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The Love of Nature: Hsü Hsia-k'o and his Early Travels

Chi Li

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尋山訪友

THE LOVE OF NATURE:
Hsü Hsia-k'ö and his Early Travels

LI CHI

*Issued in Cooperation with the
Department of Asian Studies
University of British Columbia*

*Occasional Paper No. 3
Program in East Asian Studies
Western Washington State College*

霞客先生遺像

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PREFACE

I have enjoyed the diaries of Hsu Hsia-k'o¹¹ for many years; never dillettantish, he was a veteran traveler and a thorough observer. The factual quality of his writing convinces me that his information is reliable as much as his disdain of affection, although often suggesting simplicity, ensures that his writing will always be fresh. Although all his diaries can be read with equal interest, those written during mountain visits are the most rewarding and important. They have a single focus and thus avoid the tediousness of, for example, the diaries written in Kweichow and Yunnan¹¹. Moreover, readers will find greater pleasure in the descriptions of the great mountains because their monasteries, academies and ruins, known through poetry and prose to generations of Chinese, form a vital part of China's cultural history. An awareness of this linkage should help readers in making their study of Chinese literature more intelligent and meaningful. Although the geographical information in these diaries is less important, a student of geography may find something of interest. I have prepared this translation primarily, however, for the general reader interested in the natural scenery of China and for the student of literature concerned about a significant portion of the field in which Chinese literature was created.

I wish to thank Richard Copley, Carlo Hensen, William Holland and my editor, Henry Schwarz, for help in preparing this manuscript for publication. I also wish to thank the Tsing Hua Foundation and the Canada Council for grants in support of my project.

University of British Columbia
September 2, 1971

Li Chi

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Chapter I

The Chinese Love of Nature

Any work on Hsu["] Hsia-k'o and his travels would be deficient without some sketch of the man's human and natural environment. Hsu's["] family, his life and the political conditions of his time will be discussed in Chapter II. In this introductory chapter I will attempt to present his natural environment, or more precisely, nature as it has been perceived by the Chinese from the dim past through Hsu's["] own time until the present.

My remarks will try to interpret the Chinese attitude toward nature and their appreciation of it as may be ascertained from records of various kinds. Like many other peoples, the Chinese have merely achieved a partial and biased understanding, conditioned as they are by their natural environment, their way of life, and tradition of thought.

In common with other races in their early stages of development, the ancient Chinese in their constant contact with nature evolved a complete mythology of gods and spirits who controlled the forces of nature and destinies of man. They connected their happinesses and sorrows with the phenomena of the physical universe. Although different powers were attributed to different deities and the deities were many, the overall attitude was monotheistic, as an impersonal spirit, Heaven, was the recognized omnipotent force. Later, other thoughts and beliefs arose and were widely held, but the belief in Heaven and the mutual influences between Heaven and man have continued to stand in the foreground and remain the one unshaken belief for all Chinese.

Heaven itself does not speak, but its will is manifested in

the phenomena of the physical universe. Hence, to divine the will of Heaven became the primary motive of the whole nation. The high and the low, the learned and the ignorant, all made unceasing attempts to decipher nature in order that they might discover the meaning concealed behind the myriad appearances of things, and model their ways according to it. A constellation could not wander outside its orbit, a tree could not bloom out of season, an earthquake could not occur anywhere, a stalk of rice could not bear a different number of ears, nor could an oddly glowing cloud be seen in the sky, without being duly noticed by these zealous watchers of nature and construed as a smile or frown of Heaven.

There is in this perfect reliance on nature no room for doubt and criticism, but plenty for fostering love and reverence. In this, the emperor was the first to set an example. With the advice, no doubt, of his ministers, he built an altar of Heaven and an altar of Earth before which he worshipped. In time he canonized certain mountains and worshipped there. He conferred honor on other mountains and appointed officials to be sky-watchers.

Most importantly, he made the rotation of seasons a set schedule for work as well as for occasions of celebration and rejoicing. Already the legendary Hsia dynasty is credited with an almanac which arranged the positions of the four seasons so that the beginning of the year concurred with the beginning of spring and the full moon always fell on the fifteenth of each month.¹ While it was in use, appropriate ceremonies and festivities were devised to welcome the advent of each season. The farmer planned his work according to the twenty-four solar terms of the year, and everyone watched for the return of the equinoxes and solstices. As a result, the toils and pleasures of daily life were fraught with a consciousness of man's relation to the rotation of seasons. Life, in the idealized concept, was to be an ordered round of labor and celebration. So man had his being in nature, and his days were "bound to each by natural piety." Throughout the centuries,

this reverent intimacy with nature had time to grow deep roots to support a whole nation.

We will now consider how an understanding and appreciation of nature was fostered in two important social classes, the scholars and the peasants. The former were the most articulate and sensitive through their education and travel, and the farmers were the most numerous and most intimately linked with nature's changes in their daily life and work. The knowledge and understanding obtained by these two classes combined to constitute the traditional Chinese attitude toward nature.

The farmer hardly ever travelled farther than his own village or the nearest city, nor did he seek anything beyond the welfare of his "three mou" of fields.² He knew nothing about such fanciful notions as the love and enjoyment of natural beauty. For all the forces of nature which affected him and his fields, he had the general term t'ien lao-yeh 天老爺 (Heavenly Old Master) which implied some affection akin to reverence.

The farmer's fields were his sole concern every day of the year, and here he learned nature's bounty as well as her niggardliness. He knew above all how his success depended upon the harmony between himself and the forces of nature. Because nature's clues must be detected, he bent his whole efforts toward that end and timed his work accordingly. While his face became weather-beaten and his back bent, his sensitivity to nature caused his shrewdness to become sharper and his wisdom more profound. His young son, who trotted by his side, learned about these things from an early age. Thus, generation after generation, this process went on and a sense of owning the familiar land and being owned by it became indelibly implanted in him. When we remember that the farmers formed the great bulk of the population, it is no wonder that nature became woven into the texture of China's daily life.

The legend of the ancient emperor carrying out the annual

ritual of ploughing and his empress carrying out the ritual of weaving began at least as early as the Warring States period (403-221 B.C.) when it was described in the Ku-liang chuan 穀梁傳 (Ku-liang Commentary) and the Kuo-yu 國語 (Conversations of the States). Seeing that agriculture was the foundation of the nation's wealth, emperors of later centuries were wise enough to follow this custom in order to elevate the position of the farmer to one of dignity. Some of them wrote poems to eulogize farming and weaving and had pictures of farming and weaving painted and carved, and ordered their ministers to write poems on them. Thus the grateful farmer was proud of the emperor's patronage and developed a sense of his own importance. Even though he might be poor and overworked, he drew comfort from the thought that he lived in dignified poverty.

The scholar, however, did not work the land. His feeling for nature was developed through education and travel.

The conventional scholar, whose every act had to be sanctioned by Confucius, was lucky that Confucius once approved a pleasure outing in the spring. A passage in the Lun Yu 論語 (Analects) relates how, when four of the master's disciples were in attendance, he asked them one by one what his ambition was. When it came to Tseng Hsi 曾皙, the master said:

What about you?

The notes of the zither he was softly fingering died away; he put it down, rose and replied saying, I fear my word will not be so well chosen as those of the other three. The master said, What harm is there in that? All that matters is that each should name his desire.

Tseng Hsi said, At the end of spring, when the making of the Spring Clothes has been completed, to go with the five times six newly-capped youths and six times seven uncapped boys, perform the lustration in the river I, take the air at the Rain Dance altars, and then go home singing. The master heaved a deep sigh and said, I am with Tien.³

His approval of Tseng Hsi's choice served as an authorization for scholars of later ages to enjoy themselves in spring, as innumerable references of it testify.

The scholar's attitude toward nature was largely formed by impressions and experiences of travel. An important saying which produced a tremendous effect upon the Chinese mind in favor of nature and of travel was made by Ssu-ma Ch'ien 司馬遷 (145-86 B.C.). This great historian of the Former Han dynasty travelled far and wide, freely acknowledging the beneficial influence of travel in forming his personality and helping in his understanding of people, places and nature. His method of acquiring a liberal education resulted in the proverbial saying: "To read 10,000 volumes of books and to walk 10,000 li of road."

The purpose of the 10,000 li walk was not merely to gain knowledge at first hand but acquaint oneself with nature so that one's personality might become broader and deeper. This was by far the most important function of travel. Unlike in Europe where travel was considered the finishing touch of one's education, in China it was a life-long activity.

It is astonishing to realize how much on the move an educated Chinese was bound to be all his life. In fact, the only time he spent at home was the period from birth to the end of his studying days when he was deemed ready to take the local examination. If he were successful, his travels would begin at once, first to the provincial capital and then to the national capital to compete in more examinations. Of the successful candidates, only few would get appointments far from home because it was usually forbidden for a man to hold office in his own province.⁴ Moreover, an official would be periodically reassigned to different locations. Thus, unless a man chose to retire early in life, he would for days on end ride in a cart, on horseback or in a boat and he would witness changes in natural scenery, feel the changes in climate, and see different ways of human life in the pursuance of his

career. In this manner, the experiences of travel awakened many a man's love of nature and increased the love of those who already had it.

Other opportunities for travel arose in the course of an official's career. One way was for the scholar to be a member of the emperor's retinue. Naturally, not many were honored in this manner, but some of them have left us interesting diaries of their travels with the emperor.⁵

Another albeit rather unpopular opportunity to travel was exile. For misconduct or for offenses committed against the emperor, an official would receive a sentence of banishment to a remote place for a certain period of time. If he were lucky enough to escape the graver danger of arrest and escort in custody to the capital for trial, his place of exile was often in the borderlands. As long as the capital was north of the Yangtze, any place south of it was considered fit for banishment, but after the capital was transferred to Chien-yeh 建業 (Nanking) in 317, and the South became the center of culture, a banished official was exiled farther away to such places as Kweichow and Yunnan, and later, beyond the Great Wall.

Usually, it was men of integrity and a strong sense of justice who received such sentences, as it was only such men who would risk an emperor's wrath by pointing out his errors in personal conduct or state affairs. This is how Han Yü 韓愈 (768-824), poet and scholar of the T'ang dynasty (618-905), wrote of his banishment:

In the morning I submitted a memorial to the throne up above nine flights of stairs,
In the evening I received a sentence of banishment to Ch'ao-yang, eight thousand li away.⁶

The misfortune these men suffered brought about some results for which we have reason to be thankful. It was banishment

that gave men of literary gifts a chance for distant travel. Away from the capital, scholars replaced political feuds with the quest of natural beauty and the cultivation of literature. One has only to open the works of any poet or the prose of any dynasty to find how much was written in exile. How they inspired literary interest and spread culture, and what they themselves gained on these travels to strange places in expanding their personality and deepening their understanding of nature, and of men through nature, can be read in their prose and poetry. Those who went into exile contributed more than the other travellers because they were more mature and less preoccupied with ambitious projects than the newly-appointed officials and under less restraint than those in the imperial retinue. Also, they were often men of greater worth and talent.

Consider what Hsieh Ling-yun 謝靈運 (385-433) did in the Eastern Chin dynasty (317-419). Hsieh, an aristocrat and poet, was fond of doing things in grand style, so during his days of banishment when he travelled far and wide in quest of natural scenery, it was his custom to be followed by an entourage of several hundred people. Wherever he went he would have his followers open up roads to inaccessible places in the mountains. Once he employed several hundred people in his entourage to build a road from Shih-nin 始寧 to Lin-hai 臨海 in Chekiang. They caused such a stir that the prefect, Wang Hsiu 王琇, took them to be bandits when he was alerted of their appearance on the hills.

Southwestern Hunan and Kwangsi were virtually uncivilized places in the T'ang period. It was Liu Tsung-yuan 柳宗元 (733-819) who discovered the beautiful regions of Ling-ling 零陵 in Hunan and Liu-chou 柳州 in Kwangsi and made them known to the public by his delightful prose. These are merely some of the best known things done by the best known banished officials.

It should also be remembered that most officials would have their families with them on their travels, whether to an appointed

post or into banishment. Therefore, each member of their families would become acquainted with nature in his own way according to his individuality and capacity. Day after day on those long journeys travellers would "feed on the wind and sleep with the rain." They would go from the cultured north to the barbarous south, or to the mountainous west or far beyond the northern passes. So long was the journey that even after it was over the "trotting of the hoofs of the horses, the dust from the wheels of the cart" would cling to the memory of those who travelled by land, just as the mist trailing on the surface of a river at dusk and the glimpse of a luminous sky in the east at dawn from one's pillow on a boat would cling to the memory of those who travelled on the water.

For the scholar especially, these intrusions of nature into his travelling life became endearing and memorable recollections. Here are some lines written by an unknown Chinese poet who lived three thousand years ago:

At the time when we set out,
Willows bowed gracefully along the road;
Now that we are returning
Snowflakes fill the sky.⁷

Emotion, mingled with the scenes of willows and snow, broods over these lines. The poet loses himself for a moment in his feelings and in his sensual perception of nature and is rewarded by nature with a heightened perception of her beauty. As long as the emotion is familiar to us and willows and snowflakes are seen by us, these lines will remain as fresh as if they had been written only yesterday.

This kind of identification with nature requires no great flights of the spirit. It is the result of an overflowing love for the life of this world, the human ties and their joys and sorrows. This very human and earthly love leads to a realization of the love of nature. How fine sensibility becomes through this

kind of experience can be seen from the old Chinese popular convention of choosing the willow tree as the symbol of parting. What more perfect symbol can be found for the feelings of parting than this tree? Whether in the spring, when its long stems of tender yellow make one's heart leap to look at them, or in the autumn, when the same branches have grown dry and gray and rustle in the west wind, it is sensitive to the tips of its drooping branches and seems to give sympathy and companionship to the parting company. Again, this kind of sensitivity shows that the Chinese, essentially an earth-bound people, do not leave this world to seek God. When they sense the spirit of nature, it is in moments of daydreaming when glimpses come to them through elusive forms of beauty - life, clouds, water, the willow tree - and in moments of sudden realization of the mysterious passage of time itself.

Thus for the Chinese, closely attuned to nature, life was reckoned by springs and autumns, springs with flowers and autumns with bright moons and red leaves. When the first leaf fell from the wu-t'ung 梧桐 tree, the whole world sensed the approach of autumn. So the custom was established for men to reckon the months by the seasonal flowers and fruits, and the days in relation to the shapes and phases of the moon. In a word, man and nature metaphorically interchanged personalities and appearances.

Having said so much about the Chinese understanding and appreciation of nature, it is in order to consider its limitations and biases. Two general observations have been made in modern times regarding this subject. One is that the Chinese people abhor travel, and the other is that they prefer sites with a historical past. Both observations are generally true, but they need clarification.

Anyone acquainted with Chinese literature will be ready to affirm the Chinese people's great attachment to home and dislike of travel. Although the prose and poetry of exiled officials are

full of laments over the hard fate which had befallen them, closer examination of their writings and personal histories reveals quite a different picture. The days of journey and exile, one will find, were put to good use and were as beneficial for the officials themselves as for the places of exile and the people there. Some examples of what these men did have already been cited. Moreover, since officials appointed to distant posts did not express such bitterness at the prospect of travel, we may imply that the laments raised by the banished officials had their roots in the misfortunes of demotion and loss of favor, matters remotely related to travel. So far as experiences are concerned, it is immaterial whether the officials' hearts were light or heavy when they embarked on their journey. The important thing is that they traveled, that they did not deliberately shut their eyes on the journey but gained the beneficial experiences of being in constant contact with nature and people.

The number of officials on the road should not obliterate from our minds a thin stream of travellers who sought the mountains in order to be away from man. The popular love of nature among latter-day scholars in China might not be the love of wild nature, but since ancient times (by which we mean the Warring States period), the places where recluses chose to live were certainly in the wilderness. Chuang Tzu said: "Making towards the marshes and living a quiet and retired life, such are scholars of the rivers and seas. [They] shun the world and love leisure."⁸ During the Han dynasty, one of the scholars at the court of Prince Huai-nan 淮南王 (Liu An 劉安, 179-122 B.C.) wrote a poem entitled "Summons to a Recluse" 招隱 describing forbidding cliffs and wild beasts and concluded that such a place was not fit for him to stay.⁹ This could be taken as proof of the horror with which the Chinese at that time regarded nature in its unrefined state, but we must remember that the poem intentionally exaggerates the rigors of wild nature in order to persuade the recluse to return to

civilization. Moreover, this poem also shows that there actually were people who chose to live in the wilderness. Disorder in the interval between the Ch'in and Han dynasties caused many people to flee to rugged mountains in distant places.

What were other purposes in seeking nature in its wild state, especially in the mountains? If we confine our inquiry to those who travelled for the sake of seeing nature's sights and to those who left records about their travels, we may go back as early as the Chin dynasty. The great monk Hui-yuan¹⁰ 慧遠 (334-417) and other monks climbed the dangerous spot called Stone Gate on Lu Shan. This group left a significant piece on the appreciation of nature.¹⁰ A short time later, the great poet, T'ao Ch'ien 陶潛 (365-427), lived at the foot of Lu Shan and wrote poetry there. Although he was a lover of nature, he did not travel far and wide to discover mountains and crags. Hsieh Ling-yün¹¹, whose exploits have been described earlier, did seek out spectacular scenery and wrote poems to celebrate his discoveries.

From that time on, travel for the sake of seeing nature gradually became so common that names are too numerous to mention. During the T'ang dynasty, Li Po 李白 (699-762) stands out as one who travelled to meet people and visit great mountains. "All my life I have loved to roam on the famous mountains," he wrote, and he did.¹¹ Although there is a certain amount of truth in the argument that Li Po travelled and stayed in the mountains for Taoist training, it is also true that he had an inner urge to free his spirit and mingle with the vast spirit of nature.

The second point, the Chinese preference for natural sights with a historical background, involves more subtle problems. This preference indicates a distaste for what is usually called unspoiled nature, and hence implies a limited capacity for the enjoyment of nature in its totality. This observation is to a great extent true, and to some modern men who chose to live in the wildest parts of the world, the Chinese love of nature may not only

seem trivial but almost artificial. This peculiar Chinese view of nature is deeply grounded in the Chinese way of life and thought. An analysis of it would be extremely complex, so consideration of a few significant points will have to suffice.

From the earliest authenticated records, such as certain sections of the Shu Ching 書經 (Book of History) and the Shih Ching 詩經 (Book of Poetry), it can be seen that the Chinese people have been deeply conscious of history in matters of government and daily life. As the past was never gone, men grew up in its shadow.

A few examples will suffice to show that the past was invariably interpreted as being revealed in the present and that men were conscious of how the present would appear once it became the past. Consider the role of ancestor worship in daily life, or the section entitled "Sung" 頌 in the Shih Ching which consists of songs used in the kings' ancestral temples during worship ceremonies. Or take the regulations and detailed instructions for different ceremonies in the I Li 儀禮 (Ceremonials and Rituals), or read the numerous speeches of diplomats and ministers in the Tso Chuan 左傳 (Tso Commentary) which continually recall the past.

Indeed, the Chinese preoccupation with historical associations in nature is merely part of this total preoccupation with the past, and there exists the feeling that the attractiveness of natural sights is enhanced by connections with history.

In terminology, there is no equivalent in ancient Chinese writings for the English word "nature." T'ien 天, meaning sky or heaven, was the earliest in use to signify the primary force of the universe which gives life to all things. Confucius is reported to have said in his Lun Yu: "Heaven does not speak; yet the four seasons run their course thereby, the hundred creatures, each after its kind, are born thereby."¹²

Later, t'ien was coupled with the word ti 地, meaning earth, and the two terms together came to mean the universe. As a

polarity, t'ien was understood as force and ti as matter. Thus, in Wen-yen 文言, one of the ten appendices of the I Ching 易經 (Book of Changes), heaven is characterized as strong and ceaselessly strengthening itself while the earth is described as gentle and bearing up all things by its rich virtue. The concept of heaven as the perpetually moving force and the earth as the passive, materialistic receptacle was generally accepted, and the combination of the two words reveals the way it was accepted - that the two, the creative force and the created objects, are inseparable.

There was also the term yü-chou 宇宙, meaning not only the universe, but time as well, because yü was interpreted as "the above and below and the four directions" and chou as "the past, present, and future." The characteristic of time is its ever new quality, and what is manifest on the ceaselessly rolling waves of time are the phenomena of the universe. Time, as it is said in the Chuang Tzu 莊子, cannot be stopped, and the life of things follows its flow. The T'uan Chuan 彖傳 (T'uan Commentary) on the feng 豐 hexagram says: "When the sun stands at midday, it begins to set; when the moon is full, it begins to wane. The fullness and emptiness of heaven and earth wane and wax in the course of time. How much more true is this of men, or of spirits and gods!"¹³ Understanding these terms helps one to understand the Chinese view of nature.

An outlook on life and the universe built on fundamental concepts such as these neither rejects the world of nature as entirely illusory nor considers it as entirely materialistic. Nature is real because it is being, but since being comes from non-being, there is the element of non-being in being. And both follow the course of time, the all-compelling principle. The importance given to the concept of time was carried into political rule. It is said in the Li Chi 禮記 (Record of Rituals):

Thus it was that when the sages would make rules [for men], they felt it necessary to

find the origin [of all things] in heaven and earth; to make the two forces [of nature] the commencement [of all]; to use the four seasons as the handle [of their arrangements].¹⁴

Further, since the four seasons rotate and life runs in cycles of death and birth, time, which is conceived of as curling around the universe of things, makes a spiral rather than a straight forward movement. Lao Tzu 老子 stressed the return of everything. In the I Ching, the fu 復 (return) hexagram says: "On the seventh day comes return. This is the course of heaven," and "In the hexagram of Return one sees the mind of heaven and earth."¹⁵

Nurtured in an environment in which the historical past was ever vividly present and in a philosophical outlook in which the world and men were integrated with the basic forces of nature and had their existence as the content of time, it is natural that the Chinese should be prone to find places with historical interest more meaningful and transcendently enjoyable.

In daily life, time needs the alternation of night and day and the change of seasons to make itself felt. For example, one who lives in an even climate can lose a clear sense of time owing to the lack of distinctive seasons and may get the uncomfortable feeling that the passage of his life has been one indistinguishable lump of time. The relationships between man and unspoiled nature and between man and nature with historical connotations is analogous to this. Nature in her virgin state may be to human understanding an unintelligible slumbering mass of matter, awakened only when seen by man. But when human toil takes place on nature's soil, ties are established to unite man and nature. The pleasure a viewer gains from the invasion of nature by human activities is not only a perspective of historical activities but an appreciation and insight into the senses hidden in nature. The pleasure received from natural sights with historical significance is chiefly meditative and philosophical whether it be a desolate wilderness where the grave of the tragic Han court beauty Chao-chün

昭君 lies or an extremely impressive scenic spot like the Red Cliff where Ts'ao Ts'ao 曹操 (155-220) suffered his crushing defeat in 208.

The preference for natural sights with historical connotations represents, after all, only one aspect of the Chinese love of nature. It should not be allowed to detract us from the most common form of love of nature which was manifested in the search for impressive scenery. The peculiar characteristics of China's natural scenery formed the taste of those who were most familiar with them. The famous mountains in China Proper do not rise to tremendous heights when compared to the high peaks on her borders and beyond, but they excel in sensational scenery. Overhanging precipices, weirdly shaped peaks, aged pines more fantastically twisted than any contrived by a gardener's hand, waterfalls ranging from the most haunting in grandeur to the most ethereal in beauty - these are the sights that inspired poets and painters alike.

A new appreciative understanding of nature began in the Eastern Chin period. Hui-yüan's master Tao-an 道安 (312-385), the renowned monk, always chose to live on a mountain. Yü Fa-lan 于法蘭 (fl. early fourth century), another brilliant monk, showed a great love of nature. While in Ch'ang-an, he made his retreat on the surrounding hills, but hearing of the beautiful scenery of eastern Chekiang, he went there on foot and lived on Shih-cheng Shan 石城山.

Tracing the development of the poetic trends in Wen-hsin tiao lung 文心雕龍 (The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons), Liu Hsieh 劉勰 (465?-522?) wrote: "At the beginning of Sung (420-479), some development in the literary trend was evident. Chuang 莊 and Lao 老 had receded into the background and the theme of mountains and streams then began to flourish."¹⁶ As a matter of fact, the monk Hui-yüan and the poets T'ao Ch'ien and Hsieh Ling-yün had already chosen nature as their themes a little

earlier than the time indicated by Liu Hsieh.

This new interest in and attitude toward nature was due to two factors: the influence of a philosophy combining Taoist thought with Buddhist ideas and the migration of the gentry to the warmer and more attractive South early in the fourth century when the Eastern Chin dynasty established its capital in present-day Nanking. For many philosophically minded men, a sensuous delight in nature was fused with a realization that the visible was an embodiment of the Tao 道 (the Way) in which the whole universe, including man, had its being. For them, a towering mountain was admired less for its physical height than for the ethereal nature of its mist-wrapped summit leading their thoughts to the unfathomable. Nature thus became an object of endlessly joyful and quiet contemplation. The examples set by Buddhist monks, the great corpus of nature poetry, and the many landscape paintings since that time have taught the Chinese people how to appreciate nature.

Chapter II

HSÜ HSIA-K'O

Hsü Hsia-k'o 徐霞客 (1586-1641) has been generally regarded as the greatest traveller in Chinese history. Yet he is not as well known outside of China as he deserves to be. The only account in English was written fifty years ago by the modern geographer Ting Wen-chiang 丁文江.¹ This chapter attempts to remedy the situation by relating some known facts about Hsü and his family.

Hsü's remote ancestors may be traced back to the turbulent years of the Sung dynasty when the invading hordes of Khitan Tartars were sweeping down from the north.² The capital was moved from Pien 汴 (Kaifeng) to the south of the Yangtze and finally settled in Lin-an 臨安 (Temporary Security), the present city of Hangchow, whose location promised security against invasion. Like untold thousands of other officials and commoners, Hsü Hsia-k'o's remote ancestor Hsü Ku 徐鉉, then prefectural governor of Kaifeng, also went south with his family and settled in Hangchow. His descendants are known to have lived at such places as Ching-ch'i 荆溪, Yün-chien 雲間 (Sung-chiang), and Ch'in-ch'uan 琴川, all located in the region around Lake T'ai 太湖. The next person we hear of was Hsü Ku's great-grandson Shou-ch'eng 守誠 who during the reign of Ch'ing-yüan 慶元 (1195-1200) of the Southern Sung dynasty became prefect of Wu 吳 county whose seat was in the present city of Soochow. His son, known as Ch'ien-shih-i 千十一 but whose proper name has not come down, retired to the village of Wu-ch'eng li 梧棲里 in Chiang-yin 江陰 at the beginning of the Yüan dynasty.

The descendants of Ch'ien-shih-i settled in Chiang-yin and

became one of the locally famous gentry families. When the Mongols conquered China and established the Yüan dynasty, members of the Hsü clan abstained from seeking official posts, and there is no record of them during the Yüan period.

During the Ming dynasty, several events served to distinguish the Hsü clan in Chiang-yin and keep its name fresh in the minds of the local people.

