

What follows are two papers written long ago by Susan Bush, presumably for presentation at some conferences or symposia. They were never published, and in recent correspondence she wrote me that she had no intention of publishing them, at least without extensive rewriting. But she wrote that I am welcome to put them on my website for users to read, as I am doing now. Susan and I were together again last March at the meeting of the Association for Asian Studies in Honolulu; she is still well and active, much more so than myself, at age 78 (as I wrote her, a mere youngster.) As a member of the 1977 Chinese Old Painting delegation that I headed, she was the one who was always climbing--towers, rock formations, whatever--and having to be called back down. The two papers that follow are from old copies that I used to make accessible, over many years, to my classes on Song painting. Unfortunately, I do not have copies of the old illustrations to her "Landscape as Subject Matter" article, so readers will have to imagine them or find them in old books.

James Cahill, October 2011.

As Lothar Ledderose has noted, trees and rocks or landscape, the traditional hence neutral genres of painting, evolved in Sung times to become the main repertoire of literati artists. By the late eleventh century, such subjects could already take on different meanings or overtones depending on specific circumstances or in relation to particular texts. Presumably it was the neutrality of this subject matter that allowed for a variety of later reinterpretations, but literary associations with trees and rocks also played an important role. Three different approaches to painting in late Northern Sung may offer some perspective on a period of transition, when landscape subjects were being transformed into a vehicle for literary expression. These different attitudes can be found in three specialized painting texts composed or edited mainly in the second decade of the twelfth century at the court of Hui-tsung. They provide starting points for separate discussions. The Kuo Hsi text on landscape painting, particularly the "Notes on Painting" edited by his son Ssu in 1117, can give some insight into the relation of an artist to an imperial patron and its effect on the commissioned work. Another compilation on landscape by Han Cho, a highly literate court artist, presents a historically oriented view of painting that underlines the importance of recognizing and studying past styles. The third text, the Hsuan-ho hua-p'u is the catalogue of Hui-tsung's painting collection, which stresses the connection of painting with poetry in the introduction to several genres. As works compiled at court for an imperial patron, these texts are quite different from the informal yet highly influential art criticism of Su Shih and members of his circle, the early theorists of literati art. However, when one studies these three approaches to late Northern Sung landscape in relation to contemporary painting practice, certain parallels between scholars' art and court landscapes are clearly evident. After all, both literati and Academy painting of the period came from a common background, a culture which placed a high premium on literature and poetic expression. Some points of similarity and of divergence will be noted later on.

These generalities will be illustrated by a discussion of texts and paintings roughly in chronological sequence, beginning with Kuo Hsi who was active in the eleventh century. His "Notes on Paintings" or Hua chi is a record of his artistic career at the Northern Sung capital in the late 1060s and early 1070s. It forms the sixth section of the Lin-ch'uan kao-chih, a section now known from recently published Ssu-k'u ch'uan-shu manuscript versions, and it was edited and expanded by Kuo's son, the scholar-official Kuo Ssu, in 1117. As a unique record of a Sung artist's career, it sheds light on Kuo Hsi's relations with various patrons, including the Emperor, Shen-tsung. To judge from the record, Kuo Hsi first painted for officials, doing screens for government buildings at the capital, and then was granted a special dispensation to do a joint screen for the palace, before being summoned to work in the Imperial Academy of Calligraphy as an i-hsüeh, or "artist-in apprenticeship." Eventually he is said to have become a tai-chao or "artist-in-waiting," although it is not specified whether he was attached to the Academy of Calligraphy or the Academy of Painting. The information in this record tallies with that in the earliest biographical source, Kuo Jo-hsü's T'u-hua chien-wen-chih of the late 1070s, which places Kuo Hsi in the Yü-shu-yüan or Imperial Academy of Calligraphy. Later biographies that change shu, "calligraphy," to hua, "painting," to have Kuo Hsi enter the Academy of Painting can now be seen to be incorrect. Only the Academy of Calligraphy was prefaced by yü, "imperial," since the emperor had a seat there; the title of the Painting Academy was simply the T'u-hua-yüan. This may seem like a minor quibble. Still it sheds light not only on the best possible status for a court artist in Shen-tsung's time but also on the oversimplified categories that art historians, both ancient and modern, have tended to think in. Thus, there is no hard evidence that Kuo Hsi was a member of the Academy of Painting. On the other hand, the text of the record does not suggest that he was highly educated, and Kuo Ssu notes in his preface that his father studied Taoist texts. It was Ssu himself who is said to have elevated the status of the family by becoming a scholar-official, and through his government service Ssu may have been

able to have a posthumous civil title conferred on his father Hsi. In these circumstances, one may wonder how much of the literary style of the Lin-ch'uan kao-chih is due to the efforts of Kuo Ssu, who edited the text as a filial act.

