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Duncan Campbell

Victoria University of Wellington, UK

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Qi Biaojia’s ‘Footnotes to Allegory Mountain’: introduction and translation

DUNCAN CAMPBELL

Translator’s introduction

To sleep on the high pillow in what seems my own little hut,
To sweep the rocks and listen to the soughing of the tall pines.

Du Fu and Qi Biaojia

In the late summer of the eighth year of the reign of the Chong Zhen Emperor (1635), Qi Biaojia (figure 1) was granted leave to quit his post with the Censorate and to return to his native place of Shanyin in Zhejiang province, ostensibly to care for his elderly mother. He arrived home during the mid-morning of the last day of the sixth month and was to remain in retirement for the next 9 years. Family and friends had gathered to welcome him home, and in his diary for this year, entitled ‘A Joyous Account of My Return South,’ Qi Biaojia records the happiness of the occasion. His diary entry for the very next day, however, perhaps affords us a greater insight into his state of mind at the time:

1st day 7th month: I have been home less than two days and already I find myself forced to escape my various social obligations. With Zheng Jiuhua as my only companion, I went to the Great Hall to sort out my books. Zhou Rudeng’s grandson Zhou Xianzhi happened to pay a call and I entertained him with a meal of fowl and mallet. Once he had departed I returned to my books and in the evening met up with my brothers to drink and converse.

Over the course of the succeeding weeks, in between a continuing round of family and social engagements, Qi Biaojia seems to have spent as much time as possible re-establishing his library and sorting through his father’s writings. To his own account, he seems particularly concerned with his inability to concentrate upon his reading. Again and again in his diaries he bemoans the fact that his circumstances are such that his mind is too distracted (san luan) to make much progress with his studies.

It is from an entry in his diary for early in the next month that one can date the genesis of his conception of the garden described in the account that follows, a garden which was designed to afford him the peace and quite that would allow him to rectify his reading habits:

6th day 8th month: The day dawned bright and clear. In the afternoon I went to visit my uncle’s garden with Ma Yuanchang, and my brothers Jichao and Xiangjia. Along with my cousin Zhixiang I went to Allegory Mountain, this being where the monk Without Trace had established his hermitage. The desire to choose a site and build a garden arose powerfully within me. We left Axe-Handle Mountain by boat and it was evening by the time we returned home.

On the 21st day of the 10th month, no longer able to restrain his desire to build a garden, Qi Biaojia visited the site with his brothers and friends to draw up the plans for his garden. Construction began in earnest shortly thereafter and for the next 17 months Qi Biaojia devoted much of his energy to the design and building of his garden. By the eighth month of the next year enough progress had been made on the garden that Qi was able to spend the night in a newly completed Studio of the Tranquil One. When the two ponds that became a feature of the garden were created late in the first month of the year after, the scenery of the garden ‘began gradually to acquire its excellence’ (figure 2).

By his own account, Qi inherited both his passion for garden design, and the financial wherewithal to indulge this passion, from his father Qi Chenghan. ‘My father had a lifetime’s passion for gardens,’ he tells us in the entry on his father’s Intimate Garden in his account of the various gardens of his district, ‘and he built
this garden after he had resigned from office.... Later on, he used all his income on developing it.' Both the scale and the context of Qi's own indulgence of his obsession, however, differed greatly. All too soon, visitors began to crowd their way into his garden and it rang with the commotion of a busy marketplace. ‘From Master Zhu’s place I returned to Allegory Mountain and sat in my Rotten Axe-Handle Mountain House reading the Lankavatara Sūtra,’ he tells us on one occasion, ‘but the incessant trample of the crowds of visitors proved such that I greatly regretted ever having built this garden.’

Events elsewhere too, of course, forced their way into his garden. Regular reports reached him of the collapse of the Ming political order. The recent death of his mother having finally released him from his final obligations, Qi Biaojia took up office again in 1644, and after the fall of Beijing and the suicide of the Chong Zhen Emperor, news of which reached Qi as he made his way to the Southern Capital, he was appointed Governor of Suzhou. Factional infighting in the court of the Prince of Lu soon enforced his retirement, however, and he returned to Shanyin. Under increasing pressure to accept office under the new dynasty, Qi Biaojia appears to have believed that he had little alternative but to end his life a martyr. The official history of the period records his demise in the following manner:

In the 5th month of the next year [1645] the Southern Capital was lost, and by the 6th month, Hangzhou too, in turn, had fallen. [Qi] Biaojia thereupon began his fast. On the 4th day of the succeeding intercalary month, having told his family that he was going to repair early to his bedchamber, he proceeded to his lake wherein he sat bolt upright and awaited his death. He was 44 years old.

There is a record of his last conversation with one of his sons. A relaxed smile on his lips, he turned to him and said: ‘Although your father did not fail in his family duties, I was however somewhat too addicted to the springs and the rocks. I was lavish in constructing my garden and this was my failing.’ He was buried within his garden, in a coffin that he had already prepared for himself.

Qi Biaojia seems to have begun his account of his garden late in the ninth year of the reign of the Chong Zhen Emperor (1636). His diaries show that he worked intensively upon it during the fourth and fifth months of the next year, at the same time that he was reading both Wang Shizhen’s (1526-90) ‘Record of My Mount Yan Garden’ and Li Daoyuan’s (d. 527) Footnotes to the Classic of the Waterways, finishing it on the 21st day of the fifth month. Having circulated the manuscript among friends, Qi made some changes before having it copied and sent for printing. By this time the text had acquired its present title. Construction of the garden continued, of course, and in his diaries Qi Biaojia speaks of having a friend put the finishing touches to a text entitled ‘More Footnotes to Allegory Mountain,’ It appears that this text is no longer extant.

FIGURE 1. Portrait of Qi Biaojia, from the Yu yue san bu xiu tu zan (1740), compiled by Qi’s friend Zhang Dai.
FIGURE 2. Woodblock illustration of Qi Biaojia's Allegory Mountain, from a Ming edition of his Yu shan zhi.
Brief introduction

My home is in Mei Zizhen’s Village of the Superior Man,25 that is, along the Shanyin Road.26 Here I am surrounded by solitary isles such as that of Fang Gang27 and half bays like that once owned by Censor He Zhizhang.28 All that I have taken possession of myself, however, is the tiny hillock that stands besides my home, as if by virtue of a fate predestined me. Its name is ‘Allegory Mountain.’

When I was still a little boy my brother Jichao and my cousin Zhixiang obtained this hill in exchange for a bushel of millet. They cleared it of stone and planted it in pine, hewing the land and humping away the stones until their hands were callused and their feet blistered. I too, at that time, would pole my way here by small boat, often to play games in the mud.

More than twenty years on, the pines have grown tall and the rocks, now weathered, have acquired the patina of age. All of a sudden, my brother Jichao decided to renounce the world and took tonsure as a Buddhist monk. Zhixiang, for his part, constructed Axe-Handle Garden to serve as his retreat from officialdom.29 He gave over the southern slopes of the mountain in order that a pagoda be built to commemorate Master Wheat Waves, whilst the remainder of the site was left fallow, to revert to dense and overgrown vegetation. Having myself retired from office on the pretext of ill health, I happened past this place and the scenes and emotions of twenty years ago came flooding back into my mind’s eye. As soon as the idea of building myself a garden had formed itself in my mind, moreover, it seemed to acquire an urgency all of its own and there was no putting a stop to my urge. What follows, then, is a complete account of the creation of my garden.30

When the project began, all I desired were four or five structures. But guests came by to pay their calls upon me there and, pointing this way and that, they declared: ‘Here you should site a pavilion’ or ‘This site is perfect for a gazebo.’ I was unmoved by their comments, objecting in my mind that this was not at all in keeping with my own original intentions. After another turn or two through my estate however, unconsciously, I found myself most discomforted to discover that their words had taken possession of my soul. Yes, indeed, I could not be without that pavilion there or this gazebo here. And before one stage of construction was completed, I found new ideas and novel conceptions occurring to me at every turn. Whenever I came to the end of a path or trod upon a dangerous track, I would tax my mind to come up with unexpected conceits as if heavenly inspired, to the extent that I would continue to do so even in my dreams. Thus, as my enthusiasm for the project was roused, so too did my fascination for it grow more intense. I would set off there at the crack of dawn to return only as the sun was setting. Impatiently I would lie upon my pillow waiting for the dawn to shoot forth its first tongues of light whereupon I would order the serving lads to make ready my boat and set off, wishing all the time that the three Li we had to cover to get to the site were but a single step away. I was heedless of the extreme cold or the scorching heat, the goose bumps on my flesh or the sweat that ran down my spine. Not even the most violent of storms could deter me from setting off in my boat each morning. When groping around at the head of my bed at night and finding that my cash reserve was exhausted, a sense of desolation would come over me. Yet the moment I reached the mountain again the next day and began to wander about I would worry that the rocks I had
bought and the timber I had stored away were yet insufficient for the task at hand. Thus have I emptied my purse these past two years. I have fallen ill and then recovered; having recovered I have fallen ill again. This then is an account of my crazy obsession with the creation of my garden.31

The garden encompasses three sides of the mountain as well as the ten or so mu of flat land surrounding it. Half of this area is taken up by water and rock, the other half with buildings and trees and plants. The garden contains two halls, three pavilions, four galleries, two terraces and an equal number of belvederes, as well as three dykes. As for the various studies and studios and such like structures, each is exquisite in its own manner of seclusion or capaciousness, the adytum and the hermitages are all differently shaped, either small and constricted or wide and expansive, whilst the chambers and mountain cottages and so on are all sited on different levels of the mountain side. The bridges and gazebos, paths and peaks are dotted here and there, forming a rhythm with their wave-like contours. In general terms, therefore, what was once empty has been given solidity, that which was originally solid has been rendered empty, the gathered has been dispersed, the dispersed gathered, the precipitous levelled and the level made precipitous. Like the skilled physician, I have prescribed potions with both restorative and purgative properties; like an able general, I have deployed my troops in formations designed both for frontal attack and for ambush; as an Old Master, my every brushstroke has brought life to my painting; and as a famous poet, my every line is tuneful. This then is an account of the structures contained within the garden that I have created.

Construction of my garden began during the mid-winter of the yi hai year [1635] and by early spring of the succeeding bing zi year [1636], the thatched cottage had been completed and the various studies and studios were beginning to take shape. By the mid-summer of that year, construction had commenced again, first of the gazebos, to be followed by the belvederes, this stage of the project being completed with the construction of the mountain hut. By this time, both the mountaintop and the land all around had been graven into shape and my sole cause for dissatisfaction lay in the fact that when one arrived at the garden by junk, no passage led into my garden from the riverbank. And so did dredging and channelling work begin anew. From the 11th month until the spring of the ding chou year [1637], it was a full one hundred days before irregular ponds flowed beneath my window, breeze borne spray dampened by teapoys, the vermilion balustrades were found reflected in the deep green water and the stream, turned a rosy red by the setting sun, meandered its way into the verdant valley. Only then was my garden worthy of its name. And yet, my horticulturalist’s urge proved not yet sated and so I brought the construction of my garden to a halt with the Farm of Abundance and the Bin Vegetable Plot.32 By then, it was already the 13th day of the 4th month, the very height of summer. My Eight Principles of Book Acquisition Library, Mountain Brook Thatched Belvedere, the Pitcher Hideaway and so on were all worked upon at odd moments whenever there was time from other tasks and there is no record of the exact dates of their completion. This then is the chronology of the creation of my garden.

As to the beauty of the hills and streams beyond my garden, this region has long been celebrated for its ‘Thousand cliffs and myriad torrents,’33 while the profuseness of the trees and plants growing within my garden is not restricted to the proverbial ‘Seven Pines and Five Willows.’34 The vistas of all four seasons are here to be enjoyed, as one drifts in a boat beneath the moon and in a gentle breeze. Within these ‘Three Paths’35 one can summon the clouds and become drunk in the snow. Here, the refined man may feast his eyes, while the recluse, for his part, may find a haven for his soul. But such things I need not enumerate.

1. Water Bright Gallery36

Although my garden conceals within itself a mountain, paradoxically the aspect of it most to be valued is to be found in the water that flows through it. When one arrives at the garden by boat one assumes that the water has fully played its part. But then, by the time one has walked along the gallery to the west, running alongside Asymmetric Pond with its deep clear water before winding its way beyond the green forest, both Master and guest look as if they have travelled here from the Kingdom of Aquamarine; their beards and eyebrows drip and their clothes are drenched. The scene brings to mind that couplet of old Du Fu’s from his poem ‘Moon’ that goes:

At fourth watch the mountains disgorge the moon,
The warning night brightens my water tower.

