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Abstract

This paper mainly observes the houses, mountain lines, tree dots, pale roads, dark ink and blank paper in several landscape paintings by Huang Binhong. The works discussed are *Dwelling in the Xixia Mountains*, *Ten Thousand Valleys in Deep Shade*, and *Layered Peaks and Waterfall*. These paintings are different in size, ink condition and viewing movement. Some parts are easy to recognize, such as a roof, a bank or a white waterfall. Other parts are covered by trees, mixed with gray wash, or pressed into a heavy black mountain. The viewer often needs to look again. This paper first describes the places of these forms, the dry and wet strokes, the thick and pale ink, and the different uses of open paper. Huang's writings and ancient painting theories are then used as materials for explanation. Heidegger's ideas of world, earth and strife are also introduced in some passages. They are useful for the opening and hidden side of the picture, although Huang's brush-and-ink has its own long Chinese background. From these works, it can be seen that brush-and-ink not only gives the form of landscape, but also makes the looking process slow, repeated and sometimes uncertain.

Key Words

Huang Binhong, landscape painting, brush and ink, phenomenology, Heidegger

Introduction

Huang Binhong is an important painter in modern Chinese painting, and many studies have already discussed his old masters, calligraphy, epigraphy, travelling, sketching and brush-and-ink. People also describe his mature pictures with words such as dark, dense, vigorous, luxuriant, ancient and modern. These descriptions are often correct. However, when one stands before a painting, the first problem may be more ordinary. Where is the road? Which black form is a tree group and which is a mountain? Why can a small roof be seen for a moment and then almost disappear? Liu Xiaochun discusses Huang's renewal of old painting through brush-and-ink. Qiu Zhen-

zhong compares his calligraphic and pictorial strokes, while other studies explain exhibitions, criticism, national culture and the changing modern art field. These materials provide the historical basis of this paper. The present discussion puts more attention on the visible surface and on the order in which the viewer finds things.¹

Huang did not use resemblance as a simple and fixed standard. He wrote about "true painting" which can be very like the object and also very unlike it. This sentence has a paradoxical appearance, but its meaning is related to actual painting practice. A mountain has contour, height, slope and rock surface. It also has air, force, moisture, distance and

changing light. The painter cannot obtain all these things by tracing the outer edge. He observes the mountain, remembers earlier paintings, moves the wrist and uses line, dot, dry brush, wet wash and blank paper. Huang also often discussed void and solid. The solid part may be increased by many strokes, but the void part depends on the forms around it. Therefore, nature, memory, old method and personal brush action are mixed together in the picture.²

Heidegger's theory is one source used in the paper, but it is not placed before all the pictures. In *The Origin of the Work of Art*, he says that an artwork opens a world and sets forth an earth. World concerns the relations made meaningful by the work. Earth concerns the side which appears but still keeps itself closed. Julian Young explains that earth should not be treated only as raw material. This distinction may help with Huang's mountain space and thick ink. It is a broad idea, and the concrete brush marks still need to be described first.³

A small reproduction of Huang's landscape often looks black at the first glance. After a little time, the black is no longer one black. Some places are dry, rough and broken, and white paper remains between the short lines. Some places are wet, gray and connected. There are dark round dots, pale scattered dots, thin turning strokes and broad washes. A viewer may first see one mountain mass, then a roof, and later a strip of water beside it. A pale band may be read as mist. When the bank above it becomes clearer, the same band may look like water or a road. Mathias Obert's discussion of the pictorial realm is useful here because the viewer is not only identifying objects outside the picture. He is gradually finding a place inside the painted relations.⁴

Chinese painting theory contains many practical and general words for these matters. Bimo includes the brush movement and the several conditions of ink. Xushi is often translated as void and solid, but the two sides are flexible. A blank area may give air and distance, and it may also break the road. A dark ridge can block the eye, while the same ridge can guide the eye upward. Zong Bing talks about clearing the heart and savouring images. Jing Hao discusses truth, form, spirit, brush

and ink. Guo Xi writes about walking, viewing, wandering and dwelling. Shitao often writes about mountain force, cloud, density and transformation. These sayings are not one complete theory, and sometimes they are only short remarks. They are still useful because they remain close to painting practice.⁵

Obert uses phenomenology to discuss huajing, or the pictorial realm of Chinese landscape painting. He believes that landscape painting can provide a concrete place and is not only a copy of an outside natural scene. Bush and Shih collect many early painting texts, and the voices in these texts are not uniform. One writer talks about spirit, another talks about brush method, and another gives advice about distant peaks, atmosphere or figures. The mixture of practical words, moral cultivation and visual observation is important. This paper keeps some of this mixed condition instead of making every source speak in the same way.⁶

The selected paintings do not form a perfectly equal group. *Ten Thousand Valleys in Deep Shade* needs more discussion because the ink surface contains many materials and changes. *Dwelling in the Xixia Mountains* is useful for the houses, road and pale mountain passages. *Layered Peaks and Waterfall* has a clearer moving line and can be discussed more directly. Some questions appear in more than one work. Houses occur in the dark painting as well as the dwelling painting. Pale water and blank paper also occur in different positions. The sections therefore sometimes repeat the same words, but the actual pictorial effects are not exactly the same. Some passages in the following pages therefore remain close to description and do not immediately return to the main philosophical words. A roof line, a tree dot or a pale wash may be discussed for several sentences because the difference of shape and position is itself important.

