees joined together by a branch growing into both of them. At the center of this branch a shoot springs up. To the right is a pool of water, by the side of which are two trees. Under the trees to the left stands a man with arm extended, as if elevating some votive offering. As the inscription praises the virtue of Li Hsi, who was a local official, the design of the engraving is to represent the excellent crops, *chia ho*, which had been vouchsafed to the district during his incumbency. The dragon represents the benevo-



LI HSI STONE, A.D. 171

lent rain which fills the pools, and the deer speaks of the blessing of length of days. The name of the tablet is "Five Omens of the Frog Pool"—*Ming ch'ih wu jui.*

There are two other stones of the Han dynasty which deserve especial attention. One is a slab which was over the portal of a funerary chamber

STONE OF FUNERARY CHAMBER, SECOND CENTURY

erected in honor of the wife of a lieutenant-governor of a southwestern frontier district. It has a fine figure of a recumbent deer with spreading antlers. The other is located near Yang-chow at Pao-ying, on the Grand Canal, whither it was removed from Chiang-tu in 1830 by the descendants of Wang, who discovered the stone in 1785. It has three panels, the upper being the figure of a phoenix, the lower being the figure of a warrior rushing into combat with a shield in his left hand,

which is thrust out in front of him, and an unsheathed sword in his right hand. These examples of stone sculpture are all of the second century A.D., and they are the earliest known to Chinese archeologists; but Segalen claims to have discovered a figure at the grave of Ho Ch'ü-ping dated B.C. 117. Greater details of this discovery are needed before this date can be accepted.

The epoch of the Three Kingdoms, which succeeded the Han dynasty, has left a few inscribed tablets, but none of them is decorated. During the period of division between the North and South (A.D. 420–907), the northern frontier tribes became increasingly troublesome. The stirring events of those days center around the raids of the Mu-yung and To-ba tribes (the two divisions of the original tribe Hsien-pi) and the deeds of the two generals, Fu Chien (A.D. 337–384) and Wang Mêng (A.D. 325–375). After the principality of Yen (modern Chih-li) had been annexed to Tsin, General Fu Chien brought 40,000 Turkic families and settled them in the neighborhood of his capital at P'ing Ch'êng (modern Ta-t'ung fu). It was without doubt these families which brought the Gandhara motives eastward and produced the statuary in the P'ing Ch'êng grottoes at Ta-t'ung fu, which Chavannes has named from the adjacent village, Yün-kang.

This crude, inartistic, unspiritual statuary has never called for more than a passing notice by Chinese critics, for in addition to its lack of aesthetic appeal it has been considered as un-Chinese. It is in a class by itself and stands apart from the main current of the evolution of art in China. The chief reason for ruling this sculpture out of the class of Chinese productions is its entire lack of appreciation of the culture of China, shown in its neglect of any literary inscription. This clearly labels it as the work of men who were not Chinese in education or culture. Full details of these grottoes may be found in Chavannes' *Mission archéologique*.

The Northern Wei dynasty made its capital at P'ing-ch'êng until the reign of Hsiao Wên Ti, the son of Toba Hung, when it was removed to Lo-yang, in Ho-nan, which had been the capital during the Later Han dynasty. Hsiao Wên Ti was a man of refinement and a good scholar. He was an ardent disciple of Confucius, on whom he conferred an honorific title. Not long after his arrival at his new capital, he caused a statue to be erected in honor of an old man of Lo-yang. This was in A.D. 493, and from that date onward Lo-yang became the chief influence in the erection of stone statues and bas-reliefs in the grottoes on the hillsides of northwestern Ho-nan. The in-

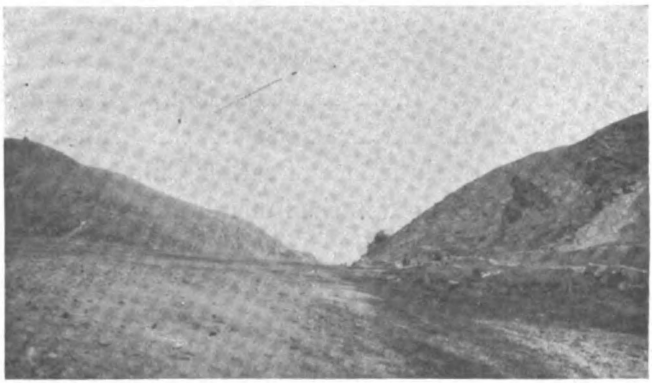
SHE YANG STONE, SECOND CENTURY

[101]

fluence of the culture of the new capital may be seen in the contrast of the quality of sculpture in the vicinity of Lo-yang with the unfinished work of the Yün-kang grottoes near the former capital. In Lo-yang the old classical influences of China, which centered here during the Han dynasty and retained their original strength, exerted their converting power over the sculpture which the Buddhists imported from Gandhara through P'ing Ch'êng. Literary inscriptions were attached to stone reliefs, as was the custom in the Han dynasty, and, though the subjects were exclusively Buddhistic, they were treated in refined taste and with due regard for Chinese tradition.

The first site chosen for the glorification of Buddhism had been long famous in history. I Ch'üeh, about ten miles south of Lo-yang, is the opening in the hills through which the I River flows to join the Lo before it empties into the Yellow River. Precipitous hills of Cambro-Ordovician limestone are on both sides of the narrow valley, and these became known as the pillars of I, *I Ch'üeh.* It was known in the "Spring and Autumn Annals" as *Chow Ch'üeh Sai* and was associated with the legendary exploits of the Great Yü in his conservancy of the waters of the empire. It had also been the scene of many important military engagements. The rocky hill

on the left bank has a water-worn fissure about ten feet wide, which came to be known as "The Gate of the Dragon," Lung Mên, and this is now the popular local name of the whole place. Lung Mên has been widely exploited, and from its

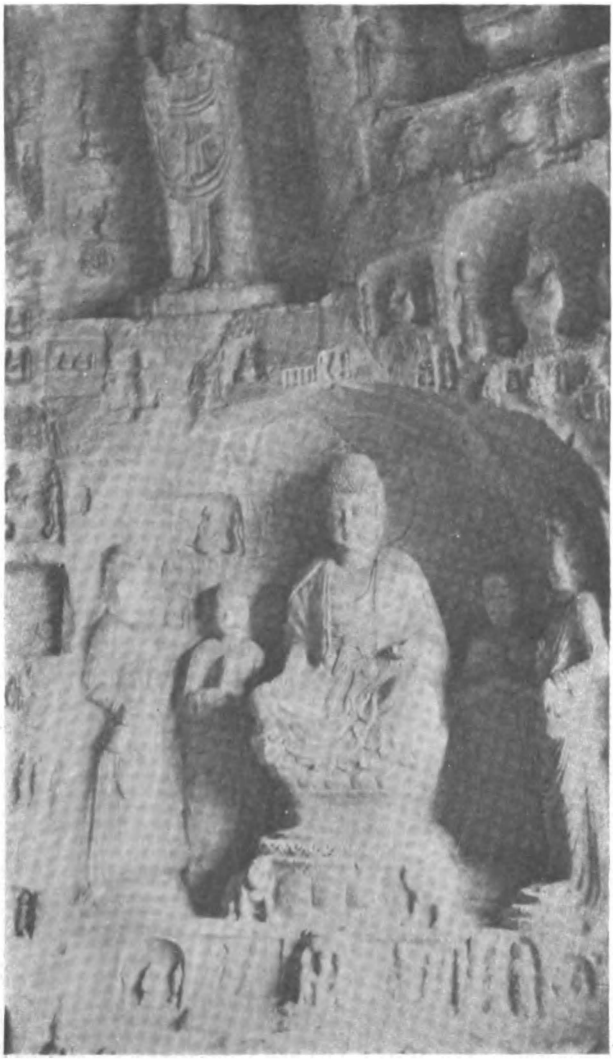


VIEW OF LUNG MÊN

hillside many of the stone figures now known in western countries have come.

The stone sculpture of this district, which was commenced in an artistically orthodox manner by Hsiao Wên Ti in his erection of a heroic statue, flourished with a new motive during the reign of his son Hsüan Wu Ti, who came to the throne as an infant. This emperor was surrounded by courtiers devoted to Buddhism, and during his reign there are said to have been erected more than

13,000 temples. The title of his reign was changed three times. It was first Ching Ming (500–504), then Chêng Shih (504–508), Yung P'ing (508–512), and finally Yen Ch'ang (512–516). The earliest image, *tsao hsiang*, at Lung Mên bears the date A.D. 502—the third year of this emperor—and from this time on through the remaining years of his reign images were produced in great numbers. They are more refined and are of higher grade than the earlier work at the Yün-kang grottoes, for the influence of earlier Chinese sculpture, such as is found in the funerary chambers at Chia-hsiang, Shan-tung, was felt in court circles and softened the harshness of the earlier Buddhistic importation. It will be noticed that I have begun to use a new term—image—and in this I am following strictly the Chinese usage, which has steadily refused to allow these Buddhistic products to be dignified by the use of the ordinary term for reliefs of human figures, *hua hsiang*. The term used, *tsao hsiang*, means literally "erected according to designs" and serves to designate these figures as religious emblems and to differentiate them from other sculpture in stone or from bronzes. It may be allowed that this distinction is the result of the religious prejudices of Confucian scholars; but this prejudice must be taken into account in the art valuations



INTERIOR OF SMALL GROTTO, LUNG MÊN

of a country where the literary class has been the custodian and defender of artistic treasures as well as of classical traditions.

These *tsao hsiang* usually consist of a Buddhistic figure cut in bold relief in a niche out of solid rock, with the highest part of the relief just level with the edge of the niche. The location of the inscription depends upon the relation of the niche to adjoining ones, but whenever possible, it is below the carving. The stone figures, which are known only by the descriptive name *shih hsiang*, are cut in ronde-bosse out of the side of the rock, to which they are attached at the base or back. The mammoth figures are built up out of several pieces, which are cleverly joined together so as to be scarcely visible. These figures are carved on the same general lines as those at P'ing-ch'êng, which were after the models of Gandhara. They show better workmanship than the earlier ones, but in conception they remain emblems of a foreign faith. It may be argued that Buddhism has become so incorporated into the life of China that it should no longer be considered foreign, but this is not, and never has been, officially true. Confucianism and Taoism are indigenous, but Buddhism is exotic. There are many opportunities in American museums at the present time of studying superb examples of the stone figures of this

WEI DYNASTY FIGURES AT LUNG MÊN

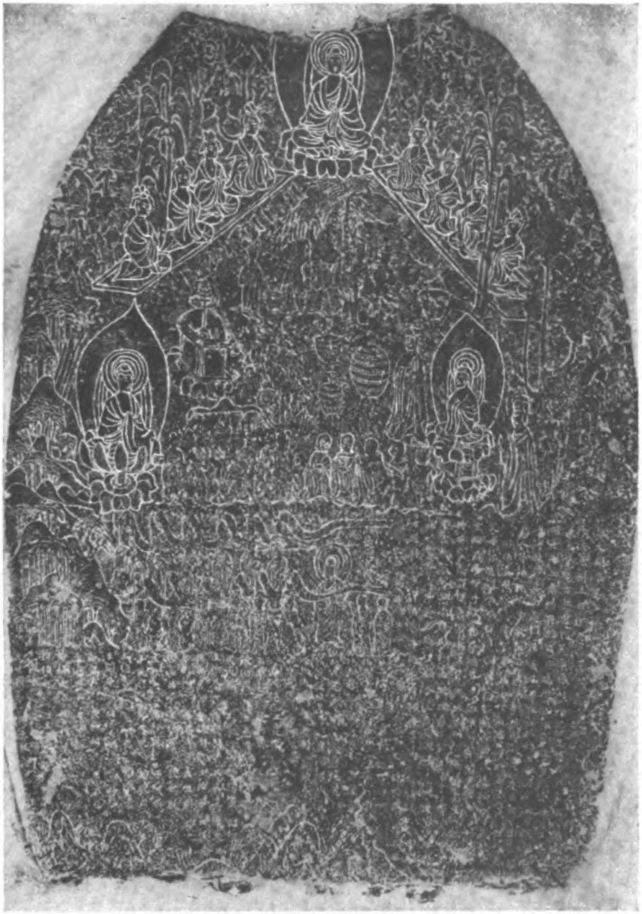
period and also a few specimens of the *tsao hsiang.* Everyone can judge for himself their aesthetic value, according to his own standards. It is sufficient for me to have called attention to the fact that whatever admiration they may elicit from westerners, whose traditions have been derived from Greece, these figures do not form an essential part of the art of China, nor up to the present time have they been sought for by the Japanese, whose art canons are in strict harmony with those of China.

Okakura, in his *Ideals of the East*, pages 78 and 92, has suggested that "a deeper and more informed study of the works of Gandhara itself will reveal a greater prominence of Chinese (than of so-called Greek) influence" and that the sculptures "follow, in the main, so far as we know, the Han dynasty style in features, drapery, and decoration." Considering the fact that the culmination of the art of the Gandhara school may be dated from A.D. 150, it is impossible to agree with Okakura's view, for we have no known Han stones as early as A.D. 50, and the funerary chambers of which he was evidently thinking when he spoke of "drapery and decoration" were built at the close of the second century. Without going into the question of the origin of the Gandhara school, it is quite clear that China borrowed from

STONE FIGURE OF AMITA BUDDHA

Gandhara, through Turkic families, its models for the Yün-kang grottoes. Lung Mên later borrowed from Yün-kang but improved upon the imported style on account of adherence to indigenous classical traditions.

The Lung Mên grottoes commence, in point of time, on the south end of the western hill with the Lao Chün grotto, where the earliest stone carvings are found. The oldest image here is dated A.D. 503—fourth year of Ching Ming. It is in honor of the priest Fah Sêng. The grotto next to this northward is the Lien Hua Kung, "Lotus Palace." Here is the immense figure of Amita Buddha with attendants on both sides. A tablet on the north side was erected by the empress Wu (A.D. 684–705), of the T'ang dynasty. The bases of immense stone pillars may be seen, showing that it was intended to cover this large opening with a roof and make it resemble a palace. Proceeding to the north, one comes to the fissure beyond which the two large characters *I Ch'üeh* are carved on a huge stone on the hillside; then to the Wan Fu grotto, or the grotto of Myriad Buddhas, beyond which is the charming small grotto, Shuan Yao. The last is the Pin Yang grotto, which is really a series of three grottoes with temple buildings around the entrance. These grottoes contain three large figures, and the



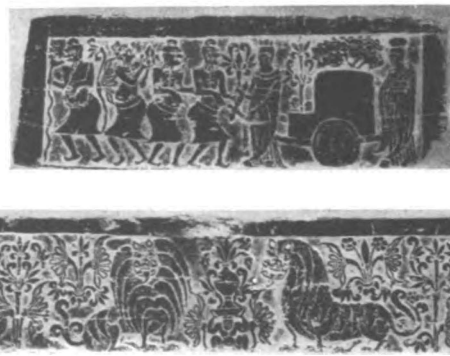
YUNG HSI TABLET, A.D. 534

ceilings are richly decorated. Pin Yang is the first place which one visits when the approach is made from Lo-yang. It is the latest portion of the work, having been executed in the T'ang and Sung dynasties, and is the anticlimax to the nobler creations of the earlier periods found as the visitor sees the other grottoes farther on.

There is a remarkable incised tablet dated A.D. 534—third year of Yung Hsi—in one of these grottoes. It is leaf-shaped and represents a hillside with Buddha seated near the top. Stretching out before him to the right and left are two rows, each of four kneeling attendants, back of whom is a drooping pine-tree. Farther down the hill are three figures standing under a palm-tree, with an attendant on either side. Three other attendants stand lower down. In front of this group are three vessels—a laver, a ewer, and a water-jar. On either side are two other Buddhas seated with folded hands. At the side of the one to the right is an attendant and of the one to the left is an incense-burner holding a twisted coil of incense. Below are three rows of persons forming a procession. The two lower rows carry streamers. To the left and at the bottom of the tablet are hilltops and trees, so as to cast the view into perspective. The technique of this stone is perfect. Unfortunately, the photographic

MAITREYA, A.D. 542

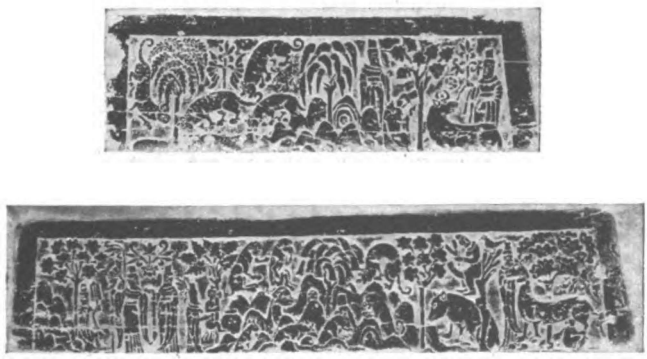
reproduction does it scant justice. Another figure in an adjoining grotto is said in the inscription, dated A.D. 542, to be that of the Mi-leh Buddha, Maitreya. A lone figure is seated on a small couch under an overspreading tree, with a bell swung on a frame at his side and a water-



TWO LI-CH'ÊNG TABLETS

vase in front of him. The design is in bold outlines, and the impression which it creates is striking. The face of this figure closely resembles the traditional representation of the first Chinese patriarch, Bodhidharma. He came to China by sea, arriving A.D. 520, and has been a favorite subject in Buddhistic painting, so that the type of his features is well known. It is probable that the artist who designed this stone had seen Bodhidharma and was so impressed by him that

he gave Maitreya the features of the living missionary, Bodhidharma, just as the early Italian masters transferred the features of their contemporaries to the prophets and saints whom they portrayed.