Although, in this case, a gallery serves in the stead of Du Fu’s tower, I’m not at all sure that he wouldn’t nod his approval.
2. Adytum for the study of the *Book of Changes*

Of the many fine features of Allegory Garden it is the rocks that prove most excellent, but it is not the rocks alone that constitute the excellence of the garden. Once a rock is placed in the midst of water, even the most recalcitrant of them seems to acquire a divine intelligence. And it is only from my Adytum for the Study of the *Book of Changes* that this perfect marriage between rock and water can be observed to full advantage.

The adytum overlooks the eastern corner of Asymmetrical Pond and stands across the water from the Hall of My Four Unfulfilled Obligations. As one raises one’s eyes upwards or stares downwards, the sky and the pond present a seamless flow of purity and one feels a profound affinity for the birds and fishes. When along the bank the lamps are lit, their inverted reflections dance enticingly upon the surface of the water, and when the strings and flutes strike up their tunes seem driven across the surface of the pond like waves of snow. It is at times such as this that I feel the scene before me to have been Heaven sent. And when the Master of the garden becomes wearied of the sights of his garden he spends his days with a copy of the *Book of Changes* in hand; painstakingly he works through the text, achieving in the process a sense of release from the vexations of life. Although my family has specialized in the exegesis of this classic for generations, I am as yet incapable of fully understanding its principles of change. I have managed to develop an inkling of the Way of waxing and waning, however, of the ebb and flow of the cosmos. This mountain has existed for as long as Heaven and Earth themselves. Before the present moment, it was no more than a tiny mound of earth. How can one guarantee that, sometime in the future, these arrayed pavilions and storeyed studios will stand tall yet upon these sheer cliffs and here within this secluded valley? Nothing is spared Heaven and Earth’s determination of its fate. How silly of Li Deyu [787–849] of the Tang dynasty who, when demoted and in exile in Red Cliff in Canton, wrote to his sons so assiduously, instructing them to seek to preserve every stone and every leaf of his Peaceful Springs Garden. Had he forgotten of the fate of the Golden Valley and Flowery Grove gardens? Where are they today? And thus does the Master have an inkling of the truth, taking joy in those pleasures afforded us in this present life and caring not a jot for what might become of this garden in the future.

3. Summon a Rainbow Canopy

When one quits the Adytum for the Study of the *Book of Changes*, there where the gallery comes to an end one finds a canopy. It is encircled by an expanse of water which rages and foams. Whenever the lotus buds burst into flower, the Treading Fragrance Dyke, looked at from afar, appears like a rainbow curving down to drink from the sea, bearing with it a myriad silken skeins of roseate cloud and disappearing in and out of the waves. My friend the Grand Historian Ni Yuanlu [figure 3] named it Summon a Rainbow Gazebo for this reason.

4. Relinquished to the Seagull’s Pond

As a mountain, Allegory is adept at concealing its height within the low lying, at making its distance appear as if close at hand. And just as the garden is extensive enough to hoard the mountain, so too is this pond large enough to nourish it. To the south, the pond curves around Water Bright Gallery, while in the north it disappears into the Farm of Abundance. Treading Fragrance Dyke leads into its centre, and the Listening Stops Bridge serves as the point of confluence for the flowing currents. When a gentle breeze wafts across the limpid water and the fine ripples begin to weave their patterns, the mountain peaks find themselves reflected upon the surface of the water and it is as if the Three Immortal Isles have been upturned into the pond. When the slanting rays of the setting sun become a confused tangle amidst the reeds and water-pepper, spouts of molten gold or soaring shards of jade .. in whatever direction one gazes, the pond appears to have no bounds. This then, I realise, is a manifestation of the very hue of Heaven itself. The Master of the Garden calls this joy indeed. But I can never aspire to be like the light gulls that satiate themselves within its luminous waves, for they see as one the pond when it is as calm as a pure expanse of silken snow or billowing like the scudding clouds. I realise that even Zhuang Zi’s thoughts, as he stood above the Rivers Hao and Pu, were not without the impurity of ulterior motive. This is precisely why the Master of the Garden does not dare lay claim to the pond for himself but rather relinquishes it to the gulls. In doing so, however, he fears that the gulls will suspect his motives and may not accept his gift.
5. Treading Fragrance Dyke

The outer dyke of the garden is called Willow Pathway, the inner one Treading Fragrance. Treading Fragrance Dyke is the means by which one may make one's way from Summon a Rainbow Gazebo across the pond to Floating Reflection Terrace. The two halves of the pond mirror each other, while the dyke dissect the water like a skein of silk, both sides of it lined with newly planted Scholar trees swaying in the sunlight. With the arrival of the spring, young beauties dance and sing in rows here, their shoes leaving delicate traces upon the moss, and their sweet sweat mingling with the breath of the flowers. I dare not compare this with the famed Six Bridges of West Lake, but at least it partakes of the beauty of a corner of Mirror Lake.

6. Floating Reflection Terrace

When one stands upon Treading Fragrance Dyke and gazes into the distance, one can make out the vague shape of a terrace, sited in mid-water. Across the deep translucent water, turned blue-green by the rays of the moon, one can reach it. Whenever the Metal Toad in the moon raises a swell upon the surface of the pond and the red cliffs seem surrounded by the pure clear water, the terrace disappears one moment only to reappear the next, as if floating between the ripples of the mist and the white crested waves. All around, the stems of a thousand lotuses jut up, as imposing as a Lotus Throne itself, surging into flower to create the Pure Land. The Footnotes to the Classic of the Waterways contains the line: 'The encircling peaks observe each other, the solitary reflection seems to be afloat.' This line presents an exact description of the present scene.

7. Listening Stops Bridge

Once one is standing atop Floating Reflection Terrace, one finds oneself facing a massive rock face. Those holding up their long gowns begin to fear for their footing when, all of a sudden, a young dragon appears, coiled upon the tips of the waves. From this point onwards, one clambers upwards like a monkey, helping one's companions up, the twisting pathway appearing out of the cracks in the rock. After a turn or two, one finds oneself at Bamboo Sheath Den. This is the beginning of the path leading to the Gazebo for
Friendship with the Rocks. The bridge has been formed by carving the belly out of the rock, and the steps are all at different heights, curving back to meet the bridge at its halfway point. Even on a barmy summer’s evening, as soon as one moors one’s boat beneath the bridge the chill arrives with a swoosh, raising goose bumps on one’s flesh.

8. Moon Secreting Spring

Beside the third rock down to the right of Floating Reflection Terrace are found two springs, the one shaped like a full moon and the other in the form of a crescent moon. Neither spring dries up during times of drought nor do they ever overflow even after prolonged rain.

If one were to try to describe the taste of the water drawn from these springs, then obviously it cannot compare with that to be obtained from the Zhongling or Beigan Springs of Zhenjiang, and nor, I believe, could it be expected to. And yet as soon as Soughing Pines tea brewed with this water hits the back of one’s throat it is struck by its excellence and it proves fine enough to revive one’s poetic inspiration. As the spring rises fresh from the lungs of the rock, its flavour is that of the mountains and rivers. In a place such as this, beyond the reach of the Water Transport System established by that great connoisseur of tea Li Deyu,48 this water is appropriate to the needs of a rustic such as myself, and thus do I take pleasure in it.

9. Mountain Brook Thatched Belvedere

In my dreams, I often find myself reciting time and again those lines from old Du Fu’s poem ‘Late Spring’ that go:


Besides the thatched cottage upon the sandy bank
the willows renew their shade,
In the wild pond besides the city wall
the lotuses begin to redden.

Even after I awaken I find that the words remain on my lips still as I continue to mumble the lines.

On one occasion as I was plying my boat into the mountain I happened to look over to the western bank of Relinquished to the Seagulls Pond and caught sight of the eroded peaks and buttressing rocks, always as if about to plummet. At the water’s edge the land flattens out somewhat and there a small path could be opened up. At the time, however, this patch was covered in tall bamboos so I had several dozen of them chopped down in order that a cottage could be built, with the bank to one side and water on the other. It was as if Du Fu had told me in my dreams how this place could be developed. Looking down from the cottage, the clear lake is in sight and one’s reflection bobs clearly on its surface. The chill of the autumnal air coming from the stone forest beneath the northern window insinuates its way beneath one’s robes. The scene is that of a painting from the hand of a Song or Yuan dynasty Master entitled ‘Living in Reclusion besides a Mountain Brook.’

10. Tea Plot

If one takes a slight turn to the southwest as one enters Bamboo Sheath Den one comes upon a small patch of wasteland covered in stones. The topsoil here is no more than a chi in depth, and so the place is most suited to the planting of tea trees. Some time ago, the monk Vacuity and I picked and treated several specimens of tea plant, finding their chill scent to be of a most exceptional quality. Now I have had removed all other plants from this pot, leaving behind only a thousand Wooden Slave orange trees. When, some day in the future, I can brew up some tea with water drawn from my Moon Secreting Spring and sit sipping it under the tall pines, this indeed will have its air of flair and elegance. The Book of Yue speaks of: ‘The auspicious tea plants of the Dragon Mountains, the snowy tips of Sun Forged Mountain.’ I have no idea whether my own tea will prove superior to these two varieties!

11. Cold Cloud Rock

Of all things, it is certainly not rocks that my Allegory Garden lacks. To the right of the Floating Reflection Terrace stand three huge rocks that appear like they have been split open by the hand of Giant Spirit, the god of the Yellow River. I treat them as if they were the speaking rocks of Cold Mountain. Apart from these three, there are also innumerable other rocks that look like crouching tigers or squatting lions. One rock in particular, standing besides Flute Pavilion, appears like a stallion galloping along a cliff and suddenly coming to a halt, not yet fully reined in and still snorting with
anger. Above this is another rock shaped like a half moon that seems always on the point of falling. My friend Zhou Youxin named this rock Cold Cloud. Although it is perhaps not quite worthy my donning my robes and holding high my tablets of office to pay homage to it as an elder brother, as did Mi Fu [1051–1107] of the Song when he came across an exceptional rock within his official residence, I can however call it my little friend.

12. Gazebo for Friendship with the Rocks

When winding one's way up or down the mountain, this place makes an appropriate mid-way point. The gazebo's cinnabar pillars connect with the slope and its flying beams traverse the mountain. When seeking the source of the river that flows through my garden, sightseers to this place find their spirits lifted whilst those in search of solitude find the peace and tranquillity they desire therein. All linger here in the gazebo, each moved to melancholy and regret at the passage of time. But here the Master of the Garden has no special friend with whom to sit opposite and converse, only my little friend Cold Cloud rock. He, at least, does not allow himself to become inflamed by the vicissitudes of human affairs and can be said to be my true winter friend.

13. Pavilion of Great Antiquity

Pines were felled for the columns and rafters but the walls were left unplastered, perhaps the intent being to make this pavilion seem to conform to the conventions that remain to us from great antiquity? At first, this pavilion was sited besides the Gazebo for Friendship with the Rocks, but later, once the gazebo had been completed, it was moved to a spot beneath Pine Path. When Master Tao Shiling revisited my garden, he repeatedly asked after the site of this pavilion in order that he may go there to rest awhile. With a laugh, I replied, 'Great Antiquity accords not with the needs of the times and so it has been demoted to where it now stands.' My guest was not convinced at all by what I had said, and responded, 'No, no, to the contrary. This pavilion gives the appearance of profound tranquillity. It may be compared to the recluse Qili Bei of the Han who, when an old man, was prevailed upon to return from Mount Shang, so imposing in his hat and robes. How could he bear to be ranked with those smart young military officers Zhou Bo, the Duke of Jiang, or Guan Ying of the Han?'

The land here abuts a ridge and is sheltered by a bank. Alone and aloof stands the pavilion beside a secluded hedgerow and amidst the gnarled trunks, with no desire to vie in beauty with the birds and the flowers. This can be said to be a perfect example of the appropriate siting of a pavilion.

