

Bifa Ji and Qizhi: Interpretations for Muqi and Contemporary Chinese Art

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Abstract

Jing Hao's *Bifa Ji (Notes on Brushwork)* applies the principle of *qiyun* (氣韻 rhythmic vitality) to the painting of natural scenery. The usefulness of this text about *shanshui* (山水) aesthetics for contemporary artists and designers is an open question in China today. For Jing Hao, a painting exhibits *qiyun* by displaying an image that is authentic (眞 *zhen*), and an authentic image is alive and true to the vitality of nature after the artist passes *qi* (氣 spirit) through *zhi* (質 substance). The image manifesting *qi* and *zhi* differs from all images that represent nature in terms of human perceptual experience of forms, patterns, objects, motions or material processes. To uphold Jing Hao's aesthetic for artists and audiences today, I offer a comparative aesthetics that translates *zhi* in terms of Merleau-Ponty's language for the first-dimension of the "surface of the visible" beheld by the painter.

To build a case for translating Jing Hao's *shanshui* aesthetics in this way, I consider accounts that Stephen Owen and Mattias Obert offer for *Bifa Ji*. By amplifying Jing Hao with novel language from Merleau-Ponty, I conclude that *shanshui* painting is about a direct personal acquaintance and uniqueness of corporal union with nature, for which analytic and pragmatist philosophies of art have no language.¹

Applying this experimental interpretation of Jing Hao's aesthetics, I improve art historical accounts of Muqi's *Fishing Village in Twilight*, a painting from the Southern Song dynasty. With images of emptiness that emphasize the visible, Muqi helps by showing: a viewer notices a paradigm for existence as a unique sentient being. Turning to contemporary Chinese art, I argue that the ink painter Jizi successfully synthesizes Jing Hao's paradigm

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for contact with nature with the compositional power displayed in some cases of modern art. The question of whether Jizi's paintings are *shanshui* – raised by critics Yu Yang and Wang Duanting—is resolved. Jizi's *Dao of Ink Series* shows how the intimate dimension of the visible unites the human individual with the universe as a whole. Jing Hao's 10th century aesthetics encourages Euro-American philosophers to change their paradigm for contact with nature.

Key words: Jing Hao, *shanshui* painting, Merleau-Ponty, Muqi, Jizi.

The classic text *Bifa ji* (*Notes on Brushwork*) attributed to Jing Hao (active 907-924) is regarded as one of the first efforts to apply the aesthetic of *qiyun* (氣韻, spirit resonance, rhythmic vitality) to the painting of natural scenery. It is widely accepted as having influenced the emergence and growth of *shanshui* (山水 mountain-water) painting throughout the Song dynasty and subsequent periods of Chinese painting.¹ Yet, the usefulness of traditional aesthetics for contemporary art and design is still an open question in China today, even when influential contemporary Chinese artists cite it as an important resource. Is Jing Hao's aesthetic of limited value for artists today, because it defines good painting in terms of a narrow range of lines, brushstrokes and subjects? Or does it have special value for our age of information and technologies, because it instructs artists in how to craft works that open the senses and give individual spectators an awareness of personal integration with nature? To answer these questions, I conduct a careful analysis that ultimately upholds the value of Jing Hao's text for artists and audiences today. For Jing Hao, a painting exhibits *qi yun* only after it displays an image (象 *xiang*) that is authentic (眞 *zhen*); and an image is authentic and alive, because the painter develops a technique for passing *qi* (氣 spirit) through *zhi* (質 substance). My aim is to develop a novel interpretation for Jing Hao's use of the terms *qi* and *zhi*, so that his account of images that are authentic can be used to stimulate innovations in philosophy, art history, and the practice of art and design. In philosophy, Jing Hao's aesthetics of *zhen*, *qi* and *zhi* implies that not all art works are about real things only; some Chinese paintings are about an element or substance (*zhi*) that is displayed in nature and that can be described neither by a pragmatic language about human experience of events nor by object languages for material counterparts. With regard to art history, Jing Hao's description of the way *shanshui* paintings exhibit images manifesting *qi* and *zhi* may be applied to improve our present-day appreciation of Muqi Fachang, a

prominent Chan Buddhist painter of the Southern Song period. In closing, I test my reading of Jing Hao's text on contemporary Chinese art, by analyzing ink paintings of the artist Jizi as text cases. I conclude that some innovative Chinese ink paintings that seem modern, abstract and perhaps entirely discontinuous with the *shanshui* aesthetic initiated by Jing Hao are instead activations of it.

To develop an interpretation for Jing Hao's aesthetic, I take three steps. First, I point out that a painting manifesting *qiyun* or resonance with the liveliness of nature must be crafted so that it contains a particular sort of image (*xiang*) that is alive and authentic (*zhen*). *Bifa Ji* is a practical manual for teaching painters the difference between what I will call prosaic images and authentic images. Prosaic images are those perceived to display forms, shapes and patterns that resemble or represent forms, patterns, real things and physical objects visually experienced in nature. On my reading, the authentic image is classified as such without regard to whether it represents perceptually experienced forms, patterns and natural objects; it is differentiated instead by manifesting an abundance of *qi* (氣 spirit, vitality) and *zhi* (質 substance). Readers need to consider carefully whether Jing Hao's text supports this distinction; this is a key premise for my subsequent conclusions. Can a painting contain both prosaic images and *also* authentic images? Yes. My contention is that Jing Hao insists on the difference and that the difference depends on *zhi* and not *qi* only. On my reading, Jing Hao's *shanshui* aesthetics is anomalous from the standpoint of pragmatist and analytic philosophies of art. This is because it specifies that images of the authentic sort are about an observable element that cannot be represented by prosaic images that emphasize forms, shapes, patterns and other recognizable things. It follows that some artworks are about an element noticed by looking that cannot be experienced as a real thing measured and known in the way material objects are. Because Jing Hao's aesthetic of *qiyun* does ultimately depend on the notion of a separate species of image that is authentic (*zhen*), I begin the search for a novel and more accessible interpretation for the differentiating features: *qi* and *zhi* (substance).

