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Artist: Zhao Mengfu 趙孟頫 (1254–1322)  
Title: *Sheep and Goat*  
《二羊圖》  
*Eryang tu*  
Dynasty/Date: Yuan, ca. 1300  
Format: Handscroll  
Medium: Ink on paper  
Dimensions: 25.2 x 48.7 cm (9-15/16 x 19-3/16 in)  
Credit line: Purchase  
Accession no.: F1931.4  
Provenance: Fukushima Company, New York

**Object description:** Plain ivory fastening pin. One (1) outside label, one (1) frontispiece on paper, front and rear mounting silk in champagne color with phoenix and cloud pattern. One (1) artist inscription with signature; two (2) other inscriptions on painting. One (1) colophon on tan back paper. Two (2) artist seals and fifty-one (51) collectors seals.

**Scroll Description:** Outside label and frontispiece by Qianlong emperor; painting with two inscriptions, one by artist and one by Qianlong; front and back mounting silks with Qianlong imperial seals; one early-Ming colophon. Including label, the scroll contains 53 seals.

**Fastening pin:** Plain ivory

**Outside label:** Hongli 弘曆, the Qianlong 乾隆 emperor (1711–1799; reigned 1735–96)  
Ink on paper. One (1) seal.

Eight characters, running script

趙孟頫《二羊圖》。神品。

*Two Sheep*, by Zhao Mengfu. Divine category.

Seal: (1)

*Qianlong chenhan* 『乾隆宸翰』 (square relief) – badly worn

**Frontispiece:** Hongli 弘曆, the Qianlong 乾隆 emperor (1711–1799; reigned 1735–96)

Ink on paper. Dimensions: 26.9 x 58 cm.

Four characters, running script

寢訛神肖

*Divine Likeness of [Sheep in] Motion and Repose*<sup>1</sup>

Seal: (1)

*Guxi tianzi* 『古希天子』 (circle relief)

**Mounting silk 1:** Champagne colored phoenix-and-cloud pattern silk, with three (3) full imperial seals and one (1) imperial seal, half on silk/half on painting (see below)

**Painting Description:** One separately mounted sheet of paper. Sheep and goat in ink, with artist inscription and two of his seals. Cataloguing character, and fifteen seals from one Ming collector (ten full, five half). Inscription (poem) of the Qianlong emperor, with two seals, and eight of his collector seals, plus one additional seal half on front mounting silk. One other imperial seal, plus five seals from four other collectors. Total 34 seals, including twenty-eight full seals and five half seals.

**Artist Inscription:** left side of painting

4 columns, running script

余嘗畫馬，未嘗畫羊，因仲信求畫，余故戲爲寫生，雖不能逼近古人，頗於氣韻有得。子昂。

I have painted horses, but have never painted sheep. So when Zhongxin [unidentified] requested a painting, I playfully drew these for him from life. Though I cannot approach the ancient masters, I have somewhat captured the essential spirit [of the animals]. Zi'ang [Zhao Mengfu].

Signature: 子昂  
Zi'ang

Date: none

Seals: (2)  
*Zhao shi Zi'ang* 『趙氏子昂』 (square relief)  
*Songxuezhai* 『松雪齋』 (rectangle relief)

**Other inscriptions:** (2)

1. Xiang Yuanbian 項元汴 (1525–1590)

Ink on paper. Painting, lower right corner

One character, standard script

門

*men* (door, gate) – cataloguing code (#626)<sup>2</sup>

2. Hongli 弘曆, the Qianlong 乾隆 emperor (1711–1799; reigned 1735–96)

Ink on paper. Painting, top middle

9 columns, running script. Poem (8x5).

子昂常畫馬，仲信卻求羊。三百群辭富，一雙性具良。  
通靈無不妙，拔萃有誰方。跪乳畜中獨，伊人寓意長。  
甲辰新正月，御題。

[Paraphrase:] Zi'ang often painted horses / But Zhongxin requested one of sheep / Declining the riches [he would receive to portray] a flock of three hundred / He captured the nature of this single pair with consummate skill / Phenomenal and altogether marvelous / Who could compare with such outstanding talent / Alone among domestic animals, the lamb and kid kneel to suck [indicating filial piety] / So the meaning he has vested in this painting is eternal.<sup>3</sup> Inscribed by the emperor in the new first month of the *jiachen* year [January 22–February 20, 1784].