The Hsü family had a painting which the celebrated painter Ni Tsan 倪瓚 (1301-1374) made for Hsü Ch'i 徐麒 when the latter was only ten years old. Ni Tsan wrote on the painting that he was pleased to find the son of his old friend Chün-p'ing 均平 a promising boy. Therefore, he gave him the name Pen-chung 本中 and painted the picture of a study room for him to express his hopes for the boy's future.³ The boy did not disappoint Ni Tsan when he grew up. The renown of his scholarship and exemplary conduct earned him the honor of being recommended to Emperor T'ai-tsu 太祖 (1368-1398) by an admiring man of high position. In recognition of his worth, the emperor appointed Hsü Chi to a special post in Szechwan to demonstrate the emperor's "benevolence" to the local inhabitants. The bestowal of an honorary office upon a scholar who was not an official was an unusual mark of distinction and an occasion calling for commemoration in verse and painting. Hsü Chi's teacher Sung Lien 宋濂 (1310-1381), statesman and great scholar, and a host of other distinguished men contributed poems and prose pieces.⁴ At a convenient moment later on, Hsü Chi retired from this office and thereby earned for himself the reputation of being a "high" man.

Hsü Chi's two sons, Min 恁 and Yü 恁, maintained the family's good name by each donating two thousand piculs of rice for the relief of a famine during the reign of Cheng-t'ung 正統 (1436-1449).⁵ The emperor acknowledged this "deed of righteousness" by granting them the honorary title Righteous Subjects

義民 along with a statement of merit. To honor and preserve this treasured document, the Hsü brothers erected a building to house it and called it the Chamber of Imperial Script 御書樓. The tributary essay for commemoration was written by the Minister of Rites, Wang Chih 王直 (1379-1462), and the transcript for inscription was done by the noted scholar-official Liu Hsüan (1394-1457).

Min and Yü did not seem to have distinguished themselves in any other way except for Min having a retreat built in a grove of winter plum trees.⁶ Min called it the Winter Plum Snow Study 梅雪軒 and many of his friends wrote poems on its completion.

Min's son, Hsü I 徐頤, attained the rank of chung-shu she-jen 中書舍人. After his death, his tomb essay was composed by the premier Li Tung-yang 李東陽 (1447-1516) and the transcript for inscription was done by Wen Cheng-ming 文徵明 (1469-1559), great painter, calligrapher and man of letters whose home was in nearby Soochow. Somehow, this family heirloom was lost and was not retrieved until Hsü Hsia-k'o traced it and finally succeeded in recovering it by giving in exchange three mou of rice fields.⁷

Hsü I had two sons, Yüan-hsien 元獻 and Yüan-shou 元壽. Yüan-hsien was a precocious boy and was thought to hold great promise, but he died very young, one year after he passed his chü-jen degree examination. A lover of books, Yüan-shou had a library called Ten Thousand Volume Library 萬卷樓.⁸ Yüan-hsien passed the chü-jen degree examination by obtaining the third highest score. His kindheartedness in giving a generous sum of money to his teacher's widow was also recorded in his tomb essay.

One strange incident occurred in this unbroken record of a virtuous, wealthy and scholarly family. It would have marred the illustrious name of the Hsü family if it had been true, but it was an unfounded accusation, and no one gave it credit. It

concerned Yüan-hsien's son, Ching 經. Ching was noted for his literary talent, yet the story was circulated that he had bribed the chief examiner's page to obtain the examination questions for the chü-jen degree.⁹ Much affected by this calumny, Ching named the collection of his writings Pen-kan chi 賁感集 (Works of Indignation) and soon thereafter died in the capital.¹⁰

Soon after Ching's death, two of his sons moved from Wu-ch'eng li to neighboring villages.¹¹ His youngest son Chan 沾 moved to Sha-shan 沙山, east of Chiang-yin, and his second son Ch'ia 洽, who was Hsü Hsia-k'o's great-grandfather, moved to the village of Yang-ch'i 陽岐 on the northern bank of the Huang. Ch'ia's son Yen-fang 衍芳 moved to the southern bank of the Huang to a village called Nan-yang-ch'i 南陽岐.

Hsü's great-grandfather Ch'ia and his grandfather Yen-fang were both men of some literary talent. Their poems appear more than once in the anthologies of the poetry of Chiang-yin. Hsü's father, Yu-mien 有勉 (courtesy name Yü-an 豫庵), was known to be a generous man. When the estate was being divided among the six sons after his father's death, the method of drawing lots was employed. Over and over again Hsü's father drew the main building, but he refused to take it. He made his eldest brother accept it while he took the tract of land to the east of their estate.

At this time, the family fortune was somewhat impaired, but Yü-an and his wife were good managers, and in time they were in very easy circumstances again. Apparently, the tract of land he took already had trees, rocks and other essentials of a Chinese garden, so before long he had put things in order and made it a pleasant abode for himself and his family.¹² Although nothing remains of Hsü's house, records tell us that he was brought up in quiet and lovely surroundings.

Yü-an was somewhat of a prototype of his more famous son.

He sought no official rank as a man of his family's standing was expected to do but enjoyed the freedom and delights of a retired life. Ch'en Chi-ju 陳繼儒 (1558-1639), who wrote a short biographical sketch of Yü-an, said that he loved to take trips to Hu-ch'iu 虎邱 and Lung-ching 龍井 in Hangchou. He would take a small boat or a sedan chair to these places, gather new tea leaves and make tea with the pure water of the famous springs of these places. He was also said to be of a stubborn and frank disposition which was unfortunate for him because a man of wealth but with no official rank had to be reconciled to certain disadvantages. When Hsü Hsia-k'o was nineteen, Yü-an died of a wound he received in his leg when bandits raided a small house he owned a short distance from his estate.

Yü-an had two sons by his wife and one by his concubine. Hsü Hsia-k'o, the second son by his wife, was born in 1586 when both his father and mother were forty-one years old and his elder brother was already twenty. His proper name was Hung-tsu 宏祖, but his friends and posterity called him Hsia-k'o¹³ which suited his personality better.¹⁴

Ch'en Han-hui 陳函輝 who wrote Hsü's tomb essay, reported that Yü-an believed he had detected in Hsü's features his future love for reading and friends. Ch'en also described Hsü's quickness of mind and his affectionate nature: "When he entered school in his childhood, he read fluently as soon as the lesson was taught and wrote his composition as soon as he held the brush in his hand. Towards his parents he was full of an instinctive affectionate concern."

Very soon, Ch'en wrote, he "developed a love for unusual books. Ancient and modern history, books on geography and topography, pictures of mountains and seas, as well as books on Taoism and hermits were his favorite reading. These he would place under the Classics and read surreptitiously, and his face would light up with visible marks of moving response."¹⁵

Books on ancient and modern history and geography were by no means unusual, but as the intellectual fare of a young student was completely shaped by the examination requirements, a child was not allowed to read any but the prescribed books. Hence, Hsü had to read such forbidden works surreptitiously. It is quite plain that the examinations held no attraction for him, and Ch'en said as much in his tomb essay.¹⁶ However, Hsü was evidently reluctant to oppose his parents' wishes; besides, it was natural that he should begin by taking the routine course of literary discipline.

His growing reputation as a young man of literary talent would normally call for his seeking a public career by way of the examinations. Ch'en Han-hui is disappointingly vague about this crucial period of Hsü's life, and we do not know exactly why Hsü did not follow the normal career of a scholar. Nor does Hsü help us learn more about him. Although he left many diaries, Hsü was peculiarly reticent about his own life and about the happenings of his family and of his friends. The diaries were kept solely for the purpose of recording the places he had visited. They were meant for himself, and there was no need for him to record his life for his own information. Had he written with an eye to posthumous fame, we would be better informed about his personal life. Nevertheless, we have enough information to sketch a reasonably detailed summary of some of the major events in his life.

In 1607, he was married to a girl of a locally prominent family named Hsü 許 and in the same year, instead of taking his examinations, he visited Lake T'ai and climbed all the hills on its islands. His earlier doubts about leading the life of a wanderer seemed to have sprung from his concern for his mother. We know from Ch'en Han-hui that his mother sought to dispel his doubts by making him a cap for distant travels. She apparently succeeded because from that time on, for all we know, Hsü had no other goal in life except to travel.

In 1609, he went north to Shantung and Hopei where he visited T'ai Shan 泰山 (the Eastern Sacred Mountain) and I Shan 嶧山 as well as the native places of Confucius and Mencius. In 1613, he made a trip to P'u-t'o Shan 普陀山, an island off Ningpo, and on his return, he visited T'ien-t'ai Shan and Yen-tang Shan.¹⁷ There is reason to believe that Hsü visited Nanking and Yangchou in the next year.¹⁸

Hsü's eldest son, Ch'i 己, was born in 1615.¹⁹ The next year, 1616, was a busy one for Hsü. In early spring he climbed Po-yüeh²⁰ but this was only a prelude to Huang Shan 黃山, the main object of his trip.²¹ In the summer of the same year he went to Fukien and visited Wu-i Shan and the Nine Curves 九曲 stream at its base.²² He moved on to Chekiang in the fall visiting such historical and scenic sites as Wu-hsieh 五泄, Lan-t'ing 蘭亭, and the mausoleum of the legendary Emperor Yü 禹, all located near Shao-hsing 紹興. He also stopped by in Hangchou 杭州 and enjoyed boat rides on the lovely West Lake 西湖.

Hsü spent 1617 at home. His wife had died and his travels were limited to the neighboring county of Wu-hsi 無錫 where he visited some famous caves. In 1618, he went to Chiu-hua Shan 九華山 and, in the fall, to Lu Shan 廬山 in Kiangsi. He was accompanied by a cousin, Lei-men 雷門, who was Hsü's age and who had been a military warden.²³ He died later in the massacre of 1645. After their trip to Lu Shan, Hsü revisited Huang Shan by way of Po-yüeh.

His second marriage, to the daughter of a family named Lo 羅, probably took place in that year. His second son, Hsien 峴, was born the following year which Hsü spent at home. Besides his second wife, he had two concubines. One was named Chin 金 who had a daughter and a son named Kou 鈎. The other was named Chou 周 who had one son who was born after she had been thrown out of the house by Hsü's wife during one of his trips in 1628.²⁴ It is interesting to note that Hsü named all of his sons,

except for the one by Chou whom he had no chance to name, with characters containing the mountain radical.

In 1620, he viewed the famous tidal bore of Ch'ien-t'ang 錢塘 in Chekiang and then continued on to Fukien to visit Chiang-lang Shan 江郎山 and Nine Carp Lake 九鯉湖. Four months after his return, his mother became gravely ill but recovered. Hsü¹¹ celebrated this happy turn of events by having a hall built which he named Sunny Mountain Hall 晴山堂. In the meantime, he and his cousin Chung-chao 仲昭 searched for and recovered some of his family's lost art treasures (see above).²⁵ Hsü solicited poems from some distinguished men of letters and displayed them and the art treasures in Sunny Mountain Hall.²⁶

His mother's advanced age and failing health probably kept Hsü at home in 1621 and 1622. In 1622, his friends Wen Cheng-meng 文震孟, Huang Tao-chou 黃道周, Chen Jen-hsi 陳仁錫 and Huang Ching-fang 黃景昉 passed the imperial examination and obtained the chin-shih degree. In 1623, Hsü¹¹ spent about two months climbing Sung Shan 嵩山 in Honan, Hua Shan 華山 in Shensi and T'ai-ho Shan 太白山 in Hopei.

In 1624, he accompanied his mother, now eighty years old, on a trip to Ching-ch'i 荆溪 and Kou-ch'ü 勾曲 in nearby I-hsing 宜興. It was on this trip that he was introduced to Ch'en Chi-ju, a renowned literary man with whom he would become friends. Ch'en's impression of Hsü¹¹ was summarized in these words: "Mr. Wang Ch'i-hai 王琦海 brought with him a visitor. He has a dark complexion and snowy white teeth. At a height of six feet, he looks as spare as a Taoist priest. His outward deportment is that of a mountain recluse, but there resides in him a rich spirit and the essence of courage."²⁷ In honor of his mother's eightieth birthday, Hsü¹¹ commissioned a painting entitled "Autumn Garden and Morning Loom."²⁸ In this year, Hsü¹¹ also bought at his mother's behest some land as a "sacrificial field" for the maintenance of the ancestral temple. He also repaired the temple of a noted

official on Chün Shan 君山 and asked Tung Ch'i-ch'ang 董其昌 (1555-1636), the most celebrated calligrapher, painter and art critic of his time, to write an essay for inscription on a stele. Hsü's third son, Kou, was born in that year.²⁹

His mother died in 1625, and he stayed home to observe the mourning period. A woman of good sense and ability, she was deeply loved and admired by Hsü. He did everything possible to honor her memory, by having her portrait painted and by asking men of distinction to write tomb essays or to contribute to the collection of writings in Sunny Mountain Hall.³⁰

In 1628, Hsü once more started on his travels. Leaving home at the end of March, he traveled to Fukien by way of Chekiang. The greater part of the trip was made by boat over rapid streams in western Fukien. On May 8 he reached Nan-ching 南靖 to visit an uncle who was an official there.

Although Hsü's diaries do not mention it, we know that he visited his friends Huang Tao-chou 黃道周 (1585-1646)³¹ in Chang-p'u 漳浦, Fukien, and Cheng Man 鄭曼 (1594-1638) on Lo-fou Shan 羅浮山, Kwangtung, on the same trip. Huang was regarded as the greatest scholar during late Ming and one of the most important political figures after the fall of Ming. Of all his friends, Hsü had the greatest respect and affection for him. In 1628, Huang was observing the period of mourning at home in Fukien following his mother's death. Receiving his chin-shih degree in 1622, he had been serving at the Hanlin Academy. In 1630 when Hsü was visiting Cheng Man in Ch'ang-chou 常州 and hearing that Huang was near-by on his way back to Peking, he took a boat and caught up with Huang at Tan-yang 丹陽 in Kiangsu. Huang was much impressed by Hsü's friendship and dedicated a poem in the old style to Hsü to mark this unexpected meeting. How Hsü treasured this poem may be seen from the fact that he asked several of his friends to write colophones on it.

The other friend, Cheng Man, was also a good friend of Huang and received his chin-shih degree in the same year as Huang.³² He was later accused of unfilial conduct and executed in Peking.

Hsü went to Peking and visited P'an Shan 盤山 in 1629 and Peach Blossom Chasm 桃花澗 in Chiang-yin in 1630 on which occasion he wrote some poems.³³ In August of that year, he again went to Chang-p'u in Fukien to visit his uncle. He spent the next year at home.

In 1632, he and his cousin Chung-chao revisited T'ien-t'ai Shan and Yen-tang Shan.³⁴ On their return, Hsü visited Ch'en Han-hui, his friend and later his tomb essay writer, at Ch'en's abode on Little Cold Mountain 小寒山 and told Ch'en of his travels.³⁵

Finally, in 1636, when he was fifty, Hsü set out on his last and most extended journey which lasted until 1640 when he fell ill and had to be carried home in a sedan chair. He died the following year.

For four years, he travelled in hitherto little known parts of Southwest China because, as he said in the first lines of his diary: "I have long wanted to travel to the Southwest, but I have dallied for two years, old age approaches and I cannot wait any longer, so on October 17, I began my long journey."³⁶

Hsü started out with three companions, two servants and a monk. Servants were indispensable in his time because inns and other lodging places were few and far between. One servant fled before the first month was over. The other, named Ku 顧, stayed with him until the fall of 1639, when, finding the rigors of the journey too much to bear, he, too, deserted Hsü.

Hsü's monk companion was named Ching-wen 靜聞, of Ying-fu Monastery 迎福寺 in Chiang-yin. Ching-wen, who had been a monk there for almost twenty years, had written a copy of the Fa-hua Sutra in his own blood, and it was his long-standing wish to

make a pilgrimage to Chi-tsu Mountain 雞足山 (Mount Kukkutapada) in Yunnan and present his copy of the sutra.³⁷ He would not see his wish fulfilled; he died on the way. According to his last will, Hsu took his bones and the sutra to Chi-tsu Mountain.

His route first took them into Chekiang where he arrived by boat on October 30, 1636. He did not take the most direct route to Yunnan, but spent two weeks in leisurely travel, exploring mountain ranges and rivers.

From Chekiang, Hsu traversed Kiangsi from Chiang-yu 江右 to Su-tzu-shu 勞子樹. He spent almost three months, from November 14, 1636 to February 5, 1637, visiting all major mountains in southern Kiangsi and noting in detail the waterways and the direction of mountain ranges. From Kiangsi he entered Hunan where he travelled extensively in the eastern and southern parts. Heng Shan 衡山 (the Southern Sacred Mountain) was the last of the five sacred mountains he visited. His party reached Huang-sha p'u 黃沙鋪, on the border between Hunan and Kwangsi, by boat on May 31.

At Liu-chou 柳州, Kwangsi, he started out alone on a side-trip to Jung 融 county on August 9 and returned on the twentieth. His party resumed its journey by boat on September 5 to Nanning where they arrived sometime in late October. Ching-wen died there while Hsu was away on another sidetrip exploring the sources of several rivers and some caves.

Hsu spent most of 1638 in Kweichow where his most important study was the tracing of the source of the P'an River 盤江. In the winter of that year he took off for Yunnan and arrived at Chi-tsu Shan on January 25, 1639.³⁸ Hsu celebrated the lunar New Year there among the hospitable monks and found a suitable burial site for Ching-wen's remains.

Hsu's diary stopped abruptly on October 11, 1639. There was some speculation that between that time and his death in 1641, he

travelled as far west as the Kunlun Mountains, but Ting Wen-chiang and others have convincingly discounted the idea. After leaving Chi-tsu Shan, Hsü probably travelled through Southwestern Szechwan and then eastward along the Yangtze. He returned home in late 1640, suffering from skin and foot diseases, and died there in early 1641.

Hsü's travels are known to us only through his diaries. A portion of them has been lost, and we do not know the size of that portion. The extant corpus contains entries for over one thousand days, stretching over a period of twenty-six years. The diaries kept for about 150 days prior to 1636 contain about 40,000 words, each daily entry averaging 270 words. This prodigious output was to be greatly exceeded during Hsü's four-year long journey into the Southwest when he wrote entries for about 700 days, totaling about 450,000 words or a daily average of 640 words. Bound on a journey into the remote and unfrequented regions of the Southwest, Hsü was more in quest of knowledge than of pleasure. He devoted more attention to geographical investigations in order to resolve certain doubts and to test certain hypotheses which he had been harboring for many years. The spirit of scientific inquiry, hitherto present but subordinated, replaced the quest for natural beauty as the predominant motive for his traveling.

Hsü's diaries are a detailed account of all his experiences, observations and results of investigations. Sometimes there would be only a few lines for a day, but when an exploration was concluded he would describe the whole procedure in great detail and accuracy, and a single day's entry might contain as many as four thousand words. Hsü's literary output is all the more impressive when we remind ourselves of travel conditions in his time. It is not only that day after day he had to endure physical discomforts and face dangerous encounters during daytime but that even in the evenings, when he was already tired, he was never sure where he and his servants could put up or what unfriendly man he would

have to win over for the promise of a filthy hole for a night's lodging.

Whenever possible, Hsü wrote his diaries at night; otherwise he waited until he had a chance to do it. In Kweichow and Yunnan, for example, sometimes for days on end he had no chance to write, but occasionally he was well-accommodated, and he painted delightful little verbal pictures of the hospitality he enjoyed. Here are two examples:

June 7, 1638:Five li to Pai-chi Taoist Temple 白墓觀. The altar in front was dedicated to the god Chen-wu 真武, the one in the rear to a "saint of the west" 西方聖人. The place was neat and clean. It was still morning and some camel drivers were letting their camels pasture behind the temple. I brought out my brush and other writing equipment and settled down at a clean desk in the rear hall to write my diary. The pleasing quietness of the place formed a contrast to the noise and bustle of the market. Tan-po 檀波 the monk hospitably anticipated my every wish and supplied me with tea, vegetable dishes and rice gruel at short intervals.

In the afternoon, two big elephants and two little ones stopped outside the temple for a while. The elephant boy got off for a drink. When they were leaving, the elephants knelt first on their hind legs and then on their front legs before they stood up. Soon the camel drivers left also, but I was too absorbed in writing my diary to want to stir.

After a while, thunder started to rumble and the sky became overcast. I took leave of Tan-po and presented him with a small gift, but he would not accept it.³⁹

Hsü wrote this entry when he was near Kuan-ling 關嶺, northeast of Pei-p'an Chiang 北盤江 in the southwestern part of Kweichow. He showed no trace of the anguish he must have suffered less than ten days earlier when his money had been stolen by a man whom he had hired to help carry his luggage.⁴⁰ The following year, on

March 19, 1639, when he was near Hao-ching 鶴慶 in Yunnan, he spent another pleasant morning writing his diary at an interesting spot. While he was climbing among thick folds of rugged crags, he heard to his surprise the ringing sound of a Buddhist "wooden fish."⁴¹ Wondering where it could come from, he tried to locate it and finally came upon a Buddhist hut halfway up a cliff:

The cliff was sheer all the way except in the middle which was marked off by horizontal ledges, and the hut was perched up there. Moving along the ledges northward, I found a t'ing 亭 which sheltered a gigantic statue of the Buddha standing against the wall of the cliff as there was no room for his lotus throne. Farther north, the ledges broke off abruptly. The sound of the wooden fish I had heard from afar came from a monk in the hut. His master was a man of Nan-tu 南都 who had built the hut at this secluded spot several years ago and has lived there since, leading a life of extreme austerity, with not even salt for his food. He had just gone to Yai-ch'ang 崖場 to conduct a service and only his disciple was there. He asked me to stay and wait for his master. I was fascinated by the secluded and dangerous location, so I stopped there for a while to write my diary. The monk cooked and invited me to a meal.⁴²

The following four chapters will bring to the reader several other examples of Hsü's characteristic penchant for detail.

Yet, many readers might find it strange that a man who spent a lifetime writing many volumes about his travels should be saying virtually nothing about his family, his friends, and the times in which he lived.

Earlier in this chapter, we offered one clue to this apparent riddle when we pointed out that Hsü's diaries were essentially memos addressed to himself. He quite naturally saw little need, therefore, to say much about his own family. But it is more difficult to explain Hsü's almost total silence on his friends and on national events. The reader of his diaries who has no

knowledge of Ming history could not be blamed if he assumed that nothing much happened in China during Hsü's life.⁴³ We hope that the following few paragraphs will help to rectify this wrong impression.

In 1586, the year in which Hsü was born, the able prime minister Chang Chü-cheng 張居正 (1525-1582) had already been dead for four years. With the prestige that Chang was able to win for the dynasty abroad and his effective administration, he was able to restore China to a brief period of security and prosperity in the late Ming dynasty. Emperor Shen-tsung 神宗 (1573-1620), who feared rather than appreciated Chang, was freed by Chang's death from the restraint the latter had imposed upon him.⁴⁴ He now gave free rein to his love of luxury and sensual pleasures. As a result of his insatiable desire for the acquisition and building of palaces and gardens, the rehabilitation of the country achieved by Chang was rapidly destroyed. Adding to the strain on an economy already on the brink of bankruptcy was the Chinese emperor's obligation to come to Korea's aid when the Japanese attacked that country in 1592.

Faced with the dire need of raising money, Shen-tsung decided to send some of his eunuchs, upon their advice and against the strong opposition of the prime minister Shen Shih-hsing 申時行 (1535-1614) and other ministers, to various places to seek wealth by opening of mines. This act placed the entire country at the mercy of the self-seeking eunuchs. Armed with the imperial edict, they were agents of the emperor. They not only did not fear the local officials but intimidated them, falsely accused them, and imprisoned those who were in the least uncooperative with the eunuchs' schemes.

Hard on the heels of the opening of mines was the imposition of new taxes. The taxes had by then become so numerous that no one could escape them. Even in sparsely populated and outlying areas, banners of tax stations were seen flying and people were

stopped to pay tax on even the smallest articles they happened to be carrying with them. This was another cause of the bankruptcy of the large middle class and the rise of banditry. Bandits appeared first in Shensi, then spread throughout the country and eventually brought about the overthrow of the Ming dynasty.

The nation was seething with unrest and bandits were already terrorizing many places while in the government the emperor, the ministers and eunuchs were contending for power. In the midst of these forces which were rushing a declining dynasty to its ruin, one class of men staunchly tried to withstand their assault and hold back for a while the inevitable collapse. These were the scholar-officials of integrity whose voices of protest and criticism were silenced only by the tragic deaths which overtook many of them.

Back in 1368 Chu Yuan-chang 朱元璋, the poor uneducated mendicant who became the founder of the Ming dynasty, had taken every precaution to guard his hard-won power from slipping from his hands and those of his heirs. Being a man without education and social standing, his sense of inferiority to most of his officials who enjoyed the cultural prestige so much esteemed in Chinese society engendered in him suspicion and resentment towards them even after he had become absolute ruler. On the other hand, his natural sagacity made him fully cognizant of the worth and value of the scholar-officials. Hence, his policy towards his ministers was highly paradoxical. He adopted unprecedentedly severe and humiliating measures in the rules prescribed for officials. The custom for officials to kneel in audience with the emperor started with Chu. For their punishment, he devised the t'ing-chang 廷杖 (court flogging) and to intimidate all educated people, he started a literary inquisition. Court flogging resulted in the death of many ministers. Those who survived bore a world of humiliation which ended only with death. It is said that in the Ming dynasty high officials were in the habit of bidding a

final farewell to their families when they went to court in the morning in case they should not return alive and, if nothing happened during the day, it was cause for rejoicing. A memorial by Yeh Po-chü 葉伯巨 (d. 1376) to the founder of Ming speaks out frankly on this: "The scholar today regards obscurity or failure in examinations as good fortune. He regards expropriation of land and hard labor as inevitable punishments and court flogging as common humiliation."⁴⁵ How the scholar was crushed by the emperor's policy of terror is vividly told in these words.

Yet, Chu Yuan-chang fully realized the wisdom, the loyalty and the selflessness of those ministers who exemplified the best aspects of Confucian teaching, and he decreed that officials and commoners could memorialize the emperor on current affairs. Consequently, throughout the dynasty, scholar-officials came to look upon criticism of government policies as their right and many of them died tragic deaths because they held fast to their principles.

In 1594, during Shen-tsung's reign, Ku Hsien-ch'eng 顧憲成 (1550-1612), director of the bureau of literature in the Ministry of Rites and a man of strong character, incurred imperial wrath by his criticism and was dismissed from office.⁴⁶ Ku returned to his home town Wu-hsi in Kiangnan, a neighboring county of Hsü's home, Chiang-yin, and devoted himself to lecturing. In looking for a suitable place, he decided upon the old site of the Tung-lin Academy 東林書院 where the Sung Confucian scholar, Yang Shih 楊時 (1053-1135) had lectured. Ku and his younger brother Yung-ch'eng 永成 (1554-1607) built on this historical site and adopted the old name Tung-lin. There they gathered their friends who shared their views, men like Kao P'an-lung 高攀龍 (1562-1626) and Ch'ien I-pen 錢一本 (1539-1610) who gave lectures.