The main task is simple. The paper looks at where a form is located, how it is painted, what is covered by another form, and where the eye moves next. After these observations, Heidegger, Huang's own writings and ancient-painting theories are introduced. Sometimes the theory gives a useful explanation. Sometimes it only gives another way to name the visual problem. The paper does not try to make one complete system from all the mater-

ials.

1. Houses, Paths, and Pale Spaces in Dwelling in the Xixia Mountains

Dwelling in the Xixia Mountains is a vertical hanging scroll. In the lower area there are several small roofs, houses, trees, low banks and pale open ground. These forms stand close to one another and are easier to recognize than the upper mountains. A narrow pale road or flat ground passes near the houses. Some roof lines are short and straight, while the tree forms around them are made with curved strokes, dots and dark wash. Above this settlement, the mountain rises in several parts. The central peak is pointed and heavy. Another form appears at the left, and lighter peaks are placed farther behind. Between the dark forms, white and pale bands remain. They may be mist, open air, or the interval between ridges. The eye usually begins with the roofs because their shapes are regular. Then it moves along the bank and the pale passage. The movement becomes less certain when the path is covered by trees and when one blank band has no fixed border. Heidegger's world and earth can be mentioned later, but the first impression is made by these ordinary differences of roof, tree, road, black slope and white paper. On the lower left, the black tree and bank forms are heavier, while the lower right has more pale ground and water-like space. The settlement is placed between these two conditions. Some roofs are close to the bottom edge and some are slightly higher. This uneven position prevents the buildings from forming one straight row. The eye may enter from the open right side, but it may also begin with the darker cluster on the left and then move across the roofs.⁷

The lower trees are close, dark and rather crowded. Some branches use thin dry lines, and some tree groups are only indicated by dots and small hooks. The dots are not placed with equal distance. A few of them gather into a heavy black group; others become pale toward the edge. In the middle part, the mountain outline is built from broken strokes instead of one closed line. A hard ridge comes forward on one side. Beside it, the wash becomes

lighter and the form seems farther away. The upper part is more open, but it is not empty. Light peaks, pale gray wash and narrow dark edges continue to divide the paper. Obert's idea of a painted place is helpful because the relation is not produced by fixed perspective only. The near house is small, yet a distant peak can still be large. The viewer moves by comparing local signs rather than by following one geometrical system. The brush does not describe every branch. A few curved lines may be enough to suggest a trunk, and a group of dots can stand for leaves or distant vegetation. In one area the dots are pressed close together and the paper nearly disappears. In another area the dots separate and the pale ground can be seen between them. This change of density also creates a difference between near and far forms, although the distance is not calculated by one fixed rule.⁸

The word "dwelling" in the title makes the small buildings important, although they occupy only a limited part of the scroll. The roofs are clearer than the walls. Some buildings seem connected and others are divided by dark vegetation. No human figure is easy to identify. The houses give human scale, and at the same time they make the mountains appear higher and more distant. Heidegger's later writing on dwelling and Guo Xi's writing on wandering and dwelling come from different traditions, but both make the small settlement more than a decorative detail.⁹

"Men are wont to say that landscapes contain places wherein one may walk, places one may behold, places wherein one may wander, and places wherein one may dwell. A painting that attaineth unto these entereth the wondrous grade. Yet that which may merely be walked through or beheld is not the equal of that wherein one may wander and dwell."¹⁰

Guo Xi's words are often quoted because they give several levels of landscape experience. In Huang's scroll, the lower part appears suitable for walking and staying. The house, bank and low hill make a small living area. The upper route is more difficult. A black tree group blocks one section, while a white band separates another section. The eye may guess that the pale form is a road going behind the slope, but it may also be mist. Zong Bing's phrase about clearing the heart and savouring