Signature: 御題

Inscribed by the emperor

Date: 甲辰新正月

in the new first month of the *jiachen* year [January 22–February 20, 1784]

Seals: (2)

*Gu xi tianzi* 『古稀天子』 (square relief)

*You ri zizi* 『猶日孜孜』 (square intaglio)

**Mounting silk 2:** Champagne colored phoenix-and-cloud pattern silk with two imperial seals (see below)

**Colophon Description:** One separately mounted sheet of paper, bearing one colophon, with five (5) calligrapher seals, together with three (3) whole collector seals and three (3) half seals.<sup>4</sup>

**Colophons:** (1) — Liangqi 良琦 (active mid-to-late 14th century)<sup>5</sup>

Ink on paper. Dimensions: 27 x 26.8 cm.

9 columns, running script

余嘗讀杜工部《畫馬讚》云：「良工惆悵，落筆雄才」，未嘗不歎世之畫者難其人也。晉唐而下，姑未暇論，至如近代趙文敏公書畫，俱造神妙。今觀此圖，後復題曰，「雖不能逼近古人，氣韻有得」，非公誇言，真妙品也。好事者其慎保諸。吳龍門山樵良琦，寓玉峰遠綠軒題，時為洪武十有七年秋七月十九日也。

I have read the *Encomium for a Painted Horse* by Du of the Ministry of Works [Du Fu, 712–770], which says, “Even the best craftsmen feel disconsolate and downcast / At the consummate skill with which he brings down his brush,” and never fail to sigh at how hard it is [to find] such a man among the painters of the world.<sup>6</sup> I will not waste any time discussing [artists from] the Jin and Tang dynasties on down, but when it comes to recent times and the painting and calligraphy of Duke Zhao Wenmin [Zhao Mengfu, 1254–1322], every work he has created is divine and marvelous. Having now seen this picture and the inscription he added at the end, which says, “Though I cannot approach the ancient masters, I have somewhat captured the essential spirit [of the animals],” [I agree that] these were not [merely] boastful words by the Duke, for it truly is a marvelous work. Those with an appreciation for such things should take special care to preserve [this painting]. Inscribed by The Mountain Woodcutter of Dragon Gate, Liangqi from Wu [Suzhou], while residing in the Pavilion of Distant Green at Jade Peak<sup>7</sup>; the date is the nineteenth day of the seventh lunar-month during autumn in the seventeenth year of the Hongwu reign period [August 6, 1384].

- Signature:** 龍門山樵良琦  
Longmen Shanqiao (The Mountain Woodcutter of Dragon Gate), Liangqi
- Date:** 洪武十有七年秋七月十九日  
on the nineteenth day of the seventh lunar-month, during autumn in the  
seventeenth year of the Hongwu reign period [August 6, 1384]
- Seals:** (5)  
*Xijiaxuan* 『夕佳軒』 (rectangle intaglio) – upper right  
*Liangqi zhi yin* 『良琦之印』 (square intaglio) – following signature, top  
*Pu'an* 『樸菴』 (square intaglio) – following signature, middle  
*Wushan yuqiao* 『吳山迂樵』 (square intaglio) – following signature, bottom  
*Longmen* 『龍門』 (rectangle relief, left half)<sup>8</sup> – mounting silk 2/colophon paper join

**Collector seals:** (42)

1. Xiang Yuanbian 項元汴 (1525–1590) – (21)

- Zijing* 『子京』 (gourd-shape relief, left half) – painting, upper right edge  
*Molinzi* 『墨林子』 (rect. intaglio w. clipped corners, left half) – painting, lower right edge – (1/2)  
*Shenpin* 『神品』 (rectangle relief) – painting, upper right  
*Xiang Yuanbian yin* 『項元汴印』 (square relief) – painting, mid right  
*Xiang Zijing jiazhen cang* 『項子京家珍藏』 (rectangle relief) – painting, lower right – (1/2)  
*Ji'ao* 『寄敖』 (oval relief) – painting, artist inscription, upper right  
*Xiang shi Zijing* 『項氏子京』 (square intaglio) – painting, artist inscription, lower right