TWO LI-CH'ÊNG TABLETS

There are other important stones of this period at neighboring places. At Kung hsien, where the Lo River joins the Yellow River, are grottoes on a hillside similar to those of Lung Mên. Some notable stones are at Têng-fêng hsien, Yung-yang hsien, and some distance eastward at Ch'ang-ko hsien. There are also four good stones at Li-ch'êng hsien on the eastern border of Shan-si province. One of these represents a funeral procession with four barbaric figures, having immense

noses, leading the way. The two figures, one in front of the cart and one following it, are of refined Chinese type. The other three stones have figures resembling those found in the paintings of Ku K'ai-chih. The mountain over which different types of animals wander is exactly similar to that found in Ku's scroll belonging to the British Museum. These Li-ch'êng stones evidence a good quality of work. They do not have Buddhistic motives and show the persistence of orthodox teachings, which did not hesitate, even in the midst of powerful Buddhistic surroundings, to assert an earlier tradition.

Stone has been used also as a means of perpetuating pictures by noted artists. Several paintings by Wu Tao-tzŭ have been cut in stone. There is a portrait of Confucius at Ch'ü-fu attributed to Wu and another striking picture representing the struggle of a tortoise with a serpent, *kuei she t'u*, which is in the Prefect's official residence at Ch'êng-tu, Sze-ch'uan. A third beautiful stone is in the Freer collection and has been exhibited in the Metropolitan Museum, New York. It has an incised picture on a flat surface and represents the Goddess of Mercy in her most gracious mood. This stone is a good illustration of the canon that such examples possess three essential characteristics:

the stone is of fine fiber, the picture is full of life, and the chirography of the accompanying inscription is excellent. There is another stone at

EIGHT STEEDS, BY CHAO MÊNG-FU

BAMBOO LEAVES ARRANGED AS IDEOGRAPHS

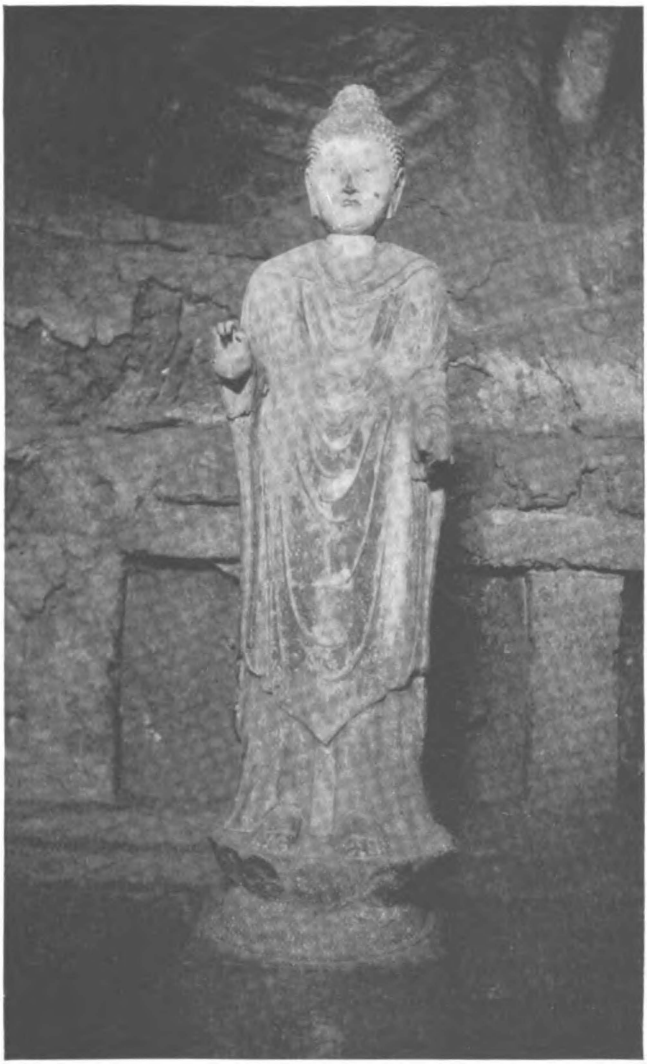
Ch'ü-fu, which bears on its face a picture of "Eight Steeds" by Chao Mêng-fu. A stone in the Tai Miao at T'ai-an fu uses the leaves of two bamboos to form a picture, while at the

same time they are arranged as ideographs containing a poetical effusion. The poem of four lines is given on the left side, and one can read it in the leaves of the bamboo. The couplet, "a poem in a picture and a picture in a poem," is also incised on the tablet, but this use of the poetical quotation seems far-fetched.

DECORATIVE DESIGN ON TABLET, T'ANG DYNASTY

Only one other stone remains to be mentioned. It bears no date and deserves attention only on account of the strange animal figures which are depicted on it. To the left is what seems to be a gorilla, in front of which is a fish. In the panel to the right are a deer and a strange animal walking on its hind legs. This animal is also found on a T'ang dynasty vase.

The earlier and nobler sculptural traditions of China were carried on by the founder of the Liang dynasty, Wu Ti (A.D. 502–550), in the neighborhood of his capital, Nanking. Like Hsiao Wên



T'ANG DYNASTY FIGURE IN PIN YANG GROTTO, LUNG MÊN

Ti of the Wei dynasty, he was a man of classical culture, and this quality of his character is exhibited in the stone remains of his reign, which have been described in *Variétês sinologiques* by Père Gaillard, whose scholarly work was brought to an untimely end by his early death. These remains at Kü-yung, Tan-t'u, and also at places near Purple Mountain, Nanking, show the last survival of a high artistic spirit devoted to expressing itself in stone. The T'ang and Sung dynasties were interested in painting and calligraphy, and, although they produced some excellent specimens, allowed stone sculpture as an art to perish. It has never been revived. It may be said that even in its best days it was more or less an intruder into art circles; its real place was always secondary to the inscriptions recording noted events or recalling the lives of illustrious persons.

CERAMICS

Ceramics find a more natural classification along with bronzes, jades, and stones, than in any other place, for the reason that our earliest known specimens of earthenware were associated with the ancient ceremonies of the Chinese people. They were substituted for bronzes in early burial rites, as they were easier to fabricate and less expensive. In the use of the term "ceramics"

anything is meant which belongs to the fictile arts, including earthenware, stoneware, pottery, and porcelain. It is comprised under the one Chinese word *t'ao*.

In the San Tai period earthenware vessels for domestic use were made, and there also can be little doubt that all of the bronze sacrificial vessels of that early time had their counterparts in clay. One well-authenticated vessel, a *ko* (this pronunciation of the character is more usual than *li*), of the Chow dynasty, is described by Laufer in *Chinese Pottery of the Han Dynasty*, and it is probable that many other similar vessels will be found as ancient graves are opened up. From the Han dynasty have been preserved many examples of vases, *hu;* candlesticks, *têng;* cooking vessels, *tou;* and rectangular food vessels, *kuei*, all modeled after bronze prototypes. Some of these have crude ornamentation, in imitation of the finer products of bronze.

Articles produced from clay have always suffered by comparison with contemporary products in finer materials. They were coarse when placed alongside of the beautiful bronze and jade objects produced in the San Tai. When the use of glaze and color produced the artistically beautiful pottery specimens of the Han, T'ang, and Sung periods, and later the wonderful Ming porcelains,

colors had already been widely used in the production of paintings on paper and on silk. Ceramics have always, therefore, been forced into a subsidiary place among art products by the Chinese. This has not been true of the occidental world, which first learned of the art of China through pottery and porcelain. Even down to the present time, more attention has been given by western students to the study of ceramics than to any other branch of art. The perfection of moulding, the variety of shapes, the brilliance and depth of the glazes, and the soft beauty of the colors have been irresistible. Another reason for the especial attention devoted by westerners to pottery and porcelain is that this study can be conducted easily along the lines of analytic reasoning familiar to our western method of education. Porcelain and pottery objects can be handled

CLAY FIGURE OF A GENERAL

and studied in all their technical details. This analytic method is in contrast to that of Chinese connoisseurs, whose minds have always seemed uncritical according to our standards. It can be said of the Chinese, as Gardner has said of the Greeks, that "they were less fond of analysis than we, and their art was less consciously directed by purpose." A beautiful pottery water-dish or porcelain brush-holder on the table of an artist or poet would be deeply admired and highly praised, but a painting in which these objects were presented or a poem in honor of their beauty would be to him an art of a superior grade. There has not been enough subtlety or elusiveness in pottery and porcelain to attract Chinese artistic fancy. In fact, the whole trend of Chinese mental evolution has contributed to the relegation of ceramics to a subsidiary position in comparison with bronzes, jades, stones, calligraphy, and painting.

This inferiority is reflected in the scarcity of literature in China concerning the development of ceramics. There are a few notes on pottery in *Cho Kêng Lu*—"Notes in the Intervals of Farming"—published in 1368, but these are fragmentary. "The Ceramic Records of Ching-tê Chên"—*Ching-tê Chên T'ao Lu*—published in 1815 and partially translated by Stanislas Julien,

describes the industry as carried on at Ching-tê Chên. Perhaps the most valuable part of this work is chapters viii and ix, which contain a large number of references to pottery and porcelain from general literature. Then there is the best book of all, *T'ao Shuo*—"Description of Pottery"—by Chu Yen, published in 1774 and fully translated by Bushell in *Chinese Pottery and Porcelain*. Chu Yen was a man of profound scholarship. He and Hsiang Yüan-p'ien, of the Ming dynasty, stand alone among the myriad literary men of China as having given critical and appreciative attention to ceramics. No one has yet written in the Chinese language as comprehensive and informative a book as Hobson's two volumes on *Chinese Pottery and Porcelain*. This of itself is the strongest possible confirmation of the fact that ceramics have attained a higher place in our western world than has been conceded this art in China.

In view of the number of available books in the English language on the subject of ceramics, it is unnecessary for me to discuss the various wares and periods in detail. Pottery succeeded earthenware and gradually was supplanted by porcelain. There is much doubt as to the exact period when porcelain objects began to be produced. The usual theory of Chinese writers is that porcelain

originated during the reign of Shih Tsung (A.D. 954–959), of the Later Chow dynasty. Credence is added to this attribution by a flower vase which is on exhibition in the Government Museum, Peking. This is labeled as *Ch'ai Yao* and has the four characters *Hsien-tê niên chih* stamped on the bottom. *Hsiên-tê* is the title of the reign of Shih Tsung. This vase is of thick porcelain and is of a mottled brownish-yellow color. The glaze is brilliant, and it has fine crackle lines. These characteristics agree with the descriptions of the *T'ao Shuo* and of the *Ch'ing Pi Tsang* quoted by Hobson (Vol. I, p. 41) in all respects, with the exception of the color, which is not "the blue of the sky after rain." As a matter of fact, there is no reason why the color should be sky-blue; for, in my opinion, what the emperor Shih Tsung commanded to be produced was a ware which should be as beautiful as the blue of the sky breaking through the clouds after rain, but not necessarily of that particular color. This is the true meaning of the phrase as interpreted by the context; and judged in the light of this explanation there is no reason to doubt the genuineness of the attribution of this particular vase to the type of ware known as *Ch'ai Yao*. It is, therefore, the earliest piece of porcelain now known in China. In his recent publication *The Beginnings of Porcelain*

in China, 1917, Dr. Berthold Laufer has called attention to Chinese porcelain of an earlier date, found at Samarra, the former residence of the Caliphs. According to F. Sarre, who carefully

POTTERY PILGRIM BOTTLE, SUNG DYNASTY

figures and describes these objects, they belong to a period which is well determined by the years 838–883. It is probable that further investigation will reveal the knowledge and use of porcelain at a still earlier period.

A complete history of Chinese ceramics may be found in two books, viz., *Chinese Pottery of the*

"OLIVE" POTTERY VASE

Han Dynasty by Berthold Laufer (Leyden: E. J. Brill, Ltd.) and *Chinese Pottery and Porcelain*, in two volumes, by R. L. Hobson (London: Cassell). This may be supplemented by reference to the illustrations found in *Chinese Porcelain and Hard Stones* by Gorer and Blacker, *Catalogue of the Morgan Collection of Chinese Porcelains* by Bushell and Laffan, *Chinese Pottery of the Han, T'ang, and Sung Dynasties* by Parish Watson, and the catalogue of Chinese Pottery published by the Metropolitan Museum, New York. Splendid collections both of pottery and of porcelain may also be seen in various museums.

A few illustrations are given of recent finds, some of which are types that are brought to public notice for the first time. One is a pilgrim bottle modeled after a bronze type of the Han dynasty. It has a flattened body with loops on the periphery. The decoration is the same as that on a jar in the Rothenstein Collection, illustrated in Hobson's *Chinese Pottery and Porcelain*, fig. 4, plate 30. It is Tz'ŭ-chou ware of the Sung dynasty. Another unusual example is that of a vase which is correctly called "olive" vase, *kan-lan p'ing*, and differs in line from a *mei p'ing*, such as is illustrated by Hobson in fig. 1, plate 79. It is a T'ang dynasty vase and was used on a temple altar as a receptacle for incense-sticks after the fragrant dust

POTTERY CREMATION RECEPTACLE

had burned off in the central incense-burner. Two sides are illustrated: one is the figure of an abbot, and the other is a strange, hideous beast walking on its hind legs. This beast resembles a figure on stone to which attention has been called on page 118. I am inclined to think that the creature is the fabulous beast *suan yi*, said to be the eighth among the nine offspring of the dragon. It is also described as a wild horse, able to travel five hundred *li* in a day. It is fond of smoke and fire and hence is appropriate as a figure placed on incense-burners or receptacles. The space intervening between the figures is decorated with graceful bamboos. A third object is a receptacle for the ashes of a priest after cremation. It is called *han*, an envelope. The lid is hill-shaped, *po shan*. On one face is a panel, in which the names of the temple and the priest are given, but I have not been able to identify them as yet, for the reason that the names of early temples have been frequently changed. The fourth specimen is a jar on three feet. It has eight semi-circular panels. The decoration is in imitation of the skin of a winter squash, and the color is that of a ripe squash. The cover has a triangular knob corresponding to the three feet. The inside of this jar is unglazed.

Whatever may be the position to which China has relegated pottery and porcelain, they will

EIGHT-PANEL POTTERY JAR

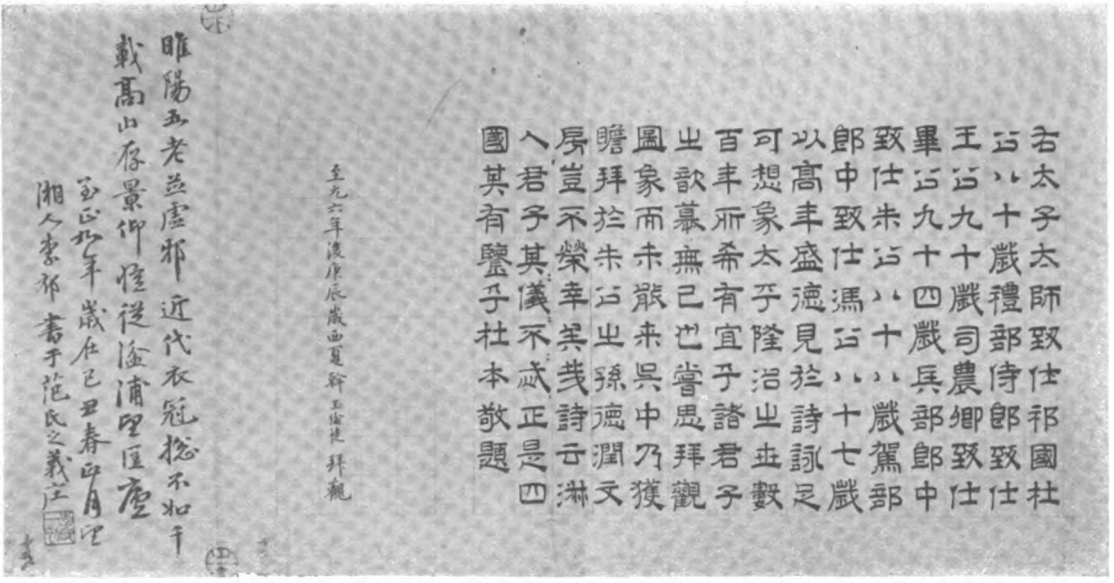
PORCELAIN VASE DECORATED FOR IMPERIAL USE, BY KU YÜEH-HSIEN

always remain for the occidental the most favorite field of Chinese art. The richness of colors found in the *Chün Yao*, the purity of the *Ting Yao*, with its graceful incised decorations, the charm of the pale green of the *Lung-ch'üan Yao*—these show an appreciation of color combined with skilful modeling which has never been equaled in pottery by any other nation. The black-grounds, green-grounds, and yellow-grounds of porcelain, together with the apple-greens, peach-blooms, clair-de-lunes, sang-de-bœufs, and pure whites, are a splendid exhibition of high artistic spirit.

IV

CALLIGRAPHY AND PAINTING

The common origin of writing and drawing, which developed into painting, is generally acknowledged by Chinese authorities. The attempt to trace designs of visible objects was accompanied by the effort to record and perpetuate mental ideas. The legendary origin of writing and drawing assigns them both to ministers of the Yellow Emperor, Huang Ti (B.C. 2600). Ts'ang Ch'ieh is given the credit for the invention of writing and Shi Huang for that of drawing, though some authorities join these two names as belonging to one individual. These ascriptions must not be taken as historically correct; it is only one of the many legends or oral traditions which are narrated by the earliest Chinese historians to account for such civilization as they found already flourishing. The most important part of the legend is the fact of the union of these two arts, writing and drawing, from the very beginning of tradition and history in China. They are but two parts of a harmonious whole. Images and ideas must have drawings and symbols, in order to be communicated from man to man and



COLOPHON OF THE "FIVE VENERABLE MEN," WU LAO T'U

from generation to generation, when the object cannot be seen nor the human voice heard. The union of these two subjects is a natural one and is obvious in the later development of ideographs and paintings. The union became more intimate after the introduction of the writing-brush and ink. From that time onward, the calligraphist and the painter used the same brush and ink for their two classes of work. The classes were grouped together after the death of artists and calligraphists as "ink remains," *mo yüan*.