Fundamentally, they were linked together not so much by their common commitment to pure learning as by their deep interest in

current affairs and their indignation over political corruption and social evils. Much time was spent in bold criticism of government measures and high-ranking officials. In name, they directed a center for learning; in fact, they constituted a party in opposition. The articulation they gave to the suppressed resentment of many attracted supporters from far and wide. They came to be respected and loved as much as the men whom they attacked were hated. High officials who tried to uphold justice and good governance also favored and supported them. Men like Tsou Yuan-piao 鄒元標 (1551-1624) and Chao Nan-hsing 趙南星 (1550-1627) who later left their official posts in despair followed the Tung-lin example and lectured to followers in their native places. The influence and fame of Tung-lin spread all over the country. Although they never called themselves a party, the public soon bestowed upon them the name Tung-lin Party 東林黨.⁴⁷

The corrupt court reacted with terrible vengeance to the audacity of the Tung-lin Party. The powerful eunuch Wei Chung-hsien 魏忠賢 overruled the weak emperor and ordered the wholesale arrest of its members and, later, of their deaths in Peking. Among them were one of Hsü's relatives and several of his friends.⁴⁸ Hsü, however, never referred by even a word or phrase to the disasters of his time. His silence makes one wonder if he was not entirely unconcerned with the country in general and with some of his friends in particular. From the few references to his friends in his diaries and other records which tell of his earnest concern for some of them, it cannot be said that he was indifferent to them. It is true that he never allowed himself to get involved in any of the grave issues that so deeply involved some of his close friends, but his sympathy and loyalty were wholly on their side.

Still, he had chosen a different mode of life which in some ways was bound to alienate him from them. They were loyal officials of Ming who had staked their lives on the destiny of the dynasty. Hsü, a commoner, bore no political responsibilities, and

he was far from the center of political ferment during the last years of his life which were also the last years of the Ming dynasty.

It is difficult to evaluate a man, so laconic about himself and his human environment, in the context of Chinese history. At first sight, it might appear that Hsü¹¹ loved nature so much that he was indeed like a mountain recluse, as Ch'en Chi-ju saw him, whose life work had no parallels either in the past or during his own time. But this is not true.

We can, for example, compare him with other famous Chinese explorers. In fact, we even have Hsü¹¹'s thoughts on the subject, or, at any rate, an attribution to him. He is quoted as having said: "There have been only three men who have made their names in remote areas: Chang Ch'ien of Han, Hsüan¹¹-tsang of T'ang and Yeh-lü¹¹ Ch'u-ts'ai of Yüan. If a commoner like me, who had only his stick and sandals, may be counted as the fourth, I may die content."⁴⁹

Two of the three men mentioned by Hsü¹¹ are the most noted among Chinese travelers. Chang Ch'ien 張騫 (fl. second century B.C.), a Han general, was sent on a diplomatic mission in 122 B.C. to Bactria, and he brought back information on the places he had visited and on their products. Furthermore, his expedition led to the opening of communication links with the countries in the West and the establishment of the so-called Silk Road. Hsüan¹¹-tsang 玄奘 (603-664) was the great T'ang monk who made a pilgrimage to India in 627 to 644 and brought back to China many volumes of Buddhist sutras and initiated under the sponsorship of Emperor T'ai-tsung 太宗 a vast translation project. Yeh-lü¹¹ Ch'u-ts'ai 耶律楚材 (1190-1244) was a man of versatile gifts and highly esteemed by Genghis Khan who took him along on his expedition to Persia in the years between 1219 to 1224.⁵⁰

Two other notable travelers should be mentioned. The Buddhist

monk Fa-hsien 法顯 (died before 423) undertook a perilous journey to India in 399 to 414 to bring back Buddhist sutras, and the Taoist Ch'iu Ch'u-chi 邱處機 (1148-1227) visited the court of Genghis Khan in Afghanistan between 1219 and 1224.

In comparison with these travelers, it cannot be said that Hsü¹¹ suffered greater hardships or that he accomplished more. Fraught as Hsü¹¹'s travels were with difficulties and dangers, they cannot compare with the spectacular risks and ordeals endured by the pilgrims to India. What distinguishes Hsü¹¹ from these great travelers was his unique devotion to travel. Unlike them, he travelled with no ulterior motive, either for the glorification of his emperor or for exploration on his behalf or for a religious purpose. Moreover, in seriousness of purpose and perseverance in the face of hardship and danger, he excelled all of them. To him, travel did not mean a task to be accomplished, like to the man bound on a mission, nor was it a form of diversion in the manner that a gentleman of leisure indulges in it. With him it was an unending pursuit, to be terminated only by illness and death. It was the one dominating passion of his life. When he was not on a journey, he was making plans for one; when he was on one, he was eager to move on, to see more and learn more.

Another factor which distinguished Hsü¹¹ from the other great travelers is the unique character of his diaries. Of the travelers mentioned earlier, Fa-hsien and Hsüan¹¹-tsang left records of their journeys, but Fo-kuo chi 佛國記 (A Record of Buddha's Country), a record of Fa-hsien's travels, was written by him only after his return to China.⁵¹ Ta-T'ang hsi-yü chi 大唐西域記 (A Record of the Western Regions of the Great T'ang), which narrates Hsüan¹¹-tsang's travels, was not only not written until he was back in China but was written by his disciple Pien-chi 辯機. By contrast, Hsü¹¹'s diaries were daily entries made on the spot. The accuracy of his detailed information regarding directions, distances and topographical features has been

confirmed by more than one modern geographer who traveled the routes taken by him.⁵²

Finally and most importantly, Hsü¹¹ differed from these other travelers in his scientific bent that he developed in his later years and which finds its fullest expression in the diaries of his final journey to the Southwest. In this respect, Hsü¹¹ can be compared with some other prominent men of his time who turned their backs on the recognized and esteemed but narrow field of scholarly pursuits and catered to their scientific interests.

Li Shih-chen 李時珍 (1518-1593), the greatest pharmacist and biologist in Chinese history, went against his father's wish that he should take the civil service examinations and pursue an official career.⁵³ His father was a profound scholar and a very good medical doctor with an intense interest in pharmaceutical studies. Family background instilled in Li Shen-chen an abiding interest in medicine and at the age of twenty, after having failed once in the civil service examinations, he gave it his undivided attention. He enjoyed great fame as a medical doctor, but he also devoted himself to old works on medicine and collected specimens for experiments and study. He started work on the Pen-ts'ao kang-mu 本草綱目 (The Great Pharmacopoeia) in 1552 and completed it after twenty-seven years in 1578. He classified 1,892 kinds of products of medicinal value into sixteen categories which he further subdivided into sixty divisions. These he described, discussed and illustrated with drawings. He died in 1593, three years before his great work was published in Nanking. It has since been reprinted many times.

Another contemporary making a major contribution to natural science was Hsü¹¹ Kuang-ch'i 徐光啟 (1562-1633).⁵⁴ He was a native of Shanghai, near Hsü¹¹ Hsia-k'o's birthplace of Chiang-yin. He rose from modest circumstances to the high position of Grand Secretary. He is best remembered for his pioneering work in

translating European scientific works into Chinese. Besides helping Father Ricci in translating and publishing his works, he recommended other Jesuit missionaries for government offices in order to introduce Western scientific knowledge to China. His own great contribution to Chinese science was his treatise on agriculture, entitled Nung-cheng ch'üan-shu 農政全書 (Complete Treatise on Agriculture), compiled in 1625 to 1628. In the sixty chüan of that work, he chronicled the history of Chinese agricultural knowledge up to his time, discussed exhaustively contemporary agricultural conditions and methods and gave his own opinions of them.

A man of outstanding achievement in the field of technology was Sung Ying-hsing 宋應星 (born ca. 1600). Sung came from an official family and he was himself an official, but he had a wide interest in all kinds of production techniques. A man of Kiangsi, he first studied the technique of porcelain making. In 1634 when he was appointed director of studies in Fen-i 分宜, Kiangsi, he spent his spare time in writing the most comprehensive technological treatise on every type of Chinese manufacture. He spent over ten years on it and finally in 1637 saw it published under the title of T'ien-kung k'ai-wu 天工開物 (Exploitation of the Works of Nature). Sung wrote many other books but they have all been lost. Even The T'ien-kung k'ai-wu would have been lost had it not been introduced to Japan and reprinted from the Japanese edition by Chinese scholars who discovered it there earlier in this century.⁵⁵

Still another man in this group, usually placed in the Ch'ing dynasty but who was a contemporary of Hsü and a loyalist of Ming, was Ku Yen-wu 顧炎武 (1613-1682).⁵⁶ Bitterly disappointed by the overthrow of the Ming dynasty, he devoted his life to learning. In his study of philology, he sought to prove his theories by marshalling specific pieces of evidence, a procedure akin to modern research methods. Besides his contributions to philology, his T'ien-hsia chün-kuo li-ping shu 天下郡國利病書 (Merits

and Drawbacks of All Countries), though unfinished, is a valuable contribution to Chinese geography.

Like Hsü Hsia-k'o, these men had two things in common. First, they were all from South-Central China, mainly from the lower Yangtze valley, a region that was industrially the most advanced and the most productive. It fostered a spirit of inquiry among men with an intellectual curiosity. Second, this curiosity was also awakened by the many different kinds of Western knowledge and techniques brought at that time to China by the Jesuit missionaries. The intellectual infusion from the West opened new vistas of inquiry to those Chinese scholars who had the perspicacity to see its importance.

Hsü made no mention anywhere in his extant works of Western missionaries or Western theories of geography and cartography, but in view of the silence he normally maintained about his life and his friends, it is no proof that he had no contact with or that he was not influenced by Western scientific learning and methods. Indeed, Professor Fang Hao 方豪 considers it impossible for Hsü not to have been influenced by Western science and thinks that he must have had at least indirect contacts with Western missionaries.⁵⁷ He points out that nine of Hsü's friends had some connection with the Catholics and that many of Hsü's friends were from Fukien which was one of the first provinces where the Catholic Church flourished. In 1625, Giulio Aleni, S.J. 艾儒略 went to Fukien at the invitation of Yeh Hsiang-kao 葉向高 (1559-1627) and befriended many distinguished scholars.⁵⁸ As we know, Hsü went to Fukien three times, and some of his friends then wrote several poems in a collection addressed to Giulio Aleni.⁵⁹ Fang Hao also points out that among Hsü's friends, men like Ch'en Chi-ju included in his compilation Pao-yen t'ang mi-chi 寶顏堂秘笈 several volumes dealing with foreign countries, while Cheng Man wrote a preface to a translation of a religious work by Wang Cheng 王徵 (1571-1644). It seems impossible, suggests Fang, that

Hsü's friends did not mention to him the new things of the "Far West" on his visits to Fukien.

Hsü's contribution to the science of geography has been subject to controversy in recent years, but China's greatest modern geographer, Ting Wen-chiang flatly said that Hsü "was essentially a geographical explorer. This spirit of inquiry is so startlingly modern that it alone would have ranked him as the earliest leader of modern geography in China."⁶⁰ For Ting, a student strongly influenced by the Western spirit of seeking the truth in the study of facts, Hsü's importance lay chiefly in several major discoveries of geographical features in Southwest China.

While this is true, Ting the modern was nevertheless unfair to Hsü's contemporary admirers by saying that they merely admired his literary accomplishments and marvelled at his travels. It is closer to the mark to say that for them, men living in the oppressive atmosphere of late Ming, his importance lay chiefly in his freedom of spirit. He differed from his admiring friends mainly in the degree to which he had the courage to shape his own life. What had to remain only dreams to his friends were possibilities realized by him, and for this they admired him and cherished his memory. One can detect in their writings on Hsü both envy and gratification of fulfillment.⁶¹ In sum, for them he was the quintessential lover of nature.

天台山圖

天台山圖

Chapter III

T' IEN-T' AI SHAN

天 台 山

Introduction

Eastern China and the four mountains included in this volume became known to the Chinese at a relatively late time. It was not until the fourth century, when the Eastern Chin dynasty made its capital at Chien-yeh (Nanking) that the natural beauty of that region gradually became known.¹

The coming of Buddhism to China and the preference for mountains shown by Buddhist monks in choosing sites for their temples and monasteries, contributed much to the Chinese reverence and love of mountains. The result was that every mountain has its own history, its monasteries, its legends, its patron saints and its associations with distinguished monks and laymen. Some of them will be presented to the reader in the introduction to each of the four diaries in this volume so that he may gain a deeper understanding and greater pleasure from reading Hsü's accounts.

T'ien-t'ai Shan is not as high as stated in local histories, but it is still a great mountain.² Its hills stand scattered over an extensive area, forming several plateaus and broad slopes. Its summit, says Professor Chang Ch'i-yün 張其鈞, is good for horseback riding.³ Other recent visitors have also remarked on the easy climb to the summit. Professor Chang further notes that the slopes and plateaus lend themselves to cultivation, as he found rice terraces at an altitude of over eight hundred feet.⁴ This corroborates Hsü's remark of seeing wheat growing everywhere on the top of the mountain.

Every great mountain in China is known by some sights

considered as unrivalled either in its singularity, dangerousness, grandeur or beauty. T'ien-t'ai Shan's two most celebrated sights are Natural Bridge 石梁 and Jade Terrace and Double Portals 瓊臺雙闕, but Natural Bridge is by far the more famous. It is a perfect blend of the awesome and the picturesque so attractive to Chinese taste. It is a natural rock, thirty feet long, ten feet thick and one foot wide at its broadest and five inches at its narrowest. It spans two overhanging crags where two waterfalls meet to form a larger turbulent one that crashes furiously down. Its description as "dragon shaped" and "turtle backed" refers to its high, narrow, and bulging shape and its cover of the richest and slickest moss. Because it commands a spot of unsurpassed beauty, it is like the devil's temptation, luring the bold and unwary to cross it. Hsü, as can be imagined, crossed it trembling with terror and delight.

T'ien-t'ai Shan owed its discovery to a few illustrious names in Chinese letters and Buddhist thought. Wang Hsi-chih 王羲之, a distinguished member of the great Wang family and recognized by many even today as China's greatest calligrapher, was magistrate of Kuei-chi 會稽 near T'ien-t'ai Shan.⁵ Having an apparent interest in the exploration of the region, Wang helped two of his friends discover T'ien-t'ai Shan. One was Chih Tun 支遁 (courtesy name Tao-lin 道林, 314-366), one of the most eminent scholar-monks of his time whose brilliant exposition of Chuang Tzu he admired.⁶ The other was Sun Ch'o 孫綽 (320-377), one of Chih Tun's great lay followers for whom Wang Hsi-chih procured the magistracy of Yung-chia 永嘉.⁷ Near the end of the fourth century, the monk T'an-yü 曇首 settled on the mountain and had a monastery built at Red City 赤城, about two miles from the seat of T'ien-t'ai county.⁸

Of the three men, it was Sun Ch'o who first introduced T'ien-t'ai Shan to China's literati in his "Fu on a Visit to T'ien-t'ai" 遊天台賦. In his foreword, he praised the mountain as

being one of the "most divinely graceful mountains. Across the sea, there are Fang-chang 方丈 and P'eng-lai 蓬萊, on land, there are Ssu-ming 四明 and T'ien-t'ai." This fu was chosen by Prince Chao-ming 昭明 (Hsiao T'ung 蕭統, 501-531) of Liang 梁 for inclusion in his famous Wen Hsuan 文選 (Literary Anthology) and became one of the best known fu to generations of scholars.⁹ They all knew T'ien-t'ai Shan by name, but its remoteness, its general inaccessibility, and the descriptions of its magnificent beauty and grandeur made it seem a fairy mountain.

From the late sixth century on, the name of T'ien-t'ai began to reverberate with fame throughout the history of Buddhism in China. The Buddhist school called T'ien-t'ai derived its name from the mountain because Chih-i 智顗 (530-597), regarded by most members of the school as its founder, made it the seat of his religious teaching. Chih-i lived on T'ien-t'ai Shan for twenty-three years and built as many as twelve monasteries.

The best known was the Monastery of Serene Realm 國清寺. It was originally named T'ien-t'ai Monastery, but legend has it that Chih-i once heard a voice in his dreams that the completion of the monastery would restore peace to the country and so he changed the name to Serene Realm. According to Li Shu-hua 李書華, who visited it in 1936, it is about 400 feet above sea level and commands a wide view of the hills around. It remains to this day the chief monastery on T'ien-t'ai Shan and has been honored by gifts from emperors, including Sui Yang-ti 隋煬帝 (r. 605-617), the second and last emperor of the Sui dynasty and Chih-i's disciple. Although it was repeatedly destroyed by war and fire, it was always rebuilt. Great damage was done to the buildings in a big storm during the reign of Hung-wu 洪武 (r. 1368-1398).¹⁰ The Great Hero's Hall¹¹ was restored in 1570 and again in 1593 and 1601, at the completion of which a complete edition of the Buddhist scriptures was donated by imperial order and housed in a new pavilion. At the time of Hsü's visit, only twenty

years had passed since the restoration so that the monastery must have been in good repair.

Of the eleven other monasteries built by Chih-i, two are of interest because of their close associations with him. His remains are interred in a stone stupa located in the main hall of the Monastery of True Awakening 真覺寺 which was built in 597. Recent travellers to T'ien-t'ai Shan have remarked on the beautiful carving of the stupa and its excellent state of preservation.¹² The Kao-ming Monastery 高明寺 contains certain relics of Chih-i, such as a silk kasaya embroidered with a golden dragon, a bronze bowl, palm leaves inscribed with sutras written in Sanskrit, and four chuan of a Dharani sutra.¹³ Hsü visited both monasteries and remarked in his diary on his second visit that Kao-ming Monastery had been rebuilt by the monk Wu-liang 無量, but he said nothing about seeing the relics. This is strange because the T'ien-t'ai school enjoyed a period of revival at the time of Hsü's first visit, and the relics, therefore, were probably on display.

Another monk who lived on T'ien-t'ai Shan and was associated with the Monastery of Serene Realm was I-hsing 一行, the great T'ang mathematician and geographer. I-hsing originally lived on Sung Shan in Honan. Commissioned by imperial order to prepare a calendar known as the Ta-yen Calendar 大衍曆, he travelled in order to seek advice. When he came to the Monastery of Serene Realm, he heard a monk working the abacus. I-hsing became his disciple and completed his work on the calendar in the monastery.¹⁴

The Taoists, on the other hand, helped to strengthen T'ien-t'ai Shan's supernatural reputation. In his famous work Pao-p'u-tzu 抱朴子, the celebrated Taoist of the Chin dynasty, Ko Hung 葛洪 (284-362), described the mountain as follows: "Not all mountains are equally suitable for alchemical purposes because they have essences of water and rock, but T'ien-t'ai is inhabited by righteous spirits who help men to work for happiness and it is good for those undergoing training to become immortals."¹⁵

But, despite occasional prosperity, the Taoists could not match the Buddhists' power and influence. The chief Taoist temple on T'ien-t'ai Shan, T'ung-po tao-kuan 桐柏道觀, had been built in 239 in honor of the immortal prince Wang Tzu-chin 王子晉. It had been the favorite of emperors but had fallen into decay long before Hsü Hsia-k'o's time.¹⁶

We should mention also the legends of the three T'ang monks and of "Liu-Yüan," familiar to the local inhabitants and to readers of poetry and literary miscellanies.

Known as the three hermits of the Monastery of the Serene Realm, the three monks, Feng-kan 豐干, Han-shan 寒山, and Shih-te 拾得, were poets and men of high principles,¹⁷ but their disguise as eccentrics inspired many stories. Feng-kan was said to have vanished first and gone to Wu-t'ai Shan 五台山 in Shansi. Han-shan and Shih-te became identified with two crags where they were said to have retreated to, and eventually people believed that they were reincarnations of the Buddhas Manjusri and Samantabhadra.¹⁸

The legend of "Liu-Yüan" remains to this day one of the most popular fairy tales and the most overworked of literary allusions. It tells the story of two young men, Liu Ch'en 劉晨 and Yüan Chao 阮肇, who in 62 A.D. went to T'ien-t'ai Shan to gather medicinal herbs. They lost their way and soon ran out of food. Walking aimlessly in search for food, they saw peaches tumbling down a clear stream, so they picked them up and ate them. Immediately they felt their bodies lightened and their spirits elated. Peach trees shaded the stream and peach blossom petals floated down the limpid current. They followed it, and they were about to get some water to drink when they saw a cup floating down filled with grains of linseed. Two maidens of divine beauty stood by the stream smiling at them. Thus encouraged, the two men asked for directions. The maidens took them to a house filled with guests and musicians who seemed to be awaiting their arrival. They were

told that they were destined to be married to the two maidens, and a wedding feast was spread out. Among the dishes they ate were linseed and dried goat meat, both of which they found to be exceptionally delicious. They lived happily with the two maidens for about half a year when they became homesick and wished to go home. The maidens did not try to detain them but bade them farewell with music. On coming out they were surprised that they no longer recognized any of the people they met and on reaching home were shocked to find that their relatives were their descendants of the seventh generation. They felt strange and unhappy at home, and after a short stay they left and were never seen again.¹⁹

Diary of the First Visit

May 19, 1613: We [Hsü, the monk Lotus Boat 蓮舟 and servants] left Ning-hai 寧海 by its west gate. It was a bright cloudless day, one which harmonized our happy mood with the cheerful aspects of the gleaming mountains. Reached Liang-huang Shan 梁隍山 after thirty li. News of tigers running rampant and killing several scores of people in a month was heard, so we stopped for the night there.

May 20: Rained in the morning, but we set off. A ride of fifteen li brought us to a fork in the road where we turned our horses towards the west. It gradually cleared up. Ten more li to Pine Gate Hill 松門嶺. The mountain being steep and the road slippery, we alighted from our horses and walked. So far we had passed several hills from Feng-hua 奉化 to this place, yet we had merely ridden along their base. Now after some bends we were up on a ridge, and here the sunshine lit up the wet mountains. Gurgling springs and dewy hills created many delightful changes. The azaleas, too, were aflame on the green hillsides, so we climbed on forgetting all thoughts of fatigue.

Another li and we had a meal at Chin-chu Temple 筋竹庵 . Wheat growing everywhere on top of these hills. The road south of the temple is the highway to Serene Realm. A monk from that monastery, named Cloud Peak 雲峯 , told us that the way from here to the Natural Bridge is long and dangerous, unfit as a path for carrying luggage. He suggested that we have our luggage brought to Serene Realm to wait for our arrival while we take the way to Natural Bridge with a few essentials. We thought it was the best thing to do, so we ordered the baggage carriers to follow Cloud Peak to Serene Realm.

Lotus Boat and I took the way to Natural Bridge. We walked five li and passed Chin-chu Hill, enjoying as we went along the dwarf pines that cover the hillsides. They have old knotty trunks and lovely green sprays and are the kind of choice pines which we see in pots in Soochow.

Mi-t'o Temple 彌陀庵 after thirty li. A most desolate spot in the mountains. It has hills all around but for fear of their harboring tigers, all trees and shrubs have been burnt. There is not a sign of human life. Thundering torrents and swift moving winds are the only sights and sounds that greeted us. The temple is half way up the hill and is hidden among many hills. It is a spot convenient both for a meal halt and for spending a night.

May 21: The rain did not stop until lunch time when we started. Waded across the swampy paths and climbed some hills, delighted with the more pleasant appearance of streams and rocks as we advanced. Twenty li and we reached T'ien-feng Monastery 天封寺 at twilight.²⁰

After I went to bed my mind was preoccupied with the ascent to the summit the next day. Fine weather would be a lucky omen for our visit, I said to myself, because for the past several days there had been clear evenings but no clear mornings. Near dawn, I heard a voice in my dream shouting that there were bright stars

all over the sky. I became so excited that [I promptly woke up and could not] go back to sleep anymore.

May 22: I got up and was overjoyed to see the glittering sun. We decided to ascend the mountain right away. Reached Hua-ting Temple 華頂庵 ²¹ after several li and T'ai-po Hall 太白堂 ²² after three more li. Neither place had anything attractive to recommend itself. Heard of a cave to the left of the temple, so I took a by-path to look for it. After two li, I found a rock boldly rising from below that was delicately shaped and pleasing in color. But when I went near the cave I discovered a monk with unshaven head living in front of it who had blocked its entrance with big boulders to stop the draft. I could not help sighing greatly with regret.

I returned to T'ai-po Hall and followed the path to the summit. Because of the high elevation and strong winds, the crown of the summit had nothing but tall grass covered with a crust of white frost an inch thick. The trees all around the mountainside were similarly encased and afforded a wonderful scene of white jade trees and branches. On the mountainsides wild flowers bloomed in glory, but the crown, restrained by the height and cold, had none. Descended to Hua-ting Temple, passed the small bridge by the pool, passed three more hills, then the stream curved around and the hills came close together to embrace a scene of solemn beauty of trees and rocks. Every turn in this place afforded some fresh delight, much gratifying to my expectations.

Twenty li to Upper Fang-kuang Monastery 上方廣寺 and Natural Bridge. ²³ Worshipped Buddha at T'an-hua Pavilion 曇花亭, ²⁴ but had not enough time to enjoy the flying cataract. Went down to Lower Fang-kuang Monastery and viewed the Natural Bridge and the cataract from below. Both appeared as if they were up in the sky. We heard that Pearl Curtain 珠簾 at Broken Bridge 斷橋 is even more beautiful, and the monk said that we could still make a trip and return if we started after our meal,

so we crossed the Immortals' Ferry Bridge 仙筏橋 and went along the back side of the mountain, crossed one hill, walked into the stone gorge for eight or nine li, and had a view of the waterfall. It tumbles down from Stone Gate 石門 and makes three breaks. The upper one is the Broken Bridge where two rocks meet obliquely and the water lashes into a foaming mist between them before it falls down into a tarn. The middle break comes where two rocks face each other like a door and tighten the water which roars impetuously in between. The lower break has a fairly wide opening and the water spreads itself as it comes down slantingly from the glen. Each of the three breaks hangs several dozen feet high and each is perfect in its own way. Only, as we came down the steps, the depths in the bends were hidden by curves and we could not get a full view of them as we would have liked. Another li to Pearl Curtain where the fall is very broad and the water streams down freely and smoothly. I jumped into the bushes, climbed up the trees and the crags in delight, but Lotus Boat could not follow me. We did not return until dusk had descended on all four sides.

On our way back we stopped again at the Immortals' Ferry Bridge, charmed by the Natural Bridge which lay like a rainbow while the cataracts spat out flakes like drifting snow. We lingered and could not tear ourselves away to go to bed.

May 23: Fine day, the mountain looked like one sweep of blue. Anxious to get on our way, we did not wait for breakfast but set off at once for T'an-hua Pavilion by way of the Immortals' Ferry Bridge. The Natural Bridge is just outside of the Pavilion. It is over a foot wide and thirty feet long and is suspended over the chasm between two hills. The two cataracts that come from the left of the pavilion meet at the bridge and fall down a thousand feet with a deafening noise like the roaring thunder of a river that has broken its dams. I walked on the bridge and looked down into the fathomless tarn below, a spine-chilling sight.

A huge rock cut the road to the front of the mountain at the end of the Natural Bridge. I returned, passed T'an-hua Pavilion and Upper Fang-kuang Monastery, followed the stream in front of it and came back to the big rock where I sat down to enjoy the Natural Bridge, but the monk hastened me to breakfast and so I went to eat.

After breakfast, I walked fifteen li to Ten Thousand Year Monastery 萬年寺 and climbed up to the Pavilion of Buddhist Canons 藏經閣 which has two storeys and contains a complete edition of the Northern and Southern Buddhist canons.²⁵ Both in front and back of the pavilion stand many aged firs with trunks which it takes three men's outstretched arms to girdle. Up in the trees storks make their nests and send out their clear ringing calls around the quiet mountains.

