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Beyond Representation

CHINESE PAINTING AND
CALLIGRAPHY 8TH-14TH CENTURY

WEN C. FONG

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2 Of Nature and Art: Monumental Landscape



Writing about landscape painting in the West, Kenneth Clark noted that "in times when the human spirit seems to have burned most brightly the painting of landscape for its own sake did not exist and was unthinkable." This observation seems also to be borne out in the East. The development of Chinese landscape painting, "paintings of mountains and rivers" (*shan-shui-hua*), occurred during the Wei, Tsin, and Six Dynasties eras (220–589) and the Five Dynasties period (907–60), China's two long intervals of political disunity, when poets and artists, disenchanted with the world of human affairs, turned away to seek a realm of spiritual enlightenment.

In the West, the human spirit has always shone most brilliantly in the expression of the creative will and in the pursuit of individualism; in the East, the human will is subsumed under a larger principle, one that is expressed through a profound belief in communion with nature, a cosmic vision of man's harmonious existence in a vast but orderly universe. The unique expression of this vision is found in the monumental landscape painting of the early Northern Sung (960–1127), whose development coincided with that of Neo-Confucianism, the resurgence of the ancient moral philosophy, at a time of vigorous idealism among the most creative class in society, the newly risen scholar-officials.

Bounded by mountain ranges and traversed by two great rivers, the Yellow and the Yangtze, China's natural landscape has played an important role in the shaping of the Chinese mind and character. The sparsely inhabited mountains are both a reminder of a simpler past, of truth unquestioned and nature unspoiled, and a spiritual refuge, where moral values can be cultivated and harmony with nature restored. From very early times the Chinese, unlike Western Europeans, who considered untamed nature inimical to human society, imagined the mountains an earthly paradise, the abode of the immortals. Thus did the early fifth-century poet T'ao Ch'ien envision, in his famous fable of the Peach Blossom Spring, the blossom-covered mountain valley as an ancient utopia, free of warfare and social turmoil.¹ After the breakup of the Han Empire, during the fourth and fifth centuries, the influence of Taoism and Buddhism led artists to turn to nature in their desire to express themselves in a spiritual domain. Several centuries later, in the wake of the devastation of the T'ang capital, Ch'ang-an, by the An Lu-shan rebellion, the poet Tu Fu (712–770) sounded his immortal lament,

Attributed to Ch'ü Ting (active
ca. 1023–ca. 1050). Detail from
Summer Mountains (pl. 10)

The country is shattered,
But the mountains and the rivers remain!¹

Indeed, throughout Chinese history, in times of both war and peace, landscapes of "rivers and mountains" (*chiang-shan*) have nurtured and reinvigorated the Chinese spirit.

Landscape painting first developed as illustration for narratives and poetry. Paintings of trees and rocks became an independent genre during the late T'ang period, in the eighth and ninth centuries. During the tumultuous Five Dynasties era, in the early tenth century, recluse scholars fleeing to the mountains saw the tall pine tree as an image of the virtuous man in the wilderness. They began to paint a symbolic landscape, with the great pine at the center of a moral universe. Then, in the early Northern Sung dynasty, the mordant, bleak spirit of the recluse painter, first expressed in the gnarled pine trees, was transformed and projected by professional court painters into a heroic, epic landscape style. This early Northern Sung vision of eternity, a timeless, archetypal landscape, lasted about one hundred years, from the middle of the tenth through the middle of the eleventh century.

Narrative and Poetic Illustration

Landscape elements first appeared as settings for narrative and symbolic representation. Archaic Chinese representations of mountains and trees resembled their ideographic counterparts: *shan* ("mountain") 山 comprises three triangles, a "host" peak flanked by two "guests," and *mu* ("tree") 木 is described by forked branches and anchoring roots. The first important compositional device was that of overlapping triangles, which created the impression of diagonal spatial recession. In a late Han tile that shows hunters shooting geese at a lakeside (fig. 25), the lake, delineated by three such overlapping tri-



Fig. 25. *Hunting and Harvesting Scenes*, Eastern Han dynasty, 25–220. Rubbing of a tomb tile from Ch'eng-tu, Szechwan Province, 15½ x 19 in. (39.5 x 48 cm). Ch'eng-tu Museum



Fig. 26. *Mahasattva Jataka*, Northern Chou dynasty, mid-6th century. Wall painting from Cave 428, Tun-huang, Kansu Province

angles, is filled with the silhouettes of lotus leaves and gliding fish, while the sky is lined with geese in flying formation. Rather than being grasped comprehensively, the picture unfolds sequentially: individual elements, each a discrete image, are read on an additive basis, one by one. Compositional unity is achieved through the consonance and repetition of similar forms and rhythms. By the mid-sixth century, as seen in the *Jataka* wall paintings at Tun-huang, Cave 428 (fig. 26), motifs of diagonally linked chains of overlapping mountains provide settings for individual scenes, creating "space cells."⁴ Although each element is still read individually, successive scenes now unfold horizontally, as in a handscroll, with tall trees serving as both space fillers and space dividers.

During the T'ang dynasty, narrative illustrations of city scenes and scholars' gardens developed as part illuminated map and part genre painting.⁵ Two important T'ang landscape compositions are paintings of gardens, the *Wang-ch'uan Villa* (fig. 27), after Wang Wei (699?–761?), and the *Ten Views from a Thatched Lodge* (fig. 28), after Lu Hung (active ca. 713–42), both pictures of a scholar's retreat.⁶ In transforming natural settings into artfully landscaped human environments, it was customary for property owners to name sites thematically—"Arbor Beside the Lake," for example, or "Bamboo Studio"—and to write poems about them. As pictorial representations, the paintings illustrate the poetic themes of the sites rather than the actual landscapes. The scholar-poet, musician, and painter Wang Wei acquired his property on the banks of the Wang River, in the southwestern outskirts of the T'ang capital, Ch'ang-an, in about the year 740. Wang developed the property and composed a set of twenty quatrains describing its various points of interest.⁷ Although the wall painting that illustrated the poems, which originally decorated the walls of a Buddhist temple, was destroyed (presumably during the Buddhist

persecutions of 845), the composition, known since the Northern Sung, has been preserved through the rubbing of a stone engraving cut in 1617.⁸ The scenes are here organized in a series of space cells formed by circular mountain motifs similar to those seen in the *Jataka* wall paintings at Tun-huang.

The recluse scholar Lu Hung, who declined a court appointment, built his retreat, the Thatched Lodge, on Mount Sung outside the eastern capital, Lo-yang. The surviving version of Lu Hung's *Ten Views of a Thatched Lodge*, known since the thirteenth century, presents individual scenes that alternate with descriptive prefaces and poems.⁹ Working within a rectangular format, the painter forms different compositional patterns by manipulating the placement of the trees and rocks: a hill encircled by a valley, a grotto surrounded by hills, a cottage surrounded by trees and rocks, a canopy of trees on flat ground or rising against a mountain slope, and so forth.

In neither Wang Wei's nor Lu Hung's composition does landscape as narrative or poetic illustration represent the "landscape of truth" as later conceived by the early Northern Sung painters. During the late Northern Sung and Southern Sung, however, when painters revived the illustration of poetry, they would return to the compositional patterns of Wang Wei and Lu Hung as their models.

Neo-Confucianism and Landscape Painting

It was Buddhism that first introduced, from India, a system of metaphysics and a coherent worldview more advanced than anything hitherto known in China. With Buddhist thought, scholars of the Six Dynasties period engaged in philosophical discussions of truth and reality, being and nonbeing, substantiality and nonsubstantiality.¹⁰ Beginning in the late T'ang and early Northern

Fig. 27. After Wang Wei (699?-761?). *Wang-ch'uan Villa*. Rubbing from a stone engraving dated 1617, 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 192 in. (30 x 487.5 cm). Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University



Fig. 28. After Lu Hung (active ca. 713–42). *Ten Views from a Thatched Lodge*. Detail from Scene 1, "Thatched Lodge." Handscroll in ten sections, ink on paper, 11 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 236 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (29.4 x 600 cm). National Palace Museum, Taipei



Sung, Neo-Confucian thinkers rebuilt Confucian ethics on Buddhist and Taoist metaphysics. A principal tenet of Neo-Confucian philosophy holds that the universe has a basis in morality. Because Neo-Confucian moral philosophy defines the human mind as engaged with the nature of being, the traditional focus of learning was self-cultivation. To the extent that the "mind" (*hsin*) reflects the perfect "principles" (*li*) of nature, man can achieve union with the ultimate "principles" of cosmic creativity only by realizing the innate moral mind within the self.

The late T'ang Neo-Confucian scholar Li Ao (died ca. 840), borrowing a phrase from the Confucian classic *The Great Learning*, described his approach to learning and self-cultivation as *ko-wu chih-chih*, "the investigation of things leading to the perfection of knowledge." The phrase, however, does not imply modern scientific method. Shao Yung (1011–1077), a leading eleventh-century thinker, defined objective learning as "observing things in terms of things" (*i-wu kuan-wu*). Shao proposed that things should be observed "with the mind" and "in light of their own principles," rather than with the eye, since only the mind can perceive underlying principles. Man's observation of the world should therefore reflect the principles of nature and remain unclouded by ego-centric human emotion (*ch'ing*)."

The unity of man and heaven (*t'ien-jen ho-i*), man as the co-creator rather than as merely a creature of the universe, is a key Neo-Confucian concept. In the words of the eleventh-century philosopher Chang Tsai,

By expanding one's mind, one is able to embody the things of the whole world. If things are not embodied, it is because the mind has excluded them. . . . As [the sage] views the world, there is in it no one thing that is not his own self.¹²

It is through embodied (*t'i*) thinking and reflection and the dynamic interchange between the observer and the thing observed that man is able to grasp the workings of the universe.

Paintings of trees and rocks as embodiments of nature's principles first appeared as an independent genre in T'ang painting. Rocks, as "kernels of energy" and "bones of the earth," isolated and immovable, symbolize potency, while trees, which are born of seeds but grow into gnarled, dragonlike forms, symbolize enduring life.¹³ The T'ang master Chang Ts'ao (active ca. 766–78) painted rocks and trees with unusually expressive brushwork, "using a blunt-tipped brush and sometimes rubbing with his fingers on the surface of the silk."¹⁴ The description of Chang's painting technique recalls that of the inspired "untrammelled class" (*i-p'in*) of painters, who are reputed to have practiced the somewhat unorthodox working method of flinging ink onto silk and spreading it on the surface by means of their hair or hands.¹⁵ In such a painting, it was not so much the composition of the work that was deemed important as the feeling of spontaneity and mystic oneness with nature. Chang described his own painting as

A reaching outward to imitate Creation,
And a turning inward to master the mind.¹⁶

This description can be said to sum up the philosophical approach of the Chinese landscape painter. Looking to nature he carefully studied the world around him, and looking to himself he sought his own response to nature. The interactive relationship between the two, as expressed by the term *wai-chung*, "outer/inner" or "exterior/interior," is circular and dynamic; as the artist sought to describe the external truth of the universe, he discovered at the same time an internal psychological truth.

After the fall of the T'ang, in the early tenth century, many scholars retreated to the mountains. Living in secluded hermitages or Buddhist temples, they attended to their spiritual needs, studying, painting, and thinking about nature and the universe. These scholars would become China's first great landscape masters. Ching Hao (ca. 870–ca. 930), a Neo-Confucian scholar who went to live in Mount T'ai-hang, in central Hopei Province, was the first to formulate a coherent theory of Chinese landscape painting. In his essay "Notes on Brush Method," Ching makes a clear distinction between physical likeness (*ssu*) and truth (*chen*):

[A picture that attains] likeness achieves the physical form but leaves out the life breath of the subject, while in [a picture that attains] truth the life breath and inner qualities of the subject are fully present.¹⁷

For Ching, the painter of truth is a "sage" capable of "divining the emblems of objects and grasping their essence" (*tu-wu-hsiang erh ch'ü-ch'i-chen*).¹⁸ The word "emblem," or *hsiang*, comes from the ancient divination classic the *Book of Changes*, a manual by which the future is predicted by the manipulation of sixty-four hexagrams (diagrams composed of six broken or unbroken lines).¹⁹

The hexagrams, as "emblems," are archetypes of physical forms (*hsing*).²⁰ By "divining emblems," Ching referred to the representation of true, or archetypal forms, rather than merely the physical qualities of objects.

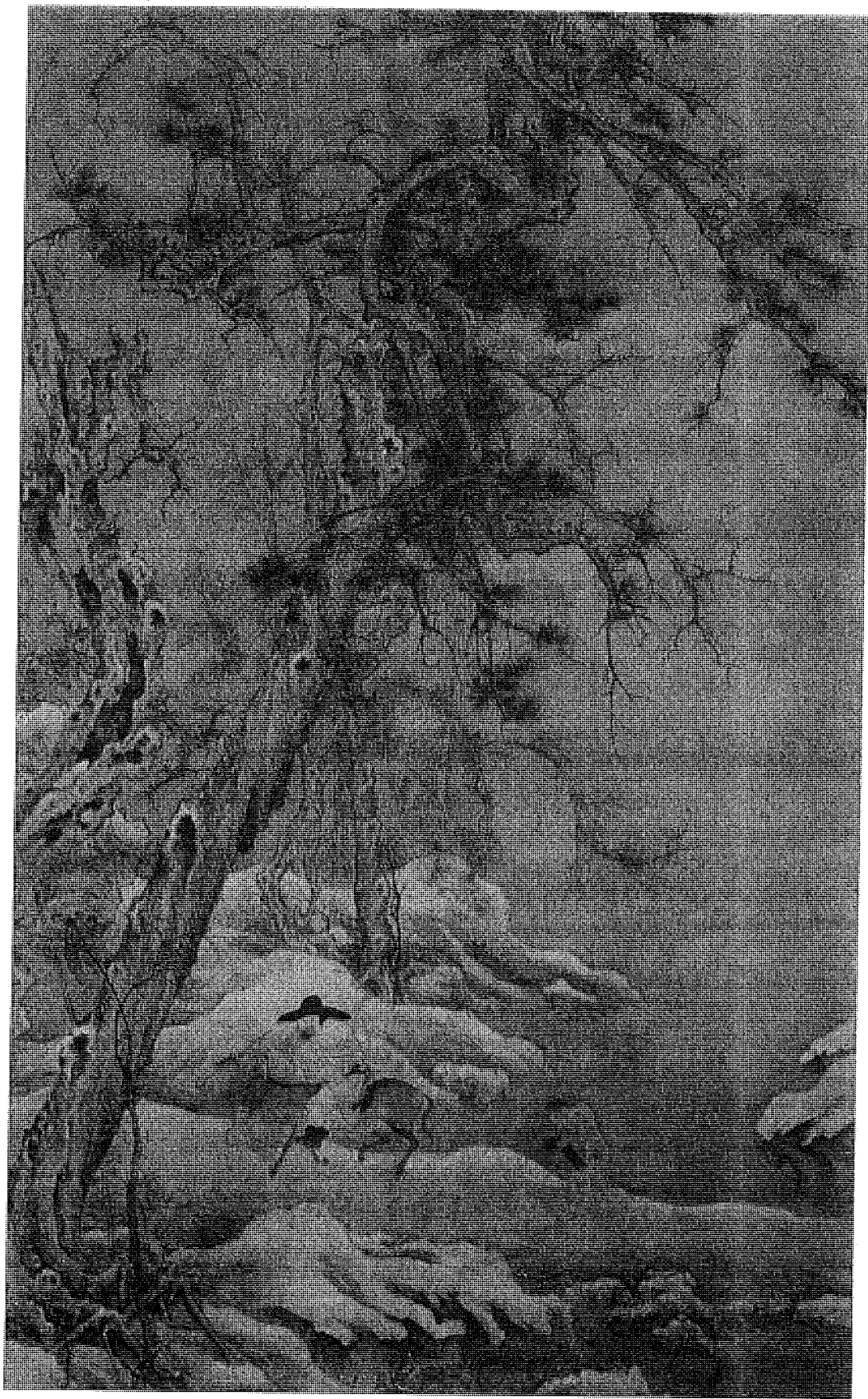
In viewing landscape painting as a magical diagram of cosmic truth, Ching Hao nevertheless followed a rational approach of "investigation . . . leading to the perfection of knowledge":

