

Introduction

This dissertation explores Chinese literati memorial painting with a special focus on Wu Li's 吳歷 (1632-1718) handscroll *Remembering the Past at Xingfu Chapel* 興福庵感舊圖 (referred to as the *Xingfu* scroll in the following study) in commemorating the deceased Chan Buddhist monk Morong 默容 (Fig. 1).

I became first interested into the *Xingfu* scroll because it touches upon the topic of death. Death is an important theme in Western art as well as in Chinese literature, but it is rarely represented in Chinese painting. I began my research on the *Xingfu* scroll by looking into the question of how death was represented. Further exploration revealed that there were a series of such literati paintings in commemorating the deceased. Interestingly they were represented in a very subtle way. To take the *Xingfu* scroll as an example: At first glance it appears to be a landscape painting only. But beyond the visual representation, it actually is dealing with religious ideas. It is a painting of religious landscape in fact.

Commemorative painting in memory of the deceased produced by literati is termed Chinese literati memorial painting in this study. In her book *The Painting of T'ang Yin*, Anne de Coursey Clapp discusses commemorative paintings and regards them as a genre of Chinese painting. According to Anne Clapp, Tang Yin's 唐寅 (1470-1524) commemorative paintings - often a human figure depicted in a landscape, function like a eulogy of the patron to honor his achievement and to win recognition from the elite literati society. Moreover, these commemorative paintings have different ranges of subject matters such as *biehao tu* 別號圖 (paintings of the visual pun of the patron's name) or *songbie tu* 送別圖 (departure paintings).¹ The subject matter of commemorating the deceased, however, is hardly mentioned in this book. In fact, Chinese literati memorial painting has some specific characteristics distinguishing them markedly from those commemorative paintings

¹ Anne Clapp. *The Painting of T'ang Yin*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1991.

discussed by Anne Clapp. The following study shows that literati memorial painting had their own origins in the 15th century in the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) centered in the Wu 吳 (i.e. Suzhou) area in Jiangsu province when death became an important theme in the Chinese society and they were widespread during the late Ming and early Qing period (1644-1911). They had their own rules such as the usage of inscriptions, colophons and symbols and were represented in a subtle way. In her book *Poetry and Painting in Song China. The Subtle Art of Dissent*, Alfreda Murck points out that some Chinese literati found landscape painting as an elegant and subtle means to criticize government policies and actions during the Song dynasty (960-1278).² According to Alfreda Murck, the capacity of Chinese painting's systems of reference in using the coding of messages in seemingly innocuous paintings allowed Chinese literati to express dissent with impunity.³ In fact, this subtle way of representation was also favored by later Chinese literati in memorial painting due to personal, religious or political reasons.

In the history of Chinese art, traditional memorial paintings were produced by professional painters for funeral and commemorative practices. Most of them were portraits. The image of Lady Dai with her name substituted in the center of the silk banner from Mawangdui 馬王堆 Tomb 1 (Western Han, early 2nd century BC) is considered to be one of the earliest portraits of this kind. It most likely constitutes a memorial painting with a strong religious function used in the funeral service (Fig. 2; Fig. 3). Such portraits used in funeral and commemorative practices were often the result of a specific relationship between the painter - normally a professional anonymous painter - and the painted, a dead or dying person. The *Portrait of Shen Zhou at Age Eighty* produced by an anonymous artisan painter is an example of such a functional portrait from a later period (Fig. 4). It was painted as a *shouxian* 壽像 (longevity image) when Shen Zhou 沈周 (1427-1509) was eighty years old and still alive. Imperial and ancestral portraits used in funeral and memorial services are brilliantly discussed in *Worshipping the Ancestors*:

² Alfreda Murck. *Poetry and Painting in Song China. The Subtle Art of Dissent*. Harvard-Yenching Institute Monograph Series 50. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Asia Center, 2002, 1-2.

³ Ibid., 2.

Chinese Commemorative Portraits by Jan Stuart and Evelyn S. Rawski.⁴ Additionally, commemorative paintings of historical or archaic figures, such as *Zhulin qixian* 竹林七賢 (Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove) are explored by Ellen Johnston Laing in her dissertation *Scholars and Sages: A Study in Chinese Figure Painting*.⁵ In the following study, however, such commemorative paintings will not be discussed. In general, Chinese literati memorial paintings require an understanding of the inscriptions and colophons. This point distinguishes them from the functional portraits used in funeral and memorial services. Furthermore these paintings are concerned with commemorating those deceased, who had a social relationship either with the painter or the patron in their lifetime. They were originally produced for a small private social group among the painter, the patron, friends or associates of the deceased.

Chinese literati painting in general is considered as being independent from court and artisan styles and ideologies, emphasizing amateurism and the role of inscriptions or colophons instead. According to Chinese literati painting theory, the literatus painted as he wrote, putting forward his own views and feelings, while the artisan, with an eye to his patron's wishes, obviously could not.⁶ The word literati in connection with literati painting actually became controversial after the mid-15th century. Paintings by artisan painters like Tang Yin, who was a great poet, but dependent on his art for his livelihood, are regarded as literati paintings in this study. Therefore, literati refer to those artists with a scholarly background. Memorial paintings by artisan painters like Tang Yin, court painters like Yu Zhiding 禹之鼎 (1647-1716) are also regarded as literati memorial paintings in this study.

The primary aim of this study is to contribute a better understanding of Chinese literati memorial painting, which is not yet systematically researched in the scholarship. It secondly is devoted to an intensive analysis of the *Xingfu* scroll, which will provide insights into socio-religious issues of its time and this will help to reveal Wu Li's hybrid religious inner world such as

⁴ Jan Stuart and Evelyn S. Rawski. *Worshiping the Ancestors: Chinese Commemorative Portraits*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 2001.

⁵ Ellen Johnston Laing. *Scholars and Sages: A Study in Chinese Figure Painting*. PhD Thesis. UMI. University of Michigan, 1967, 132-188.

⁶ Anne Clapp (1991), 25.

his understandings to Buddhism, which in turn will throw new light on the study of Wu Li as a Chinese Christian.

Although Chinese literati memorial painting as a whole constitutes a largely unexplored field, there are still many excellent case studies on painters and their paintings by scholars such as James Cahill, Anne Clapp, Craig Clunas, Jonathan Hay and Richard Vinograd, which have been of great importance to the present study.⁷ Among these studies the research on Shen Zhou is of significance since Shen played an important role in the origins of Chinese literati memorial painting. Early research on Shen Zhou and his painting has been conducted by Richard Edwards in his dissertation from 1953 and his later monograph *The Field of Stones: A Study of the Art of Shen Zhou (1427-1509)* published in 1962, which served as a standard work for many years.⁸ More recent research examines Shen Zhou and his art from different perspectives, such as *Early Ming Painters: Predecessors and Elders of Shen Zhou (1427-1509)* by Kathlyn Lannon Liscomb (1984), which provides a historical-artistic background of Shen's art. Other works include *Shen Zhou's Topographical Landscape* by Jen-mei Ma (1990), *Revisiting Shen Zhou (1427-1509): Poet, Painter, Literatus, Reader* by Chi-ying Alice Wang (1995), *Reading Birds: Confucian Imagery in the Bird Painting of Shen Zhou (1427-1509)* by Ann Elizabeth Wetherell (2006) and *The Immortal Brush: Daoism and the Art of Shen Zhou (1427-1509)* by Chun-yi Lee (2009).⁹

⁷ James Cahill. *Parting at the Shore. Chinese Painting of the Early and Middle Ming Dynasty, 1368-1580*. New York and Tokyo: Weatherhill, 1978; ---. *The Compelling Image. Nature and Style in Seventeenth-Century Chinese Painting*. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1982a; ---. *The Distant Mountains. Chinese Painting of the Late Ming Dynasty, 1570-1644*. New York and Tokyo: Weatherhill, 1982b; Anne Clapp (1991); Craig Clunas. *Elegant Debts. The Social Art of Wen Zhengming, 1470-1559*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004; Jonathan Hay. *Shitao. Painting and Modernity in Early Qing China*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001; Richard Vinograd. *Boundaries of the Self. Chinese Portraits, 1600-1900*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

⁸ Richard Edwards. *The Field of Stones: A Study of the Art of Shen Chou (1427-1509)*. Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1962.

⁹ Kathlyn Lannon Liscomb. *Early Ming Painters: Predecessors and Elders of Shen Zhou (1427-1509)*. PhD thesis. UMI. University of Chicago, 1984; Jen-mei Ma. *Shen Zhou's Topographical Landscape*. PhD thesis. UMI. University of Kansas, 1990; Chi-ying Alice Wang. *Revisiting Shen Zhou (1427-1509): Poet, Painter, Literatus, Reader*. PhD thesis. UMI. Indiana University, 1995; Ann Elizabeth Wetherell. *Reading Birds: Confucian Imagery in the Bird Painting of Shen Zhou (1427-1509)*. PhD thesis. UMI. University of Oregon, 2006 and Chun-yi Lee. *The Immortal Brush: Daoism and the Art of Shen Zhou (1427-1509)*. PhD thesis. UMI. Arizona State University, 2009.

The *Xingfu* scroll itself is briefly discussed in Xiaoping Lin's *Wu Li (1632-1718) His Life, His Paintings* published in 2001, and has been introduced in a short catalog entry by Alfreda Murck in 2005, when the scroll was for the first time on display in the West. Both studies explore the relationship between Wu Li and the Chan Buddhist monk Morong, but the underlying religious meanings beyond the visual images of the *Xingfu* scroll have not been discussed yet.¹⁰

There is, however, a considerable amount of research on Wu Li. During the 1930's, Chen Yuan 陳垣 completed pioneering studies on Wu Li's life, his social network, and his religious beliefs. Since then, research has been done on Wu Li as a Jesuit, a painter, and a poet. While Fang Hao's 方豪 studies provide details about Wu Li's religious life, Laurence C.S. Tam's 譚志成 catalog *Six Masters of Early Qing and Wu Li*, which was published in connection with an exhibition of the same title in 1986, introduces some of his important artistic works. Some of Wu Li's literary and Christian writings have been introduced to the Western public by Jonathan Chaves in his monograph *Singing of the Source. Nature and God in the Poetry of the Chinese Painter Wu Li* in 1993.

The beginning of the 21st century witnessed new advances in the study of Wu Li. Except for Xiaoping Lin's book mentioned above, a symposium *Culture, Art, Religion: Wu Li (1632-1718) and his Inner Journey* was held at the Macau Ricci Institute in 2003. The collection of Wu Li's available works consisting of his literary writings, commentaries on paintings, Christian writings and documents on him by people in the Qing dynasty titled *Wu Yushan ji jianzhu* 吳漁山集箋注 (An Annotated Collection of the Writings of Wu Yushan [Wu Li]) edited by Zhang Wenqin 章文欽 in 2007 is a significant contribution to the study on Wu Li. Particular relevant to the following study is Wu Li's oral preaching *Xu kouduo richao* 續口鐸日抄 (The Continued Diary of Oral Admonitions), which consists of his

¹⁰ Xiaoping Lin. *Wu Li (1632-1718) His Life, His Paintings*. Lanham, New York and Oxford: University Press of America, 2001, 56-63. Evelyn Rawski and Jessica Rawson (eds.). *China: The Three Emperors, 1662-1795*. London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2005, 318; 453.

theological statements and acts recorded for a period of more than one year (Aug. 15th 1696-Dec. 25th 1697) written by his disciple Zhao Lun 趙倫.

The approach used in this study is primarily a philological analysis of inscriptions and colophons, which is the key to understanding Chinese literati memorial painting. A Chinese literati memorial painting is not simply a picture but an organic interaction between texts and images, which should be dealt with in a “contextualist” sense.¹¹ Reading the inscriptions and colophons becomes part of the context within which one observes the painting. In this process the original intention and meaning can be transformed due to the colophons written by the subsequent inscriber. At the same time the reading of inscriptions and colophons affects again the understanding of the painting. The observer is then in a process of reading and re-reading the painting. Thus, understanding Chinese literati memorial painting always has to be understood as an interdependent process of a multi-leveled reading of inscriptions, colophons, and the picture itself. One consequently needs to be aware of the different meanings of inscriptions and colophons and of how the texts affect the visual images. Given the considerable number of misreadings of inscriptions and colophons by later scholars, reading the inscriptions and colophons directly from the paintings is of great importance for the following study. Many inscriptions and colophons are translated into a Western language for the first time. All readings and translations, if not noted otherwise, are mine.

The study will secondly provide a detailed visual analysis exploring the different artistic and symbolic meanings of the motifs. The use of symbolic subject matter can be found in the paintings from the Southern Song Academy, especially during the reign of Emperor Huizong 徽宗 (1082-1135) in the early 12th century and also in some other earlier paintings.¹² But in Chinese literati memorial painting the use of symbol becomes more subtle and specific, which often requires a contextualist visual analysis. An

¹¹ James Cahill. “Types of Text-Object Relationships in Chinese Art”. Paper (keynote address) for XXXI International Congress of Human Sciences in Asia and North Africa, unpublished, Tokyo-Kyoto, August-September 1983, 10. I would like to thank professor James Cahill for kindly offering me his unpublished paper.

¹² James Cahill. *Hills Beyond a River. Chinese Painting of the Yüan Dynasty, 1279-1368*. New York and Tokyo: Weatherhill, 1976a, 18.

identical motif can contain different symbolic meanings due to different visual representations.

Finally, the present study attempts to treat the stylistic, socio-religious, and socio-historical issues within a complex interaction or a mutual “activation”.¹³ These issues are interdependent when an artwork is concerned. This method of social history of art is especially relevant for my study because of the allusive character of Chinese literati memorial painting. The visual artistic images can only be fully understood when the socio-religious and socio-historical contexts behind them are explained. In this approach, questions, such as, “For whom and for what purpose were the paintings done?” and “How does this circumstance affect and help explain the artists choices of styles and motifs?” are significant. In the case of the *Xingfu* scroll, it was also painted for Morong’s soul. And this in turn affects the motifs and the way they are represented.

It is necessary here, to draw attention to the difficulties of searching for Chinese literati memorial paintings in available catalogs and selecting them. The most important catalogs for this study are *Gugong shuhua tulu* 故宮書畫圖錄 (Catalog of Calligraphy and Painting from the National Palace Museum) published by the National Palace Museum in Taipei and *Zhongguo gudai shuhua tumu* 中國古代書畫圖目 (Catalog of Ancient Chinese Painting and Calligraphy) by the Beijing Palace Museum. Unfortunately, however, not only many texts of inscriptions and colophons are not provided by the publishers but the quality of reproductions especially in the Beijing catalog is often too poor to decipher the texts. Nevertheless, the following study still attempts to present and analyse the most relevant and

¹³ Craig Clunas. “Social History of Art.” In: *Critical Terms for Art History*. Robert S. Nelson and Richard Shiff (eds.). Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press (First Edition 1996), 2003, 475. The workshop on patronage in Chinese painting organized by Chu-tsing Li in 1980 was a good start in this field. Its results were published in 1989 under the title *Artists and Patrons. Some Social and Economic Aspects of Chinese Painting*. Other publications on social history of Chinese art include, for example: James Cahill. *Three Alternative Histories of Chinese Painting*. Kansas: Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas, 1988; ---. *The Painters Practice. How Artists Lived and Worked in Traditional China*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994; Anne Clapp (1991); Jonathan Hay (2001); Ginger Cheng-chi Hsü. *A Bushel of Pearls. Painting for Sale in Eighteenth Century Yangchow*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001; Craig Clunas (2004); Wu Hung. “Chonggou zhong de meishushi 重構中的美術史 (Art History in Reconstruction).” In: *Meishushi shi yi* 美術史十議 (Ten Discussions on the History of Art). Beijing: Shenghuo, dushu, xinzhi sanlian shudian, 2008: 55-63.

representative Chinese literati memorial paintings from the 15th to the 17th centuries.

The study consists of two parts. The first part introduces the origins, development, and characteristics of Chinese literati memorial painting as a whole and uses case studies of a series of paintings from the 15th to 17th century. This will provide insights into the artistic patterns and constitute the basis for the development of the tradition of Chinese literati memorial painting, which shaped the *Xingfu* scroll. The second part is an in-depth artistic, socio-historical and socio-religious analysis of the *Xingfu* scroll.

I. Origins, Transformation, and Characteristics of Chinese Literati Memorial Painting

It was only by the end of the 15th century, that Chinese literati memorial painting became a new subject matter in Chinese painting. The origins of literati memorial painting should first be understood within the framework of the movement of personalized painting. A painting is personalized by its brush technique, style, and the addition of autograph texts and signatures. Brushwork was often a way of expressing the inner world, and the addition of an inscription became important for the literati painter. Personalized painting can be seen as the most important feature of literati painting, which had already started to become prominent during the Yuan period (1279-1368) and a very significant tendency after the Yuan.¹⁴ In the Yuan and after, there were increased liberties in self-expression in painting and at the same time the growing interest in depicting and conveying human experiences in nature. In the Ming period, many paintings were dealing with visual representations from paintings of the past, but with observations of the surrounding world or the painters' inner feelings. For example by painting topographical paintings not only the local sceneries but also the historical and cultural meanings to the specific places were addressed. These paintings functioned not only as portraits of mountains or gardens but also as portraits of people. They allowed for the meeting of past and present.¹⁵

Secondly, the commercial aspect and culture in the Wu area in the Ming period (1368-1644) became important in relationship to the origin of Chinese literati memorial painting. The city of Suzhou, called Wuxian 吳縣 or Wujun 吳郡 in the Ming, and its surrounding area became the richest part of China and home to the largest number of literati. Along with commercial activities, the arts flourished and the well-educated gentry spent its time "building gardens and libraries, collecting books and works of art, exchanging invitations to literary banquets, practicing calligraphy, and painting."¹⁶ Not only the numbers of patrons increased, but also the class of literati-artists,

¹⁴ Robert L. Thorp and Richard Ellis Vinograd. *Chinese Art and Culture*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Incorporated, 2001, 302.

¹⁵ Kathlyn Lannon Liscomb (1984), 334-335.

¹⁶ James Cahill (1978), 60.

educated but without government appointment, with its steadily improved position in the society grew larger. Comparing with the social distinction between noble patron and academy painter in Song court painting, the commissioned paintings in the Ming and Qing periods became more personal and the patron himself was often the subject of the painting.¹⁷ Furthermore, despite a revival of interest in the Song tradition of literati narrative after the 15th century,¹⁸ paintings produced by the Wu artists were in the process of becoming a conventional instrument of social interchange that served, like poetry, epitaphs, eulogies, and genealogies, to give permanence to the patron's personal history.¹⁹ Anne Clapp describes as follows:

Commemorative painting took a great variety of forms, all of which served as social symbols to mark events of places important in a personal history: birthdays, funerals, and eulogies offered to parents by filial sons, degrees and appointments won, memorial of travels, favorite sites, the founding of houses and gardens, and portraits of the recipient. These paintings were commissioned by the recipient, his relatives or friends, or were offered by the artist speaking for himself or as a member of a group.²⁰

Thus the relationship between painting and everyday life became changing in the Ming period. Painting came to join everyday life in setting down occasions for celebration or sorrow. And this caused the expanding of subject matter in painting according to Kathlyn Lannon Liscomb:

The acceptance of a greater role in such conventional commemorations had the effect of expanding subject matter in painting in ways that give us a vivid sense of the types of ideal activities experienced by Ming literati and those who sought to emulate their lifestyle and values.²¹

Furthermore, Liscomb again, "the subject matter of painting also expanded as artists saw fit to express their feelings and responses to events in their lives in the more personal style of inspired poetry."²² Thus, painting of the

¹⁷ About the situation in the Ming period see: Anne Clapp (1991), 46.

¹⁸ See also: Julia Murray. *Mirror of Morality: Chinese Narrative Illustration and Confucian Ideology*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007, 2.

¹⁹ Anne Clapp (1991), 47.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 57.

²¹ Kathlyn Lannon Liscomb (1984), 359.

²² *Ibid.*

subject matter of commemorating the deceased produced by literati is expanded or better to say is uprisen by the end of 15th century.

The third relevant aspect about the origins of Chinese literati memorial painting is the discussion about death in the Chinese society. In the 15th century, an extremely complex attitude towards death influenced by Neo-Confucians, Daoists and Buddhists was formed among the literati. As a great poet, Shen Zhou 沈周 (1427-1509) became one of the first literati painters who brought the theme of death into painting. Relying on his sensitivity to paintings of past traditions, Shen Zhou boldly asserted his own style or in other words, he personalized painting by addressing his own experiences and inner feelings. In his inscriptions and colophons, Shen Zhou often detailed the death of his beloved friends and their friendships in a narrative and poetic way.

Shen Zhou, *zi* 字 Qi'nan 啓南, *hao* 號 Shitian 石田, was born in 1427 in Xiangcheng 相城, a suburban district in Changzhou 長州 county, 35 miles northeast of the city Suzhou in Jiangsu province.²³ Being a highly educated Suzhou amateur artist of the so-called Wu school, Shen Zhou never embarked upon an official career. It was primarily due to the dynamic commercial role of Suzhou as a handicraft and textile production center in the 15th century, which enabled the formation of a congenial environment for art patronage and art production or, meaning for Shen Zhou, to live like his grandfather Shen Cheng 沈澄 and father 沈恆 as a painter.²⁴

It is quite useful to take a closer look at Shen Zhou's attitude towards death, which can be clearly observed in his two inscribed poems on the *Portrait of Shen Zhou at Age Eighty* painted by an anonymous artisan painter (Fig. 4).

The first colophon was written in 1506, three years before Shen Zhou's death:

There are those who think
My eyes are rather small

²³ Lee Chun-yi. "The Daoist Symbolism of Immortality in Shen Zhou's 'Watching the Mid-Autumn Moon at Bamboo Villa'." In: *Myriad Points of View. New Research on Ming and Qing Paintings in the Roy and Marilyn Papp Collection*. Claudia Brown (ed.), Tempe: Arizona State University, 2006, 18.

²⁴ It was also the *jiafa* 家法 (family's rule) set by his grandfather Shen Cheng of not taking the government appointment which made Shen Zhou live as a amateur artist. *Shen Zhou Nianpu* 沈周年譜 (Chronological Life of Shen Zhou). Chen Zhenghong 陳正宏 (ed.). Shanghai: Fudan daxue chubanshe, 1993, 5.

Or my face too narrow;
As for me
I wouldn't know this
Nor what is lacking.
Who cares what somebody looks like?
My only fear, loss of moral.
Improper these eighty years!
Now is death
Only a wall away.

Self-inscribed by the old man Shitian [*hao* of Shen Zhou] in
the first year of Zhengde [1506]

人謂眼差小，又說頤太窄，我自不能知，亦不知其失。面目何足較，但恐有（失？）德，苟且八十年，今與死隔壁。
正德政元石田老人自題

One year later Shen Zhou wrote his second colophon:

Like or not like,
True or not true?
It is the shadow on the paper,
It is the person beyond the body.
Man's death and life a single dream,
Heaven and earth a dusty stream.
Up and down, go and break,
I maintain spring in my chest.
A year later, Shitian again.

似不似，真不真。紙上影，身外人。生死一夢，天地一塵。
浮浮休休，吾懷自春。越年石田又題²⁵

Shen Zhou's attitude toward imminent death was apparently quite calm and rational. In his first colophon, he made fun of his appearance and stressed that one's moral, but not appearance, is the most important thing in life. At the end, he self-critically called his life an improper eighty years and with some humor describes his existence as living next door to death.

His second colophon is more philosophical and has religious overtones. Here, Shen Zhou draws the conclusion that life and death are like a dream, and the

²⁵ The translation of the two colophons is partly based on the translation by Richard Edwards with many important changes by myself. There were some mistranslations or misreadings by Edwards, like the character *yi* 頤 for face, which was wrongly translated as jaw, or the character *zhi* 紙 in the second colophon for paper, wrongly read as *di* 低 and translated as low. Cited in Richard Vinograd (1992), 28-29; Craig Clunas. *Empire of Great Brightness. Visual and Material Cultures of Ming China, 1368-1644*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007, 188-189. The Chinese texts are in: *Shen Zhou Nianpu* (1993), 286; 290.

important thing for him is to follow his own way of not caring about the outside world, seeking thus some kind of self-fulfillment, to use Shen Zhou's words, to maintain spring in his chest.

The two colophons reveal Shen Zhou's stress of self-cultivation, a significant feature of Neo-Confucianism that was becoming more prominent during this period, and his thoughts about death, which were clearly influenced by philosophical Daoism.

The thought of the most influential Neo-Confucian Wang Yangming 王陽明 (1472-1529) was probably the claim that "moral categories exist within the mind alone and do not depend on study and the outer forms of Confucianism."²⁶ Wang addressed both the moral cultivation and the practice for achieving it. What Wang expressed here was what other Neo-Confucians before him had also discussed. Chen Xianzhang 陳獻章 (1428-1500), the forerunner of Wang Yangming, freed himself from the book learning of Song dynasty scholars and turned to the self and to moral principles (*li* 理) for the truth.²⁷ For Chen self-cultivation is of significance in a person's life. Shen Zhou never met Chen Xianzhang personally, but they dedicated poems to each other and exchanged letters. In 1493 Shen Zhou painted a now not extant *Painting of Yutai Mountains* 玉臺山圖 with the depiction of Yutai Mountains for Chen, where Chen lived according to Shen's inscription.²⁸

Both Chen Xianzhang and Wang Yangming emphasized the experience of the self, addressing the quiet-sitting in meditation. The practice of quiet-sitting influenced by Buddhism and Daoism is an experience of enlightenment, which is described by Chen "in terms of seeing his essential self and its identity with all things, and drawing from this realization a sense of unlimited power in dealing with the world."²⁹ In his long inscription on the painting *Night Sitting* 夜坐圖 in 1492 Shen Zhou recorded the experience of attaining a state of quiescence through quiet-sitting in a cold autumn night

²⁶ Stephen Owen (ed. and trans.). *An Anthology of Chinese Literature. Beginnings to 1911*. New York, London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1996, 726.

²⁷ Norman Kutcher. *Mourning in Late Imperial China. Filial Piety and the State*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1999, 48.

²⁸ *Shen Zhou Nianpu* (1993), 233.

²⁹ Wm. Theodore de Bary: "Introduction." In: *Self and Society in Ming Thought*. Wm Theodore de Bary (ed.). New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1970, 12.

(Fig. 5; Fig. 6). For Lee Chun-yi Shen Zhou's intention for the practice of quiet-sitting not only was to purify his mind but also to strengthen his body in order to extend his life span due to the Daoist concepts of *yangsheng* (longevity techniques).³⁰ For Craig Clunas the practice of quiet-sitting is related to the method of self-cultivation, a way to respond to things and a sense of immobility.³¹ As Clunas correctly realized, self-cultivation is one of the keywords in understanding Shen's inscription and his attitude towards life. Some characters and terms used in the last lines in the inscription of *Night Sitting* reflect Shen's Neo-Confucianist thinking strongly influenced by Chen Xianzhang. Here Shen Zhou expressed the reasons for practicing the quiet-sitting:

Through this practice one can pursue the principles [*li*, 理] that underline events and things, and the subtlest workings of one's own mind [*xin*, 心] and body [*ti* 體], as the basis of self-cultivation [*xiuji*, 脩己] and [a proper mode of, added by James Cahill] response to external things [*yingwu*, 應物].

因以求事物之理，心體之妙，以為脩己應物之地。³²

In this passage the terms “principle (*li*, 理)”, “mind (*xin*, 心)”, “body (*ti* 體)”, and “self-cultivation (*xiuji*, 脩己)” are some of the keywords in Neo-Confucianism. In Neo-Confucianism the way to apprehend the principle of things such as the meanings of life and death lies in one's own nature, in one's own mind. And for the cultivation of the mind is quiescence (*jing*, 靜), which is a normal and healthy state of mind, free from nervous tension,

³⁰ Lee Chun-yi (2006), 53-54.

³¹ Craig Clunas (2007), 83. About this hanging scroll and the translation of the inscription, see Kathlyn Lannon Liscomb (1984), 325-331; 445-448. James Cahill (1978), 90-91; Richard Edwards. *The Field of Stones: A Study of the Art of Shen Chou (1427-1509)*. Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1962, 57, and *Wupai hua niushi nian zhan* 吳派畫九十年展 (Ninety Years of Wu School Painting). Guoli Gugong Bowuyuan 國立故宮博物院 (ed.). Taipei: National Palace Museum, 1975, 2, 293 and 332. Both Liscomb and Cahill relayed a whole translation of Shen Zhou's inscription of *Night Sitting*. The Chinese text is in the Chinese translation of Cahill's *Parting at the Shore*. Gao Juhan. *Jiang'an songbie: Mingdai chuqi yu zhongqi huihua, 1368-1580*. Beijing: Shenghuo, dushu, xinzhi sanlian shudian, 2009, 79-80.

³² Trans. by James Cahill (1978), 90. However the word of body, *ti* in Chinese, not translated by him, but added by myself. Chinese text in: Gao Juhan (2009), 80.

worry, and fear of death.³³ Doing quiet-sitting means to enter quiescence to get rid of fear of death.

In his second colophon on the *Portrait of Shen Zhou at Age Eighty* Shen Zhou talked about death and understood it as a natural occurrence in a cosmic context. Death and life was a dream and everything was just like a dust going up and down. Facing the transience of physical life and the inevitability of death, the theme of death became relevant among Chinese literati in the 15th century. On the one hand, they yearned for longevity or immortality, but on the other hand, however, they were aware of the inevitability of death in reality. Talking about death was no longer a taboo as with Confucian 孔子 (551-479 BC) himself.³⁴ In his “Tomb Inscription of Mr. Shitian 石田先生墓志銘”, Wang Ao 王鏊 (1450-1524) mentions that Shen Zhou “not only was erudite in Confucian classics, history, and philosophy, but also devoted himself to learning of other kinds, such as divination and Daoism.”³⁵ Observing Shen Zhou’s whole life, the Daoism which Shen Zhou’s was interest in was the philosophical rather than the religious Daoism, such as the idea of a dreamlike life and the dusty cosmos mentioned in this second colophon. The philosophical Daoistic view towards death can be found in many passages of the *Zhuangzi* 莊子 written well before the establishment of religious Daoism, most clearly seen in the passage where Huizi 惠子 asks Zhuangzi (ca.369-286 BC) why he looks so happy after the death of his wife. Zhuangzi answers that he has realized that death is like the procession of the four seasons, which is part of the cosmic process of nature. Beyond Zhuangzi’s attitude is his understanding of the universe, in which everything has its place and role, and finds itself in a progression of constant change.³⁶

³³ Jen Yu-wen. “Ch’ien Hsien-chang’s Philosophy of the Natural”. In: *Self and Society in Ming Thought*. Wm Theodore de Bary (ed.). New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1970, 76-77.

³⁴ James Legge. *The Chinese Classics. Vol. I & II. Confucian Analects, The Great Learning, The Doctrine of the Mean, The Works of Mencius*. Taipei: SMC Publishing INC, 1994 (third ed.), 241.

³⁵ Lee Chun-yi (2009), 31-32.

³⁶ *Zhuangzi* 莊子. Tianjin: Tianjin guji shudian, 1992 (reprint), 144-145; Also to be found in the section “Perfect Enjoyment, Zhuangzi Yinde” in Harvard-Yenching. 46/18/18. In: <http://ctext.org/zhuangzi/perfect-enjoyment>: *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu*, Section 18: Perfect Happiness. Trans. by Burton Watson.

If the 15th century was the beginning of Chinese literati memorial painting, the 17th century, however, marked an important transformation by which more paintings were produced than in previous period of time. The crucial turning point was the fall of the Ming in 1644. Never had there been a period in Chinese history during which theme of death was discussed as intensive as during the Ming-Qing transition. Topics such as belatedness, nostalgia, loss, and death were blended into the literature and art of the Ming loyalists. Writings by eminent literati like Huang Zongxi 黃宗羲 (1610-1695) and Gui Zhuang 歸莊 (1613-1673) on how to die a good death and philosophical discussions about death, books like *Mingji nanlüe* 明季南略 (Outline Record of the Late Ming in the South) and *Mingji beilüe* 明季北略 (Outline Record of the Late Ming in the North) with descriptions of personal experiences of death, became a favorite almost obsessive topic of Chinese literati during this time.³⁷ Many literati memorial paintings of this period, appearing to constitute commemorative paintings in memory of the deceased, employed a subtle symbolism that could be read as a political statement of Ming loyalism, while it was not explicit enough to endanger the safety of the painters, patrons, and viewers.

Since my study ends up in the 17th century addressing the tradition which shaped Wu Li's *Xingfu* scroll, the following example only provides a very brief look into the later periods. In the 18th and 19th centuries, the role of text remained an important feature as it had been in Chinese literati memorial painting, but the role of patronage increased markedly, as did the significance of likeness to the deceased. A good example of this is Fei Danxu's 費丹旭 (1801-1850) *Feelings about Former Times in the Orchard Garden* 果園感舊圖 (Fig. 7). It is painted for the patron Jiang Shengmu 蔣生沐 (also known as Jiang Guangxu 蔣光煦, 1813-1860), a fact mentioned in the calligraphy by Zhao Zhichen 趙之琛 (1781-1852) on the added sheet

³⁷ Both books were written from 1666 to 1669 by Ji Liuqi 計六奇 (1622-?), first published during the Jiajing (1796-1820) and Daoguang reigns (1820-1850). Ji Liuqi 計六奇. *Mingji nanlüe* 明季南略 (Outline Record of the Late Ming in the South). Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2008 (reprint). ---. *Mingji beilüe* 明季北略 (Outline Record of the Late Ming in the North). Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2008 (reprint). More about death in the Ming, see: Zhao Yuan 趙園. *Ming Qing zhiji shidafu yanjiu* 明清之際士大夫研究 (Research on Literati in the Ming-Qing Transition). Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1999, 23-49.

of paper at the beginning of the scroll. In the spring of 1846, Fei Danxu resided at Jiang's house Biexia zhai 別下齋 (Studio of Biexia) and one day he and Jiang visited the Orchard Garden of the house together with the eminent literatus Zhang Shuwei 張叔未 (*zi* Tingji 廷濟, 1768-1848), Zhang's nephew Zhang Shouzhi 張受之 (*zi* Xinyou 辛有, ?-1848), and Jiang's fifth son called Jiang Wuxiong 蔣五兄 (1838-1849) by Fei Danxu. Two years later Zhang Shuwei and Zhang Shouzhi died and another year later Jiang's fifth son died as well. When he revisited the Orchard Garden with Jiang Shengmu in 1849, Fei Danxu painted the scene of the gathering in the garden as the first section of the scroll and then two separate portraits, one of the two Zhangs and the other of the child on two sheets of paper which are added as the final section of the scroll *Feelings about Former Times in the Orchard Garden*. This must be the most important reason why the standing child, depicted on a separate paper first, appears unnaturally separated from the two other figures. Richard Vinograd claims that "the empty length of handscroll separating the son from his father" makes the portrait "especially poignant".³⁸ Contrary to this assumption, the child is not the son of the sitting figure Zhang Shuwei. Therefore, Fei's handscroll is not dealing with "familial continuity" as Richard Vinograd suggests,³⁹ but first of all with the memory of a gathering of literati from the elite society and possibly the patron's pride of his house Biexia zhai. This Biexia zhai held one of the largest libraries of the Jiangnan area in 19th-century China, which attracted famous literati, such as, Zhang Shuwei for frequent visits. The difference between this handscroll and the paintings discussed in the study is the use of *yizhao* 遺照 (posthumous portraits) by Fei Danxu. Fei Danxu used posthumous portraits produced by professional artists as model for the portraits on his scroll *Feelings about Former Times in the Orchard Garden* according to his inscription. This shows the trend of likeness in literati memorial painting especially after the middle of the 19th century, which is closely related to the rise of photography in China after the 1840's.⁴⁰

³⁸ Thorp and Vinograd (2001), 370.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ The rise of photography starts two decades earlier in the West. In or before 1844, the essay "Sheying zhi qi ji" 攝影之器記 (Notes on a Mechanism for Capturing Images) by Zou

The most relevant characteristic of Chinese literati memorial painting is its subtle way of representation, which is due to the use of texts and symbols in representing the subject matter. As James Cahill has pointed out, a Chinese painter is not only using a style in his painting, but also thinks about it in his inscription.⁴¹ Understanding a Chinese literati memorial painting, thus, requires one to read the inscription and this in turn affects the reading of the painting. Once we recognize the importance of inscriptions, which contain special clues and explications, we are able to understand the memorial painting as a complex product of the thoughts and feelings of the painter and sometimes the subsequent inscriber. It is an interdependent process of a multi-leveled reading: Reading the inscription becomes part of the context within which one observes and experiences the painting, and so affects that experience.⁴² From this point of view, Chinese literati memorial painting is an interaction between the painter, the inscriber, any subsequent inscribers, and the viewer. It is a painting in the process of constant transformation. Sometimes it is transformed from a non-Chinese literati memorial painting to a Chinese literati memorial painting only because of the later added colophon by the subsequent inscriber.

The use of symbol played an important role in Chinese literati memorial painting as well. A contextualist analysis of visual representations is often required since a same motif can contain different symbolic meanings. For example, bamboo and rocks generally symbolize endurance in Chinese painting, but the specific visual representation of bamboo and rocks on the *Xingfu* scroll, depicted separately, hints at the same time at the separation by death of two persons, Wu Li and his friend Morong.

Already in the 15th and 16th centuries, employing allusions, symbols, and metaphors became very popular among the educated society most obviously in Suzhou. Literati were required to recognize and decode poetic and visual allusions and metaphors. And decoding the allusion became particularly alive

Boqi 鄒伯奇 (1819-1869) provides a lucid account of the principles of the camera obscura and the earliest plate cameras which was produced in Guangzhou. Oliver Moore. "Zou Boqi on Vision and Photography in Nineteenth-Century China". In: *The Human Tradition in Modern China*. Kenneth J. Hammond and Kristin Stapleton (eds.). Lanham, Boulder, New York, Toronto and Plymouth, UK: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, INC, 2008, 39; 41.

⁴¹ James Cahill (1983), 7.

⁴² Ibid.

in 17th-century according to Alfreda Murck.⁴³ The ample use of symbolic representations as well as the opacity of the intentions of the painter or the patron due to personal, religious or political considerations almost transform literati memorial painting into a code full of allusions. Often primarily produced for a small social group among friends and associates, Chinese literati memorial painting had a strong component of social group identity, even if it was sometimes a commissioned work. The following chapter will provide case studies of a series of Chinese literati memorial paintings analyzing the different visual representations, purposes, and functions.

⁴³ Alfreda Murck (2000), 262.

II. Case Studies of Literati Memorial Painting from the 15th to the 17th Century

1. The Significance of the Colophon

As a complex product produced not only by the painter but by the subsequent inscriber at times, Chinese literati memorial painting is in an interdependent process of constant transformation. The analysis of the following two paintings demonstrates of how a colophon by a subsequent inscriber transformed the meaning of the painting.

Liu Jue (1410-1472) and Shen Zhou (1427-1509)

The painting *Pure and Plain Pavilion* 清白軒圖 by Liu Jue 劉瑀 (1410-1472, *zi* Tingmei 廷美, *hao* Wanan 完庵) in 1458 with the subsequent colophon by Shen Zhou is maybe one of the earliest literati memorial paintings (Fig. 8). Liu Jue was a friend and relative of Shen Zhou, whose son married Shen Zhou's sister. According to Liu's inscription this painting was originally painted for a monk called Xitian shangren 西田上人, who brought wine to Liu's house *Qingbai xuan* 清白軒 (Pure and Plain Pavilion), and other friends including Shen Zhou's father Shen Heng and grandfather Shen Cheng who also left their colophons on it. It is not a painting of celebrating Liu's retirement from the bureaucracy as James Cahill pointed out, since Liu took the position of a *Shanxi anchasi qianshi* 山西按察司僉事 (deputy-assistant surveillance commissioner for Shanxi Province, trans. by James Cahill) later after returning to his hometown.⁴⁴ After the death of Liu Jue in 1472, Shen Zhou added the following colophon:

The old pleasure of poems and wine now lack my master Liu.
The man himself has passed into silence, the pavilion is
deserted.
The crane suspires, if it would come,
and wonders whether it is here Liaodong.

舊游詩酒少劉公，
人已寥寥閣已空。

⁴⁴ *Shen Zhou Nianpu* (1993), 59-60. James Cahill (1978), 79.

仙鶴倘來還感慨，
只應此地是遼東。⁴⁵

The first line of Shen's colophon speaks of old friends, their gatherings, and the absence of Liu followed by the remark that the Pure and Plain Pavilion is deserted now. Shen achieves this melancholic mood by contrasting the visual image of the merry gatherings at Liu's house with his poem. Shen Zhou's colophon encourages a re-reading of Liu's painting. The original meaning of displaying a gathering is shifted to the condolence for the deceased: First, the memory of a joyful gathering with the depiction of his Pure and Plain House is depicted by Liu Jue; it is then described by other participants in the gathering; finally, it is closed by Shen Zhou's remembrance of Liu's house and his sorrow because of Liu Jue's death. This painting allows a reproduction, not only by the participants in the gathering, but by the later inscriber - the re-producer Shen Zhou as well. This results in a multi-leveled reading of the painting based on memories by different people, which are shifted from joy, nostalgia to sorrow in the course of time.

The painting *Gigantic Mountains and High Bamboo* 崇山修竹 by Shen Zhou possibly depicts the scene of Shen Zhou's house *Youzhu ju* 有竹居 (House of Bamboo) (Fig. 9). According to Shen Zhou's colophon from 1501, which was later mounted above the painting on a separate sheet of paper, it was originally dedicated to a certain Ma Yizhi 馬抑之. It became a parting gift for Liu Jue's brother Liu Yigui 劉以規 when he went to Beijing to take part in the examinations.⁴⁶ The earliest dating of this painting is from the

⁴⁵ The first two lines have been translated by James Cahill. James Cahill (1978), 79. The Chinese text is from direct reading from the painting. In: *Wupai hua niushi nian zhan* 吳派畫九十年展 (Ninety Years of Wu School Painting). Guoli Gugong Bowuyuan 國立故宮博物院 (ed.). Taipei: National Palace Museum, 1975, 20. The crane in Shen's poem is related to an anecdote of a certain Ding Lingwei 丁令威 from Liaodong. After Ding had learned the *dao* and transformed into a crane, he returned home and noticed that all his family members and friends were already dead. According to the folk saga, the crane then sang as follows: There is a bird called Ding Lingwei, / who left home a thousand years ago and is now back home. / The town is the same but the people are different. / Why not learning the *dao*? Because of the countless tombs. 有鳥有鳥丁令威，去家千年今始歸。城郭如故人民非，何不學道塚累累。 Duan Hongwei 段紅偉. *Shen Zhou huazhuan* 沈周畫傳 (Painting and Biography of Shen Zhou). Jinan: Shandong huabao chubanshe, 2004, 123. The translation is my own.

