Notes

Hsiao-p’iın of the Late Ming: An Introduction

1. For most English-language references, see the Bibliography. Where necessary, page and volume numbering is provided in brackets in text.

2. For the convenience of the Western reader, I have used as an approximate to the Chinese term hsiao-p’iın the word “vignette,” of Old French origin, which has been defined as “a short literary sketch chiefly descriptive and characterized usually by delicacy, wit, and subtlety” (Webster’s Third New International Dictionary, 1981).

3. For Chinese-language references, see the Bibliography. Where necessary, page and section (chüan) numbers are given in brackets in the text.

4. The Six Dynasties (222–589) traditionally referred to the Wu, Eastern Chin, and successive southern dynasties of Sung, Ch’i, Liang, and Ch’een, for all of which Chien-k’ang (modern Nanking) was the capital city.

5. For an English translation of this piece, see Lin Yutang, Translations from the Chinese, pp. 98–99. A more recent rendition is in Strassberg, pp. 63–66.

6. For an English translation of three passages from A Commentary on the Water Classic, see Strassberg, pp. 77–90.

7. Shih-shuo hsıнь-yıı was written by Liu I-ch’ıng (403–44), with supplementary annotations by Liu Ch’un (462–521). There is an English translation by Richard B. Mather.


10. See Yüan’s letter to Ts’ai Yüan-lü in K’o-hsüeh-chai chi, III, p. 1385.

11. Chüan often is translated into English as “volume.” Although the terms match etymologically (both originally meant “a roll of writing”), one must remember that chüan refers to a section of a book, sometimes only a page or two in length.

12. See the Introduction to Lu Jun-hsiang, p. 6; also Chih-p’ıing Chou, Yüan Hung-tao and the Kung-an School, p. 91, p. 139 n. 2.


14. To give just a few examples of single-author works, there were Ch’en Chi-ju’s Wan-hsiang-t’ang hsıao-p’ıın (Vignettes from the Hall of Evening Fragrance), Wang Ssu-jen’s Wen-fan hsıao-p’ıın (Vignettes as literary meals), and Ch’en Jen-hsi’s
(1579–1634) Wu-meng-yüan chi hsiao-p’ìn (A collection of vignettes from the dreamless garden), all titled by the authors themselves. Multiauthor collections of vignettes by the Sung writers Su Shih and Huang T’ing-chien bearing the term hsiao-p’ìn in the title were published during the Wan-li reign, and the extremely popular anthology Huang Ming shih-lu-chia hsiao-p’ìn (Vignettes by sixteen authors of the imperial Ming), compiled by Lu Yün-lung, was printed in 1633. For a list of such works from the late Ming and early Ch’ing periods see Ch’en Wan-i, pp. 26–27.

21. For a short biography of Chang Tai by Fang Chao-ying see Hummel, I, pp. 53–54. Of the several histories of Chinese literature written in English, the only one that refers briefly to Chang Tai and the hsiao-p’ìn wen is that by Lai Ming (pp. 3, 320); it also includes a translation of Chang Tai’s “Harvest Moon on West Lake” (pp. 320–22). More than anyone else, Lin Yutang introduced the hsiao-p’ìn—including a few by Chang Tai, in his elegant but frequently unduly free rendition (often more adaptation than translation)—to the English reader; but Lin’s excellent pioneering work is largely ignored today by Western sinologists and has had little, if any, response in serious critical writings. The only critical reading of Chang Tai is found in Stephen Owen’s Remembrances (pp. 134–41), which provides a fine translation of one of Chang Tai’s autobiographical sketches, his own preface to Dream Memories from the Tao Hut.
23. Many of these publications are included in “Primary Texts” section of the Bibliography. Among the hundreds of new hsiao-p’ìn anthologies published in the last decade, I have found the following three most useful: T’ang Kao-ts’ai, Hu I-ch’eng, and Hsia Hsien-ch’un 1995. Hsia’s anthology is of a remarkably higher academic quality. Two commendable studies of individual hsiao-p’ìn authors are Jen Fang-ch’iu and Hsia Hsien-ch’un 1989.
24. I would just mention a few here. Among the more general studies, I recommend Ch’en Shao-t’ang and Ch’en Wan-ji; and, among studies of individual authors, Liang I-ch’eng on Hsü Wei; and T’ien Su-lan, Yang Te-pen, and Yüan Nai-ling on Yüan Hung-tao.
25. Yale French Studies, no. 64 (1983), edited by Gérard Defaux and entitled Montaigne: Essays in Reading, made an exception by devoting itself to a study of the great
author of *essais*, including two delightfully thoughtful pieces by Tzvetan Todorov and Jean Starobinski.


Kuei Yu-kuang

Foreword to “Reflections on The Book of Documents”

1. The Southern Capital was the city of Nanking, so called to distinguish it from the Northern Capital of Kaifeng (1368) and eventually Peking (1421).

2. *The Book of Documents* is the earliest extant collection of historical documents, political decrees, and government regulations of the ancient Shang and Chou dynasties, canonized during the Han dynasty as one of the six Confucian scriptures.

3. Citation from an essay by the Sung writer Su Shih, “A Note on Wen Yu-k’o’s Painting of the Tall Bamboos in the Yin-tang Valley.” Su also used a variation of the metaphor in his famous poem “The Hundred-Step Waterfall.”

Inscription on the Wall of the Wild Crane Belvedere

1. Liu Kuo (cognomen Taoist of Lung-chou, 1154–1206), a song-lyric poet of the Southern Sung.

The Craggy Gazebo

1. *Chuang-tzu* is an ancient classic attributed to Chuang Chou (369?–286? B.C.E.), respectfully addressed as Master Chuang, or Chuang-tzu, a thinker of the Warring States period.

2. Respectfully addressed as Lao-tzu (real name Li Erh, 604?–531? B.C.E.), he was a legendary thinker and honored as the founder of Taoism. His sayings are found in the classic *Tao te ching*.

3. A picul (*shih*, or “stone”) is about 2.75 bushels, or roughly 22 gallons.

The Hsiang-chi Belvedere

1. Kuei Tao-lung, a distant ancestor of the author’s, once lived at a place called Hsiang-chi Creek in T’ai-ts’ang County, Kiangsu. The belvedere was named in his memory, and the author sometimes used “Master Hsiang-chi” for his cognomen.

2. When a boy was old enough to start learning (at age five or six), his hair was tied up in a knot on top of his head.

3. A court tablet, rectangular in shape and usually made of ivory, jade, or bamboo slips, was held by an official when he went to the imperial court.

4. The author’s maternal great-grandfather was the famous Ming painter Hsia Ch’ang (1388–1470), particularly known for his paintings of the bamboo.
5. The story about Widow Ch’ing of Shu (Szechwan), who made a fortune with her mine of cinnabar (needed for making Taoist longevity pills), was told in Ssu-ma Ch’ien’s *Historical Records* (“The Biography of the Moneymakers”).

6. During the period of the Three Kingdoms, Ts’ao Ts’ao (155–220) was the ruler of Wei, and Liu Pei (161–223) was the ruler of Shu. Liu Pei went to Lung-chung three times to visit the recluse Chu-ko Liang (181–234), who finally agreed to serve under Liu, and was appointed prime minister of Shu.

7. The reference to a frog (who has no idea how big the world is) down in the well is from a fable in the “Autumn Waters” chapter in the classic *Chuang-tzu*. The following passage is a postscript.

Lu Shu-sheng

*Inkslab Den*

1. The phrase “superfluous thing” alludes to an anecdote in the classic *A New Account of Tales of the World* (I, 44). Wang Ch’en called upon his cousin Wang Kung on the latter’s return from a trip to the southeast, and saw him sitting on a summer mat (made of interwoven split bamboo). Thinking that Kung must have obtained a few of those during his trip, Ch’en asked for one. Without a word, Kung had the mat sent over, even though it was the only one in his possession. Later, Ch’en heard about it and was stunned. He told Kung, “I asked you for one because I thought you had quite a few.” Kung answered, “You don’t know me. I am a person who doesn’t own any superfluous thing.”

2. Considered one of the best inkslabs by Chinese calligraphers since the T’ang dynasty, the Tuan inkslab was named after Tuan-chou (Chao-ch’ing in modern times), Kwangtung, the place of its production.

3. The She inkslab, also considered one of the best since the T’ang, was named after She-chou, Anhwei, the place of its production.

4. Men of letters of the Sung dynasty. Ou-yang Hsiu was a leading poet and prose master. Ts’ai Hsiang (1012–67) was one of the Four Masters of Calligraphy of the Sung. Hung Kuo (1117–84) was a famous collector and epigraphist. The inkstone used to make the She inkslab is found at Dragon-Tail Hill in She-chou, so the She inkslab is sometimes also called the Dragon-Tail inkslab.

