LANDSCAPE WITHOUT THEORY?
— AN ANALYSIS OF THE METHODS OF THE TRANSMISSION OF
KNOWLEDGE SURROUNDING CHINESE CLASSIC GARDENS

by

Zhen Cao

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Master of Architecture
Graduate Department of Architecture
Carleton University

Copyright © 2004 by Zhen Cao

Library and
Archives Canada

Bibliothèque et
Archives Canada

Published Heritage
Branch

Direction du
Patrimoine de l'édition

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file Votre référence

ISBN: 0-612-99011-7

Our file Notre référence

ISBN: 0-612-99011-7

NOTICE:

The author has granted a non-exclusive license allowing Library and Archives Canada to reproduce, publish, archive, preserve, conserve, communicate to the public by telecommunication or on the Internet, loan, distribute and sell theses worldwide, for commercial or non-commercial purposes, in microform, paper, electronic and/or any other formats.

The author retains copyright ownership and moral rights in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

AVIS:

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque et Archives Canada de reproduire, publier, archiver, sauvegarder, conserver, transmettre au public par télécommunication ou par l'Internet, prêter, distribuer et vendre des thèses partout dans le monde, à des fins commerciales ou autres, sur support microforme, papier, électronique et/ou autres formats.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur et des droits moraux qui protègent cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

In compliance with the Canadian Privacy Act some supporting forms may have been removed from this thesis.

Conformément à la loi canadienne sur la protection de la vie privée, quelques formulaires secondaires ont été enlevés de cette thèse.

While these forms may be included in the document page count, their removal does not represent any loss of content from the thesis.

Bien que ces formulaires aient inclus dans la pagination, il n'y aura aucun contenu manquant.

Canada

Abstract

Landscape Without Theory?

— An Analysis of the Methods of the Transmission of Knowledge Surrounding Chinese
Classic Gardens

Zhen Cao

Master of Architecture

Graduate Department of Architecture

Carleton University

2004

In the long history of Chinese classic garden design, there is only one book *Yuan Ye*, first published in 1634, extant today that addresses the topic. This is striking given that in other Chinese scholarly artistic fields such as poetry, calligraphy and painting theoretical writings are plentiful. This thesis attempts to explain this curious omission. Without written reference books how did the Chinese tradition of garden design persist for 3000 years? This thesis examines the role that Chinese traditional painting and painting theories played in communicating the knowledge of the garden. In doing so, this thesis argues that relationships between the natural world and humanity, the attitudes towards philosophy, literature and aesthetics that existed within Chinese gardens, were adapted from discoveries made and recorded in Chinese painting.

This thesis argues that Chinese painting, with its history as old as Chinese garden design, was the vehicle through which garden knowledge was transmitted. In this, one can understand the Chinese saying that “To be a good garden designer, one must first become a good painter.”

Acknowledgements

This thesis is the result of my deep love of Chinese classic gardens that started more than nine years ago in my home country, China, and that does not end there. I would like to thank Assistant Professor Paul Kariouk, my thesis supervisor. While I was his TA for almost two years, Assistant Professor Paul helped me overcome many difficulties in my transition from studies in China to studies in North America. I have no doubt that without his understanding this thesis project would have not been possible. As well, when he learned about my interest in landscape, he recommended that I audit his lectures on landscape theories. It was in his classes that I was inspired to reinterpret the relationship between Chinese painting and the classic Chinese garden. Later, during the long journey of my research, his *insight*, *encouragement* and *patience* were most valuable. Many discussions with him along with the interesting readings and analyses on the issues of landscape aided my search for objective criticism regarding my topic and helped enormously to bring this thesis to its end.

Also, I am indebted to other professors: Associate Professor Stephen Fai, Dr. Mitchell Frank (Art History Department), Dr. Kelly Crossman (Art History Department), Associate Professor Ben Gianni, Dr. Paula Durham (my editor). All of them provided knowledge and advice that I required through the different stages of my development. Special thanks to the School of Architecture, which creates an environment in which so much could be learned about so many things in just three years, along with the excellent opportunity to make many valuable friends.

Back in China, my family has been a tremendous support, not only psychologically but also in actions. My parents-in-law went to the National Library many times to find and photocopy the materials for me. My own parents went to several book stores just for one book that I needed so much. Without these materials I wouldn't have known where to start my research.

Finally I would like to thank to my husband for his understanding and support. He

helped me a lot with computer issues, especially his computer expertise in computer typesetting.

Preface

First of all, two concerns are addressed here in order to keep the entire paper consistent. They are often raised when someone studies the topics of Chinese history and culture. One is the inconsistency of Chinese chronology, and the other is the difference of two Chinese Phonetic Alphabet systems.

It is often found that the chronology of each Chinese history book is slightly different. It is hard to say which one is more accurate. One reason is that it is sometimes debatable when to define the beginning and the ending of some dynasties. Moreover, many existing historical records contradict each other. Therefore, in order to keep the chronology consistently in my thesis, I chose to use the chronological timetable published in *Ci Hai*, since it is an authoritative Chinese encyclopedic dictionary in the contemporary academic field of Chinese History. See Appendix A, Chinese Chronology.

As for the phonetic systems, there are two that exist at present. One is the Chinese Pinyin system. Currently, this is the international standard of the Chinese phonetic system. The other system is Wade-Giles, sometimes abbreviated as Wade, a Romanization (phonetic notation and transliteration) system for the Mandarin Chinese dialect of the Chinese language. It is developed from a system produced by Thomas Wade¹ in the English-speaking world and has been used for most of the 20th century.² The mixed uses of these two systems cause a lot of confusion in documents. In this paper, only the first

¹Sir Thomas Francis Wade (1818–1895 CE) was a London-born British diplomat and Sinologist linguist who invented what is to become the Wade-Giles Romanization for Mandarin Chinese.

²Information coming from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wade-Giles>

system shall be used. All the occurrences of the spelling of the Wade system shall be translated into the Pinyin system and it will be mentioned in the footnotes. For example, *Lao Tzŭ* (Wade system) shall be translated into *Lao Zi* (Pinyin system). Both refer to one person named 老子, an ancient Chinese philosopher. For further information see Appendix C, Chinese Pinyin and Wade.

In addition, this thesis uses the designations “BCE” and “CE”, abbreviations for “before the Common Era” and “Common Era”. In captions, *circa* (“about” or “approximately”) is used with dates and abbreviated to “c. ”. An illustration is called a “figure”, or “fig. ”. Thus, fig. 3.10 is the tenth numbered illustration in Chapter 3. Direct quotation and literal translation will be made when the material refers to the ideas or words of ancient Chinese philosophers, scholars or painters. If the translation used, is made by others, the source will be clearly indicated in footnotes. Otherwise, the translation is done by myself.

Contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	One Book	6
1.2	Two Questions	12
2	The World of Nature and Humanity	14
2.1	The Union of Heaven and Human	15
2.2	The Birth of Landscape Painting	17
2.3	Figures in Landscape Painting	22
2.3.1	Humans—Insiders in the Natural World	22
2.3.2	Harmony between Human Figures and Nature	23
2.4	Constructions in Landscape Painting	29
2.4.1	Constructions—Inseparable Parts of the Natural World	29
2.4.2	Harmony between Constructions and Nature	31
3	Transmitter of Spirit	36
3.1	Early Chinese Garden—A Mythical Paradise	38
3.1.1	Tais	39
3.1.2	One Lake with Three Mountains	39
3.1.3	Plants and Animals	41
3.2	The Metaphor Behind Literati Painting	44
3.2.1	Metaphor of Mountain and Water	44

3.2.2	Metaphor of Plant and Animal	58
3.3	The Poem On Literati Painting	73
3.3.1	The Appearance of Poem in Chinese Painting	74
3.3.2	Poem from Painting to Garden	78
4	Aesthetic Rules	85
4.1	Aesthetics of Yin and Yang	86
4.1.1	Philosophical Root	86
4.1.2	Landscape Painting—Perfect Unification of Yin and Yang	87
4.1.3	Dry Rock Garden—An Impossible Mission for the Chinese	88
4.2	Aesthetics of Idealism	90
4.2.1	Idealism in Chinese Landscape Painting	91
4.2.2	Idealism Guided Chinese Gardening	96
4.3	Imagination Aesthetics	98
4.3.1	An Inborn Artistic Pursuit of Landscape Painting	98
4.3.2	Use Incompleteness to Trigger Imagination	100
4.3.3	Imagination Aesthetics in the Chinese Garden	106
4.4	Monochrome Aesthetics	111
4.4.1	Philosophical Background	112
4.4.2	Monochrome Landscape Painting	115
4.4.3	Chinese Scholar Garden	117
5	Conclusion	122
A	Chinese Chronology	127
B	Charts of Development	130
C	Chinese Pinyin and Wade	132

List of Figures

2.1	Gu Kaizhi. Section of the Nymph of the Luo River	18
2.2	Gu Kaizhi. The Nymph of the Luo River (details)	19
2.3	Jing Hao. Mountain Lu	20
2.4	Guo Xi. Early Spring	24
2.5	Liu Songnian. Painting of Arhat	25
2.6	Ma Yuan. Landscape in Wind and Rain	27
2.7	Gardens viewed from within confines	28
2.8	Yao Tingmei. Fishing in A River in the Winter Time	31
2.9	Li Cheng. Buddhist Temple in the Mountains after Rain	32
3.1	Yi He Yuan (The Summer Palace), Beijing, China	40
3.2	Bei Hai Garden (The Winter Palace), Beijing, China	42
3.3	Bei Hai Garden (The Winter Palace), Beijing, China	43
3.4	Wang Wei. Section of Wang Chuan Villa (copy)	52
3.5	Li Tang. Painting of Collecting Wild Vegetable	54
3.6	Garden of Blue Wave Pavilion, Suzhou, China	55
3.7	Shen Zhou. Towering Mountain Lu	56
3.8	Humble Administrator's Garden, Suzhou, China	58
3.9	Two Paintings of Pine Tree	60
3.10	Jie Tai Temple Garden, Beijing, China	61
3.11	Wen Tong. Monochrome Bamboo Tree	62

3.12	Ge Garden, Yangzhou, China	63
3.13	Wang Mian. Monochrome Plum	64
3.14	Zheng Sixiao. Section of Monochrome Orchid	65
3.15	Xu Wei. Chrysanthemum	67
3.16	Chen Hongshou. Section of Lotus and Chinese Ducks	68
3.17	Humble Administrator's Garden, Suzhou, China	69
3.18	Garden of Gong Wang Fu, Beijing, China	71
3.19	A Temple Garden, Hangzhou, China	73
3.20	Huang Gongwang. Section of Living in the Fu Chun Mountain	74
3.21	Zheng Banqiao. Bamboo Trees in the Wind	77
3.22	Garden of Blue Wave Pavilion, Suzhou, China	81
3.23	Garden of Blue Wave Pavilion, Suzhou, China	82
4.1	Garden of Wen Lan Ge, Hangzhou, China	89
4.2	Dry Rock Garden, Ryoan-ji, Japan	90
4.3	Shen Xiyou and others. The Mustard Seed Garden Manual of Painting .	92
4.4	Shen Xiyou and others. The Mustard Seed Garden Manual of Painting .	93
4.5	Shen Xiyou and others. The Mustard Seed Garden Manual of Painting .	95
4.6	Li Tang. Section of Recluse as a Fishermen nearby A Clear River	101
4.7	Ma Yuan. Scholar Viewing A Waterfall	102
4.8	Xia Gui. Talking in A Snow Covered House	103
4.9	Yi He Yuan (The Summer Palace), Beijing, China	108
4.10	Lingering Garden, Suzhou, China	109
4.11	Lingering Garden, Suzhou, China	109
4.12	The Master of Nets Garden, Suzhou, China	110
4.13	Colorful Paintings on Containers in Pre-Qin	112
4.14	Humble Administrator's Garden, Suzhou, China	113
4.15	Quiet Heart Garden, Beijing, China	114

4.16	Wang Wei. Section of River Scene Just after the Snow	115
4.17	Li Zhaodao. Emperor Ming Huang's Journey to Shu	116
4.18	Yi He Yuan (The Summer Palace), Beijing, China	118
4.19	Lingering Garden, Suzhou, China	119
5.1	Shen Xiyu and others. The Mustard Seed Garden Manual of Painting .	125
B.1	Charts Of Development	131

Chapter 1

Introduction

The beginning of Chinese classic garden history can be traced back to the time when Emperor Zhòu, the last king of the Shang Dynasty (16th–11th BCE), constructed his two gardens. “*Lu Tai*” was located in today’s Henan province; the other, “*Sha Qiu Yuan Tai*”, was in today’s Hebei province.¹ These gardens initiated a three thousand year garden tradition that ended with the overturn of the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911 CE), the last feudal dynasty in Chinese history.²

Assisted by the contemporary study of Chinese philology, we can detect the Chinese gardens’ early appearance and function. The current Chinese characters for “gardens” are *You*(囿) or *Yuan*(園). They originated from a character from the *Jia Gu Wen*,³(囿),

¹The reason why the history of the Chinese garden begins from these two gardens is that they are the earliest garden names that appear in Chinese written history at present.

²Why does the history of the Chinese garden end at this time? It was the result of the invasions by western countries in the 19th century and early 20th century: the Opium War in 1840 with England, the 2nd Opium War in 1856 with England and France, the Jia-Wu War in 1894 with Japan, and the Eight Foreign Allies War in 1900. These invasions gradually pushed China into a half-feudal and half-capitalist society. Continuous wars not only destroyed many Chinese classic gardens, but also restrained garden construction activities severely. Since then, Chinese gardens had not developed until the People’s Republic of China was established in 1949. Moreover, although garden activities began after 1949, they were mainly focused on gardens’ restoration and rebuilding. Therefore, the end of Chinese classic garden history is always defined with the end of the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911 CE) in the contemporary research field of Chinese gardens.

³*Jia Gu Wen* (Oracle Bone Inscription) is the earliest Chinese writing date in the late Shang Dynasty (c. 1200 BCE). Ancient Chinese divines used these bones or tortoise shells to predict unknown events, then recorded their conclusions on them. Modern Chinese is evolved from the *Jia Gu Wen*.

which meant “a place enclosed by a wall with verdant trees and grass inside.” Later, in an ancient Chinese dictionary entitled *Shuo Wen Jie Zi*,⁴ *You*(囿) was clearly defined as “an enclosure in a natural forest to conserve birds and beasts and to be used as a hunting ground by kings.” [1, p.5] It is from this earliest prototype that the Chinese classic garden began its long journey.

Ever since the appearance of these two gardens, a succession of garden building activities has continued in China. Generally, most of the Chinese classic gardens can be categorized into three types according to their different ownership: the imperial garden, the temple garden and the private garden (scholar garden). **The imperial garden** was the first garden type that appeared in Chinese garden history. This kind of garden was constructed under the commissions of emperors and could only be used by royal families, who were the most influential class in the old society. It was always located in a scenic area and grand in scale.⁵ But the private garden and the temple garden didn't come into being until the Wei-Jin Period (220–420 CE). **The private garden** (the scholar⁶ garden) was always built by court-officials. Normally, they would build their urban-based gardens in their native city in their late fifties after they retired.[4, p.249] At this age, they had earned enough money to build their desired garden to retreat from the material world for the rest of their lives. It should be noted that many famous scholar gardens, celebrated in the texts, were designed by the scholar himself. Since the garden was urban-based, its size was not big. This kind of garden was only used by his family or visited by his close

⁴*Shuo Wen Jie Zi* or (*Shuo Wen*) This is the first dictionary in Chinese history written by Xu Zhen in the 2nd century CE. This dictionary collected 9,353 characters and another 1,163 character mutations.

⁵For particular festivals and/ or with the permission of the emperor, some non-royals, such as officials and foreign ambassadors, were able to enter the imperial gardens.

⁶Scholars, in traditional China, were men who had received a classical instruction that permitted them to sit for examinations that led to posts in the civil service. They were ‘responsible, evaluated at regular intervals, promoted to higher rank or demoted, assigned out of their home province and mandatorily transferred every two or three years.’[4, p.248] In addition, the civil service was limited to the male. The female was forbidden to participate in any political affairs in traditional China. As women, they had to stay at home and take care of the family. This tradition didn't disappear until the end of the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911 CE).

friends.⁷ **The temple garden**⁸ was constructed by monks, another educated class in traditional China. There were two groups of monks in old China, who still exist today. One was Daoist, whose religion was Daoism; the other was Buddhist, whose religion was Buddhism. Both of these groups preferred to build their temple gardens in scenic areas, such as in mountainous or lakeside regions. There is an old saying in China that “famous mountains were always occupied by monks since ancient times”.⁹ The temple garden was the living and religious place for monks. It was also the only public garden in traditional China where ordinary people could visit at any time. For these ordinary people, appreciation of the beauty of the garden was secondary to *praying*, which was their main and real purpose for coming to the temple garden. Whether it was an imperial garden or a private garden, the gardens were built for a very small group of people. Even the temple garden was principally built for monks to contemplate rather than for the public. The monks believed that ordinary people did not know how to appreciate it since ordinary people saw the temple garden as a place of prayer only with the gardens themselves being unimportant. In addition, at the very beginning, these three garden styles were very different from each other. With the passage of time, the imperial garden was gradually influenced by both the scholar garden and the temple garden and it shared more and more aesthetics with them by the end of the classical garden period. On the

⁷There are also historical records that demonstrate that in some cases private gardens would open to the public for certain festivals.

⁸The difference between the scholar garden and the temple garden is not so apparent, because the designers of these two types of gardens were well-educated persons in traditional China. Since the temple garden was always constructed in a scenic area, it paid more attention to architectural aspects in its gardening. The scholar garden, which was always urban-based, focused on the natural aspects. Therefore, piling artificial mountains and arranging water courses were the core tasks of the scholar garden's design. The temple garden's architectural color system was more colorful than that of the scholar garden; the color of its walls was always solid yellow. Except for these two aspects, the temple garden shared almost the same aesthetics as the scholar garden in the expression of the relationship between humanity and the natural world.

⁹Today many mountains are especially famous for their Buddhist or Daoist temples. For example, Mount Emei in Sichuan Province, Mount Wutai in Shanxi Province, Mount Putuo in Zhejiang Province and Mount Jiuhua in Anhui Province are the “Four Great Buddhism Mountains” in China. Mount Wudang in Hubei Province, Mount Longhu in Jiangxi Province, Mount Qingcheng in Sichuan Province and Mount Qiyun in Anhui Province are the “Four Great Daoism Mountains” in China.

whole, any mature Chinese garden, no matter if it was a scholar garden, temple garden or imperial garden, was full of metaphors and meanings behind the architecture and landscape. Without enough knowledge, it was difficult for uneducated people to appreciate them. “It is not a garden built as a playground for a multitude of people... It is not a place for recreation. It is essentially for contemplation and solitude.” [8, p.24] Whereas this thesis applies to all three garden types, it is more applicable to the scholar garden.

During their three thousand year history, numerous Chinese classic gardens were constructed, but only a small fraction of these gardens are extant today. Because all Chinese gardens had the same timber structure, it was difficult for them to survive during wars, fires and other social or natural disasters. Today, those disappeared gardens are only recorded in words, poems, articles and books.¹⁰ For example, in his *Luo Yang Jia Lan Ji* (A Record of the Temples of Luoyang), Yang Xuanzhi¹¹ recounted as many as 91 temple gardens in Luoyang, the former capital city of Northern Wei (386–534 CE). In addition, traditional Chinese scholars preferred to compose essays and poems to express their love of the gardens, which they had constructed for themselves or had visited. For example, Bai Juyi¹² described his private garden in the Mountain Lu in his famous essay *A Record of Hatched Residence in Mountain Lu*. Sima Guang¹³ wrote *The Garden of Solitary Delight* to indicate the special happiness he had when he stayed at his own garden. Mao Yuanyi¹⁴ composed an essay, *A Record of Ying Garden*, to praise

¹⁰Some gardens are also recorded in paintings.

¹¹Yang Xuanzhi lived during three short Chinese dynasties: Northern Wei (386–534 CE), Eastern Wei (534–550 CE) and Northern Qi (550–577 CE). When he witnessed that Luoyang, the former capital city of Northern Wei was turned into debris by the wars in 547 CE, Yang wrote a book *Luo Yang Jia Lan Ji* in order to remind later generations of this once prosperous city. In this book, he focused on recounting the splendid temple gardens of Luoyang.

¹²Bai Juyi (772–846 CE) was a famous poet of the Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE).

¹³Sima Guang (1019–1086 CE) was a renowned historian and statesman from the Northern Song Dynasty (960–1127 CE). He is remembered for his most celebrated work, *Zi Zhi Tong Jian* (Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government), which is known to be the first Chinese history text of annual chronology.

¹⁴Mao Yuanyi (1594–1644? CE) was a talented literati at the end of the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644 CE). He once visited the famous Garden of Ying owned by his friend Zheng Yuanxun. The Garden of Ying was designed by Ji Cheng. Later, after Ji Cheng wrote his book *Yuan Ye*, Zheng Yuanxun wrote the preface for this book.

its beautiful scenes after he visited the Garden of Ying. All of these records confirm that the Chinese gardening tradition is the longest garden history in the world.

Although these written materials are priceless in informing us about each garden's name, location, size, date of construction, owner, or even its appearance, they are insufficient for us to study the design theory of Chinese garden art. The extant sources merely provide isolated information from different authors in different dynasties for different purposes. There is no systematic explanation or conclusion or even argument on how to build a garden. What kind of designing strategies should be used? Why did people build gardens? What did they see in these gardens? There was no comparison between gardens from different periods to demonstrate which garden was more sophisticated or spiritual than the others. There was no criterion ever laid down that regulated or graded the numerous gardens in Chinese history.

What is a “design theory” in Chinese garden art context? It is easy to explain when we compare Chinese garden art with Chinese painting. As early as the Wei-Jin Period (220–420 CE), the Chinese had already begun to write articles on how to paint a landscape. For example, there are Gu Kaizhi's “Notes for A Landscape” (4th century CE) and Zong Bing's “The Enjoyment of Painting—How to see mountains in terms of landscape perspective” (5th century CE). For the theory of painting as metaphor, there is Cao Zhi's “Inspiring Portraits” (3rd century CE). In the Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE), in addition to many theoretical painting articles, the first theoretical book on painting was formally published in 847 CE— *A Record of Famous Paintings of Past Dynasties* by Zhang Yanyuan¹⁵ (815–875 CE). This book is divided into ten sections. Its topics span from “The Origin of Painting”,¹⁶ “The List of Famous Painters and Their Works

¹⁵Zhang Yanyuan (815–875 CE) was a famous painting critic of the Tang Dynasty. As he was born to a noble family, Zhang had the rare chance to look at many priceless ancient paintings of his time. He wrote a book to evaluate all the paintings that he had encountered. The book was named *Li Dai Ming Hua Ji* (A Record of Famous Paintings of Past Dynasties).

¹⁶This topic at the beginning of this book, is very philosophical. Zhang said, “Painting completes culture, helps human relations, and explores the mysteries of the universe. Its value is equal to that of the Six Classics and, like the rotation of the seasons, stems from nature; it is not something handed

in Different Dynasties”, “On the Techniques”, “On Grading Paintings”, “On Pricing and Appraisal”, to “On Verifying, Collecting, Purchasing and Enjoying Paintings” and many other aspects regarding Chinese paintings. This book is regarded as a milestone in Chinese painting theory studies, because it initiated a tradition of painting research that emphasized both facts and opinions. Since then, theoretical books on painting flourished along with the development of painting itself. As for the Chinese garden, the lack of garden art theory on garden history did not end until the end of the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644 CE).

It was not until 1634 CE that the first book *Yuan Ye* written by Ji Cheng,¹⁷ was published in China. This is the first book in recorded human history which focuses on garden design.

1.1 One Book

For unknown reasons, *Yuan Ye* was lost soon after it was first published. But fortunately, a copy had reached far into Japan. In the early 20th century, Chen Zhi (1899–1989 CE), a modern Chinese theorist of gardening, brought it back to China and even translated it into the modern Chinese idiom (*Baihuawen*).¹⁸ *Yuan Ye* is honored as the oldest and the most important gardening book in the world by Japanese scholars of gardening. Today, it shares the same reputation in the specialized area of Chinese garden history. Jin Xuezhi,¹⁹ a famous contemporary scholar of Chinese gardening, holds the *Yuan Ye*

down by tradition.” [10, p.43–44].

¹⁷Ji Cheng (1582–? CE) was one of the most talented garden designers in Chinese garden history. He was born in the final period of the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644 CE) in a small southern city named Tong Li. In his early years, he was distinguished as a great painter. Later he travelled to many places and began to design some famous gardens, such as the Garden of Ying, the Garden of Wu, and the Garden of Dong Di. They were all masterpieces in Chinese history. Unfortunately, all of them have been destroyed and only keep their high reputation in words and memory. During his last period, Ji Cheng decided to write a book about the art of the garden to conclude his own experience in designing and to guide his fellows. This book is named as *Yuan Ye*.

