

**Antiquarianism in an Easy-going Style:  
Aspects of Chang T'ai-chieh's Antiquarian Practice  
in the Urban Culture of Late Ming China\***

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**Abstract**

The work of late Ming antiquarianism has been considered as among the sloppiest in the history of Chinese scholarship. In the prosperous print culture of the time, for example, not only were the old reliable books on antiquarianism reprinted and recompiled, such as Ts'ao Chao's *Ko ku yao lun* (*The Essential Criteria of Antiquities*) dated 1388, but similar, less systematic new compilations, such as Ch'en Chi-ju (1588-1639)'s *Ni ku lu* (*Intimacy with Antiquities*) around the mid-1590s, were produced. Even fabricated publications, such as Chang T'ai-chieh's *Pao hui lu* (*A Record of Painting Treasure*) dated 1633, were available to meet the dramatically increased social demand for the possession of antiquities and information about them. The demand for such casual or even forged publications, exemplified the richness and dynamics of later Ming urban culture, particularly in the cities of the Yangtze River Delta, such as Sung-chiang (the present-day Shanghai), from which Ts'ao, Ch'en, and Chang all came, as well as Su-chou, where Chang resided in his later years. How can we deal with the significance of *ku* (antiquarianism) at the time between the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century when the antiquarians were so lacking of standards in their discipline? In the exceptional case presented here of Chang T'ai-chieh's antiquarian practice, such a paradoxical phenomenon will be approached from an historical perspective. Retrieving the connection between Ch'en and Chang in their sharing of a similar playful attitude toward *ku*, and their easy-going life style, being either intimate or obsessed with antiquities, will demonstrate the diversity of aspects of official-scholars like Chang T'ai-chieh in early modern China.

**Keywords:** Chang T'ai-chieh, Sung-chiang, Su-chou, *Pao hui lu*  
*Pei cheng hsiao ts'ao*, antiquarianism

In his article on "Literati Environment," James Watt 屈志仁 depicts a general picture of the creativity and dynamics of literati life during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century.<sup>1</sup> Such an environment is at once a blessing and a curse. The blessing is an unprecedented liberal ideology mixed with a booming commercial life, and the curse is the sloppy scholarship, including plagiarism or even fraud. In this environment, how can we recognize the significance of antiquarianism (*ku* 古) at the time when antiquarians were lacking of standards and antiquarianism often functioned as a superfluous, or insignificant thing? Also in this environment, how can we approach such a paradox that constituted one of the most astonishing facets of urban culture in the late Ming (1368-1644) society?<sup>2</sup>

To understand this paradox, this study will focus from the historical perspective on aspects of antiquarian practice of Chang T'ai-chieh 張泰階 (1588?-?), an eccentric man of letters, an official, and above all a notorious forger from Sung-chiang 松江 (the present-day Shanghai 上海). In the making of a fabricated catalogue *A Record of Painting Treasure* (*Pao hui lu* [PHL] 寶繪錄 prefaced in 1633)<sup>3</sup> -- an unprecedented systematic forgery of antique painting (*ku hua* 古畫), (fig. 1) he exceptionally exemplified a literati lifestyle in which Chang and other antiquarians like Ch'en Chi-ju 陳繼儒 (1559-1639) delightfully

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- 1 Chu-tsing Li 李鑄晉, James C.Y. Watt *et al.* *The Chinese scholar's studio: artistic life in the late Ming period: an exhibition from the Shanghai Museum* (New York, N.Y.: Thames and Hudson: Published in association with the Asia Society Galleries, 1987), pp. 1-13.
- 2 In addition to the discussion of antiquarianism in the symposium on *Antiquarianism and Novelty: Art Appreciation in Ming and Ch'ing China* in the Palace Museum, Taipei, on January 15-16, 2004, the symposium on *The Age of Antiquaries in Europe and China* held at the Bard Graduate Center, New York, from March 26 to 27, 2004, discussed some broader issues related.
- 3 Cf. Hsieh Wei's 謝巍 comprehensive bibliographic entry of PHL. In *Chung-kuo hua hsueh chu cho k'ao lu* 中國畫學著作考錄 (*A Critical Bibliography of Chinese Painting Catalogues and Related Texts*), (Shanghai: Shang-hai shu hua ch'u pan she, 1998), pp. 418-419. This study uses the first edition of PHL. Its reprint is in *Ssu k'u ch'üan shu ts'un mu ts'ung shu. tzu pu* 四庫全書存目叢書子部; v. 72, (Chi-nan: Ch'i lu shu she, 1997), pp. 119-343. For an English bibliographic entry of PHL, see Hin-cheung Lovell, *An annotated bibliography of Chinese painting catalogues and related texts*, (Ann Arbor, Mich., Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 1973), p. 30. Also cf. Joan Stanley-Baker, "Forgeries in Chinese Painting," *Oriental Art*, v. XXXII, no. 1 (Spring 1986), pp. 54-66.

enjoyed. From the eighteenth century down to 2000, *PHL* cast a dark shadow on Chang T'ai-chieh as a greedy painting dealer.<sup>4</sup> Now, with additional sources like *Poems Drafted during the Expeditions Northward* (*Pei cheng hsiao ts'ao* [*PCHT*] 北征小草), an anthology of Chang T'ai-chieh's poetry banned by the Manchurians during the Ch'ing Dynasty (1644-1912),<sup>5</sup> a more objective image of "the father of the systematic forgery of antique painting" will be portrayed. Furthermore, we hope to reconstruct a little known yet radical process, in three phases, of Chang's antiquarianism in an amiable, easy-going lifestyle of early modern China.

## I

From Imperial China to the twentieth century, the antiquarian practice of Chang T'ai-chieh and his fellow Sung-chiang inhabitants had substantially contributed to making what Joseph Alosp called a "rare art tradition."<sup>6</sup> As far as the late Ming antiquarianism is concerned, Sung-chiang was in the forefront as a thriving urban society in Chiang-nan 江南 (south of the Yangtze 揚子 River Delta) with a vital cultural tradition.

In his *Gazette of Sung-chiang Prefecture* (*Ch'ung chen Sung-chiang fu chih* [*CCSCFC*] 崇禎松江府志) dated 1630, Ch'en Chi-ju gathered much praise about the remarkable achievements of the place both in its economy and education. One person quoted thus observed: "The former village on the seashore becomes the hub of trading and business, where ritual buildings and Confucius temples look so solemn and splendid, no different from what exist in Tsou 鄒 and Lu 魯 -- the birthplaces of Mencius and Confucius."<sup>7</sup> This observation made by Chao

4 Beginning in the High Ch'ing period, scholars exposed the problem of *PHL*. See *Ssu k'u ch'üan shu tsung mu* (SKCSTM), 四庫全書總目, v. 114. For an English translation of this early criticism, see Joan Stanley-Baker, pp. 59-60. Also cf. Wang Ch'ao-wen 王朝聞 ed., *Chung-kuo mei shu shih: Ming t'ai* 中國美術史:明代 (*A History of Chinese Art: Ming Dynasty*). (Chi-nan: Ch'i lu shu she, 2000), p. 360.

5 This incomplete twelve-volume printed edition had yet been mentioned in any scholarly publications until it was reprinted in *Ssu k'u chin hui shu ts'ung k'an. chi pu* 四庫禁毀書叢刊集部 v. 176, (Peking: Pei-ching ch'u pan she, 1997), Prefaced in 1633 and now in the collection of the Chekiang Library 浙江圖書館, this rare book is perhaps the only extant printed copy. In *T'ien i ko shu mu* 天一閣書目 (*A Bibliography of T'ien i Pavilion*), there is a handwritten copy made by K'an yun ts'ao t'ang 看云草堂 (Hut of Cloud-Watching), which, according to Professor Fan Ching-tsung's opinion, was very likely copied after the Chekiang Library printed version.

6 Cf. Joseph Alosp, *The rare art traditions: the history of art collecting and its linked phenomena wherever these have appeared* (New York: Harper & Row, 1982).

7 昔之海隅，商賈百貨，禮殿儒宮，巖巖翼翼，粲然不異鄒魯。reprint, (Peking: Shu mu wen hsien ch'u pan she, 1991), v. 7, p. 3a.

Meng-fu 趙孟頫 (1254-1322), a leading literati artist under the Mongols, seemed to have predicted an upcoming prosperity of antiquarianism in Sung-chiang district during the late Yüan (1279-1368) and early Ming period. Famous antiquarians like T'ao Tsung-i 陶宗儀 (fl. 1360-1368) and Ts'ao Chao 曹昭, who either immigrated to or came from Sung-chiang, were erudite authors on the subject. Their writings were excellent in both quantity and quality and made the local culture known to the intelligentsia. Their impact on the development of antiquarianism can be easily spotted in various later antiquarian writings down to the twentieth century.<sup>8</sup> Ts'ao Chao's *Essential Criteria of Appreciation of Antiques* (*Ko ku yao lun* [KKYL] 格古要論) dated 1388, for example, is still considered as one of the most reliable guides about antiquities which has ever appeared in the Chinese language.<sup>9</sup> No wonder, when the demand for antiquities and knowledge about them quickly increased in the late Ming period, KKYL was reprinted and recompiled several times within fifty years, including a reprint collected in the first installation of a *Secret Collection from the Hall of Treasuring the Calligraphy of Yan Cheng-ch'ing* (709-785) (*Pao yen t'ang mi chi* [PYTMC] 寶顏堂秘笈) -- a compendium of miscellaneous books edited by Ch'en Chi-ju in 1606.<sup>10</sup>

Sung-chiang is about forty miles away from Su-chou 蘇州 -- an art and cultural center in China since the fifteenth century and a cradle of forgery as well. During the late sixteenth century and early seventeenth century, the literati artists of Sung-chiang proudly claimed superiority over their rivals in Su-chou based on excellence in artistic connoisseurship and creativity. Antiquarianism had, in a certain degree, become an essential component in the cultural movement of the Painting Theory of the Southern and Northern Schools (*Hui hua nan pei tsung shuo* 繪畫南北宗說) launched by the famous Tung Ch'i-ch'ang 董其昌 (1555-1636) and his fellow Sung-chiang literati. Part of the blame on Wu 吳 [Su-chou] artists was to be put on the Su-chou collectors. As Tung

8 E. A. Strehlneek, for instance, took a reference of T'ao Chung-i's work in compiling his catalogue entitled *Chinese Pictorial Art: E. A. Strehlneek Collection*. (Shanghai : Commercial Press, 1914), p. 332.

9 Cf. Hsieh Wei, p. 283. Its English translation, see *Chinese connoisseurship: the Ko ku yao lun, the essential criteria of antiquities*, by Sir Percival David, with a facsimile of the Chinese text of 1388 (London, Faber, 1971).

