

Wen Tien and Chin Chün-ming*

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As influential creative geniuses, such seventeenth-century recluse and loyalist artists as Chu Ta 朱牽 (1626–after 1705), Ch'en Hung-shou 陳洪綬 (1598–1652) and Tao-chi 道濟 (1641–before 1720) overshadow a host of minor painters whose careers were also affected by the fall of the Ming dynasty in 1644. These secondary men led unspectacular lives and their art cannot be classified as representing pioneering efforts. Nevertheless, they too deserve attention, since they are as much a part of the seventeenth-century *i-min* society as their more famous contemporaries.

It is well known that by the seventeenth century, Suchou had forfeited its position as artistic capital of the empire to other cultural centers. Yet the city on Lake T'ai still harbored many talents, among them, the sons and daughters of the distinguished Wen lineage and of the lesser-known but ambitious Chin household. In these two families, Wen Tien 文點 (1633–1704) and Chin Chün-ming 金俊明 (1602–1675) are particularly prominent as *i-min* painters. Obviously, no one would assume on the basis of this single assertion that the art or the lives of these two individuals were parallel or even similar. An understanding of where they diverge and where they converge requires not only an investigation into their personal histories and their artistic goals, but also a brief look at their respective families, their social status and aspirations, their reactions to the Manchu takeover. We will here examine first the Wen clan and its artistic representative, Wen Tien, and then turn to the Chins and Chin Chün-ming.

When in the early eighteenth century the *Wen Family Genealogy* 文氏族譜 was updated, for the Suchou branch alone, some 141 male descendants of Wen Lin 文林 (1445–1499), the sire of Wen Cheng-ming 文徵明 (1470–1559) were registered.¹ At least twenty-eight of these were artists and if two female painters (not, of course, included in the list) are counted,² the total is around thirty. Literary documents and paintings abound to chronicle the activities

*I wish to thank Professor Charles O. Hucker of The University of Michigan for his assistance in translating and clarifying the official titles which were encountered in the biographies used in this study, and Nora Ling-yün Shih Liu for reviewing my translations of a considerable body of Chinese material pertinent to this paper.

¹ Wen Han 文含, *Wen-shih tsu-p'u hsi-chi* 文氏族譜續集, in *Ch'ü-shih ts'ung-shu* 曲石叢書.

² The two lady painters were Wen Yin 文英 and Wen Shu 文淑 (Chao Wen Shu 趙文淑, 1595–1634). See Sun Ta-kung 孫麟公, *Chung-kuo hua-chia jen-ming ta-tz'u-tien* 中國畫家人名大辭典 (reprint ed. Taipei, 1960), pp. 17, 18.

and artistic achievements of the most famous: Wen Cheng-ming and his immediate circle of relatives and students. Many of the later artists of Wen kinship, however, because of the destruction of paintings and of collected writings over the intervening centuries, have been reduced, sadly, to mere names in biographical encyclopedia; for others, often only a single work or two survives. Consequently, no more than three or four of the seventeenth-century Wen family painters can be beneficially studied today.

It is frequently stated that the descendants of Wen Cheng-ming adhered to something called the Wen family style in painting, a belief which raises the questions, "What was the Wen family style in the seventeenth century?" "Was it a distinct and recognizable style?" James Cahill and his students have stressed the disintegration of the Wu school and the Wen style between 1600 and 1650.³ Motifs such as boulder-strewn mountains rising on over-lapping diagonals, or twisting pine trees, techniques such as effervescent ink-dabs, are exaggerated or are mingled with new emphases or are placed in startling surroundings as in the *Landscape* (Fig. 1) by Cheng Chung 鄭重 dated 1632 now in the Cheng Chi collection, or the *Landscape in the Manner of Wang Meng* (Fig. 2) by Ch'en Huan 陳煥 dated 1605 in the University Art Museum, Berkeley. Or the Wen style is given "romantic" overtones as in the Dubosc collection fan painting (Fig. 3), a composite depiction of Suchou scenic views by Wen Ts'ung-ch'ang 文從昌 (1541-1616) with poems inscribed by him and four other members of the Wen family: Wen Chen-heng 文震亨 (1585-1645), Wen Ts'ung-chien 文從簡 (1574-1648), Wen Ch'ien-kuang 文謙光 and Wen Ch'ung-kuang 文寵光.

But what then happens to the Wen style in the last half of the seventeenth century? One answer lies with Wen Tien.

Born in 1633, Wen Tien's life as a youth was idyllic and assured.⁴ He boated on Stone Lake with his elders and had demonstrated early promise as a poet. When he was twelve *sui*, the insurgents overran the capital. In 1646, his only uncle committed suicide, the estate plunged into bankruptcy, father and son transferred their home to the family cemetery. Tien spent his time writing and painting. When he was forty *sui*, in 1673, he journeyed throughout the country; while visiting the capital it was suggested that he could, if he wished, be recommended for an official position, but appalled by the proposal, he refused to even consider it. The family lived frugally and often was in dire financial straits; Tien was obliged to borrow funds to pay the taxes. Sometimes he resided at the Hui-ch'ing Monastery 慧慶僧寺 in Lien-ching 蓮涇, just west of the Ch'ang Gate 闕門 of Suchou, where he sold his own calligraphy and painting to earn a living. The author of Wen Tien's epitaph (from which these data are, in the main, taken) painstakingly underscores Wen Tien's persistence in maintaining the ideals of the *wen-jen* 文人; such as tales about his indignant and cantankerous responses when approached by wealthy buyers of his works but his affability toward officials when consulted for advice on government as well as his efforts to preserve the family prestige.⁵ Elsewhere Tien is described as having been complacent and calm, neither seeking fame nor being proud and inaccessible.⁶ He died in 1704; his collected writings have not survived.

Comments about Wen Tien's painting style often are simply couched in the laconic statement, "He followed the style of Wen Cheng-ming."⁷ Even Tien's friend, Wang Wan 汪琬

³ Marsha Smith, "The Wu School in Late Ming, I: Conservative Masters," in James Cahill (ed.), *The Restless Landscape: Chinese Painting of the Late Ming Period* (Berkeley, 1971), pp. 42-56.

⁴ Wen Tien's *tzu* was Yü-yeh 與也, his *hao* Nan-yün shan-ch'iao 南雲山樵.

⁵ Chu I-tsun 朱彝尊, *P'u-shu-ting ch'üan-chi* 曝書亭全集, *Ssu-pu pei-yao* 四部備要 ed. (reprint ed. Taipei, 1966), 74:9b-11a.

⁶ *Wu-hsien chih* 吳縣志 *apud* Feng Chin-po 馮金伯, *Kuo-ch'ao hua-shih* 國朝畫識 (reprint ed. 1923), 4:4a-b.

⁷ Feng Chin-po, *loc. cit.*; Sun Ta-kung, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

(1624–1691) repeatedly invoked the aura of the grand and distant patriarch in poems he inscribed on Wen Tien's works.⁸ Clearly, to most, Wen Tien's art was produced, to borrow a phrase from a different context, "under the ancestor's shadow." This conclusion is also the usual reaction to Wen Tien's paintings even today, but while it is essentially correct, it is simultaneously too glib and misleading, for it neglects to account for the reverse: elements of Wen Cheng-ming's art which were not continued by Wen Tien, or instances when Wen Tien did not follow Wen Cheng-ming styles.

For example, Wen Cheng-ming used the blue and green manner; Wen Tien, as far as can be ascertained from the materials available for study, favors monochrome. Indeed, just one painting, known only through a written catalogue entry, utilized color to a noticeable degree, but as light washes.⁹ Second, many of the hoary literary themes and the treasured intimacies of Suchou life and scenery which the earlier Wen family artists were so fond of depicting—*The Lute Song*, *The Red Cliff*, Tiger Hill, Stone Lake, Mt. Ling-yen, Lake T'ai, farewell scenes, the lush mansion garden—all were largely passé by the middle of the seventeenth century. Wen Tien prefers bleakly stoic subjects: trees and rocks, wintry groves, solitary wanderers on mountain and river pathways, the "three friends of winter." All of which, of course, have precedents in the work of earlier Wen artists, but the fact that Wen Tien concentrates almost entirely on such sombre and spartan themes suggests that the secure and gentle leisurely comforts of middle Ming were for him obsolete. Third, on occasion, Wen Tien forsakes the family artistic inheritance. The most radical departures are his direct translations of T'ang Yin 唐寅 (1470–1523) as observed in two leaves of an undated album entitled *Illustrations of Poems*, now in the National Palace Museum, Taipei. One landscape (Fig. 4) is a rather sketchy interpretation in which rhomboid stones and the handling of ink lines retain distinct T'ang Yin qualities, the other (Fig. 5) more positively captures all the salient characteristics of T'ang Yin's art in brushwork, rock shapes, bright light and dark contrasts.

When defining Wen Tien's own style within the Wen family idiom, it becomes obvious that he not only depends heavily upon Wen Cheng-ming, but also that he appears intent upon bolstering and reaffirming the Wu school lineage. Interestingly, as if to give it greater antiquity, he goes back beyond the Yüan dynasty to the tenth-century Tung Yüan 董源. Encountered in Wen Tien's paintings are admixtures of forms, motifs, and techniques borrowed, reworked, reformulated from Tung Yüan, from Yüan masters, from the Wu school of Shen Chou 沈周 (1427–1509) and Wen Cheng-ming.

In the fifth leaf of the album by Wen Tien in the National Palace Museum (Fig. 6) the low, rounded hills in the background, the expanding v-shaped promontory constructed from repetitions of gentle slopes, the fragile skiffs on the water, all allude to Tung Yüan and compare well with passages in the latter's handscroll *Waiting for the Ferry* (Fig. 7), now in the Liaoning Provincial Museum.¹⁰ The light, skittering brushwork, the trees and their dabbed-on foliage reflect Wen Cheng-ming.

In the second leaf of the Wen Tien album (Fig. 8),¹¹ the background hill and the modulated land forms again echo Tung Yüan; the tilted plateau with sheared-off edge and the small, stumpy figure are Wu school continuations. Massed foliage dabs and thin, delicate gossamer

⁸ *Yao-feng wen-ch'ao* 堯峯文鈔, *Ssu-pu ts'ung-k'an* 四部叢刊 ed., 1:10b; 4:11b.

⁹ Lu Hsin-yüan 陸心源, *Jang-li-kuan kuo-yen lu* 穰梨館過眼錄 (Wu-hsing, 1891), 31:14b–15a.

¹⁰ *Liao-ning sheng po-wu-kuan ts'ang-hua chi* 遼寧省博物館藏畫集 (Peking, 1962), i, pls. 16–21.

