

*Honglou meng* tends to be thought of as the encyclopaedic Qing novel par excellence, but Pollard makes a persuasive case for seeing Ji Yun's miscellany as encyclopaedic in its own way, given its broad range of topics and diversity of perspectives. Attractively illustrated and brought to a high level of finish, the book is designed to be accessible to a general readership, and one hopes that it will soon be issued in paperback so that it can reach an even wider audience. Through it readers will get a vivid sense of how Chinese in the High Qing saw their society and thought about life and the afterlife, and if their reaction is at all like mine they will be sorry when the book ends.

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***The Landscape Painting of China: Musings of a Journeyman.*** By Harrie A. Vanderstappen. Edited by Roger E. Covey. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2014. Pp. xiv + 342. \$44.95.

Harrie V. Vanderstappen (1921–2007), universally known as Father Harrie to his students, colleagues, and countless friends, was both an ordained Catholic priest and for some thirty years a beloved teacher of East Asian Art at the University of Chicago. This book, edited by his student Roger E. Covey (1954–2013), and lavishly illustrated with plentiful colour plates, is a posthumous gift to the field of Chinese painting studies and a demonstration of what made Father Harrie so unusual. Immune to academic fads and fashions in art history, he remained tenaciously, even scrappily, committed to what he calls in this book “visual-based methodologies”—an approach to engaging with works of art based on intense looking and exhaustive description, animated by the conviction that patient visual exploration will tell us more than about the minds of artists than any amount of textual research. Although open to insights from the domains of cultural history, religion, or anthropology, Vanderstappen's characteristic method privileged above all what his own eyes told him. *The Landscape Painting of China* condenses a life-time of looking and might be subtitled “Looking at Paintings with Father Harrie.”

The central argument of Vanderstappen's book, and the guiding principle that shapes what might be termed a Vanderstappian mode of looking, is that Chinese landscape painters made use of recurring patterns and conventions—of mountain forms, rocks, trees, streams, huts, and other motifs and of brush methods that were believed to animate paintings with the same vitality that courses through the natural

world. Vanderstappen sees the use of these patterns as a type of ritual, understood to mean the performance of formalized acts that acquire efficacy through their repetition. In his view of the history of landscape paintings, early masters such as Jing Hao 荆浩, academy painters such as Ma Yuan 馬遠, and scholar-amateurs such as Shen Zhou 沈周 were engaged in constant dialogue with inherited type-forms and brush conventions, each achieving originality by adapting these to their personal visions and in turn creating new patterns bequeathed to later artists.

The pleasure of this book, and its importance, lie in the descriptions of individual paintings, all of which can be read with profit by even the most seasoned students of Chinese landscape painting. Works that have been extensively discussed by other scholars yield to Vanderstappen's probing eye new details and new pictorial resonances. Writing of brushwork in Fan Kuan's 范寬 great *Travellers among Mountains and Streams* 谿山行旅, he observes that "[t]he unfailing certainty by which the same stroke both brings the particular character of a tree to life and realizes the glistening sharpness of rocks and boulders can only be the result of a complete meeting between the dynamics of nature's self-revealing unity and the artist's bonding to an ancient craft" (p. 42). Few Song paintings have been as extensively discussed as this landscape, but has anyone better captured in words the stern clarity of Fan Kuan's painting method? Or consider Vanderstappen's analysis of the structural logic of Guo Xi's 郭熙 *Early Spring* 早春圖. What contributes greatly to the painting's coherence is the artist's method of "enumerating in small places in the distance a condensed set of forms, a larger version of which takes up a single area in the foreground, with further modifications in the tonal varieties of the ink. What has become familiar in the foreground in large size retains its familiarity in reduced size in the distance" (p. 53). Returning to *Early Spring* after reading this passage, it is impossible not to see how the configuration of the majestic foreground trees is echoed by more distant trees on the tops of remote peaks, simultaneously indicating depth of recession in the fictive space of the painting and unifying its intricate formal design.

In Southern Song landscape painting, as described by Vanderstappen, atmosphere itself becomes as much a pictorial subject as mountains and trees. Yet even as painters such as Xia Gui 夏珪 and Ma Yuan transform landscape painting through their shimmering depictions of moisture suspended in the air, they, like their predecessors participate in a "ritual of similar mannerisms used in the strokes, in the contrast between light and dark, and in the manipulation of pictorial themes" (p. 132). Patterns in the form of metaphorically labelled brush idioms, such as the "axe-cut texture stroke," and recurring motifs—the travelling scholar with his servant, the sailboat approaching a shore—unify the works of these artists. Only rarely do painters of the Southern Song such as Muqi 牧溪 or Liang Kai 梁楷, both associated with Chan Buddhism, seem to depart from regulated patterns of brushwork and composition.