10 Cf. Craig Clunas: *Superfluous things: material culture and social status in early modern China*. (Urbana : University of Illinois Press, c1991), p. 34. The first installation of PYTMC in 1606 also included NKL. Probably around the mid-1590s, Ch'en began to compile NKL in four volumes. It contradicts what Lovell (p. 31) dated the compilation of NKL in and about 1635.

pointed out: "In Wu, from the time of Lu Chih 陸治 (1496-1576) on [i.e., from the generation after Wen Cheng-ming 文徵明 (1470-1559)] the course of painting has been one of decline and degeneration. This is partly because what the collectors owned were mostly forgeries, so that false models were passed on [to painters]." <sup>11</sup> In contrast, he highly recommended and often praised Ch'en Chi-ju, who initiated the idea of *ni ku* (*being intimate with antiquities* 妮古), <sup>12</sup> for showing a new literati style with an acute antiquarian interest, which enabled Ch'en to be "free of the delicate and appealing vulgarities of Wu painting." <sup>13</sup> Intriguingly, Su-chou was the very place where Chang T'ai-chieh resided in the third phase of his antiquarian practice, which furthered the decline of the Wu School painting. To understand his third phase, we need to retrace the two phases that preceded it.

## II

Born around 1588 in an official family, <sup>14</sup> Chang belonged to the younger generation of Ch'en Chi-ju. In *CCSCFC*, the biographical information about the Changs included Chang O-i 張鵬翼 (1528-?), his great grandfather, Chang Ping-chieh 張秉介, his grandfather, and T'ai-chieh himself. Both O-i and T'ai-chieh became *chin-shih* 進士 in 1548 and 1619 respectively, though T'ai-chieh's official rank was lower than that of O-i. <sup>15</sup> It is fair to acknowledge "the fact that

11 吳中自陸叔平後，畫道衰落，亦為好事家多收贗本，繆種流傳。See *Jung t'ai pieh chi* (JTPC) 容台別集, reprint, in *Ming t'ai i shu chia chi hui k'an* 明代藝術家集匯刊, (Taipei: Kuo li chung yang t'u shu kuan, 1968), v.1, p. 9ab, The English translation is quoted from James Cahill, *Distant Mountain -- Chinese Painting of the Late Ming Dynasty (1570-1644)* (New York: Weatherhill, 1982), p. 28.

12 Cf. Hsieh Wei, pp. 356-357, and Lowell, p. 31. Also cf. Jen Tao-pin 任道斌, "Ch'en Chi-ju as Critic and Connoisseur," in *Proceedings of the Tung Ch'i-ch'ang International Symposium*, ed. by Wai-kam Ho, Hin-cheung Lovell, et al., (Kansas City, Mo.: Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, c1991), 9-1-25; and Celia Carrington Riely: Ch'en Chi-ju [Ch'en Chi-ju; zi Zhongshun; hao Meigong, Meidaoren, Migong], in *The Grove Dictionary of Art*, ed. by Jane Turner (New York: Grove's Dictionaries, Inc., 1996), v. 6, pp. 544-545.

13 豈落吳下畫師甜俗魔境耶。For this confrontation, see note 11, Cahill, 1982, pp. 27-30.

14 In 1630 Chang heard that a copy of "P'i-p'a fu", which he wrote at the age of thirteen, was in Mr. T'ang's 唐君 place (cf. *PCHT*, v. 1, p. 42b). He recalled that it had been almost thirty years since it was written. Cf. *PCHT*, v. 1. From this note, we assume that Chang was probably thirteen in 1600. If it is true, then he was born in 1588. Hsieh Wei also speculated Chang was born between 1588 and 1591, though he did not give any explanation (p. 418). Chang T'ai-chieh's *tzu* 字 was Yüan-p'ing 爰平 (cf. *PHL*, Chang's preface), or Wan-p'ing 宛平 (cf. *CCSCFC*, vol. 34, p. 28a), *hao* 號 Jo-shan 弱山 (cf. *PCHT*, v. 1, p. 24b).

15 According to Ch'en's preface for *PCHT*, Chang O-i was a "*chung ch'en*" 中丞 (Palace Aide to the Censor-in-chief), perhaps in rank 2. T'ai-chieh was a "*chih fu*" (prefect) in rank 4.

he was himself a holder of the *chin-shih* degree and, hence, a social equal of his customers. With taste and connoisseurship being socially conditioned, Chang [T'ai-chieh] could hardly fail to enjoy general success and esteem."<sup>16</sup> Besides holding prestigious degrees,<sup>17</sup> the Changs also ran a print shop named I Wei T'ang 伊蔚堂, in which some old books were reprinted.<sup>18</sup> Thus, the Changs were actually engaged in print culture for either intellectual or commercial purpose, or both. What is more, Chang O-i built up a network with the Wu School painters and calligraphers, including Wen Cheng-ming and Wang Ch'ung 王寵 (1494-1533). In 1557, for instance, O-i wrote an essay about the building of the city of Ch'uan-sha 川沙 in Shanghai County. The essay was handwritten by Wen with his elegant calligraphy.<sup>19</sup> Further, according to Ch'en Chi-ju's account, Chang O-i joined a poet society with Wang Ch'ung and they became comrades and shared the same aesthetic taste.<sup>20</sup>

There is no confirmed information that can help reconstruct the art collection of this well established family, but Chang T'ai-chieh alluded in his preface for *PHL* about such cultural tradition: "When I was a child, I was enthusiastic about this collection and learned how to exercise aesthetic connoisseurship" (余爲童時，酷嗜此道。稍能別識一二). It likely included rubbings of stones or steles (*pei* 碑) and rubbings made from blocks carved specially for transmitting famous calligraphy examples (*t'ieh* 帖) from which T'ai-chieh learned writing.<sup>21</sup> Regardless of the unreliability of *PHL*, we can still gauge how this training amazed Chang as his intellectual endeavors took off.

16 Clunas, p. 134.

17 Cf. *CCSCFC*, v. 41, p. 46b. In his biography, Chang Ping-chieh was known for his filial piety. In the beginning of T'ien-ch'i 天啓 period (1621-1627), Chang T'ai-chieh reported his grandfather's merits to the Imperial Court. Afterwards the Changs received an edict from Court to have a memorial arch erected in their hometown.

18 As we know, You Mao's 尤袤 (1127-1194) *Ch'üan T'ang shih hua* 全唐詩話 (*A Complete Annotation of the T'ang Poems*) was reprinted there in 1555. The other print of the same book was revised in 1585, showing that the family business continued for at least thirty years. From the bibliographic information of this reprint, we see that Chang Tzu-hsian 張自憲 was in charge of that latest revision.

19 Cf. *CCSCFC*, v.19, pp. 11a-13b ; v. 56, p. 7b.

20 Cf. Ch'en's preface for *PCHT*. Recorded in *CCSCFC*, v. 56, p. 6b, Wang Ch'ung's calligraphy works were collected and displayed in various places of Sung-chiang.

21 For the discussion of these two kinds of rubbings, see Wu Hung 巫鴻: "On Rubbings: Their Materiality and Historicity", in *Writing and materiality in China: essays in honor of Patrick Hanan*, ed. by Judith T. Zeitlin & Lydia H. Liu, with Ellen Widmer, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center for the Harvard-Yenching Institute: Distributed by Harvard University Press, 2003), pp. 29-72.

Out of such a background, Chang T'ai-chieh continued his family legacy by displaying his early accomplishment in making poetry, which was greatly appreciated in town. From about eight to nine years of age probably until his teens, due to a severe headache, he fasted and mediated alone by following a T'aoist (Tao chia 道家) method in an isolated study.<sup>22</sup> Having been free from studying Confucian Classics for a while, he was open to access all the books collected by his forerunners: tens of thousands of volumes of histories, novels, poetries, and miscellaneous writings. These not only entertained but also inspired him; his creativity in poetry blossomed.<sup>23</sup> In a brief introduction for one of his earliest *fu* poetry "*P'i p'a fu*" 琵琶賦 (Of p'i-p'a -- a plucked string music instrument with a fretted fingerboard), he wrote: "I have examined the history of music; p'i-p'a did not exist in the remote past. So it was rarely mentioned in the earlier writings. It was not in use until the Han (202 B.C.-220 A.D.) and Wei (222-264) Dynasties. In the succeeding periods there have been many discussions about it by talented poets.....This poem will skip an exhaustive description of its physical features and remarkable sounds which antiquarians have observed. I dare not put my name among those ancient scholars. But I do not want to see the beauty of this elegant string instrument of the middle-ancient period to be ignored. For that reason, I focus on its manufacture process and its acoustic effect to compose this poem."<sup>24</sup> Under the title of "*P'i p'a Fu*", he made a note: "composed at the age of thirteen."<sup>25</sup> Chang's talent in poetry provided a foundation for T'ai-chieh to indulge his fantasy in approaching antique painting and calligraphy, whether they were fake or genuine.<sup>26</sup>

We do not know the relation of the Changs to Tung Ch'i-chang except one forged colophon of Tung in *PHL*.<sup>27</sup> However, Tung's closest friend was Ch'en Ch'i-ju, with whom Chang T'ai-chieh kept in touch through their lifetimes, for all three men were of the Sung-chiang gentry society. T'ai-chieh once owned a cottage in Mt. She-shan 佘山 where Ch'en Ch'i-ju resided as a noted recluse. In his poem entitled *Old Studio in Mt. She-shan* (*She-shan chiu cha* 佘山舊齋),

22 See the prefaces written by Ch'en Chi-ju and Chang T'ai-chieh for *PCHT*, v. 1.

23 Ibid.

24 余歷審音樂，獨琵琶不始於遼古，而其義亦罕見於書。至漢魏始並用之。而歷代才士，亦競爲之賦。.....皆稽古者所殫述，而今可得而略矣。余非敢妄側古人，然朱絃之雅器，中古之遺美，不可闕也。遂探其制度，觀其音聲而作斯賦。 Ibid., v. 1, p. 1a.

25 十三歲作。Interestingly, this *fu* poetry was included in *Yu ting li tai fu hui*, *pu i*, 御定歷代賦匯補遺 v. 12 in *Ssu k'u ch'uan shu*, *chi pu* 四庫全書集部.

26 Cf. Chen's preface for *PCHT*.

27 Cf. *PHL*, v. 14, p. 12a.

Chang T'ai-chieh described the enjoyment of the sight of the place.<sup>28</sup> This shared neighborhood suggests that both men of letters would have known each other well.<sup>29</sup> In return, T'ai-chieh must have been familiar with Ch'en's great reputation as an antiquarian good at various things, including jade, calligraphy, and painting. What is more, he would have been familiar with Ch'en's writings on antiquarianism such as *a Record of Being Intimate with Antiquities* (*Ni ku lu* [NKL] 妮古錄).<sup>30</sup>

Unlike Ch'en's versatile interests exhibited in his lucrative writings on antiquarianism, Chang T'ai-chieh actually narrowed his focus from antiquities like bronze vessels, jade, music instruments, and other item in order to concentrate on antique calligraphy and painting. As he stated later in the beginning of his preface for *PHL*: "The antiquarians who specialized in antiques like bronze pots, valuable and strange objects, can approach them by their material properties and identify them by their shapes. The same approach seemed to be applied to the standard calligraphy and famous paintings. The famous tablets of calligraphy of the succeeding dynasties, however, differ in their origins and developments; even the eminent connoisseurs may make mistakes. So it is difficult to appraise them" (從來博古家如彝鼎珍異諸物，皆可按質而索，揣象而得也。惟法書名畫，疑似相若。歷代名碑，源流難究，雖具眼者，不免魚目之混，蓋難言之矣。).