¹¹ *The Famous Chinese Painting and Calligraphy of Tsin, T'ang, Five Dynasties, Sung, Yüan, Ming and Ch'ing Dynasties. A Special Collection of the Second National Exhibition of Chinese Art under the Auspices of the Ministry of Education. Part One* 教育部第二次全國美術展覽會專集第一種晉唐五代宋元明清名家書畫集 (Shanghai [1943]), pl. 310, left.

webs of pale ink in irregular patches covered with strong black *tien* derive from Wen Cheng-ming as can be found in his *Cho-cheng Garden* album of 1551 (Fig. 9) in the Morse collection.¹² Evident here are the differences between Wen Cheng-ming and Wen Tien in visualization and depiction. Compositionally, Wen Cheng-ming works out an intricate and consequently exciting arrangement of repeated and countering, sharply-pitched diagonals; Wen Tien is much lower and horizontal in his pictorial structure. Wen Cheng-ming's ground plane moves upward in a single, continuous unit, the tilt of Wen Tien's terrace interrupts the contiguous configuration of the land. While Wen Cheng-ming gives rollicking vibrancy to the leafage by emphasizing discrete, rounded clusters of leaves dark on light, Wen Tien's foliage is nearly uniform in ink tone, all of it fused together into a single, undifferentiated large mass. And while Wen Cheng-ming's figure adheres firmly to the ground, Wen Tien's scholar floats.

Some of these characteristics are definitely accentuated in two landscape fan paintings by Wen Tien, one dated 1693 (Fig. 10), the other, *Guest at a Mountain Study*, done in 1695 (Fig. 11):¹³ the precariously slanted terraces, the unanchored figures, the zigzagged river pushing back into a space far deeper than Wen Cheng-ming's spatial conceptions. The 1695 fan and another, dated 1697 (Fig. 12) now in the Vannotti collection,¹⁴ must have been the sort of Wen Tien paintings referred to by Chang Keng 張庚 (1685–1760) who says, "In landscape, Wen Tien's brushwork is fine and delicate, mostly *tien* dots and washes extremely moist and indistinct; he excels in the use of ink."¹⁵ That "ink" is Wen Tien's medium is borne out in these two paintings: damp icings of feather-light washes, minimally textured grassy slopes, irregular blotches of wet ink merging over rock and boulder surfaces and then, Wen Tien's own stylistic hallmark, the compacting of myriads of miniscule *tien* along edges, giving shapes a brittle, crusty appearance. In this more moist technique, Wen Tien's paintings have an amazing resemblance to the use of ink and brush by the twelfth-century follower of Tung Yüan, Chiang Shen 江參. A comparison of Wen Tien's 1695 landscape fan with the opening section of Chiang's *Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains* handscroll (Fig. 13) now in the National Palace Museum, Taipei,¹⁶ shows similarities in land forms as well as in the application of large patches of ink extending nearly to the edges of rocks leaving white borders around them and the strengthening of contours through accumulations of *tien*.

Since allusions to Tung Yüan occur regularly in Wen Tien's depictions, it is instructive to observe how Wen Cheng-ming interprets the Tung style in one of his rare extant works in the tradition of Tung Yüan and Chü-jan 巨然 done in 1555 (Fig. 14) in the Chih-lo Lou collection¹⁷ and then to compare his with that of Wen Tien (Fig. 11). Wen Cheng-ming, using repeated sharply-slanted peak-like forms, textured with elongated dabs and interrupted with telltale "alum lump" rocks, fashions a composition of intersecting and overlapping diagonals centered along a vertical axis. Into this towering, visually exciting landscape are crowded large-scale trees, their roots cling to hilltops, their branches twist in rhythmic and pulsating

¹² Roderick Whitfield, *In Pursuit of Antiquity: Chinese Paintings of the Ming and Ch'ing Dynasties from the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Earl Morse* (Princeton, 1969), no. 3.

¹³ The 1693 painting is reproduced in *T'ieh-ch'in t'ung-chien-lou ts'ang-shan chi-chin* 鐵琴銅劍樓藏扇集錦 (Shanghai, 1936), I, pl. 43; "Guest at a Mountain Study" in *Ming Ch'ing shan-mien-hua hsüan chi* 明清扇面畫選集 (Shanghai, 1959), pl. 80.

¹⁴ *Shina Nanga Taisei* 支那南畫大成 (Tokyo, 1935–37), VIII, pl. 171.

¹⁵ *Kuo-ch'ao hua cheng lu* 國朝畫徵錄, *Hua-shih ts'ung-shu* 畫史叢書 ed., shang 上, 18.

¹⁶ National Palace Museum, Taipei, *Three Hundred Masterpieces of Chinese Painting in the Palace Museum* 故宮名畫三百種 (Taichung, 1959), 100; see also Fu Shen, "Notes on Chiang Shen," *National Palace Museum Bulletin*, 1:3 (July 1966), pp. 1–11.

¹⁷ City Museum & Art Gallery, Hong Kong, *Exhibition of Paintings of the Ming and Ching Periods* 明清繪畫展覽 (Hong Kong, 1970), no. 9.

patterns against foils of foliage which in turn are organized into clustered designs dark on light; manipulated into a narrow ravine is a multi-roomed thatched retreat, in front of it the vacant flat of land with sheared sides. Wen Tien achieves a similar effect of rocks and slopes with white edges textured with short lines and patches, surrounded with ink dabs. But Wen Tien reduces the angles of the slopes, making them softer and more gentle; there is a greater feeling of spaciousness throughout the composition as he avoids surface vibrancy; his tree roots do not struggle out of the ground, his branches do not exhibit a starkly conscious design, absent is the multiplicity of forms, present the nearly uniform tones in the foliage. Overall, Wen Tien is more quiescent, less exuberant than Wen Cheng-ming. Wen Tien's compositional structures here and elsewhere, also seem to convey a certain tranquility, for usually they are extremely stable, predominantly based on horizontals and verticals.

Even when he modifies a Yüan dynasty tripartite composition in the Chih-lo Lou collection hanging scroll, *Fishing* (Fig. 15), a work which is essentially a portrait of two pines silhouetted against an expanse of water, the thrusts of the diagonal row of massive boulders and the zigzagging distant hills are rectified by the horizontal island on the left, the strong vertical of the tree on the right, and the straightening out of the distant mountains on the right. The artist's reliance upon Tung Yüan is again obvious in the background range and it is interesting that he employs the same sort of pictorial conception in a depiction of a venerable Wu school theme in his *Retreat Among Lakes and Mountains* (Fig. 16).¹⁸ Many speculations about reasons for Tien's infatuation with Tung Yüan are possible: perhaps it arises from an awareness of seventeenth-century aesthetic theories, perhaps he endeavors to rejuvenate or rehabilitate the Wen style through infusions of Tung Yüan, perhaps he simply desired to explore the antique. Whatever the causes, it is worthwhile to pursue the illustration of this time-honored theme just a little deeper, for how Wen Tien treats it is an important clue to our grasp of Wen Tien as a late seventeenth-century Wu school artist in contrast to an early seventeenth-century Wu school painter.

Early seventeenth-century Wu school followers, such as Chü Mou-shih 居懋時 in his *Pleasures of Reading in Autumn* (Fig. 17) now in the National Palace Museum, Taipei,¹⁹ tend to use the tall, narrow format associated with Wen Cheng-ming, where Wen Tien does not. Further, the early followers compress a turbulent, violent and dangerous-looking escarpment into the background but with a two-dimensional effect, negating any extension into depth, whereas Wen Tien's soft, low hills open a vista curving off to the right. This last feature is one integral to Wen Tien's style, as he is habitually more interested in spatial recession than is Wen Cheng-ming. Throughout his works, Wen Tien seems to have deliberately avoided the overt excitement produced by Wen Cheng-ming in his paintings, and here we can expand somewhat upon those characteristics of the Wen school which apparently offered no or little allure for Wen Tien. Not for him the writhing, fractured landscapes based on Wang Meng 王蒙 (1308-1385), not for him the evaporating lyricism of soft river scenes, not for him the lacy, convoluted and designed patterns of twisted cypress branches with their heightened surcharge of motion and attendant emotion. His seeming refusal to countenance these elements of Wen style further serves to set him apart from the early seventeenth-century practitioners of Wen modes. Although his representations may at times be residual Wen family subjects, his underlying theme is a sombre, subdued, unmitigated melancholy.

Within such self-imposed restrictions, Wen Tien's artistic sensitivity is beautifully conveyed in his extraordinary *Wintry Forest* of 1679 in the Chih-lo Lou collection (Fig. 18) dedicated

¹⁸ *Ming-jen shu-hua* 名人書畫 (Shanghai, 1923-25), xxvi.

¹⁹ Palace Museum, Peking, *Ku-kung shu-hua chi* 故宮書畫集, xii.

as a sixtieth birthday presentation to an older family friend. The visual imagery echoes and complements that in the dedicatory poems Wen Tien inscribed above: the endurance and constancy of mountains and streams, the brevity and change of man's life, and in a more personal vein, how it is that separated as they are by misty hills, the two friends meet infrequently. But even here the ancestral presence is felt and this hanging scroll invites comparison with Wen Cheng-ming's *Listening to the Rain at Heng-t'ang*, done in 1545, now in the Yonezawa collection, Japan (Fig. 19).²⁰ Despite its poetic associations, Wen Cheng-ming's study is related to the Li Ch'eng 李成 wintry forest tradition in which one or two gnarled and time-worn trees dominate the iconography.

Compositionally these two paintings share the diagonal bank at the lower right, the stream twisting into the mid-ground on the left. Additional similarities occur in the shaping of the long, low ridges which are rounded off where they meet or are converted into tucked-in boulders. And lastly, both artists incorporate a lengthy inscription spreading across the entire upper portion of the format. Here it should be noted that Wen Tien's calligraphy also is rooted in that of Wen Cheng-ming, combining elements of the latter's *k'ai* 楷 and *hsing* 行 styles. The differences between these two representations are just as obvious and equally important, for through them are expressed Wen Tien's peculiar artistic proclivities. More keenly interested than Wen Cheng-ming in creating spatial recession, along with a breadth of spaciousness and representational completeness, he leads the eye into depth by means of the low, overlapping hillsides, a recession abetted by the fading row of trees. Wen Cheng-ming successfully curtains extensive depth by the large, low, centralized mountain. Wen Tien consciously dilutes the visual impact of cleanly silhouetted trees not only by eliminating the contrast between adversity and age-gnarled, barren branches and the evergreen cypress, but more so by gracefully integrating several trees into a unified group and then merging them into the picture as a whole. Behind the spectral, haunting, rimey leafless trees, dimly filing through the frosty air along the rim of the hills and into the distance, the thematic connotations of the wintry forest remain intact.

Before leaving Wen Tien, a few additional words and a summary are necessary. The Wens, encompassing an extended family of impressive reputation, epitomize the esteemed, lettered, landed gentry house. As long-time Suchou residents, their scions were in the public eye as artists or officials. There is substantial information about their forefathers and the compiling of the genealogy, which provides an integral list of descendants spanning several centuries, is indicative of pride taken in the family in general by recording not only its heirs, but also the achievements of its noteworthy members. Under such circumstances, it is clear that Wen Tien, in 1644, had little choice but to disassociate himself from officialdom right at the time when, as an eleven-year old, he would have been preparing for the examinations. For him, retirement was *de rigueur*. After the Ch'ing victory, his branch of the family was thrown precipitously into a painful poverty in which the selling of paintings or the borrowing of money were distasteful and distressing necessities. In his retirement, Wen Tien, for the most part, moved in a very restricted and guarded social sphere. Except by virtue of his retirement and his properly obdurate refusal to entertain the notion of possible official appointment, he punctiliously avoided open demonstrations of his political feelings. In his paintings, as if to do otherwise would be unfilial and blasphemous, he tenaciously perpetuated the past, content with introducing certain modifications, but rarely deviating drastically from his artistic origins. Seen in the overall late seventeenth-century artistic context, Wen Tien is somewhat of an anomaly: his work is largely uncontaminated by the turbulent, rambunctious landscapes popular in late Ming, unscathed by the jarring constructions of the influential Tung Ch'i-ch'ang

²⁰ *Tōsō Gemmin meiga taikan* 唐宋元明名畫大觀 (Tokyo, 1929), 285; *Kokka* 國華, 464.