The final section of Kuo Hsi's "Notes on Paintings" is particularly enlightening on the use to which his paintings were put and on the meanings that were associated with certain landscape subjects. Of course, the earlier sections of the Kuo Hsi text can be, and have been, compared with his paintings, such as the "Early Spring" of 1072 and the contemporary "Pines by a Stream," attributed to the tenth century artist Li Ch'eng but done in Kuo's manner. Then, one can point out that the composition is conceived in terms of social hierarchy - an example of correlative thinking; that seasonal mood is considered of great importance for its effect on a viewer - as in poetry scene and mood are now combined; and that the style specifically aims to create three-dimensional illusions of foreground projection and background depth - thus attracting the viewer's eye to wander in the painting. Other particulars can be learned from the section on "Notes on Paintings." As far as the lowest level of what was required of a court painter, we learn that when Kuo Hsi was asked to paint a folding screen for the Empress Dowager's palanquin, the Emperor said that a bit of color would be appropriate. As far as seasonal mood is concerned, we learn that Kuo's scenes of pines and rocks were thought by the Emperor to put the finishing touch on the decoration of the Cool Hall, a summer residence, where they had an elevating and hence no doubt a cooling effect. And inspirational scenery of spring mountains that would cheer up the onlookers was Kuo's considered choice for a folding screen in the renovated Jade Hall or Scholars' Precinct of the Han-lin. As far as subject matter goes, two entries seem particularly significant. Thus, at the time of the great drought of 1074, a special type of imperial screen was painted with a scene of "Whirling Snow in the North Wind." Shentsung was highly appreciative of the "supernatural subtlety" of this work and personally rewarded Kuo Hsi with an embroidered gold belt. Here there almost seems to be a suggestion that the painted subject might have a magical influence in countering

the drought. It is also noteworthy that for the front screen of the eleventh hall of the Imperial Shrine Kuo painted a great boulder in eleven parts with large and small fragments behind it. The fact that the number eleven is specifically mentioned here seems to be significant in context. Moreover, boulders were to be associated with the imperial lineage in the next generation when, under Taoist influence, Hui-tsung built up his Ken-ytleh rockery as a symbol of the yang element that would expedite the birth of male heirs through its geomantic positioning.

Thus, various entries in the "Notes on Paintings" would seem to indicate that landscapes or trees and rocks painted for specific purposes could be perceived as having certain overtones of meaning. A clear example of this usage occurs in the fifth section of the Kuo Hsi text, a supplement on particular paintings. There Ssu described a scroll of "Pines in a Single View" done by his father for the sixtieth or perhaps eightieth birthday of the long-term minister Wen Yen-po. In it, an uninterrupted series of pines viewed from nearby by an old man was meant to express the wish for a continuous succession of descendants in high office. The convention of equating the old tree or evergreen with the scholar of enduring moral principles could obviously take on a particular significance in a work done for an important patron's birthday. It is true, as Jerome Silbergeld has suggested, that the figure of the old man undoubtedly underlines the pine's traditional connotation of longevity. Still Kuo Hsi's painting may also have been inspired by the popular view that a number of evergreens in a family courtyard could augur success in civil office for several generations. As the Kuo Hsi text notes, figures in landscapes had an important role in conveying the message or mood of a scene. For example, when Kuo Ssu was a boy his father once gave him a painting of "Riders in the Western Hills." In it there were fleeing bandits, cautiously pursuing militiamen, and a scholarly recluse lounging on a boat, each figure exemplifying a different approach to life as Hsi pointed out to his son. Here one might add that the contemporary scholar-official Li Kung-lin also put figures in landscape settings for a specific moral purpose. His Hsüan-ho hua-p'u bio-