This more-focused interest definitely demanded a greater aesthetic intuition and knowledge in literature. Being confident of his genius in poetry, T'ai-chieh was going to define a fine line between poetic creation and sound antiquarianism. In contrast to the reclusive Ch'en Chi-ju, he would experience some hard times once his public service began in a tumultuous Northern China.

The tumultuous situation was caused by the political and military conditions during the second phase of Chang T'ai-chieh's antiquarianism. Different from the relatively peaceful days when his great grandfather had served the Ming Court,<sup>31</sup> Chang T'ai-chieh inaugurated his office-holding career at a time when

28 *PCHT*, v. 8, pp. 4b-5a.

29 When Chang visited Mt. She-shan in 1632, Chen reiterated T'ai-chieh's most recent appointment mentioned in *CCSCFC*, v. 34, p. 28a. In a short postscript of a poem written in 1630, Chang noted, "At that time I had not taken my new appointment in office." See *PCHT*, v. 11. p. 14b.

30 Cf. Hsieh Wei (p. 356). Reprint in *Mei shu ts'ung shu* 美術叢書 (Yang-chou : Chiang-su ku chi ch'u pan she, 1986).

31 See *CCSCFC*, v. 19, pp. 11a-13b. Compared to Chang O-i's article on fighting against Japanese pirates in Sung-chiang in 1557, the situation that Chang T'ai-chieh witnessed and experienced in his expedition to North China was much threatening and devastating.



the Manchurian army in the Northeast was forming an increasing threat outside the Great Wall.

Chang T'ai-chieh took office in 1619. First, in Beijing he was appointed a Secretary of a Bureau in the Ministry of Justice (Hsin pu chu shih 刑部主事), then in Shansi Province a *Prefect of Lu-an Prefecture* (*Lu-an chih fu* 潞安知府 [the present-day Shang-tang 上黨 city]) till 1630. Through this period, he often reported in his poetry on the frightening circumstances that he experienced in the Capital and areas of Shansi. Even during one of his vacations to the south,<sup>32</sup> he was very conscious of the intensified Manchurian invasions. In a brief note to his *fu* poetry *Of Hot Summer* (*Chu hsia fu* 朱夏賦) dated 1630, Chang wrote: "In the beginning of the summer of 1629, I returned eastward from Shang-tang. Less than a month later, the barbarians invaded and the whole territory of Shansi was terrified. From spring to summer, I was at home. Having been aware of current affairs, I could not express [adequately] my loyalty [to the Court] and my anger [at the enemy] in my bosom. I stayed in an empty studio, and had my vacation. I survived due to my inability to be more useful [by fighting at the frontier]. Looking at the scene and worrying about the current affairs, my emotions were mixed."<sup>33</sup> Such mixed emotions made Chang T'ai-chieh feel guilty whenever he recalled the serious situation in Northern China.<sup>34</sup> His intention to serve the Court was evident as the title of his poetry collection *Pei cheng hsiao ts'ao* indicates -- joining the expeditions Northward. Not surprisingly, after the establishment of the Manchurian Dynasty in 1644, such offensive expressions were intolerable and therefore banned.<sup>35</sup>

As a prefect, Chang T'ai-chieh could help little in changing the domestic political situation. According to a *Gazette of Lu-an Prefecture*, he was upright and did not flatter a certain powerful eunuch from the Forbidden City who was passing by Shang-tang County.<sup>36</sup> To the terrifying corruption of the Ming Court

32 See *PCHT*, v. 11, p. 14b. The title of the poem says: "In October 1629, the barbarians came through the Great Wall from Hsi-feng-k'ou 喜峰口. Next year, they invaded from east and threatened the capital. The gates of Peking had been closed for three months."

33 己巳首冬，余從上黨東還。曾未踰月，而奴虜闖入，即全晉亦有震鄰之懼焉。余方栖遲閭里。歷春及夏，雖目擊時事，忠憤莫抒。而兀坐空齋，較多暇日。其殆以不材而得全者耶？撫景憂時，百感交集。 *PCHT*, v. 1, pp. 6a-7b. The possible reason that Chang felt incapable in fighting at the frontier was due to his physical problem.

34 In a poem, Chang expressed his admiration of a patriot to Court. See *PCHT*, v. 4, p. 3ab.

35 *PCHT* was in the list of those banned books when *SKCS* was compiled in Ch'ien-lung period (1736-1795).

36 *Ch'ien-lung Lu-an fu chih* 乾隆潞安府志, v. 17, p. 69a, compiled by Yao Hsüeh-chia 姚學甲, dated 1770.

and its “eunuch politics,” Chang could only make silent opposition. He wrote poems contemplating his career: “When I was young, I aspired to do great things. Numerous frustrations oddly occurred in my middle age. My entire life is turning downward, I feel sad about the future due to my unsuccessful preceding years.”<sup>37</sup> Around 1627, Chang felt more desperate: “My years will not last forever, alas I have done little once I become forty.” Sighing he could do nothing but turn white-headed.<sup>38</sup>

Following a repeated pattern in Confucian philosophy, Chang T'ai-chieh longed for an ideal escape from his unpleasant position. In fact, the easy-going lifestyle that had prevailed in the literati circle of his time led him to be more flexible with the social reality, and his interest in certain seemingly useless engagements enabled him to find comfort with a transient life. He found that escape in antiquarianism, similar to Tung Ch'i-chang, who also served in the late Ming Court as a high-ranking official but spent most of his time in art and scholarship.<sup>39</sup> He constantly reminded himself of his early training in connoisseurship. His talent in poetry and his enthusiasm toward antique painting and calligraphy now helped to keep a balance in his mind, as domestic and foreign affairs went beyond his control. Chang T'ai-chieh's poems relevant to this direction in *PCHT* are reliable sources in weighing the significance of his antiquarian activities while in the North. His increased antiquarian curiosity is noteworthy, both positively and negatively, as he began his impossible dream of compiling an unprecedented compendium of rubbings of steles and also embarked on his systematic forgery of antique painting.

One positive aspect of Chang T'ai-chieh's activities were his understanding of calligraphy by his exciting encounters with art works from the Chin to T'ang period (265-907) engraved on ancient tablets in various historical sites. In his poem *Travel to Mt. Stone Tripitaka* (Shih Ching Shan Hsing 石經山行), he began with regret by saying: “At the beginning [of my calligraphy training], I was fascinated by [the style of] Ouyang Hsiu 歐陽詢 (577-641) and Yu Shih-nan 虞世南 (558-638). Having made a great effort to collect their works, I found not a single genuine character of theirs” (初年酷嗜歐虞蹟，搜索從來無一字。). “In the autumn of 1622,” he wrote in a brief introduction to the same poem, “I was in

37 少時慷慨有大志，中年百折多數奇。因此一生竟潦倒，東嶠不遂悲崦嵫。 *PCHT*, v. 3, p. 11b.

38 歲月會有盡，四十嗟無成。 *PCHT*, v. 2, p. 11b.

39 Cf. Nelson Wu, “Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (1555-1636) : Apathy in Government and Fervor in Art.” in *Confucian Personalities*, ed. by Arthur F. Wright and Denis Twitchett (Stanford, Calif. : Stanford University Press, 1962), pp. 260-293.

charge of a project to cut marble out of a quarry in Fang-shan 房山 County. In several trips to the quarry I found stone tablets on which the Buddhist tripitaka were engraved. The reverend monk in the Lung-so 龍朔 period (661-663) of the T'ang Dynasty carried out the mission and the tablets filled seven caves. The calligraphy works were close to the style of Ouyang and Yu. The inscriptions on the steles in tablets erected [inside the caves] at the foot of mountain all imitated the manner of Wang Hsi-chih 王羲之 (321-379). It is unlikely that people in the Five Dynasties (907-959) and Sung Dynasty (960-1279) could have made them. Having appreciated it for quite a time, I composed this travelogue in verse.”<sup>40</sup>

To this memorable experience in his antiquarian inquiry, Chang T'ai-chieh showed his strong passion. He continued in his poem:

*I touched the wall of the stone caves with care,  
They are wet because of the spring water.  
I found the cracks of the cliff covered with moss.  
The scriptures on the tablets were old and strange,  
Gradually eroded by the power of rain and wind.  
They are not the oldest scripts like the footprint of bird and seal  
script,  
Instead they are the regular and semi-cursive scripts that are  
legible.*

.....

*The monks in the mountain do not understand such a thing,  
But treat this city of tripitaka as a rubbish heap.  
They only knew to use them as the stepping-stones,  
And totally innocent that they are the tablets of the previous  
dynasties.  
The old engravings were lost in Kuan-hsi 關西 [western Shansi 陝  
西]  
Where even one or two pieces of bamboo stripes would be  
appreciated.  
However, in Mt. Yen-shan 燕山 the stone tablets are decorated all  
over the caves,*

40 壬戌秋日，余以採石之役，屢經房山縣，見有唐龍朔中高僧募刻藏經石板，七洞皆滿。書法大類歐虞。至於碑記峙立，匝繞山阿，又皆仿佛右軍，非五季趙宋諸人所及也。欣賞之次，作此以紀勝焉。PCHT, v. 5, p. 1ab.

*The standard calligraphy and Buddhist Tripitaka left a valuable treasure.*

*I came to take the marble out of the quarry at the foot of the green mountain.*

*The task lasted for years and I sometimes got a rest here.*

.....

*When can I get the rubbings of them all into my collection?*

*If so, my posterity will be able to inherit this as a rare cultural heritage.*

捫壁輕濡泉溜濕，探崖側裂苔痕斑。  
沿陂碑碣尤奇古，雨蝕風侵半欲腐。  
原非鳥跡与籀書，歷歷眞行還可數。.....  
山僧蚩苴未解事，大貝連城等閒棄。  
祇知舂石支階墀，不省前朝是碑記。  
關西古刻久已湮，一簡兩簡稱家珍。  
何獨燕山反充棟，法書貝梵留貞珉。  
我來鑿石青山趾，跋涉彌年時憩此。.....  
何時收入青緇囊，授與曾玄嬭文玼。

All the Stone Tripitaka he saw in a suburb of Beijing have calligraphy mostly written by anonymous hands in the manner of the early T'ang master calligraphers and hence were not appreciated by the monks. However, the steles he saw when he moving to Shansi Province were directly attributed to the great masters. In Temple of Chin Dukedom (Chin tz'u 晉祠) lies a famous stele reproducing the hand of Emperor T'ai-tsung 太宗, Li Shih-ming 李世民 (597-649, r. 627-649), who was pathologically obsessed with Wang Hsi-chih's calligraphy works and tried to put all the extant pieces of Wang into his collection. Chang T'ai-chieh went to see Li Shih-ming's remarkable work several times whenever he passed by T'ai-yuan 太原 where Temple of Chin Dukedom is located.<sup>41</sup> By introducing his study of the Stone Tripitaka Cave and of Emperor T'ai-tsung's Inscription about Temple of Chin Dukedom, we find that T'ai-chieh was more and more engaged in obtaining calligraphy works of the early T'ang. This passion came from both his admiration of Wang Hsi-chih's

41 *PCHT*, v. 7, pp. 20b-21a. For a recent scholarship on Chin-tz'u, cf. Tracy Miller: "Water Sprites and Ancestor Spirits: Reading the Architecture of Jinci, in *Art Bulletin*, v. LXXXVI, no. 1 (2004), pp. 6-30.

work and the cursive style of calligraphy.<sup>42</sup> Through making many comparisons of calligraphy works from the Chin to T'ang, he had a better sense of this expressive script and composed a poem to reconsider its history based on his private collection and personal observations.<sup>43</sup>

In his poems, Chang also described how he got rubbings of those ancient steles during various trips. When he went to worship at the Temple of Five Sacred Mountains (Wu yüeh tz'u 五岳祠) and visited the Temple of the Steles Erected in Yüan-feng Period (1078-1085) [of the Northern Sung] (Yüan-feng pei miao 元豐碑廟), he had his servants make rubbings of steles there.<sup>44</sup> On his way to Lu-ch'üan 鹿泉 County, he sent two servants to make a rubbing of an old stele in the Temple of Original Will (Pen-yüan ssu 本愿寺). They came upon a heavy snow. Chang described the difficulty of this working process: "Full of wrinkles, the skin of my servants' hands were cracked, however, the trace of old seal script was therefore preserved [though their hard work.]"<sup>45</sup> Field trips like these paved a new path of antiquarianism, which differs not only from studio antiquarians, but also from the former preference to *t'ieh* of the Six Dynasties (222-588). In other words, Chang T'ai-chieh's approach enhanced the epigraphic pursuit initiated by the Sung antiquarians of the eleventh-century to do more outdoor investigations in order to shift the scholar's interest from *t'ieh* to *pei*.