董其昌 (1555–1636), oblivious to the expressions of individualism among the loyalists and others such as Chu Ta, Tao-chi, or Ch'en Hung-shou.

In contrast to the Wen family, Chin Chün-ming comes from a totally different cultural background and social fabric. No genealogy of the family exists; although Chin Chün-ming's biography has long been available, only recently has his father's biography come to light. The basic facts of his father's life substantiate that the antecedents of the seventeenth-century Chin family were hidden in obscurity, beset with poverty, plagued with precarious careers and frustrated ambitions.

Chin Chün-ming's father, named Yung-yüan 永元, born in 1580, was orphaned at the age of seven *sui* and raised by a sister who had married into the Chu 朱 family. He subsequently adopted this surname and took the personal name Yung-ch'ang 永昌. He was fond of reading and completely understood affairs ancient and recent. In his relationships with others, he exhibited a generous and good temper. He traveled widely, always carefully examining the terrain, becoming familiar with local customs and keeping company with people of wisdom and talent wherever he went. He was unrestrained, a capable organizer, and his ambition was to be of service to the people and the country. Because he had not taken the examinations, he was prevented from obtaining any really significant position; undaunted, he accepted a minor clerical job in the Ministry of Personnel and eventually filled a vacancy on the personal staff of the Guard Commander of Ninghsia. Although this meant living in the bitter cold northern regions, he rather liked the work; constantly wearing a sword, he caroused with the troops, came and went across the borders, was intimate with officers and men, their horses, equipment and weapons as well as with the strategic and lesser mountain passes. In 1625 he was deputed on a trade mission by the Supreme Commander. It was February, snow had accumulated in the mountain passes so deep that it reached the horses' bellies. As he was preparing to cross the border, he caught cold and died. He was barely forty-eight *sui*; his last words were, "Zealously treasure my sword."²¹ No hint is given that Yung-ch'ang had the slightest artistic inclinations.

His son, who later (exactly when is unclear) took the name Chin Chün-ming, was born in 1602 and raised under the name Chu Kun 朱袞.²² His childhood was spent with his father in the north where he rode horseback and developed a chivalrous and self-confident character. Returning to Suchou (possibly after his father's death in 1625), he began his education in earnest. As a District Student, repeated failure in the examinations led him to relinquish this honor; he "closed his door to guests" and made his living as a professional writer. This was before the fall of the Ming dynasty.

Despite his military heritage, Chin managed to acquire all the cultural trappings of a literatus in poetry, calligraphy, and painting. An insatiable calligrapher and bibliophile, he transcribed the classics, rare books in private collections, travel diaries and literary drafts, as well as books dealing with astronomy and irrigation.²³ All were bound, boxed, and carefully stored. His own writings were collected in at least five different volumes.²⁴ The original draft

²¹ Wei Hsi 魏禧, *Shuo-t'ing wen-ch'ao* 勺庭文鈔, *Kuo-ch'ao erh-shih-ssu chia wen-ch'ao* 國朝二十四家文鈔 ed., 5:23a–24a.

²² Chin's other names were: Chiu-chang 九章, Hsiao-chang 孝章, Keng-an 耿庵. Except where otherwise noted, information on Chin's life and family is based upon his epitaph by Wang Wan (*Yao-feng wen-ch'ao*, 15:5a–6b).

²³ Wu Hsiu-chih 吳秀之 (comp.), Ts'ao Yün-yuan 曹允源 (ed.), *Wu-hsien chih* 吳縣志 (Taipei, 1970 reprint of 1933 ed.), 75 *shang* 上, 24b.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 56 *hsia* 下, 1a. His *Chi Lan* 記蘭 is published in Chu Chien-hsin 朱劍心 (comp.), *Wan Ming hsiao-p'in hsüan chu* 晚明小品選注 (Taipei, 1964), 6, pp. 214–218.

of his poetry notebook, the *Keng-an shih kao* 耿庵詩稿 is today in the National Central Library in Taipei.²⁵

Gregarious by nature, he attended literary gatherings along with such local poets as his close friend, Kuei Chuang 歸莊 (1613–1673), exchanged poems with Chu Hou-ling 朱鶴齡 (1606–1658) and Ku Meng-yu 顧夢游 (1599–1660) to name but a few, and was well-acquainted with Wang Shih-chen 王士禎 (1634–1711) and his brother.²⁶ Unstinting in offering assistance and criticism to aspiring poets, along with nearly two thousand others, he joined the quasi-literary, quasi-political Fu-she 復社, an organization which met its demise after 1642.²⁷

Rather perversely, however, although acclaimed for painting and calligraphy, he refused to instruct others in these arts. Perhaps he thus maintained a sort of monopoly on his source of income, for it is asserted that many of the stele inscriptions, monastery placards, and wine-shop signs throughout the area of the Three Wus were from his hand. Skilled as a landscape artist, Chin was most famous for his monochrome plum blossoms which, it seems, he began to paint only after 1644. These will be discussed later.

Chin Chün-ming, who died in 1675, had four sons and here the military penchant of the family again comes to the fore. The two youngest sons died young. The second son, K'an 侃, *tz'u*, I-t'ao 亦陶 was given these names with the hopes he might emulate T'ao K'an 陶侃 (259–334, the great-grandfather of T'ao Ch'ien 陶潛), who rose from poverty to become a superlative military commander.²⁸ Chin K'an was close to his father, he continued the library and trained his own artistic talents.²⁹ He died in 1703, one year before Wen Tien passed away. In the eldest son, Shang-ch'en 上震, noted as a calligrapher, the Chin family finally realized its aspirations: in 1660 he passed the *chü-jen* 舉人 degree in the military examination and became a lieutenant.³⁰ Chin Chün-ming sometimes collaborated with his two sons in painting plum blossoms, bamboo, other plants, and rocks.³¹

With no family artistic tradition to uphold, Chin Chün-ming was at liberty to depict monochrome plum blossoms as he choose and he elected to ignore the wet, spontaneous style of Wang Mien 王冕 (1335–1407) which prevailed at the time for one infinitely more chaste and fastidious. His most typical works, as seen in two leaves of an album done in 1670 (Figs. 20 and 21) now in the Vannotti collection, alternate between dramatically twisted, single branches and thick mazes of curving, arching branches spreading upward like spiraling wisps

²⁵ A reduced, black-and-white facsimile of this notebook has recently been published (Taipei, 1975).

²⁶ Ch'ien Ch'ien-i 錢謙益, *Yu-hsüeh chi* 有學集 in *Mu-chai ch'üan chi* 牧齋全集 (Sui-han Chai 遼漢齋, 1910), 5:13b; Chu Hou-ling, *Yü-an hsiao chi* 愚庵小集, *Ssu-k'u ch'üan-shu* 四庫全書 ed., 5:5a, 9:13b–16a; Ku Meng-yu, *Ku Yü-chih shih chi* 顧與治詩集, *Chün-ling ts'ung-shu* 金陵叢書 ed., 3:7b; Wang Shih-chen, *Yü-yang shan-jen ching-hua lu* 漁洋山人精華錄, *Ssu-pu pei-yao* (reprint ed. Taipei, 1966), 8 *hsia*, 24a.

²⁷ *Wu-hsien chih*, 75 *shang*, 24b.

²⁸ Chin K'an's *hao* were Li-an 立庵 and Li-t'ao 立陶. For T'ao K'an, see Herbert A. Giles, *A Chinese Biographical Dictionary* (Taipei, 1962 reprint of 1898 ed.), no. 1897. The explanation of Chin K'an's names is given by Kuei Chuang (*Kuei Chuang chi* 歸莊集 [Shanghai, 1962], 3:221–222).

²⁹ Chang Keng, *Kuo-ch'ao hua cheng lu*, *shang*, 6 (under Chin Chün-ming); Li Ming-wan 李銘皖 (comp.), Feng Kuei-fen 馮桂芬 (ed.), *Su-chou fu-chih* 蘇州府志 (Taipei, 1970 reprint of 1883 ed.), 82:1a–b. A volume of Chin K'an's writings, the *Yü-chai chi* 迂齋集, is still extant, but has not been available to me. His now lost (?) *Thunder Manual* (*Lei-p'u* 雷譜) received scant praise from Chi Yün 紀昀 and the editors of the *Ssu-k'u ch'üan-shu tsung-mu t'i-yao* 四庫全書總目提要 (Shanghai, 1933, 144, p. 13) who state that while purporting to be moralistic and admonitory, it consisted of mere hearsay and gossip.

³⁰ It would appear that Shang-ch'en's original name was T'i 遜, *tz'u* Tsu-sheng 祖生, see *Su-chou fu-chih*, 82:1a–b. The date of his success in the examination is given in *Su-chou fu-chih*, 67:12a. Another of his names was Tung-tsai 東宰.

³¹ An example of a painting done with Chin K'an is reproduced in *Shina Nanga Shusei* 支那南畫集成 (Tokyo, 1917–19), II, 3; with Chin Shang-ch'en in *Shina Nanga Taisei*, II, 233.

of smoke.³² Mercilessly lopping off lower trunk and upper twigs, he thrusts the viewer into the midst of the thicket. An interest in close observation and precise description of forms and texture is indicated by the multitude of fine, irregular, abrupt lines for exteriors, drags of dry ink twisting over each other and clusters of black *tien* for the rough bark; each petal is outlined with one or two extremely delicate, silvery-grey strokes, calyxes sometimes are just dots, other times they are outlined and filled in with wash; stamen and pistils may be treated in a slightly stylized fashion. Occasionally Chin combines outline blossoms with those done in the "boneless" technique. His extraordinary filmy brush touch and his descriptive neatness are joined with an unfailingly impeccable feeling for the proper arrangement and placement of the prunus branch on the page.

He was undoubtedly influenced by his older contemporary, Ch'en Hung-shou, in a number of ways. A comparison of a third leaf in the Vannotti album (Fig. 22) with Ch'en Hung-shou's *Mountain Bird and Plum Blossom* (Fig. 23), a hanging scroll in the National Palace Museum, Taipei,³³ permits illustration of this influence. In Ch'en's painting are visible the twisted striations, used mainly on the rock, but also to a degree on the plum bark, the combination of outline and boneless techniques, the stress on finely-wrought angled forms. A second comparison, between Chin's plum blossom album leaf (Fig. 22) and Ch'en's *Pink Apricot* (Fig. 24), an album leaf in the National Palace Museum, Taipei,³⁴ reveals a similar use of angular outline and powdery stipple; especially noteworthy here is the close association between the two works compositionally in the placement of the branch as a curving diagonal cutting across the page, a positioning in which the artists take concern for the effects of format and surrounding space. Or in a last comparison, between Chin's album leaf (Fig. 22) and another painting by Ch'en Hung-shou, *Old Prunus* (Fig. 25) from the same Palace Museum album,³⁵ Chin's work is less contrived, to be sure, and the strange and grotesque much lightened by a closer relationship to reality, but further stylistic compatibilities are undeniable: the squat, plump petals, the grouping of three or four buds or side views of blossoms, the rather mannered rendition of the calyxes.

