

**The Inner Workings of Brush-and-Ink:
A Study on Huang Binhong (1865–1955) as Calligrapher, with Special
Respect to the Concept of Interior Beauty (*neimei*)**

**Dissertation zur Erlangung des Grades einer Doktorin der Philosophie
am Fachbereich Geschichts- und Kulturwissenschaften
der Freien Universität Berlin
April 2016**

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Tag der Disputation: 18. Juli 2016

Table of Contents

Abstract (English and German)	iv
Acknowledgements	xi
List of Illustrations	xiii
Abbreviations	xxxviii
Introduction	1
Subject Matter and Research Pursuits	1
Huang Binhong as Calligrapher	6
Outline of Chapters	13
Notes on Style	22
Chapter One	
Demarcating the Field of Chinese Calligraphy	24
1.1. Terms: Body, Ritual, Pattern, Self	24
1.2. Inclusion, Exclusion: Different Narratives of Chinese Calligraphy	30
1.3. The Scopes of Art: On the “Origins” of Chinese Calligraphy	39
1.4. Early Texts in China: Meanings and Functions	44
1.5. Interior/Exterior Realms: Writing, Calligraphy, and Cultures of Ritual and Visual Display	52
Chapter Two	
Emulation and Transformation: Huang Binhong’s Aesthetic Framework as Seen through His Calligraphy Art	72
2.1. Emulation and Transformation as Basic Concepts	72
2.2. Two Free-Hand Copies: Emulation and Transformation in Practice	92
Chapter Three	
Defining an Aesthetics of Interiority: Art Historiographical Perspectives	108
3.1. The Interior Beauty of Ancient Chinese Script	110
3.2. Embodiments of the Brush: Interior Beauty, Interior Strength	122
3.3. Interior Beauty and Old-Age Style	134

Chapter Four

The Flavors and Colors of Interior Beauty: Literati Art as a Contested Field in Republican-Period China	140
4.1. A Note on Interiority, Exteriority, and Eccentricism in Chinese Art	141
4.2. Huang Binhong and the Flavors of Interior Beauty	147
4.3. Huang Binhong's <i>Discourse on Clerical-Script Painting</i>	165
4.4. A Preliminary Typology of Color in Huang Binhong's Landscape Paintings	188
4.5. Huang Binhong and the Cultural Topography of Landscape Painting	202

Chapter Five

The Inner Workings of <i>neimei</i>: Calligraphy as Mnemonic Device of the Self	209
5.1. Linking Back to Chapter One: Body, Script, Ritual	211
5.2. 1953: Huang Binhong and Transformation through Mimesis in Art	214
5.3. Re-Membering the Old Traces of the <i>Peach Blossom Stream</i>	221
5.4. Transporting the Movement of <i>caoshu</i>	227
5.5. Mnemonic Devices of the Self/Body: Calligraphy as Life Practice	239
5.6. Mnemonic Devices of the Self/Body: Art as Commemoration	245
5.7. Towards a Somaesthetics of Calligraphy Art	251

Chapter Six

Transmissions: The Cases of Lin Sanzhi (1898–1989) and Wang Dongling (1945–)	257
6.1. Workings on the Inside: Encounter in Reclusion, 1969–1970	267
6.2. Meliorative Practices and Rituals of Self-/Bonding	280
6.3. Reclusive Art and Discourses of the Inner: Reflections on the <i>nei-wai</i> Distinction	287

Summary and Closing Remarks	305
------------------------------------	------------

Bibliography	308
---------------------	------------

Illustrations	338
----------------------	------------

Curriculum Vitae	549
-------------------------	------------

Statutory Declaration	550
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Abstract

Given Huang Binhong's 黃賓虹 (1865–1955) position in art history as one of the most important Chinese brush-and-ink artists of the past century, it is noteworthy that in spite of a striking overabundance of scholarly publications on Huang's work, his oeuvre reveals an as of yet insufficiently examined area: though receiving more attention in recent years, all in all, Huang Binhong's calligraphy production still presents a significant research desideratum. One reason for the peripheral focus in this regard is surely its wide reception as being of generally lesser artistic value than Huang's painting, and its labeling thus as merely “painters calligraphy” (*huajia zi* 畫家字).

The dissertation “The Inner Workings of Brush-and-Ink: A Study on Huang Binhong (1865–1955) as Calligrapher, with Special Respect to the Concept of Interior Beauty (*neimei*)” seeks to counter this lack in scholarship. Here, special attention is paid to the aesthetic concept of *neimei* 內美, “interior beauty”, which finds particular pronunciation in Huang Binhong's brush-and-ink works. As a concept primarily stemming from the artist's theoretical and practical dealings with calligraphy, *neimei* can be taken to constitute the core of Huang's aesthetic terminology; one that is, moreover, reiterated in discourse *on* his art—inasmuch as it appears to comply with certain themes running through the narratives of Chinese art history up to the present day. It is argued that an investigation of this ubiquitous (yet all the more elusive) concept can effectively expose *neimei* as a highly charged discursive term manifesting a set of aesthetic ideas and ideals, and with this, certain body-related inhibitions that underlie art criticism and theory on the traditional brush-and-ink arts in China. In assessing various meanings and implications of *neimei* in an art historiographical context, a grave discrepancy that prevails among symptomatically dichotomous, essentialist conceptions of “interior mind” and “outer form”, respectively, can be revealed.

Before this backdrop, one of the aims of the study is to show in what way a decidedly somaesthetic approach allows us to reconsider presumedly familiar issues: specifically, the art of Huang Binhong, whom we foremost know as a landscape painter, especially through his much-praised, idiosyncratic late-period style, widely understood as a testimony to his accomplishments within the Chinese tradition of literati ink painting; and, more broadly, the complex phenomenon of calligraphy (*shufa* 書法) itself, particular to the cultures and art histories of China, and whose inadequate translation as “beautiful writing” carries notoriously misleading implications.

The title of the study, with its designation of “inner workings”, addresses the inner workings of calligraphy as a classical genre of Chinese literati art theory and practice in its entirety: a formal and material system of brush and ink methods, aesthetic frameworks, and established traditions of style. Moreover, the study aims to encompass the larger scope of Chinese brush-and-ink *discourse*, and its inner workings as a recursive space of art historiographical construction; an ideologically framed, and time and again highly contested domain that possesses essentially self-sustaining qualities of sociopolitical nature.

Chapter one undertakes a general approach to the field of Chinese calligraphy, establishing the basic theoretical premises and argumentative framework of the study. Consideration is given to the terminological issue of “calligraphy” and proposes *shuti* 書體, literally “script body”, as a useful thought figure, inasmuch as *shuti* can be deciphered not only through the image of *ti* 體 as “physical body”, “substance”; but moreover in its connotations of “self” (*shen* 身), “ritual” (*li* 禮), and “pattern”, or “text-pattern” (*wen* 文/紋); notions of equally central importance in the context of Chinese *shufa*. The chapter further thematizes “calligraphy” as an ontological category in art and art history, and raises questions on where (or rather, whether at all) the beginnings of calligraphy as an aesthetic distinction can be located chronologically in time.

Chapter two introduces the philosophically rooted discursive vocabulary frequently deployed by Huang Binhong in his writings on art, specifically those concerned with the implementation of brush-and-ink methods, which serves to carve out the particular significance of calligraphy theory and practice in this regard. Huang’s terminological approach is then further illustrated from a practical perspective through a close reading of two of his calligraphies.

Chapters one and two serve as the basic setup that is necessary in order to undertake a critical discussion and assessment of the notion of *neimei*, “interior beauty”, being the central concern of chapter three. Here, various definitions and interpretations of *neimei* both as aesthetic concept and art historiographical narrative strategy are traced. These are first considered in light of sociopolitical contexts of Republican-period China, and then in the context of Huang Binhong’s terminological framework as permeated by metaphors of the human body, bodily movement, and physical force. Huang’s rhetorical use of body-and-brush imagery is discussed with regard to an ambiguous aesthetics of interiority which is implied, and which continues to find reiteration in art critical discourse, also to the

extent of assuming an essentialist narrative of “true art”, as an art of the interior mind.

Continuing this line of thought, chapter four expands on conceptual histories and frameworks related to idea(l)s of interiority as fundamental premises of evaluation and narrative themes in Chinese art criticism. Here, the specific aspects of *flavor* and *color* are examined as discursive elements that reveal particularly well in what way Chinese literati discourse was permeated by the form-essence dualism that had prevailed since the Northern Song period, and was significantly present in Huang Binhong’s own times. A discussion of various artworks by Huang Binhong in this context serves to underpin the pursued line of argumentation.

Chapter five reprises and expands on terms and issues established in the first part of the study, so as to condense its main arguments, and place emphasis on somaesthetic aspects relevant to Huang Binhong’s late-period brush-and-ink art, specifically with regard to the function of calligraphy as a mnemonic device of the self, and with particular respect to Huang Binhong’s old-age practice of cursive-script calligraphy (*caoshu* 草書).

Chapter six finally addresses the significance of Huang Binhong’s impact as a calligrapher as seen through the lens of later generations of calligraphers in China. With regard to mutually active transmission processes and the formation of artist genealogies, the cases of Lin Sanzhi 林散之 (1898–1989), former student of Huang Binhong, and Wang Dongling 王冬齡 (1945–), in turn a student of Lin Sanzhi, are looked into. In Roger Ames’ sense in preference of pointing towards “directions”, or tendencies, rather than formulating a set of distinct “conclusions”, in teleological terms of “conclusive proof”, chapter six lastly also emphasizes the limitations and possibilities of art historical research in general, and research on Chinese calligraphy of the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries in particular.

Zusammenfassung

Angesichts des Status von Huang Binhong 黃賓虹 (1865–1955) innerhalb der Kunstgeschichte als einer der wichtigsten Vertreter der chinesischen Tuschkunst des vergangenen Jahrhunderts ist es eine bemerkenswerte Tatsache, dass sein Schaffenswerk trotz des nahezu überfülligen Maßes an vorhandenen Forschungspublikationen ein bislang nur unzureichend systematisch untersuchtes Gebiet aufweist: Zwar hat dieses in vergangenen Jahren bereits mehr Berücksichtigung in der Huang Binhong-Forschung erhalten, dennoch stellt das schriftkünstlerische Werk Huang Binhongs nach wie vor ein Forschungsdesiderat dar. Die periphere Aufmerksamkeit diesbezüglich ist sicherlich der Tatsache mitverschuldet, dass Huang Binhongs Kalligrafie im Vergleich zu seiner Malerei im Allgemeinen als qualitativ geringfügiger rezipiert und entsprechend als sogenannte „Malerkalligrafie“ (*huajia zi* 畫家字) herabgewürdigt worden ist.

Die vorliegende Arbeit „The Inner Workings of Brush-and-Ink: A Study on Huang Binhong (1865–1955) as Calligrapher, with Special Respect to the Concept of Interior Beauty (*neimei*)“ sucht diesem Defizit entgegenzuwirken. Hierbei wird das ästhetische Konzept *neimei* 內美, „innerliche Schönheit“, in den Fokus genommen, welches im Kontext von Huang Binhongs Pinsel-und-Tusche-Arbeiten partikuläre Formulierung findet. Primär der theoretischen und praktischen Auseinandersetzung Huang Binhongs mit der Kalligrafie entstammend steht *neimei* im Kern der ästhetischen Terminologie dieses Künstlers. Darüber hinaus stellt *neimei* einen Begriff dar, der auch im Kunstdiskurs über Huang Binhong bis hin zur Gegenwart Wiederholung findet, so dieser mit bestimmten Narrativen der chinesischen Kunstgeschichte übereinzustimmen scheint. In der Arbeit wird argumentiert, dass eine Untersuchung dieses omnipräsenten (dafür umso diffuseren) Begriffs es vermag, *neimei* als eine bedeutungsvoll aufgeladene Idee effektiv zu exponieren, in welcher sich ein Rahmenwerk ästhetischer Ideen und Ideale manifestiert, dem bestimmte, körperbezogene Voreingenommenheiten in der Kunstkritik und -theorie über die traditionellen Pinsel-und-Tusche-Künste Chinas zugrunde liegen. Durch die Eruierung verschiedener Bedeutungen und Implikationen von *neimei* im kunsthistoriografischen Kontext kann eine gravierende Diskrepanz deutlich gemacht werden, welche symptomatisch auf einem essenzialisierenden Binarismus „inneren Geistes“ und „äußerer Form“ beruht.

Vor diesem Hintergrund besteht ein Anliegen der Arbeit darin aufzuzeigen, auf welche Weise eine dezidiert somästhetische Betrachtung es uns ermöglicht, vermeintlich vertraute

Themenkomplexe zu überdenken und neu zu betrachten: im Speziellen, das Schaffen Huang Binhongs, welches uns vor allem durch Huangs Landschaftsmalerei bekannt ist, hier insbesondere in Form der hoch gepriesenen Spätwerke, die als Zeugnis der Errungenschaften des Künstlers auf dem Gebiet der traditionellen chinesischen Literatenmalerei verstanden werden; und im erweiterten Sinne, das komplexe kulturspezifische Phänomen der chinesischen Kalligrafie (*shufa* 書法) selbst, welches mit der defizitären Übersetzung als „Schönschrift“ notorisch irreführende Implikationen trägt.

Die Bezeichnung des „Innenlebens“ bzw. „inneren Getriebes“ (the inner workings) im Titel der Arbeit adressiert das Gebiet der Kalligrafie in seiner Gesamtheit als klassisches Genre chinesischer Literatenkunst in Theorie und Praxis: ein formales und materielles System von Pinsel- und Tuschemethoden, etablierten ästhetischen Gerüsten und stilistischen Traditionen. Überdies beabsichtigt die Arbeit den weiter gefassten Geltungsbereich eines inneren Getriebes von Pinsel-und-Tusche-Diskurs als rekursives Feld der kunsthistoriografischen Konstruktion abzustecken; eine ideologisch geprägte, zuweilen stark umfochtene Domäne, welche essenziell selbsterhaltende Qualitäten soziopolitischer Natur besitzt.

Das erste Kapitel der Dissertation unternimmt eine allgemeine Annäherung an das Feld der chinesischen Schriftkunst und etabliert dabei grundlegende theoretische Prämissen der Arbeit und deren argumentativen Rahmen. Hinsichtlich der Begriffsproblematik der „Kalligrafie“ wird der Vorschlag einer alternativen Terminologie gemacht und hier der Begriff *shuti* 書體, wörtlich „Schriftkörper“, als nützliche Denkfigur eingeführt, insofern als *shuti* nicht nur mittels des Bildes von *ti* 體 als „physischer Körper“, „Substanz“, aufgeschlüsselt werden kann, sondern darüber hinaus auch anhand der Konnotationen von *ti* im Sinne von „Selbst“ (*shen* 身), „Ritual“ (*li* 禮) und „Muster“ bzw. „Textmuster“ (*wen* 文/紋); allesamt Begriffe von gleichermaßen zentraler Bedeutung im Kontext der chinesischen *shufa*. Weiterhin thematisiert das Kapitel die „Kalligrafie“ als eine ontologische Kategorie in der Kunst und Kunstgeschichte und stellt Fragen darüber an, wo (bzw. inwiefern überhaupt) die Anfänge der Kalligrafie chronologisch lokalisierbar sind.

Kapitel Zwei stellt das von Huang Binhong in seinen kunsttheoretischen Schriften, speziell den Schriften, die den Gebrauch von Pinsel- und Tuschemethoden zum Gegenstand haben, häufig verwendete, philosophisch verwurzelte diskursive Vokabular vor. Dies dient der Herausarbeitung der Bedeutung, die hierbei der schriftkünstlerischen Theorie und Praxis zukommt. Huang Binhongs terminologischer Ansatz wird daraufhin aus einer praktischen

Perspektive anhand einer ausführlichen Lesung zwei seiner Kalligrafien veranschaulicht.

Die ersten beiden Kapitel dienen dem Aufbau eines notwendigen Grundgerüsts, um eine kritische Erörterung des Begriffs der „innerlichen Schönheit“ (*neimei*) vornehmen zu können, welche das zentrale Anliegen des dritten Kapitels darstellt. Hier werden verschiedene Definitionen und Interpretationen von *neimei* sowohl als ästhetisches Konzept als auch kunsthistoriografische Erzählstrategie aufgespürt. Diese werden zunächst im Hinblick auf soziopolitische Zusammenhänge der Republikzeit (1912–1949) Chinas, dann im Zusammenhang des ästhetischen Vokabulars Huang Binhongs, welches von einer Metaphorik des Körpers, der körperlichen Bewegung und der körperlichen Triebkraft durchdrungen ist, in Relation gesetzt. Huang Binhongs Körper-Pinsel-Rhetorik wird in Hinsicht auf eine ambigue, implizite Ästhetik der Innerlichkeit beleuchtet, die auch im kunstkritischen Diskurs über Huang Binhong auf Reiterierung trifft und die Richtung einer essenzialistischen Narrative „wahrer Kunst“ als eine „Kunst des (innerlichen) Geistes“ einnimmt.

Diesen Gedankenstrang fortführend werden in Kapitel Vier die speziellen Aspekte von Geschmack und Farbe begriffsgeschichtlich untersucht und auf deren Verschränkungen mit Ideen und Idealen der Innerlichkeit als narrative Motive und Prämissen der Evaluierung innerhalb der kunstkritischen Tradition der chinesischen Literatengelehrten hin eruiert. Als diskursive Elemente können „Geschmack“ und „Farbe“ treffend veranschaulichen, inwiefern Literatendiskurse in China von einem Form-Essenz-Dualismus durchzogen waren, der seit der Nördlichen Song-Zeit (960–1127) vorherrschte und während der Schaffenszeit Huang Binhongs auf signifikante Weise präsent war. Das Heranziehen unterschiedlicher Werkbeispiele Huang Binhongs in diesem Zusammenhang dient einer Untermauerung der verfolgten Argumentationslinie.

Kapitel Fünf greift Begriffe und Themen wieder auf, die im ersten Teil der Arbeit etabliert wurden, mit der Absicht, die Hauptargumente der Arbeit zu kondensieren und eine Hervorhebung somästhetischer Aspekte, die im Kontext der späten Schaffensperiode von Huang Binhongs Pinsel-und-Tusche-Kunst von Relevanz sind, zu vollziehen. Diesbezüglich kommt der Kalligrafie in ihrer Funktion als mnemonische Technik des Selbst, und hier speziell in Form von Huang Binhongs Übungspraxis der Konzeptschrift (*caoshu* 草書) im hohen Alter, besondere Bedeutung zu.

Schließlich adressiert Kapitel Sechs den Wirkungsbereich Huang Binhongs als Kalligraf und nimmt hierfür die Perspektive nachfolgender Künstlergenerationen in China ein. Im

Hinblick auf wechselseitig aktive Transmissionsprozesse und die Formierung von Künstlergenealogien dienen die Kalligrafen Lin Sanzhi 林散之 (1898–1989), ehemaliger Schüler von Huang Binhong, und Wang Dongling 王冬齡 (1945–), ehemaliger Schüler von Lin Sanzhi, als Fallbeispiele. Anstelle einer Formulierung eindeutiger Konklusionen im teleologischen Sinne „konklusiver Beweise“ ist es hier vielmehr ein Anliegen, Richtungen oder Tendenzen aufzuweisen.

Acknowledgements

I herewith express my deep and sincere gratitude towards a number of people and institutions, all of whom have contributed to the realization of this dissertation. I extend my gratitude to my supervisors at Freie Universität Berlin, Professor Dr. Jeong-hee Lee-Kalisch, and Professor Dr. Willibald Veit, for their guidance, and their time and patience in supervising my dissertation over such a long period. Enormous thanks are due to my colleagues of the East Asian Art History Division, Freie Universität Berlin, for their consistent support, advice, critical comments, and shared knowledge, in particular Annegret Bergmann, Antje Papist-Matsuo, Dr. Juliane Noth, and Wibke Schrape.

I thank the former program advisors, coordinators, and lecturers of the interdisciplinary doctoral studies program History & Cultural Studies of the Dahlem Research School, Freie Universität Berlin, Prof. Dr. Reinhard Bernbeck, Prof. Dr. Ulrike Heinrichs, and Prof. Dr. Claudia Ulbrich. I am indebted to the Dahlem Research School and Freie Universität Berlin for granting me a generous three-year scholarship in the context of this studies program. I further thank the Center for International Cooperation and the Division for International Affairs of Freie Universität Berlin; the Promotion Program for Women at the Department of History and Cultural Studies, Freie Universität Berlin; the Chinese Scholarship Council; and the German Academic Exchange Service, for granting me financial support to undertake research stays at various institutions as well as research trips for participation in conferences and workshops throughout.

I thank the China Academy of Art, Hangzhou, and Peking University, respectively, for granting me the possibility to undertake research at their institutions. I am especially indebted to Prof. Wang Dongling and Prof. Lu Dadong at the Contemporary Calligraphy Research Center of the China Academy of Art, for sharing their invaluable knowledge and experience as instructors of calligraphy, and for introducing me to an extended circle of scholars and calligraphers active in China over the past years. My great thanks further go to various research institutions, art museums and galleries, and their highly respected, knowledgeable professors, curators, and other staff members who have kindly, willingly provided me with opportunities to consult advice, sight works, and exchange opinions. I particularly thank all colleagues at the Asian Art Museum, Berlin State Museums; further, the staff members of the Berlin State Libraries; the Boston Museum of Fine Arts; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Princeton Art Museum; the Museum Rietberg, Zurich; the Zhejiang Provincial Museum, Hangzhou; Contrasts Gallery,

Shanghai; and the Lin Sanzhi Art Gallery, Ma'anshan. Individual thanks are due to a row of people who have provided me with their advice, critical comments and help, and with opportunities to further the work on my dissertation over the past years: Prof. Dr. Ding Ning and Prof. Dr. Li Song of Peking University; Prof. Dr. André Kneib of the Institut National des Langues et Civilizations Orientales, Paris; Dr. Lis Jung Lu of Zurich University; Dr. Cary Liu of the Princeton Art Museum; Luo Jianqun, formerly at the Zhejiang Provincial Museum, Hangzhou; Uta Rahman-Steinert at the Asian Art Museum, Berlin State Museums; Dr. Wang Ching-Ling of the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam; and Prof. Dr. Zhu Qingsheng of Peking University.

I am especially thankful for the continuous positive support given by my family and friends, without whom this project would never have found completion.

List of Illustrations

- 1a) Photograph of Huang Binhong 黃賓虹 (1865–1955), ca. 1930. Xu 2003: frontispiece (n.p.).
- 1b) Photograph of Huang Binhong, ca. 1950. HBHQJ (1): frontispiece (n.p.).
- 2a) Huang Binhong: *Landscape (Shanshui 山水)*, ca. second half of 1940s, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 102 x 34 cm, MAK, Berlin. © Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Photograph (Jürgen Liepe).
- 2b) Detail of 2a)
- 2c) Wu Changshuo 吳昌碩 (1844–1927): *Plum Blossoms (Meihua tu 梅花圖)* (detail), eighth of a set of eight hanging scrolls of the *Stone Drum Inscriptions and Flowers of the Four Seasons (Lin Shiguwen ping, ni qianren siji huahui tu ping 臨石鼓文屏、擬前人四季花卉圖屏)*, ink and colors on paper, 1927, 107 x 52.5 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Yang, ed., 2010: 141.
- 2d) Wu Changshuo: *Gourds (Hulu tu 葫蘆圖)*, 1915, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 153.1 x 83.5 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Yang, ed., 2010: 111.
- 2e) Qi Baishi 齊白石 (1864–1957): *Shrimp (Moxia tu 墨蝦圖)*, 1951, hanging scroll, ink on paper, 102 x 34.5 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou, Gift of Xia Yan. Yang, ed., 2010: 215.
- 2f) Qi Baishi: *Eagle on High Rock*, 1924, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 263 x 70 cm, MAK, Berlin. Butz, ed., 2000: 64.
- 2g) Pan Tianshou 潘天壽 (1897–1971): *This Land So Beautiful (Jiangshan ruci duo jiao tu 江山如此多嬌圖)* (detail), 1959, hanging scroll, 72 x 30 cm, ink and colors on paper, Pan Tianshou Memorial Museum, Hangzhou. Yang, ed., 2010: 371.
- 2h) Pan Tianshou: *Clearing After Rain (Yu ji tu 雨霽圖)* (detail), ca. 1962, horizontal hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 141 x 363,3 cm, Pan Tianshou Memorial Museum, Hangzhou. Andrews/Shen, eds., 1998: cat. 151 (n.p.).
- 3a) Huang Binhong: *Black Landscape*, late 1940s, album leaf mounted as a hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 26 x 24.2 cm, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Robert H. Ellsworth Collection. Photograph (Shao-Lan Hertel 2015).
- 3b) Huang Binhong: *Dwelling in the Qixia Mountains (Qixia shanju tu 棲霞山居圖)*, 1954, hanging scroll, ink on paper, 120.7 x 60.3 cm, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Robert H. Ellsworth Collection. Photograph (Shao-Lan Hertel 2015).
- 3c) Detail of 3b)
- 3d) Detail of 3b)
- 3e) Huang Binhong: *Landscape (Shanshui 山水)* (detail), ca. 1953–1955, horizontal scroll, ink and colors on paper, 36 x 63 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. HBHQJ (4): 314–315.
- 4) Front cover of the journal *Chinese Calligraphy (Zhongguo shufa 中國書法)*, vol. 10, no. 210, 2010, showing Huang Binhong's calligraphy in cursive script.
- 5a) Huang Binhong: *Poem in Seven-Character Verse (Zhuanshu qi yan shiju 篆書七言詩句)*, 1950, hanging scroll with calligraphy in large seal script, ink on colored paper, 68.2 x 33.5 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Luo 2005: 59.

5b) Huang Binhong: *Letter to Lin Sanzhi* (*Huang Binhong zhi Lin Sanzhi han* 黃賓虹致林散之函), 1933, letter written in semi-cursive script, ink on paper. Qi 2003: 10.

5c-1-2) Huang Binhong: *Preface to the Complete History of Studies on Chinese Painting* (*Zhongguo huaxue quanshi xu* 中國畫學全史序), manuscript written in semi-cursive script, ink on paper, 26.5 x 35.5 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhejiang meishuguan, ed., 2009, vol. 2: 4-5.

5d) Huang Binhong: *Letter to Zheng Zhenduo* (*Zhi Zheng Zhenduo shu* 至鄭振鐸書), letter written in semi-cursive script, ink on paper, 27 x 32 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhang Tongyu 2009: 192-193.

5e) Huang Binhong: *National Glories of China* (*Shenzhou guoguang ji* 神州國光集), calligraphy in seal script, cover page of the journal *National Glories of China* (*Shenzhou guoguang ji* 神州國光集), vol. 16, 1910. Zhejiang meishuguan, ed., 2009, vol. 2: 212.

5f) Detail of 2a) showing Huang Binhong's seal and inscription in semi-cursive style

5g) Huang Binhong: *Free-Hand Copy of the Li Xi Stele in Clerical Script* (*Lishu lin Li Xi Bei* 隸書臨李翁碑) (detail), undated, album leaf, ink on paper, 28.5 x 27.5 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Luo 2005: 68.

6a) Rectangular ritual food vessel (*fang ding* 方鼎) with inscription, ca. 1300-1030 BCE, bronze, height 80 cm, 117.5 kg, Archaeological Institute, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (*Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan kaogu yanjiusuo* 中國社會科學院考古研究所), Beijing. Kulturstiftung Ruhr, Essen, ed., 1995: 214.

6b) Detail of 6a) showing inscription in an early form of bronze script (金文 *jinwen*). Kulturstiftung Ruhr, Essen, ed., 1995: 213.

6c) *Lai Dish* (*Lai pan* 漆盤), late ninth century BCE, inscribed ritual vessel, bronze, height 20.4 cm, diameter of rim 53.6 cm, 15.5 kg, Baoji Municipal Museum (Baoji shi bowuguan 寶雞市博物館), Baoji. Fong et al., eds., 2008: 80.

6d) Inscription of ritual vessel seen in 6c) (detail). Fong et al., eds., 2008: 80.

7a) Special edition of the magazine *People's China* (*Renmin Zhongguo zazhi* 人民中國雜誌) (issue no. 1, 1973) showing Lin Sanzhi's 林散之 (1898-1989) 1972 cursive-script calligraphy of Mao Zedong's 毛澤東 (1893-1976) poem *New Dawn in the East* (*Dongfang yu xiao* 東方欲曉), Lin Sanzhi Art Gallery (Lin Sanzhi yishuguan 林散之藝術館), Ma'anshan. Photograph (Shao-Lan Hertel 2011).

7b) Lin Sanzhi: *Mt. Dong at Lake Tai* (*Taihu Dongshan* 太湖東山), 1970s, calligraphy in cursive script, ink on paper, 135 x 34 cm, Jiangsu Provincial National Painting Institute (Jiangsu sheng guohuayuan 江蘇省國畫院), Nanjing. Qi 2003: 139, fig. 97.

7c) Lin Sanzhi: *Poem by Li He* (*Li He shi* 李賀詩), 1976, calligraphy in cursive script, ink on paper, 62 x 31 cm, Collection of Chen Aizhong. Qi 2003: 126, fig. 88.

7d) Lin Sanzhi: *Two Poems on Lake Mochou*, 1978, hanging scroll with calligraphy in cursive script, 103.9 x 33.3 [mount: 166 x 45.2 cm], Princeton Art Museum, Princeton, Bequest of John B. Elliott. Photograph (Shao-Lan Hertel 2015).

7e) Detail of 7d) showing seal inscribed "Old Man of the River" (*Jiang shang laoren* 江上老人).

8a) Wang Dongling 王冬齡 (1945–): *The Void (Wu 無)*, 2000, Modernist calligraphy, ink on paper, 272 x 142.5 cm, British Museum, London, Gift of the Artist. Barrass 2002: 170.

8b) Wang Dongling: *Laozi (Laozi 老子)* (detail), 2007, large-scale cursive-script calligraphy, ink on 26 assembled paper sheets, total size 495 x 3750 cm, Zhejiang Art Museum (Zhejiang meishuguan 浙江美術館). Photograph (courtesy of Wang Dongling).

8c) Wang Dongling: Calligraphy performance at the International Exhibition *The Art of Writing*, Kurhauskolonnaden, Wiesbaden (April 29–May 22, 2011), May 19, 2011. Still image of video recording (courtesy of Wang Dongling).

8d) Wang Dongling: *Xiaoyaoyou 逍遙遊—The Happy Excursion*, 2015, triptych of hanging scrolls with cursive-script calligraphy in disorderly style (*luanshu 亂書*), ink on paper, 365 x 145 each scroll, Sanshang Art Gallery (Sanshang dangdai yishuguan 三尚當代藝術館), Hangzhou. Exhibition view at the exhibition *Shu fei shu: 2015 Hangzhou guoji shufa yishu zhan 書非書: 2015 杭州國際書法藝術展—Writing/Non-Writing: 2015 Hangzhou International Calligraphy Art Exhibition*, Art Museum of the China Academy of Art (Zhongguo meishu xueyuan meishuguan 中國美術學院美術館), Hangzhou (May 8–22, 2015). Photograph (Shao-Lan Hertel 2015).

9a) Photograph of Chinese school children taking calligraphy class, as seen on the website of Sohu Jiaoyu 搜狐教育: <http://learning.sohu.com/20151230/n432997146.shtml> [accessed March 12, 2016]. In the image caption on the website, studying calligraphy is promoted with the words that it achieves to “enrich scholarly knowledge and train formidable learning habits” (*Xuexi shufa, keyi fengfu xueshi, peiyang lianghao de xuexi xiguan 學習書法, 可以豐富學識, 培養良好的學習習慣*).

9b) Photograph of Chinese school children taking calligraphy class, as seen on the website of BuzzHand: http://www.buzzhand.com/post_795899.html [accessed March 12, 2016]. Here, the merits of calligraphy practice are praised in a similar manner. The image caption reads: “Practicing calligraphy fosters the development of the students’ formidable moral integrity and personality” (*Xuexi shufa keyi peiyang xuesheng lianghao de daode qingcao 學習書法可以培養學生良好的道德情操*).

9c) Wang Dongling demonstrating the correct use of brush and ink to his foreign student calligraphy class at the Zhejiang Academy of Art (Zhejiang meishu xueyuan 浙江美術學院, now the China Academy of Art [Zhongguo meishu xueyuan 中國美術學院]), early 1980s. Photograph (courtesy of Wang Dongling).

9d) Image of a 1984 cartoon showing a father disciplining his daughter into the “right way” of thinking through the implementation of calligraphy practice. After Kraus 1991: 10.

10a) Zhang Huan 張洵 (1965–): *Family Tree*, 2001, nine chromogenic prints, 53.3 x 41.9 cm each print, Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven. Hearn 2013: 67.

10b) Tang Kaizhi 唐楷之 (1971–): *Without Image (Wu xiang 無相)*, 2004, hanging scroll, water color on paper, 190 x 68 cm. Wang Dongling/Xu, eds., 2005 (a): 133.

11a) Ma Yuan 馬遠 (fl. ca. 1190–1225): *Walking on a Mountain Path in Spring (Shanjing chunxing tu 山徑春行圖)*, undated, album leaf, ink and colors on paper, 27.4 x 43.1 cm, NPM, Taipei. Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, ed., 2003: 199.

11b) After Xie Huan 謝環 (1377–1452): *Elegant Gathering in the Apricot Garden* (*Xingyuan yaji tu* 杏園雅集圖) (detail), ca. 1437, horizontal scroll, ink and colors on silk, 37.1 x 243.2 cm, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Barnhart et al., eds., 1996: 102–103.

11c) Shi Lu 石魯 (1919–1982): *Autumn Mood* (*Qiu yi* 秋意), 1972, flower painting with inscribed poem in cursive-script calligraphy, ink and colors on paper, 21.5 x 30 cm. *Art Gallery Magazine* (*Hualang* 畫廊), vol. 81, 2002, 41.

12a) Fragments of animal bones inscribed with characters in oracle bone script (*jiaguwen* 甲骨文), sixteenth to eleventh century BCE, height 2.4–3.8 cm, Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst Köln, Cologne. Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, ed., 2003: 81.

12b) *Pact of Alliance at Houma* (*Houma meng shu* 侯馬盟書), fifth century BCE, piece of jade with brush-written inscription in seal script, red ink on jade, 4.8 x 4.8 x 0.2 cm, Shanxi Provincial Museum (Shanxi bowuyuan 山西博物院). Fong et al., eds., 2008: 92, fig. 2.27.

12c) *Zuoyuan* 作原 Stone Drum, one of the ten Stone Drums (*Shigu* 石鼓) inscribed with large seal script, subsequently turned into a mortar, ca. fifth century BCE, height 58 cm, diameter 60 cm, ca. 500 kg, PM, Beijing. Fong et al., eds., 2008: 90.

12d) Rubbing of the *Stone Drum Inscriptions* (detail of scroll one), first half of seventeenth century, set of rubbings in ten sections mounted as a pair of horizontal scrolls, ink on paper, 41.9 x 653.4 cm (scroll one), The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Wan-go H. C. Weng. Photograph (Shao-Lan Hertel 2015).

12e) Wood slips inscribed with an early form of clerical script (*guli* 古隸) (details), fourth century BCE, ink on wood, 23 x 1.4–5 cm, Hunan Provincial Institute of Archaeology and Cultural Relics Research (Hunan sheng wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo 湖南省文物考古研究所), Changsha. Fong et al., eds., 2008: 96.

12f) Rubbing of *Mt. Yi Stele* (*Yishan bei* 嶧山碑) of 219 BCE inscribed with calligraphy in small seal script attributed to Li Si 李斯 (284–208 BCE) (detail), rubbing of a 993 replica of the original stele now preserved in the Stele Forest Museum (Xi'an beilin bowuguan 西安碑林博物館), Xi'an, ink on paper, 218 x 84 cm, Stele Forest Museum, Xi'an. Fong, et al., eds., 2008: 57.

12g) Fragment from the *Book of Political Strategists of the Warring States Period* (*Zhanguo zonghengjia shu* 戰國縱橫家書) written in a transitional form of seal and clerical script, 206 BCE–25 CE, ink on silk, 192 x 48 cm, Hunan Provincial Museum (Hunan sheng bowuguan 湖南省博物館), Changsha. Fong et al., eds., 2008: 110.

12h) Rubbing of *Yuan An Stele* (袁安碑) of 92 CE inscribed with calligraphy in small seal script, ink on paper, 153 x 74 cm, Henan Provincial Museum (Henan bowuyuan 河南博物院), Zhengzhou. Fong et al., eds., 2008: 104.

13a) *Yi Ying Stele* (*Yi Ying bei* 乙瑛碑) (detail), 153 CE, stone stele inscribed with clerical-script calligraphy, 260 x 129 cm, Confucius Temple (Kongmiao 孔廟), Qufu. Image downloaded from: <http://image.so.com/i?src=rel&q=乙瑛碑照片> [accessed March 9, 2016].

13b) Song-period rubbing of *Yi Ying Stele* seen in fig. 13a) (detail), ink on paper, 260 x 129 cm, Mitsui Memorial Museum (Mitsui kinen bijutsukan 三井記念美術館). Fong et al., eds., 2008: 115.

13c) Ming-period rubbing of *Stele on Ritual Objects (Liqi bei 禮器碑)* (detail) of 156 CE (now in the Confucius Temple, Qufu) inscribed with clerical-script calligraphy, ink on paper, 227.2 x 102.4 cm, NAMOC, Beijing. Fong et al., eds., 2008: 121.

13d-1-2) Rubbing of *Votive Inscription for Yang Dayan (Yang Dayan zaoxiang ji 楊大眼造像記)* of 506 (details), one of the *Twenty Calligraphy Pieces of Longmen (Longmen ershi pin 龍門二十品)*, stone votive inscription carved into the northern wall of Guyang Cave, Longmen Cave Temples, Luoyang, inscription in standard-script calligraphy in the Wei stele style (*Weibeiti 魏碑體*), 253 x 142 cm. Yao, main ed., 2009, vol. 18: 43, 61.

14a) Wang Xianzhi 王獻之 (344–386): *The Twelfth Lunar Month (Shi'er yue tie 十二月帖)*, Song-period ink rubbing, calligraphy in semi-cursive script, ink on paper, PM, Beijing. Fong et al., eds., 2008: 164.

14b) Mi Fu 米芾 (1051–1107) (attributed): *Mid-Autumn (Zhongqiu tie 中秋帖)* (detail), undated, imitation of Wang Xianzhi's *The Twelfth Lunar Month* (fig. 14a), ink on paper, 27 x 11.9 cm, PM, Beijing. Fong et al., eds., 2008: 165.

14c) Lu Ji 陸機 (261–303) (attributed): *Recovering from Illness (Pingfu tie 平復帖)*, undated, letter written in draft cursive script (*zhangcao 章草*), ink on paper, 23.7 x 20.6 cm, PM, Beijing. Fong, et al. eds., 2008: 149.

15a) Fu Shan 傅山 (1605–1690): *Nocturnal Reading: One of Three Poems in Cursive Seal Script (Caozhuanye du san shou zhi yi 草篆夜讀三首之一)*, one of three hanging scrolls, ink on paper, 330 x 97 cm, Shanxi Provincial Museum, Taiyuan. Fong, et al. eds., 2008: 143.

15b) Deng Shiru 鄧石如 (1743–1805): *Set of Four Hanging Scrolls with Calligraphy in Seal Script (Zhuanshu si ping 篆書四屏)*, 1791, ink on paper, 118.3 x 25.2 cm each scroll, Wuxi Municipal Museum (Wuxi bowuyuan 無錫博物院), Wuxi. Fong, et al. eds., 2008: 357.

15c) Yi Bingshou 伊秉綬 (1754–1815): *Hanging Scroll Couplet with Calligraphy in Clerical Script (Lishu duilian 隸書對聯)*, 1811, ink on paper with gold decor, MAK, Berlin, formerly in the Mochan Shanzhuang Collection, acquired with support from the Stiftung Deutsche Klassenlotterie Berlin. © Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Photograph (Jürgen Liepe).

15d-1-2) Deng Chuanmi 鄧傳密 (1795–1870) (d-1: right side of scroll; d-2: left side of scroll): *Horizontal Scroll with Calligraphy in Clerical and Seal Script*, nineteenth century, ink on paper, MAK, Berlin, formerly in the Mochan Shanzhuang Collection, acquired with support from the Stiftung Deutsche Klassenlotterie Berlin. © Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Photograph (Jürgen Liepe).

15e) Wu Changshuo: *Eight-Character Couplet in Seal Script (Zhuanshu ba yan duilian 篆書八言對聯)*, 1922, hanging scroll couplet, ink on paper, 199.1 x 42.4 each scroll, ZPM, Hangzhou. Yang, ed., 2010: 143.

15f) Detail of 15e)

- 16) Lu Hui 陸恢 (1851–1920) et al.: *Handscroll with an Image of Wu Dacheng's Collected Antiquities* (*Kezhai jigu tu* 憲齋集古圖) (detail), 1892, second of two horizontal scrolls with painting, calligraphy, and rubbings with annotations, ink and colors on paper, 41.5 x 1696 cm, Shanghai Museum (Shanghai bowuguan 上海博物館), Shanghai. Rawson, ed., 2009: 49.
- 17a) Wang Dongling: *Heaven is Black, Earth is Yellow* (*Xuanhuang* 玄黃), 1988, hanging scroll, Modernist calligraphy with ink rubbing of inscription in seal script, ink on paper, 150 x 98 cm. Song, ed., 1994: no. 43 (n.p.).
- 17b) Huang Miaozi 黃苗子 (1913–2012): *Great Changes* (*Qixiangwanqian* 氣象萬千), 1993, Modernist calligraphy in seal script, ink and color on paper, 68.5 x 64 cm, British Museum, London, Gift of Gordon and Kristen Barrass. Barrass 2002: 177.
- 17c) Gu Gan 古干 (1942–): *The Mountains Are Breaking Up* (*Shan tui* 山摧), 1985, Modernist calligraphy in oracle bone script, ink on paper, 93.5 x 87.5 cm, British Museum, London, Gift of the Artist. Barrass 2002: 55.
- 17d) Gu Gan: *Walking Alone*, 1994, Modernist calligraphy, ink on paper, 50 x 51 cm, British Museum, London, Gift of the Artist. Barrass 2002: 188.
- 18) Xu Beihong 徐悲鴻 (1895–1953): *Cypress Tree*, 1935, hanging scroll, ink and light colors on paper, 98.7 x 31.8 cm, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Robert H. Ellsworth Collection. Fong 2001: 100.
- 19) Lin Fengmian 林風眠 (1900–1991): *At the Yangtse River Bank*, early 1940s, watercolor and ink on paper, 31.6 x 37.2 cm, private collection. Danzker/Lum/Zheng, eds., 2004: 82.
- 20a) *Song Tripod* (*Song ding* 頌鼎), ca. 825 BCE?, inscribed ritual vessel, bronze, height 38.4 cm, diameter mouth 30.3 cm, 7.24 kg, PM, Beijing. Chen Mengjia 2004, vol. 2: 831, fig. 192B.
- 20b) Ink rubbing of inscription on the inside of the *Song Tripod* (fig. 20a). Chen Mengjia 2004, vol. 2: 831, fig. 192A.
- 20c) *Shanfu Shan Tripod* (*Shanfu Shan ding* 善夫山鼎), 789 BCE, inscribed ritual vessel, bronze, height 45 cm, diameter mouth 42 cm, 28.1 kg, PM, Beijing. Chen Mengjia 2004, vol. 2: 837, fig. 198B.
- 20d) Ink rubbing of inscription on the inside of the *Shanfu Shan Tripod* (fig. 20c). Chen Mengjia 2004, vol. 2: 837, fig. 198A.
- 21a) Ritual cooking tripod (*li ding* 鬲鼎) with inscription inside the lip, early Western Zhou, bronze, height 20.2 cm, diameter mouth 17.3 cm, 1.84 kg, Arthur M. Sackler Collections. Rawson 1990, vol. IIB: 222.
- 21b) Ink rubbing (left side) and photograph (right side) of inscription on the *li ding* seen in fig. 21a), reading “Lü Fu made this precious *jiang* vessel”. Rawson 1990, vol. IIB: 223.
- 21c) Rectangular ritual food vessel (*fang ding*) with inscription on the inside of one of the long sides, early Western Zhou, bronze, height 24.3 cm, maximum width 18.3 cm, 4.23 kg, Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.. Rawson 1990, vol. IIB: 234.
- 21d) Ink rubbing (left side) and photograph (right side) of inscription on the *fang ding* seen in fig. 21c), recording the dedication of the vessel to several ancestors. Rawson 1990, vol. IIB: 235.

- 21e) Rectangular ritual wine vessel (*fang yi* 方彝) with inscription on the underside of the lid, mid Western Zhou, bronze, height 28.7 cm, 4.38 kg, MAK, Berlin, Klingenberg Collection. Butz, ed., 2000: 55.
- 21f) Ink rubbing of inscription on the *fang yi* seen in fig. 21e). Butz, ed., 2000: 73. For an elucidation of the four-column inscription, see *ibid.*: 73–74.
- 22a) A 1966 poster showing Mao Zedong 毛澤東 (1893–1976) wielding the writing brush for a revolutionary party slogan on a big-character banner. Barrass 2002: 49.
- 22b) Guo Moruo 郭沫若 (1892–1978) performing calligraphy during a trip to Japan in 1955. Kraus 1991: 59.
- 22c) Title page of the Communist Party newspaper *People's Daily* (*Renmin ribao* 人民日報) with Mao Zedong's charismatic masthead in cursive-script calligraphy (detail). *Renmin ribao*, issue of June 15, 1948.
- 23a) Tian Yuan 田原 (1925–2014): *Old-Aged Lin Sanzhi Writing Calligraphy* (*Lin Sanzhi laoren zuo shu tu* 林散之老人作書圖), undated, ink sketch with inscriptions in cursive and seal script, ink on paper. Qi 2003: 135.
- 23b) Photograph of Lin Sanzhi writing his last calligraphy *Rising to Heaven and Becoming a Buddha* (*Sheng tian cheng fo* 升天成佛) two days before passing away on December 6, 1989. Qi 2003: 32.
- 24) Detail of three-tiered musical clock showing the integrated *Calligrapher* automaton, signed by British clockmaker Timothy Williamson (fl. 1769–1788), 18th century, gilt-bronze, overall height 231 cm, base 84 x 75 cm, PM, Beijing. Jung Lu 2015: 53.
- 25a) Rubbing of Li Yangbing's 李陽冰 (fl. eighth century) *Jinyun Rain God Temple Stele* (*Jinyun chenghuang miao bei* 縉雲城隍廟碑) of 759 in seal script (detail), original stele lost, rubbing of a Song-period replica preserved in Jinyun 縉雲 County, Zhejiang, 190 x 102.3 cm, Collection of the National Library of China (Beijing tushuguan 北京圖書館), Beijing. Liu Zhengcheng, main ed., 1996, vol. 23: 231.
- 25b) Rubbing of Li Yangbing's *Three Tomb Inscriptions Stele* (*San fen ji bei* 三墳記碑) of 767 in seal script (detail), original stele lost, rubbing of a Song-period replica preserved in the Stele Forest Museum, Xi'an, ink on paper, 214.6 x 93.3 cm, Collection of the National Library of China, Beijing. Liu Zhengcheng, main ed., 1996, vol. 23: 248.
- 26) Huang Binhong: *Diagram of Brush Methods* (*Bifa tu* 筆法圖, also known under the title *Taiji tu* 太極圖 [*Diagram of the Universe*], ca. 1950. Zhang Tongyu 2009: 125.
- 27a) Dong Qichang 董其昌 (1555–1636): *Fan Leaf with Calligraphy in Semi-Cursive Script*, ink on paper, MAK, Berlin, formerly in the Mochan Shanzhuang Collection, acquired with support from the Stiftung Deutsche Klassenlotterie Berlin. © Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Photograph (Jürgen Liepe).
- 27b) Dong Qichang 董其昌 (1555–1636): *The Qingbian Mountains* (*Qingbian tu* 青弁圖), 1617, hanging scroll, ink on paper, 224.5 x 67.2 cm, The Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland. Fong/Hearn 1996: 41.
- 27c) Dong Qichang: *River and Mountains on a Clear Autumn Day* (*Jiangshan qiu ji tu* 江山秋霽圖) (detail), ca. 1624–1627, horizontal scroll, ink on paper, 38.4 x 136.8 cm, The Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland. Fong/Hearn 1996: 40.

28a-1-2) Shitao 石濤 (1642–1707): *Ten Thousand Ugly Ink Dots* (*Wan dian e mo* 萬點惡墨) (detail), horizontal scroll, 1685, ink on paper, 25.6 x 227 cm, formerly Suzhou Museum (Suzhou bowuguan 蘇州博物館), Suzhou. Hay 2001: 252–253.

28b) Shitao: *Returning Home* (*Gui zhao* 歸棹) (detail), ca. 1695, twelve-leaf album of landscape paintings and poems, third leaf showing landscape depiction, ink on paper, 21.1 x 13.5 cm, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, from the P. Y. and Kinmay W. Tang Family, Gift of Wen and Constance Fong, in Honor of Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Dillon. Barnhart et al., eds., 1996: 134–145, fig. 29c.

28c) Shitao: *Landscape*, 1691, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 175 x 50.7 cm, Liaoning Provincial Museum (Liaoning sheng bowuguan 遼寧省博物館), Shenyang. Ledderose, ed., 1985: 166.

29) Huang Binhong: *Fishing Boat and Rock-Clinging Trees*, ca. 1938–1942, hanging scroll, ink on paper, 72.4 x 26.7 cm, Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Gift of Arthur M. Sackler. Kuo 2004: 109.

30a) Shitao: *Landscape in the Style of Ni Zan*, 1697, hanging scroll, ink on paper, 47.1 x 32.4 cm. Princeton Art Museum, Princeton, Carl Otto von Kienbusch, Jr., Memorial Collection. Photograph (Shao-Lan Hertel 2015).

30b) Detail of 30a) showing inscription.

30c) Shitao: *Returning Home* (*Gui zhao* 歸棹) (detail), ca. 1695, twelve-leaf album of landscape paintings and poems, eleventh leaf inscribed with calligraphy in clerical script, ink on paper, 21.1 x 13.5 cm, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, from the P. Y. and Kinmay W. Tang Family, Gift of Wen and Constance Fong, in Honor of Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Dillon. Barnhart et al., eds., 1996: 134–145, fig. 29k.

30d) Shitao: *Returning Home* (*Gui zhao* 歸棹) (detail), ca. 1695, twelve-leaf album of landscape paintings and poems, seventh leaf inscribed with calligraphy in semi-cursive script, ink on paper, 21.1 x 13.5 cm, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, from the P. Y. and Kinmay W. Tang Family, Gift of Wen and Constance Fong, in Honor of Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Dillon. Barnhart et al., eds., 1996: 134–145, fig. 29g.

31a) Ni Zan 倪瓚 (1301–1374): *The Rongxi Studio* (*Rongxi zhai* 容膝齋), 1372, hanging scroll, ink on paper, 74.7 cm x 35.5 cm, NPM, Taipei. Fong/Watt 1996: 318.

31b) Detail of 31a) showing inscription.

31c) Ni Zan (attributed): *River Scene, Yuan Style*, undated, hanging scroll, ink on paper, 60 x 38 cm, Princeton Art Museum, Princeton, Gift of DuBois Schanck Morris. Photograph (Shao-Lan Hertel 2015).

31d) Detail of 31c) showing inscription.

32) Huang Binhong: *Landscape in the Manner of Ni Zan* (*Lin Ni Zan shanshui tu* 臨倪贊山水圖), 1913, hanging scroll, ink on paper, 116 x 42 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Yang, ed., 2010: 245.

33a) Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037–1101) (attributed): *Withered Tree and Strange Rock* (*Kumu guaishi tu* 枯木怪石圖), undated, horizontal scroll, ink on paper. McCausland 2011: 296.

33b) Su Shi (attributed): *Withered Tree, Bamboo, and Rock* (*Kumu zhushi* 枯木竹石) (detail), undated, horizontal scroll, ink on paper, 23.4 x 50.9, Shanghai Museum. McCausland 2011: 297.

33c) Su Shi: *First Red Cliff Prose Poem (Qian chibi fu 前赤壁賦)* (detail), 1083, horizontal scroll with calligraphy in standard script, ink on paper, 23,9 x 258 cm, NPM, Taipei. Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, ed., 2003: 181.

34) Wang Hui 王翬 (1632–1717): *Autumn Mountains Red Trees (Qiushan hong shu 秋山紅樹)*, 1670, hanging scroll, ink and color on paper, 112.4 cm x 39.5 cm, NPM, Taipei. Fong/Watt 1996: 481.

35a) Su Shi: *Cold Food Festival Poems (Hanshi shi tie 寒食詩帖)*, 1082, horizontal scroll with calligraphy in semi-cursive script, ink on paper, 34.2 x 199.5 cm, NPM, Taipei. Fong/Watt 1996: 148–149.

35b) Detail of 35a): *nian 年*

35c) Detail of 35a): *zhong 中*

35d) Detail of 35a): *wei 葦*

35e) Detail of 35a): *zhi 紙*

35f) Detail of 35a): *po zao 破竈*

35g) Detail of 35a): *zhi shi han 知是寒*

35h) Detail of 35a): *jiu zhong fenmu 九重墳墓*

35i) Detail of 35a): *ku tu qiong si 哭塗窮死*

35j) Detail of 35a): *bai 白*

35k) Detail of 35a): *chun 春*

35l) Detail of 35a): *huang 黃*

35m) Detail of 35a): *zhou 州*

35n) Detail of 35a): *san 三*

35o) Detail of 35a): *lai 來*

36a) Huang Binhong: *Free-Hand Copy of Su Shi's Cold Food Festival Poems (Lin Su Shi Hanshi shi tie 臨蘇軾寒食詩帖)*, hanging scroll with calligraphy in semi-cursive script, ink on paper, 90 x 30 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhang Tongyu 2009: 17.

36b) Detail of 36a): *wei 葦*

36c) Detail of 36a): *zhi 紙*

36d) Detail of 36a): *na 那*

36e) Detail of 36a): *zi wo lai 自我來*

36f) Detail of 36a): *qu bu 去不*

36g) Detail of 36a): *bai chun 白春*

36h) Detail of 36a): *yu shi lai bu 雨勢來不*

36i) Detail of 36a): *hanshi dan jian 寒食但見*

36j) Detail of 36a): *huang 黃*

36k) Detail of 36a): *zhou 州*

36l) Detail of 36a): *guo* 過

36m) Detail of 36a): *san* 三

36n) Detail of 36a): *lai* 來

37a) Luo Zhenyu 羅振玉 (1866–1940): *Collected Inscriptions from the Ruins of Yin (Ji Yinxu wenzi ying tie xubian 集殷墟文字楹帖續編)* (detail), calligraphy in oracle bone script, ink on paper. Shen, ed., 2013, vol. 17, no. 121: 5.

37b) Wang Fu'an 王福庵 (1880–1960): *Yonghuai [Expressing Feelings] Poems in Seal Script (Zhuanshu yonghuai shi 篆書詠懷詩)* (detail), calligraphy in seal script, ink on paper. Shen, ed., 2013, vol. 20, no. 144: 3.

37c) Wang Fu'an: *Listed Characters from [Xu Shen's 許慎 (58?–147? CE)] Shuowen jiezi (Shuowen bu mu 說文部目)* (detail), calligraphy in seal script, ink on paper. Shen, ed., 2013, vol. 20, no. 145: 3.

37d) Wang Fu'an: *Thousand Character Essay in Seal Script (Zhuanshu Qianziwen 篆書千字文)* (detail), calligraphy in seal script, ink on paper. Shanghai shuhua chubanshe, ed., 1987: 3.

38a-1–14) [read from right to left] Rubbing of Yan Zhenqing's 顏真卿 (709–785) (attributed) *Poem for General Pei (Pei jiangjun shi 裴將軍詩)*, undated, rubbing from the *Compendium of the Hall of Loyalty and Righteousness (Zhongyi tang tie 忠義堂帖)* compiled in 1215, ink on paper, 35.3 x 32.7 cm each section, Shodan-in 書壇院, Tokyo. Nakata, ed., vol. 4: 108–112.

38b) Detail of 38a): *hu* 虎

38c) Detail of 38a): *he zhuang zhan* 何壯戰

38d) Detail of 38a): *jiangjun* 將軍

38e) Detail of 38a): *bai ma* 百馬

38f) Detail of 38a): *fu* 夫

38g-1) Detail of 38a): *sui* 隨

38g-2) Detail of 38a): *feng ying qie hui* 風縈且回

38h) Detail of 38a): *Tianshan bai yun* 天山白雲

38i) Detail of 38a): *lintai* 麟臺

38j-1) Detail of 38a): *zhan* 戰

38j-2) Detail of 38a): *ma ruo long* 馬若龍

38k) Detail of 38a): *denggao* 登高

38l-1) Detail of 38a): *Xiong* 匈

38l-2) Detail of 38a): *nu* 奴

38m) Detail of 38a): *di xiang* 相敵

- 39a) Huang Binhong: *Free-Hand Copy of Poem for General Pei by Yan Zhenqing* (*Lin Yan Zhenqing Pei jiangjun shi* 臨顏真卿裴將軍詩), undated, two hanging scrolls, ink on paper, 88 x 29 cm each scroll, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhang Tongyu 2009: 33.
- 39b) Detail of 39a): *jiang qing* 將清
- 39c) Detail of 39a): *ruo long hu* 若龍虎
- 39d) Detail of 39a): *denggao* 登高
- 39e) Detail of 39a): *ma* 馬
- 39f) Detail of 39a): *zhanma ruo long* 戰馬若龍
- 39g) Detail of 39a): *Tianshan bai* 天山白
- 39h) Detail of 39a): *hu* 虎
- 39i) Detail of 39a): *Xiongnu* 匈奴
- 39j) Detail of 39a): *di xiang* 敵相
- 40) Sun Guoting 孫過庭 (646?–691?): *Treatise on Calligraphy* (*Shupu* 書譜) (detail), 687, calligraphy in cursive script, ink on paper, 26.5 x 900.8 cm, NPM, Taipei. Yao, main ed., 2009, vol. 24: 44–45.
- 41) Huang Binhong: *Free-Hand Copy of the Treatise on Calligraphy by Sun Guoting of the Tang in Cursive Script* [seen in fig. 40] (*Caoshu lin Tang Sun Guoting Shupu* 草書臨唐孫過庭書譜) (detail), undated, horizontal scroll, calligraphy in cursive script, ink on paper, 40 x 174 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Luo 2005: 69.
- 42) Huang Binhong: *Free-Hand Copy of Stele on Ritual Objects* [seen in fig. 13c] (*Lin Liqi bei* 臨禮器碑) (detail), undated, horizontal scroll with calligraphy in clerical script, ink on paper, 29.5 x 89 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhang Tongyu 2009: 13.
- 43) Huang Binhong: *Free-Hand Copy of Lu Ji's Pingfu tie* [seen in fig. 14c] (*Lin Lu Ji Pingfu tie* 臨陸機平復帖) (detail), undated, calligraphy in draft cursive script, ink on paper, 32.5 x 20.5 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhang Tongyu 2009: 41.
- 44) Huang Binhong: *Free-Hand Copy of Mi Fu's Semi-Cursive Script Calligraphy* [as seen for example in figs. 66b–66d] (*Lin Mi Fu xingshu* 臨米芾行書) (detail), horizontal scroll, calligraphy in semi-cursive script, ink on paper, 19 x 59 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhang Tongyu 2009: 23.
- 45) Huang Binhong: *Free-Hand Copy of Zhu Yunming's Cursive-Script Calligraphy* [as seen for example in fig. 46] (*Lin Zhu Yunming caoshu* 臨祝允明草書) (detail), 1944, horizontal scroll with calligraphy in cursive script, ink on paper 30 x 450 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Luo 2005: 69.
- 46) Zhu Yunming 祝允明 (1461–1527): *Fan Leaf with Poem in Cursive-Script Calligraphy*, sixteenth century, ink on gilt paper, 17 x 50.1 cm, MAK, Berlin, formerly in the Mochan Shanzhuang Collection, acquired with support from the Stiftung Deutsche Klassenlotterie Berlin © Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Photograph (Jürgen Liepe).
- 47) Huang Binhong: *Thousand Character Essay in Large Seal Script* (*Dazhuan Qianziwen* 大篆千字文) (detail), undated, horizontal scroll, 23 x 81 cm, ink on paper, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhang Tongyu 2009: 141.

- 48a) Liu Chunlin 劉春霖 (1872–1944): *Tang Quatrains (Tangren jueju 唐人絕句)* (detail), calligraphy in standard script, ink on paper. Shen, ed., 2013, vol. 18, no. 133 (n.p.).
- 48b) Liu Chunlin: *Explanation of [First-Level] Civil-Service Examinations (Jinxue jie 進學解)* (detail), calligraphy in standard script, ink on paper. Shen, ed., 2013, vol. 18, no. 134 (n.p.).
- 49) Wen Peng 文彭 (1498–1573): *Thousand Character Essay in Clerical-Script Calligraphy (Lishu Qianziwen 隸書千字文)*, 1561, double-leaf from an album of eighty-five double leaves with calligraphy in clerical script, ink on paper, 34.9 × 61 cm, Guanyuan Shanzhuang Collection. Chang/Knight, eds., 2012: 134–135.
- 50a) Zhao Zhiqian 趙之謙 (1829–1884): *Flowers of the Four Seasons*, 1869, second of a set of four hanging scrolls, ink and colors on paper, 135 x 30.5 cm each scroll, Liaoning Provincial Museum, Shenyang. Ledderose, ed., 1985: color pl. 23 (n.p.).
- 50b) Zhao Zhiqian: *Fan Leaf with Seal-Script Calligraphy*, nineteenth century, ink on paper, MAK, Berlin, formerly in the Mochan Shanzhuang Collection, acquired with support from the Stiftung Deutsche Klassenlotterie Berlin. © Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Photograph (Jürgen Liepe).
- 51) *Recovery of the Confucius Temple Stele (Xiu Kongmiao bei 修孔廟碑)* (detail), 541, stone stele with engraved calligraphy in clerical script, 220 x 86 cm, Confucius Temple, Qufu. Image downloaded from: <http://s15.sinaimg.cn/mw690/001zQUdTzy6QCpajlamee&690> [accessed March 17, 2016].
- 52) Huang Binhong: *Free-Hand Copy of Recovery of the Confucius Temple Stele of the Wei (Lin Wei xiu Kongmiao bei 臨魏修孔廟碑)*, undated, calligraphy in clerical and semi-cursive script, ink on paper, 29 x 31 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhang Tongyu 2009: 27.
- 53a) Yan Zhenqing: *Duobao Pagoda Stele (Duobao ta bei 多寶塔碑)*, (detail), Song-period rubbing of stone stele of 752 inscribed with calligraphy in standard script, ink on paper, original stele 285 x 102 cm, Capital Museum (Shoudu bowuguan 首都博物館), Beijing. Fong et al., eds., 2008: 226.
- 53b) Rubbing of Yan Zhenqing's *Gift of Mother Yin of Lanling Prefecture to Another Lady of Lanling Prefecture (Lanling jun taijun Yin shi zeng Lanling jun taifuren zhi 蘭陵郡太君殷氏贈蘭陵郡太夫人制)* stone stele of 763 inscribed with calligraphy in standard script (detail), ink on paper, ZPM, Hangzhou. Wang Lin 2010, vol. 2: 2155.
- 54a) Huang Binhong: *Seven-Character Couplet in Large Seal Script (Dazhuan qi yan duilian 大篆七言對聯)*, 1953, hanging scroll couplet, ink on paper, 145 x 35 cm each scroll, ZPM, Hangzhou. Yang, ed., 2010: 333.
- 54b) Huang Binhong, *Free-Hand Copy of Qiang Bell Inscription in Seal Script (Zhuanshu lin Qiang zhong wen 篆書臨甕鐘文)*, 1941, ink on paper, 112 x 32 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhejiang sheng bowuguan, ed., 1999: 18.
- 54c) Huang Binhong: *Couplet on White Jade and Yellow Gold*, 1943, pair of hanging scrolls with calligraphy in large seal script, ink on paper, 152.2 x 25 cm each scroll. Princeton Art Museum, Princeton, John B. Elliott Collection. Photograph (Shao-Lan Hertel 2015).
- 54d) Detail of 54c)
- 54e) Detail of 54c)

54f) Huang Binhong: *Couplet on Jade Phoenixes and Gold Horses*, 1946, pair of hanging scrolls with calligraphy in large seal script, ink on paper, 140.5 x 25.6 cm each scroll. Princeton Art Museum, Princeton, Bequest of John B. Elliott. Photograph (Shao-Lan Hertel 2015).

54g) Detail of 54f)

54h) Detail of 54f)

54i-1-2) Huang Binhong: Four pages from a copybook with exercises in seal script calligraphy (*Lin yi ce* 臨意冊), undated, ink on paper, 24 x 20 cm each page, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhejiang meishuguan, ed., 2009, vol. 2: 81.

55) Illustration by Huang Miaozi showing the evolution of eight different Chinese characters in seven script types. Barrass 2002: 18.

56a-b) Shen Fan 申凡 (1952-): *Landscape: Commemorating Huang Binhong* (*Shanshui · Jinian Huang Binhong* 山水 · 紀念黃賓虹), 2006, light-and-audio installation, curved curtain wall consisting of ca. 2.520 handmade neon tubes, electric mechanical control set, computer control set, and speaker set, height, length, and width of curved wall: 500 x 1378 x 1000 cm. ShanghART Taopu 2014: 57.

57) Yu Youren 于右任 (1879-1964): *Epitaph for Yue Xifeng in Semi-Cursive Script* (*Xingshu Yue Xifeng muzhiming* 行書岳西峰墓誌銘) (detail), calligraphy in semi-cursive script, ink on paper. Shen, ed., 2013, vol. 18, no. 135: 3.

58a) Huang Binhong: *Outline Writing* (*Xiezuo dagang* 寫作大綱) (detail), manuscript written in semi-cursive script, 1954, ink on paper, 27.2 x 34.5 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhejiang meishuguan, ed., 2009, vol. 2: 43.

58b) Huang Binhong: *Two Poems Written for Mister [Wu 吳] Zhongming on the Occasion of His Fiftieth Birthday* (*Xingshu shi er shou gongzhu Zhongming xiansheng wushi chudu* 行書詩二首恭祝仲鳴先生五十初度), 1952, calligraphy in semi-cursive script, ink on paper. Zhang Tongyu 2009: 240-241.

58c) Huang Binhong: *On Painting* (*Huatan* 畫談) (detail), undated, horizontal scroll, manuscript written in semi-cursive script, ink on paper, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhang Tongyu 2009: 188-189.

58d-1-4) Huang Binhong: *Draft of Self-Composed Biographical Sketch and Life Chronicles* (*Zi zhuan xiaozhuan nianpu gao* 自撰小傳年譜稿) (various pages), undated, manuscript written in semi-cursive script, ink on paper, ca. 28 x 35.5 cm each double-page, ZPM, Hangzhou. Photographs (Shao-Lan Hertel 2015).

58d-5-8) Details of 58d-1-4)

58e-1-2) Huang Binhong: *Study of Painting* (*Huaxue pian* 畫學篇 *Huaxue pian*) (e-1: right side of scroll; e-2: left side of scroll), undated, horizontal scroll, manuscript written in semi-cursive script, ink on paper, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhang Tongyu 2009: 178-179.

58f) Huang Binhong: *Letter by Huang Binhong* (*Huang Binhong xinza* 黃賓虹信札), 1952, letter written in semi-cursive script, ink on paper. Zhang Tongyu 2009: 166-167.

59a) Illustration of *cangfeng* 藏鋒, the “concealed” or “hidden brush tip”. Silbergeld 1982: figs. 2h-k (n.p.).

59b) Detail of fig. 15c), illustration of *cangfeng*, as seen in the horizontal brushstroke.

59c) Illustration of *loufeng* 露鋒, the “exposed brush tip”. Silbergeld 1982: figs. 2d–g (n.p.).

59d) Detail of fig. 13b), illustration of *loufeng*, as seen in the second horizontal brushstroke; likewise an illustration of the so-called “silkworm head and swallow tail” (*cantou yanwei* 蠶頭燕尾).

60a) Huang Binhong: *Landscape in Burnt-Ink Method* (*Jiaomo shanshui tu* 焦墨山水圖), 1950, hanging scroll, ink on paper, 91 x 37 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Yang, ed., 2010: 285.

60b) Detail of 60a)

60c) Huang Binhong: *Landscape* (*Shanshui* 山水) (detail), ca. 1953–1955, horizontal scroll, ink and colors on paper, 25.5 x 133.5 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. HBHQJ (4): 14–15.

60d) Detail of 60b)

61a) Huang Binhong: *Ancient Temple in Deep Mountains* (*Shen shan gu si tu* 深山古寺圖), early 1950s, ink and colors on paper, 60.5 x 32.2 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Yang, ed., 2010: 267.

61b) Huang Binhong: *Midsummer-Night Mountains* (*Zhongxia yeshan tu* 仲夏夜山圖), 1940s, hanging scroll, ink on paper, 105 x 47.7 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Yang, ed., 2010: 261.

62a) Huang Binhong: *Observing Daybreak Below the Qixia Hills* (*Qixialing xia xiao wang* 棲霞嶺下曉望) (detail), 1955, horizontal scroll, ink and colors on paper, 36.5 x 62.5 cm, PM, Beijing. HBHQJ (4): 316.

62b) Huang Binhong: *Landscape* (*Shanshui* 山水) (detail), ca. 1953–1955, horizontal scroll, ink and colors on paper, 36 x 63 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. HBHQJ (4): 314–315.

62c) Huang Binhong: *Nighttime Conversation* (*Ye tan tu* 夜談圖), undated, hanging scroll, ink and light colors on paper, 62.5 x 33 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhejiang meishuguan, ed., 2009, vol. 1: 37.

62d) Huang Binhong: *Night Mountains* (*Yeshan tu* 夜山圖), 1954, hanging scroll, ink and light colors on paper, 51.4 x 37.1 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhejiang meishuguan, ed., 2009, vol. 1: 137.

63a) Huang Binhong: *Dwelling on Wanluo Mountain, Jinhua* (*Jinhua Wanluoshan ju tu* 金華萬羅山居圖), ca. 1931, hanging scroll, ink and light colors on paper, 117 x 40,3 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Yang, ed., 2010: 251.

63b) Huang Binhong: *Ink Landscape* (*Shuimo shanshui* 水墨山水), undated, hanging scroll, ink on paper, 65.5 x 40.5 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhejiang meishuguan, ed., 2009, vol. 1: 113.

63c) Huang Binhong: *Discourse on Tang Red-and-Green Painting* (*Lun Tang ren danqing tu* 論唐人丹青圖), 1952, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 101.3 x 42.8 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Yang, ed., 2010: 287.

63d) Huang Binhong: *Landscape in Minimalist Style* (*Jianbi shanshuihua* 簡筆山水畫), 1953, hanging scroll, ink on paper, 110.1 x 42.5 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Yang, ed., 2010: 269.

63e) Huang Binhong: *Landscape* (*Shanshui* 山水), 1953, hanging scroll, ink and light colors on paper, 48 x 28.5 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. HBHQJ (4): 129.

- 64) Fu Shan 傅山 (1605–1690): *Seven-Character Quatrain in Cursive-Script Calligraphy* (*Caoshu qi yan jueju shi* 草書七言絕句詩), undated, hanging scroll with calligraphy in cursive script, ink on silk, 202.7 x 44 cm, Nanjing Museum (Nanjing bowuyuan 南京博物院), Nanjing. Fong et al., eds., 2008: 343, fig. 7.2.
- 65a) Huang Binhong: *Flower Paintings* (*Huahui tu* 花卉圖), 1940, first leaf of an eight-leaf album, ink and colors on paper, 29.5 x 15.6 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Yang, ed., 2010: 316.
- 65b) Huang Binhong: *Chinese Peonies* (*Shaoyao tu* 芍藥圖), 1951, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 80 x 36 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Yang, ed., 2010: 321.
- 66a) Mi Fu 米黻 (1052–1107) (attributed): *Spring Mountains and Auspicious Pines* (*Chunshan ruisong tu* 春山瑞松圖) (detail), undated, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 35 x 44.1 cm, NPM, Taipei. Image downloaded from the *Taiwan Digital Archives Program* (*Diancang Taiwan* 典藏台灣) website: <http://catalog.digitalarchives.tw/item/00/03/fb/40.html> [accessed March 24, 2016].
- 66b) Mi Fu: *Purple-Gold Inkstone* (*Zijin yan tie* 紫金研帖) (detail), ca. 1101, calligraphy in semi-cursive script, album leaf, ink on paper, 28.2 x 39.7 cm, NPM Taipei. Lin Boting, main ed., 2006: 442–443.
- 66c) Mi Fu: *Letters* (*Chidu* 尺牘) (detail), after 1101, fifth of nine letters mounted to a horizontal scroll, letter written in semi-cursive script, ink on paper, 23.5 x 36.8 cm, NPM, Taipei. Fong/Wattt 1996: 551.
- 66d) Mi Fu: *Poem Written in a Boat on the Wu River* (*Wujiang zhou zhong shi* 吳江舟中詩) (detail), after 1100, calligraphy in cursive script, horizontal scroll, ink on paper, 31.1 x 556.9 cm, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of John M. Crawford, Jr., in Honor of Wen C. Fong. Fong 1992: 157.
- 67a) Zhu Da 朱耷 (1626–1705): *Record of the Zhoujin Hall* (*Zhoujintang ji* 畫錦堂記), 1675, hanging scroll with calligraphy in cursive script, ink on paper, 167.5 x 88.3 cm, Nanjing Museum, Nanjing. Fong et al., eds., 2008: 345.
- 67b) Zhu Da: *Album of Landscapes*, undated, eighth leaf from an eight-leaf album, ink and light colors on satin, 23.5 x 28 cm, Honolulu Museum of Art (formerly Honolulu Academy of Arts), Honolulu. Cahill 1967: 79.
- 68) Huang Binhong: *Secluded Rocks and Old Tree* (*You yan gu mu zhou* 幽巖古木軸), hanging scroll, ink and light colors on paper, 61 x 32.8 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. HBHQJ (1): 21.
- 69) Hakuin Ekaku 白隱 慧鶴 (1686–1768): “Mu” (*Mu* 無), Japan, undated, ink on paper, 42.5 x 42.2 cm, private collection, Japan. Addiss/Seo 2010: 23.
- 70a) Wang Duo 王鐸 (1592–1652): *Five Poems in Seven-Character Lü Form in Cursive Script* (*Caoshu qi lu wu shou juan* 草書七律五首卷) (detail), 1642, horizontal scroll with calligraphy in cursive script, ink on silk, 469 x 26 cm, Tokyo National Museum (Tōkyō kokuritsu hakubutsukan 東京國立博物館). Yao, main ed., 2009, vol. 38: 60–61.
- 70b) Gao Qipei 高其佩 (1660–1734): *Fan Leaf with Calligraphy in Standard Script* (*Kaishu shanzi* 楷書扇子), 1719, ink on paper, MAK, Berlin, formerly in the Mochan Shanzhuang Collection, acquired with support from the Stiftung Deutsche Klassenlotterie

Berlin. © Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Photograph (Jürgen Liepe).

70c) Detail of 70b)

70d) Huang Shen 黃慎 (1687–1768): *Fan Leaf with Cursive-Script Calligraphy in Cursive Script*, ink on paper, MAK, Berlin, formerly in the Mochan Shanzhuang Collection, acquired with support from the Stiftung Deutsche Klassenlotterie Berlin. © Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Photograph (Jürgen Liepe).

70e) Detail of 70d)

71) Chen Shizeng 陳師曾 (1876–1923): *Album of Miscellaneous Paintings in an Elongated Format*, 1922, third of eight leaves from a twelve-leaf album, ink and colors on paper, 35.9 x 9.8 cm, Shanghai Museum, Shanghai. Andrews/Shen 1998: cat. 31, c (n.p.).

72) Liang Kai 梁楷 (fl. early thirteenth century): *Scholar of the Eastern Fence* [Tao Yuanming 陶淵明 (365–427)] (*Dongli gaoshi tu 東籬高士圖*), early thirteenth century, hanging scroll, ink and colors on silk, 71.5 x 36.7 cm, NPM, Taipei. Cahill 1982: 111.

73a) Wu Changshuo: *Free-Hand Copy of the Stone Drum Inscriptions* (*Lin Shiguwen 臨石鼓文*), undated, eighth and ninth leaves of a twelve-leaf album showing calligraphy in seal script and flower depictions, ink and colors on paper, 37 x 33 cm each double-page, NAMOC, Beijing. He, ed., 2013 [2010]: 29.

73b-1–4) Wu Changshuo: *Free-Hand Copy of the Stone Drum Inscriptions* (*Lin Shiguwen si ping 臨石鼓文四屏*), first four of a set of eight hanging scrolls of the *Stone Drum Inscriptions and Flowers of the Four Seasons* (*Lin Shiguwen ping, ni qianren siji huahui tu ping 臨石鼓文屏、擬前人四季花卉圖屏*) showing calligraphy in seal script and flower depictions, ink on paper, 1927, 107 x 52.5 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Yang, ed., 2010: 133–136.

73c) Wu Changshuo: *Ink Pine* (*Mosong tu 墨松圖*), 1923, hanging scroll, ink on paper, 188.2 x 92.9 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Yang, ed., 2010: 125.

73d) Wu Changshuo: *Ding Tripod Cauldrons* (*Ding cheng tu 鼎盛圖*), 1902, hanging scroll with painting, calligraphy, and rubbings, ink and colors on paper, 180.1 x 96.5 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou, Gift of Wu Dongmai. Yang, ed., 2010: 101.

73e) Wu Changshuo: *Pigeonberry* (*Shanhu zhu tu 珊瑚珠圖*), 1917, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 171.2 x 45 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Yang, ed., 2010: 113.

74a) Huang Binhong: *Discourse on Clerical-Script Painting* (*Lun litihua tu 論隸體畫圖*), 1940s, ink and colors on paper, 96.5 x 39.5 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Yang, ed., 2010: 259.

74b) Detail of 74a)

74c) Detail of 74a)

74d) Detail of 74a)

74e) Two seals used by Huang Binhong in *Discourse on Clerical-Script Painting* (fig. 74a) bearing the inscriptions “Binhong 賓虹” in intaglio characters (no. 1), and “Yuxiang 予向” (no. 2) in relief characters, respectively. Yang, ed., 2010: 257.

75a) Jing Hao 荆浩 (ca. 990–940): *Mt. Kuanglu* (*Kuanglu tu 匡廬圖*), undated, hanging scroll, ink on silk, 185.5 x 106.8 cm, NPM, Taipei. Lin Boting, main ed., 2006: 88.

75b) Fan Kuan 範寬 (fl. ca. 980–1030): *Travelers Amid Streams and Mountains* (*Xi shan xinglü tu* 谿山行旅圖), hanging scroll, ink and colors on silk, 206.3 x 103.3 cm, NPM, Taipei. Fong/Watt 1996: 126.

76) Li Zhaodao 李昭道 (fl. early eighth century) (attributed): *Emperor Minghuang's Journey into Shu* (*Minghuang xing Shu tu* 明皇幸蜀圖), probably a Song-dynasty copy of a Tang-dynasty original created ca. 800 by a follower of the Li School, hanging scroll, ink and colors on silk, 55.9 x 81 cm, NPM, Taipei. Yang, ed., 1997: 68.

77) Zhao Mengfu 趙孟頫 (1254–1322): *Twin Pines, Level Distance* (*Shuang song pingyuan tu* 雙松平遠圖) (detail), horizontal scroll, ink on paper, 26.9 x 107.4 cm, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, formerly C. C. Wang Family Collection, Gift of The Dillon Fund. Hearn 2008: 78–79.

78a-1–2) Rubbing of the *Votive Inscription for Shiping Gong* (*Shiping Gong zaoxiang ji* 始平公造像記) of 498 (details), one of the *Twenty Calligraphy Pieces of Longmen* (*Longmen ershi pin* 龍門二十品), stone votive inscription carved into the northern wall of Guyang Cave, Longmen Cave Temples, Luoyang, inscription in standard-script calligraphy in the Wei stele style (*Weibeiti* 魏碑體) carved in relief, 240 x 46 cm. Yao, main ed., 2009, vol. 18: 9–10.

78b) *Great Vacuity King Buddha* (*Da kong wang fo* 大空王佛), Northern Qi (550–577), cliff engraving in standard script, total height 930 cm, Mt. Hongding 洪頂, Dongping 東平 County, Shandong Province. Harrist 2008: pl. 9 (n.p.).

78c) Chu Suiliang 褚遂良 (597–658): *Preface to the Sacred Teaching at Wild Goose Pagoda* (*Yan ta sheng jiao xu* 雁塔聖教序) (detail), Ming-period rubbing of two stone steles of 653 inscribed with calligraphy in standard script, ink on paper, PM, Beijing. Fong et al., eds., 2008: 204.

78d) Stone pillar inscribed with the *Uṣṇiṣa-vijaya Dhāranī sūtra* (*Foding zunsheng tuoloni jing* 佛頂尊勝陀羅尼經) in standard script (detail), 878, height 124.5, diameter of base 27.9 cm, Princeton Art Museum, Princeton, John B. Elliott Collection, Gift of James J. Freeman in Honor of John B. Elliott. Fong/Harrist, eds., 1999: 104.

78e) Lu Dadong 魯大東 (1973–): *Lanling–Yan'an* (*Lanling–Yan'an* 蘭陵–延安) (detail), 2013, rubbing of stele inscription in Yan-style standard script, ink on paper; original stele: limestone, 250 x 80 x 25 cm. Photograph (Shao-Lan Hertel 2015).

79a) Huang Binhong: *Landscape in the Manner of Li Tang* (*Lin Li Tang shanshui tu* 臨李唐山水圖), ca. 1910s, hanging scroll, ink and light colors on silk, 87.5 x 51.5 cm, Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst Köln, Cologne. Yang, ed., 2010: 234.

79b) Li Tang 李唐 (1166–1050): *Wind and Pines among Myriad Valleys* (*Wan huò song feng tu* 萬壑松風圖), 1124, hanging scroll, ink and colors on silk, 188.7 x 139.8 cm, NPM, Taipei. Yang, ed., 2010: 237.

80a-1–2) Huang Binhong: *Cool Air among Lakes and Mountains* (*Hushan shuangqi tu* 湖山爽氣圖) (a-1: right side of scroll; a-2: left side of scroll), 1951, horizontal scroll, ink and colors on paper, 30.6 x 300 cm, Hong Kong Art Museum, Hong Kong. Yang, ed., 2010: 238–239.

80b) Detail of 80a-2)

80c) Detail of 80a-2)

81a) Wang Meng 王蒙 (1308–1385): *Juqu Forest Chamber Grotto* (*Juqu linwu tu* 具區林屋圖), after 1368, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 68.7 x 42.5 cm, NPM, Taipei. Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, ed., 2003: 236.

81b) Wang Meng: *Qingbian Mountain Dwelling* (*Qingbian yinju tu* 青卞隱居圖), 1366, hanging scroll, ink on paper, 141 x 42.2, Shanghai Museum, Shanghai. Cahill 1998: 48, fig. 32.

81c) Detail of Huang Binhong's *Discourse on Clerical-Script Painting* (fig. 74a)

82a) Frontispiece of Sullivan 1959 showing a landscape painting by Huang Binhong with image caption: "Huang Pin-hung. Blue Landscape (Painted at the Age of 89). Chinese Ink and Colour (Mr. Ch'en Ching-chao)". Sullivan 1959: frontispiece, pl. A (n.p.).

82b) Huang Binhong: *Landscape* (*Shanshui* 山水), 1955, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 75 x 35 cm, PM, Beijing. Shandong meishu chubanshe/Zhejiang renmin meishu chubanshe, eds., 2009: 57.

82c) Huang Binhong: *Landscape* (*Shanshui* 山水), hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 56.8 x 28.7 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. HBHQJ (4): 34.

83a) Huang Binhong: *Landscape* (*Shanshui* 山水), 1953, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 75 x 32 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. HBHQJ (4): 50.

83b) Huang Binhong: *Landscape* (*Shanshui* 山水), ca. 1953–1955, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 59 x 35 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. HBHQJ (4): 153.

83c) Huang Binhong: *Landscape* (*Shanshui* 山水), ca. 1952–1953, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 31.4 x 22.4 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. HBHQJ (3): 165.

83d) Huang Binhong: *Observing Daybreak Below the Qixia Hills* (*Qixialing xia xiao wang* 棲霞嶺下曉望) (detail), 1955, horizontal scroll, ink and colors on paper, 36.5 x 62.5 cm, PM, Beijing. HBHQJ (4): 316.

83e) Huang Binhong: *Shangyang Village, Mt. Yandang* (*Yandang Shangyang cun tu* 雁宕上垞村圖), 1953, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 57.8 x 38.8 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Yang, ed., 2010: 293.

83f) Huang Binhong: *Landscape* (*Shanshui* 山水), 1953, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 48 x 33 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. HBHQJ (4): 74.

83g) Huang Binhong: *Sketched Painting in Thirsty-Brush Method* (*Kebi suxie huagao* 渴筆速寫畫稿), undated, sketch, ink on paper, 24.7 x 17.9 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhejiang meishuguan, ed., 2009, vol. 1: 167.

83h) Huang Binhong: *Sketched Ink Landscape* (*Shanshui mogao* 山水墨稿), undated, sketch, ink on paper, 37.5 x 27 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhejiang meishuguan, ed., 2009, vol. 1: 169.

83i) Huang Binhong: *Sketched Painting in the Style of Ancient Masters* (*Lin gu huagao* 臨古畫稿), undated, sketch, ink on paper, 28 x 15 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhejiang meishuguan, ed., 2009, vol. 1: 163.

83j) Detail of 83i)

84-1–2) Huang Binhong: *European Painting* (*Ouhua* 歐畫), manuscript written in semi-cursive calligraphy, written as a supplement to the essay "On the Study of Chinese

Painting” (“Zhongguo huaxue tan 中國畫學談”) of 1924/1925, ink on paper, 28.5 x 61 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhejiang meishuguan, ed., 2009, vol. 2: 2–3.

85a) Gao Jianfu 高劍父 (1879–1951): *Stupa Ruins in Burma*, 1934, hanging scroll, ink and color on paper, 162 x 84 cm, The Art Museum, Chinese University of Hong Kong. Andrews/Shen, eds., 1998: cat. 38 (n.p.).

85b) Gao Qifeng 高奇峰 (1889–1933): *Monkeys and Snowy Pine*, 1916, hanging scroll, ink and color on paper; 177 x 91.5 cm, Hong Kong Museum of Art. Andrews/Shen, eds., 1998: cat. 37 (n.p.).

86) Lucy Driscoll (1886–1964): *Letter to Huang Binhong (One) (Delisike shu [yi] 德里斯珂書[一])*, 1939, letter, ink on paper, 27.5 x 21.5 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhejiang meishuguan, ed., 2009, vol. 2: 204.

87a) Huang Binhong: *Early-Age Landscape (Zaosui shanshui tu 早歲山水圖)*, undated, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 124.5 x 47.2 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Xie, ed., 2013: 2.

87b) Huang Binhong: *Summer Water Double Spring (Xiashui chongquan tu 夏水重泉圖)* undated, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 67.6 x 33.3 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Xie, ed., 2013: 4.

87c) Huang Binhong: *Landscape in the Style of Northern Song Masters (Fang Beisong shanshui tu 仿北宋山水圖)*, 1894, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 102.6 x 38.8 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Xie, ed., 2013: 5.

87d) Detail of 87c) showing inscription

87e) Huang Binhong: *Colored Landscape (Shese shanshui tu 設色山水圖)* undated, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 86 x 36.5 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Xie, ed., 2013: 59.

87f) Huang Binhong: *Ochre-and-Ink Landscape (Zhemo shanshui tu 赭墨山水圖)*, undated, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 75.3 x 31.1 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Xie, ed., 2013: 79.

87g) Huang Binhong: *Colored Landscape (Shese shanshui tu 設色山水圖)*, undated, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 87 x 38.8 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Xie, ed., 2013: 86.

87h) Huang Binhong: *Colored Landscape (Shese shanshui tu 設色山水圖)*, undated, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 95.3 x 36.3 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Xie, ed., 2013: 10.

87i) Huang Binhong: *Talking to a Friend among Streams and Mountains (Xi shan hua you tu 溪山話友圖)*, undated, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 87.4 x 44.4 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Xie, ed., 2013: 57.

87j) Huang Binhong: *Returning Oars after Spring Outing (Chun you gui zhao tu 春遊歸棹圖)*, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 89.5 x 31.1 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhejiang meishuguan, ed., 2009, vol. 1: 26.

87k) Huang Binhong: *Bridge by Stream in Misty Clouds (Xiqiao yan'ai tu 溪橋煙靄圖)*, 1953, hanging scroll, ink and light colors on paper, 94.3 x 32.9 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhejiang meishuguan, ed., 2009, vol. 1: 140.

87l) Huang Binhong: *Drawing from Nature in Huilin (Huilin xiasheng tu 惠林寫生圖)*, hanging scroll, ink and light colors on paper, 53.2 x 35.5 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhejiang meishuguan, ed., 2009, vol. 1: 12.

- 87m) Huang Binhong: *Gazing towards the Zhi River at Daybreak* (*Zhijiang xiao wang tu* 之江曉望圖), 1952, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 52 x 27 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Xie, ed., 2013: 54.
- 87n) Huang Binhong: *Colored Landscape* (*Shese shanshui tu* 設色山水圖), undated, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 41 x 31 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Xie, ed., 2013: 32.
- 87o) Huang Binhong: *Bridge by Stream in Misty Rain* (*Xiqiao yan yu* 溪橋煙雨), hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 86,5 x 31,5 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou, HBHQJ (3): 200.
- 88a) Huang Binhong: *Light-Crimson Landscape* (*Qianjiang shanshui tu* 淺絳山水圖), undated, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 64 x 30 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Xie, ed., 2013: 67.
- 88b) Huang Binhong: *Light-Crimson Landscape* (*Qianjiang shanshui tu* 淺絳山水圖), undated, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 96 x 44.5 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Xie, ed., 2013: 70.
- 88c) Huang Binhong: *Light-Crimson Landscape* (*Qianjiang shanshui tu* 淺絳山水圖), undated, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 96.5 x 39.5 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Xie, ed., 2013: 71.
- 88d) Huang Binhong: *Emulation of the Water-Moon Cave in Guilin* (*Lin Gui Shuiyuedong tu* 臨桂水月洞圖), 1946, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 87.8 x 32 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Xie, ed., 2013: 16.
- 88e) Huang Binhong: *Colored Landscape* (*Shese shanshui tu* 設色山水圖), undated, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 93.5 x 44 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Xie, ed., 2013: 65.
- 88f) Huang Binhong: *Sitting in the Rain in Qingcheng* (*Qingcheng zuo yu tu* 青城坐雨圖), 1940s, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 86.5 x 44 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Yang, ed., 2010: 255.
- 88g) Huang Binhong: *Rainy Mountains* (*Yu shan tu* 雨山圖), undated, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 84 x 45 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Xie, ed., 2013: 58.
- 88h) Huang Binhong: *Light-Crimson Landscape* (*Qianjiang shanshui tu* 淺絳山水圖), undated, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 68 x 32 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Xie, ed., 2013: 68.
- 89a) Huang Binhong: *Winding Waterfall in Forest Thicket* (*Conglin zhepu tu* 叢林折瀑圖), undated, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 98.1 x 46.2 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Xie, ed., 2013: 25.
- 89b) Huang Binhong: *Blue-Green Summer Mountains* (*Xiashan cangcui tu* 夏山蒼翠圖), early 1950s, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 99 x 38.5 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Yang, ed., 2010: 289.
- 89c) Huang Binhong: *Deep Seclusion in Mt. Huang* (*Huangshan yousui tu* 黃山幽邃圖), 1953, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 96.3 x 38.7 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Xie, ed., 2013: 81.
- 89d) Huang Binhong: *High Pavilion in Prosperous Mountains* (*Fudeng wei ting tu* 富登危亭圖), undated, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 75.3 x 26.7 cm, ZPM. Xie, ed., 2013: 48.
- 89e) Detail of 89d)

- 90a) Huang Binhong: *Small Scenery of the Five Dragon Ponds* (*Wulongtan xiao jing tu* 五龍潭小景圖), undated, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 82.6 x 30.8 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Xie, ed., 2013: 24.
- 90b) Huang Binhong: *Colored Landscape* (*Shese shanshui tu* 設色山水圖), undated, hanging scroll, ink and colors on paper, 76 x 33.5 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Xie, ed., 2013: 73.
- 90c-1-2) Juxtaposition of original and desaturated versions of *Ancient Temple in Deep Mountains* (fig. 61a)
- 90d-1-2) Juxtaposition of original and desaturated versions of *Sitting in the Rain in Qingcheng* (fig. 88f)
- 90e-1-2) Juxtaposition of original and desaturated versions of *High Pavilion in Prosperous Mountains* (fig. 89d)
- 91a) Huang Binhong: *Old Traces of the Peach Blossom Stream* (*Taohua xi jiu ji* 桃花溪舊跡), 1953, hanging scroll, ink and light colors on paper, 51.1 x 38.1 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. HBHQJ (3): 304.
- 91b) Detail of 91a) showing inscription in semi-cursive script
- 91c) Detail of 91a)
- 91d) Huang Binhong: *Landscape* (*Shanshui* 山水), 1953, ink on paper, 43 x 31 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. HBHQJ (4): 180.
- 92a) Huang Binhong, *Old Traces of the Peach Blossom Stream* (*Taohua xi jiu ji* 桃花溪舊跡), 1952, hanging scroll, ink and light colors on paper, 78.4 x 32.2 cm, private collection. HBHQJ (3): 32.
- 92b) Detail of 92a)
- 93a) Huang Binhong, *Old Traces of the Peach Blossom Stream* (*Taohua xi jiu ji* 桃花溪舊跡), 1953, hanging scroll, ink and light colors on paper, 87.5 x 47.5 cm, NAMOC, Beijing. HBHQJ (4): 212.
- 93b) Detail of 93a) showing inscription in semi-cursive script
- 93c) Detail of 93a)
- 94a) Detail of a painting by Huang Binhong showing the inscription in semi-cursive slender gold (*shoujin* 瘦金) style. HBHQJ (9): 272.
- 94b) Song Huizong 宋徽宗 (1082–1135, r. 1100–1126): *Poem on Peonies* (*Mudan shi tie* 牡丹詩帖), calligraphy in semi-cursive script in slender gold style, album leaf, ink on silk 34.8 x 53.3 cm, NPM, Taipei. Lin Boting, main ed., 2006: 418.
- 94c) Detail of 94b). Lin Boting, main ed., 2006: 419.
- 95a) Huang Binhong: *National Glories of China* (*Shenzhou guoguang ji* 神州國光集), calligraphy in seal script, cover page of the journal *National Glories of China* (*Shenzhou guoguang ji* 神州國光集), vol. 1, 1908. Zhejiang meishuguan, ed., 2009, vol. 2: 212.
- 95b) Huang Binhong: *Free-Hand Copy of Han Stele Inscriptions* (*Lin Han bei* 臨漢碑), undated, three horizontal scrolls, calligraphy in clerical script, ink on paper, 29.5 x 167 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhang Tongyu 2009: 12–13.

- 95c) Huang Binhong: *Seven-Character Couplet in Large Seal Script* (*Dazhuan qi yan duilian* 大篆七言對聯), 1952, hanging scroll couplet, 84.5 x 21.5 cm each scroll, ink on paper, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhang Tongyu 2009: 115.
- 95d) Huang Binhong: *Free-Hand Copy of Wei Zhao Tripod Inscriptions* (*Lin Wei Zhao ding ming* 臨衛鞏鼎銘), undated, calligraphy in bronze script and semi-cursive script, ink on paper, 32 x 20 cm. Zhejiang sheng bowuguan, ed., 1999: 16.
- 95e) Huang Binhong: *Collecting Zhou Bronze Inscriptions* (*Ji Zhou jinwen* 集周金文), undated, hanging scroll, ink on paper. Zhang Tongyu 2003: 143.
- 96a) Huang Binhong: *Five-Character Lü Poem in Cursive Script* (*Caoshu wu yan lüshi* 草書五言律詩), 1952, calligraphy in cursive script, ink on paper, 32.3 x 25.2 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Luo 2005: 65.
- 96b-1-2) Huang Binhong: *Poem by Su Shi in Cursive Script* (*Caoshu Su Shi shi* 草書蘇軾詩) (detail), undated, calligraphy in cursive script, ink on paper, 27.5 x 83 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhang Tongyu 2009: 138-139.
- 96c) Huang Binhong: *Album of Four Poetic Narratives on Mt. Huang in Semi-Cursive Script* (*Xingshu Huangshan zayong si shou ce* 行書黃山雜詠四首冊), 1952, album leaf, ink on paper, 33 x 31.5 cm, in ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhejiang meishuguan, ed., 2009, vol. 1: 304.
- 96d) Huang Binhong: *Inscription of a Landscape Painting* (*Shanshui tihua* 山水題畫) (detail), 1952, calligraphy in semi-cursive script, ink on paper. Zhang Tongyu 2009: 76.
- 96e-1-2) Huang Binhong: *Two Five-Character Poems in Cursive Script* (*Caoshu wu yan lüshi [yi, er]* 草書五言律詩 [一、二]), undated, calligraphy in cursive script, ink on paper, 32 x 20 cm each sheet, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhang Tongyu 2009: 222-223.
- 96f) Huang Binhong: *Letter by Huang Binhong* (*Huang Binhong xinzha* 黃賓虹信札), 1952, letter written in semi-cursive script, ink on paper. Zhang Tongyu 2009: 229.
- 97a-g) Huang Binhong: *Album of Landscapes* (*Shanshui ce* 山水冊), 1954, eight-leaf album containing seven landscape depictions (nos. a-g respectively), ink and colors on paper, each leaf 25.9 x 33.6 cm, Museum für Asiatische Kunst Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, formerly in the Mochan Shanzhuang Collection, acquired with support from the Stiftung Deutsche Klassenlotterie Berlin © Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Photograph (Jürgen Liepe).
- 98a) Lin Sanzhi: *Five-Character Couplet* (*Wu yan lian* 五言聯), 1976, calligraphy in cursive script, ink on paper. Lin Changgeng/Lin Changwu, eds., 2003: 237.
- 98b) Lin Sanzhi: *Sunny Mountains on the Yangtze River* (*Changjiang qing xiu lian* 長江晴岫聯), 1978, calligraphy in cursive script, ink on paper, 150 x 31 cm, Jiangsu Provincial National Painting Institute (Jiangsu sheng guohuayuan 江蘇省國畫院), Nanjing. Qi 2003: 78.
- 98c) Lin Sanzhi: *Four-Character Couplet* (*Si yan lian* 四言聯) 1979, calligraphy in cursive script, ink on paper, 70 x 24 cm, Collection of Lin Changwu 林昌午. Qi 2003: 75.
- 98d) Lin Sanzhi: *Eight-Character Couplet* (*Ba yan lian* 八言聯), 1962, calligraphy in clerical script, ink on paper, 168 x 27 cm, Lin Sanzhi Art Gallery, Ma'anshan. Lin Changgeng/Lin Changwu, eds., 2003: 230.
- 98e) Lin Sanzhi: *Free-Hand Copy of Shimen Song* (*Lin Shimen song* 臨石門頌) (detail),

- 1965, calligraphy in clerical script, ink on paper. Qi 2003: 104.
- 98f) Lin Sanzhi: *Free-Hand Copy of Yi Ying Stele* [seen in figs. 13a–b] (*Lin Yi Ying bei* 臨乙瑛碑) (detail), 1972, calligraphy in clerical script, ink on paper, Lin Sanzhi Art Gallery, Ma'anshan. Jiangsu gu xiang chubanshe, ed., 1997 [1987]: 1.
- 98g) Lin Sanzhi: *Poem by Cao Mengde* (*Cao Mengde shiju* 曹孟得詩句), 1970s, calligraphy in clerical script, ink on paper. Qi 2003: 158, fig. 115.
- 98h) Lin Sanzhi: *Poem by Cao Cao* (*Cao Cao shiju* 曹操詩句) (detail), 1986, calligraphy in clerical script, ink on paper, 26 x 85 cm, Collection of Zhu Xingbang 朱興邦. Lin Changgeng/Lin Changwu, eds., 2003: 261.
- 99a) Wang Dongling: *Primordial Line* (*Yi hua* 一畫), 2013, hanging scroll with abstract calligraphy, ink on paper, 178 x 96 cm, Ink Studio | 墨齋, Beijing. Image downloaded from the Ink Studio (Mozhai 墨齋) gallery website: <http://www.inkstudio.com.cn/artists/57-wang-dongling/works/525/> [accessed March 13, 2016].
- 99b) Wang Dongling: *Xuanhuang* 玄黃—*Dark (Heaven) and Yellow (Earth)*, 2005, abstract calligraphy, ink on paper, 145 x 360 cm, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Photograph (Shao-Lan Hertel 2015).
- 99c) Wang Dongling: Detail of 99b)
- 99d) Wang Dongling: *Xiaoyaoyou* 逍遙遊—*Wandering Beyond*, 2003, large-scale calligraphy in wild cursive script, ink on 30 assembled sheets of paper, total size 750 x 1250 cm, China Academy of Art. Photograph (courtesy of Wang Dongling).
- 99e) Wang Dongling: calligraphy performance at the China Academy of Art, April 2011, large-scale wild cursive calligraphy. Photograph (courtesy of Wang Dongling).
- 99f) Wang Dongling: *Poem to the Tune of “The Rain-Soaked Bell”* (*Liu yong yu lin ling* 柳永雨霖鈴), 2007, calligraphy in wild cursive script, ink on paper, 67.3 x 66.7 cm, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Photograph (Shao-Lan Hertel 2015).
- 100a) Lin Sanzhi: *Feeling, Self-Composed Prose Poem* (*Zizuo shi, Gan fu* 自作詩, 感賦), 1962, hanging scroll with calligraphy in semi-cursive script, ink on paper, 53 x 24 cm, Lin Sanzhi Memorial Gallery (Lin Sanzhi jinianguan 林散之紀念館), Nanjing. Qi/Zhao, eds., 2010 [2000]: 15.
- 100b-1-2) Lin Sanzhi: *On Calligraphy, Self-Composed Poem* (*Zizuo shi, Lun shu* 自作詩, 論書), 1980, calligraphy in cursive script, horizontal scroll, 140 x 354 cm, ink on paper, Lin Sanzhi Memorial Gallery, Nanjing. Qi/Zhao, eds., 2010 [2000]: 58–59.
- 100c-1-2) Lin Sanzhi: *Letter to Huang Binhong (One)* (*Lin Sanzhi shu [yi]* 林散之書[一]), letter written in semi-cursive script, ink on paper, 27 x 15 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhejiang meishuguan, ed., 2009, vol. 2: 121.
- 100d-1-2) Lin Sanzhi: *Letter to Huang Binhong (Two)* (*Lin Sanzhi shu [er]* 林散之書[二]), letter written in semi-cursive script, ink on paper, 32 x 25 cm, ZPM, Hangzhou. Zhejiang meishuguan, ed., 2009, vol. 2: 122–123.
- 100e) Lin Sanzhi: *In the Brush Manner of Old Man Hong* [Huang Binhong] (*Shi Hong sou biyi* 師虹叟筆意), 1969, hanging scroll ink on paper. Lin Changgeng/Lin Changwu, eds., 2003: 85.

- 100f) Lin Sanzhi: *Homeward Journey on Lake Tai (Taihu guitu 太湖歸途)*, 1978, ink on paper. Lin Changgeng/Lin Changwu, eds., 2003: 168.
- 100g) Lin Sanzhi: *Compilation of Ancient Texts on the Category of Landscape Painting (Shanshui lei bian 山水類編)*, excerpt of manuscript written between 1923 and 1926 (total of 29 vols.), calligraphy in standard script with accompanying landscape painting, ink on paper, Lin Sanzhi Art Gallery, Ma'anshan. Photograph (Shao-Lan Hertel 2011).
- 100h) Lin Sanzhi: *Returning Sailing Boat on the River (Jiangshang guifan 江上歸帆)*, 1932, hanging scroll, ink on paper. Lin Changgeng/Lin Changwu, eds., 2003: 6.
- 100i) Lin Sanzhi: *Transmitting the Spirit of Xue Ge [Zhu Da 朱耷 (1626–1705)] (Shi Xue Ge yi yi 師雪個遺意)*, 1948, hanging scroll, ink on paper. Lin Changgeng/Lin Changwu, eds., 2003: 43.
- 100j) Lin Sanzhi: *Old Tree (Lao shu 老樹)*, 1972, ink on paper. Lin Changgeng/Lin Changwu, eds., 2003: 118.
- 100k) Lin Sanzhi: *Memories of Jiangnan (Yi Jiangnan 憶江南)*, 1984, ink on paper. Lin Changgeng/Lin Changwu, eds., 2003: 212.
- 100l) Wang Dongling: *Seven-Character Lü Poem “Arriving at Shaoshan” by Mao Zedong (Qi lü Dao Shaoshan 七律到韶山)*, 1979, hanging scroll with calligraphy in clerical script, ink on paper, 97 x 56 cm, collection of Wang Dongling. Photograph (courtesy of Wang Dongling).
- 100m) Lin Sanzhi: *Free-Hand Copy of Stele on Ritual Objects (Lin Liqi bei 臨禮器碑)* (detail), 1976, ink on paper. Lin Changgeng/Lin Changwu, eds., 2003: 242.
- 100n) Wang Dongling: *“An Autumn Evening in My Mountain Abode” by Wang Wei (Wang Wei “Shanju qiuming” 王維“山居秋暝”)*, 1989, hanging scroll with calligraphy in cursive script, ink on paper, 136 x 68 cm. Song, ed., 1994: no. 3 (n.p.).
- 100o) Wang Dongling: *“Untitled” by Liu Shenxu (Liu Shenxu “Que ti” 劉慎虛“闕題”)*, 1993, hanging scroll with calligraphy in cursive script, ink on paper, 137.2 x 34 cm. Song, ed., 1994: no. 31 (n.p.).
- 100p) Lin Sanzhi: *Poem by Su Shi (Su Shi ju 蘇軾句)*, 1985, horizontal scroll, calligraphy in clerical script with elements of standard and semi-cursive script, ink on paper. Lin Changgeng/Lin Changwu, eds., 2003: 272–273.
- 100q) Detail of 100p). Lin Changgeng/Lin Changwu, eds., 2003: 273.
- 100r-1-2) Lin Sanzhi: *Poem by Cao Cao (Cao Cao shiju 曹操詩句)*, 1986, calligraphy in clerical script, ink on paper, 26 x 85 cm, Zhu Xingbang Collection. Lin Changgeng/Lin Changwu, eds., 2003: 261.
- 100s) Lin Sanzhi: *Rivers and Mountains Like Painting (Jiangshan ru hua 江山如畫)*, 1988, hanging scroll with cursive-script calligraphy, ink on paper, 89 x 28 cm, Lin Sanzhi Art Gallery, Ma'anshan. Lin Changgeng/Lin Changwu, eds., 2003: 266.
- 100t) Lin Sanzhi: *The Wise Appears Dumb (Dazhiruoyu 大智若愚)*, 1989, calligraphy in cursive script, ink on paper. Lin Changgeng/Lin Changwu, eds., 2003: 267.
- 101a) Group photograph taken by the Slender West Lake (Shou Xihu 瘦西湖) in Yangzhou showing Lin Sanzhi (sixth from left) and Wang Dongling (second from right) together with other Yangzhou calligraphers and painters, ca. 1970. Photograph (courtesy of Wang Dongling).

101b) Photograph of Lin Sanzhi and Wang Dongling taken at Lin's home in Nanjing, ca. 1986/1987. Photograph (courtesy of Wang Dongling).

102a) Wang Dongling: *Xiaoyaoyou* 逍遙遊—*The Happy Excursion*, 2015, triptych of hanging scrolls with cursive-script calligraphy in disorderly style (*luanshu* 亂書), ink on paper, 365 x 145 each scroll, Sanshang Art Gallery (Sanshang dangdai yishuguan 三尚當代藝術館), Hangzhou. Wang Dongling 2015: 15.

102b) Detail of 102a)

102c) Wang Dongling: *Chuchu lian fangcao* 處處憐芳草—*Cherish the Youth*, 2015, horizontal scroll with cursive-script calligraphy in disorderly style, ink on paper, 96 x 180 cm, Sanshang Art Gallery, Hangzhou. Wang Dongling 2015: 36–37.

103a) Wang Dongling: *Tiger* (*Hu* 虎), 1986, Modernist calligraphy, ink on paper, 66.8 x 67 cm, British Museum, London. Barrass 2002: 167.

103b) Wang Dongling, *Light* (*Guang* 光), 1986, Modernist calligraphy, ink on paper, 66.7 x 47.4 cm. Song, ed., 1994: no. 32 (n.p.).

103c) Wang Dongling: *Confucianism, Daosim, Buddhism* (*Ru Dao Fo lian ping* 儒道佛聯屏), 1987, triptych of hanging scrolls with assembled calligraphies in various script types, ink on paper, 265 x 208 cm, collection of Wang Dongling. Wang Dongling 2008 [1999]: 354.

103d) Wang Dongling: *Gan* 感—*Feeling and Passion*, 1999, Modernist calligraphy, ink on colored newspaper, 56 x 81.2 cm, British Museum, London, Gift of Michael Goedhuis. Barrass 2002: 168.

104a-1-2) Lin Sanzhi: *Painting Inscription* (*Tihua* 題畫) (a-1: right side of inscription; a-2: left side), 1964, calligraphy in cursive script, ink on paper. Qi 2003: 18–19.

104b) Lin Sanzhi: *Travel Memories of Xi Wu* (*Xi Wu ji you* 西塢記游), 1964, hanging scroll with calligraphy in cursive script, ink on paper. Qi 2003: 172.

105a) Wang Dongling: *Seven-Character Couplet with Verses from Mao Zedong's "Arriving at Shaoshan"* [*Dao Shaoshan* 到韶山] in *Seal Script*, 1968, hanging scroll couplet with calligraphy in seal script, ink on paper, collection of Wang Dongling. Photograph (courtesy of Wang Dongling).

105b) Detail of 105a): *zhong lang* 重浪

Abbreviations

HBHQJ	<i>Huang Binhong quanji</i> 黃賓虹全集
HBHWJ	<i>Huang Binhong wenji</i> 黃賓虹文集
HYDZD	<i>Hanyu da zidian</i> 漢語大字典
MAK	Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin
NAMOC	National Art Museum of China (Zhongguo meishuguan 中國美術館)
NPM	National Palace Museum (Guoli gugong bowuyuan 國立故宮博物院)
PM	Palace Museum (Gugong bowuyuan 故宮博物院)
ZPM	Zhejiang Provincial Museum (Zhejiang sheng bowuguan 浙江省博物館)

Introduction

Subject Matter and Research Pursuits

The dissertation “The Inner Workings of Brush-and-Ink: A Study on Huang Binhong (1865–1955) as Calligrapher, with Special Respect to the Concept of Interior Beauty (*neimei*)” follows two broader pursuits. They are, inherently, enmeshed with one another. The first is to expand perspectives on the culture-specific art phenomenon which in the Chinese language is denoted as *shufa* 書法, commonly rendered in the English language as “calligraphy”, “calligraphy art”, “the art of writing”.¹ As many scholars have pointed out, the translation of *shufa* as “calligraphy”, in its derivation from the Greek terms *kállós* κάλλος (beauty) and *gráphein* γράφειν (to write) as “beautiful writing”, is considerably misleading, not least due to the multitude of social, political, ethical, religious, didactical, and philosophical entanglements crucial to the technical and aesthetical development of calligraphy in Chinese history:

Was zumeist als “Kalligraphie” aufgefasst wird, als eine künstlerische Fertigkeit im Umgang mit der Formschönheit der chinesischen Schrift, das wurde [...] in Wahrheit durch die Jahrhunderte auch als eine Lebensübung mit höchsten sittlichen und leiblichen Implikationen verfolgt.²

One of the questions at the heart of the present inquiry is thus concerned with the essential nature and structure of “calligraphy”. What do we mean when speaking of “calligraphy”? How can the phenomenon be defined; more precisely, disambiguated, from handwriting that is in turn *not* considered to be “calligraphy”? Further, while there exists an abundance of East Asian- and western-language scholarship seeming to give answers to this question, which understanding of calligraphy does the present study establish and circumscribe?

Borrowing from etymological connotations of the Chinese term *shuti* 書體—the term that is used to denote a certain type or style of script in Chinese writing and calligraphy,³ yet

¹ The problematic issue of translating the term *shufa* is readdressed at the outset of the chapter one.

² Obert 2013: 398.

³ For an overview of the history and development of calligraphy in China and an introduction to its individual script types, techniques, and styles, see, for example, Barrass 2002; Chiang 1954; Fu 1980; Fong et al., eds., 2008; Miller/Zhang 1990: 1–52; Seckel 1978; Wang Dongling 2011; Yao 1981. For a comprehensive overview of the various script types and styles through Chinese history, see *Zhongguo shufa quanji* 中國書法全集 (100 vols.), 1991–present, edited by Liu Zhengcheng 劉正成; *Shodō zenshū* 書道全集 (26 vols. and 2 suppl. vols.), 1973 [1954–1968], edited by Shimonaka Kunihiro 下中邦彦; *Shodō geijutsu* 書道藝術 (24 vols.), 1970–1972, edited by Nakata Yūjirō 中田勇次郎; as well as Fong et al., eds., 2008. For comprehensive western-language studies of individual script types, see Keightley 1978 on oracle bone script (*jiaguwen* 甲骨文); Shaughnessy 1991 on bronze script (*jinwen* 金文); Veit 1985 on seal script (*zhuan* 篆

literally meaning “script body”, “scripted body”, or “writing body”, “written body”—I carve out the image of the “script body”, as a basic *Denkfigur*. The proposal of thinking calligraphy in terms of “script body” is grounded in the incentive to lay emphasis on aspects of corporeal inscription related with calligraphy practice. Here, the fundamental Chinese vocabularies of “self” (*shen* 身), “ritual” (*li* 禮), and “pattern”, “text” (*wen* 紋/文), prove useful to unravel more intricate notions on calligraphy as “script body”. This can be argued much in the spirit of Roger Ames, who in his essay “On Body as Ritual Practice” writes:

The expression and “performance” of the body, like other Confucian preoccupations such as the practice of ritual, the playing of music, the writing of calligraphy, or the composition of literature, is a medium for self-articulation. To determine the relative importance of the body in classical Chinese thought and, by extension, Chinese thought in general, we need to explore that cluster of concepts through which the Chinese worldview is articulated.⁴

To be sure, my intention is not to reinvent the wheel of Chinese calligraphy discourse. Drawing moreover from invaluable works by scholars who have already treated Chinese calligraphy from very similar perspectives as well as from works by scholars who in turn are based in fields other than Chinese art and art history, I seek to tie together more tightly and efficaciously various strands of thought in the direction of a decidedly somaesthetic approach to the phenomenon of calligraphy in Chinese art.

What does “somaesthetic” mean? The pragmatist philosopher Robert Shusterman, notably active within the field of contemporary aesthetics, coined the term in his essay “Somaesthetics: A Disciplinary Proposal”⁵ as follows:

Somaesthetics can be provisionally defined as the critical, meliorative study of the experience and use of one’s body as a locus of sensory-aesthetic appreciation (*aisthesis*) and creative self-fashioning. It is therefore also devoted to the knowledge, discourses, practices, and bodily disciplines that structure such somative care or can improve it. If we put aside traditional philosophical prejudice

書); Goepper 1974 and Fangyu Wang 1958 on cursive script (*caoshu* 草書); Ledderose 1979, and Sturman 1997, on semi-cursive script (*xingshu* 行書); Goldberg 1981, and Goldberg 1988/1989, on standard script (*kaishu* 楷书); Hsiung 1984, Schlombs 1998, and Sturman 1994, on wild cursive script (*kuangcao* 狂草). For an introduction to and overview of early discourse on calligraphy theory and criticism see Barnhart 1964; Nylan 1999: 46–53; Debon 1978: 1–46; Fong/Harrist, eds., 1999: 28–84; Miller/Zhang 1990: 1–25. For an overview of the historical development of modern calligraphy in twentieth-century Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, further see Bai 2001; Barrass 2002; Lu 2004; Xue 1998; Zhou 2008.

⁴ Ames 1993: 149f.

⁵ Shusterman 1999; cf. also Shusterman 2005.

against the body [...] then the philosophical value of somaesthetics should become clear in several ways.⁶

Though Shusterman defines the term somaesthetics in the disciplinary context of philosophy, the merits of this approach can be considered no less valid for the study of art history in the Chinese context, particularly calligraphy art. The corporeal aspect that is inherent both to the practice and theory of Chinese calligraphy is, of course, generally acknowledged in art historical discourse. Yet, how far, and with regard to which aspects have previous studies ventured in favor of, let us call it, a comprehensive “somaesthetics of calligraphy”? Some historians of Chinese art might here interject that scholarly endeavors in this direction are redundant, as these have already been pursued exhaustively. I believe that this opinion can be countered. For rhetorical reasons, however, I will leave the strategic development of arguments for the successive chapters of this study, and instead here resort to another quote from Shusterman’s essay:

Once notoriously condemned for its lifeless “dreariness” of woolly idealism, aesthetics can achieve a robust, full-blooded vitality by affirming its necessary but neglected link to the living soma. Somaesthetics affirms this link, not simply by its program (still so schematic and provisional) but even by its very name.⁷

As Shusterman then remarks:

New names have their efficacy for reorganizing and thus reanimating old insights, as William James⁸ shrewdly recognized in defining pragmatism as “a new name for some old ways of thinking”, a definition that aptly fits my notion of somaesthetics.⁹

In this sense, in my dissertation, the reference to Shusterman is of twofold nature: for one, I argue in favor of his “Somaesthetics: A Disciplinary Proposal” as a useful methodological approach within the field of art history, in particular the field of Chinese calligraphy; and further, my use of the term “somaesthetics” can be considered through William James’ words, as the making use of a “new name for some old ways of thinking”—that is to say, in this case: “somaesthetics” as a “new name” to signify “script body” (*shuti*), “ritual” (*li*), and “pattern/text” (*wen*)—ideas which in effect indicate nothing other than “some old ways of thinking” Chinese calligraphy, as will become evident.

⁶ Ibid.: 302. While in this study, I refer to “aesthetics” as the philosophy of art, the term “aisthesis” moreover denotes processes of sensual perception and sensual knowledge production (*sinnliche Wahrnehmung und sinnliche Erkenntnis*), see Mattenklott 2012: 115.

⁷ Shusterman 1999: 310f.

⁸ Here referring to the pragmatist philosopher William James (1842–1910), who will find mentioning again later on in the study.

⁹ Shusterman 1999: 313, n. 38.

As noted, the two core pursuits of this study are inextricably related to each other. More to the point, their underlying incentives can be seen as mutually *engendered*. Next to the above-defined objective, the second one lies in an examination of theoretical and practical works by Chinese artist, art critic, and art theoretician Huang Binhong 黃賓虹 (1865–1955) (figs. 1a–b) as a case in point. Inasmuch as art historians are primarily familiar with Huang Binhong through his oeuvre as a landscape painter, as will be elucidated shortly, this study looks at Huang Binhong through the eyes of the calligrapher that he likewise was, both in theory and practice. Choosing this perspective, Huang Binhong’s case serves to crystallize significant body-specific aspects, not only in regard of his own calligraphy, but of Chinese calligraphy traditions as a general subject of art and art history, therein firming the step taken towards a systematic, comprehensive somaesthetics of calligraphy as a potential field of future scholarship. In turn, the heightened, complexified awareness for body-specific aspects and their intricate layers of meaning corroborates my choice of investigating the significance of Huang Binhong’s approaches to calligraphy as a topic of research in the first place. That is to say, the understanding of what a somaesthetics of calligraphy means in the context of Chinese art history evinces the importance, moreover, necessity to understand Huang Binhong’s engagement with calligraphy in theory and practice more deeply. In my study of this matter, special attention is paid to the concept of *neimei* 內美 (interior, inner, intrinsic, or internal beauty), a concept that constitutes the very core of Huang Binhong’s aesthetic terminology. Though finding application in his works of painting, this concept is generally considered to stem from the artist’s practical and theoretical dealings with calligraphy. I argue that through an investigation of this—omnipresent, and yet all the more elusive—concept, *neimei* can be exposed as a highly charged discursive term that effectively manifests a set of aesthetic ideals, and with this, certain body-related *inhibitions* which underlie traditional art criticism and theory on the Chinese brush-and-ink arts. In assessing various meanings and implications of *neimei* in the context of art critical discourse and art historiographical traditions, a grave discrepancy that prevails among symptomatically dichotomous conceptions of interior spirit and outer body, respectively, can be revealed.

Here, no other term that features in Huang Binhong’s discursive framework seems to point more evidently towards the assumption of (higher) qualities of the “inner” mind and spirit. To be sure, it is not my intention to reject conventionally established notions of *neimei*

once for all. Rather, I seek to counterbalance the seemingly omnipresent mind-body dichotomy which is particularly evident as an art historical narrative in the context of traditional Chinese brush-and-ink arts. This intention can be considered an affirmation of the double, ambiguous meaning of *ti* 體, as elucidated by Chung-ying Cheng:

Interestingly, the etymology of the word *ti* clearly shows the structure of *ti* in its double aspects in the domains of the physical and the living, and the spiritual: The bone radical [*gu* 骨] on the left side of the word suggests the physical structure of *ti*, whereas the combined radicals on the right side in the form of the script [*li* 豊] suggest the presence of spirit of reverence as symbolized by a vessel of food presented to spirits in the performance of a ritual.¹⁰

The title of the study, “The Inner Workings of Brush-and-Ink: A Study on Huang Binhong (1865–1955) as Calligrapher, With Special Respect to the Concept of Interior Beauty (*neimei*)” reflects both of the broader aims as introduced thus far. The designation “the inner workings” here refers to various aspects, or conditions, readable in different ways. It can be considered in the sense of the inner workings of calligraphy as an art practice, meaning the classical genre of Chinese *shufa* as a formal system of brush-and-ink (*bimo* 筆墨) methods, including aspects of material conditions, technical requirements, aesthetic frameworks, and set traditions of style. More comprehensively, however, the work title can be seen to encompass a larger scope: the “inner workings” of Chinese brush-and-ink arts as a *discursive* space of art historiographical construction; an at times highly contested, ideologically framed domain, inasmuch as it possesses (socio-political) self-sustaining qualities, in the Bourdieusian sense of a recursive field. The term of the inner workings triggers a whole set of associations, including the imagery of mechanisms, machineries, and designs; or the (perhaps negatively connoted) association of schemes, calculated programs, and rulebooks; yet also the implications of interiority as an aspect of psychological, emotional, spiritual nature.

Before providing an outline of the six chapters of this study, given its status as a significant research desideratum, several introductory remarks on the subject matter of “Huang Binhong as Calligrapher”, as denominated in the latter part of the dissertation title, are in order.

¹⁰ Cheng 2002: 145.

Huang Binhong as Calligrapher

The Chinese brush-and-ink artist, art critic, and art theoretician Huang Binhong is established in modern art history, alongside Wu Changshuo 吳昌碩¹¹ (1844–1927), Qi Baishi 齊白石 (1864–1957), and Pan Tianshou 潘天壽 (1897–1971), as one of the “four great masters of traditional Chinese painting”¹² of the twentieth century (see figs. 2a–h for representative work examples), as well as one of the last representatives working in the long-standing lineage of so-called literati (*wenren* 文人) or scholar (*shiren* 士人) painters.¹³ Huang Binhong’s work embraces in its entirety a tremendous corpus of paintings, calligraphies, and poems, as well as writings on art historical and art theoretical subjects, including essays, treatises, journal articles, colophon inscriptions, and personal letters.¹⁴ Born on January 27, 1865, in Jinhua 金華, Zhejiang 浙江 Province, into a wealthy merchant family, Huang received a private education which familiarized him with the classical arts and cultural and philosophical traditions of China from a young age.¹⁵ In

¹¹ Alternatively read Wu Changshi.

¹² Cf. Yang 2010: 36, n. 3. See *Tracing the Past, Drawing the Future: Master Ink Painters in Twentieth-Century China* for the catalogue of an exhibition that was themed on this “group” of four artists; further Xiaoneng Yang’s essay contribution to this catalogue for an introduction to the topic, Yang, ed., 2010.

¹³ Huang Binhong’s paintings alone that were donated to the Zhejiang Provincial Museum after his passing away exceed a total number of 5,000 works. Huang Binhong’s paintings are widely published. Regarding Huang Binhong’s artistic oeuvre, including the genres of ink landscape painting and sketches, bird-and-flower painting, calligraphy, and seal carving, the most comprehensive compilation of Huang Binhong’s artworks so far is the ten-volume *Huang Binhong quanji* 黃賓虹全集 published by Shandong meishu chubanshe 山東美術出版社 and Zhejiang renmin meishu chubanshe 浙江人民美術出版社 in 2006, hereafter referred to as HBHQJ followed by the respective volume number in brackets. The ten volumes comprise: *Shanshui juanzhou* 山水卷軸 (vols. 1–4); *Shanshui ceye* 山水冊頁 (vol.5); *Shanshui huagao* 山水畫稿 (vol. 6); *Huaniao* 花鳥 (vols. 7–8); *Shufa* 書法 (vol. 9); *Zhushu nianpu* 著述年譜 (vol. 10). Likewise a comprehensive publication of Huang Binhong’s work is Zhejiang meishuguan, ed., 2009 (2 vols.); and also, Yang, ed., 2010, as a western-language publication. The category of “literati painting” (*wenrenhua* 文人畫) gained first momentum during the Northern Song 北宋 dynasty (960–1127) and was inscribed by the influential social class of scholar-officials of that time. On the aesthetical foundations and the formation of the culture and tradition of literati art in China, see, for example, “The Views of Northern Sung Literati”, Bush 1971: 29–74; “Confucian Elements in the Theory of Painting”, Cahill 1960; “Some Cultural Prototypes” and “The Scholar-Official as Artist”, Fong, ed., 1996: 106–119, 146–157, respectively; Sturman 1997.

¹⁴ Huang’s writings are compiled in the six-volume *Huang Binhong wenji* 黃賓虹文集 published in 1999 by Shanghai shuhua chubanshe 上海書畫出版社 and the Zhejiang Provincial Museum (Zhejiang sheng bowuguan 浙江省博物館), which comprises art theoretical essays, journal articles, lectures, private letters, and colophon texts. See Shanghai shuhua chubanshe/Zhejiang sheng bowuguan, eds., 1999 (6 vols.), hereafter referred to as HBHWJ followed by the respective volume number in brackets. The six volumes comprise: *Shuxin bian* 書信編 (vol. 1); *Yishu bian* 譯述編, *Jiancang bian* 鑒藏編 (vol. 2); *Tiba bian* 題跋編, *Shici bian* 詩詞編, *Jinshi bian* 金石編 (vol. 3); *Zazhu bian* 雜著編 (vol. 4); *Shuhua bian (shang)* 書畫編 (上) (vol. 5); *Shuhua bian (xia)* 書畫編 (下) (vol. 6).

¹⁵ For Huang Binhong’s biography, see Wang Bomin 1979; Wang Zhongxiu 2005 (a); Zhao, ed., 1992; cf. also Wang Zhongxiu 2005 (b). A comprehensive overview of contributions to Huang Binhong scholarship is given by Claire Roberts in her dissertation (itself a significant one among these), see “Reception and Recognition: Sources for the Study of Huang Binhong”, Roberts 2005: 316–326.

spite of his parents' hopes that he would aspire to a prestigious career in civil service, at the age of twenty-one, following his personal passions, he made the decision to devote all endeavors to the arts. Throughout his long life of ninety years (according to customary traditional Chinese counting, ninety-two *sui* 歲), keeping with the traditional scholars ideal of an integrative approach to art, Huang not only continuously pursued the study of painting, calligraphy, poetry, and seal cutting, but advanced in his activities as public official, school director, university professor, art collector, exhibition curator, museum employee, and notably, author and editor of important art-related journals and book series, predominantly active in the Chinese cities of Shanghai, Nanjing, Beijing, and Hangzhou, as a significantly influential art historian, theoretician, and critic of his times.¹⁶

In the context of visual arts in China of the Republican Period 民國 (1912–1949), we are foremost acquainted with Huang Binhong's painting especially through his much-praised, idiosyncratic late-period style, classified by Jason C. Kuo as the years 1943–1955 (see figs. 3a–e, and 62a–d for representative work examples).¹⁷ Huang's late style, which is commonly described as *hunhou huazi* 渾厚華滋, and *heimi houzhong* 黑蜜厚重,¹⁸ translatable as “simple, deep and rich, luxuriant and flourishing”, and “dark and dense, rich and heavy”, respectively, is understood as a testimony to his accomplished transformation in art.¹⁹ Among other things, the intimate relationship of “calligraphy and painting” (in the Chinese language thus used in the way of a compound word: *shuhua* 書畫), a significant feature especially of his late works, has positioned Huang as one of the most important ink-landscape painters of the past century. Despite an abundance of (largely Chinese-language) scholarly publications on Huang Binhong, it is not least due to the richness and complexity of its scope that his oeuvre reveals many as of yet unplowed fields.

A significant research desideratum in Huang Binhong scholarship is posed by this artist's calligraphy production. This is confirmed by Cheng Dali 程大利 in his editorial of the unprecedented October 2010 issue of *Chinese Calligraphy* (*Zhongguo shufa* 中國書法)

¹⁶ On Huang's Shanghai-based activities around and throughout the 1920s, see Julia Andrews/Kuiyi Shen: “The Traditionalist Response to Modernity: The Chinese Painting Society of Shanghai”, Kuo, ed., 2007: 81–93; and Yu 2014.

¹⁷ Kuo 2004: 73.

¹⁸ Cf. *ibid.*: 74; Long 2005: 99; Luo 2005: 64; Wang Yu 2012: 135; Wang Zhongxiu 2005 (b): 86; Xu 2009: 114f.

¹⁹ Publications on Huang Binhong and his position in art history with special regard to the significance of his late works include Hong 2010; Kuo 2004: esp. 1–3, 169–192; Mei 2012; Roberts 2005: 269–303, 304–311; Wang Bomin 1979; Wang Bomin 2009; Xu Hongquan 2009.

(fig. 4) which was specially dedicated to Huang Binhong and his significance as a calligrapher, where he concludes that the “outstanding achievement and great contribution of [Huang Binhong’s] calligraphy still remains to be recognized by the people”.²⁰ Particularly considering the exceptionally voluminous amount of works of calligraphy that amassed throughout his highly productive life (see figs. 5a–f for a selection), the relevance of Huang’s studies in calligraphy with regard to his painting theory and practice is generally acknowledged.²¹ In fact, in the context of his landscape painting, there seems to exist not a single scholarly assessment that fails to make a point of emphasizing the importance of Huang’s profound historical knowledge and dedicated practice of calligraphy as to his engagement as a painter. In this context, scholars conventionally refer to his painting theory of “five brush and seven ink methods” (*wu bi qi mo* 五筆七墨), which is closely related to practical techniques and theoretical concepts of Chinese calligraphy.²²

In fact, here, it would be more correct to choose the designation “calligraphy and writing”,²³ rather than simply “calligraphy”, in order to point up the problematic issue of defining “calligraphy” as an “art” in the first place, since “calligraphy” is considered to be of aesthetic value, unlike the category of “merely functional” writing (a highly doubtful assumption, of course). Huang Binhong’s corpus of written works is only one among an endless number of examples that shows the difficulty, if not impossibility of categorizing specific written works with regard to their status as “calligraphy” or “non-calligraphy”, as the various formats to be seen in figs. 5a–f can serve to illustrate.²⁴ In Huang Binhong’s oeuvre, the question of categorization is likewise valid with regard to the categories of and

²⁰ “他書法的卓越成就和偉大貢獻仍有待更多的人們去認識。” Cheng 2010.

²¹ On the meaning of calligraphy as a foundational source of Huang Binhong’s approaches in painting see for example Kuo 2004: 21–44; Luo 2005; Mei 2012: 163–169; Xie 2013: 101–120; and Xu 2009: 261–262.

²² The “five brush and seven ink methods” are discussed in his 1940 essay “Huatan 畫談”, Rpt. HBHWJ (6): 158–167. The foundations of calligraphy writing as a source of Huang’s “five brush and seven ink methods” are assessed in Zhang Tongyu 2009: 110–125.

²³ “Writing” here refers to the visual form of script, not the semantic content of a textual format.

²⁴ This issue, and the nexus of related art historiographical issues, will be addressed in more detail in the following chapters. Here, suffice it may to note that in Huang’s case, the clear categorical disambiguation of non-/calligraphy only works to a certain extent: while there exists a distinct group of works that can be considered to fulfill an explicitly representative function as “calligraphy”, the larger corpus of Huang Binhong’s written works by contrast was most probably not made with this function in mind. Among these, we further have a grey zone of works that are of ambivalent nature and function, such as personal letters which were written by Huang with no intention to be shown in public, and yet to be “presented” before the eyes of the addressee. In any case, all three “categories” named here must be taken into consideration as potentially equally integral parts of Huang’s larger oeuvre. Incidentally, as the history of Chinese calligraphy has shown time and again, many of those works that were written without any intention of becoming an “artwork” were later established as precisely this: masterpieces of calligraphic art.

distinction between “calligraphy” and “painting”. While the sibling arts or “three perfections” (*sanjue* 三絕) of Chinese poetry, calligraphy, and painting traditionally exist as generically distinct categories,²⁵ obviously, a clear-cut separation appears not always feasible. With Zhang Yanyuan’s 張彥遠 (ca. 815–ca. 877) established wording in mind that calligraphy and painting are “of the same substance”,²⁶ the study proposes an integrative logic of contemplation in approaching Huang Binhong’s art production. In the same sense that Huang Binhong’s calligraphy can be assessed from his perspective as a landscape painter, his paintings, similarly, may be grasped more completely by comprehending them in terms of his calligraphy theory and practice. Here, we do well in recalling Huang Binhong’s words which were his own way of saying “calligraphy and painting are of the same roots”, namely, that he aspired to “write characters with landscapes, and create paintings with written characters” (*yi shanshui zuo zi, er yi zi zuo hua* 以山水作字, 而以字作畫).²⁷ Within the translational processes taking place between the discursive fields of “written characters” and “landscapes”, the semantic shifts that occur enable, in fact, necessitate, a revision of our common definitions of these very fields. Though this issue will not be subject to deeper inquiry in this study, it can at least be addressed, inasmuch as the related shifts in meaning again raise questions on the feasibilities and limitations of categorical divisions—in spite of the fact that such questions inherently defy any ultimate answering.

Although so far, in-depth scholarly study of Huang’s calligraphy is marginal, this is not to suggest that there does not exist any foundation whatsoever upon which this subject could be expanded. While most monographs, book series, and exhibition catalogues with a focus on Huang Binhong’s painting generally also contain a section with compiled calligraphic works by Huang Binhong,²⁸ publications dedicated entirely to Huang Binhong’s calligraphy, and a systematic assessment thereof, are few; here the two monographs

²⁵ On the “Three Perfections” in Chinese art, see Debon 1978: 47–76; Sullivan 1974. On various conceptions of the intricate relationships between calligraphy and painting in China, further see, for example, Clunas 2009 [1997]: 135–171; Feng 2010, esp. 88–95; Goldberg/Kneib 2011; Qiu 2011.

²⁶ In the chapter “On the Origins and Development of Painting” (“*Xu hua zhi yuanliu*” 敘畫之源流) of his *Famous Paintings through History* (*Lidai minghua ji* 歷代名畫記), Zhang Yanyuan stated that “[...] though writing and painting have different names, they are yet of the same substance” (*shuhua yi ming er tong ti ye* 書畫異明而同體也), rpt. Acker 1954: 59–382, 66.

²⁷ Chen Zhu 1935: 123. An assessment of this statement is given in Luo 2005: 63.

²⁸ Especially to name here are HBHQJ (9); Zhejiang meishuguan 2009, vol. 2. Works of Huang Binhong’s calligraphy are further compiled in Wang Xiaowen, ed., 1990; Zhejiang sheng bowuguan, ed., 1999.

authored by Zhang Tongyu 張桐瑀 serve as the most comprehensive examples.²⁹ Albeit in an all-in-all sporadic manner, in-depth discussions have been undertaken in form of journal articles, catalogue entries, and conference papers, which are devoted to aspects of Huang Binhong's calligraphy and its related aesthetic concepts, theories, and practices.³⁰ It is gratifying to observe that there seems to exist a tendency of increased research on this topic in recent years. In any case, despite the importance of Huang Binhong's art as a positive impetus and inspirational source regarding the development of contemporary calligraphy, which is recognized (yet not further elucidated) by Cheng Dali in the above-quoted editorial of *Chinese Calligraphy*, the studies maintain, on the whole, a pronounced emphasis on the importance of Huang Binhong's art with respect to the "past tradition" and vice versa, therein moreover reiterating established intellectual histories and terminologies frameworks that underlie traditional literati discourse, that is, the discourse that Huang Binhong had operated within himself in his activities as artist, art critic, and art theoretician.

In examining Huang Binhong's work in the context of this study, an art historiographical issue of importance thus to be addressed is the image of the artist as one of the last representatives among a long bloodline of literati artists, marking the end of a deep-entrenched tradition in China. While not rejecting this notion altogether, the present study rather wishes to draw attention to the incompleteness of designations of this kind, in that they seem to describe only one side of the coin, or seem to face only in one direction: the art historical past. Aiming to refract the prismatic spectrum through which Huang Binhong as an artist can be assessed historically, and in particular consideration of his own integrative approaches in art, the methodical decision to discuss his creative production through the perspective of calligraphy is not only grounded in the intricate relationship shared by the traditional Chinese brush-and-ink genres, which Huang Binhong continuously referred to in his writings. By investigating the intertwined nature of his painting and calligraphy, links to later artist generations of subsequent decades—notably calligraphers—can be traced and affirmed. In taking Huang Binhong's calligraphy as subject matter of this study, an additional incentive is thus to show in what way certain aesthetic, conceptual, and practical approaches that were formulated by Huang in the

²⁹ Zhang Tongyu 2003; Zhang Tongyu 2009.

³⁰ Next to the monographs by Zhang Tongyu, academic research specifically dedicated to Huang Binhong's calligraphy includes: Fan 2010; Han 2010; Hertel 2014; Li Jianfeng 2010; Long 2005; Luo 2005; Wang Guocai/Zhang Yinchuan 2009; Zhang Tongyu 2010; Zhao 2009.

context of his painting theories have found, and are continuing to find pronunciation and enhancement through the semantic framework of calligraphy, in particular within the field of cursive-script (*caoshu* 草書) calligraphy. To assert the impact that Huang Binhong may be observed to have had on later generations of calligraphers in China enables a deeper understanding of him as a calligrapher, in consequence, allowing us to envision him more completely as an artist.

It is beyond a doubt that Huang Binhong first and foremost regarded himself a landscape painter. Yet, since the landscape paintings that Huang Binhong has become widely acknowledged for are seen as rooted in the artist's life-long intellectual and practical dealing with calligraphy, it appears crucial to study this aspect and embed it more visibly and concretely within the larger relational system of his art theory and production. From a methodical point of view, it seems only logical, or natural, that Huang Binhong's calligraphy be approached with critical scholarly scrutiny. Regardless of whether or not we want to give credit to Huang's own words stating "My calligraphy excels and exceeds my painting" (*Wo de shufa shengyu huihua* 我的書法勝於繪畫),³¹ his words can in any case be understood as a rhetorical means aimed at raising our awareness for the quality of his calligraphic works. Despite the (relative) lack of systematic studies in this regard, I emphasize that it is not my aim to achieve an all-encompassing formal, descriptive survey of Huang Binhong's calligraphy in its entire scope. To be sure, this dissertation is not subtitled "A Study on Huang Binhong's Calligraphy" but "A Study on Huang Binhong as Calligrapher", thus aiming to draw attention to the epistemological status and meaning of Huang Binhong's approaches to calligraphy in theory and practice, with regard to various contexts, including the phenomenon of his highly praised landscape painting. Here, my attention is focused on an examination of *neimei* as a concept that finds particular pronunciation in the context of Huang Binhong's theories and practices of calligraphy; further, as a concept that provides an anchor point to illustrate and problematize various body-related issues and themes that run through the narratives of Chinese calligraphy in art historical discourse.

One of the reasons for the all in all peripheral focus in scholarly research on Huang Binhong's calligraphy (which is indeed critically observed by Cheng Dali, who, on these grounds, accounts for the special journal issue on the topic) is surely its wide reception as

³¹ As recorded by Huang Binhong's pupil Shi Gufeng 石谷風 (1919–), see Shi 1994: 22.

being of generally lesser artistic value than his painting, and its labeling as merely “painters calligraphy” (*huajiazhi* 畫家字; *huajia shufa* 畫家書法)³². It is possible that Huang, who had felt misunderstood by his contemporaries, and insisted that they could not grasp the “bitter” flavor of his paintings as these did not seek to satisfy the current tastes,³³ had made the claim that his calligraphy was better than his painting precisely *because* he felt that the former had not received the recognition he believed it deserved. Within the traditional aesthetic framework of brush-and-ink discourse, and especially in view of his uncompromisingly holistic approaches to art, the sheer amount of works of brush writing left behind by Huang Binhong indicate a for the time being yet expandable image and understanding of the artist. The existence of its large corpus alone should suffice for it to be considered as a valuable source in informing our approaches to his art, regardless of any final judgments on its “quality”.

To sum up the above: through this study, I hope to show in what way a decidedly somaesthetic approach to Chinese calligraphy can achieve to sharpen certain points of focus. The foci allow us to reconsider various issues that we appear to be familiar with: for one, in a specific context, the art of Huang Binhong, whom we are foremost acquainted with as a landscape painter, especially through his much-praised, idiosyncratic late-period style, which is understood as a testimony to his accomplished transformation in art. Further, in a broader context, the complex phenomenon of calligraphy practice particular to the cultures and art histories of East Asia can be reconsidered, inasmuch as its inadequate denomination as “calligraphy” carries notoriously misleading implications. Here, I quote Birgit Mersmann and her useful elucidations of calligraphy with regard to its aspect of “scriptural iconicity as projected corporeality” (*skriptomale Ikonizität als projizierte Korporalität*):

Definitiv wird man der Kalligraphie nur dann gerecht, wenn man sie nicht als “Schönschrift” betrachtet, eine Fehlsicht, die leider immer noch weit verbreitet ist, sondern als projizierte Korporalität wahrnimmt. Die Kalligraphie dient der Aufzeichnung innerer und äußerer Körperbewegungen und legitimiert sich daher immer auch als Körperspur. Der Kalligraph aktiviert seinen Körpersinn, um den Schriftzeichen “Körper” zu geben. Im Chinesischen gibt es sogar einen eigenen Begriff, der den kalligraphischen Schreibakt, die plastische Gestaltung der Schriftzeichen im Raum mit einem Akt der Korporalisierung gleichsetzt. So

³² As lamented by both Li Jianfeng and Zhang Tongyu, cf. Li Jianfeng 2010: 41; Zhang Tongyu 2010: 38.

³³ Kuo 2004: 4.

bedeutet das Wort *jieti* [結體], das mit *jiezi* [結字] (= ein Schriftzeichen gestalten) in unmittelbarer Beziehung steht, “den Körper eines Schriftzeichens formen”.³⁴

Outline of Chapters

Chapter one, titled “Demarcating the Field of Chinese Calligraphy”, undertakes a general approach to the field of Chinese calligraphy and a set of related thematic complexes. This serves to establish the basic theoretical premises and argumentative framework of the study, and so familiarize the reader with its broader thematic and methodic scope. As indicated above, consideration will be given to the terminological issue of “calligraphy” as being an inadequate translation of the Chinese term *shufa* (1.1.). In response to this problem, chapter one proposes *shuti*, “script body”, as a useful thought figure, inasmuch as *shuti* can be deciphered not only through the image of *ti* as “physical body”, “substance”; but moreover through the notions of “self” (*shen*), “ritual” (*li*), and “pattern”, or “cosmic text-pattern” (*wen*), which, as notions, are of equally central importance with regard to the phenomenon of “calligraphy” in China. The terminological prism of the “scripted body” serves to crystallize the traditional analogy drawn between the scribe’s written calligraphy and his physical body.³⁵ The corporeal image of *shuti* here aids to illustrate ritual dimensions of calligraphy, including its functions as performative and mnemonic techniques. The idea of the inscribed body can be related to various philosophical and ethical connotations of self-cultivation (*xiushen* 修身, or *zixiu* 自修); of “cultivating personhood”, “carving the self”.³⁶

Chapter one further addresses issues concerning “Inclusion, Exclusion: Different Narratives of Chinese Calligraphy” (1.2.), and “The Scopes of Art: On the ‘Origins’ of Chinese Calligraphy” (1.3.). It thematizes “calligraphy” as a categorical distinction in art and raises questions on where (or rather, whether) the beginnings of calligraphy as an aesthetic category can be located historically in time. It can be argued that the phenomenon of calligraphy, or what we circumscribe as “the art of writing”, indeed existed long before calligraphy actually found denomination as such in textual discourse. This observation, though seemingly redundant, is relevant, in that it emphasizes that phenomena often only become tangible in retrospect, that is, according to the available vocabulary and

³⁴ Mersmann 2015 (b): 198f.

³⁵ On the analogy traditionally drawn between the physical body and the written body, see Hay 1983.

³⁶ The latter two notions are coined by Yueh-ping Yen, cf. Yen 2005: 33–56, 57–80.

terminology of a given time and place—as is, for example, the case with regard to Huang Binhong’s calligraphy in its more complex significance, as I strive to show through this study. With this aim in mind, chapter one further serves to draw initial attention to mannerisms of art historical discourse and ideologically charged narratives that point towards the enmeshment of (political) function and aesthetics that has always adhered to the “art of writing” in Chinese history (even if we might prefer to believe that this is not the case).

In the context of broaching calligraphy as a phenomenon that preceded its nominal identity in history, different functions and meanings of early textual discourse in China prior to the Han 漢 dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE)³⁷ can be pointed up. Cultures of ritual and visual display emphasize the virtue of ritual and, in turn, writing/calligraphy as ritual. These aspects are discussed in the chapter sections 1.4. and 1.5.

Michael Nylan has argued:

Though much of the picture remains to be pieced together, the common assumption that China has from time immemorial been preeminently an “empire of texts” is demonstrably false.³⁸

Conventions of writing in ancient China stood in close connection with oral and ritual practices,³⁹ therein indicating a performative function of text; and, moreover, the performance of text as—to borrow the wording of Martin Kern—a tradition “organized around the principle of appropriate ritual order [*li*]”.⁴⁰ In the Chinese context, the act of writing can be understood as an inscription of the body in the human as well as scriptural sense; as Birgit Mersmann has phrased it: “Eindruck und Abdruck fallen im Schriftbild zusammen.”⁴¹ Based on the premise of brush-writing as a somatically founded act, the historical contextualization of ritual culture and practice around which ancient Chinese societies revolved is informative with regard to the discussion of Huang Binhong’s case, in particular the discussion of Huang’s late-period work, which, as I will argue, is crucially defined by the aspect of brush-writing as both an *expression* (*Abdruck*) and *impression* (*Eindruck*) of “appropriate ritual order”. Huang Binhong’s final years of art production can be considered as an engagement with art that, for one, appropriated meaning through the

³⁷ The era dates of Chinese dynasties given in the present study follow the dynastic chronology of Fong et al., eds., 2008. Exact dates may vary depending on scholars’ interpretations.

³⁸ Nylan: 57.

³⁹ See figs. 6a–d for two well-known examples of inscribed ritual implements.

⁴⁰ Kern 2005: x.

⁴¹ Mersmann 2015 (b): 208.

inherently ritual condition of calligraphic practice; and, at the same time, required an adjustment of the formal ritual itself through the performer, inasmuch as the performer sought to act in a way appropriate to the given circumstances of time and space—in Huang Binhong’s case, the new situation of a deteriorating physique. With this line of thought, I am referring to Roger Ames, who in his essay on “The Meaning of Body in Classical Chinese Philosophy” has explained:

The notion of formal *li* [i.e. ritual] action overlaps with *t’i*, body, in that a *li* action is an *embodiment* or *formalization* of meaning and value that accumulates to constitute a cultural tradition. [...] A person engaged in the performance of a particular formal action, appropriating meaning from it while seeking himself to be appropriate to it, derives meaning and value from this embodiment, and further strengthens it by his contribution of novel meaning and value.⁴²

Built on, and further developing the theoretical framework established in chapter one, chapter two, titled “Emulation and Transformation: Huang Binhong’s Aesthetic Framework as Seen through His Calligraphy Art”, introduces the discursive vocabulary frequently deployed by Huang Binhong in his writings on art, specifically those concerned with the implementation of brush-and-ink methods (2.1.). As becomes clear, this vocabulary is deeply rooted in principles of classical Daoist and Confucian thought and conduct. With reference to Huang’s model of “five brush and seven ink methods” (*wu bi qi mo*), the crucial importance that Huang Binhong ascribed to the “brush method of transformation” (*bianfa* 變法) will be taken into special consideration. While the model of *wu bi qi mo* was formulated by Huang in the context of his painting discourse, the aim of my discussion is to carve out the particular significance of calligraphy theory and practice in this regard. Following the theoretical outline given in chapter two, I then investigate examples of Huang Binhong’s calligraphy, and aim to show in what way Huang’s theoretical concepts took on shape in actual practice. Here, special attention will again be paid to Huang’s idea of “transformation”, inasmuch as this “brush method” can be considered as crucial to his aspired model of “five brush methods”. To this end, close readings of two free-hand copies are undertaken (2.2.), including comparisons with the original calligraphies after which they were modeled. In a broader sense, chapter two is concerned with the appropriation of canonical styles and traditions of artistic transformation in the history of Chinese brush-and-ink art. As great innovators and

⁴² Ames 1993 [1984]: 169f.

advocators of transformational approaches in art, the considerably influential literati artists Dong Qichang 董其昌 (1555–1636) and Shitao 石濤 (1642–1707) will be introduced in their roles as chief mentors who shaped Huang Binhong’s artistic concepts and practices of copying and transforming, which are condensed in the artist’s proclaimed credos of “learning from the ancient” (*shi gu* 師古) and “learning from nature” (*shi zaohua* 師造化).

Chapters one and two serve as the basic setup which is necessary in order to perform a critical discussion and assessment of the notion of *neimei*—translatable as “interior”, “inner”, “intrinsic” or “internal beauty”—which is the central concern of chapter three. The notion of *neimei* is a constitutive element not only within the aesthetic theory and practice formulated and exerted by Huang Binhong himself, but also within art historical discourse that has evolved *around* Huang Binhong as a particular subject of scholarship, as well as regarding the Chinese brush-and-ink arts in general, hence the chapter title as “Defining an Aesthetics of Interiority: Art Historiographical Perspectives”. Retracing various definitions and interpretations of *neimei* both as an aesthetic concept and an art historiographical narrative, chapter three carves out the conventional understanding of *neimei* as a philosophically connoted synonym of natural change, further, as a form of intrinsic beauty that manifests aspects of the uneven and irregular; moreover, the primordial, simple, unadorned. The attribution of these aesthetic qualities to ancient forms of Chinese script, including oracle bone script (*jiaguwen* 甲骨文), bronze script (*jinwen* 金文), seal script (*zhuanshu* 篆書), and clerical script (*lishu* 隸書), will be considered in light of the socio-political contexts of Republican-period China and her thriving “study of bronze and stone [inscriptions]” (*jinshixue* 金石學) related with the so-called Stele School (*beipai* 碑派) of calligraphy as well as the broader interests of the national learning (*guoxue* 國學) movement (3.1.).

In assessing various definitions of *neimei* in Huang Binhong’s context, *neimei* is further associable with the concept of *neili* 內力, translatable as “interior” or “inner strength”. This terminological framework is permeated by metaphors of the human body, bodily movement, and physical force, in turn connoting ideas of an embodied brush and a brush force rooted in body-specific notions of a “martial brush tip”; moreover, ideals of a “withheld” brush movement. Huang’s rhetorical use of body-and-brush imagery, rooted in classical Daoist and Confucian thought, will be looked into with regard to an ambiguous

aesthetics of interiority which is implied (3.2.), and which has found and continues to find reiteration in art critical discourse, also to the extent of assuming an essentialist narrative of “true art”, as an art of the interior (mind). In regard of this condition, chapter three finally addresses the association of *neimei* with a so-called old-age style of profound richness and authenticity that is ascribed to Huang Binhong’s late-period oeuvre (3.3.).

Continuing the line of argumentation pursued in chapter three, chapter four, “The Flavors and Colors of Interior Beauty: Literati Art as a Contested Field in Republican-Period China”, expands on conceptual histories and frameworks related to idea(l)s of interiority as fundamental premises of evaluation and as narrative themes in Chinese art criticism—in this sense denotable as the “inner workings” of Chinese brush-and-ink art. An introduction to this thematic complex is given in the initial chapter section, “A Note on Interiority, Exteriority, and Eccentricism in Chinese Art” (4.1.). In then looking into time-and-place-specific issues related with discourses on “flavor”, and “color”, respectively, my incentive is to draw a cultural topography of sorts with regard to the brush-and-ink arts as pursued during the Republican period. Ultimately, chapter four aims to expose the dichotomous relationship of mind and body, or inner and outer, that had prevailed in traditional *wenren* discourse since the Northern Song 北宋 period (960–1127), and was significantly present in literati art discourse of Huang Binhong’s own times. Here, aspects of the intellectual histories that have evolved around notions of the “flavorsome”, and “colorful”, in art, are examined as discursive elements which reveal, particularly well, in what way *wenren* terminologies were deeply permeated by essentialist, to some extent derogatory conceptions of art; therein contributing to an ideologically charged, highly conflicted field of art production and reception in literati artist circles of Republican-period China. Here, Huang Binhong’s 1940s work *Discourse on Clerical-Script Painting* (*Lun litihua tu* 論隸體畫圖) will be discussed in particular (4.3.), and deciphered in its meaning, as I argue, as a time-and-place-specific, personal articulation in light of its art-discursive entanglements with concurrent political and ideological issues. These issues, including the so-called modernization and westernization of the arts, on the one hand, and the renewal of art traditions through national learning and the construction of “national essence” (*guocui* 國粹), are significant with regard to Huang Binhong’s case, inasmuch as Huang was someone who not only bore witness to, but was moreover actively involved in these radically transitional phases of reformation in Chinese culture and society. The work

Discourse on Clerical-Scripted Painting, whose depicted landscape and inscribed colophon can be read together, as Huang Binhong's attempt to frame his use of more innovative, or unconventional, painting methods by way of resorting to a familiar, conventional rhetoric of traditional calligraphy aesthetics, and can serve as an example that illustrates Huang's continuous endeavor, and, as I argue, ambivalent struggle, to resolve established art-discursive frameworks, also in light of new, "exogenous" elements, through an individual, coherent system of visual representation.

In the context of Huang Binhong's landscape painting, chapter four then proposes to formulate that what is provisionally termed a "typology of color" (4.4.). Albeit preliminary, schematic, and far from comprehensive, this attempt at a typology of color can serve to substantiate the overall argumentation pursued in the study, that established conceptions of *neimei*, as associated with Huang Binhong and his image in art critical discourse, are based on misleading assumptions that "interior beauty" indicates an intrinsic, essentially immaterial quality of spiritual accomplishment and enlightenment, (only) to be found *beyond* the physical, sensory realm of "colorful pleasures"; moreover complying with the ascetic brush idiom of monochrome landscape painting based on an aestheticism of the calligraphic brush line as a visual manifestation of inner dispositions of the mind. In taking a closer look at Huang Binhong's colored landscape paintings, an astoundingly differentiated technical, and highly methodical, that is, functional, application of colors can be registered. The visual evidence provided by these works and their discernibly systematic use of brush, ink, and colors, belies the discrepant dualistic relationship maintained between conceptions of "interior mind"/"essence" and "exterior body"/"form" in Chinese art criticism; a discrepancy that appears all the more grave given the fact that Huang Binhong himself, ambiguously, promoted such views in his own writings on art.

The terms and issues of script body, ritual, and pattern/text, as were established in the first part of the study, are reprised in chapter five, "The Inner Workings of *neimei*: Calligraphy as Mnemonic Device of the Self", which serves to condense the main arguments of the study, and cement the significance of somaesthetic aspects relevant to Huang Binhong's late-period brush-and-ink art, specifically with regard to the function of calligraphy as a mnemonic device of the self. An investigation of works stemming from Huang Binhong's final years of art production will reveal the meaning and function of his art practice, notably with regard to the genre of his cursive-script calligraphy, as a self-sustaining,

artistic technique of *re-remembering*, *commemorating*, and *self-presencing* (5.2., 5.4.). A focus here lies on Huang Binhong's series of works titled *Old Traces of the Peach Blossom Stream* (*Taohua xi jiu ji* 桃花溪舊跡), dated to 1952–1953 (5.3.). As argued in the preceding chapters, the concept of *neimei* adequately illustrates the discrepancies of a mind-body/inner-outer dualism that prevails in Chinese art criticism, where, throughout the centuries, emphasis has increasingly been placed on the perfection of the mind. As will become apparent in chapter five, a discussion of Huang Binhong's late-period art practice can provide a possibility to decode and reassess *neimei* towards a resolution of this dichotomous condition; favoring moreover, polarist (process-based) rather than dualist (thing-based) constellations and explanations of the world⁴³. Lending from various terminologies put forward by various scholars of (comparative) philosophy and aesthetics, Huang Binhong's late-period work can be discussed through alternative vocabularies of brush-and-ink art (5.5., 5.6.): among others, as a “life practice” that possesses an inherently efficacious, transformative quality, as put forward by Matthias Obert; thereby effecting the “body-mimetic transformation of the practitioner” (*leibmimetische Verwandlung des Schaffenden*) through “a ‘movement of withdrawal into the self’” (*eine “in sich selbst zurückgenommene Bewegung”*)—a reflexive process of cognition that ultimately can be achieved only through the moment of “corporeal practice” (*leibliche Übung*) and “corporeal perception of the self” (*leibliche Selbstempfindung*); further through the notion of *tiyan* 體驗, “experience”, in its meaning as “learning through” or “proving effective through bodily practice”, as delineated by Chung-ying Cheng; as well the notion of *nian* 念, “commemoration”, in the Confucian understanding as expounded by Hans-Georg Möller. As already indicated, based on the premise of traditional Chinese brush writing as a somatically founded act, it can be argued that Huang Binhong's late-period work is discussable both in terms of an *expression* (*Abdruck*) and *impression* (*Eindruck*) of “appropriate ritual order”; as an engagement with art that appropriated meaning through the inherently ritual condition of calligraphic practice; at the same time necessitating an adjustment of the formal ritual itself. This perspective is maintainable inasmuch as Huang Binhong saw himself confronted with the grave circumstances of a rapidly declining vision during the year 1953. Before the backdrop of the aspects discussed in this chapter, chapter five closes with a plea of sorts “Towards a Somaesthetics of Calligraphy Art” (5.7.);

⁴³ As delineated, for example, by scholars Roger Ames and Chung-ying Cheng, see Ames 2015, Ames 1993; Cheng 2002.

towards the field of somaesthetics as a dedicated methodological approach in art history in general, and Chinese calligraphy art in particular.