graphy states that Li "learned a great deal from Tu Fu's art of writing poetry and applied this to painting...(In his Yang Pass scroll, illustrating Wang Wei's poem on the departure of a friend, Li) represented a fisherman quietly seated at the side of a stream...showing no concern over...sorrow (or) joy...(Late in his life, after an illness) whenever he made a picture to give away, he would always embody advice or a warning in it..." Even though this passage can be cited as an example of a scholar-artist's concern with the same moral values in painting as in literature, it is noteworthy that Li's use of the fisherman, however subtle it may have been, was basically the same as Kuo's use of the scholarly recluse in the "Riders" scroll. Of course, small-scale figures in a landscape setting would always be limited in effectiveness even when their actions had moral connotations. Li's moral seriousness found its most direct expression in idealized portraits such as the image of Vimalakirti in "The Preaching of the Single Doctrine" in Peking, which may be a late Chin dynasty copy after Li Kung-lin's version. These details may help to remind us that certain aspects of character, strength, or dedication can be conveyed most directly by figure painting, not by symbolic landscape elements or scenes. On the other hand, landscapes, with or without figures, have a certain lack of definition hence an infinite suggestibility.

By the end of Northern Sung, the monumental tradition of landscape painting had run its course and the monochrome ink technique was highly developed. One of the indications that landscape had achieved the status of a traditional hence neutral subject matter is the new focus on separate landscape styles and on style in itself. The most important text on landscape painting in Hui-tsung's time is Han Cho's Shan-shui Ch'un-ch'uan chi dated to 1121. Although Han Cho came from an educated family, he did not take the civil examinations and turned to the arts. In the 1090s his patron at the capital was Wang Shen, the Imperial-son-in-law and painting friend of Su Shih. Wang Shen introduced Han to Hui-tsung, then a Crown Prince, and in Hui-tsung's reign Han was to pursue essentially the same course as Kuo Hsi. According to the postface of 1121, Han first became a chih-hou or "atten-

dant" in the Academy of Calligraphy, then called the Calligrapher Service or Shu-i-ch'ü of the Han-lin, and eventually was promoted to the position of tai-chao. Again, as in the case of Kuo Hsi, we know that Han Cho was an Academy artist but are not certain that he was attached to the Academy of Painting. His position is given in two different textual versions as chih-ch'ang hua (or mi-shu) tai-chao and neither version is as yet corroborated elsewhere. It is just possible that he served as chih-ch'ang ^{ch'ung} shu tai-chao, a known position in the Academy of Calligraphy. As a long-term tai-chao, he was granted a military title with a rank of the upper ninth grade. Like Kuo Hsi, Han Cho is always being placed in the Academy of Painting, (as in the summary of this talk); both of these artists may have had a somewhat special status, possibly as a result of direct contact with imperial patrons. The Han Cho text itself is obviously written by a literate professional artist, and has the earmarks of a specialized text on landscape painting. It quotes earlier landscape texts, uses the term ch'i-yü hallowed by pre-Sung art criticism, discusses the specifics of brush techniques, and emphasizes the importance of studying one particular master's style. None of these features occur in painting criticism by Su Shih or members of his circle. Han Cho seems at his most scholastic when he stresses the importance of a thorough knowledge of distinctive earlier styles. Previously, Kuo Hsi had advocated synthesizing the best elements to be found in contemporary landscape traditions such as those of Li Ch'eng and Fan K'uan. In contrast, Han Cho writes: "Well, if one were to paint in the style of Li Ch'eng, why mix it with that of Fan K'uan? Similarly, in calligraphic technique, one would not mix the styles of Yen Chen-ch'ing and Liu Kuan-ch'uan." And he goes on to complain that most of his contemporaries did not understand "the accomplishments of the various famous traditions." One who had in the past was of course his former patron, Wang Shen, who was able to aptly characterize the distinctions between Li Ch'eng and Fan K'uan when viewing their paintings. Hui-tsung himself was presumably also well-informed about earlier landscape styles. Thus Han and his fellow artists could rely on knowledgeable imperial patronage at the end of Northern Sung.

