

CLP 191 (1994)

Discussant's remarks

(for symposium honoring my retirement, May 1994) (Program attached at end)

Want to thank organizers of this ~~grand~~ event: Joan Kask, Sue Pruyn, Joyce Kallgren, David Keightley, (others...) I've been involved in series of East Asian Studies retirement parties over the years, each better than last; this one caps them all, will be hard to match in future. Hope it's a tradition that our successors will keep up.

Given nature of occasion, didn't feel like preparing heavy discussant paper; certainly not occasion for assigning grades, writing red-penciled comments all over pages, as I have done (for these people & others) over 30 years of teaching at Berkeley, now look forward to not doing. Fortunately, their papers aren't much in need of this--my comments will be more nostalgic than critical.

These four, I'm sure everybody knows, besides being outstanding younger scholars on their own, are representative of quite a few prominent young Chinese painting specialists who've come out of our program and gone on to successes of various kinds. Products of Berkeley program have high rate of success: good jobs, productivity, engagement with field (symposia, conferences, etc.) Has been remarked more than once that we have a certain cohesion in our scholarly direction. Of course I take some credit for that; but also argue that has to do w. strong community feeling, relative freedom from competitiveness, that has characterized our program, set it apart from some others; so that our direction is best seen as outcome of productive interaction, collective achievement, w. myself as guide & instigator, dressing them down on occasion and sending them all

off on forced marches both scholarly & physical. (Ref. to Long March, as it's called. Today's rain reminds me ....)

These papers are by four of my best former students; but quite a few others could have joined them, out of a group of productive, successful scholars it's a great pleasure for me to contemplate. Others here today include Scarlett Jang, who's estab. important place for herself in field w. studies of court ptg; Eliz. Fulder, whose successes are in another realm but no less remarkable & aesthetically worthy; (etc.--who?) Pat Berger, John White, Students one most prizes are those whose work relates clearly to one's own but is highly independent of it. True of each of the papers--but no relationship of derivation.

Central issue <sup>(or problem)</sup> in our field just now (which surfaced very audibly at Tung C-c symposium two years ago): how specialist in Ch. art (ptg) situates herself/himself w. respect to, on one hand, great body of Ch. theory & practice in scholarship of this subject; and on other, to almost equally weighty and imposing body of new cultural criticism generated by our colleagues in western cultural studies. Each exerts a really heavy pressure on Ch. art specialist, saying in effect: Ignore that other group, theirs is a dead end, we offer the only true path to enlightenment. But to accept that claim from either one wholeheartedly, to embrace what it offers fully & uncritically, would I think be fatal; just as it would fatal to fail to draw productively on either one. This is partly because both include, along with the great resources they open for us, a set of terrible taboos, based on their respective ideologies, about which moves one is permitted to make

and which are not permitted. If you make this, this, or this move (on Chinese side) you depart unpardonably from the great Ch. lineage of thought abt Ch ptg, say things with which Tung C-c would have disagreed, and leave yourself open to charge of not really understanding Chinese culture, in deep sense (which always means traditional Chinese sense--god knows I have had that one applied to my own work often enough.) And, from the other side, if you make this, this, or this move, you situate yourself in a discredited past, or you open way for others to associate your arguments & conclusions w. one or another of the currently damaging pejoratives: orientalism, or cultural colonialism, or elitism, or whatever. Either way you end up partially paralyzed, deprived of options that may well, I think, be exactly what the field most needs. (I thought of using metaphor of python that swallows pig whole, and is immobilized; but rejected it since pig is ultimately more nourishing for the python than either of these, swallowed whole, is likely to be.) Berkeley group, if I can call them that, have managed admirably on the whole to draw on both sides, biting off little pieces so to speak, while keeping a healthy independence of both, neither overly sinological nor overly lit-critical, developing our methodologies according to what our material seems to suggest and demand, and so, I think, having a more useful impact on our field than any other of the local schools of Chinese painting scholarship. (I know I sound like a proponent of one of the regional schools of ptg in Ming-Ch'ing China, telling why following any of the others will lead you to perdition. But I think I'm permitted that today.)