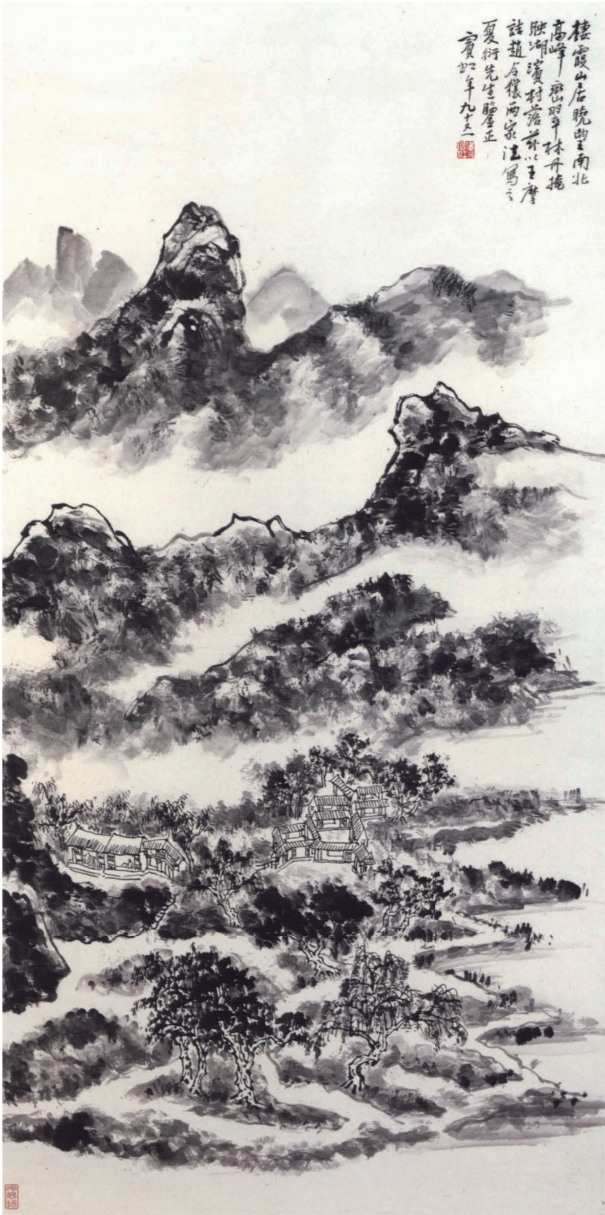


Figure 1. Huang Binhong, *Dwelling in the Xixia Mountains*. Hanging scroll, ink on paper, 120.7 × 60.3 cm. China, 1954. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1986. 267.201.

images concerns another kind of inward travel. The two statements are not explained in the same manner, and they can remain beside the painting as different historical voices.¹¹

The eye returns to the lower settlement many times. At the first look, the roofs are small architectural signs. After the eye has moved through the mountain, they become a scale for the heavy tree groups and the higher slopes. The roofs are formed by short straight

lines and small angles. Around them, dots and curved strokes spread in several directions. This contrast makes the houses stand out for a short moment. Higher in the picture, the straight forms disappear and the brush marks become more irregular. A pale opening crosses the middle area. It is broad near one slope and becomes narrow near another. The border is sometimes sharp and sometimes lost in gray wash. Because of these changes, the eye cannot decide at once whether the opening is a road, a bank or mist. The same part is observed again after the viewer has noticed the distant peak. Then the opening seems to connect more space than before. The return is also caused by the fact that the upper mountains do not contain another equally clear human sign. After the eye loses the road among the ridges, the small roofs below become familiar again. The viewer may then begin a second movement with a different idea of the pale passage.¹²

The houses are very small and do not control the picture. This is one clear difference from a landscape in which architecture becomes the main subject. Huang places the buildings among trees, rocks and banks. Some roofs are nearly pressed into the surrounding dark ink. The human living place is present, but it does not stand above nature. At the same time, the house is not completely absorbed. Its sharp roof edge and pale wall still give a point for the eye. The painting shows a relation between human habitation and mountain, but this relation is not expressed by a large story or figure.

Blank paper has several uses in this work. On the lower right, an open area may be water or flat ground. In the middle, a longer white band passes between dark slopes and looks like mist. Near the top, open paper separates the distant peaks and also gives light around the inscription. The shapes of these blanks are different. Some are horizontal and quiet. Some are narrow and turn with the mountain. Some have no clear edge because the wash gradually becomes pale. Bush and Shih show that older landscape texts discuss distance, atmosphere and mountain formation together. Huang also combines them. A blank is not only an empty interval. Its meaning changes according to the dark form beside it, and this change can happen more than once during viewing. The

open paper also changes the weight of nearby ink. A narrow white line beside a black slope makes the slope sharp and close. A broad pale area beside a light ridge makes both forms seem distant. Thus the blank is observed through its width, direction and the darkness of its border, not through one fixed symbol.¹³

Huang said, “The solid is easy; the void is hard.” This sentence is short, but it is closely related to his painting. The solid part can be strengthened by adding another stroke, another dot or another ink layer. The void cannot be made only by leaving the paper untouched. The surrounding forms must support it. In *Dwelling in the Xixia Mountains*, a blank between two weak forms may look accidental, while a blank between a dark ridge and a pale bank becomes clear and powerful. The road, mist and water are all created through this kind of relation.¹⁴

Heidegger believes that an artwork opens a world. This idea can be applied to the relations among the house, road, mountain, tree and mist. The house is meaningful because it is placed near the path and below the peak. The path is meaningful because it may connect the living place with the mountain. The mist is meaningful because it makes some relations visible and hides other relations. These elements do not remain separate. Together they form a place in which the viewer can imagine moving and staying. In this sense, the scroll opens a landscape world.

At the same time, the opened mountain is not fully clear. The central peak covers the form behind it. Dark tree groups hide the lower slope. The white mist separates the ridges and makes their distance uncertain. A roof can be seen, but the wall below is lost. A road can be followed for a short part, but then it disappears. These features may be related to Heidegger’s idea of earth, because the painting keeps something that cannot be completely seen. It is not necessary to decide that every dark mountain is earth and every blank area is world. The visual relation changes from place to place.