This essential union of writing and painting, *shu hua*, has been responsible for the continuous purpose in China of using ideographs to express ideas not only accurately but also artistically. This remarkable fact has been true of writing from its origin down to the present time, and in this respect Chinese writing is unique among the written languages of the world. When writing was done with a stylus upon bamboo pulp, the beautiful ideographs were similar to designs. They were, in fact, suggestive designs—as may be seen from the characters representing a deer, pig, or dragon, as found on bronzes of the Shang dynasty. The introduction of the writing-brush, during the Ts'in dynasty, is usually ascribed to Mêng T'ien (died B.C. 209), who was a general of the First Emperor, Shih Huang, and in charge

of the building of the Great Wall. This made painting possible, while at the same time it enabled writers to shape ideographs with precise regard for thin and thick shadings. The exact use of the correct amount of "strength" in the plying of the brush involved most careful discipline and constant practice. One of the great early calligraphists, T'sai Yung (A.D. 133–192), has left a series of nine rules for the use of the brush. These rules are known as the "nine influences," *chiu shih*, and represent in writing what the six canons of Hsieh Ho do in painting. The mastery of the brush is the first requisite of writers or painters, and their work is always judged by the quality of the brush strokes.

In chronological order, it is usual to divide Chinese writing into four periods. The first is that of ideographs on early bronze vessels, and such writing is known as *chung ting tzŭ*. The second is that of seal characters, *chuan shu*. This period is subdivided into that of the "greater seal," *ta chuan*, said to have been introduced by Shih Chou about B.C. 800, and the "lesser seal," *hsiao chuan*, introduced by Li Ssŭ (died B.C. 208), a minister of the First Emperor. The third period is that of official writing, *li shu*, by which is meant an established style in which the exact number of strokes has been definitely fixed and

is strictly adhered to. It might be described as the period when a fixed "spelling" of the characters became recognized and when freedom of individual writers in the use of fewer or more strokes in writing an ideograph ceased. The last period is that of the *k'ai shu*, model style, introduced by Wang Hsi-chih (A.D. 321–379) and in continuous use down to the present time.

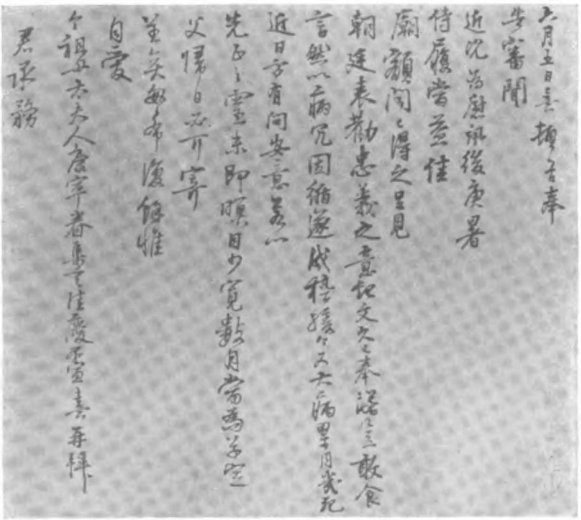
A more detailed division of the period of development is that adopted by Chang Huai-kuan, of the T'ang dynasty, one of the foremost authorities on calligraphy, who indicates the periods by his classification under ten different styles of writing: (1) *Ku wên*, ancient writing as introduced in legendary times by Ts'ang Ch'ieh; (2) greater seal, *ta chuan*, invented by Shih Chou and resembling designs; (3) *Chou wên*, writing as developed by Shih Chou, without reference to designs; (4) lesser seal, *hsiao chuan*, as used by Li Ssŭ in the third century B.C.; (5) *Pa fên* style, which literally means an eighty per cent style—referring to the work of Wang Tz'ŭ-chung, of the Ts'in dynasty, who contracted the style of the "lesser seal" of Li Ssŭ by a subtraction of twenty per cent (hence the name *Pa fên shu*, "eighty per cent style of writing"); (6) *Li shu*, official writing, invented by Ch'êng Miao, third century B.C., of the Ts'in dynasty; (7) *Chang ts'ao* style, which

means characters hastily written, though fashioned after a good model; (8) *Hsing shu*, or running style; (9) *Fei pai* style, by which is meant characters written so that the hairs of the brush separate, leaving blank spots not covered with ink (this is a style used both by Ch'ên Liu and Ts'ai Yung, of the Han dynasty); (10) *Ts'ao shu*, which are frequently spoken of as "grass" characters but which really mean the hastily written characters found in the draft copy of an official document before it is written in fair hand. This detailed sketch of the growth of writing is sufficient to give a clear idea of the approximate dates at which changes were made.

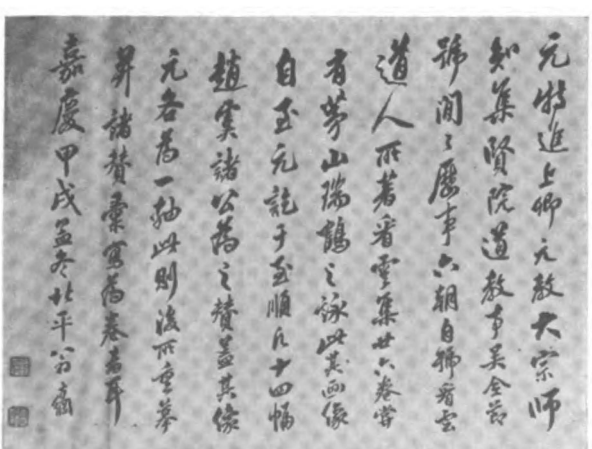
In modern writing, as distinguished from the early styles of *chuan* and *li*, there are three recognized modes of writing, viz., *chên* or regular, *hsing* or running, and *ts'ao* or draft. In the regular mode the character is written with precision, so that every stroke may be readily distinguished. In the running mode the general outline of the character is observable, but the strokes frequently are abbreviated or combined. The draft method allows each writer to be more or less of a law to himself. It is in reality a system of shorthand without any definite rules. In each of these three methods the brush may be handled with equal dexterity. Some writers who have not excelled

in writing regular characters have become models in the running or the draft mode, the excellence of style depending solely upon the strength or weakness of control of the brush shown by the writer.

In a long list of calligraphists of the times previous to the fifth century A.D., three names stand out conspicuously, viz., those of Chang Chih, Chung Yu, and Wang Hsi-chih. The first, Chang Chih, of the Later Han dynasty, first century A.D., is spoken of as the Perfect Writer of Draft Characters, *ts'ao shêng*. He is reputed to have been fond of sitting at the side of a pond while writing, but he dipped his ink brush so frequently and constantly that the water turned black. Chung Yu, who died A.D. 230, belonged to the Wei dynasty. He and Hu Chao studied together the style of Liu Tê-shên, but Chung was the more apt pupil. The two are compared as "the fat Hu and the lean Chung"—referring to the thick, inky strokes of Hu and the thin, nervous, strong strokes of Chung. The third celebrity is Wang Hsi-chih (A.D. 321–379), of the Tsin dynasty, and he is universally acknowledged as the chief among the writers of all ages in China. The power of his strokes is described as having been as light as fleeting clouds and as forceful as a startled snake. He rose in official ranks to the grade of a general,



LETTER OF CHU HSI (TWELFTH CENTURY), THE STANDARD COMMENTATOR ON THE CLASSICS



ANNOTATION OF WÊNG FANG-KANG

and is usually referred to as Major-General Wang, Wang Yu-chün, while Wang Wei, the painter, is spoken of as Vice-Minister Wang, Wang Yu-ch'êng. His son, Wang Hsien-chih (A.D. 344–388), is almost as famous as his father and barely misses being classed among the greatest. Some recognized authorities, such as Chang Huai-kuan, even place him in this high position.

Of these three great calligraphists, Chang Chih has nothing which has been handed down. Chung Yu has one famous script, *t'ieh*, known as the *Chi Chih Piao*, which belonged to the collection of writings made by the late Shêng Hsüan-huai. It is dated the eighth month of the second year of Huang-ch'u (A.D. 221), the first emperor of the Wei dynasty. It is about one foot long and three inches wide and is written in nineteen lines upon strong, white paper. The oldest seal on this script is that of T'ai Tsung (A.D. 627–650), first emperor of the T'ang dynasty, but it is four hundred years later than the time when Chung lived. This seal may also be found on the Ku K'ai-chih scroll in the Metropolitan Museum. The next seals are those of Shun-hua (A.D. 990–995) and Hsüan-ho (A.D. 1119–1126). There are many colophons by later owners and persons who had seen the script, all testifying to its genuineness. None of these is conclusive evidence of its being a

genuine script of Chung Yu, though we know that the emperor T'ai Tsung was at great pains to gather early scripts by the great masters.

As to Wang Hsi-chih—there are several examples of his script of which claims of authenticity are advanced, but in general it may be said that none of the script of writers earlier than the T'ang dynasty survived that period. The emperor T'ai Tsung in his search for early manuscripts discovered one by Wang Hsi-chih called the *Lan T'ing*, or the "Orchid Pavilion," and obtained possession of it from a descendant of Wang in the seventh generation. He had facsimiles made of it and distributed these to his sons and favorite statesmen. He also had it engraved in stone, and these stone tablets were often copied later. The original stone passed through many vicissitudes during the troublous times at the close of the T'ang dynasty, but it finally found a resting-place at Ting-chow, Chih-li province. Later the name of this place was changed to Ting Wu, the "Military Ting," on account of the levies which it supplied to aid the cause of the founders of the Sung dynasty. The stone was in such a dilapidated condition that the emperor Hui Tsung in A.D. 1119–1126 decided to have a new stone engraved with the original inscription. This stone took its name from the changed name of the place where

the original was located and is called *Ting Wu Lan T'ing*, or the "Orchid Pavilion of Ting Wu." This name serves to distinguish the recut stone of the Hsüan-ho period from the original engraved one of the emperor T'ai Tsung.

This Lan T'ing script of Wang Hsi-chih is easily the most famous writing that has ever appeared in China. It is referred to in poetry and praised in literature. It has been the inspiration of all succeeding writers, who have striven in vain to equal it. Other scripts claiming to be the work of Wang are highly prized. Four of these were in the collection of An I-chou, during the reign of Ch'ien Lung. I have seen also the Chia Hsing script, which is mentioned in the *Hsüan Ho Shu P'u* as having belonged to the emperor Hui Tsung (A.D. 1101–1125). In my opinion, this example, like all the other existing specimens, is properly designated as a T'ang copy. It is on powder-waxed paper and should be described as *T'ang Mo Wang Tzŭ Fen Lah Chih T'a Pen*, i.e., a facsimile of the script of Wang Hsi-chih written during the T'ang dynasty on powder-waxed paper. This Chia Hsing script was formerly in the collection of the noted littérateur of Canton, Liang Tsiao-ling. It bears the seals of the emperor Hui Tsung (A.D. 1119–1126), of Mi Fei (A.D. 1051–1107), and of Chia Ssŭ-tao

(died A.D. 1276). It also has one of the most important testimonies in the ink stamp of Pi Ta-ning, one of the two commissioners appointed to gather up the dispersed paintings and scripts which were lost when the Sung fled southward

T'ANG DYNASTY REPRODUCTION OF CHIA HSING SCRIPT OF WANG HSI-CHIH, FOURTH CENTURY

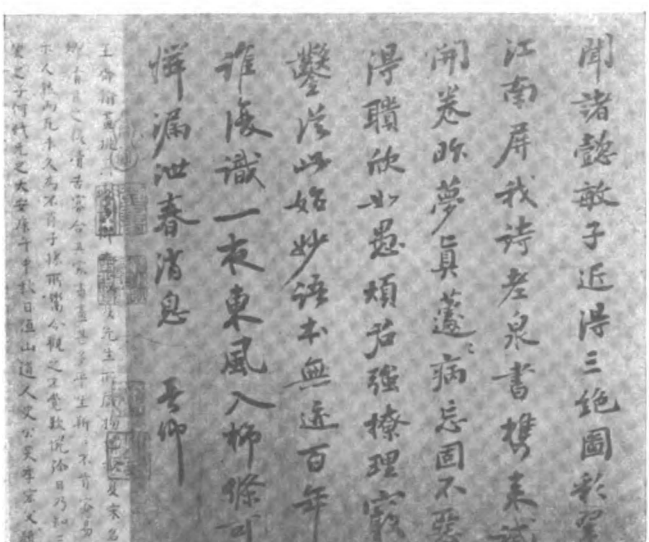
to establish their capital at Hang-chow. It is a splendid example of the earliest writing on paper in China, but it must justly be assigned to the T'ang dynasty and classed as a reproduction rather than as an original script of Wang Hsi-chih. Other famous scripts attributed to Wang Hsi-chih are the *Yüan Sêng* and his copy of a thousand characters from the script of Chung Yu. These

also must be classed as T'ang dynasty reproductions.

This practice of copying a thousand characters from an earlier master has been common to all periods of Chinese writing. Following Wang's example in copying a thousand characters of Chung's script, the emperor Wu Ti (A.D. 502–550) ordered to be compiled a thousand characters from Wang Hsi-chih. A dismissed officer of this emperor, whose name was Chou Hsing-ssŭ, arranged one thousand characters in good literary form. This "Thousand Character Essay," *Ch'ien Tzŭ Wên*, has been copied by masters and students from that time onward. It figures in the list of scripts more frequently than any subject other than the "Orchid Pavilion." It was also used as a child's primer in all the schools of China until recent years, when modern readers were introduced.

The T'ang dynasty was responsible for the creation of a widespread passion among literary men for excellence in calligraphy. It was due to the patronage of the emperor T'ai Tsung (A.D. 627–650), whose reigning title was Chêng-kuan (see p. 143), and Hsüan Tsung (A.D. 713–756) that the writings of Chung Yu, Wang Hsi-chih, and Wang Hsien-chih were copied, distributed among literary men, and cut into stone so as to be pre-

COLOPHON OF SU SHIH ON THE LEFT
COLOPHON OF SU CH'Ê ON THE RIGHT



COLOPHON OF LI HUNG-FU ON THE LEFT
COLOPHON OF WANG TSIN-CH'ING ON THE RIGHT

served. And yet this dynasty produced no great master in chirography. Ou-yang Hsün (A.D. 557–645) is usually classed as belonging to the T'ang dynasty, in accordance with the custom in Chinese literature of assigning an individual to the dynasty in which he dies, but he was in reality a product of the Sui dynasty. His son, Ou-yang T'ung, is reputed also to have been a famous calligraphist, but none of his work survived for any length of time. There were also Yen Chên-ch'ing (A.D. 709–785), whose *Ting-chow t'ieh* and *Hu-chow t'ieh* were still in existence during the reign of Ch'ien Lung, and Liu Kung-ch'uan, whose scripts of the Tu-jên classic ("Pilgrim's Progress" ?) and the *Li Sao*—"Falling into Trouble"—written by Ch'ü Yüan (B.C. 332–295), are famous; but neither Yen nor Liu can be classed as a great master.

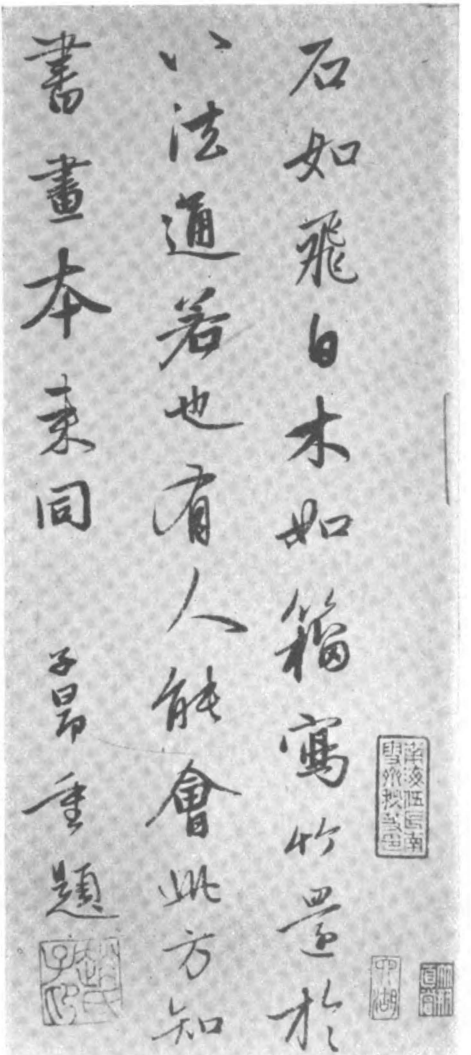
It was left to the less peaceful times of the Sung dynasty to furnish two of China's greatest writers, and these were contemporaries. They were Su Shih (A.D. 1036–1101) and Mi Fei (A.D. 1051–1107). Su Shih is more frequently alluded to in literature by his fancy name Su Tung-p'o, "Su of the eastern slope." He was a most remarkable man. He held official positions but found it difficult to retain them on account of the independence of his character and the vitriol of his pen.

LOH HSIONG SCRIPT OF MI FEI

He was twice banished for insubordination. He was a famous poet and essay writer, a painter, and a wonderful calligraphist. His "Lotus Classic," *Lien Hua Ching*, and his "Thousand Character Classic" are the best specimens of his work, but there are several others of his scripts in existence

at the present time. One of these is attached to the famous painting "Reading," *K'an-shu t'u*, by Wang Tsi-han. The chief characteristics of his style are finish and elegance combined with strength of brush strokes. His brother Su Ch'ê (A.D. 1039–1112) was a great calligraphist, as was also his brother-in-law, Wang Tsin-ch'ing, but neither of these approached the master, Su Shih.