For my second step, I turn to Stephen Owen's commentary on *Bifa Ji* and the interpretation that he gives for the sort of image that is authentic (*zhen*). According to Owen's reading, the well-made authentic image results from a deeper way of looking that offers a positive alternative to ordinary experiences of things, forms and patterns and particular things (e.g. a cypress tree). This is a valuable step that lends support to the claim that Jing Hao makes a key distinction: images that exhibit forms and patterns belong to a species that differs from those images that are

authentic. However, if I read him correctly, Owen does not explain the deeper way of looking revealed in images that are authentic by appealing to some extraordinary awareness developed through direct personal acquaintance with an exemplar that is *zhi*. Instead, Owen tends to emphasize *qi* and asserts that the creation of an authentic image is determined by reflection and the painter's discovery of a categorical norm that sets a standard for the "typical" against which particular natural objects can be judged for degree of fit or deviation. By contrast, I take Jing Hao's account to be profound, precisely because it takes the paradigm for the authentic image to be an observable substance that no image about forms – typical or abnormal – can convey. So, I continue the search for language with which to interpret *qi* and especially *zhi*, since a manifest abundance of them both is essential to the notion of the image that is authentic.

Third, through an experiment in comparative aesthetics, I find a similar aesthetic about a paradigm for contact with nature that may prove useful for amplifying Jing Hao's remarks about a substance that is essential to the creation of an image that is authentic. Specifically, I compare Maurice Merleau-Ponty's language of the surface of the visible with Jing Hao's language for an observable substance essential to the authentic image. My hope is that each may be a catalyst for new and productive ways to appreciate more fully what is compelling already in the other. For Merleau-Ponty, the visible is an interior texture, a tissue and a general atmosphere within which the gaze of visual perception wanders before focusing and creating a particular node by directing perceptual understanding to a particular spot.² The textual evidence provides conclusive evidence that Merleau-Ponty is intentionally committed to the visible as an element and exemplar beneath and between the activities of vision and visual perception; readers need to consider this carefully, since it is a second fundamental premise of my investigation. Noticing this similarity with respect to a sensuous context that is present *prior to* and *between* perceptual experiences of particular forms, patterns, and relative locations, I experiment with a provisional translation that substitutes "surface of the visible" in Merleau-Ponty's sense for instances of the term *zhi* (substance) in *Bifa Ji*. I assess the results for fit and fruitfulness. This offers the prospect of an approximate translation that may make Jing Hao's aesthetics more accessible for global audiences. I do not use Merleau-Ponty's philosophy to improve Jing Hao's language; on the contrary, I regard Merleau-Ponty's innovative work of 1960-61 as a sign that European philosophy has just started to cross the threshold to a new paradigm for direct acquaintance with observable nature, where the primacy of perception is replaced with the primacy of the relationship between thought and an immediate, inner display of the visible that is neither a thing in experience nor a factual state of affairs. Signs of success and fit with Merleau-Ponty's language

suggest an intriguing similarity that strengthens my initial claim that Jing Hao's aesthetics – from 10th century China – presents a radically different paradigm for embodied contact with nature that is anomalous from the standpoint of modern frameworks for interpreting art (such as those of pragmatism and analytic philosophy). These two latter approaches interpret embodiment in nature as some aggregate of experiences of things or by reference to real things or material counterparts. On my reading of Jing Hao, the authentic image results from the painter's success in passing *qi* through *zhi*, where *zhi* is a sensuous (observable) substance that is first noticed by looking at nature and then manifested artistically in an image that resists all attempts of a spectator to ascribe a prosaic, conventional and modern content consisting of recognizable forms, shapes, patterns or natural objects. Merleau-Ponty's use of "the visible" to describe an inward, observable, animating, pre-conceptual dimension is a catalyst for a closer look at details already implied by Jing Hao's choice of language.

These three steps for interpreting *qizi* (氣質), or *qi* in relation to the substance *zhi* (where *zhi* is treated experimentally as a private display of apparent space called "the visible"), have implications for philosophy, art history and contemporary artists and designers. I develop some of the implications here. If my account is persuasive, Jing Hao's *Bifa Ji* tells us that the authentic image depicts an exemplar of the individual person's acquaintance with an element that is anomalous from the standpoint of analytic philosophies of art. So my investigation supports Liu Yuedi's suggestion that that Arthur Danto's definition of art – on which meanings are embodied in material counterparts – may not be able to describe fully the contact with nature that some Asian traditions of art such as *shanshui* painting are about.³ The proposed interpretations here for *qizi* and *zhi* are productive for art historians. I apply to Muqi's painting the principle of *qiyun* and a novel reading for authenticity (*zhen*); the meaning for "substance" (*zhi*) is now expressed by using "surface of the visible," an *interior* term. As a result, Muqi's paintings can be interpreted as skillful means for conveying the wisdom (*prajna*) that one's own nature is inseparable from the element of the visible that animates nature. With this reading of Muqi, I am able to resolve the tension that exists in James Cahill's disparate remarks about Muqi. I also argue that Muqi's *Fishing Village in Twilight* is evidence of the strength and resilience of Southern Song dynasty culture. Finally, by analyzing the work of the contemporary ink artist Jizi (1941-2015), I argue in closing that a novel interpretation for the aesthetics initiated by Jing Hao can guide artists today.

Image of *Qi* and *Zhi*: Nature Observed Without Perception of Forms

It is useful to begin with a key passage from *Bifa ji (Notes on Brushwork)* where Jing Hao differentiates ordinary images that merely resemble forms, objects and patterns experienced as natural phenomena from authentic images that facilitate resonance with the vitality of nature. This distinction is developed in a narrative that describes an imaginary meeting between the painter-sage of Stone Drum Cliff and a painter-poet who visits the Taihang mountains from the valley below.

The younger painter-poet proposes that a painting is authentic or true to nature, when it exhibits forms and patterns like those observed in nature. The elder painter-sage states that this is incorrect. After rejecting resemblance and pictorial representation of forms and patterns as the standard for authentic images, the painter-sage goes on to describe what a painter needs to do in order to create an image that is authentic and capable of producing a resonance with the liveliness of nature:

The codger said, “It is not so. Painting is to etch lines. One sizes up the image of a thing and from that seizes upon what is authentic in it. If it is the visible pattern of a thing – seize its visible pattern; if it is the essential substance of the thing – seize its essential substance. One cannot seize on visible pattern and make it essential substance. If one does not know this technique one can perhaps squeeze out a likeness, but the representation of authenticity can never be attained. “ I said, “What do you take to be the likeness? What do you take to be authenticity?” The codger said, “Likeness gets to shape, but drops out the vital energy.

