The Becoming of a Master: Qiu Ying’s Relationship with the Literati Society and the Market

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Introduction

Qiu Ying 仇英 (1494-1552) is one of a kind and a mystery in Chinese art history due to the fact that Qiu Ying himself did not leave any detailed source of writing about his life and work. However, this issue has not affected the mass popularity of his works from time to time. He is considered one of the most successful professional painters in Chinese art history, and was one of the most beloved painters during the Ming dynasty. Not to mention quite a number of exhibitions and retrospectives of his paintings were held in China and Taiwan in recent years.

Literary Review

Even though Qiu Ying is one of the fundamental painters in the art history of China, only few scholars have devoted themselves to studies and discussions that try to reveal his puzzled archival background. Ellen Johnston Laing is one of the few art historians who has paid great attention to the artistic career of Qiu Ying in a social aspect regarding his relationships with his major patrons. In her article “Sixteenth-Century Patterns of Art Patronage: Qiu Ying and the Xiang Family”, she discusses about Qiu Ying’s long term relationship with one of his major patrons Xiang Yuanbian 項元汴 (1525-1590) and others in the Xiang family. She also writes about Qiu Ying’s other patrons in “Ch’iu Ying’s Three Patrons,” and Qiu Ying’s Other Patrons.

Unlike his contemporaries of the Four Masters of Ming, very few books have been exclusively about Qiu Ying. Shan Guolin’s book Zhongguo ju jiang meishu congshu, Qiu Ying 中國巨匠美術叢書，仇英 is one of the few examples. However, the book has relatively less content compared to books about the other three masters. His book only provides a brief

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4 Shan Guolin, Zhongguo ju jiang meishu congshu, Qiu Ying (Beijing: Wenwu chuban she 文物出版社, 1998).

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underlines refer to grammatical mistakes or awkward expressions

briefly introduce your main thesis statement.

Summarize Liang’s main arguments and explain how her articles are relevant to your research
introduction into the life of Qiu Ying and connoisseurships to some of Qiu Ying’s most famous works.

National Palace Museum in Taipei has published a series of books called *Ming si jia zhuan: Shen Zhou, Wen Zhengming, Tang Yin, Qiu Ying* 明四家傳: 沈周、文徵明、唐寅、仇英 by Wang Jiacheng 王家誠 elaborating on the archival history of the Four Masters of Ming. Due to a lack of written data, Qiu Ying plays a minor role in the series of books while Wen Zhengming 文徵明 (1470-1559) dominates most of the content.

Other references related to Qiu Ying are mostly brief research papers in single perspective, either on connoisseurship, social art history, or stylistics. Meanwhile, National Palace Museum has published a number of catalogues with accordance to their exhibitions with Qiu Ying involved, such as the catalogue regarding the special exhibition in 2014, *Four Great Masters of the Ming Dynasty: Qiu Ying* 明四大家特展：仇英.

**Research Question**

As the previous mentioned, most of the academic works about Qiu Ying are limited to a single approaching description. Therefore, this project aims to provide an inclusive answer to the reputation and definition of Qiu Ying’s artistic profession. The research question of this thesis focuses on how he has been defined and discussed in the literati society as well as on the market during his life and the period thereafter. In order to answer this question, the project is divided into three major sections: (1) Qiu Ying’s style, (2) his relationships with the literati, (3) his networks with his patrons.

**Structure**

1. State your theoretical framework
2. How do these three sections/chapters hold together to answer your main research question

The first chapter will pay attention to Qiu Ying’s capability of recreating antique paintings from styles of the Tang and Song Dynasties. His most identical works comparing to his contemporaries in the Four Masters of the Ming are the blue and green landscape paintings.

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6 *Four great masters of the Ming dynasty: Qiu Ying* (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 2014).
Firstly, during the Ming Dynasty, copying the Song style paintings was of importance for professionals. Qiu Ying has often been linked to the painters from the Tang and Song court styles. This link originates from inscriptions in his art works, and the criticisms of other painters and scholar-officials. For this reason, the relationship between Qiu Ying and these artists will be analyzed, as well as the definition of the blue and green landscape genre. This analysis will address his tributes to the former painters and the feedbacks related to these works.

The second chapter will focus on the relationship between Qiu Ying and the literati society. Qiu Ying maintained close connections with the major literati of his time. He even collaborated with some of these prestigious elites on multiple artistic creations. One of the most influential literati during the time was Wen Zhengming (1470-1559) who collaborated with Qiu Ying on several paintings. The research in this chapter will be based on the inscriptions written on Qiu Ying’s paintings in order to examine their relationships. Furthermore, references of the collaborations between Qiu Ying and others will also be consulted in this project. This analysis will provide insights in the reason why Qiu Ying’s works were greatly accepted and appreciated by the elite class.

To conclude, the third chapter will address the business nature of Qiu Ying’s networks on the market. The chapter will focus on the paintings that have been created during his residence at his patrons’ home, and on the relationships he had with his patrons. We know that Qiu Ying lived with his patron for years, while he worked for them and learned from their collections of paintings. From the archival datas, some of Qiu Ying’s paintings have been sold or commissioned at an amazingly high price. The project would emphasize on these expensive art works regarding their style and other issues in order to figure out why Qiu Ying’s paintings were appreciated and worshiped by these patrons.

Qiu Ying’s Style

In order to identify Qiu Ying’s uniqueness of style, we need to discuss the social background and the mainstream of painting styles during his time. The beginning of the Ming Dynasty known as the period of Hong Wu (1368-1398) was a disastrous period for scholar-
officials due to the harsh regime of the Emperor Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋 (1328-1398). Under his censorship over words and painting subjects, the court painters were relatively conservative. Therefore the mainstream of the academy was occupied by the court style paintings from the Song Dynasty. The academy in the Ming court was not as systematic as the well-structured academy in the Song court. Especially, during the period of the Song emperor Huizong 徽宗 (1082-1135), painters could reach a high courtly status. The academy paintings were popular to function as decoration for the high society and nostalgic tributes to their glorious history.

Emperor Hong Wu favored his officials from Anhui 安徽 and was suspicious of the people from Jiangsu 江苏, especially from the area of Suzhou 蘇州. Since the Wu area was considered a rival rebel power and the cultural center of China in the late Yuan Dynasty. Gao Qi 高啟 (1336-1373) was one of the most talented young men from the Suzhou city and a victim of the emperor’s suspicion. The poet and his friends wished to get rid of the Mongols during the Yuan Dynasty and were grateful to join the Ming court. However, they met their death shortly after served the Ming government in 1368. The literati class of the Wu area suffered disastrous suppression, as emperor Hong Wu cut short numerous lives of the most gifted and promising young painters. The elite class of the area was then revived by Shen Zhou and Wen Zhengming during the end of the fifteenth century. Shen Zhou was the founder of the Wu school of painting followed. The art of Wen Zhengming and his fellows served as basis for the principles on which this school was founded.

Of course, there were other literati painters working in the Ming Dynasty, but Shen Zhou and Wen

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7 James Cahill, *Parting at the Shore, Chinese Painting of the Early and Middle-Ming Dynasty* (Beijing: Sanlian shuju 三聯書局, 2009). 10-11


Zhengming were the ones who revitalized the Yuan traditions, by combining painting and poetry from Zhao Mengfu 趙孟頫 (1254-1322).