Now to the papers. The four people who have presented them represent generally the middle period of my teaching here, the 1970s and early 80s. Marsha Weidner was one of the eight young women who, back in 1970, made up the "Distant Mts." seminar-- under my guidance, organized exhib. of late Ming ptg, wrote catalog. Her essay on social & economic factors in Ming-Ch'ing ptg was ground-breaking; as first attempt, very good. Her present paper follows on another exhib. she herself organized, with others, of works by Ch. women artists, and volume of essays she edited, which together have created new sub-field w/i Ch ptg studies. Our undergrad. students used to come to us wanting to write term papers on women artists or women in Ch ptg, nothing much to give them to read; now a substantial body, much of it by Marsha or stimulated by her. Her paper today ties in also with work by social history specialists--Susan Mann, Ellen Widmer, Dorothy Ko, others--on growth of literacy in women, ideal of ts'ai-nü, in Ming-Ch'ing period, some networking among talented & learned women. Kind of work that helps to create bonds across disciplines. Paper establishes Hangchou as one center of this phenomenon, likening it to Ch'in-Huai district in Nanking (an observation that wouldn't have occurred to me, but convincing). Also: how culture of courtesans mirrored that of scholar-officials: courtesans as travelers, courtesans as recluses. I didn't know that Tung C-c had written abt two of them, assigning them to No. & So. schools (how quintessentially Tung C-c-ish that move is!), or that these are same two who appear in Li Yü's funny play "Ideal Love Matches." Marsha's attempt to deal w. how courtesan artists such as Lin Hsüeh & Huang Yüan-chieh were

regarded and treated w/in framework of amateur-profes. distinction, or social status of artists, and how this might be reflected in their extant ptgs, is admirable, even though some disentangling remains to be done. At the end, she suggests that western art historians who have followed Ch. practice of paying special attn. to works of male amateur painters because they were notable people in other spheres should now do the same for Huang Yüan-chieh and others. This strikes me as a bit misdirected: some of us may indeed have been guilty of that once, but I don't think we've been doing it for some time now--on the contrary, we're critical of the Chinese for praising artists for wrong reasons; and in any case, women artists don't need that kind of special treatment--they're receiving a good deal of attention now, from Marsha and others, as women artists, which is as it should be.

At time of Restless LS seminar, young student named Richard Vinograd had just arrived from UCLA; I didn't admit him to seminar because his Chinese not yet in working order. Sat quietly behind the proper participants in seminar, scarcely saying anything. I was teaching only that seminar in fall semester; in spring I taught two lecture courses, in early Ch. art and later Jap. ptg. (still period when I was doing China & Japan both). Rick enrolled in both, wrote two very impressive term papers, on middle Chou bronze style and Uragami Gyokudô. I read these and realized: what have I got on my hands here? and invited him out to lunch. The rest is, if not history, at least geneology & archaeology. (The mention of archaeology reminds me that I've thought about how it could be carried out in our study room

419A, w. stratified deposits from generations of students. I suspect it would uncover a lot of long-missing slides & photos & documents.)

Rick has been especially deeply engaged, from beginning, in kind of self-situating I spoke of; especially successful in this. Present paper is one of several in recent years that have tried to augment terms of our discourse, looking for new & fruitful ways of understanding & formulating the big issues in later Ch ptg, notably its ways of constructing its relationship to its past, by viewing them from various perspectives. In 1991, for sympos. on "Remembering and Representing" in art history, he did a paper on "Private Art & Public Knowledge in Later Ch. Ptg"; for great Tung C-c symposium of 1992 one on "Vision & Revision in 17c Ptg." arguing (among other things) for a kind of narrativity in the reading of Tung's more complex and allusive works, of which the stages can be read by the viewer through traces incorporated in the work. This paper was considered by some with whom I spoke as the best among the 22 presented there, and by most all the non-Chinese participants, at least, as one of the 2 or 3 best. And now paper on "Geneologies, Histories, and Archaeologies." Test of success of any such project is how much new light it casts on ptgs; and this one certainly does that--for instance, in its treatment of Shih-t'ao's "Searching Everywhere for Wonderful Peaks" handscroll of 1691--which he had already considered briefly in his 1992 paper. This new discussion of it, and Vinograd's quite illuminating likening of it to the handscrolls depicting K'ang-hsi's southern tours, makes us eager to read the large-scale Shih-t'ao study that is his present project.