Authenticity [真 *zhen*] is when vital energy [氣 *qi*] and essence [質 *zhi*] are both abundant. As a general rule, if vital energy is passed only through external pattern and is dropped out of the image[象 *xiang*], then the image dies.”⁴

How are we to summarize this complex passage that ends by specifying what makes an image authentic? The movement here is from the initial premise that there are two ways for the painter to observe the appearing of a thing within nature: first, one can look at it with respect to its forms and patterns; and second, one can look at it with respect to an essential substance displayed in conjunction with the thing. (The original text uses an analogy to express this difference: one can grasp the flower or the fruit. Stephen West follows common practice and translates this convincingly as grasping the form or grasping the substance.) The second premise is fundamental: the painter

cannot grasp forms (the flower) exhibited by nature and equate this with grasping the substance (the fruit) exhibited: “One cannot seize on visible pattern and make it essential substance.” Every attempt to grasp forms and to make an image displaying a likeness to them will fail to create an image that is authentic and alive. Already the text implies logically that “image” (*xiang*) stands for a genus with two species: one is a display of forms and another is a display of observable substance. In short, since the substance designated by the term *zhi* can never be grasped as form or shape, a second technique is needed to make an image of the authentic sort that resonates with the vitality of nature that the painter witnesses by eye. What then does “substance” designate in the image that is authentic? What must be done so that the authentic image becomes manifest?

The text is clear: Likeness gets the shape but drops out vital energy. It is equally clear that likeness fashioned at the stage of artistic creation also drops out the substance essential to observing the vitality of nature and to making an image that is authentic. This point is implied by the second premise just stated. The third premise is this: the authentic image combines *qi* and *zhi*. I suggest the following meaning for the last sentence: If *qi* is passed only through external pattern *that is depicted by a likeness in form*, then the image dies. Thus, the final sentence becomes a summation: To paint a live image about the substance that is essential to the (animating) vitality of things shown in nature, the painter needs to learn a second technique for crafting an image that passes *qi* through *zhi*, since *the technique for making images that display forms cannot produce this*. In short, the aspiring painter who hopes to show an abundance of *zhi* and create an authentic image of the vitality of nature will never succeed in doing so with a painting technique that merely depicts images of forms, shapes and patterns that resemble those found in nature.

Bifa Ji does imply then that *shanshui* painting combines images of form together with images of a substance essential for noticing the liveliness of nature. But it is still the case that in such paintings a separate sort of image is needed to show *zhi*, since *zhi* drops out of images that are created and inspected with regard to form, shape and pattern only. Whenever the painter-poet floats the proposal that authenticity is achieved by creating a likeness in form by passing spirit (*qi*) through forms and patterns, the painter-sage insists that it is also necessary to observe nature and to include images of *zhi* so that any given particular painting as a whole remains alive. The *shanshui* painting of mountains is not formless, of course; but it is alive and resonant with the vitality of nature (with which the painter is directly acquainted by eye), because it includes a species of *xiang* that shows no likeness to perceptible forms. If the painter’s method of passing *qi* through *zhi* merely resulted in the creation of additional forms, then the

species of the authentic image would vanish and the practice of painting the liveliness and vitality of nature would be lost. Neither resemblance with respect to form nor expression of inward feeling are sufficient for creating an image from ink and paper that conveys the vitality of nature.

The vexing question is this: what is the observable element signified by *zhi* (質) that is essential to the vitality of nature and to images that convey it? In his accompanying commentary Stephen West translates *zhi* as “physical essence,” a term that suggests corporeality of some sort.⁵ Martin Powers and Li Zehou use the term “substance” for *zhi*.⁶ The application of the English term “substance” for the translation in this case does have one advantage: the term suggests both that there is some supporting context that is not experienced as any of the temporary objects that it may happen to display and that this same context is nonetheless present during the process of experiencing distinct forms, patterns and planes in relative positions. But then what is this observable context that is not experienced as an object? In what way is it related to looking directly at a thing in nature?

Helpful directions come from Peng Feng who brings to our attention a specific use of the term *xiang* within traditional Chinese aesthetics. In analyzing a passage from Wang Yangming (1472-1529) who makes use of Chan Buddhist distinctions, Peng Feng notes that the pink flower of a single cotton-rose tree is manifested in three different ways. There is “cotton-rose in the state of silent vacancy, cotton-rose appearing clearly and vividly, and cotton-rose with the ‘cotton-rose’.”⁷ These three categories correspond respectively to the appearing of the pink flower when it is neither perceived nor known as an object; to the pink flower perceived as a particular object, and finally to the pink flower as represented in knowledge. Peng Feng holds that *xiang* in the first sense is not to be interpreted as figure, form or concept; instead, it is “the thing-in-appearing or presence,” that is, the pink flower in a state of silent vacancy before perception converts initial awareness into experiences of a particular object or into appearances. Can we say then that the painter who looks at nature and observes a thing in appearing (or in the state of silent vacancy) also grasps *zhi* and does not yet have a perceptual experience of any particular kind of form and shape? Is looking at an image of the pink flower in the state of silent vacancy comparable to looking at *zhi* as an appearing essential to a noticing of the liveliness of nature? Clearly, it may be fruitful and necessary to proceed with a more detailed analysis of the role of *zhi* in order to describe an image that is authentic in Jing Hao’s sense.

Paradigms of Authenticity: Sensuous Norm for Conceptual Content or *Zhi*?

One way to develop some paradigm for interpreting “substance” or some account for the term *zhi* is to study commentaries that analyze Jing Hao’s remarks about the sort of image that is authentic. Stephen Owen’s commentary on *Bifa Ji* and the notion of an authentic image is helpful, because his interpretation affirms some of the differences between images that represent form and those images that are alive and about the vitality of nature.

According to Owen, Jing Hao describes a deeper way of looking that reveals more than ordinary appearances of similitude with external objects. Thus Owen affirms that there is an alternative to ordinary, non-authentic observations of nature and an alternative to paintings that merely represent forms or things in human experience. Owen writes the following about the sort of image (象 *xiang*) that is authentic in Jing Hao’s sense:

I will not attempt my own history of this loaded term *xiang*; in a context like this, I doubt such a history is warranted. It is used in the Tang as “appearance” or “semblance” and here seems to be the positive alternative to merely external “similitude,” *si*. In the context of the technical terms that surround it, this *xiang* is ‘appearance’ in a deeper sense than *si*, a mode of “appearance” that leads the deliberative painter to grasp the “substance” (fruit, *shi*) as well as the “flower,” *hua*.⁸

Like Stephen West, Owen takes Jing Hao’s original remarks – about grasping of the flower and grasping the fruit -- as metaphors for the grasping of external shapes and some substance that is more fundamental. Thus this passage coheres with Jing Hao’s distinction between ordinary images that display shapes and forms and authentic images that are a semblance of a substance noticed through a deeper way of looking. The question remaining is this: for Jing Hao, what are the components of the deeper way of looking by means of which the painter notices an appearing of the vitality of nature?