Qiu Ying (1494-1552) was often stated as the fourth place in the "Four Masters of the Wu School" also as the "Four Masters of Ming Dynasty". However, he would surpass his contemporaries concerning the genre of the blue and green landscape painting. First appearing in the history of Chinese art during the Wei and Jin Dynasties (220-589), the blue and green landscape genre soon developed into one of the major repertoires. With the revolutionary revise by Zhao Mengfu, the way Ming scholars practice paintings became more literati. Qin Ying’s contemporaries Shen Chou and Wen Zhengming played as prominent examples of how a literati painting should be created. Shen Chou’s works were less refined and spectacular, he paid more attention to the poetry and the playfulness of the design. Shen Zhou’s Ye zuo tu 夜坐圖 regards one of his most renown literati paintings. Knowing from Shen Zhou's inscription Ye zuo ji 夜坐記 on the upper part of the painting, disclosed that this painting was created during a night of insomnia. The article and the painting introduced Shen Zhou's thinking during his night of...

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insomnia, mentioning his observations during the night and his reactions towards them. The entire art work was private and intimate to himself. The style and design Shen Zhou adopted in this painting was originally from the landscape of the hermit during the late Yuan Dynasty. He intentionally avoided the professional painting style from the Song Dynasty. By avoiding the eye-catching colors and dramatic designs, Ye zuo tu returned to the simple and pure form of literati painting. On the other hand, Wen Zhengming, a pupil of Shen Zhou, and the specific example of a literati followed the idea of Zhao Mengfu which will be discussed later. For him, the colors on the painting were simply an associating tool to compensate literati paintings. Wen Zhengming’s famous painting Yu yu chun shu played tribute to the historical landscape of the Suzhou city. This fascinating art was used as a present for a parting friend. Elements of the blue and green landscape were applied in this piece, but intimacy and self-experiences of Wen Zhengming were that made this painting different from the decorative golden landscapes.

With the standard of an orthodox blue and green landscape, Qiu Ying would undoubtedly be the top jewel of the crown. In fact, Dong Qichang 董其昌 (1555-1636) praised him as the best of his kind in this category of painting within five hundred years.

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Therefore, Wen Taishi admired him greatly. Wen Taishi’s painting skills were not as exquisite as those of Qiu Ying.

Before Qiu Ying, the four well-known painters Li Sixun (李思訓; 651-716), Li Zhaodao (李昭道; 675-758), Zhao Boju (趙伯駒; 1120-1182), and Zhao Bosu (趙伯驌; 1124-1182) dominated the genre of blue and green landscape painting. Furthermore, the two Li became the representatives of this style. Unlike Qiu Ying who made a living as a professional painter from the poor, these four people belong to another extreme of social class. The two Li were relatives of the Tang Dynasty (618-907) royalty and were both generals in their time, meanwhile, sharing a significant similarity, the two Zhao were from the royal family of the Song Dynasty (960-1279). The blue and green landscape painting was a genre greatly appreciated by the nobility. In fact, the other name of this type, the golden landscape, could quickly explain this idea. This style was mostly involved with subjects of splendid palace architecture, subtle woods, and rocks, historical events, and characters. Zhang Yanyuan 張彦遠 (815-907) argued in his book *Lì dài míng hua ji* 历代名畫記 that “the two Li completed the splendidness of landscape painting and the fineness of technique after the beginning of the development had been started by Wu Daozi 吳道子 (680-740) 山水之變始於吳而成於二李。”

Three major highlights could conclude the essences of the blue and green landscape genre. Firstly, the vividness that exceeds reality. Tang Dynasty Emperor Minghuang 明皇 (685-762) complimented Li Zhaodao’s landscape: “The wall painting you painted was sp incredibly vivid that I could hear the sound of water at night. Indeed, it was a blessed masterpiece.

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卿所畫掩障，夜聞水水生生，通神之佳作也。”" Secondly, the splendidness and spectacle of the landscape, being exquisite but not vulgar. Thirdly, the blue and green and the goldenness related to the subject and the materials. The style is characterized by the broad use of the colors blue and green. The season depicted in these works was mostly spring and summer. The goldenness in Chinese is jin bi; jin either represents the splendidness of the painting or the golden outline used by the two Li, while bi could simply be the meaning of the word blue and green.

Unfortunately, during the Yuan Dynasty, the genre of blue and green landscapes nearly became extinct due to the rise of the genre of literati painting. Although Zhao Mengfu might not fit into every version of the framework of the Four Masters of the Yuan Dynasty, he was undoubtedly the icon of the literati class. Being a descendant of the Song royalty, Zhao Mengfu had a different taste than his ancestors. As the style of Ma Yuan (1160-1225) and Xia Gui (1195-1224) dominated the Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279), he praised the long-abandoned style of Dong Yuan (934-962), and Ju Ran (early Song period) for having antiquarium. He argued that the essence of a painting was the antiquarium. And that without it, no matter how refined the techniques and the colors were, the painting was sick.

The essence of painting is the antiquarium, without it, the art is simply right in the technique. Nowadays, people consider themselves masters by knowing how to use the lines and colors. However, they do not know that without antiquarium, their paintings are sick and cannot be admired. Although my work might look simple, experts will praise them for knowing the antiquarium within.

作畫貴有古意，若無古意，雖工無益。今人但知用筆纖細，傅色濃艷，便自為能手。殊不知古意既虧，百病橫生，豈可觀也。吾所作畫，似乎簡率，然識者知其近古，故以為佳。 17

17. Zhao Mengfu, “Zi ba hua juan 自跋畫卷,” Qīng he shuhua fang you ji 清河書畫舫 雞集
Being a distant relative to the Song royalty Zhao family, Zhao Mengfu was born in the worst timing. At the age of twenty-five, the Song empire was conquered by the Mongol. Having struggles with his identity and the willingness to save the traditional Han culture, he decided to serve the Yuan court. The monumental mountain landscape from the Northern Song style was considered a manifestation of the royal power, while the blue and green landscape represented the gloriousness of great fortune. These two genres were still appreciated by the aristocrats in the northern China, regardless of the fact that the Mongol nobles had a different taste of paintings than those of the Han culture. Zhao Mengfu’s idea of the ideal painting might have been delivered by his most famous painting *Que hua quise tu* 鵲華秋色圖. He did not use the complex design that was often practiced during the thirteenth century. Instead, he used a rather simple form related to *Wang chuan tu* 輦川圖 of Wang Wei 王維 (699-761) in the Tang Dynasty. Besides that, he used the style of Dong Yuan from the Southern Tang to create the trees and bushes in the painting. ‘Learn from the antiquarium’ is one of his major arguments in painting. However, this does not mean one should copy things from the past. One should recreate based on one’s understanding and interpretation of the antiquarium. Being a master of calligraphy, Zhao Mengfu interpreted antiquarium based on writing. In fact, he merely used any wash in *Que hua quise tu*, as the painting could be deconstructed into only few brush strokes. Zhao Mengfu’s theory of ideal antiquarium might have cured the issue for everyone who practiced the style of Ma Yuan and Xia Gui, and in doing so, were only creating paintings that were sick and merely repetitive works of...

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residual and dilapidated landscapes. Next to this, it also led to the domination of the literati painting.\(^{19}\)

With accordance to the near-extinction of the blue and green landscape genre during the Yuan Dynasty, Qiu Ying had to inherit the cultural heritage from the Tang and Song traditions. Later, these traditions became an important standard to the successors of this pattern.\(^{20}\)

Regardless of the fact that the original piece was long lost, one could still have a glimpse of the incredible techniques Qiu Ying mastered via his tribute to Li Zhaodao *Fang Li Zhaodao hai tian xia zhaoyu* (倣李昭道海天霞照圖). Wen Zhengming’s inscription for this painting plays as an evident proof for the exquisiteness of this work.

