Xuanhe Catalogue of Paintings

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Chapter Fourteen

Domestic and Wild Animals, Two

Five Dynasties
Luo Saiweng, Zhang Jizhi, Li Guizhen, Li Aizhi

Song Dynasty
Lingsong, Zhao Mochuo, Zhu Yi, Zhu Ying, Zhen Hui, Wang Ning, Qi Xu, Venerable Master “He”

Luo Saiweng was the son of Yin, the Magistrate of Qiantang, and he served in government in Wuzhong Prefecture. He was fond of “the reds-and-blues” and good at painting sheep. Though his skill was outstanding, his works were rarely seen. Yin gained fame in his day for poetry, but though Saiweng only lodged his mind in “the reds-and-blues,” his use of imagination was similar to poets and writers. At present, there are two works kept in the palace storehouses:

*Tending Oxen*

*Sea Creatures*

Zhang Jizhi was a man of Chang’an. He painted dogs, horses, flowers, and birds quite skillfully. When he did dogs, he captured their loyal sincerity without depicting them wagging their tails to get attention. His

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1. The Luos were men of the Wu Yue Kingdom during the Five Dynasties period. Yin (833–909) was given this position in 887. See his biography in Xue, *Jiu Wudai shi*, 24.326–328. Wuzhong is modern Wuxian, Jiangsu Province. For Saiweng, see ZGMSJRMCD, 1507; Soper, *Experiences*, 27.

2. ZGMSJRMCD, 811–812, gives *Xuanhe huapu* as the sole source.
picture, *Mounted Archers*, which circulated in the world, shows [the riders] holding goshawks on their arms, leading dogs, drawing their bows, and spurring their horses to gallop. His brush force is extremely heroic and untrammeled. Through all the warfare of the Five Dynasties period, however, it had become the custom to depict dogs and horses, so it seems unavoidable that he would specialize in that subject. At present, there is one work kept in the palace storehouses:

*Sketch of Dogs*

No one knows the hometown of Li Guizhen, the Daoist adept. He was good at painting oxen and tigers, and skilled also at bamboo, sparrows, and birds of prey. Though he was called a Daoist adept, he did not wear the Daoist costume, but wore only a single cloth robe. Wandering the streets, he would see the banners flying from the upper story of a wine shop and head for it as if for home. Whenever anyone asked him about himself, he would open his mouth wide and put his fist in it, without answering, so people were unable to fathom him. One day, Emperor Taizu of the Zhu Liang dynasty summoned him to an audience and asked him, “What art do you have, sir?” Guizhen said in reply, “Your servant wears a single garment and loves wine. I use wine to ward off the winter cold, and I use my paintings to buy wine. Beyond that, I have no abilities.” Liang [Tai]zu comprehended him. One can see from this statement what an unusual person he was. Is there any difference between this and someone who awakes and recognizes nothing about the world? Truly he lodged this in his painting. There were imperial icons of excellent craftsmanship in the Xinguo Priory in Nanchang that continually suffered the indignity of sparrow and pigeon droppings, so Guizhen painted a sparrow hawk on the wall between the figures, and from then on.

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on, they came no more.\textsuperscript{5} This, too, was quite rare and marvelous. If it were not the result of his craft, then how could it have had such a spirit? At present, there are twenty-eight works kept in the palace storehouses:

\begin{quote}
\textit{Clouds and Dragons,} one picture  
\textit{Young Tiger,} one picture  
\textit{Herding Oxen,} seven pictures  
\textit{Herding Oxen across a Stream,} two pictures  
\textit{Oxen Fording a Stream,} one picture  
\textit{Oxen at Pasture Seeing Their Reflections,} one picture  
\textit{Out to Pasture at the River Embankment,} one picture  
\textit{Bamboo Shoots and Young Rabbit,} one picture  
\textit{Cypress Grove and Water Buffalo,} one picture  
\textit{Young Oxen,} five pictures  
\textit{Cat and Bamboo,} one picture  
\textit{Roosting Birds,} one picture  
\textit{Magpies and Bamboo,} two pictures  
\textit{Bamboo Shoots,} one picture  
\textit{Bees, Butterflies, Magpies, and Bamboo,} one picture  
\textit{Melon Vines,} one picture
\end{quote}