One must understand the archetype, the emblem of each thing. When a tree grows, it follows its own received nature. . . . The pine tree, [for example,] from its beginnings, may bend as it grows, but will never appear crooked. Sometimes it is dense with foliage, sometimes sparse, neither blue nor green. As a sapling it stands upright, its budding heart already harboring noble ambitions. Once it has grown taller than all the other trees, even when its lower branches bow down to the earth, they never touch the common ground. Its layered branches spreading in the forest, it has the air of a dignified and virtuous gentleman.²¹

"The emblems of the mountains and the rivers," continues Ching, "are mutually generative, their breath forces causing each other to grow."²² In landscape painting, Ching sees generating and regenerating forms and forces, endlessly transformed in the changing light and mists of the seasons. Through the painter's rigorous method of selection and elimination, these are re-combined and re-presented, each time in a complete and newly organized harmony. "Only when you are able to forget about the brush and ink will you achieve true landscape."²³

By perceiving in the pine tree the human characteristics of a virtuous gentleman, the recluse scholar-painters believed they had discovered in nature the moral order that had been lost in the human world. The first of the early Northern Sung landscape masters, Li Ch'eng (919-967), who was born in Ch'ing-chou, Shantung Province, was a descendant of the T'ang imperial family. An aristocrat fallen on hard times, Li is said to have painted desolate scenes of wintry forests because "men of virtue are now found only in the wilderness."²⁴ Although no original work by Li has survived, we know that his influence was extensive. *Travelers in a Wintry Forest* (pl. 9) is a large early twelfth-century hanging scroll after a composition by Li that is mentioned by the eleventh-century scholar-artist Mi Fu in his *History of Painting*.²⁵

As an illustration of the Confucian scholar's renunciation of worldly affairs, *Travelers in a Wintry Forest* recalls the episode in the life of the Buddha, Prince Siddhartha, when, in his Great Going Forth in search of enlightenment, he entered a deep forest. In the painting, the scholar on a donkey and his two servant companions on foot are shown huddling against the cold as they make their way through the pine forest along a snow-covered riverbank. In both their configuration and their social relationship to one another, the wanderers are echoed in the frozen forest, in which a giant pine tree, symbol of the virtuous gentleman, is surrounded by more "lowly" vegetation—small trees, shrubs, and bamboos.²⁶ The rhythmic forms of the trees and the



Overleaf
pl. 9a. Detail, pl. 9

cloudlike snow-covered boulders reflect and re-create the bearing and gestures of the figures in their fluttering draperies. Not in accord with the term "landscape"—a painting "of mountains and rivers"—the true subject of Li's painting is the great pine. Drawn with the meticulous and caring detail of a great portrait, the tree symbolizes the Neo-Confucian concept of *chün-tzu*, the uncommon, exceptional gentleman (pl. 9a). The shape of the great pine is unusual and complex; its needles remain constant, enduring the harshest of winter's onslaught. Like a great man, the tree, in Ching Hao's words, "may bend [from suffering] as it grows, but will never appear crooked." In its youth, "its budding heart [harbors] noble ambitions." As it ages, it grows in stature, climbing higher than all other trees. Finally, it is individual and superior, for "even when its lower branches bow down to the earth, they never touch the common ground." Indeed, for the Neo-Confucianist, the recluse scholar was the true sovereign of the moral earth, as the great pine was the lord of the lofty mountains.

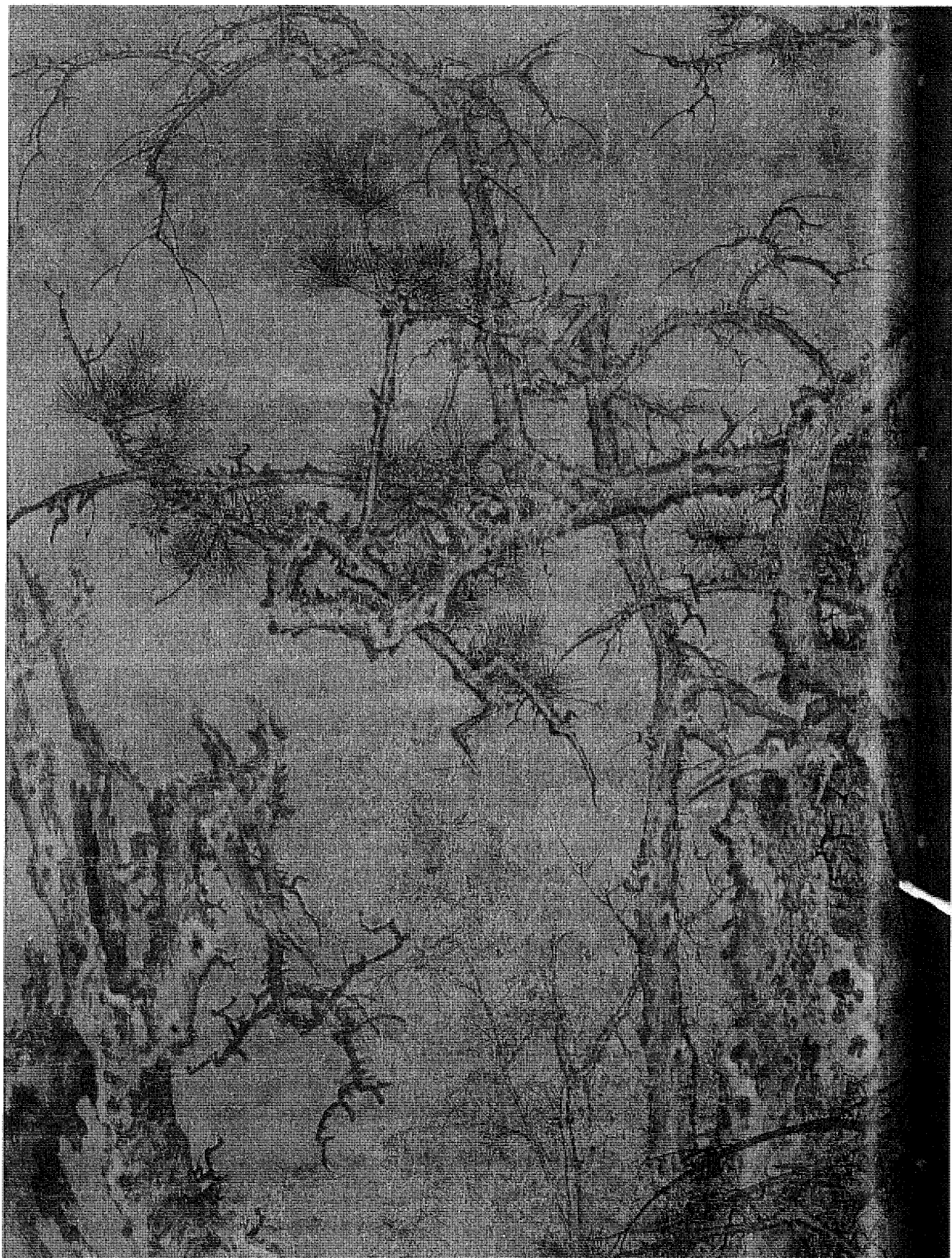
In the composition after Li Ch'eng, the beautifully wrought vegetation around the central pine ranges from early sprouting brush to lush trees in full maturity to a shattered old tree trunk, composing a microcosm of the natural cycle of growth and decay, while the great pine standing tall symbolizes constancy and eternal truth. Mi Fu compared the "drawn but elegant" face of the scholar (pl. 9b)—the painter's self-portrait—with that of the T'ang poet Meng Hao-jan (689–740), a victim of earlier political vicissitudes. This reference to past suffering injects a note of poignancy into the picture, though the artist's own unyielding will is reflected by the stoic silence of the wintry forest.

Although the highly realistic depiction of the tree and figure, as well as the way the silhouetted boulders and slopes are sequentially unified in space, dates the execution of *Travelers in a Wintry Forest* to the early twelfth century, the powerful conception of the composition relates the painting directly to Li Ch'eng, the "master of a hundred generations."²⁷ As a work of the mid-tenth century, Li's anthropomorphized landscape—in which close-up views document in detail the myriad activities of nature—mediates halfway between narrative illustration and monumental landscape representation. Despite the solemnity of its theme, the vibrancy and intelligence of the imagery and the enjoyment in the execution are so much in evidence that it is easy to see why later masters—most notably, Kuo Hsi (pl. 11), Lo Chih-ch'uan (pl. 92), Chao Meng-fu (pl. 101), and Ni Tsan (pl. 116)—continued to be inspired both by the conception and by the style of this remarkable work.

Monumental Landscape Painting

During the early Northern Sung dynasty, emperors, noblemen, and scholar-officials, as well as successful merchants, decorated the walls and screens of their palaces and homes with monumental landscape paintings. In 992, for example, the southern landscape master Chü-jan (active ca. 960–95)—an expatriate from the vanquished Southern T'ang court of Li Yü—was called to the

Pl. 9. After Li Ch'eng (919–967).
Travelers in a Wintry Forest, early
12th century. Hanging scroll, ink
and color on silk, 63 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 39 $\frac{7}{8}$ in.
(161.6 x 100 cm). Purchase,
Fletcher Fund and Bequest of
Dorothy Graham Bennett, 1972
(1972.121)







Northern Sung imperial palace, in Pien-ching, to decorate the Jade Hall in the Institute of Academicians of the Imperial Chancellery. And in 1023–31, a six-paneled landscape screen by Yen Su (died 1040) was placed in the center of the same hall.²⁸

Pl. 9b. Detail, pl. 9

As architectural decoration, earlier monumental wall paintings had served a ritual function. The Institute of Academicians, under the T'ang, was originally decorated with magical symbols of the universe, the Ocean Surrounding the Dragon Mountain. In the early Northern Sung, the Jade Hall had been first decorated on the east, north, and west with a continuous wall painting of dragons in water, executed from 980 to 983 by another southern expatriate painter from Li Yü's court, Tung Yü (active ca. 960–90).²⁹ The replacement in 992 of the central portion of Tung Yü's composition at the north end of the Jade Hall with a landscape by Chü-jan was, therefore, an important departure, inaugurating the tradition of decorating ceremonial halls of state with monumental landscapes that depicted "the vastness and multiplicity of Creation itself."³⁰

In the Liao mausoleum at Ch'ing-ling, in eastern Mongolia, dating to about 1030, wall paintings representing the four seasons (fig. 29) are found at the four cardinal points of the circular burial chamber: spring to the

east, summer to the south, autumn to the west, and winter to the north. Two lines of geese, flying counterclockwise, are seen departing for the south in the autumn and returning north in the spring. As an elegiac theme for funerary wall decoration, landscapes symbolized the cyclical movement of nature from birth to growth to decline and death and rebirth.

Rejecting the overtly narrative and symbolic, early Northern Sung landscape masters focused on the representation of (great mountain peaks), the "bones" and structure of the earth, as the true iconic image of nature. The famous masterpiece *Travelers Among Streams and Mountains*, by Fan K'uan (active ca. 990–1030; fig. 30), epitomizes this new interest. Fan K'uan, a native of Shensi Province, first studied the styles of Kuan T'ung (active ca. 907–23; a follower of Ching Hao) and Li Ch'eng, after which, declaring that it was "better to study nature and, still better, to follow one's heart,"³¹ he retired to the mountains to pursue his own inspiration. In *Travelers Among Streams and Mountains*, a large hanging scroll more than six feet in height, the great mountain peak, standing high on the shoulders of two supporting peaks, dominates the composition as the emblem of the universe. Although these great mountain forms are simple, generalized triangular masses with enveloping parallel folds, the depiction, with its pointillistic "raindrop" texture pattern and scrubby foliage on the peaks, vividly captures the landscape peculiarities of Shensi in northwest China, where trees and brush grow in wind-deposited soil on rocky mountaintops. Individual rocks and trees are viewed frontally, as discrete, additive motifs, and the treatment of space is compartmentalized. The vertical composition proceeds from front to back in three separate stages—the foreground with its minute human figures, the middle distance with massive trees, and the background with towering mountains—each with its own suggested ground plane tilting away from the viewer at a different angle. Conceived as a series of images, and read part by part and motif by motif, the great landscape represents not an actual view of nature but a conceptual vision of the macrocosmic universe.

By the mid-eleventh century, monumental landscape painting had become the official idiom of a rich and abundant culture. In his treatise on landscape painting, *Lofty Ambition in Forests and Streams*, Kuo Hsi (ca. 1000–1090), the favorite court painter of the emperor Shen-tsung, offers a comprehensive summary of Northern Sung monumental landscape theory.³² Kuo, the professional painter, begins by extolling the enjoyment of landscape painting, urging the attainment of what he calls "the heart of the forests and streams":

How delightful to enjoy a landscape painting rendered by a skillful hand! Without leaving one's home, to be transported to streams and ravines in faraway places, the cries of monkeys and birds faintly reaching one's ears, light dappling the hills, glittering reflections on the water dazzling the eye.³³

As an academician, Kuo, no doubt influenced by his learned scholar-official friends, advocates an educated, or learned, approach to landscape painting:



Fig. 29. *Landscapes of the Four Seasons*, ca. 1031. Detail, "Autumn." Wall painting from the tomb of Liao Sheng-tsung (r. 983–1031), approx. 110 x 75 in. (280 x 190 cm). Ch'ing-ling, eastern Mongolia

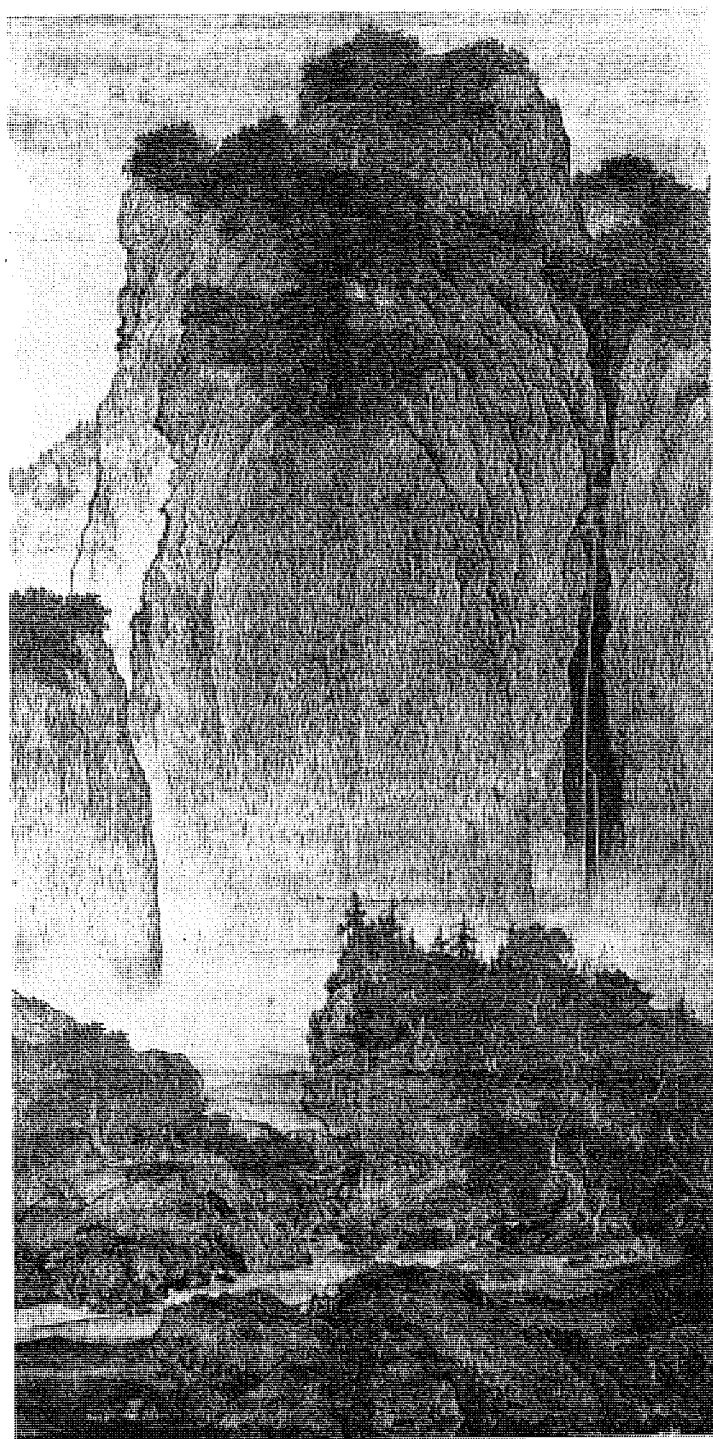
Learning to paint is no different from learning calligraphy. Those who study Chung Yu [151–230], Wang Hsi-chih [ca. 303–ca. 361], Yü Shih-nan [558–638], and Liu Kung-ch'üan [778–865] will after a while learn to write like them. Great men and learned scholars thus do not limit themselves to one school. Rather, it is necessary to absorb and combine many models, to discuss them and study them in depth, so that one may form his own personal style.¹⁴

In offering a catalogue of principles for landscape painting, Kuo Hsi categorizes rock types, compositional schemata, and atmospheric and seasonal changes, creating a visual structure that gives support to the Neo-Confucian vision of man's place in a vast and complex, but ultimately orderly, universe.