The entire sky and earth could be represented in inches of painted silk. Qiu Ying must have understood Li Zhaodao’s philosophy to the fullest to be able to reach this level of vividness, and to paint the world. This scroll is like the original piece of Li Zhaodao’s *hai tian xia zhaoyu*. The original piece was collected by the Tang family of the Wu zone. Lay Molin purchased it after asking for it from many people. With Qiu Ying’s devotion to this recreation, the fineness and brightness of it was said to be equivalent to the original painting. Lay Molin displayed these two masterpieces simultaneously, admired them for a long while and reached the cosmic meditation. Without considering the age of the silk medium, it was not possible to distinguish which one was from Li and which one was from Qiu. Presumably, with Shifu’s (Qiu Ying) skill of painting, the price of Qiu Ying’s work then surpassed Zhao Qianli (Zhao Boju) around Changan. With this tribute, later viewers could not only admire General Li Junior (Li Zhaodao).
This stunning tribute to Li Zhaodao fully manifested the reputation of Qiu Ying’s ability to recreate antique paintings. The village and sailboats were carefully depicted in details accompanied with trees and hills creating a naive living style. The painting was painted using a macro perspective focusing on multiple mountains. The mountains that occupied the painting were carefully designed and stacked in order to provide a sense of spectacle and magnificence. Finally, the blue and green colors were meticulously rendered giving the painting the feeling of aloof beauty. The painting not only played a role as luxurious decoration but also accessibility to the distant past.

Simply being an expert in making tributes and copying would not build Qiu Ying’s prestige. In fact, creativity was equally fundamental. Cahill argued that while using the techniques of Song paintings, Qiu Ying established a unique style that would never be confused with the actual Song works. Naturally, he founded a single, outstanding style of his own, concluded by observation on Song works. His style was obviously not the widely practiced literati style from that period. Therefore, Qiu Ying has suffered from biases of Chinese art critics for being possibly illiterate or at
least not great at writing. Ancient Chinese believed that one's writing represented one's personality thoroughly. Creativity requires strong characteristics. Therefore, creativity needs the intelligence of writing. Unlike his literati contemporaries emphasized on the antiquum, Qiu Ying managed different skills altogether. His tribute to *Qingming shang he tu* 清明上河圖 was an obvious example of combining the painting style of Chang Tseduan 張澤端 (1085-1154) with the blue and green landscape. Comparing Qiu Ying's work to the original art, his version was a recreation based on the blueprint of the original painting. In fact, the original piece did not contain the part from yamen 衙門 to jinming chi 金明池. Qin Ying’s version painted these residential buildings luxuriously. He created a larger scale of the size and structure of these buildings. In his version, the shops on the city avenue contain huge gardens at the back with many isles. These mansion-like buildings were a manifestation of the gorgeous Suzhou garden during his time. Meanwhile, the characters and shops also provided a peak to the material culture in the Ming Dynasty. He made the painting out of a 16th century Suzhou city instead of a 13th century Bianjing city 汴京. Adopting the precise structure of the original piece, Qiu Ying created a sense of vanity in his version by the splendid palace architecture around jinming chi, the fine clothes of the characters, and the additional blue and green

5. Hand scroll on Silk, 30.5 x 987.5 cm, “Qingming shang he tu,” by Qiu Ying. Liaoning Provincial Museum. Shenyang

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Qiu Ying also practiced subjects that were popular among the literati society. Based on the article *Chibi tu* 赤壁賦 from the prestigious scholar-official Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037-1101), *Chibi tu* 赤壁圖 became a common subject for paintings during the sixteenth century. Literati from the Suzhou area, such as Wen Zhengming, Wen Jia 文嘉 (1501-1583), Lu Zhi 陸治 (1496-1568) all painted in accordance with this poem. Painting based on literature subjects was an idea of the literati to make their works more poetic. This painting proved that Qiu Ying was also influenced by the Wu school literati paintings. Qiu Ying did not follow those literati fully but created this poetic subject in his own style which was more humane and vivid. The details in his version of the painting were more colorful and more refined than those of the others. The leaves and flowers on the cliff were painted with delicate dots accompanied with curly branches. The cliff was constituted with multiple layers of rocks and rendered using the colors of blue and green. Even the scholars and their servants on the boat were depicted accurately regarding the wrinkled drapery of their clothes.

To sum up, Qiu Ying’s style was greatly involved with the blue and green landscape genre that was abandoned during the Yuan Dynasty. His works provided his audience with a tour back to the old and glorious tradition in the Tang and Song Dynasties. With his incredible skills in painting

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23 Shan, *Zhongguo jujiang meishu congshu Qiu Ying*. 22-3

24 Shan, *Zhongguo jujiang meishu congshu Qiu Ying*. 8-9
he was able to recreate antique paintings from the past and was able to create subjects of his time while adopting the techniques of the blue and green landscape.

**Qiu Ying in the Literati Society**

Before addressing the relationship between Qiu Ying and the literati society, it should be discussed why the literati were so different from others and what the uniqueness of them was. The debate between the elegant and the vulgar was one of the major issues in Chinese art history. Not merely an academic discussion, it served as a fundamental element deeply rooted in the lives of the Chinese time after time. It was a dilemma having the consideration to define these two categories, since people’s value was quite subjective. Therefore, amounts of scholars tend to make the categorization based on the division of social classes. The taste of the elite and the upper class represents the elegant while the taste of the mundane and the lower class represents the vulgar. For instance, paintings of the famous Taoist deity Zhong Kui 鍾馗 would be classified into both two different categories because of the style adopted in the painting. The ones depicted with a more poetic or more gentlemen-like Zhong Kui were considered elegant and used for appreciation. Meanwhile, the more ugly and scary kind of Zhong Kui would be considered vulgar and served for religious purposes. Social classes could be easily defined with various standards. However, in order to strengthen these standards, the elite class needed to produce their own culture. If elegance is a kind of quality inherited in the culture, how should we separate the other parts from the section of the literati? There must be a standard that differentiated the elite culture from the public culture.

The structure of the elegant and the vulgar could be manifested by the idea of the taste of the elite and the taste of the mundane; this created more possibilities and interactions between the two social classes. The interflow and overlap of different social classes were of importance in this concern. Of course, the elites were aware of the public culture. However, for the sake of identifying

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their own culture, actions to belittle the public culture were undertaken. These measures
countenanced the anxiety of the elite towards the inevitable impacts from the public culture.26

Undoubtedly, the literati class was the most representative group of the elite class in the
history of China started after the Song Dynasty. These literati possessed the knowledge and
cultural heritage from their ancestors, and had the possibility to become government officials.
They were the cultured people, and they produced culture. Besides educational references, literati
were required to master cultural skills such as the Confucian six arts  六藝. With the same practices
and knowledge, the trend lead to mutual recognition and a value system. Finally, the concept of the
literati culture was constructed. While the literati refused to be assimilated into the public culture,
the public was eager to transcend to the upper class. In sum, the literati regarded not merely an
elite social class, but also a phenomenon that symbolized the mutual goal of the ancient Chinese
civilization.27

How is the debate on the elegant vs. vulgar relevant to your discussion
(professional vs. amateur) below?

Painting was a cultural technique that was greatly influenced by the elite class because it
was considered a requirement for the upper class. Furthermore, inherited from the Song and Yuan
literati, the Ming literati refined the standard and framework of literati painting mainly based on
Zhao Mengfu’s idea. With respect to the previously mentioned conflict between the elegant and the
vulgar, the debate in painting was slightly different. The relationship between professional painters
and the literati painters was more about the elegance and the transcended elegance. Based on
Dong Qichang’s criticism on Qiu Ying regarding the Zen Buddhism, one could be enlightened as a
Buddha practicing the literati painting styles. However, practicing the professional painting styles
would take more time like the path of a Bodhisattva.