From the above observation, the houses are not the final subject of the work. They are a starting point and a small sign of human life. After the eye leaves them, it must move through more uncertain forms. The idea of dwelling therefore becomes less stable. It

is not a protected house separated from the outside world. It is a way of staying inside a large mountain order. The road is incomplete, the mountain is high, and the trees often cover the architecture.¹⁵

Huang writes that landscape painting “writeth the nature of the natural world, and writeth withal the inmost heart of man.” The old-style English makes the statement sound solemn, but its meaning is close to the actual process of painting. The painter observes natural mountains and at the same time uses his own trained brush. In the *Xixia* scroll, the peaks do not look like a photographic record of one fixed place. They are arranged by rise and fall, dark and pale, dense and sparse. The houses are also not detailed architectural records. They are small shapes giving the feeling of residence.¹⁶

Guo Xi’s wandering and dwelling and Heidegger’s dwelling come from different historical backgrounds. The first belongs to Chinese landscape painting and the cultivated enjoyment of mountains. The second is connected with Heidegger’s thinking about building, place and human existence. The two ideas should not be regarded as exactly the same. However, both can draw attention to the relation between a human being and a place. Huang’s scroll makes this relation visible in an ordinary way: a few roofs, a partly hidden road, tree groups, a pale mist band and a high peak.¹⁷

2. Dark Ink and Different Ink Layers in *Ten Thousand Valleys in Deep Shade*

2.1 The First Black Impression

Ten Thousand Valleys in Deep Shade gives a heavy first impression. The scroll is tall and narrow, and the middle and lower areas are filled with mountain forms, tree dots, short lines and washes. At a distance, much of the surface may look like one black mass. When the viewer looks longer, the mass separates. A pale cliff stands in the upper part. Open paper remains around the inscription and toward the upper left. Several roofs can be found in the middle, and pale water appears below. Some



Figure 2. Huang Binhong, *Ten Thousand Valleys in Deep Shade*. Hanging scroll, ink and color on paper, 171.5 × 46 cm. China, 1933. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1986.267.200.

black areas are smooth and wet. Some are dry, broken and rough. Some are gray rather than black. The valleys are not drawn with clear outlines, but are suggested by overlapping light and dark forms. Huang's writings on ink give the most direct background for this surface. The upper pale cliff has a relatively clear vertical edge, but its lower part is mixed with gray and black. In the middle area, roofs, banks and tree groups are crowded into a narrow width. Near the bottom, open water and several dark stones create a different rhythm. The eye can therefore divide the scroll into several zones, but the zones are not cleanly separated. Dark branches cross pale wash, and gray slopes enter black tree masses. The painting contains many small transitions between black, gray and paper color.¹⁸

Heidegger's idea of earth may be useful for this work. Earth is described as something that comes forward and at the same time remains self-hidden. This does not mean that the ink itself is earth. Ink is a material used by the painter, and the mountain is a pictorial form. However, the dense ink makes many forms difficult to separate completely. Wang Shanshan discusses the hidden and inexhaustible side of earth, and Zhang Zhenhua points out that earth also has natural and historical meanings. These discussions remind us that earth is more than a dark substance. In Huang's painting, the important thing is the effect of the ink.¹⁹

The dark mountain is made by several kinds of mark. Long broken contours appear beside short texture strokes. Round dots are placed over wash, and some dots join into thick groups. A thin dry line may show a rock edge. A broad wet stroke may connect two forms which first seem separate. The ink sometimes gathers at the end of a stroke and makes a black knot. In another place, the same stroke becomes pale before it stops. There are also small white holes inside dark areas. They may be paper left between strokes or small passages of mist. These details make the black surface irregular. Even when the mountain is dark, the movement of the hand can still be seen in many places. Some marks are placed one over another, so the first direction is partly hidden by the later layer. A dry line may remain visible under a wet gray wash. In other places, the wet wash spreads

beyond the line and softens the rock edge. The dots also have different shapes. Some are almost square and heavy, some are round, and some are only small touches with a dry tip. These variations do not produce a regular decorative pattern. They make the mountain surface crowded, old, rough and changeable.

The title emphasizes both valleys and shade. “Ten thousand” does not give an exact number. It suggests a very large mountain space with repeated recesses. “Deep shade” may refer to tree cover, shadow, moisture and the general black atmosphere. The upper cliff receives more light, while the middle and lower parts are crowded and heavy. The buildings are small and partly covered, and the water appears only in a few pale places. The title fits the picture in a general way, but the painter does not illustrate it by drawing ten thousand separate valleys.

The vertical format makes the eye move upward, but not by one continuous line. Pale water at the bottom gives an opening. Above it, a dark slope and tree group block the direct route. A roof makes a short horizontal pause. The eye then enters a lighter gray passage, reaches another heavy black group, and finally finds the pale cliff near the top. Another viewer may begin with the pale cliff because of its contrast and then look downward. The picture does not force only one direction. The lower part is compressed, the middle part is crowded, and the upper part has more open paper. These differences produce a slow movement between light and dark. The inscription at the top also holds the eye for a moment and makes the pale paper around it more noticeable. From this open area, the viewer may return downward along the side of the cliff. Another route begins at the roofs in the middle and moves diagonally toward the upper left. These routes overlap. One does not cancel the other, and the same dark group may work as an obstacle in one route and as a connecting form in another route.