⁴⁶ In the catalogue *Wupai hua niushi nian zhan* 吳派畫九十年展, it is stated however that this painting was originally painted for Liu Jue, who then gave it as a gift to his brother Liu

colophon written by Liu Jue in 1470, Shen Zhou however did not leave any inscription on it until 1501. In the autumn of 1472, shortly after Liu Jue's death, Liu Yigui asked Wu Kuan 吳寬 (1435-1504) and Wen Lin 文林 (1445-1499), both natives from Suzhou and friends of Shen Zhou, to leave their colophons on it. Wen Lin, the father of Wen Zhengming 文徵明 (1470-1559), mentions Shen Zhou's sorrow because of Liu's death. In his colophon, Shen Zhou writes that the painting came back to him because of Liu Yigui's death. Shen Zhou's whole colophon reads:

The tiny trace of water and ink becomes true after reading.
It hurts the spirit both [because of] the [left] colophons and the
changing story of [recipients].
Only looking at the crow one knows whose house it is.
Transforming into a crane, one can wait in hoping the coming
of old friends.
Enjoy the world in the way by following the mountains even
when the white hair.
Who values the things though the black blanket is still there.
The poem retells the past story.
[It is] again a renewed dream in the floating life.

This painting was originally dedicated to Ma Yizhi. It reached Yigui through many hands. There were colophons left by ? [This place is damaged.] people. Among them only Pao'an and Ruxun are still alive. Others including Yizhi and Yigui were transformed. Overcome with emotion, I wrote this text. Shen Zhou, a day after *qixi* [the 7th day of the 7th month] of the *xinyou* year [1501]

水墨微踪認始真，
品題流落兩傷(*shang*)神。
瞻烏爰止知誰屋，
化鶴能來待故人。
白髮聊隨山玩世，
青氈雖在物何珍。
悠悠往事詩重訴，
又是浮生一夢新。
此圖舊與馬抑之，展轉以規所。凡題者？人，惟匏庵如醺
在，余併抑之以規皆化去，感慨乃有是篇。辛酉七夕後一
日沈周⁴⁷

Yigui, but from Liu's and Wu Kuan's later inscriptions it seems more like the case mentioned above. *Wupai hua niushi nian zhan* (1975), 295. See also James Cahill (1978), 85.
⁴⁷ My translation based on direct reading of the painting. In: *Wupai hua niushi nian zhan* (1975), 295.

The mood evoked by Shen Zhou's colophon is of nostalgia and grief. Thus, it constituted a *shang* 傷 (hurt), a mental injury. The commemoration of the deceased is achieved by the latest colophon. Like the painting *Pure and Plain Pavilion*, this hanging scroll is not just a picture, but a product of different activities dealing with different feelings of the painter and the inscribers and as such an example in the process of multiple reproductions.

Yun Shouping's (1633-1690) *Ferrying a Crane*

Yun Shouping's 惲壽平 (1633-1690) undated handscroll *Ferrying a Crane* 載鶴圖 displays a large body of water on the right section of the scroll, while a landscape of mountains, rocks, and high leafless trees on the left section, to which a human figure and a crane standing on a boat proceed (Fig. 10; Fig. 11). Wang Hui's 王翬 (1632-1717) colophon was written eleven years after Yun Shouping's death in 1701. It reads (Fig. 12):

This is painted by my old friend Mr. Nantian. The brushwork is elegant and it is deeply indebted to the way of Li Xigu [Li Cheng]. It is comparable to *Village by the Water* by Tang Xieyuan [Tang Yin]. I unrolled the scroll and it is far more than the grief after hearing the music of flutes. In the early spring of the *xinsi* year [1701], Gengyan sanren Wang Hui wrote this at the north side of the Yu mountains.

此我老友南田先生作也。筆意瀟灑，深得李晞古遺法，當與唐解元水村圖後先頡頏。展卷一過，可勝聞笛之悲。辛巳早春，耕煙散人王翬題於虞山之北麓。

The symbolic meaning of “ferrying the crane” first deals with the idea of withdrawal from society or the withdrawal from a career as an official. At the same time, it symbolizes the harmonic relationship between a man and a crane. The crane not only understands the man's withdrawal, but also accompanies him to his ideal place.

On Shen Zhou's undated handscroll *The Fun in Cangzhou* 滄洲趣圖卷, a crane is depicted flying between two boats (Fig. 13). On one boat, an official in a red robe is playing a zither. It is a scene of an official retiring or withdrawing from his post. The only things he takes back home with him are

the crane, the zither, and some books, hinting not only that he has lead an incorrupt official life, but also alluding to his intellectual interests. The flying crane seems to enjoy the music coming from the zither, which reveals its faithfulness and sympathy towards the official. Similar to the crane of Shen Zhou, the crane on Yun Shouping's scroll is a faithful companion to the man on the boat, accompanying him to his goal.

From this point of view, the theme of ferrying the crane is also a theme of friendship. Yun Shouping and Wang Hui were lifelong friends. Wang Hui must have recalled the friendship between himself and Yun Shouping, which can explain why he left the phrase *wendi zhibei* 聞笛之悲, grief after hearing the music of flutes, in his colophon. *Wendi zhibei* with its related tale is derived from Xiang Xiu's 向秀 (3rd century) poem *Sijiu fu* 思舊賦 (Poetic Exposition on Remembering the Past, written in 264), which refers to the grief of recalling an old friend after hearing the music of flutes. Xiang Xiu was a good friend of the poet Ji Kang 嵇康 (223-263). After the death of Ji Kang, Xiang Xiu once passed by Ji Kang's former home and heard music of a flute from the neighbor's house. Xiang Xiu, thus, recalled the old times together with Ji Kang and wrote the poem *Sijiu fu* in memory of Ji Kang.⁴⁸

After Yun's death, Wang Hui was in charge of the funeral services for him. On a separate sheet attached to the scroll, there are two undated letters for Wang Hui written by Yun Shouping, mounted by the later collector Pang Yuanji 龐元濟. In his letters, Yun describes events that he and Wang Hui had experienced together and his desire to meet his friend Wang Hui. Given their very close relationship, Wang Hui's colophon actually seems quite reserved. Wang Hui only left few writings in which he expressed his grief about Yun Shouping's death. In this colophon, his sadness is expressed by the four characters *wendi zhi bei*, which is quite an economical way of doing it. This apparent restraint or lack of emotion is related to the attitude towards death represented by Zhuangzi when Shen Zhou was discussed in an earlier chapter. For Zhuangzi, grief shows that one's mind is still prey to emotional

⁴⁸ Wang Lijuan 王麗鵬. "Zhen, Mei, Xuan. Xiang Xiu 'Sijiu fu' jiedu. 真, 美, 玄 --- 向秀《思舊賦》解讀 (Truth, Beauty and Mysteriousness: Reading Xiang Xiu's 'Poetic Exposition on Remembering the Past')." In: *Mingzuo xinshang* 名作欣賞, 2009/6, 39.

storms that disturb equanimity and make true freedom impossible.⁴⁹ Especially in the Ming and early Qing periods, literati favored a mixture of philosophical Daoism and Chan Buddhist thought of equanimity. This attitude was highly valued by Yun Shouping, as can be seen in his colophon left on the 12th leaf on Wang Hui's album *In Pursuit of Antiquity: Landscape after Song and Yuan Masters* 趨古 (Fig. 14). This leaf is dealing with the theme of ferrying a crane as well: A boat with a crane and two human figures, one sitting and the other paddling, apparently on the way to the riverbank are represented (Fig. 15). On this leaf, Wang Hui wrote that he painted the album for his teacher, Mr. Yanweng 煙翁 (Wang Shimin 王時敏, 1592-1680), in 1673 at the Garden Mi Yuan 祕園 of Mr. Li (Li Zongkong 李宗孔, 1618-1701) in Weiyang 維揚, today's Yangzhou. In the album of twelve leaves, there are five colophons written by Da Chongguang (笪重光, *hao* Jiangshang waishi 江上外史, 1623-1692) and nine by Yun Shouping. Yun Shouping's colophon with three columns in standard script on the right lower side of the 12th leaf reads:

Judging by this painting, Shigu [Wang Hui] has truly grasped the unconscious achievements of the ancient master. In a land of tumbled mountains and wilderness, a single boat is adrift. How can such scenery be found in the bosom of an ordinary man? Nantian Caoyi [Yun Shouping]⁵⁰

觀石谷此本，真能到古人不用心處矣。亂山荒遠，一棹渺然，凡俗胸中有此境界不。南田草衣

The unconscious achievements or equanimity (不用心) of the ancient master is the highest judgment in Chinese literati painting. It is related to the idea of plainness and blandness in both scenery and style in paintings. This can be observed on Zhao Mengfu's 趙孟頫 (1254-1322) handscroll *Village by the Water* 水村圖 from 1302, which is possibly the artistic source of Tang Yin's

⁴⁹ Mark Berkson. "Death in the *Zhuangzi*: Mind, Nature, and the Art of Forgetting". In: *Mortality in Traditional Chinese Thought*. Amy Olberding and Philip J. Ivanhoe (eds.). New York: State University of New York Press, 2011, 196.

⁵⁰ Translated by Roderick Whitfield. In: Maxwell K. Hearn (ed.). *Landscapes Clear and Radiant. The Art of Wang Hui (1632-1717)*. Wen C. Fong, Chin-Sung Chang and Maxwell K. Hearn. New York, New Haven and London: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Yale University Press, 2008, 199.

same-named, but not available, handscroll mentioned in Wang Hui's colophon (Fig. 16). Zhao Mengfu's scroll contains ordinary scenery: trees, water, hills, and some tiny houses, which can hardly be discerned among the trees in the background (Fig. 17). The scroll "offers less novelty in its components, less of interest *happens* in the picture, but in the end that may prove to be more satisfying."⁵¹ Behind the mood of plainness is the same mood of cool withdrawal, the same remoteness from direct sensory experience. This scroll is dealing with "an expression of a particular state of mind."⁵² It is a new antirealistic and antidecorative direction, which Chinese painting took after the end of the Song, when most painters still valued realistic and decorative issues.⁵³ It is the same mood of plainness which is represented on Yun Shouping's *Ferrying a Crane*, or the mood of equanimity. This mood of plainness or equanimity is not only a way of painting, but it actually constitutes an attitude towards life and death. This is the reason for Wang Hui's restrained colophon regarding Yun Shouping's death.

Although Tang Yin's *Village by the Water* 水村圖 is not extant any more, the brushwork and strokes applied to the rocks by Yun Shouping can be easily associated with those by Tang Yin. The dryly painted texture strokes *cun* 皴 on the rocks on the hanging scroll *Chatting with Xizhou about the Past* 西洲話舊 by Tang Yin give us a clue as to how these rocks are painted (Fig. 18; Fig. 19). Similar to this technique, the strokes on the rocks on Yun Shouping's *Ferrying the Crane* serve to separate light and shadow surfaces. They are in some places dry, and elsewhere they are applied with water, with the spaces left between the pale, overlapping the strokes reading as highlights.⁵⁴

⁵¹ James Cahill (1976a), 45.

⁵² It is the earliest dated document of this style and leads the way to the works of Huang Gongwang and Ni Zan later in the Yuan dynasty and indicates the direction that was to be taken by much of the Chinese landscape painting that followed. Ibid., 46.

⁵³ Painters like Zhao Mengfu, Ni Zan, and Huang Gongwang turned away "from these earlier concerns and concentrated on the creation of styles that were personal, expressive and recognizable, but unobtrusively involved with the past, and intellectually conditioned." Painting became a humanistic discipline (Max Loehr's phrase), a means of self-cultivation and communication. Ibid.

⁵⁴ This technique was also used by the Zhe-school artists and at times by Zhou Chen. James Cahill (1978), 196.

Indeed, not only Yun Shouping and Wang Hui had many shared works, but also that the works they produced had a mutual impact and that they used similar styles and techniques. In 1672, Wang Hui painted a handscroll *Leisured Clouds and Stream* 雲溪高逸 with rocks using a similar technique as Yun Shouping's *Ferring the Crane* (Fig. 20). The scroll begins with a large watery area and in the middle are two tiny human figures displayed on a bridge entering into the mountains. Additionally, the technique used for the leafless trees is also similar to Yun Shouping's scroll *Ferrying a Crane* (Fig. 21). The bamboo depicted in the middleground of Yun's scroll is displaced in the foreground of Wang Hui's scroll, comparable to the reeds depicted in a light and dry line in a row in the foreground of Yun's scroll (Fig. 22). Thus, it can be supposed that Yun Shouping's scroll *Ferrying a Crane* was also painted at the same time, namely, in 1672.

At the end of Wang's picture, a pavilion and three roofs are represented among the clouds. Next to them are Wang Hui's inscription and Yun Shouping's long colophon. Wang Hui wrote in his inscription that he painted the scroll for Jiangshang shiyu 江上侍御 (Minister Jiangshang, Da Chongguang) after Tang Yin's *Going Home in Wind and Rain* 風雨歸莊, which he had seen at Mr. Yang's (Yang Jin 楊晉, ca.1644-1728) house Zhushen zhai 竹深齋 (Studio in the Deep Bamboo) in the 9th month of 1672. During this time, Wang Hui, Da Chongguang, and Yun Shouping stayed together for approximately 40 days in Yang Jin's house in Piling 毗陵, today's Changzhou, which is also mentioned in Yun Shouping's colophon on Wang Hui's 9th leaf of the aforementioned album *In Pursuit of Antiquity: Landscape after Song and Yuan Masters*.⁵⁵ Wang Hui might have recalled their long stay in Piling at Yang Jin's house 29 years earlier when he saw Yun's scroll *Ferrying a Crane*.

A re-reading of Wang Hui's colophon affects or even changes the original meaning of Yun Shouping's painting *Ferrying a Crane*. It also affects the understanding of the pictorial images: Compared to the man with his crane, the large water area seems to be too large to be attainable, just as the endless grief. This painting is actually a work produced by Yun Shouping in

⁵⁵ Maxwell Hearn (ed., 2008), 198.

collaboration with Wang Hui. Through a multi-leveled reading the painting is transformed into an interaction between the painter Yun Shouping, the inscriber Wang Hui, and the viewer, in which the sorrow of Wang Hui and the friendship between him and Yun Shouping can be appreciated.

2. Representing Death and the Way of Imitation

While death is a significant theme in Western art, it is hardly represented in Chinese literati painting. If Shen Zhou was one of the first painters who brought the subject of death into painting through the implementation of colophons, Wen Zhengming's *The Jixiang Chapel* 吉祥庵圖 was maybe the first extant visual representation of death in Chinese literati painting. Moreover, the imitation of Wen's *The Jixiang Chapel* by Lu Shidao 陸師道 (1510? - 1573?) provides an interesting example of a semi-reproduction.

Wen Zhengming (1470-1559) and Lu Shidao (1510?-1573?)

Although Shen Zhou established Suzhou as the leading center of literati painting in the Ming and was founder of the Wu school, it was not Shen Zhou's style, but those of his pupil Wen Zhengming (earlier name Wen Bi 文璧,⁵⁶ hao Hengshan 衡山, Hengshan jushi 衡山居士, zi Zhengming 徵明, later zi Zhengzhong 徵仲) that were most influential in the 16th century. As James Cahill states: "Wen Cheng-ming, more than anyone else, gives Soochow painting of this period its special color and flavor."⁵⁷

Wen Zhengming's hanging scroll *The Jixiang Chapel* is a commemorative painting in memory of his friend Liu Xiezhong 劉協中 (1497? - before 1521) (Fig. 23). Two sitting figures, one in a red robe with a bare chest and the other looking like a monk with his back to the viewer, seem to talk in a cottage in the same compound in which the Jixiang chapel must be located. Not far from them, the representation of an empty stool can be observed in a

⁵⁶ This *bi* 璧 does not mean "wall" 壁 as Craig Clunas pointed out. In: Craig Clunas (2004), 19. It refers to a kind of jade instead, normally a round flat piece with a hole in it.

⁵⁷ James Cahill (1978), 211.

triangular composition. It is clear that the monk must be master Quanhefeng 權鶴峰 and the figure depicted with a bare chest is Wen Zhengming himself, while the empty stool is the place where Liu Xiezhong must have usually sat (Fig. 24). The empty stool reveals the absence of Liu Xiezhong and actually constitutes a representation of Liu's death. In a smaller cottage, a servant is preparing tea. Beside the big cottage is a huge *taihu* 太湖 rock, as well as some palm and banana trees. Behind it stands a big pine tree, which probably hints at the virtue of the figures. The foreground is separated from the middleground by a balustrade near a pond. There is a long inscription by Wen Zhengming. It reads:

The Jixiang chapel is located to the left of Zhengming's residence. He once visited the monk Quanhefeng there, together with his departed friend Liu Xiezhong. Xiezhong left the following poem:

The old chapel is located in a quiet place in the city.
Just after half a day we thought about returning.
Not clearing of is the debt of racing with clothes full of sweat,
as we were aiming for visiting the monk, but not the mountain.

Zhengming answered him in following the rhyme:
On the bamboo couch in the highly quiescent hall,
we sat there enjoying the shadow of palm and forgot to go home.
Between dormant water and bamboo we let our mind fly.
We don't have to stay long in the devoid mountain, for we grasped each other's mind.

Many years have gone by and Xiezhong has passed away.
After having read the old writings, I recalled its rhyme and wrote:
Among dust and tracks we had to run one after another.
I feel embarrassed for pacing around the temple.
I cannot meet the old friend any more and to be left over is only the rendezvous in vain,
together with the dark intermittent drizzles framing the west mountain.

It was in the 14th year of the Hongzhi reign in the *xinyou* year [1501]. Until now it has been the Zhengde reign of the *gengchen* year [1520] and twenty years have gone. The chapel was damaged by fire and the Master Quan[hefeng] passed away a couple of years ago. I recalled the old relationship and

felt saddened at heart and lost. And I followed the old rhyme again:

On that day, I was in front of the empty chapel facing the swallows.

Sorrowfully, I accompany the sun going home.

After the damage who could understand [the fortune teller] Xing Hepu?

In my ageing time, I only feel sad for Yu Zishan, [who couldn't come back to his hometown in Southern China.]

The other day I talked about it with Xisun, the son of Xiezhong, by chance. I wrote the poem and painted it down according to my memory. After that, I gave it to Xisun to keep as an anecdote of the village. It is on the 8th day of the 2nd month of the 16th *xinsi* year [1521].

徵明舍西有吉祥庵，往歲嘗與亡友劉協中訪僧權鶴峰過之。協中賦詩云：“城裡幽棲古寺閒，相依半日便思還。汗衣未了奔馳債，便是逢僧怕問山。”徵明和云：“殿堂深寂竹牀閒，坐戀疎陰忘卻還。水竹悠然有遐想，會心何必在深山？”越數年過之，則協中已亡，因讀舊題，追思其韻：

“塵蹤俗狀強追閒，慚愧空門數往還。不見故人遺跡在，黃梅雨暗郭西山。”時弘治十四年辛酉也。抵今正德庚辰，又二十年矣。菴既毀於火，而權師化去復數年。追感昔遊，不覺愴[*chuang*]失。因再疊前韻：“當日空門對燕閒，傷[*shang*]心今送夕陽還。劫餘誰悟邢和璞？老去徒悲[*bei*]庾子山。”他日偶與協中之子穉孫談及，因寫此詩，並追圖其事，付穉孫藏為里中故實云。時十六年辛巳二月八日也。⁵⁸

In his long inscription, Wen Zhengming recalled that he and his friend Liu Xiezhong once visited together the Buddhist monk Quanhefeng in the Jixiang chapel and his subsequent sadness because of Liu's death a couple of years later. It is followed by the story of the Jixiang chapel which was ruined by fire and Quanhefeng's death about 20 years after Liu's death. Wen Zhengming used altogether three characters, *chuang* 愴 for feeling saddened at heart, *shang* 傷 for hurt, and *bei* 悲 for sorrow addressing his sadness: According to the *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字 (An Analytical Dictionary of Chinese Characters), originated between 100 to 121, *chuang* 愴 originally

⁵⁸ *Wen Zhengming ji* 文徵明集 (The Collection of Wen Zhengming). Zhou Daozhen 周道振 (ed.). Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1987 (reprint).

means wound with *shang* 傷 as its synonym, *bei* 悲 is the synonym of *tong* 痛 (pain) used by Wu Li on his *Xingfu* scroll.⁵⁹ It is quite instructive how Wen Zhengming represented Liu Xiezhong's death. Although Liu Xiezhong was dead, it seemed that his soul was still there enjoying the talk between the monk Quanhefeng and Wen Zhengming. Wen Zhengming's hanging scroll is unique in representing death in Chinese painting by depicting an empty stool - the concept of absence. According to Christina Staudt, in the Western art tradition the representation of death by using the concept of absence was first used in the 19th century. She goes on to write:

Traditional symbols for death, e.g. the extinguished candle or the empty hourglass, continued to be useful in nineteenth-century visual culture. But the changing times demanded new expressions, so new metaphors for death emerged. The most potent was absence.⁶⁰

The concept of absence is however seldom taken up by later literati painters. Actually, Wu Li's *Xingfu* scroll seems to be the only other literati memorial painting employing this concept that I could find. An empty chamber instead of an empty stool was represented at the beginning section of the *Xingfu* scroll. It is possible that Wu Li was inspired by Wen's concept of absence. However, further exploration will be found later when the *Xingfu* scroll is discussed.

The painting *Imitating "The Jixiang Chapel" by Wen Zhengming* 臨文徵明吉祥庵圖 by Wen's pupil Lu Shidao is as its title suggests, an imitation of Wen's painting and, at the same time, a memorial painting of his teacher Wen Zhengming (Fig. 25; Fig. 26). The picture part constitutes an almost exact copy of Wen's original painting. Lu Shidao also took over most of Wen's original inscription, but left out the last poem by Wen and some other

⁵⁹ *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字 (An Analytical Dictionary of Chinese Characters). Xu Shen 許慎, reedited and published by Xu Xuan 徐鉉 in 986. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2001 (first ed. 1963), 222; 167. The english translation "[feel] saddened at heart" of the word *chuang* is by Lothar Ledderose. Lothar Ledderose. "Van Gulik's Tobacco Box". In: *Orientalisms*, Vol. 44, No. 4, May 2012, 55. More about the meanings of *shang* and *tong* see: Ulrike Middendorf. "Ecstasis, Recession, Pain: Images of Suffering in the *Classic of Poetry*". In: *From Skin to Heart. Perceptions of Emotions and Bodily Sensations in Traditional Chinese Culture*. Paolo Santangelo (ed.) in Cooperation with Ulrike Middendorf. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, 2006, 67-68; 70-73.

⁶⁰ Christina C. Staudt. *Picturing the Dead and Dying in Nineteenth-Century L'ILLUSTRATION*. PhD thesis. UMI. Columbia University, 2001, 352.

details. Most importantly, Lu Shidao changed Wen Zhengming's name to Master Hengshan in his inscription and by doing so, he changed the whole mood and meaning of the painting. It is thus transformed into a memorial painting of his teacher Wen Zhengming. Lu's inscription without the poems reads:

To the west of Master Hengshan's [*hao* of Wen Zhengming] residence is the Jixiang chapel. Once he visited the monk Quanhefeng there with his departed friend Liu Xiezhong. Xiezhong left the following poem: [...] The Master Hengshan answered him in following the rhyme: [...] After having read the old writings, I recalled its rhyme and wrote: [...] It was in the 2nd month of the *xinyou* year [1501]. Until now, the *gengchen* year [1520], twenty years have passed. I recalled the old relationship and felt saddened at heart and lost. The other day, by chance I talked about it with Xisun, the son of Xiezhong. I did the painting according to my memory. After that, I gave it to Xisun to keep as an anecdote of the village. It is on the 8th day of the 2nd month of the *xinsi* year [1521]. It is called *The Painting of the Jixiang Chapel*, imitated by Lu Shidao.

衡山師舍西有吉祥庵。往歲嘗與故友劉協中訪僧權鶴峰過之。協中賦詩云：城裡幽棲古寺間，相依半日便思還；汗衣未了奔馳債，便是逢僧怕問山。衡山師和云：殿堂深寂竹床間，坐戀櫻陰忘卻還；水竹悠然有遐相，會心何必在空山。因讀舊題，追次其韻：塵蹤俗狀強追閒，慚愧空門數往還；不見故人（？）空約在，黃梅雨暗郭西山。時辛酉仲春，抵今庚辰，又二十年矣。追感昔遊，不覺愴失。他日偶與協中之子穉孫談及，因追圖其事，付穉孫藏為里中故實云。時辛巳二月八日也。吉祥庵圖。陸師道謹臨。

The last sentence of Lu Shidao's inscription caused a problem in its dating. In Wen's original inscription "*shiliu nian xinsi er yue ba ri* 十六年辛巳二月八日", i.e. "the 8th day of the 2nd month of the *xinsi* year of the 16th year of the reign [1521]" is given. Lu Shidao however erased the first three characters "*shiliu nian* 十六年" and kept the rest of it. Since the *xinsi* year only occurs once in sixty years, it could be either 1521 or 1581. Today the dating of 1581 is accepted in almost all available publications, such as *Gugong shuhua tulu* 故宮書畫圖錄 (Catalog of Calligraphy and Painting from the National Palace Museum), published by the National Palace

Museum in Taipei, is however after Lu's death.⁶¹ As a matter of fact, Lu Shidao's dating is just a pseudo-dating due to his loose imitation. Lu Shidao imitated not only Wen Zhangming's picture, but also the larger part of Wen's inscription.

Lu Shidao painted his commemorative painting in memory of Wen Zhengming by imitating a painting of his teacher. Thus, his painting illustrates the phenomenon that imitation can be considered as a "form of reverence".⁶² The process by which Lu Shidao created memory for his teacher can be observed and conceived by understanding his imitation and inscription. Moreover, the memory is activated through the process of painting. But on the other hand, such kind of imitation lacks of creation. As a matter of fact, all the Wen Zhengming's followers in Suzhou in the later 16th century worked in his shadow. According to James Cahill, they imitate some features of his style but generally lose sight of Wen Zhengming's structural soundness and moderation.⁶³

3. The Theme of Filial Piety

Filial piety, *xiao* 孝 or *xiao dao* 孝道 in Chinese, is a basic principle of the Confucian morality serving as a primary ethical foundation of Chinese society. From the late Eastern Zhou period onward, it had been a favorite subject matter in both literature and art.⁶⁴ In the *Lunyu* 論語 (The Analects of Confucius) issues about "*shi fumu* 事父母 (serve the parents)" and "*xiao* 孝

⁶¹ *Gugong shuhua tulu* 故宮書畫圖錄 (Catalog of Calligraphy and Painting from the National Palace Museum), Vol. 8. Taipei: National Palace Museum, 1989-1992, 139-140. In the data bank of the National Palace Museum Taipei, both the year 1573 of Lu's death and the dating 1581 of his painting *The Jixiang Chapel* are given, however without any explanation: http://painting.npm.gov.tw/npm_public/System/View.jsp?type=1&ObjectID=6461, July, 29 2012.

⁶² James Cahill (1978), 80-81.

⁶³ James Cahill (1982b), 6.

⁶⁴ Kindall, Elizabeth. "The Paintings of Huang Xiangjian's *Filial Journey to the Southwest*." In: *Artibus Asiae* 67 (2007), No. 2, 336.

(filial)” are constantly discussed.⁶⁵ Later on, filial piety became the central issue in *Xiaojing* 孝經 (Classic of Filial Piety).

Chinese literati memorial paintings with the theme of filial piety were originally paintings commissioned by patrons to commemorate their dead parents. In reality, however, they functioned as eulogies for the patrons aiming to proclaim their moral virtue of filial piety in the Confucian sense. Compared with other literati memorial paintings, the filial piety paintings were not produced for people within a small social group, but for a wider circle of literati and later generations from the family and clan of the patron. To win the recognition of achievement from the elite society is the real goal of patron’s commissioning filial piety paintings, which can be observed by the long colophons written by many eminent literati. From this point of view, Chinese literati memorial painting of filial piety is a kind of functional painting, which is to be used by the patron to get a recognized status in the society.

Tang Yin’s (1470-1524) and Yu Zhiding’s (1647-1716) *Fengmu tu*

The word *fengmu* 風木, literally wind and tree, derives from the phrase *fengmu han bei* 風木含悲, grief containing in wind and tree, which refers to the sadness of children who are unable to serve their deceased parents with the filial piety they are supposed to cherish. This is vividly described by Han Ying 韓嬰 (ca. 200- ca. 130 BC) in his *Hanshi waizhuan* 韓詩外傳 (The Outer Commentary to the *Book of Songs* by Master Han, ca. 150 BC): “The tree needs rest, but the wind does not stop. The son is ready to support, but the parents could not linger any more. 樹欲靜而風不止，子欲養而親不待.”⁶⁶ During the Ming and Qing periods, *fengmu tu* 風木圖 (The tree in wind) became a favourite subject in commemorative painting for deceased parents.

⁶⁵ James Legge. *The Chinese Classics. Vol. I & II. Confucian Analects, The Great Learning, The Doctrine of the Mean, The Works of Mencius*. Taipei: SMC Publishing INC, 1994 (third ed.), 138-140; 142; 148; 152-153; 170-171 and passim.

⁶⁶ *Hanshi waizhuan* 韓詩外傳. Han Ying 韓嬰. Vol. 9. Xu Weiyu 許維通 (ed.). Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980, 309.

Tang Yin's 唐寅 (1470-1524) handscroll *Fengmu tu* (The Tree in Wind) was painted for a certain Ximo 希謨 (Huang Zhizhun 黃志諄, ?-?). A human figure dressed in a scholar robe, presumably Ximo, is sitting under two trees (Fig. 27). The branches are turned to the right because of the wind, while the figure is shown with his face to the left. With a hand in front of his mouth, the figure seems to be weeping. Tang Yin's inscription reads:

The west wind blows the leaves and the whole court is filled
with coldness.
The son of mischief, wordlessly, goes to burst into tears.
His heart is in the *jiuquan* netherworld while the lamp is
hanging on the wall.
The front of his garment is filled with clear blood while tears
moisten the balustrade.

西風吹葉滿庭寒，
孽子無言鼻自酸；
心在九泉燈在壁，
一襟清血淚闌干。

There is no other extant source about the patron Ximo. But from the 27 colophons written by Wen Zhengming's son Wen Jia 文嘉 (1501-1583), Lu Shidao, Zhou Tianqiu 周天球 (1514-1595), and other literati from the elite of the society, it is likely of him being their peer.

In the late Ming, filial piety became more relevant, when moral consciousness was stressed. One factor was, it was believed by the Taizhou school followers of Wang Yangming that both elite and ordinary people could cultivate themselves.⁶⁷ Another was due to the morality book movement, which began in the 16th century, reached its peak in the 17th and 18th centuries.⁶⁸ Filial piety became a "repeated injunction" for each social group in the morality books in the late Ming period.⁶⁹ It meant that one can control one's own destiny by striving for virtue or one can judge the value of one's

⁶⁷ Julia Murray. *Mirror of Morality: Chinese Narrative Illustration and Confucian Ideology*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007, 94.

⁶⁸ Cynthia J. Brokaw. *The Ledgers of Merit and Demerit. Social Change and Moral Order in Late Imperial China*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1991, 61.

⁶⁹ Tadao, Sakai. "Confucianism and Popular Educational Works". In: *Self and Society in Ming Thought*. Wm. Theodore de Bary (eds.). New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1970, 361.

own actions and be thus assured of an appropriate reward.⁷⁰ This was the background for the growing popularity of so-called popular morality books (*shanshu* 善書, literally: good books) and the idea of *gongguoge* 功過格, ledgers of merit and demerit, at all levels of society: The value of human deeds was calculated by means of how many credits or merits were attached to each good deed and how many debits or demerits were attached for every evil deed.⁷¹ People were praised if they were thought to possess the moral value of filial piety and those who were convinced that they had it, commissioned paintings like *Fengmu tu* by Tang Yin with the hope of self-promotion, defining thus elite identity, social support, and the urge becoming better established within a social network.⁷²

The *Fengmu tu* by Yu Zhiding 禹之鼎 (1647-1716) was painted for Wang Ying 王煥 (*hao* Ziweng 紫翁, 1651-1726) in 1697, whose father died at the beginning of the same year (Fig. 28). A human figure, possibly the patron Wang Ying, is depicted in the center of the handscroll with a long beard and a scholar's robe, which is shown blowing slightly in the wind (Fig. 29). The misty landscape without any trace of birds in the background taints the painting in a mood of melancholy and mourning. Several pine trees hint at the virtue of the patron Wang Ying, who mourned his father according to the mourning rites.

There are 25 post-colophons by eminent scholars of the time, such as, Zhu Yizun 朱彝尊 (1629-1709), who was active in the anti-Manchu movement in his early years, and the collector Song Xing 宋榮 (active at the end of 17th century).⁷³ The colophon writers from the elite recollect, pay respect to, and commend the act of mourning for Wang Ying's dead father. Similar to the patron of Tang Yin's *Fengmu tu*, Wang Ying's action of having asked 25

⁷⁰ Ibid., 342. For more information on the issue of morality books, see: Sakai Tadao 酒井忠夫. *Zhongguo shanshu yanjiu* 中國善書研究 (Research on Chinese Morality Books). Trans. by Liu Yuebing and He Yingying from Japanese. Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 2010.

⁷¹ Tadao, Sakai (1970), 341-342.

⁷² See also: Julia Murray (2007), 2.

⁷³ Gao Shuwei 高樹偉. "Wang Nancun, Fengmu tu, Cao Yin --- Tigong liangfen guanyu Cao Yin de xin cailiao 王南村, 風木圖, 曹寅 --- 提供兩份關於曹寅的新材料" (Wang Nancun, *The Tree in Wind* and Cao Yin --- Two Instances of New Material on Cao Yin). In: *Honglou meng xuekan* 紅樓夢學刊, 2012, vol. 2: 296-325. Also published in http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_51cd2fac01010650.html, 12 Aug. 2012.

famous scholars to write post-colophons was his way of assuring “an appropriate reward”.⁷⁴

Wang Ying was the inspector of Huizhou 惠州知府 from 1689 to 1696 and had close contacts with some famous literati of that time such as Qu Dajun 屈大均 (1630-1696), Chen Gongyin 陳恭尹 (1631-1700) and Liang Peilan 梁佩蘭 (1629-1705), for whom Wang Ying wrote the foreword for their poetry collection *Lingnan sanjia shixuan* 嶺南三家詩選 (Poetry Collection of Three Masters from the Lingnan Area) published in 1693.⁷⁵ The poems of Qu Dajun and Chen Gongyin, who were active in the anti-Manchu movement after the fall of the Ming, are in large part political statements against the Manchu conquest. Liang Peilan, however, initially served the Qing regime, but only for less than two years. This book was soon censored after its publication.⁷⁶ According to Gao Shuwei, Wang Ying seemingly never accepted any position offered by the Qing regime ever after.⁷⁷ Thus it is quite reasonable to assume that Yu Zhiding’s *Fengmu tu* is related to the issue of Ming loyalism. In her article “The Paintings of Huang Xiangjian’s ‘*Filial Journey to the Southwest*’” Elizabeth Kindall has pointed out that many filial piety paintings of the Ming-Qing transition were actually dealing with the subject of Ming loyalism. These filial piety paintings, whose audience were Ming loyalists, present a subtle symbolism that ensured the safety of their creator and viewers.⁷⁸ The filial relationship between father and son represents the loyalty of the officials towards the Emperor. The ancient equation of filiality and loyalty is mentioned in the Classic *Li ji*, which reads, “Throughout heaven and earth, he who is disloyal in serving his lord is not filial.”⁷⁹ All in all, Yu Zhiding’s *Fengmu tu* was primarily a

⁷⁴ Tadao Sakai (1970), 342.

⁷⁵ On Wang Ying see: *Huizhou fuzhi* 惠州府志. Liu Guinian 劉淮年, Deng Lunbin 鄧掄斌 et al (eds.). Taipei: Chengwen chubanshe, 1966 (first published 1881), 160; 308; 507-508. The Lingnan area refers to today’s Guangdong, Guangxi, and Hainan provinces.

⁷⁶ Zou Fulian 鄒富聯. “Fenghu shuyuan jiaoyu lishi yuanliu yiji banxue tese” 豐湖書院教育歷史以及辦學特色 (The Fenghu Academy: Its History and Way of Teaching). In: *Huizhou xueyuan xuebao* 惠州學院學報 (Journal of Huizhou University). Vol. 30, No. 1, Feb. 2010, 21.

⁷⁷ Gao Shuwei 高樹偉 (2012), also: http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_51cd2fac0101065o.html, 12 Aug. 2012.

⁷⁸ Elizabeth Kindall (2007), No. 2, 347.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 343.

memorial painting in memory of the patron's father, while functioning as a eulogy for Wang Ying proclaiming his achievement of filial piety, finally but breathed an air of anti-Manchu resentment.

Compared to the Ming, the Manchu rulers' stress on Confucian morality was even stronger than that of the Ming.⁸⁰ Therefore, it is no wonder that the subject of *fengmu tu* was also popular in the Qing, although often with an anti-Qing slant. This can be observed not only in Yu Zhiding's painting but also in the next one by Shitao.

Shitao's (1642-1707) *The Ancestral Tombs of the Fei Family*

Shitao 石濤 (1642-1707) painted *The Ancestral Tombs of the Fei Family* 費氏先塋圖 in 1702 (Fig. 30). According to Shitao's inscription, this painting was first commissioned by Fei Mi 費密 (*zi* Cidu 此度, 1625-1701), who asked for a painting to commemorate his ancestors, or more precisely, in order to demonstrate his filiality to them. Approximately three months later, Fei Mi died and, Shitao's painting became thus not only a depiction of the ancestral tombs of the Fei family, but also a commemorative painting of the recently deceased Fei Mi. The whole inscription reads as follows:

While he was still alive, Mr. Cidu requested that I paint for him a picture of his ancestral tombs. This was the anxious concern of a filial son. However, I had no way of knowing the precise aspect of the site. The gentleman was to make his own drawing of the place as he knew it to act as my guide, and I could then take up brushes. But some three months later I heard the news of his death. Now, his son has most humbly brought the drawing and asked me to quickly make a painting to fulfill his respected father's wish. So I breathed upon my frozen brushtip and executed this painting. May his soul judge its value.

His old name was, in its time, in Chengdu;

The family tombs are at Xinfan, also more than ten thousand *li* away.

To eat beans or be left for drowned were hardly unusual;

Swords and lances barred the path of the fleeing scholar.

⁸⁰ Censors of the Manchu government were ready to denounce not only any book that contained imagined ethnic slurs, but also any book deemed "injurious to the public morals." Stephen Owen (1996), 910.

The family's [copies of the] classics, his secret love, were
turned to dead leaves;
He fled his devastated home like an orphan in winter.
How could he have imagined that Yetian would be his final
resting-place?
This old man cannot help but weep for the hermit.⁸¹

此度先生生前乞予為先塋圖，孝子之用心也。然規制本末
予不可知，先生將自寫其心目所及而為之向導，予乃從事
筆墨焉。三數月後而先生之卜聞於我矣。令子匍伏攜草稿
請速成之，以副先君子之志，因呵凍作此，靈其鑒之。
故家生世舊成都，丘墓新繁萬里餘。俎豆淹留徒往事，兵
戈阻絕走鴻儒。傳經奕葉心期切，削跡荒鄉歲莫孤。何意
野田便永訣，不堪吾老哭潛夫。

This handscroll has a panoramic view which begins with the town gate of Xinfan 新繁 in Sichuan province, the hometown of the Fei family, and ends with the tombs in the western part of the town (Fig. 31). It is painted in ink, but with some bright colors of blue and brownish red. The blue painted stone tablet among straight grown trees, which marks the tomb, contrasts with the red painted city gate (Fig. 32). The scroll has at least three different intentions: The first one apparently is the attempt to highlight Fei Mi's and his sons' filial piety, which was sanctioned by the public and respected by it, as seen in the surviving colophons to the painting.⁸² Secondly, there is a kind of "obsessive quality to the family's cult of the ancestral tombs" as pointed out by Jonatha Hay.⁸³ It can be best observed in an account by Fei Xihuang 費錫璜 (1644-?) after his father Fei Mi's funeral:

The tombs at Xinfan lie to the right of the alter to the gods of grain at the west [city] gate. While they were still alive, my father and grandfather both had a long-standing desire to return west. Every time they looked westwards tears soaked their sleeves, but they died without managing to fulfill their wish to return just once in order to pay their respects at the family tombs. In the end, when they themselves died they were buried here. Alas! Our family then became residents of Jiangdu. This is the tomb of our first Jiangdu ancestors. At the end of the year, at the time of the *loula* ceremony, when we descendants perform the rites, we always pay our respects first to the west, and only then to this tomb. We dare not forget

⁸¹ Trans. by Jonathan Hay. In: Jonathan Hay (2001), 60.

⁸² Ibid., 62.

⁸³ Ibid.

Shu! We, the sons and grandsons, if it was not because of the great chaos and the great suffering, we should have never left our hometown lightly.⁸⁴

新繁墓在西門社稷壇右。吾祖吾父在時長懷西歸，每西望輒泣下沾巾袖。卒之欲一歸拜墓而不可得，歿而竟葬於此。嗚呼！吾費氏遂為江都人矣，此為江都始祖之墓。歲時臘，子孫來酌酒設肉、焚冥楮，必先西拜而後拜墓，不敢忘蜀也。子孫不經大離亂大患難，慎勿輕去其鄉哉！

Fei Mi certainly entertained the wish of coming back to the ancestral tomb in order to have a good death or a good afterlife. It is likely that Fei Mi not only anticipated his coming death, but also the fact that he would not be able to return to his hometown prior to his death. Since Shitao's painting is based on a drawing done by Fei Mi, it is clear that the goal was to produce a topographical painting of the tomb site. This would guarantee that Fei Mi's soul would be able to find its right place, namely, the place where ancestral souls belong. And this is the most important reason to detect "obsessive quality" to the Fei family's cult of the ancestral tombs. According to Chinese concepts of afterlife, however, shortly after death the soul is released from the body and reunites with the ancestral souls. This also explains why Fei Mi's son asked Shitao to complete the scroll as fast as possible as the inscription states.

At the same time, the Fei family clearly entertained the hope to send Fei Mi's body back to Sichuan. However, Fei Mi was not buried at the family gravesite at Yetian 野田 near Yangzhou until 1706, nearly five years after his death.⁸⁵ This detail affirms the Fei family's belief that the corpse should be taken back to the ancestral tombs, which, however, did not work out.

The third possible intention of the scroll is related to the fate of the Fei family, which had experienced chaos and suffering during the Qing conquest as the last sentence of Fei Xihuang's account suggests. Fei Mi was one of Yangzhou's foremost famous intellectual figures and was involved in the

⁸⁴ Trans. by Jonathan Hay. In: Jonathan Hay (2001), 63. However there are two important changes of mine. The first change concerns the *loulou* 臘 ceremony, which did not take place in the 8th month as Hay pointed out, but at the end of the year. The second change is the last sentence, which is of significance for my understanding of the scroll, but wrongly translated by Jonathan Hay. The Chinese text is given in: Jonathan Hay (2010), 78.

