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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CH'I PAI-SHIH'S ART

By

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ABSTRACT

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CH'I PAI-SHIH'S ART

BY

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This thesis is an investigation of the artistic accompolishments and the historical significance of Ch'i Pai-shih, an internationally renowned contemporary Chinese artist. As one of the artists who injected new life into traditional Chinese painting with a masterful display of calligraphic quality in painting, he broadened the range of traditional themes to include objects ordinarily seen in rural life. Most points of this study are borne out in the ayalysis of his individual works. Based on his own autobiography, an effort has been made to explain the basis of his style which played an influential role in the tradition between Chinese folk and literati art tradition. The affinity of his art to the spirit of his time is seen in the historical context of China's struggle to modernize in the nineteenth and twentieth century.

TO MY MOTHER

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I owe a special debt of gratitude to professor Sadayoshi Omoto and professor Linda Cooke Johnson for their intellectual inspiration, patient guidance, and incisive comments in revising this thesis.

I would also like to thank Joseph A. Magil who has read many drafts of this thesis, saved me from many errors.

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Introduction

Ch'i Pai-shih (齊白石 ,1863-1957) is one of the best-known and the most popular of twentieth century Chinese artists, and one who attained an international reputation. During the period of his life, the intense confrontation between Chinese tradition and foreign ideas brought rapid changes to China. Various movements--political, social, economic, cultural and ideological--struggled to find new ways amidst the turmoil and cataclysm. In this chaos and confusion, it is interesting that the relative conservative artistic achievements of Ch'i Pai-shih became so highly recognized in the artistic battlefield.

Ch'i Pai-shih lived through more than nine decades of social and political upheaval. Born in the waning years of the Ch'ing Dynasty (清朝 , 1644-1911), he witnessed the fall of the imperial house, the founding of the Republic, 1912, the war of Resistance Against Japan (抗日戰爭 , 1937-1945), civic wars, and the founding of the People's Republic of China, 1949. He gained acceptance in the 1920's at Peking 北京 and was regarded as belong to personalities of great distinction in China.

From a poor farmer's son and carpenter with no properly formal education, Ch'i Pai-shih had worked his way up to become an artist of world fame. Through a persistent effort, he mastered the true spirit of painting, calligraphy, poetry and seal carving, and gained very high

recognition. His success has artistic and historical significance.

This study is divided into three major sections. Chapter 1 outlines Ch'i Pai-shih's life and learning process.[1] His childhood in a peasant milieu and his career as a carpenter provided him the various sources of folk art tradition. In his adult life, he became acquainted with the literati art tradition because of his studies under several literati scholars. This late encounter with the traditional literati painting style contributed to his career as a creative artist, involving painting, calligraphy, seal carving, and poetry writing. After he settled at Peking permanently, Ch'i Pai-shih established his own style and soon he gained recognition and success, both in China and abroad, especially in Japan. In his last years, he was well accepted by the communist regime.

Chapter 2 deals with the significant elements of Ch'i Pai-shih's artistic style, based on his dual heritage of peasant folk art and literati culture, achieved through his energetic and economic brushwork and his enlivening gaity and sympathetic manner in depicting ordinary objects.

Ch'i Pai-shih's success can be understood only when the Chinese cultural, social and historical contexts are taken into consideration. Chapter 3 brings out the discussions of the status of Ch'i Pai-shih's art within the Chinese literati tradition. He succeeded by fusing his individualism and the folk spirit. The affinity of his art to the spirit of twentieth century China greatly contributed to his success, so in the last part of this thesis, the historical significance of Ch'i Pai-shih's accompolishment is shown in the context of Chinese society, politics, culture and arts between the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century.[2]

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1 Life of Ch'i Pai-shih

ROOTS IN FOLK TRADITION (1863-89)

Ch'i Pai-shih's own name is Ch'i Huang 齊璜, his literati names included Pai-shih 白石, Wei-ch'ing 渭清, Pai-shih lao-jen 白石老人, Pai-shih wong 白石翁, Mu-jen (木人,wood-carver) and many other names. In general, he was better known by the pseudonym Ch'i Pai-shih. He grew up in a poor peasant family of Hsiang-t'an 湘潭, Hunan 湖南 province. In 1863, the year of Ch'i Pai-shih's birth, the *Taiping* Rebellion, a peasant revolution, was in its thirteenth year, causing economic distress in Southeastern China's agriculture.[1] Peasant families as Ch'i Pai-shih's were living in poverty. Ch'i Pai-shih lived with his grandparents, parents, and his eight younger brothers and sisters. Their land possession was just one *mou* of paddy field, and the production from this tiny farm was not enough.[2] Thus both his grandfather and father had to do odd jobs to eke out an existence. As the eldest of the eight children, Ch'i had to help the family by doing some light duties. These experiences of the sights and the forms of simple life in China's countryside later came to life under his brush.[3]

As described later in Chi Pai-shih's autobiography, his grandfather was a straightforward man; whenever he saw injustice he would speak out in indignation.[4] He had experienced the ups and downs of the *Taiping* Heavenly Kingdom period, and during his old age had witnessed the way in

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which the Hsiang army (湘軍, Hunan Army) getting rich by plundering the *Taiping* Rebellion leaders' palaces. He saw how some members of the army became government officials, how they took advantage of their positions, and of how they usurped justice in their dealings with the common people. Hence he never had a good word to say about the officials. Such a straightforward personality and anti-bureaucratic attitude of his grandfather later became characteristic of Ch'i Pai-shih and had a great effect on his art.[5]

At the age of four, he was instructed by his grandfather who taught him to read some three hundred words written in the ashes by the fireplace using pine branches for a pen. When Ch'i was eight years old, his grandfather had eventually exhausted his vocabulary. After that, Ch'i attended the one-teacher-school run by his maternal grandfather in his native village, but as the family needed another hand in the fields, he was forced to drop out after less than a year. During this year in school, 1871, Ch'i was taught some basic materials for an elementary education of that time, such as the *Three Character Classic* 三字經, the *One Hundred Surnames* 百家姓, and the *Poems by a Thousand Authors* 千家詩. While he spent a lot of time tracing Chinese characters to learn calligraphy which was also a important part of the curriculum, but he got somewhat tired of the routine and started to draw. Ch'i started with tracing a wood-block print of the "Thunder God," probably done by some village painter. Shortly later he drew flowers, birds, animals, insects, water baffloes, frogs--all the things he used to observe. His thought was that "nobody ever saw a Thunder God, I liked to draw for my classmates things that I saw around me." This realistic attitude toward painting would last for his whole career.[6]

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During the years of 1871-73 Ch'i stayed at home helping out in the daily tasks of carrying water, cutting firewood, herding cattle, tending to household affairs, planting vegetables and generally taking care of his younger brothers. Meanwhile, he was so addicted to reading and drawing that apparently he was somewhat irresponsible about his tasks. Ch'i's health was poor so that even struggling hard, he was unable to control the plough and the buffalo when his father tried to teach him about farming. Realizing that he was not robust enough for strenuous work in the fields, his family finally allowed him to turn to carpentry when he was fifteen.[7]

Though accepted as an apprentice by a carpenter, the weight of large beams was too much for him and he was sent to another master small-wood craftsman whose speciality was cabinet making and ornamental carving. Here Ch'i learned to make fine, delicate objects and to carve decorative furniture. At nineteen Ch'i completed his apprenticeship and became an assistant working along with the master. He was now known as "Ch'i, the carpenter." In those days a wood-carver worked on the same traditional patterns and subjects, such as flower basket, unicorn, plum, and peach. Ch'i always thought that variety was essential in art so that he began adding other objects. For carving figures, he took the themes from novels and he also made use of birds, animals, plants, insects and fish, adding background scenery to balance the design. In this way he made up many new patterns and people praised the results. This encouraged him to improvise even more boldly.[8]

While selecting motifs for his design, he became acquainted with a colored woodblock copy of *Chieh-tze-yuan Hua-chuan* (芥子園畫傳, *Painting Manual of the Mustard Seed Garden,* first published at the 18th century), a popular manual of Chinese painting in China and Japan of that

time.[9]
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time.[9] He found this manual extremely practical and useful with its detailed illustrations and from that work he copied the pictures over and over again until he had mastered the manual's various techniques. Established here, Ch'i became an accomplished folk artist.

FROM FOLK ARTISAN TO LITERATI ARTIST (1889-1917)

Not until he was twenty-seven did Ch'i Pai-shih have the opportunity to study painting and classical literature with a knowledgeable teacher. After a self-taught period learning painting, Ch'i met some influential teachers through the intercession of his admiring patrons. One was Hsiao Hsiang-kai 蕭薌閣 who taught Ch'i to paint realistic portraits. At the same time Hu Ch'in-yuan 胡沁園, a cultivated man, art collector as well as an accomplished painter and poet, and Chen Shao-fan 陳少蕃 both taught Ch'i more advanced techniques of painting and art of poetry. Hu let him analyse and copy all the good paintings and calligraphy by ancient and contemporary artists in his collection and he also introduced Ch'i to another friend for learning landscape painting. Since then, the name of "Ch'i mu-jen (齊木人, Ch'i the Carpenter)" was associated with painting.[10]

By 1890, at the age of twenty-eight, he was already so successful at his painting and since there was great demand for traditional family ancestral portraits as well as pictures of legendary gods, he was able to give up carpentry and become a professional painter, making his living by drawing portraits. He was particularly noted for his skill in portraying the exact appearance of human figures and bringing out details of costume. His grandmother now said to him, "I used to say that you could not cook a meal with books, but now I can see that you can with your painting."[11]

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By age thirty, his painting business expanded as he became better known. He began to extend his paintings to landscapes, flowers, and birds, besides portraiture. He was quite successful. Thus far he had been painting in *kung-pi* (工筆, fine line drawing) style, with meticulous attention to the detail.[12] He worked in a variety of traditional styles, but much of the work executed before the age of forty are hardly seen now. By 1897, he was already well-known in the provincial capital of Changsha長沙.

When he was thirty-four, he began to take up calligraphy seriously and became interested in seal carving. In calligraphy, he started with learning the "court style" 館閣體; it was neat, careful, but lacking individual character. Then he followed the vogue of his area to imitate the Ho Shao-chi's (何紹基,1799-1873) style. Soon he switched to the archaic stone carving style 篆書, which dates back to the Wei Dynasty (魏朝, 386-549), considered as the prerequisite to seal carving. In seal carving, he was introduced to the style of two great Ch'ing artists, Ting Lung-hung 丁龍泓and Huang Hsiao-sung 黃小松 (both nineteenth century).[13]

During the years 1902-1920 his art went through a period of transition as a result of his extensive travels and encounters with scholars and artists. In those years he travelled to see the varied natural scenery of China, visiting famous mountains, rivers, lakes, and cities. And on his travels he sketched what he saw. These trips contribute greatly to the maturation of his own individual style of painting. Before Ch'i Pai-shih's fortieth year, he had never been far from home. In 1902, he agreed with the opinion of a friend that, "A painter needs to travel before he can understand the meaning of art. This is what the ancients called drawing inspirations from mountain and river," he accepted an invitation to Sian西安. There he became acquainted with the works of two painters

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dating from the seventeenth century: Shih Tao and Pa-ta Shan-jen, whose paintings had a tremendous influence on his later works. He also became acquainted with a great poet and scholar, Fan Tseng-hsiang 冯自祥 , who took him to Peking. Before long, perhaps because his works was not well received in conservative Peking, he left for home.[14]

1905, he was forty-three. He first saw Chao Chih-ch'ien's (趙之謙, 1829-84) "*Erh Chin Tieh T'ang Yin-p'u* " (二金蝶堂印譜,*Seal Carving of the House of Two Golden Butterflies*). From then on he engraved in the style of Chao. In paintings, he feet that the *Kung-pi* style in which he used to paint was lacking free expressive possibilities, so he consciously turned away from it in favour of the "great *hsieh-i* " style 大寫意.[15] In calligraphy he used to write in the style of Ho Shao-chi but after meeting Li Yun-an 李筠庵 in Peking, he learned to write in the style of Han Dynasty monuments, a style which he retained to his later days. In 1908, while traveling in Canton, he helped the revolutionary movement by acting as a courier. Several times a month he was instrumental in transmitting secret messages hidden between his paintings.[16]

In these nine years (1903-1911), Ch'i made five trips and travelled through half of China. In 1910, he went back to Hunan and he completed fifty-two paintings under the title of *Chieh-shan T'u-chuan* (借山圖卷, *Painting Album of the Borrowing Mountains*), based on the sketches he made during his travels. He had by now developed a style of seal carving which could be described as a fusion of those of Han Dynasty and of Chao Ch'ih-ch'ien. He was complimented on its austere characteristic of the ancients. In his spare time, he planted different kinds of fruit trees and he also kept fish and shrimp for life studies.[17]

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SUCCESS (1917-57)

From 1909-1917, during China's period of revolution and subsequent power struggle, Ch'i Pai-shih lived quietly at home in Hsiang-t'an painting his pictures and carving his seals. When threatened by local warfare and strife, he decided to leave and take his family to Peking. This move to Peking in 1917 proved to be a most important decision because his broadened contacts with scholars and artists inspired him to new activity in his art.[18]

