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The Bulletin of
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Women scarcely appear in the chronicles of traditional China. When they do, they are mentioned principally in supporting roles. They are rarely the focus of the accounts in the histories; in part, by omission, such works accommodated the traditional views of women.¹ Confucian ideology tended to emphasize the accomplishments of men while according women few privileges and rights.²

As a result, only a small number of women attained prominent positions or achieved renown in a specific profession. Political decision-making was in the hands of men, and only infrequently did women wield political power. The few women who governed traditional China are accorded harsh, biased treatment in the Chinese chronicles. Chinese histories often portrayed the Princess née Lü of the Han dynasty, the Empress Wu of the T'ang, and the Empress Dowager Tz'u Hsi of the Ch'ing, the most prominent female rulers in the worst possible light.³ They were represented as

¹Such omission has led to the following kinds of stereotypes of women as "downtrodden, lacking in legal rights, hobbled by the bindings of her feet, and at the service, body and soul, of her husband and his family." (As cited in R. W. Guisso and Stanley Johanneson, eds., Women in China: Current Directions in Historical Scholarship (Philo Press: Youngstown, New York, 1981), p. vii.)

²See Marina H. Sung, "The Chinese Lieh-nü Tradition" in Guisso and Johanneson, pp. 63-74. The literature on women in China, in Western languages, is now voluminous. For a preliminary survey, see Morris Rossabi, "The Chinese Communists and Peasant Women, 1949-1962," Columbia University M. A. Thesis (1964) and Karen Wei, Women in China: A Selected and Annotated Bibliography (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1984).

³On the Princess née Lü, see Denis Twitchett and Michael Loewe, eds., The Cambridge History of China, Volume I, The Ch'in and Han Empires, 221 B. C.-A. D. 220 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 135-136; on the Empress Wu, see R. W. Guisso, Wu Tse-t'ien and the Politics of Legitimation in T'ang China (Program in East Asian Studies, Western Washington University, 1978), p. 156, who writes: "up to the present day the people of the area [Wu's birthplace in Kuang-yüan county in Szechwan] have continued to observe the twenty-third day of the first month of the lunar calendar as the day they believe to be her birthday. No emperor of China could ask for a finer tribute." On the Empress Dowager, see, among numerous other sources, the popular but well-written account by Marina Warner, The Dragon Empress (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1972). The same kinds of omissions and negative treatment of powerful women in Europe are discussed in two recent works: Antonia

capricious, conniving, a corrupt, and the Chinese sources are replete with anecdotes attesting to their rapaciousness, their nepotism, and their milder deeds. Similarly, the more incredible reputed actions of Chiang Ch'ing during the Cultural Revolution may, instead of being totally reliable accounts, reflect some of the same biases on the part of contemporary Chinese reporters or historians, though it is perhaps too early for a proper historical perspective on her role in the 1960s and 1970s.⁴ With such stereotyped or biased historical materials, the historian is faced with serious obstacles in assessing the contributions of women in traditional China.

Cultural historians confront even greater difficulties in trying to discover and describe the works of women poets, essayists, artisans, and painters. Since literacy was relatively rare among women, few notable female writers made their mark in Chinese literature.⁵ The Han dynasty essayist Pan Chao, labelled by her biographer as the "foremost woman scholar of ancient China," was one such rare literary figure. Born to a distinguished family -- her father Pan Piao was a historian; her brother Pan Ku wrote with her assistance, The History of the Former Han Dynasty (Han shu); and her other brother Pan Ch'ao was an eminently successful military commander in Central Asia -- her talents were surely recognized and nurtured. But it is no doubt of significance that the work for which she is most recognized offered advice on etiquette and morality for women that conformed to the Confucian model. She counseled women to be obedient, humble, and respectful and to seek harmony with their in-laws. A woman's responsibility, according to Pan, was to:

guard carefully her chastity; to control circumspectly her behavior; in every motion to exhibit modesty; and to model each act on the best usage, this is womanly virtue. To choose her words with care; to avoid vulgar language; to speak at appropriate times; and not to weary others (with much conversation), may be called the characteristics of womanly words. To wash and scrub filth away; to keep clothes and ornaments fresh and clean; to wash the head and bathe the body regularly, and to keep the person free from disgraceful filth, maybe called the characteristics of womanly bearing. With whole-hearted devotion to sew and to weave; to order (to prepare) the wine and food

Fraser, The Warrior Queens (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1988) and Bonnie S. Anderson and Judith Zinsser, A History of Their Own (New York: Harper & Row, 1988, 2 vols.).

⁴See Roxane Witke, Comrade Chiang Ch'ing (Boston: Little, Brown, 1977).

⁵Evelyn Rawski's Education and Popular Literacy in Ch'ing China (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1979), the most important work on the subject, does not deal with female literacy. But Joanna F. Handlin's "Lu K'un's New Audience: The Influence of Women's Literacy on 16th-Century Thought" (in Margery Wolf and Roxane Witke, eds., Women in Chinese Society, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975, pp. 13-38) asserts that literacy rates among women in the urban areas increased during the late Ming and early Ch'ing periods.

for serving guests, may be called the characteristics of womanly work. These four qualifications characterize the greatest virtue of a woman.⁶

Women such as Pan Chao whose values and writings upheld the traditional world view were more likely to have their works transmitted from one generation to another and to survive. The Sung poetess Li Ch'ing-chao is still another renowned woman who conformed to convention. An accomplished poetess, she broached some of the same themes as other poets of her time and did not challenge the Confucian orthodoxy. Yet, "in ancient China, where most women lived in seclusion and were by tradition kept in ignorance, Li Ch'ing-chao had the good fortune to live free as a human being." Li, nonetheless, did not deviate from the accepted standards for womanhood.

