the folds of their robes, withholding the mudra that might clarify their meaning. By moving away from direct confrontation with the viewer, both paintings also blur the distinction between icon and narrative, demanding that the timelessness of the sacred somehow be fitted into a human temporality. This is essentially what *A Solitary Temple* does, and, as Jonathan Hay amply demonstrates, this mediation and the many others it effects simultaneously are far from simple and far from stable.

Patricia Berger, associate professor of Chinese art at the University of California, Berkeley, specializes in the Buddhist art of China, Mongolia, and Tibet. Her most recent book is Empire of Emptiness: Buddhist Art and Political Authority in Qing China *(University of Hawai'i Press, 2003) [Department of History of Art, 416 Doe Library, University of California, Berkeley, Calif. 94720-6020, pberger@berkeley.edu].*

Notes

1. Mi Fu, *Huashi* (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1937), 14.
2. Ibid., 13–14.
3. Richard Barnhart, *Marriage of the Lord of the River: A Lost Landscape by Tung Yuan*, Artibus Asiae Supplementum, 27 (Ascona, Switz.: Artibus Asiae, 1970); and Peter C. Sturman, "The Donkey Rider as Icon: Li Cheng and Early Chinese Landscape Painting," *Artibus Asiae* 55, nos. 1–2 (1995): 43–97.
4. See, for example, Liu Tao-chu'un, *Evaluations of Sung Dynasty Painters of Renown: Liu Tao-ch'un's "Sung-ch'ao ming-hua p'ing,"* trans. Charles Lachman (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1989), 56–58, 95.
5. Wu Hung, *The Double Screen: Medium and Representation in Chinese Painting* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press; London: Reaktion Books, 1996); and A. John Hay, "Surface and the Chinese Painter: The Discovery of Surface," *Archives of Asian Art* 38 (1985): 95–123.
6. Sturman, "The Donkey Rider as Icon," 44–54.
7. The Six Laws appear in the opening passages of Xie He's *Guhuapin lu* (Record of the Classification of Ancient Paintings). All historians of Chinese art have grappled with them, and James Cahill, who sees all six as four-character phrases and as couplets with parallel structures, has provided a valuable discussion and translation of them in "The Six Laws and How to Read Them," *Ars Orientalis* 4 (1961): 372–81. That Li Cheng and Wang Shiyuan knew Xie He's Six Laws is almost certain. Not only was his *Guhuapin lu* well read in the Northern Song but also his laws were repeated, with some small changes, in the late Tang painter Jing Hao's treatise *Bifaji* (Record of Brush Methods), in Gu Ruoxu's *Tuhua jianwen zhi*, and elsewhere.
8. Dong You, *Guangchuan huaba, juan* 6.8a–b, trans. Susan Bush, *The Chinese Literati on Painting: Su Shih (1037–1101) to Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (1555–1636)*, Harvard-Yenching Institute Studies, 27 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971), 53, emphasis mine, based on Zhang Junheng, ed., *Shiyuan congshu* (Wucheng: Privately printed, 1916).
9. Dong You, *Guangchuan huaba, juan* 4.6b, trans. Bush, *The Chinese Literati on Painting*, 54.
10. The fourth-century Buddhist layman and painting theorist Zong Bing, a proponent of "landscape Buddhism," strongly believed that the landscape itself, and paintings of it, were appropriate objects of Buddhist contemplation. See Leon Hurvitz, "Tsung Ping's Comments on Landscape Painting," *Artibus Asiae* 32, nos. 2–3 (1970): 146–56.
11. On Buddhist relics and their material and ritual framing, see Robert Sharf, "On the Allure of Buddhist Relics," *Representations* 66 (Spring 1999): 75–99.
12. See Dunhuang Academy, *Zhongguo shiku: Anxi Yulin shiku* (Beijing: Wenwu Press, 1997), pls. 158–70. They can also be seen on ARTstor's Mellon International Dunhuang Project, under Cave 2 (www.artstor.org, James and Lucy Lo Photograph Archives, nos. yl-c2-1 and yl-c2-2). This pair of murals draws on earlier paintings at the Dunhuang site, the most celebrated of which is in Cave 61 (dated to the mid-tenth century), where the field of enlightened activity of the bodhisattva Manjusri is similarly depicted as the actual landscape of Wutaishan, filled with temples, pilgrims, and miracles of the past and present moment. This mural originally formed the backdrop for a large sculpted image of Manjusri on a lion, which is no longer extant.

Response: "Picture Idea" and Its Cultural Dynamics in Northern Song China

Eugene Y. Wang

Not all pictures are created equal. There is no guarantee that a painting necessarily has a "pictorial conception." Thus spoke the Chinese theorists in the Northern Song dynasty (960–1127), when such a notion became a discursive preoccupation. The premise is that a painting is considered to display a "pictorial conception" only when its formal mechanism produces certain ineffable effects that evoke suggestive moods, conceptual overtones, or extralinguistic flavors comparable to those inspired by poetry. What is evoked is thus known as the "pictorial conception" or "picture idea (*huayi*)."[1] The concept is now often explicated through a master narrative of a general shift in taste and formal disposition away from the professional painter's deadpan verisimilitude toward extrapictorial conceptualism favored by the literati. This is a half-truth. The richness of "pictorial conception" is not necessarily proportional to the reduced verisimilitude. Moreover, the familiar narrative that spans centuries of development gives short shrift to the cultural dynamics of the initial moment, that is, the eleventh century, when the notion was first proposed. How did the notion find its consonance in pictorial practice? Insofar as the "pictorial conception" leads us into the murky domain of mental dimensions, it brings up the question of how the pictorial and conceptual universes may be brought to a level of commensurability. To the extent that the literati, the exponents of the "pictorial conception," sought to impregnate painting with poetic sensibility, it remains to be seen how poetic thinking reshaped the pictorial medium that is inherently resistant to verbalization and textual closure. This in turn raises the question of how professional painters responded to the literati's aesthetics of "pictorial conception." No other painting demonstrates these issues better than *A Solitary Monastery amid Clearing Peaks* (*A Solitary Temple below Brightening Peaks*), a Northern Song hanging scroll, now in the Nelson-Atkins

Museum of Art in Kansas City, Missouri. Jonathan Hay's extensive study of the scroll has rekindled our interest in it, and sure enough, we now see in this painting more dimensions than we have all assumed.

The painting occupies a special place in the canonical history of Chinese pictorial scrolls, traditionally conceived as a master narrative of great painters to whose names are attached a cluster of masterpieces. In the cases where a key artist represents a trend or signals a school, there is almost a categorical imperative for a body of unsigned surviving works to be appended to his name. For the Northern Song dynasty, a crucial period that saw the continued ascension of landscape painting but left us with a disproportional dearth of surviving works, such a linkage has gathered particular urgency. Attribution based on received stylistic profiles is accepted in good faith in part because of the shared anxiety of scholars, past and present, to keep the pedigree continuous and in use, as well as the convenience of a biographically ordered master narrative organized around a succession of towering figures, or rather, familiar names. It is as if unanchored from this master narrative, we would be adrift in a sea of abysmal uncertainty and disorientation.

A Solitary Monastery has long fulfilled its expected role in this regard. Traditionally attributed to Li Cheng (919–967), a key figure in the development of Chinese landscape painting, the scroll became one of the placeholders to keep the name of Li Cheng art historically meaningful and sustain our narrative of Northern Song painting. In fact, not a single Li Cheng landscape has survived. Nor is the painting to be dated to the tenth century.[2]

For all its traditional association with Li Cheng, the painting has been repeatedly yanked from its pedestal and reattributed.[3] Jonathan Hay is the latest to delink it from Li Cheng. This move is as salutary and unsurprising as his reattribution to a tenth-century painter is puzzling, since his interpretation of the painting does not need to be anchored on the bedrock, or rather, shifting sands, of an artist's biography. This is not the place to quibble over the reattribution, since it is neither Hay's punch line nor the end of his argument. The interest in his study of this scroll stems not so much from upsetting the apple cart of the received stylistic pedigree as rejecting the methodology founded on the premise of the pedigree altogether. Hay joins the force that, in his words, "quietly breaks away" from the art historical practice hinged on the operative notions of styles.

All is not lost. The painting is now thrust onto center stage to take on a larger role. Instead of serving, in the traditional manner, as a signpost in a linear stylistic pedigree, the painting now anchors, in Jonathan Hay's assertive hand, a broad swath of art historical concerns. To me, the most intriguing aspect is his treatment of the landscape form as symptomatic of different attitudes toward the social world. According to Hay, the landscape in *A Solitary Monastery* solicits two views, one political, the other religious. Hay sees the dominant mountain in the center surrounded by a cluster of peaks as a formal analogue of imperial authority and its hierarchical state of dominance and submission.[4] Meanwhile, he interprets the centrality of the Buddhist monastery as privileging an eremitic retreat from the madding crowd. He then notes a contradiction: state ideology demands participation and allegiance; the Buddhist view prompts withdrawal from social engagement. Phrased in traditional Chinese terms, one urges "entering the world," the other, "transcending the world." To Hay, the formal configuration amounts to a symbolic way of reconciling, or "mediating," the contradictory impulses. The tension in the formal configuration, however, betrays the impossibility of "suturing" the gap.

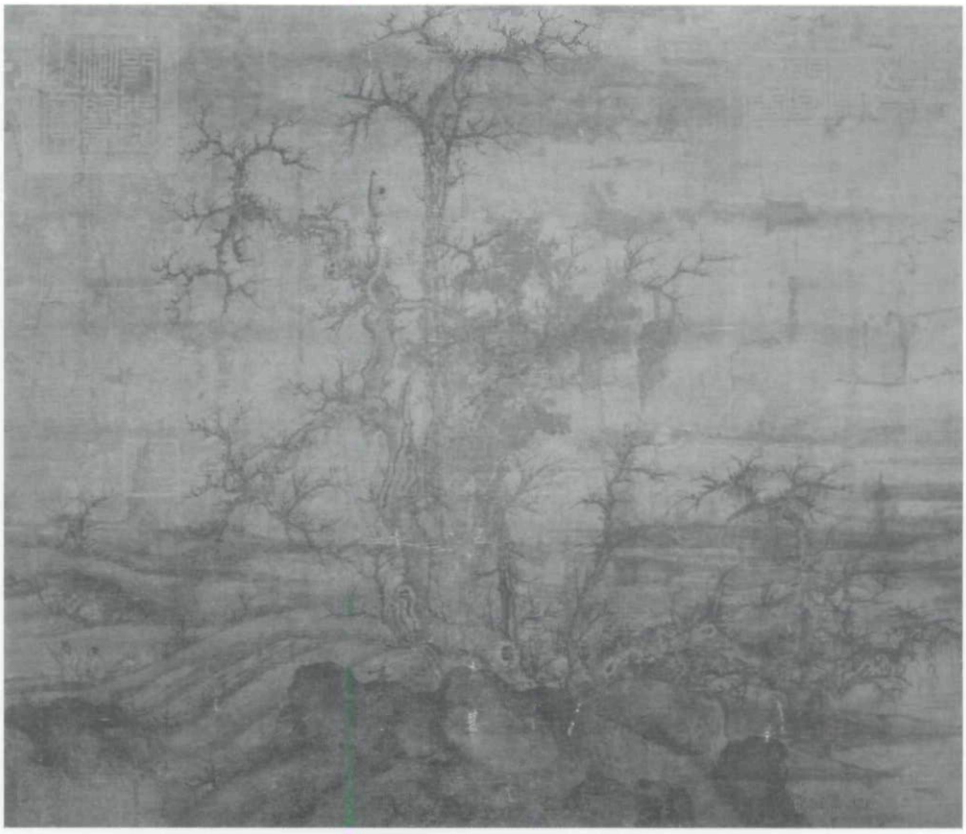
This premise leads Hay to discover an intriguing formal drama in the painting. With admirable sensitivity, he notes that a "jagged downward-projecting rock face looms above and behind the pagoda" that makes the pagoda mast seem "slightly off the central axis of the pagoda," thereby disrupting "the building's otherwise perfect symmetry." The painter's manifest effort to sustain the strictly vertical disposition of the pagoda mast and finial thus amounts to a formal response to the downward-projecting force. Hay then sees the correct disposition of the finial as a sign of the restoration of order, which he further interprets as a "suture" that "disturbs the painting's ostensible celebration of the alignment of Buddhism and the state with an intimation of that alignment's fragility."

Few would probably accept Hay's reading of this local detail. Nevertheless, his method in general offers a refreshing and stimulating way of extrapolating ideological significance from the formal traits in landscape painting. Shifting our attention to the inconsistencies and tensions in the formal texture as clues, Hay's approach clearly opens up new horizons. His perceptive identification of the interplay between the architectonic composure of the pagoda and the disturbingly downward projecting rock face that threatens to collapse on the pagoda as the central visual interest or formal drama of the painting is nothing short of a revelation or epiphany. All of a sudden, the painting appears to make some sense, although what precisely this "sense" is still eludes us when pressed into verbal formulations. To make "sense" of it is the challenge I take up here. I am not entirely convinced by the way Hay attends to some local details, but I find his discovery of the central visual drama instrumental, as it provides us with a launchpad from which various alternative interpretative trajectories and ventures become conceivable.