Knowing about all these valuable antiquarian experiences, we can now examine what Chang said in his preface for *PHL*: "I worked in Shang-tang for a period. It is a place very close to the capitals in the Han and T'ang Dynasties, where various steles are preserved. The Kuan-chung 關中 district [in the present-day Shansi Province] is especially a hub. The rubbings of those steles that I have collected were more than several thousand pieces. ....I intended to compile a compendium entitled *Records of Bronze and Stone Inscriptions* (*Chin shih lu* 金石錄). Initially, I planed to classify them into three sections: Confucianism, T'aoism, and Buddhism. Following there are sections for the stone steles, the tomb epitaphs, the poems, and the colophons, with certain volumes in each category. For the Confucius section, I could include the engravings of the Thirteen Classics sponsored by T'ang Emperor Wen-tsung 文宗 (r. 826-840). As far as the Buddhist section is concerned, I could include the

42 This was probably a reason Chang made an exception in his fabricated catalogue to include a fake calligraphy attributed to Wang Hsi-chih in *PHL*, v. 8, pp. 16a-23b.

43 *PCHT*, v. 4, p. 13ab.

44 *PCHT*, v. 2, p. 14ab.

45 僕夫膚欲裂，史籀跡猶傳。 *PCHT*, v. 8, p. 8ab.

Stone Tripitaka carved in the caves of Mt. Yan-shan” ([余] 以後承乏上黨。茲地在漢唐時逼近畿輔，長碑短碣，在在有之，而關中猶稱淵數。計所褒集，無慮數千卷。……意欲編次成帙，號《金石錄》。擬先分儒、釋、道三宗，而後爲碑記、爲墓銘、爲詩文、爲題識各若干卷，次第列之。其中欲以唐文宗所刻十三經爲儒，以燕山所刊石經爲釋。). Needless to say, this was an ambitious project, though Chang plagiarized the exact title of a compendium of the rubbings compiled by Chao Ming-ch'en 趙明誠 (1081-1129) and his wife Li Ch'ing-chao 李清照 (1081?-1041), both of whom suffered during the tragic transition from the Northern Sung (960-1126) to Southern Sung (1127-1279). At a similar tumultuous moment of Chinese history, T'ai-chieh comforted himself with an imaginary replacement of his predecessors' work as a similar escape from the social disruption of changing dynasties. In the end, however, Chang excused himself from carrying out his ambitious project: "The engraved tripitaka was secretly installed inside the stone caves. It is hard to make rubbings there without spending [the equivalent of] several thousand [taels of] gold in ten years."<sup>46</sup>

Here, Chang T'ai-chieh's new classification of *Records of Bronze and Stone Inscriptions*, in fact, anteceded what a modern calligrapher and scholar Hsiung Ping-ming 熊秉明 (1922-2002) wrote about the theoretical system of Chinese calligraphy in 1984.<sup>47</sup> In the history of Chinese scholarship, Chang T'ai-chieh's initiative represented the creativity of late Ming antiquarianism in spite of its plagiarism and other weaknesses. Its positive influence can also be discerned in his good grasp of the stylistic development of antique painting. Modern scholars have recognized the value of Chang's overview of the history of Chinese painting, and have especially appreciated his emphasis on the achievement of Yüan painting -- the very beauty of calligraphic brush strokes and their delicacy.<sup>48</sup>

In spite of his positive achievements, Chang T'ai-chieh also had his negative respects. Being a prefect of Lu An Prefecture, Chang T'ai-chieh grew under the misconception that he was somehow becoming a connoisseur of T'ang-Sung art. His occupation helped to foster an illusion about his "expertise" of connoisseurship because, in his *PHL*, Chang boasted with seemingly sound

46 而此經向秘，石洞不便摹榻，非費數千金歷十年不可。余將老矣，姑且置之。See Chang's preface for *PHL*.

47 See *Chung-kuo shu fa li lun t'i his* 中國書法理論體系 (*The System of Chinese Calligraphy Theory*), (Hong Kong: Chung hua shu chu Hsiang-kaung feng chu, 1984).

48 Cf. Hsieh Wei, pp. 418-419.

reason that he had acquired a solid understanding of the art collection of Chao Chieh 趙佖 (1082-1135). When he made a colophon for a fake painting of Wang Wei 王維 (699-759), he proudly stated: “Sung T’ao-chün 宋道君 [The T’aoist Emperor of the Sung Dynasty, which refers to Chao Chieh] once was Military Commissioner to the Army of Lu District (*Lu-chou chün chieh tu* 潞州軍節度), I have seen quite a few calligraphy works he left in that place.”<sup>49</sup> Here Chang T’ai-chieh made a cultural connection to Chao Chieh. First, they shared the same cultural geography albeit different times. From 1098-1101 Chao Chieh had been appointed as Military Commissioner to the Army of Chao-te District (*Chao-te chün chieh tu shih*, [which was the name of Lu District in the Northern Sung] 昭德軍節度史) before he was enthroned as Emperor Hui-tsung 徽宗 (r. 1100-1125).<sup>50</sup> Lu An was the home district for Hui-tsung located in the northwest of the Northern Sung capital, where his legacy was preserved. Second, they shared some aesthetic interest; Chao Chieh was an imminent artist, a collector, a connoisseur, and above all, an Imperial ruler. Chang T’ai-chieh’s cultural connection to Chao Chieh happened to be much more important to him than his own family tie to Wang Ch’ung and the private collection of antique painting in Ming China. Thus, Chang T’ai-chieh deceived himself and others that he had thoroughly gained knowledge of artworks attributed to Hui-tsung or to Hui-tsung’s collection.

The fantasy-fed legacy of Hui-tsung on Chang T’ai-chieh was imaginative and even “creative.” In *PHL*, it requires no genius to tell that this fantasy of collecting antique painting from the Chin to T’ang period made T’ai-chieh feel close to the earlier history. Due to this feeling, he became addicted to collecting “really old” antique painting after he left office in Northern China. As he “intentionally” emphasized later in the explanatory notes of *PHL*, Hui-tsung’s antiquarianism not only served as a watershed between the art collection by court and by private collectors, but also proclaimed an absolute authority in the study of pre-Sung painting. To T’ai-chieh, antique painting collection led his intellectual pursuits to move in a direction that Emperor Hui-tsung once had endorsed at the cost of losing a dynasty. In that direction, Chang was about to take on new challenges in the late Ming Su-chou.

49 蓋道君初爲潞州軍節度。余在彼中，見其遺墨甚多。 *PHL*, v. 6, p. 9b.

50 In his biography in *Sung Shih* 宋史 (*A History of the Sung Dynasty*), Chao Chieh was named as *Chao-te* and *Chang-hsin-chun Ch’ieh-t’u* in 1098, (Peking : Chung-hua Shu-chü, 1977), v. 19, p. 357. I want to thank Professor Pao Wei-min 包偉民 from Che-chiang University for bringing this connection to my attention.

## III

The third phase of Chang T'ai-chieh's antiquarianism began after he left Northern China in 1630 and ended around 1634 when *PHL* was published. That publication is the basis for most criticisms of Chang as a terrible forger. In a poem published in 1824, for example, Wu Hsiu 吳脩 (1764-1827) pointed out:

*It is not for permanent fame but for making money,*

*We laugh at this man named Chang telling an outrageous lie.*<sup>51</sup>

Given the fact that Wu might not have been able to access Chang's *PCHT*, which had been banned for many years, this image of some one money-driven was inadequate at best. Nevertheless, no one will deny that Chang forged two hundred entries of antique painting in *PHL*. In an annotation of the aforesaid poem, Wu Hsiu revealed: "Chang T'ai-chieh from Yun-chien 雲間 [another name of Sung-chiang] of Ch'ung chen period (1630-1644), forged two hundred paintings since the Chin and T'ang periods, including works from the Six Dynasties to Yuan and Ming, with a publication of *PHL* in twenty volumes. The pre-Sung paintings were accompanied by colophons attributed to Chao Meng-fu, Yü Ho 俞和, Teng Wen-yuan 鄧文原 (1258-1328), K'o Chiu-ssu 柯九思 (1290-1343), Huang Kung-wang 黃公望 (1269-1354), Wu Chen 吳鎮 (1280-1354), Wang Meng 王蒙 (1308-1385), Yüan Ch'ueh 袁桷 (1266-1327), and Wen Cheng-ming, with no one else. By leafing through the pages, we cannot help but laugh. Did it not promote the catalogue before the sale of forgeries for a better price? Over the decades, I have seen more than ten pieces of them. All the colophons in verse were written out in a single hand, mostly on the light yellow paper made in Sung-chiang" (崇禎時有雲間張泰階者，集新造晉唐以來偽畫二百件，拚刻爲《寶繪錄》二十卷，自六朝至元明，無家不備。宋以前諸圖書，皆趙松雪、俞紫之、鄧善之、柯丹邱、黃大癡、吳仲圭、王叔明、袁海叟十數人題識，終以文衡山，而不雜他人。覽之足以發笑。豈先流布其書，後乃以偽畫出售，希得厚值耶？數十年間，余曾見十余種。其詩跋乃一人所寫，用松江黃粉箋居多。). Wu was definitely correct in criticizing Chang's wrong-doing because 400 years after *PHL* was published, the forgeries from that catalogue continue to be in circulation in the market for antique painting in China and overseas. For instance, a Hong Kong 香港 collector Ch'en Jen-t'ao 陳仁濤 mentioned in 1955 that two scrolls of landscape paintings with Chang's colophons had been sent to

51 不爲傳名定愛錢，笑他張姓謊連天。Ch'ing hsia kuan lun hua ch'ieh ch'ü 青霞館論畫絕句, *Mei shu ts'ung shu* edition, p. 1053.