At Peking, Chen Shih-tseng (陳師曾,1876-1923), a central figure in literary and artistic activities in the capital, discovered Ch'i Pai-shih through the latter's seal carving ability. From that time, Chen became an influential critic of Ch'i's painting. Chen was a most articulate theoretician of that time, he urged Ch'i to abandon his rather detailed and skillful manner in favor of the "idea-writing" approach of Chu Ta, Huang shen, and Wu Chang-shih and to strike out on his own style instead of trying to please the world. Following the advice, Ch'i attempted to assimilate influences from the early Ch'ing individualists and to incorporate these influences into his earlier background of folk art. Ch'i, consequently, departed from his meticulous rendering of floral subjects and began to paint in a broader fashion. This was the chief turning point of his artistic life. In the words of Li K'o-jen (李可染,1907-), his admirer, Ch'i Pai-shih " broadened his artistic vision and turned away from mere formal likeness. He graduated from folk art to the classical tradition.[19] "This new style delighted the literary scholar Lin Ch'in-nan (林琴南, 1852-1924), the earliest translator of western novels, observed that Ch'i

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Pai-shih was the northern counterpart to Wu Ch'ang-shih (吳昌碩, 1842-1927) in the south. It was a great compliment, for by that time Wu had already won a great reputation throughout the country.[20]

In 1922, Ch'en arranged to exhibit a group of Ch'i Pai-shih's paintings on an Sino-Japanese Art Exhibition tour in Japan 中日聯合書畫展 which resulted in successful sales. Furthermore, some of his paintings selected by French connoisseurs who attended the exhibition in Japan, to be exhibited in Paris in the same year. The success in Japan boosted Ch'i's confidence as well as his reputation, and began to change the taste of the Peking connoisseurs. However he attained fame only after showing in the Berlin Secession exhibition of 1930.[21]

In 1929, Hsu Pei-hung (徐悲鴻, 1895-1953), an instructor of the Peking's National Academy of Art, became acquainted with Ch'i and invited Ch'i to teach in the Academy. [22] In the 1930s, Chi Pai-shih's reputation in Peking was already quite high, and some of his best patrons proved to be Japanese diplomats and businessmen in Peking. While the Japanese occupied Peking (1937-1945) there were several enemy officials who longed for a picture by Ch'i, but he would not accept commissions from any of them. He was full of indignation towards the invaders that he painted many pictures to satirize them and to show his patriotism.[23]

During 1945-1949, because the continuing civil war and inflation, his hope for a better China after the Japanese surrender was shattered. He was well-received by the new regime after the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, because of his humble origin and early working class background fitted in well with the communistic ideology. Mao Tse-tung (毛澤東, 1893-1976), from Ch'i's own native Hsiang-t'an, especially recognized him very him. Since then Ch'i Pai-shih's name

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became associated with many national and international organizations. He also received honors and awards. In 1949, he was one of the sponsors of the Chinese Painting Society, designed to rally painters to preserve and develop the great tradition of Chinese painting, and in 1953 he became honorary professor at the Central Academy of Fine Arts; a member of the second national committee of the All-China Federation of Literary and Art Circles; a senior member in the Association for Culture Relations with foreign countries; and a delegate from Hunan to the first National People's Congress. In 1954, the honour of 'People's Artist' was bestowed on him by the Chinese government in recognition of his service to the 'people.' He became a corresponding member of the Academy of Arts and Sciences of Eastern Germany in 1955 and a member of the Asian Solidarity Committee of China in 1956. He received the 1955 International Peace Council in Stockholm. He remained an honoured artist in Peking until his death in 1957.[23]

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2 Artistic Significance

SUBJECT MATTER AND CONTENT

Flower and bird paintings form the dominant theme of Ch'i Pai-shih's works. He was, however, equally inventive and successful with his landscape and figure paintings and in his calligraphy and seal carvings in which he created a new and inimitable style synthesizing the elements of graphic arts and painting.

Among the three divisions of traditional Chinese painting subjects, landscape had occupied the forefront for a long period from the tenth to the early eighteenth century. It engaged the creative energies of most of the best artists of that time, conveying magnificent images of the country's scenery and expressing a profound and distinctive creative response to nature. For the Chinese, nature has long been an important spiritual resource, reflecting for them, in its own way, ideals of compassion and justice. By the nineteenth century, however, subjects of figures and flower and bird were more in demand than landscapes among the primarily merchant-class patrons and customers. And by the twentieth century, the Shanghai artists had injected new life into flower and bird paintings with the inclusion of calligraphic strokes, inspired by ancient scripts, in the execution of paintings. Both of these trends, the shift of art patronage to the merchant class and the development of a calligraphic

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vocabulary for paintings, led to the popularization of flower and bird themes.[1]

Ch'i Pai-shih was one of the masters who succeeded in injecting new life into traditional Chinese painting with his masterful display of calligraphic quality in painting, and he further broadened the range of flower and bird painting subjects to include objects ordinarily seen in rural life, objects such as vegetables, farm implements, domestic animals, insects, fish, shrimp and other commonplace subjects which often had been ignored by earlier painters and were firmly considered by the literati painters unfit for artistic treatment.[2] Ch'i Pai-shih, however, handled them in a aesthetically most satisfying manner. With this achievement, a trend of secularization in flower and bird painting themes was initiated.

Ch'i Pai-shih's paintings always have a fresh lyrical quality about them. Most of them show his deep love for the beauty of nature and the reminiscences of feelings of his childhood, while others reveal his reactions for certain social phenomenon. All were excuted in a childlike exuberant vision, with humor and sometimes pointed sarcasm.

Fond reminiscences of his childhood in the countryside remained one of the major themes in Ch'i Pai-shih's paintings, poetry and seal carving. The rustic life was such a source of joy in his early days that his interest in it persisted into his adult life as an accomplished artist. Once, in recollecting his childhood, he painted a rake for gathering firewood upon which he inscribed an inscription (plate 1):

> I want to recapture all my past experiences by painting every implement I used in my childhood.[3]

For this reason, he painted many scenes from his childhood with nostalgic inscriptions which often had a playful, perhaps even mischievous

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aspect. The rake not only reminded him of his childhood labor, but there was also fond memory attached to it as evidence in the inscription:

> It looks like a cucumber, not a dragon or a horse; it cost seven coins and it is used for raking dry leaves.....but it reminds me of the time when children got together and liked to play bamboo horses with the rakes.[4]

The same association of ideals appears in one of his paintings of bamboo upon which the following poem is inscribed:

> As a child I cut bamboo to play with,
> I remember still the curving path behind my house.
> Now old and heading into my sixtieth year
> It seems that only yesterday I was riding a bamboo horse.[5]

In his treatment of the bamboo, he describes neither the appearance of bamboo nor its character, but his own childhood. Conventionally, when writing inscriptions about bamboo, artists associated them with the "blowing wind," "a shimmering moon," "noble character," "incorruptiblility" or other natural and idealistic images. Hardly anyone would think of horses when painting bamboo because traditionally there is no connection between the two. But In this simple and evocative painting, Ch'i Pai-shih linked them in an unusual manner, taking viewers back to their own childhoods; and it is because his paintings, inspired by boyhood memories, always reveal such a reverence for life that they give a feeling of intimacy, even though one who views these paintings may not have had the same childhood experiences.

Small forms of rustic life also crowded into Ch'i Pai-shih's happy childhood memories: grasshoppers, dragonflies, shrimp, crabs, tadpoles, frogs, chicks, sparrows, and even mice. The living creatures that surrounded him as a child and which were his playthings all became the major themes of his paintings. He portrayed them so vividly that once such objects became part of his paintings, they seemed infused with new spirit

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and became intensely interesting. These paintings testify to his affection for the playful creatures whose vitality and beauty he was able to capture.

Among domestic animals, the water buffalo was one of Ch'i Pai-shih's favorites, underscoring yet another facet of his childhood. In his memory, the animal was closely associated with parental love because his grandmother used to tie a brass bell on him to ward off bad luck as well as to announce his return home so that she could start fixing dinner for him.[6] In *Cow-herding* (plate 2), he painted a small bell-laden boy impatient to get home, dragging a big buffalo behind him and unable to understand why it should dawdle so. The painting shows vividly the boy's anxiety to return home--a simple enough composition, but one that makes us aware of the depth of feeling with which the artist recalled his childhood.

Because he spent all of his early days among humble working folk, Ch'i Pai-shih's paintings usually reflect the outlook of the artist who sprang from a peasant and working class background. Cow-herding was just one of the tasks in his farming life. His childhood was filled with similar instances of hard work. Some of the titles of his paintings-- *Spring Work in My Garden*, *In Winter It is Warm by the Stove*, *In the Pastures*, *Picking Vegetables and Bamboo Shoots*, *Tending the Trees and Feeding the Fishes* --indicate the kind of activity with which he was involved in the countryside. For example, when the harvest was bad, he was sent to dig taros or wild vegetables, and then he cooked them at a cow-dung fire for meals. But he apparently worked without complaint. He never ceased to reiterate how well he remembered those days and how he appreciated the virtue of honest, hard work. In later years, as he drew taros, he thought about the circumstances of those hard-working days:

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For the poor, they are worth a silo full of grain.
Don't say they taste very plain, now you've seen the world.
You used to bake them on cow-dung fire, and they smelt so good.[7]

The taro cooked at a cow-dung fire referred to in the poem above, is faithfully suggestive of the tenor of his daily life as a child until he reached fourteen. And in the words "Don't say they taste very plain, now you have seen the world," one can see that Ch'i Pai-shih is reminding himself not to forget his own beginnings. For him, "What can conquer hunger now is worth more than half a year's worth of stored food."[8] For that reason, he never allowed himself to forget how good the taros tasted.

Ch'i Pai-shih's affection for vegetables and the esteem in which he held to hard working people are revealed also in an inscription written in the painting of *Planting Vegetables* :

With our own hands we feed ourselves till old;
I having filled the soil, my wife puts in the sprouts.
If I have no meat, I am not a bit worried,
So long as my yards are green with vegetables.[9]

With these words, Ch'i Pai-shih endowed the vegetables with as great a dignity as with which he credited people who feed themselves with their own hands. For him, every creature has its own reason for existing. It was with this attitude that he also painted pumpkins,tulips, mushrooms, yams and bamboo shoots. He always took great pride in his own "smelling of vegetables," in other words, in his rustic simplicity. Nearly every study on him points to Ch'i Pai-shih's closeness to the countryside and to the soil as one of his endearing charms. Through his works of art breathe the joy of living and a loving sympathy for the little insects and vegetables which formed a part of Ch'i Pai-shih's repertoire.

With similar joy and affection, he painted plump cabbage with tender white and light green leaves and dazzling red capsicum, creating a striking

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yet charming contrast in the painting *Cabbage and Capsicums* (plate 3). To this he add the inscription:

> The peony is the queen of flowers;
> The lychee is the prima donna of fruits,
> Why is the white cabbage not called the princess of vegetables?[10]

He regarded cabbages as the best vegetable, a rival to peony--the queen of flowers, and lychee--the king of fruits. Once again, in Ch'i Pai-shih's art, the humble things gain their dignities. For him "Grasses and Plants are not Necessarily without Feeling."[11] Even the mountains shown in plate 4, which he painted in 1938, have great emotional quality in them.

Ch'i Pai-shih granted the same worth to people with humble origins in his painting *Maid-servant of the Cheng Family* 鄭家婢 (plate 5), where he inscribed:

> Beyond the curved balustrade, laughter can be hear
> And a gentle breeze wafts forth a delicate perfume;
> I was fond of her and especially remember this:
> She said,"I am Cheng Kang-cheng, the great scholar."[12]

In this painting, a somewhat plain-looking maidservant is seated at a desk with an open book and some writing tools, and was joking at herself as the great scholar Cheng Kang-cheng (鄭康成, A.D.127-200) who annotated several classic books. It would appear in this painting that Ch'i Pai-shih is making a statement regarding his own success which was irrelevant to his social origin and lack of formal schooling. He even took such pride in his peasant beginnings that he often used every means available to proclaim his origins, such as seals inscribed with, " Pai-shih, the Carpenter" or "Old Peasant of Hunan;" he went even further with the seals engraved," A Man of the People," and "I Shall Hand on My Farm Tools to My Descendants."

The range of Ch'i Pai-shih's works is inseparable from his

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understanding of people. The painting *Reading Late at Night* (plate 6), for example, presents a child dozing off at his desk, and inscribed with "Nobody cares for literature anymore, how can books retain any appeal? I really do not blame my son for being a sleepyhead," has a universal appeal.[13] On another painting with a similar theme, *Taking the son to school* (plate 7), which shows an old man and a crying child, he wrote:

> Everywhere there are children;
> Every morning they want to play.
> Why should the old man here
> Alone take you to school?
> There is nothing wrong with learning,
> And you will come back to mother soon.
> Take care lest the stream of tears
> Drip through your bright red coat.[14]

Ch'i Pai-shih's figure paintings, often pregnant with humor and sarcasm, owe little to traditional models. But whether it is a flower and bird painting or one of his figures, it always radiates with the utmost simplicity and freshness. Sometimes he went beyond mere opposition to the conservative, traditional point-of-view and became pointedly satirical. In 1931 he painted a picture of a topsy-turvy doll, one that always right itself. The doll was dressed as a bureaucrat. He added the following inscription (plate 8):

> A plaything for children, it is a clever device
> Falling, it leaps up again without any help.
> It wears a dark cap on a level with the brow;
> Though it has no heart, no guts, it has rank.[15]

Ch'i Pai-shih made the figure into a clown, a character seen frequently on the Peking opera stage, therefore something very familiar to everyone. He painted many images like this, sufficiently varied in design and verse to be distinguishable from one another, and always satirically focused on the petty bureaucrat who, in Ch'i Pai-shih's opinion, possessed neither virtue

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nor wisdom, kindness nor courage, but threw his weight around as if he did. Ch'i Pai-shih, needless to say, must have hated bureaucrats. He recalled with pride that as a child he alone refused to join his neighbors in rushing to watch the arrival in the village of a petty goverment official. His mother approved his action, explaining that she did not believe that any really good official would come to their poor village. In any case, the villagers earned their substance by their own hard work and placed themselves in debt to no government.[16] His mother's disposition to shun high society and government continued to influence him into adulthood. He always regarded himself as having been sprung from "The White Cottage of the Star Pond that does not Produce Ranking Officials," as he carved on one of his favorite seals.

