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Seattle lecture, "The Japaneseness of Japanese Nanga Painting"
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Pleased to be here on occasion of this exhibition, distinguished selection of early to middle period Nanga paintings. Also pleased to be talking, once more, on large, complex question of "Japaneseness." — by which of course we mean, in this context, difference from Chineseness (or Koreanness) Looking back over my lengthy career, I see that I've always been drawn to cross-cultural topics: China and Japan (both ways: Japan to China in late period), China and Europe, Japan and Europe. How artists working within one culture get access to works from another culture, what they choose to adopt from them. (This is, I think, right way to put it: avoids "influence" model with its objectionable implications.) Talking or writing abt Japanese ptg, as I have over some thirty years, I've never failed (I hope) to make point that I come to the subject as a Chinese art specialist, with, no doubt, certain biases; but also that art-historical moments when Jap. ptg breaks free of Chinese models seem to me moments when it is most interesting and attractive. From my 1972 Nanga catalog to the chapter on Buson in last year's book The Lyric Journey: Poetic Ptg in China & Japan, my accounts have consistently traced a two-stage process: first, what the Japanese artists take from Chinese ptg, and how they learn about it; and second, how they transform these adopted motifs and elements of style ~~into ones~~ until that can properly be called "Japanese." (And what I mean by that is topic of tonight's lecture.) Another issue of great interest, of course, is what doesn't carry over: how these elements of subject & style have certain implications in China that have no easy equivalents in Japan, so that they end up meaning something else in their new setting.

All these have been done, perhaps, with more theoretical sophistication by others, such as David Pollack for literature; my determination has always been more to keep my feet on the ground than to stick my head into the empyrean--and this with a full knowledge that keeping feet on the ground will seem hopelessly mundane to some people, who are not the ones for whom I write. Also, I'm quite aware that talking of "Japaneseness" lays one open to

the charge of "essentializing"--arguing, that is, that there is an essential quality in Japanese art that can be identified as "Japanese." This is taken to be a fault, today, because it can be implicated in a cultural slur, a put-down of "Japaneseness" in relation to China. If it has become that, in any of my writings, of course I am guilty. I've tried to see that it doesn't-- arguing, for instance, in the preface to the Lyric Journey book, that the relative freedom of Japanese painters of the late centuries from certain self-imposed restrictions that hamper Chinese painters of the same period gives the Japanese works a freshness and immediacy that their Chinese contemporaries have trouble attaining.

On questions of this kind I have tried to be pragmatic: If we can recognize some phenomenon, I think we are obliged to accept it and try to account for it, not attempt to deny it. As a parallel case: At a symposium on regionalism in Ming-Ch'ing painting in New York several months ago I argued that if a good connoisseur can distinguish, within a large group of early Ching paintings, works by Anhui-region artists from those by Nanjing-area artists, with few mistakes, it's patently foolish to deny that there is a distinguishable Anhui style, or cluster of styles, and another for Nanjing, in the early Ch'ing. (Pointing this out didn't keep others on the program from denying it, or saying that it didn't interest them.) Similarly for Chinese and Japanese ptg: we can tell them apart, with fairly few mistakes; although saying how we tell them apart is harder. It's a question I've pursued over the years, without ever arriving at any grand all-embracing answer; and I'm happy to have the occasion to try again.

Robert Treat Paine, years ago, made the much-quoted statement that Chinese ptg tends to be philosophical, and Japanese ptg decorative. This does indeed involve some cultural bias, which was endemic to East Asian art scholarship at that time; obviously, anyone given a choice would rather be philosophical than decorative. I've tried over the years to find the grain of truth in Paine's formulation, saying, for instance, that in order to accept it we have to re-define" decorative" to encompass great works of art; if ptgs by Sôtatsu and

Kôrin are decorative, then so are a lot of ptgs by Matisse and Picasso. Joan Stanley-Baker made another ambitious attempt to pin down the difference, locating it in different kinds of brushwork. This, too, has its element of truth, but wouldn't be central to my own attempt to define it. (Since "good brushwork" is a basic criterion of value for Chinese ptg theorists, denying it to the Japanese, as the Chinese commonly do, <u>does</u> seem to involve a cultural bias.)