In this situation, someone like Han Cho, a landscapist known for his eroded rocks, might well have painted a landscape such as "Streams and Mountains without End." In it, the compressed mountainscapes of the middle section seem to refer back in historical sequence to the styles of the five early masters of monumental landscape painting: Ching Hao, Kuan T'ung, Li Ch'eng, Yen Wen-kuei, and Fan K'uan. The "Li Ch'eng" and "Yen Wen-kuei" segments here form an obvious contrast in terms of motifs and composition. In the last part of the handscroll, an unmistakable reference to Fan K'uan ends the historical sequence and is followed by a closing section in a contemporary manner. As has often been noted, the beginning and conclusion of the handscroll indicate a period style of around 1100, close to the time of Wang Shen and Chao Ling-jang when broad expanses and misty distances appear in landscapes along with linked, squared-off peaks. Again as has been noted, this is precisely the type of scenery that Han Cho must have had in mind, when he Kuo Hsi's three distances to six, adding three new types of broad or misty distances of his own. On the whole, this type of historical approach to painting, citing past masters disjunctively as did Huang T'ing-chien in his poetry, seems most likely to have been fostered in a court setting where access was had to earlier masterpieces and a study of past styles was encouraged. The first quarter of the twelfth century was definitely a time when earlier styles were used in combination, sometimes in a disjunctive manner. In religious art, this approach is illustrated by the rubbing of the engraving of Bodhidharma facing the wall from the Shao-lin-ssu on Mount Sung, where different types of engraving are used for separate landscape styles. If, as has been suggested, the five monochrome-type landscapes inset here stand for the five schools or traditions of Ch'an Buddhism, then this rubbing may also represent an iconography that is parallel to that of "Streams and Mountains without End." Since the setting for the main image is done in the Li T'ang manner, in itself a blend of traditions, the rubbing may reflect direct influence from the Northern Sung capital towards the end of the dynasty. Of course a knowledge of different artistic styles might be had outside the Academy or capital. Around

1100, when in retirement, Su Shih's disciple Ch'ao Pu-chih sketched the concept (i) for a White Lotus Society handscroll, which was then finished by a professional artist. In it, Buddhist images, figures and pavilions, trees and landscapes, and animals were all painted in the various styles of specific T'ang and Sung masters. This painting was much admired and widely copied. Ch'ao's conception may in part be responsible for the rather stiltedly archaic trees and rocks that appear in later White Lotus Society illustrations, such as this detail of the handscroll attributed to Chang Chi of around 1161. In this approach, separate elements in a painting would be done in different styles. A knowledge of past styles was already essential for both composers and connoisseurs of poetry and calligraphy. By the early twelfth century, in the time of Hui-tsung, this type of expertise also seems to have been appreciated and applied in painting, particularly in landscape painting.

In this connection, as far as the influence of literature on painting is concerned, the links between poetry and painting were always thought to be the closest. This is one of the themes of literati art criticism as expressed in comments written by Su Shih and his friends. It is also noteworthy that Kuo Hsi is said by his son to have chanted lines of poetry for inspiration before he did a landscape painting, and some of his favorite couplets are included by Ssu in the text. Again this is an indication of a literary culture that Kuo Hsi shared with the scholar-painters. The links between poetry and painting were underlined in several areas at Hui-tsung's court. The third text to be mentioned, the Hsüan-ho hua-p'u catalogue of his painting collection, is an anonymous compilation of around 1120 presumably written by court officials. In the introduction to the subject categories, certain genres like dragons and animals are given a pedigree, as it were, by citing the symbolism of hexagrams of the Book of Changes, while others such as birds and flowers or insects and grasses have their status affirmed by references to the Book of Poetry. This was not merely rhetoric used for the purpose of justification, since certain subjects could serve as allusions, conveying the same meaning in painting as in poetry. Thus the introduction to bird and flower painting stresses conventional associations:

"the camellia and the peony among flowers, and the phoenix and the peacock among birds, must be made to seem rich and aristocratic; the pine and bamboo, plum and chrysanthemum, or the seagull and egret, swallow and wild duck must be seen as reserved and quiet." Some of the associations used in poetic allusions went back to the Book of Poetry or the Songs of Ch'u. In T'ang times, Po Chü-i could write about earlier poetry: "when allusion was made to leave-taking, a pair of ducks or wild geese served as a symbol; when a gentleman or a mean fellow was to be represented, fragrant plants were used for comparison...wind and snow, flowers and plants, were they not skillfully used in the Book of Poetry?" Allusions of this sort were evidently conveyed in Hui-tsung's own painting. At the winter solstice of 1120 he presented his relative, the painter Chao Hsiao-ying, with a scroll of pied wagtails, a subject symbolizing brotherly love in one of the "Lesser Odes" of the Book of Poetry. The "Five-Colored Parakeet" is shown here as an example of Hui-tsung's bird and flower painting, the flowers being those of the blossoming apricot tree. The subject portrayed, an auspicious bird sighted in the palace grounds, is appropriate for an emperor's painting, and the style of magic realism and balanced silhouetting is typical of Hui-tsung. The calligraphy is also recognizably in his manner, although it is not always accepted as by his hand. Nonetheless it is significant that an inscription and poem are combined in the same scroll as the painted bird.

Moreover, we know that links between poetry and painting were strongly promoted by Hui-tsung in his educational policy. Thus when the state-sponsored Hua-hsüeh, or Institute of Painting, was established from 1104 to 1110, candidates were drawn from all over the country to compete in examinations in which they were supposed to illustrate poetic topics. One such topic was the couplet: "Deserted waters, without men crossing;/ An empty boat, horizontal the whole day." The winning painting was a literal illustration of a time when no men were crossing, since it showed a boatman in a state of total relaxation with his flute placed horizontally. Such Academy shih-i, or illustrations of poetic concepts, generally seem limited in import by their all too solid pictorial forms, lacking the overtones of the images they illus-

trate. They have recently been characterized by Qi Gong as a vulgar aspect of the combination of poetry and painting. However, literati combinations of these two arts could be even more vulgar at times, to judge from Su Shih's poems on Licentiate Yin's insect paintings that were circulated as shih-i in the form of rubbings. The one on the snail, which ends: "He finishes stuck up on a wall - shriveled," is an obvious reference to the character and career of Wang An-shih, Su's political oponent, whose nickname, Chieh-fu, was associated with shells. Of course, a traditional role of Chinese poetic allusions was criticism if not satire, and painting could now play a part in this as well. On the other hand, the most literary example of a shih-i painting stems directly from the art of Su Shih and his circle.

This unusual work is like Hui-tsung's parakeet scroll in combining poetry and painting by the same calligrapher-painter and in illustrating a subject appropriate to the artist's circumstances. At the same time, it is unlike Academy shih-i painting in using landscape elements self-reflexively to point to the artist's own concerns. It is a joint handscroll done in ink on paper by Mi Yu-jen, Mi Fu's son, and Ssu-ma Huai, a descendant of Ssu-ma Kuang, with colophons by Southern Sung scholars dating to 1148 and 1149. Unfortunately, the painting is only known through blurred illustrations in Hsieh Chih-liu's T'ang Wu-tai Sung Yüan ming-chi. This shih-i scroll consists essentially of two paintings illustrating two lines from separate poems by the T'ang poet Tu Fu, with a concluding poem on each painting by its artist. The initial lines seem to have been picked as poetic topics by a relative of Ssu-ma Huai, conceivably a brother or cousin to judge from a tzu or nickname given in a colophon, and the joint scroll may have originally been done for this person. The first line, illustrated by Mi Yu-jen, comes from Tu Fu's "Fifty Rhymes sent to Mr. Chia Chih, Assistant Prefect of Yo-chou, and Mr. Yen Wu, Prefect of Pa-chou," two friends of Tu's who were banished to provincial posts following the An Lu-shan rebellion. A simple translation of this line might be: "Mountains cluster together, constricting a rocky spring." William Hung's translation is: "Or in a mountainous region jammed in among rocks and springs," a read-