Chin Chün-ming not only painted works in conjunction with his sons, as mentioned earlier, but also in concert with confreres of his own generation. In the spring of 1667, Chin Chün-ming, Kuei Chuang, and Ch'en K'o 陳邁 executed a hanging scroll of *Bamboo, Plum, and Epidendrum* for a mutual acquaintance (Fig. 26).³⁶ Bonds between the Chins and Kuei Chuang are firmly established by other cooperative paintings,³⁷ by the marriage of Chin K'an to Kuei Chuang's daughter,³⁸ and last but not least, by the colophons written by all three members of the Chin family on Kuei Chuang's *Ink Bamboo* handscroll now in the Chih-lo Lou collection.

Since Chin Chün-ming had attained a reputation as a calligrapher, this aspect of his art should not be overlooked, although it can here be treated in only a cursory view. His running draft style was based on that of Wang Hsi-chih 王羲之 (321-379), in particular on the T'ang

³² A number of representative examples are illustrated in *Shina Nanga Taisei*, III, 41-58 and in *Po-mei chi* 百梅集 (Shanghai, 1927), I.

³³ National Palace Museum, Taipei, *Masterpieces of Chinese Painting in the National Palace Museum* 故宮名畫選萃 (Taipei, 1969), 41.

³⁴ Palace Museum, Peking, *Ku-kung chou-k'an* 故宮週刊, 234.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 225.

³⁶ *Gems of Chinese Painting* 畫苑掇英 (Shanghai, 1955), I, 53.

³⁷ For examples, see *Shina Nanga Taisei*, II, 234; IV, 54.

³⁸ Kuei Chuang, *Kuei Chuang chi*, p. 139.

dynasty model known as the *Sheng-chiao Preface* 聖教序 (Fig. 27).³⁹ Chin's colophon on Kuei Chuang's *Bamboo* (Fig. 28) is laboriously close to this model; perhaps because he was self-conscious in employing this style in a formal writing, very little personal variation or individuality shows through. Under different circumstances, for example, when inscribing his own plum blossom painting (Fig. 29),⁴⁰ Chin's running standard script, also derived from that of Wang Hsi-chih, is a perfect complement to the representation: delicate, neat, spare, the internal rhythms of character strokes echoing the movements of branches, twigs, and blooms. Chin's personal writing style is best seen, however, in the draft of his poetry notebook, the *Keng-an shih kao*, where the less inhibited flow of the brush is evident in each character and *en toto* (Fig. 30).

To return to the colophon on Kuei Chuang's *Bamboo* scroll. At the end of his inscription, Chin Chün-ming has impressed a seal with the legend, "Among the Moon River Tide Society" 月泉汐社之間, a curious remark which deserves some explanation. To understand its significance, we have to recall that during the Yüan period there existed a number of poetry societies dedicated to anti-Mongol expressions, most notably the Yüeh-ch'üan yin-she 月泉吟社, the Moon River Poetry Society (named after the Moon River in Chin-hua 金華, Chekiang, so designated because of its tidal bore).⁴¹ During the Ch'ing dynasty, especially during the 1660s, there flourished a poetry society called Ching-yin shih-she 驚隱詩社. With a membership of seven hundred Ming loyalists, its avowed purpose was the preservation and continuation of the spirit of the Yüan dynasty Moon River Poetry Society. While it has not been established that Chin Chün-ming was a member of this society, Kuei Chuang and another close comrade of Chin, Chu Hou-ling, were.⁴² By using this seal on Kuei Chuang's painting, Chin affirms his loyalist sentiments.

In reviewing Wen Tien and Chin Chün-ming many contrasts are immediately evident. Wen, born into a ready-made life in an established family of civil gentry; Chin, self-made, emerges from the "unknowns" of military persuasion. Wen Tien's retirement was nearly mandatory as a result of the dynastic change; Chin, already disgruntled with the examination system and his scholastic performance, retired before the collapse of the Ming. Poverty, a new experience for the otherwise affluent Wens, was probably a daily concern of the Chins; Wen Tien fretted about selling his paintings, Chin Chün-ming depended upon his art for a living. In their retirement, Wen Tien's social contacts apparently were few and other artistic Wens of the same era, such as Wen Jan 文樞 (1596-1667) and Wen Shan 文揆 (1641-1701) were extremely asocial. Chin Chün-ming kept constant company with a wide circle of literati, recluses, loyalists, poets, Suchou native sons and outsiders. Both Wen Tien and Chin Chün-ming refused proffers of official appointments, although other members of the Chin family actively sought such status. Wen Tien continues the family art almost in quiet isolation; Chin, cognizant of artistic currents beyond Suchou, draws upon them to create his own distinct style. Wen Tien embraced one accepted method of passive political objection; Chin pursued another, a more active voice dating from the days when he belonged to the quasi-political Fu-she until after 1644 when he readily expresses his loyalist sympathies (and yet, paradoxically, his son would take office under the Ch'ing).

³⁹ A rubbing of the A.D. 672 stone engraving of the *Sheng-chiao Preface* is reproduced in *Shodō zenshū* 書道全集 (Tokyo, 1956), viii, pls. 50-57.

⁴⁰ *Shina Nanga Taisei*, iii, 41.

⁴¹ See Lo-shu Fu 傅樂淑, "Teng Mu, a Forgotten Chinese Philosopher," *T'oung Pao*, LI (1965), 1/3, pp. 35-96.

⁴² Hsieh Kuo-chen 謝國楨, *Ming Ch'ing chih-chi tang-she yün-tung k'ao* 明清之際黨社運動考 (reprint ed. Taipei, 1967), pp. 208-213.

It is difficult to conceive of two families ostensibly less compatible. Yet they have a history of friendship and acquaintanceship. Evidence of one such contact survives from the 1640s when Wen Ts'ung-chien and his son, Wen Tien, along with Chin Chün-ming and others inscribed a farewell scene for Ch'u Chuan 褚篆 (1607-1700) done by Shao Mi 邵彌 in 1637 (Fig. 31).⁴³ A second link, during the 1660s resulted when Wen Jan, Chin Chün-ming, and another artist depicted a suitably loyalist theme, the *Three Friends of Winter*, now in the Nan-king Museum (Fig. 32).⁴⁴ Associations between the two families continued for at least one more generation, as proven by a painting (now lost?) of the identical subject by Wen Tien, his reclusive relative Wen Shan, and Chin K'an.⁴⁵

Thus finding a common attraction in their *i-min* status, the world of arts and letters bridges the gaps which otherwise would separate the distinguished Wens and the ambitious Chins.

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Figure 1. Cheng Chung, *Landscape*, 1632. Section of handscroll.

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Figure 2. Ch'en Huan, *Landscape in the Manner of Wang Meng*.

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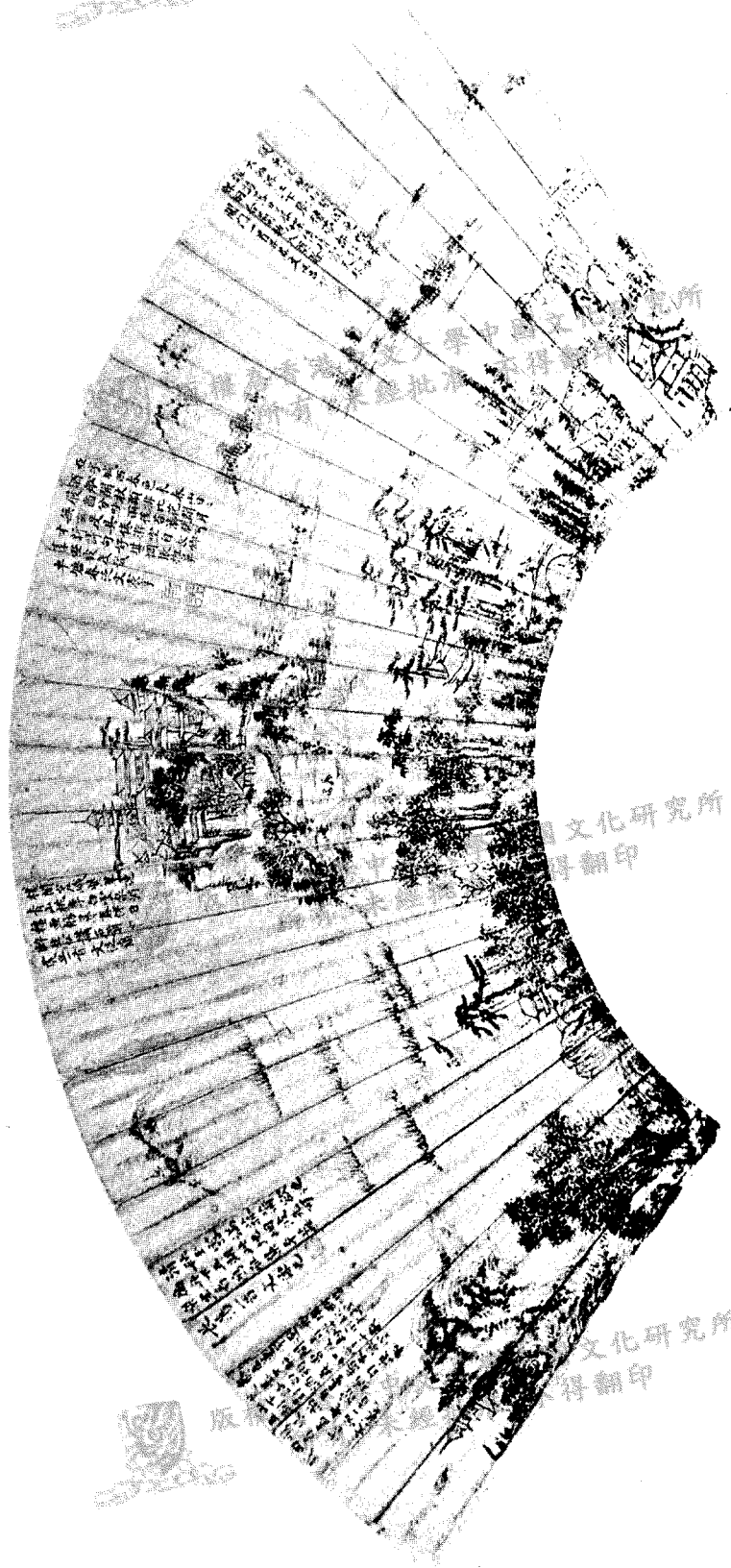