In T'ang landscape painting, tentative beginnings of two contrasting types of texture patterns (*ts'un*) for modeling rocks can be discerned. One type shows softly rubbed parallel brushstrokes in the shaded crevices of rock forms with gently swelling contours, the other uses a stippled technique to describe rock surfaces with jagged edges. Kuo Hsi identifies two contrasting landscape modes, the "rocky" and the "earthen":

Some mountains are covered with earth; others with rocks. On earthen mountains that are covered with rocks, the forests and trees are lean and tall; on rocky mountains that are covered with earth, the forests and trees are flat and luxuriant."

Fig. 30. Fan K'uan (active ca. 990–1030). *Travelers Among Streams and Mountains*. Hanging scroll, ink and color on silk, 81¼ x 40¼ in. (206.3 x 103.3 cm). National Palace Museum, Taipei



From the mid-T'ang, in the eighth century, three basic schemata had been used in the composition of mountain landscape: first, a scene dominated by tall vertical elements; second, a panoramic view filled by a series of horizontal elements; and third, a composition combining the two. The contribution of Kuo Hsi was to formulate these patterns, describing them as ways of perceiving landscape:

From the bottom of the mountain looking up toward the top is the high distance. From the front of the mountain peering into the back of the mountain is the deep distance. From a nearby mountain looking past distant mountains is the level distance.³⁶

To indicate scale, Kuo establishes a hierarchy of sizes for the human figure, the tree, and the mountain:

In landscape painting there are three degrees of magnitude: a mountain, which is larger than a tree, which is larger than a human figure. If the mountains are not piled up by the score, and if they are no larger than the trees, they will not look imposing. And if the trees are not stacked up by the score, and if they are no larger than the human figures, they will not look large.³⁷

Drawing a parallel between nature and the human world, Kuo Hsi sees the central mountain peak in a landscape composition as the emblem of "a great king, seated and facing the sun, with a hundred grandees coming to court":

In painting a landscape one attends first to the great mountain, which is called the host peak. Once the host is fixed, one may proceed with the secondary mountains, near and far, large and small. In its domination of the whole region, the host is like a ruler among his subjects, a master among servants.³⁸

Finally, to emphasize the vastness of nature and its infinite capacity for expansion, Kuo Hsi advises the painter to suggest rather than to delineate completely:

If one wishes to make a mountain appear high, one must not paint every part of it or it will seem diminished. It will look tall when encircled at mid-height by mist and clouds. If one wishes to describe a stream that stretches afar, one must not paint its entire course; only when its course is shaded and interrupted will it appear long.³⁹

According to Kuo Hsi's definition, Fan K'uan's *Travelers Among Streams and Mountains* (fig. 30) shows a high-distance view in the rocky landscape mode. In Fan's painting, it is the diminutiveness of the human figures that amplifies the sizes of the trees and mountains. Lilliputian figures are seen at the foot of an immense deciduous forest, while mountain peaks of cosmic proportions tower above. The use of a leaping scale exponentially heightens the impression of size and distance. The blank areas between the three distances serve as perceptual respites, inviting the viewer to roam freely through a space that is infinite because it is unmeasured and immeasurable.

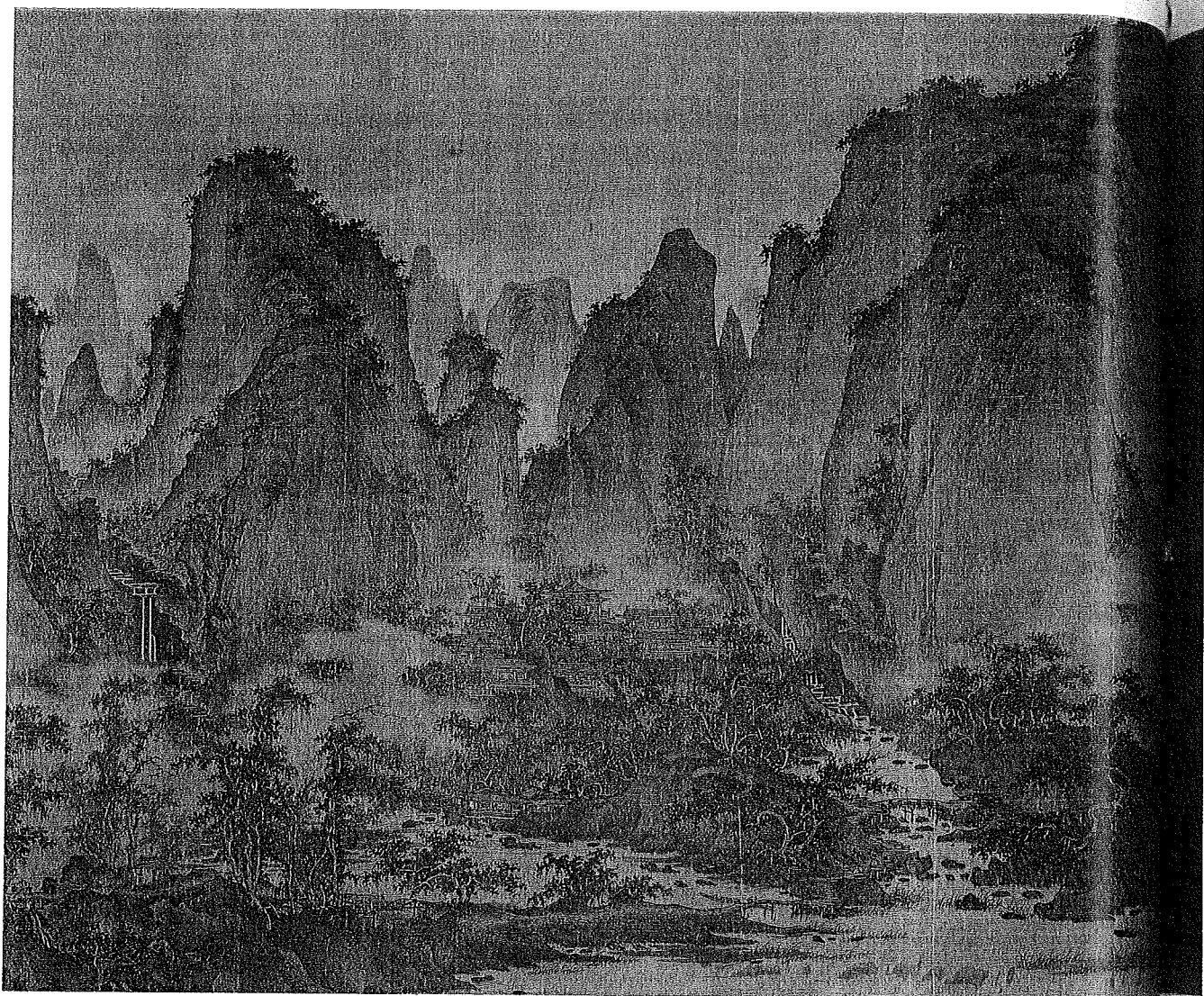
A very different kind of landscape is *Wintry Groves and Layered Banks*, attributed to the tenth-century southern landscape master Tung Yüan (died 962; fig. 31), which, according to Kuo Hsi's definition, shows a level-distance view in the earthen landscape mode. A court painter of a prosperous southeastern principality of the Southern T'ang (937-76), Tung developed a style well suited to the depiction of the soft rolling hills of southern China. After the reunification of the south in 976, the southern style was brought north to K'ai-

Fig. 31. Attributed to Tung Yüan (died 962). *Wintry Groves and Layered Banks*. Hanging scroll, ink and light color on silk, $71\frac{1}{2} \times 45\frac{7}{8}$ in. (181.5 x 116.5 cm). Kurokawa Institute of Ancient Cultures, Hyōgo Prefecture, Japan



feng by Tung Yüan's follower Chü-jan, though its influence was not strongly felt until the early twelfth century.

Summer Mountains (pl. 10), a high, horizontal composition formerly attributed to Fan K'uan's contemporary Yen Wen-kuei (active ca. 970–1030) but now reattributed to Ch'ü Ting (active ca. 1023–ca. 1050), a court painter who served under Emperor Jen-tsung (r. 1022–63), is a magnificent example of an officially sponsored landscape. The painting is in every way the product of an opulent culture, its very air breathing a well-endowed contentment. Following a summer shower, the verdant mountain peaks and dense foliage are suffused with a cool mist. The modeling of the rock surfaces is created by parallel texture strokes that blend into the ink wash; the gnarled white trunks of the hardwood trees are shown in relief against the moist foliage. Working in the handscroll format, which unfolds one section at a time from right to left,



the painter employs serial images, his focus moving in cinematic fashion in the development of his narrative of a holiday journey.

At the right is a panoramic level-distance vista, an aerial view of multi-layered horizontal elements extending far into the distance. A fishing village occupies the foreground river shore, where large fishing boats are moored and to which small skiffs return from their day's outing. Tiny human figures in the foreground indicate the scale of the panorama. In the distant hills, wayfarers slowly making their way toward temple buildings partially hidden behind the hills—two specks along a ledge—add a temporal dimension.

As we move along the river to the left, a deep distance comes into view (pl. 10a) as tree-covered knolls and rising hills gradually build to a crescendo in a monumental host mountain that dominates the surrounding valley "like a

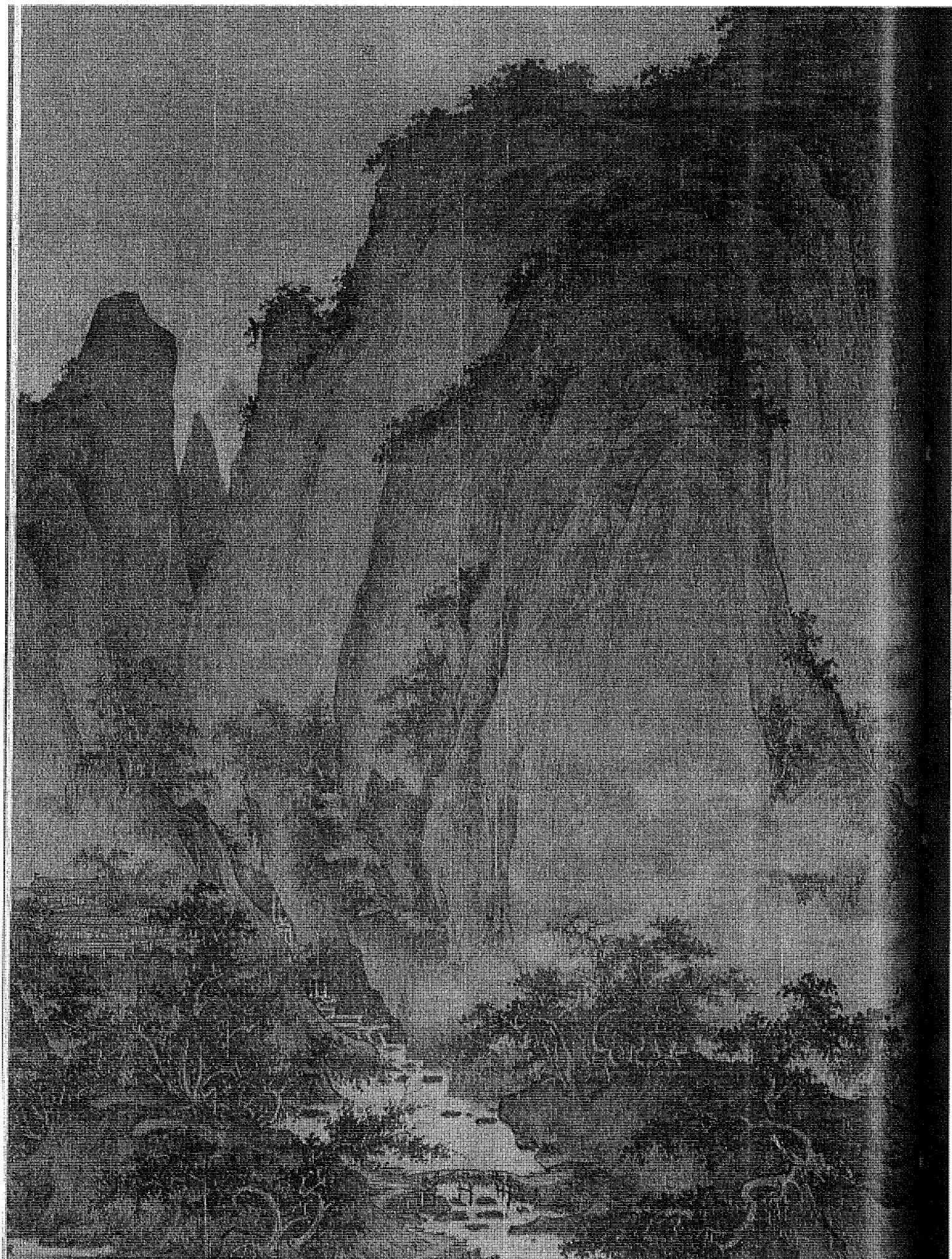
Pl. 10. Attributed to Ch'ü Ting (active ca. 1023–ca. 1050). *Summer Mountains*. Handscroll, ink and light color on silk, $17\frac{7}{8} \times 45\frac{7}{8}$ in. (45.3 x 115.2 cm). Gift of The Dillon Fund, 1973 (1973.120.1)



Overleaf
Pl. 10a. Detail, pl. 10

ruler among his subjects, a master among servants.” If we imagine ourselves as the tiny figures on the bridge, we can begin to grasp the reverential experience of journeying toward such an emblem of nature. The high-distance mountain image, while it reflects the imperial Northern Sung emphasis on centrality, symmetry, power, and domination, also epitomizes the Neo-Confucianist’s desire for moral authority and spiritual grandeur.

Finally, at the left, toward the end of the scroll, a second high-distance view appears with another, smaller set of host and guest mountains, below which a mountain retreat provides rest and recreation for the travelers at the end of their long journey. Through open windows, seated men beckon to us to share their enjoyment of the lofty heart of the forests and streams and the purity of the cool, scented mountain air.