Regarding, then, the sixth chapter, titled “Transmissions: The Cases of Lin Sanzhi (1898–1989) and Wang Dongling (b. 1945)”, I would like to note that I deliberately refrain from conceiving this final chapter of the study in terms of a classic “Conclusion”. Though the issues that are raised in this chapter indeed serve to reiterate and tie together, and therein summarize the essential lines of thought established and pursued in the course of the study, rather than formulating definite “conclusions”, my wish is, moreover, to make use of its last part in order to specify “directions”—a term which appears to me to be the more appropriate and preferable one in the given context. While the preceding chapters provide individual conclusions that are consecutively embedded into the overall framework of the study, thus aiming to add various nuances and layers of meanings to expand its larger picture, chapter six moreover serves as both a condensing reflection and open-ended outlook, inasmuch as it addresses the significance of Huang Binhong’s impact on later generations of artists in China. With regard to processes of historical transmission in art and the formation of art historical lineages, it specifically investigates the cases of Lin Sanzhi 林散之 (1898–1989), a former student of Huang Binhong, and Wang Dongling 王冬齡 (b. 1945), in turn a student of Lin Sanzhi (see figs. 7a–e, 8a–d, respectively; also figs. 23a–b). The implications of what has been termed as Huang Binhong’s “most instructive legacy”, namely, his “emphasis on brushwork and ink”⁴⁴, is assessed through the perspectives of Lin and Wang, two exceptionally famous Chinese calligraphers of the twentieth- and twenty-first century, and both of whom can be considered part of an artistic lineage in the context of this “legacy”. Inasmuch as Huang Binhong is foremost known to us through art history as a landscape painter, a discussion of Lin Sanzhi and Wang Dongling’s examples can serve to illuminate the significance of Huang Binhong as a calligrapher. The cases of Lin and Wang illustrate various aspects in this regard, including the transmission and reiteration of specific aesthetic ideas, including the aesthetic of *neime*. The understudied issue of Huang Binhong’s effective extensions into the world of twentieth- and twenty-first-century calligraphy in China opens up a research area of value.

⁴⁴ As asserted by Jason Kuo, who in the concluding chapter “The Significance of Huang Pin-hung’s Late Work” of his book *Transforming Traditions in Modern Chinese Painting: Huang Pin-hung’s Late Work* writes: “[...] Huang Pin-hung’s emphasis on brushwork and ink can be regarded as his most instructive legacy, enabling contemporary Chinese painters to develop a ‘painterly’ quality of art [...]”. Kuo 2004: 186.

Here, particular significance can be ascribed to Huang Binhong's cursive-script calligraphy, which still presents as a research desideratum in scholarship on Huang Binhong's oeuvre. What is more, in looking closely at various works of art by Huang, Lin, and Wang, respectively, and comparing these with one another, we do very well in reminding ourselves of the multilateral directions that are at work in the context of transmission processes (as it were, also on the level of art *historiographical* transmission). Inasmuch as we are often idiosyncratically inclined to think of lineages in terms of successive, straight chronologies, the impact of Lin Sanzhi's work on that of the "elder", Huang Binhong; and, analogously, that of Wang Dongling on Lin Sanzhi, should likewise be taken into consideration.

In chapter section 6.1., titled "Workings on the Inside: Encounter in Reclusion, 1969–1970", my investigation isolates the circa two-year time period of 1969–1970—that is, a period that indicates a time when both Lin and Wang had not yet come to the fame under which they are known to us today—during which the two artists experienced an intensive phase of close encounter; an encounter, I argue, that was of crucial formative significance with regard to the later, hallmark styles of cursive-script calligraphy that they have become celebrated for. In the context of art production of the Cultural Revolution period (1966–1976) in China, issues of interiority that were addressed throughout the study will be carved out more tangibly in terms of what I denote as "reclusive art" in twentieth-century China. An examination of the conditions of art practice as pursued by Lin and Wang during the time of their encounter, can further methodologically cement somaesthetic approaches to calligraphy as a meliorative, ritual-based form of physical self-cultivation (6.2.). Following from the argumentation pursued in chapter five, it can be inferred that this time served as a period of self-affirmation, or self-bonding, both for Lin Sanzhi and Wang Dongling, in the sense of calligraphy practice as a mnemonic device of in-forming the self; moreover, of in-forming "the new" through commemoration of "the old", and vice versa. The last chapter section, titled "Reclusive Art and Discourses of the Inner: Reflections on the *nei-wai* Distinction", finally considers aspects of the inner-outer distinction as a Chinese thought tradition that finds enmeshment with the field of art (6.3.), and can be addressed in philosophical terms of the private/public, or "outer kingliness" (*wai wang* 外王), and "inner sageliness" (*nei sheng* 內聖), respectively. These considerations can serve to highlight *neimei* as an overarching aesthetic concept that informs Huang Binhong, Lin Sanzhi, and Wang Dongling's approaches to art.

In Roger Ames' sense in preference of pointing towards "directions", rather than, as noted above, formulating a set of distinct "conclusions", in terms of "conclusive proof", chapter six lastly also emphasizes both the limitations and possibilities of art historical research in general, and research on Chinese calligraphy of the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries in particular. With this in mind, and particularly in light of the various research desiderata addressed throughout the study, I hope to show in what way the study of Huang Binhong as calligrapher provides a rich source and an as of yet expandable field of scholarly investigation.

The study ends with a brief summary and closing remarks.

Notes on Style

Terms, Transcriptions, Translations

The text adheres to the rules of American English orthography. For the transcription of Chinese and Japanese terms, the systems of Pinyin Romanization and Revised Hepburn, respectively, are used. Exceptions are transcriptions in quoted text sources, or transcriptions of officially carried names, i.e. of persons (e.g. Chu-tsing Li), or places (e.g. Taipei), that follow other systems. As general rules, transcriptions and translations of Chinese terms and quoted text sources are provided in the running text, yet not in the annotations, unless the transcription or translation is of context-specific special relevance. Chinese characters are held consistently in traditional Chinese. Chinese characters, life dates of individuals, and era dates, are generally only given once and not repeated upon their first mentioning in the running text.

Unless otherwise stated, all translations are by the present author. A translation is generally provided for all non-western-language work titles and institutions mentioned. Titles of articles, essays, and treatises are given in quotation marks; titles of books, journals, exhibitions, and artworks, including poems, are set in italics; as are, also, all foreign-language terms in general. Names of institutions are generally not set in italics. Regarding translations of quoted Chinese-language text passages, if the length of the Chinese source text exceeds one line, it is given in the annotations, not together with the translation in the running text. With English as its source language, the text of the study follows the English-

language system of punctuation with all languages, with the exception of the enumeration comma (、) used in the Chinese language.

Bibliographical References

All bibliographical references are listed on pages 309–337 of the study. If more than one author or editor is listed under the same reference, the names appear in alphabetical order. In the footnotes, bibliographical references generally appear as short titles: Acker 1954: 50; Addiss/Seo 2010: 50f.; Buchler, ed., 1955: 50ff.; Buden/Nowotny, eds., 2008: 50–55; Fong et al., eds., 2008: 50, 55; Hinton, transl., 1993: 50. Due to the recurrence of certain Chinese family names, authors with the following family names are referred to in short titles with both their family name and given name: Chen, Li, Lin, Liu, Wang, Zhang. Authors of East Asian-language publications are referred to with their family name first, followed by the given name. Authors of western-language publications are referred to with their given name first, followed by the family name (also if the respective author's name is of East Asian origin).

List of Illustrations

All referenced illustrations are reproduced on pages 338–548 of the study. Unless otherwise stated, the place of origin of a respective object is China. As a general rule, non-western institutions are referred to by their English name upon being mentioned for the first time. Institutions are referred to together with the city (or else region) of their respective location, yet without addition of country names. Titles of artworks generally follow the ones as given in the respective images sources. Specific data on individual objects, e.g. production dates, measurements, collections, is incomplete in a few cases; according to the availability of information.

Chapter One

Demarcating the Field of Chinese Calligraphy

1.1. Terms: Body, Ritual, Pattern, Self

It is not merely out of a sense of filial piety that one must respect one's physical body as a sacred vessel, to borrow an image from the Analects. [...] The self as a concrete living reality is inseparable from the body. Since self-cultivation [*xiushen*] in its literal meaning refers to the cultivation of the body, there is a rich reservoir of body-related language in the Confucian classics. Indeed, without an awareness of the importance of the body, we can hardly appreciate the significance of the six arts (liu-i) [...] in classical Confucian thought.⁴⁵

Shufa, in its literal sense, means “methods of writing”.⁴⁶ That the term “methods” in fact proves to be a quite appropriate description becomes obvious when bearing in mind the technical dexterity, indeed the physical challenge posed by the basic task of handling a traditional ink brush in order to produce reasonably decent Chinese characters. The process of learning how to “write calligraphy”, in the sense of skillfully mastering the “methods of writing”, traditionally concentrates a demanding set of bodily requirements: proper anatomic posture, synchronized eye-hand coordination, and fine-tuned wrist and finger action, as well as continuous calibration of brush rhythm, speed, tension, and pressure (cf. figs. 9a–d). Indeed, learning calligraphy can be downright painful! It involves a disciplined shaping and educating of the body, always according to the given formal structures of the respective “script bodies” (i.e. *shuti* 書體, script types). It involves patterning one's brush movement after the normative styles of old masters, and in correspondence with certain agreed, underlying aesthetic (and moral) values. In simulation of the model, one's brush tip must adjust and at times strain to conform to the former's graphic shape of brushstroke, thus presenting a literal molding of the own script body *into* the script body of the model. In discussing imperial practices in the context of calligraphy, the incorporation of

⁴⁵ Tu 1985: 96.

⁴⁶ In the present study, I do not insist on adhering to a single, specific English translation of the Chinese term *shufa*. However, it is important to point out the problem of translating this term *per se*. With this in mind, I consider various translations as “calligraphy”, “calligraphy art”, “writing”, “the art of writing”, “the methods of writing”, and so forth, as likewise valid; the question of which one to use then largely depending on the given context. According to the successive intellectual-historical development of the terms *shu* 書 (writing), *shufa* 書法 (calligraphy), and *shufa yishu* 書法藝術 (calligraphy art), a brief conceptual differentiation is given in Chen Dazhong 2005: 3–6. For a contemporary discussion of notions and possible disambiguation of “writing” (*shuxie* 書寫), “calligraphy” (*shufa* 書法), and “pictorial writing” or “written images” (*shuxiang* 書象) see Liu Xiaochun 2004.

bureaucrats into the Chinese government system is thus described by Yueh-ping Yen as a methodical, coercive political strategy:

[...] under the imperial system of government, recruitment was secured by the moulding of its members' bodies and morality through the training and discipline of calligraphy. Once you have been shaped by the mould of the masters, you are simultaneously moulded into one who is considered fit to govern.⁴⁷

Finally, the intense degree of physical control and high refinement of motor skills that are gained by the calligrapher through tireless repetition of individual gestures and choreographed chains of movement are to be synthesized through his or her intuitive, spontaneous performance and the transformation of adopted methods.⁴⁸ All this indicates the status of calligraphy as a cultural technique of generating, acquiring, and reproducing knowledge; not only in art historical or cultural historical terms, but moreover in related somatic, cognitive, and psychological terms of implicit knowledge, body memory, and mental visual reconstruction. Along these lines, learning to write calligraphy is understood as an ongoing physical process of reiteration—a literal form of *re-membering* (in the meaning also implied by the German-language words *Einverleibung*, “incorporation”, and *Verinnerlichung*, “internalization”), to reference Zito, who uses this term in the context of investigating ritualized forms of inscription and incorporation within expressive practices of the Chinese literati as *members* of the imperial court;⁴⁹ or, to borrow again from Yen, as the lifelong undertaking of cultivating personhood and “becoming a person through *wen* [文]”: that “slow process of polishing, carving, refining, waxing and glazing of the self [...]”.⁵⁰

With regard to the problematic translation of *shufa* as “calligraphy”, I would like to embrace the issue by adopting an explicitly corporeal terminology. This is first and foremost feasible inasmuch as the term *shuti* 書體, generally used to signify the various categories of script type differentiated in Chinese writing and calligraphy, has the verbatim meaning of “script body”, or “written body”; further:

In common use, *ti* extends its meaning of organic system to refer to groups of people organized for special purposes, and even to concrete things in the world. By

⁴⁷ Yen 2005: 128.

⁴⁸ On the role of motor memory in calligraphy practice, see *ibid.*: 109–110.

⁴⁹ See the sub-chapter “Re-membering the Past: Throne and Literati” in Zito 1997: 219–221.

⁵⁰ Yen 2005: 46.

abstraction, the word also applies to anything that has a definite form and style of organization, such as types of writing styles.⁵¹

The classic trope of the calligraphic “body” (*ti* 體) or “script body” as an analogy to the human body of the performing scribe has been expounded by John Hay in cosmological terms of an “imagery of organism” and “physiological metaphors”.⁵² Taking up on the Chinese understanding of the human body and the phenomenon of handwriting as presentational of microcosmic systems that operate and function in correspondence with the macrocosmic order of the natural world, the literal notion of “script body” can serve as an analytic, epistemic category that affords particular viewpoints to reflect certain aspects of calligraphy culture and practice in China.⁵³

Through this terminological prism, aside from pointing up the correlation that is traditionally drawn between the scribe’s written calligraphy and his physical body, the corporeal image of *shuti* aids to flesh out material and performative dimensions of calligraphy and in this regard expand on philosophically entrenched meanings and ethics of “self-cultivation” (*zixiu* 自修), “cultivating the body”, or “cultivating personhood” (*xiushen* 修身) in one’s attaining of the Way (*dao* 道).⁵⁴ “Script bodies”, whether these refer to the anatomical bodies of human beings or to the brush-written bodies of calligraphic works, are comprehended here as integral parts of intricate, to some extent self-contained systems of imprinted, accumulated knowledge and experience by which the

⁵¹ Cheng 2002: 145. On the various, especially metaphysical meanings of *ti* 體, “which has [...] commanded a fundamental position in Chinese philosophy of knowledge” (ibid.: 146), see Chung-ying Cheng’s essay (2002); and Ames 1993 [1984], for general terminological approach to the notion *ti* in traditional Chinese thought. Kristofer Schipper’s study further provides a specifically Daoistic perspective on various meanings of the body as physical and social body in China, Schipper 1992.

⁵² In his essay “The Human Body as a Microcosmic Source of Macrocosmic Values in Calligraphy”, John Hay writes: “There are many ways of analyzing a piece of calligraphy. One method anciently and effectively used by the Chinese themselves is the imagery of organism, of physiology as we would classify it.” Hay 1983: 74. He further states that “[t]he metaphors of art texts are far more than picturesque embroidery, they are the most effective mode of understanding [...]”, and that “[t]he physiological metaphors in calligraphy texts are immediately sensible.” Ibid.: 75. For illustrations of the classic trope of the calligraphic body as an analogy to the human body in contemporary Chinese calligraphy art, see figs. 10a–b.

⁵³ For a study on cosmological systems of correspondence in the context of traditional Chinese medicine theory, see Porkert 1973, especially chapter one: “Basic Standards of Value: Yin and Yang and the Five Evolutive Phases”, 9–54.

⁵⁴ On notions of self-cultivation and the cultivation of personhood, see Yen 2005: 33–56, 57–80. The reciprocity between “self” (*ji* 己) and “learning” (*xue* 學) and its relative effect on moral education is manifested in the Confucian *Analects* (*Lunyu* 論語), where it is stated in 14:25: “The Master said, ‘In ancient times, men learned with a view to their own improvement. Now-a-days, men learn with a view to the approbation of others.’” (“子曰: 古之學者為己, 今之學者為人.”), Legge, transl., 1960 [1892]: 285; cf. also Tu 2011: 33. In Tu Wei-ming’s essay “Self-Cultivation as a Response to Human Predicament”, psychological, physical, and sociological aspects of the self are discussed in the context of investigating the personal dimension of Confucian thought, see Tu 2011.

structure of the “self”—in the meaning of “*shen* [身] as ‘body-person’ or ‘lived body’”⁵⁵—is continuously informed and organized both individually and collectively; further, “[...] the lived body itself as a location for various practices [...], performances, and disciplines that shape and subjectify the self”.⁵⁶

In his essay “The Meaning of Body in Classical Chinese Philosophy”, Roger Ames has written that “the classical Chinese tradition is generally committed to a process rather than a substance ontology: the body is a ‘process’ rather than a ‘thing’, something ‘done’ rather than something one ‘has’ [...]”, such that classical Chinese thought is based on the premise of a symbiotic relationship between intellect and physical form,⁵⁷ that is, on a polar, organismic explanation of the world constituted by *intrinsically* related processes, rather than a dualistic, essentialist explanation of the world constituted by *extrinsic* relationships.⁵⁸ Ames discusses and differentiates the three most prominent terms for “body” in the Chinese tradition—*shen* 身, *xing* 形, and *ti* 體—and, with regard to the third term, *ti*, assesses that “[t]he most revealing aspect of *t’i* [...] is its cognate relationship with ritual actions (*li*) [...]”.⁵⁹ He elucidates:

Significant in the correlation between ritual action and body is the polar rather than dualistic relationship between form and matter, action and body. Any particular ritual action can be understood only by reference to a formalized body of actions, a cultural tradition; meaning and value can be enacted only by embodiment in ritual actions.⁶⁰

Along these lines, by proposing *shuti* as a figure of thought, the subject matter of “Chinese calligraphy” can be embraced from a broader conceptual-historical standpoint so as to decrypt layers of connoted meanings which indicate basic structures that have shaped calligraphy practice as an art essentially engaging certain forms of physical activity and conduct. Specifically, early conceptions of “ritual” (*li* 禮) and “pattern” (*wen* 紋/文), in the

⁵⁵ Referring to Roger Ames, Ames 1993: 156. As Tu Wei-ming critically notes in his essay “A Confucian Perspective on Embodiment”: “We, children of the Enlightenment, seasoned in Cartesian dualism, are ill-equipped to develop a sympathetic understanding of the Chinese world-view in general, and the seminal idea of ‘embodying the universe’ in particular [...]”, and further: “For Chinese thought, the body is never merely material and mechanical, but an open and flowing system of vital energy [...]”. Tu 1992: 87.

⁵⁶ Zito 1997: 210. The meaning of body in classical Chinese philosophy is discussed in Ames 1984. For an introduction to notions of self and body in Asian theory and practice, see Kasulis, ed., 1993; and further Ames, et al., eds., 1998, for a collection of essays on the self as image in the visual arts of Asia.

⁵⁷ Ames 1993 [1984]: 170.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*: 160.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*: 169.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*: 170.

sense of “cosmic text pattern”⁶¹, can be pointed up in this context. Rather than following a more conventional art historiographical rhetoric of primarily formal-aesthetic interest, in attempting to formulate definitions of calligraphy, my focus lies on aspects of calligraphy as praxis and process; the body here functioning as a “space of reaction and action”. As Birgit Mersmann writes in her discussion of Chinese calligraphy:

Schriftbildlichkeit gründet sich auf Autoperzeption, Projektion und Performanz. In dem Maße, wie der Eigenkörper aktiviert wird, verändert sich auch die Wahrnehmung der äußeren Realität. Die Wahrnehmung ist nicht mehr auf die Dinge selbst gerichtet, sondern auf deren Bewegungen als Ereignisse. Die Kalligraphie stellt das Leben des Eigenkörpers im Kontakt mit der Welt dar, sie positioniert sich damit im Jenseits der Repräsentation von Dingen und Personen und im Diesseits der Imagination.⁶²

In the Chinese context, the act of writing can be thus understood as both an *expression and impression* of the body in the human as well as scriptural sense: “Eindruck und Abdruck fallen im Schriftbild zusammen.”⁶³ One of the aims of this study is to highlight calligraphy as precisely this: an acquired system of corporeal impressions (*Eindruck*) and expressions (*Ausdruck*). Decipherable as a system of ritualized bodily patterns that relies on the dynamic locus of the body as a mnemonic device,⁶⁴ calligraphic impression and expression can be thus related to the age-old concepts of ritual and pattern, which in the Chinese cultural and philosophical traditions are closely intertwined with notions of customizing and cultivating the body, and therein provide useful epistemes in approaching the field of Chinese calligraphy. In the chapter “Self-Cultivation as a Response to Human Predicament” of his book *An Existential Reading of the Confucian Analects*, Andrew Zhonghu Yan points out the to some extent self-contained, embodied structure of the self (*ji* 己) and the possibility of humans to purposefully inform and take influence on this structure:

In Confucius’ conception, the self has a structure of its own. It involves psychological, physical, and sociological aspects. Self-cultivation, therefore, is to refine the self in such a way that it is in complete harmony with the world.⁶⁵

Yan notes that the term *shen* 身 as used in the *Analects* designates both the moral aspect and the physical aspect of self,⁶⁶ and concludes that “[t]he correctness of *shen* is the result

⁶¹ Cf. Nylan 1999: 27; Zito 1997: 223.

⁶² Mersmann 2015 (b): 200.

⁶³ Ibid.: 208.

⁶⁴ As coined by Paul Connerton, Connerton 1995 [1989].

⁶⁵ Yan 2011 (b): 33.

⁶⁶ Ibid.: 35.

of what Tu Weiming called ‘ritualization of the body’’. [...] For Confucius, self-cultivation is a process of the ritualization of the body.’’⁶⁷ Following this line of thought, we can reason that calligraphy practice may be understood as a form of self-cultivation achieved through the ritualization and patterning of the self (*shen*)/body (*ti*); the calligrapher’s body, moreover, as a ‘‘Holy Vessel’’,⁶⁸ here referencing Herbert Fingarette’s wording in the context of the Confucian tradition; and the genesis of calligraphy works, finally, as equal to the human act of shaping nature ‘‘into artifact for ritual use’’⁶⁹. At the core of this latter conception lies the Confucian understanding of conscious human action, in the sense of a potential to shape ‘‘basic’’ things into ‘‘refined’’ forms, which constitutes a central aspect of moral self-cultivation. In the sub-chapter ‘‘Early Attitudes Toward *wen*’’ of his insightful essay ‘‘Calligraphy, the Sacred Text and Test of Culture’’, Michael Nylan’s discussion of origins and meanings of the term *wen* is illuminating:

[...] enough context exists to show that *wen* carries one of two meanings in the *Analects*: Either it describes the exemplary behavior ascribed to the Ancients, behavior that went beyond the basic moral obligations to kin and ruler to forge wider societal connections to the benefit of all, [...] or it refers to that brilliant ornament that overlays a substance, greatly enhancing its basic value. The text establishes a strong tie between these two distinct meanings when it likens the effect of superb human refinement upon the fundamental human nature to that of fine painting laid on a plain surface. [...] By analogy, the Confucian ideal of benevolent rule through rites and music presupposed a latent harmony in life that could be brought to a still higher pitch of perfection through conscious human agency.⁷⁰

In respect of the close relationship to *li* (rituals) and *wen* (patterns), writing, and, in consideration of its performative qualities, also reading calligraphy are to be comprehended as bodily enactments of internalized ritual practices. Here, Martin Kern is quoted, who in the context of textual traditions in China writes that classical historiography was ‘‘organized around the principle of appropriate ritual order’’, and that ‘‘the entire body of the Five Canons and Six Arts (Liu yi 六藝), [...] together with the works immediately attached to them, is in one way or another defined and shaped by the ideal of ritual order (*li* 禮) [...]’’.⁷¹

As an interim conclusion, in introducing the theoretical framework of the present study, this first chapter hence establishes *shuti*, ‘‘script body’’, as a thought figure decipherable

⁶⁷ Ibid.: 36.

⁶⁸ As elucidated by Herbert Fingarette, see Fingarette 1972.

⁶⁹ Ibid.: 79.

⁷⁰ Nylan 1999: 25.

⁷¹ Kern 2005: x.

through the notions of *ti*, in the sense of the human body; *li*, in the sense of ritual practices and processes; and *wen*, in the sense of pattern, or “cosmic text-pattern”; all of which can be conceived as embodied systems of thought and action that are significantly related to one another in the context of Chinese calligraphy as a cultural historical and art historical phenomenon. In the following, I would like to give an outline of what I denote as “parallel narratives of calligraphy: inclusion and exclusion in Chinese art historiography”. This outline serves to illustrate the selective and omissive nature of (any) historiography in general, and that of Chinese calligraphy history in particular, since one of the aims of this study is to deliberately include and expand on certain aspects of Huang Binhong’s calligraphy art which, as I contend, are significant with regard to the very issue of their nature *as* calligraphy art. The section then dealing with “The Scopes of Art: On the ‘Origins’ of Calligraphy” aims, similarly, at a sensitization towards the issue of defining categories of art. Here, classifications such as “calligraphy” in terms of an “art of writing” are always, that is, inherently, belated, in that a description can only emerge after a phenomenon has already become actual. In any case, we may ask: when exactly *does* this description emerge—and why? That is to say, with regards to Huang Binhong’s case: when did “his calligraphy” emerge as an art historical, or rather art historiographical phenomenon? (In fact, has it at all fully emerged?) These questions recall Huang Binhong’s claim made in a letter to his close friend and associate, the art critic Fu Lei 傅雷 (1908–1966), in 1943. As documented by Jason Kuo, Huang had stated “[...] that his paintings would not please most people. He further explained that his paintings were ‘dark, unpolished, and unpopular, because they were not as pretty as paintings by the Four Wangs [...]’”.⁷² With this in mind, while Huang Binhong’s paintings have by now received their due recognition in art history, it appears feasible to suggest that certain other aspects of Huang Binhong’s art, including the full significance of his calligraphy, have still not yet fully emerged in art historical discourse.

1.2. Inclusion, Exclusion: Different Narratives of Chinese Calligraphy

In China, already as early as the Zhou 周 dynasty (ca. 1046–256 BCE), there existed a distinct category of organized functionaries who were in charge of writing at court, where “development of the government system [...] encouraged the extensive use of documents

⁷² Kuo 2004: 4.

and the establishment of archives in the royal court as well as in the feudal states [...]”.⁷³ Commonly termed as *shi* 史, they fulfilled a multitude of functions, thus alternatively translated as “scribes”, or “clerks”, “recorders”, “historians”, “historiographers”, or “archivists”, “ritualists”, or “astrologers”.⁷⁴ It was during the first imperial dynasties of Qin 秦 dynasty (221–206 BCE) and Han that these officials were firmly established and systematically expanded as the exclusive political and social group of *shiren* 士人, “scholar bureaucrats”—Confucian scholars who entered government offices through the imperial university and the civil service examination systems.⁷⁵ The subsequent gradual shift from the category of *shiren*, with its emphasis on the political, official functions of the scholar bureaucrat, to the category of *wenren* 文人, with its emphasis on the scholar bureaucrat as a “man of letters”, “literati scholar”, and promoter of the arts, which was to be complete by the Northern Song period, went hand in hand with the development of an increasingly significant intertwining of poetry, calligraphy, and painting, thus denoted as “sibling arts”, or the “three perfections” (*sanjue* 三絕), in the literati scholar tradition (see figs. 11a–c for examples of works themed on the three perfections in literati art).⁷⁶ Calligraphy lay at the very heart of literati culture, as it presented a formidable medium through which aesthetic expression, contemplation, taste, and connoisseurship could be cultivated and refined. Especially with regard to the distinction that is more often than not gladly drawn between “writing” (*shuxie* 書寫) or “writing characters” (*xiezi* 寫字), and “calligraphy” (*shufa*), that is, between notions of mere pragmatism as opposed to refined artfulness, the fragile line that seemingly divides these assumed categories actually presents a more than elusive concept.⁷⁷ In China, over time, there have been and continue to be put forward various views informing us on what kind of writing may and, in turn, may not be considered in terms of *shufa*, that is, in terms of “calligraphic”, or “artful”.

⁷³ Tsien 2004 [1962]: 5.

⁷⁴ See Kern 2007: 115f.; Tsien 2004 [1962]: 8. On the social and political history of the *shi* in China, see Connery 1998: 79–109; cf. also Shaughnessy 1991: 169.

⁷⁵ Tsien 2004 [1962]: 13f.

⁷⁶ By analogy, between the Northern-Song and late Ming dynasty, a terminological shift similarly took place with regard to the notion of “scholars’ painting”, that is, from the term *shiren hua* 士人畫 to that of *wenren hua* 文人畫, as coined by the “scholar painters” Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037–1101) and Dong Qichang 董其昌 (1555–1636), respectively. Cf. Bush 1971: 29. On the symbiotic notion of poetry, calligraphy, and painting, see Debon 1978: 47–76; Hearn 2008: 78–83; and Sullivan 1974.

⁷⁷ See reference given in n. 46.

With the introduction of paper as a novel writing material in China around 100 CE,⁷⁸ there occurred a transition with regard to the development of textual culture throughout the Eastern Han 東漢 (25–220 CE) period.⁷⁹ Not only did this shift mark the beginnings of a widespread circulation of texts among literate political and social elites. Critical discourse on the formal aesthetic value and appreciation of the written word and its visual properties began to take shape, as did gradually the systematic study and institutionalized practice of *shufa*, especially in the course of the enlargement and diversification of the bureaucratic system in China.⁸⁰

As noted above, the designation of “the inner workings” in the title of this study not only applies to the field of Chinese calligraphy as a formal genre, or material subject matter, but refers moreover to the field of Chinese calligraphy as a discursive subject matter and phenomenon, that is, a contested field of art historical concepts, discourses, and debates. With Craig Clunas’ observation that the formation of calligraphy during the Eastern Han into an “Art in the Life of the Élite”⁸¹ was inherently related with the contemporaneous transformation of the material conditions at hand—the absorbency of paper now “[...] enabling it to catch every nuance of the writer’s touch more efficiently than silk or the earlier writing surface of bamboo strips [...]”⁸², the aspect of personification as crucial to “[t]he notion of writing as an art form”⁸³ must be emphasized (cf. figs. 12a–c, 12e, and 12g for various writing materials prevalent before the invention of paper). This notion was

[...] linked to the emergence of the idea of the artist as an individual whose personal qualities allow command of the technical resources to produce work of a

⁷⁸ On the historical development of the various types of writing materials in China, including bones and shells, metals and clay, stone and jade, bamboo and wood, silk and paper, see Tsien 2004 [1962]. An overview of forms of writing implements and tools, including the writing brush, writing fluid and pigments, ink of lampblack, lacquer and mineral ink, and ink-slabs, see *ibid.*: 175–198, as well as Rawson 2012 [1992]: 84–88. On the origin and development of paper and printing in China, see Needham/Tsien 1985. The technical processes of papermaking are also discussed in Rawson 2012 [1992]: 85–87; Tsien 2004 [1962]: 145–174.

⁷⁹ On early textual cultures in China of the Shang 商 (ca. 1600–ca. 1046 BCE), Zhou, Qin, and Han periods, see Connery 1998; Kern, ed., 2005; Lai 2002; Lewis 1999; Shaughnessy 1991; and Tsien 2004 [1962]. On textual culture of Qin-period stele inscriptions, see Kern 2000.

⁸⁰ I refer once more to Michael Nylan’s essay “Calligraphy, the Sacred Text and Test of Culture” (1999) for a critical assessment of issues concerning the historical beginnings of writing and calligraphy in China, including aspects of “the origins of calligraphy as fine art” and “calligraphy’s place as the premier art in pre-modern China”, Nylan 1999: 17; and, in the context of the rise of calligraphy discourse during the Han, especially to the subchapter “Stages 6 and 7: Empire’s Fall and Calligraphy’s Rise”, *ibid.*: 41–57.

⁸¹ Clunas 2009 [1997]: 135–171.

⁸² *Ibid.*: 135.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

higher quality and greater value (in the aesthetic and commercial senses) than that of the common run of writers.⁸⁴

The understanding of writing as “art” based on the concept of recognizable visual traces of an individual person’s identity is linked to the idea that the viewing recipient of an artwork is given the possibility to construct a mental bond with its source of origin, as will be elucidated below. This definition of writing as an art form has also been established by Lothar Ledderose, who has elucidated the “connection between the rise of cursive script in China and the rise of the aesthetic concept of ‘seeing the man in his work’” that took place during the Eastern Han.⁸⁵

Throughout China’s productive and receptive history of calligraphy as an “élite art”,⁸⁶ owing to the use in Chinese painting and calligraphy of, as Wen C. Fong has put it in his essay “Chinese Calligraphy as Presenting the Self”, a “graphic convention (*tuzai*, literally, ‘pictorial diagram’) as an image-sign, which [Chinese civilization and culture] saw both as a semantic or *representative* sign and the artist’s *presentational* Self as the sign-maker that it signifies”,⁸⁷ calligraphic form has lent itself to providing a vehicle of self-presentation and -display, and, in turn, been continuous subject of, if not to say, subject *to* “characterological” readings, referring again to McNair’s use of this vivid term.⁸⁸ As Ledderose illustrates: “One of the major results of this aesthetic attitude was that handwriting itself could replace content as the main criterion by which to judge a written piece [...]”.⁸⁹ This kind of subjectified approach to and qualitative interpretation of calligraphy faces a dilemma when reading and contemplating calligraphic works produced by anonymous persons. This is the case, for example, with the early genre of inscriptions engraved on first- and second-century stone steles, or tablets (*bei* 碑), where it was not conventional for the inscriber to add his signature at the end of the inscribed text (see figs. 12f, 12h, and 13a–c for classic examples of *bei* inscriptions): “Much early engraved calligraphy is anonymous, so that we cannot see the artist in the work, while what

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ledderose 1986: 36.

⁸⁶ Clunas 2009 [1997]: 135.

⁸⁷ Fong 2008: 1. With regard to the intricate relationship between Chinese calligraphy and painting, Fong has further written: “The key to Chinese painting [...] was its calligraphic brushwork. The subject of calligraphic painting was known as the ‘trace of brush and ink’ (*biji* or *moji*)—that is, an extension of the artist’s bodily *presence*, his Self.” Chang/Fong/Hearn 2008: 9.

⁸⁸ Amy McNair coins the term of calligraphy as a form of characterology in the context of discussing Yan Zhenqing 顏真卿 (709–785), whose calligraphy style was established during the Northern Song dynasty as a prototypical aesthetic and moral role model, see McNair 1998: 1–2.

⁸⁹ Ledderose 1979: 29f.

represents the work of a known artist is not the original trace of his hand, so that we cannot marvel at his way with the brush.”⁹⁰ As Dorothy Wong points up, the craftsmen who were hired by the stele donors “belonged to a relatively low social status and never acquired the same kind of social position as that achieved by practitioners of the literati arts, such as calligraphy or painting [...]”.⁹¹ Thus, little is known about the production of steles, which, during their rise in the Han dynasty, served primarily funerary, commemorative, or edifying purposes, and espoused Confucian values, and later flourished under Buddhism of the Tang 唐 dynasty (618–907).⁹² While the engraved texts themselves had indeed often been authored or commissioned by people of high prominence, their brush-written calligraphy models as well as the inscriptions in stone, which were subsequently carved, generally originated from hands whose identities remained largely unknown to the public.⁹³ This, over the course of the circa two millennia of textual discourse on calligraphy, or writing as an art form, has in fact been a significant factor in shaping a to some extent ideologically highly charged divergence between two lines of tradition in calligraphy history.⁹⁴ These were to become known as, on the one hand, the so-called “model-letters style” (*tiepai* 帖派), which was based on the reproductive “study of model-letters” (*tiexue* 帖學) that arose in the tenth century, and, on the other hand, the “stele style” (*beipai* 碑派), referring to the tradition and cultural appreciation of stone steles bearing commendatory inscriptions, which, formerly espousing Confucian values, began to flourish in the first century CE, though they had existed at least since the fourth century BCE, and which were widely adapted for Buddhist use from the late fifth through sixth

⁹⁰ McNair 1995: 106.

⁹¹ Wong 2004: 70. On the functions, uses, and meanings of steles in China, and the origins and historical developments of the Chinese stele tradition, I refer to this quoted study by Wong; further to Kenneth Brashier’s contribution in *Text and Ritual in Early China*, see Brashier 2005.

⁹² Cf. *ibid.*: 25, 70; McNair 1995: 109, 111.

⁹³ On these two lines of tradition and their divergence in the history of calligraphy recension and reception, see McNair 1995, which investigates the perception of “the stele tradition as the great rival to the model-letters tradition as a source for calligraphy”, *ibid.*: 109. An introductory historical overview of the *bei* and *tie* traditions is also given in Ledderose 1979: 10–12; further cf. Ledderose 1970: 61ff. On the Qing-dynasty revival of Wei 魏-period (386–534) stele-style calligraphy, further see Hua 1999.

⁹⁴ First treatises dealing with calligraphy begin to appear in the second century AD with scholars and calligraphers such as Cui Huan 崔瑗 (77–142), Zhao Yi 趙壹 (fl. 178), and Cai Yong 蔡邕 (133–192), and Wei Furen 衛夫人 (272–349). Their texts are among those compiled and edited by Zhang Yanyuan 張彥遠 (815?–877?) in his ten-volume *Essential Records of Calligraphy* (*Fashu yaolu* 法書要錄) of 849 containing writings on calligraphy and calligraphers beginning with the Later Han, the earliest extant text collection of this sort, and which next to the *Famous Painting through Successive Dynasties* (*Lidai minghua ji* 歷代名畫記) of 847 presents the second of Zhang’s two encyclopedic art historiographical undertakings. For an introduction to and overview of early calligraphy theory and critical discourse on calligraphy see references given in n. 6. For the *Lidai minghua ji* and an annotated translation, see Acker 1954: 59–382.

century.⁹⁵ The former is generally associated with forms of cursive scripts that were spontaneously written with ink on paper or silk and circulated as private text formats, such as personal letters, poems, notations, or protocols, and many of which in retrospect were revered as immediate, “authentic traces” (*zhen ji* 真跡) or visual transcriptions of the writer’s personality and emotions; the latter, in turn, with the more solemn, seemingly less impulsively written forms of seal, clerical, and later also standard script (*kaishu* 楷書 / *zhenshu* 真書) types, which were commonly incised into the durable material of stone and displayed as publicly visible text formats in official and ceremonial contexts, including commemorative steles, stone tablets in temples, grave epitaphs, and even the surfaces of natural landscapes, such as granite boulders and cliffs, into which calligraphic texts were carved, often in religious and cultural contexts of Buddhism (see figs. 14a–c and 15a–f for models and examples of the *tiexue* and *beixue* 碑學 traditions respectively).⁹⁶ The textual content of calligraphies ascribed to the model-letters tradition in tendency communicated personal subjects related to the “inner worlds” or “interior social spaces” of human existence, including feelings, thought, and personal interaction, while those ascribed to the stele tradition generally bore a connection with the “outer worlds” or “exterior social spaces” of human existence and served the public interests of society and community, fulfilling primarily official, representative functions of political, religious, or didactic nature.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Cf. Wong 2004: 15.

⁹⁶ For a study on the genre of inscriptions carved into the natural stone landscape of mountains, known in Chinese as *moya* 摩崖, see Harrist 2008. For examples of Buddhist stone carvings of the Northern and Southern Dynasties 南北朝 (386–589), see Liu Zhengcheng, main ed., 2000, vol. 12, as well as Lai 2000 for a general introduction to Buddhist *moya* inscriptions of this period.

⁹⁷ I reference here the phrase “interior and exterior social spaces” coined by Wu Hung, who distinguishes between these two in the context of his study *The Double Screen: Medium and Representation in Chinese Painting* on various forms and functions of the double-screen format (*ping* 屏) in China, Hung 1996: 144f. Hung writes: “The Chinese terms for such objects [free-standing screens] are *ping* and *zhang*, both meaning ‘shields’ or ‘to shield’. [...] The screen is thus a framework whose basic function is to distinguish *space*. [...] To the person backed or surrounded by a screen, the area behind the screen has become hidden from sight [...]. He finds himself within an encircled area and perceives this area as belonging to him. He is the master of this *place*.”, *ibid.*: 10f. Though different in format, what Hung writes about the traditional function of screens as dividers of space—both physically and spiritually—holds equally true for traditional calligraphy in China, whose various script types and styles are generally divided into “private” and “public” spheres, therein fulfilling different uses, functions, and meanings. While the screen serves the function of demarcating personal space by transforming an undefined “space” into a defined “place”, the blank hand scroll or sheet of writing paper used in calligraphy can very similarly be considered in terms of undefined space that is then turned into a personal one through the calligrapher’s act of inscription, thus becoming “the master of this *place*.” In fact, the notion of the writing brush as a tool, or even a sword, through which the battlefield of the paper plane be conquered (and in this sense tamed, or domesticized into a private, personal area), is manifested in earliest texts on calligraphy theory, such as the “Diagram of the Battle Formation of the Brush”

Although already sufficiently pointed out by scholars, in this context, it should nevertheless be emphasized that one of the distinct features of Chinese calligraphy is its dimension of time and temporality, which is given, among other things, due to the formally determined order of brushstrokes in every written character.⁹⁸ Each text thus not only provides the prescribed chronological sequence of brushstrokes to be placed by the calligrapher; the linear narrative of the proceeding brush line can be pursued visually and read on a formal-aesthetic level by the viewer from beginning to end; from one stroke to the next; character for character, and column for column. The viewer is able to visually “retrace the creation of a finished work in all its consecutive phases”,⁹⁹ and furthermore mentally re-perform its creative process. He thereby inhabits an expanded moment in time during which a direct mental connection with the calligrapher is established and experienced and as a form of transcending historical time, imbuing “the viewer with a feeling of intimacy with the writer”, who “can imagine himself sitting next to Wang Xizhi [王羲之 (303?–361?)] at the little creek during the beautiful spring day in 353, witnessing one of the great creative moments in Chinese history” (namely, the day on which the if not most famous piece in the history of Chinese calligraphy was written, the *Preface to the*

(“Bizhen tu 筆陣圖”) attributed to Wei Furen 衛夫人 (272–349), or Lady Wei, of the Jin 晉 (265–420) dynasty. For a discussion of this treatise, see Barnhart 1964. Moreover, just like “[...] the screen transforms *space* into *places* that are definable, manageable, and obtainable. The concept of place is thus political [...]” (Hung 1996: 11), in the context of calligraphy practice, too, the demarcation of personal space as a political act of setting boundaries between official and unofficial realms of human action presents a significant issue with regard to the historical development of calligraphy script types and styles in China. On this matter, see for example Ledderose 1979: 32f. Here, the author describes how the Jin masters, on whose cursive styles the canonical tradition later centered, reflected the political attitude “among the intellectuals of the period in their distrust in the worth of government service”, and that “the calligraphic practice of the Chin masters [...] had from the beginning an apolitical connotation”. Ledderose writes: “[...] the Chin masters especially favored the cursive script *hsing-shu*. Because of its aesthetic possibilities for self-expression and its abbreviations of characters not necessarily intelligible to an outsider, *hsing-shu* was the script of an esoteric elite. This casual type could be used neither for official documents nor for tablets with the names of state buildings [...]”, and goes on to conclude that the emperor Tang Taizong’s 唐太宗 (599–649, r. 626–649) “unprecedented choice of the *hsing-shu* type for stone inscriptions had a symbolic significance: the emperor, by officially sanctioning the use of this type, divested it of its escapist notions.” In *The Double Screen*, Hung further comments on the person who is literally “shielded” by the screen: “Standing behind him, the screen ‘blocks’ any unwelcome gaze from the outside and supplies a sense of privacy and security; it guarantees that he be the only spectator of the landscape, and therefore it defines a *place* that is exclusively subjected to his vision [...]”, Hung 1996: 11. Analogous to this, the traditional Chinese literati culture of sharing one’s private realm with like-minded associates and friends, thereby creating a common private social space of human interaction, is reflected in the phenomena of private gatherings and writing performances (known as *yaji* 雅集, “elegant gatherings”), and the exclusive circulation of private works of calligraphy, which therefore, similarly, “defines a *place* that is exclusively subjected to [the] vision”, namely, of those people included. For in-depth discussions of these topics in the context of double screens, see especially the chapters “Interior and Exterior Spaces” and “Inner and Outer Worlds”, *ibid.*: 72–133, and 134–199, respectively.

⁹⁸ Cf. the elaborations on “the factors of time and movement in a work of calligraphy” in Ledderose 1984: 35f., 43, as well as Ledderose 1979: 29.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*: 35.

Collection of Poems of the Orchid Pavilion [Lantingxu 蘭亭序]).¹⁰⁰ This is held to be especially true for cursive-script calligraphies, where the abbreviation and joining together of brushstrokes allow for a continuous, uninterrupted flow of brush-and-ink and convey a dynamic sense of progression and spontaneity. In light, then, of the issue of anonymity in the context of stone engraving culture in general, it comes as no surprise that calligraphers who positioned themselves within the distinctly impersonated model-book tradition based on the cursive-script styles of Er Wang 二王, the “Two Wangs” (the master Wang Xizhi referenced above, and his son Wang Xianzhi 王獻之 [344–386] of the Eastern Jin 東晉 [317–420] [cf. figs. 14a–b]; the former of whom is to have studied under aforementioned Lady Wei) were held in much higher esteem than the vague personas who could (or, for that matter, could *not*) be identified and named in connection with calligraphic texts that had been or were being inscribed into stone. Whereas works in the model-book tradition were appreciated and affirmed in terms of superior, artful quality in Chinese art history, artistic traditions of engraved calligraphy were largely dismissed as ‘merely’ decorative, technical or artisanal.¹⁰¹ Considered to be of lesser value, these were silently excluded from aesthetic discourse dominated by intricate circles of literati scholars, thus indicating the parallel existence of alternative, untold histories of calligraphy.¹⁰² Only as late as the Qing 清 period (1644–1911) did a positive reevaluation of stone-inscribed calligraphy gain significant momentum through the scholars of the epigraphical calligraphy movement, therein achieving to gradually establish a new canonical tradition based on paleography and the study of ancient stele scripts (*beixue* 碑學) (cf. figs. 15a–f; and further fig. 16 for an illustration of late-Qing antiquarianism).¹⁰³ Before this backdrop, we see that according

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.: 39.

¹⁰¹ On the establishment and transmission of the canonical tradition based on the calligraphy styles associated with the Two Wangs, see Harrist 1999; Ledderose 1979: 12–28; McNair 1994; and Eugene Wang 1999.

¹⁰² Cf. McNair 1995. McNair’s article provides insightful arguments in reconstructing aspects of such alternative histories. With regard to calligraphy history in China, the general issue of art historiographical exclusion can further be crystallized through the example of Wang Xianzhi, the son of Wang Xizhi, whose works were systematically excluded from the imperial collection of calligraphy at Tang Taizong’s court during the period in which the establishment of the canonical model-letter tradition was finally cemented. Cf. Ledderose 1979: 26ff. For Wang Xizhi and Wang Xianzhi’s calligraphy, further see Nakata, ed., 1970–1972, vol. 1.

¹⁰³ For in-depth studies on Qing-period epigraphy and the rise and canonical establishment of Stele School calligraphy during the late Ming through Qing, see Bai 2003; Ledderose 1970. Precedent to the Qing-period phenomenon and notion of *beixue* was that of *jinshixue* 金石學, “the study of [inscriptions] in stone and metal”, presenting the main field of investigation in Chinese epigraphy and archaeology before the discovery and study of inscriptions on bones and shells, pottery and clay, and bamboo and wood around the turn of the twentieth century, cf. Tsien 2004 [1962]: 69. For a disambiguation of the terms *jinshixue* and *beixue* in the Qing-period context, further see Ledderose 1970: 59–64. Emanating from circles of influential scholars and

to the classical literati scholar idiom, the art of writing in China by common definition is associated with an immediate expression of personality, in a notably idolizing mode. It is not my incentive to argue against this definition; moreover, I propose a different lens through which to read calligraphy as a form of ritualized, patterned form of bodily practice. In turn, it is not my intention to argue that this lens is the ultimate one, but rather one that is equally valid among many others. Incidentally, especially in the Chinese-language context, we may keep in mind the transient, ever-changing significances of terms over time, since the (tendentially, comparatively) consistent visual appearance and phonetic reading of their signifiers, that is, the written characters in the Chinese language, suggest an unbroken linearity of meaning through time; that is, especially when compared for example with Anglo-Saxon languages, where the phonetic reading, and hence also the visual appearance of words as signifiers of meaning have changed over time in an essential way.¹⁰⁴ The elusive definition of the concept of calligraphy, or *shufa*, is a good example to point up this condition. While before the Han dynasty, in the context of ritual bronzes, “fine writing” can be said to have primarily fulfilled something that is distinguished by Nylan as “functional beauty” and “served to dignify the context of a text, to dignify the object the text was placed on, or both”,¹⁰⁵ by the time of the Eastern Han, calligraphic forms had advanced to become an “art”, more precisely, the “premier art”.¹⁰⁶ However, “[o]nly a fool would be blind to the undeniable beauty of many examples of writing in the bone and bronze inscriptions (*jinwen* 金文) dating to Anyang [安陽 (ca. 1300–1028 BCE)] and Western Zhou [西周 (ca. 1046–771 BCE)] [...]”, and Nylan warrants that “their beauty comes not by accident [...]”.¹⁰⁷ In other words: it appears feasible to claim that

intellectuals of the Northern Song, such as Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–1072), the *jinshixue* movement had constituted a significant part of Song-period antiquarianism and scholarly inquiry of China’s cultural, historical, art historical, and archaeological past. *Jinshixue* scholars took as their raw material early inscribed objects made of metal and stone, predominantly bronze vessels dating from the Shang and Zhou periods, and stone tablets dating from the Han, the engraved inscriptions of which were systematically reproduced in form of paper rubbings and handwritten copies. On the history and intellectual contexts of Song-period archaeology and paleography, see Rudolph 1963; and Ye 2011. For a study of Northern-Song literati culture and related matters of aesthetics, taste, and style in this context, see Peter Sturman’s *Mi Fu: Style and the Art of Calligraphy in Northern Song China*, Sturman 1997. A discussion of the Song-period interest in and artistic interpretation of calligraphy in the ancient script styles of seal and clerical script, further see Mok 1999.

¹⁰⁴ On this issue, see the chapter “The System of Script” in Ledderose 2000: 9–23.

¹⁰⁵ Nylan 1999: 19. In his emphasis on the functional aspect of beautified writing, Nylan here writes: “A finely written Western Zhou investiture inscription, for instance, at once declares the importance of the event it commemorates and beautifies the bronze on which it appears, so that content and ornament jointly redound to the credit to the person invested, in whose possession the vessel lies.”

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.: 17.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.: 19.

“calligraphy”, or what we circumscribe as “the art of writing”, did exist as a phenomenon before it found denomination as such in textual discourse. Why is this seemingly obvious observation relevant? Because it emphasizes that phenomena often only become describable in retrospect, that is, according to the available vocabulary and terminology of a given time and place—as is the case with regard to Huang Binhong’s calligraphy art in its full significance, as I aim to show through this study.

1.3. The Scopes of Art: On the “Origins” of Chinese Calligraphy

In this sense, the answer to the question where the historical origins of “calligraphy”, or Chinese brush writing as a form of “art”, are to be located in time, is one that cannot be ultimately, objectively asserted. Moreover, the answer depends on the chosen perspective. Scholars like Clunas or Ledderose indeed usefully contextualize developments in bureaucratic society and material culture during the Eastern Han with the concurrent changes in calligraphy practice; the former designating it as an “Art in the Life of the Élite”; the latter stating that “[a]s soon as the literati made their appearance in the first centuries AD, the aesthetic dimensions in the practice of writing began to be explored. Writing was turned into calligraphy [...]”¹⁰⁸ Yet this, of course, should not lead us to assume that any visual aesthetic consciousness for the written word had not existed before the time of the Han dynasty. As Jingxian Wang points out in his discussion of oracle bone inscriptions (*jiaguwen* 甲骨文) (exemplified in fig. 12a) as China’s first writing system:

From some of the inscriptions written in cinnabar or black ink, it is clear that at the initial stage of writing, the authors were already paying attention to different methods of handling the brush and how they might use these in combination. [...] To write small characters [as seen in cinnabar- or black-ink-inscribed oracle bones] requires great skill in maneuvering the brush tip. The oracle bone inscribers obviously knew how to use its pliability to enhance the artistic effect of their work.¹⁰⁹

Martin Kern, moreover, elucidates:

Deep into early imperial times, the capacious ideal of *wen* 文 was primarily one of ritual order; it could embrace texts, but was not restricted to them. [...] The canonical text that elaborates by far the most extensively on terms like *wen* and *wenzhang* 文章 (“patterned brilliance”, a term that only in the late Western Han [西漢 (206 BCE–25 CE)] times began to refer to textual compositions) is, unsurprisingly, the *Liji* (Records of ritual), in particular in its essay on music, the “Yueji” 樂記 (Records of

¹⁰⁸ Ledderose 1986: 35.

¹⁰⁹ Jingxian Wang 2008: 70.

music). The dimension of *wen* in early texts included “patterned phrasing” (*wenci* 文辭, an Eastern Zhou term known, for example, from *Zuo zhuan* [左傳, *Commentary of Zuo*]), yet it also seems to have extended to a visual dimension. Already among the Late Shang [商 (ca. 1600–ca. 1046 BCE)] oracle bone and plastron inscriptions, we find what David N. Keightley has labeled “display inscriptions”, executed in large seal script that clearly emphasizes the visual appearance of these records; in other cases, they were carefully pigmented or created in series of identical texts. [...] Along with other Western Zhou inscriptions, the famous water basin of Scribe Qiang 牆, dating from around 900 B.C.E., has its inscribed text arranged in two beautifully symmetric columns. The bells from the tomb of Marquis Yi of Zeng 曾侯乙 carry inscriptions inlaid with gold [...]. The calligraphy of the Guodian and Shanghai Museum bamboo manuscripts is marked by marvelous clarity and regularity. The Chu silk manuscripts display its writing in mandala-like format, accompanied by colorful drawings, to reflect its cosmological contents. Textual *wen* cannot be reduced to such features, but it is clear that these added a dimension of expression beyond the propositional information of the words. Altogether, it is not difficult to show how in early China the aesthetic manifestations of literature and calligraphy emerged directly out of contexts of ritual performances where verbal expression and the display of writing were part of a larger synthetic whole.¹¹⁰

From this passage we can see aspects of both similarity and difference when comparing with later cultures of writing in China, as well as, not least, the simple fact that writing seems to have fulfilled very different functions during different times. In spite of changing social and political environments, similarities between pre-, Han, and post-Han cultures of writing and inscribing can be found in aspects such as a certain level of meaning that exists beyond the mere information given by the words themselves; an awareness of and attention paid to the visual structure and arrangement of words; as well as the display, or “showcasing” function of written words. A crucial difference seems to be the vocal element—including speech-endowed, musical, auditive, physical, sensory, performative, ephemeral, and further qualities—inherent to practice and performance of ritual in pre-imperial China; and the writing act as one that is synthetically embedded within a larger structure of interconnected ritual elements. This in consequence points towards a possibly different conditional structure that layed out the basic premises of aesthetic assumptions and systems of evaluation. Seeing that the act of writing has fulfilled different functions and meanings through history, aesthetic consciousness and judgement must be taken to be and to have been shaped accordingly, and we as onlookers, particularly as scholars, in turn should train to adapt our habits of seeing in order to better understand these various and different concepts of perceiving and evaluating objects and practices.

¹¹⁰ Kern 2005: xiiif.

The erudite culture of calligraphy practice, consumption, and transmission in China as a “premier art” from the second century CE onwards has been essentially constitutive of the elite group of *wenren*, whose affirmation and perpetuation as a social class has strongly relied on calligraphy as a recursive structural element. In the Bourdieusian sense, of course, no form of “art” will ever be able to be practiced autonomously, that is, as a “pure art”, since there cannot possibly exist a mode of cultural production that is independent of its real-time physical surroundings; its social, ideological, economical, political, religious contexts.¹¹¹ And yet, it is precisely *due to* this highly developed intricacy that has always existed between writing culture, social status, and political power, that the 1980s Modernist calligraphy movement in China demanded the very “purification” (*chunhua* 純化) of calligraphy as an independent, academized art form, thus claiming the status of calligraphy as a “fine art” (*meishu* 美術) in its own right (see figs. 8a, 17a–d, and 103a–d for calligraphy of the Modernist movement).¹¹² While there seems to be no doubt about the existence of aesthetic consciousness and artfulness, or refinement, in the history of Chinese writing, it is all the more difficult to define wherein this artfulness specifically lies. More important, however, than articulating ultimate, fixed definitions of what “calligraphy as a fine art” means, is the ongoing process of articulation itself. Before we are at all able to think about any possible definitions, we are enticed to first think about the premises of “art” *per se*. In this regard, diverging opinion are even illuminating, since they tell us something about the constitutive elements of aesthetic taste in different periods and environments, which helps us grasp the epistemological, or ontological preconditions that have informed our systems and modes of perception and comparison over time (figs. 12a, 12b, 12e, 13d, or 14c can serve as some among the multitude of examples of writings that have in retrospect been reevaluated and upgraded, aesthetically, as “calligraphy”, that is to say, as objects of artistic value beyond the “merely functional”).

¹¹¹ As argued by sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1930–2002) in his essay “Genèse Historique d’une Esthétique Pure”, Bourdieu 1989.

¹¹² To some extent, the 1980s period can be considered a reprisal of the Republican-period endeavors in Chinese Modernist art circles as represented by western-trained painters like Xu Beihong 徐悲鴻 (1895–1953) and Lin Fengmian 林風眠 (1900–1991) (see figs. 18 and 19). On the histories of various notions and forms of art, the arts, and fine arts in China and East Asia, especially in the context of early- to mid-twentieth-century discourse on western concepts of art in China, see Guo 2010: 114–120. See also n. 122. The Modernist calligraphy movement in Mainland China throughout the 1980s and early 1990s will be further thematized in chapter six. For a western-language introduction to this art movement, see Barrass 2002: 162–193.

Discussing the question on the origins of calligraphy as an “art”, Nylan notes that the phenomenon of Chinese characters is usually understood in the sense of a “written” system of script, it is often overseen that the term *wen* in fact signifies a much more complex scope than that of written text, and that “[...] the common assumption that China has from time immemorial been preeminently an ‘empire of texts’ is demonstrably false”.¹¹³ He emphasizes that the notion of *wen* in fact went through distinctly different stages of meaning, stating that in the first stage, “talk of *wen* (‘pattern’) primarily signified exemplary behavior worthy of admiration and emulation (that is, ‘model behaviour’)”.¹¹⁴ Supported by evidence that “[t]he earliest texts known from China [...] apply *wen* to those memorable patterns that endure in time as an ideal locus for the appreciative gaze of cultivated elites”,¹¹⁵ Nylan proposes to adhere to this initial definition of *wen*, “which at first means ‘[exemplary] pattern’ (not necessarily visual) and only much later comes to mean ‘written text’ and even ‘culture’”, and which he terms as the most important word in the Chinese language “whose historical evolution has shaped aesthetic theory”.¹¹⁶ Only as late as Western Han times did the character *wen* find use in its hitherto wide-spread meaning as (written) textual composition, or, as Nylan notes, in “the reductionist sense of *wen tzu* [文字], words that precisely name”¹¹⁷. In its earlier context, *wen*, as “cosmic patterns”¹¹⁸, or “cosmic text pattern”¹¹⁹, denotes an element that is added to a corpus and thereby raises the moral-aesthetic value of the corpus, be it human or thing. As indicated above, *wen* in its initial meaning as an overlaid ornament, as an ideal pattern to be incorporated and modeled on, signifies the process of a mental and physical refining of one’s self, and, equally a material and aesthetic refining of an object, due to the fact that its visually splendid “text pattern” bears the traces of human agency, therein possessing the effect of upgrading its material value.

If “written text” and textual culture can be taken as (mere) parts of the larger conceptual development of “*wen*”, then the beginnings of “calligraphy”, calligraphy culture, and calligraphy discourse may be comprehended, analogously, as parts of the larger discourse

¹¹³ Nylan 1999: 57.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.: 20.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.: 25.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.: 20. The two other words Nylan denominates as significantly formative to aesthetic theory in China are *xiang* [象], “images emblematic of a hidden order”, and *tu* [圖], “charts identifying the site and distinctive configurations of power”.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.: 28.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.: 27.

¹¹⁹ Zito 1997: 223

that Nylan describes as a “[d]iscourse about marvelous ‘patterns’ in Chinese culture”.¹²⁰ To emphasize my concerns, I here refer to “calligraphy” and calligraphy culture in the sense of a systematically acquired technical, cultural, and artistic skill that began to be cultivated with the rise of text culture and textual discourse on the subject itself beginning in the second century CE.¹²¹ Form and content of the written word mutually informed and cultivated by one another, calligraphy discourse was to evolve continually over the millennia up to this day, by now already well-couched within frameworks of “post-modern calligraphy” (*hou xiandai shufa* 厚現代書法).¹²² While the word “calligraphy” signifies only one of the myriad aspects of *shufa*, i.e. something that is “beautifully written” (as derived from the Greek *kallós* and *gráphein*, as noted above), its other common translation as “the art of writing” (or *Schriftkunst*, or *l’art d’écriture*) is—though perhaps inclusive of additional aspects aside from those of visual pleasance—nevertheless similarly misleading, in that traditionally, *shufa* is precisely *not* considered an independent or “purified” (*chunhua de* 純化的) art form *per se*, but has, as implied above, only been established as such in the course of modernization and the institutionalization of the “fine arts”, i.e. as *meishu*, in China throughout the twentieth century.¹²³

¹²⁰ Nylan 1999: 57.

¹²¹ See references in n. 79 and also n. 3.

¹²² See for example Lang 2004; Zhu 2004. For an overview of the historical development of “modern calligraphy” in China (*Zhongguo “xiandai shufa”* 中國“現代書法”) from the 1950s onwards, see Lu 2004; Wang Nanzhou 1996; Yang, ed., 1996; Zhu 1996. For discussions of the status and meaning of “Chinese ‘modern calligraphy’”, see e.g. Wang Dongling 2008 [1999] (b); Wang Dongling 2004; Zhu 2011; Zhu 2010; cf. also Wang Dongling 2008 [1999] (a). An assessment of the phenomenon of exhibiting Chinese “modern calligraphy” in the West, see Yang 2012.

¹²³ As far as Liu Yu-jen’s thesis *Publishing Chinese Art: Issues of Cultural Reproduction in China, 1905–1918* is concerned, the *Fine Arts Series (Meishu congshu* 美術叢書), the monumental book series project on “art” that was co-edited by Huang Binhong from 1911 to 1936 and “gathered together from various sources existent treatises on art, and proposed a general scheme for the selection and categorisation of these texts”, shows that “the principles by which these texts were categorised became all the more important for gauging the horizon of ‘art’ as a discursive field”; and that “the notion of Chinese art manifested and represented in this book series [...] was a result of the accommodation of the literati’s leisure pursuits and of their cultural practices around antiquarianism to the new semantic field of ‘art’”. Yu-jen Liu 2010: ivf. In Ogawa Hiromitsu’s article “Regarding the Publication of the *Meishu congshu* 美術叢書: The Introduction of the European Concept ‘Fine Arts’ and the Japanese Translated Term ‘Bijutsu’”, the author concludes: “Unlike Europe, Asia did not have a concept of fine arts that encompassed painting, sculpture, architecture, and craft until the modern era. [...] [W]hile there was no specific term that combined these artistic endeavors, we know for a fact that an inclusive framework corresponding to ‘fine arts’ had been fully established by that time [...]. Conversely, in the East Asian world centered on China, calligraphy and painting formed the framework of formative arts. [...] [O]pposite to a Europe of beaux-arts or fine arts stood an Asia of calligraphy and painting, an Asia of sculpture, and an Asia of architecture. [...] The transformation from East Asia’s traditional calligraphy and painting paradigm to a modern European-style fine arts paradigm evoked various forms of discord and friction in cultural worlds of each of the East Asian nations of China, Japan and Korea. [...] Indeed, even today these conundrums and contradictions are by no means fully resolved in each

From Kern's above quote on the "capacious ideal of *wen* 文" as "primarily one of ritual order" we understand that there did indeed exist an aesthetic system of visual form in the context of the written word in pre-imperial times. Rather, it is the case that in pre-imperial China, there did not exist any textual discourse that was explicitly and systematically concerned with the visual properties and the aesthetic dimension of writing,¹²⁴ as was, by contrast, the case with the corpus of textual records that constituted and transmitted through the written tradition ever since the first century CE, when "the very art of writing graphs ruled supreme" and, beginning in the second century CE, calligraphy was "the first of the visual arts to have been discussed and evaluated systematically".¹²⁵ What largely distinguishes traceable pre-imperial textual cultures from those beginning with the second-century Han dynasty scholar bureaucrats are the contexts of use and function of text and writing.¹²⁶ These facts are often or quickly overseen, and the "origins" of writing as an art form have thus been conveniently inscribed into the period of the Han, when discourse on art became textually visible and evident.

1.4. Early Texts in China: Meanings and Functions

It was not only specific discourse on the "methods of writing" that then took tangible shape as a phenomenon, grounded especially in the notion of calligraphy as an embodied, personified "delineation of the mind" (*shu xin hua ye* 書心畫也).¹²⁷ Moreover, discourse on the meaning of writing in general, which, alongside the changes of technological and

country. It would not be an exaggeration to say that these ongoing cultural struggles continue to expand throughout the Asian region. [...]" Ogawa 2003: 17f.

¹²⁴ While notions of art, or the arts, certainly did exist, i.e. in the sense of *liu yi* 六藝, the Six Arts—which, alongside the rites, music, archery, charioteering, and mathematics, also included writing calligraphy—here, the idea of *yi* is primarily connoted with the Confucian ideal of self-cultivation and moreover translatable as "skill" or "artful skill", which is also evidently illustrated through the very characters *yi* 藝 and *shu* 術 of the word compound *yishu* 藝術 (art), whose etymological derivations both stem from the ancient field of agriculture and are rooted in images of craftsmanship and skill in the cultivation and processing of grains. Cf. Karlgren 1957: 98, no. 330f; Acker 1954: 5; Guo 2010: 114; HYDZD, vol. 5: 3317; Mathews 1975 [1943]: 3014; and Tu 1985: 97.

¹²⁵ Cf. Kern 2007: 111.

¹²⁶ On uses and functions of writing in pre-imperial China, see Erkes 1941; Keightley 1978; Kern, ed. 2005; Kern 2007; Shaughnessy 1991; Tsien 2004 [1962]. On textual culture of Qin-dynasty stele inscriptions, see Kern 2000.

¹²⁷ In 5:13 of his treatise "Model Sayings" ("Fayan 法言") of ca. 5 CE, the Confucian scholar Yang Xiong 楊雄 (53 BCE–18 CE) made the thereafter much-quoted statement that "writing is the delineation of the mind" (書心畫也), as translated by McNair, McNair 1998: 1. Yang Xiong's statement has alternatively been translated as "calligraphy is mind-painting" by Susan Bush and Hsioh-yen Shih, Bush/Shih 1985: 96, as well as by Michael Nyland as "[...] speech is the heart's sounds, and writing its images." (言, 心聲也; 書, 心畫也), Yang/Nyland, transl., 2013: 76–77. On the notion of writing and calligraphy as a personification of the scribe him-/herself, see also Ledderose 1986: 35; Fong 2008.

material conditions, was given due to the overall new quantitative and circulative structure of textual discourse against the backdrop of cultural unification processes under the First Emperor of Qin (Qin Shihuang 秦始皇, 259–210 BCE, r. 246–210 BCE) and his successful political endeavor to unify the Chinese language and script. Thus initially enforced as an imperial undertaking and subsequently firmly cemented by strongholds of Chinese culture such as the powerful canonical textual tradition as well as calligraphy with regard to its “inherent potential [...] to furnish social coherence”,¹²⁸ while in the past, much collective effort has been put into the cause of constructing a consistent image of China as a politically and culturally more or less homogeneously unified space, in light of the various cultural turns to be registered in the humanities,¹²⁹ recent scholarship on the histories of China’s arts and cultures have been concerned with the systematic deconstruction of these generally ideologically charged narratives of one monolithic China. As Michael Nylan observes in his essay “Toward an Archaeology of Writing: Text, Ritual, and the Culture of Public Display in the Classical Period (475 BCE–220 CE)”:

Over the last fifty years, archaeological evidence, poststructuralist theories, and comparative studies have fairly well battered the traditional accounts of antiquity in China that posited from time immemorial a slow but steady evolution toward a single, coherent, and recognizably “Chinese” culture.¹³⁰

In face of a dominance of established narratives of China’s unbroken cultural past, Martin Kern recognizes that “[d]own to the present day, it has proven difficult to imagine the pre-imperial period as fundamentally different from later times in terms of the role and significance of writing [...]”,¹³¹ and argues contra deep-entrenched conceptions such as that “[w]e simply have to accept that the Zhous were a people who liked to write books”, as was put forward by Herrlee G. Creel in 1937 and is still affirmatively quoted, among others, by Tsuen-hsuei Tsien in his introduction to the revised 2004 edition of the justly acclaimed *Written on Bamboo and Silk*.¹³² In Nylan’s aforementioned contribution to *Character and Context in Chinese Calligraphy*, it is critically noted that while “in the Confucian *Analects* [...], no fewer than sixteen passages discuss *wen*, *wen hsüeh* (the study of *wen*), *wen ts’ai* (ornaments of *wen*), and *wen chang* (displays of *wen*) [...]”, in fact “[...] only a single, very late passage in the *Analects* employs *wen* in the sense of written

¹²⁸ Ledderose 1979: 33.

¹²⁹ See Bachmann-Medick 2006.

¹³⁰ Nylan 2005: 3. For an overview of major archaeological finds in China from 1899–2000, I refer to Appendix A in Tsien 2004 [1962]: 233–237.

¹³¹ Kern 2007: 114.

¹³² Creel 1937: 254–255; Tsien 2004 [1962]: 7; cf. Kern 2007: 114, n. 19.

characters [...]”.¹³³ In discussing the early notions of *wen* in terms of “patterns”, Nylan concludes along similar lines as Kern:

[...] long centuries of change were required before one category of significant pattern, the written script forms, would be regarded as a sufficient repository of extraordinary human value in and of itself, rather than the tool of bureaucrats or the specialty of craftsmen. Though much of the picture remains to be pieced together, the common assumption that China has from time immemorial been preeminently an ‘empire of texts’ is demonstrably false. It is the invention of later scholars who have sought to prove by the undeniable fact of a writing system continuously employed within China’s borders the more dubious proposition that an essentially unified China has enjoyed for millennia ‘the longest, continuous civilization’ in the world.¹³⁴

In his essay “The Performance of Writing in Western Zhou China”, Kern in turn posits that

[...] the rhetoric about writing as the ultimate expression of culture, as we find it from the late first century BCE onward, is decidedly an imperial phenomenon. Over the entire first millennium for which we have evidence of the Chinese script, beginning in ca. 1200 BCE, such rhetoric is virtually absent. Across the actual abundance of pre-imperial texts, there are very few statements assigning particular significance to writing.¹³⁵

Kern equally aims to strengthen the case against the prevailing image of China as an “empire of texts”, claiming that “[...] in order to put the characteristic uses and specific prestige of early Chinese writing into focus, we need to first liberate ourselves from a cluster of later imperial concepts.”¹³⁶ Concerning the developments of the Chinese writing system and Chinese text culture from the Qin period onwards, Kern further writes:

In this vast imperial tradition of elite literary writing, the very concept of culture (*wen* 文), was collapsed into that of the written text (*wen* 文). This concept of *wen* gave continuous presence to the past. It generated a cultural history of the written text together with the institutions to sustain it—first and foremost the imperial bureaucracy and its civil examination system—that remained intact and in place throughout the rise and fall of succeeding imperial dynasties and contributed

¹³³ Nylan 1999: 25.

¹³⁴ Ibid.: 57. The designations of China as an “empire of texts” as well as “the longest, continuous civilization” can be taken as references to Christopher Leigh Connery’s book *The Empire of the Text: Writing and Authority in Early Imperial China* (1998), and to Tsuen-hsuei Tsien’s *Written on Bamboo and Silk* (1962), where it is stated in the introduction: “Chinese records are [...] recognized for their unique continuity as the carrier of an old and ingenious civilization that bound the Chinese people together as the largest homogeneous cultural group of mankind. The continuous use of Chinese writing as a living medium of communication has maintained Chinese ideas and aspirations [...] in a long tradition that has been carried forward from generation to generation. [...] This unbroken tradition of Chinese civilization is largely due to the uninterrupted use of ancient literature [...]” Tsien 2004 [1962]: 2.

¹³⁵ Kern 2007: 115.

¹³⁶ Ibid.: 114.

forcefully to the image (such as Hegel's) of the Chinese empire as frozen in time and incapable of historical change.¹³⁷

He points out that textual sources containing reference to the function and meaning of writing were not common before the Western Zhou, and that textual sources before this time infer a moreover oral tradition to which texts stood in relation with respect to their divinatory, documentary, and representative functions in the context of ritual performance processes.¹³⁸ For example, in Shang divination practices that involved the ritual use and scriptural incision of so-called oracle bones and plastrons, queries formulated and addressed towards the spirits by the Shang kings were recorded in written form, as were the spirits' answers as observed from the crack signs created through heating of the material, and, subsequently, indication of whether or not the individual prophecies could be verified (see fig. 12a for an illustration of the so-called oracle bone script already mentioned above).¹³⁹ During the middle and late Western Zhou, in the ritual context of official appointment ceremonies, similarly, “a complex interplay between the oral and written performance of text” took place.¹⁴⁰ The text, which served the ceremonial purpose of a written “charge” (*ming* 命) or “order” (*ling* 令) that had been issued by the king, was to be read out loud and thus bestowed upon the appointed person, often including the names and titles of the attending officials as ritual participants and thus testimonial witnesses through whom the happening of the initiation act could be legally verified. The charge, which was written on to wooden or bamboo slips by a designated record-keeper (*zuoce* 作册), was then cast into a bronze vessel (that is, an edited version of the original text) (see figs. 20a–d for examples),¹⁴¹ together with sacrificial prayer texts in the name of the appointee, who, as the vessel donor, would later use the inscribed artifact in sacrifices to his ancestors, presumably transforming the physically manifest words again into a verbalized form of spoken announcement.

Noteworthy in this context of appointment rituals is that the oral and written performance of text also fulfilled the legal function of inscribing the king's authoritative

¹³⁷ Ibid.: 110.

¹³⁸ Ibid.: 114f., 121, 126f.

¹³⁹ Tsien 2004 [1962]: 32. A description of the content and arrangement of oracle inscriptions is provided *ibid.*: 31–35; see also Veit 1985: 40–41. For an in-depth study of Shang oracle-bones, I refer to the 1978 classic by David Keightley.

¹⁴⁰ Kern 2007: 150. For a detailed description of the formal procedure of such appointment ceremonies, see *ibid.*: 140–151, as well as Falkenhausen 1993: esp. 156–158; further, cf. Kern's essay “Offices of Writing and Reading in the Rituals of Zhou” in *Statecraft and Classical Learning: The Rituals of Zhou in East Asian History* (Elman/Kern, eds., 2010) for a similar discussion, esp. pages 83–87.

¹⁴¹ On the different transcriptions and editions of the charge, cf. Falkenhausen 1993: 162f.

presence—most literally—for it was not him, but a secretary of the king, who read out the charge with which the appointee was to be commanded to a certain position:

In an illocutionary speech act on behalf of the king, the Secretary presented—by reading it out loud—the document, thus bringing the appointment under the full ritual force and imposing dignity of the royal ceremony. [...] *The written document was important, but it was its ritual performance, with the king personally present, that sealed its authority.* [italics mine] [...] The king did not read to the appointee; all he did was to maintain his position. [...] The king, as far as we can tell from the inscriptions, controlled and approved the document—which represented his spoken voice—through his mere presence at the ceremony when the text was recited to the appointee.¹⁴²

Incidentally, this example illustrates the use of the physically inscribed word in lieu of the emperor or king's person, and “his spoken voice” can to a certain degree be considered in the same way that later calligraphy discourse of the Eastern Han would see “the rise of the aesthetic concept of ‘seeing the man in his work’” (Ledderose, as quoted above), that is, the written character as a presentative signifier, alternatively, an embodiment of an individual human being. Analogously, although true that “[a] shift occurred at the end of the Shang and especially in early Zhou from preoccupation with the spirits towards an emphasis on the formalities of ritual [...]”,¹⁴³ the early notion in China of written words as sacred cyphers possessing magical efficacy, perhaps “designed to transcribe the trance utterances of shaman-kings”,¹⁴⁴ can be taken to have prevailed to some extent in the later context of Western Zhou appointment ceremonies and inscriptions, as von Falkenhausen writes that “[...] it was the words of the charge [...] that were the most valued and ritually significant component of the investiture”, and that “[...] these words may have had a magical, power-endowing force”.¹⁴⁵

As far back as the very forms of inscribed objects can be traced in the material cultural histories of the ancient Shang and Zhou, whether etched into the bones and plastrons of animals in form of oracle bone script, brush-written upon the surfaces of imperishable jade objects, molded and cast into bronze ritual vessels, or incised into the outer layers of rock boulders as with the so-called “stone drum script” (*shiguwen* 石鼓文)¹⁴⁶ (as seen in figs.

¹⁴² Kern 2007: 150f.

¹⁴³ Falkenhausen 1993: 161, n. 43.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.: 158. On the magical efficacy ascribed to writing in early China, see Chaves 1977, and Vandermeersch 1980: 473–497.

¹⁴⁶ The *Stone Drum Inscriptions* refer to a set of texts inscribed into the famous, culturally highly charged, so-called “stone drums” (*shigu* 石鼓), which designate ten granite boulders discovered in early seventh-

12c–d), the Chinese written word thus seems to evidence that it has always been intricately related with contexts of religious belief, political power, and social hierarchy.¹⁴⁷ On early Chinese conventions of recording, von Falkenhausen writes that although ritual structures as an act of communion with the spirits present a universal phenomenon in human religious practices, in the early Chinese context, this act takes on unique characteristics such as the degree of reliance on writing in communicating with the spirits, and thus that “[t]he genesis of Chinese writing was certainly linked to cultic concerns”.¹⁴⁸ Especially the image of the Shang kings who sought to legitimize their sovereignty through above-mentioned pyromantic divination rites underpins the age-old, intricate relationship between ancient script forms and concepts of state authority and power, and also, as we can infer, the notion of singular rule.¹⁴⁹ Here, an etymological reference to the Greek terms *hierarchia* ἱεραρχία (hierarchy), literally meaning “sacred rule”, and, moreover, *hierarches*

century China in present-day Fengxiang 鳳翔 County, Shaanxi Province, dated to the fifth century BC, and now preserved in the Palace Museum in Beijing. The stone-engraved, rhymed inscriptions technically show a transitional form of seal script with elements of Western-Zhou bronze and large script and the later Qin- and Han-dynasty small seal script. They are of utmost importance as to our understanding of the development of Chinese script in that they present the longest extant poetic text sequence engraved into stone in seal script. The most complete set of sources for the earliest history of ritual processes of the pre-dynastic period, together with the seven steles of the First Emperor of Qin, they constitute the largest corpus to survive from after the time of the canonical poems (dating back as far as the tenth century BCE) and before the better-documented Han dynasty, see Rusk 2012: 97. Although stone inscriptions of the Shang and Western Zhou are still extant, so few are available that they cannot be considered representative of the script at the time, Fong et al., eds., 2008: 89. The ten stone drums are traditionally dated to the eighth century BCE, cf. Miller/Zhang 1990: 13; Tsien 2004 [1962]: 70. However, there has long been disagreement among scholars concerning their origin, date of manufacture, and purpose, which remain obscure, and present scholarship attributes the stone drums to the Eastern Zhou 東周 (770–256 BCE) state of Qin, dating them to around the fifth century BCE, cf. Fong et al., eds., 2008: 90; Rusk 2012: 78. Scholars largely agree that they were most likely produced at the instance of one of the dukes of the Qin state in commemoration of some event, Mattos 1998: 3; Tsien 2004 [1962]: 70. For an in-depth study on the stone drums, their discovery and transmission, and the content, style, and sequential order of their inscriptions, see Mattos 1988. The important relationship between the stone drum texts and the classic *Book of Poems* (*Shijing* 詩經), an assemblage of hymns, chants, and folkish songs, is discussed in Rusk 2012: 78–81. On the *Stone Drum Inscriptions* as a particular case and peculiar phenomenon of art historical and cultural transmission, further see Harrist 2011; and Hertel 2015 (b).

¹⁴⁷ For an overview of the pre-imperial history and the formal characteristics of ancient records on bones and shells, inscriptions on objects of metal and clay, and engravings on stone and jade, see Tsien 2004 [1964]: 19–39, 40–68, and 69–95, respectively. On the relationship between writing, politics, authority, and divinatory ritual practices of writing in early China, see Ahern 1981; Connery 1998; Kern 2000; Kern, ed., 2005; Lewis 1999. On writing with respect to its performative function of ritual display in pre-Qin China, see Kern 2007. For a study of Western Zhou ritual bronzes, see Rawson 1990 (2 vols.); further Falkenhausen 1993, for an essay Western Zhou ritual culture. On the enmeshment of calligraphy practice and politics in China in various ages from Han to modern times, see Connery 1998, Goldberg 1981, Hay 2005, Kraus 1991, Mersmann 2015 (b), Proser 1995, Yen 2005.

¹⁴⁸ Falkenhausen 1993: 161.

¹⁴⁹ As Keightley notes with regard to the identities of the Shang-dynasty diviners, throughout the five periods of the Shang as denoted by Dong Zuobin 董作賓 (1895–1963) in this context, while a larger number of court diviners’ names are recorded for the earlier periods I and II, their number begins to decrease in period III, and for the later periods IV and V the only diviner who is recorded is the king himself, who functioned as diviner throughout all five periods, see Keightley 1978: 31. Cf. also Qiu 2000: 61.

ιεράρχης (hierarchy), literally, the “ruler of sacred rites”, is applicable. With regard to the studies of Keightley and Shaughnessy on sources of Shang and Western Zhou history, respectively, Kern moreover writes that divination and bronze inscriptional records

[...] were highly tendentious, expressing authority and tight control over historical memory rather than offering an objective account of the bare facts: over 150 years their documented history, Late Shang oracle records became overwhelmingly optimistic and affirmative, while all known Western Zhou bronze inscriptions related to military matters were exclusively devoted to victories. Thus, in making the best use of the historical information found in bronze inscriptions, one needs to take seriously that they were claims for authority that were expressed in religious and political rituals and were consciously formed and purposefully manipulated by these specific functions and contexts. Would bronze inscriptions, with their highly formalized structure and self-referential gestures toward the donor’s merits and purposes, exist at all if not within and because of these circumstances?¹⁵⁰

And yet, although “[...] no doubt, the bones, plastrons, and bronze paraphernalia were indexical of sheer power [...], and their use in religious practices documented, before anything else, successful communication with the spirits [...]”,¹⁵¹ as Kern argues with reason, it would be incomplete to conclude that this indexing of power was the sole aspect significant to early forms, uses, and functions of writing. On grounds of early China’s “extraordinary material expenses and deliberate choices of transmission to lend longevity to ritual texts”, Kern implies that we can sensibly assume that “[...] especially in its display form, the early development of the writing system went hand in hand with its use for ritual purposes [...]”.¹⁵² Even more to the point, Kern wishes to raise awareness for the enmeshed structure of political, religious, and socio-cultural aspects, and that these should not, or cannot be considered as divided from one another. Regarding the question to what extent the inscriptions to be found in bronze ritual vessels can serve as primary sources,¹⁵³

¹⁵⁰ Kern 2005: xif.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.: xi.

¹⁵² Ibid. Along similar lines, in the context of appointment texts, von Falkenhausen strongly emphasizes that “[...] no bronze inscription was a unique document that preserved the only extant version of an investiture record. It was, instead, one of several existing versions of such a record, which had been inscribed in the bronze medium for the specific purpose of communication to the ancestral spirits.”, Falkenhausen 1993: 164.

¹⁵³ This question is matter of debate, for example, in Falkenhausen 1993, where the author argues in favor of “two interrelated propositions: (1) the bronze inscriptions must be understood as essentially religious documents”; and (2) they are not, strictly speaking, primary sources”, Falkenhausen 1993: 146. Rather than primary texts, the bronze inscriptions present “secondary versions [of the documents stored in the donor’s family archives]”, *ibid.*: 163. Falkenhausen goes on to conclude that “Only when we realize that the Western Zhou bronze inscriptions are not tantamount to Western Zhou administrative records, but derivative versions edited for a specifically religious purpose, can we fully appreciate their potential as sources.”, *ibid.*: 167.

that is, in the sense of fulfilling a “primarily documentary and historically oriented function”,¹⁵⁴ he convincingly insists:

The inscriptions do contain—and presumably were meant to preserve—historical knowledge. This fact is not diminished by their ritual environment, nor does it erase this environment. We need to avoid positing false alternatives: the question is, not whether bronze inscriptions are historical or religious documents, but how the two functions were mutually related. To the ancient Chinese, historical memory—including what may sometimes look like tedious bureaucratic accounting—was a significant dimension of political identity and expression; yet it also was shaped according to the ritual context. Nothing suggests that we should artificially isolate the one from the other.¹⁵⁵

Revealingly, the above conclusions can be taken as equally valid and substantial with regard to the historical and cultural meaning of calligraphy as it was to evolve as an art form over the millennia following the Late Shang and Western Zhou. While the written word initially fulfilled functions of divinatory practice as well as expressions of identificatory and classificatory significance, apart from the text which the word represented on a strictly semantic level, it was specific visual aspects, such as the graphic shape, the structural build, or the spatial constellation of the written characters and their individual strokes that throughout the history of writing in China were to become more and more elaborately established as readable, physically visible enactments and manifestations of political ideologies, religious inclinations, and moral values. These visual aspects provide the measure and framework upon which aesthetic assumption and qualitative evaluation are traditionally based in the appreciation of the art, or “methods”, of writing. In ancient and imperial China, the various visual aesthetic systems that were gradually to find pronunciation through the different written script types and material formats were ones which from their very beginnings had thus been inextricably, that is, *inherently* enmeshed with structures and articulations of political power. While to a certain extent this premise may be said to hold universally true for all genres in art, it appears to have significant validity in the special case of calligraphy in China, whose complicated and ambivalent condition in this respect is perhaps most felicitously circumscribed with Yueh-ping Yen’s grandiose metaphor, stating that “function and aesthetics do not simply coexist in Chinese calligraphy, they seduce each other [...]”.¹⁵⁶ This intricacy of “function and aesthetics” can be taken as grounded in classical philosophical conceptions of the moral and the aesthetic,

¹⁵⁴ Kern 2005: xi.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Yen 2005: 10.

which were closely intertwined with one another, as Nylan notes: “The *Analects*, like most other early Warring States texts, presupposes a near identity between the moral and the aesthetic such that the good and the beautiful tend to be conflated, particularly when discussion turns to consider things of lasting beauty.”¹⁵⁷ “Function”, then, in its political, social, didactic, or ritual sense, and “aesthetics”, in a Bourdieusian sense of taste, and the judgement of taste, as a culturally acquired habitus, are not only mutually related; they moreover engender each other, and therefore cannot be divided; and so, here, too, we should not “artificially isolate the one from the other”, as Kern’s claim reads. Why is it significant to emphasize this point in the context of the present study on Huang Binhong’s art? Because, as I hope to show in the following chapters, art historical discourse and art historiographical narrative *both on and within* the oeuvre of Huang Binhong (with exceptions, of course) appear to nurture, or at least underlie, a distinct enmeshment of function and aesthetics, which becomes particularly evident when examining aspects of Huang Binhong’s calligraphy art.

1.5. Interior/Exterior Realms: Writing, Calligraphy, and Cultures of Ritual and Visual Display

The point that I would here like to draw special attention to once more is that just because the aesthetic meaning and visual appeal of written characters were not verbalized systematically in texts dating from before the Han period, it cannot be said that this aesthetic dimension did not exist (as certain art historiographical narratives seem to suggest, whether intentionally or not, by focusing textual culture of the Han period as the beginning moment of aesthetical writing in China). Further corroborating this proposition is what Kern infers to be “the significance of writing as ritual display” during the Western Zhou.¹⁵⁸ This designation links to Keightley’s earlier labeling of “display inscriptions” in the context of late Shang oracle bone and plastron inscriptions, “executed in large seal script that clearly emphasizes the visual appearance of these records [...]”,¹⁵⁹ as well as to Nylan’s phrasing of a “Culture of Public Display in the Classical Period”¹⁶⁰. In discussing inscribed objects and their function as cultic paraphernalia, including vessels, bells, weapons, and textiles, Kern writes: “Such artifacts certainly enjoyed pragmatic use among the living, but their often elaborate splendor betrays not only exceptional expenditure but

¹⁵⁷ Nylan 1999: 25.

¹⁵⁸ Kern 2007: 121.

¹⁵⁹ Kern 2005: xiii.

¹⁶⁰ As phrased in his essay title, Nylan 2005.

also a conscious effort toward aesthetic representations that points beyond the mere functionality of things”.¹⁶¹

He thus emphasizes that articulations of aesthetic taste were indeed present in the context of pre-imperial visual and textual culture in China, and also points up the intricacy of “functional” and “aesthetic” elements within single objects, as well as the delicate, permeable boundaries of these elements. In “The Performance of Writing in Western Zhou China”, Kern further notes than when referring to “public display” in the early Chinese context of oracle bone and bronze inscriptions, this should not be misunderstood in the modern sense of the word, which implies associations of a large public audience or a wide-spread exhibition culture.¹⁶² The inscriptions in question were even rather difficult to read, which was due to the generally small size of the inscribed objects as well as the fact that they were usually cast on the inside of bronze vessels and thus covered from view by the sacrificial offerings with which the vessels were filled (see figs. 21a–f for early- and mid-Western Zhou examples). Although Kern therefore concludes that these inscriptions cannot have been meant to be read during the sacrifices, he goes on to argue:

All this, however, does not mean that objects and texts had no ‘public’ representation or were devoid of any display function. The—however limited—‘public’ was the prominent lineage group of high status and its guests [...]. This audience was an insider audience, but it comprised a cultural and political elite that did not need to inspect a bronze vessel and its inscription up close in order to know about and comprehend its representational nature. What counted, in general, was the sheer presence of the artifact.¹⁶³

Incidentally, it may be noted that with regard to the entire subsequent history of writing in imperial China, too, the production, reception, and circulation of texts, in general, and works of calligraphy, in particular, this designation of the recipient circle as an “insider audience” is fully applicable and likewise appropriate. In this regard, the wording of Western Zhou (as well as later) display cultures as being ones of “public display” could more precisely even be taken to describe a time-and-space-specific form of “semi-public” or “private public” display. It was only as late as the mid-twentieth century that first large-scale campaigns were undertaken by the Chinese Communist government to systematically raise literacy rates among the up until that time largely illiterate population in China (a transformation which has certainly conditioned the wide-spread popularization of

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Kern 2007: 113.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

calligraphy practice in China from the latter decades of the twentieth century onwards up to this day); although, even then, despite officially condemning the traditional arts as negative residue of feudalist society, calligraphy performance and display continued to be deployed as an exclusive, charisma-enhancing means of earning respect and distinguishing oneself amongst the internal political and social elite of the Chinese Communist Party (cf. figs. 22a–c).¹⁶⁴ The reasons for this are quite simple, inasmuch as the somatic foundation of calligraphy (among other things) virtually encourages its abuse as a powerful means of political control, as Birgit Mersmann points out, stating that

[...] es gerade die somatische Begründung der Schriftbildlichkeit ist, die ihrem Missbrauch als Machtinstrument der Indoktrinierung Vorschub leistet. Weil skripturale Ikonizität projizierte Korporalität ist, kann sie auch zum Zwecke der umgekehrten Projektion, nämlich des Subjektentwurfs durch Inskription von Ideen und Vorstellungsbildern in den Körper instrumentalisiert werden.¹⁶⁵

The contextualization of ritual culture around which ancient Chinese societies revolved and organized themselves appears useful to inform us as art historians on the various significances that writing and calligraphy may have had in these societies as well as on the ways in which aesthetic perception might have subsequently developed in connection with writing and the genesis of “calligraphy” in art discourse. Along these lines, we may note that Kern, in the context of backing Nylan’s idea of pre-imperial China as a “culture of public display”, provides the following definition and meaning of writing in pre-imperial China, designating “[...] writing’s most prominent functions in Zhou times, namely, those of ritual display and representation of status [...]”.¹⁶⁶ In concluding the essential significance of the written word for the performance and display of rituals in Western Zhou, Kern further concretizes the use of certain materials:

[...] for writing, the Western Zhou elites themselves restricted the use of the precious, non-perishable material of bronze to texts that were to be presented in ceremonial (mostly religious) contexts—a fact that speaks eloquently to the significance of writing as ritual display.¹⁶⁷

Falkenhausen, too, thematizes the ideas of public display culture and material value in the pre-imperial context of writing. In discussing ritual and social codes related with Western Zhou appointment ceremonies, which involved, notably, the exchange of gifts, he points out: “Given that gift-exchange between aristocrats may have been the major form of trade

¹⁶⁴ See Kraus 1991: 62; Yen 2005: 31.

¹⁶⁵ Mersmann 2015 (b): 208.

¹⁶⁶ Kern 2007: 115.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.: 121.

in Western Zhou, the importance of the material transactions accompanying the investiture should not be underemphasized [...]", and in the footnotes, Falkenhausen adds that according to the *Book of Rites* (*Liji* 禮記), "[...] the material tokens of power were magnificently displayed during ancestral celebrations."¹⁶⁸ Interestingly, different from the emphasis implied by Kern, Falkenhausen contends:

Investiture documents were inscribed in bronze not because bronze was more durable (as some have suggested), but because bronze was a sacred material fit for use in ritual as a medium for transmitting written messages to the spiritual realm.¹⁶⁹

In shifting our focus in view of ancient China away from its image as an empire of texts and towards an understanding of its pre-imperial structures as cultures of ritual display, a distinct entry point can be established through which the sphere(s) of Chinese calligraphy can be accessed and opened up. The chosen vantage point reveals calligraphy as a culture- and society-specific form of ritual display, and as an integral part of *wen*—this latter term, however, not in its text-heavy sense of “written culture”, as it was only to be established gradually over time¹⁷⁰—but rather with regard to its assumed originary form of a “crisscross pattern”, and meaning, moreover, “cosmic patterns”¹⁷¹, “cosmic text pattern”¹⁷², “model pattern”¹⁷³, or “memorable patterns”¹⁷⁴. With an emphasis on the performative nature of ancient rituals, calligraphy is understood as a regulative agent that models and cultivates the structure and behavior of the self/body. This self/body is thus patterned, or programed, in its mnemonic function to operate within longer “chains of ritualized action within society”, involving various interconnected forms of personal, collective, and cultural memory, such as the ones specifically distinguished by Connerton (personal, cognitive, habitual).¹⁷⁵ Connerton’s definition of “performatives” in ritual can be well applied to calligraphy practice (, as here, too, the performative elements “are encoded [...] in set postures, gestures and movements. The resources of this encoding are elementary. In rites the body is given the appropriate pose and moves through prescribed

¹⁶⁸ Falkenhausen 1993: 158, n. 38. Falkenhausen points out the significance of presenting objects of value in the context of these ceremonies. For an informative study on the cultural, social, and political exchange networks of gift-giving in Western Zhou China, see the essay by Constance A. Cook (1997), in which the author elucidates the importance of the trade of goods during this period as “associated with the status and prestige of an individual as a representative of lineage” (Cook 1997: 289).

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.: 164.

¹⁷⁰ See Kern 2007: 110.

¹⁷¹ Nylan 1999: 27.

¹⁷² Zito 1997: 223.

¹⁷³ Nylan 1999: 23.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.: 25.

¹⁷⁵ See Connerton 1995 [1989]: 25.

actions [...]”.¹⁷⁶ The process of first acquiring calligraphy skills according to different styles of canonical works can itself be understood as an internalization and ritualization of patterns of “postures, gestures and movements”; patterns that in their entirety present a canon through which to gradually develop an individual style the more these have been internalized, incorporated (see the illustrations in figs. 23a–b; and further fig. 24 for the gilt-bronze musical clock in the collection of the Palace Museum, Beijing, whose “calligrapher automaton” nicely illustrates the images of repetition, precision, and patterning of bodily movement associated with calligraphy practice).

Here, we can also resort to Stephen Owen’s useful definition of the term *wen* 文 in the context of classical Chinese literary criticism. In the glossary of his book *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, Owen defines *wen* as “pattern”, “literature”, “the written word”, and notes:

In the common organic tree metaphor for literature, *wen* is the visible outward pattern of the leaves, which, observed carefully, reveals the hidden shape of the trunk and branches: *wen* is the organic external manifestation of some “substance” (*chih*) or “natural principle” (*li*) (e.g., growth or “treeing”) [...].¹⁷⁷

Analogously, in the context of calligraphy practice, the human body equals the system of a trunk and branches, whose “hidden shape”, in other words, whose *potential* shape, becomes tangible through writing (*wen*), i.e. the written calligraphy; a “visible outward pattern” of “leaves”. Further, the specific visual shapes of these “leaves” can be considered as determined by the inner dispositions of the writer, i.e. his/her “natural principle”; his/her personal state of (moral) “growth or ‘treeing’”. In the case of calligraphy, the visible “output” of writing in turn has a reciprocal effect on the “inner dispositions”; a point that will be discussed in more detail in chapter five.

If occidental worldviews traditionally mark a distinction between human beings and animals according to Cartesian dichotomies of “nature” and “culture”, or “nature” and “art”, then, with respect to classical Chinese concepts, by contrast, the drawn line, if any, is a much more malleable and transient one.¹⁷⁸ Here, the ritual act fulfills an important role in

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.: 59.

¹⁷⁷ Owen 1992: 594.

¹⁷⁸ On traditional conceptions of nature in China, see Tu Wei-ming’s chapter “The Continuity of Being: Chinese Visions of Nature” for a discussion in the Confucian context, Tu 1985: 35–50, and Ronald Egan’s essay “Nature and Higher Ideals in Texts on Calligraphy, Music, and Painting” for a discussion in the context of the arts, Egan 2004. In the latter, Egan concludes: “As we know, crucial developments regarding the conception and values of calligraphy, music, and painting took place during the late Han and early post-Han era. Nature was a significant element in the way all three arts were thought of and described. With

ancient China, in that it provides and conditions porous interfaces between “natural” and “cultured”, or “natural” and “artificial” bodies, substances, and domains. In the chapter “A Confucian Metaphor: The Holy Vessel” of his book *Confucius: The Secular as Sacred*, Fingarette trenchantly registers:

What is it that distinguishes man from the beasts and the inanimate? In what do man’s peculiar dignity and power reside? Confucius offers an amazingly apt and generative image: Rite (*li*).¹⁷⁹

I here refer again to Roger Ames, who was quoted above with his observation that “[s]ignificant in the correlation between ritual action and body is the polar rather than dualistic relationship between form and matter, action and body.”¹⁸⁰ Ames further writes:

[...] the body of ritual actions and institutions constitutes the root which supports and sponsors the innovation and creativity of a cultural tradition. Like the human body, it is a profoundly organic entity which must be nurtured and cultivated to preserve its integrity, and which must be constantly revitalized and adapted to prevailing circumstances in order to retain its influence. It is once the fruit of the past and the ground of the future.¹⁸¹

Hence, when speaking of writing as a cultural achievement of human civilization, we should not forget that in its earliest forms in China, the written word was inextricably intertwined with ritual acts; moreover, ones through which cosmological links to higher powers of the natural world order were to be established. The employed materials, including animal bones for the transcription of divine prophecies; copper-tin alloys for casting sacred records into ceremonial bronze objects; cinnabar pigment for the mixing of writing paste; or inscribed stones which were buried with the deceased so as to accompany them into the afterlife, in fact, presented nothing more (or less) than resources of nature

calligraphy and music, nature was a trope used to characterize the texture and qualities of the artistic media, to root them, as it were, in an analogy of universal familiarity. With painting, nature was not a trope but the subject matter of the art form itself [...]. The parallel among the three arts goes beyond their reliance upon the rhetoric or subject of nature. With all three, there was posited an ultimate meaning or goal of the art that lay beyond nature but was nevertheless intimately connected with it. For each art there was one term and concept, among many, that emerged as the key designation of this ultimate meaning. The key term differed with each art: for calligraphy it was ‘*yi*’ [意] (idea); for music, ‘*he*’ 和 (harmony), and for painting, ‘*shen*’ 神 (spirit). The choice of each term was determined by the circumstances or older ideologies connected with each art and unique to each. For calligraphy the deciding factor in giving special importance to ‘idea’ was the connection between writing and the ‘images’ and hexagrams in the *Yi jing* [易經, *Book of Changes*]. For music, it was the ancient notion of a cosmic ‘harmony’ uniting all within heaven and earth. For painting, it was the earlier dominance of a portraiture as a subject and the assumption that a portrait might, like a person, possess an inner ‘spirit.’” Ibid.: 303f. On the aesthetics of music as one of the oldest ritual arts in the Confucian context, see DeWoskin 1984.

¹⁷⁹ Fingarette 1972: 79.

¹⁸⁰ Ames 1993 [1984]: 170.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

itself, which had only been “shaped into artifact for ritual use”—the margins between “natural” and “cultural”, or “natural” and “artificial” spheres thus permeable. It is the process of ritualization that bestows upon man, and nature alike, their aspect of sacredness, therein becoming sealed together. In the context of ancient shaman rain dance rituals, Fingarette writes:

Nor should we suppose that Nature is cast out unless shaped into artifact for ritual use. The raiment of holiness is cast upon Nature as well as man, upon the river and the air as well as upon youth and song, when these are seen through the image of a ceremonial Rain Dance.¹⁸²

I quote from Fingarette the above passage, for one, because this passage can be applied to the field of calligraphy, inasmuch as I see calligraphy to be precisely this: a form of nature that is “shaped into artifact for ritual use”, to quote this efficacious imagery; the written word as well as the writer further as inscribed with “the raiment of holiness” in their own context, if seen through the image of a ceremonial act. What is more, Fingarette’s phrase of the human act of shaping nature contains a critical cue with regard to our understanding of calligraphy practice as a form of ritualized action: the term “use”, and specifically, “ritual use”. In discussing cultures of writing in pre-imperial and imperial China, the significance of function and functionality of inscribed objects, namely, *as* objects which do possess material, plastic structures of specific shape, size, and color, should not be underestimated when analyzing content and meaning of the written texts themselves. Also, the concrete aspect of ritual *use* is key in deciphering an aesthetic semantics of style implemented with each object, and it is only through this “usefulness”, meaning its functional nature as a ritual object, that the inscribed text lastly fulfills its whole meaning. While Confucius had stated in 2:12 of the *Analecets* that “the accomplished scholar is not a utensil” (*junzi bu qi* 君子不器),¹⁸³ signifying that a person of honor should always make decisions in favor of moral values rather than utilitarian profits that might be gained from a certain situation, we must not confuse “use” and “usefulness” of ritual objects with that of ordinary “utensils”. Indeed, ritual objects, in the common sense, are not “useful” at all; or, put differently, their “usefulness” lies outside the category of everyday utilitarianism or pragmatism. In *Analecets* 5:3, Confucius paradoxically likens his disciple Zigong 子貢 (b. 520 BCE) to “a utensil”, more precisely, to a *hulian* 瑚璉 “a sacrificial vase of jade”,¹⁸⁴ or

¹⁸² Fingarette 1972: 79.

¹⁸³ Legge, transl., 1960 [1892]: 150.

¹⁸⁴ Fingarette 1972: 73.

“a gemmed sacrificial utensil”,¹⁸⁵ in other words, a “utensil”, yet notably an adorned, and thus nevertheless valuable one. As Fingarettes notes, this passage is usually read in the light of aforementioned book chapter 2:12,¹⁸⁶ yet according to the author, the actual value of the jade vase has nothing to do with its esteemed materials:

[...] the vessel’s sacredness does not reside in the preciousness of its bronze, in the beauty of its ornamentation, in the rarity of its jade or in the edibility of the grain. Whence does its sacredness come? It is sacred not because it is useful or handsome but because it is a constitutive element in the ceremony. It is sacred by virtue of its participation in rite, in holy ceremony. [...] It is therefore a paradox as utensil, for unlike utensils in general, this has no (utilitarian) use external to ceremony itself but only a ritual function. (Indeed some ceremonial pots had holes in them in order to emphasize their ritual rather than utilitarian value.) By analogy, Confucius may be taken to imply that the individual human being, too, has ultimate dignity, sacred dignity by virtue of his role in rite, in ceremony, in *li*.¹⁸⁷

On the next page, he further writes:

It is not individual existence per se that is the condition sufficient to create and sustain the ultimate dignity of man. It is the ceremonial aspect of life that bestows sacredness upon persons, acts, and objects which have a role in the performance of ceremony.¹⁸⁸

Humans and things are never virtuous in themselves; they are not self-justifying. Only through enactment of or in ritual do they come to fulfill virtuous meaning, for “[t]he rite is self-justifying [...]”.¹⁸⁹ This assertion is noteworthy with regard to notions of the useful in the Confucian context. We may recall Kern’s observation that in the context of Western Zhou appointment ceremonies “[t]he written document was important, but it was its *ritual performance* [italics mine], with the king personally present, that sealed its authority [...]”,¹⁹⁰ and also Falkenhausen’s argumentation that the material of bronze vessels presented a sacred form that was “fit for use in ritual”,¹⁹¹ rather than that it had been chosen for practical reasons of durability. Fingarette’s elucidation through the above

¹⁸⁵ Legge, transl., 1960 [1892]: 173. As Legge notes, “the 瑚璉 were vessels richly adorned, used to contain grain-offerings in the royal ancestral temples [...]. While the sage did not grant to Ts’ze-kung that he was a *Chün-tsze* (II. xii), he made him ‘a vessel of honour’, valuable and fit for use on high occasions.”, *ibid.*: n. 3. The compounds *hu* 瑚 and *lian* 璉 denote “a kind of sacrificial vessel”; the term *hulian* 瑚璉 moreover originally carries the meanings of “vessels of grain at an ancestral temple”, “a vessel used to hold grain at the imperial sacrifice”, further, “a person of virtue and quality”, cf. HYDZD, vol. 2: 1125, 1130; Karlgren 1957: 34, no. 49i’, and 73, no. 213c; Mathews 1975 [1943]: 2171, 4013.

¹⁸⁶ Fingarette 1972: 73.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*: 75.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*: 76.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*: 78.

¹⁹⁰ Kern 2007: 151.

¹⁹¹ Falkenhausen 1993: 164.

example of the adorned temple vessel similarly argues against its function as a representation of material value.

Following Fingarette's reasoning, what, then, is in fact gained from ritual; from this "ceremonial aspect of life"; our "role in the performance of ceremony"? What meaning do rituals have? As noted above, Andrew Zhonghu Yan asserts that "[s]elf-cultivation [...] is to refine the self in such a way that it is in complete harmony with the world."¹⁹² With reference to *Analects* 13:6, Yan quotes Confucius with: "If a man is correct in his own person (*shen* [身]), then there will be obedience without orders being given; but if he is not correct in his own person (*shen*), there will not be obedience even though orders are given [...]"¹⁹³ and goes on to elucidate:

Through ritualization, one internalizes the social norms such that one is always able to align oneself with those norms in any circumstances. Finally, *shen* refers to life itself but this life's value is superseded by the ideal of benevolence [*ren* 仁]. It is clear, then, that the self is embodied and the body is cultivatable. For Confucius, self-cultivation is a process of the ritualization of the body.¹⁹⁴

And so we may understand that rituals are equatable with (bodily) practices of self-cultivation, and that self-cultivation, in essence, aims towards as well as effectuates a harmonious existence of the individual being in life and society. Further, rituals can be considered to contain a desirable effect in that, as Connerton states, "[a]ll rites are repetitive, and repetition automatically implies continuity with the past [...]"¹⁹⁵ which, incidentally, is one of the factors that guarantees for this "complete harmony with the world" described by Tu. It seems we can also infer from this that certain things which are enacted in a formally repetitive way are to some extent equal to rites, as for instance would be the case with artistic and technical repetition—significant to our specific field of inquiry—in that this kind of repetition presents forms of bodily practice aiming towards as well as effectuating self-cultivation. As a side note, the positive value of repetition, or

¹⁹² Yan 2011 (b): 33.

¹⁹³ Ibid.: 36. *Analects* 13:6 is alternatively translated by Legge as: "The Master said, 'When a prince's personal conduct is correct, his government is effective without the issuing of orders. If his conduct is not correct, he may issue orders, but they will not be followed.'" ("子曰: '其身正, 不令而行; 其身不正, 雖令不從。'") Legge, transl., 1960 [1892]: 266.

¹⁹⁴ Yan 2011 (b): 36.

¹⁹⁵ Connerton 1995 [1989]: 45.

repetitive practice, with regard to the culture-specific practice of copying in Chinese art, can be pointed out here.¹⁹⁶ Concerning the effective sphere of rites, Connerton contends:

Rites are not limited in their effect to the ritual occasion. It is true that rituals tend to occur at special places at fixed times. And it is the case that many rites mark beginnings and endings [...]. But whatever is demonstrated in rites permeates also non-ritual behaviour and mentality. Although demarcated in time and space, rites are also as it were porous. They are held to be meaningful because rites have significance with respect to a set of further non-ritual actions, to the whole life of community.¹⁹⁷

Along Connerton's line of thought, the question that comes to mind is whether we are always able to differentiate clearly between what the author denotes as "rites" and, in turn, as "non-ritual actions". In the context of his definition and differentiation of "closed" and "open practices", Connerton denominates "closed practices" as distinguished by "an explicit beginning and end"; a set of rules that "can be described exhaustively" and whose nature is "constitutive" as well as "fixed"; the point of the practice being "given in the rules". By contrast, "open practices" are defined through a form of activity that is "on-going and open-ended"; a structure of rules that "would be impossible to give a complete account of" and whose nature is "regulative" as well as "changing"; the point of the practice possibly lying "outside the rules".¹⁹⁸ While to some extent we certainly understand that, following this, practices such as "rites", in the classical sacral context of *li*, could be considered as "closed" ceremonial acts that are visibly "demarcated in time and space" and undertaken according to a set procedure, length, constellation, and place, it seems too narrow and rigid a definition to divorce "constitutive" and "fixed" aspects of the rules involved from "regulative" and "changing" ones. How do we define "fixed" and "changing"; where do they begin and end? Translating this model to the historical phenomenon of calligraphy practice, one could argue that the "rules" (technically, structurally, aesthetically) are both "constitutive" and "regulative"; "fixed" and "changing". Though Connerton does assume a permeability of "ritual" and "non-ritual" patterns of behavior, it seems that this is not based on the understanding of a reciprocal correlation, but rather on a one-way permeation of "rites" into the "non-ritual" sphere. The

¹⁹⁶ The value of repetitive action as a means of paying reverence to the past is articulated in *Analects* 7:1: "The Master said, 'A transmitter and not a maker, believing in and loving the ancients [...]' ("子曰, 述而不作, 信而好古 [...]"), Legge 1960: 195. Legge annotates: "Confucius disclaims being an originator or maker. 述 = 傳舊而已, 'simply to hand down the old.' Commentators say the Master's language is from his extreme humility.", *ibid.*: n. 1.

¹⁹⁷ Connerton 1995 [1989]: 44f.

¹⁹⁸ See *ibid.*: 64ff.

question is whether this assumption of permeability in fact not diffuses the very boundaries held to divide “ritual” and “non-ritual” spheres of human behavior and mentality? Regardless, whether or not it be understood as “closed” or “open”, we are in any case inclined to ask what it is that essentially *makes* a ritual practice, especially if comprehended in terms of explicitly non-sacral contexts; as a “porous” structure that infiltrates and melds with domains of “non-ritual actions”, extending even into “the whole life of community”. In light of Connerton’s model, which in spite of these problematic issues still does provide stimulating impulses in discussing the subject matter of ritual practice, I think it is appropriate to emphasize and give preference to the term “chains of ritualized action” (in fact coined by Connerton himself) over a clear-cut division between the “ritual” and “non-ritual”. In relating and translating these “chains of ritualized action” to the many-faceted field of writing and calligraphy in China, their intertwined processes should be visualized not only as a spatially but also temporally interlocked framework of complexly connected patterns of behavior, including aspects of gesture, demeanor, and body language, conventions of thought and conduct, and social and moral codes, traversing and transferring themselves into different areas of human existence as well as different historical eras in time, thus maintaining a connective structure between the past, present, and future. With regard to his above-quoted phrase that ritual repetition “automatically implies continuity with the past”, Connerton also expounds:

Concerning memory as such, we may note that our experience of the present very largely depends upon our knowledge of the past. We experience our present world in a context which is casually connected with past events and objects, and hence with reference to events and objects which we are not experiencing when we are experiencing the present. And we will experience our present differently in accordance with the different pasts to which we are able to connect that present. Hence the difficulty of extracting our past from our present: not simply because present factors tend to influence—some might want to say distort—our recollections of the past, but also because past factors tend to influence, or distort, our experience of the present.¹⁹⁹

If we comprehend our experience of the present as significantly informed by our past, then the meaning of rites in their function as a regulative agent of (social) behavior becomes all the more apparent. In the chapter “The Rites and Music Tradition” of Li Zehou’s *The Chinese Aesthetic Tradition*, the author describes the traditional relationship between rites and aesthetics in China with regard to their coercive function as political and social regulatives:

¹⁹⁹ Connerton 1995 [1989]: 2.

Both rites and music are closely related to aesthetics. From the earliest times, ‘rites’ was probably a general term that encompassed rituals governing everything from the sacrificial system to military and political affairs to everyday life. In actuality, they comprised a sort of unwritten law, a set of behavioral regulations that the clans and tribes required their members to obey. Fundamentally, then, the rites were a coercive set of demands, restrictions, and rules imposed on the individual’s external conduct, actions, and demeanor. Through these restrictions on the individual, the order and stability of the collective could be protected and maintained.²⁰⁰

In the section “Politics and Art” of the same chapter, Li more precisely names the investigation of various artistic genres as a scholarly desideratum that still needs to be tackled in this context:

[...] politics and art, the regulations of politico-moral instruction, and the logical form of emotion itself came to share a complex coexistence in which could be found both conformity and discrepancy, both unity and opposition. At different times and for various reasons, these surfaced in aesthetic theory in the form of debates and contradictions between ornament and substance, beauty and good, expressing emotion and being a ‘vehicle for the Way’, ‘musical education’ (emphasizing emotional form) and ‘poetic education’ (emphasizing political content). The situation is very complex and calls for a very concrete analysis. [...] I believe that there is some merit in looking at these issues from the perspective of the development and differentiation of various artistic genres.²⁰¹

According to this kind of definition of rites, in the traditional Chinese context, we can comprehend the deeds of writing and reading of calligraphy as forms of performing ritual; as integral, entwisted links among “chains of ritualized action” with social, political, cultural, aesthetic, and didactic implications, which are what I think Li means to signify with the “complex coexistence” of politics and art, in terms of “politico-moral instruction” and “logical form of emotion”. This nexus of issues is elucidated by Li through the example of literature; while calligraphy is also mentioned in this context, it is not further discussed.

Although the complex political dimension of calligraphy practice and criticism in China has already been dealt with extensively, there remains yet to be contextualized, specifically, the subject-matters of calligraphy and ritual, and with this, bodily performance. One of the reasons why I aim to provide a contribution in furthering this contextualization through the present study is that I see in the aspect of body and bodily performativity a sensible and profitable approach to illustrate the links between these two matters. This motivation is all the more strengthened by the fact that the bodily aspect, as

²⁰⁰ Zehou Li 2010: 11. For an alternative discussion of Chinese aesthetic traditions, see Xu 1966; cf. also Zehou Li 1998.

²⁰¹ Ibid.: 34f.

mentioned above, presents an in general similarly under-investigated topic in studies on traditional arts in China.²⁰² This idiosyncrasy surely owes to the circumstance described by Thomas A. Wilson in his introductory essay to *Culture, Society, Politics, and the Formation of the Cult of Confucius* with specific reference to the Confucianism scholar Rodney Taylor, that

[...] the study of Confucianism in the West has been ‘dominated by historical and philosophical approaches’ to the neglect of ‘religion and spirituality’. Because early Confucianism ‘has long been defined in intellectual, or at most ethical terms,’ he continues, ‘anything that fell outside that frame has been left out to gather dust in outer darkness.’ More recently, scholars have begun to approach Confucianism as ‘a lived and living faith rather than a philosophy or an ethic’ [...].²⁰³

Wilson continues:

If Taylor is correct that the spirit has been neglected in Western studies of Confucianism, most of the body has virtually disappeared as well. One’s everyday corporeal existence, whether in social intercourse with other people or in worship of one’s ancestors, was central to being Confucian and was an underlying concern in Confucian discourse on *li* 禮, or ‘ritual’, from ancient times to the present. The word *li* has a broad range of meanings that tends not to distinguish between sacred and secular contexts.²⁰⁴

Scholarly idiosyncrasies that have neglected “spirituality” and “body” in discourse on Confucianism and ritual are likewise raised as an issue by Nylan. In his essay “Toward an Archaeology of Writing”, Nylan provides an overview of the “series of negative hypothesis” formulated by those scholars “dissatisfied with the major propositions that once informed scholarly opinion on the classical period” in China, and among these, he lists: “Cultivation was far less ‘interior’ than hitherto thought, with a greater emphasis on performance and embodiment, so the classicists of yore do not really represent the forerunners of modern Chinese intellectuals.”²⁰⁵ This circumstance is likely to be related with the development that took place throughout the first century CE in Han China and which Nylan denotes as a

[...] dramatic shift from ritual practice to text-based knowledge as the basis for classical learning, refinements in the textual tradition—rather than appropriately modeled social interactions—were increasingly viewed as the primary avenue by

²⁰² On this issue, see also John Hay’s essay “The Body Invisible in Chinese Art?”, Hay 1994.

²⁰³ Wilson 2002: 14.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.: 15.

²⁰⁵ Nylan 2005: 5.

which to approach the past. In effect, the sacred past had become largely synonymous with the literary past, its culture heroes recast as literary creators.²⁰⁶

This paradigm shift, Nylan argues, stood in connection with the political interests of the government scribes and literate candidates for office, whose number was increasing “far too rapidly for the state apparatus to absorb them, with the result that men of privilege began to engage in sedulous self-promotion via textual genealogies and the genealogizing of their preferred texts”.²⁰⁷ Concurrently, the invention of cheap paper, which had been accounting for much more widespread literacy, presented a change to which certain hereditary elites responded to with “considerable alarm, anxious lest the state’s limited political patronage be shared with the *arrivistes*, defined as those who had merely learnt texts through texts, without spending long years practicing the classics and the allied arts under the tutelage of acknowledged masters”.²⁰⁸ The “truths once assumed to lie in consistent practice informed by reference to cosmic principles and canonical traditions now were to be had only from the kind of persistence in reading and writing [...]”, thus accounting for a “brand-new definition of *wen* and *wen chang* in terms of neo-canonical writing dedicated to the Han throne by its loyal elites”.²⁰⁹ If writing in imperial China is discussed in terms of a government device for systematic recruitment that is “secured by the moulding of its members’ bodies and morality through the training and discipline of calligraphy”, as suggested by Yen who has been quoted above,²¹⁰ the conclusion that “[o]nce you have been shaped by the mould of the masters, you are simultaneously moulded into one who is considered fit to govern [...]” can be paralleled with Nylan’s inference that, as of the Eastern Han, “the skillful reproduction of texts, in their literary and also physical aspects, was the single best test of the degree to which men had fully internalized the authoritative message contained in the state-sponsored texts”.²¹¹

²⁰⁶ Ibid.: 41.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.: 38.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.: 37f. One more reason for “considerable alarm” among certain hereditary elites could have been the prospect of losing political control over clan-dominated local society. As Wilson states in his above-quoted essay with reference to James Watson: “The Chinese empire succeeded in effecting cultural integration across class and geographic boundaries, Watson argues, by standardizing the rituals rather than the ideological context of the various local and regional cults; the state promoted and regulated *orthopraxy*—correct performance of rites—rather than *orthodoxy*—correct belief in a specific meaning of the rites. ‘Performance’, [Watson] says, ‘took precedence over belief—it mattered little what one believed’ about a particular ritual ‘as long as the rites were performed properly’ [...]”, Wilson 2002: 19.

²⁰⁹ Nylan 2005: 38.

²¹⁰ Yen 2005: 128.

²¹¹ Nylan 1999: 38.

Analogously, a prevalent lack among scholars of Chinese history and philology in the attention that is imparted to performative aspects of ritual culture in ancient China is reflected in the field of Chinese art history and historiography. In art criticism as verbalized and manifested through the written text culture of the traditional Chinese literati, the high value that is conventionally ascribed to the spiritual, ideational, and essential meaning of things and their ideas has claimed as much as afforded attention and reiteration not only in primary sources of Chinese art, but also in secondary literature on the subject, both in East Asian and western languages.²¹² Incidentally, evaluative attributions of this kind and the consequential formation of an art discourse centering on “interior” issues have taken place at the expense of systematic discourse on the bodily, physical, and material issues of things and their relation to humans in the context of art; a symptomatic reflection of the broader tendencies in historical studies on China implied above. As it were, prevalent attitudes towards artworks and their evaluation are, similarly, deeply entrenched in historically and discursively cemented, ancient conceptions of art and the arts. Ronald Egan describes in his essay “Nature and Higher Ideals in Text on Calligraphy, Music, and Painting” how beginning with late-Han art criticism, each of these three art forms were associated with a specific concept and term: calligraphy with “idea” (*yi* 意); music with “harmony” (*he* 和); and painting with “spirit” (*shen* 神).²¹³ Informative here is the transcendent quality of the ideals ascribed to each—their “spiritual-metaphysical-aesthetic claim and dimension”, as put by Egan, who elucidates:

Different as they may have been, what these three concepts had in common was that each transcended nature as it was used in service of the three arts, and each, indeed, could readily be associated with the Way of heaven and earth. They each also transcended the perceptible forms of the respective art that embodies them: “idea” lies beyond the “images” presented by the written characters; “harmony (cosmically conceived, not musically) lies beyond the sounds and notes of song; and “spirit” lies beyond the formal shapes and colors of painting. “Harmony” is associated with an extreme degree of this transcendence of form, to the extent that perfect “harmony” is often said to leave the medium behind altogether and consist, in fact, of “silent” music.²¹⁴

Although it is true that the bodily dimension of calligraphy practice is, indeed, more often than not mentioned in introductory literature to the subject, especially with regard to the technical and methodical aspects of brush writing, it is hardly at length or in depth that

²¹² On this issue, see Cao Yiqiang’s *The History of Art History in China*, Cao 1997.

²¹³ Egan 2004: 304.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*

these aspects are studied or taken into focus. Generally, literature conforms, on the whole, with a traditional rhetoric of the body, therein moreover conveying and confirming notions of a conservative Chinese *Weltbild* in the context of art, rather than embracing alternative approaches and readings into this field of inquiry. Often charged with ideological or political content, such art historiographical tendencies in scholarship, presenting, in themselves, firmly established traditions, have ultimately served the effective self-affirmation of cultural values and nationalist interests within a recursive, self-preserving, and exclusive system of art historical discourse.²¹⁵ Before this backdrop, one of the main aims of the present study is to further the path that has been taken by initial studies which are indeed specifically dedicated to calligraphy and writing in China as seen through the prism of the human body and in its significance as a space of negotiating social, political, and aesthetic meaning.²¹⁶ In another sense, the aim is also to return to the “calligraphic act of writing” (*den kalligraphischen Schreibakt*), as denoted in the above-cited quote by Birgit Mersmann:

Im Chinesischen gibt es sogar einen eigenen Begriff, der den kalligraphischen Schreibakt, die plastische Gestaltung der Schriftzeichen im Raum mit einem Akt der Korporalisierung gleichsetzt. So bedeutet das Wort *jieti* [結體], das mit *jiezi* [結字] (= ein Schriftzeichen gestalten) in unmittelbarer Beziehung steht, “den Körper eines Schriftzeichens formen”.²¹⁷

In accordance with the culture-specific definitions of ritual discussed in this chapter, if we intend to carve out a notion of calligraphy in terms of rites and ritual acts, it is essential that we are not misled by disconnecting this notion from its “performance context”—which, as it were, is one of the very reasons for arguing in favor of calligraphy as ritual—lest the meaning of ritual terminology invariably become all the more obscured by any of our “current preoccupations” as scholars and “agents and onlookers” in dealing with subjects of ritual significance. Brief reference be made here to Bruce Rusk’s study on the *Shijing*, where in the section “Ritual Models” of the chapter “In the Image of the Classic” the importance and the complexity of space-specific, performance-related aspects

²¹⁵ It is one of the objectives of the present study to critically reveal this phenomenon, and it shall become clear in the subsequent chapters in which different ways this phenomenon has taken shape in various contexts of Chinese art theory, art history, and art criticism.

²¹⁶ Among these to name are Billeter 1990; Hay 1983; Hertel 2014; Kraus 1991; Mersmann 2006; Mersmann 2015 (b); Obert 2013; Yen 2005; Zito 1997. For discussions of traditional concepts of the body in Chinese culture and philosophy, see Ames 1993; Ames 1993 [1984]; Cheng 2002; Hay 1983; Hay 1994; Hay, ed., 1994; Tu 1992. For theoretical overviews of western concepts of the body from phenomenological, sociopolitical, cultural, and historical perspectives, see Leder, ed., 1992.

²¹⁷ Mersmann 2015 (b): 198f.

in the context of ancient ceremonies that involved the oral act of reading and singing texts inscribed on ritual objects is pointed up:

In contrast with the epigraphic tradition, critics recognized a close tie between ritual verse, especially that used in imperial rituals, and the *Classic* [the Poetry Classic, or Book of Poems, *Shijing* 詩經] [...]. Although all of the pieces in the *Classic* could be sung, its ceremonial lyrics most explicitly encode their own enactment, hinting at the context of their performance as but one carefully constructed part of the complex coordination of space, people, and materials called for in ritual. [...] The ritual language is in a mode shared with the inscriptions on ritual implements [...].²¹⁸

I then refer to Nylan, who critically alerts in the scholarly context of interpreting ritual items:

[...] with texts, as with other ritual items, meaning accrues over time. In the case of rituals, it is the successive agents and onlookers who assign meanings to the performance, with the result that traditions designed to conserve the past invariably register current preoccupations as well. With texts, the accounts must be fleshed out via the proper formulae and then read against the background of successive interpretive layers [...] to which the reader/citer responds. Out of necessity or ignorance, scholars may choose to divorce a particular ritual or a particular text from its performance context, but they do so at their peril [...].²¹⁹

Tu Wei-ming likewise critically remarks in the chapter “*Li* as Process of Humanization” of his book *Humanity and Self-Cultivation: Essays in Confucian Thought*:

Li is a concept pregnant with ethico-religious connotations. The mere fact that it has been rendered as “ceremony”, “ritual”, “rites”, “propriety”, “rules of propriety”, “good custom”, “decorum”, “good form”, and a host of other ideas including that of natural law suggests the scope of its implications. [...] Etymologically, the ideograph *li* [豐] symbolizes a sacrificial act. As Wing-tsit Chan has pointed out, it originally meant “a religious sacrifice”. [...] However, the earliest available dictionary meaning of *li* is “treading” or “following”. Specifically it points to the step or act whereby spiritual beings are properly served and humans happiness obtained [...].²²⁰

Angela Zito, too, strikes a similar chord in discussing scholars’ interpretation of the very term “rituals” itself, inasmuch as, in *Body, Subject and Power in China*, she posits that

[m]any modern philosophers have interpreted *li* in the context of something they call ‘Confucian humanism’ [...], and goes on to argue that “[t]hese philosophers share a tendency to neglect or de-emphasize the ceremonial practices associated with *li* in favor of a ‘meaning-centered’ approach based upon readings of Chinese interpretive texts. In unconscious collusion with the philosophic texts they study, they make the performing body disappear, along with its material circumstances and limitations.²²¹

²¹⁸ Rusk 2012: 97.

²¹⁹ Nylan 2005: 9.

²²⁰ Tu 1979: 20f.

²²¹ Barlow/Zito, eds., 1994: 104f.

Emphasizing the fact that *li* were intimately connected to the body, in her book *Of Body & Brush: Grand Sacrifice as Text; Performance in Eighteenth Century China*, Zito further refers to Peter Boodberg for having pointed out that the Chinese written characters for “ritual” (*li*) and “body” (*ti*) are the only two that share the right-hand element *li* 豊, meaning “the ritual vase/vessel”, therein sharing a “sense of organic form”.²²² Illuminating is Zito’s inference that “[t]he explicit homology showed us how the body itself was imagined so as to provide the incorporated anchor for inscriptional activities. Within *li*, the body itself provided both sign and site for signification [...]”.²²³ Here, brief note be taken of Nylan’s elucidations concerning the term *wen* and the question of its origin, as they draw a very concrete image of the human body as that “sign and site” of these “inscriptional activities”:

The origin of the character *wen*, which appears first in the Shang oracle bones (ca. 1300 BC), is—like that of all the other oracle-bone forms—unknown. For a long time, speculation has started from the belief that *wen* represents a crisscross pattern, with the latest analysis interpreting that pattern as a tattoo on the human body signifying high status, as indicated by precious jades found in royal tombs of the time.²²⁴

With regard to the etymological closeness of the written characters for “ritual” and “body”, like Zito, Wilson points out that the character *li* etymologically

[...] consists of two parts: the left-hand radical *shi* 示, which the first-century CE dictionary *Shuowen* [*Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字 (Explication of Written Characters)] glosses as ‘Heaven’s omens that inform the living of impending good or ill’, and which, by extension, came to signify the spirits generally. The right-hand phonetic means a sacrificial vessel. Thus, the *Shuowen* explains, *li* is ‘the way to serve the spirits and secure blessings’ (*suoyi shi shen zhi fu* 所以事神致福).²²⁵

Concerning the etymology of *ti* 體 for “body”, Chung-ying Cheng similarly remarks that

[...] the word *ti* clearly shows the structure of *ti* in its double aspects in the domains of the physical and the living, and the spiritual: The bone radical [*gu* 骨] on the left side of the word suggests the physical structure of *ti*, whereas the combined radicals on the right side in the form of the script [*li* 豊] suggest the presence of

²²² Zito 1997: 210. According to Karlgren, *li* 豊 has the meaning of “sacrificial vessel” and perhaps shows the “picture of a vase with flowers”. Next to the characters *ti* 體 and *li* 禮, Karlgren lists three further characters that possess the right-hand element *li* 豊: *li* 澧 (fountain; spring); *li* 醴 (sweet wine/water); and *li* 鱧 (snakehead mullet; murrel; snakehead), Karlgren 1923: 175, no. 538.

²²³ Zito 1997: 210.

²²⁴ Nylan 1999: 23.

²²⁵ Wilson 2002: 15.

spirit of reverence as symbolized by a vessel of food presented to spirits in the performance of a ritual.²²⁶

If the object of the ritual vessel is taken as an image for the human ritualized body, Fingarette's reasoning can be followed:

Just as an individual must cultivate himself, just as the temple vessel must be carved and chiseled and polished, [...] self-cultivation is no more central to man's dignity, in Confucius' views, than the preparation of the vessel is central. Preparation and training are essential, but it is the ceremony that is central, and all the elements and relationships and actions in it are sacred though each has its special characteristics.²²⁷

If calligraphy is taken as a ceremonial rite for which and through which the human individual and self/body must be cultivated and "carved and chiseled and polished" like a "temple vessel", we are able to clearly visualize the value that lies inherently in shaping, molding, and exercising the vessel/body, which is necessary as a continuous process in preparation of and usage within ritual performance. Though the worth of the vessel/body only attains its full meaning during the practice of ritual itself, for this ritual to be executed properly and appropriately, the various stages of material, physical, and mental arrangement and maintenance are crucial; in the case of calligraphy meaning the development and ongoing refinement of techniques and styles. In this regard, the "methods", *fa*, to be acquired, cultivated, practiced, and performed through calligraphy are definable as "[...] ritual, the first of the six arts [*liu yi*]", which is "a discipline of the body", as Tu Wei-ming contends.²²⁸

To conclude this chapter, which sought to provide the reader with a basic theoretical framework for the present study: In the same way that historically and historiographically there can be observed a paradigm shift away from the notion of *wen* as "texture" towards the notion of *wen* as "text", we may observe a similar shift of scholarly focus away from the "textures" and physicality of calligraphy as a somatically founded phenomenon towards the "texts" and narratives of calligraphy as a spiritual form of transcendent art. It is thus my incentive to historically contextualize concepts and practices of ritual, around which ancient Chinese societies revolved and organized themselves, which proves valuable not only to better comprehend culture-specific developments of thought, convention, and

²²⁶ Cheng 2002: 145.

²²⁷ Fingarette: 78.

²²⁸ In his essay "The Idea of the Human in Mencian Thought: An Approach to Chinese Aesthetics", Tu writes: "In the classical educational context, [...] the six arts are disciplines that have particular reference to physical exercises [...]", and that "[...] ritual, the first of the six arts, is a discipline of the body [...]", Tu 1985: 93–112, 97.

conduct in pre- and imperial China, but also in the modern-day context, whose basis can be seen in specific concepts and practices of old, as the cultural phenomenon of calligraphy can illustrate. This I seek to exemplify through my examination of Huang Binhong, in particular the examination of Huang's late-period work in chapter five, which, as noted in the introduction, can be considered as defined by the aspect of brush-writing as both an *expression* (*Abdruck*) and *impression* (*Eindruck*) of “appropriate ritual order” of the self and body.

The preceding contextualization of calligraphy, body, and ritual in historical perspective can moreover help us as art historians to relieve ourselves somewhat from certain entrenched idiosyncratic tendencies in art historical discourse which have expounded a strongly text-focused emphasis on traditional connoisseurship and art criticism, including the analysis, evaluation, and appreciation of style; the assessment of aesthetic meaning and moral character; and the narration of unbroken art traditions and lineages in history.²²⁹

²²⁹ For a critical assessment of issues related with art historiographical traditions in modern China, see Cao 1997.

Chapter Two

Emulation and Transformation: Huang Binhong's Aesthetic Framework as Seen through His Calligraphy Art

As outlined in the introduction, a particular aim of this study is to examine Huang Binhong's concept of *neimei*, inasmuch as I contend that this aesthetic concept efficaciously shows the discrepancy and dichotomy between idiosyncratic conceptions of an "interior spirit" and an "exterior body", respectively, in Chinese art criticism. No other term in Huang Binhong's discursive framework seems to point more evidently towards the assumption of "inner" qualities of mind and spirit. As will be assessed in the subsequent chapters, *neimei* can be identified as an idea fundamental and specific to Huang Binhong's theory and practice of art. To this end, in the present chapter, an introduction to Huang Binhong's conceptual framework on a more general level is first undertaken. The reader will be familiarized with Huang's frequently used art critical terminology and its application both in theory and practice. While the concepts to be discussed have already been examined by eminent scholars in the field of Huang Binhong studies,²³⁰ research has primarily focused on deciphering them from a theoretical point of view. My aim here is to expand this view and include praxis-related aspects of Chinese brush-and-ink arts as a physical technique of ritualizing and patterning body, mind, and self. Through this approach, a reassessment of the concept of *neimei*, which is conventionally interpreted as a spiritual, or immaterial quality, will become feasible. After drawing from various primary and secondary textual sources, a close reading of two calligraphy works by Huang Binhong shall thus serve to illustrate these concepts and show in what way Huang put his theoretical ideas into practice as an artist. This chapter forms a basis upon which later arguments regarding Huang Binhong's concept of *neimei* are to be established and developed. Chapter three introduces and discusses this specific concept in Huang Binhong's context, which will then continue to be a subject of inquiry throughout the study.

2.1. Emulation and Transformation as Basic Concepts

Given the unremitting activities during his lifetime, as an influential practitioner, scholar, and critic of Chinese art, art history, and cultural history of his time, Huang Binhong left behind a copious amount of texts that deals with art critical issues and terms, including the

²³⁰ I refer here to the bibliographical references given in the introduction, cf. ns. 19, 21, 22.

evaluation of Chinese painting and calligraphy traditions throughout history. His written oeuvre, comprising art theoretical essays, journal articles, lectures, letters, colophon texts, and poems, provides an important theoretical supplement to his art production and an enlightening source from which a complex of basic ideas emerges as an aesthetic framework. That is to say, in spite of the overwhelming quantity of Huang Binhong's writings, a set of specific ideas and terms clearly crystallizes in these. The reiterative nature of certain ideas and terms is also reflected in the secondary sources dealing with Huang Binhong's art. Though they must always be decoded according to the given contexts of time and place of their application, their persistent recurrence and rephrasing nevertheless point up the overall importance of these ideas and terms in the context of Huang Binhong's art theory and practice. Representative writings that attempt a systematic, comprehensive theoretical approach to art include essays such as Huang Binhong's "Essentials of Painting" ("Huafa yaozhi 畫法要旨");²³¹ "Preface to the Complete History of Studies on Chinese Painting" ("Zhongguo huaxue quanshi xu 中國畫學全史序") (fig. 5c);²³² "Records on Painting" ("Huayulu 畫語錄");²³³ "General Assessment of Painting Studies" ("Huaxue tonglun 畫學通論");²³⁴ and "Discussion on Painting" ("Huatan 畫談") (fig. 58c).²³⁵ The present study draws special attention to Huang's "Discussion on Painting", which is of particular meaning inasmuch as Huang's concise model of "five brush methods and seven ink methods" (*wu bi qi mo* 五筆七墨) is put forward in this essay. Though the primary context of this model is Chinese ink painting, its ideas are closely related to, and thus inseparable from practical techniques and theoretical concepts of Chinese calligraphy art. The *wu bi qi mo* model engages a prominent position among the recurring aesthetic concepts in Huang Binhong's views on art, as it presents the holistic approach to a definition of those brush and ink techniques which, in Huang's opinion, constitute the essential methods of Chinese brush-and-ink art. Huang Binhong's theory of *wu bi qi mo* evolved over the course of more than twenty

²³¹ Published 1934 successively in four parts in the periodical *Chinese Painting Monthly* (*Guohua yuekan* 國畫月刊). See bibliography for further reference.

²³² Rpt. HBHWJ (5): 342–343.

²³³ Published in 1936 in the journal *Academic World* (*Xueshu shijie* 學術世界), rpt. HBHWJ (6): 40–44.

²³⁴ Written as part of a series that served as learning material for classes of traditional Chinese painting theory (*guohua lilun* 國畫理論) at the Beijing Central Academy of Fine Arts (*Zhongyang meishu xueyuan* 中央美術學院, formerly *Guoli Beijing yishu zhuanke xuexiao* 國立北京藝術專科學校), where Huang Binhong taught from 1937–1948. Rpt. HBHWJ (6): 106–112.

²³⁵ First published in 1940 in the periodical *China Monthly* (*Zhonghe yuekan* 中和月刊), rpt. *ibid.*: 158–167.

years.²³⁶ Outlined for the first time in 1921 in a letter to his friend the contemporary scholar and historian Hu Yunyu 胡韞玉 (1878–1947),²³⁷ it underwent continuous modifications, omissions, and amendments. As a framework, it found theoretical completion in 1940, as formulated by Huang Binhong in his essay “Huatan”. The five brush methods are denoted by Huang as “even” (*ping* 平), “round” (*yuan* 圓), “lingering” (*liu* 留), “heavy” (*zhong* 重), and “transforming”, or “transformation” (*bian* 變); the seven ink methods further as “thick” (*nong* 濃), “light” (*dan* 淡), “broken” (*po* 破), “splashed” (*po* 潑), “accumulated” (*zi* 漬), “burnt” (*jiao* 焦), and “overnight” (*su* 宿) ink.²³⁸ In this context, the notion of transformation surfaces as a distinct discursive idea. Among the “five brush methods” denominated by Huang Binhong, we note that the fifth one is the “method of transformation” (*bianfa* 變法). As we know, the idea of transformation permeates quite a vast scope of traditional philosophical meanings and terms in Chinese thought. In the respective section of the essay “Huatan” concerned with the brush method of transformation, Huang Binhong elucidates the term with reference to the *Classic of the Way and Virtue* (*Daodejing* 道德經) and writes:

To know the white yet stay close to the black, to push the old away and bring forth the new, just as the course of the year has four seasons, many channels emerge from the flowing mountain spring, ceaselessly in motion, their constant principle unchanging.²³⁹

In the context of brush-and-ink art traditions, Huang’s citation of *zhi bai shou hei* 知白守黑 (literally, “to know the white, yet stay close to the black”), meaning to observe all but remain silent and obscure, evokes the association of one of his role models, the

²³⁶ See Zhang Tongyu 2009: 114.

²³⁷ The letter is reprinted in HBHWJ (1): 98–99.

²³⁸ HBHWJ (2): 162–163. In formulations prior to 1940, the fifth ink method, “accumulated ink” (*zimo* 漬墨), had been denoted as *jimo* 積墨, Zhang Tongyu 2009: 114. At an earlier stage, the fifth brush method of “transformation” (*bianfa* 變法) had further been denoted by Huang Binhong as the method of “emptiness” (*xu* 虛); on this, see also Wang Zhongxiu’s 王中秀 remarks in Wang Zhongxiu 2014: 23. In an essay of 2005, Wang Zhongxiu has further noted that Huang Binhong put forward the initial idea of “three brush methods and seven ink methods” (*san bi qi mo* 三筆七墨) in a lecture given in Guangzhou in 1928, see Wang Zhongxiu 2005 (b): 82. For elaborations of Huang Binhong’s “five brush and seven ink methods”, further see Kuo 2004: 96f.; Xu 2009: 187–198, 221–225; Yang 2010: 274f. The foundations of calligraphy writing as a source of Huang’s “five brush and seven ink methods” are assessed for example in Zhang Tongyu 2009: 110–125.

²³⁹ “知白守黑，推陳出新，如歲序之有四時。泉流之出眾壑，運行無已，而不易其常。” HBHWJ (6): 160. The phrase *zhi bai shou hei* 知白守黑 is a reference to chapter 28 of the *Daodejing*, which Legge translates as “Who knows how white attracts, Yet always keeps himself within black’s shade [...].” Legge, transl., 1959: 119.

calligrapher Deng Shiru 鄧石如 (1743–1805) (fig. 15b), who as an excellent seal-script writer of the mid-Qing period had made the claim that a calligrapher should “count the white as the black” (*ji bai dang hei* 計白當黑)²⁴⁰, therein pointing towards the significance and constitutive meaning of the unwritten, “empty” paper space. During the writing process, attention should be paid to maintaining a harmonious balance of opposites, in this case, between “matter” (*shi* 實), i.e. the black of ink, and “non-matter” (*xu* 虛), i.e. the white of paper. In the above-cited passage from Huang Binhong’s “Huatan”, the idea of being “ceaselessly in motion” (*yunxing wuyi* 運行無已) is synonymous with his idea of transformation. In the essay, Huang Binhong further refers to eighth-century court calligrapher Li Yangbing 李陽冰 (figs. 25a–b)²⁴¹ and his discussion of seal script, stating:

The three dots for water [i.e. *shui* 氵, radical no. 85] and the four dots for fire [i.e. *huo* 灬, radical no. 86] must turn around and look back between left and right, and must have the structural force of an echo that resonates between up and down, thus achieving naturalness.²⁴²

The uninterrupted brush movement and constant turning back, or “looking back”, of the brush tip maintain a dialectical relation between opposed directions (left, right; up, down). The moment of changing direction indicates a change of momentum between two poles essentially conditioned by one another, which symbolically can stand for any two corresponding opposites, such as darkness and light, form and void, curve and line, and so forth. Huang’s choice of water and fire for the image of a complementary pair is fundamental and straightforward. It reflects a holistic *Weltanschauung* that can be traced back to the earliest forms of Chinese philosophy as recorded in the *Book of Changes* (*Yijing* 易經).²⁴³ Here, Huang’s water-fire image resonates especially with hexagram no.

²⁴⁰ Deng Shiru’s statement was: “字畫疏處可使走馬，密處不使透風，常計白當黑，奇趣乃出。” as recorded in Bao Shichen’s 包世臣 (1775–1885) “Two Oars in the Boat of Art” (“Yi zhou shuang ji 藝舟雙楫”), see Bao 2011: 1082. In his 1929 essay “Emptiness and Matter” (“Xu yu shi 虛與實”), Huang Binhong makes direct reference to Deng Shiru, stating “[...] 前人謂為分行間白，鄧石如有以白當黑的說法 [...]”, rpt. HBHWJ (5): 476–478, 478. Huang Binhong’s admiration for Deng Shiru and Bao Shichen is further expressed, for example, in his essay “Historical Changes of Script Types and Their Different Schools” (“Shuti zhi bianqian ji qi paibie 書體之變遷及其派別”), rpt. HBHWJ (5): 344–346, 346. For a discussion of Deng Shiru and Bao Shichen’s calligraphy styles and their contemporary followers, see Ledderose 1970: 70–92. For examples of Deng Shiru’s calligraphy, further see Liu Zhengcheng, main ed., 1995, vol. 67; Nakata, ed., 1970–1972, vol. 10; for examples of Bao Shichen’s calligraphy, see Shanxi renmin chubanshe, ed., 2013.

²⁴¹ For more examples of Li Yangbing’s calligraphy, see Liu Zhengcheng, main ed., 1996, vol. 23: 231–272.

²⁴² “氵點為水，灬點為火，必有左右回顧、上下呼應之勢，而成自然。” HBHWJ (6): 160.

²⁴³ Huang Binhong’s references to the *Book of Changes* abound. His most evident among these is arguably his *Diagram of Brush Methods* (*Bifa tu* 筆法圖, also known under the title *Taiji tu* 太極圖 [Diagram of the Universe]) (fig. 26), showing an ink sketch of a mountain dwelling, above which hovers a *yin-yang* symbol,

38 ☲ of the *Yijing*, which carries the name *kui* 睽, “opposition”, and whose line structure shows the image of “Fire ☲ over Lake ☱”, translated by Richard Wilhelm as “Kui/Der Gegensatz”:

Das Zeichen besteht aus dem oberen Urzeichen Li, die Flamme, die nach oben flammt, und dem Urzeichen Dui, der See, unten, der nach unten sickert. Diese Bewegungen stehen zueinander im Gegensatz. Ferner ist Li die zweite und Dui die jüngste Tochter. Obwohl sie im selben Hause wohnen, gehören sie doch verschiedenen Männern an und ihr Wille ist daher nicht gemeinsam, sondern auf Gegensätzliches gerichtet.²⁴⁴

Wilhelm further translates the hexagram’s short statement “*Kui. Xiaoshi ji* 睽. 小事吉.” as “Der Gegensatz. In kleinen Sachen Heil.”, and interprets it as:

[...] Der Gegensatz, der im allgemeinen als Hemmung erscheint, hat als polarer Gegensatz innerhalb eines umfassenden Ganzen auch seine guten und wichtigen Funktionen. Die Gegensätze zwischen Himmel und Erde, Geist und Natur, Mann und Weib bewirken durch ihren Ausgleich die Schöpfung und Fortpflanzung des Lebens. In der sichtbaren Welt der Dinge ermöglicht der Gegensatz eine Sonderung in Arten, durch die Ordnung in die Welt kommt.²⁴⁵

In the introduction to his *Yijing* translation, where Wilhelm explains the origins of the eight symbols (*bagua* 八卦, also known as the eight trigrams) as stacks of three broken or unbroken horizontal lines, respectively, he writes that these were interpreted as images of things taking place in heaven and on earth:

Dabei herrschte die Anschauung eines dauernden Übergangs des einen in das andere, ebenso wie in der Welt ein dauernder Übergang der Erscheinungen ineinander stattfindet. Hier haben wir nun den entscheidenden Grundgedanken der Wandlungen. Die acht Zeichen sind Zeichen wechselnder Übergangszustände, Bilder, die sich dauernd verwandeln. Worauf das Augenmerk gerichtet war, waren nicht die Dinge in ihrem Sein—wie das im Westen hauptsächlich der Fall war—, sondern die Bewegung der Dinge in ihrem Wechsel. So sind die acht Zeichen nicht Abbildungen der Dinge, sondern Abbildungen ihrer Bewegungstendenzen.²⁴⁶

Denominated by Huang Binhong as the fifth and thus concluding brush method, *bianfa*, the “method of transformation”, abides by the cosmic principle of dialectical change, that is, of unifying the complementary elements by which nature is given shape through its ongoing dynamic states of being-in-transition (*Übergangszustände*). Potentially, “transformation” can reveal its entire philosophical dimension through the microcosm of brush-and-

and inscribed with Huang’s philosophical elaborations on brush method. For a transcription of the inscription, see HBHWJ (6): 443–444.

²⁴⁴ Wilhelm, transl., 1976 [1973]: 146–149, 146.

²⁴⁵ Ibid.: 147.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.: 15.

ink—indeed within a single (brush) line. Recalling the cosmogonic analogy in chapter 42 of the *Daodejing*: “*Dao sheng yi, yi sheng er, er sheng san, san sheng wanwu* 道生一，一生二，二生三，三生萬物.”; “Der *Weg* schuf die Einheit. Einheit schuf Zweiheit. Zweiheit schuf Dreiheit. Dreiheit schuf die zehntausend Wesen.”²⁴⁷; “The Tào produced One; One produced Two; Two produced Three; Three produced All things.”²⁴⁸ In fact, this entire philosophical dimension (the Dao) can become physically manifest only through the very materiality of things (One, Two, Three, All things). In light of Huang’s aim to harmonize complementary formal and technical elements as evident through his *wu bi qi mo* model, “transformation” serves as the overarching crucial element without which all other methods would fail to achieve completion. While the mastery of formal brush-and-ink technique is necessary in order to adequately give form to transformation, transformation in turn is essential in order to bestow form and technique with any substantial meaning. Transformation reflects the overall conceptual approach to the artwork, according to traditional Chinese aesthetic thinking, thus also the individual writer’s frame of mind, or *Geisteshaltung*. It follows that those who master the brush technique(s) of transformation have achieved a certain stage of high personal moral cultivation. While it is not wrong to discuss Huang’s terminology of transformation through the framework of his “five brush and seven ink methods”, it is at the same time important to remember that its meaning encompasses a broader existential dimension reaching beyond the microcosm of calligraphic brushwork. This condition can be compared and illustrated with Peter Sturman’s useful comments on the ubiquitous, yet all the more elusive term of *pingdan* 平淡 in Chinese art criticism, translated alternatively as “blandness”, “insipidity”, “flavorlessness”.²⁴⁹ Sturman notes that *pingdan* is generally misconceived in Chinese art discourse, in that it is primarily (or solely) understood as and used to denote a certain kind of *style* in traditional calligraphy and painting. In truth, however, Sturman clarifies: “As an attribute *pingdan* becomes manifest not in a style but in *one’s approach* [*italics mine*] to giving shape to a style [...]”.²⁵⁰

Huang Binhong’s “frame of mind”, or his “approach to giving shape to a style”—in this

²⁴⁷ Debon, transl., 2014 [1961]: 71.

²⁴⁸ Legge, transl., 1959: 133.

²⁴⁹ The problematic use of this term in Chinese art criticism will be discussed in more detail at a later stage. For the moment, I refer to the related studies by François Jullien (2004) and Jean-François Billeter (2006) as well as to the chapters “The Pingdan Aesthetic” and “Naturalness” in Peter Sturman’s book *Mi Fu: Style and the Art of Calligraphy in Northern Song China*, Sturman 1997: 121–149, and 150–172, respectively.

²⁵⁰ Sturman 1997: 153.

case, his approach of transformation—can be illuminated through his related fundamental ideas of “mastering oneself after the ancient” (*shi gu*), and “mastering oneself after nature” (*shi zaohua*), meaning the comprehensive studying of received art traditions, and written art history and theory, on the one hand, and the extensive studying of the myriad forms of life to be found in natural landscapes, on the other hand. These two inseparable themes refer to the old phrase advising one to “read ten thousand books and travel ten thousand *li*” (*du wan juan shu, xing wan li lu* 讀萬卷書, 行萬里路) in life, as coined, among others, by one of Huang Binhong’s greatest role models, the influential late-Ming 明 (1368–1644) painter, calligrapher, art critic and theoretician Dong Qichang 董其昌 (1555–1636) in his essay “Purport of Painting” (“Huazhi 畫旨”) (see figs. 27a–c for examples of Dong’s calligraphy and painting).²⁵¹ *Shi gu* and *shi zaohua* can be related to Huang’s model of *wu bi qi mo* accordingly: only through mastering oneself after traditions and acquiring the methods of the ancients, including the mastery of brush and ink as technical tools, and further, through mastering oneself after nature and acquiring the principles of natural movement, including the essential all-pervasive principle of transformation, will it be able to produce works of true art. The ideal of harmonizing the relation between *shigu* and *shi zaohua* poses a task that in fact *only can* be resolved through art. This resolution through art is precisely what is proposed by Huang Binhong with his concept of “likeness and non-likeness” (*si’er busi* 似而不似). Essentially “antithetical”²⁵² in its claim, that art should aim to be like and at the same time unlike natural form, it points towards the seemingly irresolvable, dichotomous relation between the man-made, cultural, and artificial, on the one hand, and the heavenly-genuine (*tianzhen* 天真), or nature-given (*ziran* 自然), on the other hand. This dichotomy, it appears, can be overcome through an artwork’s quality of “likeness and non-likeness”. Huang’s notion of *si’er bu si* echoes his role model Dong Qichang’s conceptions of nature and art. Aside from the promoting of “reading of ten thousand books and travelling of ten thousand *li*”, in Dong’s “Huazhi”, a famous statement on the relationship between art and nature contends that when it comes to speaking of the marvelousness of a natural environment, (landscape) painting could never be considered

²⁵¹ See the essay rpt. in Yu, ed., 1989, vol. 1: 70–106, 71. On the status and impact of Dong Qichang in the history of Chinese art, see Chang/Fong/Hearn 2008: 4–35; Ho, ed., 1992; Ho/Smith, eds., 1993 (2 vols.); Unverzagt 2005: 138–165, Wu 1962. For Dong Qichang’s calligraphy, further see Nakata, ed., 1970–1972, vol. 8. The motif of *du wan juan shu, xing wan li lu* is also reprised by Huang Binhong’s student Lin Sanzhi, see Qi 2003: 82.

²⁵² As denoted by Jason Kuo, Kuo 2004: 66.

equal to natural landscape; yet that when it comes to speaking of the wonderful refinement of brush and ink, the (natural) landscape could never be considered as equal to (landscape) painting.²⁵³

Returning to Huang Binhong's essay "Huatan", in the section concerning *bianfa*, the brush method of transformation, Huang finally writes: "The Dao has no form, art comes into being and takes on form. While art shows ten thousand transformations, the Dao never changes, this is how it is."²⁵⁴ The first sentence is a near-to citation of the *Yijing*, where it is stated: "That what has no form is called Dao, that what has form is called utensil."²⁵⁵ In Huang Binhong's wording, "utensil" (*qi* 器) is replaced with "art" (*yi* 藝), and thus a relationality between Dao and art is established: both are assigned to metaphysical and physical dimensions of existence, respectively; the latter is brought forth by the former. In the same essay, in a section titled "The Greater Meaning of Compositional Elements" ("Zhangfa yinsu zhi dazhi 章法因素之大旨"), Huang Binhong further transfers the analogy of Dao and art to the specific field of painting. He writes: "In painting composition, importance must be given to brush-and-ink; composition constantly changes, yet brush-and-ink does not change. That what does not change is the internal spirit, and that what changes constantly is the surface appearance."²⁵⁶ Huang Binhong differentiates between "painting composition" and "brush-and-ink", associating the former with a mutable, transient physical surface appearance (*mianmao* 面貌), and the latter with a persistent, immaterial spirit (*jingshen* 精神). Here, it appears that "brush-and-ink" is not referred to in its meaning as a material texture. Rather, Huang establishes brush-and-ink as something essential or primary, something that exists prior to the further division into (five, respectively seven) specific techniques of brush and ink. In this way, there exists an analogy between brush-and-ink and the Dao (both immaterial, spiritual), and between painting composition and utensils (both material, transient). Basically, Huang wants to

²⁵³ "以境之奇怪論，則畫不如山水，以筆墨之精妙論，則山水不如畫。" Yu, ed., 1989, vol. 1: 70–106, 72.

²⁵⁴ "道形而上，藝成而下。藝雖萬變，而道不變，其以此也。" HBHWJ (6): 160.

²⁵⁵ As stated in chapter 12 of the "Great Appendix, Section I" ("Xici shang 繫辭上") of the *Yijing*: "[...] 形而上者謂之道，形而下者謂之器。化而裁之謂之變，推而行之謂之通，舉而錯之天下之民，謂之事業。" Sturgeon, ed., 2006–2016 (n.p.). This passage is translated by James Legge as: "[...] that which is antecedent to the material form exists, we say, as an ideal method, and that which is subsequent to the material form exists, we say, as a definite thing. Transformation and shaping is what we call change; carrying this out and operating with it is what we call generalising the method; taking the result and setting it forth for all the people under heaven is, we say, (securing the success of) the business of life." Legge, transl., 1966 [1882]: 377.