14. Little Transverse Stream

Once work had begun on excavating the pond, just as soon as we had begun to hump away the soil, the sharp ridges of the rock base seemed about to rise up. By the time a depth of a zhang or so had been reached, a steep and precipitous mountain appeared, which, as if in anger, stampeded towards the spring like a thirsty steed, burst through the clouds like a prize falcon. As the water entered the jagged, teeth-like crack in the rock and was agitated by the breeze, it resounded with an echoing boom, just as in old Su Shi's 'Account of Stone Bell Mountain.' Even Tao Qian, out on his spring travels, had never seen such a sight, even Wang Wei's fabled Wheel River Estate had not contained a thing such as this. If one goes by boat across Relinquished to the Seagulls Pond and alights here, a secluded path leads one towards the Pavilion of Great Antiquity. The banks of the stream have been planted mostly in old plum trees, which, like pure maidens lightly made up, bend over to observe their own reflections within the ripples. When one looks down upon this scene from the Adytum for the Study of the Book of Changes, it is not just the muffled sound of dropped hairpins that reaches one's ears.

15. Pine Path

My garden is not without its twisted pines of martial air, but they all seem arrogant and ill disciplined. Only here along this path are they arrayed in majestic ranks, like sentinels standing guard within the Palace of Penetrating Brightness, helmets upon their heads and swords at their sides. This being the case, I had a path cut out between them and this became the means by which one could make one's way from the Gazebo for Friendship with the Rocks to the Selecting the Superior Pavilion. When a strong wind soughs amidst these pines, a bitter chill comes upon: one even in the 6th month. The pine that faces the gate is twisted as if in dance and everyone is taken aback to find one of the Five Grandees capable of such delicate and
seductive beauty. Along the path flowering plants of various kinds have been planted, their reds and purples intermingling with the weathered green of the pines, and like a marriage arranged between Wei Wen’s beautiful daughter and the Old Man on the Donkey, the contrast thus established has its own poetic beauty.

16. Cherry Tree Grove

Below Selecting the Superior Pavilion a hedge row has been woven from bamboo. Several varieties of clambering rose have entwined themselves within the hedgerow, and beyond it grow cherry, plum, and peach, again in several varieties. Whenever the blossoms form upon these trees before falling as snow and the red fruit hangs like stars from their branches, it is like catching a glimpse of a great beauty from behind a screen, her red lips only half revealed. But the Master of the Garden happens at the time to be seeking to brush away the dust of the world with his fly-whisk and discuss abstruse matters with the Laymen from Mount Culai; he has no need for their red-teethed clappers and their romantic songs of the dawn breeze and the waning moon.

17. Selecting the Superior Pavilion

In the past it was said of clerk Xu Xun of the Jin that not only did he have a superior sensibility but that he had at his disposal also the equipment to enhance this sensibility. I would argue that even more does one require to be destined to be capable of selecting the superior. If one is not so destined, then every spring and each rock will be lost to you as soon as you encounter them. Just as Heaven and Earth work to their own principles, the mountains and rivers too form of their own accord.

To the north, this pavilion connects with Pine Path, while to the south it gives on to the Little Crenellated Peaks. Off to the east stands Tiger Horn Hermitage. Here the sandals of visitors form a constant pile, and yet, with its plain rafters and rustic beams, the pavilion itself is not at all exceptional. It is only once one has ascended the pavilion and taken a look around, caught sight of the rosy mist which shrouds the peaks and hides the sun, of the vast expanse of cloud spreading beyond the horizon, does one begin to understand the pleasures of the birds and the fishes and experience to the full the joy of the forest. The pavilion itself is not at all superior, becoming so only when united with the various scenes here assembled. Nor should the superior all be found here within the pavilion; rather it is the site of the pavilion that proves superior.

18. Horned Tiger Hermitage

Turning to the west at the northernmost point of Pine Path, one comes upon Selecting the Superior Pavilion. Taking another turn, this time to the east, brings one to a small patch of ground where the rock has acquired a patina of age. These jangle with the sound of shattering jade when struck, echoing with the muffled soughing of the sparse stand of bamboo. To the edge of this area stand two fantastic examples of Great Lake Rock, one of which looks like waves upon the surface of a pond and another like a mountain cavern. Both are as if they have fallen from the sleeve of that great lover of rocks, Mi Fu of the Song. Here I have built a hermitage of five bent rafters so as to resemble a plum blossom.

Once the hermitage had been completed, I asked my brother Jichao to give it a name. He obliged with the name Horned Tiger, saying to me, ‘You have built this hermitage to serve Bodhidharma. This manifests your devotion to the Way of the Ancestors. But have you thought also about Pure Land?’ ‘I’d like to hear their teachings,’ I responded.

To say that the Sixth Patriarch did not go to the Pure Land of the West is like the poisoned drum that brings death to all that hear its beat. Later pendants divided the two into separate schools. Not to seek to become enlightened to the original heart and to say that after all there is a pure land to which one can go is to believe in the false doctrine that there is a dharma that is external to the heart. Conversely, those who are intent upon becoming enlightened to the original heart and who insist that the Pure Land of the West is external to the heart can certainly not be said to truly be enlightened. It was for this reason that the Chan Master Yongming said: ‘With both Chan and Pure Land is to be like a tiger with horns.’ His words are profound. I often find myself teasing my Chanist acquaintances, saying to them: ‘Monks do not begrudge spending their grass shoe money, travelling the country in search of wisdom. At the moment, Amitabha is running a large congee stall in the Western Paradise. Why don’t you lot go and see what wisdom you can pick up from him? Why is it that you shy away from the Pure Land in this way?'
FOOTNOTES TO ALLEGORY MOUNTAIN

I will respectfully abide by the teachings of the Pure Land, but tell me, how does one manage to tame a tiger with horns?

Jichao counted a bead or two of his rosary before responding to my query:

Understanding begins with chanting the Buddha’s name. Once you have understood, then you can bind it with the hair of a tortoise, feed it with the echo of the valley, accompany it with a wooden horse or a clay ox, guard it with a magician or a sorcerer. Only at times such as that are you truly walking along the right way.

After pausing for a considerable time, Jichao concluded, ‘I hold true to this always.’

19. Sleeve Sea

To the north of the Mountain Brook Thatched Belvedere is found a stone chamber, the ceiling of which is so fine as to allow graduations of light to filter through. Like the gaping mouth of the Ash Sieve Taoist, it exposes to full view the five internal organs. As soon as several dozen people have taken their seats here, the bitter chill of the snow cuts straight to the bone and all memories of the heat of the 6th month in the outside world disappear completely. Perhaps the rocks here are like those that the Song poet Su Shi carried back home in his sleeves for they too seem to be from the shores of the Langya Sea in Shandong and have been ground smooth by the wash of the waves.

20. Pitcher Hideaway

Long ago, whenever Shentu Youai went wandering in the wilds, he would always carry with him a pitcher. Every now and then he would leap into the pitcher, calling it his ‘Pitcher Hideaway.’ The story so amused me when I heard it that I resolved to name my bedchamber ‘Pitcher Hideaway’ also. The room is but a single zhang square, with two small rooms built off either side, the better to resemble the handles of its namesake. With its rounded shoulders and raised spine, half hidden amidst the flowers and the trees, it is the spitting image of a pitcher. Shentu believed that the entire universe was contained within his pitcher and that like the Kalavinka pitcher told of in the sutras, it too, although completely empty, could nonetheless contain food enough to feed another kingdom. This truly is like the mustard seed that can support Mount Sumeru, and if one were to regard it simply as a pitcher one would be doing a grave injustice to Master Shentu.

21. Terrace of the Jade Maiden of Solitary Peak

East of the Ford, a single green peak rises steeply, which, clothed in a myriad jade-green bamboos and with its cinnabar towers surrounded by kingfisher water, appears like a brightly madeup beauty. This is the terrace. Like a rainbow bridge, the screened terrace shrinks back amidst a thousand stems of lotus flowers, above which only the caps of the visitors remain visible. Just as one has become intoxicated on the assembled scents of this Land of the Mased Fragrances one suddenly hears the muffled jangle of jade pendants and one believes it to be those two divine maids Orchid Fragrance Du and Green Flower Stem, riding their green pheasant and treading the clouds, and arriving here late with mincing gait from the Peak of the Assembled Fragrances. As its name, I have conferred upon it a line from a poem by the Tang poet Shen Quanqi [c.650-713], for like Cao Zhi [192–232] of the Wei dynasty when he first encountered the Goddess of the Luo River, I find myself quite lost for words.

22. Hibiscus Ford

A winding gallery leads from the Thatched Pavilion to Pitcher Hideaway. Looking down through the gaps between the floorboards one finds oneself standing above flowing water. Fantastic rocks jut upwards, and alongside the paths between these rocks giant Yundang and delicate Chill Jade bamboos sough in the autumnal breeze. A small pond of clear green water reflects the images of those passing by this way, making them appear like kingfishers playing upon the branches. My garden is long on open vistas but short of secluded spots. A place like this where one can whistle and sing is a place one can while the day away. Halfway along the gallery, a narrow path leads away towards the east and here a terrace is followed by a bridge, and the bridge in turn by an island. Red blossoms float upon the ripples and the deep green water cuts a transverse passage. But all this is not what most appeals to the mind of the Master of this garden, for when the autumnal river brings a sense of loneliness upon him, only the few Cold Fragrance
hibiscus flowers found here will become, along with the distant peaks and the deep cold pond, his boon companions. It is for this reason that the ford has been named Hibiscus.

23. Isle of Echoes

Fata Morgana form far on the horizon where the mist and the waves meet, and once formed appear like mountain peaks bobbing upon the shifting tides, the riverbanks too merging with the encircling heavens. Guests, on catching a momentary glimpse of the sight, exclaim in alarm that these must be the Tree Immortal Isles of legend, carried here across the oceans upon the backs of the fishes and dragons. Terrified, they have difficulty holding up their long gowns as they walk, a zigzag bridge serving as their single reed. Leaving the bridge, one comes upon a pavilion, followed in turn by a stone bridge. Once one has crossed the bridge with the assistance of one’s staff, the barely discernible path seems about to peter out altogether. Gibbons lead one through the cracks in the disorderly flurry of rock before one passes upward through a stone gate. The reflections dance in the surrounding purity, as if seeking to compete with my Allegory Mountain, as arrogant as that King of the tiny kingdom of Yelang who proved quite ignorant of the existence of the great Han Empire. Once upon a time a most eccentric monk exposed the root of Gold Mountain and said: ‘As the stem of the mountain is worn thin and becomes more exposed, it appears more and more like it is being held up like a mushroom.’ This is a most apt description of my isle, for as the belly of the rock base has been eroded away and water has begun to flow underneath it, the rock sits upon the surface of the waste as if it were floating there. With its encircling water and shrouded in mist, the isle looks like the preliminary sketch of that line from Xie Lingyun’s [385–433] poem ‘On Climbing the Solitary Island in the River’ which goes:

The Solitary Island, lovely in mid-stream.

Occasionally, the isle seems to rise in anger. The water eating away at the rocks leaves them like the knob of a bell half worn away, but they, for their part, unwilling to admit defeat, send forth the bravest troops among them who, with a crash and a roar, engage the enemy like 30,000 armoured horsemen, all blowing their trumpets and beating their drums. My friend Wang Siren [figure 4] once said of the two scenic spots of Runzhou that

FIGURE 4. Portrait of Wang Siren, from the Yu yue san bu xiu tu zaian.
FOOTNOTES TO ALLEGORY MOUNTAIN

‘Gold Mountain is suitable for travel, whereas Scorched Mountain is ideal for reclusion; Gold Mountain is at its best under a bright moon, Scorched Mountain in rain.’

To this scene I can add this isle to make a third. I wonder what comment he will have to make about it?

24. Pavilion for the Appreciation of Excellence

That which is superior about Allegory Mountain cannot be entirely encompassed by Allegory Mountain itself, by virtue of the fact that you find yourself within the mountain itself. Su Shi made precisely this point in his poem ‘Inscribed on the Wall of Western Forest Monastery’:

Of Mount Lu you cannot make out the true face,
For you are yourself lost in the heart of the very place.