At this stage of his essay, Owen gathers the relevant terms. He includes both *qi* and *zhi* as elements that the painter-poet is urged to notice by means of a deeper way of looking that reveals substance: “the old man advised him to look deeper – to interior terms such as ‘substance,’ *shi* [fruit], ‘material,’ *zhi*, and *qi*...”⁹ Owen brings our attention to a point of interest: both *qi* and even “material” *zhi* are designated as *interior* terms. One may ask then what Jing Hao has in mind by using the *interior* term *zhi* to signify a substance noticed by looking at nature and then at the appearing of an authentic image made with ink and paper. However, Owen goes on to emphasize the

role of *qi* and evidently postpones discussion of both the relation between *qi* and *zhi* and also the role of *zhi* in noticing an image that is authentic in Jing Hao's sense. This is evident in Owen's explanation of Jing Hao's way of validating authenticity and differentiating it from mere similitude: "here we have a bad outside (*hua*) [flower] and a good outside (*xiang*) [image]; what differentiates them is the immanence of *qi*."¹⁰ With the term 'immanence,' Owen connects *qi* persuasively with some inward element or process; but *zhi* is left unanalyzed as Owen gives details about *qi* and how it contributes to the deeper way of looking at an authentic image. Owen's reading of the painter-sage's advice privileges the role of *qi*: "The privileging of *qi* as the interior term is expected; its presence is what guarantees authenticity, *zhen*."¹¹ Yet, as I noted, the painter of Stone Drum Cliff insists that *both qi* and the substance *zhi* are needed in abundance; the painter needs to pass *qi* through the substance *zhi* to make an image that is authentic. The authentic image is not produced merely by some activity of spirit.

The substance *zhi* goes unmentioned again, as Owen interprets Jing Hao to mean that the authentic image is a product of the painter's noticing a "sensuous norm." Owen treats Jing Hao's text as a pedagogical device for "devaluing the immediacy of the percept in favor of the reflective discovery of *sensuous norm* within the percept."¹² To put this a different way, Owen means that the painter who creates an authentic image resonant with the vitality of nature practices a deeper way of looking guided by a sensuous norm against which perceptual experiences of particular objects can be compared. He also describes the authentic image as the product of a normative Gestalt organized by *xing* (性 categorical nature, given nature); for example, he claims that to look at the authentic image is "to see all the particulars of the percept in relation to the categorical 'pine,'" as opposed to the categorical cypress.¹³ Owen finishes his thought by suggesting that Jing Hao's account of authentic images might have a function comparable to "a botanical handbook that would permit the user to 'recognize' a pine in its variety."¹⁴

There are difficulties for Owen's attempt to read Jing Hao as claiming that the painter makes an authentic image by reflection and discovery of a categorical norm. This reading seems to be at odds with Jing Hao's claim that it is impossible to create an authentic image by attending to form or shape. Owen takes Jing Hao to be teaching painters how to represent a norm that brings conceptual content to a painting. But it is not clear to me how infusing an image with a conceptual content by conformity with a categorical norm helps to explain the creation of a special sort of image that gives an awareness of the vitality of nature.

Owen does not seem to consider the possibility that it is the inclusion of an appearing of *zhi*, observed without regard to both universal norms and perceptions of particular forms and objects, that enables the authentic image to resonate with the vitality of nature. He provides a compelling case for claiming that the painter crafts an authentic image [*xiang*] after looking at nature in a deeper way that offers a positive alternative to ordinary perception of particular appearances (such as the forms and shapes of mountains and waters). But Owen does not explain in a sustained way how the *interior* term *zhi* contributes, when he suggests that the painter is supposed to follow a path of inward reflection concerning “typical” properties in order to create an image that is authentic. In contrast to this, I propose a different path for interpreting what Jing Hao may mean by the image that is authentic: an image is authentic when the painter places *qi* in relation to a sample or an appearing of *zhi* (which is illegible as a particular object or as an aggregation of objects).

My proposal is to consider *qi* along the lines proposed by Mathias Obert: “*qi* is primarily an infinite vital agitation, as well as various kinds of transfer phenomena, including an original self-relatedness within what is called life.” Instead of treating *qi* as an element (a *qi*-element) with some ontological or existential implications, Obert treats *qi* as an expression, “the expression being the very incarnation of the manifestation of something *in itself*.”¹⁵ I propose to make the following modification to Obert’s account: *qi* is the expression or utterance of the incarnation of a manifest *zhi*-element, which is something *in itself* with existential implications. In other words, on my hypothesis *qizi* is an original self-relatedness that one observes for oneself within one’s own life, where *zhi* is the corporeal incarnation for which *qi* is the utterance. *Qi* does not manifest embodiment without *zhi*; and *zhi* has no expression and no utterance (or is left with no interpretation whatsoever) without *qi*. *Zhi* is an embodied element related to *qi* (a separate corporeal element for the utterance that is *qi*) that is always obscure from the standpoint of object languages that structure perceptual experiences of material things. I suggest that it is the noticing of the appearing of *zhi* that becomes the paradigm or model for making authentic images that resonate with the animating vitality of nature. Once again, what is the *appearing* designated by the *internal* term *zhi*?

***Qizhi* and Thought of the Visible: Inner Monocular Awareness of Nature**

Is there some parallel language for painting and looking upon nature that might be used experimentally to amplify details already contained within Jing Hao's aesthetic? Maurice Merleau-Ponty uses the term "surface of the visible" to refer to an elemental ground that mingles but never merges with the individual person's visual experiences of particular objects or events. I propose an experimental substitution of Merleau-Ponty's term "the visible" for occurrences of *zhi* in Jing Hao's aesthetic about images that are authentic, alive and successful in conveying the vitality of nature. This inclusion of the term "the visible" to aid translation may help us explain how resonance with the animate vitality of nature can be aided by an appearing of *zhi* (substance) that is not experienced as a natural object.