During the era of the so-called barbarian dynasties (approximately tenth to fourteenth centuries) in China, historians were more likely to notice the accomplishments of women, and women indeed had greater political, social, and cultural opportunities. The nomads of the steppes, the hunters of the forests, and even the few farmers of the plains who constituted the population of the "barbarian" dynasties generally accorded women higher status and more rights than in China. Women played such vital economic roles and undertook such critical military, social, and economic responsibilities that it was imperative to grant them substantial authority. The Mongol rulers of China, often the subjects of criticism by Chinese and Western historians alike, provided numerous opportunities for women to distinguish themselves. Women in the Mongol nobility often participated in the politics of the domains conquered by the steppe nomads. Chinggis Khan's mother, Hö'elün, Ögödei Khan's wife Töregene, and Khubilai Khan's mother Sorghaghtani Beki and his wife Chabi all were extremely influential in the political history of the Mongols.⁷ Absence of sources prevents us from determining the position of non-elite women in Mongol society. Sufficient examples of assertive and prominent elite women are mentioned, however, so that it seems evident that many women in the Mongol nobility had considerably greater rights and privileges than other women in contemporary East Asia.

In this context, it is not surprising that several women achieved some renown in the Mongol domains in China in the thirteenth and fourteenth

⁶Nancy Lee Swann, Pan Chao: Foremost Woman Scholar of China (New York: Twayne, 1966), p. 41.

⁷Hu Pin-ching, Li Ch'ing-chao (New York: Twayne, 1966), p. 41.

⁸See Herbert Franke, "Women under the Dynasties of Conquest" in Lionello Lanciotti, ed., La Donna Nella Cina Imperiale e Nella Cina Repubblicana (Florence, 1980), pp. 23-44.

⁹Morris Rossabi, "Khubilai Khan and the Women in His Family," in Wolfgang Bauer, ed., Studia Sino-Mongolica: Festschrift für Herbert Franke (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1979), pp. 153-180.

centuries. This is not to say that non-elite women enjoyed more rights and responsibilities than in other periods of Chinese history. It is simply that exceptional women were enabled to come to the fore. One of Khubilai's daughters, for example, was independent and was fervent in her religious beliefs and became a prominent Buddhist nun in the Miao-yen temple in Ta-tu (the Yüan dynasty name for Peking).¹⁰ Princess Sengge, one of Khubilai's great granddaughters, gathered together a spectacular collection of Chinese art.

Another contemporary of Khubilai's, Kuan Tao-sheng, was the most renowned woman painter of this era.¹² The subjects of her paintings, bamboo, orchids, and plum blossoms, were cherished by contemporary connoisseurs but were perceived as less significant and more as decorative than provocative. This attitude was transmitted to later generations and is exemplified in an evaluation by a leading Western authority earlier in the twentieth century: "The feminine touch in the pictures of Kuan Fu-jen [Kuan Tao-sheng] is unmistakable and contributes to make them interesting, though not very important, works of art."¹³ Such judgements ignore the severe limitations in the lives of Chinese women. Art historians in the West have recognized that the circumscribed lives of European and American women artists affected their choice of themes and subjects.¹⁴ Chinese women artists, traditionally confronted with many more limitations, selected themes and subjects within their purview. Conventional aesthetic standards developed for Chinese male artists may not be relevant as criteria in evaluating women artists, and in particular in judging the works of Kuan Tao-sheng.

¹⁰Morris Rossabi, Khubilai Khan: His Life and Times (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), p. 226.

¹¹On Sengge's collection, see Fu Shen, Yüan-tai Huang-shih Shu-hua Shou-ts'ang (Taipei, 1981) and Marsha Weidner, "Yüan Dynasty Court Collections of Chinese Paintings," Central and Inner Asian Studies 2 (1988), pp. 10-16.

¹²I should like to thank the following art historians for offering me valuable advice, offprints of their articles, or bibliographic information: Robert Mowry (of the Sackler Museum, Harvard University Museums), Marsha Weidner (University of Virginia), Jerome Silbergeld (University of Washington), William Talbot (Cleveland Museum of Art), and Richard Vinograd (Stanford University). They are not, of course, responsible for the shortcomings and differing interpretations in the article.

¹³Oswald Siren, A History of Early Chinese Painting, Volume Two: From the Sung to the End of the Yüan Dynasty (London: The Medical Society, 1933), p. 129.

¹⁴Linda Nochlin, Women, Art, and Power, and Other Essays (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), p. 15. See also the evaluations in Ann Sutherland Harris and Linda Nochlin, Women Artists: 1550-1950 (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1978).

Born in 1262 in Wu-hsing (in the province of Chekiang), Kuan Tao-sheng spent her childhood living under a dynasty that was rapidly losing ground to the Mongols of North China. Corruption, incompetent rulers, an inequitable tax structure, ill-conceived military strategies, and a declining army and navy all contributed to the growing weakness of the Southern Sung dynasty. During Kuan Tao-sheng's childhood, chaos prevailed. Internecine conflicts among eunuchs, bureaucrats, and military commanders demoralized and disillusioned ordinary Chinese. Such unsettled conditions surely affected the young girl, and she and many other Chinese yearned for stability.

Her family and background, however, offered Tao-sheng an advantage over most Chinese. She had the security derived from a direct link with one of the most illustrious figures in Chinese history. Kuan Chung (d. 645 B. C.), the principal adviser to the ruler of the state of Ch'i (in the modern province of Shantung), one of the most powerful and important states of its day, and the originator of a uniform and centralized tax and military system, as well as the presumed author of the classic text, the Kuan-tzu, was her reputed ancestor, giving her a claim to a remarkable lineage.¹⁵ The Kuan clan, according to the histories, fled at some unspecified time south to Wu-hsing. They made their marks in their new abode as well. Reaching to Tao-sheng's own time, her father Kuan Chi-fu was locally prominent and was particularly renowned for his generosity. Like most women of that time, her mother is barely mentioned in the histories, and thus next to nothing is known of her.

Little is known of Tao-sheng's own early life. She was originally named Chung-chi, which means second daughter. It may be that she had an older sister, but the sources are silent about this or any other sibling. It is clear that she did not have any brothers because after her marriage her husband, recognizing that her family had no male descendants to continue offerings to the ancestral spirits, built a "Taoist" temple as a lasting memorial to his in-laws. Without competition from a male sibling, Tao-sheng was doubtless accorded much attention from her family, and she thrived in what was for a girl of that time an unusual environment. The family had greater expectations of her and offered her greater opportunities precisely because she had no brothers. She responded to these challenges as she was extremely precocious. Unusual also for the women of her age, she received an education, was literate, and in fact eventually became renowned for her calligraphy. She was perceived as extremely intelligent and talented. Her father, impressed by the towering abilities, was convinced, in the perhaps stereotyped views of the traditional histories, that she would marry a gifted scholar.¹⁶

¹⁵On this remarkable thinker and activist, see W. Allyn Rickett, trans. and ed., Kuan-tzu: A Repository of Early Chinese Thought, Volume One (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1965).