This pavilion, however, does not fraternise with the mountain and so can possess it in its entirety. A layer or two of tower and terrace, inlaid within the green cliffs and the blue-green precipices; every now and then when the clouds gather to obscure them, they rise upwards, supporting themselves upon a layer of mist. Looking upwards greedily, all of a sudden one finds oneself transported to the very edges of Heaven and it is as if one were no longer aware of the pavilion. One casts a hurried glance backwards, only to discover oneself in the very midst of an ocean with breakers crashing against the rocks and flooding through the forest, all the time issuing forth a sound both pure and surpassing. Not only does this assuage one’s hunger, it serves also to cleanse one’s innards of a decade’s encrusted dust. To place an island within the pond, to site a pavilion upon that island, like the froth floating upon the surface of the sea, and thus to assemble here together all that is excellent, how could this fail to move the refined man to appreciation?

25. Little Crenellated Peaks

In the mist of the Eastern Sea is found the immortal isle of Fangzhang, an alternative name for which is Crenellated Peaks. There stand palaces of gold and jade and porcelain, the very things that Mount Kunlun too is famous for. In contrast to this, how inferior are the rope doors and tiny jar-like windows of my garden! Little Crenellated Peaks is the place from where one can enter my Determination to Retire Studio, and as this studio embodies my original ideal of simplicity for my garden, is not the name given this site somewhat inappropriate and out of keeping? But then again, grass mat doors juxtaposed with vermilion gates are not at all an exceptional sight, and in legend King Mu of Zhou gave the Five Terraces and Twelve Towers of Mount Kunlun not a second lingering glance, treating them simply as a lodging place for the night. From this point upward in my garden, one needs to turn and twist at almost every step, and with its serpentine kiosks and hanging pavilions serving to tassel the peaks and bind the waists of the hillocks, it has a vague likeness to Langfeng, the summit of Mount Kunlun, only much smaller of course. Although I can not name the structures here Fungus Chamber and Medicine Hall after those found on Mount Kunlun itself, I may perhaps partake of some small part of the glory of that place by naming this spot as I have.

26. Determination to Retire Studio

When work had just begun upon my garden, I happened to buy up a number of large rafters. These I had placed here, retaining for the while their coarse and untreated quality. Here indeed one may whistle and sing with delight, loll about and take one’s rest. Galleries lead away from the studio, both to the left and the right, the one to the right taking one to Allegory Mountain Thatched Cottage, the one to the left to Flute Pavilion. Within the studio itself one can escape from the summer’s heat, the north-facing shutters remaining wide open all day long whilst beyond, a strong breeze rouses green waves amid the fields of arable land. Taking a drink or chanting a poem or two, I forget altogether about the coarse and untreated appearance of the rafters, indeed begin to find them quite lovable in their rustic simplicity. So I had all the painted beams and carved tile rafters blanched of their colours.

When I requested leave to retire from my post I intended, in the time left free to me from caring for my mother, to devote myself to gardens and pavilions. This studio represents the beginnings of my enterprise. The studio marks my retirement. It is also named Retirement in order to strengthen my resolve to retire.
27. Heaven’s Calabash

Besides the Peak of the Iron Fungus, a single rock juts majestically into the sky, like an overturned cup. When my brother Jichao and cousin Zhixiang were opening up this mountain, they had a hollow hacked out of it to form a pond to store water. My late brother Yuanru took delight in the sight of it and named it Heaven’s Calabash from the line in a poem by Su Shi that goes:

Falling from my horse, Heaven’s calabash overturned.

He wrote a poem to record the excellence of the sight. I, for my part, cannot bare to allow this name to disappear, so I have retained it.

28. Flute Pavilion

Once long ago, Cai Yong [132–92] happened to be spending the night at an inn in Keting. Looking up, he eyed the third bamboo rafter and exclaimed: ‘A fine flute could be made from that!’ And indeed, so it proved, for when played the flute gave forth a sound of extraordinary quality. Keting is but a short ten li away from here and the names of the mountains and the bridges there are still the same as they were in Cai Yong’s day. When I began construction of my garden, it so happened that I had at my disposal the services of a master craftsman who was skilled at building pavilions from split bamboo, and thus have I alluded to Cai Yong in my name for this pavilion. I wonder if a shaft of green jade bamboo can also be made to issue forth with the sound of bells and musical stones? But then again, I fear that the bamboo would split asunder just as Master Dugu reached his crescendo, splintering not only the hand of Sun Chuo’s [fl. 330-65] dancing girl.63

29. Gallery of the Intoxicating Sip

A gallery meanders its way throughout my garden. Only two sections of this gallery are at all noteworthy, however; that section of the gallery found at the foot of my garden I have named Water Bright because of the excellence of the water there, whilst that at the top I have called it Intoxicating Sip by reason of the excellence of the rocks to be found thereabouts. Descending my garden by way of the gallery one reaches Flute Pavilion where an oblique angled cliff splits the clouds and a strange shaped peak soars into the haze. Each and every one of the inch-sized peaks and foot-long rocks here are sharp and deeply eroded, like wild ducks diving beneath the waves or pheasants soaring into the heavens, and any of them can be used to sharpen one’s teeth upon. I find that I tend to be too intoxicated with the sip, and yet by nature I cannot hold my drink beyond a single plantain leaf. Although those who ‘wash their ears’ may find my intoxication with this spot somewhat excessive, I may nonetheless be regarded as being superior to the likes of those two Worthies of the Bamboo Grove Xi Kang [223–62] and Ruan Ji [210–63] who proved altogether too fond of their cups.64

30. Rotten Axe-Handle Mountain House

If one looks up at this Mountain House from beyond my Allegory Garden, it appears but a short step or two away. But one can only reach it having taken a number of turns along the path leading to it from the Gazebo for Friendship with Rocks and visitors are forever losing their way as they make their way here. From the Chamber of Restraint, one descends to it down some steps, feeling all the time as if one had entered into the very bowels of a mountain cave. Once one had arrived, one finds a three-columned structure, these columns supported by the branches of still growing trees. Here the Master of the Garden reads his books, and when weary, he leans upon the balustrade and gazes about him in all four directions. Whenever guests arrive at his garden, he can catch sight of them while they are still several li away and he can dispatch a serving boy to investigate. After some considerable time, their boat will appear in the midst of the flowing water. At times he will lie here in peace and from his pillow he will watch the sun rise and the clouds form, observing nature’s myriad spluttering transformations. This is what men in the past have called ‘Recumbent Travel.’ It is also as if there are landscape murals painted on all four walls, and the Master is akin to a connoisseur comparing the relative merits of these murals.

31. Chamber of Restraint

In the past, when my esteemed father was naming the various sites of his gardens he did so with words such as ‘intimate’ and ‘tranquil.’ With the deference a minor official owes his superior, I have followed the intent of his
practice in this regard and have had the words ‘quiet’ and ‘restraint’ carved into a number of the rafters as a constant reminder. This accords also with that habit of the ancients to have maxims engraved on their side tables and platters. Indeed, for the Superior Man there is no greater virtue than the Way of Restraint, both in the manner in which he conducts himself in this world and for that wherein he dwells. In the matter of his habitation, all that is required is space enough for him to sit down in. Was I to have cleaved true to my father’s injunction I would have been content simply with having enough room to hug my knees and would have had no good reason for embarking upon the construction of this garden. And, indeed, in the beginning all I conceived of was a single studio and a solitary hall. As time went by, however, I gradually expanded my plan of it, my sentiments shifting with the scenery, my heart turning as it was possessed by material things. In this way, the garden has become a token of the extent to which I have proven incapable of manifesting restraint. I have named this place Restraint, therefore, as a token of my remorse. And yet, although Restraint is its name, the moment I ascend to this chamber, what I see as I gaze out over the horizon is flowing waters and mountain peaks, everything, it seems, lies gathered here before me. How extravagant is the scene obtained! The fact that Restraint is its name but extravagant is its reality serves simply to intensify my sense of remorse.

32. Peak of the Iron Fungus

To the north of my Determination to Retire Studio, a small hillock reaches skywards in a somewhat clandestine manner. This is the highest point of my Allegory Mountain. When viewed from beyond the garden it appears to be little more than a tiny mound, like a fist-shaped rock left discarded here when it proved incapable of joining the ranks of the rocks expelled by the First Emperor of Qin. When you reach the summit and take a look around, however, it seems as if the clouds and the rosette rays of light are born at your feet. To the east one bows in the direction of the Qinwang Mountains, and to the west one salutes the peaks of the Yuezhang Range. Standing here, upon the middle of the three brothers, it is as if the mountain itself grows taller in keeping with the loftiness of the sentiments of the traveller. The summit is flat and large enough to seat several dozen people. Over the course of the past year, however, both the Green Lad and the Scattered Old Man have each occupied half this area. Upon the summit stands a rock shaped like a fungus, and so I have called it Iron Fungus.

33. Allegory Mountain Thatched Cottage

Allegory Mountain reaches its highest point with Iron Fungus Peak. The Thatched Cottage is at an almost equivalent height but to the right of it, as if cottage and peak were greeting each other with a bow. The cottage is only 20 chi square and at first glance it appears to be little more than a small pavilion. The moment one enters the door however, one becomes aware of its spaciousness and its roof soars up above one like a canopy of low-hanging clouds. Sitting upon a barbarian folding stool, engaging in elegant conversation and light banter, one finds oneself completely at ease. Although my cottage is without strings and flutes and sacrificial vessels, it does not lack for lacquered teapots and bamboo couches, tea braziers and wine tables however, and in the light of the dawn or the glow of the dusk, when the peaks are shrouded in mist or the hilltops bathed in the rosy glow of the clouds, I give pleasure to my guests and this spot can be said to surpass all their fondest expectations. Those that dwell in the garden are not allowed to regret the absence of close friends. Nor does one ever have regrets that, after having repeatedly refused to entertain the vulgar, one is frequently subject to the curses once showered on Zhang Muzhi.

34. Penetrating the Roseate Clouds Terrace

To the right of Allegory Mountain stands Axe-Handle Mountain. Over the ages, ten thousand hands have hacked away at the rock face here and as a result, in the period since the Chi wu reign period of the Great King of the Wu [239], almost half the mountain has been eaten away. Now the sheer cliff rises straight up with the force of souring roseate clouds, exposing to full view several finely layered precipices and dominating the contours of all the other nearby peaks. The flying torrents that pour down the gullies frequently seem both watchful and apprehensive, like wild beasts about to pounce upon their human prey. A collapsed bank lies like a rainbow and crawling like an
ant along a plank path brings one to a small pavilion that seems suspended in mid-air. Glancing upwards, one catches sight of a stone Buddha several tens of zhang tall with a purpose-built canopy sheltering it from rain and sun, its greens and golds bright and beautiful. Ingenious effort was required to hack this Buddha out of the primordial chaos, the rocks split open and the slopes hewed asunder, as if to supplement the task of the Creator himself. The splendours of Axe-Handle Mountain as seen from here provide the most superb sight to be seen in this part of the Yue region, and all I have done here is to present the scene that lies before one when one stands upon this terrace. As for the scene that the terrace itself serves to create, this there is no need for me to speak of.

35. Studio of the Tranquil One

As if connected to my Thatched Cottage along the edge of a cock's comb but facing the south stands a studio of three columns. The east door of the studio leads to the Gallery of the Intoxicating Sip, whilst below the studio is found Connected Beads Hermitage, this latter being part of the pagoda cloister dedicated to the memory of Master Wheat Waves. Distant peaks and a sparse forest appear as if just below the balustrade and as the rain lifts a vivid greenness insinuates itself among the chairs and tables of my room.

In the past, when I sat here upon rattan mats with various famous monks concentrating solely upon our conversation or listening to the rise and fall of the chanting of the sutras and the accompanying banging of the gong, all my extraneous thoughts would be extinguished. Acknowledging that the air of benevolence and longevity of this place is powerful in the extreme, I named it Tranquil. Tranquillity is to be found within the tranquil one however, not in the mountains, precisely the point made by Wang Haochang.

36. Distant Belvedere

This belvedere was named Distant not simply because it stands at the very horizon of one's eyesight. Rather it is because the view from the belvedere encompasses all the mountains and rivers of the region of Yue but that the various mountains and rivers thus united are not enough to encompass all the splendours of my garden. Thus does the belvedere take its place of honour and sit at the highest point of my garden.

