influence is often present, an example from the first half of the nineteenth century being the portrait of the heroic admiral Kuan T'ien-p'ei, of which the arresting head is illustrated in Figure 47.

Certain eighteenth-century court painters, notably Leng Mei, Tsou I-kuei and Shen Yüan, show unmistakable signs of Western influence in their work. There were other seventeenth-century painters, such as Shang-kuan Chou, Lu Wei and possibly the curious Fa Jo-ch'en, in whom Western influence is less obvious but still discernable. In the handscroll by Lu Wei in the Tōkyō National Museum (Figure 48), the definition of continuous ground surfaces by means of gradations of shading is something quite new in Chinese landscape painting that must have been stimulated by contact with Western art. Such borrowings are elusive and difficult to substantiate; they need to be further investigated.

The Eighteenth Century

With the arrival in Peking, in December 1715, of Giuseppe Castiglione, a young Milanese Jesuit trained in Genoa, the court at last acquired a European painter of some quality—a man who was destined to have a considerable impact on Chinese court taste for over half a century. En route, he had spent four years in Portugal, where he had decorated the chapel of the Jesuit novitiate in Coimbra with frescoes of the life of St Ignatius Loyola. But if he imagined that his career in China would likewise be dedicated to the decoration of Christian churches, he was in for a cruel shock.

Within a short time of his arrival in Peking, Castiglione, now bearing the Chinese name Lang Shih-ning, found himself at the workbenches in the dismal atelier that occupied one corner of K'ang-hsi's huge, rambling country palace, the Yüan-ming-yüan. In these crowded, malodorous workshops, 'full of corrupt persons', as one of the Jesuits put it, Lang Shih-ning and Father Matteo Ripa, another recent arrival, slaved away at enamelling on porcelain. The Jesuits were prepared to do almost anything to further the aims of the mission—'tout pour l'amour de Dieu'—but this was too much. They petitioned to be excused, and succeeded only by painting so clumsily that the emperor reluctantly released them, though not to the kind of freedom that they had hoped for.

Jean-Denis Attiret, who joined Lang Shih-ning in 1738, complained bitterly that they were forced always to work in the Chinese medium and never had the time or the energy for the devotional pictures they longed to paint. Though loaded with honours, Lang Shih-ning and Attiret found no relief from unremitting labour. In 1754, when he had been working night and day for several weeks in Jehol, painting portraits and commemorative pictures for the emperor, Attiret

wrote to Father Amiot in Peking, 'Will this farce never come to an end? So far from the house of God, deprived of all spiritual sustenance, I find it hard to persuade myself that all this is to the glory of God'.

Lang Shih-ning spent the rest of his life in the service of three emperors, K'ang-hsi, Yung-cheng and Ch'ien-lung, gradually perfecting a synthetic style in which, with taste, skill and the utmost discretion, Western perspective and shading, with even on occasion a hint of chiaroscuro, were blended to give an added touch of realism to paintings otherwise entirely in the Chinese manner.

In April 1723, Father Amiot reported:

> Our most dear Castiglione has been daily occupied in the Palace, with his art . . . which has been thoroughly investigated by the Emperor [Yung-cheng], first in enamel painting, then in the usual technique, whether in oil or in water-colour. By imperial order he had to send the ruler whatever he did. It can be said that his works have succeeded in winning the Emperor's favour, for he has on various occasions benignly praised the artist, and sent him gifts even to a greater degree than his deceased parent. Frequently, . . . dishes were sent from the Imperial table; again, the Emperor rewarded him with twelve rolls of the best silk, accompanied by a precious stone, carved in the shape of a seal, with the effigy of Christ our Saviour, on a cross. Latterly, he was presented with a summer hat, which gift denotes great honour.