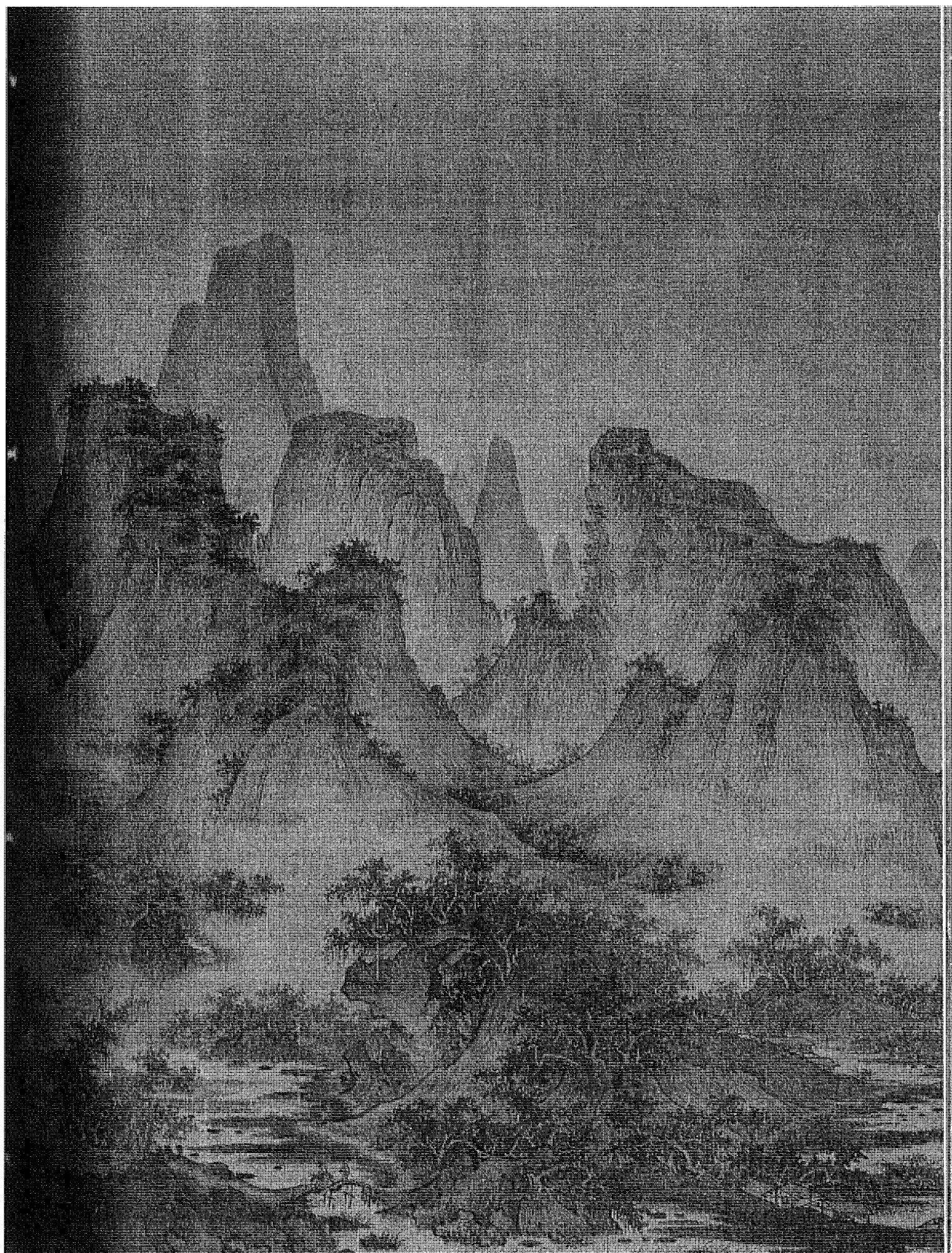




Fig. 32. Kuo Hsi (ca. 1000–ca. 1090). *Early Spring*, dated 1072. Hanging scroll, ink and light color on silk, 62¼ x 42⅞ in. (158.3 x 108.1 cm). National Palace Museum, Taipei

Landscape of Emotion

By the second half of the eleventh century, when the Northern Sung court was embroiled in bitter struggles over new reform policies during the reign of the emperor Shen-tsung (r. 1067–85),⁴ painters increasingly turned from a more objective, naturalistic landscape (the “true” landscape) to one that was imbued with human emotion (*ch’ing*).

A native of Wen-hsien, northern Honan Province, Kuo Hsi, who rose to dominate landscape painting as a court painter under Shen-tsung, exemplifies

par excellence the landscape painter of mist and sadness. From 1068 to 1083, Kuo executed wall paintings for several major imperial buildings, including the Hall of Academicians and the main halls of the three departments, the State, the Secretariat, and the Chancellery.⁴⁰ He was befriended by many leading scholar-officials, among them the grand councillors Fu Pi and Wen Yen-po, the censor Wu Chung-fu, and Su Shih and Huang T'ing-chien.

In Chapter 3, "Ideas in Painting," of his treatise *Lofty Ambition in Forests and Streams*, Kuo Hsi quotes the saying "Poetry is painting without form, painting is poetry with form." "On days of leisure," he writes, "I peruse ancient and modern poetry . . . where beautiful lines seem to pour out from the poet's belly, creating vivid scenes before my eyes."⁴¹ In attempting to re-create through landscape mental, or "idea," images (*i-ching*) and emotional states (*ch'ing-ching*) rather than merely to describe landscape realistically, Kuo moves beyond "principles" of nature. He is most drawn to the changing landscape of the seasons. "The clouds and vapors of a landscape are not the same throughout the four seasons," he notes. "In spring they are bright and harmonious, in summer dense and brooding, in autumn scattered and thin, and in winter dark and gloomy."⁴² He takes delight in citing the fine distinctions of seasonal change that should be made in landscape painting:

Within each kind of spring, summer, fall, and winter [landscape], there are an infinite number of possibilities. There are early and late, there are morning and evening. . . . For spring alone, there are myriad possibilities: spring in snow, early spring in rain, melting snow, clearing after snow in early spring, clearing after rain in early spring, mist and rain in early spring, chilly clouds in early spring, just before a spring rain, early spring in late evening, sunrise on spring mountains.⁴³

Early Spring, dated 1072 (fig. 32), with its wildly twisting, turning peaks, is a landscape of the imagination. The brush technique and use of ink are rich and extravagant, as Kuo Hsi boldly casts aside precision of expression in favor of a dramatic interpenetration of solids and voids, the landscape elements simultaneously emerging from and receding behind dense, wafting mists. A highly complex landscape, *Early Spring*, though it suggests great depth, remains a composite of compartmentalized pockets of space.

Kuo Hsi's *Old Trees, Level Distance* (pl. 11), a handscroll dating to the late 1070s, shows a level-distance view of a rugged stretch of the shoreline of the Yellow River, with round boulders, gnarled trees, and tiny figures dotting the bleak late autumn landscape. On the left, two old friends, tottering and supported by servants, head for an outing in a pavilion overlooking the river; on the right, two boatmen stop midstream to exchange greetings; on the opposite shore, two heavily laden wayfarers with a donkey slowly make their way toward the distant hills. While the brushwork is animated and lively, the mood is somber and elegiac. Leaves have fallen and human figures are old and tired; the gnarled and ancient vine-covered trees show angry clawlike branches, and the bare rocks look like human skulls. The thickly applied ink renders both the



landscape and the atmosphere heavy, slowing everything down so that the scene, arrested in time, assumes the significance of an impending cosmic event.

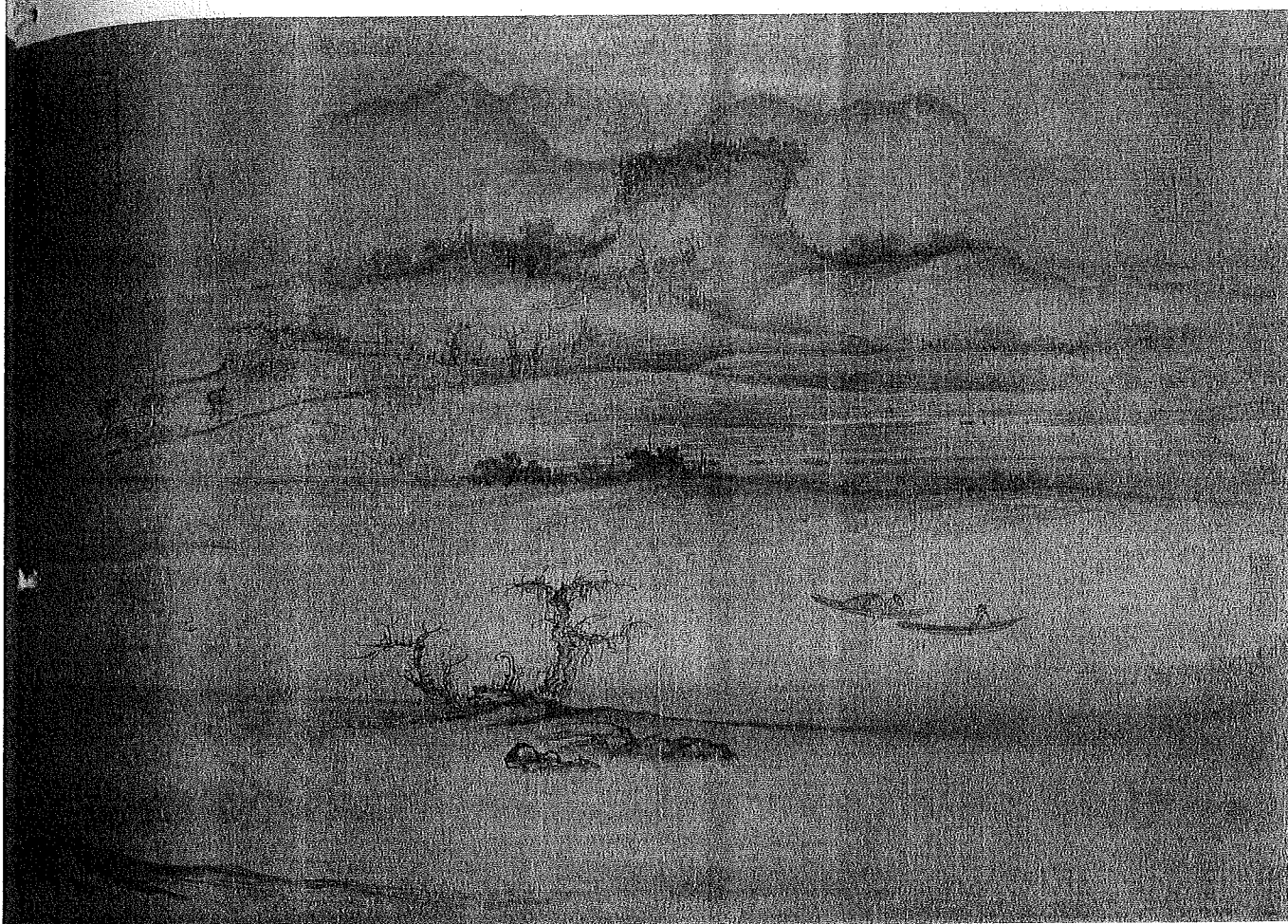
Developing in the tradition of Li Ch'eng's trees and rocks (pl. 9), Kuo Hsi's animated forms are brilliantly expressive. In his essay, Kuo explains how he builds his forms, using many layers of ink wash:

After the outlines are made in dark inkstrokes, I trace the outlines repeatedly with ink wash mixed with blue, so that even when the outlines remain visible, the forms appear as if emerging from the mist and dew.⁴⁴

Compared with Ch'ü Ting's mountain forms (pl. 10a), which are clearly defined by crisp outlines and smoothly modulated ink washes, Kuo's (pl. 11a), with mottled texture strokes and layered ink washes, are fused. Kuo achieves this effect by the use of thickening-and-thinning brushstrokes in values ranging from transparent blue gray to charcoal black, which he applies simultaneously so that the ink tones run together, creating the impression of blurred, wet surfaces.

As a revered master court painter, Kuo purposely cultivated his reputation for virtuoso performance. A follower of occult Taoism, he practiced yoga.⁴⁵

Pl. 11. Kuo Hsi (ca. 1000–ca. 1090). *Old Trees, Level Distance*. Handscroll, ink and color on silk, 13¼ x 41¼ in. (35.9 x 104.8 cm). Gift of John M. Crawford, Jr., in honor of Douglas Dillon, 1981 (1981.276)

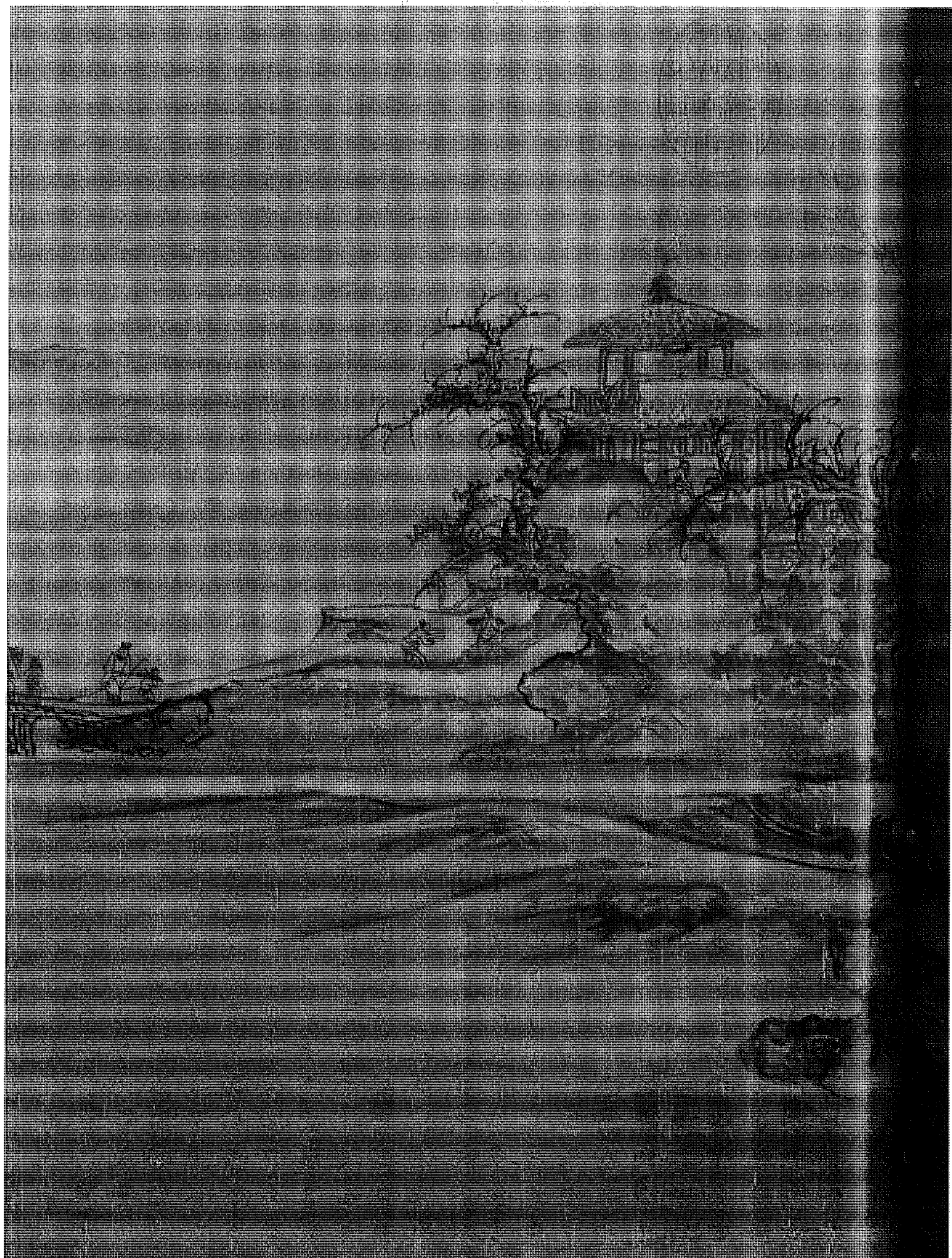


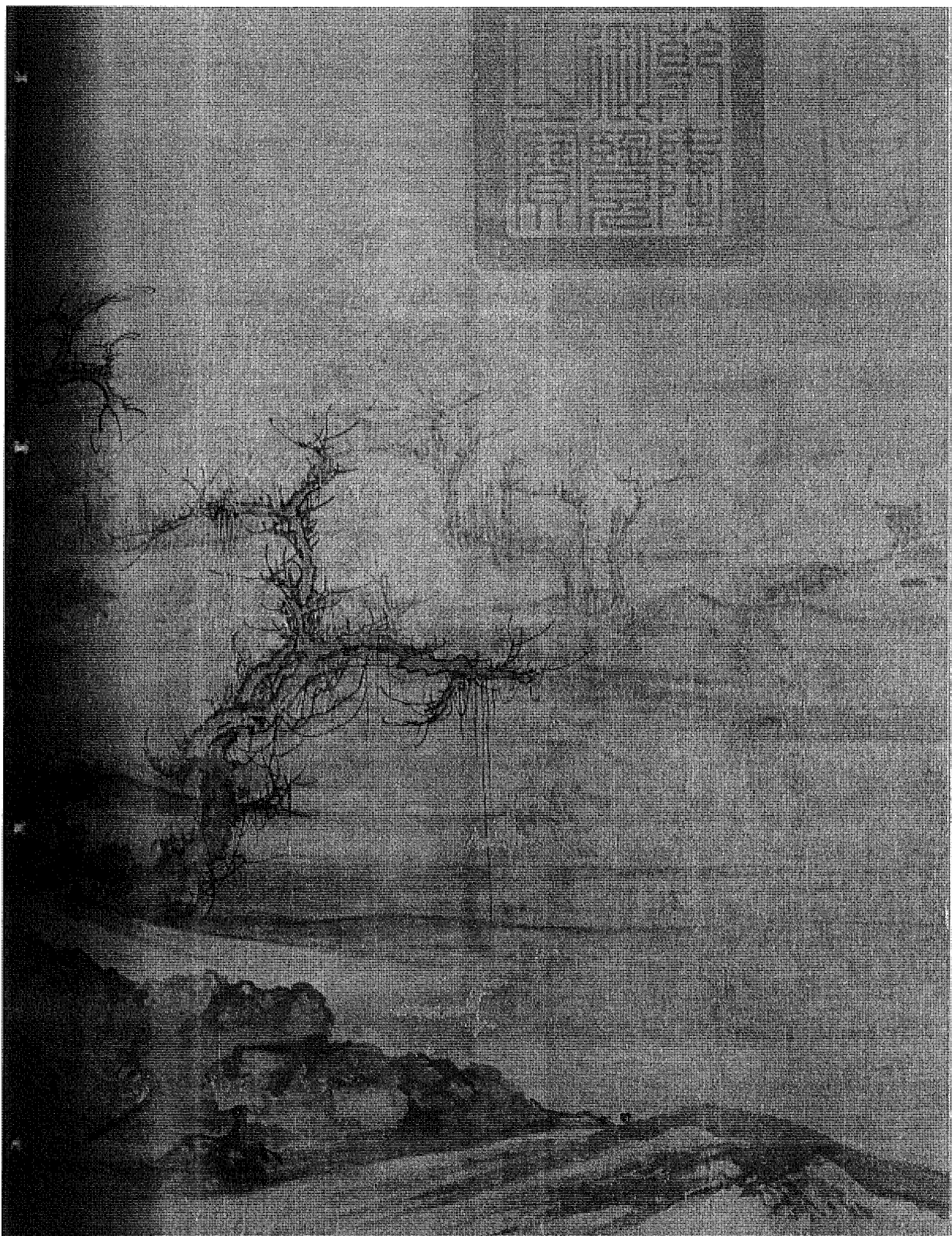
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Pl. IIIa. Detail, pl. II