²⁵⁶ "畫之章法，重在筆墨；章法屢改，筆墨不移。不移者精神，而屢改者面貌。" HBHWJ (6): 164.

make the point that we should not let ourselves be distracted by something as volatile as a “pretty picture”, for even though it might be considered as pretty today, it might be discarded as ugly tomorrow. The negative connotation that adheres to an object as a purely functional utensil was noted in chapter one, and it should just be noted here that Huang’s choice of wording, *qi*, meaning “utensil”, “instrument”, “tool”, is, of course, intentional, in that ethically, *qi* stands below things of spiritual, non-functional quality (we recall Confucius’ statement “*Junzi bu qi* 君子不器”). To further clarify: the “surface appearance” of every painting is different in terms of formal and structural features, meaning its measurable, hence *variable* parameters, such as the length and shape of individual brushstrokes, the variation of ink tones, the alignment of pictorial elements, etc., whereas the principles of brush movement itself, including the principles of gravitation, direction, and pressure, further of dynamic force, the building-up of momentum, and the releasing of speed, do not ever change as *principles*. In a modern scientific sense, they are indeed unable to change. In a traditional philosophical sense in the Chinese context, they are governed by the constant principle (*chang li* 常理)²⁵⁷ inherent to the Dao.

Based on Huang Binhong’s relational assumption of art, as a physical enactment and manifestation of metaphysical Daoistic principles, the desirable quality of *bian* is established as an important aesthetic criterion in judging the value of an artwork. It is implied that good brushwork is distinguished by its ability to essentially capture and convey transformation; that “art is manifestation of metaphysical principles”, as Huang stated.²⁵⁸ In concordance with the long-standing scholarly tradition of idealizing the past as a utopian place or state of High Antiquity (*gaogu* 高古),²⁵⁹ it is the generically termed “ancients” (*guren* 古人) whom Huang Binhong associates with the unchanging principle of the Dao, holding that “the methods of the ancients” (*guren zhi fa* 古人之法) will not change.²⁶⁰ “The ancients” are thus embedded within his relational structure of Dao and art, and it is indeed in this discursive context that Huang’s strife for transformation shows its existential meaning. In Huang Binhong’s view, the act of looking back to the past and

²⁵⁷ On the term *chang li* 常理 as prominently coined in the context of Song literati discourse on brush arts, see Ryckmans 1970: 21.

²⁵⁸ Cited after Kuo 2004: 163.

²⁵⁹ On the culture-historical theme of reference to and collective reminiscence of the past and High Antiquity (*huaigu* 懷古), see Hung, ed., 2010; Shi 1998. For a study on *huaigu* traditions as grounded in classical Chinese literature, see Owen 1986. On the cultural restoration of the past (*fugu* 復古) in the special context of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Chinese art circles, see Brown 2011.

²⁶⁰ See Kuo 2004: 49.

“taking antiquity as one’s master”, indispensable for one’s artistic development, likewise ought to be undertaken as a form of implementing transformation; to borrow Kuo’s words: as a form of “learning from the ancient [that] ultimately aims at ‘change’ or innovation”.²⁶¹ In emulating old models, focus should be laid on their “methods” (of unchanging nature), that is, their “internal spirit”. If the unchanging methods of the ancients can be considered analogous to the principle of the Dao that does not change, it is only logical that one should strive to recapture their very essence. In this sense, Huang’s claims of learning from the ancient and learning from nature can be understood as inseparable: both the methods of the ancients and the laws of nature are derived from the Dao, and so they form a unity.

Notably, the act of emulation always indicates a form of transformation. It is only through a genuinely re-creative process on part of the artist that the emulation succeeds to achieve the “internal spirit”—be it the essence of an old master’s work, or the essence of a natural process. If a transformational process is a requirement for successful copying, then with every copy produced, a new work is created, that is to say, one that inevitably, uniquely differs from its model. The emulation as a formative act that brings forth newness is to some extent a political act, inasmuch as this newness bears the traces of time and place connected with the productive context of the work, as well as the marks inscribed by the emulator him-/herself. Huang Binhong had stated, “To trust the old, or to doubt the old, both have their own shortcomings.” (*Xin gu yi gu, ge you pianpi*. 信古疑古, 各有偏毗).²⁶² The historical relevance of one’s own independent stance as an artist is pointed up by Huang, which, if seen from this perspective, bears a certain responsibility towards history: “Those who transform will live; those who do not transform will go under and be washed away. This is the principle of historical change, which [thus] cannot be judged only as good or bad.”²⁶³ He further stated: “Neither blind adherence to, nor skepticism towards, the ancient is correct. One should understand the new and carry out reform, and above all, know how to change.”²⁶⁴ Incidentally, in the preface of the catalogue accompanying the 2013 exhibition *Tranquil and Distant: Welcoming the “Tenth Arts Festival” Traveling Exhibition of Huang Binhong’s Works* (*Jingmi youyuan: xiying “Shi yi jie” Huang*

²⁶¹ Ibid.

²⁶² As recorded in the “Miscellanies at Ninety, Part Two” (“Jiushi zashu zhi er 九十雜術之二”), compiled by Zhao Zhijun 趙志鈞, rpt. HBHWJ (4): 573–580, 576: “前人鑒別書畫, 信古疑古, 各有偏毗, 載籍固未可全信為實, 疑之太苛, 亦傷忠厚; 存大醇小疵, 斷不能無, 惟不可不糾正之。” For a further compilation of Huang Binhong’s quotations recorded by Zhao Zhijun, see Zhao, ed., 1993.

²⁶³ “變者生, 不變者淘汰。此是歷史變遷之理, 非僅以優劣衡之也。” Ibid.: 579.

²⁶⁴ “泥古疑古, 均屬失誤; 知新維新, 尤當善變可耳。” Cited after Kuo: 49; 206, no. 29.

Binhong zuopin xuzhan 靜謐悠遠: 喜迎“十藝節”黃賓虹作品巡展), Xie Zhixiu 謝治秀 interestingly contextualizes Huang Binhong’s notion of *bianfa* with the social and political realities of the artist’s times, which were marked by the great transitions taking place in Chinese society and culture after 1911:

The method of transformation, that is the central subject of China’s modern history. Huang Binhong, who went through the Hundred Days Reform and the Xinhai Revolution, endeavored to reestablish a pure form of Chinese painting, and the method of transformation is still to be considered as a new concept he firmly established. It is the foundation of his general ideas on transformation that entered into painting history.²⁶⁵

This interpretation recalls *Yijing* hexagram no. 38, *kui* 睽, discussed above, whose judgement and image refer also to the need for balance of opposites in terms of human relations, indicating the need to work together, even if, or rather precisely because the differing qualities of the parties involved will remain existent as separate elements. As Richard Wilhelm further interprets the judgement of this hexagram:

Der Gegensatz. In kleinen Sachen Heil. Wenn die Menschen in Gegensatz und Entfremdung leben, so läßt sich ein großes gemeinsames Werk nicht ausführen. Die Gesinnungen gehen zu weit auseinander. Vor allem darf man nicht schroff vorgehen, wodurch der Gegensatz nur noch verschärft würde, sondern muß sich auf allmähliche Wirkungen im Kleinen beschränken. Hier ist noch Heil zu erwarten, da die Lage so ist, daß der Gegensatz nicht jede Verständigung ausschließt.²⁶⁶

Moreover, in this opposition, or difference, there lies merit:

Oben das Feuer, unten der See: das Bild des Gegensatzes. So behält der Edle bei aller Gemeinschaft seine Besonderheit. Wie die beiden Elemente Feuer und Wasser, auch wenn sie beisammen sind, sich nie vermischen, sondern ihre eigene Natur behalten, so wird der gebildete Mensch auch durch Verkehr und gemeinsame Interessen mit anders gearteten Menschen sich nie dahin bringen lassen, daß er sich gemein macht, sondern er wird bei aller Gemeinsamkeit doch immer seine Eigenart wahren.²⁶⁷

The last words of the hexagram judgement, stating, in Wilhelm’s words, that “der gebildete Mensch [...] sich nie dahin bringen lassen [wird], daß er sich gemein macht, sondern er wird bei aller Gemeinsamkeit doch immer seine Eigenart wahren [...]” (*junzi yi tong er yi* 君子以同而異)²⁶⁸, is reiterated in *Lunyu* 13:23, where Confucius states, in

²⁶⁵ “變法，是中國近代史的核心話題，曾經歷‘戊戌變法’、‘辛亥革命’的黃賓虹，欲擔當純正中國畫的重建，變法，仍是他堅定的新念，深入畫史當是他變法方略之基石。” Xie, ed., 2013: 1.

²⁶⁶ Wilhelm, transl., 1976 [1973]: 146f.

²⁶⁷ Ibid: 145.

²⁶⁸ In the *Yijing*, it is stated: “象曰。上火下澤。睽。君子以同而異。”, Sturgeon, main ed., 2006–2016 (n.p.); cf. also Legge’s translation of the hexagram judgement: “(The trigram representing) fire above, and that for

Legge's translation: "The superior man is affable, but not adultery; the mean man is adultery, but not affable [...]" (*junzi he er bu tong, xiaoren tong er bu he* 君子和而不同, 小人同而不和),²⁶⁹ by Günter Debon, alternatively, as: "Der Edle ist in Einklang, aber macht sich nicht gleich; der kleine Mann macht sich gleich, aber ist nicht in Einklang."²⁷⁰ This positive understanding of assimilation and self-modulation—as being "in Einklang" (*he* 和), i.e. with the world and one's surroundings, yet without making oneself equal (*tong* 同), i.e. at the expense of one's moral integrity—is a crucial aspect that inhabits the notion of transformation and its many meanings, including the human capability and existential necessity, even social responsibility, of man to achieve transformation. This may be kept in mind in the context of utterances such as the ones by Huang Binhong cited above, holding that "Those who transform will live; those who do not transform will go under and be washed away [...]", or "Both to follow the ancient blindly, and to distrust it completely, are mistakes. One must understand and maintain the new, and, especially, know how to transform."

Whether copying after a model landscape painting, or painting directly from nature (which, strictly speaking, is no less a form of copying), Huang Binhong attached crucial importance to the expression of "deeper vision and feeling"²⁷¹, as Kuo writes: "For Huang Pin-hung, the art of landscape painting is more than merely representing nature; it is to impose the artist's vision on nature and his vision on nature."²⁷² The act of infusing an emulated work with one's own insights not only indicates the artist's rejection of becoming a "slavish imitator of calligraphy models" (*shunu* 書奴) and a confinement to a resemblance of "surface appearance".²⁷³ It plays a decisive role in aspiring to capture the

(the waters of) a marsh below, form Khwei. The superior man, in accordance with this, where there is a general agreement, yet admits diversity.", Legge, transl., 1966 [1882]: 314; further cf. 139–140; 232–244.

²⁶⁹ Legge, transl., 1960 [1892]: 273.

²⁷⁰ As translated by Debon, who comments on this chapter from *Lunyu* in the context of his discussion of calligraphy theory, see Debon 1978: 19, n. 50.

²⁷¹ Kuo 2004: 178.

²⁷² Ibid.

²⁷³ "Huang Pin-hung did not [...] simply advocate slavish imitation, but followed the ageless practice of the creative transformation of change (*pian*) of the past." Kuo 2004: 32. Huang Binhong's critical stance towards "slavish imitation" bears closeness with the early-Qing individualist painter and calligrapher Shitao 石濤 (1642–1707), who in his "Records on Painting" ("Huayulu 畫語錄") wrote that the painter who is only concerned about imitating the correct styles and techniques "becomes a slave to a certain known artist and not his master, Even if he succeed in imitating the model well, he is only eating the left-overs of his home." ("是我為某役, 非某家為我用也. 縱逼似某家, 亦食某家殘羹耳."), as Lin Yutang has translated, Yutang Lin 1969 [1967]: 153; see here also Lin Yutang's comment on this section of Shitao's "Huayulu", *ibid.* The original essay is reprinted in Zhou 2007; see p. 13 for the respective section. The conceptual

“internal spirit” of the original work. As mentioned above, to capture the “internal spirit” of a work implies that the copy must be impregnated with some form of subjective experience and thus imbued with an aspect of change—however, the *proper* form of change. In his 1935 essay “Changes within Chinese Landscape Painting in the Present and Past” (“Zhongguo shanshuihua jinxi zhi bianqian 中國山水畫今昔之變遷”),²⁷⁴ Huang Binhong states: “When transformation is achieved properly, figure and appearance differ, yet the spirit stays the same. When transformation is undertaken improperly, the spirit is lost, and figure and appearance are wrong, too.”²⁷⁵ If transformation succeeds, then the spirit will remain the same “of its own accord” (*zitong* 自同), that is, naturally, without manipulation. Here, again, (proper) change is only possible if a certain condition of cognizance and insight—an understanding through the self, or “from oneself”, *ziwo* 自我—is fulfilled by the emulating artist. This idea recalls the early-Qing individualist painter and calligrapher Shitao 石濤 (1642–1707) (figs. 28a–c), who together with Dong Qichang was one of Huang Binhong’s most inspiring role models. In Shitao’s classic essay “Records on Painting” (“Huayulu 畫語錄”) written around 1700, in the first chapter “The One Brushstroke” (“Yihua 一畫”), Shitao describes the act of writing as an existential process.²⁷⁶ Every single drawn brushstroke is considered an individual entity and must be created as such. Shitao writes: “The method of the one brushstroke can only be established from the self” (*Yihua zhi fa nai ziwo li* 一畫之法乃自我立.).²⁷⁷ The process of comprehending, of grasping the essence of a model artwork, is thus even comparable with an act of enlightenment, or awakening, a moment of conscious realization in the sense of *wu* 悟. Huang Binhong indeed uses this term in his description of how he, as a child, would contemplate “from morning till night” the rolled-out works of art belonging to the family collection, “trying to comprehend the essence of their brushwork” (*chenxi zhandui*,

history of *shunu* as an art critical term in calligraphy discourse is discussed by Xiao Lijuan 蕭麗娟, see Xiao 2012. Shitao’s rejection of slavish imitation of the old is condensed in his numerous provocative statements and rhetorical questions, such as “能使我即古而古即我? 如是者知有古而不知有我者也.”, translated by Nürnberger as: “Kann ich es dazu bringen, dass ich zu einem Alten werde und ein Alter zu mir wird? In solch einem Fall ist es so, dass man zwar weiß, dass es die Alten gibt, aber nicht weiß, dass es ein Ich gibt.” Brinker 2009: 159f.; Zhou 2007: 13.

²⁷⁴ Rpt. HBHWJ (6): 23–25.

²⁷⁵ “變其所當變, 體貌異而精神自同; 變其所不當變, 精神離而體貌亦非也.” Ibid.: 23f.

²⁷⁶ For chapter one with annotations, see Zhou 2007: 3–8.

²⁷⁷ Ibid.: 3.

wu qi biyi 晨夕展對，悟其筆意。²⁷⁸ We can here also cite Lin Yutang, who in an annotation to his translation of Shitao's "Huayulu" writes:

The artist's creation is compared with the creation of the world of forms out of chaos and life out of forms. When the first vague shape takes form in ink, this is comparable to the awakening and growth of a child's consciousness (*meng-yang* [蒙養]), and later life is given to the picture through the brush-strokes.²⁷⁹

The process of "establishing the method of the One Brushstroke" within the self begins, not necessarily by drawing the brushstroke, but by reading it, that is, through the act of contemplation.²⁸⁰ This is where transformation can begin to take place. In other words, with regard to every (accomplished) emulation—or, for that matter, even with regard to every single brushstroke—"figure and appearance differ" (*timaoyi* 體貌異) from the preceding models/brushstrokes, as a result of having grasped their spirit. Consequentially, this is the reason why Huang Binhong valued the strife for "spiritual likeness" so highly. In his "Huayulu", he states:

In emulating famous works of the ancients, it is of superior importance to attain spiritual likeness, formal likeness comes second. A fine work is achieved through at once likeness and non-likeness with the original; the original brush traces are superseded, and at the same time the outer appearance is transmitted, thus grasping the idea of their spirit.²⁸¹

Huang Binhong's undated *Fishing Boat and Rock-Clinging Trees* (fig. 29) can serve as an illustration of his ideas on "emulating famous works of the ancients". Comparing this work, for example, with Shitao's 1697 *Landscape in the Style of Ni Zan* (fig. 30a), we see a stylistic and compositional citation of the ink landscape by Shitao. Even though no reference is made to Shitao in Huang's inscription, in this case, reference to Shitao is established on an even deeper aesthetic level. Reading in turn the inscription of Shitao's *Landscape in the Style of Ni Zan*, which can be considered as a possible model for Huang Binhong, we comprehend that Shitao's words are in fact a critical commentary on the act of emulating old painting masters, here with regard to the specific model of the Yuan 元-

²⁷⁸ Cited after Kuo 2004: 47; 205, no. 21

²⁷⁹ Yutang Lin 1969 [1967]: 164.

²⁸⁰ Incidentally, Jason Kuo contends that it is very likely that Huang Binhong viewed more than ten thousand pieces throughout his lifetime, as the artist himself had stated. Next to Huang Binhong's activities as art collector, his participation in the editorial work for numerous periodicals on art, the large-scale compilation project of the *Meishu congshu* 美術叢書, as well as his positions at the Museum of Shanghai (1935) and, notably, the Palace Museum, where he functioned as authenticator of traditional Chinese painting and calligraphies (1935–1937), substantiate this. Kuo 2004: 47f.

²⁸¹ "臨摹古人名蹟，得其神似者為上，形似者次之。有似不似原蹟為佳者，蓋蹟亦遺貌取神之意。" HBHWJ (6): 44.

dynasty (1279–1368) painter Ni Zan 倪瓚 (1301–1374) (figs. 31a–d).²⁸² The inscription of the work is executed in the unmistakable calligraphy style of Ni Zan’s exquisite standard script, which bears squat-shaped, swallow-tailed features reminiscent of archaic clerical script (cf. figs. 30b and 31b, and further fig. 30c for another example of Shitao’s calligraphy in this style).²⁸³ In it, Shitao wrote, in Wen C. Fong’s translation:

The paintings of that noble gentleman Ni are like the sands in the ocean-surf, and the pebbles in the rapids. They move about and pour forward as if they were born of the ‘self-existent’ (*tzu-jan*). There is, yet [in Ni’s paintings], a body of *ch’i* that is at once empty and animated, both pure and luxuriant, which seems to press coolly on the beholder. Later generations have merely imitated the part of the master that appears to be dry, desolate, cold, and over-restrained. This is why their paintings do not have such an imposing bearing when viewed from a distance.²⁸⁴

The work *Landscape in the Style of Ni Zan* by Shitao is highly informative, since the painting performs the very ideas that are put forward in its inscription. The description of Ni Zan’s style as “animated” (*ling* 靈) and “luxuriant” (*run* 潤) does not comply with the dry, reduced, “ascetic” or “flavorless” (*pingdan* 平淡)²⁸⁵ brush style commonly associated with Ni Zan’s arid landscapes of “Sparse Trees and a Lonely Pavilion”²⁸⁶; even less does Shitao’s lavish use of water and ink to create washes (which are unseen in Ni Zan’s works) seem to comply with the brushwork of the stylistic model. The point, however, that Shitao here aims to make is that it is wrong to “merely imitate [...] the part of the master that appears to be dry, desolate, cold, and overrestrained”—as would be the very case with Ni Zan. It seems that the only way Shitao was able to illustrate this point effectively was to adopt an expressly lavish, or “[at once empty and] animated” and “[both dry and] luxuriant” style in his emulation of Ni Zan. From this we see that Huang Binhong’s *Fishing Boat and Rock-Clinging Trees* conveys a two- or even three-fold form of emulation: an emulation of Shitao’s style, and with this, an emulation of Ni Zan’s style

²⁸² For a discussion of Shitao’s *Landscape in the Style of Ni Zan*, see the section “A Free-Hand Copy” in Fong 1962: 113–115.

²⁸³ For Ni Zan’s calligraphy, see Chen Yuyang 2003.

²⁸⁴ Fong 1962: 113. For an alternative translation of the inscription as well as a discussion of this work by Shitao, cf. Brinker 2009: 137, and 137–141, respectively, as well as Fong 1992: 497.

²⁸⁵ For a discussion of Ni Zan’s notoriously minimalist, dry-ink landscape scenes, which have become synonymous with the notion of *pingdan* 平淡 (the “flavorless”, “insipid”, “bland”) and are thus denoted by François Jullien as “landscapes of blandness”, see Jullien 2004: 35–39. A discussion in turn of Shitao’s “dry linear” brush style is further given in Fu 1976 (a).

²⁸⁶ As Ni Zan’s work *Sparse Trees and a Lonely Pavilion*, which Wen C. Fong denotes as the model for Shitao’s emulation, is indeed titled, Fong 1962: 113.

(on which Shitao's example had been based), and, more importantly, an emulation of aesthetic concepts—as it were, concepts *on* the very notion of emulation itself.²⁸⁷

Huang Binhong's closeness to Shitao's understanding of and approach to art is particularly reflected in Huang's above-cited essay "Huayulu 畫語錄" of 1936, which not only carries the same title as Shitao's work, but also deals with the subject of learning from the old masters of Chinese brush arts. Shitao's "Huayulu" is explicitly mentioned as a point of reference and model in the foreword of Huang's essay.²⁸⁸ Given this closeness, let us look a bit further into some of the theoretical ideas put forward by the early-Qing artist. The notion of "grasping the idea of the spirit" (*qu shen zhi yi* 取神之意) of the emulated masters' brush traces, literally, their "footprints" (*ji* 蹟), echoes Shitao's idea of grasping (*woqu* 握取) the One Brushstroke (*yihua* 一畫). The term *yihua* carries singularly philosophical meaning, the obvious (though not only) association here being the character *yi* 一 for "one" itself: a single horizontal line, which, as indicated shortly before, in the early context of divination rites performed with oracle bones signified the answer "yes", and was recorded in the original Western Zhou divination manual from which the later Book of Changes was to develop.²⁸⁹ Shitao's term *yihua* has undergone various translations into western languages, including "the One-stroke",²⁹⁰ "the One-Stroke Method",²⁹¹ "the Holistic Brushstroke",²⁹² "the Primordial Line",²⁹³ "1'Unique Trait de Pinceau",²⁹⁴ "der All-Eine Pinselstrich"²⁹⁵. The chapter one from Shitao's "Huayulu" states, in Marc Nürnberger's translation:

Reisen in die Ferne, Aufstiege in die Höhe, sämtlich nehmen sie ihren Ursprung im Allerkleinsten. Doch dieser All-Eine Pinselstrich umfasst selbst restlos das, was jenseits der äußersten Ränder der Welt liegt. Auch wenn man hundert Millionen mal zehntausend mal zehntausend Mal zu Pinsel und Tusche griffe, würde es doch nicht den Fall geben, dass man nicht mit diesem begönne und mit diesem endete. Es kommt letztlich nur darauf an, dass der Mensch ihn ergreift. Die Menschen

²⁸⁷ As would be expected, there also exist numerous paintings by Huang Binhong that allude directly to Ni Zan's typically "cold", thin and dry brushwork. For rhetorical reasons, I here refer to a most explicit example titled *Landscape in the Manner of Ni Zan* (*Lin Ni Zan shanshui tu* 臨倪贊山水圖), dated to 1913 (fig. 32).

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*: 40.

²⁸⁹ See Ryckmans 1970: 17f.; Wilhelm, transl., 1976 [1973]: 15.

²⁹⁰ Hay 2001: 272.

²⁹¹ Yutang Lin 1969 [1967]: 150f.

²⁹² Strassberg 1989: 61–62.

²⁹³ Chou 1969: 104. Incidentally, Wang Dongling similarly chooses "Primordial Line" as a translation for *yi hua*; see fig. 99a his calligraphic interpretation of this notion.

²⁹⁴ Ryckmans 1970: 11–12.

²⁹⁵ Brinker 2009: 9–12.

vermögen mit Hilfe des All-Einen Pinselstrichs den kompletten Wesenszusammenhang im Ansatz zu erfassen: Ist die Absicht aufrichtig klar, durchdringt der Pinsel alles.²⁹⁶

Shitao's conclusion, that it lastly depends on man's ability to grasp and comprehend (*ren zhi woqu* 人之握取) the use of *yihua*—and thus “den kompletten Wesenszusammenhang im Ansatz” (*juti'erwei* 具體而微)²⁹⁷; “the universe in miniature”;²⁹⁸ “en miniature une entité plus grande sans rien en perdre [...] jusqu'à la racine des choses”²⁹⁹—implies a moral responsibility on part of the artist, similar to Huang Binhong's understanding that the artist must not succumb to a blind following of models. Moreover, just as Huang Binhong relates the essence of the ancients' artworks with the constant principle of the Dao, *yihua*, according to Shitao, is likewise capable of conveying the world as a microcosmic whole. Here, the moral charge that lies with the individual human being is sharply assessed by Nürnberger:

Shitao [...] stellt als erster in schonungsloser Konsequenz aus sich selbst heraus den All-Einen Pinselstrich als Richtlinie auf: Man ist niemals in der Lage, diese Richtlinie aufzustellen—ein Selbst, das, nicht mehr man, sein Ich überwunden hat, muss es tun. Nur in der Annahme des All-Einen kann die Malerei wieder dem Herzen folgen, da sie sich nicht mehr von dem Von-selbst-so-Sein des Weltgeschehens abtrennt.³⁰⁰

The claim is that the human being must undergo transformation, must overcome “I”.³⁰¹ It is only by embracing the One Brushstroke that the brush can follow the heart freely again—“again” in the sense of restoring the original cosmological state of Oneness.³⁰² In slightly different words, yet essentially meaning the same thing, Huang Binhong concludes

²⁹⁶ Ibid.: 10. For alternative translations, see Chou 1969: 110; Hay 2001: 274; Ryckmans 1970: 11. The original text is: “此一畫收盡鴻濛之外, 即億萬筆墨, 未有不始於此, 而終於此惟聽人之握取之耳. 人能以一畫具體而微, 意明筆透.” Zhou 2007: 3.

²⁹⁷ *juti'erwei* 具體而微 is a citation of Mencius 孟子 (ca. 372–289 BC), see Zhou 2007: 7, n. 12.

²⁹⁸ Strassberg 1989: 61.

²⁹⁹ Ryckmans 1970: 11.

³⁰⁰ Brinker 2009: 13f.

³⁰¹ The notion of “overcoming I” is obviously connoted with Daoist and Buddhist meaning, see Bauer 2001: 89–96, and 173–176. For a systematic discussion of notions of self, no-self, being, and non-being in Buddhist, Daoist, and Confucian philosophical traditions, see Jess Fleming's essay “Self and (In)Finitude: Embodiment and the Other”, Fleming 2002.

³⁰² In the first line of Shitao's “Huayulu”, this state is associated with Supreme Antiquity (*taigu* 太古) and the idea of an Uncarved Block (*taipu* 太樸): “太古無法, 太樸不散.” (Supreme Antiquity was without method, the Supreme Woodblock was still undivided.), Zhou 2007: 3. On the notion of *taipu* in Shitao's “Huayulu”, see Ryckmans 1970: 13f., n. 4; Strassberg 1989: 113, n. 1.

that “once spiritual essence is attained [in an emulated artwork], [it will] come to life with breath resonance” (*jingshen suo dao, qi yun yi sheng* 精神所到, 氣韻以生).³⁰³

At this point, a few notes are in order concerning the diametric, seemingly incompatible relation between notions of “outer form” (*xing* 形), “formal likeness” (*xingsi* 形似), “figure and appearance” (*tima* 體貌), “outer appearance” 外貌 (*waimao*), “surface appearance” (*mianmao* 面貌) etc., on the one hand, and of “inner essence” (*jingshen* 精神), “spiritual likeness” (*shensi* 神似), “spiritual idea” (*shenyi* 神意), etc., on the other hand. The juxtaposition of these terms is based on an assumption of “external” and “internal” qualities, the latter of which are attributed with higher value. This long-standing polarization of an assumed “outer” and “inner”, chiefly established in the history of Chinese art criticism through Northern-Song intellectual discourse, and thereafter distinguished as an important analytical category within the field of literati art, will be known to those familiar with Chinese art.³⁰⁴ I nevertheless want to draw attention to this basic issue, with special regard to the later development of my arguments in the context of Huang Binhong’s *neimei* concept. Recalling the widely cited statement made by the influential court official, literati artist, and theoretician Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037–1101) (see figs. 33a–c) of the Northern Song: “If anyone discusses painting in terms of formal likeness, his understanding is nearly that of a child.” (*Lun hua yi xingsi jian yu ertong lin* 論畫以形似見與兒童鄰).³⁰⁵ Within both genres of literati painting and calligraphy art, effort should not be put into representing things in a naturalistic or purely formal manner, but into grasping their essence and conveying them through a moment of spontaneous resonance, thus infusing of the artwork with emotive content. As Martin Powers has pointed out in his illuminating essay “The Cultural Politics of the Brushstroke”, the Song 宋 (960–1279) literati painters developed their style in competition with the court—to some extent, out of necessity:

³⁰³ HBHWJ (6): 23. On the traditional aesthetic notion that accomplished painting must possess the quality of *qi yun shengdong* 氣韻生動 as put forward by sixth-century Xie He 謝赫 in his foundational “Six Principles of Painting” (“Huihua liu fa 繪畫六法”), see Acker’s discussion of “Hsieh Ho’s *Ku Hua P’in Lu* or Old Record of the Classification of Painters”, and his “Analysis of the Six Elements and their Six Elements”, Acker 1954: xiv–xxviii, xxviii–xlili, respectively. See also Bush/Shih 1985: 10–15; and Cahill 1961.

³⁰⁴ Though now over forty years of age, Susan Bush’s *The Chinese Literati on Painting: Su Shih (1037–1101) to Tung Ch’i-ch’ang (1555–1636)* is still a major reference in the context of Northern-Song art and intellectual history, Bush 1971. In this context, see also Peter Sturman’s discussion of “‘Ideas’ and Northern Song Calligraphy”, Sturman 1997: 18–53.

³⁰⁵ In Bush’s translation, Bush 1971: 188.

Since the court valued naturalism and finish, the literati had little choice but to move in the direction of coarser brushwork that, as a by-product, left clear traces of the artist's choices. Flattening space suddenly and radically likewise was an unmistakable sign of the artist's personal intervention, in flagrant contradiction of the scale of value chosen by a cultural rival. In essence, the literati rejected courtly values by reserving a shared scale of value. For the literati, naturalism sat at the negative end, while coarseness and facture marked the positive side of the scale.³⁰⁶

The form-essence dichotomy in Chinese art theory, which grew more and more pronounced over time, reached a climax with the flourishing of the Orthodox School of Painting³⁰⁷ under the prominent influence of Dong Qichang, and in turn ever-increasing formalist tendencies throughout the seventeenth century (as seen in Dong's own works, too, cf. figs. 27b–c)—even though “[...] some of the artists advised their fellows, as Tung Ch'i-ch'ang did, to look at *real* mountains. But the fact that such advice was necessary indicates that most of the artists were not doing so.”³⁰⁸ This dichotomy, which in Shitao's view had ultimately estranged the essence of painting as a result,³⁰⁹ is somewhat neutralized by Huang Binhong and his idea of what constitutes “true paintings” (*zhen hua* 真畫). As was briefly already noted above, in his view, a true painting is something both

³⁰⁶ Powers 2013: 315. Especially before the backdrop of this sharp observation made by Powers, I would like to note that in spite of the high respect that is due to Roger Ames for his essay “The Body in Classical Chinese Philosophy”, Ames makes one assertion that I disagree with. Ames juxtaposes the dualistic thinking that prevails in western philosophical traditions, for example in form of Plato's model of *psyche* and *soma*, with Chinese thought traditions, which he describes as essentially polarist, stating that “One of the most significant implications of this dualism/polarism distinction lies in the perceived relationship between mind and body. [...] In the polar metaphysics of the classical Chinese tradition, the correlative relations between the psychical and the somatic militated against the emergence of a mind/body problem. It was not that the Chinese thinkers were able to ‘reconcile’ this dichotomy; rather, it did not arise.” Ames 1993 [1984]: 163. Surely, we cannot apply the western-based model of *psyche* and *soma* to the Chinese context one-to-one, and yet, it seems erroneous to assume that there did not exist a comparable phenomenon in the Chinese case, i.e. that there did not exist any Chinese thinkers who *did* indeed make a severe (dichotomous) distinction between body and mind, or spirit, or inner—or whatever you may want to call it here.

³⁰⁷ Its most prominent exponents being Dong Qichang's followers Wang Shimin 王時敏 (1592–1680), Wang Jian 王鑑 (1598–1677), Wang Hui 王翬 (1632–1717), Wang Yuanqi 王原祁 (1642–1715), also known as the Four Wangs (Si Wang 四王); of whom Wang Hui can be considered the most celebrated. See fig. 34 for an example of his painting. For a study on the art of Wang Hui, further see Chang/Fong/Hearn 2008.

³⁰⁸ Yutang Lin 1969 [1967]: 149. On this issue, see also Cahill 1982, esp. chapter two, “Tung Ch'i-ch'ang and the Sanction of the Past”, 36–69. As Cahill writes: “In painting a picture, the artist was not committing a simple creative act, even to the extent that artists in other times and places were. He was, in effect, espousing a cause, asserting his status, commenting on the history of art.” Cahill 1982: 185. In her essay “Eine Kiefer auf dem Huangshan: Naturwahrnehmung und Alte Meister bei Huang Binhong”, Juliane Noth similarly comments on practices of landscape painting in traditional China and the dilemma of the viewer who attempts to describe the depicted scene in terms of a natural landscape, that is, a scene that factually exists *in natura*: “Tatsächlich sind die Elemente, aus denen das Bild aufgebaut ist, zeichenhafte Versatzstücke—es geht eben nicht darum, natürliche Landschaft darzustellen [...]. Stattdessen zitieren die Berge, die Bäume, das Landhaus mit dem Hausherrn am offenen Fenster und der Besucher auf der schmalen Brücke Bilder oder Kompositionen, in denen diese auch bereits eine Referenz auf eine abgebildete Landschaft waren.” Noth 2010: 4.

³⁰⁹ See Yutang Lin 1969 [1967]: 149f.; Strassberg 1989: 8ff.

“exactly like and absolutely unlike life”,³¹⁰ oscillating “between complete resemblance and complete non-resemblance to actual objects”,³¹¹ thus able to avoid the undesirable, extreme poles of stiffened, empty form brought about by the artist’s exaggerated concerns to imitate most accurately, on the one hand, and random, subjective outbursts of the brush, bearing no formal resemblance whatsoever, on the other hand. Huang Binhong’s antithetical aesthetic of “likeness and unlikeness” (*si’er bu si* 似而不似), implying man’s complex relation to nature, art and visual representation, can be taken as one of Huang Binhong’s guiding principles.³¹² However, it should be remarked that in spite of Huang Binhong’s sincere endeavors to de-binarize the form-essence dichotomy through his definition of “true painting”, claiming that the depiction should be at once “like and unlike” nature, or at once “like and unlike” its emulated model, Huang, of course, was not entirely invulnerable to the deep-entrenched art discursive narrative of this categorical division either. Related problems and issues will be further looked into in chapter four.

For the moment, the focus lies on familiarizing the reader with Huang Binhong’s basic, frequently used art critical terminology. To this end, the focus now shifts towards Huang Binhong’s calligraphy practice. Here, the aesthetic of “likeness and non-likeness” is just as valid as in the context of his landscape paintings. In fact, the conflicted issues related to this aesthetic are of particular relevance within the field of calligraphy and its tradition of emulating, or free-hand copying (*linmo* 臨摹) the works of old masters.³¹³ The object of representation here not being natural landscapes, but sequences of formal script, the calligrapher is continuously tackling the general tension that exists between “form” (i.e. *xing* 形) and “content” (i.e. *shen* 神, “internal spirit”; *qing* 情, “feeling”; *qi* 氣, “life breath”, etc.; that what the brush line is supposed to be imbued with) of the written characters, attempting to achieve a harmonious balance between both. In addition to this, he faces the challenge of establishing and maintaining an appropriate balance between the “original spirit” that imbues the model, and his own “deeper vision and feeling” (as noted by Kuo) of the work. In the context of Huang Binhong’s claim to strive for change, it is this element of “vision”, of “establishing through the self” (*ziwo li*), that is crucial to

³¹⁰ Kuo 2004: 66, 181f.

³¹¹ Ibid.: 129f.

³¹² A discussion of this notion in the context of Huang Binhong’s emulations of calligraphy models, see Li Jianfeng 2010: 43–44.

³¹³ For a terminological disambiguation of various concepts of copying in the traditional Chinese brush arts, see Fong 1962: esp. 110–118; cf. also Fong 1980; further Mersmann 2004.

artistic accomplishment—be this in form of an emulation of an ancient master, or a work completed after nature *en plein air*, or a painting as a product of pure imagination. Primarily put forward in the context of his “five brush and seven ink methods”, considering the fifth brush method of transformation that “governs” the other four, this brush method can be compared with an act of continuous adjusting, rearranging and recoding of elements within a given structure. While many methods can be technically acquired through patterning of the self and mind-body, the ultimate method of transformation cannot be learned in the conventional sense of a measurable skill. In this sense, Huang Binhong’s brush method of transformation can also be compared with Shitao’s method—or rather “the method of non-method” (*wufa zhi fa* 無法之法)³¹⁴—of One Brushstroke.

The above discussion serves to illuminate our view on Huang Binhong’s own emulations of calligraphy models, two examples of which we look into in the following. In turn, the work examples illustrate in what way Huang Binhong put his theoretical ideas into practice as an artist.

2.2. Two Free-Hand Copies: Emulation and Transformation in Practice

The Master said, “A transmitter and not a maker, believing in and loving the ancients [...]” (*Zi yue*, “*Shu er bu zuo, xin er hao gu* [...]” 子曰, “述而不作, 信而好古 [...]”)³¹⁵

As was noted in the introductory chapter of this study, the value of repetitive action as a means of paying reverence to the past is articulated as early as Confucius’ times. Two intertwined notions surface in the above-cited passage from the *Analects*: the value of reproduction, and the value of the old. James Legge annotates in his translation that in this chapter, “Confucius disclaims being an originator or maker”, and that the word *shu* 述 here carries the meaning of “simply handing down the old” (*chuan jiu er yi* 傳舊而已), which is juxtaposed with *zuo* 作, “doing” or “making”, in the sense of “creating”, “innovating”.³¹⁶ Based upon Confucius’ humble claim, and on the assumption of repetitive action as a high value as well as a productive, formative process in itself, in the following, I provide a close

³¹⁴ In the third chapter of his “Huayulu”, incidentally, the chapter titled “Transformation” (“Bianhua” 變化), Shitao writes: “又曰: ‘至人无法’. 非无法也, 无法而法, 乃为至法.” Zhou 2007: 13–16, 13. Lin Yutang translates this passage as: “Again it is said, ‘The perfect man has no method.’ It is not that he has no method, but rather the best of methods, which is his method of no-method.” Yutang Lin 1969 [1967]: 152.

³¹⁵ *Analects* 7:1, Legge, transl., 1960 [1892]: 195.

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*: n. 1.

reading of two free-hand copies by Huang Binhong which are modeled on famous calligraphy works of the Tang and Northern Song Dynasties, respectively. My reading argues in favor of the idea that every emulation in art, in all its forms, functions as a technique of cultural reproduction, thus always generating a new “text”, with new meaning. In this regard, I refer again to Michael Nylan, who was cited in the introduction with his elucidation of the term *wen* 文/紋 in its early meaning as “pattern”, stating that “[...] *wen* (‘pattern’) primarily signified exemplary behavior worthy of admiration and emulation (that is, ‘model behaviour’)”.³¹⁷ I support Nylan’s proposed definition of *wen* in its initially action-based, not text-based, meaning: *wen*, “which at first means ‘pattern’ (not necessarily visual) and only much later comes to mean ‘written text’ and even ‘culture’”, further denoted by Nylan as the most important word in the Chinese language “whose historical evolution has shaped aesthetic theory” over time.³¹⁸

The first of the two examples to be discussed is Huang Binhong’s undated free-hand copy of the *Cold Food Festival Poems* (*Hanshi shi tie* 寒食诗帖)³¹⁹ (fig. 35a) written in semi-cursive script (*xingshu* 行書) by aforementioned poet, calligrapher, painter, and theoretician Su Shi, well-known as one of the “Four Great Masters of the Song” (*Song si da jia* 宋四大家), and who was quoted above with his statement that “If anyone discusses painting in terms of formal likeness, his understanding is nearly that of a child.”³²⁰ While the original work now in the collection of the National Palace Museum, Taipei, is a handscroll measuring 35.9 x 188.6 cm, Huang’s undated *Free-Hand Copy of Su Shi’s Cold Food Festival Poems* (*Lin Su Shi Hanshi shi tie* 臨蘇軾寒食詩帖) (fig. 36a), now in the Zhejiang Provincial Museum, has a hanging scroll format measuring 90 x 30 cm. Throughout the latter half of his life, Su Shi, who attained the highest degree in the civil servant examination system at the young age of twenty, encountered severe hardships caused by his political enmeshment with disputes between internal government factions. In the horizontal scroll that comprises two poems written in 1082, during the first of his two banishments into exile, Su Shi expresses his feelings of frustration, depression, and

³¹⁷ Nylan 1999: 20.

³¹⁸ Ibid.

³¹⁹ Also known as *Huangzhou Cold Food Festival Poems* (*Huangzhou hanshi shi tie* 黃州寒食詩帖), which refers to Huangzhou as the place (of exile) where the poems were originally written.

³²⁰ Next to the reference to Bush 1971, monographs on Su Shi’s life and work include Egan 1994 and Yutang Lin 1947.

loneliness in face of his unfortunate situation.³²¹ The dramatic variations in his brushwork vividly mirror their emotionally charged content. A visual hallmark of this piece is arguably the energetically elongated vertical (*shu* 豎) brushstroke which is repeated four times: in the characters *nian* 年 (2/2)³²², *zhong* 中 (5/6), *wei* 葦 (11/5), and *zhi* 紙 (13/2) (figs. 35b–e respectively). As if the brush was slashing its way across the picture plane, these visually protrusive, blade-like strokes are not to be found in Huang Binhong’s version—at least, not in the sense of a mimetic repetition. Here, only the two characters *wei* 葦 (4/10) (fig. 36b) and *zhi* 紙 (4/20) (fig. 36c) are rendered with slight elongations of the downward vertical stroke by Huang Binhong, yet they do not possess the same piercing, feisty quality that Su Shi’s do. They have, in their seemingly reserved, less impulsive execution, moreover something suggestive. Rather than identically reproducing Su Shi’s blade-like strokes, their graphic shape is hinted at subtly. The character *na* 那 (4/11) (fig. 36d), which immediately follows *wei* 葦 in Huang’s version, accentuates this reference to Su Shi: its downward stroke is repeated with the same slight hint of an elongation. Coyly curving itself, it gradually fades into a thin tip of *feibai* 飛白 (flying white)³²³, as if to echo Su Shi’s piercing blade-strokes—thereby both acknowledging and reiterating their presence in the original work.

Another feature of Su Shi’s *Cold Food Festival Poems* are the lively variations of ink tone and character size, which both appear to intensify throughout the piece. Especially the first characters in most of the columns in the latter half of the scroll are enlarged and written with a heavily saturated brush, such as *po zao* 破竈 (11/1–2); *zhi shi han* 知是寒 (12/1–3); *jiu zhong, fenmu* 九重, 墳墓 (14/1–4); and *ku tu qiong, si* 哭塗窮, 死 (15/1–4) (figs. 35f–i respectively). The overall alternation of ink tone and character size is, surely, a conscious

³²¹ For a study of this work, see Fu Shen’s 傅申 essay “Tianxia di yi Su Dongpo: Han Shi tie 天下第一蘇東坡:寒食帖”, Fu 1996 (b). For an in-depth study of Su Shi’s period of exile in Huangzhou, see Wang Linxiang 2010. Su Shi’s “Poetry of Resentment and Defiance” written in exile is discussed by Egan, Egan 1994: 250–260. The original text of the poem reads: “自我來黃州, 已過三寒食. 年年欲惜春, 春去不容惜. 今年又苦雨, 兩月秋蕭瑟. 臥聞海棠花, 泥汗燕支雪. 閨中偷負去, 夜半真有力. 何殊病少年, 病起鬚已白. 春江欲入戶, 雨勢來不已. 小屋如漁舟, 濛濛水雲裡. 空庖煮寒菜, 破竈燒溼葦. 那知是寒食, 但見烏銜紙. 君門深九重, 墳墓在萬里. 也擬哭塗窮, 死灰吹不起.” Zhang Tongyu 2009: 261. A translation of the poem is given in Fong/Watt 1996: 148. For Su Shi’s calligraphy, further see Nakata, ed., 1970–1972, vol. 6.

³²² The first digit in the brackets denotes the respective column number; the second the respective position of the character in the column.

³²³ Huang Binhong’s use of this calligraphic ink effect, which is created by moving the brush over the paper with such speed that the ink line leaves white “traces of the underground paper material, is discussed by Claire Roberts with regard to several of Huang’s landscape paintings, see Roberts 2005: 55, 211, 258f., 278.

stylistic choice on part of the calligrapher. To a certain extent, however, these aspects are also determined by the material conditions at hand. Characters tend to shrink in size towards the end of a line, due to the gradual lack of writing space and increasingly pointed (hence awkward) angle formed between arm and body. The brush, moreover, needs to be continuously soaked with fresh ink at certain intervals, thus producing a rhythmically pulsating flow of ink that enables the reader to mentally recreate and follow the narrative sequence of the brush line. In his copy, Huang Binhong did not attempt to mimetically reproduce the rhythm and “meter” of ink flow in the original work. Then again, he did not entirely ignore its rhythmic aspect either, but decided, rather, to incorporate the flow of ink more naturally, allowing this aspect to unfurl of its own accord. Characters that stand out for their density and thickness of brushstroke in Huang Binhong’s version (unlike in Su Shi’s), are, for example, the very first three characters *zi wo lai* 自我來 (1/1–3) (fig. 36e) as well as the characters *qu bu* 去不 (1/17–18) in the same column (fig. 36f); further, *bai, chun* 白, 春 (3/6–7); *yu shi lai bu* 雨勢來不 (3/12–15); or *hanshi, dan jian* 寒食, 但見 (4/14–17) (figs. 36g–i respectively). Altogether, they reveal an own and individual rhythmic pulse of brush line and ink flow. The same is true with regard to the aspect of character size. Given that in Su Shi’s calligraphy, where this aspect, as mentioned above, may be influenced by the given materials, Huang Binhong, who chose to write out his copy on a vertical format (thereby inevitably breaking up the overall physical structure and spatial composition of the original work), would have invoked an unnatural development of shapes, had he tried to literally transpose Su Shi’s version to his own version in terms of character size and proportion. An example that illustrates this well is the notably tiny character *bai* 白 (7/7) (fig. 35j), the last one in column 7 of Su Shi’s piece. It marks a delicate final note in conclusion to the six preceding characters in this line, similar to a full stop that indicates the end of a sentence, or a comma, allowing for a pause before continuing in the next line. Structurally interwoven in an entirely different way, that is to say, bearing a unique position relative to the preceding and succeeding characters, as well as among the text as a whole, in Huang Binhong’s calligraphy, the same character *bai* 白 (3/6) (fig. 36g) does not fulfill the same (aesthetic, compositional) function and meaning. Here, it maintains a strong visual connection with the following character *chun* 春 (3/7) (fig. 36g; in Su’s version: 8/1 [fig. 35k]), not only due to a physical proximity, but, moreover, due to a similarity of physical features: the large size, the broadly drawn

brushstrokes, the use of wet ink (all of which are, moreover, *induced* by the physical proximity of the two characters). In other words, Huang Binhong let the narrative course of his brush line evolve in an organic way, allowing it to be infused with spontaneous movement—without, however, failing to take into account a distinct degree of resemblance with Su Shi’s work. Huang Binhong’s calligraphy, which generates its visual cohesion through a comparably even arrangement and homogeneous size of characters, perhaps lacks the gusty impulse characteristic of its model. Yet this is most likely intentionally chosen by Huang Binhong, revealing his aim to copy Su Shi’s work in a contemplative rather than mimetic manner. In disapproval of exaggerated and self-embellishing forms of imitation that sought to cater to the taste of the crowd (which Huang Binhong believed to observe among many of his artist contemporaries),³²⁴ all his references to the original work by Su Shi are made in an oblique manner. These references are evidence, not of close copy, but, moreover, of close study.

Detail comparisons such as Huang Binhong’s rendering of the first line in Su Shi’s calligraphy, reading “Since I last came to Huangzhou already three Cold Food Festivals have gone by” (*Zi wo lai Huangzhou yi guo san han* 自我來黃州已過三寒), attest his idea of carefully maintaining the right balance between stylistic similitude and variation. Here, similarity is achieved with regard to each character’s relative position, proportional size, and general shape, or directional inclination (as, for instance, with the character *huang* 黃 [in both versions: 1/4] [figs. 35l, 36j, respectively]); further, with regard to the varied use of a slanted brush tip (*cefeng* 側鋒); and, finally, of course, with regard to a prevailing faithfulness to the methodic principles of the semi-cursive script type.³²⁵ A major difference, by contrast, lies in the strongly abbreviated brushstrokes in Huang Binhong’s calligraphy. Whereas the six individual strokes that constitute the character *zhou* 州 are identifiable as such in Su Shi’s work (1/5) (fig. 35m), Huang Binhong joins them together in two strokes (1/5) (fig. 36k); the eight strokes belonging to the phonetic component *guo*

³²⁴ Huang Binhong strictly differentiated between two types of art production: firstly, art whose “purpose is to please the viewers” and cater to the people’s taste, which he denoted as the (academic) tradition of “imperial learning” (*junxue* 君學); and secondly, art that emphasizes what is “spiritual within” and not necessarily pleasing to the eye at first glance, which Huang associated with a tradition of “people’s learning” (*minxue* 民學), Kuo 2004: 8f. Needless to say, Huang rejected the former and promoted the latter. His thoughts on this issue are elucidated for example in his essay “Guohua zhi minxue 國畫之民學” (“Chinese Painting and People’s Learning”) of 1948, rpt. HBHWJ (6): 448–452.

³²⁵ For a concise overview of the Chinese calligraphic script types and their respective basic characteristics see Fong/Harrist, eds., 1999: xvi–xvii; further the references given in the introductory chapter, n. 3.

𠂇 in the character *guo* 過 (1/7) (fig. 36l), are moreover abbreviated to a single one. Small details, like the character *san* 三 (1/8) (fig. 36m) that leans towards the right (and not to the left, as in Su Shi's work [1/8] [fig. 35n]), subtly exemplify conscious alterations on part of the copyist. Moreover, they reveal facets of his personal style. The slight left-turn, or hook (*gou* 鉤) of the brush in ending the falling rightwards strokes (*na* 捺), for example, which is a recurring feature in Su Shi's work (as in the character *lai* 來 [1/3] [fig. 35o]), is omitted by Huang Binhong (1/3) (fig. 36n). Instead, Huang adds a curvaceous hook in the vertical stroke, thus affixing a personal signature of sorts. Features like this illustrate Huang Binhong's leitmotif of aspiring to be at once "like and unlike" the model.

Huang Binhong's approach in emulating models may well be understood as a decided reaction against the rigid environment of calligraphy culture of the late Qing dynasty, which, among other things, had evolved as a result of the increasingly over-cultivated, petty practices of *tiexue* (the study of model-letter compendia) indebted to the tradition of Wang Xizhi, and which had exhausted their meaning in form of the prevalent, somewhat "insipid 'Examination-hall style'" (*guanggeti* 館閣體).³²⁶ In his essay "On Huang Binhong's Emulations of Model Calligraphies" ("Guanyu Huang Binhong shufa de lintie 關於黃賓虹書法的臨帖"), Li Jianfeng 李劍鋒 states that Huang Binhong, in emulating seal script model calligraphies, already demonstrated a "flexible and free orientation in using the brush" (*linghuo ziyou de yongbi quxiang* 靈活自由的用筆取向) at an early age, despite the fact that his calligraphy had not yet reached its mature stage.³²⁷ Li further writes that among Huang Binhong's contemporaries, only few equaled him in terms of this confidence. Comparing Huang Binhong's emulations of bronze inscriptions with those of Luo Zhenyu 羅振玉 (1866–1940) and Wang Fu'an 王福庵 (1880–1960), the author juxtaposes them by noting that the latter two exhibited an "overly cautious" (*xiaoxin jijin* 小心拘謹) use of the brush, "lacking in change" (*quefa bianhua* 缺乏變化) (for examples of Luo Zhenyu and Wang Fu'an's calligraphy, see figs. 37a–d; further compare figs. 37d

³²⁶ Kuo 2004: 33.

³²⁷ Li Jianfeng 2010: 41. As an important representative of the epigraphical movements of *jinchixue* (the study of bronze and stone inscriptions) and *beixue* (the study of stone stele inscriptions), which had gained momentum particularly throughout the eighteenth century, Huang Binhong saw the revival of ancient Chinese script types as a suitable remedy against the uninspired yet influential *tiexue* tradition. These and related aspects will be further addressed in the following. On the rise of epigraphical calligraphy in the early Qing dynasty, see Qianshen Bai's study, Bai 2003; further Ho 2012, for an essay on the mid- to late-Qing Epigraphic School of calligraphy; and Hua 1999, on the Qing-dynasty revival of Wei-period stele-style calligraphy. For a catalogue of an exhibition of Qing-dynasty couplets, see Kuo/Sturman, eds., 2003.

and 47, which show Wang Fu'an and Huang Binhong's respective seal-script versions of the *Thousand Character Essay* [*Qianziwen* 千字文]).³²⁸

Bringing to mind Huang Binhong's statement that "To be a calligrapher and painter, one first of all needs to be a connoisseur",³²⁹ the intensive contemplation of models, as opposed to their meticulous reproduction, was what Huang Binhong considered to be a precondition of utmost importance in bringing forth newness (*chuang xin* 創新) and achieving transformation.³³⁰ Out of the knowledge of models results the confidence that is necessary in order to liberate oneself from "slavish imitation" and move freely when copying. Here, "transformation" presents the key process in striving to create something that is both "like and unlike life"; in the case of emulating a model, something that is both "like and unlike" the original work. In the context of the example discussed above, it seems as if Huang Binhong had pursued to write out a poem composed by Su Shi, yet deliberately filtered through his own perspective—or, vice versa, to create a calligraphy of his own, yet seen through the eyes of Su Shi. In any case, we can agree that this example of Huang's calligraphy, like all others, was written "not with an innocent eye but with the mind's eye", to borrow Jason Kuo's felicitous wording.³³¹ Here, "the copy" is not only understood as an evocation, or an echo that resonates with an "original work". Moreover, "transformation", as a dialectical, reciprocal process is defined as a *formative* act; in the case of the example discussed, a formative act that allows—even requires—us, in hindsight, to translate and recode both Su Shi and Huang Binhong's morphological systems of writing.

As a second example that serves to illustrate aspects of Huang Binhong's calligraphy practices is his undated *Free-Hand Copy of Poem for General Pei by Yan Zhenqing* (*Lin Yan Zhenqing Pei jiangjun shi* 臨顏真卿裴將軍詩) (fig. 39a), two hanging scrolls measuring 88 x 29 cm each, and now in the collection of the Zhejiang Provincial Museum, Hangzhou.³³² The work is based on the calligraphy *Poem for General Pei* (*Pei jiangjun shi* 裴將軍詩) attributed to Yan Zhenqing 顏真卿 (709–785) (fig. 38a), known in China's

³²⁸ Li Jianfeng 2010: 41.

³²⁹ "一個書畫家，首先應該是一個鑑賞家。" Cited after Wang Guanghan 2007: 36.

³³⁰ As already noted, the practice of intensive contemplation can be traced back to Huang's childhood, in which he enjoyed looking at the family's collection of ancient and contemporary pieces "from morning till night, trying to comprehend the spirit of their brushwork" (晨夕展對，悟其筆意), cited after Kuo 2004: 47.

³³¹ *Ibid.*: 79.

³³² The original text of the poem reads: "裴將軍！大君制六合，猛將清九垓。戰馬若龍虎，騰陵何壯哉。將軍臨北荒，烜赫耀英材。劍舞躍遊電，隨風縈且回。登高望天山，白雲正崔嵬。入陣破驕虜，威聲雄震雷。一射百馬倒，再射萬夫開。匈奴不敢敵，相呼歸去來。功成報天子，可以畫麟台。" Zhang Tongyu 2009: 262.

history as a loyal statesman and leading calligrapher of his times.³³³ Ranking, just like Su Shi's *Cold Food Festival Poems*, among the major masterpieces of Chinese calligraphy, *Poem for General Pei* is marveled for the skilled use of a highly varied brush technique, incorporating elements of different script types, sometimes even within a single line. Although generally held in semi-cursive script, the brushwork is full of sudden transitions and contrasts, alternating between the bold, solid monumentality of clerical script, and the delicate, fluid lightness of cursive script. It is said that General Pei (Pei Min 裴旻),³³⁴ whose military accomplishments are subject of praise in this poem, excelled at sword dance, and that Yan Zhenqing achieved to express the related rhythm and movement of martial arts and calligraphy in this work. At times, the dashing brush surges forward in surprising attacks, only then to proceed in tranquil and reserved manner, so as to rebuild its force and momentum. Not least, *Poem for General Pei* is valued highly in the history of Chinese calligraphy for the moral integrity of Yan Zhenqing's personal character that is believed to be revealed.³³⁵ Conveying the vigor and authority of a strong-willed statesman, yet also the unpretentious simplicity and honesty of a humble scholar official, the calligraphy is marked by a distinctive, peculiar note of eccentricity, which only adds to its high degree of individuality. A wide range of human dispositions and emotions unravels before the eyes of the viewer, who is invited to follow on the heels of Pei Min's war

³³³ For Yan Zhenqing's biography, see Huang, ed., 2007. For a discussion of this work attributed to Yan Zhenqing, see McNair 1998: 75–79. Huang Binhong's emulation, more precisely, is of a rubbing version of Yan's work, possibly a rubbing from the model-letter *Compendium of the Hall of Loyalty and Righteousness (Zhongyi tang tie 忠義堂帖)* compiled by Liu Yuangang 留元剛 (1180–1268) in 1215, now in the collection of the Zhejiang Provincial Museum, Hangzhou. No ink-written original is extant, only an ink-written copy possibly dating to the Yuan dynasty, which is now in the collection of the Palace Museum, Beijing, see also McNair 1998: 149, n. 37.

³³⁴ Pei Min's life dates are unknown. An imperial official of the Tang dynasty, he served as a military general under the reign of Tang Xuanzong 唐玄宗 (685–762, r. 712–756) and was praised for his excellent skills in sword dance, see *ibid.*: n. 38. McNair argues that it is likely Yan Zhenqing and Pei Min knew each other personally and that the poem attributed to Yan could thus be authentic, since Pei had been a friend and contemporary of the Tang cursive-script master Zhang Xu 張旭 (fl. eighth century), under whom Yan had studied calligraphy, *ibid.*: 78. For a comprehensive publication of Yan Zhenqing's calligraphy, see Wang Lin 2010 (2 vols.); also Nakata, ed., 1970–1972, vol. 4. For Zhang Xu's calligraphy, see Nakata, ed., 1970–1972, vol. 5.

³³⁵ On the establishment of Yan Zhenqing's position in the history of Chinese calligraphy during the Northern Song and his status as an aesthetic and moral role model, see Fu 1987; Fu 1996: 11–60, 61–78; and McNair 1998. Classic examples of Yan's regular-script brushwork upon which “Yan-Style calligraphy” (*Yanti 顏體*) is modeled (up to this day at primary schools in China) are his *Duobao Pagoda Stele (Duobao ta bei 多宝塔碑)* of 752, and his *Gift of Mother Yin of Lanling Prefecture to Another Lady of Lanling Prefecture (Lanling jun taijun Yin shi zeng Lanling jun taifuren zhi 蘭陵郡太君殷氏贈蘭陵郡太夫人制)* of 763, published in Wang Lin 2010, vol. 1: 81–136, and vol. 2: 2155–2164, respectively. See figs. 53a–b for illustrations of these works, and further fig. 78e for a contemporary work styled on the latter one by Yan Zhenqing.

horses, which are fantastically likened to dragons and tigers (*zhanma ruo long hu* 戰馬若龍虎); and to re-enliven the general's experience by extending with him into the "six directions" (*liu he* 六合), that is, "the whole wide world".

In the same spirit as with his emulation of Su Shi's *Cold Food Festival Poems*, Huang Binhong's interpretation of Yan Zhenqing enacts a dynamic tension between similarity with and difference to the original model, producing, again, a visually coherent system of written characters that can be read as "neither complete resemblance nor complete non-resemblance". At first glance, Huang's work evokes a visual reference to Yan Zhenqing's hallmark standard-script style, rather than to the given model *Poem for General Pei*. The overall appearance is dominated by a composition of evenly, albeit densely spaced characters, which are all of similar size, and distinguished by rectangular, robust body structures, as well as wide, angular brushstrokes. The broad movements of the brush and the coarse texture of the brush hairs stand in contrast to the slender, supple, and fluid brush lines to be seen in the previous example of the *Cold Food Festival Poems*. In the emulation of *Poem for General Pei*, even the characters that are rendered in cursive script—such as *jiang qing* 將清 (1/1/10–11)³³⁶; *ruo long hu* 若龍虎 (1/2/3–5); *denggao* 登高 (2/1/1–2); or *ma* 馬 (2/2/11) (figs. 39b–e respectively)—more or less all adhere to the same size, squat shape, and steady pace that is maintained throughout the piece. In this regard, Huang Binhong's version differs greatly from its model, where especially the cursive characters show a great degree of variation in terms of size and spatial arrangement; compare, here, for example, Yan Zhenqing's renderings of the characters *hu* 虎 (6/1); *he zhuang zhan* 何壯戰 (7/2–4); *jiangjun* 將軍 (8/1–2); *bai ma* 百馬 (20/2–3); or *fu* 夫 (22/1) (figs. 38b–f respectively). Further, Yan Zhenqing's sequences of cursive script stand off starkly from those written in clerical style, in that they display abrupt releases of speed and the use of a slivery thin brush tip that joins individual strokes or characters together within one continuous line; as to be seen in columns 5, 8, 12, 13, 15, 18, and 24. Huang Binhong's cursive-script characters, by contrast, are not connected with one another; every brushstroke appears to be drawn individually and with deliberation, attentive to a visibly discernible beginning and ending in each one.³³⁷ Also in terms of size and proportion,

³³⁶ Where three digits are given in brackets, the first denotes the respective scroll; the second the column number; the third the position of the character in the respective column.

³³⁷ The importance of paying attention to initiative and conclusive movements in executing individual brushstrokes is expressed by Huang Binhong in the above-quoted statement that certain strokes "must turn

Huang's cursive-script characters do not differ from the ones written in clerical script, as they do in Yan Zhenqing's calligraphy. Rather, Huang Binhong chose to treat all characters in an integrative manner, as equable elements of a larger whole, regardless of script type. The sections in Yan Zhenqing's version where size, proportion, spacing, and abbreviation of individual characters vary drastically appear notably moderated and “toned down” in Huang Binhong's version. The visually striking idiosyncrasies of Yan Zhenqing's calligraphy—whether the fearless “general” (*jiangjun* 將軍 [8/1–2] [fig. 38d]), appearing to lash out as if with a weapon; or the quirky spirals literally “following the wind” (*sui feng ying qie hui* 隨風縈且回 [12/4, 13/1–4] [fig. 38g]); the “Heavenly Mountains” in line 15 that seem to diminish and disappear into the “white clouds” (*Tianshan, bai yun* 天山, 白雲 [15/1–4] [fig. 38h]); or the “imperial library” (*lintai* 麟臺 [27/1–2] [fig. 38i]) concluding the calligraphy with its intimidatingly powerful *shu*-stroke in the last line—are all rendered in a downscaled, evenly measured manner by Huang Binhong.

This, however, is not to say that Huang Binhong's emulation of *Poem for General Pei* does not bear any formal similarity to its model at all. The differences described above notwithstanding, plenty of characters in fact demonstrate the process of rather close copying, as, for example the characters *zhanma ruo long* 戰馬若龍 (Yan: 4/4, 5/1–3 [fig. 38j]; Huang: 1/2/1–4 [fig. 39f]), or the characters *Tianshan, bai* 天山, 白 (Yan: 15/1–3 [fig. 38h]; Huang: 2/1/4–6 [fig. 39g]) show. Further examples are the characters *denggao* 登高 (Yan: 14/1–2 [fig. 38k]; Huang: 2/1/1–2 [fig. 39d]); *Xiongnu* 匈奴 (Yan: 22/3, 23/1 [fig. 38l]; Huang: 2/3/6–7 [fig. 39i]); or *di, xiang* 相, 敵 (Yan: 23/4–5 [fig. 38m]; Huang: 2/3/10–11 [fig. 39j]). Yet, rather than a close copy in the sense of fastidiously reproduced details, the characters show similarity regarding general aspects including their architectural build, directional inclination, or the imposed brush momentum. Just like his emulation of Su Shi's *Cold Food Festival Poems*, close-up comparisons expose Huang Binhong's intricate dealing with the idea of a both faithful and “unfaithful” rendering of the modeled form. For instance, he carefully follows the brush movement in Yan Zhenqing's “tiger” (*hu* 虎; 6/1 [fig. 38b]; cf. Huang: 1/2/4 [fig. 39h]), even tracing the

around and look back between left and right, and must have the structural force of an echo that resonates between up and down [...]” (“[...] 必有左右回顧、上下呼應之勢 [...]”), HBHWJ (6): 160.

near-to invisible thread of ink that connects the initial two horizontal strokes of the character, and ending it with a slight turn of the brush to the left in the final vertical stroke. Although complying with the proportional structure of the model, the brushstrokes of Huang's own "tiger" do not bear the same delicacy and agility as Yan Zhenqing's. Thick and even in width, they lend the character a robust, forceful appearance. Also, Huang Binhong contrasts a dense and heavy ink tone with a coarse and dry one, and the slight wavering of the brush, perceivable amid the brittle of *feibai* in the stroke that connects with the final vertical one further indicates the overall decreased, controlled speed with which this character (and the work in general) was written. Notably, this connecting stroke is an addition in Huang Binhong's version that presents a conscious departure from the original. Its slow-paced, somehow pensive proceeding allows, then, even for a pause to refresh the brush with ink, before continuing with the final vertical stroke. The leveled tempo of writing, as well as the fact that the work on the whole bears no striking irregularities or extreme divergences in terms of shape and style, particularly in comparison to its model, reveals the same reflective, "tempered" approach as observed in the previously discussed emulation. This implies, again, Huang Binhong's hesitation with regard to the over-eager imitation of "outer form", and his search to moreover connect with the "internal spirit" of the original work. Also, the seemingly withheld execution—both "emotionally" and "technically" (in many cases in fact inseparable)—of the brushstrokes is a good example of the third brush method denoted in Huang Binhong's model of *wu bi qi mo*, namely, the "lingering method" (*liufa* 留法). Incidentally, this can be specially noted as a stylistic feature of Huang Binhong's maturing brushwork from around the mid-1940s onwards, to become particularly prominent in Huang's late cursive-script style, as will be discussed in the next chapter. The "lingering", "withheld" quality of the brush is a significant component of an aesthetics of *neimei*, I argue. On stylistic grounds of Huang's presently discussed emulation of Yan Zhenqing, I think that the two hanging scrolls can be dated to the late 1940s. This dating is corroborated by the fact that Huang Binhong was living in Hangzhou during this time,³³⁸ which would have afforded him the opportunity to sight the

³³⁸ Huang Binhong moved from Beijing to Hangzhou in 1948, when he was appointed to the Guoli yishu zhuanke xuexiao 國立藝術專科學校 (renamed in 1950 as Zhongyang meishu xueyuan 中央美術學院; today named Zhongguo meishu xueyuan 中國美術學院, respectively, China Academy of Art) as an art professor. Huang stayed in Hangzhou until his passing away in 1955. His residence was located the foot of the Qixia Hills (Qixialing 棲霞嶺) on the northwest side of the West Lake. The former residence now functions as the Huang Binhong Memorial Gallery (Huang Binhong jinian guan 黃賓虹紀念館).

rubbing of Yan Zhenqing's poem in the collection of the Zhejiang Provincial Museum³³⁹ (which was located only a few minutes' walk away from his house).

Through the close reading of these two examples of copies by Huang, we can comprehend his endeavor of simultaneous adherence to and divergence from the modeled form. Though not further discussed in this study, other emulations of canonical works of calligraphy by Huang Binhong corroborate this endeavor (for examples, see figs. 41–45; and also fig. 47 showing Huang Binhong's version of the *Thousand Character Essay* [*Qianziwen* 千字文]—which strictly speaking is not an emulation but can be considered as such nevertheless, as it shows the spirit of arduous practice through copying, inasmuch as the *Thousand Character Essay* is traditionally used as a prime model in learning calligraphy). Indeed not only true for his landscape paintings, which, as already noted, Kuo describes as “sketched not with an innocent eye but with the mind's eye”, the examples go to show that Huang Binhong's emulations in calligraphy are likewise “never merely direct recordings of visual observation”, as the artist himself asserted.³⁴⁰ If Huang Binhong's underlying assumption and claim in emulating old models was that “the form changes, but the spirit stays the same”, what, then, in the case of Yan Zhenqing's calligraphy, exactly is this “spirit”, which Huang sought to connect with through his emulation? On the note that *Poem for General Pei* is valued in the history of Chinese calligraphy for the complex variety it bears in terms of technical skill, visual morphology and emotional range, all the while maintaining a spontaneous, unadorned aesthetic quality, the opening line of the poem may be taken, in a figurative sense, as the principal driving force and leitmotif of the work: “The gentleman General Pei controls the Six Directions” (*Pei jiangjun dajun zhi liu he* 裴將軍大君制六和). The “Six Directions” signify “the whole wide world”, into which General Pei advances with his war horse—and, even farther, into the “remote wilds beyond the frontier” (*jiu gai* 九垓), where he successfully battles intruding enemies in the northern wastelands (*bei shu* 北荒). On his journey, he conquers high mountains, and even the clouds, “ascending the heights of the Heavenly Mountains, white clouds loftily towering” (*deng gao wang Tianshan, bai yun zheng cuiwei* 登高望天山, 白云正崔嵬),³⁴¹ and his “dancing sword

³³⁹ See n. 333.

³⁴⁰ Kuo 2004: 79.

³⁴¹ The “Heavenly Mountains” (Tianshan 天山, Old Turkic [romanized]: *Tenġri taġ*), denoting the system of Central Asian mountain ranges north and west of the Taklamakan Desert, indeed signify the great distance tackled by the general travelling all the way from the Tang imperial house at the capital Chang'an, whose successful military campaigns of the seventh century had significantly expanded the borders of the Chinese

leaps and roves fast as lightning, following the wind, then lingering and returning” (*jian wu yue you dian, sui feng ying qie hui* 劍舞躍游電，隨風縈且回), now in harmony with the forces of nature. General Pei encounters the myriad shapes of the earthly realm, seeking, perhaps, to expand, beyond the geographic journey, into a daoistic experience of limitless wandering, or “enjoyment in untroubled ease” (*xiaoyaoyou* 逍遙遊).³⁴² Yan Zhenqing, alike, explores the “ten thousand things” (*wanwu* 萬物), the phenomena of the material, living world in its entirety, by way of his dancing brush, aspiring, perhaps, to tame and capture them in form of the written characters in his calligraphy. Abiding by the daoistic principle of constant change, his brushwork resonates with the words that Sun Guoting 孫過庭 (646?–691?) put forward in his “Treatise on Calligraphy” (*Shupu* 書譜) (fig. 40) of 687: “*Wei’er bu fan, he er bu tong; liu bu chang chi, qian bu heng bing; dai zao fang run, jiang nong sui ku* [...] 違而不犯，和而不同；留不常遲，遣不恆疾；帶燥方潤，將濃遂枯 [...]”, translated by Chang Ch’ung-ho as:

There may be differences, but there should be no conflicts; there ought to be harmony, but not repetition; you may linger, but you should not stand still; you may move swiftly, but you should not rush. Dry strokes bring out moistness; when the ink is too thick, it leads to dryness.³⁴³

Huang Binhong’s own understanding that the movement of the brush must be in constant flux and strive after continuous change of form and force is expressed by Huang in the above-quoted statement that “[t]he character components *shui* 氵 [for ‘water’], and *huo* 灬 [for ‘fire’], must turn around and look back between left and right, and must have the structural force of an echo that resonates between up and down, thus achieving naturalness.”³⁴⁴ In his emulation of Yan Zhenqing, Huang Binhong, too, seeks to unfold

state north-west into the Turkic nomadic regions, the “northern wastelands” (*bei shu* 北荒), as the poem denotes. See Jacques Gernet: “La grande expansion du VII^e siècle”, Gernet 1972: 220–224.

³⁴² The notion of “enjoyment in untroubled ease” refers to Legge’s translation of *Xiaoyaoyou* 逍遙遊, the title of the first book of Zhuangzi 莊子, Legge, transl., 1959: 212–223; see also Richard Wilhelm’s translation “Wandern in Muße”, Wilhelm, transl., 2002 [1969]: 29–31.

³⁴³ Chang, transl., 1995: 14, 97. Alternatively, Roger Goepfer translates this crucial passage as: “Eine Schrift darf zwar voller Gegensätze, aber nicht fehlerhaft sein; sie soll ausgeglichen (ho 和), aber nicht eintönig (t’ung 同) sein; verhalten, aber nicht in jedem Fall langsam; dahineilend, aber nicht stets hastig; sie mag starr, soll aber dann wieder elegant sein. Verwendet man die Tusche üppig, so gebrauchte man sie anschließend wieder trocken.” Goepfer 1974: 131; Günther Debon further as: “Abweichen, doch nicht sich widersetzen, in Einklang sein, doch nicht sich gleichmachen. Verweilen, ohne ständig zu säumen; sich sputen, ohne ständige Hast. Mit Trockenem begleite das Feuchte; laß Üppiges dem Starren folgen.” Debon 1978: 21.

³⁴⁴ As quoted above: “氵點為水，灬點為火，必有左右回顧、上下呼應之勢，而成自然。” HBHWJ (6): 160.

the myriad forms and shapes of life in all its bizarre, and wondrous appearances. True, Huang Binhong's version may lack the impulsive, somewhat extreme gestures to be found in his model. However, it possesses its own, tempered language of gestures that bears, in its own way, an overwhelming scale of variation with regard to brush-and-ink method. Particularly the alternation between circular and angular elements; between wet and dense, and dry and light brushstrokes, shows a highly rhythmical quality. This aspect is much "in the spirit" of the overall rhythmic harmony that is distinctly achieved in Yan Zhenqing's work; achieved precisely *through* its many extremes, in that these lastly all find appropriate balance through the alternation, hence harmonization, of complementary elements (powerful-timid; cursive/curvaceous-clerical/angular; large-tiny, etc.). This balance of opposites accords with Huang Binhong's afore-cited statement that "art bears ten thousand variations, yet the principle [i.e. its principle] does not change" (*yi sui wan bian, er dao bu bian*) and becomes particularly evident when considering the overall composition of his emulation. Huang Binhong's version of *Poem for General Pei*, whose visual coherence lies in its brittle brush texture and a so-called "naive and simplistic", "clumsy and awkward" (*puzhuo hunhou* 朴拙浑厚) aesthetic style,³⁴⁵ brings to mind something of an intricately interwoven, intact organism. It shows the artist's technical versatility as well as his structural sense of organizing space. In this respect, the work can even be considered a vivid practical demonstration of Huang's "five brush and seven ink methods" in all its aspects, including the overarching claim to achieve transformation, i.e. through the "fifth brush method of transformation". Moreover, the calligraphy to some extent anticipates the so-called dark and dense landscape painting style of Huang's late period that lent him the nickname Hei Binhong 黑宾虹 (meaning "Dark" or "Black Binhong", a word play on his family name Huang 黄, meaning "yellow"), to which I will get back again in more detail in the following chapters.

In sum, the above-discussed two examples were chosen to illustrate, through Huang Binhong's perspective, what is meant with the statement that "the form changes, but the spirit stays the same", and what Huang Binhong meant with his idea of an artwork being

³⁴⁵ Here I am referring to the aesthetic notion of *puzhuo hunhou* 朴拙浑厚 which was especially coined in the context of Huang Binhong's student Lin Sanzhi, whose late cursive-script style is associated with this quality, and was espoused by Lin Sanzhi for example through the extensive use of the "wrinkly brush method" (*sebi* 澀筆). As will be discussed in chapter six, Lin Sanzhi's calligraphy aesthetic was significantly shaped by aspects of Huang Binhong's art, and can be considered in terms of an aesthetics of *neimei*. On Lin Sanzhi's use of the "wrinkly brush", see Cui 2008.

both “like and unlike” its subject of description, in this case, two calligraphy works that were emulated. In both cases, the emulations can be read as a transformative process involving the “mutual education of old and new” (*gu jin xiang shi* 古今相師): “Old and new educate each other, no copy goes to waste, every draft is circulated and transmits the tradition, this is the original importance [of copying].”³⁴⁶ Therein neutralizing the hierarchical relation between “original” and “copy”, or “old” and “new”, the discussed emulations allow—even compel—us to see Huang Binhong through different eyes. Retroactively, they also inform the way in which we see and read Su Shi and Yan Zhenqing’s calligraphies: the juxtaposing of “original” and “copy” allows us to question the static nature of Su Shi and Yan Zhenqing’s calligraphies as accomplished, complete objects, or “identities”, in spite of their origins that seem so firmly rooted in a history that dates back many centuries. With regard to the letters scroll *Presenting Oranges* (*Fengju tie* 奉橘帖) by Wang Xizhi, Lothar Ledderose writes about the complex routes of historical transmission, which are not least manifest visually through the many collectors seals, signatures and colophons that have accumulated over time on the surface of this work: “The identity of such a work then is not a physical one anymore, but rests only in the continuity of its tradition [...]”³⁴⁷ In the context of calligraphy traditions and the practice of emulating old models, the notion of transformation can be defined as an ongoing process of re/producing. Though Huang Binhong’s versions are modeled after Su Shi and Yan Zhenqing’s, whose were theirs modeled after in their own time? And who were the models of their models? The chain of questions is endless, yet it points toward the inevitable condition inherent to (not only) calligraphy culture and practice, that every reproductive process is always a productive, that is, formative process; or, the other way round, that every “innovative” work is always also a reproduction of something that was already there before. Based on the definition of translation as put forward by Walter Benjamin in his 1921 essay “Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers”,³⁴⁸ positing that every translation always involves an act of displacement and alteration, the very notions of original and copy are called into question. Moreover:

Die Einsicht etwa in die *Neuerfindung* (statt bloßer *Abbildung*) des *Originals* durch Übersetzung ist [...] eine [...] wichtige Qualität eines kulturwissenschaftlichen

³⁴⁶ “古今相師，不廢臨摹，粉本流傳，原為至重。”，as put forward by Huang Binhong in “Huatan”, HBHWJ (6): 165.

³⁴⁷ Ledderose 1987: 47f. *Fengju tie* is reproduced *ibid.*: 46–47.

³⁴⁸ Benjamin 1972.

Übersetzungsverständnisses: Originale sind nicht einfach vorhanden, sie sind nicht vorgängig, sondern werden überhaupt erst durch Übersetzung geschaffen.³⁴⁹

If we see the emulation as an indispensable element among these processes of re-/production, transmission, and transformation, and thus as an act of *intersemiotic translation*; of transferring specific signs between different—yet permeable—systems (i.e. in the sense of Huang Binhong, Su Shi, and Yan Zhengqing’s calligraphy as respective systems in themselves); then the emulation can neither be completely allocated with the “original” calligrapher nor completely with the “copying” one anymore. Rather, it positions itself, elusively, somewhere in-between, bringing forth a unique morphology of its own, a “third text”, inscribed with new meaning every time. In his *Culture as Praxis*, Zygmunt Bauman writes:

Translation is an ongoing, unfinished and inconclusive *dialogue* which is bound to remain as such. The meeting of two contingencies is itself a contingency, and no effort will ever stop it from being such. The act of translation is not a one-off event that will put paid the need of further translating effort. [...] No act of translation leaves either of the partners intact. Both emerge from their encounter changed, different at the end of the act from what they were at its beginning [...].³⁵⁰

In this context, Huang Binhong’s claim that an artwork be both “like and unlike” is quite useful. Though it initially denotes likeness and unlikeness to nature, we can see that the issue is also valid in contexts of copying not directly from nature, but from works of art made by old masters. Whether Huang Binhong was aware of this or not, the problem of achieving both likeness and unlikeness to a master of old through one’s emulation raises interesting questions of authorship and originality, which were to receive much attention in postmodern theory within the humanities throughout the twentieth century, in form of discourses on cultural in-betweenness, and translational spaces of cultural production.³⁵¹

This chapter aimed to outline Huang Binhong’s fundamental conceptual framework, both in theory and in practice, which serves as a point of departure from which Huang Binhong’s *neimei* concept can be introduced in the following.

³⁴⁹ Buden 2008: 30.

³⁵⁰ Bauman 1999 [1973]: xlviii.

³⁵¹ Though these and further related issues cannot be further looked into here, some of them will be addressed in the concluding chapter that is concerned with aspects of art transmission between Huang Binhong and later artist generations.

Chapter Three

Defining an Aesthetics of Interiority: Art Historiographical Perspectives

Based on the conceptual framework outlined in the preceding chapter, Huang Binhong's concept of *neimei*—"interior beauty"—will be introduced in the following. Drawing from Huang Binhong's own writings as well as secondary sources including publications by leading representatives of Huang Binhong scholarship, various approaches to the concept of *neimei* are traced out in the context of Huang Binhong as an artist. It cannot necessarily be said that *neimei* occupies any more prominent a position than the concepts discussed in the preceding chapter—that is to say, concepts of "learning from the old" and "learning from nature"; "transformation", or the "brush method of transformation" in the context of Huang's *wu bi qi mo* model; as well as notions of "likeness and unlikeness"—since all concepts possess an equally integral meaning as part of a larger whole and are thus inseparable from one another. What is rather the case is that the concept of *neimei* can effectively illustrate the dichotomous relationship of "interior spirit" and "exterior body" that prevails as a (mis-)conception in art critical discourse on the Chinese brush-and-ink arts. This term of "interior beauty" moreover finds reiteration in the aesthetic terminology of Lin Sanzhi and Wang Dongling's work, therein indicating a line of artistic transmission that is thematized in the concluding chapter of this study.

In the present chapter, *neimei* is thus to be deciphered and defined not as a solely spiritual, or immaterial quality, but moreover through perspectives that also take into consideration bodily aspects in the context of Chinese calligraphy practice, as put forward in the first chapter of the study; a line of argumentation that will be further pursued in the chapters to follow. Here, the notion of *neili* 內力, "interior force", or "interior strength", is included into the discussion, which aids to establish and highlight the importance of body-specific aspects often overseen in discussions of *neimei*.

Following the somatic turn in western philosophy as grounded in *somaesthetic*, or *aisthetic* approaches, as promoted by scholars including Richard Shusterman, Roger Ames, and Christoph Menke,³⁵² whose paths have been further paved in the specific field of Chinese

³⁵² Ames 1993 [1984]; Ames 1993; Ames 2015; Shusterman 1989; Shusterman 1999; Shusterman 2008; Menke 2008.

aesthetics by scholars including Mathias Obert,³⁵³ and Gudula Linck,³⁵⁴ I aim to establish *neimei* as an expression of the body, the *Körperleib*³⁵⁵, in the sense of self/body as espoused in chapter one; rather than an expression of the purely “spiritual” and “immaterial” traditionally allocated beyond physical, sensual levels of perception and action. As was noted at the outset of the introduction, Richard Shusterman has defined the term “somaesthetics” in his essay “Somaesthetics: A Disciplinary Proposal”³⁵⁶:

Somaesthetics can be provisionally defined as the critical, meliorative study of the experience and use of one’s body as a locus of sensory-aesthetic appreciation (*aisthesis*) and creative self-fashioning. It is therefore also devoted to the knowledge, discourses, practices, and bodily disciplines that structure such somative care or can improve it. If we put aside traditional philosophical prejudice against the body [...] then the philosophical value of somaesthetics should become clear in several ways.³⁵⁷

Though Shusterman defines the term somaesthetics with regard to the disciplinary field of philosophy, the merits of somaesthetic approaches should be considered as no less valid for the study of art history in the Chinese context, especially calligraphy art. As noted in the introduction, in chapter five, which condenses the arguments of this study, it will become clear in what way Huang Binhong’s late-period brush style in art provides a crucial anchor point to decode and assess *neimei* accordingly, and escape the problematic mind-body dualism that prevails in Chinese art criticism—where, throughout the centuries, emphasis has increasingly been placed on the mind, as opposed to the mind *and* the body as inseparable aspects.³⁵⁸ With these goals in mind, the discussion of *neimei* in the present

³⁵³ And his *aisthethical* approach as put forward in the essay “Leibliche Mimesis und Selbstsorge in den chinesischen Künsten des Pinsels” in Schmücker/Heuber, eds., 2013: 396–426. *Aisthethical* (*aisthethisch*) here denotes the terminological compound of aisthethical-ethical (*aisthethisch-ethisch*).

³⁵⁴ As expounded in her 2011 publication *Leib oder Körper: Mensch, Welt und Leben in der chinesischen Philosophie*, which references the Neue Phänomenologie developed by philosopher Hermann Schmitz, Linck 2011: 7f.

³⁵⁵ As coined by Gudula Linck in the first part of her above-quoted book (“Leib und Körper”), where the terms *Leib* and *Körper* are disambiguated in the Chinese philosophical and art-related context, cf. Linck 2011: 31–125, and here especially the sub-chapter “Außen und Innen, Körper und Leib”, *ibid.*: 35–56. Linck’s terminology is based on the distinction made by Hermann Schmitz between *Leib* as “personal body”, “flesh”, “corporeality”, and *Körper* as “physical body”, cf. Sepp/Embree, eds., 2010: 307–309.

³⁵⁶ Shusterman 1999; cf. also Shusterman 2005: 119–140.

³⁵⁷ Shusterman 1999: 302. As had been noted in the introduction, while in this study, I refer to “aesthetics” as the philosophy of art, the term “aisthesis” moreover denotes processes of sensual perception and sensual knowledge production, see Mattenklott 2012: 115.

³⁵⁸ As Gudula Linck points out, the radical mind-body separation of “inside” and “outside” that gradually took place in Chinese intellectual history was significantly effectuated by the ideological shift in light of the spreading of Mahayana Buddhism in China from the Eastern Han 東漢 dynasty (25–220 CE) onwards, which was based on the understanding of an ever-incarnating soul from which the body was to disengage itself. This radical defiance of the body and tendency towards a negation of life (*Lebensverweigerung*) culminated in the indifference towards, even rejection of outward appearance typical of the Northern Song literati.

chapter serves to support general scholarly endeavors towards the emerging field of somaesthetics, inasmuch as it provides a useful lens for calligraphy studies. Specifically, this fact can be illustrated through Huang Binhong as the case at hand, thus hopefully achieving to enlighten our view on Huang as an artist. Richard Shusterman elucidates that the development of somaesthetics as an emerging field is significant, because:

Initially [...] somaesthetics seems most modestly and securely situated within an expanded discipline of aesthetics. Such an enlarged aesthetics would give more systematic attention to the body's crucial roles in aesthetic perception and experience, including the aesthetic dimensions of body therapies, sports, martial arts, cosmetics, etc., that remain marginalized in academic aesthetic theory. But to incorporate somaesthetics' practical dimension, the field of aesthetics must also expand its notion of disciplinary attention to actual, hands-on training in specific body practices that aim at somaesthetic improvement. Inclusion of such body work may make aesthetics more difficult to teach or practice in the standard university classroom, but it certainly could make the field more exciting and absorbing, as it comes to engage more of our embodied selves.³⁵⁹

3.1. The Interior Beauty of Ancient Chinese Script

Translating a quote from Huang Binhong's essay "On Art" ("Shuo yishu 說藝術"),³⁶⁰ which was written as part of a series that served as learning material for classes of traditional Chinese painting theory (*guohua lilun* 國畫理論) at the Beijing Central Academy of Fine Arts (*Zhongyang meishu xueyuan* 中央美術學院)³⁶¹, where Huang Binhong taught from 1937 to 1948:

[The Dao is a pathway, artistic skills are channels of this pathway. Art is a pathway of artistic activities.] To apply in practice what one has learned and acquired through study and experience is achieved by virtue of the mind. [(As in) When observing sceneries of nature, the mind is filled with impressions and reflections, and one must develop/enhance and transport these through writings and paintings]. The benevolent love others. Through their art, people can set an example and help to change, whereby the superior ones speak of internal beauty and are not preoccupied with external beauty. The rich and splendid colors of external beauty are inspired by overly luxurious, dissipated thoughts in man, whereas internal beauty stems from self-cultivation of the body and mind, without bearing the slightest hint of desire. In order to make others comprehend the channels of art, they must have been grasped in oneself, then they can be developed and conveyed in the world, thereby enabling a life of peace and contentment, without the pains

According to Linck, in this sense, Buddhism in China paved the way for Neo-Confucian dualist approaches to mind and body, Linck 2011: 40ff.

³⁵⁹ Shusterman 1999: 310.

³⁶⁰ Rpt. HBHWJ (6): 122–124.

³⁶¹ Formerly Guoli Beijing yishu zhuanke xuexiao 國立北京藝術專科學校.

and sufferings of worry and illness. As the saying goes: Art can save the world and mankind. A determined effort must be made to this end.³⁶²

This excerpt expresses two intertwined, ultimately inseparable aspects important to Huang Binhong's understanding of *neimei*: aesthetics and ethics. The positive (moral) attribution and high evaluation of the “inner” qualities of an art work—beyond the “rich and splendid colors of external beauty” (*waimei zhi jinbi danqing* 外美之金碧丹青)³⁶³—has, as was touched upon in the preceding chapter, a long discursive tradition in the history and historiography of literati art in China. Indeed, it would present the task of an entire dissertation in itself to document the art historical reception of this conception, which is related to dialectical views of human existence and human relations within the natural and metaphysical world, and is informed by particular ontological pre-conditions of perception and thought that have existed in China since early times and further developed throughout time.³⁶⁴ As Gudula Linck carves out, this disbelief in a pretty appearance of outer form is grounded in the disappointment experienced and lamented already by the earliest of Chinese philosophers, who observed that exterior beauty does not necessarily imply interior beauty, and that both are often marked by a significant discrepancy.³⁶⁵ Significantly, in the Chinese context, this discrepancy is also taken to indicate a lack of truth, or authenticity, of a thing, as is expressed in chapter 81 of the *Daodejing* that “true words are not pretty; pretty words are not true” (*xinyan bu mei, mei yan bu xin* 信言不美，美言不信).³⁶⁶ Interestingly, the mind-body separation of “inside” and “outside” was one that had not always been made thus rigorously in Chinese intellectual history, and it only took on its radical form in the context of Northern-Song art criticism, to the extent that the

³⁶² “[道是道路，術即是路之途徑。藝術是藝事之道路。] 行道而有得於心之謂德。[如流覽山水風景，心中皆有所感想，而得以文字圖畫發揚之。] 仁者愛人。藝術感化於人，其上者言內美不事外美。外美之金碧丹青，徒啓人驕奢淫佚之思；內美則平時修養於身心，而無一毫之松愆。使人人知藝術之途徑，得有所領悟，可發揚於世，皆能安生立命，而無憂愁疾病之痛苦。語云：藝術救世。是不可不奮勉之也。” Ibid.: 123.

³⁶³ *danqing* 丹青, literally meaning “red and green”, refers to the tradition of colored landscape painting as associated with the so-called red-green or blue-green-style of the Tang-dynasty painters Li Sixun 李思訓 (651–716) and Li Zhaodao 李昭道 (fl. early eighth century) (see. fig. 76), and which stood in contrast to the monochrome ink-painting style traditionally associated with Wu Daozi 吳道子 (680–760?). On these painting traditions of the Tang, see the section “The Sui and Tang” in Wu Hung’s essay “The Origins of Chinese Painting”, Hung 1997: 59–85. Issues related with these traditions will be point of critical discussion in the following chapter. Huang Binhong’s juxtaposing of the terms “interior beauty” (*neimei* 內美) and “outer beauty” (*waimei* 外美) is elucidated by Xu Hongquan, see Xu 2009: 175–177.

³⁶⁴ A brief yet concise discussion of the aesthetic dimensions of inner and outer beauty and ugliness in the history of Chinese art is given by Gudula Linck, Linck 2011: 43–56.

³⁶⁵ Linck 2011: 35, 52.

³⁶⁶ Du, ed., 2009: 124 Legge translates this phrase as: “Sincere words are not fine; fine words are not sincere.” Legge, transl., 1959: 171.

indifference towards, even rejection of outward appearance then shifted towards a paradigm of the ugly,³⁶⁷ as will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. In Huang Binhong's case, this aesthetic of the ugly, which was to last on in traditional Chinese art criticism ever since the Northern Song, can be condensed in the artist's statement that "in ugliness there is beauty" (*chou zhong you mei* 醜中有美).³⁶⁸ Here, Huang Binhong's reference is to a form of beauty in art which is less pleasing to the "physical eye", but, rather, discernable by the "mind's eye"—as seems to be reflected visually by the manuscript itself in which Huang put forward his statement (see fig. 58a). A further work that emphasizes the correlation between the conceptual idea of *neimei* and its visual illustration is a 1953 landscape painting in Huang Binhong's so-called reduced-brush (*jianbi* 簡筆) style (fig. 83f),³⁶⁹ whose "beauty in ugliness" can be found in the jumbled brushstrokes of the depicted landscape as well as those of the inscribed text rendered in a blotchy semi-cursive script. The inscription reads:

[Composing the brushstrokes] unevenly, at once loose, at once closely tied, there exists theory in calligraphy. The Tang [writers] slavishly imitated calligraphy models, every brushstroke is perfectly and evenly arranged, just like beads on an abacus. The mannerism of the court style is generally despised by scholars. In order to have true interior beauty [*zhen neimei* 真內美], [the method of arranging the brushstrokes unevenly] may not be abandoned. In the *guisi* year [1953], Binhong at the age of ninety [*sui*].³⁷⁰

As elucidated in his essay "Chinese Painting and People's Learning" ("Guohua zhi minxue 國畫之民學")³⁷¹ of 1948, Huang Binhong strictly differentiated between two types of art production: firstly, art whose purpose it was to please the viewers, which he denoted as the academic tradition of "imperial learning" (*junxue* 君學); and secondly, art that emphasized what is "spiritual within" and not necessarily pleasing to the eye at first glance, which

³⁶⁷ As elucidated on pages 89–91. On the paradigm shift that became evident in Northern-Song literati discourse as an aesthetic of the bland and withered, see also the chapters "'Ideas' and Northern Song Calligraphy", and "The Pingdan Aesthetic", in Sturman 1997: 18–53, and 121–149, respectively.

³⁶⁸ "內美外美, 美既不齊. 醜中有美, 尤當類別." As put forward in "Outline Writing" ("Xiezuo dagang 寫作大綱") (see fig. 58a), rpt. HBHWJ (6): 474–477, 477. For a discussion of Huang Binhong's notion of *chou zhong you mei* 醜中有美, see Wang Zhongxiu 2014: esp. 18; Xu 2009: 175. The explicitly Daoist connotation of this statement is pointed up by Xiao Lijuan 蕭麗娟, Xiao 2012: 14.

³⁶⁹ See figs. 63b–e for further examples in this style.

³⁷⁰ "參差離合, 書法有論, 唐人奴書, 字畫平均, 真如算子, 院體作氣, 士習輕之, 有真內美不可棄也. 癸巳. 賓虹年九十." HBHQJ (4): 74.

³⁷¹ Rpt. HBHWJ (6): 448–452.

Huang denoted as the tradition of “people’s learning” (*minxue* 民學).³⁷² He wrote: “In imperial learning, importance lies on outer appearance, and on catering to the taste of the crowds. In people’s learning, importance lies on inner spirit, and on giving free reign to oneself.” (*Junxue zhong zai waibiao, zaiyu yinghe ren. Minxue zhong zai jingshen, zaiyu fahui ziji* 君學重在外表, 在於迎合人. 民學重在精神, 在於發揮自己).³⁷³ Needless to say, Huang rejected the former and promoted the latter. As was indicated in the preceding chapter, Huang’s radical socially critical evaluation of art production must be read in the contemporary cultural-historical and -political context of a felt art tradition in decline: as a cultural critique of prevalent trends in art engendered by the rigidly formalized “examination-hall style” (*guangeti* 館閣體)³⁷⁴ of calligraphy (see figs. 48a–b for examples by Liu Chunlin 劉春霖 (1872–1944), considered to be China’s last top-ranking official of the Qing, and whose calligraphy can be taken as representative of this style), synonymous with what Huang denoted as the uninspired *junxue* styles, and also as a nationalistically motivated one in face of the “infiltration” of western art influences and the rise of a strongly commercialized art market.³⁷⁵ In this essay, Huang further put forward the claim for a reinvigoration and innovation of simplistic, archaic, and formalistically liberal styles which centered around the study of ancient bronze and stone inscriptions notably in large seal script (*dazhuan* 大篆) (as seen for example in fig. 12c–d).³⁷⁶ Regarding this script type, he wrote:

The outer appearance of large seal script is not neat, but in its bones there is spirit, and the neatness lies within the bones. After the First Emperor of Qin, it changed and turned into the small seal script [*xiaozhuan* 小篆]; the outer appearance became neat, and the spirit within the bones was lost.³⁷⁷

Huang’s claim for a revival of the original forms of the Chinese script was motivated by the aims of the concurrent epigraphic School of Metal and Stone Inscriptions (*jinshi xuepai*

³⁷² On Huang’s understanding of *junxue* and *minxue*, see also Kuo 2004: 8f.; Li Jianfeng 2010: 41f.; Zhang Tongyu 2010: 39f.

³⁷³ HBHWJ (6): 451.

³⁷⁴ *Guangeti* denotes the writing style promoted at the imperial court, which took standard script as a model and was characterized by evenness of brushstroke width and character size, and a straightforward, clean precision of style. Hence Huang Binhong’s disdain for the above-criticized courtly style of the Tang writers, whose brushstrokes were perfectly arranged “like beads on an abacus”.

³⁷⁵ See Kuo 2004: 33, and Li Jianfeng 2010: 41. On the politically motivated endeavors of Republican-period art societies based in Shanghai, see Andrews/Shen 2007.

³⁷⁶ See HBHWJ (6): 451.

³⁷⁷ “大篆外表不齊, 而骨子裡有精神, 齊在骨子裡。自秦始皇以後, 一變而為小篆, 外表齊了, 却失掉了骨子裡的精神。” Ibid.

金石學派) (see figs. 15b–e for examples),³⁷⁸ which had gained significant momentum from the early to mid-Qing dynasty onwards and endeavored to revive and reinterpret the study of ancient bronze and stele script calligraphy by way of creative transformation (rather than by mere imitation).³⁷⁹ The Epigraphic Painting School (*jinshi huapai* 金石畫派) of the late Qing and Republican Period, as represented by painters like Zhao Zhiqian 趙之謙 (1829–1884) (figs. 50a–b), Wu Changshuo 吳昌碩 (1844–1927), and Qi Baishi 齊白石 (1864–1957) (as seen in figs. 2c–f, 15e–f, and 73a–e)—some of whom, naturally, were also representatives of the *jinshi xuepai*—similarly took calligraphic brush methods as a basis to infuse their painting styles with an archaic “air of metal and stone” (*jinshi qi* 金石氣).³⁸⁰ In his essay on Huang Binhong’s emulations of calligraphy models, Li Jianfeng 李劍鋒 notes that Huang Binhong’s notion of studying large seal script, a “root-level” form of *minxue* that allowed for the enhancement of personal feelings and expressed a kind of natural true flavor (*ziran de zhen qu* 自然的真趣), is equivalent to *neimei*. Li argues that the ancient script type of large seal script presented, in Huang Binhong’s view, the quintessential embodiment of *neimei*, to which the succeeding small seal script stood in stark contrast (cf. figs. 12c–d and 12f, 12h for a comparison), in turn being a restricted form of artistic expression, as fostered by the imperial, or regimented systems of *junxue*, and only preoccupied with “neatness of surface appearance” (*waibiao zhengqi* 外表整齊).³⁸¹ Li further names five characteristic aspects of Huang Binhong’s emulations of calligraphy models, among which the fifth he denotes as “attaching importance to *neimei*”

³⁷⁸ *jinshixue* 金石學 literally meaning the “study of metal and stone”, which is also denoted as *beixue* 碑學, the “study of stele inscriptions”; the school of calligraphy respectively as *beixue pai* 碑學派—the “Stele School”, or “Epigraphic School”. One of the inspirational forerunners of the Epigraphic School can be seen in the mid-Ming-period seal carver Wen Peng 文彭 (1498–1573) (fig. 49), the grandson of Wen Zhengming 文徵明 (1470–1559), who is credited as “the founding father of the Ming literati seal carving movement” (Bai 2003: 50), thus promoting the conception of seal carving as an art form. On Wen Peng’s life and art, further see Lumban Tobing 2010.

³⁷⁹ Here, the Qing epigraphers Deng Shiru 鄧石如 (1743–1805) and Bao Shichen 包世臣 (1775–1885) had a great influence on Huang Binhong. Huang Binhong’s admiration for the two calligraphers is expressed for example in his essay “Historical Changes in Script Types and Their Schools” (“Shuti zhi bianqian ji qi paibie 書體之變遷及其派別”), see rpt. HBHWJ (5): 344–346, 346. Their influence is also noted in the discussions of Huang Binhong’s calligraphy, Zhang Tongyu 2010: 37; Li Jianfeng 2010: 41; Han 2010: 46. For an excellent study on the rise and development of the Epigraphic School of calligraphy in seventeenth-century China, see Bai 2003. For examples of Deng Shiru’s calligraphy, see Liu Zhengcheng, main ed., 1995, vol. 67; Nakata, ed., 1970–1972, vol. 10. For examples of Bao Shichen’s calligraphy, see Shanxi renmin chubanshe, ed., 2013.

³⁸⁰ See Brown 2011: 41f., 66; Han 2010: 46; Kuo 2004: 13. A history of the Republican Period in China is given in Fairbank/Twitchett, main eds., 1983–1986.

³⁸¹ Li Jianfeng 2010: 41f.

(*zhongshi neimei* 重視內美).³⁸² In sum, Li denotes *neimei* as a very important aesthetic concept put forward by Huang Binhong, defining *neimei* according to Huang as a quality inherent to things, rather than an addition made by man, “embodying the spirit of ‘naturalness of the Dao’” (*tixian “daofa ziran” de jingshen* 體現“道法自然”的精神). Since all things were not only made up of even elements and perfect curves and angles, but moreover of twisted and unsmooth elements, their transformations were many, and thus they were of beauty. This idea, that the transformational aspect of things is what makes them beautiful, is noteworthy. It confirms the importance of *neimei* as a concept, inasmuch as the notion of transformation presents the fifth and most crucial of Huang Binhong’s five brush methods, as was discussed in the previous chapter. To be sure, Huang is quoted by Li with:

Separating and reuniting unevenly and irregularly; constantly correcting and adjusting between large and small; bending down and facing upwards, at once interrupted and then continuously; fat and thin, long and short; both neat and unneat, this is interior beauty.³⁸³

As Li concludes: “*Neimei* is a kind of beauty that complies with the beauty of natural change.” (*Neimei shi yi zhong heyu ziran de bianhua zhi mei* 內美是一種合於自然的變化之美).³⁸⁴ Referring to one of Huang’s letters to his long-term friend Fu Lei 傅雷 (1908–1966), the famous art critic and translator, Huang is then quoted by Li Jianfeng with the statement that it is through its “neatness and at the same time unneatness” (*qi’er bu qi* 齊而不齊)³⁸⁵—again, an antithetical phrase similar to Huang’s notion of “likeness and unlikeness” (*si’er bu si*)—that calligraphy possesses interior beauty, *neimei*. Li argues that it is on these grounds that Huang chose his calligraphy models, including bronze seal-

³⁸² Ibid.: 44. The other four characteristics Li identifies are, firstly, the “unifying of stele and model letters” (*beitie jiehe* 碑帖結合), which refers to concurrent debates in calligraphy discourse where there existed a factionalism between the old-school model letter tradition based on calligraphy by the Two Wangs (Wang Xizhi and Wang Xianzhi), and the more modern tradition based on epigraphic calligraphy styles, on this, see also Kuo 2004: 22; secondly, the “five methods of the brush” (*bi you wu fa* 筆有五法); thirdly, the “distinguishment of seven ink colors” (*mo fen qi cai* 墨分七彩); and fourthly, the “likeness of non-likeness” (*busi zhi si* 不似之似), see Li Jianfeng 2010: 42–44. For Wang Xizhi and Wang Xianzhi’s calligraphy, see Nakata, ed., 1970–1972, vol. 1.

³⁸³ “參差離合，大小糾正，俯仰斷續，肥瘦短長，齊而不齊，是為內美。” Ibid.: 44. The quote is from Huang Binhong’s “Miscellanies at Ninety (Part Two)” (“Jiushi zashu zhi er 九十雜術之二”), compiled by Zhao Zhijun 趙志鈞, rpt. HBHWJ (4): 573–580, 579.

³⁸⁴ Li Jianfeng 2010: 44.

³⁸⁵ The full quoted statement is: “書法流美，有弧三角，齊而不齊，以成內美。”, *ibid.* The respective letter to Fu Lei is reprinted in HBHWJ (1): 225. The important relationship and correspondences between Huang Binhong and Fu Lei have been studied by Claire Roberts, see Roberts 2010.

script inscriptions, inscriptions of Han-dynasty stone tablets and bamboo strips, and further, writings in draft cursive script (*zhangcao* 章草) (see e.g. figs. 14c and 43), and Wei 魏-period (386–534) stele script (see e.g. figs. 51 and 52), for these models fulfilled specific qualities of the archaic and simple, thus embodying an aesthetic standard of *neimei*.³⁸⁶ Li's choice of words here is *guzhuo pumao* 古拙樸茂, which literally means “ancient and clumsy, simple and sincere”, thus not only signifying formal aesthetic qualities, but moreover human character traits that are associated with ideals of a naive, humble, and honest personality. The aspect of *guzhuo* as an aesthetic connoting an ancient, or “primordially naive” form of unadorned beauty, even clumsiness, is also used by Han Xiufang 韓秀芳 in describing Huang Binhong's calligraphy as *guzhuo er ziran* 古拙而自然, “ancient and clumsy, and [thus] natural”;³⁸⁷ Cheng Dali, in his editorial of the *Zhongguo shufa* special issue on Huang Binhong, further denotes Huang's cursive calligraphy as having, literally, “old and spicy, clumsy and thick flavor” (*laola, zhuohou de caoqu* 老辣、拙厚的草趣); *laola* here also translatable as “experienced”, *hou* further as “deep” or “rich”.³⁸⁸ As annotated in the previous chapter in the context of discussing Huang's emulation of Yan Zhenqing, the aesthetic of the “clumsy and awkward” (*puzhuo hunhou* 朴拙渾厚) was especially coined in the context of Huang Binhong's student Lin Sanzhi, whose prized late cursive-script style (as seen in figs. 7a–e) is associated with this quality, and can be subsumed under something of an aesthetics of *neimei*, as will be further addressed in chapter six. Incidentally, the phrase singled out in Chinese-language art history to tag Huang Binhong's late painting style—*hunhou huazi*, translatable as “simple, deep and rich, luxuriant and flourishing”³⁸⁹—carries a similar moral connotation, in that *hunhou* 渾厚 as a compound also signifies the meaning “simple and honest”; yet *hun* 渾 on its own, moreover, “turbid”, “muddled and confused”, and even “stupid”, “unsophisticated”.³⁹⁰ With regard to this aesthetic of the naive implying an untainted, unadorned, pure mind, Huang's choice of Yan Zhenqing as a model for emulation, as investigated above, can be comprehended as a conscious, “art political” decision of sorts. Rather than bearing strict formal similitude to the original work of the eighth century,

³⁸⁶ Li Jianfeng 2010: 44.

³⁸⁷ Han 2010: 46.

³⁸⁸ Cheng 2010.

³⁸⁹ Alternatively as “robustness and luxuriance”, see Kuo 2004: 164, n. 4; or as “dense, thick, and splendidly luxuriant”, Yang, ed., 2010: 266.

³⁹⁰ HYDZD vol. 3: 1687; Karlgren 1957: 125, no. 458b; Mathews 1975 [1943]: 2366.

Huang's copy of *Pei jiangjun shi* points towards an aesthetical-ethical ideal of the “humble and upright”, as generally associated with Yan Zhenqing's image as a meritorious Confucian statesman.³⁹¹ Cheng Dali reiterates this very image by referring to Huang Binhong's calligraphy style as “authentic” (*zhen* 真), “plain” (*pu* 樸), and “simple” (*jian* 簡), thus incorporating “internal beauty” (*neimei*) as well as “beauty of ‘high antiquity’” (“*gaogu*” *zhi mei* “高古”之美).³⁹² Fostered and cemented by a circle of influential Northern-Song literati scholars, the “Yan Style” (*Yanti* 顏體) (see figs. 53a–b; cf. also fig. 78e) had been established as the prototypical counterpart to predominant styles in the orthodox tradition of Wang Xizhi, whose “over-cultivated” calligraphy, by contrast, was considered to be “vulgar” and of “seductive beauty”, as Han Yu 韓愈 (768–824) of the Tang dynasty had once lamented in his poetry.³⁹³ Huang's choice of model demonstrates his critical reflection of late-Qing calligraphy culture, whose rigid environment including other culturally and politically engaged contemporaneous artists and art critics had in his view evolved as a result of the likewise highly formalized styles of *tiexue* (the study of model-letter compendia) indebted to the Wang Xizhi tradition, and which had exhausted their meaning.³⁹⁴

Huang Binhong's status as an important representative of *jinshixue* and *beixue*, the study of inscriptions in bronze and stone steles, and his promotion of calligraphy in ancient script types thus refer to a form of ideologically inscribed, antiquarian aesthetics. Among his own calligraphies executed in large seal and clerical script—which, as works of art, moreover present a performative form of epigraphical study—a 1953 pair of hanging scrolls (fig. 54a) can be taken as a representative example.³⁹⁵ The seven-character couplet rendered in large seal script vividly illustrates the transformative methods pursued by Huang in

³⁹¹ On the establishment of Yan Zhenqing's position in the history of Chinese calligraphy during the Northern Song and his status as an aesthetic and moral role model, see Fu 1987; Fu 1996: 11–60, 61–78; and McNair 1998.

³⁹² Cheng 2010.

³⁹³ See McNair 1998: 13.

³⁹⁴ See Kuo 2004: 33.

³⁹⁵ The following discussion of this 1953 work by Huang Binhong (pages 118–119) is based on research that has been published in an article in 2014, and which has been modified in accordance with the purposes of the present study, cf. Hertel 2014 in the volume *Huang Binhong yu xiandai yishu sixiang shi guoji xueshu yantaohui wenji* 黃賓虹與現代藝術思想史國際學術研討會文集—*Huang Binhong and the Evolution of Modern Ideas in Art: An International Forum* edited by Kong Lingwei 孔令偉 and Juliane Noth. On the significance of *beixue* concepts and approaches in Huang Binhong's calligraphy, see Kuo 2004: 33f.; and especially Han 2010. On the mutually influenced development of the *tiexue* and *beixue* traditions in the history of calligraphy in China, see Bai Qianshen's 白謙慎 essay “Qingdai de beixue he ‘Er Wang yiwai you shu’ de sixiang 清代的碑學和‘二王以外有書’的思想”, Bai 2010 (b); and McNair 1995.

copying his artistic models—as Jason Kuo has pointed out, these are to be considered as “never merely direct recordings of visual observation”.³⁹⁶ The intensive study of epigraphy since the mid-Qing dynasty, which was prompted by new, comprehensive archaeological discoveries, had provided novel insights into the development of early types of Chinese writing and its historical evolution of form and style.³⁹⁷ At the end of the Qing dynasty, findings of inscriptions on the so-called oracle bones (*jiagu* 甲骨), that is, the aforementioned divinatory inscriptions dating back to the Shang dynasty, which had been etched into the bones of oxen and shells of tortoises, gave evidence that the origins of the Chinese written language had been of primarily pictographic nature (cf. fig. 55).³⁹⁸ Oracle bone script (as seen in fig. 12a) therein embodied the oldest and most originary of script types, out of which the more complex types of bronze script and seal script (as seen in figs. 6c–d, and 20a–21f) evolved in pre-Qin China.³⁹⁹ Huang Binhong’s aim to reconstruct, moreover, rehabilitate, the originary forms of ancient Chinese writing also meant to point towards the *representational* condition of written characters, i.e. visual signs that actually *displayed* the form of the thing they signified, and to “give back” to Chinese writing a pictorial quality that it had inevitably lost through the diversification of language throughout time; a development that Huang Binhong lamented from an aesthetic point of view, and whose large seal script is thus praised by scholars like the above-cited Li Jianfeng.⁴⁰⁰ Huang’s “recovery” of Chinese characters in their function as pictograms—as noted, signifiers that mimic the visual form of the signified⁴⁰¹—corresponds with Huang’s

³⁹⁶ As pointed out by Kuo, Kuo 2004: 79.

³⁹⁷ On archaeological findings and new discoveries regarding ancient Chinese script types and their influence on the development of calligraphy during the twentieth century, see Bai Qianshen’s 白謙慎 essay “Ershi shiji de kaogu faxian yu shufa chuanguo 二十世紀的考古發現與書法創作”, Bai 2010 (c).

³⁹⁸ On the evolutionary history of pictographs as seen in the development from ancient scripts to modern scripts in China, see Shizheng Wang 2008. As Ledderose has argued, Chinese writing as a formally determined system of visually abstract structures, with its total corpus of approximately fifty thousand recorded characters, evolved and amassed over the millennia as a continuous process of systemized “modularization”, see the chapter “The System of Script” in Ledderose 2000: 9–23. Seen from today’s point of view, only a very small percentage of Chinese characters (i.e. the oldest ones, as found in oracle bone script) can be categorized as pictographs. On the distinction between pictographic and “abstract” characters among the earliest forms of Chinese script, further see Fong et al., eds., 2008: 48f.

³⁹⁹ Cf. Shizheng Wang 2008: 56; and Liu Zhengcheng, main ed., 1997, vol. 3.

⁴⁰⁰ Cf. Li Jianfeng 2010: 41; or also the catalogue entries by Luo Jianqun 駱堅群 in Yang, ed., 2010: 328, 332.

⁴⁰¹ In Peircean terms, “icons”: signs that bear physical resemblance with the things for which they stand; different from “symbols”, which are chosen according to an arbitrarily determined system (as is applicable to the majority of all other characters that exist in the Chinese writing system today, cf n. 398). See Charles S. Peirce’s essay “Logic as Semiotic: The Theory of Signs”, Peirce 1955.

understanding of art as “learning from nature”, indicating a mimesis of natural forms and movements.

In this regard, Huang’s dedication towards the epigraphical study of ancient script types was not only connoted with cultural-political meaning. Since it was considered in terms of an image (more literally, *Abbild*) of the natural world, archaic seal script, in particular large seal script, provided an important source and model for Huang’s artistic, aesthetic approaches to both the scripted and the painterly brushstroke, the formation of lines, their compositional structure, and especially their endless variability of movement. As already noted, in his essay “Huatan”, Huang Binhong wrote: “In painting composition, importance must be given to brush-and-ink; composition constantly changes, yet brush-and-ink does not change. That what does not change is the internal spirit, and that what changes constantly is the surface appearance.”⁴⁰² The calligraphy in fig. 54a illustrates Huang’s emphasis on incorporating painterly elements: the pictorial arrangement of the characters, each of which is conceived like an individual self-contained “figure”; the technical play with effects of softly spreading, seemingly layered “washes” and gentle blots of ink; the contours and graphic shapes of the individual brushstrokes that create the impression of plastic form, seeming to subtly evoke the diffusing clouds described in the poem: “The wind carries a harmonious sound; a phoenix rests on bamboo. Clouds spread out on mountain plateaus; pine trees transform into a dragon.”⁴⁰³ The couplet is flanked by colophon inscriptions to the right and left side of the scrolls, which visually frame the composition. Executed here in a loose semi-cursive style, the written characters, with their comparably angular bodies, sharp brush tips, and coyly curved lines—therein reminiscent of Huang Binhong’s clerical style, as seen, for example, in his *Free-hand Copy of the Li Xi Stele* (*Lin Li Xi bei* 臨李翕碑) (seen in fig. 5g)—complement and harmonize with the circles and ovals as well as the evenly measured linearity of the main inscription in large seal writing. Just like the colophons to be found inscribed in paintings may fulfill the function of enhancing both the depicted motif and the chosen style of the painting’s brushwork, here, similarly, the colophon on the right-hand scroll repeats the first line of the couplet in a commonly legible script type. Its stylistic reference to Huang Binhong’s clerical script corresponds well with the overall archaic theme of this work in particular,

⁴⁰² “畫之章法, 重在筆墨; 章法屢改, 筆墨不移. 不移者精神, 而屢改者面貌.” HBHWJ (6): 164.

⁴⁰³ “和聲風動竹棲鳳. 平頂雲鋪松化龍.” Yang, ed., 2010: 414, no. 91. For an alternative translation, see *ibid.*: 333.

and, in general, with Huang's broader aspiration to achieve an unrefined and naive; moreover, a reductive, laconic brushwork style that promoted the qualities of "internal beauty" of the individual brush line.⁴⁰⁴

As argued by aforementioned Han Xiufang in his article "Analyzing the *beixue* Concepts of Huang Binhong's Calligraphy" ("Qianxi Huang Binhong shufa de beixue guannian 浅析黄宾虹书法的碑学观念"), *beixue* and *jinshixue* provided the basis of Huang's approach to calligraphy,⁴⁰⁵ thus corroborating Li Jianfeng's viewpoint as introduced above (and all other authors' on this subject). According to Han, Huang's accomplishments in this genre are to be seen in the context of his large seal script (see figs. 54a–i for examples), and especially the sub-type of *zhouwen* 籀文, a form of large seal script that was current during the Spring and Autumn Period 春秋时代 (770–ca. 475 BCE) and the first half of the Warring States Period 战国时代 (ca. 475–221 BCE) (see figs. 5e, 15b, 15e–f, and 54f for possible illustrations of this style).⁴⁰⁶ The author further expounds that Huang Binhong believed calligraphy still presented a form of painting (in the sense of a pictographic form of visual expression), and that the ancient style and flavor of metal and stone (*jinshi guyi* 金石古意) should be sought after in calligraphy, therein retaining true

⁴⁰⁴ With regard to Huang Binhong's denoted reduction of form and method, an aesthetical-conceptual parallel may be drawn to his late style of "reduced" or "minimalist brush painting" (*jianbihua* 简笔画), which had been based on ink landscapes of Yuan dynasty painters. The significance and influence of Yuan-dynasty painting as to Huang Binhong's art, especially his late-period reduced-brush style, are discussed in Wang Bomin 2009; Xu 2009: 122–124; and Yang, ed., 2010: 268f. Luo Jianqun further addresses the evident correlation between Huang's *jianbihua* and his practices in calligraphy, see Yang, ed., 2010: 329. For examples of works by Huang in his "minimalist brush" style, see figs. 63b–e, and 83f; further HBHQJ (4): 174–179, 185; Xu 2009: 156–159.

⁴⁰⁵ Han 2010: 46.

⁴⁰⁶ Cf. Veit 1985: 35. Though the circa 220 examples of *zhouwen* graphs (deriving their name from their source, the early large seal script dictionary *Shizhoupian* 史籀篇) that are quoted in the second-century dictionary *Shuowen jiezi* 说文解字 have been described as generally distinctly symmetrical and balanced, and also more complex than the succeeding forms of seal script—which would appear to contradict Huang Binhong's aesthetic of the uneven and simple—they still bear freer, and more curved lines and circular shapes than the later small seal script with its characteristically straight lines and moreover angular shapes (as seen in figs. 12f, 12h, cf. also 25a–b), cf. Qiu 2000: 72ff. For an overview and terminological disambiguation of script types and categories that were in use in China before the Han dynasty, including *jiaguwen* 甲骨文, *jinwen* 金文, *zhongding wen* 钟鼎文, *zhouwen* 籀文, *guwen* 古文, *zhuanshu* 篆书, *dazhuan* 大篆, *xiaozhuan* 小篆, *niao chong shu* 鸟虫书, *mouzhuan* 缪篆, *caozhuan* 草篆, *lishu* 隶书, *guli* 古隶, and *bafen* 八分, further see Veit 1985: 35–38. For examples of Huang Binhong's seal, bronze, and clerical script, see HBHQJ (9): 1–14; Zhang Tongyu 2003: 84–106, 134–135, 143, 149; Zhejiang meishuguan, ed., 2009, vol. 1: 270–282. For examples of seal-, bronze-, and clerical-script styles of the Shang, Zhou, Qin, and Han dynasties, cf. Liu Zhengcheng, main ed., 1997, vols. 3 and 5; as well as Qi Gong et al., eds., 1987; further Zhang Qiya, main ed., 2000: 97–144, and 144–289, for examples of Han-dynasty seal script, respectively, clerical script; Wang Jingxian et al., eds., 1986, for seal script of the Jin and Northern and Southern Dynasties.

interior beauty (*neimei*).⁴⁰⁷ As Huang Binhong had written himself in his “Autobiographic Account” (“*Zixu* 自叙”)⁴⁰⁸ of 1943:

The study of metal and stone flourished during the Daoguang [道光, 1820–1850] and Xianfeng [咸豐, 1850–1861] periods of the Qing dynasty; *zhou* [籀] seal script, seal script, *bafen* [八分] clerical script, and clerical script were distinguished, and precise rubbings of stone tablets were taken; [it became evident how] calligraphy and painting are interlinked, and our forefathers were even surpassed [in their works of calligraphy], possessing true interior beauty.⁴⁰⁹

From this appraisal of Qing-period calligraphy, which, as mentioned, had undergone a complete renewal in the wake of significant archaeological finds shedding new light on the origins of ancient Chinese script, including the aspect of its originally highly pictographic nature, we can read the high value that Huang Binhong attached to script of the ancient past, in that he believed it to contain interior beauty, which in this context signified something “true”, “authentic”, “genuine” (*zhen neimei ye* 真內美也).⁴¹⁰

As an interim conclusion: if, according to Huang Binhong, *neimei* forms the aesthetic core of the ancient Chinese script types, and these in turn form the foundation of Huang Binhong’s calligraphy, of which it is said that he made use of it in order to “enter and penetrate”, or “nurture” the field of painting,⁴¹¹ then *neimei* must be considered as a concept that occupies a central, if not *the* central aspect of Huang’s creative oeuvre. Following the above, we can define *neimei* accordingly, as the beauty of natural change;

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁸ Rpt. HBHWJ (4): 560–562.

⁴⁰⁹ “清道、咸金石學盛，籀篆分隸，椎拓碑碣精確，書畫相通，又駕前人而上，真內美也。” Ibid.: 560. The wording *zhou zhuan fen li* 籀篆分隸 here designates the distinction of *zhouwen* 籀文 seal script, seal script (*zhuan shu* 篆書), *bafen* 八分 clerical script, and clerical script (*lishu* 隸書). On *zhouwen*, see n. 406. Examples of *bafen* can be seen in figs. 13a–c and 15d respectively.

⁴¹⁰ The issue of genuinity versus fraudulence has in fact a long and pronounced intellectual history within the various fields of Chinese philosophy, literature, and the arts. Drawing from the *Commentary of Zuo* (*Zuozhuan* 左傳), the commentary of the Zhou-period court chronicle *Spring and Autumn Annals* (*Chunqiu* 春秋) covering the period 722–481 BCE, Gudula Linck refers to the early physiognomic practices of reading faces (*xiangren* 相人, inspecting people), and elucidates: “Wie bei Schönheit und Häßlichkeit mögen Täuschung und Enttäuschung und das daraus genährte Mißtrauen dafür verantwortlich sein, daß sich die Kunst der Gesichts- und Körperwahrsagerei entwickelte, chin. *xiang-ren* 相人 (Menschen prüfen). In jedem Falle geht dem hier die Überzeugung voraus, daß eine Übereinstimmung von Außen und Innen durchaus nicht selbstverständlich ist.” Linck 2011: 56. For a discussion of authenticity and fraud within the field of Chinese art criticism, notably painting history, see for example Wen C. Fong’s essay “Reproduction and Forgery”, Fong 1980; and Fong/Smith, eds., 1999.

⁴¹¹ *Yi shu ru hua* 以書入畫, as used for example by Wang Zhongxiu, Wang Zhongxiu 2014: 22; and Xu Hongquan, Xu 2009: 115; or *yin shu ru hua* 引書入畫, and *yi shu yang hua* 以書養畫, as used for example by Zhang Tongyu, Zhang Tongyu 2010: 37, 38, 40.

further as the beauty of the uneven and irregular; of the simple and unadorned. Moreover, *neimei* can be defined as something that is in possession of ancient truth and authenticity.

Having introduced Huang Binhong's concept of "people's learning" (*minxue*) and some of its related ideas, we can infer that Huang's endeavor to preserve aesthetic traditions and values through the pursuit of the Chinese brush-and-ink arts illustrates his understanding of the moral and didactical functions of art—as he had postulated in his essay "On Art": "Art can save mankind" (*yishu jiushi* 藝術救世). On this note, it should be remarked that the conception and promotion of national art are still alive even today. Notwithstanding all its merits, the recent large-scale traveling exhibition *Jingmi youyuan: xiying "Shiyi jie" Huang Binhong zuopin xuzhan* already mentioned above, which showed a comprehensive selection of Huang Binhong's works collected by the Zhejiang Provincial Museum, was accompanied by a catalogue whose introductory words vividly illustrate this point.⁴¹² Here, Chen Hao 陳浩, in his representative function as Director of the Zhejiang Provincial Museum, had written:

All his life, Huang Binhong persisted in his search for China's "interior beauty" from within traditional culture. Through his strife after "interior beauty" and a style of the "simple, deep and rich, flourishing and luxurious", he pushed traditional landscape painting towards a new high peak. Huang Binhong's very life-long strife after "interior beauty" is a never-ending guiding torch in passing on traditions between masters and students as part of our national spirit and artistic spirit.⁴¹³

With regard to Huang Binhong, the specific notion of *neimei* thus serves not only to feed the construction of his image as a "torch light" of Chinese national spirit, but also as a readily convenient vehicle to perpetuate cultural self-identity and propagate movements of national learning.

3.2. Embodiments of the Brush: Interior Beauty, Interior Strength

With regard to this chapter's aim to draw a rough map of discourse on *neimei* as a concept in Huang Binhong's art, this map would be incomplete without considering a term that arises in connection with *neimei*, and must thus be seen as part of a conceptual pair: *neili* 內力, "inner" or "interior strength", "interior force", or "interior power".⁴¹⁴ More

⁴¹² Xie, ed., 2013.

⁴¹³ "終其一生，黃賓虹始終堅持從傳統文化內部尋求中國的'內美'，並以對'內美'的追求和渾厚華滋的風格把傳統山水畫推向新的高峰。黃賓虹畢生所追求的'內美'正是薪火相傳於我們民族精神和藝術精神中的不滅之燈。" Ibid.: Preface II (n.p.).

⁴¹⁴ For discussions of *neimei* and *neili* as a conceptual pair, see Wang Zhongxiu 2014; Zhang Tongyu 2003: 39; and Zhang Tongyu 2010: 36–38. In the unpublished conference paper "Analyzing the Influence of Huang

obviously perhaps than *neimei*, *neili* embodies the highly physical aspect of Huang Binhong's conceptual framework, not least due to the fact that the written character *li* is etymologically related to the human body: like many other Chinese characters significant to art-related vocabulary—*yi* 藝 and *shu* 術 in the word *yishu* 藝術 here being the best examples—*li* is originally connoted with the realm of agriculture, and with this, physical labor, or physical ability.⁴¹⁵

Zhang Tongyu 張桐瑀, who can be considered a significant scholar of Huang Binhong's calligraphy inasmuch as he is the only one so far who has published monographic research on this subject,⁴¹⁶ in his contribution to the 2010 special issue of *Zhongguo shufa* on calligraphy art by Huang Binhong, reiterates the association of Huang Binhong's passion for Zhou-seal script calligraphy on grounds of its “imposing and eccentric use of the brush” (*yongbi ningzhong qigui* 用筆凝重奇詭), and further argues that the artist's deepened understanding of this script type reinforced his aspirations to acquire interior beauty (*neimei*) as well as interior strength (*neili*).⁴¹⁷ Despite the evident bodily aspect of strength, or force, implied by the notion *li*, *neili* presents a no less ambiguous notion in Huang Binhong's conceptual framework than *neimei*: both terms possess a double-status as signifiers of form-related, physical, or material qualities, and at the same time form-less, meta-physical, or invisible, immaterial—“interior”—qualities. Interestingly, Zhang considers the aspect of *neili* to be a characteristic of Huang Binhong's late-style calligraphy in seal script and semi-cursive script (see figs. 5b–d, and 58a–f⁴¹⁸ for examples

Binhong's Art Concept of 'Interior Beauty' on Contemporary Calligraphy Production” (“Shixi Huang Binhong de ‘neimei’ yishu guan dui dangdai shufa chuanguo de qishi 試析黃賓虹的‘內美’藝術觀對當代書法創作的啟示”) by Qiu Hongri 邱紅日, Qiu points out that the terms *neimei* and *neili* coined by Huang Binhong were significantly inspired by Bao Shichen's 包世臣 (1775–1855) approaches to art as put forward in his “Two Oars in the Boat of Art” (“Yi zhou shuang ji 藝舟雙楫”): “在書法理論方面, 黃賓虹十分讚賞清末包世臣的‘藝舟雙楫’。包世臣從傳統儒家思想出發, 崇尚平和簡靜、適麗天成的書風, 特別講究‘內力’、‘內美’。” Qiu Hongri 2011 (n.p.). For Bao Shichen's essay, see Bao 2011.

⁴¹⁵ While *li* 力 is traditionally held to depict a strongly muscled arm, or a sinew, new archaeological finds and newly discovered characters indicate that it is more likely to depict a farm implement such as a plow. Cf. HYDZD, vol. 1: 364; Karlgren 1923: 172, no. 523; Karlgren 1957: 244, no. 928a; Lindqvist 1991: 165; Mathews 1975 [1943]: 3920. On the etymological agricultural connotations of *yi* 藝 and *shu* 術, see n. 124. According to the second-century dictionary *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字, the character *mei* 美, moreover, depicts a large ram, as has been pointed out in Zehou Li 2010: 1; Karlgren further defines the graph *mei* as showing “a man [...] with a head adornment in the form of ram's horns”, Karlgren 1957: 151f., no. 568a. Cf. also HYDZD, vol. 5: 3126; Lindqvist 1991: 128; Mathews 1975 [1943]: 4406.

⁴¹⁶ As mentioned in the introduction of this study; see Zhang Tongyu 2003; Zhang Tongyu 2009.

⁴¹⁷ Zhang Tongyu 2010: 37.

⁴¹⁸ Though some of the examples are undated, on stylistic grounds, they can clearly be grouped to Huang Binhong's late-period work.

of the latter), which were the script types predominantly espoused by Huang Binhong in later years. Zhang writes:

His [Huang Binhong's] use of the brush and composition of written characters were unrestrained and at ease, the outer appearance [of the calligraphy] looks as though without strength, yet in fact the strength is hidden inside; the outer appearance looks as though slightly slack and loose, yet in fact it is firm and unyielding.⁴¹⁹

The term *tiegu* 鐵骨, translated here as “firm”, literally means “iron bones”, which, incidentally, may be briefly noted with regard to Huang Binhong's student Lin Sanzhi, whose “iron-line” style of cursive-script calligraphy (to be addressed in chapter six) was considered to bear the same feature of a brush line that combined a free-flowing softness with a highly suspended and wiry tautness. The phrase *zangyu/cangyu nei* 藏於內, translated here as “hidden inside”, is also noteworthy in that *zang* 藏, alternatively read *cang*, implies the meaning of “storing”, “concealing”, as found in the term *cangfeng* 藏鋒, the “concealed” or “hidden brush tip”; as opposed to *loufeng* 露鋒, the “exposed brush tip” (see figs. 59a–d for illustrations). The notion of concealing, storing, and “centering”⁴²⁰ one's vital energies is, unsurprisingly, daoistically connoted.⁴²¹ Zhang reinforces his argumentation that though the brushstrokes of Huang's late brush style seem to have deficiencies, in truth they possess a hidden interior beauty. This recalls Huang's own claim made in a further letter to above-mentioned Fu Lei in 1943 “[...] that his paintings would not please most people. He further explained that his paintings were ‘dark, unpolished, and unpopular, because they were not as pretty as paintings by the Four Wangs [...]’, as documented by Jason Kuo.⁴²² Huang's understanding that his works were not pleasing to the viewer at first glance moreover indicates his understanding of what he called “best quality paintings”, stating that these revealed their true flavor only gradually: “Some paintings are such that at first glance they seem not very good, or no good at all, but on examination they show merits that other artists cannot achieve and the viewer cannot

⁴¹⁹ “其用筆、結字隨意自如，表面看似無力，實則力藏於內；表面看似略有鬆脫，實則鐵骨錚錚。” Ibid. The fact that Zhang associates *neili* with Huang Binhong's old-age calligraphy style may also have to do with the understanding that, as the physical body is said to weaken with age, a resorting to “inner” forms of strength “beyond” the physical dimension appears plausible.

⁴²⁰ As implied by the term *zhongfeng* 中鋒, the “centered brush tip”, which technically denotes the same movement as the “hidden brush tip”, i.e. the alignment of the brush tip along the center of the brush line's graphic shape. For a graphic illustration of the technique, see Yee 1954 [1938]: 147, 153–163.

⁴²¹ On this, I refer again to Debon and his discussion of calligraphic terminology; see his elucidation of “T.3: 藏鋒 (筆中) *ts'ang-feng (pi-chung)*, ‘(im Pinselzug) die Spitze verwahren’”, Debon 1978: 8f., 23ff.

⁴²² Kuo 2004: 4.

understand easily.”⁴²³ Huang Binhong’s utterance evokes the words to be found inscribed in the painting *Landscape in the Style of Ni Zan* by the early-Qing painter Shitao, which was discussed in the previous chapter. In the inscription of the work, Shitao had written that Ni Zan’s paintings were “at once empty and animated, both pure and luxuriant”, further lamenting that “[l]ater generations have merely imitated the part of the master that appears to be dry, desolate, cold, and overrestrained. This is why their paintings do not have such an imposing bearing when viewed from a distance.”⁴²⁴

Huang’s reiterated notion of a form of beauty that reveals itself only “on second glance” implies the, again, philosophically grounded idea of “hiding one’s traces”,⁴²⁵ meaning that art of high quality is not necessarily, or not supposed to be, overt; its strength rather lying in the very fact that it succeeds in not readily revealing its innermost secrets. As Huang had stated in his 1929 essay “Emptiness and Matter” (“Xu yu shi 虛與實”):⁴²⁶

Regarding the concealed brush tip in paintings, the mind is intent on the actual process of guiding the brush, moving swift and free to one’s heart’s content. If one can gain knowledge on the methods of guiding the brush, then one can come to know what is shown without traces in painting. Famous paintings hide their traces; this is the concealed brush tip.⁴²⁷

Concerning the art historical appreciation of Huang Binhong not only as a painter but also as a calligrapher, Zhang Tongyu draws the noteworthy conclusion that given all the appraisal Huang has received posthumously for his late painting style (denoted, as mentioned, as *hunhou huazi*), credit is due to his to no degree less accomplished skills in calligraphy. Zhang argues that it in fact on grounds of Huang’s calligraphy writing that his painting was able to attain the technical and aesthetical quality that it did. He further writes:

Huang Binhong’s calligraphy possesses extremely rich meaning on the inside, and its artistic achievement is in no way lesser than his painting. His calligraphy art is aimed directly at the attainment of “interior beauty” [*neimei*], this is what ordinary people do not understand. Regarding his painting, the people who genuinely comprehend [it] are already not many. Yet, [regarding the value of] his calligraphy,

⁴²³ Cited after Kuo 2004: 182.

⁴²⁴ As translated by Fong, Fong 1962: 113.

⁴²⁵ The idea of leaving “no traces”, or being “without traces” (*wuji* 無跡), as a Daoistically connoted ideal in the brush-and-ink arts of East Asia, is also discussed by Debon as one of the fundamental themes running through Chinese art theory, see “T.14: 無起止之跡 *wu ch’i-chih chih chi*, ‘ohne Spur des An- und Absetzens’, auch 無跡可求 *wu-chi k’o-ch’iu*, ‘ohne Spur, daran man sie fände’”, Debon 1978: 19f., 26ff.

⁴²⁶ Rpt. HBHWJ (5): 476–478.

⁴²⁷ “畫之藏鋒，在乎執筆，沈著痛快。人能知善書執筆之法，則能知畫無跡之說。名畫藏跡，此藏鋒也。” Ibid.: 478. Concerning the notion of *chenzhuo tongkuai* 沈著痛快, translated here as “moving swift and free to one’s heart’s content”, I refer again to Debon and his discussion of this term, Debon 1978: 53–57, 82–83.

which remains “covered inside” by his manifold painting methods and “covered outside” by the fame of his painting, even fewer have the insight to recognize it.⁴²⁸

This critical assessment is strongly imbued with moral-philosophical implications, implying that those who do not fully appreciate Huang Binhong’s art (i.e. the majority of the people) are lacking in overall awareness and comprehension (慧眼識金 *huiyan shi jin*). Zhang’s argumentation in favor of raising awareness for Huang Binhong’s calligraphy is in line with the artist’s own relational understanding of the brush-and-ink arts who elaborated in his essay “Huatan”: “Calligraphy and painting are of the same origin; those who speak about painting, must first understand calligraphy. The beginnings of calligraphy, in turn, are to be found in nature.”⁴²⁹ While Huang reiterates the famous postulation made by afore-referenced Zhang Yanyuan of the Tang dynasty, that “calligraphy and painting are of the same origin” (*shuhua tong yuan* 書畫同源), thus connecting the two genres to one another, their successive relation is clear: calligraphy comes first; painting second. Moreover, nature lies at the basis of all creative art—which complies with Zhang Tongyu’s argument that Huang’s “calligraphy art is aimed directly at the attainment of ‘interior beauty’ [*neimei*]”, since according to this reasoning, calligraphy would be logically “closer” to “nature” and the “interior beauty of natural change” than painting (which in Zhang’s view perhaps did not aim as directly at the attainment of *neimei* as was the case with Huang’s calligraphy).

With regard to the concept of *neili*, I would like to look a step further into Huang Binhong’s vocabulary associated with ideas on exerting brush force. For reasons to become evident in the following, I choose his “Huayulu” as an appropriate example, which, as already indicated, can be considered one of, if not *the* single most important of his statements on brush-and-ink art. In his “Huayulu”, he states that “[t]he secret of using the brush lies in ‘sharpness’, and in using the brush as if it were a sharp-edged knife; now pausing, then transitioning and returning. Those who do not profoundly pursue this principle, will never come to know its [true] flavor”.⁴³⁰ As was mentioned in the annotations of the introductory chapter, the analogy of brush and sword, and the notion of the writing brush as a tool through which the “battlefield” of the paper plane can be

⁴²⁸ “黃賓虹書法內涵極為豐富，藝術成就絕不低於繪畫。他的書法藝術，向以直挾‘內美’為指歸，常人不易領會。就他的繪畫而言，真正會心者也不多，而被他為窮畫法而‘內掩’、為其畫名所‘外掩’的書法，慧眼識金者更少。” Zhang Tongyu 2010: 38.

⁴²⁹ “書畫同源；言畫法者，先明書法。書法之初，肇於自然。” HBHWJ (6): 159.

⁴³⁰ “用筆有‘辣’字訣，使筆如刀之銛利，從頓挫而來，非深於此道者，不知其味。” HBHWJ (6): 42.

conquered are known to us from earliest texts on calligraphy theory, notably the “Diagram of the Battle Formation of the Brush” (“Bizhen tu 筆陣圖”) attributed to Wei Furen 衛夫人 (272–349), or Lady Wei, of the Jin 晉 (265–420) dynasty.⁴³¹ The martial terminology that explicitly permeates traditional calligraphy theory and is connoted with aspects of physical combat, physical effort, and physical strain, can be illustrated through the etymology of the simple yet fundamental notions of “brush tip” (*bifeng* 筆鋒) and “structural brush force” (*bishi* 筆勢): while the character *feng* 鋒 for “tip” in fact bears the left-hand radical for metal (*jin* 金), thus implying its original context of the “sword tip” (*daofeng* 刀鋒), the character *shi* 勢 for “structural force” is composed of the upper element *yi* 執 for “agriculture” (as also contained in *yishu* 藝術, “art”), which in turn shows a “heap of earth” (*lu* 壘) that is “seized [by a hand]” (丸), and the lower element *li* 力 for “power”, “strength”.⁴³² Also to be mentioned here, yet only briefly, are further body-effort-related topoi established in calligraphy theory, such as “the brush tip penetrates to the backside of the paper” (*feng touguo zhibei* 鋒透過紙背), “to penetrate wood three *fen* deep [with ink]” (*ru mu san fen* 入木三分), “to draw [lines] in the sand with an awl” (*zhui hua sha* 錐畫沙), or to “suddenly halt and deflate” (*duncuo* 頓挫, i.e. to “pause and transition in rhythm”), all of which have been discussed notably by Günther Debon.⁴³³ Since Huang Binhong paid much attention on emphasizing that such ideas stemming from calligraphy discourse were crucial to proper painting practices, these topoi similarly surface in his oeuvre, as the above-quoted passage from his “Huayulu” exemplifies. In a letter to Fu Lei, Huang wrote:

Painting originates in calligraphy, [and so] first one must study the theory of calligraphy. Brush force that is applied on the paper is able to penetrate through to its backside [*tou zhibei* 透紙背]. And this is the way painting should be done; never superficially.⁴³⁴

In his “Essentials of Painting” (“Huafa yaozhi”), Huang further poses the rhetorical question: “How could the ill-educated, who do not understand brush methods [...] and are

⁴³¹ For a discussion of this treatise, see Barnhart 1964.

⁴³² Cf. HYDZD, vol. 1: 369; Karlgren 1923: 83, no. 198.

⁴³³ See Debon 1978: T.5, T.20, T.1, and T.19, respectively.

⁴³⁴ “畫源書法，先學論書。筆力上紙，能透紙背，以此作畫，必不膚淺。” Cited after Yun 1999: 86.

inattentive to the brush, ever achieve to penetrate to the backside of the paper with their calligraphy?”⁴³⁵

A reference to the notions of *feng touguo zhi bei* and *ru mu san fen*, this image not only corroborates Huang Binhong’s particular application of multiple layers of saturated ink that literally permeate the paper fibers entirely; it especially befits Huang Binhong’s “martial” use of the brush, as to be seen in certain late works which “appear to beaten, rather than painted”, to cite the vivid description given by Luo Jianqun 駱堅群, former custodian of his works collected at the Zhejiang Provincial Museum in Hangzhou (figs. 60a–d can here serve as examples).⁴³⁶ Moreover, as recorded by Wang Bomin 王伯敏, Huang Binhong stated in 1948:

The brush force that penetrates through to the backside of the paper [*Bili tou ru zhibei* 筆力透入紙背], that is the second finest aspect of brush use; the finest aspect still lies in the brush that touches upon the paper and [whose force] is able to condense [itself] upon it. In painting mountains, it can be heavy; in painting water, it can be light; in painting human beings, it can be lively. The method lies in condensing [itself upon] the paper.⁴³⁷

This statement is interesting, for it illustrates that more important than the aspect of applying vigor and force *per se* is the aspect of texturing the paper in a varied manner. Huang’s description of a near-to *literal* formation of heavy mountains and light streams onto the paper surface (i.e. “to condense upon the paper”, *ya de zhu zhi* 押得住紙) strikingly reinforces his “sculptural” late painting style that reveal Huang’s efforts towards visual effects of spatial depth and volume (cf. for example figs. 61a–b, 62b, 62d, or 82b). The element of physicality characteristic of Huang’s understanding of art, becomes particularly manifest through his idea of *la* 辣. Huang Binhong considers *la*, which as an adjective in the Chinese language today conventionally denotes the meanings “peppery”, “hot”, and “sharp”, “spicy”, or “biting” of smell and taste, to be an essential and indispensable feature of good artworks. Requoting the above passage from his “Huayulu”: “The secret of using the brush lies in its ‘sharpness’, in using the brush as if it were a knife;

⁴³⁵ “淺學之子，未明筆法，一畫一豎，兩端著力，中多輕細，筆不經意，何能力透紙背？” As put forward in part three of his “Essentials of Painting” (“Huafa yaozhi [xu san] 畫法要旨[續三]”), published in *Chinese Painting Monthly* (*Guohua yuekan* 國畫月刊), vol. 1, no. 3, 1934, 39–40, 39.

⁴³⁶ As stated in a personal interview undertaken with Luo Jianqun on January 2, 2014, hereafter referred to as IV Luo 02/01/2014 (n.p.). On the use of the notion of *bili tou ru zhibei* in Huang Binhong’s calligraphy, see also Zhang Tongyu 2003: 131.

⁴³⁷ “筆力透入紙背，是用筆之第二妙處，第一妙處，還在於筆到紙上，能押得住紙。畫山能重，畫水能輕，畫人能活，方是押住紙。” Wang Bomin, ed., 1997 (a): 33; Wang Bomin, ed., 1997 (b): 83.

now pausing, then transitioning and returning. Those who do not profoundly pursue this principle, will never come to know its [true] flavor”. *Fei shen yu ci dao zhe* 非深於此道者 is translated here as “those who do not profoundly pursue this principle”, yet this could also be translated as “those who do not deeply penetrate this principle”, which would be close to Huang’s insistence on the idea of “penetrating the paper through to its backside”. The passage continues with the statement: “Like the nature of ginger and cinnamon, [it, i.e. their taste] improves through sharpness; [like] the habits of smoking and drinking, with sharpness, too—the older one gets, the deeper one’s love.”⁴³⁸

Of special interest here is Huang Binhong’s choice of the word *la* 辣 to describe an essential quality of proper brush use. Indeed, the character *la* substantiates the martial connotation of the brush as weapon, and thus implies the image of handling the brush as a physically strenuous and challenging effort: next to the common meanings of *la* as sharpness or spiciness of taste, *la* is also used in the sense of “vicious”, “ruthless”. Again, the etymological roots of the written character are enlightening: according to Karlgren, *la* derives from *xin* 辛, for “suffering”, or “hot”, “pungent”, with the meaning of “bitter suffering”; and from *shu* 束, for “bundle”. Further, *la* is etymologically the same word as 刺 *la*, meaning “to slash”, “cruel”, and “perverse”, which in turn consists of the word components *shu* 束 (bundle) and *dao* 刀 (i.e. *dao* 刀), for “knife”, or “to cut”.⁴³⁹ What is more, next to its martial connotations, *la* points towards another important art critical dimension, namely that of flavor, the flavorsome, and the act of tasting, and it is interesting that the character itself combines both aspects its meanings “spicy”, “to slash”, and “bitter suffering”. The gustatory and olfactory component is emphasized by Huang’s phrasing of “knowing flavor” (*zhi wei* 知味) as well as his comparison with the biting spices of cinnamon and ginger. What here may appear to be a random minor observation is actually of some significance worthwhile to expand on with regards to the discussion of “inner beauty” versus “outer appearance”, moreover “interiority” versus “exteriority” as such, within traditional Chinese art critical discourse.

Issues of taste and flavor in this context will thus be subject to discussion in the next chapter. At this point, suffice it to take note of Huang Binhong’s wording—*la*—in the

⁴³⁸ “譬如薑桂之性, 以辣見長, 菸酒之嗜, 亦老而彌篤於辣也。” HBHWJ (6): 42.

⁴³⁹ Cf. HYDZD, vol. 6: 4040; Karlgren 1923: 169, no. 509; Mathews: 3761.

sense of “pungent”; bringing to mind philosophically connoted associations of the five gustatory flavors, and further evoking, perhaps, the Daoist connotation of the five sensory perceptions that are attributed to the human senses of sight, sound, and taste, respectively.⁴⁴⁰ Here, Huang Binhong equates the principle of sharpness with a quality that imbues the brush with a deepness of “true flavor”, thus implying a kind of flavor, or essence, that is perhaps *beyond* sensory perception.

Despite the image of a decisive and “vicious” brush that is drawn through the notion of “sharpness”, in his “Huayulu”, Huang Binhong makes further statements on proper brush use, through which this image is counterbalanced, or complemented, by aspects of caution hesitation in moving the brush. He writes: “When using the brush, an overbold display of abilities must be avoided” (*Yong bi ji wang guijiao* 用筆忌妄圭角); and then: “Using the brush is like using a knife, [one] must withhold and pay attention to the brush tip.” (*Yong bi ru yong dao, xu liuyi bifeng* 用筆如用刀, 須留意筆鋒).⁴⁴¹ In his presently discussed essay “Huayulu”, though there is no explicit use of the specific term *neili* (or *neimei*, for that matter), the idea of “inner” or “interior force”, or “force from within”, is clearly expounded:

In using the brush what must be avoided most is the overbold exertion of force. If the hand is already moving although the brush tip has not yet touched the paper, then [the brush lines] will feel flighty and frivolous; its force will be suffused, and it will therefore remain on the outside. The method [of using the brush] must connect with force from the inside, this is why the masters of old all used an armrest to support the wrist so as to avoid overly hasty movements.⁴⁴²

Incautious writing method will result in “covering up” (*gai* 蓋), or smothering, its own force and momentum; this type of writing will “therefore remain on the outside” (*zai wai gu ye* 在外故也), i.e. on the outer surface of things, unable to penetrate through to a deeper

⁴⁴⁰ As Legge notes, in the Chinese context, “the five tastes are Salt, Bitter, Sour, Acrid, and Sweet”, Legge, transl., 1959: 103. Further, the numbing effect of the “five flavours” (*wu wei* 五味) is mentioned in the *Daodejing*, part one, chapter 12, “The Repression of the Desires” (“Jian yu 檢欲”), together with the “blinding” five colors (*wu se* 五色) and the “deafening” five tones (*wu yin* 五音): “五色令人目盲, 五音令人耳聾, 五味令人口爽 [...]”, Du, ed., 2009: 16; “Colour’s five hues from th’eyes their sight will take; Music’s five notes the ears as deaf can make; The flavours five deprive the mouth of taste [...]”, Legge, transl., 1959: 103. For a study on the cultural history of Chinese cuisine and its “Five Flavors”, see Höllmann 2013; cf. also Höllmann 2010. In this study on the importance of food in the culture-specific context of China, Höllmann discusses, among other aspects, the relationship between food and political power from pre-imperial times on, see for example the section “Prestige and Consumption”, Höllmann 2013: 1–7; cf. also the section “Geltung und Genuss”, Höllmann 2010: 11–18. On the five colors (*wu se*), see n. 600.

⁴⁴¹ HBHWJ (6): 41.

⁴⁴² “用筆最忌妄發筆力, 筆鋒未著紙而手已移動, 便覺浮輕, 蓋其力在外故也。法須連力在內, 故古人每用臂攔承腕, 以防移動過於急促。” Ibid.: 42.

level (of technique; of understanding). This claim is juxtaposed with the proper method of writing that succeeds in connecting between brush, hand, wrist, and arm, and the force from within (*lian li zai nei* 連力在內)—that is, to connect with force *initiating* from the inside)—thus avoiding the error of moving the hand “although the brush tip has not yet touched the paper”.

The term *Einleibung* (embodiment),⁴⁴³ which Gudula Linck proposes in the section “Exkurs: Leibbemeisterung, Kampfkunst und Spiel” of her book *Leib oder Körper: Mensch, Welt und Leben in der chinesischen Philosophie*, is useful here. Linck refers to chapter 30 of the *Zhuangzi*, “Discoursing on Swords” (“Shuo jian 說劍”), in which Zhuang Zhou 莊周 explains to the King Wen 文 of Zhao 趙 that the secret of sword play lies in the swordsman who first feigns an attack, demonstrating “emptiness” (*xu* 虛) and pretending to expose himself, to then preempt his enemy’s movement as soon as he advances to attack.⁴⁴⁴ Based on this classic parable, Linck defines the moment of combat not as a viscous confrontation between two enemies in which physical signals are merely transmitted between two counterparts; but, moreover, as a moment in which both parties are attuned to one another (*aufeinander “eingespielt”*) and thus able to react intuitively, before any conscious reflexion can occur, which Linck denotes as a form of mutual “embodying” (*einander wechselseitig “einleibend”*): “Sie bilden dabei eine übergreifende quasi-leibliche Einheit: eine gemeinsame Situation.”⁴⁴⁵ In this sense, Huang Binhong’s aim is towards an attuned movement between the writer’s hand and the writer’s brush: both must unite in form of “a common situation” (*eine gemeinsame Situation*) and become “a transgressive quasi-corporeal unit” (*eine übergreifende quasi-leibliche Einheit*)—which, if following the parable from the *Zhuangzi*, is only possible through a dynamic process of opening (or emptying) one’s senses, and reacting to, or rather acting in tune with one’s “counterpart” (be this the brush or the other swordsman). According to Linck, “skill” or

⁴⁴³ I choose here a translation as “embodiment”, inasmuch as the prefix *em-* in “to embody” forms a verb “with the general sense ‘to cause (a person or thing) to be in’ the place, condition, or state named by the stem”, Random House 2015 (n.p.); rather than the alternative translation as “incorporation”, since it is Linck’s aim to disambiguate the terms *Leib* and *Körper*. Linck’s terminology is based on the distinction made by Hermann Schmitz between *Leib* as “personal body”, “flesh”, “corporeality”, and *Körper* as “physical body”, see Sepp/Embree, eds., 2010: 307–309.

⁴⁴⁴ Cf. Du, ed., 2009: 399–402; Linck 2011: 220; and Legge, transl., 1959: 626–631, where the chapter title is rendered as “Delight in the Sword-Fight”.

⁴⁴⁵ Linck 2011: 221.

“competence”, not only in the context of fighting, are thus synonymous with a “behavior of resonance” (*Resonanzverhalten*).⁴⁴⁶

We may note that in Huang Binhong’s discussion of proper brush use the main emphasis is on movement and attunement, that is, on the act of writing or painting itself, rather than on the material product of the creative process. In this context of body-specific resonance, though no novelty as an observation, Mathias Obert’s phrasing of brush-and-ink art as a specifically Chinese tradition is well-placed, which, as Obert writes, is marked by “[...] die Insistenz [...], mit der der leibliche Vollzug des Malaktes als Schlüssel für künstlerisches Gelingen herausgestellt wird. Das Malen muss als *Bewegungskunst* betrieben werden, noch bevor es als eine Darstellungskunst begriffen wird.”⁴⁴⁷ With regard to Huang Binhong’s admonishing of overly hasty brush movements, and in turn his appraisal of the old masters for their tempered pace in moving the brush, Obert can be further cited with an interesting hypothesis on what he terms as the “retarding moment” in the context of Chinese calligraphy writing. Like Gudula Linck, Obert refers to an episode from the Daoist classic *Zhuangzi*, here to the third chapter, “Nourishing the Lord of Life” (“Yangsheng 養生”), containing the story of the master cook Pao Ding 庖丁 and his handling of the knife in carving an ox.⁴⁴⁸ While Obert also speaks of a form of “transformative embodiment” (*verwandelnde Einleibung*) at work with regard to the cook’s astounding, near-to blind technique of cutting,⁴⁴⁹ he moreover specifies the aspect of a “peculiar hesitation” (*ein eigenartiges Zögern*) to be observed in the cook’s sequence of movements,⁴⁵⁰ and states:

Offensichtlich ist das Vorgehen des Kochs im entscheidenden Augenblick überhaupt nicht behänd und flink. Seine Kunstfertigkeit ist durchaus nicht mit einem Zirkuskunststück zu vergleichen.

Die Tätigkeit des Kochs bringt ein Moment der Langsamkeit und Umsicht zum Austrag, das auf der leiblichen Ebene des Bewegungsvollzuges selbst unmittelbar wirksam wird. Dieses retardierende Moment aber, so die nun zu verfolgende These, dient nicht einer zweckmäßigen Vorsicht im Umgang mit den Dingen und im Verfolg einer Wirkung. Vielmehr entfaltet dieses eigentümliche Retardieren als eine “Rücknahme” der Bewegung in sich selbst eine verwandelnde Wirksamkeit innerhalb dessen, der eine Bewegung in dieser Weise zum Austrag bringt. [...] Wenn die Spuren einer solchen leibhaft verkörperten “Langsamkeit” oder besser: vollzughaften Selbstbindung sich in der Malerei und insbesondere in der

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid.: 226.

⁴⁴⁷ Obert 2013: 417.

⁴⁴⁸ Cf. Du, ed., 2009: 230–232; Obert 2013: 405–416; Legge, transl., 1959: 246–250.

⁴⁴⁹ Obert 2013: 407.

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid.: 415.