In Ch'i Pai-shih's days, official positions could be bought, and many of these officials then became bureaucrats. Ch'i Pai-shih, with the confidence born of living by his own exertion, was always straight forward in telling of the feelings of common people toward bureaucrats. Moreover, in concern about the affliction of the people by bureaucrats, he described his ideal type of public servant in his painting of *A Druken Wine Thief* (plate 9):

> The prime-minister has retired to his native village penniless,
> but he would rather be a thief than a corrupt official.[17]

The image of the topsy-turvy toy was one he employed later also to express his feelings toward the Japanese invaders. He used the dolls to satirize the puppet officials of the Japanese who lived in Peking during the occupation. As Ch'i Pai-shih neared age eighty, the Japanese occupied Peking, and some of the Japanese officials asked him to paint for them. He posted a notice on his door saying that his paintings were not for sale to

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officials who were not even to be admitted to his house.[18] He was a staunch patriot, and throughout his hard life, his morality always matched his integrity as an artist. A poem inscribed on a landscape painting by his close friend Hu Leng-an 胡冷庵 describes this patriotism:

> Facing this album of yours I think of early days,
> The nation's ramparts shattered, our country in deep sorrow.
> Under the lamp I look at it again and again, wiping my tear.
> China no longer has such beautiful lands, unspoiled and inviolate.[19]

More directly Ch'i Pai-shih expressed his anger and his desire for the speedy end of Japanese domination in his painting of *Rats* :

> Groups of Rats,
> Why so many?
> Why so noisy?
> You ate my fruit.
> And you ate my grain
> The candles have burn short, and dawn is about to break,
> The night watch man has struck his last report in the depth of winter.[20]

Here the rats can be taken to refer to Japanese occupation forces.

In his lifetime of close to one hundred years, Ch'i Pai-shih lived through the most disturbed century in the history of China. But the wonderful thing about him was that he retained his genius and childlike heart untill the very end, and this youthful spirit still pervades his art.

As Ch'i Pai-shih grew old, his enthusiasm for life increased. Many of the works that he executed late in his career revealed this felicity. He liked to portray flowers in full bloom or paint autumnal fruit, merry magpies, squirrels eating cherries, chickens fighting for fish, and tadpoles chasing the reflections and shadows of lotus flowers--subjects brimming with life, radiant with joy and optimism.[21]

The faded lotus of autumn is one of the themes Ch'i Pai-shih used to represent his personal feelings for life (plate 10). The beauty of autumn

has long been revered by artists and poets, but while most of them admire the melancholy and the brilliance of the season, Ch'i Pai-shih revelled in its warmth and richness. Under his brush, the last of the year's lotuses remain full of life, their seed capsules, symbolizing abundance and fertility in Chinese folk values, hanging heavy though their petals have fallen and their leaves are yellowing. They signify maturity and the promise of even more luxuriant growth in the following year rather than the decay seen by many other poets and artists. The total effect is at once spontaneous and vigorous, giving testimony to the painter's love of life and nature.[22]

In the same way, after his seventieth year, he favored the painting of amaranth (plate 11). The amaranth is known in Chinese as "red when old" or "red when geese return." To Ch'i Pai-shih the plant speaks of the success and popularity he obtained in his later years and the strength he gained as he grew older. To expound further on this theme, he wrote several poems, for example:

> To be good at changing, one need not rely on Heaven's work
> When the whole garden is green, it looks just like any other.
> Only by autumn does it begin to show the colors,
> Then the amaranth distinguishes itself from the rest of the crowd.[23]

Ch'i Pai-shih's enthusiasm for life is not only alluded to symbolically in the arrangements of his flower and bird paintings, but it is also directly indicated in his figure paintings. He painted "*The Older the Stronger*" (plate 12) showing himself as a vigorous old man. In this painting, he is telling us that he is healthy, enjoying himself, and not above reminding us that his continued presence is because he has been toughened by age. Along this line, he once carved an impressive seal that reads "Healthy in Old Age, I do not Wish to be an Immortal." He was so deeply

attached to the temporal life that he even dared to "fool the heavens" in striving for a longer life.[24]

Ch'i Pai-shih believed in the words of a fortune-teller who had predicted for him that he was to meet with grave misfortune in 1937 at the age of seventy-five. At that advanced age, he felt, the misfortune could easily spell death for him. Therefore, in order to escape this fate, he adopted the traditional procedure known as *man t'ien kuo hai* , ,"Fooling the Heaven to cross the sea." This ruse would carry him past the dangerous age of seventy-five so that he would miss his appointment with the heavenly messengers of death who were to come to collect him. This is why Ch'i Pai-shih began in 1937 to refer to his age as seventy- seven.[25]

Ch'i Pai-shih so treasured life that he was also fond of painting conventional themes such as "long life" which is traditionally symbolized by the pine tree and the crane, "sons in multitude" by the pomegranate, and "wealth and prosperity," by the peony and the cock. These motifs were popular with the general populace.

While Ch'i Pai-shih referred to himself in one of his seals as "One of the Common Folk," his works of art may give pleasure on several levels. His painting subjects are so close to everyday experience that even people unconcerned with these matters and having only slight acquaintance with Chinese art find them quite accessible simply as lively and delightful pictures of sometimes mundane subjects. On the other hand the connoisseurs of Chinese art may savor the subtleties of the artist's poems inscribed on his works or the strengh of the brush and knife work as well as the originality of design.

Ch'i Pai-shih was an artist of the people and an artist's artist.

Form

Ch'i Pai-shih achieved his style by a great economy of brushwork, an unconventional composition and by a boldness of color juxtaposition. He usually pares the themes of his paintings to the barest essentials while miraculously preserving their spirit; his form of expression has the force of a proverb.

Ch'i Pai-shih is most well known for his great simplicity of style. He has well conceived the essentials of objects and he could paint in a very realistic manner (plate 13 &14), which is no doubt derived from his early training as a fine wood carver, portraiture and fine-detailed paintings. With this, he gained the skills to grasp the essentials of the objects. It was in his sixties, that the integration of technique and inspiration enabled him to attain maturity as a painter and thus, searching for a freer expression, he headed toward the "great *hsieh-i* 大寫意 " style, with clean brush work, purity of line, a wide range of subjects and many different moods of expression. Some of his compositions became very florid, and he made bold use of strong colors, combining these with Chinese ink. Since then, he set little store by attention to mere detail, but laid great stress on beauty of line, and required that this should be true to nature and life.[26]

Ch'i Pai-shih's search for formal beauty is closely linked with the characteristics of the subjects. All his efforts were bound up with his determination to bring out the salient features of his subject, so there is always something outstanding in the form of his paintings, whether of landscapes, human figures, flowers or insects. As a nature painter, with rich experience behind him, he succeeded in bringing these distinctive characteristics into line with his artistic requirements.[27]

One of the important stylistic characteristics of Ch'i Pai-shih's art is his outstanding composition achieved through the emphatic use of contrast in his paintings and seal carvings.

Ch'i Pai-shih adapted various kinds of pictorial compositions. He was most likely to use straight-forward contrast of mass and void to emphasize the significance of the subject matter. In some of his paintings, he drew only one single object and nothing more. As seen in the painting of *A Crane* (plate 15), on a plain background, the fowl is painted to occupy three-fifth of the height of the painting. The crane motif was found often in traditional Chinese paintings. This is not only because the crane is a symbol of longevity but also because of its elegant shape. In this case, however, Ch'i Pai-shih was obviously not inspired by the elegance but by the absurd physiognomy of the creature. The crane appears to be standing in an immense space of unlimited width and depth. Its stately posture seems to look down upon everything around him. It can be interpreted as a solitary soul, all by itself, surrounded by emptiness. It could also be an image of Ch'i Pai-shih himself. Here the main composition is held together by rich black lines; rhythm is provided by varying thickness of the ink, and accented by a touch of red and blue on the bird's head.[28] Though the subject has been reduced to its simplest configuration, nothing seems to be amiss or lacking. The surprise value is shown in the attitude of the crane's head, which is traditionally shown in profile, but here looks directly at the viewer.

Another example of his distinguished compositional design is the painting of *Cherries in a Bowl* (plate 16). The stems of the cherries are painted in black curving lines; the way they are curved in various directions gives the painting an energetic feature. Each vermilion cherry

takes part in this painting like a musical note; it even creates an noisy effect. This is seen in the cherry in the center part of the foreground, with its black stem, connecting the inner and outer parts of the bowl, and the three cherries on the left ground with their red parts heading away from the bowl, makes it appear as though the naughty fruit are just on their way to escape from the container. The whole setting gives a great sense of humor to the subject. On the other hand, most of the cherries were concentrated in the right side of the bowl forming a strong and coherent unit, so the few cherries scattered on the lower ground carry extra force in the composition due to their contrast with the heavy and bulky mass above. Contrasting effect used in this way not only increases the interest of the subject matter, but also accelerates the rhythm of the composition.

Besides emphasizing the effect of contrast, he also tried to add life to his painting by manipulating the rhythm and direction of movement of the lines and dots. Like the artist himself, the rhythm expressed in most of his works is cheerful and fast moving. This approach is evident in his paintings of lotus (plate10) and shrimp (plate17). The lotus in their final stage of flowering is delineated in a full, almost chaotic composition with a powerful visual impact. The shrimp are completely devoid of outline and virtually every detail that is not absolutely essential has been eliminated. Although the shrimp is represented in a naturalistic way, exploring a wide range of transparent ink tones, the play of entwined lines in contrast with the wet ink spots could be viewed as an abstract composition. By this masterly display of lines and dots, a delightful surface patterning is created from a wispy network of the stems of lotus and the pincers with antennae of shrimp which infuse great vitality into the paintings.[29]

In a much simpler and bolder manner, Ch'i Pai-shih also mastered

using lines to link different elements of a painting in order to unite the whole composition. *The Yellow Gourd* (plate 18), which has symmetrical proportions in terms of format, exemplifies this. The composition which could be read uncomplicated; the pictorial surface is provided by the ceaseless movement. It starts from the gourd to the leaves to the twisting vine and the vibrant progressing calligraphy. The surface of the painting is dynamically established by the tension between the luminous lemon yellow color, that appears to push forward and the moist and heavy black leaves, which have a tendency to recede and are holding the yellow gourd in place. In this tension, the lines of vine are introducing the mass of yellow and black leaves to each other. Together with the calligraphy, they both give the still life an effect of movement.[30]

In the meantime, this painting also shows how the inscription and seal are used by Ch'i Pai-shih to improve his composition. At first, the inscription and seal help to relieve the monotony of the composition and add extra interest to it. Further, the large seal on the lower right corner has a stabilizing effect to the whole composition. It is because at times the objects he painted may give depth and perspective suggesting its three dimensional form. Thus, they may appear to be below the surface, and suggest depth. While the solid, opaque, and brilliant vermilion rectangle of the seal pinpoint and stabilize the pictorial surface and reconfirms the birthright of painting as a two-dimensional art.[31]

Each component part of the painting, including the calligraphy, the painting and the seal, is an inseparable and vital element in the whole composition. But seals have often been overlooked, and connoisseurs did well to examine closely not only the seals on a painting but also the finer details of technique and style that were employed by the artist.[32]

Seal carving is an art integrated with calligraphy and graphic design. Judging by existing materials, the seals of the collectors began to be used on calligraphy and painting in the seventh century early in the Tang Dynasty (618-907). By the middle of the thirteenth century it was customary for the artist to affix a seal and inscription to his own painting. Since the sixteenth century, when most calligraphers and painters could cut seals, the painting, calligraphy and seal were often all done by the same artist. Thus the synthesis of this art enriched the content of painting and helped to give fuller expression to the artist's thought and feelings. Though the scope provided by seals is very small, the most effective seals should combine calligraphy of a high order with brilliant arrangement of characters and blade work. They should have both flesh and bone, integrating writing and carving to make a perfect work of art.[33]

In this realm of this Chinese graphic art, Ch'i Pai-shih succeeded brilliantly in creating the beauty of simplicity, health and vigor typical of his compositions. The creation of this beauty was achieved by a masterly integration of techniques and aesthetics. He once said, "My poems come first, my seals second, my calligraphy third, my painting fourth."[34] This shows how highly he rated his seal carving, and what an important position the seal carving occupied in Ch'i Pai-shih's art. His genius and originality are manifested in his seal carving no less than in his painting. Every single example of his handiwork is a superb work of art, an inspiring poem, an unforgettable symphony.

Take as an instance one of the name seals that Ch'i Pai-shih used most often on his painting, "Pai-shih" 白石 (plate19). In the limited square, he made the two simple characters occupy the opposite corners, leaving a great empty field; each character and each stroke of the chisel has great

harmony with others. After careful examination, one can find the upper part of the character "Pai 白 " is elongated and the vertical line above it is added to improve the whole composition in helping balance; the oblique line on the center links the whole divided spaces. With his skillful arrangement of solids and voids, Ch'i Pai-shih presented in his seal a dynamic tension, and it could be said that this tension is invigorated by the individual lines on the seals.

In the composition of Ch'i Pai-shih's paintings and seal carvings, individual lines constitute the primary sources of rhythmic vitality and in some works the linear rhythm seems inspired by their contest. So the life-endowing performance of brush and knife becomes the second important character of Ch'i Pai-shih's artistic appeal.