Western perspective often uses a fixed viewpoint, converging lines and regular size reduction. Huang’s depth is more dependent on covering, ink tone and local comparison. A valley seems deep because its entrance is dark. A ridge seems distant because its edge is pale and soft. A tree group

comes forward because the dots are strong and the dry lines are rough. The small roofs provide scale, but they do not organize the whole picture. The viewer must compare one local sign with another, and the relation may change after a longer observation.

2.2 Accumulated Ink and Overnight Ink

Huang’s “five brush methods and seven ink methods” provides a direct list of technical materials. The seven ink methods include accumulated ink, broken ink, dense ink, pale ink, splashed ink, scorched ink and overnight ink. These names describe different operations and conditions. Accumulated ink is built through repeated applications. Broken ink places one tone or moisture condition into another. Scorched ink is dark and dry. Overnight ink may contain particles and uneven deposits. In the picture, these methods do not appear as seven isolated examples. A dry contour may be placed over gray wash, while dark dots and a later wet stroke make the same slope thicker. The mountain is produced by their combination. The list itself has a classificatory character, like many old discussions of painting method. Yet the finished work does not show labels. Accumulated ink may contain broken ink, and scorched dry marks may be added beside a wet layer. One area can therefore belong to several methods at the same time. This mixed use is important because the picture would become mechanical if each method occupied a separate zone.²⁰

Wang Huiyu and Mao Jianbo discuss Huang’s use of overnight ink. Ink left for a long time may separate and form sediment. Earlier practice could regard it as unclean or difficult. Huang used the rough, granular and unstable quality. In *Ten Thousand Valleys in Deep Shade*, some black passages look wet and joined, while others look broken and full of small particles. Rough ink is suitable for old trees, rock surfaces and the thick air of the valley. It makes the mountain heavy without making every part a continuous black wash.²¹

Overnight ink also brings different painting times into one surface. One layer becomes dry or partly dry before another layer is put above it. A wet edge spreads softly into paper. A later dry mark remains on the upper

surface with sharper grain. A dark dot may sit on a pale gray wash, and a thin stroke may cross an earlier heavy part. The exact order cannot always be known, but the difference between the layers can be felt. Therefore, the surface contains not only dark and light, but also earlier and later actions of the brush.²²

2.3 Roofs, Water, and Pale Openings

The small architecture gives another way to observe the ink. Roof lines are straighter and more regular than the tree and rock strokes. For this reason, a roof can suddenly appear inside a black group. Several roofs in the middle are placed at different heights. They show that the slope continues through the dense ink and they also give a measure of the mountain. The pale water below has a similar function. It is smooth and open beside the rough crowded mountain. After the eye has looked at the water, the black above seems heavier. When the eye returns to the roof, the building may appear more fragile than before, almost pressed into the dark surface. One roof near the center is clearer because a pale wall remains below it. Another roof is only a small angle and almost disappears into tree dots. Their difference shows that architecture is not painted with one degree of detail. The lower water also contains several dark stones or banks, so it is not a completely empty white place. It has small interruptions which connect it with the mountain above.²³

Heidegger's idea of earth can be used after these ink conditions are observed. The dark forms are present, but they do not give all their internal divisions. The viewer knows that there are mountains, trees and valleys, yet many boundaries remain mixed. This resembles the self-hidden side of earth. The comparison is general. The actual hidden effect comes from wash, dry stroke, wet stroke, dots, small blank holes and the covering of one form by another.

Tong Zhongtao writes that brush-and-ink is related to the structure and expression of Chinese painting as a whole. This point is clear in Huang's work. Accumulated ink does not decorate a mountain which has already been completed. It makes the mountain, the trees and the spaces between them. A dry line gives a hard edge. A wet wash joins forms. A dot strengthens one tree group. A pale blank opens



Figure 3. Huang Binhong, *Layered Peaks and Waterfall*, Hanging scroll, ink and color on paper, 99.4 × 49.8 cm. China, 1946. Shanghai Museum.

water, air or mist. These different actions also change the speed of viewing.²⁴

Liu Xiaochun describes Huang's art as a renewal of the old with brush-and-ink at the center. Huang did not stop using traditional paper, brush, ink, texture strokes or

ancient models. He changed the intensity and combination of these things. In the dark landscape, a descriptive stroke can almost become an independent mark, while a group of independent marks can again form a mountain. Soft wash is placed beside hard dry lines. Repeated dots build a thick surface, but their irregular arrangement prevents mechanical repetition. These tensions give the work a modern visual feeling.²⁵

The words dark, dense and layered are often used for this work, and they appear again in the present discussion. The repetition is difficult to avoid because the painting itself repeats dark groups and ink layers. Still, the words must be connected with positions. The upper cliff is pale. The middle roofs are surrounded by black. The lower water remains open. Some black is moist and some black is dry. The viewer does not see these differences at one time. He may first see the cliff, then the roofs, then the water, and later return to the dark middle again. A similar repetition occurs when one describes the roof, the pale cliff and the lower water, because these forms continue to act as visual points during different stages of looking. The description returns to them from another direction. This is not a new object each time, but the relation around the object has changed.