Schreibkunst ohne weiteres nachweisen lassen, so muss hier wohl, sofern es sich dabei tatsächlich um eine “in sich zurückgenommene Bewegung” handeln mag, ein oder der Kern der verwandelnden Kraft der Selbstsorge in den Künsten zu suchen sein.⁴⁵¹

If we believe Obert’s hypothesis to be valid, then Huang’s cautioning to avoid the rash exertion of force—the aspect that is to be most avoided in using the brush—has nothing to do with “a purpose-related caution in the handling of things and the pursuit of an effect” (*einer zweckmäßigen Vorsicht im Umgang mit den Dingen und im Verfolg einer Wirkung*), which would also corroborate with the fact that Huang Binhong not so much addresses the outcome of the writing/painting process, but rather emphasizes the aspect of movement itself. Following Obert’s argumentation, Huang’s cautioning to “use the brush like a knife”, and “to “withhold and pay attention to the brush tip”—whether a conscious one or not—is moreover rooted in the understanding of tardiness as a performative method of self-bonding (*vollzughafte[n] Selbstbindung*) accomplished through a movement of retraction, or withdrawal (*eine “in sich zurückgenommene Bewegung”*), i.e. equal to that what Huang denotes as the “method that must connect with force from within” (*fa xu lian li zai nei 法須連力在內*). The notion of tardiness in fact surfaces in the context of Huang Binhong’s model of “five brush and seven ink methods”, among which the third brush method is denominated as *liu* 留, the “lingering”, “sustaining”, “tardy” brush method, alternatively translated as the brush method of “presence”.⁴⁵² In his elaborations on this brush method, Huang Binhong writes:

When using the slanted brush tip, [the brush line] becomes jagged and uneven like saw teeth. When using the centered brush tip, [the brush line] becomes like the backbone of a sword. When Li Houzhu [Li Yu 李煜, ca. 937–978] wrote calligraphy in the “gold-inlaid knife coin” [*jin cuo dao* 金錯刀] style, he excelled at [the method of] the quivering brush. The calligraphy of Yan Lugong [Yan Zhenqing] penetrated through to the backside of the paper; the halting brush tardy and sluggish. Therein lay their [brush method of] lingering.⁴⁵³

⁴⁵¹ Ibid.: 416.

⁴⁵² As put forward in his essay “Huatan”, HBHWJ (6): 160. While “sustaining” is the translation chosen by Jason Kuo (Kuo 2004: 96), Claire Roberts translates the brush method *liu* 留 as “presence”; the other four further as “control [*ping* 平]”, “roundness [*yuan* 圓]”, “substance [*zhong* 重]”, and “variety [*bian* 變]”, Roberts 2005: 117.

⁴⁵³ “用筆側鋒，成鋸齒形。用筆中鋒，成劍脊形。李後主作金錯刀書，善用顫筆。顏魯公書透紙背，停筆遲滯，是其留也。” HBHWJ (6): 160. The method of the “quivering brush” (*chanbi* 顫筆) is commonly interpreted as an expression of an intentionally awkward style, which was cultivated, in particular, among brush-and-ink artists of the Ming-Qing transition period in China (see figs. 70b–e for examples), cf. Bai

Concerning the definition of *neimei*, we can thus make an addition to the above-stated criteria and note that with regard to Huang Binhong, *neimei* is associated with the concept of *neili*, which in turn connotes ideas of an embodied brush as well as brush force rooted in a body-specific terminology of a “martial brush tip”. These ideas are likewise associated with an aesthetics of a “withheld”, “cautious” movement of the brush; an aesthetics of interiority.

3.3. Interior Beauty and Old-Age Style

As was noted in the introduction, it is with respect to Huang Binhong’s so-called old-age style, described as “simple, deep and rich, luxuriant and flourishing” (*hunhou huazi*), alternatively as “dark and dense, rich and heavy” (*heimi houzhong*), that the artist has been art historically labeled with the nicknames “Hei Binhong 黑賓虹” and “Bai Binhong 白賓虹” (Black Binhong and White Binhong, respectively, being a pun on his family name Huang 黃, meaning “yellow”), the latter of which stands for his so-called early-period “light” style (compare figs. 61a–b, and 62a–d, with figs. 63a–e, for an exemplary juxtaposition of these two styles).⁴⁵⁴ As has been pointed out by Wang Zhongxiu 王中秀, there prevail several misunderstandings within Huang Binhong scholarship regarding the classification of Huang Binhong’s painting styles; two of these being the overly literal interpretation of Huang’s late style as “dark and dense, rich and heavy” (*heimi houzhong*), and the simplistic denomination of a “White Binhong” versus a “Black Binhong”.⁴⁵⁵ In response to the transition that is commonly seen from “White Binhong” to “Black Binhong” throughout the 1940s, Wang Zhongxiu argues that Huang Binhong’s styles cannot merely be divided into two stages of “white” and “black” belonging to his “early” and “late years”, respectively, and moreover identifies a periodic chronological development of five stages of “white—black—white—black—white”.⁴⁵⁶ That is to say that

2003: 207. The aesthetic of *chanbi* can likewise be considered synonymous with the aesthetic of the tardy brush, as Huang Binhong’s above-quoted statement corroborates.

⁴⁵⁴ Cf. Kuo 2004: 15, 161; Wang Bomin 2009; Wang Zhongxiu 2005 (b): 86; Xu 2009: 114–115.

⁴⁵⁵ See Wang Zhongxiu 2005 (b): 86.

⁴⁵⁶ According to Wang Zhongxiu, if one truly wanted to adhere to a model of “black and white”, then one would have to be much more precise: here, the period following his earliest (“white”) stage of painting, namely the years between 1909 and 1920, should be identified as Huang Binhong’s initial “black” period, during which Huang modeled his painting after the styles of the Anhui Xin’an 新安 School of Painting. Huang Binhong then distanced himself from this stylistic trend, and from around 1925 onwards, we can clearly speak of a new “white” period in Huang Binhong’s painting. The second stage of “black” is moreover to be identified as the years 1945 to 1949; after which Huang Binhong’s painting then saw a gradual return to “white”. Cf. *ibid.* In the following, when referring to Huang’s “late-period” style(s), I am referring to the works produced post-1948, that is, the last of the five stages denoted by Wang Zhongxiu. The time period

the final fifth stage, Huang's third "white" period, can be associated with the reduced Yuan-style brush method (*jianbi*) pursued by Huang Binhong, i.e. *after* the turn conventionally considered to be his "old-age" transition towards "blackness". This more differentiated division notwithstanding, Wang Zhongxiu emphasizes that each stylistic period always also contained elements of the "other" style. Along similar lines, Claire Roberts, too, is aware of the pitfalls of a dualistic over-simplification: while she observes that there occurred a turn in Huang Binhong's art production throughout the 1940s in form of a "period of artistic reflection and experimentation in which the artist's interest in 'darkness' intensified",⁴⁵⁷ Roberts' titling of her chapter on Huang Binhong's last years of life and work as "The Balance of Darkness and Light [Selected Works from 1952 to 1955]" is carefully and well chosen.⁴⁵⁸

In any case, it is clear that categorical divisions are questionable, especially in the case of someone like Huang Binhong, who generally sought to avoid dualistic approaches in art. Credit must therefore also be given to Xu Hongquan 許宏泉, who in his monograph on Huang Binhong's painting includes a chapter devoted to a discussion of *neimei* in Huang Binhong's art.⁴⁵⁹ Giving an overview of Huang's overall painting development and tracing various stages beginning with Huang Binhong's childhood, this chapter is concluded by a short section titled "White Binhong and Black Binhong" ("Bai Binhong yu Hei Binhong 白賓虹與黑賓虹"), in which it is argued that the pursuit of *neimei* presented the final and core aspect of Huang's endeavors in art.⁴⁶⁰ The section begins with a critical assessment:

The labeling of "white" and "black", it seems, was first put forward on account of Hong Kong scholars; perhaps this was a convenient way of phrasing for them. Looking at Huang Binhong's life work as a whole, the categories of his "white" and "black" cannot be divided into clearly separate periods. With regard to Huang Binhong, "white" and "black" only present two different aesthetic environments, and [though] perhaps, all in all, there do exist to some extent certain emphases, the

1948/1949 can be considered as transitional in Huang Binhong's life, inasmuch as they saw him moving home from Beijing to Hangzhou, his last abode, where he was to spend the final years of his life. This last creative period of circa six years can be further sub-divided into individual phases, as will be elucidated later on.

⁴⁵⁷ Roberts 2005: i.

⁴⁵⁸ For this chapter of her dissertation, see Roberts 2005: 269–303.

⁴⁵⁹ See the chapter "Interior Beauty in Quietude, Attaining Transformation and New Life: Huang Binhong's Artistic Thoughts and Painting Processes" ("Jing can neimei—da bian xinsheng: Huang Binhong de yishu sixiang he huihua chengli 靜參內美—達變新生: 黃賓虹的藝術思想和繪畫歷程"), Xu 2009: 51–115.

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid.: 114–115.

categorical assumption that “white” stands for his early period, and “black” for his late years, is evidently one-sided and bound to fail.⁴⁶¹

The section ends with the conclusion drawn by the author that “[...] Huang Binhong emphasized ‘interior beauty’. He paid attention to complexity, and he also paid attention to simplicity. He said [in his “Huayulu”]: ‘Void and matter are not to be equated with black and white; looseness and density; complexity and simplicity.’”⁴⁶² This succinct quote is evidently chosen by Xu Hongquan to end his chapter on discussing *neimei* in Huang Binhong’s art in order to emphasize that concepts such as “dark” and “light” should not be mistaken as literal concepts, or taken at face value entirely; meaning that the “loose”, open-spaced, and sparse brushwork of a seemingly “white” painting can be just as (aesthetically, technically) “dense and rich” and “robust”, as a seemingly “black” painting, filled with multiple layers of saturated ink and creating remarkably complex effects of visual depth, can possess a straightforward aura of “simplicity”, and “looseness”, or spontaneity of style.

The main reason why I include this brief discussion of Huang Binhong’s aliases as “Black Binhong” and “White Binhong” is because I think the same holds true for the concept of *neimei*, and rather, the common misconceptions thereof: *neimei*, in the entirety of its meanings, does not simply signify a withdrawal to the inner, that is, to inner qualities of beauty “beyond” the dazzling effects of “exterior”, or “superficial”, colors and embellishments; indeed, *neimei* is not to be mistaken with a (merely formally) withered, dried-out brush; moreover, *neimei* can be found even in the most colorful, sensual, and extrovert of paintings and calligraphies, as is to be shown in the chapters to follow. That *neimei* is a notion prone to misunderstanding is probably also due to the fact that in art criticism, it is based on an inversion of concepts: as was mentioned above, Huang Binhong’s idea of *neimei* is related to a certain aesthetic of the ugly, condensed in his statement that “in ugliness there is beauty” (*chou zhong you mei*). The paradoxical statement that beauty is in fact ugly, and analogously, that ugliness is in fact beautiful, has particular historical roots in art-related discourse. It can be traced back to Shitao, who in a poem on the subject of seal carving wrote: “Calligraphy, painting, and seal carving are an integral whole; [Setting store on] the energetic and vigorous, the old and ugly, they prize

⁴⁶¹ “‘白’與‘黑’之謂，似最早為香港學者提出，可能也是研究者的一種方便說法。綜觀黃賓虹一生所作，其‘白’與‘黑’之分並無明顯的時代劃分，對於他來說，‘白’與‘黑’只是兩種不同的審美境界，或許前後有所側重，倘若斷然將‘白’作為前期，‘黑’作為晚年求，顯然有失片面。” Ibid.: 114.

⁴⁶² “[...] 黃賓虹強調‘內美’，其繁在意，其簡也在意，他說‘虛實不等於黑白、疏密、繁簡。’” Ibid.: 115.

expressing spirit.”⁴⁶³ further to Su Shi of the Northern Song, who was known for his appraisal of the Eastern-Jin poet-recluse Tao Yuanming 陶淵明 (365–427), stating about Tao’s poetry that “[i]t appears bland but actually it is beautiful”, and further stating that “[w]hat is prized in the withered and bland is that the exterior is withered but the interior is moist.”⁴⁶⁴ Along these lines, with his (attributed) ink paintings *Withered Tree and Strange Rock* (*Kumu guaishi tu* 枯木怪石圖) and *Withered Tree, Bamboo, and Rock* (*Kumu zhushi* 枯木竹石) (figs. 33a–b), Su Shi had expressed his love for these subjects, inasmuch as they called to mind human traits of “prickliness, contempt of ingratiation, steadfastness amid hardship, and proud aloofness”, as Ronald Egan notes.⁴⁶⁵ In his contribution to the recent essay collection *Huang Binhong yu xiandai yishu sixiang shi guoji xueshu yantaohui wenji* 黃賓虹與現代藝術思想史國際學術研討會文集, Wang Zhongxiu examines the very concepts of “interior beauty” (*neimei*) and of “beauty within the ugly” (*chou zhong zhi mei* 醜中之美) in Huang’s writings.⁴⁶⁶ He argues that Huang Binhong transferred the idea of “beauty within the ugly” from its late-Qing context of calligraphy discourse to the realm of painting discourse, and further traces Huang’s concepts back to premodern artists including Shitao, Fu Shan 傅山 (1605–1690) (see figs. 15a and 64 for Fu Shan’s experimental blending of script types), and Su Shi. He cites Huang Binhong from his 1944 article “Discussion of Painting Techniques: A General Introduction” (“Huafa yi tan—zonglun 畫法臆談—總論”) with: “Strange rocks take ugliness as [their] beauty, ugliness reaches its most extreme degree; in fact, this is beauty reaching its most extreme degree. Regarding this [written] character for “ugly”, its obscure scheme is not easily expressed.”⁴⁶⁷

We can reasonably assume that Huang Binhong was well aware of the problematic division made in art discourse between “inner”, “spiritual”, and “outer”, “physical” categories. In this regard, I am grateful for Wang Zhongxiu’s remarks, that at Huang Binhong’s early stage of formulating his model of “five brush and seven ink methods”, the fifth brush method had been denoted, not as “transformation” (*bian* 變), but as “emptiness”

⁴⁶³ Cited after Bai 2003: 206.

⁴⁶⁴ Cited after Sturman 1997: 141.

⁴⁶⁵ Egan 1994: 292.

⁴⁶⁶ Wang Zhongxiu 2014.

⁴⁶⁷ “怪石以醜為美，醜到極處，便是美到極處。一‘醜’字中，丘壑未易盡言。” Ibid.: 18. Huang’s article was published in *Huabei xin bao* 華北新報 on July 7, 1944.

(*xu* 虛).⁴⁶⁸ Wang comments on this by stating that the main meaning of denoting a “fifth” brush method lay in its function as an intermediary, establishing a connection between the “‘emptiness’ of interior beauty” and the “‘matter’ of brush and ink”, and he writes:

The five brush methods are actually four brush methods: even, round, heavy, and lingering. The method of “transformation” among the five brush methods, at the earliest stage of their conception, was denoted as “emptiness”. It [the fifth method] is imbued with a multitude of meanings and implications, among which the most important is to link up the “emptiness” of interior beauty with the “matter” of brush and ink.⁴⁶⁹

The crucial meaning of the fifth brush method, as expounded in the preceding chapter, is thus substantiated: within the relational, if not to say inseparable, structure of (formless) “interior beauty” and (formal) brush-and-ink techniques, the fifth brush method of transformation acts as a go-between—incidentally carrying the very name “transformation”, thus implying the transition between different states of aggregation, if you will. It presents something like the crux of the matter, as it is linked with the task to resolve the inner-outer dualism of non-form (inner beauty, substance, truth) and form (ink, brush line, technique).

In the conclusion of his essay, Wang Zhongxiu suggests that Huang Binhong’s pursuit of *neimei* should be considered by later generations as the artist’s wish to further explore this realm of “interior beauty”, despite, or rather precisely *due to* its difficult scheme and seemingly inaccessible dimension. As the title of Wang Zhongxiu’s essay—“Painting that Reaches the Place Nobody Likes: Discussing the Brushwork Behind the Idea of Interior Beauty and the Renewed [Idea of] Interior Beauty Behind the Brushwork” (“Hua dao wuren ai chu gong: Shi tan neimei linian xia de bimo yu bimo shuaxin xia de neimei 畫到無人愛處工：試談內美理念下的筆墨與筆墨刷新下的內美”)—implies: different from the contemporaries of Huang’s own times, many of whom had not been able to grasp the true meaning of Huang Binhong’s works, we should dare to investigate their “deep and profound space” (*shenchu* 深處). Especially with regard to the late period of Huang’s oeuvre, comprising the last twenty years of his work production, we should follow his quest for “true interior beauty of the disorderly and yet non-disorderly” (*luan er bu luan*

⁴⁶⁸ Wang Zhongxiu 2014: 23.

⁴⁶⁹ “五筆法其實是四筆法：平、圓、重、留。五筆法中的‘變’，在最初整合時，表述為‘虛’。它被賦予眾多涵義，其最重要的是溝通內美之‘虛’與筆墨之‘實’。” Ibid.

zhen neimei 亂而不亂真內美).⁴⁷⁰ Following his elaborations on *neimei* according to Huang Binhong's writings, Wang Zhongxiu thus establishes the notion as a kind of synonym for the artist's late style, here indicating the years from around the mid-1930s to mid-1950s. On grounds of Wang's conclusion as well as his argument that Huang Binhong's *neimei* concept was derived from concurrent calligraphy discourse (among other sources), the present study, as an agent of the "later generations", proposes to take the path of Huang Binhong's late-period works, and further explore their assumed "true interior beauty of the disorderly and yet non-disorderly".

Concerning the definition of *neimei*, we can finally add that with regard to Huang Binhong's case, *neimei* is associated with an old-age style of "profound richness". Though this might not have been expressed by Huang himself, we should nevertheless take this aspect into account when considering *neimei* from an art historical perspective.

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid.: 25f.

Chapter Four

The Flavors and Colors of Interior Beauty: Literati Art as a Contested Field in Republican-Period China

Looking further into Huang Binhong's reiteration that "in ugliness there is beauty" (*chou zhong you mei*), the present chapter expands on two issues that can be considered as essential themes running through Chinese literati discourse in general, and, in particular, Huang Binhong's discourse on *neimei*: the themes of flavor, and color, respectively. A discussion of these two themes and their related art critical and art historical contexts shall hopefully achieve to open up some new aspects in defining the term *neimei* with regard to Huang Binhong. As I hope to show, the subjects of flavor and color feature prominently within Republican-period art discourse, which can be made evident through Huang Binhong's case when seen as embedded within its culture-specific and socio-political frameworks. An examination of Huang Binhong's color application in his paintings serves to address color as a complex phenomenon in his work that stands essentially in contrast to the ascetic idiom of monochrome-ink brush art (as grounded in the aesthetic ideals stemming from traditional calligraphy). This contrast points towards the conflicted field of "literati art" during the first half of the twentieth century, among which Huang Binhong had featured as a prominent figure. A contextualization of this conflicted field shows how a rhetoric that was centered on ideas of flavor and taste was utilized to accommodate certain ideological and political interests. The aim of the argumentation followed in this chapter is to crystallize a crucial point concerning (conventional) conceptions of *neimei* as they have been outlined in the preceding chapters, and show in what way these conceptions, if taken only on their own, actually distort and even falsify the notion of *neimei*, inasmuch as these define *neimei* as a foremost spiritual, immaterial quality—"beyond" the (physical) body.

With this line of argumentation I seek to respond to the decisive turning point observed by Gudula Linck among scholars and practitioners of the traditional arts in imperial China from Song times onwards: the turning away from a body-specific culture of games and physically challenging competitions, towards an elite society of officials and "pale

theoreticians” operating only from behind their writing desks.⁴⁷¹ About the scholar scribes of the so-called “brush notes” (*biji* 筆記) *au courant* in late imperial China, Linck writes:

Sie selbst—als Angehörige einer eher bewegungsgehemmten Gelehrtenkultur—pfligten Malerei, Kalligraphie, Dichtkunst und das Spiel auf der Zither [...], um durch diese Aktivitäten der Selbstkultivierung ihre Lebenskraft zu nähren. Für umtriebige Spiele und körperlich anstrengende Wettkämpfe hatten sie nur Verachtung übrig.⁴⁷²

4.1. A Note on Interiority, Exteriority, and Eccentricism in Chinese Art

When contemplating examples of Huang Binhong’s late landscape paintings with their typically dense compositions and multiple layers of ink upon ink, and considering indeed Huang Binhong’s own descriptions of these works as being “dark, unpolished, and unpopular”, further, as “bitter”, “hard to comprehend”, and “not to the taste of present-day people”, it seems to come as no surprise that they have been denoted by various art historians both of the Chinese- and western-language spheres, alternatively, as “unorderly” and “chaotic”, through to “confusing”, and even “sloppy”.⁴⁷³ Similarly unsurprising is the circumstance that Huang’s “unpolished” brush style is not only to be found in his ink landscapes, but also in other genres of his brush-and-ink art, including even Huang’s bird-and-flower painting (*huaniaohua* 花鳥畫, a genre that is classically associated with technical perfection, and a clean and neat style, cf. figs. 65a–b for examples by Huang Binhong),⁴⁷⁴ which has thus been described by Wang Bomin as “simple, plain, awkward, and strong (*chien-dan cho-jian* [簡單拙健])”;⁴⁷⁵ and, as I hope to have been able to illustrate thus far, including Huang’s calligraphy.

As indicated in the preceding sections, Huang Binhong’s claim of *chou zhong you mei* pays tribute to an age-old discourse in Chinese art history. In the following, I pick up on what within the broader aesthetical framework of literati art can be read as a rhetoric of interior beauty tightly interwoven with long-standing ideals of the ugly or repulsive

⁴⁷¹ Linck 2011: 216.

⁴⁷² Ibid.: 219. With “bustling games and physically strenuous competitions” Linck refers to the pastimes and bodily exercises of swimming, martial arts, and soccer, which in Chinese cultural history had developed as the prominent forms of physical activity and self-cultivation, as the author expounds. See the fourth book section of part two: “Exkurs: Leibbemeisterung, Kampfkunst und Spiel”, *ibid.*: 215–226.

⁴⁷³ See Kuo 2004: 4.

⁴⁷⁴ For Huang Binhong’s bird-and-flower painting, see HBHQJ (7) and (8); Kuo 2004: 132–160; Xie, ed., 2013: 87–100; Xu 2009: 230–259; Yang, ed., 2010: 315–325; Zhejiang meishuguan, ed., 2009, vol. 1: 218–267.

⁴⁷⁵ Cited after Kuo 2004: 159.

(*chou'e* 醜惡), the clumsy and awkward (*zhuo* 拙), and the bland or mediocre (*pingdan* 平淡); qualities that have been evaluated positively and appreciated highly in certain contexts of traditional Chinese art criticism. On this inversion of terms, that is, of an ugly appearance on the outside that reveals a beautiful center on the inside, Gudula Linck, whom I continue to refer to in this context, writes:

Im Laufe der Jahrhunderte wurde die äußere Schönheit immer geringer geschätzt, so daß zwangsläufig das andere Muster: [...] äußere Häßlichkeit bei innerer Schönheit in der den Vordergrund rückte. Dies geschah so umfassend, daß wir Beispiel an Beispiel, Zitat an Zitat reihen könnten. Dabei wurde innere Schönheit sehr wohl unterschiedlich aufgefaßt: Verstanden die offiziellen Geschichtsschreiber darunter moralische Schönheit, so plädierten die Schreiber von Kurzgeschichten und Anekdoten eher für charakterliche Originalität. [...] Letzteres führte auch dazu, daß einige Zeitgenossen bewußt eine unansehnliche äußere Erscheinung gepaart mit kauzigem Verhalten geradezu als ihr ganz persönliches Markenzeichen stilisierten. Nicht zuletzt sollte mit zum Ausdruck gebracht werden, wie wenig den Betreffenden an Sitten und Moral gelegen war: Eremiten, Mönche, Philosophen, alle möglichen komischen Leute und “Aussteiger” [...]. Diese Selbststilisierung war in der Frühen Kaiserzeit in der Oberschicht beliebt, während sich in den späteren Jahrhunderten die moralischen Kriterien durchsetzten auf Kosten der Originalität.

Das Muster von innerer moralischer Schönheit bei äußerer Häßlichkeit hatte sich die chinesische Gesellschaft in der Späten Kaiserzeit längst zu eigen gemacht [...].⁴⁷⁶

For a ready example of “repulsive” art, our first association might be so-called Individualist Shitao’s *Ten Thousand Ugly Ink Dots* (*Wan dian e mo* 萬點惡墨) handscroll of 1685 (fig. 28a), whose explicit, ironic title already serves as programmatic statement, and which has been described by Nelson Wu as “[a]n almost direct translation into painting of the unconventional behavior of Ming loyalists”.⁴⁷⁷ It is no coincidence that ideas of interior beauty and outward ugliness are politically connoted, and the *Aussteiger*, whom Linck denotes, including “hermits, monks, and philosophers”, instantly brings to mind famous “eccentric” artist personae such as Mi Fu 米黻 (1052–1107) (as seen in fig. 14b; further see figs. 66a–d), Ni Zan (as seen in figs. 31a–d), who has already been referred to above, or Zhu Da 朱耷 (1626–1705) (figs. 67a–b). Many of these had been marked in life with the fate of turning into “leftover folk” (*yimin* 逸民)⁴⁷⁸ after the forceful

⁴⁷⁶ Linck 2011: 53f.

⁴⁷⁷ Wu 1957: 29. For a discussion of Shitao’s *Ten Thousand Ugly Ink Dots*, see also Brinker: 111–118; and Hay 2001: 250–253.

⁴⁷⁸ On the topic of *yimin* in Chinese art, which will resurface again later on when discussing reclusive art in

fall of the ruling dynasty (notably the Song and Ming ruling houses), thus bearing witness to new political leaders who perhaps sought to remain “pretty on the outside” yet in truth could reveal themselves as quite “ugly on the inside”.⁴⁷⁹ As social outcasts (or intermittent outcast figures), their social and political function as subversive, yet “tolerated eccentrics” has been discussed by Nelson Wu, who clarifies that the term “eccentrics” is more than misleading for it evokes a minority, more or less random group of “mad”, or “crazy” outsiders, when in truth the eccentrics in Chinese history had previously presented an intricately organized group of high social status:

[...] instead of wasting time trying to define the attributes of the eccentric, it may be more profitable to examine specific examples, especially from that large group of intellectuals who were forced to become eccentrics, almost overnight, *en masse*, in seventeenth-century China [i.e. in 1644]. Many of them ranked as first-rate artists in their day, and since their change was so swift, we need not feel like the lock on an insane-asylum gate which wants to know if it is keeping people in or out.⁴⁸⁰

What is more, according to Wu, eccentricism was not only socially tolerated, but even promoted in China, who in “her long history [...] has developed many interesting systems, like the *po-hsüeh-hung-tz'u* [*boxue hongci* 博學鴻詞] examination, to accommodate the eccentric.”⁴⁸¹ Wu expounds: “The special interest of the Chinese case is the partial

the context of Lin Sanzhi and Wang Dongling, see *The Artful Recluse: Painting, Poetry, and Politics in Seventeenth-Century China*, Sturman/Tai, eds., 2012.

⁴⁷⁹ The gory details that have marked many turning points in history are mostly overseen. Though in Chinese art history, there do exist examples of texts in which explicit mention of bloodshed or violent killing is made, these can be considered as relatively rare. As Qianshen Bai argues, during the period of the Qing invasion, critical discourse in art was oblique, rather than explicit, resorting for example to a vocabulary of “disease” and “handicap” instead of “death”, asserting that: “During the wars of transition, artists witnessed massive killings, the sufferings of the wounded, the roans of the sick, the cries of starvation, [...] and they must have become acutely sensitive to their own bodies as the experienced this upheaval.” Bai 2005: 157. An example for an inscription in which the bloodshed of the Ming-Qing transition is directly addressed is the album leaf “Red Trees in the Autumn Mountains” in the album by Xiang Shengmo 項聖謨 (1597–1658) now kept in the Museum für Asiatische Kunst, SMBPK. The inscription reads: “前年未了傷春客，去歲悲秋哭未休。血淚染成林葉醉，至今難寫一腔愁。”, in the translation of Willibald Veit: “Zwei Jahre sind vergangen, noch währt der Schmerz um jenen Frühling. Die Tränen der Trauer des gestrigen Herbstes sind noch nicht versiegt. Blut und Tränen sind vergossen und machen das Laub der Wälder trunken [rot]. Bis heute noch vermag ich kaum die Schwermut meines Herzens zu beschreiben. Bewegt von den Ereignissen der *jiashen*- (1644) und der *yiyou*-Jahre (1645) habe ich [dies] im Herbst des *bingxu*-Jahres (1646) gemalt. Shengmo.” On art practices of the Ming-Qing transitional period and various forms of *yimin* art, see also Jonathan Hay's essay “Posttraumatic Art: Painting by Remnant Subjects of the Ming”, in which the painter Xiang Shengmo is also discussed, Hay 2012.

⁴⁸⁰ Wu 1957: 27.

⁴⁸¹ Ibid.: 53. The *boxue hongci* 博學鴻詞 (“broad learning and vast erudition”) was a special imperial examination that took place three times in the history of Qing rule, namely in 1660, 1736, and 1903. According to Ginger Cheng-chi Hsü, “From the viewpoint of the ruling house, the practice was a gesture signaling the openness of the Manchu government toward native Han. [...] This practice was also part of the

eccentric and his social adjustment. Here both society and the eccentrics recognized themselves as a whole made of controversial and happily irreconcilable parts [...]”⁴⁸² Richard Barnhart, further, in the context of discussing the hermit-painter’s “Ideal of the Garden” as a theme of reclusive art in China, poignantly writes:

The concept of individual freedom was sharply limited in traditional China, and almost purely Taoist in origin. Within the sphere of Confucian thought, the idea scarcely existed. Locked in side the grid of obligations, duties, responsibilities, and expectations to which he was subject throughout his life, the Chinese scholar could find release only in nature—or in madness, as Wolfgang Bauer [...] observes. Actually, the madness of so many distinguished Chinese artists is more than a medical statistic. The pretense of madness—along with claims of filial devotion to aging parents and of personal illness—was a means by which one might attain freedom. Other ploys included willful eccentricity, public debauchery, drunkenness, travel, and loyalty to fallen dynasties.⁴⁸³

In this sense, we can infer that the phenomenon of eccentricism—literally, of “being outside the center” or “not having the same center” (Gr. *ek-/ex-*, “out of”, and *kentron*, “center as”)—was a constitutive part of traditional Chinese society (and presumably many others, too), and that at times, eccentricism even took on the traits of a mainstream trend itself. This is particularly true in the context of art in China.⁴⁸⁴ The permeability and ambivalence of center and periphery as categories of identity are condensed in what Peter Sturman has discussed in terms of the Chinese “long-standing model of the ‘hermit in the marketplace’—the individual who adopts a spirit of detachment while in office”.⁴⁸⁵ It is therefore only logical that an “eccentric” brush style—that is, a style characterized, among other things, by certain attributes that were considered to be ugly on the outside (and beautiful on the inside)—was to become not only a consciously cultivated method of self-fashioning (*Selbststilisierung*, as Linck writes), but also a method of visually codifying and expressing one’s political opinion, sometimes in more subtle, sometimes more explicit

Manchu policy of alternating intimidation and conciliation toward the recently conquered Han Chinese.” Hsü 2001: 23.

⁴⁸² Wu 1957: 53.

⁴⁸³ Barnhart 1983: 13f.

⁴⁸⁴ On traditions of eccentricism in Chinese art, see Cahill 1967. As Cahill writes in discussing the styles of the so-called Eight Eccentrics of Yangzhou (Yangzhou Baguai 揚州八怪), who are generally juxtaposed with the concurrently influential Orthodox school of painting, and who had styled themselves after the earlier so-called Individualist painters: “With the turn of the eighteenth century, Chinese painting seems to subside into a quieter mood. The Orthodox artists who follow the Four Wangs lapse into a more complacent orthodoxy, the eccentrics into a somewhat institutionalized eccentricity.” Cahill 1967: 90. On the different traditions of the Orthodox and Individualist painting schools in China, see also Chang/Fong/Hearn 2008: 3–47; Unverzagt 2005: 138–177.

⁴⁸⁵ Sturman 1997: 119.

manner.⁴⁸⁶ To requote Nelson Wu's discussion of Shitao's example, Wu states that the "awkwardness" and "ugliness" Shitao was able to achieve in his paintings was "well calculated", and that "as an artist determined to be against the *status quo*", Shitao was proud of these qualities.⁴⁸⁷ With regard to Shitao's *Ten Thousand Ugly Ink Dots*, he further assesses: "There had been a chemical change somewhere in the transformation of experience to esthetic expressions. The controversial and bitter has become harmonious and sweet; the single ugly dots pour out like a torrent of music."⁴⁸⁸ Among further well-known examples of an (deliberately) "unrefined" style, we can refer to the "dry brush" (*ganbi* 干筆) and "thirsty ink" (*kemo* 渴墨) to be seen in Su Shi's *Withered Tree* ink paintings noted above (see figs. 33a–b; cf. also fig. 68, an early work that is Huang Binhong's own tribute to the thematic tradition of withered tree and rocks), prompting the viewer to shift his focus, away from "formal likeness" (*xingsi* 形似) and towards "spiritual likeness" (*shensi* 神似) of the depicted things. Aforementioned Mi Fu and his calligraphy *Purple-Gold Inkstone* (*Zijin yan tie* 紫金研帖) (fig. 66b) written in semi-cursive script is further discussed by Peter Sturman as "one excellent example [that] demonstrates the profundity of [the] transformation" that took place with regard to what the author denotes as "Mi Fu's so-called old-age calligraphy".⁴⁸⁹ Indeed, the work is described as one that "exemplifies writing that lacks beautiful, graceful airs" and "appears not only sloppy but perverse". In the same way Huang Binhong had considered his late works as "hard to comprehend", and "not to the taste of present-day people", Sturman conclusively remarks on Mi Fu's late style: "It is not difficult to understand how the realm of Mi Fu's spontaneity and naturalness was not for everyone."⁴⁹⁰ Further resonating with this aesthetic of the coarse, and flawed, are the "ink traces" (*C. moji*, *J. bokuseki* 墨跡) in the stylistic tradition of Chan-/Zen- 禪 Buddhist monks, with which attributes of the rough and

⁴⁸⁶ On artworks as codified subversive political statements in Chinese art, cf. also Alfreda Murck's publication for a respective discussion of Song-dynasty painting and poetry, Murck 2000. For an illuminating discussion of calligraphy of the Ming-Qing transitional period in this context, see Qianshen Bai's essay "Illness, Disability, and Deformity in Seventeenth-Century Chinese Art", Bai 2005.

⁴⁸⁷ Wu 1957: 52.

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁹ Sturman 1997: 151.

⁴⁹⁰ "This quickly written short note, 'Purple-Gold Inkstone', exemplifies writing that lacks beautiful, graceful airs [...]. Little attention is paid to the propriety of individual strokes and characters. In places the strokes merge as indistinguishable blots of ink, as in the character *zi* (purple). The characters occasionally tend toward imbalance and misshape. The writing appears not only sloppy but perverse, especially when contrasted with such early works of crafted beauty as 'Zhang Jiming' of about twenty years earlier [...]. It is not difficult to understand how the realm of Mi Fu's spontaneity and naturalness was not for everyone." Ibid.

ugly were associated positively. Here, connoting a *wabi-sabi* 侘寂 aesthetic of imperfection and transience, the Japanese Zen master Hakuin Ekaku 白隱 慧鶴 (1686–1768) (fig. 69) is perhaps the single most famous example in the context of East Asian art.⁴⁹¹ Further, as Qianshen Bai examines in his illuminating study, particular brush aesthetics of the awkward and distorted, even damaged, broken, and fragmented were cultivated within late-Ming and early- to mid-Qing calligraphy circles (see figs. 70a–e for illustrations).⁴⁹² The development of this aesthetic can be regarded as based on late-Ming conceptions as purported by leading artist and art theorist Dong Qichang. As has been discussed by Xin Yang, Dong Qichang had contented that “calligraphy has to be skillful, then become raw again”, the stylistic implications of which meant “employing rawness to counter charm, glamor, and vulgarity, to promote classic refinement, and return to childlike innocence and naïveté”; the formal and technical implications of brushwork further a “roughness instead of smoothness” (see figs. 27a–c for examples of Dong’s calligraphy and painting).⁴⁹³

In this context, reference must also be made to the closely related idea of beauty that lies in the “plain and bland” (*pingdan* 平淡), a term that was most significantly coined in the context of above-mentioned Ni Zan, whose arid scenarios of riverbeds and sparse trees (as seen in figs. 31a and 31c) were to become the paradigm of the *pingdan* aesthetic emulated by artist generations to follow.⁴⁹⁴ Aside from this, *pingdan* as a critical term is moreover an

⁴⁹¹ As Hakuin is discussed in Perle Besserman and Manfred Steger’s study on *Zen Radicals, Rebels, Reformers*: “In his inimitable, eccentric way, he depicted humane and earthy subjects, executed in light shades of black ink, exchanging formal aesthetic values for an appreciation of the coarse and ugly.” Besserman/Steger 2011: 155. For an in-depth study on Hakuin’s art, see Addiss/Seo 2010. For studies on calligraphy art in the Chinese Chan and Japanese Zen traditions of *moji* and *bokuseki*, respectively, see also Brinker 1995; Götze 1979: 20ff.

⁴⁹² Although it must be noted that in this context, the Qing-period aesthetic of the broken and damaged did not so much refer to the idea of a “beauty within”, but moreover embodied the broken inner morale of many artists in face of the fallen Ming dynasty and the takeover by the foreign Qing rulers.

⁴⁹³ Yang 1992: 19.1. In Xin Yang’s essay “On Calligraphy Has to Be Skill-ful, Then Raw: An Analysis of the Principal Tenet of Tung Ch’i-ch’ang’s Theory of Calligraphy”, the author argues that Dong’s idea of “calligraphy has to be skillful, then become raw again” may be seen as “Tung Ch’i-ch’ang’s manifesto in reaction to Chao Meng-fu’s calligraphy”, *ibid.*

⁴⁹⁴ Incidentally, Ni Zan is a great example showing how an “eccentric” style could rise to such prominence in the history of Chinese art; Ni Zan himself posthumously entitled as one of the Four Masters of Yuan (*Yuan si da jia* 元四大家) thus by no means representing a figure on the margins (though this was to some extent the case throughout his lifetime), but to the contrary, one of significantly constitutive meaning for Chinese art history. As it were, the persistence of critical terms specific to traditional literati discourse within contemporary Chinese art history, such as the aesthetic idea of *pingdan*, can be seen in the case of Huang Binhong’s student Lin Sanzhi, whose calligraphy style is strongly associated with *pingdan* as a manifestation of sincerity and true feelings, as the choice of title “To See True Feelings through the Flavorless” (“Pingdan

appropriate example that illustrates the way in which art appreciation in China is enmeshed with the realm of the gustatory. The character *dan* 淡 has many meanings, including “pale”, “light”, “thin”, as in the aforementioned *danmo* 淡墨, “light ink”, one of Huang Binhong’s seven ink techniques. In food contexts, *dan* is used as an adjective to describe a flavor as weak, bland, lacking in taste, as for example with a clear soup that is only lightly seasoned. The dimension of flavor—or, in the specific case of *pingdan*, rather the flavorless—I propose, is a crucial aspect with regard to reading and understanding Chinese art, and especially its inherent discourses on interiority and exteriority.

4.2. Huang Binhong and the Flavors of Interior Beauty

Along my line of inquiry, I would then like to pick up again on the aspect of sensual taste that surfaced in the context of discussing Huang Binhong’s idea of *la* 辣—“sharpness”, the “spicy”, “pungent”. As mentioned above, what may perhaps seem to be a random observation is, I argue, actually quite worthwhile to expand on regarding the discussion of “interior beauty” versus “outer appearance”, or more generally, “interiority” versus “exteriority” within traditional Chinese art critical discourse. Within this framework, the particular term *quwei* 趣味, meaning at first “flavor”, or “taste”, presents a somewhat ubiquitous, and yet all the more elusive critical term; its terminology conjuring aesthetically inscribed connotations ranging from *wenren* terminologies of “archaic flavor” (*guqu* 古趣), or “strange flavor” (*qiqu* 奇趣), to Daoist notions of “the five flavors” (*wuwei* 五味) as well as “flavorlessness” (*wuwei* 無味). To recapture his statement on the quality of “sharpness”, Huang had claimed: “The secret of using the brush lies in its ‘sharpness’ [...] Those who do not profoundly pursue this principle, will never come to know its [true] flavor”.⁴⁹⁵ Of interest here is that Huang Binhong appears to make a distinction between those who will come to “know” the “flavor” of the principle of sharpness, and those who won’t (*bu zhi qi wei* 不知其味). It had been noted that Huang Binhong’s word choice of *la* as “pungent” denotes one of the gustatory flavors,⁴⁹⁶ and that

jian zhen qing 平淡見真情”) for the essay by one of Lin Sanzhi’s own students, Duanmu Lisheng 端木麗生 (1949–), exemplifies, see Duanmu 2008.

⁴⁹⁵ “用筆有‘辣’字訣 [...] 非深於此道者, 不知其味.” HBHWJ (6): 42.

⁴⁹⁶ As already noted, Legge stated that in the Chinese context, “the five tastes are Salt, Bitter, Sour, Acrid, and Sweet”, Legge, transl., 1959: 103. The numbing effect of the “five flavours” (*wuwei* 五味) is mentioned in the *Daodejing* in chapter 12 of the first part, “The Repression of the Desires” (“Jian yu 檢欲”), together with the “blinding” five colors (*wuse* 五色) and the “deafening” five tones (*wuyin* 五音): “五色令人目盲,

at the same time, Huang Binhong equates the principle of sharpness with a quality that imbues the brush with a deepness of “flavor”, implying a kind of flavor, or essence, or “deeper meaning” that lies perhaps *beyond* sensory perception. The reason for this assumption as shall be elucidated will also explain why the term *qi wei* 其味 in the last line of Huang Binhong’s quote is translated as “its [true] flavor”, rather than simply “its flavor”. In examining this rhetoric of flavor, my aim is to embed and decipher aspects of Huang Binhong’s art approaches within the time-and-space-specific context of Chinese literati art practice and discourse during the first half of the twentieth-century.

In approaching the conceptual history of this art critical term, and addressing the implications of what I here call a rhetoric or discourse of flavor, we can take one of Huang Binhong’s contemporaries as a point of entry: the artist-scholar Chen Shizeng 陳師曾 (1876–1923, also known as Chen Hengke 陳衡恪), whose art theoretical works can be seen as both reflections and catalysts of literati art discourse of their time (see fig. 71 for an example of his brush-and-ink art).⁴⁹⁷ Symptomatically, in Chen’s seminal essay “The Value of Literati Painting” (*Wenrenhua zhi jiazhi* 文人畫之價值) published in 1921,⁴⁹⁸ and which Wen Fong has denoted as an “exegesis” that “sets the tone for modern Chinese discourse in traditional-style Chinese painting”,⁴⁹⁹ the term “flavor” appears in the usual ubiquitous yet elusive manner. The first lines read programmatically:

What is literati painting? It is painting that contains the nature and the flavor [*quwei* 趣味] of the literati. It has nothing to do with studying the technical aspects of a painting; rather, the many feelings and thoughts of the literati must be revealed, which lie beyond the painting itself. This is what is considered as literati painting.⁵⁰⁰

Inasmuch as Huang Binhong is indeed counted among the “four twentieth-century masters of traditional Chinese painting”, he can be considered a prime representative of this genre.

五音令人耳聾, 五味令人口爽 [...]], Du, ed., 2009: 16; “Colour’s five hues from th’eyes their sight will take; Music’s five notes the ears as deaf can make; The flavours five deprive the mouth of taste [...]], Legge, transl., 1959: 103.

⁴⁹⁷ On Chen Shizeng’s life and work, I refer to Kuo-Sheng Lai’s dissertation *Learning New Painting from Japan and Maintaining National Pride in Early Twentieth-Century China, with a Focus on Chen Shizeng (1876–1923)*, Lai 2006. For Chen’s biography, see also Liu Mengxi, main ed., 1996: 819–823.

⁴⁹⁸ The essay was first published in the 1921 January issue of “Painting Study Magazine” (*Huixue zazhi* 會學雜誌). Rpt. Shen, main ed., 1986: 12–18. Chen’s motivations and the impacts of his essay are discussed in Lai 2006: 74–124. A discussion of Chen Hengke’s viewpoints with regard to Huang Binhong’s case is given by Kuo, Kuo 2004: 13f.

⁴⁹⁹ Fong 2001: 15.

⁵⁰⁰ “何謂文人畫? 即畫中帶有文人之性質, 含有文人之趣味, 不在畫中考究藝術上之工夫, 必須於畫外看出許多文人之感想, 此之所謂文人畫。” Shen, main ed., 1986: 12.

Further, given the fact that Chen Shizeng himself was a student of the epigraphic painter and calligrapher Wu Changshuo (see figs. 2c–d, 15e–f, 73a–e)—as noted above, one, namely the eldest, of the entitled “four twentieth-century masters of traditional Chinese painting”⁵⁰¹—we know that Chen had been well familiar with the contemporary circles of Shanghai-based *wenren*-artists, their jargon and way of thinking.⁵⁰² How then does Chen Shizeng’s definition of literati painting exactly translate to the works of Huang Binhong? That is, how to read Huang’s works as “containing the nature and the flavor of the literati”? In order to answer these questions, here, too, at first resorting to the etymological background of the term proves useful. In common usage, the character compound *quwei* 趣味 signifies “taste” and “savor”, yet also “fun”, “interest”, and “delight”; moreover, a “liking” or “preference”.⁵⁰³ A simple yet concise illustration moreover pinpoints an inherent etymological bond that exists between taste and *aesthetics* in the Chinese context. In his *The Chinese Aesthetic Tradition*, Li Zehou cites from the early second-century dictionary *Explanation of Simple and Compound Characters* (*Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字) compiled by Xu Shen 許慎 (58?–147? CE), where it is explained that *mei* 美, the very character for “beauty”, or “beautiful” (as in *neimei* 內美), combines the elements “ram” (*yang* 羊) on top and “large” (*da* 大) below, meaning: “When a ram is large, it is beautiful”.⁵⁰⁴ Li reasons: “This is presumably because a fatter ram is more delectable”, and concludes: “That ‘delicious’ and ‘beautiful’ are synonymous has become almost a truism over the millennia”.⁵⁰⁵ If we take this conclusion to be sound, then nowhere in China’s history does this truism appear to be more evident than within the discursive field of

⁵⁰¹ As mentioned in the introduction, next to Huang Binhong and Wu Changshuo, the “four twentieth-century masters of traditional Chinese painting” (*Zhongguohua ershi shiji si dajia*) are Qi Baishi and Pan Tianshou. For a recent systematic assessment of these four artists, I refer again to Yang, ed., 2010, and here especially to Kuiyi Shen’s essay “Wu Changshuo: The Last Scholar-Official Painter”, 73–83. A prime reference for an in-depth western-language study of Wu Changshuo’s life and work is Kuiyi Shen’s dissertation *Wu Changshi and the Shanghai Art World in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century*, Shen 2000. A comprehensive, high-quality publication of Wu Changshuo’s works is the catalogue of a recent large-scale exhibition held at the Zhejiang Provincial Museum in Hangzhou, see Sang, main ed., 2014.

⁵⁰² Concerning the activities of Shanghai-based artists and the so-called Shanghai School of Painting (*haipai* 海派) as well as related discussions on the social and artistic transformations as evident through the production and reception of visual culture in the late-Qing through Republican periods, I refer again to Kuo, ed., 2007, and here especially to the contributions by Kuiyi Shen: “Patronage and the Beginning of a Modern Art World in Late Qing-Shanghai”, 13–27; as well as Julia F. Andrews and Kuiyi Shen: “The Traditionalist Response to Modernity: The Chinese Painting Society of Shanghai”, 79–93. The relationship between Chen Shizeng and his teacher Wu Changshuo is discussed in Lai 2006: 136–143.

⁵⁰³ Cf. HYDZD vol. 5: 3490; Karlgren 1957: 54, no. 131g; Mathews 1975 [1943]: 1617.

⁵⁰⁴ Zehou Li 2010: 1.

⁵⁰⁵ *Ibid.* However, it should be noted that a “fatter ram” does not necessarily mean it is “more delectable”, but could also simply point towards the fact that large amounts of meat were crucial for survival.

traditional literati arts. Here, “flavor” generally speaking refers to the individual style of an artwork (as will become clear in the following), and, as indicated in quoted passage from Chen Shizeng’s essay, is associated positively with “spiritual”, “essential” qualities thereof. Entailing ideological or moral implications—i.e. “[...] the many feelings and thoughts of the literati must be revealed, which lie beyond the painting itself”—this accords with the literati tradition of emphasizing the transcendent, innate aspects of things, including aspects of *qi* 氣 (breath), *qiyun* 氣韻 (breath resonance), *yi* 意 (idea, essence, spirit), *shen* 神 (the divine, inspired) etc., as already touched upon earlier. Inscribed with different nuances of meaning, the terminology of *quwei* permeates Chinese aesthetic discourse in a similar manner. Due to the limits posed by the scope of this study, a very brief conceptual history must suffice to paradigmaticize its relevance and preponderance.

In a sub-chapter of his book *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought*, Stephen Owen translates a passage from the *Record of Music* (*Yueji* 樂記), the nineteenth chapter of the Zhou-dynasty *Book of Rites* (*Liji* 禮記), which is noteworthy as a first reference in this context:

The true glory of music is not the extreme of tone; the rites of the Great Banquet are not the ultimate in flavor (*wei* [味]). The zither used in performing “Pure Temple” [...] has red strings and few sounding holes. One sings, and three join in harmony; there are tones which are omitted. In the rite of the Great Banquet, one values water [...] and platters of raw meat and fish; the great broth is not seasoned [*ho* (和), “harmonized”]; there are flavors which are omitted. We can see from this that when the former kings set the prescriptions for music and rites, they did not take the desires of mouth, belly, ears, and eyes to their extremes, in order thereby to teach people to weigh likes and dislikes in the balance and lead the people back to what is proper (*cheng*).⁵⁰⁶

This passage Owen comments as:

Here the aesthetics of omission, so important in later Chinese literary thought, is given its earliest enunciation, in an ethical context. The perfect music holds back from overwhelming force; the sense that something is omitted brings response from others, draws them in. The phrase “one sings, and three join in harmony” will come to be commonly used for precisely such aesthetic restraint as engages others. In its original context here in the “Record of Music”, however, that restraint has an ethical rather than an aesthetic force. Omission is the embodiment of the principle

⁵⁰⁶ As given in the sub-chapter “Supplement: Selections from the ‘Record of Music’”, Owen 1992: 50–57, 53. The original Chinese text is cited as: “是故樂之隆非極音也。食饗之禮非極味也。清廟之瑟朱弦而疏越。壹倡而三歎。有遺音者矣。大饗之禮。尚玄酒而俎腥魚。大羹不和。有遺味者矣。是故先王之製禮樂也。非以極口腹耳目之欲也。將以教民平好惡。而反人道之正也。” Ibid.

of proper limits in sensuous satisfaction.⁵⁰⁷

Owen here speaks of an “aesthetics of omission”, moreover, of “flavors which are omitted”, meaning, in other words, a form of restrained flavor that embodies the “principle of proper limits in sensuous satisfaction”. Incidentally, the use of the term *da geng* 大羹 in the original passage of *Yueji*, translated here by Owen as “the great broth”, underpins the triangular relationship of flavor, morality, and beauty, that was already indicated above in connection with the term *mei* 美: in reading the statement that “the great broth is not seasoned [*ho* (和), “harmonized”]” (*da geng bu he* 大羹不和), we may call to mind that the character *geng* 羹, for “broth”, etymologically combines *gao* 羔, “lamb”, and *mei* 美, “beautiful”, or “fine”, thus defined by Lindqvist: “If the character for beautiful is put together with the one for lamb, it makes the name for a meat soup or stew called *geng*, described in many texts as early as 500 B.C.”⁵⁰⁸

In the context of the classical tradition of Chinese literary criticism, the general terminology of *wei* is further elucidated by Owen in the glossary of his book:

wei 味: “flavor”, an important master metaphor in describing the aesthetic experience of the text. A complex set of gustatory terms was generated around *wei*. There were several sources of *wei*’s appeal to theorists: it admitted broad shared categories that are held in common (e.g., “salty” or “sour”), while permitting both the cultivation and absolute particularity of individual taste. Another attraction of *wei* is that it lingers after eating, as the *wei* of texts endures, changes, and attenuates after reading. Chinese theorists tended not to speak of disjunctive acts of reflection in the “meaning” of a text, but rather of the “continuation” of the text in the mind after reading is over, a time in which the significance of the text gradually unfolds.⁵⁰⁹

With this intellectual backdrop of an “aesthetics of omission” in mind, it is not surprising that the motif of “flavor” features in Chinese script culture as pursued by the traditional literati, right from its very beginnings. While the *Shuowen jiezi* recognized a correlation between the savoring of food and the appreciation of beauty, the Eastern-Jin poet-recluse Tao Yuanming 陶淵明 (365–427, also known as Tao Qian 陶潛) (depicted in fig. 72), the archetypal role model of the classical literati tradition, tied together in his poetry ideas of beauty—and *drinking* (wine, that is), thus formulating something of an aesthetics of

⁵⁰⁷ Ibid. On this passage, cf. also Owen 1992: 164–165.

⁵⁰⁸ Lindqvist 1991: 128; cf. HYDZD, vol. 5: 3139; Karlgren 1957: 199, no. 747a; Mathews 1975 [1943]: 3342.

⁵⁰⁹ Owen 1992: 593f.

savoring.⁵¹⁰ In his cycle of poems *Drinking Wine* (*Yinjiu* 飲酒), Tao writes: “Old friends share my taste [for drinking wine] (*guren shang wo qu* 故人賞我趣) [...] Soon, the sense of knowing I exist is gone (*bu juezhi you wo* 不覺知有我) [...] Within this wine there lies deep flavor (*jiu zhong you shen wei* 酒中有深味).”⁵¹¹ The act of tasting wine is described as an existential one, presenting a means to escape and transcend the laments of life’s earthly confines, yet also create a human bond through the communal savoring of a transient moment in time. The idea of an *innate* quality—*jiu zhong* 酒中, “within wine”—as a limitless source for true, lingering joy—*shen wei* 深味, “deep flavor”—was to be reiterated through the centuries, notably during the Northern Song (which incidentally corroborates Gudula Linck’s argument that the Northern Song marked a discursive turn towards the “inner”, and a higher evaluation of the “spiritual”, as opposed to the “physical”). While Mi Fu praised Ju Ran 巨然 (fl. second half of tenth century), saying about this tenth-century painter that “[...] when he was older, in his tranquility (*p’ing-tan*) the flavor (*ch’ü*) was lofty” (*laolai pingdan qu gao* 老來平淡趣高), Dong Yuan 董源 (fl. 930s–960s) was praised for his depictions of cloudy mountain scenes, whose “[...] mood is lofty and antique [*yiqu gaogu* 意趣高古]”, thus inscribing the terms of “charming flavor” (*yiqu* 意趣) and “inexhaustible flavor” (*wuqiong zhi qu* 無窮之趣) to be savored in the atmosphere, or “mood” of a landscape painting.⁵¹² Mi Fu’s son Mi Youren 米友仁 (1074–1153) likewise aspired to capture the mood of landscapes through his paintings and “sketch their true flavor” (*xie qi zhen qu* 寫其真趣).⁵¹³ The moral undertones are evident. As Mi Fu had postulated in a letter written during the period of his quasi-exile in Lianshui 漣水: “Relishing poverty and delighting in the bland—these are the eternal affairs of the scholar.”⁵¹⁴ In the same vein, contemporary scholar-official Su Shi, who through his idea of “tasting poems” (*wei shi* 味詩) corroborated a relation between poetry and flavor in the

⁵¹⁰ On Tao Yuanming and his role in Chinese cultural history, cf. Kwong 1994; Sturman 2012: 18–19; and Tian 2005. For translations of Tao’s poetry, see Acker 1952; Hinton, transl., 1993; Pohl, ed., 1985.

⁵¹¹ The full poem reads: “故人賞我趣，挈壺相與至。班荆坐松下，數斟已復醉。父老雜亂言，觴酌失行次，不覺知有我，安物為貴，悠悠迷所留，酒中有深味。” For a translation of Tao Yuanming’s *Drinking Wine* poems, see Hinton, transl., 1993: 50–58.

⁵¹² Bush 1971: 68. For reproductions and a discussion of landscape paintings by Dong Yuan and Ju Ran, see Lin Boting, main ed., 2006: 38–43, and 44–53, respectively; further Yang, ed., 1997: 93–99. For an in-depth study on the historical transmission of the tradition in the so-called Dong-Ju painting style, see Unverzagt 2005.

⁵¹³ Ibid.: 69.

⁵¹⁴ Sturman 1997: 139, see also 124.

context of praising the Tang poet Wang Wei 王維 (701–761);⁵¹⁵ further claiming of Tao Yuanming’s poetry that “It appears bland but actually it is beautiful”, and that “What is prized in the withered and bland is that the exterior is withered but the interior is moist.”⁵¹⁶ The reduced-brushwork idiom of subsequent Yuan literati painters like Ni Zan resonated with this aesthetic. As noted above, Ni’s notoriously minimalist dry-ink landscape scenes became synonymous with the notion of *pingdan* 平淡 (the “flavorless”, “insipid”, “bland”), which have thus been denoted by François Jullien as “landscapes of blandness”.⁵¹⁷ The art critical vocabulary of flavor, and, for that matter, *flavorlessness*, is connected with further taste-related attributes. For example, the ideal of bitterness, or bitter taste (*kuwei* 苦味), was coined by eminent Northern-Song scholars such as Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–1072), who in praise of his poet-friend Mei Yaochen 梅堯臣 (1002–1060) wrote that

His diction grows fresher and cleaner than ever; His thought becomes profound with age. He is like a beautiful woman; Whose charm does not fade with the years. His recent poems are dry and hard; Try chewing on some—a bitter mouthful! The first reading is like eating olives, But the longer you suck on them, the better the taste.⁵¹⁸

The notion of olives that taste better “the longer you suck on them” recalls the notion of a form of beauty that does not reveal itself “at first glance”, which was discussed in the context of Huang Binhong’s idea on “best quality paintings”, the artist’s utterance that “[s]ome paintings are such that at first glance they seem not very good, or no good at all, but on examination they show merits that other artists cannot achieve and the viewer cannot understand easily.”⁵¹⁹ We can now see how the notion of “beauty on second glance” is in fact rooted in an age-old aesthetic of the seemingly withered or bland.

Furthermore, from the late Ming onwards, the artists subsumed as the so-called “Eccentrics” introduced above (and it be emphasized that they themselves did not consider themselves a coherent group, let alone school), who, informed by late-Ming aesthetics of

⁵¹⁵ As Susan Bush translates Su Shi’s description of a painting by Wang Wei: “When one savors Mo-chieh’s [Wang Wei’s] poems, there are paintings in them, When one looks at Mo-chieh’s pictures, there are poems.” Bush 1971: 25; the original statement being: “味摩詰之詩，詩中有畫，觀摩詰之畫，畫中有詩。” Ibid.: 188, no. 24.

⁵¹⁶ Sturman 1997: 141.

⁵¹⁷ See Jullien 2004: 35–39.

⁵¹⁸ Cited after Bush 1971: 5f. On Mei Yaochen and the development of early Song poetry, see Chaves 1976.

⁵¹⁹ Cited after Kuo 2004: 182.

qi 奇 (strangeness, marvelousness)⁵²⁰ in literati painting and calligraphy, became known for the “different and strange flavor” (*qiqu* 奇趣) of their artworks.⁵²¹ As Qianshen Bai writes: “[...] the concept of *qi* in art theory was in the ascendant in the late Ming, with eager literati searching for their true selves. Dong Qichang was their spokesman in the field of calligraphy.”⁵²² Among these, we can count late-Ming and early-Qing artists like Wang Duo 王鐸 (1592–1652) (fig. 70a), aforementioned Fu Shan (figs. 15a, 64), Zhu Da 朱耷 (1626–1705) (figs. 67a–b), Gao Qipei 高其佩 (1660–1734) (figs. 70b–c), or Huang Shen 黄慎 (1687–1768) (figs. 70d–e) and their calligraphies as prime examples of the “different and strange”, and the previously mentioned aesthetic of the fragmented, or weathered, which had come about in light of the late-Ming fashioning of all things antique (such as old calligraphy rubbings, rare seals, or generally any antique and curious gadgets).⁵²³ More than that, however, these calligraphers’ works were in part also expressions of a damaged morale; indicating a “different and strange” with regard to the social and political estrangement and its inevitable moment of self- and intersubjective alterity particular to these artists’ times.⁵²⁴ While the connection between “strangeness” and “flavor” might perhaps not be overt, it is nonetheless given in the context of “bitterness”, “bitter flavor”, and the “bitter mouthful” praised by Ouyang Xiu. To be sure,

⁵²⁰ The term *qi* 奇, which carries a range of meanings in the Chinese art critical context, has been variously translated. While Katherine Burnett argues for a translation of *qi* as “originality”, her book *Dimensions of Originality* introduces various other possible definitions in its investigation of the intellectual history of this term based on art theoretical and art critical sources of the Six Dynasties through early Qing periods. Here, *qi* is considered in its meanings as “ineffable”, “different and strange”, “unbalanced”, “extraordinary and great”, and “original”. See Burnett 2011, e.g. chaps. 5 and 7, 103–134, and 167–200, respectively.

⁵²¹ See Bai 2003: 20–34. The correlation between notions of “strange flavor” (*qiqu* 奇趣) and aspirations to “return to antiquity” and revive ancient aesthetics (*fugu* 復古) in seventeenth-century painting is further discussed in article by Shi Shou-ch’ien 石守謙, Shi 1998.

⁵²² Bai 2003: 25.

⁵²³ “The Aesthetics of the Unusual and the Strange in Seventeenth-Century Calligraphy” have been discussed by Dora C. Y. Ching, see Ching 1999. On late-Ming literati culture, see Ho 1987. For studies on Wang Duo, see Atkinson 1997; Zhang 2001. On Fu Shan, see Bai 2003; on Gao Qipei, see Ruitenbeek 1992.

⁵²⁴ In the Ming-period context, I agree with Craig Clunas’ translation and discussion of *qi* as “rarity” or “rare” in the sense of “rarity and skill”, or “rare commodity” (thus entailing exoticist connotations of *qi* as something marvelous). In the early-Qing context, by contrast, I would give preference to the translation of *qi* as “different and strange”, in that “difference”, in the Derridean sense of *différance*, for one, emphasizes the moment of personal alterity which I consider to be significant to the social and political contexts of calligraphy production during the Ming-Qing transitional period, and further deconstructs the frozen binary oppositions of self and other, and center and periphery, as ontological categories where the former prevails over the latter in a hierarchical way. For Clunas’ discussion of *qi* in the context of Ming-period material culture, see the chapter “Words about Things: The Language of Ming Connoisseurship” in his book *Superfluous Things: Material Culture and Social Status in Early Modern China*, Clunas 1991: 91–115, esp. 85f. Jacques Derrida’s notion of *différance* is elaborated notably in his 1968 essay “Différance”, Derrida 1982: 3–27.

the sobriquet of Shitao, “Monk Bitter Melon” (*kugua heshang* 苦瓜和尚), vividly illustrates this *eccentric* appreciation of the “bitter” and “strange”. Yet, especially with Shitao and his contemporaries does the foregrounding of “bitterness” as an attribute carry ambivalent meaning, and the third leaf from his album *Returning Home* (*Gui zhao* 歸棹) of ca. 1695 showing what appears to be a waterfall gushing down from the sky in the upper left corner of the image (fig. 28b) could indeed be more than just a fun play on illusions—perhaps indicating in a subtle manner the reversed world order of many former Ming literati scholars and their bitter fate in face of the still young foreign dynasty, seemingly accentuated in the picture by the sinister, desolate peaks of Huangshan rising in the background.⁵²⁵

Ouyang Xiu’s idealized image of the enjoyment that lies in tasting bitter food (in form of olives) is still present in the late Qing, as a comment made by Wu Changshuo in his inscription of a flower painting of 1896 testifies:

My brushwork is rough and awkward; in drawing the branches and outlining the stones, I sometimes achieve the feeling of archaic seal script engravings. Some critics say that in my poems the epigraphic spirit (*jinshi qi*) is combined with the bitter flavor of ginger and cinnamon (*jiangui qi*). I think these words can be used to describe this painting.⁵²⁶

This, last but not least, recalls Huang Binhong’s own reference to these spices quoted in the chapter before: “Like the nature of ginger and cinnamon, [the taste] improves through sharpness; [like] the habits of smoking and drinking, with sharpness, too—the older one gets, the deeper one’s love.”⁵²⁷ Here, it is also useful to bring to mind the common definition of “flavor” as “the quality of something that affects the sense of taste”,⁵²⁸ that is, as something *acquired and cultivated*; a premise, then, of the connoisseur’s aesthetic judgement and choice. In his essay, Chen Shizeng implies that the “value of literati painting”, in other words, its “true flavor”, is not to be found in the “technicality of brushwork”, but somewhere “beyond the painting” itself (“What is literati painting? It is painting that contains the nature and the flavor of the literati.”). His words connote the

⁵²⁵ As Qianshen Bai argues in his essay “Illness, Disability, and Deformity in Seventeenth-Century Chinese Art”, Shitao’s depiction of apparently broken plum tree branches in the first leaf of his *Plum Blossoms* album of ca. 1705–07, discussed by Wu Hung as “traces of ruin”, can further be deciphered in terms of *zhili* 支離, “deformation”, which points towards the very same circumstance of self-alterity in face of a dysfunctional society, see Bai 2005: 163f.

⁵²⁶ Cited after Yang, ed., 2010: 79.

⁵²⁷ “譬如薑桂之性，以辣見長，菸酒之嗜，亦老而彌篤於辣也。” HBHWJ (6): 42.

⁵²⁸ Merriam-Webster, ed., 2014 (n.p.).

Daoist aesthetic ideal that “the greatest beauty lies in no form” (*da xiang wu xing* 大象無形), and they precisely reiterate the understanding that an artwork’s “[...] marvelousness lies outside the actual brushstrokes”, as had been claimed by aforementioned Su Shi with regard to poetry and calligraphy of the Wei-Jin 魏晉 period (220–420).⁵²⁹ As Peter Sturman assesses:

The implicit is valued over the explicit, and inner substance and genuineness are prized over outward appearance and artifice. We see this most clearly in Su Shi’s comments on the poetry of Tao Yuanming, who, among all of the earlier poets, was most commonly associated with pingdan in the eleventh century.⁵³⁰

Sturman notes that the Northern-Song *pingdan* aesthetic developed specific stylistic characteristics in the arts pursued by literati circles, and that these were “[...] characteristics generally associated with antiquity”, further, that

[...] it is clear that the qualities of simplicity and unpretentiousness that are fundamental to the concept of pingdan were also qualities attributed to the distant past. [...] This is especially evident with calligraphy, where we find pingdan and its related terms consistently applied to pre-Tang writing.⁵³¹

Interestingly, Sturman expounds that *pingdan* as a critical term in literati discourse, derived from earlier literary criticism, underwent an important shift in meaning in the Northern Song, setting it apart from its original intended meaning in philosophical discourse. In the early Wei-Jin context of literary criticism, the application of the term *pingdan* had been enmeshed with Daoist philosophical discourse, which held that the fundamental nature of the Dao is nothingness. However,

For the Song Confucian scholar whose feet are firmly planted in the phenomenal world, [...] the pingdan poem [thus applied to the other literati arts] must exhibit some measure of the good fruits born from the pingdan personality. There must be something of substance. Thus we find as a critical element in the Song definition of the pingdan aesthetic the idea of concealment. The true substance of a Tao

⁵²⁹ Cf. Sturman 1997: 141ff. The notion of *da xiang wu xing* 大象無形, interpreted by Li-ling Hsiao as “the greatest beauty lies in no form”, is discussed by this author in the context of Su Shi’s establishing of Wang Wei “as an iconic figure whose poetry and painting embody an ideal conflation of the two media”, further coining the famous phrase that in viewing the works of Wang Wei, one feels “there are paintings in the poems” (*shi zhong you hua* 詩中有畫) and “poems in the paintings” (*hua zhong you shi* 畫中有詩), Hsiao 2013: 178, 182. As noted above, Su Shi’s verbatim phrasing here had moreover been of “tasting [Wang Wei’s] poetry” (*wei [Mojie zhi] shi* 味[摩詰之]詩). As would be expected, Huang Binhong reiterates Su Shi’s appraisal in his writings: “書畫同源, 求之書法; 文藝同科, 證之詩文; 王維‘詩中有畫, 畫中有詩’, 得六朝人被墨法。” HBHWJ (4): 576. On Wang Wei’s life as a painter-poet, see Brush Walmsley/Calvin 1968. For a discussion and comparison of Su Shi and Wang Wei’s aesthetic concepts as differing Chan-Buddhist models, see Zhang Guomin 2011.

⁵³⁰ Sturman 1997: 141.

⁵³¹ Ibid.

Yuanming poem may not be apparent in the plainness of its surface, but is most certainly present.⁵³²

In recognizing these contexts, we can retrace how over time, the ideas of a withered, even ugly outside appearance and a (morally) truly substantial inside—“the pingdan personality”—were established; following Sturman, even *needed*, in order to befit the naturalistic, humanistic rationalism of the Neo-Confucian worldview, as opposed to Daoist mysticism and its notion of emptiness and essential negation of form and substance. Moreover, before this backdrop, we can more intricately decipher typical phrases such as Chen Shizeng’s exemplary assumption of a deeper meaning, or flavor that is present “beyond”, or “outside the paintings” (*hua wai* 畫外) of literati art, which in turn is synchronous with the theme of many contemporary scholars of his time. The approaches of Chen’s famous teacher Wu Changshuo illustrate this: the epigraphic artist’s undertaking of producing free-hand copies of the *Stone Drum Inscriptions* (*Shiguwen* 石鼓文)⁵³³ (cf. figs. 73a–b, and 12c–d), pursued over the course of around five decades and up to his passing away in 1927, led him to become established and associated with an image of “emulating the spirit, not the formal shape” (*lin qi bu lin xing* 臨氣不臨形).⁵³⁴ The devaluation of technical aspects as a lesser artistic concern is a somewhat misleading conception in *wenren* thought. As an example, this becomes quite evident with Wu Changshuo when studying his oeuvre in its entirety, that is, from Wu’s classically styled works of calligraphy in combination with traditional literati motifs such as monochrome-ink pine trees (fig. 73c), ink bamboo, and ink plums; to his luxuriant, bright and colorful depictions of sumptuous flowers and fruits (figs. 2c–d),⁵³⁵ and further his *bogu huahui* 博古花卉 (antiquities and flowers) compositions (fig. 73d) belonging to the new pictorial genre that was à la mode among epigraphic artists of his time.⁵³⁶ (Fig. 16, showing a portrait of the

⁵³² Ibid.

⁵³³ See n. 146.

⁵³⁴ The exhibition catalogue published in conjunction with the most recent large-scale exhibition of Wu Changshuo’s work, held at the Zhejiang Provincial Museum in Hangzhou, June 19–July 18, 2014, strikes a chord that strongly resonates with Chen Shizeng’s statement on the nature of literati painting. In the introduction, it is stated: “吳昌碩以臨寫石鼓文稱譽於世，他臨寫石鼓文，注重的是整體氣勢的強烈突出，所謂‘臨氣不臨形’，正是這種對於‘金石氣’的執意追求 [...]” Sang, main ed., 2014: 6.

⁵³⁵ For further examples, see *ibid.*: 70–77, 85–89, and 92–113, respectively.

⁵³⁶ *Bogu huahui* 博古花卉 (lit. antiquities and ornamental flowers) denotes a pictorial genre and type of cross-media “collage art” where composite rubbings of inscribed ancient artifacts like bronze vessels were incorporated into the picture field as an aesthetic visual element and, likewise, as a paleographical technique; all in combination with brightly colored flowers. This new genre reflected endeavors of “artistic archaeology” prevalent in the late Qing and early Republican periods. On the pictorial genre of *bogu huahui*, see Qianshen Bai’s essay “From Composite Rubbing to Pictures of Antiques and Flowers (*Bogu huahui*):

bronze collector and calligrapher Wu Dacheng 吳大澂 [1835–1902]⁵³⁷ with his collection of antiquities, can further serve as an illustration of the heterogeneous antiquarianist trends and epigraphic interests among late-Qing scholar-artists.) *Bogu huahui* depictions, with their particular feature of intricately incorporated ink rubbings, demonstrate an especially high degree of methodical ambition, technical accuracy, and dexterity in the handling of brush, paper, line, ink, and color. In spite of this, the dichotomous rhetoric of “emulating the spirit, not the formal shape”, and the high evaluation of “inner”, “spiritual substance”, over “formal”, “surface appearance”, is deep-entrenched, inasmuch as it is intellectually rooted in earliest textual manifestations like the above-quoted *Daodejing* and its claim that “true words are not pretty, pretty words are not true”, or further: “But though the Tào as it comes from the mouth, seems insipid [*dan* 淡] and has no flavor [*wuwei* 無味], though it seems not worth being looked at or listened to, the use of it is inexhaustible.”⁵³⁸ The Dao is described as “not worth being looked at or listened to”, i.e. as having a visual appearance and audible sound that are dismissible; yet, coming “from the inside” (“from the mouth”), its meaning is “inexhaustible”, that is, of “inexhaustible efficacy [...] for the good of the world”.⁵³⁹ This idea of “inexhaustible efficacy” finds reiteration in typically antithetical notions such as the Tang poet Sikong Tu’s 司空圖 (837–908) phrase of “representation-beyond-representation, landscape-beyond-landscape” (*xiangwai zhi xiang, jingwai zhi jing* 象外之象, 景外之景); likewise, François Jullien’s reference of “Flavor-Beyond-the-Flavorful”.⁵⁴⁰ In a similar vein, the reference to a deep and limitless source of enjoyment and fulfillment, as for example seen by Mi Fu in Ju Ran’s paintings, and, as mentioned above, described by him as possessing “inexhaustible flavor” (*wuqiong zhi qu* 無窮之趣), is elucidated by Susan Bush: “*Ch’ü* is what we are attracted by in a landscape, its charm, or flavor or aura.”⁵⁴¹ Bush thus translates *wuqiong zhi qu* as “inexhaustible charm”.⁵⁴²

The Case of Wu Yun”, Bai 2007; and Brown 2011: 66. The term “artistic archaeology” is borrowed from Sarah Fraser, who disambiguates twentieth-century *jinshi* practices from earlier forms of antiquarianism, and names “artistic archaeology” as a new technique belonging to “a comprehensive framework” of “Nationalist historical inquiry”, responding “to the changing meaning of ‘China’ in the face of modernity”. Cf. Fraser’s essay “Antiquarianism or Primitivism? The Edge of History in the Modern Chinese Imagination”, Fraser 2010: 343f.

⁵³⁷ For a discussion of the scroll depicted in fig. 16, see Rawson, ed., 2009: 50–51. On Wu Dacheng’s artistic impact within the field of late-Qing and early-Republican calligraphy, see Bai 2001.

⁵³⁸ Legge, transl, 1959: 125; as stated in part one, chapter 35, of the *Daodejing*: “道之出口, 淡乎其無味, 視之不足見, 聽之不足聞, 用之不足既。” Du, ed., 2009: 54.

⁵³⁹ As annotated by Legge, Legge, transl, 1959: 125.

⁵⁴⁰ See Jullien 2004: 103–116.

⁵⁴¹ Bush 1971: 68.

Notably, Bush further translates the term *pingdan* not only as the more common “blandness”, but moreover as “colorlessness”, and “tranquility”.⁵⁴³

On this note, and concluding the somewhat brief overview outlined here, I would like to draw special attention to a remark made by Li Zehou, who was quoted above with his comment on taste and beauty in Chinese culture, which I consider to be quite instructive. Li ascertains: “The great Chinese philosophers Confucius, Mencius, and Xunzi each routinely spoke of taste, color, and sound together in their discussions of human pleasure [...]”, and further that “[...] from the very beginning aesthetic consciousness in the Chinese tradition has never been ascetic.”⁵⁴⁴ If Li is right that the Chinese aesthetic tradition initially “has never been ascetic”, then not only can we conclude that the Song-literati turn towards an aesthetic ideal of the withered, meta-physical (lit. “beyond the body”), as argued by Linck, indicated in some sense a significant departure from fundamental philosophical traditions; what is more, following Li’s equation of taste, color, and sound with basic forms of “human pleasure”, all the more striking does the classical literati monochrome-ink paragon of the “flavorless”, “insipid”, and “colorless landscape” truly appear. In the art-critical context of flavor discourse, early textual sources of the Confucian tradition indeed seem to point towards a dilemma that was to ensue and petrify over time with regard to intertwined concepts of “flavor” and “knowledge”. Here, two different notions of flavor—and more specifically, of “knowing flavor” (*zhi wei* 知味)—can be disambiguated: first, the notion of “knowing flavor” on a fleshly, sensual, corporeal level of experience, flavor here signifying the taste of food and drink; and second, the notion of “knowing flavor” on a spiritual, explicitly immaterial level of experience beyond corporeal sensation and perception, flavor here signifying something like the essential substance of a thing. *Lunyu*, book 7, chapter 13, gives the account: “When the Master visited [the state of] Qi and heard [the music of] Shao, he for three months did not know the taste of meat [...]” (*Zi zai Qi wen Shao, san yue buzhi rouwei* 子在齊聞韶, 三月不知肉味), meaning that because the music was so wonderful, Confucius forgot what meat tasted like, or was supposed to taste like; implying a process of

⁵⁴² Ibid.

⁵⁴³ Ibid.: 72.

⁵⁴⁴ Zehou Li 2010: 10.

disengagement from the realm of “bodily concerns”.⁵⁴⁵ At the same time, the cause for this process of forgetting (the taste of meat) is in fact a thing that belongs to the very realm of sensory perception (the music of Shao). Further, in the *Doctrine of the Mean* (*Zhongyong* 中庸) attributed to Confucius’ grandson Zisi 子思, it is stated in chapter four, verse two: “There is no one who does not eat and drink, but there are few who can really know flavor” (*Ren mobu yinshi ye. Xian neng zhi wei ye. 人莫不飲食也。鮮能知味也.*).⁵⁴⁶ This in turn implies that food and drink possess two different forms of flavor: for one, gustatory flavor, in the sense of the flavor of meat known to everyone, and which Confucius forgot over the music of Shao; and then, “real flavor”, or that what the *Zhongyong* denotes as the flavor known only by few. We can juxtapose the above translation of *Zhongyong* 4:2 with the one given by James Legge: ““There is no body but eats and drinks. But they are few who can distinguish flavours.””⁵⁴⁷ It seems that the reason why Legge translates *zhi wei* 知味 as “to distinguish flavours”—that is, in the sense of the five flavors as mentioned in the *Daodejing*, where they have a negative connotation⁵⁴⁸—rather than as “knowing flavor” (in the figurative sense of an “ideal” flavor), is because he wants to point out that flavor here does *not* have the meaning of something transcendental, but actually indicates gustatory flavor in its immediate sense. As Legge comments this verse:

We have here not a comparison, but an illustration [...]. People do not know the true flavor of what they eat and drink, but they need not go beyond that to learn it. So the Mean belongs to all the actions of ordinary life, and might be discerned and practised in them, without looking for it in extraordinary things.⁵⁴⁹

Legge’s use of the term “true flavor” here denotes the actual, fleshly flavor of meat, and his elucidation of the verse cements Li Zehou’s argument that the early Confucian tradition did nurture the “human pleasures” to be found in “ordinary” taste, color, and sound, i.e. “all the actions of ordinary life”; and to be “discerned and practised” without needing to “go beyond”, in search for “extraordinary things”. In light of this understanding, Legge’s translation is to be preferred over the one given at first, and the main reason for my initial

⁵⁴⁵ The chapter states: “子在齊聞韶，三月不知肉味，曰，不圖為樂之至於斯也。”，which Legge translates as: “When the Master visited [the state of] Qi and heard [the music of] Shao, he for three months did not know the taste of meat, stating that he had not expected music could have reached thus far.” Legge, transl., 1960 [1892]: 199. For a variant translation of this passage, see *ibid.*: n. 13.

⁵⁴⁶ Cf. *ibid.*: 387.

⁵⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴⁸ That is, in terms of their “numbing” effect, which stands in relation with the “blinding” effect of the five colors and the “deafening” effect of the five tones, as noted above.

⁵⁴⁹ Legge, transl., 1960 [1892]: 387.

translation of *xian neng zhi wei* 鮮能知味 as “there are few who can really know flavor” is precisely to draw attention to the discrepant definitions of “knowing flavor” as a transcendental process, and “distinguishing flavours” as a gustatory process.

Indeed, Sikong Tu’s above-quoted phrase of the “image beyond image, and scene beyond scene” (*xiangwai zhi xiang, jingwai zhi jing*) is described by Wai-lim Yip as an “aesthetic measure, in which he [Sikong Tu] compares the ability to write good poetry to that of distinguishing extremely subtle differences in tastes and flavors, and only with this ability can one arrive at what he calls ‘*taste beyond taste*’ [...]”,⁵⁵⁰ corroborating the hierarchical order that places “spiritual flavor” over “fleshy flavor”. It seems that over the millennia, the idea of flavor, which initially denoted a highly sensual aspect of human enjoyment, was gradually turned into the concept of a highly spiritual thing belonging to a realm “beyond” the “the actions of ordinary life”. As noted by Yip, it was with reference to Sikong Tu that Su Shi uttered that “The taste of plums ends in being sour; that of salt in being saltiness”, and that “in cooking we cannot dispense with salt and (sour) plum, but wonderful taste/flavor that emerges from them [...] go way beyond salt and plum”.⁵⁵¹ With this quote in mind, it is an irony that there probably exists no other literati personality in Chinese history next to Su Shi who is more strongly associated with a popular specialty dish of such mouth-watering, fatty taste: braised pork belly, named after Su Shi and also known as *Dongpo rou* 東坡肉 (Dongpo meat)—truly, quite the opposite of bland!

Incidentally, the ambivalence of flavor as (an ideologically connoted) concept is reflected in Huang Binhong’s writings as quoted in the preceding chapter, where the idea of “knowing true flavor” is mentioned in the context of Huang’s description of *la* 辣, “sharpness”, “spiciness” as an essential quality of good brushwork: “[...] Those who do not profoundly pursue this principle [i.e. of sharpness], will never come to know its [true] flavor” ([...] *fei shenyu ci dao zhe, bu zhi qi wei* [...] 非深於此道者, 不知其味).⁵⁵² As stated already, Huang distinguishes those who “know its flavor”, from those who don’t (*bu zhi qi wei* 不知其味). It is clear that here, Huang Binhong’s use of the term “flavor” does not mean the flavor of sharpness in a literal, physical sense, but that sharpness as a principle is equated with a quality that imbues the brush movement with a form of

⁵⁵⁰ Yip 2008: 218.

⁵⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵⁵² HBHWJ (6): 42.

profoundness, implying a kind of *ideal* flavor, and “deeper meaning”, that lies beyond sensory perception. Considering Huang Binhong as an artist and scholar who was actively involved in contemporary literati discourse evolving around the question of “the nature and flavor of the literati” (*wenren zhi quwei* 文人之趣味), as put forward by Chen Shizeng, it is only natural and not at all surprising that his rhetoric approaches by and large comply with the established ideals of traditional *wenren* thought. However, it is just as important to understand Huang Binhong’s ambivalent status as one among many of the Republican-period literati artists, whose dilemma of perpetuating “indigenous” art traditions on the one hand, and incorporating and making use of novel “exogenous” art concepts, methods, and techniques on the other hand, was much more pressing than many of them would have openly addressed. Though Huang Binhong and his contemporaries did officially promulgate traditional Chinese culture and art, and for example aspire to reinvigorate the ancient spirit of “metal-and-stone” whose archaic appeal was perceived in an unadorned beauty of simplicity and rawness, this kind of aesthetic framework in fact reveals significant incongruencies when scrutinized with regard to the visual vocabulary actually evidenced by the artworks themselves. In this context, Wu Changshuo—to pick up again on his case and stay with it for a moment—is indeed a representative, prime example whose oeuvre remarkably embodies this ambivalence. That is to say, while the large part of *textual* sources, prominently in form of the calligraphy inscriptions to be found in his (as in other literati artists’) paintings, indeed adhered to the familiar, idiosyncratic language and rhetoric of classical discourse, *visually*, modernist aspects were at the same time clearly accommodated and embedded within the traditional literati monochrome-ink idiom of depiction. In Wu’s case, this conveys the artist’s endeavor to realize and harmonize different visual modes and techniques in a subtly manner. Wu believed that ideally, an artist should have “strength that ‘eats’ metal and stone, and a mind that nourishes grass and wood” (*ji jinshi poli yang caomu lingxin* 集金石魄力養草木靈心).⁵⁵³ This can be read as meaning a robust, straightforward, no-frills brush style derived from early calligraphic scripts, combined with vibrant, iridescent, and sumptuous depictions of classical literati themes like plum blossoms, chrysanthemums, wild grasses, rocks. Yet, it could also be read as a response to Song-dynasty Su Shi’s above-noted polemic that “what is prized in the withered and bland is that the exterior is withered but the interior is moist”; as a

⁵⁵³ Yang, ed., 2010: 132.

proposal to imbue—or nourish (*yang* 養), in Wu’s words—this “withered and bland” with something that is “moist”—“moist”, however, both from the “inside” *and* the “outside”; that is, to nourish the forms of literati painting with a flavor that lies not “beyond the painting itself” (as stipulated by Chen Shizeng), further, with a “marvelousness” that lies not “outside the actual brushstrokes” (as claimed by Su Shi), but, moreover, *within* the brushstrokes of the painting itself. Incidentally, it was Pan Tianshou 潘天寿 (1897–1971)—next to Wu Changshuo, Huang Binhong, and Qi Baishi, the fourth of the “four twentieth-century masters of traditional Chinese painting” (see figs. 2g–h)—who once commented on Wu’s use of color in his later works, saying: “He was bold in the use of what might be seen as garish greens and reds, having achieved a complex transformation in the use of color that had not been present among earlier painters.”⁵⁵⁴ Zhang Yiqing’s 張毅清 catalogue entry on Wu Changshuo’s 1917 work *Pigeonberry* (*Shanhu zhu tu* 珊瑚珠圖) (fig. 73e) corroborates this, where it is stated that “[t]he vivid reds that Wu Changshuo used in *Pigeonberry*, as in his late paintings, were usually ‘Western style’ carmine reds (*xiyang hong* [西洋紅]), which he felt were deeper and richer than the red used in the Chinese tradition (*yanzhi hong* [胭脂紅], or crimson red).”⁵⁵⁵ While Wu’s famous series of *Shiguwen* copies (as exemplified in figs. 73a–b) embody the conceptual *jinshi* theme of “strength that ‘eats’ metal and stone” and provide the artist with a means to position himself conceptually among the art discursive landscape of Republican-period China, examples like *Pigeonberry* and many more in fact illustrate how ambivalent and conflicted this intellectual landscape was with respect to its negotiation of “modernism” and “westernization” in art. As is discussed by Aida Yuen Wong, the commercial success of Wu Changshuo was due, among other things, to a certain “retro flavor”, as Wong denotes, that was ascribed to his works.⁵⁵⁶ Wu’s *Shiguwen* copies are a good example that testified to this current taste for things antique in the context of Chinese cultural traditions of recovering antiquity. His synthetic approach that combined erudite archaic scripts with popular colorful pictorial themes resonated with the contemporaneous cultural inquiry of China’s past, thus pointing towards the function and meaning of artworks as both a historical source and an agent of art historical inscription. At the same time, the appearance of a new social class of “literati merchants” mirrored the ambivalence of Chinese literati

⁵⁵⁴ Ibid.: 112. For a discussion of Huang Binhong and Pan Tianshou in context, see Lu 2004.

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁶ Wong 2006: 83.

culture and identity during this time. I refer here to Wu Changshuo to illustrate this point, inasmuch as he can be seen as a paradigm nourishing from and catering towards this ambivalent phenomenon.

With regard to its dealing with questions on the function, meaning, and value of literati art, the essay by Wu Changshuo's student Chen Shizeng must be read, similarly, in all its ambivalence: as an act of self-positioning; of accommodating to structural transitions taking place in early twentieth-century China. As outlined by Kuo-Sheng Lai, Chen had not simply been the radical traditionalist that he is usually classified as.⁵⁵⁷ Preceding the publication of his essay "The Value of Literati Painting", throughout the 1910s, Chen had in fact repeatedly voiced his dissatisfaction with contemporary Chinese painting.⁵⁵⁸ "Growing up in a reform-minded family, Chen Shizeng was very open to learning from the West", writes Lai, and argues that his seminal essay in which "the lack of realism in traditional Chinese literati painting" is not criticized but *advocated* not so much reflects an "abrupt change of attitude toward westernization of Chinese painting",⁵⁵⁹ but shows rather that Chen "had to defend literati painting from the attacks by New Culture Movement activists" in the context of cultural debates on the progressive function and role of Chinese art, and that this is in fact why "his words became more conservative".⁵⁶⁰

⁵⁵⁷ Lai 2006: 102–109. Lai recounts: "In October 1921, Japanese art historian Ōmura Seigai went to China and met Chen Shizeng. Then Chen Shizeng decided to translate Ōmura Seigai's 'The Revival of Literati Painting', an essay published both as a book, and as an article for the *Alumni Association Monthly* (*Kōyukai Geppō* 校友會月報) of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts in February 1921. Chen Shizeng rewrote 'The Value of Literati Painting' in literary Chinese and published it in May 1922 together with his translation of Ōmura's 'The Revival of Literati Painting' in the book titled *The Study of Chinese Literati Painting*." Ibid.: 110.

⁵⁵⁸ In spite of his critical stance, in his *History of Chinese Painting* (*Zhongguo huihua shi* 中國繪畫史) first published in 1926, he in turn praises Zhao Zhiqian 趙之謙 (1829–1884) and his teacher Wu Changshuo for "being different from others by applying the brushstrokes of ancient calligraphy". For Chen's *History of Chinese Painting*, see rpt. Liu Mengxi, main ed., 1996: 743–812. The calligraphy styles of Zhao Zhiqian and Wu Changshuo and their contemporary followers are discussed in Ledderose 1970: 92–116. For examples of painting and calligraphy by Zhao Zhiqian and Wu Changshuo, further see Qian, ed., 1991; Nakata, ed., 1970–1972, vol. 10, and Sang, main ed., 2014; Yang, ed., 2010, respectively. For a study on Zhao Zhiqian's life and art, further see Bennett 1984.

⁵⁵⁹ Lai 2006: 105.

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid.: 108. Chen's words must thus be understood as a concrete reaction against the radical critique put forward by reformist intellectuals like Chen Duxiu 陳獨秀 (1879–1942) and Kang Youwei 康有為 (1858–1927) in the context of traditionalism and modernism in early twentieth-century China. As history would have it, it was especially Chen's 1921 essay as well as Chen's translation of Japanese art historian Ōmura Seigai's 大村西崖 essay "The Revival of Literati Painting" ("Wenrehua zhi fuxing 文人畫之復興") in the same year, which, in Lai's words, "became a classic defense of literati painting" that "earned him fame as a traditionalist and defender of Chinese literati painting", Lai 2006: 112. Lai elaborates: "It is true that literati painting was still popular during Chen Shizeng's time. [...] However, during the New Culture Movement, Chinese traditions were faced with great challenges from Chen Duxiu and other radical intellectuals. These attacks were, on their own, strong enough to be Chen Shizeng's main motive for writing [...]. Although Chen Shizeng was a very famous painter in his own lifetime, what made art historians and art critics continue to

Ambivalences and discrepancies can be similarly pointed up in the case of Huang Binhong. Many of his works illustrate how Republican-period discourse on “the value of literati art” presented a complex, cultural-politically enmeshed field of friction. In the next step, my aim is to identify and carve out expressions of this conflicted discourse within Huang's work, and examine what his landscape paintings and their inscriptions can tell us in this regard. I contend that there is more to see and comprehend than first meets the eye—and, especially, more than is generally acknowledged in art historical discourse on this artist. Though the overall focus of this study lies on the genre of calligraphy, I think it is not necessary to point out that within literati art production, the genre of (ink landscape) painting is closely intertwined and thus not entirely separable from the realm of calligraphy, its theory, concepts, methods, and aesthetics.

4.3. Huang Binhong's *Discourse on Clerical-Script Painting*

The central piece to be discussed in the context of above-stated aims is Huang Binhong's hanging scroll *Discourse on Clerical-Script Painting* (*Lun litihua tu* 論隸體畫圖) (fig. 74a), whose title in fact corroborates the very intertwinement of calligraphy and painting just noted. Suggesting the depiction of a calligraphy-styled landscape, an assessment of the painting composition and the calligraphy inscription, with special regard to the title, serves to anchor entanglements of political, ideological, and art-discursive issues concurrently present in the Chinese art world. These entanglements encompass the modernization of the arts and the renewal of cultural customs and beliefs through a “progressive traditionalist” promotion of national essence (*guocui* 國粹)⁵⁶¹ as well as an influx of increasingly western-based information on art practices and concepts. As someone who was actively involved in the radically transitional phases of Chinese art and culture during the 1910s through mid-1950s, our scholarly interest in and understanding of Huang Binhong can still be expanded with regard to seemingly definite, yet treacherously self-sufficing classifications of his landscape painting style as “black” and “white” (i.e. Black Binhong and White Binhong), moreover as the “harmonious uniting of red-and-green and black ink” (*danqing shuimo hebi* 丹青水墨合璧), this latter term of which is of particular interest in

talk about him was this essay and his translation of Ōmura Seigai's essay.” Ibid. For an in-depth discussion of cultural debates on the role of Chinese art in the context of traditionalism and modernism in early twentieth-century China, see also Cheng-hua Wang 2011. On Chinese discourse on calligraphy culture and practice in Republican-period China, see Shi 2015.

⁵⁶¹ On Huang Binhong's dealing with *guocui* in art and culture, see, Andrews/Shen 2007; Kong 2014; Kuo 2004: 7f.; Roberts 2005: 65–91. Further, for a discussion of the incorporation of Chinese brush-and-ink art theory into national art discourse of the 1920s and 1930s, see Shen 2009.

the following. *Danqing shuimo hebi* references the tradition of colored landscape painting as associated with the so-called red-green, or blue-green styles (see fig. 76 for an example) reaching back to the Tang-dynasty painter Li Sixun 李思訓 (651–716) and his son Li Zhaodao 李昭道 (fl. early eighth century), the latter of whom is credited with the inauguration and accomplishment of *danqing shuimo hebi* 丹青水墨合璧 meaning a landscape painting style that is said to have brought together the red-green-tradition with the genre of monochrome ink painting, which in turn is traditionally associated with the Lis’ contemporary Wu Daozi 吳道子 (fl. ca. 700–760).⁵⁶² These particular sub-genres among the overarching genre of traditional *shanshuihua* 山水畫 have stood to some extent in ideological opposition to one another through history: on the one hand, the monochrome ink landscape and its idiom of the “spiritually expressive”, “calligraphic”, “reduced brush” style as embodied especially by the Yuan-dynasty literati painters, and on the other hand, the polychrome landscape grounded in the red-green (or red-blue, *qing* 青 actually denoting a color of green-blue), and blue-green (*qinglü* 青綠) painting traditions,⁵⁶³ whose value traditionally stood lower than that of the former, at least in literati discourse, since it was considered as merely “decorative” given its use of materials such as gold and silk, indicators of “adorning”, “eye-pleasing” surface details.⁵⁶⁴ However, beyond aiming at a “harmonious uniting of red-and-green and black ink” (*danqing shuimo hebi*)⁵⁶⁵—the terminology of which notably limits itself to “indigenous”, culture-specific traditions of Chinese art—works such as *Discourse on Clerical-Script Painting* moreover exemplify Huang Binhong’s effort to resolve conventional art-discursive frameworks, as I argue, probably also in light of the omnipresence of new “exogenous” elements (i.e. of western art), which he sought to integrate into an individual, coherent system of visual depiction.⁵⁶⁶

⁵⁶² Cf. Yang, ed., 2010: 286. For reproductions and a discussion of these painting traditions of the Tang, see the section “The Sui and Tang” in Wu Hung’s essay “The Origins of Chinese Painting”, Hung 1997: 59–85.

⁵⁶³ It should be noted that the terms “red-green” (or “red-blue”) and “blue-green” painting are literal translations of *danqing* 丹青 and *qinglü* 青綠 respectively. While the early traditions of color painting were grounded in the use of these specific colors, both terms signify colored landscape painting in a more general sense. Cf. McNair 1997: 72.

⁵⁶⁴ While in the Chinese context, monochrome painting styles are generally related to the art traditions of Confucian literati scholars, polychrome painting styles are in turn related to traditions of Daoist and Buddhist painting. On the specific traditions of red-blue and blue-green landscape painting styles, see McNair 1997.

⁵⁶⁵ As indicated by Luo Jianqun, Yang, ed., 2010: 286.

⁵⁶⁶ Albeit in a different context, a similar art historiographical juxtapositioning of monochrome and polychrome landscape painting styles occurs in the case of the Japanese Kano painting school, a phenomenon

Huang Binhong's undated hanging scroll *Discourse on Clerical-Script Painting*, executed in ink and light colors on paper, measuring 96.5 x 39.5 cm, and now in the collection of the Zhejiang Provincial Museum, shows the scenery of a mountainous landscape. With its classic three-level division of visual space into fore-, mid-, and background, composition and theme are reminiscent of the Northern-Song-typical genre of monumental *shanshui* depictions. The deliberate inclusion of empty space, that is, of the white paper ground as a pictorial element in order to convey water, mist, and sky, emphasizes this reference. Beginning, classically, in the foreground, amidst some low earthen mounds and beneath a group of trees in full leaf, there stands a single hut in which a scholar, to be seen in profile and dressed in traditional attire, is seated and gazing out. In the mid-distance, occupying the central field of the picture plane, a massive, bulbously built mountain formation rises high. Its lusciously vegetated, piled-up rock structure appears to swell in- and outward with the swirling movements of the brush, whose lines alternate with saturated pitch-black ink and chalky dry ink. The mountain range in the far-distant background, faintly depicted in pale ink and light yellow and green color washes, lead our view further up and into the white space of a bright sky. In the upper left corner of the picture, a four-column inscription rendered in a casual standard and semi-cursive script style can be seen. It is concluded by impressions of two of Huang Binhong's seals. The title of the work, "Discourse on Clerical-Script Painting", is expounded in the inscription:

Those who discuss calligraphy speak of depth and richness, while in painting, it is about density and lusciousness. True integrity interlinks both, thus is [the nature of] clerical-script painting.⁵⁶⁷

Though one of Huang Binhong's art historical achievements is indeed considered to lie in "drawing from calligraphy to enter into painting" (*yin shu ru hua* 引書入畫),⁵⁶⁸ thus confirming the most fundamental of assumptions in literati art theory that "calligraphy and

that is critically assessed by Quitman E. Phillips with regard to the overly biased association of the two traditions with, respectively, the idea of a "coarse" and "sketchy" brushwork on the one hand, and that of a "meticulous", "fine" one on the other hand. According to Phillips, the "Kano myth" indicates in an art historical narrative that constructs the Kano school painters as masterly unifiers of both traditions (the former having been derived from Chinese painting traditions; the latter from indigenous Japanese traditions). See Phillips 1994.

⁵⁶⁷ Cf. Yang, ed., 2010: 257. The original inscription reads: "論書者曰蒼雄深秀, 畫宜渾厚華滋, 至理相通, 有隸體畫.", *ibid.*: 412. The scroll carries two of Huang Binhong's seals, reading "Binhong 賓虹", and "Yuxiang 予向", respectively (see fig. 74e), the second of which is discussed below; and one seal of the museum collection (Zhejiang bowuguan zang 浙江博物館藏).

⁵⁶⁸ As termed by Zhang Tongyu, Zhang Tongyu 2010: 38, 40. Other phrases of the same idea, as already noted in the chapter before, are *yi shu ru hua* 以書入畫, see Wang Zhongxiu 2014: 22; Xu 2009: 115; and *yi shu yang hua* 以書養畫, see Zhang Tongyu 2010: 37.

painting are of the same roots”, Huang was of course not the first to exert the idea of “calligraphy-scripted painting” or “script-styled painting”. This idea references the famous thought figure established by Yuan-dynasty Zhao Mengfu 趙孟頫 (1254–1322), who had aspired to paint “rocks like flying white and tress like large seal script” (*shi ru feibai mu ru zhou* 石如飛白木如籀),⁵⁶⁹ thus establishing a correlation between painting techniques and the ancient *zhouwen* seal script (see fig. 77 for an example of Zhao’s painting style). Moreover, the Qing-period study of ancient inscriptions in bronze and stone artifacts from which then emerged the group of so-called Epigraphic Painters, which were already mentioned above, can be seen as a direct influence on Huang Binhong’s approaches in supporting the idea that Chinese painting be re-invented and promoted through the study and application of techniques and aesthetics specific to archaic Chinese script types.⁵⁷⁰ The late Qing-dynasty interlinking of painting with ancient script types emphasized the methods of both seal script and clerical script, and Huang Binhong, in the here-discussed example, chooses clerical script as the appropriate model through which to establish a link between painting and writing.⁵⁷¹ Next to the aesthetic flavor of an “archaic”, “natural”, and “unadorned” style that the *jinshi*-scholars of the Qing had associated both with seal script and the subsequent clerical script type which had flourished during the periods of the Qin, Han, and Northern Dynasties 北朝 (386–581), several aspects come to mind that may be considered as representative, unique qualities of clerical script (cf. figs. 13a–c, 15d).⁵⁷²

⁵⁶⁹ Zhao’s original statement, as recorded in the *Peiwenzhai shuhua pu* 佩文齋書畫譜 (Collection of Phrases and Rhymes: Commentary on Calligraphy and Painting) compiled by Wang Yuanqi 王原祁 (1642–1715), had been: “石如飛白木如籀，寫竹還應八法通，若也有人能會此，須知書畫本來同。” Wang Yuanqi, ed., 1984 [1919], vol. 2: 395. For a study of Zhao Mengfu’s life and work, see McCausland 2011.

⁵⁷⁰ On the Epigraphic Painting School (*jinshi huapai* 金石畫派) of the late Qing and Republican Period, as represented by painters like the above-mentioned Zhao Zhiqian, Wu Changshuo, and Qi Baishi, I refer again to Brown 2011: 41f., 66; Han 2010: 46; Kuo 2004: 13. For painting and calligraphy by these representatives of the Epigraphic Painting School, see Qian, ed., 1991; Sang, main ed., 2014; Yang, ed., 2010. For representative examples of Qing-dynasty epigraphic calligraphy, see Nakata, ed., 1970–1972, vol. 10. For a study on seal-script calligraphy of the Qing dynasty, see Ledderose 1970.

⁵⁷¹ Despite the espousal of seal script as an important model for calligraphic studies by early epigraphical scholar-calligraphers such as the influential Fu Shan and his experimental blending of cursive and seal script (as seen in figs. 15a and 64), most early-Qing epigraphers were indeed focused on rubbings and emulations of clerical script, which was due, among other things, to the availability of clerical-script rubbings and original stone artifacts in light of concurrent, ongoing archaeological finds, see Bai 2003: 186ff. The focus of the later established Stele School, which was at its height in the second half of the eighteenth century, then lay on clerical and seal script likewise, see *ibid.*: 260f. The late-Qing epigraphers, notably the representatives of the Epigraphic Painting School, by whom Huang Binhong will have received the strongest direct influence, similarly took both seal and clerical script as models. For painting and calligraphy by representatives of the Epigraphic Painting School, see preceding footnote. For Fu Shan’s calligraphy see Bai 2003; Liu Zhengcheng, 1996, vol. 63.

⁵⁷² For examples of writing on silk, bamboo, and wood slips dating from the Qin- and Han-dynasty, see Liu Zhengcheng, main ed., 1997, vol. 5. For a discussion of these formats of documentary writing, further see

First to name is a special attention paid to the pronounced modulation of the single brushstroke as an individual graphic shape, which came about with the transition of the writing medium around 100 CE, shifting from wooden slips, bamboo strips, and silk to paper as a writing surface, “its absorbency enabling it to catch every nuance of the writer’s touch more effectively [...]”.⁵⁷³ The new technical conditions thus presented a discovery of revolutionary impact for the artistic development of brush writing, and the dynamic movements and quick twists and turns that became manifest in the brush line were soon developed into an aesthetic semiotic system of their own. Second, if compared with the other types of Chinese script, clerical script is typically distinguished by written characters of a robust, heavy and compact architectonic build. This visual impression of heaviness is due to the emphasis of well-balanced horizontals, which lend the characters their squat shape and sense of gravity. Third, a special haptic aspect of plasticity adheres to the image of clerical script, inasmuch as this script type is historically tied to the physical, three-dimensional format of stone. Copied and incised by hand in meticulous processes of artistic craftsmanship, the written texts, carved into the surfaces of monumental stone steles, and the walls of cave temples and other buildings, were valuable for their durability, which has played a significant part in the transmission of the script type to this day. With regard, moreover, to the genre of inscriptions carved into the natural stone landscape of mountain faces, known in Chinese as *moya* 摩崖, these “landscapes of words”, to cite Robert Harrist’s terminology,⁵⁷⁴ were not only to be read with eyes and mind, but explored and experienced physically as a terrain and from different angles and viewpoints.⁵⁷⁵ Although clerical script is not the only script type that has a long tradition in the history of Chinese stone carving—indeed, within the Northern-Dynasties genres of stone inscriptions, epitaphs, Buddhist votive steles, and cliff engravings, as well as the later

Wo 1997. For examples of Han-dynasty seal script and clerical script, cf. also Zhang Qiya, main ed., 2000: 87–144, and 144–289, respectively.

⁵⁷³ Clunas 2009 [1997]: 135.

⁵⁷⁴ As used in the title of his book *The Landscape of Words: Stone Inscriptions from Early and Medieval China*, Harrist 2008.

⁵⁷⁵ Cf. Harrist’s description of various sites of Buddhist scriptures carved into mountains in Shandong during the latter half of the sixth century, *ibid.*: 169–175, 188f. Harrist elucidates in this context, “the only way to read a monumental inscription is to go to the place where it is carved”, further stating that “the ascent of a sutra-bearing mountain granted intense and direct visual experience of the real world”, Harrist 2008: 189. As Harrist argues, the act of reading here is even comparable with ambulatory forms of Buddhist ritual practice, *ibid.* A further discussion of Northern-Qi 北齊 (550–577) Buddhist sutra stone engravings is given in Tsiang 1996. For examples of Buddhist stone carvings of the Northern and Southern Dynasties, the time during which this genre flourished, see also Liu Zhengcheng, main ed., 2000, vol. 12, as well as Lai 2000 for a general discussion of Buddhist *moya* of this period.

courtly traditions of the Tang, the standard script flourished in many styles (see figs. 13d, 53a–b, 78a–d for examples).⁵⁷⁶ Nevertheless, clerical script it can be considered a “classical” or “archaic” stone script type inasmuch as it was the one that flourished when the culture of erecting inscribed stone tablets was at its first height in the first and second centuries CE.⁵⁷⁷ Moreover, the modulation of individual brushstrokes specific to this type achieves an all the more plastic quality when incised into stone. This can for example be vividly seen in the so-called “silkworm heads and swallow tails” (*cantou yanwei* 蠶頭燕尾) of the mature clerical script (*bafen li* 八分隸) (see fig. 59d for an illustration),⁵⁷⁸ as, for instance, chiseled into the *Yi Ying Stele* (*Yi Ying bei* 乙瑛碑) of 153 CE or the *Stele on Ritual Objects* (*Liqi bei* 禮器碑) of 156 CE (seen in figs. 13a–c, 42, 98f, and 100m), both preserved at the Confucius Temple (Kongmiao 孔廟) in Qufu, Shandong, thus realizing the potential of visual depth that the individual brush line originally possesses.

Taking a close look at Huang Binhong’s *Discourse on Clerical-Script Painting* we can see how the features of this ancient writing form might have inspired him to paint a picture of the given title. The rocks and trees do not show the typical application of form-giving texture strokes (*cun* 皴) conventionally used in Chinese traditions of ink landscape depiction, which are instead all the more present in Huang’s early landscape paintings stemming from before the mid-1910s, which is denoted by Jason Kuo as Huang Binhong’s early-period style “of learning from contemporary and ancient artists”,⁵⁷⁹ as can be seen for example in Huang’s *Landscape in the Manner of Li Tang* (*Lin Li Tang shanshui tu* 臨李唐山水圖) (cf. figs. 79a–b), his above-noted *Landscape in the Manner of Ni Zan* (cf. figs. 32 and 31c), or two early-age landscape paintings (87a–b) in the manner of aforementioned Dong Yuan and Ju Ran, where Huang Binhong still closely adheres to the

⁵⁷⁶ Cf. Fong et al., eds., 2008: 176ff., 196ff. For a discussion of standard-script calligraphy styles as to be seen in late fifth-/early sixth-century Northern-Wei stone engravings of the Longmen Cave Temples in Luoyang, Henan (as seen in figs. 13d and 78a), see Lu 1999.

⁵⁷⁷ See Wong 2004: 25.

⁵⁷⁸ While the “silkworm head” (*cantou* 蠶頭) denotes the round contour to be seen typically at the beginning of the horizontal strokes, which is created by an initial turning movement of the brush from right to left, before proceeding to draw the stroke line from left to right, the “swallow tail” (*yanwei* 燕尾) denotes the flaring endings to be seen typically in horizontal or downward right strokes that are produced by a smooth pressing down and then lifting up of the brush. Both traits are classic hallmarks of the *bafen* style denoting the fully matured style of clerical script as to be seen on bamboo slips from the mid-Western Han dynasty onwards, cf. Veit 1985: 38.

⁵⁷⁹ Kuo 2004: 73.

characteristic application of form-giving texture strokes (*cun* 皴) used by his models.⁵⁸⁰ Rather, we see an unconventional configuration, or graphic shaping of the brushstroke: especially in the upper part of the mountain formation, heavy, rich strokes, dots, and blots of ink are amassed together with singular, short and forceful movements of a sweeping, rhythmical, and relatively loosely modulated brush, thus creating a systematic, concentric build-up of volumetric mass (see fig. 74b). The overall impression of the work is that of a landscape painted in a rather free, nearly sketched manner and with fair speed; and yet, in its own way, the depicted scenery still possesses all the monumental weight and imposing grandeur of its Five-Dynasties 五代 (907–960) and Song-period forerunners (as seen in figs. 75a–b, 79b). While it was just noted that the plasticity of *lishu* characters is highlighted when seen incised into stone, in Huang’s *Clerical-Script Painting*, the modulation of brushstrokes moreover serves to depict stone itself and describe its various textures. The darkly saturated areas of blotted and slightly spreading ink are contrasted by lighter ones made up of near-to transparent daubs, or washes (see figs. 74c–d). Huang’s variation of in part extreme ink tones is suggestive of the plastic effect created by the contrast of light and shade to be observed with the incised characters of a stone-inscribed surface—which is notable as a feature, since shade, and the depiction of spatial depth through shading, are aspects foreign to traditional Chinese landscape painting.⁵⁸¹ Huang’s method of densely amassing thick, dark brushstrokes, in what is denoted here as the concentric build-up of volumetric mass, evokes a restless, near-to “cyclonic” visual effect when seen close-up, and it seems to anticipate Huang’s characteristic style of thoroughly systematical, layered stroke-upon-stroke compositions post-1948⁵⁸²—that which is

⁵⁸⁰ For an introduction to fundamental techniques and principles of brushwork in traditional Chinese ink painting (likewise applicable to calligraphy), see Kwo 1990 [1981]: 134–179; Silbergeld 1982.

⁵⁸¹ A well-known exception is the depiction of shadows cast by the group of figures to be seen in the first section of the handscroll *Second Red Cliff Prose Poem* (*Hou chibi fu tu* 後赤壁賦圖) attributed to Qiao Zhongchang 喬仲常 (fl. first half of twelfth century), which is however due to the literary content of the prose poems written by Su Shi that this handscroll serves to illustrate, see Wilkinson 1981: 78. The handscroll is reproduced *ibid.*: 77. Notably, in a highly illuminating essay that discusses Huang Binhong’s use of colors as seen in a small hanging scroll titled *Soughing Pines of Huangshan* (*Huanghai song tao* 黃海松濤), Juliane Noth closely observes Huang Binhong’s physically accurate depiction of shadow according to the low, slanted angle from which the sunlight must be falling upon the depicted motif of pine tree and rocks, Noth 2010: 9. For an image of this work, see *ibid.*; or HBHQJ (4): 308.

⁵⁸² See n. 456. According to Jason Kuo’s division of Huang Binhong’s painting style into four rough periods, the last period is denoted as the years 1943 to 1955, Kuo 2004: 73. I largely agree with Kuo’s overall argumentation for his periodization, yet I am in favor of further emphasizing Huang’s “late style” and propose a sub-division of the last period into three phases: namely the years 1943–48, 1948–53, and 1953–55, respectively. Indeed, Kuo does focus on the years 1952–1955 in his analysis of a selection of Huang’s late-period paintings, yet these three years are not defined in terms of an actual period, cf. *ibid.*: 15, 73ff. The

commonly referred to as *heimi houzhong* (dark and dense, rich and heavy), or *hunhou huazi* (simple, deep and rich, luxuriant and flourishing, as denoted by himself in the inscription) (cf. figs. 3a, 3e, 60c–62d). Comparing Huang’s *Clerical-Script Painting* with his three-meter long handscroll *Cool Air among Lakes and Mountains* (*Hushan shuangqi tu* 湖山爽氣圖) of 1951 (figs. 80a–c), we rediscover the dense pattern of whirlwind-like build-ups as a repetitive element in the structural composition of the shrubs and hills of the latter work. While Luo Jianqun, custodian of the Zhejiang Provincial Museum’s collection of Huang Binhong’s works, loosely dates *Discourse on Clerical-Script Painting* as a 1940s piece,⁵⁸³ the fact that this structural element is not yet applied in the same systemized or elaborate manner in this piece indicates that it was probably painted during the earlier years of the 1940s. In any case, we see that Huang Binhong’s late-period style of *hunhou huazi* can be subtly anticipated in *Discourse on Clerical-Script Painting*. In fact, interestingly, Jason Kuo has pointed out that the penname “Yuxiang 予向” (“I admire Xiang”), which the lower of the two seals in the upper left corner of the painting bears (fig. 74e), is a reference to the late-Ming/early-Qing painter Yun Xiang 惲向 (1586–1655), who as a transmitter of the Dong-Ju⁵⁸⁴ style had a considerable influence on Huang Binhong, for “To Huang Pin-hung, Yün Hsiang’s work embodied the ideal of ‘solidity and density in structure and freshness and moisture in brush-and-ink’ (*hun-hou hua-tzu*)”.⁵⁸⁵ The aesthetic aspiration of “density and freshness” is not least corroborated in Huang Binhong’s inscription of the work.

With regard to stylistic lineages, Huang’s apparently unruly, yet actually highly organized structure and style of brushwork as then seen in his later works such as *Cool Air among Lakes and Mountains* are reminiscent of the unsettled, near-to claustrophobic landscape compositions of Yuan-dynasty Wang Meng 王蒙 (1308–1385) characterized by their masses of piled ox-hair (*niumao* 牛毛) and hemp-fiber texture strokes (*pima cun* 披麻皴), and their plentiful use of ink, as seen for example in the of *Juqu Forest Chamber Grotto*

reasons for my emphasis on this sub-division will be further expounded in the following chapter. For the moment, I refer to the year 1948 as the inauguration of Huang’s “intermediate late-style phase”, so to say. This is related to the fact that 1948 was the year Huang Binhong moved to Hangzhou from Beijing, his final place of residence upon having been appointed to the art academy in Hangzhou.

⁵⁸³ Yang, ed., 2010: 257.

⁵⁸⁴ Referring to the painting tradition in the styles of above-noted Dong Yuan and Ju Ran.

⁵⁸⁵ Kuo 2004: 73f. Based on Huang Binhong’s admiration of Yun Xiang, Kuo translates “Yuxiang 予向” as “I admire [Yün] Hsiang”, *ibid.* The influence of Yun Xiang’s writings on Huang Binhong’s aesthetic awareness is also noted by Luo Jianqun, see Yang, ed., 2010: 268. On Huang Binhong’s use of the penname Yuxiang, cf. also Xu 2009: 114f.

(*Juqu linwu tu* 具區林屋圖) (fig. 81a). The comparison with Wang Meng is obvious, not only with respect to brushwork, but also composition. Indeed, when juxtaposed, the mountain composition in Huang Binhong's *Discourse on Clerical-Script Painting* nearly appears to be a mirror image of Wang Meng's *Qingbian Mountain Dwelling* (*Qingbian yinju tu* 青卞隱居圖), especially when “trimming” away the empty, open spaces of sky and valley in Huang's composition (cf. figs. 81b and 81c). At the same time, it is with particular regard to the very trait of *hunhou huazi*, or *heimi houzhong*, that individual works representative of Huang Binhong's later, “matured” painting style of densely layered brushwork, among these, the noted *Cool Air among Lakes and Mountains*, are described by Zaixin Hong as revealing “a compelling structure akin to that of the Abstract Expressionists”;⁵⁸⁶ alternatively, by Michael Sullivan, as “magnificently expressionistic”;⁵⁸⁷ by Chu-ting Li further as approaching “total abstraction”.⁵⁸⁸ As Zaixin Hong notes, the work Sullivan refers to—a late landscape painting in a hanging scroll format which carries the caption “Huang Pin-hung. Blue Landscape (Painted at the Age of 89). Chinese Ink and Colour (Mr. Ch'en Ching-chao)” —is published as the frontispiece of his *Chinese Art in the Twentieth Century* (fig. 82a).⁵⁸⁹ The comparison of Huang's so-called late style with the contemporaneous art movements in the West is hardly surprising. Next to evident references to stylistic lineages in the Chinese painting tradition, Huang's late style is similarly reminiscent of impressionist, pointillist, cubist, and expressionist methods used by nineteenth- and twentieth-century European impressionist and post-impressionist painters, as many work examples appear to testify (next to fig. 80a, cf. figs. 83a–f for a selection).⁵⁹⁰ Examples of Huang Binhong's “calligraphic” brushwork as to be seen in his “thirsty brush” (*kebi* 渴筆) ink landscape sketches (figs. 83g–j) are further reminiscent of abstract expressionist styles, in spite of their indebtedness to Chinese

⁵⁸⁶ Hong 2010: 240.

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid. As it were, a similarly “magnificently expressionistic” hanging scroll that Huang Binhong painted in 1955, his final year of life, shows a scenery that could likewise carry the title “Blue Landscape” (fig. 82b). In fact, though few in number, there are several further examples of late paintings by Huang Binhong that make prominent use of bright and intense blue as the only color, which, as “blue landscapes”, stand off from his more common, “earthy”, “naturally” colored landscapes, see HBHQJ (3): 22, 237, 284; and further fig. 82c for a landscape painting of ca. 1953–1955 showing the use of blue color, albeit in more subdued manner.

⁵⁸⁸ Kuo 2004: 2.

⁵⁸⁹ Sullivan 1959, pl. A.

⁵⁹⁰ As it were, Huang Binhong was familiar with the pointillist method. As Zaixin Hong notes: “On January 30, 1934, Huang observed that ‘Western painting began to talk about Abstractionism after Impressionism, shifting the focus on lines from “pointillist method”.’” Hong 2010: 241, n. 25. Kuo indeed denotes Huang Binhong's application of color as “pointillist”, “using color dots in place of ink dots”, and further cites Wang Bomin as having observed about Huang Binhong: “He uses paper both as the object of coloring and as a ‘palette’.”, Kuo 2004: 64.

traditional brush-and-ink methods. Considering these and further examples, and seen through eyes habituated to the images of European masterpieces, subtle evocations of modern landscape painting styles seem inevitable, if we call to mind, for example, Paul Cézanne's (1839–1906) late-period depictions of Mt. Saint-Victoire and Château Noir, Claude Monet's (1840–1926) *Pont Japonais*, or Vincent van Gogh's (1853–1890) restless wheatfield.

With regard to aspects of composition and technique, it seems evident that the work *Discourse on Clerical-Script Painting* cannot be explained from the established standpoint and vocabulary of calligraphy discourse alone—that is to say, in spite of the programmatic title and inscription. While we have noted that Huang's overall treatment of spatial depth and volume comprises the strong contrasting of ink tones as well as a distinctive technique that was to receive ever more elaboration and systemization in form of his stroke-upon-stroke, layer-upon-layer application of the designated “five brush and seven ink methods” developed by him, it should further be noted that the factor of *color*, and the manner in which colors are applied, deserve similar mentioning. The lighter surface areas where we see the application of diluted ink washes also show nuanced layers of thin pastel yellow washes. This coloring accentuates the texture and depth of the solid rock as material, subtly effectuating additional transitions between light and shadow, and creating in-between hues of greenish greys and blues. If spoken in metaphoric terms of the “brush as chisel”, both the ink and the colors are employed as if to literally sculpt out the various shapes of the rock surface with all its bulging protrusions and hatched recesses. Moreover, the image of “sculpting out the mountain” implies, for one, a physically exerting process for the sculptor, and further, a three-dimensional physicality of the sculpted subject. While this body-specific image is perhaps likewise present in the context of traditional Chinese stone carving, it is, in general, not commonly associated within the genre of Chinese landscape painting. I am aware that the terminology of sculpture has its roots in western-based art traditions, and yet reference to this term seems legitimate in Huang Binhong's case.⁵⁹¹ In his essay “Huatan”, he establishes the following image of the painter's brush as a weapon or tool:

⁵⁹¹ In the context of discussing the early 1950s hanging scroll *Ancient Temple in Deep Mountains* (*Shen shan gu si tu* 深山古寺圖) (fig. 61a), Luo Jianqun similarly speaks of Huang Binhong's methods of applying ink “to construct an unprecedented, almost sculptural volumetricity”, Yang, ed., 2010: 266. Though reference here is to Huang's use of ink and not color, I think the argument is the same one, inasmuch as it points towards Huang Binhong's general interest in constructing volume as an aspect of lifelike landscape depiction.

After setting down on the paper [with the brush], even if it is only a tiny dot, [the brush must] move with the force of the entire body and at no times be slack. As if wrestling with a lion, entire force must be used. The brush on the paper should be like a [double-edged] *kunwu*-knife cutting jade, its tip and edges sharp and keen. Without skilled work and hard effort one will not be able to sculpt deeply.⁵⁹²

In order to draw attention to this particular image that Huang Binhong establishes, i.e. of using one's entire body force to shape the physical structure of a plastic object (or rather, "tame", as if fighting against a wild beast), I here translate his term *diao* 雕 as "to sculpt" instead of the perhaps more obvious "to carve", "to engrave", or "to cut", since the act of sculpting, as an *additive* form-giving process, seems to be more appropriate and applicable in the context of painting. By contrast, "carving", "engraving", and "cutting" are associated rather with a *subtractive* process of giving form. The technical process of controlled removal as implied by traditional Chinese stone-engraving methods seems to contradict the cumulative process of structural build-up achieved by placing individual brushstrokes.

What is more, from the example of *Discourse on Clerical-Script Painting*, it seems that Huang Binhong's had a pronounced sensitivity towards the potentiality of especially color (rather than only ink) as a *form-giving* element⁵⁹³ in painting. Let us re-read his inscription: "Those who discuss calligraphy speak of depth and richness, while in painting, it is about density and lusciousness. True integrity interlinks both, thus is [the nature of] clerical-script painting." Here, it appears striking that Huang proposes to describe calligraphy in idiomatic terms of *cangxiong shenxiu* 蒼雄深秀 ("depth and richness") considering that the Chinese character *cang* 蒼 actually refers to a color of intensive quality: for example, in the compound words *cangtian* 蒼天, and *cangsong* 蒼松, it denotes, respectively, the "sky-blue" of the sky, and the "pine-green" of pine trees.⁵⁹⁴ In this sense, Huang Binhong's wording could also be translated more literally, as "Those who discuss calligraphy speak of deep blues and rich greens [...]". Huang links the traditionally monochrome art form of calligraphy with a color terminology that is suggestive of the sumptuous, vibrant hues of blue and green to be found in nature. Why would Huang Binhong have wanted to make a point of integrating color as a topic (both visually and textually) in the first place? Perhaps

⁵⁹² "落紙之後，雖一小點，運以全身之力，絕不放鬆，譬如獅子搏兔，亦用全力。筆在紙上，當視為昆吾刀切玉，鋒芒銛利，非良工辛苦，不能淺雕深刻。" HBHWJ (6): 161.

⁵⁹³ As opposed to color as merely an accentuation, i.e. of forms that have already been given shape through ink, an aspect that will be further elaborated shortly.

⁵⁹⁴ Cf. HYDZD, vol. 5: 3266; Karlgren 1957: 184f., no. 703e; Mathews 1975 [1943]: 6714.

for the simple reason that he believed that colors, and the use of colors in painting, were essential in order to truly depict nature! Though it is true that in the history of Chinese painting there exist numerous examples of monochrome ink paintings with poetic inscriptions containing color imagery to describe landscapes,⁵⁹⁵ I think that Huang Binhong's textual and visual dealing with color were motivated by more than merely making a poetic reference. Yet his embedment within certain art circles would not have allowed him to openly promote the combination of the monochrome ink landscape idiom with any all too "deep blues" or "rich greens" (at least not in landscape paintings that were to be taken seriously as works devoted to the higher pursuit of *guocui*, national essence), since overly bright colors would have contradicted the classic image of traditional literati art as promoted especially in the Republican-era context of nationalist and culture-essentialist debates. In a catalogue entry on Wu Changshuo's 1915 painting *Gourds* (*Hulutu* 葫蘆圖) (seen in fig. 2d), author Zhang Yiqing notes:

Traditional Chinese literati theories promoted the use of ink and admonished against extensive use of color even when color is appropriate. When Wu Changshuo first started his career as a painter, his older friend Pu Hua [蒲華] (1839–1911) had advised him to use more ink and less color. Given such a climate, Wu Changshuo's use of bright colors is a bold artistic move.⁵⁹⁶

Moreover, the classic image of literati aesthetics was espoused not least by Huang Binhong himself, who would have thus been contradicting his own postulations. In his "Huayulu", for instance, Huang comments on the use of colors in landscape painting and writes

When drawing the parts of mountains where clouds amass, [the technique of] burnt ink must be used to convey spirit and distinguish depth; the water hides within the ink, and this renders [the painted subject] all the more lively. Similar is the case with color composition. When applying colors, the colors must incorporate ink. This is what is called "hiding the colors in ink, hiding the water in ink".⁵⁹⁷

According to this understanding, the use of colors should never go unaccompanied by ink. Colors should not appear in their pure form, rather, they fulfill the (mere) function of emphasizing the overall application of ink. What is more, although Huang Binhong does critically comment on how to use colors appropriately in landscape painting, he remains within the classical discourse of brush-and-ink methods. Referring to "colors" as *danqing*

⁵⁹⁵ McNair 1997: 72.

⁵⁹⁶ Yang, ed., 2010: 110.

⁵⁹⁷ "寫山石之積陰處，須以焦墨提神，分出深淺，墨內隱水，倍覺靈活。賦色亦然。設色之筆，丹青中妨含墨，所謂‘丹青隱墨、墨隱水’是也。" HBHWJ (6): 43. As Luo Jianqun elucidates, to "hide the colors in ink" refers to Huang's technique of blending ink with color through layers of light ink washes, in order to "avoid showiness and vulgarity", Yang, ed., 2010: 288.

丹青, literally “red-and-green”, i.e. the colors used in traditional Chinese color painting, Huang responds to the rhetorical framework of *danqing shuimo hebi* (the harmonious uniting of red-and-green and black ink). That is to say, colors are not treated as an individual subject or as elements of landscape composition in their own right.⁵⁹⁸ In a further passage of his “Huayulu”, Huang’s comment on the use of color washes in landscape painting corroborates the understanding that the use of colors must always stand in appropriate relation to the use of ink:

Concerning the techniques of color washes, the Tang and Song painters, no matter whether using colors or ink, depicted the parts of mountains where clouds amassed by applying accumulated dots to perfection, this is why the Old Masters spoke of “dot washes” in painting.⁵⁹⁹

It therefore appears understandable why Huang Binhong would choose to circumvent any obvious confrontation, firstly, by choosing a softer tone of pale yellow color, rather than a bright and piercing green; and secondly, by choosing a rhetoric that *legitimizes* the use of deep and rich colors—at least in theory (the deep and rich colors are only referred to in the inscription, but not shown in the painting). Huang’s rhetoric resorts to the indigenous traditions of Chinese writing, wherein the ancient script types of clerical script and seal script (discussed above) present an ultimate embodiment of a “morally sound” aesthetic in art. In the inscription, Huang’s reference to clerical script is thus associated with moral uprightness and an aesthetic of the unadorned: those who “interlink both” (i.e. the arts of writing and painting) in a proper way, demonstrate “true integrity”. Further remembering that the stylistic term *hunhou* 渾厚, which is used to describe Huang’s painting style as “dense”, also carries the moral connotation of “simple and honest”, as was noted in the previous chapter, Huang’s argument of moral uprightness is emphasized through his use of this term in the inscription. Huang’s argument is quite simple: a humble and honest person of true integrity must not exclude the enjoyments that lie in the sensually pleasing aspects of human existence. The implication that Huang Binhong might have been concerned about expressing moral soundness in using colors is not at all surprising when we recall that in the Confucian tradition, colors—in their “pure” form, that is⁶⁰⁰—fulfilled a (solely)

⁵⁹⁸ This is also noted by Luo, who indicates that Huang generally used composition and color independently of one another (with exceptions, however, as the author then goes on to argue), *ibid.*

⁵⁹⁹ “就染法而言，唐宋人畫山石樹木之積陰處，不拘用色用墨，皆以積點而成，故古人作畫曰點染。” HBHWJ (6): 43.

⁶⁰⁰ Meaning the generic “five colors” (*wu se* 五色) as based on the *yin-yang* five-phases models that were codified around the fourth century BCE, see McNair 1997: 72. The “five colors” are: blue-green (*qing* 青),

symbolic, morally rectifying purpose, which was opposed to the Daoist tradition, where mineral color pigments were mixed together and utilized as alchemic substances. As noted by Amy McNair in her essay “On the Meaning of the ‘Blue-and-Green Manner’ in Chinese Landscape Painting”:

Alchemy was condemned by the Confucian scholars at court as early as the first century B.C.E. The Confucianists had no interest in the physical manipulation of pigments; their approach to color made symbolic and moralizing use of hue, that is, “the attribute of colors that permits them to be classed”. [...] In the Confucian view, [...] color as hue is charged with social and political significance. In contrast with Daoist notions of color as a controlling substance, the Confucian belief is that color requires control.⁶⁰¹

Although many aspects concerning the motivation and production of individual artworks cannot be entirely understood and must be left to speculation, I think it is reasonable to consider Huang Binhong’s *Discourse on Clerical-Script Painting* as a work that illustrates well in what way culturally charged themes, in particular themes that bear a special relation to the past—as here in the guise of ancient calligraphy—are used to (politically) legitimize a presently valid status quo, usually a status quo marked by some sort of significant transition or “innovation”.⁶⁰²

It is not at all arbitrary that the “guise” here chosen by Huang is clerical-script calligraphy, for it appears to be the specific traits of this writing form that perhaps proved especially well-suited to accommodate and assimilate a particular visual aesthetic as well as certain elements uncommon to this painting genre. While it is debatable to what extent Huang Binhong actually applied the brush methods specific to clerical script in this painting, it is anyhow obvious that his brushstrokes are inspired by an aesthetic of the robust and strong, and at the same time by an aesthetic of the luscious and vibrant—qualities that Huang Binhong associated with clerical script, as his *Free-hand Copy of the Li Xi Stele in Clerical Script* (*Lishu lin Li Xi bei* 隸書臨李翁碑) (fig. 5g) brilliantly conveys. Comparing this and further examples of Huang’s clerical script (e.g. figs. 42, 52, 95b) with his *Discourse on Clerical-Script Painting*, we see the transference of these aesthetic qualities in the way that

red (*chi* 赤), yellow (*huang* 黃), white (*bai* 白), and black (*hei* 黑), Du, ed., 2009: 16.

⁶⁰¹ McNair 1997: 72.

⁶⁰² This can be said to be especially true in Chinese culture and history. As we know, reverence to the past was established as a human and cultural ideal in textual sources as early as those of the *Analects*. As *Analects* 7:1 states: “The Master said, ‘A transmitter and not a maker, believing in and loving the ancients [...]’ (子曰, “述而不作, 信而好古 [...]”), Legge, transl., 1960 [1892]: 195. On traditions of referring to the past in the context of Chinese art and art history, see Mote 1976; Murck, ed., 1976.

many of the brushstrokes, both in the calligraphies and the painting, are executed with a strongly saturated brush, and with robust and thick, and yet elegantly curved brush lines. Moreover, the association of clerical-script with the, as I argue, “sculptural painterly” treatment of the mountain landscape seems plausible: incised into stone stroke for stroke, clerical script is historically connoted with the plastic format of stone slabs, monuments, natural boulders.

Since seal script—which would be the other possible script form Huang Binhong could have referred to in the context of this painting and its rhetoric of resorting to antique cultural forms—was already charged with the aesthetic of the plain, unadorned, and withered (as promulgated by Huang; discussed in chapter three), it appears plausible that Huang resorted to the notion of clerical script in arguing for his case: Huang’s association of the clerical script type with an aesthetic of the sensuous, luscious, deep, succulent, even extravagant (in the sense of the extravagance to be found in the splendors of nature) presented traits that were complementary to the ones which seal script and its “unrefined” and “dry” brush style were in turn associated with. Clerical script, which arose during the Qin-Han period, was “situated developmentally between large and small script (*zhouzhuan* [籀篆]), and standard and semi-cursive script (*kaixing* [開行]). It blended aspects of ancient and more recent styles and so was regarded as an art that was both ancient and elegant (*guya* [古雅]), and fresh and new.”⁶⁰³

While Luo Jianqun, as noted, dates *Discourse on Clerical-Script Painting* to sometime during the 1940s, Zaixin Hong further indicates that the above-mentioned seal bearing the style name “Yuxiang 予向” was used by Huang Binhong (apparently exclusively) in the year 1939,⁶⁰⁴ whereas the other seal to be seen in this work, inscribed “Binhong 寶虹”, is also used in works dating from other periods (such as his 1953 *Landscape in Minimalist Style* [*Jianbi shanshuihua* 簡筆山水畫], see fig. 63d). I would like to support a dating of this work around 1938/’39 in light of the circumstance that Huang Binhong had made personal acquaintance with the French foreign service officer and art collector Jean-Pierre Dubosc (1903–1988) in 1938. Dubosc, whose special expertise was in painting of the Ming and Qing dynasties, had helped to supply paintings of these periods to collections in

⁶⁰³ Yang, ed., 2010: 257.

⁶⁰⁴ Hong 2010: 241, n. 1.

Europe and the United States.⁶⁰⁵ Huang Binhong's encounter with this connoisseur of Chinese art may be considered at least as significant as his (much better documented) exchanges with Lucy Driscoll (1886–1964) that were to follow only one year later. A letter written by Huang Binhong to a friend tells us that in May 1938, Dubosc came to Beijing to buy new works of Chinese painting. During this time, Huang and Dubosc held a friendly relationship. In light of the political and social turmoil of the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937–1941), in the summer, Huang escaped to the South together with his “European friend” and stayed at a Buddhist temple named White Sand Temple (Baishasi 白沙寺) in the southern mountains of Jinhua 金華, Zhejiang. Huang states in the letter that he inscribed some of his old works with new inscriptions and gave them to Dubosc as presents.⁶⁰⁶ Information further given in several painting inscriptions supports the case that Huang had kept a secret deposit for valuable artworks in or somewhere in the vicinity of White Sand Temple. It is plausible that when Dubosc accompanied Huang Binhong from Beijing to Baishasi, the two either used this opportunity to view the works Huang Binhong had been keeping there, or to add new ones to the deposit, or both.⁶⁰⁷ In any case, Huang Binhong must have greatly trusted Dubosc as a person, inasmuch as the region around Jinhua had very special meaning for Huang: both his mother's ancestors and his father's first wife were buried near the temple, and his biography further suggests that this region fulfilled the function of providing solace and retreat for Huang Binhong in times of personal grief and political and social turmoil (as was the case in 1938).⁶⁰⁸ According to Luo Jianqun, this 1938 encounter, which both parties had used as an opportunity to learn more about the other's cultural history and history of art, had a considerable impact on the development of Huang's painting style. This, she says, manifests itself visibly in the changes to be seen in Huang Binhong's painting style in the years immediately to follow.⁶⁰⁹ Although there only exist few letters by Huang in which explicit reference is made to Dubosc, the fruits of their encounter can also be read in Huang's manuscript “European Painting” (“Ouhua 歐畫”) (fig. 84),⁶¹⁰ and, in turn, Dubosc's essay “A New Approach to

⁶⁰⁵ Cahill 1990: 3. On the relationship of Huang and Dubosc, see Wang Zhongxiu 2005 (a): 406–408.

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid.: 408.

⁶⁰⁷ As implied by the account given in Yang, ed., 2010: 250–252.

⁶⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁹ As stated in IV Luo 02/01/2014. A large number of hitherto unshown works stemming from precisely this period were shown in a large-scale exhibition in 2013, which is discussed in detail below.

⁶¹⁰ The original manuscript, which is now kept in the Zhejiang Provincial Museum, was written by Huang Binhong as a supplement to his essay “On the Study of Chinese Painting” (“Zhongguo huaxue tan 中國畫學談”) of 1924/1925, rpt. HBHWJ (5): 189–191. “Ouhua” is transcribed in HBHWJ (5): 192–193.

Chinese Painting”.⁶¹¹ While Huang’s essay was not published, Dubosc’s article appeared in a 1950 issue of *Oriental Art*, one year after he organized the exhibition *Great Chinese Painters of the Ming and Ch’ing Dynasties* at the Wildenstein Gallery in New York together with Laurence Sickman,⁶¹² former Director of the Kansas City Nelson Gallery of Art. With regard to this article, James Cahill states that Dubosc had “worked to dispel the old, uninformed attitudes” which at the time had been “all too prevalent” in the West towards paintings of the Ming and Qing dynasties.⁶¹³ Though their personal exchanges had taken place around ten years prior to Dubosc’s exhibition and publication, we can assume that Huang Binhong had functioned as one among a network of mediators who had informed Dubosc’s knowledge of—and “new approach” to—Chinese art, notably painting and calligraphy of the Ming and Qing.

As will be elaborated on the following pages, we know through various sources that Huang Binhong had developed an increasing interest in the art history and painting methods of western art throughout his life, and had pursued, to some extent, forms of cross-cultural communication on art. However, or perhaps precisely due to the fact that Huang’s utterances in this matter are sporadic, the aspect of cross-cultural exchange presents an under-investigated one in Huang Binhong research, which appears to operate largely within the common traditionalist and nationalist argumentative frameworks of Chinese literati art. This is especially true with regard to the growing corpus of Chinese-language publications, which was introduced in this study through literature on Huang Binhong’s calligraphy as one aspect of his work production. The circumstance is perhaps understandable, since this kind of rhetorical framework is the very one that Huang Binhong himself had chosen to be embedded in, not least reflected in his deliberate use of an antiquarian language that reiterated the vocabulary, narrative, and logic of traditional literati thinking. True enough, the *Fine Arts Series (Meishu congshu 美術叢書)*, the

⁶¹¹ Dubosc 1950. See also Dubosc’s later publication on Chinese painters of the sixteenth century, Dubosc 1961.

⁶¹² For the exhibition catalogue, see Dubosc/Sickman 1949.

⁶¹³ Cahill 1990: 2ff. Cahill here especially criticizes the biased position of Alan Priest, who as Curator of Far Eastern Art at the Metropolitan Museum had vehemently promoted “Song-style paintings, even those of clouded authenticity”, which according to Priest “were still more beautiful than genuine works of later periods.” Ibid.: 3. Cahill further states that Jean Pierre Dubosc was “[o]ne of the articulate opponents of Priest’s position at this time”, and writes: “Dubosc’s article ‘A New Approach to Chinese Painting’ [...] was an open attack on Priest, whom he quotes as describing his gallery of Song-style paintings at the Met as ‘One of the most beautiful rooms in the world’, and as raging against ‘the stormy virtuositities or suave insipidities of the Ming and Ch’ing landscapes.’” Ibid. Wang Zhongxiu in turn corroborates Cahill’s appraisal of Dubosc and Sickman with regard to their contribution to the understanding of Chinese painting in the West, see Wang Zhongxiu 2005 (a): 407f.

monumental book series on Chinese art that was chiefly edited by Deng Shi 鄧實 (1877–1951) and Huang Binhong between 1911 and 1947,⁶¹⁴ is described critically in Yu-jen Liu’s thesis *Publishing Chinese Art: Issues of Cultural Reproduction in China, 1905–1918*, as a project

[...] which gathered together from various sources existent treatises on art, and proposed a general scheme for the selection and categorisation of these texts. As it was the first text collection that had been compiled under the rubric of ‘art’ as, the principles by which these texts were categorised became all the more important for gauging the horizon of ‘art’ as a discursive field [...].⁶¹⁵

Yu-jen Liu significantly stated that “[...] the notion of Chinese art manifested and represented in this book series [...] was a result of the accommodation of the literati’s leisure pursuits and of their cultural practices around antiquarianism to the new semantic field of ‘art’.”⁶¹⁶ Similarly enlightening is Hiromitsu Ogawa’s article “Regarding the Publication of the Meishu Congshu [Fine Arts Series]: The Introduction of the European Concept ‘Fine Arts’ and the Japanese Translated Term ‘Bijutsu’” of 2003,⁶¹⁷ in which Ogawa critically discusses the historical, cultural, and social contexts surrounding the undertaking of this publication:

Unlike Europe, Asia did not have a concept of fine arts that encompassed painting, sculpture, architecture, and craft until the modern era. [...] While there was no specific term that combined these artistic endeavors, we know for a fact that an inclusive framework corresponding to “fine arts” had been fully established by that time. Conversely, in the East Asian world centered on China, calligraphy and painting formed the framework of formative arts. [...] Opposite to a Europe of beaux-arts or fine arts stood an Asia of calligraphy and painting [...] The transformation from East Asia’s traditional calligraphy and painting paradigm to a modern European-style fine arts paradigm evoked various forms of discord and friction in cultural worlds of each of the East Asian nations of China, Japan and Korea. Indeed, even today these conundrums and contradictions are by no means

⁶¹⁴ The *Meishu congshu* at first comprised three series that were edited by Deng Shi and published successively by Shenzhou guoguang she 神州國光社 in Shanghai between 1911 and 1918. A second edition was published in 1928 together with Huang Binhong as editor. In 1936, a third addition comprising four series was published, and in 1947, an expanded and revised fourth edition of these four series was produced, with both Deng and Huang’s names on the editorial masthead, see Deng/Huang, eds., 1998 [1947] (20 vols.); see also Ogawa 2003: 1. The 1947 version was followed by further editions and additional series in subsequent decades, cf. for example the forty-volume edition published by Guangwen shuju 廣文書局 in 1963, Huang et al., eds., 1963.

⁶¹⁵ Yu-jen Liu 2010: iv.

⁶¹⁶ Ibid.: ivf.

⁶¹⁷ Ogawa 2003.

fully resolved in each country. It would not be an exaggeration to say that these ongoing cultural struggles continue to expand throughout the Asian region.⁶¹⁸

Considering these arguments, it perhaps comes as no surprise to find that certain subjects are left unarticulated among Huang's corpus of writings. The fact should be emphasized again that Huang Binhong was an exceptional example in terms of his extensive writing activities in his roles as creative artist, art historian, art collector and critic, designated museum consultant, and university professor. While his poetic inscriptions, letter correspondences, theoretical essays, university lectures, and journal articles show the continuous concern with traditional techniques and aesthetics of Chinese brush-and-ink arts, and especially their art historical and cultural historical importance as constitutive elements of "national essence", it is somewhat symptomatic that there exist near-to no writings by Huang that reveal any in-depth dealing with western art styles and methods, or even, on a more general level, the elementary topic of color, for instance as a structural means through which to define and organize the pictorial space of the landscape. It is hard to imagine that this latter aspect did *not* present a topic of great interest for Huang, and it even seems as if the very dichotomies within certain debates ("traditionalism versus modernism", "nationalism versus internationalism") simply did not allow for any truly differentiated discussions or slightly ambivalent, in-between positions. Further, considering the special format of traditional paintings including their textual inscriptions, although these inscriptions have served throughout the centuries, and not least in Huang Binhong's particular case, as an elaborate medium to express art criticism, beyond their "functional purpose" as important art theoretical and art historiographical sources, a certain aesthetic also adheres to the written format of colophons in paintings. In a certain sense, it probably would not only have been deemed inappropriate, or stylistically "out of place" to incorporate technical and conceptual terminologies of western art history, or even simply the names of foreign artists; it was, moreover, practically unthinkable, since the antiquated language of traditional connoisseurship would have had to be altered in a fundamental structural way—less in terms of style, but rather in terms of its vocabulary given the present influx of new ideas and words which did not possess any proper Chinese-language equivalents and necessitated a translation or (even less appealing) a transliteration. In any case, Huang's explicit references to European painters, painting styles, or schools are scant in his writings, and there seems to be no visible attempt to systematically integrate these

⁶¹⁸ Ibid: 17f.

subjects into his theory of painting. One exception may be seen in his above-mentioned manuscript “Ouhua”, which was written as a supplement to his essay “On the Study of Chinese Painting” (“Zhongguo huaxue tan 中國畫學談”) of 1924/1925. In this manuscript, Huang Binhong aims to provide a condensed historical overview of European painting from antiquity through to the twentieth century, referring to technical terms such as “fresco”, “tempera”, and “sepia”, as well as painters ranging from Jan van Eyck, Leonardo da Vinci, Albrecht Dürer, and Tintoretto, to Ingres, William Turner, Claude Monet, and Henri Matisse.

It was just noted that based upon various sources, foremost private conversations and letter correspondences with other scholars, artist friends, and students, though few in number, we can assume Huang Binhong was quite familiar with the history and traditions of European art, both past and contemporary.⁶¹⁹ However, it is difficult to assess the exact amount and type of information he had gained in this respect throughout his life;⁶²⁰ our knowledge on Huang Binhong’s specific activities of cross-cultural exchange is sparse and fragmentary. Next to the French collector Jean-Pierre Dubosc, among Huang Binhong’s notable contacts in this context were German art historian Victoria Contag (1906–1973), North American scholar Lucy Driscoll, and English art historian Michael Sullivan (1916–2013),⁶²¹ all of whom can be considered as promoters of knowledge on Chinese art and art history in the west. Also to mention are Chinese scholars with whom Huang had had exchange and who had been trained in western-style realism in Europe and/or Japan, such as the Gao brothers Gao Jianfu 高劍父 (1879–1951) and Gao Qifeng 高奇峰 (1889–1933) (figs. 85a–b).⁶²²

⁶¹⁹ On the views that Huang Binhong put forward with regard to western art, see Kuo 2004: 55f. Claire Roberts further points out and elaborates on Huang Binhong’s engagement in various Shanghai-based art associations and newspapers explicitly interested in western contemporary art, Roberts 2005: 107ff. Huang’s ongoing dealing with certain subjects of European art is evident from his various references to specific European artists and schools of art, see Kuo 2004: 55. For example, in his “Lessons on New Painting” (“Xin shu xun 新畫訓”) published in 1918 successively in ten parts in the journal *Fine Arts Weekly* (*Meishu zhouban* 美術周刊), Huang Binhong refers to the nineteenth-century French Romantic school, specifically the painter Eugène Delacroix (1798–1863), whom Huang appears to have appreciated, see “Lessons on New Painting, Part Four: Changes in Painting” (“Xin hua xun, di si zhang: huihua bianyi 新画第四章绘画报编译”), HBHWJ (2): 12–17, 13. In a letter written to his student Zhu Yanying 朱砚英 in 1955, the last year of his life, Huang again refers to the Romantic painting school, which shows his ongoing interest in the subject over the course of near-to forty years, HBHWJ (1): 32–33, 32.

⁶²⁰ As also remarked by Kuo, Kuo 2004: 55f.

⁶²¹ See Huang Binhong’s letters to Fu Lei in 1943, and to his pupil Bao Junbai 鮑君白 in 1948, HBHWJ (1): 203, 368, respectively; see also Kuo 2004: 55.

⁶²² In the early 1910s, Huang Binhong was active as a staff member and a contributing writer of *Zhenxiang huabao* 真相畫報 (*The True Record*), an art journal which was edited by Gao Jianfu and Gao Qifeng and published in Shanghai between June 1912 and March 1913, and which was aimed at bringing together different aspects of eastern and western art approaches, see Roberts 2005: 109f.

Through the research of scholars Zaixin Hong and Zha Yongling, we know that Huang's 1939 letter correspondences with Lucy Driscoll had a lasting impact on the artist.⁶²³ Driscoll, the co-author of *Chinese Calligraphy*,⁶²⁴ at the time was appointed Professor for Western Aesthetics and Chinese Painting at the University of Chicago. The letter exchanges (see fig. 86), which were focused on an introduction and explanation of Chinese painting history, will have significantly shaped Huang Binhong's consciousness of Chinese art as a Chinese phenomenon, especially with regard to its increasingly important role on the international stage of art, art exhibitions, and the art market. The task of bringing the matter of Chinese art closer to a western-speaking audience will have made it necessary for Huang Binhong's to take on an outsider's perspective on the own, indigenous tradition—an endeavor and a responsibility that may have been catalyzed by his previous encounter with Jean-Pierre Dubosc only one year before. Without a doubt, it will have been these exchanges, taking place comparatively late in his life, that influenced Huang's gradual revision of his early-age stance purporting that Chinese and western art should be treated separately, later however coming to the conclusion that both in fact were concerned with the essentially same questions.⁶²⁵ Unlike the “artist-educator-curators”⁶²⁶ Xu Beihong 徐悲鴻 (1895–1953) and Lin Fengmian 林風眠 (1900–1991), who, having had studied in France, made use of both ink and oil color and watercolor in their works (see figs. 18 and 19), and upon their return to China strongly promoted the notion that Chinese painting could profit from studying aspects of western naturalism and anatomical accuracy,⁶²⁷ there appear to exist no documents in which Huang explicitly promotes views on the positive effects that western art might have on the reinvigoration of Chinese art traditions.⁶²⁸

⁶²³ See Hong 1990, and Zha 1990. For a transcription of the letters, see Zha 1990: 20; an image of Driscoll's third letter to Huang Binhong is reproduced in fig. 86. I also refer to Zaixin Hong's unpublished paper “The Chicago Connection: Lucy Driscoll's Creative Approach to Chinese Art and Her Chinese Contacts from the 1910s to 50s”, presented at the Association for Asian Studies 2015 Annual Conference as part of session 93: “China through Its Art: Collecting and Scholarship in Early-Twentieth-Century United States and Britain”, in Chicago, March 31, 2005. In Huang Binhong's 1955 letter to his student Zhu Yanying 朱硯英, written in the last year of his life and over fifteen years after his correspondences with Driscoll, Huang emphasizes the importance of this exchange, HBHWJ (1): 32–33, 32. This has also been noted by Zaixin Hong, Hong 2010: 241, n. 25.

⁶²⁴ Driscoll/Toda 1935.

⁶²⁵ Cf. Kuo 2004: 55f.

⁶²⁶ As termed by Jo-Anne Birnie Danzker, Danzker 2004: 26.

⁶²⁷ Yang, ed., 2010: 26; cf. Danzker 2004: 23–27. For recent in-depth studies on Xu Beihong and Lin Fengmian, see Otsuka/Xu, eds., 2012, and He 2007, respectively.

⁶²⁸ In his “Huatan”, by contrast, Huang comments on the (positive) effect of East Asian art traditions on European artists, which he believed to observe during his time; the concluding words of his essay are: “方今歐美文化，傾向東方，闡揚幽隱，餘願有心世教者，三致意焉。”，HBHWJ (6): 167. Kuo similarly notes that

However, this is not to suggest that such views were not present; to the contrary, I think that these indeed found articulation in Huang Binhong's oeuvre, yet in an oblique manner, and using, in first instance, the discursive framework within which Huang Binhong was already established, namely, the theoretical, conceptual and technical frameworks of what Ogawa denotes as "an Asia of calligraphy and painting", entailing an entire system of perception, description, and evaluation. It appears only logical if Huang Binhong resorted to the means that were most available to him—be it in terms of language and vocabulary, or in terms of technique and material. For that matter, the aspect of color type is a good example: here, too, Huang made use of the readily available—that is, the mineral and plant pigment colors traditionally used in Chinese painting—and yet, his methods of application are so unconventional that it seems unjust to simply "check" these "off" as a combination of red-green painting and ink painting.⁶²⁹

With regard to Huang Binhong's case, it was suggested that the overall lack of an in-depth discursive engagement—on a verbal-textual level—indicates a striking discrepancy when reading the visual evidence actually provided by Huang Binhong's paintings and the observable use of brush, ink, and color. When studying and comparing individual examples of as early as the 1890s through to 1955, we discover that Huang's above-noted purpose to "hide the colors in ink" (*danqing yin mo* 丹青隱墨) does not appear to be true to the word in many cases. To the contrary, it nearly appears as if "ink" was taken as a pretext, or even disguise, so as to legitimize the use of an—indeed, exhilaratingly rich and expressive palette—of colors. Huang's claim of "hiding the colors in ink" complies fully with the Daoist ideals of concealment (as was discussed for example with regard to notions of a concealed brush tip) and of subduing the "outer", sensory perceptions. In other words, it complies with Huang Binhong's aesthetic asceticism of *neimei*, "interior beauty", which implies that truly beautiful things have an unassuming outward appearance, yet that they contain an inner substance of endless flavor and depth. Since I think that the color issue in Huang Binhong's works reflects a much more intricate conflict in the context of Republican-period literati art than seems to be acknowledged so far in art history, I am including, in the following, a preliminary attempt to outline Huang Binhong's use of colors

Huang Binhong "[...] pointed out that while the Chinese were unaware of the aesthetic value of their own brushwork and ink, many Europeans took a great interest in it." Kuo 2004: 55.

⁶²⁹ Luo Jianqun's catalogue entry on Huang Binhong's painting *Blue-Green Summer Mountains* (*Xiashan cangcui tu* 夏山蒼翠圖) (fig. 89b) corroborates this conclusion, cf. Yang, ed., 2010: 288.

in landscape painting throughout the successive periods of his life. To be sure, this is not to imply that Huang Binhong's use of colors has not drawn any scholarly attention at all. To the contrary, it has indeed been subject of inquiry and has found praise in discussions of his landscape paintings every now and then. What seems to be the case, moreover, is that the issue of color has so far remained on the margins and has not been studied systematically, i.e. comprehensively, in the context of Huang's landscape works. With regard, for example, to Huang's work *Shangyang Village, Mt. Yandang* (*Yandang Shangyang cun tu* 雁宕上垟村圖) (fig. 83e), which is described by Claire Roberts as "a small, impressionistic painting", Roberts notes that "Huang's great sensitivity to colour and his ability to mix subtle warm and cool hues, despite his failing eyesight, is apparent [...]." ⁶³⁰ Credit is also due to Juliane Noth's highly illuminating study "Eine Kiefer auf dem Huangshan" which discusses Huang Binhong's use of colors as seen in a small hanging scroll titled *Soughing Pines of Huangshan* (*Huanghai song tao* 黃海松濤), and convincingly argues for the western influence in Huang's painting. ⁶³¹ While this study points up the phenomenon of cross-cultural influences in Huang Binhong's work, which in itself is valuable as a finding, it remains a singular case study, and it does not delve further into specific references to western artists or written sources.

The following attempt at a typology of color, as I would then name it, albeit preliminary, schematic, and far from comprehensive, can serve to substantiate the overall argumentation of the present study, that the established conceptions of *neimei* as associated with Huang Binhong and his image in art history are based on the misleading assumption that "interior beauty" indicates a quality of immaterial, spiritual significance, (only) to be found beyond the physical sensory realm of "colorful pleasures"; an assumption which has thus distorted our perception of Huang Binhong as an artist. The term "typology of color" is chosen here to point up that the attempt at approaching Huang Binhong's use of colors in a systematic way is not only necessary, but at all *feasible*, ⁶³² precisely due to the fact that Huang's

⁶³⁰ Roberts 2005: 278.

⁶³¹ Noth 2010. For an image of the discussed *Soughing Pines of Huangshan*, see *ibid.*: 9, or HBHQJ (4): 308.

⁶³² Here, I would like to make a remark about the most recent large-scale exhibition of Huang Binhong's works. The exhibition was held at the Zhejiang Provincial Museum from March 25 to May 18, 2015, on the occasion of the artist's 150th birthday anniversary. The selection of works on display corroborated the necessity to study the topic of colors in Huang Binhong's landscape painting. The special exhibition showing around 220 pieces was divided into four sub-exhibitions themed on Huang Binhong's landscape painting, his bird-and-flower painting, his calligraphy, and his biography, respectively. It is more than gratifying that this is the first exhibition to date that explicitly thematized the aspect of color in Huang Binhong's landscape painting, which is reflected in the respective title of this exhibition section: *Shanshui hun rong: Huang*

application of colors is astoundingly diverse and methodical—that is, given its embedment within the formal framework of monochrome landscape painting and its allegedly invisible presence, enshrouded by ink.

4.4. A Preliminary Typology of Color in Huang Binhong's Landscape Paintings

In the aforementioned recent large-scale exhibition of Huang Binhong's works titled *Tranquil and Distant: Welcoming the "Tenth Arts Festival" Traveling Exhibition of Huang Binhong's Works* (*Jingmi youyuan: xiying "Shiyi jie" Huang Binhong zuopin xuzhan*) that was held at the Shandong Museum in Jinan from September 15 to October 31, 2013, of the circa 200 exhibits, more than 70 percent were on public display for the very first time.⁶³³ Including formats of hanging scrolls, album leaves, sketches, and carved seals, the chronologically presented works invited the visitor to retrace different stages of Huang Binhong's technical and stylistic developments in landscape painting, bird-and-flower painting, and calligraphy. Moreover, though not explicitly treated as a subject of discussion in the exhibition, the selection of works distinctly conveyed to the viewer scale and spectrum of Huang Binhong's elaborate use of colors omnipresent in his landscape painting. Counting a total of 78 hanging scrolls that showed natural landscapes, while 18 of the depicted mountain-water scenes had been executed in ink only, the other 60 relied on a combination of ink and colors. The selection of exhibits, most of which were on loan from the Zhejiang Provincial Museum, obviously constitutes only a small fraction of the

Binhong shese shanshui zhan 山水渾融: 黃賓虹設色山水展 (Densely Blended Landscapes: Exhibition of Huang Binhong's Colored Landscape Paintings). Incidentally, in the interview conducted with Luo Jianqun (IV Luo 02/01/2014), the curator of this exhibition, I had the opportunity to speak about issues of color in Huang Binhong's landscape works as I was preparing research on this topic to be presented at a workshop at the School of Arts, Peking University (January 5–10, 2014). In the interview, Luo confirmed my assumption that this topic is an under-researched one in Huang Binhong scholarship, and she told me about her plans to devote a special exhibition to the theme of colors in Huang's landscape paintings. Even more telling, however, was the fact that Luo conceded this was an idea that she had in fact been meaning to realize for many years, but that she felt it had always been "too early" and not yet the "right time", meaning that the topic was too precarious to be addressed given the established image of the artist as a high representative of the ink landscape idiom. Luo was thus implying that there were reasons for the understudied nature of this topic. The research I presented at the Peking University workshop provides the basis for my argumentation in the following sub-chapter.