In seal carving, the technique of engraving corresponds in some respects to brushwork in painting, which is that it must serve calligraphy and arrangement, more importantiy, it must serve the artist's ideas and mood. Ch'i Pai-shih's distinctive and energetic use of the chisel showed clearly the strength of his wrist and the vigor of his spirit. He did not seek superficial decorative refinement nor fine symmetrical balance but rusticity and carefree impetus. This is the remarkable characteristic of his seal carving. The seal of *Study is Necessary as Long as I am Still Breathing* (plate 20) could be taken as an example. By his outstanding technique, he created a forceful style of his own, one perhaps influenced by the skills which he had originally learned as a carpenter carving in wood.[35]

He used his carving knife in the same way as his brush, an instrument for creating forms as well as expressing the artist's own feeling. His carved strokes are fluent and decisive, conveying the strength of his

character, emphasizing stability in his control and the rhythm of the movements. His knife goes in only two directions, latitudinal and longitudinal--unlike most of other seal carvers who allow their knives to go in all directions, back and forth.[36] He does not make tracings on the stone in the process. He followed to the direction and rhythm of the characters. He felt the way most people treat their stones can only be called scraping and scratching, as he always said:

> " Things should be done promptly and to one's own complete satisfaction--the more so in the case of seal carving, which, being something to be enjoyed, should be pursued without any feeling of encumbrance. Otherwise it cannot be down well."[37]

Because of this concept of making art just for the artist's own satisfaction, he did not seek superficial decorative refinement nor fine, symmetrical balance but rusticity and carefree impetus. This is the remarkable characteristic of his seal carving. Emphasizing the spontaneous expression of using knife and brush, Ch'i Pai-shih's competence in handling the brush was both concise and exquisite too.

Proper brushwork has traditionally been seen as one of the crucial elements of Chinese painting. Ch'i Pai-shih shared the same belief. He devoted himself to perfecting his brushwork in calligraphy, then fused the technique of calligraphy into the brushstrokes of his painting. On the *Wine of Longevity* (plate 21), the shape and lines of the writing are entirely compatible with those used in the upper part of the wine jar, both using strokes taken from *Ta Chuan* (大篆 , Archaic Character).[38] This illustrates well the close relationship between brushwork and calligraphy in his works.

Chinese brush, which is preeminently a line instrument, is the implement of both writing and painting. The simliarity in character and

tools between Chinese painting and calligraphy gives them an integral resemblance, and the expressive possibilities of brush in creating lines usually were explored in calligraphy, and then were infused into the brushworks of painting. Mostly, a good Chinese painting gains part of its charm through the rhythmic alternation of brushworks; it is so as seen in Ch'i Pai-shih's painting.

Ch'i Pai-shih's brushwork succeeded in creating a satisfying visual experience with its proper rhythm. On one of his paintings of *hsieh-i* floral (plate 22), the twisted vines are painted by two angular and versatile brushstrokes suggesting abstract force rather than direct visual effects. It shows Ch'i Pai-shih's ability in executing various possibile brushstrokes, by which he created a three dimensional form. The brushstrokes in this painting are both confident and sinewy and each exhibits the force on the move. The rhythmic movement inlaid in a single brushstroke provided the viewer with another dimension of visual experience which goes beyond form.

Ch'i Pai-shih used his brush with the greatest discretion and stability, in considering that "every little detail affects the whole" and "Each stroke co-ordinates and complements the others."[39] Every stroke he made had its power and effect, contributing to the depth and shades of the complete picture. By his dexterity with the brush, he vividly expressed the feeling of skin, flesh and bone in pictorial idiom. A study of some of his work will illustrate this. In a painting of *Loquats* (plate 23), the fruit was executed with round and steady brushstrokes, giving them a fleshy appearance, while leaves were first painted in a slanting wet brush to give the skinny, thin, fragile feeling. Then onto each leaf were added strokes representing veins in darker ink, stretching and giving strength to the thin shapes. The

other parts such as the stems and pedicles which make up the scaffolding or bone of the painting were excuted with a firm vertical brush, keeping the point of the brush always along the central core of the line. Thus these lines look columnar and possess a restrained force sufficient to bear the whole weight of the composition.[40]

Ch'i Pai-shih's way of using the brush when painting the shrimp (plate 17) fully reveals his concept of pictorial reconstruction. The head of the shrimp was skilfully drawn with a few decisive touches of the brush. The brush was first applied swiftly onto the paper moving in the direction of the point of the brush forming the rostrum (the pointed part of the head). Then the brush was pressed down slantingly, increasing the pressure as it moved along, forming the upper carapace (covering shell of the head) which was then completed with two additional light ink strokes in the rear and two others at the front. Each segment of the body was executed with the point of the brush moving in the direction of its curvature. Each stroke overlaps the adjacent ones, giving a continuous springy structure ending at the tail which is composed of three strokes arranged in a balancing position. Then with the brush heavily loaded with dark ink, a stroke was applied with restrained force on the top of the half-wet carapace to represent the digestive system, while two short jerky strokes were applied on the two sides of the head as two protruding eyes. These three dark ink strokes are of vital importance, for they evoke life and alertness in these creatures. The heavy ink tone also has a contrasting effect making the other parts in light spreading ink look semi-transparent and lively in water. As to the legs, pincers and antennae, Ch'i depicted them with brushstrokes of a different nature to promote action and agility. He executed these light, fluent and well-controlled lines with his nimble

touches. These linear elements were also used to decide the direction of movement of the whole painting and to bring the shrimp together to form an integrated whole. The well-controlled brushwork combined with the subtle charm achieved by the manipulation of ink and water on paper has animated each of the shrimp thus created by the artist.[41]

From the investigations above, it could be conceived that what demonstrates Ch'i Pai-shih's outstanding mastery of brushwork are his successfully employed water marks left between strokes as constructive elements in pictorial presentation, he skillfully varied the ink tones to promote pictorial movement and he boldly emphasized the magnitude of ink strokes to give impact to the picture plane. Under his brush, ink and color seem to have been impregnated with animating power ready to give life to any pictorial form that comes under his touch.

Ch'i Pai-shih wielded his color brush in the same way as he did the ink brush, emphasizing rhythm, and "bone structure". While his ink brushwork, which is reminiscent of the archaic script of Northern Wei (386-535), has successfully brought back in his paintings the classical spirit of the ancients, his color has a stark modern feeling, breathing with brilliant freshness.[42]

For Ch'i Pai-shih, color is a positive element in both formal composition and expression of ideas and it is an integral part of his painting. Although his choice and application of color are not entirely unrestricted by tradition, his work has clearly demonstrated that in Chinese painting, color can play as important a role as ink.

Over the centuries, most of the Chinese literati artists held an active prejudice against the use of any significant degree of color in painting. However, Ch'i Pai-shih sensed color as the crucial element in the appeal of

a flower, and he further brightened his palette with luminous colors to simplify the modelling of objects. The unique way he applied colors made his paintings look greatly different from those of the traditional masters.[43]

Looking at Ch'i Pai-shih's paintings one tends to be attracted by the lustre of his ink and color. Together with his ink brush, he had his own way of applying color in his paintings. He gave new life to color by using strong contrast, as in painting flowers, fruits, and vegetables, he used robust reds and yellows against leaves of different tones of black ink wash. In contrast to the graduated tones of ink used for the leaves, the fruit is painted in the boneless manner as bright and undetailled globes of yellow and red. The painting of *Gourd and Ladybird* (plate 24), an album leaf painted at about the age of 80, is an example. The composition is again very simple. Just by a few broad strokes he brings out a fresh and succulent fruit with a tiny ladybird perched on it. The bright yellow of the gourd and the intense red of the ladybird create a pleasing contrast never attempted by traditional artists. Although only a few colors were used here, the color scheme of his paintings is very simple and effective.

The conscious use of the contrast between colors and black ink in Ch'i Pai-shih's composition is another characteristic of his style. By his way of using color, the prominence of his subject is properly emphasized. His color scheme boldly liberated the natural strength of colors in his works, breaking away from the tradition of literati painting in which colors were usually reduced to mere faint tints.[44]

He also symbolized his colors with the traditional values to reveal his sentiments of social symphathy. A painting of cabbage exhibits elegant brushwork and masterful control of the tonality of ink. It is inscribed:

Next to me stands the red-lacquered door, behind it, fine viand.
How can the hungry, the starving, reach it?
Who has caused our good old law-abiding citizens
To show a ghastly green like this on their faces?[45]

In the Chinese traditional value, red usually stands for nobility or wealth, while the "vegetable color", pale, bloodless green, is a common vernacular phrase in Chinese referring to the hungry person's face. Ch'i Pai-shih took the two contrasting symbols to reflect his infinite compassion for the suffering people.[46]

A different kind of social comment lies in another poem which Ch'i Pai-shih inscribed on his painting of peony plants in monochrome ink:

Bushels of yellow sands on my clothes,
Thousands of worn-out brushes in my grove.
Till death nobody has heard of me,
Only because I refused to by rouge.[47]

Another similar poem on a fan-leaf of red crysanthemums says:

Yellow is the true color of chrysanthemums, and yet it is not considered artful,
For it is not agreeable with the faddish people's eyes.
Thus even plants know how to get along with the world,
They sacrificed themselves and learned to be red as the peony.[48]

The poems, written when he first arrived in Peking feeling like an intruder unappreciated and unwanted, express Ch'i Pai-shih's defiance of an indifferent, even hostile, society which expected conformity to its vulgar taste. At that time the tendency was to paint flowers in bright but rather conventional colors, in vulgar imitation of the real flowers in garden.

Contrary to the conventional concept of coloring, Ch'i Pai-shih made the combination of color and ink to give a simple visual effect, and he applied color unrealistically to symbolize the subjects, that those paintings became half realistic and half abstract. Ch'i Pai-shih is an artist who admired nature but he did not intend to imitate nature by matching its

color exactly; he liked only to recreate what is appealing in nature through his choice of color and form. Thus, he always painted objects in their natural colors but in a much simplified manner. This means that the complex variegation of nature was summarised in simplest and most straight forward hues. So that his color scheme goes hand in hand with his pictorical concept. The result most persuasively argued for his aesthetic principle.[49]

ARTISTIC THOUGHTS

Ch'i Pai-shih's artistic thoughts are as simple and as concise as his works. First of all, he despited slavish imitation.

Chinese artistic tradition accepts the accomplishments of a copier artist because of the copy, even without acknowledgement, and as such it verges on plagiarism. He could have attained his own artistic height in the same way as the performance of the earlier artist. Learning from copying prior artists' works is a traditional way of learning Chinese painting, because the mastery of the technique and the art of the brush requires imitative experience for a sustained period of time. Each masterpiece demonstrates the skill a master artist has been able to attain. Being a self-educated artist, Ch'i Pai-shih started his learning process by copying. Ch'i Pai-shih absorbed the skills of earlier models, but consciously abandoned them to develop his own style, which enabled him in seizing the ability to create freely and spontaneously. As he inscribed on a colophon of his album of seal prints:

> "When I was young, I devoted myself to the study of seal carving of the ancient masters. Later, I began to search for the true spirit of carving. Now I no longer wasting my time on imitation, refinement and craftsmanship.

"In my seal carving, I made a careful study of the calligraphy of the ancients, then looked for the inner logic of seal carving characters. I did not spoil my work by imitation, artificial elabration or over-polishing, considering these a waste of energy. When man praised my seals, I smiled; when they ran them down, I smiled."[50]

The above quotations truly reflect the spirit and essence of Ch'i Pai-shih's spirit of explicitly denouncing copying and upholding originality and innovation. He first studied the way in which the ancient calligraphers wrote, then why they had written in such a way, and the significance of this. In this way he avoided learning simply from the forms handed down by the old masters, but deliberately studied and mastered all the laws of calligraphy so that he could bring endless variety to his own methods of expression. He disliked slavish imitation, whereas, the critics of that time always slighted him by saying that he was not cultured in the art tradition of China.[51] However, filled with confidence, he lashed back by the words:

I use my own approaches
To paint my own landscapes.[52]

When Ch'i Pai-shih did landscapes, he devoted much thought to the composition and the idea he meant to convey so that it did not fall into the trap of the old masters. He did not want to duplicate the works of others and disliked following the strict rules of certain schools of painting. He said:

People in the past vainly talked about the Six Canons 六法 (by Hsieh Ho 謝赫, A.D. 479-501) when they tried painting. In fact they missed either the form or the spirit of the object. I loathe to be that way.[53]

And in a painting (Plate 25) dedicated to Lao She (老舍, 1897-1967), a famous contemporary writer, he proudly announced:

" I am ashamed to hear people talk about Ching Hao 荊浩 (f. 920) and Kuan Tung (關仝, c. 920), and should blush to boast of belonging to a certain school."[54]

The Six Canons are the six prerequistes of excellence in Chinese painting, prescribed by Hsieh Ho in *Ku Hua Pin Lu* 古畫品錄 including rhythmic vitality, significant brushwork, likeness according to nature, appropriate in tones of coloring, creative composition and creative modeling. The "Six Canons of Painting" has been accepted through the ages as the first law of Chinese art. The typical Chinese landscape painting under these laws of Hsieh Ho was born through the influence of Ching Hao and Kuan Tung's works. Their styles were set as the criteria of landscape paintings in persuing the achievements of Six Canons. As a result, later Chinese painters normally liked to look up to them as models. But Ch'i Pai-shih protested against slavish imitation while painting landscapes. He said:

> To paint pavilions beyond hills and peaks behind the clouds, only hack painters makes them all alike throughout the ages."I scorned to make painstaking copies of the works of the old masters. That is what I said, "Scenes conceived in my heart outshine real mountains and rivers . I have no use for hand that can only imitate.[55]

This does not show that Ch'i Pai-shih was disrespectful of tradition, but it simply states that he was opposed to the blind copying of prior models and the endless repetition of classic themes. He has painted many landscapes quite different from those of the earlier masters, and strikingly fresh in nature. Against the eclectic manner, he puts forward the living present. Ch'i Pai-shih's originality can be seen in his landscape painting, *Cave of the Immortals* 仙人洞 (plate 26). In this painting he gives a well-defined form of a mountain cave and the distant view of a creek made to look real by skillful use of aerial perspective, to echo his personal experience of seeing such attractive mountains. The painting alludes to the existence of a secluded, utopia-like idyllic setting which evokes his intellectual experience of reading the fourth century poem and story about a *Peach Blossom Spring* 桃花源,[56] a folk tale which is a household

subject in China. Although the themes are derived from conventional sources, he insisted on painting the "real mountain and real river" that he had already seen. In the painting Ch'i dedicated to Lao She, he continued writing as follows:

> Within me there are things that top the whole world ---
> I am used to seeing the mountains and rivers in Kwelin.[57]

The mountains and rivers on Ch'i Pai-shih's mind and which appeared through his hand were located in the real world that he had experienced, instead of existing on the painting scrolls of prior painters. What he saw in Kwelin, mainly during his first trip in 1906, incited his landscape paintings as well as confirming his belief in another principle approach to art, "observing nature."[58]

Ch'i Pai-shih liked to experience nature himself and study the real wonder of it. His inspirations did not rely too much on indirect sources. He approached nature in person to find how he felt towards it. He once remarked that, 'I have drawn hundreds of birds but I would not dare to draw even the smallest insect, unless I had seen it." [59] This statement confirms the fact that his art starts out from a sound knowledge of reality.