The Ch'ien-lung emperor (1736–96) was as lavish in his praise of Lang Shih-ning as his father and grandfather had been before him—and was as exacting in his demands. Before long the Jesuit found himself appointed chief architect for the new complex of buildings in the northeast corner of the Yüan-ming-yüan, Ch'ien-lung's 'Garden of Everlasting Spring' (its earlier name having been Ch'ang-ch'un-yüan). There Lang Shih-ning designed a series of palaces, pavilions and terraces in an ornate pseudo-Rococo style that delighted the emperor (Figure 49). These structures—the product of the Jesuit's fertile imagination, lack of professional training and remoteness from any possible critics—must have given him enormous pleasure too, for this seems to be the one occasion in his career at court when he was able to do exactly what he pleased. Between his pavilions stood huge fountains worked by machinery designed by Father Benoist that were Ch'ien-lung's special pride.

Ch'ien-lung filled these remarkable buildings with furniture, clocks, pictures and mechanical toys that had been sent as gifts to the court by Louis XIV and Louis XV. On the walls he hung tapestries designed by Boucher, the *Teintures Chinoises,* which were said to have been based on sketches made in the Forbidden City by Lang Shih-ning's young Jesuit colleague, Attiret, though this seems rather unlikely. Could Ch'ien-lung have imagined that these charming chinoiseries were meant to depict his own court? Perhaps he thought they repre-

sented Versailles. Another pavilion was built to accommodate the set of Gobelins tapestries sent out by Louis XV in 1767.

Just as it amused Louis XV to attire his court on occasion in Chinese dress, so, in reverse, with Ch'ien-lung. He had himself and his lovely Mongolian consort, Hsiang Fei, painted dressed up in European armour and helmet, and there exists a charming portrait of the 'Fragrant Concubine', as she was called, dressed *en paysanne*, with a shepherd's crook and basket of flowers—a figure straight out of Boucher, possibly painted by Attiret or one of his pupils (Figure 50).

49.
Anonymous follower of Lang Shih-ning (Giuseppe Castiglione; 1688–1766). *The Belvedere (Fang-wai kuan), in the Yüan-ming-yüan.* Engraving. 1793. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. By the time these engravings were made, Castiglione's Chinese pupils had begun to forget some of what he had taught them, particularly in drawing trees; perhaps also they found the European idea of the formal garden unnatural, even ridiculous.

50.
Anonymous follower of Lang Shih-ning. *Portrait of Hsiang Fei, the 'Fragrant Concubine'.* Eighteenth century. Palace Museum, Peking. This charming figure, possibly inspired by Boucher, was popular in China where it was copied in carved and painted ivory.

51.
Lang Shih-ning (Giuseppe Castiglione; 1688–1766). *Landscape*. Ink and slight colour on silk. National Palace Museum, Taipei. A brilliant exercise in the academic manner of Wang Hui (1632–1717).

52.
Detail of Figure 51. Lang Shih-ning shows his Western training only in the drawing of the little thatched pavilion and of the young gentleman reclining in the window.

When not employed in painting portraits of the emperor or of historical events in his reign or decorating the walls of the Yüan-ming-yüan, Lang Shih-ning devoted himself to painting scrolls depicting the emperor's favourite pets, horses and auspicious plants. Occasionally, he painted landscapes, and his tall landscape in the National Palace Museum, Taipei, is, except in some details, a clever pastiche of the manner of the seventeenth-century orthodox master Wang Hui (Figures 51 and 52). Perhaps his most successful blending of Chinese and Western methods was achieved in the long handscroll, *A Hundred Horses in a Landscape*, which he painted for Yung-cheng in 1728 (Colour Plate 5). The continuous perspective, required by the handscroll format, is of course Chinese, but the depth achieved by means of a continuous ground plane is Western, as are the reflections and shadows. But the extreme restraint with which they are used is a concession to Chinese taste, while Chinese conventions for mountains, rocks and trees are transformed by a quite Western realism in the drawing. In all, this is a brilliant synthesis, cleverly calculated to give the emperor enough of Western realism to delight him, but not enough to disconcert.