⁶³³ This exhibition of 2013 can be considered as forming the basis, or forerunner, of the exhibition held at the Zhejiang Provincial Museum mentioned in the preceding footnote, which took place around one-and-a-half years later. Though the Shandong Museum exhibition largely showed the exact same selection of works as those presented at the Zhejiang Museum exhibition in 2015, the two exhibitions differed conceptually: while the former had the same division of the exhibition into four parts, the part devoted to Hang Binhong's landscape paintings did not explicitly thematize the aspect of color. Incidentally, it was this very circumstance that drew my attention to the issue in the first place and made me come to realize the scholarly desideratum it presents. The exhibition catalogue was co-published by both museums, see Xie, main ed., 2013.

thousands of works extant in the museum's collection today; and although the ratio of circa 1:4 (of the exhibited monochrome and polychrome works respectively) may not be considered entirely representative for Huang Binhong's total corpus of landscape paintings, nevertheless, the exhibition curator Luo Jianqun still estimates that about one third of Huang Binhong's landscape paintings contain colors; the overall ratio thus being more like 3:1.⁶³⁴ Picking up again on the wide-spread, dichotomous designation of "Bai [White] Binhong" and "Hei [Black] Binhong" which refers to the common distinction that is made between Huang's earlier "light" and later "dark" style respectively, I suggest a reframing of the artist's image, rather as a "Multi-Color Binhong". To this end, I draw from the Shandong Museum exhibits as examples, which serves to formulate a typological outline of the various uses and functions of color in Huang's landscape depictions. It was already indicated above that these uses and functions are, to a certain degree, enmeshed with ideologically charged debates and viewpoints on the "right" compositional techniques, aesthetical concepts, and stylistic lineages to be pursued according to traditional literati discourse in China. Before this backdrop, the term "typology" is definable not only as "the study or systematic classification of types that have characteristics or traits in common",⁶³⁵ but moreover as "the study of types or of the correspondence between them and the realities which they typify".⁶³⁶ I wish to cement my argument that works like the above-discussed *Discourse on Clerical-Script Painting* present a form of negotiating culture-specific ideas and practices of art. The discursive mismatch that seems to reveal itself when comparing Huang Binhong's textual and visual sources shall hopefully become all the more evident. Ultimately, this discrepancy can be seen as a reflection of the one that I aim to point out through this study: a discrepant opposition between the misleading conceptions of "inner" and "outer" beauty as expressions of an alleged "spiritual essence", on the one hand, and a "sensual corporeality", on the other hand.

Regarding the 60 of the 78 colored-landscape hanging scrolls exhibited at the Shandong Museum in 2013, I propose a categorization into the following four general types of "ink-and-color schemes" and their functions: 1) "Atmospheric Accentuation: Ink with Traces of Light Color"; 2) "Sculpting Visual Depth: Color Washes"; 3) "Revealing, Not Hiding the

⁶³⁴ As stated in IV Luo 02/01/2014.

⁶³⁵ Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, ed., 2011 (n.p.).

⁶³⁶ HarperCollins, ed., 2014 (n.p.).

Colors in Ink: Colors in ‘Thick-Ink’ (*nongmo*) Method”; 4) “Creating a Total Landscape: The All-Color Scheme”.

1) Atmospheric Accentuation: Ink with Traces of Light Color

The first of these four categories bears the largest number of work examples. It can be further divided into two sub-schemes: a) ink with few traces of one light color, and b) ink with few traces of two light colors. Concerning 1a): this is the ink-and-color scheme that occurs most frequently in the exhibited works dating to the early period of 1908–1922, where use is made of one color only. The color is strongly watered down and near-to-transparent; it is applied sparsely, and its overall visual presence is only just conceivable. Here, the use of color serves to subtly accentuate certain areas, such as the mossy green and amber autumn leaves of the mountainous scenery in a work titled in the exhibition as *Early-Age Landscape* (*Zaosui shanshui tu* 早歲山水圖) (fig. 87a), which evokes Dong Qichang’s style of emulating old masters (cf. fig. 27c); or the cool shadowy hues of twilight on a luscious summery day, as to be seen in the hanging scroll *Summer Water Double Spring* (*Xiashui chongquan tu* 夏水重泉圖) (fig. 87b) showing mountains and trees, which, as noted above, is reminiscent of the early landscape painting styles of Five-Dynasties painters like Jing Hao 荆浩 (ca. 880–940) (as seen in fig. 75a), or the abovementioned Dong Yuan and Ju Ran, the reputed founders of the so-called Southern School (*nanpai* 南派) of painting. The tender rose color in Huang’s early work *Landscape in the Style of the Northern Song* (*Fang Beisong shanshui tu* 仿北宋山水圖) (fig. 87c) of 1894 reflects the glistening snow which is mentioned in the first verse of the poetic inscription,⁶³⁷ and further complements the lyrical theme of the depicted cranes, whose elegant appearance is visually enhanced by the similarly fine and slender standard script to be seen in the upper left part of the painting (fig. 87d). In this early phase of Huang Binhong’s landscape depictions, which has been denoted as the artist’s stage up to the age of fifty “as imitating ancient masters”,⁶³⁸ the application of color appears to be a means to achieve the quality of “spirit resonance and life vitality” (*qiyun shengdong* 氣韻生動), the most important of aspects which a landscape painting should fulfill, as put forward in early

⁶³⁷ The first verse reads: “西風淡淡水悠悠，雪照絲飄帶雨愁。”

⁶³⁸ Kuo 2004: 14.

Chinese landscape painting theory.⁶³⁹ This use of color as an accentuation of the atmospheric quality within a landscape continues to be present through to Huang Binhong's late painting stage, as for example to be seen in an exhibit generically titled *Colored Landscape* (*Shese shanshui tu* 設色山水圖) (figs. 87e), where the pale pastel color of pink bathes the depicted scene in a sweet hue of nightfall.

The same is true for *Ochre-and-Ink Landscape* (*Zhemo shanshui tu* 赭墨山水圖) (fig. 87f), and another work generically titled *Colored Landscape* (*Shese shanshui tu* 設色山水圖) (fig. 87g), which belong, then, to the second sub-scheme, 1b), denoted as “ink with few traces of two light colors”. In the former example, the scenery of scattered patches of rusty brown add an aspect of earthy robustness to the otherwise misty mountainscape of ink- and green-colored rock. In the latter example, the crystalline light blue reflections afford a softer, more tranquil visual transition away from the massive rock formations and up into the entirely empty space of a large white sky. During Huang Binhong's later stages of painting, i.e. from around the 1910s onwards,⁶⁴⁰ the scheme of “ink with few traces of light color” occurs more often in this combination of two light colors. Notably, the color pairing of green and red is prominent, as to be seen in another work titled *Colored Landscape* (*Shese shanshui tu* 設色山水圖) (fig. 87h) as well as the work *Nighttime Conversation* (*Ye tan tu* 夜談圖) (fig. 62c), an example belonging to Huang Binhong's series of paintings that took mountain landscapes at night as their subject; a series that began in the 1940s and lasted through to the mid-1950s and indicated that what is considered as Huang's transition from “White Binhong” to “Black Binhong” throughout the 1940s.⁶⁴¹ In these works, Huang now turned special attention to the systematic layering of ink washes and blots, so as to recreate the ever-changing, brilliant nocturnal effects of naturalistic light and shadow on the moonlit surfaces of the mountains. Next to *Nighttime Conversation*, works like *Ancient Temple in Deep Mountains* (*Shen shan gu si tu* 深山古寺圖) (fig. 61a), *Midsummer-Night Mountains* (*Zhongxia yeshan tu* 仲夏夜山圖) (fig. 61b), and *Night*

⁶³⁹ Notably in the afore-referenced foundational “Six Principles of Painting” (“Huihua liu fa 繪畫六法”) by sixth-century Xie He 謝赫.

⁶⁴⁰ Following the periodization given in Wang Zhongxiu 2005 (b), see n. 456.

⁶⁴¹ As defined by Wang Zhongxiu, who, as elucidated earlier on, states that Huang Binhong's painting styles cannot simply be divided into two successive stages of “white” and “black”, but must rather be differentiated more precisely, as a chronological development of “white—black—white—black—white”; the second phase of “black” occurring between 1945 and 1949, see Wang Zhongxiu 2005 (b): 86. For discussions of Huang Binhong's nighttime landscapes, which are associated with this stage of his “dark” paintings, see Kuo 2004: 132f.; Roberts 2005: 215ff., 287.

Mountains (*Yeshan tu* 夜山圖) (fig. 62d) can serve as illustrations of Huang's nighttime paintings.⁶⁴² Further comparing with works such as *Talking to a Friend among Streams and Mountains* (*Xi shan hua you tu* 溪山話友圖) (fig. 87i), *Returning Oars after Spring Outing* (*Chun you gui zhao tu* 春遊歸棹圖) (fig. 87j), *Bridge by Stream in Misty Clouds* (*Xiqiao yan'ai tu* 溪橋煙靄圖) (fig. 87k), or *Bridge by Stream in Misty Rain* (*Xiqiao yan yu* 溪橋煙雨) (fig. 87o), even though these latter examples are not to be considered as belonging to the category of nighttime paintings, we can see obvious stylistic and technical similarities with and influences of those works that are clearly denoted as nocturnal landscape scenes, inasmuch as they have the same the blurry, aquarelle-like, and shadowy matte-ink appearance characteristic of *Nighttime Conversation* and *Talking to a Friend among Streams and Mountains*. Among this scheme of “ink with few traces of two light colors” are also Huang Binhong's landscape paintings styled on masters of the Yuan period, in which the landscapes are rendered in a sketched (*xieyi* 寫意), or reduced-brush (*jianbi*) manner, therein representing yet another sub-genre⁶⁴³ among Huang's landscape

⁶⁴² Jason Kuo describes Huang Binhong's nighttime painting *Midsummer-Night Mountains* with the words: “The bright white spaces in the dark black, however, ingeniously highlight the mountain body so that it looks like an ink rubbing of ancient calligraphy engraved on stones or mountain cliffs.” Kuo 2004: 132. I assume that Kuo's words refer to what I denote as the “blurry”, “matte-ink” appearance of the above-raised examples. Though Kuo's vivid comparison with calligraphy rubbings seems plausible, I would nevertheless like to point out that this comparison might be a bit too convenient and limited, inasmuch as the techniques used by Huang Binhong are not related to traditional calligraphy rubbing techniques, but are grounded in a varied painterly use of brush, ink, water, and color unconventional in traditional Chinese landscape painting and—relatively—new to the twentieth-century innovation within this field. Initially beginning in the 1940s, Huang continued to pursue the practice of painting nighttime scenes into the final stage of his life. *Midsummer-Night Mountains* is one example. Another example is the early 1950s hanging scroll *Ancient Temple in Deep Mountains* (fig. 61a), which is described by Luo Jianqun as reflective of Huang's energized high spirit of that time (the first three of his final Hangzhou years, i.e. 1948–1951), stating that “His brushstrokes in this painting are dense, thick, and splendidly luxuriant [*hunhou huazi*]—a continuation of his earlier manner of painting nocturnal or shaded mountain scenes, yet more assured and proficient.”, Yang, ed., 2010: 266. In this sense, Huang's late-style tag as *hunhou huazi* can be considered to be closely linked to his approaches as a painter inspired by depictions of nature during the nighttime.

⁶⁴³ While the function of Huang Binhong's nighttime paintings as a quasi sub-genre within Huang's oeuvre could be defined as the depiction of real-space and real-time landscapes exposed to natural conditions of light and shadow, Huang's reduced-brush (*jianbi*) landscape paintings could be defined as a sub-genre whose function is aimed towards a strongly abstracted and to some extent idealized depiction, or contemplation, of nature. Both of these types—nighttime landscapes and reduced-brush landscapes—address respectively different traditions of seeing and visually representing the world. In this sense, James Cahill's coining of Chinese landscape painting in terms of “genre clusters” is useful. While the term “sub-genre” generally denotes an under-category of an overall genre, the term “genre cluster”, following Cahill's understanding, moreover indicates the *functionality* of the given under-category. Chinese landscape painting as such does not possess a single meaning or function, but accommodates a broad spectrum of different motivations, subject categories, themes, functions, and meanings, and can thus be more usefully considered as a cluster of genres, cf. the chapter “Meanings and Functions in Chinese Landscape Painting” in Cahill 1998: 37–63, esp. 38.

painting oeuvre.⁶⁴⁴ Here, the overall effect of the applied color has a more visible impact. This is due to the proportionately reduced application of ink, and thus, the outweighing of white (empty) space over black (ink-filled) space, as seen for example in *Drawing from Nature in Huilin* (*Huilin xiesheng tu* 惠臨寫生圖) (fig. 87l), which shows a panoramic view upon Huilin, Guangdong;⁶⁴⁵ as well as *Gazing towards the Zhi River at Daybreak* (*Zhijiang xiao wang tu* 之江曉望圖) (fig. 87m) dated 1952; and also a further *Colored Landscape* (*Shese shanshui tu* 設色山水圖) (fig. 87n). Belonging to the same sub-genre of reduced-brush landscapes, these three examples are probably all datable to the same period on grounds of stylistic comparison, that is, to Huang's late stage of painting, denoted by Wang Zhongxiu as his final "white" phase, and which I would categorize as post-1948.⁶⁴⁶ A characteristic feature is the color combination of again red and green, here however in rather subdued tones, so that the overall effects of transparency and reduction are not undermined. This red-green color pairing, prominent also in Huang Binhong's bird-and-flower painting (*huaniaohua*) (as in fig. 65a),⁶⁴⁷ can be read as a reference to the tradition of colored landscape painting associated with the above-discussed red-green or blue-green styles of the Tang dynasty. Though perhaps self-explanatory, to be sure, it should be clarified that in discussing Huang Binhong's extraordinary use of colors, which is the subject of the present section, this phenomenon refers to Huang's *landscape* paintings—as opposed, for instance, to his bird-and-flower paintings, which obviously are grounded in a polychrome painting tradition as it were (unlike the monochrome landscape painting tradition). While the assessment of both genres should therefore be undertaken under different premises, a color relation between the two does exist, inasmuch as Huang Binhong was greatly skilled in the tradition of bird-and-flower painting (and in connection with this, also the younger tradition of epigraphical painting), which will have greatly

⁶⁴⁴ Huang's landscapes in reduced-brush method represent what according to Wang Zhongxiu's model is the third and final stage of "white" in the development of Huang Binhong's painting styles post-1948, as previously elucidated. On the significance and influence of Yuan-dynasty literati brush art with regard to Huang Binhong and his *jianbi* style, see Xu 2009: 122–124; and Yang, ed., 2010: 268f., 329. For examples of Huang Binhong's works in this style, see figs. 63b–e, and 83f; and further HBHQJ (4): 174–179, 185; Xu 2009: 157–159.

⁶⁴⁵ In spite of the title of the work that refers to the *xiesheng* 寫生 painting tradition of "drawing from nature" or "drawing from life", its style is decidedly in the manner of "sketching the idea", *xieyi* 寫意, and it can thus be counted to what I here denote as the Yuan-styled reduced-brush sub-genre.

⁶⁴⁶ See ns. 456, 582.

⁶⁴⁷ For reproductions and discussions of Huang Binhong's bird-and-flower painting, further see HBHQJ (7) and (8); Kuo 2004: 132–160; Xie, ed., 2013: 87–100; Xu 2009: 230–259; Yang, ed., 2010: 315–325; Zhejiang meishuguan, ed., 2009, vol. 1: 218–267.

shaped his overall understanding of colors and color use as visible in his landscape paintings.

2) *Sculpting Visual Depth: Color Washes*

Presenting the second category within this preliminary typological framework are landscape depictions in which color washes are applied with the effect of creating visual depth. Here, the term of “sculpting” visual depth is chosen with reference to Huang Binhong’s own statement quoted and discussed above, that “[t]he brush on the paper should be like a [double-edged] *kunwu*-knife cutting jade, its tip and edges sharp and keen. Without skilled work and hard effort one will not be able to sculpt deeply.”⁶⁴⁸ Regarding this category, we can again differentiate two sub-categories: 2a) color washes applied to few individual picture segments, and 2b) color washes applied throughout the entire composition. In the former case, the color washes cover the surfaces of isolated pictorial elements, typically the background mountains, where the contours are rendered through diluted ink and/or color in aquarelle-like manner, as to be seen for example in three undated hanging scrolls all titled *Light-Crimson Landscape* (*Qianjiang shanshui tu* 淺絳山水圖) (figs. 88a–c, respectively). All in all, Huang Binhong’s manner of applying washes testifies to the fact that he was very well-trained in the “boneless method” (*mogufa* 沒骨法) characteristic of the bird-and-flower painting genre (as can be seen in fig. 65b).⁶⁴⁹ At times, the applied color washes are not combined or reworked with ink or other colors, as in the work *Emulation of the Water-Moon Cave in Guilin* (*Lin Gui Shuiyuedong tu* 臨桂水月洞圖) (fig. 88d) dated 1946, where light washes of ochre are applied singly to isolated areas of the mountain surface. Other times, the mixing of various colors on the paper can be observed in certain places, as in the hanging scrolls *Colored Landscape* (*Shese shanshui tu* 設色山水圖) (fig. 88e) and *Ancient Temple in Deep Mountains* (fig. 61a). Here, the blending of the ink and the different colors creates subtle nuances of violet and turquoise as well as a shimmering overall effect. Incidentally, this technique of mixing fluids upon the paper is familiar to us from Huang Binhong’s ink techniques of layering “broken ink”

⁶⁴⁸ “筆在紙上，當視為昆吾刀切玉，鋒芒銛利，非良工辛苦，不能淺雕深刻。” HBHWJ (6): 161.

⁶⁴⁹ The boneless method refers to the controlled spreading of ink and color washes, through which the graphic forms of the depicted subject are given shape, without making use of any ink lines as contours. The techniques of the boneless method were developed especially in the genre of fine-brush (*gongbi* 工筆) bird-and-flower painting as for example represented by Song Huizong 宋徽宗 (1082–1135, r. 1100–1126), Yun Shouping 惲壽平 (1633–1690), and Mei Qing 梅清 (1623–1697).

(*pomo* 破墨) and “accumulated ink” (*jimo* 積墨) (as to be seen well for example in figs. 61a, 62d, or 97b–c).⁶⁵⁰

In the latter sub-category 2b), color washes are applied throughout the entire compositional structure, as for example in the 1940s hanging scroll *Sitting in the Rain in Qingcheng* (*Qingcheng zuo yu tu* 青城坐雨圖) (fig. 88f), or in the abovementioned *Bridge by Stream in Misty Clouds* (fig. 87k) dated 1954, where we see the combination of pale color washes and watery ink washes which are applied systematically in layers in a gently daubed manner. Here, the merging of the materials of ink and color is a consistent feature throughout the entire compositional space, as is also the case with the above-noted work *Nighttime Conversation*. The mosaic-like, layered composition evocative of Cubist and Pointillist technique results in transitions between near-to transparent ink shades, and the faintest washes of light green and red, which brings about an opalescent, dimly glimmering light-and-shadow effect that befits the misty atmosphere described in the title *Bridge by Stream in Misty Clouds*. It seems that this style was used by Huang Binhong in order to evoke naturalistic effects of night, rain, mist, and haze, as suggested by the titles of the above three examples. In other words, the techniques gained through his study of landscapes during the nighttime can be said to have affected his overall approaches to landscape depiction, which is logical. To be sure, it can reasonably argued that initially beginning in the 1940s, as a direct result of his dealing with modern western art traditions that were furthered through his contact to western scholars notably in 1938 and 1939, Huang continued to pursue the practice of painting nighttime landscape scenes into the 1950s, the final stage of his life. The aforementioned *Midsummer-Night Mountains* (fig. 61b) of 1954 illustrates this, as does the early 1950s *Ancient Temple in Deep Mountains* (fig. 61a), which, as annotated above, has been described by Luo Jianqun as reflective of Huang’s energized high spirit of that time (the first three of his final Hangzhou years, i.e. 1948–1951), stating that “[h]is brushstrokes in this painting are dense, thick, and splendidly luxuriant [*hunhou huazi*]—a continuation of his earlier manner of painting nocturnal or shaded mountain scenes, yet more assured and proficient.”⁶⁵¹ This suggests that Huang’s late style, tagged as *hunhou huazi*, can be considered closely linked to his approaches as a painter inspired by depictions of nature during the nighttime.

⁶⁵⁰ For discussions of Huang Binhong’s brush-and-ink methods in painting, see the references given in n. 238.

⁶⁵¹ Yang, ed., 2010: 266.

Moreover, in *Bridge by Stream in Misty Clouds*, a sense of plastic depth is achieved in the textures of the depicted vegetation and hilly rocks. This is also the case with the undated *Talking to a Friend among Streams and Mountains* (fig. 87i), where the pale iridescence of the green summery hills and the slight tinge of a red glow are contrasted by heavily saturated, strong single ink lines. With reference to the afore-raised term, here, too, the landscape possesses an overall “sculpted” quality (albeit in a different, more elaborate manner than with *Discourse on Clerical-Script Painting*). In another work titled *Rainy Mountains* (*Yu shan tu* 雨山圖) (fig. 88g), in addition to the application of green and red, dark ochre intermingles with light ink, creating a vivid atmosphere of dense autumn haze. Examples like this not only indicate Huang’s dexterity in handling color; moreover, they evidence an interest of the painter that clearly goes beyond the use of color as (merely) an accentuation of the (ink-lined) subject. In another hanging scroll titled *Light-Crimson Landscape* (*Qianjiang shanshui tu* 淺絳山水圖) (fig. 88h), we see Huang’s idiosyncratic late-period style of loosely sketched brushwork characterized by vigorously executed short, broad, and coarse individual brushstrokes, which is rendered in a kind of “pale-ink” (*danmo* 淡墨) version. Here, the slate-like, blue-green-greyish tones of the applied ink lend the depicted rocky structures a lively, haptic quality. However, the vibrant appeal of the landscape is not least due to the sporadically, yet attentively placed daubs of light rust-red to be seen in the higher-up stones as well as the lines in the branches and trunks of the trees lower down.

3) Revealing, Not Hiding the Colors in Ink: Colors in “Thick-Ink” (*nongmo*) Method

The third category among this typology of color schemes is especially interesting; its name is chosen with respect to Huang Binhong’s above-quoted statement that “When applying colors, the colors must incorporate ink. This is what is called ‘hiding the colors in ink, hiding the water in ink’”.⁶⁵² I propose to define this category as denoting Huang’s colored landscape paintings in which the colors are applied in his method of “thick ink” (*nongmo* 浓墨); meaning that the (water-based) color application is marked by a proportionally high amount of color that was blended with water. The opaque textures of green and olive hues to be seen in the hanging scroll *Winding Waterfall in Forest Thicket* (*Conglin zhepu tu* 叢

⁶⁵² “設色之筆，丹青中妨含墨，所謂‘丹青隱墨、墨隱水’是也。” HBHWJ (6): 43. As was noted above, Luo Jianqun elucidates that “hiding the colors in ink” refers to Huang’s technique of blending ink with color through layers of light ink washes, in order to “avoid showiness and vulgarity”, Yang, ed., 2010: 288.

林折瀑圖) (fig. 89a) are a good example. Here, the color texture in the lower part of the scroll even lends the painting the appearance of an oil painting. In spite of Huang Binhong's outspoken incentive to "hide the colors in ink"—as Luo Jianqun writes, "in order to avoid showiness and vulgarity"⁶⁵³—there exists an astounding number of works that imply the completely contrary, inasmuch as they appear to show a purposely bold, Fauvist-like "naive and unrefined" application of color. The proportionate amount of color pigment which here seems to outweigh the amount of water parallels Huang's thick-ink technique produces pasty, opaque textures, and bright, intensely vivid shades. In Huang's early 1950s work *Blue-Green Summer Mountains* (*Xiashan cangcui tu* 夏山蒼翠圖) (fig. 89b), the color, which finds mentioning in the title of the work (*cangcui* 蒼翠), does not *hide* itself in ink. Actually, it appears to be blotted on top of the ink in seemingly random, even nonchalant manner, as if meaning to add an unmissable final touch like the icing on a cake. What is more, whereas the "deep blues and rich greens" are referred to in the above-discussed inscription of *Discourse on Clerical-Script Painting* but only subtly hinted at in the painting itself, here in the case of *Blue-Green Summer Mountains*, the colors are to be vividly seen. This can surely be understood as evidence of Huang Binhong's increased confidence with respect to his use of colors during the final decades of his life.⁶⁵⁴ While *Shangyang Village, Mt. Yandang* (*Yandang Shangyang cun tu* 雁宕上垵村圖) (fig. 83e) of 1953 is another obvious example of Huang Binhong's color application in "thick-ink" manner, in another landscape depiction of the same year titled *Deep Seclusion in Mt. Huang* (*Huangshan yousui tu* 黃山幽邃圖) (fig. 89c), this color technique is only subtly executed in the upper leaves of the trees to be seen at the top of the mountains, more like a mellow reference to the bolder versions of this kind of color application.

One of the most striking examples within this third typological category showing "colors in thick-ink method" is the undated work *High Pavilion in Prosperous Mountains* (*Fudeng wei ting tu* 富登危亭圖) (fig. 89d)—though it is nearly even an understatement to speak of "thick-ink" brush method here: the colored areas are properly opaque and seem more like

⁶⁵³ Yang, ed., 2010: 288.

⁶⁵⁴ It has been argued by some scholars that Huang Binhong's late-period use of bright blotchy colors was due to the eye illness that nearly caused his blindness during the early 1950s. Yet this argument is only partially sound, since, among other reasons, this manner of color application continued to persist also after Huang's eyes were healed. I will get back again to this important point in the next chapter. For further examples of Huang Binhong's systematic use of strong green color in his landscape paintings, see HBHQJ (3): 67; HBHQJ (4): 152, 153.

color fields. We can hardly discern individual brushstrokes anymore. The subdued chalkiness of the landscape's muddy green and brown surfaces evokes the pasty, weighty impression of an oil painting—similar to the effect observed in *Winding Waterfall in Forest Thicket*, albeit in a more intense manner—and we may also note that the depiction of one of the trees to be seen in the lower foreground (fig. 89e) is striking inasmuch as its trunk and roots appear to be rendered with distinct shadows, which is highly uncommon in the context of traditional Chinese painting conventions;⁶⁵⁵ therein moreover vaguely evoking the 1935 rendering of a *Cypress Tree* (seen in fig. 18) by aforementioned western-trained painter Xu Beihong. Though the color-field-like effect in *Winding Waterfall in Forest Thicket* is less pronounced than in *High Pavilion in Prosperous Mountains*, all the same, it demonstrates a confident, if not to say daring use of colors. For what is special in this piece, is that we see distinct tonal variations of one and the same color within a single work, here in form of the color green. These tonal variations find special emphasis through Huang's impressionistic application of individual punctuations, which are set off against the darker under- or background layers, as is the case with the fresh spring-green of the leaves, and the thick matte-olive undergrowth to be seen in this picture.

A reason why I draw attention to the aspect of “distinct tonal variation of one and the same color within a single work” is that this aspect is significant when considered in the Confucian context of moral soundness that was noted above. Here, the “proper” choice of colors was limited to colors in their “pure” form, specifically meaning the generic “five colors” (*wu se* 五色) as based on the yin-yang five-phases models that were codified around the fourth century BCE.⁶⁵⁶ The five colors were considered to be blue-green (*qing* 青), red (*chi* 赤), yellow (*huang* 黄), white (*bai* 白), and black (*hei* 黑).⁶⁵⁷ This Confucian understanding stood in opposition to the Daoist tradition, where mineral color pigments were mixed together and utilized and as alchemic substances. As Amy McNair discusses in her afore-quoted essay, the red-blue and blue-green landscape painting traditions mirrored a Daoist understanding of colors, according to which “both painting and alchemy were transformative and magical arts [...]”; moreover: “In Confucian writings, these five colors [*wu se*] are the orthodox or conventional colors. Secondary colors, such as green, derived

⁶⁵⁵ This aspect was already addressed above, see n. 581.

⁶⁵⁶ See McNair 1997: 72.

⁶⁵⁷ Du, ed., 2009: 16.

from their combinations were considered secondary and subordinate.”⁶⁵⁸

4) *Creating a Total Landscape: The All-Color Scheme*

Based on the vast selection of exhibits shown in the Shandong Museum retrospective, the fourth and last category to be distinguished in this context is what I would like to define as an “all-color scheme”. While we have noted that the colored landscape paintings of Huang Binhong’s earlier periods showed the use of one or two combined colors, a large amount of those exhibited in the Shandong Museum which stem from later periods of Huang Binhong’s work production show a distinctive color combination of red, blue, and green. Rather than simply speaking of a three-color scheme, however, and with reference to the just-noted Confucian model of “five [primary] colors”, I would like to include the classical “literati colors” of black and white. Interestingly, while the Confucian model excludes the color green, because green is a compound color, and thus “unpure” and “subordinate” color, Huang Binhong indeed makes extensive use of this color. At the same time, he only seldom mixes colors with one another, and thus adheres to some extent to the idea that colors be left in their “pure” state, i.e. usually, the individually used colors can be clearly differentiated from one another in his paintings. Based on the fact however that his palette indeed includes green to me shows that Huang Binhong’s interest lay in the attempt to achieve something like a holistic, total landscape depiction; one that was able to draw from an unlimited spectrum of (technical) resources. The inclusion of what I here denote as the classical “literati colors” of black and white is grounded in the calligraphy-specific understanding that black and white are mutually constitutive, essential elements of form and structure in the brush-and-ink arts. The hanging scroll *Small Scenery of the Five Dragon Ponds* (*Wulongtan xiaojing tu* 五龍潭小景圖) (fig. 90a) can be taken as an illustration of this point. Here, the “white” paths not only serve to lead our way through the bramble and thicket of wild brush. More importantly, they open up the passages, or spatial gaps which are essential for establishing and maintaining a compositional balance among the otherwise densely woven, “pitch-black” brushwork. The subtle yet systematic incorporation of red in the lower foreground; green in the central middle ground; and blue in the higher background, fulfills the function of a kind of “substratic” undercoat or base, which substantiates the complexity of the structure and the depth of form. The light and airy quality of the colors further compensates the weight of the heavy, hard black of the

⁶⁵⁸ McNair 1997: 72.

ink, and achieves to settle the seemingly restless brush action perceivable in the movement of the ink lines.

Similarly “harmonizing” uses and functions of color can be observed in works like the afore-discussed *Ancient Temple in Deep Mountains* (fig. 61a) from the early 1950s. Here, the counterbalancing effect of the colors is especially visible. They lighten up the overall composition and prevent the massy dark structure in the left half of the picture from becoming over-dominant. They also add dimensional depth through the illusion of a sun-soaked field, thus further preventing the darker, ink-saturated field on the left from appearing flat or shallow. The watery ink of the background mountains higher up finally softens and mellows the intricate composition lower down; with its cloud-like spreading, the ink’s tonal quality seems to be of a completely different “color”. Above-noted works with the titles *Light-Crimson Landscape* and *Colored Landscape* (as seen in figs. 88b and 88e respectively), as well as another work titled *Colored Landscape* (*Shese shanshui tu* 設色山水圖) (fig. 90b) provide further examples that can be counted to this type of “all-color scheme”, and which on stylistic grounds can be dated as late-period works (of 1948–1955). Looking at these, we can comprehend that the creation of vivid atmosphere through transitional effects of light and dark presented a great concern to Huang Binhong. As noted, it seems that when juxtaposed with the first three color schemes introduced above, the function of this “all-color scheme” aims to realize something of a grand view, or “great synthesis” (*dacheng* 大成)⁶⁵⁹ of a “total landscape”; a depiction of natural forms through a subjectively filtered, integrative combination of stylistic traditions—both monochrome and polychrome. It is likely that this had been Huang Binhong’s aim, for it would also correspond with his holistic notion of “transformation” as epitomized through his idea of the “fifth brush method”, the “method of transformation”, which, in the context of the brush-and-ink arts, essentially strives after continuous change so as to perpetuate a harmonious synthesis of forms.

On this note, the significance of colors as a *form-giving* element in Huang Binhong’s landscape paintings—obvious in works like *Ancient Temple in Deep Mountains*, *Sitting in*

⁶⁵⁹ In the tradition of Chinese literati painting, it was most notably Dong Qichang who coined the term *dacheng* 大成, defined by Wen C. Fong as “the integration of the styles of ancient models into works that would in their art-historical comprehensiveness exceed the sum of their stylistic components”, see the chapter “Creating a Synthesis” in Fong/Watt 1996: 419–425, 421. For an assessment of *dacheng* and its philosophical connotations in the context of Mi Fu (by whom Dong Qichang had been strongly influenced) and Northern-Song discourse on art, see the chapter “Great Synthesis” in Sturman 1997: 173–211.

the Rain in Qingcheng, or *High Pavilion in Prosperous Mountains*, where the colors fulfill a form-giving function in different ways—can be highlighted if we consider the issue “negatively”: Would these images still “work” as complete, i.e. coherent compositions *without* their colors? While some paintings would indeed still “work”, since colors are here used for example to (only) give subtle accentuations, other paintings, like the above-referenced three examples, would by contrast lose a significant part of their internal compositional logic if stripped of their colors—see figs. 90c–e for illustrations of a hypothetical juxtaposition.

In conclusion, surely, I do not claim any finality to this typological model. It is constructed, and, as with any given model, there exist overlaps between its denoted categories. Rather than putting forward any absolute truth claim, the identification of the proposed types serves moreover to take an initial step towards giving the phenomenon at all a name. For, though this attempt at a systematic approach to Huang Binhong’s use of colors in landscape painting is perhaps non-comprehensive and in part simplified, it nevertheless might provide some thoughts for a more expandable, in-depth study of the subject. In taking a closer look at Huang Binhong’s colored landscape paintings, an astoundingly differentiated technical, and highly methodical, that is, functional, application of colors can be registered. The visual evidence provided by these works and their discernibly systematic use of brush, ink, and colors, belies the discrepant dualistic relationship maintained between concepts of “interior spirit” and “superficial form” in Chinese art criticism—a discrepancy that appears all the more grave given the fact that Huang Binhong himself, ambiguously, promoted such views in his writings on art. In a letter written to Fu Lei in December of 1954, Huang Binhong stated:

Calligraphy has a flowing beauty; it has the [method of] “three arches”; both a neatness and unneatness; this constitutes [its] interior beauty [*neimei*]. The two colors of black and white, this is what is true beauty. The light cast by the multitude of spectral colors is false; the triangular prisms of today testify this. Wang Wei [and his use of] ink, [this was] the beginning of painting in two colors; [this is] true interior beauty. In [his] paintings, there are poems, in [his] poems, there are paintings [...]⁶⁶⁰

It is indeed difficult to reconcile this radical viewpoint with the language of colors that many of his landscape paintings seem to speak.

⁶⁶⁰ “書法流美，有弧三角，齊而不齊，以成內美，黑白二色，是為真美。五色七色假日之光，今三稜鏡可以證明之。王維水墨，畫始二色，為真內美，畫中有詩，詩中有畫 [...]” Wang Zhongxiu 2005: 556.

It had been noted that according to Luo Jianqun, the 1938 encounter between Huang Binhong and Jean-Pierre Dubosc had a considerable impact on the development of Huang's painting style, and that this manifests itself visibly in the changes to be seen in his works of the immediately following years. She further states that one of the underlying incentives of the Shandong exhibition had been to place a focus on displaying a large number of so far unshown works stemming from precisely this period.⁶⁶¹ It must be left for future research to thoroughly investigate contemporaneous cross-cultural flows and elements that may help to more deeply understand Huang's engagement with and negotiation of transhistorical and culture-specific traditions of landscape painting. In special consideration of Huang's always integrative, holistic approach to art, I would like to refer to Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's (1749–1832) color theory as has been discussed by the Cézanne specialist Lorenz Dittmann. Dittmann has elucidated the theory as a basis of Paul Cézanne's approach to landscape painting, meaning not the pursuit of naturalistic representation, but instead the pursuit of a way leading to freedom through nature; moreover, a means to achieve liberation through totality of color.⁶⁶² As a stimulating perspective on the connection that has been made between Huang Binhong and Paul Cézanne by some scholars,⁶⁶³ Goethe's holistic notion of harmonic opposites within the system of color might illuminate our understanding of both these painters' claim to *dacheng*—the total, or absolute landscape in art. To quote the passages 810 and 813 from the section “Totalität und Harmonie” of Goethe's color theory:

Gelb fordert Rotblau, Blau fordert Rotgelb, Purpur fordert Grün, und umgekehrt. [...] So einfach also diese eigentlich harmonischen Gegensätze sind, welche uns in dem engen Kreise gegeben werden, so wichtig ist der Wink, daß uns die Natur durch Totalität zur Freiheit heraufzuheben angelegt ist, und daß wir diesmal eine Naturscheinung zum ästhetischen Gebrauch unmittelbar überliefert erhalten.⁶⁶⁴

4.5. Huang Binhong and the Cultural Topography of Landscape Painting

While the phenomenon of Huang Binhong's colored landscapes was here broached in terms of a typology, it can likewise be assessed in terms of a topography, that is, as a cultural topography of Republican-period China and its contested field of literati art. The

⁶⁶¹ As stated in IV Luo 02/01/2014.

⁶⁶² Dittmann 2005: 49.

⁶⁶³ Cf. Wang Yu 2012: 134; and Shen 2012: 108–110, where the author undertakes a comparison between late landscape depictions of the Qixia 棲霞 Hills and Mt. Saint-Victoire by Huang Binhong and Paul Cézanne, respectively, and here particularly compares the use of brushstrokes and spatial composition.

⁶⁶⁴ Goethe 1840: 480.

“topographic landscape” of this contested field was first approached through the art discursive term of “flavor”, which served as a conceptual prism to historicize and crystallize the relationship between critical terms and visual art in the context of Chinese literati discourse and its aesthetically and ideologically charged dimensions, including related idea(l)s of the “ugly”, the “bland”, and the “colorless”. Given Huang Binhong’s extensive and continuous activities as an author and editor in various contexts throughout his life, it is noteworthy, if not to say contradictory, and somewhat telling, that there are no known writings by Huang Binhong that reveal an in-depth dealing with the subject of color. In the context of the highly topical nationalist and traditionalist discourses of Huang’s times, as were looked into above with regard to Chen Shizeng’s programmatic essay “The Value of Literati Painting”, however, this appears to be not at all surprising. In any case, the lack of a textual discursive engagement with this subject in Huang Binhong’s writings presents a striking discrepancy when compared with his extensive and varied uses of color as evidenced by his corpus of paintings—here meaning not his oeuvre of bird-and-flower paintings (which of course are completely in line with their genre-specific trait of combining ink and colors), but meaning those paintings of his that are conventionally grouped into the genre-clusters of traditional *shanshuihua* working in the monochrome ink-landscape idiom of literati painting.

As seen through the Shandong Museum retrospective, the various phases of Huang Binhong’s landscape painting technique and style show that the manner in which colors were deployed by Huang Binhong became more and more elaborate over time. This is not only suggested by the selection of the exhibited works, but also confirmed by the curator Luo Jianqun, who moreover emphasizes that Huang Binhong’s color techniques in landscape painting indeed reveal a transference and application of his original system of ink techniques.⁶⁶⁵ While in the initially discussed example *Discourse on Clerical-Script Painting*, the sensually pleasing aspect of “deep blues and rich greens” (*cangxiong shenxiu* 苍雄深秀) are only referred to in the words of the inscription, moreover to be imagined by the viewer when looking at the painting, there exists a significant amount of works that, in turn, evidence a somewhat inverted condition: while their inscriptions remain within the familiar, unassuming language of traditional literati discourse, their visual depictions display a deliberate, at times even conspicuous application of the very brightest of colors.

⁶⁶⁵ As stated in IV Luo 02/01/2014.

And so, in spite of Huang's proclaimed ideal to "hide the colors in ink"—as was mentioned above, "in order to avoid showiness and vulgarity"⁶⁶⁶—many landscape works especially of the late years post-1948 reveal, for one, a thoroughly methodical implementation of color as a constitutive component in creating depth of visual space, volume of form, and fine nuances of atmosphere, and, moreover, a strikingly eye-catching application of intensely vivid color tones.

The use of "dazzling colors" (*xuan danqing* 炫丹青, literally "dazzling red-and-green"),⁶⁶⁷ which had gained a marred reputation since the Northern Song-dynasty rise of the amateur scholar-painter class and its minimalist aesthetic of monochrome ink, thus presented a somewhat delicate, if not to say precarious, subject in literati discourse. The monochrome-ink idiom, which was essentially grounded in the methodical and aesthetical framework of calligraphy art, stood in diametrical opposition to the polychrome depictions of nature grounded in the tradition of Tang red-green/blue-green painting, which was devaluated once and for all in the late Ming/early Qing period with Dong Qichang's formulation of artistic lineages belonging to alleged Northern and Southern Schools of painting.⁶⁶⁸ Here, the image of the amateur literati artist, whose uttermost strife in art was of idealistic, spiritual nature, and expressed through "calligraphic" brushwork as well as a reduction of form and color, was placed above the image of the so-called "artisan class" of professional painters and court painters, whose painting practices and traditions were in turn associated with a superficially "decorative", detailed, and color-rich style. The art historical assessment then of Huang Binhong's painting as *danqing shuimo hebi*, the "harmonious uniting of red-and-green [painting] and ink [painting]",⁶⁶⁹ not only presents a conveniently neat and clean classification; recursively, it also reaffirms the established tradition of Li Zhaodao, with whom the origins of this "third", synthesizing tradition is credited in Chinese art history, as was noted at the outset of this chapter. Incidentally, the association of Huang Binhong with *danqing shuimo hebi* even illustrates the terminological limits that were just pointed out in Huang Binhong's own language and seem to prevail to this day in art historical discourse, thus excluding a more differentiated discussion of those "reds",

⁶⁶⁶ Yang, ed., 2010: 288.

⁶⁶⁷ A term that Huang Binhong refers to in the inscription of his painting *Discourse on Tang Red-and-Green Painting* (*Lun Tang ren danqing tu* 論唐人丹青圖), which is discussed below.

⁶⁶⁸ On the influence of Dong Qichang's art theory and practice on Huang Binhong's art, see Kuo 2004: 92f. On the art and the art historical status and influence of Dong Qichang, see Chang/Fong/Hearn 2008: 4–35; Ho, ed., 1992; Ho/Ho Delbanco 1993; Ho/Smith, eds., 1993 (2 vols.); Unverzagt 2005: 138–165; Wu 1962.

⁶⁶⁹ As indicated by Luo Jianqun, Yang, ed., 2010: 286.

“greens”, and “blacks” in Huang Binhong’s painting. In light of the discrepancy between the information given by textual and visual material, it appears sound to conclude that Huang Binhong’s motivations were also driven by his concern not to estrange, or “betray”, the revered “methods of the ancients”, which he, as many like-minded contemporaries, felt to be at stake at this particular moment in history. Rather than merely facilitating the category of the “harmonious uniting of red-and-green and black ink”, which relies on a binary assumption of (only) two traditions, works such as the above-discussed *Discourse on Clerical-Script Painting* exemplify these artists’ efforts to resolve conventional art-discursive frameworks given the omnipresence of new elements, through individual coherent systems of visual depiction. In the case of Huang Binhong, we can consider the discussed example as a space-and-time-specific solution to the traditional literati’s ultimate goal of “transgressing the methods of the ancients” (*chaochu guren zhi fa* 超出古人之法)⁶⁷⁰: in the noteworthy inscription of a landscape painting titled *Discourse on Tang Red-and-Green Painting* (*Lun Tang ren danqing tu* 論唐人丹青圖) (fig. 63c), a late work of 1952 which contains a rare comment on the topic of color, Huang Binhong writes,

Depictions by Tang artists dazzled with their multitude of colors, Northern-Song [artists] reconditioned the ways of seeing the spirit of nature. Simple, deep, luxuriant, and rich [is the artistic beauty of] my people. [Though] the principles of the ancient should be honored, it should be avoided to follow the classical works by way of copying [alone]. In winter of the Renchen Year [1952], old man of eighty-nine years, Huang Binhong.⁶⁷¹

The inscription and also the painting itself, which depicts a river and mountain landscape scene and is, symptomatically, executed in ink and red and green color, both seem to reiterate the established traditions of Chinese painting; however, I think they actually suggest to go beyond a mere reiteration of these traditions. In her discussion of this piece, Luo Jianqun writes, in a similarly rare comment on the use of colors in Huang Binhong’s landscape painting, that this use of colors was “both a look back and a gaze forward”:

During Huang Binhong’s lifetime, China experienced an influx of Western artistic style and media, including oil and watercolor painting. Added to the growing interest in the theory of color, this clearly stimulated Huang’s creative thinking.

⁶⁷⁰ This is the phrase Luo Jianqun uses to elucidate Huang Binhong’s aims and achievements in art in her discussion of Huang’s calligraphy and his concept of “transformation”, which, as we may recall from the previous chapters, bears tight parallels with Qing-dynasty Shitao’s ideas of transformation. Luo writes: “用自然之理、筆性之理到心性之理來證明‘變’的可能性和必然性，從而證明‘超出古人之法’，傳統得以延續、擅變的原因和必然。” Luo 2005: 64.

⁶⁷¹ The original inscription reads: “唐人刻劃炫丹青，北宋翻新見性靈。渾厚華滋我民族，惟宗古訓忌途經。壬辰冬日，八十九叟黃賓虹。” Yang, ed., 2010: 412, no. 76.

Huang had long emphasized that before the advent of classic boundless monochrome ink painting, Chinese art was dominated by rich, multicolored paintings. Looking back at history and looking toward the future, he maintained the well-grounded tradition of monochrome ink painting, but also saw a value in the tradition of colorful eye-catching images.⁶⁷²

Though Luo Jianqun lastly remains within the classical terminological framework of “monochrome ink” on the one hand, and “colorful eye-catching images” (i.e. red-green-painting) on the other hand, thus confirming the narrative of Huang Binhong as a master of both traditions, it is quite clear that she does seek to integrate the stylistic aspect of foreign influx. Huang thus was not only reiterating established Chinese painting traditions, but further articulating a space-and-time-specific response to these traditions in form of, in fact, *transgressing* them. In another sense, incidentally, this very transgression of traditions presents the perhaps highest of traditional literati ideals, that is, the ultimate aim to transcend and “go beyond the methods of the ancients”. If Luo Jianqun is right that Huang Binhong’s systematic use of color actually reflects a *transference* of his “five brush methods and seven ink methods” to the field of color—a viewpoint that I hope to have corroborated throughout my attempt of formulating a typological color framework—then we can not only logically conclude that the artistic practices of monochrome-ink painting and color painting truly are closely related to one another in Huang Binhong’s case. What is more, given that his “five brush methods and seven ink methods”, although developed in the context of painting discourse, actually stem from his theoretical and practical understanding of calligraphy art, I think it is not at all far-fetched, but likewise logical to conclude that color and calligraphy are inextricably intertwined in Huang Binhong’s case, notably in the context of his later works which show an increased use of colors—as well as an increased application of calligraphic methods in his paintings; an aspect that will be further examined in the next chapter. Most important to understand, however, is that while there exists a bond between painting, calligraphy, and color in Huang Binhong’s case, it is not sufficient to say that he simply mixed together the two idioms of a (static) monochrome brush-and-ink tradition and a (static) polychrome painting tradition. It is more adequate to say that he was an artist who aimed at articulating an own coherent, systemized visual order of the world, and that this systemization underwent adjustment and reformulation through time. In other words, Huang Binhong’s visual system was always evolving as a dynamic whole; as a result of continuous processes of translation and

⁶⁷² Ibid.: 286.

incorporation. On this note, Luo Jianqun has interestingly pointed out that

After Huang Binhong turned seventy, his landscapes were dominated by heavy ink washes and began to assume a more solemn cast. His flower painting of the same period, by contrast, became more exuberant and their brushstrokes freer and livelier. This disjunction may be psychological, for it is reminiscent of the complementarity of yin and yang in Chinese philosophy; for Huang, flower painting seems to have been a means to escape from darkness into [sic] achieve a more lively mode.⁶⁷³

While I completely agree that Huang's work—including his calligraphy and his painting in both monochrome and polychrome techniques—must always be considered in its entirety at any given time of his life, I think that Luo's categorization of the “solemn” and “dark” landscape on the one hand, and of the “exuberant” and “lively” bird-and-flower depiction on the other hand, is too rigid. In fact, as I hope to have shown through the selection of examples in this chapter, it is especially his late landscape paintings that reveal a final stage of “lightening up” and becoming what I would consider just as “exuberant” and “lively” as any of his freshest bird-and-flower renderings. This aspect will be subject to further inquiry in the next chapter.

In this chapter, I hope to have shown in what way the subjects of flavor and color feature prominently within Republican-period art discourse. As I contend, their omnipresence and complexity as culturally and art historically charged issues can be made evident through Huang Binhong's case when seen as embedded within its culture-specific and socio-political frameworks. An examination of Huang Binhong's color application in his paintings served to address color as a complex phenomenon in his oeuvre which stands essentially in contrast to the ascetic idiom of monochrome-ink brush art, as grounded in the aesthetic ideals stemming from traditional calligraphy. This contrast points towards the conflicted field of “literati art” during the first half of the twentieth century, among which Huang Binhong had featured as a prominent agent grappling with highly topical discourses and practices of the time. Through a contextualization of this conflicted field we can see how a rhetoric centered on ideas of flavor and taste have been utilized in art history to accommodate certain ideological and political interests. The aim of the argumentation followed in this chapter was to crystallize a crucial point concerning conventional conceptions of *neimei* as they were outlined in the preceding chapters, and show in what way these conceptions, if taken only on their own, actually distort and even falsify the

⁶⁷³ Ibid.: 320.

notion of *neimei*, inasmuch as these imply *neimei* to be a foremost spiritual, immaterial quality—“beyond” the realm of physical senses and sensual enjoyments.

The argumentation of this chapter further served to make way for the next and final chapter that focuses on Huang Binhong. With special regard to a reassessment of *neimei* as a concept in the context of this artist’s work, the next chapter carves out the significance of art as praxis, more specifically, calligraphy practice as a mnemonic device of *remembering, commemorating, and self-presencing*. An examination of works dating to the very last period of Huang Binhong’s work production, which I denote as the years 1953–55, cements the line of argumentation pursued by this study, to assess *neimei* as a concept that is likewise valid as a body-specific framework constituted by practices of physical ritual, and corporeal, or embodied knowledge and action.

Chapter Five

The Inner Workings of *neimei*: Calligraphy as Mnemonic Device of the Self⁶⁷⁴

As stated, the methodical structure of the preceding chapter served to make way for the present, fifth that investigates Huang Binhong's case with special regard to reassessing the meanings of *neimei* in the context of Huang's creative work. As noted, the aim of this chapter is to clarify the significance of art as praxis, specifically, the notion of calligraphy practice as a mnemonic device, and show in what way *neimei*, next to the various definitions that have already been carved out throughout this study, can be defined as form and technique of *re-membering*, *commemorating*, and *self-presencing*, in this regard. Here, an examination of calligraphic and painted works dating to the very last period of Huang Binhong's work production, which I define as the years 1953–1955, further cements the overall argumentation of this study, namely that *neimei* be considered as a concept that is valid not only in terms of a discourse of the immaterial, spiritual, but likewise as a body-specific framework that is constituted by forms of corporeal knowledge and technique, and continuous practices of physical ritual and pattern. Special attention will be placed on Huang Binhong's concrete life situation and specifically his most acute phase of a near-to full blindness during the first half of 1953—incidentally a phase within the creative period that is held to represent his “late maturity”⁶⁷⁵ as an artist. In this context, the meaning and status of *neimei* as a concept can be discussed as a matter of existential value whose significance becomes manifest through Huang Binhong's resorting to corporeal methods of ritualized, internalized action, or patterned movement. Matthias Obert's assessment of traditional calligraphy practice as a method of “self-bonding” (*Selbstbindung*), and thus his equation of calligraphy as “life practice” (*Lebensübung*), or “life art” (*Kunst des Lebens*), takes on full meaning.⁶⁷⁶ Huang Binhong's case can serve to illustrate what Obert describes as the transformative quality of calligraphy as an art form and life practice bringing about an immediately effective “body-mimetic transformation of the practitioner” (*leibmimetische Verwandlung des Schaffenden*) through “a ‘movement of withdrawal into the self’” (*eine “in sich selbst zurückgenommene Bewegung”*); an act that can only be achieved through “corporeal practice” (*leibliche Übung*) and “corporeal perception of the

⁶⁷⁴ Several passages on pages 214–218 and 227–235 of this chapter are based on research that was published in an above-noted article for the volume edited by Kong Lingwei and Juliane Noth; the contents of which have been modified in accordance with the purposes of the present study, see Hertel 2014.

⁶⁷⁵ As denoted by Wang Bomin, Kuo 2004: 15.

⁶⁷⁶ See Obert 2013: 398f., 416.

self” (*leibliche Selbstempfindung*).⁶⁷⁷ We may recall that this understanding of calligraphy resonates with Gudula Linck’s terminology of arts and games in traditional China as forms of “educating”, “mastering”, even “subduing the body” (*Leibbemeisterung*),⁶⁷⁸ as was elucidated in the preceding chapter. Next to Obert’s framework of “body-mimetic transformation”, in this chapter, I will also draw from Chung-ying Cheng’s terminology of “proving effective through bodily practice” (as Cheng defines the Chinese notion of *tiyan* 體驗), as well as ideas of “self-presencing” and “commemorating” based on Hans-Georg Möller’s terms of “presence” and “commemoration”. Through this theoretical frame, I aim to sharpen certain points of focus and reconsider issues that are known to us as familiar subject matters: in a specific context, the art of Huang Binhong, whom we are foremost acquainted with as a landscape painter, especially through his much-praised, idiosyncratic late-period style, which is understood as a testimony to his accomplished transformation in art; and, in a more general context, the complex phenomenon of calligraphy practice particular to the cultures and art histories of East Asia. Referring to Obert’s comment on the latter:

Was zumeist als “Kalligraphie” aufgefasst wird, als eine künstlerische Fertigkeit im Umgang mit der Formschönheit der chinesischen Schrift, das wurde [...] in Wahrheit durch die Jahrhunderte auch als eine Lebensübung mit höchsten sittlichen und leiblichen Implikationen verfolgt.⁶⁷⁹

As I hope to show, through the examples introduced in the following, various “ethical and body-specific implications” (i.e. what Obert denotes as *sittlichen und leiblichen Implikationen*) of Chinese brush art will crystallize with regard to the definition of calligraphy as “script” (*shu* 書), and “script body” (*shuti* 書體), as expounded in the first part of this study. One particular aspect to be looked into is the relationship between calligraphy and painting in Huang Binhong’s late works, which is of particular significance in that context. This intertwining of calligraphy and painting has established Huang Binhong in modern art history as one of the most important ink-landscape painters of the twentieth century as well as last representatives painting in the tradition of so-called literati artists. Based on this relationship—which has even gained idiomatic meaning over time, if we recall the general consensus in literati discourse that “[...] though writing and painting

⁶⁷⁷ See *ibid.*: 424f. As Obert elucidates: “Auf dem Feld der Kunstübung kann der Person [...] in ihrer leibhaftigen Existenz eine ganz unmittelbar wirksame Verwandlung widerfahren [...]”, *ibid.*: 397.

⁶⁷⁸ See Linck 2011: 215ff.

⁶⁷⁹ Obert 2013: 398.

have different names, they are yet of the same substance [or body]” (*shuhua yi ming er tong ti ye* 書畫異明而同體也)⁶⁸⁰—, next to examples of Huang’s late-period calligraphy, examples of Huang’s late-period painting, notably landscape painting, will also be taken into consideration. As an advocator of the notion *shuhua tong yuan* 書畫同源 (calligraphy and painting share the same roots’),⁶⁸¹ we can assume that Huang Binhong’s works provide ample material that illustrates this notion. Here, we can appropriately quote Huang Binhong with the words that were his own way of saying “calligraphy and painting are of the same body”, namely, that he aspired “to use landscapes to write characters, and use written characters to make paintings” (*yi shanshui zuo zi, er yi zi zuo hua* 以山水作字, 而以字作畫).⁶⁸²

5.1. Linking Back to Chapter One: Body, Script, Ritual

Linking back to the introductory chapter, in which basic methodological concepts of this study were carved out, we can recap some of the essential thoughts that were put forward, since they are of aid to the following discussion. The Chinese term *shuti* 書體—commonly used to denote the various script types in Chinese calligraphy, yet literally translatable as “script body”—was established as a figure of thought that can be deciphered through the notions of *ti* 體, in the sense of the human body; *li* 禮, in the sense of ritual practices and processes; and *wen* 文/紋, in the sense of pattern, or cosmic text-pattern; all of which can be conceived as embodied systems of thought and action that are significantly related to one another in the context of Chinese calligraphy as a cultural historical and art historical phenomenon. Lending from the classical trope of the calligraphic “script body” as an analogy to the human body of the performing scribe, as has been expounded by John Hay in terms of an “imagery of organism” and “physiological metaphors”,⁶⁸³ the notion of “script body” can serve as an epistemic prism through which to reflect some significant

⁶⁸⁰ As stated in the chapter “On the Origins and Development of Painting” (“*Xu hua zhi yuanliu* 紱畫之源流”) of Zhang Yanyuan’s 張彥遠 (ca. 815–ca. 877) *Famous Paintings through History* (*Lidai minghua ji* 歷代名畫記), rpt. Acker 1954: 59–382, 66.

⁶⁸¹ Cf. Luo 2005: 64.

⁶⁸² As recorded by his friend Chen Zhu 陳柱 (1890–1944) in a 1935 issue of *Academic World* (*Xueshu shijie* 學術世界), see Chen Zhu 1935: 123.

⁶⁸³ As had been noted in the introductory chapter, Hay writes: “There are many ways of analyzing a piece of calligraphy. One method anciently and effectively used by the Chinese themselves is the imagery of organism, of physiology as we would classify it.” Hay 1983: 74. He further states that “[t]he metaphors of art texts are far more than picturesque embroidery, they are the most effective mode of understanding [...]”, and that “[t]he physiological metaphors in calligraphy texts are immediately sensible.” *Ibid.*: 75.

aspects of Huang Binhong's late work. Examples of his late-style calligraphy and landscape painting allow to carve out the correlations between written body and human body, and moreover, the status and meaning of *neimei* in this regard. Through the analogy of writing and body, we are able to expand the image of the *body as a mold*,⁶⁸⁴ that is, as an intricate system of imprinted, accumulated knowledge and experience continuously organizing, or “rearranging”, the structure of the self; and “[...] the lived body itself as a location for various practices [...], performances, and disciplines that shape and subjectify the self”.⁶⁸⁵ In this context of calligraphy practice, the Chinese term for “experience”, *tiyan* 體驗—literally, “to learn through”, “verify”, or “prove effective through bodily practice”—illustrates well the function and use of the human body as a mnemonic device.⁶⁸⁶ I will get back again to this point later on. The image of molding the body had been chosen with reference to Fingarette's notion of the “holy vessel” in Confucian thought,⁶⁸⁷ a reference that becomes evident through the Chinese written characters for body (*ti* 體) and ritual (*li* 禮), which are among the very few that share the right-hand phonetic component *li* 豊 meaning “sacrificial vessel” or “ritual vase”.⁶⁸⁸ With regard to these two characters, Angela Zito writes that “[their] explicit homology showed us how the body itself was imagined so as to provide the incorporated anchor for inscriptional activities. Within *li*, the body itself provided both sign and site for signification.”⁶⁸⁹ The metaphor of the holy vessel is related to the process of human self-cultivation (*zixiu* 自修; *xiushen* 修身) of “becoming a person through *wen*”,⁶⁹⁰ whereby *wen* 文/紋 here be

⁶⁸⁴ We recall that the terminology of molding the body is used, for example, by Yueh-ping Yen in discussing imperial practices in the context of calligraphy the methodical political incorporation of bureaucrats into the Chinese government system: “[...] under the imperial system of government, recruitment was secured by the moulding of its members' bodies and morality through the training and discipline of calligraphy. Once you have been shaped by the mould of the masters, you are simultaneously moulded into one who is considered fit to govern.” Yen 2005: 128.

⁶⁸⁵ Zito 1997: 210. In the context of discussing eighteenth-century Chinese ritualist culture, Angela Zito interprets various painting, ritual, and medicine discourses in terms of two-dimensional sites of emergent knowledge, such as “the woven web” (*jing* [經], the classics), “the network (*mai* [脈], arteries and veins of calligraphy and body energetics)”, or “the vessel (*qi* [器], center of sacrifice)”. She writes: “In this episteme of boundary and surface, agency and subjecthood belonged to those who could discern the cosmic patterns of *wen* [文], in other words, those who were both literate *and* capable of performing *li* [禮] [...]”, *ibid.*: 222.

⁶⁸⁶ Cf. HYDZD, vol. 7: 4580; Karlgren 1957: 163, no. 613h; Mathews 1975: 7367.

⁶⁸⁷ See Fingarette 1972: 71–79.

⁶⁸⁸ Cf. Karlgren 1923: 175, no. 538, and Zito 1997: 210, respectively.

⁶⁸⁹ Zito 1997: 210.

⁶⁹⁰ In “Becoming a Person through *wen*”, the second chapter of her book, the notion of *wenhua* 文化, meaning “culture”—yet, literally, to become “transformed through writing”—is discussed by Yueh-ping Yen: “What lies at the semantic core of the character *wen* is precisely this slow process of polishing, carving,

understood in its originary sense “which at first means ‘exemplary pattern’ (not necessarily visual) and only much later comes to mean ‘written text’ and even ‘culture’”, as pointed out by Michael Nylan, who further determines *wen* as the most important word in the Chinese language “whose historical evolution has shaped aesthetic theory.”⁶⁹¹

As a figure of thought, the calligraphic “script body” can be assessed through its aspect of *re-membering* (in the literal sense of “re-incorporating [into the body]”), as defined by Angela Zito,⁶⁹² as well as its aspect of *commemorating*, as has been theorized by Paul Connerton, inasmuch as the human body functions as a mnemonic device, presuming corporeal consciousness and corporeal enactment as constitutive forces in commemorative ceremonies and collective memory:

If there is such a thing as social memory [...], we are likely to find it in commemorative ceremonies; but commemorative ceremonies prove to be commemorative only in so far as they are performative; performativity cannot be thought without a concept of habit; and habit cannot be thought without a notion of bodily automatisms.⁶⁹³

At the same time, the molded script body provides a source of creative potential from which something new can emerge. Next to an analysis of a selection of late works by Huang Binhong, this last chapter dealing with Huang Binhong aims to stimulate additional impulses in pondering calligraphy and the common understanding of this art form, which has been established in art history as a form of visual expression whereby the writing brush is conceived as an extension of the hand,⁶⁹⁴ the narrative of the brush line as “writing, a delineation of the mind” (*shu xin hua ye*);⁶⁹⁵ the produced images or graphic shapes of the written characters moreover as coherently structured organisms of metaphorical bones (*gu* 骨), flesh (*rou* 肉), sinews (*jin* 筋), and blood (*xue* 血), which are animated through spirit

refining, waxing and glazing of the self. To be more precise, *wen* means to transform the natural or raw self into the social and cultural self that glistens the gloss of accumulated heritage.” Yen 2005: 33–56, 46.

⁶⁹¹ Nylan 1999: 20.

⁶⁹² As was referenced in the introduction of this study, Zito uses this term in the context of investigating ritualized forms of inscription and incorporation within expressive practices of the Chinese literati as *members* of the imperial court. See the sub-chapter “Re-membering the Past: Throne and Literati” in Zito 1997: 219–221.

⁶⁹³ Connerton 1995 [1989]: 4–5.

⁶⁹⁴ See the sub-chapter “Calligraphy or Handwriting as the Extension of the Body-Person” in Yen 2005: 75–80. The fundamental notion that there should exist a harmonious unity between the writer’s hand and his writing tool—since any disharmony would become immediately manifest in his calligraphy—is expressed in the “Treatise on Calligraphy” (*Shupu* 書譜) by Sun Guoting 孫過庭 (646–691): “若五乖同萃，思遏手蒙；五合交臻，神融筆暢.”, translated by Chang Ch’ung-ho as: “When the five discords coincide, the mind is blocked and the hand is checked. When the five harmonies concur, the spirit issues forth freely, and the brush moves with ease.” Chang, transl., 1995: 7, 88.

⁶⁹⁵ As put forward by the first-century scholar Yang Xiong, as noted in chapter one.

(*shen* 神), vital energy (*qi* 氣), and configurational force (*shi* 勢),⁶⁹⁶ the irreversible ink marks as “original”, “authentic traces” (*zhen ji* 真跡), or immediate “traces of the self” (*Spuren des Selbst*).⁶⁹⁷ Following this understanding, a piece of calligraphy not only mediates an ideographic text; moreover, form itself becomes vehicle, is filled with content—the signifier is turned into the signified. As was expounded in the introduction, aside from telling us something about the writer’s technical skill, calligraphy is held to transcribe “characterological”⁶⁹⁸ aspects: individual dispositions and peculiarities of the writer’s personality, including his or her ideological and moral inclinations, aesthetic tastes, and choices of style, as well as inseparable aspects of physical constitution, such as anatomical build, physiognomic features, and kinesthetic qualities, all of which configure the calligrapher’s handling of brush-and-ink.⁶⁹⁹ It was also noted in this context that according to the traditional understanding of the Chinese brush-and-ink arts, calligraphy can thus be seen as a *presentational*, or *self-presentational* form of expression,⁷⁰⁰ an aspect to be further considered in the following.

5.2. 1953: Huang Binhong and Transformation through Mimesis in Art

Given Huang Binhong’s approach to the brush-and-ink arts as modeled on the ideals of, firstly, learning from old masters and art historical traditions (*shi gu*), and secondly, learning from nature and nature observation (*shi zaohua*), both of which are aimed at the ultimate purpose of artistic innovation and transformation, we can see how the notions of copying and transformation are inherently intertwined in Huang Binhong’s art. In this context, the technique of free-hand copying serves as a method of reproduction, appropriation, and variation in art, as was illustrated in the first chapter on Huang Binhong. The format of the free-hand copy provides a space for both exercise and experimentation,

⁶⁹⁶ On connotations and uses of physiological metaphors in calligraphy terminology, see Hay 1983; Yen 2005: 75–79.

⁶⁹⁷ On the traditional Chinese conception of the brush line as an original, immediate imprint of the performer’s mind-body as *Spuren des Selbst*, see Brinker 1995; also Hertel 2009. A cultural philosophical reflection of the notion of *zhen ji* in Chinese art and art history is given by Byung-chul Han, see Han 2011: 17–27.

⁶⁹⁸ As noted in the first chapter, a term coined by Amy McNair in the context of discussing Yan Zhenqing 顏真卿 (709–785), whose calligraphy style was established during the Northern Song dynasty as a prototypical aesthetic and moral role model, see McNair 1998: 1–2.

⁶⁹⁹ See Yen 2005: 33–56, 57–80; Billeter 1989: 61–65, 135–145, 157–202.

⁷⁰⁰ See Wen C. Fong’s essay “Chinese Calligraphy as Presenting the Self”, which was referred to in the introduction, Fong 2008.

since it allows for, even requires, an element of subjective interpretation.⁷⁰¹ This format further presents an indispensable point of reference in terms of personal technical and stylistic growth, as well as an essential analytical category in the aesthetic reception and qualitative evaluation of calligraphy. In last consequence, the practice of free-hand copying can be considered the conditional basis and method, measure, or gauge, without which individual style—or “transformation”, for that matter—cannot be developed. In her essay “From Written Characters to Landscapes: Analyzing Huang Binhong’s Calligraphy Concepts and Calligraphy” (“Cong wenzi dao shanshui: shixi Huang Binhong de shufa guan ji shufa 從文字到山水：試析黃賓虹的書法觀及書法”), Luo Jianqun discusses theoretical and practical aspects of Huang Binhong’s calligraphy, and describes the two-fold, ambivalent quality of art historical transformation as a form of *following* and at the same time *reacting* against “the ancients”; “transformation” here meaning to have acquired the transmitted methods and traditions of brush-and-ink, so as for them to then be superseded and refigured: “[...] to follow and to reject simultaneously, that is transformation; to attain the methods of the ancients and yet to go beyond the ancient methods, that, likewise, is transformation.”⁷⁰²

We can take this wording of “going beyond the ancient methods” (*chaochu gufa zhi wai* 超出古法之外) as a cue that hints at the real, that is, the actual, efficacious structural conditions of specific historic time and space in which an individual artist is embedded at any given moment of his existence. Conceived philosophically, these art historical *Lebenswirklichkeiten* among which artists of all times have sought to position themselves, are described by Huang Binhong in his afore-quoted claim that in calligraphy, brush movement must “bear the structural force of an echo that resonates between up and down” (*shangxia huying zhi shi* 上下呼應之勢); in other words, demanding of the calligrapher the capability to react and adapt to continuously changing states and frames of action. This not only comprises the formal-aesthetic and technical aspects of brush-and-ink methods, but moreover the individual’s general art historical approach and frame of mind within the given contexts of time and space. Huang Binhong’s claim recalls the one made by his role model Shitao, purporting that “the brush and ink should follow the times” (*bimo dang sui*

⁷⁰¹ For a case study on the gradual individual development of style(s) in calligraphy, see Shen C. Y. Fu’s essay “Chu Yun-ming: Defining a Master’s Range and Quality”, Fu 1980.

⁷⁰² “[...] 順逆兼施是變，得古人法而超出古法之外也是變 [...]”, Luo 2005: 64.

shidai 筆墨當隨時代).⁷⁰³ Luo thus interprets “transformation” in the life context of Huang Binhong as the *possibility* yet also *necessity* to transgress one’s own traditions, which again indicates the double-sided nature of transformation: artistic transformation inevitably signifies a reiteration, confirmation, and preservation of traditions, and, at the same time, an alteration of and emancipation from these very traditions.⁷⁰⁴ Both these aspects of artistic transformation become actual through mimesis as a technique in the Chinese brush-and-ink arts. Moreover, artistic transformation in the traditional Chinese context not only implies a modeling of the present through the past, but, in a bilateral sense, also a modeling of the past through the present. To refer again to Shitao, whom Helmut Brinker has commented on with regard to the third chapter of this artist’s “Huayulu”, titled “Transformation” (“Bianhua 變化”):

Mit bald 60 Jahren konnte Shitao aus einem unschätzbaren Erfahrungsreichtum schöpfen, sodass er Guo Xi [郭熙, ca. 1000–ca. 1090] in nichts nachzustehen glaubte, ja sich hier gar als “Guo Xi” der frühen Qing-Zeit wahrnahm. In seinen “Aufgezeichneten Worten zur Malerei”, *Huayulu*, schreibt er im 3. Absatz: “Kann ich es dazu bringen, dass ich zu einem Alten werde und ein Alter zu mir wird? In solch einem Fall ist es so, dass man zwar weiß, dass es die Alten gibt, aber nicht weiß, dass es ein Ich gibt. [...] Bart und Augenbrauen der Alten können nicht in meinem Gesicht und über meinen Augen wachsen. Die Lungen der Alten kann man nicht meinen Eingeweiden einpflanzen. Ich selbst trage die Klagen mit meinen Lungen vor und zeige meinen Bart und meine Augenbrauen. [...]”⁷⁰⁵

As was noted in the context of the above discussion on Huang Binhong’s seven-character poetic couplet of 1953 (fig. 54a), it had been Huang’s aspiration to achieve an unrefined, naive style and a reduction of form and method, so as to bring forth the “interior strength” (*neili*) and “interior beauty” (*neimei*) of the brush line. Created two years before his passing away, this work is in line with Huang Binhong’s aesthetic concept of “reduced” or “minimalist brush painting” (*jianbihua* 簡筆畫) as based on the ink-landscape styles of Yuan-dynasty painters (e.g. figs. 63b–e, 83f).⁷⁰⁶ It can be considered as a convergence, or

⁷⁰³ As inscribed in a work Shitao painted in 1703 and recorded in “Poems and Annotations Inscribed in Paintings by The Pure One [Shitao] Volume One” (“Da Dizi ti huashi ba juan yi 大滌子題畫詩跋卷一”) in *Meishu congshu* 美術叢書. See Deng/Huang, eds., 1998 [1947], vol. 15, : 3–88, 28, for the full record.

⁷⁰⁴ Luo writes: “用自然之理、筆性之理到心性之理來證明‘變’的可能性和必然性，從而證明‘超出古人之法’，傳統得以延續、擅變的原因和必然。” Luo 2005: 64.

⁷⁰⁵ Brinker 2009: 159f.

⁷⁰⁶ For further examples of Huang’s “minimalist brush” style, see HBHQJ (4): 174–179, 185; Xu 2009: 156–159. For discussions of the significance and influence of Yuan-dynasty painting on Huang Binhong’s *jianbihua*, see the references given in n. 404. Shitao’s original words read: “[...] 能使我既古，而古即我。如是者，知有古而不知有我者也。[...] 古之鬚眉，不能生在我之面目；古之肺腑，不能安入我之腹腸。我自發我之肺腑，揭我之鬚眉 [...]”, Zhou 2007: 13.

resumé, of a life-long studying from old masters and studying from nature, and serves moreover as an example of Huang's late-period works as the result of a continuous gesture of mimetic reproduction or emulation. In consideration of the ongoing national and cultural identity crisis during the first decades of the twentieth century in China, besides the "necessities and possibilities" of defining one's own position regarding China's cultural history and heritage in all its aspects—including the revival of temporarily numbed art traditions through fresh stylistic interpretations; the promotion of "national essence" in face of the increasingly influential commercial trends from abroad; as well as the simultaneous experimenting with these foreign elements—the year in which this calligraphy was written by Huang Binhong, 1953, bore the perhaps gravest necessity and challenge, and also greatest possibility, for him in his life as an artist.

Huang, who had already been suffering from radically declining vision since the age of eighty-six, had written the above-mentioned *duilian* scrolls during the few months immediately preceding his eye operation in June 1953, that is to say, in his worst condition of near-complete blindness. Without a doubt, the successful realization of method, composition, form, and style, was being put to the test. Remarkably, the execution of this work shows a confident handling and skillful, versatile technique of brush-and-ink, to be seen especially in the small-sized clerical script on either side of the main inscription rendered in large seal script. Relying on a life-long study of artistic forms modeled after the masters of old as well as the myriad movements and transformations to be observed in nature, it was by force of circumstance that the process of writing calligraphy now depended significantly on Huang's abilities of memory, reproduction, and intuition. Here, the commonplace word "imagination" takes on literal meaning, as a (mental) process of image-making, as do the German-language terms *Wiederholung* (repetition) and *Erinnerung* (memory), inasmuch as they literally denote acts of "retrieval" and "reinternalization", respectively. Even though the 1953 scroll couplet is not explicitly designated as a free-hand copy, it can nevertheless be considered as belonging to this genre—if not to say, even presenting a pinnacle, or culmination of free-hand copying, given Huang Binhong's act of writing in a near-to blind state of his visual senses. At this moment, Huang's implicit, somatically anchored knowledge did not depend on confirmation through the physical eye, but allowed him to "follow the hand", more

literally, to “trust to the hand” (*xin shou* 信手)⁷⁰⁷. We are left to speculate whether it was precisely this experience of inner disengagement and liberation that might have stimulated Huang Binhong towards the imagination of “pine trees transform[ing] into a dragon”, as described in his poetic inscription.⁷⁰⁸

In any case, the lofty pursuit of detachment from worldly concerns and their “outer surface” of things, as initially postulated by the literati artists of the Northern Song, now gained new, practical significance: as a real personal need in Huang Binhong’s life. In this context of his final work period, Huang’s 1953 landscape painting *Old Traces of the Peach Blossom Stream* (*Taohua xi jiu ji* 桃花溪舊跡) (fig. 91a), alternatively titled *Peach Blossom Stream* (*Taohua xi* 桃花溪) and now in the collection of the Zhejiang Provincial Museum (ZPM) in Hangzhou, which measures 51.1 x 38.1 cm, and is executed in ink and light colors on paper, was produced during the same time period as the above-mentioned poem in seal script, and it may serve to illustrate in what way Huang Binhong’s *necessity* to modify and adapt to the given conditions provided, equally, a *possibility* to effectuate his self-appointed goal of transformation in art. Like the phoenixes and dragons described in his poem, the allusive motif of this landscape painting is of mythical nature and has its origins in the realm of collective cultural imagination: the title of the work invokes an allusion to the famous “Record of the Peach Blossom Spring” (*Taohua yuan ji* 桃花源記) by the Eastern-Jin poet Tao Yuanming 陶淵明, who was already mentioned in this study in the context of his poems on wine and flavor. In the inscription of his painting *Peach Blossom Stream*, Huang Binhong’s direct point of reference, however, is the “historical” Peach Blossom Stream, which actually did once flow through the scenery that is depicted in his painting, namely, the Qixia 棲霞 Hills on the northwest side of the West Lake in Hangzhou, just where Huang’s last residence had been located.⁷⁰⁹ Yet, interestingly, the stream referred to in this work existed only implicitly, in form of a memory, as the painting

⁷⁰⁷ “The term *hsin-shou*, ‘to trust to one’s hand’, implies that the painting is done spontaneously with no conscious direction: [...] the artist can forget about his brushwork since he is in his element.”, Bush 1971: 36. As has similarly been noted by James Cahill, who discusses the term *xin shou* in connection with the related notions of *xin bi* 信筆, “to trust to the brush”, and, respectively, *xin kou* 信口, “to trust to the mouth”, which is defined as “to say whatever comes uppermost”: “All three phrases imply an absence of intellectual control over the activity.” Cahill: 1958, 68.

⁷⁰⁸ To requote the poem: “和聲風動竹棲鳳。平頂雲鋪松化龍。” Yang, ed., 2010: 414, no. 91.

⁷⁰⁹ Indeed, he had lived on Qixia Hills Road (Qixialing Lu 棲霞嶺路), moving from no. 19 to no. 31 in 1952, where his former residence was established as the Huang Binhong Memorial Hall (Huang Binhong jinian guan 黃賓虹紀念館) in September 1959.

inscription (fig. 91b) reveals: “Long time ago, at the foot of the Qixia Hills, there existed the Peach Blossom Stream. Today, its course can only just be made out. Written in the *guisi* year [1953], Binhong, at the age of ninety [*sui*].”⁷¹⁰

It should be noted that the title of the painting *Taohua xi* 桃花溪 is indeed translated as *Peach Blossom Spring* in the English-language catalogue *Tracing the Past, Drawing the Future*.⁷¹¹ In her translation of this painting inscription, Claire Roberts, too, translates *Taohua xi* 桃花溪 as “Peach Blossom Spring”.⁷¹² The translation shows the closeness of the culture-historical association with Tao Yuanming, and Roberts claims that this association was intended by Huang: “In this painting Huang uses the motif of the Peach Blossom Spring to evoke the idyllic retreat of the famous recluse Tao Yuanming, in relation to his own dwelling below the Qixialing Ridge.”⁷¹³

In an article by the late Hong Kong poet and scholar Leung Ping-kwan 梁秉鈞⁷¹⁴ (1949–2013) that appeared in the *West Lake Supplement* (*Xihu fukan* 西湖副刊) of the *Hangzhou Daily* (*Hangzhou ribao* 杭州日報) under the title “Wishing to be the Old Artisan-Painter of the West Lake” (“Yuan zuo Xihu lao huagong 願作西湖老畫工”),⁷¹⁵ a connection between Huang’s 1953 paintings and the mythical theme of *Taohua yuan* is similarly established. In the article, Leung thematizes Huang Binhong’s painting practices as pursued at his home by the West Lake in Hangzhou, that is, his last place of residence where he lived from 1948 to 1955, and in the context of his near-to blind phase prior to June 1953, the following is recounted:

[That day,] Huang Binhong stood in front of the painting table, his left hand holding a magnifying glass, his right hand holding the painting brush. Relying only

⁷¹⁰ “棲霞嶺下舊有桃花溪，今澗路略辨，寫此，癸巳，賓虹，年九十。” Yang, ed., 2010: 412, no. 78.

⁷¹¹ Ibid.: 290, 412, no. 78.

⁷¹² Roberts 2005: 278.

⁷¹³ Ibid. In any case, we can safely relate certain subjects and themes in Huang Binhong’s painting with introspective ideas of reclusion (in nature). With regard to Huang Binhong’s painting series of nighttime mountain landscapes that was mentioned in the previous chapter, Claire Roberts has denoted these works as form of reclusive art, stating that “Huang Binhong was intrigued by nightscapes and while travelling at night took great delight in experiencing different tones of blackness. He produced many black and brooding paintings during the Beiping years [1937–1948], expressing both his own mood and the national psyche at the time. The works, with their frequent reference to the Northern Song, or night mountains, are deeply introspective. The artist’s fascination with painting ‘the dark side of the mountain’ [*yin mianshan* 陰面山], continues the tradition of withdrawal or retirement (*yinyi* 隱逸) and the art of the scholar-recluse (*yinshi* 隱士) within the context of bitter and uncertain times.” Ibid.: 217.

⁷¹⁴ Also known by the penname Yesi 也斯.

⁷¹⁵ Leung 2006 (n.p.). The article was published in the print issue of June 21, 2006, as well as on *Hangzhou ribao* online, under Leung’s penname Yesi.

on a faint trace of light [i.e. eyesight], he struggled to find his way on the paper and paint the picture. The painting *Peach Blossom Stream* once again nearly found completion; this was the second *Peach Blossom Stream* that he painted in that year [1953]. An old farmer who lived halfway up the Qixia Hills had described to Huang Binhong many times: in the old days, there had been peach blossoms a plenty in the Qixia Hills, and in springtime, one could see them to afar, the scenery resembling rosy clouds [*xia* 霞, as in the name of the hills], bright and gleaming. At the foot of the hills there had been a small stream called Peach Blossom Stream, which followed the passage of the time of day. These old sceneries had already turned into tales, and after having heard them, Huang Binhong harbored deep feelings towards the earth and grounds of every [nearby] dwelling, asking himself: Was this not precisely the “Peach Blossom Spring” [*Taohua yuan* 桃花源, i.e. the utopia] that he had been constantly searching for the large part of his life? Beneath his painting brush, works with the repeated subject matter of the Qixia Hills then began to emerge [...].⁷¹⁶

From this account of how Huang Binhong allegedly came to know about the history of the immediate surroundings of his home by the West Lake, it can in any case be inferred that the information on the so-called Peach Blossom Stream which had flowed nearby had been imbued, not only with a myth-like narrative, but also with a motif very similar to that of the legendary “Record of the Peach Blossom Spring” (*Taohua yuan ji* 桃花源記), in which a fisherman discovers a river, whose course he follows and is thus led to its source located in the far-away, hidden Peach Blossom Land, a place of eternal peace and seclusion where a harmonious community resided.⁷¹⁷ Despite the lyrical imagery of Leung’s language (which is, of course, hardly surprising, given Leung’s renown as a poet), if we take the gist of his words to be true, then Huang’s last abode among the Qixia Hills carried the significance of a final, near-to utopian retreat, similar to the utopia described in Tao Yuanming’s escapist tale of the “Peach Blossom Spring”. Unfortunately, I have so far not come across any explicit utterances on Tao Yuanming in Huang Binhong’s context, yet it appears nevertheless plausible to assume that Huang’s work title is also be read as an allusion to Tao’s story. In any case, as Peter Sturman notes in his essay “The Art of Reclusion”:

⁷¹⁶ “[這天] 黃賓虹站在畫桌前, 左手拿著放大鏡, 右手拿著畫筆, 憑著一絲微弱的亮光, 艱難地摸索著在紙上作畫。‘桃花溪’ 一畫又將近完稿, 這是今年他畫的第二幅 ‘桃花溪’ 了。一位家住棲霞嶺半山腰的老農多次向黃賓虹描述: 舊時棲霞嶺有桃花萬株, 每當春天, 遠遠看去, 如雲似霞, 一片粲然, 嶺下有一條小溪名桃花溪, 隨著時日的過去, 這些舊景已成美談, 而黃賓虹聽後, 對所居之地心存感觸, 這不就是自己大半生都在尋覓的桃花源嗎? 他的筆下開始反復出現以棲霞嶺為題材的作品 [...]” Ibid.

⁷¹⁷ For a translation of Tao Yuanming’s *Taohua yuan ji* 桃花源記, see Hinton, transl., 1993: 70–74. On pictorial traditions of the Peach Blossom Spring in Chinese painting, see Barnhart 1983.

The popularity of Tao's [Tao Yuanming's] "Peach Blossom Spring" made it a common subject for painting. [...] More importantly, the story offered a spatial template for the fundamental theme of escape and transcendence that provides meaning to landscape in Chinese art.⁷¹⁸

Before the backdrop that in Huang's view, learning was not an end in itself, but a tool and means to achieve the artist's ultimate goal of creative transformation, I would like to further consider the year 1953, which marked a significant change of momentum in Huang Binhong's life as an artist. My aim is to eventually make clear that in the context of his near-blindness, art practice took on an existential function and meaning as a method of *re-rememberance* as well as *self-presentation*⁷¹⁹ emerging from a complex body of accumulated knowledge and skills throughout Huang's long life of ninety years. Here, the concept of *neimei*, as introduced and discussed in this study from various perspectives, can be finally understood as constituting the core of Huang Binhong's art practice during this time.

5.3. Re-Membering the Old Traces of the *Peach Blossom Stream*

Expanding on the above-introduced work *Old Traces of the Peach Blossom Stream* of 1953 which opens up some valuable insights in terms of theme and style, it is noteworthy to refer to two additional work examples by Huang Binhong that carry the same title. These appear to depict the same natural scenery, and can be considered as closely linked to the 1953 work. My line of inquiry and argumentation suggests that especially the works created during Huang Binhong's short yet highly intense phase of near-blindness during the first half of 1953 possessed a crucially transitional element, anticipating a shift in style and technique that was then to find resolution in his works post-June 1953. What is more, these works fulfilled an existential function and meaning of "re-remembering"—literally, to "make part of the body again"; a term that refers not only to Angela Zito's definition of "re-remembering", but further implies Yueh-ping Yen's notion of "moulding" the body, both being forms of "incorporating" and "re-incorporating", much in the meaning of the German words *Einverleibung* or *Wiedereinverleibung*. In this sense, *re-remembering* is equal to a technique that possesses an essentially constitutive function for the self/body (as grounded in notions of *ti* 體 and *shen* 身).

Following the initially noted 1953 version of *Old Traces of the Peach Blossom Stream* in the ZPM collection, the second work to be referenced is a hanging scroll painted by Huang

⁷¹⁸ Sturman 2012: 19.

⁷¹⁹ In Zito's and Fong's senses, respectively.

Binhong in 1952 (fig. 92a), now kept in a private collection. Measuring 78.4 x 32.2 cm, it is executed in ink and light colors on paper, and, as noted, it carries the same title *Old Traces of the Peach Blossom Stream* (*Taohua xi jiu ji* 桃花溪舊跡). A five-line inscription in the upper right corner is followed by the artist's seal. Depicting a mountainous, densely vegetated landscape with a thatched hut and a water scene with a boat in the foreground, this picture pays tribute to the afore-noted scholar artist credo coined by Dong Qichang to “read ten thousand books and travel ten thousand *li*”, in that it shows Huang's indebtedness to the traditions of large-scale landscape composition in the Northern-Song manner, as well as a closeness to the subject of translating the personal experience of nature to the field of art. Of particular interest in this work is the relation between text and image, moreover, the story that the inscribed words tell us in relation to the story that can be read visually through the picture. The inscription reads:

North of the West Lake, beneath the high peaks, there used to be the Peach Stream [*sic*: Tao Xi 桃溪]. Recently I saw it in a painting by a Yuan master, thus I imitate his style. Old Man Binhong at the age of eighty-nine [*sui*].⁷²⁰

A specific geographical reference is thus given by the West Lake in Hangzhou where it had been noted that Huang Binhong spent the final years of his life, with his home located right in the hills north of the lake. Moreover, Huang's reference to Yuan-specific aesthetics is not only evident through the textual content of his inscription; it is underpinned by the spontaneous style of his calligraphic brushwork and the composition as a whole, which are, again, reminiscent of the Yuan master Wang Meng, as had previously been noted with regard to Huang Binhong's *Cool Air among Lakes and Mountains* (fig. 80a) and *Discourse on Clerical-Script Painting* (fig. 74a) discussed in the preceding chapter. The landscape is marked by in parts densely organized, and in other parts loosely and speedily sketched structures of brushstrokes, lending the painting the overall impression of having been painted “at random”. Of course, the overlapping layers of heavy, saturated ink in the thicket and undergrowth of the hills, which are effectively contrasted with fields of white mist or unfilled space, and enhanced by the subtle use of transparent, light ink and pastel color washes, are anything but arbitrarily executed. Together, they combine to a well-

⁷²⁰ “西湖北，高峰下，舊有桃溪 [*sic*]. 近於元人畫中見之，因擬其意。八十九叟賓虹。”

meditated composition, and present, rather, what we might imagine to be Huang Binhong's everyday practice of brush-and-ink technique.⁷²¹

While Huang's textual (and visual) reference to the old Yuan painters seems tangible, more ambiguous, by contrast, is again the reference made to the Peach Blossom Stream, which "used to exist" (*jiu you* 舊有) here. As with the 1953 painting of the *Peach Blossom Stream* which was previously introduced, we can ask ourselves whether Huang Binhong by this meant the *historical* Peach Blossom Stream, which indeed once flowed along this range of hills surrounding the West Lake—or whether this was an allusive motif implying the mythical Peach Blossom Spring of Tao Yuanming. Huang's referring to the works of Yuan-dynasty painters is certainly to be understood as a stylistic reference, yet at the same time, it could perhaps also point towards the theme of a collective cultural nostalgia which in Chinese history had been nourished time and again by hermit painters, including those of the Yuan dynasty, as the "leftover folk" (*yimin*) under foreign Mongol rule.⁷²² The Confucian scholar depicted on the houseboat in the lower left corner of the picture is recognizable by his traditional attire and topknot, as would hardly have been the case in the People's Republic of China beginning of the 1950s, so that the narrative setting of the motif, though it may be embedded into the actual geographical environment of the West Lake, is enmeshed with an imagined one, located somewhere in the indeterminate past.⁷²³

As Leung Ping-kwan notes in the above-cited account published in the *Hangzhou Daily*, Huang Binhong had painted at least two works carrying the title [*Old Traces of the*] *Peach Blossom Stream* during the same year ("this year", *jin nian* 今年, i.e. 1953). We can further assume that the 1953 work *Peach Blossom Stream* shown in fig. 91a is the one referred to in Leung Ping-kwan's account of Huang Binhong's "struggle to find his way on the paper" in face of his near-to completely diminished eyesight. Since the other *Peach Blossom Stream* shown in fig. 92a appears to be datable to 1952,⁷²⁴ it is likely that Huang

⁷²¹ Indeed, Huang Binhong had even used the term *rike* 日課, "daily exercise", to denote what he considered as his regular practicing of brush-and-ink technique in painting, see Kuo 2004: 131.

⁷²² The term "Peach Blossom Spring" (*Taohua yuan*) has thus become synonymous with the general idea of "Utopia" in the Chinese language, as expressed also in the idiom *shiwaitaoyuan* 世外桃源 (lit. Outerworldly Peach Spring) denoting a paradise, dream land, realm of peace, cf. Zhang, et al., eds., 2004 [1985]: 737.

⁷²³ Though it was not at all unusual for Huang to paint human figures clad in traditional attire (indeed, one will not find any other style of human depiction in his works), this style of depiction nevertheless indicates an idealized image of life.

⁷²⁴ That is, unless it was painted in 1953 before January 27, i.e. Huang's ninetieth birthday (or eighty-eighth, following the Gregorian calendar), which is our point of reference on grounds of Huang's painting

Binhong had all in all painted numerous versions of this motif, including the alleged “first version” of 1953 referred to by Leung.⁷²⁵ We can anyhow further take into consideration a third work, an example in which the motif of the “old traces” of the Peach Blossom Stream indicates a similar enmeshment of imagined and historical spheres. Also a hanging scroll titled *Old Traces of the Peach Blossom Stream* (*Taohua xi jiu ji* 桃花溪舊跡) (fig. 93a), this one is datable as a 1953 work; it measures 87.5 x 47.5 cm in size and is today kept in the collection of the National Art Museum of China (NAMOC) (Zhongguo meishuguan 中國美術館) in Beijing. It shows a similar, probably the same scenery of an abundantly green mountain range with a waterscape in the lower left foreground that is to be seen in the 1952 work of the same title. It further bears similarity with regard to the symbolic literati theme of the nature recluse, as well as technically, regarding the spartan application of (the same) soft pastel blue and pink colors, and the subtle alternation of dark ink and transparent washes. Several pictorial features differ from those to be seen in the 1952 scroll. In this later version, signs of human life are more present: the dwelling comprises of altogether four distinct building constructions, the shore of the lake is occupied by three houseboats, and a total of four human figures are visible in the front house and on one boat—as opposed to the solitary person, boat, and hut depicted in the earlier painting of 1952. In the 1953 work, the overall style and method of brush-and-ink is less spontaneous, and it does not have the same quality of apparent randomness, inasmuch as the brush movement is less sweeping and rhythmical, and less quick. Blots, dots, and lines are applied carefully and precisely, and more attention is given to the graphic shape of the spread of light, watery ink, and the gentle transitions of color tone, to be seen especially in the background of the far-away hills. Having said that the modes of composition and method bear deviations from one another, the main difference between both landscape

inscription which states his age as eighty-nine. The dating of this painting to 1952 is based on the specifications given by Xu Hongquan, Xu 2009: 217.

⁷²⁵ Another possibility is that Leung’s account is not entirely correct, and that the “first version” which he refers to is actually the 1952 version seen in fig. 92a, which perhaps implies that Huang Binhong had in fact painted only two versions of this theme at that point in time, that is, prior to his eye operation in June 1953. In any case, we may note that there exists another depiction that is extremely similar to the one seen in fig. 91a, albeit rendered in an even sketchier and abbreviated style and executed in ink only. The generically titled *Landscape* (*Shanshui* 山水), is dated to 1953; it bears an inscription, which however does not make any reference to the Qixia Hills or the Peach Blossom Stream (see fig. 91d). Further, in his 2012 essay, the author Shen Yubing 沈語冰, the author refers to a further painting by Huang Binhong with a depiction of the Qixia Hills, inscribed “西湖棲霞嶺, 舊有桃花溪.” For an image of the work and a formal discussion thereof, see Shen 2012: 108–110.

scenes, moreover, may be seen in the viewer's perspective upon the scene. The later painting of 1953, with its elevated, clear and distant viewpoint, offers the classical "grand view" of a complete and self-contained mountainscape, which is emphasized by the enclosing circular shoreline in the foreground. While it is true that the 1952 example also shows a large-scale depiction of nature, that is, including the traditional spatial composition of three depths, or distances (*san yuan* 三遠), here, the viewer seems to stand physically closer to the comparably intimate scene depicted in the foreground, thus readily identifying with the solitary figure on the boat (fig. 92b). In fact, we could even imagine this depiction to present something like a detailed view, a kind of zoom, into the very landscape of the later 1953 scroll: for example, when we compare both works, we find a repetition of specific pictorial elements, such as the recess of the shoreline in the foreground, the same location of the hut, the arriving boat depicted with a human figure.

What does it mean that these two works are potentially depicting the same landscape? The inscription accompanied by Huang Binhong's seal in the upper left corner of the later example may give us a clue (fig. 93b). It reads:

At the foot of the Qixia Hills by the West Lake, there once was the Peach Blossom Stream. Today, it is covered up and clogged by houses and gardens. Taking a rest there, I painted this. In the *guisi* year [1953], Binhong, at the age of ninety [*sui*].⁷²⁶

Both works are titled *Old Traces of the Peach Blossom Stream*, and though they are not explicitly designated as a series, they can all the same be conceived as such. In both examples, an explicit topographical reference is given, that is, to the West Lake and its surroundings, the Qixia Hills, while the question on the nature of the Peach Blossom Stream, which is mentioned here, too, remains unanswered. Considering his artistic attempt to capture the ever-changing effects of natural light and darkness during the day-and nighttime, it is not at all surprising that a painter like Huang Binhong who was producing sketches, paintings, and drawings of all sizes and formats without interruption until the end of his days would take the same scenic view in the direct vicinity of his home as a repeated model for his work. Concerning this 1953 version of the *Old Traces of the Peach Blossom Stream*, it is noteworthy that its inscription self-referentially specifies the person "I" (*yu* 餘), that is, the painter himself, Huang Binhong, who states that "I take a leisurely rest there, and sketched this" (*yu xiuxi qi zhong xie ci* 餘休息其中寫此). Huang

⁷²⁶ "西湖棲霞嶺, 舊有桃花溪。今湮塞, 築為園居, 餘休息其中寫此。癸巳賓虹年九十。"

embeds himself within the scene, and thus becomes part of our visual imagination and experience of the picture, which is established through his personal perspective. Examining a detail of the dwelling that is depicted in the picture (fig. 93c), we could assume Huang Binhong to be one of the figures seated inside the front house. The three figures depicted in the house, possibly two scholars and one servant, embody a vivid depiction of social activity, in coherence with the typical iconographical scheme of the idealized hermit's reclusion in nature, and conveying an air of the other-worldly and out-of-time. The apparent allusion to the mythical Peach Blossom Spring adds to this air of the other-worldly, as does Huang's reference in the inscription to the quasi non-existent, historical Peach Blossom Stream, which is "now clogged up and dried out" or "built up" (and perhaps "fallen into oblivion", as *jin yan sai* 今湮塞 could be alternatively interpreted?)⁷²⁷. The boundaries between real and imagined landscape are obscured, and yet there exist concrete references to the actual environment: a subtly perceivable lamentation over the "clogged" or "built up" stream described textually in the inscription, as well as a comment on the houses and gardens that have been constructed there. Indeed, while the 1952 painting—as well as the initially discussed ZPM version of 1953 to be seen in fig. 91a—show only one house, the presently discussed version depicts a second residence further up in the hills. It is likely that this residence was built during the interim phase that separates it from the other two paintings timewise, and that Huang Binhong's inscription is to be taken as a comment on the changing landscape of his immediate living surroundings in light of modern housing projects. In another sense, we can take the repetition of the chosen motif as well as the near-to verbatim repetition of the inscription as an indication of Huang Binhong's wish, and perhaps even *necessity* to *re-member*—to "make part of the body again"—a condition that had gained acute significance during the year 1953. This

⁷²⁷ Though *yansai* 湮塞 here should be translated as "clogged up and dried out" or "built up", in the context of the painting in question, we may call to mind that *yansai* etymologically also carries the implication of "falling into oblivion". On the meanings of *yan* 湮 and *sai* 塞, see HYDZD, vol. 3: 1671, and vol. 1: 475; Karlgren 1923: 105, no. 278; Karlgren 1957: 132f., no. 483e; 240f., no. 908a; and Mathews 1975: 7415 and 5446, respectively. Notably, the character *yan* 湮 in the above-cited inscription could be read alternatively as *yin* 堙 (as Leung does, who transcribes the inscription of the discussed painting as: "西湖棲霞嶺舊時有桃花溪, 今堙塞, 築為園居, 餘休息其中。" Leung 2006 [n.p.]), which would moreover imply the meaning of "blocked up" in the sense of "built up" or "built upon" (i.e. by houses, as indeed is described by Huang Binhong in the inscription), cf. HYDZD, vol. 1: 461; Karlgren 1923: 105, no. 278; Karlgren 1957: 132f., no. 483d; Mathews 1975: 7414. It thus seems more than unclear which specific condition Huang Binhong meant to describe in referring to the old traces of the stream—a (naturally) dried-out and clogged up water course; or a stream that was drained for purposes of irrigation or house building; or perhaps a sight, moreover a memory, that had begun to vanish due to the passage of time and the decline of the artist's physical state?

point can be further elucidated if we return to the initially introduced version of *Old Traces of the Peach Blossom Stream* in the ZPM collection. As was noted, suffering from severely declining vision already for several years,⁷²⁸ Huang's worst condition of near-complete blindness reached a pinnacle during the first half of 1953. Contrary to the assumption that facing the graveness of his handicap, Huang might have rather refrained from his painting and writing activities, the few months that preceded his eye operation in June of that year turned out to be a highly productive phase. Compared with the other two works, the atmosphere in this version is hazy, in some way sinister, and even unhomely. It has an all-over quality of restlessness, as do many other work examples painted in the time period directly preceding his eye operation in June of 1953. Leung Ping-kwan's vivid description of Huang Binhong with the magnifying glass in one hand and the painting brush in the other, his eyesight "relying only on a faint trace of light", gives us a vague idea of the practical conditions under which this version of *Peach Blossom Stream* came into being. The strongly abstracted forms in this work are pursued by way of bold, broad, rough, and forceful brushstrokes (cf. fig. 91c). The forms border on the verge of the indiscernible. The thatched house that is depicted is well-camouflaged among the jungle-like scrub and brambles of the brittle brush and dense strokes in this version, and yet, we can still just about recognize it near the lower left edge of the enclosing shoreline.

5.4. Transporting the Movement of *caoshu*

In her above-mentioned article, Luo Jianqun recounts a conference on Huang Binhong that took place in 2004, where two different opinions became evident in the context of discussing Huang Binhong's cursive-script styles (*xingcao* 行草).⁷²⁹ The larger part of the discussants considered these to have, all in all, never reached the same accomplished level as had by contrast Huang Binhong's archaic-script styles (*zhuanli* 篆隸). This was explained by the fact that Huang Binhong's artistic focus had been on painting, and that Huang's simultaneous dealing with calligraphy had moreover been of epigraphical nature, with a particular interest in bronze and stone inscriptions. The other—lesser-represented—opinion that was put forward, was that

[...] Huang Binhong applied the brush methods of calligraphy to painting in such thorough and fundamental way that [we can say] he possibly achieved to

⁷²⁸ In fact, Huang's eyesight had begun to show first signs of deterioration as early as the late 1930s, see Roberts 2005: 279.

⁷²⁹ Luo 2005: 64.

substitute the essential language of painting; to empty out and open up [*choukong* 抽空] a new space of defining the essential characteristics of painting; and to thus destroy [*hui* 毀] painting in the course of this development.⁷³⁰

The gist of this viewpoint implies that with Huang Binhong's "destruction of painting", our understanding of traditional Chinese ink-landscape painting, too, is overthrown. No wonder, therefore, that it did not find acceptance among the majority of conference discussants.

In this context, we can note that Huang Binhong's archaic calligraphy styles are repetitively referred to with high appraisal (a circumstance that is also pointed out by Luo); in a much different way than holds true for Huang's cursive calligraphy styles. Yet, the meaning of the latter cannot be overlooked or even dismissed as trivial. This assertion is based on the premise that private formats such as letters, personal notes, essay manuscripts, diary entries and the like are generally written in cursive script types, and that these are likewise to be taken into consideration as potentially "calligraphy" when evaluating a calligrapher's overall oeuvre—even if these formats were not initially written for public display.⁷³¹ Huang Binhong's cursive-script works thus naturally constitute the significantly larger part of his corpus of writings and calligraphies.⁷³² Cursive forms of script, including draft cursive, semi-cursive, and cursive script, are traditionally used for informal text formats and are thus ascribed to the private domains of life, such that Huang Binhong's cursive script styles cannot possibly be evaluated by the same criteria as his "accomplished" archaic script styles (for examples, see figs. 91b, 93b, 94a, and 95a–e, respectively, as well as the figures referenced in n. 733).⁷³³ The latter, with its typical double-hanging-scroll format, fulfilled a more representational function, better fit for public display—likewise the seal-script calligraphies by Huang Binhong that were printed, in programmatic manner, onto the cover of the art journal *Shenzhou guoguang ji* 神洲國光

⁷³⁰ “[...] 黃賓虹將書法用筆用於繪畫過於徹底，甚至可能有取代繪畫的本體語言、抽空了繪畫的繪畫性特質之虞，照此發展下去會毀了繪畫。” Ibid.

⁷³¹ For a disambiguation of “formal” and “informal” styles in calligraphy, cf. Barnhard 1972: 233; Miller/Zhang 1990: 4–9. An overview of various representative functions and formats of seal and clerical scripts during the Han dynasty is further given in Fong et al., eds., 2008: 97–106. Further, for a study on “Letters as Calligraphy Exemplars”, see McNair’s contribution to the essay volume *A History of Chinese Letters and Epistolary Culture*, McNair 2015.

⁷³² As similarly pointed out by Luo, Luo 2005: 64.

⁷³³ Huang Binhong's semi-cursive and cursive script was exemplified in figs. 5b–d, 5f, 36a, 39a, 41, 43–45, 58a–f, 84. For further examples of Huang Binhong's semi-cursive and cursive script, see HBHQJI (9): 16–302; Zhejiang meishuguan, ed., 2009, vol. 1: 283–304. Huang Binhong's seal and clerical script was exemplified in figs. 5a, 5e, 5g, 42, 47, 52, and 54a–i. For further examples, see the references given in n. 406.

集 (*National Glories of China*) (as seen in figs. 5e, 95a), whose publication Huang had been involved with for several years.⁷³⁴ As Roberts notes, this journal was one among others “concerned with historical literature, poetry, painting, calligraphy, epigraphy and the arts”, and “central to the contemporary debate on national learning or *guoxue* and the formulation of a modern canon of the arts”.⁷³⁵

According to his own accounts, throughout his latter life decades, Huang Binhong spent several hours every morning with writing calligraphy, explicitly in cursive script; after this, he would commence with work on his landscape paintings.⁷³⁶ Comparing examples of Huang Binhong’s late-period semi-cursive and cursive-style works (figs. 96a–f)⁷³⁷ with the calligraphic brushwork to be seen in Huang’s previously mentioned “thirsty brush” (*kebi* 渴筆) ink landscape sketches (figs. 83g–j), we can easily grasp the mutual effectivity at work between “written” and “painted” brushstrokes. While Kuo refers to Huang’s description of his “daily exercises” (*rike* 日課) in painting in his letters to Fu Lei as early as 1947,⁷³⁸ Huang’s daily exercises in *caoshu*, which served as a kind of warm-up before beginning to paint, are described in a letter to his friend Chen Zhu 陳柱 (1890–1944), from which Luo Jianqun cites and comments:

“Every day, getting up as early as possible, I use rough hemp paper to practice brush force, and I write cursive calligraphy in order to concentrate on loosening up. I transport this movement into the paintings. For twenty years already I have been doing this without interruption [...]” This statement illustrates the background as well as the aim of [Huang Binhong’s] writing this type of cursive-script calligraphy, namely the training of wrist strength, so as to achieve the state of “loosening up”.⁷³⁹

Seen from Huang Binhong’s perspective as a painter, the particular requirements of writing in cursive script, including the high manoeuvrability of a flexible brush tip, well-controlled brush pressure, rhythm, and speed, and sound eye-hand coordination—in other words, the overall visuospatial capability to execute and, simultaneously, react immediately to the

⁷³⁴ Huang Binhong’s seal-script calligraphy was used for the cover of volumes 13 to 18 of *Shenzhou guoguang ji*, which was published between 1908 and 1912 in Shanghai, see also Yu-jen Liu 2010: 35; Roberts 2005: 85.

⁷³⁵ Roberts 2005: 66.

⁷³⁶ Luo 2005: 64; Yang, ed., 2010: 329.

⁷³⁷ As with figs. 58a–f, though not all of the examples are dated, on stylistic grounds, they can clearly be grouped to Huang Binhong’s late-period work.

⁷³⁸ Kuo 2004: 131.

⁷³⁹ “每日趁早晨用粗麻紙練習筆力，作草以求舒和之致，運之畫中，已二十年未間斷之 [...]。這段話解釋了這批草書書作的來歷及作草書的目的，是為練腕力，為涵養‘舒和之致’。” Luo 2005: 64; cf. also Yang, ed., 2010: 329. For Huang Binhong’s letters to Chen Zhu, see HBHWJ (1): 107–135.

constantly changing form and composition of the characters in the writing space—all these doubtlessly provided ideal preparatory qualities to physically warm up, relax, and also strengthen the arm, hand, wrist, and fingers; as well to “warm up” mentally for the day of work lying ahead. Moreover, Huang’s daily practice in cursive writing will have proved useful as to the systematic application of his distinct “five brush and seven ink methods” in painting. While the brush methods denoted as “roundness” (*yuan*) and “transformation” (*bian*) can be associated with typical features of cursive-script calligraphy, the other brush methods denoted as “evenness” (*ping*), “heaviness” (*zhong*), and “lingering” (*liu*), embody characteristic traits of seal script and clerical script. Notably, with regard to Huang Binhong’s cursive calligraphy, we can thus see how his writing is aimed at an incorporation of all five methods in equal manner. The description of Huang Binhong’s late painting style both as “simple, plain, awkward, and strong (*chien-dan cho-jian* [簡單拙健])”, as described by Wang Bomin,⁷⁴⁰ likewise as “dark, unpolished, and unpopular”, as described by Huang Binhong himself,⁷⁴¹ appears to be transferable and likewise applicable to Huang Binhong’s semi-cursive and cursive-script calligraphies as emerging from the latter half of the 1940s onwards, inasmuch as these achieve to visually evoke, in themselves, dense and withered “landscapes” of sorts. As can be retraced in the monographs on Huang Binhong’s calligraphy, regarding the stylistic development of Huang’s cursive script styles, a stylistic transition towards a decidedly rougher brush idiom is observable around 1947–1949;⁷⁴² one that appears to have matured around 1952.⁷⁴³ A rare scholarly contribution devoted entirely to the study of Huang Binhong’s semi-cursive script calligraphy is Zhao Jianxian’s 趙鑑欽 2012 article published in *Juvenile Calligraphy* (*Qingshaonian shufa* 青少年書法), in which the author undertakes a categorization of Huang Binhong’s various *xingshu* styles.⁷⁴⁴ Quoting Huang’s idiomatic statement that “My

⁷⁴⁰ Cited after Kuo 2004: 159.

⁷⁴¹ *Ibid.*: 4.

⁷⁴² Cf. e.g. Zhang Tongyu 2003: 40, 43, and Zhang Tongyu 2009: 67, 82, and 216–217 for reproductions of work examples dating from the latter half of the 1940s and earlier.

⁷⁴³ Regarding Huang’s mature cursive style, I am referring to representative works as seen in the above-mentioned figs. 58a–f, and 96a–f.

⁷⁴⁴ Zhao differentiates five *xingshu* categories in this context: 1) a semi-cursive standard-script style based on Chu Suiliang’s 褚遂良 (597–658) standard script (有褚楷意蘊的行楷書); 2) a dense and thick semi-cursive standard-script style inspired by seal script (篆意頗濃的行楷書); 3) letters written in a beautiful fluid semi-cursive script style (秀麗流動的手札); 4) painting inscriptions written in a natural, free and easy semi-cursive script style (自然灑落的題畫行書); 5) works of highest degree written in a dense and thick semi-cursive standard-script style inspired by seal script, characterized by a dripping-wet brush and ink, and conveying a vigorous and firm, ancient and dignified quality (筆墨淋漓、雄渾古穆、篆意頗濃的行書極品

calligraphy surpasses my painting” (*Wo de shufa shengyu huihua* 我的書法勝於繪畫), Zhao (as do all other authors who have taken Huang Binhong’s calligraphy as a subject of their research) remarks that Huang’s accomplishments in calligraphy are yet to be fully recognized in art history, especially with regard to their meaning on an aesthetic level.⁷⁴⁵ Further, Zhao notes:

Concerning Huang Binhong’s calligraphy, many people evaluate his seal script as the best, and his semi-cursive script as second-best. On the whole, I have no doubts about this standpoint. Though the reputation of his seal script seems to be less high than that of Wu Changshuo, Deng Shiru, Qi Baishi, and others, specialists within the field assert that with regard to his calligraphy and its highest [aspiration towards the] realm of “naturalness, heavenliness, and interior beauty”, Huang Binhong’s seal script seems to be slightly superior. Though Huang’s semi-cursive script is somewhat inferior to his seal script, due to his exceptional artistic concepts and his skills based on laborious brush practice, his deep level of scholarly knowledge and self-cultivation, as well as his fortunate lot of a long life, [his semi-cursive script] also reached a high degree of technical proficiency, and the acme of perfection and beauty.⁷⁴⁶

Although it is a highly welcomed development to see that the less-known aspects of Huang Binhong’s oeuvre are receiving more attention within the scholarly field, it must nevertheless be noted that Zhao’s assessment of Huang’s semi-cursive calligraphy remains entirely within a classic, strictly hierarchical aesthetic framework, denoting Huang’s seal script as coming “first”, his semi-cursive script as coming only “second”. If we think of Huang Binhong’s cursive styles in calligraphy as having had an immediate effect on his late painting styles (which in turn are praised as “having pushed traditional landscape painting towards a new high peak”)⁷⁴⁷, then such a hierarchical model, with its tagging of “best” and “second-best” styles, becomes redundant. As already noted, in spite of Huang’s

). See Zhao 2009: 43–45. For calligraphy by Chu Suiliang, cf. fig. 78c; further see Nakata, ed., 1970–1972, vol. 3. It can be added that with the third *xingshu* category denoted by Zhao, “letters written in a beautiful fluid semi-cursive script style”, the author probably refers to what could also be called Huang Binhong’s “slender-gold style”, a reference to the calligraphy style of Song Huizong’s 宋徽宗 (1082–1135, r. 1100–1126) “slender gold” (*shoujin* 瘦金) (fig. 94b–c) that has also been noted by Claire Roberts in discussing the inscription in Huang Binhong’s undated ink painting *Yuliang* (魚梁), Roberts 2005: 85; reproduced *ibid.*: fig. 3.9. For further examples of Song Huizong’s *shoujin* style, see Wang Pingchuan, ed., 2002: esp. 39–189; as well as figs. 5f and 94a for examples by Huang Binhong similar to this style. A similarity can also be observed with Ni Zan’s “slender-gold” style, cf. fig. 30d.

⁷⁴⁵ Zhao 2009: 43.

⁷⁴⁶ “黃賓虹的書法，不少人評價為篆書第一，行書第二。這個觀點我基本上沒有疑義。儘管他的篆書，名氣上似乎比吳昌碩、鄧石如、齊白石等差些，但行內人士評價，就其書法的最高境界‘自然、天成、內美’諸方面來講，黃賓虹的篆書似略勝一籌。黃氏的行書雖略遜於篆書，但因其有超人的藝術理念及實實在在的筆下功夫，加之黃氏豐厚的學養及幸運的高壽，亦達到了爐火純青、盡善盡美的高度。” *Ibid.*

⁷⁴⁷ As was quoted in chapter three: “[...] 黃賓虹始終堅持從傳統文化內部尋求中國的‘內美’，並以對‘內美’的追求和渾厚華滋的風格把傳統山水畫推向新的高峰。” Xie, ed., 2013: Preface II (n.p.).

physical handicap which might have prevented him from pursuing any serious artistic activities, the time period that immediately preceded his eye operation in June 1953 revealed itself as an intensive phase of remarkable artistic output. Mentally visualizing the amount of time and intensity of concentration that Huang accounts to have invested into practicing *caoshu* during his last few life decades, we can reasonably conclude that at this key point of impaired eyesight, which posed unprecedented challenges to the ability of Huang Binhong's imaginative power and skills, there existed an essential necessity to trust in automatized, internalized somatic processes and forms of sequenced movement, in order to be able to give outer form to his inner visions. It appears only natural that the aspects of rhythm, repetition, and pattern, specific to Huang Binhong's matutinal practice of *caoshu* over the long time period of many years, would leave discernable traces in the landscape paintings he made during the later hours of the day—as Huang himself asserts through his statement that “I transport this movement [of *caoshu*] into the paintings” (*yun zhi hua zhong* 運之畫中).

As Jason Kuo further points out, Huang Binhong had said that he “never took a day's break from practicing”.⁷⁴⁸ With this quote, Kuo is referring to Huang's above-noted “daily practices” in painting—unsigned works of which Kuo further writes that “a large number [...] should be regarded as the processes and records of his exploration [in art]”.⁷⁴⁹ Assessing the general significance that “daily practice” thus took on in the case of Huang Binhong's late years, we can conclude that his morning exercises in *caoshu* calligraphy—just like the paintings he refers to, works that were “unfinished, undated, and unsigned”—were of substantial practical value.⁷⁵⁰ We can assume that in fulfilling the function of a warm-up exercise, they had a direct impact on his manner of using brush and ink to paint his landscapes. Also, they are of important value for us in their meaning as “processes and records”, as denoted by Kuo, since they evidence, among other things, that Huang Binhong, was indeed still in command of producing legible forms of text and image in spite of his impaired eyesight. As pointed out already, Huang Binhong's cursive-script styles can, or rather, *should* not be evaluated in the same way “accomplished” as his archaic script styles. The question moreover is of how, then, to define “achieved”, for if we

⁷⁴⁸ Kuo 2004: 174.

⁷⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁰ Ibid. On Huang Binhong's own assessment of his daily exercises as “unfinished” works, see also Luo 2005: 64; Yang, ed., 2010: 329.

understand Huang's late-period, landscape paintings—commonly considered as highly “achieved”—as directly effected by his intensive practice of cursive-script calligraphy, then does it not appear to some extent feasible to credit the latter with this merit? It was noted earlier on that Huang Binhong had strongly promoted the archaic forms of large seal script, inasmuch as he held these to incorporate the aesthetics of “people’s learning” (*minxue*), praising large seal script specifically for its “intrinsic”, “interior beauty” (*neimei*) and “interior strength” (*neili*), and its “unneat” (*bu qi*), i.e. non-uniform appearance. Interestingly, specific qualities of “unneatness” can be similarly applied to certain styles of cursive script in the history of Chinese calligraphy (including Huang Binhong’s case), and we can consider Huang’s late cursive style, as seen through those “processes and records” of his “daily practices”, as a kind of informal expression of the aesthetics that this artist had sought to promote within the public sphere (that is, through the “formal” script types of seal and clerical scripts). In the context of Huang Binhong’s concept of *neimei*, Luo Jianqun makes a similar connection in assessing the importance of Huang Binhong’s cursive script styles *alongside* his epigraphic styles—as opposed to his epigraphic styles *only*—claiming that

[...] in championing the epigraphic style of the eighteenth century and after, and promoting a pure form of cursive and running script, [Huang Binhong] inaugurated a return to the origins of “inner beauty”. This may in fact be his ultimate achievement as an artist and art historian.⁷⁵¹

Incidentally, the “records” of Huang’s daily *caoshu* practice are less-known to the public, which is, for one, due to the fact that Huang Binhong was reluctant to show the works he considered to be mere exercises to other people.⁷⁵² Notably, though, they are less-known due to the sheer amount of examples that are in existence. As Luo notes on the “presence of so many practice sheets in Huang’s archive”, these countless examples “[...] may also explain the extraordinary range of [Huang Binhong’s] late work—from minute density and detail, to a sensibility characterized by emptiness and ethereality—since practicing calligraphy is intended to build strength in the wrist and develop technique.”⁷⁵³

Pondering the aspects outlined in the above paragraphs, it appears sound to argue that it was through Huang’s final stage of landscape painting, initiated by the unforeseen incident of his acute eye illness in 1953, that his cursive-script practice gained new meaning—to

⁷⁵¹ Ibid.: 328.

⁷⁵² Cf. Ibid.: 174.

⁷⁵³ Yang, ed., 2010: 329.

reiterate Luo's above-quoted words—as a “necessity and possibility”, namely, to transgress his known methods, “the methods of the ancient masters”, and achieve “transformation” (“*bian*” *de kenengxing he biranxing, cong'er zhengming* “*chaochu guren zhi fa*” “變”的可能性和必然性，從而證明“超出古人之法”)⁷⁵⁴. We could say that Huang's cursive calligraphy thus received an “opportunity” to come into full effect and attain “achievement”—namely, through his painted landscapes, as the version of *Peach Blossom Stream* in the ZPM collection can illustrate. In this regard, the viewpoint defended at the Huang Binhong conference in 2004, that the artist's application of calligraphy methods had permeated the field of traditional ink-landscape painting, to the extent of overthrowing (“destroying” [*hui*]) our common understanding thereof, is coherent and reasonable. Huang Binhong's late landscape works, especially those dating from the time period of his eye illness, imply a reversal, or rather annihilation, of categorical distinction as *either* “painting” *or* “calligraphy”—hence, Huang's own claim that he sought “to use landscapes to write characters, and use written characters to make paintings”. With regard to the context of production surrounding the ZPM version of Huang Binhong's *Old Traces of the Peach Blossom Stream*, including its mutually effective aspects of visual imagination, reconstructed memory, sensory perception, and implicit somatic knowledge, perceived images, remembered images, and mythical images merge across (anyhow blurry) boundaries. The constitutive categories of painting and calligraphy, likewise, merge together—however, not only in hierarchical terms of “calligraphic painting”, but, then, equally in terms of “painterly calligraphy”. The particular entwining of *shu* 書 and *hua* 畫 in Huang Binhong's works of this time is surely due to Huang's diminishing eyesight—which favored a rougher, freer, more abbreviated, or more approximate drawing of brush lines, as is typical in cursive-script calligraphy. As Kuo observes in his discussion of a *Landscape in Colors* painted by Huang Binhong in 1952 when he had already been suffering from cataracts:

Like many other paintings done in 1952, this painting can be considered somewhat experimental. The brushwork used was entirely that of calligraphy. The sprightly, crisscross strokes showed neither their beginnings nor their ends. At close range the picture displays only chaotic dots and strokes rendered in watery touches, from which the viewer could hardly identify any object, but hung on the wall and viewed

⁷⁵⁴ Cf. Luo 2005: 64.

from five or ten steps away, it demonstrates brilliant scenery with a rising, enshrouding mist.⁷⁵⁵

Kuo's description can be readily transferred and applied to the ZPM version of Huang Binhong's *Peach Blossom Stream*. Further, Huang Binhong, writing in the inscription of this work that the course of the water stream "today [...] can only just be made out" (*jin* [...] *lüe bian* 今[...]略辨) or "distinguished" (i.e. with eyes), at first appears to refer to the course that has dried up over time; yet given the present circumstances of Huang Binhong's eyesight, the statement also suggests that the course is nearly unperceivable due to Huang's near blindness, which would have a rather different, introspective quality of meaning. Further, given the pervasive narration of Huang Binhong's "late maturity"⁷⁵⁶ in art throughout the circa last ten years of his life, which has been considered in terms of a stylistic "metamorphosis",⁷⁵⁷ an "attainment of a high summit",⁷⁵⁸ and as a process of perfecting and completing the lineage of traditional literati landscape painting,⁷⁵⁹ through the above-noted interpretation of Huang's final transitional stage as a form of artistic (self-)destruction, an interesting thought figure is generated that is worthwhile taking into consideration. It implies the radical semiotic inversion, or negation, of calligraphy and painting, as noted above; an idea that unsurprisingly met with resistance at the 2004 conference. In this context, it is most telling that Huang Binhong, in his dealing with the evolutionary history of Chinese writing and calligraphy, had a particular interest in transitory phases during which a given script type had begun to change its form and incorporate new features, therein presenting a precursor in anticipation of a new script type, which had yet to become fully developed (in other words: conventionalized); and moreover defining itself through its very state of being "unpure", or "raw", and "in-between".⁷⁶⁰ Here, Huang Binhong was fascinated by the state of artistic experimentalism and liberty found in the natural, unrefined forms of the written characters' brushstrokes and compositions—constituting that what he considered to be an "intrinsic", "interior beauty", as was expounded above in the context of discussing Huang's views on large seal script; a quality that would eventually be lost through repeated historical processes of standardization. In Huang Binhong's context, the large seal script type serves as a

⁷⁵⁵ Kuo 2004: 116.

⁷⁵⁶ Cf. *ibid.*: 15.

⁷⁵⁷ *Ibid.*: 73.

⁷⁵⁸ "[黃賓虹] 登上了藝術的峰巔", Zhang Tongyu 2010: 38.

⁷⁵⁹ Cf. Kuo 2004: 1f.

⁷⁶⁰ This aspect is elaborated in Yang, ed., 2010: 332.

paradigm of this historical phenomenon. Huang Binhong was a person who possessed “a profound sense of history”, as noted by Zaixin Hong.⁷⁶¹ Having had a special interest in the transformational periods in the history of Chinese writing and calligraphy, it follows that Huang expressed this interest in his own approaches to art, which Zaixin Hong has thus denoted as “the transformational artistic practice”⁷⁶² of Huang Binhong. On this note, the “dark, dense, thick and heavy” (*heimi houzhong*) “confusion”⁷⁶³ and “disorganization”⁷⁶⁴ of “Black Binhong’s” late works can be recognized in their meaning, as crystallizations of transitional moments, in the life history of the artist as well as the discursive history of “calligraphy and painting” (*shuhua*), both of which disrupted and invigorated by “cursive-script methods” (*caofa* 草法)⁷⁶⁵.

Given the paradigm shift that Chinese academia underwent in light of the introduction of western aesthetics from the end of the nineteenth century onwards, marking, as Shi Xiongbo has recently argued, “the end of traditional calligraphy criticism”,⁷⁶⁶ and representing “a shift from the traditional discourse to one that engages in a dialogue between Chinese calligraphy criticism and Western aesthetic theories”, notably the aesthetics of modern abstract art,⁷⁶⁷ we can only speculate whether or not Huang Binhong had had any intentions to further his understanding of “abstraction” in art, that is to say, as a concept imported from Japan and the West.⁷⁶⁸ In any case, if he did have any intentions

⁷⁶¹ Hong 2010: 231.

⁷⁶² Ibid.

⁷⁶³ As Huang Binhong’s friend Fu Lei provocatively and polemically described Huang Binhong’s landscape paintings from the fictitious perspective of an imaginary viewer: “Master Huang’s paintings are mostly landscapes. But when you look at his landscapes, mountains do not look like mountains and trees do not look like trees. All you see is confusion. You cannot make sense of anything at all [...]”, Kuo 2004: 4. On this, Kuo comments: “This imaginary viewer represented the public which, in Fu Lei’s view, simply could not understand Huang Pin-hung’s art.” Ibid.

⁷⁶⁴ As Kuo quotes James Cahill’s disapproving evaluation of Huang’s paintings, *ibid.*: 3.

⁷⁶⁵ *caofa* being the term used by Luo in the context of her similar conclusion, cf. Luo 2005: 64.

⁷⁶⁶ In Shi’s article “Zhang Yinlin: A Preface to Chinese Calligraphy Criticism (1931), Translation and Introduction by Shi Xiongbo”, the author states: “Following the introduction of Western aesthetics at the turn of the century, theoretical writing on art had undergone a paradigm shift in Chinese academia. As far as Chinese calligraphy was concerned, the publishing of Kang Youwei’s 康有為 (1858–1927) *Guang yizhou shuangji* 廣藝舟雙楫 (Expanding on Two Oars of the Ship of Art) in 1891 marked the end of traditional calligraphy criticism, and Wang Guowei’s 王國維 (1877–1927) treatise ‘On the Position of the Refined in Aesthetics’ in 1907, to many contemporary calligraphy theorists, initiated modern calligraphy aesthetics, or modern Chinese aesthetics at large.” Shi 2015: 1.

⁷⁶⁷ *Ibid.*: 4. Shi Xiongbo here names Chiang Yee, the author of *Chinese Calligraphy: An Introduction to Its Aesthetic and Technique* (1938), as an example, inasmuch as “Chiang Yee noticed the fundamental role of calligraphy to Chinese arts [...]”, further stating that “[a] novelty of Chiang’s aesthetics lies in his connecting the aesthetics of Chinese calligraphy with the aesthetics of modern abstract art [...]”, *ibid.*

⁷⁶⁸ A scholarly contribution devoted to this question is Wang Yu’s 王煜 essay “The Connections between Huang Binhong and Abstract Expressionist Painting” (“Huang Binhong he chouxiang biao xian zhuyi huihua

of this sort (which the comparisons by Zaixin Hong, Chu-tsing Li, and Michael Sullivan cited in the previous chapter, namely, of Huang's late works with contemporary abstract styles, seem to corroborate), then it is likely that Huang would not have discussed these openly—in spite of, or rather precisely because of the fact that “[t]he study of the aesthetics of Chinese calligraphy began to thrive in the 1930s. Many scholars, most of whom had studied in western countries, started to pay attention to the field.”⁷⁶⁹ From Shi Xiongbo's accounts, we can gather that in the context of “national essence” discourses in art circles of Republican-era China which sought after a revival of traditional “indigenous” aesthetics and values, contrary to the established narrative of this art form (which is still wide-spread up to this day), calligraphy did not at all present the “pure”, inherently Chinese tradition anymore that it was generally readily defined and promoted as. In other words, even the “most Chinese” of all Chinese art traditions had begun to engage in a cross-cultural dialogue, and so from the perspective of “national essence” advocates, talk about “abstraction” in the modern sense could have stood in direct opposition to their pronounced goals. As was elucidated at length in the previous chapter of this study, it is therefore more than difficult to fully assess Huang Binhong's thoughts and motivations regarding specific issues related with contemporary “modernist” and “western” trends in Chinese art.

Notably, we can consider Huang Binhong's utterance that he aimed “to use landscapes to write characters, and use written characters to make paintings”, as transporting significant cultural (ideological) meaning: through this utterance, Huang Binhong establishes an aesthetics of “seeming disorderliness”⁷⁷⁰ in the brushwork of his landscape paintings which is informed by Chinese calligraphy techniques and aesthetics—in the *classic*, traditional sense of calligraphy, that is; rather than perhaps by “modern”, “western” aesthetics of “abstract art”. It thus seems somewhat ironic that this very utterance at the same time also reveals—whether intended or not—a “typically” modernist approach, in that it points

de xiangtong zhi chu 黃賓虹和抽象表現主義繪畫的相通之處”), see Wang Yu 2012. Though the title of the essay implies a perhaps explicit connection, regrettably, the communal aspects that the author establishes between Huang Binhong's art and Abstract Expressionist Painting (these being the three aspects of “the creative process of painting” [繪畫創作過程]; “the painting space” [繪畫空間], and “the independent character of the painting language” [繪畫語言的獨立性], cf. *ibid.*: 134) are not substantiated by any direct textual or verbal references on part of Huang Binhong, so that Wang Yu's argumentation remains largely speculative. In spite of this, Wang Yu's research presents a nonetheless pioneering approach.

⁷⁶⁹ Shi 2015: 2.

⁷⁷⁰ As noted by Kuo, who describes Huang Binhong's late work in terms of its “strength and power despite its seeming disorderliness”, Kuo 2004: 5.

precisely towards the “‘abstract’ beauty of the line”⁷⁷¹ in the Chinese brush-and-ink arts, meaning a beauty beyond the written “text” or painted “image”. It is not completely out of the question that Huang Binhong had also made use of the classic idiom of *shuhua tong yuan* in order to implicitly embed abstractionist (i.e. explicitly “modern”, “western”) ideas into his art.

The gist of the preceding can be rounded up as follows: it was by force of circumstance that in face of Huang Binhong’s acute eye illness throughout 1953, the artist’s practice of painting pictures and writing calligraphy during this time strongly depended on his repertoire of technical abilities grounded in memory and intuition, and forms of implicit, or somatic knowledge that did not require constant confirmation through the physical eye. This phenomenon has thus been termed by Xu Hongquan as “blind painting” (*ming hua* 瞑畫), relying fully on a form of perception guided (solely) by the hand (*quan ping shou xia ganjue* 全凭手下感覺).⁷⁷² Particularly at this critical moment of Huang Binhong’s limited eyesight, art practice called for the brush holder to “trust in the hand” and rely on the rhythmic and repetitive gestures of the daily exercises of sketching, painting, and writing—notably calligraphy in *caoshu*—over many decades. In the following, I would like to further expand on several terms that were referenced at the outset of this chapter.

⁷⁷¹ As has been denoted and discussed by Chiang Yee, see Chiang 1954 [1938]: 103–132.

⁷⁷² Cf. Xu 2009: 111f. Notably, Xu adds that the term *ming hua* in this context is interchangeable with the term *ming shu* 瞑書, “blind writing”, *ibid.* I would like to remark here that we must differentiate among the denotation of Huang’s art of this period as “blind”, inasmuch as different art historians have associated this term with alternatively positive and negative evaluations. While the aspect of “blindness” seems to have served as an explanation for the “chaotic”, “sloppy” and “confusing” appearance of Huang’s so-called “dark and dense” brushwork during this time (cf. Kuo 2004: 4), with regard to Huang Binhong’s nickname “Hei” (Black) Binhong, the art historian Wang Bomin, for example, has pointed out: “Some people have said that Huang Pin-hung became ‘Hei Pin-hung’, because he was painting blind. [...] But in fact this is a grave misunderstanding. Even at the time the old painter had cataracts, he could still distinguish shapes and structures, black and white [...]. He was always able to express himself, to realize his intention: can this be called ‘painting blind’?”, Kuo 2004: 161. Obviously, Wang Bomin’s emphasis here is on the argument that Huang Binhong had always been able “to realize his intention”, thus arguing that the quality of Huang’s paintings never took damage by the physical limitations posed by his cataracts. This is a completely different tone of evaluation, suggesting—as does Xu Hongquan—that Huang Binhong’s cataracts in fact “proved” his abilities as a painter; Xu’s notion of “blind painting” (*ming hua*) moreover placing emphasis on artistic “achievement” in spite of (or perhaps even *by way of*) limitation. On a similar note, in this context, at a joint workshop of the Art History Institute, Freie Universität Berlin, and the Peking University School of Arts (January 5–10, 2014), where I presented research on Huang Binhong’s use of colors in landscape painting, it was noted by an art historian of Peking University that the artist’s use of in part extremely bright colors in his late years had something to do with his increasing blindness. As I hope to have shown in the preceding chapter of this study, this argument is sound only to a certain extent, for when we investigate Huang Binhong’s use of colors thoroughly and systematically, we see a very complex and subtle understanding of color use that already becomes evident from the early 1940s onwards, and continues to persist also after Huang’s eye illness was healed; see also n. 654.

5.5. Mnemonic Devices of the Self/Body: Calligraphy as Life Practice

As had been noted, the Chinese term *tiyan* 體驗 generally signifies the meaning “experience”, yet more literally, “to learn through” or “to prove effective through bodily practice”. This illustrates well the function and use of the human body as a mnemonic device of accumulating skill and knowledge, and essentially constituting that what we perceive to be our “self”. This knowledge is not one that can be acquired from books; it is one that is continuously born out of the individual’s bodily practice, which requires an ongoing assimilation to and penetration of new situations. This understanding bears similarity with the pragmatist philosophy of William James (1842–1910), whose radical empiricist approach held that the true meaning of any idea placed an emphasis on “radical empiricism”, indicating that the true meaning of any idea can only be verified through experience:

[...] the great assumption of the intellectualists is that truth means essentially an inert static relation. [...] Pragmatism, on the other hand, asks its usual question. “Grant an idea or belief to be true“, it says, “what concrete difference will its being true make in one’s actual life? How will the truth be realized?“ [...] *True ideas are those that we can assimilate, validate, corroborate and verify. False ideas are those that we can not.* [...] The truth of an idea is not a stagnant property inherent in it. Truth *happens* to an idea. It *becomes* true, is *made* true by events. Its verity is in fact an event, a process: the process namely of its verifying itself, its *verification*. Its validity is the process of its *valid-ation*.⁷⁷³

Reprising some of the thoughts that were already raised in the introductory chapter of this study, Chung-ying Cheng, who in his article “On the Metaphysical Significance of *Ti* (Body-Embodiment) in Chinese Philosophy: *Benti* (Origin-Substance) and *Ti-Yong* (Substance and Function)” has commented on the meaning of *tiyan*, can be quoted appropriately in this context:

As *ti* is our living body, to experience our living body as living and as a whole is one of the meanings of the word *ti*. To experience something intimately and be aware of this intimate experience is referred to as *tiyan* (coming to know by intimate and personal experience), where *yan* means “confirmed” or “confirmation.” Hence, *tiyan* is to confirm by direct experience of one’s own person. The important thing about this notion of *tiyan* is that there is no restriction as to what we could intimately experience. Not only can we intimately experience our life, or have an intimate experience of some event or situation, but we can also come to intimately experience life and its meaning in general, or the *dao*, or other

⁷⁷³ As stated by James in “Lecture VI: Pragmatism’s Conception of Truth”, James 1907: 197–236, 200f. For further reading on William James’ pragmatist philosophy and its impact on various disciplines in the Euro-American context, see Rohr/Strube, eds., 2012; Schwartz 2012.

properties of basic categories of reality as well. That this is possible is because we as human persons have the ability to experience intimately reality, both internal and external, on many levels. But we have to cultivate ourselves to enable this ability to experience to become active and productive.⁷⁷⁴

This last note that “we have to cultivate ourselves to enable this ability to experience to become active and productive” implies a mutually effective relationship between personal experience and moral growth: experience does not only effectuate development of the self; development of the self, in turn, allows for a heightened “ability to experience”. This understanding complies fully with traditional notions of self-cultivation, as expressed, for example through the organic tree metaphor for *wen* 文 (pattern, literary text), which Stephen Owen denotes as “the visible outward pattern of the leaves, which, observed carefully, reveals the hidden shape of the trunk and branches: *wen* is the organic external manifestation of some ‘substance’ (*chih*) or ‘natural principle’ (*li*) (e.g., growth or ‘treeing’)”.⁷⁷⁵ Analogously, in the context of calligraphy practice, the human body equals the system of a trunk and branches, whose “hidden shape”, in other words, whose *potential* shape, becomes tangible through writing (*wen*), i.e. the written calligraphy; a “visible outward pattern” of “leaves”. Further, the specific visual shapes of these “leaves” can be considered as determined by the inner dispositions of the writer, i.e. his/her “natural principle”; his/her personal state of (moral) “growth or ‘treeing’”. In the case of calligraphy, the visible “output” of writing in turn has a reciprocal effect on the “inner dispositions”. Or, in the alternative wording of Mersmann, who in the context of discussing the scriptural iconicity of Chinese calligraphy as a form of projected corporeality states:

Der Körper als sensomotorischer Reaktions- und Aktionsraum regelt damit nicht nur das Zusammenspiel von Außen- und Innenraumwahrnehmung, sondern auch den Austausch zwischen Imagination als internen Bildentwurf und Ikonizität als externalisierter, sprich außenprojizierter Imagination.⁷⁷⁶

Further, Huang Binhong’s case provides a vivid example that conveys not only Chung-ying Cheng’s above-quoted notion of experience as *tiyan*, but also Mathias Obert’s understanding, which parallels the ideas put forward by Cheng. In his article “Leibliche Mimesis und Selbstsorge in den chinesischen Künsten des Pinsels”, Obert has described the transformative quality of calligraphy as an art form and form of “life practice” that is

⁷⁷⁴ Cheng 2002: 146.

⁷⁷⁵ Owen 1992: 594.

⁷⁷⁶ Mersmann 2015 (b): 200.

based on the praxis of copy and mimesis, thus bringing about an immediately effective “body-mimetic transformation of the practitioner” (*leibmimetische Verwandlung des Schaffenden*). As the author further writes, in calligraphy practice

[...] werden im Ausgang von einem Kopieren standardisierter Strichfolgen an vorgegebenen Schriftzeichen übungshalber die diesen wahrnehmungsmäßig innewohnenden Gestaltqualitäten mimetisch jeweils neu wiedererschaffen. Die Mimesis der Zeichengestalt, die Hervorhebung bestimmter Ausdruckscharaktere am geschriebenen Zeichen wird insgesamt vermittelt durch leibliche Mimesis. Ein leibliches Bewegungsmuster allein vermag dabei die erwünschte ästhetische Wirkung zu gewährleisten. Dieses Bewegungsmuster erreicht eine Verdichtung der Raumgestalt durch einen bestimmten Rhythmus und das geregelte Tempo im zeitlichen Vollzug. Dabei tritt die ideale Bewegung als eine “in sich selbst zurückgenommene Bewegung” hervor. Diese kann nur durch leibliche Übung und leibliche Selbstempfindung verwirklicht werden. Sie ist weder als eine zielgerichtete Handlung zu beschreiben noch nach Maßgabe eines Willensaktes zu vollziehen. Auch verweigert sich diese Bewegungsqualität in ihrer paradoxen Verfassung dem Begriff, während davon ausgegangen werden muss, dass die leibliche Sphäre gerade zur Vermittlung solcher Widersprüche in der Bewegung selbst imstande ist.⁷⁷⁷

In the context of calligraphy, Obert describes the practitioner’s movement pattern as ideally “a ‘movement of withdrawal into the self’” (*eine “in sich selbst zurückgenommene Bewegung”*); a movement that can only be achieved through “corporeal practice” (*leibliche Übung*) and “corporeal experience of the self” (*leibliche Selbsterfahrung*). This movement he denotes as “neither purposeful”, or “telic” (*weder [...] eine zielgerichtete*), nor to be realized by “stipulation of an act of will” (*nach Maßgabe eines Willensaktes*). I understand this to mean that writing calligraphy, in the traditional sense as based on the model of mimetic reproduction, is only possible if giving up, to some extent, the notion of control (in classic psychological terms as steered by mere volition); and in turn embracing an intuitive form of consciousness that allows the hand to guide the brush in a steady movement of rhythm and pace, perhaps comparable with the moment of riding one’s bicycle as a child for the first time without support wheels. I further understand Obert’s idea of “withdrawal into the self” as a form of giving up this control and handing “oneself” (“self” here based on the premise of “being” as steered by will) over to a form of “being” and “doing” *of oneself* (as signified by the Chinese term *ziran* 自然, meaning “nature”, “natural”; yet literally, a state of being or operating “of oneself”, or “of the self”)—“self” here implying a state of being and doing by way of internalized—if you will, “corpo-

⁷⁷⁷ Obert 2013: 424.

realized”—knowledge and technique. For, as Obert clarifies in the next passage of his text:

Indem der Mensch sich einem künstlerischen Gestaltungsprozess auf der leiblichen Ebene überlässt, wird er als ethische Haltung das “Sich-Einlassen” auf Begegnendes und auf ein je schon sich vollziehendes Geschehen verinnerlichen. So wird er leibhaftig in der Weise des “von-selbst” antworten können auf den Anspruch, der an ihn von den Dingen, aus seiner Umwelt, vom Anderen her ergeht.⁷⁷⁸

Crucially, Obert then concludes that the “ability to respond of oneself” (“*von-selbst*” *antworten können*) is not only a prerequisite, but also an effect, or a “fruit”, of writing calligraphy:

Was zunächst als eine Voraussetzung gekonnten [Malens und] Schreibens oder als ein ästhetisches Ideal, als Vollkommenheit künstlerischer Gestaltungspraxis angesehen werden mochte, die antwortende Vollzugsart des “von-selbst”, das muss nunmehr als eine *ethische Frucht künstlerischen Schaffens* verstanden werden. Dasjenige gelebte Weltverhältnis, welches von der Vollzugsweise des “von-selbst” getragen wird, kann sich einstellen als ein Ertrag künstlerischer Arbeit. Dieser ethische Ertrag ästhetischer Praxis resultiert als “Zurückhaltung” der Person und Öffnung gegenüber dem Weltgegenüber gerade aus einer leibmimetischen Verwandlung des Schaffenden.⁷⁷⁹

Following this argumentation, we can apply the idea of a “movement of withdrawal into the self” to the case of Huang Binhong and his art production during the severe phase of near-to blindness: as an “abandoning” of his (willful) self to creative processes on a corporeal level of action (i.e. *Indem der Mensch sich einem künstlerischen Gestaltungsprozess auf der leiblichen Ebene überlässt*), and an embracing of “the things as they are” (i.e. *das “Sich-Einlassen” auf Begegnendes und auf ein je schon sich vollziehendes Geschehen*). The moral growth gained through this “withdrawal into the self” is thus to be understood as a form of restraint, or containment, of one’s person (“*Zurückhaltung*” *der Person*) effectuated through the aesthetic practice of calligraphy—inasmuch as writing calligraphy always involves the “body-mimetic transformation of the practitioner” (*leibmimetische Verwandlung des Schaffenden*), which occurs in accordance with his or her relational connection to the world (*Weltverhältnis*). If we consider the phase of near-to blindness in Huang Binhong’s life to be especially characterized by the artist’s movement of withdrawal in Obert’s sense, then the work phase that followed Huang’s successful eye operation mid-1953 can be considered to illustrate in turn the artist’s “body-mimetic transformation” and the fruit of this “withdrawal into the

⁷⁷⁸ Ibid.: 424f.

⁷⁷⁹ Ibid.: 425.

self”. Incidentally, Obert’s understanding of a “body-mimetic transformation” that becomes “immediately effective” through art practice (*Auf dem Feld der Kunstübung kann der Person [...] in ihrer leibhaftigen Existenz eine ganz unmittelbar wirksame Verwandlung widerfahren [...]*)⁷⁸⁰ is synonymous with the meaning of *tiyan* as “to learn through” or “to prove effective through bodily practice”. It is with this in mind that the heading of one the above chapter sections was chosen: “1953: Transformation through Mimesis in Art”.

Obert’s conclusion that the “ability to respond of oneself” is not only *prerequisite*, but also *effect* of writing calligraphy resonates with Chung-ying Cheng’s words that “we have to cultivate ourselves to enable this ability to experience to become active and productive”. Both authors’ viewpoints corroborate an understanding of Huang Binhong’s eye illness as an external factor that triggered a transformational moment in art; a transformation which in turn was only made possible because its prerequisites had already been “cultivated” and been made way for before this time. Following the terminology of *ti* (body/script-body), *li* (ritual), and *wen* (text-pattern) introduced in the initial chapter of this study, the notions of cultivating and self-cultivation here signify the continuously pursued, ritualized (text-)patterns of embodied movement that are inherent to the practice of brush-and-ink arts in the traditional Chinese context, notably calligraphy. What is more, I think that what is described by Obert as a “withdrawal into the self” in fact corresponds with the notion of *neimei* as it has been elucidated from the various angles pursued throughout the course of this study. Concerning the meaning and status of *neimei* as a concept in this regard, in chapter three, it had been argued that in the context of Huang Binhong’s case, *neimei* can be understood as “a kind of beauty that complies with the beauty of natural change [*ziran de bianhua* 自然的變化, following the above, alternatively translatable as “change that becomes effective of itself]”.⁷⁸¹ Here, the very ideas just discussed, of self-restraint; of “abandoning” one’s (willful) self to creative processes on a corporeal level of action; of embracing “the things as they are”—and thus allowing them to operate “of themselves”—these ideas comply fully with the notion of natural change in the sense previously elucidated. In this way linking the term of “withdrawal into the self” with the term of *neimei*, it becomes all the more evident in what way *neimei* does not only denote a

⁷⁸⁰ Ibid.: 397.

⁷⁸¹ As put forward by Li Jianfeng: “內美是一種合於自然的變化之美。” Li Jianfeng 2010: 44.

“state of mind”, but moreover a bodily condition, inasmuch as Obert defines “withdrawal into the self” as both *prerequisite and effect* of calligraphy practice. Moreover, in chapter three, it was also highlighted that Huang Binhong’s idea of *neimei* is closely associated with that of *neili* (interior strength), and that the latter is in turn connoted with aesthetic ideas of an embodied brush rooted in the body-specific terminology of a “martial brush tip”. It was noted that this aesthetic further conveys an ideal of the “withheld”, “cautious” movement of the brush—to here requote Huang Binhong:

When using the slanted brush tip, [the brush line] becomes jagged and uneven like saw teeth. When using the centered brush tip, [the brush line] becomes like the backbone of a sword. When Li Houzhu [Li Yu 李煜, ca. 937–978] wrote calligraphy in the “gold-inlaid knife coin” [*jin cuo dao* 金錯刀] style, he excelled at [the method of] the quivering brush. The calligraphy of Yan Lugong [Yan Zhenqing] penetrated through to the backside of the paper; the halting brush tardy and sluggish. Therein lay their [brush method of] lingering.⁷⁸²

Incidentally, we can note that Huang Binhong’s own, subtle use of the so-called quivering, or trembling brush (*chanbi* 顫筆) (cf. figs. 5f and 96d for examples; and further figs. 30d, and 70b–e for examples of *chanbi* by other artists), presents an interesting variation of what was annotated above as his semi-cursive “slender-gold” (*shoujin* 瘦金) style (cf. figs. 5f, 94a), which refers to the calligraphy style of Song Huizong 宋徽宗 (1082–1135, r. 1100–1126) (figs. 94b–c).⁷⁸³ Moreover, the aspect of an intentionally trembling brush line to some extent reflects the aesthetic of the tardy and sluggish brush espoused by Huang Binhong. This “tardy and sluggish” points towards the ideal of “lingering”, or “withholding”, which is, essentially, of ethical nature, and implemented by way of bodily practice and (bodily) self-cultivation.⁷⁸⁴ In this context, reference was made to Obert, who points towards this same aspect in connection with the *Zhuangzi*, stating that a form of “transformative embodiment” (*verwandelnde Einleibung*) is at work with regard to the

⁷⁸² “用筆側鋒，成鋸齒形。用筆中鋒，成劍脊形。李後主作金錯刀書，善用顫筆。顏魯公書透紙背，停筆遲滯，是其留也。” HBHWJ (6): 160.

⁷⁸³ See n. 744. As was noted already, the technique of *chanbi* was especially à la mode during the early Qing period, as for example calligraphies by Gao Qipei (figs. 70b–c), Huang Shen (figs. 70d–e), and also Shitao exemplify. With regard to Shitao’s quivering brush, as seen in the inscription on an album leaf of a 1680 landscape painting album, Qianshen Bai has written: “The belief that ‘calligraphy, painting, and seal carving are an integral whole’ was one reason why Shitao, probably more than any other artist in the early Qing, strove to achieve a broken effect in his calligraphy by purposely allowing his hand to tremble while writing.” Bai 2003: 206; the album leaf is reproduced *ibid.*: 207. For another example of Shitao’s use of *chanbi*, see fig. 30d, especially the character *lao* 老 (old) to be seen in right-hand column of the inscription.

⁷⁸⁴ Incidentally, the lingering brush method was especially espoused by Huang Binhong’s student Lin Sanzhi, as can be seen in figs. 7a–e. On Lin Sanzhi’s use of the lingering brush method, see Cui 2008.

cook Pao Ding’s astounding, near-to blind technique of carving meat,⁷⁸⁵ moreover specifying the aspect of “[peculiar] hesitation” (*ein [eigenartiges] Zögern*) to be observed in the cook’s sequence of movements.⁷⁸⁶ We can thus equate Obert’s crucial term of “withdrawal into the self”, as expounded in the present chapter, with the notions of “lingering”, or “withholding”, and “hesitation”, as previously discussed; and, thus, with the underlying notions of *neimei*, and *neili*, respectively. The equation of “withdrawal into the self”, “lingering”, and “hesitation”, is feasible also inasmuch as these aspect likewise present crucial prerequisites and effects of calligraphy practice with regard to the “body-mimetic transformation of the practitioner”, i.e. the transformation of “script-body”—*shuti*, meaning the indivisibility of the written body and the human body—through this art form. And it is in these senses that the concept of *neimei*, or rather, the *various* concepts of *neimei* as deciphered throughout this study can be considered as constitutive factors in the context of Huang Binhong’s late-year “transformation in art”; his art practice therein fullfilling existential meaning as life practice (*Lebensübung*) or life art (*Kunst des Lebens*) in Obert’s sense; hence, then, the title that was chosen for the present chapter, “The Inner Workings of *neimei*”: Here, we can once more refer to Richard Shusterman’s afore-quoted definition “somaesthetics”:

Somaesthetics can be provisionally defined as the critical, meliorative study of the experience and use of one’s body as a locus of sensory-aesthetic appreciation (*aisthesis*) and creative self-fashioning. It is therefore also devoted to the knowledge, discourses, practices, and bodily disciplines that structure such somatic care or can improve it. If we put aside traditional philosophical prejudice against the body [...] then the philosophical value of somaesthetics should become clear in several ways.⁷⁸⁷

5.6. Mnemonic Devices of the Self/Body: Art as Commemoration

Through the above discussion that took into consideration a selection of late works by Huang Binhong, my overall aim is to crystallize various body-specific meanings of Chinese brush art; the term “script body” (*shuti*), as defined above, here proving helpful as a supportive thought device. If we further adhere to the above-defined meaning of *tiyan* as “to learn through” or “to prove effective through bodily practice”, the Chinese brush-and-ink arts in general, and Huang Binhong’s case in particular, moreover illustrate effectively

⁷⁸⁵ Obert 2013: 407.

⁷⁸⁶ Ibid.: 415.

⁷⁸⁷ Shusterman 1999: 302.

the function and use of the human body as a mnemonic organism of accumulating knowledge, skillfulness, and technique through art. Essentially, the quality and degree of this knowledge and skill constitutes that what we perceive to be our “selves” as individuals as well as social beings; the process and progress of *tiyan* thus mirroring the process and progress of moral and aesthetic self-refinement. It is in this way that the practice of brush-and-ink arts fulfilled an existential function and meaning for Huang Binhong as a mnemonic device of confirming and consolidating his self during the critical phase of 1953. Moreover, not only the functioning of automatized processes of bodily movement, but also the capability and power of imagination, that is, the willful envisioning and generation of internal images, were needed and challenged more than ever. As already noted, the inscription of Huang’s 1953 *Peach Blossom Stream* in the ZPM collection reads that “Long time ago [...] there existed the Peach Blossom Stream. Today, its course can only just be made out [...]”, and it remains unclear whether Huang had meant to say that the water course “today [...] can only just be made out” because it had already *dried* out (as seems to be implied by the term *yan sai*), or because it presented some kind of memory and reminiscence of something from the past, maybe a mythical past (as seems to be moreover suggested by the other two works of 1952 and 1953 respectively). Further, is it possible that Huang had meant to say that the watercourse can “only just be made out”, i.e. with eyes, in reference to his fading eyesight? Whatever the case, in the exhibition catalogue *Tracing the Past, Drawing the Future*, Luo Jianqun in fact informs us that it was not only Huang’s eyesight, but indeed his recollective memory as such that had begun to fade. In her catalogue entry on Huang Binhong’s painting *Shangyang Village, Mt. Yandang* (fig. 83e) of the same time period that preceded his eye operation in 1953, Luo elucidates that Huang in the inscription of this work erroneously describes his “memory” of traveling to Mount Yandang in 1933, whereas he had in fact made this trip in 1931.⁷⁸⁸ With regard to the work *Shangyang Village, Mt. Yandang*, Claire Roberts corroborates the notion of art practice as a mnemonic device, writing that “This painting is as much about the technique of painting as it is about place and memory. Failing eyesight forced Huang to rely on poetic sentiment and images formed in his mind’s eye.”⁷⁸⁹

We can conclude that in the context of Huang’s depictions of the *Peach Blossom Stream*—moreover, its “Old Traces”—the mutually dependent elements of sensory

⁷⁸⁸ Yang, ed., 2010: 292f.

⁷⁸⁹ Roberts 2005: 278.

perception, reconstructed memory, somatic knowledge of brush-and-ink methods, and the human property of visual imagination, invariably merge together. On this note, I would like to refer once more to Zito's term of *re-membering*. Though Zito very convincingly applies this term in the specific context of practices of the Chinese literati as members of the imperial court,⁷⁹⁰ a further terminological disambiguation proves useful. Aside from understanding Huang Binhong's *Old Traces of the Peach Blossom Stream* as a series, perhaps, of "re-membered landscapes", reference to the term of "commemorated landscapes" is likewise useful. With regard to the case at hand, the mnemonic function of calligraphy practice can be carved out through the insightful aspects of commemoration, presentation, and presence as elucidated by the Sinologist, comparative philosopher, and semiologist Hans-Georg Möller.⁷⁹¹ According to Hans-Georg Möller and his disambiguation of different cultural notions of remembering and forgetting, while the conventional western understanding of remembering implies an act of "re-gaining" or "re-attaining" (*wiederholen*) of a thing that had been *temporarily absent*, the Confucian understanding of commemorating (*nian* 念) is, by contrast, connoted with a ritual of an *uninterrupted presentation*, or making present—the presence-ing—of a thing.⁷⁹² This could even be in form of an imagined presence, as Möller reasons, e.g. an internal visualization of a thing or person, a deceased ancestor, for instance, serving to preserve and ensure a *continuous* state of presence; for, that what is once forgotten is irretrievably lost, forever. The written character *nian* 念 itself illustrates this notion: according to Bernhard Karlgren, it comes from "now" (*jin* 今) and "heart", or "mind-heart" (*xin* 心), and means: "reflect, think; to study, learn by heart, remember; recite, read—to have present (*jin*) to the mind (*xin*)".⁷⁹³

Further, while the traditional Chinese painting genre of honorific commemorative landscapes "takes landscape as its apparent subject but dedicates its discourse on landscape to the commemoration of an historical person",⁷⁹⁴ we can in some sense also consider

⁷⁹⁰ Zito 1997: 219–221.

⁷⁹¹ I refer here to Hans-Georg Möller's discussions and comparative analyses of culture-specific notions of presence, presentation, and representation, Möller 1999; Möller 2003; Möller 2007.

⁷⁹² Möller 1999: 240f. I emphasize here that I do not want to insinuate a "western" understanding on part of Zito and her use of the term *re-membering*. I moreover simply want to draw attention to the various implications of "remembrance" in common usage.

⁷⁹³ Cf. Karlgren 1923: 207, no. 670; Karlgren 1957: 178, no. 670a. *Nian* bears the various meanings "to think of", "to miss"; "care", "remembrance"; "thought", "idea"; "to read aloud", "to study".