When Qiu Ying was painting he was so concentrated that he could not hear the sound
of talking and the gathering like the ladies next door. Therefore, his practicing was like

26 Shih Shouchien, “Anxiety between Elegance and Vulgarity: Wen Zhengming, Zhong Kai and
Popular culture 雅俗的焦慮：文徵明、鍾馗與大眾文化,” Taisa Journal of Art History 美術史研究集刊
(Taipei: National Taiwan University, 2004), 307-339.
27 Ho Pingti, The Ladder of Success in Imperial China: Aspects of Social Mobility, 1368-1911 (New
a monk. After fifty years of practicing, he finally found that this school should not be
teaching. It was like Buddhist Zen; one needed to go through many obstacles to
become a Bodhisattva. Unlike practicing the styles of Dong, Ju, and Mi, one could be
enlightened as a Buddha immediately.

During the late fifteenth century, the professional painting style also known as the Zhe
School dominated the mainstream of painting in the court and the practices spread to Korea and
Japan. Similar to all professional paintings in various time periods, these works were greatly
influenced by the public. They matched the social expectations either in the aspect of politics,
religion, aesthetics, or social functions. They would represent royal power or family fortune to
match the taste of their audiences. James Cahill argued that the mainstream style of paintings
were changing over the years. Because the most important painters in the Yuan Dynasty were
mostly literati and scholar-officials, the literati style dominated that period. Due to the suspicion of
the emperor, the literati class was suppressed and the Zhe school of style originally from the
Southern Song court, was favored. After the literati society of Suzhou was revived, they decided
to follow the footsteps of the Yuan literati regarding the style of painting. Qiu Ying’s contemporaries
Shen Zhou and Wen Zhengming had significant impact on purifying the idea by taking a different
path from the professional painters. Shen Zhou argued that paintings should be a medium to
deliver self-expressions and the content should come from one’s heart. However, history has
revealed the fact that the two literati were both offering their art works for sale. Shih Shouchien
argued that Wen Zhengming was more independent-thinking than Shen Zhou, when creating
paintings. Although Wen Zhengming was involved with the selling of paintings, he was conscious


29 James Cahill, Hills Beyond a River: Chinese Painting of the Yuan Dynasty (Beijing: Sanlian

(Beijing: Renmin meishu chuban she, 1957). 707.
of avoiding the content and style of his paintings to be controlled by his patrons. Even when he was required to draw specific subjects, he refused to use patterns related to the professional painter and insisted on using his own style.³¹

Qiu Ying played an unique role with the overlap of both professional painters and literati painters. Unlike the two painters mentioned previously, he did not create his paintings based on self-expression, nor did he, based on his own spiritual cultivation. There was evidence about his relationships with his patrons and how they influenced him to paint certain works according to their needs. Furthermore, Qiu Ying did not devote himself to painting in merely the literati style or subjects like some of his contemporaries did. Instead, he mastered both the professional style and literati subjects in order to satisfy the market. Surprisingly, being a professional painter himself, Qiu Ying managed to build strong relationships with numerous literati. Above all, Qiu Ying's network with Wen Zhengming, one of the most influential and prestigious literati, and his family provided him with the ticket to the core of the elite class.

Surprisingly, Qiu Ying was from the low class of the society, regardless of his close connections with the elites. “Born from the poor, he made a living as a painter.”³²

Huang Chongxing 黃崇惺 (1829-1898). To sum up these references, Qiu Ying was possibly a porcelain painter and a part-time lacquerer in his early career.

It was Wen Zhengming who made the literati painting mainstream in the Ming Dynasty. During his period of time, painting became the major medium for the elites to form their culture and society. By creating, appreciating, gifting, and exchanging, the identity and culture of literati was produced in order to distinguish itself from the public culture. Wen Zhengming was a leading figure of the elite class in the Jiangnan 江南 area. Being recognized for his personality, reputation, and capability as a literati, he was considered the leader of the Wu School after Shen Zhou. Under his guidance, the Wu School soon became the most influential genre of Chinese art history. In other words, the literati had come to a consensus of what should be considered a literati painting.

Qiu Ying’s relationships with Wen Zhengming and other literati could date back to the first painting in his career. According to Cheng lan shi gu yuan cui lu 澄蘭室古緣萃錄 written by Shao Songnian 邵松年 (1848-1923), it was during the march of 1509 that Qiu Ying, Shen Zhou, Wen Zhengming, Tang Ying 唐寅 (1470-1524), and Zhou Chen 周臣 (1460-1535) co-painted the scroll of Taozhu tu 桃渚圖 in order to celebrate the 50th birthday of Sheng Taozhu 盛桃渚. The scroll was divided into four sections. While Qiu Ying and Tang Ying were in charge of the second section named Sheng Taozhu wan he tuxiang 盛桃渚玩鶴圖像, Qiu Ying was responsible for the figure and Tang Ying for the color.

Circumstances of Qiu Ying’s birth and death are not exactly known but


37 Shao Songnian, Cheng lan shi gu yuan cui lu. Vol. 2. 28-30

from the existing relevant materials can be concluded that he was merely sixteen years old at the time of this collaboration. Presumably, his brightness shined at an early stage to be able to collaborate with these prestigious literati.\(^{39}\)

Qiu Ying’s relationships with Wen Zhengming and the Wen family played a vital role in his career and dealing with the elite class. Peng Nian 彭年 (1505-1566) inscribed on Qiu Ying’s Louhan tu 羅漢圖, “Qiu Ying was appreciated by Wen Zhengming in his young age. 十洲少即見賞於衡翁。\(^{40}\)” This record showed that their friendship was built up during Qiu Ying’s youth in spite of their difference in age. Their relationship could be proved by many collaborations between the two masters. According to Guo yun lou shuhua ji 過雲樓書畫記 by Gu Wenbin 顧文彬 (1811-1889), Wang Zhideng 王穉登 (1535-1612) inscribed on Wen Zhengming’s Xiang chun tu 湘君圖, “Asked Qiu Ying to apply color on the painting and was not satisfied by the two versions he painted. Thus, he decided to paint it himself as a gift for Mister Wang Lüji 便仇實甫設色,兩兩易紙皆不滿意,乃自設之以贈王履吉先生。”\(^{41}\) When Qiu Ying created this painting, he was twenty-four years old and Wen Zhengming was forty-eight. Despite the fact that Qiu Ying failed to accomplish Wen Zhengming’s request, they still maintained close connections and collaborated on other works later.

With quantitative research of Qiu Ying’s paintings, Wen Zhengming and his relatives contributed to most of the inscriptions. In 1539, he inscribed on the Chun jiang tu 春江圖, Shuang jun tu 雙駿圖 in 1540, and tribute to Qingming shang he tu in 1541.\(^{42}\) In 1542, after Qiu Ying’s creation of Suzhou tu 蘇州圖, Wen Zhengming wrote down Wu du fu 吳都賦 for it. Both of them


\(^{40}\) Mi dian zhu lin chu bian 秘殿珠林初編, Vol. 9, 120


\(^{42}\) Liu Fangju 劉芳如, Figure Paintings of the Middle Ming Dynasty 明中葉人物畫四家特展(Taipei: National Palace Museum, 2000). 35.
worked together on *Xiao jing tu* 孝經圖 in 1544, with Qiu Ying finished the painting. After which Wen Zhengming inscribed the *Xiao jing* on it. Wen Zhengming also wrote an inscription on Qiu Ying’s *Zhong Kui tu* 鍾馗圖 during new year’s eve in 1543. There are more examples of their collaboration that cannot be dated, such as *Gong zhi tu* 貢職圖 and *Bi wu cui zhu tu* 碧梧翠竹圖.