⁸⁵ Jonathan Hay (2001), 63.

resistance against Zhang Xianzhong's 張獻忠 rebellion from 1644 to 1646 and later in the resistance against the Manchus. In 1648, he had a secretarial post under the Ming general Lü Daqi 呂大器 (1586-1649). Three years later, finding his home in ashes upon his return to Xinfan, he moved his family to Mianxian 勉縣 in Shaanxi province. In 1658, Fei Mi and his family joined his father in Yangzhou. Only then did the refuge and exile of the members of the Fei family which had lasted for 15 years, end.⁸⁶ So, Shitao's scroll not only deals with the fate of a single family, but also constitutes a collective memorial, since thousands of families and Han Chinese shared the experience of withdrawal, resistance, refuge, and exile during the Ming-Qing transition. Looking beyond the Fei family story, the viewer can detect a political statement against the Manchu conquest on the scroll, disguised as a memorial of the past. Thus, Shitao's scroll constitutes a commemorative painting for the dead Fei Mi with the intention to celebrate the Fei family's filial piety. Furthermore, the topographical precision assures Fei Mi's soul finding its way back to the ancestral tomb in his hometown Xinfan. On a second level, the handscroll conveys a family's story of exile in a very subtle way, which is indeed a political statement against the Qing regime. The combination of the subject filial piety with an allusive political statement against the Manchu's conquest is an interesting phenomenon in Chinese painting in the Ming-Qing transition. It was the fear of the Qing regime's punishment, which made such paintings expressed deliberately concealed. The subject about Ming loyalists will be further explored in the following section.

4. The Ming Nostalgia

The fall of the Ming in 1644 resulted in drastic changes in both art and society. Memorial paintings by Ming loyalists (*yi min* 遺民) who lived through the Qing conquest became important in the whole history of Chinese literati memorial painting and were characterized by an interplay of personal

⁸⁶ Ibid., 61.

experience and historical memory. About the Ming loyalists Craig Clunas states as follows:

For the ‘remnant subjects’ (*yi min*), that is for those born under the Ming allegiance who now found themselves the subject of a dynasty that insisted on material proof of a change of loyalty, worn on the body in the form of new clothing patterns and new hairstyles, nostalgia was no simple self-indulgence.⁸⁷

The sense of regret, nostalgia, and grief was blended into the Ming loyalists’ work. Political memory or nostalgia for a lost dynasty were not unprecedented in Chinese painting and can be observed during the Yuan and in the early Ming when the prominence of historical memories and personal experience played an important role. After the fall of the Ming, nostalgia not only found its place in painting, calligraphy and literature, but in numerous other personal responses, such as, collections of anecdotes about the Ming. The Ming and its culture did not vanish overnight. Its fall was in fact not an event but a process. Craig Clunas goes on to write:

Ming things, Ming images, or images of Ming things, were in the seventeenth century a “place of memory” in the sense invoked by the French historian Pierre Nora. The painting of the period is in many cases suffused with cryptic political symbolism regretting the fall of the Ming.⁸⁸

For a Ming loyalist writer, life could be dangerous, since any writing was censored by the Qing regime. Anybody with writings of overt political statement could be punished by death. It was the same in art. The use of allusion and symbol was extremely relevant for assuring the artist’s life. The following three paintings provide examples of the subtle way of representation when political statement is concerned.

Xiang Shengmo’s (1597-1658) *Venerable Friends*

The issues of mental pain and emotion became extremely important for Ming loyalists. Their feelings were dominated by a sense of loss, regret, frustration and disappointment while they simultaneously suffered from an identity

⁸⁷ Craig Clunas (2007), 214.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

crises in this highly politicised period. *Venerable Friends* 尚友圖 is painted by Zhang Qi 張琦 (active mid-17th century) and the Ming loyalist Xiang Shengmo 項聖謨 (1597-1658, *zi* Kongzhang 孔彰) in 1652 (Fig. 33). In his inscription, Xiang Shengmo mentions that Zhang Qi painted the portrait figures while he himself contributed the background. The inscription by Xiang reads as follows:

Xiang was forty years old at that time and got along well with the other five senior masters in the realm of art. They were like teachers with students, and friends with friends. They wrote colophons for each other and bestowed their paintings to each other. After the dramatic events, only one-tenth of it has been preserved. Today, I only have contact with Lu Zhushi because the other four have passed away. In memory of the old times, I painted *Venerable Friends*. Everyone is depicted in accordance with his spirit. The one with the *jin*-hat, the dark red robe, and one hand holding the scroll while the other one points somewhere with gazing eyes is the Chief Minister master Dong Xuanzai [Xuanzai is the *zi* of Dong Qichang]. The one with the blue *jiao*-hat and the brown robe, sitting next to the Chief Minister on the stone is Mr. Meigong Chen Zhengjun [Chen Jiru], holding the scroll and talking. The one with the *tang*-hat sitting straight, with his hand writing on his belly is the uncle of my wife, Chief Minister of the Court of the Imperial Study, Li Jiuyi [Li Rihua]. The one with the *yuanming*-hat looking like a sick crane is Lu Zhushi [Zhushi and Lushan are the *hao* of Lu Dezhi]. The monk is Qiutan xuangong, the poet of Chan Buddhism. The one with the *gaojiao*-hat and blank robe, standing under the pine and phoenix tree, with one hand holding a scroll and leaning against a rock, with the other hand pointing at something as if inquiring about it to the two masters is Xiang Xuqiao with the *zi* of Kongzhang [Xiang Shengmo], who also wrote the following poem: The five old masters are all good at painting and calligraphy; The friendship between them could almost be called a friendship between two people with a great difference in age; The legend of their mutual expectations and promises will be passed along for a thousand years. Both will be transmitted, their painting and their art in composing Chan poetry. On the 8th day of the 8th month of the *renchen* year [1652] Xiang writes himself the inscription. The portraits are by Zhang Qi and the rest is by Kongzhang. I wrote all these in the light of lamp.

項子時年四十，在五老游藝林中遂相稱許，相師相友，題贈多篇。滄桑之餘，僅存什一，今惟與魯竹史往還，四公皆古人矣。因追憶昔時，乃作尚友圖。各肖其神，其晉巾

荔服，一手執卷端，一手若指示而凝眸者，為宗伯董玄宰師。其藍角巾褐衣，與宗伯並坐一石，展卷而談者，為眉公陳徵君先生。其唐巾昂坐，以手畫腹上作書者，為罔卿李九疑妻伯。其淵明巾如病鶴者，為竹史魯魯山。釋則秋潭舷公詩禪也。其高角巾素衣，立於松梧之下，一手持卷倚石，一手指點，若有所質於二公者，即胥樵項子孔彰也，並題一絕云：五老皆深翰墨緣，往還尚論稱忘年；相期相許垂千古，畫脉詩禪已竝傳。壬辰八月十八日項子自題，像則張琦所寫，餘亦孔彰自畫，燈下書此。

This painting is an imaginary group portrait of an idealized literary gathering, which most likely never happened. Only Xiang Shengmo and Lu Dezhi 魯得之 (1585-after 1660) were still alive when the painting was completed; the other four had died during the Ming period. At the same time, it constitutes a memorial painting of four distinguished literati, namely, the high Ming official, painter, calligrapher, and one of the most important theorists in Chinese art, Dong Qichang 董其昌 (1555-1636), his best friend, the calligrapher and writer Chen Jiru 陳繼儒 (1558-1639), the high Ming official and writer Li Rihua 李日華 (1565-1635), and the monk and poet Qiutan 秋潭 (1558-1630). So, this painting is a commemorative painting of a gathering of both the living and the dead.

Xiang Shengmo was the grandson of the famous late Ming collector Xiang Yuanbian 項元汴 (1525-1590). Dong Qichang in his youth was employed as a tutor at Xiang's house in Jiaxing in Jiangsu province. For Xiang Shenmo, the Manchu conquest of China in 1644-45 meant the end of a relatively secure way of life. Upon the fall of Yangzhou, Nanjing, and finally Xiang's hometown Jiaxing in 1645, the Xiang family was forced to flee to the south and live as refugees, abandoning their great collection of art works, which was pillaged or destroyed.⁸⁹ According to Xiang Shengmo's inscription on this painting, only one-tenth of his art collection survived the terrible slaughters and the accompanying wave of destruction.

It is remarkable that Xiang Shengmo gives a detailed description of the headgear of the five literati, from the headgear *jin jin* of Dong Qichang to the *gaojiao jin* of Xiang Shengmo himself. Craig Clunas states that the six

⁸⁹ James Cahill (1982b), 130-131.

literati “are dressed in the loose robes of the Ming and in styles of headgear that were out of fashion by 1652.”⁹⁰ After the fall of the Ming, many loyalists became Buddhist or Daoist monks in order to avoid the mandatory haircut following the Manchu style.⁹¹ Huang Zongxi (1610-1695) once wrote a gravestone epitaph for the former Ming official Yu Zengyuan 余增遠 (zi Ruoshui 若水, ?-1669) stressing that after the Ming fall Yu bore a *zaomao* 皂帽 (black hat), regardless if it was summer or winter, and that even his closest relatives and friends never saw his bare head.⁹² Xiang Shengmo’s description of the headgear was not only nostalgia for the Ming, but an act of outright resistance to the Manchu regime, comparable to the behavior of Yu Zengyuan.

Xiang’s inscription with his rather explicit contents was quite dangerous because writing of all kinds was censored as aforementioned. Thus, Chinese literati memorial painting carrying the note of Ming loyalism is often only recognized in a private circle and only at the time of the painting. It was normally represented in a very subtle way as demonstrated in the next painting.

Chen Hongshou’s (1598-1652) *Elegant Gathering*

Chen Hongshou’s 陳洪綬 (1598-1652) *Elegant Gathering* 雅集圖 is an undated memorial painting in memory of nine late Ming scholars (Fig. 34). In the 6th month of 1646, Chen Hongshou became a monk in the Yunmen temple 雲門寺 and began to use his *hao* Senghui 僧悔, Monk of Repentance, as inscribed on the scroll, therefore, this handscroll must have been produced after that. It represents nine human figures in a garden setting who are identified by family names and sobriquets inscribed in gold on the scroll next to them. In the center, an image of a Bodhisattva is depicted. A book, a patterned bowl decorated with lotus petals, and three other jars, one

⁹⁰ Craig Clunas (2007), 215.

⁹¹ For more examples of the headgear and haircut in the early Qing see: Yao Ning (2012), 287.

⁹² Zhao Yuan 趙園. *Ming Qing zhiji shidafu yanjiu* 明清之際士大夫研究 (Research on Literati in the Ming-Qing Transition). Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1999, 309.

with lotus flowers inside, are displayed on the rectangular stone table in front of the Bodhisattva.

The nine figures, eight scholars and a monk, starting from the right side of the scroll are as follows: Tao Shiling 陶奭齡 (*zi* Gongwang 公望, *hao* Shiliang 石梁, 1571-1640) in sitting, the lay Buddhist Wang Zanhua 王贊化 (*zi* Jingxu 靜虛, active in the early 17th century), Tao Yunjia 陶允嘉 (1556-1622), Huang Hui 黃輝 (*zi* Zhaosu 昭素, 1554-1612) with a bamboo stick, the monk Yuan 愚庵 (active in the early 17th century), Mi Wanzhong 米萬鍾 (*zi* Zhongzhao 仲昭, 1570-1628) in the middle holding a scroll with his back toward the viewer, Tao Wangling 陶望齡 (*zi* Zhouwang 周望, *hao* Shigui 石簣 (1562-1609?), and Yuan Hongdao 袁宏道 (*zi* Zhonglang 中郎, 1568-1610) and his brother Yuan Zongdao 袁宗道 (*zi* Boxiu 伯修, 1560-1600) sitting behind two old trees on the left. In the right upper corner of the scroll, Chen Hongshou wrote: Senghui painted it for Qubing daoren 去病道人.

There are archaic elements, such as, rectangular faces, elongated eyes, and robes depicted in a linear manner on the scroll. At the same time, the scroll contains a psychological link between most of the figures: Except for Tao Shiling, the first person on the right, all of the figures pay attention to the two figures in the middle of the scroll, the one in the back who is reading a scroll, and the monk who is pointing to the scroll with his finger. There are different interpretations of Chen Hongshou's scroll. Richard Vinograd analyzes it from a psychological perspective. For James Cahill, it represents the possible depiction of a meeting of the Grape Society, whereas for Tsai Hsing-li, it is a pictorial manifesto of the widespread acceptance of Pure Land Buddhism among the Ming literati. All three consider Chen's scroll however to be echoing the theme of the White Lotus Society in the 5th century: a group made up of laymen and Buddhist monks who gathered to discuss Buddhist doctrines.⁹³ Related to the theme of the White Lotus Society, there are several paintings attributed to Li Gonglin 李公麟 (ca. 1040-1106), such as

⁹³ Cahill (1982a), 129; Richard Vinograd (1992), 35; Tsai Hsing-li. *Chen Hongshou's "Elegant Gathering": A Late-Ming Pictorial Manifesto of Pure Land Buddhism*. PhD thesis. UMI. University of Kansas, 1997, abstract: i.

the scroll *The White Lotus Society* 白蓮社 produced in the Ming (Fig. 35). It is possible that Li Gonglin's paintings served as a visual inspiration for Chen Hongshou.

The brothers Yuan Hongdao and Yuan Zongdao, leaders of the Gongan literary school 公安派, together with Tao Wangling, Huang Hui, and some other literati organized the literary society Putao she 蒲桃社 (also written as 葡萄社, Grape Society) from 1598-1600 in Beijing.⁹⁴ However, the scene on Chen's scroll is not the depiction of a realistic meeting of the Grape Society, because only three or four figures of the Grape Society are represented on the scroll. Neither did it constitute a meeting of any other specific society, since none of the nine seem to have belonged to any other society according to all available sources. Similar to the paintings of elegant gatherings in the Western gardens attributed to Li Gonglin, the meeting of these nine figures is likewise an ideal association as Ellen Laing has pointed out.⁹⁵

Tao Shiling, the younger brother of Tao Wangling, who is depicted sitting at the far right with his back towards the other figures, was a follower of the Neo-Confucian scholar Wang Yangming and belonged together with Liu Zongzhou 劉宗周 (*hao* Niantai 念台, 1578-1645) to the Zhengren Society 證人社. Except for him, all the other people depicted in the painting seem to be Pure Land lay Buddhists or believers.

The fact that Yuan Hongdao was the author of the famous book *Xifang helun* 西方合論 (Entire Commentary on the Western Land) published in 1599 might suggest that the painting constitutes a pictorial manifesto of the widespread Pure Land Buddhism and the Buddhist laymen movement among the Ming literati. Yuan's book deals with his understanding of Buddhism and includes a large number of aphorisms from sutras and Buddhist masters. Yuan simultaneously stresses that chanting Amida Buddha's name is the best practice to reach the Pure Land.⁹⁶ The image of the bodhisattva Manjusri riding on his lion on the scroll suggests the coming of the Pure Land for the

⁹⁴ Richard Vinograd (1992), 35. According to Tsai Hsing-li, Huang Hui took no part in organizing the Grape Society. Tsai Hsing-li (1997), 65.

⁹⁵ Ellen Johnston Laing, "Real or Ideal: The Problem of the Elegant Gathering on the Western Garden in Chinese Historical and Art Historical Records." In: *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 88, No. 3 (Jul.-Sep., 1968): 419-435.

⁹⁶ Tsai Hsing-li (1997), 67.

nine dead figures. It seems as if the painter Chen Hongshou and the patron Qubing daoren wanted to express their wish for the deceased to arrive at the Pure Land paradise, just as expressed on other memorial paintings, such as the *Xingfu* scroll. Compared to Chen Hongshou's scroll, the *Xingfu* scroll is much richer in allusions, but is Chen's scroll really just a "wish painting" for the Pure Land?

An important key in understanding this scroll is to explore the intention of the patron Qubing daoren. Qubing daoren is the *hao* of Tao Sheng 陶涪 (active in the 17th century), identified by two of Tao Sheng's seals on Chen's scroll. He was the grandson of Tao Yunjia, the third standing figure in the scroll (Fig. 36).⁹⁷ This scroll constitutes thus, first and foremost, a memorial painting commemorating Tao Sheng's grandfather, Tao Yunjia, and his contemporaries, friends, and relatives whose social circle Chen Hongshou must have known very well. The patron Tao Qubing and Chen Hongshou, who both were natives of Zhejiang province, Tao was from Taoyan 陶堰 and Chen from Zhuji 諸暨, were in a closely knit social circle. The third figure Tao Yunjia, the grandfather of Tao Qubing, was also the grandfather from the mother's side of Zhang Dai 張岱 (1597-1689), who was one of the best friends of Chen Hongshou. In turn, for Tao Qubing, Chen Hongshou once wrote a letter of a poem called "Thank Tao Qubing for Giving me Rice and Candle" 陶去病贈米燭書謝.⁹⁸

It is important to note that the theme of elegant gatherings was favored among the literati in the Ming-Qing transition. The idea behind it, like in *Venerable Friends* by Xiang Shengmo, is nostalgia for the Ming. The tradition of Chinese literati organizing literary societies started by Mid-Tang (618-907) and reached its peak during the Ming with at least 300 different

⁹⁷ Ibid., 51.

⁹⁸ In: *Chen Hongshou ji* 陳洪綬集 (The Collection of Chen Hongshou). Hangzhou: Zhejiang guji chubanshe, 1994 (reprint), 587. More evidences for the close relationship between Tao Sheng and Chen Hongshou can be mainly found in four historical sources: Chen Hongshou's *Baoluntang ji* 寶綸堂集 (The Collection of Baolun Hall), Zhang Dai's *Taoan mengyi* 陶庵夢憶 (Reminiscences in Dreams of Taoan) and *Xihu mengxun* 西湖夢尋 (Search the West Lake in Dreams) and the diary *Qi Zhongmin gong riji* 祁忠敏公日記 (The Diary by Mr. Qi Zhongmin) by the Ming official Qi Biao 祁彪佳 (1602-1645, *jinshi* of 1622). Qi's diary covers the period from 1631 up to two days before Qi's death on the 6th day of the intercalary 6th month in 1645.

literary societies.⁹⁹ In the twenty years prior to the fall of the Ming, there were almost two hundred societies organized by literati.¹⁰⁰ In 1652, *shengyuan* 生員, licentiates, were forbidden to organize any societies by one of eight laws from the Manchu board of rites.¹⁰¹ Eight years later, in 1660, this law was enforced on anyone with the intention to organize a society of any kind.¹⁰² As early as 1647, the famous case of the monk Hanke 函可 (1611-1660) was considered the first *wenziyu* 文字獄, literary inquisition, of the Qing dynasty which reveals the heavy handedness of the Manchu rule.¹⁰³ In this respect, life under the Qing dynasty was quite dangerous since writing of all kinds were censored.

The patron Tao Sheng was a Ming loyalist. According to the available sources, Tao had organized the Feishe 廢社, Decadence Society, during the late Chongzhen reign (1611-1644), which was dissolved by the Manchus after the fall of the Ming. Tao himself then withdrew to the Pingshui 平水 mountains for six or seven years.¹⁰⁴ Against this backdrop, the meaning of Chen Hongshou's scroll is very complex. At first glance, it appears to be a

⁹⁹ He Zongmei 何宗美. "Mingdai wenren jieshe zonglun" 明代文人結社綜論 (On the Societies of the Ming Literati). In: *Zhongguo wenxue yanjiu* 中國文學研究, 2002, Vol. 2 (No. 65), 51.

¹⁰⁰ He Zongmei. "Mingdai wenren jieshe xianxiang pipan zhi bianxi" 明代文人結社現象批判之辨析 (Critical Analysis about the Phenomenon of Clubs Organized by the Ming Literati). In: *Wenyi yanjiu* 文藝研究, 2010, Vol. 5, 70.

¹⁰¹ Zhang Tao 張濤. "Mingqing zhiji wenren shetuan fazhan de lishi zhuanxiang" 明清之際文人社團發展的歷史轉向 (The Historical Turn of the Development of the Literary Society in the Ming-Qing Transition). In: *Yanshan daxue xuebao* 燕山大學學報 (Journal of Yanshan University), Vol. 8, No. 2, 2007, 76.

¹⁰² He Zongmei (2002), 51.

¹⁰³ Hanke, a native from Boluo 博羅 in Guangdong province with the original name Han Zonglai 韓宗駉, was the son of the Ming Minister of Rites, *libu shangshu* 禮部尚書, Han Rizuan 韓日纘 (ca. 1577-1635). He was found with his book *Zaibian ji* 再變記 about the fall of the Ming and an old letter for Ruan Dacheng 阮大鍼 (1587-1646) written by the Fu Wang 福王 (Zhu Yousong 朱由崧, ?-1646), the grandson of the Ming emperor Shenzong 神宗 (1563-1620), when he was going to leave the city of Nanjing in 1647. Ruan Dacheng was the president of the Board of War and Grand Guardian of the Heir Apparent of the Southern Ming regime of Fu Wang. Hanke was tortured and banished to Shenyang a year later. Yu Meina 于美娜. *Hanke shige yanjiu* 函可詩歌研究 (On Hanks Poetry). Master thesis, Shandong daxue, 2009, 10-12; Arthur Hummel (ed.). *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period (1644-1912)*. Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc., 1991 (first ed. 1943), 398; 195.

¹⁰⁴ Shaoxing xianshizhi bangongshi 紹興縣志辦公室. "Mingqing shiqi Taoyan wenren de jieshe" 明清時期陶堰文人的結社 (The Literary Societies in the Ming-Qing Transition in Taoyan). In: *Shaoxing xianshizhi* 紹興縣志, No. 3, 2008. In: <http://www.sxxszb.com.cn/shizhiqikan/2008niandi3qishaoxingxianshizhi/2009-05-18/589.html>, July 30, 2012.

Pure Land painting wishing for the nine figures to be reborn in the Western paradise. Related to this, it is a commemorative painting in memory of the dead grandfather and his Ming contemporaries. Finally, it also constitutes a political painting with a statement directed against the strict Manchu regime and a celebration of the memory of the Ming dynasty, when hundreds of literary societies were established.

Gui Zhuang's (1613-1673) *The Ink Bamboo and Poems from the Traveling in Yue*

The painting and calligraphy *The Ink Bamboo and Poems from Traveling in Yue* 墨竹並書越游詩翰 by Gui Zhuang 歸莊 (1613-1673) represents bamboo depicted in ink and nine poems written by him during a boat journey from Wumen to Shanyin in the eastern part of Zhejiang province undertaken three years earlier (Fig. 37).¹⁰⁵ The poems written here are dealing with landscape destroyed by the Manchu army, the memory of four Ming loyalists, and the author's sorrow about the Manchu destruction of the land.

The bamboo consists of five groups. In the first group, the stalks and leaves of the bamboo shoot up to the right, while the second group of bamboo grows more or less straight, and the third group grows to the left (Fig. 38). The fourth group represents a balanced composition with a straight stalk with two groups of leaves in the middle, and one to either side. The last group represents falling bamboo stalks which grow from above to the earth (Fig. 39). There are basically two different tones of ink: dark for the leaves on the front side and light for the stems of the bamboo and leaves on the back side, which creates a rich feeling of depth.

The appearance of the term *mo zhu* 墨竹, ink bamboo, mentioned for the first time in *Yizhou ming hua lu* 益州名畫錄 (preface dated by 1006) by Huang Xiufu 黃修復 (active around 1006) is an indication that ink bamboo as a subgenre was gradually accepted among artists between late 9th century and

¹⁰⁵ *Zhongguo gudai shuhua tumu* 中國古代書畫圖目 (Catalog of Ancient Chinese Painting and Calligraphy). *Zhongguo gudai shuhua jian ding zu* (ed.). Vol. 11. Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1994, 77.

the early 10th century. During that early period, bamboo was already metaphorically compared to noble human character.¹⁰⁶

The image of Gui Zhuang's bamboo seems to be reduced to a graphic formula lending itself easily to a variety of calligraphic strokes showing the painter's confidence in handling the form. The calligraphy is mainly written in running script 行書 with some free-flowing characters in draft script 草書, which display spontaneity and natural impulsiveness. The poem "Following the Rhyme of *Shizheng* after Climbing the Guiji Mountain and Viewing the Yu Tomb" 登會稽山謁禹陵分韻得十蒸 and the way in which Gui Zhuang employs his calligraphy are worth an analysis (Fig. 40). The whole poem reads as follows:

In ten and more rows the mountain peaks are located in the southern town.
In several layers they encircle the tomb of the King of Xia.
The spirit of this landscape permeates Wu and Yue.
The sacrifices taking place for a thousand years follow those performed in Qi and Zeng.
Temples painted red, lean against old trees.
Among the birds and the worms, stone tablets lie between the withered vine;
Since early times, the barbarians provide their tribute as leather clothes.
Raising my head I cannot help regretting that the land of Zhongyuan has not won.

南鎮諸峰十數層，層層環拱夏王陵。江山一氣通吳越，俎豆千年嗣杞鄆。丹雘遶祠依古木，鳥蟲殘碣臥枯籐。島夷自昔供皮服，矯首中原恨不勝。

The characters in the last two lines in Chinese become larger and are written with more ink. It starts with the character *dao* 島 for island, written with stress on the radical *shan* 山, mountain, which hints at a "backward" rustic area where people are not well educated. The other part above the *shan* means birds and is written like a bird with its head raised. The combination of *dao* with the next character *yi* 夷 refers to barbarians, namely the Manchus, and it is written on purpose in a deformed and ugly way. The way the

¹⁰⁶ It appears in the context of the subject *song shi* (pine and rock) painted by Sun Wei 孫位 (10th century) of the Southern Tang kingdom (937-975) mentioned in *Yizhou ming hua lu* by Huang Xiufu. Han, Sungmii Lee. *Wu Chen's "Mo-chu P'u": Literati Painter's Manual on Ink Bamboo*. PhD thesis. UMI. Princeton University, 1983, 29.

character *yi* is written can be easily associated with the visual image of a dog with two feet on the ground, which is the character *quan* 犬, a swear word both in classical and modern Chinese.¹⁰⁷ On the contrary, the two characters *Zhongyuan* 中原 for land of the center, namely China, are written in a beautiful fluent style (Fig. 41). In these two lines, Gui Zhuang stresses his rancor and regret in two ways: by using the term *hen* (hate) overtly and by employing different calligraphic styles in his pictured calligraphy indirectly. Gui Zhuang's calligraphy and ink bamboo emerge as the most important vehicle for the emotional expression of his sorrow and nostalgia. Furthermore, it emblemizes the ethical character of the following four Ming loyalists: Liu Zongzhou, Ni Wenzheng gong 倪文正公 (Ni Yuanlu 倪元璐, 1593-1644), Qi Zhongmin gong 祁忠敏公 (Qi Biaojia 祁彪佳, 1602-1645), and Qian Xisheng 錢希聲 (1606-1648). Liu Zongzhou was a philosopher, scholar, and an orthodox Confucian. After Nanjing and Hangzhou had successively fallen to the Manchus, he despaired over the conquest and refused food and drink until he died on July 30, 1645. Ni Yuanlu was junior vicepresident of the Board of War and lecturer to the Emperor and hung himself on April 25, 1644, when Li Zicheng took the capital Beijing. Qi Biaojia was promoted to censor in 1631 and was famous among Ming literati due to his bold criticism of corruption and inefficiency in all branches of government service. He took an active part in the inauguration of the regency of Prince Lu 魯王 (Zhu Yihai 朱以海, 1618-1662) and became his loyal supporter after the fall of Beijing in 1644. After the fall of Hangzhou in 1645, he drowned himself in the lake of his garden Yuyuan 寓園. Qian Xisheng was vice director of the Ming Board of Punishment and served the Nanming regime (1644-1682) until his death in 1648.¹⁰⁸ The following poem devoted to Qian Xisheng is one of a total of four poems written for the loyalists:

Weeping from a far Distance for the Deceased Vice Director
of the Board of Punishment, Mr. Qian Xisheng

¹⁰⁷ See also the character *quan* for dog in: *Shuowen jiezi* (2001), 203.

¹⁰⁸ For more information on Liu Zongzhou, Ni Yuanlu and Qi Biaojia see: Arthur Hummel (1991), 532; 587; 126.

Under the mountain Langqi, a bright star went down.
He died, but his glory will be remembered in history.
He has inspired minds to build up the new country.
He has exhausted his strength for the small court for four
years.
His literary talent was admired everywhere.
His political achievement in Loudong was praised
(Mr. Qian was inspector in Taicang and earned respect for his
good politics.)
My friend who was so kind to me is separated from me by ten
thousand *li*.
We two have not the luck of being together and all I can do is
hang the sword Qingping above his grave.¹⁰⁹

遙哭故刑部員外郎錢希聲先生
琅琦山下落明星，身死留名在汗青。一振志興新社稷，四
年力盡小朝廷。文章海內皆屍祝，治行婁東有頌銘。(先
生嘗為太倉州守，有善政。)知己恩深隔千里，無緣墓樹
掛青萍。

For Gui Zhuang, his memory was the pain of having lost his friend Qian Xisheng. Gui Zhuang was a native of Kunshan 昆山 in Jiangsu province and the greatgrandson of the Ming scholar Gui Youguang 歸有光 (1506-1571). When the residents of Kunshan rose to a brave defense of the city against the invaders in 1645, Gui Zhuang was one of the leaders, another being Gu Yanwu 顧炎武 (1613-1682). After the fall of the city, Gui Zhuang fled disguised as a monk, changing his personal name to Zuoming 祚明, long live the Ming dynasty.¹¹⁰

Gui Zhuang's *The Ink Bamboo and Poems from Traveling in Yue* was a gift for a certain friend, Anqing 安卿, for Gui's twenty days' sojourn at his place in the 9th month of 1657. In 1675, two years after Gui Zhuang's death, Gu Yanwu passed by Guangping 廣平 and Anqing showed him this scroll. In his colophon, Gu Yanwu pointed out that Gui's death was for him "the feeling of

¹⁰⁹ To hang a sword above the grave refers to a legend from the *Shiji*. Xu Jun 徐君 liked the sword of Ji Zha 季札 and Ji Zha knew it, but did not give it to him because Ji Zha needed the sword for going to another kingdom as a ambassador. When Ji Zha returned, Xu Jun had died. Ji Zha hung his sword above Xu Jun's grave to commemorate him. Qingping is another name for a valuable sword. In: *Shiji* 史記 (Records of the Grand Historian). Sima Qian 司馬遷. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1985 (first ed. 1959), 1459.

¹¹⁰ Arthur Hummel (1991), 427.

the man and his zither 人琴之感。” This saying refers to the story of Wang Huizhi 王徽之 (?-386?) and his younger brother, the calligrapher Wang Xianzhi 王獻之 (344-386), who were the 5th and 7th sons of Wang Xizhi 王羲之 (ca. 321-379). Wang Huizhi tried to play Wang Xianzhi's zither after his death, but it did not have a nice tone anymore. After having realized this, Wang Huizhi was full of sorrow and died a couple of months later as well.¹¹¹ Gu Yanwu's colophon, thus, transforms Gui Zhuang's work to a memorial painting for both the four Ming loyalists and for Gui Zhuang himself.

The handscroll again reminds us of the importance of multi-level readings in Chinese literati memorial paintings. With its different inscriptions and colophons, Gui Zhuang's work contains different levels of meanings, which in turn affect the understanding of the pictorial elements and the calligraphic styles. It is a memorial painting for the four Ming loyalists and at the same time, it is suffused with cryptic political symbolism regretting the fall of the Ming and expressing hate regarding the conquest of the Manchus. For Gui Zhuang, his individual memory is a memory of pain for the lost dynasty, metaphorically represented as ink bamboo and conceived through linguistic and calligraphic construction. It is a work, which unites painting, calligraphy, and poetry into a unique expressive medium.

Until now, the study has provided an outline of Chinese literati memorial painting, that is about its origins, development and some important features, and examined a series of paintings as case studies. These paintings can be divided into two categories: The first one concerns paintings in which a subsequent colophon turned them into memorial paintings. Three paintings discussed are belonging to this category. They are *Pure and Plain Pavilion* by Liu Jue, *Gigantic Mountains and High Bamboo* by Shen Zhou and *Ferrying a Crane* by Yun Shouping. The second category refers to paintings which are originally memorial paintings in the strict sense. The rest of the paintings discussed in this study belongs to this category. In the 17th century,

¹¹¹ This tale is from *Shishuo xinyu* 世說新語 (New Account of Tales of the World) by Liu Yiqing 劉義慶 (403-444). In: *Shishuo xinyu jiaojian* 世說新語校箋 (Annotated New Account of Tales of the World), *shangshi* 傷逝 17, Xu Zhene 徐震堦 (ed.). Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984, 353.

there were more literati memorial paintings produced due to the Ming fall. As many filial piety paintings are in fact political paintings against the Qing regime, Yu Zhiding's *Fengmu tu* and Shitao's *The Ancestral Tombs of the Fei Family* can also be discussed in the section of "The Ming Nostalgia". These literati memorial paintings were represented very obscure, an extreme example is Chen Hongshou's *Elegant Gathering*. In Chinese aesthetic principles, metaphorical expression and indirection were of significance. "The idea of encoding poetry and imagery pushed indirect discourse still further, for it was premised on selective understanding," as Alfreda Murck pointed out.¹¹² The audience of the filial piety paintings was however the Ming loyalists, but not the Qing regime. Alfreda Murck goes on to write: "From its inception, the criticism was invisibile to all except those who immersed themselves in poetry, and the circle of people who undersood the code was relatively small."¹¹³ In the filial piety paintings, the circle of people who understood the code was those Ming loyalists from the elite literati society. These paintings aimed to express the loyalists's feelings of hate, regret, and belateness, but they were not for real direct remonstrations. The next case of the subtle way of representation is Wu Li's *Xingfu* scroll, which is however due to religious and personal reasons.

¹¹² Alfreda Murck (2000), 259.

¹¹³ Ibid.

III. Wu Li and his *Xingfu* Scroll

The last two chapters have provided an artistic background for a better understanding of Wu Li's *Xingfu* scroll. Related issues such as the role of the text and the subtle way of representation play the same relevant role in this chapter. Moreover, the concept of absence in representing death of Wen Zhengming's *The Jixiang Chapel* had possibly given impact of Wu Li's depiction of the empty chamber on the *Xingfu* scroll. However Wu Li's *Xingfu* scroll and the idea behind it are complex and unique, which is worthy of an in-depth analysis.

1. Wu Li's (1632-1718) Life and Art

Wu Li 吳歷, *zi* Yushan 漁山, *Zili* 子歷, *hao* Taoxi jushi 桃溪居士 (Lay Buddhist Taoxi), *Mojing* 墨井 or *Mojing daoren* 墨井道人 (Daoist of *Mojing*), was born in Changshu 常熟 in Jiangsu province in 1632 and died in Shanghai in 1718. Together with Wang Shimin, Wang Jian 王鑑 (1598-1677), Wang Hui, Wang Yuanqi 王原祁 (1642-1715), and Yun Shouping, Wu Li was considered one of the so-called *Qing chu liu jia* 清初六家 (Six Masters of the Early Qing Period) by art critics and art historians in the beginning of the 20th century.¹¹⁴ His hometown Changshu is 40 kilometers from one of the most important commercial and cultural centers Suzhou in 17th-century China. Changshu and its surrounding region was one of the important missionary areas after the arrival of the Italian Jesuit Giulio Aleni (1582-1649) in 1623.¹¹⁵

As a child, Wu Li lived next to a Catholic church in North-West Changshu. Wu Li's mother was probably a Christian. Following his ordination as a Jesuit priest in 1688, Gregorio Lopez O.P. (Luo Wenzao 羅文藻 1616-1691)

¹¹⁴ Laurence Tam. *Six Masters of Early Qing and Wu Li*. Hong Kong: Urban Council, 1986, 12.

¹¹⁵ Xiaoping Lin (2001), xii.

sent a letter to Rome, according to which, Wu Li had already been baptized as a child.¹¹⁶

As early as 1646, Wu Li began to devote himself to painting at the age of 15 *sui*.¹¹⁷ One reason was that his father Wu Shijie 吳士傑 (?- before 1635) died when he was still an infant so that he had to support his family by selling his paintings from very early on.¹¹⁸ From approximately 1659 to 1665, Wu Li studied with Chen Hu 陳瑚 (1613-1675, *hao* Quean 確庵), who was a *yi min* 遺民, a Ming loyalist, a Neo-Confucian scholar and an admirer of Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200), one of the greatest Confucianists of the Song period.¹¹⁹ It seems, however, that the theories of (Neo)-Confucianism did not provide a satisfactory answer to the question of the meaning of life for Wu Li as he stated in his *Xu kouduo richao* 續口鐸日抄 (The Continued Diary of Oral Admonitions).

Shortly after 1660, Wu Li started to study with his most important painting teacher Wang Shimin. With him, Wu Li not only learned the art of painting, but Wang also gave him the opportunity to make copies from his collection.¹²⁰ There is no knowledge of how many paintings were originally in Wang's collection or how many of them Wu Li saw and copied.¹²¹ It is

¹¹⁶ Noël, Golvers. *François de Rougemont, S.J., Missionary in Chang-shu (Chiang-nan). A Study of the Account Book (1674-1676) and the Elogium*. Leuven: Leuven University Press and Ferdinand Verbiest Foundation, 1999, 416. See also Zhang Wenqin. *Wu Yushan jiqi huahua tianxue* 吳漁山及其華化天學 (Wu Yushan and his Sinified Christianity). Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2008, 106.

¹¹⁷ In 1646, Wu Li painted the hanging scroll *Qin jiliao zhou* 秦吉了軸 (The Common Myna from Qin), which inscription is still available in *Guoyun lou shuhua ji* 過雲樓書畫記 (On Calligraphies and Paintings in Guoyun lou), published in 1882 by Gu Wenbin 顧文彬 (1811-1889). In his inscription, Wu Li mentioned that he started to learn painting when he was a child. See in: Chen Yuan 陳垣. "Wu Yushan xiansheng nianpu" 吳漁山先生年譜 (Chronological Biography of Wu Yushan [Wu Li]). Beijing: Furen daxue, 1937, 3; Also in: Zhou Kangxie 周康燮 (ed.). *Wu Yushan (Li) yanjiu lunji* 吳漁山(歷)研究論集. Hong Kong: Cuncui xueshe, 1971, 2.

¹¹⁸ It is mentioned in the eulogy for Wu Li's mother written by Qian Qianyi 錢謙益 (1582-1664) in 1660. Chen Yuan (1937), 2; see also Zhang Wenqin 章文欽 (ed.). *Wu Yushan ji jianzhu* 吳漁山集箋注 (An Annotated Collection of the Writings of Wu Yushan). Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2007, 679.

¹¹⁹ Zhang Wenqin (2008), 25-26. For Chen Hu, "Master Zhu had accumulated the accomplishments of all the great scholars and fully expounded the direction and purpose of the Great Dao." In: Tam (1986), 57.

¹²⁰ According to Chen Hu's preface in Wu Li's poetry volume *Congyou ji* 從游集 (Traveling in Company) in 1664. In: Tam (1986), 50.

¹²¹ In a colophon to Wang Hui's *Landscape after Fan Kuan's "Travelers amid Streams and Mountains"* 倣范寬溪山行旅 in 1671, Wang Shimin wrote about his collection: "Of the

clear, however, that Wu Li viewed the following four paintings in Wang's collection and made copies including reduced-size copies of some of them, which is mentioned in Wu Li's writing on painting titled *Mojing huaba* 墨井畫跋 (Inscriptions and Colophons by Mojing):¹²² *Travelers amid Autumn Mountains* 秋山行旅圖 attributed to Dong Yuan 董源 (ca. 934-ca. 962) in today's Ogawa 小川氏 Collection in Kyoto,¹²³ *The Fuchun Mountains* 富春山卷, also called *Dwelling in the Fuchun Mountains* 富春山居圖, now in the Zhejiang Province Museum with its first section and the National Palace Museum Taipei with its second section,¹²⁴ *Cliffy Chasm and Dense Forests* 陡壑密林圖 by Huang Gongwang 黃公望 (1269-1354) in C. C. Wang's collection and *The Clear Fount in the Forest Running Together* 林泉清集 by Wang Meng 王蒙 (1308-1385), originally in Zhang Xueliang's collection

Song and Yuan masterpieces in my family collection, two-fifths were acquired in the capital and the other three-fifths were acquired from Dong Qichang. I loved them no less than essential parts of my own body. With the passage of time and as circumstances have changed, only one- or two-tenths of what I once owned still remains.” 余家所藏宋元名蹟，得之京師者十之四，得之董其昌者十之六，余寶愛之，不啻頭目髓腦。歲月如流，人事遷改，向者所藏僅存一二。Trans. by Wen C. Fong. In: Hearn, Maxwell (ed.). *Landscapes Clear and Radiant. The Art of Wang Hui (1632-1717)*. Wen C. Fong, Chin-sung Chang and Maxwell K. Hearn. New York, New Haven and London: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Yale University Press, 2008, 192.

¹²² Zhang Wenqin (2007), 407; 410; 414; 429. According to Chen Yuan, the first extant publication of *Mojing huaba* was from the Daoguang reign (1821-1850). Chen Yuan 陳垣: “Wu Yushan: Jinduo erbaiwushi nian jinian” 吳漁山進鐸二百五十年紀念 (Wu Yü-Shan: In Commemoration of the 250th Anniversary of his Ordination to the Priesthood in the Society of Jesus). In: Zhou Kangxie 周康燮 (1971), 53. About the reduced-size copies of old masters, see: Chang, Tsenti Joseph. *A Study of “Large Emerging from Small” in the Collection of the National Palace Museum, Taipei*. PhD thesis. UMI. University of Kansas, 1985; Wen C. Fong. “Wang Hui and Repossessing the Past”. In: Hearn, Maxwell (ed., 2008): 3-47; Chin-sung Chang. “Wang Hui: The Evolution of a Master Landscapist”. In: Hearn, Maxwell (ed., 2008), 49-127; Wang Jingling 王靜靈. “Lun Xiao zhong xian da ce de zhizuo wenti” 論《小中現大冊》的製作問題 (On the Production of the Album *Large Emerging from the Small*). In: *Gugong wenwu yuekan* 故宮文物月刊, vol. 295, 2007/10, 1-12; ---. “Jianli dianfan: Wang Shimin yu 《Xiao zhong xianda ce》 建立典范：王時敏與《小中現大冊》” (Establishing Model: Wang Shimin and the Album “Large Emerging from Small”). In: *Meishu shi yanjiu jikan* 美術史研究集刊, vol. 24, 2008, 175-258.

¹²³ For more on this painting: Wen C Fong. “Riverbank.” In: *Along the Riverbank. Chinese Paintings from the C. C. Wang Family Collection*. Maxwell K. Hearn and Wen C. Fong. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Distributed by Harry N. Abrams, Inc., New York, 1999, 43.

¹²⁴ For more on this painting: Zhang Xiqing 張希清, Zhao Yixin 趙一新 and Xu Wenguan 徐文光 (eds.). *Huang Gongwang yu “Fuchun Shanjutu” yanjiu* 黃公望與《富春山居圖》研究 (Huang Gongwang and the Research on *Dwelling in the Fuchun Mountains*). Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 2011.

with today's location unknown.¹²⁵ Moreover, Wu Li must have also seen another painting *Whiling Away the Summer* 消夏圖 by Zhao Danian 趙大年 (12th century), which is now in the Boston Art Museum and has a collector seal of Wang Shimin. The handscroll with the same title *Whiling Away the Summer* painted for Xu Zhijian by Wu Li is now in the New York Metropolitan Museum (Fig. 42).