5. This alludes to an anecdote from *History of the Chin* (Chin-shu) about Wang Hsien-chih (344–86), the son of Wang Hsi-chih and a renowned calligrapher himself. One night, while Hsien-chih was lying on his bed, a couple of burglars entered his room and began taking everything. After a while Hsien-chih calmly said, “Thieves, the black felt blanket is an old relic of my family. You had better put it down.” The burglars were startled and ran away. The phrase “black felt blanket” has thenceforth referred to a keepsake or relic.

*Bitter Bamboo*

1. In the Ming dynasty, Chiang-nan (lit., “South of the River”) referred to the Yang-tze River delta, which included southern Kiangsu and parts of Chekiang and Anhwei.
A Trip to Wei Village

1. Ts'ung-wen Gate was one of the city gates of Peking.
2. Wang Wei (701–61), the great T'ang poet and painter, served as assistant director of the Department of State Affairs. The cited line is from one of his court poems in heptasyllabic regulated verse, which tells about a spring outing in the rain.
3. T'ao Yüan-ming, alias T'ao Ch'ien (365–427), was a great poet of the Southern Dynasties (Eastern Chin and Sung). Here the author jokingly called the cool wind “T'ao Yüan-ming's old friend” in an allusion to what T'ao once wrote in a letter to his sons: “I often say that during the fifth and sixth [lunar] months, while lying down under the northern windows, whenever a cool wind arises, I would consider myself someone from remote antiquity.”

A Short Note about My Six Attendants in Retirement

1. The kingdoms of Yen and Chao of the period of Warring States were located in the region of northern China that is now Hopei and part of Shansi.
2. The Five Sacred Mountains are T'ai-shan in Shantung, Heng-shan in Hunan, Hua-shan in Shansi, Heng-shan in Hopei, and Sung-shan in Honan, representing respectively the mountain gods of the east, south, west, north, and center. Emperors of different dynasties since the Han had made sacrifices to these mountains, and they were sanctified by Emperor T'ai-tsu of the Ming.
3. Tsung Ping (375–443) was a painter of the Southern Dynasties (Sung). He had traveled widely in his life, and when he was too old to do so, he painted on walls the landscapes he had seen, saying, “I now clear my mind to watch the Tao, and make my recumbent travels.”
4. Two anecdotes are used here in allusion. The former is from the “T’an Kung” section in the The Book of Rites. When Confucius’s pet dog died, the Master asked his disciple Tzu-kung to have it buried, saying, “I have heard that one does not throw away worn-out draperies so that they may be used to bury one’s horse, that one does not throw away worn-out canopies so that they may be used to bury one’s dog.” The latter is from the biography of Wei Hsiung in History of the Northern Dynasties (Pei-shih). Wei Hsiung paid a visit to a governor. On departure, the governor gave Hsiung his own horse with all its fancy trappings. Hsiung declined, saying, “In the old days one would not throw away dropped hairpins and old shoes, because one would hate to go out wearing them but to come back without them. Although I cannot match those good people of the past in my behavior, nor would I like to discard old things and pick up new ones.” So he went home on his own old horse. Both stories involve tenderness for things that have been in one’s possession for a long time.

Inscription on Two Paintings in My Collection

1. “Fine brushwork” (kung-pi) is a genre of traditional Chinese painting characterized by close attention to detail.
2. Han Huang and his student Tai Sung were T’ang masters who specialized in painting cattle.
3. Han Yü was a great prose writer, poet, and statesman. His “Note on a Painting” is a frequently anthologized prose piece.

Inscription on a Portrait of Tung-p’o
Wearing Bamboo Hat and Clogs

1. The painting for which this piece was written, long since lost, was said to be a self-portrait by Su Shih (cognomen Tung-p’o Chü-shih, or Lay Buddhist of Eastern Slope) during his exile. This one was probably an imitation. The bamboo hat is one with a shaped crown and brim, made of interwoven thin strips of bamboo stem, habitually worn by farmers and fishermen.

Hsü Wei

To Ma Ts’e-chih

Ma Ts’e-chih was a student of Hsü. This short note was probably written in late 1576, when the author was serving as a private secretary to fellow townsman and former classmate Wu Tui, the Grand Coordinator of Hsüan-fu Prefecture on the northern frontier.

1. The heatable brick bed (k’ang), which serves as a desk as well as a bed, is still widely used in northern China today.

2. Water chestnuts and bamboo shoots are delicacies generally available only in the Chiang-nan area.

Another Colophon

This is the second of two colophons inscribed on the same scroll. A model script (t’ieh) is the copy of a text by a calligraphy master that is used by students as a model for imitation. “The Seventeenth” is a famous “cursive style” model calligraphic script by Wang Hsi-chih. The holograph was a personal letter that started with the characters shih ch’i jih (the seventeenth day), hence the title. The Court of the Imperial Stud was principally responsible for the management of state horse pasturage throughout the empire and for the maintenance of related vehicles and gear.

A Dream

1. Lit., “a sardonic grin.”

Li Chih

Three Fools

1. Li Pai-yao (565–648) was a famous historian of the T’ang dynasty.
In Praise of Liu Hsieh

1. “Learner of the Tao” (Tao-hsüeh) referred to those who engaged themselves in the study of what has been frequently translated in a narrow sense into English as Neo-Confucianism, the school of learning that assimilated Taoism and Buddhism in a reexamination of Confucianism, established by the Sung thinkers Chou Tun-i (1017–73), the brothers Ch’eng I (1032–85) and Ch’eng Hao (1033–1107), and Chu Hsi (1130–1200). Their followers were often accused of affectation and hypocrisy. The “three cardinal guides” (sovereign guides subject, father guides son, and husband guides wife) and “five constant virtues” (benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and trustworthiness) were established by Confucians of the Han dynasty. “Human relationship” (jen-lun) refers to the Confucian ethics regarding the relationships between sovereign and subject, father and son, husband and wife, elder and younger siblings, and friends.

2. Confucius is the Latinized form of K’ung-fu-tzu, or Master K’ung, traditionally the respectful form of address for the great Chinese thinker K’ung Ch’iu (styled Chung-ni, 551–479 B.C.E.).

3. Liu Hsieh, who received the degree of Metropolitan Graduate during the Lung-ch’ing reign, was once appointed magistrate of Yü-ch’ing County, Kiangsi.

4. These two anonymous lines (pentasyllabic in the original), found on the wall of a wayside inn in Szechwan, were cited in a volume of “remarks on poetry” (shih-hua) by the Sung author T’ang Keng (1070–1120). They were popularized through Chu Hsi’s quotation.

5. Hsi-huang, or Fu-hsi, a legendary ruler in ancient China, was one of the Three Sovereigns (San Huang) glorified by Confucius as early sages.

Inscription on a Portrait of Confucius at the Iris Buddhist Shrine

1. All quotations are from the Confucian classics The Analects (the sayings of Confucius and his disciples) and Mencius (Meng-tzu; the sayings of Mencius), which were among the Four Books canonized by Chu Hsi.

2. The Iris Buddhist Shrine was a lodge built by the author’s friends to be used as a private chapel for his Buddhist studies as well as for his residence. It was located by the Dragon Pool northeast of the city of Ma-ch’eng.

Essay: On the Mind of a Child

This more formal essay is included here along with hsiao-p’in by Li Chih because of its significance among his works.

1. The Western Chamber is a famous play about a romantic love affair written by the playwright Wang Shih-fu of the Yuan dynasty.

2. Yen Chün, a thinker of the T’ai-chou school and contemporary of the author’s, is known by his “style” name, Mountain Farmer. Some have regarded it as a cognomen of Li Chih himself.

3. This is from a proverb: “When a short person watches a stage performance, he can only echo the comments of others [because he cannot see by himself].”
4. *The Old Poems* (Ku shih) are a group of nineteen poems, written in pentasyllabic verse during the late second century. *The Anthology* refers to the poems included in the *Wen hsüan* (An anthology of literature), compiled by Hsiao T'ung (501–31), Prince Chao-ming of the Liang dynasty. Both have been considered models par excellence for later poets.

5. Here the author ridicules the retrogressive concepts of literary history promoted by contemporary neoclassicists such as the Later Seven Masters, who maintained that one should model only after the pre-Ch'in works in prose writing, and only up to the High T'ang works in poetry composition.

6. The “new forms” refer to the several forms of “regulated verse” (*lű-shih*) that began to flourish in the T'ang dynasty.

7. *Ch'üan-ch'i* (lit., “transmission of the strange”) is a literary term whose definition has varied in different ages. Here it probably refers to the short classical prose fiction that was popular during the late T'ang dynasty. It was also used for drama in the Ming dynasty.

8. *Yüan-pen* is a generic name for the early drama during the Jurchen Chin reign (1115–1234) in northern China.

9. *Tsa-chü* is a generic name for the drama of the Mongol Yüan dynasty.

10. *Water Margin* is a novel, attributed to Shih Nai-an (1296?–1370?), that tells the story of a band of robbers.