As the issue here pertains to ideological overtones of landscape, there seems to be an alignment between our present-day interest in teasing extrapictorial overtones out of a formal design and the Northern Song preoccupation with the "pictorial conception." While this is not Hay's concern, I take this opportunity to revisit the issue. My reading differs from what Hay makes of the painting, but my account affirms—and demonstrates in my own way—the general efficacy of the method that begins with noting the oddities, inconsistencies, and tensions in the formal texture[5] and takes flight from there.

"Desolation-*cum*-Austerity": A Pictorial Conception

A Solitary Monastery is an unusual painting. Its oddity stems not from any of the landscape elements individually but from their uncommon configuration. We begin with a familiar motif in the foreground. The clusters of contorted, twisting, forlorn trees atop the rock outcrops flaunt what is called "crab-claw" branches. These are staple features of a subgenre of Chinese landscape painting known as the Cold Forest or Wintry Forest (*hanlin*). Li Cheng is allegedly its originator.[6]



1 *Cold Forest*, 11th century, probably a fragment of a handscroll, remounted as a hanging scroll, ink on silk, 16⅝ × 19⅜ in. (42.2 × 49.2 cm). National Palace Museum, Taipei (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by the National Palace Museum)

What takes us by surprise is not their appearance in the painting but the way the composition vexes the perceptual habit conventionally solicited by the Cold Forest.

The Cold Forest composition formalizes a distinct mode of spatial organization. Its conventional modus operandi is the interplay between the distinct close-up trees with an indistinct distant horizon. A cluster of contorted barren trees with "crab-claw" branches typically occupies the foreground, serving, as it were, as a measure of distance, a substantial marker of the real to accentuate the insubstantial void behind, and to offset the vast stretch of spatial recession behind/beyond, known as the "Level Distance" (*pingyuan*) in Northern Song painting.[7] The distinctiveness of the foreground trees also accentuates the indistinctive—hence elusive—character of the background void that prompts the beholder's imaginary projection of mist, cloud, haze into the spatial recession that presumably stretches all the way to the horizon (Fig. 1).[8] Inasmuch as the formal apparatus encourages the beholder to mentally complete the picture by filling in the blank, it becomes an effective way of coaxing the mind into the process of pictorial conception.

The spatial scheme provokes thoughts about time. The "crab-claw" branches signal the chilly forlornness of late fall or winter, as the barren trees tell of a *past* of one-time lushness and bloom that is now a distant memory. The Cold Forest-*cum*-Level Distance (*hanlin pingyuan*) composition thereby encapsulates both time and space as representative of charged *distance*: the memory of the distant past finds its formal analogue in the hazy view into the distant horizon. Thus, "when tree leaves fall, the poet already resents the autumn, / And cannot stand 'Level Distance' [painting] provoking poetic sorrow."[9] It comes as no surprise that this formal apparatus of conflating spatial and temporal distances is pressed into service in the melancholy and nostalgic Northern Song composition *Reading the Stela*. A donkey rider (a scholar) chances on a stela. He is absorbed in reading the ruinous trace of the past, which finds its visual analogue in the withering trees of "crab-claw" branches (Fig. 2).[10] The gaze into the proverbial Level Distance is here logically transposed to a scrutiny of the trace of the past. The two are essentially about the same experience. Pictorial schemes of this kind were fashioned in a culture when scholars, such as Ouyang Xiu (1007–1072), were voicing their preference for certain "pictorial conceptions." Among them is "mindfulness of approaching the distance" or "far-reaching consciousness" (*quyuan zhixin*).[11] Suffice it to note here two traits conventionally associated with the Cold Forest: formally, it is integrated spatially with the Level Distance, and thematically, it inspires sorrow and mournfulness. The formal device predisposes the viewer to expect these two conditions.

A Solitary Monastery takes its viewer by surprise. It solicits a response somewhat against the grain of its contemporary beholder's viewing habit attuned to the Cold Forest and Level Distance. Much as the foreground Cold Forest predisposes the viewer to expect the unblocked Level Distance beyond, the composition decidedly flouts the expectation. Instead of horizontal recession, we have vertical peaks. Instead of guiding the viewer's eyes beyond the desolate trees into the evocative hazy void of mists and clouds where one could let one's imagination roam, the painting here ostensibly draws attention to the monastery nestled against its monumental backdrop as both the visual focus and the terminus for the travelers' mountainous journey.[12]

The rupture in the perceptual scheme, however, belies its

2 *Reading the Stela*, ink on silk, 49¾ × 41¼ in. (126.3 × 104.9 cm). Osaka Municipal Museum (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by the Osaka Municipal Museum)

conceptual coherence. The "cold" (*han*) mood is the unifying concept that governs the disparate images here. The word "cold" in the Northern Song sensibility is richly multivalent. The range and the way its divergent senses are configured may strike us as unexpected. Its period senses denote not only the sensation of chill but also the condition of poverty

and solitude, a new sensibility in the Northern Song. All these are condensed in the figure of the donkey rider.

The donkey rider crossing a bridge is a recurrent motif in Northern Song landscape painting.[13] Variously identified as Meng Haoran (689–740) or other eremitic poets, the donkey rider is above all a generic portrait of the poverty-stricken scholar, an eccentric nonconformist given to inebriation, eschewing the material comforts of an official career, and seeking poetic inspiration and spiritual solace in the natural landscape. The Cold Forest here serves as the externalization or, following T. S. Eliot, the "objective correlative" of his inner state, as he braves the harsh and buffeting elements of nature.

The scenario of the donkey rider crossing a bridge in *A Solitary Monastery* is a visual formula of poverty-inspired pathos. The bridge to be crossed by the donkey rider alludes to the renowned Ba Bridge near the Tang capital city Chang'an,[14] a windswept snowy area allegedly conducive to poetic thoughts.[15] The topography had lost its geographic specificity and became a general symbolic ambience or backdrop. The donkey rider at the bridge here therefore plays the generic role of an *impoverished* scholar-poet on an eremitic journey. The country inn across the bridge reinforces the rusticity in keeping with the mood of poverty; so is the desolate ambience of the Cold Forest integral to this scenario.

The popularity of the motif in Song landscape paintings indicates a distinct cultural sensibility that was gaining ground in the Northern Song. Scholar-officials made a virtue of poverty and aestheticized the forlorn condition of coldness. Han Yu (768–823), who consistently provided a template for the Song style of thought, set the tone. It has been noted that early literature abounds in complaints about the difficulty of repelling Poverty, perceived as one's own shadow dogging one's frame. In Han Yu's writing, however, Poverty turns into a perpetual guest.[16] The appeal of poverty derives from its attendant conditions—solitude, neglect, sorrow, discontent—many of which were perceived as conducive to poetic creation. "Cheerful words," as Han Yu observes, "are difficult to craft, whereas a discourse on poverty is easy to compel. The art of writing stems from the experiences of dislocation and exile." Although well-positioned "princes, dukes, and nobility" may not undergo these experiences in their real life, their desire for poetic experience draws them to the imaginary situation of poverty.[17] By the Northern Song, the predicament of poverty amounts to a state of mind or an affected stance regarded as a prerequisite for creative writing and a staple of good taste. The poet is commonly cast as a poor scholar; the poetic sorrow is often the "sorrow of poverty" (*qiongchou*).[18] The trend led to the observation that "the refined writing of repute in the world mostly comes from the poor. Therefore those who take up writing subsequently are given to fashioning lyrics of poor authors."[19] The affectation of poverty became a poetic conceit. Even Kou Zhun (961–1023), the prime minister, assumed the voice of a poor poet and "composed poems invariably full of pathos, sorrow, and complaint, at a time when he was rich and prosperous."[20]

Again, Ouyang Xiu's formulation of the aesthetics of poverty is most revealing. He highlights two aspects of poverty. To begin with, poverty is a vehicle of expression. It amounts to a circumstantial or causal condition for the artful and cathartic release of inner tension. It leads to a gentleman scholar's "self-exile to the mountaintop and water bank." External nature, in its myriad forms and species, galvanizes the scholar's curiosity; it also provides a means of venting the "pent-up sad thought and rankling" in his mind. "Not that poetry impoverishes the poet; poverty enriches poetry."[21] In other words, poverty in its normative setting of nature inspires poetry; it is a situational framework for poetry. Second, the aesthetics of poverty is given a texture, or temperature. Poverty, a situation of material deprivation, is conceived as a sensory deprivation, crystallized in one's suffering from bitter coldness and nature's inclemency. The poetry of Meng Jiao (751–814) and Jia Dao (779–843) supplies mental pictures and palpable scenarios: "silken as the hairs on the temples are, they are hardly sufficient to weave the *cold* clothes." "One sits at the zither of the west couch, as the *cold* breaks the chords two and three."[22] Poverty, rhetoric, and cold are rolled into one sensibility. It is the kind of sensibility the painting of Cold Forest solicits.

In this sensibility, poverty takes various figurations but traditionally has little to do with Buddhist monasteries. During the mid-Tang dynasty, though, the aestheticizing perception of poverty and austerity began to be projected into the imaginary world of Buddhist monasteries, often represented by the monk's empty begging bowl, the tattered and patched robe, the austere diet, and the secluded monastic environment. The monastery was envisioned as a pristine world of *austerity*, to be relished aesthetically. The poetry of Jia Dao, in particular, supplies the scenarios.[23] The Song scholars were well exercised in these poetic scenarios involving Buddhist monasteries with their perceived austerity. It is fitting that the eremitic journey depicted in *A Solitary Monastery* features a Buddhist monastery as its terminus, with the rustic hamlet as its way station and prelude.

The cold mood thus serves as the unifying conception underlying the composition of *A Solitary Monastery*. Cold Forest sets the rhetoric of cold in motion, calling up the awareness of poverty, which logically leads to the figuration of poverty and hardship in the monastery. This conceptual scheme can be phrased in other period terms, all gathered under the governing rubric of the cold mood. Since "cold" has various nuanced associations in the Northern Song, so there are different ways of verbalizing it. The Cold Forest in the foreground spells out the mood of "desolation"; the monastery in the middle ground suggests the idea of "austerity" and hardship. Putting the two together, what do we get then? A synergy between two nuanced variations on the theme of cold; moreover, we find ourselves verbalizing a Northern Song scholar-official's thought about "pictorial conception."

The combined effect of "desolation" and "austerity," as it turns out, is precisely what Ouyang Xiu, the most influential eleventh-century scholar-official, asserts as *the* pictorial effect a painter should seek: "Desolation-*cum*-austerity," 蕭條淡泊 (*xiaotiao danbo*), says Ouyang, "is the *pictorial conception* [or effect] hardest to capture in painting. Even when the painter gives

shape to it, the beholder does not necessarily get it."[24] The "conception" or "effect" (*yi*) in question consists of two parts: *xiaotiao*, bleakness and desolation,[25] and *danbo*, austerity, simplicity, and poverty. These moods, unappealing as they appear to our modern palate, were positive cultural values and aesthetic ideals touted by leading scholar-officials of the time, Ouyang Xiu chief among them.

The phrase "desolation-*cum*-austerity" now readily calls to mind a sparse and abbreviated landscape form executed in dry brushes. The term is routinely applied to the elucidation of Chinese literati landscape painting, as a result of some later critics' retrospective formulation. We reflexively link this eleventh-century aesthetic ideal to fourteenth-century landscapes by Ni Zan (1301–1374), as the two seem to have the strongest symbiosis or resonance with each other. In other words, we are used to thinking of a sparse Ni Zan landscape as *the* ultimate pictorial expression of this aesthetic vision of desolation and austerity. What may have happened, in fact, was the curious historical situation of a theory constantly in search of its corresponding visual models over the course of history. In the eleventh century, the aesthetics of desolation and austerity may have conjured up visual moods altogether different from Ni Zan's sparse landscape. This is hard for us to absorb, as we have become entrenched in our conviction about the symbiosis between Ouyang Xiu's formula and Ni Zan's austere landscape. Only when we unlink the two can we come to terms with the eleventh-century pictorial equivalences to Ouyang Xiu's aesthetic assertion.