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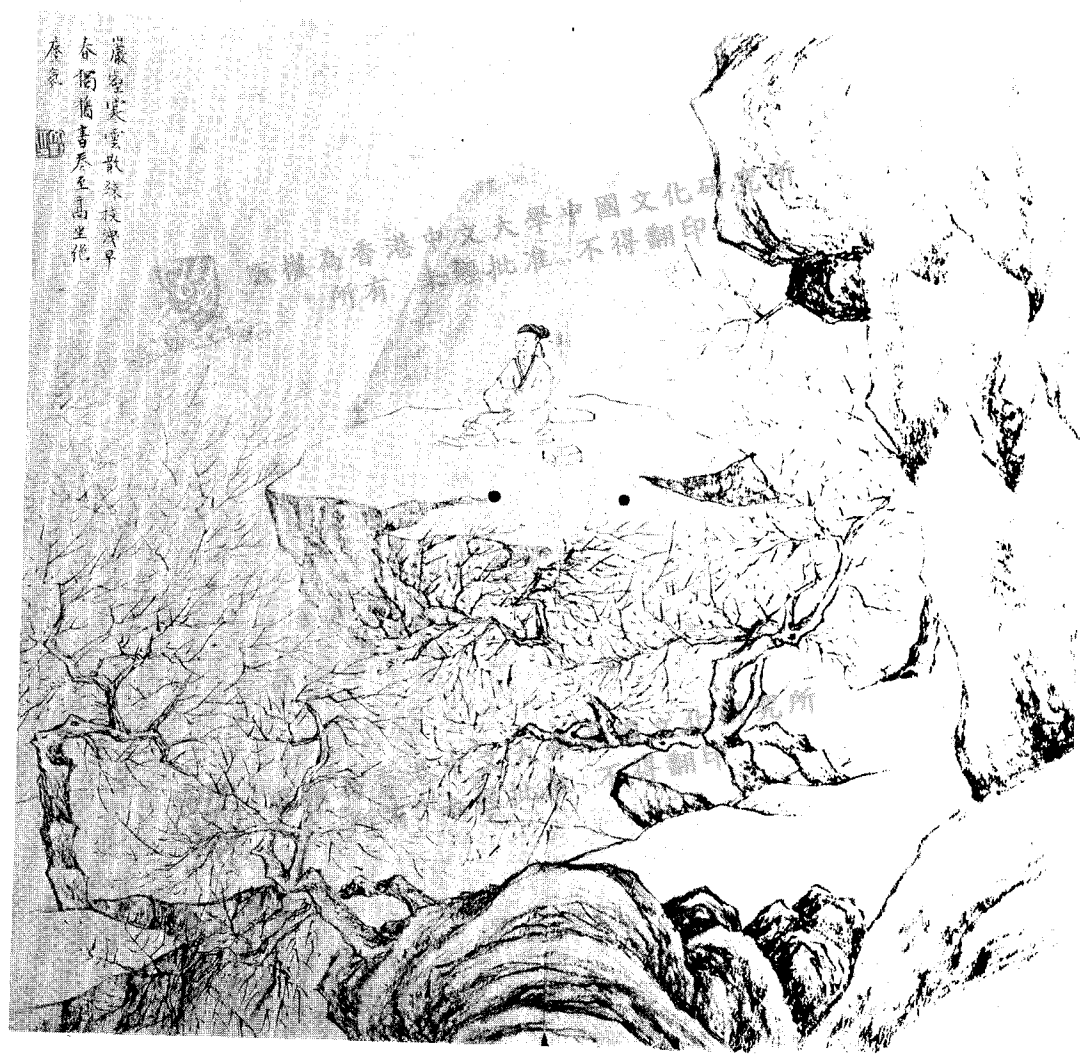


Figure 4. Wen Tien, *Illustrations of Poems*. Album, leaf four.

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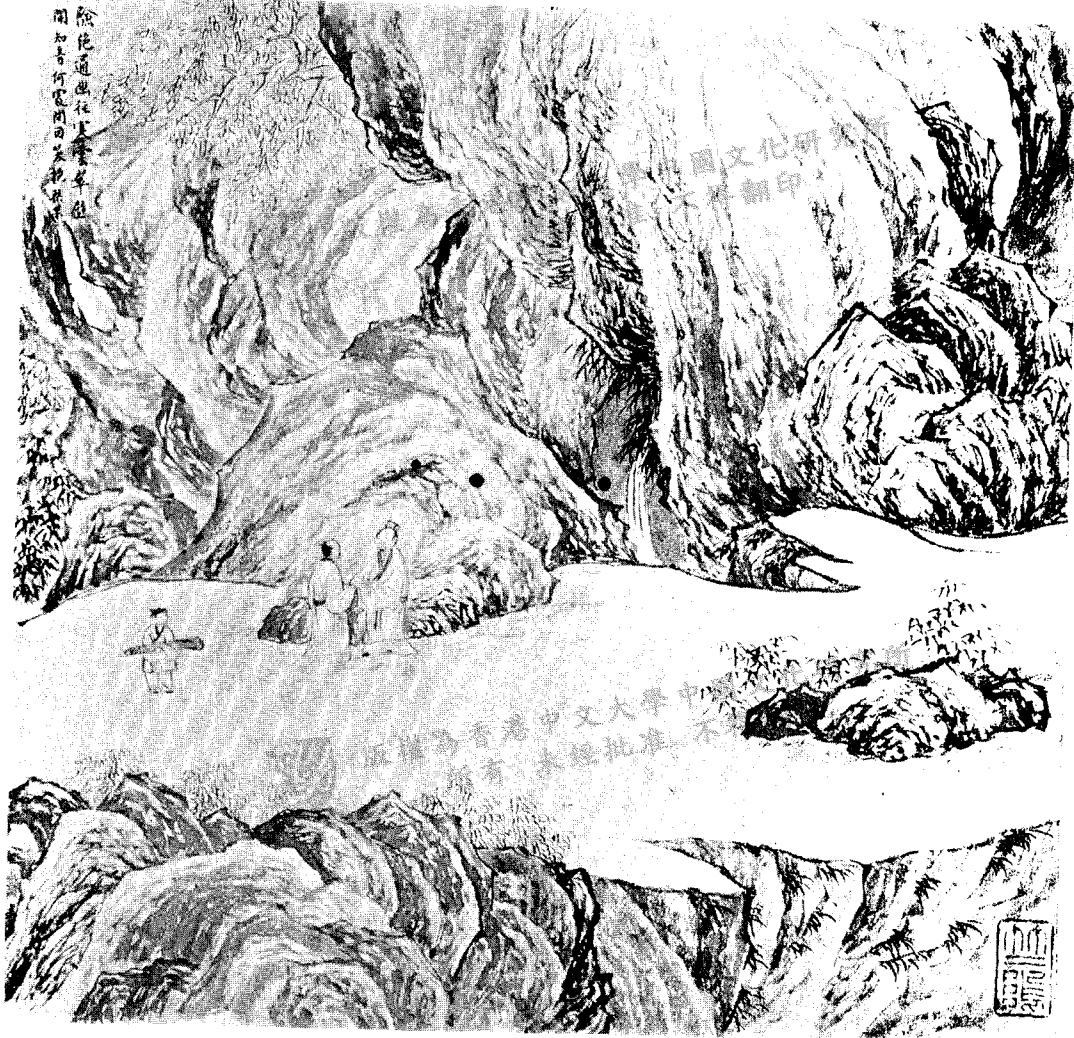


Figure 5. Wen Tien, *Illustrations of Poems*. Album, leaf eight.

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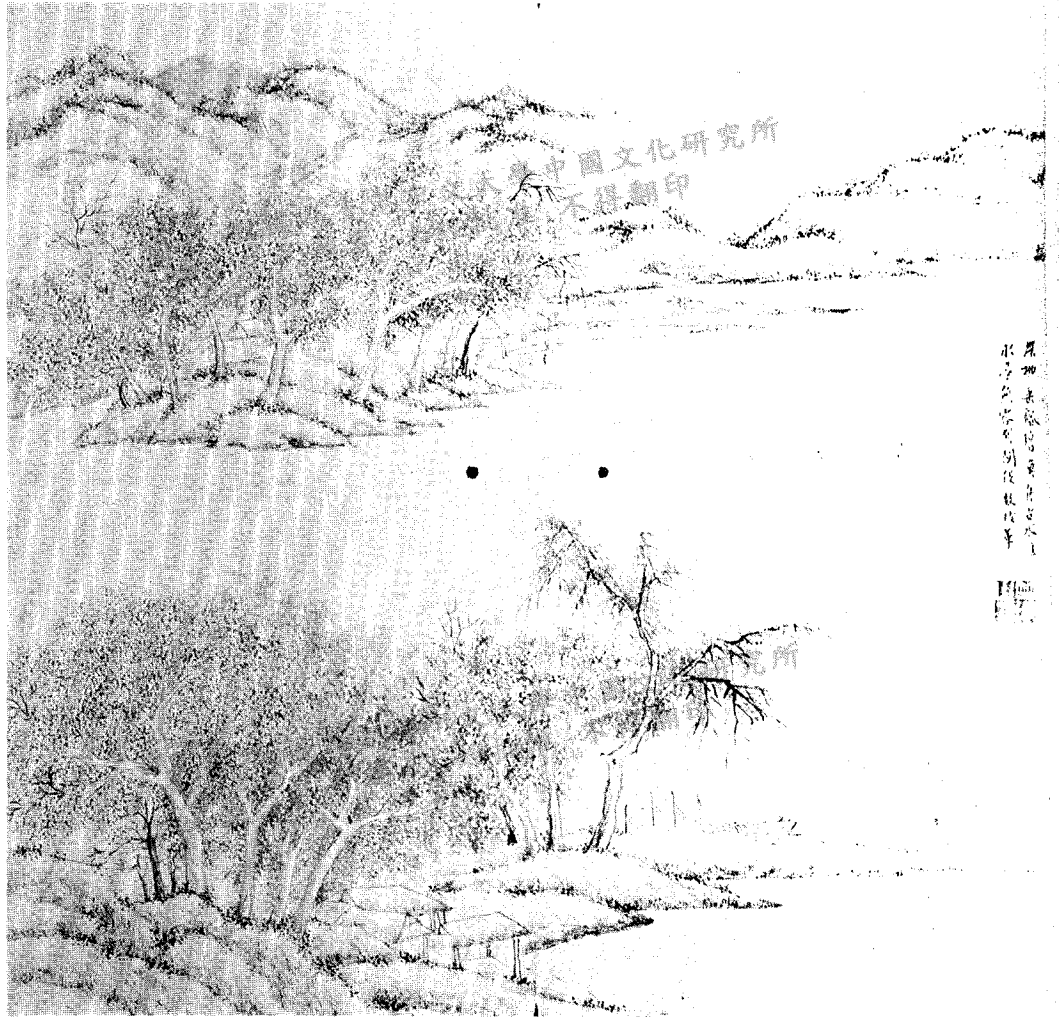


Figure 6. Wen Tien, *Illustrations of Poems*. Album, leaf five.