¹⁶Ch'en Pao-chen, "Kuan Tao-sheng ho t'a-te chu-shih t'u," [Kuan Tao-sheng and the National Palace Museum "Bamboo and Rock"] Ku-kung chi-k'an 11:4 (1977), pp. 52-53.

Yet her family did not pressure Tao-sheng to marry young. In fact, she married at a much later age than most of that era's Chinese women, the vast majority of whom were betrothed in their early teens. The family waited patiently for the right match because Tao-sheng was remarkable. Their patience was rewarded with the appearance on the scene of Chao Meng-fu (1254-1322), whom later generations would regard as the greatest painter and calligrapher of the dynasty.¹⁷ Chao, also a native of Wu-hsing, may have known the Kuans before this time, but it was only after the death of his first wife that he renewed acquaintances with these former neighbors. A widower with five young children, one son and four daughters, Chao was eager to remarry and to have a manager for his household and a mother for his offspring. In 1289, a match was negotiated, leading to a marriage between two exceptionally talented people.

Chao was already renowned though he had been criticized for his political choices. Descended from the imperial family of the Sung dynasty, he had maintained a low profile during the first decade after the Mongol conquest of South China. In 1286, however, Khublai Khan, seeking capable men to help him govern, had sent a Confucian official named Ch'eng Chü-fu on a talent search.¹⁸ Ch'eng traveled to the south and selected two dozen Chinese, including Chao Meng-fu, to serve at court. Chao impressed Ch'eng not only with his scholarly accomplishments, his poetry, and his paintings, but also with his competence in practical affairs. Chao had as yet not produced many of the works for which he would later be recognized as a great artist. Nonetheless, he was sufficiently well known to be chosen by Ch'eng, to be highly regarded by Khublai, and within a year to be appointed Director (Lang-chung) of a section in the Ministry of War.¹⁹

Such a spectacular rise did not deflect criticism of his (and, by extension, Kuan Tao-sheng's) willingness to serve the Mongol conquerors of China. Chao was particularly susceptible to such criticism because of his apparent disloyalty to his relatives, however distant they might be, the imperial family of the Southern Sung dynasty. He sought to

¹⁷There are numerous studies of this greatest of Yüan dynasty calligrapher-painters. A fine English-language summary of his career is found in Li Chu-tsing, The Autumn Colors on the Ch'iao and Hua Mountains: A Landscape (Ascona: Artibus Asiae Publishers, 1965). See also Wen Fong, Images of the Mind (Princeton, The Art Museum, Princeton University, 1984) and Herbert Franke, "Dschau Mong-fu: Das Leben eines chinesischen Staatsmannes, Gelehrten und Künstlers unter der Mongolenherrschaft," Sinica 15 (1940), pp. 25-48.

¹⁸For more on Ch'eng, see the sources listed in Combined Indices to Thirty Collections of Liao, Chin, and Yüan Biographies (Harvard-Yenching Institute Sinological Index Series No. 35; San Francisco: Chinese Materials Center, Inc., 1974 reprint).

¹⁹Translation of government terms is based on Charles O. Hucker, A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985).

defend himself by asserting that he was helping to sinicize the Mongols and to protect fellow Chinese. Yet occasional twinges of guilt intruded in his poetry, his painting, and his correspondence -- as, for example, in a letter to his friend Chou Mi, who chose not to work for the Mongols: "Tomorrow morning -- rise again at the rooster's crow; Disappointed again -- my desire to doze in the shade of flowers at high noon. Three years wearily have I served as secretary in the Ministry of State, Even in dreams my heart is never away from native place."²⁰ More often, he rationalized his collaboration with the Mongols: "Each person lives his life in this world according to his own times; whether to come forth and serve, or to retire in withdrawal, is not a fortuitous decision."²¹

The controversy swirling around Chao's seeming defection to the Mongols surely affected Kuan Tao-sheng, but she was at first preoccupied with her home. Within a year after her marriage, she gave birth to a son, given the name Yung. She also moved from her native town to the new capital at Ta-tu (near modern Peking), a change that required numerous adjustments. It took time for her to get used to the colder climate, the diet (less rice and fruits and vegetables and more grains), and the dialect. Bereft of family and friends, she was frequently by herself, as her husband pursued his career and tended to affairs at the Ministry of War. The large, imposing alien presence (which included Mongols and Muslims from Central Asia and Persia) in the capital also contributed to her sense of isolation. She was clearly looking for a pursuit or a diversion from household and children, and it seems likely that she turned to painting at this time as a form of relaxation or amusement.

There is no evidence that she studied with Chao, but the fact that he served as an instructor to his sons and grandchildren increases the possibility that he taught his wife as well. Her earliest extant paintings are dated from the time after her marriage. Though she may have dabbled in painting earlier, she became much more serious at this point. In his epitaph for his wife, Chao asserted that she had not been trained as a painter and instead had "received a gift from Heaven."²² Yet exposure to her husband's works undoubtedly influenced her own artistic development, and he must have discussed some of his aesthetic views with her. After all, they shared this common interest and pursuit.

²⁰Jennifer Jay Preston, "The Life and Loyalty of Chou Mi (1232-1298) and His Circle of Friends," Papers on Far Eastern History 28 (September, 1983), pp. 85-86.

²¹Frederick W. Mote, "Confucian Eremitism in the Yüan Period," in Arthur Wright, ed., The Confucian Persuasion (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960), p. 236; see also Li Chu-tsing, "The Role of Wu-hsing in Early Yüan Artistic Development under Mongol Rule," in John D. Langlois, ed., China under Mongol Rule (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), pp. 343-348.

²²Elizabeth Toll, "Kuan Tao-sheng: A Study and Translation of the Primary Sources," Harvard University B. A. Thesis (1978), p. 52.

