

## TRACKS IN THE SNOW

— an autobiographical memoir by Lin-ch'ing

translated by Yang Tsung-han

## PREFACE \*

by P'an Shih-en 潘世恩<sup>1</sup>

Figure 11

Calligraphy for the title page of *Tracks in the Snow* by Ko Tsai, author of the "Encomium" (see p. 17)



The late Director-General of River Conservancy,<sup>2</sup> Lin Chien-t'ing 麟見亭 of Ch'ang-pai,<sup>3</sup> was a successful candidate in the Provincial Examination of the year *wu-chen* [1808], when I was appointed one of the examiners. Now, three years after his decease, his sons Ch'ung-shih and Ch'ung-hou 崇厚<sup>4</sup> have commissioned the manuscript of his work *Hung-bsueh yin-yuan t'u-chi* 鴻雪因緣圖記 to be carved on woodblocks<sup>5</sup> for publication, and have asked me to write a preface.

The work is a narrative of his lifetime's travels. In Mao's Commentary on the *Book of Odes* we read: That man who, having climbed a mountain, can compose poems to describe the scene and to express his feelings withal; that man who, having travelled among mountains and rivers, can describe them and narrate the legends and histories connected with them; that man has a truly edifying voice and is worthy to be a high official.<sup>6</sup> From ancient times, distinguished scholars have written down accounts of their official travels, to the benefit of later ages. Examples of this are the *Record of Riding on a Phoenix* 驂鸞錄 and the *Record of the Ships of Wu* 吳船錄 by Fan Shih-hu 范石湖,<sup>7</sup> and *Travels in Szechwan* 入蜀記 by Lu Wu-kuan 陸務觀,<sup>8</sup> both of the Sung dynasty; while in the present dynasty there have been the *Narrative of Journeys by an Imperial Delegate* 皇華紀聞 by Wang Yu-yang 王漁洋<sup>9</sup> and the *Sung-t'ing hsing-chi* 松亭行紀 by Kao Tan-jen 高澹人.<sup>10</sup> As to writings with illustrations and maps there have been the *Embassy to Korea in the Reign of Hsuan-ho* 宣和奉使高麗圖經 by Hsu Ching 徐競 of the Sung dynasty,<sup>11</sup> and the *Ch'ang-an Illustrated Gazetteer* 長安志圖 by Li Hao-wen 李好文 of the Yuan dynasty.<sup>12</sup> These works follow varying plans, yet all are recorded in the bibliographies of the dynastic histories and have thereby achieved immortality.

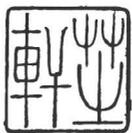
Chien-t'ing was widely read and proficient in composition; he passed the highest state examinations in the prime of his youth, served in the central government and thence was sent out to fill various responsible posts in different parts of the Empire. In this work, he has given a comprehensive narrative based on his extensive studies into local characteristics, picturesque locations and antiquities, legends and relics, climate, fauna, folklore and folkways, river conservancy and hydraulic problems. His own learning and

official achievements have thereby been demonstrated. But in its general plan the work is an autobiographical record of his travels, and is more or less similar to the various works of Fan Ch'eng-ta and Lu Yu, while in his provision of illustrations Chien-t'ing is a successor to Hsu Ching and Li Hao-wen.

During the latter days of his life, he lived in retirement at home, keeping his gate closed and neglecting to sweep the pathway, but constantly revising and touching up this work. Certainly he identified himself with Tsung Shao-wen 宗少文<sup>13</sup>: he kept his thoughts pure and meditated on the *Tao*,<sup>14</sup> revisiting these haunts from the comfort of his couch. We are thereby enabled to picture, exactly as they were, those moments of leisure in the midst of official splendour: the elegant outpourings of the muse, the skilful games of pitch-pot,<sup>15</sup> the exquisite refinement that informed his life.

Written in the eighth month, autumn,  
the twenty-ninth year of the Reign of Tao-kuang [1849],

by P'an Shih-en of Soochow



/blocks were left in Yangchow and burned by the Taiping army in 1860. The Bodleian Library, Oxford, possesses a fine copy (Backhouse Collection no.139), as does the library of the Institute of Chinese Studies, Chinese University of Hong Kong.

<sup>6</sup> (YTH) The quotation is from Mao's commentary on Ode No 50.

<sup>7</sup> (YTH) Fan Ch'eng-ta 范成大 (1126–93), Southern Sung poet and official.

<sup>8</sup> (YTH) Lu Yu 陸游 (1125–1210), generally acknowledged as the pre-eminent and most influential poet of the Southern Sung dynasty.

<sup>9</sup> (H) Wang Shih-chen 王士禎 (1634–1711), eminent poet and official from Shantung. He was sent by the K'ang-hsi Emperor to Kwangtung to offer sacrifices to the Spirit of the South Seas in 1685.

<sup>10</sup> (H) Kao Shih-ch'i 高士奇 (1645–1703). The work in question concerns a journey to Jehol in the company of the K'ang-hsi Emperor in 1681.

<sup>11</sup> (Balasz & Hervouet) Hsu Ching (1091–1153) wrote and presented this work to the emperor in 1124, the year following his return from Korea.

<sup>12</sup> (Ed) Biography in *Yuan Shih, chüan* 183.

<sup>13</sup> (YTH) Tsung Ping 宗炳 (375–443) lived in the Tsin dynasty. He was a famous traveller in his prime and a philosopher-hermit in his latter days. He painted the scenes of his former travels. Giles, *Biographical Dictionary*: "I can no longer see the hills; I must visit them in imagination from my couch."