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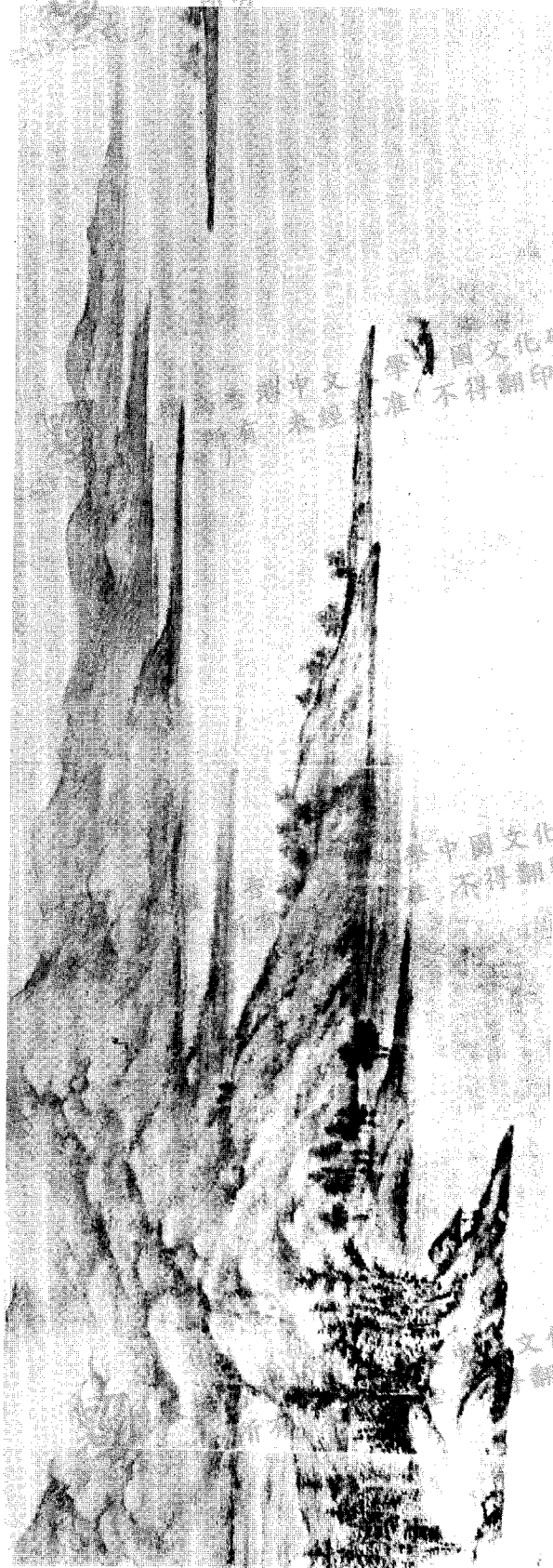


Figure 7. Tung Yüan (10th century), *Waiting for the Ferry*. Section of handscroll.

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Figure 8. Wen Tien, *Illustrations of Poems*. Album, leaf two.

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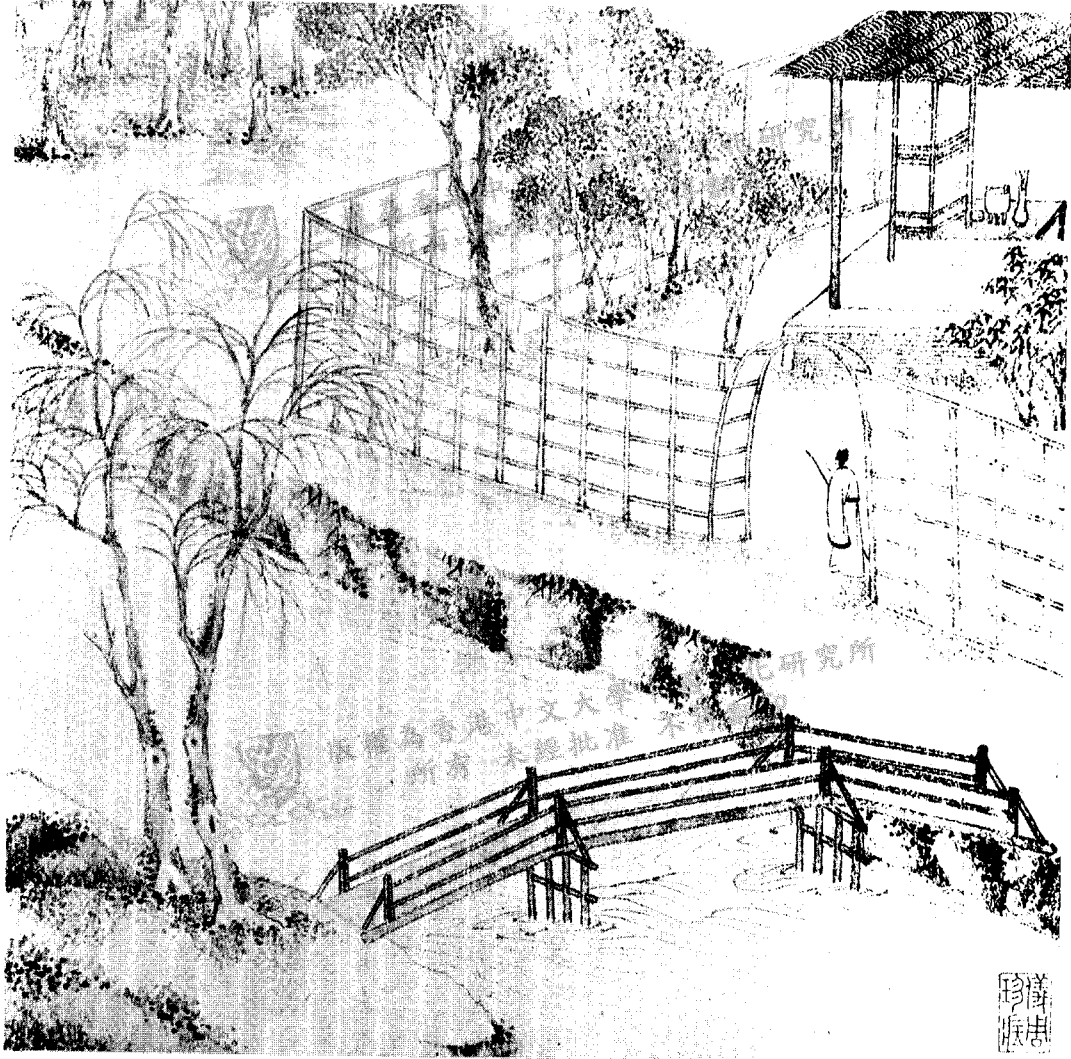


Figure 9. Wen Cheng-ming, *Cho-cheng Garden*. Album, leaf two.

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Figure 10. Wen Tien, *Landscape*, 1693.

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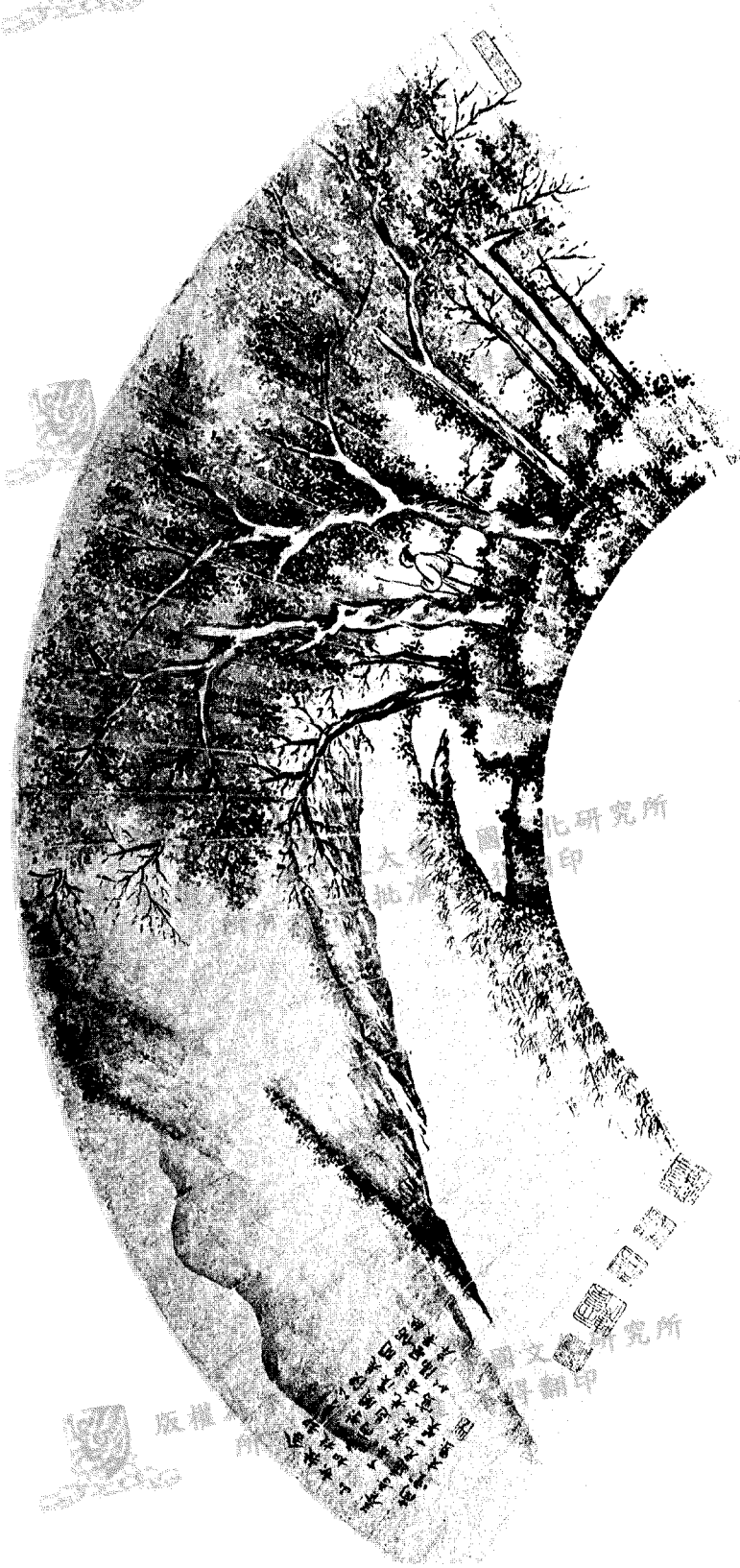


Figure 12. Wen Tien, *Landscape*, 1697.



萬壑千峰飛雪
如白馬走空神
凌虛妙術瑤池
代宣和御物先
渾唐江山如神
教控青臺翠雲
蒼道揚揚子雲
於置在古造物
有飛瀑垂空美
不常言心知數
已知應接無暇
為波如物隨壽
候年生遠生六
朝夕卷中樓之
盡臨學道本在
上者必立解氣

Figure 13. Chiang Shen, *Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains*. Section of handscroll.

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Figure 14. Wen Cheng-ming.
*Landscape in the Style of
Tung Yüan and Chü-jan.*

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松徑草花蔚然其
新綠如漾笑他早鳥忙
輸與詩年去約破
版 田成於日
延秀道兄笑正
十甫堂文正



Figure 15. Wen Tien, *Fishing*.

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此畫為中國山水畫之傑作，其筆墨淋漓，氣韻生動。畫中展現了雄偉的山巒、清澈的溪流以及茂密的松林，構成了一幅和諧的自然景觀。畫家通過精細的筆觸，刻畫了山石的質感和樹木的蒼勁，使觀者彷彿置身於畫中，感受到大自然的磅礴與寧靜。



Figure 16. Wen Tien, *Retreat Among Lakes and Mountains*.



Figure 20. Chin Chün-ming, *Plum Blossom Album*. Album, leaf six.