A Solitary Monastery may just be one such equivalence. To establish the parity between the mood of the Cold Forest painted here and Ouyang Xiu's use of "desolation" (*xiaotiao*), we need to find out how Ouyang himself may have visualized the "desolate" mood. His use of the word "desolation" in his "Rhapsody on the Sounds of Autumn" is instructive. Articulating his complex thoughts inspired by the advent of the ruthless force of autumn, he runs off several variations on autumn's complexions: "its color is dismal and pale (*candan*) / The mist dissolves and clouds disperse"; and "its mood is desolate (*xiaotiao*); the hills and rivers lie lonesome and deserted."[26]

Ouyang Xiu's association of the "desolate" state with the "dismal and pale" (*candan*) mood is highly significant. The phrase is in fact a qualitative perceptual category often used in Song times to characterize a distinct pictorial effect. It shows up in Ouyang Xiu's discussion of the pictorial "conception" (*yi*):

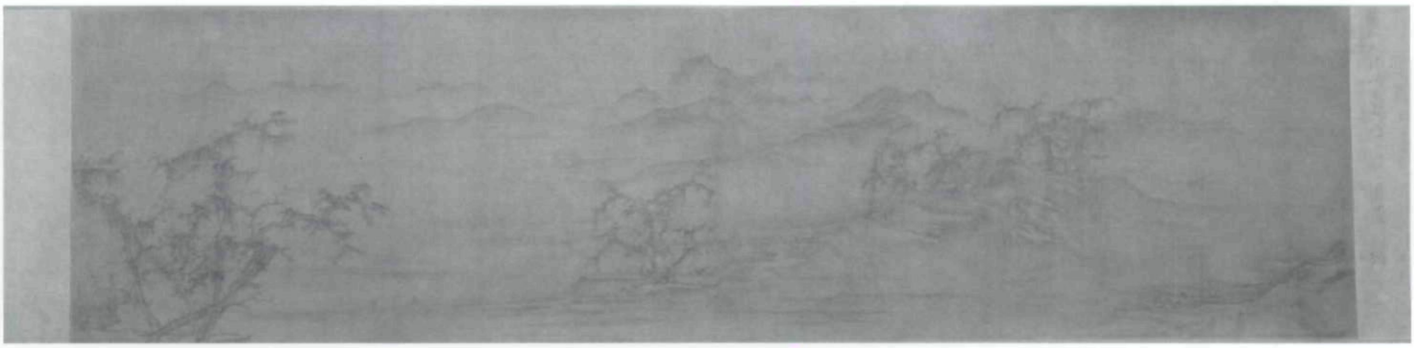
> Those experienced in speaking about painting often comment that it is easy to produce a polished depiction of ghosts and spirits on the grounds that the difficulty of painting lies in verisimilitude; one does not see ghosts and spirits [hence, it is easy to paint them.] [But pictures of ghosts and spirits] are gloomy, formidable, *dismal*, and *pale* [*candan*] in their transformations, transcendence, sheer miracles, and uttermost strangeness, which startle the beholder and make him marvel at the sight of them. As one slowly focuses attention on them, one begins to see thousands of appearances and ten thousand poses. The simple brush lines are full of conceptual overtones. Isn't this just as difficult to accomplish?[27]

He is not alone in deploying the term to characterize a pictorial mood. Su Che (1039–1112) wrote of Guo Xi's scroll of Level Distance, "Hills and rivers stretch a hundred miles, dismal and pale."[28] The twelfth-century author Deng Chun characterizes Song Di's gloomy and hazy landscape of the Xiao-Xiang Rivers as displaying "a touch of somber, atmospheric, dismal and pale complexion."[29]

All three writers apply the term to designate a pictorial effect. Ouyang uses it in the context of paintings of ghosts and spirits; Su and Deng deploy the phrase to describe a landscape. Granted, spirits and landscape belong to two unrelated experiential and generic domains. Yet the fact that the same perceptual category could be transposed or displaced from the demonic realm to landscape reveals a special quality and its corresponding perceptual experience in the Northern Song landscape. This explains why the Cold Forest landscape painting featuring "crab-claw" branches, which strike us as eerie and spooky, readily evoked in the Northern Song beholder's mind "the ways of dragons, snakes, ghosts, and spirits."[30] It also tells us why the Cold Forest with "crab-claw" branches works perfectly to picture ruins in a forest (Fig. 2). In other words, the Cold Forest with "crab-claw branches" calls up a decidedly "dismal and pale" (*candan*), that is, bleak and "desolate" (*xiaotiao*), mood. With his taste for the "dismal and pale" flavors of spectral scenes animated by demonic images, Ouyang Xiu would have no problem with the painter's decision to use the eerie landscape of "crab-claw" branches in *A Solitary Monastery* to spell out the atmospheric effect of "desolation and austerity," which he touted as the "pictorial conception" difficult to capture in painting.

As for the "austerity" 淡泊 effect, which constitutes the second half of Ouyang's "pictorial conception," most Northern Song viewers would, as I argued above, share the perception of the Buddhist monastery as a figuration of austerity.[31] The painter sets that perception into specific forms in *A Solitary Monastery*. The painting thus demonstrates a remarkable fit or consonance with a leading scholar-official's aesthetic ideal. To forestall the impression that the situation boils down to nothing but a painter's effort to press a scholar's idea into practice (which may or may not be the case), it should be noted that the consonance may have a range of implications. The affinity between the conceptual underpinning of the painting and Ouyang's "pictorial conception" of "desolation-*cum*-austerity" points to an aesthetic aspiration shared by scholar-officials and painters in the eleventh century. Ouyang formulated it with succinct cogency and verbal economy, which comes down to us in written form, whereas the painter pictured it with iconographic ingenuity, which comes down to us in pictorial form.

The affinity is not without its problems. *A Solitary Monastery* is not alone in combining the effects of "desolation" (figured in the Cold Forest "crab-claw" branches) and "austerity" (epitomized by the monastery). Similar efforts are discernible in the scroll painted by Guo Xi, probably depicting a Level Distance landscape, that Su Che described: "Hills and rivers stretch to a hundred miles, dismal and pale. An old monas-



3 *Solitary Monastery and Autumn Hills*, 11th century, handscroll. Fujii Yurinkan, Kyoto (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by Fujii Yurinkan)

tery sits atop a hill, nestled in a cloudy forest."[32] Su's word picture is complemented by a contemporary scroll, *Solitary Monastery and Autumn Hills*, in Yurinkan Museum, Kyoto (Fig. 3). Blank spaces alternate with trees and hills to suggest an unblocked spatial recession. The pagoda-dominated monastery, pictured as a pale apparition, is all but engulfed in the dismal Cold Woods of "crab-claw" branches. The scroll is perhaps the closest an eleventh-century painting could come to capturing the "desolation-*cum*-austerity" effect in an accurate and unproblematic way. This is evidenced in its inadvertent anticipation of the sparse landscape fashioned by Ni Zan and others centuries later, which appears to be the ultimate pictorial expression of Ouyang's "desolation-*cum*-austerity" ideal. But that is a hindsight, not to mention its implied problematic teleological overtone. For the eleventh century, the Yurinkan scroll is "desolation-*cum*-austerity" writ large. It points to *A Solitary Monastery* in the Nelson-Atkins Museum as a problem.

The Nelson-Atkins scroll maps out the "desolation-*cum*-austerity" conception in an odd way. The painter could have accomplished this effect by treating or disposing the monastery easily, elliptically, and cursorily with the concealing forms of trees and rock formations in the manner of the Yurinkan scroll. He could have spared himself the trouble of going the length of plotting out, almost in a plodding way, the meticulous architectural drawing when it came to the monastic pagoda. He could have made his composition easier by retaining the Level Distance in the manner of the Yurinkan scroll instead of stacking up hills upon hills behind the monastery. Of course, he did none of these. He took the hard way. There is something to be said for his hard-nosed approach. In addition to the "desolation-*cum*-austerity" conception, he appears to have striven after other effects. At least his labored treatment of the pagoda, to an extent unseen in any other Northern Song landscape, leaves us with that impression.

Motion, Stillness, and Sublimation

The monastery of *A Solitary Monastery* presents a problem, a sticking point. Conceptually, it signals "austerity." Pictorially, it does not; it points to something different. Its significance can be adduced from its role in a larger visual drama, which is absent in the Yurinkan scroll. With the pagoda as the central divide, we observe two distinct and contrasting moods associated respectively with the foreground and background. The tilting rock outcrops and agitated "crab-claw" tree branches in the foreground emanate an eerie sense of the demonic "ways of dragons, snakes, ghosts, and spirits"[33] and produce an effect of chill, agitation, restlessness, and anxiety. The soaring peaks in the background, especially the central one, convey, in general, a majestic stability, august grandeur, lordliness, sturdiness, and composure, as the vertical form recapitulates the monumental landscape convention that gained ground in the tenth and a good part of the eleventh centuries. The monumentality is, however, as noted by Hay, dented by a disturbing sign of instability, most notably manifested in the left-inclining craggy rock face that threatens to collapse onto the central pagoda beneath it.

The stage is now set for the central pagoda to rise up to the occasion. Interposed between the agitated tilting rock outcrops capped by monstrously gesticulating trees in the foreground and the dominant central peak in the background that shows signs of toppling, the pagoda, with its calm architectonic composure, remains unfazed. Its structural stability contrasts dramatically with the agitation of the surrounding landscape forms. This visual drama is characterized by modern scholars as interplay between "the obvious energy seen in the trees" and "a classical equipoise."[34] One wonders about the pictorial conception behind this formal interplay.

Again, Ouyang Xiu supplies us with a formulation. The same locus classicus cited above that lays out his aesthetics of "desolation-*cum*-austerity" contains a related category:

> Whereas it is easy to see the obvious suggestiveness of the kind of things such as birds' or animals' varying rates of speed, it is difficult to give shape to leisurely harmony and solemn stillness [閒和嚴靜], as well as far-reaching consciousness. As for the effects of height and depth, distance and recession, these are only the skills of the artisan-painter and not the concern of refined connoisseurship.[35]

The phrase "leisurely harmony and solemn stillness" (*xianhe yanjing*) fittingly describes the architectonic majesty of the pagoda-dominated monastic compound in *A Solitary Monastery*. For the eleventh-century art critic Guo Ruoxu, the best architectural drawing (*jiehua*) conveys the "flavor of sublime majesty and leisurely elegance" (莊麗閑雅之意, *zhuangli xianya zhi yi*).[36]

The modifier "leisurely" (*xian*), integral to both Ouyang's "leisurely harmony" (*xianhe*), and Guo's "leisurely elegance" (*xianya*), is a highly charged period term that evokes a distinct value cultivated in the eleventh century. As the North-

ern Song culture increasingly shifted from military prowess to civic virtues, leisure and relaxation were valorized as a preferred stance and state of mind as opposed to assertion and tension. The touted "leisureliness" (*xian*) gives primacy to the relaxed mood of peace and tranquillity.

The "stillness" effect is part of the overall pictorial scheme of *A Solitary Monastery*. It ostensibly offsets the agitation of the foreground trees and rock formations. In other words, stillness owes its existence to what it is not. It does not occur in isolation; it has a prior stage, a context, and is often the end result of some other state. The effect of "stillness," in fact, depends on its antithesis to succeed. In Ouyang Xiu's locus classicus on stillness, the pictorial conception of "leisurely harmony and solemn stillness" follows his initial proposition of the "pictorial conception" of "desolation and austerity." Conceptually, the two moods are related, as they appear to be two variations of the same theme. How Ouyang Xiu may have organized them in his mind is not entirely clear. However, once these two moods are mapped out in *A Solitary Monastery*, they take on a fixed spatial relation implying some causal links. With the travelers entering the pictorial space in the foreground, we are presented with an itinerary, a linear movement from one spot to another, which points to the monastery (read: stillness) as the terminus of the journey; that is, we have a linkage between the two moods or mental states. The painting therefore maps out a mental process that ends with stillness and tranquillity. The question then is: Where, how, and why does this stillness-bound process begin?

The topography comprising the Cold Forest and tumbling waterfalls in the painting is the starting point. "Crab-claw" branches shiver in a cold wind; the poverty-stricken scholar is about to cross a *broken* bridge. Waters tumble and cascade down into the deep valley. We see in the painting much motion and sound. Northern Song accounts contain ekphrases of comparable scenes in contemporary landscape paintings. According to the imperial catalog *Xuanhe huapu*:

> Therefore, all the conditions pictured in [Li Cheng's] paintings—the mountains, forests, marshes, waters, level-distant [recessions], rugged and easy [roads], tumbling waterfalls, precarious plank paths, the *broken bridge*, the precipitous valley, rapids, boulders, wind, rain, obscurity, light, mist, cloud, snow, and fog—are disgorged from within his breast and released through his brush, much like Meng Jiao sounding through his poetry, and the Crazy Zhang raging through his cursive-script calligraphy.[37]

The passage is premised on an intuitive analogy that had gained currency in Tang and Song times. According to this view, man is born with a still and tranquil nature (*xing*), comparable to the still and placid water. External events cause inner stirrings and agitation, that is, emotions comparable to waves. Artistic expression is thus an act of outpouring: artists release the pent-up stirrings through expressive means.

The allusion to "Meng Jiao sounding through his poetry" is in fact the keynote and the tip of an iceberg. Its implied subtext is Han Yu's "Preface Seeing Off Meng Jiao":

> Whatever does not attain a state of equilibrium will sound forth. Trees have no sound but will cry forth when the wind stirs them; water has no sound but will sound forth when the wind roils it, leaping out if blocked, speeding along if constrained, bubbling up if heated. Metal and stone have no sound, yet if struck will sound forth. Man with his gift of speech is the same. When there is no other recourse, then he speaks out, singing songs if moved, wailing if deeply touched. Every sound that comes from his mouth shows a lack of some inner equilibrium. Through music we vent forth what wells up inside. We choose objects that make the best sounds and use them to sound forth. . . . Of those in lesser stations among our contemporaries, Meng Jiao was the first to sound forth in poetry. . . . The sounding forth of these three [Meng Jiao, Li Ao, and Zhang Ji] is truly excellent. Yet I know not whether Heaven will soften their sound and cause them to sing the fullness of our State or whether it will starve their bodies, trouble their spirits, and so cause them to sing their own misfortune. Their fate hangs with Heaven. If they are among the upper stations—what cause for joy? If they are among the lower stations—what cause for grief?[38]

The passage was well known to Song scholars. It is notable that the author of the imperial catalog explicitly transposes Han Yu's account of human disposition as water and human expression as stirred water to the landscape painting. Rapids and waterfalls are taken to be the cathartic outpouring of the inner stirrings of the painter. A parallel is also drawn between the rapids and waterfall and the painter's gestural rapidity in moving his expressive brush.