Void and solid are also important in this dark work. Although much of the surface is painted, the blank and pale parts are not small accidents. The open paper around the inscription gives air to the upper section. The pale cliff provides a large light form. Narrow gray or white passages separate tree groups. The lower water keeps the bottom from becoming completely blocked. These open places make the dark mountain more powerful. At the same time, some blanks are uncertain. A light patch may be mist, water or exposed rock. Thus void does not always mean a simple open road.²⁶

From these observations, the darkness of Ten Thousand Valleys in Deep Shade is not only a feeling of gloom. It is made by brush pressure, moisture, repeated layers and the arrangement of open paper. The black ink shows mountain and also keeps part of the mountain difficult to separate. The viewer can enter the valleys, but he cannot name every

slope and tree. The work therefore has a deep, heavy and moist feeling. The black is rough, broken, wet, thick and sometimes lively.

The painting is different from *Dwelling in the Xixia Mountains*, but the difference is not complete. The Xixia work begins more easily from houses and pale ground. *Ten Thousand Valleys* begins with a larger dark mass. However, both contain roofs, water, trees, blank paper and hidden paths. The second picture is more compressed and the viewer stays longer in the ink.

The material richness of *Ten Thousand Valleys in Deep Shade* is one of the main reasons for its visual force. Accumulated ink, overnight ink, dry strokes, wet washes, dots and pale paper are combined on one vertical surface. Chinese ink theory gives a practical explanation for these changes. Heidegger's earth gives a broader word for the part that remains hidden. The two explanations can be used together, although they are not the same.

3. The Waterfall Line in Layered Peaks and Waterfall

Layered Peaks and Waterfall has a more obvious moving line. The pale waterfall begins in the upper right area, turns toward the middle, is covered by rock and tree masses, and appears again near the lower water. Around it are dark slopes, short dots, small buildings and broken ink passages. The left mountain is heavy, while the lower right is more open. The picture contains vertical movement and several short horizontal pauses. The relation of water and mountain can later be connected with Heidegger's strife, but the line of the waterfall is the first thing to follow.²⁷

The upper part of the painting contains distant peaks and an inscription. The peaks are not very high in the format, but they form a broken line across the top. Below them, the ink becomes darker and the mountain body grows thicker. The waterfall enters from the upper right. Its edge is pale and rather narrow. It passes beside dark rock and then turns toward the central area. At one point the water is clear, and at another point it is nearly lost among

trees and ink. The left mountain contains many short dark strokes and dots. The inscription occupies the upper right and is separated from the main dark body by pale paper. The distant peaks form a broken, uneven line rather than one continuous horizon. Some tips are sharp, and others are softened by wash. The waterfall begins below this open upper zone, so its pale course seems to come out of a lighter and more distant space before entering the heavy middle mountain.

At first, the waterfall looks like the main line. Its pale color has strong contrast with the dark mountain. The eye follows it from the upper right, but a dark group covers the middle section. Water is visible above and below this group. The viewer must imagine the missing connection. Small roofs and tree dots near the covered part also attract attention, so the eye leaves the water for a moment and then finds it again. The same movement may happen more than once.²⁸

The mountain forms are heavy, rough and layered. Vertical strokes suggest steep rock, while short horizontal strokes make stepped surfaces. Dense dots fill the central and left parts. Near the waterfall, the dark marks press closely against the pale reserve and make the water brighter. A projecting rock narrows the stream. The mountain is therefore not only a background. It decides where the waterfall can appear. The left side contains more closely packed marks, while the right side around the water has narrower dark edges. Several short lines turn around the rock and create small ledges. The mountain body therefore has internal direction even when the main contour is unclear. The dots do not only fill space; they make local groups which push forward or sink back according to their darkness.

Shitao pays much attention to mountain momentum, distance, density and cloud. He does not describe landscape as a group of separate objects. Mountain, water, cloud and the painter's brush are connected by movement. This idea is useful for Huang's work. The waterfall is not placed in an empty channel. It belongs to the bent and compressed structure of the peaks. The dark left side, the narrow middle passage and the pale lower water form one moving relation.²⁹

"Measure thou the forms and bent of mou-

ntains and streams; reckon the breadth of the earth; mark the closeness of the peaks; discern the dimness of cloud and mist. Heaven transformeth their living presence, earth stirreth their vital currents, and by the One Stroke do I bind their form and spirit."³⁰

Shitao's statement contains many actions: measure, reckon, mark, discern and bind. These are not only philosophical words. They describe an active painter who observes the distance and density of the landscape. In *Layered Peaks and Waterfall*, the close peaks are painted with heavy ink, while some distant peaks are lighter and less detailed. The cloud and mist are not separately drawn; they appear through blank paper and pale wash between the dark forms. The waterfall is one of the clearest lines, but even this line is changed by the mountain's density.

The brush-and-ink process makes mountain and water appear together. The mountain is not finished first and then cut by a white waterfall. Some pale paper is reserved, some light wash is placed beside it, and darker strokes are added around it. The pale stream becomes visible because of these dark edges. In other places the dark strokes cross or cover the possible water line. Shitao says that mountains and streams meet the painter in spirit and are transformed into traces. Huang's painting shows this transformation through actual brush marks.³¹

Qiu Zhenzhong's comparison of Huang's calligraphy and painting helps us see the movement inside the mountain. Huang's mature strokes are often short and separated, but they still contain force. Some marks turn slowly and heavily. Some dots are placed quickly. Some lines look broken, yet the viewer can feel an invisible continuation between them. This is similar to calligraphy, where separate strokes belong to one movement of the wrist and body. In the painting, the waterfall is not the only moving part.³²

The painting contains ordinary contrasts: dark and light, dry and wet, solid and blank, vertical and horizontal. The pale waterfall is mainly vertical. Roofs and lower banks make short horizontal forms. The left mountain is crowded and the lower right is open. These differences make the picture rich, but they are not equal in every part.