¹⁸Chen Zhi’s book is named *Yuan Ye Zhu Shi (Annotations of Yuan Ye)*. [2]

¹⁹In 1990, Jin Xuezhi published a book named *Zhong Guo Yuan Lin Mei Xue (The Aesthetics of Chinese Classic Gardens)*. [6]

in high regard. He believes that “it is a treatise which has systematically summarized the many aesthetic rules and construction experiences of gardening of that time. Its appearance is defined as a mark of the full maturity of the Chinese garden.” [6, p.48]

However, recent studies by the contemporary garden scholar Stanislaus Fung²⁰ began to reevaluate and question the true value of *Yuan Ye*, because he found that *Yuan Ye*, in fact, had never played the crucial role in Chinese garden design that was originally thought. Fung believes that, “*Yuan Ye* had an obscure existence after its appearance in the final decade of the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644 CE). It was not mentioned in any of the bibliographies and catalogues that have survived from seventeenth-century China. It was not among the works collected by the eighteenth-century editors of the *Siku quanshu* (The Imperial Library) nor by editors of various collectanea of the Qing Period (1644–1911 CE).” [4, p.213]

No matter how we evaluate the book *Yuan Ye* today, it is really a curious fact that except for *Yuan Ye*, there is no other theoretical book about gardening that has been published throughout Chinese history. This situation did not change until the last century. Both Chinese and Western scholars participated in this task of figuring out the history of the development of the Chinese classic garden. There were three sources for them to start from. Firstly, there were a few extant gardens, mostly constructed during the Ming (1368–1644 CE) and the Qing (1644–1911 CE) Dynasties. Secondly, some garden images existed in stones and paintings, which are still extant. Thirdly, those numerous literary writings, still extant, were the main source for those modern scholars. Because these writings are so numerous scholars could pick up the key words from those emotional poems and essays, conjure up the appearance of gardens and conclude their characteristics in different dynasties with an analysis of their contemporary social, religious and economic

²⁰Stanislaus Fung is a contemporary Western scholar specializing in the Chinese classic garden. He has published several academic articles in some international journals. For example, his “The Interdisciplinary Prospects of Reading *Yuan Ye*” was published in *Studies in the History of Garden & Designed Landscapes*[4] in 1998.

context. Therefore, since the last century, modern scholarship on the Chinese classic garden is plentiful not only in China but also in the West. According to their different aims and arguments, those works can be divided into three groups.²¹ The first group is the most general introductory works on the Chinese classic garden. Authors from various disciplines argue that “the arts were part of a unitary theorizing mode from which all the other nonartistic activities also drew their intellectual orientations.” [4, p.216] Examples are: Zhou Wei-quan’s *Zhong Guo Go Dian Yuan Lin Shi* (The History of Chinese Classic Gardens) (1990); Dorothy Graham’s *Chinese Gardens: Gardens of the Contemporary Scene—An account of their design and symbolism* (1938); Maggie Keswick’s *The Chinese Garden—History, Art & Architecture* (1978); Edwin T. Morris’s *The Gardens of China: History, Art and Meanings* (1983); and Siren’s *Gardens of China* (1949). The second group “adheres to specific ‘ways of knowing’ that correspond to their particular disciplinary affiliation”. For instance, Yang Hongxun²² and Peng Yigang²³ have emphasized the spatial analysis of Chinese gardens. [4, p.216] Liu Dunzhen,²⁴ Chen Congzhou²⁵ and others have documented Chinese gardens in accordance with modern principles of orthogonal drawings. The third group “highlights the difficulties in situating traditional Chinese gardens in relation to contemporary discussions in architecture and landscape architecture.” [4, p.217] For example, Bor-Shuenn Chiou’s paper has “a critical attitude towards a technicist understanding of architecture... He suggests that Chinese geomancy is a ‘theory’ generally relevant to the understanding of Chinese architecture.” [4, p.217] Among these dozens of authors, most of them mention the significance of *Yuan Ye*, but

²¹Here, I borrow Stanislaus Fung’s paradigm for dividing the studies of the Chinese classic gardens. [4, p.216] I find it is very helpful for us to know what modern scholarship on the Chinese classic garden art has accomplished. For complete information, see Stanislaus Fung’s paper “The Interdisciplinary prospects of reading *Yuan Ye*” [4, p.416–418]. Here I just give brief information about his research on this aspect.

²²Yang Hongxun, “Jiangnan gudian yuanlin yishu gailun”, *Jianzhu Lishi Yu Lilun*, 2 (1981), pp.141–161; 3–4 (1982–83): 1985–241.

²³Peng Yigang, *Zhongguo Gudian Yuanlin Fenxi*. Beijing: Zhongguo Jianzhu Gongye Chubanshe, 1986.

²⁴Liu Dunzhen. *Suzhou Gudian Yuanlin*. Zhongguo Jianzhu Gongye Chubanshe, Beijing, 1979.

²⁵Chen Congzhou. *Yangzhou Yuanlin*. Joint Publishing Co., Hong Kong, 1983.

they don't further question themselves why this is the only written historical source for the Chinese garden art, when other artistic forms such as poetry, painting, and calligraphy, have repeatedly been written about in China. Only a couple of authors suggest some explanations for this curious omission in their works. An example is Dorothy Graham, a Western pioneer scholar on the Chinese classic garden.²⁶ In addition, with another important discovery that *Yuan Ye* itself was mysteriously lost in China soon after its appearance, modern garden scholar Stanislaus Fung is indeed questioning the "significant" status of *Yuan Ye* in Chinese garden history. If we based ourselves on his theory, we would have to conclude that the Chinese classic garden art is really a "no-theory" garden art history regardless of the existence of this one theoretical garden art book.

Now, all these facts suggest to us the "reality" that Chinese literati did feel reluctant to discuss the art of the garden. Instead of being a new issue in the 21st century, this reluctance was noticed and considered by some scholars throughout Chinese history. For example, in the preface of *Yuan Ye* written by Zheng Yuanxun (1603–1645 CE), one of Ji Cheng's contemporaries, Zhang questioned, "The various arts of the ancient times have all been handed down in writing, so why has the art of designing gardens alone not had a written tradition?" [5, p.29] Generally, in the present academic climate, this question can be answered by an analysis of the Chinese philosophical, cultural and social setting.

Firstly, in the philosophical field, many Chinese traditional literati shared the same opinion as Lao Zi,²⁷ the legendary founder of Daoism. In the first teaching of his *Dao De Jing*,²⁸ Lao Zi had already indicated his viewpoint on books. He said that, "The Dao that can be told is not the eternal Dao." Zhuang Zi (c. 369–286 BCE), an outstanding philosophical successor of Lao Zi, further explained this idea through a short fable. This story tells of an interesting discussion between a duke and his wheelwright.

²⁶I will mention her explanation in her book *Chinese Gardens*, first published in 1938, later in this chapter.

²⁷Lao Zi was an ancient Chinese philosopher, who lived around the later years of the Spring and Autumn Period (770–476 BCE).

²⁸Dao means the way, natural law; De means virtue.

One day, Duke Huan of Qi was reading a book at the upper end of the hall; the wheelwright was making a wheel at the lower end. Putting aside his mallet and chisel,

"What are you reading?" the wheelwright asked the Duke.

"One that records the words of the Sages." the Duke answered.

"Are those Sages still alive?" the wheelwright asked.

"Oh, no. They are dead." said the Duke.

"Your majesty, in that case, what you are reading can be nothing but the lees and scum of bygone men." the wheelwright said.

"How dare you, a wheelwright, find fault with the book I am reading? If you can explain your statement, I will let it pass. If not, you shall die." The Duke was very angry.

"I look at the matter in this way; when I am making a wheel, if my stroke is too slow, then it bites deep but is not steady; if my stroke is too fast, then it is steady, but does not go deep. The right pace, neither slow nor fast, cannot get into the hand unless it comes from the heart. It is a thing that cannot be put into words; there is an art in it that I cannot explain to my son. That is why it is impossible for me to let him take over my work, and here I am at the age of seventy, still making wheels. In my opinion it must have been the same with the men of old. All that was worth handing on, died with them; the rest, they put into their books. That is why I said that what you were reading was the lees and scum of bygone men," the wheelwright replied. ²⁹

To some degree, this fable well explains why Chinese traditional literati disliked writing books on the art of gardening. They didn't believe that a book was the best way to transmit knowledge and thought, especially about the essence of life. They deemed that gardening, as a complex art form, was unspeakable like an image in a mirror or still water, which could be viewed and felt, but was impossible either to touch or to speak of. For those scholars and garden designers, they believed that there were somethings that could only be understood by one's heart alone; the essence of reality could not be transmitted by words in books.

It is easier to explain this reticent attitude in the light of Chinese culture. When the art of gardening entered its mature period in China, a garden was not only seen as a physical environment including buildings, water and hill, flower and tree, but was

²⁹Translated by Arthur Waley. *Three Ways of Thought in Ancient China*. George Allen & Unwin Ltd, London, 1969. p. 14. [14].

also seen as a psychological and spiritual place. Many meanings and symbols had been transferred into the simple earth and plant matter. In the end, the layout of a garden was conceded to be a matter of inspiration, and furthermore, the whole garden itself became an expression of the individual personality of the designer and owner.[3, p.13] So writing a theory book on classic Chinese gardening was regarded as too difficult because garden design was too complex and subjective to completely transmit.

Thirdly, Chinese literati looked down on craftsmen because of the huge difference between their social status in traditional China. At that time, there was a common prejudice that every skill was trivial when compared with reading and calligraphy.³⁰ Therefore, scholars preferred to write books on poetry, calligraphy and painting rather than gardening, especially since it was difficult to avoid issues of craftsmanship when discussing the art of the garden.[3, p.13] In addition, this could also help us to understand why *Yuan Ye* had an obscure existence after its appearance in China. When opening this book, one finds that it is very short, only around 10,000 words without the preface. It mentions little on garden history. On the contrary, it includes a lot of patterns, such as the shutters (45 patterns), the balustrades (100 patterns), the doorways (23 patterns), and the paving of ground (15 patterns). From the viewpoint of traditional scholars, this book was much more of an instruction manual for craftsmen to show them how to construct a garden rather than a serious academic, theoretical treatise on the art of gardening.

Therefore, these three conditions become the most likely and reasonable explanations that make clear general phrases such as “no fixed rules” or “un-transmittable” that appeared here and there whenever traditional Chinese scholars discussed the topic of gardening or their uncommonly reluctant attitude to avoid writing about this art since the Chinese first began writing about their gardens over three thousand years ago.

³⁰In the Chinese traditional literati field, poetry, calligraphy and painting were regarded as *San Jue* (The Three Perfections).

1.2 Two Questions

The following two questions arise:

1. Are these three explanations (first, books were not adequate to transmit the essential; second, Chinese garden art itself was too complex to write into books; third, traditional Chinese scholars disdained to compose articles about an art which couldn't avoid discussing craftsmanship.) though persuasive, really sufficient to explain this curious omission of Chinese garden art, the only Chinese scholarly artistic form, from written Chinese art history?
2. Without written reference books beyond the *Yuan Ye* (It was soon lost in China after it was first published.), how did the Chinese tradition of garden design persist for 3000 years?

This thesis is about to examine the role that Chinese traditional painting and painting theories played in communicating the knowledge of the garden. To this end the thesis is divided into three chapters. **Chapter Two** discusses the relationships between “the world of nature” and “humanity” on the stage of Chinese landscape painting. How did Chinese paintings and painting theories interpret the Chinese philosophy that examines “the union of heaven and human?” and how did the artists transform this philosophy into a visual artistic form? This analysis is meant to improve our understanding of the different roles of human beings, human-made constructions, and natural settings in a Chinese classic garden and to explain the interrelationship between them. **Chapter Three** deals with the role of Chinese painting and Chinese literature as it effected Chinese gardens. It examines how Chinese painting helped to transfer philosophical, lyrical or emotional words into a visual form, and assisted the expression of lofty human spirituality in earthly and plant forms. By understanding this, we might understand that although the Chinese classic garden appeared to be a quiet artistic form (without written reference books),

in fact, it was the strongest reverberation of the inner world of the garden designer or owner in the real physical world. As any great poem did, a successful Chinese classic garden could also express a multitude of meanings and delicate human emotions. **Chapter Four** focuses on painting itself. It analyzes several aesthetic characteristics of Chinese painting, such as “The Beauty of Yin and Yang”, “Aesthetics of Idealism”, “Imagination Aesthetics” and “Monochrome Aesthetics”. From discovering the philosophical and religious roots to comprehending the corresponding influences on the appearance of Chinese garden, we find that the principles and codes used and embedded in Chinese painting were exactly the same as those employed in Chinese gardening. The chapter endeavors to prove that Chinese classic garden art was a three-dimensional extension of the pictorial design.

In pursuing the aforementioned, this thesis argues that the relationships between the world of nature and humanity, and the attitudes towards religions, literature and aesthetics that were reflected in Chinese gardens, were adapted from discoveries made and recorded in Chinese painting. It argues that Chinese painting with its history as old as Chinese garden design, was the vehicle through which garden knowledge was inadvertently transmitted. In this, one can understand the Chinese saying that “To be a good garden designer, one must first become a good painter”.

Chapter 2

The World of Nature and Humanity

The union of heaven and human
—— 天人合一

For any art form, no matter whether it is painting or garden design, there must be some grounding principles. This chapter tries to make clear that “the union of heaven and human” is the common theoretical foundation of classical Chinese landscape painting and gardening.

This chapter first explains that the essence of “the union of heaven and human” is found in the study of the interaction of the natural world and humanity. It believes that human behavior must conform with the principle of nature. Human beings, merely as a part of nature, must live harmoniously with the physical world. Therefore, any activities against nature are eventually harmful to the human beings.

After the introduction of the theory, we turn to the artistic world and show how this theory was visualized in the landscape painting, and how this visualization also contributed to garden design.

2.1 The Union of Heaven and Human

The origin of this theory can be traced back to *Yi Jing* (Book of Changes) of the Zhou Dynasty (1066–221 BCE), which is the earliest Chinese classic text. It says that, “We, human beings, share the morals with heaven and earth, share the brightness with the sun and moon, share the order with the four seasons, share the good and evil with the god.”

In the Qin (221–206 BCE) and the Han (206 BCE–220 CE) Dynasties, this theory further developed into the theory of Wuxing. It claims that the physical world consisted of five essential elements—gold, wood, water, fire and earth. It also believes that human behavior could be predicted by natural phenomenon, and vice versa. For example, the observation of a comet might imply a coming world disaster. An earthquake might predict an overturn of a dynasty. Therefore, human beings are integrated as one part of the natural world.

In the Song Dynasty (960–1279 CE), this theory was officially proposed and elaborated by some new Confucianists. The exact phrase, “the union of heaven and human”, first appeared in one of the works of Zhang Zai—*Zheng Meng Cheng Ming*. Another philosopher, Zhu Xi (1130–1200 CE), in his works, explained that the unchangeable rules of nature also apply to human beings. Everything in nature is consistent with the nature of human beings.

This theory was so fundamental to the society that many myths and legends are directly derived from it. For example, a well-known legend tells about the creation of the world by a hero named Pangu. According to this legend, the prehistoric world was one piece of unified entity until the appearance of Pangu. The hero Pangu created the universe and after he died, his breath became the wind and cloud; his voice became the thunder; his eyes became the sun and moon; his hair became the stars; his limbs and skeleton became the mountains; his blood became the sea and the river; his muscles became the soil; his perspiration became the rain; his teeth became the mines; his leather

and down became the forests and flowers. Eventually, his body melted and transformed into nature itself. In this story, “**the natural world**” was interpreted as an image of a “**man**” which represented, though a little primitively, the idea of “the union of heaven and human”.

Now let us take a look at how ancient philosophers interpreted the theory of humanity and the natural world in their works. In Daoism, Lao Zi (c. 6th century BCE) discussed the relationship between the natural world and humanity in his works *Dao De Jing*. It says,

*Something mysteriously formed,
Born before heaven and earth.
In the silence and the void,
Standing alone and unchanging,
Ever present and in motion.
It is the mother of ten thousand things.¹
I do not know its name.
Call it Dao.
For lack of a better word, I call it great.
Being great, it flows.
It flows far away.
Having gone far, it returns.
Therefore, “Dao is great;
Heaven is great;
Earth is great;
The king is also great.”
There are the four great powers of the universe,
and the king is one of them.
Man follows the earth.
Earth follows heaven.
Heaven follows the Dao.
Dao follows what is natural.²*

Therefore, Daoism teaches that human nature is merely a part of the natural world. Everything in the world is guided by the eternal Dao (or the natural law). To benefit best as a human being, one has to follow the law of nature rather than exploit or fight with nature.

¹Ten thousand things means everything in the world.

²Translated by Gia-fu Feng. Lao Tzu. *Tao Te Ching*. Vintage Books, New York, 1997, p. 13. [13].

To Confucianists, this theory also applies, though the definition and scope of “heaven” is a little different. Confucius and his pupils believed that the king is the representative of “heaven” in the world. Therefore, in order to achieve harmony with “heaven” and other human beings, one must respect the authority of the king and faithfully work for the country.

Since ancient times, these Chinese philosophies about the relationship between the natural world and humanity have gradually grown and seeped into peoples’ mind. All of them fostered a radical philosophy—*the union of heaven and human*. Regardless of the passing of ages, this philosophy has never been seriously interrupted or reversed, and it was the essence of the Chinese spirit. But how did this theory take forms in the realistic world, especially in the artistic fields? In the next section, I will examine that by studying Chinese landscape paintings, one can easily perceive the visualization of the theory in the artistic field.

2.2 The Birth of Landscape Painting

In the early stage of Chinese painting, the human figure was the dominant subject. Although the elements of nature, such as trees, mountains, flowers and grasses appeared in early Chinese painting, as an independent painting style, landscape painting did not come into being until the Wei-Jin Period (220–420 CE). In fact, the event itself is a striking sign that indicates Chinese artists had noticed worldly beauty including that of nature and humans as a whole rather than as alienated strata. It was the first time that the theory “*the union of heaven and human*” (focusing on the inseparable and harmonious relationship between the natural world and humanity) was given a conscious expression in Chinese visual artistic form.

How did this landscape painting look? Unfortunately, no authentic landscape painting of this period exists today. But many valuable copies made by the artists of later dynasties

are still extant.³ Gu Kaizhi (345–411 CE)'s *The Nymph of the Luo River* is one such

Figure 2.1: **Gu Kaizhi. Section of the Nymph of the Luo River (copy)**
Eastern Jin Period (317–420 CE). Handscroll, ink and color on silk, 27.1 x 572.8
cm. The Palace Museum, Beijing, China. This is a copy made in the Song Dynasty
(960–1279 CE)

painting (fig. 2.1). Although it is only a copy by an artist from the Song Dynasty (960–1279 CE), it offers us a rare chance to look at a landscape painting of this stage.⁴ In the painting, compared with human figures, natural elements such as trees, mountains, waters and clouds are still in a secondary position. However, they have already been described as environmental components. These environmental factors, instead of being simple decorative patterns as before, play an important role to accommodate the figures'

³In Chinese painting history, many famous paintings were always exactly copied by other painters. In the ancient period, this was the only way to keep some valuable paintings extant. Serious copies were even made by outstanding painters. For example, Mi Fu (1051–1107 CE), a talented painter of the Song Dynasty (960–1279 CE), was also a well-known master who could exactly copy ancient paintings. Therefore, these kind of copies were regarded as valuable as the original paintings in Chinese painting history.

⁴According to the connoisseurship study of Chinese painting, scholars believed that this copy authentically transmitted the characteristics of the landscape painting of an earlier age. This painting coincided well with the comments made by Zhang Yanyuan (815–875 CE) in his *Li Dai Ming Hua Ji* (A Record of Famous Paintings of Past Dynasties). When he evaluated the landscape painting of the Wei-Jin Period (220–420 CE), Zhang said,

In (early) landscapes, the peaks stand serrated in fine lines. Some waters are narrowly confined, and sometimes the human figures are larger than the hill. Mostly they are adorned with trees and rocks. The trees are planted like stretched out fingers and arms.[10, p.53]

Therefore, even at present, Chinese scholars also treat this copy as a “real” painting by Gu Kaizhi.

activities. Although the proportion of human figures is a little bigger when compared with the trees or mountains nearby, their sizes still do not break the balance between the natural world and humanity. Moreover, natural scenes already share the same beautiful depiction as the human figures (fig. 2.2). All these signs indicate that the painter was

Figure 2.2: Gu Kaizhi. Details of the Nymph of the Luo River (copy). The images of mountains and trees in this painting share the same beautiful depiction as the human figures.

purposely trying to set the human figures in an environmental context. The artist was trying to express a concept that a perfect painting includes both natural beauty and human beauty. In addition, in this painting, we can also notice that between the world of nature and humanity there is no conquest, no surrender, no overwhelming fear and depression, but only peace and harmony. This painting is commonly regarded as a typical work in the transitional stage from human figure painting to landscape painting. From then on, landscape paintings started to further the concept of the relationship of the natural world and humanity.

Long before landscape painting took over figure painting as the dominate art form, it had already achieved its golden age at the end of the Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE) and the Five Dynasties (907–960 CE) (fig. 2.3). It is said that the great achievement of Chinese landscape painting is at the great expense of figure painting. In fact, this opinion can be strongly challenged by another understanding that the lush growth of landscape painting is indeed a “*celebration*” of Chinese culture and philosophy, which

Figure 2.3: **Jing Hao. Mountain Lu.** Five Dynasties (907–960 CE).
Hanging scroll, ink on silk, 106.8 x 185.8 cm. National Palace Museum,
Taibei, Taiwan.

have the longest known history in the world of acknowledging the harmony between the natural world and humanity. Here, one point should be made clear. In the artistic field, this thesis is not positing that figure painting is superior to landscape painting, or vice versa. They are both significant.

The birth of landscape painting in the Wei-Jin Period (220–420 CE) is a sign that indicates the concept of *the union of heaven and human* started to influence the art. This is true because landscape paintings normally focused on the harmony of the natural world and humanity.

Meanwhile, if we study gardening around the same period, we would also realize the similar influence. According to historical records, before the Wei-Jin Period, normally the Chinese garden was described as a garden with various buildings, such as halls, pavilions, bridges and corridors. All of them were interconnected, forming a building group. In some cases this building group could extend for miles. On the contrary, less words were written on the garden's artistic treatment of natural matters. Clearly, at that time, garden design was mainly focusing on the aspect of garden architecture. It also explains why most ancient gardens were entitled as “palace” instead of “garden”. All of this can only suggest that the role of nature was still subservient to architecture in early gardens. But after the Wei-Jin Period, Chinese gardens showed a different design trend. Garden designers began to pursue gardening by integrating the environmental and architectural factors together. It means two aspects. One is that natural elements such as mounds, water and plants would play more and more important roles in the garden design. The other is that garden architectural and natural elements would be more akin to (or penetrate into) each other rather than repel one another.

Furthermore, the relationship between the natural world and humanity in the design of the Chinese classic garden can be conveyed by analyzing landscape painting and painting theories. In fact, even for the landscape painting, human existence is crucial, because Chinese philosophers tell us that humans are a part of nature. However, just because

human beings are a part of the natural world does not necessarily mean a landscape painting must have a human figure therein. In some cases, a few visible human traces in the landscape painting are sufficient; examples include a boat on a river or a bridge across a canyon. Even without human beings in the landscape, these elements still inform us about human activities. Therefore, a landscape painting must have either a human figure or an indication of human activity or habitation.

Next, I will examine how landscape painting continued to evolve from two aspects. One relates to the role of the human figure; the other relates to constructions that indicate human activity and a habitation. Later under the influence of landscape painting, both were transformed into a three-dimensional artistic form—the garden.

2.3 Figures in Landscape Painting

If a Chinese landscape painting includes human beings, the painter described the figure as an “insider” within nature rather than a “bystander”. Moreover, human beings and human life were meticulously and purposely woven into this two-dimensional art form to celebrate this theoretical harmony of humanity and the natural world.

2.3.1 Humans—Insiders in the Natural World

In China, the beauty of nature was discovered and recorded by experiencing nature. This conclusion can be drawn by studying the proportion of humans and nature in Chinese landscape painting. In Gu Kaizhi’s painting *The Nymph of the Luo River* (fig. 2.1), though the proportion of the human figure to the nature surrounding is a little greater than some trees or hills in his painting, the human figures are actually standing *inside* the natural environment. Soon this seemingly improper proportion was corrected and regulated in the Chinese traditional painting field by a method provided by Wang Wei (c. 701–761 CE), a celebrated poet-painter of the mid-Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE). In

his famous essay on painting *Shan Shui Lun* (Formulas for Landscape), he wrote, “In painting landscape, the concept [of rhythmic forms] should lead the brush along. Ten-foot hills, one-foot trees, one-inch houses, and tenth-of-an-inch men.”⁵ This guidance is pivotal because there is only one circumstance in which the human being must appear *in* the actual nature on its own rather than *out of* nature. Since Wang Wei, this ratio has dominated Chinese landscape painting and has even been deemed as the only correct way to paint landscape painting with human figures. That is why that in most circumstances the human figure in a monumental landscape painting looks tiny. See Guo Xi’s (c. 1020–1090 CE) *Early Spring* (fig. 2.4). Later, this principle was extended to all paintings which had humans and natural elements together. In these paintings, no matter how big a human figure is, its surrounding are drawn with exact proportion. For example, see figure 2.5 the *Painting of Arhat* painted by Liu Songnian, a famous painter of the Southern Song Dynasty (1127–1279 CE). In a word, the human being has never exited from its environmental context in Chinese landscape painting; its role is always as an insider of nature. From this viewpoint, the method of setting human figures in a natural environment is a strong representation of the theory—*the union of heaven and human*.

2.3.2 Harmony between Human Figures and Nature

In addition to treating humans as an insider of nature, the theory of landscape painting also discussed at length the harmonious relationship between the natural world and humanity. Here, the word “union” in the phrase “*the union of heaven and human*” has a more significant meaning—regarding the natural world as a living, equal and emotional companion of human beings.