With the waterfalls in sight, could the Cold Forest be far behind? The two sets of images work in concert in the rhetorical scheme. The stirrings in nature, both without and within, induce and produce—according to Han Yu's formula—soundings, which in turn need to find their medium. In *A Solitary Monastery* the sounding following stirrings finds its outlet in the pictorial rhetoric of the Cold Forest, suggesting the advent of autumn and winter. "When tree leaves fall, the poet already resents the autumn / And cannot stand 'Level Distance' [painting] provoking poetic sorrow."[39] The sorrow inspired by the advent of autumn leads to lamentation. The Song dynasty scholars were familiar with the *sao*-style poem by Song Yu that sets the precedent for the autumn-inspired lamentation:

> Alas for the breath of autumn!
> Wan and drear! Flower and leaf fluttering fall and turn to decay.
> Sad and lorn! As when on journey far one climbs a hill and *looks down on the water to speed* a *returning friend*.[40]
> Empty and vast! The streams have drunk full and the waters are clear.
> Heartsick and sighing sore! For the cold draws on and strikes into a man.
> Distraught and disappointed! I leave the old and turn towards the new.
> Afflicted! The *poor esquire has lost his office* and his heart rebels.
> Desolate! On his long journey he rests with never a friend.

Melancholy! . . . and secretly pities himself.
. . . . . .
I have left home and country, and gone a traveler to distant places.
Far have I wandered; where now can I stop?[41]

Song Yu's rhapsody established the pattern: a disgruntled, unemployed "poor esquire" on the road finds the desolate autumn scene a fitting objective correlative to his own circumstances and an occasion for self-pity.

Ouyang Xiu's "Rhapsody on the Sounds of Autumn" is a variation on this archetypal theme.[42] He depicts a desolate autumn scene. Autumn, the protagonist, has a "lonely, withered" mood. Its awesome destructive force leaves "the hills and rivers desolate" and strips the trees barren. Its primary note is that of sorrow. Ouyang tries to "deconstruct" the traditional theme of autumn-inspired lamentation and self-pity: he paints autumn as a withering breath of nature that stirs, strips, and destroys everything in its wake. To this he draws a parallel in the human disposition: worldly worries and tasks weigh on him, weary his body, and cause stirrings in his heart. He then tries to dissociate the natural process out there from the human state inside. The erasure comes belatedly; the parallel is already drawn. The dissociation appears as a willful act of self-consolation. In short, for Ouyang Xiu, the mood (*yi*) of autumn is "desolation" (*xiaotiao*); the state of mind attending the autumn scene is "motion" or "agitation" (*dong*): "The stirring of his emotions / Is enough to agitate his spirit." His amplification on the theme of autumn is an attempt to overcome that agitation.

As a variation of Han Yu's stirrings-to-sounding theme, Ouyang's "Rhapsody" posits the human disposition as a calm state of stillness ruffled by the sweeping visitation of the stirring force of autumn. The ensuing outpouring naturally gives rise to metaphoric associations of overflowing water and tumbling cascade. In a different work, Ouyang compares the sighs of the loyal minister Qu Yuan and "the moans and sighing of bitter men or lonely women" to the melodies played on a *qin*: "The music resembles boulders cleft asunder from sheer cliffs, springs flowing forth from high mountains."[43]

He is not alone in subscribing to this rhetorical scheme. Huang Tingjian (1045–1105) likewise offers a taxonomy of three different musical models of human response to the stirrings of nature. At the seasonal changes, we observe the "glory and decline of the grass and plants." We naturally "celebrate the glory and lament the decline." There are, however, three different types of response, respectively figured in insects, waterfalls, and musical instruments. Insects produce sounds. "Encountering the uneven ground, the valley waterfalls produce thunderous and sonorous sounds. The metal, stone, strings, and bamboo are muted, their stirrings are regulated." For Huang, the insects' chirpings are the voices of the "fin-de-siècle poets"; the "sound of the valley waterfalls" that of the gushing Chu-style poets (à la Qu Yuan and Song Yu); and the pregnant silence of the "metal, stone, strings, and bamboo" belongs to the elegant class of the *Classic of Poetry*.[44] Huang, of course, is merely reiterating some of the commonplaces in the Northern Song.

This alerts us to the possible significations of the tumbling waterfalls, four in all, in *A Solitary Monastery*. The precipices from which they cascade down the valley give an indication of the thunderous momentum they must have gathered. Their free fall provides a visual analogue to the noise they produce, thereby resonating with the agitated forms of the landscape—trees and rocks and all—in the wake of the visitation of the ruthless, withering "breath" of autumn. These waterfalls could thus be construed as signs of emotional stirrings and inner agitations in response to the advent of autumn, signaled by the desolate, barren trees. The donkey rider enacts "the poor esquire" in Song Yu's Chu-style rhapsody, who "has lost his office and his heart rebels." The Southern-style rhetoric of autumn-inspired sorrowful stirrings, in any case, is equated to the "sound of the valley waterfalls."

The stirrings highlight the architectonic stability of the pagoda-dominated monastery in the center, a stability that easily translates into a mood of stillness. Since the mid-Tang, the environment of Buddhist monasteries was frequently depicted in poetry as a realm of quietude. The lonely trailing resonance of Buddhist bells served as one of the poetic conceits used to evoke this mood. This presents a problem for painters, as the "sound of bells cannot be painted."[45] The painter had to rely on visual means.

The interplay between motion and stillness is a not uncommon pictorial conception in Northern Song landscape painting. It apparently underlies the composition of *Early Travel in Snowy Mountains* (Fig. 4), which opposes the left to the right sides, that is, motion to stillness. On the left, a series of waterfalls tumble down over precipices in a narrow valley. The cascades surface under a water mill—an emphatic sign of perceptual motion—and turn into rapids and finally a stream that flows underneath the bridge. The travelers, leading donkeys over the bridge, appear to head toward a path, punctuated by a country tavern, that extends into the deep valley on the left that terminates with a gate. The journey will presumably end on the Buddhist monastery atop the hill that puts to rest all that motion and agitation generated by the tumbling waterfall. The pagoda, modeled in the shape of a slender cone, is aligned with the vertical force of the soaring hills and peaks, thereby conveying an uplifting spatial transcendence that generates an effect comparable to the poetic device of figuring monastic tranquillity through the trailing resonances of the reverberating sound of bells across space. It is notable that the monastery is placed at the same height as the source of the waterfall, as if to make explicit and thematize the interplay of motion and stillness.

A Solitary Monastery works more emphatically. To accentuate the hard-earned stillness, it first dramatizes its antithesis (motion and agitation), and finally presents the stillness effect as a result of overcoming the agitation and offering a resolution. The travelers in the foreground heading toward the bridge and the shore across it enact the implied viewer's imaginary entrance into the pictorial space. The foreground already stages a prelude to the visual drama of stillness versus agitation. The architectonic stability of the hamlet is seriously challenged and overwhelmed by the surrounding dynamic forms of gesticulating trees and irregular rock formations. As the eye moves up and into the pictorial space, the monumental peak in the center begins to take on more regulated forms that partially harmonize with the architectonics of the pa-

4 *Early Travel in Snowy Mountains*, 11th century, hanging scroll, ink and light color on silk, 64 × 29¼ in. (162.5 × 74.3 cm). Shanghai Museum (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by the Shanghai Museum)

goda, even though it also contains an irregular passage of deviance figured in the left-inclining craggy rock face that threatens to undo the monolithic stability of the central peak. Whatever lingering agitation there is, as manifested in the central peak, it is counteracted by the squarely composed form of the pagoda occupying the very heart of this agitated universe. The painting solicits a viewing process that turns on the dynamic interplay between the animated landscape and the stable architecture, agitation and composure, distraction and concentration. The object of the representation is therefore the mental process of calming down, of fighting distractions and dispelling agitations—in short, concentration.

To the extent that the prominence of the monastery infuses the landscape with Buddhist associations, it is not too much of a stretch to think of this way of picturing the agitation-to-concentration process as a new development in the line of Buddhist iconography. The same mental process is represented differently in traditional Buddhist iconography. The Subjugation of Mara in Buddhist art pictures precisely this mental process. The tableau is often centered on the iconic image of the Buddha Sakyamuni, surrounded by the marauding assembly of Mara and his demonic army, who mount an attack on the Buddha in an attempt to distract him from his composed contemplation. Pictures of this kind externalize a mental state or enact an interior drama through figuration: Mara and his demonic followers are visual tropes of distraction and disturbance. Sakyamuni's subjugation of them signals the overcoming of his inner demons. The tableau externalizes an inner drama.

Just as the Song landscape replaces the Tang figural tableau as the dominant genre of pictorial art, so the same mental process of arriving at composure and stillness finds its new incarnation in landscape paintings. The pagoda replaces the central Buddha, and the agitated trees and tilting rock outcrops substitute for the demonic army. It is perhaps for good reason that the expressive trees of this kind reminded the Song beholders of the demonic "ways of dragons, snakes, ghosts, and spirits," as their memory of—and continuing exposure to—the graphic transformation tableaux of the Subjugation of Mara, often painted on the walls of Buddhist monasteries, intervened as a cognitive screen in their viewing and processing of the Song landscapes.[46] The Subjugation of Mara tableau, after all, was still current in Song times.[47] In addition, the effort to attain stillness also found visual expression in Chan/Zen Buddhist painting, such as *Second Patriarch in Contemplation*, showing the Chan patriarch Huike leaning against a sleeping tiger.[48]

The *Second Patriarch* is, however, a visual paradox: its theme is stillness; its form is, in contrast, a dashing bravura registering gestural motion. This kind of paradox puzzled Su Shi (1037–1101), as expressed in a poem for his monk friend Master Canliao. Buddhist monks, Su presumes, embody the undisturbed state of "austere emptiness" (*kongku*), free from the distracting onslaught of "myriad thoughts," and voluntarily "languish in bland austerity" (*danbo*). How does it come about that these world-renouncing monks, presumably self-absorbed in the tranquil realm of stillness, produce calligraphy of dashing strokes and poetry of unchecked sentiment? Su does not have a clear answer. He nevertheless reaches a conclusion about the primacy of "emptiness and stillness" as the supreme condition of poetic art:

> Stillness, therefore, ends all motions,
> Emptiness encompasses myriad states.

For all his assertions about the primacy of "emptiness and stillness," Su betrays the sentiment in his own pictorial practice. On the basis of surviving copies and Song textual accounts, his dabbling in painting suggests his fixation on withered trees with "branches and trunks endlessly serpentine" and the anamorphism of strange rocks. As Su himself is said to have painted pictures of the Cold Forest,[49] it is easy to imagine the projection of his fixation on withered trees and "serpentine" branches into those compositions: "When tree leaves fall, the poet already resents the autumn, / And cannot stand 'Level Distance' [painting] provoking poetic sorrow."[50]

The Northern Song accounts of Su's serpentine trees and bizarre rocks thus serve as a possible subtext attending the foreground Cold Forest in *A Solitary Monastery*: "Bizarre and unusual they are like the twirling [traces of] inner rankling."[51] Or: "Big branches bursting out of the bounds of the peaks, and small stems wriggling their way through the lean rocks."[52] In other words, the "twirling trace" of inner agitation is the *real* pictorial mood that speaks to literati like Su. Giving free rein to inner motion and emotion is what he cannot help but *do*; stillness is what he says he wants to *accomplish*. Stillness is the end result of a tortuous mental process that begins with motion and agitation. It is a "dream work," a process of sublimation through which the inner disturbance and discontent are displaced, overcome, and sublimated into the transcendent state of "emptiness and stillness." Embedded in the "stillness" is, therefore, the mechanism of overcoming and repression. What "stillness" signifies is precisely what it is not—namely, its opposite, the inner disturbance and its overcoming.

Many Northern Song artifacts—verbal and visual—display this double stance. Ouyang Xiu is again exemplary in this regard. His "Rhapsoday on the Chirping Cicada" takes us to a "solemn temple yard" with "several ancient trees." The poet tries to enter into stillness:

> I restricted my eyes and ears to cleanse my mind
> And purified my heart to make my supplication.
> Through stillness I sought to comprehend movement,
> I saw into the true nature of the myriad things.

Then begins the chirping of the cicada from the treetop, whistling, trilling, wailing, humming, and soughing. This reminds the poet of the "enlightened scholar": "he sings of his sorrow of poverty (*qiongchou*) / Or he nobly proclaims grand ambitions." The tension between stillness and agitation is built up and remains unresolved, as the poem ends abruptly: "A heavy rain came down, / The cicada's chirping stopped."[53] Likewise, his "Rhapsody on the Sounds of Autumn" compares the withering force of autumn that leaves the landscape "desolate" to the worldly worries and chores weighing on and wearying the human heart and body. The rhapsody draws the parallel; the poet, however, denies it and comforts himself with the thought that human beings are above the natural scheme of things and therefore should not be bothered by "the sounds of autumn."[54] The peace is hard-earned. It arises from sublimation through the suppression of disturbing thoughts and the unresolved calming of agitations.

One may wonder about the relevance of a scholar's thought process to the domain of pictorial conception. It turns out that "Rhapsody on the Sounds of Autumn" was in fact on the mind of Northern Song beholders when viewing a type of landscape painting. The imperial catalog *Xuanhe huapu* contains, in the landscape chapter, an entry regarding an inner palace eunuch named Feng Jin, a native of Kaifeng, who excelled in both hazy atmospheric landscapes and "towers in forest shades." His *Golden Wind [or Phoenix] and Sounds of Nature*, according to the catalog author, made one feel as if one could hear the pipings of wind instruments. The depth of the thought and sentiments embedded therein can be compared to the "Rhapsody on the Sounds of Autumn." Meanwhile, we are told that Feng's "disposition is, alas, not peaceful; he may go astray some day."[55] Go astray or not, what little we know about him suggests an outspoken character.[56] There appears to be, in reference to Feng at least, a perceived correlate between the painter's untamed disposition and his preference for picturing nature's stirrings and pipings. The catalog author is being judgmental, operating on the assumption that the eunuch is better off bringing his agitated disposition under control.