After 1665, Wu Li began to have close contact with the Chan Buddhist monk Morong 默容 (?-1671) and took an interest in Chan Buddhism. He gave himself the *hao* of Taoxi jushi 桃溪居士 (Lay Buddhist Taoxi), which he often used in his paintings from this period. Another important personality in Wu Li's life was the censor Xu Zhijian 許之漸 (*zi* Qingyu 青嶼, 1613-1701), a native of Wujin 武進 in Jiangsu province and *jinshi* 進士 (scholar of metropolitan graduate) of the year 1655. Xu Zhijian was dismissed from office in 1665 because of his involvement in the Calendar Case of the German Jesuit Adam Schall von Bell (1592-1666). When Xu had returned to his native place in that year 1665, he began a friendship with Wu Li. In addition to his *Whiling Away the Summer* dedicated for Xu Zhijian, the following three paintings for Xu are further evidences of their friendship: The first one is the hanging scroll *Landscape for Longevity of Xu Qingyu* 壽許青嶼山水 as Xu's 60th birthday present from 1672, the second *Suffering from the Rain in the Mountains* 山中苦雨 from 1674 with a long colophon by Wang Shimin, and the third the handscroll *The River Pen by Baifu* [Bai Juyi] 白傅湓江圖 with the farewell motif from the poem "Pipa xing" 琵琶行 by Bai Juyi 白居易 (772-846) (Fig. 43). In his colophon on *Suffering from the Rain in the Mountains*, Wang Shimin mentioned that Wu Li and Xu Zhijian visited together a lot of famous sights and had many shared literary works.¹²⁶ Moreover, Wu Li accompanied Xu Zhijian on several of his travels. The longest of these trips was the 10-month journey to Yanji 燕薊, today's Beijing, in 1670/71, which is mentioned in Wu Li's inscription on the handscroll *Remembering the Past at the Xingfu Chapel* 興福庵感舊圖 (Fig.

¹²⁵ Wang Jingling (2007), 2; 8.

¹²⁶ Zhang Wenqin (2007), 685.

1).¹²⁷ The handscroll *The River Pen by Baifu [Bai Juyi]* was taken by Wu Li to Macao. Shortly after his arrival in Macao in 1681, Wu Li sent it to Xu Zhijian, which is mentioned in his inscription dedicated to Xu. It seems that it was the last painting to which Wu Li affixed his seal “Taoxi jushi” and the last known contact between Xu Zhijian and him. Apparently, Wu Li ceased to have contact with Buddhists in his later years. His contact with Xu Zhijian, who became a faithful Buddhist, became less intense and apparently stopped in the end. In a short text written in 1686 and published in his poetry compilation *Jirang jinian jian* 擊壤紀年箋 (Chronological Annotations of Knocking the Earth), Xu Zhijian mentioned sadly that he rarely had contact with Wu Li any more. It reads:

Yushan came so rarely by that even a catch for birds can be built up [in front of my house]. [He] is the blue mountain being cut off from the world. [My words like] shooting the ears of the horse with the eastern wind, [didn't have any effect on him at all]. Being an old man, I can only sigh with emotion.

漁山罕過雀羅，青山絕世，馬耳東風，老人感慨繫之矣。¹²⁸

It was not until his middle age that Wu Li began to have closer contact with missionaries, eventually becoming a Christian himself in 1670/71 during his sojourn in Beijing.¹²⁹ At the end of 1680, Wu Li went with the Belgian Jesuit

¹²⁷ On that occasion, Wu Li met numerous high officials and famous literati in Beijing, for example, the Chinese Christian Xu Zuancang 許纘曾 (1627-?, *jinshi* of 1649), Wu Weiye 吳偉業 (1609-1671, *jinshi* of 1631), Shi Yunzhang 施閏章 (1618-1683, *jinshi* of 1649), Song Wan 宋琬 (1614-1674, *jinshi* of 1647), Wang Shizhen 王士禎 (1634-1711, *jinshi* of 1655), Cheng Keze 程可則 (?-ca. 1673) and Cao Erkan 曹爾堪 (1617-1679, *jinshi* of 1652). Moreover, it is quite possible that Wu Li had the opportunity to view paintings in the house of another important connoisseur, Sun Chengze 孫承澤 (1593-1676) as well. In the inscription on his hanging scroll *The Lake and Heaven in Spring* 湖天春色圖 in 1676 Wu Li mentioned a certain Beihai, possibly being Sun Chengze, as Sun's *hao* was Beihai 北海 and he lived in Beijing for the most of his life. In the house of the influential connoisseur Liang Qingbiao 梁清標 (1620-1691, *jinshi* of 1643), Wu Li was able to see Wang Meng's painting *A Tranquil Autumn Morning* 靜深秋曉圖, mentioned in Wu Li's hanging scroll of the same title in 1702. See my partly published master thesis “Das Bild *Stille Herbstmorgendämmerung* von Wu Li (1632-1718)”. Yao Ning, “Wu Li de ‘Jingshen qiuxiaotu’ yu youwu xifa zhi zheng” 吳歷的“靜深秋曉圖”與有無西法之爭 (Wu Li's *A Tranquil Autumn Morning* and its Controversy of Western Influence). In: *Meishu yanjiu* 美術研究 (Art Research), 2007/1, 62-68. See also: Chen Yuan (1937), 15.

¹²⁸ Xu Zhijian 許之漸. *Jirang jinian jian* 擊壤紀年箋 (Chronological Annotations of Knocking the Earth). Printed in Kangxi 30 *nian* [1691], 9. Also cited in Zhang Wenqin (2008), 51.

¹²⁹ Chen Yuan (1937), 11-15.

Philippe Couplet (1623-1693) to Macao hoping to continue his trip to Europe. In the end however, Wu Li stayed in Macao from 1681 to 1686, residing at St. Paul's Jesuit College studying Latin and theology. In 1682, Wu Li entered the Society of Jesus.¹³⁰ In 1690 in one of his seven poems with the title "Seven Miscellaneous Poems - Following Rhymes [by Shen 沈 and Fan 范]" 次韻雜詩七首, Wu Li wrote that nobody wearing a monk's robe is knocking at his gate any more 絕無衲叩扉.¹³¹ Wu Li's later attitude towards Buddhism is quite remarkable when considering his close friendship with the Chan Buddhist monk, Morong, in his early years. In 1718, Wu Li was buried in the cemetery outside the South Gate in Shanghai with a gravestone erected by the Portuguese missionary Emmanuel Mendes (1656-1741), who had worked with him during his last days.¹³²

Wu Li's earliest surviving dated work seems to be *Fungus Growing at the Cenwei Residence* 岑蔚居產芝圖 in the Kyoto National Museum in Japan, which is dated by the artist's inscription to the autumn of 1659 (Fig. 44).¹³³ The earlier works were strongly influenced by the Wu school masters, when the use of symbolic motifs and topographical elements is frequently found. Wu Li's second innovative phase starts with *The Lake and Heaven in Spring* 湖天春色圖, painted in a light blue-and-green manner in 1676 (Fig. 45). Due to its nature-oriented realistic features, this hanging scroll differs fundamentally from most other 17th century landscape paintings. In his article "Wu Li's Religious Belief and *A Lake in Spring*" Xiaoping Lin pointed out the impact of Western art on this painting.¹³⁴ In his inscription, Wu Li mentions for the first time his contact with Western missionaries,

¹³⁰ Theodore Nicholas Foss. "The European Sojourn of Philippe Couplet and Michael Shen Fuzong, 1683-1692." In: Heyndrickx, Jerome (ed.). *Philippe Couplet, S.J. (1623-1693): The Man Who Brought China to Europe*. Nettetal: Steyler Verlag, 1990, 122-123.

¹³¹ In Wu Li's *San yu ji* 三余集 (The Collection of Three Leftovers), in: Zhang Wenqin (2007), 274; also in: Jonathan Chaves. *Singing of the Source. Nature and God in the Poetry of the Chinese Painter Wu Li*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1993, 37.

¹³² Xiaoping Lin (2001), 163.

¹³³ For more information on this painting see Yao Ning 姚寧. "Meanings and Functions of the Painting *Fungus Growing at the Cenwei Residence*: Wu Li (1632-1718) and his Intellectual World". In: *Shifting Paradigms in East Asian Visual Culture. A Festschrift in Honour of Lothar Ledderose*. Burglind Jungmann, Adele Schlombs, Melanie Trede (eds.). Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 2012, 271-297.

¹³⁴ Xiaoping Lin. "Wu Li's Religious Belief and *A Lake in Spring*". In: *Archives of Asian Art*, Vol. 40 (1987), 24-35. Also in Xiaoping Lin (2001), 81-99.

namely the Belgian Jesuit François de Rougemont (1624-1676), who was most likely his teacher in Christian doctrines at that time.

From 1681 to 1695, Wu Li apparently stopped painting, extant paintings are only dated after 1695. During this late phase of his artistic accomplishment, Wu Li focused on Wang Meng's texture strokes - the "hemp fiber" with mainly dry ink. The hanging scroll, *A Tranquil Autumn Morning* 靜深秋曉圖 of 1702 and the handscroll *Horizontal Mountains and Bright Clouds* 橫山晴靄圖 of 1706 are two significant works from this phase (Fig. 46; Fig. 47).

The texture strokes on the rocks have a directional function and determine the way the eye moves over the surfaces.¹³⁵ These features largely originate from Wang Meng's paintings, such as *Dwelling in the Mountains on a Summer Day* 夏日山居圖 in today's Palace Museum Beijing (Fig. 48).

In the Chinese history of painting, Wu Li and the five other masters of the early Qing are regarded as belonging to the so-called *zhengtong pai* 正統派 (Orthodox School), which constitutes a meaningless historical definition. According to this definition, these painters accepted the doctrines and stylistic innovations of Dong Qichang and carried them out in a particular conservative direction.¹³⁶ This classification resulted in misunderstandings regarding the paintings of the six masters of the early Qing. Wu Li's paintings, for example, are not conservative at all.

¹³⁵ James Cahill. "The Orthodox Movement in Early Ching Painting." In: *Artists and Traditions*. Christian Murck (ed.). Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976b, 176.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 169. The theory of the Northern and the Southern School of literati painting, which mainly had been formulated by Dong Qichang, was dominant among literati painters for at least two or three centuries. The admired Southern School included painters of the Tang (618-907) and Song (960-1279) and educated amateur painters of the Yuan and early Ming such as Wang Meng, Huang Gongwang, Ni Zan and Shen Zhou. The denigrated Northern School included academy and professional painters. The theory is not clear-cut, however. Thorp and Vinograd (2001), 323. Important literature about this issue see also: Ho Wai-kam (ed.). *The Century of Tung Ch'i-ch'ang 1555-1636*. Volume I and II. Kansas City: The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 1992; Duoyun bianjibu 朵雲編輯部 (ed.). *Dong Qichang yanjiu wenji* 董其昌研究文集 (The Collection of Research on Dong Qichang). Shanghai: Shanghai shuhua chubanshe, 1998.

2. Documentary, Verbal, and Calligraphic Analysis

Description, Seals and Dating

Wu Li's handscroll *Remembering the Past at the Xingfu Chapel* 興福庵感舊圖 is a commemorative painting in memory of the Chan Buddhist monk Morong 默容 (?-1671) (Fig. 1). The scroll has clearly three defined parts of a composition of juxtaposition: the chapel on the right side of the painting, which is the beginning of the handscroll, the mountainous area at the center, and the clouds on the left. In the first part, a depiction of the Xingfu chapel encircled by a curved wall is painted from a bird's-eye view (Fig. 49). A chamber door is open. Inside the chamber is a small table with a scroll on it. A mat in front of the table suggests that someone has recently left. Two birds are seen on a lotus seat in stone supported by a column. Behind the chamber, a crane standing on a pine tree seems to be screaming with his head raised towards heaven (Fig. 50). The mountains dominated by huge leafless trees are depicted in the blue-and-green manner. Some dots and a minimal amount of texture strokes in ink are applied to the blue-and-green mountains, on which a remarkably curved road is represented (Fig. 51). The road functions as a sign guiding the viewer's gaze from the chapel to the clouds. Remarkable are also the separated rocks and bamboo, to each side of the road. In the end section clouds are gathered and above them is Wu Li's long inscription (Fig. 52; Fig. 53).

There are two seals by Wu Li, one "Jia zai Taoxi shenchu" 家在桃溪深處 (My house is located deeply among the Peach creek) on the lower right corner and the other "Wu Li" at the end of his inscription. In addition to these two seals, there are eight collector's seals on the picture. They read from the upper right to the down left:

Huzhong moyuan 壺中墨緣

Jin Futing Shouxian shi kaocang 金黼廷瘦仙氏考藏

Degong xinshang 德公心賞

Yinbei jianshang 蔭北鑒賞

Changgeng zhenshang 長庚珍賞

Shouxian shending zhenji 瘦仙審定真跡

Shouxian jianchang 瘦仙鑒藏

Boju xinshang 伯駒心賞

Three collector's seals are of Jin Futing 金黼廷 (active 1851-1861) alone, whose *hao* is Shouxian 瘦仙. The last collector is Zhang Boju 張伯駒 (1898-1982) with his seal "Boju xinshang" 伯駒心賞 (Heartly enjoyed by Boju), who donated the *Xingfu* scroll to the Beijing Palace Museum after the establishment of communist China in 1949.

Three colophons written by Xu Zhijian 徐之璣 in 1672, Ji Yin 紀蔭 (active 1662-1722) in June of 1699, and by Zhang Jingwei 張景蔚 (active 1695-1712) in November or December 1699 are appended on a separate sheet of paper at the end of the scroll (Fig. 54). On this sheet of paper, there are altogether 18 seals with 12 of them being seals of the three colophon writers. They read from the upper right to the down left:

Wan?zhong hua? 萬種花? [possibly of Xu Zhijian]
Huzhong moyuan 壺中墨緣
Jinshi miji 金氏祕笈
???cang ? 藏
Shiming xiao? 是名小? [possibly of Xu Zhijian]
Xiuyi nazi 繡衣納子 [*hao* of Xu Zhijian]
Xuyin zhijian 許印之漸
Qingyu 青嶼 [*hao* of Xu Zhijian]
Yu??? 御? [possibly of Ji Yin]
Yuti shenjun 御題神駿 [*hao* of Ji Yin]
Ji Yin zhiyin 紀蔭之印
Yimo 鋏墨 [of Zhang Jingwei]
Jingwei ? 景蔚? [of Zhang Jingwei]
Shaowen 少文 [*hao* of Zhang Jingwei]
Qianjing zhai 乾淨齋 [possibly of Zhang Jingwei]
Jin Futing Shouxian shi kaocang 金黼廷瘦仙氏考藏
Yinbei jianshang 蔭北鑒賞
?jinlan? ?金蘭?

Moreover, between the picture and the added sheet of paper there are two collector's seals, one reads Jingzhao 京兆 and the other is unidentified.

In all available publications, the date of the *Xingfu* scroll is given as 1674, the year in which Wu Li wrote his inscription. This, however, is incorrect. The colophon by Xu Zhijian contains the phrase "jin renzi xia 今壬子夏 (this summer of the *renzi* year)", which suggests that his colophon was written already in 1672. Therefore Wu Li's painting must have been produced before

the summer of 1672. According to his inscription, Morong died between the fall and winter of 1671 before Wu Li crossed the river Huai 淮河 on his way from Beijing to Changshu. And thus the *Xingfu* scroll must have been painted between the winter of 1671 and the summer of 1672. In my opinion, it has to be dated to 1672 due to the geographical distance from the river Huai to Changshu.

Wu Li's Inscription and Calligraphic Style

Wu Li's inscription is the key in order to understand the *Xingfu* scroll. It is written three years after Morong's death. The reason for it is quite possibly due to the rite of three years mourning, a topic discussed in the section "Memorial Rites and the Three Years Mourning" later. The following is a complete translation of Wu Li's inscription from 1674:

Among all the brush and ink friends of mine, the friendship with Master Mo was the deepest. I paid him a visit very often without saying good-bye being afraid that the farewell would make us sad. At the time *qinghe* of the *gengxu* year [1670], I traveled to Yan and Ji,¹³⁷ where I often received his letters full of affection from the Chapel in the South. In the fall and winter of the *xinhai* year [1671], I was about to write a poem [telling him about the news of my] returning home, and hoped that I would share the ice and snow of that year's winter with him. However, before I crossed the river Huai, I received the news that Master Mo had hung his shoes on the peak [i.e. passed away]. How could I describe my pain? Since I traveled away, I feel guilty of not being of one heart with him. Calling back the soul, I wrote the eulogy *lei*, which is far from enough to describe his entire life. Thus, I express my feeling on the white silk. I dipped my brush in the ink and started weeping without an end.

I just arrived at the place of Dharma,
With tears filling in my eyes I find it hard to understand its emptiness.
The shadow of the pine is still there in the snowy courtyard,
Traces of ink are fused in the grassy pond.
Several green trees left in the last days of spring,
A single light from the half-closed door is red.

¹³⁷ The *Qinghe* of the *gengxu* year was from May 19th to June 16th in 1670. *Qinghe* is another name of April in the moon calendar. Yan and Ji are today's Beijing.

The obsession with poetry and painting all [his] life,
was often wrongly used in singing the wind.

Were the fish and goose [i.e. letters] separated from each other?

I regret deeply that I returned home too late.

I pity myself for being a traveler from south to north,
that I failed to show my heart at this death-and-life moment.

The infatuated butterfly still feels puzzled by the dream,
while the hungry bird alone sticks to the trees.

Looking at clouds in getting their infinite meanings:

For what things go up and down?

Two days before the Day of *Denggao* in the *jiayin* year
[October 6th, 1674], inscribed after the rain cleared up, Taoxi
jushi Wu Zili¹³⁸

吾友筆墨中，惟默公交最深。予常作客，不為話別，恐傷折柳。庚戌清和，游于燕薊。往往南傳方外書信，意甚殷殷。辛亥秋冬，將欲賦歸，意謂同此歲寒冰雪。而未及渡淮，聞默公已挂履峰頭，痛可言哉！自慚浪跡，有負同心，招魂作誄，未足抒寫生平，形於娟素，泚筆隕涕無已。

卻到曇摩地，
淚盈難解空 [kong]。
雪庭松影在，
草沼墨痕融 [rong]。
幾樹春殘碧，
一燈門掩紅 [hong]。
平生詩畫癖，
多被誤吟風 [feng]。

魚雁幾曾隔，
賦歸遲悔深 [shen]。
自憐南北客，
未盡死生心 [xin]。
癡蝶還疑夢，
飢鳥獨守林 [lin]。
雲看無限意，
何事即浮沉 [chen]。

甲寅年登高前二日，雨霽並書。桃溪居士吳子歷

¹³⁸ Denggao refers to the Denggao festival which is on September 9th in the moon calendar.

In the summer of the *gengxu* year (1670), Wu Li had accompanied the censor Xu Zhijian on a trip to Beijing. Xu wanted to thank the Kangxi emperor for the rehabilitation of Adam Schall von Bell in the Calender Case, who served the Qing government in Beijing as the director of the Imperial Bureau of Astronomy. Xu Zhijian was charged for having written the preface to the book *Tianxue chuangai* 天學傳概 by the Chinese Christian Li Zubai 李祖白 (?-1665), who was then the vice-director of the Imperial Bureau of Astronomy, propagating Christianity.¹³⁹ Wu Li and Xu Zhijian arrived in Beijing on August 26th, 1670, where they stayed for more than ten months, until the late autumn to early winter of the following *xinhai* year (1671).¹⁴⁰ A multi-leveled reading of the scroll can lead to an experience in which points of semi-congruence or semi-equivalence between the scroll and the inscription can be observed: the pine tree at the court yard, the birds in the forest, and the clouds are equally mentioned in the inscription and depicted on the scroll.¹⁴¹

The exact year of Wu Li's conversion is a controversial issue due to limited evidence. The earliest mentioning evidence of Wu Li as a Christian seems to be from the *Account Book (1674-1676)* by François de Rougemont (1624-1676), in which he mentioned that he gave the "Catechistae U Yu xan" (Wu Yushan) 0.4 *liang* 兩 silver for going to Taicang 太倉 on March 12th, 1676.¹⁴² However, there is also evidence suggesting that Wu Li became a

¹³⁹ Xiaoping Lin (2001), 67-68. In fact, the preface in *Tianxue chuangai* was written by a certain Xinzonghan 新中翰, but not by Xu Zhijian himself. Xu mentioned it in his book *Jirang jinian jian* 擊壤紀年箋 and wrote that he was happy being dismissed by the emperor back home. Xu Zhijian (1691), under Poem 9. See also Tang Kaijian 湯開建 and Zhang Zhongpeng 張中鵬. "Xu Zhijian yu Kangxi liyu 許之漸與 '康熙歷獄'" (Xu Zhijian and the "Kangxi's Calender Case"). Here I would like to thank professor Zhang Xiping for giving me this unpublished article.

¹⁴⁰ Zhang Wenqin (2007), 83; 355. On the people whom they met in Beijing, see: Chen Yuan. *Chen Yuan xueshu lunwen ji* 陳垣學術論文集 (Collection of Chen Yuan's Academic Articles). Vol. 2. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1982, 272-5. Zhang Wenqin (2008), 46-51.

¹⁴¹ The idea of equivalence or identity of data received through different senses is called synesthesia. It is an idea that expressions of thoughts and sensations in different media can be equivalent, one virtually a translation of the other. Literature on this issue see: Kotzenberg, Heike. *Bild und Aufschrift in der Malerei Chinas*. Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1981; Murck, Alfreda and Wen Fong (eds.). *Words and Images: Chinese Poetry, Calligraphy and Painting*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1991. We should not forget the warning of James Cahill, however, and overstate this phenomenon of equivalence or so-called synesthesia between inscription and painting. In: James Cahill (1983), 4; 9.

¹⁴² On page 48 in the original *Account Book*. Noël, Golvers (1999), 208; Chinese translation: Gao Huashi 高華士 (Noël Golvers). *Qingchu jesuishi Lu Riman. Changshu zhangben ji*

Christian earlier than 1676. After his return from Beijing in 1672, Wu Li did the proofreading for the book *Chongzheng bibian* 崇正必辯 published by the Chinese Christian He Shizhen 何世貞 (*zi Gongjie* 公介, active 1660-1675) as his signature reveals. This detail suggests that Wu Li was probably already a Christian by that time. Recent research conducted by Xiaoping Lin and Noël Golvers further suggests that Wu Li already converted to Christianity during his trip to Beijing in 1670/71.¹⁴³ This can be confirmed when Wu Li's inscription is analyzed.

Wu Li begins his inscription with a piece of prose describing the friendship between the Chan Buddhist monk Morong and himself and his sadness after having received the news of Morong's death. This is followed by two five-character poems 五言律詩. Both the prose and the two poems are rich in adjectives, verbs, and phrases expressing the sad feelings experienced by Wu Li: It is started with the rhetorical question “*Tong ke yan zai* 痛可言哉 (How could I describe my pain?)” and followed by using the verb *yunti* 隕涕 (weep) and the adjective *leiyong* 淚盈 (full of tears) in order to stress the sad tone. Furthermore, Wu Li expresses extreme feelings of regret by using a combination of expressions such as *can* 慚 (regret), *you fu tong xin* 有負同心 (I feel guilty of not being of one heart with him.), *chi* 遲 (late), *hui shen* 悔深 (regret deeply), *lian* 憐 (pity), and *wei jin si sheng xin* 未盡死生心 (I failed to show my heart at this life-and-death moment).

Here, it is worth noting the meaning of the sentence *you fu tong xin* 有負同心 (I feel guilty of not being of one heart with him). Beyond its literal meaning, the sentence actually points to the fact of Wu Li having converted to the Christian faith, wherefore he feels guilty of not being of one heart, i.e. of the same Buddhist faith with Morong.¹⁴⁴

lingxiu biji yanjiu 清初耶穌會士魯日滿常熟賬本及靈修筆記研究 (François de Rougemont, S.J., Missionary in Chang-shu (Chiang-nan). A Study of the Account Book (1674-1676) and the Elogium). Trans. by Zhao Dianhong. Zhengzhou: Daxiang chubanshe, 2007, 142; 332. See also Zhang Wenqin (2008), 108.

¹⁴³ Xiaoping Lin (2001), 60. Noël, Golvers (1999), 415-416 and Gao Huashi (Noël Golvers, 2007), 332.

¹⁴⁴ It is also pointed out by Lin Xiaoping. In: Xiaoping Lin (2001), 60.

Finally, Wu Li uses Zhuangzi's metaphor of the infatuated butterfly who still feels puzzled by a dream to his own very situation. The word *yi* 疑, i.e. doubt, in the line "The infatuated butterfly still feels puzzled by the dream 癡蝶還疑夢" is the indicator for Wu Li's skeptical attitude and his unwillingness to accept the death of Morong. While Wu Li could not accept the truth of Morong's death, the line "with tears in my eyes I find it hard to understand its emptiness" seems to suggest Wu Li's doubt of a basic tenet of Buddhism. The phrase *nan jie kong* 難解空 (difficult to understand the emptiness) is ambiguous here: On the one hand, Wu Li cannot understand the real emptiness, the death of Morong, depicted by using the concept of absence, while on the other hand, the word *kong* 空 is a fundamental term of Buddhism and also in the *Heart sutra* 心經, where it means that there is no reality in everything in the world or everything is untrue.¹⁴⁵ Related to the issue of Wu Li's skeptical attitude towards Buddhism, the two words *yan* 掩 (to cover, close) and *wu* 誤 (to take mistakenly for, error) are also cryptic: The word *yi deng* 一燈 is ambiguous, on the one hand meaning "a light", while on the other standing for Buddhist wisdom. The combination of *yi deng* and *yan* taints the whole passage in a slightly negative manner, as the translation "A single light / [Buddhist wisdom] from the half-closed door is red" shows. The obsession with poetry and painting is certainly related to Morong, who studied poetry and painting with Wu Li, but why this obsession was often wrongly dealt with "singing the wind"? It seems that in Wu Li's understanding Morong's talent had been sacrificed for his Buddhist belief. The second, forth, sixth, and last line of the first poem all end with *ong* due to the last four characters *kong* 空, *rong* 融, *hong* 紅 and *feng* 風 [fong], while in the second poem, all rhyme on *en/in* as *shen* 深, *xin* 心, *lin* 林, and *chen* 沉.¹⁴⁶ All of these eight characters are in the level tone (*ping sheng* 平聲), which compared with the deflected tone (*ze sheng* 仄聲) express a

¹⁴⁵ *Foguang da cidian* 佛光大辭典 (Dictionary of Buddhas Light). Ciyi 慈怡 (ed.), vol. 4. Taipei: Foguang chubanshe, 1995 (first ed. 1988), 3467.

¹⁴⁶ *Feng* pronounced *fong* according to the ancient pronunciation. In: *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字 (An Analytical Dictionary of Chinese Characters). Xu Shen 許慎. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2001 (first ed. 1963), 284.

deeper and more calming tone complying Wu Li's sadness.¹⁴⁷ The first character *kong* meaning emptiness and the last one *chen* meaning to sink down are the two key words for creating the sad, regretful, and pessimistic, even skeptical tone of the two poems.

Among the 284 characters of Wu Li's inscription, there are no less than 20 words related to the feeling of broken-heartedness, regret, doubt, and desperation. These words reveal the underlying mood of the inscription and Wu Li's skeptical attitude towards Buddhism.

The following section examines briefly the calligraphic style of Wu Li's inscription. There is a dream-like quality about Wu Li's calligraphy (Fig. 53).¹⁴⁸ According to Wen Fong, Wu Li's calligraphy is written in the manner of Su Shi 蘇軾 (*zi* Dongpo 東坡, 1037-1101). Indeed, the comparison between Wu Li and Su Shi's calligraphy was first mentioned by Zhang Yunzhang 張雲章 (1648-1726) in Wu Li's biography in 1716, while Wu himself was still alive. Zhang stated that Wu Li enjoyed writing calligraphy in the manner of Su Dongpo 蘇東坡 (於書好法東坡) and related the story of Wu Li being about to meet the magistrate of the Wuxing 吳興 district. While waiting in the hall, Wu Li noticed the calligraphy *Zuiweng ting ji* 醉翁亭記 (On the Drunken Old Man's Pavilion) by Su Shi in the next room. Wu Li, ecstatic and inspired, became lost in copying Su Shi's calligraphy for three or four days. Upon completion, Wu Li left the house without having even spoken a word to the magistrate.¹⁴⁹

In 1603, Dong Qichang compiled the *Xihongtang fashu* 戲鴻堂法書, in which Su Shi's small regular script *kaishu* 楷書 can be seen in volume 12 (Fig. 55).¹⁵⁰ There are some similarities between Wu Li and Su Shi, for example, the use of a heavy first stroke when writing the character *jie* 解 (Fig.

¹⁴⁷ For some related issues see: Stephen Owen (ed. and trans.). *An Anthology of Chinese Literature. Beginnings to 1911*. New York, London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1996, 383-384; Wang Li 王力 (ed.). *Gudai hanyu* 古代漢語 (Classical Chinese). Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1992 (first ed. 1964), 1503-1526.

¹⁴⁸ The following stylistic analysis is based on descriptions of Chinese calligraphy and analytical concepts employed by Lothar Ledderose in his monograph: *Mi Fu and the Classical Tradition of Chinese Calligraphy*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1979, 61-65.

¹⁴⁹ Zhang Wenqin (2007), 42.

¹⁵⁰ Ho Wai-kam (1992), 338.

56). In the character *xue* 雪, both wrote the roof of the upper part *yu* 雨 with two heavy dots (Fig. 57). However, clear differences exist between Wu Li and Su Shi's calligraphy. Su Shi's brushwork appears fluid and was executed by using additional ink. Compared to Su Shi's elegant, fluent and refined regular script, Wu Li's writing appears straight and individualistic, though being written with meticulous care and precision. Moreover, Su Shi's strokes are softer and thicker, while many of Wu Li's strokes are edged with a hook. For example, the horizontal turning stroke *zhe* 折 of the fifth character *zhong* 中 in the first line (1/5) is written with a hook on the upper right corner which then goes downward (Fig. 58, right). There are also variations between Wu Li's brushstrokes by alternating between narrow and thick.

The feature of the turning strokes with a hook and the differences between narrow and thick brushstrokes on the rubbing *Duobaota ganying bei* 多寶塔感應碑 by Yan Zhenqing 顏真卿 (709-785) suggest that Wu Li possibly also learned from him (Fig. 59). The character *tong* 同 on Yan's *Duobaota ganying bei* with the horizontal turning stroke *zhe* with a hook is comparable to the hook of the above mentioned character *zhong* by Wu Li (Fig. 58).¹⁵¹

Wen Fong characterized Wu's calligraphy as follows: "[It] uses a flat, oblique stroke that makes dazzling sharp turns and hooks."¹⁵² The horizontal strokes with an upward tendency of Wu Li's inscription tilt frequently towards the right. Often they are drawn extremely long and with a small hook in the beginning of the stroke, such as the *mu* 木 part of the character *shu* 樹 (Fig. 60, left). In some characters, the central, vertical stroke is pushed off-centre towards the left, e.g., the first character *nan* 南 of the forth line (4/1) (Fig. 60, right). Although there is a difference in the size of the characters with some written small and some large, the overall appearance is

¹⁵¹ An interesting phenomenon in the Ming-Qing transition is that, according to Bai Qianshen, many literati took Yans calligraphy as a model for learning because of political reasons. Especially Ming loyalists like Fu Shan 傅山 favored Yan Zhenqing because he was considered a symbol of loyalty. Bai Qianshen. *Fu Shan (1607-1684/85) and the Transformation of Chinese Calligraphy in the Seventeenth Century*. PhD thesis. UMI. Yale University, 1996, 111-123.

¹⁵² Wen Fong. "Wang Hui, Wang Yüan-chi and Wu Li". In: *In Pursuit of Antiquity. Chinese Paintings of the Ming and Ching Dynasties from the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Earl Morse*. Roderick Whitfield (ed.) with an Addendum by Wen Fong. Rutland, Vermont and Tokyo: The Art Museum, Princeton University and Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1969, 193.

that of a harmonic rhythm. All in all, the way how Wu Li studied calligraphy was, as did every Chinese literatus, to copy works by classical masters like Su Shi and Yan Zhenqing and eventually to develop his own personal style.

Xu Zhijian's Colophon

Xu Zhijian's colophon reads:

Venerable literae Morong was the foremost disciple of Master Zheng. He had studied the Buddhist rules since his childhood. He was honest and earnest and did not like laughing at other people. Besides his Buddhist recitations, he dedicated himself to inscribed wooden tablet and brush [poetry and painting]. He was friends with Master Yushan Wuzi [Wu Li], Master Shanmin Chenzi [Chen Min 陳岷, active 1652], and some other gentlemen of high character. Every time when I passed through Wumen, I always dropped by at the Xingfu [chapel] and sat face to face with him all day long. He was never disagreeable or unctuous, hence, I regard highly on him. In the autumn of the eighth month, when I took leave of him, he was helping Master Zheng to build the sutra pavilion. He had been so critically ill that shortly before the building was finished he went to the West. When Yushan [Wu Li] and I were traveling on the way home to the South, we heard of his transience and I was doleful for a long time. In the summer of this *renzi* year [1672] when his old chamber was opened again, I sighed at the rapidity of his going and the fact that he could not realize his wishes. Therefore, I wrote [the following] poems to mourn him and showed them to Masters Zheng and Yushan.

[I am] sad for [things like] the shadow of a bubble coming and going.

I recall the past old travels.

The ink flowers are empty in the emerald pond.

The Buddhist leaf-sutras are by themselves in the cinnabar tower.

Unforgettable is the wise engagement [with Buddhism],
and the amusement and feeling are enough to stream.

The Book of Tea is still next to the meditation mat.

And the hanging green jade is colder than the autumn.

The plain zither is still hanging on the wall.

The small table is horizontally standing there as well.

Entering the chamber I wonder about all these.

Unrolling the painting I open up the dust [which is] left:

Following the idea of the past person,

it is for thinking over the cause [*karma*] of the world.

Touching the moon and singing the wind,
it is true - the stone of three forms of life.

The lay Buddhist Xiuyi nazi Xu Zhijian from Piling

默容上人為證公大弟子，幼習毘尼，慤誠巖淨，不苟訾笑。
梵誦之餘，酷嗜觚翰。與漁山吳子、山民陳子諸高士相友善。
余每過吳門，必過興福，坐對輒竟日。從無矯拂及脂韋之習，以是器重之。酉秋別去，時方佐證公創經閣，將
瘞盡瘁，閣垂成而西逝。余與漁山歸橈南渡，得其幻去之
信，憮然久之。今壬子夏，復啓故闕，感其去來之速，而
願果之未成也，詩以悼之，並眎證公、漁山。
來去悲漚影，經過撫舊游。
墨花空碧沼，梵筴自丹樓。
慧業難忘處，閒情足勝流。
茶經禪榻畔，墜綠冷於秋。

素栞仍掛壁，棐几亦橫陳。
入室思數度，披圖展後塵。
還將故人意，為省世間因。
弄月吟風在，三生石上真。

毘陵繡衣衲子許之漸

When the door of Morong's chamber was reopened in the summer of 1672, a book, possibly *The Book of Tea*, is on the small table beneath the mat in the empty chamber. Xu also makes clear that he unrolled Wu Li's *Xingfu* scroll and left his colophon on it. The word *chen* (dust) in the sentence "Unrolling the painting I open up the dust [which is] left" (披圖展後塵) is metaphoric: It could be the dust from Wu Li's scroll when Xu Zhijian unrolled it and left his colophon after Wu Li's inscription and picture. It could also be the dust left by Morong or, in other words, the memory recalled by the past times with Morong. The following four lines (in the English translation) give the idea of Xu's understanding of death, and more importantly the key to understanding the *Xingfu* scroll. Due to its importance, here again, the four lines:

Following the idea of the deceased,
[the painting] is depicted for thinking over the *karma* of life.
Touching the moon and singing with the wind,
it is true - the stone of three forms of life.

There are two significant issues in these four lines: Primarily, in the first line Xu points out that the *Xingfu* scroll represents the dead Morongs will and thinking. The reason for doing so is to consider the *karma* of life. The theory of *karma* or law of cause and effect not only determined ones realm of rebirth, but was the foundation for Buddhist cultivation.¹⁵³ Everything can be explained with the theory of *karma* or every act, *karma*, has a result. The next sentence, “Touching the moon and singing with the wind” functions as an intersection or a crossover, which is followed by the key sentence of the entire colophon, “It is true, the stone of three forms of life (三生石上真).” The term *sansheng* 三生, originally from Buddhist thinking, denotes the three forms of life: beforelife, this life and the afterlife. The Buddhist idea of three forms of life, beforelife, this life and afterlife, is universal. Death constitutes the link between beforelife, this life and afterlife and is followed by rebirth. Related to this Buddhist concept is the legend about *sansheng shi* 三生石 (the stone of Sansheng), which became popular as late as the tenth century. There are many versions, however, the most famous version is from the essay “Seng Yuanze zhuan” 僧園澤傳 (Biography of the monk Yuanze) by Su Shi. Li Yuan 李源 and Yuanze 園澤 (also known as Yuanguan 園觀) traveled to Sichuan together, where Yuanze died unexpectedly during the journey. Twelve years later, Li Yuan met a child in Hangzhou in the Tianzhu temple 天竺寺. The child gave him two poems as a present, providing the following clue that he was indeed the rebirth of Yuanze: “Sansheng shi shang jiu jinghun 三生石上舊精魂 [I am] the old soul from the stone of three forms of life.”¹⁵⁴

It seems that the last poem of Xu describes the following situation: Xu entered the room after Morong’s death and saw that the instrument and the small table were still there like before. He unrolled the *Xingfu* scroll and left

¹⁵³ Stephen Teiser and Jacqueline Stone. “Interpreting the Lotus Sūtra”. In: *Readings of the Lotus Sūtra*. Stephen Teiser and Jacqueline Stone (eds.). New York: Columbia University Press, 2009, 10.

¹⁵⁴ Yan Chunhua 嚴春華. “Sansheng shi gushi kaobian” 三生石故事考辯 (Exploration on the Story of Sansheng Stone). In: *Zongjiao xue yanjiu* 宗教學研究 (Research on Religion), 2007/2, 171-174.

his colophon with his understanding of both Morong's death and the *Xingfu* scroll: In order to think over the law of cause, the *Xingfu* scroll is depicted in following the understanding of life, death, and the afterlife of the dead Morong. Xu's last line hints at the fact that the *Xingfu* scroll is dealing with the idea of the three forms of life or in other words it is a representation of the three forms of life, a key issue of the study below. Indeed the juxtaposition of the three sections on the *Xingfu* scroll reveals the representation of death, namely this life in the chapel section, the afterlife in the middle section and rebirth in the clouds section.

The Other Two Colophons

Jiyin (active 1662-1722) was the abbot of the Xiangfu monastery 祥符寺 in Wuxi 無錫 and Zhang Jingwei (zi Shaowen 少文, hao Jieting 借亭, active 1695-1712) was one of patrons of Shitao. Their colophons provide some evidence about the history of the *Xingfu* scrolls collection. The translation of Jiyin's colophon is as follows:

What is a matter of being an aureate personality?
Turning to taking a free and easy rambling.
Being satisfied in a snowy night,
is it all illusion to make a promise?
To sweep in the forest so that the chinaberry gets clean.
The remnants of flowers and the lotus show the coming of the fall.
The birds and cranes are miserable and mournful,
feelings which are not to be asked any more among the high-ranking people.

There are lofty meanings in the picture.
It is difficult, however, to express them all in a painting.
The old Yushan wiped his eyes.
Xiuna [Xu Zhijian] sighed at this sorrowful world.
In solitude [they] reflected on things past,
and thought the cause at a loss.
If [Morong] would be reborn, [he and Wu Li] wouldn't feel separate any more.
The engagement with literature and art would be finer and purer.

On the summer day of the *jimao* year [June 21st, 1699] by the
Shenjun old man Ji Yin following the previous rhymes for Yiru
Chande to memorize

何事英靈漢
翻成撇脫游
安心方雪夜
結願豈蜃樓
林埽梅檀淨
花殘菡萏秋
淒涼烏鷁意
無復問高流。

圖畫存高寄
丹青難具陳
漁山揮老淚
繡衲感哀塵，見內典
寂麼思前事
蒼茫想後因
再來應不隔
慧業更清真

己卯夏至，神駿老人紀蔭次前韻為
繹如禪德存感

Ji Yin left his colophon for the monk Yiru Chande 繹如禪德 in the summer in
1699, who possibly was the new abbot of the Xingfu chapel. It seems that the
Xingfu scroll was not preserved in the Xingfu chapel any more by the end of
1699. The third colophon by Zhang Jingwei tells us more about it:

Today's painters imitate old masters, but this lets them be
limited. Even if some of them are inspiring coincidentally,
their way can be followed and is comprehensible. This is the
so-called aimless by the Chan masters. How could I find
somebody who is unique and outstanding to talk with about
painting? Among all of today's paintings, I like those by the
monk Kugua [Shitao] most. The [brushwork] on his paintings
moves and pauses abruptly and one cannot tell when it comes
and goes away. It reaches beyond listening, seeing and
thinking. It comes from itself between heaven and earth. It is
amazing. Today, I saw Yushan's painting, which also can
accomplish such a taste. Yushan retreated into Chan
Buddhism and had contact with monks everyday. That is why
most paintings in the Xingfu chapel are painted by him, and
the best among them are the *Xingfu* scroll and *The Snow
Mountains*. Yushan's painting takes heaven and earth as its

pattern and spirit as its brushwork. This is what contemporaries should not ignore. His paintings belong to the highest level, just as the Lingjiu mountain [flying from its Buddhist Indian origin]. Can it be something imaginable from this world?

Zhang Jingwei from Xiangping on the 10th month of *jimao* year [1699] in Nansha's Hanyun hut

今之畫家，描摹古人而自桎梏，其性靈即偶有可觀，俱思議可到，蹊徑可尋，此禪家所謂落七落八者矣。安得一絕凡聖路、離意識參者與之論畫哉！今人畫，予最愛苦瓜僧。其畫也，忽起忽住，無來無去，在耳目心思之外，卻天地間之所自有者，予嘗嘆觀止矣。今又見漁山畫，亦得此中三昧者。漁山愛逃禪，日與僧往還，故興福庵中其所畫最多，極得意者雪山圖與此卷也。蓋漁山之畫，直以天地為粉本，精神為筆墨，今人不可端倪，得畫家無上一乘，竟將靈鷲一支分來矣，豈人間所有哉！
己卯十月，襄平張景蔚題於南沙寒雲草廬

According to Zhang Jingwei, the *Xingfu* scroll and the other painting, *The Snow Mountains* 雪山圖, were the best paintings among many others preserved in the Xingfu chapel. Here, we can infer that the *Xingfu* scroll was no longer in the Xingfu chapel when the colophon was written, which was at the 10th month of *jimao* year (21 Nov.-20 Dec., 1699) in the Hanyun hut of Nansha.¹⁵⁵ It is not clear whether the Hanyun hut is the name of Jiang Tingxi 蔣廷錫 (1669-1732) studio or house. Nansha is the *hao* of Jiang Tingxi, an official and painter, who originated from a wealthy and eminent official family of Changshu – the same hometown of Wu Li, and became a *juren* in 1699. Zhang also left another colophon in 1699 on the painting *Joy on Fishing in the Landscape* 江山漁樂 by Wang Hui, which was dedicated to Shengyu in 1676. Zhang states in his colophon that he had stayed the night beneath the Xingfu pond in the 10th month of the *jimao* year (1699) (己卯十月宿興福池上). Zhang Jingwei, therefore, had visited the Xingfu chapel at the end of 1699. It seems that something important must have happened to the *Xingfu* chapel in 1699.

