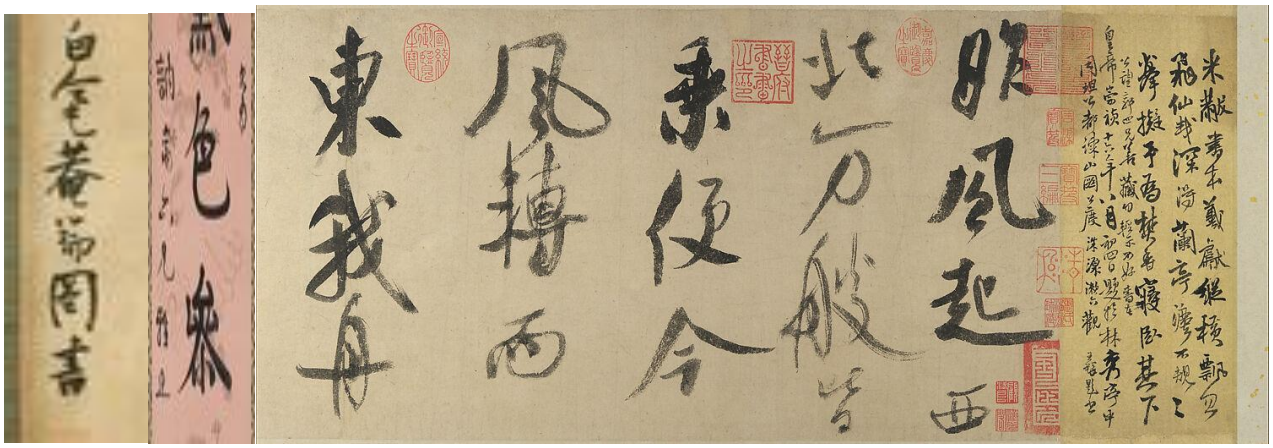
History Group



At our June meeting Jenny presented a comprehensive report on the Ming Dynasty and Margaret covered Chinese Painting and Calligraphy over the centuries with a display of brushes, silks and postcards of famous silk scrolls. In our July meeting we Resumed the chronological account of Chinese history we examined the Han, Sui/Tang and Song Dynasties, each of which united China after periods of instability. They followed the same pattern: unification, reform and expansion; ideological and cultural continuity; some change; prosperity and population increase. Dynasties collapsed: emperors neglected government duties for a sybaritic life and expenditure on vanity projects; corruption and in-fighting among officials and between generals weakened the army and governance; natural disasters were poorly handled and blamed on the state; rebellion and incursions by neighbouring states. Chinese Ceramics, Sculpture and Bronzes from the 2000 BC to 1900 AD and their influence outside China, particularly in Europe from the 16th century AD were discussed and members displayed items. In our 13 August meeting Ruth will examine over 5000 years of Chinese Water Management. I guess we will be unable to avoid diverting to NZ's "Three Waters". Brent will lead discussion on China from The Boxer Rebellion to the death of Mao.

Paul Etheredge, Convenor