⁷⁹⁴ Clapp 2012: 15. For a study of this painting genre in China, see Anne de Coursey Clapp's book from which the preceding quote is cited, in which this tradition is traced back to Northern-Song China.

Huang Binhong's *Old Traces of the Peach Blossom Stream* works in these terms—that is, in spite of the fact that, strictly speaking, these works do not serve to commemorate “an historical person”, but moreover an amalgam of personhoods and realities. This, then, is not even that different from the “historical persons” commemorated in the conventional honorific tradition, inasmuch as these were to some extent idolized and projected images of the commemorated as well as commemorating persons in question:

Although commemorative landscape was made as a form of biography intended to be preserved for generations by the honorand's family, it was not made as a fully public monument accessible to everyone. [...] Commemorative landscape paintings, especially those dedicated to the elucidation of the recipient's *hao* [or *biehao* 別號, the pen name, or literary name, i.e. the more intimate, self-chosen name of educated men in traditional China], were often cast in styles decided by some event in his real or imagined experience [...], and were often determined by considerations of his character or a projected state of mind. These [paintings] are surprisingly personal declarations, and, perhaps by way of compensation, their style often betrays an intentional degree of removal from the real world—the content of the painting is idealized, and the form becomes abstracted [...].⁷⁹⁵

Moreover, the category of “commemorative landscape painting” is particularly applicable in Huang Binhong's case when considered in terms of landscape depiction whose function lies in evoking a *site-specific* “remembrance of the past” (*huaigu* 懷古) within the painter (or viewer); a tradition grounded in classical literature and which is even older than that of “biographical” commemorative landscape painting.⁷⁹⁶ Jonathan Hay elucidates:

The commemorative painting was often highly personalized, providing a visual record or a metaphoric representation of a person, place, or occasion. It was usually intended to serve as the catalyst for literary responses, though any aesthetic merit it possessed in its own right was of course all to the good.⁷⁹⁷

Wu Hung has further discussed landscape paintings of this genre in terms of “ruin images”, and “memory paintings”, respectively, taking painting by Shitao as an exemplary case in point to illustrate the conception of ruins as a specific aesthetic category in Chinese culture

⁷⁹⁵ Ibid.: 108.

⁷⁹⁶ On literary and culture-historical themes of reminiscence of the past (*huaigu* 懷古), see Owen 1986, and Hung, ed., 2010, respectively. For further discussions of commemorative landscape painting traditions in China, see Hay 2001: 189–193; Hung 2010. Incidentally, we also find reiteration of the commemorative landscape painting genres within contemporary Chinese art. In the context of Huang Binhong, a notable reference is the artist Shen Fan 申凡 (1952–), whose *Landscape: Commemorating Huang Binhong* (*Shanshui · Jinian Huang Binhong* 山水 · 紀念黃賓虹) of 2006 (figs. 56a–b), a light-and-sound installation composed of ca. 2,520 handmade neon tubes, pays homage to the late brush-and-ink artist. Each neon tube represents one brushstroke and lights up one tube at a time over the course of several hours, accompanied by the sounds of a classical *qin* 琴. On this work by Shen Fan, see ShanghART Taopu 2014: 56–57.

⁷⁹⁷ Hay 2001: 189.

and art.⁷⁹⁸ Incidentally, Shitao's *Flower-Rain Terrace*⁷⁹⁹ from the album *Eight Views of the South*, which Wu Hung discusses among other works in this context, bears a striking parallel to the case of Huang Binhong's *Old Traces of the Peach Blossom Stream*—less visually, but rather in that it refers to a geographically specific place within nature that bears the historical traces both of human existence and mythical inscription. “[A]uthenticated as a ‘ruin image’ by Shitao himself”, as Wu Hung writes, the album leaf *Flower-Rain Terrace*

[...] depicts [Shitao's] journey to the Flower-Rain Terrace (Yuhua tai) when he lived in Nanjing [...]. According to local lore, the place became a popular scenic spot beginning in the third century and gained its name in 507 from a miraculous event: when the eminent monk Yunguang constructed a platform and lectured on Buddhist Dharma there, flowers fell from the sky. In the album leaf, Shitao has painted himself standing on a large, cone-shaped earthen mound, which contrasts the surrounding landscape with its strange form, soft contour, and unnatural bareness. Clearly the painter intends to tell the viewer that it is a man-made mound, not a natural rocky hill. This impression is supported by the poem Shitao has inscribed on the page, which begins with these two lines: “Outside the city walls stands an ancient terrace in wilderness. Today's folks still tell the legend of the flower rain.” He also appended a narrative account to the poem: “The Flower-Rain Terrace: When I was living in the Qin-Huai region [south of Nanjing], in the evening at sunset, I often climbed this terrace (*tai*) after people had left. Sometimes I also painted it after chanting poems.” The painting shows that the “platform” he climbed is a naked hill devoid of human construction; it is its barren desolation [...] that evokes the painter-poet's remembrance of the past.⁸⁰⁰

In explanation of his intense productive output during the spring months of 1953, the discussed *Peach Blossom Stream* series by Huang can be thus read as an urge to *commemorate*: on the one hand, to affirm and con-firm, that is, consolidate, and re-inform that what he knew may be at stake: essentially, the constitutive structure of his self; a coherent body of accumulated knowledge which had evolved throughout his long life. We here recall Yueh-ping Yen, who aptly describes this continuous process of forming and cultivating “personhood” through *wen* 文 (in the sense of “becoming cultured through text”, *wenhua* 文化), the “slow process of polishing, carving, refining, waxing and glazing of the self”.⁸⁰¹ In this sense, the reproductive, recreative commemoration of traditions,

⁷⁹⁸ Hung 2010: 267.

⁷⁹⁹ Reproduced in Hong 2010: 269.

⁸⁰⁰ Ibid.: 269f.

⁸⁰¹ Yen 2005: 46. It should be noted here that the modern Chinese usage of the term *wenhua* in its meaning as “culture” derives from the Japanese *kanji bunka* 文化. As Lydia Liu has noted in her book *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity China; 1900–1937*: “Despite its antiquity as a Chinese word, the classical Chinese term *wenhua* carries none of the ethnographic connotations, of

including art traditions, styles, and methods, yet also cultural traditions including myths, iconic symbols, and moral ideals, which is emphasized through the explicit repetition of the specific theme of the Peach Blossom Stream, has an identificatory function, in that it affords a technique of self-presentation, or self-presencing—of “making present the self”. Even though the stream does not flow as real water anymore, its old traces must be commemorated, or else they will be forgotten completely, and lost forever. Along the same lines, we can interpret Huang Binhong’s scriptural self-embedment in the NAMOC version of *Peach Blossom Stream* as his wish to secure the continuity of his own presence, which he may have felt was at risk of disintegrating in the course of his increasing blindness.

Last but not least, art practice as a technique of “making present the self” finds realization in form of a re-confirmation of the self through the physical body and physical practice.⁸⁰² In this sense, Richard Shusterman’s “Disciplinary Proposal” for the field of somaesthetics, which had been referred to previously, can be considered in its methodological relevance for art historical study. To emphasize this point, here, the author elucidates the emerging field of somaesthetics as significant, because:

Such an enlarged aesthetics would give more systematic attention to the body’s crucial roles in aesthetic perception and experience, including the aesthetic dimensions of body therapies, sports, martial arts, cosmetics, etc., that remain marginalized in academic aesthetic theory. But to incorporate somaesthetics’ practical dimension, the field of aesthetics must also expand its notion of disciplinary attention to actual, hands-on training in specific body practices that aim at somaesthetic improvement. Inclusion of such body work may make aesthetics more difficult to teach or practice in the standard university classroom, but it certainly could make the field more exciting and absorbing, as it comes to engage more of our embodied selves.⁸⁰³

With this in mind, in the context of investigating Huang Binhong’s art as a subject in this study, it was my decision to examine the concept of *neimei* in particular, inasmuch as I

‘culture’ now associated with the word. [...] In its earlier usage, *wenhua* denoted the state of *wen* or artistic cultivation in contrast to *wu* [武] or military prowess. The new ethnographic notion of *wenhua* did not enter the Chinese language until after *bunka*, the Japanese *kanji* translational equivalent of ‘culture’, was borrowed back by the Chinese at the turn of the twentieth century. [...] What this history means is that the changing meaning of *wenhua* in twentieth-century China has to be investigated in light of its specific historical ties to other languages and discourses and cannot always be traced to its original Chinese etymology.” Lydia Liu 1995: 239f. On the issue, see also Hon 2015: 84f.

⁸⁰² Incidentally, it had been noted above that Huang Binhong’s brush method of “lingering” (*liu* 留) has found various translations in western-language literature: while “sustaining” is the translation chosen by Jason Kuo (Kuo 2004: 96), Claire Roberts translates the brush method *liu* as “presence”, Roberts 2005: 117. This choice of wording indicates interesting parallels to Matthias Obert’s definition of tardiness in calligraphy writing as a method of self-bonding with the self, and moreover with notions of calligraphy as a technique of self-presencing and presentative action as indicated by Gerhard Möller.

⁸⁰³ Shusterman 1999: 310.

contend that it effectively shows the discrepancy and dichotomy between idiosyncratic conceptions of spirit and body, respectively, in Chinese art criticism. No other term in Huang Binong's discursive framework seems more highly charged with meaning in its assumption of "interior" qualities of mind and spirit. To be sure, it is less my aim to reject this understanding altogether; rather, I seek to balance out the prevailing discrepant relation between "mind" and "body"—much in the sense of the word *ti* 體, which, as quoted in the introductory chapter, etymologically indeed possesses "double aspects in the domains of the physical and the living, and the spiritual".⁸⁰⁴

Before this backdrop, the following wrap-up of this chapter is to be considered as a plea towards the field of somaesthetics; towards somaesthetics as a dedicated methodological approach in art history in general, and Chinese calligraphy art in particular.

5.7. Towards a Somaesthetics of Calligraphy Art

By juxtaposing the three versions of *Old Traces of the Peach Blossom Stream* produced during 1952 and -53, the time periods immediately preceding and following Huang Binhong's successful eye operation were examined. Despite evident differences of format, technique, and style, the works bear the same title, and appear to present a serial repetition of the depicted motif and the underlying theme, which is reflected through the content of the inscribed texts. While the 1952 work reveals the more intimate perspective of a large-scale landscape, as is conveyed through the grand, distant and clear view of the 1953 work in the NAMOC collection, the other 1953 work in the ZPM collection, in turn, displays an abstracted vision of again the same landscape. What is more, all three examples share a similarity, in that they show the reciprocal influence and enmeshment of the historical and the remembered (in form of the reference to the Peach Blossom Stream of old) as well as the imagined (through the allusion to the mythical Peach Blossom Spring). This enmeshment took on acute significance in form of a necessity to *commemorate* during the last few years of Huang's life. With special regard to the individual meanings that the three versions of *Old Traces of the Peach Blossom Stream* have in the context of various stages in Huang Binhong's life, the notion of commemoration not only signifies a method of

⁸⁰⁴ Chung-ying Cheng was quoted in the introductory chapter with his remark that "[...] the word *ti* clearly shows the structure of *ti* in its double aspects in the domains of the physical and the living, and the spiritual: The bone radical [*gu* 骨] on the left side of the word suggests the physical structure of *ti*, whereas the combined radicals on the right side in the form of the script [*li* 豐] suggest the presence of spirit of reverence [...]", Cheng 2002: 145.

“making present”, and more specifically “making present the self”, or “self-presencing”, but can be established as a form of imagination, that is, literally, a form of image production (*image-ination*). While the so-called Peach Blossom Stream has fallen into topographical obscurity and historical oblivion, the 1953 NAMOC version, which shows the clear-view grand-scale landscape, abounds with signs of life. The depiction of boats, houses, and scholars serve to enliven and commemorate a past—be this a mythical past, a factual past, or the personal past of a single individual—therein ensuring its presence, or “being present” (*jin*) to the “mind-heart” (*xin*). After the rehabilitation of Huang Binhong’s eyesight and, with it, a recovery of his personhood, a new space for imagination was opened up, and this painting, with its integration of fictional elements as well as its compositional aspiration of a great synthesis (*dacheng*), contrasts the indistinct rendering of the other 1953 work in the ZPM collection, which, in turn, seems less concerned with the depiction of an *ideal* landscape, and, moreover, preoccupied with the depiction, rather, (cognitive) recognition of the *physical* landscape. I do not know which of the two 1953 works preceded the other one chronologically, yet it is on these grounds that I would argue for a later dating of the hanging scroll in the NAMOC collection, which I believe was produced *after* the alienating incident surrounding Huang’s eye operation,⁸⁰⁵ inasmuch as it presents the affirmative return to the “familiar landscape” (or depiction thereof); and likewise, the resolution towards a renewed, brightened-up—and, for that matter, even expressly meticulous⁸⁰⁶—manner of landscape depiction. Last but not least, the NAMOC version shows an altered landscape in form of a second residence that can be seen in the higher-up hills, which seems to illustrate the building projects mentioned in the inscription, and that seem to have taken place in-between the production of the second and third work.

Huang Binhong’s *Old Traces of the Peach Blossom Stream* convey three different artistic approaches to the same landscape and theme, and can serve to illustrate various forms of

⁸⁰⁵ Which would also correspond with Leung Ping-kwan’s reference to (only) “two versions” of *Peach Blossom Stream* made in 1953, and prior to Huang’s eye operation in June of that year.

⁸⁰⁶ With “meticulous”, I here refer to what Huang Binhong denoted himself as the thousand-fold application of ink layers by the Northern Song masters of landscape painting whose style he had aspired after, cf. Kuo 2004: 104. This “meticulous” quality, which seems to have gained a new meaning after the rehabilitation of Huang Binhong’s eyesight, has also been noted by Jason Kuo, who describes Huang’s 1954 hanging scroll *Night Mountains* (fig. 62d) as “a typical work executed with ‘layers of accumulated dots’”, remarking that “When this painting was produced, Huang Pin-hung’s eye ailment was cured and his style was shifting back from terse to meticulous expression.” Ibid.: 106. “Terse” here indicates Huang Binhong’s sketchy, forceful brush style as seen in his 1953 version of *Taohua xi jiu ji* in ZPM collection. Similarly, Claire Roberts groups the 1953 NAMOC version of *Taohua xi jiu ji* to a group of paintings that “are likely to be the works he painted after he had recovered his health. Compared to his earlier paintings they are careful, rather detailed paintings through which he tested the new clarity of his vision.” Roberts 2005: 280.

“experiencing” landscape—or, borrowing from Chung-ying Cheng’s definition, of “confirming” landscape, inasmuch as Cheng establishes the useful notion of *tiyan* is as “to confirm by direct experience of one’s own person”. “Person” can here be considered in terms of the physical self/body (*ti*). In his above-quoted article, Cheng further writes:

[...] *tiyan* is a potential way of reading reality and understanding meaning, which is a source of visions, faith, and values. This does not mean that we have no way to check on the validity of *tiyan*. *Tiyan* has to begin with things at hand, and has to be congruent with our observations, thinking, and insights to form a system or a body of understanding and knowledge; it is not something to be understood in separation from a context of cognitive or moral understanding.⁸⁰⁷

Understanding memory, and the experience of memories as one aspect of being or becoming “congruent with our observations, thinking, and insights” through “a system or a body of understanding and knowledge”, I further quote from Byung-chul Han’s discourse on the phenomena of copying, originality, and identity construction in the Chinese cultural and art historical context, where it is stated, with reference to Sigmund Freud:

Erinnerungsbilder sind [...] keine unveränderlichen Abbilder des Erlebten. Sie sind vielmehr Produkte komplexer Konstruktionsleistung des psychischen Apparats. So sind sie einem ständigen Wandel unterworfen. Neue Konstellationen und Beziehungen verändern permanent ihr Aussehen. Der psychische Apparat folgt dabei einer komplexen temporalen Bewegung, in der auch das Spätere das Frühere mit konstituiert. In ihm durchdringen sich Vergangenheit, Gegenwart und Zukunft. [Freuds Theorie der Umschrift stellt jene Abbildtheorie in Frage, die annimmt dass die erlebten Szenen im Gedächtnis unverändert abgespeichert werden und auch nach längerer Zeit in identischer Form wieder abgerufen werden können.] Die Erinnerungen sind keine Abbilder, die sich immer gleich bleiben, sondern *Spuren*, die sich kreuzen und überlagern.⁸⁰⁸

As noted, Luo Jianqun describes the two-fold, ambivalent character of art historical transformation as acquiring the transmitted methods and traditions of brush-and-ink, only to then to supersede them; and thus defines “transformation” in the life context of Huang Binhong as the possibility yet also necessity to transgress one’s own traditions. I believe this “going beyond the methods of the ancients” (*chaochu guren zhi fa*) should always be understood as an indicator of the real, that is, actual, effective structure of circumstances and conditions of specific time and space within which an individual is embedded at any given moment of his existence. We can imagine that Huang’s diminishing eyesight must have induced a moment of self-estrangement in his life, at the same time opening up an opportunity for artistic renewal. Aside from what was noted in the above paragraph as an

⁸⁰⁷ Cheng 2002: 146.

⁸⁰⁸ Han 2011: 18.

“expressly meticulous manner of landscape depiction” that can be seen in Huang Binhong’s “brightened-up” landscape works post June 1953, Huang Binhong did continue to work in his typical sketchy manner of loose, or “terse”⁸⁰⁹ brushwork—however, not anymore in entirely the same way (as seen in the 1953 ZPM version of *Taohua xi jiu ji*). An excellent example of his sketched style post-June 1953 that illustrates the transformational effect of that period, is an exquisite eight-leaf album containing seven landscape depictions in the collection of the Museum für Asiatische Kunst Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (figs. 97a–g). Painted by Huang Binhong in 1954, Huang Binhong’s use of brush, ink, and colors bear testimony to an illuminated, crystalline quality of the depicted sceneries, marked by an overall solution and clearing of “darkness”. A similarly illuminated work is the 1955 scroll *Observing Daybreak Below the Qixia Hills* (*Qixialing xia xiao wang* 棲霞嶺下曉望), in which the protagonist shown in meditative posture, appears literally enlightened (fig. 62a). Rather than providing the reader with a minute stylistic analysis of these examples, I instead here prefer to cite Christoph Menke’s term of “a process of self-reflexive transformation of the practical” (*ein Prozeß der selbstreflexiven Transformation des Praktischen*),⁸¹⁰ which is based on an *aisthethical* (that is, aesthetic-ethical) understanding of reflexive processes as being inherently anchored in the physical human body. This aspect of “self-reflexive transformation” can be elucidated through a quote from Menke’s essay “The Dialectic of Aesthetics: The New Strife between Philosophy and Art”.⁸¹¹ In the section “The Reflectivity of Aesthetic Experience”,⁸¹² Menke refers to the “self-unfolding” and “the working of ‘forces’” in human activities, and here differentiates between “usual enactment” of processes, and “aesthetic modes of enactment”:

In the usual enactment of [such] processes we do not experience [...] our forces as

⁸⁰⁹ In Kuo’s sense, see n. 806.

⁸¹⁰ Menke 2008: 79; as cited by Obert, Obert 2013: 399.

⁸¹¹ Menke 2008.

⁸¹² Menke 2008: 63–66. Here, Menke’s notion of aesthetic experience relies on the German philosopher Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten (1714–1762), whose writings were influential for the development of a modern philosophy of aesthetics. Baumgarten coined the term *aesthetics*, shifting its meaning from its connotation as “sensibility” (*Sinnlichkeit*) to that of, rather, “sense of beauty”; as Menke has written in his contribution to *Baumgarten Studien: Zur Genealogie der Ästhetik*: “‘Ästhetik’ bedeutet nach Baumgartens [...] nichts anderes als die philosophische Untersuchung der ästhetá [...]—und enthält also die Behauptung ihrer philosophischen Untersuchbarkeit. Das hat Baumgarten den Titel des ‘Erfinders’ der Ästhetik eingebracht. [...] Ästhetik heißt für Baumgarten: Das Sinnliche ist ein Gegenstand philosophischer Untersuchung *wie jeder andere auch*—also ein Gegenstand philosophischer Untersuchungen *genauso wie* die Handlung des Verstandes.” Menke 2014: 76f. On the conceptual history and (aesthetic) meaning of the notion of *Sinnlichkeit*, see Barck, et al., eds. 2010, vol. 5: 534–577.

such. The forces work directly here in the production of determinate products: perceptions that identify an object, gestures that communicate an intention, expressions that articulate a thought, etc. Forces serve for such productions, and in the ordinary enactment they disappear into or behind their productions. In aesthetic experience, however, the forces become apparent as such. It is in this that reflectivity consists; in aesthetic experience there occurs a turning back to the concealed presuppositions of visible productions, namely, to the activities and working of forces. [...] Aesthetic experience as (self-) reflection is, rather, of a practical kind: by changing and transforming the ordinary process of comprehension and representation, it allows the forces that are concealed in this process to become apparent. Aesthetic experience as (self-) reflection takes place as aesthetic *activity*: by means of another mode of enactment of processes of comprehension and representation.

Conversely, the aesthetic mode of enactment is “different” to the ordinary mode of enactment because (and only because) it allows the latter’s concealed forces and activities to become apparent as such.⁸¹³

According to Jason Kuo’s division of Huang Binhong’s painting style into four rough periods, the last period is denoted as the years 1943 to 1955.⁸¹⁴ As noted in the preceding chapter, while I largely agree with Kuo’s overall argumentation for his periodization, I am in favor of further differentiating the rather long last period lasting from 1943 to 1955 and propose its sub-division into three phases: namely the years 1943–48, 1948–53, and 1953–55, respectively.⁸¹⁵ Here, I consider the year 1948 as marking the inauguration of Huang’s intermediate late-style phase, which is related to the fact that this was the year Huang Binhong moved to Hangzhou from Beijing, his final place of residence upon having been appointed to the art academy in Hangzhou. Regarding the periodization of Huang Binhong’s so-called late style, my proposed division is close to the tripartite division of Huang Binhong’s Hangzhou years, i.e. the years 1948–1955, undertaken by Luo Jianqun, who here defines “three distinct stages”, stating that “the period from age eighty-five to eighty-eight was marked as a consummation of Huang’s skills as an artist; the period from eighty-nine to age ninety was an experimental phase; and the last two years of his life signaled a return to serenity and a glorious end.”⁸¹⁶ While I also largely agree with this differentiation, I actually consider the year 1953 to be of such fundamental impact, as I hope to have illustrated in this chapter, to the extent that it appears to be nearly missing the point if this year is denoted merely as an “experimental phase”, which I assume Luo’s

⁸¹³ Menke 2008: 64f.

⁸¹⁴ See Kuo 2004: 73.

⁸¹⁵ Indeed, Kuo does focus on the years 1952–1955 in his analysis of a selection of Huang’s late-period paintings, yet these three years are not defined in terms of an actual period among his periodization, see *ibid.*: 15, 73ff.

⁸¹⁶ See Yang, ed., 2010: 266.

periodization to be indicating. Rather than reiterating the somehow teleological narrative of a final “return to serenity and a glorious end”, I think it is more important to point out that the year 1953 brought about unforeseen grave and “unwanted” conditions of art production, and that the “experimental” works of this time were born out of the given physical and technical limitations—equally, possibilities—at hand. To be sure, it is not my incentive to argue *against* what had already been said about Huang Binhong’s late-period art; and I dare claim that Luo Jianqun would surely agree with my argumentation. My incentive, moreover, is to simply lay stronger emphases on certain aspects in reflecting on Huang Binhong’s late years of art production. The somatic aspect—rather, the “self”, in the meaning of “*shen* [身] as ‘body-person’ or ‘lived body’”⁸¹⁷; moreover, a “psychosomatic process”, indicating a “uniquely Chinese ‘psychosomatology’”⁸¹⁸—here being one of the central aspects, I would like to place a final note in this chapter by borrowing again from Roger Ames, whose words most appropriately express my view on Huang Binhong’s late-year art production: “[...] the classical Chinese tradition is generally committed to a process rather than a substance ontology: the body is a ‘process’ rather than a ‘thing’, something ‘done’ rather than something one ‘has’ [...]”, such that classical Chinese thought is based on the premise of a symbiotic relationship between intellect and physical form;⁸¹⁹ that is, on a polar, organismic explanation of the world constituted by *intrinsically* related processes, rather than a dualistic, essentialist explanation of the world constituted by *extrinsic* relationships.⁸²⁰ Moreover:

The notion of formal *li* [ritual] action overlaps with *t’i*, body, in that a *li* action is an *embodiment* or *formalization* of meaning and value that accumulates to constitute a cultural tradition. This ritual action, like body, is of variable “shape”, appropriating much of its definition from its context. It is morphological rather than schematic in that changing participants and environments result in an altered disposition of the ritual. [...] A person engaged in the performance of a particular formal action, appropriating meaning from it while seeking himself to be appropriate to it, derives meaning and value from this embodiment, and further strengthens it by his contribution of novel meaning and value.⁸²¹

⁸¹⁷ Ames 1993: 156.

⁸¹⁸ Ames 1993 [1984]: 163.

⁸¹⁹ *Ibid.*: 168.

⁸²⁰ *Ibid.*: 160.

⁸²¹ *Ibid.*: 169f.

Chapter Six

Transmissions: The Cases of Lin Sanzhi (1898–1989) and Wang Dongling (1945–)

At the outset of this last chapter of the study, I would like to draw attention to a notable statement made by Luo Jianqun in the exhibition catalogue *Tracing the Past, Drawing the Future: Master Ink Painters in Twentieth-Century China*. Her statement can serve as a lens through which to consider Huang Binhong in his meaning as a calligrapher, and with regard to the transmission of his oeuvre *through* calligraphy art:

Historians particularly value Huang's cursive script for its legacy. Huang's student Lin Sanzhi (1898–1989) originally sought Huang as a teacher of painting, but soon abandoned painting and concentrated on cursive script calligraphy, eventually becoming one of the great calligraphers of the twentieth century. The relationship between teacher and student was so intertwined that it is difficult to speak of their contributions to calligraphy independent of one another. Their contribution to calligraphy—apart from their oeuvre—is the fact that they instigated the revival of cursive script calligraphy, and in fact established a lineage of calligraphers as important as that of Yu Youren [於右任, 1879–1964; see fig. 57].⁸²²

This assessment is significant with regard to the question of Huang Binhong's effective discursive, art historical impact as a master of the brush-and-ink arts, including calligraphy, in China. With respect to this question, Luo asserts that Huang Binhong's cursive script is of particular value “for its legacy”, thus implying and emphasizing two points: firstly, Huang Binhong's cursive script is meaningful art historically; and secondly, Huang Binhong's cursive script moreover had a meaningful impact on the artistic afterworld in some way. It is important to register these points, for they cement the importance of Huang Binhong's calligraphy art, in particular his cursive script, as well as its importance as a research desideratum in the context of Huang's artistic oeuvre. What is more, we can further note that Huang Binong's calligraphy art in some way found a form transmission and reiteration, that is, a translation and reformulation through later generations of calligraphy artists who were to have significant impact, notably within the particular genre of cursive-script calligraphy. In other words, we could purport that certain potentialities of Huang's cursive-script calligraphy that may not have found full elaboration during this artist's own lifetime were actualized through later artists, in form of something new. The understudied issue of Huang Binhong's effective extensions into the

⁸²² Yang, ed., 2010: 329. In the context of modern Chinese calligraphy, the influence of the calligrapher and educator Yu Youren is widely acknowledged. For a western-language study of Yu Youren and the impact of his work within the field of twentieth-century Chinese calligraphy, see Dai 1994.

world of twentieth- and twenty-first-century calligraphy in China opens up a research area of value.

As had been noted in chapter two, in his contribution to the volume *Huang Binhong yu xiandai yishu sixiang shi guoji xueshu yantaohui wenji*, Wang Zhongxiu has suggested that Huang Binhong's pursuit of *neimei* should be considered by later generations as the artist's wish to further explore this realm of "interior beauty", despite, or rather precisely *due to* its difficult scheme and seemingly inaccessible dimension. As the title of Wang's essay—"Painting that Reaches the Place Nobody Likes: Discussing the Brushwork Behind the Idea of Interior Beauty and the Renewed [Idea of] Interior Beauty Behind the Brushwork"—implies: different from the contemporaries of Huang's own times, many of whom had not been able to grasp the true meaning of Huang Binhong's works, we should dare to investigate their "deep and profound space". Especially with regard to the late period of Huang's oeuvre, comprising the last twenty years of his work production, we should follow his quest for "true interior beauty of the disorderly and yet non-disorderly" (*luan er bu luan zhen neimei* 亂而不亂真內美).⁸²³

The fact that Huang Binhong's student Lin Sanzhi 林散之 (1898–1989), and, in turn, Lin Sanzhi's student Wang Dongling 王冬齡 (1945–) (introduced in figs. 7a–e, 8a–d, respectively; see also figs. 23a–b) have come to gain exceptional international status as leading calligraphers of their own times carries various implications.⁸²⁴ While Lin Sanzhi, "the man with the 'iron line'",⁸²⁵ is established in art history as China's "modern sage of cursive script" (*dangdai caosheng* 當代草聖) (see figs. 98a–h for further examples of Lin

⁸²³ Cf. Wang Zhongxiu 2014: 25f. As Wang writes here: "1930 年代初, 從歐洲歸來的傅雷對國內畫界現狀十分不滿, 寫了數篇探索中國繪畫前途的文章, 其中有篇題目叫: '我再說一遍: 往何處去... 往深處去!' 時隔二十年已屆耄耋之年的黃賓虹, 在 '亂而不亂真內美' 的探究中, 重提 '醜中有美' 的話題, 難道不是希望後人, 希望我們以及我們的後人繼續走向 '深處' 嗎?"

⁸²⁴ For Lin Sanzhi's biography, see Hertel 2015 (a); Lin Changgeng 2007; Wang Guanghan 2007. Lin Sanzhi's work, including calligraphy, landscape painting, and poetry, is published and discussed in Barrass 2002: 140–145; Ji, ed., 1995; Li/Shao, eds., 2003; Lin Changgeng 2007; Lin Changgeng, ed., 1998; Lin Changgeng/Lin Changwu, eds., 2003; Lin Sanzhi 1993; Lin Sanzhi yanjiu hui, ed., 2008; Qi 2003; Tian, ed., 1991; Wang Dongling, ed., 1996; Zhuang, ed., 2015 [2013]. For Wang Dongling's biography, see Wang Dongling 2015: 206–215. Wang's work is published and discussed in Barrass 2002: 163–171; Song, ed., 1994; Wang Dongling 2015; Wang Dongling, ed., 2015; Wang Dongling, ed., 1998; Wang Dongling 1996; Wang Dongling/Xu, eds., 2005 (a); Wang Dongling/Xu, eds., 2005 (b); Xu, ed., 2012; Xu, ed., 2011; Xu, ed., 2007 (see here esp. the essays by Fan Di'an 範迪安, Fan Jingzhong 範景中, and Zhang Songren 張頌仁).

⁸²⁵ As denoted by Barrass, Barrass 2002: 140, 143.

Sanzhi's calligraphy, including his cursive and clerical styles),⁸²⁶ Wang Dongling in turn has come to international fame in connection with his signature format of large-scale calligraphy (*jufu dazi shufa* 巨幅大字書法) written in wild cursive (*kuangcao* 狂草) as well as abstract styles (next to figs. 8a–d, see figs. 99a–e for further examples; moreover fig. 99f for a “small-scale” work), which he demonstrates before live audiences in sometimes hour-long performances.⁸²⁷

Lin and Wang's cursive-script calligraphy can here be considered as an example of an artistic lineage in Huang Binhong's context. Lin's pursuits and achievements in art are considered to be significantly shaped by the artist's three-year period of learning painting and calligraphy from Huang Binhong between 1929 and 1931; the author Qi Kaiyi 齊開義, for example, establishes a causal relation between Huang Binhong's teachings and Lin Sanzhi's later success as a calligrapher, writing that Lin Sanzhi “genuinely penetrated Huang Binhong's profound concepts of art, and applied all aspects of his painting principles and methods of brush-and-ink to his own calligraphy production, and finally became the ‘modern sage of cursive script’”.⁸²⁸ Without a doubt, the aesthetic of Lin Sanzhi's “lingering brush method” (*liufa* 留法) can be considered inspired by Huang Binhong's aesthetic of the lingering, or withheld (as was discussed above).⁸²⁹ Further, Fang Awen 方阿雯, in his article “Idea within Landscape, Achievement in Cursive-Script: On Huang Binhong's Influence on Lin Sanzhi's Cursive-Script Calligraphy” (“Yi zai shanshui, cheng yu caoshu: tan Huang Binhong dui Lin Sazhi caoshu de yingxiang 意在山 水成於草書：談黃賓虹對林散之草書的影響”), notably observes that Lin Sanzhi's

⁸²⁶ Acclaimed by Guo Moruo 郭沫若 (1892–1978) as “China's best calligrapher of the past 300 years” (Barrass 2002: 143), Lin achieved his international breakthrough in the context of his contribution to a special edition of the magazine *People's China* (*Renmin Zhongguo zazhi* 人民中國雜誌) in 1973 (see fig. 7a), which featured the work of modern Chinese calligraphers and was published to mark the re-establishment of Sino-Japanese relationships in 1972, see Barrass 2002: 142f. The wide-spread iconic reference to Lin as a modern-day “sage of cursive script” (the “classical” one of course being Wang Xizhi) is reflected, for example, in essay titles such as Zhuang Xizu's 莊希祖 “Inspiration from the Sage of Cursive Script” (“Caosheng de qishi 草聖的啓示”), Zhuang 2008. On Guo Moruo's (political) influence as a calligrapher, see Kraus 1991: 117ff.

⁸²⁷ For a discussion of large-scale calligraphy performance as a contemporary art form, see Wang's own elucidation of the subject, Wang Dongling 2010 (b); as well as Mao Jianbo 毛建波 and Sun Shanchun's 孫善春 discussions of Wang Dongling's large-scale cursive calligraphy, Mao 2011: 36–47, and Sun 2011: 61f., 71f., respectively. For an appreciation of Wang Dongling's large-scale calligraphy, further see Gao 2007; Wang Bomin 2007.

⁸²⁸ “他 [Lin Sanzhi] 真正深入黃賓虹的藝術堂奧，併把黃賓虹深奧的畫理、筆法、墨法全面運用到書法創造上，終於成為當代草聖。” Qi 2003: 11.

⁸²⁹ On Lin Sanzhi's espousal of the “lingering brush”, and, furthermore, the “wrinkly brush” (*sebi* 澀筆), the latter of which can indeed be considered an embodiment of *neimei* aesthetics, see Cui 2008.

cursive script calligraphy shows the traces of Huang Binhong's semi-cursive script style as seen in Huang's painting inscriptions.⁸³⁰ Comparing between Huang Binhong and Lin Sanzhi's works, numerous examples both of landscape paintings and calligraphies can illustrate the transmission of technique and style. I here only refer to a small selection (see figs. 100a–f). Their letter correspondences (see figs. 5b, 100c–d) as well as references in titles of artworks (see fig. 100e) bear further witness to the personal bond that held between Huang and Lin up to the final years of each one's life. Looking closely at some of Lin Sanzhi's arid landscapes in reduced-brush manner (figs. 100g–k)—which can indeed be considered an serial motif that is traceable from the early 1920s through to the 1980s—we do very well in reminding ourselves of the *two-way* direction that is at work in the context of transmission processes. Inasmuch as we idiosyncratically, erroneously tend to think of lineages in terms of successive chronologies, we may well ask the question “Who actually copied from whom?”, when we call to mind Huang Binhong's reduced-brush landscapes (seen in figs. 63b–e, 83f)⁸³¹ as an idiom of his late-period “white phase” post-1948. Essentially, the question can and should not be answerable in any straightforward way, and yet, the question is important in order to not forget that transmission is never unilateral. In this sense, the example of Lin Sanzhi's *Transmitting the Spirit of Xue Ge* [Zhu Da 朱耷 (1626–1705)] (*Shi Xue Ge yi yi* 師雪個遺意) (fig. 100i) of 1948, though its explicit reference is to the Qing painter Zhu Da (seen in figs. 67a–b), the work can likewise be seen as Lin's “version” of Shitao's *Landscape in the Style of Ni Zan* (fig. 30a), which was discussed above and moreover juxtaposed with Huang Binhong's *Fishing Boat and Rock-Clinging Trees* (fig. 29), inasmuch as the three examples share obvious similarities in composition and style. In other words, the enmeshment of elements from multiple, overlapping sources renders the question of “Who copied from whom?” to some extent redundant.

The same condition holds true for comparisons between Lin Sanzhi and Wang Dongling's script styles. Here, again, reference is made only to a small selection (see figs. 100l–t); and, here, too, we can speak of a mutually active impact of both artists on one another (aspects of which will be further discussed below). While an image of Wang Dongling's

⁸³⁰ Fang 2009.

⁸³¹ Compare here for example fig. 63d with figs. 100h, 100j, and 100k, with regard to the iconography of brushwork seen in the depiction of the trees, their bent trunks, and outstretched, “grasping” branches (as also seen in Shitao's work in fig. 30a; an iconography that is historically rooted in the Li-Guo tradition of Northern-Song landscape depiction).

1979 clerical-script calligraphy in the “guise” of a poem by Mao Zedong (fig. 100l) bears testimony to Wang’s intensive years of studying clerical script with Lin Sanzhi, whose free-hand copy of the *Stele on Ritual Objects* (*Liqi bei* 禮器碑) (fig. 100m) of 1976 in turn serves as a good comparison, the presence of Lin Sanzhi’s “iron line” (as exemplified in figs. 7a–d) is moreover visibly discernable in Wang Dongling’s early-phase cursive-script works (figs. 100n–o), and still even much later on, as seen in the background inscription of his *Void* (*Wu* 無) (fig. 8a), a key work of the year 2000. Likewise, we can consider Lin Sanzhi’s turn towards a larger scale of format as well as a freer, more pictorial, and also more abstract style of cursive script during the 1980s (figs. 100p–t), the last decade of his life, as being directly effected by the environment of the thriving Modernist calligraphers, among whom Wang Dongling featured as a prominent exponent. The close bond between the two was to last until Lin Sanzhi’s passing away in 1989 (see figs. 101a–b).

Extensive research has been pursued on the three artists Huang Binhong, Lin Sanzhi, and Wang Dongling. While the connections between Huang and Lin, and moreover between Lin and Wang, have indeed been thematized in various studies by contemporary scholars,⁸³² a systematic study of the connection between all three artists is still due.⁸³³ A unique feature with regard to this case is the transmission of Huang Binhong’s *neimei* terminology, which is explicitly reiterated by both Lin and Wang as an aspect fundamental to their own conceptual frameworks and modes of creative production.⁸³⁴ Here, Lin can be quoted with statements such as: “Cursive-script calligraphy must have beauty on the inside.” (*Caoshu yao you nei zai mei* 草書要有內在美);⁸³⁵ or: “[Regarding] the force exerted in using the brush tip, [there is] inner beauty and outer beauty, [and its] flavor [should be] mellow, pure, and rich.” (*Yong bijian de liliang, neimei waimei, qiwei chunhou* 用筆尖的力量，內美外美，氣味醇厚).⁸³⁶ In his essay “The Ultimate Achievement of Writing: Discussion of Cursive-Script Calligraphy” (*Shuxie de jizhi: lun*

⁸³² Including Barrass 2002; Fang 2009; Li 2008; Lin Changgeng 2007; Qi 2003; Wang Guanghan 2007. For letter correspondences between Huang Binhong and Lin Sanzhi, spanning the years 1929 to 1948, see rpt. HBHWJ (1): 86–90; also Lin Sanzhi yanjiu hui, ed., 2008: 281–285. As indicated above, reproductions of original letters can be seen in figs. 5b, and 100c–d. For reproductions of further letters, see the color plates in Lin Sanzhi yanjiu hui, ed., 2008 (n.p.).

⁸³³ The thus-far seemingly only exception is Long Hong 2005.

⁸³⁴ For discussions of Lin Sanzhi’s application of Huang Binhong’s aesthetic framework, including Huang’s the specific terms of *neimei* and *neili* as well as his model of “five brush and seven ink methods”, see for example, Fang 2009; Qi 2003: 81–87; cf. further Zhuang, ed., 2015 [2013]: 15.

⁸³⁵ As put forward in a painting inscription, Zhuang, ed., 2015 [2013]: 90.

⁸³⁶ As stated in a recorded conversation with his student Sang Zuokai 桑作楷 (1944–), *ibid.*: 59.

caoshu 書寫的極致: 論草書”), Wang Dongling, in turn, reiterates Lin’s statement, and adds his own comment:

Mr Lin Sanzhi said: “Cursive-script calligraphy must have beauty on the inside. Cursive-script calligraphy uses structural force; this force does not only rely on the formal structure of the [individual] written characters, it also relies on the connective relation between each character and each column.” The structural force of a brushstroke carries [the potential to bring forth] the next brushstroke; the structural form [of the written character] lies on the inside, and the brush method determines the internal structure. In fact, this is the characteristic of cursive-script calligraphy, in particular the characteristic of wild cursive script [...].⁸³⁷

Wang Dongling, who with his live performances has been furiously successful in recent years and could be currently considered as at the zenith of his career, applies the “interior beauty of the brush line” (*xiantiao de neimei* 線條的內美) as a key aesthetic term in his work,⁸³⁸ notably to his above-mentioned specialized field of large-scale wild-cursive calligraphy, which, incidentally, has seen the invention of a new style that Wang denotes as *luanshu* 亂書, “disorderly calligraphy” (figs. 8d, 102a–c).⁸³⁹ In Wang’s view, the unique form of large-scale *kuangcao*, especially when performed before an audience, is capable of intensifying the explorative creative process of the writing act through the body language of the artist, thus allowing for an expression of “the calligraphic line and its beauty of empty space, beauty of rhythm, and beauty of spirit” (*shufa xiantiao de kongjian mei, jiezou mei, jingshen mei* 書法線條的空間美、節奏美、精神美).⁸⁴⁰ What is more, to him, this calligraphy format bears huge potential as a culturally specific art form with

⁸³⁷ “林散之先生說: ‘草書要有內在美, 草書取勢, 勢不僅靠結體, 也靠行行字字間關係.’ 一筆的勢帶出另一筆, 結構就在裡面了, 筆法決定結構, 實是草書特有的, 尤其是狂草特有的 [...]” As stated by Wang Dongling in the article “The Ultimate Achievement of Writing: Discussion of Cursive-Script Calligraphy” (“Shuxie de jizhi: lun caoshu 書寫的極致: 論草書”), Wang Dongling 2013 (n.p.).

⁸³⁸ In various personal interviews conducted with Wang Dongling during the time period of 2010–2015, I repeatedly asked him what he considers to be the main element of (stylistic, technical, aesthetic) transmission between Huang Binhong, Lin Sanzhi, and himself. His straightforward answer was always the same one, being: “the interior beauty of the brush line” (*xiantiao de neimei* 線條的內美). The interviews with Wang Dongling were conducted on October 27, 2010, July 1, 2011, and June 16, 2015; hereafter referred to as IV Wang 27/10/2010, IV Wang 01/07/2011, and IV Wang 16/06/2015, respectively.

⁸³⁹ Wang’s *luanshu* made a large-scale appearance in the 2015 exhibition *Writing/Non-Writing: Works by Wang Dongling* (*Shu fei shu: Wang Dongling zuopin* 書非書: 王冬齡作品) at the Sanshang Art Gallery (Sanshang dangdai yishuguan 三尚當代藝術館), Hangzhou, May 8–June 10, 2015. For further examples of Wang’s *luanshu*, see the catalogue that accompanied this exhibition, Wang Dongling 2015. A discussion of Wang’s *luanshu* is given by Gao Shiming 高士明 in the introductory essay of the catalogue, Gao 2015.

⁸⁴⁰ As put forward in his essay “Large-Scale Calligraphy in the Twentieth Century” (“Ershi shiji jufu dazi shufa 二十世紀巨幅大字書法”), cf. Wang Dongling 2010 (b): 29. On the format of large-scale wild cursive calligraphy, Wang further writes: “這種現場創作是最有文化底蘊行為藝術, 因為創作過程必須在理性和感情的交織之中用身體演示書法.” Ibid.: 28.

contemporary and cross-cultural relevance, further stating that “large-scale wild-cursive calligraphy is a form of modern calligraphy that belongs to the 21st century”.⁸⁴¹ Here, Wang sees large-scale wild cursive calligraphy as a genre that combines and especially enhances the elements of bodily art, or physically dynamic art, with the aesthetics of artistic abstraction, and the conditions of on-site performance in a microcosmic exhibition space—as Wang Dongling believes, a space in which the possibilities of participation and resonance come into mutual effect between artist and audience.⁸⁴²

The development of Wang's large-scale cursive styles as clearly discernable from the late 1990s onwards can be said to have gradually evolved in light of various factors over the course of roughly thirty years prior to this time. Beginnings can be traced back to Wang's writing practice during the Cultural Revolution period, during which the artist was charged by the Chinese government with writing Communist Party texts and slogans in the particular format of big-character posters and banners (*dazibao* 大字報).⁸⁴³ Within Wang's history and career as a calligrapher, the years 1969/1970 here indicate a specific incidence of considerable formative impact—namely, the close encounter between him and Lin Sanzhi. As a transitional point, or point of creative culmination, the artistic transmission that took place in this context was marked by traditionalist approaches to calligraphy, therein marking what I believe to be one among three distinct phases which are of formative significance as to the genesis of Wang Dongling's cursive-script style(s).⁸⁴⁴

⁸⁴¹ “巨幅大字創作打通了傳統與現代的脈絡，巨幅大字不是一般意義上的傳統書法，巨幅大字創作是屬於 21 世紀的現代書法。” Xu et al., eds., 2010 (a): 18.

⁸⁴² Wang Dongling has summarized the condition of “contemporaneity” that adheres to large-scale wild cursive calligraphy in terms of three relational aspects: body and movement (*shenti he yundong* 身體和運動); the exhibition space and visual perception (*zhanting he shijue* 展廳和視覺); and tradition and modernity (*chuantong he xiandai* 傳統和現代), see Wang Dongling 2010 (b): 27–31. For a general discussion and disambiguation of the terms “modernity” (*xiandaixing* 現代性) and “contemporaneity” (*dangdaixing* 當代性) in the context of Chinese calligraphy, further see Guan Huaibin's 管懷賓 study on Wang Dongling's case, Guan 2011.

⁸⁴³ As recounted in Barrass 2002: 163.

⁸⁴⁴ The present study does not allow for a detailed discussion of what I denote as three distinct phases in this context. Suffice it to briefly summarize these three phases as follows: while the 1960s and 1970s mark the first phase that is characterized by intensive learning and acquiring of traditions; the time period of the early 1980s to mid-1990s marks the second phase marked significantly by the academization of calligraphy as an institutional field at the art academies in China, further bringing about initial cross-cultural encounters and an internationalization of calligraphy in the context of Modernist art discourse. The third, ongoing phase, moreover, begins around the year 2000 and is defined by large-scale exhibitions and performances; numerous publications and the systematic furthering of theoretical approaches and concepts of calligraphy as a contemporary art form. All three phases, in their individual contexts, are likewise significant as to the formation of Wang's hallmark cursive style, which can be seen as established by the year 2000. For a case study of cross-cultural encounters taking place during Wang's productive years of the 1980s and early 1990s,

Considering the concept of *neimei* in the context of artistic transmission, I would like to point out that Luo Jianqun has established a direct connection between Huang Binhong's cursive (as well as epigraphic) calligraphy styles and this concept. I here requote Luo, who had been cited in the preceding chapter with her conclusion that

[...] in championing the epigraphic style of the eighteenth century and after, and promoting a pure form of cursive and running script, [Huang Binhong] inaugurated a return to the origins of “inner beauty”. This may in fact be his ultimate achievement as an artist and art historian.⁸⁴⁵

With regard to Lin Sanzhi and Wang Dongling's particular case, a deeper understanding of the way in which specific elements of Huang Binhong's art have been received and negotiated by subsequent artists not only enables us to envision these later artists more completely—not least in terms of their significance as regenerators of Huang Binhong's “most instructive legacy”, as Jason Kuo quotes the contemporary Chinese painter Zhuang Zhe 莊喆 (1934–):

Huang Pin-hung's emphasis on brushwork and ink can be regarded as his most instructive legacy, enabling contemporary Chinese painters to develop a “painterly” quality of art because Huang Pin-hung's persistent emphasis on brushwork and ink comes very close to the “physicality” of painting, as can be seen in Huang Pin-hung's statement that “the brush should be used as a sharp knife”.⁸⁴⁶

Retroactively, a deepened understanding of this matter can also achieve to shed new and different light on Huang Binhong himself, both in terms of his works as a landscape painter and a calligrapher. In this regard, rather than speaking of lineages, and *lines* of transmission, it is preferable to speak of *routes* of transmission, inasmuch as the image of the line implies a linear, that is, unilateral direction and progression. The image of the

I refer to my forthcoming article in *Yishu: Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art*, which is based on the paper “Translating the Brush Line: Modernist Calligraphy in Early-1980s China and Its Cross-Cultural Significance” (“Zhuanyi xiantiao: lun 1980 niandai zaoqi Zhongguo ‘xiandai zhuyi’ shufa ji qi kua wenhua yiyi 轉譯線條:論 1980 年代早期中國‘現代主義’書法及其跨文化意義”) presented at the *Academic Forum of the International Festival of Calligraphy, Hangzhou, China, 2015* (2015 Zhongguo Hangzhou xiandai shufa guoji luntan 2015 中國杭州現代書法國際論壇), China Academy of Art, Hangzhou (May 8–9, 2015).

⁸⁴⁵ Yang, ed., 2010: 328.

⁸⁴⁶ Kuo 2004: 186. In his book *Chinese Ink Painting Now*, Kuo further comments on Huang Binhong's impact with regard to the revival of traditional brush-and-ink arts in Post-Mao China as follows: “In the late 1980s, traditional ink painting based on the aesthetics of ‘brush-and-ink’ (*bimo*) and ‘New Trends’ in art clashed in mainland China, touching off a series of debates. It was under these circumstances that the work of such ‘traditional’ painters as Huang Binhong, Qi Baishi (1863–1957), and Pan Tianshuo (1897–1971) (and especially the late work of Huang Binhong) was rediscovered and re-debated.” Kuo 2010: 21. Kuo then goes on to make the following significant assessment: “[...] Huang Binhong's late aesthetic principles on brushwork and ink passed down the traditional theory of Chinese calligraphy and painting at the same time they opened up a path towards abstraction, enabling contemporary Chinese ink painters to develop a ‘painterly’ quality of art because his persistent emphasis on brushwork and ink comes very close to the physicality of painting.” Ibid.: 22.

route, by contrast, may well be thought as a reciprocal, multi-layered process of exchange, much in the sense of James Clifford's use of the dynamic term “routes”, emphasizing the aspects of travel, movement, and process, as opposed to the static term “roots”, which moreover aims at identifying an origin and confirming a progressive narration of traditions.⁸⁴⁷

As already noted, while Huang Binhong, Lin Sanzhi, and Wang Dongling present Chinese brush-and-ink artists of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries who have in fact drawn much attention by art historians as individual cases, their connection in terms of a lineage, by contrast, has so far not featured as a topic of in-depth study. The only published study to date that is devoted to the connections between these three artists appears to be Long Hong's 龍紅 essay “Characteristics of Calligraphy Art through Three Periods: A Study on the Development of Huang Binhong, Lin Sanzhi, and Wang Dongling's Calligraphy Transmission” (“San ge shidai de shufa yishu biao zheng: Huang Binhong, Lin Sanzhi, Wang Dongling de shufa shicheng fazhan yanjiu 三個時代的書法藝術表徵: 黃賓虹、林散之、王冬齡的書法師承發展研究”),⁸⁴⁸ which is all the more surprising, given the publication date as far back as 2005.

In the following, supported by Wang Zhongxiu and Luo Jianqun's above-referenced assessments; Jason Kuo's comment regarding Huang Binhong's “most instructive legacy”; as well as Long Hong's contribution to the issue, I look into the circa two-year period of 1969–1970. This time marked a close encounter between Lin Sanzhi and Wang Dongling, a time when both had not yet come to fame in the public sphere. Their encounter indicates a pivotal, formative moment with regard to the lines of transmission between Huang, Lin, and Wang as promoters of the Chinese brush-and-ink arts. A detailed, expansive study of

⁸⁴⁷ I refer here to Clifford's book *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century* (1997), in which the author writes that in the course of preparing his book, the notion of travel “[...] emerged as an increasingly complex range of experiences: practices of crossing and interaction that troubled the localism of many common assumptions about culture. In these assumptions authentic social existence is, or should be, centered in circumscribed places—like the gardens where the word ‘culture’ derived its European meanings. Dwelling was understood to be the local ground of collective life, travel a supplement; roots always precede routes. But what would happen, I began to ask, if travel were untethered, seen as a complex and pervasive spectrum of human experiences? Practices of displacement might emerge as constitutive of cultural meanings rather than as their simple transfer or extension.” Clifford 1997: 3.

⁸⁴⁸ Long 2005. Aside from Long Hong's publication, I also refer to my preliminary investigation of this lineage, to be published in Jeong-hee Lee-Kalisch/Almut-Barbara Renger, eds.: *Meister und Schüler. Master and Disciple: Tradition, Transfer, Transformation*. Weimar: VDG (in print), which is based on a paper presented at the conference “Master-Disciple Relationships in the Interdisciplinary Discourse: Humanities, Sciences and Arts”, Freie Universität Berlin (April 23–25, 2010).

these lines of art transmission, also with particular regard to the intellectual history of *neimei* as an aesthetic term, exceeds the limits of the present study. Nevertheless, I would like to propose at least a glimpse into the historical processes of transference in this context. Here, I focus on the aspect of agency related with Lin Sanzhi and his function as a mediator among what is considered to be the threshold between “traditional” and “modern” calligraphy art in twentieth-century China, specifically with respect to the Cultural Revolution period (1966–1976), during which Lin’s incognito activities as a calligraphy teacher played a crucial role. As Gordon Barrass has given account in *The Art of Calligraphy in Modern China* (incidentally, as of yet, still the only comprehensive western-language publication on the contemporary history and phenomenon of calligraphy art in China), Wang Dongling’s passion for calligraphy was significantly deepened through his secret joining of a group of students who were being taught by Lin Sanzhi in the late 1960s.⁸⁴⁹ Using Chairman Mao’s poetry as a guise for their works, Barrass states that “[a]s far as the locals were concerned, this group was learning how to promote “proletarian culture” more effectively through calligraphy. In practice, they were learning the secrets of this ancient art.⁸⁵⁰ A comprehensive history of calligraphy in post-1949 China awaits tackling by western-based art history. Here, I moreover aim to address isolated aspects which are significant in piecing together the historical background of Wang Dongling’s present position, namely, as a crucial player among the thriving field of contemporary calligraphy art; a field that has long since expanded its borders beyond the Chinese-speaking world and established its ground not least through the very activities and endeavors of contemporary artists including Wang Dongling, in his function as a pioneer of the Modernist calligraphy movement beginning in the late 1970s (see figs. 8a, 17a–d, and 103a–d for examples of Modernist calligraphy).⁸⁵¹ As outlined in the introduction, I deliberately refrain from conceiving this final chapter of the study in terms of defining a classic “Conclusion”. Though the issues raised in this chapter indeed serve to reiterate and tie together, and therein summarize the essential lines of thought established and pursued

⁸⁴⁹ See Barrass 2002: 164.

⁸⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁸⁵¹ Representatives of the Modernist calligraphy movement in post-Mao China are introduced in Barrass 2002: 162–193; Schlombs 1992; Wu 1986; Yiguo Zhang 1998. For general discussions and overviews of the historical development of twentieth-century calligraphy in Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, see Bai 2001; Barrass 2002; Lu 2004; Lu 2015; Xue 1998; Zhou 2008. A comprehensive documentation of the display and dissemination of calligraphy and calligraphy culture in the public Chinese sphere from 1985 to 2015 is undertaken in the most recent publication project *Shu fei shu: wenxian* 書非書: 文獻 | *Writing Non-Writing: Documents*, Xu et al., eds., 2015 (b).

in the course of this study, rather than formulating definite “conclusions”, I would prefer to say that my wish is, moreover, to specify “directions”. This choice of this wording is indebted to Roger Ames. Albeit used in another context, I think that it is legitimately applicable in light of Ames’ elucidations in this regard. Stating that his attempted “conceptual reconstruction of ‘body’ through a mutually corroborative philological and philosophical analysis” aims at “a verification of the direction established by this analysis”, Ames notes:

I say “direction” here rather than “conclusions” in recognition of the speculative and hence tentative nature of this kind of hermeneutical analysis. It provides us with an explicatory apparatus and with definite clues, perhaps, but not with conclusive proof.⁸⁵²

6.1. Workings on the Inside: Encounter in Reclusion, 1969–1970

In the People’s Republic of China, the late 1960s marked the Chinese Communist Party’s apogee of ideological control over the masses in form of the Cultural Revolution, lasting from May 1966 until October 1976. Defined by its momentum of cultural, political, and social upheaval, this decade, as already indicated, had a fundamentally formative significance for Wang Dongling’s subsequent art production, in particular, the development of his large-scale cursive-script calligraphy. As noted, during the circa two-year period spanning the years 1969–1970, Wang Dongling had the opportunity to receive instruction in calligraphy from Lin Sanzhi, who at the time had fled from his home in Nanjing to Yangzhou.⁸⁵³ While culturally, all traditional pastimes and pursuits had been condemned as residue of a reactionary feudal Chinese society, in submerged intellectual art circles active during the Cultural Revolution period, art practices served all the more as a clandestine means to conserve and transfer aspects of traditional Chinese culture.⁸⁵⁴ In the

⁸⁵² Ames 1993 [1986]: 158.

⁸⁵³ Regarding the period of Lin Sanzhi’s temporary escapes after breakout of the Cultural Revolution, first commuting between Nanjing and his daughter’s home in Yangzhou from September 1966 to the winter of 1969, and Wujiang from the spring of 1970 until March 1973, whereupon Lin returned to Nanjing, see Lin Changgeng 2007: 108ff., 253f.; Wang Guanghan 2007: 184–190, 261. For an in-depth study on Lin Sanzhi’s Yangzhou years, see Cao, ed., 2011. A personal account of Lin’s sojourn in Yangzhou during the Cultural Revolution period is further given by his daughter Lin Xingruo 林荇若 in her essay “Father’s Sojourn in Yangzhou during the Cultural Revolution Period” (“Fuqin wenge qijian zai Yangzhou 父親文革其間在揚州”), Lin Xingruo 2008.

⁸⁵⁴ On the related historical and socio-cultural issues in this context, see the essay “Chinese Calligraphy and the Cultural Revolution” by Da Zheng, who discusses the political movement of the Cultural Revolution in terms of “a massive destruction of culture and tradition, among which was calligraphy [...]”, Zheng 1994: 185. For an assessment of the cultural and art historical aftermath of calligraphy culture of the Cultural

context of his close encounter with Lin Sanzhi during 1969–1970, a consolidation of Wang Dongling’s educational foundation, rooted in the traditional Chinese arts, took place. Here, the notion of “studying the old to create the new” (*xue gu chuang xin* 學古創新) strongly fostered by Lin Sanzhi⁸⁵⁵—in turn a reiteration of Huang Binhong’s ideas on this notion—was cemented in theory and practice; the years of 1969–1970 thus denotable as a “traditionalist” phase, or a turn towards tradition, both for Wang and Lin.

It was around the mid-1960s, while Wang Dongling was pursuing his bachelor studies at the Fine Arts Department of Nanjing Normal University,⁸⁵⁶ that he first got wind of Lin Sanzhi’s calligraphy, who, at that time, was gaining considerable reputation in Nanjing artist circles for his distinctly developing cursive-script style (see figs. 104a–b for two examples both dating from 1964).⁸⁵⁷ In the autumn of 1967, one year and some months after the outbreak of the Cultural Revolution, Wang Dongling had the opportunity to meet Lin Sanzhi for the first time at Lin’s son Lin Changgeng’s place in Nanjing, by way of introduction through Wei Tianchi 尉天池 (1936–), today Vice-Chairman of the National Calligraphers Association (*Zhongguo shufajia xiehui* 中國書法家協會) and Chairman of the Jiangsu Calligraphers Association (*Jiangsu sheng shufajia xiehui* 江蘇省書法家協會). At the time, Wei, who was affiliated with Nanjing Normal University (*Nanjing shifan daxue* 南京師範大學, formerly *Nanjing shifan xueyuan* 南京師範大學院), had been appointed to the Taixing County Cultural Bureau (*Taixing xian wenhua guan* 泰興縣文化館) in Jiangsu. On this occasion, Wang brought along a calligraphy in seal script that he had written. As Lin Sanzhi acknowledged, the calligraphy showed great talent and ability (*cai qi* 才氣). In the following year of 1968, Wang worked at printing factories in Taixing and Yangzhou, then later on at an office of the Taixing County Cultural Bureau that dealt with the promotion of mass education through art. With his background in painting and calligraphy, Wang was assigned with the task of writing big-character banners and posters

Revolution period, see Xuan 2014.

⁸⁵⁵ See Lin Sanzhi’s essay “On Studying the Old to Create the New” (“*Tan xue gu chuang xin* 談學古創新”), rpt. Qi 2003: 175–176.

⁸⁵⁶ Wang studied at the department from 1963 to 1966. In 1966, soon after the Cultural Revolution began, the department was closed.

⁸⁵⁷ As recounted by Wang Dongling in a personal interview I undertook with the artist on July 1, 2011. Unless otherwise annotated, information given in the present chapter is based on this interview, hereafter referred to as IV Wang 01/07/2011 (n.p.). Examples of Lin’s semi-cursive and clerical-script calligraphy dating from the early- to mid-1960s can be seen in figs. 100a, and 98d–e, respectively. For further examples of Lin Sanzhi’s calligraphy dating from the 1950s to mid-1960s, see the reproductions in Qi 2003: 17, 46, 51, 64, 66–67, 70–71, 101.

disseminating the political party line of “revolutionary art for the masses”, as had been proclaimed by Mao Zedong at his speeches given at the Yan’an Forum on Literature and Art (Yan’an wenyi zuotanhui 延安文藝座談會) in as early as 1942.⁸⁵⁸ In private, however, Wang’s occupation with calligraphy continued to take classical poetry as its content.⁸⁵⁹ As noted by Gordon Barrass, it is thus not surprising that Wang was criticized for being “feudal, capitalist and revisionist in outlook”, yet that because he was young, quick to

⁸⁵⁸ Unfortunately, as would be expected, no examples of Wang’s writing in this format exist today. For Mao’s speeches at the Yan’an Forum on Literature and Art, which were later edited and published by Mao as *Zai Yan’an wenyi zuotanhui shang de jianghua* 在延安文藝座談會上的講話, see Mao 1953; cf. also He 2012: 188–193. For a discussion of revolutionary discourse under Mao’s rule, see Apter/Saich 1994. For a study on art production and artistic life in the context of the visual and performing arts of the Cultural Revolution period, see King, ed., 2010, which presents an important contribution to our art historical understanding of Maoist China. For further reading on aspects of visual culture during the Cultural Revolution period, notably poster culture, see Donald/Evans, eds., 1999; and He 2012: 228–292.

⁸⁵⁹ This, by the way, was no less true for Mao Zedong himself. The mere fact that the traditional arts were programmatically condemned as negative residue of feudal society, including scholarly pastimes like writing calligraphy, by no means meant that these forms of deep-entrenched cultural practices and techniques simply ceased to exist. In fact, on the outside, the government did not hesitate to make extensive use of the calligraphic brush in various public spheres. In everyday life, characters hand-written by the Chairman permeated the spaces of visual and material culture, in form of inscriptions on famous buildings, newspaper mastheads, or decoration on stamps and clothing. The common people, in turn, learned as school children how to write their first three characters: *Mao zhuxi* 毛主席 (Chairman Mao). As long as calligraphy was “practical”, and not “pretty”, it was accepted, as Richard Kraus points out, Kraus 1991: 62. Inside Party circles, however, quite the contrary was the case; here, calligraphy lived on as a “pretty” art form. In *The Art of Calligraphy in Modern China*, Barrass sketches a haunting image of Mao as “the revolutionary Classicist” who, sitting alone by his desk, wrote calligraphy, all rapt withal, while the Red Guards raged outside on the streets. In fact, Barrass emphasizes that Mao’s symptomatically, and increasingly, erratic calligraphy style reflected calligraphy in its function as an emotional outlet, and also as a place of solace to turn to in times of grief. Mao, whom he describes as a lonely figure who finally found himself in a state of complete social isolation, first pursued calligraphy with a passion, and later with an obsession. All this presents only one among the countless incommensurable contradictions, ironies, and human tragedies that are associated with the history of the Chinese Communist Party rule under Mao. For Barrass’ discussion of Mao’s calligraphy, see Barrass 2002: 105–177. The obsessive quality that calligraphy practice took on for Mao is vividly illustrated through an escapade that took place in face of internal political rivalries between himself and Guo Moruo 郭沫若 (1892–1978) in 1963. When it came to writing calligraphy, the at times seriously competitive relationship of these two political players showed well how calligraphy practice continued to be an important factor of social status and political influence. After having had received a fine piece of calligraphy that Guo had sent Mao as a gesture of their friendship, or so it seemed, Mao had felt compelled to respond by sending back a calligraphy of his own, yet one that would excel Guo’s example in terms of style and technique. Mao thus undertook repeated attempts at writing out the poem *Manjianghong* 滿江紅 in wild cursive script (*kuangcao*), before he was finally satisfied with the result, “filling more than half of the waste basket with discarded paper copies”, as Ji Guoping 季國平 describes in *Mao Zedong yu Guo Moruo* 毛澤東與郭沫若, see Ji 1998: 272. The calligraphy was then published in the *Renmin Ribao* 人民日報 and later engraved as gilded scripture into a wall of the Mao Mausoleum on Tiananmen Square. Rather than the spontaneous, creative outpouring of thoughts and feelings that the work appeared to be, *Manjianghong* was a carefully premeditated *mise-en-scène* that came to demonstrate Mao’s aggressive and powerful stance to Guo and the world. By showing his mastery of *kuangcao*, he hoped to establish himself as the first national leader to succeed in this difficult and sophisticated script. Whereas many emperors were known for their proficiency in calligraphy, none had ever specialized in wild cursive—a script type which, originally, was not intended for public use. Rather, it has its roots in a tradition of artistic rebellion against conventional calligraphic models and styles, as has been argued by Ping-ming Hsiung (Hsiung 1984: ii), thus suggestive, maybe, of Mao’s own ambivalent attitude towards traditional culture.

acknowledge his mistakes, and, notably, accomplished at writing big-character posters, Wang was able to escape punishment.⁸⁶⁰ During this time, Wang paid several visits to Lin Sanzhi, who commuted between various temporary residences in Yangzhou, Nanjing, and Wujiang.⁸⁶¹ Eventually, in the autumn of 1969, Wang was entrusted by a government official responsible for cultural affairs with a special task. He was to serve as Lin Sanzhi's personal assistant. Due to this fortunate turn of events, Wang was given the opportunity to spend a period of three months together with Lin. During this time, among other things, he provided practical assistance to Lin in his daily exercises of writing calligraphy: he prepared the ink with a grindstone, smoothed and waxed the paper before use, and affixed seals to the works when they were finished. On many afternoons, he would accompany Lin to the movie theater in town.

After the three months had passed, Wang was transferred back to Taixing, yet it was only several months later, in May 1970, that he was to receive his second appointment as personal assistant to Lin Sanzhi in Yangzhou.⁸⁶² Wang Dongling, currently in his mid-twenties, was obviously more than grateful for these circumstances. It goes without saying that the around-the-clock attendance to Lin Sanzhi and his needs gave him an excellent chance to witness and learn more about the art of calligraphy from Lin Sanzhi first-hand, who, as mentioned, at the time was gaining somewhat of a reputation for his emerging cursive-script calligraphy. In the course of their intensive encounters, Wang thus not only got to know Lin as a person on a close level, but was able to greatly broaden and enrich his knowledge of brush writing, and, importantly, further his own skills in this regard. As we would imagine, especially in face of the present political and social conditions, the process of teaching and learning did not take place in a conventionally systematic way, i.e. in form of methodologically structured “lessons”—as had, for example, more so been the case with Lin Sanzhi and Huang Binhong at the turn of the 1930s in Shanghai.⁸⁶³ As emphasized by Wang in his accounts of the events, “[Lin’s] method was not so much teacher-like” (*bu shi yi ge hen zuo laoshi de fangfa* 不是一個很做老師的方法).⁸⁶⁴ Most of the time, Lin would simply write characters and let Wang watch him, sometimes commenting on which details

⁸⁶⁰ Barrass 2002: 163.

⁸⁶¹ See n. 853.

⁸⁶² Aside from Lin and Wang's close encounters in 1969/1970 Wang served as Lin's assistant in Yangzhou once more in 1978, Lin Changgeng 2007: 110.

⁸⁶³ I refer again to my preliminary study of art transmission between Huang Binhong and Lin Sanzhi (and further Wang Dongling), to be published in Lee-Kalisch/Renger, eds. (in print).

⁸⁶⁴ As stated in IV Wang 01/07/2011.

to pay special attention to; sometimes talking about more general aspects of calligraphy. With regard to calligraphy, this kind of learning-by-looking-over-the-shoulder is what Wang considers to be “the best kind of learning” (*zui hao de xuexi* 最好的學習). Here, we are reminded of Huang Binhong’s educational notions of “the mutual teaching of old and new” (*gujin xiang shi* 古今相師)⁸⁶⁵ and “the mutual transmission of old and new” (*gujin xiang chuan* 古今相傳):

Old and new transmit each other’s traditions, relying on oral instruction, the methods of brush, ink, and composition, these three, the mind-heart comprehends without verbal exchange, the spirit is nimble and receptive. Knowledge should be spread, exercise should be undertaken, many efforts should be put into the practice of brush and ink, the capable and virtuous will acquire understanding through their study.⁸⁶⁶

Occasionally, Lin also gave instructions more explicitly by correcting works that Wang had written in his spare time. One of these rare moments is recalled by Wang: in one instance during his stay with Lin, Wang presented him with the calligraphy he had prepared as an exhibit for the *Calligraphy Exhibition of Poetry by Lu Xun* [1881–1936] (*Lu Xun shici shufa zhan* 魯迅詩詞書法展) organized by the Xiling Calligraphy and Painting Society (*Xiling shuhua she* 西泠書畫社) in Hangzhou. Lin, who had been invited to participate in this exhibition, had the intention to also submit a work by his “student” along with his own works. Upon seeing the calligraphy of the untitled four-line poem by Lu Xun that Wang had written out in an archaic stele-script style based on the *Liqi bei* 禮器碑, Lin immediately grabbed a brush and demonstrated how the work, which in Lin’s opinion had turned out too “weak”, ought to be improved. Instead of elaborating on the principles of clerical-script calligraphy through words, Lin wrote out the poems *Hills by the Lower Reaches of the Yangzi River* (*Xiajiang ling* 下江陵) and *Setting off Early from Baidi City* (*Zao fa Baidi cheng* 早發白帝城) by Li Bai 李白 (701–762) in order to illustrate his points. While the first of the two was written out by Lin in a clerical style that Wang describes as based on the stele scripts of *Zhang Qian bei* 張遷碑 and *Liqi bei*, the second, by contrast, Lin interestingly wrote out in a cursive script style, obviously so as to disambiguate and emphasize his points. This, incidentally, underpins the understanding of Lin Sanzhi as a

⁸⁶⁵ “古今相師，不廢臨摹，粉本流傳，原為至重。” As stated by Huang Binhong in his essay “Huatan”, *HBHWJ* (6): 158–167, 165.

⁸⁶⁶ “而古今相傳，憑於口授，筆法、墨法、章法三者，心領神悟，聞見宜廣，練習宜勤，翰墨功多，庶幾有得。” *Ibid.*: 159.

calligrapher whose great achievement is said to lie in his “penetration of cursive script by way of clerical script” (*yi li ru cao* 以隸入草), and vice versa.⁸⁶⁷ Wang thereupon rewrote the *Liqi*-style piece, which was then sent to Hangzhou, where it was finally exhibited together with Lin Sanzhi’s works.

Through this manner of teaching, Wang was to come to realize where his technical and stylistic lacks lay (his clerical script, for example, bearing a generally much too “skinny” and “frail” [*shou* 瘦] appearance, according to Lin); and to gain a deeper understanding of the differences through which the script types are individually characterized. This proved especially true as to the clerical and cursive scripts, inasmuch as these presented the script types that Lin Sanzhi was predominantly preoccupied with at this time, the latter type, for which Lin was to make his name in the art world only few years later, increasingly so.⁸⁶⁸ Concerning the development of Lin Sanzhi’s calligraphy style during his Yangzhou years as seen through Wang Dongling’s perspective, Wang recounts noticing how Lin Sanzhi would, on the one hand, copy clerical-script models intensively and systematically on a daily basis, and, at the same time, write a large number of cursive-script calligraphies in a more spontaneous manner, “at random”. At first, this does not appear further striking, since, in the history of Chinese calligraphy, cursive styles have all along been ascribed to the “informal” realm of textual culture, including the more or less spontaneously conceived formats of private notations, diary entries, personal letters, poems, and the like.⁸⁶⁹ Yet in consideration of the fact that the Cultural Revolution was concurrently raging outside on the streets and throughout the entire country, it is significant to note the increased quantitative output of Lin’s cursive-script calligraphy during this time, which indicates not merely an increased amount of time spent indoors, that is, among the “informal” realm of private life. It also underscores the quality considered to be inherent to cursive calligraphy as an emotionally inscribed script type, lending itself ideally to the calligrapher as a vehicle through which to give appropriate form and expression to intensive emotions and moods.

⁸⁶⁷ See Qi 2003: 103. For a discussion of Lin’s accomplishment of “using clerical script to penetrate cursive script”, see the section on this issue in Qi’s book, *ibid.*: 103–107. The aspect of *yi li ru cao* in Lin Sanzhi’s calligraphy is further examined in the afore-referenced forthcoming essay in the volume edited by Lee-Kalisch/Renger.

⁸⁶⁸ On the development of Lin Sanzhi’s clerical and cursive script styles, see, for example, the assessments given in Qi 2003: 74–80, and 80–121, respectively.

⁸⁶⁹ Different from the “formal” styles of seal and clerical script, which in turn are traditionally allocated within the official realm of human activity, thus fulfilling foremost representative, public, and ceremonial functions, as has already been point of discussion in the context of examining Huang Binhong’s late-period works. For a disambiguation of “formal” and “informal” styles in calligraphy, I refer again to Barnhard 1972: 233; Miller/Zhang 1990: 4–9.

From the extant sources on this subject, we know that Lin Sanzhi's Yangzhou years in the late 1960s presented a life phase of deepest grief, which saw not only the loss of his public status and identity in the wake of the Cultural Revolution, but most notably also the loss of his wife in 1966 due to illness.⁸⁷⁰

In any case, with regard to Lin and Wang's relationship on both personal and art-related levels, during these years, interaction on the whole took place largely behind closed doors. In spite of Lin's precaution to adapt his calligraphies to an ideologically conform context by taking Mao Zedong's poems as their content,⁸⁷¹ Lin would still not show his work openly to others, out of fear to be unveiled and denounced as a reactionary. Also, he knew that the sheer amount of calligraphies that had accumulated over the years spent at his enclaves in Yangzhou (1966–1969) and Wujiang (1970–1973) could present sufficient evidence to be used against him. Lin Sanzhi's second son Lin Changgeng 林昌庚 notes that during the two-and-a-half years spent in Wujiang, his father's production of poetry, calligraphy, and painting was considerably high.⁸⁷² Prior to this, the excessive, if not to say, obsessive quality of art production during Lin Sanzhi's Yangzhou years became manifest not only in the amount of calligraphies written during this time, but also the amount of (self-composed) poems. As Lin's above-cited daughter Lin Xingruo writes, her greatest fear during this time was her father's "addiction to poetry" (*wo zui pa de jiu shi fuqin fa shi yin* 我最怕的就是父親發詩癮), by all means to be read as an unironic statement.⁸⁷³ Her choice of wording as *yin* 癮, which can mean both "passion" and "addiction", is noteworthy in that this character consists of the element *yin* 隱, meaning "hidden", "concealed", "secret", and the radical *ni* 疒, indicating sickness, illness, disease; the latter of which thus signifying the more negative meaning of an addiction, rather than the more positive one of a passion. As Lin Xingruo recounts, many nights saw her father spending half the night awake in bed thinking up new poems, then jumping out of bed in the morning to write them down, before even being properly dressed. In wintertime, this would indeed induce illness, and Lin Sanzhi was constantly catching colds.⁸⁷⁴

⁸⁷⁰ See Barrass 2002: 141f.

⁸⁷¹ As described in Lin Changgeng 2007: 112.

⁸⁷² Ibid.: 122.

⁸⁷³ Lin Xingruo 2008: 167.

⁸⁷⁴ Ibid.

Further, the character *yin* 癡 is interesting in that it appropriately denotes Lin Sanzhi's general situation of pursuing a passion in seclusion, and hidden from view. It is not hard to imagine that the air of secrecy and exclusivity permeating the particular environment of Lin Sanzhi's enclave will have presented an additionally bonding factor between him and Wang Dongling, and their relationship can be aptly described as that of teacher and student, or in more traditional terms, master and disciple. Considering the times, in which the individual's social and moral integrity were fundamentally called into question, and an interpersonal atmosphere of fear and suspicion prevailed, even among neighbors, it seems hardly surprising that his early encounter with Lin Sanzhi has left deep imprints in Wang Dongling's memory and personal life history. He remembers Lin Sanzhi's cursive script of that time as "making one sense a strong breath and feeling of art...a kind of artistic achievement" (*rang ni gandao hen you yishu qixi de ganjue...yizhong yishu chengjiu* 讓你感到很有藝術氣息的感覺...一種藝術成就). In face of the political climate, described by Wang as one in which "calligraphers dared not write calligraphy", the particular form of cursive script, whose writing and reading was mastered only by a select few (thus denoted by Wang as a "minority script type" [*shaoshu ziti* 少數字体]), would have been especially at risk of receiving public criticism as an elitist art, not least with regard to its particularly expressive, unpredictable and "unruly" brush line. In this sense, Wang was well aware that the insights he was gaining through Lin Sanzhi were rare and precious. Together with a small yet tight network of close associates and old friends, as well as young students who came to Lin Sanzhi in Yangzhou to seek out lessons in art,⁸⁷⁵ Wang was one among those few partaking in Lin's calligraphy lessons and "learning the secrets of this ancient art", as worded by Barrass. At first largely a passive onlooker, Wang was to gradually, yet all the more so, turn into an active producer and agent of the art. What is more, Wang bore close witness to a crucial turning point in Lin Sanzhi's own life that was marked by Lin's hand injury in 1970, and consequently the evolvment of "The Man with the 'Iron Line'"⁸⁷⁶, which, as noted above, is Barrass' nickname for Lin with regard to the artist's hallmark cursive-style calligraphy that brought him his international breakthrough shortly afterwards, as China's "greatest calligrapher of the past three hundred years".⁸⁷⁷ If seen, then, within the broader frame of the cursive-script styles developed by Wang Dongling, it can

⁸⁷⁵ These are named by Lin Xingruo, *ibid.*: 165.

⁸⁷⁶ Barrass 2002: 140.

⁸⁷⁷ See n. 826.

reasonably be concluded that the meaning and value attached to this script type by Wang was and continues to be significantly informed by his personal and art-related encounters with Lin Sanzhi in their shared past.

Xuming yi de, shi xue nan qiu 虛名易得，實學難求, translatable as “It is easy to gain an empty reputation, and difficult to strive after true learning”, are the “eight characters” that, according to Wang Dongling, were “given to him” by Lin Sanzhi and, looking back, have incised themselves most profoundly into his mind. Continuously emphasizing the importance of a well-based, down-to-earth, and sincere attitude in one’s dealings with art, Lin Sanzhi disapproved of those who let themselves be readily blended by all the latest trends and “concepts”, therein merely attaining a general and superficial level of understanding (*yiban de biao mian de lijie* 一般的表面的理解) of art. Especially the transformative period of the late 1970s through 1980s in China, which gave rise to new art discourses revolving around notions of “modernization” and “contemporaneity”, saw an abundance of artists putting forward their ideas of “originality”, “creativity”, and “innovation”; in Lin’s view, often nothing more than “pretentious and fake” (*xujia* 虛假) words, serving as a personal adornment or tag. Lin Sanzhi strongly criticized those who were notoriously concerned with the issue of a “so-called ‘creating newness’” (*suowei “chuang xin”* 所謂“創新”), which seemed to be just an arbitrary use of the term; a hypothetical idea that bore neither any great efforts nor any resourceful foundation (*mei you gongli mei you jichu* 沒有功力沒有基礎). Lin’s opposition is thus to be understood in its cultural-historical context, including his statement that “it is easy to gain an empty reputation, and difficult to strive after true learning”. For certain, Lin Sanzhi did not object to “creating newness” *per se*, that is, in terms of its actual meaning. Much to the contrary, if this idea of “creating newness” was realized in a genuine and honest way, “creativity” and “innovation” presented the highest goals to strive after as an artist (hence, Lin’s vehement rejection of an insincere use of the term). The bottom line was that it was not the category, e.g. “traditional”, “modern”, “innovative” etc., but the quality that counted. Furthermore, “true innovation” (*zhen de “chuang xin”* 真的“創新”) was only possible with a solid foundation in traditions, and to “create newness” meant to produce work emerging from this very basis of one’s acquired knowledge and skills. This conviction is evidently much in line with Huang Binhong’s, which is also acknowledged by Wang Dongling, who points out the high importance of the notion *xue gu chuang xin* 學古創新

in Huang and Lin's understanding. In his short essay on the notion of *xue gu chuang xin*, Lin Sanzhi wrote:

In the fine arts and in calligraphy, the creation of new things happens continually. Which historical period does not bear the creation of new things? [...] When scholarly knowledge and [practical] efforts reach a certain level, the creation of new things will happen naturally. Art must reveal a rational attitude, it may not be chaotic as [was the case] in the Cultural Revolution.⁸⁷⁸

Similarly, the integrative approach to things “old” and “new” is echoed by Wang Dongling's firm belief, which has become more and more pronounced over the years, that “tradition” and “modernity” are essentially just as inseparable as “East” and “West”, and that the emphasis in art discourse should lie on aspects of correspondence rather than difference. Indeed, Wang states that upon seeing for the first time his student's “new” kind of artworks in the early 1980s, among these, novel interpretations of various cursive-script styles, such as draft cursive script, large cursive (*dacao* 大草) script, cursive clerical (*caoli* 草隸) script, and notably Wang's examples of cursive seal (*caozhuan* 草篆) script calligraphy, Lin Sanzhi had taken an instant and great liking to them. Giving Wang his approval and encouraging him to continue, Lin Sanzhi felt that through these works Wang had truly achieved to grasp and realize the idea of “creating” (*chuangzao* 創造), and, in its underlying meaning, of “studying the old to create the new”, therein echoing Huang Binhong's credos of “the mutual teaching of old and new” (*gujin xiang shi* 古今相師) and “the mutual transmission of old and new” (*gujin xiang chuan* 古今相傳).

Following the argumentation pursued in the previous chapter, we can infer that the Yangzhou period served as a period of self-consolidation, or self-affirmation, both for Lin Sanzhi and Wang Dongling—in the very sense of calligraphy practice as a mnemonic device of *in-forming* the self; moreover, of *in-forming* “the new” through *commemoration* of “the old” (and vice versa). Matthias Obert's assessment of traditional calligraphy practice as a method of “self-bonding” (*Selbstbindung*), and thus his equation of calligraphy as “life practice” (*Lebensübung*), or “life art” (*Kunst des Lebens*), is equally applicable to the cases of Lin Sanzhi and Wang Dongling. Roger Ames can likewise be requoted with regard to our understanding here of calligraphy as a “body of ritual actions”

⁸⁷⁸ “美術、書法創新，這是不斷的，哪一時代沒有創新？[...] 學問、功夫到了一定得程度自然會創新。藝術要有科學的態度，不能像‘文化革命’亂闖。” Rpt. Qi 2003: 175f. On Lin Sanzhi's notion of “penetrating the old to bring forth the new” (*ru gu chu xin* 入古出新), see Zhuang 2008.

that needs to be nurtured in order to be effective, and at the same time provides a very source of self-revitalization:

[...] the body of ritual actions and institutions constitutes the root which supports and sponsors the innovation and creativity of a cultural tradition. Like the human body, it is a profoundly organic entity which must be nurtured and cultivated to preserve its integrity, and which must be constantly revitalized and adapted to prevailing circumstances in order to retain its influence. It is once the fruit of the past and the ground of the future.⁸⁷⁹

For Lin, art practice during this time served as a strategy of survival, and of staying humane in face of the irrationalism and violence of the Cultural Revolution. Studying the classical masters of calligraphy was a way to fill the gaping empty space among an intellectually and culturally deprived nation, which had been brought about by the Communist government. Though it is true that “From his contact with Lin, Wang gradually saw how studying and copying the works of earlier masters could refresh one’s own creative powers [...]”,⁸⁸⁰ substantiating Lin’s credo of *xue gu chuang xin*, this statement emphasizes the reinterpretation and renewal of art traditions. Yet we should similarly emphasize that for Wang Dongling, his sojourn in Yangzhou signified a consolidation of his calligraphic basis, and that the “creation of the new” was in fact only to become the prominent theme in Wang’s later Modernist work beginning in the late 1970s. Seen from this angle, the Yangzhou period takes on meaning as a traditionalist turn, that is, as a strengthening of Wang’s foundations in calligraphy. Although these had already been laid in his early life, the further development of his artistic endeavors had faced significant adversities given the ongoing political situation; its future course thus more than uncertain at the time of meeting with Lin.

Gordon Barrass’ conclusion that “[...] the enduring freshness of [Lin Sanzhi’s] output encouraged other calligraphers to explore new styles [...]”, and that “Lin can therefore be seen as having made an important contribution towards the emergence of China’s Modernist school of calligraphy [...]”,⁸⁸¹ corroborates Lin’s ideas of “creativity” and “newness” as discussed above. These ideas informed an important conceptual credo as well as the methodical tools with which Wang Dongling and likewise the larger Modernist

⁸⁷⁹ Ames 1993 [1984]: 170.

⁸⁸⁰ Barrass 2002: 164.

⁸⁸¹ Ibid.: 145.

group of calligraphers would be working with throughout the 1980s.⁸⁸² Certainly, Lin Sanzhi was not the only person whom Wang had learnt from and whom he now considers as one of his most important mentors.⁸⁸³ Here, we may emphasize in what way Wang's period of learning with Lin was distinguishable and remarkable. Firstly, the impression that Lin and his calligraphy were to make on Wang as a person was especially deep and lasting; "person" here signifying the human being as a "mind-body" in its broadest possible spectrum of meanings, encompassing aspects of the psychological, emotional, and rational; of the moral and aesthetic; and not least, with regard to the notions established in Huang Binhong's context of calligraphy practice, the human being as an inscribed body, or "script body" (*shuti* 書體)—a corporeal subject and structure constituted by capabilities and aspects of self-presence, experience, and agency. Together with the given conditions of the specific time and place, the particularly deep and lasting impression of Lin's person upon Wang's was surely also due to the latter's still young age. Facing the disrupting realities of the Cultural Revolution, human relations and emotional ties among artists and intellectuals intensified, thus also functioning as a crucial element of affirming the self. The fact that everything in Lin and Wang's life was, or rather had to be, happening behind closed doors (at least in terms of art production), will have additionally contributed to an atmosphere of trust and closeness. Notably, verbal communication was limited and kept at a low-volume level out of fear of being overheard by neighbors, and conversation often took place in form of sign language. In more lyric terms, conversation resorted to the artistic language of the brush line. And so, it is perhaps precisely because Wang's encounter with Lin lies back so far—that is, in comparison to his years of learning with other calligraphy masters after entering into the Zhejiang Academy of Art in 1979,⁸⁸⁴ and moreover because Wang's learning with Lin was "confined" to a hermetically closed (yet all the more emotionally charged) space of art production—as opposed to the open, public

⁸⁸² For an assessment of the Modernist calligraphy movement in China as emerging in the 1980s, see *ibid.*: 29–33, and 162–193.

⁸⁸³ Next to Lin Sanzhi, Wang's most important teachers were the renowned Lu Weizhao 陸維釗 (1899–1990), and Sha Menghai 沙孟海 (1900–1992), both from whom Wang learnt calligraphy after his entry into the Zhejiang Academy of Art (Zhejiang meishu xueyuan 浙江美術學院; renamed in 1993 to "China Academy of Art" [Zhongguo meishu xueyuan 中國美術學院]) in 1979. The art academy was founded in 1928 as the National Academy of Art (Guoli yishuyuan 國立藝術院). As previously noted, Huang was appointed to the art academy as an art professor in 1948. For Lu Weizhao and Sha Menghai's calligraphy, see Zhongguo meishu xueyuan chubanshe, ed., 2009, and Xiling yinshe, ed., 2010, respectively.

⁸⁸⁴ See above note.

space of the later art academy—that Lin’s impression on Wang has been of remarkably enduring quality.

Further, calligraphy practice, with its ascribed cathartic, restorative, and healing qualities and functions of subduing and relieving personal frustration;⁸⁸⁵ of providing a protected place of solace to resort to as well as an open space where to release feelings and thoughts; of renewing, or “resetting” the self/mind-body, has become particularly manifest through specific forms of Chinese literati culture through the ages, notably involving the recurring phenomenon of *yimin* art (*yimin*, as already noted, literally being the “leftover folk”, or “remnant subjects”, i.e. of fallen dynasties), or, more generally, art of the recluse or hermit (*yinju* 隱居), which in itself can be considered as a distinct, often subversive, genre in Chinese painting, calligraphy, and poetry.⁸⁸⁶ Corresponding with this, in Chinese cultural history, reclusive art is connoted with the idea of seclusion in nature, and, moreover, with the subversive image of “wilderness” (*ye* 野). As Jonathan Hay elucidates in discussing painter Xiang Shengmo’s 項聖謨 (1597–1658) case as a “remnant subject” of the Ming dynasty:

Corresponding to the temporal state of remnant subjecthood was the metaphoric space of internal exile known as the wilderness (*ye* 野) [...]. As an ancient metaphor that took its meaning from opposition to the space of central power, *chao* (朝, literally “the court”), the wilderness was inherently political. While the exile in questions could be non-metaphorically physical and geographic, as in the cases of

⁸⁸⁵ The idea of art as physical practice and a self-liberating and self-healing method has a long history in China. In this context, the simultaneous writing of calligraphy and drinking of wine has been considered as mutually responsive—a tradition that culminates in the Tang dynasty with the Buddhist monk-calligrapher “Drunken Su” (Zui Su 醉素, i.e. Huaisu 懷素 [737–799]) and his wild cursive style, and is moreover traceable to the “founding father” and archetypal role model of classical literati artist culture, the Eastern-Jin Daoist poet-recluse Tao Yuanming, who has already been mentioned repeatedly throughout this study. In Tao’s cycle of poems *Drinking Wine* (*Yinjiu* 飲酒), the act of drinking wine is described as an existential means to escape and transcend the laments of life’s earthly confines, and, with the consumption of wine whilst writing poetry, “[...] soon, the sense of knowing I exist is gone.” (*bu juezhi you wo* 不覺知有我), as translated by David Hinton, see Hinton, transl., 1993: 50–58. On the cultural tradition of relating calligraphy, especially cursive-script writing in the Tang tradition, with wine-drinking, further see Sturman’s essay “Wine and Cursive: The Limits of Individualism in Northern Sung China”, Sturman 1999. For Huaisu’s calligraphy, see Nakata, ed., 1970–1972, vol. 5; further Schlombs 1998, and Sturman 1994, for discussions thereof.

⁸⁸⁶ On this rich and complex topic, see the afore-referenced catalogue that accompanied the exhibition *The Artful Recluse: Painting, Poetry, and Politics in Seventeenth-Century China* (Sturman/Tai, eds., 2012) held at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Santa Barbara, California, from October 2012 to January 2013, and the Asia Society and Museum, New York, from March to June 2013, respectively. In this context of *yimin* art, I also refer to the two exhibitions held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York: *The Art of Dissent in Seventeenth-Century China: Masterpieces of Ming Loyalist Art from the Chih Lou Collection*, held from September 2011 to January 2012, and *Dreams of Yellow Mountain: Landscapes of Survival in Seventeenth-Century China*, held from September 2003 to January 2004, respectively. On traditions of subversive art in Chinese literati culture, see also Murck 2000.

banishment or flight, it more fundamentally referred to a self-displacement of consciousness—a disengagement from the spheres of political authority.⁸⁸⁷

Wang Dongling's exploration of calligraphy practice as an extensive, liberating experience of artistic self-expression had taken an initial decisive step when he was tasked with producing large-character propaganda banners during the Cultural Revolution period. The time spent with Lin Sanzhi will have expanded Wang's already known dimension of calligraphy; and, in metaphorical terms, it will have afforded a liberating exploration of "wilderness", even if in a different way than with the big-scale format of banners, which had presented new challenges and possibilities for Wang in highly physical sense. Acting for the large part as an onlooker observing Lin Sanzhi's work process in what Wang describes as having been "the best form of learning", as quoted above, the notion of achieving solace through art is likewise valid and applicable here. Through his observation of Lin Sanzhi, Wang Dongling was able to experience the liberating meaning and function of practicing calligraphy, and, inherently connected with this, the writing of poetry—which presented a further form of giving expression to inner grief. It is in this sense that Lin and Wang's Yangzhou years can be described as a point of crystallization, which only became effective in reaction to specific preconditions, meaning both artists' individual search for artistic freedom and emotional expansion. In light of the above points, it seems adequate to denote the productive period of the Yangzhou years in terms of reclusive art. Here we can quote Peter Sturman from his essay "The Art of Reclusion", where he significantly notes: "For the artist, reclusion represented a private space, a chamber within the mind, but it was a private space that was always intended to be shared."⁸⁸⁸

6.2. Meliorative Practices and Rituals of Self-/Bonding

We can thus far register the following aspects special and specific to Wang Dongling and Lin Sanzhi's personal encounter in art: first, a distinct emotive aspect; second, the aspect of calligraphy in its functions as a body-specific technique of self-affirmation and self-restoration; third, the pursuit of brush-and-ink arts (including poetry) as a form of solace in times of personal grief and loneliness. Next to these three, I would like to draw attention to a further aspect I consider crucial as to the formation of the close bond that was to last between the two until Lin's passing away in 1989, and which even today appears to have lost none of its intensity in Wang's consciousness: the element of ritualization, moreover,

⁸⁸⁷ Hay 2012: 80.

⁸⁸⁸ Sturman 2012: 15.

the ritualization of bodily processes. The time the two spent together was determined by a repetitive, clearly structured daily routine, a chain of ritualized activities from morning to nighttime. In particular, the Yangzhou years must be seen in the light of an immersion into body-focused practices. Aside from the obvious practice of brush writing—which in itself already held a significant position within the day-to-day routine, its meaning moreover reinforced on account of the above elucidated circumstances—I am referring to practices related with philosophical-religious traditions of physical training and meditation. Here, it should be noted that all of the three artists discussed in this study had a pronounced interest in Daoist and Buddhist, notably Chan-Buddhist theory and practice, maintaining established connections with various thus-inclined circles.⁸⁸⁹ As Lin reflects in his poem *Shaolin Temple* (*Shaolin si* 少林寺), the place of which he visited during his travels in Henan Province in 1934:

My heart is inclined towards converting [to Buddhism], and penetrating emptiness with the tip [of my sword]. Not knowing when my sons and daughters will have graduated, I come here to practice with the frosty knob of my sword.⁸⁹⁰

During Lin and Wang’s Yangzhou period, the more or less inevitable turn towards a life in seclusion was paralleled by a perceivable intensification of artistic activities as well as explicitly physical activities of meditative, or self-immersive nature, indicating perhaps the personal need to deal with existential matters during that time. That Lin and Wang would have sought a solution of these matters through meliorative bodily practices corroborates the argumentation pursued in the preceding chapters, that calligraphy practice can be

⁸⁸⁹ Cf. Qian 2005; Qian 2008. Wang notes that from young years on, Lin Sanzhi had had a close circle of Chan-Buddhist monk friends; as stated in a personal interview I undertook with Wang on June 16, 2015, hereafter referred to as IV Wang 16/06/2015 (n.p.). Lin’s interest in Buddhist practice and teaching, reflected in his training of Shaolin *gongfu* from an early age, was to grow with the years. An account of Lin Sanzhi’s travels to the Shaolin Temple in Henan Province in 1934 is given in Qian 2005: 62–65. In Lin’s last stage of his life, the poetic content of his calligraphy increasingly echoed Buddhist themes, and his last piece, written two days before passing away, bore the four characters *Sheng tian cheng fo* 升天成佛 (Rising to heaven and becoming a Buddha), see fig. 23b. Similarly, the conceptual choice of motif, textual content, and many aspects of visual style mirror Wang Dongling’s inclination towards Daoist and Chan-Buddhist ideas and aesthetics, which have gained all the more significance with age, especially from around the year 2000 onwards. With regard finally to Huang Binhong in this context, I am extraordinarily thankful to Dr. Cary Liu, Curator of Asian Art at the Princeton Art Museum, who in early 2015 allowed me to sight an extraordinary handscroll of a Dunhuang-styled Buddhist scripture showing calligraphy in standard script as well as colored depictions of Buddhist deities. According to Liu, this handscroll is attributed to Huang Binhong, or, more likely, a workshop that operated under the auspices of Huang Binhong. At the time of viewing the scroll, Liu was not able to provide any further information on its production, and I have not looked deeper into the issue since. Should the connection to Huang Binhong be validatable, this would further corroborate the fact that there exist numerous unstudied, rather, unknown aspects of Huang Binhong’s work as an artist (and which probably will remain unknown).

⁸⁹⁰ “我有皈依心，多為尖虛侵。何時畢兒女，來此煉霜鐔。” Qian 2005: 65.

traditionally assessed as a cohesive strategy, or method, of confirming the self; a method of “self-bonding”, in Obert’s sense—here, moreover, also in the sense of a bonding with, and confirmation of the respective other. Further, Lin and Wang’s pursuit of bodily practices complies with Shusterman’s disciplinary proposal of somaesthetic approaches:

Somaesthetics can be provisionally defined as the critical, meliorative study of the experience and use of one’s body as a locus of sensory-aesthetic appreciation (*aisthesis*) and creative self-fashioning. It is therefore also devoted to the knowledge, discourses, practices, and bodily disciplines that structure such somatic care or can improve it. If we put aside traditional philosophical prejudice against the body [...] then the philosophical value of somaesthetics should become clear in several ways.⁸⁹¹

Accompanying the daily routine of writing calligraphy, Lin Sanzhi continuously practiced techniques of *gongfu* 功夫 and *taijiquan* 太極拳 in the mornings and afternoons, pursuing these traditional Chinese martial arts with no less sincerity and ambition than his writing⁸⁹²—as Qi Kaiyi states: “Lin Sanzhi pursued self-cultivation of both the inner and outer” (*Lin Sanzhi neiwai jian xiu* 林散之內外兼修)⁸⁹³. Though Wang Dongling did not participate in these exercises himself, he bore witness to them every day, leaving a distinct impression on his image of Lin Sanzhi, not least due to the fact that Wang was also trained in traditional Shaolin *gongfu* and could thus readily relate to the bodily gestures, movements, and choreographies performed. There is no doubt that Lin’s concurrent exercising of martial arts and calligraphy served to strengthen his overall physical condition, which, incidentally, was not entirely sound during this time: Wang states that in his function of assisting Lin, one of his daily chores was to accompany Lin to the nearby Northern Jiangsu People’s Hospital (Subei renmin yiyuan 蘇北人民醫院) in the afternoons to receive acupuncture for his apparent chronic health condition.⁸⁹⁴ In any case, here too, repetition and routine will have compensated for the lack of order and continuity in Chinese society of the time, be it even in form of a daily visit to the doctor.

⁸⁹¹ Shusterman 1999: 302.

⁸⁹² As recounted by Wang Dongling, IV Wang 16/06/2015. On Lin Sanzhi’s practice of martial arts, see further Lin Changgeng 2007: 96–97; and Wang Guanghan 2007: 174–177; the latter stating that Lin practiced *taijiquan* intensively especially during the twenty years of circa 1960 to 1980, also on grounds of his belief that this form of exercise could alleviate his chronic stomach weakness. It must be left to speculation whether or not the self-immersive practice of martial arts during this time also bore political connotations of personal resistance for Lin Sanzhi. Whatever the case, it should be noted that the tradition of Shaolin *gongfu* (as other schools and traditions of martial arts in China) is culturally charged with a long history of organized resistance within Buddhist and Daoist circles which operated as secret sects against various regimes. Cf. Linck 2011: 224–226.

⁸⁹³ Qi 2003: 82.

⁸⁹⁴ IV Wang 16/06/2015.

Ritual and repetition can be considered to possess particular efficacy as a mnemonic device when in form of practices that command more or less complex body-specific processes, as is the case with calligraphy practice. On this note, I think it is worthwhile to point up the correlation between Chinese calligraphy and the Chinese martial arts (*wushu* 武術) and some of their mutually effective aspects.⁸⁹⁵ Though different in medium, and different in physical technique, the underlying system and principles of movement and force in the brush arts and the martial arts share a fundamentally common language. As discussed in chapter three on Huang Binhong’s art theoretical approaches, a connection between notions of brush and sword as energetic extensions of the hand, respectively, was established in the history of calligraphy theory as early as the Jin dynasty; a major reference here being the essay “Battle Array of the Brush” (“Bizhen tu 筆陣圖”) traditionally attributed to Wei Furen 魏夫人 (272–349).⁸⁹⁶ Lin Sanzhi will have experienced first-hand in what way the simultaneous cultivation of brush arts and martial arts could be of mutual benefit for one another, with regard to a multitude of aspects. Though these cannot be discussed comprehensively here, some elemental correlations can be addressed to illustrate the point, including the initial meditative practices of emptying the mind-body, or “warming up”, before taking up the actual activity; anatomical and motoric cohesion; sound eye-and-hand coordination; precision of speed, rhythm, and force; the continual economizing of energy flows and respiration, or “breath” (*qi* 氣); and especially the memorization, ritualization, and patterning of the mind-body in form of endlessly repeated sequences of standardized movements, sometimes involving very long and complex choreographies that may not be interrupted, but have to be performed in one flow from beginning to end. To be sure, the image of the “martial brush”—not least epitomized by the left-hand radical for metal (*jin* 金) to be found both in the word for “sword tip” (*daofeng* 刀鋒) and that for “brush tip” (*bifeng* 筆鋒)—is more than a mere metaphor. In fact, the crucial value of harmonizing contrastive, yet complementary, elemental pairs, such as swiftness (*ji* 急) and hesitation (*liu* 留), toughness (*ying* 硬) and suppleness (*rou* 柔), openness (*kai* 開) and togetherness (*he* 闔), exposure (*lou* 露) and concealment (*cang* 藏), etc., could nowhere be more evident in traditional Chinese culture

⁸⁹⁵ For a systematic discussion of the history of martial arts traditions in China, see Kai Filipiak’s study *Die chinesische Kampfkunst: Spiegel und Element traditioneller chinesischer Kultur*—which, regrettably, still seems to be the only western-language academic publication on this subject to date; Filipiak 2001.

⁸⁹⁶ As noted above, this essay is discussed in Barnhart 1964.

than in the fields of martial arts and calligraphy art. The ideal balance of opposites is what Dietrich Seckel has brilliantly condensed in his definition of Chinese calligraphy aiming to pursue “a dialectical conversation between black and white”,⁸⁹⁷ which resonates distinctly with Huang Binhong’s use of the term *xushi* 虛實, “emptiness and matter”,⁸⁹⁸ to be considered as a compound word consisting of two inseparable parts. In particular contexts of Daoist, Chan-Buddhist, and Shingon 真言 Buddhist teachings of *gongfu*, the idea of “empty-solid” is reflected in such designations as “empty fist” (*xuquan* 虛拳), “fist of great emptiness” (*taixuquan* 太虛拳), or “empty hand” (*karate* 空手), and “way of the empty hand” (*karate do* 空手道), which are the modern Japanese designations for karate. I here note once more that Huang Binhong reiterates the philosophically and art theoretically connoted notions of “empty hand” (*xushou* 虛手) and “empty wrist” (*xuwan* 虛腕) in his own theoretical approaches to brush art, stating, for example, that “[i]n using the brush, one must “hold the brush with the fingers filled and the palm hollow” (*zhibi zhi shi zhang xu* 執筆指實掌虛) and “use the brush like a sword” (*yong bi ru yong dao* 用筆如用刀).⁸⁹⁹ The implication of the “empty brush”/“empty sword” is further reiterated by Lin Sinzhi, as his above-quoted poem shows: “My heart is inclined towards converting [to Buddhism], and penetrating emptiness with the tip [of my sword/brush] [...]” (*wo you guiyi xin, duo wei jian xu qin* 我有皈依心, 多為尖虛侵). In any case, we can assume that for Huang Binhong, who had likewise undergone training in martial arts in young years, such connections between the traditional Chinese brush and martial arts did not just carry meaning on a terminological or theoretical level; moreover, these connections will have been ones that were experienced on a practical, physical level. Although this issue cannot be dealt with in depth in this study, I think it is noteworthy to register that all three artists discussed were trained in both fields.

It is unfortunate that extant works by Lin Sanzhi and Wang Dongling dating from the late-1960s/early-1970s period discussed in this section are scant. Yet, this circumstance is, of course, hardly surprising, given the limitations of technical reproduction of that time (as

⁸⁹⁷ “ein dialektisches Gespräch zwischen Schwarz und Weiß”, Seckel 1960: 147.

⁸⁹⁸ On this aesthetic notion fundamental to Huang Binhong’s art theory and practice, see his essay of the same title: “Emptiness and Matter” (“Xu yu shi 虛與實”), rpt. HBHWJ (5): 476–478.

⁸⁹⁹ As stated in his “Huayulu”, HBHWJ (6): 41. Moreover, it was also noted above that at an early stage of developing his model of “five brush and seven ink methods”, the fifth brush method of “transformation” (*bian*) had been denoted by Huang Binhong as the method of “emptiness” (*xu*), see Wang Zhongxiu 2014: 23.

opposed to today), and especially the restrictive external conditions posed by the time period itself. Considering that artworks were being systematically destroyed by the Red Guards from 1966 onwards, it is fortunate that Lin Sanzhi had succeeded in secretly taking away a batch of works with him when fleeing from Nanjing to Yangzhou after breakout of the Cultural Revolution. Different, then, was the situation from the late 1970s onwards: not only was there an obvious increase to be registered in the production of art; the preservation of works was now in a more secure condition. For example, the one piece mentioned above that Wang had made under Lin's "auspices" for submission to a 1969 calligraphy exhibition in Hangzhou is now lost, and no reproduction exists. However, an image of another work that Wang made in 1979, the *Seven-Character Lü Poem "Arriving at Shaoshan"* by Mao Zedong (*Qi lü Dao Shaoshan* 七律到韶山) written in clerical script (fig. 100l). It can here serve as a representative example of the style in which the earlier 1969 work exhibited in Hangzhou had been created. Though separated by ten years, Wang emphasizes that his "*Arriving at Shaoshan*" is written in precisely the kind of clerical script styled on ancient models like *Liqi bei*, which he had studied together with Lin Sanzhi (cf. here fig. 100m). In turn, a luckily extant work by Wang Dongling dating from early 1968 (figs. 105a–b) which is executed not in clerical, but in seal script, can give us a rare insight into his script styles of that period; and it is in this way (only) that we are able to piece together fragments of a stylistic development. Incidentally, the seal-script piece carries the same content—the last two verses from Mao's poem "*Arriving at Shaoshan*".

As it were, the later, 1979 version of "*Arriving at Shaoshan*" was exhibited at the *Jiangsu Province Exhibition of Calligraphy Works* (*Jiangsu sheng shufa zuopin zhan* 江蘇省書法作品展), which was the first one of the kind to take place on provincial level after the Cultural Revolution had ended. Among the circa forty-five exhibited pieces, next to Wang Dongling's contribution, works by Lin Sanzhi, Hu Xiaoshi 胡小石 (1888–1962), Gao Ershi 高二適 (1903–1977), and Fei Xinwo 費新我 (1903–1992) were shown. The pronounced revival of calligraphy from the late 1970s onwards gained significant momentum with the re-establishment of the art institutions in China. The institution provided the necessary framework for calligraphy to become public again, now in form of an academized, independent subject, or officially "purified" form of art, for the first time in history. When considering the works produced by young calligraphers at the art academies throughout the 1980s in China under the self-given name of "Modernism", we should stay

aware of the fact that these works do not only bear their characteristic shapes and gestures on grounds of a new, western-influenced discourse, but that this feverishly pursued discourse was moreover informed by the memories of lived realities experienced during the preceding decades in China, including their visual and material culture. With regard to the gradual formation of Wang Dongling's calligraphy styles yet to become known on a wide scale, I would like to make the point that in spite of the near-to absence of any visual material stemming from the formative years of Wang's first two life decades, it is nevertheless an absence that can be taken as meaningful in itself. Neither are we able to reconstruct what Wang Dongling's large-character revolutionary banners looked like, nor can we visually retrace in what way his calligraphy style developed during this crucial time of his teenage years. The times did not allow for an open discourse on art or any open dissemination of artworks. All the same, we can approximate and imagine what it may have looked like when Wang held and maneuvered the large, broom-like brushes in order to write out the life-size characters of party slogans onto posters. This is possible only through the observation of the public calligraphy performances given by him later on and up to this day, which in this sense present nothing more than an ongoing cultivation and transformed abstraction of a practice performed and ritualized at a young age. The artistic form and format of *dazixing*, large-character calligraphy, which found elaborate formulation throughout the 1980s and -90s, is physically rooted in the practice of writing *dazibao*, large-character party banners. In hindsight, in our attempt to reconstruct history, we can thus gratefully infer certain puzzle pieces. Another one of those puzzle pieces is Wang Dongling's incorporation of a brush line that, as noted above, is unmistakably informed by Lin Sanzhi's ductus, especially true with the examples of 1989 and 1993 shown in figs. 100n–o, respectively, and even the much later example of the year 2000 seen in fig. 8a. Lastly, we must concede and acknowledge that certain blind spots will always remain historically. These invisible spots are thus also a constitutive part of what we call our historical knowledge, or, to put it the other way round, even the "visible" parts of our knowledge can never show the whole picture.

The preceding argumentation established four main aspects as crucial to the encounter that took place between Lin Sanzhi and Wang Dongling in 1969/1970: a distinct emotive aspect; calligraphy in its functions as a body-specific technique of self-affirmation and self-restoration; the pursuit of brush-and-ink arts as a form of solace in times of personal grief and loneliness; the element of ritualization, moreover, the ritualization of bodily

processes as a meliorative practice and technique of bonding—both a bonding with the self, and with the (respective) other.

In face of the not only social but also physical seclusion of Lin Sanzhi and Wang Dongling's encounter during China's years of turmoil, aspects of the interior and exterior, in their multitude of senses, took on a curiously literal meaning. With the political turn of events and given human constellations of time and space, the potentiality of unfurling “interior beauty” and “interior strength” in art attained a particular dimension of actuality. In the remaining paragraphs to follow, I propose to pick up again and expand on the notion of “reclusive art”, as had been touched upon in naming the pursuit of art as a form of personal solace, with special regard to the culture-specific phenomenon and tradition of *yimin* 逸民 art in China. In the context of the time period discussed above, during which Lin Sanzhi and Wang Dongling established a close tie with each other, I think that art-related ideas of reclusion and interiority are not only applicable, but especially useful in discussing their case. The discussion of these aspects serves to come to a close of this study, inasmuch as they can help to highlight *neimei* as an overarching aesthetic concept that informs Huang Binhong, Lin Sanzhi, and Wang Dongling's approaches to art. Here, *neimei* will be considered with regard to its implications of what is termed as a “*nei-wai* distinction”; a distinction of interior/exterior, or inner/outer.

6.3. Reclusive Art and Discourses of the Inner: Reflections on the *nei-wai* Distinction

We may recall Richard Barnhart's comment on reclusive art as a willfully chosen motif to attain individual freedom, which was quoted in the above chapter that dealt with eccentricity in Chinese art:

The concept of individual freedom was sharply limited in traditional China, and almost purely Taoist in origin. Within the sphere of Confucian thought, the idea scarcely existed. Locked in side the grid of obligations, duties, responsibilities, and expectations to which he was subject throughout his life, the Chinese scholar could find release only in nature [—or in madness...].⁹⁰⁰

Here, related issues concerning conceptions of interiority/the inner (*nei* 內) and exteriority/the outer (*wai* 外), respectively, can be raised. In the history of Chinese literati culture, significantly intertwined with the brush-and-ink arts in their function as a means of self-relief and self-restoration, is the traditional topos of reclusive art; an issue that has already been addressed throughout this study in various contexts. As was indicated,

⁹⁰⁰ Barnhart 1983: 13.

reclusive art represents a generic metonym for art produced within an environment of to some extent evident physical seclusion—be this in form of the scholar-official’s private retreat to be found in the idyllic countryside, or the even more remote and lofty mountains, as associated with culture historically and art historically influential personae such as, first and foremost, “T’ao the Hermit”⁹⁰¹ of the Eastern Jin, Wang Wei of the Tang, and Li Gonglin 李公麟 (1049–1106)⁹⁰² of the Northern Song; or in form of the far-off, uncultivated wastelands to which political expatriates were banished (likewise, many of whom belonged, or had belonged, to the scholar-official class), the most celebrated examples here probably being Su Shi and Mi Fu of the Northern Song; or further in form of a “voluntarily” chosen place of self-exile, often being that a simple abode well tucked away in nature, or a Buddhist or Daoist mountain temple, as was the case with Yuan-dynasty Ni Zan, and Qing-dynasty Shitao, respectively. Apart from Li Gonglin, all of the above figures have been addressed, to some extent, in the past chapters. Last but not least, in this context, Huang Binhong, too, can be added to the list. With regard to themes of reclusion in Huang Binhong’s works, in the preceding chapter, an annotation was made on Claire Roberts, who has indeed described Huang Binhong’s painting series of nighttime mountain landscapes as a continuation of the tradition of reclusive art, stating that

Huang Binhong was intrigued by nightscapes and while travelling at night took great delight in experiencing different tones of blackness. He produced many black and brooding paintings during the Beiping years [1937–1948], expressing both his own mood and the national psyche at the time. The works, with their frequent reference to the Northern Song, or night mountains, are deeply introspective. The artist’s fascination with painting “the dark side of the mountain” [*yin mianshan* 陰面山], continues the tradition of withdrawal or retirement (*yinyi* 隱逸) and the art of the scholar-recluse (*yinshi* 隱士) within the context of bitter and uncertain times.⁹⁰³

If traveling in nature during the nighttime evoked Huang Binhong’s association of the monumental landscape painting of the Northern Song, then, in turn, so did the viewing of these paintings evoke his reminiscence of traveling: in her catalogue entry on Huang Binhong’s *Midsummer-Night Mountains* (seen in fig. 61b), Luo Jianqun quotes Huang with his observation: “Look at the paintings of the Northern Song masters; it’s as though one is traveling in the mountains at night.”⁹⁰⁴ Luo argues that “Huang’s talk of [...]

⁹⁰¹ The alias given to Tao Yuanming by William R. B. Acker, see Acker 1952.

⁹⁰² For western-language studies on the life and art of Li Gonglin, see Harrist 1998; Ding 2015.

⁹⁰³ Roberts 2005: 217.

⁹⁰⁴ Yang, ed., 2010: 260.

‘mountains at night’ is in fact his way of stating a preference for the style of the Song and Yuan landscape painters.”⁹⁰⁵ And yet, when reading the above assessment made by Claire Roberts, it seems that Huang’s preference—that is, both for “mountains at night” and “the paintings of the Northern Song masters”—implies interests and inclinations that reach beyond stylistic formulae of brushwork and composition. As Luo herself then adds in the catalogue entry, Huang stated in one of his poems that after having observed the mountain peaks at night for a long time, he now understood what was meant by the phrase “surging and leaping among ten thousand ravines”.⁹⁰⁶

Lin Sanzhi, moreover, can be likewise included to the above list of scholar-recluses in continuation of “the tradition of withdrawal or retirement”, as denoted by Roberts. In his case, the *yimin* term of “leftover folk” is in fact very suitable, given that he belonged to the distinct social group of modern *wenren* that had received a classical Confucian education in young years and borne witness to the last decades of traditional imperial rule in China prior to 1911, only to gradually become the target of severe political repression following the Communist takeover in 1949. In Lin Changgeng’s monograph, the years of 1966 to 1973 spent by Lin Sanzhi in temporary residence are entitled as his “seven years of vagabonding” (*qi nian liulang* 七年流浪).⁹⁰⁷ The author further describes the three of these years spent by Lin Sanzhi in Yangzhou as a period of “temporary rest” (*Yangzhou zan qishen* 揚州暫棲身)⁹⁰⁸—literally, of “temporarily ‘perching’ the self”—which etymologically conjures the image of a bird dwelling in its nest; the home of the nest moreover providing a safe abode where to find restoration and nourishment. Along these lines, Lin’s sojourn in Yangzhou can easily be read in terms of an exile, if only self-exile;⁹⁰⁹ his home, though situated within the city, providing a safe hideout, yet, at the

⁹⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁶ Ibid.: 262.

⁹⁰⁷ Lin Changgeng 2007: 108.

⁹⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁹ In spite of my reference here to the term “self-exile”, we must not forget that in the context of the Cultural Revolution (and not only there), the line that runs between “self-exile”, i.e. as a consciously made choice of an individual person, and “exile”, in terms of a forced displacement implemented by higher authority and against one’s own will, is a very thin one. This is particularly evident in Lin Sanzhi’s case: Lin had been appointed to the prestigious Jiangsu National Painting Institute led by Fu Baoshi 傅抱石 (1905–1965) in 1963, only to be discharged in 1966. Given the sudden loss of his social status and identity, his social isolation potentiated significantly with the death of his wife in the same year, and in face further of an ever-increasing deafness. The act then of retreating from public life during the years 1966–1973 was neither entirely imposed from the outside by radical policies of the Communist party, nor was it entirely a decision of free will. Whatever the case, we can contend that from 1966 to 1973, Lin Sanzhi lived the life of a political exile within the borders of his own homeland. The topos of art produced in exile is a consistent

same time, demarcating a space of social isolation. Nelson Wu's intriguing discussion of the so-called "eccentric painters" of the early Qing, and their modes of landscape depiction as representations of "spaces of interior exile", is an appropriate reference in this context.⁹¹⁰ It associates two intertwined aspects of clandestine art production in the Chinese context: first, the aspect of *exile* in its meaning of enforced absence, social exclusion, alterity, and punishment; and second, the aspect of *interiority*, implying the individual's withdrawal from the external worldly realm of human existence and action, towards an innerworldly, retreated state of mind, of being and existing in the world. This movement of withdrawal can also be understood not only as a drawback from the representational sphere of officialdom and "outer kingliness" (*wai wang* 外王), but as a willful resorting to that what is perceived as the inner resources, the "substantial", "genuine", and "essential" inner workings of the self, located within the private sphere of "inner sageliness" (*nei sheng* 內聖), to adopt here an age-old Confucian distinction between inner (*nei* 內) and outer (*wai* 外).⁹¹¹

It had been noted previously that, in the context of the classical tradition of Chinese literary criticism, Stephen Owen defines the term *wen* 文 as "pattern", "literature", "the written word", and elucidates:

In the common organic tree metaphor for literature, *wen* is the visible outward pattern of the leaves, which, observed carefully, reveals the hidden shape of the trunk and branches: *wen* is the organic external manifestation of some "substance" (*chih*) or "natural principle" (*li*) (e.g., growth or "treeing") [...].⁹¹²

In accordance with this terminological disambiguation of *wen* 文 (as a visible outward pattern), *zhi* 質 (as substance), and *li* 理 (as natural principle, or the principle of growth), Owen notes that the interior qualities of *zhi* and *li*, inherent to all things of the world (*wanwu* 萬物), are dependent on the exterior manifestation of *wen*, in that "[...] *li* and *chih*

theme that runs through the history of Chinese literati art; on this, see for example Wang Linxiang 2010; Egan 1994: 250–260; Fu 1976 (b); Murck 1996; Murck 2000; and Sturman 2000 for discussions of various Northern-Song cases, including those of Su Shi, Huang Tingjian 黃庭堅 (1045–1105), and Mi Fu. For a compilation of calligraphy by Su Shi, Huang Tingjian, and Mi Fu, further see Nakata, ed., 1970–1972, vol. 6.

⁹¹⁰ See Wu's article "The Toleration of Eccentrics", Wu 1957. Albeit not in a specifically East Asian context, I further refer to Johannes A. Gaertner's article "Myth and Pattern in the Lives of Artists" which vividly discusses art history's idiosyncratic traditions of labeling artists according to certain patterns, in particular the pattern of the "mad", "crazy", or "odd artist", see Gaertner 1970.

⁹¹¹ For a critical discussion of the inner-outer distinction in the Confucian context, see the sub-chapters "Inner and Outer" in Levenson 2005 [1964]: 51–52; "Polarity of the Outer and the Inner in the Dialectics of Harmonization" in Cheng 1991: 202–205; and "The Inner and Outer Realms" in Benjamin Schwartz' essay "Some Polarities in Confucian Thought", Nivison/Wright, eds. 1959: 50–62, 54–58.

⁹¹² Owen 1992: 594.

cannot be complete without *wen*: the inside must have its organic outside or it is ‘bare’, incomplete.”⁹¹³ Owen’s reference here is to *The Poetic Exposition on Literature (Wenfu 文賦)* by third-century literary critic Lu Ji 陸機 (261–303) (whose [attributed] calligraphy is seen in fig. 14c), where the terms *li*, *zhi*, and *wen* are established in a triangular relationship through the metaphor of a tree in lines 51 and 52 of the exposition: “natural principle (*li*) supports the substance (*chih*), a tree’s trunk; pattern (*wen*) hangs down in the branches, a net of lushness” (*li fu zhi yi li gan, wen chui tiao er jie fan* 理扶質以立幹, 文垂條而結繁).⁹¹⁴ Owen then expounds:

The question remains exactly of what is *wen* [...] the outside. The most elegant answer is given in the theory of poetry, *shih* 詩: as in the ‘Great Preface,’ the literary text is the outside of a certain kind of state of mind, a state of mind qualified by the condition of ‘being intent upon,’ *chih* [志].⁹¹⁵

Here, it is easy to relate Owen’s definition of literary text to other early art forms in China, notably calligraphy, where it is believed that “writing is the delineation of the mind”, and we can thus understand artistic output in form of poetry, calligraphy, or painting, as being merely variant forms of “literary composition”, inasmuch as “[w]en, the literary text, is the outside of an inside, the final stage of a process”.⁹¹⁶ Moreover, when thought through the organic metaphor of the tree, “[w]en, ‘pattern’, is the lavish exterior of leaves and twigs and branches, that which is most visible. [...]. *Wen*, the ‘pattern’ of leaves and branches, is the final stage of growth [...], the most exterior stage of ‘becoming outward’, that to which a tree grows.”⁹¹⁷ *Wen*, in its broader sense, denotes “patterns” that carry moral and aesthetic meaning. It is in this sense that my reference to Owen serves to draw attention to the *nei-wai* distinction as a moral categorization of “inner” and “outer perfection”, which can add a further facet to our understanding of *neimei*, “interior beauty”, and also *neili*, “interior strength”. As aesthetic concepts, these two play a centerpiece role in Huang Binhong, Lin Sanzhi, and Wang Dongling’s work. The moral categorization of inner and

⁹¹³ Ibid.: 114.

⁹¹⁴ Lines 51 and 52 of the exposition, respectively, as translated by Owen, *ibid.*: 113. For his insightful discussion of *zhi* 質, commonly translated as “substance”, “matter”, “stuff”, “solid shape”, further as “nature”, “disposition”, “quality”, see Stephen Owen’s translation and commentary of Lu Ji’s *Poetic Exposition on Literature*, Owen 1992: 73–181, esp. 112–115, and 130–134. For an alternative rendering of the above-cited lines 51 and 52, see Ernest Richa Hughes’ translation, Hughes 1951: 99.

⁹¹⁵ Owen 1992: 114.

⁹¹⁶ Ibid.

⁹¹⁷ Ibid.: 113f.

outer perfection can be carved out through the words of Chung-ying Cheng, who in his book *New Dimensions of Confucian and Neo-Confucian Philosophy* writes that

The *outer* refers to ‘completion of things’ and the *inner* refers to ‘completion of the self’. The distinction between the *outer* and the *inner* is a distinction between things outside oneself and nature within oneself. By extension we might say that the *outer* is the culture, objective order, environment, society, world and other people whereas the *inner* is the subjective self-existence, mind and various functions of human nature or human endowments. There is also this implication: the *outer* is given beyond my will and my cultivation, whereas the *inner*, as moral and spiritual potentialities of man, can be developed and cultivated at one’s free will. Thus we can regard the *outer* and the *inner* as representing two orders of reality. The problem of harmony and conflict for the *outer* and the *inner* is that of producing a balanced and organic unity of reality in which the *outer* and the *inner* are polaristic, namely, opposite and complementary.⁹¹⁸

This passage is cited from the book’s chapter “Polarity of the Outer and the Inner in the Dialectics of Harmonization”, whose title aptly pinpoints the issue I aim to draw attention to. While the harmonious unity of inner and outer is propagated by Confucius, numerous scholars have pointed out the ambivalences and discrepancies that have prevailed between these two alleged spheres throughout history, not least illustrated through Confucius himself, who was “notoriously a ‘throneless’ king”, as noted by James R. Levenson in *Confucian China and Its Modern Fate*,⁹¹⁹ where it is further written:

The spheres of *nei* and *wai*, that is, inner and outer, were considered interrelated, so that [...] *hsiu-shen* [...] and *p’ing-t’ien-hsia* were joined ideally in one concept. Self-cultivation and world-pacification must imply each other; if there is a true *sage* (sageliness being a quality of inner perfection), he should properly make an outside mark on the world, as the true king.⁹²⁰

Here, the sphere of the inner is equated with “self-cultivation” (*xiushen* 修身); the sphere of the outer with the “pacification of all under heaven” (*ping tianxia* 平天下). Cultivation of the inner, i.e. by the individual, should serve the ordering of the outer, i.e. society. This model, however, presupposes human beings “with a vocation for political and cultural leadership—the superior men, or *chün-tzu* [...]”, and “it is obvious that only those in public office can do anything to order human society. [...] The superior man can achieve complete self-realization only in his public vocation [...]”.⁹²¹

⁹¹⁸ Cheng 1991: 202.

⁹¹⁹ Levenson 2005 [1964]: 51.

⁹²⁰ Ibid.

⁹²¹ As Benjamin Schartz remarks, Nivison/Wright, eds., 1959: 50–62, 52.

The ambivalence that thus appears between the inner and outer realms of human activity, or realms of inner “completion of the self” and outer “completion of things”, could be no more evident in the lives of Huang Binhong, Lin Sanzhi, and Wang Dongling, than during their individual periods of greatest hardship and personal challenge, in a sense periods of utmost “interiority” and “self-cultivation”. In Huang’s case, we can take as the prime example the late years around 1953, marking his phase of near-to blindness; in Lin’s case, the trauma of the Cultural Revolution which, as noted above, was accompanied by his wife’s death in 1966, and further, the deformation of his right hand in 1970, as well as an ever-increasing state of deafness;⁹²² in Wang’s case, his four-year period sojourn as a teacher in the USA from 1989 to 1992, which in spite of the many rich and exciting experiences gained nevertheless posed an unprecedented phase of extreme loneliness, even self-estrangement, in face of Wang’s first-time confrontation with a cultural Other outside the borders of China, inducing a fundamental questioning of cultural values and “national essence”—including the definition of art, specifically calligraphy as art; its premises, possibilities, limitations.⁹²³ In Confucius’ sense, that what cannot be “pacified in the [outside] world” finds all the more “completion of the self” on the inside. It is easy to follow this logic, and we can readily interpret the “outside world”, in the cases of our three examples, as constituted by the externally induced conditions of political turmoil, cultural and social isolation, personal loss, physical degeneration, and physical injury. To be sure, individual periods of hardship in turn became manifest in form of highly generative and transformative moments of art production, thus cementing the notion of “self-realization”. While the period around 1953 was established as a highly creative phase in Huang Binhong’s life, which is to be seen in the context of a personal crisis that Huang Binhong went through during this time, the same holds true for the latter cases of Lin Sanzhi and Wang Dongling: we can identify the years around 1970 as a culmination of personal crisis in Lin Sanzhi’s life, upon which closely followed his international breakthrough as China’s “modern sage of cursive calligraphy” in 1972; in Wang Dongling’s case, moreover, his four-year stay in the United States at the turn of the 1990s continues to show its creative fruit up to this day, one of its greatest gains lying in the fact that Wang could use his experiences and art exchanges abroad to further theories and practices of contemporary

⁹²² See Barrass 2002: 141f.

⁹²³ See *ibid.*: 166ff.

calligraphy as an international art form.⁹²⁴ However, in spite of these conclusions, none of the three artists would have considered themselves as “superior men” with a “public vocation” at these specific moments within their respective personal histories, and the question that arises is, how then did they actually come to “achieve complete self-realization”—that is, in the public sphere? Moreover, how acceptable is the notion that inner and outer realms can be distinguished from one another? Which realm do the artworks, emerging in the above-noted contexts, belong to? To the inner or outer—to the concealed realm of inner sages, or the visible sphere of outer kings? And when, or where, does human activity cross the borderline between these two spheres? Justifiably, the reader may now also ask: Why all these questions in the first place? Why bother to raise these issues if they essentially cannot be solved anyway? What difference does it make for us to know whether the distinction between “inner” and “outer” is feasible, and reasonable, or not? It may indeed seem long-winded, yet my reason to address the problem of the *nei-wai* distinction serves to emphasize, from an additional angle, overall considerations of *neimei* as an aesthetic concept; pursued in this study primarily in the context of Huang Binhong, and secondarily, in addressing the cases of Lin Sanzhi and Wang Dongling. Although the scope of the present study cannot sufficiently accommodate the much more complex and comprehensive inquiry that befits the matter of the *nei-wai* distinction with regard to art and art critical discourses, I at least want to touch upon some of the problematic issues that arise in this context.

In Huang’s case, his “self-completion” through art after having overcome his eye illness is a by now firmly rooted art historical rhetoric that nearly verges on a myth, and we can safely claim that the wide-spread official appraisal of his accomplished late style as an epitome of Chinese national essence and cultural tradition was only fuelled by the recognition of his late transformation in art. In Lin’s case, the inextricability of inner and outer is even more evident, for, the much-celebrated wiry, dry and hard iron-line style of Lin Sanzhi did not actually evolve *during* the many years of inner grief, within the four walls of a secluded home; it was only *after* his calligraphy was “discovered” by party officials in 1972 that his hallmark style gained proper momentum and further

⁹²⁴ On Wang’s first-time confrontation with a cultural Other, which was brought about by his sojourn in the USA from 1989 to 1992, as well as a discussion of the thus emerging and today still prevalent cross-cultural aspect in Wang’s calligraphy art are subject to inquiry see the above-mentioned, forthcoming article in *Yishu: Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art*.

development.⁹²⁵ In Wang Dongling’s case, then, in spite of all the adversities and existential conflicts he saw himself faced with during his years abroad, as indicated above, the ensued disruption of culture- and art-specific foundations not only accounted for the permanent alienation and depression Wang experienced during this time, but it also significantly triggered a multitude of productive processes in art that can be seen to have ongoing and increasingly wide-spread effect within international spheres of art criticism, academia, the politicized exhibition space, and the marketplace up to this day. Bringing these contexts to mind in their complexity, how could we but not agree that the dichotomous, somewhat convenient distinction of inner and outer realms of human activity implies an all too simplified, static version of life? Chung-ying Cheng was quoted above with: “the *outer* is given beyond [one’s] will and [one’s] cultivation, whereas the *inner*, as moral and spiritual potentialities of man, can be developed and cultivated at one’s free will. Thus we can regard the *outer* and the *inner* as representing two orders of reality.” Yet, is it true that the given constellations of the “outer” are always beyond the range of one’s own doing? And is it true that one always has free command over the enactment of one’s own potentialities? In the early Confucian context, the inner-outer distinction is understood as a distinction between the private/individual and public/collective, and similarly as a distinction between knowledge (*zhi* 知) and action (*xing* 行)—“knowledge”, in terms of the cultivation of mind, belonging to the internal realm of human existence; “action”, in terms of political engagement and state-related decision-making, to the external realm of the public sphere.⁹²⁶ Ideally, humans should strive after a unity of both aspects (*zhi xing heyi* 知行合一). However, here again, the ambivalence of “inner” and “outer” categories can be noted; and Levenson points out:

Knowledge and action [...] should be one, but the ‘times’, the mysterious ‘times’, so often thrust them apart. ‘Though Confucius had *te*, virtue, he did not attain *i*, position’: [...] those who know, in the Confucian sense, cannot act. Or they *should* not act, as Confucian officials, under monarchs who are in the supreme position to act, but who do not *know*.⁹²⁷

Though perhaps self-evident, I would like to emphasize caution in adhering to a binary model that assumes “things” and “actions”, on the one hand, and the “self” and

⁹²⁵ Thus functioning as a medium of political diplomacy between China and Japan, and also serving as a symbol of cultural resurrection in a nation completely deprived of art. Cf. Barrass 2002: 142–145.

⁹²⁶ On the knowledge-action polarity in Confucian thought, I also refer to Benjamin Schwartz’ essay in Nivison/Wright, eds., 1959: 50–62, esp. 58–62, as well as Rošker’s “Epistemology in Chinese Philosophy: Knowledge and Action”, Rošker 2015 [2014] (n.p.).

⁹²⁷ Levenson 2005 [1964]: 51f.

“knowledge”, on the other hand, as belonging to “outer” and “inner” spheres, respectively. Obviously, any clear-cut definition and distinction of two spheres poses a problem. Even if these spheres are considered as relational, mutually conditioned, or interdependent, a problem remains because the idea of mutuality still implies some sort of duality and the preservation of constitutive borderlines, rather than emphasizing their actual fuzziness. To understand “completion of the self” in the traditional Confucian sense, as a form of intensified inner self-cultivation and accumulation of knowledge, especially during times of (political, social, economic, personal) upheaval, indicates that the lack of efficacious action in the outer sphere, and the disunity, or dissonance, thus perceived between “self” and “environment” is compensated by a stronger activity within the inner sphere; in the case of the three artists in question, as elucidated above, meaning that unfavorable “external conditions” provoked favorable “internal transformations”. At the same time, it is only through *art as physical practice*; moreover, through the tangible handling and negotiating—both in an artistic and political sense—of physical matter and material (“things”), that this “inner” transformation could ever become visible and efficacious (i.e. in the “external” world). With special regard to the case of calligraphy practice, “self” and “thing”, or “knowledge” and “action”, could not ever be reasonably separated. Particularly in the context of calligraphy, does “knowledge” not become “known” only in the very moment of its externalization—that is, through enactment/ritual performance/patterned movement, i.e. as implied through the above-noted “pragmatist” notion of *tiyan* 體驗 (as indicating a form of knowledge that is “proven effective through bodily practice”)?

In his most recent contribution to what could be called a field of discourse on the “inner-outer nexus” in the traditional Chinese context, published in *Frontiers of Philosophy in China* under the somewhat cryptic, yet in my opinion thoroughly reflected title “‘Bodyheartminding’ (Xin 心): Reconceiving the Inner Self and the Outer World in the Language of Holographic Focus and Field”,⁹²⁸ Roger Ames expounds the traditional Chinese notion of “self” as being not centered around *xin* 心 (the so-called “heart-and-mind”, or “heartmind”), that is, in terms of a “thing”, but moreover as equal to what he denotes as *bodyheartminding*—signifying a “process”.⁹²⁹ Ames’ definition of

⁹²⁸ Ames 2015.

⁹²⁹ Ibid.: 172.

“bodyheartminding” is useful with regard to the question raised in the above paragraph.

The author writes:

The resolutely correlative language of Confucian cosmology can perhaps offer a way forward in reconceiving what is being expressed as the conjunction, the combination, and production of erstwhile separate things—body, mind and culture—to be in fact a qualitative transformation in the relational dynamics of a complexly inclusive yet continuous experience. [...] Specifically, *xin* (心) in this cosmology—frequently translated as “heart-and-mind” or simply as “heartmind”, but better understood as an evolving process of “bodyheartminding”—is a continuous, gerundive event rather than a conjoining of nominative things that can be separated as body, heart, and mind [...]. *Xin* is at once body, heart, and mind—an existentially and somatically experienced process of thoughtful feeling—that is profoundly normative and descriptive.⁹³⁰

Regarding the inner-outer nexus, aside from such epistemological connotations of calligraphy, it is the socio-political sphere of calligraphy practice that probably serves best to illustrate the malleability of inner and outer: nowhere else does this distinction seem to be more elusive, given the cultural significance of brush-writing in China as a method of cultivating the moral self, yet at the same time as a cultural technique of skillful public display, therein perfectly visible and efficacious among society—and especially officialdom, the “external world of kings”. On this note, in his essay “Some Polarities in Confucian Thought”, Benjamin Schwartz asks whether the outer realm is to be understood as “an outgrowth of capacities and potentialities presenting the inner realm”, or, in turn, the “moral content of the inner realm [as] only a product of culture”.⁹³¹ Surprisingly, Confucius himself does not give any explicit hints concerning the relation of inner and outer to one another. The dispute on which of the binary elements has priority over the other one presents a crucial debate in traditional as well as modern Chinese epistemology. Benjamin Schwartz states in this regard:

The two polarities are intimately related, but their relationship is complex. [...] The key problem is the relation of the ‘inner’ realm to the ‘outer’ in accounting for the bases of human culture. Both realms are touched upon in the sayings of Confucius, but nothing is said of the relation between them.⁹³²

Was the outer realm an outgrowth of capacities and potentialities presenting the inner realm, or was the moral content of the inner realm only a product of culture?, Schwartz asks. Rather than aiming to generate definite answers to the above questions, many of

⁹³⁰ Ibid.

⁹³¹ Nivison/Wright, eds., 1959: 54f.

⁹³² Ibid.: 54.

which moreover seem to present something of a chicken-and-egg problem, my aim in this concluding section is instead to highlight the permeability and ambivalence of the many “orders of reality” (Chung-ying Cheng) that constitute calligraphy as a practical and historical phenomenon in Chinese culture. In addition to the above considerations, which reflect a largely Confucian perspective, a multitude of further cultural topoi, stemming notably from traditions of Daoist philosophy, have likewise nourished the praxis of calligraphy. Here I will raise only one example, inasmuch as it appears well-suited and particularly illuminating in light of the specific case discussed. While it is feasible to argue that the degeneration of sensory perception due to old age, as was the case with Huang Binhong and his impairment of eyesight in late years, presented an “external” condition that was brought about *against* and *beyond* the act of one’s own will, we should nevertheless not completely disregard the topos of (willfully) transcending one’s senses in order to immerse oneself into a meditative state of emptiness, in that this state could be considered an ideal precondition of mind for the creation of art. Repeated reference can be made to Stephen Owen and his reading of Lu Ji’s *Poetic Exposition on Literature*, where this state of mind is described as a “cutting off” of the senses”, inducing a “state of Taoist vacuity”, a form of “Taoist quietism”.⁹³³ Owen translates lines 15 to 18 of the *Poetic Exposition*, where the “beginning stage” of poetry-writing seems to be described as the “process of meditation or speculation that precedes an individual act of composition”.⁹³⁴

Thus it begins: retraction of vision, reversion of listening; absorbed in thought, seeking all around, my essence galloping to the world’s eight bounds, my mind roaming ten thousand yards, up and down.⁹³⁵

I would like to draw attention to the first line of this passage, in that it specifically addresses the perceptive senses of seeing and hearing. In his commentary on this line, Owen writes:

Retraction of vision, reversion of listening, *shou-shih fan-t’ing* [收視反聽]: [...] Most Chinese exegetes since Li Shan and the Wu-ch’en commentary interpret this passage as a cutting off of sense perceptions, taking *shou* (“retract”) in a common usage as “cease”, and apparently taking *fan* (“revert”) as the attention of listening “reverting” to non-attention. Chinese theorists often spoke of the necessity of cutting oneself off from the determinations of the lived world in order to write. [...]

⁹³³ Owen 1992: 96f.

⁹³⁴ Ibid.: 96.

⁹³⁵ “其始也。皆收視反聽。耽思傍訊。精鷲八極。心遊萬仞。” Ibid. Alternatively, in Ernest Richa Hughes’ translation: “The beginning was in this fashion: [...] Oblivious to all sights, oblivious to all sound, both sunk in thought and questioning abroad, [...] his spirit was away on a wild gallop to the Eight Poles, his mind thousands of cubits beneath the sod.” Hughes 1951: 96.

There is no question that in his own lines Lu Chi is using a Taoist model of spiritual movement, from cutting off the outer world to a dark stillness and finally to inner light. But it is important to distinguish between a useful, attractive model for the operations of the mind in literary composition and true Taoist values. We might note that Lu Chi never rejects knowledge, that rejection being essential to the Taoist spiritual project. Lu Chi is simply transferring the Taoist spiritual model to the writer's quest for words and ideas. In place of the Taoist negation of perception, Lu Chi chooses a somewhat different phrasing, one more appropriate for his purposes: reversion or inversion of the senses [...].⁹³⁶

Owen concludes his discussion of the passage in question by emphasizing that his use of the term “vacuity” in this context signifies not a *literal* sense of vacuity “achieved by ‘cutting off’ the senses, but rather a true ‘inversion’ of the senses—looking and listening within the microcosm of the self”.⁹³⁷ Upon reading both Lu Ji's verses and Owen's commentary, how could we not but be enticed to transfer the image of the poetry-writer, who makes use of “the Taoist spiritual model” in his “quest for words and ideas”, to the image of the calligraphy-writer, whose quest it is to concentrate his intention—*yi* 意, literally, the “sound of the mind-heart”⁹³⁸—entirely on lending these very words and ideas adequate visual form? I am aware that the ritual of emptying the mind as a precondition of writing calligraphy has been a point of discussion in significant studies of scholarship on traditional Chinese calligraphy,⁹³⁹ and readily, we hear the echo of the celebrated statement traditionally ascribed to Wang Xizhi: “The concept precedes the brush, the writing comes after the heart” (*yi zai bi qian, zi ju xin hou* 意在筆前, 字居心後).⁹⁴⁰ The reason why I relate to Owen in this context is to emphasize the aspect of radicality which is implied by the strong image of rigorously “cutting oneself off from the determinations of the lived world”, and resonates with the theme of art produced in self-/exile which I have aimed to

⁹³⁶ Ibid.

⁹³⁷ Ibid.: 95.

⁹³⁸ According to Bernhard Karlgren, who notes that *yi* 意, “intention”, derives “from 音 (yīn) ‘sound’ and 心 (xīn) ‘heart’”. The 音 sound in the 心 heart”, Karlgren 1923: 85, no. 203. In this sense, *yi*, which is traditionally held to be formed within the human being's spiritual-emotional center, *xin* 心, is a fundamental premise of writing calligraphy. For a study on culture-, body-, and language-connoted aspects of *xin* 心 from a cognitive perspective, see Yu 2009.

⁹³⁹ See Günther Debon's discussion of “Aus der Versunkenheit freiheraus 沈著痛快 *ch'en-cho t'ung-k'uai*” (“Swift and Free out of Concentration”) which he denominates as a fundamental topos in his study on basic terms and ideas of Chinese calligraphy theory, and the commonalities among traditional Chinese poetry, calligraphy, and painting theory. Debon 1978: 53–57, 82–83.

⁹⁴⁰ As translated and discussed by Günther Debon in terms of a fundamental topos in Chinese calligraphy theory, see Debon 1978: 1ff., 77ff. Next to the English translation given by Debon, his German-language translation is “der Gedanke geht dem Pinsel voran, das Zeichen kommt nach dem Sinn”. The statement was put forward in the postscript of the aforementioned “Diagram of the Battle Formation of the Brush” (“Bizhen tu”) by Jin-dynasty Lady Wei, which is traditionally attributed to her student Wang Xizhi, see Barnhart 1964: 21.

carve out earlier on. Although Günther Debon, in his study on basic terms and ideas of Chinese calligraphy theory, and the commonalities among traditional Chinese poetry, calligraphy, and painting theory, states that “[a] direct influence of literary theory upon that of painting or calligraphy and vice versa seems to be relatively rare”, this statement seems to be superseded by his following words that “[t]he intellectual and social background which determined the approach of the poet-painter or poet-calligrapher towards his art proves to be of much greater consequence”.⁹⁴¹ From what we know, practitioners and theorists of poetry, calligraphy, and painting, i.e. the élite social class of *shiren* 士人, or later *wenren* 文人, to some extent themselves constituted this very “intellectual and social background”; afore-cited Wang Xizhi here being a prime example.⁹⁴² To be sure, in his chapter on “The Spiritual Background” of Chinese calligraphy theory, the very first statement made by Debon is that “[t]he predominance of ideas and, connected with it, the identification of terms arises to a great extent from the philosophical background of the critics and theorists [...]”, and Chan-Buddhism, Confucianism, and Daoism are then elucidated as various schools of thought that exercised influence on fundamental concepts of calligraphy theory.⁹⁴³

My line of argumentation is not in the least aimed at claiming that Huang Binhong’s blindness (or Lin Sanzhi’s deafness, for that matter) was self-induced, i.e. as a form of willful “cutting off” or “inversion” of the senses. However, I do believe that certain culture-specific topoi, deeply entrenched in the rhetoric of art history, art theory, and art production, may have played some role with regard to practices of self-cultivation—and with this, the cultivation of a certain (self-)image of the artist—whether consciously or not, and I moreover seek to address, as side issues within the frame of this study, various contexts of philosophical and religious discourses and traditions in order to point up the problematic entanglement; the interplay, and indivisibility, of so-called exterior and interior factors. With this in mind, and with special regard to the discussion of creative processes in art, as crystallized in conceptual terms such as *neimei* and *neili*, I think that the problem of the *nei-wai* distinction can be made particularly tangible with help of Stephen Owen’s approach. His examples of the tree metaphor and the poetry-writer

⁹⁴¹ Ibid.: 84.

⁹⁴² For a historical outline of art production and its socio-political contexts in imperial China, also with special regard to the case of Wang Xizhi, see Clunas 2009 [1997]: 135–171, “Art in the Life of the Élite”.

⁹⁴³ Debon 1978: 80–81.

illustrate well that the *nei-wai* distinction does not only refer to different realms of “things” and “actions”, and “self” and “knowledge”, respectively, but, on an even more fundamental, yet nonetheless problematic level, also to a division of inner and outer matter, that is, of essential, spiritual matter, and physical, bodily matter: in Owen’s example, we have the inner principle (*li*) of the tree as well as the inner conception (*yi*) of the poet, on the one hand, and the outer pattern (*wen*) of the tree’s visible leaves and branches as well as the manifest outpour of the poet’s words (*wen*), on the other hand. While this division of inner and outer appears at first reasonable, it is in fact a more than elusive one, which the concepts of *neimei* and *neili* similarly go to show.

From the artist’s perspective, following the preceding discussion, *nei* seems to indicate qualities that exist on an interior level of immaterial, spiritual, metaphysical quality. Along these lines, we may understand Huang Binhong’s utterance that “art is manifestation of metaphysical principles”⁹⁴⁴: inner principles attain outer form through art. And yet, considered both philosophically and technically, the utterance that “art is manifestation of metaphysical principles” is of course a contradiction. Indeed, Huang himself conceded that “The secret of ‘knowing the white yet cleaving to the black’ [*zhi bai shou hei* 知白守黑] is beyond verbal interpretation”, thus affirming the Daoist notion that certain truths cannot be expressed through form. Nevertheless, Huang’s personal curiosity and apparent need to overcome the contingency of human knowledge and cognition did not stop him from attempting to, at least, approximate a last truth, or “order of reality” through art. The contradictive statement made by Huang on the material manifestation of the immaterial, is of course, no novelty within traditional discourse on the brush-and-ink arts in East Asia. To the contrary, here, the formal medium of the brush line is understood as a material carrier of vital energy, or breath resonance, something that is essentially thought to be of spiritual, immaterial quality, thus pointing towards the paradoxical condition that characteristically inhabits the specific genres of calligraphy and ink painting: the aim to pursue and give form to that what is per definition formless and ungraspable. We can recall the opening lines of the first chapter of the *Daodejing*:

[I. 1.] The Tào that can be trodden is not the enduring and unchanging Tào. The name that can be named is not the enduring and unchanging name. [2.] (Conceived

⁹⁴⁴ Cited after Kuo 2004: 163.

of as) having no name, it is the Originator of heaven and earth; (conceived of as) having a name, it is the Mother of all things.⁹⁴⁵

In the East Asian tradition of brush-and-ink arts, moreover, the condition of essentially being unable to grasp and convey truth through description of form does not present an actual contradiction, but rather one that can and needs to be resolved by the artist. The solution to the artistic problem of truth and depiction is the insight that depiction should never aspire to be fully “true to nature” in a naturalistic sense, but that it must aspire after non-perfection in order to attain perfection/truth—hence its terming, in Pierre Ryckmans’ words, as “le paradoxe taoïste”.⁹⁴⁶ Similarly, in his *Ästhetik und Literaturtheorie in China: Von der Tradition bis zur Moderne*, Karl Heinz Pohl discusses Zhang Yanyuan’s aesthetic theory as put forward in *Lidai minghua ji*, and elaborates:

Das Bemühen um schön wirkende Farbigeit und “oberflächliche Ähnlichkeit” mit den Dingen—mit anderen Worten um Vollkommenheit in der Darstellung—steht, Zhang Yanyuan zufolge, wahrer Kunst entgegen. [...] Zhang Yanyuan rät [...] zu einer daoistisch empfundenen Natürlichkeit in der Malerei: Nur nicht mit übertriebener Sorgfalt und Detailfreude ein Bild so naturgetreu, so vollkommen wie möglich zu malen versuchen! Deshalb auch ein typisch daoistisches Paradox: Die Unvollkommenheit ist die wahre Vollkommenheit.⁹⁴⁷

As previously indicated, in Huang Binhong’s view, the painter who achieves to resolve this paradox has in fact achieved to create “true paintings” (*zhen hua* 真畫), which in Huang’s antithetical definition must be “exactly like and simultaneously absolutely unlike [life]” (*jue si you juebu si* 絕似又絕不似), as Jason Kuo elaborates, further quoting Lang Shaojun: “[...] Huang Pin-hung’s principle of painting being ‘exactly like and absolutely unlike life’ is based on the representation of life’s ‘intrinsic beauty’ [*neimei* 內美]. It is in keeping with the spirit of his landscape creation in his late years.”⁹⁴⁸

Huang Binhong’s definition of true art, whether in terms of “a manifestation of metaphysical principles”, as noted above, or in terms of having “both likeness and unlikeness”, corresponds with his idea of *neimei*: a beauty that exists beyond the “outer” form and surface of things. The problem with the term *neimei*, which is later reiterated by Lin Sanzhi and Wang Dongling, relies on an age-old discourse of inner and outer that places a misleading emphasis on so-called “inner” qualities, which in Chinese art criticism

⁹⁴⁵ “道可道，非常道。名可名，非常名。無名天地之始。有名萬物之母。” Du, ed., 2009: 2. Cited here is Legge’s translation, Legge, transl., 1959: 95.

⁹⁴⁶ Ryckmans 1970: 22.

⁹⁴⁷ Pohl 2007: 139f.

⁹⁴⁸ Kuo 2004: 66f.

are traditionally valued higher than “outward” qualities. Even to this day does the narrative of calligraphy as a highly “spiritual” art form find continuous reiteration, as discourse within the thriving field of contemporary Chinese calligraphy clearly testifies.⁹⁴⁹ Though we know Huang Binhong made the point that a harmonious, that is, equilibrated relation of outer and inner is essential to achieve representation successfully in visual art (i.e. through both likeness and unlikeness, or naturalism and abstraction of the depicted subject), emphasis still lies on the literati scholar ideal and idiom of “attaining spiritual essence”. As outlined in the introduction, my aim in this study is not at all to eradicate this ideal and idiom, I rather propose to readjust the image of calligraphy art as a spiritual endeavor by laying bare the in my opinion underemphasized, multifaceted aspects of the physical in this context. I hope that through this study I was able to bring into stronger focus various bodily aspect of art production in the particular Chinese context of *wenren* traditions and brush-and-ink arts. Ideally, “physical” and “metaphysical” ought not be divided as clear-cut categories in the first place, at least not in the dichotomous manner that appears to prevail within art critical and art historical discourse.

Incidentally, Lin Sanzhi’s use of the term *xu ming* 虛名, which was translated above as “empty reputation” in the quote *Xuming yi de, shi xue nan qiu*, literally means “empty name”, which in a semiotic sense points up the mutual necessity, and thus inextricability, of signifier and signified—in this case, words and meanings: words can only make sense if they are filled with meaning, and meaning (in a cognitive sense) can only become tangible through description. For calligraphy, then, to be truly “substantial”, the brush line itself needs to be filled with meaning, or rather, become “meaningful” itself, by imbuing it with “vital energy”, “spiritual content”, “life breath”, or however you wish to name it.⁹⁵⁰ Whether or not one agrees with this conventionalized definition of a good-quality calligraphy, it is in any case significant to understand this particular, if not to say, curious semiotic condition in the context of traditional Chinese calligraphy—namely, the inversion, moreover, sublation of signifier and signified, given such phrases as the “interior beauty of the brush line”; signifier and signified thus presenting a relationship whose status can be

⁹⁴⁹ That is to say, not on the whole, but at least as a pronounced tendency; an issue that is here left open to inquiry for further research.

⁹⁵⁰ On a final note, I here only make reference to one example; an appreciation of Lin Sanzhi’s cursive-script calligraphy by his student Wang Dongling, published under the title “Writing That Reaches the Deepest Realm of the Soul: A Brief Analysis of Lin Sanzhi’s Cursive-Script Calligraphy Art” (“Xie dao linghun zui shen chu: Lin Sanzhi xiansheng caoshu yishu jianxi 寫到靈魂最深處: 林散之先生草書藝術簡析”), Wang Dongling 2008.

described as “complicated”, to say the least. In short: we may do well to assume a more careful stance when encountering idiosyncratic narratives of true art as being of an *essentially immaterial* nature.

Though it is arguable that “signifier” and “signified” depend on and need each other to fulfill their respective function (indeed, to have a very reason to exist), we may nevertheless let Zhuangzi have the final say: conveying the notion that the word, both written and spoken, is only—that is, no more than—a vessel, a formal vehicle used to accommodate and transport an idea. As the famous final passage in the chapter “External Things” (“Wai wu 外物”) of the Daoist classic goes:

The fish trap exists because of the fish; once you’ve gotten the fish, you can forget the trap. The rabbit snare exists because of the rabbit; once you’ve gotten the rabbit, you can forget the snare. Words exist because of meaning; once you’ve gotten the meaning, you can forget the words. Where can I find a man who has forgotten words so I can have a word with him?⁹⁵¹

⁹⁵¹ Watson, transl., 1968: 302. “荃者所以在魚,得魚而忘荃;蹄者所以在兔,得兔而忘蹄;言者所以在意,得意而忘言.吾安得夫忘言之人而與之言哉!” Du, ed., 2009: 382.

Summary and Closing Remarks

In this study, I argued in favor of somaesthetic approaches as a useful methodology with particular regard to the field of Chinese calligraphy. The term “somaesthetics” can be considered as the making use of a “new name for some old ways of thinking” (as the pragmatist philosopher William James had been quoted), that is: “somaesthetics” as a “new name” to signify “script body” (*shuti*), “ritual” (*li*), and “pattern/text” (*wen*). These words—“script body”, “ritual”, and “pattern/text”—in effect, indicate nothing other than “some old ways of thinking” Chinese calligraphy, as I argued in chapter one. In chapters two, three, and four, I investigated and expanded on Huang Binhong’s ideas and definitions of art through various perspectives, taking into consideration, among others, aspects of Huang’s art practice in the context of calligraphy emulations, and his art theoretical elaborations on specific aesthetics of “intrinsic beauty” (*neimei*), which he ascribed to ancient forms of Chinese script. A contextualization of conceptual frameworks and histories related to idea(l)s of “interiority” as fundamental premises of evaluation in Chinese art criticism—and what could thus be termed as the inner workings of Chinese brush-and-ink art in a broader sense—served to carve out the dichotomous relationship of mind and body, or inner and outer, that had prevailed in traditional *wenren* discourse since the Northern Song, and was significantly present in literati art discourse of Huang Binhong’s own times. Here, the specific aspects of flavor and color were examined as discursive elements which reveal particularly well in what way *wenren* discourse was permeated by the mind-body, or inner-outer dichotomy, as seen through Huang Binhong’s case. Issues of script body, ritual, and pattern/text, as established in the first part of the study, were reprised in chapter five, where somaesthetic aspects of Huang Binhong’s late-period brush-and-ink art in its function as a mnemonic device of the self were taken into particular focus. Chapter six finally looked into implications of Huang Binhong’s “most instructive legacy”—his “emphasis on brushwork and ink”, as assessed by Jason Kuo—seen through the perspectives of calligraphers Lin Sanzhi and Wang Dongling, both of whom can be considered part of an artistic lineage in the context of this “legacy”. It was argued that inasmuch as Huang Binhong is foremost established in art history as a landscape painter, an investigation of Lin and Wang’s examples can shed more light on the significance of Huang Binhong’s impact as a calligrapher. The discussion of Lin and Wang’s cases served to point up the transmission and reiteration of specific aesthetic ideas,

including the aesthetic of *neimei*. Moreover, related issues of interiority were further carved out in the context of art production of the Cultural Revolution period art, as a form of reclusive art in twentieth-century China. An examination of the conditions of art practice as pursued by Lin and Wang during the time of their encounter, methodologically further cemented somaesthetic approaches to calligraphy as a ritual-based form of physical self-cultivation. Following from the argumentation pursued in chapter five, it could be inferred that this time served as a period of self-consolidation, or self-affirmation, both for Lin Sanzhi and Wang Dongling, in the sense of calligraphy practice as a mnemonic device of in-forming the self; moreover, of in-forming “the new” through commemoration of “the old”, and vice versa.