It is difficult to compress Chao's views on calligraphy and painting, but a few, in particular, shaped Kuan Tao-sheng's artistic career. Chao repeatedly asserted that painters ought to go beyond "from-likeness" -- that is, the aim of painting was not merely to replicate Nature. Instead a painting ought to convey the "spirit resonance" (*ch'i-yün*) of the artist. It should capture the personal quality of the painter. The artist's own style and state of mind ought to emerge from a viewing of the work. Chao's own style entailed an attempt to recreate "the spirit of antiquity." He wished to distinguish his paintings from those of the Southern Sung dynasty and to return to the more classically oriented works of the T'ang and Northern Sung dynasties.²³ He found the bird and flower paintings of the Southern Sung, for example, overly decorative and academic and lacking depiction of the artist's style. Instead he proposed a return to the T'ang and Northern Sung type of paintings which would not be mere imitations but which would mesh with the classical spirit and be more orderly and symmetrical than Southern Sung painting.

Kuan Tao-sheng apparently adopted some of these views from the outset of her career as a painter. Her extant paintings often exemplify Chao's principles. When she painted bamboo, she strove for more than absolute reproductions. The various bamboo paintings attributed to Kuan Tao-sheng appear to have focused on more than a straight-forward, realistic depiction. A careful analysis of Kuan Tao-sheng's paintings is stymied, however, by false attributions. A number of works formerly credited to her have been proven to be later copies. Similarly, an essay on bamboo earlier believed to have been composed by her (entitled *Mo-chu p'u* or *Essay on Ink Bamboo*) was actually written by Li K'an, one of the foremost bamboo painters of the Yüan dynasty.²⁴ Kuan's authenticated bamboo paintings, nonetheless, fit in with Chao's views of not settling for "form-likeness."

Kuan's artistic development was shaped not only by her husband's aesthetic but also by her travels after her marriage. Once the couple had married, Kuan accompanied Chao back to the Yüan dynasty capital at Ta-tu in 1289. Here she and Chao were able to see T'ang and Northern Sung paintings which simply were unavailable in the South. Though Ta-tu did

²³For a summary, see James Cahill, *Hills Beyond a River: Chinese Painting of Yüan Dynasty, 1279-1368* (New York: Weatherhill, 1976), pp. 38-46; for a more complete analysis of Chao's beliefs on the "spirit of antiquity," see Li Chu-tsing, "The Uses of the Past in Yüan Landscape Painting," in Christian F. Murck, ed., *Artists and Traditions: Uses of the Past in Chinese Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), pp. 80-85, and Richard Vinograd, "Some Landscapes Related to the Blue-and-Green Manner from the Early Yüan Period," *Artibus Asiae* 41 (1979), pp. 105-106.

²⁴On Li K'an's bamboo paintings, see Chang Kuan-pin, "Li K'an and Revival of Bamboo Painting in the Style of Wen Tung," *National Palace Museum Bulletin* 13:5 (November-December, 1978), pp. 1-14; and on another early Yüan painter of bamboo, see Martha Sutherland, "K'o Chiu-ssu, A Bamboo Painter of the Yüan Dynasty: A Brief Introduction," *National Palace Museum Bulletin* 16:1 (March-April, 1981), pp. 1-13.

not have a great tradition in painting and, as Li Chu-tsing has pointed out, was "perhaps not the city most receptive of the artists,"²⁵ it still had substantial collections of early Chinese paintings. Kuan and Chao were exposed to the works of Wang Wei, Wen T'ung, Li ch'eng, and Kyo Hsi, great painters and calligraphers of the T'ang and Northern Sung.²⁶ They had the opportunity to view the official collections at the court. As an official with a growing reputation and great prestige, Chao could readily gain access for himself and his wife. During his initial three year appointment in Ta-tu, therefore, Chao and Kuan took a remarkable course in Chinese art, an education that shaped their future artistic careers.

While studying the past masters of Chinese painting and moving with her husband as he assumed government positions in different parts of China, Kuan also managed to superintend her various households and to give birth to at least eight children. She had two sons, Chao Yung (b. 1290) and Chao I. She is credited in some sources with a third son, Chao Liang, who was reputedly the eldest child and died in infancy, but since Chao Yung was born within a year of her marriage, it appears unlikely that Liang was her son.²⁷ Chao Yung became an important painter in his own right, and his son, Chao Lin, in turn, pursued an artistic career. Kuan's descendants therefore continued the family tradition in the arts, and in fact several generations collaborated on a number of paintings and scrolls. One such collaborative venture produced a painting composed of three segments, the one by Chao Meng-fu of a white horse with a groom in a pale red costume, another by Chao Yung of a youth in red horseback shooting at birds on a tree, and still another by Chao Lin of a man, also in red, seated by a tree looking at a horse.²⁸ Together with her

²⁵Li Chu-tsing, "The development of Painting in Soochow during the Yüan Dynasty," *Proceedings of the International symposium on Chinese Painting* (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 1972), p. 484. See also Marilyn Wong Fu, "The Impact of the Reunification: Northern Elements in the Life and Art of Hsien-yü Shu (1257?-1302) and Their Relation to Early Yüan Literati Culture" in John Langlois, ed. *China under Mongol Rule* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), pp. 372-295.

²⁶For Wen T'ung, see the lamentably brief biography of him found in Herbert Franke, ed., *Sung Biographies: Painters* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1976), pp. 150-151; for Wang Wei as a painter, see Marsha Wagner, *Wang Wei* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1981), pp. 150-172, and for his poetry, see Pauline Yu, *The Poetry of Wang Wei* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980).

²⁷Chao Meng-fu, *Sung-hsüeh-chai wen-chi*. Ssu-pu ts'ung-k'an ed., (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1929), 17b does, however, include Liang as one of her sons.

²⁸On this series of paintings, see Li Chu-tsing, "Three Horses by Three Members of the Chao Family," *Workshop on Chinese Figure Painting*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1985; on another work by Chao Yung, see Jerome Silbergeld, "In Praise of Government: Chao Yung's Painting, *Noble*

husband, Kuan must have developed considerable time and effort to encouraging Chao Yung from earliest days to pursue his artistic bent.