Li Aizhi was a man of Huayin.\textsuperscript{6} He was good at painting mountains, forests, streams, and rocks, but especially fond of painting cats. He was treated very generously by Luo Shaowei, who built a pavilion, named Golden Waves, in which Aizhi could wield his brush.\textsuperscript{7} At that time, Aizhi was called Recluse of Golden Waves. He had the skill to imagine the forests and streams of the recluse and the hermit, so what he put into his paintings was not the vulgar affairs of court service or the clamor of the streets, for he truly had “these hills and streams” in his breast. He

\textsuperscript{5} According to THJWZ, the icons were of the Three Officers and were made during the reign of Minghuang. See Soper, \textit{Experiences}, 29.

\textsuperscript{6} See ZGMSJRMCD, 413; Soper, \textit{Experiences}, 29.

\textsuperscript{7} Also called Luo Wei (877–910), he was “an enthusiastic patron of the humanities.” See Soper, \textit{Experiences}, 141n300.
was particularly skilled at painting cats. The ordinary painter of cats sets them beneath flowers, but Aizhi alone painted them among sprouting herbs. Were this not a subject in which recluses and hermits could express themselves, why would the viewer be moved by this profusion of beauty? At present, there are eighteen works kept in the palace storehouses:

- *Cats Frolicking in Sprouting Herbs*, one picture
- *Intoxicated Cats*, three pictures
- *Young Cats in Sprouting Herbs*, one picture
- *Cat and Kittens Frolicking*, three pictures
- *Cats Frolicking*, six pictures
- *Small Cat*, one picture
- *Cat and Kittens*, one picture
- *Angry Cat*, one picture
- *Cats*, one picture

Lingsong, of the royal house, had the style name Yongnian, and he gained renown equally for “the reds-and-blues” with his elder brother Lingrang.\(^9\) He was skilled at painting flowers and bamboo, free from any vulgar tone. Though it is difficult to have skill in doing flowers and fruit in ink monochrome, Lingsong had uncommon ability at this. Still, his ingenuity in portraying rot and insect damage was excessive, which critics considered a flaw.\(^{10}\) He gained particular fame in his day for painting dogs. A man of antiquity said, “When a painting of a tiger is unsucces-

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8. Intoxicated by peppermint or catnip.
9. Lingrang’s entry is in chapter 20. For Lingsong, see Toghto et al., *Song shi*, 223.6488; ZGMSIRMCD, 1274; Chen, *Song, Liao, Jin huajia shiliao*, 408–411. This entry, except for the citation of his titles at the end, is a loose paraphrase of quotations from colophons by Huang Tingjian on paintings by Lingsong, which are directly attributed to Huang in Deng Chun’s *Huaji*, 2.275. See also Chen, *Song, Liao, Jin huajia shiliao*, 411.
10. The critic was Huang Tingjian. His colophon on a painting by Lingsong is quoted in Deng, *Huaji*, 2.275.
ful, it will look like a dog.”¹¹ Now the fact that Lingsong does dogs directly, could that be unintentional? He held the official positions of Militant General of the Right and Military Training Commissioner for Xizhou. He was given a posthumous appointment as Surveillance Commissioner of Xuzhou and posthumous enfeoffment as Marquis of Pengcheng. At present, there are four works kept in the palace storehouses:

_Auspicious Banana Plants and Pekinese Dogs_, one picture
_Flowers, Bamboo, and Pekinese Dogs_, one picture
_Banks of Autumn Chrysanthemums_, two pictures

The personal name of Zhao Mochuo [“Filthy”] has been lost, but since he was simple, rustic, and never dressed up, people called him “Filthy,” and his hometown is unknown.¹² He was good at painting tigers, and not only did he grasp their form-likeness, but their personality and manner were also skillfully captured. When the personality is there but the form-likeness is lacking, in spite of a sense of life, it will often “look like a dog.” When the form-likeness is complete, but it lacks the personality and manner, although it may be called similar, actually it will just be something from beneath the Nine Springs.¹³ The only one who was good at form-likeness while skillful at personality and manner and able to make it similar and have a sense of life was Mochuo. Nowadays many people praise Bao Ding as in the forefront. Yet they are like a frog in a well or a small fish in shallow water—how can they discuss the breadth of the ocean? At present, there are eight works kept in the palace storehouses:

¹¹ A well-worn saying attributed to the Han-dynasty general Ma Yuan; Soper, _Experiences_, 184n563 gives the full context of the line.