Ch'i Pai-shih's subjects of paintings, no matter whether it is great mountains or small insects, all reflect the special characteristics of nature to a remarkable degree. He had absolute artistic integrity and stressed the necessity for accurate observation of real life. In his native village, he tended the trees and flowers in his garden himself, and studied them daily so that he could depict them truthfully. He carefully analyzed and studied the different features of common living creatures and plants of the countryside until he understood their spirit and movements. He kept birds and insects for the same purpose. Further, in order to increase his

personal knowledge and understanding of nature, he left home and travelled through half of China. On the way he did not miss any opportunity of painting the natural scenery. These examples show how Ch'i Pai-shih created his works by carefully observing nature. Hard work and creative genius enabled him to reach a high level of artistic insight and technique. In general, Ch'i Pai-shih painted from internal visions without looking at real models, pictures or drafts. This was because through years of deep observation and artistic creation, he had accumulated enough impressions to reach the stage of having the whole objects in his mind, the creative power in his hands.

Through his life Ch'i Pai-shih thought to perfect his art by approaching the essential of an object. He spent nearly forty years observing shrimp, training his eyes, hands and mind. He used to keep two live shrimp in a glass bowl at home for daily studies. By such exercise he improved his approach to the objects. In the long process of painting shirmp he remarked his progress as follows:

> "I have made several changes since I started painting shrimps. At first, my shrimp bore only a slight resemblance of real ones. Then I made them look exactly like live ones. Later I changed my method, using different shades of ink ... "[60]

It was not until he had painted shrimp for dozens of years that he declared that he had grasped the spirit of the shrimp. The word "grasped" not only refers to his understanding of shrimp but also to his mastery of the brush and choice materials suitable for portraying them. Only in his seventieth year did he feel his paintings of shrimp achieved a likeness both in shape and spirit.[61] He became so familiar with them that he was able to paint from memory, and with a few strokes, he brought to life on paper shrimp swimming in limpid water. His unusual sense of beauty and his

skill and talent brought about a high degree of unity of content and form and he achieved a consummate beauty in his works.

Ch'i Pai-shih's education and family background, his practical and straight-forward character had combined to prevent him from accepting illusion or abstracting ideas. So that while he tried to stick to reality, he was fascinated by commonplace things that rarely appeared in traditional paintings. He himself noted this as a decisive step to widen the scope of his painting subjects. His practical attitude, a result of the difficult life of his early childhood, had made him to rely on the real rather than unreal. He observed the outside world with great patience and he would not paint the object unless he had fully understood its structure. He believed that "One should speak the language others can understand, and so one should paint things others can realize."[62] This belief had prevented him from going after the exquisite and courtly things. Therefore, his attention was directed to the animals and plants of the countryside and the small insects for his painting practices. Thus his favorite painting subjects were mainly common objects easily available in Chinese farm or in the rural area.

Warning against total departure from recognizable form, Ch'i Pai- shih seemed to be objecting to abstractions. And yet some of the models he painted are very close to abstract. This is because he had realized that going too deeply into the structure of natural forms may limit the painter's artistic expression. Hence in his paintings, in which he adhered to the principles of form and structure in nature, Ch'i Pai-shih had not forgotten his own presence. He felt that he enjoyed painting most when he depicted nature according to his own feeling and in his own way. The forms in his paintings are ideal forms resulting from his careful observation of nature and his day to day surroundings, which had been recreated by him to convey

a message of his own, they are not just simple duplicates of natural forms. Through these forms, the communication between the spirit of an object and his personal feeling is achieved.

Herein lies the principle of Ch'i Pai-shih's most important aesthetic beliefs that "The marvel of a good painting lies in between likeness and unlikeness." He said:

> Too much likeness flatters the vulgar taste; too much unlikness deceives the public. Likeness can be achieved by objective observation and good craftsmanship, but unlikeness further requires imagination and a creative instinct. " [63]

With this he defined his attitude to reality. What he meant by "likeness" was in not losing realistic characteristics. "Unlikeness" actually indicates that one cannot break the laws of abstract beauty in order to yield to the external appearance of an object.

In painting Ch'i Pai-shih always tempered his observation of real things with his own feelings and sentiments. All his life he opposed works which were mere imitations of actual objects. On the other hand he was equally opposed to the flippant pictures of some literati painters who "make rough sketches without any likeness to real things." He aimed at the optical truth rather than the objective, scientific truth.

Poised between realism and idealism, Ch'i Pai-shih has left many great works that capture both the outer forms and the inner spirit of the nature world, representing the aesthetics of "between likeness and unlikeness."[64] For example, shrimp ordinarily have ten swimming legs, but he painted only six to eight of them, thus pleasing the optical experience of the observer. Shrimp normally do not show their short feelers in any noticeable way, but by exaggerating them to the right extent he enhanced the mobility and vitality of this creature on paper. He usually painted a

plant that was quite representational, but only the blossom was in color while the rest of the plant was depicted all in black ink. There was no attempt to recreate the true colors of the plant, and yet it drew positive response from the viewer; the colors became immaterial. He made most of his flowering branches swing downwards, some actually hanging. When someone commented that most tree branches did not droop that much, he replied, "That's what makes them beautiful."[65] He reordered the sensuous qualities to achieve balance and stability so that the observer could experience "beauty." Thus, although the forms of his painting are simple and sparse, yet one is able to perceive a high sense of reality which enlivens all his paintings. He had written something on this:

> "Painting life I do not strive for more likeness; I do not mind lowering my reputation thereby." "Although I usually paint things of everyday life, I did not aim at verisimilitude. I believe that only when a painting becomes lifelike without contrivance can it reach sublimity.[66]

Aiming to arrive at this state of being similar and yet dissimilar, Ch'i Pai-shih succeeded in finding harmony between nature and his individual self. But he did not let himself be restricted by fixed rules; he was not to afraid to break the laws of nature, but depicted something half true and half imaginary to show his childlike sense of wonder and his love of beauty.

3. Historical Significance

HIS STATUS IN THE WEN-JEN HUA TRADITION

Taking together Ch'i Pai-shih's artistic style and theoretical statements, it might be appropriate to say that he stands at the apex of the Shanghai School of Chinese *wen-jen hua* (文人畫, literati painting) tradition, in both spirit and form.[1]

Traditional Chinese art can be roughly divided into two levels, folk art and academic art, before the T'ang Dynasty (唐朝, 618-907). After the T'ang Dynasty, a third broad category, *wen-jen hua*, emerged. It represents, in a very general way, a revolt on the part of the scholarly class against the extreme conventionalization of academic art. The ideal artist should be a scholar, poet, calligrapher, and painter. Thereafter, the art theory of literati painting, which the scholars verbalized in literary and philosophical terms, eventually became a standard of Chinese painting.

In the early Ch'ing Dynasty, The salt merchants of Yangchow became the new and enthusiastic patrons of art, who had a taste for novelty. Therefore, a new mood of a light-hearted playfulness, charm, and humour entered into Chinese literati painting. Intimate subjects of birds and flowers overtook landscapes in importance. Colours were used more frequently and were applied with great sensitivity and subtlety.[2]

In the later Ch'ing, with economic prosperity brought about by trade

with the West, Shanghai 上海 took the place of Yangchow and became the center of artistic activity.[3] The artistic demands of the nouveau riche led to the rise of "*Haipai* " (海派 , Shanghai School) in the second half of the nineteenth century. The style of Shanghai School traced its origins to some of the more eccentric artists of Ming and Ch'ing, such as Hsu Wei (徐渭,1521-1593), Chu Ta (朱耷 , 1625-after 1705), Shih-t'ao (石濤 ,1641-1710), and the Eight Eccentrics of Yangchow of the eighteenth century.[4] This style exhibits free and spirited brushwork, exaggeration and distortion of shapes and images, patternization and archaism. Ch'i Pai-shih was one the painters who was influenced by this school. The style of approaching art adapted by these artists is called *hsieh-i* 寫意 .[5]

The word *hsieh* used alone usually refers to writing, while the term *hsieh-i* has the meaning of of expressing something spontaneously through the display of brushstroke, which required an absolute mastery of calligraphy. Chinese calligraphy and paintings have long been thought to have originated from the same sources, because Chinese written language was originally pictographic. As most Chinese painters apply the principle of "bone structure" to their brushwork in painting, the calligraphic quality has become one of the major characteristics of Chinese painting.

An understanding of the historical development of calligraphy is necessary for investigating the significance of Ch'i Pai-shih's art. The basic style of Chinese calligraphy has mainly been divided into two types, *pei* 碑 and *t'ieh* 帖. *Pei* refers to monumental stone stele with inscriptions and in a broader sense to all writing carving into stone. The cursive types of script were used only for casual and unimportant functions and not yet written with aesthetic intention, but full of strength as well as naive and monumental beauty. The t'ieh style of calligraphy was written with brush

on paper or silk, mostly in letters or personal notes. There are stylistic differences between *pei* and *t'ieh* (plate 27 & 28), with regard to several factors, such as materials, aesthetic concepts, period, and the personality of the writer. The stroke and composition are also the major differences of the characters. The strokes on *pei* are excuted completely and precisely. The characters of *pei* are usually written in imaginary squares of equal size and strictly composed along vertical and horizontal axes, while those of *t'ieh* vary greatly in size, the result being a delicate and unstable compositional balance. In addition to the difference in the execution of the brushstrokes and in the composition of a single character, the two styles further differ fundamentally in the overall composition. The characters in *pei* are all separated from each other by space of equal size forming a regular grid pattern of both vertical and horizontal columns. The characters of *t'ieh* by contrast, follow each other in easy, flowing, vertical lines; their various balanced compositions together produce a picture of rhythmic variety.[6]

The great calligraphic works of the Han Dynasty (漢朝, 206 B.C-A.D. 220) were all *Pei*. In the Six Dynasties period (六朝, A.D.220-589), the artistic attention began to shift away from the monumental stone of *pei* and focused instead on *t'ieh*. It was one of the epoch-making trends of the Six Dynasties. The popularity of *t'ieh* contributed to the early development of literati painting for hundreds of years, because of its freer expression. Later the popularity of seal carving brought the literati painter's attention to the strong carving styles of *pei*.

Before the the Ch'ing dynasty many Chinese painters were especially fond of practicing the draft and running script typical of the *t'ieh* style. Under the circumstance, early Chinese painters, literati painters in

particular, tended to place greater emphasis on subtle refinement and elegance of the brushstrokes. With the production of better paper, the artistic talents of the Four Great Masters[7] of the Yuan Dynasty (元朝 ,1279-1368) triumphantly brought Chinese literati painting in the calligraphic style of *t'ieh* to its glorious summit.[8]

In the Ch'ing Dynasty, following the popularity of seal carving in the literati circle, scholars began to take an interest in the calligraphic forms of *pei,* the inscriptions of the ancient bronzes and steles. Calligraphy of *t'ieh* style began to decline. In the Tao-kuang era (道光 ,1821-1850), Chao Chih-ch'ien (1829-84) applied the calligraphic spirit of *pei* in his painting, putting forth a new style of painting and adding strength to the creative spirit of the Four Monks[9] of the seventeenth century and the Eight Eccentrics of the Yangchow of the eighteenth century.

Chao Chin-ch'ien's idea was further developed by Wu Ch'ang-shih who was at heart a calligrapher who excelled in the ancient scripts. Wu's paintings are imbued throughout with the heroic features of the highlanders of northern China and his brushwork is forceful, firm and magnanimous. Behind its casual and sketchy appearance are hidden abundant feeling and potential strength.[10]

Ch'i Pai-shih's painting was deeply indebted to both Chao and Wu. His seal carving is related more to the former, his painting to the latter. Although Wu was scarcely mentioned in Ch'i Pai-shih's autobiography, by a simple comparison of their works it will be easy to sense the inter-relationship between the style of these two masters (plate 29), in that is they both employed the calligraphic technique of *pei* in their paintings.