My intention this day was to go to T'ung-po Monastery to seek Jade Terrace and Double Portals, but the path was hard to find, and instead we planned to go to Serene Realm which is forty li from Ten Thousand Year Monastery. On our way we passed Dragon King's Hall 龍王堂. Each time we descended a hill I thought we had reached level ground, but after descending several times and finding that we were still going down, I realized that the height of the summit is indeed not far from the sky.

Reached Serene Realm at dusk. Cloud Peak hastened out to receive us and we were all as happy at the meeting as if we had been old friends. I consulted him about the itinerary, and he suggested that the best places to see were the two crags which, although far away, could be reached by horses. After the two crags we could walk to Peach Source 桃源 and on to T'ung-po. This [itinerary] would include every place.

May 24: Signs of rain in the morning, but ignored them and took the road to Cold Crag 寒巖 and Bright Crag 明巖 by the west door of the monastery where we hired horses. When they came, the rain also started. Rode fifty li to Pu-t'ou 步頭, the rain

stopped and we discharged the horses. Walked two li and found ourselves in the mountain which unfolded a very pleasant scene of winding hills and waters, beautiful trees and quaint rocks. A stream from Tung-yang 東陽, as big as the Ts'ao-o River 曹娥江, rushes on very rapidly. The water being knee-deep, we looked around for a ferry but could not find any, so we crossed on the servants' backs. Soon we came to a gorge which took us nearly a whole hour to get across. Then three more li and Bright Crag which used to be the retreat of Han-shan and Shih-te. Here the two mountains come close together and form a pass called in the local history Eight Inch Pass 八寸關. Inside the pass wall-like cliffs stand all around. In the rear lies a cave which is several dozens of feet deep and large enough to accommodate several hundred people. Outside the cave two crags rise from midway up on its left. On the right side a rock, shaped like a bamboo sprout, rears its head. It reaches up to the same height as the crag with only a thread-like gap in between. Green pines and purple flowers spring up in luxuriant growth here, quite different from the left crag. [Presumably the left crag is barren.]

Went out of the Eight Inch Pass and went up another crag to its left. It looked like a narrow gap when we viewed it from below, but when we reached its top we found it to be bright and wide enough to hold several hundred men. There is a well called the Immortals' Well 仙人井. It is shallow but never dry. Outside the crag stands a peculiar looking rock which is several dozens of feet in height, with a forked top looking like two men standing up there. The monks pointed to it and said that it was Han-shan and Shih-te.

After a meal in the monastery the clouds scattered and dispersed. A new moon appeared in the sky, flooding the rocky walls with its pure beams as we lingered on top of the crag.

May 25: Left the monastery early in the morning; a six or seven li's walk brought us to Cold Crag. Here shattered rocks

rise like a jagged wall. We looked up and saw many caves. One of them is midway up the crag. It is eighty steps wide and over a hundred steps deep, and it is bright, flat and wide. Climbing up by the narrow cleft on the right, we found in the yawning cave two rocks seemingly facing each other and shrugging their shoulders. Unconnected at the bottom but joined at the top, they are called Magpie Bridge 鵲橋. The beauty of this place matches that of Natural Bridge at Upper Fang-kuang [Monastery]; it only lacks the perpendicular fall of the cataracts.

Returned for meal at the monastery, found a ferry to cross the stream and walked along the foot of the mountain. It is a range of precipitous walls and jagged crags, while sprawling over it are overhanging trees and weeds most of which are hai-t'ang 海棠 [begonias] and purple magnolias. As we walked on, their glowing reflections kept lighting up the stream and everywhere a breeze wafted the sweet odor of orchids and other aromatic plants.

Then we reached a turn in the mountain [path] where stone walls rise straight from the gorge which is flooded by a rapid current so that there is no path along its sides and the way is made by notches in the walls. In crossing it, my whole soul shuddered as we pressed our bodies to the stone walls and moved our feet from notch to notch which held only half a foot.

Fifteen li after Cold Crag was Pu-t'ou where we took a small path to Peach Source. A monastery, named Guard the Nation 護國寺, used to stand there but it no longer exists, and even the natives knew nothing about it.²⁶ We followed Cloud Peak in and out along winding paths until the sun had set and still found no place to put up for the night. We inquired for the way to P'ing-t'ou Lake 坪頭潭 and found that it was only twenty li from Pu-t'ou but now, having taken [a different] path, it would be over thirty li. Peach Source is indeed a place for people to get lost in.

May 26: Started from P'ing-t'ou Lake. Walked along winding paths for over thirty li. Crossed the stream and entered the mountain. After another four or five li, the opening between the mountains grew narrower. There is a building called Peach Blossom Vale 桃花塢. We followed a deep crystal-like tarn into which a cataract falls from above. This is Ringing Jade Gorge 鳴玉澗. It follows the meanderings of the mountain and we followed it. The hills on both sides are naked skeletons of rocks, some heaped up and some having trees growing out from them, all delightful to the eye. Its beauty may be rated between Cold Crag and Bright Crag.

Found no path at the end of the gorge, for here a torrent crashes down from the mountain glen with a terrible force. We returned to the building for a meal, then walked southeast along the valley, passed two hills but found no one who could answer our inquiry about the Jade Terrace and Double Portals. After several more li, we heard that it is up on top of the mountain, so Cloud Peak and I climbed up and finally gained the top. Looking down we saw perpendicular green cliffs standing around as they do at Peach Source, only these are loftier. The rift in the middle of the summit is what is called Double Portals while what is rounded in by the two gates is the Terrace, joined to Double Portals on one side and falling off perpendicular cliffs on the other three. I was opposite the Portals and could not go up because it was too late. Nevertheless, I had already had a complete view of the place. We descended, returned to Serene Realm from Red City, a distance of thirty li.

May 27: Left Serene Realm, walked five li from the back of the mountain. Mounted Red City whose crown is enclosed by a rampart resembling a city wall from afar. The color of its rocks is a pale red. The crags are covered by disorderly dwellings of monks and whatever natural beauty there might have been has been swept away by them. Places called Jade Capital Cave 玉京洞,

Gold Coin Pool 金錢池 and Well for Washing Intestines 洗腸井 are all uninteresting.

Diary of the Second Visit

May 2, 1632: We rode from Ning-hai on horseback for forty-five li and spent the night at Ch'a-lu-k'ou 岔路口. Fifteen li southeast from this place is Shang-chou-i 桑洲驛 which is on the way to T'ai-chün 台郡. Ten li southwest is Pine Gate Hill on the way to T'ien-t'ai.

May 3: We crossed Shui-mu Stream 水母溪, ascended Pine Gate Hill and passed Wang-ai Shan 王愛山, a total distance of thirty li. Had a meal at the temple on Chin-chu Hill which is on the border of Ning-hai and T'ien-t'ai. Crossed over the mountain ridge for thirty li in perfectly silent wilderness. Even the Mi-t'o Temple of earlier days is now lying in ruins. We descended a hill and found a country house in the mountain wilderness. Made tea and drank it while sitting on rocks. After ten more li crossing another hill, we reached T'ien-feng Monastery. T'ien-feng is at the foot of Hua-ting Peak and is the most sequestered spot on T'ien-t'ai.

We discharged our horses. The monk Wu-yü 無餘 took us up to Hua-ting Monastery. Spent the night in Ching-yin's room. The moon was bright and guided me on the way up. It was still three li to the summit. I headed in the wrong direction and mounted Ocean-Viewing Pinnacle of the peak to the east. It was after I had turned west that I found the path to the summit. By the time I returned to the monastery it was already past the first night watch.

May 4: The fifth watch. I took advantage of the moonlight and ascended the summit to watch the sunrise. My clothes and shoes got soaking wet, so I returned to the monastery and dried

them. Crossed over a hill to the right of the temple, going down in a southerly direction for ten li and reached Watershed Hill 分水嶺. The river west of the hill flows out to Natural Bridge, the one east of it goes out by T'ien-feng. Followed the stream and turned north. The water and rocks sheltered a quiet scene. Another ten li, I passed Upper Fang-kuang Monastery and reached T'an-hua Pavilion. Looking at the strangely beautiful Natural Bridge, I felt as if I was seeing it for the first time.

May 5: We left by way of Watershed Hill and headed south for ten li to Ch'a Hill 察嶺 which is very high. It and Hua-ting mark the division between the northern and southern [portions of the T'ien-t'ai Shan area]. Turned west to Dragon King Hall where several trails meet. Turned south and walked ten li to Han-feng Ch'üeh 寒風閣 and, after another ten li, to Yin-ti Hill 銀地嶺 where the ruins of the stupa of Chih-che 智者 are located. Found Great Mercy Monastery 大悲寺 to its left. A rock by the side used to be the Pai-ching T'ai 拜經台 of Chih-che. The monk Heng-ju 恆如 cooked for us.

We then divided our luggage and went by way of the Monastery of Serene Realm. Reaching the city, Chung-chao and I went east to Kao-ming Monastery. It had been rebuilt by Master Wu-liang 無量. A quiet stream flows on its right, and on its banks are such scenic spots as Yüan-t'ung Tung 圓通洞, Sung-feng Ko 松風閣 and Ling-hsiang Yen 靈響岩.

May 6: Chung-chao stayed at Yüan-t'ung Tung while a monk took me to explore the wonders of Rock Bamboo Sprout Peak 石筍峯. We descended eastward and reached Lo Stream 螺溪. Pursued it northward between sharp and closely pressed rocky cliffs. Jets of water splashed from treetops. Walked along on stones in the water for seven li and then the mountain turned and the stream dropped. We were already at the foot of Rocky Bamboo Sprout Peak. As we looked up, we could not see the peak as it was hidden by the cliff

on the right. Descended by the cleft alongside the cliff and reached the top of Bamboo Sprout. There we saw a rock rising from the creek. The stream turned into a waterfall as it fell and pounded the base of the rock. Water and rocks made this spot a place of great beauty.

As we turned north following the stream, the cliffs on both sides became steeper at their base and waters were running into a pool called Snail Tarn 螺蛳潭. Grasping the vines by the cliff, I peered in from the cleft of the rock and saw that the stone walls in the grotto branched out into four directions like a crossroad. Water filled the inside so that it was impossible to discern [the grotto's] edges. Atop two crags in the innermost corner was a horizontal rock like a natural bridge. Behind it, a waterfall as high as Natural Bridge, cascaded into the tarn. Cliff ranges folded all around but they could only be viewed from a distance. They were higher than those at Natural Bridge.

Heard that Immortal's Shoe was above it and to the left of Cold Wind Gap which could be reached by crossing the hill. But sudden rain prevented us from going. Returned and rested at Sung-feng Ko.

May 8: Reached the seat of T'ien-t'ai county. Walked north for seven li to the foot of Red City. We gazed at the glowing walls, with temples on their tops, standing among rich green colors and mountain haze. Up one li to Central Crag where a Buddhist hut had been recently repaired, very different from its earlier dilapidated appearance. As we were anxious to get to Jade Terrace and Double Portals, we had no time to spare to climb the crag but went west and crossed a hill. Took a path for seven li to Falling Horse Bridge 落馬橋, then another fifteen li northwest to the left side of Waterfall Mountain 瀑布山. Ascended it and walked five li to T'ung-po Shan 桐柏山. Crossed its summit northward and found a glen surrounded by hills as if it were a world by

itself. T'ung-po Monastery was in the center with only the central hall remaining. The two stone statues of Po-i 伯夷 and Shu-ch'i 叔齊 were in a room on the right. Their carving showed great age. It must be pre-T'ang work. The Taoists have long since left the place. When the farmers saw us they stopped their tilling and talked to us. We hired one of them as a guide. Went west for three li, crossed two small hills and went down folds of crags and up to Jade Terrace. A protruding peak overlooks a deep ravine and is surrounded on three sides by dangerous crags. A stream to the right of a crag, coming from the maze of mountains in the northwest, pounds its base. It is Thousand Foot Crag 百丈崖. The water moves on to the foot of Jade Terrace where it becomes a quiet pool of indigo blue. It is called Thousand Foot Dragon Tarn 百丈龍潭. In front of the peak rises another crag like a pillar as high as the others surrounding it. It is Jade Terrace. Thousand Foot Crag is at its back and Double Portals in front. Beyond them but unconnected, surrounding crags form an outer ring. A climber has to descend along waterfalls coming from the northern hill, cross a ridge in the gap and climb again by pulling himself up from tree to tree. All the while [the climber has to contend with] sharp rocks and loose sand which offer hardly any room for his feet to step on. Descended from the edge of the Terrace to the south and came to an abruptly rising rock. It is curved like the Immortals' Shrine 仙人坐 there.

The beauty of Jade Terrace lies in its being located in an isolated ravine and surrounded by green hills. Double Portals are part of an outside ring surrounding it, so that one cannot ascend [Jade Terrace] without climbing down again to the bottom of the creek. I recalled that twenty years ago I had come here with Cloud Peak from Peach Source by way of a stream. We had not been able to explore its recesses. It was only now that I could gaze down from the edge of the crag and see it in its full dimension.

Had a meal at T'ung-po Monastery. Went south along a path, crossed a stream and after ten li reached the official road to Kuan Ling 關嶺 of T'ien-t'ai. Took a small path heading south and walked for ten li in a cleft. A peak rises to its left like a heavenly pillar and, asking [someone], I learned its name to be Ch'ing-shan Cho 青山嶺. Followed the stream coming from the south for ten li and turned in at an inn at P'ing-t'ou Lake 坪頭潭.

[Between May 9 and June 3, Hsü Hsia-k'o and his party undertook the first part of their second visit to Yen-tang Shan and then returned to explore the sights on the west side of T'ien-t'ai Shan. As explained in the introduction to Yen-tang Shan (Chapter IV), the diary covering that trip is no longer extant.]

June 4: Walked southwest from P'ing-t'ou Lake for eight li to the Ch'en's 陳氏 of Chiang-ssu 江司. Crossed the stream and followed its left bank. After another eight li, we turned south into the mountains. Crossed two small hills and after six li came suddenly upon high rocky crags amidst a network of streams. The southern one was Cold Crag and the eastern one Bright Crag. Dispatched a boy ahead of us to prepare our meal at Bright Crag Monastery while we headed south for Cold Crag. Overhanging crags were ranged impressively along the left side of the path. At one place there is a yawning cave and [a rock like] a crouching rabbit, complete with mouth and ears, in front of it. To the right side of the path is Big Stream with a rock looking like a canopy jutting out amidst its swirling waters. I wondered what it was. When I got to the monastery and asked the monk, I learned that I had seen Magic Mushroom Rock 靈芝石 of Dragon Beard Grotto 龍鬚洞. Cold Crag is in the rear of the monastery. It is quite impressive in its openness and loftiness, but it cannot be said to be delicately shaped.

Came out by way of an upper bridge on the right side of the grotto. Took the old path for one li and entered Dragon Beard

Grotto on the right. The path was choked with thickets and thorns. Ascended one li. It was like climbing to the nine heavens. The grotto is round, lofty, and open. A rock leans obliquely outside the mouth, looking somewhat similar to Natural Bridge of Yen-tang. A spring races down from the top of the ridge, exactly in the same way as Precious Crown in Banana Cave 芭蕉洞. Went down the mountain and returned to the head of the old path. Followed the small stream east and turned south into Bright Crag Monastery. It is on top of the crag and surrounded on all four sides by other crags except for one fissure in the east called Eight Inch Pass. More than one delicately shaped cave are to be found at the back of the monastery. A "rock bamboo shoot" rises to the right of the cave. It is not as tall and massive as that at Spiritual Crag [of Yen-tang] but rather is a miniature version.

After our meal, we rode on the old path for thirty li and returned to P'ing-t'ou Lake. Then north for twenty-five li to San-mao 三茅 where we crossed Big Stream which flows from Kuan Hill to the west. Five li farther north, we crossed two mountain torrents, reached the foot of North Mountain and spent the night at Guard the Nation Monastery.

June 5: Early in the morning, we hurried to Peach Source, two li east of Guard the Nation Monastery and only eight li west of T'ung-po. Yesterday, when I visited T'ung-po, I [decided to save Peach Source] for my return trip to Ten Thousand [Year Monastery] today. Therefore, I had gone to Cold Crag and Bright Crag instead. When I reached Guard the Nation, I learned that if I went to Ten Thousand by way of New Stream to the west, I could also include the sights of Nine-li Pit 九里坑. With this purpose in mind, we went today to Peach Source from where we walked into [the mountains] about one li from the mouth of the stream to Golden Bridge Tarn 金橋潭. As we went up, two mountains came close together and layers of verdant walls and vaulting crags

wound along a stream in between. I followed it. After three turns, I came to the end of the stream. A waterfall of several dozens of feet was pouring into it from the left crag.

When I had come to the foot of the waterfall on my first visit, the path ended here and I could not go up. I had viewed the vaulting crag to the north. Clusters of hills stood gracefully on both sides of the stream. The reflections of the green hills in the rushing current had made it hard for me to pull myself away. This time I found a rocky path through the thickets on the right side of the crag. I had no time to call Chung-chao and, pushing the thickets aside, climbed up in the rain. At the end of the rocky steps, more rocks were piled up on the left side of the crag. I climbed over them and found myself above the waterfall. I went all the way to the foot of the northern crag and came to the end of the steps. Two falls came down the crag, one to the right and the other to the left. Looking to the left crag far away, I saw some more steps, so I took them. There had once been a bridge made of loose rocks over the left waterfall but it was now broken and there was no way to cross it.

The upper reaches of the waterfall are between the walls in the northeast, the fissure being just a thread and allowing one to enter by walking in the water. Its beauty did not seem to equal the fall of the right crag, so I returned to the big rocks and went up northwest. Reached the bottom of the gorge and discovered a steep tarn. The walls [of the gorge] drop vertically to the bottom [of the tarn] making it impossible to climb. All I could do was to look to the west of the pool and feast my eyes upon rows of rocky chasms and layers of waterfalls. The latter come from the indistinct vaporous depths to the northwest and splash helter-skelter from the crags' ledges down steep walls. Reflected by the glowing light of the mountains, the rocks seemed to have come to life and be ready to fly away.

After a while, I returned from the waterfalls to find

Chung-chao who had lost his way and was sitting there alone enjoying the waterfalls [from afar]. We went back to Guard the Nation together. Heard that there was a shortcut to Merciful Cloud 慈雲 and T'ung-yuan 通元 Monasteries and to Ten Thousand by way of the mouth of the stream at Peach Blossom. But we also heard that New Stream was more beautiful, so, after a meal, we went that way. Walked west for four li and turned north to a stream which we followed for three li and gradually turned east to Nine-li Pit. At the end of the pit a waterfall bursts out from the eastern crag while above it a jumbled heap of inaccessible peaks rises sharply. Climbed up by skirting the western crag and came out on its north side. When I turned around I saw the back of the waterfall with a stone gate straddling it and a dragon tarn in the middle.

After walking northeast for several more li and crossing a hill, I came suddenly to an extensive plain and found Ten Thousand Year Monastery surrounded by five hills. It was thirty li to Guard the Nation [Monastery]. Ten Thousand Year is in the western part of T'ien-t'ai and opposite T'ien-feng. Natural Bridge is between them. There are many old cedars in the monastery.

Had a meal there. Then on to the northwest for three li after having crossed the high hill behind the monastery. We climbed the edge of another hill and, turning west and walking ten li, we reached T'eng-k'ung Mountain 騰空山. Descended for three li to the foot of Ku-niu Hill. Crossed three more small hills going west and after a total of seventeen li reached Hui-hsü 會墅. The main road came from the south and I could see T'ien-mu Mountain there, but I had already crossed [the road] and thought that Hui-hsü was on level ground. After three more li to the northwest, we saw a stream gradually forming. Followed it for five li. Spent the night at Pan-chu Inn 班竹旅舍.

鴈蕩山圖

Chapter IV

YEN-TANG SHAN

雁蕩山

Introduction

Yen-tang Shan lies about seventy miles southeast of T'ien-t'ai Shan and closer to the sea. Its peculiar shape was formed by erosion. Through the millenia, floods created deep gullies which in time became valleys between solitary pinnacles. When viewed from the base, they are high and precipitous but seen from above, they are of the same elevation as the surrounding high plateau.¹ They are so intricately shaped that they appear completely different from different angles. For this reason, some of the peaks bear more than one name. For instance, one peak is called A Sail 帆 when seen from front, Heavenly Pillar 天柱, from its side, and Scissors 剪刀, from a third angle.²

Another celebrated sight is Wild Goose Lake 雁湖, from which the mountain derived its name. Located on or near the summit, the lake is used by wild geese as a stopover on their migrations. Its beauty, however, has long since disappeared. In 1934, when Professor Chang Ch'i-yün visited it, it was "decidedly a disappointment. It is but three depressions in the ridge of the mountain and overgrown with reeds. There is hardly any water except a muddy puddle in the central depression. The whole place presented a look of desolation."³

Its most celebrated sight, however, is Great Dragon Falls 大龍湫, considered by many as the most remarkable of all waterfalls. It spills from a tall crag hidden high up among the clouds and seems to fall right from the sky. The crag overhangs at the top so that the fall is not obstructed and water enjoys the

freest play with every breeze. A pavilion was built by the fall and was appropriately named Look Without Satiation Pavilion 看不足亭.⁴ Other waterfalls are Little Dragon Falls 小龍湫, Swallow Tail 燕尾瀑, Plum Rain 梅雨, and Precious Crown 寶冠.

Great Dragon Falls has naturally been compared with Natural Bridge of T'ien-t'ai Shan. The consensus of visitors to both is that Natural Bridge is vigorous while Great Dragon Falls is graceful, Natural Bridge is boisterous while Great Dragon Falls is quiet, Natural Bridge rushes headon while Great Dragon Falls is leisurely.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Yen-tang Shan became one of the most admired mountains. The appeal it had to its early visitors was immediate and complete, and the prestige of the five sacred mountains suffered not a little from this newly discovered wonder.

Yen-tang Shan became known to the general public even later than T'ien-t'ai Shan, even though Hsieh Ling-yün, the first major popularizer of natural scenery, had spent several years in that general area. Politician, poet, aristocrat and Buddhist devotee, Hsieh was also known for his passionate appreciation of mountain scenery.⁵ It is doubtful, however, that he discovered Yen-tang Shan. His large collection of poems which seems to include poems about every mountain he ever visited makes no mention of Yen-tang Shan. Moreover, the name Lord Hsieh's Hill 謝公嶺 for one of its pinnacles does not refer to Hsieh Ling-yün, as had once been assumed, but probably to the Hsieh clan native to the area.⁶

The prevalent notion that Yen-tang Shan was not known to the world until Sung times seems to have been popularized by a passage in a miscellany written by Shen Kua 沈括 (1030-1094), the famous and versatile scholar. Shen visited Yen-tang Shan during the early part of the eleventh century while he was on an imperial commission to prepare maps of the empire. He put down his thrilling

discovery of this beautiful mountain in his Meng-ch'i pi-t'an 夢溪筆談 (Penned Talks at Dream Stream) and thus inspired generations of mountain lovers. He said that despite its great beauty, Yen-tang Shan had not been previously recorded and that it had not been until the reign of Ta-chung hsiang-fu 大中祥符 (r. 1008-1010), when men went there to fell trees for building the Taoist temple Jade Pure Palace 玉清宮 that it was discovered. At that time, he said, the mountain had still no name.⁷ We find nearly identical language in a local history of the mountain edited by the monk Tao-yung 道融 during the Ch'ien-lung reign (1736-1795).⁸

We can be certain that Yen-tang Shan was not widely known before the Sung dynasty, but it was by no means unexplored. I-hsing, whose work on calendar reform we mentioned in the introduction to T'ien-t'ai Shan, advanced the theory that the geography of China should be divided by two boundary lines, the southern line passing through Yen-tang Shan.⁹ Tu Shen-yen 杜審言, an early T'ang poet and grandfather of Tu Fu 杜甫, left his name on a rock at Great Dragon Falls. According to the records of a local history entitled Kuang Yen-tang shan chih 廣雁蕩山志, a stele bearing the year 527 and recording the building of a pagoda by Crown Prince Chao-ming of Liang was discovered under Hibiscus Peak 芙蓉 by a monk named Lying in Clouds 卧雲 during the reign of T'ien-ch'i 天啟 (r. 1621-1627).¹⁰

Legend pushes the mountain's history back even further. It is claimed that Nakula, the fifth of the sixteen arhats who are traditionally said to have come to China from the Western Regions 西域, settled with his three hundred followers on Yen-tang Shan during the reign of Yung-ho 永和 (r. 345-356) of the Chin dynasty.¹¹ Nakula, the legend continues, visited Great Dragon Falls one day and while he viewed the waterfall, a smile spread over his face and he entered Nirvana.¹² Some local histories also tell us that once upon a time there was a temple standing by Wild

Goose Lake. One night the temple sank into the lake, and people living nearby still occasionally hear the bell at night.¹³

The most eminent name associated with Yen-tang Shan is Ch'üan Liao 全了, believed to be a native of Yung-chia 永嘉, Chekiang. Soon after his arrival, he built Hibiscus Temple 芙蓉庵 in 976 and seventeen more monasteries between then and 1042.¹⁴ Spiritual Crag 靈岩 and Spiritual Peak 靈峯 are the most celebrated. Both repeatedly received imperial favors during the Sung and Ming dynasties. K'ang Yu-wei 康有為, who spent much time visiting mountains after his abortive reform movement, wrote the characters Ling Yen Ssu 靈岩寺 for the plaque that hangs outside the monastery.¹⁵

Hsu Hsia-k'o visited Yen-tang Shan twice, with his second visit made in two parts.¹⁶ His first visit ended in his failure to find Wild Goose Lake upon which he had set his heart, and the diary closed on a note of frustration and fatigue. Such unfulfilled desires naturally persisted to tantalize a man of Hsu's zest for exploration, and it is not surprising that he would visit the mountain again nineteen years later.

The following anecdote related by Ch'en Han-hui in his tomb essay describes well Hsu's sense of triumph upon having discovered Wild Goose Lake.

At a dinner party I asked Hsia-k'o: 'Have you been up to the pinnacle...?' Hsia-k'o looked moved on hearing it. The next morning before daybreak, he was by my bedside with a pair of clogs in his hands, saying: 'I am going there again and will tell you about it when I come back.' Ten days later he returned and said to me: 'I took a bypath and climbed thirty li from Dragon Fall through clinging plants until I reached a grassy tarn where wild geese make their home. I climbed another ten li and found the hassocks and the gourd ladle of the monks White Cloud and Beyond Clouds of the Cheng-te reign [1506-1521] still there. Twenty more li and I stood on the pinnacle, hard

pressed by a stiff wind. Deer by the several hundreds slept around me in the night. I did not descend until I had spent three nights up there.¹⁷

Diary of the First Visit

We left T'ien-t'ai Shan on May 28, 1613 and arrived at Huang-yen 黃巖 on May 29. The sun was already in the west. Spent the night at Pa-ao 八奥, thirty li outside the south gate.

May 30: Twenty li. Mounted the top of P'an-shan Hill 盤山嶺 where the mass of peaks and pinnacles of Yen-tang burst upon our sight. These rocks, so solid, so huge, and yet so delicately formed as to resemble exquisite flower petals carved in the sky, overpowered our senses.

Another twenty li. Had a meal at Ta-ching-i 大荆驛. Crossed a stream on its south side and saw round stones on top of a western hill. My servants cried out that they were the "two monks." I suspected that it was Old Monk's Crag 老僧岩 although the resemblance did not seem to be very strong. Five more li to Chang Family Storeyed House, and we saw the true features of the Old Monk with his bald head and flowing robes, a perfect resemblance. It is about one hundred feet high. By its side is a [rock resembling a] small boy stooping behind and partially hidden by him.