11. The Six Classics are *The Book of Songs* (Shih ching), *The Book of Documents, The Book of Rites, The Book of Music* (Yüeh ching; no longer extant), *The Book of Changes* (I ching) and *The Spring and Autumn Annals* (Ch’un ch’iu), canonized as Confucian scriptures during the Han dynasty.

**T’u Lung**

A Letter in Reply to Li Wei-yin

1. During the Han dynasty the Orchid Terrace (Lan-t’ai) was the Imperial Archives; by the T'ang dynasty the name was used for the Department of Palace Library, also known as the Orchid Department (Lan-sheng). In later usage the term often referred to one of the departments of the central government. Here it refers to the Ministry of Rites, where the author served.

2. The Ch’in-huai River, a tributary of the Yangtze in southeastern Kiangsu, flows through the city of Nanking.

3. The “Clear Void” is a Taoist term that refers to a pure mind in harmony with the Tao, or the Way of Nature.

4. Tsou Yüan-piao (1551–1624) was an official and philosopher. He won the degree of Metropolitan Graduate in the same year as T’u Long (1577).

5. Traditionally, “Sagacious Sovereign” referred to the ruler in power.

6. Moling was an ancient county in Kiangsu near Nanking. Here it refers to Nanking. In 1584 Tsou Yüan-piao was demoted to serve in the Ministry of Justice there.

7. In classical literary usage, the term “beautiful one” was often used for a person one admired, especially an ideal Confucian personality.
To a Friend, while Staying in the Capital

1. Here Yen refers to the capital, Peking. The capital of the ancient dukedom (since the 11th cent. B.C.E.) and later the kingdom (332–221 B.C.E.) of Yen was located in what is now the southwestern part of Peking.
2. Ch’ang-an (modern Sian or Hsi-an) was the capital of many dynasties. Here it is a synonym for the capital, i.e., Peking.

To a Friend, after Coming Home in Retirement

1. The Gate of Splendor was one of the gates of the city of Ch’ang-an, the capital city during the T’ang dynasty. Here it refers to one of the city gates of Peking.
2. Built in 644 at the foot of Mount Li-shan in Ling-t’ung County near Ch’ang-an, the Hua-ch’ing Palace, which housed a hot spring, became the famous setting of the amorous relationship between the T’ang emperor Hsüan-tsung (r. 712–55) and his concubine Yang Yü-huan. It was burned down in the rebellion that started in 755. Here it refers to the imperial palace in general.
3. O-p’ang Palace was built by order of the First Emperor of the Ch’in empire (r. 221–210 B.C.E.). It was never completed, and the front part of the palace, built in 221 B.C.E., was destroyed with the fall of the empire in the year 206 B.C.E. The Mi-lou (lit., “Tower To Get Lost In”) was a labyrinth constructed during the reign of the Sui emperor Yang-ti (605–17), who indulged himself in all kinds of sensual pleasures inside.
4. The ancient kingdoms of Wu and Yüeh were located in southeastern China (mainly modern Kiangsu and Chekiang).

Ch’en Chi-ju

Trips to See Peach in Bloom

1. The Birthday of the Flowers was celebrated on the second, twelfth, or fifteenth day (varying geographically) of the second month in the Chinese lunar calendar. Judging from the context, here it refers to the twelfth day.
2. “Red rain” refers to the falling of flower petals caused by the activity of the visitors.
3. In the Ming, an administrator (ch’ang-shih) was the chief executive official in a princely establishment. Here it probably refers to Yüan Tsung-tao, who served as a secretary to the heir apparent.
4. This Mr. T’ien (lit., “Mr. Farmer”) may be the same old man whose property the author and his friends trespassed on the previous day.
5. “Guessing the fist” (ts’ai ch’üan) was a finger-guessing game traditionally played at drinking parties for a wager of who should drink more.
6. The ending here refers to the famous poem “Peach Blossom Fountain” and its prose preface written by the poet and recluse T’ao Yüan-ming, in which he described how a fisherman coincidentally came to a secluded mountain valley and was told by local residents that they had fled from upheavals during the Ch’in dynasty.
“Inquiring about the ferry,” a phrase quoted from the prose preface, has become a synonym for adventure or exploration. “Gentleman Summoned to Office” (Cheng-chün) was a common unofficial reference to one who was nominated by local authorities for possible official appointment, regardless of whether he accepted. T’ao served in several insignificant positions on assignments from local authorities. The author himself, who was repeatedly recommended to the court but never accepted any appointment, was often addressed by his friends by the same title.

Inscription on Wang Chung-tsun’s *A History of Flowers*

1. Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism.
2. A “low cap” (in contrast to the peaked cap worn by officials) was one for commoners, according to historical records of the T’ang dynasty. The phrase “long-bearded” comes from Han Yü’s “Poem Sent to Lu T’ung”: “I have a long-bearded servant who leaves his hair in a tousle / And a barefooted old maid who has no more teeth left.” Both are used here as epithets for servants.
3. The friend was poking fun at the author with a pun here. Traditional Chinese astrologers referred to one’s love experience as “the peach flower in destiny.” “Brow Taoist” refers to the author’s cognomen, Mei-kung, or Master Brow.
4. The author’s retort involves another astrological concept: when the Post-Horse Star is over someone’s destiny, he or she would be doomed to make long journeys or to relocate.
5. When Liu Pei was still subordinate to Ts’ao Ts’ao, who later became his rival, he lived in seclusion and spent his time planting vegetables and “watering his garden,” so as to hide his ambitions from the latter, who suspected him to be a future rival.
6. “Those who fly and eat meat” are power-hungry officials. In the history classic *Tso’s Commentary* (*Tso chuan*), Ts’ao Mei, a recluse, came to the rescue of the duke of Lu when the army of the Ch’i dukedom invaded Lu in the year 684. He told the duke, “Those who eat meat are vulgar, short-sighted people not worth counseling.” The term “meat eater” has since become an epithet for government officials.

A Colophon to *A History of Flowers*

1. The “twenty-one histories” refers to the official dynastic histories from Ssuma Ch’ien’s *Historical Records* down to *The History of the Yuán*. During the reign of Emperor Kao-tsung of the Manchu dynasty, three more were added to the list, and afterward the phrase “twenty-four histories” stood for all of the official dynastic histories.

A Colophon to *A Profile of Yao P’ing-chung*

Yao P’ing-chung was a military general during the Northern Sung dynasty who led, beginning at the age of eighteen, many victorious battles against invading troops from the northwestern state of the Western Hsia. In 1126, after an unsuccessful night raid against the troops of the northeastern state of the Jurchen Chin, he
disappeared into the Blue Castle Mountains (Ch’ing-ch’eng-shan) in Szechwan and remained there in hiding until half a century later, when he was a senile person in his eighties. A Profile of Yao P’ing-chung was written by the Southern Sung poet and writer Lu Yu (1125–1210) and included by Ch’en Chi-ju in his anthology A Selection of Extra-Canonical Classical Prose (Ku-wen p’in-wai lu).

1. Lady Li was a favorite consort of the Martial Emperor of the Han (r. 140–87 B.C.E.). General Ma was Ma Yüan (14 B.C.E.–C.E. 49), who in the year of C.E. 41 was given the title Waves-Riding General (Fu-po Chiang-chün) and enfeoffed as a marquis for his military accomplishments. The author seems to have made a mistake here, as Lady Li is known to have died a young woman.

2. Hsi-tzu (alias Hsi Shih), a famous beauty of the fifth century B.C.E., was a native of the state of Yüeh. She agreed to seduce King Fu-ch’ai (r. 493–473 B.C.E.) of the Wu kingdom and became his favorite consort. After the elimination of the Wu kingdom she is said to have gone into seclusion. In pre-Ch’in usage the term “Five Lakes” refers to Lake T’ai-hu in southern Kiangsu.

3. The legendary dragon (lung) was regarded as divine and ruler of the sea.

Selections from Privacies in the Mountains

1. The night was divided into five periods of approximately two hours each. At the beginning of each period the official night watchman would beat the watch from the drum tower or in the streets.

2. Smaller Mount K’un-shan, located in northwest Sung-chiang Prefecture in Kiangsu, is so called to distinguish it from Horse Saddle Hill (see Kuei Yu-kuang’s “Inscription on the Wall of the Wild Crane Belvedere”), which is also called Mount K’un-shan, in nearby K’un-shan County.

3. “Plum rain” refers to the season of intermittent rains and drizzles, usually in April and May, in the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze.

3. Many popular Chinese ornamental plants have no common English names. Both the mei-hua (Prunus mume) and li-hua (Prunus salicina) fall under the English word “plum,” a general term for any species of the genus Prunus. The American (Prunus americana) and European (Prunus domestica) species of Prunus are close to the li-hua, but quite different from the mei-hua referred to here, which is the earliest to flower. I have rendered it as “early plum” or attached its Latin name in brackets to mark the difference.