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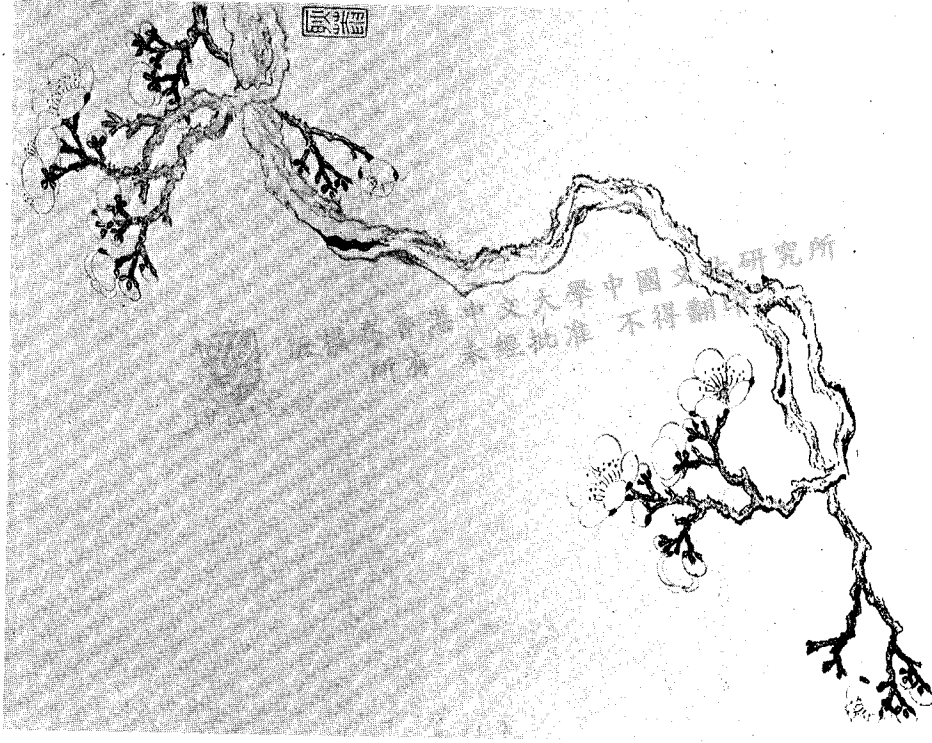


Figure 22. Chin Chün-ming, *Plum Blossom Album*. Album, leaf three.

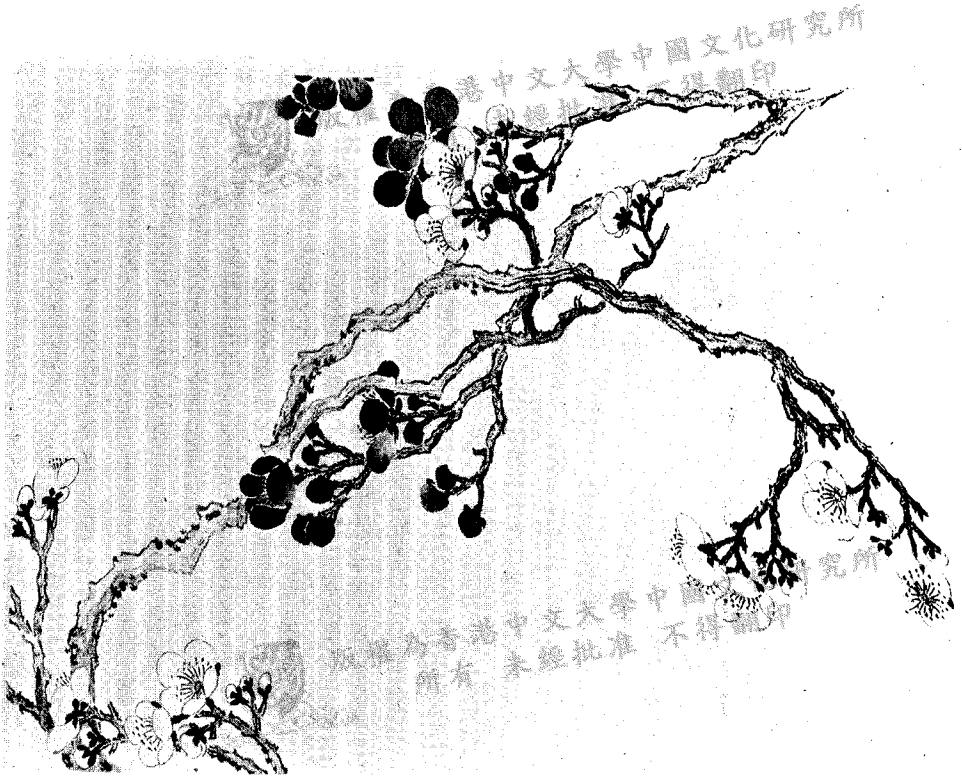


Figure 21. Chin Chün-ming, *Plum Blossom Album*. Album, leaf four.

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Figure 23. Ch'en Hung-shou, *Mountain Bird and Plum Blossom*.

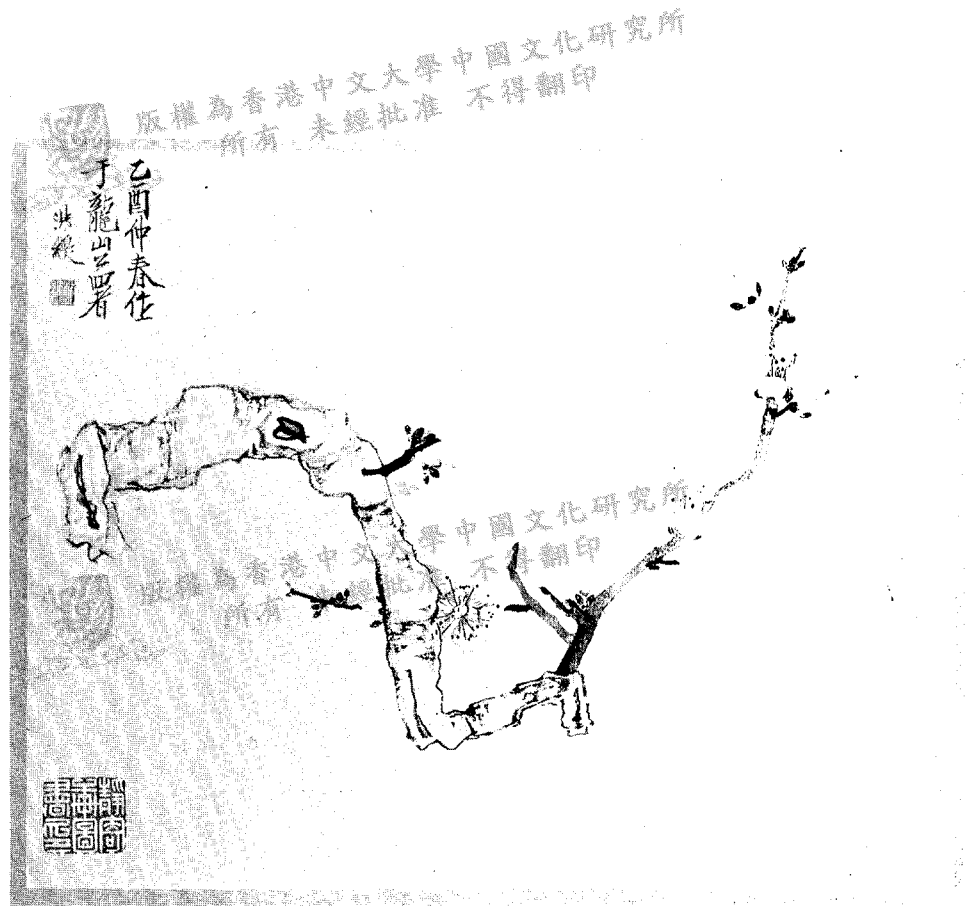


Figure 24. Ch'en Hung-shou, *Pink Apricot*. Album leaf.



Figure 25. Ch'en Hung-shou, *Old Prunus*. Album leaf.

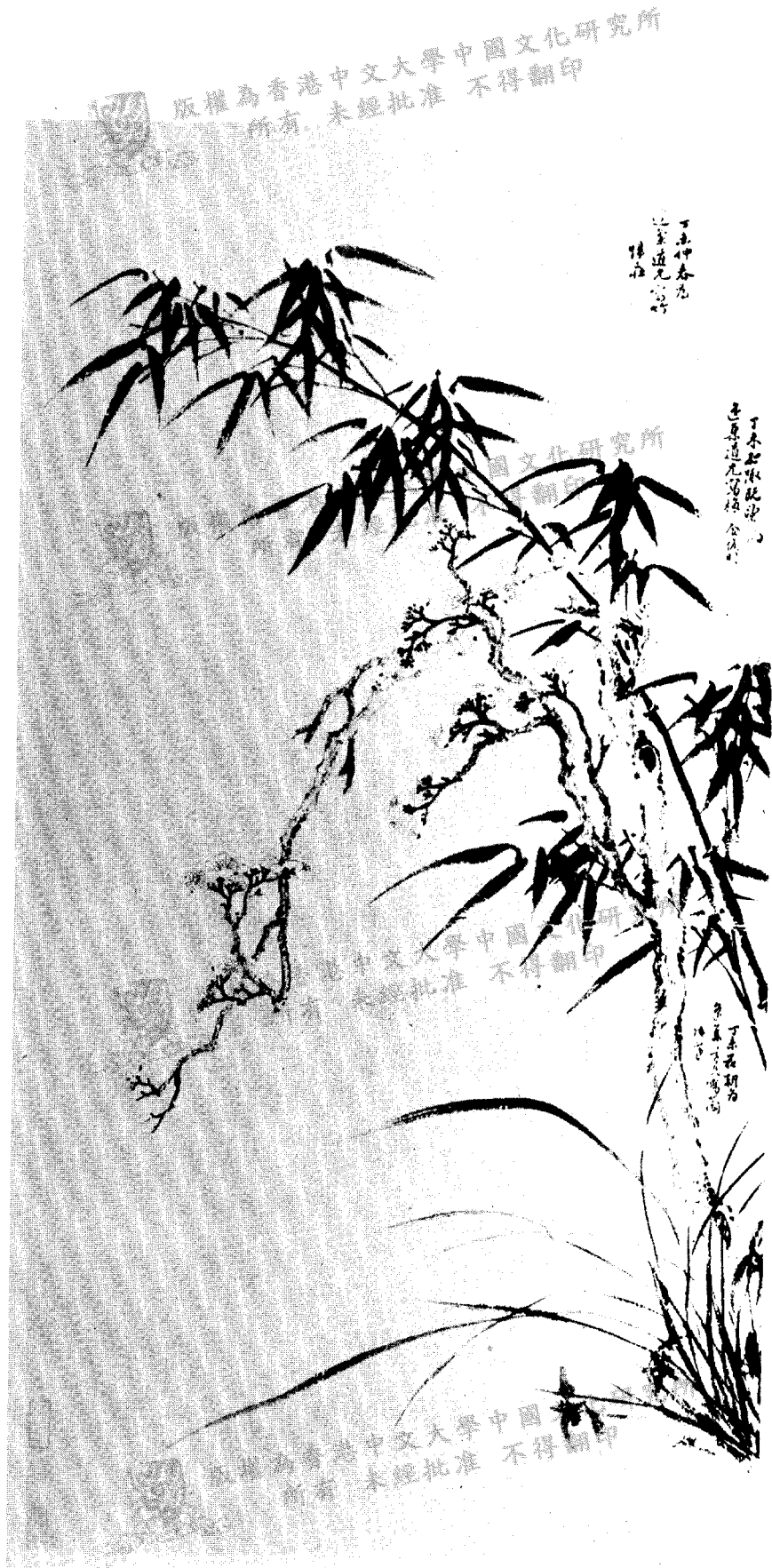


Figure 26. Chin Chün-ming, Kuei Chuang, and Ch'en K'o,
Bamboo, Plum and Epidendrum.