After two more li, we came to a cave half way up the mountain. It faces south. A stone pillar at its entrance runs perpendicularly from the roof and cuts into the ground below. It looks like a drooping rainbow. We climbed up by the steps hewn in the cleft by the side of the crag and found up above a high and spacious hollow, so we sat down and rested for a while. Then we descended by the right side, passed Lord Hsieh's Hill, crossed a gorge and followed it westward to Spiritual Peak. As soon as we came around the

shoulder of the mountain, the cliffs on the two sides soared into the sky, pile upon pile of terrifying peaks, some like split pieces, others in clusters, others like bamboo sprouts growing side by side, others erect like agarics [a kind of mushroom], others like upright pens, and still others like headdresses. Some caves have mouths hidden behind curtains, and some tarns are of a deep inky blue. These [peaks] join their wings and shoulders for about a li until we arrived at Spiritual Peak Monastery.¹⁸ The ascent to Spiritual Peak Cave is by the side of the monastery, and it was the way we took. It is hollow inside and stands detached in the rear of the monastery. An opening on its side led us up several scores of steps until we reached its top, a flat terrace, round and wide. There are many statues of laughing Buddhas. We stayed there until dusk enjoying them and then returned to the monastery.

May 31: Went in search of Green Heaven Cave 碧霄洞 from the right toe of Spiritual Peak, then returned by the same road to the foot of Lord Hsieh's Hill. Passed Resounding Crag 響岩 on the south. Five li to the junction of the road to Ching-ming Monastery 淨名寺.¹⁹ Went into Water Curtain Cave 水簾谷 where a cataract pours down from the top of two closely pressing crags. Walked five li beyond the glen to Spiritual Crag Monastery.²⁰ Here perpendicular walls close in on all sides, brushing the sky and cutting into the earth. As we wound our way in, we felt as if we were entering another world. The monastery is in the center of the enclosure, facing south, with Glowing Cloud Screen 屏霞嶂 at its back. It is purple in color and rises to several thousand feet with a matching width. At its extreme southern end stand Unfurling Banner Peak 展旗峯 on its left and Heavenly Pillar Peak 天柱峯 on its right. Between Heavenly Pillar and the right rib of the Screen is Dragon Nose Water 龍鼻水. The opening of Dragon Nose Water leads straight up the rocky clefts, resembling Spiritual Peak Cave in shape, only smaller. The colors

of the stones in the cave are yellow and purple, but vein-like traces at its mouth show a dark blue and they seem to be velvety smooth, quite resembling the claws of a dragon. One end of a stone hangs down from the roof like a nose with nostrils in which a finger can be inserted and where water drips down into the stone basin below. This is one of the sights of the right side of the Screen.

To the southeast is Lonely Grace Peak 獨秀峯 which is smaller than Heavenly Pillar but matches it in steepness and pointedness. Under Lonely Grace is Upright Pen Peak 卓筆峯 which is only half as high as Lonely Grace but also sharply pointed. In the southern glen between these two hills, a waterfall crashes down with a roaring noise. It is Little Dragon Falls 小龍湫. Facing Lonely Grace on the other side of Little Dragon Falls is Jade Maiden Peak 玉女峯. Some spring flowers are blooming on its top, looking as if they were flowers adorning her bun. We then passed on by Shuang-luan 雙鸞 which are two joined hills, with a rock resembling a monk in between. The rock is named Monk Worship Rock 僧拜石 because its shape suggests a monk bowing low in his robes.

Between the left side of the Screen and Unfurling Banner Peak comes first Peaceful Ch'an Glen 安禪谷 which is the lower crag of Cloud Screen. To the southeast is Stone Screen Peak 石屏風, about half as high and wide as Cloud Screen and standing at its end. On its top is a stone called Toad Stone 蟾蜍石 which faces the Jade Turtle 玉龜 at Cloud Screen's side. Walking south of the Screen and into the folds of Unfurling Banner, we came upon a perpendicular track with hewn steps leading to a stone bar from which the abyss below could be viewed. Up above is a cave and outside are two round caves and one oblong one through which the light shines. This is Heavenly Wisdom Cave 天聰洞, and it can be seen to the left of Cloud Screen.

This place is indeed a wonder of the world, with its piercing

peaks, layers of screens folding around left and right, and all kinds of unexpected marvels and curiosities.

Down the lower reach of Little Dragon Falls, passing Heavenly Pillar and Unfurling Banner and the bridge over it, we found the entrance of the mountain gate. Beyond the bridge is Holding Pearl Crag 含珠岩 which is at the foot of T'ien-chu 天柱, while Crown Pearl Peak 頂珠峯 is above Unfurling Banner. This is the outer view of Spiritual Crag.

June 1: Went out of the mountain gate, turned right along the base and ... beheld a scene of varied cliffs and crags glowing with resplendent hues. Broad Screen Crag 板障岩 stands high and wide, Little Scissors Peak 小剪刀峯 rises upright and sharply pointed. Soaring high into the sky in front of it is Goddess of Mercy Crag 觀音岩, and beside it is Saddle Hill 馬鞍嶺. Following the tortuous trail and turning right after crossing the glen, we came to a broad stream tumbling over a bed of stones as flat as pavement. We followed the stream until we were over ten li away from Spiritual Crag. Passed Ever Cloudy Peak 常雲峯. Great Scissors Peak stands upright by the stream, while north of it Joining Clouds Peak 連雲峯 rises abruptly with its layers of ranges. From here on, hills turn and close round and the end of the crag is reached. Great Dragon Falls beats down upon the tarn below with a noise like an explosion. The crag is open and precipitous and the water has nowhere to rest. It tosses itself into the air and blows about in the sky, sweeping back and forth so as to dazzle the eye and pound the heart.

Above the tarn is a hall said to have been the place where Nakula viewed the waterfall. Behind the hall a flight of steep steps leads up to a pavilion situated upon a jutting rock, a well-chosen vantage point. Here we sat for a long while. Then went down to the monastery for our meal.

A fine curtain of rain continued to fall, but my spirits had flown up to the mountaintop where Wild Goose Lake is located, so we went to Ever Cloudy Peak in the rain and climbed up the perpendicular stone steps past Wayside Pine Cave halfway up the mountain until we reached White Cloud Monastery 白雲庵 but found it dilapidated and without a single living soul. Suddenly a Taoist monk was seen among the shrubbery, but when he discovered us he glanced at us a few times and went his way. We walked another li, found Cloud Reposing Temple 雲靜庵 and spent the night there. The monk Ch'ing-yin 清隱 had been bedridden for many years but was still able to converse pleasantly with us tourists.

Seeing that all mountainsides were enclosed by clouds and rain, I could not help feeling apprehensive about the next day.

June 2: The sky unexpectedly cleared up and I urged Ch'ing-yin's disciple to be our guide. Ch'ing-yin said that the lake was so choked with weeds that it had become a meadow. Moreover, his disciple had an errand to some other place, so that he could accompany us only as far as the summit. I thought that from the summit the lake could be found easily, so, each clutching a staff, we set off. We scrambled among very tall grass, catching our breath at every step. After several li, we reached the summit but, alas, our eyes were filled with one sweep of boundless white clouds that had spread down to the foot of the hill, with their peaks floating above. Now the glittering sun was fully upon them, and our universe was turned into one of ice and jade. We saw no distinction between land and sea except for Jade Ring 玉環 Island which looked so vivid and close as if we could lean over and pick it up.

Looking northward, we viewed the mountain recesses and the rocky bamboo sprouts of various heights.²¹ Their three sides are surrounded by shaggy green crags more beautiful than Spiritual Crag. But the glen is secluded and entirely closed to the outside world. All we heard was the flowing water but we could not

make out where we were. The hills and hillocks on all sides crouch below like knolls; only the East Hill stands up majestically. The only other hill that is comparable to it is Ever Cloudy far to the east.

At this time, the guide excused himself and withdrew but pointed out to us that the lake is on a hill to the west and that we had to cross three more summits in order to get to it. We followed his directions and crossed one pinnacle but found that the path had come to an end. When we mounted another we were already high up in the sky, and I began to have doubts because, according to the description given in the local history, "the lake is at the top of the mountain, and the water of Dragon Falls comes from it." Now the mountain is sloping but the upper reaches of Dragon Falls has its source in the eastern high hill which is two valleys beyond here, so we turned back and made for the high hill to the east. Finding himself too tired to follow me, Lotus Boat descended by the way we came, while the servants and I continued our search.

We crossed two hills but found not a soul on the way. Then the mountain became higher and higher, and the ridge became narrower ... so that walking on it was like walking on the edge of a knife. Besides, there were rocky pinnacles jutting out all along, and as every ridge was followed by a sharp rocky peak, we had to climb, as it were, through a phalanx of swords and knives. After passing over three ridges, we no longer had room even for our feet, and I asked myself how there could be a lake. Then, at the end of a high hill we came to an awesome rock standing there as if it had been shattered asunder. Whereas only a short while ago we had been afraid of the rocky edge cutting us, now there was not even an edge. We stood undecided on the crag, dreading to return by the same way. Looking down to the south, we caught sight of some steps under the rocky cliff. The servants contributed their leggings, and, tying them together, we suspended them

down the crag. One servant scrambled down first, and I followed thinking that we could find a track there.

But when we got down we found that the ledge had just room enough to hold our feet while below it was an abrupt fall of a thousand feet. Discouraged, we sought to go up again, but the crag was bulging out thirty feet or more and we could not fly up. We threw the cloth up for a ladder, but it was torn by a protruding rock. We tried again and succeeded in suspending it. Then we spent all our strength clutching and climbing until finally we reached the crag.

We got out of danger and returned to Cloud Reposing Monastery. The sun was setting in the west. The clothes and shoes of both master and servants had been torn to shreds. Our tension was relieved but our enthusiasm was also dampened. So ended our search for the lake.

We bade the monks good-bye and descended by way of Great Dragon Falls. After the torrential rains of the previous day, it presented a new look. Its volume was doubled and its angry waters crashed down in foam and thunder in all kinds of spectacular forms. I sat watching it until dusk. Then I walked south for four li and stayed overnight at Neng-jen Monastery 能仁寺.

June 3: Found some of the famed square bamboo in back of the monastery but they were very slim.²² The new stems in the grove were as big as one inch in diameter but too soft for use as sticks. All the old stems had been cut off.

Followed the forty-nine windings by the sea, crossed Yao-ao Hill 窑奥嶺 and went to Lo-ch'ing 樂清.

Diary of the Second Visit (Second Part)

My cousin Chung-chao and I took a trip to T'ien-t'ai in

April-May 1632. On June 15, we reached Huang-yen and revisited Yen-tang. We hired horses and left the city by the south gate. Followed Fang Shan 方山 for ten li, turned southwest for thirty li, crossed Hsiu Ling 秀嶺 and had a meal at Yen-ch'ien p'u 岩前鋪. Five li to the border of Lo-ch'ing. After another five li, we mounted P'an-shan Hill and saw, shrouded in the depths of clouds and mists in the southwest, a vague outline of clusters of peaks. That was Yen-tang. Ten li, and we reached Cheng-chia Ling 鄭家嶺 and another ten li, Ta-ching-i. We crossed Stone Gate Torrent 石門澗 where recent rains had swelled the stream and the water reached the horses' bellies. Five li to Chang Family Storeyed House where we spent the night. This is the Outer Eastern Valley 東外谷 of Yen-tang. During the Chang family's more prosperous times, storeyed houses had been built to accommodate tourists. Now inns and stores were left to decay, only the name was still being used.

June 16: Headed west for the mountain, making Old Monk's Crag our goal. After two li we passed its foot and, after another two li, we crossed the stream on its north bank to climb Stone Beam Cave 石梁洞, then returned to the other side of the stream. Turned west for two li and crossed Lord Hsieh's Hill. This side of the hill is the Inner Eastern Valley. At the foot of the hill, a stream coming from the north is flanked by folds of crags and strange-looking peaks. They are naked rocks carved by nature into fantastic shapes. Not a particle of soil can be seen on any of them.

Crossed the stream, turned north for about one li and entered Spiritual Peak Monastery. Here each peak is a marvel in itself and each rises independently. Behind the monastery a solitary peak rears its head, with a cleft running up its middle all the way to the summit. This is Spiritual Peak Cave. Mounted the one thousand steps and found that both the terrace and all the arhat figures had been newly repaired. Descended and ate at the

monastery. Then, accompanied by a monk, we started from Mirroring-the-Gall Pool 照膽潭 and crossed the stream to the left to see Windy Cave 風洞. Its entrance is shaped like a semicircle, and wind pours out from it with such a force that it rushes out for several yards. Then we followed the left bank of the stream and explored all the caves in the crag. When we returned to the monastery the rain had started to pour in torrents. I carried an umbrella and pursued the stream north barefoot. By the time I got near Chen-chi Monastery 真濟寺, the mountain had sunk so deeply in the fog that I could not see a thing, so I went back to the eastern bank of the stream and entered Green Heaven Cave. There I found a vihara [a Buddhist monastery] inhabited by the priest Shou-yü 守愚. I had the feeling that he was a very unusual man, so I ordered a boy to go and summon Chung-chao who came splashing through the water. We were so pleased with Shou-yü that we regretted we had not met him earlier. Dusk came, and we returned to Spiritual Peak Monastery for the night.

June 17: We followed the stream westward for two li in pouring rain. A stream from the northwest joins it here. Crossed it and headed northwestward and reached Ching-ming Monastery after three li. The rain became still heavier. I looked up to two crags whose cliffs rose one above the other but the fog made it impossible for me to discern the layers. My clothes and shoes were completely soaked, but I was determined to explore the western valley, and I discovered such places as Water Curtain Glen 水簾谷, Wei-mo's Stone Cabin 維摩石室 and Summons Terrace 說法台. Two more li to Resounding Crag which has two caves on its right side screened by waterfalls. I reached them after struggling through thorny thickets. One of the caves is Dragon King 龍王 and the other Three Terraces 三台. A crag protruding in front of them looks like a porch and may be reached by a skyway. When I left the caves and looked back to the top of Resounding Crag, I saw a rock attached to it as if it were an

ear. It is called Poetry-listening Old Man 聽詩叟. Two li farther west came Spiritual Crag. There are several other lofty crags as well as joining screens from there all the way west. Ching-ming Monastery is situated in the first recess in the rocky walls. There the split is very narrow, hence the name One Thread of Sky 一綫天. Spiritual Crag Monastery is located in the center of the second recess and is surrounded by folds of screens.

June 18: Chung-chao and I walked up to Heavenly Wisdom Cave 天聰洞. We saw two round caves to the east and one long cave to the north. All three have openings through which light shines, but their sides drop vertically with no foothold in their vicinity. I went back to the monastery and borrowed a ladder. Returning with a boy, we broke through the brambles, crossed a valley and reached the bottom [of the hill with] the round cave. The ladder not being long enough, we cut some wood into pieces and inserted them in the rock fissures and climbed up on them. But we were still a long way from the cave, so we roped the ladder to the trees growing out from the rocks. Thus, by alternately using the ladder and the pieces of wood and finally by scrambling up the trees with the help of the rope, we succeeded in climbing into the round cave. Once there, I shouted to Chung-chao in the other cave. Later, I used the same method with the long cave. By the time I got down, it was already noon. We went west to Little Dragon Falls because I wanted to find Sword Spring 劍泉, but we could not find it. We sat down on some rocks and I gazed at the mountain range which seemed to press hard against the sky with its pointed peaks. The flying cataract hanging in between looked like a silk curtain flowing down from the upper heavens.

Going still farther west, we passed Small Scissors Peak and Iron Board Rampart which spreads out squarely like a screen towering high above layers of crags. Under it is a gap like a door; only vapors but no men have ever passed through it. Passed the Goddess of Mercy Crag again. The crag expands towards the west

and becomes Plow's Point 犁尖 . It stands right next to Ever Cloudy Crag which, in turn, dips toward the south and rises again to become Tai-ch'en Peak 戴辰峯 . The hollow of the dip is called Saddle Hill and is considered the dividing line between the eastern and western portions of the inner valley. The short distance of four li between Spiritual Crag and Saddle Hill is so crowded with high hills and ridges that one cannot see them all at once.

Crossed the hill when the setting sun was already pressing down on it. We walked west for two li and passed the stream of Great Dragon Falls, turned southwest for another two li and spent the night at Neng-jen Monastery.

June 19: Searched for square bamboo in the valley behind the monastery but did not find any good ones. Visited T'an-hua Chapel 曇花庵 , a rather secluded spot. Left the temple and viewed Swallow Tail Spring on its right. The stream coming from Dragon Falls divides into two as it flows over the cliff, hence the name. Followed the stream north for two li, then west for another two li, and as we turned by Joined Clouds Rampart, we came upon Great Scissors Peak standing majestically in the stream. Here the rocky walls of the cliffs fold around and the water of the Great Dragon Falls seems to be falling from the sky. As I sat in the Look Without Satiation Pavilion, Great Dragon Falls was in front of me and Great Scissors at my back. I was indeed surrounded by mountains.

Left Joined Clouds Rampart, crossed Hua-yen Hill and reached Arhat Monastery after two li. The monastery had been in disrepair for a long time and it was only recently reconstructed by Master Lying in Clouds 臥雲 . Lying in Clouds is over eighty, with features resembling those of the arhat who is believed to have flown over here. He is a great authority on the mountain. I invited the master to join me in climbing to the summit, and he promised to accompany me to Ever Cloudy Crag. Wild Goose Lake is

west of there and is easier to reach by way of Stone Gate Monastery. As it was already afternoon, he agreed to go to Ever Cloudy Crag with me the day after tomorrow. Accompanied by his disciple, we crossed Eastern Hill 東嶺 and after four li reached the Outer Western Valley. Passed the ruins of Stone Gate Monastery and followed the stream west for one li [to the point] where it is joined by another stream. This stream comes from the west, carrying the water of the falls of Ling-yün and Precious Crown, and continues from here southward into the sea.

I followed it and spent the night at Ling-yün Monastery which is at the foot of Holding Pearl Peak 含珠峯. It is a solitary peak piercing the sky and split in two from top to bottom with the gap only one foot wide. Rather miraculously, a rock as round as a pearl is lodged in the gap. I followed the stream north to a stone basement which is called Plum Rain Pool 梅雨潭. The flying cataract which beats down from the sheer cliff is full of grandeur, quite different from the usual vapor-like drizzle.

June 20: Went east for three li, followed the stream north to Stone Gate, deposited our luggage at the grave keeper's house of the Huang family, and took the steps north to the summit of Wild Goose Lake. The path was not very steep. We climbed for two li and the hills began to crouch down while islands seemed to move into the foreground. The higher we ascended the closer the sea seemed to press under our feet. Four more li up and we crossed the ridge of the mountain. The mountain extends westward from the highest point in the northeast, and here it spreads out into four branches. The ridges of the four branches are covered with soil and bulge slightly thus forming three depressions between them. As each depression also has a ridge dividing it into two in a north-south direction, there are no less than six depressions. Accumulated water in them has turned them into extensive swamps completely covered with green vegetation. This is what is

called Wild Goose Lake. Waters run off on its south side at Stone Gate, Plum Rain at Ling-yün, and Precious Crown. Some waters also flow down the north side but none of these waters are in any way connected to Great Dragon Falls.

After crossing the ridge I gazed upon the vast ocean in the south and the stream in the north, with nothing blocking my view on either side. Only East Hill soars above the clouds. I wished to go northeast and descend to Precious Crown, but the bramble-filled crags offered no footing whatever, so I sought the old path and descended by Stone Gate. Passed Ling-yün on the west, took the path by Holding Pearl Peak for two li to seek Precious Crown Monastery. It is deep in the Western Valley and has been lying in ruins for a long time. At the extreme end of the valley rocky crags close around and there are neither steps nor trails. A cave hangs high up and a rock leans obliquely at its entrance, dividing it into two. It is lofty and airy and a spring sprinkles around in the center. There are many banana trees like the kind grown in Fukien. Outside, new bamboo of different heights had shed their skins and were forming a grove. As I came near the cave, I heard the thundering noise of a waterfall, but it was hidden by the crags and I could not see it.

I descended the mountain and crossed over to the other side of the stream. Looking back from there into the right rib of the cave, I saw an opening left by a rift in the crag. Through it I could see a waterfall coming straight down and crashing into the round glen where it again leaped up and rushed out forming a stream. The fall is not as high as Dragon Falls but seems more vigorous, so I think that it should be ranked high among the waters of Yen-tang. Headed east along the same path and slept at Arhat Monastery.

June 21: Early in the morning I looked and saw that Ever Cloudy was veiled in white misty clouds, but I was not to be deterred. I hastened Lying in Clouds to go up with me. We walked

east for two li, passed Hua Crag 華岩 and took the steps between Joining Clouds Rampart on the left and Tao-sung Cave on the right. We climbed in a westerly direction for three li. Looking down, we saw that Scissors Peak was already below us. After another li the mountain begins to turn and a stream flows out. It is the upper part of Dragon Falls. We crossed it, passed by the huts of White Cloud and Beyond Clouds, and went north to Cloud Reposing Temple 雲靜庵. Both the temple and the path were in very good condition, very different from the old days. Lying in Clouds ordered his disciple to pluck bamboo shoots and cook rice. When the meal was finished, the mists suddenly lifted from the hills.

Chung-chao remained at the temple while Lying in Clouds and I made straight for East Peak. After two li we began to hear the sound of water. It was Great Dragon Falls tumbling down from the folds of the crag. The water has its source in a valley between the pinnacle [of East Peak] to the north and Ever Cloudy to the south. Followed the water down for two li, and the sound of the water grew fainter. After another two li, we crossed the ridge whose north side reaches the pinnacle. Its south side divides into two branches, the eastern one being the Goddess of Mercy Crag and the western one being Ever Cloudy. East of the ridge is Wu-chia K'en 吳家坑. Of the peaks there, Iron Board Rampart is the nearest, followed by Spiritual Crag, Ching-ming, Spiritual Peak and Lord Hsieh's Hill at the extreme end. The folds west of the ridge are the back of Dragon Falls 龍湫, Hibiscus Peak, Ling-yün, Precious Crown and Li-chia Shan 李家山. In the center of the south side of Yen-tang are Goddess of Mercy and Ever Cloudy. They were then below us, but a peak to the north stood behind us like a tall screen.

We went up that way for two li and came to a ridge as narrow as the top of a wall. Both edges, however, are raised. Its north side drops down vertically, forming one bank to Nan-ko Stream 南閣溪, and is not folded around like the south side. I

walked from the eastern summit to the western summit. All of a sudden I heard a flurry of scampering and found that it was several scores of scared deer. The peak to the north is split in the middle as if by a hammer and reveals a bottomless pit in which masses of tall rocks and broken crags stand. The deer rushed to the brink and plunged down. I was sure that many were killed and maimed. Then monks came rushing up and threw stone slabs [into the pit] causing a sharp sound like tearing silk which reverberated for a long time. This, of course, made the deer cry out even more pitifully.

Farther west from there the stone ridge comes to an end and the peaks also recede. As I looked northwest towards Wild Goose Lake, it seemed to get lower the farther I walked away from it. When I tried to find it twenty years ago, I was stopped by a crag and was forced to descend by cloth strips. Then I was on its west side, now I came up from its east side, so I have no more regrets.

Returned to Cloud Reposing Temple, followed the stream to the top of Great Dragon Falls. I looked down into the Dragon Pool which winds around the foot of the crag. As the water dropped into the pool from the folds of the rocky walls, its spray caused such dazzling light that it blinded me.

I crossed the stream and ascended in a westerly direction. I found myself on the crag opposite Dragon Falls. Turned south and crossed two more peaks. They are surrounded by Stone Gate in the west, Arhat in the east, Hibiscus Peak in the south and East Hill still farther south. Hibiscus Peak is rounded and stands by itself to the southwest of Arhat Monastery. After I descended to the foot of the peak, I found the path leading east to the monastery. The sun was already in the west and Chung-chao had arrived before me.

June 22: Bade Lying in Clouds good-bye, left Arhat Monastery and followed the stream for one li to the mouth of Dragon Falls Stream, altogether four li. Descended after crossing Saddle Hill.

Far to the north we saw openings like doors in the rocks under Goddess of Mercy Peak. Chung-chao had already gone ahead to Spiritual Crag. I took a boy with me and went north to the foot of the peak, followed the fuel gatherers' path, turned west for two li and reached the foot of the two peaks Goddess of Mercy and Ever Cloudy. It was then that I saw that the upper parts of the two peaks face each other and are far apart but their bases are formed of one rocky wall like a city wall. Then I followed the crag east for about one li, climbed above the stone rifts but found that it was so densely covered by thick brush that it was impossible to see anything below. At the end of the crag a stone stands out like an opened umbrella, very flat on top and almost nothing underneath. I sat there for a long while and then entered the crag by the rifts. They are split into so many layers that it is impossible to grope one's way through all of them. Outside the rifts stands a peak with a crown as thin as a layer [of early morning mist] and as high as Old Man's Crag. Its rounded crown and raised sleeves make it resemble a child standing with his palms pressed together in salutation.

Came out to the path. Most of the inhabitants here are surnamed Wu. One named Wu Yin-yüeh 吳應岳 invited me to dinner. I asked him to go with me along the stream to Wu-chia K'en which I had seen from the summit. It is between Goddess of Mercy and Iron Board Rampart. I wanted to climb to the cave on the left of the stream. The crag is to the west of Iron Board, and the cave is on the left side of the crag. It seems to have two levels. When I reached the lower level, I could not go higher. When I walked out and climbed to the higher level, I could not get down because the cave is located halfway up the crag. Then I walked east along the crag and found another rift in the rock. Looking up, I saw that it had several levels, but without suspended ladders it was impossible to get up. Descended a small peak called Oriole Beak Crag 鶯嘴岩. Parted from Wu and walked east

past Iron Board Rampart and saw a rift larger than the others. Water seemed to be flowing like a stream underneath. I hurriedly followed it and reached the foot of the cave, but the path was blocked by piles of stones. I discovered a path on the left going straight up the crag. It may be negotiated with the help of notches chipped in the precipitous side and overhanging plants. So I braced myself and ascended. When my clothes became burdensome, I took them off; when my walking stick got in the way, I threw it away. In this manner I ascended one crag and then traversed another, repeating the procedure on my way up. More than once, I used some wood to make bridges and finally gained entrance to the gap in the rock.

It was like a door between tall rocks. The inside was spacious and I was able to go up. I entered two more stone gates. Looking up, I saw rocky walls stand all around while the blue sky, framed by them, looked like a well. The sun's rays guided my eyes back into the cave and to a wooden ladder at the bottom. I climbed it as if in a storeyed house. [When I reached the outside] I turned left and found some flat ground. The lofty range of Iron Board Rampart was at my back. It is surrounded to the east and west by dangerous cliffs while the south side has light and spacious gaps underneath. It is truly the abode of immortals. I found a thatched hut, but it was uninhabited. Many tea bushes grow here which account for the notches in the rocks and the ladders that are intended for the convenience of the tea pickers.

Going down along the stream, I met some local inhabitants. Crossed Little Scissors Peak to the east and after two li, entered Spiritual Crag Monastery to be reunited with Chung-chao.