2. A “versifying soul” is a poet.

4. Mulberry leaves are fed to silkworms.

7. The “plum wind” is that in the humid season of the “plum rain.”

2. The water-shield (Brasenia schreberi) is an aquatic plant, the leaves and tender stems of which are considered a delicacy. The best are from West Lake in Hangchow.
The perch (*Lateolabrax japonicus*) is a prized fish found in brackish water near the coast. The reference to these two delicacies carries an allusion to an anecdote in *A New Account of Tales of the World* (VII, 10). During the Chin dynasty Chang Han, a native of Wu, was serving under Prince Ch’i in the capital of Loyang. One day when the autumn wind arose, Chang suddenly missed the “water-shield soup” and “minced perch” of Chiang-nan. He said, “We are supposed to enjoy ourselves in life. How could anyone get trapped in official duties and stay thousands of miles away from home in search of fame and rank?” Soon afterward he left for home.

8

1. The Peaks are the several hills (Mount She-shan, etc.) located in Sung-chiang Prefecture, Kiangsu. Lake Mao, also known as the Three Maos (upper, middle, and lower), which lay west of Sung-chiang, has vanished today due to silting.

2. Ching-k’ou was an ancient city sited at what is now Chen-chiang, Kiangsu, at the crossing of the Grand Canal and the Yangtze. Ch’ien-t’ang is an old name for Hangchow. The Chiang-nan section of the Grand Canal leads from Chen-chiang all the way to Hangchow.

**Yüan Tsung-tao**

**Little Western Paradise**

1. Built in 1189–92, Lu-kou Bridge spans the Yung-ting River in the southwestern suburbs of Peking.

2. “Western Paradise” originally referred to the Buddhist Pure Land in the “west,” i.e., India. “Little Western Paradise” was a name given to one of the peaks in the Stone Scriptures Hills (Shih-ching-shan) in the southwestern suburbs of Peking.

3. The *kung* originally was an ancient bronze drinking vessel, usually with a lid in the shape of an animal’s head. Here it probably just refers to a large goblet.

**A Trip to Sukhāvatī Temple**

1. Sukhāvatī Temple (Chi-lo Ssu), outside the Western City Gate of Peking, was a popular tourist spot during the Ming dynasty. Sukhāvatī is the Sanskrit term for “pure land” or “paradise.”

2. Su Embankment, about 1.7 miles in length, which spans West Lake in Hangchow and divides it into the Inner Lake and the Outer Lake, was built when the great Sung poet Su Shih was governor of Hangchow and is so called in his memory. Along the embankment are the famous Six Bridges, which have been popular tourist spots. Ch’ien-t’ang County was the seat of the governments of Chekiang Province and Hangchow Prefecture during the Ming dynasty.

**A Trip to Yüeh-yang**

1. Stonehead (Shih-shou) is a county in southern Hupei adjacent to Hunan. Yüeh-yang is a city on the southern bank of the Yangtze in northeast Hunan. In the
old days Chinese women wore their hair in a bun or coil in the shape of a conch shell.

2. In the Ming dynasty a Cultivated Talent (Hsiu-ts’ai) was one who passed the civil service examination at the county level and was admitted to the prefectural school.

3. “Liu the Cultivated Talent” refers to Liu I, the title hero of a T’ang short story (ch’uan-ch’i) by Li Ch’ao-wei, “A Biography of Liu I,” which tells about Liu’s adventure in the underwater palace of the dragons.

Selections from Miscellanea

2

1. There are more rivers and lakes in south China than in the north, hence the stereotype.

2. An allusion to a passage in Chuang-tzu (VIII, “Double Toes”): “A duck has short legs, but if we stretch them, it will be unhappy. A crane has long legs, but if we cut them short, it will be sad.”

5

1. Po Chü-yi (772–846) is arguably the best-known Chinese poet internationally. He was extremely popular in Korea and Japan even in his lifetime. According to his biography in the official History of the T’ang, every time he composed some new poems, handwritten copies were sold at a high price. His poems were made into songs that singing girls all tried to learn. In Korea merchants from China who presented new poems by Po to the prime minister received a piece of gold for each one. Po is well known to the English-speaking public, probably more so than most Chinese poets, through Arthur Waley’s graceful translation. Po was once appointed Junior Mentor of the heir apparent, a position that was sometimes referred to as “secretary” (she-jen).

2. During the T’ang dynasty, Rooster Woods (Chi-lin) was a Chinese name for Korea, or, to be more specific, the kingdom of Shilla (Hsin-lo), which unified most of the Korean peninsula in the mid-seventh century. In the year 663 the T’ang emperor issued an order to make Shilla the prefecture of the Rooster Woods and to appoint the king of Shilla as its governor-general.

Yüan Hung-tao

First Trip to West Lake

1. According to Chang Tai’s Searching for West Lake in Dreams, the Celebration Temple (Chao-ch’ing Ssu) was first built in the tenth century, during the period of the Five Dynasties, in celebration of the eightieth birthday of Ch’ien Liu (852–932), who was enfeoffed by the emperor of the Later Liang as the king of Wu-Yueh.

2. Prince Tung-o was the title of Ts’ao Ts’ao’s son, the poet Ts’ao Chih (192–232), who wrote a rhapsody on the goddess of the River Lo.

3. Tzu-kung was the “style” name of Ho Wen-chuan, who served the author as his personal secretary between 1594 and 1607.
4. Yüeh’s Tomb is that of Yüeh Fei (1103–42), the Southern Sung military general who led many victorious battles against the invading Jurchen Chin troops but was later wrongfully maligned and summarily executed.

5. T’ao Wang-ling (1562–1609), a writer and thinker, was a close friend of the author’s.

Waiting for the Moon: An Evening Trip to the Six Bridges

1. Chang Kung-fu (Chang Tzu), grandson of the famous Sung general Chang Chün (1086–1154), had his Shining Jade Hall built by West Lake, where he is said to have planted more than three hundred early plum (Prunus mume) trees.

2. The Broken Bridge (Tuan Ch’iao) is located at the foot of Solitary Hill by West Lake. It was originally named Pao-yu Bridge, but has been called the Broken Bridge since the T’ang dynasty, as the road that leads from Solitary Hill terminates (“breaks”) at the bridge.

A Trip to the Six Bridges after a Rain

1. The Cold Food Day, usually in early April, was a day when people were supposed not to make a fire and therefore had to eat cold food.

Mirror Lake

1. Mirror Lake (Chien Hu) is in southern Shao-hsing Prefecture, Chekiang. It was also known as Director Ho’s Pond (Ho-chien Ch’ih).

2. Ho Chih-chang (659–744) was a T’ang poet and a close friend of the great poet Li Po (701–62). Ho once served as director of the Palace Library (mi-shu-chien), an appointment in charge of archival and editorial work. For a short period (662–70) during the T’ang, when the Palace Library was called the Orchid Terrace, the director was known as the Grand Scribe (T’ai-shih)—the same title held by the author’s friend T’ao Wang-ling, hence the allusion.

3. Li Po, a legendary alcoholic, was sometimes called the Banished Immortal.

A Trip to Brimming Well

1. “Yen” refers to Peking. The southwestern part of the city was the location of the ancient city of Chi, the capital of Yen, one of the feudal states during the Chou dynasty and the period of the Warring States.

2. The Flowers Day Festival is another name for the Birthday of the Flowers. See note 1 to Ch’en Chi-ju’s “Trips to See Peach in Bloom.”

3. Brimming Well, in the northeastern suburbs of Peking, was a place for sightseeing during the Ming dynasty. There was a fountain spring there, the water of which was said to be frequently overflowing over its brim, hence the name.

4. The author was at this time an educational official at the Confucian school in Shun-t’ien Prefecture.
A Trip to High Beam Bridge

1. During the Ming dynasty, High Beam Bridge spanned the High Beam River, which rose in the Western Hills and flowed east all the way into the imperial palace, where it was called the Jade River.
2. In Ming usage, classmates (t’ung-nien) were those who passed the prefectural or metropolitan civil service examination in the same year.

A Biography of the Stupid but Efficient Ones

1. Master of Stone was the author’s cognomen.
2. The swallow is known to habitually build its nest under the eaves of houses. As noted in the ancient classic Erh-ya, the stork was capable of catching the hunter’s arrow and throwing it back. It was observed in the ancient classic Classic of Birds (Ch’in-ching) that “the turtledove is stupid but safe.” According to the footnote by the Chin writer Chang Hua (232–300), although the turtledove is so stupid it doesn’t even know how to build a nest, it just takes over the nest of another bird, notably a magpie’s, and stays in perfect ease there.
3. A “capping” ceremony was held for a young man at his twentieth birthday as a symbol of achieving adulthood.