<sup>14</sup> (YTH) It is a happy coincidence that the Chinese word *Tao* 道 both literally and figuratively means the same as *bodos, via* and 'way' in the three Indo-European languages.

<sup>15</sup> (YTH) *Tou-hu* 投壺, the throwing of a bamboo arrow into a standing vase containing sand, was a classical sport of great elegance played at inter-state, state and aristocratic meetings and dinner parties. It was first recorded in the *Tso Chuan*, the 12th year of Chao Kung.

\* (Ed) This is only one of seven prefaces to the first volume. Among the others who contributed prefaces were the well-known figures Juan Yuan 阮元 (1764–1849) and Ch'i Chün-tso 祁雋藻 (1793–1866).

<sup>1</sup> (H) (1770–1854), prominent official of the Chia-ch'ing and Tao-kuang reigns, rose to be a Grand Secretary and Grand Councillor of State (1834–49).

<sup>2</sup> (Ed) In most cases I have preserved the official titles used by Yang Tsung-han in his manuscript.

<sup>3</sup> (YTH) Originally the name of a mountain in Kirin, Manchuria, here referring to the whole of Manchuria. For details of the career of Lin Chien-t'ing (Lin-ch'ing) see above, n.3.

<sup>4</sup> (H) Ch'ung-shih (1820–76) and Ch'ung-hou (1826–93) were both prominent officials during the latter half of the nineteenth century.

/Ch'ung-shih's autobiography, *T'i-an nien-p'u* 揚齋年譜, was published in 1877. He was acting Military Governor of Mukden before his death. Ch'ung-hou was especially famous as the Chinese envoy sent to apologise for the Tientsin Massacre, reaching France in January 1871. He subsequently travelled to Russia, had an audience with the Czar, and signed the Treaty of Livadia (1879). For this he was later disgraced.

<sup>5</sup> (Ed) The publication history of *Tracks in the Snow* is complex. The first two volumes were printed between 1839 and 1841 without the illustrations. The third volume was ready in 1846, the year of Lin-ch'ing's death. His eldest son Ch'ung-shih had the complete work printed in Yangchow between 1847 and 1850 (*T'i-an nien-p'u*, I, 24–25). The first edition comprised one thousand copies and these were brought to Peking. But the wooden

*A Likeness of the Author at the Age of Thirty-Nine*

像水巖九十三乎亦帝昆

*The Author's Own Inscription*

The wise find joy in rivers,  
 The humane in mountains;  
 Motion and stillness  
 Are the impulses of Heaven.<sup>16</sup>  
 That I, a creature of folly,  
 Should have lived among them  
 Was due to my Liege's grace  
 And the merits of my ancestors<sup>17</sup>;  
 These granted me  
 A providential enjoyment  
 Of mountains and rivers.



汪英福恭寫  
 曹

*Respectfully executed by Wang Ying-fu 汪英福*<sup>18</sup>

*An Encomium, by Ko Tsai*<sup>19</sup>

Behold the Star of Letters, Star of Blessing!  
 Gaining his laurels at a tender age,  
 He passed from grove of Hanlin Academe to halls of state;  
 Then with emblem of office  
 Was sent to govern two prefectures;  
 With coach<sup>20</sup> and cap, toured his domain.  
 His compositions were a torch illuminating his path in life,  
 His administration a pattern for future ages.  
 He ascended famous mountains, sailed great rivers,  
 His steps traversed the land.  
 Splendour shone in his writings,  
 Brilliance blazed in his painting<sup>21</sup>;  
 His was the deportment of a true scholar,  
 The elegant bearing of a gentleman;  
 How fortunate am I (and how unworthy)  
 To have counted among my acquaintance  
 Such a paragon!

親器乎半德露科是  
 仰宇豪天政冕由文  
 德雅素下為四薇星  
 馨人炳皆典巡省是  
 標采足型煥人福  
 吳格乎跡登文槐星  
 縣不丹之名章廳自  
 戴才青所凶為出弱  
 贊何此經涉事麾冠  
 幸儒摘大業兩掇  
 而臣華川旋守魏

<sup>16</sup> (Ed) *Analects*, VI, 21.

<sup>17</sup> (Ed) This must be an allusion to Hsieh Ling-yun 謝靈運 (385–433), famous for his landscape poetry, and also as the author of a “Poem to Describe the Merits of my Ancestors.”

<sup>18</sup> (Ed) Served on Lin-ch'ing's staff from 1827. He executed the first of the three series of drawings (nos. 1–80).

<sup>19</sup> Of Wu County (Soochow). (Ed) A well-known calligrapher-painter and writer of lyric verse (*tz'u*). Listed under his name in the *I-wen chib* of the *Ch'ing-shih kao* are several works on lyric verse. He also wrote the calligraphy for the frontispiece of *Tracks in the Snow* [Figure 11], and for another of Lin-ch'ing's books, *Huang-yun ho-k'ou ku-chin t'u-shuo* [Figure 9].

<sup>20</sup> (YTH) Here a pretentious pedant has deliberately used a wrong word in order to pose as a learned and extensively read person.

<sup>21</sup> (YTH) “Crimson and blue”: figurative (and conventional) expression for painting. See Tu Fu's 杜甫 “Song of Painting”: “By his devotion to the ‘crimson and blue’ [i.e. painting], he is oblivious of the approach of old age.” Here “painting” really means the paintings that were done for Lin-ch'ing or presented to Lin by others; Lin himself could not paint at all.

**Figure 12**

*The Encomium in the calligraphy of Ko Tsai*