In landscape paintings, in addition to scenery there should be figures and other living things. They should be drawn well and with style, though not in too great detail. And they should, of course, fit the particular scene. For instance, a

⁵Translated by Yutang Lin. Yutang Lin, editor. *The Chinese Theory of Art*. William Heinemann Ltd, London, 1967, p. 39.

Figure 2.4: **Guo Xi. Early Spring.** Northern Song Dynasty (960–1127 CE). Hanging scroll, ink and color on silk, 108.1 x 158.3 cm. National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan. In this landscape painting, there are several tiny human figures. It is a good example to demonstrate Wang Wei's pivotal guidance of the proportion.

Figure 2.5: Liu Songnian. *Painting of Arhat*. Southern Song Dynasty (1127–1279 CE). Hanging scroll, ink and color on silk, 55.8 x 117 cm. National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan.

*figure should seem to be contemplating the mountain; the mountain, in turn, should seem to be bending over and watching the figure. A lute player plucking his instrument should appear also to be listening to the moon, while the moon, calm and still, appears to be listening to the notes of the lute. ... Otherwise the mountain is just a mountain, the figures mere figures, placed by chance near each other and with no apparent connection; and the whole painting lacks vitality.*⁶

These sentences telling one how to draw human figures in the landscape painting, come from *The Mustard Seed Garden Manual of Painting*,⁷ a famous book teaching how to draw even to today's artists. It was first published in 1679 in China.

Clearly, this book indicates the fact that in Chinese landscape painting, less detailed and stylized human figures are painted on purpose. Here, the special concern is more focused on figures' participation and communication with their settings. These great professional Chinese painters would never simply treat the setting around the figure as a mere context or background or stage. They considered the natural world as a living thing. There should be a potential communication between humans and nature. Though invisible, this communication could be felt by the viewer's heart. This kind of intimate connection between human figures and nature helps explain why most Chinese landscape paintings still transfer a calm and serene feeling although a human being is lingering alone in the vastness of nature. See Ma Yuan's (1190–1224 CE) *Landscape in Wind and Rain* (fig. 2.6). In brief, in landscape paintings, figures are drawn in such a way that

⁶Translated by Mai-Mai Sze. Mai-Mai Sze, editor. *The Mustard Seed Garden Manual of Painting—Chieh Tzu Yuan Hua Chuan, 1679–1701*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1977, p. 220.

⁷*The Mustard Seed Garden Manual of Painting* became the most widely used handbook of painting in China soon after it first was published in 1679 (the Qing Dynasty). It sets forth many basic steps and principles of painting, which are even considered as a valuable guide for beginners at present. Its publisher is Shen Xinyou; its editors are Wang Kai, Wang Qi and Wang Nie, who are all brothers. The complete work consists of thirteen "books" arranged in three parts. Part One, on landscape, appeared in 1679, and constitutes the first edition of the manual. It contains five books: one on general principles and standards, with historical notes and a section on colors; Book of Trees; Book of Rocks; Book of Figures; and a book of additional plates of examples of landscape painting. In 1701 the publisher reissued Part One along with Parts Two and Three, which together make up the first complete edition. Part Two contains four books: Book of the Orchid; Book of the Bamboo; Book of the Plum; and Book of the Chrysanthemum. Part Three has four books: Book of Grasses, Insects, and Flowering Plants; Book of Feathers-and-Fur and Flowering Plants; and two books of additional examples.

Figure 2.6: Ma Yuan. **Landscape in Wind and Rain.** Southern Song Dynasty (1127–1279 CE). Hanging scroll, ink and color on silk, size unknown. The Seikado Bunko Art Museum, Tokyo. In this painting, although a man is walking in wind and rain, the whole painting still transfers a peaceful atmosphere between the natural world and humanity.

they peacefully live with, respect and appreciate nature. This ideology is derived from *the union of heaven and human*. In this way, the world of nature is treated as a friendly partner. There is no conflict between humans and nature.

Now, using the same theory to explain why the Chinese garden is such a garden which must be viewed from within its confines is much easier. The beauty, intimacy and humanity of a Chinese garden can never be explored from outside or understood simply in a plan view (fig. 2.7). Those intimate small spaces of a Chinese garden encourage

Figure 2.7: **Art Garden, Suzhou (left)**, Jiangsu Province, China. Ming Dynasty (1368–1644 CE). A typical small green space in a garden. This kind of small space must be viewed by visitors entering it. **Master of Nets Garden, Suzhou (right)**, Jiangsu Province, China. Qing Dynasty (1644–1911 CE). The map of this garden shows us how a Chinese garden is divided into many small green spaces by walls and buildings.

people to enter, wander around and interact, while various scenes of each small space

greet one's arrival at the same time. A Chinese garden is a place for one to contemplate; a spiritual communication between the individual and nature is achieved as the human figure does in a Chinese landscape painting. The design device of the Chinese garden is compelling the interaction between humans and nature.

2.4 Constructions in Landscape Painting

If no human figures appear in a Chinese landscape painting, the images of architectural constructions are always regarded as necessary. In addition, traditional Chinese painters and critics believed that such constructions were as much a part of nature as human beings themselves. Therefore, keeping a harmonious communication between constructions and natural settings was also an artistic pursuit.

2.4.1 Constructions—Inseparable Parts of the Natural World

In Chinese landscape paintings, various human-made constructions further celebrate the human life in nature. Sometimes a small austere isolated hermit's hut appears by the river; sometimes a towering palace and terraces are lost amid a vastness of mountains and mist; sometimes a bridge dangerously spans over a canyon; sometimes several fishing boats are half hiding among the reeds near the shore. In the eyes of a Chinese traditional painter, the presence of these constructions was never simply seen as a minor component of a painting. More significantly, they were seen to be truly establishing a connection between humans and nature. It was said that in a painter's mind, the awareness of the beauty of nature always simultaneously stimulated the idea that nature was a beautiful place in which to live an everyday life. This Chinese perception can be demonstrated by using the words of Guo Xi (c. 1020–1090 CE), an outstanding painter in Chinese history.

Those(landscaping paintings) that are good for walks and for residence are preferable to those(landscape paintings) good for climbing or for looking up at from a distance. The reason is that in several hundred miles of land, only 30 or

40 percent are good for easy walks or for residence, but this is what one wants. This is the reason why gentlemen seek regions of natural beauty. Artists and critics should always remember the primary motivation of landscape art, its raison-d'être.[10, p.72]

Therefore, constructions indicative of human activity or habitation were always considered necessary in Chinese landscape paintings. The best way to conclude this point is with sentences that come from the famous book *The Mustard Seed Garden Manual of Painting*.⁸ It says, "Landscape paintings contain dwellings just like human being have eyes and eyebrows. Without eyes and eyebrows, the human is blind. . . In a landscape with a dwelling in it, a feeling of life will come out of the painting."⁹

Similarly, both landscape painting and landscape gardening belong to landscape art, no matter if one is discussing a two-dimensional landscape painting or an actual Chinese garden; the pursuit of living is their common motivation. Accordingly, in a traditional Chinese garden, various buildings, bridges, rails, and other constructions not merely invite habitation of human beings, but more significantly they celebrate habitation itself. Habitation in nature is the best way to show the harmonious relationship between nature and humans. Therefore in China, the garden was the perfect stage of people's everyday life. Now it is easy to explain why Chinese garden can not be defined as a garden if it has no building in it. Buildings are the representation of human life. A Chinese garden is a "perfect universe", which combines the world of nature and humans together. Regardless of whether it is the image of a building in a painting or a real building in a Chinese garden, human-made constructions are inseparable from the natural world. In brief, to the ancient Chinese literati, 'living with nature' was linked to the pursuit of natural beauty.

⁸This book was first published in 1679 CE. Its publisher is Shen Xinyou; its editors are Wang Kai, Wang Qi and Wang Nie, who are all brothers. Further information see footnote 4.

⁹These sentences come from Mai-Mai Sze, editor. *The Mustard Seed Garden Manual of Painting—Chieh Tzu Yuan Hua Chuan, 1679–1701*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1977, p. 264. But I made some change, because I think Sze's translation is not very correct.

2.4.2 Harmony between Constructions and Nature

In a Chinese landscape painting, human constructions and nature share the same harmonious relationship as the relationship between human figures and nature. Sometimes buildings such as a hermit's hut or a fisherman's cottage are as humble as the nest of a bird. If a person viewing the landscape is not paying enough attention, it will be easy for him or her to overlook the presence of such huts or cottages. See Yao Tingmei's *Fishing in A River in the Winter Time* (fig. 2.8). Sometimes storied palaces and terraces are in

Figure 2.8: Yao Tingmei. *Fishing in A River in the Winter Time*. Yuan Dynasty (1279–1368 CE). Handscroll, ink on paper, 24.3 x 81.9 cm. The Palace Museum, Beijing, China.

as grand a manner as sublime pines in the mountain. But their flying multi-roofs curve upward like stretched out wings. This structural roof design greatly relieves the weight of the building. Its wooden roofs and the branches of trees stretch into each other melding human constructions and nature. See Li Cheng's *Buddhist Temple in the Mountains after Rain* (fig. 2.9). In addition, scattered building groups create more open spaces to interact with their surrounding. In this painting, both buildings and nature welcome and respect each other's presence. From these two examples, we notice that Chinese landscape painters paid close attention to balance buildings and the world of nature in their paintings no matter it was a humble hut or a grand building. Their effort makes us feel constructions are directly emerging from nature.

This Chinese attitude toward buildings in landscape painting is also palpable in Chi-

Figure 2.9: Li Cheng. **Buddhist Temple in the Mountains After Rain.** Northern Song Dynasty (960–1127 CE). Hanging scroll, ink on silk, 56 x 111.4 cm. The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, USA.

nese gardens. On one hand, Chinese garden buildings are made from wood, bamboo, and hay. All of them share the same basic substance as nature. On the other hand, the style of Chinese garden buildings is open, light and permeable, which makes the eye freely float through the interior and exterior of various buildings in a garden without barriers. In the words written by Ji Cheng, the author of *Yuan Ye*:

Generally... The surrounding wall should be concealed under creepers, and rooftops should emerge here and there above the tops of the trees... The pillars of your verandah should be tall and widely spaced; your windows and doors should give an unimpeded view.[5, p.43]

Reading between his lines, we just find it is impossible to separate Chinese garden buildings from nature. The walls are covered by the natural blanket of green plants; the roofs are “dancing” with the branches of trees; the wide windows and doors beckon one to enjoy the great beauty of nature. Garden buildings are a kind of building that makes one conscious that he or she is somehow still outside while still physically inside a building. The function of garden buildings is not to separate humans with the world of nature. Instead, they help human beings get closer to the natural world.

On the whole, natural and human constructions, just like longitude and latitude, have been woven together to cover the earth (fig. 2.7 right). They intertwine lightly and peacefully, which well represents the Chinese theory under consideration—*the union of heaven and human*, and clearly explains the phenomenon that the freely growing plants and numerous human-made buildings in a garden are congruent rather than contradictory. We could say that the best Chinese gardens realize the highest goal of those Chinese landscape painters who believed that humans are destined to *live with nature*.

The purpose of this chapter has been to establish the importance of “*the union of heaven and human*” as the most important and fundamental theory behind Chinese landscape painting and gardening. Unfortunately, except for *Yuan Ye*, there is no other reference

book on garden theories published in China and no ancient gardens survived until today.¹⁰ It is quite difficult for us to explain how exactly this theory guided the garden design. But, in the field of Chinese landscape paintings, there are many critical articles and books about the roles of human figures and human-made constructions in landscape paintings and how to paint them in order to help this theory of *the union of heaven and human* be visualized by the works of painters. For instance, the presence of human life is a necessary part of landscape painting; human figures must be drawn as insiders rather than as bystanders in the natural world; human-made constructions should assist human beings to live in the natural world instead of separate from it; human figures and their buildings must regard nature as a friendly partner and respect each other's existence. All of these landscape painting principles are invaluable sources for us to examine these seemingly contradictory garden design concepts. Chinese classic garden is in fact a materialized representation of "the union of heaven and human". On one hand, the plants and grasses are allowed to grow freely in the corner, among stones or by the water. Different kinds of plants can be mixed together in a group, which looks like they are the plant community in an actual natural environment. Lawns and trimmed trees are strictly forbidden in a garden. Regarding this aspect, the Chinese garden is clearly treated in a naturalistic way. This is how designers showed their respect for the natural law. On the other hand, numerous buildings in various shapes are omni-present in the garden. Their appearance can poignantly remind one that Chinese gardens should be identified as a living place for human beings rather than a purely botanical garden guided by the power of nature. Those human-made garden constructions are so striking that even a Chinese modern scholar declared that "garden architecture in China is so delightfully informal and playful that even without flowers and trees it would still make a garden." [8, p.23] Those buildings' presentation is well realized the unification of nature

¹⁰At present, most extant Chinese classic gardens were first constructed during the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644 CE) and the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911 CE).

and human life.

Therefore, the harmonious relationship of the natural world and humanity that reflects in Chinese classic garden is the direct result of this theory—"the union of heaven and human", one of their most fundamental philosophies. Although no any reference book on how to use this theory to guide their garden design was written in Chinese history, it doesn't mean Chinese garden designers knew nothing about it. In fact, they were continuously informed by those valuable ideas from Chinese landscape painting throughout its long history as we have discussed in this chapter. It was those landscape painters and critics that further developed this theory and visualized it in their landscape paintings. Their detailed and concrete explanations about this theory were the great source for Chinese garden designers to draw upon.

However, this theory only sets up a conceptual framework of this oriental art and helps us appreciate a Chinese garden on the whole. Many more details, ideas, concerns related to Chinese literature and aesthetics need to be further explored in the following chapters, and again, assisted by reference to Chinese painting.

Chapter 3

Transmitter of Spirit

Painting is the seal of one's heart
—— 画乃心印¹

For most Westerners, several Chinese garden characteristics are very curious. Westerners don't understand what makes grotesque artificial mountains so important for a Chinese garden; why Chinese prefer to plant bamboo trees rather than any other plants; why most of their water ponds are always full of the lotus instead of leaving them clean and clear? Moreover, why does a Chinese garden have so many textual couplets on walls, pillars and doorways? All of these characteristics make the Chinese classic garden very different from any other gardens of the world. All these characteristics have meanings behind them, and understanding them significantly influences the way one appreciates Chinese gardens.

Strictly speaking, these characteristics didn't appear in Chinese garden until the Wei-Jin Period (220–420 CE). At that time, there were two new classes who began to participate in garden construction activities. Previously this was an imperial imperative. One group comprised retired court-officials or scholars and their gardens were named the “scholar gardens”; the other group comprised monks, another learned class in the

¹Said by Mi Youren, a great painter of the Song Dynasty (960–1279 CE). His father Mi Fu was an outstanding painter too. They created a special landscape painting style. In history, this style is dedicated to them as “Mountain and Water of Mi family”.

traditional Chinese society, whose gardens were classified as the “temple gardens”. These two new classes had not only a good knowledge of Chinese literature, but also the eyes of a painter. One aspect of their garden design, that was very different from former emperors, who always wanted to find the medicine of longevity in the mythic landscape, was that these educated persons gradually treated the matter of mountains, water, plant and animal in a garden as a spiritual thing. This theme was first explored by both Chinese literati and painters. In Chinese gardens, the contribution of these two new classes provided the foundation for the Chinese classic gardens.

After introducing the early Chinese gardens, this chapter examines how the spiritual world of the Chinese classic gardens was formed by analyzing the role of Chinese painting relative to Chinese literature and the Chinese garden. This can be divided into two parts. Firstly, there was metaphor behind Chinese literati painting,² especially in how it related to landscape painting and plant & animal painting. This characteristic helped train the eyes of garden designers, who later treated the garden elements (mountain, water, plant and animal) in a metaphorical way. Secondly, when Chinese scholars found that the metaphor was not enough to express their deepest feelings about the world, they introduced words, such as poems and short essays onto painting directly. This characteristic also subsequently impacted the Chinese gardens. In the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644 CE), following painting, garden designers also introduced couplets, a kind of poem form and posted them everywhere in the gardens. Therefore, both characteristics in Chinese literati painting became forerunners of the Chinese garden. Those metaphors and couplets further assisted to build the whole spiritual sphere behind the actual scenes

²Generally, Chinese painting could be categorized into human figure, landscape painting, and plant & animal according to various subjects. According to the painting technique, Chinese painting can be categorized into realistic painting (characterized by fine brushwork and close attention to detail) and freehand brushwork (characterized by vivid expression and bold outline). According to different painter classes, it could be categorized into craftsmen painting, literati painting (characterized by a strong expression of the inner world of the literati-painter) and academy painting (characterized by creating painting to fulfil the appetite of the royal family). Generally, in this thesis, Chinese painting only refers to literati painting.

in a Chinese garden. In doing so, one could perceive how the Chinese classic garden gradually evolved from its condition as a mythical garden into a real-world spiritual place.

3.1 Early Chinese Garden—A Mythical Paradise

Ancient Chinese emperors were the only people who constructed gardens in China before the Wei-Jin Period (220–420 CE). As the most privileged people in China, they wanted to keep their privileges unshared as long as they could. We know that the Egyptian kings constructed the pyramids to preserve their mummies for their next lives. Similarly, Chinese emperors also sought longevity in their gardens. Then, the appearance and functions of imperial gardens was deeply influenced by Chinese mythical landscapes, which were associated with immortality.

In Western culture the garden of Eden is a mythical paradise. In ancient China, similar mythical landscapes existed. For example, there is the living place of the Western Queen, the governor of many celestial beings in the west heaven. Her palace named *Yao Chi* is located on the top of Mountain *Kunlun*, where terraces are made of gold and pavilions are made of jade. From there, a path could reach heaven. As with Western Biblical myths, gardens are associated with immortality. If a person climbs up to the top of *Kunlun*, he or she will never die. Another landscape focuses on the three mountains, where many other celestial beings live. These mountains are always freely floating in the *Bo Sea* and not far away from the mainland. Their names are “*Peng Lai*”, “*Fang Zhang*” and “*Ying Zhou*”. On these mountains, splendid palaces and terraces are built of gold and silver; jewelled trees grow thickly; ripe fruits are plentiful and delicious. If one is able to reach these mountains and eat the fruit, one would neither grow old nor ever die.³

³This is the opposite of the Christian myth in which eating the apple in Eden brought death and misery into the world.

3.1.1 Tais

Since finding the medicine of longevity and meeting with celestial beings were the strong desires of the imperial class, imitating those fabricated landscapes became an aim of their gardens. In most early Chinese gardens, to symbolize the Mountain *KunLun*, human-made *Tais* were constructed. *Tai* was a square high terrace piled by soil on an extensive scale. For instance, according to the historical record, Emperor Zhou, the last king of the Shang Dynasty (16th–11th century BCE) took seven years to finish his *Lu Tai*. Each bottom side was one and a half kilometers and its height was about 333 meters. Emperor Lin of Chu, on the throne from 540 BCE to 529 BCE, also spent five years building his *Zhanghua Tai*. Sometimes, buildings would be constructed on the *Tai*. All *Tais* had a common function: the holding of ceremonies by emperors at their summit. The emperors believed that *Tai* imitated the mythical Mountain *Kunlun* in the actual world, and created a space for communicating with the celestial beings. Today, huge *Tais* can still be seen in the imperial gardens in Beijing. One example is *Wan Shou Shan* (Longevity Hill) in the garden of *Yi He Yuan* (the Summer Palace)⁴ (fig. 3.1).

3.1.2 One Lake with Three Mountains

Along with *Tais*, early Chinese imperial gardens were famous for excavating extensive water ponds with islands inside. This kind of landscape was used to symbolize the *Bo Sea* and the three legendary mountains in their myths. For example, after the first unification (221 BCE) in Chinese history, Emperor Shi of Qin began his massive construction of

⁴The initial construction of the Summer Palace began in 1750, commissioned by Emperor Qinglong as a gift for his mother's birthday. The construction took 15 years to complete. It had the name "Qingyi Yuan" (Garden of Clear Ripples) at that time. The plundering of foreign troops in 1860 destroyed most of the buildings, but they were renovated in 1888 by Empress Dowager Cixi, who was said to have embezzled the funds from the Imperial Navy to build the garden. After China's liberation, the garden became a park and was named *Yi He Yuan* (The Summer Palace). Covering an area of 4,300 mu (290 hectares), the park in Beijing is an outstanding example of imperial gardens. The landscape architect utilized Longevity Hill and Kunming Lake to create a paradise of hills and waters. This information comes from the web site (<http://www.travelchinaguide.com/cityguides/beijing/summer.htm>).

Figure 3.1: **Yi He Yuan (The Summer Palace), Beijing, China.** Qing Dynasty (1644–1911 CE). “Longevity Hill” is the most striking scene in this garden. It is totally a human-made mountain created from the earth excavated from the “Kun Ming Lake” nearby. There are lots of buildings on the hill.

gardens, the most famous one of which is known as *Shang Lin Yuan* (Upper Forest Garden). Within the garden, *Lan Chi* (Blue Pond) was excavated to form a large lake (100 x 10km), which was supplied by a canal dug from the Wei River nearby. In this lake, an island was constructed and purposely called *Peng Lai*, one of the names of the three mythical mountains floating in *Bo Sea*. In addition, Emperor Wu of Han (7–30 CE) constructed his *Jian Zhang Palace*.⁵ Of note here are the three scenic islands: *Peng Lai*, *Fang Zhang* and *Ying Zhou*, which were built in the enlarged lake called *Ta Ye Chi* (Grand Liquid Pond).⁶ These extravagant activities were to celebrate his birthdays and to provide a proper site to welcome the coming of the celestial beings, or *Ying Xian*. In modern Beijing, we still can see the vestige of this layout in the garden of *Bei Hai* (North Sea or the Winter Palace),⁷ an extant imperial garden beside the Forbidden City. Its

⁵There is a different viewpoint between book [1, p.6] and [15, p.33]. The first book says that the pond and three islands were built in *Wei Yang Palace* instead of *Jian Zhang Palace*. As a result of my research, I have chosen to use the view of the second book.

⁶Later it even became a very typical and formal layout for the imperial garden. Today, we call this kind of layout in the Chinese garden as “One Lake and Three Mountains”.

⁷*Bei Hai* Garden is known as the oldest extant imperial garden in China. It was built throughout five successive dynasties. The dynasties are Liao (907–1125 CE), Jin (1115–1234 CE), Yuan (1279–1368

traditional layout of *One Lake with Three Mountains* was first completed during Yuan Dynasty (1279–1368 CE) (fig. 3.2). Although so many changes have occurred, the famous *Jade Flowery Islet* is still standing in the lake called *North Sea*, a symbol of the legendary *Peng Lai* mountain in the *Bo Sea* (fig. 3.3).

3.1.3 Plants and Animals

There are many historical records about garden plants and animals before the Wei-Jin Period (220–420 CE). By carefully studying them, we can find that plants and animals in early Chinese gardens had two main functions. Firstly, they were mainly raised for their farm and livestock products. Secondly, some plants and animals would be appreciated for their exotic and beautiful appearance. On the one hand, they were planted and raised to make the garden like the mythical places of paradise. On the other hand, they were used as a sign to show off the extraordinary wealth and power of their owner's high social class.

In the early stage of the Chinese garden, no matter how extensive its artificial mountain and water pond or how priceless the exotic plants and animals, there was still nothing about the metaphor of noble human spirits. This situation was to gradually change after the Wei-Jin Period (220–420 CE). With the participation of the two new classes of educated scholars and monks in garden construction activities, the interest in the Chinese mythical paradise and the magical medicine of longevity waned. Instead, in their

CE), Ming (1368–1644 CE) and Qing (1644–1911 CE). In the Liao Dynasty, the Bei Hai Garden was first constructed as a secondary imperial palace, in which an island (Jade Islet) was built. In the Jin Dynasty, the garden was expanded by digging a lake and adding more palace halls. In the Yuan Dynasty, the garden was rebuilt three times. And it was believed that the three islets were finished during this period. In the Ming Dynasty, the lake of *South Sea* was excavated. The former two of the three islets were connected to the east bank of the garden by the earth excavated from the *South Sea*. In addition, a bridge of *Jin Bie Yu Dai Qiao* (Golden Turtle and Jade Band) was constructed to span the west and east bank of the lake. This bridge divided the original huge lake into two small lakes. One is the *North Sea*, the other is the *Middle Sea*. This huge renovation made Jade Flowery Islet (former Jade Islet) the only islet in the *North Sea* lake today. In the Qing Dynasty, it saw more renovation and construction, such as the White Pagoda, an onion-shaped shrine pagoda in Tibetan style. It was erected in honor of the fifth Dalai Lama's visit to Beijing in 1651.

Figure 3.2: **Bei Hai Garden (The Winter Palace), Beijing, China.** First constructed in the Liao Dynasty (907–1105 CE), work continued on it during the following four dynasties. This is the present map of Bei Hai Garden. In this map, we can notice that there is only one islet in the North Sea. The other two islets become peninsulas.

Figure 3.3: **Bei Hai Garden (The Winter Palace), Beijing, China.** It was first constructed in the Liao Dynasty (907–1105 CE), which is regarded as the oldest extant imperial garden in China. This scene is the “Jade Flowery Islet” (former Jade Islet) in the North Sea. There are many buildings on it but the most famous is the “White Pagoda”. Two white bridges are constructed to connect the islet and the mainland. This islet symbolizes the mythical “Peng Lai” mountain in the “Bo Sea” in Chinese legends.

gardens, we see the need for a place of retreat, a **unification** of the natural world and the human spiritual world, a theme that was first discovered in the Chinese painting (especially landscape painting and plant & animal painting) of both the literati and the painters.