Before painting, he would meditate for several days, and then, suddenly feeling inspired, would "toss off the work with a single sweep of his arm."⁴⁶ In *Old Trees, Level Distance*, the ecstatic frenzy of Kuo's brushwork recalls the "un-trammeled" painters of the T'ang dynasty, who would abandon themselves to the act of painting; splattering ink and spreading it on the surface with their hands.⁴⁷ Kuo's trees and rocks, shimmering, luminous, menacing, and vividly transcending the ordinary, seem endowed with magical powers. A story by the twelfth-century writer Teng Ch'un tells of the painter's fascination with forms that seemed to materialize of their own accord:

[Kuo] told the wall plasterer not to use the trowel, but instead to throw the plaster on the wall. . . . After the plaster had dried, applying ink to modify the forms, he created mountain peaks, forests, and valleys, . . . making them look as if they had been realized in heaven.⁴⁸

With the art of Kuo Hsi, we encounter a new landscape style. Defined by the poetry of mist, it celebrates change and transitoriness. But above all, it is an art in which human emotion (*ch'ing*) is newly incorporated as a compelling reality.







Overleaf
Pl. 12a. Detail, pl. 12

Fig. 33. Wang Shen (ca. 1036–after 1104). *Misty River and Layered Peaks*, ca. 1084. Detail. Handscroll, ink and color on silk, 17 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 65 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (45.2 x 166 cm). Shanghai Museum

Landscape of Exile

In the second half of the eleventh century, during the reign of Kuo Hsi's patron the emperor Shen-tsung, Northern Sung art and culture were at their zenith. A galaxy of brilliant scholars, philosophers, and men of arts and letters lived and worked in the Sung capital, Pien-ching. It was, however, during these very years that all the best human resources were squandered by Wang An-shih's unsuccessful reform policies and the ensuing political struggles between his supporters and his detractors. Scarcely twenty years after Shen-tsung's death, in the early years of the twelfth century, an entire generation of talented men was gone—many of them having died in political exile—and affairs of state, both domestic and foreign, had broken down beyond repair. In 1126, the Jurchen Chin invaders marched from the northeast and sacked the capital, and the Northern Sung dynasty came to its tragic end.

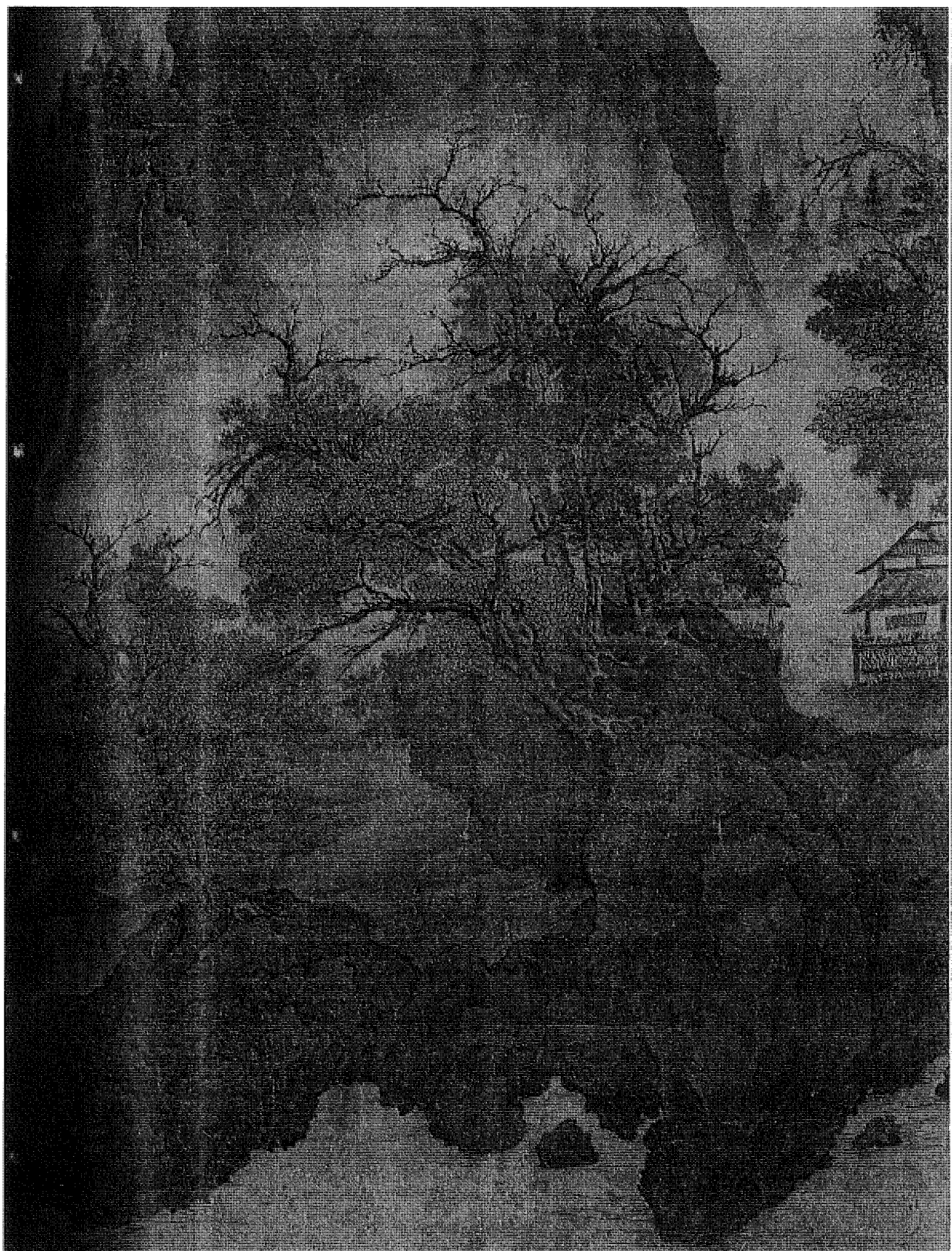
Wang Shen (ca. 1036–after 1104), a gifted follower of Kuo Hsi, was married to a sister of Shen-tsung; she died young in 1080. Holding Wang responsible for the princess's untimely death, the grieving emperor sent Wang into exile. After being reinstated in the capital in 1084, Wang painted *Misty River and Layered Peaks* (fig. 33). A melancholy landscape poem that expresses the poignancy of lost hopes, loves, and friendships, the painting represents the brooding dream world of the unhappy exile. When the painter's friend Su Shih saw the painting, he wrote the following poem:

In the mountains you look past the edge of the sun,
Seeing not the capital, Ch'ang-an, but only clouds and mists.
Returning to Ch'ang-an, you glance back at the mountains.
How times have changed!

Pl. 12. After Fan K'uan (active ca. 990–1030). *Landscape in the Style of Fan K'uan*, early 12th century. Hanging scroll, ink and light color on silk, 64 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 40 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (165.8 x 103.8 cm). Gift of Irene and Earl Morse, 1956 (56.19)







Pipes and strings are no more, guests have long departed;
Only the moated carriage roads remain . . .
Never will you forget your days of exile;
While making merry, you will always sing of the mountain prison.⁴⁹

The great symbolic landscapes, while they are monumental evocations of the early Northern Sung at the turn of the twelfth century, also reflect major changes that occurred at this time. *Landscape in the Style of Fan K'uan* (pl. 12), a large hanging scroll by an anonymous early twelfth-century painter, continues the early eleventh-century brush idiom of Fan K'uan (fig. 30). Here, however, the master's angular, nervously charged contour strokes and pointillistic dots are softened, transformed into a generalized surface to suggest a hazy atmosphere. Overlapping mountain silhouettes, ranged from front to back in a continuous sequence, dissolve at their base into surrounding mist, creating a unified image. This new vision (as in Wang Shen's painting, fig. 33) is achieved at the expense of both objective clarity and the intimation of endless space, qualities that had distinguished the early Northern Sung works of Fan K'uan and Ch'ü Ting (pl. 10). The landscape is now pushed back in space, creating a psychological remove.

As a transitional work that marks the threshold of change between the monumental and the intimate and personal, *Landscape in the Style of Fan K'uan* speaks a language of crisis. The composition builds a sense of tension, an unsettling surreality, by the use of the leaping scale of the three magnitudes—tiny figures, large trees, and enormous mountains—the dwarfed figures appearing trapped in a frozen, unnatural space. The significant difference between this painting and the masterpiece by Fan K'uan is the spiritual gulf that separates them. Here, we sense the malaise and anxiety that pervaded the world of the late Northern Sung. By the early twelfth century, when good government had been irretrievably lost and men of principle had left the capital, the monumental landscape idiom itself became a thing of the past. For by then, most landscape painters had exchanged a vision of clarity, one that had attained "truth," for a vision of uneasy foreboding, clouded by mists and fog.

An Earthly Paradise

At the beginning of the twelfth century, a dramatic shift of taste in landscape painting, from Kuo Hsi's extravagant naturalism to a refined antiquarianism, occurred under the patronage of Emperor Hui-tsung's (r. 1100–25) Painting Academy. Teng Ch'un recounts that Hui-tsung, as soon as he became emperor, ordered the removal from his palaces of all pictures by Kuo Hsi, his father, Shen-tsung's, favorite painter. When Teng Ch'un's own father served on the Imperial Privy Council, he was given a new mansion by the emperor. One day he discovered that a workman sent from the palace was dusting the furniture with a piece of silk. The silk turned out to be a painting by Kuo Hsi, recycled as a dust rag.⁵⁰

With a full cycle of developing naturalism completed in the second half of the eleventh century, early twelfth-century painters, under the influence of the Academy, began to codify their techniques and to develop a new approach to landscape. Whereas earlier landscape painters had devised new representational techniques, Hui-tsung's academic painters used formulaic brush idioms and compositional schemata to illustrate literary and poetic themes. Han Cho (active ca. 1119–26), for example, catalogued individual landscape techniques, giving different names to specific texture patterns (*ts'un*) for modeling rocks:

There is the *p'i-ma* [draping hemp fiber] *ts'un*, the *tien-ts'o* [dotting and crossing] *ts'un*, . . . the *cho-t'a* [cutting] *ts'un*, the *heng* [horizontal] *ts'un*, and the *yün-erh-lien-shui* [uniform and connected, waterlike] *ts'un*. For every dot and every stroke, there is an ancient and a modern school, and special methods and rules.⁹

Han's academic approach marked a new direction in landscape painting, a return, on the one hand, to earlier models for inspiration, and an exploration, on the other, of linear and schematic abstraction and surface pattern.

Retreats in Spring Hills (pl. 13), a handscroll composition by an unknown master executed in the archaic mineral-green color scheme, can be dated stylistically to the early twelfth century. Clusters of mountain peaks are ranged horizontally in space in three compositional movements, the central, overlapping peaks comprising both pointed and flat-topped formations (pl. 13a). The mountains, trees, and clouds are drawn in a schematic idiom; the outlines and

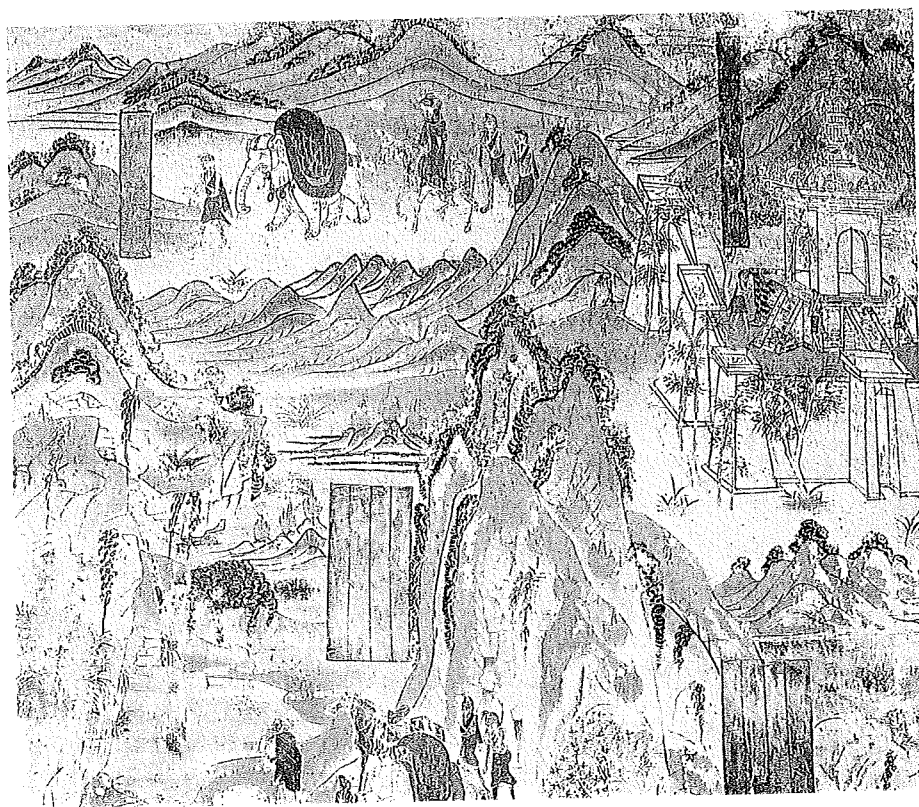
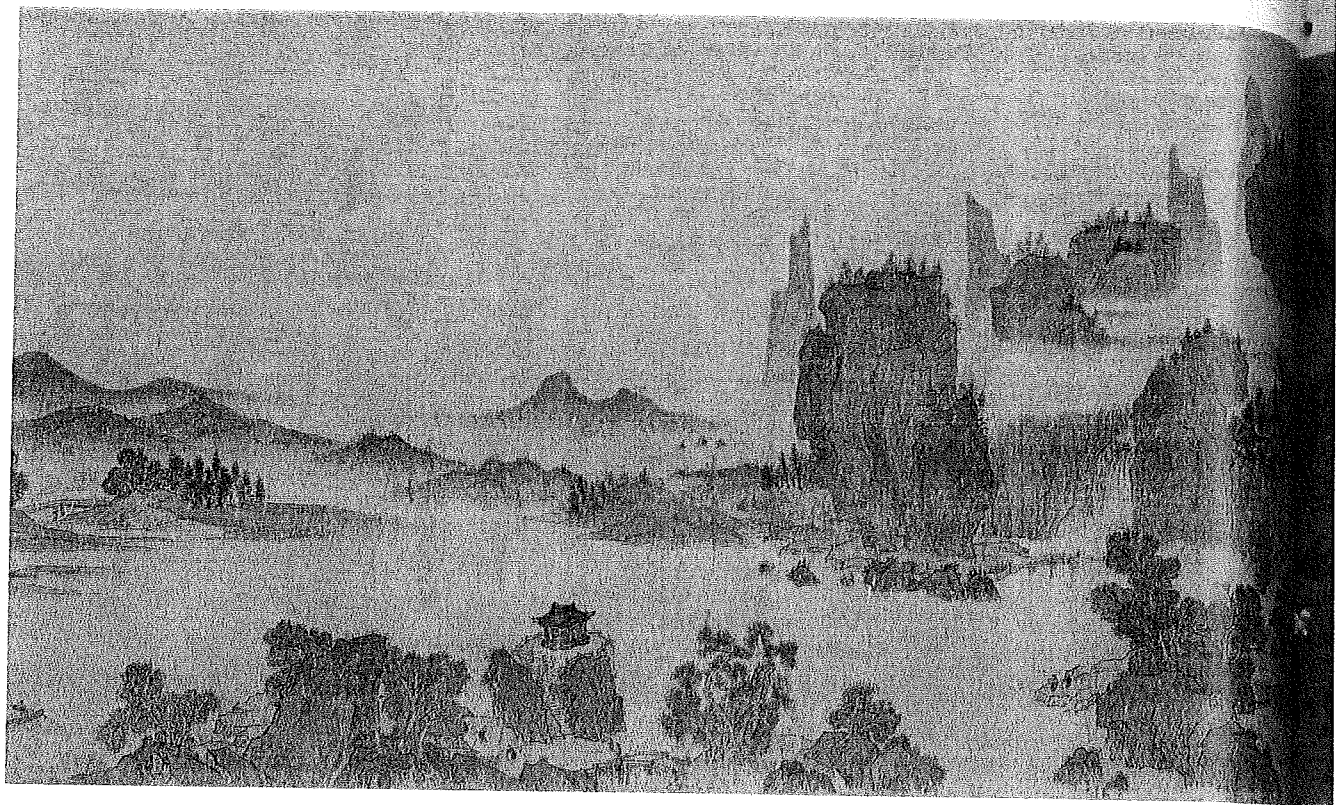