In Vanderstappen's musings, the history of Chinese landscape painting is a continuous story of patterns transmitted, revived, or invented afresh. It was through the invention of new brush modes and compositional formulae that the Four Great Masters of the Yuan laid the foundation for much of later Chinese painting. Ni Zan 倪瓚, arguably the inventor of one of the most instantly recognizable (and readily imitated) styles of landscape painting, "[locked] nature into a pattern that, worn bare of all emotional associations, is ready to function as a standard-bearer for nature in its purest form" (p. 183). Recapturing the monumentality of Northern Song painting, Wang Meng 王蒙, according to Vanderstappen, was the key artists of the Four Great Masters in the transition to painting of the Ming dynasty. The turbulent brushwork of Wang Meng's landscapes—yet another pattern to be followed by later painters—was widely influential in the century after his lifetime. Wang's depictions of people in mountain huts and garden cottages are images in which "nature becomes a setting in which they are comfortable and which provides an extraordinary sense of well-being" (p. 198). These presage similar images in paintings by Ming dynasty artists of Suzhou 蘇州.

The final chapters of *The Landscape Painting of China* are devoted to the Ming dynasty, the period about which Vanderstappen wrote extensively in his earlier publications. Although he describes with keen insight the works of virtuoso professional artists of the Zhe School 浙派 such as Dai Jin 戴進 and Wu Wei 吳偉, he concludes that the "Zhe School did not survive its own expertise" (p. 219). The two artists who dominate his account of Ming landscape are the founding father of the Suzhou-based Wu School of painting 吳門畫派, Shen Zhou, and his principal follower, Wen Zhengming 文徵明. Shen Zhou, in Vanderstappen's account, emerges as one of the most inventive of all Chinese painters, freely adapting patterns and styles of brushwork from the past and incorporating them into paintings that in their "casual clutter of things" (p. 237) seem to speak of Shen's easy-going temperament, expressed also in startlingly off-hand, oblique compositions and "stretched-out moments of relaxed intensity" (p. 236) embodied in Shen's broad, plain brush strokes. The unique character of Wen Zhengming's landscapes, suffused with references to Tang painting and to that of other earlier periods, is more difficult to pin down. Vanderstappen is probably correct in isolating a distinctive intensity of movement and texture, "whether they are featured in the hairline patterns of pine needles or in the rough bark of the cryptomeria tree" (p. 273).

Looming over the final chapter, just as he looms over the history of later Chinese painting, is Dong Qichang 董其昌. It is hard to escape the sense that Vanderstappen was not enamoured of this artist, whose work, in his words, "exemplifies . . . self-proclaimed majestic orthodoxy, in both its daunting genius and its ugly haughtiness" (p. 283). As he states in the "Introduction," Vanderstappen was concerned with the relationship between landscape painting and phenomena of the visual world. In the

landscapes of Dong Qichang, however, direct visual experience of nature plays almost no role in the creation of his bewilderingly strange paintings. “If you think you see nature in [these paintings],” Vanderstappen warns, “you are deceived” (p. 280). What we do see in Dong’s paintings is nature transformed into independently existing patterns, rituals of brushwork, and allusions to earlier styles. It is the detachment of landscape painting from nature that seems to explain Vanderstappen’s decision to end, quite abruptly, with the late Ming period. Qing dynasty painting, which Dong Qichang so powerfully shaped, requires, “an entirely new approach” (p. 302), which apparently lay beyond the scope of Vanderstappen’s interest at the time his manuscript was completed.

It does not detract from the merits of this book to note that the manuscript, according to an Afterward by the editor, was completed in the mid-1990s, almost twenty years before its publication. Works cited in the bibliography do not reflect up-to-date scholarship, and this is not a book one would turn to for the fruits of cutting-edge research. Nor do issues of authenticity that vex many discussion of Chinese painting much concern the author, who generally accepts traditional attributions of paintings. In spite of these limitations, the book should elicit from its readers a heartfelt “Thank you, Father Harrie.”

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***Reconstructing the Confucian Dao: Zhu Xi’s Appropriation of Zhou Dunyi.***

By Joseph A. Adler. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2014. Pp. x + 331. \$95.00 cloth, \$26.95 paper.

This book provides us with an innovative explanation of the question why Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200) placed Zhou Dunyi 周敦頤 (1017–1073) at the head of the lineage of the founding fathers of Northern Song Confucianism. This question has intrigued scholars, particularly Western sinologists, because Zhou Dunyi did not enjoy a great reputation during his lifetime, was believed to have had strong Daoist inclinations, and had taught the Cheng 程 brothers (who were the first “Neo-Confucians” to manifest the idea of a vocation to resuscitate the heritage of Mencius after a rupture of 1,300 years) for less than two years while they were still teenagers. Moreover, no tangible trace of Zhou’s teaching is visible in their writings.