Essay: A Biography of Hsü Wen-ch’ang

This more formal essay is included here along with hsiao-p’in by Yüan Hung-tao because of its significance among his works.
1. As commander-in-chief of the troops of several southeastern provinces, Hu Tsung-hsien led many battles against invading Japanese pirates and other insurgents. In 1558 he captured two white deer (considered an auspicious sign) in Chekiang and presented them to Emperor Shih-tsung. Hsü Wei wrote a memorial to the throne for the occasion on his behalf.
2. Liu T’an, a renowned man of letters and a wit, was once a private secretary of Prime Minister Ssu-ma Yü, who later became Emperor Chien-wen of the Eastern Chin (r. 371–72). Tu Fu, the famous T’ang poet, was once a private secretary of Yen Wu, military commissioner of Szechwan.
3. As writers of classical prose, Han Yü and Tseng Kung (1019–83) were ranked among the Eight Prose Masters of the T’ang and Sung.
4. Ou-yang Hsiu, a Northern Sung poet and author, was another of the Eight Prose Masters of the T’ang and Sung.
5. Chang Yüan-pien (1538–88), who won the title of Optimus (chuang-yüan, “first place”) in the Metropolitan Examination of 1571, was Chang Tai’s great-grandfather.
Yüan Chung-tao

Foreword to *The Sea of Misery*

This preface for an anthology of poetry compiled by the author provides a glimpse into the mind of the young Chung-tao, who was only fifteen years old at the time.

1. Yüan Sung was governor of Wu-chün during the Chin dynasty. This refers to an anecdote in *A New Account of Tales of the World* (XXIII, 43).
2. “Transcendence” (*t’an tu*) here refers to the Mahayana Buddhist belief that one should help others in their enlightenment in addition to achieving enlightenment oneself.
3. According to the ancient classic *The Book of Chou Officialdom* (*Chou li*), which is about the hierarchy, rites, and government structure of the Chou dynasty, the Chime-maker was a low-ranking official in charge of the making of chimes. Here the term refers to the author’s social status (as a prefectural school student) at the time.

Shady Terrace

1. The suburbs of Ch’ang-an refers here to the capital, i.e., Peking.

Selections from *Wood Shavings of Daily Life*

*Wood Shavings of Daily Life* (*Yu-chü fei-lu*) is the author’s diary from 1608 to 1618; the entries in it are mostly undated and probably were not written on a daily basis.

3

1. Matteo Ricci (1552–1610) was a Jesuit missionary from Italy. “Attendant” (*shih-t’sung*) refers vaguely to someone honored with an interview with the emperor.
2. Wang Yang was probably Wang Chi (styled Tzu-yang, d. 48 B.C.E.), a Han dynasty official who was known to live in luxury at home despite a reputation for being free from corruption. Hence he was suspected of possessing the power of alchemy.

4

1. From the twenty-second of the eighth month until the sixth of the ninth month of the year 1610, Yüan Chung-tao’s daily diary entries provide a detailed description of how Hung-tao fell sick and died.

5

1. Yü’s Tripod is a bronze vessel cast in the late Western Chou period (9th–8th cent. B.C.E.), so called because the inscription on it is a brief account of the military accomplishments of Yü, the founder of the legendary Hsia dynasty. The legendary Mirror of Ch’in, which was said to have the magical power of seeing through one’s body and revealing one’s mind, was in the possession of the First Emperor of Ch’in.
Chung Hsing

Flower-Washing Brook

1. The Bridge of Ten Thousand Li (Wan-li Ch’iao) in the southern part of the city of Ch’eng-tu, originally the Comet Bridge (Ch’ang-hsing Ch’iao), was renamed after a saying of Chu-ko Liang’s. When Fei I was sent on diplomatic errands to the kingdom of Wu, Chu-ko Liang held a farewell party for him at the bridge and remarked, “A travel of ten thousand li is about to start from your first step.”

2. When Tu Fu came to Szechwan, he first lived in the western suburbs of Ch’eng-tu, where he named his residence the Flower-Washing Thatched Cottage.

3. The Black Sheep Palace is a T’ang dynasty Taoist temple. The name is based upon a legend about how Lao-tzu, canonized as the founder of Taoism, once visited this place on the back of a black sheep.

4. From one of Tu Fu’s poems, Kuan-hsien County was also known as Kuan-k’ou (lit., “mouth of the Kuan River”) in earlier times.

5. Commandant Chu-ko Liang’s Shrine still stands in the suburbs of Ch’eng-tu today.

6. Tu Fu was once appointed vice-director of the Ministry of Works and traditionally was often referred to by his official title. Vice-Director Tu’s Shrine, located at the site of the Flower-Washing Thatched Cottage rebuilt during the Sung dynasty, is still a favorite tourist attraction.

7. Tu Fu has often been referred to as Tu the Senior so as to distinguish him from Tu Mu (803–52?), a later poet who was called Tu the Junior, though unrelated to the former.

8. After Yen Wu’s death, Tu Fu moved from Ch’eng-tu to K’uei-chou (K’uei-meng) along the Yangtze and lived in a place called the Eastern Garrison, so named because it was the site where Kung-sun Shu (d. c.e. 36), a warlord of the Eastern Han, led his garrison troops to open up wasteland east of K’uei-chou for agriculture.

9. This is from the biography of Confucius in Ssu-ma Ch’ien’s Historical Records.

10. Ching-ling, the author’s native town, was a part of the ancient kingdom of Ch’u.

To Ch’en Chi-ju

Ch’en Chi-ju was sixteen years older than Chung.

A Colophon to My Poetry Collection

1. “Notable” (ming shih) originally referred to one who had become famous but had no official appointment. In the late Ming context the term became fashionable and was principally used for literati who chose not to adhere to social norms. The author was obviously contemptuous of those who claimed to be such notables.
A Colophon to A Drinker’s Manual

1. One of Ts’ao Ts’ao’s poems starts with the carpe diem lines “In front of wine, one is to sing! / How brief human life is.”
2. Hsieh An (320–85) was a statesman of the Eastern Chin. In 383, when he served as prime minister during Emperor Hsiao-wu-ti’s reign (373–96), the Eastern Chin troops, numbering some eighty thousand men, defeated the invading army (who claimed to be nine hundred thousand strong) of the northern regime of the Former Ch’in in the famous Battle of Fei-shui. This anecdote about Hsieh An is found in A New Account of Tales of the World (VI, 35).
3. One tan equals approximately 26 gallons. Notice the literary hyperbole here.
4. Li Po, who wrote many poems about drinking, was known as one of the Eight Immortals among Drinkers.
5. The Analects (X, 8).
6. From Ssu-ma Ch’ien’s Historical Records (“The Biographies of the Humorists”). This was Ch’un-yü K’un’s response to a question from King Wei-wang about his capacity for drinking. Ch’un-yü was an erudite scholar who served under the king of the Ch’i during the period of the Warring States. A tou equals approximately 2.6 gallons; 10 tou equal one tan.

Inscription on My Portrait

1. P’ei Tu (765–839) was a T’ang dynasty statesman.

Li Liu-fang

A Short Note about My Trips to Tiger Hill

1. The Mid-Autumn Festival falls on the fifteenth day of the eighth month in the Chinese lunar calendar. The full moon on that night is equivalent to the English “harvest moon” (the full moon nearest the autumnal equinox).
2. This line alludes to a famous remark by Confucius in The Analects (IX, 27): “Only in the depth of winter do we realize that the pine and the cypress are the last to shed their leaves.”

A Short Note about My Trips to Boulder Lake

1. Boulder Lake (Shih Hu) is southwest of Soochow. To its north is Horizontal Pond, to its southwest is Lake T’ai-hu, and to its east is the Grand Canal at the Hsü Gate of Soochow City. The Sung poet Fan Ch’eng-ta (1126–93), who lived there in retirement, adopted the cognomen Lay Buddhist at Boulder Lake.
2. Meng-yang was the “style” name of Ch’eng Chia-sui (1565–1644). As poets and landscape painters, Ch’eng and the author, along with T’ang Shih-sheng (1551–1636) and Lou Chien (1567–1631), were known as the Four Masters of Chia-t’ing. Ch’eng was also one of the Nine Painter Friends.
3. “Height-ascending,” usually a drinking party atop a hill, is a custom observed on the Double Ninth Festival (the ninth day of the ninth month of the lunar calendar). It originated from a story in a collection of supernatural tales by Wu Chün (469–520) of the Liang dynasty. Fei Chang-fang, a Taoist of the Eastern Han period, once told his disciple Huan Ching that his family was to suffer a disaster on the ninth day of the ninth month. To avoid the disaster, everyone in the family had to tie a bagful of ailanthus prickly ash (*Zanthoxylum ailanthoides*) flowers and leaves around the arm, ascend to a high place, and drink some wine brewed with chrysanthemum flowers. Huan did as he was instructed and took his family atop a hill. When they went home at dusk they found that all the fowl, dogs, cattle, and sheep left there were dead.

**Inscriptions on An Album of Recumbent Travels in Chiang-nan**

**Horizontal Pond**

1. Hsü Gate, named in memory of Wu Tzu-hsü (d. 484 B.C.E.), the military commander of the ancient kingdom of Wu, is in the western city wall of Soochow, formerly the capital of Wu. The Ch’ang Gate is also along the western city wall.