As a specific instance of the dynamics of agitation and stillness, this case points to a consonance and transpositions between the literary and pictorial universes respectively inhabited by a scholar-official and a eunuch painter. To some extent, it justifies our mapping of Ouyang Xiu's thought pattern onto *A Solitary Monastery*. For the "desolation-*cum*-austerity" conception, desolation inspires agitation and emotion; austerity (*danbo*) overcomes it. In other words, "desolation-*cum*-austerity" is about motion and stillness, or overcoming agitation to obtain peace. Not surprisingly, almost in the same breath, Ouyang next speaks of "leisurely harmony and solemn stillness." So "desolation-*cum*-austerity" is the first phase of a mental process: it sets up the tension between motion and stillness. By the time we reach the stage of "leisurely harmony and solemn stillness," the tension is resolved; the initial agitation is overcome. This is the conceptual overtone of the central formal drama of *A Solitary Monastery*.

If the painting was indeed produced about 1050,[57] what is the source of the agitation?

Iconic Pagoda, Iconographic Disparity, and Cognitive Dissonance

Thus far, the painting appears to make sense in view of the eleventh-century style of thought. I have briefly noted—but largely withheld the elaboration on—a glaring oddity in the painting. Now is the time to confront the issue squarely, so to speak.

The composition is in fact decidedly an anomaly. No other extant Northern Song scroll gives such central prominence to the pagoda as does *A Solitary Monastery*. It is not uncommon for Northern Song landscape painting to feature architectural images. These mostly consist of palatial towers, terraces, and pavilions, in keeping with the classification of architectural drawing in the early-twelfth-century imperial catalog as the generic category of "palaces and chambers" (*gongshi*). Of the seventy-one *architectural* paintings listed in the imperial catalog, only one concerns a Buddhist monastery.[58]

There was, indeed, a subgenre of landscape paintings fea-

turing Buddhist monasteries. The imperial catalog lists about twenty-four such paintings.[59] They are mostly known as the "painting of a solitary monastery" (*xiaosi tu*).[60] A number of surviving Northern Song scrolls may belong to this genre, but identification remains difficult due to the uncertain character of the architectural cluster in the mountains, which may or may not be a monastery. We can be fairly certain that the surviving Northern Song landscapes featuring a pagoda qualify as "paintings of solitary monasteries."[61]

Based on what we can gather from the imperial catalog, a few elements stand out: with the exception of one listed in the architectural painting category (mentioned above), these paintings belong exclusively to the landscape genre; they are mostly entitled "painting of a solitary monastery [in mountains]" (*xiaosi tu*), with the consistent emphasis on the "*xiao*," or "solitary-*cum*-desolate" mood; they are invariably set in mountains or hills.[62] It becomes apparent that the pictorial interest vested in the monasteries stems largely from the mood associated with them. They imbue landscape with desolate-*cum*-austere (*xiaotiao*) overtones. As such, they are often treated cursorily, reduced to a notational sign or marker that points to something beyond themselves. Surviving Northern scrolls testify to this. The few scrolls that feature a pagoda push it to the recessed depth, where it is all but lost or veiled in the hazy horizon of clouds and mist[63] or registered as an apparition in the far distance.[64] The only few other notable surviving Northern Song scrolls that show a pagoda, a masonry structure pictured in half-length, subordinate it to the overall configuration of the mountains (Fig. 4).[65]

The pagoda in *A Solitary Monastery,* by contrast, is taken on its own structural or architectonic terms and treated fully with care. Drawn in the manner of "ruled-line painting" (*jiehua*), the architectural members and structural features—the eaves, railings, mast, finial, and so on—are all rendered with sharp precision in correct proportions and spatial modeling. While other Northern Song scrolls, such as *Early Travel in Snowy Mountains* (Fig. 4), show a half-length pagoda as a slender tapering cone, the pagoda in *A Solitary Monastery* is presented as an expansive, squat, octagonal timber structure.

The discrepancy has various implications. One way of viewing it is to see the typological difference in terms of pictorial convention. The Nelson-Atkins scroll shows a careful portrait of a real architectural structure. The painter appears to flaunt the contemporaneity of the architectural reference. Instead of subordinating the pagoda to the generic mood of desolation and poverty, the painting showcases an architectural splendor. Instead of epitomizing the virtue of "austerity," the edifice, in fact, makes a mockery of the notion. Its squatness and octagonal plan register an architectural style of pagoda construction that gained currency in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Its typological affinities are the Leifeng Pagoda of the Wu-Yue Kingdom in Hangzhou, built between 971 and 977,[66] and the timber pagoda at Yinxian, built in 1056,[67] all expansive octagonal structures. If the painting makes the architecture a pictorial focus, or topic, what architectural structure may have loomed so large in the mental horizon and the physical landscape at the time? In other words, which contemporary pagoda could have become a comparable discursive topic that may in turn have generated a corresponding pictorial topic?

The similarity of the pagoda in *A Solitary Monastery* to the Leifeng Pagoda may offer a clue. In 982, Emperor Taizong's court decreed that a pagoda be built in the Fusheng Precinct of the Kaibao Monastery to enshrine the fabled Asoka reliquary acquired from the conquered Wu-Yue state. Yu Hao from the Wu-Yue Kingdom, who came to the Northern Song capital to work on imperial projects, was the architect, and he created an architectural wonder. Completed in 989, the eleven-story octagonal timber structure, 360 Chinese feet in height (more than 180 feet, or 55 meters),[68] was the tallest and most splendid edifice in the capital city. It was celebrated for its "gold-and-green splendor."[69] In the monastery under the imperial aegis, the pagoda served as a privileged site to stage various ritual ceremonies, including the prayer for rain or snow led by successive emperors. One day in 1013, the pagoda's mast allegedly radiated golden light, which prompted Emperor Zhenzong's (r. 1023–63) visit to the site, and then the spectators saw "five-colored relics, . . . as big as the moon in size, with color like the crystal, flying above the bell strings." In celebration of the auspicious occasion, the pagoda was renamed Linggan Pagoda (Pagoda of Numinous Response).[70]

The frugal Confucian scholar-officials did not share the popular enthusiasm for this grandiose edifice. Tian Xi (940–1003), the Grand Master of Remonstration, for instance, did not mince words when counseling Emperor Zhenzong against the project: "whereas the public hails the [pagoda] as a gold-and-green splendor, this minister thinks [the pagoda] has [people's] sweat and blood written all over it!"[71] The detractors of the pagoda were vindicated when the timber pagoda was struck by lightning and burned down in 1044.[72] Emperor Renzong's intention to rebuild the pagoda drew anger and strong opposition from the Confucian scholar-officials on the grounds of the heavy financial burden and labor cost the project would incur. Ouyang Xiu, Yu Jing (1000–1064), and Cai Xiang (1012–1067) were among the most vocal opponents, pointing to the fire as an omen of heavenly disapproval of the extravagant building.[73]

The emperor overrode the objections and went ahead with the rebuilding. Resited to the Shangfang Precinct (the east precinct of the Kaibao Monastery) on Mount Yi, outside the Inner City to the northeast, the new pagoda was a thirteen-story octagonal masonry structure built of glazed tile.[74] It retained the height of the old timber structure that had gone down in fire, and is still standing today.[75]

There is no way of verifying if the pagoda in *A Solitary Monastery* indeed alludes to the fire-destroyed timber pagoda in the Kaibao Monastery. Uncertainty concerning the date of the scroll makes it even harder to ascertain what precise circumstantial references it may have. Given that the pagoda in the painting is made a pictorial focus—and topic—against the grain of the landscape genre of the time, there appears to be a comparable degree of intense topicality underlying both the pictorial design and the heated publicity of the Kaibaosi Pagoda.

What little we know of the Northern Song painter's rhetorical use of architectural painting makes the suggestiveness of the parallel all the more tantalizing. Yin Jizhao, a painter renowned for his unsurpassed specialization in figures and architectural drawing, painted the Gusu Tower and Efang

Palace, both historical landmarks.[76] The author of the imperial catalog ascertains "the didacticism" embedded in these paintings, something absent in the "prosaic paintings" by others. Comparing them with the poetic sources they draw on, he opines that "the poet's didacticism is deeper and far-reaching, something that the painting does not quite match."[77] Nonetheless, the painter's effort in didactic rhetoric is recognized.

With this in mind, the comparable topicality of both the painting and the pagoda in the capital makes us mindful of the range of possible rhetorical overtones—didactic or otherwise—of the scroll. Is the painting a retrospective pictorial record of the fire-destroyed timber pagoda? Was the painting intended as a glorifying blueprint or "poster" of sorts by the imperial propaganda force in service of the emperor's agenda to advocate and rationalize the rebuilding of the pagoda? Did the painting amount to a pictorial plea to the throne on the part of the pagoda's detractors showing the foreseeable jeopardy and disturbing consequences caused by the construction? Is there some pointed message embedded in the ominous left-inclining rock face that threatens to topple over the pagoda? Or does the visual drama of agitated forms—tilting rock formations and wildly gesticulating "crab-claw" trees—surrounding the central iconic pagoda inadvertently or serendipitously register the historical situation of the scholar-officials' agitation against the reconstruction of the Kaibaosi Pagoda? These remain idle speculations at best. Any hypothetical conjectures regarding the overtones of the pagoda have to be formed with the entire picture in mind.

While we are uncertain about the circumstantial references in the painting to the Kaibaosi Pagoda, their comparable topicality notwithstanding, there is still some insight to be gained by seeing them in juxtaposition. For one thing, the reception history of the Kaibaosi Pagoda tells us a good deal about the perceptual habit of the Northern Song literati in respect to a pagoda-dominated landscape.

In the eyes of scholar-officials, the newly built Kaibaosi Pagoda signified imperial excess and financially irresponsible indulgence in architectural extravaganza. In spite of its monumental grandeur, it met with a collective silence, registered as a glaring lacuna in the Northern Song literary canon, which otherwise shows no lack of interest in responding to landmarks. Ouyang Xiu, for all his aversion toward Buddhism, had noted that the old timber structure in the Kaibao Monastery was "the tallest among the pagodas in the capital city" and an accomplished architectural feat by a notable architect-*cum*-carpenter.[78] As his remonstration against the rebuilding of the fire-destroyed pagoda fell on the deaf ears of Emperor Renzong, Ouyang never bothered to mention the rebuilt pagoda again in his writing—not even once. This is remarkable considering his close attention to landmarks. It was not until five centuries later that the pagoda became a poetic topic for scholar-officials, such as Li Mengyang (1472–1529).[79]

There was, however, no escaping the pagoda in the eleventh-century capital city, given its dominance in the landscape. What is instructive is the Northern Song scholars' distinct way of mentally picturing it—or lack thereof. They simply transformed and displaced the physical pagoda-dominated topography into a familiar poetic scene of nature-inspired transcendence.

Visits to the monastery by two Northern Song scholar-officials are particularly revealing in this regard. The brothers Liu Chang 劉敞 (1019–1068) and Liu Bin 劉攽 (1022–1088), both of whom obtained their advanced degree (*jinshi*) in 1046,[80] visited the monastery sometime around the mid-eleventh century. Both wrote poems on the occasion; both had the pagoda—old and new—in mind. As we may expect of a typical Northern Song scholar-official, Liu Bin disregarded, at least in writing, the new Kaibaosi Pagoda in the Shangfang Precinct. He visited the nearby Fusheng Precinct, the site of the old pagoda that had burned in 1044. The old pagoda, now registered as a distant memory that had left traces of "ashes" of a "catastrophe," afforded him and his friends the topic for a "freewheeling discussion." The "tower" is dismissed as "the Phantom City," a reference to the fictive city in the *Lotus Sutra*,[81] temporarily conjured up by the Buddha as an expedient device to coax the wearied treasure-seeking travelers into a quest for the real treasure trove elsewhere.[82]

Liu Chang is the only Northern Song scholar who left us with a poem occasioned by his visit to the Shangfang Precinct where the new Kaibaosi Pagoda stood:

> The layered hills rise around the city,
> The clear rivers bring back the rusticity.
> The *old monastery* nestled in deep recesses,
> The *high tower* peeps amidst precipitous peaks.
> The site is amenable to distant views,
> Towering over the city and its environs.
> Near and afar, one sees one thousand miles,
> Opening up both the mind and eye.
> . . . . . .
> All of a sudden I feel like scaling the mountain,
> Looking around, my mind reaches afar.
> Those who have passed are gone forever,
> As Xinling has long collapsed.
> Those who are yet to come are not in sight,
> Kong Hou and Sun Cui.
> Past and present are all vast and distant,
> Sighing turns into elation and despair.
> . . . . . .[83]

The first thing to note is the resilience and persistence of a schema that shapes and orders Liu's viewing of the landscape. The schema in question is that of poetic-generic convention that serves as the lens through which Liu views and transforms the physical topography. The Northern Song capital city of Kaifeng followed the plan of a nesting set of rectangles: the Imperial City occupied the heart of the Inner City; the latter was in turn circumscribed by the Outer City. The Kaibao Monastery was located just outside the northeast border of the Inner City, with the Wuzhang River to its north (Fig. 5), but well inside the walls of the Outer City. Liu was presumably looking outward across the space of what was still part of the populated Outer City, presumably a stretch of "suburban" sprawl. Still, he gave us a picture of a depopulated rustic landscape of hills and rivers.