Fig. 34. *Illustration to the Sutra of the Law (Fa-hua ching)*, T'ang dynasty, 7th century. Detail, "Landscape." Wall painting from Cave 217, Tun-huang, Kansu Province



texture strokes of the rocks are threadlike and linear; evergreens and deciduous trees are depicted in needled or dotted patterns; and encircling mists are delineated as outlined cloud scrolls.

As a color scheme, the "blue-and-green" (*ch'ing-lü*) idiom, exemplified in *Retreats in Spring Hills*, refers to the archaic, flat, and decorative landscape styles of the pre-T'ang and T'ang periods (fig. 34), in which schematic mountain motifs are filled with bright and solid mineral-blue (azurite) and green (malachite or copper carbonate) colors. Because of its use in the occult Taoist's alchemical practices,³² the malachite-green color scheme is also associated with the representation of the theme of the Taoist immortals. The clustered peaks in *Retreats in Spring Hills* hark back to the archaic space cells of Wang Wei's *Wang-ch'uan Villa* (fig. 27), while the flat and opaque mineral-green color scheme, in suppressing natural shading, evokes the ethereal quality of T'ao Ch'ien's "Peach Blossom Spring," in which a timeless landscape is defined structurally as beyond change.³³ The schematic landscape is a visionary one, the emerald-green mountains seeming to float above sheets of water and encircling mists. Unlike Ch'ü Ting's *Summer Mountains* (pl. 10), which, with its streams and passes winding through towering mountains, invites the viewer to roam freely in space, *Retreats in Spring Hills* is a picture of myth and memory, spatially closed to the viewer and reflecting the artist's inner world. Structurally, it resembles *Landscape in the Style of Fan K'uan* (pl. 12), in which overlapping forms range from front to back in a unified spatial continuum. The dating of the composition to the twelfth century is confirmed archaeologically

Pl. 13. Unidentified artist (first half of 12th century). *Retreats in Spring Hills*. Detail. Handscroll, ink and color on silk, 10½ x 110¾ in. (26.7 x 281.6 cm). Bequest of John M. Crawford, Jr., 1988 (1989.363.8)

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Pl. 13a. Unidentified artist (first half of 12th century). Detail from *Retreats in Spring Hills*

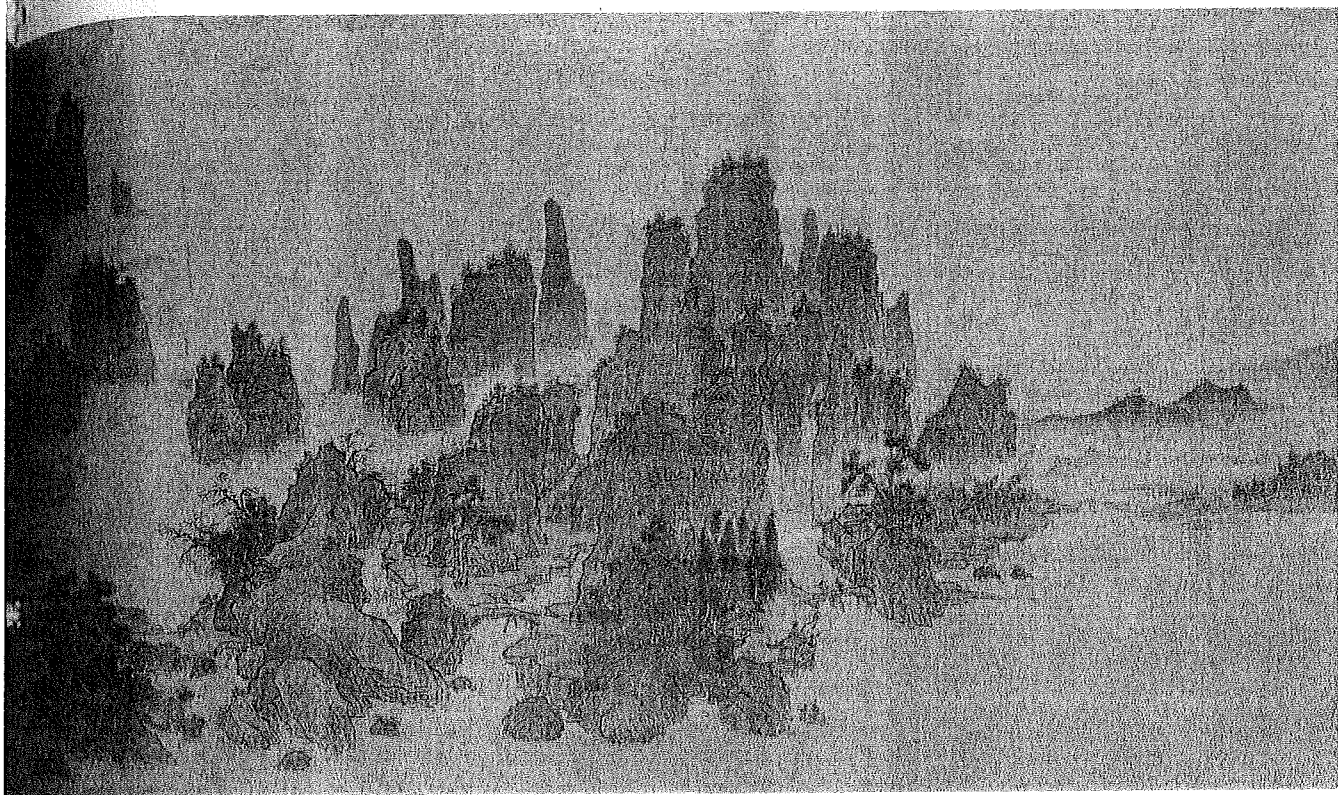
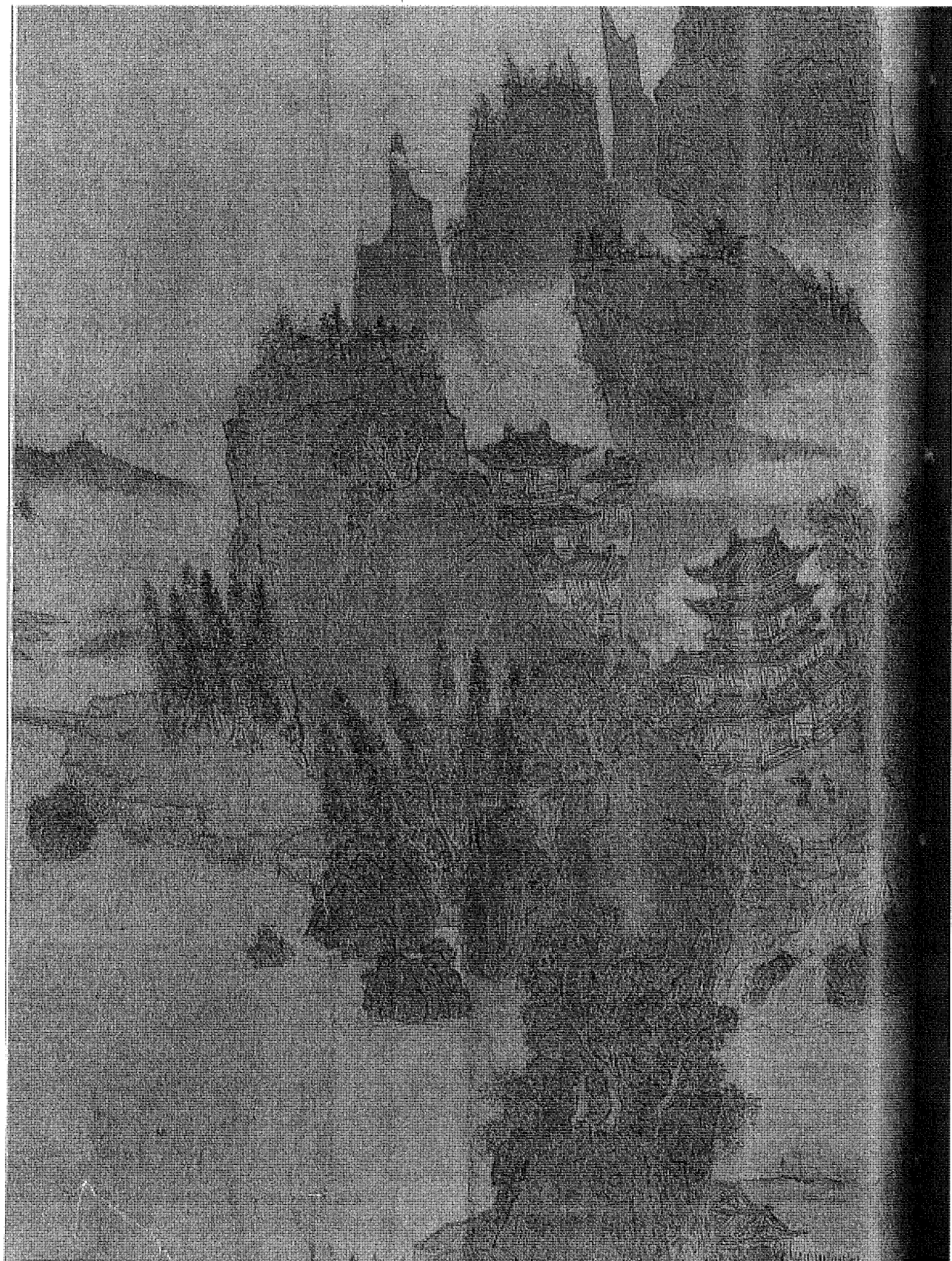
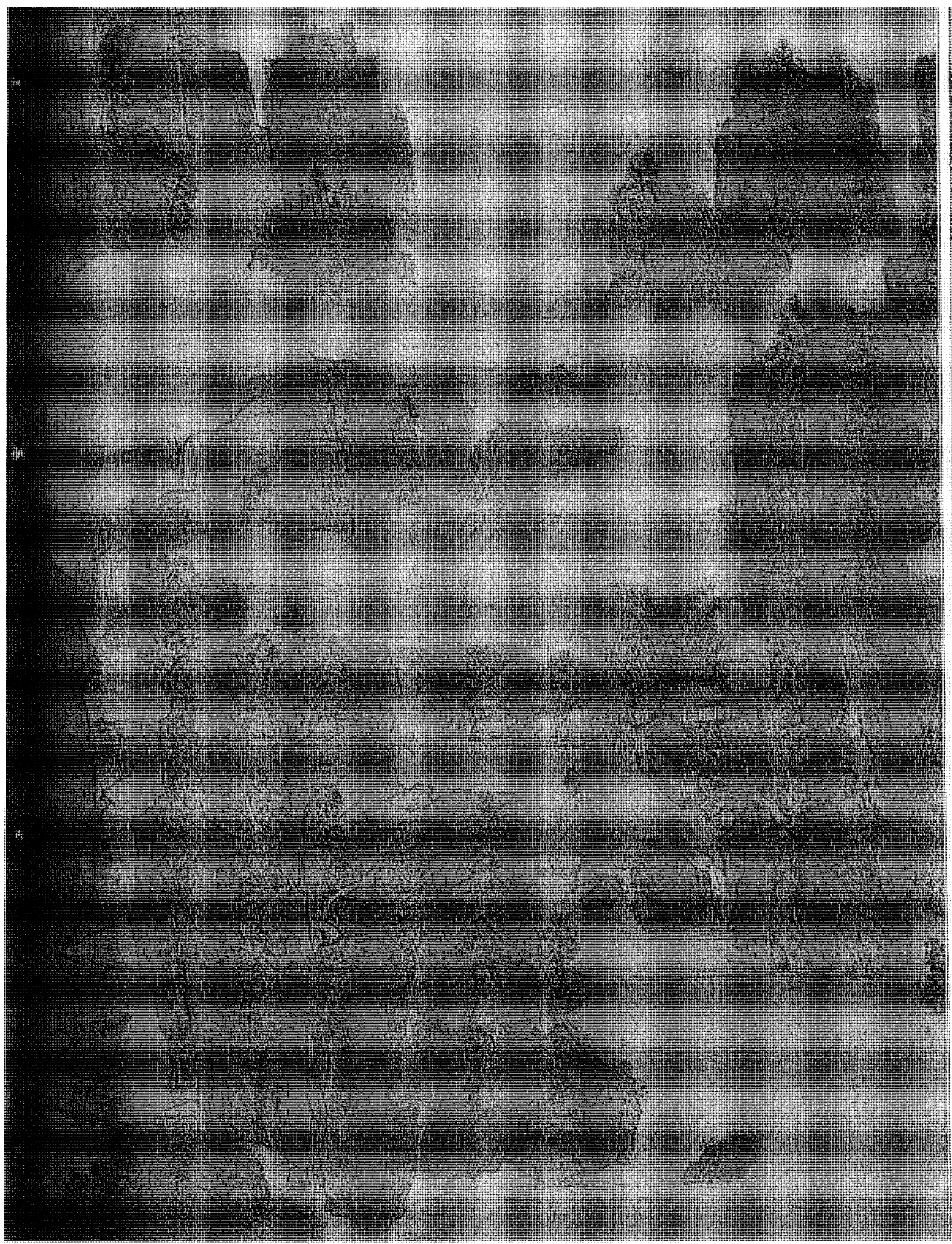


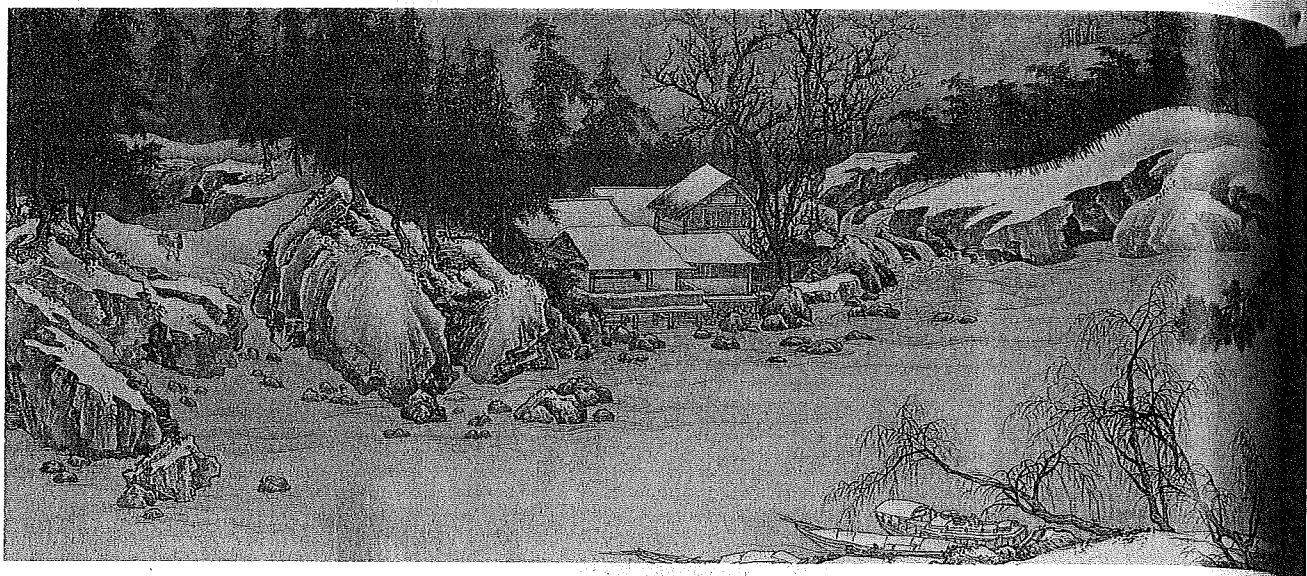
Fig. 35. *Landscape*, late 12th–early 13th century. Fragment of a drawing on silk, discovered in Kara-khoto from a site datable to between 1032 and 1226

by landscape fragments discovered at Kara-khoto, a Central Asian site datable to between 1032 and 1226 (fig. 35). In the horizontal picture fragments, nervous but fluent brushstrokes depict floating mountain peaks. The overlapping mountain forms do not yet describe a ground plane; rather, mountain forms are seen frontally and individually, fanning out in parallel vertical planes like a deck of playing cards. Each mountain form fades into mist and water, thus avoiding the problem of building a fully articulated mountain base.