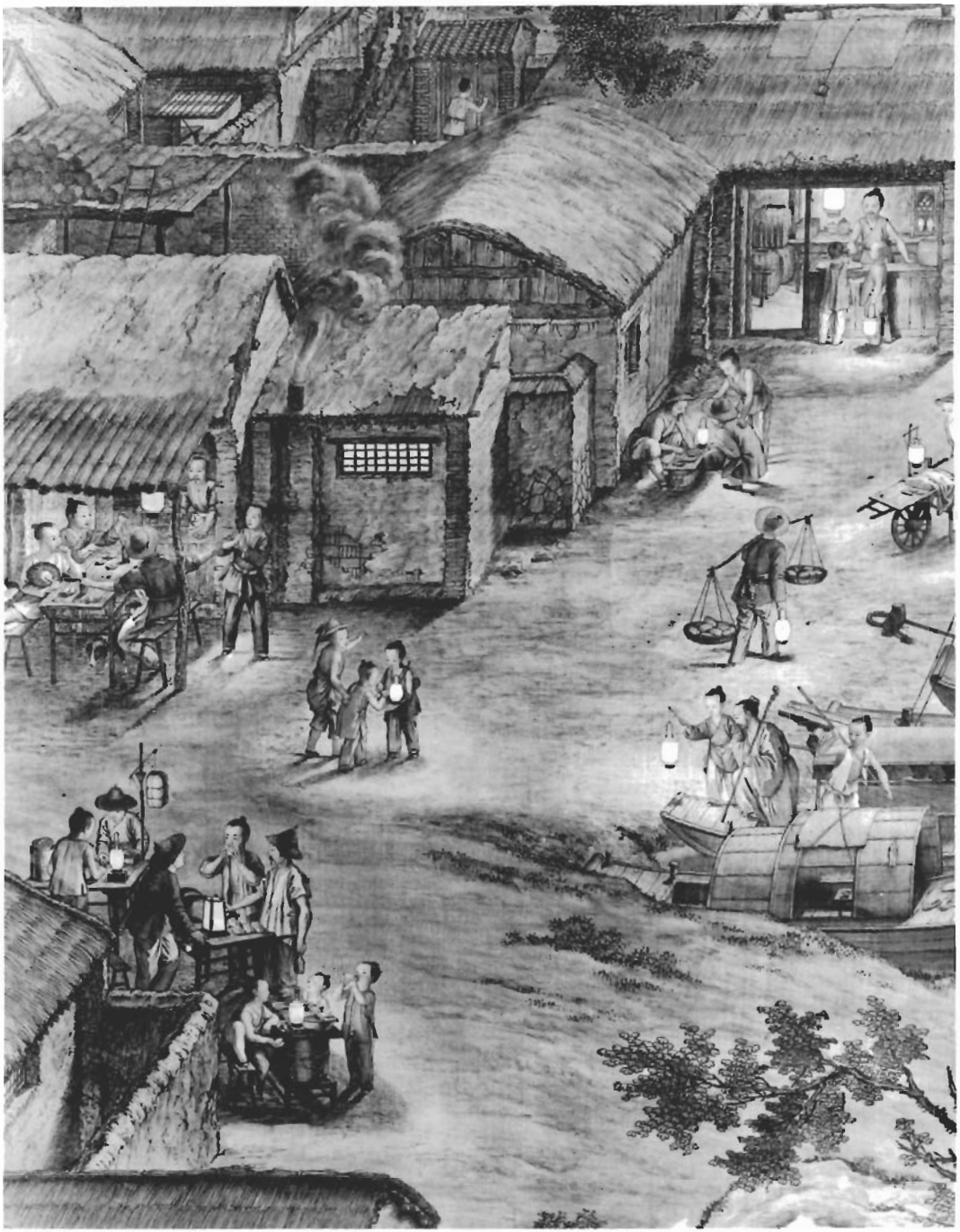
The large panel on silk from a private collection in London seems to belong to this group of courtly portraits painted by the Jesuits and their pupils (Colour Plate 6). An elegant young lady sits in a foreign chair, wrapped in velvet, with a fur-trimmed muff, looking tranquilly down at the little servant girl warming her hands at the charcoal brazier, while another brings what looks like a Dutch coffee pot, jug and teapot on a tray of mother-of-pearl. The setting is subdued Rococo; the painting of many details—such as the glass bulb-bowl, the landscape over the door, the furniture and brackets, and above all the lively, delicate treatment of the lady's face, with its deft highlights and shadows—proclaims the hand of a European, possibly working with Chinese assistants.