In one of Qiu Yin’s early paintings *Wu zhu she tang tu* 梧竹書堂圖, Wang Chong 王寗 (1494-1533) wrote down “The outstanding accomplishment as Chang shi at Yexia and the illustrious talent in literature is brighter than the Phoenix. 常侍風流鄴下遺，英英文彩耀長離。” This poem manifested the great outcome and reputation Wen Zhengming earned during his career as government official at the capital. Peng Nian also inscribed “You have the best talent in literature within the Wu area; your beautiful writing was admired by all people. 吳中文藝屬君家，錦繡辭章世共誇。” Although these poems were not directly linked to Wen Zhengming in the content; he was the only person deserving all these compliments. As a result, this painting might have been a gift to Wen Zhengming. Wen Zhengming himself wrote “These years, I have never been to the capital in my dream. 年來無夢入京華。” which was referring to his retirement in 1526. The painting depicted a literati studying or meditating in his small studio, being surrounded by bamboo groves. Mountains, as well as waterfalls were painted in the back with the design to emphasize the studio. This early piece of Qiu Pei Jingfu 裴景福, *Zhuang tao ge shuhua lu* 壯陶閣書畫錄, Vol. 10 (Taipei: Taiwan zhonghua shuju 台灣中華書局, 1971). 685-686.
Ying used strokes, dots, and washes that were highly influenced by Wen Zhengming and Tang Ying. Another special collaboration worth mentioning is *Han lin Zhong Kui* 寒林鍾馗 which was originally considered to be painted by Wen Zhengming. As the master of the literati, Wen Zhengming tended to avoid subjects related to public interests and rarely painted large figurative works. Thus, this popular subject of Zhong Kui was definitely unusual according to his previous standards. The figure in this painting is relatively big considering the proportion of it. Most of the figures in his works were quite small compared to this one. In fact, most of them were used only as elements in his paintings. Only one figurative painting of Wen Zhengming exists in this standard which is the *Xiangjun xiang furen* 湘君湘夫人 painted in 1517. However, it is quite difficult to see the details of the face and the proportion of the body in this painting. The skills used in this painting were no match to the ones in the *Han lin Zhong Kui*. The dry strokes used in the *Han lin Zhong Kui* were the same as in other works with similar elements by Wen Zhengming. Qiu Ying being a professional painter, had to master various techniques and themes in order to fit customers’ needs. Analyzing the detailed depiction and style in this painting, one could conclude that this painting is probably painted by Qiu Ying. However, this figure is less narrative than Qiu Yin’s other works. Shih Shouchien argued that this practice was probably required by Wen Zhengming in order to make it less mundane.

Investigating Qiu Ying’s paintings, it can be concluded that more literati that maintained relationships with Qiu Ying, besides Wen Zhengming. Tang Ying, Zhu Yunming 祝允明

44 Shan, *Zhongguo juijiang meishu congshu Qiu Ying*. 4-5

45 Tang Ying and Qiu Ying co-painted *Sheng Taozhu playing with the crane* and *Ci mu shuang tu* 刺目雙圖. Tang Ying also inscribed on Qiu Ying’s *Donglin tu* 東林圖.
(1460-1526), Wang Chong, Lu Zhi, Wen Peng

(1497-1573), Wen Jia, Wang Guxiang

(1501-1568), Wen Boren, Peng Nian, Lu Shidao

(1514-1595) and more were all part of Qiu Ying’s networks according to the inscriptions on Qiu Ying’s paintings. The paintings with relatively more inscriptions regarded the ones with blue and green landscape paintings. As mentioned in

46 Zhu Yunming wrote *Dong lin ji* 東林記 for *Donglin tu* and inscribed on Qiu Ying’s *Mo Zhao Wenmin xie lao dan* 摺趙文敏寫老聃 and *Yu dong shao dan tu* 玉洞燒丹圖.

47 Wang Chong and Qiu Ying co-painted *Xi xiang tu* 西湘圖 and *Zhulin qi xian gao shi tu* 竹林七賢高士圖. He also inscribed on Qiu Ying’s *Yuan ju tu*, *Wu lin caotang* 梧林草堂, *Lanre Xuanji tu* 蘭若玄機圖 and *Bi wu cui zhu tu*.

48 Lu Zhi inscribed on Qiu Ying’s *Meiren chun si juan*, *Zuiwenting tu* 醉翁亭圖, *Meiren chun si juan*, and *Si ma tu* 食馬圖.

49 Wen Peng inscribed on Qiu Ying’s *Liu tan yu ting* 柳塘漁艇, *Lin Yuan ren Ni Zan xiang* 臨元人倪瓊像, *Fang Zhao Mengfu xie jing huan cha tu*, *Cang xi tu* 聶趙孟頫寫經換茶圖, *Chibi tu* 赤壁圖, and *Huija shiba pai* 胡笳十八拍.

50 Wen Jia inscribed on Qiu Ying’s *Yu tang chun se tu* 玉堂春色圖, *Meiren chun si tu*, *Fang Zhao Mengfu xie jing huan cha tu*, *Chibi tu*, and *Louhan tu*.

51 Wang Guxiang inscribed on Qiu Ying’s *Si ma tu*. He also received Qiu Ying’s *Zhong Kui tu* as gift.

52 Wen Boren inscribed on Qiu Ying’s *Meiren chun si juan*.

53 Peng Nian inscribed on Qiu Ying’s *Bi wu cui zhu tu*, *Gong zhi tu*, *Chun yeyan taoli yuan tu* 春夜宴桃李園圖 and *Chibi tu*.

54 Lu Shidao wrote down *Xian shan tu* 仙山賦 on Qiu Ying’s *Yun xi xian guan tu* 雲溪仙館圖 and *Xian shan lou ge tu* 仙山樓閣圖.

55 Zhou Tianqiu inscribed on Qiu Ying’s *Chibi tu* and *Zhang xia jiang can tu* 長夏江村圖.
In the first chapter, this genre was often associated with legends and historical events. Therefore, these literati often wrote poems related to legends and historical events on these paintings. Others might have written inscriptions about the relationship between them and Qiu Ying or between them and the person this painting was made for. Wen Zhengming inscribed how Qiu Ying depicted the legend on the painting and what kind of styles he had used for the painting *Yu dong shao dan tu*. Tang Yin wrote about the content of the painting, his relationship with Qiu Ying and that they learned from the same teacher on *Donglin tu*. Wang Chong wrote about the content of the painting and how it feels like to live in Qiu Yin’s painting *Yuan ju tu*. Lu Zhi inscribed a poem about the life of the lady depicted on Qiu Yin’s *Meiren chun si juan*. Wen Peng and Wen Boren both wrote a poem regarding the image of Qiu Yin’s *Meiren chun si juan* as well. Peng Nian made an inscription about Qiu Yin’s skills and styles adopted on his painting *Chun yeyan taoli yuan tu*. Lu Shidaow wrote the poem of *Xian shan fu* regarding the image created on Qiu Yin’s *Xian shan lou ge tu*. Zhou Tianqiu inscribed about the fineness of Qiu Ying’s techniques and the origin of his style on his painting *Zhang xia jiang can tu*. From these inscriptions we not only know the close connections between Qiu Ying and these literati but also how well his techniques and style was according to their compliments.