Organizing her household in Ta-tu was also time consuming, but the effort seemed worthwhile, as her husband assumed higher offices and greater responsibilities. In 1290, Chao was promoted to the position of Auxiliary Academician (chih hsüeh-shih) in the Academy of Scholarly Worthies (chi-hsien yüan), one of the principal tasks of this agency being to lure recalcitrant, perhaps somewhat disaffected, scholars into government service. The example of Chao himself, a descendant of the Sung imperial family, served as a model for others who might waver when representatives from the government sought to recruit them. The somewhat more than partial success in this recruiting effort was matched by his advocacy of currency reform and his opposition to the despised Tibetan official Sengge who was deposed and shortly thereafter executed.²⁹ Court satisfaction with Chao's performance led to still another promotion. In 1292, he was assigned to the Supervisorate-in-chief (tsung-kuan fu) of Chi-nan in the province of Shantung. Kuan once again had to move her belongings and household to another location. She did so in order to promote her husband's career, a career that was also abetted by Khubilai Khan who was impressed with Chao's talents.³⁰

Chao and Kuan, however, were to move again within a few years. Khubilai died in February of 1294, and the following year Chao was called back to the capital to work on the Historical Records (shih-lu) of Khubilai's reign as a first step in the writing of an account of Khubilai's era. Chao and Kuan, for some unexplained reason, did not wish to return to Ta-tu or to government service. Perhaps Chao had a strong personal bond with Khubilai and could not conceive of serving another Mongol leader.³¹ Or it may be that Kuan and he were weary of official responsibilities and wanted to return to their native land. Or they may have wished to devote uninterrupted time to their art. Whatever their motives, Chao, feigning illness, requested and received permission to go back to their birthplace of Wu-hsing.

During this sabbatical, Kuan began to paint seriously. In 1296, she completed "The Purple Bamboo Retreat," a scroll that is now part of the T. Moriya collection in Kyoto, and the following year she first portrayed a subject, bamboo, that was to be the major preoccupation for the rest of her artistic career. Her painting "Tall Bamboo Growing By Rocks," now at the Princeton Art Museum, was the first of her efforts to

Steeds, and Late Yüan Politics," Artibus Asiae 46:3 (1985), pp. 159-198.

²⁹Sung Lien et al., Yüan shih (Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1976), 172: 4019-4020.

³⁰Ch'en Kao-hua, Yüan-tai hua-chia shih-liao (Shanghai: Jen-min mei-shu ch'u-pan-she, 1980), pp. 38-39.

³¹On Khubilai's role as a patron of the arts, see Marsha Weidner, "Painting and Patronage at the Mongol Court of China, 1260-1368," (University of California at Berkeley Ph. D. Dissertation, 1982).

portray a traditional subject.³² Painting bamboo was surely an ideal choice for a comparative beginning because of "the close affinity with calligraphy." The brush strikes were reminiscent of those employed in calligraphy, and Kuan, who was trained in calligraphy from childhood, could more readily make the transition to this art form. Representational art required, according to many art historians, more sophisticated technical skills immediately; painting of plants, particularly bamboo, was more accessible for the less technically accomplished Kuan. Yet, along with its deceptive simplicity, bamboo painting had numerous positive artistic features. The bamboo, often a symbol of purity and simplicity, could serve to express a wide range of emotions, from bleakness to anger. On the other hand, realistic depictions of bamboo could also be an important objective of the artist, and here Kuan introduced some innovations. Describing her "A Bamboo Grove in Mist," which is now part of the Yale University Art Gallery collection, James Robinson noted that "one of Guan Daosheng's great achievements was the reintegration of bamboo into a landscape setting, and an acknowledged innovation of hers was the depiction of bamboo clumps, particularly a grove of bamboo in mist after fresh rain."³³ Such flexibility would serve Kuan well in her numerous paintings of bamboo, which were by no means always alike in tone, theme, or objective. Though Tung Ch'i-ch'ang, An Ch'i, and several other connoisseurs praised Kuan for her bamboo paintings, they still patronized her. One connoisseur wrote, for example, that her use of the brush had not "the slightest similarity to traditional female (styles of painting)."

Her and Chao's brief sojourn and sabbatical in their native land ended, however, with his reassignment to the north in 1297. In that year, the government ordered Chao to go to Fen-chou (in the T'ai-yüan area of modern Shansi province) to help administer the region which according to the perhaps stereotyped writings in the Chinese accounts meant to bolster the army and to encourage agriculture. Shortly thereafter, he was able to return to his native land in Wu-hsing where he supervised the Chiang-che Confucian scholars and later became Magistrate of T'ai-chou.³⁴ For about a decade he and Kuan remained in their beloved South China, with both of them having some time to pursue their art. Of great help in their artistic endeavors was the fine group

³²A partial listing of her paintings in China is found in E. J. Laing, Chinese Paintings in Chinese Publications, 1956-1968 An Annotated Bibliography and An Index to the Paintings (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 1969), pp. 125-126; a more complete listing is in Marsha Weidner, et al., Views from Jade Terrace: Chinese Women Artists, 1300-1912 (New York: Rizzoli, 1988), pp. 179-180. For the authenticated works of Kuan, see James Cahill, An Index of Early Chinese Painters and Paintings (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), pp. 293-295.

³³Cahill, op.cit., p. 159.

³⁴Ch'en Kao-hua, p. 40.

of T'ang and Northern Sung paintings they had collected during their stay in the North.³⁵

Such inspiration from the masters of Chinese painting confirmed Kuan's ambitions as an artist as well as her particular interest in painting bamboos. During her decade-long stay in the South, she produced quite a number of her attested paintings. Most depicted the bamboos that characterized her oeuvre. She reputedly (art historians question how many of these works ought to be attributed to her) completed the "Two Branches of Bamboo" (in the Yurinkan in Kyoto) in 1305, the "Bamboo Groves in Mist and Rain" (in the National Palace Museum in Taipei) in 1308, and the "Bamboo" (a handscroll in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston) in 1309. Yet she was also credited with several portraits -- one of "Lady Su Hui and Her Rebus" (a handscroll in the Fogg Art Museum which may be a Ch'ing copy and not necessarily Kuan's own work) and another of "Kuan-yin with a Fish Basket After Wu Tao-yi" (a handscroll now in the Osaka Municipal Museum). Her bamboo paintings were distinctive for their elegance. Bamboo was depicted as thin and delicate rather than in large clumps. Such technique required greater sophistication and brush control than ordinary bamboo paintings.