Realistic Landscape

After the destruction of the Northern Sung capital by the armies of the invading Jurchen Chin in early 1127, Prince K'ang, the ninth son of Hui-tsung, was proclaimed the new emperor, Kao-tsung (r. 1127–62), and a Southern Sung court was established in Lin-an (modern Hangchow, Chekiang Province) in 1138. Although ruling only the southern half of the empire, the Southern Sung, supported by the agricultural wealth and expanding commerce, trade, and industry of the Chiang-nan area, enjoyed unprecedented material abundance.

Under the Southern Sung Painting Academy, re-established in Lin-an in the 1160s, the landscape idioms of the early Northern Sung developed in

Pl. 14. Attributed to Liu Sung-nien (active ca. 1175–after 1195), after Kao K'o-ming (ca. 1000–1053). *Streams and Mountains Under Fresh Snow*. Handscroll, ink and color on silk, 16 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 95 $\frac{5}{16}$ in. (41.7 x 242.4 cm). Gift of John M. Crawford, Jr., 1984 (1984.274)

Fig. 36. Chao Kan (active ca. 961–75). *Early Snow on the River*. Detail. Handscroll, ink and color on silk, 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 148 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (25.9 x 376.5 cm). National Palace Museum, Taipei



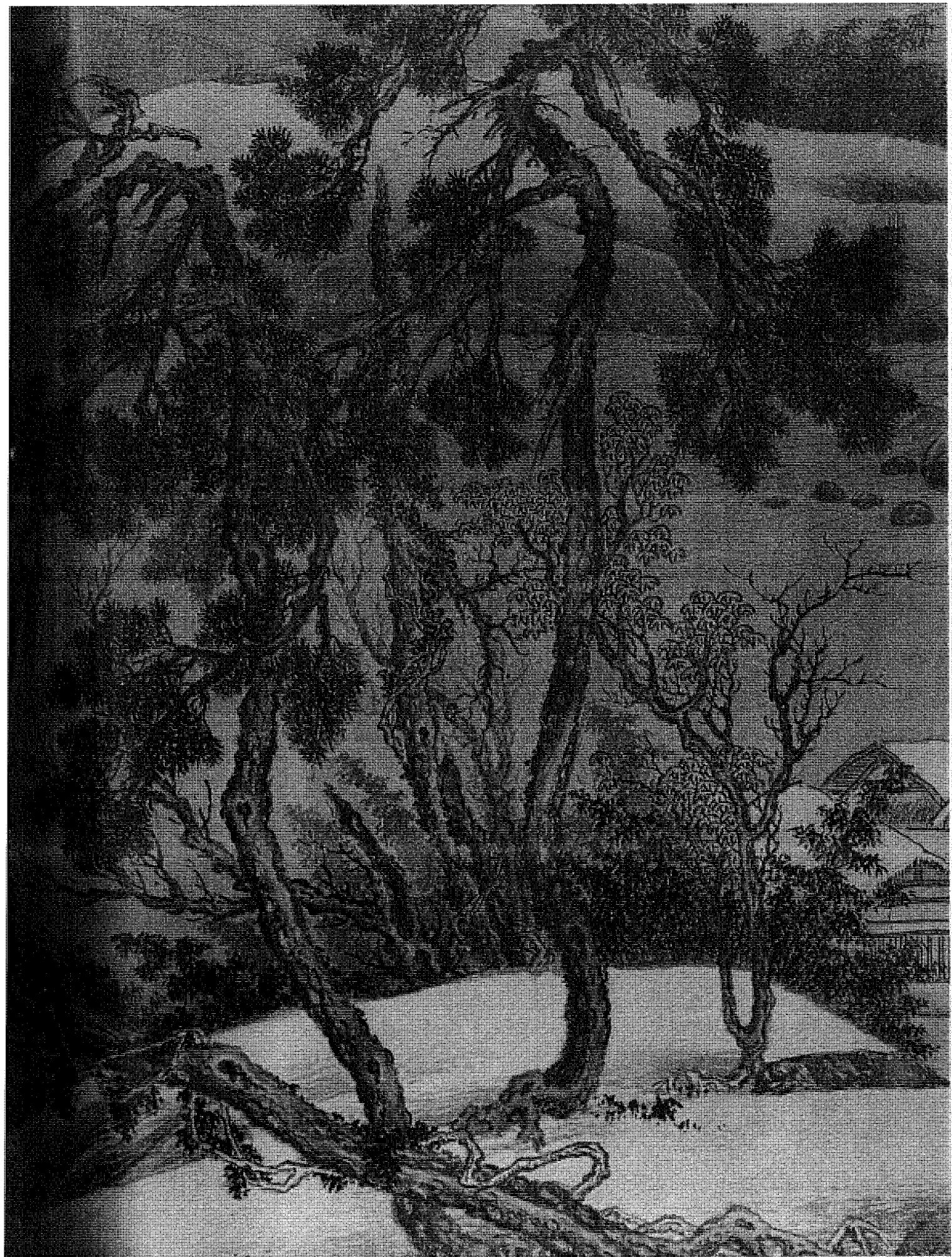


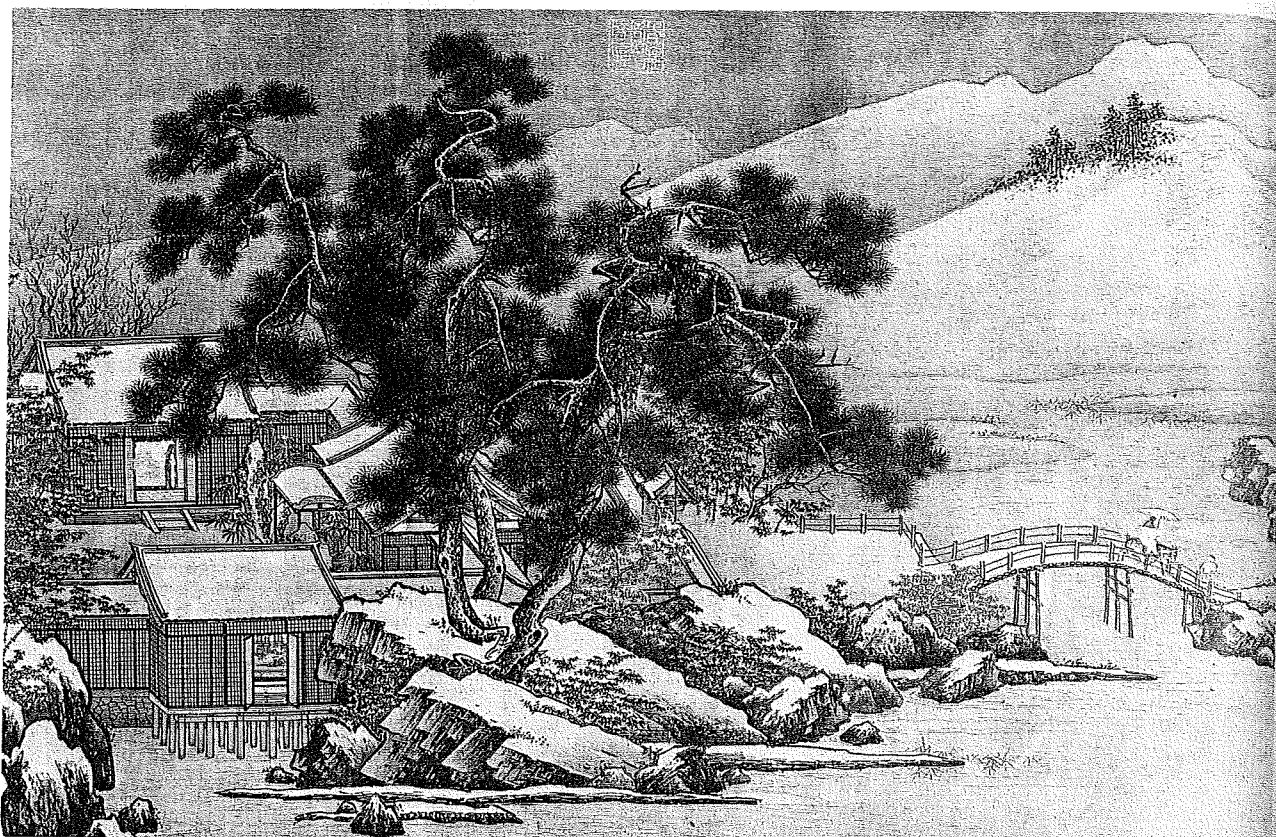
two seemingly different directions: on the one hand, there was the realistic depiction of the soft, lush landscape of the south, and, on the other, a schematic archaistic style, which reflected a nostalgic return to the lost monumental northern landscape.

Streams and Mountains Under Fresh Snow (pl. 14), a handscroll formerly attributed to the early Northern Sung court landscapist Kao K'o-ming (ca. 1000–1053), is now reattributed to the Southern Sung court painter Liu Sung-nien (active ca. 1175–after 1195). Kao's name is inscribed at the beginning of the scroll, in the distinctive style of the Southern Sung emperor Li-tsung (r. 1224–64; see pl. 38). Barnhart speculates that the scroll is an adaptation by Liu Sung-nien recalling a Northern Sung palace wall painting executed by Kao in the 1030s.⁵⁴ The original composition, which shows large foreground trees rising from the bottom to the top of the scroll, is in turn probably similar to that of the late tenth-century handscroll *Early Snow on the River*, by Chao Kan (active ca. 961–75; fig. 36). In Chao's composition, spatial organization is additive and there is no unified ground plane.

In the late twelfth- or early thirteenth-century adaptation, however, there is a realistically represented Chiang-nan scene. Both in motifs and in composition, *Streams and Mountains Under Fresh Snow* closely resembles the winter scene in Liu Sung-nien's *Landscapes of the Four Seasons* (fig. 37). Morning stirs peacefully along a quiet riverbank covered by a light snow. In the foreground, flanked by large deciduous hardwood trees and majestic twisting pines that rise to the full height of the silk, is a hermitage, in which a seated gentleman and two servants warm themselves with a brazier in the front hall. To the left of the pines, a man sets out on the river in a houseboat, and farther to the left,







on the opposite bank, along a path with lush bamboos and rustling pines, a lone traveler, bearing a shoulder pole, begins his day's journey.

The landscape elements, drawn with a sure sense of perspective and foreshortening, are treated as a spatially integrated physical environment (pl. 14a). The rocks are modeled with bold ax-cut strokes, a hallmark of the Southern Sung Academy style under the influence of Li T'ang (ca. 1070s–ca. 1150s; fig. 79). Particularly striking is the organization of the landscape elements, arranged along a receding ground plane.

If we compare the early thirteenth-century *Streams and Mountains Under Fresh Snow* with *Travelers in a Wintry Forest* (pl. 9), which dates to the early twelfth century but follows a tenth-century composition, we can discern a distinct evolution. In the earlier work, the triangular spits of land that form the shoreline are flat silhouettes stacked vertically on the picture plane, overlapping at the top but disappearing into the silk at the base; discrete frontal motifs, they range sequentially through space, without a receding ground plane. In *Streams and Mountains*, on the other hand, diagonally foreshortened plateau motifs are skillfully employed to describe a ground plane that continuously recedes and links the landscape elements. Landscape elements are no longer only laterally placed or superimposed vertically on the picture plane; rather, they are now seen in the context of spatial recession.

Fig. 37. Liu Sung-nien (active ca. 1175–after 1195). *Landscapes of the Four Seasons*. Detail, "Winter Scene." Handscroll in four sections, ink and color on silk, each section 16¼ x 27⅞ in. (41.2 x 69.5 cm). Palace Museum, Beijing

Landscape of Nostalgia

By the thirteenth century, the heroic format of Northern Sung monumental landscape was considered archaic. Side by side with lyric realism, there developed in late Southern Sung painting an opposite tendency for linearity and schematic surface abstraction, a predilection most clearly expressed in the archaistic landscape idiom that looks back to the grand manner of the early Northern Sung. *A Bridge Over a Stream Among Steep Mountains* (fig. 38), an anonymous fan painting, exemplifies the essence of the archaistic formula. A bird's-eye view of a vast expanse of mountain peaks depicted by triangular motifs with parallel folds, it shows a schematic "raindrop" surface pattern reminiscent of the early Northern Sung mountain textures of Fan K'uan (fig. 30) and of Fan's Five Dynasties progenitors Ching Hao (ca. 870–ca. 930) and Kuan T'ung (active ca. 907–23). There are no trees, but only foliage dots along the contours of the mountains to reinforce the design. Despite this schematic archaism, the realistic compositional structure of the painting dates it to the middle of the thirteenth century; as the triangular mountains pile up on the picture plane, their curving shorelines merge convincingly into the distance, following a continuously receding ground plane.