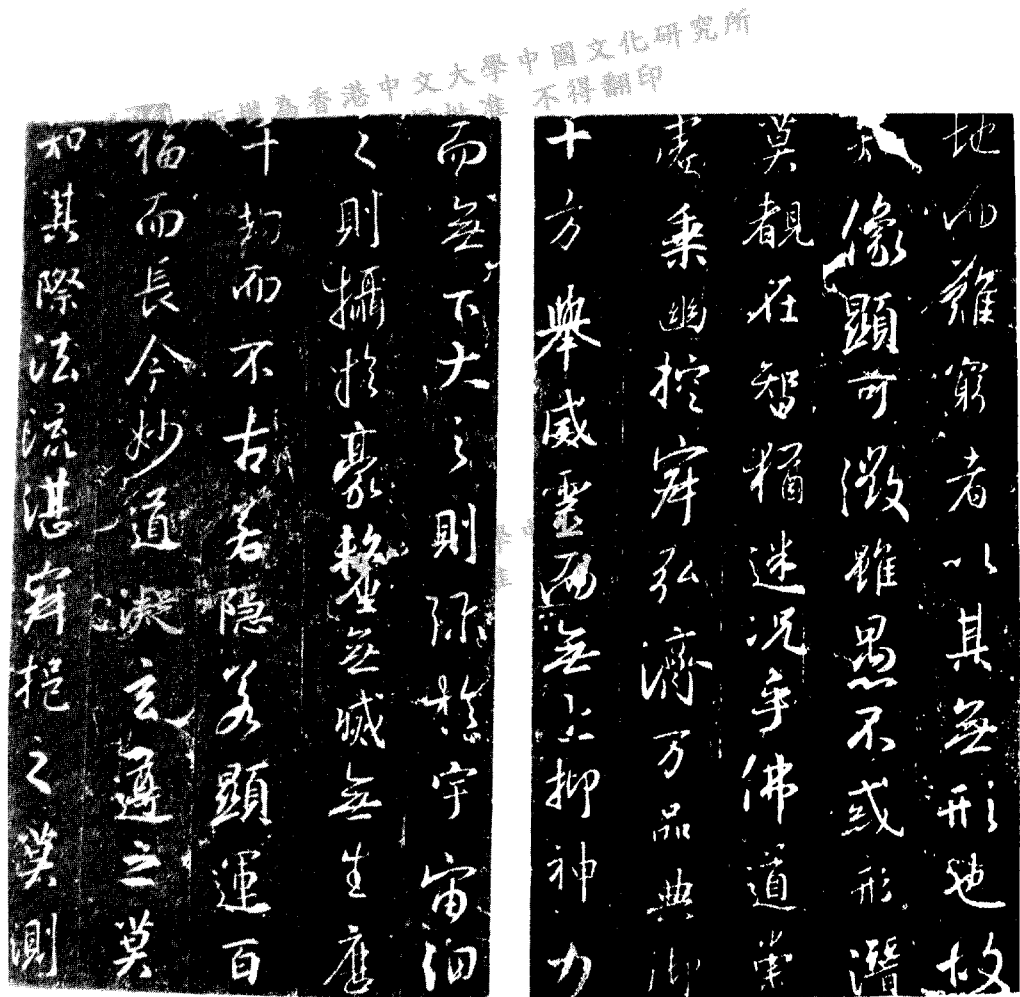


Figure 27. Sheng-chiao Preface, section of rubbing.

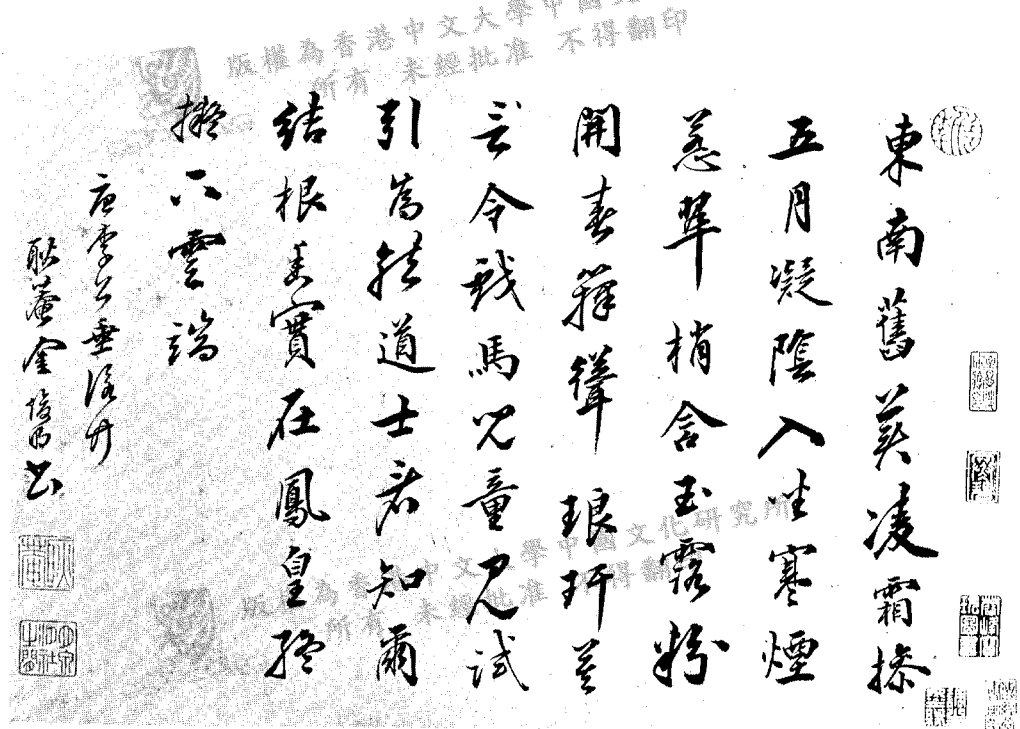


Figure 28. Chin Chün-ming, colophon on Kuei Chuang's *Ink Bamboo*, handscroll.

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所有 未經批准 不得翻印

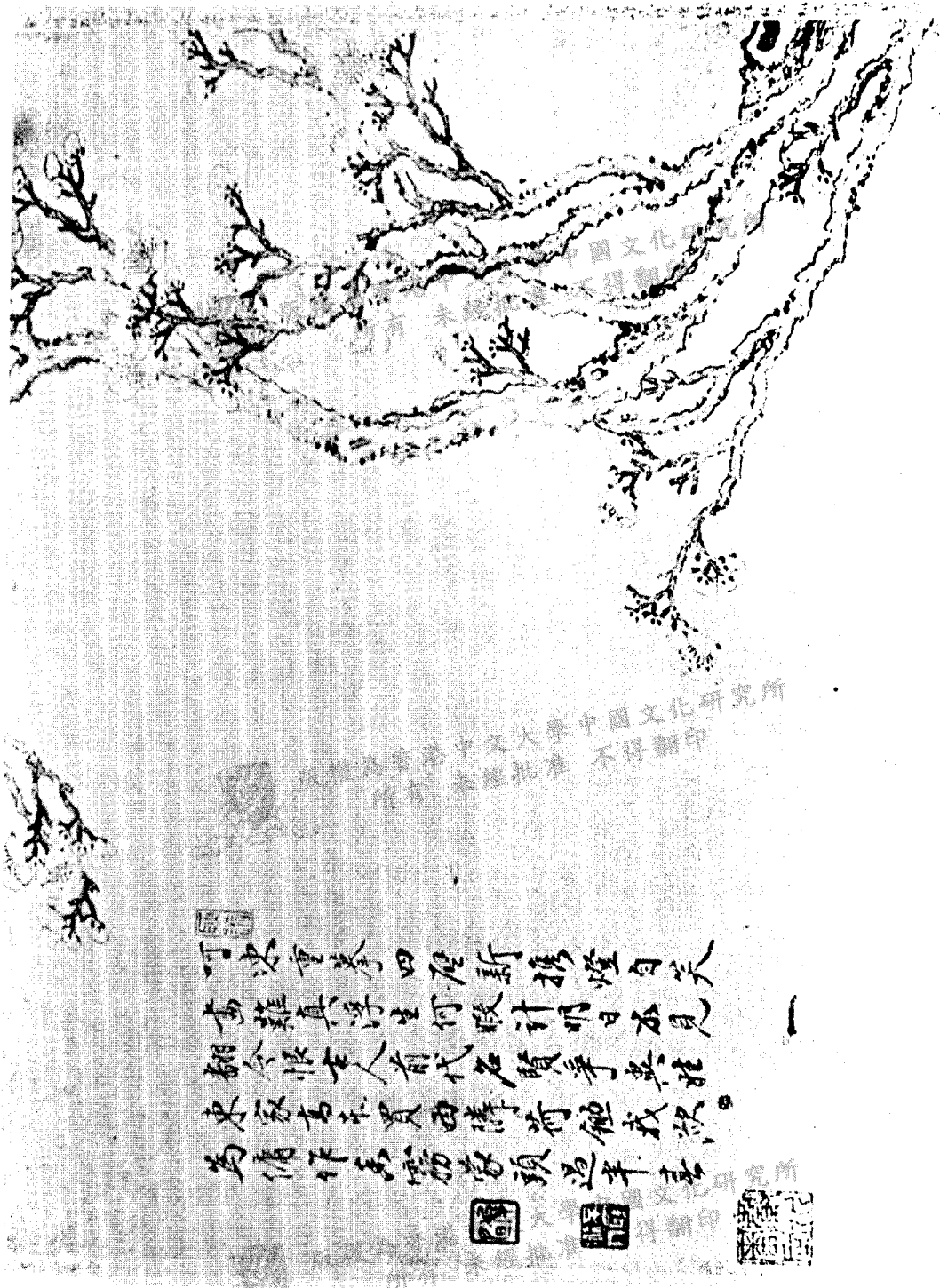


Figure 29. Chin Chiün-ming, Plum Blossoms. Album leaf.

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冷然孤定基如知撐腸淡石賦何悲
 淡開元清理中常清到剛強起百時寄
 凌閣山開舊出到好宮前青新枝玉
 松飛合江而夢 德語空岩徹夕吹
 甲辰修襟日宮宮冷空月梅得
 秋意全信臨

種王餐芝術不傳金丹下手更芒控陶
 公妙法善曾受但陸宋風自得仙
 丙午初夏補宋羊錦悅句一首
 曲棘文拙

物 产秋移花未序滿
 玉清茶草湘江酒醉何
 夏克臨 錦對月 錦
 小忘 全信



Figure 32. Wen Jan, Chin Chün-ming, and Chin Ch'uan,
Three Friends of Winter.