Perhaps the most significant event in Kuan's life during this time was her encounter with the Ch'an Buddhist Chung-feng Ming-pen.³⁶ The Mongol dynasty of China had favored Buddhism in the thirteenth century and, in fact, had supported the Buddhists in an ideological, political, and economic struggle with the Taoists. Mongol rulers had tended to patronize more practical and less meditative Buddhist sects than Ch'an, emphasizing in particular the Tibetan Buddhists. Yet patronage of Tibetan Buddhism translated into prosperity and renewal for most of the Buddhist sects. In 1291, as a result, there were 213,148 Buddhist monks and nuns and 42,318 temples and monasteries in China.³⁷ Another indication was that in 1317, "the units of catties required for Buddhist rituals conducted in the palace chapel in each year amounted to 439,500 catties of flour, 7,900 catties of oil, 21,870 catties ghee, and 27,300 catties of honey."³⁸ During Khubilai's reign 102 court 500 such rituals a year were recorded.

³⁵On his collection, see Richard Vinograd, "Some Landscapes Related to the Blue-and-Green Manner from the Early Yüan Period," *Artibus Asiae* 41 (1979), p. 106.

³⁶See Chun-fang Yu, "Chung-feng Ming-pen and Ch'an Buddhism in the Yüan," in Hok-lam Chan and W. T. de Bary, eds., *Yüan Thought: Chinese Thought and Religion under the Mongols* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), pp. 419-477.

³⁷Paul Ratchnevsky, "Die mongolischen Grosskhane und die buddhistische Kirche," in Johannes Schubert, ed., *Asiatica: Festschrift Friedrich Weller zum 65. Geburtstag* (Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz, 1954), p. 497.

³⁸. Yu, *op. cit.*, pp. 420-421.



Kuan Tao-sheng, "A Bamboo Grove in Mist"

Ink on paper handscroll, 15 x 112.4 cm
Used with permission of the Yale University Art Gallery

Chung-feng Ming-pen was the most prominent Ch'an Buddhist of the Yüan dynasty. Originally based in and having received the tonsure in Mount T'ien-mu (in modern Kiangsu), Chung-feng moved away after the death of his master and continued to move around central China. He led a peripatetic life partly to avoid appointment as abbot of any monastery or any administrative position, but he was willing to instruct others and to meet with disciples. He was concerned about the decline of monastic discipline and about the growing dependence of some Ch'an masters on intellectual means to achieve enlightenment. Attempting to deal with these problems, he first wrote a handbook of monastic rules and then emphasized faith and non-intellectual pursuits as the way of Ch'an Buddhism.

Kuan and Chao both came under the influence of the great Ch'an master. Chung-feng himself wrote that he met the couple in 1304. The number of visits and meetings that the two artists and the Buddhist monk had is unknown, but their frequency was sufficient to have a profound impact on Kuan in particular. A letter from Kuan, which was sent after she and Chao were compelled to return to Ta-tu so that Chao could undertake another administrative responsibility, reveals her respect and reverence for him. She repeatedly referred to him as a "master" and an "august presence" and stated her belief that his prayers could ensure that her parents and in-laws reached the Pure Land and attain Buddhahood. Such attributions surely indicates a remarkable faith in Chung-feng's abilities. Kuan also mentioned that she had received the sutras and other writings sent to her by the Ch'an monk and was looking forward to even more guidance. A note of homesickness crept in to her letter when she stated that she wished to return to her native land to perform sacrifices in her household and to receive instruction in person from Chung-feng.³⁹ She ended the letter by identifying herself as his "female disciple." Unfortunately Kuan did not reveal much about her religious views, though she presumably subscribed to Chung-feng's doctrines.

Ch'an Buddhism was useful for an artist of Kuan's sensibility. The meditation techniques associated with Ch'an promoted tranquillity while her painting in and of itself illustrated Ch'an principles in its focus on a calm representation of Nature. Her paintings are not cluttered and not full of activity. Nature is in repose in her paintings, which complements the Ch'an emphasis on contemplation. Her paintings thus inspired meditation and reflected her Ch'an master's views. Intuition rather than appeal to the intellect was the desired response. Her paintings therefore often embodied one of the more sophisticated philosophies of East Asia. Yet critics downplayed the significance of her work partly because of the subjects she painted. This was somewhat of a double standard, as male artists who depicted similar subjects were not scorned. Cheng Ssu-hsiao, for example, painted orchids and bamboos, but his choice

³⁹Ch'en, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-56.

of subject did not automatically disqualify him from consideration as a major painter.⁴⁰

Kuan's and Chao's relatively contemplative and placid existence was almost shaken by his desire to take a concubine. In the early 1300s, Chao wrote a poem (tz'u) seeking to justify his longing to bring another woman or other women into his bedroom. Like many Chinese scholars or philosophers or poets who tried to develop compelling arguments for specific ideas or actions, Chao cited historical precedents to support his proposal. He pointed to the calligrapher Wang Hsien-chih (344-?), son of the great calligrapher Wang Hsi-chih, and the Sung poet and calligrapher Su Tung-p'o as renowned artists who had been permitted several concubines.⁴¹ If these remarkable men were not accused of violating the Confucian moral code, it would not appear unseemly for him to have concubines. To clinch his argument, Chao noted that Kuan was more than forty years of age and ought not to prevent the arrival of younger women in the household. Kuan responded with a poem (tz'u) of her own, reminding her husband of their earlier passionate love ("as hot as fire"). She then offered an image that would be familiar to Westerners with a Biblical frame of mind:

"If one took a lump of clay and kneaded it into a 'You' and molded it into an 'I,'
Then took the two of us and smashed [us] together,
Used water to mix [the] clay
And once again shaped a 'You' and once again molded an 'I,'
In the 'I' clay there would be you, and in the 'You' clay there would be 'I.'"⁴²

Even more touching, she observed that in death they would share the same grave. She made no mention of his desire for a concubine. Nor did she dispute his claim that prominent artists of the past had had concubines. In fact, the poem is not couched as debate or an argument. Kuan merely emphasized the positive features of their relationship and elicited memories of their closeness and, by implication, of the distancing that might occur with the intrusion of an outsider. This subtle, non-aggressive approach was compelling, for Chao did not bring a concubine into the household.