I want tonight to approach this question of "Japaneseness" from several angles, beginning with one closest to Robert Paine's "decorative": the Japanese tendency to make stylistic choices that enhance the abstract, sheer visual beauty of the work--its "decorative value," if you will.

S,S. Last year I gave a lecture at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art titled "Two Snowy Peaks Seen from Afar: A Chinese View of Sesshû and Sesson." I chose the title, months before the event, with no clear idea of what I would talk about; as it developed, the lecture was not the gentle put-down of Sesshû that I had planned, portraying him as an interesting but rather provincial Ming Che-school painter, whose claims to derive his style directly from the Sung-Yüan masters, and whose low opinion of his Chinese contemporaries in the Ming, seemed a matter of nationalist or chauvinistic rhetoric. I had taken that line in the past, and my colleague at UCLA Don McCallum, who himself feels that way about Sesshû, looked forward to such a lecture--I think I disappointed him. Going through old reproductions of ptgs ascribed to Sesshû I found an album of landscapes, long neglected but seeming (to me) probably genuine, along with several other ptgs, which make it clear that Sesshû in his (presumably) early period, while he was in China or shortly after his return, was entirely capable of working in close approximations of Sung styles, with all their nuances of ink-tone, sensitive detail, and successful renderings of misty space. Even though his ptgs of this kind couldn't be mistaken for Sung works, they could be taken to be close, fairly successful Ming imitations of them.

S,S. From this it follows that the departures from this Sung-like style in Sesshū's later works were deliberate; and, in turn, that we might legitimately understand them as calculated moves in the direction of a distinctively Japanese ink-monochrome landscape style. I illustrated this process, as I would like to understand it, with a series of splashed-ink landscapes in the manner of the late Sung (13th cent.) monk-artist Yü-chien. On right, fan ptg attrib. to him, ptg long in Japan, since Jap. ptgs apparently based on it go back to time of Sesshû or beyond. Now, the success of such a ptg as an evocation of a spacious, atmospheric landscape, with the parts readable as hilltops and trees and so forth, depends on the brushstrokes not being distinct, well-shaped, neat; on the contrary, they are ragged, amorphous, run together, and because of that powerfully suggestive. Won't take time to analyze how this works; will only point out that ink values separate near and far, dry strokes suggest rough surfaces of earth and rock with play of light and shadow, wet strokes are read as atmospheric blurring, etc. Small miracle of making seemingly casual strokes work effectively as elements in coherent representation of scene. Note for instance volumetric drawing of hilltop. Fisherman in boat. When Sesshu paints the well-known copy after Yü-chien in his series of copies of fan ptgs (at left), he does something quite different: emphasizes formal elegance of brushstrokes, which become distinct, not merged; variations in ink value less directed twd. separation of forms in space, or rendering their volume, than twd pure visual beauty. No comparable development of ink-monochrome ptg can be found in Ming that would serve to account for this.

S←. Here is Ogata Kōrin doing his version of composition--he must have seen this late Sung fan ptg too. Or else Sesshū's fan. Turned into cluster of brushstrokes that hold our interest in their own right, not resolving into clear image.

S,.S. At right, another ptg attrib. to Yü-chien, "Clearing Mists over Mt. Village"; at left, twofold screen by Ogata Kôrin in Seattle Art Mus., clearly based on it. (Point out comp. elements). But entirely

different; again, Jap. ptg flattened, brushstrokes take on independent existence--

S, S. And this is direction in which Sesshu will continue in his production of "splashed-ink" landscape, which became one of his favorite types. (One in Tokyo N.M., one in Cleveland Mus.) Note extreme simplification, conventionalization, in Tokyo ptg, of motif of two people facing each other in boat. Has conflated fisherman-in-boat motif from Ch. work with two-people-facing motif from Ma Yuan and Hsia Kuei--doesn't make a lot of sense representationally--who rows the boat? but who cares? not kind of thing Sesshu is concerned with by now. In Cleveland ptg, brushstrokes even more independent of rep. or even suggestion of specific things, they are locked stably together into highly formalized configuration; light & dark don't work to define planes of distance. What began as a highly evocative image of an evanescent passage of scenery has been transformed into a tightly organized, stable structure of broad, non-descriptive brushstrokes. The identifying elements of scene, insofar as they are still readable at all, have been turned into conventional signs. And even more than before, the shapes of the brushstrokes, and their ink values, take on a certain independence of descriptive or representational purpose; they work as pure form, visually very satisfying.