In accordance with existing records, Qiu Ying could barely write poetries and inscriptions. In fact, some argue that he was illiterate. Guo Huang pointed out that Qiu Ying’s signatures included various writing styles such as Chuan 篆, Li 隶, Xing 行, and Kai 楷. However, these handwritings were quite different. As a result, Qiu Ying might have had other people write these signatures and inscriptions for him. Regarding how important calligraphy was to literati in the sense of Confucianism (one’s writing represented one’s personality), it was impossible for literati or even educated painters to take this action. When analyzing Qiu Ying’s signatures and inscriptions, it can be assessed that he often used the word *zhi* 製 to show that the painting was made by him. Meanwhile, the other contemporary literati would not use the word *zhi*. Instead they would only

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sign with their names, and in some occasion, they used the word zuo 作 to clarify whom the painting was created for. The origin of the word zhi is related to craftsmen making clothes, and was generally used for crafting domestic objects rather than artistic creations. On the other hand, the origin of the word zuo is much more complex. It could mean ‘made’, ‘created’, or ‘be’. It is often associated with achieving a certain position, or creating an artistic creation like a song or image. Qiu Ying has also made a great amount of smaller works such as fan leaves and figurative album without any signatures or writings at all. Presumably, Qiu Ying was self-aware of his identity as a professional painter, using different words in his signatures and inscriptions from the literati. In another words, the made these paintings for someone or with specific purposes instead of creating them at his own will.

Having such a different background and social status compared to the elites in the Ming Dynasty, one might wonder how Qiu Ying built these strong connections with them. It is evident that these elite connections were willing to become friends with him mainly because of his incredible talents in painting. Inscriptions analyzed in the first chapter demonstrate this. His works could break the boundary between the elegant and the transcended elegant. Qiu Ying was accepted by the literati as a professional painter mainly because of his painting abilities, considering the admirations of both the literati paintings and the professional paintings. Being able to meet the standards of the elite class, Qiu Ying was also capable of making a living by satisfying the market value and the tastes of the collectors.

Qiu Ying and the Market

As mentioned in the second chapter, Qiu Ying did not enjoy the privilege and cultural heritage from his family like Shen Zhou and Wen Zhengming did. In order to make a living on his own, Qiu Ying needed to fit the needs of the market. This chapter will focus on the relationships between Qiu Ying and his patrons, and the paintings that were created for them. Some literati scholars would support Qiu Ying occasionally by requesting and buying paintings from him. Others

57 Kangxi zidian 康熙字典 Vol. 9, No. 3 (China: Tong wen shuju 同文書局). 13
58 Kangxi zidian. Vol. 1, No. 2, 9
would commission Qiu Ying to make pictures as illustrations to accompany their calligraphic pieces. However, the most unique approach was to provide the artist with access to their family collection and to make the artist a painter in residence. In this way, the painter lived with the patrons and worked for them in a close relationship.

During the first fifty years of the sixteenth century, the economy of the Suzhou area had revived from the depression in the early Ming Dynasty. Besides agriculture, handcraft industry such as embroidery, fan crafting, jade and wood carving were also thriving among the public. As for the rich and the elite, gardens, calligraphies, and paintings were the major elements of their artistic gatherings. Ming literati were fascinated with gardens and studying studios. In fact, they not only enjoyed these places but also appreciated paintings about these subjects. Meanwhile, the literati had a strong impact on the taste of the rich due to their close interactions. These subjects of gardens and studying studios accompanied by poems were considered ideal elements for painting. 

“Landscapes were peaceful and harmonious, while gardens were worth painting them. 山水足清晏，園林堪畫圖” by Gu Qing 顧清 (1460-1528) was an outstanding example of this idea. Qiu Ying was able to satisfy his patrons by creating paintings with these elements using the style of the blue and green landscape. Based on these subjects and the blue and green landscape style, the paintings manifested a sense of nostalgia to the distant past, the fortune and taste of the collector, and links to the antique paintings.

Qiu Ying’s famous Donglin tu presented a combination of garden, painting, and calligraphy. He combined the styles of Liu Songnain 劉松年 (1172-1224), Ma Yuan, and Ma Lin 馬麟 (1180-1256) to create the trees, rocks, streams, and mist. The leaves in this painting were carefully depicted with dots, except for the bamboo leaves that were painted with powerful hook-like strokes. The rocks were outlined with thick and dry ink and then rendered with more wet and light strokes.

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59 Lin Mu 林木, Ming Qing wenren hua xinchao 明清文人畫新潮 (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin meishu chuban she 上海人民美術出版社, 1991). 130.

60 Gu Qing, “Dong jiang jia cang ji 東江家藏集,” Jing yin wen yuan ge si ku quan shu 景印文淵閣四庫全書, Vol. 1261, 396-397
Qiu Ying truly mastered various styles and was able to perform them at his will. He manifested his
techniques of the court painting of the Southern Song Dynasty in this example. He was capable
of creating exquisite, elegant, and beautiful scenery on paper. Qiu Ying was praised by Zhang
Chou 張丑 (1577-1643) in his book Qing he shuhua fang 清河書畫舫, “He borrowed various styles
from different schools and was able to combine them amazingly creating many miraculous works.
資諸家之長而渾合之，種種臻妙。” Qiu Ying inscribed “Qiu Ying Shifu made for Mister Donglin 仇
英實⽗父為東林林先⽣生製” on the painting. According to Pingsheng zhuang guan 平生壯觀 by Gu Fu 餘
復, Zhu Yunming wrote Dongling ji 東林記 for this painting. However, this article was lost. James
Cahill argued that Donglin might have been a scholar-official named Jia Ding 賈錠 (1448-1523).
While Liu Fangju pointed out that Donglin tu 東林圖 shared great similarity to Qiu jiang dai du tu 秋江待渡
圖 in style and artistic conception. These two paintings might therefore have been created in the
same period. Due to the extreme detailed human figures, the use of the dots for the carefully
constituted trees, and the elegant atmosphere created by the rendered mist, Liu Fangju’s argument
does sound reasonable. Qiu jiang dai du tu was made during Qiu Ying’s stay at the Xiang 項 family
because Xiang Yuanbian’s 項元汴 (1525-1590) seal was found on the painting. However, Jia Ding
had already passed away when Qiu Ying was staying in Xiang Yuanbian’s home. It seems not
possible that Qiu Ying has created this painting for someone who already had died, and the real
Mister Donglin should be someone else.

The researches of Qing Ying encountered problems and issues generally led by a lack of
written resources from the sixteenth century. Little information about Qiu Ying’s early life has been
recorded, making one’s interpretation on single reference rather vulnerable and problematic.

61 Liu Fangju, Ming zhong ye renwu hua si jia te zhan. 39.
63 Cahill, Parting at the Shore, Chinese Painting of the Early and Middle-Ming Dynasty. 223.
Over the past three decades, a number of scholars such as Ellen Johnston Laing and Lin Jiazhi have intended to discover the mystery created by the paucity of information in order to obtain a better image of this elusive and stunning painter. With their contribution analyzing and combining scattered data, it is generally agreed upon that he came from Taicang 太倉. He was born in 1494, and probably died around 1552.66 Common in Chinese culture, he was considered a child prodigy. Qiu Ying moved to Suzhou in his youth to become a student of Zhou Chen, and the situation of moving to learn from Zhou Chen might also have happened on Tang Yin. As mentioned in the second chapter, Qiu Ying established and maintained lasting relationships with literati and his fellow painters of Suzhou. From time to time, he stayed in the outskirt of the Suzhou city and resided with some wealthy patrons. Then, he moved to live with his most important patron Xiang Yuanbian who lived in Xiushui 秀水 (Jiaxing 嘉興), Chekiang 浙江.