In his writings of 1960-1961, Merleau-Ponty describes how the eye of the painter wanders freely through a more general and stable texture and "atmospheric existence" of the visible, before and after perceptual discrimination activates experiences of individual colors or things.¹⁶ Merleau-Ponty refers to the texture and metallic shimmering of the surface of the visible as an "element" that mingles but never merges with the perceptual understanding of things that comes with every human experience.¹⁷ For the practicing painter, the visible is an extraordinary first dimension of depth within which relationships capable of measurement – height, width and depth, location -- are unified. It is an "inner animation" and the radiation of a "nonconceptual presentation."¹⁸ Merleau-Ponty often states explicitly the paradox at hand: since the interior dimension of the element of the visible possessed by the painter is a general atmosphere that persists through the coming to be and passing away of perceptions of things, "there is access to it only through an experience which, like it, is wholly outside of it." He struggles to find terms capable of referring to a sensuous context that is not experienced as an object: "tissue...which for its part is not a thing," "thickness of the look," and habitation of "an exemplar sensible." Moreover, he promises not to avoid the question of "how the sensible sentient can be thought," or how it is possible to utter words about possessing a dimension of the visible that is not an object or thing, when it remains unspeakable for those who still insist on restricting themselves to the use of object languages.¹⁹

After studying Merleau-Ponty's last writings, we can say that the visible is an inner animation, because it is a private monocular display of one's own that is either nothing or else invisible for every person other than oneself. The monocular images that one witnesses for oneself by looking are "floating pre-things" that provide an interior relation to one's own body.²⁰ Each monocular display of the visible is an interior surface or a "little private world"

or *idios kosmos*; it is not to be identified with the common world of objects of experience that we share.²¹ The visible is an open secret but an enigma for vision and for those who think about life only in terms of scientific knowledge. Yet, for the individual person, observation of the visible amounts to direct acquaintance with a unique token belonging to one's own body that mediates an openness upon nature: and it does so even though the texture of the visible does not open directly upon the one world that we all have in common. Merleau-Ponty keeps the Leibnizian notion of unique monads that differ from each other as perspectives; but unlike Leibnitz, he claims that each perspective is based not on some mental substance but on the distribution of the interior dimension of the element of the visible, where each person possesses direct acquaintance with a unique and incomparable instantiation of the visible that can never be an object of experience for a third party.²² Since the visible is an interior surface provided by the organ of one's own eye, one can think of it as constitutive of one's own sensuous existence: "I who see have my own depth also, being backed up by the same visible which I see."²³ Each private world of the visible – mine for me and yours for you -- is a unique instance of a first-dimension that serves as a sample and exemplar for an inner, non-conceptual appearing, a showing of an interior element.

Merleau-Ponty grants that the dimension of the visible is an anomaly for philosophical systems cultivated and practiced in Europe: "It is this Visibility, this generality of the Sensible in itself, this anonymity innate to Myself that we have previously called flesh, and one knows there that there is no name in traditional philosophy to designate it."²⁴ Given the comparison with Jing Hao's *Bifa ji*, it is better to say the pre-spatiality of the visible has no name in ancient or modern traditions of *European* philosophy.

Does Merleau-Ponty's account of the visible rely on Gestalt psychology? In his working notes of 1959, Merleau-Ponty takes up this question explicitly, and his answer is instructive. He claims to be providing a description that goes beyond conventional interpretations of the Gestalt: "Every Psychology that places the Gestalt back into the framework of "cognition" or "consciousness" misses the meaning of the *Gestalt*." What Gestalt psychology does not describe is the Gestalt experience from within, or as an appearing for the individual person. Merleau-Ponty insists that a Gestalt is not grasped by a mind; instead, it is an actual instance always inscribed within the flesh of the person who grasps it. Using the terms of his final writings, we may describe this point: What Gestalt psychology misses is use of the word "flesh" as an interior term to refer to the dimension of the visible which is a private paradigm for self-sentient existence. Language for the paradigm of the interior element of the

visible makes it possible to describe the corporeal basis for how the individual person's own looking gives an animating grain to the Gestalt as something actual (for the viewer, that is). Thus, he sketches out his program of investigation: "There remains to understand precisely what the being for itself of the Gestalt experience is---It is being for X, not a pure agile nothingness, but an inscription in an open register, in a lake of non being..." Using Merleau-Ponty's account as a stimulus for innovative interpretations, scholars may wish to consider the intriguing question whether Jing Hao uses such terms as *qizi* or *zhi* to convey a paradigm of individual self-existence that is to be shown by authentic images of the silent vacancy of the visible.²⁵

It follows that the dimension of the visible is a relatively stable sensuous medium that the painter can emphasize by technique. As Merleau-Ponty suggests persuasively, it is Cézanne's pursuit of the depth of the visible before the spaciality of forms that led him to break the fruit bowl or and to open contour lines. Although the texture of the interior element of the visible is "a spectacle of nothing" from the standpoint of visual perception and experiences of *things*, it still shows something, namely, how a thing comes to be a thing within the look possessed by the individual person. In a similar way, he describes Matisse as using line to open up within white paper "a certain hollow" or "a certain constitutive emptiness, an emptiness which...sustains the supposed positivity of things."²⁶

It is productive to experiment by substituting the term "surface of the visible" for the term "substance" (*zhi*) in Jing Hao's aesthetics of *qiyun*, where authentic images resonate with the vitality of nature. Jing Hao's account of images that resonate authentically with the animating vitality of nature becomes more accessible for contemporary readers who can be distracted at times by modern ways of thinking. Each of us can begin to look for paintings with *qiyun* – or for paintings with images that contain a semblance of the interior sensuous element of the visible that animates the individual person's own unique openness upon nature. Thus, a plausible meaning for the term "substance" (*zhi*) can be suggested, without departing from a philosophy about the individual person's own sensuous existence. For Merleau-Ponty, it is no longer possible for philosophies about actual life and art to dismiss as nonsense the assertion that authentic images display a unique and profound contact with nature that cannot be experienced as a scientifically known location or material event. The term *zhi* acquires an observable content that is non-supernatural (or non-metaphysical). It follows that Jing Hao's aesthetic is based on a very different paradigm for direct contact with nature that is both accessible and compelling today.

This comparison with Jing Hao is a two-way street, of course. It also suggests ways to amplify Merleau-Ponty. To take one example, Jing Hao's *shanshui* aesthetics links the creation of paintings with authentic images manifesting *qi* and *zhi* to resonance with the vitality of nature, self-cultivation and moral development. At the end of *Bifa Ji*, when the painter-sage implies that paintings are traces of the moral cultivation of the painter, the young poet-painter realizes that the sage's ultimate purpose in giving lessons in technique is "moral development through instruction."²⁷ Thus, if there is a smoothness of fit with Jing Hao's text, this may also mean that Merleau-Ponty's final writings about painting have implications for the normative role of the visible as a means for moral teaching. Though he did not develop this at length, his texts and the example of Chinese philosophy suggest that this role can be described by linking his analysis of painting to his remarks on the visible as an *exemplar sensible* for thoughts about another person as a *sensible for itself* (or a self-sentient being).