-- S. Detail of LS attrib. to Sesshû in this museum. Without getting into authenticity questions--which I'm not competent to deal with--can note even further degree of transforming of coherent, spatially readable scene into structure of brushstrokes. Too far in this direction to be real Sesshû? or Sesshû himself pushing this aspect of his ptg almost over the edge? Won't try to decide. Will only say that we see here is somehow very Japanese, and, I would argue, it marks the real beginning of a great development of Japanese ink ptg as largely independent of Chinese. I made this argument some years ago, on occasion of a big exhib. of Jap. ink ptg.; didn't credit Sesshu for his role as a major initiator of it, as I would now be inclined to do. **S,S.** One could follow through by showing Tôhaku's pine trees, ink ptgs by Sotatsu and Korin,

S,S. by Taiga and Gyokudo (left, LS by Gyokudô in west-coast collection), all the way down to Tessai and (right) Murakami Kagaku (as I did at another symposium last year), always making basically the same observations about the relative divorcement of brushstrokes and ink values from the representational purposes that they served in Chinese painting.

S,S. We can see it also, at the highest level, in Yosa Buson's great painting of the city of Kyoto on a snowy night, in which virtually every Chinese rule for how brush and ink should be employed is ~~broken~~ violated, to sublime effect. Even though the line of poetry is Chinese (The color of night over storeyed halls, snow on the myriad houses), Buson's poetic vision is entirely Japanese. We will deal with Buson, and how he develops the capacity to create such works as this, later on.

S,S. Pursuit of this "decorative" quality, sheer beauty of ink values and repetitions of shapes and brushstrokes, has its equivalent of course in colored ptg--in fact, usually located there, in Rimpa school of Sotatsu & Korin & their followers. (Here, Korin & Roshû doing Utsuyama scene.) This is kind of ptg that we think of as being quintessentially Japanese, for late period.

S,S. It is part of the genius of Ikeno Taiga to be able to carry out a kind of Rimpafication (to coin a word) of the Chinese styles and themes, transforming them into patterns of flat color and repeated strokes entirely in harmony with the Japanese tradition, and espec. Kyoto, tradition he knew so well. Here, ptgs of 1748 (left, Red Cliff, based distantly on some Chinese model) and 1749, LS w. trees & man on bridge.

S←. Detail of 1749. With enough time & slides I could demonstrate how he derives this style from woodblock colorprints in Mustard Seed Garden manual--have done this in other lectures; we even planned an exhibition (etc.--never carried out.) Player - piano analogy.

S,S. This side of Taiga's style is taken up by, among others, his friend & follower Kuwayama Gyokushû, notably in this album of landscapes. There is a danger in this stylistic direction: can quickly

(could have used Aiseki screen, or others)

turn decorative in negative sense: thin, flat expressively as well as formally, lacking in tensions that hold our interest in good art.
S ← Another follower, Kanryô, exemplifies this pitfall, I think; his ptgs can be visually lovely but seem in the end expressively empty. This was one of the traps that forever beset the lesser Nanga masters--as well as others, for instance later Rimpa artists.
S,S. (Mokubei, 1826, "Listening to Wind in Pines.") Best painters escape this in a number of ways; Aoki Mokubei, by vigorous, seemingly "wild" brushwork and inventive compositions. (Two people walking in mist, only upper parts visible.) Lively, visually stimulating style.
S ←. Upper part. Yet even Mokubei's "wild" brushwork doesn't have real implications of powerful tension or unrest that charges brushwork of such Chinese masters as Hsü Wei, or even Yangchou painters. Mild, pleasing, undisturbing.
S,S. Nanga artists understood, I think, this pull twd dilution of Chinese styles as one aspect of Japanization, some of them tried to resist it by understanding the Chinese styles better and imitating them more closely. Another way to construct history of Nanga is through this process. But not by any means a matter of steady "progress"; already some close imitations of Chinese models at beginning, espec. in works of Sakaki Hyakusen, who could be almost Chinese in some of his works. (Describe.) (Around middle of 18c)
→ S. Would be hard to find anything clearly Japanese in either of these. (Hyakusen was of Chinese lineage? Maybe.) Nor would any Japanese artist approximate the Chinese styles so closely again until much later in the history of Nanga.
S,S. In fact, seen from viewpoint of success in imitating Chinese styles, history of Nanga can be said to have a dumbbell shape: thick at ends, thin in middle. By the second decade of the 19th cent. or so, much more Chinese ptg to be seen in Japan, including more truly "Southern School" works, closer studies possible. (Here, Tanomura Chikuden, 1830, work in this museum: he had access to Ch ptgs from which he learned dry-brushdrawing & other techniques.
S,S. Or this wonderful "Bamboo Groves and Waterfall" by Yamamoto Baiitsu, a bit later, around middle of century--spatial effects,