Who this European was is not known. The peculiar charm of the figures is French rather than Italian. In a letter of November 1743 Attiret wrote that he painted chiefly in watercolours on silk, or in oil on glass, and seldom in the European manner, except for his portraits of 'the brothers of the Emperor, his wife and several other princes and princesses of the blood, and certain favourites and other seigneurs'. Not only is the central figure disproportionately large, but her face is painted with a care and realism not devoted to the others. This suggests that it is a portrait, and not merely a decorative composition, though whether it is indeed by Attiret, we cannot of course be certain.

In his large compositions Lang Shih-ning sometimes cooperated with a Chinese court painter, the Jesuit putting in the figures, the Chinese the landscape. Among Lang Shih-ning's known collaborators were Ting Kuan-p'eng, Ch'in K'un and T'ang-tai. There was formerly in the Imperial Palace collection an album of illustrations to a section of the ancient *Book of Odes,* in which the landscapes are by T'ang-tai, the buildings by Lang Shih-ning and the figures and animals by Shen Yüan, one of the artists who produced a series of forty views of the Yüan-ming-yüan.

Perhaps it is the hand of T'ang-tai, collaborating with Lang Shih-ning, that we see in a huge and remarkable painting now hanging in the Stanford Museum, known as *Night Market at Yang-ch'eng* (Figure 53). The picture is signed with

53.
Attributed to Lang Shih-ning. *Night Market at Yang-ch'eng*. Detail. Hanging scroll on silk. Dated 1736. Stanford University Art Museum, Stanford. Although the landscape in the background of this fascinating picture may be by a Chinese artist, the drawing of the buildings and figures and the handling of light and shade show the unmistakable hand of a European.



Lang Shih-ning's name and the date 1736, but this may have been added later. The *Night Market* depicts with a wealth of fascinating detail the life along a riverbank outside a city wall on a summer night. There are pedlars and boatmen, wine shops and roadside stalls, drawn in the Chinese medium yet obviously by a European who had exchanged his pen for a Chinese brush. His handling of light and shadow, of human anatomy and the very texture of walls and roofs could not have been learnt in Peking, and there are details, such as the gentleman stepping ashore from a sampan and a girl in a boat drawing water from the river, which look very French, as though the painter had studied engravings after Watteau and Boucher. In the distance, however, there rises a mountain landscape bathed in moonlight, executed, unlike those in the *Hundred Horses* scroll, by an unmistakably Chinese hand. It may be that the *Night Market* represents no actual place, but was painted to give Ch'ien-lung an idea of how his subjects might spend a hot summer night. The origin and history of this painting before the twentieth century are a mystery. It bears no imperial seals, and, like many of the works of the court painters, may have been painted simply as a wall decoration for one of the pavilions of the Yüan-ming-yüan. If so, it must have been taken down long before that great, rambling complex of buildings and gardens began to decay, for it is still in very good condition.

In 1762 Ch'ien-lung completed the conquest of Turkestan, and his generals returned in triumph to Peking. The Jesuits had shown him engravings after the panoramic battle pictures of Georges Philippe Rugendas of Augsburg (1666–1743) and possibly also others after Jacques Courtas, le Bourguignon (1621–76), and these seem to have inspired the emperor to celebrate his own victories in a similar fashion. Sixteen pictures were executed under the direction of the Jesuits, who presumably made the preliminary drawings and supervised the making of the enlarged colour versions. In addition to Lang Shih-ning and Attiret, the work was directed by Ignace Sichelbarth (1708–80), who had arrived in 1745 (a few of whose wretched Castiglionesque paintings survive in the National Palace Museum), and by Jean-Damascène Sallusti, an Augustinian father who became bishop of Peking after the suppression of the Jesuit order in 1773. The sixteen huge battle paintings were hung in the Tzu-kuang-ko, a hall in the western part of the Forbidden City where foreign ambassadors were received. Above them were arranged the portraits of fifty victorious generals, mostly painted by Attiret.