*Xiang Molin jianshang zhang* 『項墨林鑑賞章』 (rectangle intaglio) – painting, artist inscription, lower right

*Tuimi* 『退密』 (gourd-shape relief) – painting, mid left

*Ju Ni zhi chou* 『沮溺之儔』 (square intaglio) – painting, lower left

*Xiang Yuanbian yin* 『項元汭印』 (square intaglio) – painting, lower left

*Molin Xiang jizi zhang* 『墨林項季子章』 (rectangle intaglio) – painting, lower left

*Qulu* 『籛廬』 (rectangle intaglio, right half) – painting, upper left edge

*Zijing [fu yin]* 『子京[父印]』 (square relief, right half) – painting, upper left edge

*Tianchou [gengnou]* 『田疇[耕耨]』 (square intaglio, right half) – painting, mid left edge

*[Molin] shanren* 『[墨林]山人』 (square intaglio, left half) – colophon, lower right edge

*You fang zhi wai* 『遊方之外』 (square intaglio) – colophon, lower right

*Zijing suocang* 『子京所藏』 (square intaglio) – colophon, lower right

*Xiang Zijing jiazhencang* 『項子京家珍藏』 (rectangle relief) – colophon, under signature – (2/2)

*Molinzi* 『墨林子』 (rect. intagl. w. clipped corners, right half) – colophon, upper left edge – (2/2)

*Xiang molin fu [miji zhi yin]* 『項墨林父[祕笈之印]』 (rectangle relief, right half) – colophon, lower left edge

## 2. Fang Hengxian 方亨咸 (1620–1679) – (2)

*Fang Shaocun shoucang tushu ji* 『方邵村收藏圖書記』 (rectangle relief) – frontispiece, lower left

*Longming Fang Hengxian Shaocun tushu* 『龍暝方亨咸邵村圖書』 (square relief) – painting, lower right

## 3. Song Lao 宋犖 (1634–1713) – (1)

*Song Lao shending* 『宋犖審定』 (rectangle relief) – painting, mid left

4. Hongli 弘曆, the Qianlong 乾隆 emperor (1711–1799; reigned 1735–96) – (14)

*Guxi tianzi* 『古希天子』 (circle relief) – mounting silk 1, top

*Shou* 『壽』 (rectangle intaglio) – mounting silk 1, middle

*Taishang huangdi zhi bao* 『太上皇帝之寶』 (square relief) – mounting silk 1, bottom

*Bian Yongyu shuhua huikao tong* 『卞永譽書畫彙考同』 (rectangle relief) –  
mounting silk 1/painting join, top

*Shiqu baoji* 『石渠寶笈』 (rectangle relief) – painting, mid right

*Qianlong yulan zhi bao* 『乾隆御覽之寶』 (oval relief) – painting, right

*Shiqu dingjian* 『石渠定鑑』 (circle relief) – painting, between animals, top

*Baoji chongbian* 『寶笈重編』 (square intaglio) – painting, between animals, middle

*Chonghuagong jiancang bao* 『重華宮鑑藏寶』 (rectangle relief) – painting, between animals,  
bottom

*Qianlong jianshang* 『乾隆鑑賞』 (circle intaglio) – painting, center, top

*Sanxitang jingjian ji* 『三稀堂精鑑璽』 (rect. relief) – painting, artist inscription, mid right

*Yi zisun* 『宜子孫』 (square intaglio) – painting, artist inscription, mid right

*Wufuwudaitang guxi tianzi bao* 『五福五代堂古稀天子寶』 (square relief) – mounting silk 2, top