3.2 The Metaphor Behind Literati Painting

The first level of the spiritual world in Chinese gardens is reflected in the metaphors of the garden elements. For example, bamboo trees symbolize an unyielding personality; mountain and water mean a lofty character. What is significant is that the whole development of the metaphor that gradually resided in earth and plants in gardens represents a long and difficult spiritual journey for Chinese scholars. It began with the Chinese literature, then took its first visual form in Chinese painting, and at last ended in the three-dimensional artistic form—the Chinese classic garden. This process is very pivotal for the Chinese garden. It helped the Chinese garden evolve from its early condition as a simple, imperial reference to a mythical paradise into a real-world spiritual place.

3.2.1 Metaphor of Mountain and Water

The Chinese metaphor of mountain and water (landscape) first appeared in Chinese literature.

Before the Wei-Jin Period

Before the Wei-Jin Period (220–420 CE), the Chinese had already built a literary tradition that expressed belief in nature as a place of wisdom and dignity in two aspects. Firstly, many ancient legends and historical records tell of a tendency of noble and educated persons to retreat into the wilderness. Secondly, in many ancient literary works, natural mountains and waters are likened to certain human virtues by the scholars and

philosophers who wrote these works.

Noble and Learned Persons An example of this kind of story that became a metaphor is the narrative of Bo Yi and Shu Qi, who lived at the end of the Shang Dynasty (16th–11th century BCE) and the beginning of the Zhou Dynasty (11th century–221 BCE). Both of these individuals were nobles of the Shang royal family. Their country was conquered by the king of Zhou.⁸ Because they could not achieve their political ideals in this conquered society, they retreated to the Shouyang Mountain and existed by collecting wild vegetables in the wilderness. They believed that a place of untamed nature was a place beyond any social law and regulations. Through their retreat, they firmly declared their refusal to eat the “food of Zhou Dynasty”. Though they died of hunger, their unyielding integrity was admired by Chinese people. This story reinforced an emotional link between landscape and the search for a lofty human spirit.

During the Eastern Zhou Dynasty (770–221 BCE),⁹ the most intellectual period in Chinese history, more and more scholars and philosophers retreated into the natural world. For example, Lao Zi (c. 6th century BCE), the legendary founder of Daoism, was told to choose nature as his last destination.¹⁰ Another famous Daoist, Zhuang Zi¹¹ (c. 369–286 BCE) was a well-known recluse who spent most of his life in the natural surroundings of his home.

All these tales of “retreat” built a cultural belief in China that nature is the refuge for those persons with great wisdom and dignity. It is a peaceful place for the human

⁸The king of Zhou overturned the rule of Shang and created a new Zhou Dynasty (11th century–221 BCE).

⁹The Eastern Zhou Dynasty includes two periods. One is the Spring and Autumn Period (770–476 BCE); the other is the Warring States Period (475–221 BCE).

¹⁰An extant legend tells that Lao Zi was an archivist in the Imperial Library of the Zhou’s court. Afterwards, disgusted with the way the world seemed to him to be going, Lao Zi resigned and set out to leave the country. At the western door of the city he was detained by a guard who recognized him and refused to let him pass until he wrote down his wisdom. He did it in eighty-one short verses, which make up the *Dao De Jing*. Then he left and went into the vast countryside. He was never heard of again.

¹¹Zhuang Zi is the most important follower and developer of Lao Zi’s philosophical ideas. In the Chinese history, people compare him with Lao Zi and call them together, “Lao-Zhuang”.

heart.¹²

Literary Works In addition to these famous persons' stories, many works of ancient Chinese literature highlight the two natural elements, mountain and water, and analogize them with certain human virtues.

Confucius (551–479 BCE) wrote, “In mountains, one sees human-heartedness; in water, wisdom.”¹³

Lao Zi wrote in his classic *Dao De Jin*, that

*The highest good is like water.
Water gives life to the ten thousand things and does not strive.
It flows in places man rejects and so is like the Dao.*¹⁴

...
*Why is the sea king of a hundred streams?
Because it lies below them.
Therefore, it is the king of a hundred streams.
If the sage would guide the people, he must serve with humility.
If he would lead them, he must follow behind.*¹⁵

...
*Under heaven nothing is more soft and yielding than water.
Yet for attacking the solid and strong, nothing is better.
It has no equal.
The weak can overcome the strong; the supple can overcome the stiff.*¹⁶

...

From all these materials, we can conclude that before the Wei-Jin Period, in the context of Chinese literature, mountains and water had already been linked with certain human virtues. But during this same period, all the garden construction activities were carried out by the imperial class. Because they only wanted to seek longevity in their

¹²This view is very different from the Medieval Western idea that nature always reminded people of the untamed, horrible, evil forces. It was a place beyond the normal masses, controlled by wizards or witches.

¹³Translated by Sherman E. Lee. *Chinese Landscape Painting*. Prentice-Hall International, Inc., London, 1962, coverpage. Another translation by Chen Shouyi is “This wise find pleasure in water; the virtuous find pleasure in hills.” Shao Chang Lee, editor. *Chinese Houses and Garden*. Hastings House, New York, 1950, p. 7.

¹⁴Translated by Gia-fu Feng. Lao Tzu. *Tao Te Ching*. Vintage Books, New York, 1997, p. 8.

¹⁵Translated by Gia-fu Feng. Ibid., p. 66.

¹⁶Translated by Gia-fu Feng. Ibid., p. 78.

gardens and had no interest in literary works at all, the metaphors described above were not reflected in imperial gardens.

During the Wei-Jin Period

During the Wei-Jin Period (220–420 CE), under the influence of literary works celebrating both mountains and water, hiking in the mountains and roaming along the rivers became more and more popular among cultured persons. In addition, painting was no longer limited to craftsmen; more and more literati began painting.

At the same time, theories about the function of painting were further developed. Both painters and literati started to consider the real function of painting. They gradually realized that painting was “more or less imaginative works of art whose importance depended on their power to evoke certain characters, actions or events.”[11, p.9] In a word, painting became a visual transmitter of the human spirit. It became a kind of mind represented in images instead of words in books.¹⁷

The earliest Chinese example of the metaphorical function of painting is recorded in an ancient Chinese painting history book named *Li Dai Ming Hua Ji* (A Record of Famous Paintings of Past Dynasties) by Zhang Yanyuan¹⁸ (815–875 CE). In the first chapter, Zhang recorded a paragraph spoken by his ancestor Cao Zhi (192–232 CE),¹⁹ a famous literati of the Wei-Jin Period (220–420 CE). Cao Zhi first taught the Chinese what they should see in paintings.

When one sees pictures of the Three Kings and of the Five Emperors, one cannot but look at them with respect and veneration, and when one sees pictures of the San Chi (the last debased rulers of Xia, Shang, and Zhou dynasties), one cannot but feel sad. When one sees pictures of rebels and unfilial

¹⁷Chinese classic painting, especially literati paintings were always created and appreciated by scholars. This is very different from the Western culture where religious paintings were used to teach unlearned masses to understand the profound teachings in the Bible. Chinese literati painting did not fulfil this function at all.

¹⁸Zhang Yanyuan was a painting theorist of the Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE). Further information see Chapter 1: Introduction, p. 5–6.

¹⁹Cao Zhi was a great poet of the Wei-Jin Period (220–420 CE). His biggest contribution to Chinese poetry is the introduction of lyric feeling into poetry, adding a new form alongside narrative poetry.

*sons, one cannot but grind the teeth. When one sees pictures representing men of high principles and great sages, one cannot but forget one's meals. When one sees pictures of faithful subjects who died at the call of duty, one cannot but feel exalted. When one sees pictures of exiled citizens and expelled sons, one cannot help sighing. When one sees pictures of vicious men and jealous women, one cannot but look askance. When one sees pictures of obedient empresses and good secondary consorts, one cannot but feel deepest admiration. By this we may realize that paintings serve as moral examples or as mirrors of conduct.*²⁰

Notably, this idea of seeing spirits in images was not only limited to literati, but was also shared by painters of the same time. For example, Zong Bing (375–443 CE), an ancient learned painter, once wrote in his essay *The Enjoyment of Painting*, “the spirit has no form of its own, but takes form in things.”²¹

In the Wei-Jin Period (220–420 CE), both literati and painters agreed that the art of painting was not the literal recording of things in bright colors and vivid shapes. This was especially true for those literati-painters who began to realize that those kind of paintings could only amuse the eyes, but were far away from the real purpose of painting—serving as transmitters of spirit. From then on, Chinese painting began to evolve from its original function as simple decorating and recording into an art which could reflect human feelings and characteristics. It helped those human virtues recorded in words take form in a visual style.

Under this circumstance, these new literati-painters brought a new subject into the Chinese painting field, that of the mountain-water painting or landscape painting in a manner that was different from former craftsmen. Because they painted the landscape with the knowledge of the metaphor of mountain and water in Chinese literature. This is the first time that the metaphor of landscape took on an artistically moral form in

²⁰Translated by Osvald Sirén. *The Chinese on the Art of Painting—Translations and Comments*. Schocken Books and Hong Kong University Press, New York and Hong Kong, 1963, p. 9.

²¹Translated by Lin Yutang, editor. *The Chinese Theory of Art*. William Heinemann Ltd, London, 1967, p. 32. Another translation by Osvald Sirén is “The divine soul has no limits; it inhabits the forms and stimulates everything.” *The Chinese on the Art of Painting—Translations and Comments*. Schocken Books and Hong Kong University Press, New York and Hong Kong, 1963, p. 15.

Chinese painting. Here, mountains and waters were not only images but the metaphors of human virtues. Since that time, discovering, praising and appreciating the beauty of nature have become also a symbol of human intellectual cultivation.

In the end, whether in the field of literature or of painting, whether or not a person could appreciate the beauty of mountain and water became a criteria for judging if one had a cultivated personality. There was also an element of conceit in these who behaved themselves to be cultivated. There is a conversation between Emperor Jin Ming²² and one of his ministers named Xie Kun.

Ming Emperor asked,

"Compared with Yu Liang (his other minister), how is your ability?"

Xie Kun answered,

"Sitting straight in the hall and letting officers handle official business by the law, I can't par with Yu Liang; but I'm better at appreciation of mountain and ravine." [15, p.42]

When landscape painting quickly incorporated the new interpretation presented by Chinese literature, Chinese gardens themselves were left behind in this development. But we can notice a clear change that first appeared in those gardens which were created by the literati or the monks in this period. The former functions of imperial gardens (hunting, producing, meeting with celestial beings and finding longevity medicine) were downgraded in these two kinds of gardens. Imperial themes were gradually replaced by themes of mountain and water that were influenced by landscape literature and painting. From that time the Chinese garden began its long journey serving as a spiritual refuge in the secular world.

For example, Tao Yuanming (365–427 CE),²³ the outstanding poet of the Jin Period, constructed his living place and garden in Mountain Lu. Since this garden does not exist today, we can only study it from several poems written by Tao Yuanming himself.

²²The Emperor Jin Ming held his throne for only three years from 322 to 324 CE.

²³Tao Yuanming was the greatest pastoral poet of the Eastern Jin Period (317–420 CE) in Chinese history. As a descendant of a high-level feudal official, he was a learned gentleman. Tired of court conflict, Tao decided to return to natural and rural life after his short public employment. His hermitic life style and his poems became appreciated and loved among Chinese literati.

*Since my youth I have been out of tune with the multitude;
 To love the hills and mountains is my nature.
 But by mistake I fell into vulgar ways,
 And for thirty years I was astray.
 A captive bird longs for the old woods,
 A fish in the tank for its familiar pool.
 Long was I kept in a cage,
 But now . . . free at last . . . I have returned to Nature's ways.
 I have cleared the wild land on the southern horizon. I have built eight or
 nine grass huts.
 Elms and willows shadow the eaves;
 Peach and plum trees give shade at my front door.
 I see in the distance, as in a haze, the haunts of men;
 The lazy smoke lingers over the village.
 Dogs bark in the deep lanes;
 Cocks crow on top of the mulberry tree . . .
 There is no dust, and no clamoring in my courtyard.
 In my empty rooms I enjoy leisurely the idle hours.²⁴*

*I built my cottage among the habitations of men,
 And yet there is no clamor of carriages and horses.
 You ask: "Sir, how can this be done?"
 "A heart that is distant creates its own solitude."
 I pluck chrysanthemums on the eastern hedge,
 Then lifting my eyes, I gaze long at the Southern Hill.
 The mountain air is fresh at dawn and at dusk;
 The flying birds circle back and forth in pairs.
 In these things there lies a deep meaning;
 Yet when I wish to express it, I forget the words.²⁵*

From these poems, we can conjure up the appearance of this garden in our mind: several huts enclosed with fences locate in a scenic mountain area; in the yard, chrysanthemum and other plants being cultivated; a clear view of a mountain. Apparently, Tao's garden is very austere and simple. Yet its architectural aspect is very secondary to the spirituality that Tao's garden exudes for him. In Tao's poems, he mentioned many times that the garden to him was not merely a living place. For instance, "I have returned to Nature's

²⁴This poem is the first one from a series of six poems, entitled "Returning to Live in the Country", by Tao Yuanming. Translated by James Legge. Shao Chang Lee, editor. *Chinese Houses and Garden*. Hastings House, New York, 1950, pp. 38-39.

²⁵This poem is the fifth poem from a series of twenty poems, entitled "Drinking Poems", by Tao Yuanming. Translated by Tony Barnstone. <http://www.chinapage.org/poem2e.html#TAO>

way”, “In my empty rooms I enjoy leisurely the idle hours”, and “A heart this is distant created its own solitude”. All those words express to us that his garden was purposely created as a spiritual refuge. Therefore, it can be regarded as the earliest literati garden in Chinese history.

By the end of this period, although the love of mountain and water had already helped Chinese literary works take a visual form in Chinese landscape painting, metaphor was still in its early stage in Chinese paintings and gardens. During the following dynasties, this character in Chinese landscape painting and its impact on Chinese gardens became more and more clear and strong.

After the Wei-Jin Period

The Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE) Influenced by Chinese literature, landscape painting developed quickly and was favoured by those court-officials and monks who were its artists. Both groups were not only well educated but also had wealth.²⁶ By the end of the Tang Dynasty, landscape painting reached its peak.²⁷ This success had a significant influence on Chinese gardens. Wealthy court officials and monks who felt limited by the two-dimensional landscape, and who had the ability and money to realize landscapes three-dimensionally, built private gardens or temple gardens. Some of these artists were among the most famous literati-painters of their time. By their effort, the metaphors of mountain and water were further incarnated into the matter of the earth of the gardens. Among them, the most famous garden was Wang Wei’s (c. 701–761 CE) Wang Chuan Villa.²⁸ As the outstanding landscape painter and poet of his time, Wang Wei spent his entire life designing his garden after retiring from a high official position. Each major scene in the garden was recorded in his painting (fig. 3.4) and had a poem composed

²⁶In traditional China, court-officials were a wealthy class. Their money came from their service to the court. This class of monks had money too, which came from the donation of pilgrims.

²⁷It is also mentioned in Chapter 2, The World of Nature and Humanity

²⁸Wang Chuan Villa is a garden recorded in painting and words in Chinese history. It doesn’t exist today.

Figure 3.4: Wang Wei. Section of Wang Chuan Villa. Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE). National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan. This is a copy by Guo Zhongshu (?–977 CE), a landscape painter of early Song Dynasty (960–1279 CE). The original painting no longer survives.

to it. For example, the poem of *The Deer Enclosure* describes a scene named “Deer Enclosure” in the Villa of Wang Chuan.

*So lone seem the hills, there is no one in sight there,
But whence is the echo of voices I hear?
The rays of the sunset pierce slanting the forest,
And in their reflection jade-green mosses appear.*²⁹

Another scenic poem is *In A Retreat Among Bamboos*.

*Leaning alone in the close bamboos,
I am playing my lute and humming a song
Too softly for anyone to hear
Except my comrade, the bright moon.*³⁰

These poems don’t overtly mention the landscape. But from them, we can perceive his deep love of the landscape, which is apparently different from former emperors.

The Song Dynasty (960–1279 CE) Landscape painting paid more attention to the virtues of human beings and are spiritually appealing. For example, the story of Bi Yi and Shu Qi³¹ was represented in Li Tang’s (1066–1150 CE) *Collecting Wild Vegetable* (fig. 3.5). In this painting, Li Tang purposely chose the natural setting with mountain and water to accommodate these two characters. His objective is very clear: he was using the metaphor of mountain and water to demonstrate their unyielding integrity. Landscape painting was a way to pay his great homage to this human virtue. It was a spiritual symbol.

The symbolism of the Chinese garden can well explain why Su Shunqing (1008–1048 CE) constructed his garden after he was dismissed by the emperor. In order to show his own dignity, he built the artificial mountains and arranged water ponds everyday in his garden. Notably, he named his garden, *Cang Lang Ting* (Blue Wave Pavilion). It is a name borrowed from an ancient short essay by Qu Yuan³² (340–277 BCE).

²⁹Translated by W.J.B. Fletcher, 1919. <http://www.chinapage.com/poem/wangwei/wangwei-trs.html>

³⁰Translator is unknown. Reference to <http://www.shiandci.net/ts300-8e.htm>

³¹Detailed story has been mentioned before, reference to page 45.

³²Qu Yuan, the chief poet in the “Songs of Chu”, was a member of the ruling house, a statesman

Figure 3.5: Li Tang. **Painting of Collecting Wild Vegetable**. Southern Song Dynasty (1127–1279 CE). Handscroll, ink and color on silk, 27.2 x 90.5 cm. The Palace Museum, Beijing, China.

*If the water of blue wave is clean, I will use it to wash my hat;
If the water of blue wave is dirty, I will use it to wash my feet.³³*

In using this name, Su indicated his determination to keep his unyielding personality rather than bend before influential officials. Through those daily gardening activities, Su projected his feeling and lofty personality right into the earth of his garden. In Chinese garden history, this garden was always remembered for the reason of its construction and it was renovated many times by later literati who admired Su Shunqing's dignity and wanted to celebrate this human virtue in this garden. It is the reason why this garden

and diplomat. In his youth, he had a brilliant official career and was made a court minister and at one time the Chu envoy to Chi (in Shantung), a great neighbouring state. But Qu Yuan's comet-like success incurred the jealousy of his fellow ministers, who slandered and intrigued against him. In consequence Qu Yuan lost the king's favor and was dismissed from office. There were several ups and downs in his career - for after each banishment he was recalled to court, only to be again rebuffed and disgraced. In the meantime, his country was in danger. Failing to heed Qu Yuan's advice, the king of Chu foolishly went to a conference with the king of Chin (in Shensi), the most powerful military state of that period; he was held there by the Chin army and died in captivity. His son, the new king, instead of avenging his father's death, made a humiliating peace with his enemy. This, however, did not deter Chin's aggressive designs against Chu, and Qu Yuan, who had started his exile as a result of his political failure, and who lived long enough to see the capital of his state plundered and ruined by the conquering army of Chin in 278 BCE. At that time, Qu Yuan was already an old man of over sixty, and the fall of the Chu capital was the last blow to his patriotic hope. He does not seem to have long survived this disaster, for the next we hear of him is that he had drowned himself in the river Mi-lo.

³³This statement is the advice of a fisherman, who wanted to recommand Qu Yuan to follow the secular rules and regulations whether it was good or bad. Don't fight with the darkness of the society. But Qu Yuan refused to lead a humiliated life when he found his country was conquered. As a patriot, he committed suicide in the river at last.

still exists today in Su Zhou, a southern city of China, a thousand years later (fig. 3.6). For this period, the scholar garden was clearly regarded as a spiritual place, a refuge to rest a lofty heart.

Figure 3.6: **Garden of Blue Wave Pavilion, Suzhou, Jiangsu Province, China.** Northern Song Dynasty (960–1127 CE). It was first constructed in 1045 by Su Shunqing (1008–1048 CE), a dismissed court official. Later, it was rebuilt and renovated many times. This garden is regarded as the oldest extant scholar garden in Suzhou, a southern city of China.

The Ming Dynasty (1368–1644 CE) Mountain and water likened to the dignity of human beings became more direct and popular. Metaphor came to its final mature stage not only in landscape painting but also in the Chinese garden. An example is Shen Zhou's (1427–1509 CE) *Towering Mountain Lu* (fig. 3.7), which was painted by Shen Zhou as a gift for his instructor's birthday. At first sight, one would think it is a sheer landscape painting with a tiny human figure in the lower middle. Facing him is a magnificent mountain. A waterfall is coming down the mountain from above. This makes the mountain full of life. The tiny man stands still with his two hands together in front of his chest. Normally, this is a very polite gesture that is always used to pay respect to a person in traditional China. In the upper-right corner, there is a poem

Figure 3.7: **Shen Zhou. Towering Mountain Lu.** Ming Dynasty (1368–1644 CE) Hanging scroll, ink and color on paper, 98.1 x 193.8 cm. National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan. This painting was drawn by Shen as a gift to his teacher (Chen Kuan) to celebrate his seventieth birthday.

composed by Shen Zhou. In this poem he clearly compared his teacher's lofty character to the high Mountain Lu. So immediately, one can perceive that the true meaning of the painting is that the tiny figure is the Shen Zhou himself while the mountain in front of him symbolizes his respected teacher. Here, the image of mountain and water is used as a metaphor for the lofty human spirit. One should understand that this painting is very subjective. By seeing through this image, one sees that there is a lofty human (Shen Zhou's instructor) standing behind. It is not simply a painting about a beautiful scene; the authentic purpose of Shen Zhou in this painting was using his brush to draw his teacher's human spirit. He used the form of mountain and water to accommodate this spirit, which has since been mentioned thousands of times in Chinese literature.

During this period, assisted by the landscape literature and painting's cultivation, scholar and temple gardens fully became spiritual places. No matter whether those learned persons were officials or monks, they created their gardens in the cities with artificial mountains and water ponds or in the actual mountain areas with waterfalls or brooks. They regarded their gardens as a place of retreat to refresh their souls and hearts. It was a refuge to escape from all the secular life outside, while giving them a peaceful place to contemplate among the landscape, loaded with metaphors reflecting human virtues. Therefore, following landscape literature and painting, Chinese gardening became the third main artistic form to represent this special love of mountain and water in the world of the Chinese mind. They felt proud of their gardens and enjoyed it whether the garden was small or big. The metaphorical component of the landscape was the key point. For example, Wang Xianchen's *Zhuo Zheng Yuan* (Humble Administrator's Garden) was first constructed in 1509 CE. When he lost his faith in the court, he resigned and returned to his home town—Suzhou, a southern city of China. He invited Wen Zhengming (1470–1559 CE), an outstanding landscape painter of that time, to design his garden. In addition, he named the garden “Humble Administrator's Garden”, which comes from an ancient prose. It says, “Watering the garden and selling the vegetables

could supply the daily needs. It is the way of ruling for the humble.”³⁴ Here, the key word is “humble”. On one hand, Wang Xianchen used it to indicate that he was not good at handling political conflicts. On the other hand, Wang expressed that he would like to enjoy a peaceful life in his garden. The metaphor of the mountain and water in the garden is what Wang truly persued; in doing so he was also pursuing the virtue of humility. Today, this garden still exists in Suzhou (fig. 3.8, 3.17 and 4.14).

Figure 3.8: **Humble Administrator’s Garden, Suzhou, Jiangsu Province, China.** Ming Dynasty (1368–1644 CE). It was first constructed in 1509 CE by Wang Xianchen, a retired court official. The garden designer is Wen Zhengming (1470–1559 CE), a famous landscape painter of the Ming Dynasty. This garden is regarded as the greatest extant scholar garden in Suzhou, a southern city of China. Little Flying Rainbow (left); Pavilion of Four Sides Lotus Wind (right).

3.2.2 Metaphor of Plant and Animal

In addition to landscape painting, Chinese literature influenced Chinese plant and animal painting. Although there are thousands of plants and animals in nature, Chinese literati-

³⁴Comes from a line in the “Xian Ju” (An Idle Life) rhyme-prose composed by the famous scholar-official Pan Yue of the Jin Dynasty (281–420 CE). Once when Pan was disappointed in his political life, he retired to live in a farmhouse and led an idle life planting trees and growing vegetables.

painters³⁵ only painted certain subjects, whose meanings were recorded in literature. For example: pine, bamboo, plum, lotus, orchid and chrysanthemum were the top subjects in the plant kingdom; crane, deer, dragon and phoenix were the favorite ones in the animal world. Along with the metaphor of mountain and water, they became another metaphorical system that has significantly impacted the design of Chinese gardens, especially in two aspects. One was plant selection, the other was architectural decoration. Here the focus is on their different meanings as well as a brief history of their development.

Plants Selection

Why did Chinese designers prefer certain plants rather than others? Generally, at the very beginning, no plant had any meaning at all. Over the centuries, some plants gradually acquired symbolic virtues of human beings in the works of literati. Those great works further inspired Chinese literati-painters. The convergence of plant literature and paintings deepened the understanding of the plant metaphor in the Chinese cultural context and trained the mind and eyes of Chinese garden designers and owners, who came to prefer certain plants in their gardens.

Several favorite garden plants in Chinese classic gardens will be discussed. In addition, each of these symbolizes a virtue of the human spirit found in the Chinese literary context. Plant paintings further assisted the maturing of the metaphors in the Chinese gardens.

Pine (松) because it can grow from the crack of rocks, appear on the summit of high mountains, and stay green in the winter, is a symbol of human integrity that can help a person to survive in the worst circumstances. In addition, because it can live a long life in bad conditions, it is a symbol of “robustness, dignity, and majesty of a wise old man; shows how to grow old gracefully.” [8, p.43] Therefore, in Chinese paintings, painters always loved to paint pine in a manner which showed it had suffered many adversities.