Chao perhaps redeemed himself by his concern for Kuan's family. Her parents had died without producing a son, who could carry out the ancestral sacrifices. Filial piety would require her to find a way to continue the rituals of ancestor worship. She tried at first to adopt a willing male into the family but eventually abandoned her efforts because she could not locate a suitable man. Her subsequent plan was to

⁴⁰On Cheng, see his biography by Li Chu-ting in Franke, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-23.

⁴¹See Burton Watson, trans., *Su Tung-p'o: Selections from a Sung Dynasty Poet* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965).

⁴²Toll, *op. cit.*, Appendix, p. 59.

build a shrine adjacent to her parents' home and to recruit a Taoist priest, not only implemented this plan but was even more expansive. He bought thirty mou (approximately 6.6 mou to an acre) of land as an endowment for the expenses of the rituals and for the support of the priest. Both Chao and Kuan earned the praise of later Confucians. Chao was clearly impressed with Kuan's devotion to her parents because he wrote a highly laudatory essay praising her filial piety.⁴³ Such devotion no doubt made his decision to refrain from taking a concubine much more palatable to such a good Confucian as Chao.

Other evidence of Kuan's devotion to family is found in Chao's description of her and her activities. He wrote about her in a letter to her parents and in her epitaph, indicating that she was exceptionally capable and efficient in managing the family's finances. Judging from her own letters, she seems often to have played a significant role in decisions concerning the couple's estate in Wu-hsing. Even when she was traveling in other parts of China, she sent instructions to relatives and underlings about the disposition of questions or problems, relating to family properties. In her letters, she might have been transmitting the joint decisions of Chao and herself. Nonetheless, the fact that she took part in such discussions and decisions was remarkable. Her instructions were specific and detailed and revealed considerable knowledge of the fiscal and other matters in the estate.

she ordered her representatives and retainers to buy specific parcels of land, instructed them on the collection of loans, and advised them to offer donations at the sacrifices commemorating the death of an abbot who had performed valuable services for her and her family.⁴⁴ Here she showed a masterfulness, an assertiveness, and a decisiveness that one would not ordinarily expect from Chinese women in traditional times. Moreover, the knowledge and decisiveness were demonstrated in fiscal matters where women customarily had no authority. Chao credited Kuan with excellent management of the household and with living up to the requirements of a good Confucian wife, but she clearly went beyond mere supervision of servants and the immediate household. She was not only adept at "management of affairs of the home..., [and] entertaining guests and maintaining social relations" but also at all the family's financial affairs, allowing Chao, according to his own biography, to "concentrate on poetry and calligraphy."⁴⁵

Kuan and Chao had to correspond with the managers of the estate because the court recalled them to North China in 1310. The Crown Prince, who within a year became the Jen-ting emperor, appointed Chao as Academician Reader-in-waiting (shih-tu hsüeh-shih) in the Han-lin Academy, the most important scholarly body in China, and gave him the honorary title of Chung-feng tai-fu while Kuan was granted the honorary rank of Wu-hsing chün fu-jen. In 1313, Chao was promoted to the office of Recipient of Edicts (ch'eng-chih) in the Han-lin Academy, and Kuan was

⁴³Chao Meng-fu, *op. cit.*, 7, 11b.

⁴⁴Ch'en, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

⁴⁵Toll, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

also advanced to Wei-kuo fu-jen (Madame of Wei Kingdom).⁴⁶ Except for a year's leave of absence during which Chao and Kuan erected a building in Wu-hsing to honor Kuan's parents, they remained in Ta-tu for most of the remainder of Kuan's life.

Chao and Kuan each independently received accolades from the imperial family. The Jen-tsung emperor commissioned Kuan to copy the Ch'ien-tsu wen (One Thousand Character Classic) in her calligraphy, which he prized highly. He had it mounted and placed in the Imperial Library, asserting that "this is to let later generations know that our dynasty had a woman who excelled in calligraphy..."⁴⁷ At least one Mongol emperor was clearly delighted that the dynasty was hospitable to talented women and fostered conditions that permitted them to express their creativity. The Empress too was impressed with Kuan's work and was solicitous of this remarkable woman artist, treating her as an honored guest on at least one occasion mentioned in the sources. The court and, in particular, the empress also admired Kuan's painting, and, according to one account, prized specifically a representation of a plum blossom she had fashioned.⁴⁸

Despite this evidence of imperial favor and possibly patronage, Kuan was apparently discontented in the North. She longed for her house, her friends, and her relations in Wu-hsing. The harsh climate and the less attractive scenery of Ta-tu depressed her and made her increasingly homesick for the warm and the lush vegetation of her homeland. Moreover, she must have felt somewhat uncomfortable with the large contingent of non-Chinese, (Mongols, Tibetans, and Central Asians, for example) in Ta-tu. She also expressed her disillusionment in several poems written during this time. The honors, the blandishments, and the headiness of official life in the capital had palled for her. As she wrote in one of her poems,

[I] pine at a distance for [my] home in the mountains,
with its several trees of plum blossoms,
Despite the cold the jade blossoms are opening on the southern
branches,
The moon shines on the mountain, and the dawn breeze blows,
It is only because of their pure fragrance that I bitterly want to
return home.⁴⁹

Despite her gloom and unhappiness in the capital, she continued to paint, producing some fine work, depicting bamboo, mountain landscapes,

⁴⁶Yüan shih 172: 4021; on the Jen-tsung emperor, see Francis W. Cleaves, "The Bodistva-Carita-Avatar-un Tayilbur of 1312 by Cosgi Odsir," Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies 17 (June, 1954), pp. 1-129.

⁴⁷Toll, op. cit., p. 18.

⁴⁸Ch'en, op. cit., p. 61.

⁴⁹Toll, op. cit., p. 18.

and horses.⁵⁰ Her husband was similarly productive. While performing his official duties and assisting in writing a history of the early Yüan reigns, he remained an exceptionally prolific painter and calligrapher. He completed an astonishing variety of paintings of horses, bamboo, Buddhist images, and landscapes during this period at the court in Ta-tu. This remarkable output of paintings by both Kuan and Chao suggests that though they professed to be unhappy and homesick, their artistic creativity was certainly not impeded by their sojourn in the Mongol capital.