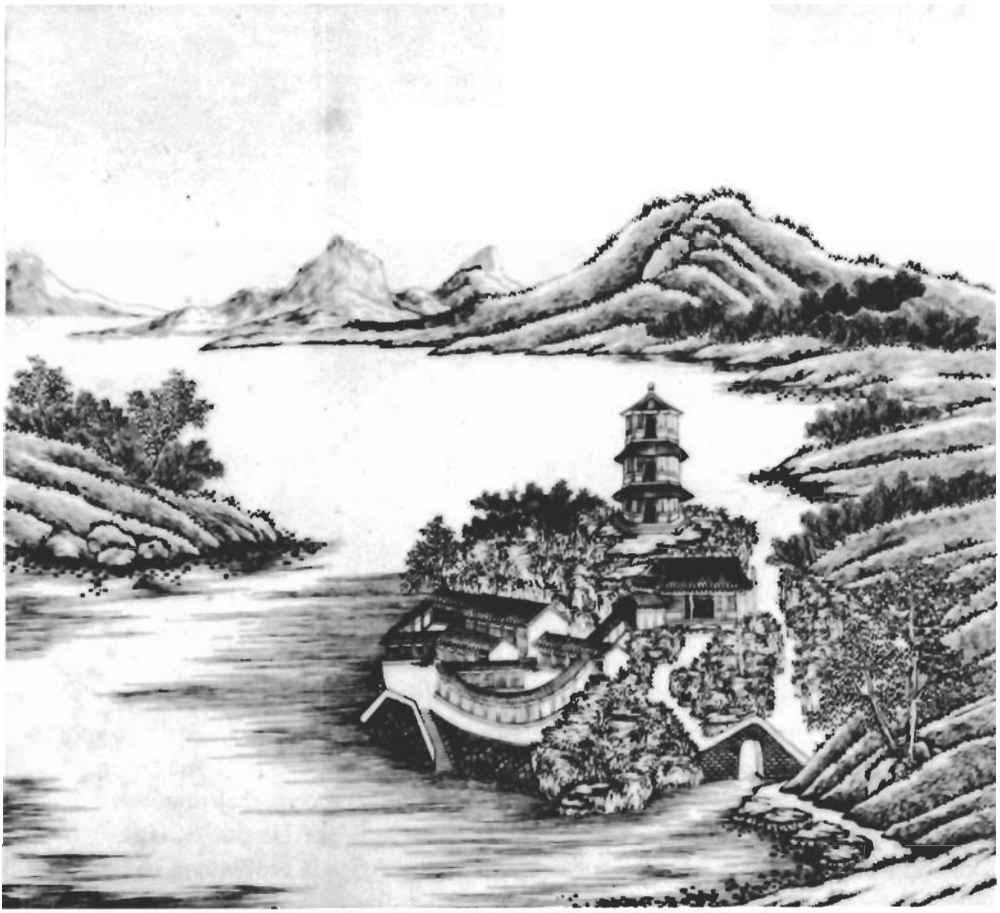
In July 1765 the emperor ordered the Jesuits to make ink copies of the battle pictures to be sent to Europe to be engraved. Lang Shih-ning intended them for Rome, but when the first batch of four reached Canton, the French mission there intercepted them and persuaded the viceroy to direct them to France,

54.
Anonymous. *Ch'ien-lung's Conquest of Turkestan*. British Museum, London. One of a set of sixteen engravings made in Paris between 1767 and 1774 after paintings by Jean-Damascène Sallusti and other missionary artists in Peking.

whose engravers, they said, were the best in Europe. The drawings arrived in Paris in the autumn of 1766. Bertin, minister to Louis XV, saw that they were put into the hands of the director of the Royal Academy, the Duc de Marigny, who, on seeing them, wrote to Attiret that his drawing was very much in the Chinese manner. This must have pleased the Jesuit, for he had said of himself that his own taste, since he had been in China, had become 'a little Chinese'.

The remaining twelve drawings reached Paris by 1772 and the set of sixteen magnificent plates, meticulously engraved by Le Bas, Saint-Aubin and others under the direction of Cochin, was completed two years later. By this time the style had, apart from a vaguely exotic treatment of the mountains, lost all its Chinese flavour (Figure 54). With the exception of a few sets kept in Paris, the whole edition of two hundred impressions, with the original drawings and the plates, was, at the express order of Ch'ien-lung, sent back to Peking in December 1774.