The belvedere appears to best advantage when covered in snow, when under a bright moon, or during a fall of rain. At such times, waves of silver sea billow to and fro and the jade peaks stand tall; shadows dance under the clear bright rays of the moon and for a moment one sees the moon's penumbra cleansing itself in the ice pot; with a shower of rain imminent all are taken aback by the change that comes across the hue of the mountains. This is when my belvedere is at its most splendid, and if its effect is born of its distance, so too does distance give its conception a certain harmonious charm. The raging torrents amid the cliffs appear even more extraordinary in their seductive beauty when seen at a distance; at a distance, the single peak appears more sharply defined with its vapours raising their misty shrouds; the lamps and cooking fires of ten thousand households enter my tower only because they are at such a distance, whilst the thousand twists and turns of the brooks and mountains too, because of their distance, return to rest within my bamboo screens. As to the sudden rise of smoke from the village fires, the far off glimmer of the fishermen's flares, the oaring songs of the boatmen coming to one from amidst the water-pepper and riverine islands, the pleasant tones of the orioles amongst the billowing willows, all these too are made manifest by the quality of distance. It is an illusion created by distance that when one takes a general survey of the ridges of that Immortal Isle of Yingzhou, the blue sky surrounding it seems so vast; when one strains one's eyes to take in the entirety of Wu Zixu's River, the vast tide surges like an arrow; or when one catches a momentary glimpse of the working out of the principles of Heaven and Earth, the sun and the moon appear no larger than a couple of pellets. It is distance's sleight of hand also that when one visits sites of historical significance, Yu the Great's Stele stands firm and straight like a sentinel; sighing at the fate of Gou Jian, the King of Yue, the rook weeps within his former palaces; the sight of withered grass in the setting sun within the confines of the once imposing West Garden moves one to sorrow; the trees with their thick foliage and the tall bamboos remain on Orchid Isle where once the wine cups floated down the meandering stream. Such sights bring despair to some, to others they serve to renew their sense of purpose. Standing here in this belvedere, the mountains and the rivers, all the various elements of the scene laid out
before one, are seen in their grandest prospect and one feels that the very hills and valleys have all been rendered even more exquisite by their apparent smallness.

37. Willow Pathway

When leaving Allegory Garden, taking the southern dyke leads one to the Bin Vegetable Plot, whereas the northern dyke affords entry to my Farm of Abundance. Connecting these two dykes is yet another, screen-like in its appearance, bearing a tablet inscribed by Zhang Lingxu and which reads: 'Willow Pathway.' Here and there alongside the dyke grow peach and willow trees. Each spring, the air is filled with drifting peach blossom and the slightest puff of breeze drenches the clothes of passersby with red raindrops. To my mind, however, far better than this are the few weeping willow trees that cast their lingering green reflections upon the surface of the surrounding water. Here perhaps the fishermen will rest their oars within the deep green shade and listen to the golden orioles trilling in the branches, and the scene will embody that simple rustic air of the Pengze District where once Tao Qian retired. This was the idea in the mind of the Master of the Garden when he named the place not Peach Pathway but rather Willow Pathway.77 When, beyond this dyke, the water mellow knots its crisscross patterns turning the entire river green, the billowing clouds rise suddenly or a misty rain drifts by, to ply one's boat into midstream is truly to give full vent to one's sense of pleasure.78

38. Bin Vegetable Plot

To the south of Relinquished to the Seagulls Pond once lay a patch of fallow land, two hundred 'chi' wide and not quite half as long. Three-fifths of this area I had planted in mulberry, the rest in pear, orange, peach, plum, apricot, chestnut and so on. My bondservants are all assiduous in the discharge of their duties, going out to irrigate the plot three times a day and to mow and weed five times. Beneath the trees we have planted purple eggplant, white peas, sweet melons and millet. We have also planted an unusual variety of sweet potato obtained from across the oceans, each plant of which spreads to cover two or three 'mu' of land, each 'mu' giving a yield of a cartload or two of potatoes. When eaten instead of grain, the harvest is enough to fill the bellies of a hundred people. I often find myself intoning those lines from Tao Qian's poem that go:

Contentedly I sit
and pour the new spring wine,
Or go out to pluck
vegetables in my garden.79

The atmosphere is very much akin to that found in the first poem of the 'Airs of Bin' section of the Book of Songs which speaks of 'boiling the mallow' and 'drying the dates,' and so I have named my vegetable plot Bin.80

39. Lugging a Pitcher Hut

When my Bin Vegetable Plot was first cleared I would supervise my bondservants as they irrigated the fields. Taking pity on them for having to work under the scorching midday sun, I had built a small thatched hut for them to rest in. The master too occasionally repairs here to gnaw upon some vegetable or other or to sample some of the fruit from the orchard, lingering here amidst the birdsong. In this manner I can experience to the full the rustic delights of life in a village. How I wish that I had as my close friends here Chen Zongzi of Qi or the old gardener of the south bank of the river Han so that I could discuss with them the art of living.81

40. Farm of Abundance

Although the words 'farm' and 'garden' now appear close in meaning, this has not always been the case. If this is a garden, then why have I created also this farm? I have had it developed in order that it might be the site where I can earn my livelihood. Going out of my garden and turning to the north one comes across a bridge, and just over the bridge one encounters an embankment within which there is a gateway. Here, spread out before one's gaze, lie the green paddy fields. Often I come here to commiserate with the farmers about their labours and sometime on such occasions I will ask my
wife [figure 5] to bring along with us some of our leftover food and wine for the old peasants. I join in their farming songs and we sing back and forth. Behind the hall is a threshing ground. During the evenings of the 10th month, when the grain is being harvested, the sounds of the threshing can be heard coming from each household, and a mouthful or two of new rice adds flavour to the diet of my elderly mother. When the silkworm season of the 4th month comes around, I come here with my wife to live a while, picking mulberry leaves and white aster and ensuring that her womanly tasks are undertaken in the proper order. Besides the threshing ground the peasants live in houses of several columns each. Here they raise their chickens and their pigs, the sounds of which echo in all directions. I shall grow old here, learning the arts of raising vegetables and growing grain. To the west of the hall there are three side rooms and these, in the future, will become the schoolrooms for my sons. By having them study here I will ensure that as they grow up they will also learn of the various hardships of the life of a peasant.

41. Plum Slope

If the superiority of my garden is to be found in its pavilions and its terraces, only the air of rusticity does it still lack. In order to make up for this deficiency I have had soil piled up to form a slope, water led in to make a canal, and thatch woven to create a shelter. With its rustling artemisia plants it truly does appear like the sandy bank of a river village. The reed gatherers and the fishermen stand to gaze at the scene before struggling their way along the paths. Upon the slope, I have had planted a hundred or so ancient West Brook plum trees, thus creating an appropriate refuge place for the hermit Lin Bu to bring his reclusive wife. I linger here unable to drag myself away from the scenery, calling the place an unadorned Xi Shi, so pretty as to plunge into fits of mortification all those other gaudy beauties.

42. Pole Bridge of the Old Man of the Sea

A pole bridge has been erected over Relinquished to the Seagulls Pond and boats can pass beneath the gallery here. The bridge takes one from the Adytum for the Study of the Book of Changes to the Hall of My Four Unfulfilled Obligations. And yet, as I have already relinquished this pond
to the seagulls, is the name of this bridge not somewhat contradictory? I once read in the work *Historical Spittle* that when Liu Jiquan got hold of a hibiscus gull he exclaimed: 'The form of this Chinese character is such that it implies that the bird is an official of the lowly Third Rank so perhaps it is appropriate that I appoint it Houseman of the Green Sea.' To have done so would be similar to the Qin dynasty’s disrespectful conferring of official titles on the pines of Mount Tai! But in the present case, the name I have chosen for this bridge is designed to enhance the respect with which the gulls are treated, in the hope that they will remain my true friends, just as the Tang poet Li Bai [701-62] once sought to summon the gulls to join him with his line: 'Willing I am to summon the gulls of the Eastern Ocean.'

43. Testing the Orioles Lodge

The Pole Bridge of the Old Man of the Sea winds off towards the north face of my garden and here on a small patch of land I have built a studio that juts out over the pond. It was spring when the lodge was completed and such was its pleasant aspect that, quite involuntarily, my tongue shot out in astonishment.

Initially I thought that I would name the lodge Listening to the Orioles, but a friend objected: 'I have heard that during the Zhen guan reign period of the Tang dynasty [627-49] there lived a young lady called Testing the Orioles. It is a most melodious name. Why don’t you name this lodge in her honour?' I consulted the records contained in books such as *Notes from the Studio of the Truly Forthright*, *Poetic Notes from the Hall of the Abstruse* and Miscellaneous, *Master Xie's Source of Poetry*, and *Miscellaneous Notes on Picking Orchids* and discovered that Testing the Orioles was adept at the art of papermaking and had created a type of carp letter paper. She could also perform a solo dance and had once exchanged poetry with Song Qian, one such poem bearing the title: 'I Cut Out a Leaf from Flower Letter Paper to Send to You.' For his part, Song Qian too cut a small foreigner out of Roseate Clouds letter paper and inscribed it with the words: 'This person resembles the clouds of Mount Chu.' Not only is her name a melodious one, but the events of her life too are elegant in the extreme and so I have dedicated this lodge to her memory. I don’t imagine that my having done so will displease her?

44. Returning to the Clouds Retreat

When visitors to my garden become intoxicated with their tour and decide they wish to ascend to my Library of the Eight Principles of Book Acquisition, they must do so by passing through this retreat. Here, a tower serves the purpose of a gallery, admitting visitors either ascending or descending my garden. Opposite, the soughing pines fill the valley, and standing here it is as if one is lying amid the crashing waves or within a roaring waterfall. A stretch of thick shade casts its inverted shadow upon the pond before flowing away beneath the winding gallery, like a ten zhang-long slice of chill green jade. My garden contains an excellent rock that I have named Cold Cloud. Fearing that it will prove reluctant to appear out of its mountain cavern, thus repudiating the master’s fascination with the mountains and rivers, I have therefore returned it to this retreat. But after all, even this return will provide but a temporary retreat.

45. To be a Lotus Flower Hut

Between the Hall of My Four Unfulfilled Obligations and my Library of the Eight Principles of Book Acquisition stands a chamber. It abuts upon the hall but does not borrow its view from the hall, and although it faces the library it is not reached by way of the library. The water of the pond converges towards the north, and by the time it reaches this spot its meandering course becomes more pronounced. Flowing beneath the Pine Path where the spine of the mountain juts up, pure waves encircle the scene, and when it enters Returning to the Clouds Retreat the pure flow describes a turn or two before forming a square pond of half a mu in size here beside this hut. The jade stamens and encased buds combine with the green snow and the blue-green clouds to form a scene of fragrant harmony.

Leaning upon the balustrade and quietly contemplating the scene before me I suddenly think of a couplet from Master Cien Xianzhang’s [1428–1500] poem: ‘In Praise of Zhou Dunyi’s Love of the Lotus’ which goes:

I am a lotus flower, the flower is I,
Only now do I become a lover of the lotus.

This couplet establishes such a distant resonance in my mind that I decide to take it as my motto.
46. Turning Ring

My youngest daughter once owned a Turning Ring that seemed to contain within it both red cliffs and white water. If you held it in your hand as you fell asleep then in your dreams you would find yourself elsewhere, surrounded by the splendours of famous mountains and great rivers, precious trees and rare birds, rose-gem towers and green jasper chambers. Whatever one happened to imagine in one's mind would appear the moment one conceived of it. This toy is also known by the name Ring of Fantasy. How extraordinary it would be to have hold of such a ring in everyday life!

I invite you to think of the northern gallery of my garden as being somewhat akin to this. Through a small opening in my Returning to the Clouds Retreat one enters obliquely through a low-hung doorway, just like Master Lu leaping into his pillow. From this point onwards each step one takes finds one within a forest of cherry trees with sweet streams and lingering shadows, and before one knows it, pavilions and terraces suddenly reveal themselves, all as if designed to startle one out of the sweet black village of one's dreams, like a grave and intimidating Sea of Dhamma. Those who enter my mountain are forced to ascend the clouds and make their way across damp moss, the exertions of their feet never quite finding adequate compensation in the pleasures afforded their eyes. Only here, a single step takes one to the very top of Distant Belvedere, as if you have at your disposal that magical art of Master Pot's that enabled him to shrink distance into nothingness. It can indeed be claimed that the scenery here besides the dykes and in the fields beneath the bridges fully encompasses the natural beauty of the Southeast. Layer upon layer of open vista present an ever changing tableau and for a moment one believes, magically, that the Immortal Isle Penglai has suddenly appeared, or perhaps it is that mountain once shifted by the Foolish Old Man. And so, after all, it can be said that I have in my hand every day a Turning Ring. But if dreams are merely an illusion, what then is real? The allegory of my mountain is lodged in consciousness. It is lodged also in a dream, and if one can understand the allegory thus lodged in both dream and consciousness, how can one know that the dream is not itself conscious and consciousness not itself a dream? It doesn't seem to make much difference at all whether I have possession of a Turning Ring or not.