The spatial scheme experienced in Liu's poetic vision is noteworthy. Liu begins with the observation of "layered hills," which would call for a mental picture of soaring peaks. The scheme of Monumental Landscape would facilitate this men-

5 Map of Kaifeng, capital city of the Northern Song dynasty (after *A Journey into China's Antiquity* [Beijing: Morning Glory Publishers, 1997], vol. 3, 231, fig. 239)

tal picture. Then, the pagoda enters the picture—sort of. *Not* taken on its own terms, the pagoda is spirited away and repackaged as a "high tower" (*gaotai*), a traditional Chinese architectural structure without monastic association. The "tower" then conveniently provides the generic framework for the ascension topos, a topographically inspired topic. The topos involves the poet's ascent to command a distant view of the horizon, which in turn triggers thoughts about the invisibility of different times. So it does in Liu's poem: "The site is amenable to distant views." This entails the mental picturing of an unblocked view of a spatial recession in the manner of Level Distance: "Near and afar, one sees one thousand miles." The spatial view soon dissolves into thoughts of invisible times, and Liu reflects on the limit of the horizon in view of past and future. The past is forever out of sight, the future not yet within range. This occasions "sighing" that "turns into elation and despair." The poet here takes liberties with the different mental compositions: first the Monumental Landscape, then the Level Distance. The two do not cohere well in actual pictorial layout, but a verbal picture has the license to both have one's cake and eat it. The painter has to find a way of accommodating these two impulses: a task the painter of *A Solitary Monastery* succeeds in.

The painting is therefore under pressure from both the generic schema and topographical verisimilitude. Just as the poet at once takes cues from the hilly landscape out there ("The layered hills rise around the city") and constructs a Level Distance landscape out of the generic impulse ("distant views" of "one thousand miles"), so the painter tries his best to fit in the two mutually exclusive impulses. The need to reckon with the hilly topography around the capital city may account for the Monumental Landscape form, so that the "old monastery" can be nestled there. The Cold Forest evoking Level Distance grows out of the generic imperative to facilitate the expected existential sorrow (the "sighing") attending the mood shift from the elation of the unblocked view obtained from the "tower" to the subsequent despair over the invisibility of different times.

The focus of attention in the pictorial landscape may thus be commensurate with the center of attention in the cultural landscape. A salient historical fact about the Kaibao Monastery may account for the topicality of the architectural drawing of the pagoda-dominated monastery in the painting. With its pronounced theme of an impoverished donkey-riding scholar about to cross a bridge—a broken bridge at that—the painting speaks to the sensibility of the Northern Song scholar-official. To this end, a function linked with the Kaibao Monastery in the Northern Song may imbue the image of a generic monastery with an otherwise unlikely association. Starting with Emperor Taizong, the Kaibao Monastery often served as the site of events related to imperial civil service recruitment examinations. In 977, Emperor Taizong hosted a

ceremonial banquet in the monastery to celebrate the success of the top candidates who had excelled in the civil service examination.[84] For a period of time, certainly as late as 1085, the monastery continued to house the Examination Office in the Ministry of Rites, an organ of ministry officials and staff responsible for paperwork related to the civil service examination.[85] One night in 1085, the monastery caught fire, causing the death of examination officers and staff members.[86] While it is not entirely clear if the monastery's link to the civil service examination was continuous throughout the Northern Song,[87] what little we know already securely establishes the association of the monastery with the civil service examination.

This sheds light on the situational logic of the painting. The grandeur of the architectural structure of the monastery, with its suggestive contemporary referentiality, may signal the glamour of achieving success in the civil service examination, circumstantially associated with the Kaibao Monastery, or a generic monastery. True, monasteries are supposed to be the antithesis of social success, but the special circumstances under the Northern Song made them strange bedfellows. The donkey rider (the impoverished high-minded scholar) is poised to cross the bridge that eventually leads to the Promised Land, that realm of architectural splendor and social success. The promise is mocked and harsh reality sets in: he faces a *broken* bridge. His aspiration for social success is frustrated. Hence, the rankle that finds its objective correlative in landscape:

> Therefore, all the conditions pictured in [Li Cheng's] paintings—the mountains, forests, marshes, waters, level-distant [recessions], rugged and easy [roads], tumbling waterfalls, precarious plank paths, the *broken bridge*, the precipitous valley, rapids, boulders, wind, rain, obscurity, light, mist, cloud, snow, and fog—are disgorged from within his breast and released through his brush, much like Meng Jiao sounding through his poetry, and the Crazy Zhang raging through his cursive-script calligraphy.[88]

It is just as interesting that Ouyang Xiu, noting the popularity of Li Cheng's Cold Forest landscape paintings, claims that Li's official career took him all the way to the position of a "Secretarial Court Gentleman" serving in the Imperial Secretariat.[89] We know that Li never achieved this.[90] Ouyang most likely registers a widely circulated rumor. What this points to is the popularly perceived association of the Cold Forest landscape with the generic frustrated scholar-official given to "sounding through his poetry" and releasing his inner rankling through his brush. The "broken bridge" is cause enough for much of the rankling.

Hence the internal contradiction embedded in the image of the monastery here. *Conceptually*, it is supposed to embody austerity and social disengagement, whose mood is best represented in low-key, sketchy simple forms, an effect that is captured in the Yurinkan scroll (Fig. 3). The *formal* aggrandizement of the monastery in the Nelson-Atkins scroll, however, betrays the ideal of austerity. It exudes modish glamour, social distinction, and material opulence, evoking the kind of euphoric state engendered by success in the civil service examinations. The monastery thus *conceptually* signals eremitism; the edifice *formally* signals social distinction. Eremitic escapism and social distinction are two irreconcilable and mutually exclusive polar opposites in the Northern Song conceptual universe; by a stroke of circumstantial contingency, the monastery in the painting signifies both.

The landscape here is under the pressure of both the circumstantial association and the literary convention. The historical circumstances (that is, the association of the monastery with the civil service examination) posit a landscape that both beckons with social distinction and forewarns frustrated aspiration, a frustration epitomized in the broken bridge that intervenes between the high-minded aspiring scholar (the donkey rider) and the terminus of his travel. The literary convention maps out a landscape that offers an experience in mood swing from desolation/agitation to austerity/stillness.

The perceptual coherence and instantaneity solicited by the monastery image—that is, that it demands to be *seen* as one entity—thus masks, belies, "sutures," and compensates for the disparity in its divergent significations. It at once entices and consoles. It elicits the aspiration for social distinction on the one hand; it comforts the bruised heart smarting from the thwarted aspiration and mocked expectation on the other hand. Frustrated aspiration and mocked expectation lead to rankling, agitation, and a state of desolation; overcoming the agitation leads to stillness and tranquillity, conceptually epitomized by the monastery. The path to the monastery in this particular context thus can be read at once as a symbolic ride to social distinction and as a spiritual journey to the haven of social disengagement. It speaks to both success and failure. The pictorial scheme allows one to have one's cake and eat it, too. With striking clarity, the painting inadvertently and serendipitously maps out the complexity underlying Northern Song eremitism. The ambiguity of the monastery image here registers the tension in the ambiguous nature of eremitic aspiration of the time. Eremitism is the overcompensation for the failed attempt at social distinction.

This is asking too much from an architectural image. In choosing among architectural structures as signpost for mental compositions or picturing imaginary landscapes, the Northern Song literati preferred not to deal with the pagoda and its ambiguities. In its stead, the pavilion—with its modest structure, smooth integration into the landscape, and open views—caught the literary imagination and became a favorable topos.[91] Even with the pavilion, the interest stems not from the architectural form itself but from the views it accords the beholder. Again, here is Ouyang Xiu:

> When it comes to the splendid forms of the mountains and rivers *around the pavilion*, the blurring haze of plants, trees, clouds, and mist coming into view and disappearing in the broad and empty expanse, hanging between presence and absence, which can fully satisfy the gaze of a poet as he climbs these heights and writes his own *Li Sao*—it is best each viewer finds such things for himself. As for the frequent ruin and repair of the pavilion, either accounts already exist or the details do not merit close examination. I will say nothing more.[92]

This accounts for the triumph of the pavilion-dominated landscape in the late Northern Song (Fig. 6). It also explains the formal impulse—a "pictorial conception"—to "hide" the pagoda in Northern Song compositions. The entrance examination for the Northern Song Imperial Painting Academy involved testing the students' ability to press "pictorial conceptions" into practice. One competition required the candidates to come up with compositions inspired by the poetic line "the disarrayed hills hide the old monastery." Most compositions depict a pagoda mast peeping through the array of hills. The winning design shows a banner on a tall post sticking out from the mountain forest.[93]

This story is often cited to show the ingenious exercise in the "less-is-more" kind of shorthand pictorial economy. For our purpose, the case is instructive. It is notable that most students still regarded the pagoda as the staple feature of a monastery. The winning composition that signaled the new trend and sensibility eliminated the pagoda altogether. The crux here is not how successfully he produced the effect of "hiding"; the lesser compositions accomplished that just as well by rendering a pagoda mast. The operative word is "old": what best represents an *old* monastery? Not the pagoda; a posted banner works better. Not architecture, for architecture is often too loaded, too prone to cognitive dissonance for the Northern Song literati, not to mention that its plodding and cumbersome execution is greatly at odds with the increasingly minimalist premise underlying the "pictorial conception." This further throws into high relief the oddity underlying the meticulous care invested in the architectural drawing of the pagoda in the Nelson-Atkins scroll. Now we understand why: it *was* loaded.

The circumstantial weight of the image raises intriguing questions concerning the possible cognitive dissonance it may have solicited from its implied viewer. To the extent that the landscape maps out the eremitic impulse of a scholar-official leaving behind the agitated, mundane world to seek peace and solace in the transcendent Buddhist haven of "emptiness and stillness," the painting intends the scholar-officials' class as its implied audience and their eremitic desire as its primary "button" to press; at any rate, it speaks to anyone aspiring to attain that social and cultural status where such a desire can come into play. The success of the painting's communication with this implied beholder hinges on the latter's willingness to accept the pagoda as a fitting embodiment of the transcendent realm of "emptiness and stillness." Theoretically, it may work; historically, it did not. In the mid-eleventh century, as we know by now, it was fraught with problems, considering the intensity of the scholar-officials' collective ire provoked by—and their resistance to—the Kaibaosi Pagoda. Among the most vocal in opposing the pagoda construction was none other than Ouyang Xiu. He certainly would have balked at the iconic centrality of the pagoda that dominates the landscape. The disturbing shadow of the rebuilt Kaibaosi Pagoda must have instilled in him and his contemporary scholar-officials an intense dislike of the architectural extravaganza that makes a mockery of his aesthetics of poverty and desolation.

The painting therefore hints at possible dynamic exchanges between the literati and professional painters. The literati sought inventions in the pictorial art carrying their

6 Li Gongnian, *Winter Landscape*, ca. 1120, hanging scroll, ink and light color on silk, 51 × 19 in. (129.5 × 48.2 cm). The Art Museum, Princeton University (artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by the Art Museum)

ideals of extrapictorial "conceptions." The professional painters more or less vibrated to these ideals. While we do not know the identity of the painter, we know for certain that painters were mostly, if not exclusively, professional during the early and mid-Northern Song periods. That Ouyang Xiu's writing could be brought consistently to bear on the painting does not presuppose the painter's immediate response to his theory; rather, the commensurability between the two says something about the painter's effort to take in stride the shifts in taste at the time when the literati were fast becoming the arbiters of taste. "Much of what we call 'taste,'" to recall Michael Baxandall's dictum, "lies in this, the conformity between discriminations demanded by a painting and skills of discrimination possessed by the beholder."[94] The painting here ostensibly demands a perceptual baggage for which Ouyang Xiu's writing provides the most succinct formulation.

It is interesting to mull over the superb skills on display in *A Solitary Monastery* in light of Ouyang Xiu's dismissal of the artisan-painter's deadpan craftsmanship and excessive preoccupation with producing the "effects of height and depth, distance and recession" at the expense of "pictorial conceptions." The well-proportioned spatial layout in *A Solitary Monastery* clearly shows a refined craftsmanship at work, thereby making itself liable to Ouyang's scorn. The liability, though, is mitigated by the painter's manifest effort to press into practice the scholarly aesthetics of "desolation-*cum*-austerity" and "leisurely harmony and solemn stillness." We sense here a give-and-take kind of exchange or parity between the scholarly community and professional painters. As the scholar-official defines the challenges faced by the painter, that is, the difficulty of capturing these effects in painting, so the painter appears to rise to the challenge by showing that it can be done. The painter appears to be rather sensitive and responsive to the scholar's aesthetic pronouncements.