2. Wu-lin, also known as Ling-yin Hill, is in the western suburbs of Hangchow. The term is often used to refer to Hangchow in general.

**Boulder Lake**

1. “Cap-dropping party” refers to an anecdote in *A New Account of Tales of the World* (VII, 16). The handsome Meng Chia, who was the maternal grandfather of the poet T’ao Yüan-ming, once attended a “height-ascending” party with his colleagues. All in the company except Meng were dressed in formal military attire, but he was admired by everyone for his graceful carriage when he sat and drank at ease, unaware that the wind had blown his cap off.

**Tiger Hill**

1. This alludes to a story from the ancient classic *Lü’s Spring and Autumn Annals* (*Lü-shih ch’un-ch’iu*), compiled by retainers of Lü Pu-wei (d. 235 B.C.E.), the prime minister of the kingdom of Ch’in. Deserted by all his family and relatives because of his strong body odor, a man lived in seclusion by the sea. There he met a man who was addicted to the stench of his body odor and followed him around all day and night.

**Divinity Cliff**

1. On Hsi Shih, see p. 117, note 2 to Ch’en Chi-ju’s “A Colophon to A Profile of Yao P’ing-chung.” King Fu-ch’ai built for her a palace known as the Belle’s Lodge (Kuan-wa Kung) at Divinity Cliff in the western suburbs of Soochow.

**Inscription on A Picture of Solitary Hill on a Moonlit Night**

1. The West Fall (Hsi-ling) is a bridge by West Lake. It is at the foot of Solitary Hill (Ku-shan).
Wang Ssu-jen

A Trip to Brimming Well

Compare this piece with Yüan Hung-tao’s travel note on Brimming Well in this collection.

A Trip to Wisdom Hill and Tin Hill

1. Wisdom Hill and Tin Hill are in the western suburbs of Wu-hsi, Kiangsu. Water from Wisdom Hill fountain has been known as the “second best in the world” for tea making, and clay statuettes are a famous local product. The ancient kingdom of Yüeh covered a large part of modern Chekiang. In 473 B.C.E., led by King Kou-chien, the Yüeh troops eliminated the kingdom of Wu and expanded their territory into Kiangsu. The author was a native of Shan-yin, Chekiang, so he often claimed to be a “native of Yüeh.”

2. Ssu-ma Hsiang-ju (179–117 B.C.E.), the famous Han dynasty rhapsody writer, met the beautiful widowed Cho Wen-chün at her father’s house. They fell in love at first sight and eloped. After marriage they ran a tavern, with Wen-chün herself serving their customers.

3. Ting-yüan, as a title for Sun, could refer to either ting-chia (one of the top three men among those who passed a Palace Examination, the culmination of the triennial civil-service recruitment examination sequence), or ting-k’uei (the Metropolitan Graduate whose name stood in third place on that list). Hui-pang, used as a title for Hua, could be a variation of Principal Graduate (Hui-yüan), the man ranked first in the Metropolitan Examination. Both the Suns and the Huas were prominent families of Wu-hsi. These two men were probably local celebrities.

4. According to traditional Chinese geomancy (feng-shui), terrestrial veins at the location of a house or tomb guarantee the prosperity of the family.

5. Yeh Fa-shan was a Taoist priest who served several T’ang emperors, including Emperor Hsüan-tsung. He is said to have had some magic power, and to have brought the spirit of Yang Yü-huan, the imperial consort, for a reunion with the emperor. Hsüan-tsung (685–762, r. 712–56) was the third son of Emperor Jui-tsung, hence in folk literature he was often referred to as the Third Brother. His tragic love affair with Yang Yü-huan was immortalized in Po Chü-i’s famous poem Song of Everlasting Sorrow. Kuang-ling was an old name for the city of Yangchow.

Passing by the Small Ocean

1. Mount Kua-ts’ang is in southeast Chekiang. The Evil Brook (O-hsi), later known as the Good Brook, flows through several southwestern counties in Chekiang. It was so named because it was once said to have been haunted by evil spirits.

2. The Small Ocean (Hsiao-yang), so named because of its relative broadness, is a tributary in the lower reaches of the Evil Brook.

3. The yellow-helmeted gentlemen (huang-t’ou lang) were members of the palace
guard in charge of imperial navigation during the Han dynasty. The term is used here for the boatmen.

4. Siddhartha was the name of Buddha (ca. 563–ca. 483 B.C.E.).

5. The author alludes to Tu Fu’s lines from his poem “Looking at Mt. T’ai-shan in the Distance”: “My agitated bosom gives rise to layers of clouds / My straining eyes chase the home-going birds.”

6. Chinese traditionally believed that there were five primary colors: green, red, yellow, white, and black.

Shan-hsi Brook

1. Ts’ao O was a girl of the Han dynasty known for her filial piety. When her father was drowned, fourteen-year-old Ts’ao O walked along the river in tears, trying to find his corpse. When she failed, she drowned herself. The Ts’ao O River flows through Shao-hsing County in eastern Chekiang; Shan-hsi Brook is part of its upper reaches.

2. Located in what is now the town of Riverside (Ling-chiang Chen), the Junction of Three Counties was where Shang-yü, Shao-hsing, and Sheng-hsien joined.

3. The Cool Breeze Ridge (Ch’ing-feng Ling) is north of the town of Sheng-hsien. In 1276 Lady Wang of Lin-hai County was carried off by Mongol troops. The next year, when the troops passed by the Cool Breeze Ridge, she bit her finger and used her own blood to write a poem on the cliff, and then killed herself by jumping off the precipice. Later a shrine was built there in her honor.

4. Green leaves and red flowers.

5. Wang Hsien-chih, son of the famous “sage of calligraphy” Wang Hsi-chih, was also a great calligrapher known as Wang the Junior. Here the author quotes a line from his description of the beautiful views in Shan-yin County, Chekiang: “Throughout Shan-yin County, the mountains and the rivers set off and outshine one another, overwhelming viewers. Between autumn and winter it would be even more exhilarating” ([A New Account of Tales of the World][II, 91]).

6. Wang Hui-chih (styled Tzu-yu, d. 388) was also a son of Wang Hsi-chih’s. One night when he lived in Shan-yin, he woke up during a heavy snow and had a drink. Then he suddenly missed his friend, the famous scholar, sculptor, and painter Tai K’uei (d. 396), who lived along Shan-hsi Brook. Wang immediately went there in a small boat. The trip took all night. When he arrived at Tai’s gate at dawn, he suddenly changed his mind and went back. On being asked why, he replied, “I went at the peak of my enthusiasm, and turned back when my enthusiasm was gone. Why must I see Tai?” The anecdote is found in [A New Account of Tales of the World](XXIII, 47). The author was not known to be a direct descendant of the calligrapher’s family; he jokingly refers to Wang Hui-chih as “Tzu-yu of our family” because they shared the family name Wang.

7. One chang equals approximately 11 feet 8 inches.

8. According to a Chinese myth, the rainbow stoops down from heaven to drink from the earth.

9. Sun Ch’u (218–93) was a man of letters of the Western Chin dynasty. When he was young, Sun once wanted to tell a friend about his desire to become a recluse,
about how he would like to “pillow his head upon the pebbles and brush his teeth in the stream.” But he stumbled and said instead that he would like to “pillow his head on the stream and brush his teeth upon the pebbles.” His stunned friend asked, “You may be able to use the stream as pillow, but how can you brush your teeth upon the pebbles?” The quick-witted Sun replied, “I want to use the stream as my pillow so that I can wash my ears in it, and I want to brush my teeth upon the pebbles so that I can have them sharpened.” In Chinese the phrase “sharp teeth” is tantamount to the English phrase “sharp tongue.” This anecdote is from *A New Account of Tales of the World* (XXV, 6).

**T’an Yüan-ch’ún**

**First Trip to Black Dragon Pond**

Black Dragon Pond (Wu-lung T’an), located at the foot of Cooler Hill in the western part of Nanking, is so named because a black dragon was said to have emerged from the pond during the Chin dynasty.

1. During the period of the Six Dynasties (222–80, 317–589) Chien-k’ang (later known as Nanking) was the capital of several regimes in south China. The southern gate of the city was also called the White Gate, so Nanking was often referred to as the White Gate, especially in poetic and literary usage.

2. The Swallow Rock (Yen-tzu Chi), a famous resort, is located on the bank of the Yangtze in the northeastern suburbs of Nanking.

3. Mo-ch’ou Lake, named after the legendary singing girl Mo-ch’ou (lit., “No Sorrow”), is located right outside the Waterway West Gate of Nanking.

4. According to Taoist belief, the Black Turtle (Hsüan-wu)—in the image of a turtle, or in another version, the duality of a turtle and a snake—is one of the deities representing the four directions: Black Turtle for the north, Red Bird the south, Green Dragon the east, and White Tiger the west. Black Turtle Lake is outside the Black Turtle Gate along the northeastern city wall of Nanking.