¹⁵⁵ Arthur Hummel (1991), 142.

In the 16th and 17th centuries China it was quite common that old paintings were sold when a new abbot came to a monastery. Was the *Xingfu* scroll sold because Shenggong had died and the abbot Yiru Chande came in? Was it bought by somebody as a present for Jiang Tingxi for becoming *juren* in 1699? Since we are lacking positive evidence, I can only assume that the *Xingfu* scroll had left the monastery at the end of 1699. It seems that the Xingfu chapel was decayed some time later. According to *Suzhou fuzhi* 蘇州府志 (Prefectural Gazetteer of Suzhou), the Xingfu chapel was rebuilt during the reign of Daoguang 道光 emperor (1821-1850) by the monk Dechan 德禪.¹⁵⁶ The seal “Degong xinshang” 德公心賞 (Heartly enjoyed by Master De) on the *Xingfu* scroll is quite possibly from this monk Dechan.

3. Visual Representations, Motifs, and Meanings

The Pine Tree and the Crane

The worship of trees is deeply entrenched in the early history of religion and belongs to one of the ancient Chinese popular beliefs.¹⁵⁷ Combined with the idea of tree-worship, a tree in Chinese culture is like a mirror of a man, who passes through youth, maturity and old age to death. In certain trees, Chinese see human images of integrity, dignity and enduring strength which are oblivious to superficial standards of value. Among all the trees, the pine tree is the king, and this was prescribed as the appropriate memorial of kings in the early ritual texts.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁶ *Suzhou fuzhi* 蘇州府志 (Prefectural Gazetteer of Suzhou). Vol. 2. Feng Guifen 馮桂芬, Li Mingwan 李銘皖 et al (eds.). Taipei: Chengwen chubanshe, 1970 (first published 1883), 1173.

¹⁵⁷ Reginald F. Johnston. *Lion and Dragon in Northern China*. Hong Kong, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1986 (first published 1910), 377. Johnston stresses: “The idea that certain trees are animated by more or less powerful spirits, or the distinct and still earlier view that certain trees are themselves the bodies of living divinities, is a belief that can be traced to almost every part of the world.” Ibid., 378.

¹⁵⁸ Richard Barnhart *Wintery Forests, Old Trees. Some Landscape Themes in Chinese Painting*. New York: China Institute in America, 1972, 11. One of the first famous painters of pine trees was Zhang Zao 張瓘 (active around 750), whose works do not survive, but many contemporary accounts recorded the nature of his art. It is recorded in “Guan Zhang Yuanwai hua songshi xu” 觀張員外畫松石序 (Preface to Watching Ministry Council Zhang Painting Pine and Rock) by Fu Zai 符載 (active around 750), *Tangchao minghua lu* 唐朝名畫錄 (Records of Famous Painters of the Tang Dynasty) by Zhu Jingxuan 朱景玄 (active ca. 806-840) and *Lidai minghua ji* 歷代名畫記 (Records of Famous Painters of the Subsequent

It is still unknown, however, when Chinese painters began to employ the pine tree as a motif of painting. An early example of painting a pine tree is mentioned in the essay “Hua Yuntai shan ji” 畫雲台山記 (A Note on How to Paint Mt. Yuntai) by Gu Kaizhi 顧愷之 (ca. 344-ca. 405), in which Gu writes that a pine tree should be painted on one of the major peaks in the centre of the scroll depicting Mt. Yuntai.¹⁵⁹ Kiyohiko Munakata has pointed out that Gu Kaizhi employs the pine tree and other symbolic motifs in order to emblemize immortality.¹⁶⁰

The most important reason for the great importance accorded to this motif in Chinese painting is probably the symbolic meaning of the pine tree, which emblemizes endurance, longevity and moral virtue. As early as during the ancient period, it was said by Confucius in the *Lunyu* 論語 that “Only when the year grows cold do we see that the pine and cypress do not fade”,¹⁶¹ to which Xunzi 荀子 (298-ca. 220 BC) added, “Only when things are difficult does one see the superior man.”¹⁶² The symbolic meaning of endurance in hard times by the man of virtue has preoccupied Chinese artists for more than a thousand years.¹⁶³

Dynasties) by Zhang Yanyuan 張彥遠 (ca. 813-ca. 879). Yu Jianhua 俞劍華 (ed.). *Zhongguo gudai hualun leibian* 中國古代畫論類編 (Classified Collection of Historical Essays on Chinese Painting). Beijing: Remin meishu chubanshe, 2004 (first ed. 1957), 603; 20-1. Also: He Zhiming 何志明 and Pan Yungao 潘運告 (eds.). *Tang Wudai hualun* 唐五代畫論 (Essays on Paintings from the Periods of Tang and Wudai). Changsha: Hunan meishu chubanshe, 2002, 88.

¹⁵⁹ Yu Jianhua 俞劍華 (2004), 582.

¹⁶⁰ This article is not only concerned with how to paint a whole composition of Mt. Yuntai but also with some aspects of religious daoism. It tries to give a concept of how to paint the sacred mountain Yuntai with the activities of the Daoists - the founder of the Tianshidao 天師道 (Heavenly Master) sect Zhang Ling 張陵 (34-156?) and his pupils. Munakata, Kiyohiko. *Sacred Mountains in Chinese Art*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1991, 40.

¹⁶¹ Trans. by Arthur Waley, cited in Richard Barnhart (1972), 15.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Jing Hao 荆浩 (ca. 870-930) in his *Bifa ji* 筆法記 (A Note on the Art of the Brush) points out that pine trees are like the moral virtue of virtuous men. Yu Jianhua (2004), 607. See also Susan Bush and Hsio-yen Shih. *Early Chinese Texts on Painting*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, England: Harvard University Press, 1985, 146-7. The pine tree painting was called *songshi* (pine trees and rocks) in contrast to the Chinese term *shanshui* for landscape painting according to *Tangchao minghua lu*. In this book 28 painters were registered as landscape painters and 13 as pine trees and rocks painters. Among them seven painters were good at both landscape and pine trees and rocks painting. Li Lincan 李霖燦. *Zhongguo minghua yanjiu* 中國名畫研究 (Research on Some Famous Chinese Paintings). Taipei: Yiwen yinshuguan, 1973, 260; He Zhiming and Pan Yungao (2002), 76-80.

During the development of pine tree painting, the symbolic meanings of moral virtue and longevity of pine trees still remain in later periods. The pine tree on Tang Yin's *The Painting of Yi'an* 毅庵圖卷 is an appropriate example in which the pine tree symbolizes the virtue of the patron Yi'an 毅庵 (Fig. 61). Yi'an, literally a cottage of endurance (*yi* 毅 for endurance and *an* 庵 for cottage), is the *hao* 號 of the patron Zhu Bingzhong 朱秉忠, a friend of Tang Yin and Wen Zhengming in writing poetry, who is depicted sitting up straight in the open cottage, viewing the garden. The pine tree beneath his cottage and the book on the small table hint at his character, his social position as a literatus and possibly the painter's wish of his longevity. Thus the *Painting of Yi'an* is a *hao* painting in which the pine tree and the cottage are depicted as spelling out in visual form what essentially constitutes a literary pun.¹⁶⁴

On the *Xingfu* scroll Wu Li seems to aim at stressing the virtue of the monk Morong by using the representation of a pine tree. Furthermore the combination of the pine tree and the standing crane on it gives us a clue to the possible allusion of immortality, as cranes in Chinese painting are very often taken as a symbol of long life as well. Shen Quan's 沈銓 (*hao* Nanping 南蘋, 1682-after 1765) *Pine, Plum, and Double Cranes* 松梅雙鶴圖 symbolizes longevity in depicting both pine tree and crane (Fig. 62).

The same symbolic meaning of the longevity of the crane can also be observed on another painting by Wu Li *The Painting of Nangao* 南皋圖, which was painted for the poet Chen Fan 陳帆 (1617-after 1676, *hao* Nanpu 南浦 and Menggu 蒙谷), who lived in Nangao 南皋, for his 60th birthday (Fig. 63). On this painting a person, quite possibly Chen Fan himself, sits on a chair watching two cranes in the yard. The two cranes, both facing towards the seated person, create a harmonic mood and an image of meeting the poet with their own response, which hints at the spiritual understanding between them (Fig. 64).

¹⁶⁴ In the Ming period it was very common for a person to choose his *hao* himself in any number and at any time in his life and the *hao* very often emblemizes the intellectual and ideological principles of the patron or, in this case, the character of endurance of the patron Zhu Bingzhong.

However, the single crane with his head raised towards heaven on Wu Li's *Xingfu* scroll, which is possibly screaming, suggests one more important symbolic meaning apart from the allusion of immortality. Here we are dealing with a complex case concerning the depiction of a crane on the *Xingfu* scroll: The single crane is indeed screaming for having lost its partner. There is a very famous anecdote related to this interpretation. "The Eulogy for the Cranes" 鶴贊 by Yu Xin 庾信 (513-581) states that, in the year 560, General Zheng Wei 鄭偉 shot a pair of cranes in the garden Shanglin yuan 上林園. The cranes looked at each other, squalling, then the male one died. The female crane was not willing to leave her mate and flew around it. The king felt sorry for them and asked Yu Xin to write the poem "Eulogy for the Cranes". Its last lines describe the scene of the cranes like this:

They looked at each other and cried sadly.
The livers are destroyed and their hearts crushed.
The sadness on the pine tree lasts a long time,
The eternal farewell is taken [in the music of the] zither.

相顧哀鳴，肝心斷絕。松上長悲，琴中永別。¹⁶⁵

It is a scene of two sad cranes, standing on pine trees and screaming in the moment of death. A similar association related to death can also be found in the colophon by Shen Zhou on the painting *Pure and Plain Pavilion* by Liu Jue discussed earlier (Fig. 8). Wu Li also used the metaphor of the sadly screaming crane in his poem of 1665 to show his mourning for the Daoist Sun Taichu 孫太初 (1484-1520). It reads:

I arrived at the Guiyun [temple] where [Sun Taichu] had
retreated.
The lonely monkey and the wild crane are still sadly
screaming.

行到歸雲高隱處，
孤猿野鶴尚哀鳴。¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁵ Mo Rong 莫容 (ed.). *Zhongguo de he wenhua* 中國的鶴文化 (The Chinese Culture of Crane). Beijing: Zhongguo linye chubanshe, 1994, 119.

¹⁶⁶ In Wu Li's poem "Following the Rhymes of [Chen Hu's] 'Mourning in front of the Tomb of Sun Taichu'" 和弔孫太初處士墓), which was written during Wu's travel in Wuxing 吳興 together with his Neo-Confucian teacher Chen Hu, see Wu Li's poetry band *Xieyou ji* 寫憂集. In: Zhang Wenqin (2007), 118.

The crane here hints at those persons such as Sun's friends who knew him very well and were sad after his death. To sum up the depiction of pine tree and crane on the *Xingfu* scroll, Wu Li apparently wants to stress the virtue of the monk Morong and the single crane with its head raised towards heaven, suggesting grief for losing a partner. At the same time, both the pine tree and the crane hint at immortality - a good wish of Wu Li and the basic concept of this *Xingfu* scroll, which I shall explore further in the following sections.

Emptiness and the Lotus Seat

On the *Xingfu* scroll an open chamber with a small table with a mat in front of it and a scroll lying on it is depicted (Fig. 65). To the left of the chamber are two crows on a plain platform with a lotus ornament underneath and a column as socket - the lotus seat or lotus pillar (Fig. 66).

The depiction of a space with an absent human figure can be observed especially in Ni Zan's 倪瓚 (1301-1374) paintings. Ni Zan probably was the first Chinese painter to become famous for the empty lodges in his paintings. As can be seen on *The Rongxi Studio* 容膝齋 the empty lodge represents a lonely world, which suggests an invitation of the sensory participation from the viewer's side (Fig. 67).¹⁶⁷ Compared with Ni Zan's empty lodge, Wu Li's depiction lacks the function of inviting the viewer because the chamber is not really empty. We are dealing here with a room with an absent person who has just left, or more precisely with a representation of death as Wu Li's inscription relays.

The source of Wu Li's concept of representing death might be the concept of absence of Wen Zhengming's hangingscroll *The Jixiang Chapel* discussed in the last chapter (Fig. 23; Fig. 24). The absence of the human figure in the empty place, be it a stool on Wen's *The Jixiang Chapel* or be it a chamber on Wu Li's *Xingfu* scroll, constitutes a visual representation of death. There is dialectics between presence and absence. The stool or the chamber left by the deceased is still present, while the deceased themselves are not to be seen on the pictures. But where does this Wen Zhengming's concept of absence come from?

¹⁶⁷ James Cahill (1976), 118-119.

The north wall of Cave 172 in Mogaoku in Dunhuang from the eighth century is dealing with the scene of Pure Land paradise. The figure of Amida surrounded by Bodhisattvas in the centre is depicted in the paradise. On the right upper corner is another depiction of Amida and his two Bodhisattvas with their backs towards the viewer which represents the leaving of Amida for his return to paradise (Fig. 68; Fig. 69). It represents the moment in which the deceased is taken away by Amida on the way back to paradise. The empty room below without a human figure hints at the leaving of the deceased for paradise (Fig. 70). Thus the empty chamber on the *Xingfu* scroll hints at not only Morong's death but also his rebirth in the Pure Land paradise.

In the three sutras *Amituo jing* 阿彌陀經 (The Sūtra of Amida), *Wuliangshou jing* 無量壽經 (The Sūtra of the Buddha of Immeasurable Life) and *Guan wuliangshou jing* 觀無量壽經 (The Sūtra of Contemplation on the Buddha of Immeasurable Life) we can find the important concept, which describes the welcoming descent of Amida (or Amitābha) Buddha to the deathbed of a Pure Land practitioner for the purpose of guiding the deceased devotee to the Western Pure Land.¹⁶⁸ The last sutra *Guan wuliangshoujing*, known as the “Visualization Sutra” and regarded as a guidebook for contemplative practice, contains the essential elements of early Pure Land Buddhism and descriptions of the descent of Amida in detail.¹⁶⁹ Later the depiction of both descending and returning movements of Amida is attributed to the last part of the Commentary to the last sutra *Guan wuliangshou jing shu* 觀無量壽經疏 by Shandao 善導 (613-681), the 3rd patriarch and the priest who brought

¹⁶⁸ Dietrich Seckel understands the idea of emptiness as aniconic or non-figurative Buddhist art which existed in both early and late Chan Buddhist art. The idea of the absent human-figured Buddha constitutes the “Entbildlichung” in Buddhist art. The idea behind the aniconic art is, according to Seckel, that it serves “zum Abbau jeder anthropomorphen Formulierung der eigentlichen Wahrheit”. Its depiction hints at the nirvana or Buddhist paradise. Seckel chose the Dhārani-platter with Siddham characters in the Pure Land Buddhist temple Byōdō-in 平等院 in Japan as an example for the aniconic art. Indeed the idea behind this platter is mixed from Chan and Pure Land Buddhism. Dietrich Seckel. *Jenseits des Bildes. Anikonische Symbolik in der buddhistischen Kunst*. Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1976, 37; 52.

¹⁶⁹ Kanda, C. Fusae. *The Development of Amida Raigō Painting: Style, Concept, and Landscape*. PhD thesis. UMI. Yale University, 2002, 9-10. See also Ryukoku University Translation Center. *The Sutra of Contemplation on the Buddha of Immeasurable Life as Expounded by Śākyamuni Buddha*. Kyoto: Ryukoku University, 1984, 81.

Pure Land Buddhism to its zenith in China.¹⁷⁰ According to Fusae C. Kanda Amida's descent, his returning movement and the holding of the lotus seat by the Bodhisattva can be observed on mural representations preserved on the south wall in cave 431 (early Tang period, 618-712) (Fig. 71) and on the south, north and east walls in cave 171 (high Tang period, 712-781) in Dunhuang.¹⁷¹

Except for these Dunhuang mural paintings there are hardly Chinese Pure Land paintings from the 16th to 17th century available any more. However, it is quite likely that the concept of an empty space with the allusion of death and rebirth existed in Pure Land Buddhist art in 16th and 17th-century China. It is evident that during the Ming-Qing transition the belief in Amida was embraced by Chinese at all levels of society.¹⁷² Moreover, there is another evidence on the *Xingfu* scroll dealing with the concept of rebirth in the Pure Land.

Behind the chamber on the *Xingfu* scroll a lotus seat or lotus pillar is depicted (Fig. 66). In the scene of the welcoming descent of the Amida Buddha, a bodhisattva called Dashizhi 大勢至 or Guanyin 觀音 on the left side of Amida holds a lotus seat in his hand.¹⁷³ It is the seat on which the deceased will sit during the trip to the future Western Pure Land. The lotus seat depicted on the southern wall of Cave 217 in Dunhuang in the 8th century hints at the idea that the figure on it is on the trip to the Pure Land (Fig. 72; Fig. 73).

¹⁷⁰ Kanda, C. Fusae (2002), 36.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Denis Twitchett. In: Twitchett Denis and Frederick W. Mote (eds.). *The Cambridge History of China. Volume 8. The Ming Dynasty, 1368-1644, Part 2*. General Editors: Denis Twitchett, John K. Fairbank. Cambridge, New York, and Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1998, 933.

¹⁷³ The lotus flower (*padma*) - an old Indian sign related to water, fertility and purity - is a frequently depicted subject in Buddhist art with the function of describing the spiritual virtue of the Buddha. Karlsson, Klemens. *Face to Face with the Absent Buddha. The Formation of Buddhist Aniconic Art*. Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 1999, 19; 165-6. At the same time, the lotus symbolizes the different directions, emanating from the centre and the seat of the Buddha. Dietrich Seckel makes the following remark: "Der kosmisch-universale Charakter des Buddha und der aus ihm sich enthaltenden Welt wird im Hauptfeld des Garbhadhātu-Mandala durch eine nach dem Weltrichtungen ausgebreitet achtblättrige Lotusblüte symbolisiert, deren Zentrum als Sitz des höchsten Buddha den Weltmittelpunkt bildet; zugleich repräsentiert der Lotus die reine, absolute Wesensnatur des Buddha, die ja auch allem Existierenden innewohnt und von allen Lebewesen durch erleuchtende Einsicht realisiert - im Doppelsinne von erkannt und verwirklicht - werden kann und soll." In: Dietrich Seckel (1976), 40; 47.

Although it is clear that Japanese *kuhon raigōzu* 九品來迎図 (painting of nine degrees of welcoming descent of Amida with his attendants from the Western Pure Land), abbreviated as *raigō* 來迎 paintings underwent a distinct development into various types, evidence based on Chinese models surviving in Japan can still provide us with some additional clues about the visual representation of the lotus seat.¹⁷⁴ It has been recognized that the Japanese *raigō* painting was adapted from Chinese prototypes depicting Amidas descent on a cloud from the Pure Land.¹⁷⁵

The Descent of Amida and the Heavenly Multitude 阿彌陀聖衆來迎図 is a triptych consisting of three hanging scrolls (Fig. 74). On the central scroll the golden figure of Amida is surrounded by Bodhisattvas descending to earth to welcome and guide the deceased devotee to the Western Pure Land paradise. Several musicians with joyful facial features reveal their friendly warmth and compassion, which is one of the main characteristics of *raigō* imagery and, at the same time, hints at the further glories of paradise.¹⁷⁶ On the lower right corner of the central scroll the Bodhisattva Guanyin holds a golden lotus pedestal in the hand for the deceased to sit on (Fig. 75).

According to Pure Land Buddhism there are nine degrees of rebirth, which accord with the evil deeds of the devotees and the acts of piety they accomplished during their lifetime. And for each degree of rebirth there is a lotus seat for the deceased to sit on for going to the Pure Land.¹⁷⁷ Thus the

¹⁷⁴ In: Kanda, C. Fusae (2002), 2; 4-6. A more extensive discussion in: Kanda, C. Fusae (2002), capital I.

¹⁷⁵ In Japan Pure Land Buddhism attained a very high degree of importance after the Tang period (618-907) and the *raigō* concept became popular in the decades around 1052. Ibid., 3-4.

¹⁷⁶ Jōji Okazaki. *Pure Land Buddhist Painting*. Trans. a. adapted by Elizabeth ten Grotenhuis. Tokyo, New York, and San Francisco: Kodansha International Ltd. and Shibundo, 1977, 97.

¹⁷⁷ They are called *jingang tai* 金剛臺 (adamantine pedestal) for the upper birth of the upper grade 上品上生 and *zijing tai* 紫金臺 (pedestal of purple-gold), *jin lianhua* 金蓮華/花 (golden lotus flower), *lianhua tai* 蓮花臺 (lotus flower pedestal), *qibao lianhua* 七寶蓮花 (seven-jeweled lotus flower), *bao lianhua* 寶蓮華 (jeweled lotus flower) and *jin lianhua* 金蓮花 (a sun-like golden lotus) for the other eight degrees of rebirth. The nine degrees are: Upper Grade: upper birth of the upper grade 上品上生/middle birth of the upper grade 上品中生/lower birth of the upper grade 上品下生; Middle Grade: upper birth of the middle grade 中品上生/middle birth of the middle grade 中品中生/lower birth of the middle grade 中品下生; Lower Grade: upper birth of the lower grade 下品上生/middle birth of the lower grade 下品中生/ lower birth of the lower grade 下品下生. In: Kanda, C. Fusae (2002), 3. Ryukoku University (1984), 86-87; 90-91; 94-95; 96-97; 108-109.

empty lotus seat on the *Xingfu* scroll hints at the seat on which the deceased Morong to sit on in attaining rebirth in the Buddhist Pure Land.

Furthermore, there are some other details on the *Xingfu* scroll confirming the idea of rebirth. According to Fusae C. Kanda the *shōju raigōzu* 聖衆來迎図 (welcoming descent of Amida with his celestial attendants from the Western Pure Land) type painting has diagonal and central descents: descent from the upper left to the lower right, from the upper right to the lower left, and from the high center to the viewer. *The Descent of Amida and the Twenty-five Bodhisattvas* 阿彌陀二十五菩薩來迎図 shows Amida and the Bodhisattvas descending to the praying devotee who is sitting in an open chamber in a diagonal line over a landscape painted in a blue-and-green manner (Fig. 76). In the hand of the Bodhisattva there is a golden pedestal prepared for the deceased (Fig. 77). According to Pure Land Buddhism the devotee should face towards the West - the direction of the descent of Amida,¹⁷⁸ practice *nianfo* 念佛 (literally “to recite the name of Buddha” or “to think of Buddha”), which means contemplating Buddha and invoking his name (Fig. 78). Remarkably, the clouds, the winding descending line of the coming movement of Amida and the blue-and-green mountains can be easily associated with the *Xingfu* scroll. The mat in front of the table on the *Xingfu* scroll hints at the direction in which the deceased must have faced (Fig. 65). In other words the dead Morong must have faced west, in the direction of the Pure Land, namely the left clouds part of the scroll. Until now, we can see that the visual representations of the empty chamber, the lotus seat and to which direction Morong had faced hint at, more importantly, Morong’s rebirth in the Pure Land.

Another possible interpretation of the lotus seat on the *Xingfu* scroll is to view it as a lotus pillar, a *jingchuang* 經幢, a pillar with sutras such as the *Dharani* sutra 陀羅尼 or the *Heart sutra* written on it. It functions to cultivate happiness for the living and most importantly to protect the deceased from suffering in hell and help the deceased get rebirth in the Pure

¹⁷⁸ Ryukoku University (1984), 105.

Land.¹⁷⁹ The sutra pillar on the left side in front of the Tianwang Hall 天王殿 in the Lingyin monastery 靈隱寺 in Hangzhou built during the early Song dynasty in 969 is a typical *jingchuang* (Fig. 79). The lotus seat on the *Xingfu* scroll could be a simplified *jingchuang* as during the Ming and Qing periods it was common when they were built with fewer levels and with reduced ornaments. But the idea beyond the empty lotus seat, namely helping the deceased to attain rebirth in the Pure Land remained the same.

Moreover, the visual representations of the empty chamber and the empty lotus seat seem to be dealing with the concept of emptiness, which is a fundamental term of Buddhism and figures prominently in the *Heart sutra* especially: “The world is situated in emptiness and emptiness gives rise to great enlightenment.”¹⁸⁰ During the Late Ming Dynasty the *Heart sutra* and the *Diamond sutra* were the most popular sutras. Reciting the *Heart sutra* was considered as part of the practices for going to the Pure Land.¹⁸¹

In his inscription of the *Xingfu* scroll Wu Li uses the word emptiness, which is *kong* 空 in Chinese, as well: “With tears in my eyes I find it hard to understand its emptiness (淚盈難解空).” On the one hand, it reveals that Wu Li cannot understand the real emptiness - the death of Morong as the phrase *nan jie kong* (difficult to understand the emptiness) tells us. On the other hand, and more importantly, it seems that Wu Li cannot accept the idea of emptiness. Wu Li’s inscription, which was written almost three years after he had finished the painting, demonstrates how hard it was for him to accept the fact of Morong’s death and at the same time shows his skepticism toward the Buddhism. Wu Li became a Christian a year before the *Xingfu* scroll was painted. Wu Li wishes that his friend Morong will attain rebirth in the Pure

¹⁷⁹ Liu Shufen 劉淑芬. *Miezui yu duwang. Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jingchuang zhi yanjiu* 滅罪與度亡---佛頂尊勝陀羅尼經幢之研究 (Eliminating Sinner and Rescuing Soul: Research of Foding Zunsheng Dharani Pillars). Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2008, 1; 125.

¹⁸⁰ This is the understanding about the *Heart sutra* of the two Buddhist masters Hanshan Deqing 憨山德清 (1546-1623) and Ouyi Zhixu 藕益智旭 (1599-1655), who published a large number of writings on Chan, Pure Land Buddhism and commentaries to the *Heart sutra*. Denis Twitchett. In: Denis Twitchett, Frederick W. Mote (eds., 1998), 940; 927. According to the *Heart sutra* everything is empty and this even includes death, because “there is no decay and death, no extinction of decay and death.” 乃至無老死，亦無老死盡. Conze, Edward. *Buddhist Scriptures*. Selected and translated by Edward Conze. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1979 (first ed. 1959), 163.

¹⁸¹ Denis Twitchett. In: Denis Twitchett, Frederick W. Mote (eds., 1998), 949; 933.

Land paradise. The *Xingfu* scroll is painted by employing a manner of assimilation. Since the deceased Morong was a Chan Buddhist monk, Wu Li used the concept of assimilation of the Buddhist concept on his scroll in order to mourn his friend Morong. But in reality the *Xingfu* scroll is conflicting. Wu Li's intention can be only understood within the framework of the phenomenon of syncretism in 17th-century China, an issue, which will be discussed more in the following sections.

Old Leafless Trees

The center of the *Xingfu* scroll is dominated by some old leafless trees (Fig. 51). On Wu Li's birthday painting *The Painting of Nangao* for Chen Fan some old leafless trees are represented as well (Fig. 63). However, compared to the A-shaped twigs of the trees on the *Xingfu* scroll, the twigs in this painting are depicted as V-shaped forms, which results in a different atmosphere. In his book *Essai sur les signes inconditionnels dans l'art*, published in 1827, Humbert de Superville (1770-1849) discussed the aesthetic meanings of three forms or directions of lines, which are horizontal, V-shaped and A-shaped. Here the V-shaped form is associated with a happy-looking human face, while the A-shaped form on the contrary (Fig. 80).¹⁸² It seems that the V-shaped twigs of the old leafless trees together with the two greeting cranes on *The Painting of Nangao* provide a positive celebratory mood while the A-shaped twigs on the *Xingfu* scroll quite the contrary.

In China, as mentioned earlier, tree painting was regarded as a form of artistic expression with different symbolic meanings. The origin of the metaphor of old trees seems to be from Zhuangzi.¹⁸³ According to Richard Barnhart, trees and rocks were already being described, using human metaphors, in the 8th and 9th centuries in Chinese painting. The artist

¹⁸² Raphael Rosenberg, Max Hollein. *Turner, Hugo, Moreau. Entdeckung der Abstraktion*. Frankfurt: Schirn Kunsthalle; Muenchen: Hirmer Verlag, 2007, 26.

¹⁸³ Old trees have succeeded in living out their natural span because they were *bucai zhi mu* 不材之木 (useless trees) and had made themselves *wu suo ke yong* 無所可用 (nowhere can be used). Zhuangzi, however, also pointed out the use of uselessness since people can have a rest under the shadow of these useless old trees. He stresses, on the other hand that *shenren* 神人 (spiritual persons) were just like those old trees, since they know how to take over their abilities and therefore have long lives. *Zhuangzi* (reprint, 1992), 49.

conceives himself “in the image of the vulnerable yet enduring elements of nature: trees and rocks; and conversely, to see in them a reflection of human existence and history”.¹⁸⁴ Richard Barnhart described it as a “phenomenon of inter-identification”, since Chinese culture sees man and nature as “the symbiotic relationship of existence.”¹⁸⁵

Probably the first and most influential artist was Li Cheng 李成 (919-967), who painted wintry forests and level plains in a way nobody had done before him - a “master to a hundred generations.”¹⁸⁶ In the *Xuanhe huapu* 宣和畫譜 (Catalogue of Paintings in the Xuanhe Collection, dated at 1120) it was written that eight paintings of *Wintry Trees* by Li Cheng were available.¹⁸⁷ The painting with the calligraphy *Wintry Forest and Level Plain* 寒林平野 written by the Song emperor Huizong, must be one or one copy of them, although there is no signature of the painter on this painting and, according to Richard Barnhart, no original work from Li Cheng has survived (Fig. 81).¹⁸⁸ The reason for the vogue of wintry trees by later Chinese painters is most likely due to this association with Li Cheng, who was a poet, gentleman, recluse and Confucian scholar but unsuccessful in his political career. The wintry forest theme in paintings thereafter expressed the hard and shadowed seasons of life, and the will of the man of inner strength to endure.¹⁸⁹

Related to these meanings is the painting *Wintry Trees after Li Cheng* by Wen Zhengming painted for a certain Li Zicheng 李子成 for his attendance at Wen’s wife’s funeral (Fig. 82). There are almost no leaves on the trees in this painting; instead we observe a cold, lonely atmosphere without any evidence of human beings. This lonely atmosphere and the symbolic meaning of wintry trees, of sadness, loneliness or resilience in times of

¹⁸⁴ Richard Barnhart (1972), 7.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 15.

¹⁸⁷ *Gugong shuhua tulu* 故宮書畫圖錄 (Catalogue of Calligraphies and Paintings from the National Palace Museum), Band 1, Taipei: Guoli Gugong Bowuyuan, 1989, 146.

¹⁸⁸ Richard Barnhart (1972), 15.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 16. Deng Chun 鄧椿 (active in 12th century) has pointed out in his *Huaji* 畫繼 (preface dated to 1167) that the pine trees of Li Cheng were often painted with their roots out of the earth, which hints at virtuous men, while the level plains hint at the power of vicious men. *Huaji* (A Continued History of Painting). Deng Chun. Beijing: Renmin meishu chubanshe, 2004 (first ed. 1964), 116-117.

difficulty, seems to imply Wen's loss of his wife and his sad feelings because of this. Wen Zhengming wrote:

Li Zicheng of Wuyuan, because of the death of my wife, did not consider several hundred *li* as too far to come and condole with me at Suzhou. Since having read about the marvellousness of *Wintry Trees* by Li Yingqiu, I have subsequently done this for him. Although it is nearing the end of the year, the weather is mild, and my spirits are good. I sketched, rendered the scene in ink and filled the paper all unawares. Now it is finished, after ten hours. On the 21st day of the last month of the *renyin* year of the Jiajing reign [25 January 1543], by Zhengming, aged 73.¹⁹⁰

武原李子成以余有內子之戚，不遠數百里過慰吳門。因讀李營丘寒林之妙，遂為作此。時雖歲暮，而天柔和煦，意興頗佳，簞燈塗抹，不覺滿紙。比成，漏下四十刻矣。時嘉靖壬寅臘月廿又一日。徵明識，吉年七十三矣。

This painting is not a commemorative painting of the deceased in the strict sense. The death of Wen's wife, however, was the indirect occasion for the production of this painting. The word *qi* 戚 in the inscription, which Wen used for the sorrow of losing his wife, is a synonym of the word *tong* used by Wu Li on the *Xingfu* scroll in terms of mental pain. *Qi* is a word for sorrow but with the added stress of worry.¹⁹¹ On the other hand, this painting is at the same time a semi-*hao* painting. It is, in my view, quite possible because of the patron's name Li Zicheng, which can be easily associated with the famous painter Li Cheng, who was also known as Li Yingqiu. This gift painting combines perfectly the personal feelings of the painter with a hint to the patron's character, possibly as an ethical and intellectual hermit.

During the last decades of his life, Wen Zhengming, who lived to be 89, was preoccupied with old tree paintings. He once claimed: "On a less mythic and amorphous level, the black bones of winter trees are found again and again in any anthology of Chinese poetry to speak of sorrow, bitter hardship, poverty, and old age."¹⁹² Wen Zhengming's engagement with old tree paintings in his

¹⁹⁰ It is based on the translation by Craig Clunas with some changes by myself. Craig Clunas (2004), 31. See also Wen Zhengming (1987, reprint), 1402.

¹⁹¹ *Ciyuan* 辭源 (Source of Words). Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1997, 644.

¹⁹² Richard Barnhart (1972), 16.

later years was apparently combined with feelings of nostalgia and worry about his approaching death.

Thus wintry leafless tree paintings can be understood as visual symbols of bitterness, endurance or even of death. Indeed the idea of death seems to have been formed during the 16th century, when Lang Ying 郎瑛 (1487-after 1566) in his *Qixiu leigao* 七修類稿 (Draft Notes Organized under Seven Subjects) mentioned that *hanlin* 寒林 for wintry tree is also the place of a cemetery. He writes:

Hanlin is the place where the barbarian tribes cast the bodies of their dead. Now this word is borrowed in order to refer to the place where ghosts and souls reside.

寒林者，夷狄棄屍之地，今借而為鬼魂依棲之所。¹⁹³

In Xiang Shengmo's album leaf *Landscape* from 1649, a great leafless thick-trunked tree occupies the center of the composition (Fig. 83). Xiang Shengmo's life was deeply altered by the Manchu conquest around 1644. To the right a scholar in a red robe gazes toward distant mountains. The possibly "dying" or "dead" tree symbolizes China itself as being comparable with the red sunset, which can easily be associated with the Ming imperial family and with the surname of Zhu, meaning "red". The accompanying inscription by Xiang himself "is couched in a tone of lonely, resentful lamentation, conveying a general sense of loss that may be imputed to the fall of the Ming dynasty as well as to Xiang's former lost circumstances."¹⁹⁴

Wu Hung relates the old leafless tree painting to the issue of memory and points out that old trees show the process of experiencing decay, death and rebirth.¹⁹⁵ The allusion to rebirth of wintry trees plays an important role in Shitao's last section of the painting *Sketches of Calligraphy and Painting by Qingxiang* 清湘書畫稿 (Fig. 84). This section "shows a withered but beatific figure, with protruding ribs, wrinkled face and neck, wearing a monks robe

¹⁹³ Lang Ying 郎瑛, *Qixiu leigao* 七修類稿 (Draft Notes Organized under Seven Subjects), first published after 1566. Shanghai: Shanghai shudian chubanshe, 2009 (reprint), 217.

¹⁹⁴ Richard Vinograd (1992), 37-38.

¹⁹⁵ Wu Hung 巫鴻. "Ruins in Chinese Art: Site, Trace, Fragment." In: *A Story of Ruins: Presence and Absence in Chinese Art and Visual Culture*. London. Reaktion Books, 2007. Chinese Translation: "廢墟的內化：傳統中國文化中對往昔的視覺感受和審美" In: 《時空中的美術-巫鴻中國美術史文編二集》. Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 2010, 48-49.

and meditating with a blissful smile within the hollow trunk of a tree.”¹⁹⁶ The idea of rebirth in Shitao’s painting is represented by an old Buddhist *lohan*-looking man, sitting in the old leafless tree. The inscription begins as follows: “An old tree on the empty mountain has sat here for forty *kalpa* [ca. million years].” 老樹空山，一坐四十小劫。 It ends with a rhetorical question: “The man in the picture - could we call him the Blind Abbots future incarnation or not?”¹⁹⁷ 圖中之人可呼之為瞎尊者後身否也。 The Blind Abbot, *xia zun zhe* 瞎尊者, originally a name of a Buddhist *lohan*, was Shitao’s *hao* before 1697. In 1697 he gave up his Buddhist identification and took a new studio name with Daoist implications.¹⁹⁸ This painting of Shitao seems to be a pseudo-self-portrait of the final identity of a Buddhist monk who waits for a future incarnation or, in the words of Richard Vinograd, this image “appears to be a final, somewhat wistful letting-go of a long-maintained role and identity, with its spiritual attainment deferred to a possible future incarnation.”¹⁹⁹ The idea of rebirth can be also observed on the 11th leaf “Old Ginkgo at Mount Qinglong” 青龍山古銀杏樹 of the album *Reminiscences of Jinling* 金陵懷古冊 in the year 1707, painted shortly before Shitao’s death (Fig. 85). On the leaf a ginkgo tree with some blue and yellow painted new leaves is depicted with an empty trunk. According to Shitao’s inscription, the thunder and fire from the Six Dynasties (229-589) had made the tree look like this. It not only stood on the Qinglong mountain in Nanjing up to his time, but it was also able to hear the music of Heaven, due to its empty trunk - literally *kongxin* (empty heart). The last two lines read: “I happen to lean toward its empty heart, and ever so slightly, I hear the music of Heaven.” 偶向空心處，微聞頂上音。²⁰⁰ Both the visual image of the new leaves and the text relating to heavenly music hint at the fact of rebirth. Although it is not completely clear to what kind of heavenly music Shitao here refers, the painting of a pine tree on the 8th leaf “Ancient Pine at the Xufu Chapel” 徐府庵古松樹 in the same album reveals

¹⁹⁶ Richard Vinograd (1992), 62.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid. Trans. by Richard Vinograd.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ Richard Vinograd (1992), 62; Wu Hung (2010), 50; Jonathan Hay (2001), 123.

²⁰⁰ Based on Jonathan Hay’s translation. Jonathan Hay (2001), 318.

quite clearly the idea of Buddhist rebirth (Fig. 86). The pine tree in the Xufu chapel on the outskirts of Nanjing has survived from the time of the Six Dynasties and it was supposedly planted by Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty (502-557).²⁰¹ According to Jonathan Hay, Shitao's last two lines of the inscription refer to the idea that an arhat who renounces the final stages of enlightenment stays behind in this world to relieve its suffering: "While steadfast hearts return to the Pure Land, it remains, shaking in the teeth of the wind 真心歸淨土，留待劫風搖。"²⁰² Thus the old leafless tress on the *Xingfu* scroll refer to the meanings of sorrow, endurance, death and more importantly rebirth.

Rocks and Bamboo

On Wu Li's *Xingfu* scroll, bamboo can be seen on the left side of the barren trees and rocks, painted in dark green, on the right side of the trees. Some bamboo has fallen down, with its leaves touching the ground (Fig. 87). Rocks are considered as possessing unattainable strength and stoic endurance, while bamboo is the foremost symbol of perseverance, especially under adverse conditions, the controlling component and a symbol of strength-in-weakness. Bamboo bends with the wind but springs erect when the wind has passed.²⁰³ In his *Mojing huaba* 墨井畫跋 (Collection of Inscriptions by Mojing, Wu Li writes that the most important thing in depicting bamboo is to represent its *jiecao* 節操 (integrity) and to show its vital green hues in the cold and windy landscape.²⁰⁴ The painting *Bamboo and Rock*, created for a certain Ziying 子膺, is one of Wu Li's few available bamboo and rocks paintings (Fig. 88).

Wen Tong 文同 (?-1079) and Su Shi were considered to be the key masters of bamboo and rock painting. It was especially Su Shi, who elaborated the most fundamental concepts of Chinese literati theories of art and established

²⁰¹ Ibid.

²⁰² Trans. by Jonathan Hay. Ibid.

²⁰³ Richard Barnhart (1972), 11; 18. Han, Sungmii Lee (1983), 17-18.

²⁰⁴ Zhang Wenqin (2007), 440.

the so-called “old trees, bamboo, and rock” 古木竹石 genre of painting, of which, however, no example has survived up to the present day.²⁰⁵

On the other hand, it is quite significant to note that the bamboo and rocks on the *Xingfu* scroll are depicted separately. This possibly alludes to the legend of the two good friends Wen Tong and Su Shi and Su’s sadness after Wen’s death. Eight years after Wen Tong’s death, Su Shi saw a bamboo painting of him and wrote as follows:

The whole world knows the value [of his paintings],
but only I can enjoy them to the full.
It is difficult for two bosom friends to be together since
ancient times,
and death did not want to wait for a bit.
Who says that life and death are separated?
We meet like Gong and Wei, [who understood each other
very well even after the death of Wei].

舉世知珍之，賞會獨余最。
知音古難合，奄忽不少待。
誰云死生隔，相見如龔隗。²⁰⁶

²⁰⁵ Richard Barnhart (1972), 18. *Songshi* (pine and rock), *hanlin* (wintry forest), and *gumu zhu shi* (old tree, bamboo and rock) are themes of three distinct categories of subject matter in Chinese painting. Each of these themes contains a distinct expressive range, distinct patterns and flourished in different periods. The eighth and ninth centuries were a golden age for pine and rock, and the tenth and eleventh centuries for wintry forest; the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were a golden age for old trees, bamboo and rock. In later periods, however, the distinction between the three themes was lost and they were classified as tree painting or, at times, even as part of landscape painting. Li Lincan 李霖燦 (1973), 286; 260. The following colophon by Su Shi describes the best form of art: “When Wen Tung painted bamboo,/He saw bamboo, not himself./Nor was he simply unconscious of himself;/Trance-like, he left his body./His body was transformed into bamboo./Creating inexhaustible freshness./Chuang-tzu is no longer in this world,/So who can understand such concentration?” Trans. by Susan Bush. In: Susan Bush. *The Chinese Literati on Painting. Su Shih (1037-1101) to Tung Chi-chang (1555-1636)*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1971, 41.