In the late 1310s, however, Kuan became quite ill. She contracted beri-beri and was gradually debilitated by the ailment. Throughout the winter of 1318, the Emperor repeatedly sent Imperial Physicians to visit her and to prescribe a cure. None of these prescriptions was effective, and her condition worsened. Recognizing that she was near death, the Emperor permitted Chao to escort her back to her beloved homeland in the South. On May 15, 1319, they departed with plans to travel, visit the recently constructed extension of the Grand Canal (which had been one of Khubilai Khan's major public works projects) toward Wu-hsing.⁵¹ Their ship left from Chih-ku and sailed on the Wei river toward Lin-ch'ing (in Shantung). On May 29, Kuan died as they reached Lin-ch'ing. The convoy continued on its melancholy trip southward to Wu-hsing, and Kuan was finally put to rest at the foot of the Tung-heng mountains in Ch'ien-ch'iu township (hsiang) near Wu-hsing. According to the perhaps stereotyped observations in the Chinese accounts, Chao was overwhelmed with grief at her death. He expressed his profound sadness to the Buddhist monk Chung-feng who had had such a strong relationship with and such a marked influence on him and Kuan, implying that he could not cope with even practical day-to-day affairs.⁵² Though this version may be somewhat idealized, nonetheless, Chao requested that he be placed in the same tomb as his wife. When he died four years later, he was buried as he had wished.

Kuan Tao-sheng would probably have produced her fine calligraphy and paintings under any conditions, yet Mongol rule in China, with its relatively greater opportunities for women, may have encouraged her to pursue her artistic career and facilitated acceptance of her work. It is surely ahistorical to romanticize or idealize the Mongols, but on the other hand their generally negative image ought not be used to deny their contributions to Chinese civilization. Kuan's is certainly a case where the Mongol rulers patronized and, on occasion, subsidized her and her husband's artistic career.

⁵⁰Weidner, op. cit., ppl 179-180.

⁵¹Rossabi, Khubilai Khan, pp. 188-190 on the Grand Canal.

⁵²Ch'en, op. cit., p. 60.

GLOSSARY

Chao I 趙奕	mou 畝
Chao Liang 趙亮	Pan Chao 班昭
Chao Lin 趙麟	Pan Ch'ao 班超
Chao Meng-fu 趙孟頫	Pan Ku 班固
Chao Yung 趙雍	Pan Piao 班彪
Cheng Ssu-hsiao 鄭思肖	shih-lu 實錄
ch'eng-chih 承旨	shih-tu hsueh-shih 侍讀學士
Ch'eng Chu-fu 程鉅夫	Su tung-po 蘇東坡
chi-hsien yüan 集賢院	Ta-tu 大都
Chi-nan 濟南	T'ai-chou 泰州
ch'i-yün 氣韻	T'ai-yüan 太原
Chiang Ch'ing 江青	T'ien-mu 天目
Ch'ien-ch'iu hsiang 錢秋鄉	tsung-kuan fu 總管府
Ch'ien-tzu wen 千字文	Tung-heng 東衡
Chih-ku 直沽	tz'u 詞
Chung-chi 仲姬	Wang Hsi-chih 王羲之
Chung-feng Ming-pen 中峰明本	Wang Hsien-chih 王獻之
Chung-feng tai-fu 中奉大夫	Wang Wei 王維
Fen-chou 汾州	Wei-kuo fu-jen 魏國夫人
Kuan Chi-fu 管直夫	Wu-hsing 吳興
Kuan Chung 管仲	Wu-hsing chün fu-ren 吳興郡夫人
Kuan Fu-jen 管夫人	
Kuan Tao-sheng 管道昇	
Kuo Hsi 郭熙	
lang-chung 郎中	
Li Ch'eng 李成	
Li Ch'ing-chao 李清照	
Li K'an 李衍	
Lin-ch'ing 臨清	
Miao-yen 妙岳	
Mo-chu p'u 墨竹譜	

BOOK REVIEWS

State and Scholars in T'ang China. By David McMullen. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988. Pp. x, 423, bibliography, index and glossary.

During my tenure (now ending) as Book Review Editor, I have solicited reviews for all publisher-sent books, except a novel and two books on Japan that clearly did not fall within the scope of the Bulletin. Although State and Scholars in T'ang China deals with the era before the one covered by the Bulletin, it is of such relevance to major views becoming current in Sung and Yüan studies that an exception should be made. Hence, I will very briefly highlight some of the contributions of this noteworthy book.

Professor McMullen has written a well-balanced and detailed survey of Confucian scholarship during the T'ang. In discussing scholarship on the classics, histories, governance, ritual, and belles lettres, he demonstrates that common trends throughout these complex topics fit into three periods: the two founding reigns; the years from 650 to 755; and lastly the period after the An Lu-shan rebellion. Such factors as degree of state power, relative peace, and numbers of scholars are put forth as causes for the differences between periods. As such, he links intellectual history to social--and especially political--developments. In the process, he suggests that the social and economic backgrounds and experiences of T'ang scholars are too mixed for us to apply the simple term "elite." Although one might be skeptical about the degree of poverty claimed by some members of prominent lineages, McMullen's suggestion deserves consideration by those of us in the Sung period who have expended so much effort in defining the elite. We have tended to focus either upon centralization and autocratic power at the national level or upon local studies in which the power of the central government appears inconsequential. Moreover, we have used degree of involvement in polity and society at the national level to define a watershed change in the nature of the elite from the Northern to the Southern Sung. Perhaps, we should consider similar patterns in other dynasties. Comparative study might further accent such factors as the ones McMullen emphasizes. This is not a call for a return to a dynastic-cycle interpretation of history, but some of our studies might be enriched by paying closer attention to similar phenomenon in other periods.

McMullen's study is particularly helpful in setting forth the complexity of being Confucian during the T'ang. In contrast to some Sung scholars in recent years, he does not restrict "Confucian" to refer to pedants commenting upon the canon or to scholars committed to particular doctrines. McMullen understands that many T'ang scholars had commitments to Confucian values and scholarship; moreover, although not formalized or detailed, there were expectations about those who were associated with the values and learning of earlier Confucians. Although not as clearly delineated and articulated as our own polemics would require, McMullen's sense of the variety of T'ang Confucian views and priorities might serve as a corrective to our tendency to apply later definitions or standards for being Confucian. For instance, T'ang scholars surely had in mind