June 23: I took a monk of Spiritual Crag to accompany me on my visit to Glowing Cloud Rampart. We climbed up by way of clefts in the rocks from Dragon Nose Grotto. After half a li, we found a strangely shaped grotto. Half a li farther, the crag and the path ended, but a ladder left by charcoal makers leaned there. We

climbed it and found three enormous rocks lying across the two crags, forming a room below. The outside rock was a [natural] bridge. The light and spacious room was sheltered by layers of crags. Although it did not have the magnificent composition of those at Iron Board Rampart and Stone Gate, its seclusion made it a world of its own.

Went up by the left side of the cave. Pulling at vines for aid, we ascended along rocky trails and reached the middle level of Glowing Cloud Rampart which is on top of Dragon Nose. The front of the crag was flat enough to build a hut on but the rear towered against the sky. On the right of the rampart stood an overhanging crag with springs splashing over it. We resumed our climb on the rocks of the crag and were about to reach the summit when a sharp rock blocked our way. By its side, a narrow fissure covered with plants provided room for our feet, so we descended on it. Each of us plucked a handful of long vines growing luxuriantly in the crag and [used them as ropes] whenever there were no trees nor footholds. In this manner, we moved westward crossing five ridges and after several li we reached the dead end of a torrent, the upper reaches of Small Dragon Falls. The torrent starts southeast on the summit of Yen-tang Shan, with Iron Board on its right and Glowing Cloud on its left. A ravine between the two ramparts is sheltered by layers of crags and it is impossible to approach it from either above or below nor, indeed, to cross it without ropes.

Waded into the torrent and, walking on rocks, we followed the current eastward for about one li when an enormous rock blocked the water so that it beat against the stark rocky walls. We had come to an impasse, so we fashioned a wooden ladder and climbed up the crag and lowered ourselves on the other side of the rock. There we saw that the lower part of the rock had a hollow space large enough to accommodate a flag pole a hundred feet high. The water spilled right down from behind the rock and formed an

emerald pool which calmed one's mind. Craggs on both sides had grottos high up above. Farther down from here is Dragon Falls. I had tried twice to find Sword Spring and the monks had always told me that it was above Dragon Falls and beyond reach. Now it was still nowhere to be found. It must have long since disappeared.

I wanted to descend the two peaks zigzag, so we chopped wood for making a ladder and detoured around the soaring peaks. Gazing down, such peaks as Lonely Grace and Shuang-luan seemed just below us. When we reached Immortals' Bridge, we found the crag broken off. We were very tired, so we backtracked and returned to the monastery by way of the stone room at Glowing Cloud Rampart. Took our bags, passed Ching-ming and spent the night at Spiritual Peak [Monastery].

June 24: Followed the stream in front of the monastery and visited South Blue Heaven Bridge 南碧霄岡 whose only remarkable feature is its loftiness. Another three li, and we turned west towards Chen-chi Monastery in the glen north of the stream coming from the gorge in the west. Wu-ma Ch'ao-t'ien 五馬朝天, the peak south of the gorge, is forbodingly lofty. There were narrow stony paths on both sides but no inhabitants and the paths were choked with thickets. Continued for about one li but found the going tough. Passed Chen-chi Monastery to the north. It is a very secluded spot in the north valley and is hardly ever visited by tourists. Followed the small creek to the right of the monastery for about three li, ascended Ma-chia Shan Hill 馬家山嶺 and viewed from its top the crown of Yen-tang Shan clustered like a lotus flower. Looking northward, I spotted Nan-ko just below my feet. I hurriedly descended over four li and found New Temple 新庵. Left my luggage there and followed Nan-ko Stream to see the sights of Yen-tang's north side. Nan-ko stream originates over thirty li from here at Jo-niao Hill 箬畚嶺, northwest of Yen-tang at the boundary of Yung-chia 永嘉.

South of the hill lies Lo-ch'ing and Hibiscus, and west of it lies Feng-lin 楓林 on the road to Ou-chün 區瓦君. The north side of Yen-tang is lofty and well-covered with trees and bamboo, very different from the stern ruggedness of the south side. The big mountains which come winding down from Jo-niao Hill south of the stream have oddly shaped peaks and crags vying with clouds and mists in their illusory aspects. They terminate at Nan-ko. Another stream north of the mountain comes from Pei-ko and joins the one here, then continues east into Stone Gate Tarn.

Inside Nan-ko lies a flat plain of a thousand mou. The people there use the stone gate as their gate and window, hence the name ko 閣 [chamber]. The names north and south refer to the banks of the stream. There are also the house of Chang Kung-i 章恭毅 and such sights as Stone Buddha Cave 石佛洞, Splashing Water Crag 散水岩 and Grotto Immortal Crag 洞仙岩. Pei-ko has the old site of White Crag Monastery, and farther west is the Bridge of the Immortal Wang Tzu-chin 王子晉仙橋, purported to be extraordinarily awesome. I explored Nan-ko in the rain. I first passed Kung-i's house where a large and prosperous clan lived. Then followed the stream for five li and passed Li-t'ou Temple 犁頭庵, to the south of which is Stone Buddha Cave, but I did not go in because the path was blocked. Walked west for ten li to Chuang Wu 莊塢 where all the people bear the surname Yeh 葉. Splashing Water Crag is in the north glen. It is a massive rocky crag with flying cataracts tumbling down. Going up from the left side of the crag, I found a small temple on the top.

It was getting dark and rainy. Some local people invited us to spend the night at Chuang Wu. They told us about the sights of Grotto Immortal Crag.

June 25: The rain did not stop. Followed the stream west for three li. Mountains and streams became still more secluded. Turned north for another two li. Saw a small path on the other

side of the stream leading into cloudy depths. Crossed the stream and we followed [the path]. Suddenly the peak and the stream turned around. As we went deep into the valley, [we found] a maze of mist-wrapped crests stretching from beyond Chuang Wu and unfolding a magnificent scene. A native whom we asked told us that this is Hsiao Tsuan-ts'o 小纂厝 and that Grotto Immortal is beyond it at the upper reaches of the big stream. We crossed the stream which is joined, about one li down, by another coming from the east. It is the Grotto Immortal stream. We followed it upstream in an easterly direction and discovered hills, peaks and huts, very much like those we had seen before. The Immortal Cave was on the inner crag, leaning against it and facing north. It was shielded by rows of bamboo. Broke through the undergrowth and entered by way of a rocky cleft. At first it was very narrow but grew wider as we ascended. We came out south toward Chuang Wu and returned east to Li-t'ou Temple but we never found the way to Stone Buddha Cave.

We went out by Nan-ko in order to go to Bridge of the Immortal Wang Tzu-chin which was at the end of Pei-ko, some twenty li away. However, remembering that Chung-chao was at nearby Hsin Temple, we went there instead. The sun had set and there was no time to visit Pei-ko. We returned east by way of Ta-ching 大荊.

峯屏玉

雲浮

仙鶴

展旗

鐘

鼓

碧霞

石林

拱日

Chapter V

PO YÜEH

白嶽

Introduction

Po Yüeh and nearby Huang Shan are part of a mountain range on the border between Chekiang and Anhwei. Po Yüeh is not nearly so well known as Huang Shan, but most people who go to Huang Shan by way of Hsiu-ning 休寧 also visit Po Yüeh.

One of its claims to historical fame seems to be as the home of some of China's greatest makers of ink sticks. Those made by Li T'ing-kuei 李廷珪 in the tenth century came to be valued as the rarest treasures by calligraphers and painters and their cost was greater than their weight in gold. During the reign of K'ang-hsi (r. 1662-1722), a man named Wang Lung 汪隆 combined his superior skill in ink-making with his great love for Po Yüeh, the most beautiful mountain in his native district, to produce a set of ink sticks made of the choicest materials. Each stick carried the picture of one of Po Yüeh's scenic spots on one side and a poem about it by a celebrated poet or scholar on the other. The fate of the ink sticks is unknown, but readers can still obtain Wang's book in which he described his work and provided illustrations of his ink sticks.¹

Po Yüeh had been a popular mountain by Hsü's time. The emperor Shih-tsung 世宗 (1522-1566) believed it answered his prayers for an heir and in gratitude had the chief monastery there rebuilt.² He also conferred upon it the name Equalling Clouds 齊雲.³ Hence, the monasteries and forests of the mountain must have presented a prosperous and well-kept look when Hsü visited it.

The drinking bout Hsü had with the Taoist monk Wang Po-hua 汪伯化 suggests that it was customary for Taoist monks on Po Yüeh to hold convivial gatherings with their scholarly visitors. Another tourist of the Ming dynasty, Li Jih-hua 李日華 (1565-1635), remarked in his journal how very pleased he was to find the Taoist monks of Huang-t'ing Yüan 黃庭院 such good drinking companions.⁴ "All the Taoist monks of Huang-t'ing Yüan drink. It is a pleasure to see how freely they toss off drinks and how frankly and high-spiritedly they converse. So different are they from the constrained manner and servility so characteristic of their kind in the city. How much I regret that I could not procure the superior skill of such portrait painters as Chan 展 and Lu 陸 to make a portrait of "Topsy Taoists" and present it to them!"⁵

Perhaps it was the wine of the Taoist monks of Po Yüeh that led to the excessive practice of inscribing stones. A visitor of the reign of Chia-ching 嘉靖 (r. 1522-1566), one Shen Ming-ch'en 沈明臣 described in detail how he and his friends engraved their names on a stele. Shen first remarked on the inferiority of most of the inscriptions he saw. Then he said: "One of the attendant boys carried a hamper containingtea, fruit, brushes, ink stones as well as knives and swivels There is a stele in the pool at the foot of Purple Heaven Crag 紫霄岩 . The inscription was by T'ang Yin 唐寅 . The four of us put our names and dates on the left of the tablet."⁶

This practice of scholarly graffiti reached such proportions by late Ming that Yuan Hung-tao 袁宏道 (1568-1610), a contemporary of Hsü and a master of prose style, penned this bitter indictment:

Remarkably beautiful as Heaven's Gate 天門 of Equalling Cloud Crag is, it is disgusting to see inscribed stone tablets cluttering its foothills. The predilection of Anhwei people for inscription is an incorrigible vice. Even officials in this province get accustomed to this practice and make it a tradition,

so that all the rocks are carved with inscriptions in red and white, making it a most distressing sight. The law provides regular punishments for those who rob mountains and open mines. Why is it that it does not prohibit the defiling and defacing of the spirit of the mountain by vulgar scholars? Buddha says that evil karma of all kinds shall reap evil results. This karma belongs to the same category as murder and killing, but Buddha's retribution does not reach out to these offenders.⁷

Two aspects of Hsü's visit to Po Yüeh deserve comment. He had a companion whom he called Uncle Hsün-yang 潯陽. We do not know who he was. Ting Wen-chiang conjectured from the fact that the term shu-weng 叔翁 (honorable old uncle) suggests both a respectful way of addressing an elderly man and a family relationship that he probably was a relative on his wife's side.⁸ At any rate, the significant point which will become apparent to the reader of Hsü's diaries is that so long as his travels did not extend beyond the Yangtze valley, he never lacked travelling companions from among his friends and relatives.

The other aspect was the time Hsü chose for this trip. Usually, March is not deemed a suitable time for visiting mountains because the weather is still very cold even down on the plains. Hsü may have deliberately chosen that time in order to see Po Yüeh in the winter. If that had been his aim, he was not disappointed. He was snowbound three out of the five days that he was on the mountain. He did not regret it. Although he was debarred from climbing, he enjoyed the rare sight of a snowy landscape on top of a mountain.

Diary

My uncle Hsün-yang and I reached Hsiu-ning in Anhwei on March 13, 1616. We left its west gate and followed the stream

coming from Ch'i-men county 祁門. Crossed it, headed south, and we reached Mei-k'ou 梅口 where the stream joins the one from the city on its course into Chekiang. Followed the stream for twenty li to South Ferry 南渡 and crossed the bridge. Then we walked along the base of the mountain until dusk when we reached the Crag of Equalling Clouds.

We climbed five li, borrowed a lantern from a temple, and continued the ascent in a snowstorm, treading on ice. Passed Heaven's Gate after two li, also Pearl Curtain 珠簾 but could not spare time to look for them in the darkness. All that we were aware of was the clinking of icicles among the trees. Finally I reached Lang-mei Temple 榔梅庵 and turned in for the night.

A heavy snowstorm came afresh after I had arrived at the monastery, but Hsün-yang and the servants had fallen behind and had still not come. I slept alone in the mountain abode and listened to the water dripping from the eaves all night without being able to sleep.

March 14: Rose and saw one color permeating the whole scene. The white snowy mountainsides were covered with ice flowers and jade trees [a conventional way of describing snow-covered trees]. I stayed in the upstairs room until Hsün-yang and the servants came. Then we set out and ascended T'ai-su Monastery 太素宮 which faces north. The figure of Yuan-ti 元帝, the presiding god of the monastery, is of a rugged black. Legend has it that birds carrying bits of mud they had brought made the figure, so it is rugged and dark. It is said to have been made during the Sung Dynasty, but the monastery was rebuilt in 1559 and the inscription on the stone in the courtyard was a composition of the emperor Shih-tsung 世宗. On either side of the central hall is a side hall, one dedicated to Wang the god 王靈官 and the other to Chao the general 趙元帥. The architecture of the monastery is grandly beautiful.

Jade Screen 玉屏 is in back of the monastery and Incense Burner Peak 香爐峯 is in front of it. The latter rises abruptly for several hundred feet like an inverted bell, a sight impressive to those who have not seen the more wonderful peaks of T'ient'ai and Yen-tang.

Going left from the monastery, we reached Self-surrender Crag 捨身崖. Farther up is Purple Jade Screen 紫玉屏 while west of it is Purple Heaven Crag. Both rise to enormous heights. Farther west are Three Maidens Peak 三姑峯 and Five Old Men Peak 五老峯 with Pavilion of Literary Effusions 文昌閣 in front of them. The peaks of the Five Old Men stand shoulder to shoulder, not very pointed but shaped like a brush supporter .

Returned to Lang-mei Temple, following the path by which we had come the night before. Descended the Sky Ladder 天梯 and came to a place enclosed on three sides by crags which are hollow near the base and protruding above so as to form a covered corridor. Walked along the crag. A waterfall called Pearl Curtain Water flows down on its outside. In its recesses is Arhat's Cave 羅漢洞 which opens wide at the entrance and has a depth of fifteen li, its southeastern end being connected with South Ferry. At the end of the crag is Heavenly Gate whose hollow lower part allows men to walk in and out like a city gate. Outside the Gate, tall nan 楠 trees rear their proud heads in the sky and stretch out their thousand green boughs. Inside the Gate, a range of crags forms the back of Pearl Curtain, making a beautiful sight.

Went back to the monastery for the night and made plans to go to Five Wells 五井 and Bridge Crag 橋岩. The Taoist monk Wang Po-hua 汪伯化 promised to accompany us in the morning.

March 15: Heard some voice in my dream calling "heavy snow." Made the servant hasten to get up and see, and heard the report that snow was covering hill and dale. Therefore I stayed in bed

until nine when I got up and walked with Po-hua for two li to Pavilion of Literary Effusions. Although our plan of visiting Five Wells was frustrated, we were more than compensated by the wonderful sight of the whole universe clothed in snow.

March 16: The servant reported that the clouds were lifting and sunbeams were hovering above the woods. Put my clothes on at once and got up. The sky was a boundless blue, a sight we had not seen for a half a month. But the cold was severe, and I hurried Po-hua to eat breakfast. Breakfast over, a heavy snowstorm started again and soon it was a foot deep. Walking accidentally to the edge of the second storey of the temple, I suddenly caught sight of Incense Burner rearing its enormous height in front of the building. Another Taoist by the name of Ch'eng Chen-hua 程振華 came out from the back quarters of the temple and talked to me about the sights of the Nine Wells, Bridge Crag, and Fu Crag 傅岩.

March 17: Heavy snow and thick fog limited visibility to within one foot. Po-hua carried wine to Self-surrender Crag and we drank in T'i-yuan Pavilion 睇元閣 which is by the crag. Icicles hung all over as far as the eye could see; the largest were as long as ten feet. All sights of mountains and hills were completely blotted out. Even one as close as Incense Burner could not be seen.

March 18: At first one strip of sky made its appearance in the clouds; soon it was all clear. Hsün-yang remained in the temple to nurse his chapped feet. Po-hua and I hastened to descend by West Heaven's Gate. Ten li to Double Stream Street 雙溪街. From here we had an open view of the mountain, but after five li it disappeared again, and the winding streams and beautiful rocks were full of charming delights. Another three li and we entered a narrow path at the head of the stream, passed one hill and reached, two li farther down, Stone Bridge Crag. The enclosing crags by the Bridge are as high and continuous as Purple Heaven.

Under them halls had been built to conform to the natural shapes of the crags. All rocks are purple save one blue stone dragon which is curled up inside the crag with his head hanging down over a foot, with water dripping down. It is called Dragon Saliva Spring 龍涎泉. It is similar to Dragon Nose Water of Yentang. To the left of the crag, a mountain with its lower half hollow curves in such a way that it leaves the hollow space underneath exactly in the shape of a half-moon while the mountain is like a rainbow spanning it. It sits under it and faces the peak of another mountain reposing high above. Other hills are standing guard around it. The view here is superior to that of Heaven's Gate. Awe-inspiring as Natural Bridge at T'ien-t'ai may be, it is merely a rock suspended between two hills whereas this is a mountain that is suspended in air over a hollow lower half.

We walked into the [hollow space] for about one li and came to the inner crag which has tumbling springs tossing and sprinkling. Inside is a pleasant looking monastery. We returned to the outer crag for our meal, then found a guide and went down by the left side. The track in the gorge took us between two shaggy mountains overgrown with thickets. It was very hard walking, especially as the snow was coming down thick and fast. The guide advised me to go to Fu Crag and not to Goddess of Mercy Crag, but I was unwilling to miss the sights of Dragon Well 龍井 and Chessboard 碁盤, so I did not take his advice. We went on for two li and found a tarn of unfathomable blue. It is also called a dragon well. Another three li brought us to the end of both the crag and the gorge where a hanging torrent of several dozens of feet drops down from the curve of the mountain. This also is a wonderful sight.

We climbed and walked on the mountain ridge for two li and saw Chessboard Rock which is shaped like an upright mushroom and of a size that takes several men's outstretched arms to girdle. It stands erect on the summit. We scrambled up to its top which

was thickly covered with accumulated snow like white jade. From here we had a view of Fu Crag towering sublimely among the clouds. We discovered that from there it is also easy to get to Chessboard, and we regretted that we had not heeded the guide's words.

Near Chessboard Rock is Manjusri Temple 文殊庵, a beautifully secluded spot of bamboo and rocks. We walked southeastward for two li, passed two hills, and halfway up found the Goddess of Mercy Crag. The monasteries here are neat and regular structures but have nothing else remarkable about them, thus my regret was doubled for not having gone to Fu Crag when we were so near it.

Passed the hill again and went down on the eastern side into a deep hollow. Here the waters in the stone gorge converge from all directions. Deep tarns are all called dragon wells. They are of various sizes and shapes and they met us along the way for a stretch of three li. In the crags traces of rock veins can be seen, and the guide pointed them out to me as a blue dragon and a white dragon. I smiled my assent.

Above the pile of crags one solitary rock appears as if it were inserted in the sky, and water is flowing down from it. It looks like a span similar to Natural Bridge of T'ien-t'ai.

As it was getting late in the afternoon, Po-hua suggested that we follow the gorge to find the Great Dragon Well, but we met a monk from Huang Shan who argued that the only thing going out from here is a big stream, so what else could there be to see? Hence we turned back but took another path which goes to Ch'i-shu Yüan 漆樹園. As we picked our way among rugged rocks and many-forked streams, rays of the setting sun shone into the depths of the woods, affording a long vista of magnificent and quiet beauty. A climb of three li brought us to the top of a hill. I thought that it must be as high as Equalling Clouds, but when we arrived there we found that the Pavilion of Literary Effusions was still higher. Five Old Men Peak faces the Pavilion and to the

east of it is Lonely Shrugging Fortress 獨聳寨 . We followed the glen and came out to West Heaven's Gate.

West of Five Old Men is the Peak of Unfurling Banners 展旗峯 . Under it is Hibiscus Bridge 芙蓉橋 . In the morning we had set out from West Heaven's Gate, and now we were returning by way of this bridge. The sun was still lingering on Three Maids Peak, so I climbed Five Old Men and watched the sunset.

Returned to supper in the temple and recapitulated our day's tour to the monks and learned with regret that Big Dragon Well is just at the head of Big Stream. It seems that we were destined to miss it by the misleading words of the monk we had met, so our steps had actually been within its reach but we had not found it.

Chapter VI

WU-I SHAN

武夷山

Introduction

Wu-i Shan is a mountain near Ch'ung-an county 崇安 on the border between Chekiang and Kiangsi.¹ Its greatest fame, in a nation of tea drinkers, rests with its tea.² Hsü Hsia-k'o's observation of tea being planted in Tea Cove 茶洞 and His Majesty's Tea Garden 御茶園 testified to the preeminent position that tea held in that region. In the time of Lu Yü 陸羽 (d.804), the first tea connoisseur, Wu-i Shan was not yet known but by the time of Ts'ai Hsiang 蔡襄 (1011-1067), statesman and tea connoisseur, the tea of Wu-i Shan had become so widely known and highly rated that it was sent as a tribute to the emperor. The annual production of its best type of tea did not exceed sixty catties. It was classified into ten grades of which the first grade, Dragon Tea, was made exclusively for the emperor's use and as gifts to his ministers.³

In the Yüan dynasty, two officers were stationed here in charge of tea making, and a tea garden, almost two miles in length, was built and named His Majesty's Tea Garden. It contained the Call the Spring Pavilion 喊泉亭 and the adjacent Meeting the Immortals Well 會仙井. By imperial command, a tribute of 9,999 catties of three grades of tea were to be sent to the capital annually.⁴ On the day of Excited Insects 驚蟄 early each spring, the officers assembled their staff to offer sacrifices after which the attendants sounded cymbals and drums and shouted in unison: "The tea sprouts!" As if on command, the well would gradually fill up with very pure and sweet water that imparted to the tea its unrivalled taste. Towards the end of the tea-making

process, the well would gradually subside to its usual low level.⁵

Water has played a central role not only in the making of Wu-i Shan's nationally famous tea but also in its equally famous natural beauty. One feature that gives Wu-i Shan the particular beauty unequalled by any other mountain in China is a stream that forms nine bends as it follows its sinuous course, hence its name Nine Curves 九曲. Crowding close to its edges are steep cliffs and overhanging crags, dotted with groves and grottos, with more peaks and rocky buttresses standing behind. Tourists usually board a raft made of bamboo grown in the local groves and adapted especially for use on mountain streams.⁶ As the raft proceeds and the landscape begins to unfold its beauties, the tourist feels himself drawn deeper and deeper into the charms of this enchanting place. The trees are luxuriant and illuminated by reflected light from the water, the rocky peaks and crags gleam with a kaleidoscope of colors - from pure white to jet black to many tints of yellow, red, russet, and brown - and all this is set off by alternating flashing torrents and pools of eternal calm.

Compared, as it often is, to Lu Shan and its vast P'o-yang Lake 鄱陽湖 nearby, Wu-i Shan's small size and compactness allow a fuller appreciation of its beauty by the limited powers of human comprehension. Contrasts of form, distance and color - all the things that bring out the beauty of a landscape and delight the artistic sense of the painter - may be readily seen here.

Quite fittingly, Wu-i Shan is not preeminently a home for the profound, unworldly and solemn Buddhists but for the materialistic yet more fanciful and occult Taoists whose dreams are of immortals, hoards of gold and silver, and the elixir of life. Following the Nine Curves and learning the story of each hill, rock, and building on its banks is like perusing a Taoist anthology.

Hsü Hsia-k'o read a grand chapter of this anthology when he came across Canopy Peak 幔亭峯. On its summit is the Altar

for Feasting Immortals 宴仙壇, an enormous stone resembling an incense burner. Legend says that in 245 B.C., the Jade Emperor 玉皇 and his consort, the Grand Dame 皇太姥, gave a feast here for over two thousand local men and women.⁷ The astounded guests climbed on a rainbow bridge to the summit where they found several hundred rooms lavishly decorated with streamers and bunting for their entertainment and with furniture made of superbly beautiful clouds. The guests were treated to a sumptuous feast, wine and music.

At the end of the feast, the musicians sang a sad song of the mortal world, of the rare meeting between mortals and immortals, of the setting of the sun and the return of the birds, of the evanescence of life and of unfulfilled wishes, and of their regret that the mortals could not follow them to the celestial palaces. As the last notes died away, glorious clouds began to close in, the sounds of steeds and chariots and the tinkling of their jade pendants came floating on the breeze and a voice in the sky was heard to announce: "The Jade Emperor and the Grand Dame bid farewell to their great grandchildren. Make obeisance twice and depart."

After the guests duly performed this ceremony, they descended by the same rainbow bridge. No sooner had the last person stepped off than a violent wind rose and snapped the bridge into fragments. Finally, when the wind had died down, the people raised their eyes to the summit but they could not see anything except some planks of the bridge left sticking out of the crags. Ever since that time, these planks have weathered wind and rain, and a cloudy vapor is often seen to fill up the crevices where the planks stick out.⁸

An even stranger sight awaits the visitor in the grottos high up in the crags. In these almost inaccessible places, the visitor will find wooden boxes and china urns holding human bones and complete skeletons.⁹ This probably accounts for the names of such

hills as Great Storage 大藏峯 and Little Storage 小藏峯 where, like on Great King Peak 大王峯, several such urns and boxes are stored. Great King Peak not only contains five china urns decorated with a pattern called Thunder Traceries 雷紋 but also four suspended boats containing two cases of such remains called "immortals' chrysalises" 仙蛻. At Little Storage Peak, there are wooden boxes with yellow centers and two boats with the same strange content. In times of drought, farmers used to ascend the crags on braided bamboo ladders and take down some of these cases for use in rain prayers.¹⁰

The legendary explanation of these human bones may be found in the name of Crag for Changing Bones 換骨岩. According to Taoist books, trainees for immortal status had to register their names at T'ien-t'ai Shan and leave their bones on Wu-i Shan on achieving immortality. Like the butterfly that abandons its chrysalis as it emerges, the trainees left their mortal remains when they ascended heaven to become immortals.

It is not surprising that with so many immortals on its premises, Wu-i Shan would acquire a king to govern their affairs. It began in the time of Ch'in when an immortal descended to this mountain and declared: "I am King Wu-i. I reign over all immortals on earth, and my office is decreed to be on this mountain."