Different from Qiu Ying’s situation, not having enough archival data about his life, information related to Xiang Yuanbian and his family is much more abundant. Xiang Yuanbian was often recorded as a famous art collector, painter, and patron to artists in the art history of China. However, we should not forget the fact that he was born in a large and prestigious family that raised many degree holders and government officials, because being a collector not only requires a good taste but also a great fortune. Xiang Yuanbian’s great grand-uncle Xiang Zhong 項忠 (1421-1502) was first appointed as the governor of Shensi 陝西 in 1463. In the 1470s, he began to serve the yu-shi tai 御史台 and became a ta-fu 大夫 during 147466. Unfortunately, he was accused of corruption and taking bribes, after which his rank was reduced to commoner status. However, the privileges gained by Xiang Zhong still sheltered the family for years with family fortune and connections.67 Besides the heritage from his ancestors, Xiang Yuanbian also had brothers with accomplished degrees in the government. Xiang Yuanqi 項元淇 also known as Shaoyue 少岳 for

65 66 Laing, “Problem in Reconstructing the Life of Qiu Ying,” 69-89.
his hao 號 was born in 1500, and an older brother of Xian Yuanbian. Although he did not successfully pass the jinshi 進士 exam to enter the upper management of the government, he still served the bureaucracy at a minor position. Xiang Yuanqi was mostly known for his poetry and calligraphy. Another brother of Xiang Yuanbian, Xiang Dushou 項篤壽 (1521-1586) did achieve to pass the jinshi exam and was in charge of authoring several collections of biography of Ming nobles. Xiang Dushou gained his name for his collection of antique paintings and calligraphies. The most famous painting in his collection was the Minghuang xing shu tu 明皇幸蜀圖, now in the National Palace Museum in Taipei. Comparing the collection of Xiang Doushou and the one of Xiang Yuanbian’s, Xiang Yuanbian’s collection is better on both the quality and quantity of treasures.

Xiang Yuanbian and his art collection became a popular research subject because paintings in his collection were giving a sense of authenticity. As a result, fake seals of Xiang Yuanbian were used on many paintings in order to create better market value. Despite the issues related to fakes, the existing data could still shape an overall relationship between Qiu Ying and Xiang Yuanbian as an art collector and as a patron. As stated previously, Qiu Ying was born around 1494, which made him thirty years older than Xiang Yuanbian and of almost the same age as Xiang Yuanqi. With accordance to data in the sixteenth century documents, it is likely that Qiu Ying started his life living with the Xiang family in 1547, as many of Qiu Ying’s tributes to antique paintings and works made for the Xiang family were dated to that period. It should be kept in mind that Qiu Ying only spent a few years with the Xiang family before his death around 1552. During the period with Qiu Ying’s company, Xiang Yuanbian was still in his late twenties. Therefore, it was not possible for Qiu Ying to have a glance on the complete collection of Xiang Yuanbian’s vast treasures. Possibly, many of the masterpieces were yet to come into the hand of Xiang Yuanbian. Ellen Johnston Laing has argued that those paintings by Qiu Ying with Xiang Yuanbian’s

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69 Chung Eunsuk 鄭銀淑, *Xiang Yuanbian zhi shuhua shoucang* 項元汴之書畫收藏 (Taipei: National Taiwan Normal University, 1983), 17.

seals are made specifically for the Xiang family or acquired by Xiang Yuanbian, either before Qiu Ying’s residence or after his demise.\textsuperscript{71}

Xiang Yuanbian’s magnificent collection held approximately three hundred items of calligraphy and more than three hundred pieces of paintings. Nineteen paintings of the number were made by Qiu Ying, and possibly a few more escaped from the Xiang Yuanbian’s colophon. Looking at the proportion of Qiu Ying’s works in the collection, it is possible that Xiang Yuanbian owned more paintings of Qiu Ying’s than any other painters.\textsuperscript{72} This idea was also provided Shen Hongmei who did researched on Xiang Yuanbiam’s collection with a more precise number of 48 out of 784 paintings were made by him which also crowned him for having the highest percentage in the collection.\textsuperscript{73} Presumably, Qiu Ying and Xiang Yuanbian might have had a clear business contract on the relationship of their patronage back then, according to the high percentage of Qiu Yin’s painting in the collection. Xiang Yuanbian would provide a housing residence and accessibility to the antique paintings for Qiu Ying so he could improve his skills and learn from the growing collection of former great masters. On the other hand, Qiu Ying’s creations during the period would go directly to Xian Yuanbian’s collection as contemporary art. There is also a possibility that Xiang Yuanbian used Qiu Ying’s works as gifts for social courtesy. Meanwhile, Ellen Johnston Laing has argued that Qiu Ying might have advised Xian Yuanbian on connoisseurship and brush strokes. However, as much as it sounds logical, no critical proof could assist her theory.\textsuperscript{74}

Qiu Ying’s painting \textit{Tao cun caotang tu} 桃村草堂圖 in the Palace Museum in Beijing played as a prominent example of the relationship between him and the Xiang family. First, the painting was inscribed with “Made for Mister Shaoyue by Qiu Shify (Qiu Ying) 仇實父為少岳先⽣生製。” In fact, the figure in this painting was actually Xiang Yunqi himself. Without doubt, \textit{Tao cun caotang tu}

\textsuperscript{71} Laing, “Sixteenth-Century Patterns of Art Patronage: Qiu Ying and the Xiang Family,” 1-7.

\textsuperscript{72} Chung Eunsuk, \textit{Xiang Yuanbian zhi shuhua shoucang}, 185-253.

\textsuperscript{73} Shen Hongmei 沈紅梅, \textit{Xiang Yuanbian shuhua dianji shoucang yaniu} 項元汴書畫典籍收藏研究 (Beijing: Guojia tushu guan chuban she 国家图书馆出版社, 2012), 47.

\textsuperscript{74} Ellen Johnston Laing, “Sixteenth-Century Patterns of Art Patronage: Qiu Ying and the Xiang Family,” 1-7.
would be classified in the blue and green landscape genre stylistically. As mentioned in the first chapter, this genre was normally associated with themes related to legends, historical events, people from the distant past, and literature. Why would Qiu Ying depict his contemporary in this kind of genre then? Xiang Yuanqi held a minor position associated with the court in Nanjing and was not able to attend his father’s funeral in 1563. He finally decided to resign when he was around 65 years old on the excuse of old age and returned home to live in the mourning hut. The writer of his epitaph mentioned visiting his mourning hut in a place full of peach-blossom. That was possibly the idea of the image painted by Qiu Ying. I would argue that Qiu Ying used the style of blue and green landscape to create a nostalgic sense of isolation, referring to the idea of *Taohuayuan*. Similar to *Minghuang xing shu tu*, both stories were from the distant past.

Another major patron of Qiu Ying was Zhou Fenglai from Kunshan. The most interesting interaction between the two was the creation of *Zixu Shanglin tu*. Although the painting was long lost, it should have been created using the style of blue and green landscape, according to the written data in *Hui lin fa cai* written by Wang Chen. He learned painting from Zhou Chen. However, his style was not as great as his teacher’s. He was especially good at copying sketches and antique paintings in a way that one could not distinguish the brush strokes of his from the original paintings. His blue and green landscape paintings on silks were so exquisite and gorgeous that they would not fail the old masters. He created *Shanglin tu* for Zhou Liuguan. The figures, birds, landscapes, architectures, chariots, armies were carefully rendered using the techniques from the old masters. This creation should be considered a masterpiece of paintings and a great event for the art society.

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The price of this piece was particularly significant since the price of this episode became a part of it and was recorded in documents. Craig Clunas argued that since the painting did not survive, the price became the meaning of this painting and articles about this painting tend to focus on its price.77

Zhou Liuguan (hao of Zhou Fenglai), a wealthy man in the Wu area, commissioned Qiu Shizhou (hao of Qiu Ying) to stay in his home for six years in order to create Zixu Shanglin tu for his mother’s ninetieth birthday. He would provide a thousand ounces of silver and feast with delicacy and female singers every month.