²⁰⁶ Chen Bangyan 陳邦彥 (ed.). *Yuding lidai tihuashi* 御定歷代題畫詩 (The Imperial Collection of Inscriptions on Paintings from All the Dynasties). Hong Kong: Shenzhou tushu gongsi. Publishing year unknown (reprint), vol. III, *juan* 79, *lanzhu lei* 蘭竹類, 2. According to this book there are altogether five colophons written by Su Shi after the death of Wen Tong left. The story about Gong 龔 and Wei 隗 is in the *Jinshu* 晉書 (compiled in 648): Wei Zhao 隗炤 was very good at *yi* 易. Before he died, he gave his wife a board with characters on it and told her to go to a certain ambassador Gong with this board five years later, because Gong owed him gold. Five years later Gong, who was also very good at *yi*, came. After Gong saw the board and charged in the way of *yi*, he told Wei’s wife that he did not owe her any gold because she had gold at her home. According to Gong’s words, Wei’s wife found five hundred *jin* of gold at her home. The story is told in order to stress that two friends may understand each other very well, even if one of them has already died. In: *Jinshu* 晉書. Fang Xuanling 房玄齡 (ed.). *liezhuan* 列傳 65, *yishu* 藝術: <http://guji.artx.cn/article/2731.html>

This poem demonstrates the deep grief and sadness of Su Shi because of Wen's death. In another text, Su Shi wrote that, for Wen Tong, Su Shi had been the only person who had really understood him.²⁰⁷ The legend of friendship between Wen Tong and Su Shi became one ideal for later literati. The allusions to eternal friendship and the sorrow of losing a friend are two of the many other symbolic meanings of bamboo and rock painting, which can be understood in concerning with Wu Li's *Xingfu* scroll. This becomes clearer when comparing the *Xingfu* scroll with the 2nd leaf of the album *Landscape in Archaic Style* 仿古山水冊 painted by Wu Li (Fig. 89). On this leaf rocks are depicted beneath the bamboo and no bamboo falls down to the ground. This album is Wu Li's earliest work dedicated to Morong in 1666. Compared to this work, the allusion to death and the separation between Morong and Wu Li by death, as rocks and bamboo depicted on the *Xingfu* scroll, becomes quite clear.

The Mountains and the Clouds

The symbolic meanings of the mountains depicted in heavy blue-and-green manner and the clouds on the *Xingfu* scroll are of importance for the following study (Fig. 87; Fig. 90). Chinese terminology separates the blue-and-green landscape paintings into "heavy blue-and-green" 大青綠 and "light blue-and-green" 小青綠 manner, which is based on the proportion of color and ink.²⁰⁸ The most important difference between these two terms seems that in the light blue-and-green manner colors are not applied as

²⁰⁷ Chen Bangyan 陳邦彥 (ed.). *Yuding lidai tihuashi*, vol. III, *juan* 79, *lanzhu lei* 蘭竹類, 2.

²⁰⁸ The term blue-and-green manner derives from the use of blue and green mineral pigments - azurite and malachite - which are held together by a glue binder and applied on rocks and earth surfaces. There are also herbal blue and/or green pigments, however, and they are often mixed with ink in the technique of the blue-and-green manner, especially after the Yuan period. For more information on the issue of the blue-and-green manner see Yao Ning (2012), 278-81. Also: Shih Shou-chien. 石守謙. *Eremitism in Landscape Paintings by Chien Hsüan (ca. 1235-before 1307)*. PhD thesis. UMI. Princeton University, 1984, 280. On the way of using colors in the blue-and-green manner see: Yu Feian 于非闇. *Zhongguohua yanse yanjiu* 中國畫顏色的研究 (Chinese Painting Colors) Beijing: Zhaohua meishu chubanshe, 1955, 60-61. Wang Teh-yu. *The "River and Mountains in Autumn Colors" by Zhao Boju, and Associated Attributions*. PhD thesis. UMI. New York University, 1991. Chapter III "The Use of Color Before the Southern Song", 85-157.

heavily as they are in the heavy blue-and-green manner.²⁰⁹ Shen Zongqian 沈宗騫 (1736?-1820?, *zi* Jiezhou 芥舟) used *zhong qinglü* 重青綠 (heavy blue-and-green) and *dan qinglü* 淡青綠 (light blue-and-green) instead of *da qinglü* 大青綠 and *xiao qinglü* 小青綠 in his book *Jiezhou xuehua bian* 芥舟學畫編 (Jiezhou's Learning to Paint, first published in 1781) and, according to him, there are sixty to seventy percent colors and thirty to forty percent ink in the heavy blue-and-green manner while sixty to seventy percent ink and thirty to forty percent colors in the light blue-and-green manner.²¹⁰ Although this differentiation is sometimes a matter of controversy, I prefer to follow this broad definition to separate the blue-and-green manner into heavy and light blue-and-green manner. The reason for doing so is the heavy blue-and-green manner normally provides the symbolic meaning of immortality, while the light blue-and-green manner is often used in representing naturalistic mood. And this concerns especially in the Ming and Qing periods.

Indeed paintings of clouds together with mountains normally in heavy blue-and-green manner as representing a mystical world of immortals or paradise, sometimes called as paradise paintings, remained valid through a very long period in Chinese art history. It is thus not surprising that these two motifs, clouds and blue-and-green mountains, quite often appear as birthday imageries as Jerome Silbergeld and Craig Clunas have observed.²¹¹ Especially in the 16th and 17th centuries there are many paradise paintings available. *The Dream of Immortal Mountain* 仙山夢影圖 by Zhao Cheng 趙澄 (c. 1565-c. 1640) represents mountains in heavy blue-and-green manner surrounded by clouds (Fig. 91). In his inscription Zhao Cheng wrote that, one night after he had finished painting, he dreamed of an immortal land with jade buildings, surrounded by pine trees and dancing cranes. After he woke up, he painted *The Dream of Immortal Mountain*.

On Qiu Ying's 仇英 (1494?-1552?) painting *Jade Vault and Immortal Spring* 玉洞仙源圖軸 not only the clouds and mountains in heavy-blue-and-green manner but also a vault is depicted, which hints at the Daoist paradise (Fig.

²⁰⁹ Wang Teh-yu (1991), 188.

²¹⁰ Yu Jianhua (2004), 1302.

²¹¹ Craig Clunas (2007), 193-194.

92). It is associated with the immortal place or Tao Qian's 陶潛 (365-427) "Peach Blossom Spring", a favorite motif for the Ming and Qing painters, which relates how a fisherman passed through a cave and emerged into the light of day. Here he finds a place of an ideal, utopian society.

Wu Li's undated painting *Clear Cloud and Vault* 晴雲洞壑 dedicated to a certain Mr. Gao 高 clearly represents the idea of immortality by using the motifs of clouds and a sitting figure meditating in a vault (Fig. 93). The brushwork and color of the clouds representing realistic mood are indeed very similar with those on the *Xingfu* scroll (Fig. 94). This similarity suggests that it was possibly produced in the same period as the *Xingfu* scroll. The signature "Young pupil Wu Li from Yushan" (虞山後學吳歷) from Wu Li's early years on the painting again proves this possibility.

The heavy blue-and-green technique, as used on the *Xingfu* scroll, can be also observed on the 5th leaf of the story of Qu Yuan 屈原 (340-278BC) in the narrative album *Figures and Stories from Shiji* 史記人物故事畫冊 by Wu Li (Fig. 95).²¹² The barefooted Qu Yuan stands on a mountain, painted in the heavy blue-and-green manner, shortly before he jumps into the river Miluo 汨羅. On the opposite side of the picture is the story of Qu Yuan from *Shiji* 史記 (Records of the Grand Historian), inscribed by Wu Li in the regular script *kaishu*. The heavy blue-and-green manner shows Qu Yuan's heroic death, a mythical atmosphere and the painter's wish for the ascent to paradise for the deceased.

In his undated poem "Commendation of St. Joseph" 讚聖若瑟, Wu Li describes a dream in which his mother appeared. In his dream he asked his mother whether God was doing well (潛向慈親問聖躬).²¹³ Wu Li's mother was quite possibly a Christian and although she supposedly lived in paradise, where God presides, this for Wu Li still appears dreary.²¹⁴ This poem can

²¹² Qu Yuan is considered to be a great poet and of being utmost loyal to his monarch. His death has been so often described and interpreted by later Chinese literati that it has become a mythical legend and is even celebrated in a festival.

²¹³ The word *shenggong* (聖躬) refers originally to emperor but here to God. Wu Li was about one year old when his father died in Northern China. So the word *ciqin* 慈親 is quite possibly concerning his mother, who died in the year 1662. Zhang Wenqin 章文欽 (2007), 200.

²¹⁴ Zhang Wenqin (2008), 106.

help us understand what Wu Li had in his mind when depicting the mountains and clouds. It reads:

In my dream I got up vigilantly because of the calling of God.
Accompanied by the north wind I set off hastily.
With the frost and moonlight touching my clothes, I started to
feel tired.
Peaks and mountains becoming dangerous, the road was just
about to come to an end.
Let the old horses search for [the direction] on the lost road,
Quietly [I] asked my loved one whether God was doing well.
Cannot tell was the dreary place,
where the blue faintly visible mountains met the white clouds
in the East.

神呼驚起夢魂中，倉卒登程伴朔風。霜月侵衣身欲憊，峰
巒阻險路方窮。姑憑老馬尋迷道，潛向慈親問聖躬。此際
淒涼不可訴，青山隱隱白雲東。²¹⁵

Although this poem is most likely written in Wu Li's late years, it is still quite reasonable to assume that the visual representations of mountains in blue-and-green manner and clouds are related to Wu Li's conception of afterlife or more precisely paradise. For Wu Li paradise should look like a place where blue mountains met with clouds. Wu Li seems to follow this way in using the heavy blue-and-green manner and clouds with the paradisiacal symbolic allusion on his *Xingfu* scroll.

It is difficult to determine when the depiction of clouds for the first time appeared in Chinese art.²¹⁶ The concept of clouds and its importance in Chinese art have developed in combination with a very early Chinese religious belief - mountain worship. By the end of the Zhou dynasty (1027?-256 BC) a kind of cosmic religion or "Universism", as some scholars call it, was established, which prevailed during the late Zhou, the Qin (221-206 BC) and the Han (206 BC-220 AD) periods, and was maintained throughout later eras. In this religious system mountain

²¹⁵ Zhang Wenqin (2007), 200.

²¹⁶ The Chinese character for cloud for the first time appeared on an oracle bone from the late Shang period in around 1200 BCE with the meaning of praying for rain. Tsung-Tung Chang. *Der Kult der Shang-Dynastie im Spiegel der Orakelinschriften. Eine paläographische Studie zur Religion im archaischen China*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1970, 205 and 246; Peter Glum. "Rain making at Anyang? Speculations about two ritual vessels of the Shang Dynasty filled with revolving dragons," in: *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities* 54 (1982), 241-65. Cited in: Maria Rohrer. *Das Motiv der Wolke in der Dichtung Tao Yuanmings (365-427 n. Chr.)*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1992, 19.

worship played a significant role.²¹⁷ In the context of mountain worship the importance of clouds, which bring rain, the life source for agricultural China, should not be ignored. In representations of mountain scenes in the art of Han period one of the new iconographical elements, the *yunqi* 雲氣 (literally, "cloud-spirit" or "cloud-force") motif appeared.²¹⁸ This *yunqi* motif, designated as a sign of *xiangrui* 祥瑞 (auspicious omen), possibly represented a mystical force gathered in a cloud-like form which could be a vehicle of the immortals, and, if sighted by people, would signify a good omen for the emperor or for society as a whole.²¹⁹ In his *Shiji* Sima Qian 司馬遷 (ca. 145-86 BC) mentions three islands in the sea - Penglai 蓬萊, Fangzhang 方丈, and Yingzhou 瀛洲, where immortals lived and medicine for achieving immortality could be found. These three islands supposedly appeared like clouds at distance, but it was impossible to reach them.²²⁰ During the reign of the Han Wudi 漢武帝 (reign 140-87 BC) a special *ding*-vessel 鼎 was found and transported to the capital Chang'an, auspicious yellow-white colored clouds appeared along the road near Zhongshan 中山.²²¹

The scenes painted on the lid and four sides of the black lacquered coffin from the Mawangdui Tomb 1 in Hunan province, datable to ca. 168 BC, are boldly brushed abstract *yunqi* motif, which look like swirling clouds - another evidence for the spiraling road of the deceased soul on its way to paradise (Fig. 96). While there are still a number of controversially discussed problems related to the meaning of the decorations on the altogether four coffins, the depiction of the *yunqi* motif on the 2nd coffin most likely is the depiction of the soul of the deceased in the netherworld.²²² For Eugene Wang

²¹⁷ Kiyohiko Munakata. *Sacred Mountains in Chinese Art*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1991, 3.

²¹⁸ Ibid., 20.

²¹⁹ Ibid., 21-22.

²²⁰ *Shiji* 史記 (Records of the Grand Historian). Sima Qian 司馬遷. Vol. 28: Fengshan shu 封禪書. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju (first ed. 1959), 1985, 1369-70.

²²¹ Ibid., 1392.

²²² Kiyohiko Munakata understands this *yunqi* as a hint of mountains and puts it in the following way: "As funerary art, those mountain scenes are related to the concept of death current at the time; thus they reveal the development of the idea of the mountain as the place of passage of the soul of the deceased during the Western Han." Kiyohiko Munakata (1991), 24.

the clouds relate to the space in the unknown netherworld, in which the soul wanders and quells the demons.²²³ For Wu Hung the *yunqi* motif is representing a place of immortality, which is framed within a progression from death to rebirth.²²⁴ On the other hand, the symbolic meaning of clouds has also to be understood together with the meaning of the winding road on the *Xingfu* scroll.

The Winding Road

At the center of the *Xingfu* scroll a winding road on the blue-and-green mountains is represented (Fig. 87). With its aesthetic effect the curved line not only constitutes a contrast to the geometric-formed chambers and the vertical-expanding trees, but also appears like a signpost, which can be followed. At the same time, it seems to have the function to connect the chapel part with the clouds part on the *Xingfu* scroll. Indeed, Wu Li here is using a very allusive way to represent the afterlife soul-journey, which starts from the chapel part where the death begins and leads to the clouds part, where the paradise is supposed to be.

The idea of a soul-journey can be observed in Chinese archaeological excavations from the very early period. A pottery coffin of the Yangshao 仰韶 culture with a hole in it's wall is one of the earliest findings testifying to the concept of the soul-journey according to Wu Hung, since the hole would allow the soul of the child to move out and in (Fig. 97).²²⁵

It should be noted that the composition of the visual representations of the concepts of soul-journey can be often observed in a linear composition. There are examples of representations, which attest to the continuity of the concept of the soul-journey in some archeological findings of Han (202 BC-220 AD) funerary art, where a continuous process of transformation divided into three sections - the juxtaposition of this life, the soul-journey and afterlife - is represented. The silk banner from Mawangdui Tomb 1 features the three sections - the juxtaposition of the three scenes of the cosmos: the

²²³ Wang Eugene Y (2005), 365.

²²⁴ Wu Hung (2010), 55.

²²⁵ Wu Hung. *The Art of the Yellow Springs. Understanding Chinese Tombs*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2010, 193 and 18.

watery underworld at the bottom, the section of the living in the middle and the heavenly realm above (Fig. 2).²²⁶ Although the idea on the *Xingfu* scroll is not completely the same as on the Mawangdui banner, the idea of using a linear composition expressing a cosmic context is the same.

In later period, evidence showing the soul-journey performed on a winding road of a form of line can be found in Buddhist art. On the painting *Bodhisattva as Guide of Souls* 引路菩薩圖 both Bodhisattva and the deceased soul - a woman in red robe - are depicted as standing on clouds (Fig. 98). The winding line behind the woman is like dust she left during her journey. It is painted in dark red and the farther it is from the woman the narrower it becomes. The representation of the curved road of the soul-journey seems to be much the same in later period.

According to Stephen Teiser, there are two discursive paradigms in revealing the travels in the otherworld in Buddhism: One employs the shape of a line, while the other uses the shape of a circle. The illustration in *The Scripture on the Ten Kings*, for example, represents the process of death and rebirth as a line, while the wheel of rebirth represents it in a circle.²²⁷ The linear composition represents the idea of a soul-journey defined by two points - a beginning and an end. Stephen Teiser describes as follows:

Movement takes place in one direction only. Repetition is not possible; there is no backtracking. In this sense the line is the basic organizing principle for both time and space: the journey commences at the first point, proceeds along the line, and concludes at the last point.²²⁸

The linear composition actually represents the concept of purgatory - a Western term, "which may be defined as the period between death and the next life during which the spirit of the deceased suffers retribution for past

²²⁶ David N. Schmid. "Revisioning the Buddhist Cosmos. Shifting Paths of Rebirth in Medieval Chinese Buddhism." In: *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 17, 2008, *En hommage à Lothar Ledderose - In Homage to Lothar Ledderose*. Lothar von Falkenhausen (ed.). Kyoto: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 2010, 300. See also Wu Hung (2010), 130-131; Cook, Constance A. *Death in Ancient China. The Tale of One Mans Journey*. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2006, 130-133.

²²⁷ Stephen Teiser. *Reinventing the Wheel. Paintings of Rebirth in Medieval Buddhist Temples*. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2006, 239-242.

²²⁸ Ibid., 240.

deeds and enjoys the comfort of living family members.”²²⁹ In the Chinese purgatory, each deceased person passes through a series of ten courts and this process lasts for three years. The process of the Chinese purgatory illustrated on the scroll of *The Scripture on the Ten Kings* comes to an end when the deceased is assigned rebirth and passes into the clouds leading up to the left of the scroll according to Stephen Teiser (Fig. 99).²³⁰ Thus the combination of the winding road and the clouds next to it on the *Xingfu* scroll most likely suggests the afterlife journey and the rebirth in paradise. The fact that Wu Li’s inscription is written three years after Morong’s death hints at the belief of Chinese purgatory.

The idea of Chinese purgatory was shared by people from all social classes in the 17th century. Moreover, there is another very important evidence of the afterlife journey represented in a form of winding line. It is Shitao’s 10th leaf “Riding the Clouds” 乘雲 in his album *Reminiscences of Jinling* (Fig. 100). It represents a human figure on the left side at the foot of the album leaf wandering on a *lingzhi* 靈芝 (fungus)-shaped road of clouds. It is a journey towards the afterlife on a road of clouds, which has taken the form of *ruyi* 如意 - “scepters”, up into the sky.²³¹ This album leaf hints at death drawing nearer and at the wish of an afterlife journey towards paradise or immortality. In fact, almost all the leaves in this Shitao’s album are dealing with issues of afterlife and rebirth. Shitao died a couple of months after having completed this album. The 3rd leaf “Walking Along towards East Mountain” 獨步入東山 suggests the wandering of a tiny human figure, who is just about to cross the bridge heading to the East Mountain in the background (Fig. 101). It is a man on a solitary journey seen in a winding road towards East Mountain who expresses his desire to settle there according to the inscription. Jonathan Hay argues that the East Mountain is indeed Mount Tai, the Sacred Mountain of the East, residence of the dead.²³² These two Shitao’s leaves function like a foreshadowing of the approaching

²²⁹ Stephen Teiser. *The Scripture on the Ten Kings and the Making of Purgatory in Medieval Chinese Buddhism*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2003 (paperback edition, first published 1994), 1. See also David N. Schmid (2010), 300-301.

²³⁰ Stephen Teiser (2006), 242.

²³¹ Ibid.

²³² Jonathan Hay (2001), 318.

death and a vision of the afterlife journey in the netherworld. Comparing with them, the winding road on the *Xingfu* scroll functions as a guide for the deceased soul to come into the clouds where the paradise should be.

As a commemorative painting, the ideas behind the *Xingfu* scroll are allusive and complex. It is depicted not only in memory of the deceased Morong, but also for Morong's soul: The chapel part with its allusion to death is followed by the mountain part on the center of the scroll with a winding road as a signpost for the soul, which leads to the end in the clouds part - the part of paradise. The three sections are juxtaposed but at the same time clearly differentiated from each other. The linear composition from right to the left, or in other words the juxtaposition of chapel, tree, and clouds sections, displays a unique characteristic of paradise paintings. According to Shih Shou-Chien, paradise paintings have normally specific format of a handscroll with an idea of searching for paradise behind it.²³³ When the *Xingfu* handscroll is unrolled from right to left, the viewer is led to follow the direction and to read the three sections from death to the afterlife and then to paradise. Not only is the goal important, but also the travel in space and time, searching for such a paradise.

Because the journey in the netherworld was imagined as hard and tortuous, the deceased soul needs endurance and energy. The symbolic meanings of the old leafless wintry trees, rocks and bamboo hint at this point. At the same time, the leafless trees, the empty lotus seat and empty chamber, and the separated rocks and bamboo hint at rebirth and death. The mountains in heavy blue-and-green manner and clouds further render the whole scroll in a paradisiacal mood.

Moreover, the *Xingfu* scroll is a painting with many contradictory issues. It can be firstly observed in the visual representation of the scroll: The blue-and-green mountains contrast with the leafless wintry trees; Some branches grow from the clouds. More importantly, the chapel part seems to be representing death and rebirth at the same time in using the idea of emptiness in the chamber. And there are some conflicts between the basic ideas behind the *Xingfu* scroll as well: the idea of riding on the lotus seat to get immediate

²³³ Shih Shou-Chien (1984), 18.

rebirth at the Pure Land paradise and that of the soul-journey within three years in Chinese purgatory. This conflict exists in fact unsolved in the Buddhist ideas and practices.²³⁴ On the other hand, there is no wonder if the issue of death itself is filled up with contradictory ideas in Buddhism. It is described as follows:

Death, as anthropologists have long recognized, brings together a number of contradictory logics, and Buddhism is no exception in this regard, juxtaposing a number of strikingly disparate elements in death-related settings.²³⁵

Wu Li's intention and concept behind the visual representation and inscription on the *Xingfu* scroll are contradictory as well. Wu Li hoped for Morong to have a good soul journey and to attain a Buddhist rebirth, but at the same time, his inscription displays a skeptical attitude towards Buddhism in general. The contradiction reveals Wu Li's hybrid and syncretistic religious inner world, which will be discussed in the next section.

4. Socio-Historical and Socio-Religious Issues

The Chan-Buddhist Monk Morong (?-1671)

The inscription of Wu Li, in which he states that he wrote a *lei* 誄-eulogy after having performed the ritual of "calling back the soul" for Morong, suggests that Wu Li most likely was older than Morong. In Chinese literature *lei* constitutes a special form of essay normally with four characters as a line. To write a *lei* means to confer a posthumous honorary title on someone and also to "eulogise in prayer, i.e. to recite ones excellences as the ground of supplication."²³⁶ According to *Li ji* 禮記 (The Book of Rites), a younger man does not write a *lei* for an older man: "One in a low position should not pronounce the eulogy of another in a high, nor a younger man that of one older than himself (賤不誄貴，幼不誄長，禮也。禮記 曾子問第七)."²³⁷

²³⁴ See also Teiser (2003), 13.

²³⁵ Bryan J. Cuevas and Jacqueline I. Stone (2007), 8.

²³⁶ James Legge. *The Chinese Classics. Vol. I. Confucian Analects, The Great Learning, and The Doctrine of the Mean*. Taibei: SMC Publishing INC., 1994, 206.

²³⁷ James Legge. *The Li Ki (The Book of Rites)*. Book V. The Question of Zang-Dze, Section II. In: *Sacred Books of the East* vol. 27, New York: University Books, 1967 (reprinted), 13.

In his inscription Wu Li expressed his sad feeling *tong* 痛 first in using the rhetorical question “Tong ke yan zai? (痛可言哉! How could I describe my sorrow?)”, this followed by the descriptions of the endless tears, his regret and self-dispraising. The English translation for *tong* is ache, pain, sorrow and grieve - a word which binds time, place, and the human emotion. According to Ulrike Middendorf, pain is associated with a subjective component of emotion and a behavioural expression, namely suffering.²³⁸ As discussed earlier, among the total 284 characters of Wu Li’s inscription there are no less than twenty words related to the feeling of sadness, regret, doubt and desperation revealing the underlying downbeat mood. There are a couple of reasons for expressing such strongly feelings as Wu Li did.

Primarily is the predominant role of *qing* 情, emotion or sentiment in the late Ming, including feelings like pain, happiness, anger, love, hate and desire.²³⁹ As Stephen Owen stresses, “the age [of late Ming] was fascinated with *qing*, a term that ranges from the more delicate ‘sentiment’ to ‘passion’.”²⁴⁰ The function of literature at that time was nothing but the exhibition of human emotions.²⁴¹ For example, in the preface to his play *Mudan ting* (The Peony Pavilion, 1598), whose original complete title is *Mudan ting huanhun ji* 牡丹亭還魂記 (The Returning Soul in the Peony Pavilion), which is about a love story between a young woman Du Linang 杜麗娘 and a young man named Liu Mengmei 柳夢梅, Tang Xianzu 湯顯祖 (1550-1616) uses the word *qing* six times in this short “Introductory Comment” of just 224 characters. This preface which by scholars who seek to reveal the radical and idiosyncratic strains of late Ming though for long has been regarded as a manifesto of *qing*, became the classical statement on the boundless power of *qing* for other late Ming

²³⁸ Ulrike Middendorf (2006), 71.

²³⁹ See more in: Ulrike Middendorf (2006); Gang Gary Xu. *The Sentimental Education of Chinese Modernity: Qing in Chinese Fiction from the Late Ming to the Turn of the Millenium*. PhD thesis. Columbia University, 2002.

²⁴⁰ Stephen Owen (1996), 727.

²⁴¹ Norman Kutcher (1999), 47. See also, Chou Chih-p'ing. *Yuan Hung-tao and the Kung-an School*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988, 3.

and early Qing promoters of *qing*.²⁴² The translation of the preface is as follows:

The young women of the world experience the feelings of love, but can any of them compare with Du Li-niang? No sooner did she dream of her man than she grew sick; the sickness became protracted; at last she reached the point of painting her likeness with her own hand in order to preserve it for others; then she died. Three years she lay dead; and then, from the dark world blow, once again she sought the man of whom she had dreamed; then she came to life. Someone like Du Li-niang may well be called a person with the feelings of love.²⁴³

Another example was Yuan Hongdao 袁宏道 (1568-1610) with his Gong'an 公安 school, which is one of the most influential literary group at the turn of the 17th century China. For the Gong'an school, poetry is considered primarily to be a medium “for the direct expression of individuality and strongly felt emotion.”²⁴⁴

After the fall of the Ming and the coming to power of the Manchus in 1644 the issues of mental pain and emotion became even more important for Ming loyalists and literati, whose feelings were dominated by a sense of loss, regret and identity crises. It was a highly political period filled with frustration, disappointment, and psychological problems among Chinese literati. Wu Li's stress of the aspect of sorrow certainly was shaped by these political, philosophical and literary developments, it might have been the result of influences from beyond the Chinese tradition.

Jiao youlun 交友論 (On Friendship), also known as *Youlun* 友論, was written by Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) at the request of the prince Jian'an 建安 Zhu Duojie 朱多節 in the 23th year of the Wanli reign (1595).²⁴⁵

²⁴² Xu Gang Gary (2002), 5; See also Footnote 33.

²⁴³ Trans. by Stephen Owen. Stephen Owen (1996), 881-882.

²⁴⁴ by Richard Lynn, quoted in Jonathan Chaves (2005), 17.

²⁴⁵ Noël Golvers. *François de Rougemont, S.J., Missionary in Ch'ang-shu (Chiang-nan). A Study of the Account Book (1674-1676) and the Elogium*. Leuven: Leuven University Press and Ferdinand Verbiest Foundation, 1999. Trans. by Zhao Dianhong; Gao Huashi 高華士. *Qingchu jesuishi Lu Riman. Changshu zhangben ji lingxiu biji yanjiu* 清初耶穌會士魯日滿常熟賬本及靈修筆記研究. Zhengzhou: Daxiang chubanshe, 2007, 142. Zhu, Weizheng 朱維錚 (ed.). *Li Madou zhongwen zhuyiji* 利瑪竇中文著譯集 (Collection of Chinese Works by Matteo Ricci). Hong Kong: Xianggang chengshi daxue chubanshe, 2001, 141.

Matteo Ricci emphasized through his *Jiaoyou lun* that “men should love and help each other in order to form an equal, normal, unrepressive, and ‘natural’ human relationship”.²⁴⁶ Issues like *qing* and *ai* 愛 to a friend are becoming the most important thing in a human’s relationship for Ricci, as he wrote: “If you are my true friend, then your love to me based on your feeling, but not on my property. 爾為吾之真友，則愛我以情，不愛我以物也。”²⁴⁷ *Qing* and *ai* which were highlighted in the book were rarely used as a topic in traditional Confucian classics. It was maybe the first time in Chinese culture indeed that the issue of friendship was engaged so explicitly and extensively in Ricci’s *Jiao youlun*. This book was explicitly written for a general, non-Christian readership, and comprises short passages translated or paraphrased from classical European sources like *Sententiae et Exempla* by Andreas Eborensis (1498-1573), a collection of edifying statements borrowed from Aristotle, Cicero, Seneca, and many other classical authors.²⁴⁸ More importantly, one edition of it was included into Li Zhizao 李之藻 *Tianxue chuhan* 天學初函 in 1626. In fact, Wu Li used *banwo* 半我 (my other self), a term taken over from *Jiaoyou lun*, in his letter to Wang Shigu 王石谷 (*zi* of Wang Hui 王翬) in his late years.²⁴⁹ The original sentence by Ricci reads: “My friend is none other than my other self, that is, a second self; thus I should see my friend as my self (吾友非他，即我之半，乃第二我也，故當視友如己焉)”.²⁵⁰

The earliest available evidence of Wu Li’s contact with the monk Morong is the following inscription from the album *Landscape in Archaic Style* which was dedicated to Morong in 1666 mentioned earlier (Fig. 102):

Returning from Shaozha, I passed by Wumen [today’s Suzhou] to visit Master Mo. Master Mo let me stay there for two months in a fine Xingfu chamber before I noticed the time had passed. Since he asked me for a couple of album leaves

²⁴⁶ Lin Xiaoping (2001), 86.

²⁴⁷ Zhu Weizheng (2001), 146. More about *qing* and *ai* see also: He Jun 何俊. *Xixue yu wanming sixiang de liebian* 西學與晚明思想的裂變 (Western Learnings and the Mutation of the Late Ming Thought). Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1998.

²⁴⁸ Lin Xiaoping (2001), 85-86; Nicolas, Standaert (ed.). *Handbook of Christianity in China. Volume One: 635-1800*. Leiden, Boston and Köln: Brill, 2001, 605. It was written as a form of dialog at the beginning. Zhu Weizheng (2001), 141.

²⁴⁹ According to Chen Yuan, this letter probably is from 1712. Zhang Wenqin (2007), 527.

²⁵⁰ Trans. by Lin Xiaoping (2001), 85; Also in: Zhu Weizheng (2001), 143.

last spring, I painted these ten pieces from morning till evening in a way of playing with brush and ink. Because of the blunt talent and awkward wrist, I was not able to dream of the ancient masters. [Therefore] this album is just for light amusement. On the day of *qinghe shanggan* of the *bingwu* year [from the 4th to the 13th of May, 1666], Wu Zili

予從茗雪歸，過吳門訪默公。默公留於興福精舍，不覺兩月。以去春索畫素冊，早晚戲弄筆墨，遂得十幀。顧資鈍腕拙，未能夢見古人，聊供嘔噓耳。丙午清和上澣。吳子歷

During the Ming and early Qing, it was quite common that Buddhist monasteries served as short-term residences, so that artists like Wu Li could stay at the Xingfu chapel for two months. Indeed the records of the late Ming period are full of references to touring, visiting, and meeting in monasteries. The Buddhist monastery became prized as the ideal site for engaging in all manner of high-cultural undertakings during the late Ming and early Qing period.²⁵¹

The relationship between Wu Li and Morong, on one hand, is characterized by a deep friendship, on the other hand, is a relationship between a patron and a painter.²⁵² After Morong's death Wu Li rededicated the album to Shengyu, Morong's disciple, and left the following post-inscription on another leaf of this album (Fig. 103). It reads:

My Chan Buddhist friend Morong studied painting with me, and he also set his mind on poetry. Had he achieved enlightenment earlier, he would have been outstanding and eminent. Unfortunately he climbed the golden staircase and expired. Since the *renzi* year [1672] every time I came by the Xingfu [chapel] I was in tears. Shengyu was his disciple. I am pleased that Shengyu has furthered the studies of [Morong's] doctrine so that it shines brightly. In this respect Morong is not dead. I had painted this album for Morong and today I just improved it a bit and presented it to Shengyu. On the 17th day

²⁵¹ Timothy Brook. *Praying for Power. Buddhism and the Formation of Gentry Society in Late-Ming China*. Cambridge (Massachusetts) and London: Harvard University Press, 1993, 3; 107.

²⁵² On the relationship between painters and patrons see James Cahill (1994), 65; ---, "Types of Artist-Patron Transactions in Chinese Painting." In: *Artists and Patrons. Some Social and Economic Aspects of Chinese Painting*, edited by Chu-ting Li et al. A publication of the Kress Foundation Department of Art History, University of Kansas. Kansas City and Seattle: Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in cooperation with the University of Washington Press, 1989, 15-16.

of the 9th month of the *yimao* year [1675], again Wu Li from Yanling

吾禪友默容從余繪事，有志於詩學，使其早得三昧，當以弘秀聞名。不幸挂履高巖，其命矣夫！壬子年來，每過興福，輒為隕涕。其徒聖予，喜其復修家學，一燈耿然，默容為不亡矣。此冊往予為默容所作，今潤色並及之。乙卯年九月十七日，延陵吳歷又識。

According to this colophon, Morong was Wu Li's pupil in painting. From another colophon on Shanchou's painting *Landscape by Shanchou in Small Format* 山疇山水小幅 (?-before 1675) by Wu Li more information about Morong's painting can be obtained. It reads:

My friends Shanchou and Morong had started painting one by one. Each has learned the spirits of the masters of Song and Yuan periods. Morong's painting was beautiful and fine, while Shanchou's delightful and rhythmical. The works left by them are rare to see. This painting with its lonely and quiet mood of brushwork had been done by Shanchou. His uncle Yongyu had kept the painting and now asked me to identify it. Therefore I wrote this down on the top of the painting. Sunshine just after the *meiyu* (plum rain) of the *yimao* year [1675], Wu Zili from Yanling

吾友山疇與默容先後同參畫禪，而各得宋元三昧。默容秀而工，山疇逸而韻，二者之遺墨，世不多見。此幅筆意蕭寂，乃山疇之作也。其伯氏用玉所藏，請余鑒定，以識其端。乙卯梅雨新晴。延陵吳子歷。

During the late Ming and early Qing it was common that Buddhist monks learned cultural skills such as painting, calligraphy and poetry composition from lay persons among the gentry. In Morong's case, this may be attributable to his personal interests. But there was another general reason, namely, that monks wanted to bridge the gap between themselves and the gentry in terms of social status to attract well-educated visitors.²⁵³ This was one of the major reasons that most monks were able to read and could enjoy writing in an elegant style as Wen Zhengming claimed when talking about the monks of a temple in Suzhou.²⁵⁴

²⁵³ Timothy Brook (1993), 111-112.

²⁵⁴ Ibid., 111.

Some more information on Morong's personality can be gathered from Xu Zhijian's colophon on the *Xingfu* scroll, of which a complete translation is provided in the earlier section. According to this colophon, Morong was honest, would not laugh at others, never disagreeable or unctuous. In fact, the reason for Xu Zhijian's mentioning this is that in 17th-century China, the opinion regarding Chan Buddhist monks and Chan Buddhism in general was quite mixed. Jiyin, the author of the second colophon on the *Xingfu* scroll, once related that monks sometimes were not favored due to their manners. Thus among the ten rules a monk from Jiaying 嘉興 pronounced for those under his charge during the early Kangxi era (1661-1722), one was not to beg for food on the street. He further wrote "those who call themselves monks fill and block the streets in order to beg for food makes themselves subject of general disgust. 稱和尚者，盈街塞路，苟求糊口，人皆生厭."²⁵⁵ In his *Rizhi lu* 日知錄 (Records of Daily Knowing), Gu Yanwu criticized Buddhist monks and nuns as follows:

Today's monks and nuns, using wrongly their religious garments, do not even follow the *Five Bans* and other broad rules. However they are respected by some bewitched people. They encroach the common people and profit at the expense of their possessions. And this is not the way of giving donations.

今僧尼往往依傍法服，五戒粗法尚不能遵，而迷惑之徒競加敬事，又侵漁百姓，取財為惠，亦未合布施之道也。²⁵⁶

Gu Yanwu's hard critique constitutes an interesting contrast to the phenomenon of Buddhist revival, which had begun at the beginning of the 16th century and continued into the early part of the Qing period. As Xie Zhaozhe 謝肇淛 (1567-1624) mentions in his *Wu za zu* 五雜俎 (Five Mixed Groups) everyone from princes, lords, and noblemen to common women and children in his time took delight in worshipping Buddha and talking about

²⁵⁵ Jiyin 紀蔭, *Zongtong biannian* 宗統編年 (Chronology of Chan Lineages and Transmissions), vol. 32, 諸方略紀 (下), under *xinhai shinian* 辛亥十年.

²⁵⁶ Gu Yanwu 顧炎武. *Rizhi lu jishi* 日知錄集釋 (Record of Daily Knowing with Commentations). Shijia zhuang: Huashan wenyi chubanshe, 1991 (reprint), 1350. *Rizhi lu* was first published in eight volumes in 1670 and later supplemented and published in 32 volumes in 1695.

Chan.²⁵⁷ It is understandable that a Confucian like Gu Yanwu criticized Buddhists when Buddhism was favored and became ever more powerful in society.

Xu Zhijian also mentions that he did meditation with Morong each time he visited him at the Xingfu chapel. The term *zuodui* 坐對 in Xu's colophon, literally, sitting face to face, denoted a common mediation practice also called as quiet-sitting, appreciated by (Neo)-Confucians, Buddhists and Daoists discussed in an earlier chapter. In another colophon by Xu Zhijian on the album *Landscape in Archaic Style* by Wu Li, dedicated at first to Morong and after his death to Shengyu, Xu hints at the fact that Wu Li did the same meditation with Morong at the Xingfu chapel. It reads:

Every time when [he] passed by Wumen, Wu Li stopped at Morong's fine chamber. [The two] closed the door and went out rarely. Their traces in a day became an anecdote. After Morong was gone, Yushan's pain of the zither and its listener was like the one, who did not dare to pass by the city gate of Xizhou [where he would recall the past times]. And this had lasted for three years.²⁵⁸

其過吳門，必止興福默容精舍。閉門簡出，一日之跡，頗有流傳。默容既逝，漁山人琴之痛，如過西州門者且經三歲。

That Wu Li and Morong closed the door and didn't go out suggests Wu Li and Morong practiced sitting meditation. In the book *Xuean qingshi* 雪菴清史 (The Stories by Xuean) by the Ming writer Lechun 樂純 (*hao* Xuean) there is a chapter on *xijing* 習靜 (practicing quiescence), of which the practice

²⁵⁷ Xie Zhaozhe 謝肇淛. *Wu za zu* 五雜俎 (Five Mixed Groups). Shanghai: Shanghai shudian chubanshe, 2009 (first published 1616, reprint), 158; See also Twitchett Denis and Frederick W. Mote (1998), 927; 898.

²⁵⁸ It is said that Boya 伯牙 was good at playing the zither and his friend Zhong Ziqi 鍾子期 was good at listening. After the death of Zhong, Boya destroyed the zither and said he won't play it again because nobody is worthy playing it for. This story is in "Tangwen" 湯問 in *Liezi* 列子. In: *Liezi zhu* 列子注 (*Liezi* with Commentary). Commented by Zhang Zhan 張湛, Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1954 (reprint), 61. In "Xie An zhuan" 謝安傳 (Biography of Xie An) in *Jinshu* 晉書, it is written that Yang Tan 羊曇 was valued by Xie An 謝安. After the death of Xie, Yang Tan didn't dare to pass by the Xizhou city gate. Once Yang Tan got drunk and passed by the Xizhou gate. When he realized it he cried sorrowfully and ran away. In: *Jinshu* 晉書. Wang Yunwu 王雲五 (ed.), Commented by Huang Gongxu 黃公緒. Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1933, 188.

of *zuo* (sitting) is a part.²⁵⁹ During the Ming period there were different words for sitting in terms of meditation. They are such as *jingzuo* 靜坐 (quiet-sitting), *yanzuo* 燕坐 (sitting in the way of Chan, the same like *zuochan* 坐禪), *yanzuo* 宴坐 (sitting in the pause of *yanzuo* 燕坐), *mozuo* 默坐 (silent sitting), *duzuo* 獨坐 (sitting in solitude), *weizuo* 危坐 (straight sitting), *wuzuo* 兀坐 (straight sitting), *duanzuo* 端坐 (straight sitting) and *yezuo* 夜坐 (night sitting).²⁶⁰

Except the example that Shen Zhou practiced the quiet-sitting in a cold autumn night stated in the inscription on his painting *Night Sitting* in 1492 (Fig. 5; Fig.6), there is a considerable amount of evidence on Daoists, Buddhists and Confucians of the Ming and early Qing periods who could practice *zuo* (sitting) for a very long time. The Neo-Confucian Yan Jun 顏鈞 (1504-1596) claimed that he could *mozuo* 默坐 (silent sitting) for seven days and seven nights without eating and sleeping. In the *Yunjian zhilue* 雲間志略 (Stories from Yunjian, first published in 1623) by He Sanwei 何三畏, a *juren* of 1582, it is written that the Ming literatus Zhang Zhixiang 張之象 (1496-1577) sits self-absorbed face to face with his guests, when they come to visit him (賓客有造謁者，對之跌坐嗒然而已). For the time after the fall of the Ming there are numerous anecdotes of Ming loyalists who refused to go out and practiced sitting at home. According to *Liuxi waizhuan* 留溪外傳 (Anecdotes by Liuxi) by Chen Ding 陳鼎 (1650-?, *zi* Liuxi 留溪), the Ming loyalist Zhao Maozhi 趙茂之 closed the door and practiced *weizuo* (straight sitting) with closed eyes (有時杜門不出，閉目危坐).²⁶¹ The goal of the quiet-sitting meditation is to achieve the cultivation of quiescence, and more importantly to achieve enlightenment and apprehend the principle of things. From this point of view, the intensive contact with Morong to practice quiet-sitting reveals Wu Li's searching for the real meaning of things in his early years.

²⁵⁹ Wu Zhihe 吳智和. "Mingren xijing xiuxian shenghuo" 明人習靜休閒生活 (The Practicing Quietness of the Entertainment Life in the Ming Period). In: *Mingqing shi jikan* 明清史集刊 (Bulletin of Ming-Qing Studies), Volume VI, Dec. 2002: 69-117.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., 70-71.

²⁶¹ Ibid., 83; 81.