Huang's writings say that natural form passes through method, vital force and brush-and-ink. A firm line gives a rock edge, dots give tree density, gray wash joins forms, and reserved paper becomes water. The mountain and waterfall are built by these actions instead of being copied as two finished objects.

Void and solid change their use in this picture. The pale waterfall may be called void, but it is active and gives the main direction. The dark mountain may be called solid, yet it contains gray openings, broken paths and hidden movement. A blank passage in the middle may be water, mist and space at the same time.

The eye moves downward with the waterfall and then stops. It turns toward the left rock, nearby dots and small architecture. After this short detour, the water appears again below. The movement is downward, sideways and downward again. The viewer connects the separate pale parts in his own observation. It may pause at a roof, move across a horizontal bank, and return to the pale water from below. On another viewing, the eye begins with the lower open water and searches upward for the source. The route can therefore be followed in both directions, although the interruption remains in the middle.

This work has some features of the other paintings. Like the Xixia scroll, it gives a route. Like Ten Thousand Valleys, it uses dark ink to slow recognition. The waterfall, however, makes the movement more direct. The eye follows a natural force rather than only wandering among slopes.

Huang's mature landscapes are often called dense, rich and vigorous. Here the central mountain is dense, but the upper peaks are lighter and the lower water is open. The surface therefore has compression and release. The arrangement is not equally heavy from top to bottom.

The interruption of the waterfall is more important than a simple contrast of dark and light. The eye expects the pale line to continue. When it is covered, the mountain becomes noticeable as an obstruction. When the water appears below, the viewer looks backward and tries to join the two sections. This is a very concrete action of seeing.³³

Heidegger calls the relation of world and

earth a strife. In this painting, pale water opens a route and the mountain keeps part of the route hidden. Without dark rock, the waterfall would lose some brightness. Without the waterfall, the mountain would be more closed. This comparison is useful, although it does not explain the special brush movement.

Manifestation and concealment are easy to see in this work. The waterfall appears, disappears and appears again. The mountain is also visible through strokes and washes, but its inner parts remain mixed. Rock, tree, house and water can be named, while their boundaries are not always separated.

In general, Layered Peaks and Waterfall combines one clear motif with a complicated brush surface. Water gives movement, mountain gives weight, roofs give small pauses, and the lower blank gives a larger open place. It is first a work of lines, dots, washes, pale paper and dark ink. The philosophical comparison comes after these things.

4. Some Notes on Heidegger and Chinese Painting

The three works show that Heidegger can be used for some visual questions, but the use is not equal in every painting. World is clearer in the relation of house, path and mountain in the Xixia scroll. Earth is easier to discuss when the ink becomes thick and mixed. Strife is visible in the waterfall and the blocking mountain. These connections are convenient, but Chinese painting did not wait for these words. Guo Xi, Zong Bing, Shitao and Huang already discussed dwelling, spirit, mountain force, brush, ink, void and solid. Obert begins from this Chinese background when he brings phenomenology into the study of huajing.³⁴

Bimo is not exactly the same as medium. It includes brush action, ink condition, calligraphic training, composition and older styles. Xushi is also flexible. Blank paper sometimes opens space and sometimes cuts it. Dark ink sometimes hides a roof and sometimes shows the ridge direction. These Chinese words are practical and historical, and they do not always give one fixed meaning.³⁵

Heidegger should not become a key used for every part of Huang's painting. His theory is useful when the picture opens a place and at the same time keeps part of it hidden. After this general connection is made, the discussion must return to roofs, paths, dry lines, wet wash and small white openings. Otherwise, the words world and earth become too broad.

Heidegger says that what appears does not need to become completely available. This sentence helps with the dark mountain and the broken road. However, it cannot explain why overnight ink has particles, why a calligraphic line turns slowly, or why copying an old master changes the painter's hand. These questions belong to another history.³⁶

Huang's works also make the philosophical words more concrete. World in the picture is made by a roof below a peak, a path beside a tree and a blank band between slopes. Earth can be related to thick ink, mixed boundaries and hidden valleys. These are examples rather than exact definitions.

Brush-and-ink remains the central concrete problem. Huang's line may be round, heavy, slow, broken or changing. Ink may be dry, wet, thick, pale, accumulated or granular. These states build the mountain and also give a feeling of age, moisture, weight and movement. Tong Zhongtao's discussion is useful because he treats bimo as more than one technique.