America and then returned to Hong Kong.<sup>52</sup>

Although to retrieve the history of how these forgeries were made and circulated during Chang T'ai-chieh's lifetime and thereafter is beyond the compass of this study, T'ai-chieh's situation, as the first two phases of his antiquarianism prove, was more complicated than what Wu had portrayed and most of art historians have so far known. Forging was the negative outcome of Chang's antiquarianism. But the real question here is, as this study will unfold, how Chang became such an extreme case of the literati's obsession with antiques in the late Ming Su-chou.

Su-chou had its special attractions to literati and officials like Chang T'ai-chieh. He chose to reside in West Hill (Hsi-shan西山) by Lake Tung-t'ing 洞庭湖, famous for its scenic views such as can be seen in Chao Meng-fu's landscape paintings.<sup>53</sup> In 1632, before he was about to take office as Vice Chekiang Provincial Administration Commissioner in charge of the affairs of Wen-chou 溫州 and Ch'u-chou 處州 Prefectures (Che-chiang pu cheng ssu fu shih 浙江布政司副史),<sup>54</sup> Chang T'ai-chieh went to visit Ch'en Chi-ju in their hometown. From Ch'en's preface for *PCHT*, we know what Chang had been doing in Su-chou. It reads:

*He lives a reclusive life in the city of Wu, obsessed with ni ku. Whenever he encounters famous paintings and model calligraphy works from the Chin to T'ang Dynasties, he would try to possess them even at the cost of consigning his land and house.*<sup>55</sup> (fig. 2)

Here Ch'en described how addicted Chang was to antiquities, especially to

52 Ch'en mentioned "one of them was originally an album leaf remounted in the format of handscroll." See *Ku kung i i shu hua mu chiao chu* 故宮已佚書畫目校注, (Hong Kong : T'ung ying kung ssu, 1956), p. 14.

53 In his poems, Chang T'ai-chieh expressed how delighted he was by the beautiful surroundings: "I dwell in a house by the foot of West Hill. /As time goes by like a flying arrow. /The forest keeps a distance from the dusty world, /The dark color conveys a message of farewell" 卜筑西山陲，歲月如飛輶。林深絕塵坳，黛色遙相送 (*PCHT*, v. 1, p. 19a-b.). He also portrayed the scenery of Su-chou like Hu-ch'iu 虎丘 (The Tiger Hill) -- his favorite place to visit (*PCHT*, v. 1, p. 22ab). In addition to the one of Hsi-shan, Chao also depicted Tung-shan 東山 (East Hill), which is now in the collection of Shanghai Museum. They once were in Tung Ch'i-chang's collection, and Ch'en Chi-ju mentioned them in *NKL*, v. 3. Also see *JTPC*, v. 1, pp. 13b-14a.

54 In *CCSCFC*, the compiler noted that T'ai-chieh took charge of Wen chu t'ao, l. 34, p. 28a ; v. 40, p. 7a. In a Chia-ch'ing 嘉慶 edition of *SCFC* prefaced in 1817, T'ai-chieh was *Assistant Administration Commissioner* (Che-chiang pu cheng ssu ts'an i 浙江布政司參議), v. 54, p. 86a.

55 市隱吳門，癖于妮古。凡晉唐六朝以來法書名畫，不惜質田宅購之。The anthology was undated. In his preface, Chen called him "seventy-five fears old man" 七十五叟. So it was probably compiled around 1632.

antique painting. We must remember that it was in a preface for the collection of Chang's poems that Ch'en -- an antiquarian senior to Chang -- advertised the latter's new interest beyond poetry. However, Ch'en somehow regretted that his younger friend did not join the poetry society in their hometown as a prospective leading figure as his great grandfather once had been. For Chang himself, compared to his new involvement in collecting, poetry now seemed to be rather conventional and less stimulating. When writing his own preface for *PCHT* he even commented, belittling his earlier poetry: "In my life I have no specialty. Even in literature, I have hardly had perseverance in learning. Therefore, in the writing of poetry, most of my works were created out of spontaneity in a plain and direct style. I have no single piece of writing with deep and profound meaning in a sophisticated manner" (余平生無專學，即習爲文詞，又不肯竟學。故操觚之際，大都夷易徑直，率然而成。而叩以幽深之遠調，浩渺之波瀾，無有也。). He stated that he had no other view in compiling this anthology but to invoke "spontaneity just like a child" (仍是童子塗抹伎倆). In the end, he concluded: "The poems kept in my suitcase were composed in my spare time and during my vacations as an evocation of what I had suffered during my expeditions, which serve as evidence not only of my travel back and forth between South and North over the years, but also of my lacking in specialization and perseverance in learning" (今策中所存者，皆得之征途之假息，旅病之呻吟，蓋數年來南北往返，與無專學與不肯竟學之左券哉！). (fig. 3)

"No perseverance in learning" connotes here a number of meanings. In poetry, Chang was sampling various theories from before or during his time. He would not contradict the theory of "returning to the archaic" (*fu ku* 復古) propagandized by the Ho 何 brothers (Ho Liang-chun 何良浚 [1506-1573] and Ho Liang-ch'en 何良臣), who had been friends of his great grandfather.<sup>56</sup> On the other hand, he was more likely a believer of the left wing of Wang Shou-jen's 王守仁 (1472-1529) *Innate knowledge* (*hsin-hsüeh* 心學).<sup>57</sup> This new philosophy led to Li Chih's 李贄 (1527-1602) *Theory of Childlike Mind* (*T'ung hsin shuo* 童心說) which Chang followed in his writing. This theoretical sampling prevented him from being satisfied with his poetry. In religious practice, he began to doubt the effectiveness of his early exercise of fasting and meditation based on the T'aoist regulations.<sup>58</sup> All these factors, as well as the

56 See Ch'en's preface.

57 See both Ch'en and Chang's prefaces for *PCHT*.

58 *PCHT*, v. 3, p. 11b. He regretted by saying: 妄信神仙在絕粒。(In my childhood) "blindly followed the T'aoist masters to fast (whereas I was sick)."

unsatisfactory bureaucratic career in his middle age, drove Chang to take an increased devotion to antiquarianism. During and after his compilation of *PCHT*, the obsession of antique painting gave Chang an alternative and more comfort occupation. Chang was quite proud of having such an obsession, so as he professed: "This is the very scenery of my homeland, a pure bliss from the eternal world."<sup>59</sup>

Around the autumn of 1633, his antiquarian inquiry experienced something astonishing.

First of all, he made investments in the antique painting from the Chin to T'ang Dynasty, which to Ch'en Chi-ju and other Sung-chiang antiquarians would be a real shock. In theory, Chang was unlikely to have been ignorant of what Tung Ch'i-ch'ang had said about antique painting, for that leading connoisseur denied the possibility of the existence of so-called antique painting before T'ang.<sup>60</sup> Ch'en Chi-ju expressed the same opinion in *NKL*. Ch'en wrote: "I saw *Admonitions of the Instructress* (Nü shih chen 女史箴) in Su-chou, which has always been attributed to Ku K'ai-chih 顧愷之 (344-405). Actually it is a copy of the early Sung Dynasty. The admonitions were the calligraphy work of Emperor Kao-tsung 高宗 (1107-1187, r. 1127-1162), not of Wang Hsi-chih."<sup>61</sup> This observation clearly contradicted Chang T'ai-chieh's fantasy about Ku K'ai-chih and other great names in the early period.

Ironically, Chang consigned immovable property to invest in movable property: the former was Chang's land and house -- sought-after commodities in Sung-chiang society,<sup>62</sup> while the latter turned out to be a bunch of forgeries produced in Su-chou. It is sad to notice that Chang got pathologically obsessed with these forgeries. According to his *Introduction of the House of the Painting*

59 此本地風光，亦是洞天清祿。See Ch'en's preface.

60 Cf. *JTPC*, v. 6, pp. 1b-2a. Tung says: "The ancients are remote from us. Ts'ao Fu-hsing 曹弗興 [fl. 3rd century] and Wu T'ao-tzu 吳道子 [fl. 8th century] lived in the recent time, but we can see not a single brush stroke of their paintings. As far as the ancient painters like Ku K'ai-chih and Lu Tan-wei 陸探微 are concerned, how can we get to see their works? Therefore, in our discussion of paintings, we must rely on what we can see and use extant works as references. If a person attributes a painting to the ancients such as Ku and Lu, he is cheating others as well as himself" (古人遠矣。曹弗興、吳道子，近世人耳，猶不復見一筆。況顧陸之徒，其可得見之哉。是故，論畫當以目見者為準。若遠指古人，曰此顧也，此陸也，不獨欺人，是自欺耳). Ironically, Tung Ch'i-chang was by no means a serious antiquarian either. When he mentioned Ts'ao Fu-hsing, he perhaps meant instead Ts'ao Chung-ta 曹仲達, who lived in the sixth century which is closer to what his said about "the recent time."

61 女史箴余見于吳門。向來謂是顧愷之。其實宋初筆。箴乃高宗書，非獻之也。See *NKL*, v. 4.

62 *CCSCFC*, v. 7, p. 30a.

*Treasure (s)* (*Pao hui lou chi* 寶繪樓記), Chang had a new house built in Su-chou for keeping them. Regardless of the nature of *PHL*, the irony about this “newly built house” is that Chang’s real estate in Sung-chiang was transformed under the name of *ni ku* into a virtual house in Su-chou that existed only in fiction. No doubt, Chang was, after of all, a victim of his benighted connoisseurship of antique painting.

But how could Chang be so blind in his investments? In addition to possibly having been misguided by the so-called Hui-tsung legacy about the collection of the pre-Sung painting that he had learned from his tenure in Shang-tang, he also suffered from a serious eye problem. By checking his extant writings, we find that before and after he embarked on the fabrication of *PHL*, this physical limitation seemed to trap him into a pitfall from which he could not help to escape. Attached to *an Album of Painting Leaves from the Four Dynasties* (*Ssu ch’ao ho pi ts’e* 四朝合璧冊), Chang composed two colophons in the winter of 1631 and the early autumn of 1633. In his first colophon he told about the process how he had started to put forty-five pieces of masterpieces together in a studio named *Hall of Regaining Sight* (*Ch’ung kuang t’ang* 重光堂). This studio name indicates that, right before he resumed his public service in Chekiang, Chang wished his eyesight could get better.<sup>63</sup> In the second colophon, he reiterated how he retired again to Su-chou from Chekiang and rearranged the order of the album leaves.<sup>64</sup> He wrote: “Though I did not experience the loss of a beloved son [as Tzu Hsia 子夏 (ca. 5th B.C.) had], I do suffer the blindness [as Tzu Hsia did]. Whenever I think about this deficiency, I feel poorly, but work even harder with my writing. I had to dictate the colophon to Mr. Tung 董君 and ask him to write it down.”<sup>65</sup> (fig. 4) Here he simply called himself *a Man Survived from Blindness* (Mang Yu Tzu 盲余子). In that year, he dictated his preface for *PHL* to another assistant.<sup>66</sup> Obviously, this reliance on dictations proves the seriousness of his physical difficulty. (fig. 5)

63 *PHL*, v. 4, p. 9a.