³⁵In traditional China, literati-painters were those painters who had a good education. They could be court-officials or monks.

It bends, twists, grows from the crack or is even half-dying (fig. 3.9 left). Moreover, painters liked to place a human figure near the pine to purposely indicate the human had

Figure 3.9: **Wu Shen. Painting of Pine and Waterfall (left).** Yuan dynasty (1279–1368 CE). Hanging scroll, size unknown. Nanjing Museum, Nanjing, China.
Ma Lin. Quietly Listen to the Sound of Pines (right). Southern Song Dynasty (1127–1279 CE). Hanging scroll, ink and color on silk, 110.3 x 226.6 cm. National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan.

the characteristics of the pine (fig. 3.9 right). This propensity deeply influenced the eyes of garden designers. Therefore, together with Chinese literary meanings and painting's further extrapolation, the pine became a very popular plant in Chinese gardens. It could

be planted alone or in groups. If it is single in a garden, its beauty always comes from its old age and suffering appearance as is shown in Chinese paintings (fig. 3.10).

Figure 3.10: **Jie Tai Temple Garden, Beijing, China.** This garden was first constructed during the Sui Dynasty (589–618 CE). This temple garden is famous for its old pine trees and other plants. Lying Dragon Pine (left). Nine Dragons Pine (right). Both of them are over 1000 years old now.

Bamboo (竹) whose leaves remain green in winter, whose flexible branches and trunks stand the strong wind without breaking, whose new shoots always spring in the mud of winter, symbolized the virtue of survival in adversity in early Chinese literary works. Furthermore, benefiting from the birth of bamboo painting in the Wei-Jin period, bamboo became a special plant in Chinese garden. It was always regarded as a good “friend” in the eyes of scholars (fig. 3.11). A famous story is about Wang Ziyou,³⁶ who let his servant plant bamboo trees near his temporary living place. His servant didn’t understand and asked him, “We just stay here for several days, why do we bother to plant them?” Wang replied, “How can we for a single day do without these men?” Chinese history contains many stories of famous literati-painters who loved to plant bamboo in their gardens. We can find this in their paintings which remain to this day. For example, Weng Zhengming, a famous painter of the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644 CE) designed *Zhuo*

³⁶Wang Ziyou was a famous scholar of the Eastern Jin (317–420 CE).

Figure 3.11: **Wen Tong. Monochrome Bamboo Tree.** Northern Song Dynasty (960–1127 CE). Hanging scroll, ink on silk, 105.4 x 131.6 cm. National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan.

Zheng Garden (Humble Administrator's Garden). He planted many bamboo trees in this garden. Zheng Banqiao, a great painter of the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911 CE) planted bamboos in his courtyard. For those literati-painters, bamboo was not an objective thing anymore; it has been likened to a gentleman who had an unyielding personality in their hearts not only in their paintings but also in their gardens. That is why most Chinese gardens have bamboo trees. For example, Ge Garden in Yangzhou, a southern city of China, was especially constructed to celebrate the metaphor of bamboo trees (fig. 3.12).

Figure 3.12: **Ge Garden, Yangzhou, Jiangsu Province, China.** Qing Dynasty (1644–1911 CE). Ge Garden was constructed in 1818 CE by the owner Wang Zhijun, a high court official. He appreciated the characteristics of bamboo so much that he planted thousands of bamboo trees in his garden. Moreover, he even named his garden as “Ge (个)”, which is a part of Chinese character “Bamboo (竹)”. Today the garden is famous for its bamboo trees and artificial mountains.

Plum (梅) because it could bloom in the winter time and its delicate white or pink flowers could stand the chilly wind and cold snow, represented “both the purity of the scholar as well as beauty amid harsh conditions”. Appreciate the characteristic of plum. The plum became a painting subject after the Wei-Jin Period. Since then, literati-painters loved to depict its delicate flowers in their paintings. In gardens, it also appeared very

Figure 3.13: **Wang Mian. Monochrome Plum.** Yuan Dynasty (1279–1368 CE) Handscroll, ink on paper, 31.9 x 50.9 cm. The Palace Museum, Beijing, China.

early. For example, Wang Anshi (1021–1101 CE), an economist, a statesman, as well as a famous poet of the Song Dynasty (960–1279 CE) once composed a famous poem about plums in his yard. It reads:

*At a wall corner some plum trees grow,
Alone against cold white blossoms blow.
Aloof one knows they aren't the snow,
As faint through air soft fragrances flow.*³⁷

But the metaphorical transfer of the plum from literary works to gardens was assisted greatly by Chinese paintings. For instance, Wang Mian³⁸, the most famous plum painter in Chinese painting history, is regarded as having the same personality as the plum does in Chinese literature. His plum paintings let people recall his unyielding character in that he would rather lead a life of poverty than serve the crude foreign court (fig. 3.13).

³⁷Translator is unknown. See <http://www.wenxinshe.org/040sp3/ReadNews.asp?NewsID=2465>

³⁸Wang Mian (1287–1359 CE) was a famous poet and painter of the Yuan Dynasty (1279–1368 CE). He led a life of retreat in the Jiuli Mountain and made a living of selling his paintings. In his poems, Wang always expresses his indignation regarding the rule of the Yuan Dynasty, a dynasty ruled by foreign invaders. This kind of resentment is also well represented in his plum paintings. At that time, he was well known as only painting the plum trees which grew in the wilderness instead of in the gardens of officials. He called his plum the “wild plum”.

Therefore, the maturity of the plant metaphor in the Chinese garden was a contribution of both Chinese literature and painting.

Orchid (兰) because it always grows in less noticed places, its leaves are slender and fragile, its appearance looks modest like grasses, and because the fragrance of its flowers penetrates everywhere, has been associated with the virtues of “culture, refinement, and nobility.” [8, p.42] For example, in the book, *Words of Confucius*, it says that “orchid

Figure 3.14: **Zheng Sixiao. Section of Monochrome Orchid.** Yuan Dynasty (1279–1368 CE), 1306 CE. Handscroll, ink on paper, 25.4 x 94.5 cm. The National Museum of Art, Osaka, Japan.

is growing in the deep forest, it spreads its fragrance although without the presentation of people; gentlemen should keep learning the Dao and cultivating his personality, which couldn't be changed by his poverty.”[6, p.378] Although Chinese literature was the first presenter of the Chinese orchid metaphor, in the same way as the contribution of Wang Mian's plum paintings were the presenters of the metaphor of the plum for Chinese garden context, the influence of Chinese orchid painting could never be omitted. For example, Zheng Sixiao³⁹ (1214–1318 CE) benefited a lot from this metaphor. In painting

³⁹Zheng Sixiao (1214–1318 CE) was an outstanding poet and painter of the Yuan Dynasty (1279–1368 CE).

history, Zheng is outstanding for his orchid painting. When people see his orchids without land (fig. 3.14), they could not help but remember his virtue. It is recorded that Zheng retreated to a temple of Suzhou, a southern city of China after witnessing his country's conquest. As a recluse, he always painted his favorite flower—the orchid. When his close friends asked him why he drew the orchid in that way (no land and sometimes with roots exposed), he said, “my country has been occupied by invaders, how could my orchid have its land?”. In addition, in order to vividly paint his orchid, he planted a lot of orchids in his temple garden. Painting and planting the orchid became his main activity. Since then, the orchid has clearly represented the human virtues of cultural refinement and nobility in the eyes of Chinese garden designers and owners.

Chrysanthemum (菊) because it never competes with other flowers, but just quietly blooms in the autumn when other flowers have already faded, it stands for the virtue of gentility and good fellowship. Chrysanthemum was the favorite flower of Tao Yuanming, a literati-recluse of the Jin Dynasty. His famous sentence, “I pluck chrysanthemums on the eastern hedge, then lifting my eyes, I gaze long at the Southern Hill.” [8, p.37] makes chrysanthemum always relate to a wild and solitary feeling. Since the Song Dynasty (960–1279 CE), more and more poets created poems about this characteristic of the chrysanthemum. For example, Zheng Sixiao wrote, “Never blossoms with other flowers, Yet endless dignity arising when it stands alone by the sparse fence.” [6, p.376] In the Chinese painting field, Xu Wei (1521–1593 CE) is famous for his chrysanthemum paintings (fig. 3.15). He always depicted it in a wild and dignified manner. As we know from the poem of Tao Yuanming, chrysanthemum has already been planted in Chinese gardens since the Wei-Jin Period. But the metaphor of the chrysanthemum was not clear at that time, it needed the effort of both literati and painters to spread the metaphor in the garden.

Lotus (莲) The spotless lotus flower coming from the dirty mud of the pond is always likened to a person in Chinese literary works who has a strong will to keep his virtue no

Figure 3.15: **Xu Wei. Chrysanthemum.** Ming Dynasty (1368–1644 CE). Hanging scroll, ink on paper, size: unknown. Liaoning Museum, Shenyang, China.

matter how compromising the social circumstances. For example, Li Bai (701–762 CE), the great poet of the Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE), wrote, “Lotus rising from the clear water, natural without any decoration.” [6, p.378] The metaphor of the lotus was further

Figure 3.16: **Chen Hongshou. Section of Lotus and Chinese Ducks.**

Ming Dynasty (1368–1644 CE). Hanging scroll, color on silk, 98.3 x 183 cm.

The Palace Museum, Beijing, China.

developed in Chinese literature and painting. Another literary masterpiece about the lotus flower is *Why I love the Lotus*. It was composed by Zhou Dunyi, a distinguished Chinese philosopher of the eleventh century CE. The essay is very short but written in an elegant style.

*How stainless it rises from its slimy bed! How modestly it reposes on the clear pool! Symmetrically perfect. Its subtle perfume is wafted far and wide; while there it rests in spotless state, something to be regarded reverently from a distance, and not to be profaned by familiar approach.*⁴⁰

⁴⁰Translated by Shao Chang Lee, editor. *Chinese Houses and Garden*. Hastings House, New York, 1950, p. 42.

Stimulated and inspired by those works, the lotus became a popular subject of Chinese painters. In their paintings, the lotus is always shown simply and clearly (fig. 3.16). Those great literary works and paintings deeply impacted the Chinese garden design. Since the Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE), planting lotuses in a garden was not a rare thing. For example, Bai Juyi (772–846 CE) especially loved to plant lotus in his gardens. He said in his essays, “Surrounding the lotus is the small path in the bamboo trees.” and “In the pool are those white lotus and white fishes”. [15, p.84] During the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644 CE), making garden scenes centered on the lotus was very popular. For example, in *Zhuo Zheng Garden* (Humble Administrator’s Garden), a garden first built in the Ming Dynasty, “Hall of Remote Fragrance” (fig. 3.17 left), “Pavilion of Four Sides Lotus Wind” (fig. 3.8 right) and “Fragrant Islet” (fig. 3.17 right) were all designed to appreciate the lotus in the garden. Why did those garden designers love the lotus so much? It is because the lotus was not merely an objective thing anymore; it was a

Figure 3.17: **Humble Administrator’s Garden, Suzhou, Jiangsu Province, China.** Ming dynasty (1368–1644 CE). In this garden, many scenes were purposely designed to appreciate the lotus. For example, Hall of Remote Fragrance (left); Fragrant Islet (right).

subjective form of the human virtue of integrity in tempting circumstances—a very old Chinese cultural metaphor.

At the end of this section, we should understand that the development of plant metaphors is a very long journey. This whole system is really impossible to be rep-

resented by one poem, one painting or one dynasty. It is a great epic that was created by all the great poets and painters throughout Chinese history. Each of their poems and paintings made its contribution to benefit this enterprise, like little streams which form a big river that empties into the sea—into the Chinese garden. Indeed, garden plants are where the Chinese spirits of those great scholars resided. They also help us faithfully perceive Immanuel Kant's (1724–1804 CE) ⁴¹ words that “Beauties are the symbol of morals.”[6, p.382]

Architectural Decoration

In Chinese classic gardens, architectural decoration included a lot of patterns. In addition to the plants, there were many animal patterns. How to choose various animal patterns was also guided by different metaphors in Chinese culture. Similar to plants, animal metaphors were also created by Chinese literature and paintings. Here is a brief review of animal design meanings and garden examples.

Bat (蝠) has the same pronunciation as the character “福”(blessing) in China. So people liked to use the figures of bats to indicate a “blessing”. For example, in the Garden of Gong Wang in Beijing, a water pond was constructed in a form of “bat” (fig. 3.18). It also appeared in the window lattice of the garden buildings.

Deer (鹿) was a favorite subject of Chinese figure painters. “Deer” has the same pronunciation as “Fortune(禄)” in China. In addition, the Chinese god of fortune was always accompanied by a deer. Therefore, it was a symbol of fortune.

Crane (鹤) was the animal of the Chinese god of longevity. Crane with pine was always used as a celebration of longevity. In Chinese gardens, a crane pattern always appeared in the middle of a pebble-paveway or window lattice.

⁴¹Immanuel Kant is one of the most influential philosophers in the history of Western philosophy. His contributions to metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, and aesthetics have had a profound impact on almost every philosophical movement that followed him. Further information see Fieser, James. editor. The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy. 2004. 18 September 2004. <www.iep.utm.edu/k/kantmeta.htm>.

Figure 3.18: **Garden of Gong Wang Fu, Beijing, China.** Qing Dynasty (1644–1911 CE). There are “Three Great Scenes” in this garden. One is the calligraphy “福”. It was written by the Emperor of Kangxi (1654–1722 CE), who wrote this character as a gift for his mother’s birthday. This character was inscribed on a huge stone on an artificial mountain. To complement it, a nearby pond was constructed in a bat pattern. Moreover, the pond was also named, “Bat Pond”.

Dragon (龙) is a fictional animal figure in Chinese culture. The dragon has been described as a kind of beast, which combines the strong points from other animals. It has “the head of a camel, the horns of a deer, the ears of an ox, the eyes of a hare, the body of a snake covered with the scales of a carp, the claws of an eagle, and the paws of a tiger.” [8, p.41] ⁴² It can fly in the clouds as well as swim in the water. It was a symbol of strength and represented the “Yang”. In the secular world, it was the symbol of the emperor.

Phoenix (凤) is also an imaginary figure for the Chinese people, which combines the merits from other fowls. It has the big body of the ostrich, the colorful tail of peacock, the legs of crane, the wings of swan and with the five-color feather all over.⁴³ It always flies in the sky, and would only rest on the tung tree.⁴⁴ It was a symbol of elegance and represented the beauty of “Yin”. Worldly, it was the symbol of the queen.

Normally, these two animals figures (dragon and phoenix) were used to decorate the windows or were painted on the wall in imperial and temple gardens (fig. 3.19). Since they were the symbols of King and Queen, private gardens or scholar gardens were forbidden to use them.

Strictly speaking, since the Wei-Jin Period (220–420 CE), Chinese literature and painting has played a crucial role in Chinese garden. Both of them taught those learned garden designers how to evaluate the beauty of mountains, water, plants and animals of the physical world in a spiritual way. For the Chinese classic gardens, it was the first step toward growth into a spiritual place from the original mythic landscape. Hence, animal and plant symbols in literature taken from nature were easily re-adapted to gardens’ natural setting. Literature therefore served as a continuous “catalogue” for garden elements,

⁴²Chinese dragon has no wings at its back, but still could fly in the sky; Chinese dragon is in charge of the water, so it could create the cloud and bring the rain, unlike the one spraying the fire from its mouth in the Western world.

⁴³Chinese phoenix is different from the Western phoenix, which can rebirth from the fire.

⁴⁴Tung tree is the only place where the phoenix will have a rest in Chinese culture, so Tung tree has another name phoenix tree.

Figure 3.19: **A Temple Garden, Hangzhou**, Zhejiang Province, China. A window with a dragon design (left), delicately carved and tinted in pastel colors. A window with a phoenix design (right), companion to the left window.

forms, plant materials and metaphors despite the fact gardening had no written tradition itself.

3.3 The Poem On Literati Painting

Another significant influence of Chinese literature on the Chinese classic garden is more striking than the metaphorical references cited earlier— horizontal or vertical boards inscribed with words or poems. They were hung on the walls, pillars and doorways in everywhere in gardens. For traditional garden designers, they were very important, because they further helped them convey their various designing intentions in every different corner of the garden. They believed that naming and adding proper couplets to the scenes was the last step in garden designing. This special attitude to Chinese literature in the Chinese classic garden was adapted from a discovery made in Chinese painting.

3.3.1 The Appearance of Poem in Chinese Painting

We know this fact that except for painters' signatures, Western traditional painting was an art of no words. Even the title of the painting was indicated in a separate label. The painting was just a painting. Writing was merely a separate thing to record, describe, celebrate or criticize the painting's existence. There was a clear line to divide them. But in a Chinese painting, we always encounter lots of words. It is striking to notice that poems like images can directly participate in the creation of a Chinese painting (fig. 3.20). Poems shared the same status in a painting as the painting itself. Sometimes, without

Figure 3.20: **Huang Gongwang. Section of Living in the Fu Chun Mountain.**

Yuan Dynasty (1279–1368 CE). Handscroll, ink on paper, 33 x 639.9 cm. The whole painting was divided into two parts by a fire in the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644 CE). Now, the first part is in Zhejiang Museum, Hangzhou, China; the second part is in National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan. In Yuan dynasty, Chinese painting had already evolved into a complex artistic form, which combines poetry, calligraphy and painting together.

words, not only the balance of the whole painting is broken, but also the meaning behind a painting is severely obscured. This characteristic of Chinese painting didn't appear until the Yuan Dynasty (1279–1368 CE).

The appearance of poems in the painting is regarded as a milestone in the history of Chinese painting. Before it, Chinese literature was only the mother of Chinese painting metaphors, which once helped landscape painting and plant and animal painting bear

certain human virtues. It was only playing the role of the *reference source*, which inspired the painters. But since the Wei-Jin Period, Chinese painting became more and more about an art that would best express the authors' feelings. The metaphor was clearly not enough. At the end of the Song Dynasty (960–1279 CE), in order to fully express their rich and various emotions, some painters introduced a poem or short essay into the art of painting to directly "tell or hint at the mood, *raison d'être* and/or circumstances of its creation." [9, p.35] Through this, on the one hand, the painter could guide the viewer in how to look at his or her painting. Without being physically present, the painter could directly talk with the viewer about what he or she wanted to express in the painting. On the other hand, instead of guessing or analysing, these words on the painting were convenient for viewers to catch the painters' feeling and personality. This innovative experiment soon became very popular among painters during the Yuan Dynasty (1279–1368 CE). Since then, poems have become inseparable part of Chinese painting. Let us examine several paintings in order to understand the important role the painting poems have played.

For example, Shen Zhou's (1427–1509 CE) *Towering Mount Lu* (fig. 3.7) is worth examining again. It was painted for Shen Zhou's teacher Chen Kuan in 1467 CE. Although high mountain is a symbolism which has already hinted at his instructor's virtue, in the eyes of Shen Zhou, it was not enough to express his admiration. So he deliberately composed a poem at the upper-right corner of this painting after technically rendering the image of Mount Lu. The beginning of this poem describes the splendid scenery of Mountain Lu, then changes to appraise his teacher's character as follows,

*I was one who listened about his door
Looking up at his lofty eminence
Mount Lu is no longer high ... [12, p.17]*

Together with Shen Zhou's mountain and water images, the poem allows the painting to thoroughly and clearly speak to us. Although almost 600 years have passed, with the words, a viewer still can catch the essence of the painting. But in this circumstance, the

poem is merely playing as an assistant to make the literary metaphor of the mountain and water more powerful. In some other cases, the role of the poem or essay in a painting is much more important than we had imagined before. Without it, the painting can only be regarded as a very general art piece, because it loses the real purpose and intention about its creation that are conveyed by the poem and image together.

Now, let us have a look at one painting of Zheng Banqiao's (1693–1765 CE)⁴⁵ bamboo trees. It was named, *Bamboo Trees in the Wind* (fig. 3.21). According to the Chinese literary metaphor, the bamboo tree always symbolizes the virtue of survival in adversity. Is that a hint that Zheng Banqiao wanted to use the painting to indicate his unyielding character? Without the poem, we would surely think that. But after reading his poem at the right bottom corner, we are very surprised by the intention of the painter and appreciate the whole painting in a very different way. The poem reads:

*Listening to the sound of bamboo leaves swaying in the wind while lying
in the bed of my reading room,
Wondering if are the sound of woe from the masses.
Although we are just some minor officials,
Concern about a piece of leaf or a small branch is always about the love
to the people.*

After reading this poem, we can truly realize what was the motivation of Zheng Banqiao when he created this painting. Here, bamboo trees were just objective things, which Zheng borrowed to place his personal feeling and opinion on how to be a good minor official. Reading between the poem's lines, we can experience deeply that Zheng had a lofty personality. The first half of the poem indicates that he was very concerned about the life of his country men. Zheng heard the sound of bamboo leaves as the sound of sufferings coming from the people. In the second part, as a minor official, Zheng expressed his political ideal that he diligently did his job in a detailed way to benefit his people.

⁴⁵Zheng Banqiao (1693–1765 CE) was a famous painter of the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911 CE). He was especially adept at painting bamboo trees and orchids. He had been a minor official for over ten years by middle age. During this period, people loved him so much, because he was always concerned about the weal and woe of the people. After he retired, he lived in Yangzhou, a southern city of China and made a living selling his paintings.

Figure 3.21: **Zheng Banqiao. Bamboo Trees in the Wind.**
Qing dynasty (1644–1911 CE). Hanging scroll, ink on paper, size
unknown.

This poem carries the complex feelings of the painter; without the poem nobody would pick up this purpose. So the function of this poem is to help us feel the same emotion of the painter when he created this painting. Back to the image of bamboo trees again, in our eyes, it is not the original one of our first viewing. On the contrary, we now begin to appreciate the trees in an emotional way such that each touch of the brush, no matter it is a piece of leaf or a small twig, reminds us of Zheng's love for his people.

These two examples are used to demonstrate how important a painting poem could be in a Chinese painting. We know a masterpiece is always appreciated for its power to transmit the feeling of the artist and arouse a resonance in the viewer. In this aspect, the poem in a Chinese painting plays this significant role. Both images and poems benefit each other and highlight each other. For Chinese painters, this joining of images and words was such a breakthrough in Chinese painting that they accepted it immediately after its appearance. During the Yuan Dynasty (1279–1368 CE), it had already become very popular among literati painters. From then on, almost all Chinese paintings would be accompanied by poems, which were regarded as the last step to fully finish a painting.

In a word, a poem could help the mind of the viewer reset back to the painting's original moment of creation, no matter the era of the viewer or where he or she is standing. So in the Yuan Dynasty (1279–1368 CE) the art of Chinese painting had already become a complex art accomplishment, which included literature, calligraphy, and painting together. This kind of aesthetic taste began to foster and nurture the eyes of scholars. It played an very important role in Chinese garden designing during the Ming (1368–1644 CE) and the Qing (1644–1911 CE) Dynasties.

3.3.2 Poem from Painting to Garden

Commonly, there are two kinds of hanging boards with inscribed words in a Chinese garden. One always appears alone and in the middle, called *Bian*(匾). Words on it are used to convey the name of a garden, a building or a scenery. The other is the vertical

boards. They always appear in twos, called *Dui Lian*(对联) or couplet. The couplet should be read from the left to the right. They contain exactly the same number of characters and between them there is a correspondance in the tone and meanings. In most gardens, *Bian* and couplet appear together. A couplet was used to further explain the title or praise the scenery. The function of couplets in a Chinese garden was exactly like the poem in a Chinese painting. After discovering its evolution, we can understand how these hanging boards were influenced by Chinese painting.

The couplet has a long history. It originally came from *Tao Fu*, which was a kind of peach wood charm against evil, hung on the gate on the lunar New Year's Eve (or Spring Festival) in ancient Chinese times. Later, the Chinese character appeared on the charm instead of the figures of the gods.⁴⁶ Although the first couplet recorded in Chinese history was in 965 CE, it didn't become very popular until the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644 CE), because the first emperor promulgated a decree that every family must post a couplet on the door to celebrate the Spring Festival. Therefore, before the participation of Chinese scholars, couplets were merely used as a simple charm to celebrate a festival. Moreover, it would only stay on a building for several days. After the Spring Festival, it would be taken off. So strictly speaking, although a couplet on building had a long history before the Ming Dynasty, it had a huge difference from the couplet, which appeared in Chinese gardens in the Ming (1368–1644 CE) and the Qing (1644–1911 CE) Dynasties. The later couplet had evolved from wood charm into an idea transmitter of designers or owners in Chinese gardening.

This significant change was made by Chinese scholars. At that time, they were already very familiar with the creative possibilities of using several artistic forms together to clearly express their ideas. It was first discovered in Chinese painting and spread by these scholars. When the first emperor of Ming promulgated that decree, the Spring

⁴⁶According to the record of *Shan Hai Jin*, Shen Tu and Yu Lei are two gods who can subdue the evil and protect the people.

Festival couplet that hung on the building inspired some garden designers and owners to use this literary form to write down their ideas and thoughts on garden designing in the same manner as painters composed poems to explain their paintings. Since they well understood the importance of the poem in painting, they regarded the couplets also as a part of a garden's design. They inscribed the characters on two boards and painted them to keep them permanent. At that moment, the Chinese garden couplet joined the whole garden art design. This development began in the Ming Dynasty, but became mature during the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911 CE).⁴⁷ In this period, naming and adding proper couplets to the scenes in every corner in a garden⁴⁸ regarded as the last step in designing. In the important novel, Cao Xueqing's (c. 1715–1763 CE) *Red Mansions* of the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911 CE), one character in his novel said, "No matter how big the scene is, and how many pavilions (in the garden), without words and naming, even though the flowers and willows, mountains and waters are still there, they couldn't bring the colors to the garden." [6, p.241]

Here, an example could help us understand the importance of couplets in a Chinese garden. Figure 3.22 shows a couplet in *Garden of Blue Wave Pavilion*⁴⁹, which was inscribed in the front pillars of the Blue Wave Pavilion.