This is no mere coincidence; just before Ch'i Pai-shih's time, the theory was proposed by a few scholars that the inscription on steles of *pei*

and the written scripts of *t'ieh* have their own distinctive characteristics belonging to two different streams. Later, in Ch'i Pai-shih's time, the belief became prevalent that the inscriptions of *pei* were superior to the written scripts of *t'ieh*. This theory was further encouraged by K'ang Yu-wei (康有為, 1825-1927), the eminent scholar and statesman of the time. Ch'i Pai-shih's painting in the style of the Northern inscription was, therefore, a natural outcome of the artistic movement of his time. The powerful lines he painted may be angular or broken in form, jerky and abrupt in movement, but with much restrained force lying between the dots and lines. Ch'i Pai-shih's paintings have truly grasped the essence of the calligraphic style of *pei*.[11]

Wu Ch'ang-shih learned the art of painting from his teacher Jen Po-nien (任伯年,1839-1895). Jen was a versatile painter, noted for his many-sided painting talents. Wu, while indulging himself in the calligraphic expression of his painting, had neglected much of the pictorial skills of his teacher. Although Ch'i Pai-shih was not their student, his painting has seized the essence of these two masters, the calligraphic spirit of Wu and the pictorial eloquence of Jen.[12]

These dual influences on Ch'i Pai-shih helped greatly in the formation of his brush technique which distinguishes him from Wu Ch'ang-shih. Mainly a calligrapher, Wu painted more often with the brush held vertical to the surface of the paper and tried to use the tip of the brush, moving along the central core of the line. The aim is to emphasize the restrained force of the calligraphic strokes in his painting. Ch'i Pai-shih was more a painter than a calligrapher. While he exercised his calligraphic strokes, he would not forsake their pictorial effect. With a clear structural concept of the objects he intended to paint, he would not limit himself to holding

the brush in a vertical position. Instead, he wielded his brush with the tip pointing to any direction which would favour the execution of his ideal pictorial forms. His long years of practice with the brush allows him to do this without sacrificing the calligraphic subtleties. In this way, Ch'i Pai-shih's painting fully exalted the virility of the calligraphic style of the North and his achievement summed up the development of this school of painting in the Ch'ing dynasty.[13]

HIS ROLE AS TRANSITION BETWEEN FOLK AND LITERATI TRADITION

Ch'i Pai-shih originated an artistic style of his own and simultaneously concluded the period of "Chinese Trio," which required artists to be proficient in poetry, calligraphy and painting. But on the other hand he opened up a broad trail for the furture artist through the blend of folk style and literati traditions, both stylistically and spiritualy.

Many factors enabled Ch'i Pai-shih to take part play as a transitional role between the folk and literati traditions in twentieth century Chinese art. First of all, his sources of inspiration and learning were from the traditions of folk and literati. They began with his childhood filled with the poetic beauty of his homeland, then came the long years of country life in the mountains which formed the basis of his artistic memory. He gained power and knowledge from folk art, artistic crafts, wood-carving, the theatre, the T'ang and Sung poetry with which he was perfectly familiar, illustrated woodcut text-books, and numerous collections of ancient paintings. Finally he based his work on the paintings of Hsu Wei (徐渭, 1521-1593), Chu Ta, the Yuangchow masters and from the Shanghai masters. In seal carving, he began by studying the seal patterns of Ting Chin (1695-1765) and Huang I (1744-1801). He was also very much

attracted by the seals of Chao Chih-ch'ien and Wu Ch'ang-shih. Later he explored the ancient inscriptions on the Stone Drums and Bronze Measures of the Ch'in Dynasty (221-207 B.C.) and the inscriptions on lampstand, mirrors, tiles, and steles of the Han dynasty, which inspired him very much with the grand beauty and vitality of folk art.[14]

It is obvious that Ch'i Pai-shih's use of strong color was derived from folk art. Ch'i Pai-shih was able to absorb much from folk art into his own stylistic development, especially in his choice of color and themes. His simple direct approach coupled with his use of bright colors were inherited from his early years of contact with folk art and from his craftsman background. Folk artisans in China have the knack of making their products extremely attractive. The portraits, sculptures, New Year pictures and lanterns of the folk artisans were painted in bright, sharp colors which make them eye-catching whether viewed closely or at a distance. The maxims for color treatment in Chinese folk art are "sharp" and "bright", and they stand for a style that has its particular merits. Artists who manufacture New Year prints like to give their prints strong, bold colors to make them impressive and easy to sell. The colors in New Year printing are bold and daring, though there are plain ink pictures too. Ch'i Pai-shih's use of bold and striking colors are closely related to the folk way of applying color, while it is in defiance of the Chinese literati painting tradition in monochrome ink.[15]

In the choice of subjects, Ch'i Pai-shih demonstrated the ability of an artist to capture the innate beauty of commonplace things which were ordinarily neglected in fine art. His paintings proved that beauty is hidden in all things, including those that are most banal. This is what endeared him to the viewers. Another way in which Ch'i Pai-shih's appeals to the

folk populace is through his sincere concern for the life of the the common people and to Communist Party ideology. On a painting of *Southern Squash* , he wrote:

> The southerners call this nankua (southern squash). It is sweet and delectable. In good years it serves well as a vegetable dish; in famine years it can be a substitute for grain. Don't forget to plant some in spring." [16]

It was in this way that he showed his concern for working people in their days of hardship and privations. Same concern for the working people can be traced back to the folk songs in the *Books of Odes* , which reflect the concerns and poetry of working people. From his early childhood Ch'i Pai-shih experienced several periods of hunger and need, and for this reason he could well understand the suffering of people. A similar sentiment of social sympathy is embodied in a poem inscribed in a painting with a fisherman looking at his empty creel:

> Lost in thought he stares at his creel;
> The river is dry, where can he go?
> Lacking rice next morning is not his worst worry,
> What he fears is the tax imposed on his empty creel.[17]

Ch'i Pai-shih in this poem states the complaint of the people against high taxes and records how people suffered from it. The same social symphathy also had been vividly expressed in some of the ancient folk songs collected in Book of Odes, and, coincidentally, were also used ordinary things as a symbol for satire, such as rats.[18]

Related to the key elements of folk art were Ch'i Pai-shih's themes of longevity, wealth, peace and prosperity, and social advancement. These values could refer to the primitive beginnings of human interest--a basic interest in life itself. They were popular symbols in folk art and struck a familiar theme among the general populace, although these themes are usually disregarded by the literati art tradition since the Wei Chin

Dynasties. The images of "peace and prosperity" and "health and wealth forever" were plainly understood and accepted in the Han Dynasty. On the *wa-dan* (瓦當 , circular face of a roof tile) of secular architecture and copper mirrors of Han Dynasty, most of the inscriptions were sentences of realistic impression and the wish for happiness, such as "We are Happy with Fortune," "Live for Thousand Years," and "Forever Joy." (plate 30). Han Dynasty was the time that Chinese folk art had reached full bloom. Most of the literary works and other artistic expressions of the Han Dynasty had simple and naive characteristics, although after Wei Tsin Dynasty the main trend of Chinese artistic style was separated away from the folk style and acquired its elite spirit.

Themes like farming as depicted in the stone tablets of Western Han (plate 31) reappeared as subjects of orthodox Chinese painting hundreds of years later as Ch'i Pai-shih picked them up again (plate 25). Folk style was continuously flowing among the ordinary people for hundred years then met with the mainstream of Chinese art again when Ch'i Pai-shih's art was accepted by the critics.

Since the Sung Dynasty, Chinese painting has been following the course of pursuit of nobility and elegance. From the Yuan dynasty onwards, literati painting prevailed. The major leaders in Chinese painting were scholars and officials who treated painting mainly as a pastime. In the Ming and Ch'ing dynasties, it became the extravagant commodities of the officials and the wealthy class. The art of Chinese painting thus slowed down as it moved further and further away from the general public. Although there were painters like the Eight Eccentric of Yangchow whose work delighted many of the middle class, they were not generally accepted by the society of that time and were looked upon as eccentrics.

In this long period the artists of the scholar-official class usually looked upon classical paintings as elegant and folk art as common; they felt that the two were incompatible. Ch'i Pai-shih, however, highly prized folk style art. Once when teaching others what should be admired and what should not, he made a statement that, if there were only one painter of the past which could served as his model, it would be the artisan who painted the brick tablets of the Han period. He admired their simple, naive and monumental style, and disliked the delicacy of the later artistic styles. By this, not only did he break down the supposed incompatibility between what is elegant and what is common, but also he enriched his creative conception, thus he could very naturally blend the wholesomeness and truthfulness of folk art with his own style of painting.[19]

Ch'i Pai-shih was not disturbed by the fact that he was a carpenter coming from a poor farmer's family. He knew that an artist had to be honest with himself. He knew quite well his differences from the traditional literati painters. So he gave the duck he painted (plate 32) with Chu Ta's manner (plate 33), the normal eyes, unlike Chu Ta's painting of a bird with a white eye. In Chinese, "giving someone white eyes 给白眼" means regarding someone with indifference and disdain. Chu Ta, whom Ch'i Pai-shih admired very much, was a descendant from the Ming Dynasty imperial family. He refused to submit to the new Manchu regime, chose to be a recluse, and shunned all worldly contacts. Most of his paintings of birds and fish share the expression by "giving the white eye." Ch'i Pai-shih did not have the same background as Chu Ta; he was only a country man filled with bravery and self-confidence. Thus he inscribed this painting of his duck, "This is a domestic duck instead of wild one." In his paintings, he unreservedly revealed his own self. He did not try to conceal his early

profession as a carpenter, the influence of his teachers, and the plain and blunt nature of his self-expression. Plate 34 could be taken as an instance in the way of approaching mountains by Ch'i Pai-shih which is reminiscent of Hung Jen (弘仁,1610-1663), but the atomosphere Ch'i Pai-shih creates is warm, crowded, and cheerful unlike Hung Jen's cold, pure, and solitary air produced by the austere lines and contours (Plate 35). Inheriting the best from old traditions, his artistic creations are still imbued with a strong contemporary. His paintings possess the subtle feelings of a scholar, the rustic quality of a villager and the modern characteristics of a contemporary, so his works gained recognition by the people and scholars. By painting common themes with proficiency of brush and ink, he successfully communicated the essence of Chinese art to a wide audience among the Chinese populace.[20]

THE AFFINITY OF HIS ART TO THE SPIRIT OF HIS TIME

Ch'i Pai-shih's style of secularization coincides with the general pattern of development in twentieth century Chinese politics and literature movements in the goal of going to the people. This coincidence enabled Ch'i Pai-shih's art to survive under various value systems of the twentieth century China and gave a great historical significance to his accompolishments.

During the period of Ch'i Pai-shih life, the intense confrontation between Chinese traditions and foreign ideas brought rapid changes to China. Before then, there was a persistent pattern of political, social and economical systems in Chinese history. Agriculture embraced a vast amount of peasants, and which formed the basis of social organization for thousand years and the philosophies of Confucianism and that of Taoism

ruled as the warp and the woof of the Chinese cultural fabric.[21]

Such recognizable characters remain in the feature of Chinese history until the infusion of West at the beginning nineteenth century. It was the issue of Opium War (鴉片戰爭,1840-42) which triggered the first conflict of Chinese tradition and foreign ideas, although two centuries earlier, the Jesuits at the Imperial court, such as Matteo Ricci (1552-1610), had impressed a small circle of scholars with their skills in astronomy and geography. The *Taiping* (太平 , Heavenly Peace) Rebellion, 1850-1864, which followed the Opium War, promised land redistribution to peasants and other social reforms in addition to the planned overthrow of Manchu's (Ch'ing) rule.

With the suppression of the *Taiping* Rebellion, the governance of the empire reverted to defenders of the traditional order. Their response was a program of reforms that known as the Tzuhchang (自強運動 , self-strengthening) movement which culminated in the slogan of, "Chinese learning as the basic substance, Western learning for practical use." [22] Two steps were taken for acquainting Western knowledge, first by sending promising students abroad to study and acquire new technology. Second, and more effectively, was that the flood of translations of foreign books arose in China following the *Taiping* Rebellion. Those books were mostly associated with technology, science engineering, and mathematics. A few years later, the interests gradually began to spread to Western philosophy and political theories.[23]

Meanwhile, artists of that time did not take seriously the trickle of foreign art that penetrated China, although when scholar-official Kang Yu-wei (康有為 ,1856-1927) introduced the 1898 reforms, the teaching techniques of Western art were part of the package. It was because in

applying the doctrine of "Chinese learning as the basic substance, Western learning for practical use," China thought to draw strength from her own cultural tradition and preserve her cultural identity. Painting in the literary style was part of this rich cultural tradition. Therefore, the Shanghai painters, all learned scholars, took great interest in mastering the other scholarly arts, particularly poetry, calligraphy, and seal carving. In their style calligraphy rather than exaggeration was emphasized. They united painting and calligraphy in these works in a much closer manner than earlier literati painters and also brought a revival of interest in studying archaic bronze and stone inscriptions. Ch'i Pai-shih's art belonged to the style of this trend.[24]

At the end of the nineteenth century, ideals of a constitutional monarchy were giving way to the view that only revolution could save China. Politically, the rebirth of China started by the collapse of the Ch'ing dynasty and the construction of the Republic. Socially, the civil examination system and the bureaucracy were abolished and as a result, the scholar-gentry class lost their special privileges. As to art, on the whole, the traditional style of Chinese painting was little affected by other movements. Controversy was not brewing in art circles until the *pai-hua* movement and the May Fourth Movement initiated. Painters of that time saw their own situation as paralleling that of writers and were strongly affected.[25]