In preference of pointing towards “directions”, rather than formulating a set of distinct “conclusions”, the study finally emphasized both the limitations and possibilities of art historical research in general, and research on Chinese calligraphy of the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries in particular. In this context, and in light of the considerable number of various research desiderata that were addressed throughout the above chapters, I hope to have shown in what way the study of Huang Binhong as calligrapher provides a rich source and an as of yet expandable field of scholarly investigation.

On a final note: in the various personal interviews conducted with Wang Dongling during the time period of 2010–2015, I repeatedly asked him what he considers to be the main element of (stylistic, technical, aesthetic) transmission between Huang Binhong, Lin Sanzhi, and himself. His answer, which he always gave in the same wording, and always without a moment of hesitation, was: “the interior beauty of the brush line” (*xiantiao de neimei*). The straightforwardness of Wang’s response—next to the response itself—has given me continuous food for thought. I came to the conclusion that it does not make sense to phrase the title of this dissertation as “A Study on Huang Binhong as Calligrapher, with Special Respect to *His* Concept of Interior Beauty”, but that it must be “with Special Respect to *the* Concept of Interior Beauty”, inasmuch as this study is not primarily, or at least, not solely, concerned with *Huang Binhong’s* coining of the term. Moreover, *neimei* is significant in its discursive function, as a term that has been reiterated, appropriated, and even instrumentalized by others over time, therein continuously recoinning the meanings of *neimei*; not only in the individual contexts of discussing Huang Binhong’s art, but also in the various contexts of interests that reach beyond the subject of Huang Binhong’s art.

**The Inner Workings of Brush-and-Ink: A Study on Huang Binhong (1865–1955)
as Calligrapher, with Special Respect to the Concept of Interior Beauty (*neimei*)**

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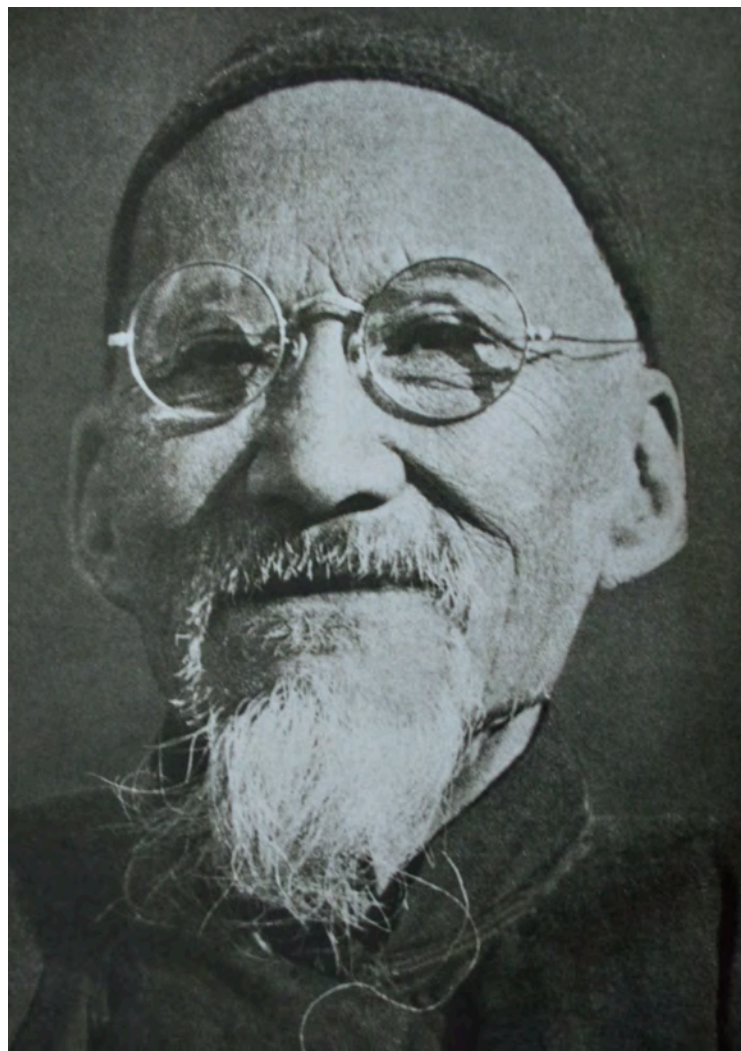
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1a)



1b)



2a)



2b)



2c)



2d)



2e)



2f)



2g)



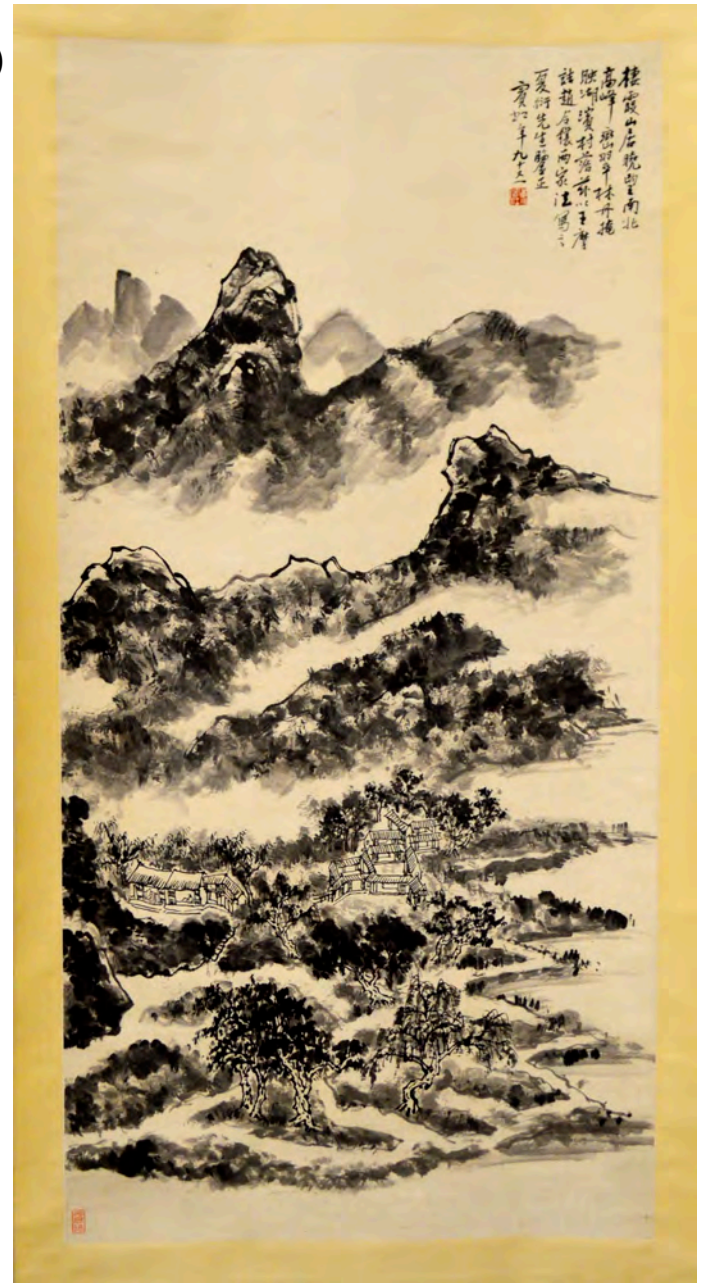
2h)



3a)



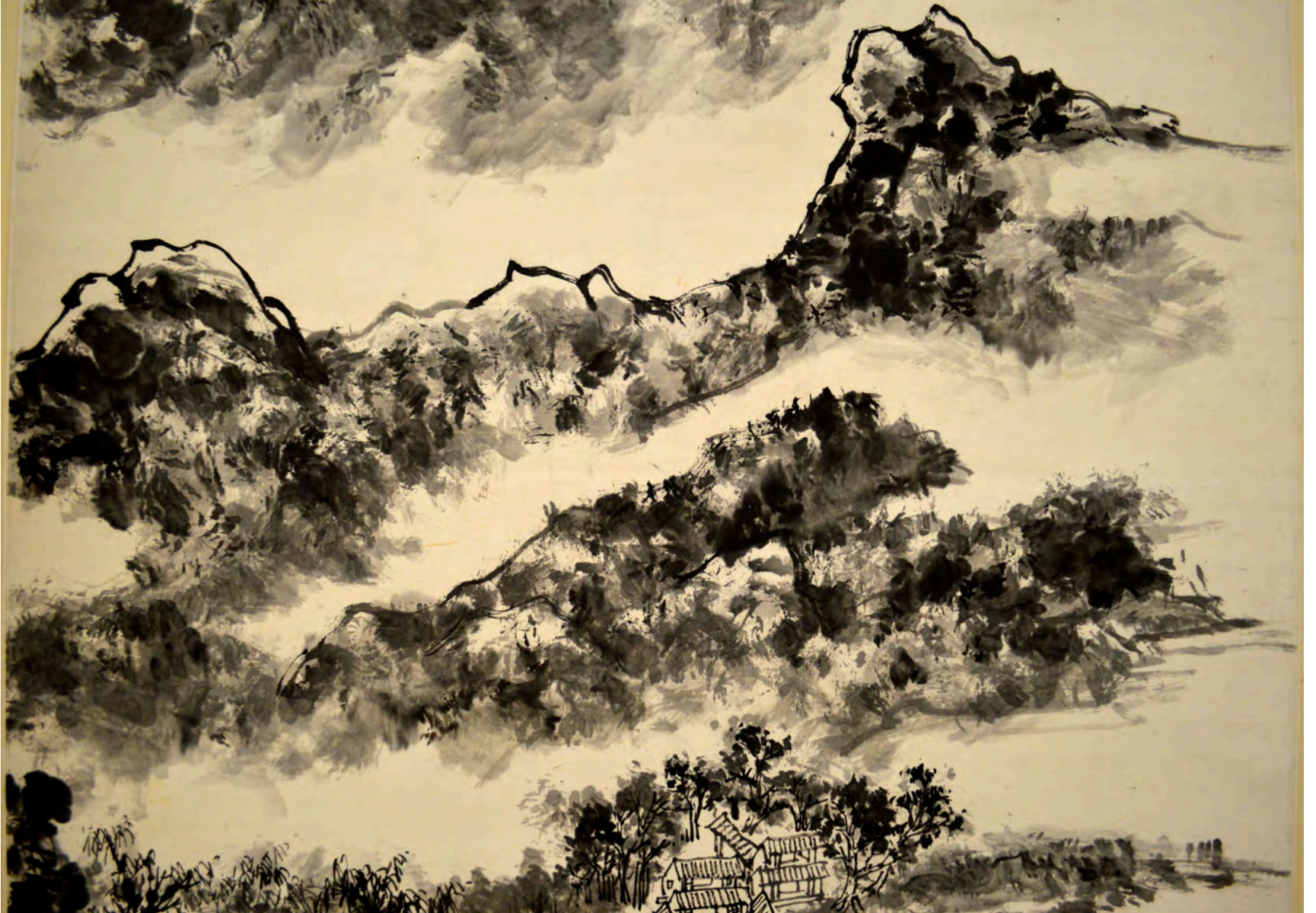
3b)



3c)



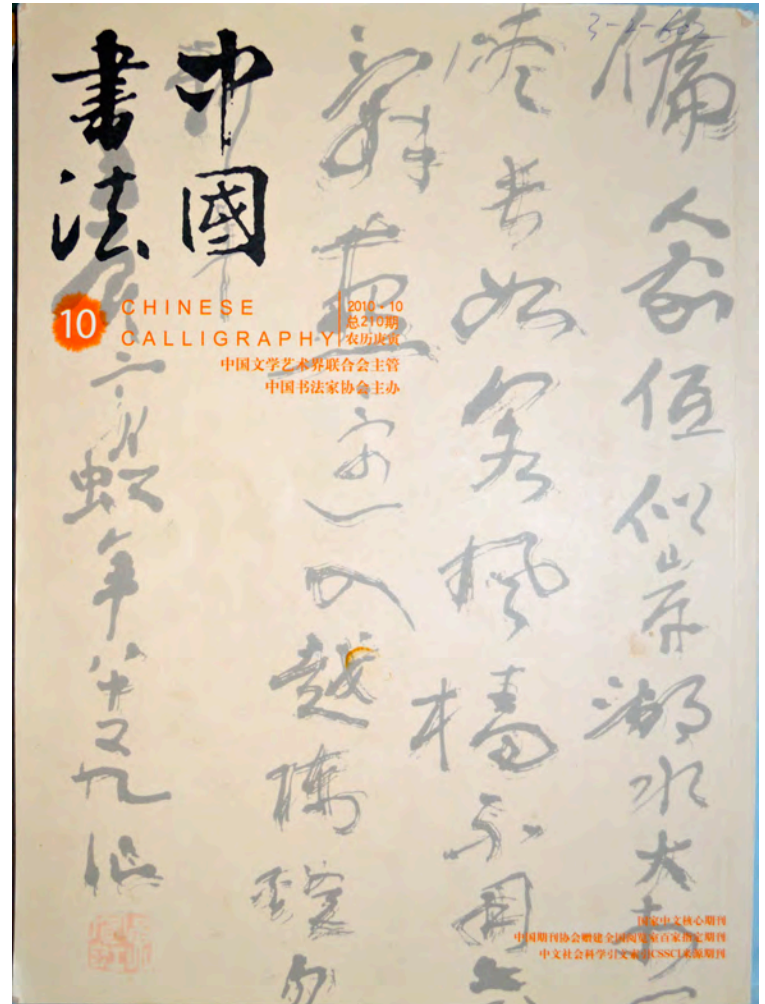
3d)



3e)



4)



5a)

翰天樂此際
 難辨大旨聖
 功成
 歲
 庚寅初春
 黃山賓虹年八十元

5b)

敬
 惠誠并古作
 前存視及類
 啟心惟和人
 有城諸勝今
 署積涼即行
 及略也方便
 用
 謹
 黃山賓虹

夫虞廷作繪五采彰施周代表象形六書俶始記述圖
 畫繇來舊已易曰道樞而上藝成而下上馬者視道
 為高深口能言而語不詳下馬者習藝為根節
 言無文而行不遠國畫精微迭經蛻變若斷若續
 繇數千年而弗墜非應占人之說代遠年湮無所
 徵引而憲羣言蒼萃支離蹢駁未能芟繁
 就簡提要鉤玄如絲之就緒如肉之在串者此誠
 學者之憂也方今佞虛梵書遐取重譯之菴術
 滂溥字內英奇才雋之士將欲舉其殊形異制

曲意附會而溝通之以為古往今來圖時遷變
 之道此莫屬不謂新知原於溫故竟委責於
 尋源由梨刀而柔其刃今作家與士習雅格獨
 逸品彌清董玄等所稱讀萬卷善行萬里路
 方可作画其意深矣畫之有法肇於古人著
 之載籍非徒誇遠游車博覽已也古者方技一門
 列於志乘一都一邑之間會事傳世代有名人學
 風所播成為流派之大家傑出諸臻神妙多
 師造化幾於化之其最著者如荆浩之寫太行
 山董元之寫江南山米元章寫京口江山黃子久寫

海虞山水諸如此類又皆因其一居之地朝夕
 目覩各有不同一施之於筆墨歷世久遠亦終
 相承非步麗端墨守家法古今名流類以
 勿替有極其善者連口授而已柳帶柳更柳輪柳頭柳轉柳變柳別手
 摹心追思兼眾長獨抒已見知非開節之諸
 道寸與庸史之練習所可窮其奧交因觀解
 不般亦確識畫者之直其需筆壯病尋詩人
 之意亦精神至所筆法惟精善者須
 神會焉云友鄭君午昌工詩文善繪事
 方間博雅教品勵有閱數書者輯成卷

跋古畫今

帙名曰中國畫學全史有條不紊別類分明
 眾善兼該為文之府行見衣被寰宇騰美
 士林媲美前徽嘉惠後學家珍和璧人
 握隋珠則度世之金誠迷津之寶筏也
 以適此因書簡端志歡幸

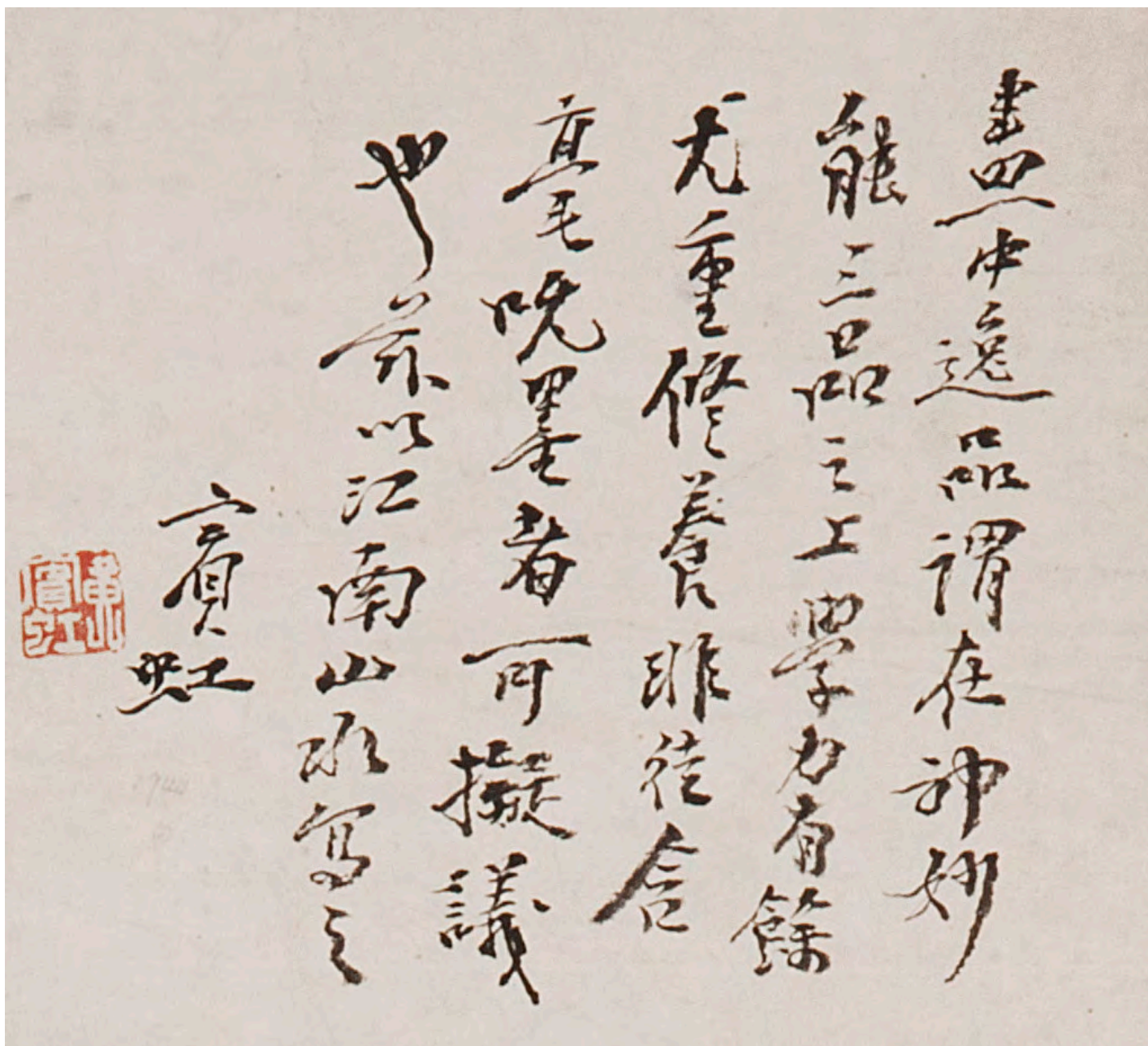
論述

年

5e)



5f)



5g)

日夜涉四方先難行人懽誦民歌

德惠穆如清風乃刊斯石曰

赫赫明后果嘉惟則克長克君牧
守三國三國清平詠歌懿德瑞降
豐稔民曰偵植威恩並隆遠人賓
服鑿山浚瀆路曰安宜繼禹之迹

亦世賴福

建寧四年六月十三日王寅造時府

銘三

6a)



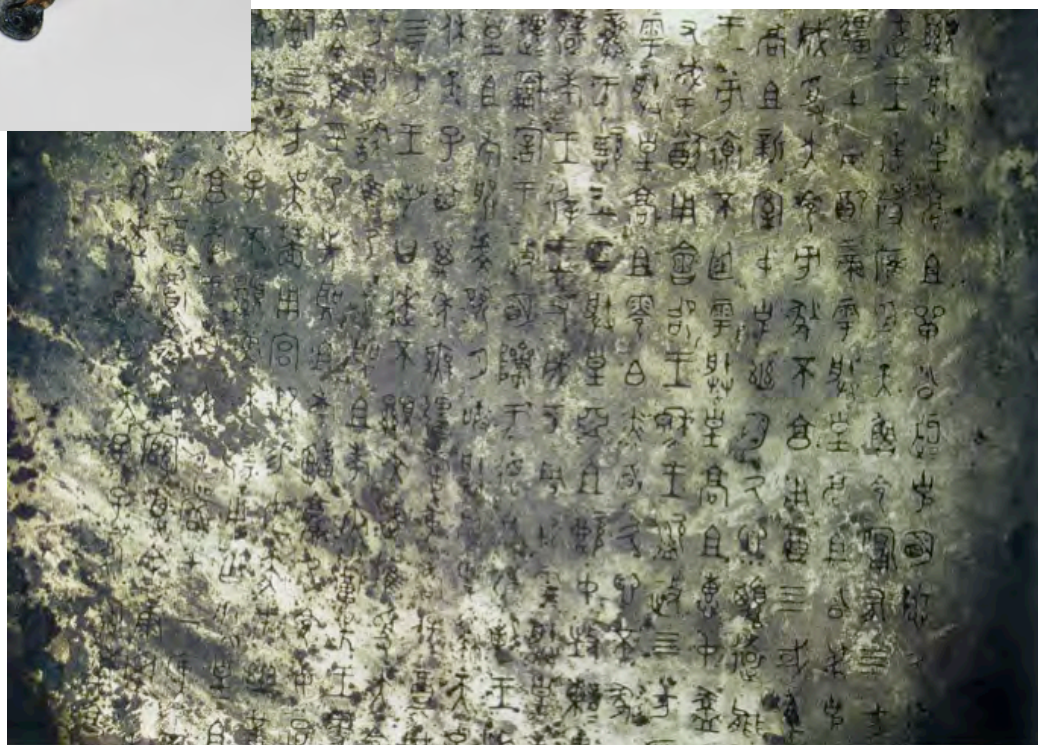
6b)



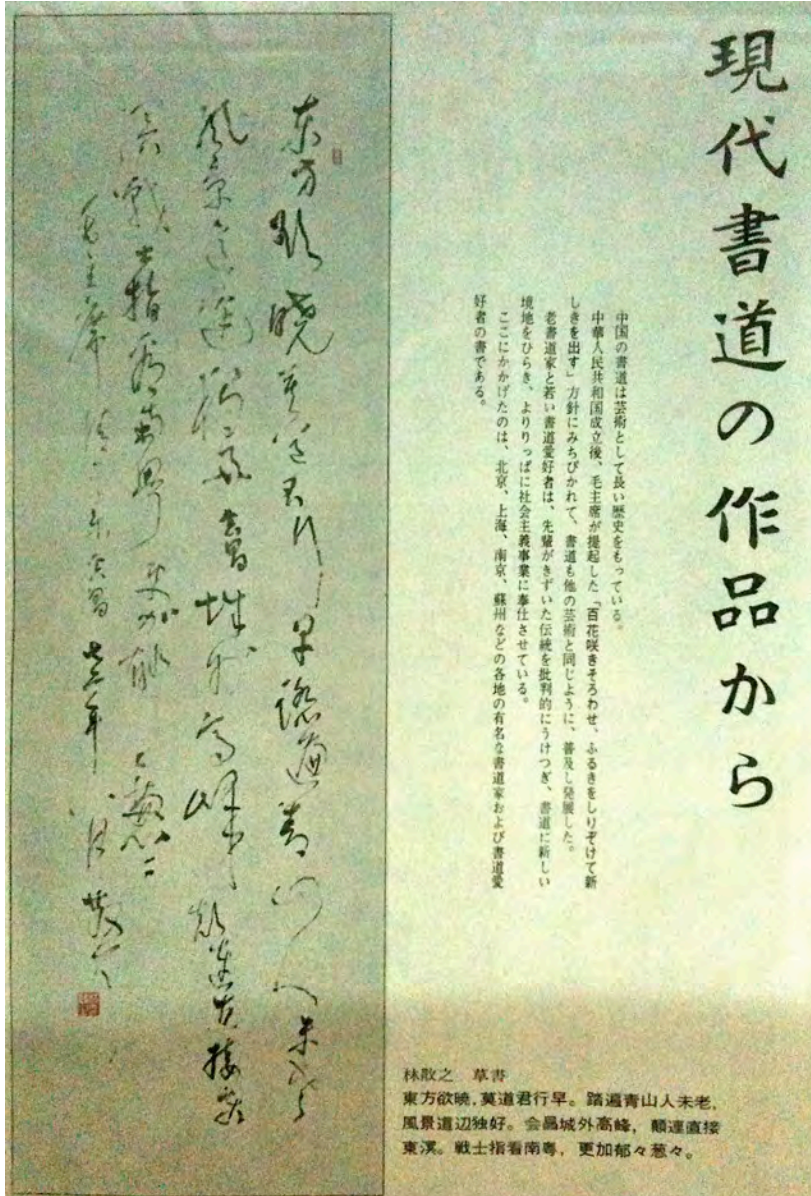
6c)



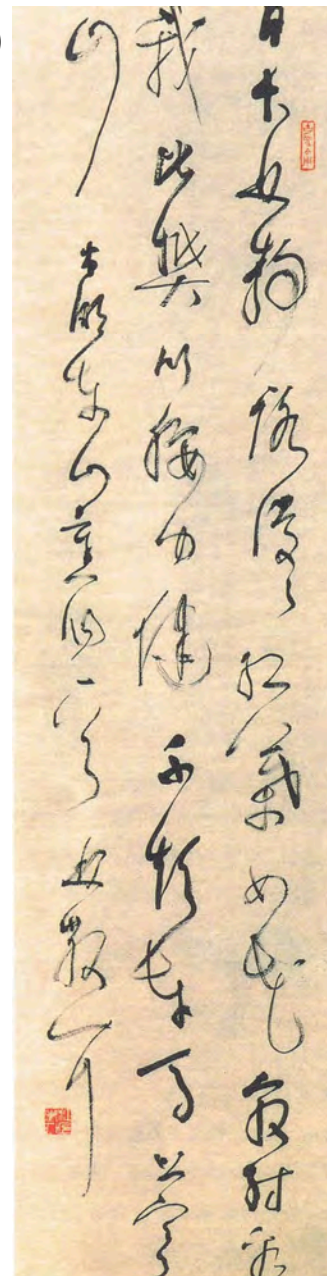
6d)



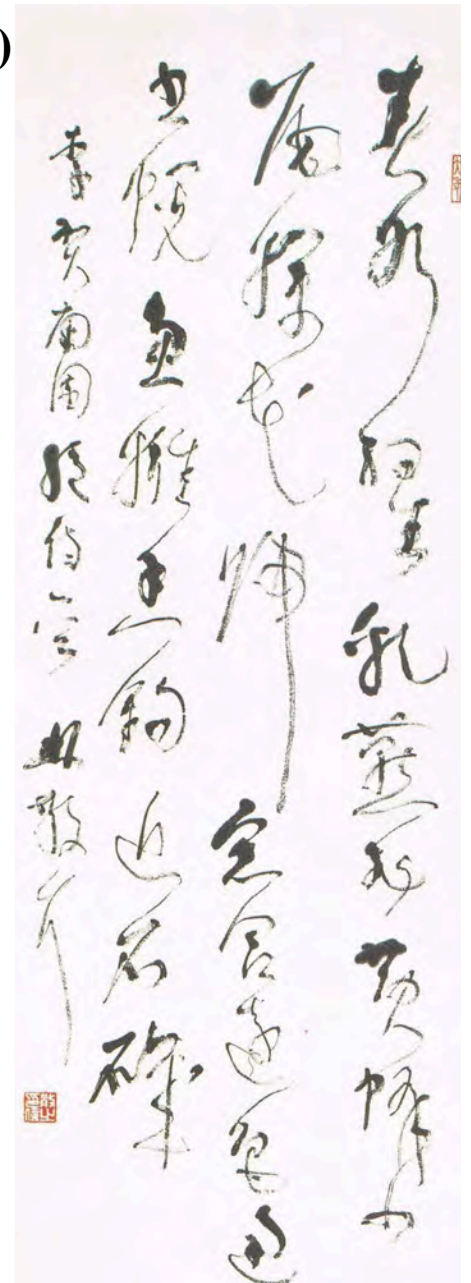
7a)



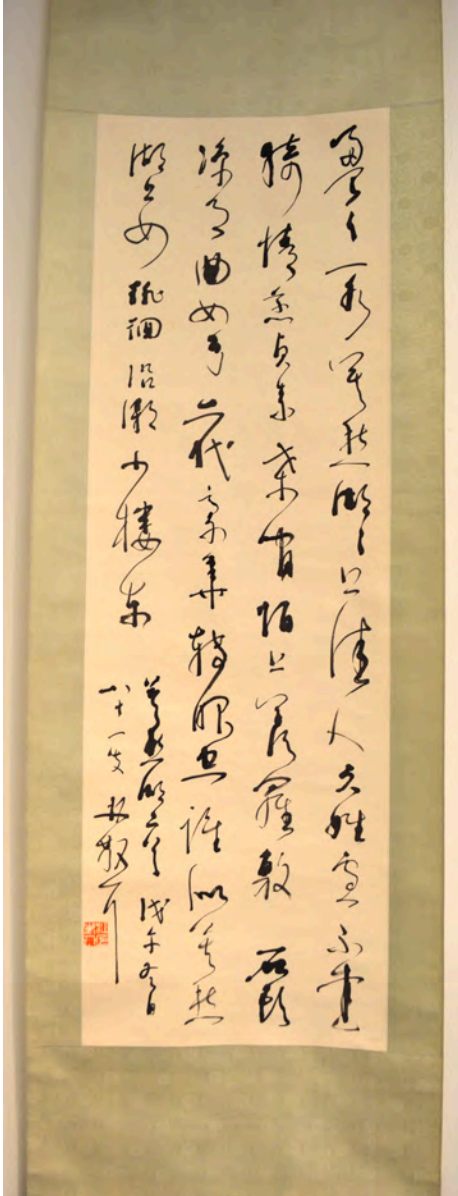
7b)



7c)



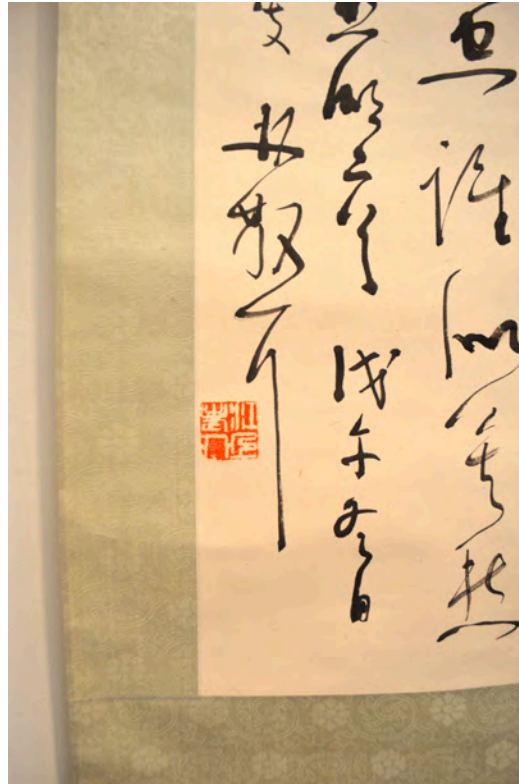
7d)



8a)



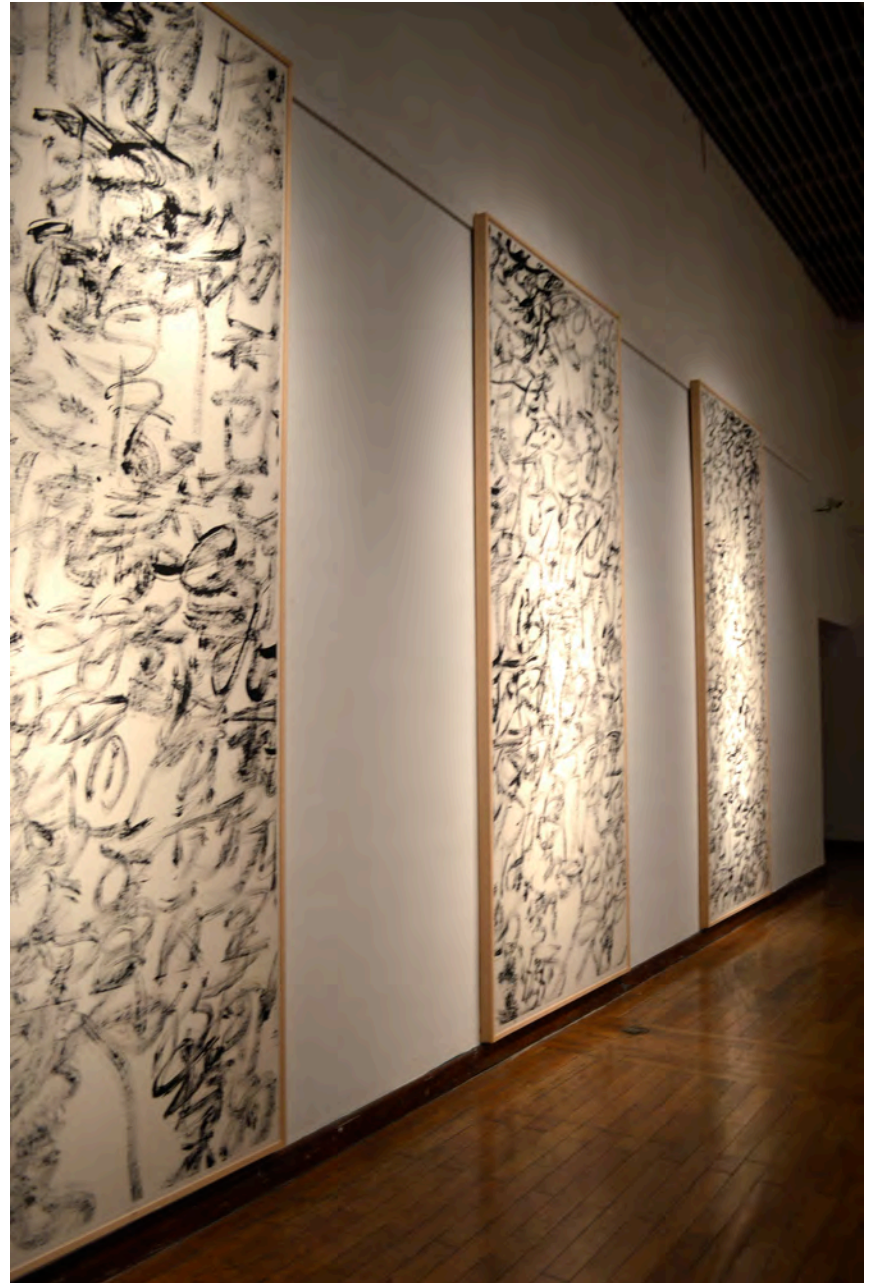
7e)



8c)



8d)



9a)



9b)



9c)



9d)

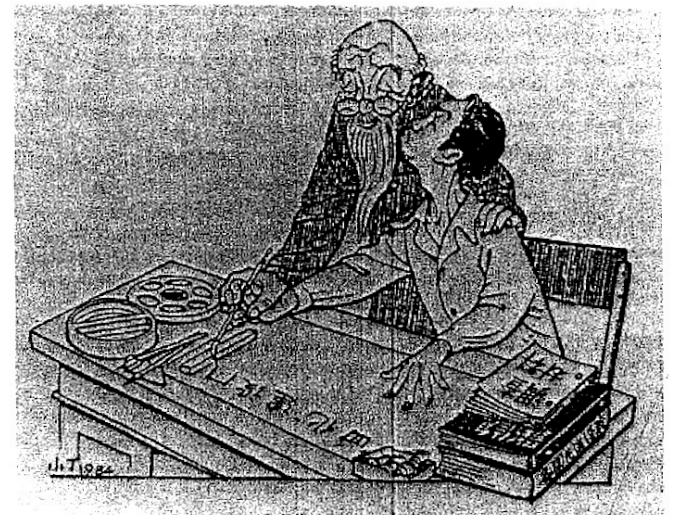


Fig. 3. "Please let go of my hand, Dad." Calligraphy is often an instrument by which the old dominate the young. In this 1984 cartoon by Ding Cong, an aged father insists on guiding the brush as his middle-aged son tries to write, "How to implement the four modernizations."

10a)



10b)



11a)



11c)

11b)



12a)



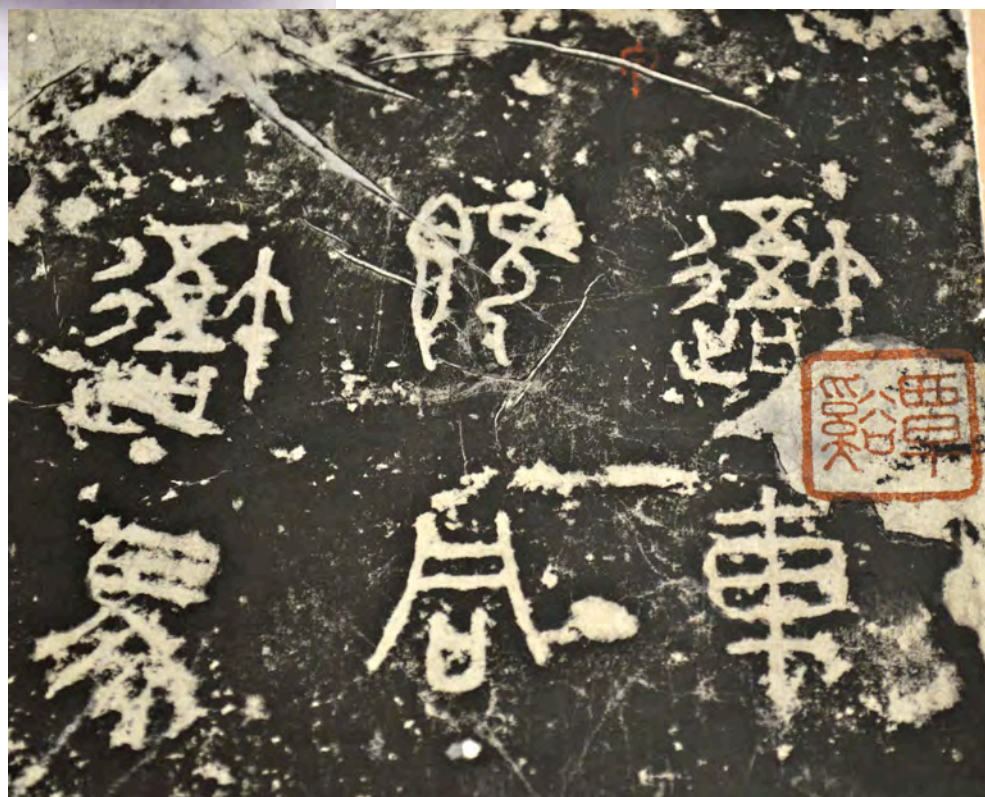
12b)



12c)



12d)



皇帝立國維妙杜若無世稱王計伐亂
 詳威動四極志義直方戎臣奉詔經時
 不之滅火暴強廿武火冬上蕭高鼎貴
 諧顯明既獻齋成之降專專廟軌遠方
 豈于繹山羣臣細省咸卑攸委赴命亂
 世外土畫拜以屏笄理功戰曰化流正
 於啞自齋古始也魏蒙蒙既及五帝莫
 歲禁也適今皇帝壹家不下兵不復起
 熾周滅餘黔首肅向和澤安之羣臣誦

12f)

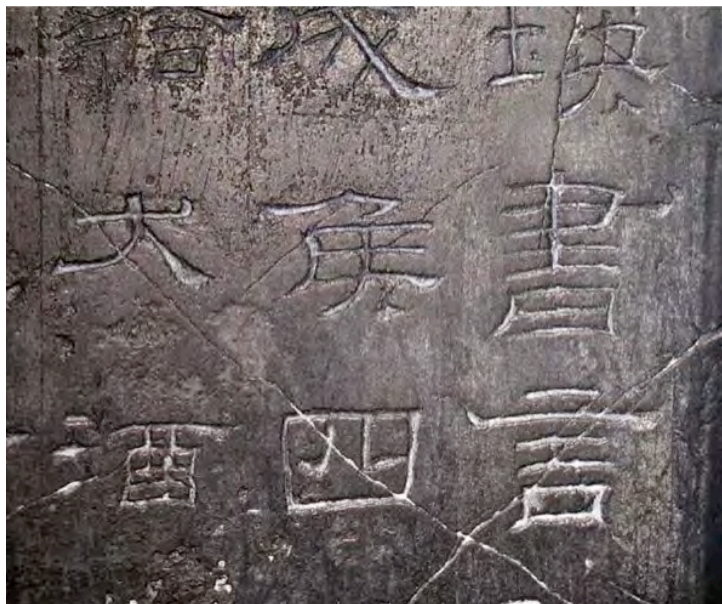
世三年四月辛酉朔甲申司馬騰取言上陽陵地陽上遂徐奇貨錢二千六百八十
 徐戎州府計不督地縣屬今縣錢券二上詔言州府屬今屬縣屬
 世三年八月癸巳朔日陽陵地陽取言之至今未報詔退取言之也一信半

世三年四月辛酉朔甲申司馬騰取言上陽陵地陽上遂徐奇貨錢二千六百八十
 世三年四月辛酉朔甲申司馬騰取言上陽陵地陽上遂徐奇貨錢二千六百八十
 世三年四月辛酉朔甲申司馬騰取言上陽陵地陽上遂徐奇貨錢二千六百八十

世三年四月辛酉朔甲申司馬騰取言上陽陵地陽上遂徐奇貨錢二千六百八十
 世三年四月辛酉朔甲申司馬騰取言上陽陵地陽上遂徐奇貨錢二千六百八十
 世三年四月辛酉朔甲申司馬騰取言上陽陵地陽上遂徐奇貨錢二千六百八十

12e)

13a)



13b)



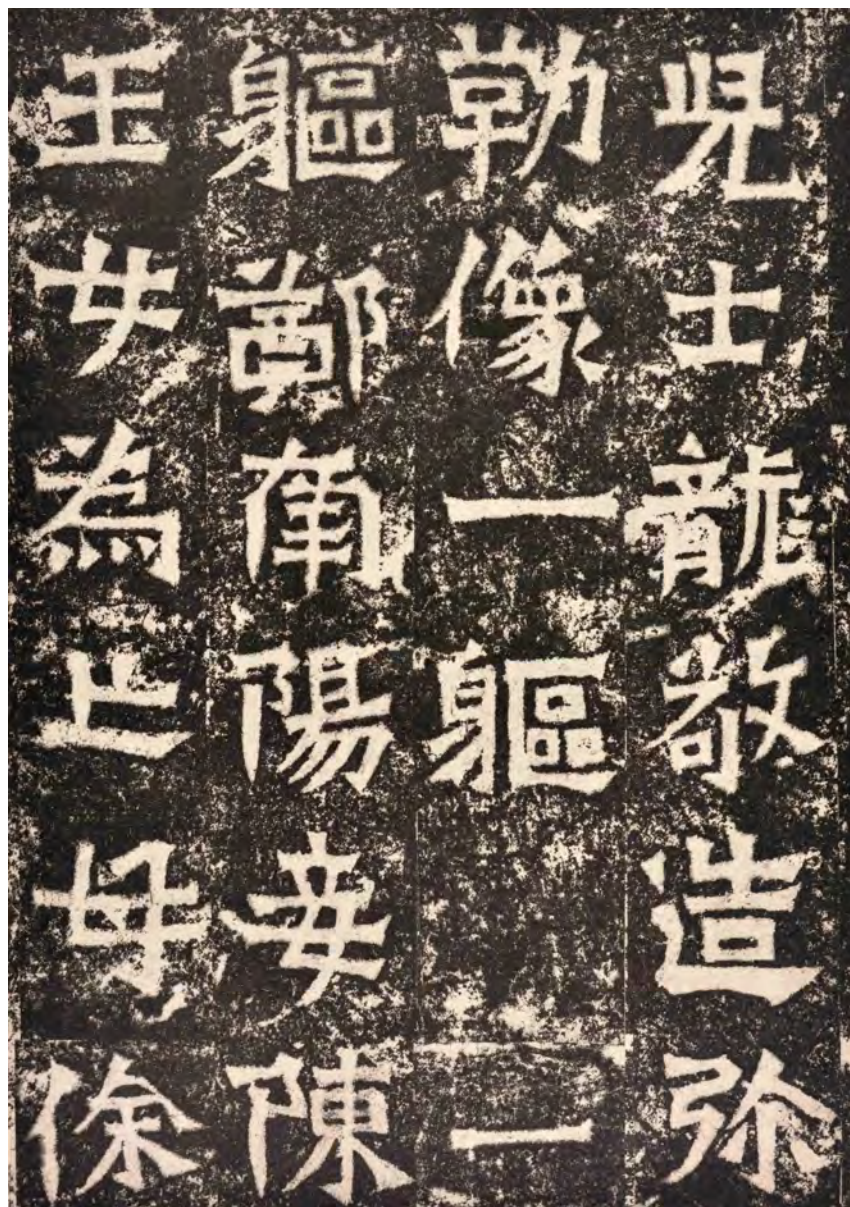
13c)



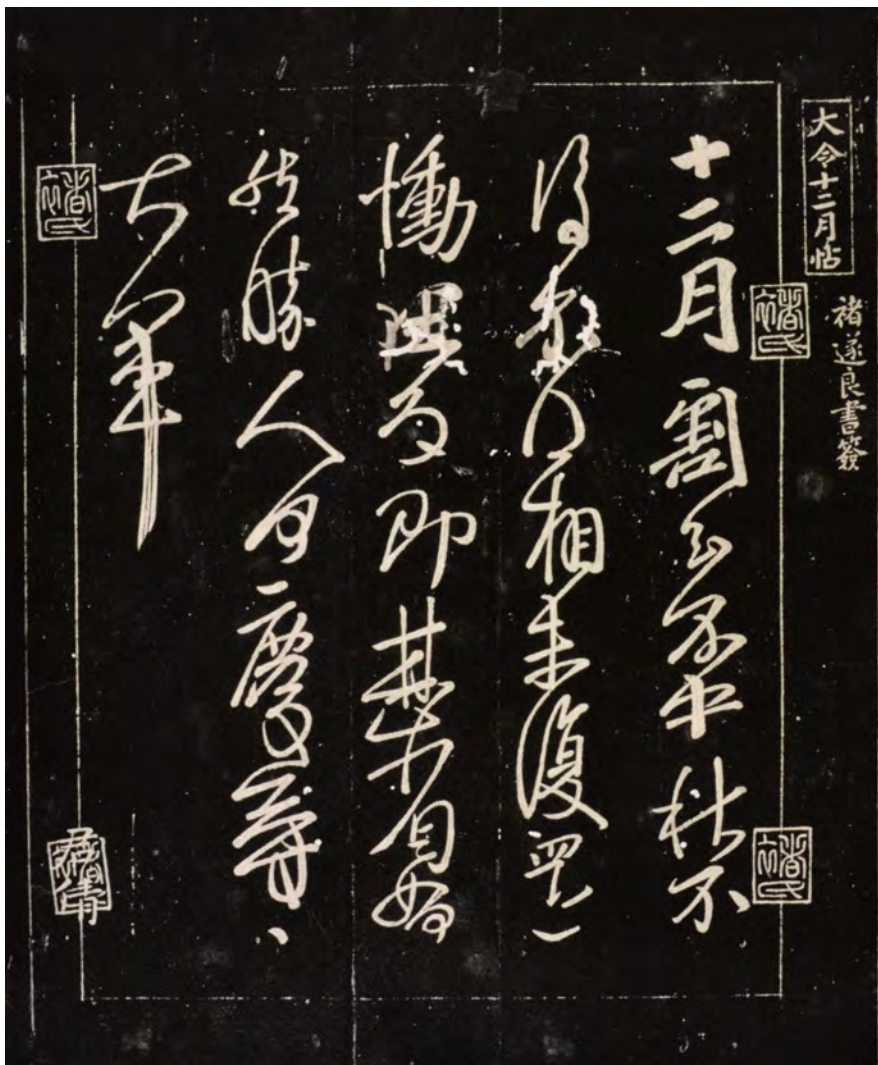
13d-1)



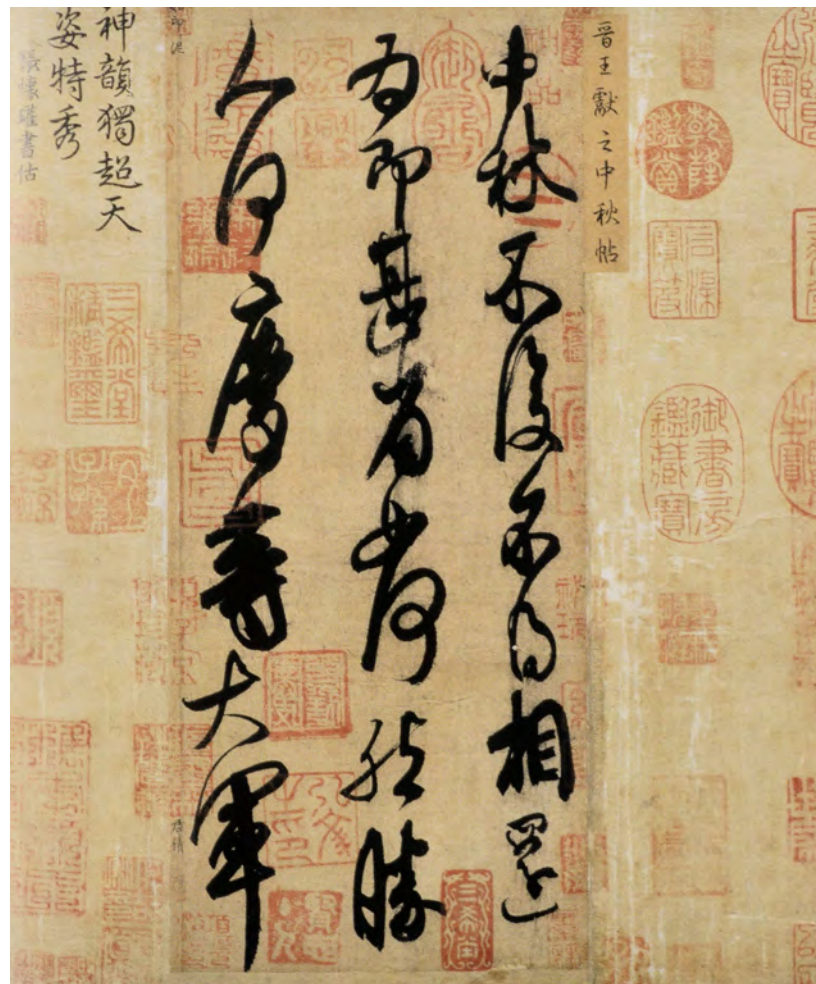
13d-2)



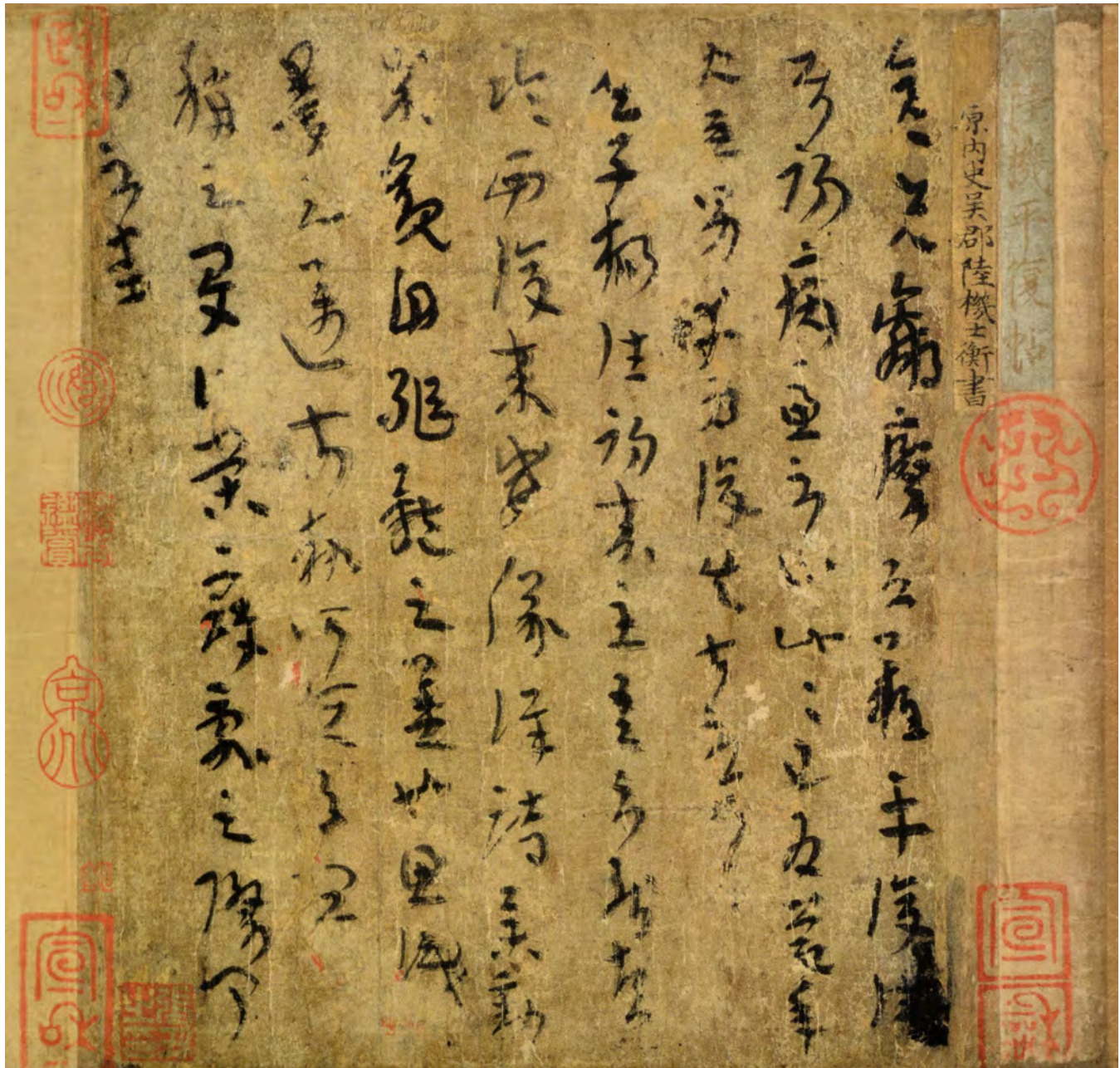
14a)



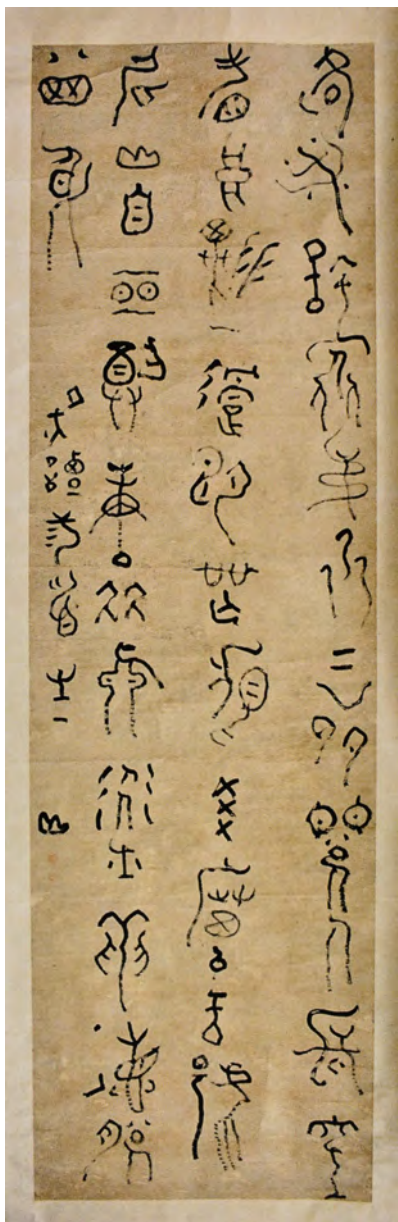
14b)



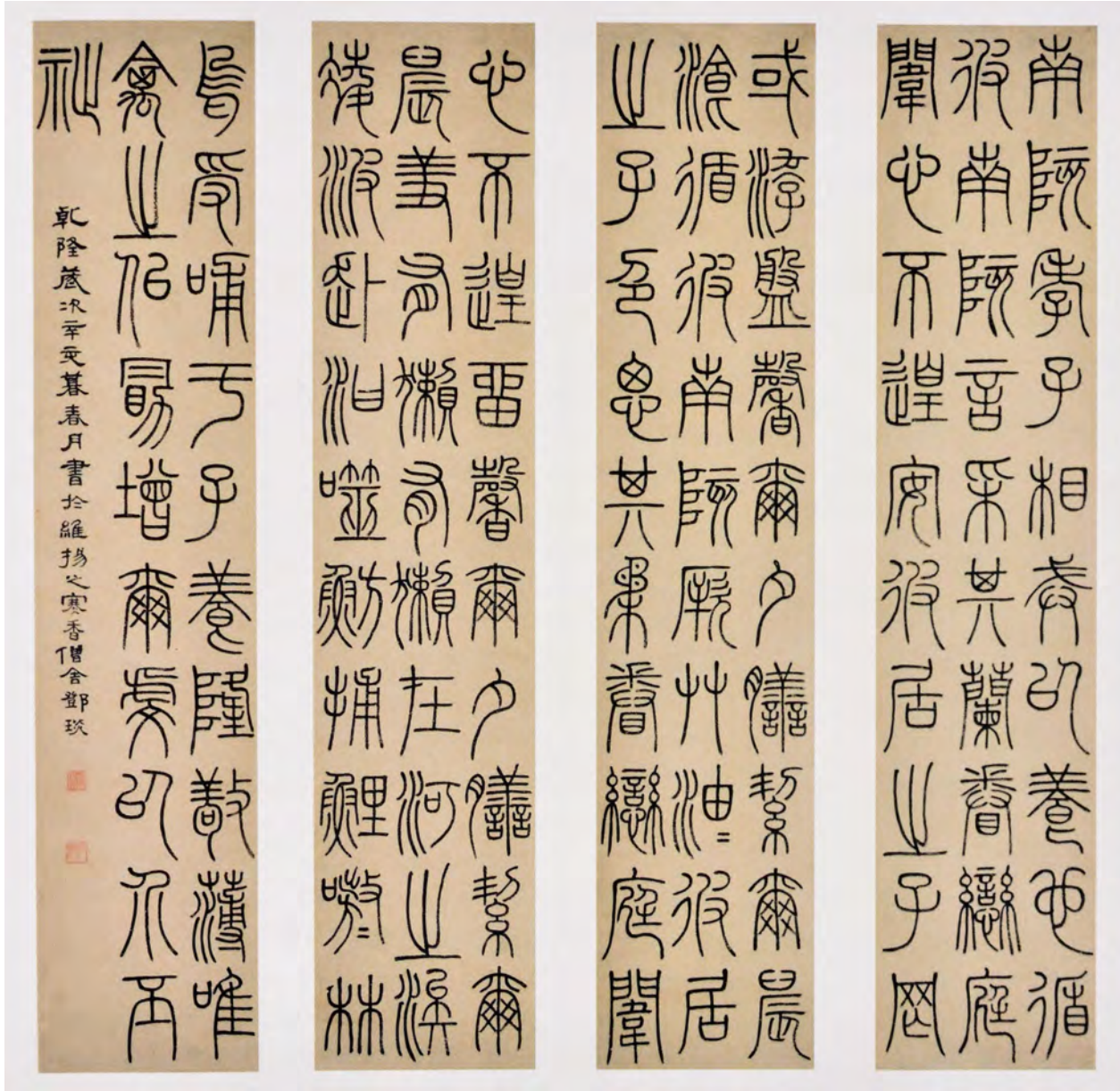
14c)



15a)



15b)



15c)

是彛是訓 進德于無疆

克儉克勤 保世以滋大

顯承大兄老先皇大人雅囑

辛未元月書於五羊仙館 寫化伊 善樓

15d-1)

桐坡秀廡文翰餘閒怡
 情園名學四照脩竹
 萬草亭蔭茂林軒延眾
 岫春禽亦友薰月揚輝

景隨呀而透 遷人與物
 其兩適且有 名湖清漪
 為汎治有 高峰羅剎為
 垣墉大不 因人功由天
 設而 秀廡 猷抑其名
 曰非抑 獸何歟 余家先
 登不園 數里而 近地曰
 煙波一 權願遊 其藩奔
 為我開 羊亦火 徑縱其
 觀覽一 審斯園 其與非
 類子抑 與是類 乎呀
 道光庚 戌上巳 將火焚
 遊倚裝 書此即 希
 政龍山 小榭 龔傳密
 益識

15d-2)

景隨呀而透 遷人與物
 其兩適且有 名湖清漪
 為汎治有 高峰羅剎為
 垣墉大不 因人功由天
 設而 秀廡 猷抑其名
 曰非抑 獸何歟 余家先
 登不園 數里而 近地曰
 煙波一 權願遊 其藩奔
 為我開 羊亦火 徑縱其
 觀覽一 審斯園 其與非
 類子抑 與是類 乎呀
 道光庚 戌上巳 將火焚
 遊倚裝 書此即 希
 政龍山 小榭 龔傳密
 益識

15e)

鼓德化所經緯累端

七十九叟 吳昌碩

吾鄉之土宜鸞治德素者為全球冠輸於滬濱列市炫爛爰建

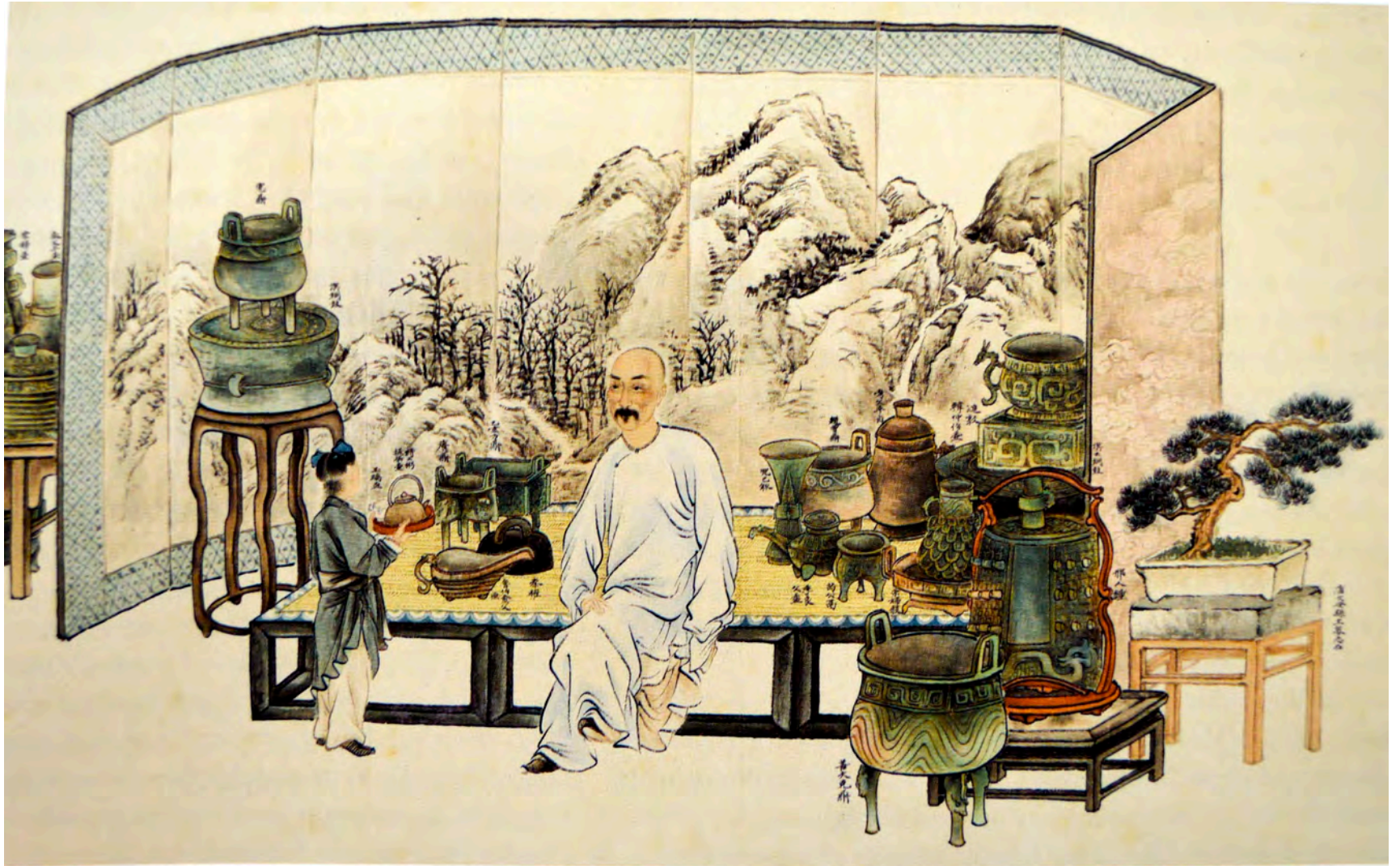
大廈以時集合規畫業事壬辰清和落款鄉人屬謬句擬慶

評賢處及沂瀛一氣

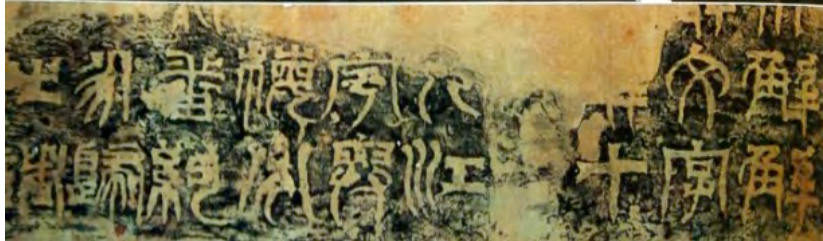
15f)

賢處

16)



17a)



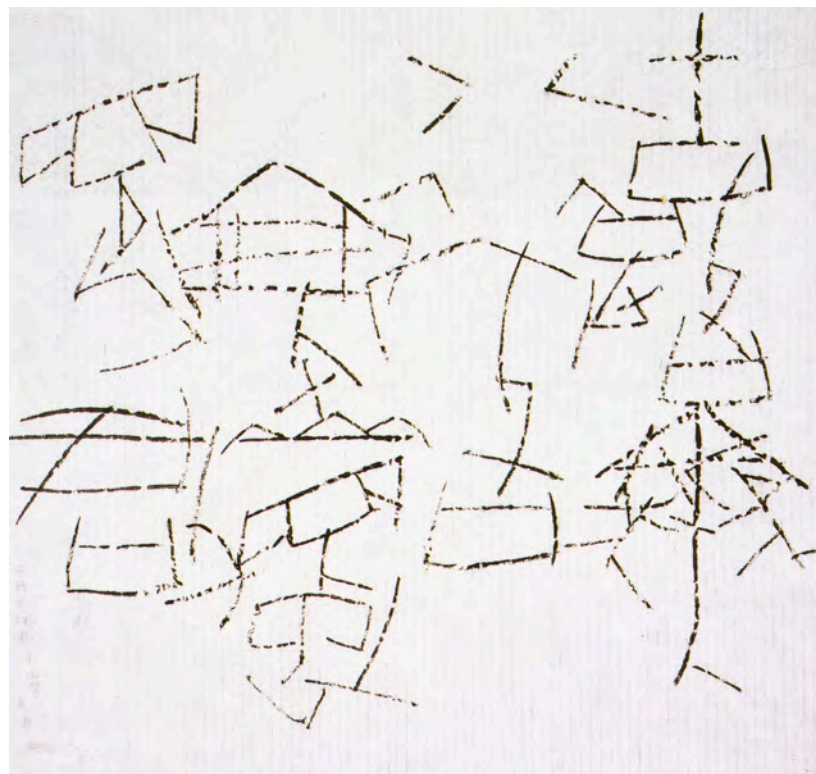
17b)



17c)



17d)



18)



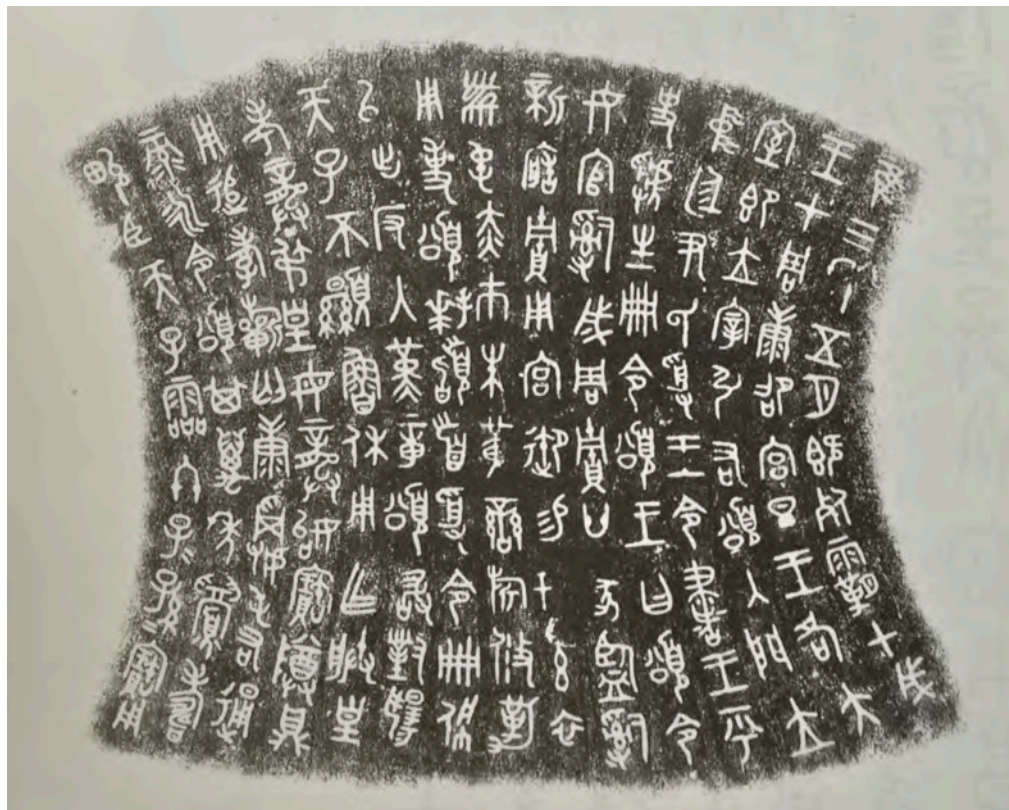
19)



20a)



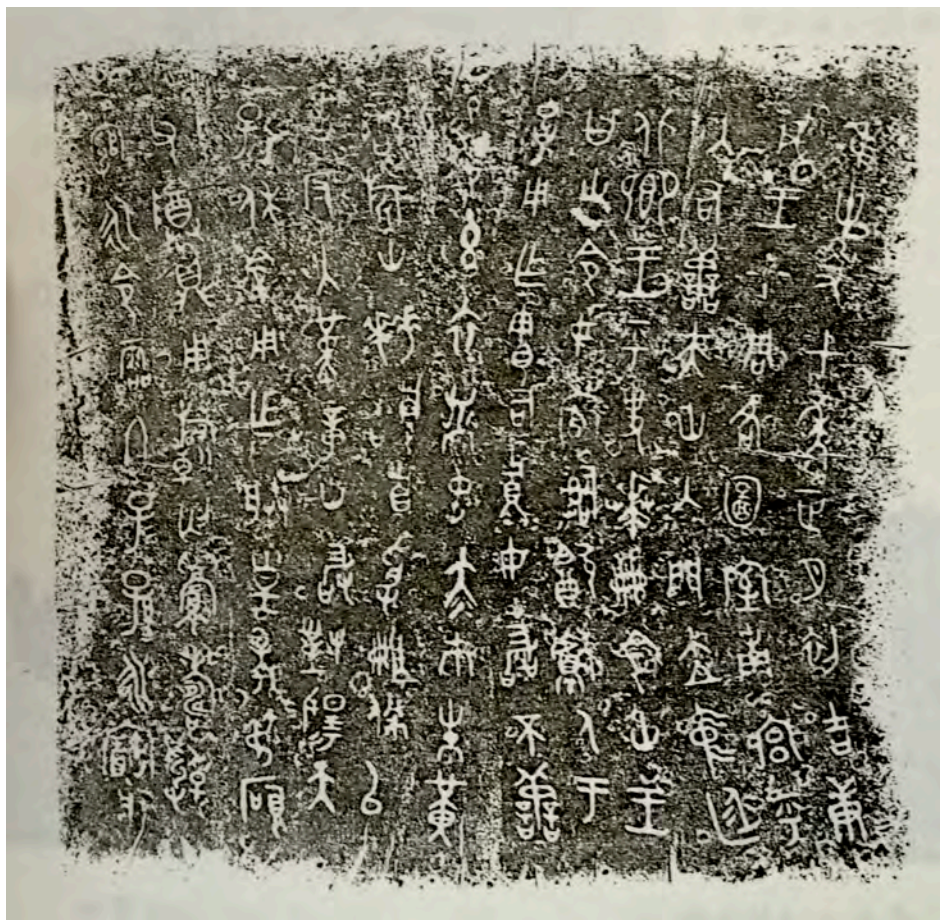
20b)



20c)



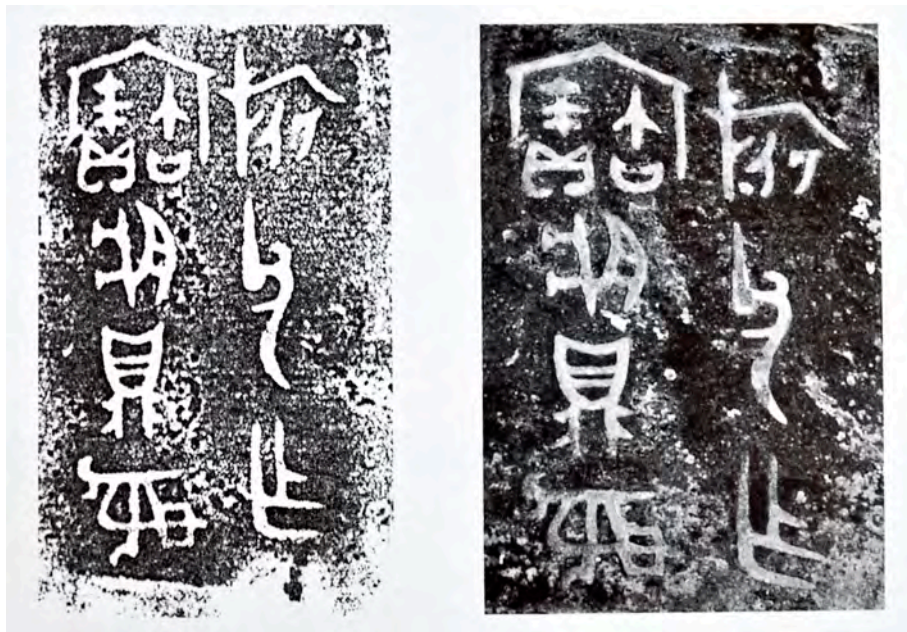
20d)



21a)



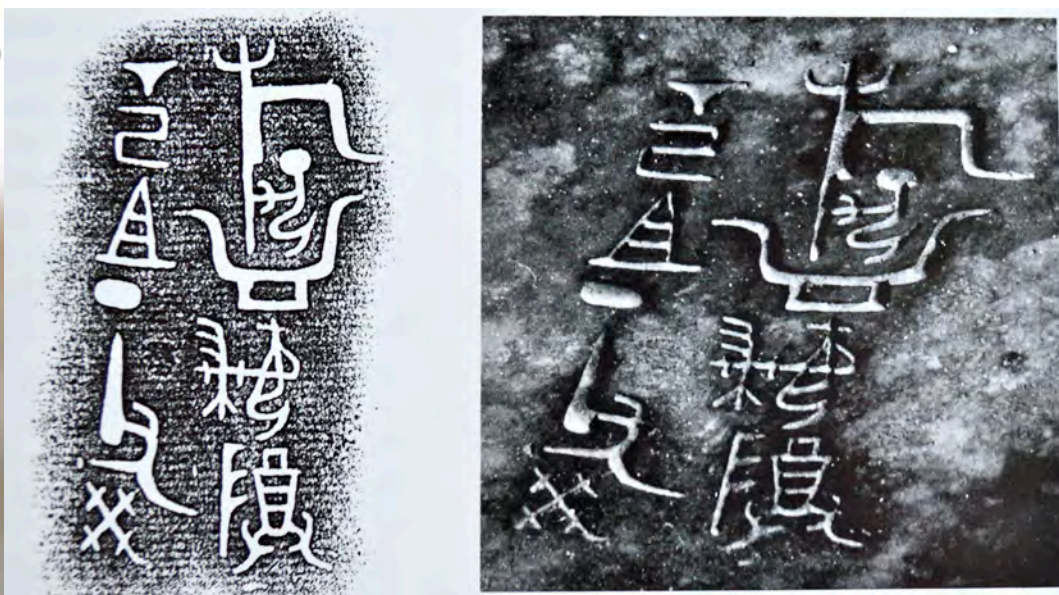
21b)



21c)



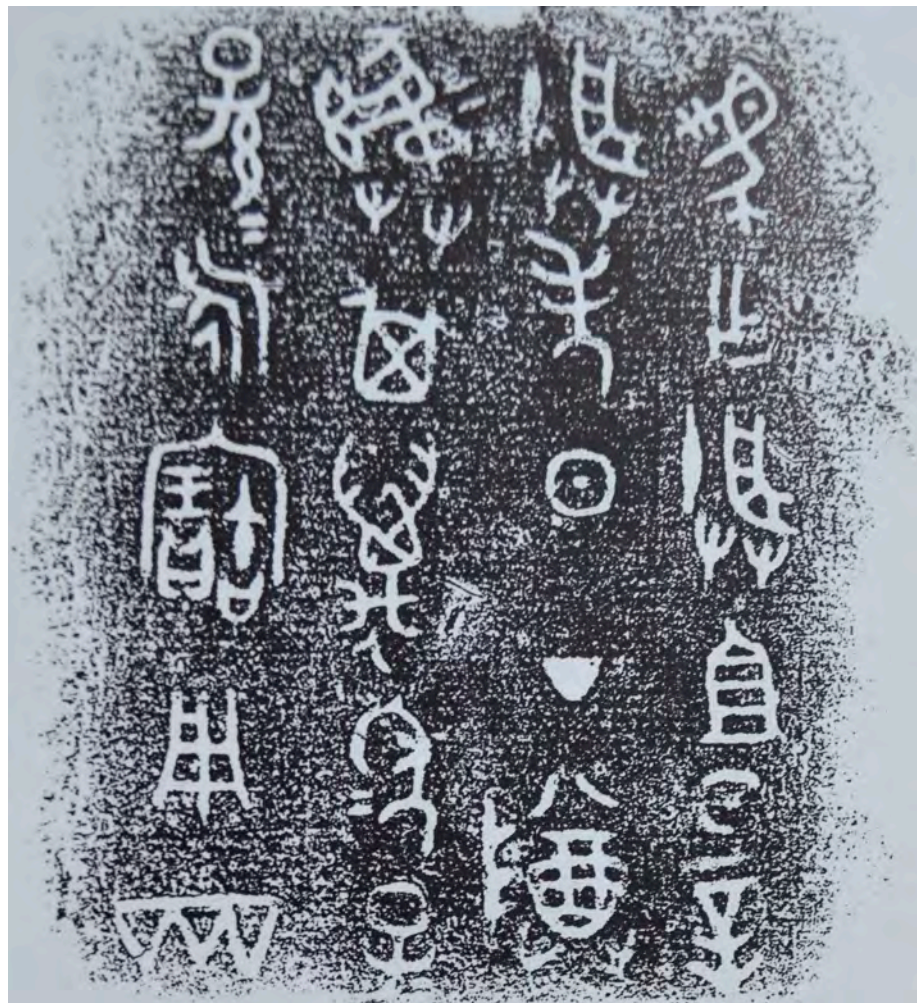
21d)



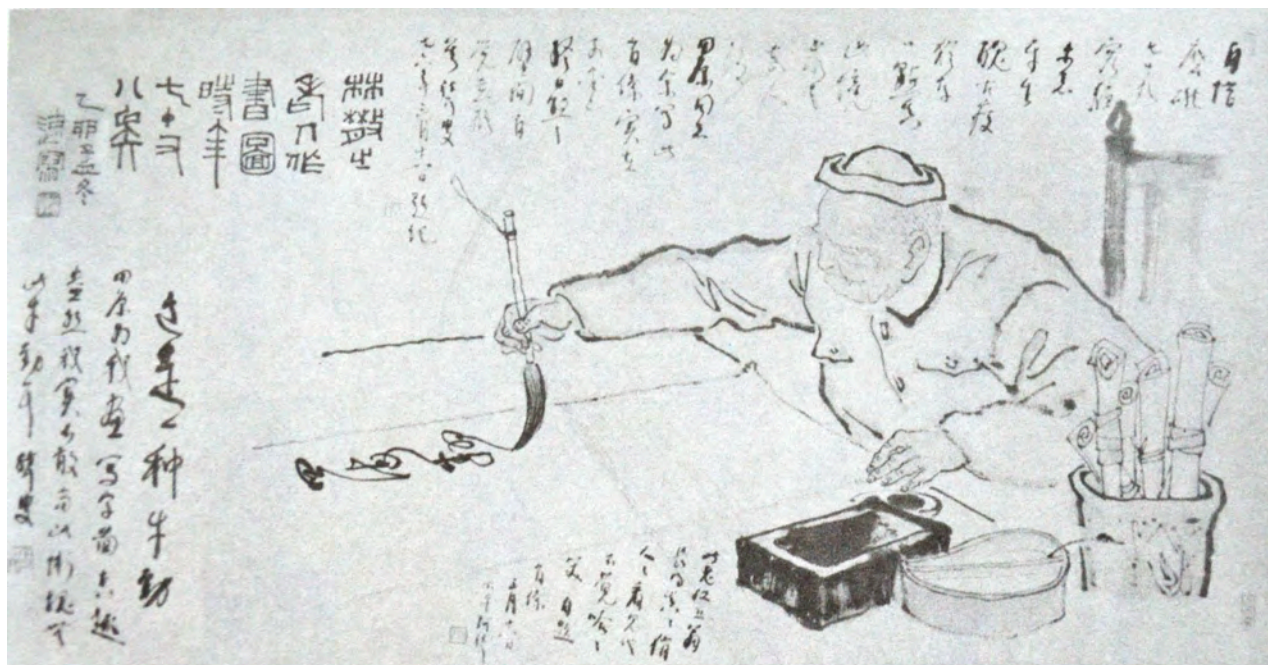
21e)



21f)



23a)



23b)



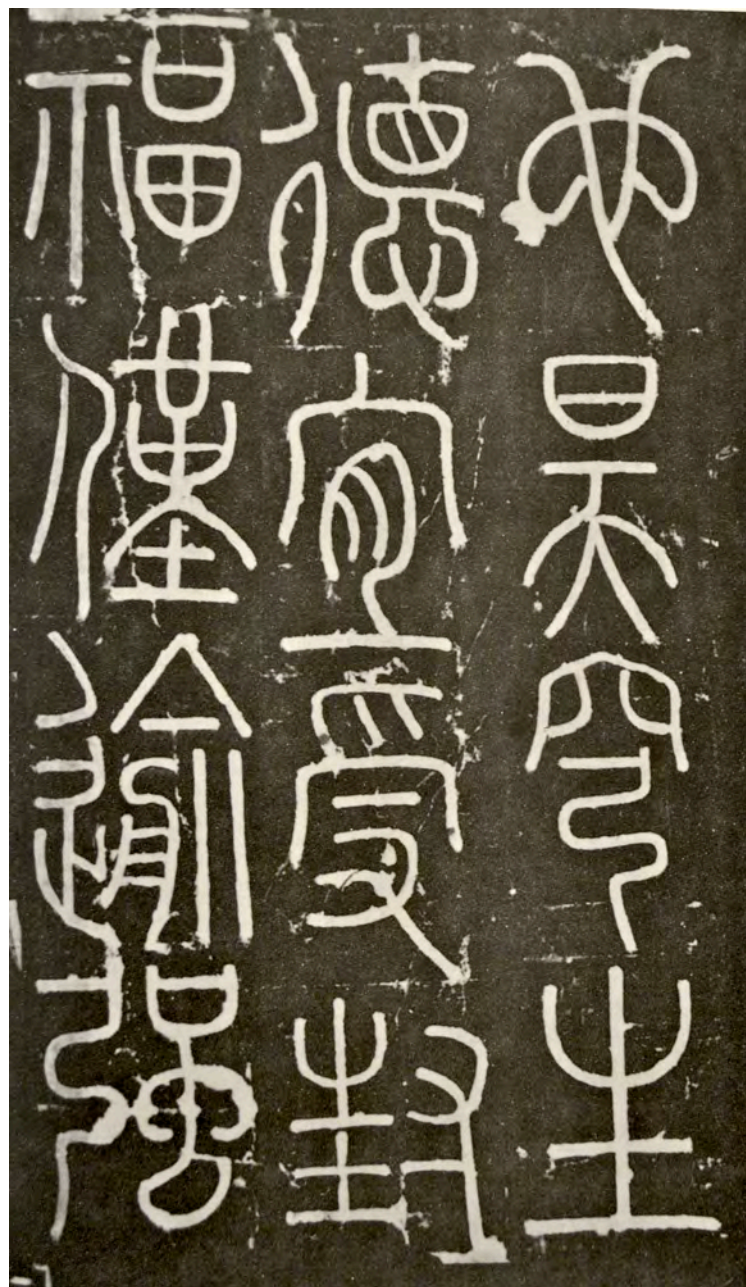
24)



25a)



25b)



26)

畫法 簡言 渴舉 三反 五耳

山石用側
鋒有幾法
度須界線
分明
筆法圖勒

一、破三折蘇體
是名面
筆中之中腰
須肥而圓
要轉而有方
起筆

無鋒謂之橋最惡習
即是筆病
筆貴道練屋漏痕
法極蘇隆石諸法
皆見於古之編者

收筆謂之磬
俗稱筆根
向在行者者
王羲之力能扛鼎
筆在不甚平滑細
筆尤者有力

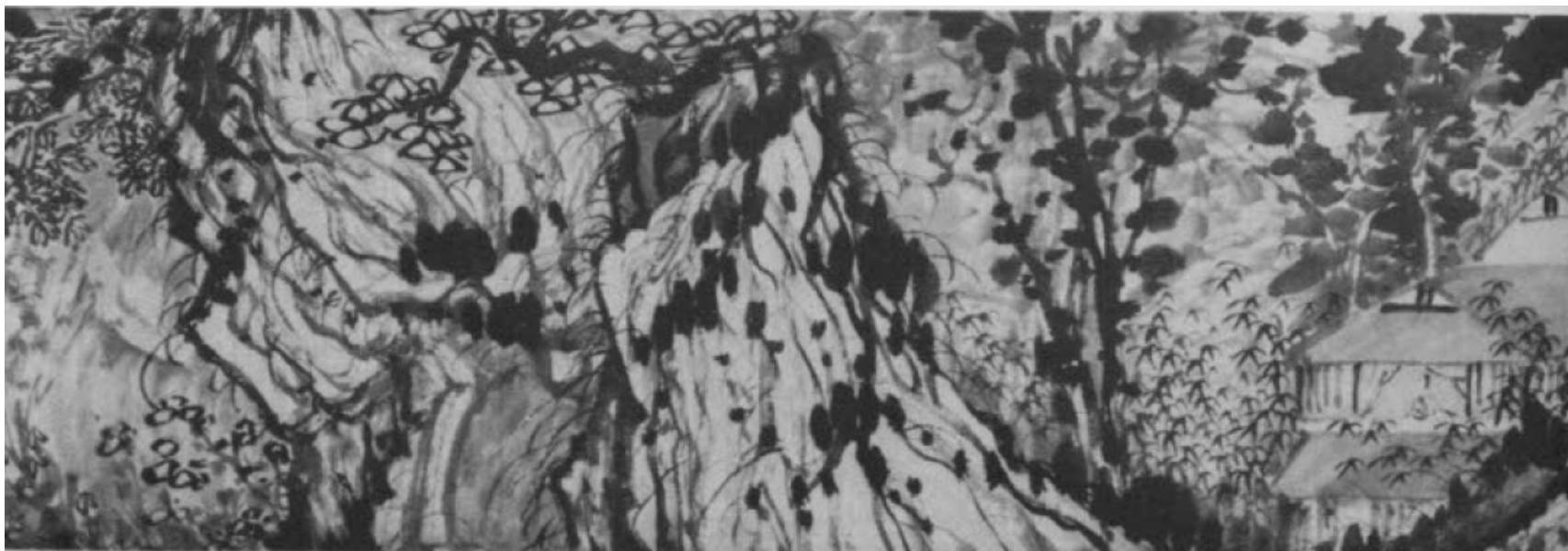
房屋用出鋒
舟車亦從中間
轉折不可全其
轉弱無力

全見此
香兒本自

閣立本在者
朝以西拜樹且
不能識親似
僧慈西壁
必待三筆無
後徘徊
其下不
忍捨
去國
法
結後先承不
其短橫
狀之毛羽
理如鳥
不有似

文徵明
破後與
香

28a-1) (above) 28a-2) (below)



28b)



28c)



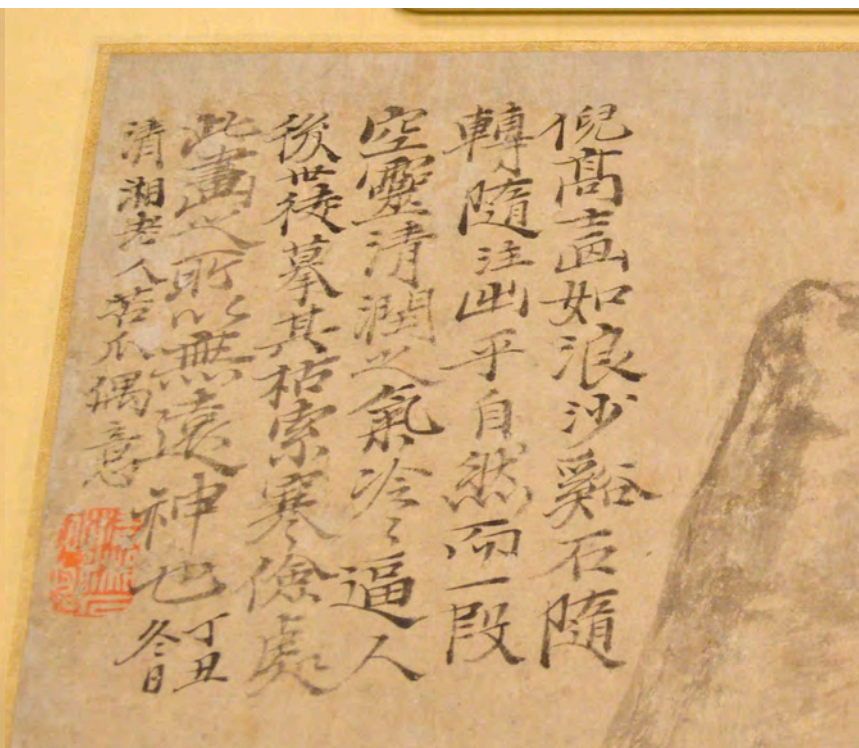
29)



30a)



30b)



30c)

山色蒼上樹色丹黃露欲
 碎背點流苦瓜客舍消閒
 筆畫瀟灑應愧老貫休

晴尊
 原濟

30d)

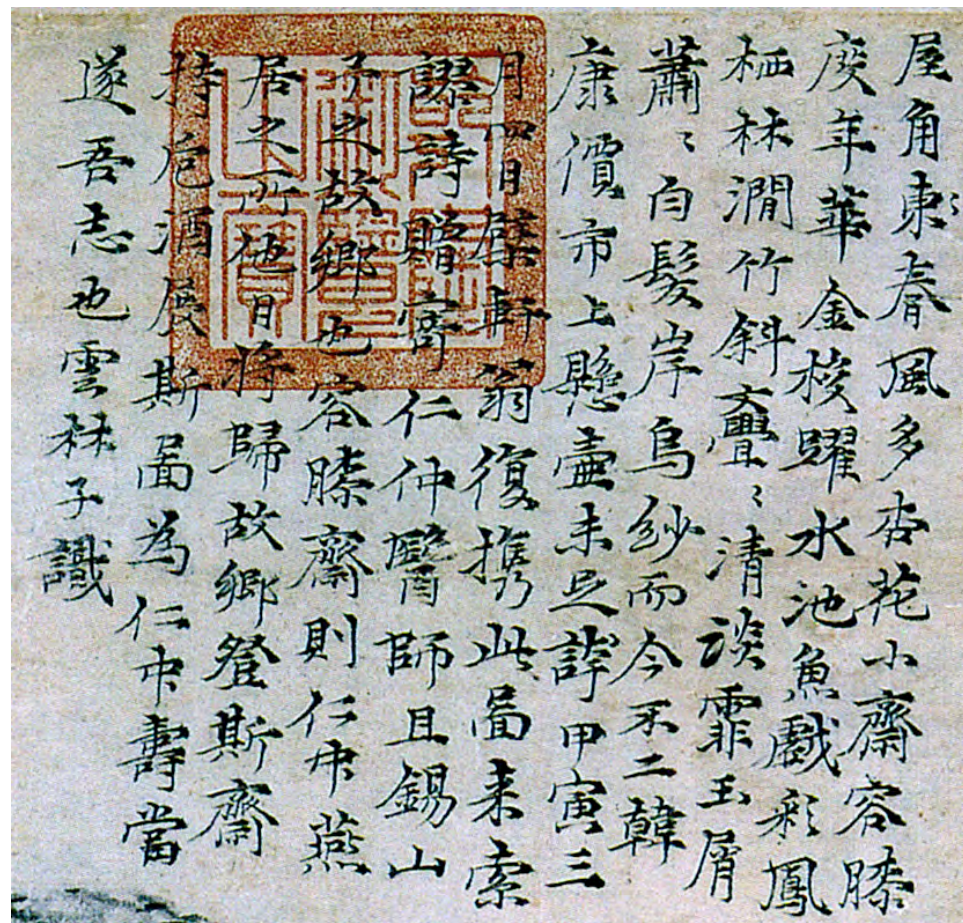
荒山重老樹無
 飯後尋幽禪到
 香煖斜暉

石傳
 齊

31a)



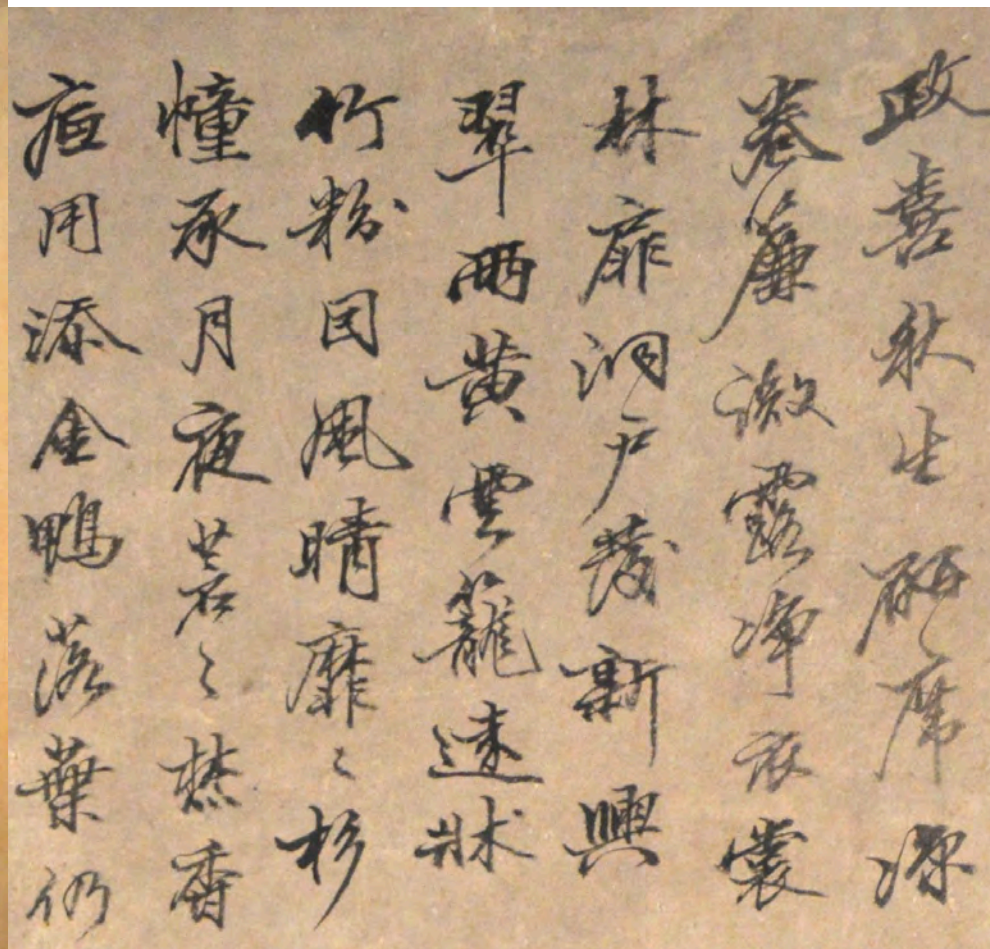
31b)



31c)



31d)



32)



33a)



33b)



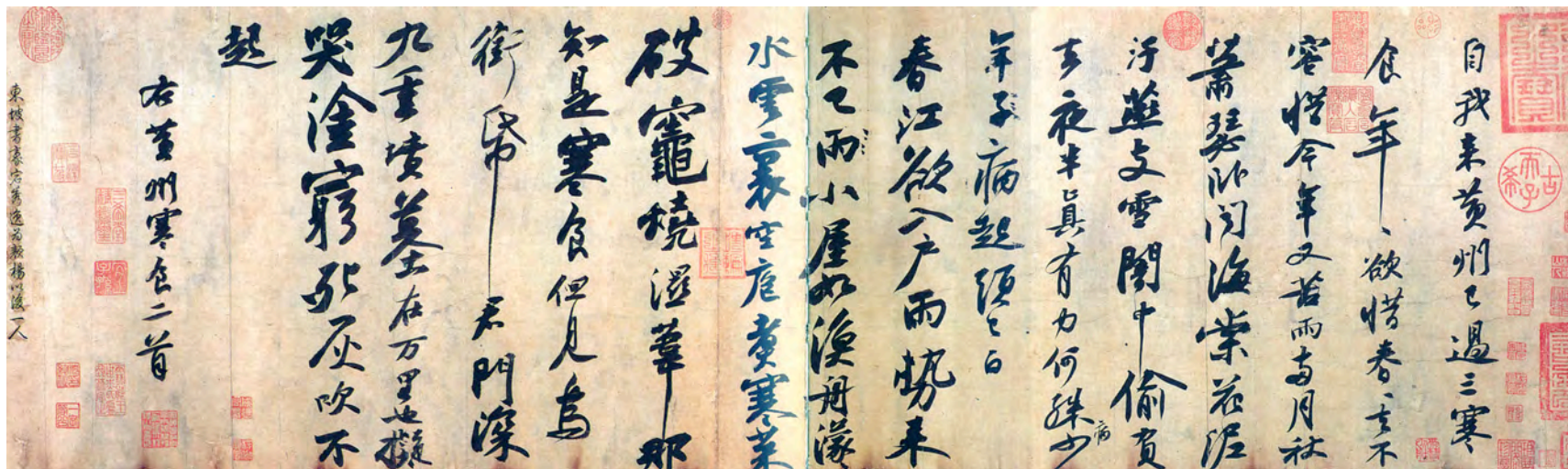
33c)

如遺世獨立羽化而登僊
 於是飲酒樂甚扣舷而
 歌之歌曰桂棹兮蘭漿
 擊空明兮泝流光渺兮
 余懷望美人兮天一方客有
 吹洞簫者倚歌而和之其
 聲嗚々然如怨如慕如
 泣如訴餘音嫋々不絕如
 縷舞幽壑之潛蛟泣孤

34)



35a)



35b)



35c)



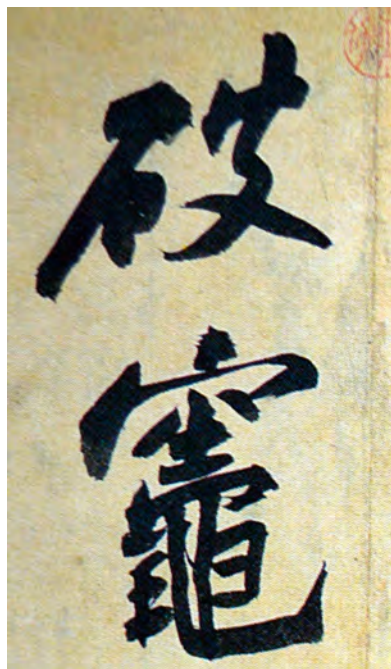
35d)



35e)



35f)



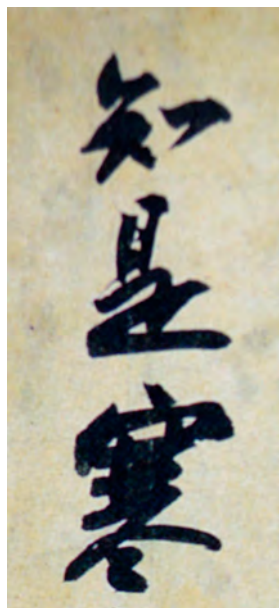
35h)



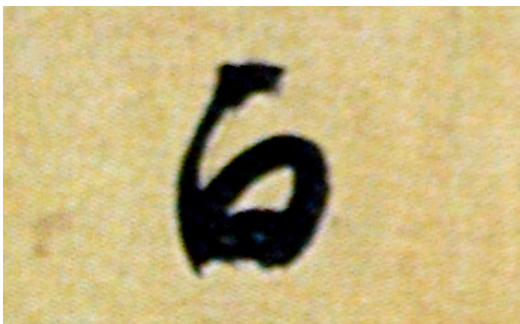
35i)



35g)



35j)



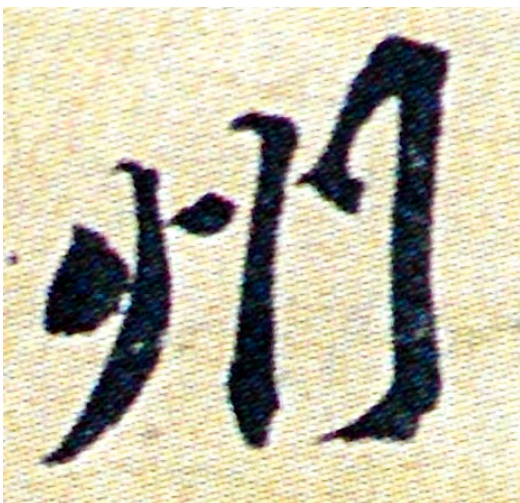
35k)



35l)



35m)



35n)



35o)



36a)

自我來黃州已過三寒食年已欲惜春、玄不容惜今年又苦雨五月秋蕭
 瑟卧岡海棠花泥汙燕支雪閣中偷負去夜半真有力何殊病中
 年病起頭已白春已去入戶雨勢來不已小屋如澳舟濛水雲衰
 空庭煮寒菜破竈燒澀芋那知是寒食但免為銜幣君
 門深九重墮蒼生五字也擬笑儘空躬死灰吹不起

在黃州寒食二首

36b)

36c)

36d)

36e)

自我身

36f)

玄不

36h)

雨勢來不

36i)

寒食但免

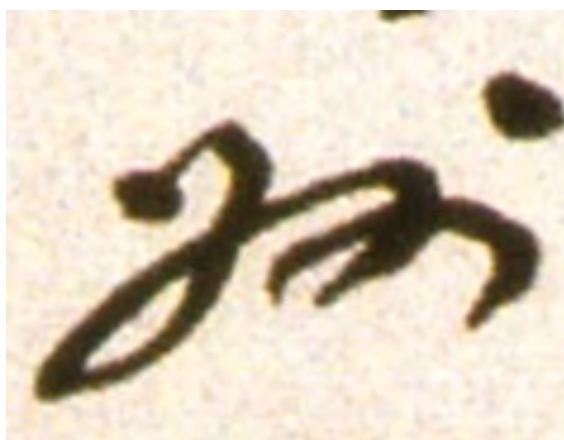
36g)

白春

36j)



36k)



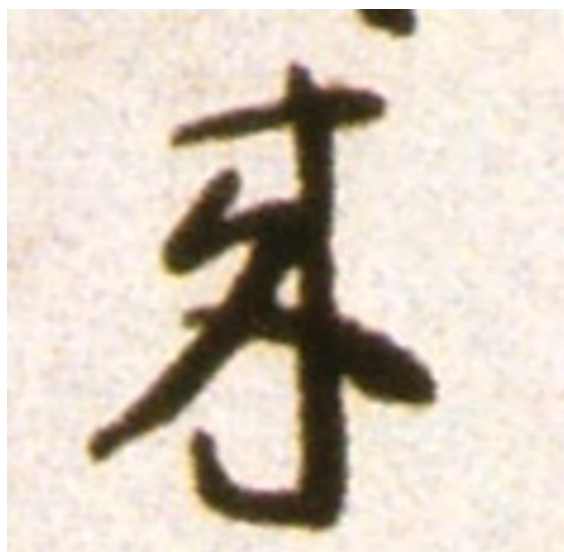
36l)



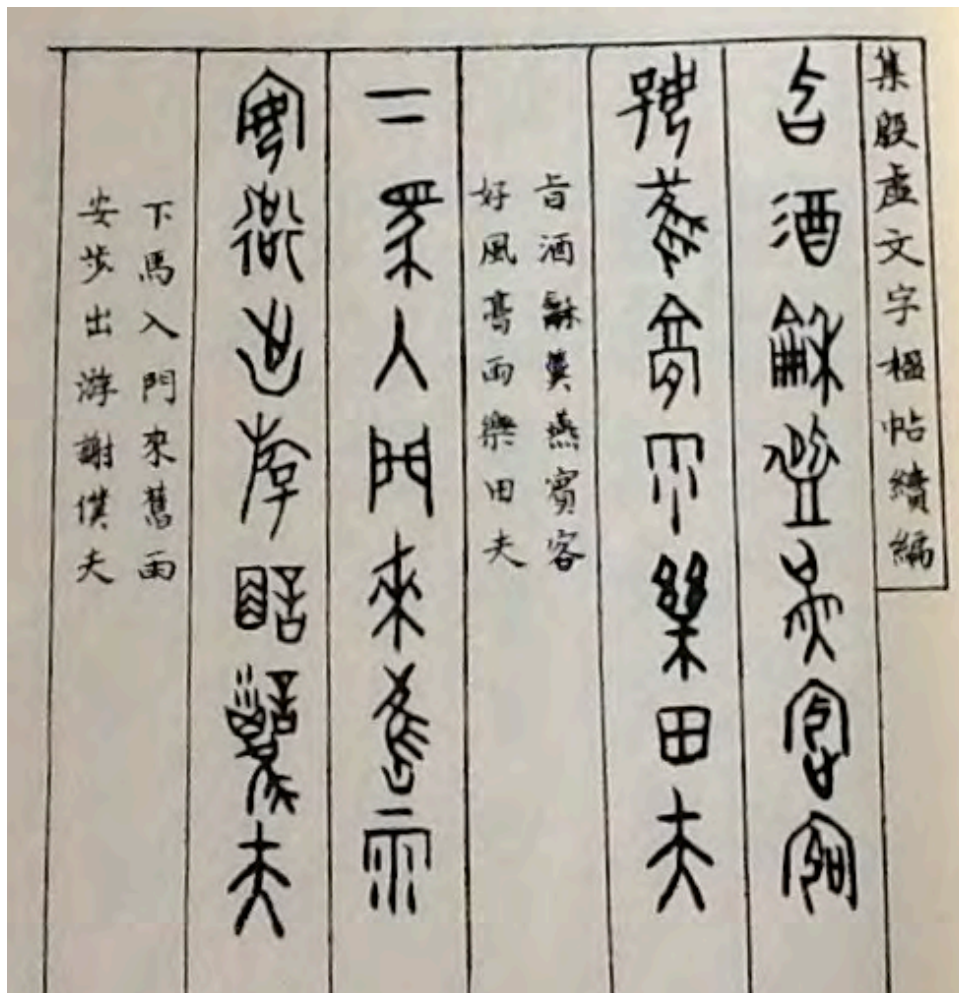
36m)



36n)



37a)



37b)



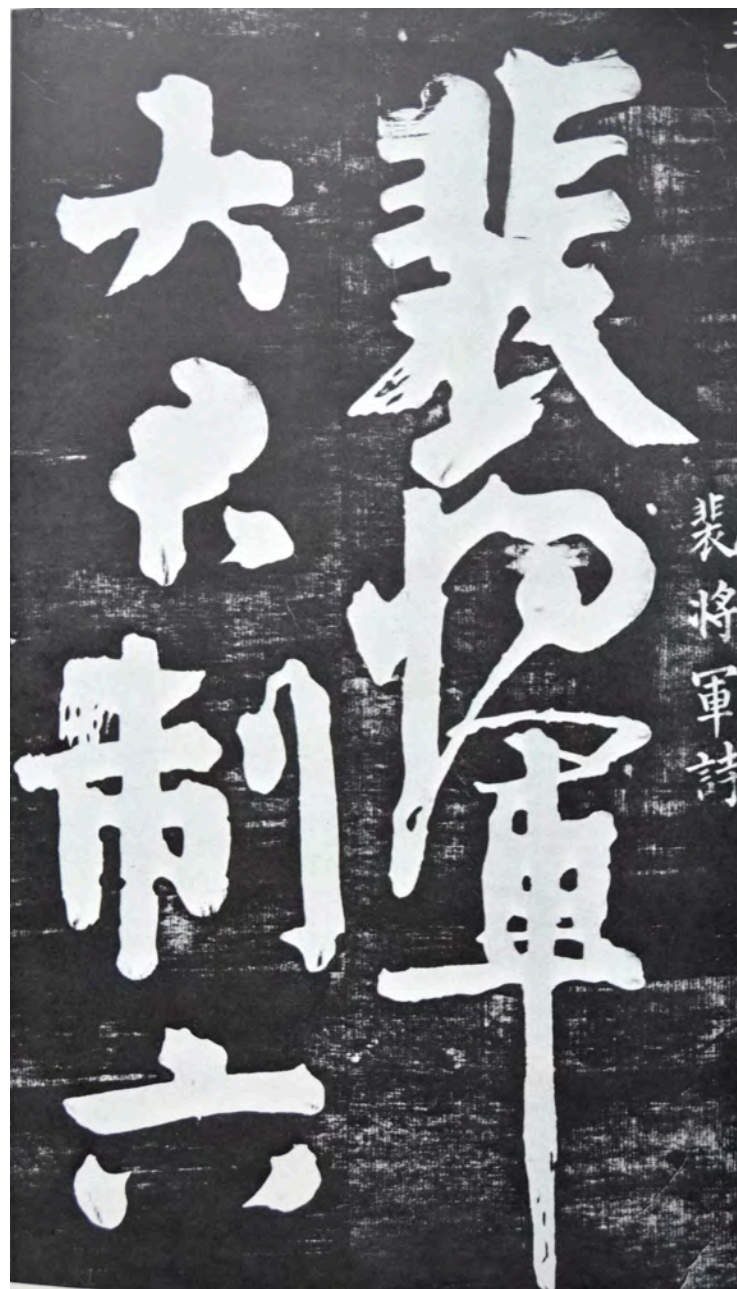
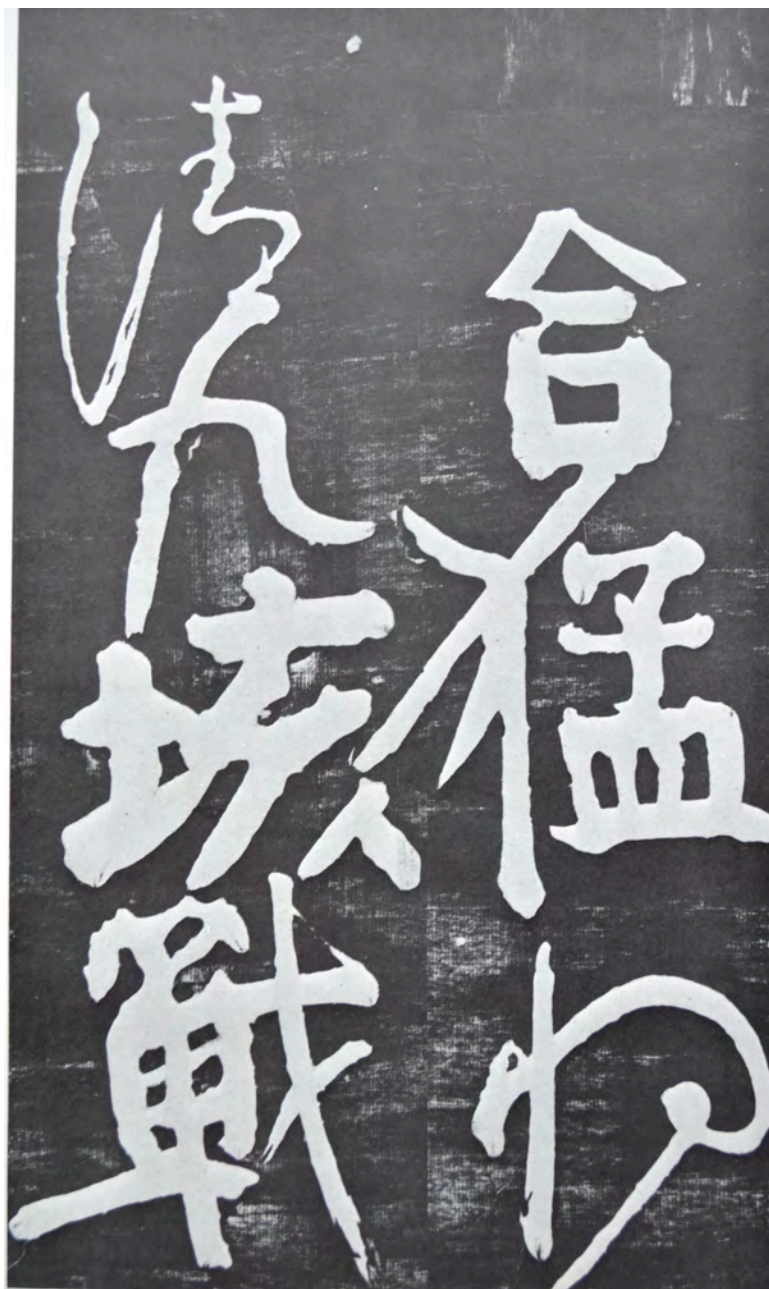
37c)

	五	說
美	百	文
一	卍	都
	十	首

37d)

漢 果 劍 金
 鹵 珍 號 生
 河 李 互 麗
 溪 崇 關 川
 鱗 菜 珠 王
 潛 壘 隔 世
 羽 荼 夾 息
 翔 疆 炎 岡

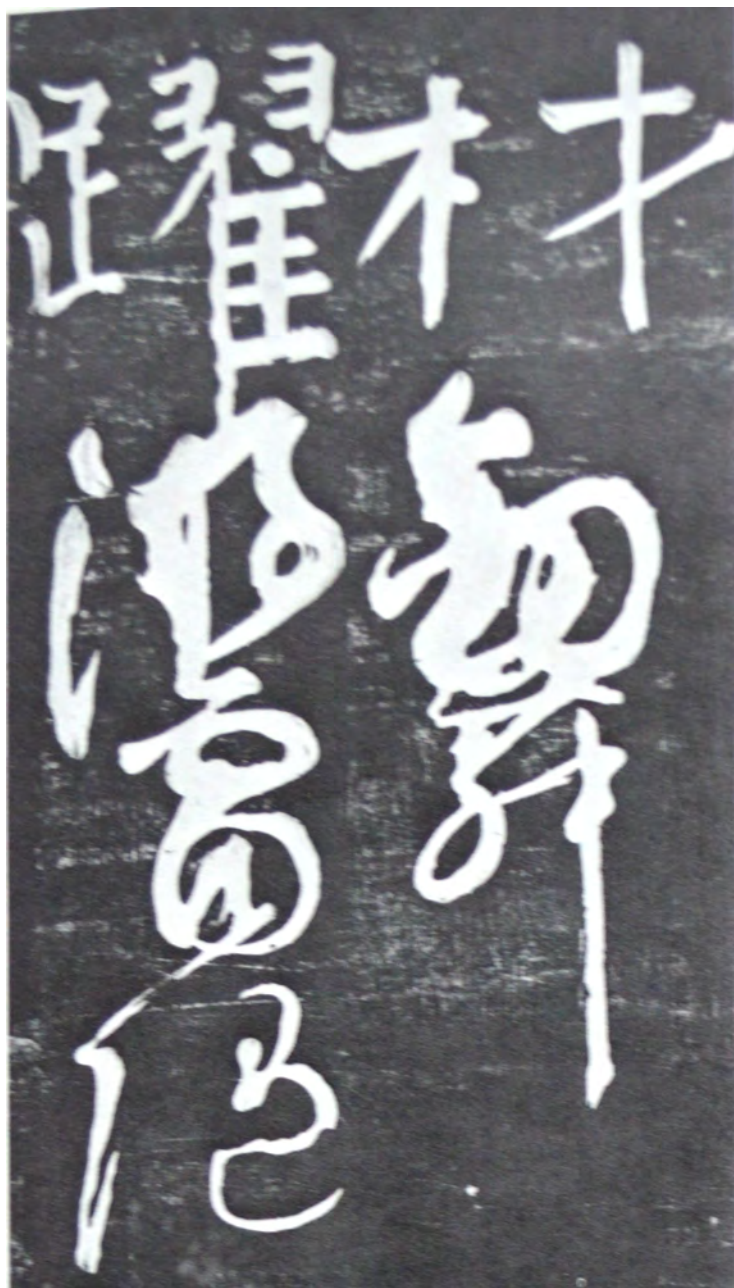
38a-
1-2)



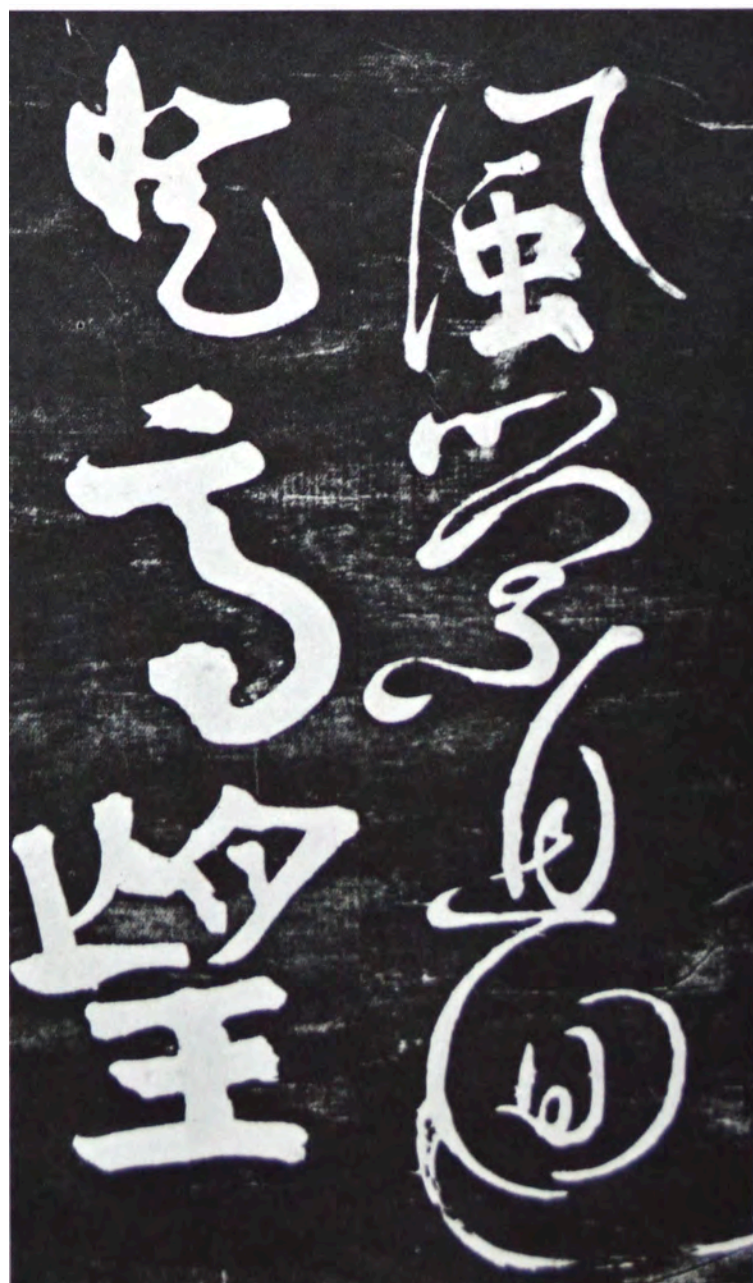
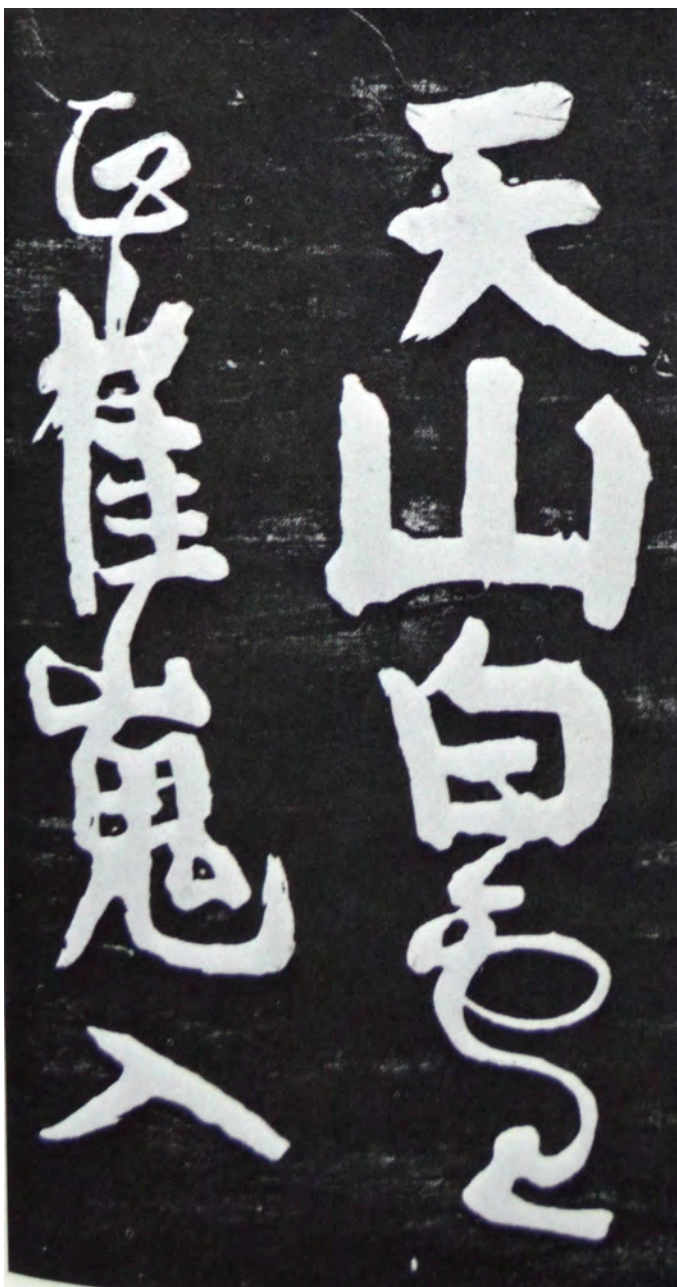
38a-
3-4)



38a-
5-6)



38a-
7-8)

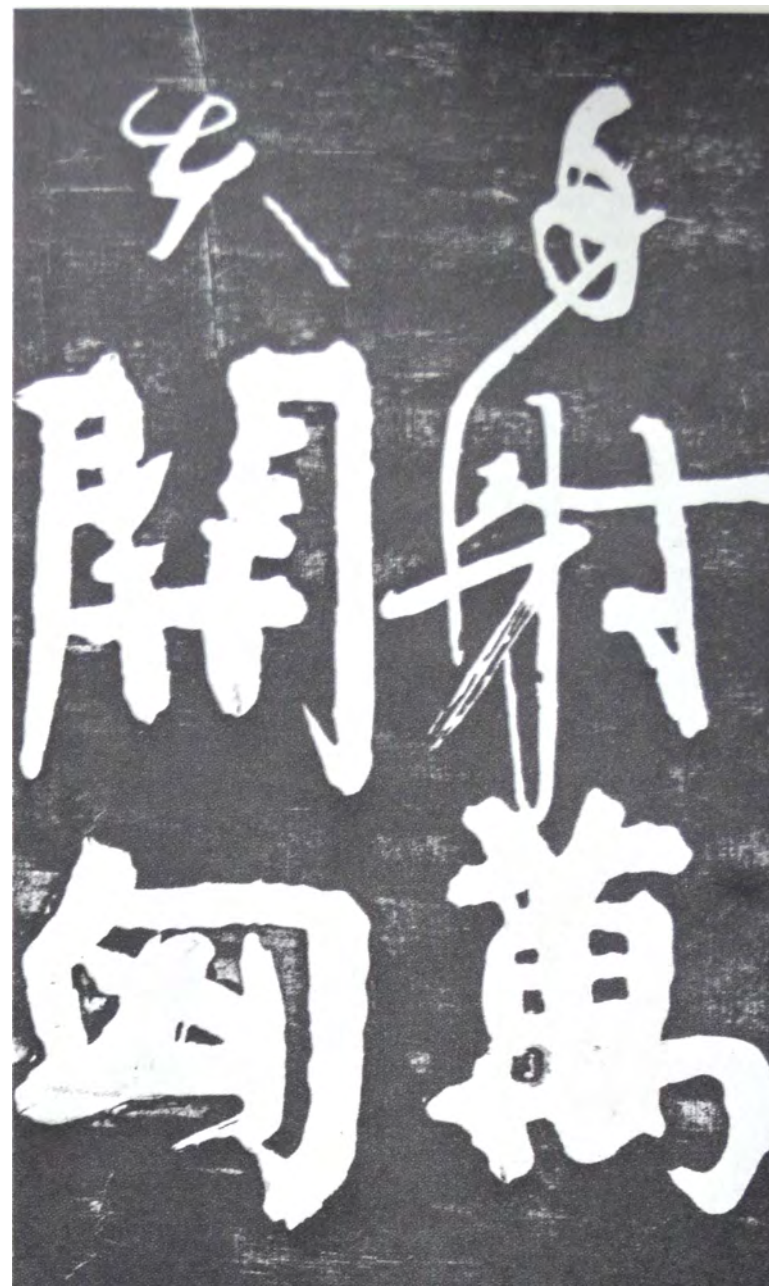
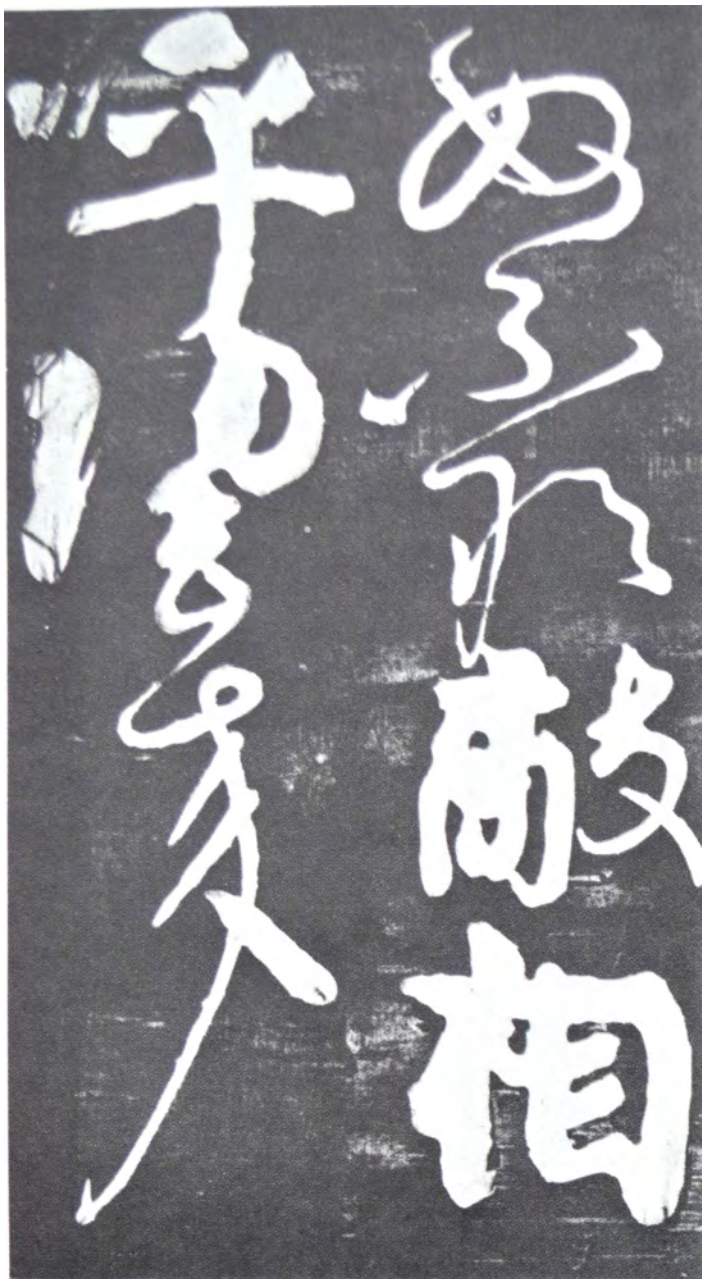


38a-
9-10)

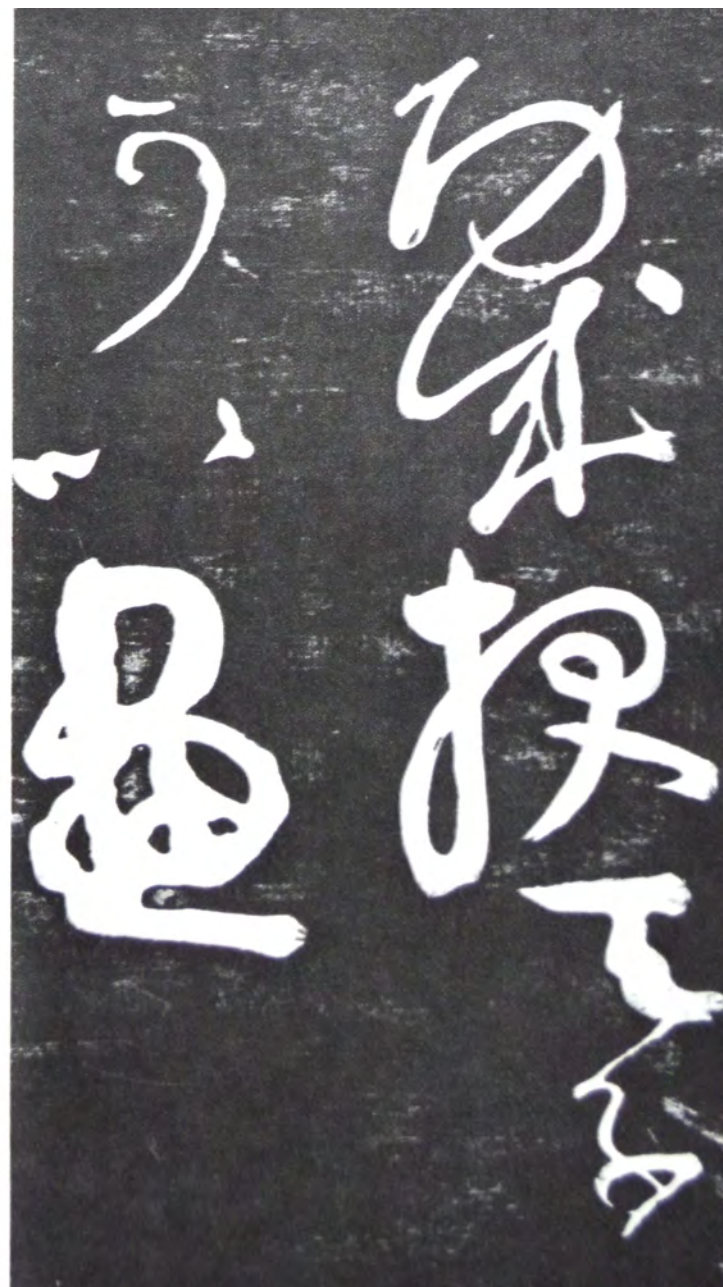
射身倒
雄震雷

威震
破驍勇

38a-
11-12)



38a-
13-14)



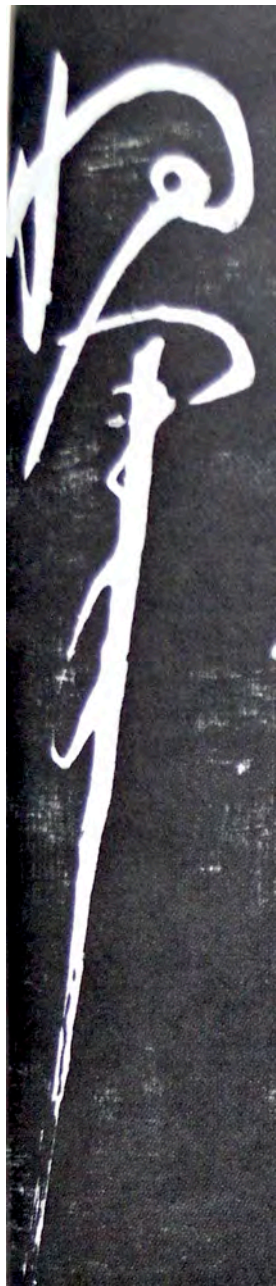
38b)



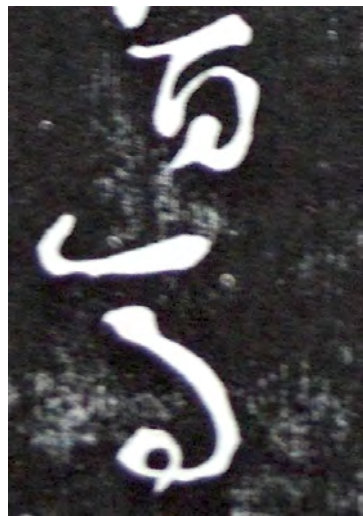
38c)



38d)



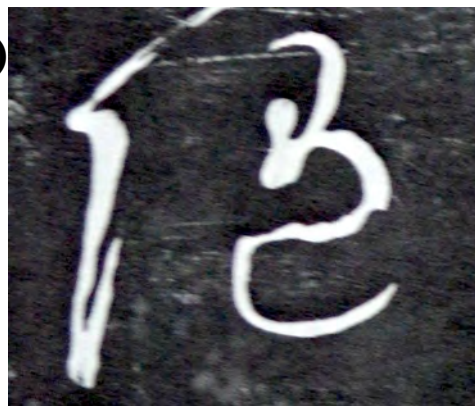
38e)



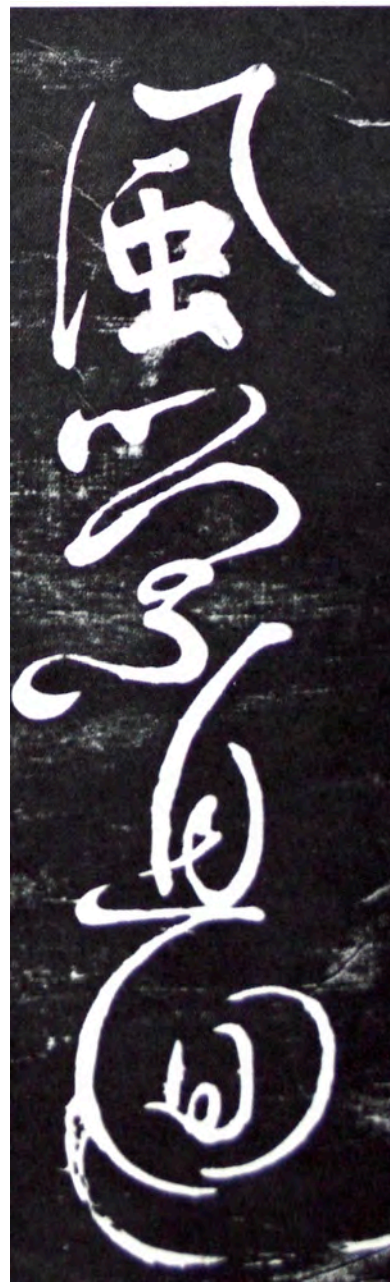
38f)



38g-1)



38g-2)



38h)



38i)



38j-2)



38j-1)



38k)



38l-1)



38l-2)



38m)



39a)

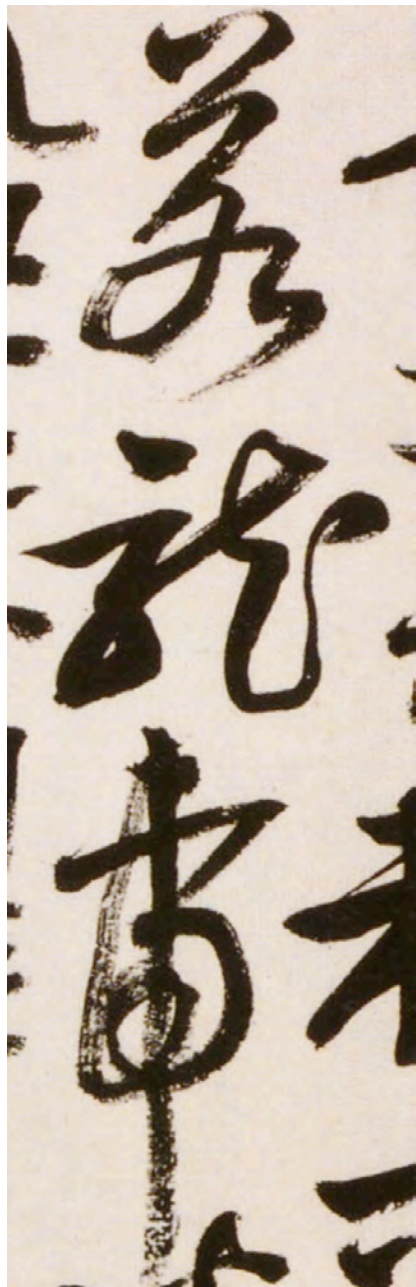
乞高望天山
 白雲正崔嵬
 入陣破
 驕虜威聲
 雄震雷
 一射百
 子射萬夫
 開弓如
 敵相
 功年
 子
 畫
 麟
 屋

39b)

裴物車大
 天利六合
 猛如
 漢九
 戰了
 名
 龍
 中
 騰
 陵
 何
 壯
 哉
 穿
 臨北
 荒
 但
 赫
 耀
 英
 材
 切
 舞
 躍
 游
 野
 風
 宗
 道
 回

响
 清

39c)



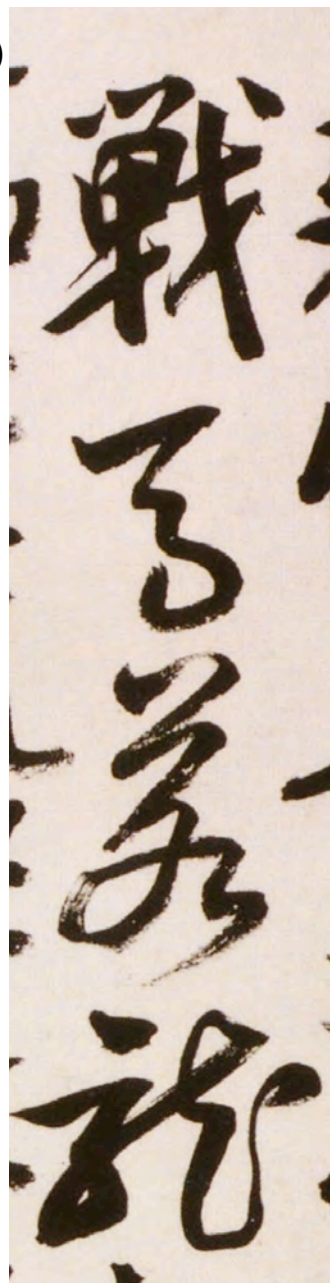
39d)



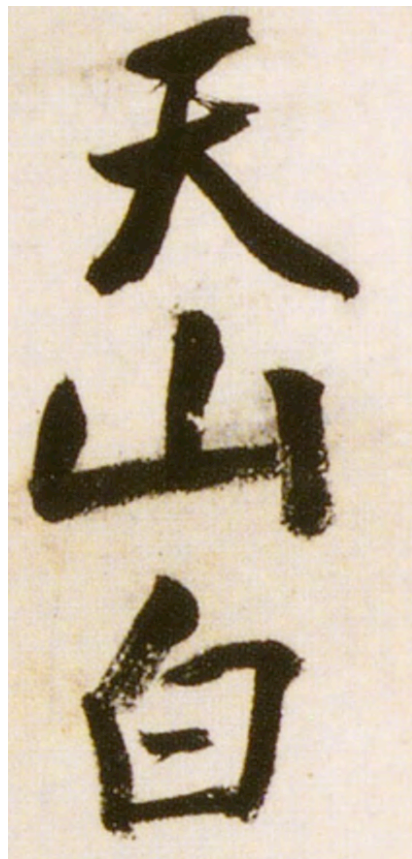
39e)



39f)



39g)



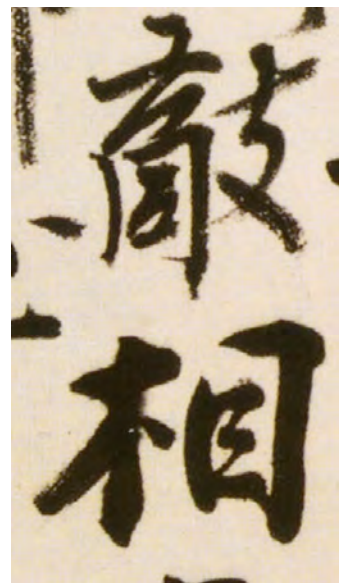
39h)



39i)



39j)



畫之情情宛然終之以以
 精飛篆篆陶切字繁精色
 村之器用儀形之極
 晉之造如或一云世方主
 畫之精可飛者矣
 點高而
 體直素一點生之字之規一字
 乃終篇之字連而不犯如而
 同而不同連而不一恒疾筆
 惟方潤而濃子枯紙規矩於
 方圓通初魏之曲直正顯已
 晦美行若飛之疾於
 神合情調於紙上世習心手
 三指枯骨白可省家款而
 世生連筆張而為三為五
 樹青翠結安其能隨珠如

孫子庭書譜


夫自古之筆書者，惟魏、晉、唐、宋、元、明、清、各代，其法各異。末稱二王之妙，其意之云，以行草法名也。魏、張、伯、為、絕、作、其、餘、不、之、觀、可、得。魏、張、云、使、而、善、秋、建、之、又、云、五、者、以、之。魏、張、魏、者、抗、行、或、得、過、之、張、行、魏、者、唐、行、然、張、精、熟、也、水、為、量、也。今、宣、人、說、之、其、此、未、必、後、之、其、乃、掩。張、之、意、也、考、之、其、掩、魏、未、果、於、此、魏、掩、以、其、通、也、其、恐、於、即、子、評、之、云。彼、之、曰、賢、古、今、特、絕、而、今、未、述、其、質、而。今、好、去、質、以、代、真、好、因、信、不、疏、其、契。之、心、道、以、記、之、而、存、確、一、應、質、之、交。魏、晉、以、筆、物、理、者、其、矣、然、其、亦、不、求。時、今、不、同、矣、夫、文、質、相、之、道、亦、不、可、必。不、能、言、於、六、矣、及、至、魏、於、掩、於、者。

42)

禮器碑
 聖極斐緯無文不綜
 賢孝之性相生於心易
 世載德不隕其名及其
 從政清擬夷齊直慕
 史魚紀經萬里未紫
 不認出典諸郡彈枉
 糾邪貪暴決心同儻

43)

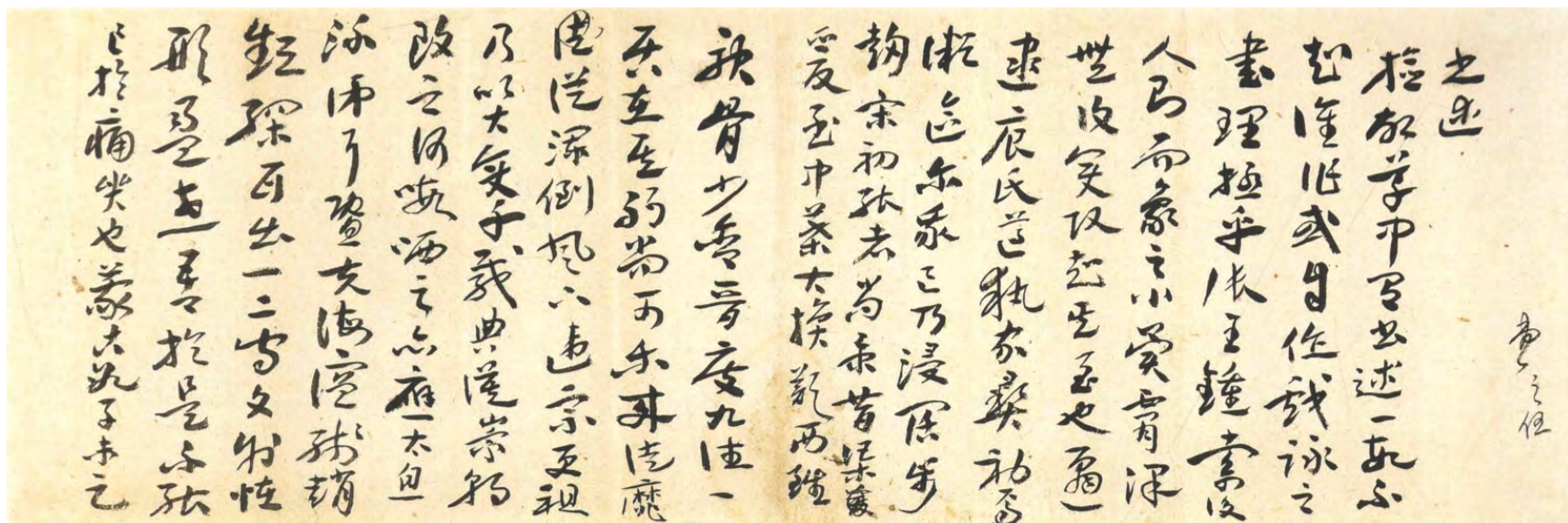
先帝痛廖正籍平復
 秀初病重亦以此正為憂
 承大至勞子乃後生甚憂今子相
 注初末主吾不強如海洽平復末
 來儀律詩為勸累觀自驅體
 之子美也思後景之遂亦執所宜也



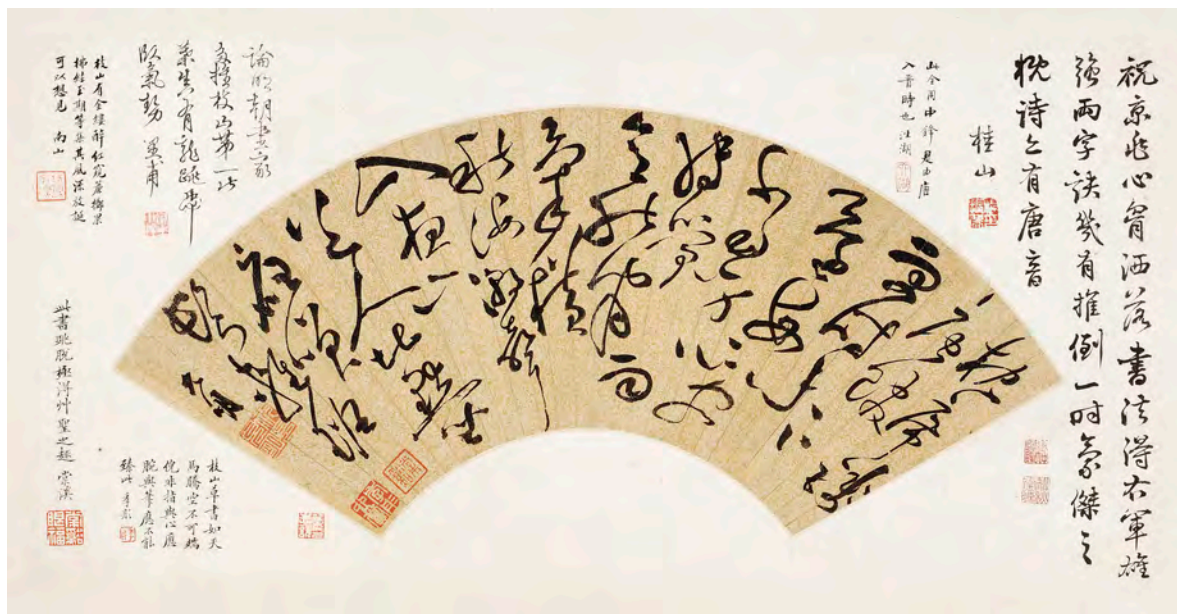
44)

持細者不在唐
澄心之下固康
王教紙道入灰
品道不及康
王展之則石灰

45)



46)



47)

律呂調陽
閑餘所賦
鸛鳴丹旌
窈來暑往
正酒節征
日月盈昃
宇宙漭荒

48a)

牀前明月光疑是地上霜
舉頭望山月低頭思故鄉

48b)

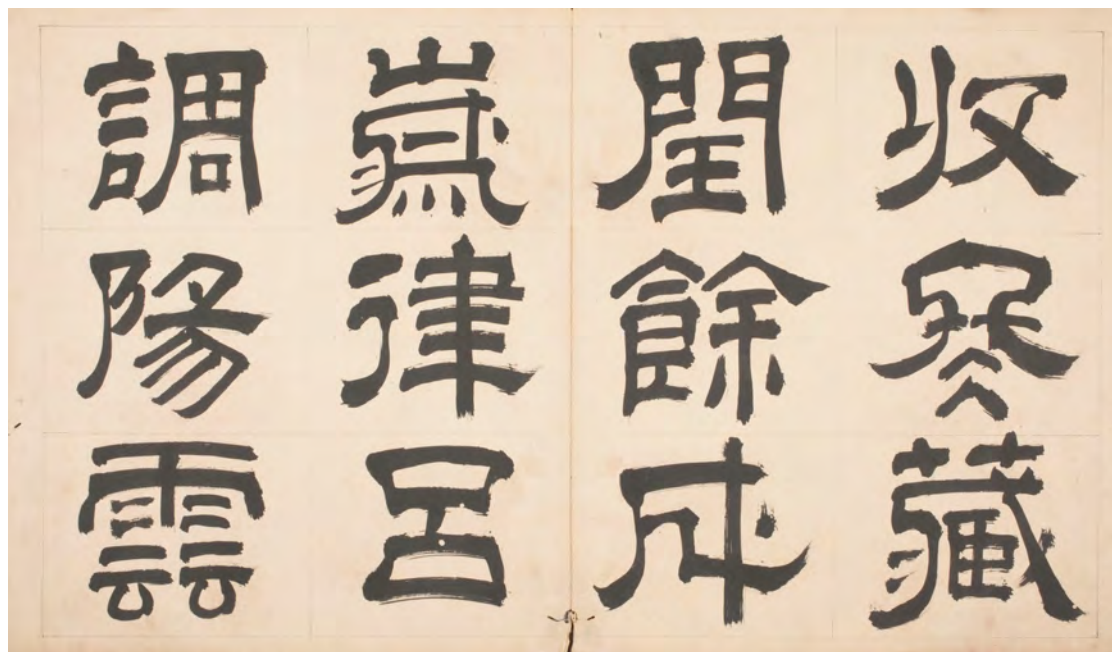
進學解
國子先生晨入太學招諸生立館下誨
之曰業精於勤荒於嬉行成於思毀於
隨方今聖賢相逢治具畢張拔去凶邪
登崇峻良占小善者率以錄名一藝者無
不庸爬羅剔抉刮垢磨光蓋有幸而獲

進學解



進一

49)



50a)



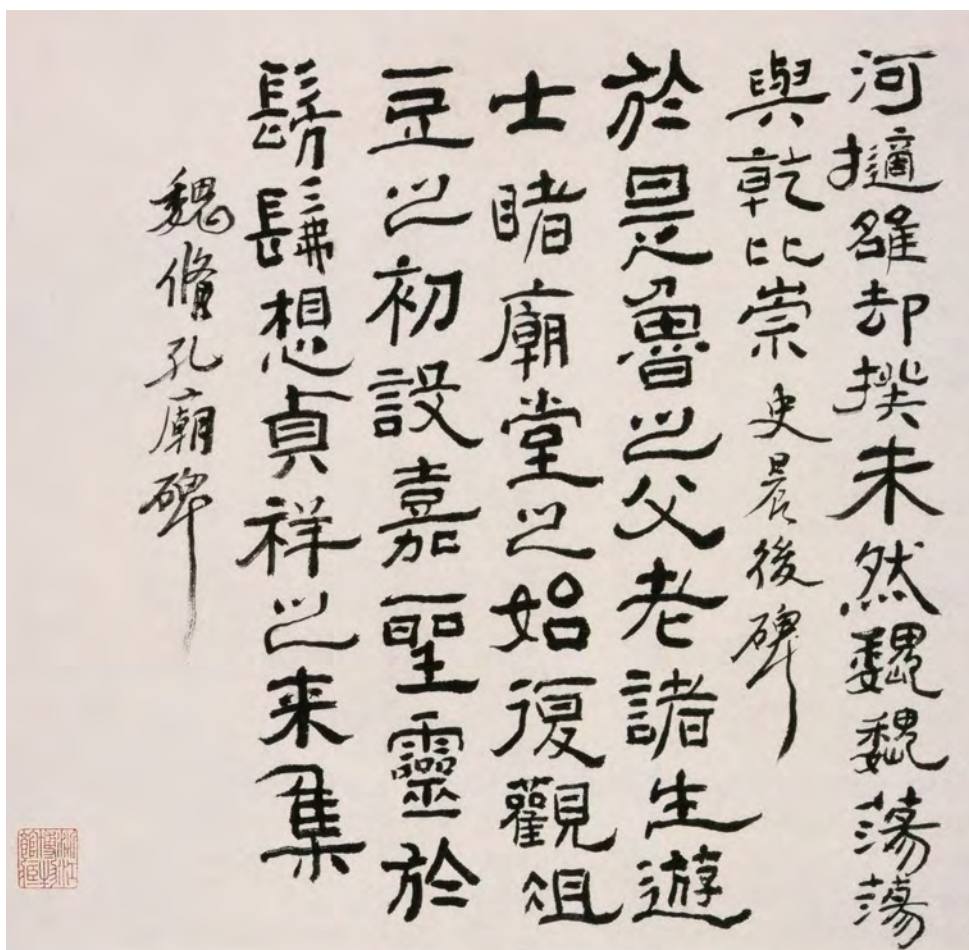
50b)



51)



52)



53a)

大唐西京千福寺多寶
 佛塔感應碑文
 南陽岑勛撰
 朝議郎判尚書武部
 書
 負外郎琅邪顏真卿
 朝散大夫檢校尚書
 都官郎中東海徐浩

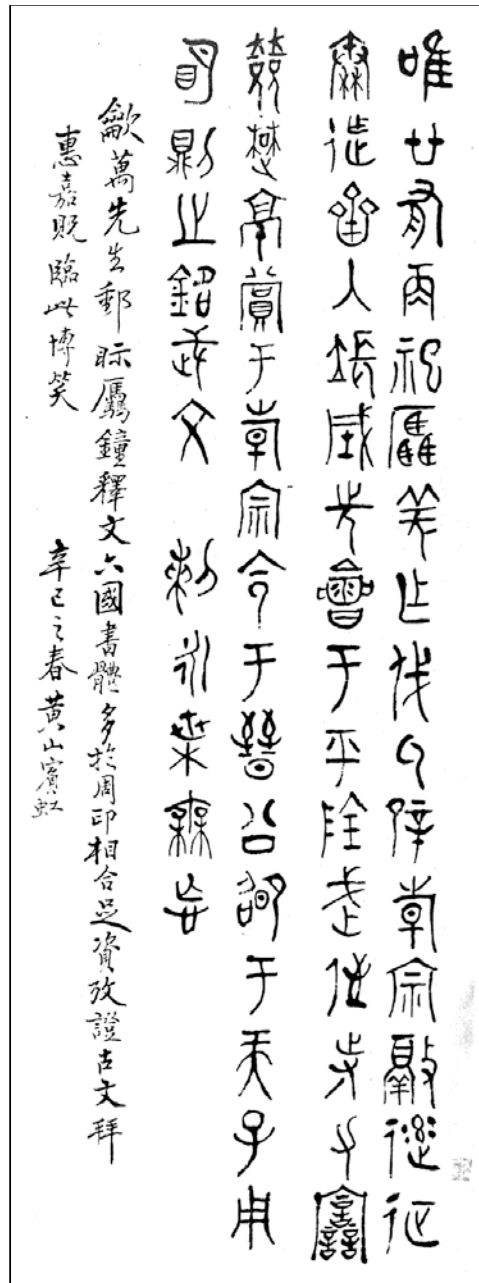
53b)

寶應元年七月廿七日下
 正議大夫行國子司業上柱國
 金鄉縣開國男顏允南上
 母贈蘭陵郡太君殷氏
 右可贈蘭陵郡太夫人
 門下禮厚飾終義殷錫

54a)



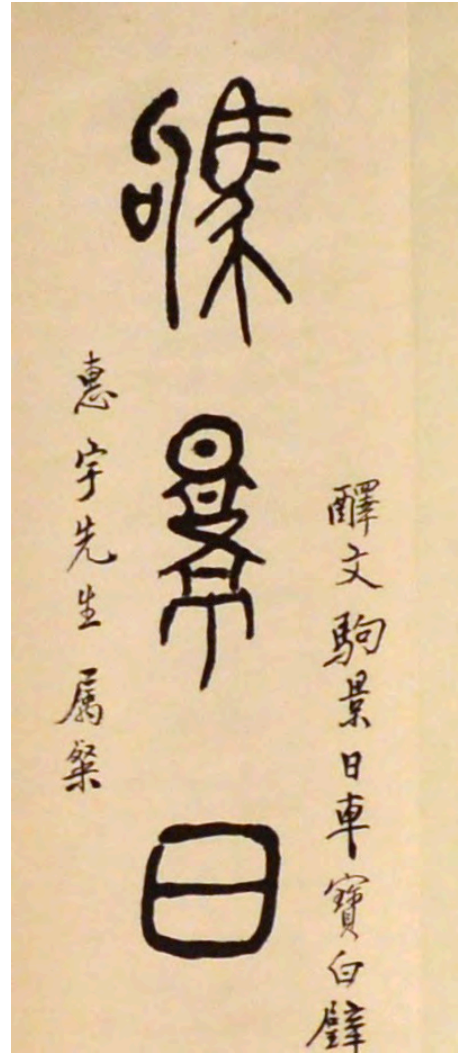
54b)



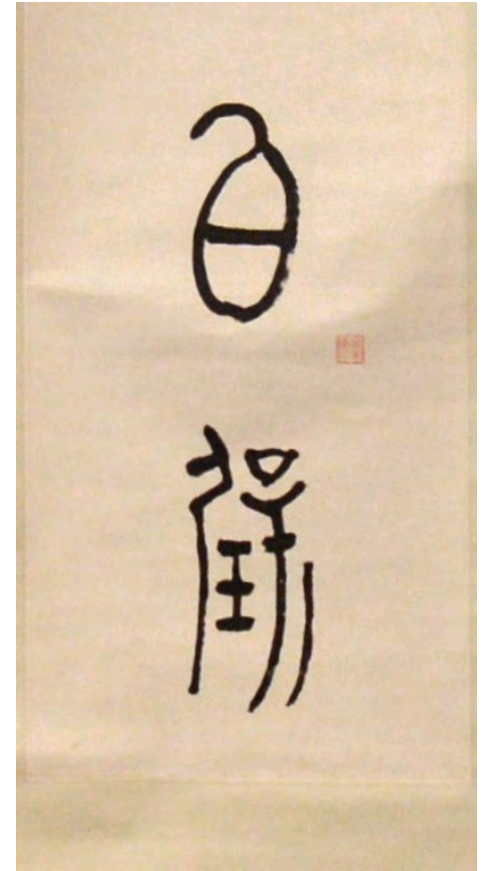
54c)



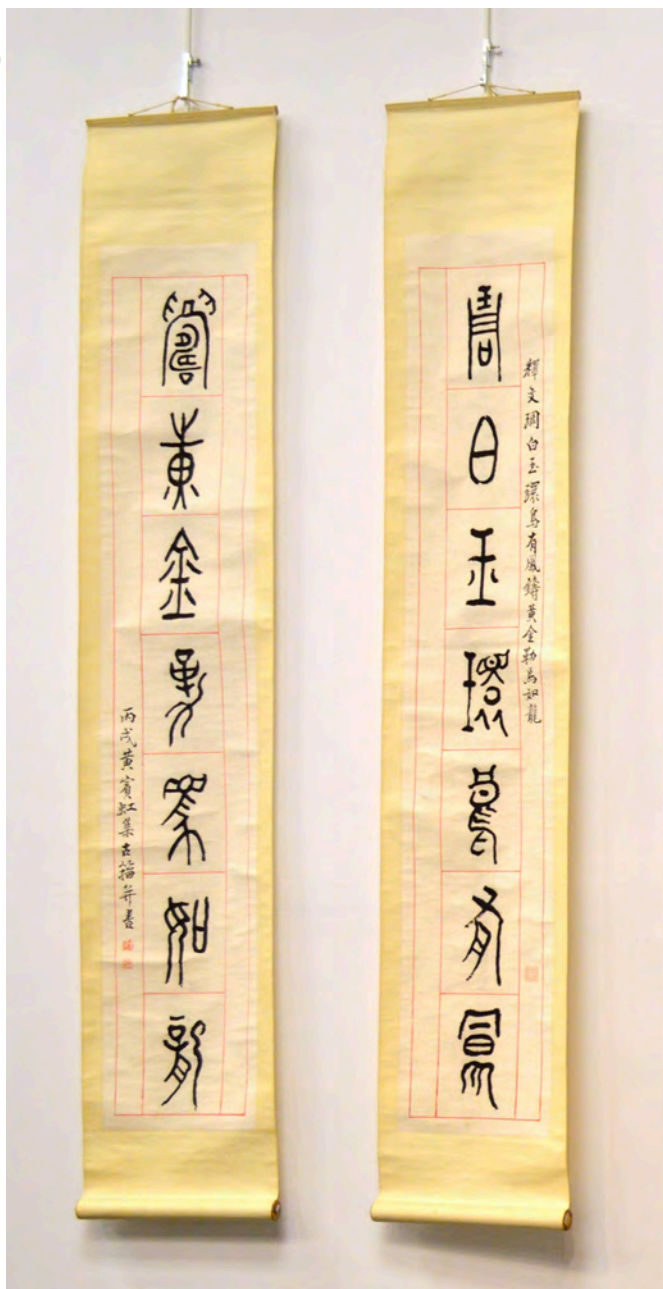
54d)



54e)



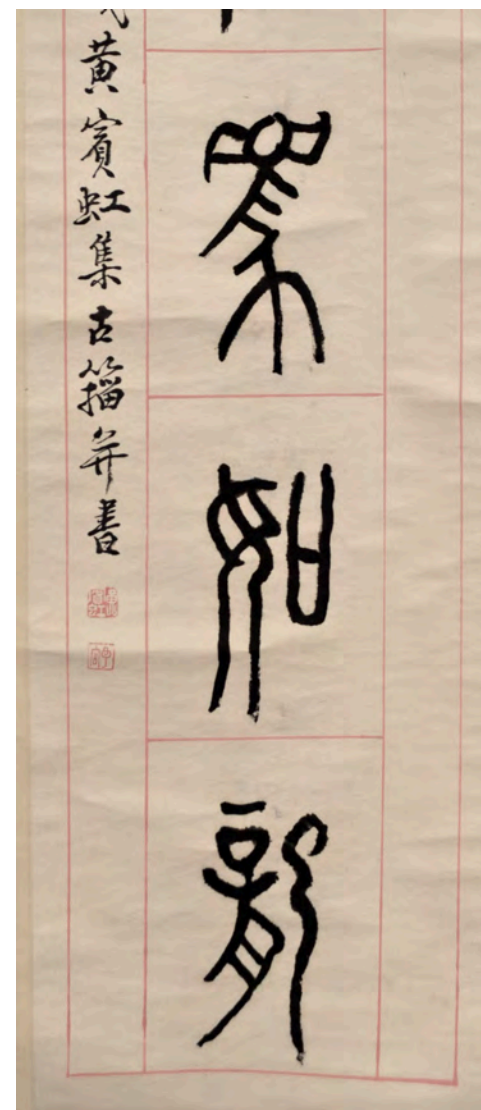
54f)



54g)



54h)



54i-1)

枯藜而不維滑毒
 皆隱忍而不敢就
 其缺而博猛者皆
 疑而不發盡其膽
 斷而復視其引者
 弱止險者束止毒
 省甘止猛者束止

不得大用
 暮眼明
 顛路故
 沈沈
 難難
 醒神
 振筆
 蓄蓄
 紙紙
 了了
 已已
 聽聽

大自慶

54i-2)

開獨斯饋也廣不
 踰數席也鼓楊森
 躡樵兒牧豎過亦
 指上曰李曰嘗酸
 于此吳皇元恭
 揚桓書照州鞠城
 龔森形州真定業

珪同形泗原勤庭
 丞州半陽穀味怡
 同太石

石工王謙黃秀等同刊
 監修白玉山樓百順暨
 揚桓書學於六書統可
 謂博綜矣以未得碑拓為
 憾也碑四面疑並存在任城太

慶

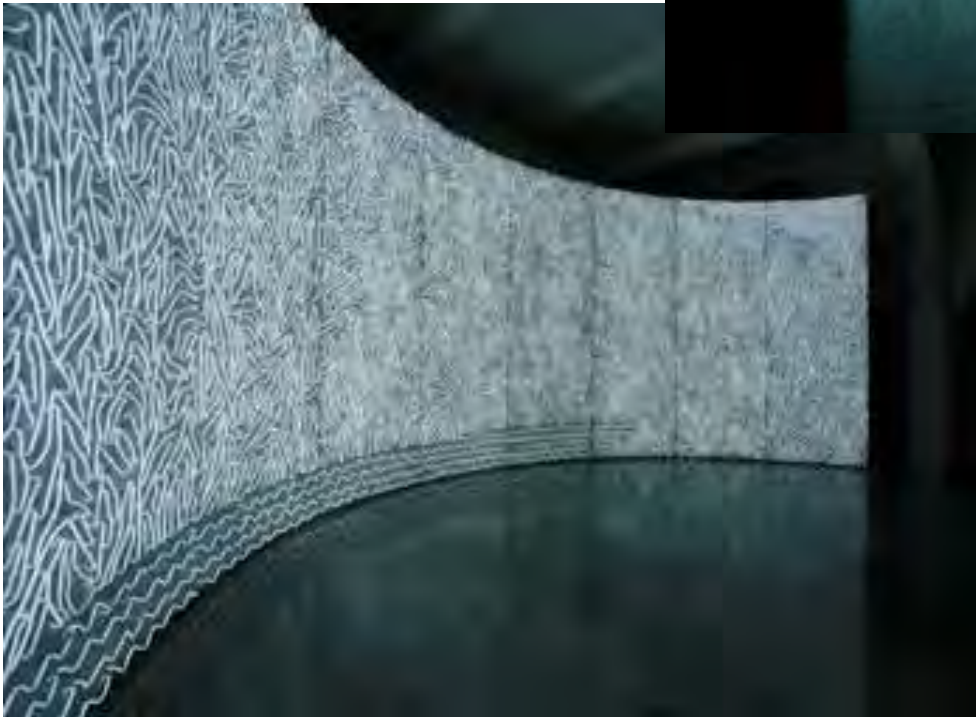
55)

CURSIVE SCRIPT	RUNNING SCRIPT	REGULAR SCRIPT	CLERICAL SCRIPT	SMALL SEAL SCRIPT	LARGE SEAL SCRIPT	ORACLE-BONE SCRIPT	
							MOUNTAIN
							WATER
							SUN
							MOON
							MAN
							HORSE
							TIGER
							OX

56a)



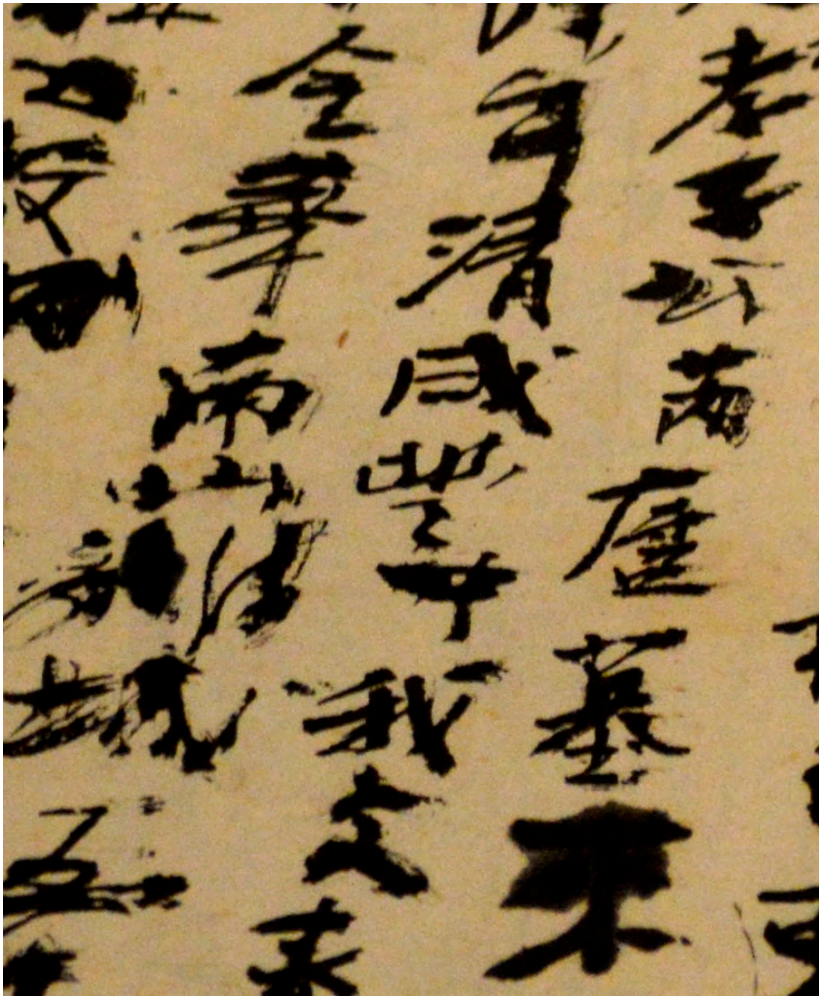
56b)



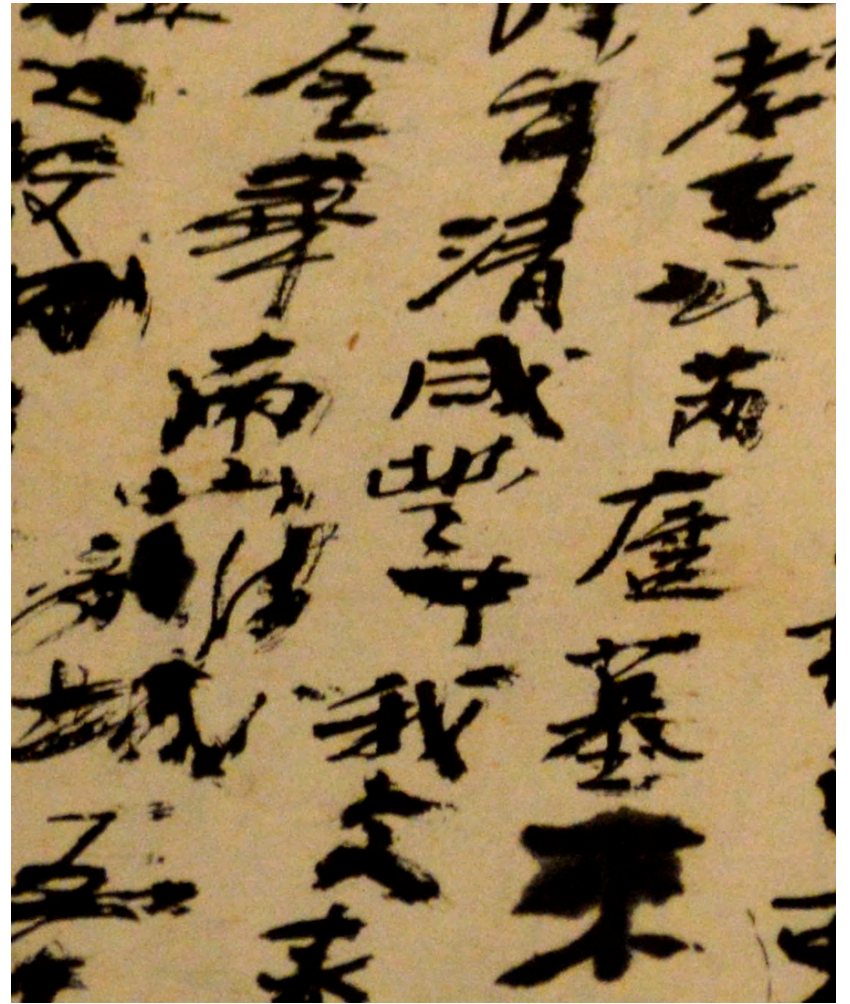
57)

葬於華山之麓宜有誌
銘公諱維峻字西峯係
自河陰宋忠武族後
遷蒲城伏龍村代有達

58d-5)



58d-6)



58d-7)

教者之書院錄業誅餘...
 板本書畫...
 個人廣學...
 工之模範...
 授與...
 禮...
 者...
 文字不同...
 上...
 明...