The result is this: a painting is good and alive in Jing Hao's sense only after it is crafted so that it also includes – in some portion of its composition -- images of the texture of the visible (often displayed in a painting as an enveloping emptiness) that resonate with an instance of the element of the visible that unites the eye witness to the actuality of nature. I invite specialists to decide whether this experimental step in comparative aesthetics is a productive and accurate way to interpret Jing Hao's use of the terms *qiyun*, *zhen*, *qi* and *zhi*. On my account, the interior dimension of the visible is what Thomas Kuhn calls a "paradigm as shared example," which he describes as the most novel aspect of his account about paradigm change in the natural sciences. His remarks have meaning for this investigation of *qi* and *zhi*: the start of problem solving, or the actual practice of looking for exemplars is learning from nature; this differs from an approach that begins problem solving with theory and the rules for applying it.²⁸

Muqi's *Fishing Village in Twilight*: Self Inseparable From Nature

Can the experimental interpretation for *qi* and *zhi* proposed here help us decide whether Muqi's images of enveloping emptiness satisfy the aesthetic inaugurated by Jing Hao? The art historian James Cahill approves of the way Muqi depicts phenomena of the natural environment, such as mist, twilight, and atmospheric lightning; however, Muqi emphasizes an emptiness of surface that Cahill tends to regard to destructive of the tradition of Song

landscape painting.²⁹ Are the images of enveloping emptiness in paintings by Muqi and Yujian signs of continuity with Jing Hao's aesthetic? Or are they destructive of the great tradition of *shanshui* painting that fully emerged in the Northern Song dynasty? In a response to some of Cahill's negative assessments of Chan Buddhist painting, I argue that my reading of Jing Hao's aesthetic has value today for art historians, because it supports the conclusion that Muqi's paintings resonate with the interior element of the visible in a way that is compelling for art observers today. By interpreting Muqi's paintings in terms of Jing Hao's aesthetic of authenticity, it is possible to improve art historical narratives about the profound significance of the images of enveloping emptiness in Southern Song paintings of mountains and waters.

James Cahill is a keen observer of Muqi in many respects. He places Muqi in the literati lineage: "[t]he mode of painting which began with ink splashes of the Tang period, and was carried on by the late Northern Sung literati, who tamed its wildness somewhat, here reaches full maturity."³⁰ Since Muqi is clearly a practitioner of Chan Buddhism, Cahill consents to consider seriously how the practices of Chan Buddhism relate to Muqi's paintings. Cahill notes some affinities: both Chan practice and landscape paintings by its practitioners are skillful methods for providing direct revelation, without the mediation of rational terms. Given that revelation is immediate, Cahill concludes plausibly that in Chan practice it is up to the individual person to develop the awareness of enlightenment that differs from ordinary rational experience of things. He adds: "Chan Buddhism refuses to present the student with a well-lit road to enlightenment, and Chan painting declines in a like way to present a ready-made, clearly delineated image."³¹ Turning more specifically to Muqi's *Fishing Village in Twilight* (Fig. 1) he notes accurately that the painting presents "a few key points," "repetition of forms," and a "scattering of dark accents," as well as "inchoate areas" that become a remainder that is "ambiguous, sometimes amorphous, suggestive rather than descriptive."³² With regard to the indistinct and the amorphous, he makes an additional claim that is compelling: the most significant element of Southern Song landscape is a space that has "no locality or form, or substance, properly speaking," a space that is nonetheless regarded positively and not as a meaningless interval that separates one object of experience from another.³³



Fig. 1. Muqi, *Fishing Village in Twilight*. Southern Song Dynasty, 13th century.

However, Cahill also launches a negative critique of Chan Buddhist paintings from the Southern Song dynasty. He seems predisposed to regard resemblance or representation of physical objects experienced in the external world as the paradigm for judging landscape paintings as good, successful and meaningful. This predisposition is evident in the way that he describes *Fishing Village in Twilight*: “the painting is not only moving in purely ink-on-paper terms, but also functions as an image – abbreviated, impressionistic, but nevertheless compelling – of the external world.”³⁴ In effect, Cahill avoids analysis of the significance that areas of enveloping emptiness may have for Chan Buddhist awareness about life in nature; instead, he argues that this painting – which he accepts as expressing a Chan world-view - is ultimately compelling, not because images of emptiness confer value in some way, but because the painting functions as an image that resembles the external world of particular forms and things in experience. Cahill is of course correct in noticing that this painting displays both images of emptiness and images of things and particular natural phenomena. This is in keeping with Jing Hao’s aesthetic, which allows for the coexistence of authentic images with images that merely resemble forms or objects. The problem is that Cahill seems unable to harmonize the two sorts of images; he does not explain how both images of enveloping emptiness and also impressionistic images about phenomena of weather and light contribute equally and conjointly to the significance of this painting.

Cahill’s critical review of Yujian is much more severe. Although he notes the importance in Southern Song culture, Cahill asserts that the images of enveloping emptiness created by Yujian -- a Chan painter who Cahill places in the same school as Muqi – dissolved solid forms in a way that “effectively exhausted” the tradition of Song landscape painting. Out of parity, Cahill would need to classify many of Muqi’s images of emptiness as equally extreme and destructive of the great tradition of Song landscape painting of which they also the culmination. Many paintings by Muqi -- *Returning Sails Off a Distant Shore*, *Geese Alighting on the Sand*, *A Temple in the Misty*

Distance: The Evening Bell Tolls, and Autumn Moon Over Lake Dongting – display an enveloping emptiness close to the style of Yujian that Cahill describes as “extreme.” What is needed is an explanation for how Muqi and Yujian affirm a Chan Buddhist world-view and philosophies about union of self with nature popular during the Song dynasty, precisely because both painters create images of emptiness that resonate with the vitality of nature. By contrast, Cahill suggests instead that such images of enveloping emptiness can be explained, in part, as the consequence of the historical circumstances of a society that turns inward due to military threats from hostile neighbors.³⁵

Once we adopt the account proposed here for Jing Hao’s aesthetic, it makes good sense for Muqi and Yujian to emphasize images of an enveloping emptiness that scarcely suggest perceptual experiences of real things. Muqi expresses a world-view that is Chan Buddhist, precisely because he creates images of enveloping emptiness that show the element of the visible as a basis for the individual person’s awareness of innate inseparability from nature. Moreover, these Chan artists imply that awareness of the visible as a paradigm for egoless, conceptless self-existence is compatible with regarding the visible as a place for visual experiences of particular things and environmental phenomena. This is to say that *Fishing Village in Twilight* – no less than a painting by Yujian -- is a skillful means for displaying the inseparability of things in human experience from the enveloping, animating surface of the visible that gives nature an animating vitality and that gives the individual who looks an inalienable paradigm for existence as a sensible sentient or sentient being.