The Xingfu Chapel

The Xingfu *an* 興福庵 (Xingfu chapel) was located in the Jiayu fang 嘉魚坊 in the north-western part of the city according to the *Suzhou fuzhi* 蘇州府志 (Prefectural Gazetteer of Suzhou). It seems to have been a very small monastery.²⁶² Timothy Brook noticed that most Buddhist establishments founded during the Ming period were known as *an* 庵 (chapel), and were small in scale, housing one or two monks only. This was because of the ban on the private founding of new large *si* 寺 (monasteries).²⁶³

Originally the Xingfu chapel was called Jifu chapel 集福庵, first built by the monk Zhiming 智明 during the Jiading 嘉定 era (1208-1224) of the Song Dynasty. In 1655, the monk Zhengyan 證研, master of Morong, bought the ground for reestablishing the Xingfu chapel. Jin Zhijun 金之俊 (1593-1670), a native of Wujiang 吳江 of Jiangsu province and *jinshi* of the year 1619, established the *cangjing ge* 藏經閣 (building for storing the scriptures, sutra pavilion) and renamed the chapel as Xingfu chapel. There is no evidence to when and why the Xingfu chapel was broken up after 1699. It was however rebuilt during 1821 to 1850 by the monk Dechan 德禪.²⁶⁴

The fact that the *Xingfu* scroll originally belonged to the Buddhist chapel demonstrates another important function of monasteries, as Timothy Brook stresses: “In an age before museums, monasteries preserved much of the material record of China’s past,” and “many monasteries also had collections of art works, from paintings on silk to inscriptions engraved on great stone steles.”²⁶⁵ It would be interesting to know how such a monastery museum

²⁶² *Suzhou fuzhi* (1970, reprint), 1173. In the book *Zongtong biannian* 宗統編年 by Jiyin 紀蔭, neither the name of the abbot Zhengyan 證研 nor the Xingfu chapel was mentioned.

²⁶³ Timothy Brook (1993), 4.

²⁶⁴ *Suzhou fuzhi* (1970, reprint), 1173. Timothy Brook (1993), 4. Jin Zhijun reached the office of junior vice-president of the Board of War under the Ming dynasty and in 1659 he was given the title of Grand Guardian and Grand Tutor of the Heir Apparent, and in the following year that of Grand Tutor - two years before he went back to Suzhou for being permitted to retire. On the occasion of the seventy-first birthday (April 29, 1661) of Adam Schall von Bell (1591-1666) Jin Zhijun wrote him a congratulatory essay. Arthur Hummel (1991), 160-161; 890.

²⁶⁵ Timothy Brook (1993), 111.

looked like. Unfortunately the sources provide little information on the question of whether and where the paintings were hung and whether and how they were used in monasteries in 17th-century China.

In his essay “A Record of a Trip to Chongguo Temple” 崇國寺游記, Yuan Hongdao writes that he, his brother and their friends on a certain day of the year 1599 were led by a monk of the Chongguo temple to see the portrait of Yao Guangxiao 姚廣孝 (1335-1418) in a hall. Yao became a monk at the age of fourteen, but resumed a lay name when appointed Tutor to the Heir Apparent.²⁶⁶ After having seen this, they visited the hostel for foreign monks and saw images of Manjushri and other figures.²⁶⁷ This essay thus suggests that there was a special portrait hall for hanging paintings in important monasteries like Chongguo monastery during the Ming period. On the other hand, it is also possible that some collections like paintings were stored but not hung in the monastery according to the rules laid down by Tongrong 通容 (1593-1661), the abbot of the Jinsu temple 金粟寺 during the late Ming, in his *Conglin liangxu xuzhi* 叢林兩序須知 (Arrangement for Two Sets Monastic Monks) published in 1639. This book contains detailed rules for monks in charge of monastic management and services. The monk who is responsible for the monastic collection is called *cangzhu* 藏主 (person in charge of collection). It is his duty to register the collection in an index (*mulu* 目錄), to note the exact place where the collection is stored and put it in the best order according to the signatures (*zihao* 字號) of the collections. If a guest asks to view a certain collection, the name of the guest should be written down in a notebook. After having read or seen it, the *cangzhu* should check again with the help of the notebook, and then put the collection back to

²⁶⁶ Yuan Hongdao remarks the portrait of Yao: “Yao was dignified and imposing, and his eyes seemed to flash like lighting.” Jonathan Chaves. *Pilgrim of the Clouds. Poems and Essays by Yüan Hung-tao and his Brothers*. Buffalo, New York: White Pine Press, 2005 (first published 1978), 127. Yuan Hongdao (1568-1610), his elder brother Zongdao 宗道 (1560-1600), and their younger brother Zhongdao 中道 (1570-1624) constituted what came to be known as the Gong'an 公安 school, named after their hometown in today's Hubei province.

²⁶⁷ Marsha Weidner. “Buddhist Pictorial Art in the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). Patronage, Regionalism and Internationalism.” In: *Latter Days of the Law. Images of Chinese Buddhism 850-1850*. Weidner, Marsha (ed.). Lawrence, Kansas: Spencer Museum of Art, 1994, 60; Jonathan Chaves (2005), 127.

its right place.²⁶⁸

The last two attested contacts between Wu Li and the Xingfu chapel were Wu Li's painting for Master Zheng's (Zheng Yan 證研) 60th birthday in the *xiaochun* 小春 of the *yimao* year (Nov. 17-Dec. 16 1675) and Wu Li's rededication of his album *Landscape in Archaic Style* to Morong's disciple Master Sheng (Shengyu 聖予) on the 7th day of *jiaping* (Jan. 21 1676). On the 8th day of *jiaping* Xu Zhijian, who also was at the Xingfu chapel together with Wu Li wrote a colophon for Master Sheng on the same album.²⁶⁹ The fact that Wang Hui also painted *Joy on Fishing in the Landscape* 江山漁樂 for Master Sheng in the same year mentioned earlier indicates that Shengyu might have become the abbot of Xingfu chapel in 1676.

Chan Buddhist Funeral Rites

This and the followed two sections attempt to examine the funeral and memorial rites provided for an ordinary monk in 17th-century and their meanings in concerning with the case of Morong.

Published Buddhist funeral and memorial rites in 17th-century can be mainly found in *Conglin liangxu xuzhi* 叢林兩序須知 (Arrangement for Two Sets Monastic Monks) by Tongrong 通容 (1593-1661) published in 1639. Another book *Conglin zhubai qinggui keyi* 叢林祝白清規科儀 (Arrangement of Oral Texts in Monastic Services) first edited by Daopei 道霈 (1615-1702, also known as Weilin laoren 為霖老人, Daopei chanshi 道霈禪師) in 1659 and re-edited by him in 1691 contains sample oral texts for recitations for different Buddhist services with gaps where time, name and place should be completed. In this book some details about funeral and memorial rites can also be found. Except these two books, Jiyin's *Zongtong biannian* 宗統編年 (Chronology of Chan Lineages and Transmissions) in

²⁶⁸ Tongrong 通容. *Conglin liangxu xuzhi* 叢林兩序須知 (Arrangement for Two Sets Monastic Monks). In: *Chanzong quanshu* 禪宗全書 (The Complete Chan Buddhist Collection). *qinggui bu* 2 清規部二. Lan Jifu 藍吉富 (ed.), Taipei: Wenshu chubanshe, 1990, 201.

²⁶⁹ Zhang Wenqin (2007), 466; 100-101.

1689 provides very few and brief documents about how the funeral and memorial rites were performed to some famous monks or abbots.²⁷⁰

These arrangements of Buddhist funeral rites are mainly based on the following four earlier published books: *Song gaoseng zhuan* (Biographies of Buddhist Masters in the Song Period) 宋高僧傳 written by Zanning 贊寧 (919-1002) in 988, *Jingde chuandeng lu* 景德傳燈錄 (Buddhist Doctrine from the Jingde Reign) by Daoyuan 道原 written in 1004, *Chanyuan qinggui* 禪苑清規 (Arrangement in Buddhist Monasteries) edited by Zongze 宗謁 in 1103 and *Chixiu Baizhang qinggui* (Imperial Edition of the Baizhang Arrangement) 敕修百丈清規 edited by Dehui 德輝 in 1335. The last arrangement edited by Dehui contains the most details. There was a generic funeral format in the Tang era, which was to remain the workhorse of Chinese Buddhist death practices right down to the present as Alan Cole argues.²⁷¹ However, special care must be taken to avoid generalizing what

²⁷⁰ *Zongtong biannian* is a document of chronological data of historical Buddhist events with names of important monks and monasteries from the twenty-second year of Zhaowang 昭王 (around 974 BC) of Zhou dynasty, which was considered the beginning of Buddhism, to the twenty-eighth year of Kangxi (1689). Except for these publications which all can be found in *Chanzong quanshu* 禪宗全書 (The Whole Collection of Chan Buddhism) edited by Lan Jifu 藍吉富, there are some other publications on or related to Buddhist funeral and mourning rites and practices in 17th-century China and in general: Gu Yanwu (1991, reprint); Groot J. J. M. de. *The Religious Systems of China. Its Ancient Forms, Evolution, History and Present Aspect. Manner, Custom and Social Institutions Connected Therewith*. Leiden: Brill, 1892-1910. Taiwan: Cheng-wen Publishing Co., 1967 (reprint); Chen Yuan 陳垣. "Mingji Dian Qian fojiao kao" 明季滇黔佛教考 (Buddhism in Yunnan and Guizhou Provinces in the Ming Period). In: *Mingji Dian Qian fojiao kao (Wai zongjiaoshi lunzhu bazhong)* 明季滇黔佛教考 (外宗教史論著八種). In: *Mingji diaqian fojiao kao (Wai zongjiaoshi lunzhu bazhong)* 明季滇黔佛教考 (外宗教史論著八種). Shijiazhuang: Hebei jiaoyu chubanshe, 2000: 231-480; Myron Cohen. "Souls and Salvation: Conflicting Themes in Chinese Popular Religion." In: *Death Ritual in Late Imperial and Modern China*. James L. Watson a. Evelyn S. Rawski (eds.). Berkeley, Los Angeles a. London: University of California Press, 1988: 180-202; Robert H. Sharf. "The Idolization of Enlightenment: On the Mummification of Chan Masters in Medieval China". In: *History of Religions*, Vol. 32, No. 1, Aug., 1992: 1-31; R. H. Sharf and T. Griffith Foulk. "On the Ritual Use of Chan Portraiture in Medieval China". In: *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie*, Vol. 7, 1993: 149-219; Alan Cole. "Upside Down/Right Side Up: A Revisionist History of Buddhist Funerals in China." In: *History of Religions*, 35:4 (1996: May): 307-338; Norman Kutcher (1999); Bryan J. Cuevas and Jacqueline I. Stone. *The Buddhist Dead. Practices, Discourses, Representations*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007.

²⁷¹ Alan Cole (1996), 337. According to Alan Cole Chan liturgical texts from the Song dynasty prescribe two different funeral rituals: one for abbots and the other one for ordinary monks. The funeral arrangements done for ordinary monks are described by Alan Cole in the following way: "The prescription for an ordinary monks funeral begins with the instruction that a seriously ill monk is to be taken and set in the western hall, called the impermanence hall, where merit-making rituals based on Buddha name-recitation (*nian fo*) are performed to encourage his recovery. Should this fail and he dies, he is to be encoffined in the infirmary

was in fact a complex and ever-changing process, especially in the hybrid syncretism of different religious and philosophical thought in 17th-century China. The arrangements *Conglin liangxu xuzhi* (Arrangement for Two Sets Monastic Monks) by Tongrong and *Conglin zhubai qinggui keyi* (Arrangement of Oral Texts in Monastic Services) by Weilin laoren presenting Buddhist funeral processes in 17th-century China are similar to earlier sources but somehow simplified.²⁷² For example in *Conglin liangxu xuzhi* the length of the mourning period and the number of persons in charge of the funeral have been reduced.

In all above mentioned Buddhist arrangement texts, there is no documentary evidence of calling back the soul performed for a Buddhist monk. Furthermore, a three years mourning performed for an ordinary monk like Morong can be hardly found in these texts either. According to the Buddhist arrangement, a normal Buddhist funeral process for an ordinary monk in 17th-century China should be done as follows:

When a monk is very sick, firewood must be prepared first. When the monk closes his eyes and is dead, tell *zawu* 雜務 to arrange the spirit tablet and soul table, on which tea, fruit, incense and paper are put. Together with *zhike* 知客 check all the belongings of the dead monk and put them at the empty place where the deceased had been living. After that, sent *xingzhong* 行衆 to prepare fire, water, and the *taikan*-ritual 擡龕 (carrying the spirit tablet). Then the *wangpai* 亡牌 (dead tablet, soul tablet) must be hung up. After all the monks have finished their rice soups, [the body] will be accompanied to the place of cremation while the sutras being recited. The *zhuchi* 住持 (abbot) stands still checking with the torch. When the right time has come, he can commence with the Buddhist service. The next day, the *sangzhu* 喪主 (owner of the death) should be *yin* 引 (guided) [in a way that] the bones are put into a porcelain jar. The opening of the jar should then be sealed and put in a covert place, preparing for going into stupa.

with offerings of incense, flowers, and banners. That night the monks gather to recite sutras, vinayas, and the ten-toned Amitābha prayer. The next day the monks gather again to offer incense and again recite the ten-toned Amitābha prayer in order to produce merit so that the deceased may be able to go across the sea of samsara and be reborn in the Pure Land. After this service, the casket is taken out and disposed of with another similar recitation conducted at the place of disposal. Seven days after the death, the monks again gather to recite magical spells (dhāraṇīs) and sutras to make more merit for the deceased.” Ibid., 315. Unfortunately Cole does not provide his source of this passage.

²⁷² Tongrong (1990, reprint), 216.

凡僧病革，須先備辦柴薪。迨瞑目時，預告雜務收設龕位靈桌及齋供茶果香紙等。將亡僧所有隨身行李同知客簡點安放常住空處，仍差撥行衆打點水火及擡龕等，復掛送亡牌，俟大眾粥罷，念誦送出到茶毗所。住持立定，廼問訊度火炬，候舉佛事。次日，引喪主，持磁器收骨，盛貯封定，安置諸隱處，以便入塔。²⁷³

Zhisui 直歲, i.e. the superintendent of a monastery, a term which is not mentioned above, is in charge of all services including the funeral service in fact. The other important person playing a direct role in the funeral is the *zhike* 知客, the guestmaster of a monastery. Here the superintendent also takes on the role of guidance in the funeral and his duties are described as follows:

When a monk dies, [the superintendent] leads the *sangzhu* to the Fangzhang-hall and asks the abbot to light the candle and to perform the Buddhist service. Then he goes to the Chan-hall in order to ask the Weina-masters to recite sutras. After the cremation, [the superintendent] should again lead the *sangzhu* to the Fangzhang-hall and Chan-hall in order to perform a ceremonial thankyou.

遇亡僧，領喪主到方丈請住持秉燭佛事。次至禪堂，請維那諸師念誦。候茶毗畢，仍引喪主到方丈禪堂禮謝。²⁷⁴

The language in the arrangement for the monks in charge provides a glimpse of the religious beliefs as well as the humane and emotional aspects of the ritual. The instruction for the deceased to thank the abbot for having performed the funeral service for him suggests not only the emotional aspect, as if he were still alive, but also the religious belief that the dead monk is not dead, but is on his way to the Buddhist papradise. Remarkable is also the slight difference between these two above quoted texts, which are given in the same arrangement. It seems that there were different variations of performing the funeral services in 17th-century.

²⁷³ Tongrong (1990), 216. According to this book there are three different stupas for monks of different ranks. These are *zu ta* 祖塔 (stupa of ancestors or patriarchs), *zhuchi ta* 住持塔 (stupa of abbots) and *putong ta* 普同塔 (common stupa of ordinary monks). The jar only could be put into the stupa on certain days as for example Qingming 清明 (day for remembering the deceased). Ibid.

²⁷⁴ Ibid., 204.

According to *Conglin zhubai qinggui keyi* (Arrangement of Oral Texts in Monastic Services), it depended on the results of the *guchang* 估唱 (auction), whether the memorial service took place or not.²⁷⁵ During the *guchang*-auction the belongings such as the clothes of the deceased are auctioned off to the other monks. The memorial service could only take place when the belongings of the deceased monk were valuable enough for the monastery. For the deceased monk who had left valuable belongings the service called *pufu* 普佛 would be carried out, while for the others a standard service called *wangseng changgui pufu santang* 往生常規普佛三堂 is available. In the prior *pufu* service, incense, food and tea were delivered, and this was called *shezhai* 設齋 (erecting *zhai*) while the later would refrain from this.²⁷⁶ According to this arrangement, the aforementioned album *Landscape in Archaic Style* originally dedicated to Morong by Wu Li was possibly valuable enough to let the service of *pufu* be carried out. On the other hand, all the arrangement mentioned above concerns large monasteries, but not a small chapel like the Xingfu chapel with possibly only three monks, Zhenggong, Morong and Shengyu. In fact, the historical record is far from clear as to how funeral and memorial services were carried out for an ordinary monk like Morong in such a small chapel in the early Qing. In the section above I reviewed evidence bearing on the textual record of arrangement since there is no other positive evidence as to how the Chan Buddhist funeral rites actually appeared in the case of Morong.

Memorial Rites and the Three Years Mourning

To follow the correct ritual and, first of all, to put the deceased at peace was perhaps the most important aspect of memorial rites in late Imperial China, both in Confucianism and in popular belief.²⁷⁷ According to Wu Li's

²⁷⁵ Weilin laoren 為霖老人 (ed.). *Conglin zhubai qinggui keyi* 叢林祝白清規科儀 (Arrangement of Oral Texts in Monastic Services). In: *Chanzong quanshu* 禪宗全書 (The Complete Chan Buddhist Collection), *qinggui bu* 2 清規部二. Lan Jifu 藍吉富 (ed.), Taipei: Wenshu chubanshe, 1990, 297.

²⁷⁶ Ibid., 297-301.

²⁷⁷ In response to a memorial by the Jiangsu Provincial Surveillance Commissioner Chen Hongmou 陳弘謀 from 1741, the Grand Secretariat pointed out: "We [Grand Secretaries

inscription, Morong died between the late fall and the early winter of the *xinhai* year (1671) and his inscription was written two days before the day *denggao*, which was on the 6th day of October in 1674, three years after the death of Morong. It is a quite reasonable assumption that Wu Li wrote his inscription because of the third anniversary of Morong's death - an important aspect according to the memorial rites.

The maximal mourning period was called *dasang* 大喪 (greater mourning) or *sannian zhi sang* 三年之喪 (three years mourning) and it contrasts with the shorter *xiaosang* 小喪 (lesser mourning) period.²⁷⁸ Not hearing music, not getting married, not taking part in examinations and not taking up an official post during the period of *dasang* was called *xinsang* 心喪 (heart mourning).²⁷⁹ Both for Wu Youqing 吳幼清 (1249-1333) and Gu Yanwu, mournings of somebody who undertook concrete actions and not only adhered to superficial rules, like dressing in different costumes for mourning, could be called as *xinsang* (雖不服其服而有其實者，謂之心喪).²⁸⁰ Thus, Wu Li's mourning for Morong can be understood as *dasang* or *xinsang*.

In fact, the *dasang* or *sannian zhi sang* (three years mourning) only lasted for twenty-five months according to the *Li ji*. It reads: "The mourning of the three years came really to an end with (the close of) the twenty-fifth month. (三年之喪，二十五月而畢)."²⁸¹ In his essay "Three years mourning 三年之喪", Gu Yanwu criticized the people of his time for only superficially adhering to the mourning rules because they did not follow the rules as they were required to. Gu, for example, pointed out that they extended the

speaking, added by Kutcher] have examined the regulations regarding funerals and mourning. The *li* has a fixed period, in which to find an end for the body and soul (*ti po* 體魄) and put the ancestors at peace." Norman Kutcher (1999), 144-145. Chinese literatis understanding of the death ritual is dominated by those texts, which are repeatedly cited in the *Li ji* and the *Yi li* (Book of Ceremonies). "These texts were the reference points for subsequent compilations of ritual into the late Qing period." Evelyn S. Rawski. "A Historians Approach to Chinese Death Ritual". In: *Death Ritual in Late Imperial and Modern China*. James L. Watson a. Evelyn S. Rawski (eds.). Berkeley, Los Angeles a. London: University of California Press, 1988, 20.

²⁷⁸ Stephen Teiser (2003), 26. Also Xie Zhaozhe (2009), 292.

²⁷⁹ Gu, Yanwu. "The Mourning of Three Years (三年之喪)". In: Gu Yanwu (1991), 248.

²⁸⁰ Concrete actions for Wu Youqing included not drinking schnapps, not eating meat, and not having sexual intercourse. Ibid.

²⁸¹ The *Li Ki* translated by James Legge, Book XXXV. (Sacred Books of the East 28), 3. Teiser however points out that medieval commentators disagree over the precise timing of the *dasang*. Some suggest the 25th month after death, some the 27th. Teiser (2003), 26.

mourning time to 27 months, thus making it longer than the original 25 months stipulated in the *Li ji*.²⁸² This changing took place as well in Buddhist rites. In *Zongtong biannian* by Ji Yin a *xinsang* to mourn the Master Chuanzu 傳祖 performed by the monk Wu 悟 is recorded. It lasted from the 1st month of the *yimao* year (1615) to the 4th month of the *dingsi* year (1617) for 27 months.²⁸³

During the late Ming period, Chinese rituals underwent a transformation, which – according to Norman Kutcher – was the most far-reaching made since the changes that had taken place during the Wei and Jin dynasties about 1300 years earlier.²⁸⁴ Rituals should be performed to express emotions for many elites. Norman Kutcher goes on to write:

This development meant that rituals could be changed to make them accord with individualistic and even idiosyncratic beliefs about how the dead should be mourned. In this climate, for example, some came to believe that it was natural and therefore permissible, contrary to the mourning canon, to observe formal mourning for a close friend or deeply respected teacher.²⁸⁵

In Wu Li's time it was possible to mourn a teacher like a father or a friend like a brother, because “rituals are permissible because of righteousness 禮可以義起”, as Xie Zhaozhe put it.²⁸⁶ The mourning ritual became personalized - a shift which could be termed as “privatization” of grief.²⁸⁷ But whatever the case, it seems still seldom to mourn a friend in a way of a *sannian zhi sang* in the 17th century China. Xie Zhaozhe again:

And as to Guan [Zhong] and Bao [Shuya]; or Lei [Yi] and Chen [Zhong] [famous Chinese friends] it was permissible for them to mourn each other as brothers. And yet, this should not happen frequently. ... Probably as to teachers and friends down to today, mourning out of grace and benevolence is rather rare.²⁸⁸

Xu Zhijian's colophon on the album *Landscape in Archaic Style* rededicated

²⁸² Gu Yanwu (1991), 239.

²⁸³ Ji Yin (1988), 559.

²⁸⁴ Norman Kutcher (1999), 190.

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

²⁸⁶ Xie Zhaozhe (2009), 292.

²⁸⁷ Norman Kutcher (1999), 190.

²⁸⁸ Trans. by Norman Kutcher. Ibid., 51.

to Shengyu hints at the fact of Wu Li's three years mourning, when he wrote that Wu Li was like the zither without its listener and this had lasted for three years. However, Wu Li's mourning seemed to have another reason.

According to Buddhist belief, there is a period of three years between death and rebirth, adopted a confucianized three years periodization in fact, or, to be more exact, between the moment of death until the soul of the deceased is reborn in another bodily form.²⁸⁹ During these three years after the death the deceased is neither dead nor alive - he or the soul of the deceased is on a three years tramp, which was conceptualized as a "purgatorial" period, judged by the ten kings, who meted out appropriate rewards and punishments and assigned the dead to their next rebirth.²⁹⁰ In his book *The Scripture on the Ten Kings and the Making of Purgatory in Medieval Chinese Buddhism* Stephen Teiser examines in detail the scenes of judgement by every one of the ten kings. For the 10th king - the Wudao zhuanlun wang 五道轉輪王 (King Who Turns the Wheel of Rebirth in the Five Paths) - charging the third year after death, these three years are "an important crossing" for the deceased.²⁹¹ Lothar Ledderose describes the process as follows:

In the sutra with the title "Yü-hsiu shih-wang sheng-chi ching 預修十王生七經", the ten kings are for the first time grouped together in proper sequence. The deceased person meets them one after the other, the first king seven days after his death, the second king after twice seven days and so on until the seventh king on the 49th day. After 100 days he sees the eighth king, after one year the ninth, and finally, after three years, the tenth.²⁹²

When exactly *The Scripture on the Ten Kings* was written is unclear; however, according to Ledderose the fundamental text for the iconographic

²⁸⁹ Stephen Teiser. *The Scripture on the Ten Kings and the Making of Purgatory in Medieval Chinese Buddhism*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003 (paperback ed., first published 1994), 26, 1.

²⁹⁰ Jacqueline I. Stone. "Death". In: *Critical Terms for the Study of Buddhism*. Donald S. Lopez Jr. (ed.). Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2005, 63.

²⁹¹ Stephen Teiser (2003), 215-216.

²⁹² Lothar Ledderose. "A King of Hell". In: *Suzuki Kei sensei kanreki kinen Chûgoku kaiga shi ronshû* 鈴木敬先生還曆記念 中國繪畫史論集 (Festschrift for Professor Suzuki Kei. Articles on Chinese Art History). Suzuki Kei Sensei Kanreki-kinenkai 鈴木敬先生還曆記念會 (ed.). Tôkyô: Yoshikawa kôbunkan 吉川弘文館, 1981, 37.

type of the ten kings of hell dates from the 9th century.²⁹³ The “earliest surviving manuscript of *The Scripture on the Ten Kings* that can be dated conclusively was copied in the year 908,” but where the original text comes from is unknown according to Stephen Teiser.²⁹⁴ However the text of the scripture was based on notions that had crystallized sometime during the 7th century. The earliest reference to the ten kings is preserved in a work by Daoxuan 道宣 (596-667) in the year 664.²⁹⁵

The idea behind the three years journey judged by the ten kings is Chinese purgatory, which was shared by most social classes (whether ranked by economic, social or educational status) and most regions, regardless of explicit religious affiliation in 17th-century China. We can observe it in many media and activities, like popular drama, morality books, burning of spirit-money or funeral services. In the whole concept of purgatory the quality of the next life is determined by the moral balance of one’s past life. The moment of death is very important for a Buddhist, since “dying a good death meant preparing for purgatory.”²⁹⁶ “For some this meant taking last-minute refuge in the Three Jewels and facing the direction one hoped to go, while for others it meant leaving behind the appropriate relics or poems.”²⁹⁷ Possibly Morong had faced the direction of the Western Pure Land or at least we can sense it from the allusive depiction of the mat and table in the chamber and the paradisiacal clouds opposite by Wu Li (Fig. 50). And one of the appropriate relics of Morong seems to have been Wu Li’s album *Landscape in Archaic Style*, which Morong left to his disciple Shengyu after his death.

²⁹³ Ibid. On the ten kings of hell see also L. Ledderose. “Shiwang tu de tuxiangxue fenxi 十王圖的圖像學分析 (Iconographical Analysis of the Paintings Ten Kings of Hell)”. In: *Haiwai Zhongguohua yanjiu wenxuan* 海外中國畫研究文選 (Essays on the History of Chinese Painting by Overseas Scholars, 1950-1987), Hong Zaixin (ed.). Shanghai: Shanghai renmin meishu chubanshe, 1992, 232-245; ---. *Ten Thousand Things. Module and Mass Production in Chinese Art*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001, and its Chinese translation: *Wan wu: Zhongguo yishu zhong de mojianhua he guimohua shengchan* 萬物:中國藝術中的模件化和規模化生產. Beijing: Shenghuo dushu xinzhi sanlian shudian, 2005, 164-165.

²⁹⁴ Stephen Teiser (2003), 48.

²⁹⁵ Ibid., 48; 1.

²⁹⁶ Ibid., 5; 13.

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

For the living persons, dying a good death meant standing by the deathbed, keeping vigil and reciting sutras. Using the words of Wu Li, it meant showing the heart at the death-and-life moment. This has to do with one aspect of Buddhist funeral practices, which the monk Daoxuan in the Tang dynasty described as follows:

Based on traditions in China, at the time of death, regardless of whether the person is a monk or a layperson, those with whom the dying person is closely related should stand by his side and keep vigil and recite [sutras] until the dying person's root consciousness has faded away. This is so that the dying person's inner mind [*nei xin*] is happy and does not fear the road ahead. And so that he will attain correct remembrance [*zheng nian*] without being distracted and thereby attain a good rebirth.²⁹⁸

It is quite likely that Wu Li's self-reproach for having failed to show his heart at the death-and-life moment refers to his not being at Morong's side when Morong was dying. For the living persons, their diligence and memorial services play an essential role during the time between death and rebirth. All these will help the deceased to achieve the general religious goal of attaining rebirth in the Pure Land paradise.²⁹⁹ The possibility of cultivating merits involves a range of activities: one could contribute to a Buddhist temple, copy or recite sutras, chant mantras, or provide vegetarian feasts. Above all, one could build a pagoda and make Buddha images.³⁰⁰ Since the *Xingfu* scroll was donated to the Xingfu chapel, it hints at the possibility that to paint a painting for the Xingfu Buddhist chapel could be considered as being of merit for Wu Li. However, there is no evidence available. In this section above I discussed the cultural and religious meanings behind the anniversary of three years after death and the relevant role of Chinese purgatory in 17th-century. It is remarkable that as a Christian Wu Li still

²⁹⁸ Alan Cole (1996), 326.

²⁹⁹ In medieval China a ritual called "pursuing the departed with benediction" (*zhui fu* 追福 or *zhui jian* 追薦) could be performed once every seven days during the first forty-nine postmortem days, as a way of "increasing the deceased's chances of reaching a desirable destiny and to prevent him or her from falling into the Three Paths and Eight Catastrophes, because it was believed that the deceased soul, during the first forty-nine postmortem days, tended to get lost in a state of limbo, with the retribution for good or evil deeds still pending." Eugene Wang, *Shaping the Lotus Sutra. Buddhist Visual Culture in Medieval China*. Seattle and London. University of Washington Press, 2005, 364.

³⁰⁰ Ibid.

followed the belief and custom of the three years to mourn his Buddhist friend Morong.

The Ritual of *zhaohun* (Calling back the soul)

It becomes more remarkable when the *zhaohun* 招魂 ritual (calling back the soul), mentioned by Wu Li in his inscription had been performed for Morong. My central purpose in this section is to reconstruct the ritual in order to know how it could have been performed for Morong and to understand what it meant for Wu Li. I will try to provide a sense of how gentry was performing this ritual in 17th-century China by perusing writings from this period.

The most important source for the following section is the *Wumengtang ji* 午夢堂集 (The Collection of Wumengtang) edited by Ye Shaoyuan 葉紹袁 (1589-1648).³⁰¹ It is a collection, first published in 1636, of essays and poems, written by Ye Shaoyuan himself, his wife Shen Yixiu 沈宜修 (1590-1635) and their thirteen children. These probably are the most detailed accounts concerning the question of calling back the soul in 17th-century China. They contain descriptions of the process and how it was carried out by different priests in different ways. However it is far from clear how the ritual exactly was performed for a Chan Buddhist monk during this period. Studies of religious practices have paid surprisingly little attention to the *zhaohun*-ritual in 17th-century China. This is maybe partly due to the conservative nature of the state-oriented ritual texts which are to be found in the *Li ji*, *Zhou li*, *Daming huidian* 大明會典 (Collected Statutes of the Great Ming) and *Qing huidian* 清會典 (Collected Statutes of the Qing). These reject shamanism as well as popular religious sects and Buddhist and Daoist practices and simply ignore the whole range of activities carried out by the vast category of the *shuren* 庶人, commoners without official titles.³⁰²

The ritual of *zhaohun*, which originally was called *fu* 復 in classical Chinese,

³⁰¹ More about Ye Shaoyuan and this collection see: Zhang Xiaoquan Raphael. *Marginal Writing in Seventeenth-Century China: Ye Shaoyuan and His Literary Family*. PhD thesis. UMI. Washington University in St. Louis, 2010.

³⁰² Daniel L. Overmyer. "Attitudes Toward Popular Religion in Ritual Texts of the Chinese State: The Collected Statutes of the Great Ming". In: *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie*, Vol.5, 1989: 193, 221.

can be possibly dated as early as the first century.³⁰³ It is the crystallization of a variety of ideas about human survival after death.³⁰⁴ In different periods of Chinese history, however, there were different forms of the *zhaohun*-ritual, often with slightly different aims and meanings. An early lyric description can be found in the *Chuci* 楚辭 (Lyrics of Chu), which gives the idea of *zhaohun*, as carried out by shamans in the early 3rd century B.C..³⁰⁵

In *Li ji* there are many passages concerning the *zhaohun*-ritual.³⁰⁶ According to Chinese traditional belief, human beings have at least two souls: *po* 魄 - the earthly *yin*-soul which goes into the grave with the body of the dead, and the *hun* 魂 - the immortal *yang*-soul of the ancestral tablet which remains in the family.³⁰⁷ It seems that in the Han dynasty the garment of the deceased was used, while in later times soul banners, the portrait of the deceased or a slip of paper with an emblem on it were used for the ritual.³⁰⁸

³⁰³ For Stephen Teiser it relates to the ritual of consulting a spirit medium. Stephen Teiser. "Introduction." In: Lopez, Donald. Jr. (ed.). *Religions of China in Practice*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996, 21-22.

³⁰⁴ Yü Ying-shih. "O Soul, Come Back! A Study in the Changing Conceptions of the Soul and Afterlife in Pre-Buddhist China." In: *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 47, No. 2 (Dec. 1987), 363.

³⁰⁵ Ibid., 373. The *Chuci* (Lyrics of Chu) is "an anthology of rhymed, metrical works that represent a tradition of poetry quite distinct from that of the Classic of Poetry". In: Stephen Owen (1996), 155. Calling the soul back in very early China means a shamanistic ritual in which the shaman calls back the soul of someone dead, dying, or otherwise not in full possession of their senses (comatose, soul-wandering). Ibid., 204. See also Claudius Müller. "Totenkult und Ahnenverehrung". In: *Wege der Götter und Menschen. Religionen im traditionellen China*. Claudius Müller in cooperation with Wu Shun-chi (ed.). Berlin: Reimer, 1989, 132.

³⁰⁶ Wu Hung argues that calling the soul back was not part of the death ritual while Liu Dunyuan suggests the opposite. According to Liu Dunyuan one aim among many others is to let the soul come back to the dead body or to let the soul and body to be one before the corpse was buried. Zhao Panchao 趙盼超. "Cong sangzang liyi kan Handairen dui siwang de ganyu --- Jianlun routi yu linghun de liangchongxing 從喪葬禮儀看漢代人對死亡的干預 - 兼論肉體與靈魂的兩重性 (Tamper with the Death in Mourning and Bury Ritual by the Han Chinese - The Ambiguity of Body and Soul)". In: *Wenbo* (2007), vol.1, 61.

³⁰⁷ Myron L. Cohen (1988), 181-183. Myron L. Cohen has also argued that there are three *hun* and seven *po*. As the title of Cohen suggests he discusses the conflicting terms *hun*, *po*, *gui*, and *shen* and points out that these terms were used interchangeably or in different social contexts. Ibid., 182; See also: Mareile Flitsch. "Die chinesische Volksreligion." In: Claudius Müller (ed., 1989), 60; Yü Ying-Shih (1987), 386.

³⁰⁸ During the Tang dynasty a paper garment was employed in calling the soul back, as can be seen in the following remark of the poem "Pengya xing" by Du Fu: "Let the warm water wash my feet, Let the paper cut recall my soul (暖湯濯我足, 剪紙招我魂)." Kang Baocheng 康保成. "Fojiao yu Zhongguo piyingxi de fazhan 佛教與中國皮影戲的發展 (Buddhism and the Development of Chinese Shadow Theatre)". In: *Wenyi yanjiu* 文藝研究, 2003, vol. 5, 88.

One of the most important functions of *zhaohun* may have been to express love as described in the *Li ji*. It reads: “Calling (the soul) back is the way in which love receives its consummation, and has in it the mind which is expressed by prayer. 復，盡愛之道也，有禱祠之心焉。”³⁰⁹

The *zhaohun*-ritual was a very popular religious practice presented in 16th and 17th-century China, which of course also found its way into the literature of the time. Stories concerning *zhaohun* can be found in many novels, plays and *suibi* (jotting literature). In the play *Mudan ting* by Tang Xianzu mentioned before, Du Liniang sought the man - Liu Mengmei of whom she had dreamed after she died and came back to life three years later after her death. In the scene of “Spirit Roaming” 游魂, the Daoist nun Sister Stone 石道姑, arranges a mass (*kaishe daochang* 開設道場) in order to perform the *zhaohun*-ritual for the ascension to Heaven of Du Liniang, who had died three years earlier.³¹⁰ Sister Stone set up a banner to announce the mass outside the gate of the temple, unrolled the *duren jingzang* 度人經藏 (scriptures of salvation) and waited for the one who will bring the soul to the Heavens.³¹¹ The practice of writing down the name of the deceased, which is called *ming* 銘 in Chinese, is mentioned as early as in the *Li ji*. This was done because the deceased could no longer distinguish himself and with the *ming* the soul could find the right way back to the body.³¹² Later on, the soul of Du Liniang appeared and met with the Lady of the Eastern Peak and the First Consort of the Southern Dipper, who came to bring her to the

³⁰⁹ James Legge. *The Li Ki (The Book of Rites)*, Book II. The Than Kung. Section II. Part I. 25. (Sacred Books of the East, 27).

³¹⁰ Tang Xianzu 湯顯祖. *Mudan ting* 牡丹亭 (The Peony Pavilion). Trans. by Cyril Birch. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002 (first ed. 1980), 149. Also in Chinese: Tang Xianzu. *Mudan ting*. Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1978, 133.

³¹¹ The scripture of the Daoists is indeed borrowed from the Buddhists. Teiser (2003), 28-29.

³¹² Hu Zhiyong 胡智勇. “Shi Yinhun shengtian haishi zhaohun ru mu – Chu Han jingbo bohua zaitan 是引魂升天還是招魂入墓- 楚漢旌幡帛畫再探 (To Let the Soul Go to Heaven or to Call the Soul Enter the Tomb - Rediscuss the Banner and Silk Painting from Chu and Han)”. In: *Meishu* 美術 (2008), vol. 9, 108. The original sentence is in *Li ji, tangong xia*: 銘，明旌也，以死者為不可別己，故以其旗識之。James Legges translation runs as follows: “The inscription forms a banner to the eye of fancy. Because (the person of) the deceased, can no longer be distinguished, therefore (the son) by this flag maintains the remembrance of him.” *The Li Ki (The Book of Rites)*, Book II. The Than Kung. Section II. Part I. 25. (Sacred Books of the East 27). See also Wu Hung (2010), 130; Constance A. Cook (2006), 36.

Heaven.³¹³

Shen Yixiu's collection *Li chui* 鷗吹 in *Wumengtang ji* contains a poem called "After 'Calling Back the Soul' - Calling the Two Dead Daughters Back 擬招 - 招兩亡女", which is written after the poem "Zhaohun" 招魂 (Calling Back the Soul) in *Chuci*. In Shen's poem the line *Hun xi gui lai* 魂兮歸來 (O soul, come back) from *Chuci*, is repeated thirteen times and the image of a sweet home is evoked while the outside world, where the soul is supposed to be, is described as a dark and dangerous place.³¹⁴ This image originally from *Chuci* has remained fairly constant over a period as long as two thousand years in fact.

In his essay "The Mirror of Qionghua 瓊花鏡", Ye Shaoyuan describes that he saw his daughter Ye Xiaoluan 葉小鸞 (1616-1632, *zi* Qiongzhong 瓊章) in the priest Zhusheng's mirror ten years after her death. He mentions two priests specializing in calling back the soul, one of them called Master Le 泐公 (also known as Le'an 泐庵 or Le dashi 泐大師) from Wumen 吳門, the other one Zhusheng 朱生.³¹⁵ About Zhusheng and his practice Ye describes as follows:

Zhusheng's *ming* is Mao, *zi* Xizhe and he is a native from Huaiyin. He is good at Li Shaojun's practice. He can call the soul back as if [the deceased] revived again. He then depicts it with the so-called *jinsu ying bifa* 金粟影筆法 (shadow brushwork of Jinsu). When he paints the picture, everyone can

³¹³ Tang Xianzu (2002), 155; Tang Xianzu (1978), 135.

³¹⁴ Ye Shaoyuan 葉紹袁. *Wumeng tang ji* 午夢堂集 (The Collection of Wumeng tang). Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1998 (first published 1636), 195-196.

³¹⁵ In his essay "天台泐法師靈異記 (The Activities with Spirits of Master Le from Tiantai)", Qian Qianyi 錢謙益 (1582-1664) points out that Le'an is the *hao* of the famous literatus and critic Jin Shengtang 金聖嘆 (1608-1661), who started his activities of worshipping gods and ghosts and his practice of calling back the soul when he was about twenty years old. These practices performed for the Ye family, were also mentioned by later scholars such as Zhou Lianggong 周亮工 (1612-1672) and Yuan Mei 袁枚 (1716-1797) in their books. Lu Lin 陸林. "Wumengtang ji zhong Le dashi qiren --- Jin Shengtang yu wanming Wujiang Yeshe jiaoyou kao 《午夢堂集》中“泐大師”其人---金聖嘆與晚明吳江葉氏交游考 ("Master Le" in *Wumengtang ji*: Textual Research on the Relationship between Jin Shengtang and Wujiangs Ye Family in Late Ming Dynasty)". In: *Xibei shida xuebao (shehui kexue ban)* 西北師大學報 (社會科學版), July 2004, Vol. 41, 24. It is interesting that Jin Shengtang was a good friend of Xu Zhifu 許之溥 (?-before 1661), younger brother of Xu Zhijian. See: Lu Lin 陸林. "Jin Shengtang yishi yilian xinkao 金聖嘆佚詩佚聯新考 (New Research on Jin Shengtang's Lost Poems and Antithetical Couplets)". In: *Guji zhengli yanjiu xuekan* 古籍整理研究學刊 (*Journal of Ancient Books Collation and Studies*), Nov. 2008, No. 6: 51.

see how he does it. His method is as follows: He affixes a piece of blank paper to the wall and then directs a mirror towards the paper. He then concentrates his spirits, holds his breath and looks into the mirror. When he has the feeling that he sees something, he makes it appear on the paper.