refinements of brushwork, scarcely possible in Nanga before. He had access to good col. of Ch. ptgs. in Nagoya, where he worked, could when he chose draw on Ch styles in this way.

S,S. And by later 19th cent., e.g. in this 1864 work by Hine no Taizan (Monsen? Now this museum), Japanese ptgs could "pass," virtually indistinguishable from Chinese. So, Nanga artists achieve their goal; and Nanga ptg as vital, independent mvt. virtually ends, except for Tessai and a few others. (Fine ptg--using to make art-historical point. Not put-down.) Strongest period of Nanga lies between these two points of high sinicization.

S,S. An interesting chapter of Nanga is the pursuit of the Yuan master Huang Kung-wang by some of the Japanese artists. Huang Kung-wang was recognized as the quintessential "Southern School" painter, whose innovations in compositional method and in a certain kind of built-up or overlaid brushwork were enormously influential in later Ch ptg. (LS by Wang Shih-min at right exemplifying both.) This is what some Nanga artists--in my view, not the most interesting group--were determined to capture. But had no good models--a few Chinese amateurs (such as I Fu-chiu), woodblock pictures. A late version of his 1341 "Stone Cliff at Pond of Heaven (at left) was in Japan at least by time of Hyakusen, who wrote colophon for it, copying info. on artist from <u>P'ei-wen-chai shu-hua p'u</u>. (Couldn't find slide--now in Fujita Mus. in Osaka.)

--> S. Again, Hyakusen alone in early Nanga can imitate this style with considerable success, making his ptg almost indistinguishable from Ch. Orthodox-school works. But, fortunately perhaps, none of Nanga artists after him, at least until very late, could do the same.

--> S. One of artists engaged in this determined pursuit was Noro Kaiseki, who saw this ptg in 1810, and immediately felt he had risen to new height in mastery of "So. School" style--this is his 1811 "Autumn LS,"

S <--. (Det. of upper part.) Kaiseki doesn't understand how to use this manner for volumetric renderings of landscape forms; but had indeed come to some understanding of kind of repeated & overlaid brushwork used by Orthodox school masters in China. But once

mastered, what then? Kind of dead-end. Already by mid and later 18c, this Orthodox landscape manner scarcely being practiced with any fresh energy in China; ~~wasn't going~~ unlikely to to have any notable creative development in Japan.

S,S. Another by Kaiseki, 1819; LS by Rai Sanyô, who was more Confucian scholar than painter, and never got beyond this dilute version of "Southern School" style. Lots of ptgs of this kind; easy style to learn & practice; they make up least interesting side of Nanga. (Story of Japan Times reviewer who complained of Nanga exhib. that too much of ptg was flat & boring & uneventful; and was chastised in letter from another (U.Mich. grad student) pointing out that in So. School ptg one ~~didn't~~ doesn't look at picture, one ~~admired~~ admires formal qualities & brushwork--quoting me. I thought: oh my god, what have I done.)

S,S. In hands of Nakabayashi Chikutô, contemp. of Baiitsu, Huang Kung-wang style (by way of late Ming artist Lan Ying) undergoes final dissolution into repeated geometric forms; not unpleasant, but one tires of it quickly when hung on one's wall.