47. Distant Mountain Hall

Two halls stand facing each other, one to the rear of my garden and the other in front of my farm, with a tower serving to separate them. The hall within my garden I intend to call the Hall of My Four Unfulfilled Obligations. That within my farm, ensconced as it is within the mountain forest, I will name Distant Mountain Hall in keeping with the excellence of its location. Why is this? Such is human nature that whereas we tend always to covet that which we lack, we begin to despise that which we have plenty of. The souring peaks and crashing waves of my garden are as close to me as objects upon my teapoy and each day I nourish myself on the breath of the rock and the stalactites of cloud, satiating myself day and night upon such things. Familiarity, however, breeds contempt. Only here in this hall can I gaze far off to the north and catch sight of a few distant peaks, as if floating there beyond the clear autumn horizon. Perhaps, long ago, that is what Zhuo Wenjun's eyebrows looked like and why they were so named; the mountains seem eager to greet an elegant scholar or an eminent monk, one moment they are visible, the next they disappear, within sight but always beyond reach. Thus have I named my hall Distant Mountain.

48. Hall of My Four Unfulfilled Obligations

Within my Farm of Abundance stands a three-columned hall, overlooking the flowing water, as if its wings outspread. Here the Master of the Garden raises his silkworms and stores his grain. Here, occasionally, too he entertains his guests with wine served in finest rhinoceros-shaped goblets. I happened at the time to have taken as my teacher Master Wang Chaoshi. He took grave issue with my obsession with the construction of my garden and upbraided me in a letter, in the following manner:

Recently I took a look at your garden and found that it embodied four unfulfilled obligations, three of which are failings on your part, and one on mine. Great has been the favour bestowed upon you by the state. You ought to be considering how you can show yourself worthy of such favour. Even though you have retired to the countryside, you ought nonetheless to be discussing the Way and thinking about the great profession, each day deliberating how you may restore to their glory the gods of the grains and the soil, and confer
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benefits to the common folk. But for the past two years that you have been here, far from concerning yourself with such matters, you have simply devoted yourself to the construction of your garden, with carving and engraving, with flowers and rocks. In order to display your mastery of such petty skills, you have neglected the Grand Scheme of things as far as your state goes. If everyone were to be like you, what then could the state rely upon? This then can be said to be the manner in which you have failed to fulfill your obligation to the sovereign.

Your revered father long cleaved true to the Way, and was also conversant with the Buddhist scriptures. He purchased more than 10,000 books and entrusted them to the care of his sons and grandsons. To bring glory to the illustrious example of one’s parents is a matter for the progeny of such parents. You are today approaching your fortieth year, the age at which you should be without doubt, and you have served in the past in the post of censor. The requirement to establish yourself and implement the Way does not change with the circumstances of the times. But of such a determination I can observe no evidence and all you seem capable of is following the precedent set by your forbears, but with even greater flourish than they. How can such behaviour be regarded as an expression of the filial piety expected of you? In this way, you can be said to have failed to fulfill your obligation to your father.

You are blessed with heaven given talents and a quick intelligence, by nature you are loyal and upright. Your attributes are such that you could have become a mentor who benefits the age, an effective vessel of the Way. At the same time, your fortunate destiny is such that you enjoy the pleasures of friends and teachers and without having to quit your home you could have followed in the footsteps of the sages of old, if only you had devoted yourself to such an effort. On the contrary, however, far from cherishing your considerable abilities, you have associated with vulgar types and have pursued this particular task. Word of your efforts has spread to all four quarters, earning you the awe of mere boys and girls everywhere. You pay no heed to the frowns of those intent upon the Way, casting your pearls amongst the weeds. In this respect you can be said to have failed to fulfill your obligation to yourself.

If you are guilty of having not fulfilled these three obligations, then I for my part should have repaid the affection you have shown me with some straight talking in order to nip your enterprise off in its bud. This I have failed to do, vainly hoping now to remedy the situation with my present remonstrances, once the deed has already been done. I regret that I have been remiss in my effort to rectify myself, and I am ashamed that nor have I been able to provide you with an appropriate role model. In this way I may be said to have failed to fulfill my obligation of friendship.

49. Library of the Eight Principles of Book Acquisition

Long ago, the great Song dynasty bibliophile Zheng Qiao (1104–62) stipulated that there were eight principles to the Way of book collecting. Firstly, one collected by category; secondly, by related category; thirdly, by region and fourthly by family; fifthly one sought books from collections in the public domain; sixthly, books in private hands; seventhly, one acquired books in terms of their authorship; and lastly, by dynastic provenance.

My esteemed father cleaved true to these precepts all his life and through exhaustive searching and comprehensive acquisition he eventually assembled a library of over a 100,000 volumes. For the edification of his sons and grandsons, he composed a convenant in which he gave a complete account of the methods of book buying, book collecting, book connoisseurship and the art of reading. In so doing, he approximated the achievements of Cao Pingmu and his Stone Vault, Ren Mo’s Garden of the Classics and Shengtu Zhiyuan’s Ink Village.

Although I too, for my part, harbour a love of books, most regrettablly I happen also to be plagued by an atrocious memory. I cannot pretend to be like Wang Chong (27–79) of the Han who could remember everything he ever read, even if he had done so leaning against a doorpost in the middle of the marketplace, nor can I ever hope to emulate that Flourishing Talent of the Northern Wei Zhen Chen who attacked his studies with such a vengeance and who took such copious notes of what he had read. When I
took leave of my post in Suzhou to return here, I calculated that I had accumulated 31,500 volumes. These I had placed within the hindmost tower of my Farm of Abundance and there I would fondle them all day long. But even this collection is a mere semblance of that bought and assembled by my esteemed father.

I have heard it said that Li Mi [d. 754], Duke of Ye during the Tang, collected on his shelves more than 30,000 scrolls and that later his son Fan too was given a hereditary fiefdom in Ye and served as censor of Suzhou. It is also said that Ouyang Xiu [1007–72], who owned a book collection of over ten thousand volumes, had a son named Fei who was a fluent writer and who became an official famed for his incorruptibility. Somewhat inferior to this was Zhao Kuo who people made fun of for only reading books written by his father, and yet he at least knew how to read.

How much superior were the men of old to those of this present age! Yi Sundu of the Song once said: 'So many are the books that I have collected that my sons and grandsons are bound to be good scholars!' My father toiled painstakingly all his life and the scholarly efforts of the one generation ought to be continued by the next. As I dare not believe that the future will see me able to much improve my efforts in this respect, I can only hope that my descendants will make up for my own neglect!

Victoria University of Wellington

NOTES


2. Qi Biaojia chose these lines as the epigraph for his garden. The first line of the couplet comes from the first of Du Fu’s (712–70) set of five poems entitled ‘Revisiting General He’; Florence Ayscough, Tu Fu: The Autobiography of a Chinese Poet (London: Jonathan Cape, 1919), pp. 166–7. The poem reads in full: ‘I enquired categorically for the bamboos by the East Bridge. / And have a written report from the General of the Army. / I throw on my clothes and command my chariot; / I return. / To sleep in the high pillow in what seems my own little hut. / Flowers droop, / an oriole seizes a butterfly; / Stream clamours, / an otter pursues a fish. / I come again; / I rest in this favoured place / Where I can live the life of a man in the wilds.’ The second line is Qi’s own. For this, see ‘Gui nan kuai lu’ (A Joyous Account of My Return South), Qi Biaojia wen gao (Beijing: Shumu wenxian chubanshe, 1991), II, p. 1035.

3. On this important Ming thinker, see DMB, I, pp. 271–4. Qi Biaojia’s father had been a student of Zhou’s, and Qi, in turn, had studied under Zhou’s son. Throughout the period of the construction of his garden, Qi Biaojia was reading Zhou Rudeng’s philosophical writings.


5. Ibid., p. 1025.

6. Ibid., p. 1032. Allegory Mountain was the original name of the mountain, and although Qi Biaojia proved happy to accept the suggestions of various friends for the names of the sites within his garden, he ‘did not dare rename the mountain itself,’ for which see ‘Gui nan kuai lu’, Qi Biaojia wen gao, II, p. 1035.

7. During his retirement Qi Biaojia was also involved in various philanthropic activities, for which see Joanna F. Handlin Smith, ‘Opening and closing a dispensary in Shan-yin County: some thoughts about charitable associations, organizations, and institutions in late Ming China’, Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient, XXXVIII/3 (1995), pp. 371–92.

9. 'Shan ju zhuo lu' (Clumsy Record of My Sojourn on the Mountain), Qi Biaojia wengao, II, p. 1073.
10. 'Yue zhong yuan ting ji' (Record of the Gardens and Pavilions of Shanyin), Qi Biaojia ji, p. 211.
11. On this first point, see in particular his entry on his Chamber of Restraint, translated below.
12. Qi Biaojia makes this observation a number of times in his diaries, for example 'Shan ju zhuo lu', Qi Biaojia wengao, II, pp. 1072, 1076. On the question of access to gardens such as that of Qi Biaojia during this period, see Craig Clunas, Fruitful Sites: Garden Culture in Ming Dynasty China (London: Reaktion, 1996), pp. 91-103.
15. On the important role that Qi Biaojia played in attempting to pacify the countryside around the Southern Capital, see Jerry Dennerline, 'Hsi Tu and the lesson of Nanking: political integration and the local defense in Chiang-nan, 1614-1645', in From Ming to Q'ing: Conquest, Region, and Continuity in Seventeenth-century China (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1979), pp. 89-132.
17. From the biography of Qi Biaojia written by Xie Jin, as cited in Qi Biaojia ji, p. 252.
19. On this distinguished man of letters, see the biography in DMB, II, pp. 1399-1405.
20. On this important geographical source, see William H. Nienhauser, Jr (ed), The Indiana Companion to

22. The collected works of Zhang Dai (1597-c.1684), a man related to Qi Biaojia by bonds of both marriage and friendship (on whom see ECCP, pp. 52-4) contains two colophons on the text, for which see Langhuan wen ji (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 1985), pp. 210-11.
23. 'Shan ju zhuo lu', Qi Biaojia wengao, II, p. 1095.
24. 'Zi jian lu' (Record of My Self-admonition), Qi Biaojia wengao, II, p. 1127.
25. Mei Zizhen, also known as Mei Fu, served as an official during the last years of the Western Han. When his advice was ignored and the dynasty fell, legend has it that he became a recluse and settled near Guji in Zhejiang. In the annotations to his 'Guji feng su fu' (Prose-poem on the Customs of Guji), the Song poet Wang Shipeng (1112-71) says of this area: 'Mei's Mountain, also known as Sorcerer's Mountain, is 18 li to the north of the Prefectural Seat and this was where Mei Zizhen became a recluse. To the west are Mei's Market Village and Mei Fu's Village'; Nan fan gao mu zhuang wei shi er zhong Shanghai: Guji chubanshe, 1993), p. 257.
26. The Shanyin Circuit, the area surrounding present-day Shaoxing in Zhejiang Province, is famed for its natural beauty. This is found most famously expressed in the Shi shuo xin yu (A New Account of Tales of the World) wherein Wang Xianzhi says: 'Whenever I travel by the Shanyin road, the hills and streams complement each other in such a way that I can't begin to describe them'; Richard B. Mather (trans.), Shi shuo Hsin-yü: A New Account of Tales of the World (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1976), pp. 71-2 (romanization converted to Pinyin).
27. Fang Gang, a poet of the Tang, became a recluse after being unsuccessful in the Imperial Civil Service Examinations. He settled on an island in the middle of Mirror Lake, not far from Guji.
28. He Zhizhang (659-744), also a poet of the Tang, but a successful official as well. In old age, He Zhizhang retirec to his home besides Mirror Lake where he was given a plot of land by the emperor. During the Song, He Zhizhang became an 'immortal,' for which process, see Russell Kirkland, 'The making of an immortal: the exaltation of Ho Chih-chang', Numen, xxxii/2 (1991), pp. 214-30.
29. In his Tao'an meng yi (Dream Recollections of Taoan), Zhang Dai gives the following biographical note on Qi Biaojia's cousin Qi Zhixiang:

One cannot befriend a man who is without an obsession for he lacks profound emotion; one cannot befriend a man without an obsession for he lacks authenticity. My friend Qi Zhixiang is obsessed with books and paintings, obsessed with football, bells and drums, ghost plays and play actors. In the ren wen year [1642], when I arrived in the Southern Capital, Zhixiang presented his Little Treasure to me. 'He's like that most melodious of birds, the Kalavinka!' I exclaimed, 'Wherever did you find him? Little Treasure was as seductive as a flower girl, but he was also somewhat spoilt and ungracious, often sour of manner and unwilling to serve his Master. Like eating an olive, however, which is first sour and tasteless, its flavour only obvious with the aftertaste, or strong wine or tobacco which catches at the throat, soon to prove all too smooth and intoxicating, he is irritating at first but before long one finds oneself incapable of dismissing him from one's mind. Zhixiang is expert in the rules of music and in writing his lyrics he grinds away endlessly at every word, insisting on teaching his songs himself. Little Treasure seemed to have an intuitive understanding of his Master in this respect. In the yi you year [1643], when the Southern Commandery fell, Zhixiang fled home. On his way back, he encountered local bandits who


34. Seven Pines and Five Willows is a metonymy for the recluse, the seven pines being associated with Zheng Xun of the Tang, and the five willows with that quintessential Chinese recluse, the poet Tao Qian (365–427).