5. On the Ch’in-huai River, see p. 114, note 2 to T’u Lung’s “A Letter in Reply to Li Wei-yin.”

6. Mao Yüan-i (styled Chih-sheng) was the grandson of the famous essayist Mao K’un.

**Second Trip to Black Dragon Pond**

1. The Seventh Evening is that of the seventh month in the Chinese lunar calendar. It was to be the night when the Cowherd (the star Altair) and the Weaver Maid (the star Vega) made their annual rendezvous by the Heavenly River, or River of Stars (the Milky Way).

2. This refers to the canopy of the raft. Mao Yüan-i built his raft in the shape of a canopied tent. See “First Trip to Black Dragon Pond.”

3. Wu Ting-fang (styled Ning-fu) was a poet who later became a Buddhist monk. Both Mao Yü-ch’ang (styled Po-ling) and Hung K’uan (styled Chung-wei) were poets.
Third Trip to Black Dragon Pond

1. The two gates along the western city wall of Nanking were the Waterway West Gate and the Overland West Gate. The latter was also called Cooler Gate because it was close to Cooler Hill.

2. The Hua-lin Garden, site of the royal palace of the kingdom of Wu during the period of the Three Kingdoms, was frequented by nobility during the Southern Dynasties. Lord Hsieh’s Mound, at the foot of Mount Chung-shan, was a garden built in the Chin dynasty by Hsieh An. During the Sung dynasty it was once renamed Mid-Hill Garden by its new owner, the statesman and writer Wang An-shih (1021–86), who lived there in retirement after dismissal from the position of prime minister.

3. Cooler Hill, also known as Stone Hill, is located in the western part of Nanking. Nanking is sometimes called the Stone City because of the hill.

Chang Tai

Selections from *Dream Memories from the T’ao Hut*

A Night Performance at Golden Hill

1. Golden Hill (Chin-shan) is northwest of Chen-chiang City. The Golden Hill Temple, built in the Eastern Chin dynasty, is one of the oldest Buddhist temples in China.

2. See Ch’en Chi-ju’s *Privacies in the Mountains*, selection 1, note 1 (this volume). The second beat was two hours before midnight (the third beat).

3. Han Shih-chung (1089–1151) was a military general who led the Southern Sung troops in a victorious battle against the invading Jurchen Chin army at the foot of Golden Hill.

Plum Blossoms Bookroom

1. During the Eastern Chin dynasty, a military garrison was set up at Yü-chou, west of the capital, Chien-k’ang (Nanking). It was called the West Garrison (Hsi Fu). The West Garrison crab apple is a dwarf tree with red flowers, originally from Yü-chou, hence the name.

2. Lake T’ai-hu rock is a porous rock used in garden rockeries.

3. The West Brook (Hsi Hsi) is one of the Nine Brooks and Eighteen Gullies, a chief tourist attraction northwest of Ling-yin Hill in Hangchow.

4. The Obtuse Ni (Ni Yü) was the nickname for Ni Tsan (1301–74), a great landscape painter of the Yüan dynasty. He built a house for his private collection of books and paintings, which he named Pavilion of Quiet Privacy (Ch’ing-pi Ko). Like the author, Ni was born and brought up in a rich family, but, due to the social upheavals with the change of regime (from the Yüan to the Ming), he had to give up his property and lead a recluse’s life. His cognomen was Cloud Forest (Yün-lin).

Drinking Tea at Pop Min’s

1. Min Hsien (styled Wen-shui) was a potter from Shantung famous for making I-hsing style porcelain tea sets.
2. After Emperor Ch'eng-tsu moved the capital to Peking, Nanking was designated the “reserved capital” (liu tu).

3. The Ching-hsi Brook flows through I-hsing County, Kiangsu, which is famous for its tea vessels.

4. Emperor Hsüan-tsung’s Hsüan-te reign (1426–35) and Emperor Hsien-tsung’s Ch’eng-hua reign (1465–87) were famous for their fine porcelain products.

5. Lo-chieh tea is produced in Ch’ang-hsing County, Chekiang.

6. Favor Hill is also known as Wisdom Hill. See Wang Su-jen’s “A Trip to Wisdom Hill and Tin Hill” (this volume).

7. Tea fanciers prefer the new crop (hsin ch’a), which is picked in the spring.

Viewing the Snow from the Mid-Lake Gazebo
1. The last beat of the night watch is just before dawn.

2. Chin-ling was an old name for Nanking.

Yao Chien-shu’s Paintings
1. Yao Yün-tsai (styled Chien-shu) was a late Ming painter from Chekiang.

2. The painter brothers Wei Chih-huang and Wei Chih-k’o were natives of Nanking.

3. Tseng Ching (styled Po-ch’en, 1564–1647) was a painter from Fukien.

4. Su Han-ch’en was a painter at the Imperial Academy during the Sung dynasty.

Moon at Censer Peak
1. Censer Peak is one of the famous peaks of Mount Lu-shan, located by the Yangtze in northern Kiangsi.

2. This height is obviously rhetorical.

3. Wang Shou-jen (posthumously designated Lord Wen-ch’eng) was a Ming philosopher and statesman better known by his cognomen Master Yang-ming. He once served as governor of Kiangsi.


Liu Ching-t’ing the Storyteller
1. Pockmarked Liu (Liu Ma-tzu) was the sobriquet people gave to Liu Chingt’ing, who was originally named Ts’ao Yü-ch’un but changed his name in youth when he ran away from home as a fugitive after getting in trouble with the local government. Liu became extremely popular as a professional storyteller in Nanking. As a celebrity, he had connections among dignitaries and, after the downfall of the Ming, served in the Southern Ming regime as an assistant to General Tso Liang-yü (1599–1645). Like Chang Tai, Liu lived into his eighties and died in oblivion and poverty. He was fictionalized as a major figure in the famous historical drama The Peach Blossom Fan by K’ung Shang-jen (1648–1718).
NOTES

2. This description of Liu Ling, one of the Seven Sages in the Bamboo Grove of the Chin dynasty and a legendary alcoholic, is from A New Account of Tales of the World (XIV, “Looks and Manners,” 13).

3. Wang Yüeh-sheng was a renowned courtesan in Nanking. See Chang Tai’s sketch of her in this anthology.

4. “Wu Sung Knocks Out the Tiger at Ching-yang Ridge” is an episode from the famous Chinese novel Water Margin.

West Lake on the Fifteenth Night of the Seventh Month
1. The fifteenth night of the seventh lunar month (lit., “mid-seventh month”) was a Taoist festival called the Mid-Year Festival (Chung-yüan Chieh).
2. Gatekeepers were tipped for keeping the city gates open later than usual.

Wang Yüeh-sheng
1. The Vermilion Market and Crooked Lane were late Ming red-light districts in Nanking.

Crab Parties
1. The five flavors are sweet, sour, bitter, hot, and salty. “Five flavors” refers to flavors in general.
2. The quantity and richness of the roe of the female and the milt of the male freshwater crabs from the lakes and ponds around Soochow grant them their special status as great delicacies.
3. The “eight treasures” are delicacies, mostly game food. The list, varying through the ages, includes such rarities as bear’s paw, orangutan’s lips, and camel’s hump.
4. Jade-Pot Ice is a kind of liquor. Yüan Tsung-tao wrote a rhapsody in celebration of it.
5. In another piece in Dream Memories, the author tells how he personally made the experiments that led to the production of a new kind of tea, which he named Snow Orchid. In a few years it became extremely popular with the public.

Lang-hsüan, Land of Enchantment
This is the last piece in Dream Memories from the T’ao Hut. The title originates from a collection of short sketches and stories, Notes of Lang-hsüan, attributed to I Shih-chen of the Yüan dynasty. The first entry tells how Chang Hua (232–300), poet and statesman of the Chin dynasty, once came into a grotto and found a magnificent palace inside, where every room was filled with strange books about pre-Han historical events. He was told that the place was called Lang-hsüan, Land of Enchantment (Lang-hsüan Fu-ti). Chang Tai was obviously fascinated by the story, as he also titled the collection of his poetry and more formal essays Collection of Literary Works from Lang-hsüan.

1. The ancient inscription script (chuan shu) was used mainly on seals.
2. The so-lo is a big evergreen dragonhead tree that belongs to the genus Dracocephalum. It has terminal spikes of rose-pink or purplish flowers that bloom in mid-summer. It was under such a tree that Buddha is said to have passed away and attained nirvana.
3. In traditional usage, “one hill and one dale” (i ch’iu i ho) refers to a recluse’s retreat.

4. Both Taoists and Buddhists compare death to the sloughing of a cicada, hence the decease of a believer is often referred to as “exuviation.”

5. “Chang-kung” (Eldest Son) was used as the author’s “style” name in the epitaph he wrote for himself, following the tradition of one who was the eldest son in his family.

