

The Lyrical Resonance Between Chinese Poets and Painters: The Tradition and Poetics of Tihuashi. By DAAN PAN. Amherst, N.Y.: Cambria Press, 2010. xvii, 415 pp. \$124.99 (cloth).
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Daan Pan's masterful and important study is an extremely rewarding read, even an eye-opening one, for all who are interested in traditional China's literati culture and the place of literati painting within it. Pan's excellent translations of numerous *tihuashi* (poems written on paintings), along with his incisive and nuanced commentary, show us that painting occupied a central role in literati culture, and was at times even instrumental in that culture's development. On the assumption that literati painting cannot be understood without attention to contemporary literary theory, Pan describes major stages in the history of both literati painting and poetics, and suggests stylistic developments in *tihuashi* themselves. After the fourteenth century, when many *tihuashi* began to physically occupy the surfaces of paintings, the calligraphic style in which they were inscribed could also inspire new developments in painting and poetry. The depth of insight that this book provides into the increasingly complex interrelations between the "Three Absolutes" (*sanjue*: poetry, painting, and calligraphy), especially between the first two, far surpasses any previous English-language study of the subject.

The book is divided into two parts. Part 1 presents a detailed and well-documented critical history of *tihuashi* from Du Fu (712–70) to Zheng Xie (1693–1765), while part 2 discusses the poetics of *tihuashi* over the same time span. Pre-Tang and post-Qing developments are treated in the introduction and afterword, respectively. To this reviewer, the book's two main parts are not clearly distinguishable in subject matter; but this is a point about which Pan may not be too concerned, given his theoretical embrace of both "holistic" (p. 190) and critical fuzziness as positive forces in the literati tradition. It would seem a tall order to conceptualize a history of the *tihuashi* as a discrete component of Chinese literary and artistic production, since *tihuashi* have varied greatly in function and content over the centuries, and they have also been informed by specific and largely unknowable circumstances due to their implied bond with the (usually) no-longer-extant paintings for which they were originally written. Pan claims, however, that such a historical study is indeed very possible, as well as worthwhile and necessary. He builds his study upon a conviction that, within the context of "the holistic values unique to traditional Chinese aesthetics, in which interartistic mutuality and unity are of central significance" (pp. xii–xiii), *tihuashi* occupy a position equal in status to their source paintings, if not higher. For this reason, they need to be approached as elements of a distinct literary subgenre rather than as appendages to other works, and they can reflect literary and artistic creativity as fully as do any stand-alone poems, or as do the paintings they accompany. Such a parity between paintings and *tihuashi* as works of art, we are led to conclude, undermines the value of *tihuashi* as informants on their source paintings, but unleashes their potential as literary and cultural expressions in themselves.

Pan agrees with art historian Yu Jianhua's remark that the poetic form in which *tihuashi* are written limits their usefulness in painting criticism, but he sees Yu's complaint as largely beside the point. Describing *tihuashi* as a "worthy complement to formal Chinese art criticism and art history," Pan continues by noting that "traditional Chinese scholarship itself in these two areas is marred by obscurity, ambiguity, and inconsistency of the written discourse" (p. xiv). Furthermore, it becomes clear in what follows that Pan finds such ambiguity to be a fertile source for the literati tradition's constant vibrancy and potential for redefinition. This conviction of Pan's does no damage to his critical acuity. In his chapter on Su Shi's poetics, for example, Pan offers much-needed clarity to the problem of Su's famously vague, and largely misunderstood, poetry-painting analogy, while at the same time embracing the "fuzzy poetics" (p. 259) of Su Shi as a central mode of Su's theory. Pan also compares Su's ideas with Western theories of ekphrasis, and with Gotthold Lessing's theory of "poetic pictures" (in his *Laocoon: An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry* [1766], translated by Ellen Frothingham [New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1969]): while both of these latter envisioned painting as a mimetic art, Su's analogy did not pursue actual pictorialism in poetry and painting, but rather stressed "the two arts' capability to signify ad infinitum beyond the surface text, the attainment of which has almost become a sine qua non in literati aesthetics" (p. 260). Yet in spite of Su's implied desideratum, his actual poems, including those about paintings, allow for no such open-endedness, for their discursive elements "tend to impose a closure on the signifying process, thus undermining the signifying subtlety and potentiality of the text" (p. 237).

Interesting observations like this are found throughout Pan's study. As with all books, there are a few flaws in fact and language. In some chapters, one is inundated with an overabundance of material, raising the question of whether more conciseness would have been possible. Yet had the contents been reduced, we would be deprived of this cornucopia of examples at our fingertips. Far outweighing any flaws is the book's comprehensive sweep combined with informed commentary. The proximity of Chinese texts to their fine English translations is also very welcome.

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Strong Society, Smart State: The Rise of Public Opinion in China's Japan Policy. By JAMES REILLY. New York: Columbia University Press, 2012. xv, 331 pp. \$50.00 (cloth).

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Given China's growing importance in global politics and its rapidly changing society, the book under review presents a timely study addressing a critically important topic: societal influences on the state's foreign policy making. The