*Bazheng maonian zhi bao* 『八徵耄念之寶』 (square relief) – mounting silk 2, bottom

5. Yongyan 顥琰, the Jiaqing 嘉慶 emperor (1760–1820; reigned 1796–1820) – (1)

*Jiaqing yulan zhi bao* 『嘉慶御覽之寶』 (oval relief) – painting, center top

6. Unidentified – (3)

*Yinghou zhenshang* 『應侯珍賞』 (square intaglio) – painting, mid right



*Gengshen Fang Zhong* 『庚申方仲』 (square intaglio) – painting, upper left

*Zisun shichang* 『子孫世昌』 (square intaglio) – painting, mid left

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*Notes*

<sup>1</sup> Qianlong's frontispiece contains a reference to stanza 2, line 3 in a poem titled *Wuyang* 無羊 (No Sheep) in the *Shijing* 詩經 (Classic of Poetry): 「或寢或訛」, “Some [sheep] are *lying down* (*qin* 寢), some are *moving about* (*e* 訛).” See Hong Ye 洪業 (William Hung, 1893–1980) et al., eds., *Mao Shi yinde* 毛詩引|得 (A concordance to the Shih Ching), Harvard-Yenching Sinological Index Series, Supplement 9 (Beiping: Yanjing daxue tushuguan, 1934), 42 (*Mao*#190, stanza 2, line 3).

<sup>2</sup> Composed by Zhou Xingsi 周興嗣 (ca. 500–550), the *Qianziwen* 千字文 (Thousand-character Essay) is a long rhymed composition consisting of 250 four-character lines, for a total of 1000 characters in all. As no character is used more than once, the text became a popular vehicle for students and calligraphers to practice and demonstrate their mastery over a wide selection of characters in various script types. Because the text was so ubiquitous and familiar, it also became employed as a cataloguing system, with each character in order standing for a number. The collector Xiang Yuanbian 項元汴 (1525–1590), who also impressed twenty-one seals on the painting and Colophon 1, used the system as the basis for ordering his massive collection of scrolls. The character written here, *men* 門 (door, gate), is number 626 in the *Thousand-character Essay*. For another example of Xiang Yuanbian's use of the *Thousand-character Essay* as a cataloguing system, see F1931.2, elsewhere in the website.

<sup>3</sup> In Qianlong's chronologically arranged literary works, the emperor's poem appears among those he composed during the first lunar-month of *jiachen* 甲辰 (1784), which agrees with the date on the scroll. See Qianlong, *Yuzhi shi wuji* 御製詩五集, 1:15a, in *Qing Gaozong* (*Qianlong*)



*yuzhi shiwen quanji* 清高宗(乾隆)御製詩文全集, 10 vols. (Beijing: Zhongguo renmin daxue chubanshe, 1993), vol. 8, 216.

The emperor's poem alludes to several early texts that were part of the Confucian canon, thereby reading a moral allegory into the painting. Line 3 contains two references:

1. to the same poem in the *Shijing* as the frontispiece, stanza 1, lines 1–2: 「誰謂爾無羊，三百維群」: “Who says you have no sheep? / *Three hundred* is the *flock*,” quoting Arthur Waley, trans., *The Book of Songs* (New York: Grove Press, 1960), 167.

2. to the text of *Mencius* (5B/5): 「爲貧者，辭尊居卑，辭富居貧」 ([He who takes office] because of poverty should decline a high position and occupy a lowly one, *decline riches* and dwell in poverty.); see Hong Ye (William Hung) et al., eds., *Mengzi yinde* 孟子引|得 (A concordance to Meng Tzu), Harvard-Yenching Institute Sinological Index Series, Supplement 17 (Beiping: Yanjing daxue tushuguan, 1941), 40.

Line 7 refers to an annotation by He Xiu 何休 (129–182) to the *Chunqiu Gongyang zhuan* 春秋公羊傳 (Gongyang's Commentary on the *Spring and Autumn Annals*) in reference to sheep: 「羔，取其執之不鳴，殺之不號，乳必跪而受之，類死義知禮者也」 (As sheep do not cry out when one grabs them, and do not wail when one kills them, and in *suckling they must kneel* to get [nourishment], they are the kind [of animal] that knows propriety and would die for [the sake of] righteousness.). See *Chunqiu Gongyang zhuan zhushu* 春秋公羊傳注疏, 8:17a–b, in *WSKQS*.