The other illustrious name is that of Mi Fei, official, artist, and calligraphist. He had a very eccentric character, which interfered with his career as an official and seemed to prevent his acquisition of a high literary style; but as artist and writer he excelled. He could pile ink upon ink with strong, nervous strokes and preferred to use paper rather than silk, on account of it absorbing ink readily without danger of spreading. He is held in the highest honor as a calligraphist, and specimens of his script are among the greatest art treasures of China. He usually signed his pictures, and these exhibit a bold, strong type of writing in which thick ink is generously used. He was a prolific writer. The collection of An I-chou lists twenty-eight specimens of his scripts, and there are several in the Government Museum, Peking. The Sung dynasty had a larger number of good calligraphists than any other period, but



COLOPHON OF CHAO MÊNG-FU

their excellence is eclipsed by the splendor of the names of Su and Mi.

Chao Mêng-fu (A.D. 1254–1322) is a name scarcely less brilliant than those of the two masters of the Sung dynasty. Chao was a scion of the Imperial House of Sung, who retired to private life on the advent of the Mongol dynasty, in 1280, but was later recalled to office and came to a high position in the Academy. He was distinguished as a painter, in which field he shared honors with his wife, Kuan Fu-jên, but his fame rests chiefly upon his eminence as a calligraphist. He combined the freedom of Mi's script with the elegance of Su's. His draft characters, such as are found in his copy of the "Thousand Character Classic," are as perfect as those of his regular mode in his *Tao Tê Ching*. He wrote long notes on his own paintings, which are usually signed with the three characters *Tzŭ-ang hua*—"painted by Tzŭ-ang," which is his fancy name. He also signed *Sung-hsüeh pi*—"the brush of Sung-hsüeh"—after the style of the artists of the T'ang dynasty. *Sung-hsüeh* means "pine and snow" and was Chao's nom de plume. These signatures, when genuine, are in the most perfect style and can be readily distinguished from the myriad forgeries which have been made of his writing. No calligraphist, and indeed no painter, has been more studied,

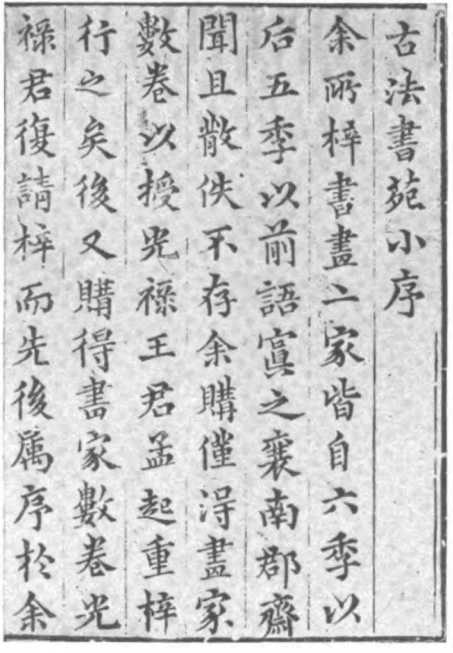
imitated, and forged than Chao Mêng-fu. This is the highest tribute to his excellence, while at the same time it is the greatest danger to the careless student or collector who wishes to obtain authentic specimens of his work.

COLOPHON OF TUNG CH'I-CH'ANG

Another master is found in the Ming dynasty —Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (A.D. 1555-1636). A student of antiquity, a high official, a good artist, Tung's reputation like that of Chao rests chiefly upon his calligraphy. He made copies of the scripts of Chung and Wang, of Su, Mi, and Chao, but imparted to these his own personality. His work is so recent in comparison with his

illustrious predecessors that specimens of it are more frequently found. He could write equally well in any of the three modes—regular, running, or draft. He was a close friend of the leading literary men of his time, many of whom made large and important collections of early paintings. To these Tung frequently attached colophons which have become famous, not only for their sound criticisms of art, but also for their beautiful style of writing.

These masters who have been mentioned have all given their names to styles of writing which are now studied and followed. Students attempt to write *Mi Tzŭ*, or *Chao Tzŭ*, or *Tung Tzŭ*, as their inclinations lead them. This means that their style is patterned after the model of Mi Fei, or Su Shih, or Chao Mêng-fu, or Tung Ch'i-ch'ang. These men thus live again in the daily lives of thousands of students and furnish not only the first inspiration to artistic appreciation but also the most enduring. Other art stimulus, coming from bronzes, tablets, jades, or paintings, has inspired the few who have had access to the collections where they have been preserved; but the reproductions of the script of these masters, used as copy-books for pupils, have reached every hamlet of the country and have carried into the meanest surroundings the inspiration of a high



古法書苑小序

余所梓書畫二家皆自六季以
后五季以前語窴之襄南郡齋
聞且散佚不存余購僅得畫家
數卷以授兒祿王君孟起重梓
行之矣後又購得書家數卷兒
祿君復請梓而先後屬序於余

宣和書譜

敘

河出圖洛出書而龜龍之畫始著見於時後世乃
有蟲鳥之作而龜龍之大體猶未鑿也迨至有虞
彰施五色而作繪宗彝以是制象因之而漸分至
周官教國子以六書而其三曰象形則書畫之所
謂同體者尚或有存焉於是將以識魑魅知神姦
則刻之於鐘鼎將以明禮樂著瀋度則揭之於旂

TWO EXAMPLES OF "REGULAR" WRITING

artistic spirit. However lacking in appreciation of the delicate intricacies of calligraphy we westerners may be, it is well for us to remember not only that this branch of art is more highly honored in China than any other, but that its influence has been more widespread. A great idea well expressed is most valuable to the world, but in China its influence is enormously increased when it is transmitted to others by means of artistically written characters. Thus calligraphy, by the wide influence which it exerts, justifies for itself its rank as the crown of art in China.

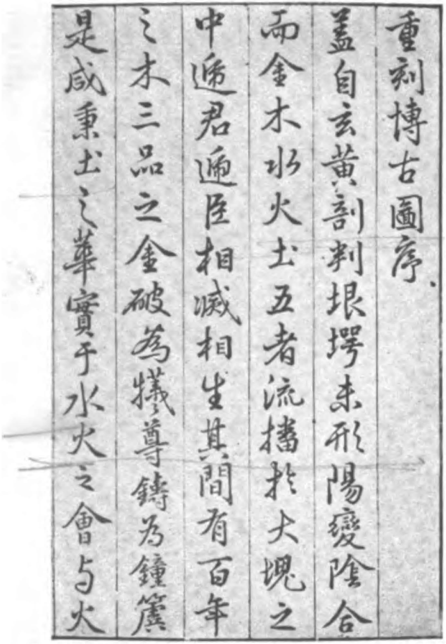
The literature of writings and paintings is voluminous, and by many authors the two are treated together as parts of one subject. The references of the very early writers are quoted and discussed in later publications, so that it is unnecessary in this outline even to mention the names of these men and their books, of which in many instances no copies can be found. It is sufficient to say that there is no phase of the subject which has not been investigated and discussed. One of the books most frequently quoted by western writers is the "Collection of Paintings in the Hsüan Ho Palace"—*Hsüan Ho Hua P'u*—of which the counterpart is the "Collection of Writings in the Hsüan Ho Palace"—*Hsüan Ho Shu P'u.* It is possible that the "Collection of Paintings" was

prepared by some unknown author in the Southern Sung period, who attached to it the forged introduction by the emperor Hui Tsung, but it is more probable that it was compiled from the records of the Imperial Household of the Yüan dynasty, as was the "Collection of Writings."

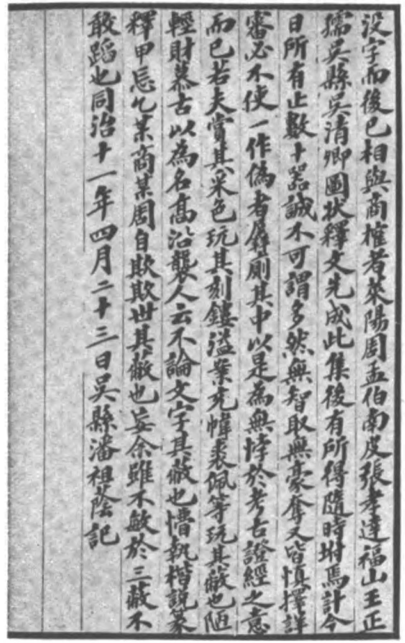
After the abandonment of K'ai-fêng by the Sung dynasty, the art treasures of the emperor Hui Tsung, which were stored in the Hsüan Ho Palace, were scattered or seized by the conquering Nüchên Tartars, who carried them away to their capital city. When this dynasty was overthrown by the Mongols, the treasures which had been captured from K'ai-fêng passed into the possession of the founders of the Yüan dynasty, together with other art possessions seized from the hands of the governing families. According to Luh Hsin-yüan, in his *I Ku T'ang T'i-pa*—"Annotations of I Ku T'ang"—Wu Wên-kuei in 1302 made a collection of writings, from the Ts'in dynasty to the Sung, which belonged to the Hsüan Ho Palace. This important fact is contained in a quotation from Chêng Piao in Volume III of *Yen Chi* ("Glosses") and is sufficient evidence to prove that the "Collection of Writings" should not be ascribed, as is usually done, to Ts'ai Ching and Mi Fei, but that it was prepared at the beginning of the fourteenth century. It is also probably

true that the "Collection of Paintings" was produced about the same time. This theory is corroborated by the fact that neither of these two books is referred to in the list of early publications prepared by Ch'ên Chi-chai. It also explains the records of the Ming dynasty collection, where paintings and manuscripts mentioned in the "Collections" as belonging to the Hsüan Ho Palace bear no seals of the emperor Hui Tsung, while others bearing undoubtedly genuine impressions of these seals are not mentioned in the "Collections."

The most complete thesaurus of writings and paintings down to the close of the Ming dynasty was prepared under the orders of the emperor K'ang Hsi and published in 1708. It is the *P'ei Wên Chai Shu Hua P'u*—"Cyclopedia of the Writings and Paintings of the P'ei Wên Library." This scholarly work classifies and describes writings and paintings—the various styles and schools—gives biographies of celebrated artists and calligraphists, discusses the inscriptions and decorations on bronze and stone monuments, quotes the annotations which have been made by famous authors, and gives the lists of paintings and writings in noted collections in past times. The difficulty in using this valuable work is that there is nothing to guide one as to the relative impor-



重刻博古圖序
蓋自玄黃剖判垠堮未形陽變陰合
而金木水火土五者流播於天壤之
中遞君遞臣相滅相生其間有百年
之木三品之金破爲犧尊鑄爲鐘簴
是咸秉土之華實于水火之會与火



没字而後已相與商榷者萊陽周孟伯南皮張孝達福山王正
孺吳縣吳清卿圖狀釋文先成此集後有所得隨時坿焉計今
日所有止數十器誠不可謂多然無智取無豪奪又皆慎擇詳
審必不使一作偽者厠其中以是爲無悖於考古證經之意
而已若夫賞其采色玩其刻鏤溢業充幃表佩等玩其蔽也陋
輕財慕古以爲名高沿襲人云不論文字其蔽也僭執楷說篆
釋甲爲乙某商某周自欺欺世其蔽也妄余雖不敏於三蔽不
敢蹈也同治十一年四月二十三日吳縣潘祖蔭記

TWO EXAMPLES OF "RUNNING" WRITING

tance of the quotations which are so copiously recorded. Varying opinions are given equal prominence. It is, in fact, a detailed record of what others have written of manuscripts and pictures and not a critical discussion of them.

The "Ch'ing Ho Collection of Writings and Paintings"—*Ch'ing-ho Shu Hua Fang*—was written during the Ming dynasty, in 1616, by Chang Ch'ou. It is the most critical work which had been written up to that time, and it was published during the reign of the emperor Ch'ien Lung as an authority on these two subjects. It describes the size of scripts and paintings, sketches the biography of artists, quotes annotations, discusses the value of the opinions expressed, mentions and describes seals that have been impressed, and, as far as possible, gives a list of those in whose possession the object may have been. The opinions of this valuable book are always quoted as definitive.

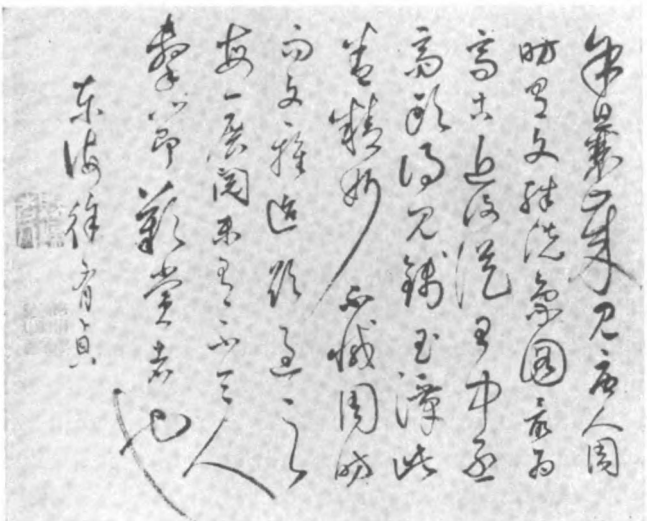
The "Ink Remains"—*Mo Yuan Hui Kuan*—by An I-chou, who lived during the first part of the eighteenth century, has been made available recently by its publication in Peking. It remained in the form of a written manuscript until it was published by Tuan Fang, about 1904. Unfortunately, this edition was lost in a fire, with the exception of a few copies which had been dis-

tributed to friends. It is a critical discussion of the writings and paintings in the collection of this wealthy Korean, who was a salt merchant in Tientsin. He must have been a man of refined taste, for his selection of scripts and paintings was most careful. Any objects bearing the seal of "I-chou" are most eagerly coveted by collectors, as it is a certain mark not only of genuineness, but also of fine aesthetic quality.

Two other books of first importance should be noted. "The Collection of Writings and Paintings of the Wang Family"—*Wang Shih Shu Hua Yüan*—was prepared by Wang Shih-chêng (A.D. 1526–1593) and published by Wang Ch'ien-ch'ang a generation later. Wang Shih-chêng had access to the famous collection of Yen Sung. He quotes early authorities, gives chronological lists of calligraphists and painters, together with their works, and also describes famous collections. The other publication is now very rare. It is the *Shi Ku T'ang*—"Notes on Writings and Paintings"—published during the reign of K'ang Hsi. This book is a mine of accurate information. There are many other valuable books on these allied subjects which consist of notes made from personal inspection of script or paintings. The three books written by different authorities and entitled "Summer Vacation Records"—*Hsiao*

Hsia Chi—describe paintings or writings which the authors had seen and handled. Of such critical examination as is found in these publications it is possible to say that the observer has sometimes been misled but, in the case of responsible men, not that he has not reported accurately what he saw. There is only one conspicuous instance of a deliberate forgery of supposititious ancient writings and paintings. This was done on a large scale in the *Pao Hui Lu*, though this book also contains descriptions of many genuine specimens. An instance of a poor critic, lacking in discrimination, is found in the author of *Hung Tou Shu Kuan Shu Hua Chi*, who describes as genuine many examples which are known from other sources to have been unreliable.

The materials with which calligraphists and painters worked were the same. The brush was used indifferently for writing or painting, but in addition to the black ink of the writer the artist had colors. In all other respects—whether as to surroundings, method of approach, use of materials—the two classes were considered as fellow-members of the "Grove of Brushes," *Han-lin*, which is the literary designation of the wielders of the brush. The studios of both are known as *Wên Fang*—"The Abodes of Culture"—and have similar furnishings. In addition to the



EXAMPLE OF "DRAFT" WRITING

brush and the tablet, on which the ink in solution is rubbed to its correct consistency, the necessities are ink, paper, and silk. Each of these three materials has been carefully studied, and there are complete records of the types used in the different periods of the development of the graphic arts.

As to ink—the usual process of manufacture has been from the soot obtained from imperfect combustion in the burning of dry pine or fir and mixed with glutinous substances. One of the early literary references to ink is that of the poet

Ts'ao Chih (A.D. 192–232), who said, "Ink is made of black soot obtained from pine-wood." It is known that during the T'ang dynasty there was included in the yearly tribute from Korea a present of ink made from pine-soot. It was not until the Sung dynasty, according to the *Cho Kêng Lu*, that lampblack, *yu yen*, began to be used. The best quality of glue used in the manufacture of ink is that which comes from Tung-o hsien, Shan-tung province, and is called *O Chiao*. It is made from boiling donkey hides in the water of the Tung-o, which is reputed to contain mineral substances especially useful for this purpose. The glue obtained is of the color of amber, is glossy, and has no odor. This pine-soot ink, *sung-yen mo*, is popularly spoken of as glue ink, *chiao mo*, and is the kind that is always found in paintings and scripts previous to the end of the Yüan dynasty. It was also used by Tung Ch'i-ch'ang, Wu Wei, and Fu Shan, of later times. It is always jet black and glossy like varnish. It is different from Ming ink, *ming mo*, as used by Shên Chou, T'ang Yin, Wên Chêng-ming, and Ch'iu Ying, which is lacking in depth of color and is never glossy. These qualities are also absent from lampblack ink, *yu mo*, which is in general use. Much attention has been paid to the artistic forms and decoration of ink cakes and tablets.

Many of the designs on porcelain have been copied directly from previous designs on ink cakes. A discussion of these would lead us too far afield, but the subject is fully treated in *Chêng Shih Mo Yüan* and *Fang Shih Mo P'u*, both of which are fully illustrated.