朱生名懋，字熙哲，淮陰人。善李少君之術，能招魂如生人，繪以金粟影筆法。當其磅礴丹青時，人皆得以目寓也。其法裝白紙於壁，以鏡對紙，凝神屏氣，先視鏡中，恍惚若覩，即現紙上矣。³¹⁶

After Zhusheng had failed three times over a course of seven months, Ye finally saw the image of his daughter Qiongzhong in the mirror. Ye describes the figure of Qiongzhong as standing on clouds accompanied by two girl servants. Her dress was light red-colored and it appeared like the wing of a cicada being blown upwards by the wind. Even Zhusheng was struck by her beauty and on the next day he finished the picture, which could then be hung up. They all believed that Qiongzhong had not really died but had become an immortal, which was also the reason for the difficulties the priest experienced when trying to call back her soul.³¹⁷ Another method used by Zhusheng to call back the soul is described by Ye Shaoyuan as follows:

... On the first day of the second month, three tea tables were put in front of the altar. On the tables were food, nuts, wine, tea, and such things. On a yellow paper Zhusheng presented a report to the *Yuhuang shangdi* 玉皇上帝 (Jade Emperor), *Zhenwu beiji* 真武北極 (God of North Pole Zhenwu), and to all spirits of the netherworld. Then he bit the cockscorn and mixed the blood with cinnabar to write the charms *fu* 符. At noon, he burned first the report. After the report was burned, he then closed the door. At the time of *bushi* 晡時 [from 3 to 5

³¹⁶ Ye Shaoyuan (1998), 735-6. Huaiyin is in Jiangsu province. Li Shaojun was a priest active in the reign of Han Wudi (141-87 BC). In: Fengshan shu 封禪書, in *Shiji* (1985), 1385-6. Jinsu 金粟 refers to Vimalakirti, an ideal Mahayanist lay practitioner and a contemporary of Gautama Buddha (6th-5th BC). *Jinsu ying bifa* 金粟影筆法 (shadow brushwork of Jinsu) refers to the Vimalakirti images created by Gu Kaizhi (ca. 345-ca. 406). More about Vimalakirti images and Gu Kaizhi see: Qiang Ning. *Art, Religion and Politics in Medieval China. The Dunhuang Cave of the Zhai Family*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004, Chapter One.

³¹⁷ Ye Shaoyuan (1998), 737. Indeed, according to Ye's writing he did see all these in the mirror but not on the portrait by Zhusheng, which is different to the description of Zeitlin in her article. Judith T Zeitlin. "The Life and Death of the Image. Ghosts and Female Portraits in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Literature." In: *Body and Face in Chinese Visual Culture*. Wu Hung and Katherine R. Tsang (eds.). Cambridge (Massachusetts) and London: Harvard University Asia Center, 2005, 253.

pm] he did it again. After the *yuyuan* 虞淵 [sunset], Zhusheng let his hair fall down over his shoulders and went around barefoot. In his hands he held a seal and a sword. Then he lit six candles in the hall and put seven lamps on the ground. The incense produced fragrant smoke and the clear water [at the food of the incense burner] was frequently taken in. Zhusheng put two big round mirrors in front of the altar, one for himself, and the other one for me and my sons to look into.³¹⁸

二月初一日，具壇設三几，几各備肴核酒茗之屬，朱生以黃紙書奏章，告之玉皇上帝、真武北極及冥府諸神，啗雞冠血，漬丹砂書符。午間，先焚疏。疏焚已，即閉戶。晡時，又然。迨虞淵後，朱生披髮跣足，手印仗劍，然六炬於堂，布七燈於地，爐香頻燎，清水頻吸，置二大圓鏡於壇前，一朱生自視，一俾余與諸子視焉。

In “Supplement to the Chronological Autobiography of Tianliao 天寥年譜別記 (also titled as “Banbuxuan liushi 半不軒留事”, Tianliao is *hao* of Ye Shaoyuan)”, Ye Shaoyuan recounts that, in the 8th month of the *bingzi* year 丙子 during the reign of the Chongzhen emperor (1636), the priest Gu Taichong 顧太沖 came to his home and painted a colored painting for his dead daughter Qiongzhang 瓊章, which was called *Returning to the Guanghan-Palast* 返駕廣寒圖.³¹⁹ Gu and the priests Le’an and Zhusheng, mentioned above, told Ye Shaoyuan that his daughter originally was an immortal in Yuefu 月府 or in Guanghan gong 廣寒宮 – a name referring to the moon. After having finished the painting Gu called the immortals to come by burning the charms *fu*. Two female immortals came and left a couple of poems, which Gu wrote down on the painting for Qiongzhang.³²⁰ In the 5th month of *xinsi* year (1641) Gu Taichong and a certain young man called Feng 馮 from Zhejiang province arrived again. Ye writes:

... [They] could call the immortals coming. They locked themselves in a covert room and painted in different colors. [Their way in] calling back the soul is vital. This is really an amazing method.

³¹⁸ Ye Shaoyuan (1998), 736.

³¹⁹ Ibid., 891.

³²⁰ Ibid., 891-892.

... 能致仙，鎖於密室中，具諸繪彩於內招魂傳神，甚奇術也。).³²¹

Later on they painted a posthumous portrait of Ye's wife Wanjun 宛君 (zi of Shen Yixiu), together with the figure of their daughter Qiongzhang on a piece of *jing* 涇 paper, reasoning that both of them were immortals. According to Ye the portrait was not a good likeness (*ying shu bu si* 影殊不似).³²² About this Feng, Ye wrote in another piece that he specialized in the technique of calling back the immortals by using a hanging brush (善懸筆請仙術).³²³

It seems that depicting a painting of the deceased played an important role in the ritual of calling back the soul in the 17th century. In Pu Songling's 蒲松齡 (1640-1715) *Liaozhai zhiyi* 聊齋誌異 (Strange Records from the Liao-Studio), there is a brief tale about a painter from Wumen specializing in retrospective portraiture by using the method of *xuankong moxie* 懸空摹寫 (to paint with hanging brush).³²⁴ The method which Wang Shizhen 王士禎 (1634-1711) describes in his *Chibei outan* 池北偶談 (Chance Talks North of the Pond), however seems to be a portrait done rather by the spirit and not by the painter. The story is about a painter from Wumen specializing in "retrospective portraiture" which Wang calls *zhui xiezhen* 追寫真. For a certain official called Song 宋, who wanted to have a portrait of his long dead mother, the painter at first erected an altar in a clean room. Then the painter wrote a couple of charms *fuzhou* 符咒, and on the third day he put colors, paper and a brush out and let Song pray in front of them. Then they left and locked the room. After they had heard some noise at night, the painter opened the door the next day and saw the colors were spattered

³²¹ Ibid., 898.

³²² Ibid. Here the technique of painting a picture was different from that described by Wang Shizhen (1634-1711). These two painters painted the portrait by themselves while the painter in Wang's essay locked the painting implements and paper in a room and left so that it seemed as if the spirit of the dead mother painted the picture. This detail is slightly different from the story as relayed by Zeitlin. Judith T. Zeitlin (2005), 252-253.

³²³ Ye Shaoyuan (1998), 1072.

³²⁴ Pu Songling 蒲松齡. *Liaozhai zhiyi* 聊齋誌異 (Strange Records from the Liao-Studio). Jinan: Qilu shushe, 1985, 131. Zeitlin translates the term *xuankong moxie* as "sketching based on the imagination", Zeitlin (2005), 252.

everywhere, the brush had fallen on the floor and the roll of paper was unsealed. Then they opened the paper and found the portrait done.³²⁵

Except for painting portraits, pictures of flowers or Buddhist figures were also painted in rituals. In his “Continued Yao wen” 續窈聞 Ye Shaoyuan writes that the master Le’an could perform funeral service in the Buddhist way (能以佛法行冥事). Ye describes that the master came in the 8th year of the reign of the Chongzhen emperor (1635), three years after the death of Ye Xiaoluan and Ye Wanwan 葉紈紈 (1610-1632), and painted four flower paintings, depicting peony, lotus, chrysanthemum, and narcissus and a painting of a Buddhist deity in order to call back the souls of his two daughters.³²⁶ At the end of the performance Ye asked for a portrait called *xie ying shen* 寫影神 (to paint a portrait of the spirit) of Xiaoluan, but the master refused, saying that it would be too difficult for him to do that.³²⁷

In fact, all the *zhaohun* practices mentioned above were related to a ritual of consulting a spirit medium, which was called *qing xian shu* 請仙術, *zhao ji* 召箕 or *ji xian zhi pu* 箕仙之卜 in the 16th and 17th centuries.³²⁸ The special technique of using the hanging brush mentioned earlier belongs to a related concept called *fujī* 扶乩 (sciomancy or planchette writing), in which a brush was hung on a “T”-formed frame.³²⁹ All these different practices were used for predicting the future and curing people, as well as within the framework of funeral and memorial services. Clients request the help of mediums to let the dead soul come back or to solve different problems. During the seance the medium usually enters a trance and incarnates a deity, who speaks through the medium or depicts a painting that requires deciphering by the medium and his manager.³³⁰ Such performances often constitute an interactive communication between the mediums and deities. All the

³²⁵ Wang Shizhen 王士禎. *Chibei outan* 池北偶談 (Chance Talks North of the Pond). Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1982 (reprint), 483. Compare Zeitlin (2005), 252.

³²⁶ Ye Shaoyuan (1998), 518-526.

³²⁷ Ibid., 526.

³²⁸ Lang Ying (2009), 403; 479-480; 523-524. Xie Zhaozhe (2009), 305-306.

³²⁹ Hu Fushen 胡孚深 (ed.). *Zhongguo dao jiao da cidian* 中華道教大辭典 (Dictionary of Chinese Daoism). Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1995, 832. Also see Zhang Xiaoquan Raphael. *Marginal Writing in Seventeenth-Century China: Ye Shaoyuan and His Literary Family*. PhD thesis. UMI. Washington University in St. Louis, 2010, 134-193.

³³⁰ See also Stephen Teiser. “Introduction”. In: Lopez, Donald. Jr. (ed.). *Religions of China in Practice*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996, 22.

mediums mentioned above were mainly young men and some were literati. The practices were intermingled with ideas from Shamanism, Daoism and Buddhism.

There can be little doubt that these practices, including the *zhaohun*-ritual, were widely practiced by Chinese people in the Jiangnan 江南 area in the 16th and 17th centuries, regardless of their social and economic standing or explicit religious identification.³³¹

Although Buddhist monks took care of all funeral arrangements during this period, according to Timothy Brook, there is no evidence that such a *zhaohun*-ritual would or could have been performed for a Buddhist monk in a Buddhist monastery.³³² Indeed, some aspects of the *zhaohun*-ritual are inconsistent with normative Buddhism, since there is no soul in normative Buddhism and nothing survives the death of the body.³³³ The denial of any permanent essence, such as a soul, is the Buddhist doctrine of “not-self” (Skt. *anātman*; Pāli *anattā*).³³⁴

In 17th-century China, however, because ideas related to the soul were shared by almost all Chinese people, the idea - but not the practice of *zhaohun* - can also be found in Buddhist arrangements. Instead of the word *hun*, the word *ling* 靈 for spirit is used. In the memorial service of *pufo* 普佛 for the deceased, which could extend up to a service lasting seven days - called a *qi* 期 (period), followed by annual memorial sacrifices for three years, the *jueling* 覺靈 (awakening spirit) is called back by reciting the following poem and burning incense according to *Conglin zhubai qinggui keyi* (Arrangement of Oral Texts in Monastic Services):

The light reaches everywhere where it is highly pure.
It shines lonely in the empty emptiness.
It comes back to watch the human world,
where things happened like in a dream.

Burning heartfully the incense may the awakening spirit be
aware today.

³³¹ See also Ibid.: 3-37.

³³² Timothy Brook (1993), 99.

³³³ Melford Spiro. Cited in Cuevas Bryan J. and Jacqueline I. Stone. *The Buddhist Dead. Practices, Discourses, Representations*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007, 6.

³³⁴ Ibid., 5.

淨極光通達
寂照含虛空
卻來觀世間
猶如夢中事

心香一燭覺靈鑒知於今。³³⁵

According to this text it was like a dream for the deceased when it came back to this life. In Chan Buddhist belief the deceased monk is understood or seen as a *jueling*. This word is especially stressed in the *Conglin zhubai qinggui keyi* (Arrangement of Oral Texts in Monastic Services), in which it is used as being equivalent to a deceased monk. Different from the practices described in the *Wumengtang ji*, it is considered sufficient just to burn incense and the soul of the dead monk would come back. The *Conglin zhubai qinggui keyi* (Arrangement of Oral Texts in Monastic Services) also contains instructions for the recitations employed for the *Yulanpen jie* 盂蘭盆節 (ghost festival) in the 7th month every year. According to this arrangement all the *jueling* of the ancestors of every Chan school, all dead monks within the monastery and other partly unholy souls, like *zhipo youhun* 滯魄幽魂 (blocked *po*-soul and dull *hun*-soul), should be called back by way of offering them a *daochang* 道場 (religious mass). In the course of this *daochang*, service texts written down in the book as well as sutras were recited, incense was burned and a *qingzhai* 清齋 ceremony with food and fruit should be performed, providing offerings to the spirits and souls.³³⁶

Now to bring this section to an end: Although the *zhaohun*-ritual was only loosely affiliated to organized Daoism and Buddhism, the medium still could be called or viewed as a Daoist or Buddhist priest, like the Shidaogu 石道姑 (the Daoist nun Sister Stone) in *Mudan ting* or the *fofa* (Buddhist law or service) performed by the priests in *Wumengtang ji*. In all likelihood it was performed for Morong, not in a Buddhist monastery and not in the way as described in Buddhist arrangements. Although it does not belong to the “orthodoxy” (correct belief) according to Buddhism, but is an “orthopraxy”

³³⁵ Weilin laoren (1990), 298.

³³⁶ Ibid., 311-312.

(correct performance) due to the fact that it was widely practiced by Chinese people in the Jiangnan area in the 16th and 17th centuries. In concerning with the late Imperial China, James L. Watson has pointed out that the state apparently sought to enforce “orthopraxy” (correct performance) rather than “orthodoxy” (correct belief), meaning that it was less concerned with what people believed about rituals than it was with the outward conformity of these rituals.³³⁷ On the one hand, both the idea of the three years journey and the ritual of calling back the soul performed for Morong reveal the religious syncretism in the 16th and 17th centuries in China. On the other hand, it must be a controversial subject for Wu Li as a Christian: Could Wu Li as a Christian engage in non-Christian rituals such as the *zhaohun*-ritual? There is no direct answer found in Christian writings to the question whether the *zhaohun*-ritual was acceptable for Christians at Wu Li’s time. However, the attitude of missionaries especially of Jesuits was still tolerant in concerning with Chinese rituals around the 1670s. The next two sections will provide more historical background and Wu Li’s attitude and understanding toward the netherworld.

Historical Aspects of Death, Soul, and the Netherworld

In *Lunyu Ji Lu* 季路 asked Confucius about serving the spirits of the dead. The Master answered: “While you are not able to serve men, how can you serve their spirits?”³³⁸ Like his attitude towards death, Confucius refused to answer questions about serving spirits, but on the other hand he did not deny the possible retribution, reward and punishment for the next life. The scholar Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200) in the Song period expressed a similar idea with

³³⁷ James Watson. “The Structure of Chinese Funerary Rites: Elementary Forms, Ritual Sequence, and the Primacy of Performance”. In: *Death Ritual in Late Imperial and Modern China*. James L. Watson and Evelyn S. Rawski (eds.), Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1988, 10-11. See also Norman Kutcher (1999), 193. On further aspects see Donald S. Sutton. “Death Rites and Chinese Culture: Standardization and Variation in Ming and Qing Times”. In: *Modern China* 2007, Volume 33, Number 1: 125; 145.

³³⁸ James Legge (1994), 241.

this remark: “Let us understand those things that can be understood. Those that cannot be understood let us set aside.”³³⁹

For a Buddhist, the present life is the unavoidable result of the last life and at the same time the cause of next life. The present human being is part of an endless chain of rebirth (saṃsāra-tschkra).³⁴⁰ The four great masters Yunqi Zhuhong 雲棲株宏 (1535-1615), Zibai Zhenke 紫柏真可 (1543-1603), Hanshan Deqing 憨山德清 (1546-1623) and Ouyi Zhixu 藕益智旭 (1599-1655) brought about a Buddhist revival, which began during the early 16th century and continued into the early part of the Qing period and peaked during the Wanli period (1573-1615).³⁴¹ Consequently the Buddhist lay movement greatly gained in significance with the late Ming and early Qing society. In this period, “Buddhist rituals to secure blessings for the living and the dead, the Buddhist ideas of karmic retribution and the Western paradise, the Buddhist practice of reciting the name of Buddha, the release of life, vegetarianism, meditation, and asceticism were all integrated into the belief systems of ordinary people.”³⁴² For the Suzhou scholar You Dong 尤侗 (1618-1704), Buddhism was a way of understanding birth and death for the gentry. He wrote critically in 1661: “supplicating the Buddha to gain good fortune is a matter for ignorant men and women, whereas studying Buddhism in order to understand birth and death is the approach of the gentry.”³⁴³

The 16th and 17th centuries were characterized by religious syncretism, influenced by cultural traditions and deeply penetrating into society and administration. During this period, there was “a high level of uniformity in beliefs, attitudes, and conceptions regarding the dead”, but “no centralized hierarchy of specialists charged with the responsibility of dispensing religious truth, as in Christendom.”³⁴⁴ During this period the boundaries between Confucian ideology, popular Daoist religion and Buddhism are

³³⁹ *Zhuzi quanshu* 51:2a. Quoted in Wm Theodore de Bary and Irene Bloom. *Sources of Chinese Tradition. Volume I. From Earliest Times to 1600*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999 (second ed.), 703.

³⁴⁰ Li Wenchao (2000), 154.

³⁴¹ Twitchett Denis and Frederick W. Mote (eds., 1998), 927.

³⁴² *Ibid.*, 940.

³⁴³ *Huayin shanzhi* 華銀山志 (Gazetteer of Huayin Mountain), 1865, 17: 2b. Cited in Timothy Brook (1993), 97-98.

³⁴⁴ James L. Watson (1988), 11.

almost impossible to discern. To the Chinese everything was reconcilable and people could try to approach truth from different angles and take inspiration from whatever was best in every doctrine. “The means, basically, were of little importance.”³⁴⁵ For an ordinary Chinese dealing with the concepts of *hun* and *po*, Confucianism, Buddhism, Daoism, popular religion or Christianity were not categories of any importance. For him or her the soul is differentiated into *hun* and *po* and the *hun* goes to heaven and *po* to the earth after the death.

After the 16th century missionaries and Chinese Christians published an impressive number of Chinese texts on Christianity. Among the issues discussed the question of soul and death apparently was of predominant importance. In Christian belief the life of a human being is dependent on the soul, and death concerns the body but not the soul.³⁴⁶ In the book *Tianzhu shiyi* 天主實義 (1603), Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) used arguments from natural theology to discuss themes like the existence of God, the human soul, the remuneration of good and evil, heaven and hell, refutation of reincarnation and many other topics.³⁴⁷ Other books more specifically discussed the topic of death and afterlife like Lazarro Cattaneos (1560-1640) *Shenhou bian* 身後編 (On the Afterlife) published around the year 1622 and *Sishuo* 死說 (On Death) by Niccolò Longobardo (1565-1655) in 1630.³⁴⁸

Moreover, the art of good death (*ars bene moriendi*) became an important genre discussed in numerous Christian spiritual writings on death, presenting death at the moment of ultimate choice. “One had to learn to die well, which also meant that one had to learn to live well.”³⁴⁹ Related to this theme were the “four ends” (*quatuor novissima*): heaven, hell, death and judgement,

³⁴⁵ Jacques Gernet. *China and the Christian Impact. A Conflict of Cultures*. Cambridge and Paris: Cambridge University Press and Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l’Homme, 1985, 64.

³⁴⁶ The missionaries in the 17th century with their medieval theology went to China with the aim of saving souls. Christian missionaries view of the soul in China at that time were influenced by Aristotelianism. Aristotelianism was the basis of the Jesuits philosophical education and natural theology and many of the “sciences” (like physics, astronomy, etc.) were founded on it. Nicolas Standaert (ed.). *Handbook of Christianity in China. Volume One: 635-1800*. Leiden, Boston and Köln: Brill, 2001, 606-607.

³⁴⁷ This book was the basis for the introduction of the basic Christian teachings and this far beyond the 17th century. It was reprinted several times and translated into several languages including Japanese and Korean. *Ibid.*, 612-613.

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 629-630.

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 629.

which aimed at making the human being aware of his or her state as a sinner. “One should be encouraged to transform the forces of one’s soul and arrive at contrition by meditating on death, judgment and hell, and enforce hope by meditating on heaven.”³⁵⁰

However, some aspects of these ideas were different in China, for example the aspect of the soul. Moreover, the missionaries very soon realized that it was not possible to hold purely “Christian” funerals when they were confronted with Chinese funeral and memorial rites, in which the aspect of soul is of importance. As Nicolas Standaert correctly pointed out, “Christian tradition is often associated with orthodoxy, while Chinese tradition is associated with orthopraxy”.³⁵¹ Matteo Ricci and most of his successors followed a tolerant method based on accommodation to the Confucian elite culture. They defined some of Chinese funeral and memorial rituals such as burning incense or serving the food in the cult of ancestors not as idolatrous but as “civil” and “political” ones, and thus acceptable.³⁵² However, the stress on correct belief of missionaries after Matteo Ricci and his successors caused the conflict between the tolerant “Ricci method” and the other approach followed mainly by Dominican and Franciscan friars. This touches upon some relevant aspects of the Chinese Rites Controversy, which is beyond the scope of this study. The controversy culminated in a condemnation of the Chinese rites by papal authority in 1704, “forbidding the use of *tian* and *shangdi* while approving *tianzhu* for the concept of God, and forbidding Christians to take part in sacrifices to Confucius or to ancestors.”³⁵³

Although I have no positive evidence whether the *zhaohun*-ritual was acceptable for Christians at Wu Li’s time, traces of the idea of the three years journey of Chinese purgatory can be found in the “Ritual Sequence” guideline edited by Li Andang 李安當 (?-?) and Francesco Saverio Filippucci (1632-1692) in Guangdong in 1685. This “Ritual Sequence” has

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

³⁵¹ Nicolas Standaert. *The Interweaving of Rituals. Funerals in the Cultural Exchange Between China and Europe*. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2008, 182; 164-165.

³⁵² Ibid., 165.

³⁵³ Ibid., 165; Nicolas Standaert (ed.). *Handbook of Christianity in China. Volume One: 635-1800*. Leiden, Boston and Köln: Brill, 2001, 680.

four different versions with the Chinese titles “Linsang chubin yishi” 臨喪出殯儀式 (Ritual Sequence for Attending Funerals and Organizing the Procession) and “Sangzang yishi” 喪葬儀式 (Ritual Sequence for Funerals and Burials), collected in the 5th volume of *Yesuhui Luoma dang'an guan Ming Qing tianzhujiao wenxian* 耶穌會羅馬檔案館明清天主教文獻 (Chinese Christian Texts from the Roman Archives of the Society of Jesus) edited by Nicolas Standaert and Adrian Dudink.³⁵⁴ In this “Ritual Sequence” the ritual of the seven sevens that the deceased meets the first king seven days after his death, and the tenth king after three years as discussed before, was allowed to be used. The 17th rule in the long version of “Linsang chubin yishi” is dealing with the rite of seven sevens. It reads: “The ritual of the seven sevens can be used except for the blended and superstitious things.”³⁵⁵ This guideline, which was however never printed, was not detached from practice. It was intended as a local prescriptive text, destined for basic Christian communities, including the lower layers of society. Its basic structure is that of the traditional Chinese funeral sequence with a mixture of Christian, Neo-Confucian and Buddhist rituals and traditions.³⁵⁶

Wu Li's Attitude towards Death and the Netherworld

Wu Li's personal encounter with death played an essential role for his conversion to Christianity. Wu Li lost his father when he was still a baby. In the year 1662 his mother passed away and shortly afterwards his wife died. Nine years later Wu Li lost Morong, one of his best friends. In an untitled poem possibly written in Macao, Wu Li expressed his loneliness, his missing of his grandchildren and of his long deceased wife. The line reads: “That the hand towel becoming wet was because of my deceased wife 霑巾何事為亡

³⁵⁴ Nicolas Standaert and Ad Dudink (eds.). *Yesuhui Luoma dang'anguan Ming Qing tianzhujiao wenxian* 耶穌會羅馬檔案館明清天主教文獻 (Chinese Christian Texts from the Roman Archives of the Society of Jesus). Vol.5. Taipei: Taipei Ricci Institute, 2002, 439-491. More discussions about the four versions see: Nicolas Standaert (2008), 140-147.

³⁵⁵ Trans. by Nicolas Standaert. In: Nicolas Standaert (2008), 144.

³⁵⁶ Ibid., 141-142; 149.

妻.”³⁵⁷ In another poem mentioned earlier Wu Li describes how he met his deceased mother in a dream in the netherworld where blue mountains met the white clouds. The motif of missing the beloved ones and the issue of death occurs quite frequently in Wu Li’s poems.

In his late years it seemed that the question of death and the wish to die a good death became the driving force for Wu Li to persuade people to be converted to Christianity. It can be read in *Xu kouduo richao*, where Wu Li’s disciple Zhao Lun recalled: “My teacher wanted to advise people to think constantly about the timing of death, so as to cultivate their spiritual life as early as possible. 先生之意，蓋勉人恆思死候，及時操修耳。”³⁵⁸ The book *Xu kouduo richao* records Wu Li’s theological remarks and activities over a year (15th August 1696 - 25th Dec. 1697). Its model was *Kouduo richao* 口鐸日抄 (Diary of Oral Admonitions) - a selected record of the missionaries preaching, theological and moral comments edited by more than twenty five Christians in Fujian over a period of ten years (13 March 1630 - 4 July 1640).³⁵⁹ Wu Li found the Dao (way, meaning) of life in accordance with the issue of death in Christianity. In his late poem “The Deplorable 可歎” Wu Li appealed to people for turning toward the Dao for life and death 人人向道為死生. Here is a complete translation of this poem:

How miserable a human life is
If one only worries about his poverty instead of the Dao!
How hastily people part for ever
No matter how old or young they are!
If one fails to apprehend the truth of life and death,
He will for sure be punished in hell.
Many people have long taken the wrong road;
They have made mistake not only in their advanced age.
Although Confucians often miss the crucial point,
They ridicule the truth of Catholicism instead.
I see them as sheep that have got lost in the road,
But I don’t see any of them come back with regret.
Time passes gradually like a flying arrow;
Life is short and death is hard to escape.

³⁵⁷ Zhang Wenqin (2007), 234. Chen Yuan put this poem together with two other poems under the title “澳中有感 (Some Thoughts in Macao).” Li Wenyu had them removed from the original collection at the beginning of the 20th century.

³⁵⁸ Zhang Wenqin (2007), 584.

³⁵⁹ Nicolas Standaert (2001), 423. The translation of the title *Kouduo richao* is by Erik Zürcher. Ibid., 635.

If one has not done even the smallest thing which accords with
Catholicism,
He will be judged as a sinner when the lid is laid on his coffin.
For whom does the bell of my church toll today?
For ten years I have walked to and fro tirelessly.
I wish that in thousands upon thousands of villages,
Everyone turns toward the Dao for life and death.³⁶⁰

At the beginning of the poem, Wu Li warns of the shortness of life time, the possible sudden arrival of death and the danger for those who, like some Confucians, do not believe in God. Then he stresses the danger of being judged as a sinner after death, his passion for the mission and his wish that everyone converts to Christianity. The importance of the issue of death can be observed again in the following text in *Xu kouduo richao*, which gives further information on Wu Li's attitude toward death and most importantly on the reason of his conversion as described by Zhao Lun:

...[Zhao Lun says:] Like me, I was also a member of the Confucian school. I recited poems when I was young, studied commented classical books like *Sishu* and *Wujing* when I grew up, and tried many times the examinations when I was middle-aged, thinking pleasantly that the essential Dao was lying there. When seeking back the origin and source of all principles, I exhausted my thoughts and spirits, but I could not obtain the answer. Then, I realized that the cause and origin of life and death, which even Confucius himself rarely talked about, was unable to be sorted out. Therefore I cleansed my mind and embraced Christianity, humbly. Since then, I have been enlightened and have found where the fundamental questions and the origin of principles can be encountered. I am happy that I am not what I was before. ... [After hearing this,] the Master [Wu Li] nodded repeatedly in agreement.

即如余一人，亦儒教中人也，幼而吟詩，長而哀集《四書》、《五經》大全註疏諸書，壯而屢試風檐，欣欣自得，以為道在是矣。及返而求諸理之大本大原，則窮思極慮，殫精疲神而不可得。乃知死生之故，性命之源，即孔子亦罕言之，不可得而聞焉。用是洗心滌慮，俯首入教，從此蒙昧一開，而大本大原之所在，始恍然若有以遇之，自喜非復故我矣。... 先生頻點頭。³⁶¹

³⁶⁰ Trans. by Xiaoping Lin. Xiaoping Lin (2001), 145.

³⁶¹ Zhang Wenqin (2007), 595. The translation is based on Luo Jie's translation. Luo Jie. "Missionaries Influence on Wu Li's Conversion to Christianity". In: *Culture, Art, Religion: Wu Li (1632-1718) and His Inner Journey*. International Symposium organized by the Macau Ricci Institute. Macao: The Macau Ricci Institute, 2006, 224.

Wu Li's intensive engagement with Neo-Confucianism under the guidance of Chen Hu and with Chan-Buddhism through Morong reveal that he was highly conscious of religious, philosophical and moral issues. Since his hometown Changshu became an important basis for Christian missionaries, it was easy for him to get access to Christian ideas and practices through personal observation and reading. Confucians and Neo-Confucians were not sure what would happen after death and they did not even want to know about it. But for Wu Li the issue of death was closely related to his personal experience throughout his life, and the *Dao* he searched for was the meaning of death, which he found in Christianity. The hope of going to Heaven and the fear of being punished in hell were the key issues for Wu Li's conversion. However, Wu Li's attitude to death and the netherworld was syncretistic even in his late years. The following supernatural tale was recorded by Wu Li and is still retained in the *Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu* in Rome. In 1679, as head of St. Francis Society in Jiading, Wu Li went to visit the grave of Martino Martini (1614-1661) together with fellow Christians and left the following description:

In autumn of the seventeenth year of Kangxi, after Sunday worship in Yushan Zhaoshi Hall, Paul Yao told us that Father Martin Martini had been buried in Wulin's Dafangjing for more than twenty-one years [sic]. In the summer, the coffin was seen to have decayed, so people were trying to collect the remains. When they opened it, they found that his skin and hair were intact. It was a remarkable miracle. People near and far were all impressed. It is now the ninth of the first month of the eighteenth year. The head of the Society, with the Catholics Wu Li, Wang Zhigang, Shen Shaofang, Suzude, Qian Zhong, Chen Gebo, Bao Zhongyi, Qian Zi, Qian Yun, Bao Shan, Zhang Hongzuo, Ni Pei, and Su Ruming visited the grave in person, with piety and witness that the hair, beard and skin were still intact, and that the cloth and shroud kept their fresh colour. We, humble sinners, have approached such a spiritual miracle, which has never existed over the past thousands of years in China. Hereby we testify in front of God, and report it to the reverend priest. Wu Li, Wang Zhigang, Shen Shaofang, Suzude, Qian Zhong, Chen Gebo, Bao

Zhongyi, Qian Zi, Qian Yun, Bao Shan, Zhang Hongzuo, Ni Pei, and Su Ruming.³⁶²

This letter by Wu Li shows clearly his idea towards death and the netherworld. Actually such ideas were quite common and often can be found in accounts of the lives of both Buddhist and Daoist Saints, who are recognizable from their dead bodies. Here again we are confronted with the complexity and the mixture of ideas from Chinese religions, Confucianism and Christianity apparent in the thought of Wu Li.

The following example reveals Wu Li's Confucian view. Between the year 1691 and 1692 Wu Li wrote the poem "Ku sijiao Luo xiansheng 哭司教羅先生 (Weeping over the Bishop Mr. Luo)" in commemorating the Chinese Bishop Luo Wenzao, who ordained him as priest together with two other Chinese Wan Qiyuan 萬其淵 and Liu Yunde 劉蘊德 in Nanjing in 1688.³⁶³

In this poem Wu Li first describes Luo's life and the difficulties Luo encountered when carrying out his missionary work. It is followed by the description of the memorial rites that a funeral hall was arranged for Mr. Luo with his portrait. Wu Li then goes on to explain that it was difficult to write a short *lei* for Mr. Luo as he had great achievements for the mission in his life. At the end, Wu Li reveals that he wishes to live alone in the cottage next to Mr. Luo's tomb and mourn him for three years (廬居願獨三年止). The mourning ritual *luju sannian* 廬居三年 (mourning in a cottage next to the tomb for three years) is an extreme case of *xinsang* (heart mourning) with regard to the son or the student mourning to the father or the teacher in Confucian tradition.

As Jacques Gernet has pointed out, many literati in Wu Li's time, apart from their classical education, profound or shallow, had tried out a bit of everything in the course of their lives - Buddhism, Daoism and techniques of longevity, divination and the science of *yin* and *yang* - moving from one to another without the slightest compunction about mixing them up.³⁶⁴ Given

³⁶² Translated in Han Qi. "Catholics in Regions South of the Yangzi River (1669-1702)". In: *Culture, Art, Religion: Wu Li (1632-1718) and His Inner Journey*. Macao: The Macau Ricci Institute, 2006, 131.

³⁶³ Chen Yuan. In: Zhou Kangxie (1971), 36.

³⁶⁴ Jacques Gernet (1985), 65.

this historical background it is not surprising that Wu Li's attitude towards death and soul was influenced by elements from different strands of thought and religions. And it is necessary to be aware of this framework of different religious ideas which leads to hybrid and at times contradictory results, as can be seen in Wu Li's attitude to death, soul and the netherworld. In respect to the Buddhist ideas and practices, which are to be found on his *Xingfu* scroll, it cannot be said that Wu Li adhered to a clearly defined Buddhism.

Before this section is closed, there is still a question left: Why did Wu Li express these Buddhist ideas so obscure? Not everyone who sensed he was viewing a religious landscape could identify the religious allusions, in fact.

There are several important reasons for it. Primarily, the *Xingfu* scroll was first at the collection of the Xingfu chapel and the audience was the monks who understood the code. Secondly, as an educated literatus, a literati painting with inscription and the coding of messages was a better way of self-expression for Wu Li. Moreover, as a Christian, Wu Li intended to mourn his Chan Buddhist friend Morong in a Buddhist way - to wish him get rebirth in the Pure Land paradise. All these personal and religious reasons made the *Xingfu* scroll allusive. Finally, the subtle way of representation was also favored by Chinese literati painters in 17th-century. Alfreda Murck's book *Poetry and Painting in Song China. The Subtle Art of Dissent* shows that there is a very long tradition of decoding poetic allusions in Chinese art history. And according to her, this tradition was alive in 17th-century.³⁶⁵ She describes the pleasure of the distinguished poet Wu Weiye 吳偉業 (1609-1671) as follows when he recognized a message in painting:

When, during the process of collecting and authenticating, he got hold of rare scroll, he would shut his studio and deeply contemplate it, staring at it without speaking. In the event that he apprehended it, he would run around the couch, shouting wildly, clapping his hands, and leaping.³⁶⁶

Alfreda Murck writes further: "Perhaps such glee in a connoisseur was triggered by the authentication of a work of art, but the more likely possibility is that he had deciphered a concealed but apt poetic allusion."³⁶⁷

³⁶⁵ Alfreda Murck (2000), 262.

³⁶⁶ Ibid. The Chinese text is from *Wu Meicun wenji*, juan 37, 780.

³⁶⁷ Ibid.

Similar with the *Xingfu* scroll, many other memorial paintings discussed in this study are also represented in a subtle way, though due to personal reasons or political reprisals.

Concluding Perspectives

Chinese literati memorial paintings, functioning as a document, a record, or a source of information on the deceased, were produced by literati for the special purpose of memorizing. This study has attempted to introduce the basic characteristics of Chinese literati memorial painting with the aim of drawing attention to this not yet systematically researched subject in the scholarship of Chinese painting.

Based on this study, there are two different kinds of Chinese literati memorial paintings: One refers to the paintings in which the intention of memorizing the deceased was subsequently added, and the other kind consists of those paintings that were originally intended to serve as memorial paintings. Three paintings discussed above belong to the first category: Liu Jue's *Pure and Plain Pavilion*, Shen Zhou's *Gigantic Mountains and High Bamboo*, and Yun Shouping's *Ferrying a Crane*. The memorial aspect was added by subsequent inscribers so that the meanings of the paintings were transformed with each colophon. Most paintings analyzed in this study, however, belong to the second category, memorial paintings in the strict sense.

Considering the artist-patron relationship, it is again possible to distinguish between two subtypes. The question here is whether the artist or the patron is first and foremost of importance. Some paintings were designed as a means of memorizing from the point of view of the artist or in other words, they are painted for the artists themselves to memorize the deceased. These include paintings such as Wen Zhengming's *The Jixiang Chapel*, Lu Shidao's *Imitating The Jixiang Chapel by Wen Zhengming*, and Xiang Shengmo's *Venerable Friends*. Others are produced for patrons as a memorial record for personal and private reasons, such as, Chen Hongshou's *Elegant Gathering* painted for Qubing daoren, Gui Zhuang's *The Ink Bamboo and Poems from Traveling in Yue* for Anqing, Wu Li's *Xingfu* scroll for the Xingfu chapel, or for patrons who longed to be respected and praised by society with paintings concerning filial piety, such as, those painted by Tang Yin, Yu Zhiding, and

Shitao. The interaction between artists and patrons lets the literati memorial paintings become part of an elaborate system of Chinese society, such as the filial piety paintings discussed above. The mutual activation between artists and patrons provides a sense of how Chinese society functioned.

At the same time, it is important to point out that some of the paintings in this study have multi-leveled intentions or functions. Except memorizing the ancestors and Fei Mi and proclaiming the filial piety of the patrons, Shitao's *The Ancestral Tombs of the Fei Family* was painted with further aims for Fei Mi's soul to find the right ancestral tombs due to the topographical element of the scroll. Behind these intentions was also the Fei family history combined with the political statement against the Qing regime.

The ideas behind the *Xingfu* scroll are also very complex. Besides the function of memorizing, Wu Li's *Xingfu* scroll was painted for the soul of the deceased Morong for its three years soul journey. The composition of juxtaposition reveals the process of the journey: The representation of death in the chapel part is followed by the mountain part with the winding road as a guide leading to the paradise - the clouds part. At the same time, different motifs such as the pine tree, wintry trees, rocks and bamboo with their symbolic meanings hint at the virtue of Morong, endurance and energy which are needed in the netherworld. Behind these standard symbolic meanings is the allusion of death and rebirth represented by the empty chamber, the empty lotus seat, and the old leafless trees. Meanwhile, the image of separated rocks and bamboo is also a metaphorical expression of the two friends separated by death.

A question worth further investigation in this study is how sacred and profane elements correspond or interact in visual representations in paintings. To some extent, the study of the *Xingfu* scroll, appearing to be of largely profane quality at first glance, has dealt with the question of how visual images containing religious allusions and meanings included into a painting or in other words how the sacred and profane elements interacted on the *Xingfu* scroll. Georg Kauffmann has pointed out that there are two types of combinations of sacred and profane elements in art: the "additionstype" and

the “integrationstype”.³⁶⁸ The additionstype is dealing with a mechanical or semi-mechanical way of the combination of sacred and profane elements, while the integrationstype denotes an intimate and integrated connection between them. Kaufmann explains the additionstype by examining the woodcut *Luther with the Nimbus* by Hans Baldung Griens. According to Kaufmann, it is a profane portrait of Luther with an attribute from Catholic iconography, namely the aura, a sacred element. The sacred element is added to the profane elements in a way which is easily recognizable in the painting. As to the integrationstype, Kauffmann hints to a drawing by Albrecht Dürer, non-existent any longer, on which Dürer is represented as the “Schmerzensmann”. Kauffmann points out:

Hier ist offenbar das Weltliche mit dem Sakralen eine innigere Verbindung eingegangen. Zwar kann man auch in diesem Beispiel die sakrale Komponente von der paganen unterscheiden, doch sind die beiden Sphären hier nicht durch eine Art von Koppelung zusammengebracht, sondern gleichsam über- und ineinander projiziert.³⁶⁹

At first glance, it is not quite clear for the viewer whether this painting is dealing with Dürers self-portrait associated with the suffering of Jesus Christi or if it is a painting of Jesus Christi with Dürers facial features.

The representation of the lotus seat as a sacred element on the *Xingfu* scroll refers to the additionstype: It is “added” to the profane landscape element and easily recognizable in the picture. The representation of clouds and blue-and-green mountains with their symbolic meaning of paradise as sacred elements, refers to the integrationstype. It is “integrated” into the picture and in this way not easily recognizable.

The dominant worldly image on the *Xingfu* scroll is likely related to Wu Li’s personal situation, namely being a literatus and a Christian. Religious paintings are not highly regarded by Chinese literati, for whom “landscapes display the beauty of the Tao through their forms, and humane men delight in

³⁶⁸ H. Zabel. *Verweltlichung-Säkularisierung, Untersuchung zur Struktur einer Interpretationskategorie der neuzeitlichen Geistesgeschichte*. Diss. Münster, 1968. Cited in: Georg Kauffmann. *Michelangelo und das Problem der Säkularisierung*. Rheinisch-Westfälische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Vorträge G 181. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1972, 9.

³⁶⁹ Ibid.

this.”³⁷⁰ Being a literatus, a landscape painting was a good way to express the Dao and personal feelings for Wu Li. Moreover, as a Christian who wanted to address Buddhist contents to mourn his friend, it was a reasonable strategy for Wu Li to paint allusively. This mode of expression is similar to many cases of literati memorial painting in the 17th century discussed in this study - the subtle way of representation, which was alive during this period. Emerging under particular conditions and in particular contexts, it is possible to observe that many artists chose safe and allusive ways to express political, religious, or personal statements and issues.

Chinese society in the 17th century was characterized by intellectual openness, spiritual vitality, and new ways of looking at reality and of attaining self-realization. On one hand, this resulted in the spiritualization of the society and led to a religious syncretism heavily influenced by Chinese tradition. On the other hand, the effect was a new search for the meaning of life and death, a question passionately pursued by Wu Li.

The *Xingfu* scroll reveals Wu Li’s syncretistic and conflicting religious inner world. It seems that Wu Li was skeptical towards the basic principles of Buddhist thinking, but not towards some Buddhist practices and ideas concerning the afterlife. In fact, Wu Li continued to believe in some Buddhist and Confucian ideas of the afterlife, even in his later years when he had become a Jesuit. Buddhist rituals to secure blessings for the living and the dead for attaining a good rebirth in the Western paradise and the ideas of the three years journey in the afterlife in Chinese purgatory, were integrated into the religious system both of the elite and ordinary people in the 16th and 17th centuries. Such an attitude mixed with the practices of calling back the soul and *lei*-writing was common among 17th-century literati, including Wu Li. Considering Chinese tradition to be compatible with Christianity, Wu Li and many other literati tried to approach the truth about life and death from completely different ideologies and practices. For a Christian in the West, there was only one true religion, but for Wu Li and his contemporaries there were no eternal truths. The examination of the *Xingfu* scroll reveals the

³⁷⁰ In Zong Bing’s (375-443) “Hua shanshui xu (Introduction to Painting Landscape)”. In: Susan Bush and Hsio-yen Shih. *Early Chinese Texts on Painting*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, England: Harvard University Press, 1985, 36.

intensity of Wu Li's hope for immortality or a good afterlife, which is also evident in his writings and in the *Kouduo richao* by Zhao Lun. These hopes actually constitute the most important motivations for Wu Li's conversion to Christianity. It was Christianity that was able to give Wu Li a satisfying answer concerning the question of a good afterlife.

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