周六觀，吳中富人，聘仇⼗洲主其家凡六年，畫子虛上林圖為其⺟慶九⼗歲，奉千⾦，飲饌之豊逾于上方，月必張燈集女伶歌宴數次。78

According to the article about Zixu Shanglin tu, the price of Qiu Ying’s painting was quite high. One might wonder how expensive that painting was. According to Wen Zhenheng’s 文震亨 (1585-1645) book Zhang wu zhi 長物誌, there was a hierarchy of prices among calligraphies and paintings.


The cost of calligraphy and pictures: For calligraphy prices, the standard is set by a regular script. One hundred characters in drafting script by Wang Xizhi are worth one line of running script, and three lines of running script are worth one line of regular script. When it comes to his works, such as articles of Yueyi Lun, Huangting, Huazan and Gaoshi, then their value cannot be calculated by the number of characters. It is the same with painting prices: landscapes, bamboos and rocks, and the portraits of famous ancient worthies are worth as much as works in regular script. Human figures, flowers and birds are, if small, worth as much as running hand. Large figure paintings, Buddhist images, palaces and pavilions, beasts, insects and fish are worth as much as drafting script.

The price of Qiu Ying's paintings could also be compared to paintings of Shen Zhou and other products from the same period. Wang Guxiang sold a painting of Shen Zhou for a garden worth thousand ounces of silver to Wang Xiyuan 王西園 (Ming Dynasty). A basket of high quality paper was worth eight taels of silver, a fine horse forty ounces of silver, and a bolt of silk four-thirds ounces of silver. Presumably, Qiu Ying earned a great fortune from his major patrons, and the content of his paintings was also influenced by them. The reason why Qiu Ying's famous works were mostly blue and green landscape painting might be led by the price and the taste of his


81 Chen Xuewen 陳學文, Ming Qing shiqi shangye shu yu shangren shu zhi yan jiu 明清時期商業書與商人書之研究 (Taipei: Hong ye wenhua, 1997), 229
patrons. As mentioned in this chapter, Qiu Ying learned from Xiang Yuanbian’s collection of antique paintings. Therefore, his skill of blue and green landscape might be strengthened during his stay in Xiang Yuanbian’s home. Besides that, these extremely expensive paintings commissioned by his patrons were mostly from the same genre. As a result, Qiu Ying mainly made his reputation, as well as his living via blue and green landscape paintings.

--- Quote Cahill who also argues the same ---


Conclusion

In the first chapter, it has been discussed that Qiu Ying’s most representative style was his blue and green landscape painting. Although Dong Qichang argued that with following this school of painting, one could not reach enlightenment instantly, he still confirmed Qiu Ying’s technique in the genre and praised him for being the best of his kind in five hundred years. Due to the importance of Dong Qichang in Chinese art history, his words made Qiu Ying important and appreciated in the late Ming Dynasty and the Qing Dynasty.

The second chapter focused on the relationships between Qiu Ying and other literati. The genre of the blue and green landscape painting also played a vital role in his connections with the elites. Most of the inscriptions from these literati were written on paintings from this genre and a lot of these writings were poetries about legends, and history of the distant past, or Qiu Ying’s techniques and origins of the blue and green landscape. Wen Zhengming being one of the most influential literati of his time had a strong connection with Qiu Ying according to his inscriptions on Qiu Ying’s paintings and the various collaborations between them. Qiu Ying’s paintings of the blue and green landscape were the major reason that he was connected to the elite class.

In the third chapter, the networks of Qiu Ying are analyzed as well as the patronages between Qiu Ying and his major patrons. The references about Qiu Ying and Xiang Yuanbian show that Qiu Ying’s stunning techniques of the blue and green landscape painting are probably influenced by Xiang Yuanbian’s collection of antique paintings. The chapter also has shown how expensive Qiu Ying’s paintings were during his time, considering the written data of the creation of the Zixu Shanglin tu. Surprisingly, most of these extremely high-value paintings were related to the blue and green landscape genre. Thus, it could be concluded that these paintings were greatly favored by the collectors at that time.

Wu Sheng 吳升 (17-18th century) was the first person to state Shen Zhou, Wen Zhengming, Tang Yin, and Qiu Ying the Four Masters of Ming Dynasty. The 20th volume of his
Daguan lu 大觀錄 was written exclusively about these four masters. According to him, Qiu Ying could be crowned as one of the Four Masters of Ming Dynasty because he was able to inherit the style of Li Sixun, Li Zhaodao, Zhao Boju, and Zhao Bosu. He also mentioned that the price of Qiu Ying’s paintings was able to surpass the works from the other three masters. He argued that the reason why Qiu Ying’s paintings were so expensive was because he was praised by Dong Qichang.  

Qiu Ying’s reputation was based on his paintings of the blue and green landscape. He was able to revive the tradition that was nearly abandoned during the Yuan Dynasty, and was able to master the skills of his predecessors. This genre of painting was his key to be recognized by the elite class, and regarding the genre of painting where his patrons paid the highest price for. To conclude, his paintings of the blue and green genre were the reason why he was crowned as one the four masters of the Ming Dynasty.

To sum up:
The research question of this thesis (“how Qiu Ying has been defined and discussed in the literati society as well as on the market during his life and the period thereafter,” p. 4) is vague. It only makes clear until the last chapter that the author’s discussion has revolved around the style of blue-and-green landscape paintings of Qiu Ying. I suggest that the author should reorient the “Introduction,” and Chapters 1 and 2, to consolidate his/her main arguments. Moreover, the analysis and arguments of the thesis in various places are lack of clarity and coherence. The section, “Literature Review,” only covers a very limited range of primary and secondary sources in a passing manner. The author draws upon the scholarship of James Cahill, Shih Shouchien, Shan Guolin, and others for visual analysis in later chapters, but largely forgets to critically review them in this section. The author should look in-depth not only the sources on Qiu Ying, but also other scholarships that inform the art historical contexts and methodology. A large number of awkward expressions, misleading translations, and vocabulary mistakes still demand correction. Moreover, this thesis needs a careful proofreading to make the use of language acceptable. The illustrations are not numbered and not refereed in texts, which makes it difficult for readers to follow. The thesis tries to follow Chicago Manual of Style, but sources are not always correctly cited.
List of Illustrations

1. Shen Zhou: Ye zuo tu, painted in 1492. Hanging scroll on paper and ink, 84.8 x 21.8 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei.

2. Wen Zhengming: Yu yu chun shu, painted in 1507. Hanging scroll on paper and ink, 94.3 x 33.3 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei.


4. Qiu Ying: Fang Li Zhaodao hai tian xia zhao tu. Hand scroll on paper and silk, 54 x 204.4 cm. National Palace Museum, Taipei.

5. Qiu Ying: Qingming shang he tu. Hand scroll on Silk, 30.5 x 987.5 cm. Liaoning Provincial Museum, Shenyang.

6. Qiu Ying: Chibi tu, painted in 1548. Hand scroll on paper and ink, 26 x 91 cm. Liaoning Provincial Museum, Shenyang.

7. Qiu Ying: Wu zhu she tang tu, painted in 1533-1536. Hand scroll on paper and ink, 148.8 x 57.2 cm. Shanghai Museum, Shanghai.

8. Wen Zhenming: Han lin Zhong Kui, painted in 1535. Hand scroll on paper and ink, 69.9 x 42.5 cm, National Palace Museum, Taipei.

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12. Qiu Ying: *Qiu jiang dai du tu*. Hanging scroll on silk and ink, 155.4 x 133.4 cm. National Palace Museum, Taipei.
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