The invention of paper is usually ascribed to Ts'ai Lun, of the Later Han dynasty, who rose to prominence during the reign of Ho Ti (A.D. 89–106). Having replaced the bamboo tablet and stylus with silk and ink, he made a further contribution to the graphic arts by the invention of paper as a medium for the use of writers and painters. Another famous name in the early production of paper is that of the courtesan Hsieh T'ao, of the ninth century, who invented the kind known as Sze-ch'uan paper, *Shu chien*. The earliest paper which I have seen is a specimen of bamboo paper, *chuh chih*. As its name indicates, it is made of bamboo pulp, is thick, and has a rough surface. Over it is a loosely woven silk mesh, which, it appears, was intended as a protection. The artist Wei Hsieh, in the fourth century A.D., is known to have used this variety of paper. That which was used previous to the end of the T'ang dynasty, tenth century, was called hemp paper, *ma chih*, or white hemp paper, *pai ma chih*. This was used by Wu Tao-tzŭ, Liu Shan, and other

artists of the T'ang dynasty. It is thick and has a rough surface, which under the microscope plainly exhibits hemp fibers. The Five Dynasties and the Sung witnessed the introduction of a finer quality of paper, called *ch'êng hsin t'ang*. It is said to have been invented by Li Hou-chu of the Later T'ang dynasty (A.D.923–934). It is fine, thin, and has a smooth surface. It is the best quality of paper that has ever been produced in China and was used by Li Kung-lin, Ch'ien Hsüan, and other great artists of the Sung and Yüan periods. The paper of the Ming dynasty, called *Ta-chien* and *Hsiao-chien*, was of inferior quality, but relief from it was found by artists and writers in the introduction of silk-cocoon paper from Korea—*Kao-li chien chih*. However, this new paper proved to be too glossy to take ink well and after a brief popularity fell into disuse. The same kind of paper as was used in the Ming dynasty is still in use. Any variety of paper was prepared before use by an artist. It was washed with a weak lye, obtained usually from the pods of the *Gymnocladus chinensis* (*ts'ao chia tzŭ*) and then sized with alum.

Silk was used for paintings more often than paper, which was reserved for script, but some artists used both materials. It is said of Li Kung-lin that he always used paper for original paintings

and silk for reproductions of the work of others. Those who had the most perfect control of their brushes, like Mi Fei and Chao Mêng-fu, used paper for their best work. The earliest silk was coarsely woven. It is doubtful whether or not we have any existing samples of silk anterior to the T'ang dynasty, though it is claimed that there are paintings of the Han dynasty done on silk of that period in the Stein collection of the British Museum, taken from the Tun-huang Stone House. I have a sample of this silk and cannot distinguish it in any way from the coarse silk, *sêng chüan*, of the T'ang dynasty, of which there are detailed descriptions in literature and of which I have an example. This kind of silk was used by Yen Li-pên. There is also another type of T'ang silk, which is called *lien chüan* or prepared silk. It is silk which has been beaten on a polished stone with a stick, sometimes covered with silver, until the interstices between the threads are filled and the silk has a continuous surface. This prepared silk was first used by Chou Fang in his delineation of court scenes, and an example of it may be seen in the scroll by Chou Fang in the Metropolitan Museum. The silk of the Sung dynasty had double strands for both warp and woof, being called *shuang-ssŭ chüan;* or the warp had double strands and the woof a single one.

The latter was called *tan ssŭ chüan.* In addition to this silk, there was a coarser type known as "academy silk," *yüan chüan,* on account of it having been specially prepared for the use of the academicians. It was woven into various widths, the widest being seven or eight feet. Many of the surviving ancient pictures of China are on this type of silk. They were made in the Sung Academy of Painting and are reproductions of the work of great masters. The silk of the Yüan dynasty is practically the same as that of the Sung, with the exception that the double-stranded variety does not seem to have been woven. The Ming dynasty silk has single coarse strands both for warp and woof. It is similar to the coarse silk of the T'ang dynasty, but it is more closely woven.

These details of the materials used have been given as aids in determining the period to which writings and paintings should be correctly assigned. While it is always possible that a picture painted at the beginning of the Ming dynasty may be on Sung dynasty silk and done with Sung dynasty ink, both of which have been carefully preserved, it is obvious that no Sung dynasty painting could have had silk or ink of the later Ming. It is idle to discuss the age of writings or paintings solely on the basis of their style, for the

great masters used different styles. Even the quality of work is not a sure guide, for this was never uniform, the same artist or writer frequently having left both good and indifferent specimens. The paper or silk, the ink, the color value of the pigments must all be given due consideration, along with the signature, seals, and annotations. The aesthetic value may suffice for one who is indifferent to the origin of a script or a picture, but it is only one of many essentials which must be determined when the question arises as to who wrote a certain specimen of script or who painted a certain picture. Then information must be sought for from all available sources, and in this search the quality of paper, silk, and ink is important evidence.

V

PAINTING

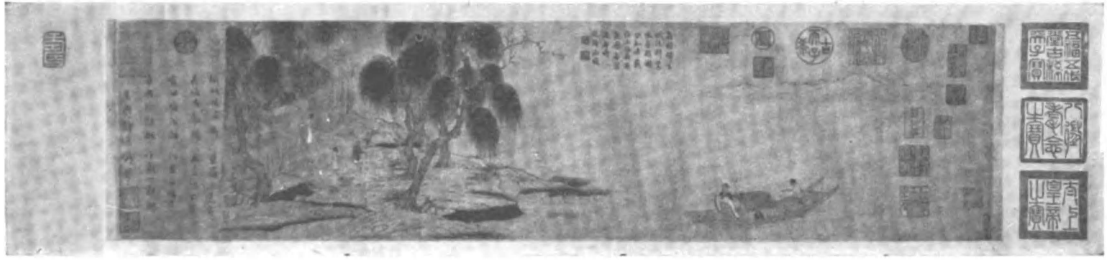
Although the Chinese estimate of calligraphy as the crown of their art may be grudgingly allowed, it is in painting that we must find the best expression of their strong aesthetic and imaginative spirit. Painting is as truly national in its character as the writing of ideographs, and, though from its nature it has not had such a far-reaching influence, it is a method of artistic expression which is more easily appreciated. The same delicate lines or strong brush strokes are found in both arts, but it is by painting alone that the finest aesthetic emotions may be aroused. Writing delights the beholder but does not move him by playing upon his feelings; painting both delights and moves. More than in any other branch of art, the Chinese have expressed in painting the essential qualities of their genius. They are devoted to literary culture, and their artists are evolved from it. It is not linear drawing nor any other form of technical training which has given an artist his necessary tutelage; this has been found in literature, poetry, history, and belles-lettres. He has learned to control a

brush, which is his one essential tool as an artist. In literature he has learned the names of the delicate shades of color, which he learns to produce for his own palette by combinations of elemental colors. His first desire is to have his mind filled with the historical and traditional stories of his country, to have his heart moved by the verses of the poets, and to loose his imaginative faculties. After such preliminary exercises, he copies the style of earlier masters, noting their use of the brush and of colors. He is then ready to commence individual work and to follow his own bent. This is the training which all the great artists of China received in their time. They became artists after the necessary preliminary culture had been acquired; and this culture was the result of a general literary training, which only awaited the stirrings of imagination in their souls before they were fully equipped for their work. Almost none of the great artists has attempted to teach pupils, as this would have seemed to him to be a profanation of his art, which is a thing of the spirit and not of the letter.

There is always another class which makes drawing and painting a profession. Such persons are trained in the same prescribed methods as are found in our western art schools, with the single aim of teaching them to earn a livelihood.

They do not expect to become artists, for they do not consider themselves to have had a sufficiently good education; they are content to remain artisans of painting. They are responsible for the tawdry and grotesque paintings which have been considered too often to be the characteristic representations of all the Chinese have known of this art. They have copied freely the reputed peculiarities of the styles of great masters, often without ever having seen one of their paintings, and have even gone to the further extent of copying the signatures of these artists. Such copies naturally vary in quality, some of them being forgeries apparent even to a tyro, while others need most careful examination.

One of the largest schools ever established was that of the Ming artist Ch'iu Ying, who was an exception to the rule that good artists are not teachers. He himself wielded a strong, yet delicate, brush—as is seen in his "Dancing Women," in the collection of Mr. Ching Hsien, Peking. His pupils produced some good work, to which they were allowed to attach the name of their master as if it were his own; but most of the pictures which they left are of mediocre or bad quality. In addition to the poor work of his pupils, their paintings have been reproduced in forgeries of still worse quality. No artists have



HOME AGAIN: THE RETURN OF T'AO YÜAN-MING, BY CH'IEN HSÜAN, YÜAN DYNASTY

THE ARHATS, BY LI KUNG-LIN, SUNG DYNASTY. IN THE COLLECTION OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, NEW YORK

suffered from the poor work of copyists more than Ch'iu Ying and Chao Mêng-fu.

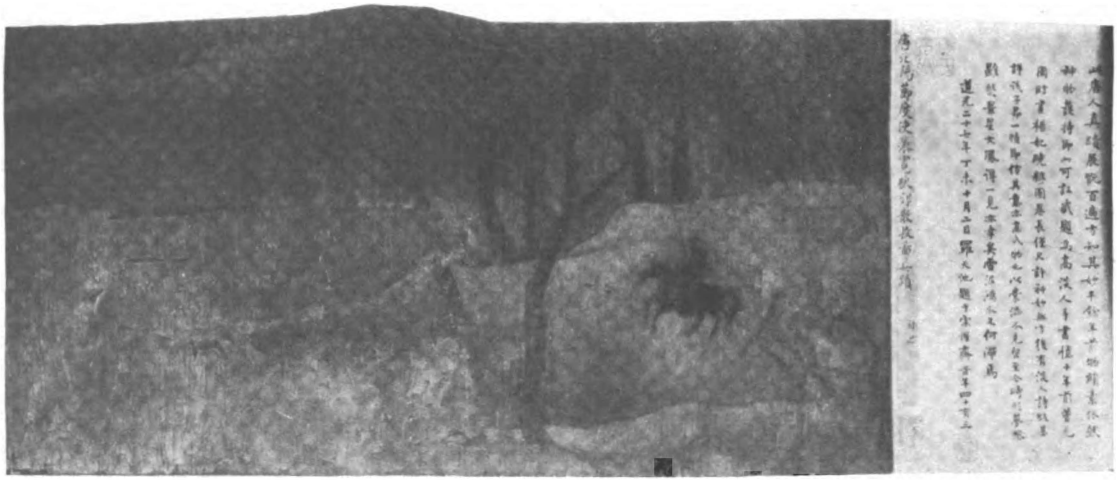
A large number of art students also were trained in the academies of painting founded in the T'ang and Sung dynasties. These students were recruited chiefly from the ranks of disappointed literary men or persons of artistic taste who had not acquired a liberal education. They were not in the same class as the great masters, who were appointed officers of the Academy by imperial favor, in recognition of their talents, but often they did very creditable work. Many of the Sung pictures which have survived to our time are doubtless the work of Academicians, some of whom must have been men of great talent. One of the severe tests imposed by the emperor Hui Tsung upon these Academicians was to paint a picture suggested by the line of a poem. This gave rise to the couplet "A poem in a picture and a picture in a poem." Other examples of paintings which I should not hesitate to class as having been produced in the Sung dynasty are weak in design and faltering in execution. These are the work of the less talented members of the Academy. The age of such paintings is undoubted, but they are valueless as examples of fine art. It is too often supposed that a particular painting cannot belong to the Sung period because it is so

poor or, on the other hand, that it must belong to this period for the reason that it is so well done. Neither of these reasons is sound. The Academicians of the Sung dynasty produced both good and bad paintings. It is of no value to collect or study their poor work, even though it is old. What should be prized is only that which is aesthetically good, and this should be independent of whether the painting is an original or a reproduction.

Indeed, it is difficult to determine in Chinese paintings what is original and what is reproduction. The same themes have served over and over again for artists in succeeding generations. Such subjects as a portrait of the giant General Kuo Tzŭ-i, the gentle Kuan Yin, goddess of mercy, the Nine Songs of the legendary period (*chiu ko t'u*), Mongol horsemen (*fan ma t'u*), washing the elephant (*hsi siang t'u*), the home-coming of T'ao Yüan-ming (*kuei ch'ü lai t'u*), have been painted by many artists. Because P'ei K'uan, of the T'ang dynasty, painted the "Ten Horses" and six hundred years later Chao Mêng-fu chose the same subject, it does not follow that Chao tried to copy P'ei's picture. In fact, a comparison of the two in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum, New York, shows that Chao has placed some of his horses in different positions

from those found in P'ei's painting. The only fact that can be established is that the idea of the two artists was taken from a common literary source. The same remarks may be made concerning the T'ang picture by Chou Fang of "Washing the Elephant" and its reproduction by Ch'ien Hsüan, of the Yüan dynasty, both of which may be found in American collections. These pictures are treatments of the same subject, but each discloses in its brush work the peculiarities of the artist. While this explanation is true of paintings by recognized artists, it would be misleading if applied to many others who have not been careful of their standing and have not hesitated to make slavish copies, which they have forged with the evident intention of passing them off as genuine. Some of these are very cleverly done, and their defects can be discovered only by a careful process of comparison with recognized originals.

The marvelous tenacity of memory which the Chinese system of education has developed for many centuries makes reproduction easier than it is for western artists, whose minds have been trained according to analytic methods. A striking example of memory retentiveness was shown by Mr. Kung-pa King, who is the most brilliant of living artists in China at the present time. He



THE TEN HORSES, BY P'EI K'UAN, T'ANG DYNASTY

visited me at my house in Peking one morning for nearly an hour and saw on the wall of my room a charming Sung dynasty landscape which had been lent to me by a friend. Mr. King and I discussed the merits of the painting from many points of view. The subject was a neck of land jutting out into a river in which small boats were plying. A few houses dotted the land, behind which masts of sailing vessels could be seen. A pagoda crowned a height to the right. It was a quiet evening river scene on a summer day inviting to leisure. The charm of the picture appealed deeply to Mr. King, as it had already stirred my heart. A few days later I visited the artist in his home, and we conversed again about this landscape. To my amazement he produced a splendid copy of the landscape, which he had made in the intervening time solely from his memory of the painting as he had seen it for a brief hour in my house. His reproduction omitted no detail, while at the same time it caught the spirit of the original. Never before had Mr. King seen the painting. His copy was made from memory aided by keen, sensitive powers of observation.

Chinese painting is based upon memory reproduction and imaginative reconstruction rather than upon accurate imitation of a model. An artist wanders over a hillside on an autumn morn-

ing and watches the bluish-gray mist lift itself heavenward. He sees a ruined temple on the other side of the valley, half hidden, and hears a gurgling brook hastening on its way to the foot of the hill. On an elevated path, in the clear daylight, he sees two travelers, one on foot and the other riding a donkey. The artist returns home with certain definite mental impressions. He makes no sketch of what he has seen, but his mental vision is retentive and his imagination on fire. He reads a book of history which reminds him of some authentic incident, like that of Su Tung-p'o going to search for two noted priests of great reputation for holiness, during the first days of his official life at Hang-chow. Immediately the whole scene which lay in the artist's mind is changed. The autumn hills take on the shape of those surrounding the West Lake, where Su Tung-p'o made his famous trip; the mountain stream is spanned with a bridge of flagstones; Su in loose, flowing robes and with long beard is crossing a bridge attended by a servant leading a donkey. A temple where the two holy men live lies just across the bridge. It is located on a rocky cliff, from which gnarled pine-trees overhang the stream. The picture "Searching for Truth," now in the Cleveland Museum, is thus produced. It is a combination of artistic impulse, based upon

the inspiration of natural scenery, and of the imaginative reconstruction of the artist. The subjective life of the artist is always present in his pictures.

Another artist watches the movements of a captive tiger chained to a tree in a rocky, desolate farm-yard and is impressed with the pent-up energy of the beast. He watches the fierceness of its eye, the sinuous movements of its tail, and the strength of its legs. He goes to his studio, selects a piece of wide silk, wastes days of precious time in preparing it for its work, and diverts himself with his ordinary daily occupations. He made no sketch while watching the tiger and makes none during the intervening days of preparation. After he is ready to begin, he unrolls a small part of the silk, selects a vacant space on the table in front of him, sketches an upright rectangle, in which he makes a rough drawing of a tiger so as to have it placed in right position on his silk. Then he goes to work. The head of the tiger is sketched in, then the body, and on from part to part, until everything that is to be in the completed picture has been given its place. He follows no order and obeys no rule, except the one imposed upon him by the narrowness of his table—that he shall have as small a portion of the whole picture exposed before him as is necessary for his brush work.

SEARCHING FOR TRUTH, SUNG DYNASTY

The completed picture rests undisturbed in his mental vision from the time the first stroke is committed to the silk through the various incomplete stages of its development until it leaves his brush as a work of art. This mental vision of the completed painting is clearer to him than a sketch could be. He does not paint the tiger as he saw it in the farm-yard. The artist selects from his mass of visual impressions only those which are essential to his depiction of the strength and cunning of the tiger. All other impressions are eliminated or made subservient to these. In the completed picture the tiger is seen as about to spring on his prey. His eyes are keen, his white teeth show between parted lips, every muscle is tense, his tail stretches sinuously beside his body in such a way as to insure the greatest assistance at the moment of use, the back is curved, and the two right feet are extended forward. Suppressed strength, eager to break forth in expression, is in every part of the tiger's body. The surroundings are also in harmony. The overhanging branches of a gnarled tree appear ready to part company with the creature whose presence seems only an accident. The shape of the rock on which the tiger stands and the contour of the rippling waves bend and sway in perfect accord with his body. They are intent upon helping

THE TIGER, SUNG DYNASTY

him spring forth. Thus the painting "The Tiger" is made. It is not true to its original model in any single respect, with the exception of the only one which is of exclusive and essential importance: it depicts faithfully and strikingly the strength and cunning of the tiger.