58d-8)

神州時報...
 廣州...
 高...
 柳...
 其...
 市...
 人...

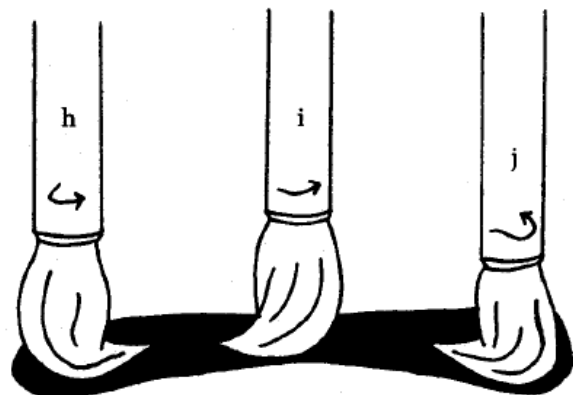
58e-1)

畫堂篇
 女用鑽燧補皇初丹成純青
 火候獲女媧補天石五色甲
 章作繪開唐虞鳳皇來
 儀有百格龍馬應瑞呈河
 圖夏瓊殿契用金古國族
 標幟通魚息春秋封建既破
 壞民學洙泗刪詩書優游暇
 豫習六藝遠事村居書數餘
 國經訓詁有為誤新到典西
 旋分途顧欽陸稼書張傳新履
 平度重內美不齊之齊三南
 孝唐君學善有奴丹青炫耀
 閭主本李思訓吳道子魏徵媼媚
 工應制王侯如嬪宮廷娛玉維
 鄭度作水旱詩中有畫三絕俱
 集取優長洪谷子荆浩隱照華華
 山中居補綴人物特胡翼閻全出藍
 非過譽范寬林山石畫
 淡汀平滂扇鋪董元巨然二并
 一家法渾厚華滋唐不如虞山
 友若歐波趙孟頫得神妙翰柯
 丹邱以思方畫從義元季四家稱
 傑出權若吳倪王正廷梅卷畫
 畫者早濡黃柳推魏程崔
 癡碑癡像不迂沈者初初文亦粗
 自至至至宗北苑才殊特備年小老
 露珠放視多士登春熙屋浦
 均俊所衣白即之耕年力折齋
 邊生作向早采源際唐涇陽
 張相策東華策年足主畫
 山畫永昌帶水項後勢葉藏餘
 畫經畫卷為戲圖畫朱竹松雲
 有靜志在

58e-2)

冷間彈見紫瘡悉朝臣
 別北年奉唐馬遠畫事造自
 吳偉張跋祥野狐表來
 海友王季入才麻揚州八怪
 相疎詩文去西爪四雲松
 顏天事搽每樂情大儒
 陰非原漸內善外患長嘆
 于畫學後與思故國運特
 俱來丙病新畫向細得句性
 伯世
 金且趙氏之孫石查畫
 四方鄉方應應望高呼
 夏玉老畫珍良
 美大澤字老意勇揭榜
 諫琳紅珠平成水陸通
 舟身天然固為大運正
 有造化滇南無之家
 夫華旦後日一生畫也他
 序新
 今古月中畫史日易先
 陰道多茶
 國日治先正短人必事
 無善不勤勤力行之而昂
 莫講淡永壽萬多者不
 瑜
 雅宗

59a)

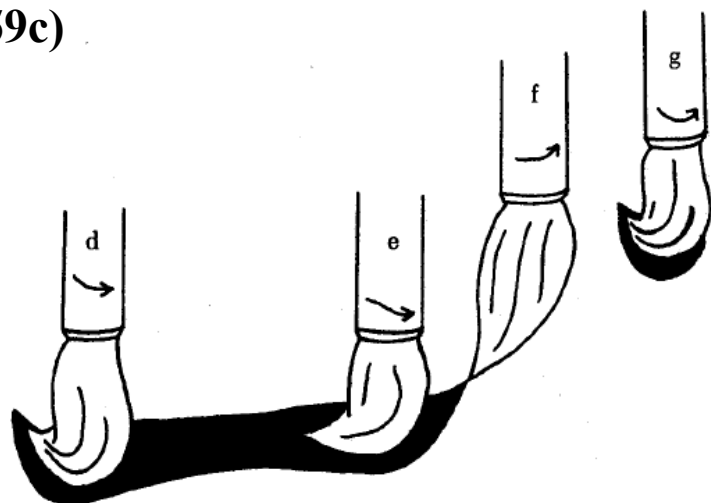


h-k. Concealed-tip brush movement

59b)



59c)



d-g. Exposed-tip brush movement

59d)



60a)



60b)



60c)



60d)



61a)



61b)



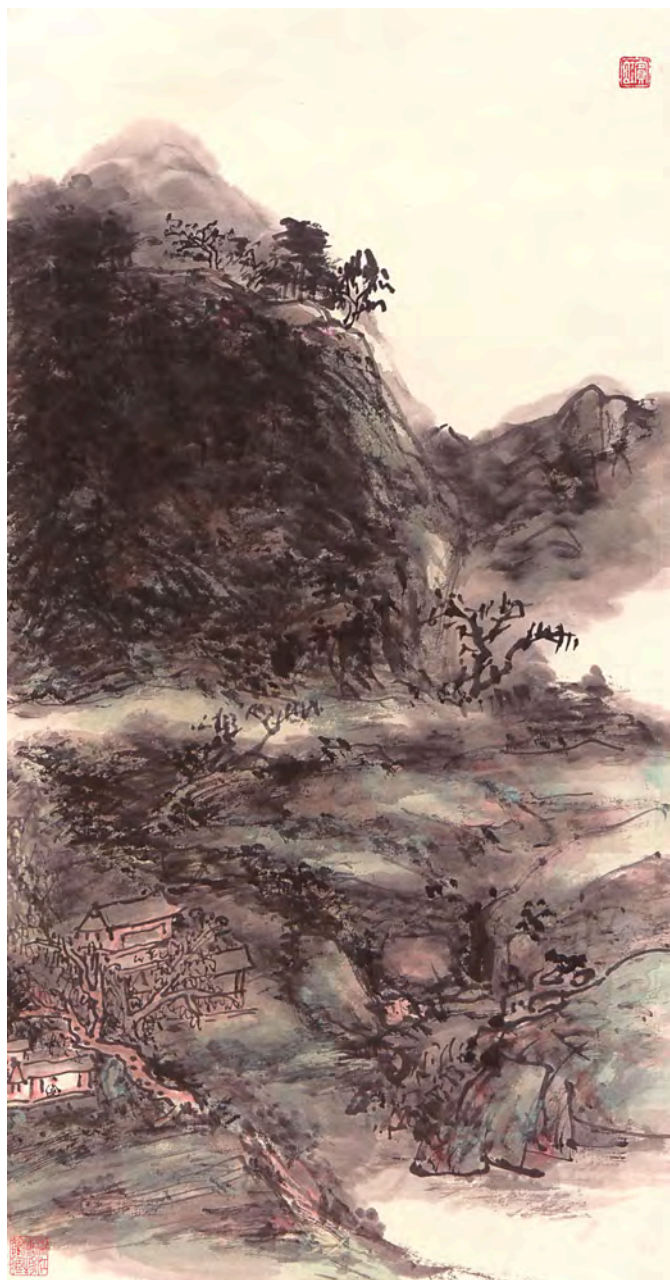
62a)



62b)



62c)



62d)



63a)



63b)



63c)



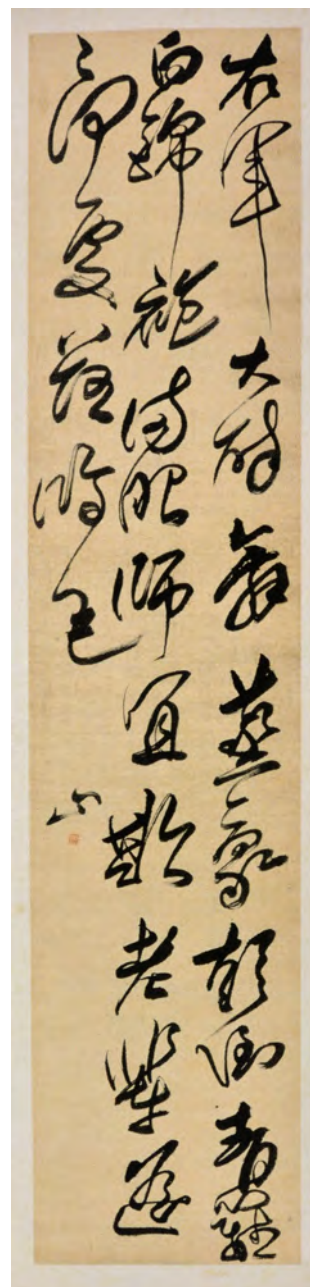
63d)



63e)



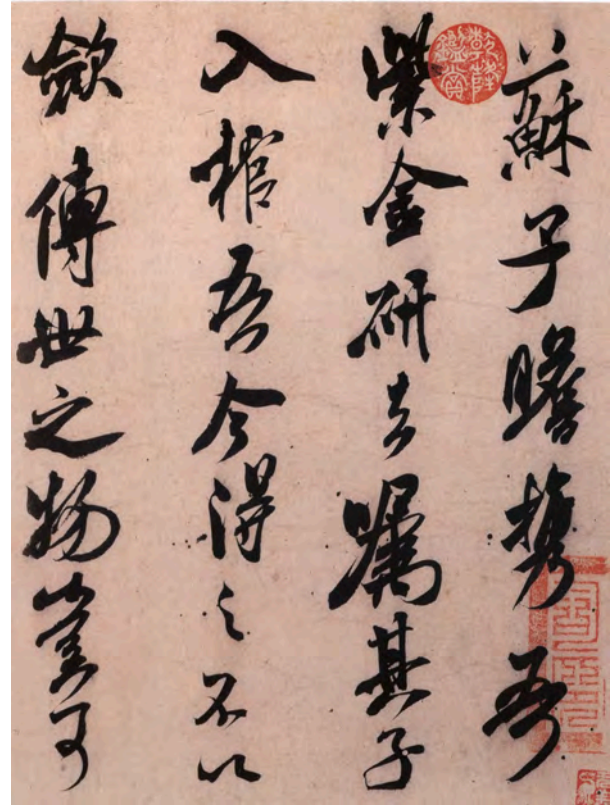
64)



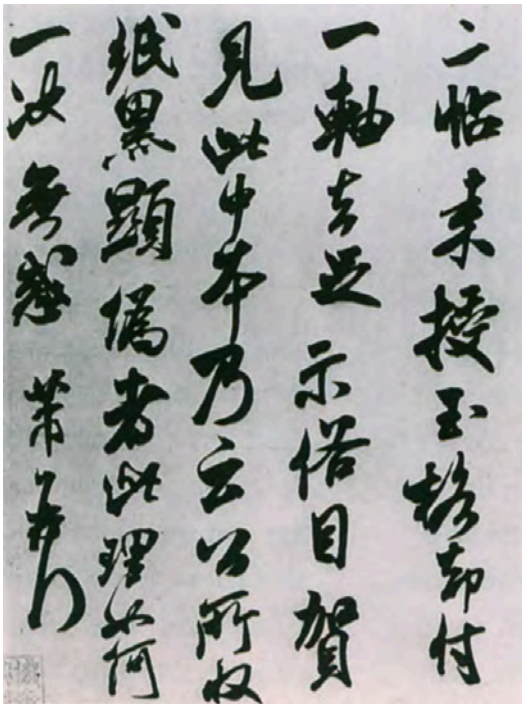
66a)



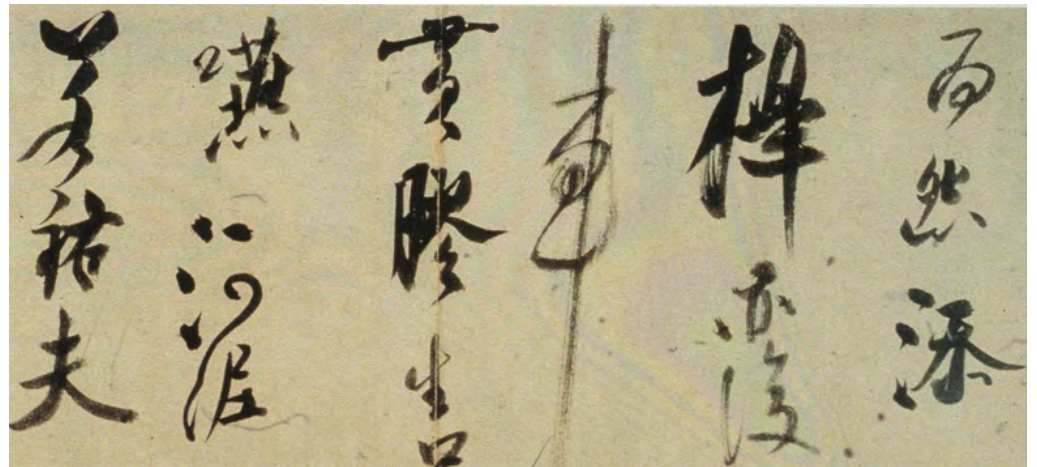
66b)



66c)



66d)



67a)

仕宦而生將相之富貴而歸以鄉里之情之所學
 皆得易而悔之者幸子不禮于其嫂買臣見棄於
 道之人相與誹而里述共言望洛陽而所謂庸士
 馬足之了此介之士得志當時而幸子之盛乃人
 之德為時名卿自弟時已擢為科登顯仕海
 僥倖得志于而幸庸夫愚物之幸以獲能而幸耀也

67b)



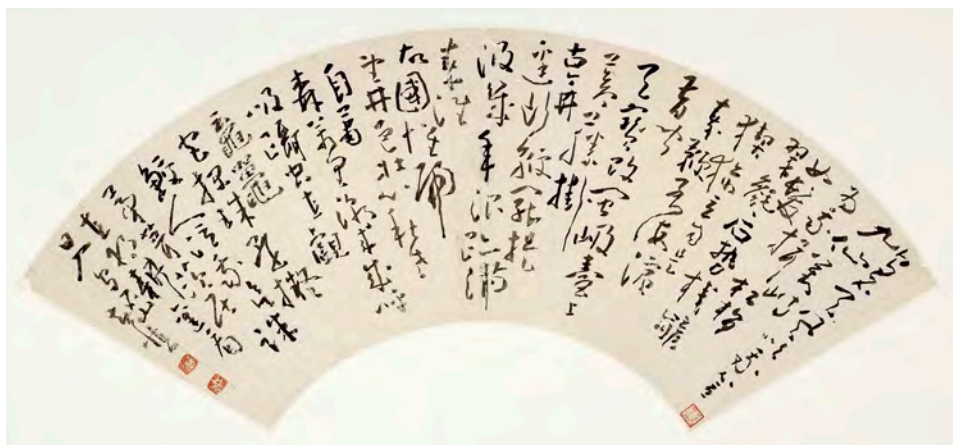
68)



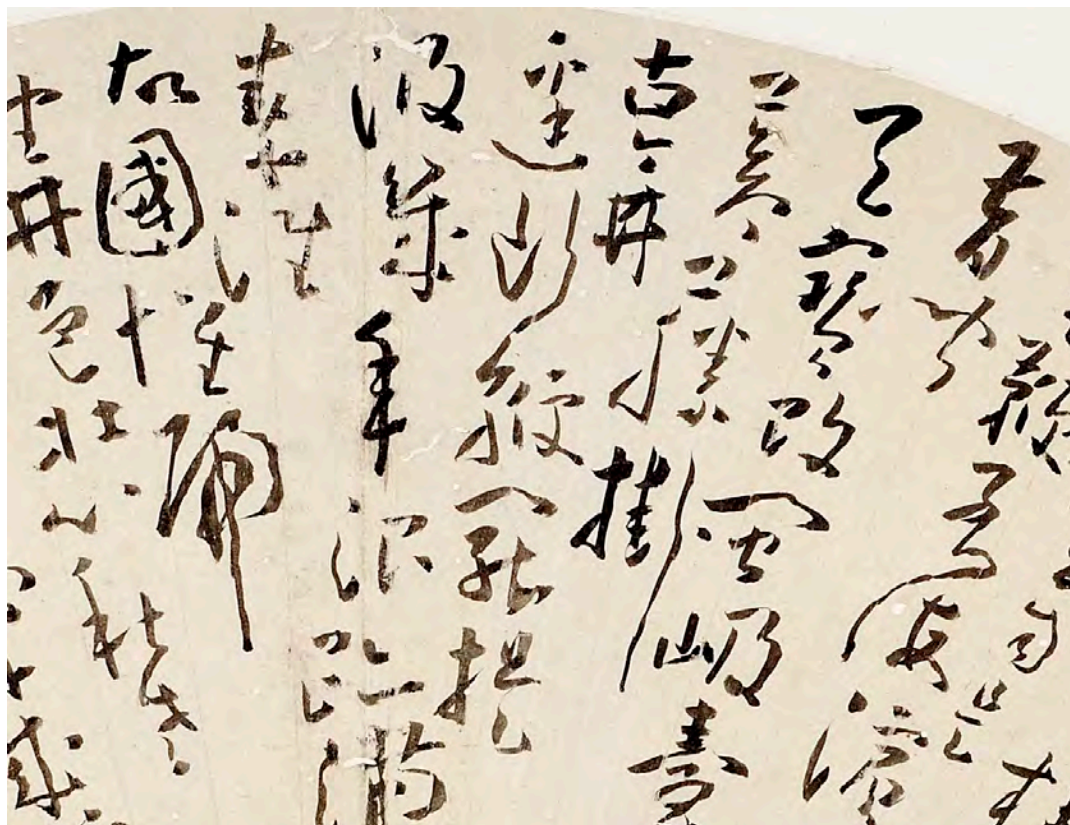
69)



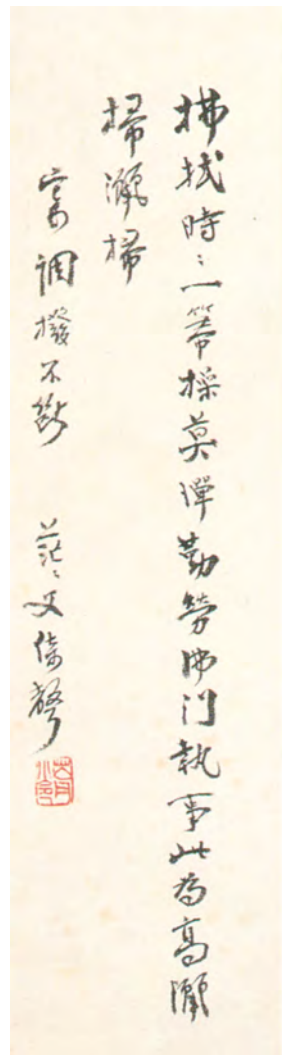
70d)



70c)



71)



72)



73a)

猗止纒止纒
 匪非詞除帥
 易厥葉象出
 里微滅道舍
 樂柁械其柁
 柁膏

安吉長長
 歲在己未
 時在三月
 廿七日



在松樹下
 踏花作履
 皎立
 己未首夏雨坐
 安吉長長
 七十有六

其盤生鮮黃
 昂其鰓又鰓
 又鰓其如早
 展繼止蠶吐
 踵其鰓尾可
 尾鰓尾鰓

老吉



今為多為年
 少若花本三卷老
 少年 己未首夏
 安吉長長

73c)



73d)



73e)



74a)



74b)



74c)



74d)



74e)



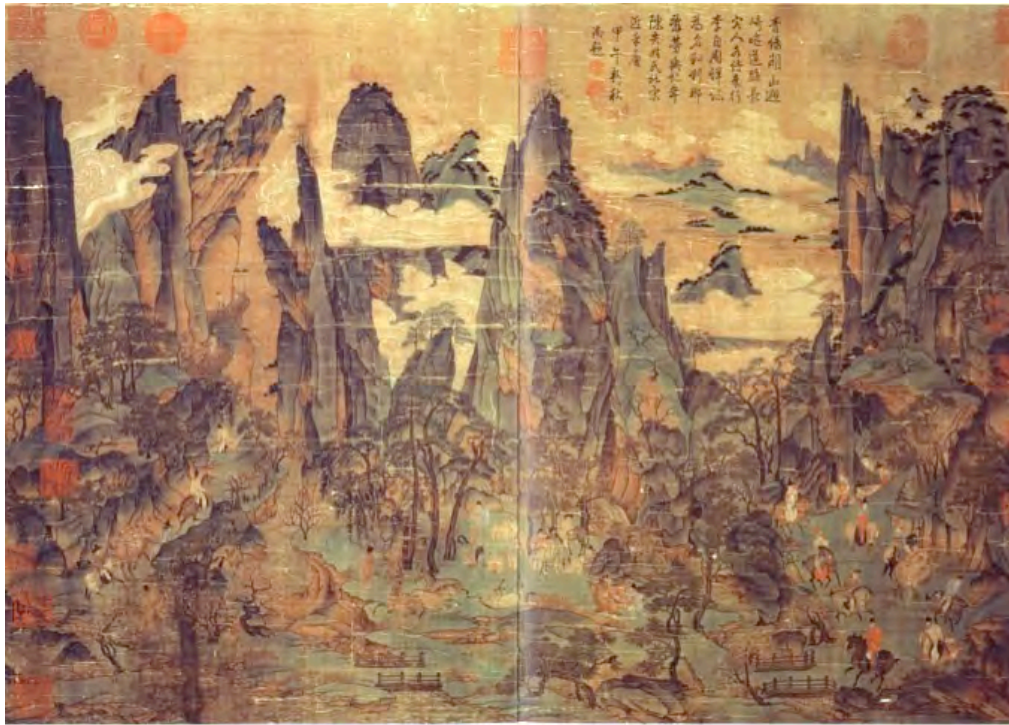
75a)



75b)



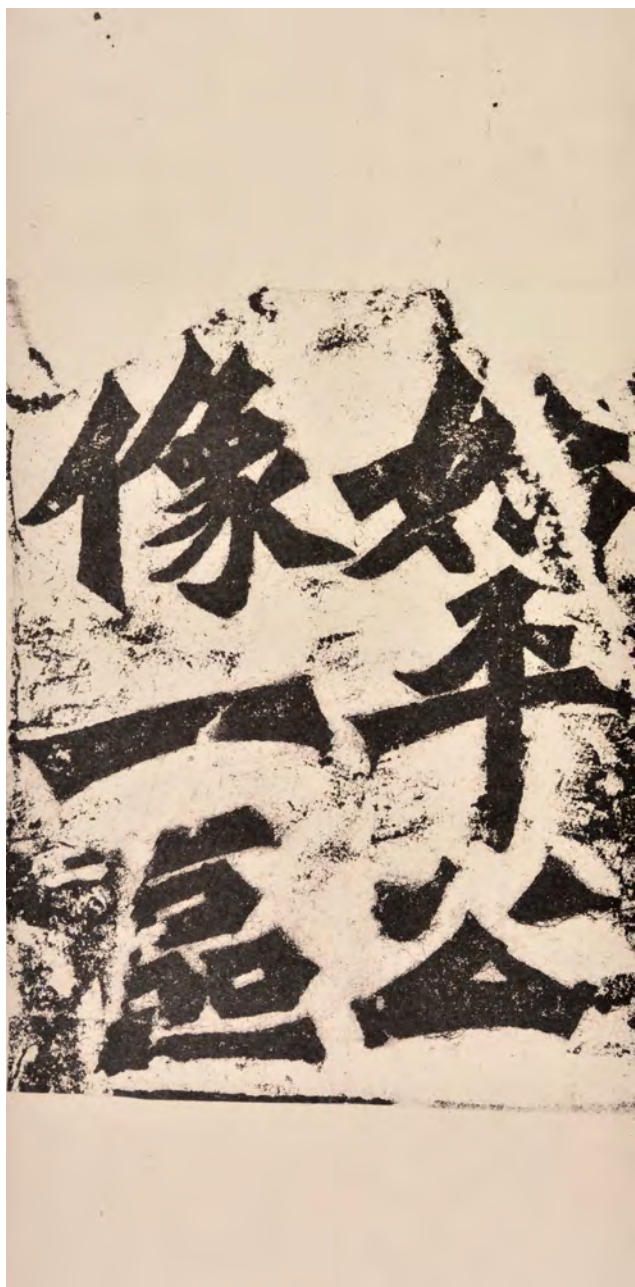
76)



77)



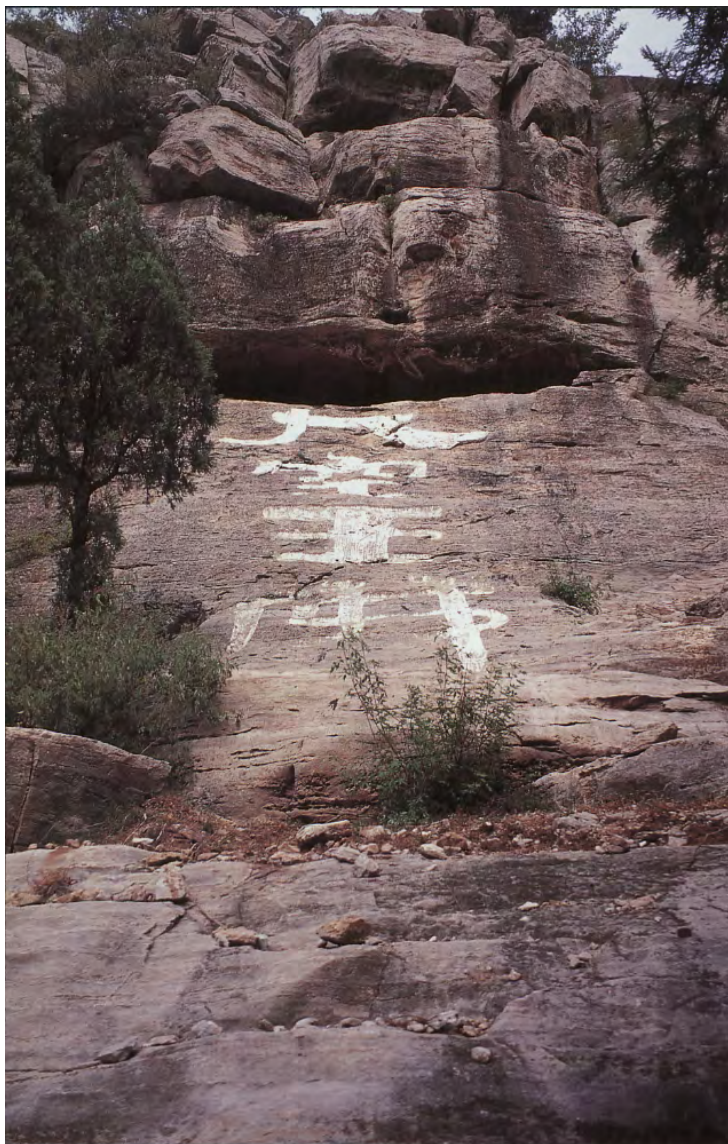
78a-1)



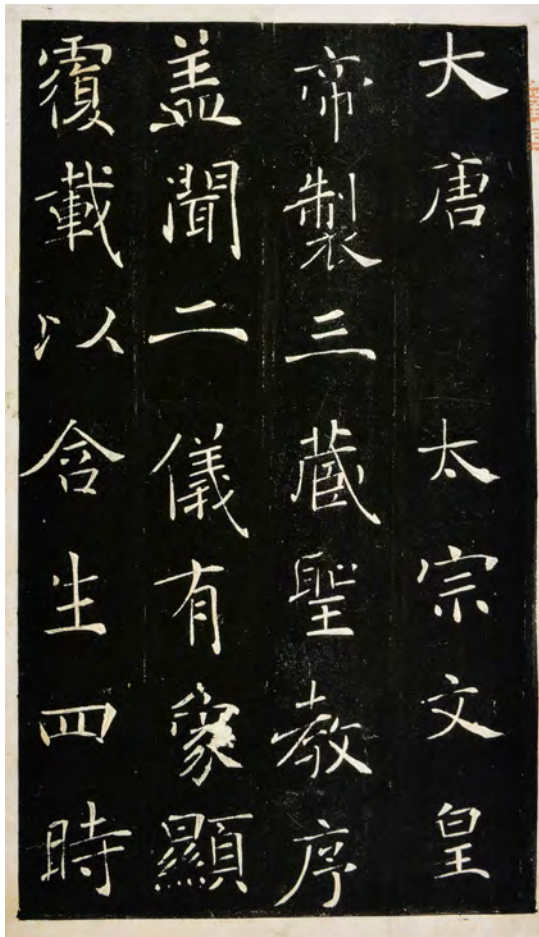
78a-2)



78b)



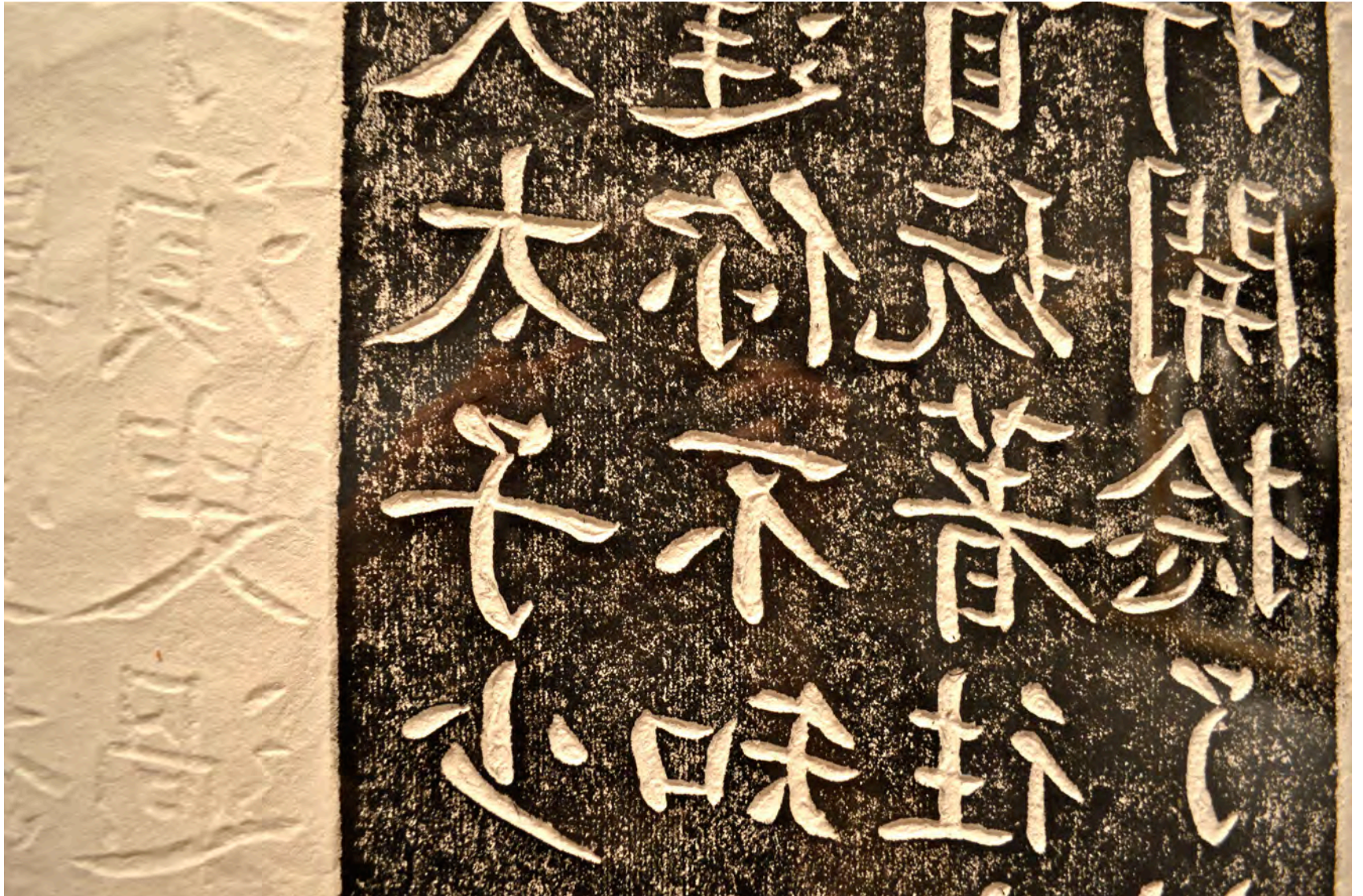
78c)



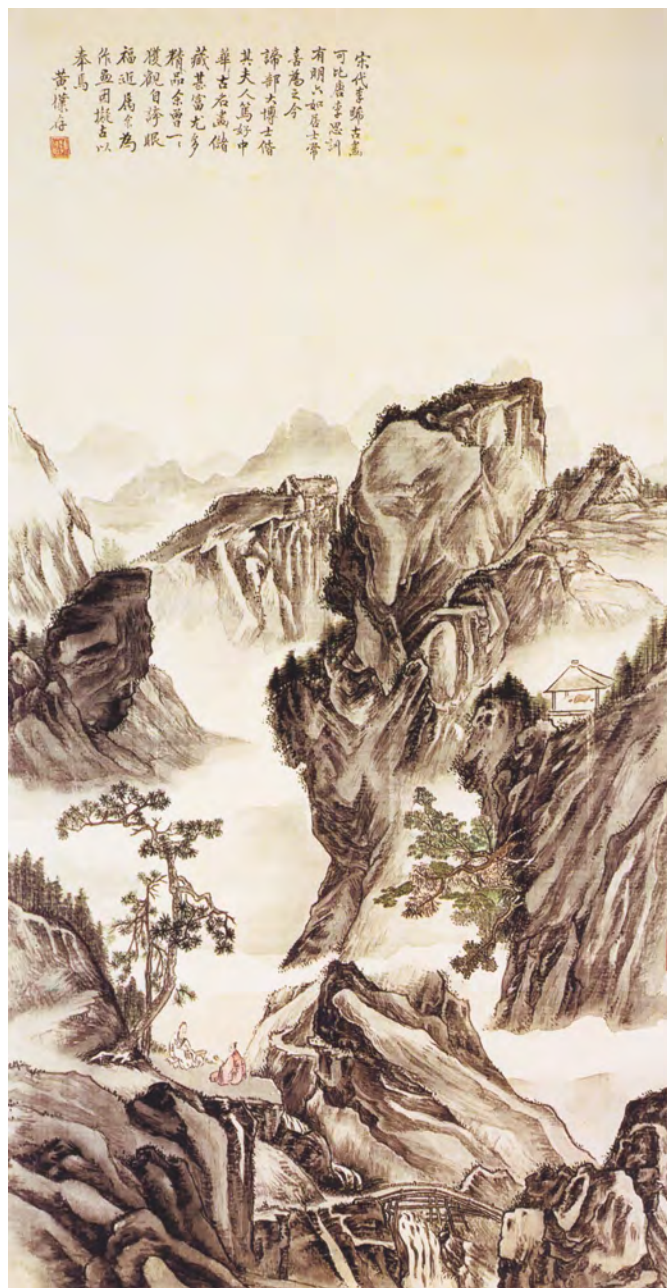
78d)



78e)



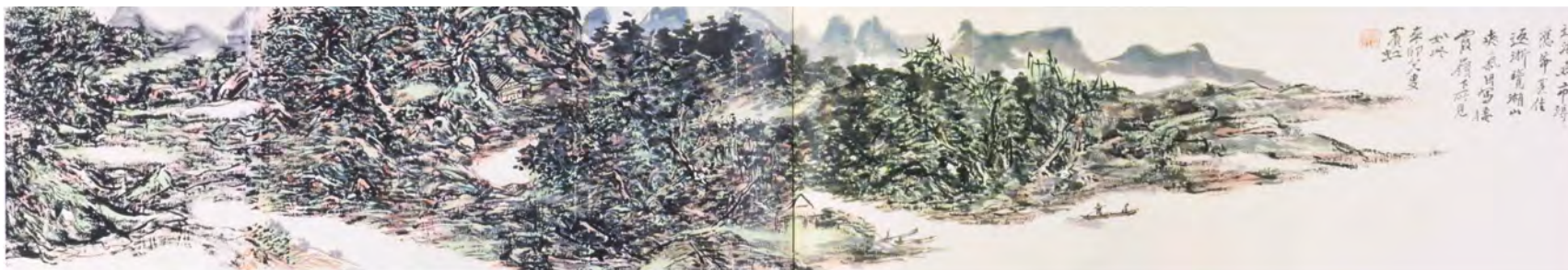
79a)



79b)



80a-1)



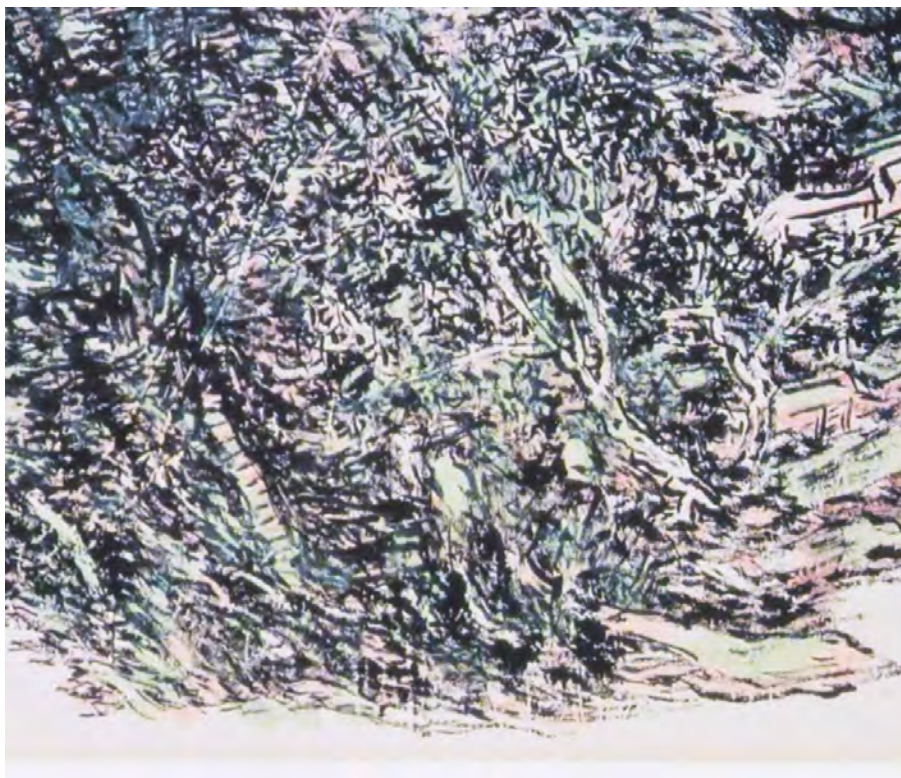
80a-2)



80b)



80c)



81a)



81b)



81c)



82a)



A. Huang Pin-hung, Blue Landscape
(Painted at the age of 89)
Chinese Ink and Colour

82b)



82c)



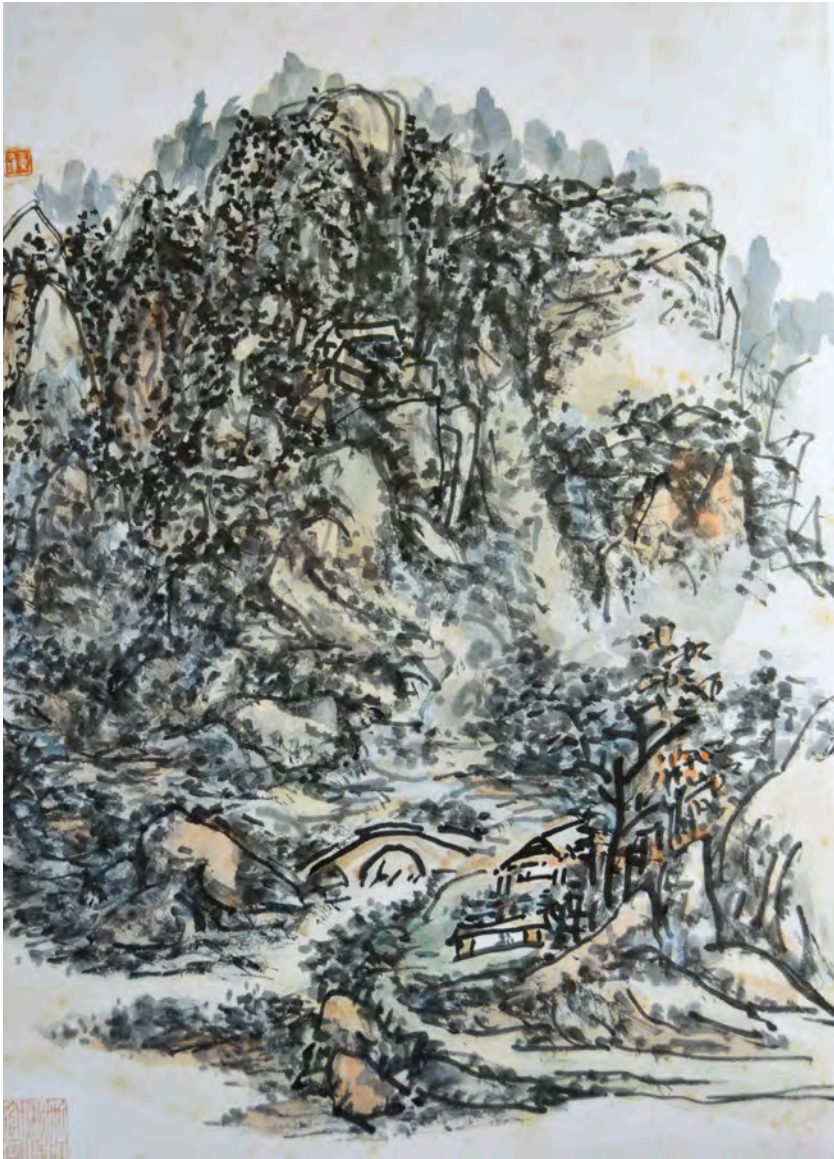
83a)



83b)



83c)



83d)



83e)



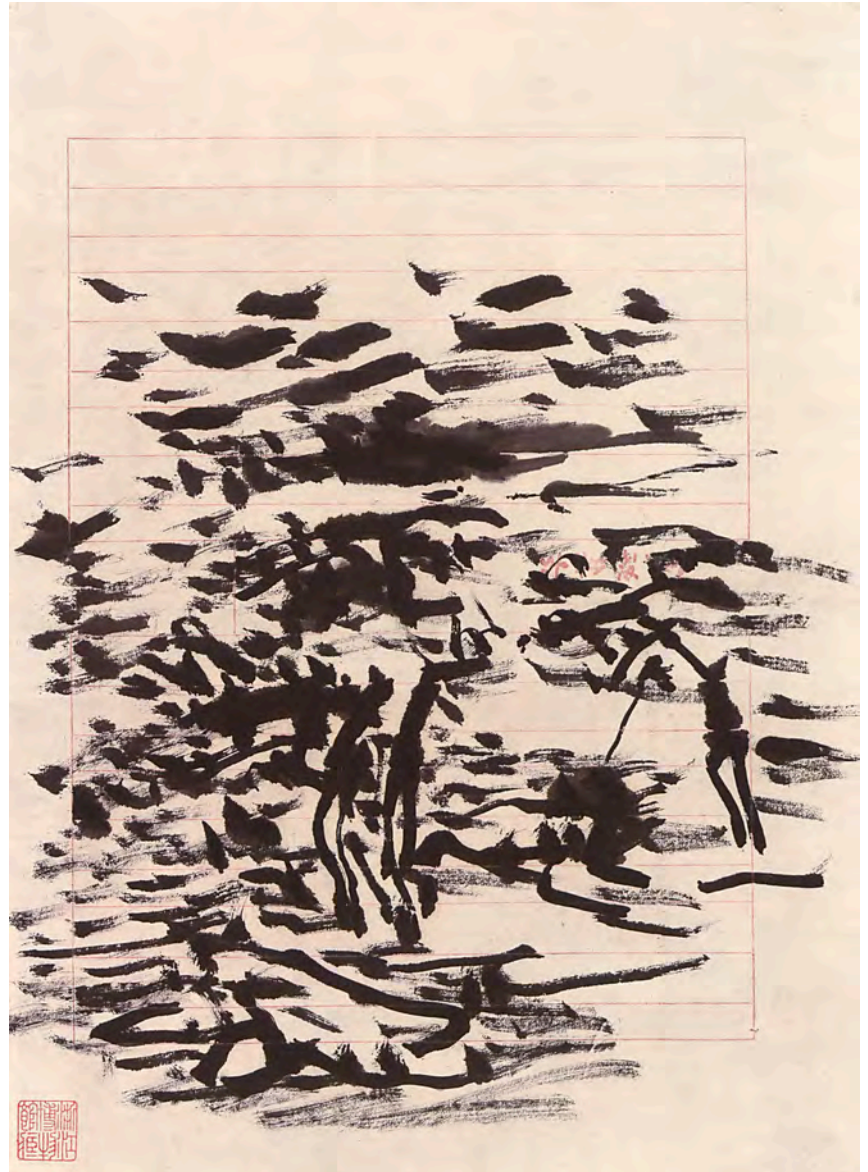
83f)



83g)



83h)



83i)



83j)



85a)



85b)



The University of Chicago
University College

The University of Chicago
University College

寶霞先生有造賜鑒：頃奉
手教並承 賜附來珂羅版血像四張
大著一篇及

尊鑒墨畫十二幅，均收護收志，扣閱之餘，欣謝莫似，銘感之
忱，曷其手極，
高情厚誼，後齒不忘，
先生惠示寶畫多矣。

先生 貴國 畫藝碩彥，領袖稱倫，久所佩服，此次得親觀
尊擬之珂羅版畫之

大作，縱真逼肖，蒼逸超逸，實足為

貴國文人畫之代表傑作，扣閱迴環，益覺神往，敬佩之忱，庶言不
喻，不啻如余，所幸得此机缘，而能得扣閱
大作也。日吹得

大依通亦可向諸因好，茲不同聲讚佩，而於

貴國之畫，更有深切之認識，且益知吾西方畫界，果有借助於
貴國之畫者正多也。

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

尊賜名畫，實為不朽傑作，自當特別愛護，精裝裝冊，可為珍藏，
永留紀念也。又承 賜

大著「畫談」一篇，扣用筆用墨之道，闡發精詳，尤多切到之論，敬佩之。

叔 著余事，一切進行，尚祈順利，現猶立為集材料，籌備撰擬期

中，何時脫稿，一時尚難說定，嗣後幸隨時函臨 指示切望，不宣
賜教也。又前蒙

可先購擬美術畫卷一節，早已遵 命函購，該書以之到美，現正在研習中，

此書收四紙，半皆，材料精詳，極便參考，實於讀者有極切之助益，鄙人
飲水思源，實不得不深謝
先生教命之厚意也。

關於徽筆名畫真蹟血像事，現仍在進行中，俟將來出版後，定將
用圓畫四相若干幅，現時尚未解決，承

示尊厚厚現可名蹟甚多，將來擬視為之 厚意，極為感謝，鄙人現暫
時擬定之圓畫血像尺寸為長七寸，寬四寸，俟此事稍待出版者請後，
既可作前報之確定，一俟稍可頭緒，當即專函奉 函一切並請
指示也。

先生北行，此次何似，至為企念，俟中得暇，尚祈時賜
南針，藉匡不逮也。致以奉白，並鳴謝悃，希經表長，不宣。一、流燒

撥稿

為人美國芝加哥大學 德曼斯 致由 十二月十八日
中國畫藝教授 L.C. DUNN

87a)



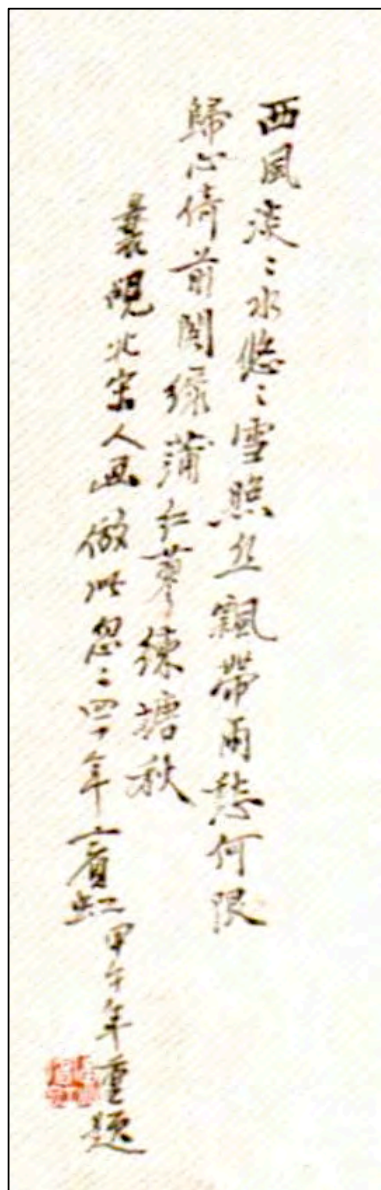
87b)



87c)



87d)



87e)



87f)



87g)



87h)



87i)



87j)



87k)



87l)



87m)



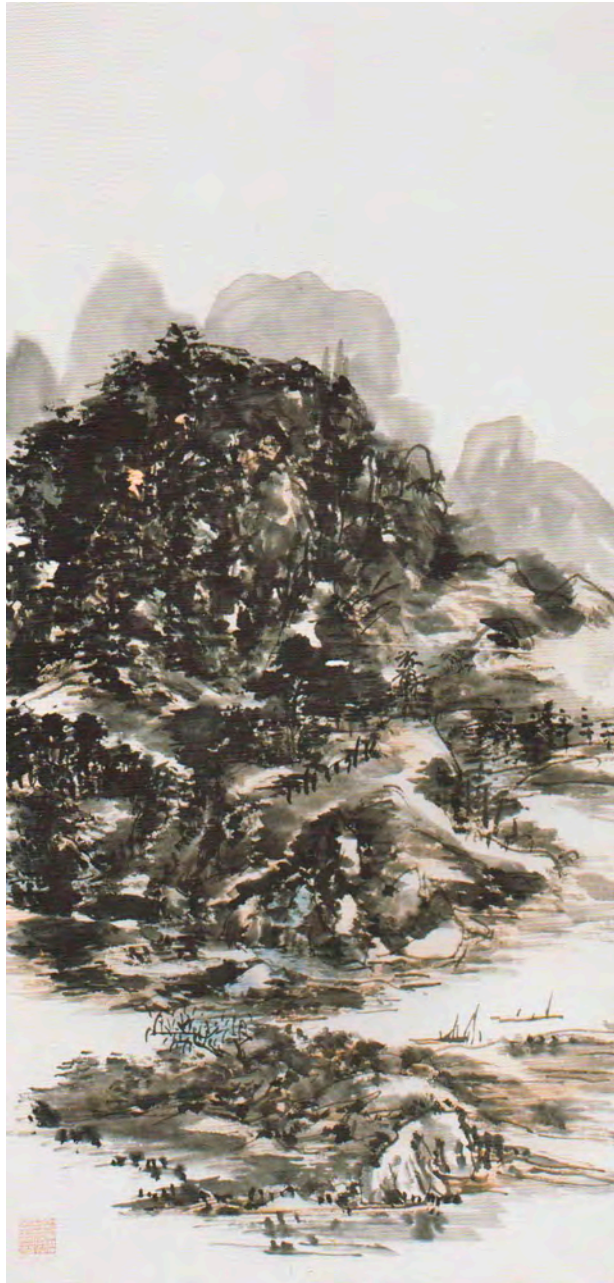
87n)



87o)



88a)



88b)



88c)



88d)



88e)



88f)



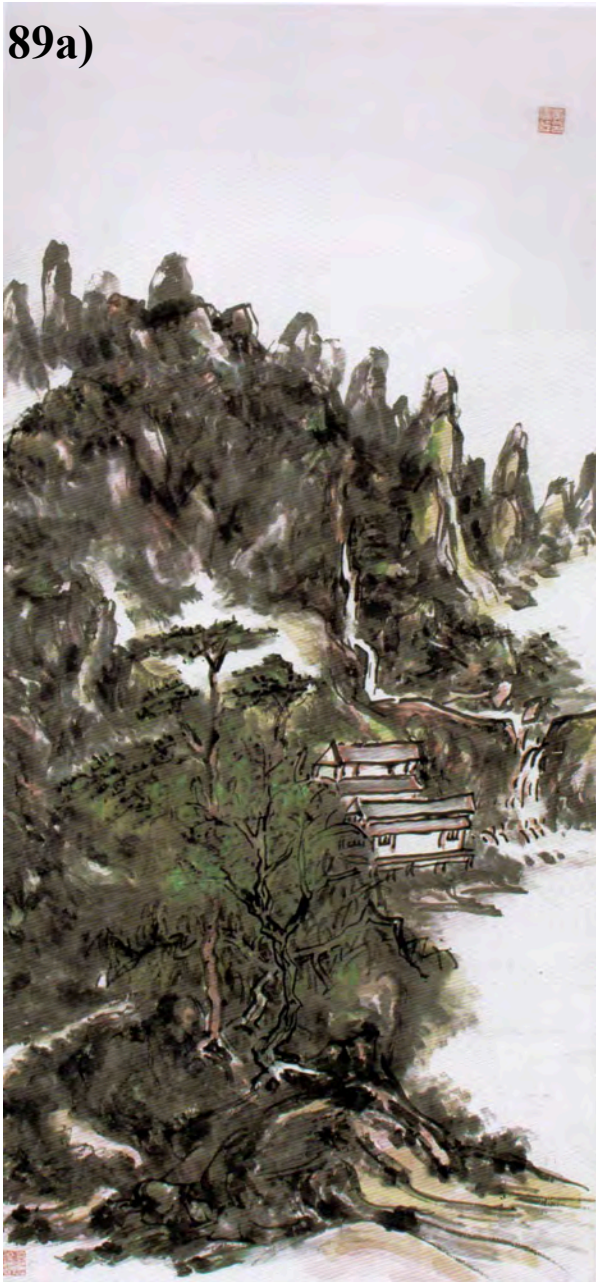
88g)



88h)



89a)



89b)



89c)



89d)



89e)



90a)



90b)



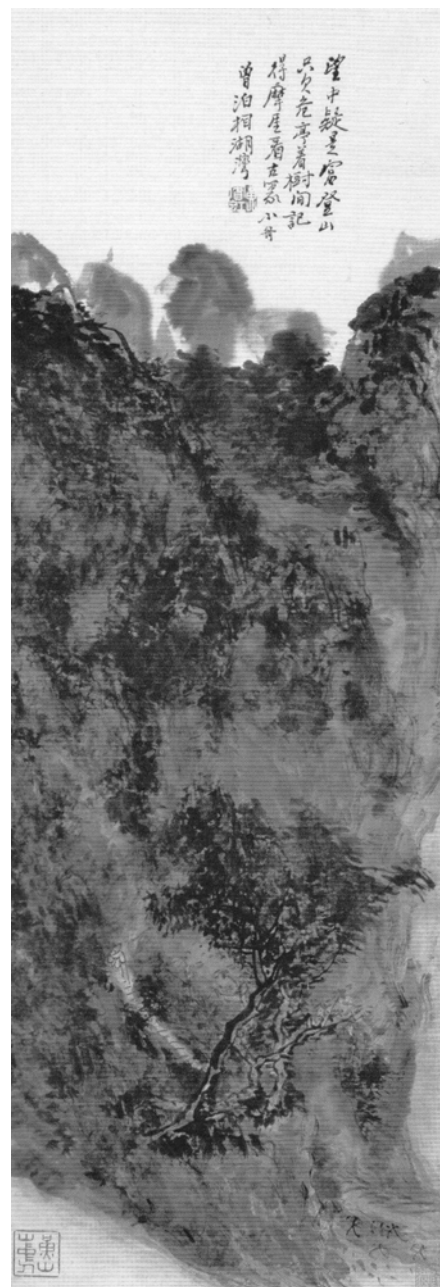
90c-1-2)



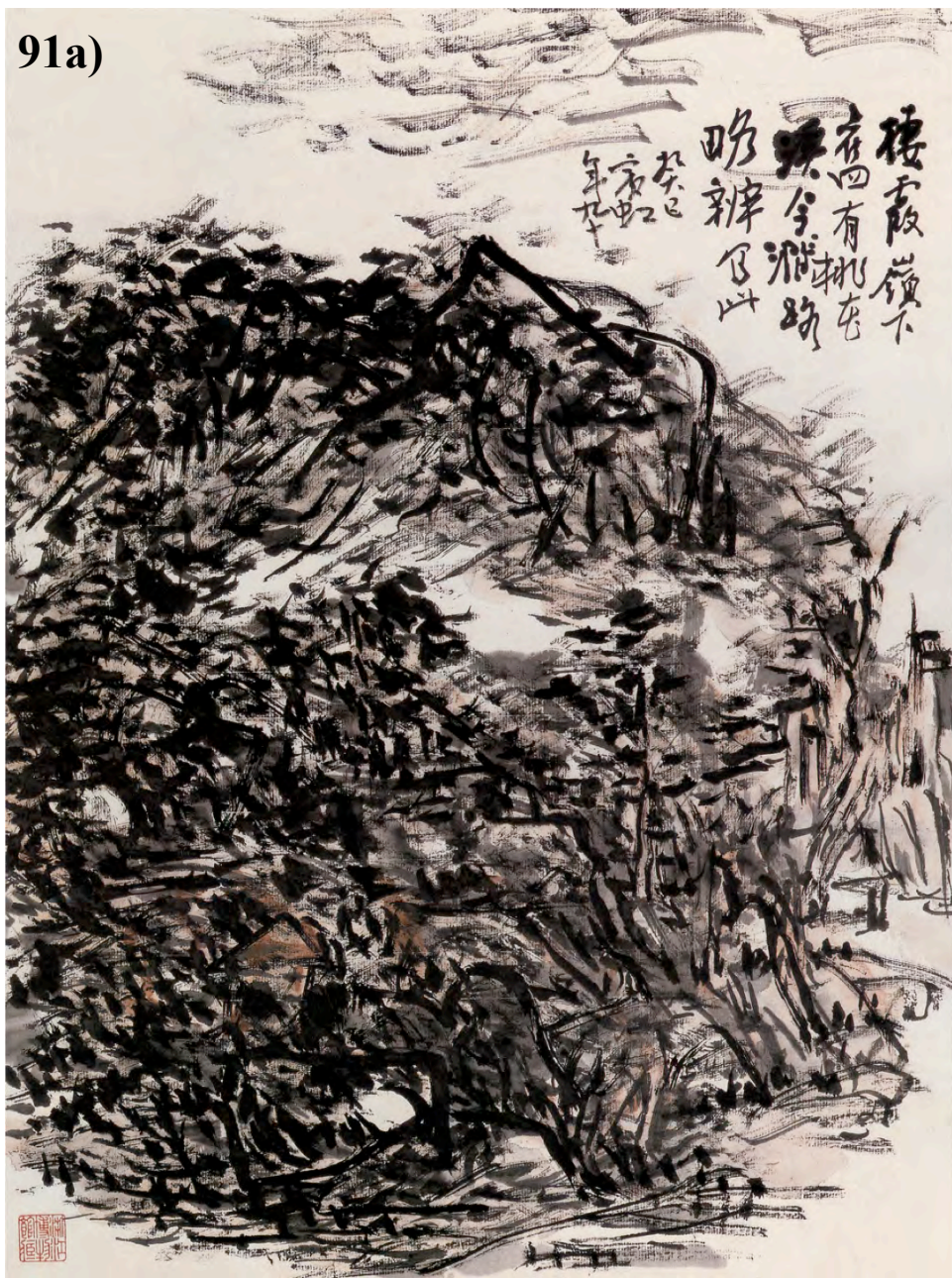
90d-1-2)



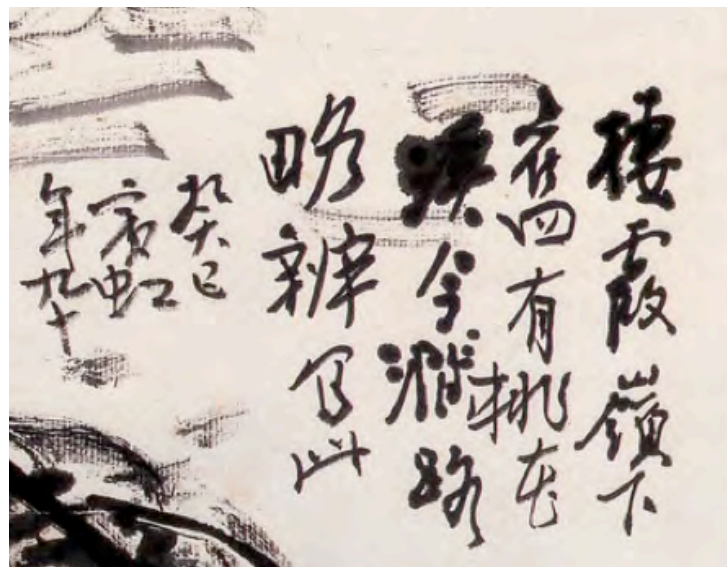
90e-1-2)



91a)



91b)



91c)



91d)



唐吳道子
有筆無墨
其指無玉
月初依芳
野狐得
大筆自謂
萬出
其上
以此
卷已
年

92a)



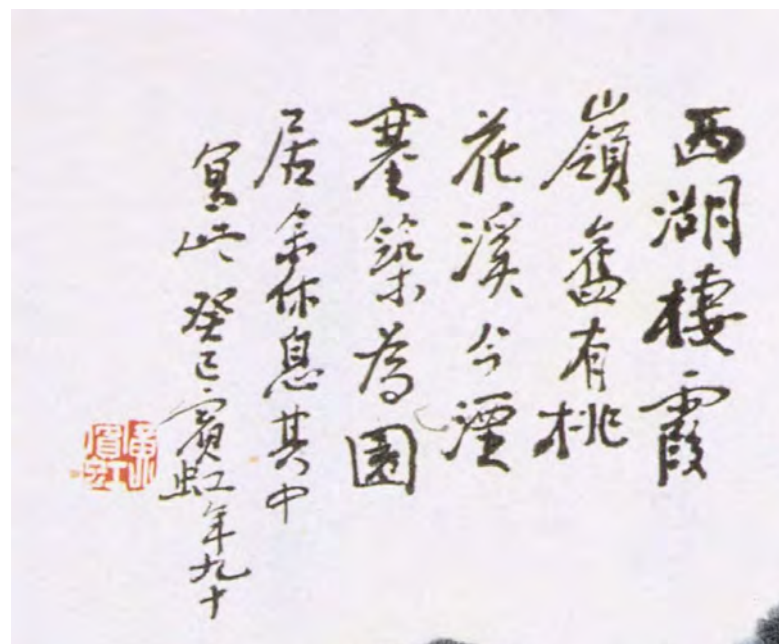
92b)



93a)



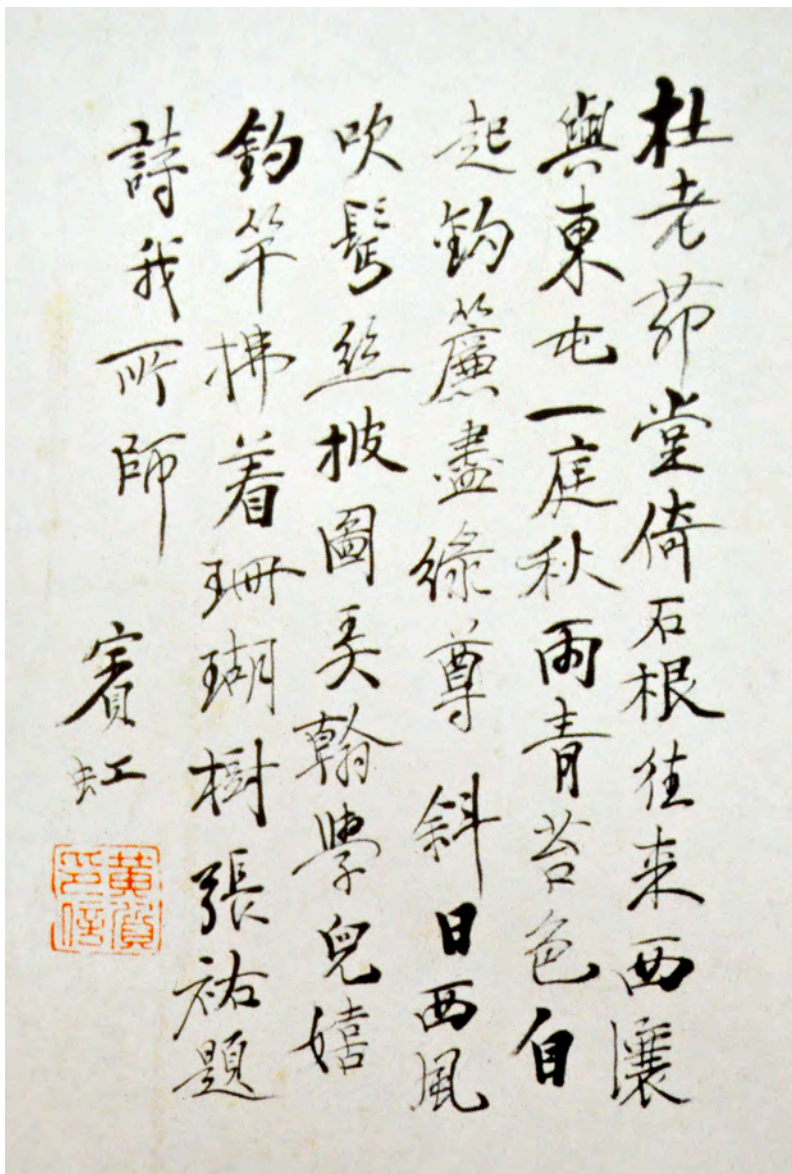
93b)



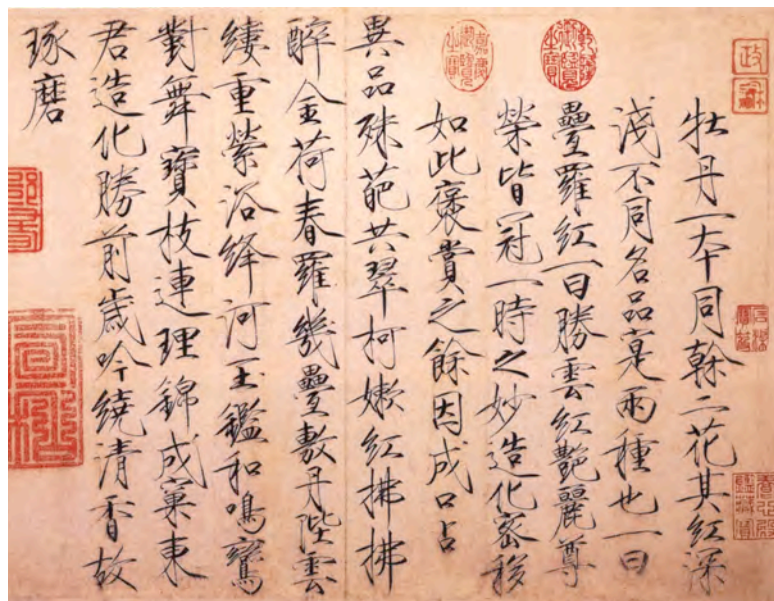
93c)



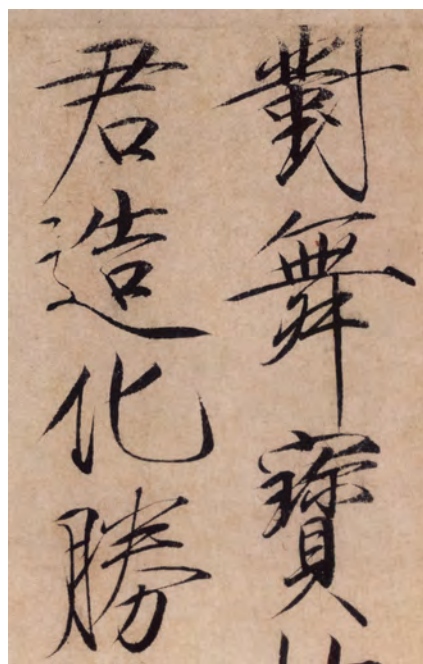
94a)



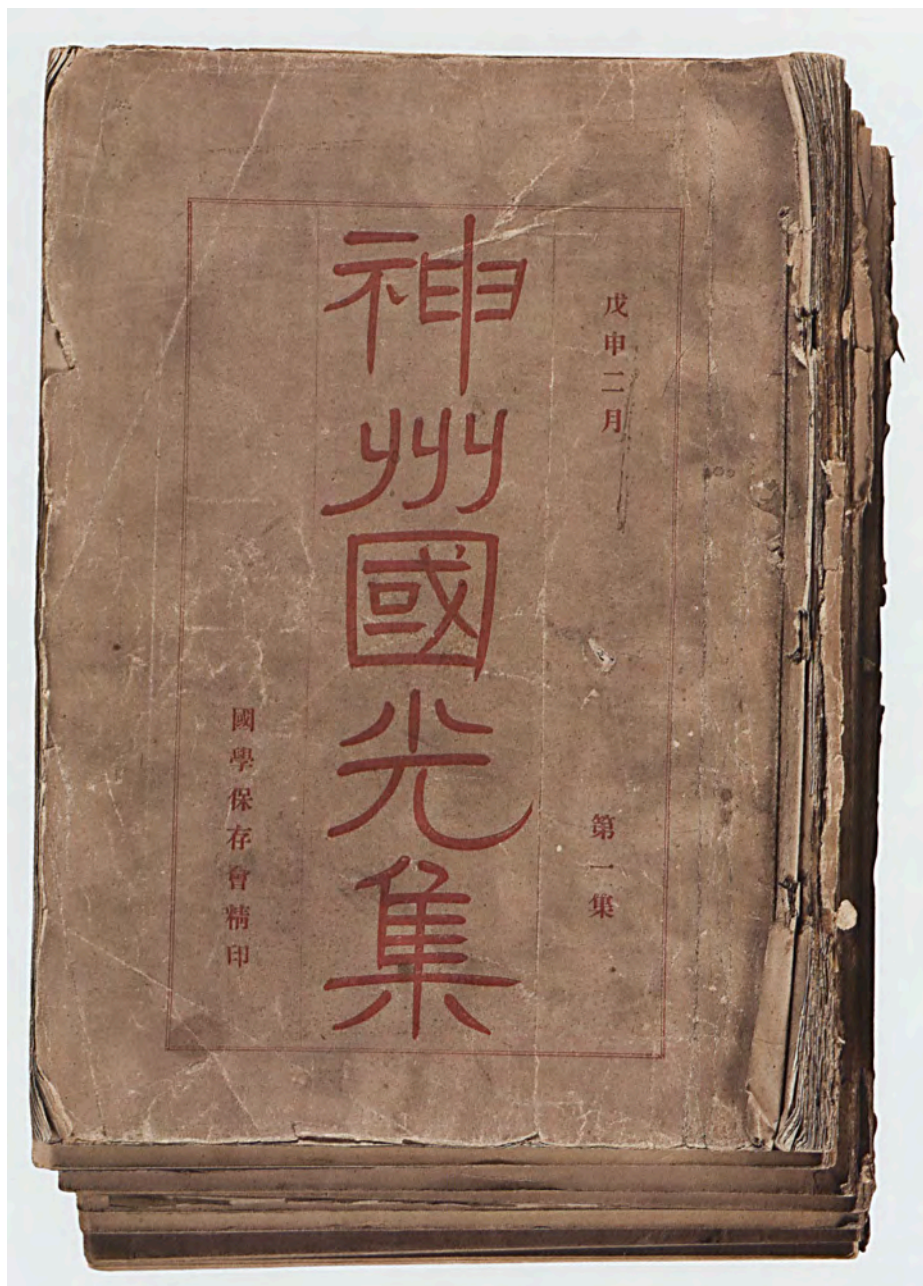
94b)



94c)



95a)



蘇脩春秋嚴氏經
通高弟事親至孝
能奉先聖以禮為
宗所歸 孔蘇碑

皇統統華肯承天畫
卦顏育空宗孔誕元孝
俱祖徽官大一所授前
闡九頭以升言教後
孝百王獲麟來吐制
不空佐承天之語乾

元以來三九之載八皇
三代至孔乃脩 晉修碑
雅歌吹笙孝以六律八
音克諧絳耶反正奉爵
稱壽相樂終曰於穆肅
靡上下蒙福長享利
貞與天無極 之義所碑
於豈捐玉瑞班宗肅鈞衡

石度量耕耨祀於無文
順天時以布化既乃緝
熙聖緒昭顯上帝退
考五代以禮脩百王
之事因魯史而冊春
秋就大師而正雅頌

孔義碑
祗傳五教尊取貝眷

老躬思恕凱及人兼
禹湯之暈已田暖喜
子荒圃商旅交步險
路會鹿鳴於樂苑復

長幼於酬 孔富碑
五月二羊 富世碑
六月四日成 富世碑

於豈造立禮器樂之音
符鍾磬瑟鼓雷洗角觥
爵唐祖桓遠極禁壹

禮器碑
聖極斐緯無文不綜
賢孝之性相生於心易

世載德不隕其名及其
從政清凝夷齊直慕
史魚紀綱萬里未紫
不認出典諸郡彈枉
約邪貪暴決心同儻

服德遠近憚威興師征
討有爽臆之仁分醜之
惠攻城盟戰謀若浦
泉威平諸貢還陸振

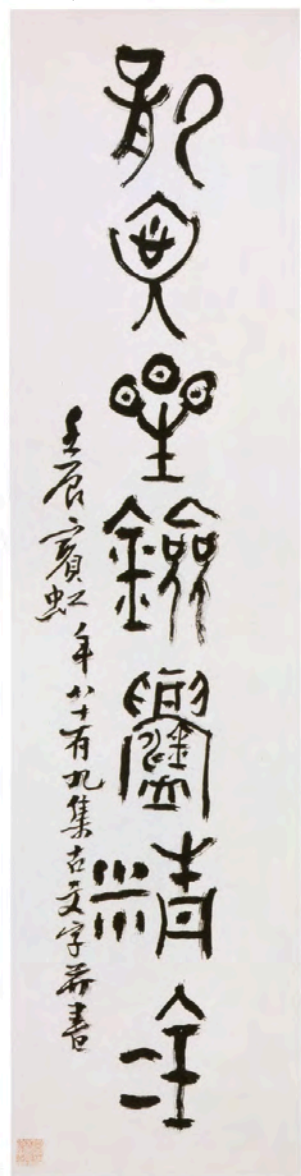
旅諸國禮遺且二百萬
志以導官恤民之要李
慰高年撫青解宣惠
政之流甚於買部百姓
解負反者如雲 曹嘉慶碑
篇藉靡遺為淵
為林 孔文禮碑

穆穆我君乃聖也胃
厚懿允元叡其育秀
惟懋降精誕生忠良
奉應郡邑亮保我

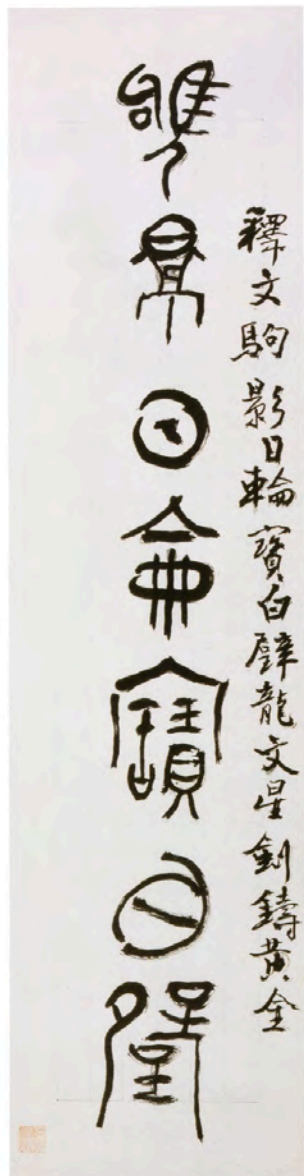
孔亮元碑

昔在仲尼汁先以儲大帝所
挺顏母疏靈自衛反惠昌
廷子獲麟歸作端門見激血
書著紀黃主讓應主為漢制
道當可行乃脩春秋獲漢季
經冊定六藝象與天談鈞

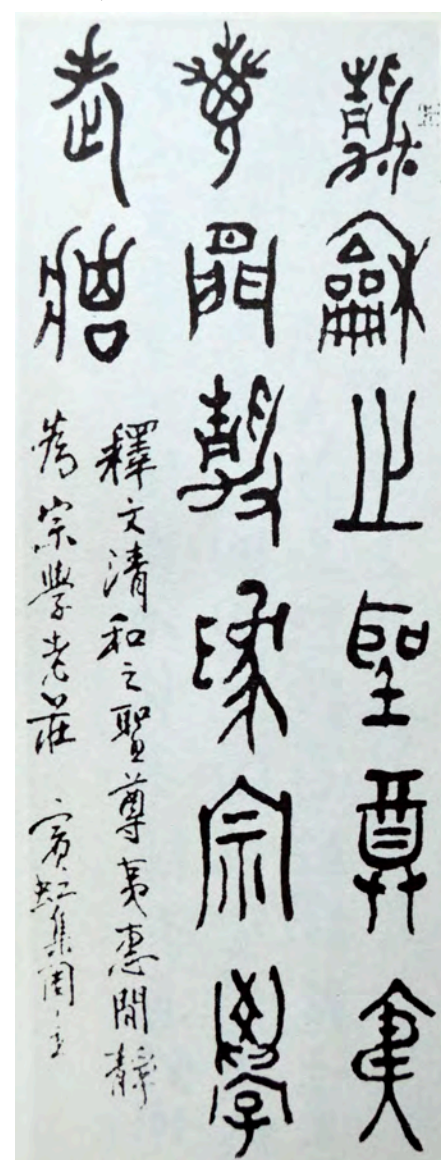
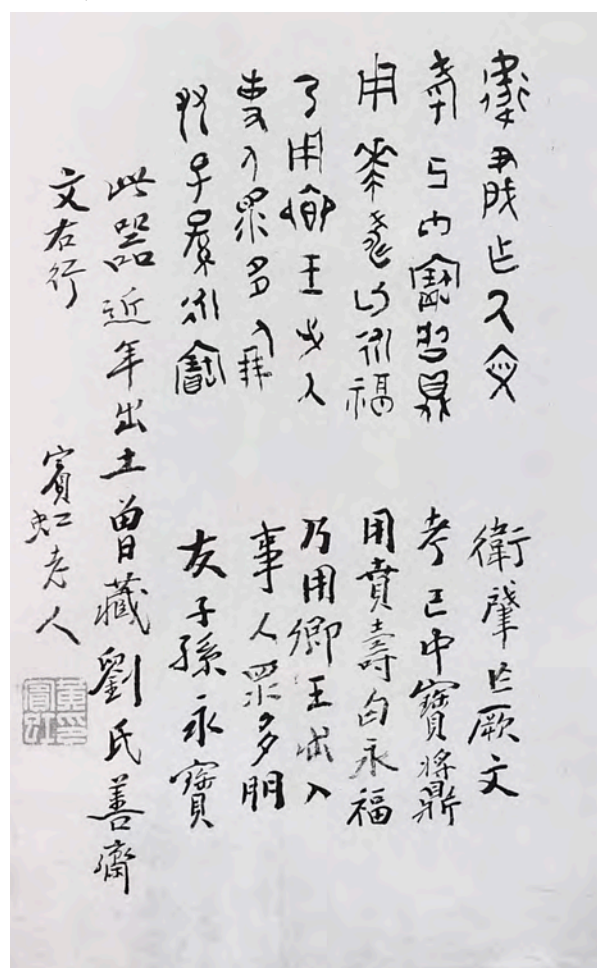
95c)



95d)



95e)



96a)

歸歟歲車動北原之策
 備家似岸湖水大木下
 流者如名極橋不用策
 家時燕之入越陳璽之
 新
 年
 三石之八
 年
 第
 九
 信



96b-1)

坡公詩
秋後煙光
山後城隈
煙雲好
多山子及
取香
物中未到
閒
竹外飛
三
支
枝




96b-2)

春江水暖鴨先知
竹外桃花三兩枝
春風不識人面意
吹落紅花隨處飛
好棧野在屯
年山寺歸
好棧野在屯

96c)

草筆峰共玉削成飛泉珠通作碧鳴
 雲芝六月不知暑盤過松陰不繞行
 鱗之低感浪紋隱脈之橫拖山豎青直上坡坑
 開佇之迤樓倚霞看茅亭
 以念歷翠活重身解駁晴定吐紫螺行逐石
 斜苔藓潤成米糲於兩徑過
 竹樹蕭疎水一窳鍊丹人去散鶴散畫長日午
 閒雜大谷口成村三兩家
 黃山雜詠
 士青先生大雅教正
 壬辰夏月年十九歲




96d)


還實於心一變唐
 代刺刺如拟其意

96e-
1-2)

薄遊各在倦
無事出
井魚
法理
去
英
修
然
其
聲
二
辭
深
一
刻
聊
免
信
千
載
許
回
心
維
道
蘇
蘇
門
校
終
之
寫
書
音



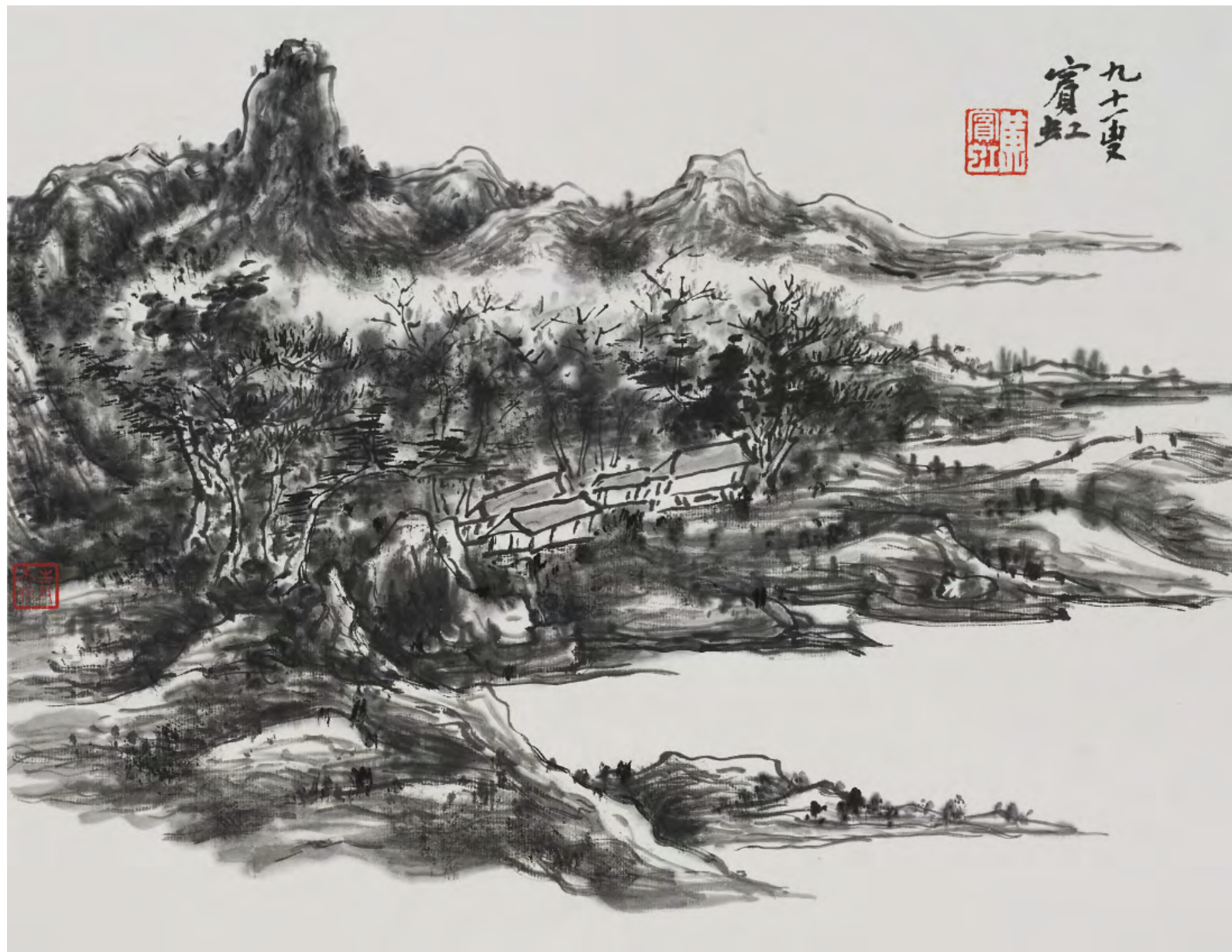
分襟
為
北
去
贈
子
綈
刀
宜
是
月
重
別
孤
臺
何
所
期
疏
年
多
起
翁
都
是
編
旌
旌
我
輩
班
老
事
祁
連
程
執
碑



96f)

杜雅馬出部見曰疾漢書魏无
化及似目精錄一清絲
谷斤前正謬付之排可也
友好尤感起再托上
拙作夏禹文物證以字體
之形攷其聲讀殿首辨
後異同在考理中云力也
存自笑天也劣冒深云云

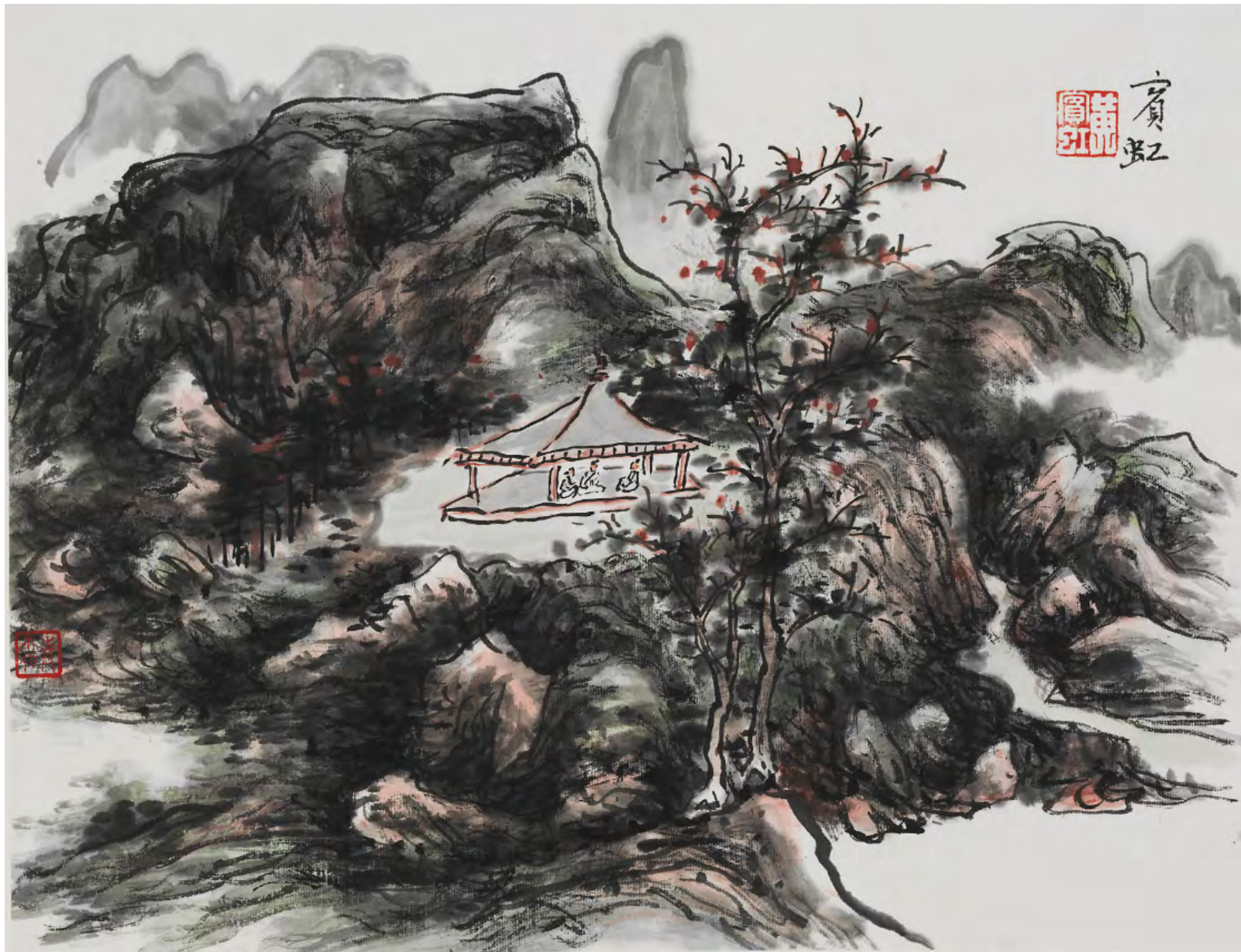
97a)



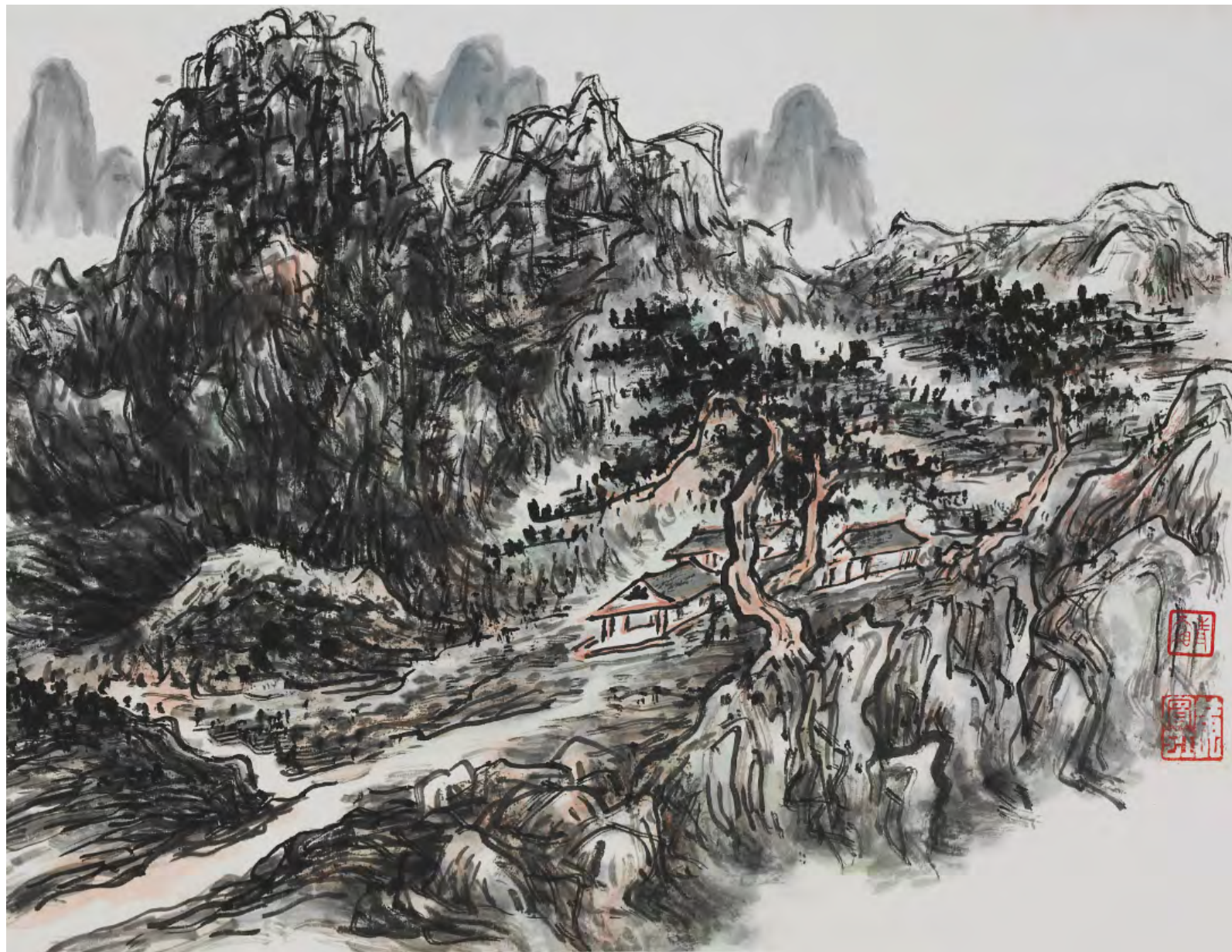
97b)



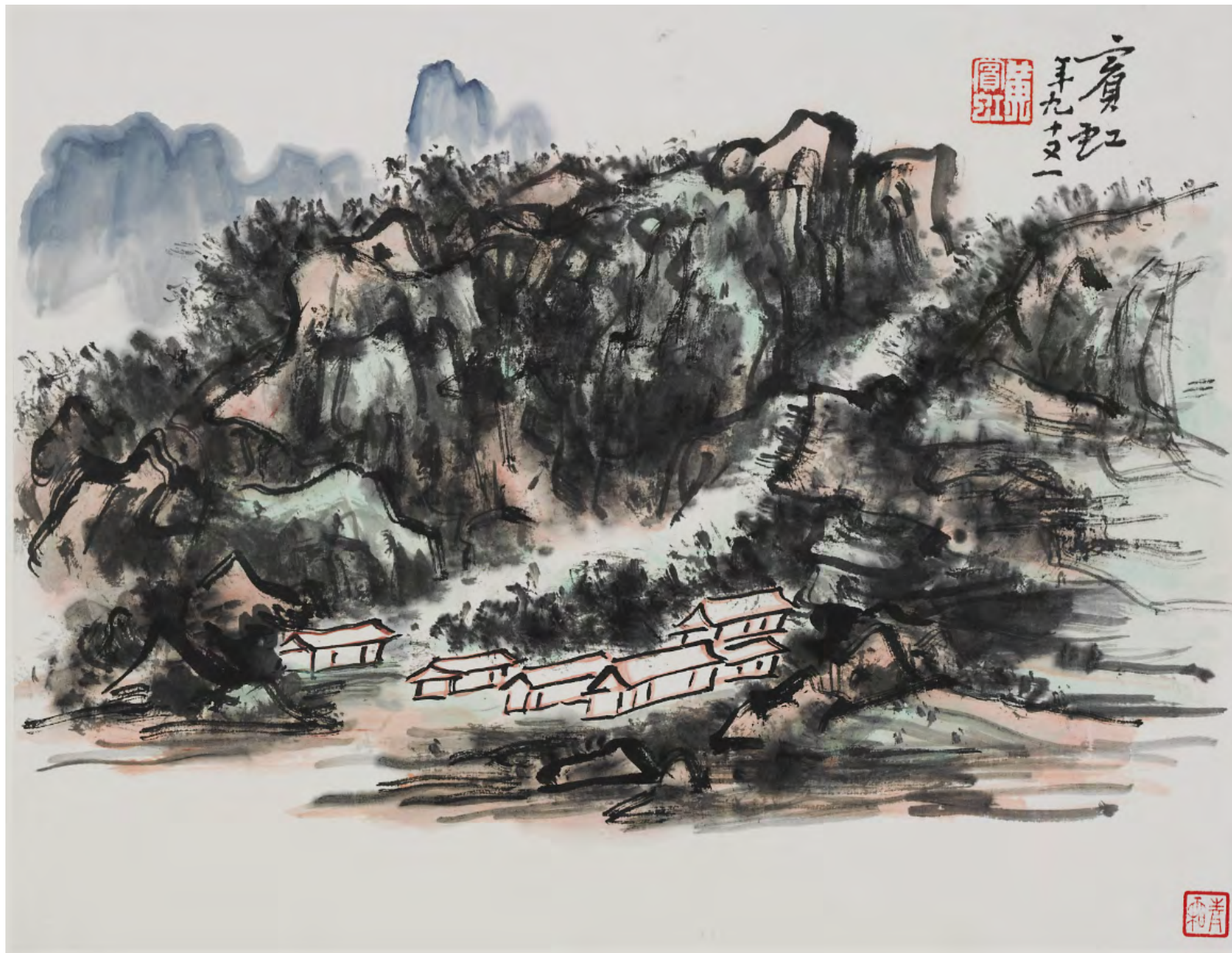
97c)



97d)



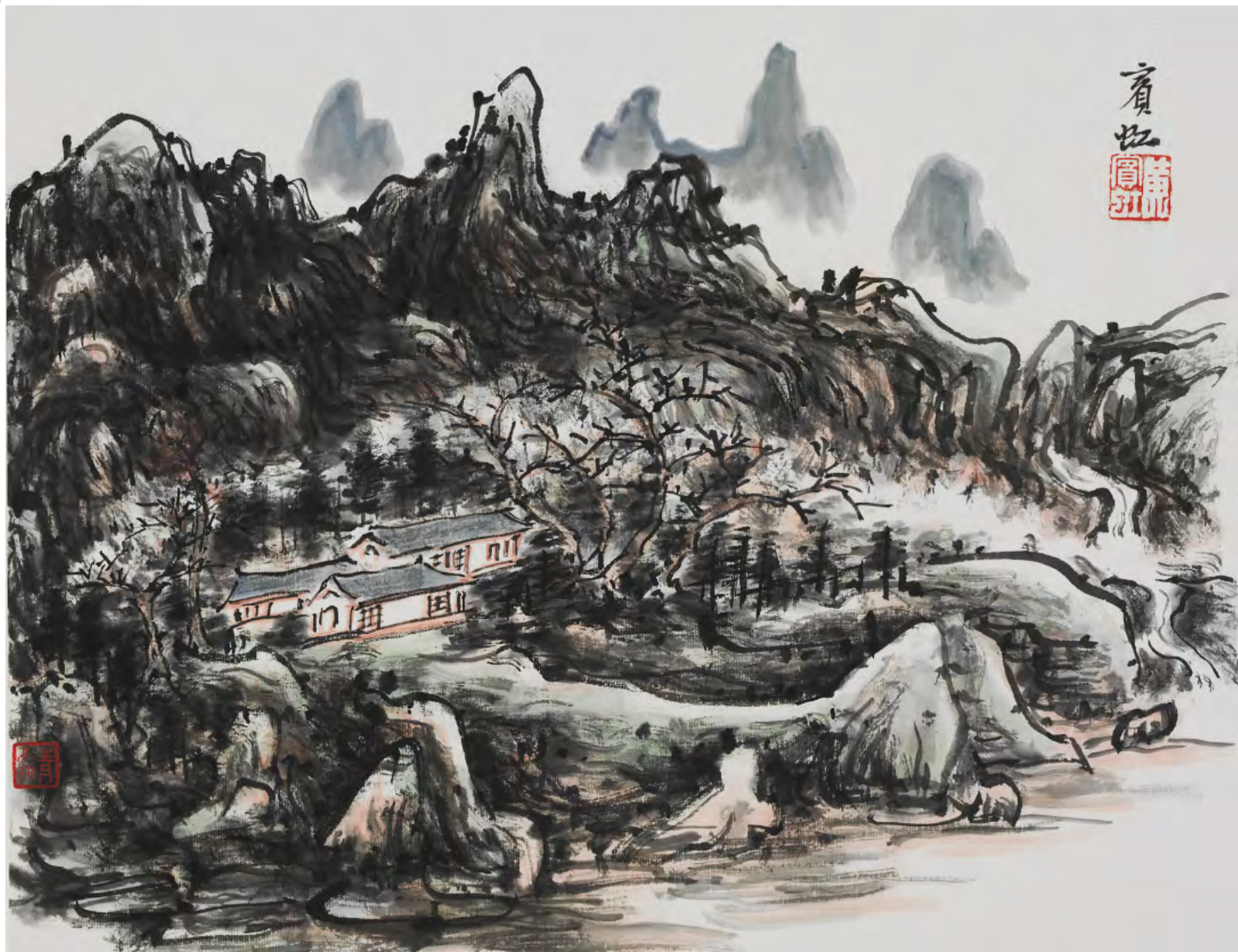
97e)



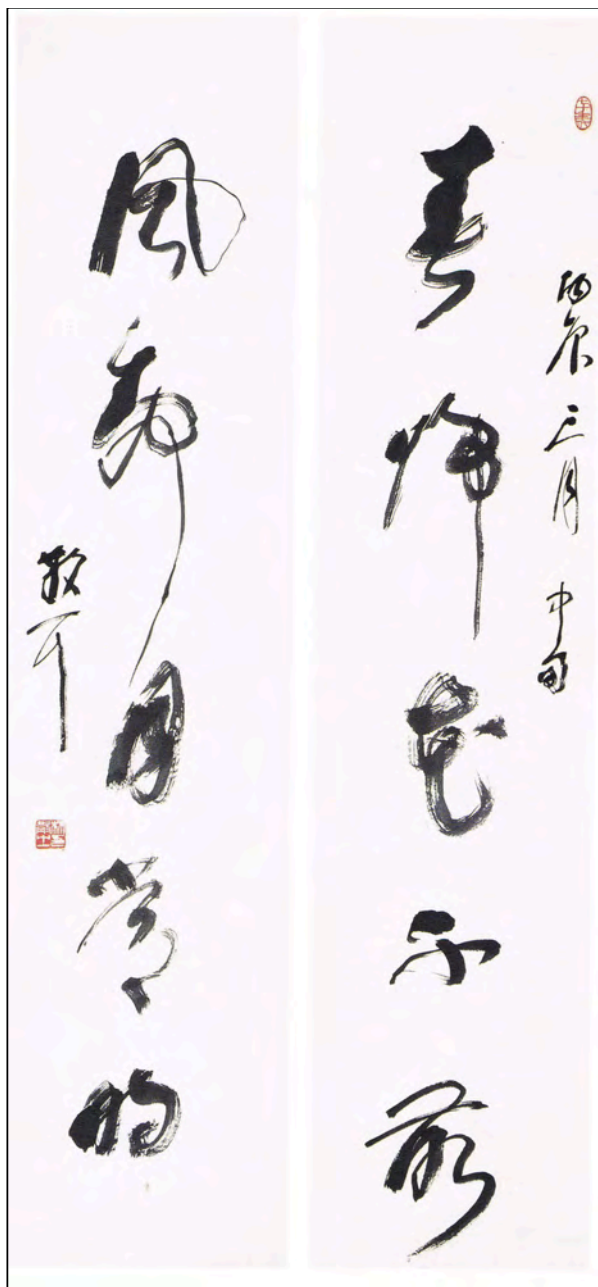
97f)



97g)



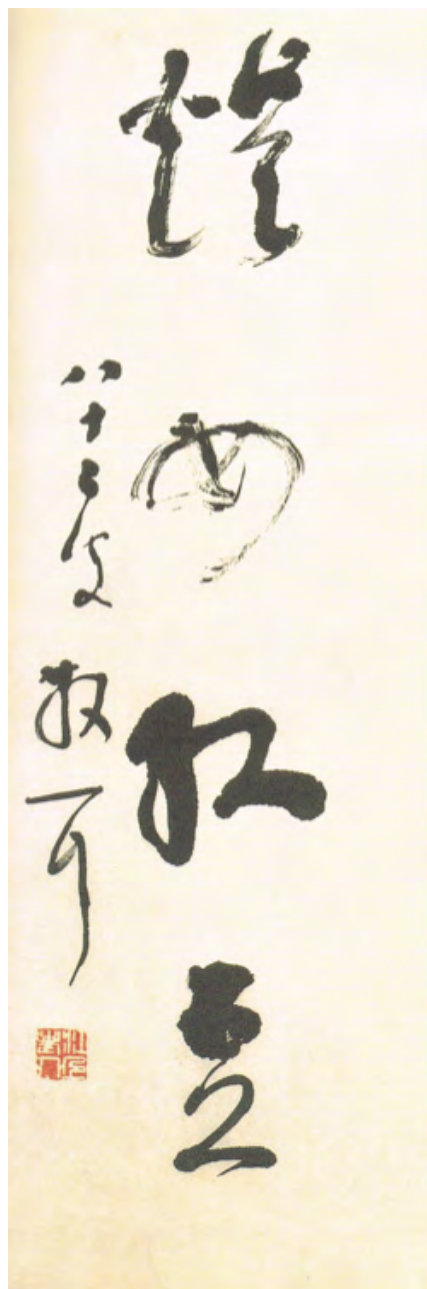
98a)



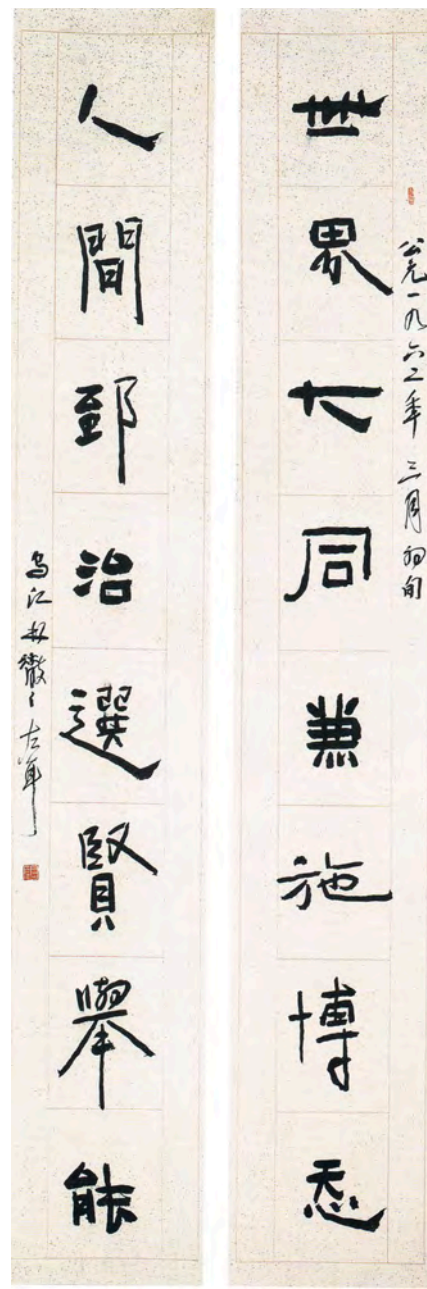
98b)



98c)



98d)



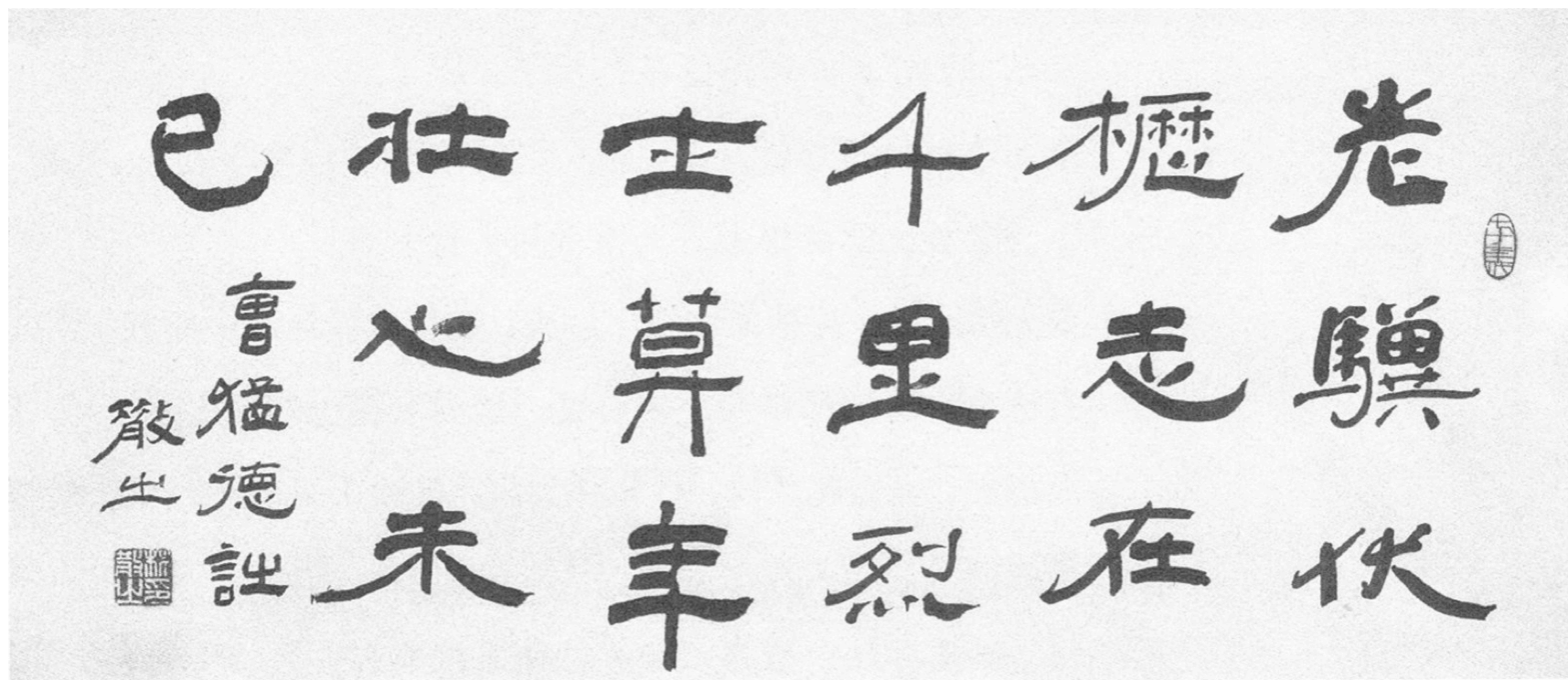
98e)

梁斷絕子
平復上楮

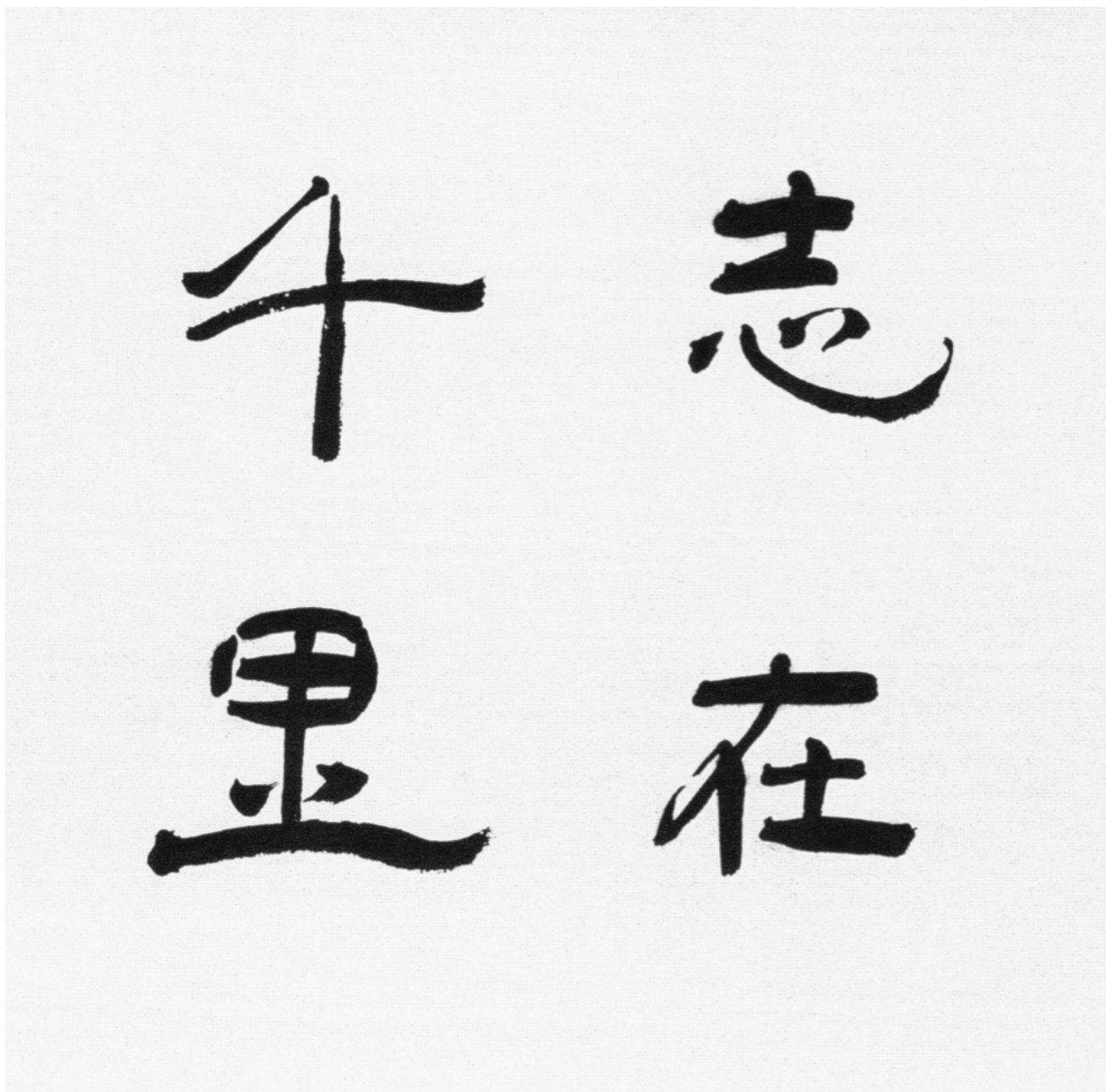
98f)

稽首言魯
司空臣弋
司徒臣雒

98g)



98h)



99a)



99b)



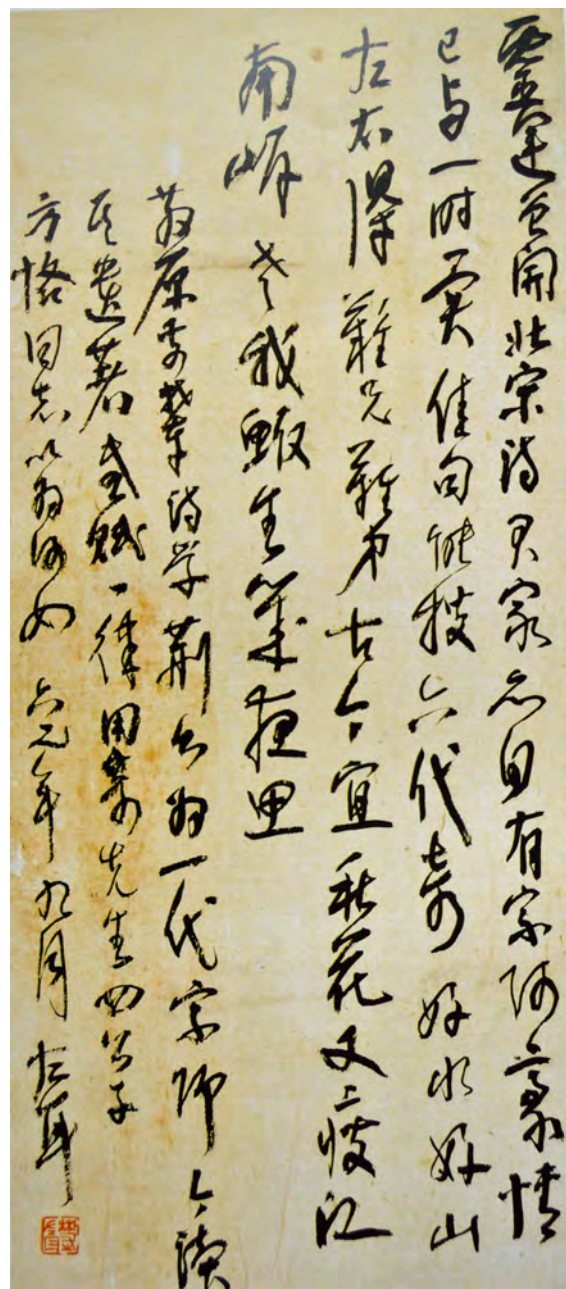
99c)



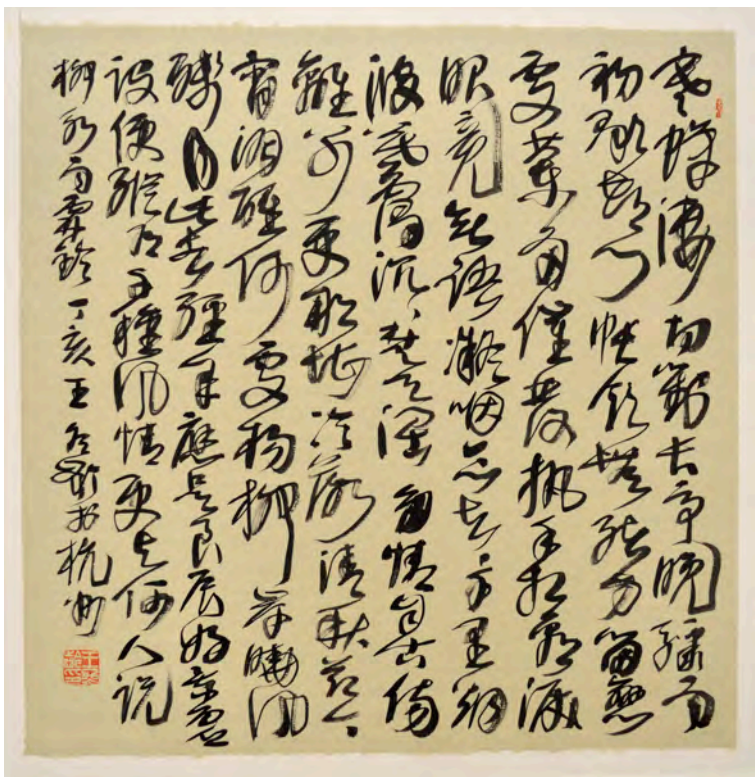
99e)



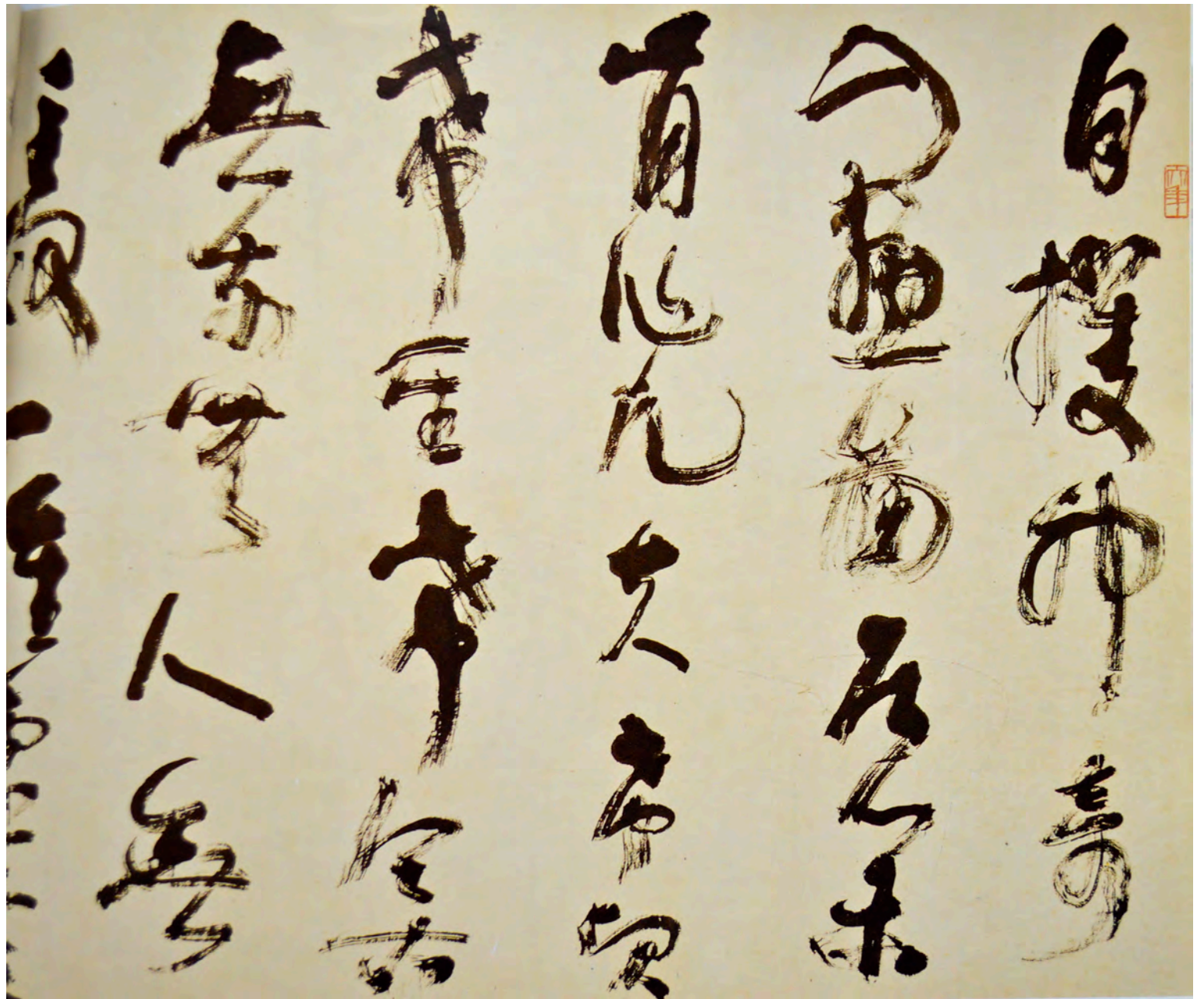
100a)



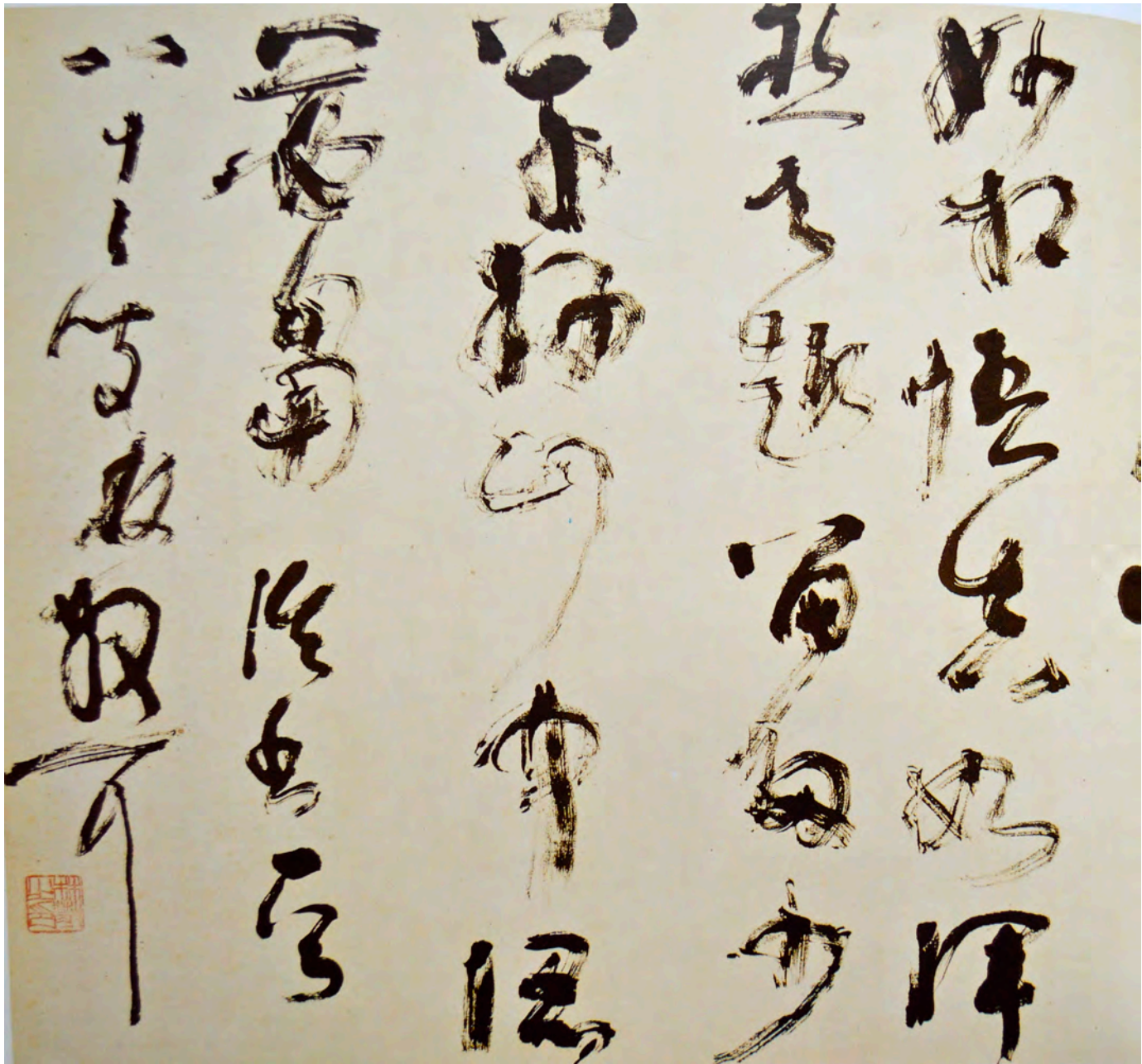
99f)



100b-1)



100b-2)



宣和初夫子大人座右書簡在

牙支函并遊詩草一冊均

未蒙覆及不獲懸懷念未

審近來

起居服食何如久不聞音

向甚念及知也自今秋取

由湘赴真粵轉南嶺一觀

衡山桂林四經浮武夷入天台

惟過諸孫以信可稍留

不能如願擬日杪改作美

100c-2)

山不狂也信到于身祈
 肝作曾以盈六培位小
 春之志素此致法
 秋安
 林
 竹世央弟均此问安

100d-1)

寅也夫子大人座右二年奉事寸草
 奉向罪思：秋间午完自抗得白
 间 正师乘机由子返抗校课
 蕪香师送已东易侍忙课恭完
 福腹安志康强如五十许人每与子
 完海画厯数十时之已每日必卷未
 尝间防以半五岁老人狂如以勤
 学之息在古人与黄子久在田翁诚
 不多谦实神仙人也并蒙巨赐
 子完 结婚函帛立轴及友人可子近信

米山一紙于道卷则全用积于後是也
物出海为年元之收则国策中降于元
序初法集樸人眉宇为

吾师之身得之收其子近连日好读
不思释手而于道尤多傲也 癸卯年

来者中托人子未敢後信以汝用力
之余日见汝復以视

吾师提汗笔极准擬的甚微道

来款恭叩

江上草堂

崇安今年秋光已去其来甚早御

向芝亦为赠谨将土產棉花和衣成

被絮一床由午完 親自带来用也

吾师及师母二位大人御示定之物教

祈安袖袖御近日竟空日累渐振

復戰时状态大雅方本不堪之念生

餘性易由午完回矣幸正之不其正其者

来肃法

文之安

白子子 拜敬之叩 癸卯年十月七日

外甥南亭小福 昨有餘典物及卷为荷

100g)

子休今
 年學
 禮一
 出村
 得富山
 則句
 屋堂
 乃也自
 則因
 不不識
 重一
 存
 壬午九月
 有子
 有子



山光照檻水繞廊
 弄雲歸詠春風香好鳥枝頭亦朋友
 落花向皆文章
 送宛莫遠韶光
 老人生惟有讀書好
 讀書之樂何如
 綠滿窗前草不除
 新竹屢簷弄
 四圍小齋無
 暇明朱曦
 畫夜吟
 為樹
 夜深爐落螢
 入幃北窓高
 臥羲皇
 侶只因素
 檢讀書趣
 讀書之樂無窮
 按琴一曲
 來筆風
 昨庭前
 葉有聲
 籬豆花開
 蟋蟀鳴不覺
 商意滿
 林薄
 蕭然萬籟
 涵虛清
 近床
 賴有短檠
 在越此
 讀書功
 更倍
 讀書之樂陶
 起弄明月
 霜天高
 木落水盡
 千崖枯
 迥然
 吾亦見
 真吾坐對
 弄編燈
 動屋高
 歌夜半
 雪壓
 廬地
 煙京泉
 然活火
 一清足
 稱讀書
 者讀
 書之樂
 何處
 尋數
 點梅花
 天地心

100h)



100i)



100j)



100k)



100l)

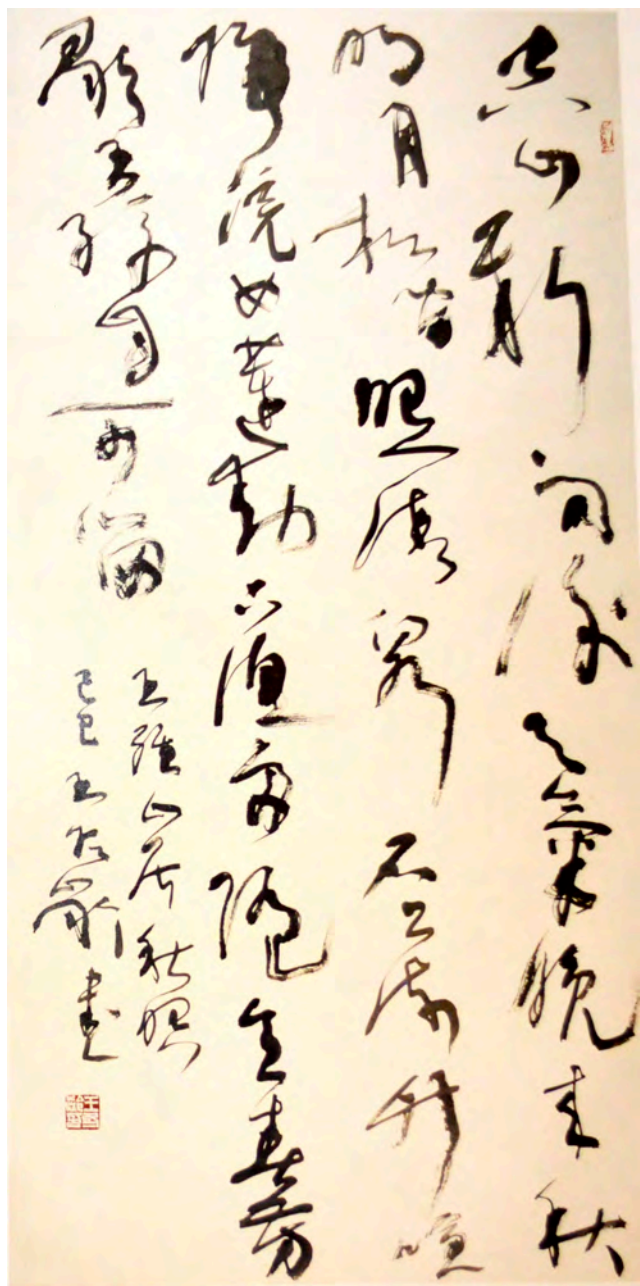
別夢依稀逝川故園三十二
 年前紅旗捲起農奴戟黑手高
 懸霸王鞭為有犧牲多壯志敢
 教日月換新天喜看稻菽千重
 浪遍地英雄下夕煙

毛主席詩到韶山
 冬 啟

100m)

惟永壽呵二率
 青龍在涓歎
 霜月之靈皇

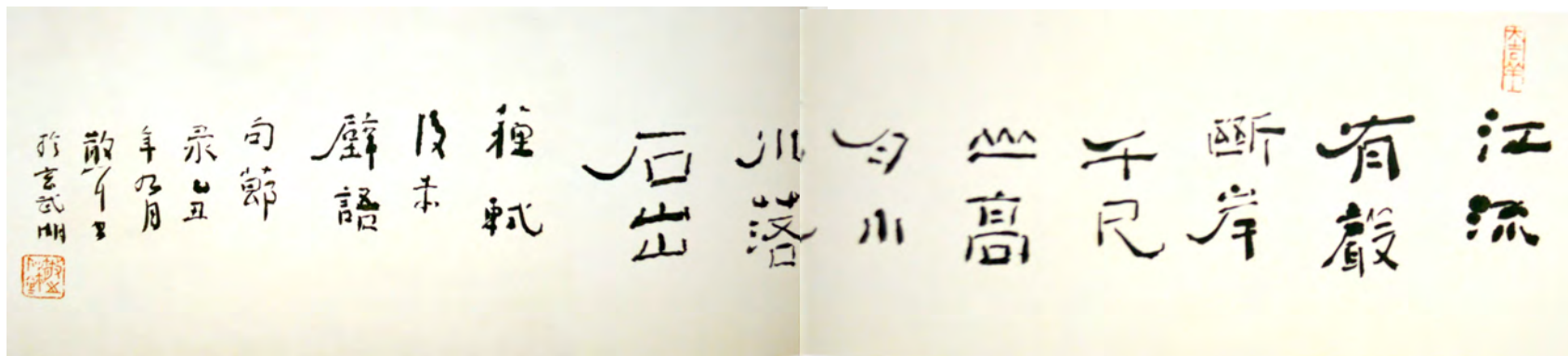
100n)



100o)



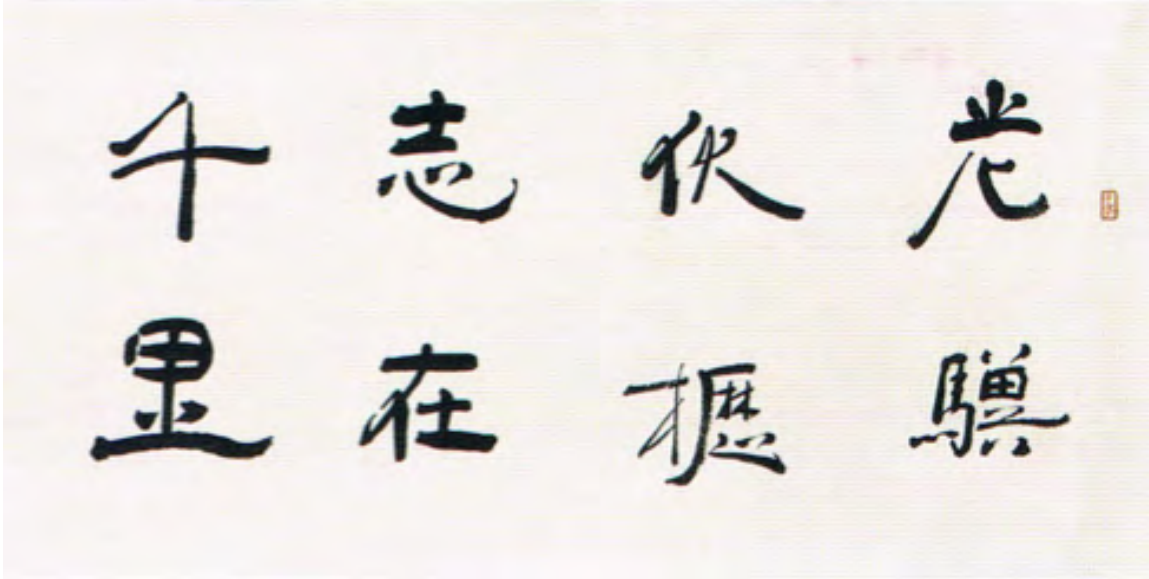
100p)



100q)



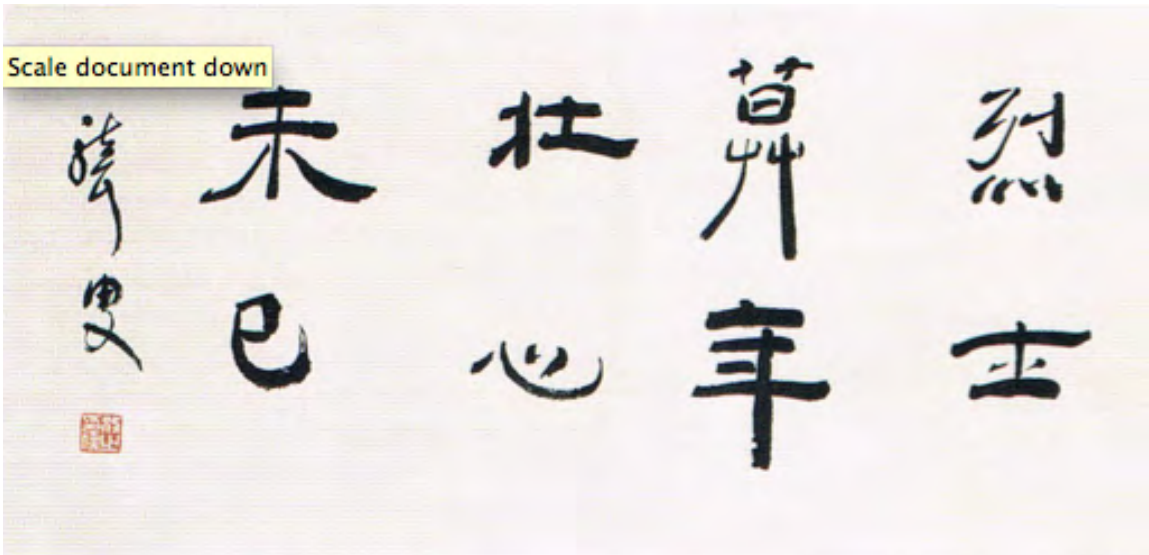
100r-1)



100s)



100r-2)



100t)



101a)



101b)



102a)



102b)



102c)




103a)




104a-1)

携笈穿女不雅道
 莫山一上望年来前卷
 如卷在庶在律临
 年变疏徊以日好风
 和日晚 菊望向余开
 人间天上 技能同入喜
 卷 三十六峰仍早

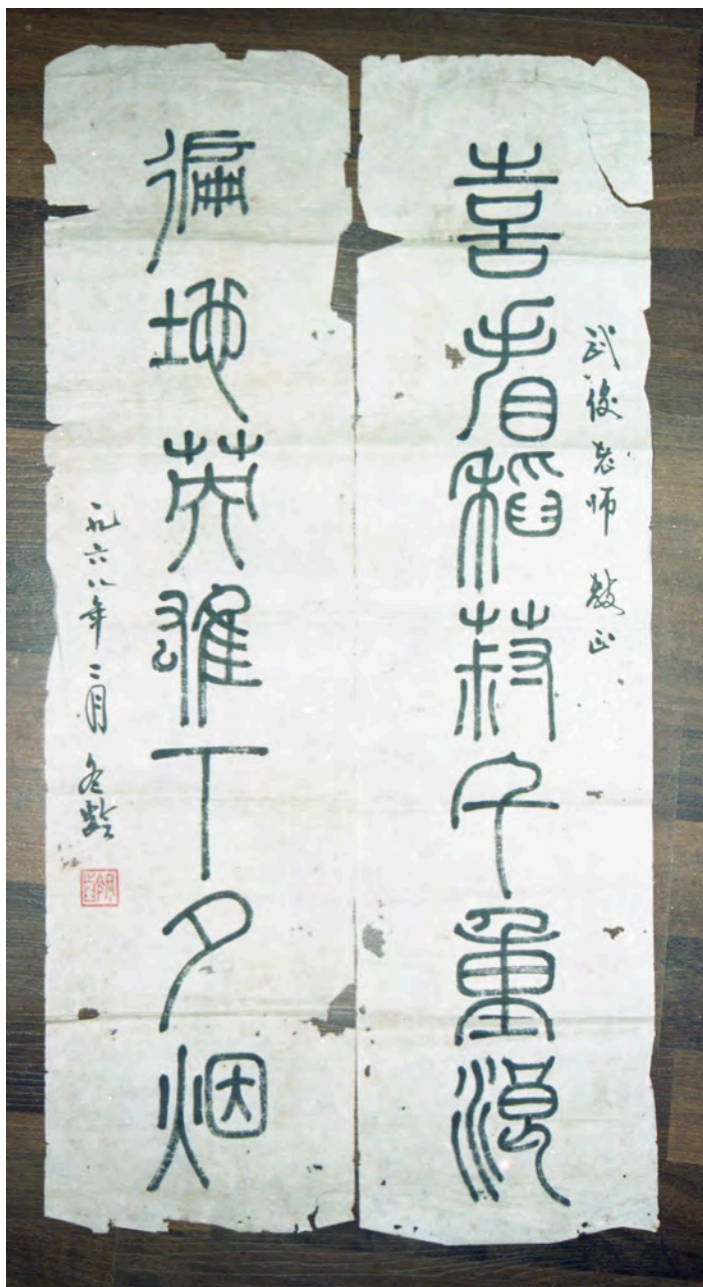
104a-2)

安振精神 时代英雄
 句况无于 况女太憨不思
 暗分能 狂呼快割谁云
 如卷下 终成终是凡胎
 二四身 冬日黄山纪游
 洞宗 念奴娇 书卷


104b)

千峰競秀 白雪開
 西峰人字特地才
 雪忽晚 抵斜照裏
 有人像不為青梅
 日長 出動 誰得
 紅菜 必能 寂寂 看
 我 比 樊川 睡才 健
 不飲 在 可 上 寒 山 耐
 二四身 元月 西峰 紀游 并叙 于 志 年


105a)



105b)



Curriculum Vitae

For reasons of data protection, the curriculum vitae is not included in the online version.

Eidesstattliche Erklärung

Hiermit erkläre ich an Eides statt, dass ich die vorliegende Arbeit selbständig und nur unter Verwendung der angegebenen Literatur und Hilfsmittel angefertigt habe.

Berlin, den 5. April 2016

Shao-Lan Hertel