64 His new appointment did not last long and, for some reason (according to Hsieh Wei, Chang was impeached, though Hsieh does not give evidence. p. 418.), he again retired to Su-chou in 1633.

65 *PHL*, v. 4, p. 9b. Tsu Hsia cried for his son’s death, which caused the sightlessness.

66 次年謝事歸里。無西河之感而有其疾。每一念及，終屬欠事。遂力疾據案，口占數語，浼赤明董君書之，聊識其始末云。In the Ch’ung-chen edition of *PHL*, Tung Yüan-hsi’s 董元熙 name was mentioned as a proofreader under each volume next to Chang’s. Tung Yüan-hsi’s *tzu* was ch’ih-ming 赤明, also a Sung-chiang native. In addition, Chang has another assistant Tung T’ien-feng 董天鳳, *tzu* I-yun 翼云, whose handwriting of Chang’s preface can be seen in a cursive script in the same edition.

Also obviously, Chang T'ai-chieh was blind in his investment in antique painting. But, contrary to his wrong-headed aspirations, he would hardly acknowledge it. In fact, his impaired sight very likely contributed to his fantasies about his specialized "expertise".

Here, Chang T'ai-chieh's pathological obsession further showed positive and negative aspects of his antiquarianism. In making forgeries through a systematic compilation of *PHL*, he did have a good sense of the stylistic development of antique painting. In a succinct generalization, Chang argued: "Painting from ancient times to the present day changes its style in the different periods: the T'ang painting prefers to be delicate, the Northern Sung to follow principles, the Southern Sung to emphasize style, and the Yüan to write ideas. Yüan painting succeeded the Sung, and was a vigorous continuation."<sup>67</sup> It is very clear that he valued the Yüan literati painting with a spontaneous manner over the Sung, especially the Southern Sung.<sup>68</sup> What is more, this pro-Yüan painting preference already formed the mainstream of the Chiang-nan art society in Chang's time.<sup>69</sup>

Living in a fantasy world conditioned by his impaired eyesight, Chang followed his *Childlike Mind* (*t'ung hsin* 童心) to be a *Man of Free Speaking* (*fang yan tzu* 放言子) -- as his own sobriquet described him, and this encouraged him to challenge any authorities, even the Neo -- Confucian master Chu Hsi 朱熹 (1130-1200).<sup>70</sup> This controversy quite typically embodied one of the most fascinating aspects in late Ming antiquarian practice. In the liberal environment of enjoying uninhibited speech during his time, Chang's brave attack on the canonized ideology creatively echoed Ch'en Ch'i-ju's rhetoric expression of *ni ku*. Around the mid 1590s, Ch'en Ch'i-ju expressed a cheerful attitude toward antiquarianism. "Yang Yung-hsiu's 楊用脩 [Yang Shen's 楊慎 (1488-1559) *tsu*] said: 'There is a word *ni* 昵 in *liu shu* 六書 [the six principles of making Chinese characters], which means intimacy.' I smiled and adopted [the combined phrase] *ni ku* [which means to be intimate with antiquities] as the title of the record [of my writings on art and connoisseurship]" (楊用修云：六書中有

67 古今之畫：唐人尚巧，北宋尚法，南宋尚體，元人尚意，各各隨時不同。然以元繼宋，足稱後勁。 *PHL*, v. 1, p. 12b.

68 Chang repeatedly emphasized the same opinion. See v. 1, p. 2b, 7b.

69 Cf. *JTPC*, v. 2. pp. 20b-21b.

70 Chang expressed such a radical opinions in his preface for *PHL*. Pao T'ing-po 鮑廷博 (1728-1814) -- a learned scholar and publisher who reprinted *PHL* in 1755 -- deleted that paragraph because he had zero tolerance of Chang's criticism of Chu Hsi.

妮字，軟纏之謂。乃笑以妮古名錄)。 Nearly forty years later, Chang T'ai-chieh's uninhibited speech reminds us of Ch'en's great appreciation of Yang Shen's causal writings and publications on antiquarianism.<sup>71</sup>

On the other hand, the negative aspect of Chang's antiquarian obsession is that it took a turn from collecting to forging. He seemed to lose control of his imagination and rapidly composed his twenty-volume catalogue of antique painting. He unfortunately fell into a pitfall by which a middle-aged Ch'en Ch'i-ju once was trapped. In his preface for *NKL*, Ch'en recalled such a nightmare: "When an aura of the antique leaves imprints in my sight and mind, it is so hard for me to get rid of them while sleeping and eating, and such suffering painfully becomes a sea of sheer bitterness. As an obsessed antiquarian, one would risk one's life to plunder people's treasure boxes, or to raid old tombs. The emperor like T'ang T'ai-tsung employed his wits in acquiring a piece of famous painting from a monk, and a scholar utilized a trick in obtaining valuables from a friend. Such madness only ended up with emptiness like floating clouds and chilly smokes" (然得之於目而貯之心，每或廢寢食不去。思則又翻成清淨苦海矣。夫癖於古者發肱篋冢墓，帝王而巧賺僧藏，文士而僥奪人好。及其究也，至化為飄風冷煙而不可得也。). Needless to say, obsessive attachment to *ni ku* definitely is destructive.

During his sojourn in Su-chou, Chang T'ai-chieh's antiquarianism was mixed with his blind investments and unfortunately with his new business of forging. Concurrent with the permanent decline of Wu-style painting, his compilation of *PHL* testifies to a booming market for forgeries in China.

#### IV

Chang T'ai-chieh dictated a preface to *PHL* in the autumn of 1633. Half a year later, in the mid-summer of 1634, he added the last colophon attached to a forgery of the Yüan literati master (Huang Kung-wang) in its last volume. In this colophon he again referred to the illness from which he had been suffering.<sup>72</sup> But what he did after 1634 remains obscure.<sup>73</sup> He seemed to have disappointed Ch'en Chi-ju who had wished to read the new poems pertaining Chang's travel to

71 Cf. Ch'ing scholars' commentary on Yang's publications such as *Chin shih ku wen* 金石古文 enlisted in *SKCSTM*, (Peking: Chung hua shu-ch'ü, 1965), v. 192, p. 1745.

72 *PHL*, v. 20, p. 10b.

73 Hsieh Wei argued that Chang did not die until the second to fifth year of Shun-chih 順治 Period (1645-47) of the Ch'ing Dynasty, but he did not give evidence. p. 418.

Chekiang Province.<sup>74</sup> And he was unlikely to request a preface for *PHL* from his senior antiquarian. Nonetheless, having examined all the three phases of his antiquarianism, we can now pause there and reflect on how this case study deals with the significance of antiquarianism.

Chang T'ai-chieh's case is significant for showing the dynamic characteristics as well as diversity of the literati life style. In tune with his times, Chang T'ai-chieh expressed his demand for free speaking. He was proud of himself for suspecting any existent standards, both ideological and scholarly. His unpleasant public service experience probably contributed to this urge. In a poem complaining of his frustrated political career, he called himself an Eccentric Man (*a chi-jen* 畸人) who "would not be restrained by boundaries of the mundane world, even in a downward situation."<sup>75</sup> In the summer of 1631, Chang further defined himself as an Eccentric Man from Sung-chiang (*Yün-chien chi-jen* 雲間畸人).<sup>76</sup> Such a sobriquet was rather popular in the late Ming, and could be found in quite a few cases of celebrities. Li Ma-tou 利馬竇 (Matteo Ricci 1552-1610), a Jesuit Missionary, presented *Ten Essays by an Eccentric Man* (*chi-jen shih-p'ien* 畸人十篇) to Emperor Shen-tsung 神宗 (r. 1573-1620) in 1600.<sup>77</sup> But what could make Chang T'ai-chieh an eccentric man?

As mentioned above, both Ch'en Chi-ju and Chang T'ai-chieh confessed that they were lacking a specialty in their middle age. Coincidentally, these two Sung-chiang natives found a common recourse in antiquarianism. Of course, both had already been developing this interest for years. Ch'en stated in *NKL* that he had casually taken notes on what he had seen of antiquities. Thus he considered himself "an historian of the ancients" (古人之史臣). As the most famous "recluse" of his time, Ch'en Chi-ju pronounced his playful attitude toward antiquarianism, or *ni ku*, to demonstrate his literati ideal. Some of Ch'en's contemporaries admired him greatly for enjoying this easy-going life style. Chang T'ai-chieh was one of them. Antiquarianism, so to speak, reinforced a fascinating dimension in their retiring life. Chang's investments in antique painting and the making of *PHL* transformed him from "a man without a specialty" to "an eccentric man from Sung-chiang." In this dramatic turn, his specialty and eccentricity became identical. In other words, his obsessive

74 See Ch'en's preface for *PCHT*.

75 畸人襟期寄物外，落魄寧爲世網拘。 *PCHT*. v. 3, p. 11b.

76 See his own preface for *PCHT*.

77 See *SKCSTM*, v. 125, p. 1080.

attachment to antiquarianism became a sign of his eccentricity.<sup>78</sup>

Having become a forger, Chang T'ai-chieh left behind him in *PHL* a number of intriguingly "inventive" enterprises.

One major enterprise of *PHL* was to find landmarks in both collecting and making art. Among them, Emperor Hui-tsung was such a landmark. Chang T'ai-chieh also took Chao Meng-fu as a favorite model. He praised Chao enthusiastically:

*The delicacy of Mr. Chao of Duke Wei's painting equaled that of Wang Wei, and his sophistication that of the Li father and son [Ssu-hsun 思訓 and Chao-tao 昭道]; his brushwork combined both the excellence of Ku K'ai-chih and Lu T'an-wei. Whenever he made copies of others, nothing was imperfect. He is not only a leader of Yüan painting, but also the single greatest painter in the past thousand years.*<sup>79</sup>

It is not far from the truth that Chao's virtuoso and all-embracing achievements were well recognized in the Yüan and Ming Dynasties by both literati and professional artists. In order to support his argument, Chang T'ai-chieh even forged a colophon of Tung Ch'i-chang attached to a so-called Chao Meng-fu's "Mountain Dwelling" (Shan chü t'u 山居圖).<sup>80</sup> Throughout *PHL*, Chao Meng-fu was cited as a forger of almost any antique painting before the Yuan Dynasty, either by using Chao's acknowledgement of them or using Chao's own painting in the manner of these ancient masters. Clearly, it was Chao Meng-fu's ideal of "returning to the archaic" that inspired Chang to fake antique painting, though Chao's "returning to the archaic" was not necessarily the same as antiquarianism.<sup>81</sup> In Chang's opinion, there was a gray zone with a lot of overlaps in artistic and antiquarian practices.

78 I am indebted to Professor Bai for helping to make this point. Cf. Qianshen Bai, *Fu Shan's World: the Transformation of Chinese Calligraphy in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003), p. 17. Also cf. Professor Shih Shou-ch'ien 石守謙, "You ch'i ch'ü tao fu ku -- shih ch'i shih chi Chin-ling hui hua ti i ko ch'ieh mien" 由奇趣到復古——十七世紀金陵繪畫的一個切面, in *Ku kung hsueh shu chi k'an* 故宮學術季刊, v. 15, no. 4 (Summer 1998), pp. 33-76. I want to thank Ms. Hsu Ya-hui 許雅惠 for sending me a copy of Shih's article.

