

**THREE THOUSAND YEARS OF CHINESE PAINTING** / Richard Barnhart, James Cahill, Nie Chongzheng, Wu Hung, Lang Shaojun, and Yang Yin.--(The culture & civilization of China)--New Haven, Conn. : Yale University Press ; Beijing, China : Foreign Languages Press, June 1997.--402 p. : ill.--ISBN 0-300-07013-6 (cl., alk. paper); LC 97-11152: \$75.00.

Hailed as a historical publishing event, *Three Thousand Years of Chinese Painting*, is the first volume of the series *The Culture & Civilization of China*, a joint multi-volume publishing project of Yale University Press and the China International Publishing Group in China, published simultaneously in English and Chinese. In its entirety, the 15-year project will comprise 75 books, covering various aspects of Chinese art and culture. The goals of the project are "to illustrate the cultural riches of China, to explain China to both interested general readers and specialists, to present the best recent scholarship, and to make original and previously inaccessible resources available for the first time."

The book has seven chapters, with splendid illustrations, mostly in color, of over 300 paintings. The first chapter introduces the reader to Chinese painting, highlighting its differences from Western painting traditions. The following six chapters cover a span of 3,000 years and are arranged chronologically by dynasty, from the origins of Chinese painting to the present day. Chapter two reaches back to the Neolithic flower and animal designs painted on pottery, rock paintings, and the earliest known tomb murals from the first century BC and concludes with the Tang dynasty (618-907) and the development figure and narrative painting. Chapters three and four cover the 462 years of the Five Dynasties (907-960), the Song dynasty (960-1270) and the Yuan dynasty (1271-1368); during these centuries, the painting academy was established, Buddhism played an important role in Chinese painting, Chan Buddhist painting styles developed, and with the decline of imperial patronage southern literati scholars emerged with a diversity of individual styles. The fifth and sixth chapters deal with the Ming (1368-1644) and the Qing (1644-1912) dynasties; two artistic traditions are discussed, with professional painters, on the one hand, who enjoyed court patronage and followed the traditions, and the literati painters, on the other, who promoted spontaneity, artistic intuition, and direct expression of feelings. The last chapter covers the traditional style painting of the twentieth century, providing a historical background, divided into the late Qing-early Republic period, 1900-1927, the middle and later periods of the Republic, 1927-1949, the early years of the People's Republic of China, 1950s-1970s, and the new period since 1976; stylistic movements, new techniques and forms of expression, and the influence of Western and Japanese art are discussed.

Written by three American and three Chinese scholars--an unprecedented collaborative effort reflecting different approaches in methodology and historiography--the book offers a coherent, in-depth, and comprehensive history of Chinese painting and provides information on more than 400 artists. It is a valuable resource and the extensive notes and bibliography offer material for those who are eager for further study of Chinese painting.

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