S,S. Once more, great artist can use more or less same elements of style to make exciting pictures. Here is Uragami Gyokudô, in early work ("Green Pines & Russet Valleys" of 1807) taking up the practice of repeated brushstrokes and overlaid, built-up brushwork and making it his own, charging it with extraordinary nervous energy. What began as quiet applications of horizontal strokes along contours have become energizing repetitions of larger strokes set diagonally and hovering outside the earth masses. If anyone in China had been able to do anything comparable to this with the Orthodox manner, the later history of Chinese landscape would have been quite different.

S,S. <u>Idea</u> of layered applications of brushwork for effects of depth underlies, I think, ~~his~~ Gyokudô's great work titled Tôun Shisetsu, or "Fine Snow from Eastern Clouds" (col. of Kawabata Yasunari, in whose house in Kamakura I first saw it; [in 1955;] later took Wen Fong there, and he was equally struck by it, sat gazing at it for long time--I commented that this was probably first time in history that Chinese connoisseur had spent more than one minute looking at a Japanese

ptg.) One could build whole lecture on "Japaneseness of Nanga Ptg" around this one picture, looking at it from various angles, including distinctive use of ink tonality. But I want to get on to my final section.

(S,S) My final section has to do with a more elusive aspect of late Japanese ptg, including Nanga, in its relationship to the Chinese ptgs that were its models. I have offered in several recent writings and lectures the opinion that Chinese artists of the later centuries on the whole suffered under more strictures--things that they were enjoined by critics and theorists not to do, and could do only at considerable risk to their standing and reputations--than Japanese artists of the same period. And the Japanese artist I have used to represent on the highest level the achievements permitted by the relative freedom that Japanese ptrs enjoyed has been the 18th century poet-painter Yosa Buson. Those artists within Nanga who aspired to the "pure Southern School" ideal were aware that some of their compatriots were violating it--Nakabayashi Chikutô, for instance, two of whose relatively arid landscapes we saw a bit earlier, belittles Buson's works as having too much of "the flavor of haiku poetry" in them--he hates this haiku flavor, he writes. Chikutô had read enough of Chinese theoretical writings to understand that paintings imbued with poetic sentiments and human feelings were considered by the lofty-minded Chinese arbiters of taste to be rather vulgar, or low-class. (Again, in various recent writings, I've tried to show that these qualities are not entirely absent from late Chinese ptg, but only from Chinese literati ptg, which we have wrongly come to think of as the part that deserves our more or less exclusive attention and admiration. But that is another lecture--which in fact I delivered yesterday at the U. of Washington.)

(like Ch'ing Orthodox)

But it is exactly the poetic flavor, or haiku flavor, which makes Buson's late works, especially, so engaging, and raises them far above any level that artists like Chikutô could attain. It can be felt even in some of his earlier works, such as the screens of horses dated 1763 in the Kyoto National Museum (detail at left)--these are

copies after the Chinese artist Shen Ch'üan, but through small changes, such as the drawing of the foal, inject touches of feeling into Shen's rather cold style. And Buson never so insistent as Shen Ch'üan in his use of European-derived highlighting--Shen was one of Ch ptrs heavily affected by European illusionistic pictorial devices. So Nanga was also spared that.

→ **S.** Buson's foal appears in his late-period paintings, notably the one from which this is a detail (1780s), in the broader, looser, slightly whimsical drawing of this late period. Another part of what makes Buson's ptgs lovable, Shen Ch'üan's not.

S,S. A small, late (1781), lovely painting by Buson of "Visiting Tai"--the well-known story of how Wang Hsien-chih traveled by boat on a snowy, moonlit night to visit his friend Tai K'uei, but when he reached Tai's house, never went in--he had come carried by feeling, but then the feeling ran out, and he went home. Anecdote stands for virtue of spontaneity, letting feeling overcome logic. While I was working on an article on Buson and Chinese painting, I found in a Kyoto store the very picture that Buson's must be based on, the work of a minor Chinese artist, unrecorded but probably 18th cent., named T'ang Hsien-tzu. (Buson only reversed the composition; otherwise very similar.) I made slides but left it there; whereas I would have given a lot to own the Buson. Why is one so successful, other not? It has to do, again, with Buson's light, playful drawing, and with his subtler handling of ink washes etc.; but also

S,S. with the way he characterizes the simply-drawn figures, in equally subtle ways, imparting to the picture what we can legimately call a poetic mood. Related to haiga, the spontaneous, simple pictures done to accompany haiku poems--Buson was great master of these as well.