Just as we might expect from the founder of a Chan monastery, Muqi uses painting to help the art observer acquire awareness of the wisdom of enlightenment and not merely to express tranquility arising from the cessation of the flux of experiences of things. With *Fishing Village in Twilight*, Muqi creates intentionally images that resist nearly every attempt to experience them in terms of objects; for his purpose is to de-center perceptual experience of things long enough for the viewer to notice and think about the visible as an interior paradigm for sentient existence. By intertwining some authentic images of the first dimension of the visible with images of natural phenomena in human experience, Muqi expresses the idea relevant to enlightenment: awareness of oneself as a sensible sentient cannot be separated from the visible life that presents obstacles and the appearing of other sentient beings in genuine need.

Cahill helps by encouraging us to think of Muqi's *Fishing Village in Twilight* as expressing both Chan and Daoist accounts of the union of the individual person with nature. The painting is "an expression of the Chan (and also the Taoist) world-view: 'One Nature, perfect and pervading, circulates in all natures; one Reality, all-comprehensive, contains within itself all realities.'"³⁶ However, his description of the Way (Dao) does not yet accommodate the thesis that there are two different dimensions for oneness and wholeness. On the one hand, there is the uniqueness of the innate surface of the visible where inseparability with nature is displayed uniquely by eye. On the other, there is oneness of the cosmos (not directly observed in person) that is inferred as an invisible reverse side of one's own interior element of the surface of the visible. It is the former interpretation – about the way in which the animating surface of the visible is inseparable from the individual person's own way of looking at nature – that seems fundamental to *Fishing Village in Twilight*.

Are paintings of the Impressionist movement authentic according to Jing Hao's aesthetic? If some qualify, will this cast doubt on my contention that Jing Hao's aesthetic is based on a paradigm for contact with nature that is anomalous in comparison with philosophies of art circulating in Europe? While an answer here requires a case by case analysis of particular paintings, I offer some preliminary thoughts. Jing Hao's aesthetic calls, in part, for authentic images that convey an observable paradigm for contact with nature that does not depend on resemblance to any forms or patterns of natural phenomena observed in nature. Although *plein air* landscapes belonging to European Impressionism do often convey the perspective of an eye-witness, they usually contain images that emphasize forms, shapes, patterns, particular weather conditions or phenomena of natural light at a specific time of day. So although they break from Renaissance conventions of perspective and the lifelikeness exhibited in *tromp l'oeil* painting, it seems probable to me that many paintings of the Impressionist movement would not qualify as authentic in Jing Hao's sense. Consider the difference between Muqi's *Returning Sails Off a Distant Shore* and impressionism. Although this painting contains images of clouds and gusts of wind, the strength and vastness of the areas of emptiness resist all categorization. *This is not Impressionism. What is it?* Even today the painting has the power to shock. What about post-Impressionist paintings then? This may be a more challenging question. Yet, at the same time, it is important to recall Arthur Danto's thoughtful and instructive insights: Van Gogh, Gauguin and Monet accepted and cultivated the influence of images made originally in Japan and China.³⁷

According to the art historian John Hay, some traditional Chinese paintings display an emptiness that overwhelms determinate objects (e.g. mountains, waters, trees and houses). This is so widely known “that we generally treat it as a cliché to be ignored by serious scholarship.”³⁸ Hay himself seeks to explain how this feature of enveloping emptiness has remained valid in the evolution of Chinese painting. If my investigation persuades, Muqi’s *Fishing Village in Twilight*, made by intertwining images of emptiness with images of clouds and atmospheric phenomena, works as skillful means for expressing an interpretation of enlightenment that recent scholarship attributes to Chan Buddhist circles in Southern Song society. According to this interpretation, enlightenment is accompanied by a tranquility of playfulness, where one who is enlightened still wanders freely in everyday life, while remaining unbound by the illusory belief in the reality of human experience of natural phenomena.³⁹ Thus, paintings by Muqi and Yujian, valued and accepted by artists and patrons in Japan and appreciated by many artists in China, are important today, because they help us confirm that traditional Chinese aesthetics enables viewers to appreciate and value Song dynasty paintings and the philosophies of nature that they express.

Aesthetics and Innovation in Contemporary Chinese Painting

Is the novel interpretation proposed here for Jing Hao’s aesthetic of practical use to contemporary artists and art critics? To find out, we can test it on some of Jizi’s innovative ink paintings that combine features of traditional *shanshui* painting with influences from modern art. According to the art historian Yu Yang, Jizi remains within the tradition of *shanshui* painting, because he continues the practice of expressing “a view of heaven, earth and the universe.”⁴⁰ Wang Duanting, a Beijing curator and art critic, emphasizes the differences: *shanshui* images depict a still world of scenery that is without time, but Jizi’s images convey movement and scenes of fantasy that transcend the real world.⁴¹ In closing, I argue that my reading of Jing Hao is promising and practical, because we can use it to reach the conclusion that Jizi creates authentic images by bringing the element of the visible to the attention of the art viewer.

On the account of *qizi* proposed here, the painter passes *qi* through the interior element of the visible that is manifest within the limits of the painter’s monocular fields. As I described earlier, the surface of the visible

delivered by eye is an element of sensuous existence that an individual person can observe even in the absence of perceptual experiences of particular forms, shapes or things. This incomparable inwardness of an interior first-dimension of the visible emerges as a subject matter in Jizi's artworks. Consider for example two paintings from his *Dao of Ink Series – No. 1* and *No. 10*. The composition of *Dao of Ink Series No. 1* (Fig. 2) contains images that resemble various natural phenomena in human experience; and images of these phenomena are displayed in several layers, not within a single space that is continuous and unifying. With *Dao of Ink Series No. 10*, Jizi adds contour edges and then bends and joins them to make enclosures with interior images (Fig. 3).



Fig. 2. Jizi, *Dao of Ink Series, No. 1, 2009*.



Fig. 3. Jizi, *Dao of Ink Series, No. 10, 2009*.