Ni Tsan (A.D. 1301–1374) was one of the free spirits developed during the short-lived Mongol dynasty. Belonging to a good family, he inherited wealth, but this did not tie him to one place or fetter his soul. His life was devoted to wandering from one noted Taoist monastery to another. He belonged to the open and called himself the son of the clouds and groves, *yün-ling tzŭ*. On one occasion he went to the city to see his friend Hsü, who was expected home from official duty in a distant place. While waiting for Hsü, he became interested in the ten-year-old son of the household, who was pursuing his studies under a tutor. As a stimulus to diligence on the part of the boy the artist one day seated himself at the father's table and drew a black and white sketch. He portrayed a small house on three sides of a courtyard situated in a pine-grove on a hillock, behind which mountains towered. A small stream wound in and out before the grove, but there was no sign of life, not even a path leading to the house. All the surroundings were forbidding and such as

BLACK AND WHITE SKETCH BY NI TSAN, YÜAN DYNASTY

would induce one to remain indoors. The object of the painting is explained in the peculiar handwriting of the artist himself on the remaining portion of the paper. He says that he wished to encourage the youth in his studies by reminding him that he could master his books only by detaching himself from the ordinary life of the world in as complete a measure as if he were dwelling in a lonely hut on a hillside, far from the world and with no paths leading to it. In this sketch imagination was given free rein. The artist needed to draw upon his memory only for the reproduction of a grove backed by hills. Imaginative creation supplied the rest.

As pictorial art in China is not associated with, or related to, sculpture and architecture, it is not subject to their laws. Painting knows only one relation, and that is to writing. It makes no attempt to arouse emotions by figures seen in relief and roundness, as in sculpture, and it diverts the spaces and perspective of architecture to its own uses. It is a freer and bolder art than sculpture; but mere freedom did not attract Chinese artists. They were always anxious to establish conventions, but the point is that the conventions subscribed to by them had no relation to sculpture or architecture. Not that they were afraid of portraying figures, *jên wu*, for one of the earliest

references to painting is found in the "Family Sayings of Confucius," in which the sage is described as visiting a palace at Lo-yang, in B.C. 517, where he saw portraits. On one side of the walls of the palace were portrayed the figures of the two beneficent rulers of antiquity, Yao and Shun, while on the other side were portraits of the degenerate despots, Chieh and Chou. One group encouraged virtue, and the other warned against vice. Paintings of figures have been among the best types in all periods of Chinese art. There has been no attempt to introduce the effects of the high relief or ronde-bosse of sculpture. There is no trace of light and shade. The figures stand, as it were, in a neutral light, which suffuses them but casts no shadows. There is, however, a class of architectural paintings, *chieh hua*, but in these the masters Kuo Chung-shu and Wang Chêng-pêng have established their own conventions, which differ widely from those followed by western painters. Beauty of design and balance of composition are the chief characteristics of their work.

In the exercise of freedom, resulting from a neglect of the more ambitious desires of western confrères to include everything possible in their painting, Chinese artists have devoted themselves to the single task of producing harmonious

effects of line and color. The developments of accurate knowledge have not disturbed them, nor have they felt the benumbing influence of an art in which there was a fateful tendency toward science. They have been the masters, not the servants, of the world's knowledge. They have taken liberties with it, just as Homer stopped the fury of a battle to allow his heroes to discuss their ancestry and achievements, or as Rubens in a landscape made his figures cast shadows in a different direction from those of the trees. In his famous painting of "The Five Hundred Disciples," Li Kung-lin, of Lung-mien, shades some of the faces in one group which are turned to the side and leaves similar figures in another group without shadows. In some faces the shadow is shown by the use of a thick, heavy line. In accordance with the miraculous accounts of Buddhism, Li places some of the disciples on birds riding through the air, in defiance of the laws of nature. It was, in fact, this spirit of freedom which made the Chinese pictorial presentation of Buddhistic lore so easy and so attractive. The more the saints transgressed ordinary laws, the greater the delight of the artist and the better his scope of treatment.

This freedom is not confined to a disregard of natural laws. It sometimes goes still further.

The artist Ch'en Hsüan, thirteenth century, painted a scroll depicting the journey southward from Sze-ch'uan to Yün-nan of the famous General Chu-ko Liang (A.D. 181–234). The scene begins with the emergence of two rafts from a bend in the river into an open stretch. The rafts, which carry mailed warriors with conspicuous, multicolored war-flags, are propelled by men on either side with short paddles and are convoyed by men riding astride distended pigskin floats, armed with bows and swords. Part of the procession accompanies the raft on the land and is seen disappearing dramatically around the farther side of a hill. Figures in mellow shades of red, green, blue-gray, and pale yellow are grouped around a canopied structure built on the raft. The vertical lines of the flags against the brown background of infinite depth make a perfect harmony of warm color and fine composition. But, strange to say, the central figure of General Chu-ko does not appear at all, as is pointed out in a poetical effusion written on the painting by the emperor Ch'ien Lung. Strange freedom it would be to send the General's troops southward without him—but to the mind of the artist the General is, of course, in his right place under the canopy, where he cannot be seen. For whose use was the canopy made if not for that of

the commanding general, and for what purpose are guards and flags surrounding it if not to indicate surely where he might be expected to be?

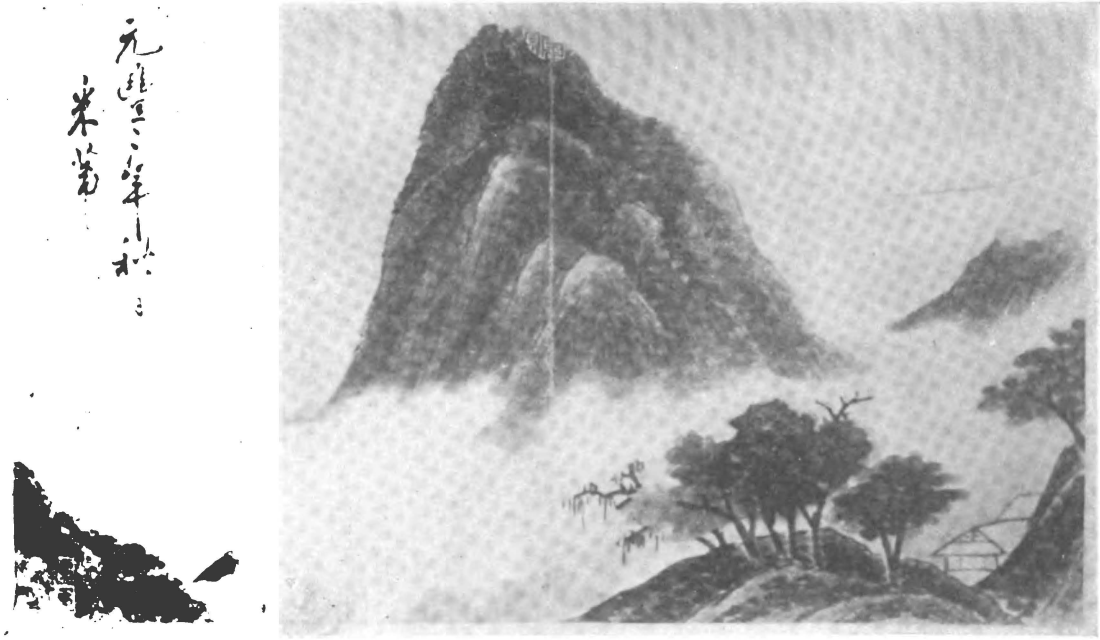
Perspective, or rather linear perspective, is a scientific achievement adopted by our artists but forming no necessary part of art, as is shown by the almost complete absence of it in Chinese paintings. The artists of China never lost sight of the fact that their paintings were to hang on a flat wall with light coming possibly from both sides or directly on the surface from one side. In the case of scrolls, which roll up like a parchment, *volumen*, they are always exposed to view on a table. This method of flat exposure makes the use of isometric perspective less objectionable to westerners, accustomed to linear perspective, than it would otherwise be. Furthermore, Chinese artists have not assumed the immobility of a spectator. On the contrary, he is supposed to move about, so as to obtain the view of a picture which gives most pleasure. Some landscapes must be viewed obliquely from one side or the other; some disclose their greatest beauty directly from the front; with some the beholder must imagine himself as viewing the scene from a higher point of view or from a neighboring hillside. No rule positing the eye of the spectator at a fixed angle to the center of a pic-

ture would be flexible enough for the free spirit of a Chinese painter. He would fret under its restraints, even if he were educated to appreciate its optical correctness. At any rate, it must be conceded that in the realm of art both linear and isometric perspectives are a convention. Artists may safely leave it to scientists to discuss the laws of light, while they get on with their business of producing imaginative creations which will be a real experience in the appreciative hearts of beholders. Of what use are a correct understanding of optical laws and a strict application of them in his work if the artist produces only a cold, lifeless picture? He is an artisan, not an artist. Painting is of the spirit; it is not an outcome of the study of mathematical laws.

It must be conceded that many Chinese paintings leave an impression of flatness, but on careful examination it will be found in every instance that this is due to the failure of the artist to have obtained harmony of line and harmony of color. This is the correct explanation, it seems to me, and not the lack of chiaroscuro, to which it is so often assigned. Where there is a proper balance in composition and coloring there is never flatness. In fact, wherever this is marked, it may be taken as evidence of inferior work. Kuo Jo-hsü (about A.D. 1100) pointed out this tendency in his

"three faults," the first of which is a weak wrist, which results in a stupid brush. Balance is lacking, objects have a flat appearance and cannot be represented in relief. Thus it is evident that the danger of flatness has been freely recognized by Chinese artists.

Brush strokes, *pi fah*, out of which lines are formed, are the essence of Chinese painting. They are thick or thin, calm or nervous, abrupt or finished, according to the style of the artist or, in some instances, to his mood. The most fundamental distinction is between thick strokes, *ts'u pi*, and thin ones, *hsi pi*. Wu Tao-tzŭ, for example, used the former, and Li Kung-lin the latter. The landscapists, Yen Wên-kuei, of the Sung dynasty, and Shên Chou, of the Ming dynasty, used both with equal facility. Brush strokes form the basis on which different "styles" of painting are distinguished. In landscape painting the brush strokes came to be known as "wrinkles," *ts'un fah*, and in the delineation of mountains were divided into a great number of varieties. There were those which resembled the strokes of a large axe, *ta fu p'i ts'un*—like those used by the artist Li T'ang—and others resembling those of a small axe, *hsiao fu p'i ts'un*—as used by Li Ch'êng. The raindrop strokes, *yü tien ts'un*, of Fan K'uan were only slightly different from



HILL IN CLOUDS, BY MI FEI

the hemp-fiber ones, *ma p'i ts'un*, of Tung Yüan, or the same fiber strokes made with a short-handled brush, *tuan pi*, by the priest-artist Chü Jan. The famous Hsia Kuei used "girdled by water," *tai hsui*, strokes. Each of these is a technical name for the style in which artists used their brushes, and their distinguishing marks can be readily learned. These distinctions of brush strokes are also made in the method of painting different kinds of stones.

It was the fundamental difference between strong, vigorous brush strokes and those in which gentle gracefulness was the chief quality that was responsible for the origin in the Sung dynasty of the terms Northern and Southern Schools. These are not geographical terms but refer wholly to differences in style of brush work. Li Ssŭ-hsün was made the founder of the Northern School, and Wang Wei of the Southern. These were two outstanding figures of the T'ang dynasty, whose styles, being dissimilar, were sufficient justification for the broad grouping into the two schools, though it must be confessed that the terms as applied to T'ang dynasty painters indicate a distinction rather than a difference. In the Sung and later periods, however, the line of demarcation of the two styles is distinct. Kuo Hsi, Ma Yüan, Hsia Kuei, Liu Sung-nien,

Li T'ang, Chao Pai-chü are representatives of the Northern School in the Sung dynasty, while the Southern claims Tung Yüan, Chü Jan, Mi Fei, and many others. Some landscapists could not be claimed as exclusively belonging to either school. These were Ching Hao and Kuan T'ung, of the Five Dynasties, and Li Ch'êng and Fan K'uan, of the Sung. For all practical purposes the distinction between these two schools can be ignored. It is sufficient to bear constantly in mind the two fundamental ideals in landscape painting. In one, .strength and grandeur are sought; in the other, beauty and charm.

It is the lack of quality in brush strokes that most impresses Chinese critics in their opinion of our western painting. Tsou I-kuei (A.D. 1680–1766) was a famous littérateur and a good artist. He was a favorite of the emperor Ch'ien Lung and was one of the group of artists who studied western painting under the tutorship of the Jesuit fathers, Attiret and Castiglione. These two artists found their work highly appreciated at first in court circles, but this popularity could not last, for their style was too much at variance with accepted Chinese canons. It must also be said, judging from the existing specimens of Castiglione's work, that he would not have been considered in Europe as belonging to the highest

rank of artists. These two priests studied Chinese methods, and Chinese artists, like Tsou I-kuei, Tung Pang-tah, and T'ang Tai, studied European painting. As a result of the experiment, both sides seemed more convinced than previously of the excellence of their own methods. In 1743 Attiret wrote in *Lettres êdifiantes*, as quoted by Bushell:

"It was necessary for me to forget, so to speak, all that I had already learned and make for myself a new style, in order to conform to the taste of the nation. Whatever we paint is ordered by the emperor. We first make the designs; he sees them, has them changed, rearranged, as seems good to him. Whether the correction be good or poor, one must let it stand without daring to say anything."

About the same time Tsou I-kuei wrote, in his "Remarks on Painting," *Hsiao Shan Hua P'u*, as follows:

"Westerners are fond of using the perspective plane in painting, with the result that the impression of depth and distance is very accurate. In the painting of human figures, houses, and trees there are always shadows. The colors and brushes used are also different from those used in China. The shaded portion of the picture tapers off from wide to narrow, like the point of

"a triangle. Mural paintings of palaces and residences are often so real that one wants to walk straight into them. Students may make use of a small percentage of the methods of westerners, and especially of their suggestiveness, but they are entirely devoid of style [style of the brush]. Although their work shows skill in drawing and workmanship, yet it cannot be classified as true painting."

The subtlety of Chinese paintings is not often the result of symbolism. This is a quality to which attention is rarely called by Chinese critics. Horses are symbolic of the strength of a noble man, and a lion represents a teacher, probably for the reason that teacher and lion are pronounced alike—*shih*. But apart from a few such instances, symbolism is confined to the religious paintings of Buddhism and Taoism, and in these it is that of the religionist and not of the artist. The real subtlety is based upon the inferior position of man in his relation to the powers of Heaven and Earth. He is not as with us the center of the universe; his God is not anthropomorphic. He might have expressed his philosophy in the words of the Hebrew psalmist: "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and stars, which thou hast ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him?" This

LANDSCAPE BY WÊN CHÊNG-MING.
MING DYNASTY

union of philosophic thought and art inspiration is reflected in the calmness of Chinese life and its freedom from startling upheavals, such as have come to the western world through scientific inventions, by which man finds himself no longer the subject of nature but has become its master. The Chinese spirit has kept itself free from the burden of material things and has reveled in contemplation. Man is but a small part of creation—he is evanescent, while the great laws of heaven and earth are constant and eternal. This subtle spirit breathes in every noble landscape painted by a Chinese artist.

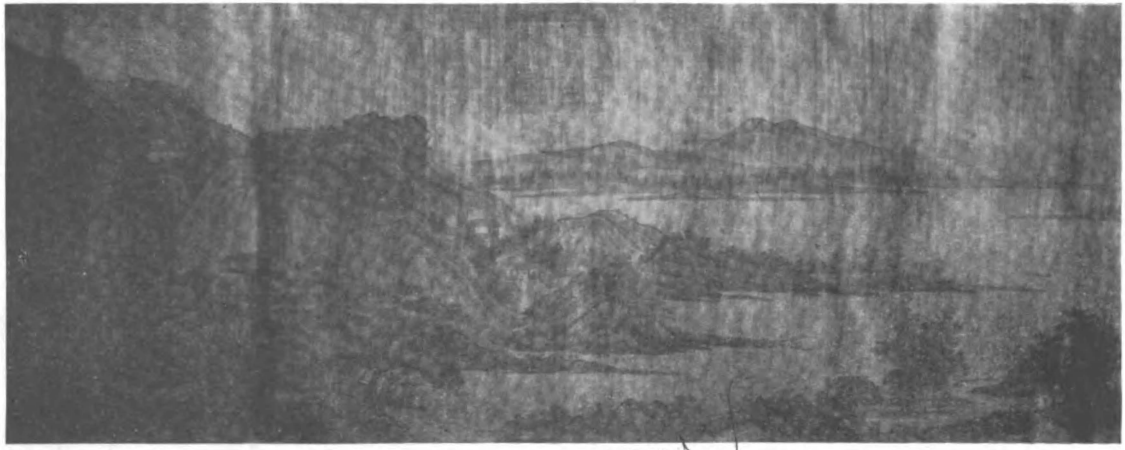
Such sublimity might be tiresome if it were not relieved by lesser delights. Fortunately the artists have seen birds on wing and have heard their songs; they have beheld beautiful flowers, such as orchids, lilies, apple blossoms, or peonies, and have watched birds of paradise, thrushes, or swallows fluttering among the fragrant branches; they have observed carp disporting themselves and have noted the grotesque antics of the praying-mantis. These all they have delighted to paint and sketch. Nothing has given them more satisfaction than studies of the graceful bamboo stem and leaf. They have allowed themselves to be satirical and have made cartoons in which they have lampooned notabilities. One such scroll,

from the collection of Tuan Fang, represents some of the leading men and women of the T'ang dynasty as beggars, each with hand extended for some favor. Garden scenes with women in beautiful gowns, toy-venders with gaily dressed children pressing upon them, monkeys on sticks, falcons eager for the hunt, horses halting for rest in the shade of a tree, a playful cat ready to spring at

CARTOON, T'ANG DYNASTY. IN COLLECTION OF TUAN FANG

a dog, an aroused sleeper throwing his boot at a troublesome rodent—these are also subjects for the artists and show the more human side of their character.