35. Three Paths, too, is a metonymy for the residence of the recluse, as found used in the lines from Tao Qian's poem 'Returning Home': 'Overgrown with weeds, the three paths almost disappear. Yet the pines and chrysanthemums remain.'

36. The naming of the various sites of one's garden was a process invested with the utmost importance, of course. In his discussion of this aspect of Sima Guang's (1019–86) garden, ROBERT E. HARRIET, JR, 'Site names and their meanings in the Garden of Solitary Enjoyment', *Journal of Garden History*, xiii (1993), pp. 199–212, concludes by saying: 'A Chinese garden is not merely a site occupied by buildings, ponds, stones, and plants, all subject to decay or transformation by the elements. Through the transforming power of language a garden like that of Sima Guang can express the garden owner's reverence for the past and continue to exist long beyond the brief temporal span allotted to him and the sites he created.' For a more recent treatment of the topic, see JOHN MAKEHAM, 'The Confucian role of names in traditional Chinese gardens', *Studies in the History of Gardens and Designed Landscapes*, xviii/3 (1998), pp. 187–210.

In the case of Qi Biaojia's garden, one is afforded a rare insight into this process by a letter to him from his friend Zhang Dai:

'The real difficulty of constructing a garden lies in the overall conception of its layout. Even more difficult however is the appropriate naming of the various sites the garden contains. If the names given are vulgar, then the garden loses whatever elegance it can lay claim to, and its artistry also lacks subtlety. In terms of the naming of the scenes within a garden, there has been nothing to compare with Wang Wei's Wheel River Estate... Of the various sites of your Allegory Mountain Garden, as many as forty-nine have been given names, not one of which reveals the slightest sign of vulgarity. To achieve this was a true test of your abilities. Yet,'
whereas the Master of the garden possesses the talents of a Wang Wei, I am no Pei Di. You require me to compose poems in response to yours, but those that I have managed to come up with are common and vulgar in the extreme. . . An ugly wife will live in fear of those inevitable meetings with her husband's mother. Her mother-in-law, for her part, if she has any powers of discernment, will have a clear conception of the guilt that separates beauty from ugliness. Written in much haste!

*Lanqian weij*, pp. 139–40.


38. This alludes to a passage from *Shi shuo xin yu* which, in Mather's translation (p. 402, romanization altered), reads:

> When Sun Chu was young he wanted to become a recluse. Speaking of it once to Wang Ji, he intended to say, 'I'll pillow my head on the rocks and rinse my mouth in the streams.' Instead, he said by mistake, 'I'll rinse my mouth with rocks and pillow my head on the streams.' Wang asked, 'Are streams something you can pillow on, and rocks something you can rinse with?' Sun replied, 'My reason for pillowing on streams is to 'wash my ears,' and my reason for rinsing with rocks is to 'sharpen my teeth.''

39. This appears to be a conflation of two allusions; the first to that passage from the *The Great Treatise* attached to the *Yi jing* that reads: 'Looking upward, we contemplate with its [the *Yi jing*] help the signs in the heavens; looking down, we examine the lines of the earth. Thus we come to know the circumstancias of the dark and the light.

> Going back to the beginnings of things and pursuing them to the end, we come to know the lessons of birth and of death . . .'; *The I Ching or Book of Changes*, trans. Richard Wilhelm, rendered into English by Cary F. Baynes (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968), p. 294. The second allusion is from the 'Autumn Floods' chapter of *Zhuang Zi*, which reads:

> Zhuang Zi and Hui Zi were strolling along the dam of the Hao River when Zhuang Zi said, 'See how the minnows come out and dart around where they please! That's what fish really enjoy!' Hui Zi said, 'You're not a fish — how do you know what fish enjoy?' Zhuang Zi said, 'You're not I, so how do you know I don't know what fish enjoy?' Hui Zi said, 'I'm not you, so I certainly don't know what you know. On the other hand, you're certainly not a fish — so that still proves you don't know what fish enjoy!' Zhuang Zi said, 'Let's go back to your original question, please. You asked me how I know what fish enjoy — so you already knew I knew it when you asked the question. I know it by standing here besides the Hao.'


40. Two famous gardens of old, the first built by Shi Chong of the Jin, and the latter an imperial garden sited in Luoyang and given this name during the Three Kingdoms period.

41. For a brief biography of Ni Yuanlu (1594–1644), see *ECCP*, p. 587.

42. As recorded in Sima Qian, *Shi ji* (Records of the Grand Historian), the Three Immortal Isles were Penglai, Fangzhang and Yingzhou.

43. The allusion here is to a story from the 'Yellow Emperor' chapter of *Lie Zi*, which, in A. C. Graham's translation, reads:

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There was a man living by the sea-shore who loved seagulls. Every morning he went down to the sea to rum with the seagulls, and more birds came to him than you could count in hundreds. His father said to him: 'I hear the seagulls all come roaming with you. Bring me some to play with.' Next day, when he went down to the sea, the seagulls danced above him and would not come down. Therefore it is said: 'The utmost in speech is to be rid of speech, the utmost doing is Doing Nothing.' What common knowledge knows is shallow.


44. The expression 'Zhuang Zi's thoughts above the Rivers Hao and Pu' derives from two different stories from the *Zhuang Zi*, the first of which is that cited in note 39. The second, again in Watson's translation, reads:

> Zhuang Zi was once angling in the River Pu, when the King of Chu sent two great officers to visit him there, hoping to tie Zhuang Zi down with responsibility for his entire realm. Zhuang Zi, still holding his rod without looking around, answered them, 'I hear that in Chu you've got a sacred tortoise who's been dead for three thousand years and is wrapped in a napkin preserved in the ancestral temple. Would this tortoise rather be dragging his tail in the mud, or would he rather have his bones preserved and honoured?' The two great officers replied, 'He'd rather be dragging his tail in the mud.' 'Then be off with you! I'd rather drag my tail in the mud too.'

*Chuang Tzu: Basic Writings*, pp. 187–8 (romanization altered). The phrase was later used to express the desire to seek this state of perfect communion between man and nature, as in this following passage from the *Shi shuo xin yu*: 'On entering the Flowery Grove Park Emperor Jianwen looked around and remarked to his attendants, "The spot which suits the mind isn't necessarily far away. By
any shady grove or stream one may quite naturally have such thoughts as Zhuang Zi had by the Rivers Hao and Pu, where unselconsiously birds and animals, fowls and fish, come of their own accord to be intimate with men’’; MATHER, Shih-ruo Hsin-yu, p. 50 (romanization altered).

45. There seems to be an allusion to Poem no. 129 of the Shi jing here: ‘‘Thick grow the rush leaves!/ Their white dew turns to frost./ Whom I love/ Must be somewhere along this stream./ I went up the river to look for him./ But the way was difficult and long./ I went down the stream to look for him./ And there in mid-water/ Sure enough, it’s he!’’ WALEY, The Book of Songs, p. 42.

46. In an entry dated 27th day of the first month of the 10th year of the reign of the Chong Zhen Emperor, Qi Biaojia notes that his friend Wang Siren (1575–1646) has promised to inscribe the calligraphy for the plaque for this terrace, for which, see ‘‘Shan ju zhuo lu’’, Qi Biaojia wen gao, ii, p. 1073. For a brief biography of this man, see DMB, ii, pp. 1420–5.

47. The name of this bridge would appear to derive from a passage of the ‘‘In the World of Men’’ chapter of the Zhuang Zi that records a conversation between Confucius and his disciple Yan Hui:
   
   Yan Hui said, ‘‘My family is poor. I haven’t drunk wine or eaten any strong foods for several months. So can I be considered as having fasted?’’ That is the fasting one does before a sacrifice, not the fasting of the mind.’’

   ‘‘May I ask what the fasting of the mind is?’’ Confucius said, ‘‘Make your will one! Don’t listen with your ears, listen with your mind. No, don’t listen with your mind, but listen with your spirit. Listening stops with the ears, the mind stops with recognition, but spirit is empty and waits on all things. The Way gathers in emptiness alone. Emptiness is the fasting of the mind.’’

   WATSON, Chuang Tzu: Basic Writings, pp. 53–4 (romanization altered).

48. It is said that while serving as Grand Councillor to the Tang court, Li Deyu had water drawn from the Mount Hui spring in Wuxi specially conveyed to him in the capital.


51. In Buddhist terms, to hear such things was bound to lead one to break one’s vow of abstinence.

52. By legend, the Palace of Penetrating Brightness was one of the palaces of the Jade Emperor.

53. On his ascent of Mount Tai, the First Emperor of Qin took shelter from a storm under some pine trees. He later appointed them Grandees, and this term has subsequently become a metonymy for the pine tree.

54. Metonymy for the cypress tree.

55. This anecdote is found in the ‘‘Living in Retirement’’ chapter of the Shi shuo xin yu: ‘‘Xu Xun was fond of wandering among mountains and streams and his physique was well suited to mountain climbing. His contemporaries used to say, ‘‘Xu not only has superb feelings; he really has the equipment for traversing the superb’’’; MATHER, Shih-shuo Hsin-yu, p. 338 (romanization altered). Elsewhere in the Shi shuo xin yu one is told that Xu Xun was once offered the post of clerk in the Board of Civil Office.

56. Duan Chengshi’s (c.800–63) Youyang za zu (Assorted Notes from Youyang) records the following story: ‘‘There was a Taoist of Shu who was known by the vulgar name ‘‘Ash Sack.’’ He had a disease of the mouth and having not eaten for several months and being on the point of death, he suddenly leapt to his feet. His mouth gaped open and his five internal organs were exposed to full view.’’

57. In a poem, Su Shi tells of how once along the coast of Shandong he picked up some stones washed smooth and round by the sea. He took them home and used them to plant his calamus. A couplet from this poem goes: ‘‘I carried these stones home with me./ And it was as if I held the Eastern Ocean within my sleeve.’’ One learns from Qi Biaojia’s diary for the ninth year of the reign of the Chong Zhen Emperor (1636) that Qi’s friend Zhou Youzin suggested this name for the chamber, and presented Qi with the calligraphy for its plaque; ‘‘Lin ju shi bi’’, Qi Biaojia wen gao, ii, p. 1064.

58. An allusion to Poem no. 61 of the Shi jing, the first two lines of which read: ‘‘Who says that the River is broad?/ On a single reed you could cross it’’;


60. Wang Siren, ‘‘You jiao Shan ji’’ (Record of My Trip to Scorched Mountain), Wen fan xiao pin (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 1989), p. 263. In his diary of the 10th year of the reign of the Chong Zhen Emperor (1637), Qi Biaojia notes that Wang Siren has agreed to write a record of the garden (17th day of the second month), for which see ‘‘Shan ju zhuo lu’’, Qi Biaojia wen gao, ii, p. 1075. In a letter to Wang Siren that appears to have been written the next day, Qi thanks Wang for his promise and speaks of the extent to which such a record would enhance both Qi’s own reputation and that of his garden, for which see ‘‘Lin ju chi du’’ (Letters Written during my sojourn in the Woods), Qi Biaojia wen gao, iii, p. 2307. Qi wrote to Wang several times to remind him of his promise and notes in his diary (entry dated 26th day of the fourth month) having received the
FOOTNOTES TO ALLEGORY MOUNTAIN

Yet the person distant indeed!"; Waley, The Book of Songs, p. 50.