As I noted earlier, the interior substance *zhi* may be translated experimentally in terms of an interior instance of the element of the visible that is privately possessed and directly observed only by oneself and never by others. The foregoing discussion also suggests that the dimension of the visible presented within one's own eye is the ground for visual experiences of natural phenomena. It is this dual role of the visible that is illustrated in *No. 10*. There are six self-enclosed and inward surfaces of the visible. Each enclosed surface is a separate image of an interior dimension, as well as an image that displays particular forms that seem to resemble natural phenomena. It is as if Jizi's painting represents six enclosures belonging respectively to six unique and incomparable individuals. Each of these six

interiors also undergoes a cycle of alteration: now it is looked at as an appearing of the first dimension of the visible; next it is looked at as a surface that shows phenomena experienced as objects and appearances. Thus, Jizi's painting has philosophical and moral content, since it conveys by showing that the surface of the visible to which one's own life is connected is one portion of community of similar "private worlds." *No. 10* qualifies as a painting that contains authentic images, because Jizi has by intention created an image of the visible texture that animates phenomena perceived as external. Thus, this painting begins to satisfy portions of Jing Hao's paradigm for the sort of image that is authentic.

Given this analysis of Jizi's paintings, it follows that parts of traditional Chinese aesthetics help us evaluate whether a given work of contemporary art represents intimate contact with the vitality of nature. If the novel interpretation of *Bifa ji* detailed above holds up to scrutiny, Jing Hao's text from 10th century China may serve painters today as a guide for creating meaningful paintings about an enveloping emptiness of visible surface that is not expressed in the knowledge claims of factual science. One lesson from *Bifa Ji* is that good paintings include images about an observable dimension of the visible that is not supernatural and not metaphysical in Kant's sense. This paradigm for direct acquaintance with nature is one that painters and designers today can work with. Such an interior dimension is often granted in casual conversation; but individual analytic philosophers often add that it is of no interest to their professional community.⁴² Thus, one issue today is whether members of the discipline of analytic philosophy will agree that a privately displayed, monocular surface of the visible is *an anomaly of interest*.

Jing Hao's aesthetics – since the 10th century – points to a dimension of observable nature that has not yet been accepted as a profound anomaly that necessitates a paradigm-change by the community of Euro-American philosophers of art. What difference is there at this historical moment that makes it more likely that the profound significance of Jing Hao's aesthetic will now be accepted by the global community of philosophers? Consider the dynamic conditions today: the globalization of contemporary Chinese art and design, the interest of Chinese artists and designers in utilizing traditional Chinese aesthetics for direction, and the global need for aesthetic language supportive of new designs that show individual persons their respective acquaintances with an element of the visible about which the natural sciences will always remain silent. All these may serve to change the status of Jing Hao's aesthetics (and perhaps also that of Merleau-Ponty's final writings) from anomaly, to counter instance, and finally to

acceptance as an improved paradigm for the life of individual persons in nature. Analytic philosophers and fact-minded art historians need to take another look and cultivate a more profound response to Asian art and aesthetics.

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- ¹ Li Zehou, *The Path of Beauty*, trans. Gong Lizeng (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 185.
- ² See Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, ed. Claude Lefort, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968), pp. 131-132.
- ³ Liu Yuedi, "Chinese Contemporary Art: From De-Chineseness to Re-Chineseness," p. 73.
- ⁴ Jing Hao, "*Bi fa ji* (Notes on the Method for the Brush)", trans. Stephen H. West, in Pauline Yu, *Ways with Words: Writing about Reading Texts from Early China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), p. 204.
- ⁵ Stephen H. West, "*Bi fa ji* (Notes on the Method for the Brush)," p. 204.
- ⁶ See Martin Powers, "How to Read a Chinese Painting, *Jing Hao's Bi fa ji*," in Pauline Yu, *Ways with Words: Writing about Reading Texts from Early China*, p. 235; and Li Zehou, *The Path of Beauty*, trans. Gong Lizeng (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 187.
- ⁷ See Peng Feng, "Paths to the Middle: A Tentative Theory for Chinese Contemporary Art," in *Subversive Strategies in Contemporary Chinese Art* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), p. 275.
- ⁸ Stephen Owen, "*BI FA JI*," in Pauline Yu, *Ways with Words: Writing about Reading Texts from Early China*, p. 214.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, 217.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 215.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 215.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, p. 218.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 217.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 217.
- ¹⁵ Mathias Obert, "Imagination or Response? Some Remarks on the Understanding of Images in Pre-modern China, in *Dynamics and Performativity of Imagination, the Image between the Visible and the Invisible*, eds. Bernd Huppau and Christoph Wulf (London: Routledge, 2009), p. 122.
- ¹⁶ See Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, pp. 131-132.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 10, 131-132, 139.
- ¹⁸ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "Eye and Mind," in *The Merleau-Ponty Aesthetics Reader*, ed. Galen A. Johnson (Evanston: Northwestern, 1993), pp. 140, 142.
- ¹⁹ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, pp. 132-133, 137.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 8.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.
- ²² *Ibid.*, p. 216..
- ²³ *Ibid.*, p. 135.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 139.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 205-206.
- ²⁶ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "Eye and Mind," pp. 141, 144.
- ²⁷ Jing Hao, "*Bi fa ji* (Notes on the Method for the Brush), p. 212.
- ²⁸ Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2012), 186-187.
- ²⁹ James Cahill, *Chinese Paintings, XI-XIV Centuries* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1961), p. 21-22.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 20.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 19.
- ³² *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.
- ³³ James Cahill, *The Art of Southern Sung China* (New York: Asia House Gallery, 1961), p. 11.
- ³⁴ James Cahill, *Chinese Paintings, XI-XIV Centuries*, p. 20.
- ³⁵ James Cahill, *The Art of Southern Sung China*, p. 8.

³⁶ James Cahill, *Chinese Paintings, XI-XIV Centuries*, p. 20.

³⁷ Arthur Danto, "The Shape of Artistic Pasts: East and West," in *Subversive Strategies in Contemporary Chinese Art*, p. 365.

³⁸ John Hay, "Surface and the Chinese Painter: The Discovery of Surface," *Archives of Asian Art*, Vol. 38 (1985), pp. 98-99, 112.

³⁹ See Joseph D. Parker, *Zen Buddhist Landscape Arts of Early Muromachi Japan (1356-1573)* (Albany: State University of New York, 1999), p. 189.

⁴⁰ Gao Jianping *et al.*, "Philosophical Reflections on Contemporary Ink and the Jizi Solo Exhibition Symposium" in *Jizi-When Spirituality Becomes Form* (Suzhou: Jinjihu Art Museum, 2015), p. 341.

⁴¹ *ibid.*, p. 342.

⁴² For example, Bertrand Russell concedes that there is a privacy of apparent space; but he asserts immediately that it is of no interest to the natural scientist. See Bertrand Russell, "The Nature of Matter," *Problems of Philosophy*. (Home University Library, 1912). Available at www.ditext.com/russell/russell.html.