Fortunately we have not been left without a description of an early painting. A scroll representing a landscape with the Yün Tai Mountain in the distance is strikingly described by the great artist Ku K'ai-chih, of the fourth century. It is not known where this hill was located, but it was probably one of the peaks of Kuei-chi, the eastern part of the province of Cheh-kiang.



THE HILLS OF KUEI-CHI. ATTRIBUTED TO KU K'AI-CHIH

These were the hills that Ku painted in his famous scroll "The Hills of Kuei-chi," in the Metropolitan Museum, New York. This was formerly in the collection of the Ch'ên family, of Wei hsien, Shan-tung province. It was brought to Tuan Fang while he was Viceroy at Nanking, and he told me that he offered a high price for it, but the seller demanded a higher one. In his great love for landscape painting, Tuan Fang said that he preferred this scroll to the one then in his collection. It was doubtless of this painting that Viceroy Tuan spoke to Professor Adolph Fischer, of Berlin, as quoted by Binyon, on page 37 of his *Painting in the Far East.* Of the three known paintings attributed to Ku K'ai-chih this landscape scroll has the earliest attestation in a seal of the emperor T'ai Tsung (A.D. 627–650), the genuineness of which I have been able to ascertain by comparison with another known specimen. The style of painting is in complete accord with Ku's description, which follows:

"Back of the face of the hill are the shadows. The clouds, vomited forth from the clear blue of the eastern sky, are rushing toward the west. The sky and water are brilliant blue. The setting sun throws its rays over the hillside and makes it possible to distinguish between objects that are near and those that are in the distance.

"The hill starts from the east, but halfway to the top there is a turn, and four or five purple-colored rocks, looking like thick clouds, come into view. A narrow ravine winds in and out like a curled dragon. Above are hilltops on all sides, which burst upon the view. In rear of these is a steep peak facing the east, and, joined with other undulatory summits, it stretches off toward a large reddish boulder on the west. Below are deep ravines cut into the face of the hill and leaving a boulder projecting in a most threatening aspect. Laotse is sitting on the boulder and pointing toward a peach tree, which is growing out of the sides of one of the high ravines. His face is thin, but full of life, and is turned toward two of his disciples who are looking down, frightened and perspiring. He is calmly discussing philosophical problems with Wang Liang, whose whole body is in sight, while Wang Chao is partially hidden by a projecting rock, so that only the sleeves of his coat may be seen. The clothes of the other men, faintly seen on account of the height and distance of the hill, differ from the richly-colored clothes of persons painted in their home.

The central part of the scroll represents two mountains, Chüeh Wo, covered with red sand, and Kao Lü, with its rugged peaks. A solitary

"pine-tree stands on Kao Lü opposite the boulder on which Laotse is sitting and leaning out over the intervening gulley, in which clusters a small red hut, which seems at no great distance from either side. These two hills stretch out toward the west to connect with the Yün Tai Mountain, having a road on the left side overhanging a ravine, filled with massive rocks bunched together, under which a stream pours forth from a fountain. The water rushes out toward the coast and drops below through quick-flowing rapids, disappearing in the depth. There are distant views of the hill Yün Tai from the east and west, as well as from the northwest. Looking up the hill there is a cleft rock resembling double doors, in one of which calmly sits a phoenix with wings outspread and tail elevated, as if about to fly. The last part of the scroll presents the western side of Yün T'ai. There is a wide valley with a flowing stream. A white tiger crouches at the edge of the water ready to drink. The picture then gradually slopes off to the end of the scroll."

Another great painter, Kuo Hsi, gave his idea of landscape painting. In the *Hua Hsün*, a portion of which has been freely translated by Seiichi Taki, the artist reveals his communings with nature:

"From what motives springs the love of high-minded men for landscape? In his very nature man loves to be in a garden with hills and streams, whose water makes cheerful music as it glides among the stones. What a delight does one derive from such sights as that of a fisherman engaging in his leisurely occupation in a sequestered nook, or of a woodsman felling a tree in a secluded spot, or of mountain scenery with sporting monkeys and cranes? Nothing is so distasteful as the bustle and turmoil of a city, and one naturally envies the lot of sages and hermits, who always abide amidst the beauties of nature. But in this day of peace, when the emperor and people are in perfect accord, each striving to promote the weal of the empire, it would be contrary to justice if a man should egotistically leave society and retire to a mountain. This is no time for us to abandon the busy worldly life for one of seclusion in the mountains, as was honorably done by some ancient sages in their days. Though impatient to enjoy life amidst the luxuries of nature, most people are debarred from indulging in such pleasures. To meet this want artists have endeavored to represent landscapes so that people may be able to behold the grandeur of nature without stepping out of their houses. In this light, painting affords pleasures

"of a nobler sort by removing from one the impatient desire of actually observing nature."

The general principles of painting were summed up in the "Six Canons" of Hsieh Ho (A.D. 475). These were expressed in the tersest form, only four characters being used for each rule. They have been variously translated. Giles' version is: (1) rhythmic vitality, (2) anatomical structure, (3) conformity with nature, (4) suitability of coloring, (5) artistic composition, and (6) finish. It is easier to obtain an adequate idea of the artistic principles underlying these canons from the original Chinese than from Giles' extra-terse translation. Interpreting them in the light of the explanation of Chang Yen-yüan, ninth century, it seems to me that the real meaning of the canons, expanded so as to convey the implied ideas, is as follows:

1. The conception should possess harmony and vitality.

2. The brush should be used to establish the structural framework.

3. The outline should conform to the shape of the objects.

4. The coloring should be suitable to the varied forms.

5. The perspective should be correctly conceived.

6. The representation should be in conformity with the style selected.

According to later authorities, the only artists who could abide judgment by the high standards of these canons were Lu T'an-wei, Wei Hsieh, and three others. Even such a great artist as Ku K'ai-chih is relegated to the third class. It was, indeed, a lofty ideal to set forth at such an early stage in the development of pictorial art in China. It has been at once the inspiration and the despair of succeeding generations.

VI

PAINTING

It will be seen from the previous lectures that the artistic heritage of China differs widely from that to which the occident has succeeded from Greece; but in no particular is the divergence wider than in the estimate of the human body as a motive. Gardner says that "as it was man who specially interested the Greeks, it was to the study of the human body, both in itself and as the abode of the spirit, that the Greek artist especially devoted himself. In the fifth and fourth centuries he made rapid and uninterrupted progress in the knowledge of this body in every position of rest and action, from the extreme tension of the battle and the palaestra to the complete repose of the reclining position." This is the tradition that has held continuous sway over the minds of our artists and critics. Berenson adheres to the principle and says:

"The human figure must be the principal material out of which the graphic and plastic arts are constructed. Every other visible thing should be subordinate to man and submitted to his standards. The standards concerned are stand-

"ards of happiness, not the happiness of the figure portrayed, but of us who look on and perceive. This feeling of happiness is produced by the way the human figure is presented to us, and it must be presented in such a way that, instead of merely recognizing it as meant for a human being of a given type, we shall be forced by its construction and modeling to dwell upon it until it arouses in ourselves ideated sensations that shall make us experience the diffused sense of happiness which results from our becoming aware of an unexpectedly intensified, facilitated activity."

A similar opinion relative to our western art of painting has been expressed by Kenyon Cox, who says that "the highest subject for the exercise of the greatest powers of a painter is the human figure, nude or so draped as to express its structure and movement." These three quotations fairly and fully state a fundamental canon of our western artistic method and interpretation.

I am entering into no controversy as to art values when I endeavor to make clear that Chinese painting does not accept this canon and at all stages of its development would have been horrified at its claims. It places man as a small part of creation. It sees him waging a losing fight against the superior powers which surround

him during life and finally succumbing to the inglorious triumph of disease and death. It sees some of the noblest spirits incarnated in frail, ungainly bodies and shining through unhandsome features. It sees sensuous beauty beaming on the comely faces of courtesans and profligates. Then it becomes more than ever convinced that it is the beauty of righteousness that is worth while and that man and his body can serve as high artistic motives only in so far as their delineation will contribute to such pleasurable emotions as are consistent with virtue. The Chinese would not recognize this difference of viewpoint as a contest between the moralist and the artist but would insist that it is solely a matter of artistic values, in which it is necessary to recognize clearly the distinction between the greater glory of the wide universe and the lesser splendor of man.

Chinese artists, far from being averse to the portrayal of human figures, were ardently devoted to it; they insisted only that there should be some pleasurable emotion excited in the beholder, other than sensuous. There is a portrait on paper by Liu Shan, of the T'ang dynasty. The figure is that of a tall, sturdy man of middle age with long-flowing beard. He is garbed in loose, coarse robes, bound at the waist with a

PORTRAIT OF KUO TZŬ-I, BY LIU SHAN,
T'ANG DYNASTY

girdle of braided straw. His hands are clasped in front of him, and over his left arm hangs a long, narrow food-basket. His bare feet are heavy and ill-shapen, as if swollen from hard travel. On his head is a priest's cap. The portrait is that of the famous T'ang general Kuo Tzŭ-i (A.D. 697–781), said to have been seven feet two inches in height and fond of wearing the coarse garments of a Taoist priest when off duty. The lines of the brush are thick and strong, and the ink is glossy and deep. It is an imaginative sketch, *hsieh-i*, and not careful, delicate work, *kung-pi*. The strength of soul and dignity of body of the great general stir the emotions. There is an almost barbaric strength in the massive figure. The artist has caught the determined, relentless spirit of the general and has shown himself a master of portraiture. Li Kung-lin, of the Sung dynasty, copied one of his pictures, *Kuan I t'u*—"Watching the Game of War"—but, as far as I know, neither the original nor the copy has survived. A figure similar to this portrait by Liu Shan is given by Petrucci in *Les peintres chinois* (where it is wrongly described as a portrait of Lü Tung-pin) and has been exhibited in the Metropolitan Museum, New York. It lacks, however, the ruggedness of Liu's work, as may readily be seen by a comparison of the silken girdle, well-arranged

cap, and shapely bag on arm with the coarser objects used in this portrait. The finer articles are out of keeping with the general intent of the portrait, as is also the weak poise of the head contrasted with the resolute attitude when the head is slightly thrown back. The portrait is signed *P'êng-lai*, which was the style of Liu Shan. It also bears two seals of the artist.

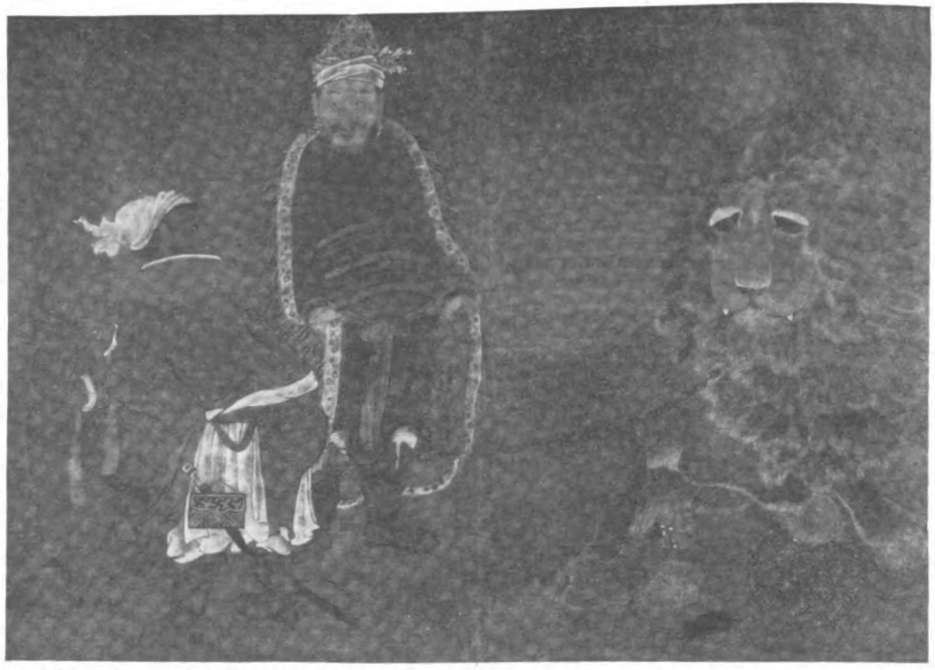
There is such a high standard in the portrayal of human figures, *jên wu*, that one passes easily from this division to that of so-called religious pictures, *shih tao*. As a matter of fact, there seems no reason for an arbitrary separation into two divisions by the author of *Hsüan Ho Hua P'u*, and it has not been generally adopted in other books. The naturalness of transition from one class to the other may be seen by reference to a picture of Kuan Yin, goddess of mercy, which is attributed to Wu Tao-tzü. The painting is from one of the Jehol temples, to which it was presented by the emperor Ch'ien Lung. It is on thick white paper, which has been thoroughly sized by the use of *blanc de Chine* and a thin solution of glue. The life-size figure stands with bare feet on a cloud-shaped rock. Her flowing robes and underskirt are blown by the wind. The shapely hands are crossed gracefully in front of the body, revealing long delicate fingers. At her

KUAN YIN, GODDESS OF MERCY, BY WU TAO-TZŬ
T'ANG DYNASTY

right side a white dove flutters, carrying in its beak a rosary. Under it is Shan Ts'ai, the faithful attendant of the goddess. To the left is another rock with one side carved in the shape of a panel, on which is the signature of Wu Tao-tzŭ—*T'ang Wu Tao-tzŭ pi.* The use of the name of the dynasty before the name of a person was not uncommon in the T'ang period. Around the heads of the goddess and attendant are halos. The colors are rich and their combination striking. The robe of the goddess is clear, deep blue with mauve, embroidered underskirt. Her head-gear has blue drapery and a tall front piece in which is a touch of brilliant red. Red is again used as the color of the pendant which hangs from a necklace of gold-colored yellow. The face, breast, hands, and feet are of shell-white. The halo is of blue and gold, and the rocky pedestal red-brown with blue and gold edges. The small attendant stands on a lotus petal, blue underneath and rose-lined. The boldness of the contrasting colors is worthy of a goddess or of a rising sun, but does not detract in the least from the benevolent, gracious countenance, which radiates calm content.

A religious picture of the greatest importance is a copy on silk of a screen painting, *p'ing hua*, by Lu T'an-wei. This picture belonged to the Li family, by whom it was lent for many years to

Tuan Fang. During the Boxer trouble, in 1900, it disappeared but was later found in the home of a servant who had carried it away for safe-keeping but who was not able to preserve from vandalism the valuable annotation on the side of the painting by Wang Yüan-t'ing. Fortunately the circumstances under which this painting was produced have been narrated by Su Shih, the poet (A.D. 1036–1101), in his comments on the Chiao-hsi Kai-kung Hall. From these comments we learn that there was a painting by Lu T'an-wei, who lived in the Liu Sung dynasty of the fifth century, on a screen in the Kan Lu Temple at Jun-chow. The modern name of this temple is Ch'ao An Ssŭ, and it stands on the Pei Ku hills in Tan-tu hsien near Chin-kiang. This screen painting was preserved carefully in the midst of the many devastating wars which laid waste the country-side. The emperor Shên Tsung, of the Northern Sung dynasty, heard of it and commanded a member of the Imperial Academy of Painting to go to the temple and make a copy. This was in A.D. 1076. When it was completed and brought to the palace, the emperor had it hung in his banqueting hall and wrote the following eulogy in its honor: "Haughty are the eyes of the lion, prominent is the nose. His mane is ruffled, his tongue is swollen, and his teeth slightly protrude. The feet are dancing,



THE LION AND BARBARIANS, AFTER LU T'AN-WEI

the ears are pricked up, he looks to the right while he still watches to the left. He is pleased with the appearance of his tail. Though fierce, yet he is gentle. Such playfulness hung in the Main Hall has the effect of adding a guest to the festive board. Alas! a hundred wandering souls drop into oblivion, while the early Master Lu remains wonderful." The purport of this painting is to show the triumph of Buddhism, represented by the human-faced lion, even among the barbaric frontier tribes. The posture of the central figure is striking. His pelisse, stretched wide in his hands, resembles wings. He is so alive that it looks as if he would walk straight out from the picture.

There is a painting of a priest in contemplation, by Wên Hsün (A.D. 1050), which is a near approach to our western oil painting. The background is wholly covered with a dark color, so that no part of the silk can be seen. This method is called *shua-sêh*, "color-washed." The sketch is of a young priest seated on a rock, while his attendant is in a stooping position pouring water from a vase. One knee is drawn up over the other and held by his clasped hands. His head is slightly turned to the right. The eyes are bright, as might be expected of a youthful devotee. His robe is white, while over his left shoulder hangs

A PRIEST IN CONTEMPLATION, BY WÊN HSÜN
SUNG DYNASTY

his richly colored camlet cloak. The contour of the body under the clothes seems distinct, although there are no lines to indicate it. This lack of structure in a portrait belongs to the class of "boneless pictures," *mu-ku hua;* and the artist, Wên Hsün, was one of the best exponents of that style. The portrait is a noble example of "a conception which possesses harmony and vitality," as prescribed by the first canon of Hsieh Ho. The name of the priest is unknown, but his life-story could be written from the artist's delineation of him. Carlyle says, "Often I have found a portrait superior in instruction to half a dozen written biographies."