68. This mountain is to the north of Yu the Great's Grotto. In the annotations to his 'Guiji feng su fu,' Wang Shipeng cites Tao Hongjing's (456–536) Zhen gao (Declarations of the Perfected) as saying of this cliff face: 'In the 2nd year of the Chiuwu reign period this rock fell from the sky and Ge Xiongqong here refined the elixir of immortality. Having eaten Yu the Great's Leftovers, he flew upwards and ever afterwards the cliff has been known as "Ge's Cliff" or "The Immortal's Cliff"'; Nan fang cao mu zhuang wu shi er zhong, p. 255. Ever afterwards, the cliff had attracted the attentions of seekers after immortality and had been, quite literally, half eaten away.

69. This hermitage was built by the monk Without Trace. In his diary for the ninth year of the reign of the Chongzhen Emperor (1636), Qi Biaojia mentions settling a boundary dispute with a neighbour while the hermitage was being constructed, for which see 'Shanju zhuo lu' (entry dated 26th day of the first month), Qi Biaojia wen gao, ii, p. 1073.

70. Here there appears to be an allusion to Luu yu, vi, xxii: 'The Master said: "The wise find joy on the water, the good find joy in the mountains. The wise are active, the good are quiet. The wise are joyful, the good live long."'; MATHER, Shih-shuo Hsin-ya, p. 436 (romanization altered).

71. This is an allusion to the anecdote from the Shi shuo xin yu retold in note 33.

72. An alternative name for the River Zhe. Wu Zixu was a native of the Kingdom of Chu during the Spring and Autumn period (722–486 BC). When both his father and brother are executed, he fled to serve the State of Wu. Eventually he fell foul of the decadent King of Wu, Pu Chai, and was ordered to commit suicide. His corpse was placed in a wineskin and allowed to float away on the river. Legend claims that he became the god of the waves.

73. Yu the Great was reputed to be a descendant of the Yellow Emperor. Having succeeded in controlling the floods, Shun appointed him emperor and he became the founder of the Xia dynasty (c.2100–c.1600 BC). In the eighth year of his reign, it is said, in the course of a royal progress through his domains, he held a grand assembly in Guiji. A stele was said to have been erected to mark the occasion.

74. Gou Jian was the King of Yue and the great protagonist of Fu Chai of Wu. A poem by Li Bai, 'In Yue Viewing the Past' gives the lines: 'Gou Jian, king of Yue, came back from the broken land of Wu;/ his brave men returned to their homes, all in robes of brocade./ Ladies in waiting like flowers filled his spring palace/ where now only the partridges fly'; BURTON WATSON (trans.), The Columbia Book of Chinese Poetry: From Early Times to the Thirteenth Century (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), p. 209 (romanization altered).

75. Qi Biaojia has a short entry on this garden in the 'Gardens of Old' section of his 'Yue zhi yu yuan.' The unit of 'On Yue Viewing the Past' gives the lines: 'Gou Jian, king of Yue, came back from the broken land of Wu;/ his brave men returned to their homes, all in robes of brocade./ Ladies in waiting like flowers filled his spring palace/ where now only the partridges fly'; BURTON WATSON (trans.), The Columbia Book of Chinese Poetry: From Early Times to the Thirteenth Century (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), p. 209 (romanization altered).

76. Throughout this entry there are echoes of that most famous of prose writings in China, Wang Xizhi's (c.307–c.365) 'Preface to the Orchid Pavilion.'

Here, mid lofty mountain ranges and majestic peaks, among trees with thick foliage and tall bamboos, with clear streams and gurgling rapids catching the eye on both sides, we sit by the waterside. Our cup floats down the meandering stream and we drink in turn. And though we have no strings and flutes to fill the air with music, yet with singing and drinking we can while away the hours in quiet intimate conversation. The sky is clear, and the air fresh; a mild breeze blows. How fine it is to contemplate the mighty firmament and all creation's wonders, letting our eyes wander
over the landscape, while our hearts roam at will. When people are gathered together, some like to sit and talk and unburden their thoughts in the intimacy of a room; others, overcome by a sentiment, soar forth into a realm of ecstasy.


77. Here Qi Biaojia establishes a playful contrast between two of Tao Qian’s most famous prose writings. The first is his ‘Peach Blossom Source,’ a translation of which can be found in Cyril Birch (ed.), *Anthology of Chinese Literature* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967), pp. 188–90. A translation of the second piece, Tao’s ‘Biography of Master Five Willows,’ is in Owen, *An Anthology of Chinese Literature: Beginnings to 1911*, pp. 314–15.

78. This last expression derives from the ‘River Mian’ chapter of Li Daoyuan’s *Footnotes to the Classic of the Waterways*: ‘When Sima De was in charge of the north of Zhaihzhou, with dwellings all around, his pleasures followed one another. Plying his boat, however, and lifting up his gown, he truly gave vent to his sense of pleasure.’

79. This poem is entitled ‘On Reading the Classic of the Hills and Seas;’ this translation of which, by William Acker, is found in Birch, *Anthology of Chinese Literature*, p. 203.

80. Bin is the name of the area that was regarded as the ancestral home of the imperial house of the Zhou. The poem alluded to here is Poem no. 154 of the Shi jing, the relevant lines of which is translated thus: ‘In the seventh month we boil mallows and beans./ In the eighth month we dry the dates’; Waley, *The Book of Songs*, p. 166.

81. This hut takes its name from a story found in the ‘Heaven and Earth’ chapter of the *Zhuang Zi*.

Zigong traveled south to Chu, and on his way back through Qin, as he passed along the south bank of the Han, he saw an old man preparing his fields for planting. He had hollowed out an opening by which he entered the well and from which he emerged, juggling a pitcher, which he carried out to water the fields. Grunting and puffing, he used up a great deal of energy and produced very little result. ‘There is a machine for this sort of thing,’ said Zigong. ‘In one day it can water a hundred fields, demanding very little effort and producing excellent results. Wouldn’t you like one?’ The gardener raised his head and looked at Zigong. ‘How does it work?’ ‘It’s a contraption made by shaping a piece of wood. The back end is heavy and the front end light and it raises the water as though it were pouring it out, so fast that it seems to boil right over! It’s called a well sweep.’ The gardener flushed with anger and then said with a laugh, ‘I’ve heard my teacher say, where there are machines, there are bound to be machine worries; where there are machine worries, there are bound to be machine hearts. With a machine heart in your breast, you’ve spoiled what was pure and simple; and without the pure and simple, the life of the spirit knows no rest. Where the life of the spirit knows no rest, the Way will cease to buoy you up. It’s not that I don’t know about your machine — I would be ashamed to use it!’

Watson (trans.), *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), p. 134 (romanization altered). The other man referred to here, Chen Zhongzi of Qi, one is told in the Gaohsi zhuan (Accounts of Aloof Scholars), was once invited to take high office by the King of Chu. Chen refused, preferring instead to become a gardener.

82. Qi Biaojia’s diaries reveal that his wife, Shang Jinglan (1605–c.1676), was a frequent visitor to the garden. On this remarkable woman, see Dorothy Ko, *Teachers of the Inner Chambers: Women and Culture in Seventeenth-century China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), pp. 226–22. Some of her writings, and of her sons and daughters, are appended to Qi Biaojia ji, pp. 258–364.

83. Poem no. 13 of the *Shi jing* contains the following lines: ‘See, she gathers white aster! By the pools, on the little islands./ See, she uses it/ At the ritual,;’ Waley, *The Book of Songs*, p. 90.

84. Lin Bu (967–1028), a recluse poet of the Song, was said to have ‘taken a plum tree as his wife and the cranes as his children.’

85. During the Warring States period, Xi Shi, ever afterwards regarded by Chinese tradition as representing the paragon of feminine beauty, was sent by the King of Yue to his rival the King of Wu in the hope that she would distract him from his kingly duties. The stratagem succeeded. The likening of Xi Shi to the West Lake in Hangzhou became something of a cliché and is found most famously expressed, perhaps, in a couplet from Su Shi’s poem ‘Drinking by the Lake: Clear Sky at First, then Rain’: ‘If you wish to compare the lake in the west to the Lady of the West,/ Lightly powered or thickly smeared the fancy is just as apt’; A. C. Graham (trans.), *Poems of the West Lake* (London: WellswEEP, 1990), p. 23.

86. An allusion to the line from Tao Qian’s poem ‘Returning Home’ that reads: ‘The clouds seem to be in no mind to quit the mountains.’

87. On this important Ming thinker, see DMB, 1, pp. 153–6.

88. This is a reference to the Tang classical tale entitled ‘The World Inside a Pillow’ by Shen Ji (c.740–c.800). Meeting a Taoist in an inn in Handan one day, Master Lu bemoans his lack of worldly success. The Taoist gives him a porcelain pillow upon which he promptly falls asleep. In his dreams, Master Lu experiences a lifetime full of all the successes he had been hoping for. He awakens only to find that he has been asleep for no longer
than the time it has taken to cook his evening meal. The tale ends:

‘He got up with a start. “Could it all have been a dream?”’ “The happinesses of human life are all like that,” the old man replied. Lu sat lost in thought for a long time, and then thanked the old man; “Of the ways of favour and disgrace, the vagaries of distress and prosperity, the patterns of accomplishment and failure, the emotions of life and death, I have thoroughly been made aware. In this way, sir, you have checked my desires. How could I dare fail to profit from this lesson?” The he bowed and left.


89. In the ‘Biography of Fei Changfang’ in Hou Han shu (History of the Latter Han Dynasty) the story is told of Fei Changfang’s encounter with an old medicine pedlar in a marketplace one day. At the end of the day, the old man leapt into his pot. Upon following him, Fei was tutored in the art of shrinking distance.

90. This is a reference to the story, found in the ‘Questions of Tang’ chapter of the Lie Zi, that tells of an old man who, at the age of 90, decides to move the two mountains that block egress to his house, for which see GRAHAM, The Book of Lieh-tzu, pp. 99-101.

91. Zhuo Wenjun, daughter of Zhuo Wangsun of the Han, was said to have eloped with the poet Sima Xiangru (179–117 BCE) after hearing him play the lute. A great beauty, her eyebrows were said to be like ‘Gazing at Distant Mountains,’ and ‘Distant Mountain Eyebrows’ later became the name for a style of makeup.


94. In his diary, Qi Biaojia records receiving this letter on the 20th day of the second month of the 10th year of the reign of the Chong Zhen Emperor (1637), see ‘Shan ju zhuo lu’, Qi Biaojia wenqiao, II, p. 1076. ‘His letter put me in quite a funk for the rest of the day,’ he tells us. On a visit to the garden the next day, Qi Biaojia decides to build a hall within his Farm of Abundance and to give it this name, in order, he says, ‘to record the error of my ways.’


96. On the library accumulated by Qi Chenghan and the eventual fate of this collection, see his biography in DMB, I, pp. 216-20; also Huang Shang, ‘Guanyu Qi Chenghan’, Yuexia zaihuo (Shanghai: Guji chubanshe, 1992), pp. 1-9.

97. Fearing that his many rare books would be lost, Cao Pingmu of the Han constructed a stone vault to ensure their survival. Ren Mo, also of the Han, carved into the trunks of the trees of his garden the texts of rare commentaries to the Confucian Canon. Anecdotes about both these men can be found in Wang Jia’s (d. c.324) Shi yi ji (A Gathering of Lost Records), in CHENG RONG, Han Wei cong shu (Changchun: Jilin daxue chubanshe), p. 723.

98. Shentu Zhiyuan, an official during the Yuan, collected a library of over 10 000 volumes.

99. Having wasted his time playing chess, Zhen Chen turned back to his books when laughed at by his servants.

100. This anecdote is found in the ‘Biography of Lian Po and Lin Xiangru’ in SIMA QIAN’S Shi ji. When the King of Zhao made Zhao Kuo commander, Li Xiangru said: ‘Your Majesty is sending Kuo because of his reputation; this is like gluing the tuning bridges to strum a zither. Kuo can only recite his father’s writings and instructions; he knows nothing about adapting to the changes of battle’;