In the 1910s, an intellectual revolution was well under way. First, Ts'ai Yuan-p'ei (蔡元培 ,1868-1940), as president of Peking University, promoted the ideal of the spiritual salvation for China through an association of ethics and aesthetics. Then comes the further-reaching progress of *pai-hua* (白話, vernacular) movement of 1915, which proposed

to destroy the painted, pedantic and obscurantist literature of the hermit, and to create the plain-speaking and popular literature of a living society. The *pai-hua* movement and subsequent events in literature and politics have had profound influences on following Chinese history, particularly the May Fourth Movement 五四運動 of 1919, which had been inspired by anti-imperialist (anti-foreign) feelings, and it brought about a deeper commitment to social reform and from it came the call for a new culture. Chinese culture, including its keystone, the Confucian code of behavior, was challenged by this movement and had a tremendous effect on the cultural and political development in China, especially the instillation of socialistic thought.[26]

As discussed in the preceding part, folk art and literature have long been regarded by Chinese literati as inelegant, if not unworthy of attention. But a new view began to emerge as the new ideas generated by the May Fourth Movement, drastically changing many long-held conceptions of literature and forcing intellectuals to reflect upon their traditional role as custodians of cultural truth. During the May Fourth era many young scholars changed the basic attitudes of Chinese intellectuals not only toward literature, but, more importantly, towards the common people. And so in art, they attempted to bring art to the common people and to popularize aesthetic education as Ts'ai Yuan-p'ei had promoted.[27]

During those movements, while many deep-rooted cultural problems were seriously argued over, there was the realization that the fate of the country lay no longer in the "high culture" of Confucianism, which was vehemently rejected as the principal source of China's backwardness. As young intellectuals searched anxiously for new answers, they found hope in the "low culture" of the common people. They developed a romantic view of

the peasants, arguing that this untapped, but rich, folk culture, if treated properly, could be used to convey new ideas and furnish urgent solutions to China's myriad problems. Thus, beginning in the May Fourth era, Chinese intellectuals started to focus on the concept of the folk--mainly peasants--and elevated the status of the common people to a level unprecedented in Chinese history.[28]

Ch'en Shih-tseng, who discovered Ch'i Pai-shih through the latter's seal carving ability, was one of the central figures in literature and art at that time. He was a most articulate theoretician, and had written a book on searching for a new spirit in literati painting. He considered that only the principles vitality and bone structure brushwork of Hsieh Ho's "Six Canons" were important, the rest of it is merely following as matter of course. Actually, many of his concepts of new literati painting, such as "the resemblance of outward form is not enough for a literati painting," had combined a lot of the Western modern concepts already. He was attracted by both the Shanghai School and Chinese folk art. He especially found in Ch'i Pai-shih's style elements which coincided with his concepts of a new literati style, and thus introduced Ch'i Pai-shih's works into the literati circle. [29]

At the same time while Chen Shih-tseng was looking for a new spirit of Chinese painting, a group of European trained artists came back to China, carrying the idea that the revival of Chinese paintings might achieve through the infusion of Western art into Chinese painting. As a new class of intellectuals, these artists held academic positions in the Art Academies and universities. One of this new generation, Hsu Pei-hong (徐悲鴻, 1895-1953) studied western painting at Paris between 1919-1927. After experimenting with the Western style of painting, Hsu returned to

the traditional Chinese style which he enriched with the techniques of Western painting. Probably under the stimulus of Western art Hsu Pei-hong in particular, returned to nature for direct observation. After Chen Shih-tseng, Hsu became Ch'i's most dedicated advocate. It might be that the openmindedness they possessed brought these two artists with different backgrounds and belonged to different art circles so closely. Once, when talking with Hsu Pei-hung, Ch'i even expressed the desire that had he been thirty years younger, he would like to try to paint in the Western styles, although he was too old to learn it.[30] He also encouraged others to strike out on their own by saying:

> Those among former painters who had the ability and courage to break away from the conventions of their predecessors and to set up their own styles need feel no shame or inferiority before the prior artists. [31]

Twentieth century China has been a time in when the traditional culture was confronted with the dilemma of whether to continue the tradition or to change with times. Thus it was also true for the traditional Chinese paintings. Most painters of the time were still worked in the traditional way. They dared not to accept new ideas. Whereas Ch'i Pai-shih, coming from a humble origin with no proper education, was always open to new concepts.

At the time when Ch'i's style of painting was under some attack (1929), Hsu not only came to his defense but also invited him to teach in the Art Academy. That a carpenter-turned-painter with no official schooling in either literature or art could join that faculty in conservative and sophisticated Peking appears as almost a revolution in itself. Probably, the appointment of Lin Fang-mien (林風眠 ,1901-) as president of the Academy in 1927, an artist who also just returned from a nine years stay

in France where he was strongly influenced by Fauvism, have contributed to this new spirit.[32]

Chen Shih-tseng and Hsu Pei-hung may have found in the characteristic of Ch'i Pai-shih's art some resemblance to the European Post-Impressionism and Fauvism, and thought that the compromise of Chinese art and Western art might be achieved through this connection. They were not only personally inspired by Ch'i Pai-shih's style but also introduced it to the artistic circles and to the public. Through the promotion of these pedagogues, Ch'i Pai-shih's artistic style became one of the most influential one to the twentieth century Chinese artists. For example, under Ch'i's influence Hsu gave up most of his "westernizations" and returned to forceful brushwork in his later 1937-1940's paintings.

Prior to the Communists conquest in 1949, China had been engulfed in an intermittent but devastating twenty-two year civil war, which continued even while the whole nation was fighting the war of Resistance Against Japan between 1937 and 1945. This conflict resulted from the basic difference between the Nationalist Party 國民黨 and the Communist Party 共產黨 over how to modernize and govern China. One aspect of the domestic political struggle was a clash of views concerning what the new Chinese art should be. In 1942, Mao Tse-tong's (毛澤東 ,1893-1976) *"Talks at the Yen'an Forum on Art and Literature"* (延安文藝講話) laid down a general guideline for Chinese Communist art. The Talks became the theoretical framework of Chinese art onward.[33] In the Yen'an "Talks", Mao pointed out that literature and art must serve the workers, peasants and soldiers; and Chinese writers and artists must for a long period of time unreservedly and whole-heartedly go among the masses, in order to observe, experience, study and analyse all the different kinds of people, all

the classes, all the masses, all the vivid patterns of life and struggle, all the raw materials of literature and art. Only then can they proceed to creative work.[34]

As this guidance of Communist ideology became the dominant criterion of all arts after 1949, the destiny of traditional Chinese art was in serious question. The Communist theorists viewed traditional painting as elite--a vestige of feudal China. It was labeled "art for art's sake," which meant it was inconsistent with the role defined for art: to serve the revolution. However, a compromise was reached whereby figure painting of the masses would be construed as revolutionary and landscape paintings would be considered patriotic. Nevertheless birds and flowers painting was labeled "feudal." Many artists who suffered from the compromise. However, Chi Pai-shih, also mainly a flower and bird painter, was a special exception; he was treated with a respect and admiration not afforded other artists and was being lavishly praised by the Communist regime and was bestowed the honor of 'People's Artist' in 1954.[35] The main reasons for this curious phenomenon was that Ch'i Pai-shih's peasant background fit well into Mao's idea of good art. As explained by Arnold Chang in his writing, *Painting in the People's Republic of China: The Politics of Style*, as:

> Ch'i Pai-shih's unique status derived less from his artistic skills than from his working class background. His works are totally nonrevolutionary in subject matter, and his dramatic and expressive brushwork is a continuation of the literati painting style. But the communists were able to see in Ch'i's work an unpretentious, folk-like quality. The case of Ch'i Pai-shih, though unique, demonstrates that the regime was willing to allow traditional styles to continue if they were produced by an artist from a working class orientation. After Liberation, Ch'i was allowed, even encouraged, to work in his own individual style.[36]

Ch'i Pai-shih survived the drastic changes in the value structure in Chinese society and actually achieved a dominant position in twentieth

century Chinese art history, apparently without compromising any of his own views on art. His art even overcame political barriers. Ch'i Pai-shih was equally well accepted in both the Communist mainland China and the republic goverment in Taiwan. Most works of the writers and artists who stayed in mainland after the Communist took power over China were hardly mentioned on Taiwan between 1949 and 1987, but Ch'i Pai-shih's work was one of the exceptions. It was because critics of mainland and Taiwan see contradictory political meanings in Ch'i's paintings.[37] Actually, Ch'i Pai-shih was an artist who owed no political inclination, which could be proved in the narration of his autobiography, that any political application is inproper.

Conclusion

Ch'i Pai-shih is an artist truly belonging to the twentieth century China. His painting synthesizes, without a blemish, the simple and wholesome feelings of the people with his fine techniques. He succeeded in a lapidary, powerful artistic expression of the *great hsieh-i* style, arriving thus to refined symbols full of meaning and, gradually to an unique dialectic synthesis of traditions and new matter, eternity and imagination, of object and subject, striking a balance between Chinese ink and colors, between lines and blots. The world he pictured lay on the boundary line and between resemblance and dissimilarity where he achieved a new poetical simplicity in the poetical evocation of his childhood world and his homeland. In his long life his paintings achieved dramatic expression, full of a dynamic quality and veiled meanings.[1]

Ch'i Pai-shih sincerely amalgamated the simplicity of a villager, the skill of a carpenter and his own firm and steady character as an individual, and projected them into the traditional composition of Chinese painting. Thus his art created a style of his own, and stated the spirit of twentieth century China. Carried forward a living tradition and did not simply attempt to conserve and perpetuate the past, Ch'i Pai-shih assimilated the influences from the early Ch'ing individualists and incorporated these influences with the spirit of folk art.

As China were struggling for modernize, Ch'i's art does have a definite relationship to modernization. He is a leader in modern styles throught his selection of subject matter, selective rather than representational use of color, and especially through his intense, personal and frequently nearly abstract brushwork. Although he was not influenced by western art, instead, he represents an indigenous, Chinese tradition. His art is a reaction against westernization and reaffirmation of Chinese art, values and styles. As a progenitor of twentieth century Chinese art, Ch'i great contribution is to show a way in which Chinese at can be modern without being western.[2] His success gives evidence that it is necessary for an artist who was permeated by the spirit of his own environment and time to respond and express himself sincerely as well as to approach his own time with an open mind.

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

[1]The information of Ch'i Pai-shih's life in this thesis are based on Ch'i Huang 齊璜 (Ch'i Pai-shih). *Pai-shih lao-jen tzu-chuan* 白石老人自傳 (*The Autobiography of Ch'i Pai-shih*), (Peking: Jen-min mei-shu, 1962).

[2]Most of the historical information in this thesis are based on Jacques Gernet, *A History of Chinese Civilization*, trans. J.R. Foster, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

CHAPTER 1

[1] *Taiping* Rebellion was a major event of nineteenth-century Chinese history. In the rebellion, the leader, Hung Hsiu-ch'uan (洪秀全 ,1814-64), originally a peasant, constructed the *Taiping* Heavenly Kingdom (1850 -1864) in south China. For a detailed study, see Michael Franz, *The Taiping Rebellion*, vol.1, (Seattle & London: U. of Washington Press, 1971).

[2]*Mou* 畝 is one of the Chinese land measurements; it equals to 1/3 acre.

[3]Ch'i, *Autobiography*, 7-10.

[4]When Ch'i Pai-shih was seventy-one, he asked Chin Sung-shen to write his biography and kept Chin supplied with details of his life through Chang Tz'u-chi 張次溪 one of his pupils to whom he had verbally communicated this account. So far only that part of the narrative ending in 1947 has been published.

[5]Ch'i, *Autobiography*, 10-14.

[6]Ibid., 17-20.

[7]Ibid., 23-29.

[8]Ibid., 30-31.

[9]*Mustard-seed-garden Painting Manual*芥子園畫傳, first published at 1679, was the most popular single book on the art of painting ever published in China. This treatise has served as a basic manual of instruction in both China and Japan until modern times. See: *McGRAW-HILL Dictionary of Art* ,vol.3, (London, 1969), 157-158.

[10]Ch'i, *Autobiography*, 32.

[11]Ibid., 34-42.

[12]*Kung pi* 工筆 : delicate, elaborate style of painting.

[13]Ch'i, *Autobiography*, 40.

[14]Ibid., 55-70.

[15]*Hsieh-i* 寫意 : a style of painting in which the artist aims primarily in expressing an idea.

[16] Ch'i, *Autobiography*, 61-66.

[17]Ibid. 66-71.

[18]Ibid.71.

[19]Li K'o-jen 李可染 , "A Reminiscence of Ch'i Pai-shih, "*Chinese Literature* 10, 1959:142.

[20]Ch'i, *Autobiography*, 106-109.

[21]Ibid., 78-79.

[22]Ibid.,83-84.

[23]Ibid.89-102.

[24]Woo Cho Yi-yu Catherine吳卓羽玉, *Chinese Aeshetics and Ch'i Pai-shih,* (Hong Kong: Joint Publishing Co., 1986), 40-42.

CHAPTER 2

[1]Pang Mae Anna. *Chinese Paintings of the Ming and Ch'ing Dynasties XIV-XXth Century.* (International Cultural Corporation of Australia Limited.) 92-93.

[2]Woo Cho Yi-yu Catherine, *Chinese Aeshetics and Ch'i Pai-shih,* 89-90.

[3]Lai Tan-chang, *Ch'i Pai-shih,* 75.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Li K'o-jen, "A Reminiscence of Ch'i Pai-shih." 143.

[6]Ch'i, *Autobiography,* 19-20.

[7]Ibid., 38. trans. Lai, *Ch'i Pai-shih,* 19.