S ← Hyakusen, from whom he learned a lot, could also catch momentary moods in simply-drawn figures--here, two boatmen relaxing as the float down the river on a raft. And Hyakusen was also a haiku poet and haiga painter--this quality in ptgs of Hyakusen and Buson is indeed related to haiku, and haiga--Chikutô was right in that, at least.

S,S. How Buson reached his great period, what he learned from Hyakusen and from Chinese paintings, was principal subject of third chapter of book I published last year, The Lyric Journey: Poetic Ptg in China and Japan. I don't want to repeat that account at length, but will insert a quick outline of it here, since it is basic to what I want to say about this aspect of Japanese Nanga ptg--its ability and willingness to capture the mood and feeling of some momentary, everyday experience. In China, more difficult for artists to break away from established thematic categories; portrays als of everyday life and momentary feeling were seen there as trivializing the art of painting. In Japan, Hyakusen had opened the way in pictures that used special systems of brushwork to evoke agitation and excitement of walking in rain, or of wind blowing over grassy slopes. But he died young, never entirely realized potential of this new expressive capacity of brushwork, which was quite new to Japanese ptg.

S,--. Buson makes it all work perfectly in best of his late works, such as this small picture on satin, "Clearing After Rain in Spring," in which he pursues & attains poetic effect of sun breaking through clouds, lighting up field of yellow flowers at right while grove of trees in lower left is still dark. Beside this, Hyakusen's picture looks tentative and more than a bit awkward.

S,S. Another early Nanga artist who studied Chinese paintings and understood how to make Chinese-style brushwork serve Japanese poetic purposes was Kô Fuyô, a Confucian scholar, poet, and painter who was a friend of Ikeno Taiga. (He inscribes the picture at right as in Taiga's manner.) In a few of his works, such as this pair of small tanzaku paintings, he reveals an unusual sensitivity, for the time, to nuances of brushwork,

(2 screens)

--,S. and how they can be used to evoke specific, momentary experiences--here, of being in a waterside pavilion while the wind blows the trees and agitates the water. But Kô Fuyô seems to have painted only a few works, and had little influence on others.

S,S. Another aspect of this development of a specifically Japanese kind of poetic painting that I tried to trace was a great change from early to later Nanga in the themes chosen for figure ptg. Typical of

early Nanga was a type that aimed at conveying idea of unworldliness in depictions of ideal Chinese personages engaged in their very Chinese pursuits--T'ao Yuan-ming under the pine in Nakayama Kôyô's picture, or the Taoist woodgather in Mochizuki Gyokusen's, reading one of the classics while resting--themes that had little to do with Japanese culture or the everyday experiences of their viewers.

S.S. Hyakusen did these, and Buson in his early period--scholars getting drunk in a garden, a Taoist alchemist refining cinnabar in the mts. to make the elixir of immortality or, more likely, to produce some potent home brew--both seem to be images of intoxication, which was a common metaphor for an unwordly state of mind, or an easy means of achieving it.

S,S. In Buson's later figure paintings, even when they are of Chinese themes, the figures and their activities are given a greater sense of immediacy, and more relevance to Japanese life. This depiction of the T'ang poet Li Po and his friends partying in the Apricot Garden was done for the Sumiya, the famous brothel in the Shimabara disctrict of Kyoto that Buson frequented, and was surely understood by the Sumiya's customers as likening their own drinking and poetry parties to this great precedent.

S,S. The figures that appear in many of his late paintings, however, are not Chinese at all--they participate in what appear to be no more than intimate scenes of everyday life in the Japanese countryside: an old farmer brings feed to his horse, while a weasel runs along the roof; a woodcutter chops branches from a tree while a young deer trots below, undisturbed by the sound. The implications of this shift--a parallel development in poetry and in poetic theory, the popularity among city-dwellers of the bucolic ideal they depict, just at a time when this ideal of reclusion in nature is becoming difficult, for most people impossible--I deal with in my book, and must pass over here. But I would argue that the change from adopted classical Chinese subjects to what seem, at least, to be familiar scenes of Japanese everyday life is another marker of the coming of full maturity to Japanese Nanga painting, and its independence from China. (Paper by young scholar named Emanuel Pastreich given at

AAS mtg last month traced way early 18c Japanese scholars such as Ogyu Sorai advocated reading vernacular Ch. lit.; later, Ueda Akinari and others rewrote Chinese narratives as Japanese themes, or made new stories in the Chinese mode. The vernacular Chinese allowed, as Pastreich put it, a "defamiliarization" of everyday Japanese experience. Something like that accomplished in these ptgs, which allow depictions of the everyday to transcend the mundane.)