But the Lieh-hsien ch'uan 列仙傳 (Biographies of Immortals) has another story. According to Taoist tradition, the immortals owned thirty-six sacred grottos in the universe of which Wu-i Shan contained the sixteenth. Grand Ancestor P'en 彭祖, reputed to have lived eight hundred years, retired to this mountain and was succeeded by Wu 武 and I 夷.¹¹

Still another important story relating to Wu-i Shan must be told. Hsü Hsia-k'o remarked on the second day of his visit that the boat passed the Heavenly Pillar 天柱 and the Terrace for Changing Dress 更衣台 at the third and fourth curves. The

terrace received this name because it was believed to be the place where Prince Wei 委鬼王子 changed his dress when he ascended to heaven as an immortal. While he was in training there, it so happened that a master of immortals at T'ien-t'ai Shan sent his seventh son, Shu-jen 叔仁, to this mountain to investigate the status of immortals. Shu-jen came riding on a stork, hence he was called the Controller of Storks 控鶴仙人. Meanwhile, a group of twelve men and women who had heard of Prince Wei's fame had come to Wu-i Shan to learn from him. Upon Shu-jen's arrival, he found Prince Wei and the twelve men and women praying for rain. Much impressed by their unusually distinguished bearing, he helped them by producing rain. He also dispatched his follower Ho Feng-erh 何鳳兒 to T'ien-t'ai Shan to check the Immortal Registry 仙錄 there for the names of these people. He learned that Wei and the others had been immortals in a former life, but that they had affronted the immortal Huang-yüan chen-jen 黃元真人 while drunk, and, as a consequence, had been banished to Wu-i Shan where they had to wait eight hundred years before they could change into immortals again. Taking pity on them, Shu-jen gave them books on the secret of making the elixir of life and instructed them on the ways of getting their bones changed into immortal bones.¹²

Incredible as these stories may seem, rulers of China, feeling that they lacked only longevity to make life perfect, often lent a willing ear to them. Emperor Wu of Han honored Wu-i Shan with sacrifices offered by a deputy, and other honors and gifts were bestowed on it in later dynasties.¹³

Although the Taoist monks may be blamed for playing upon the credulity of the public by spreading these legends, the presence of many skeletons stored in china urns, wooden cases and suspended boats is a puzzling phenomenon. No less strange are the wooden boards protruding from crags and other openings. At first not widely known, these facts and legends eventually found their way into poems, travel diaries, miscellanies, and topographical chronicles. Most often mentioned were the "rainbow bridge planks." It

was believed that occasionally a plank would be blown down into a glen and picked up by a wood gatherer or a cowherd, but that if it were not closely kept, it would fly away. A man named Chang Ch'i-tang was believed to have seen a plank in Hangchou which, after ten years, he acquired from a certain Wu family. It was described as one foot long, two inches wide and one-third of an inch thick. The Ch'ing poet Chu I-tsun 朱彝尊 also reported seeing one. It was made into a box for an ink slab.¹⁴

While the strange facts of wooden boards and coffins gave rise to legends, Chu Hsi 朱熹 (1130-1200), the great Sung Neo-Confucian scholar, sought to offer a rational explanation for them. In his Wu-i t'u hsü 武夷圖序 (Preface to the Topographical Pictures of Wu-i) he said that Wu-i Shan became known in the Han dynasty when sacrifices were offered by Emperor Wu. He further conjectured that at that time, barbarian tribes may have lived there and that the sacrifices of the Han emperor were in fact offered to their chief which, if true, would explain such names as King Wu-i and Great King Peak. These barbarians may have been refugees who had chosen some able man among themselves to be their leader and whom they came to regard as an immortal.¹⁵

The gazeteer contained another passage giving a similar explanation. The twelve men and women who went to see Prince Wei, it said, were refugees seeking the safety of mountain recesses. The time, the second year of the reign of the First Emperor of Ch'in, was, after all, a time of great turmoil which gave rise to the phrase "to take refuge from Ch'in."

There can be no doubt as to the correctness of these conjectures. The entire fabric of these legends was built around the puzzling relics left by a people who had long been dead and who kept no chronicles of their existence. So our doubts may be resolved, but gone also are the clouds of glory and the mystery enveloping beautiful Wu-i Shan.

Diary

April 7, 1616: Left Ch'ung-an by its south gate and hired a boat. A stream coming from Fen-shui Kuan 分水關 in the northwest joins here another coming from Wen-ling Pass 溫嶺關 in the northeast in its course across [Fukien] into the sea.

Our boat glided downstream for thirty li. I was attracted by two hills, one reclining and the other standing erect and alone, along the banks. The reclining one is Canopy Peak and the erect one is Great King Peak. South of it is the Wu-i stream which flows east into the big stream. Ch'ung-yu Temple 冲幼宮 is located on the stream near the peaks, but as I wanted to see all nine curves by boat before following the stream or exploring land features, I did not visit it. Our boat pursued the stream against the current which was so swift that the boatman had to pull it barefoot in the stream.

Soon came the first curve which has Canopy and Great King Peak on its right and Lion's Peak 獅子峯 and Goddess of Mercy Peak on its left. On the right bank is a stone called Water-light Stone 水光石 and it is full of inscriptions. On the right bank of the second curve are Iron Board Rampart 鐵板嶂 and Brush and Ink Crag 翰墨岩; on its left are Helmet Peak 兜鍪峯 and Jade Maiden Peak 玉女峯. By the side of Iron Board are perpendicular cliffs with three openings grouped in the shape of the character p'in 品. The third curve has Meeting the Immortals Crag 會仙岩 on its right and Little Storage Peak and Great Storage Peak on its left. Great Storage rises to six thousand feet, and in some openings near its summit stand wooden boards like those of a loom supporting a boat called Suspended Ravine Boat 架壑舟. The fourth curve has on its right bank Fishing Terrace 釣魚台 and Hsi-chen Crag 希真岩, while on its left are Cock Roost Crag 雞棲岩 and Resting Immortals Crag 晏仙岩. Cock Roost has a cave in its midsection, narrow at the

opening and roomy inside, and it has wooden boards on supports, looking like a hen house. Under it is a clear deep tarn called Sleeping Dragon Tarn 卧龍潭.

At the fifth curve are Ta-yin Screen 大隱屏 and Mortise Peak 接笋峰 which are on the right and Terrace for Changing Dress and Heavenly Pillar on the left. Wen-kung College 文公書院 is at the foot of Ta-yin Screen. Reaching the sixth curve, we found Immortals' Palm Crag 仙掌岩 and Sky Travel Peak 天游峰 on the right and Facing the Twilight Peak 晚對峰 and Echo Crag 響聲岩 on the left. Looking back to Ta-yin and Sky Travel, my spirit soared to the breath-taking sight of the dangerous stairways and overhanging pavilions above them. By then, the boat could no longer make any headway against the swift current, so we went back to Ts'ao Family Rock 曹家石 and disembarked there. We went into Cloud Den 雲窩, elbowing the clouds and treading between the rocks to find a track in the clump of crags. Behind the Den is Mortise Peak which is connected to and in fact a part of Ta-yin Screen. The crag is named Mortise after two lines circling its waist.

Ascending the cleft in the rocky cliff, I came upon a tiny tract of land hidden securely in its surrounding greenery. This is Tea Cove whose one end is entered by the west side while the other end is Mortise Peak, the Immortals' Palm being to the north. East of Immortals' Palm is Sky Travel, and south of Sky Travel is Ta-yin Screen. All these peaks are exceedingly steep at the summit but are joined at the base. There are no steps outside, a gap leading toward the west being the only trail, so it is even more secluded than Bright Crag of T'ien-t'ai. I climbed up from the gap to Ta-yin Screen until I came to a perpendicular cliff where a big hanging tree trunk is hewn into a flight of steps up the cliff into the cloudy heights. The stairway is in three parts comprising eighty-one steps. At its end an iron chain encircles the cliff's waist into which notches are cut to provide footholds.

By clinging to this chain I moved west of the peak and found between the two cliffs a promontory like a hanging tail upon which were also hewn footholds up to the summit of Ta-yin Screen. The Screen's summit has a pavilion and some bamboo and it is surrounded on all four sides by overhanging crags. Looking down from here, the world below seemed completely separated from this heavenly one above.

Descended by the same hanging stairway and reached Tea Cove from where the summit of Ta-yin appeared clear up in the clouds. The northern crag of the cove is Immortals' Palm Crag which stands majestically upright. It has marks like the human palm, some of them as long as ten feet. Ascended its summit on the north side. The slanting light of the setting sun was upon the pines which crossed each other in intricate patterns upon the mountains and waters.

Turning south, I walked to the end of the glen where another peak made its appearance. This is Sky Travel which also has a pavilion hanging over its brow and is surrounded by cliffs on three sides. It is situated in the central area of the Nine Curves and is surrounded by the stream on three sides although it is not directly located on its bank. I stood there and viewed Great King Peak to the east, enclosed by the first three curves of the stream. Southward is Terrace for Changing Dress and near it are the hills of Ta-yin Screen group. They are bordered by the stream's fourth and sixth curves. Westward is Three Religion Peak 三教峯 and near it are Sky Pot 天壺 and other hills standing within the bends of the seventh, eighth and ninth curves. Only the north side has no stream, and the many hills which crowd upon each other abruptly end here as if they were all of a sudden suspended. Tea Cove peers down from up there. Looking up from Tea Cove, all that one sees are steep cliffs rising into the sky and waterfalls tumbling down from their sides, giving one no inkling of more peaks and resting places up above. As a hill that is not

by the Nine Curves and yet from which one could view the sights of all the curves, this peak must rank first.

On the Terrace I watched the half disk of the setting sun which melted the hills far and near in a molten sea of changing hues of gorgeous purple and blue. Behind it is Sky Travel Monastery 天游觀. We hastened back to the boat as it was already dark.

April 8: Went ashore and turned west of Immortals' Palm. The path we followed was on the right bank of the stream. The seventh curve has San-yang Peak 三仰峯 and Sky Pot on the right and City High Crag 城高岩 on the left. Under San-yang is Little Peach Source 小桃源 whose entrance is through a gap in a huge heap of shattered crags. Entering this natural door with bent backs we found a tract of land nestling in the center of a circle of hills. It is a world by itself with its extensive fields, winding streams, old pines and green bamboos. Here you hear the cocks' crow and the voices of men, women and children coming from among the green depths.

To the west outside the door is North Corridor Crag 北廊岩 whose summit is Sky Pot Peak. Opposite it is City High Crag, erect and alone, its ramparts as perpendicular as city walls. A temple on its summit can be approached by a suspended ladder, but it was out of my reach because I was on the other side of the stream.

The eighth curve has Drum Tower Crag 鼓樓岩 and Drum Crag on its right and Ta-lin Rock 大廩石 and Hai-tse Rock 海蛸石 on its left. By going west of Drum Tower Crag and turning north, I climbed up its summit which is crowned by two enormous boulders resembling two drums. The steep walls of this crag also resemble those of a city. The hollow space under it is like a deep corridor. A temple named Drum Temple 鼓樓 is located there. Looking upward from this spot, I saw many wooden boards stuck out of various openings. Went around the back of the crag and came to

Wu-kung Cave 吳公洞 which is deep and spacious, but the stairway leading to it being destroyed I could not go up, so, walking through thick woods and shrubbery, I climbed the steps to Three Religions Peak. There a pavilion perched on its edge afforded a view of both Drum Crag and Drum Tower Crag. The three pinnacles of this peak rise to an impressive height, and I started my ascent by way of the stone steps to the right until I came to a pavilion. I entered a stone door and found myself between two steep crags of tremendous height with such a precarious path between them that walking on it made one's hair stand on end. Three peaks stand closely together here and this passage is a fissure between two of them. Next to this gap there are two other clefts whose sides are not quite so sheer and steep.

Descended and turned to the back of the mountain where a hill stands opposite a rock called Cat Rock 貓兒石. There is also a cave like the Drum which is called White Cloud Cave 白雲洞 of Spiritual Peak 靈峯. We went up the steps in the stone rift to the top of the hill whose two sides stand erect like Heaven's Gate of Huang Shan. At the terminal of the crag we climbed down again and walked under the crag in whose hollow space houses are built conforming to its contours just like at the Drum. We walked upstairs in one of the houses and looked southward to the upper reaches of the Nine Curves. In the middle of the stream stands an island surrounded by a stream that comes from the west and joins the main stream at the curve. Beyond, two mountains gradually open out and the Nine Curves come to an end.

There is a crag at the end of the Nine Curves. Layers of crags fold around it and it is very quiet and spacious. At its northern end is another awesome crag with precipitous cliffs above and below, but in its middle there is a gap running its entire length and which allows one to crawl through like a snake. I took this opening but soon it became so narrow and steep that I had to bend down. Then as it became increasingly narrower I went on my

knees and wriggled on like a snake. At the turning of the gap between two parts it was only seven inches high and fifteen inches wide. Outside, perpendicular cliffs stand three thousand feet high. I advanced pressing my body until my chest and back almost met in my attempt to flatten myself. After maneuvering thus for a long while I passed out of danger. The hollow of the crag is high, roomy and terraced. A path is about to be opened there for I spotted some hatchets and hammers.

Returned to the front crag and then to the back crag. New houses of spacious appearance are being built there. Came out to the Nine Curves and saw Lion Crag. Returned on the stream and enjoyed Human Face Rock 人面石 at the eighth curve and City High Crag at the seventh curve, all stimulating one's spirits.

Moored the boat again and walked from Cloud Den to Tea Cove. Tea Cove is vaulted on the top and delicately shaped. Then turned left from Cloud Den and entered the cold and gloomy Fu-hsi Cave 伏羲洞. Next we went to the south side of Ta-yin Screen and on to Tzu-yang College 紫陽書院 where we went inside and worshipped the figure of Master Chu 朱子.

Went downstream by boat. The green hills flew by us so quickly as the boat shot down the stream that I regretted its speed. When we reached the south bank of the fourth curve, we moored again. We had passed by Sky Pillar and Terrace for Changing Dress, and now we made for His Majesty's Tea Garden with the intention of going up Golden Cock Crag 金雞岩, but we lost our bearings among thick nettles and brush and we could not find a single track, so we returned to the back of the crag and walked east on the path hoping to ascend Great and Little Storage Peaks on the way. We also failed to locate them but instead found ourselves already at the foot of Jade Maiden Peak. We thought perhaps we could discover the path to One Strip of Sky from here, but we could not find anyone to direct us. As our boat was moored at Golden Cock Crag, there was no way of getting in touch with it. All we could do was

to follow the stream and try to find our way. We passed by the foothills of Great and Little Storage Peaks whose steep and gravel covered sides had been planted with tea bushes by the natives. As we walked among them, the deep stream was below us and perilous cliffs above, some bearing names like School for Immortals 仙學堂 and Immortals' Retreat Cavern 藏仙窟, but we had no time to spare for them.

Finally we came to the place where the suspended boat was and saw it more clearly here than we did from the stream the day before. The trail ended west of Great Storage Peak, and we clung to the brambles on the cliff to scramble up. Looking back from there to the western crag of Great Storage, we saw another suspended boat, but as the two crags were opposite each other, it was beyond our reach.

Suddenly we discovered a boat coming from the second curve towards us against the current. We rushed downhill and waved to it. It came towards us. It was another tourist boat, and the people on it asked us to go back with them to Crag for Changing Dress and visit One Strip of Sky and Tiger Roar Crag 虎嘯岩. We did. When we reached our boat, the two boats went down together. We intended to go up Canopy and Great King but first came to Water-light Stone at the first curve. I told the boat to wait for me at the mouth of the stream and walked to Chih-chih Temple 止止庵. Catching sight of a path leading up behind the temple, I took it and found a crag and monk chanting his devotions there. The crag is called Ch'an Crag 禪岩.

I found that the way uphill was to the west of the temple, so I turned west, climbed up for two li and reached the foot of the hill where I found Ascending to Immortality Rock 登仙石 among the thickets. Beside it another hill reared itself as if it were standing on tiptoe. In the fissures of this hill is the so-called Stork Model Rock 鸛模石, complete with frosty plumage and vermilion crown while the long splits in the rock seem like folds of

drapery in a painting.

There was no path to the summit but there was a ladder, so I climbed up on its shaky rungs and found the crag where the immortal Chang was said to have left his bones. It was halfway up the hill. I wanted to find Crag of the immortal Hsü, but there was no path leading across the rocky walls. I descended to find another path but failed.

Now I was in a quandary for there were no steps down the steep cliff and the brush was too thick for me to plunge through. Suddenly, a servant ahead of me found a flight of broken stone steps and yelled that he found the path. My clothes had already been torn, but I ignored it when I heard him and ran to him only to find that there was no path. The sun was pressing to the west, so we pulled at the thickets and scrambled down the trackless waste. When we reached the bottom, we found the path to the right of Ten Thousand Year Monastery 萬年宮. We rushed in. It was a vast structure. A Taoist monk came out [from the inner court] to meet us and told us that for a long time it had been impossible to get to the summit of Great King. Only one stairway remained, the other six and the one to Hsü Crag having all rotted. Besides, the body of the immortal Hsü had been removed to Hui-chen Monastery 會真廟, located to the right of [Ten Thousand Year] Monastery. A great maple tree in front of it made us linger in admiration. Its huge trunk gives shade to an area of several mou. We took leave of the monk and returned to the boat for the night.

April 9: Went ashore to find Crag of Changing Bones and Water Curtain Cave. Ordered the boat to go ten li and wait for us at Carmine Stone Street 赤石街. I returned to Hui-chen Monastery and worshipped the mountain god Wu-i and the body of the immortal Hsü. After leaving the monastery I followed the foot of Canopy Peak in a northeasterly direction for two li, saw three hills standing side by side behind it which upon inquiry turned out to be Three Maiden Peaks. Crag of Changing Bones is just

beside it. We made for it and ascended for about one li when we found springs. Looking down from there we beheld a pleasant scene of precipitous cliffs out of whose fissures came springs and thin bamboos. But we were already high up, so we did not return but continued up for another half li to Exchanging Bones which is at the back of Canopy. In front of it is a temple, and at its back are two flights of stairs. We climbed them to another crag which is not very high and is completely enclosed by hills. The natives had recently stacked lumber here to construct rooms which will completely conform to the contours of the crags.

We climbed up from the clefts and were near the summit of Canopy, but the path came to an end and we were forced to return to the foot of Three Maidens Peak. We descended by the same path and reached the place where we had viewed the protruding springs. The path divided here, one branch going across the hill to Water Curtain and the other branch descending to the wall of the springs. A little while earlier we had viewed them from above and had not fully enjoyed them. Now we went down and viewed them from below. The water is channeled along a groove cut in the cliff. Mortar lines the groove and is enclosed by a wooden frame. I climbed along the wooden supports and came to the spring. Here the cove is only twenty feet wide, but it has steep cliffs above and below. The spring pours into it from the cliff above, overflows it, and falls again, so that it fills every nook and cranny. A rock jutted out of the middle of the pool. I sat on it for some time before descending.

Followed the path among the bamboo, crossed three hills and walked about seven li into a valley where there is a stone gate. Half a li farther, we reached Water Curtain Cave which is another place of high steep cliffs protruding above and receding below. A spring cascades from the top of a crag whose grandeur and spaciousness are fully matched by the high and wide fall. Innumerable smaller springs pouring down from the sky add to a magnificent

spectacle. Because of the high crag's protrusion, the water pours down without hitting the railings of the houses being constructed under it.

Having heard that Tu-ko Pass 賭閣寨 is worth seeing I now asked the way and was told to take the same path back. Went out of the stone door but took the wrong path because I was lured by the beautiful valley and so found myself on the path to Carmine Stone Street. I was, however, told to cross the small bridge to the south. I did and ascended the mountain and entered the pass. There are crags and houses, and I learned that the name Tu-ko is an error made by the local people. Its correct name is Tu-hsia 杜轄.

I continued and found another crag with winding railings and overhanging rooms. Carmine Stone Street appeared very near, so I backtracked for three li, crossed a stream, and after another li reached the big stream of Carmine Stone Street. Returned to the boat and put up sail for our journey. Reached Ch'ung-an after twenty li.

NOTES

1. The Chinese Love of Nature

1. In the Analects, Confucius says in answer to Yen Hui's question about the making of a state: "One would go by the seasons of Hsia." (Arthur Waley (tr.), The Analects of Confucius (New York: Random House, 1938), 195.) It seems to suggest that as early as Confucius' time, the belief had been that the Hsia calendar began its new year with the beginning of spring. Its first month, cheng-yüeh 正月, began with the cyclical sign yin 寅. The Hsia Hsiao-cheng 夏小正 (The Lesser Annuary of the Hsia Dynasty) might have been written much later than the time of Hsia, but much of its content, such as the determination of the seasons on the basis of observations of weather, stars, trees and animal life which was essential knowledge to farmers, must have gone into the making of the calendar. Hence Confucius' preference for it.

During the Yin dynasty, the year began with the twelfth month, cyclical sign ch'ou 丑, and the intercalary month was introduced. During the Chou dynasty, the use of standard solstice measurements and the observation of the twenty-eight constellations led to the discovery that the winter solstice occurred in the eleventh month. As a result, during the Chou dynasty the year began with the eleventh month and the cyclical sign tzu 子. While the calendar beginning with this sign was prevalent during the Chou dynasty, the state of Sung 宋, which continued the cultural traditions of Yin, kept the Yin calendar, and the state of Chin 晉, preferring the advantages it offered to the farmers, used the Hsia calendar. The Ch'in 秦 dynasty adopted the Chuan-hsu 顓頊 calendar, one of several calendars during the Warring States period, and made the tenth month the beginning of the year. The Han 漢 dynasty adopted the Yin calendar until the time of Emperor Wu 武帝 when a calendar reform was proposed. The emperor commissioned over twenty men for the task. The new calendar, completed in 104 B.C., was a revival of the Hsia calendar, as the first month again began with the cyclical sign yin. To celebrate the adoption of the new calendar, Emperor Wu changed his reign title from the seventh year of Yuan-feng 元封 to the first year of T'ai-ch'u 太初. Except for one very short period of change, this calendar was used until 1911 when it was officially abolished. It was then referred to as the "old calendar" 舊曆 or the "lunar

calendar" 陰曆. When the Communists assumed state power in 1949, it was reintroduced in newspapers along with the solar calendar under the name of "farmers' calendar".

2. A Chinese land measure, about one-sixth of an acre.
3. Waley, Analects, 160. Waley is wrong about the numbers here. It should read "five or six newly-capped youths" and "six or seven uncapped boys."
4. This practice seems to have been started at the end of the Eastern Han dynasty. The purpose was to prevent favoritism. It was, however, not strictly observed. From the Wei 魏 dynasty to the end of the Ch'ing 清 dynasty, there were many instances of men receiving appointments to their native places. It was usually in consideration of elderly parents, to show favor to elderly statesmen or to grant an opportunity for certain illustrious officials to return home and "shine" among their own people that such exceptions were made. See Chao Chi 趙翼 (1727-1814), Kai-yü ts'ung-k'ao 陔餘叢考 (Shanghai: Shang-wu, 1957), 27: 556-560.
5. See, for example, Kao Shih-ch'i 高士奇 (1645-1703), "Hu-ts'ung hsi-hsun jih-lu" 扈從西巡日錄, in Wang Hsi-chi 王錫馬, Hsiao fang-hu-chai yü-ti ts'ung-ch'ao 小方壺齋輿地叢考, 64 vols. (Nan-ch'ing ko, Kiangsu, preface 1877), ch'ih 1, ts'e 4, 265a-268a. Kao was in Emperor K'ang-hsi's entourage on a tour to Wu-t'ai Shan in 1683.
6. Ch'uan T'ang shih 全唐詩, 12 vols. (Peking: Chung-hua, 1960), V, 344: 3859-3860.
7. For another translation, see Arthur Waley (tr.), The Book of Songs (New York: Grove Press, 1960), 123, which reads:

Long ago, when we started,
The willows spread their shade.
Now that we turn back
The snowflakes fly.
8. Ch'ien Mu 錢穆 (ed.), Chuang Tzu tsuan-chien 莊子纂箋 (Hong Kong: Tung-nan, 1962), wai p'ien 8 "K'o-i" 刻意, 122.
9. Chu Hsi 朱熹 (ed.), Ch'u Tz'u chi-chu 楚辭集注 (Taipei: I-wen, 1956), 8: 15a-16b.
10. "Yu shih-men shih" 遊石門詩 by the monks on Lu Shan, in Shen Te-ch'ien 沈德潛 (ed.), Ku shih yuan 古詩源 (4 vols.), III, 9:11a-b. The long preface is more important than the poem.

11. Li Po, Li T'ai-po ch'üan-chi 李太白全集, 4 vols. (Taipei: Chung-hua), II, 14: 1, "Lu Shan yao" 廬山謠.
12. Waley, Analects, 214.
13. Richard Wilhelm (tr.), The I Ching (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), Book III, 55, feng, 670.
14. "Li yün" 禮運 in Li Chi hsün-tsuan 禮記訓纂 (Ssu Pu Pei Yao ed.), III, 9: 10a.
15. Wilhelm, Book III, 24, fu, 505.
16. Vincent Yu-chung Shih (tr.), The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), ch. VI, 37.

II. Hsü Hsia-k'o

1. Ting Wen-chiang, known to his contemporaries in the West as V. K. Ting, was a distinguished geologist. He was chiefly responsible for making Hsü Hsia-k'o better known in modern times. He read a paper in English on "Hsü Hsia-k'o, explorer and geographer" before the Wen Yu Hui in June of 1921 in Peking. It was published in The New China Review, III, 5 (October 1921), 325-337. In 1928, the Shang-wu yin-shu-kuan (Commercial Press) in Shanghai published his Hsü Hsia-k'o yu-chi 徐霞客遊記 (hereafter abbreviated as HHKYC) which he edited and for which he prepared a book of maps and a nien-p'u 年譜 (biographical annals). A nien-p'u is a year-by-year record of a person's life and is usually written on the basis of that person's own works and other related materials of historical value.
2. The history of the Hsü family narrated in this chapter is based on (1) writings contributed by friends of the Hsü clan and preserved in the "Chia-ch'ih ts'ung-k'o" 家祠叢刻 (Miscellaneous inscriptions in the family temple) and reproduced in Ting, HHKYC, II, chüan 20. These writings date from the early decades of Ming down to Hsü Hsia-k'o's own time, and they took the forms of poetry, letters, biographical essays, tomb essays and the like; (2) Ting's nien-p'u. Ting had at his disposal many primary sources, among which were the Hsü-shih chia-p'u 徐氏家譜 (Genealogy of the Hsü Clan) and all extant inscriptions; and (3) three sets of

Chiang-yin hsien-chih 江陰縣志 (Gazetteer of Chiang-yin County): Lu Ssu-ch'eng 盧思誠, Chiang-yin hsien-chih (20 vols., 1878), Ch'en Yen-en 陳延恩, Chiang-yin hsien-chih (16 vols., 1840), and Ch'en Ssu 陳思, Chiang-yin hsien hsü-chih (12 vols., preface 1921).

3. Among the men who wrote colophones on it were the poets Yang Wei-ch'en 楊維禎 (1296-1370) and Kao Ch'i 高啓 (1326-1374).
4. For the poems and essays celebrating this event and tomb essays mentioning it, see Lu, XI, 16: 42b, and Ch'en Ssu, III, 10: 9b-10a.
5. Ting, HHKYC, II, 2: 59-67; Lu, XI, 16: 42b.
6. This tree was esteemed by scholars because it flowers in the dead of winter.
7. Ting, HHKYC, I, nien-p'u, 13.
8. Ch'en Yen-en, X, 17: 8a.
9. This incident is recorded in the biographical account of T'ang Yin 唐寅 (1470-1523) in the Ming Shih 明史 (Po-na ed.), LXXVII, 286: 16b. It is appended to the biography of Hsü Chen-ch'ing.
10. Ching's collected works are no longer extant, but some of his prose and poems are preserved in the Hsü-shih chia-p'u.
11. His eldest son Chih 治 remained at Wu-ch'eng li.
12. Tung Ch'i-ch'ang's tomb essay of Hsü's parents (in Ting, HHKYC, II, 20:101) and Ch'en Chi-ju's biographical essay on them (in op. cit., II, 20: 104) both speak of the essentials of a garden, to wit, "strange rocks and great trees."
13. It is in order to say something about Chinese names to explain why of the several names borne by Hsü, this one clung to him. Chinese names in transliteration have been known to be a source of confusion and irritation to foreign readers. As a matter of fact, Chinese names in romanization are just as meaningless to the Chinese themselves because they cannot make out what characters are supposed to be represented by the sounds they get from the romanization. Some writers resort to translation of meanings, but this method has not been very successful, for, lifted bodily out of one kind of linguistic associations and habits into another, meanings acquire either a fantasticalness or an absurdity which they

do not have in their native language. Moreover, as words of exactly the same shades of meaning are hard to find in another language, a poverty or at least an inadequacy is seen in translated names as compared with the rich tones of the originals.