¹² I read Mochuo as a variant of _wochuo_ 鬏餽, meaning “dirty” or “filthy.” See ZGMSJRMCD, 1299; Chen, _Song, Liao, Jin huajia shiliao_, 212–215; Lachman has Chao Miao-cho (Evaluations, 69); Soper has Chao Mo-ch’o (Experiences, 68–69). This entry blends and elaborates on the SCMHL and THJWZ entries.

¹³ Since the Nine Springs means the underworld, the idea is that his paintings did not look vivid, but dead.
Tigers in a Bamboo Thicket, three pictures
Tigers Emerging from the Mountains, one picture
Tigers Fighting on the Sand, one picture
Recumbent Tiger, one picture
Tame Tiger, one picture
Tigers, one picture

Zhu Yi was a man of Jiangnan. Together with his clansman Zhu Ying, he was famous for painting oxen. His scenes of fragrant grass in the setting sun, a solitary herd boy playing his flute, and out-of-the-way villages lack any feel of the clamor and bustle of striving for fame or fortune. Although he was not the equal of Dai Song, still, he was a famous master of later times. At present, there are six works kept in the palace storehouses:

Tending Oxen, three pictures
Playing the Flute while Tending Oxen, one picture
Water Buffalo Drinking, one picture
Young Oxen, one picture

Zhu Ying was a man of Jiangnan. Like his clansman Zhu Yi, he gained fame for being good at painting oxen and horses, and he was especially skilled at figures. His works called Tending Oxen reached the epitome of skill. Drinking water and nibbling grass is in the essential nature of oxen. If one could merely make a likeness of their forms and not delve into the principles of nature, then anyone could be a specialist. Only Ying and Yi understood this. At present, there are five works kept in the palace storehouses:

14. Here he is called Yi, but in the Table of Contents, he is called Xi. ZGMSJRMCD, 228, has Xi.
15. See ZGMSJRMCD, 225.
16. A variation on “To munch grass, drink from the stream … this is the true nature of horses,” from “Horses’ Hoofs,” Watson, trans., Complete Works of Chuang Tzu, 104.
Zhen Hui was a man of Suiyang.17 He was good at painting the Buddha and Indra. He stripped off any worldly appearance and gave them the awesome dignity of heavenly beings, which is why he was famous in his day. He was also expert at painting oxen and horses, in which his intent was realized with great skill. It is in the basic nature of oxen and horses to want to get loose of the rings in their noses. Yet when they are shown as controlled by whips and ropes, this can display the ideas of admonition or encouragement. Though painting is no more than a skill, it does contain ideas, and so it is a skill that can enter [into the Way]. At present, there is one work kept in the palace storehouses:

_Herd-boy and Recumbent Ox_, one picture

The hometown of Wang Ning is unknown.18 He once served as a Painter-in-Attendance in the Painting Academy. He was skilled at painting flowers, bamboo, and feathers-and-fur. His brushwork was methodic, and he captured a sense of life quite well. He was also skilled at such things as parrots and lion-cats. These are not things that those who do mountain groves and open countryside are capable of, for not only must [artists] seek to capture a likeness of their forms, but also the aristocratic feel they embody, so naturally this has a distinct style. No artist who cannot paint in this way will be successful. At present, there is one work kept in the palace storehouses:

_Lion-cat on an Embroidered Cushion_19

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17. See ZGMSJRMCD, 1207. Suiyang was near modern Shangqiu County, Henan.
18. See ZGMSJRMCD, 132.
19. Yue Ren says a lion-cat is a type of cat with long hair and a large tail. See Yue, _Xuanhe huapu_, 307n2.
Qi Xu (序, alternately 嶼) was a man of Jiangnan. He was good at the specialized painting of flowers, bamboo, and wild birds, and also skilled at painting oxen. There were those who said he continued the style of Dai Song. As for his paintings of cats, they have rarely been equaled in recent times. Cats and oxen, being creatures that are commonly seen, are difficult to do with skill. In the past, a man had a painting of fighting oxen, which everyone praised for its excellence, except for a farmer off to the side, who pointed out it had a flaw. When asked what it was, he said, “When I have seen oxen fighting, their tails are usually pressed down, but here they are raised, which is wrong.” When painters miss it, it is because they accept their own lack of thought. Qi also did fighting oxen that were quite novel. At present, there are forty-four works kept in the palace storehouses:

* Oxen and Their Reflections in the Water, one picture
* Young Oxen Fording a Stream, two pictures
* The Four Hoaryheads Playing Chess, three pictures
* Oleander Blossoms, two pictures
* Fishermen’s Joy on the Long River, one picture
* Encountering an Old Friend in the Xiaoxiang Region, two pictures
* Drawing-under-Color Cockscomb Blooms, one picture
* Herding Oxen, twenty-two pictures
* Young Oxen, three pictures
* Fighting Oxen, two pictures
* Water Buffalo, one picture
* Herding Sheep, one picture
* Poet, two pictures
* Tiger, one picture

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20. See ZGMSJRMCD, 549; Soper, *Experiences*, 63.
21. A curious statement, given that Guo Ruoxu does not speak of this specialization (Soper, *Experiences*, 63), nor are any cat paintings listed here.
22. According to Guo Ruoxu, the man was one Ma Zhenghui, and the painting is ascribed to Li Guizhen. See Soper, *Experiences*, 95–96.
23. The same title is found under Han Huang’s name in chapter 6.
The hometown of Venerable Master “He” is unknown. During the Longde era, he lived on Mount Heng and never revealed his name. He roamed the area between Cangwu and the Five Ranges. Though he was over one hundred years of age, whenever anyone caught sight of him, the appearance of his face was unchanged. Asked about his ancestry or age, he would only reply, “He-he.” As a result, people of the time called him Venerable Master “He.” He never manifested any other artistry; he was simply fond of playing with brush and ink. He was skilled at doing flowers and rocks, and he was particularly praised in his day for his specialization in painting cats. His paintings of cats fully captured their attitudes, whether they were asleep or awake, walking or sitting, playing together or strolling about, watching for mice or catching birds, washing their muzzles or grinding their teeth. It may be concluded that he was so peerless he could not be surpassed. It is said that cats are like tigers, with the only exception being their large ears and yellow eyes. What a pity that Venerable Master “He” could not go on to paint tigers, but remained skilled only at cats, for it seems not to be something an otherworldly person would study, but only something a person would lodge his mind in as a form of amusement. At present, there are thirty-four works kept in the palace storehouses:

- *Hollyhocks and Lake Tai Rocks*, one picture
- *Cats Frolicking amid Mallows and Rocks*, six pictures
- *Cats Frolicking amid Mountain Rocks*, one picture
- *Mallows and Frolicking Cats*, two pictures
- *Pack of Cats with Mallows and Rocks*, two pictures
- *Cat and Kittens Frolicking*, one picture

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25. Longde (921–923) was a reign-period of the Later Liang dynasty (907–923).
26. Area of modern Ningyuan County, Hunan Province.
27. A noncommittal sound, possibly akin to the modern slang response, “What-ever.”
Three-Colored Amaranth and Frolicking Cats, one picture
Cat and Kittens, one picture
Peppermint and Intoxicated Cats, one picture
Pack of Cats, one picture
Frolicking Cats, five pictures
Cats, one picture
Intoxicated Cats, ten pictures
Cats Frolicking amid Pinks, one picture

28. Reading shizuhua 石竹花 as Chinese pinks (Dianthus chinensis), but could also be read separately as rocks, bamboo, and flowers.