79 趙魏公秀潤可方摩詰，婉然可方李氏父子，兼以顧陸，皆在其筆端。凡有摹倣，無不盡善。豈止領袖胡元，千年以來一人而已。PHL, v. 1, p. 11b.

80 *PHL*, v. 14, pp. 11b-12a.

81 For the discussion of "returning to the archaic", see Wen Fong 方聞, *Archaism as a 'Primitive' Style*, in *Artists and traditions: uses of the past in Chinese culture*, ed. by Christian F. Murck (Princeton, N.J.: The Art Museum, Princeton University: distributed by Princeton University Press, c1976), pp. 89-112.



In another of his enterprises, Chang used Chao Meng-fu to bridge the gap between the different periods. Chao's name appears significantly over 150 times in *PHL*. Thus, if there were no Chao Meng-fu, there would be no *PHL*. Among many Chao Meng-fu forgeries that he made, one album in volume fourteen titled "Ten Paintings of Chao Sung-hsüeh [Chao's sobriquet] in the Manner of the Noted Masters from the Chin to T'ang" (*Chao Sung-hsüeh fang Chin T'ang ming chia shih fu* 趙松雪仿晉唐名家十幅) is rather ridiculous. To this album, two colophons written by "Chao Meng-fu" were attached, one in 1352, the other 1377.<sup>82</sup> Even though he had been dead for thirty and fifty-five years, the colophons said Chao Meng-fu had painted this album for a young colleague in court. Such a breach of historical accuracy showcased how careless the forger was.<sup>83</sup> Absurd as they were, what really mattered was that all the paintings were in the manner of the greatest artists in the Six Dynasties and T'ang time. And all the "original pieces" the style of which Chao had followed were eventually in Chang T'ai-chieh's own collection and could be found in *PHL*! This deception is not simply a matter of faking Chao Meng-fu, but of promoting the forgeries attributed to much earlier periods.

A third enterprise of *PHL* was Chang T'ai-chieh's promotion of the forgeries of Sheng Mao 盛懋 -- a professional painter of the Yüan Dynasty.<sup>84</sup> Compared to Tung Ch'i-chang's biased opinion of the same painter,<sup>85</sup> Chang's choice seemed to be rather balanced. He put this least respected painter among the great names of Yüan literati and described one of Shen's best works equal to that of the Four Masters of the late Yüan. He valued him with certain reservations: "Shen came from a family of professional artists, but Tzu-chao 子昭 [Shen's *tzu*] is the best [among the professionals]. He can synthesize the marvelous merits of the paintings of the T'ang and Sung, absorbing the salient points of various schools and showing his own strength. But it is hard to avoid the problem of imitating others and giving up one's own family heritage."<sup>86</sup> The

82 In his *Chao Meng-fu hsi nien* 趙孟頫系年 (*A Biographic Chronology of Chao Meng-fu*), Jen T'ao-pin detected this fault, though, ironically, he took *PHL* as a reliable source in writing some other entries (Cheng-chou : Ho-nan jen min ch'u pan she, 1984), p. 220.

83 In this case, we can probably understand why he criticized Chu Hsi's impact on Yüan scholarship. In his view, the Yüan scholars were too bookish. Of course, Chang's opinions are always self-contradictory. In certain circumstances, he would think that some literati were not well-thought in their writing of poems. Wu Chen was an example in this regard.

84 Cf. Sandra Jean Wetzel, "Shen Mou: The Coalescence of Professional and Literati Painting in Late Yuan China," *Artibus Asiae*, v. LVI, no. 3 /4 (1996), pp. 263-290.

85 Cf. *JTPC*, v. 6, p. 38a.

86 盛氏原系專門之學，而子昭尤稱白眉。其繪事能綜唐宋之妙。然正為欲兼眾美而獨擅之，所以不免步趨隨人，而自棄家珍也。*PHL*, v. 1, p. 12ab.

promotion was probably due to the fact that Sheng was a skillful imitator, if not a forger, of ancient and contemporary painters, including Chao Meng-fu, in both meticulous and spontaneous styles. In his seeking for antique painting of the earlier periods, Chang T'ai-chieh often saw copies, if not forgeries, of old masters very possibly by the professional copiers like Sheng Mao. In volume eighteen of *PHL*, Chang also included "ten paintings of Sheng Mao for Yüan K'ai 袁凱 in the manner of the early masters."<sup>87</sup>

From Ch'en's *ni ku* to Chang's obsession with *ni ku*, we see the dark side in the paradox of this case study -- their engagement in sloppy antiquarianism and other disciplines. Ch'en Chi-ju's casualness in this respect was infamous in his many lucrative publications. His *NKL*, if compared to Ts'ao Chao's *KKYL*, was lacking well-defined categories. Chang's *PHL*, on the contrary, was well-conceived, but, sadly enough, had little basis in fact.<sup>88</sup> From the evolution of Chang's antiquarian practice, we can detect where Chang got such a seemingly coherent structure in *PHL*. His implausible fabrication of the prose and poetry of Yüan painters and collectors demonstrated that he had acquired an extraordinarily deep knowledge of Yüan paintings and poetry, though he was less than mindful of the accuracy of basic facts. It is true that *PHL* represented the poorest antiquarianism in the Ming-Ch'ing period, if fabrication of a catalogue was not considered as a crime as it would have been by European antiquarians. Nevertheless, in this catalogue, Chang T'ai-chieh was quite honest in sharing with his readers both the good and bad lessons that he had learned from his unusual experiences. He taught these lessons in explanatory notes, and his introductory information was certainly a rare documentation of how an official-scholar embarked on the business of forgery.

It is quite a mystery why Chang alienated himself from the Sung-chiang community after he retired from Shang-tang. But from his alienation, we are reminded of the aforementioned confrontation between the Wu and Sung-chiang painting schools.<sup>89</sup> With this conflict of taste and interests, we can compare what Ch'en Chi-ju did with Chang. In *NKL* Ch'en mentioned that he had purchased a copy of Chao Meng-fu's "A Water Village" (Shui ts'un t'u 水村圖) made by Wen Cheng-ming in the former Wang Shih-ch'en's 王世貞 (1526-1590) collection. Having told where he got it, he commented that was "exactly like

87 盛子昭爲袁凱傲古十幅 *PHL*, v. 18, p. 11b.

88 As Lowell points out, "The lack of such information as dimensions, materials, seals, and so on, makes the text hopelessly inadequate as a catalogue." p. 30.

89 Cf. note 11.

what Chao painted.”<sup>90</sup> Surely Ch'en had a good eye; he could tell the copy from the original. Further, Ch'en suggested that Chao Meng-fu would be an ideal model for the leading Wu School masters. In *PHL*, connoisseurship was not in Chang's agenda except for the necessity of exploiting it in his fabrications. The truth is, he would probably be unable to tell such a difference himself. Whenever connoisseurship was in question, his words were always elusive. In volume thirteen, he faked a scroll of landscape named “A River Scene with High Cliff” (*Ch'ung-chiang tieh chang t'u* 重江疊嶂圖) attributed to Chao Meng-fu. Possibly an early copy under the same title, it is now in the collection of the National Palace Museum, Taipei.<sup>91</sup> Chang perhaps saw or heard about this piece in Chang Ch'ou's 張丑 (1577-1643) collection in Su-chou,<sup>92</sup> but the forgery contained a date and colophons that were totally different.<sup>93</sup> An amusing device to authenticate his forgery was to relate it to the collections and connoisseurship of Wu School masters. In a spurious colophon attributed to Wen Cheng-ming attached to the same scroll, Wen stated that he had seen this very piece -- “A River Scene with High Cliff” -- in Shen Chou's 沈周 (1427-1509) place. Such interlocking relationship not only showed how Chang utilized every detail of his entry as a relevant component of the fictitious *PHL*, but also exemplified the problematic nature of most connoisseurship practiced in Su-chou. With his physical limits, Chang T'ai-chieh could not effectively exercise connoisseurship by using his eyes. Instead, he had to depend mostly on hearsay about the “masterpieces” from Su-chou collectors.

Chang T'ai-chieh never knew his great grandfather's Su-chou friends in person, but that family tie to Su-chou's elite society served as a foundation for T'ai-chieh to place himself as an “insider”. This image could deceive the readers of *PHL*. What is even worse, *PHL* was conceived as based upon the collections

90 如出趙手。 *NKL*, v. 2.

91 James Cahill, *An index of early Chinese painters and paintings: T'ang, Sung, and Yüan*, (Berkeley : University of California Press, 1980), pp. 248-249. It has an inscription of Chao Meng-fu on February 6th, in the seventh year (1303) of Ta te 大德 period. “Colophons and poems by Yu Chi 虞集, Wu Kuan 吳寬, Chou Tien-chiu 周天球, Shen Chou, Wang Shih-chen and others. Close copy?”

92 Several later Ming collectors had catalogued this scroll. Cf. Chu Tsun-li's 朱存理 *T'ieh wang shan hu* 鐵網珊瑚, reprint. (Taipei: Han hua wen hua shih yeh, 1972), v. 2, p. 21; Chang Chou, *Ch'ing he shu hua fang* 清河書畫舫, (*Ch'ih pei ts'ao t'ang pen* 池北草堂本), v. 10. p. 48; Chang Chou, *Nan-yang ming hua p'iao* 南陽書畫表, (*Ts'ang hsiu shu wu pen* 藏修書屋本), p. 7.

93 Instead of having a short inscription with the date and signature, Chang fabricated a long colophon of Chao dated on September 4th, in the year of Wu-wu 戊午 (1318) of the Yan-you 延祐 Period. Fake colophons that followed were attributed to Teng Wen-yüan, Wu Chen, K'o Chiu-ssu, Yu Ho, Huang Kung-wang, Wang Meng, Yüan Kai, and Wen Cheng-ming.

of two Su-chou lesser collectors Hsü Chen-ch'ing 徐禎卿 (1479-1511) and Wang Ch'ung. Being a talented artist inside Wen Cheng-ming's circle, Wang Ch'ung was famous for his small-size regular script calligraphy and landscape painting in the manner of a Yüan master Huang Kung-wang. It was on this account that T'ai-chieh considered Wang Ch'ung as perhaps one of the most influential antiquarians of the Ming Dynasty. His intention to promote Wang was self-evident. Both Hsu and Wang were contemporaries with Lu Chih whom Tung Ch'i-chang mentioned, so the forgeries that Chang catalogued in *PHL* were significant in revealing the special demand of the booming commercial life in Chang's time.