The exchange, no doubt, involves some uneasy parsing on the part of the painter. The painting manages to incorporate the literati's theory of "desolation-*cum*-austerity" and "leisurely harmony and solemn stillness." However, in using the architectonic grandeur of the pagoda as the anchor of the visual drama, it ostensibly runs up against the Confucian scholar-official's deep-seated wariness about architectural extravaganza, thereby inadvertently "deconstructing" the aesthetics of austerity it set out to picture in the first place. This partly explains the short-lived parity the painting seeks to establish with the scholar's aesthetics of "desolation-*cum*-austerity" and its ultimate failure. The disparity here looks forward to Ni Zan's sparse landscape as the ultimate expression of Ouyang Xiu's ideal. Precisely because it is the odd piece out in the extended process of an aesthetic ideal in search of its pictorial model, the painting carries an enormous load of historicity. Precisely because its iconography is odd and ephemeral, the composition captures and encapsulates the peculiar contours of the cultural dynamics in the mid-eleventh century.[95] So much hangs on this single scroll that the case confirms the hypothesis implicit in Meyer Schapiro's study of the sculptures of Souillac, formulated succinctly by Thomas Crow: "the most productive cases in art-historical inquiry will involve objects that already exist as disruptive exceptions against a field of related works of art that surround them."[96] Many cases—from the Ruthwell Cross to Édouard Manet's *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*—have borne this out. *A Solitary Monastery amid the Clearing Peaks* qualifies as the eleventh-century Chinese example to bear similar weights.

Eugene Y. Wang is Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Professor of Asian Art at Harvard University. His book Shaping the Lotus Sutra: Buddhist Visual Culture in Medieval China *(Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004) recently received the Academic Achievement Award from Japan. He is also a recipient of the Ryskamp and Guggenheim Fellowships [Department of History of Art and Architecture, Harvard University, 485 Broadway, Cambridge, Mass. 02138, eywang@fas.harvard.edu].*

Notes

1. The senses of the term itself evolved over time. My definition pertains largely to the initial sense proposed by Ouyang Xiu around the mid-eleventh century. By the early twelfth century, the term could be reduced to the sense of an evocative pictorialization of a poetic line. Wai-kam Ho gave the following gloss of the term in the early-twelfth-century context: "One of the main concerns constantly emphasized by the Sung Academy was the ingenious and proper treatment of the *hua-i*, or idea of a picture. The sought-after objective was not so much the reality of life but the poetry of life. . . . In other words, a picture was evaluated not merely by its quality of 'form-likeness,' which is basic, but more importantly by its quality of 'picture-likeness,' which was on a supposedly higher level—on a par with literature." Wai-kam Ho, "Aspects of Chinese Painting from 1100 to 1350," in *Eight Dynasties of Chinese Painting: The Collections of the Nelson Gallery–Atkins Museum, Kansas City, and the Cleveland Museum of Art* (Cleveland: Cleveland Museum of Art, 1980), xxix. See also idem, "The Literary Concepts of 'Picture-like' (*Ju-hua*) and 'Picture Idea' (*Hua-i*) in the Relationship between Poetry and Painting," in *Words and Images: Chinese Poetry, Calligraphy, and Painting*, ed. Alfreda Murck and Wen C. Fong (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1991), 359–404.
2. The Nelson-Atkins scroll recapitulates and complicates the monumental landscape form of Fan Kuan's (active ca. 990–1030) *Travelers among Streams and Mountains*; it also anticipates formal aspects—the atmospheric effects and the spatial recession through the proportional near/far distinctiveness—of Guo Xi's *Early Spring* (1072). This suggests a date between Fan Kuan and Guo Xi, somewhere around the mid-eleventh century. I concur therefore with Wen Fong, who dates it to about 1050. See Wen Fong et al., *Images of the Mind* (Princeton: Art Museum and Princeton University Press, 1984), 43–45.
3. For a comprehensive review of the various positions in dating the scroll, see Peter C. Sturman, "The Donkey Rider as Icon: Li Cheng and Early Chinese Landscape Painting," *Artibus Asiae* 55, nos. 1–2 (1995): 43–97, esp. 94–95.
4. The analogue finds its support in an oft-quoted passage in the twelfth-century text *Linquan gaozhi* by Guo Si. See *Zhongguo shuhua quanshu*, ed. Lu Fusheng et al. (Shanghai: Shanghai shuhua chubanshe, 1993), vol. 1, 498. For an English translation, see Susan Bush and Hsio-yen Shih, comps. and eds., *Early Chinese Texts on Painting* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985), 153. We need to take the analogy with caution, though. It is to be noted that Northern Song landscape painters worked largely outside the parameters of the imperial court before Guo Xi's arrival in Shenzong's court. The appropriation of the landscape form as analogue of imperial state ideology did not quite occur until the 1070s and after. The analogy drawn in the *Linquan gaozhi* by Guo Si was a relatively late construct. See Heping Liu's forthcoming work on the relation between Song landscape and the state. I owe this point to discussion with Liu.
5. The methodological roots of this method can be traced to, among others, Pierre Macherey, *A Theory of Literary Production*, trans. Geoffrey Wall (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978); and T. J. Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and His Followers* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), esp. his chapter on Édouard Manet's *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*, 205–58.
6. For studies of this genre, see Richard Barnhart, *Wintry Forests, Old Trees: Some Landscape Themes in Chinese Painting* (New York: China Institute in America, 1972); and Charles Hartman, "Literary and Visual Interactions in Lo Chih-ch'uan's 'Crows in Old Trees,'" *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 28 (1993): 129–67, esp. 140–45.
7. As observed by Wang Pizhi (advanced degree 1064–67): "The [painting of] Level Distance and Cold Forest created by [Li] Cheng is un-

precedented." Wang Pizhi, *Shengshui yantan lu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981), 90.

8. A similar Northern Song composition is the *Cold Forest* in the Liaoning Museum.

9. Su Shi, "Guo Xi Qiushan pingyuan ershou," in *Su Shi quanji* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 2000), 355, trans. follows Alfreda Murck, *Poetry and Painting in Song China: The Subtle Art of Dissent* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center and Harvard University Press, 2000), 124.

10. For a discussion of this painting, see Suzuki Kei, *Zhongguo huihua shi*, trans. Wei Meiyue (Taipei: Guoli gugong bowuyuan, 1987), vol. 1, 164–67; and Sturman, "The Donkey Rider as Icon," 85–88.

11. Ouyang Xiu, "Jianhua," in *Ouyang Xiu quanji* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2001), vol. 5, 1976.

12. One may object by pointing to the formal demand made by the hanging scroll that favors the verticality of the soaring peaks. Northern Song painters would in fact ostensibly resist this demand and insist on putting the Level Distance in the background to harmonize with the Cold Forest in the foreground. See, for instance, *Ancient Trees and Distant Mountains* (*Gumu yaoshan tu*) in the Shanghai Museum, reproduced in *Wudai Bei Song huaji* (Tianjin: Tianjin renmin meishu chubanshe, 1998), pl. 118; and *Cold Forest*, 60¼ by 38⅝ in. (153 by 98 cm), in the Palace Museum, Taipei, in ibid., pl. 120.

13. For a comprehensive study of the motif, see Sturman, "The Donkey Rider as Icon."

14. The Ba Bridge is located east of modern Xi'an. The association of the bridge with "winds and snow" may have arisen from the lore that the banks along the Ba River used to be lined with willow trees whose catkins were perceived figuratively as snowflakes.

15. Zheng Qi, a late Tang official, is said to have observed that "poetic thought lodges on the back of the donkey in the winds and snow of the Ba Bridge." Dong You (fl. 1111–18), *Guangchuan huaba*, in *Zhongguo shuhua quanshu*, ed. Lu Fusheng et al., 14 vols. (Shanghai: Shanghai shuhua chubanshe, 1993), vol. 1, 822 (hereafter *ZSQ*).

16. The earliest work in this line is Yang Xiong (53 BCE–18 CE), "Rhapsody on Repelling Poverty." Han Yu's "Seeing Off Poverty" marks a notable reversal of the attitude. For discussion of the development of this literary theme, see Qian Zhongshu, *Guanzhui bian* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1979), vol. 3, 961–64.

17. Han praised two high-ranking officials, Pei and Yang, for their willingness to participate in the art of the deprived. See Han Yu, "Jing Tan changhe shi xu," in *Quan Tang wen*, ed. Dong Gao et al. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983), *juan* 556, 5629b–5630a.

18. In mourning Mei Yaochen (1002–1060), Wang Anshi (1021–1086) observes that "poets are full of sorrows of poverty." Wang Anshi, "Ku Mei Sheng Yu," in *Quan Song shi*, ed. Fu Xuancong et al. (Beijing: Beijing University Press, 1991), *juan* 546, 6539.

19. Zhang Lei (1052–1112), "Song Qin Guan cong Shu Hangzhou weixue xu," in *Keshan ji*, in *Yingyin Wenyuange Siku quanshu* (Taipei: Taiwan Shangwu yinshuguan, 1983–86), 8.9 (hereafter *YWSQ* ed.), *juan* 40, 11.

20. Wenying (eleventh century), *Xiangshan yelu*, ed. Zheng Shigang and Yang Liyang (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984), 8.

21. Ouyang Xiu, "Mei Shenyu shiji xu," in *Ouyang Xiu quanji*, vol. 2, 612.

22. Meng Jiao and Jia Dao, quoted in Ouyang Xiu, "Shihua," in *Ouyang Xiu quanji*, vol. 5, 1952, emphasis added.

23. See Xiao Chi, *Fofa yu shijing* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2005), 207–33.

24. Ouyang Xiu, "Jianhua," in *Ouyang Xiu quanji*, vol. 5, 1976. Bush and Shih, *Early Chinese Texts*, 230, translate the phrase *xiaotiao danbo* as "loneliness and tranquility."

25. Murck, *Poetry and Painting in Song China*, 291 n. 1, glosses the character *xiao* thus: "The character *xiao* . . . has such meanings as 'reverent,' 'mournful,' 'the soughing of wind,' 'gloomy.' In combination with the word *sao*, as used by the tenth-century poet Luo Yin, it means 'lonely,' 'cold,' and 'desolate.'"

26. Ouyang Xiu, "Qiusheng fu," in *Ouyang Xiu quanji*, vol. 2, 256, trans. based on Ronald C. Egan, *The Literary Works of Ou-yang Hsiu (1007–72)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 128, with modifications. Egan translates *xiaotiao* as "withered and lonely" and *jiliao* as "desolate." As the two phrases are largely interchangeable, I have made the switch in my rendition to be consistent with my translation of *xiaotiao* as "desolate." Also, I choose to translate *candan* as "dismal and pale" instead of adopting Egan's rendition of "sad and pale."

27. Ouyang Xiu, "Ti Xue Gongqi hua," in *Ouyang Xiu quanji*, vol. 3, 1058. Our present-day reading of Ouyang Xiu as one of the first detractors of verisimilitude misses a crucial point Ouyang makes in this passage, which contains what is now understood as his dismissal of "form-likeness." Ouyang is not arguing with form-likeness; he is simply asserting the primacy of charging forms with evocative moods and conceptual overtones, regardless of the degree of verisimilitude.

28. Su Che, "Shu Kuo Xi hengjuan," in *Quan Song shi*, ed. Fu Xuancong (Beijing: Beijing University Press, 1991), *juan* 863, 10031.

29. Deng Chun, *Hua ji*, in *ZSQ*, vol. 2, 716. Alexander Soper, "Hsiang-Kuo-Ssu: An Imperial Temple of Northern Song," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 68, no. 1 (1948): 33, translates the phrase as "a suggestion of somber and dismal shapes." Murck, *Poetry and Painting in Song China*, 229, translates the line as "merely had concealing atmosphere and a dispirited quality."

30. Mi Fu, *Huashi*, in *ZSQ*, vol. 1, 979b. Viewing a painting of an autumn scene, Su Shi, *Su Shi quanji*, 351, also compared "scattered woods" to the ways of "dragons and snakes."

31. Ouyang himself may not have subscribed to this notion, which is a problem to be discussed below.

32. Su Che, "Shu Kuo Xi hengjuan," *juan* 863, 10031.

33. This characterization comes from Mi Fu, who asserts that the trees in an authentic Li Cheng painting do not show the "ways of dragons, snakes, ghosts, and spirits," often seen in landscape paintings by Li's followers. Since Mi claims to have seen only two authentic paintings by Li and the *Xuanhe huapu*, the twelfth-century imperial catalog, lists 159 works attached to the name of Li Cheng, this gives us a sense of the currency of this form in the eleventh century. See Mi Fu, *Huashi*, in *ZSQ*, vol. 1, 979; and *Xuanhe huapu*, in ibid., vol. 2, 92.

34. Lawrence Sickman and Marc F. Wilson, "A Solitary Monastery amid Clearing Peaks," in *Eight Dynasties of Chinese Painting* (Cleveland: Cleveland Museum of Art; Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), 15.

35. Ouyang Xiu, "Jian hua," in *Ouyang Xiu quanji*, vol. 5, 1976, trans. based on Bush and Shih, *Early Chinese Texts*, 231, with modifications.

36. Guo characterizes a good architectural drawing as follows: "In painting buildings among trees, one's calculations should be faultless, while the drawing [should be carried out with] a brush of even strength. Perspective distance will penetrate the space, with a hundred [lines] converging on a single point. . . . In painting towers and pavilions, one usually shows all four corners, with the bracketing ranged in order; front and rear are clearly distinguished without error in the marking-lines." Guo Ruoxu, *Tuhua jianwen zhi* (1074), in *ZSQ*, vol. 1, 467b; see also Alexander Soper, trans., *Kuo Jo-Hsü's Experiences in Painting: An Eleventh Century History of Chinese Painting* (Washington, D.C.: American Council of Learned Societies, 1951), 12.

37. *Xuanhe huapu*, in *ZSQ*, vol. 2, 92a.

38. Han Yu, "Song Meng Dongye xu," in *Quan Tang wen*, *juan* 555, 5612–13, trans. Charles Hartman, *Han Yü and the T'ang Search for Unity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 230–32.

