MOSS OR WINGS?

The Chinese landscape gives wings to the beholder, but it does not rest him. He cannot linger on soft moss in a secluded grove, or in the shade of Corot's trees, he cannot find his home in a Ruisdael hamlet. He has to look at the woods from afar; he has to pass the hut by the wayside and journey to the pagoda on the hill, which will give him no shelter; he will take off from there into space filled with more mountains rising out of the mist of tomorrow. The Western landscape reminds us of some summer day of the past, when we ourselves have seen just that radiance of light and color in the country we love. To delight our eyes it blends the accidental beauties of color and planes, preserving a beautiful moment that otherwise would be lost.

The Chinese landscape promises to show us all the glories of creation, if we dare abandon our safe foothold on that little part of the world over which we are master. It fulfills man's age-old longing for wings, the longing of Faust to follow the course of the sun:

Ah, that no wing can lift me from the soil,
Upon its track to follow, follow soaring!

Then would I see eternal Evening gild,
The silent world beneath me glowing,
On fire each mountain peak, with peace each valley filled,
The silver brook to golden rivers flowing.

The mountain chain, with all its gorges deep,
Would then no more impede my god-like motion,
And now before mine eyes expands the ocean
With all its bays, in shining sleep.

MEDITATION

By Wei Li Bo

The evening rain has quenched the swirling dust
Raised in the heat of day by summer wind.

The yellow moon emerged from shadowy clouds
And through the plane trees cast her peaceful beams.

Through silence of the night from leaf and tree
Rings faint the reverent chime of silver drops.

MODERN PHOTOGRAPHS OR ANCIENT PAINTINGS?

Fig. 1 This dramatic scene, photographed by Hedda Hammer in the Hua Shan of Shensi, might have been chosen as the subject for a painting in the Tang or Sung dynasty
Art and Reality in China

Fig. III Mist in the Mountains, by Hsia Kuei, late 12th century

Fig. II Pilgrim's Path, by Ma Yuan, late 12th century
Fig. IV Mist in the Hua Shan, photograph by Hedda Hammer
River Bend

Fig. V  by Hsia Kuei, late 12th century

Fig. VI  by Gottfried Keller, 19th century
Countryside
East and West

Fig. VII  Country Scene,
by Kuo Hsi, 11th century

Fig. VIII  Country Doctor,
by Lauren Ford, 20th century
Wanderer's Rest

Fig. IX by Moritz von Schwind, 19th century

Fig. X Attributed to Emperor Hui Tsung of the Sung dynasty.