Surrounded by verdant plants, this pavilion is located at the top of a huge artificial mountain, which is the highest point in the garden. From there, one could have an

⁴⁷In the Qing Dynasty, couplets even became a major literary genre. Instead of only being used as charms at the Spring Festival, couplets could be used everywhere and at anytime, such as business couplets, longevity couplets, elegiac couplets, temple couplets, game couplets, door couplets, hall couplets and so on. The modern Chinese scholar, Nan Huaijing, even compares the achievement of *Couplets* in the Qing Dynasty with Poems in the Tang Dynasty, *Ci*(词)(poetry written to certain tunes with strict tonal patterns and rhyme schemes, in fixed numbers of lines and words, originating in the Tang Dynasty [618–907 CE] and fully developed in the Song Dynasty [960–1279 CE]) and *Qu*(曲)(a type of verse for singing, which emerged in the Southern Song and Jin Dynasties and became popular in the Yuan Dynasty.)

⁴⁸Generally, a Chinese garden is divided into many small spaces. Each space has neither narrative relation nor a prescribed sequence with the other. But each space has a subject, which is always indicated in its naming and couplets.

⁴⁹For information about this garden please also refer to p. 54–55, Su Shunqing and why he constructed the *Garden of Blue Wave Pavilion* in the Northern Song Dynasty (960–1127 CE).

Figure 3.22: **Garden of Blue Wave Pavilion, Suzhou, Jiangsu Province, China.** Northern Song Dynasty (960–1127 CE). Its couplet was inscripted in the two front pillars of Blue Wave Pavilion.

overview of the whole garden. Nearby is a canal watercourse with clear water, which only passes along one side of the garden. Although the layout of this pavilion and its surrounding environment are already very impressive by themselves, the couplet on the pillars is the one that indeed brings colors to this scene (fig. 3.23). It says,

*Gentle breeze and bright moon are of no value as they are,
Yet both nearby water and far-off mountain are of feelings.*⁵⁰

This couplet uses the power of Chinese literature to indicate to a person how to appreciate this scene. On the one hand, it reminds one that at this location there are many other elements that can be appreciated in addition to the pavilion and the plants; for instance, the soft breeze, the bright moon, the nearby water and the remote mountain.

⁵⁰It was created by three Chinese literati together, who lived in different dynasties. The first part comes from a poem of Ouyang Xiu, a friend of the garden owner as well as an outstanding literati. The second part comes from a poem of Su Shunqing, the first designer as well as the owner of this garden. Arranging these two poem sentences into a couplet was done by Liang Zhangju (1775–1849 CE), a literati of the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911 CE).

Figure 3.23: **Garden of Blue Wave Pavilion, Suzhou, Jiangsu Province, China.** Northern Song Dynasty (960–1127 CE). The couplet on the pillars of Blue Wave Pavilion. It was created by three Chinese literati together, who lived in different dynasties. The first part comes from a poem of Ouyang Xiu, a friend of the garden owner as well as an outstanding literati. The second part comes from a poem of Su Shunqing, the first designer as well as the owner of this garden. Arranging these two poem sentences into a couplet was done by Liang Zhangju (1775–1849 CE), a literati of the Qing Dynasty. This couple not only reminds visitors of the respectable owner (Su Shunqing) but also directs their minds on how to view the scene.

Although those things are not created by the garden designer or included in the garden, one could borrow them to amuse his or her eyes as far as one's eyesight could reach. On the other hand, this couplet brings human feeling to the scene. It uses the words "nearby water and far-off mountain are of feelings" to highlight the traditional metaphor of the mountain and water, which always referred to a lofty human virtue. In this couplet, once again, by borrowing Su Shunqing's poem, Liang Zhangju lets us recall the construction motivation of this garden. So this couplet helps enrich one's experience and feeling, which in the past could only be conveyed by literature. Its significance can hardly be overestimated, for it teaches one how to "see" and how to "appreciate" a good view.

In the Chinese classic garden, literature has informed the perception of the Chinese garden since the Wei-Jin Period, when Chinese literati-painting worked together. Shen Congzhou, a modern Chinese garden scholar, once claimed that, "the study of Chinese gardens should *begin* with the study of Chinese poetry and prose." [4, p.219] But between literature and garden, Chinese painting was a pivotal bridge to connect them. Firstly, in the Wei-Jin Period (220–420 CE), painting helped those metaphors made by Chinese literati take form into visual images. The teachings about "what one should indeed 'see' in certain images" were gradually formed and shared by those scholars who could own or design a garden. Secondly, in the Yuan Dynasty (1279–1368 CE), a word format was joined with images in the art of Chinese painting to further express the rich emotion and intention of the painting works. Later, such "connection between word and image"—what was first adopted in Chinese painting—became the most significant and powerful creative advance in Chinese garden design in the Ming (1368–1644 CE) and the Qing (1644–1911 CE) Dynasties, and we still depend upon this strategy of artistic creation today.⁵¹

⁵¹Today this way is named as mixed-media in the artistic field. For example, a painting could be created by combining collage, painting and embroidery together.

It should not be too surprising, then, to find that the attitude to the literature in the Chinese garden was exactly the same as that of the literature in Chinese painting. On the whole, numerous invaluable paintings and painting theories of each dynasty played a significant role to train the eyes and nourish the mind of Chinese garden designers, especially at building gardens' spiritual world. Therefore, despite the absence of a written theory, Chinese classic garden still could survive and develop by the knowledge adapted from Chinese painting.

Now, we return to the Chinese painting itself—what are its aesthetic rules and what are their influence on how to arrange a beautiful Chinese garden?

Chapter 4

Aesthetic Rules

The most beautiful lady is an ugly thing in a fish's eyes.

—— 西施不美

“What is beauty?” We know that “beauty is in the eye of the beholder”. Zhuang Zi (369–286 BCE), an ancient Chinese philosopher, stated in his works that Mao Qiang and Li Ji were two beautiful women based on the standard of human beings. But if a fish saw them, it would swim away into the depths; if a bird saw them, it would fly away into the sky; and if a deer saw them, it would gallop away at full speed. Zhuang Zi questioned, “Which of these knows what is truly beautiful?” He then pointed out that “beauty” has various standards. Today, it is well acceptable that criteria of beauty are strikingly different with various cultures.

This chapter discusses several distinguishing aesthetic principles of Chinese landscape painting in detail, like these of “The Beauty of Yin and Yang”, “Aesthetics of Idealism”, “Imagination Aesthetics” and “Monochrome Aesthetics”. From discovering their philosophical and religious roots to their corresponding influences on the appearance of gardens, we find that the principles and methods used and recorded in landscape painting are exactly the same as those employed in gardening. We are trying to demonstrate that the Chinese garden was a three-dimensional extension of landscape painting in this actual world. Therefore, if a person has a pair of Chinese painter's eyes, he or she could

understand and appreciate the beauty of a Chinese garden easily.

4.1 Aesthetics of Yin and Yang

Mountain and water are the most essential parts of a garden.

—— 园林山水，最不可无。¹

The aesthetics of Yin and Yang are the pivotal principle for one to understand Chinese landscape painting. It not only has a profound philosophical root in Chinese culture, but also deeply influenced the appearance of the Chinese classic garden.

4.1.1 Philosophical Root

In China, the theory of the division and unification of *Yin*(阴) and *Yang*(阳) can be dated back as early as the Zhou Dynasty (11th century–221 BCE) in an ancient Chinese book named *I Ching* or *Book of Changes*.

Firstly, according to this theory, everything in the world can be categorized into two philosophical contradictory concepts—Yin and Yang. For example, in the natural world: sun is Yang, moon is Yin; day is Yang, night is Yin; heaven is Yang, earth is Yin; mountain is Yang, water is Yin. In the human society: male is Yang, female is Yin; king is Yang, official is Yin; husband is Yang, wife is Yin; life is Yang, death is Yin. In the status and quality of things, Yang and Yin also represent: up and down, rigid and gentle, bright and dark, outside and inside, forward and backward, strong and weak. Based on this traditional philosophical origin, the beauty in China is also divided into two different styles. One is the beauty of Yang, which is like “the thunder, the lighting, the strong wind coming out of the ravine, the sublime mountain and precipitous cliff, the roaring river, running horses; to light, like the broiling sun, the fire, the pure gold . . .” The other

¹Said by Wen Zhenheng (1585–1645 CE), a famous scholar of the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644 CE). In Chinese history, Wen Zhenheng is famous for his book named *Zhang Wu Zhi* (Records of Excellent Creations / Treatise on superfluous things).

is the beauty of Yin, which is like “the morning sun, the soft wind, the mist, the rosy clouds, the fog, the quiet woods and twisting brook in the ravine, like ripples, like the trivial movement of the water, like the shining of the pearl and jade, like the crying of goose and swan in the void space ...”²

Secondly, this ancient theory also focuses on the relationship between these two contradictory concepts—Yin and Yang. It says that no matter the concept, it must exist with and be explained by its opposite. Otherwise, it is meaningless. The whole universe consists of Yin and Yang together. When it applies to the issue of the aesthetics of Yin and Yang, the ideal beauty of the universe should also combine the two different styles of beauty together, because each beauty is benefited by the other’s participation.

4.1.2 Landscape Painting—Perfect Unification of Yin and Yang

We know that landscape painting in China has another name, “Mountain and Water Painting”, which means a painting should always contain those two basic elements. One is the mountain, the other is the water. Rarely is there an exception. Why did Chinese traditional painters paint their ideal landscape in this way? It is because they were deeply influenced by the aesthetics of Yin and Yang. Firstly, according to the Chinese aesthetics of Yin and Yang, mountains are rigid and represent the beauty of Yang, while formless waters are submissive and represent the beauty of Yin. When water meets mountain, it yields to mountain’s form. Each shapes the other and each reflects the other. With water, a mountain looks alive; with a mountain, water looks more gentle. So the perfect beauty of the universe is combined with Yin and Yang, two different beauties together.

Secondly, the unification of Yin and Yang is further explained by traditional painters and critics. They borrowed the concepts from the ancient Chinese myth of God Pangu to enhance the relationship between mountains and water. In that story, mountains are

²Said by Yao Nai (1732–1815 CE), a famous Chinese scholar. He made a great contribution in the field of Chinese aesthetics. He provided a dualism to judge the style of writing in the Chinese literary domain based on the ancient theory of Yin and Yang.

interpreted as human's bones, while water is human's blood and marrow. They wrote,

*Streams are the blood veins of a mountain, the vegetation its hair, the clouds and mists its expression. Therefore, a mountain becomes alive with water, luxuriant with bushes and trees, and graceful with clouds.*³

*Is not water, whether trickling, flowing, spraying, foaming, splashing, or in rivers or oceans, the very blood and marrow of Heaven and Earth? Blood nourishes the embryo and the marrow nourishes the bones. Bones without marrow are dead bones. Such bones are like dry soil and can no longer be called bones. Mountains are bones, since water has formed them, and for this reason the ancients paid careful attention to painting waterfalls...*⁴

Therefore, for a Chinese landscape painter, if a rock was not surrounded by water, it was a dead rock. A mountain without waterfall or brook inside was a dead mountain. Beauty could never appear in a dead thing. This strong and inseparable connection between mountains and water in Chinese landscape painting theory deeply impacted a fundamental concept—"what is the ideal natural beauty?". It has been clearly defined as the "combination of mountains and water", which correspondingly symbolizes the beauty of Yang and the beauty of Yin in the universe. It is not surprising that this kind of aesthetic would influence the appearance of Chinese classic garden, and as it pervaded Chinese culture in general, it is easy to understand how these characteristics persisted in Chinese gardens even without a written body of theory.

4.1.3 Dry Rock Garden—An Impossible Mission for the Chinese

Once we grasp this aesthetic principle, many opinions about the garden mountains and water written by Chinese traditional scholars can be readily understood. Otherwise, they are really difficult to understand. For example, at the end of the Ming Dynasty

³Translated by Yutang Lin, editor. *The Chinese Theory of Art*. William Heinemann Ltd, London, 1967, p. 78.

⁴Translated by Mai-Mai Sze, editor. *The Mustard Seed Garden Manual of Painting—Chieh Tzu Yuan Hua Chuan, 1679–1701*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1977, p. 203

(1368–1644 CE), Ji Cheng made a comment in his *Yuan Ye* that, “if artificial mountains could come out of a water pond, the scene would be the best of the best in a garden.” [2, p.204] (fig. 4.1) Another famous scholar living around the end of the Ming Dynasty, Wen

Figure 4.1: **Garden of Wen Lan Ge, Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, China.** Qing Dynasty (1644–1911 CE), first constructed in 1782 CE. This scene is a rock in a water pond.

Zhenheng again pointed out that, “mountains and water are the most essential parts of a garden.” Based on the specific explanation about the aesthetics of Yin and Yang in Chinese landscape theories, we should understand that the Chinese classic garden is always a kind of garden with mountains and water together.

In addition, this aesthetic could also help us comprehend why the Chinese couldn’t create a dry rock garden as the Japanese did it, for example, the *Ryoan-ji* (fig. 4.2), although we know that these two nations share much cultural and religious similarity,⁵ and both countries’ gardens are categorized in the same style—ideal and stylized. The key issue here is that the Chinese believe a dry rock is a dead rock; there is no life at

⁵Due to their geographical positions, the communication between China and Japan has never stopped since ancient times. Therefore, these two nations share many similarities. For example, both languages belong to hieroglyph; Buddhism is their common philosophy (in Japan, Buddhism is named as Zenism).

Figure 4.2: **Dry Rock Garden, Ryoan-ji, Kyoto, Japan.** Muromachi period, c. 1480 CE. Several dry rocks scattered in a yard paved with gravel, which represents the sea. No literal water surrounds them.

all if there is no water. The beauty of Yang symbolized by mountain or rock couldn't be realized without the beauty of Yin beside it. So the Chinese could never create a dry garden as the Japanese did. According to Chinese belief, it is an impossible mission.

4.2 Aesthetics of Idealism

Come from nature but better than nature
—— 本于自然，高于自然

In China, the beauty of nature was expressed on paper or silk in an idealistic manner. Traditional Chinese artists believed that idealism was the best and only way to achieve their artistic pursuits—making natural beauty perfect and eternal in their paintings. This kind of understanding about idealism also benefited their garden design. Strategies of idealism used in landscape painting such as redefinition, readjustment and reorganization were further adopted in their gardens' design. All these ways of artistic creation affected

the appearance of the Chinese classic garden from its former big and coarse style into a small and refined one.⁶

4.2.1 Idealism in Chinese Landscape Painting

In China, making exact images of actual objects has never been a pursuit of painting. In the mind of Chinese traditional painters and critics, a direct copy was not a painting at all. They loved to use type forms (fig. 4.3 and 4.4)⁷ to represent their ideal of the beauty of nature in their landscape paintings.

Then what was the Chinese ideal of beauty? It was explained as one principle that “*comes from nature but is better than nature*”. The first part—to *come from nature*—means that the images of trees, waterfalls and mountains are really natural things that painters encounter in nature; the second part—*better than nature*—suggests that the brushes of the artists are not strictly limited by the actual scene. In the artists’ eyes, the natural scene itself is not perfect in most cases. For example, sometimes the peak is not high enough to be magnificent; sometimes the location of the waterfall does not properly fit into the painting; sometimes the ravine is a little dull without a light fog or colorful mist surrounding it. Under this circumstance, re-creation happens. Painters break down all these natural images into pieces, digest those raw materials, then redefine their appearance and reorganize their arrangement in the painting to make the landscape painting more impressive and beautiful than the actual scene. In a word, Chinese landscape painting was a process of artistic *re-creation* rather than *record*. In order to be more clear, let us have a look at *Towering Mount Lu* (fig. 3.7) by Shen Zhou (1427–1509 CE) again. This principle—*comes from nature but is better than nature* means that one can find the reflection or essence of Mount Lu in Shen’s painting, but one will never find

⁶This progress is more apparent in its scholar garden.

⁷The plates come from *Mustard Seed Garden Manual of Painting*, a book setting forth many basic steps and principles of painting. It was first published in 1679 CE. For further information see footnote 7 in Chapter 2: The World of Nature and Humanity.

Figure 4.3: Shen Xiyou and others. *The Mustard Seed Garden Manual of Painting*. Qing Dynasty (1644–1911 CE). It is a book that explains how to paint and presents many famous painters' style. The whole book includes three parts. Part One published in 1679 CE, includes five books; Part Two published in 1701 CE, includes four books; Part Three published in 1701 CE, includes four books. These two tree plates come from *Book of Trees* in Part One.

Figure 4.4: Shen Xiyou and others. *The Mustard Seed Garden Manual of Painting*. Qing Dynasty (1644–1911 CE). These two mountain plates come from *Book of Rocks* in Part One.

this authentic scene on the actual Mount Lu. The painting is just an ideal impression about Mount Lu by Shen Zhou, the painter. This is one of the most important rules to remember: never try to identify any Chinese landscape painting in the real world. In addition, since different painters had different ideals, ideal printings of the same scene can be very different. If two artists painted a mountain together, their paintings would be very different. For example, compare figure 2.3 and figure 3.7. Both artists painted the Mountain Lu, but nothing in their paintings tells us they painted the same mountain.

Notably, apparently distinct from the West, what Chinese artists pursued in their landscape paintings was an air of eternity and detachment. Traditional Chinese painters believed that idealism was the best way to express their perception of *eternity*, a perception that came from the depths of their being. Through reorganizing and readjusting, a kind of unchangeable and perpetual beauty—the essence of nature, was achieved quietly in their painting. That is why one always can experience a sense of serenity and permanence in most Chinese landscape paintings, which is not usually found in the landscapes of other cultures. Moreover, it also helps us fathom realism was not a proper “style” in China. Realism is always related to too much passion and temporality, which destroys the feeling of eternity.

Traditional Chinese painters kept practicing and realizing the perfect and eternal beauty of nature in their landscape painting. They gradually acquired the strategies of recreation, such as **redefinition**, **readjustment** and **reorganization**. For example, there are two plates in *Mustard Seed Garden Manual of Painting* (fig. 4.5). The left plate explains how to arrange rocks of various numbers, ranging from one rock alone to five rocks in a group. The right plate studies how to paint a big rock among small ones or a small rock among big rocks. In addition, both plates tell what shapes of rocks would most please the eye.

It was these strategies that allowed Chinese painters to represent the vast world of nature on a small piece of paper or silk. Chinese landscape painting was a kind of refined

Figure 4.5: Shen Xinyou and Others. *The Mustard Seed Garden Manual of Painting*. These two plates come from *Book of Rocks* in Part One. Methods of Grouping and Establishing the Forms of Rocks.

and enriched artistic expression reflecting the whole of nature. This helps us understand the words of Wang Wei (701–761 CE), a famous painter of the Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE), who wrote, “merely in a several-feet-long paper, a painting could describe scenes in an extensive area of thousand miles in nature.”⁸ His words also point out what was the highest achievement in Chinese landscape painting: idealism.

4.2.2 Idealism Guided Chinese Gardening

Since ancient times, Chinese painters and critics have studied and practiced idealism to produce natural beauty in their paintings. For them, idealism was the only proper manner of representation. This kind of understanding about the aesthetics of idealism significantly impacted their garden designs, especially those related strategies such as readjustment, redefinition and reorganization of original natural elements to represent a perfect beauty. It is these technique that assisted Chinese garden designers to achieve a significant step in aesthetics.

If we examine the time before the Wei-Jin Period (220–420 CE), we would find that the characteristics of early Chinese gardens were distinguished by their huge size and less artistic treatment. Their major functions were always related to hunting and religious purposes.⁹ During its early stage, ancient Chinese gardens were merely those extensive virgin lands enclosed by walls. Realism was the major way of garden creation.

However, this mode of Chinese garden design was strikingly changed by the birth of Chinese landscape painting in the Wei-Jin Period (220–420 CE). Since its birth, Chinese landscape painters kept trying to deal with a pivotal problem of how to represent the perfect beauty of nature within several square feet of paper or silk. Generation after generation, Chinese painters perfected methods whereby natural beauty was not only

⁸Wang Wei wrote two famous articles on how to paint landscape. One is *Shan Shui Lun* (Mountain and Water Analects); the other is *Shan Shui Jue* (Mountain and Water Formula). This sentence comes from *Shan Shui Jue*.

⁹It was mentioned in Chapter 1: Introduction, pp. 1–2 and Chapter 3: Transmitter of Spirit, pp. 38–41.

miniaturized onto small Chinese landscape paintings, but also reflected purposeful selection, rendering and organization of original natural elements. These creative strategies in Chinese landscape painting deeply influenced the art of Chinese garden design in urban areas. Many garden owners began to construct their gardens in the city instead of in a wild mountain-water area. By doing that they could enjoy garden life and city life together. As the garden gradually became urban-based, its area was reduced. Beginning from the Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE), the Chinese classic garden began its new journey—shrinking from an extensive territory into a small size and to an even smaller scale during its late stage. Under these circumstances, more and more concerned garden designers were trying to artistically represent the beauty of nature in a small spatial area. The largeness of a garden was no longer a characteristic for grandeur. On the contrary, small gardens with highly artistic elements became the most characteristic pursuit of the Chinese classic garden. This new kind of space limitation became the strongest impetus which influenced and further successfully changed the appearance of the former large Chinese traditional garden into a small but exquisite one.

During the Ming (1368–1644 CE) and the Qing Dynasties (1644–1911 CE), the late period of Chinese traditional gardens, some private gardens especially those in the city area already became very small compared with those gardens of the Qin (221–206 BCE) and the Han (206 BCE–220 CE) Dynasties. At that time, the small sized garden in a refined style became more and more popular among the literati of China. Generally, a small garden was considered to be under 0.5 hectares;¹⁰ middle sized ones ranged from 0.5 to 3 hectares; over 3 hectares was already considered to be a large garden.[15, p.7] With the successes of using idealism in Chinese garden designing, many scholars began to show off their gardens made on a much smaller scale. Sometimes, they even directly pointed out a garden's smallness in its name. For example, the *Spoon Garden* (the Qing Dynasty), *Half-Hectare Garden* (the early Qing Dynasty), *Mustard Seed Garden* (the

¹⁰1 acre = 0.405 hectares

Ming Dynasty) and so on. Although those gardens have been destroyed by wars, their names, themselves, truly celebrate this highly crystallized garden art.

4.3 Imagination Aesthetics

Imagination aesthetics¹¹ was a very special characteristic of Chinese landscape painting. Whether painters or critics, both regarded beauty as coming from the power of imagination rather than the depiction of reality. In order to trigger the viewer's imagination, artists deliberately used creative strategies in their paintings, such as purposely cutting and half-hiding certain scenes. This technique required that if one wanted to depict the vastness of nature, one should paint less rather than paint everything; if one wanted to reveal the beauty of nature, one should purposely hide part of it rather than give a thorough exposure. In doing this, the former monumental vista landscape painting (fig. 2.3, 2.4 and 2.9) was replaced by small scenes (fig. 4.6, 4.7 and 4.8). Here, "less is more"¹² deeply increases the paintings' artistic appeal. Now painting is not merely understood as a visual art any more. It assists viewers to free their minds and let them go beyond the limitation of the painting itself by triggering the power of imagination. This kind of aesthetic also influenced the Chinese classic garden. The garden's winding paths and half-covering spatial arrangement were exactly its three-dimensional reflections in the actual world.

4.3.1 An Inborn Artistic Pursuit of Landscape Painting

In China, imagination aesthetics had an intimate relationship with landscape painting. We have seen that the direct impetus to the birth of landscape painting during the Wei-Jin Period (220–420 CE) was the love of natural beauty and the corresponding metaphors

¹¹It means that Chinese painters like to use their paintings to trigger viewers' imagination.

¹²This is the famous aphorism of Mies van der Rohe (1886–1969 CE), an outstanding American architect of the 20th century.

created by the Chinese literati.¹³ But one should not overlook the crucial role as medium that the power of imagination was indeed playing. This helped to span the difference between real nature and the images in the painting. Zong Bing (375–443 CE), a famous landscape painter of the Wei-Jin Period (220–420 CE), wrote,

*I treasure memories of Mountain Lu and Mountain Heng and remember the gorges of King-chow. But I'm getting old without notice. I deeply regret that I can no longer materialize myself and stand over the waters of Shih-men. Therefore I have taken to painting forms, arranging colors and constructing clouds over mountains. We see that a truth perceived by someone long, long ago can be understood by those coming a thousand years after, and the concept or idea suggested by a few descriptive lines can be found within the covers of a book. How much more should this be true of form represented by form and color represented by color, recalling past experiences that pleased our eyes and filled our past days? ... Therefore in my leisured life, ... unfolding the painting, quietly sitting before it, without leaving the crowded human habitation, I roam and wander in the solitary wilds of nature. There the mountain peak soars aloft and the clouds and forests spread deep and far away. ... What more do I want? I am enjoying myself by freeing my thought in the mountain and water and if I do that, what more can I ask?*¹⁴

Therefore, landscape painting played the role of a replica of real nature in people's everyday life. An old saying in the Chinese traditional field of landscape painting said that the way to judge whether the highest level of a landscape painting has been achieved was to see whether or not the painting can induce the viewer into imagining or feeling that he or she is wandering in the painting. Here one important fact needs to be explained. Chinese painting was an art painted by the educated as well as for the educated. Thus, in traditional China, between the painter and the viewer there were no obstacles to understanding. On the one hand, to trigger the viewer's imagination was deemed a very important artistic pursuit in landscape paintings for the painters. On the other hand, the learned viewers would also like to appreciate the painting by using the power of their imagination.