The fondness for portraiture has been with some artists only one step in the direction of their ideal in depicting historical tales. This has had an overpowering attraction for them, just as it had for Rembrandt, who preferred to paint scenes from the Old Testament and the life of Christ, while his admirers clamored for portraits. The "literary subject" has never been tabooed in China as a weak motive; on the contrary, it has been a fruitful source of artistic inspiration. This was illustrated in the pictographs of the Wu family funerary chambers and again appears at the end of the fourth century in the paintings of Ku K'ai-chih. The scroll "Admonitions," in the British

Museum, depicts scenes which grow out of the advice given by Chang Hua to the empress during the reign of Wu Ti (A.D. 265–290). Chang Hua said: "In the reign of Yüan Ti, when a bear escaped from its cage, the empress Feng boldly faced it. Was not this woman fearless in the face of death?" Ku K'ai-chih pictorialized this scene in the first paragraph of his scroll. The empress stands between the bear and the emperor, seeking to protect him while two attendants rush forward to slay it. Every scene of the scroll represents a different historical incident which has no connection with what precedes or follows it. The sole connection is found in the collocation of these incidents in the "Admonitions," written by Chang Hua.

A "literary subject" is also depicted by Ku K'ai-chih in the scroll formerly owned by Tuan Fang and now in the remarkable collection of Mr. Charles L. Freer. This scroll is called "The Lo Goddess," Lo Shên, and illustrates scenes from a poem on this same topic by a Han dynasty poet, Ts'ao Chih. It has been beautifully illustrated in the Japanese publication *Kokka*. The opinion has been expressed to me by an eminent Chinese scholar, Mr. Wang Tsung-lieh, that this scroll does not represent scenes from the Lo Shên poem but illustrates the river excursion of Mu Wang, *Mu*

Wang Yu Ho. I am inclined to agree with Mr. Wang's opinion, for I have seen a painting of the Lo Shên by Chao Jung, Yüan dynasty, which depicts high officers standing on the bank to receive the goddess emerging from the water. This is the scene which one would form in his mind from reading the poem rather than that which is found in this scroll. But whatever may be the

BIRDS ON A PRUNUS BRANCH

correct version of the incident depicted, there can be no doubt that the scroll is based upon historical fact and not upon some procession seen by the artist.

One other example of the portrayal of historical tales is the "Nine Songs" scroll, *chiu ko*, by Li Kung-lin, Sung dynasty, in the Government Museum, Peking. This was one of the "Four Beauties," *ssŭ mei chü*, of the emperor Ch'ien Lung. It illustrates a part of the famous poem *Li Sao*—"Falling into Trouble"—composed by

Ch'ü Yüan (B.C. 332–295). The poem is an allegory describing the search for a good prince who will administer just government. The first scene is that of Tung Huang T'ai I, a god of the ancient kingdom Ch'u; the next is that of Yün Chung Chün, the god of the clouds; the next is that of Siang Chün, the father of the two women, Siang fu-jên, who are depicted in the following scene. These two women have been much discussed in the literature of China, but they are generally supposed to represent the two sisters who became the wives of the ancient emperor Shun. The next three scenes are of Ta Ssŭ Ming, Hsiao Ssŭ Ming, and Tung Chün, all of them being deities of the Ch'u kingdom, which is the country included in the modern provinces of Hu-nan and Hu-peh. The next scene is that of Ho Po, the old man of the river; this is followed by Shan Kuei, the god of the hills. The picture of Kuo Shang, the martyr, is very striking and forms a good ending to this scroll, though another scene—that of the sacrificial spirit, Li Hun—might have been added to complete the tale.

Landscape has had a greater attraction for a Chinese artist than any other division of painting. It has suited his philosophy, his manner of life, and his love of inexactitude. Human figures, images of gods, animals and birds, boats and bridges—

everything that the fancy of the artist could think of was placed in his scenery.

> Fancy, high commissioned, send her,
> She has vassals to attend her.
> She will bring in spite of frost
> Beauties that the earth hath lost.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> All the heapèd autumn's wealth
> With a stiff, mysterious stealth
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Thou shalt at one glance behold
> The daisy and the marigold.

The nature which he depicted was that described by Aristotle: "Nature is not the outward world of created things; it is the creative force, the productive principle of the universe." Its possible moods were not confined to those which had come under the observation of the artist but were as unlimited as the bounds of his imagination. He could invade the courts and pavilions of the forbidden palaces, he could set men and women amid surroundings distant from him, and he could combine into one view the attractions of several places. He appropriated to himself the whole world in the spirit of Emerson, who said that "though fields and farms belong to this man or that, the landscape is no man's property."

Wang Wei (A.D. 699–759), in whose style the Southern School of landscapists painted, was an official in early life, but had a stormy career, owing to his persecution by the rebel An Lu-shan. He finally retired to his native hills in northern Shan-si, where he lived alone, his wife having died while he was still young. He built for himself a modest house, in which he wrote poetry and painted. His most famous work is the landscape scroll and the poem, both entitled "Wang Ch'uan." In poem and picture he put palaces on the side of the barren hills around him, peopled them with distinguished guests, surrounded them with deer parks and groves of the graceful bamboo, which could not grow in the inhospitable climate of those northern hills, assembled poets and littérateurs on the banks of beautiful streams flowing through the valleys and, in fact, took entire possession of his surroundings and metamorphosed them into the delectable mountains of his own unfettered spirit. In one paragraph he represents a grove in which is a house without roof, in which he could sit free from interruption and enjoy music in the moonlight. The poet sang of the artist's picture:

> Sitting alone where the bamboo grows
> The harp sings to me its sweet tune,
> Hid by the trees where no man knows
> I am greeted with light from the moon.

THE LONE FISHERMAN, SUNG DYNASTY

[226]

A profound impression of the mystery of nature and its irresistible powers controlled the thoughts and filled the imagination of Chinese landscapists.

Hushed by the silence of infinity,
I vaguely feel those rhythmic lines that roll
In singing cadence from the brush-sweep free,
Hold symbols of the surge of that vast soul,
The ever-poised and ever-whirling Whole,
Singing creation's endless melody.

—ROLLA PRIDEAUX

These artists would have adopted as their own the statement of Herbert Spencer that "amid the mysteries which become the more mysterious the more they are thought about, there will remain the one absolute certainty that man is ever in the presence of an infinite and eternal energy from which all things proceed." This frame of mind is revealed in the famous landscape by Kuan T'ung, the name of which corresponds to Tennyson's line "A ridge of heapèd hills." Several annotators, among whom is the Yüan dynasty artist Ni Tsan, have called attention to the greatness of Kuan's work as lying in his power to spiritualize a landscape and to breathe into it the breath of life, without resorting to the expedient of introducing figures in order to accomplish this result. In this landscape, which formerly belonged to the noted collector Fêng Tzŭ-yün, of

Canton, and is now in the collection of Professor Vladimir Simkhovitch, hill is piled on hill, like Ossa on Pelion. A waterfall pours down into a small valley on one side, and a broad stream, on the other, flows past the overhanging cliffs. Small houses are on the bank of the stream, and beautiful temples crown the summits of nearer hills, but these seem an insignificant part of the grand mood of nature which overspreads the whole landscape.

Landscape reached its highest development in the Sung dynasty (A.D. 960–1277), and the annals of the period record the paintings of several great masters. Kuo Hsi was one of them. His scroll "Mountain Scenery," in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, came from the collection of Wu Jung-kuan and bears the seals of such critics as Wu Yün and Kêng Hsin-kung. It represents the scenery of western China in Sze-ch'uan province. On these hill roads Kuo introduces travelers, as is his usual practice. A splendid specimen of the work of Li Ch'êng was exhibited in the Art Institute of Chicago, November, 1917, from the collection of Mr. Freer. Ma Yüan and Hsia Kuei, in the Southern Sung period, painted chiefly the landscapes which were inspired from views of the West Lake, Hang-chow. There are precipitous hills with perpendicular drops; pine and fir trees abound. From his

LANDSCAPE BY KUO HSI, SUNG DYNASTY

habit of putting one corner of a gnarled tree or one corner of the roof of a house on the edge of a picture Ma Yüan is often spoken of as the "one-cornered Ma," Ma I-chioh. Hsia Kuei usually painted with thinner ink than Ma, but in most respects their styles are the same. Both were prolific workers, and there are several extant specimens of their magnificent landscapes.

No division of painting lent itself so readily to the slavery of brush strokes as landscape, and none has contributed so much to the loss of artistic inspiration. The brush strokes of Shên Chou, Wên Chêng-ming, and T'ang Yin, of the Ming dynasty, or of the four Wangs, Wu, and Yün, of the late Manchu dynasty, are as good as may be found in the great masters of the Sung dynasty; but their pictures lack inspiration and vitality. Wang Hui (A.D. 1632–1720) had a marvelous control of the brush, but his paintings are those of a dilettante "sipping the nectar of existence while he keeps aloof from its deeper interests." His are *wên jên hua*—paintings of literary men—in which style, brush technique, and design are of the best standards. All that is lacking is what can least be spared—life. His work smells of the oil lamp of the studio and has none of the fragrance of the open.

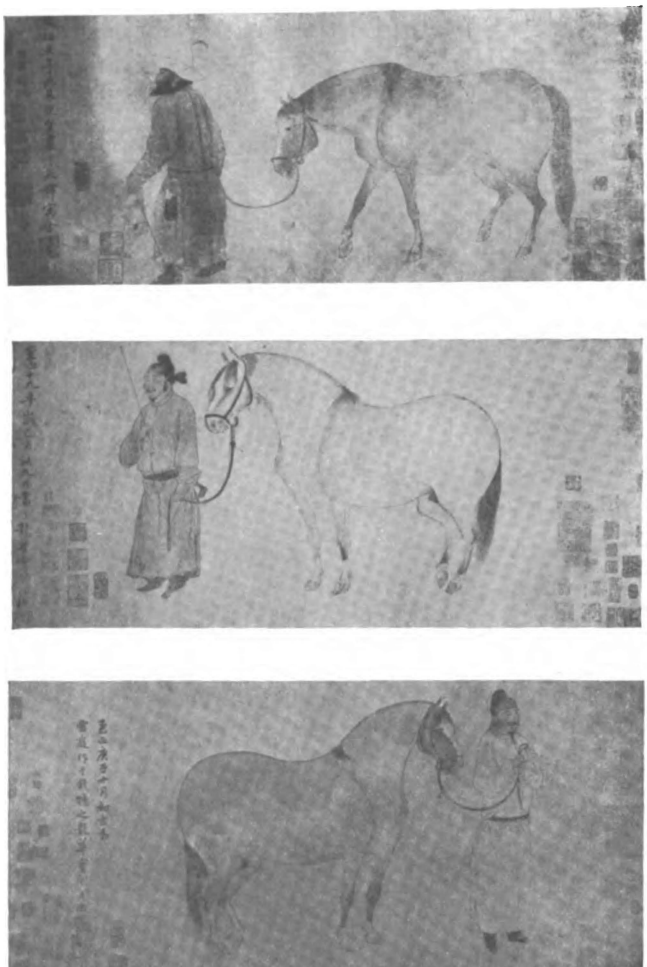
A lighter touch is apparent in the painting of Mongolian horses. I have seen in the collec-

tion of Mr. Hsü Ch'i, Peking, the painting of a horse which eminent authorities—including Chang Ch'uan-shan, eighteenth century—claim was made in the T'ang dynasty. The horse has six hoofs, two of them on the front legs growing out of the fetlocks. This type is noted for swiftness. The painting is on silk and is full of life. A curious picture by Chang Hsüan, of the T'ang dynasty, is mentioned in the "Collection of Hsüan Ho." It is of a Japanese woman riding a horse, *Jih-pên nü ch'i*, but there is no description of it in this "Collection," nor have I seen any reference to it in any other book. It is interesting because it is the earliest reference in Chinese art literature to the Japanese that I have seen. A remarkable horse painting is that of Yang Pang-chi, of the Chin dynasty (A.D. 1115–1260). This is from the famous collection of Ts'ao San-to, of T'ai-ku hsien, Shan-si province. It compares favorably with the well-known painting of a similar subject by Albert Cuyp in the Munich Gallery. A Mongol is riding a light-bay, spirited pacer, decked out with complete trappings. The rider wears a greenish-colored, close-fitting jacket with fur collar. His skirt also has a border of fur, and the saddle is covered with a tiger skin. Red tassels dangle from the horse's bridle and from the man's white cap. In the background is an

A TARTAR HORSEMAN, BY YANG PANG-CHI, CHIN DYNASTY

overhanging green willow, behind which the landscape stretches out to a great depth. The painting has a concealed signature, *an k'uan*, from which the name of this little-known painter is revealed. The same type of horses is seen in the "Three Horses," *san ma t'u*, by the three generations of the Chao family. The first and best is by Chao Mêng-fu and is dated A.D. 1318, fourth year of Yen Yu; the other two are by Chao's son and grandson and are both dated 1360. Each represents a horse being led by a halter. The men are Mongols. The horses have heavy bodies and short, slender legs, like the Mongolian ponies of the present day. This painting is from the collection of Mr. Ching Hsien, who was connected with Tuan Fang for many years and was trusted by him as an expert adviser on paintings.

The art of line and tone is most perfectly combined with harmony of color in the painting of birds and flowers, *hua niao*, or *hua hui*, as it is now popularly called. In this style of work artists have exhibited the delicacy of their brush work without causing any suspicion of pedantry, while at the same time their refinement of feeling is evident in their eschewal of strong colors. What a temptation to let loose a riot of color in the painting of a peacock! This was spurned by the unknown artist of the Sung dynasty who painted



THE THREE HORSES, BY CHAO MÊNG-FU, HIS SON, AND HIS GRANDSON, YÜAN DYNASTY

"The Peacock," which is in the University Museum, Philadelphia. The dignity of posture is evidenced by the graceful curves of the neck and the poise of the head, as well as by the half-opened tail, but this charm would have been lost entirely by any extravagance in the use of colors. The variegated colors of the eyelike spots of the tail coverts and the rich blue of the neck and breast are in soft tones, which delight but do not confuse the observer. This same frugality in the use of colors is seen in a painting by Tiao Kuan-yin, tenth century, who resided in Sze-ch'uan province, where flowers are abundant. It is a large picture in which six double peonies, pink, red, and white, are on a background of green branches and brown rocks with gilded edges. The colors blend into harmony without loss of effect, while the space-filling size of the peonies is relieved by a contrast of a few pear blossoms. This wonderful picture is in the collection of Mr. Ching Hsien and formerly belonged to Shen Po-hsi. Cleveland Museum has a fine painting of "Nine Autumns," which is attributed to Hsü Hsi, of the Five Dynasties, by an attached label of the emperor Ch'ien Lung. The name of the picture is a poetical reference to the autumnal season of a prosperous, fruitful year. The colors are delicate even to the verge of somberness, but this is offset by the brilliant red feet of a

EGRETS AMONG LOTUS FLOWERS, SUNG DYNASTY

small bird in the foreground. This picture is referred to in *Shih Ku T'ang* as "Nine Colors," *chiu-sê t'u*, but there is only one color which is outstanding—the red—and that was used only in contrast.

There is naturalness as well as life and beauty in this type of painting. A Sung artist painted "A Pheasant under a Peach Tree," in which the amber-colored crest, the glossy scarlet breast, the white-ringed neck, and the golden yellow feathers of the long tail are set in contrast with the soft shades of peach blossoms. "A Pair of Egrets among Lotus Flowers" has a background of varied colors, which brings out the white plumage of the egrets balancing with the pink shades of lotus flowers. "The Four Magpies" is a large painting of the Sung dynasty. White-breasted birds are disporting themselves on the branches of an old tree, over which is a creeping vine with white flowers. In a well-known scroll, the *Prunus* is painted in its four stages of development—first with wintry branches, then with flowers and no leaves, again with flowers and leaves, and lastly in its spring appearance. A pair of birds appropriate to the period of development is found in each of the four paragraphs. I have seen a Ming dynasty copy of a beautiful scroll by Chao Ch'ang, eleventh century, in which birds with red

THE FOUR MAGPIES, SUNG DYNASTY

[238]

breasts, blue crowns and tails, brown bodies, and wings tipped white and black are hovering on branches of prunus and hibiscus. It is a work of imaginative beauty, in which the artist must have enjoyed himself even more than those who have had the opportunity of seeing the picture. It shows an abandon of mind, while the brush is under perfect control. The flowers talk to you, the birds fly, all nature is alive; but there are harmony and symmetry, just as in a symphony there are balance and cadence.

Perhaps the most important single characteristic of Chinese art, exemplified chiefly in painting, is its disposition to seize upon permanent elements. George Eliot once remarked that we always think of a lion as full-grown, not young or old. Chinese artists have the keenness to appreciate this quality of the human mind. A tiger is fierce, a lion is strong, a cat is playful, a horse is swift, women are beautiful, men are dignified, flowers delight, birds are cheerful, a landscape is mysterious—these are the outstanding qualities. Among men the human relations of father and son, husband and wife, are universal, but not the temporary position which one may occupy. The illustrious emperor, Ming Huang, of the T'ang dynasty, had a brilliant court and was fond of elaborate state functions. A picture of him in

A STATESMAN, SUNG DYNASTY

the midst of regal glory might be thought to have been the setting which the ceremonious Chinese would have required; but not so. A Sung artist depicts him at a rehearsal acting as conductor, with the women players on one side and the men on the other. A scroll by Chao Mêng-fu represents this emperor seated in an open pavilion, while in front of him several attendants are

EXAMINING THE POINTS OF A HORSE

examining the points of a horse and reporting to him. Another scroll, "Instruction," which is now in the Metropolitan Museum, places the emperor on a wide couch with his young son in front hesitating to take the books handed to him by his father. This man who for a brief span was an emperor could be appreciated for all time as one fond of music, horses, and children, and these human traits were such as would be found in people of all generations. An appeal to the emotional influence of such permanent elements is surer and quicker than to the splendor of any king.

These universal qualities of human nature are also the best fields for imaginative settings, in which the ordinary can be made resplendent and the commonplace glorified as divine.

INDEX

INDEX

The following list has been prepared by me in conjunction with my friend Mr. Fêng Ên-kun. It furnishes the Chinese characters for all of the names used in the text of the lectures. The spelling is that used in Giles' Dictionary.

INDEX