ing that emphasizes the main point of the couplet and poem that talent is cramped by situation. Hence the sense of awkwardness created by the crowded mountain forms. Mi Yu-jen's poem on the conclusion of his section, and note that it comes after a final, solitary fisherman, elaborates on the theme of densely packed mountains and a single weeping torrent, and ends by wondering if anyone would understand if this were put into ch'in music, which of course refers to the ability of the noted musician Po Ya to evoke images of mountains and streams for his friend, Chung Tzu-ch'i, a true listener. Mi Yu-jen never attained exceptional rank in office, and, after serving as an instructor in Hui-tsung's revived Institute of Calligraphy for two years, he led a wandering life in unsettled times for at least fifteen years until 1139. Only in 1145 did he receive appropriate office attached to the Han-lin Academy, where he acted as Kao-tsung's chief connoisseur of calligraphy and painting. One might point out here that the rootless trees and murky mists, which his friend Chai Ch'i-nien describes as Mi's subjects, were evidently painted during his wanderings in the early Southern Sung period before he received imperial favor. A painting such as this one is obviously a literary work, where the artist's feelings are suggested by allusions in the accompanying poetry. Thus painted scenery now becomes a mirror reflecting the image of the artist-calligrapher.

Mi's expansion of the stream to a torrent leads on to the following section, a possible response by Ssu-ma Huai. There the topic set is a line from one of Tu Fu's poems on "Rain," evidently still untranslated. In my rendering it reads: "A sobbing of the torrent among the rocks," although other versions might be possible. In any case, the painting is indeed a soundless poem illustrating a picture with sound. Whether or not the total context of Tu Fu's poem is relevant here is an open question. The last couplets in it focus on Tu Fu in his garden, ending with intimations of mortality and a view of the sweeping expanse of a river. Few facts are known about Ssu-ma Huai, except that as a descendant of Ssu-ma Kuang, the leader of the conservative faction, Huai was banned from preparing for an official career during Hui-tsung's reign. Thus he devoted himself to the arts, eventually receiving some recognition for his painting from connoisseurs in Kao-tsung's time. If the

set topic might seem to suggest an unappreciated expenditure of talent at a low level, this impression may also be reinforced by the beginning of Huai's poem, which emphasizes the twistings of a rocky path in the mountains (Mi Yu-jen's theme again) from whence one can be pleased by a glimpse or sound from afar (presumably of rushing water). But the conclusion, "If there was any dwelling here, / It would be the Old Drunkard's pavilion," refers explicitly to Ou-yang Hsiu, who in semi-retirement when a provincial governor took pleasure in the stream near his retreat like a worthy of old. And the ch'an-ch'an sound of this stream could be heard from a path in the hills before one saw the sight, as he wrote in the preface to his poem on the "Old Drunkard's Pavilion." So the sequence ends on an elevated level, elevated by literary allusions and by inferred acceptance of one's own lot in life. The twisted tree battered by the rain is followed by an empty stretch of paper, with the poem eventually standing in for a fisherman. In connection with this empty area, one might note that Ssu-ma Huai also painted Ch'an Buddhist subjects with such titles as "The Transmission of the Lamp," including Ch'an figures done in a Six Dynasties style. Ch'an terminology of course occurs in some of Mi Yu-jen's recorded inscriptions on his own paintings. Thus the empty stretch may possibly have had Ch'an connotations. Another thought forcibly comes to mind when one is confronted with Ssu-ma Huai's strongly rooted yet contorted tree. Does it evoke the criss-crossed, convoluted tree forms that sprang from Su Shih's own innards, according to his friend Mi Fu's appreciation of Su's expressive painting? After all, the connections between the conservative leaders, Ssu-ma Kuang, Ou-yang Hsiu and Su Shih, were very close. Whether or not Ssu-ma Huai's tree harks back to Su Shih's art, it is just this type of link, literary, social or historical, that forms the context within which viewers saw literati painting. This context is necessary for imagery to be read as self-reflexive and in Sung times it only occurs in the works of scholar-officials and their families.

The Mi Yu-jen-Ssu-ma Huai joint handscroll is a rare early example of scholar-artists' painting and poetry done in combination. Similarly the Cleveland "Streams and Mountains without End" may be the only Sung work that presents earlier landscape

styles in a historical sequence. And Kuo Hsi's "Notes on Paintings" is a unique record of a Sung artist's commissions for an imperial patron. These three exceptional cases have been discussed here together in an attempt to focus on a transitional period in painting, when landscape as a subject came to take on something of the flexibility of poetic imagery. In T'ang poetry, landscape elements such as rocks and trees could carry conventional meanings but also have special overtones in reference to important or exemplary figures, to earlier writers' usage, or to the author himself. By late Northern Sung, as we have seen, similar uses of landscape elements in painting begin to come to light.