¹³See Chapter 3, Transmitter of Spirit

¹⁴The original translation comes from Lin Yutang, editor. *The Chinese Theory of Art*. William Heinemann Ltd, London, 1967, pp. 31–32. Here, my translation is somewhat different from the original article.

4.3.2 Use Incompleteness to Trigger Imagination

Before the Song Dynasty (960–1279 CE), Chinese painters liked to depict the landscape in a monumental style (fig. 2.3, 2.5 and 2.8), which generally included part of the sky, part of the earth and between them, mountains and waters. In this miniaturized natural setting, small buildings, winding trails, human beings and other figures were scattered to make the landscape full of life. Here, presenting the whole of nature through a microcosm achieved the early stage of imagination aesthetics in Chinese art—it became “a universe in a pot”. In this monumental vista landscape painting, everything was painted, such as mountain after mountain, waterfall continued by a river, many trees, building groups and human figures. In fact, the painting left less room for the viewers to imagine. Due to this shortcoming, painters and critics became dissatisfied with this style. In order to trigger more imagination in landscape painting, Chinese painters began to cultivate the strategy of incompleteness. Whenever one encounters an incomplete thing, completing it by one’s imagination is the most logical train of thought. Thus the concept of incompleteness soon became accepted by Chinese painters. It was realized by two technical strategies in their landscape paintings. One was the technique of “cutting”; the other was the technique of “half-hiding”.

Cutting

In the middle of the Song Dynasty (960–1279 CE), there was a significant change in Chinese landscape painting. Monumental overall composition, the composition of choice in the early stage of Chinese landscape painting, was challenged by several talented painters who focused on a small aspect of nature in their paintings.

In Chinese history, the first step is attributed to Li Tang (c. 1066–1150 CE). Although in his youth, he painted like other painters who painted the landscape in a monumental style, in his later works, he used the technique of “cutting” in his paintings’ composition,

as seen in his most famous one, *Recluse as A Fisherman nearby A Clear River* (fig. 4.6)¹⁵ In this painting, there is no sky as well as no earth. Huge trees only show us their claw-

Figure 4.6: **Li Tang. Section of Recluse as a Fishermen nearby A Clear River.** Southern Song Dynasty (1127–1279 CE). Handscroll, ink on silk, 25.2 x 144.7 cm. National Palace Museum, Taibei, Taiwan.

like roots and sturdy trunks, while their verdant crowns are suddenly half cut by the paper edge. The original mountains after mountains in the monumental style is replaced by a couple of huge rocks. Li Tang deliberately chose to record only a part of nature. This kind of composition painted less than the monumental style, indeed gives people more space to imagine. Because with the incompleteness of the flourishing roots and trunks, in their mind, viewers have already figured out the whole appearance of the trees. With the humble habitat and simple bridge, they could imagine that the owner of the house must be wondering somewhere nearby. With a corner of mountain and river and the peaceful air, viewers' imagination is further triggered to conjure up the whole natural setting around it. In Chinese landscape painting, purposely choosing a corner of mountain and water to paint leaves more imaginative space for the viewers. This special composition of landscape painting was regarded as a breathtaking event, because it made the whole picture's artistic appeal rise to a higher level than ever before.

Although Li Tang first created this way of composing landscape painting, several of his followers made the influence more profound and lasting. Two such followers are

¹⁵This thesis includes another painting of Li Tang's, which shares the same cutting strategy. See Chapter 3. (fig. 3.5) *Painting of Collecting Wild Vegetables*.

Ma Yuan (1190–1224 CE) and Xia Gui.¹⁶ Because of their expertise in organizing and representing the natural beauty of the small part of an area through proper cutting, they both were given a famous nickname. Ma Yuan was called “Corner Ma” (see his *Scholar Viewing A Waterfall* (fig. 4.7)). Xia Gui’s nickname was “Half-Side Xia” (see his *Talking in A Snow Covered House* (fig. 4.8)).

Figure 4.7: Ma Yuan. *Scholar Viewing A Waterfall*. Southern Song Dynasty (1127–1279 CE). Album leaf, ink and color on silk, 24.9 x 26 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA.

¹⁶Xia Gui was a contemporary of Ma Yuan. Detailed information about his birth and date of death are unknown.

Figure 4.8: **Xia Gui. Talking in A Snow Covered House.** Southern Song Dynasty (1127–1279 CE). Album leaf, ink and color on silk, 28.2 x 29.5 cm. The Palace Museum, Beijing, China.

Half-hiding

In addition to cutting, another important strategy to achieve the incompleteness in landscape painting was half-hiding. This time, the incomplete image was realized by being hidden in the painting itself. For example, part of the building was hidden by trees or half of a boat was covered by reeds. Without a full show, these kinds of incomplete images could strongly trigger the viewers' imagination too. Here, we also can not overlook the key issue in this strategy which is contained in the word "*half*". Covering anything is, of course, impossible to stimulate the imagination as well as revealing everything.

Compared with the strategy of cutting, half-hiding appeared in Chinese landscape painting much earlier. As early as the Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE), this strategy has already been addressed in Wang Wei's (c. 701–761 CE)¹⁷ essay *Shan Shui Jue*. He wrote,

(in landscape paintings)... the pinnacle of the pagoda soaring up to the sky, its body is not necessary to appear at all, looks indistinct, up or down. No matter hills with verdant plants or bold, behind them, half-exposed the rooftops of a barn; thatched dwelling and reeded pavilion should only emerge a little part of their pillars.

His words do not clearly and directly mention anything about imagination aesthetics. Maybe he couldn't specifically point out this rule at that time. Nonetheless Wang did explain how to draw an image to amuse the eyes of the viewers—the result which was the incompleteness with which he chose to present images in his paintings.

During the Song Dynasty (960–1279 CE), the half-hiding strategy was used very widely and explained more clearly by many painters and critics. For instance, a paragraph written by Guo Xi (c. 1000–1090 CE) from his book *Lin Quan Gao Zhi Ji* (Forest Waterfall and Lofty Ideal)¹⁸ is very typical.

If you want to show the height of mountains, they will appear high if half hidden midway by cloudy forms, but not so if completely exposed. If you want the rivers to appear long, they will appear long if they are cut off from view in places, but not so if completely shown. A completely exposed mountain lacks

¹⁷Wang Wei was a great literati-painter of the Tang Dynasty.

¹⁸*Lin Quan Gao Zhi Ji* was published in 1117 CE, the editor was Guo Si, the son of Guo Xi.

*an air of distinction and looks like a tip of a mortar. A completely shown waterway lacks not only twists and bends, but looks like an earthworm.*¹⁹

Between the lines, Guo Xi clearly pointed out the function of half-hiding, which was to leave room for the viewers to conjure up the height or the length in their mind by using their imagination. Properly using half-hiding to stimulate the imagination created the highest mountain, or the longest river in the world. It made the mountain magnificent and let the water's course be fantastic.

In addition, during the Song Dynasty (960–1279 CE), whether or not a painter could ingeniously and properly deploy the technique of half-hiding to stimulate the viewer's imagination in his or her landscape paintings has even been considered as a criterion to evaluate the quality of his or her works. There is a very famous story reporting this. Li Tang (c. 1066–1150 CE), an outstanding painter of the Song Dynasty, attended the examination of the Imperial Art Academy at the age of forty eight. The topic of the test was a sentence from a poem,

Near the bridge, in the deepest bamboo grove, a wineshop²⁰ is there.

Unlike other painters, Li Tang didn't pay too much attention to the appearance of the wineshop. Instead, he chose to carefully paint the scene of the river, the bridge and the grove. From the middle of the bamboo grove, a big banner of the wineshop was raised up in the wind, while other parts of the wineshop remained hidden by the thick bamboo trees. By painting in this way, Li Tang vividly interpreted the meaning of the poem "*the deepest*" in his picture, which, at first, is not easy to express. Here, Li Tang used the rule of imagination aesthetics—half hiding, very well. He exposed the most important part of a thing while hiding the others. He was greatly eulogized by the Emperor Hui Zong (1082–1135 CE).²¹ This story is always mentioned to show how important it was

¹⁹Translated by Yutang Lin, editor. *The Chinese Theory of Art*. William Heinemann Ltd, London, 1967, pp. 79–80.

²⁰In China, generally, a wineshop is much more like a restaurant, not a place that only sells wine.

²¹Emperor Hui Zong himself was a famous painter and calligrapher of the Song Dynasty (960–1279 CE).

for a good painter to wisely use this strategy in a painting. Moreover, it tells us that stimulating the viewer's imagination was a very important artistic pursuit of Chinese landscape painting.

On the whole, one should understand that what we call the imagination aesthetics of Chinese landscape painting indeed contained two procedures. The first is how Chinese painters achieved incompleteness through cutting and half-hiding; the second is how viewers completed the cutting and hiding parts by the power of their own imagination. This is a kind of game that was played by the painter and viewer together. Both of them created the most delightful beauty in the world, because this kind of beauty must come from the viewer's imagination stimulated by the incomplete images properly arranged by the painter. Simply speaking, beauty came from *no painting at all*. The influence of this aesthetic upon the Chinese garden was tremendous.

4.3.3 Imagination Aesthetics in the Chinese Garden

While Chinese traditional painters and critics were probing the essence of the imagination aesthetics and searching for the proper strategies to achieve it in their landscape paintings, garden designers were also evolving to adapt this same aesthetic in their gardens.

Designers directly borrowed the concept that ideal beauty came from incompleteness. In order to create the effect of incompleteness in their gardens, designers adopted two strategies. One was winding paths, the other was half-hiding. Normally, they would be used together. Today, the maze-like spatial arrangement of the Chinese classic garden is the direct result of these aesthetics. When we visit it, instead of a panorama in a French garden, we will see a mere fraction of the whole garden and experience a continuous stimulation of the imagination (experience the completeness of the actual incomplete garden in their imagination).

In the Chinese garden, there are several elements to create incompleteness. They are artificial mountains, plants and walls. These components of the garden performed a latent function—they not only amused the eyes of the viewers but also served to manipulate the visual experience of the garden.

Artificial Mountains and Plants

Examining figure 4.9, one sees a very typical example that depicts how to use artificial mountains, plants and winding paths to create the incompleteness in a Chinese garden. Here, the building can not be viewed thoroughly. But part of its wall and upper-right roof clearly tell the viewer that there is a scene behind the mountains. The incomplete image of the building strongly induces the viewer's curiosity and drives the viewer to follow the winding path to explore the scene further. Of course, buildings are not the only things to be half-hiding, some open scenery spaces should also be treated in the same way to prevent seeing through at once. If this is not done, the garden will be regarded as lacking delight.

Wall with Opening

In the Chinese classic garden, a wall with artistic openings such as latticed windows (fig. 4.10 and 4.11) or figured doorways (fig. 4.12 and 2.7 left), is another way to create incompleteness. These openings also help embody the essence of imagination aesthetics in the art of Chinese gardening. Because this kind of incompleteness is more sophisticated than just using one image to cover another image in landscape paintings.

On the one hand, the wall in Chinese gardens is not merely the boundary of a garden, but more significantly it continues into the garden and further divides the whole garden space into many small spatial cells. Certain scenes in these spatial cells are intentionally hidden by walls. This device in Chinese gardens prevents one from seeing the whole garden instantly. On the other hand, completely hiding scenery is definitely not the aim

Figure 4.9: Yiyun Hall, Yi He Yuan (The Summer Palace), Beijing, China. Qing Dynasty (1644–1911 CE). Yiyun Hall is the rear part of Hall of Jade Ripples. This is the rockery yard in Yiyun Hall. On the one hand, the rocks and stones themselves display a great variety of colour, shape and texture. On the other hand, they also play an important role to prevent visitors from seeing through the garden instantly by half-hiding the scene behind them.

Figure 4.10: **Lingering Garden, Suzhou, Jiangsu Province, China.** Qing Dynasty (1644–1911 CE). Many latticed windows on walls show part of the scene in another space cell.

Figure 4.11: **Lingering Garden, Suzhou, Jiangsu Province, China.** Qing Dynasty (1644–1911 CE) 1593. These two stone lattice windows are the examples to explain how walls in Chinese garden with opens could half-exposed the scene behind the wall.

Figure 4.12: **The Master of Nets Garden, Suzhou, Jiangsu Province, China.** Qing Dynasty (1644–1911 CE). A doorway on the wall shows part of the scene behind the wall.

of any Chinese garden. Hiding is only the first step to creating the imagination aesthetics of the garden art. So with the openings on the wall, these scenes hidden by the walls in the spatial cells are partly exposed to the visitors, which greatly stimulates people's imagination and curiosity, and further triggers visitors to explore the space behind the wall.

In brief, properly hiding and exposing are the essence of garden designing in its spatial arrangement. Additionally, we should understand that in order to fully achieve this delightful beauty, the participation of visitors is needed. It is for the imagination aesthetics that plays in Chinese landscape painting. The unification of landscape and imagination is the right realm for the art of the Chinese classic garden.

4.4 Monochrome Aesthetics

Ink is just the colors.
—— 墨即是色。

The beginning of Chinese painting is multi-colored. The ancient Chinese used various mineral pigments to decorate their bowls, pots and other containers (fig. 4.13). For most cultures, this colorful tradition in their painting art has continued throughout their history. But in China, this changed during the Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE) with the introduction of monochrome paintings. This means that some painters and critics preferred drawing and appreciating the paintings that were in different shades of ink rather than in various colors. Since then, Chinese landscape paintings was divided into two categories according to their color system. One was the blue-green landscape genre; and the other was the water-ink landscape genre, distinguished by its simple black and white appearance. On the one hand, the appearance of monochromy enriched the color theory of Chinese painting art as a very unique aesthetic characteristic. On the other hand, it

Figure 4.13: **Petal Grain Basin (left)**, from Heinan Province, China. Approximately 4500–3000 BCE. Colorful Terra-cotta, height 20 cm, diameter 33.3 cm. **Human Face and Fish Grain Basin (right)**, from Xi'an, Shanxi Province, China. Approximately 4500–3000 BCE. Colorful Terra-cotta, height 16.5 cm, diameter 39.5 cm. National Museum of Chinese History, Beijing, China.

deeply influenced the eyes of some garden designers, who later introduced the beauty of monochromy into the Chinese scholar garden.

This section begins with the birth of monochrome aesthetics in the Chinese philosophic field, to its development in Chinese painting, and ends with its success in the Chinese scholar garden. By adopting the “white wall and black roof” color system (fig. 4.14), Chinese scholar gardens well represented this special aesthetics in the actual world and made their gardens very different from the Chinese imperial gardens. The imperial gardens were strikingly famous for their varied color decoration on buildings (fig. 4.15). The next section extends the understanding of Chinese monochrome aesthetics.

4.4.1 Philosophical Background

Although the breakthrough appearance of monochromy in Chinese painting happened in the Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE), the root of monochrome aesthetics indeed first emerged in Chinese philosophy. As early as the Spring and Autumn Period (770–476 BCE), Lao Zi (c. 6th century BCE), the founder of Daoism, has already clearly expressed his opinion

Figure 4.14: **Humble Administrator's Garden, Suzhou, Jiangsu Province, China. Ming Dynasty (1368–1644 CE).** The building of a scholar garden in a black and white melody.

about color theory in his classic book *Dao De Jing*. He said,

*The five colors blind the eye.
The five tones deafen the ear.
The five flavors dull the taste.²²*

*Truthful words are not beautiful,
Beautiful words are not truthful.²³*

By discarding all the polished surfaces or materials, Lao Zi put forward a kind of beauty, which could only be achieved in a “truthful” and “simple” manner. Later, Zhuang Zi (369–286 BCE), another famous Daoist, further developed Lao Zi’s ideas. He said, “Being simple is a beauty that is unchallenged in the world.” In addition, Buddhism, another Chinese major religion, came to share the same opinion with Daoism. Its doctrines expressed the belief that “Dazzling the eye was a sure way to confuse the soul.” [7, p.92]

These teachings are the most original ideas in China about the belief that being simple is the proper way to achieve beauty. This did a lot to nourish and spread the initial

²²Translated by Gia-fu Feng. Lao Tzu. *Tao Te Ching*. Vintage Books, New York, 1997, p. 12.

²³Translated by Gia-fu Feng. *Ibid.*, p. 81.

Figure 4.15: **Quiet Heart Garden, Beijing, China.** Qing Dynasty (1644–1911 CE). Quiet Heart Garden is a small garden in Beihai Garden (The Winter Palace). This kind of a small garden within a big garden is normally named a “Garden in Garden”. It is a typical imperial garden building with strong color decoration.

idea of monochrome aesthetics. More significantly, it enlightened the next inheritor of monochrome aesthetics—those Chinese painters and painting critics, who went to carry out these aesthetics in the real practical field—Chinese landscape painting.

4.4.2 Monochrome Landscape Painting

In the middle of the Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE), during which time color was used to depict the landscape by most artists, a shift from color to black and white began. The most notable painter who promoted this change is Wang Wei (701–761 CE), a great Buddhist poet and painter. Since he was a devout Buddhist and learned scholar, he could grasp and appreciate the simple beauty of black and white. That is why it was said that Wang especially loved the snow scenes and painted them by adding different amounts of water into ink to create them. Today several copies, but no original paintings have survived. *River Scene Just After the Snow* is one of them (fig. 4.16). In addition

Figure 4.16: **Wang Wei. Section of River Scene Just after the Snow.** Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE). Handscroll, ink on silk, 31.3 x 207.3 cm. Japan. This is a copy.

to his striking creation of water-ink landscape paintings, in the field of theory Wang Wei also composed essays to spread monochrome aesthetics. In his *Shan Shui Jue* (Mountain Water Rules), Wang Wei boldly began it with, “In paintings, black and white is the

utmost. It is the quality of nature ...” Here is the first time that monochrome was specially honored by such an accomplished Chinese artist.

It was not until this time that the beauty of monochrome was first introduced and accepted in Chinese landscape painting. Wang’s paintings and words about monochrome inspired many followers. At the end of the Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE), monochrome aesthetics were already well appreciated and practiced by many painters. With this innovation, the former blue-green landscape painting²⁴ could never again be the only painting style. A style is famous for its splendid, colorful effect (fig. 4.17). Since the Tang

Figure 4.17: **Li Zhaodao. Emperor Ming Huang’s Journey to Shu.** Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE). Handscroll, color on ink, 55.9 x 81 cm. National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan.

Dynasty (618–907 CE), Chinese landscape painting was divided into two groups. One was the water-ink (monochrome) landscape painting; the other was blue-green landscape

²⁴Blue-green landscape painting is also known as golden-green landscape. Its characteristics are very exquisite, meticulous and detailed. When applying color, the artist used black line to delineate the outline, then filled it with rich blue or green. Sometimes, gold and silver were also employed, which always made the overall painting effect dazzlingly splendid and magnificent.

painting.

After the Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE), with the passage of time, more and more painters and critics preferred monochrome aesthetics, especially the scholar-painters.²⁵ With their passionate participation, several things changed in Chinese painting. Firstly, the former dominating status of the blue-green landscape painting was gradually overtaken by monochrome landscape painting. Secondly, monochrome was not only limited to the subject of the landscape, it was also popularly used in other painting genres, such as human figure and plant & animal. Thirdly, many special techniques of monochrome were further developed and enriched Chinese monochrome theory. For example, “There are five colors in ink.”, which means that even though the ink is black, it can be divided into five colors. The five colors are *Jiao* (burned black), *Nong* (dark black), *Zhong* (deep black), *Dan* (light black) and *Qing* (delicate black). Another old saying is, “Ink is just the colors”, which means that all the various colors in the world can be substituted by different shades of water-ink. All these events testify that in most cases color was not an essence of beauty in Chinese painting art. Beauty could also be successfully achieved in black and white.

In the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644 CE) monochrome aesthetics were regarded as characteristic of the highest level of Chinese painting. No other colors could challenge its purity and loftiness in the eyes of the Chinese traditional painters and critics. At the same time, this kind of aesthetics would also impacted on their other artistic fields, such as garden designing, especially on the aspect of choosing colors.

4.4.3 Chinese Scholar Garden

In China, scholar garden designers represented the third generation of monochrome aesthetics. Under the influence of the beauty of Chinese monochrome landscape painting, Chinese scholars totally discarded the colorful and meticulous decorations of the imperial

²⁵Generally, the royal family always preferred blue-green landscape painting.

garden and replaced them by adopting black and white in their garden buildings.

Firstly, Chinese scholars gradually stopped using the same criteria as imperial garden designers, especially regarding its building color system. The decorations on the buildings of the imperial garden were always painted in rich colors and full of minute details (fig. 4.15 and 4.18). In these two examples, the pillars are painted in red or green; the roofs are covered with *Liu Li Wa*,²⁶ showing a kind of shining yellow color; additionally under the roofs, the beams of the building are full of the numerous and various decorative paintings, which are multicolored and extremely delicate. Normally the subjects of these

Figure 4.18: Shuimu Ziqin Hall, Yi He Yuan (The Summer Palace), Beijing, China. Qing Dynasty (1644–1911 CE). Shuimu Ziqin Hall (the Hall of Natural Affinity between Water and Wood) is one of the halls in the building complex of Leshoutang Hall. All the halls are connected by roofed walkways. This picture shows the detailed column and beam painting on the walkway in this typical imperial garden.

²⁶*Liu Li Wa* is a kind of shining ceramic tiles. It could only be used in the royal family. It has three colors: yellow, blue and green.

paintings are always secular human figures, colorful flowers, birds and animals. In the scholar's eyes, the overall color effect of the imperial garden buildings was an opportunity for the royal family to show off its high social status, immense wealth and absolute power. The scholars realized that beauty was definitely not the main goal of the garden design. Later, they refused to use the imperial techniques in their gardens.

After the scholars discarded the color system of the imperial garden, they began to use a "white wall and black roof" (fig. 4.19) that they first experienced within their landscape painting. Except for black (roofs), white (walls) and brown (beams and pillars), other

Figure 4.19: **Lingering Garden, Suzhou**, Jiangsu Province, China. Qing Dynasty (1644–1911 CE). Detailed white wall and black roof in a typical scholar garden.

artificial colors were sparsely employed in scholar garden buildings. In addition, another difference with the imperial garden was that there was no splendid decorative painting on the beams or columns of the buildings. In scholarly eyes, every white wall was like a sheet of painting paper. In the sun, the creeping branches and the delicate flowers in front of the white wall, cast black shadows on it. In the gentle wind, the shadows keep dancing and

changing, just like the free monochrome drawing by the hand of nature. Moreover, using black and white tones helped to maintain the garden's simple and tranquil atmosphere, which coincided with its purpose of retreat and meditation. Everything in their gardens was to amuse the scholars themselves rather than to be for public show. Furthermore, they also believed that painting their buildings in this way was the best way to show their respect for the beauty of nature. Because the natural world itself was considered the most beautiful and colorful thing, it would be better to keep architecture quiet and unassuming. Obeying this rule, humanity and the world of nature achieved a permanent peace and harmony rather than creating what would have been considered chaos in a garden.

At the end of this chapter, one should understand that the appearance of the Chinese classic garden benefited by the achievements first made in Chinese paintings. Many design theories and methods of gardening were directly adopted from the paintings. Firstly, landscape painting further informed Chinese classic garden designers on how to understand the theory of "Yin" and "Yang". These artificial mountains and water ponds in fact symbolize two contradictory beauties—Yang and Yin, in the garden world. Moreover, the "unification" of mountain and water in a garden is where the ideal beauty exists, since each beauty must exist with and be explained by its opposite. Regarding this aspect, the dry rock garden of Japan was unacceptable in the mind of the Chinese. Secondly, in landscape paintings, Chinese painters and critics adopted idealism to represent the beauty of nature. In order to achieve it, strategies such as redefinition, readjustment and reorganization were created. Consequently, they were very useful for those garden designers, who wanted to construct gardens in limited urban areas. Because by doing that, garden owners could enjoy the natural life without discarding the city life. That is the reason why many Chinese scholar gardens became urban-based since the Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE). At the same time, extensive scale gardens were gradually replaced

by small and refined gardens in the Ming (1368–1644 CE) and the Qing (1644–1911 CE) Dynasties at last. Therefore, the highest level of the Chinese garden was judged by the aphorism, “come from nature but better than nature”. Thirdly, landscape painting never stopped pursuing the power of human imagination. It was regarded that with the joint of imagination, paintings could greatly increase its artistic appeal. Therefore, Chinese painters cultivated the strategy of incompleteness in their landscape painting. This strategy also influenced the garden design, especially on its spatial arrangement. No matter it was a lattice window on the wall or a building half exposed from artificial mountains, their purpose was to prevent people seeing through the garden instantly. A special delight emerged by this endless incompleteness in the garden spatial arrangement. At last, monochrome aesthetics of the landscape painting trained the eyes of those scholar garden designers. The black and white paintings assisted them perceive the beauty in a simple and direct way. This kind of appetite made the scholar garden designers choose “White Wall and Black Roof” system in their garden buildings, which was different from those colorful buildings in the imperial gardens.