These difficulties are likely to remain insoluble, yet it is worthwhile to keep them in mind. The Chinese take a greater interest in names and have more freedom in creating them than Westerners. This does not mean that there are not people who do not trouble their minds about such things and instead make use of long lists of common names easily available, but that they have the perfect freedom of choosing any character for a name or of combining two or more characters to make one. Most Chinese consider it an opportunity to exercise one's originality, ingenuity, intellect, eccentricity or to voice one's aspirations and regrets. Consequently, a name may be scholarly, ethical, romantic, comical, shocking, pious, blasphemous, smacking of superstition, smelling of cash, glaring with vanity, alive with ambition, glowing with beauty, sparkling with wit, dewy with fragrance, or a hundred other things. Some names become provokingly comical when the incongruity between them and their bearers is too strikingly evident; sometimes they fit them like a glove. When it comes to giving oneself a name after reaching adulthood, the field of choice becomes even wider. Many have been tempted, especially men of letters, to give themselves one name after another as their interests and positions change. Thus a series of names often provides a clue to the bearer's different stages in outlook and mood as well as to his places of residence.

Family names are inherited and as such are absolutely beyond the owner's control. They do not in any way color their bearers. Yet because of the rich historical and social associations connected with certain family names, fiction writers have always given appropriate family names to their different characters, from the beautiful high-born heroine to the wicked villain.

The name Hsia-k'o was the fittest name that Hsü could have. Hsü's proper, or official, name Hung-tsu means to bring honor to one's ancestors, which very plainly was not in Hsia-k'o's mind, seeing that he did not even take the usual examinations. His hao 號 (courtesy name) was Chen-chih 振之, which is rather abstract in meaning: to stir up so as to maintain a high character. He also had two pieh-hao 別號. One was Hsia-i 霞逸, given by his friend Huang Tao-chou, and the other was Hsia-k'o, given by his friend

Ch'en Chi-ju. The two names belong to one group. Hsia means the bright rosy clouds seen at sunrise and sunset. In the Taoist books, hsia is regarded as the essence of the sun and believed to be a fragrant and brightly illuminated red fluid. It stays hunger and confers long life on anyone who drinks it. It is also invested with the power to lift up into heaven anyone who has attained the Tao and achieved immortality. The word i describes the free spirit of a man without any burdens, often a hermit. The word k'o means guest or visitor and, in its general meaning, signifies a person who makes a temporary stay. Hence it has been a conventional way of describing man's sojourn in this world. When the two words hsia and k'o are combined, the meaning becomes obvious. It brings to mind a person who lives apart, uninterested in the pursuits of this world. Names of this kind are by no means uncommon among literary names, but their appropriateness to their bearers, if any, is usually limited to some wistful yearnings for the infinite of the earth-bound individual. Hsü Hsia-k'o's is a rare instance of fitness between a name and its bearer. His friends, no doubt being aware of this, called him by this name rather than by his courtesy name, and posterity has agreed that this was the best name for Hsü.

14. Yü-an's youngest son was born in 1599 when Hsü Hsia-k'o was thirteen.
15. Ting, HHKYC, II, 20: 45-53.
16. Ch'en did not make it clear whether Hsü ever participated in the examinations.
17. See Chapters III and IV.
18. Ch'en quoted Hsü as telling him that he should not leave out the two cities.
19. Ting, HHKYC, I, nien-p'u, 8.
20. See Chapter V.
21. See Li Chi, "Hsü Hsia-k'o's Huang Shan travel diaries," Two Studies in Chinese Literature (Ann Arbor: Michigan Papers in Chinese Studies, No. 3, 1968), 1-9.
22. See Chapter VI.
23. Ting, HHKYC, I, nien-p'u, 10.
24. Ting, HHKYC, I, nien-p'u, 20-21.

25. Chung-chao is the courtesy name of Hsü¹¹ Tsun-t'ang, a distant cousin of Hsü Hsia-k'o. He also loved travel and wrote poetry some of which may be seen in such anthologies as Ming shih hsüan 明詩選 and Ch'en-chiang shih hsüan 澄江詩選.
26. Ting, HHKYC, I, nien-p'u, 12-13.
27. Ting, HHKYC, I, nien-p'u, 15.
28. The writing of poems for the painting "Autumn Garden and Morning Loom" should not be confused with the writing of poems on the completion of Sunny Mountain Hall. The latter was in 1620 to celebrate his mother's recovery from a grave illness; the former was in 1624, and the painting was done to celebrate his mother's eightieth birthday. Poems were added to both collections from time to time by Hsü's friends upon his requests. See Ting, HHKYC, I, nien-p'u, 12-13, 15.
29. Ting, HHKYC, I, nien-p'u, 16.
30. Ibid.
31. Ming Shih, LXVIII, 255: 20b-30b; Chang Tai 張岱, Shih-kuei shu hou-chi 石簾書後集 (Peking: Chung Hua, 1962), 37: 220-224.
32. Cheng Man was a very good friend of Hsü¹¹. He was falsely accused during the reign of Chung-chen 崇禎 and put to death. He wrote a philosophical work entitled Mi-yang ts'ao-t'ang shuo-shu 荃陽草堂說書 while in prison.
33. For Hsü's poems on Peach Blossom Chasm, see Ting, HHKYC, II, 20: 19-20.
34. See Chapters III and IV.
35. It was said that Ch'en's mother dreamed of the arrival of Cold Mountain, the T'ang monk, at her house before she gave birth to Ch'en Han-hui, thus his hao was Hsiao Han-shan (Little Cold Mountain) which he also named his study. See Ch'en Chia-lin 陳甲林 (ed.), T'ien-t'ai yu-lan chih 天台遊覽志 (Shanghai: Chung-hua, 1937), p'ien 4, 22. But according to Chang Tai, 45: 253, Ch'en's father dreamed of meeting Yang Chiao-shan 楊椒山 (i.e. 楊繼盛, 1516-1555) at the time of Ch'en's birth, so he split the character chiao 椒 in two and made it his son's courtesy name Mu-shu 木叔.
36. Ting, HHKYC, I, 3:1.

37. Lu, XV, 21: 3b-4a.
38. It should be noted that the travel diaries on Yünnan take up eleven of the twenty chüan still extant of Hsü's diaries.
39. Ting, HHKYC, I, 8:31.
40. Ting, HHKYC, I, 8:21.
41. A wooden clapper in the shape of a fish.
42. Ting, HHKYC, II, 14: 22-23.
43. Although Ting flatly stated in his article in the New China Review that Hsü was not at all interested in politics, he said in his preface to Volume I of HHKYC that Hsü in several notes spoke in detail of current political affairs which, according to Ting, showed that he was not unconcerned with the political situation. This is very slim evidence on which to make a claim for Hsü. On the contrary, Hsü's engrossment in "mountains and rivers" and his indifference to current affairs had come in for some veiled criticism in a poem which a friend addressed to him on his travels in Yünnan.
44. Emperor Shen-tsung was not quite ten years old at the time of his accession to the throne. The empress dowager held Chang Chu-cheng in great reverence, calling him Chang hsien-sheng (teacher Chang) rather than by his name. Thus, the young emperor was brought up in awe of Chang.
45. By saying that scholars regarded obscurity or failure in examinations as good fortune, Yeh Po-chü meant that scholars who failed to achieve success had better chances of escaping the punishments the emperor so frequently inflicted upon them.
46. Hsü was eight years old.
47. A great deal has been written on the Tung-lin Party, largely because defiance displayed by officials towards the emperor and high ministers was a matter of perennial interest to Chinese scholars. For readers who are interested in the subject, the following are a few suggested titles: Li Chi 李季 (comp.), Tung-lin shih-mo 東林始末 (Shanghai: Shen-chou kuo-kuang, 1936); Wang Ling-kao 王靈皋 (comp.), San-ch'ao yeh-chi 三朝野記 (Shanghai: Shen-chou kuo-kuang she, 1941); and Li Yen 李穡 (comp.), Tung-lin tang chi-kao 東林黨輯稿 (Peking: Jen-min, 1957).

48. In 1626, Miao Ch'ang-ch'i 繆昌期, a man of Chiang-yin, died of torture in a Peking prison for having drafted a memorial accusing Wei of twenty-four crimes (Ming Shih, LXVI, 245: 3a-5a). There is no reference to his friendship with Miao in Hsü's writings, but Ch'en Han-hui included Miao among Hsü's friends. Miao was twenty-five years Hsü's senior and his granddaughter married Hsü's eldest son in 1633 (Ting, HHKYC, I, nien-p'u, 27; Lu, XII, 18: 20a.).
49. Quoted in Chien Ch'ien-i's biographical essay of Hsü. See Ting, HHKYC, II, 20:55.
50. Yüan Shih, chüan 146.
51. The dates of Fa-hsien's journey to the Western Region are not certain. He left Ch'ang-an with four other monks around 399 and returned in 413 or 414. Fo-kuo chi was written after his return.
52. Ting Wen-chiang, Chang Ch'i-yün, Jen Mei-o and Chiao-min Hsieh have all testified to the accuracy of Hsü's observations.
53. Ming Shih, LXXXI, 299: 19b-20a; LXVII, chüan 251.
54. Ming Shih, LXVII, chüan 251.
55. For an English-language edition, see T'ien-kung k'ai-wu: Chinese Technology in the Seventeenth Century (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1966).
56. Ch'ien I-chi 錢儀吉 (comp.), Pei chi-ch'uan 碑集傳, 60 vols. (Kiangsu shu-chü, 1893), L, 130: 1a-4b.
57. Fang Hao, "Hsü Hsia-k'o yü hsi-yang chiao-shih kuan-hsi chih ch'u-pu yen-chiu," 徐霞客與西洋教士關係之初步研究 in Chu K'o-chen 竺可楨 et al., Ti-li hsueh-chia Hsu Hsia-k'o 地理學家徐霞客 (Shanghai: Shang-wu, 1948), 11-24.
58. Yeh Hsiang-kao, the prime minister, was a man of Fukien. Realizing that he had no power to stop Wei Chung-hsien's usurpation of power and persecution of officials who did not side with him, he resigned and lived in retirement at home.
59. This collection is now in the Chinese division of the National Library in Paris. Giulio Aleni wrote a geographical work entitled Chih-fang wai-chi 職方外紀 (On World

Geography) in 1623 which contained a map of the world intended to supplement the maps by Matteo Ricci.

60. Ting, The New China Review, 331.
61. For Hsü's friends' opinion of him, see their essays and letters in Ting, HHKYC, II, chüan 20.

III. T'ien-t'ai Shan

1. During the period of the Three Kingdoms 三國 (200-280), Sun Ch'üan 孫權 made his capital in the present city of Nanking and changed the name from Mo-ling 秣陵 to Chien-yeh 建業. During the Eastern Chin 東晉 (317-420), it was first changed to Chien-yeh 建業 and later to Chien-k'ang 建康.
2. Traditional geographers, including Hsü, measured a mountain's elevation from its base rather than from sea level, as modern geographers do.
3. Chang Ch'i-yün, "Che-yu chi-sheng" 浙遊紀勝 in Ti-li Hsüeh-pao 地理學報 No. 1 (1934), 6.
4. Ibid.
5. The Wang family of Lang-ya 琅瑯, Shantung, was one of the most distinguished families which moved to and settled in Chiang-nan 江南 (South of the (Yangtze) River) during the Eastern Chin dynasty. The only other upper gentry families which were regarded as "high" as the Wang family were the Hsieh 謝 and the Yuan 元 families, both of Yang-hsia 陽夏, Honan. Wang Hsi-chih was one of the outstanding members of his family. See Chin Shu, chüan 80. For anecdotes of the Wang family, see Liu I-ch'ing 劉義慶, Shih-shuo hsün-yü 世說新語 (Taipei: Ch'i-ming, 1960).
6. For Chih Tun's exegesis of Chuang Tzu and Wang Hsi-chih's admiration for him, see Liu I-ch'ing, op. cit., wen-hsüeh p'ien 4, 13-22; see also E. Zürcher, The Buddhist Conquest of China, 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1959), I, 116-130.
7. Liu I-ch'ing, op. cit., wen-hsüeh p'ien 4, 34.
8. T'an-yü was a man of Tun-huang. He came to T'ien-t'ai and lived at Red City during the reign of Hsing-ning 興寧

- (363-365). See Chang Lien-yüan 張聯元 (comp.), T'ien-t'ai shan ch'üan chih 天台山全志 (6 vols., preface 1667), II, 7: 1a-b.
9. Li Shan 李善 (annotator), Wen Hsüan, 16 vols. (Shanghai, reprint of Shun-hsi 淳熙 (1174-89) edition), III, 11: 2a-4b.
 10. Ch'uan-teng 傳燈 (comp.), T'ien-t'ai shan fang-wai chih 天台山方外志 (preface 1601), II, 4: 2a-3a. Ch'uan-teng was a monk.
 11. Great Hero refers to the Buddha as the conqueror of demons.
 12. Li Shu-hua 李書華, "T'ien-t'ai shan yu-chi," Yü-kung, VI (1936), No. 1, 43-54. For a detailed list of the relics of Chih-i and other treasures in Kao-ming Monastery, see Ch'en Chia-lin, p'ien 4, 23-24.
 13. Originally written by Chih-i, three ch'üan were lost in war-time and were replaced by copies made by Yuan-t'ung 圓通, a monk in the Sung dynasty.
 14. Chiu T'ang Shu 舊唐書, XXXIV, 191: 15a-16b.
 15. Ko Hung, Pao-p'u-tzu (Ssu Pu Ts'ung K'an ed.), nei p'ien 4, 26.
 16. For Wang Tzu-chin, supposedly the son of King Ling of Chou and later an immortal, see Ch'uan-teng, IV, 9: 3a-b.
 17. Han-shan's poems are available in translation. See Burton Watson (ed. and tr.), Cold Mountain: A Hundred Poems by Han-shan (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970).
 18. Ch'uan-teng, II, 5: 5b-6b. For poems of Han-shan, Shih-te and Feng Kan, see Ch'üan T'ang Shih, XII, 9063-9110.
 19. The book in which this story appeared is Yu-ming lu 幽明錄 by Liu I-ch'ing, compiler of Shih-shuo hsün-yü (see note 5 above). It is listed in the Ching-chi chih 經籍志 (Bibliography of Sui Shu 隋書), but a complete edition of it is no longer available. Lu Hsün collected various pieces from different old works and included them in his Ku hsiao-shuo kou-ch'en 古小說鈎沉. The story of "Liu-Yüan" has been so popular that it does not depend on the book itself for preservation. See "Liu Ch'en Yuan Chao," in Hsü Chen-o 徐震謬 (ed.), Han-Wei Liu-ch'ao hsiao-shuo hsuan 漢魏六朝小說選 (Shanghai, 1956), 54-57.

20. T'ien-feng Monastery is fifty li north of the county seat and at the foot of Hua-ting Peak. It was founded by Chih-i in 575. See Chang Lien-yüan, III, 6: 6a-b.
21. Hua-ting is believed to be the highest point on T'ien-t'ai. The monastery named Hua-ting was founded by the monk Te-shao 德紹 in 936. See Ch'en Chia-lin, p'ien 3, 33-34.
22. The T'ang poet Li Po visited T'ien-t'ai and the hall was named after his courtesy name.
23. Upper and Lower Fang-kuang Monasteries were built in 1101. The former is located on the upper reaches of Natural Bridge and latter at its foot. See Chang Lien-yüan, II, 6: 8a-9b.
24. T'an-hua Pavilion was built by Chia Shih-tao 賈似道 (d. 1275), the widely known "bad" prime minister of late Southern Sung.
25. Ten Thousand Year Monastery is fifteen li west of Natural Bridge and was founded by the monk P'u-an 普安 (or 普岸) in 833. During the reign of Wan-li (r. 1573-1619), a set of Buddhist sutras was donated by the empress dowager. See Chang Lien-yüan, III, 6: 9a-b.
26. Guard the Nation Monastery is thirty li northwest of the county seat. It was built in 957. See Chang Lien-yüan, III, 6: 7b.

IV. Yen-tang Shan

1. Shen Kua 沈括, Hsin chiao-cheng ming-ch'i pi-t'an 新校正夢溪筆談 (annotated by Hu Tao-ching 胡道靜) (Shanghai: Chung-hua, 1958), 238-239.
2. Professors Chang Ch'i-yün and Li Shu-hua, who visited Yen-tang Shan in the thirties, remarked on the amazingly illusive appearances of the peaks. See Chang Ch'i-yün, op. cit., 14-15, and Li Shu-hua, "Yen-tang shan yu-chi" 雁蕩山遊記, Yü-kung, VI (1936), No. 2, 58.
3. Chang Ch'i-yün, op. cit., 14. But Chiang Shu-nan 蔣叔南, Yen-tang shan i-lan 雁蕩山一覽 (Shanghai, 1934), 2, claims that the summit is not Wild Goose Lake but Tip of a Hundred Ridges 百岡尖.

4. The name came from the following two lines:

"Before the crag I met a white-haired old man,
Who said he had not enough after a life's looking."

See Tseng Wei 曾唯, Kuang Yen-tang shan chih 廣雁蕩山志 (8 vols., 1808 enlarged edition), IV, 9: 12b.

5. For Hsieh Ling-yün's exploration of mountain scenery, see Sung Shu 宋書, 67: 1a-14a.
6. Li Wu-feng 李五峯, who lived during the Yüan dynasty, said that families named Hsieh lived east of Lord Hsieh's Hill which in antiquity had been called Hsieh Family Hollow 謝家嶼. The fact that Hsieh Ling-yün wrote an entire poem about crossing Chin-chu Gorge 筋竹澗, the point of entry into the mountain but not even a word about the scenic valley to the east of it tends to support Li's argument that the hill got its name not from Hsieh Ling-yün but from those residents named Hsieh. See Tseng Wei, II, 1: 10a-b.
7. Shen Kua, 238.
8. Yen shan pien-lan 雁山便覽.
9. See "T'ien-wen chih" 天文志 in the Hsin T'ang Shu 新唐書 for quotations from I-hsing.
10. Tseng Wei, VIII, 27: 1a-2b; Li Shu-hua, 53.
11. Tseng Wei, II, 1: 2b; Chiang Shu-nan, 1.
12. The story of Nakula's entering Nirvana while watching the waterfall was known to all visitors to Yen-tang Shan. See P'an Lai 潘耒, "Yu Yen-tang shan chi" 遊雁蕩山記 in Hsiao fang-hu chai yü-ti ts'ung-ch'ao, ch'ih 4, ts'e 5, 346b; Liang Chang-chü 梁章鉅, "Yu Yen-tang jih-chi" 遊雁蕩日記, op. cit., ch'ih 4, ts'e 5, 352b; and Kuo Chung-yüeh 郭鍾岳, "Pei Yen-tang chi-yu" 北雁蕩紀遊, op. cit., ch'ih 4, ts'e 5, 356b.
13. Tseng Wei, II, 2: 11a-14a; V, 15: 1b.
14. Tseng Wei, V, 14: 2a; Chiang Shu-nan, 1-2, gives the names of all eighteen monasteries and the years in which each was built.
15. Li Shu-hua, 55.

16. We have only the second part, the first part being no longer extant.
17. Ch'en Han-hui, "Hsü Hsia-k'o mu-chih ming" 徐霞客墓誌銘 in Ting, HHKYC, II, 20: 48-49.
18. Spiritual Peak Monastery was built in 1023. Chiang Shu-nan, 1-2, says that it was one of the eighteen monasteries founded by Ch'üan-liao 全了, but Tseng Wei, IV, 9: 9b-11a, says that it was built by the monk Wen-chi 文吉.
19. Ching-ming Monastery was built by Ch'üan-liao in 977. Tseng Wei, IV, 9: 6b-9b.
20. Spiritual Crag Monastery was built in 979 and rebuilt during the reign of Wan-li (1573-1620). Tseng Wei, IV, 9: 1a-6b.
21. Rocky bamboo sprouts 石筍 is an established term for pointed rock formations. It is also sometimes used to call stalactites and stalagmites.
22. Square bamboo is a typical product of this mountain.

V. Po Yüeh

1. Po Yüeh ning-yen 白嶽凝烟 (Condensed Smoke of Po Yüeh) (Preface 1714).
2. Shih Jun-chang 施閏章, "Po Yüeh yu-chi" 白嶽遊記, in Hsiao fang-hu chai yü-ti ts'ung-ch'ao, ch'ih 4, ts'e 3, 215a.
3. Shen Ming-ch'en 沈明臣, "Po Yüeh yu-kao" 白嶽遊稿, in ibid., ch'ih 4, ts'e 14, 1b.
4. "Li Po Yüeh chi" 禮白嶽記, in his Li Chu-lan hsien-sheng shuo-pu ch'üan-shu 李竹懶先生說部全書 (10 vols., preface for K'ang-hsi reprint of Ming edition), Vol. II, 12a. Li was a literary man and a talented art critic. See Ming Shih, chüan 288.
5. By Chan, Li meant Chan Tzu-ch'ien 展子虔, a skilled painter of the Liang period (907-922), by Lu, he meant Lu Huang 陸晁 of Southern T'ang (937-975).

6. Shen Ming-ch'en, ibid., 2b.
7. Yüan Hung-tao, "Yüan Chung-lang yu-chi" 袁中郎遊記, in Yüan Chung-lang ch'üan-chi 袁中郎全集 (Shanghai: Shih-chieh, 1935), 25.
8. Ting, HHKYC, I, nien-p'u, 8-9.

VI. Wu-i Shan

1. In modern times, the name refers to an entire mountain range.
2. There are several names for tea in Chinese. The most ancient one is t'u 荼 which appeared in the Book of Songs (Waley, The Book of Songs, 100) where it meant a vegetable with a bitter taste, but it was also the word for tea. The chapter "On explaining trees" of the Erh Ya 爾雅 gave the word chia 檟 and explained it as k'u-t'u 苦荼 (bitter tea). Ho I-hsing 郝懿行, the annotator, said that the word ch'a 茶 had been t'u in ancient times and that when Lu Yü wrote his Ch'a ching 茶經 (Tea Classic), he eliminated one stroke and got the word ch'a. The word t'u is no longer used.

Lu Yü gave five terms for tea according to the different stages of picking during spring: ch'a, chia, she 設, ming 茗 and ch'uan 筴. Distinction of different kinds of tea had already been made before Lu. Wen Chiao 溫矯 (288-329) offered the emperor as tribute one thousand catties of ch'a and one thousand catties of ming. The latter term appears in Yü p'ien 玉篇 of Ku Yeh-wang 顧野王 (519-581) of Liang. Ming is now used only occasionally in literary Chinese.

Tea drinking seems to have started after Ch'in had taken Szechuan, the first place to have known to grow and drink tea, from where it was introduced to Wu 吳 and Ch'u 楚. Because these places were not considered China proper, the Ching-chou ti-chih 荊州地志 listed tea under the heading "Fei Chung-kuo wu-p'in" 非中國物品 (non-Chinese products) and commented that "the tea produced in Fou-liang [i.e. Kiangsi] is the best."

3. The custom of sending tea regularly as tribute to the emperor seems to have started with Ts'ai Hsiang. The tea he

sent was the product of Chien-chou建州 (i.e. Chien-ou in Fukien) and was called Pei-yüan lung-t'uan 北苑龍團 (Dragon coils of Pei-yüan). The tea of Wu-i was not yet widely known at that time. See Wang Tzu王梓 (comp.), Wu-i shan chih 武夷山志 (18 vols., 1710), XI, 18: 27a-32a.

4. The three grades were First Spring 先春, Exploring Spring 探春 and Second Spring 次春.
5. Wang Tzu, VI, 9: 16a-20a; Tung T'ien-kung 董天工 (comp.), Wu-i shan chih 武夷山志 (8 vols., 1829 reprint of 1751 ed.), III, 9: 18a-22a.
6. Chu Hsi wrote ten short poems on the sights of Wu-i, called collectively "Wu-i ch'ao-ko" 武夷棹歌 (Boat songs of Wu-i). See Tung, II, 4: 9a-10a; also Chu Hsi, Chu Tzu ta-ch'üan 朱子大全 (60 vols., Ssu Pu Pei Yao ed.), VI, 9: 5a-6a.
7. Grand Dame is synonymous with Sacred Dame 聖母 who, according to Taoist legend, had been a star at the time the universe emerged from chaos. She took her son and other immortals to this mountain and made it their abode. To venerate her, the other immortals addressed her as Her Majesty the Grand Dame.
8. This legend is from Chu Mu 祝穆's "Ku chi" 古記 and is quoted in Wang, XII, ch'uan 19. See also Tung, VII, 20: 1a-b. Chu, a man of Southern Sung, was also one of Chu Hsi's younger relatives. He was the author of the work Fang-yü sheng-lan 方輿勝覽 (Beautiful sights of the nation). Although it is listed among books of geography, it is more useful as a source book for scenic spots, historical sites, and poetry and prose related to such places.
9. Tung, VI, 19: 1a-7a.
10. Anon., "Wu-i chi-sheng" 武夷紀勝, in Hsiao fang-hu chai yü-ti ts'ung-ch'ao, ch'ih 4, ts'e 5, 380a.
11. Another story has it that Wu and I were the two sons of Ch'ien I 錢籙, another immortal. See Wang Fu-li 王復禮, Wu-i chiu-ch'ü chih 武夷九曲志 (5 vols., 1718), IV, 12: 30b. These stories may be found in the Lieh hsien ch'uan and the Li-tai shen-hsien t'i-tao t'ung-chien 歷代神仙體道通鑑 of the Tao tsang 道藏.
12. Wang Tzu, IV, 12: 31a; Tung, VII, 20: 2a-b.
13. Tung, II, 4: 3a mentioned dried fish as sacrifice. Sacrifices were continued in the T'ang and subsequent dynasties.

See also "Feng-shan shu" 封禪書 in Shih chi 史記, XII, 28: 24a.

14. Tung, VI, 19: 1a-3b.

15. Chu Hsi, XLIV, 76: 26b-27a; Fu-chien t'ung-chih 福建通志 (Fukien Gazetteer).

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Li Chi 李祁 was born in Changsha, Hunan in 1903 and attended Peking National University and Ginling College in Nanking after a classical education at home. She then traveled to Oxford as a Boxer Scholar and took a Bachelor of Letters. She returned to China to teach at the National Universities of Hunan, Chekiang and Taiwan and at Lingnan University. She has translated the first two books of Wordsworth's Prelude into classical Chinese. After arriving in North America in 1951, she did research work on Chinese Communist terminology at the University of California in Berkeley, served as an associate professor of Chinese at the University of Michigan, and joined the University of British Columbia in 1964. She is now a Professor Emerita and is currently finishing a study of Chu Hsi's poetry.

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