6. Mount Ching-t’ing (lit., “Homage Gazebo”) is located in southern Anhwei, across the Yangtze from Censer Peak in Mount Lu-shan. The gazebo on it was said to have been the site where Hsieh T’iao (464–99), a poet of the Southern Dynasties (Ch’i), composed his poems. The mountain has also become famous from a quatrain, “Sitting Alone in Front of Mt. Chingt’ing,” by the great T’ang poet Li Po.

An Epitaph for Myself

The great poet T’ao Ch’ien, whom Chang Tai admired (the author’s cognomen, T’ao Hut, was in his honor), wrote “A Funeral Speech for Myself” and initiated this sub-genre of literary prose.

1. The Pear Garden was located inside the Forbidden Palace in Ch’ang-an. At the imperial order of T’ang emperor Hsüan-tsung, three hundred musicians and several hundred palace maids were housed there to study singing and dancing. The term “Pear Garden” referred to theater in general.


3. Golden Valley was the family garden owned by Shih Ch’ung (242–300), a high-ranking official of the Chin dynasty known for his wealth and extravagant lifestyle.

4. This is from a story in the ancient classic Han-fei-tzu. A hare ran into the stump of a tree and dropped dead. A farmer saw and picked it up. He gave up farming and waited by the stump, hoping for another windfall.

5. During the period of the Warring States, Ch’en Chung-tzu, a native of Ch’u, left his home because of disagreement with his elder brother on a matter of principle. He settled down at Yü-ling in the state of Ch’u and became known as the Master of Yü-ling. The king of Ch’u wanted to appoint him prime minister because of his reputation, but he ran away again and lived the rest of his life as a gardener. In literature Yü-ling often signifies a retreat or hermitage.

6. In the Taoist tradition the Jade Emperor (Yü-huang Ta-ti) is the supreme deity, who governs in the Celestial Palace.

7. A citation from a story in the biography of Lou Shih-te (630–99), who in 693 was promoted to the position of grand councillor, in New History of the T’ang (Hsin T’ang-shu). Once Lou and his younger brother discussed the art of exercising restraint. His brother said, “If someone spits on me, I’ll just clean it up.” Lou said,
“That’s not enough. If you wipe it clean, you’ll stir up more anger. You should just let it dry off by itself.”

8. Under the traditional patriarchal system, “Tsung-tzu” meant the eldest son of the wife, as distinguished from the son of a concubine. Chang Tai’s other “style” name and his cognomen were similar to those used by preceding Ming authors whom he admired: Shih-kung (Master of Stone) had been adopted by Yuan Hung-tao, and T’ao-an (Tao Hut) by Kuei Yu-kuang.

9. Of the fifteen works listed here, seven have been lost (nos. 2, 5, 6, 10, 11, 13, and 15). The fifth and sixth works are obviously studies of the I Ching, an ancient manual for fortune-tellers and one of the six Confucian classics. The title of no. 13 is based upon an anecdote about the T’ang poet Li Ho (790–816) as recounted in A Short Biography of Li Ch’ang-chi by the late-T’ang poet Li Shang-yin (813–58). When Li Ho rode out on the back of a donkey, he always had a servant boy carrying an old embroidered bag follow him on foot. Whenever Li Ho felt inspired and thought of some lines, he would write them down on a slip of paper and throw it into the bag.

10. Chang Tai’s father, Chang Yao-fang (cognomen Ta-t’i), served as administrator under the prince of Lu. The position, chief executive official in a princely establishment (wang-fu), was also known as kuo-hsiang, counselor-delegate. During the Ming, Lady of Suitability (I-jen) was the honorific title granted to wives of fifth-tier officials.

11. Note that the author switches here to the use of the first-person singular pronoun to refer to himself.

12. Chang Tai’s grandfather Chang Ju-lin (cognomen, Yü-jo), a Metropolitan Graduate of 1595, once served as a secretary (chu-shih) in the Ministry of War.

13. Master Mei-kung was the cognomen of Ch’en Chi-ju. “To strike at the autumn wind” is a vernacular phrase that means “to call on someone for money or gifts through social connections.”

14. Wang Chi (d. 644) was an early T’ang poet. Following the example of T’ao Yuan-ming, both Wang Chi and Hsü Wei wrote epitaphs for themselves.

15. “Knit my brows in imitation,” referring to blind imitation with ludicrous effect, is derived from a story in Chuang-tzu (chap. “The Heavenly Way”). An ugly woman named Tung (East) Shih knitted her brows in imitation of her neighbor Hsi (West) Shih, the celebrated beauty of the state of Yüeh, only to make herself look uglier.

16. Hsiang-wang was Hsiang Yü (232–202 B.C.E.), an aristocrat of the Ch’u kingdom and rebel leader who fought against and overthrew the Ch’in empire. He was defeated in battle by his rival Liu Pang (who later became the first emperor of the Han dynasty) and killed himself. By identifying himself with a rebel, the author showed his indignation against the Manchu regime.

17. Liang Hung was a first-century recluse who lived in the mountains (probably on Mount Chickenhead) with his loving wife, Meng Kuang. Yao Li was a swordsman of the Wu kingdom of fifth century B.C.E. who successfully carried out a suicidal mission to assassinate Prince Ch’ing-chi, the king’s political rival.

18. This is from a story in Han-fei-tzu. Pien Ho, a Ch’u native, found a piece of uncut precious jade at Mount Ching and presented it to King Li-wang, who thought it was a fake and had Pien’s left foot cut off. When King Li-wang died, Pien again
presented the jade to the new king, Wu-wang; this time he got his right foot cut off. When the next king, Wen-wang, succeeded to the throne, he was told that Pien was crying at Mount Ching, holding the uncut jade in his arms. The king ordered a jade artisan to work on it and found it really to be a precious jade. It was later known as Ho's Jade.

19. Lien P'o was a famous general of the kingdom of Chao. In 251 B.C.E., after winning a war, Lien was made counselor-in-chief, but he was disfavored by the next king and later died in exile. Cho-lu, now in Hopei Province, is known as the site of an ancient battlefield where the legendary Yellow Emperor (Huang-ti) defeated Ch'ih-yu.

20. This refers to the great Han historian Ssu-ma Ch'ien. Dragon Gate (Lung-meng), the name of a county in Honan, was his birthplace. One interpretation of the term “sham” (yen) used here is that it refers to Ssu-ma Ch'ien's castration, after which he was no longer considered to be a “real” man. Since in the entire epilogue the author compares himself to these historical figures, it may be an expression of modesty, implying that the author himself was not a “real” historian like Ssu-ma Ch'ien.

21. Eastern Slope (Tung-p'o) was the cognomen of the great Sung writer Su Shih, also known as a gourmet. Some Chinese dishes, including Tung-p'o Pork, are said to have been invented by him while he lived in exile on Hai-nan Island.

22. Solitary Bamboo (Ku-chu) was an ancient state known as the home of Po I and Shu Ch'i, the two sons of the Lord of Ku-chu, who refused to inherit their father's rank and went in exile to the state of Chou. When King Wu-wang of Chou conquered the kingdom of Shang and founded the Chou dynasty, they went into the mountains and died of hunger there. They were acclaimed by Confucius in The Analects as men of high principles.

23. Duke Mu-kung of the state of Ch'in (r. 659–21 B.C.E.) ransomed Pai-li Hsi from the state of Ch'u, where the latter was held as a slave, for the price of five black ram skins. Known as the Grand Master (Ta Fu) of Five Black Rams, Pai-li Hsi helped Duke Mu-kung to become a leader of the feudal lords, known as one of the Five Hegemonies (Wu Pa).

24. Mei Fu was an official of the Han in the early first century B.C.E. When Wang Mang (45 B.C.E.–C.E. 23) usurped the throne and founded the short-lived Hsien dynasty, Mei Fu left his family and went into exile. Several years later he was found to be working as a gatekeeper in a southern city under an assumed name. He was said to have subsequently become an Taoist Immortal.

Preface to Searching for West Lake in Dreams

1. Shang Chou-tso was minister of personnel in Nanking. Ch'i Piao-chia, a famous prose writer and a relative by marriage of the author, was assistant censor-in-chief and grand coordinator in Chiang-nan. Ch'ien Hsiang-k'un was grand secretary of the Eastern Hall. Yü Huang was senior compiler at the Han-lin Academy. All of these courtiers owned residences by West Lake.

2. Li Po, who served as court attendant under T'ang emperor Hsüan-tsung, wrote a famous poem about a dream trip to Mount T'ien-mu in Chekiang.
3. Here the author alludes to a famous passage from *Chuang-tzu* (chap. “The Equality of Things”): “Once upon a time, Chuang Chou dreamed that he was a butterfly that flitted around happily, enjoying himself without knowing that he was Chou. Suddenly he woke up, and in a startle realized that he was Chou.”

4. Golden Mincemeat is a famous Chiang-nan–style dish made of fish cooked with peeled and finely cut tangerine slices. Jade Columns is a dish of cooked scallops.

5. Chien-chou (Sword County), where Chang Tai’s ancestors once lived, was located at what is now the town of Chien-ko, Szechwan.