In addition to a short-term negative effect on sloppy antiquarianism, *PHL* had a long-term destructive impact on the market for forgeries in Su-chou and elsewhere. Shao Ch'ang-heng 邵荃衡 (1637-1704) later on described in his delightful poem on "Bogus Antiques" what he saw there: "In old Su-chou, at Ch'ang-men 閘門 the city gate, /Many shops stand neatly in rows like fish scales. /Among the most numerous are antique stores. /Let's see what works of calligraphy and painting are in store. /Wang Hsi-chih is represented by look-alike 'iron-stones', /Chu You 朱繇 is called Wu Tao-tzu 吳道子...../How amazing that the world of brush and ink could be so commercialized by a few unethical merchants!"<sup>94</sup>

In *PHL*, the forgeries tell the stories of what the Su-chou art market demanded. "Fakes are," as Mark Jones points out, "before all else, a response to demand, an ever-changing portrait of human desires. Each society, each generation, fakes the thing it covets most. They are buying an illusion -- the illusion of status, of belonging, of success, conferred by the fraudulent reproduction of a famous name. ....If the market concerned is in antiques, however broadly defined, the fakes produced for it will reflect its demands more accurately than the genuine works traded in it. The former mirror the perceived desires of collectors; the latter may pass unchanged through their hands."<sup>95</sup> Chang's passion to fake Chao Meng-fu in particular satisfied the craze for that master of literati painting.<sup>96</sup> Moreover, through Chao's multi-faceted painting

94 Quoted from Clunas, p. 111, who uses English translation by Wai-kam Ho 何惠鑒. I have not read the original text.

95 Mark Jones with Paul Craddock and Nicolas Barker, ed. *Fake? The Art of Deception* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), p. 13.

96 Cf. an observation made by a lesser master Shen Hao 沈顥 from Su-chou on this preference. For Shen's quotation and its English translation, see Cahill, *Distant Mountain*, p. 30.

style and Chao's ideas and practice of "returning to the archaic", Chang's forgeries made a difference in stimulating and therefore fulfilling collectors' appetite for older masterpieces.

## V

*Now the use of ni ku (being mired in antiquities 泥古) is exposed,  
For collectors have already been cheated for nearly two hundred  
years.<sup>97</sup>*

The High Ch'ing critic Wu Hsiu made a now widely accepted criticism when he adopted the phrase *ni ku* (being mired in antiquities) to satirize blind antiquarian pursuits. This conception is equivalent to Chang's pathological obsession with *ni ku* (being intimate with antiquities). In our discussion of the significance of antiquarianism, Wu directed us to analyze how antiquarianism had led most collectors to feel lost in a perplexing situation. Considering the fact that Wu might not have had access to Chang's *PCHT*, we understand why he did not acknowledge the significance of antiquarianism as it had attracted official-scholars like Chang T'ai-chieh as part of their own accomplishment. The unpleasantness of Chang's political career, the deterioration of his eyesight, the dissatisfaction of his previous intellectual pursuits like poetry, all led him to antiquarianism in an easy-going manner. Even in making forgeries he experienced a new sense of self-realization. He seemed to have envisioned that it would not be *PCHT* -- the anthology of his poems, which was only one of thousands of its kind, but *PHL* -- the first systematical compilation of fake paintings in the "rare art tradition" ever that would make him known in history, regardless of its notorious reputation.

Finally let us show one more intriguing example before we close this case study. Following a fake colophon of a Yüan master Wu Chen, Chang T'ai-chieh commented in *PHL* that Wu was famous for painting landscape and his calligraphy also followed Wang Hsi-chih's style. "But his poetry was lacking in consideration."<sup>98</sup> This opinion was shared by Ku K'ui-kuang 顧奎光 (1694-1720) who included one of Wu Chen poems in his *Addendum of the Selections of Yüan Poetry* (*Yüan shih hsüan pu i* 元詩選補遺) in 1751. Ku said: "Wu's poems on paintings are mostly mediocre, but the opening of this poem is excellent."<sup>99</sup>

97 可知泥古成何用，已爲人欺二百年。Cf. note 51.

98 惟題詠少覺率意耳。 *PHL*, v. 8, p. 28b.

99 In its original edition, v. 6. Chang's poem can be found in *PHL*, v. 9, pp. 5b-6a.

The problem is, he had not slightest idea that this very poem was a forgery made by Chang, a mistake that his predecessor Ku Ssu-li 顧嗣立 had also made in compiling *Selections of Yüan Poetry* (Yüan shih hsüan 元詩選) in which many fake poems attributed to Wu Chen from *PHL* were included. Ironically, in a brief biographical note of Wu in his *Selections*, Ku Ssu-li made fun of Ch'en Chi-ju's *Biography of Wu Chen* (Mei hua an chi 梅花庵記) for its mistake about Wu's birthday. Further, he quoted Ch'ien Ch'ien-i's 錢謙益 (1582-1644) criticism of Ch'en's scholarship, and caricature of Ch'en as "a man pretentiously being a hermit, mingling with men of letters and posing as a lover of culture" (裝點山林, 附庸風雅。). "This is," Ku emphasized, "the only judgment that history can ever offer!"<sup>100</sup>

We are not sure whether there is an "historical judgment" about Ch'en Chi-ju's scholarship. As stated in his preface for *NKL*, Ch'en smartly offered some brilliant historical insights into being an antiquarian even though his concept of *ni ku* is no more than a rhetorical strategy.<sup>101</sup> If Ch'en Chi-ju's writings were so unacceptable, how about those of Chang T'ai-chieh? Both Ku Ssu-li and Ku K'ui-kuang seemed to believe in Chang's *PHL* much more than they did in Ch'en's writings, then what can we say about Ch'en's reservations about Chang's antiquarianism? Despite the different responses toward Ch'en and Chang from artistic and literary circles,<sup>102</sup> we see how they also had manipulated the past in their own ways. Just as Ch'ien Ch'ien-i and Ku Ssu-li had accused Ch'en for his sloppy works, Wu Hsiu and other scholars detected the deceptions of *PHL*. But, as Chang's *PHL* fooled quite a few distinguished scholars of Yüan poetry in the Ch'ing Period, nobody in the same period ever questioned that the Theory of Southern and Northern Schools advocated by Tung Ch'i-ch'ang and Ch'en Chi-ju had any basis in historical fact. Such a fascinating story of Chang

100 爲千古定評矣。Yüan shih hsuan, II, (Peking: Chung hua shu chü, 1987), p. 710.

101 Cf. Ch'en's preface for *NKL*: "As for a collector, he takes great care of treasures in a good place and hands them down to later generations: he shall be called an official loyal to the ancients. As for a connoisseur, he distinguishes the genuine from the fake and the good from the bad with minute carefulness: He shall be named the critical censor of the ancients. I have no specialty except keeping records of what I have seen. Though these are "mere words" (*k'ung yen* 空言), shall I not be called an historian of the ancients?" (收藏家緘肩封閉傳之後世, 可謂古人之功臣。賞鑒家批駁其真偽醜好, 窮秋毫之遁情, 振夏虫之積瞋, 可謂古人之直臣。余無長能, 見而輒記之。此雖托之空言, 亦不可謂非古人之史臣也。)

102 In literary circle, the problem of *PHL* was not recognized until Luo Chen-yü 羅振玉 (1864-1941) revealed the truth in 1916. See Luo Chen-yü Wang Kuo-wei wang lai shu hsin 羅振玉王國維往來書信 (*Correspondences between Luo Chen-yü and Wang Kuo-wei*), (Peking: Tung fang ch'u pan she, 2000), pp. 122-123.

T'ai-chieh and his contemporaries tells us much about the significance of antiquarianism in late Ming. Their exciting yet controversial antiquarianism, after all, constituted a chapter in a living literati tradition. In this chapter, Chang T'ai-chieh was certainly not alone in pursuing his antiquarian interests. His pathological obsession with *ni ku* exceptionally exemplified the trend of collecting of antique painting and the making of forgeries. We can still feel its positive and negative legacy in our time. Chang T'ai-chieh's antiquarian practices were, therefore, something more than a single fabrication of *PHL*: they were but part an easy-going life style greatly facilitated by a prosperous commercial culture in early modern Chinese society.

Having drawn a more objective and comprehensive picture of Chang T'ai-chieh's antiquarianism, we can address more clearly issues such as the significance of antiquarianism in his time. Given that Chang Yen-yüan 張彥遠 -- "the father of Chinese art history" -- had already defined the significance of art collecting around 847 C.E., then, why should Chang T'ai-chieh -- "the father of the systematic forgery of antique painting" -- be bothered by his problematic antiquarian practices? Chang T'ai-chieh's activities were nothing but an eccentric reiteration of Yen-yüan's advocacy of being a literate in a most carefree manner:

*If I do not do something useless, how can I enjoy this short life?* <sup>103</sup>

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103 若復不爲無益之事，則安能悅有涯之生？Chang Yen-yüan, *Li tai ming hua chi* 歷代名畫記 (*A History of Famous Painting in the Consecutive Dynasties*), edited and annotated by Yu Ch'ien-hua 俞劍華 (Shanghai : Shang-hai jen ming mei shu ch'u pan she, 1963), v. 2. p. 47.

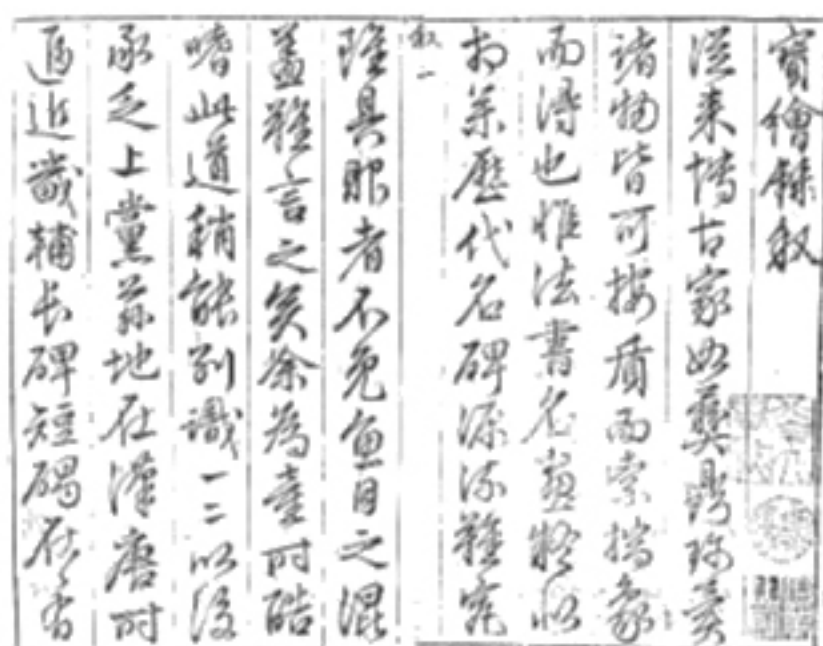


Fig. 1. A page from Chang T'ai-chieh's Preface for PHT, Ch'ung-chen edition, Peking University Library.



Fig. 2. A page from Chen Ch'i-jr's Preface for PCHT, Ch'ung-chen edition, Cho-sh'ang Library.





Fig. 3. A page from Chang T'ai-chih's Preface for PCH.



Fig. 5. A page from Chang T'ai-chih's Preface for PHL.



Fig. 4. A page from PHL.



Fig.6. Chao Meng-fu "Ch'ang-ching T'ieh-hung tu" (A River Scene with High Cliff). Handscroll, ink on paper, 284 cm X 1764 cm. Signed, dated 1303, National Palace Museum, Taipei.