<sup>4</sup> Late Ming and Qing catalogues record that this scroll originally contained an additional eight colophons, seven by various fourteenth-century contemporaries of Liangqi, and one by the later Ming collector, Li Rihua 李日華 (1565–1635) (see Traditional Chinese catalogues, above). The missing texts were evidently cut off some time after Li Rihua added his colophon in the early seventeenth century and before the scroll entered the Qing imperial collection in the mid-eighteenth century. All the missing colophons associate the image of *Sheep and Goat* with the life of nomadic herdsmen along the northern frontier, and many specifically refer to the story of



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Su Wu 蘇武 (139–after 60 B.C.E.), a Han dynasty imperial envoy held captive for nearly twenty years by the Xiongnu 匈奴, a confederation of nomadic Central Asian tribes. Su was forced to herd a flock of sheep in conditions of isolation and adversity until a thaw in relations allowed his release. Su Wu’s resistance to Xiongnu coercion and the suffering he endured made him a popular symbol of uncompromising loyalty to the emperor and the Chinese state. The missing colophon texts are translated and discussed in Chu-tsing Li, “The Freer *Sheep and Goat* and Chao Meng-fu’s *Horse Paintings*,” in *Artibus Asiae* 30 (1968): 283–87.

<sup>5</sup> A Chan monk, the colophon writer’s full religious name was Liangqi Yuanpu 良琦元璞. He is primarily known as a poet and scholar of the late Yuan and early Ming and as a member of the literary and artistic coterie that surrounded Gu Ying 顧瑛 (also known by his other given name Gu Dehui 顧德輝, 1310-1369), the wealthy late Yuan dynasty collector and patron of literature and the arts who maintained a magnificent country retreat at Yushan 玉山 (Jade Mountain), near the town of Kunshan 崑山 (a county seat in Jiangsu Province). On Gu’s estate, and his patronage of men such as Liangqi, see David Sensabaugh, “Guests at Jade Mountain: Aspects of Patronage in Fourteenth Century K’un-shan,” in *Artists and Patrons: Some Social and Economic Aspects of Chinese Painting* (Seattle: The Kress Foundation Department of Art History, University of Kansas, and the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, in association with University of Washington Press, 1989), 93–100.

<sup>6</sup> The renowned Tang dynasty poet, Du Fu 杜甫 (712–770), wrote the lines quoted here in praise of his contemporary, the court painter Han Gan 韓幹 (ca. 710–after 780), who was most admired for his paintings of horses. For the full Chinese text of Du Fu’s *Huama zan* 畫馬讚 (Encomium for a Painted Horse), see Li Fang 李昉 (925–996) et al., comps., *Wenyuan yinghua* 文苑英華, 764:3a, in *WSKQS*.



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<sup>7</sup> The editors of the *Shiqu baoji xubian* (see Traditional Chinese Catalogues, above) state that this scroll once belonged to the collection of Gu Ying (see note 5, above), saying they arrived at this conclusion from reading the colophon by Liangqi (是跡據僧良琦跋，乃顧瑛家所藏也).

However, the only statement in Liangqi's text that might be construed as connecting the painting with Gu Ying is the name of the place where he wrote his colophon: "the Pavilion of Distant Green at Jade Peak (Yufeng)." Yufeng 玉峰, also known as Ma'anshan 馬鞍山, is a low mountain located in the northwest corner of old Kunshan and is famous for its view over the surrounding flatlands, as the name of the pavilion here would suggest. While the editors take the place-name Yufeng as a reference to Yushan, Gu Ying's famous estate in Kunshan—and many of the early Ming colophons missing from the current scroll were by individuals known to have associated with Gu Ying at his estate in the 1340s and 50s—in fact there is no direct evidence that the current painting ever belonged to the Gu family. For one thing, it is unclear if the Yushan estate was either intact or still belonged to one of Gu's heirs or descendants when Liangqi and the others added their colophons to the scroll in 1384, some fifteen years after Gu Ying accompanied his son into exile where he died.

<sup>8</sup> Only the left third of this rectangle relief seal is preserved on the right edge of the colophon paper, where it once must have bridged the join to whatever preceded it. To compare with a full impression of the same Liangqi seal on a 1360 example of his calligraphy, see: *Gugong lidai fashu quanji* 故宮歷代法書全集 (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 1978), 89.