Buddhist Temple in Autumn Mountains (pl. 15), a handscroll painted about 1250 and bearing a spurious signature of the early Northern Sung master Yen Wen-kuei (active ca. 970–1030), shows a Southern Sung interpretation of Yen's



Fig. 38. Unidentified artist (mid-13th century). *A Bridge Over a Stream Among Steep Mountains*. Fan mounted as an album leaf, ink and light color on silk, $9\frac{7}{8} \times 10\frac{7}{8}$ in. (25 x 27 cm). Liaoning Provincial Museum, Shen-yang

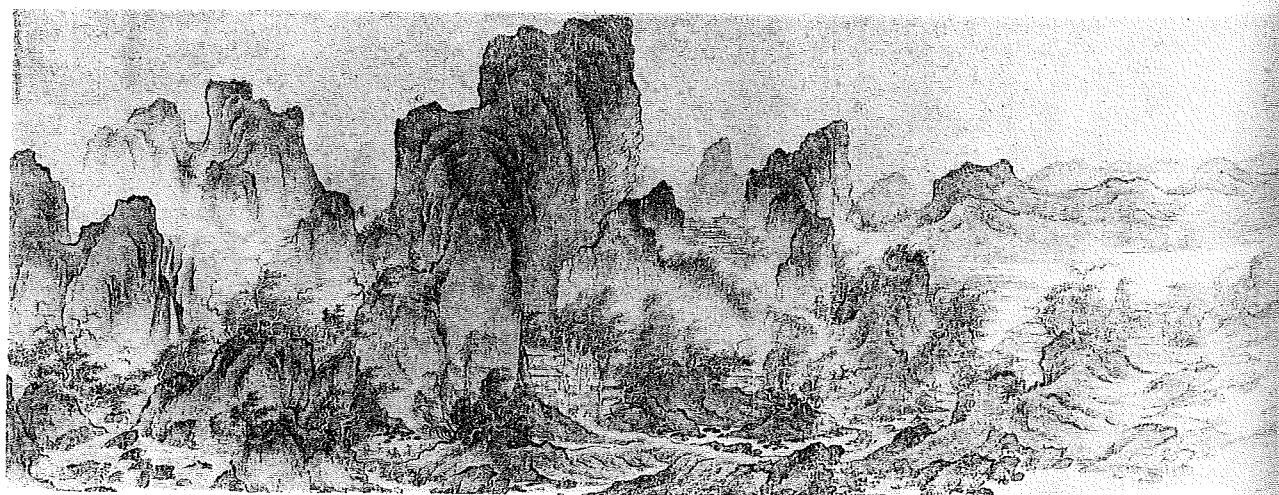


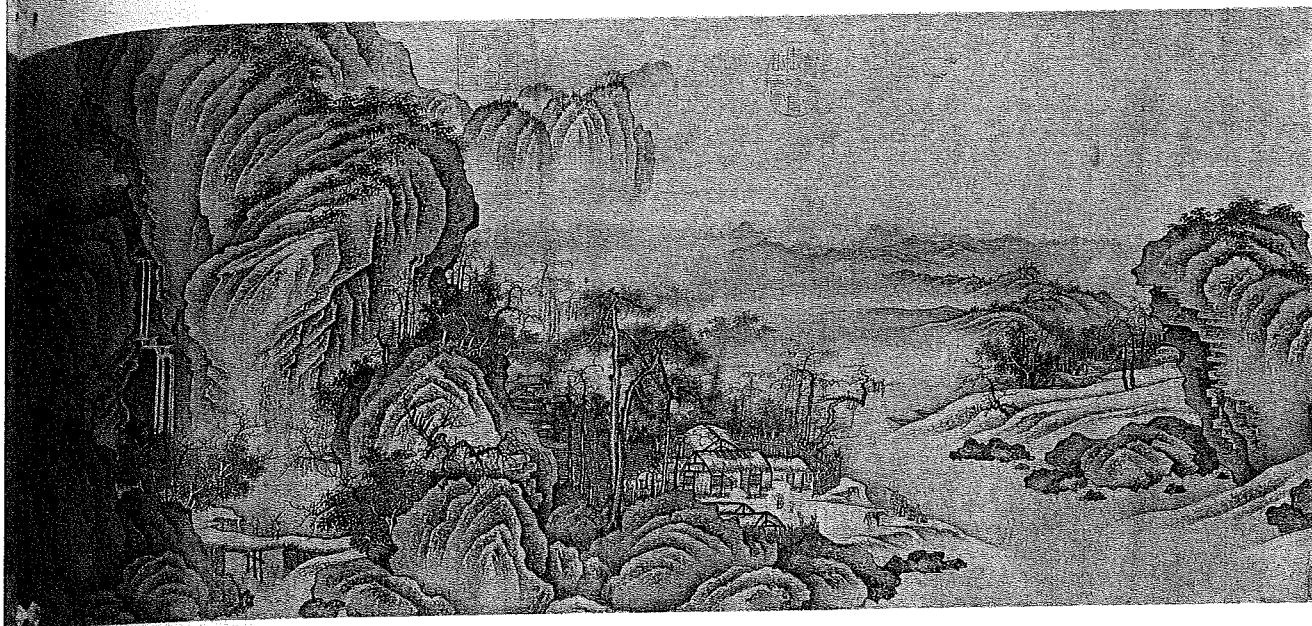
monumental landscape style. Modeled after a composition similar to Yen Wen-kuei's *Pavilions Among Rivers and Mountains* (fig. 39), it displays scallop-edged mountain folds with a mixed dotted and ax-cut texture pattern and intricately drawn spiky branched trees in the tradition of Li Ch'eng and Kuo Hsi. Painted at a time when Southern Sung landscapists usually depicted Chiang-nan in a softly intimate and naturalistic style (pl. 54), the archaistic idiom represented an expressionist mode with a strong emotional element. In precisely drawn hard-edged images, the handscroll created for the southern urban dwellers a nostalgic return to the heroic mountains and streams of their lost northern homeland.

The realistic landscape structure of *Buddhist Temple in Autumn Mountains* is achieved at the expense of its power to suggest infinite space. When compared with the awesome vistas of the early Northern Sung landscapes of Yen

Pl. 15. After Yen Wen-kuei (active ca. 970–1030). *Buddhist Temple in Autumn Mountains*, mid-13th century. Detail, Handscroll, ink and light color on silk, 12 1/16 x 126 1/2 in. (32.5 x 321.4 cm). Purchase, The Dillon Fund Gift, 1983 (1983.12)

Fig. 39. Yen Wen-kuei (active ca. 970–1030). *Pavilions Among Rivers and Mountains*. Detail. Handscroll, ink and light color on paper, 12 1/2 x 63 1/2 in. (32 x 161 cm). Osaka Municipal Museum of Art





Wen-kuei and Ch'ü Ting (pl. 10), its peaks and valleys seem physically contained and measurable. In marking the end of the monumental tradition of landscape painting, however, this archaistic work of the thirteenth century, with its schematic texture pattern, nevertheless defines and establishes the early Northern Sung Fan K'uan-Yen Wen-kuei landscape idiom for later landscape painters. By the time a full-scale revival of Northern Sung styles was under way during the fourteenth century, this handscroll composition had become an important prototype for late Yüan and early Ming landscape painters, who increasingly turned to art rather than to nature for inspiration.

1. Kenneth Clark, *Landscape into Art* (New York: Icon, 1979), p. ix.
 2. For T'ao Ch'ien's "Peach Blossom Spring," see Herbert A. Giles, *Gems of Chinese Literature*, 2d ed. (London: B. Quaritch, 1923), pp. 104-5.
 3. Tu Fu, *Tu Kung-pu shih-chi* (The Poems of Tu Fu) (Hong Kong: Chung-hua Shu-chü, 1972), vol. 1, p. 38.
 4. The term "space cells" was first used by Ludwig Bachhofer in *A Short History of Chinese Art* (New York: Pantheon, 1946), pp. 94-97.
 5. Tsuji Nobuo discusses T'ang cityscapes in "Rakuchü-rakugai-zu and the Beauty of Tang: Two Observations from the Viewpoint of Comparative Art History Between China and Japan," in *International Symposium on Art Historical Studies*, 4th, 1985, Kyoto: *The Representation of Genre in East Asian Art*, edited by Shimada Shûjirô (Osaka: Society for International Exchange of Art Historical Studies, Osaka University, 1986), pp. 54-58.
 6. For the history of transmission of these two compositions, see Robert E. Harist, Jr., "A Scholar's Landscape: *Shan-chuang t'u* by Li Kung-lin" (Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 1988), pp. 192ff.
 7. For Wang Wei's life and painting, see Marsha L. Wagner, *Wang Wei* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1981); for translations of Wang Wei's quatrains, see Pauline Yu, *The Poetry of Wang Wei: New Translations and Commentary* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980).
 8. For a study of the different surviving versions of the composition, see Kohara Hironobu, "Ôi-ga to sono denshō sakuhin" (Wang Wei's Paintings and Attributed Works), in *Bunjinga suihen* (A Selective Collection of Literati Painting) (Tokyo: Chûō Kōronsha, 1975), vol. 1, pp. 125-45.
 9. The scholar is pictured in various settings: seated in the Thatched Lodge, in the Leafy Shade Lodge, under the Canopy over Green Court, in the Chamber of Understanding the Origin, lounging by the Cloud Brocade Torrent, by the Soothing Rapids, or standing atop the Upside-Down (that is, reflecting) Terrace, and the Pillowing Mist Plateau. For a discussion of the problems relating to this set of paintings, see Hsü Fu-kuan, *Chung-kuo i-shu ching-shen* (The Spirit of Chinese Art) (T'ai-chung: Tung-hai Ta-hsüeh, 1966), pp. 485-525.
 10. See Kenneth K. S. Ch'en, *Buddhism in China: A Historical Survey* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), pp. 133, 182.
 11. See Fung [Feng] Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, translated by Derk Bodde (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952-53), vol. 2, pp. 465ff.
 12. See *ibid.*, p. 491.
 13. See John Hay, *Kernels of Energy, Bones of Earth: The Rock in Chinese Art*, exhib. cat. (New York: China House Gallery, China Institute in America, 1985); and Richard M. Barnhart, *Wintry Forests, Old Trees: Some Landscape Themes in Chinese Painting*, exhib. cat. (New York: China House Gallery, China Institute in America, 1972).
 14. See Chang Yen-yüan, *Li-tai ming-hua chi* (Record of Famous Paintings in Successive Dynasties; completed 847), in Yü An-lan, ed., *Hua-shih ts'ung-shu* (Compendium of Painting Histories) (Shanghai: Jen-min Meishu Ch'u-pan-she, 1963), vol. 1, *chüan* 10, p. 121.
 15. See Shimada Shûjirô, "Ippin gafû ni tsuite," *Bijutsu kenkyû* 161 (1950), p. 267; translated by James F. Cahill, "Concerning the I-p'in Style of Painting, I," *Oriental Art* 7, no. 2 (Summer 1961), p. 68.
 16. See under Chang Ts'ao, in Chang Yen-yüan, *Li-tai ming-hua chi*, in Yü An-lan, *Hua-shih ts'ung-shu*, vol. 1, *chüan* 10, p. 121.
 17. See Yü Chien-hua, ed., *Chung-kuo hua-lun lei-pien* (Classified Compilation of Writings on Chinese Painting) (Hong Kong: Chung-hua Shu-chü, 1973), vol. 1, p. 605; for an English translation, see Kiyohiko Munakata, *Ching Hao's "Pi-fa-chi": A Note on the Art of Brush* (Ascona, Switz.: Artibus Asiae, 1974), pp. 12, 21 n. 14.
 18. *Ibid.*
 19. See Fung Yu-lan, *History of Chinese Philosophy*, vol. 2, especially pp. 435-42, 454-64.
 20. See Willard J. Peterson, "Making Connections: 'Commentary on the Attached Verbalizations' of the *Book of Change*," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 42, no. 1 (June 1982), pp. 67-116.
 21. See Yü Chien-hua, *Chung-kuo hua-lun lei-pien*, vol. 1, p. 607.
 22. *Ibid.*
 23. *Ibid.*, p. 608.
 24. Teng Ch'un, *Hua-chi* (A Continuation of the History of Painting; preface dated 1167), in Yü An-lan, *Hua-shih ts'ung-shu*, vol. 1, *chüan* 9, p. 71.
 25. Mi Fu, *Hua-shih* (History of Painting); quoted in Ch'en Kao-hua, ed., *Sung Liao Chin hua-chia shih-liao* (Historical Source Materials on the Painters of the Sung, Liao, and Chin Dynasties) (Beijing: Wen-wu Ch'u-pan-she, 1984), p. 161.
 26. See Barnhart, *Wintry Forests, Old Trees*, pp. 16-17, 28.
 27. See Wai-kam Ho, "Li Ch'eng and the Mainstream of Northern Sung Painting," in *Proceedings of the International Symposium on Chinese Painting, National Palace Museum, Taipei, 18-24 June 1970* (Taipei, 1972), pp. 251-83.
- In dating *Travelers in a Wintry Forest* to the early twelfth century, we follow the analytical scheme as proposed in Wen C. Fong et al., *Images of the Mind: Selections from the Edward L. Elliott Family and John B. Elliott Collections of Chinese Calligraphy and Painting at the Art Museum, Princeton University*, exhib. cat. (Princeton: Art Museum, 1984).

- pp. 20–22, figs. 13–15. According to this analysis, landscape composition from about 700 to about 1300 developed in three distinct stages. In the first stage, additive motifs recede in separate sequences (ca. 700–ca. 1050); in the second, motifs range back in a continuous sequence (ca. 1050–ca. 1250); and in the third, elements are integrated spatially along a continuous ground plane (ca. 1250–ca. 1300). In *Travelers in a Wintry Forest*, the snow-covered mountain slopes that range from the foreground into the background are stacked up vertically on the picture plane. This method of suggesting continuous recession without an integrating ground plane dates the painting to the early twelfth century.
28. See Hiromitsu Ogawa, "Inchū no meiga" (Famous Paintings in the Academy), in *Chūgoku kaigashī ronshū: Suzuki Kei sensei kanreki-kinen* (Essays on Chinese Painting in Honor of Professor Suzuki Kei's Sixtieth Birthday) (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1981), pp. 23–85.
 29. *Ibid.*, p. 34.
 30. A phrase used to describe a work by the early Northern Sung master Yen Wen-kuei; see translation by Alexander C. Soper of *Kuo Jo-hsü's Experiences in Painting (T'u-hua chien-wen chih): An Eleventh Century History of Chinese Painting Together with the Chinese Text in Facsimile* (Washington, D.C.: American Council of Learned Societies, 1951), p. 173, n. 504.
 31. *Hsüan-ho hua-p'ü* (Catalogue of the Imperial Painting Collection During the Hsüan-ho Era; preface dated 1120), in Yü An-lan, *Hua-shih ts'ung-shu*, vol. 2, *chüan* 11, p. 117.
 32. Kuo Hsi's *Lofty Ambition in Forests and Streams (Lin-ch'üan kao-chih)*, compiled by his son Kuo Ssu, comprises the following chapters:
 1. Preface by Kuo Ssu
 2. Lessons on Landscape (Shan-shui hsün)
 3. Ideas in Painting (Hua-i)
 4. Methods of Painting (Hua-chüeh)
 5. Topics of Painting (Hua-t'i)
 6. Notes on the Paintings of Kuo Hsi (Hua-ko shih-i)
 7. The Record of [Kuo Hsi's] Painting (Hua-chi)
 8. Colophon by Hsü Kuang-ning, dated May 24, 1117
- See Suzuki Kei, "Rinsen kōchi shū no gaki to Kakuki ni tsuite" (Kuo Hsi and "The Record of [Kuo Hsi's] Painting" in Kuo's *Lofty Ambition in Forests and Streams*), *Bijutsushi* 109 (November 1980), pp. 1–11; translated into Chinese by Wang Wei-ming, "Lin-ch'üan kao-chih chi Hua-chi yü Kuo Hsi," *Mei-shu yen-chiu* 4 (1982), pp. 70–76.
33. See Yü Chien-hua, *Chung-kuo hua-lun lei-pien*, vol. 1, p. 632.
 34. *Ibid.*, p. 633.
 35. *Ibid.*, p. 642.
 36. *Ibid.*, p. 639.
 37. *Ibid.*
 38. *Ibid.*, p. 642.
 39. *Ibid.*, p. 639.
 40. See Suzuki Kei, *Chūgoku kaigashī* (History of Chinese Painting) (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1981), vol. 1, pp. 231ff.
 41. Yü Chien-hua, *Chung-kuo hua-lun lei-pien*, vol. 1, p. 640.
 42. *Ibid.*, p. 634.
 43. *Ibid.*, p. 644.
 44. *Ibid.*, p. 643.
 45. *Ibid.*, p. 631.
 46. "The Record of [Kuo Hsi's] Painting" (Hua-chi); see Suzuki, "Rinsen kōchi shū no gaki to Kakuki ni tsuite," p. 3.
 47. See Shimada, "Ippin gafū ni tsuite," p. 267; translated by Cahill, "Concerning the I-p'in Style," p. 68.
 48. Teng Ch'un, *Hua-chi*, in Yü An-lan, *Hua-shih ts'ung-shu*, vol. 1, *chüan* 9, p. 72.
 49. See Ch'en Kao-hua, *Sung Liao Chün*, pp. 434–35.
 50. See Teng Ch'un, *Hua-chi*, in Yü An-lan, *Hua-shih ts'ung-shu*, vol. 1, *chüan* 10, p. 76.
 51. See Yü Chien-hua, *Chung-kuo hua-lun lei-pien*, vol. 2, p. 667; see also Robert Maeda, *Two Twelfth-Century Texts on Chinese Painting*, Michigan Papers in Chinese Studies, 8 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1970), p. 25.
 52. See Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilization in China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), vol. 5, part 2, p. 209, note b.
 53. See Giles, *Gems of Chinese Literature*, pp. 104–5.
 54. See Richard M. Barnhart, "Streams and Hills Under Fresh Snow, Attributed to Kao K'o-ming," in Alfreda Murck and Wen C. Fong, eds., *Words and Images: Chinese Poetry, Calligraphy, and Painting* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1991), pp. 223–46.