The emperor presented sets to imperial relatives and deserving subjects, and they were immensely admired. He then set out to show that his own engravers could do just as well. He can hardly have been aware of how little developed the



55.
Matteo Ripa (1682–1765). One of the *Thirty-six Views of the Summer Palace (Pi-shu shan-chuang) at Jehol.* Copperplate engraving. 1712–14. Here, by contrast, the European artist is trying to make his engraving look like a Chinese painting, even to the extent of distorting the perspective and imitating the *tien* (dots) along the edges of the hills. These were the engravings that Ripa showed to Lord Burlington in 1724.

art of copperplate engraving was in China. Very shortly after arriving in Peking in 1711, Father Matteo Ripa had been obliged by K'ang-hsi to execute some Chinese landscapes in oils, for which he was ill-fitted. 'I recommended my efforts to the direction of God', he wrote, 'and began to do what I had never before undertaken'. The emperor was satisfied. 'Thus I continued to paint till the month of April, when His Majesty was pleased to command that I betake myself to engraving'. Of this latter art Ripa knew even less. When called upon to engrave the huge maps prepared by the Jesuit fathers, he had to build his own press and make his own ink. K'ang-hsi was so pleased with the result that he ordered Ripa to make thirty-six engravings, after paintings by court artists, of the summer palace at Jehol (Figure 55). In these, the first copperplates (apart from the maps) engraved in China, Ripa with naive and cunning charm manages to convey something of the quality of the Chinese brush technique. When these engravings later appeared in England, they, and Ripa's descriptions, exerted a major influence on the revolution of English garden design initiated by William Kent.

Ripa left for Europe in 1723, but Lang Shih-ning kept the craft going in the Imperial Printing Office (Ts'ao-pan ch'u) and supervised the delightful set of plates of his fantastic Sino-Rococo pavilions in the Yüan-ming-yüan, engraved in 1786. In Ch'ien-lung's lifetime five more sets of campaign engravings were produced by his Chinese craftsmen. One set, cut between 1798 and 1803 after paintings by Feng Ning, depicts the ruthless campaign to exterminate the rebellious Miao aborigines (Figure 56). These later plates, by many hands, are varied in style and sometimes awkwardly composed, but they show a determined attempt to follow the model of the original Conquest series, even using the same landscape elements over and over again. Interesting as they are, however, they represent a stream in eighteenth-century court art that had little influence outside the palace and soon dried up altogether.

The halcyon days of the Yüan-ming-yüan ended with the abdication of Ch'ien-lung in 1796. By then Father Benoist had long been dead, and his defunct mechanical fountains were being supplied, on special occasions only, by chains of men with buckets. Ch'ien-lung's successors continued to use the royal apartments of the Yüan-ming-yüan, but Chia-ch'ing (r. 1796–1820), weighed down with debts, was rigidly economical, and there were no more extravagances. Already the Yüan-ming-yüan was becoming a place of ghosts and memories, while neglect and pilfering were beginning to take their toll.

When Lord Elgin's punitive force put it to the torch in October 1860, only the royal apartments were in decent order. In fact, contrary to popular belief, the British and French managed to destroy only a small part of this vast complex of

56.
Anonymous. *The Subjugation of the Miao Aborigines in 1795*. One of a set of sixteen engravings made by Chinese artists in Peking between 1798 and 1803 after paintings by the court artist Feng Ning. Formerly Richard B. Arkway, Inc., New York. A comparison between this engraving and that in Figure 55 shows how much, by the end of the eighteenth century, Chinese engravers had modified, stiffened and formalised the European style, while still keeping some Western flavour in the figures and the shading.

over two hundred buildings. In spite of the looting that went on for years afterwards, there was enough still standing for the empress dowager to embark in the early 1870s on a costly restoration. But in the face of popular protests this was abandoned in 1874, and the dismantling was resumed; even the wooden piles were dug up and sold for fuel. Today Ch'ien-lung's great fairy palace, in which, long ago, the Jesuits had staged an Italian light opera and Hsiang Fei had dressed up as a French peasant girl, has almost disappeared. Only the ruins of the marble buildings survive.