39. Su Shi, "Guo Xi Qiushan pingyuan ershou," 355, trans. following Murck, *Poetry and Painting in Song China*, 124.

40. This line may explain the scholar looking from the country hamlet awaiting the newly arrived donkey rider in *A Solitary Monastery*.

41. Song Yu, "Jiubian," in *Chuci buzhu*, ed. Hong Xingzu (1090–1155) (Taipei: Tiangong shuju, 1989), 182, trans. David Hawkes, *Ch'u Tz'u: The Songs of the South* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1959), 92–93, emphasis added. This is reinforced and mediated by Du Fu's reiteration, quoting Song Yu, "'Decay and decline': deep knowledge have I of Song Yu's grief." Du Fu, "Yonghuai guji," trans. Murck, *Poetry and Painting in Song China*, 15.

42. Ouyang Xiu, "Qiusheng fu," in *Ouyang Xiu quanji*, vol. 2, 256. For translations, see Arthur Waley, *Translations from the Chinese* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1941), 317–18; A. C. Graham, in *Anthology of Chinese Literature from Early Times to the Fourteenth Century*, ed. Cyril Birch (New York: Grove Press, 1965), 368–69; and Egan, *Literary Works of Ou-yang Hsui*, 127–29.

43. Ouyang Xiu, "Song Yangzhi xu," in *Ouyang Xiu quanji*, vol. 2, 629, trans. Ronald Egan, "The Controversy over Music and 'Sadness' and Changing Conceptions of the Qin in Middle Period China," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 57, no. 1 (June 1997): 63.

44. Huang Tingjian, "Hu Zongyuan shiji xu," in *Shangu ji*, *YWSQ* ed., *juan* 16, 19.

45. Deng Chun, *Hua ji* (1167), in *ZSQ*, vol. 2, 716b. See also Murck, *Poetry and Painting in Song China*, 229.

46. Mi Fu, *Huashi*, in *ZSQ*, vol. 1, 979b.

47. A tableau of the Great Subjugation of Mara was painted by Gao Wenjin on the west wall of the Buddha Hall of the Xiangguo Monastery in the Northern Song capital. Guo Ruoxu, *Tuhua jianwen zhi*, in *ZSQ*, vol. 1, 479b. In light of Hay's identification of the Buddhist monastery in *A Solitary Monastery* as possibly alluding to Kaibao Monastery, it is interesting to note that Gao Wenjin also painted Buddhist tableaux on the pagoda wall in the Kaibao Monastery, ibid., vol. 1, 479b. That the post-

Tang tableaux of the Subjugation of Mara still retain the Tang composition can be deduced from the relief carving of the theme on a panel beneath the Sumeru cornice of the stone pagoda in Qixia Monastery in Nanjing, the capital of the Southern Tang in the tenth century. It is worth noting that a group of renowned Southern Tang figure painters, including Wang Qihan, Zhou Wenju, and others came to the Northern Song capital following the captivity of Li Yu, the Southern Tang ruler.

48. The painting, now in the Tokyo National Museum, is probably a Yuan dynasty (1279–1368) copy of Shike's painting. See Shūjirō Shimada, "Concerning the I-P'in Style of Painting," pt. 1, trans. James Cahill, *Oriental Art* 7, no. 2 (1961): 132.

49. Deng Chun, *Hua ji*, in *ZSQ*, vol. 2, 706a.

50. Su Shi, "Guo Xi Qiushan pingyuan ershou," trans. following Murck, *Poetry and Painting in Song China*, 124.

51. Mi Fu, *Huashi*, in *ZSQ*, vol. 1, 983.

52. Li Ziyi, "Ciyun Dongpo suohua Guo Gongpu jiabi zhumu guaishi shi," in *Su Shi buzhu*, *YWSQ* ed., *juan* 23, 27.

53. Ouyang Xiu, "Mingchan Fu," in *Ouyang Xiu quanji*, vol. 2, 254–55, trans. based on Egan, *Literary Works of Ou-yang Hsui*, 125–27, with modifications.

54. Ouyang Xiu, *Ouyang Xiu quanji*, vol. 2, 256–57, trans. Egan, *Literary Works of Ou-yang Hsui*, 127–29.

55. *Xuanhe huapu*, in *ZSQ*, vol. 2, 98.

56. His remonstration to the throne on the issues of landscaping in connection with the observance of "imperial memorial days," made in 1131, is on the record. See Xu Song, *Songhuiyao jigao* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1957), 39–40.

57. Wen Fong, *Images of the Mind*, 43–45, is of the opinion that the painting dates from about 1050. Marc Wilson, in Suzuki, *Zhongguo huihua shi*, vol. 3, 177, also voiced a similar opinion. I concur with the dating.

58. *Xuanhe huapu*, in *ZSQ*, vol. 2, 83. The category is also known as *jiehua*. For studies of the genre, see Robert Maeda, "Chieh-Hua: Ruled-Line Painting in China," *Ars Orientalis* 10 (1975): 123–41; and Heping Liu, "'The Water Mill' and Northern Song Imperial Patronage of Art, Commerce, and Science," *Art Bulletin* 84 (December 2002): 566–95.

59. *Xuanhe huapu*, in *ZSQ*, vol. 2, 90b–99b.

60. They can also be called *lanruo tu*, 蘭若圖 (such as those painted by Juran; see *Xuanhe huapu*, in *ZSQ*, vol. 2, 99a), or *fancha tu*, 梵剎圖 (as those by Fan Tan, in ibid., vol. 2, 96b), or simply *sengshe tu*, 僧舍圖 (in ibid., vol. 2, 93b). The Chinese character *si* has sometimes been translated as "temple." I translate it as "monastery."

61. Besides *A Solitary Monastery amid Clearing Peaks* at the Nelson-Atkins Museum, these include (1) *Mountain Dwelling* (*Shanju tu*), traditionally attributed to Juran, in a private collection in Osaka; (2) *Solitary Monastery in Autumn Hills* (*Qiushan xiaosi tu*), in Fujii Yurinkan, Kyoto; (3) *Woods and Distant Hills* (*Maolin yuanxiu tu*) in the Liaoning Museum; (4) *Early Travel in Snowy Mountains* (*Xuelu zhaoxing tu*) in the Shanghai Museum; (5) *Streams and Mountains* (*Xishan tu*) in the Shanghai Museum; and (6) *Autumn Colors of Rivers and Mountains* (*Xishan qiuse tu*) in the National Palace Museum, Taipei.

62. *Xuanhe huapu* lists twenty-five or so paintings featuring Buddhist monasteries, eleven of them titled "painting of solitary monastery [in mountains]" (*xiaosi tu*); the rest have various titles such as "painting of *aranya*" (*lanruotu*), or "painting of Buddhist monastery" (*fochatu/fanchatu*). See *ZSQ*, vol. 2, 90–99. The Chinese character *cha* is derived from the Sanskrit *laksatā* (banner post).

63. Such is the case with *Woods and Distant Hills*, a Northern Song painting in the tradition of Li Cheng, now in the Liaoning Museum. See *Zhongguo huihua quanji* (Beijing: Wenwu, 1997), vol. 2, pl. 53. Another example is *Streams and Mountains* in the tradition of Yan Wengui (967–1044) in the Shanghai Museum.

64. This is demonstrated by *Autumn Colors of Rivers and Mountains* by Huizong, now in the National Palace Museum, Taipei.

65. The scroll, traditionally attributed to Fan Kuan, appears to be a work by one of Fan Kuan's followers. See Guo Ruoxu, *Tuhua jianwen zhi*, in *ZSQ*, vol. 1, 482b; and Deng Chun, *Huaji*, ibid., vol. 2, 717a.

66. The pagoda image is captured in *West Lake*, a Southern Song scroll now in the Shanghai Museum. For a reproduction, see Zhejiang Provincial Archaeology Institute, *Leifeng yizhen* (Beijing: Wenwu, 2002), 18. Even though the Leifeng Pogoda is a brick structure, it had timber eaves and railings. For the construction dates of the Leifeng Pagoda, see ibid., 14–17.

67. See Chen Mingda, *Yingxian muta* (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1980); and Nancy Steinhardt, *Liao Architecture* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997), 103–21.

68. *Fayun tongsai zhi*, in *Taishō shinshu Daizōkyō*, ed. Takakusu Junirō and Watanabe Kaigyoku, 100 vols. (Tokyo: Taishō Issakyō Kankōkai, 1924–32), 49:400b (hereafter referred to as *T*).

69. Li Tao (1115–1184), *Xu zhizhi tongjian changbian* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1979), *juan* 30, 686.

70. *Fayun tongsai zhi*, in *T*49:404c.

71. Li Tao, *Xu zhizhi tongjian changbian*, *juan* 30, 686; and Qian Yueyou, *Xianchun Ling'an zhi* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1990), *juan* 89, 4181.

72. *Song shi* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1977), *juan* 63, 1378; *Fayun tongsai zhi*, in *T*49:410b; and Wang Pizhi, *Shengshui yantan lu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981), 5.

73. For Yu Jing's remonstration, see *Song shi*, *juan* 320, 10408; and Zhao Ruyu, ed., *Song mingchen zouyi*, *YWSQ* ed., *juan* 84, 3. For Cai Xiang's remonstration, see *Song shi*, 320.10398; and *Song mingchen zouyi*, *juan* 128, 8–9. For Ouyang Xiu's remonstration, see *Ouyang Xiu quanji*, vol. 4, 1639–40.

74. Li Lian, *Bianjing yiji zhi* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1999), *juan* 10, 155.

75. Liu Chunying, *Bei Song dongjingcheng yanjiu* (Beijing: Kexue chubanshe, 2004), 238. Another source gives a different measurement: 168½ feet (55.6 meters) in height. *Zhongguo lidai yishu jianzhu yishu bian* (Beijing: Zhongguo jianzhu gongye chubanshe, 1994), 343, no. 248.

76. The Gusu Tower was built by Fuchai (fifth century BCE) of the ancient state of Wu (present-day Suzhou area) to please the beauty Xi Shi, whom he had acquired from the neighboring state of Yue. The Efang Palace was the architectural complex built by the First Emperor of Qin. For later generations, both sites are charged with historical meaning.

77. *Xuanhe huapu*, in *ZSQ*, vol. 2, 83.

78. Ouyang Xiu, "Guitian lu," in *Ouyang Xiu quanji*, vol. 5, 1909.

79. Song Jijiao, comp., *Dongjing zhilüe* (Kaifeng: Henan University Press, 1999), 532.

80. See Ji Yun et al., "*Pengcheng ji* tiyao," in *Pengcheng ji*, *YWSQ* ed., 1. For biographies of Liu Chang and Liu Bin, see Zang Lihe, ed., *Zhongguo renmin dacidian* (Taipei: Taiwan Shangwu yinshuguan, 1966), 1468d, 1449b.

81. *T*9:26a. For the significance of the Phantom City in medieval Chinese imagination, see Eugene Y. Wang, *Shaping the Lotus Sutra: Buddhist Visual Culture in Medieval China* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005), 112–16, 355–57.

82. Liu Bin, *Pengcheng ji*, *YWSQ* ed., 13.3, 16.25.

83. Liu Chang, *Gongshi ji*, *YWSQ* ed., 54.12, emphasis added.

84. *Song shi*, *juan* 155, 3607.

85. Charles Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985), 296.

86. *Song shi*, *juan* 63, 1379; and Li Tao, *Xu zhizhi tongjian changbian* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1979), *juan* 351, 8408. A nephew of a survivor of the fire also provided an account; see Cai Tao, *Tieweishan congtan* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983), 44.

87. In a study of the eastern capital city of the Northern Song, Liu Chunying, *Bei Song dongjingcheng yanjiu*, 237, states that "the Northern Song government had its civil service examination office of the Ministry of Rites in [Kaibao] Monastery, where candidates from the entire country were tested." He did not give sources for his assertion.

88. *Xuanhe huapu*, in *ZSQ*, vol. 2, 92a.

89. Ouyang Xiu, *Guitian lu*, in *Ouyang Xiu quanji*, vol. 5, 1929.

90. For a careful study of Li Cheng's life, see Wai-kam Ho, "Li Cheng lüezhuan," *Gugong jikan* 5, no. 3 (Spring 1971): 33–62.

91. Notable examples include the Pavilion of Bounty and Joy (Fengle ting), the Pavilion of the Drunkard Old Man (Zuiweng ting), and the Pavilion on Mount Xian, made famous through its description by Ouyang Xiu and his contemporaries. Ouyang, "Fengle ting ji," in *Ouyang Xiu quanji*, vol. 2, 575–76, "Zuiweng ting ji," in ibid., 576–77, and "Xianshan ting ji," in ibid., 588–89.

92. Ouyang Xiu, "Xianshan ting ji" (An Account of the Pavilion on Mount Xian) (1070), in *Ouyang Xiu quanji*, vol. 2, 589, trans. Stephen Owen, *An Anthology of Chinese Literature: Beginnings to 1911* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1996), 630.

93. Deng Chun, *Hua ji*, in *ZSQ*, vol. 2, 704.

94. Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy: A Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 34.

95. If the painting makes so much sense when examined against the mid-eleventh-century context, does this not constitute, in and of itself, an argument for its dating to the period? Certain work can make sense only in the context of a certain period. This opens up a different can of worms: Can contextual study amount to a source of dating?

96. Thomas Crow, *The Intelligence of Art* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 11.