Void and solid show why one-to-one translation is difficult. In the Xixia painting, white mist opens distance and also breaks the road. In Ten Thousand Valleys, black ink hides architecture and at the same time strengthens the mountain. In the waterfall picture, pale water is the strongest moving form. Therefore, void is not always world and solid is not always earth. Their uses change according to the surrounding forms.³⁷

Historical context is another matter and it does not always enter the close description smoothly. Huang lived through the late Qing, the Republican period and the early People's Republic. Chinese painting was discussed in schools, exhibitions, newspapers and cultural debates. Song Shumin shows that Huang's reputation was related to critics, exhibitions, political conditions and the later market. Zhang Xuefeng connects vigorous luxuriance and

brush-and-ink with national and modern ideas. This slight break is also part of the research problem. The visible ink surface and the social history of exhibitions are not the same kind of evidence. They need to be placed near one another, but they do not always join in one smooth paragraph.³⁸

Huang did not become modern by giving up old painting. He copied old masters and continued to use paper, brush, ink and texture strokes. At the same time, he made the surface more dense, broken and difficult. Liu Xiaochun calls this renewal from the old. The statement is general, but it fits the paintings because old means produce a new viewing difficulty.³⁹

Lang Shaojun discusses learning from old masters and learning from nature. Huang did not treat the two activities as enemies. Copying trained the hand. Travel and sketching gave experience of real mountains, roads, weather and light. A painter needed both. This point is related to the present paintings even when no direct sketching place can be identified.⁴⁰

The method of this paper is therefore a comparison, but it is not a balanced comparison in every paragraph. Sometimes Heidegger gives a useful name. Sometimes Chinese painting theory is more concrete. In some places the visual description is enough and no large theory is needed.

The differences should remain. Heidegger discusses an opening that is never complete. Huang shows how an incomplete road, a covered roof or a broken waterfall is made by hand. Chinese theory then asks about wrist force, blank paper, ink moisture and inherited brush method. These questions do not become one question.⁴¹

This method may also be used for other Chinese paintings, but it should be used carefully. Global art history sometimes keeps Chinese concepts completely separate, and sometimes translates everything into general theory. Both ways can become simple. Translation creates distance. An old Chinese sentence, an archaic English rendering and a modern research article do not have the same voice, and the difference can remain visible. The difference of language is especially clear in quotations. A short classical saying can sound dense and old, while a modern English explanation becomes longer and more direct. It

is not necessary to remove all of this difference by rewriting every sentence into one style.⁴²

Huang is a suitable case because his pictures preserve old brush methods and also give a modern surface experience. The viewer recognizes a traditional mountain, but the ink can make that recognition unstable. This is one reason why his paintings continue to be discussed. The point does not need to be made into a complete solution.⁴³

A Heideggerian reading must change when it enters Chinese painting. It needs to notice brush-and-ink, void and solid, calligraphy, copying, paper and the slow route of the eye. It also needs to accept that some Chinese terms have several English translations. Phenomenology is useful when it stays close to these materials.

World is not the same as *huajing*. Earth is not ink, mountain or paper. Strife is not exactly the same as void and solid. Still, the terms can meet around small visual problems. The lower houses open a place. The dark valleys keep depth hidden. The waterfall gives a line and loses it. This is enough for the comparison used here.

Conclusion

This paper has spent much of its length on ordinary visual materials: roofs, tree dots, rock lines, pale water, dark wash and open paper. These things are repeated because they appear repeatedly in Huang's paintings. The viewer often begins from one familiar form and then finds that the surrounding surface is less clear. A roof provides scale, but its wall disappears. A road gives movement and then is covered. One black mountain divides into several layers only after longer observation. The paintings therefore do not give all their forms at one time.⁴⁴

The houses in the *Xixia* scroll and the roofs in *Ten Thousand Valleys* are small, but they are useful points for the eye. They have straighter lines than the nearby trees and rocks. The pale spaces around them may be road, water

or mist. These differences make the viewer compare one place with another instead of receiving one complete space immediately.⁴⁵

Accumulated ink is especially important. Dry stroke, wet wash, black dot, pale layer and overnight ink make several kinds of darkness. The black can be rough, moist, broken and heavy. This material variety is one reason why looking becomes slower.⁴⁶

The waterfall gives another kind of observation. Its line is visible above and below, but not in the middle. The viewer follows, stops and reconnects it. This process is simple, and it shows clearly how a picture can guide the eye and also interrupt it.⁴⁷

Huang's modern transformation took place inside older painting methods. Calligraphic pressure, ancient models, accumulated ink and natural observation are all present. He did not leave tradition, but he used it with another density and another visual effect.⁴⁸

Heidegger's world, earth and strife provide broad words for opening, hidden depth and conflict. They are helpful in several places, but they cannot replace *bimo*, *xushi*, calligraphy, ink history and copying. The theory remains one part of the materials.⁴⁹

The viewer is active in these paintings. He moves from lower to upper parts, compares near and distant forms, returns to a roof and looks again at black ink. Sometimes the first judgment changes. Mist becomes water, a tree group becomes a ridge, and one black mass becomes several smaller forms.⁵⁰

Huang Binhong paints mountains and water, and he also makes the seeing of mountains and water difficult. Brush gives line, weight and direction. Ink gives moisture, darkness and grain. Blank paper gives mist, road, air and water. These parts work together, cover one another and remain partly unfinished in the viewer's mind. For this reason, the picture can be looked at again after the general argument is finished, and some small forms may still appear differently, and may still change in a later viewing.⁵¹

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