In a word, Chinese landscape paintings continued to serve as the blue prints for the Chinese garden all through its history.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

After exploring the relationships between the natural world and humanity, the attitudes towards religions, literature and aesthetics that were reflected in the Chinese classic garden from Chinese painting, we can discern a strong kinship between the Chinese garden and Chinese landscape painting. Here, the concept of the Chinese garden includes the imperial garden, the scholar garden and the temple garden. As discussed in the introduction, the imperial garden was gradually influenced by the scholar garden and the temple garden, especially during the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911 CE). Because several emperors of the Qing loved the special beauty of scholar gardens, they even directly copied several famous scholar gardens in their imperial gardens. Therefore, except for its grand size and color system, there were no other significant difference between the imperial garden and the scholar garden. Nonetheless, this thesis is more applicable to the scholar garden than the other two gardens. Now it is time to answer the two questions raised in the first chapter.

1. Are these three explanations (first, books were not adequate to transmit the essential; second, Chinese garden art itself was too complex to write into books; third, traditional Chinese scholars distained to compose articles about an art which couldn't avoid discussing craftsmanship) though persua-

sive, really sufficient to explain the curious omission of Chinese garden art, the only Chinese scholarly artistic form, from written Chinese art history?

Clearly, those three explanations are only part of the reason and are far from being sufficient to fully explain how Chinese garden traditions continued without written records.

The art of Chinese classic garden design in fact was deeply rooted in the medium of Chinese painting, especially landscape painting, which kept nourishing the flower of the Chinese garden since its birth [the Wei-Jin Period (220–420 CE)]. The art of the Chinese landscape painting did not only help to shape the appearance of the Chinese classic garden through its aesthetics rules, but also gave the physical garden a feeling, a life and a spirit through its combination with Chinese literature. In addition, it transformed one of China's fundamental philosophies—the union of heaven and human—into a visual representation by demonstrating that finding a beautiful place in which to *live* was the motivation of gentlemen who sought regions of natural beauty.¹ This kind of understanding about the world of nature and humanity helps to set down the main tenet of a Chinese garden as an art about human-made buildings and natural elements together.

Therefore, the Chinese classic garden carried on all the discoveries, be they philosophical, aesthetic, or literary of Chinese painting into the non-imaginary world. Any Chinese classic garden was an authentic three-dimensional example of the Chinese landscape painting archetype. It was regarded as an extension of Chinese painting. In a word, the art of the Chinese garden was not to be seen as an independent artistic form in Chinese history. Based on this explanation, the Chinese classic garden did have a written history, which consisted of the many Chinese painting theories and aesthetic writings of each dynasty.

2. Without written reference books except Yuan Ye (it was soon lost in China after it was first published) how did the Chinese tradition of garden

¹For further information see Chapter 2: The world of Nature and Humanity.

design persist for 3000 years?

Given the answer to the first question, the second question is very easy to resolve. The reason that the Chinese classic garden could continue developing for 3000 years was indeed due to written knowledge in books on Chinese paintings. It is an art that greatly benefited from the discoveries made or recorded in Chinese paintings. Without painting's tremendous support, it would have been impossible for the Chinese classic garden to develop into such a complex, meaningful artistic form.

In addition, as the only gardening book in Chinese history, *Yuan Ye* can not be regarded as a summary of Chinese gardening. It is just a supplementary book transferring some rules, which were difficult to express in two-dimensional painting art. The essence of the Chinese classic garden existed in the numerous classic essays or books on Chinese painting.

This opinion can even be demonstrated by *Yuan Ye* itself. Firstly, it is a book full of Chinese painting terminology and famous Chinese painters' names. If we do not have enough background knowledge of Chinese painting, we have difficulty really understanding it. Secondly, in this book, Ji Cheng, the author, avoided repeating some rules that he believed we could find in Chinese landscape painting. For example, when discussing the ways of piling artificial mountains, he said, "piling the small mountain in a garden, follow the paintings of Ni Yunlin²; large one, see paintings of Huang Ziju³." [2, p.214] (fig. 5.1) Thirdly, the table of contents of the *Yuan Ye* only included six parts. They are "situation", "layout", "buildings", "non-structural features", "structural features" and "scenic features".⁴ We notice that the book discussed little about flowers and plants,

²Ni Zan (1301-1374 CE), a native of Wuxi, Jiangsu Province, self-styled (pen name) as Yunlin. His wealthy family assured him a good education in his childhood. Ni Yunlin together with Huang Gongwang (1269-1354 CE), Wu Zhen (1280-1354 CE) and Wang Meng (?-1385 CE), are the "Four Masters" of the Yuan Dynasty (1279-1368 CE). They occupy an outstanding position in China's art history because of their great achievements in landscape depiction.

³Huang Gongwang (1269-1354 CE), was born in Changshu, Jiangsu Province, self-styled as Ziju. He is deemed as number one among the "Four Masters" of the Yuan Dynasty (1279-1368 CE).

⁴(1)Situation: discusses different garden settings, such as sites among the mountain forest, urban sites, and village sites; (2)Layout: discusses how to arrange different buildings by their function in

Figure 5.1: Shen Xiyou and others. *The Mustard Seed Garden Manual of Painting*. Qing Dynasty (1644–1911 CE). It is a book that explains how to paint and includes many famous painters' styles. These two mountain plates come from *Book of Rocks* in Part One. Ni Yunlin (left), Huang Ziji (right).

the relationship between the natural world and humanity, the meanings of gardens and so on. Moreover, it only focused on *how to do* rather than *why to do*. Therefore, how can we use it as a summary of the Chinese classic garden today when it does not contain the various stages of development that come after it? We should keep in mind that a book is truly a classic because of its valuable contents rather than its rarity.

This thesis aims to demonstrate that Chinese landscape painting was the source for the Chinese classic garden and its various innovations. It helps us to understand the old Chinese saying that, “To be a good garden designer, one must first become a good painter”.

a garden; (3)Buildings: discusses various buildings’ structures; (4)Non-structure Features: discusses the patterns of windows, and balustrades; (5)Structural Features: discusses the patterns of doorways, walls and paving; (6)Scenic Features: discusses the ways of raising mountains and selecting rocks. For further information see *The Craft of Gardens*, translated by Alison Hardie. *The Craft of Gardens*. Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1988, pp. 5–6.

Appendix A

Chinese Chronology

NAME OF DYNASTY			CHRONOLOGY	
Xia			21st —16th century BCE	
Shang			16th — 1066 BCE	
Zhou	Western Zhou		1066 — 771 BCE	
	Eastern Zhou	Spring and Autumn period	770 — 476 BCE	
		Warring States period	475 — 221 BCE	
Qin			221 — 206 BCE	
Han	Western Han		206 BCE— 24 CE	
	Eastern Han		25 — 220 CE	
Three Kingdoms	Wei		220 — 265 CE	
	Shu		221 — 263 CE	
	Wu		222 — 280 CE	
Western Jin			281 — 316 CE	
Eastern Jin	Eastern Jin		317 — 420 CE	
	Sixteen Kingdoms		304 — 439 CE	
Northern and Southern Dynasties	Southen Dynasties	Song	420 — 479 CE	
		Qi	479 — 502 CE	
		Liang	502 — 557 CE	
		Chen	557 — 589 CE	
	Northern Dynasties	Northern Wei	386 — 534 CE	
		Eastern Wei	534 — 550 CE	
		Northern Qi	550 — 577 CE	
		Western Wei	535 — 557 CE	
		Northern Zhou	557 — 581 CE	
Sui			589 — 618 CE	
Tang			618 — 907 CE	
Five Dynasties	Later Liang		907 — 923 CE	
	Later Tang		923 — 936 CE	
continued on next page				

NAME OF DYNASTY		CHRONOLOGY	
<i>continued from previous page</i>			
and Ten Kingdoms	Later Jin	936	— 946 CE
	Later Han	947	— 950 CE
	Later Zhou	951	— 960 CE
	Ten Kingdoms	902	— 979 CE
Song	Northern Song	960	— 1127 CE
	Southern Song	1127	— 1279 CE
Liao		907	— 1125 CE
Western Xia		1032	— 1227 CE
Jin		1115	— 1234 CE
Yuan		1279	— 1368 CE
Ming		1368	— 1644 CE
Qing		1644	— 1911 CE
Republic of China		1912	— 1949 CE
People's Republic of China		1949 CE	— Present

Table A.1: Chinese Chronology

Note:

1. Translated according to *Ci Hai*. Shanghai Ci Shu Chu Ban She, Shanghai, 1987. p.2077-2138
2. The Wei-Jin Period (220–420 CE) in Chinese history is specifically referring to a period from the beginning of the Wei (220–265 CE) to the end of the Eastern Jin (317–420 CE).

Appendix B

Charts of Development

Note:

1. In this chart, “Painting” only refers to landscape (mountain & water) painting and plant & animal painting. Their appearances played an important role in the development of Chinese gardening.

2. Landscape painting and plant & animal painting did not appear until the Wei-Jin Period (220–420 A.D.) in Chinese painting history, but its figure painting appeared as early as the Neolithic Age (c. 4500–3000 BCE).

3. No matter it is the painting or gardening, the decline in this chart means no new development rather than retrogression.

Figure B.1: Charts Of Development

Appendix C

Chinese Pinyin and Wade

PINYIN	WADE	PINYIN	WADE	PINYIN	WADE
<i>a</i>	a	<i>chuang</i>	ch'uang	<i>fo</i>	fo
<i>ai</i>	ai	<i>chui</i>	ch'ui	<i>fou</i>	fou
<i>an</i>	an	<i>chun</i>	ch'un	<i>fu</i>	fu
<i>ang</i>	ang	<i>chuo</i>	ch'o	<i>ga</i>	ka
<i>ao</i>	ao	<i>ci</i>	tz'ü(ts'ü)	<i>gai</i>	kai
<i>ba</i>	pa	<i>cong</i>	ts'ung	<i>gan</i>	kan
<i>bai</i>	pai	<i>cou</i>	ts'ou	<i>gang</i>	kang
<i>ban</i>	pan	<i>cu</i>	ts'u	<i>gao</i>	kao
<i>bang</i>	pang	<i>cuan</i>	ts'uan	<i>ge</i>	kê,ko
<i>bao</i>	pao	<i>cui</i>	ts'ui	<i>gei</i>	kei
<i>bei</i>	pei	<i>cun</i>	ts'un	<i>gen</i>	kên
<i>ben</i>	pên	<i>cuo</i>	ts'o	<i>geng</i>	kêng
<i>beng</i>	pêng	<i>da</i>	ta	<i>gong</i>	kung
<i>bi</i>	pi	<i>dai</i>	tai	<i>gou</i>	kou
<i>bian</i>	pien	<i>dan</i>	tan	<i>gu</i>	ku
<i>biao</i>	piao	<i>dang</i>	tang	<i>gua</i>	kua
<i>bie</i>	pieh	<i>dao</i>	tao	<i>guai</i>	kuai
<i>bin</i>	pin	<i>de</i>	tê	<i>guan</i>	kuan
<i>bing</i>	ping	<i>deng</i>	têng	<i>guang</i>	kuang
<i>bo</i>	po	<i>dí</i>	ti	<i>gui</i>	kui
<i>bu</i>	pu	<i>dian</i>	tien	<i>gun</i>	kun
<i>ca</i>	ts'a	<i>diao</i>	tiao	<i>guo</i>	kuo
<i>cai</i>	ts'ai	<i>die</i>	tieh	<i>ha</i>	ha
<i>can</i>	ts'an	<i>ding</i>	ting	<i>hai</i>	hai
<i>cang</i>	ts'ang	<i>diu</i>	tiu	<i>han</i>	han
<i>cao</i>	ts'ao	<i>dong</i>	tung	<i>hang</i>	hang
<i>ce</i>	ts'ê	<i>dou</i>	tou	<i>hao</i>	hao
<i>cen</i>	ts'ên	<i>du</i>	tu	<i>he</i>	hê,ho
<i>ceng</i>	ts'êng	<i>duan</i>	tuan	<i>hei</i>	hei
continued on next page					

PINYIN	WADE	PINYIN	WADE	PINYIN	WADE
<i>cha</i>	ch'a	<i>dui</i>	tui	<i>hen</i>	hên
<i>chai</i>	ch'ai	<i>dun</i>	tun	<i>heng</i>	hêng
<i>chan</i>	ch'an	<i>duo</i>	to	<i>hong</i>	hung
<i>chang</i>	ch'ang	<i>e</i>	ê	<i>hou</i>	hou
<i>chao</i>	ch'ao	<i>ê</i>	eh	<i>hu</i>	hu
<i>che</i>	ch'ê	<i>ei</i>	ei	<i>hua</i>	hau
<i>chen</i>	ch'ên	<i>en</i>	ên	<i>huai</i>	huai
<i>cheng</i>	ch'êng	<i>eng</i>	êng	<i>huan</i>	huan
<i>chi</i>	ch'ih	<i>er</i>	êrh	<i>huang</i>	huang
<i>chong</i>	ch'ung	<i>fa</i>	fa	<i>hui</i>	hui
<i>chou</i>	ch'ou	<i>fan</i>	fan	<i>hun</i>	hun
<i>chu</i>	ch'u	<i>fang</i>	fang	<i>huo</i>	huo
<i>chua</i>	ch'ua	<i>fei</i>	fei	<i>ji</i>	chi
<i>chuai</i>	ch'uai	<i>fen</i>	fên	<i>jia</i>	chia
<i>chuan</i>	ch'uan	<i>feng</i>	feng	<i>jian</i>	chien
<i>jiang</i>	chiang	<i>lun</i>	lun	<i>pei</i>	p'ei
<i>jiao</i>	chaio	<i>luo</i>	luo	<i>pen</i>	p'ên
<i>jie</i>	chieh	<i>ma</i>	ma	<i>peng</i>	p'êng
<i>jin</i>	chin	<i>mai</i>	mai	<i>pi</i>	p'i
<i>jing</i>	ching	<i>man</i>	man	<i>pian</i>	p'ien
<i>jiong</i>	chiung	<i>mang</i>	mang	<i>piao</i>	p'iao
<i>jiu</i>	chiu	<i>mao</i>	mao	<i>pie</i>	p'ieh
<i>ju</i>	chü	<i>me</i>	me	<i>pin</i>	p'in
<i>juan</i>	chüan	<i>mei</i>	mei	<i>ping</i>	p'ing
<i>jue</i>	chüeh, chüo	<i>men</i>	mên	<i>po</i>	p'o
<i>jun</i>	chün	<i>meng</i>	mêng	<i>pou</i>	p'ou
<i>ka</i>	k'a	<i>mi</i>	mi	<i>pu</i>	p'u
<i>kai</i>	k'ai	<i>mian</i>	mien	<i>qi</i>	ch'i
<i>kan</i>	k'an	<i>miao</i>	miao	<i>qia</i>	ch'ia
<i>kang</i>	k'ang	<i>mie</i>	mieh	<i>qian</i>	ch'ien
<i>kao</i>	k'ao	<i>min</i>	min	<i>qiang</i>	ch'iang
<i>ke</i>	k'ê, k'o	<i>ming</i>	ming	<i>qiao</i>	ch'aio
<i>ken</i>	k'ên	<i>miu</i>	miu	<i>qie</i>	ch'ieh
<i>keng</i>	k'êng	<i>mo</i>	mo	<i>qin</i>	ch'in
<i>kong</i>	k'ung	<i>mou</i>	mou	<i>qing</i>	ch'ing
<i>kou</i>	k'ou	<i>mu</i>	mu	<i>qiong</i>	ch'iung
<i>ku</i>	k'u	<i>na</i>	na	<i>qiu</i>	ch'iu
<i>kua</i>	k'ua	<i>nai</i>	nai	<i>qu</i>	ch'ü
<i>kuai</i>	k'uai	<i>nan</i>	nan	<i>quan</i>	ch'üan
<i>kuan</i>	k'uan	<i>nang</i>	nang	<i>que</i>	ch'üeh
<i>kuang</i>	k'uang	<i>nao</i>	nao		ch'üo
<i>kui</i>	k'ui	<i>ne</i>	nê	<i>qun</i>	ch'ün
continued on next page					

PINYIN	WADE	PINYIN	WADE	PINYIN	WADE
<i>kun</i>	k'un	<i>nei</i>	nei	<i>ran</i>	jan
<i>kuo</i>	k'uo	<i>nen</i>	nên	<i>rang</i>	jang
<i>la</i>	la	<i>neng</i>	neng	<i>rao</i>	jao
<i>lai</i>	lai	<i>ni</i>	ni	<i>re</i>	jê
<i>lan</i>	lan	<i>nian</i>	nien	<i>ren</i>	jên
<i>lang</i>	lang	<i>niang</i>	niang	<i>reng</i>	jêng
<i>lao</i>	lao	<i>niao</i>	niao	<i>ri</i>	jih
<i>le</i>	lê, lo	<i>nie</i>	nieh	<i>rong</i>	jung
<i>lei</i>	lei	<i>nin</i>	nin	<i>rou</i>	jou
<i>leng</i>	lêng	<i>ning</i>	ning	<i>ru</i>	ju
<i>li</i>	li	<i>niu</i>	niu	<i>ruan</i>	juan
<i>lia</i>	lia	<i>nong</i>	nung	<i>rui</i>	jui
<i>lian</i>	lien	<i>nou</i>	nou	<i>run</i>	jun
<i>liang</i>	liang	<i>nu</i>	nü	<i>ruo</i>	jo
<i>liao</i>	liao	<i>nü</i>	nü	<i>sa</i>	sa
<i>lie</i>	lieh	<i>nuan</i>	nuan	<i>sai</i>	sai
<i>lin</i>	lin	<i>nüe</i>	nüeh	<i>san</i>	san
<i>ling</i>	ling		nüo	<i>sang</i>	sang
<i>liu</i>	liu		nio	<i>sao</i>	sao
<i>long</i>	lung	<i>nuo</i>	no	<i>se</i>	sê
<i>lou</i>	lou	<i>o</i>	o	<i>sen</i>	sên
<i>lu</i>	lu	<i>ou</i>	ou	<i>seng</i>	sêng
<i>lū</i>	lū	<i>pa</i>	p'a	<i>sha</i>	sha
<i>luan</i>	luan	<i>pai</i>	p'ai	<i>shai</i>	shai
<i>lue</i>	lueh	<i>pan</i>	p'an	<i>shan</i>	shan
	lūo	<i>pang</i>	p'ang	<i>shang</i>	shang
	lio	<i>pao</i>	p'ao	<i>shao</i>	shao
<i>she</i>	shê	<i>tun</i>	t'un	<i>yun</i>	yün
<i>shei</i>	shei	<i>tuo</i>	t'o	<i>za</i>	tsa
<i>shen</i>	shên	<i>wa</i>	wa	<i>zai</i>	tsai
<i>sheng</i>	shêng	<i>wai</i>	wai	<i>zan</i>	tsan
<i>shi</i>	shih	<i>wan</i>	wan	<i>zang</i>	tsang
<i>shou</i>	shou	<i>wang</i>	wang	<i>zao</i>	tsao
<i>shu</i>	shu	<i>wei</i>	wei	<i>ze</i>	tsê
<i>shua</i>	shua	<i>wen</i>	wên	<i>zei</i>	tsei
<i>shuai</i>	shuai	<i>weng</i>	wêng	<i>zen</i>	tsên
<i>shuan</i>	shuan	<i>wo</i>	wo	<i>zeng</i>	tsêng
<i>shuang</i>	shuang	<i>wu</i>	wu	<i>zha</i>	cha
<i>shui</i>	shui	<i>xi</i>	hsi	<i>zhai</i>	chai
<i>shun</i>	shun	<i>xia</i>	hsia	<i>zhan</i>	chan
<i>shuo</i>	sho	<i>xian</i>	hsien	<i>zhang</i>	chang
<i>si</i>	sǔ, szǔ, ssǔ	<i>xiang</i>	hsiang	<i>zhao</i>	chao
continued on next page					

PINYIN	WADE	PINYIN	WADE	PINYIN	WADE
<i>song</i>	sung	<i>xiao</i>	hsiao	<i>zhe</i>	chê
<i>sou</i>	sou	<i>xie</i>	hsieh	<i>zhei</i>	chei
<i>su</i>	su	<i>xin</i>	hsin	<i>zhen</i>	chên
<i>suan</i>	suan	<i>xing</i>	hsing	<i>zheng</i>	chêng
<i>sui</i>	sui	<i>xiong</i>	hsiung	<i>zhi</i>	chih
<i>sun</i>	sun	<i>xiu</i>	hsiu	<i>zhong</i>	chung
<i>suo</i>	so	<i>xu</i>	hsü	<i>zhou</i>	chou
<i>ta</i>	t'a	<i>xuan</i>	hsüan	<i>zhu</i>	chu
<i>tai</i>	t'ai	<i>xue</i>	hsüeh,hsüo	<i>zhua</i>	chua
<i>tan</i>	t'an	<i>xun</i>	hsün	<i>zhuai</i>	chuai
<i>tang</i>	t'ang	<i>ya</i>	ya	<i>zhuan</i>	chuan
<i>tao</i>	t'ao	<i>yan</i>	yen	<i>zhuang</i>	chuang
<i>te</i>	t'ê	<i>yang</i>	yang	<i>zhui</i>	chui
<i>teng</i>	t'êng	<i>yao</i>	yao	<i>zhun</i>	chun
<i>ti</i>	t'i	<i>ye</i>	yeh	<i>zhuo</i>	cho
<i>tian</i>	t'ien	<i>yi</i>	yi	<i>zi</i>	tzŭ(tsŭ)
<i>tiao</i>	t'iao	<i>yin</i>	yin	<i>zong</i>	tsung
<i>tie</i>	t'ieh	<i>ying</i>	ying	<i>zou</i>	tsou
<i>ting</i>	t'ing	<i>yo</i>	yo	<i>zu</i>	tsu
<i>tong</i>	t'ung	<i>yong</i>	yung	<i>zuan</i>	tsuan
<i>tou</i>	t'ou	<i>you</i>	yu	<i>zui</i>	tsui
<i>tu</i>	t'u	<i>yu</i>	yü	<i>zun</i>	tsun
<i>tuan</i>	t'uan	<i>yuan</i>	yüen	<i>zuo</i>	tso
<i>tui</i>	t'ui	<i>yue</i>	yüeh		

Table C.1: PinYin system and Wade system mapping table

Bibliography

- [1] Lifang Chen and Sianglin Yu. *The Garden Art of China*. Timber Press, Portland, Oregon, 1986.
- [2] Zhi Chen. *Yuan Ye Zhu Shi*. China Building Industry Press, Beijing, 1982.
- [3] Dorothy Graham. *Chinese Gardens—Gardens of the Contemporary Scene, An account of their design and symbolism*. Dodd, Mead and Company, Inc., New York, 1938.
- [4] John Dixon Hunt, editor. *Studies in the History of Gardens & Designed Landscapes*, volume 18. Taylor & Francis, London & Washington, DC, 1998. Chinese Gardens.
- [5] Cheng Ji. *The Craft of Gardens*. Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1988.
- [6] Xuezhi Jin. *Zhong Guo Yuan Lin Mei Xue*. China Building Industry Press, Beijing, 1999.
- [7] Maggie Keswick. *The Chinese Garden—History, Art & Architecture*. Academy Editions, London, 1978.
- [8] Shao Chang Lee, editor. *Chinese Houses and Garden*. Hastings House, New York, 1950.
- [9] Sherman E. Lee. *Chinese Landscape Painting*. Prentice-Hall International, Inc., London, 1962.

- [10] Yutang Lin, editor. *The Chinese Theory of Art*. William Heinemann Ltd, London, 1967.
- [11] Osvald Sirén. *The Chinese on the Art of Painting—Translations and Comments*. Schocken Books and Hong Kong University Press, New York and Hong Kong, 1963.
- [12] Michael Sullivan. *Symbols of Eternity—The Art of Landscape Painting in China*. Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 1979.
- [13] Lao Tzu. *Tao Te Ching*. Vintage Books, New York, 1997.
- [14] Arthur Waley. *Three Ways of Thought in Ancient China*. George Allen & Unwin Ltd, London, 1969.
- [15] Weiquan Zhou. *Zhong Guo Gu Dian Yuan Lin Shi*. Qinghua University Press, Beijing, 1993.

Websites for Reference

1. Szucsouban, Magánkertek . The Classical Gardens of Suzhou.
Terebess Asia Online (TAO). Terebess Collection. 10 Aug. 2004.
<www.terebess.hu/kert/magankert/index.html>
2. 中国古代绘画. 海纳百川. 上海市黄浦区教育信息中心. Jan. 2001. 21 Feb. 2004.
<www.hnbc.hpe.sh.cn/07/0708/zhongguogudaihuihua/zhongguogudaihuihua.htm>
3. 中国古代名画. 中原画苑. 河南信息港. 1998–2004. 21 Jul. 2003.
<www.art.henan.com.cn/classic.htm>
4. 历代书画珍品(绘画). 上海市教委信息中心, 上海电视大学 中文系联合制作. 2004. 18 Jul. 2004.
<www.shtvu.edu.cn/ccwindows/page/shuhua1.htm>
5. Summer Palace (Yiheyuan). Travel China Guide. Xi'an Foreign Languages University. 3 Aug. 2004. 16 May. 2004.
<www.travelchinaguide.com/cityguides/beijing/summer.htm>
6. Beihai Park. Travel China Guide. Xi'an Foreign Languages University. 3 Aug. 2004. 16 May. 2004.
<www.travelchinaguide.com/attraction/beijing/beihai.htm>
7. 蔡仲德. 也谈“天人合一”—与季羨林先生商榷 传统与现代化 (No. 5, 1994). 4 May. 2004. 24 May. 2004.
<www.tao56.51.net/ac/ac044.htm>
8. 名园鉴赏. 苏州园林设计院. 26 Sept. 2004.
<www.szlاد.com/index_c.htm>