[8]Lai, *Ch'i Pai-shih,* 135.

[9]Ibid.,19.

[10]Ibid., 60

[11]Ibid., 75

[12]Ibid., 117.

[13]Hsu Kai-yu許芥昱 and Wang Fang-yu王方宇 , *Ch'i Pai-shih's Painting* 齊白石畫, (Taipei: The Art Books Co., 1979.) 34-35.

[14]Ch'en Fan. *Ch'i Pai-shih shih-wen chuan-k'o chi* (*Poetry, Essays, and Seals of Ch'i Pai-shih*), (Hong Kong: Shanghai Publshing House, 1961),

48.

[15]Ibid., p.23, trans. Lai, *Ch'i Pai-shih*, 128.

[16]Ch'i, *Autobiography,* 11-12.

[17]Ch'en Fan, *Poetry, Essays, and Seals of Ch'i Pai-shih* , p.22, trans. Lai, *Ch'i Pai-shih*, 78-79.

[18]Ibid., 100-102.

[19]Ibid., 106-107.

[20]Ch'i, *Autobiography*, p.107, trans. Woo, *Chinese Aeshetics and Ch'i Pai-shih*, 38-39.

[21]Li K'o-jen, "A Reminiscence of Ch'i Pai-shih." 147.

[22]Ibid.

[23]Hsu and Wang. *Ch'i Pai-shih's Painting* , 72, plate 67, trans. Woo, *Chinese Aesthetics and Ch'i Pai-shih*, 72.

[24]Wu Nelson I.吳訥孫, "The Chinese Pictorial Art: Format and Program." *Translation of Art*, (Seattle and London: University of Washington, 1976.) 182.

[25]Ch'i, *Autobiography,* 97-98. Based on the writing of Wu Nelson I., "The Chinese Pictorial Art: Format and Program."183.

[26]Ch'i, *Autobiography,* 98.

[27]Li and Wang, *Collection*,34.

[28]Lubor Hajek, Adolf Hoffmeister and Eva rychterova. *Contemporary Chinese Painting,* (London: Spring Books, 1961), 31.

[29]*Ch'i Huang: Paintings, Calligraphy and Seals.* (Hong Kong: City Museum and Art Gallery, 1973). 18-20.

[30]Wu Nelson I., "The Chinese Pictorial Art: Format and Program". 180-181.

[31]Ibid.

[32]*Ch'i Huang: Paintings, Calligraphy and Seals.*

[33]For the history of Chinese seal carving see: Fu Pao-shih 傅抱石, History of Chinese Seal Carving, *Fu Pao-shih Mei-shu Wen-chi*傅抱石美術文集. (*Fu Pao-shih's Articles on Art*), (Chingshu Art Publish Co.,1986), 254-275.

[34]Li Tien-sho李天馬 and Wang Ch'eng-dieh 王昌德 ed., *Ch'i Pai-shih Tan-i-lu*談藝錄; (*A Collection of Ch'i Pai-shih's Talking about Art*), (Honan: Honan People's Publish co., 1984), 44.

[35]Fu Pao-shih傅抱石, The Seal Carving of Ch'i Pai-shih, *Fu Pao-shih Mei-shu Wen-chi*傅抱石美術文集 . (*Fu Pao-shih's Articles on Art*), (Chingshu Art Publish Co.,1986), 593-594.

[36]Li and Wang, *Collection,* 44.

[37]Ch'i, *Autobiography,* 94.

[38]*Ta chuan* 大篆 --greater seal character, a style of Chinese calligraphy begun in the Ch'in Dynasty秦朝 .

[39] Li and Wang ed., *Collection*, 36.

[40]*Ch'i Huang: Paintings, Calligraphy and Seals.* 21-22.

[41]Ibid.

[42]It is called the Wei Tablet魏碑 style, which was first used in the Northern Wei Dynasty inscriptions. The style is fairly vigorous, angular and full of strength.

[43]Woo. *Chinese Aeshetics and Ch'i Pai-shih.* 45.

[44]Wu Nelson I., "The Chinese Pictorial Art: Format and Program".

68-70.

[45]Ch'en Fan, *Poetry, Essays, and Seals of Ch'i Pai-shih*, 24, trans. Woo , *Chinese Aeshetics and Ch'i Pai-shih* , 86.

[46]Woo. *Chinese Aeshetics and Ch'i Pai-shih*, 86.

[47]Ibid., p.15, tran. Woo. *Chinese Aeshetics and Ch'i Pai-shih.* 82.

[48]Hsu and Wang, *Ch'i Pai-shih's Paintings*, 65.

[49]see: Li and Wang ed., *Collection*, 32.

[50]see: Ch'i, *Autobiography*, 20.

[51]Ibid., 40.

[52]Ibid., 58.

[53]Ibid.

[54]see: Ch'i, *Autobiography*, 90-91.

55see: Li and Wang ed., *Collection*, 31.

[56] Peach Blossom Spring 桃花源記 is a fictional poem written by Tao Ch'ien 陶淵明 (A.D. 365-427), which told a story about a fisherman who was rowing along a stream aimlessly, until he suddenly found himself passing through a narrow entrance to a wonderland where people enjoy work in the farm, live in peace, without having secure against the vicissitudes of dynastic changes. For more information see: Sun Kang-i 孫康宜 , Six Dynasty Poetry, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).

[57]Hsu and Wang, *Ch'i Pai-shih's Paintings*, 41.

[58]Woo. *Chinese Aeshetics and Ch'i Pai-shih*, 63

[59]Li and Wang ed., *Collections*, 43.

[60]Ibid.

[61]Ch'i, *Autobiography*, 42.

[62]Li and Wang ed. *Collection*, 70-75.

[63]Ibid.71.

[64]Li and Wang ed. *Collection*, 70.

[65]Ch'i, *Autobiography*, 42.

[66]Lu Kuang-chao盧光照, *Ch'i Pai-shih tso-p'in chi*齊白石作品集 (*The works of Ch'i Pai-shih*), (Peking: Jen-min mei-shu, 1963), 1, plate 89.

CHAPTER 3

[1]For the definition of*wen-jen hua*, see Susan Bush,*The Chinese Literati on Painting,* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press,1971).

[2]Under the long and stable reigns of the K'anghsi (康熙,1662-1723) and Ch'ienlung (乾隆,1736-96) emperors, China enjoyed a peaceful period of political stability and economic prosperity. Yangchow揚州, in particular, became a commercial center. The salt merchants of Yangchow, who made huge fortunes in a short time, became the new and enthusiastic patrons of the arts. see Capon, Edmund and Pang Mae Anna. *Chinese Paintings of the Ming and Ch'ing Dynasties XIV-XXth Century*. International Cultural Corporation of Australia Limited. 90-95.

[3]Shanghai became one of the five treaty ports open to foreign trade and residence, as a result of China's defeat in the Opium War with the British and the subsequent treaty of Nanking南京, in 1842.

[4]The Eight Eccentrics of Yangchow are Chin Nung (金農, 1687-1764), Cheng Hsieh (鄭燮,1693-1765), Li Chang (李鱓, 18th century), Wong Shih-shan (汪士慎, mid 18th century), Li Fan-yin (李方膺,1695-1754) Hung Shen (黃慎, 1687-1789), Kau Fon-han (高鳳翰,1683-1743), and Lo P'ing (羅聘,1773-99).

[5]Milena Horakova. *Master of Shanghai School of Painting*. (Prague:

Benesov Nad Ploucnici, 1968). 1-5.

[6]Ledderose Lother, *Mi Fu 米芾 and the Classical Tradition of Chinese Calligraphy*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979).10-12.

[7]The Four Great Masters of Yuan Dynasty are Huang Kung-wang (黃公望 ,1269-1354), Ni Tsan (倪瓚 , 1301-74), Wang Mong (王蒙 ,1308-1386), and Wu Chen (吳鎮 ,1280-1354).

[8]*Ch'i Huang: Paintings, Calligraphy and Seals.* Hong Kong: City Museum and Art Gallery, 1973. 15.

[9]The Four Monks of early Ch'ing Dynasty are Chu Ta, Shih T'ao, Shih Shi (石溪 ,1601-1693), and Hung Jen (弘仁 ,1610-1663).

[10]*Ch'i Huang: Paintings, Calligraphy and Seals.* Hong Kong: City Museum and Art Gallery, 1973. 15-16.

[11]Ibid.16.

[12]Ibid.

[13]Ibid. 16-17.

[14]For the sources of Ch'i Pai-shih's learning see: Ch'i, *Autobiography* and Li and Wang, *Collections.*

[15]For the folk way of appling color see: Yu Fei-an 于非闇 , "The use of color in Chinese Folk Art," *Translation of Art*, (Seattle and London: University of Washington, 1976), 106.

[16]Wang and Li, *Collection* , 62.

[17]Li Ying-ch'iang,*Ts'ung Ch'i Pai-shih t'i-pa yen-chiu Pai-shih lao-jen* 從齊白石題跋看白石老人(*A Study of Ch'i Pai-shih from his Inscriptions*), (Taipei: Wen-shih-che 文史哲 Publish Co., 1977), p.44.

[18]For the poem see: Willam R. Schultz, *The Book of Songs*, (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc. 1971), pp. 21-22.

[19]Wang and Li, *Collection,* 28.

[20]Lai Tan-chang, *Understanding Chinese Painting.* New York: Schocken Books, 1985.182.

[21]Jacques Gernet, *A History of Chinese Civilization*, trans. J.R. Foster, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

[22]The slogan " Chinese learning as the basic substance, Western for practical use" was proposed by a scholar-offical, Ch'ang Chih-tung (張之洞, 1837-1909).

[23]Capon and Pang . *Chinese Paintings of the Ming and Ch'ing Dynasties XIV-XXth Century.* 23.

[24]Ibid.23-24.

[25]For a detailed study of the early twentieth century Chinese literatural movements see: Hung Chang-tai 洪長泰, *Going to the People, Chinese Intellecturals and Folk Literature 1918-1937*, (Massachusettes and London: Havard Unversity Press, Cambridge,1985). pp. 91-93.

[26]Ibid.

[27]Ibid.

[28]Ibid.

[29]For Chen Shih-tsan's theroy of new literati painting see Chiang Hsun , *Chi Pai-shih* 齊白石, (Taipei: Hsiung-shih Publish Co., 1978).18.

[30]Li and Wang, *Collection*, p.44.

[31]Ibid., p.45.

[32]Li Chu-Tsing 李鑄晉 . *Trends in Modern Chinese Painting.* (Switzerland, Ascona: Artibus Asiae Publishers, 1979.)

[33]In May 1942, at Yen'an, the headquarter of Chinese Communists held a conference on problem of art and literature. Mao Tse-tung made two

addresses to this conference, from which these excerpts are taken. For the content of the addresses see: Mao Tse-tung, *Selected works of Mao Tse-tung* , vol.3, (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1965), 69-98.

[34]Chang Arnold, *Painting in the People's Republic of China: The Politics of Style*. (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1980),17-18.

[35]Ibid.34.

[36]Ibid.

[37]Woo. *Chinese Aeshetics and Ch'i Pai-shih*. 42.

CONCLUSION

[1]Milena Horakova, *Master of Shanghai School of Painting*. (Prague: Benesov Nad Ploucnici, 1968). 12.

[2]Several important points in the conclusion are concluded through private communication with Dr. Linda Cooke Johnson, Department of History, Michigan State University.

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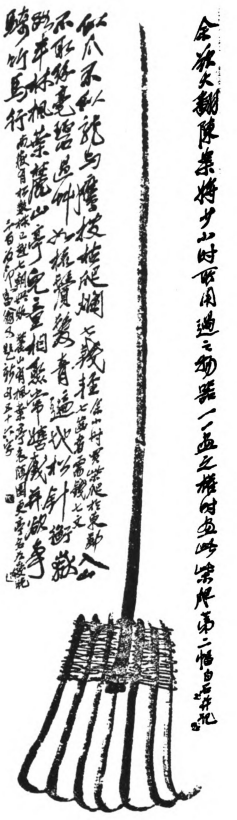

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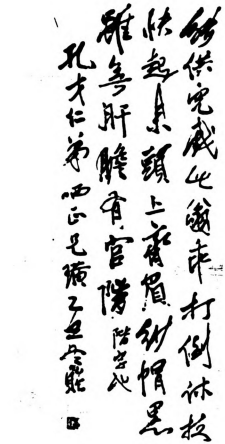

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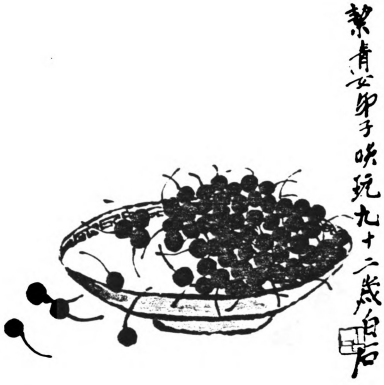

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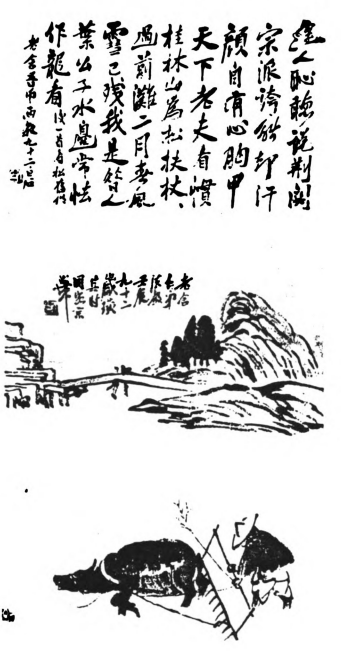

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