In 1772 Father Giuseppe Panzi arrived from Paris as a replacement for Attiret. Though his patron dismissed him as obsequious, he sounds from his letters a delightful man, charitable, modest and gay. 'Tout pour l'amour de Dieu!', he wrote home. 'Je suis le peintre, ou mieux le serviteur de la mission pour l'amour de Dieu'. He painted a portrait of the emperor soon after his arrival and other portraits of high officials and Jesuit missionaries, but little is known about his work, and it is doubtful whether, with Ch'ien-lung old and tired and his successor, Chia-ch'ing, immersed in his inherited problems, Panzi was able to sustain his enthusiasm. He died, very old and obscure, in Peking in about 1812 or a little earlier. We hear of two more European painters in the service of the Chinese court before the curtain descends: Joseph Paris, a mechanic, clockmaker and painter of sorts sent out by the Lazarists in 1784, who worked in Peking for twenty years; and Father de Poirot, who lingered on till 1814.

This is a good moment to ask ourselves what the missionary artists accomplished during their two hundred years of dedicated work in China. When we think of the intense interest that they aroused in the seventeenth century, we cannot help being surprised that their ultimate achievement was so meagre. Although in the eighteenth century they painted only for the emperors, many scholars and officials at court must have seen their work. Yet hardly one thought it worth mentioning. The influence of Western art, if it did not peter out altogether, trickled like sand to the lower levels of the professional and the craftsman painters, where it stayed till modern times.

The explanation is not far to seek. In the late Ming period some enlightened intellectuals—as in Japan a century later—looked to the Jesuits for leadership or support, and Western culture was eagerly studied. This was the only time that the literati took Western art seriously. But with the reestablishment of stable authority under the Manchus they no longer needed, or perhaps no longer dared, to associate too closely with the foreigners. From the time of K'ang-hsi until the Opium War, China felt it could afford to ignore European culture. As Ch'ien-lung made plain in his celebrated letter to George III, China needed nothing from the 'Outer Barbarians'. Western thought was almost unknown, Christian-

ity was kept very firmly in its place, and Western technology and the Western arts were confined to serving Ch'ien-lung's own domestic and courtly needs. Besides, Western painting had one fatal flaw, which the court artist Tsou I-kuei summed up in these words:

> The Westerners are skilled in geometry, and consequently there is not the slightest mistake in their way of rendering light and shade [*yang-yin*] and distance (near and far). In their paintings all the figures, buildings, and trees cast shadows, and their brush and colours are entirely different from those of Chinese painters. Their views (scenery) stretch out from broad (in the foreground) to narrow (in the background) and are defined (mathematically measured). When they paint houses on a wall people are tempted to walk into them. Students of painting may well take over one or two points from them to make their own paintings more attractive to the eye. But these painters have no brush-manner whatsoever; although they possess skill, they are simply artisans [*chiang*] and cannot consequently be classified as painters.

'No brush-manner whatsoever'—there is the key. To the Chinese gentleman-painter who aimed at a triple synthesis of painting, poetry and calligraphy, what had the laborious realism of Western oil painting to do with fine art?

Early Nineteenth-Century Contacts in South China

While the foreigners and foreign art were slowly but surely losing their foothold at court, they were beginning to make a very different kind of impact on the South China coast. Macao, larger and much more accessible than Deshima, had been the centre of Portuguese influence in South China since early in the sixteenth century. In the eighteenth century foreign ships were trading directly with Canton. The Cantonese craftsmen were immensely skilled in imitating and adapting European styles and techniques to textiles, screens, furniture, porcelain and a dozen other products made for the European market. This export art, however, which has been exhaustively studied, made almost no impact on what we may call 'fine art' in South China. The gentleman-amateurs continued to paint in the traditional style, being if anything less curious about Western painting than had been some of the seventeenth-century literati who had consorted with the Jesuits. A good deal of semiforeign painting, however, was produced in Canton from about 1750 onwards, some of it of great charm and delicacy (Figure 57) and much of it wrongly attributed by dealers to Lang Shih-ning and his pupils.

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The Meeting of Eastern and Western Art

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