Our other two speakers belong to slightly younger generation: both were among the participants in another seminar that produced an exhibition and catalog, the 1981 Shadows of Mt. Huang. Both were by then, however, old hands in the program. I remember when Hiro Kobayashi came into it, after only a few months in an English language program in this country. (He already had a lot of academic work in Ming-Ch'ing history & art history behind him, however, in Japan.) He plunged immediately into my seminar on late Ming figure painting, another that had a number of notables in it and was unusually productive of careers--Judy Andrews (whose Ts'ui Tzu-chung dissertation originated there), Anne Burkus (similarly for Ch'en Hung-shou)--Arnold Chang--three who unhappily could not be with us today. I remember thinking about what to suggest to Hiro, some topic on which good writings existed in Japanese, so we could exploit his strengths--and hitting on late Ming pictorial prints. Couldn't foresee, of course, that this would set direction for much of his subsequent work--masters thesis, Ph.D. dissertation, articles publ. in recent years in Japan (incl. one that won prize for best Kokka article by younger scholar for that year.) Extending this direction of research, Hiro has discovered Chinese woodblock-picture sources for ptgs by Edo-period artists unsuspected before, and so helped to illuminate whole sinophile area w/in Edo-period ptg. Present paper carries this investigation further, introducing examples unknown to me and I assume to other specialists. In particular, Yoshimura Shûzan, a totally new name to me--doesn't even appear in writings I have on Jap. picture books, or in Laurence Roberts' dictionary of Jap.

artists--who turns out to be making extremely interesting uses of Ch. pictorial materials. (As professor still w. red pencil in hand, I would note in margin of one of last pages that the Obaku Zen channel of importation should be considered when we're writing about the presence in Japan of ptgs by a late Ming artist from Fukien, as Wu Pin was.)

Ginger Hsü is another who was involved in Shadows of Mt. Huang seminar--8 participants, as w. Restless LS, who made low-cost tour of East Coast museums & collections, led by myself, to search out ptgs to include. Both trips still remembered fondly. I remember very well my first meeting w. Ginger, in Taipei, after we had admitted her to grad. program; she took me off to a peripatetic lunch in a big food market, and after about a half-hour I informed her that whatever her views on the matter might be, she was going to be known as Ginger. Couldn't say why, still can't; just a mysterious matter of rightness. Her first seminar w. me was on Wen Cheng-ming, and she did a presentation on his art theory, an especially admirable achievement because Wen Cheng-ming didn't write any art theory. Matters such as that never deterred Ginger. She ended up doing her dis., however, neither on Wen C-m nor on Anhui ptg, but on the economics of ptg in 18c Yangchou, a much-admired piece of work which has come to be used by many in the field, including myself. Now embarking on new project, of which present paper one part, dealing w. popular iconography of this period and how literati artists such as Chin Nung appropriated it for their own very different purposes. It's quietly innovative, as Ginger's work tends to be; her



handling of interaction of high & low levels of culture so interesting that with minimal rewriting & working in of key words such as "negotiation" and "mapping" and the like, probably could be turned into quite creditable example of New Historicism. (As could Rick's interrelating of Shih-t'ao scroll and work of hack artists who ptd K'ang-hsi's Southern Tours scrolls.) But Ginger's suggestions abt this, and about how literati displaced (another one!) displaced their anxieties and frustrations are more valuable on their own, and potentially very productive--as is her provocative discussion of drunkenness, a recurring topos in Ch. ptg.

All in all, these are four very good <sup>stimulating</sup> papers, all parts of larger projects in progress, all indicative of liveliness of our group, all the kind of work that makes an old professor proud to have had a part in producing such people. Want to thank them, again, for coming and giving papers; thank all my colleagues and friends who came; and thank organizers for what has really been a lovely and memorable occasion.

**IMAGES AND IMAGINATION:  
Perspectives on Chinese and Japanese Art  
of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries**

**A SEMINAR IN HONOR OF JAMES CAHILL**

*Saturday, May 7, 1994  
2:00-6:00 pm*

*150 Boalt Hall  
University of California, Berkeley*

**AGENDA**

- 2:00 pm **Welcoming Remarks**, *David N. Keightley*, Chair, Department of History, University of California, Berkeley
- 2:10 pm **Ladies of the Lake: Three Seventeenth-Century Women Painters of Hangzhou**, *Marsha Weidner*, University of Kansas
- 2:40 pm **Sino-Japanese Interrelationship in Art in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: Reincarnation and Reinterpretation of Chinese Iconography**, *Hiromitsu Kobayashi*, Sophia University
- 3:10 pm *Coffee Break*
- 4:00 pm **Genealogies, Histories, and Archaeologies: Some Projects for Painting in Ming-Qing China**, *Richard Vinograd*, Stanford University
- 4:40 pm **A Door-God Who Went Beyond**, *Ginger Cheng-chi Hsu*, University of California, Riverside
- 5:10 pm **Discussion**, *James Cahill*, University of California, Berkeley

**Informal reception to follow**

*Sponsored by the Institute of East Asian Studies, the Group in Asian Studies, the Centers for Japanese and Chinese Studies, and the Department of History of Art, University of California, Berkeley.*