S,S. The main argument of my "Lyric Journey" book, as the title suggests, is that just as Chinese and Japanese lyric poems typically imply a passage by the poet through the landscape, during which he registers or reports poetic sensations that are (whatever practical objectives may also be involved) the real justification for the travel, so does traveling in nature become an underlying theme in poetic painting of the late Sung and late Ming in China, and some Edo-period painting in Japan, notably the late works of Buson. Both gentlemen and rustics participate in this--one of the former fording a stream at right, a farmer returning home (a part of the same theme) at left--both are late Buson paintings, from the few years before his death in 1784, when he used the name Sha-in.

S,S. From slightly earlier, the late years of the period when he used the Sha Shunsei signature, i.e. the middle or late 1770s, is this painting (in the exhibition) in which two motifs that in China would never be conflated are conflated (as frequently happens in Nanga painting): in the central section, a scholar living in reclusion receives a visit from a friend in a house built over the stream; in the foreground a traveler fords the stream, and will make his way upward to where, far above, the road continues and disappears. The composition is structured, that is, to allow the viewer a visual passage that parallels the traveler's. This is a jewel of a painting, in my biased view (I own it, through circumstances too complex to recount here), which will repay your unhurried and prolonged attention.

S,S. My book ends with this superb Buson landscape in the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth--a work that I was responsible for their acquiring, from the excellent Tokyo dealer Kumita Shôhei--but in deference to my

hosts I will put it next-to-last tonight. The line of Chinese poetry that inspires it, written in upper right, is "A single road through cold mountains, among the myriad trees." The traveler, with his minimal luggage on a stick over his shoulder, crosses a bridge over a stream that runs swiftly among rocks. The green color on the traveler's coat is the only touch of color in the painting, but is enough to impart a cool resonance to the ink-washes around it. The painting seems totally free of brush mannerisms and overtly derivative forms, and reads as a fresh, unmediated report of an exhilarating experience in nature.

→ **S.** Once more, the road reappears at the top of the composition, after winding its way "among the myriad trees," signifying the traveler's passage out of the scene.

S,S. Buson's "Travelers in a Cold Forest" in this museum, another of the major Buson works that have entered U.S. collections in recent years (and around which our doomed exhibition was to have been build), bears the unusual signature "Sha Rô," which cannot be precisely dated--none of the few "Sha Rô" signatures is accompanied by a date; it is probably from around 1778. (Apologize for hard slide of whole, made from reproduction--my original is too dark to use.) No line of Chinese poetry accompanies this painting; I suggested that it might recall a Buson haiku reading: "Mountains have darkened,/ And the field, in a twilight/ With pampas grass" (Yama wa kurete/ no wa tasogare no/ susuki kana.) Another traveler, this one on horseback and accompanied by a servant, rides through a field of tall grass, on a road that will wind through tall boulders and reappear in upper right, to disappear again in a misty tree grove.

→ **S.** The ability to paint landscapes that can be read so convincingly and movingly as space and three-dimensional form and strongly differentiated textures, I argued, the painterly techniques that permitted such achievements as this, Buson had learned from the study of certain Chinese paintings, especially late Ming works by Suchou-school artists, which by this time had been disparaged in their homeland by adherents of the "Southern school" ideology of Tung Ch'i-ch'ang so powerfully as to discourage later Chinese artists from attempting such visually persuasive effects. Japanese

painters, fortunately, were unaware of these critical prohibitions or chose to disregard them, and they underly some of the triumphs of the best Nanga masters.

S.S. Restrictions of time keep me from following up that observation with examples, which would range through works by Buson's followers such as Goshun and (more rarely) Kinkoku, as well as later masters from Tani Bunchô to Tessai. A single painting by Bunchô's follower Tachihara Kyôsho, painted in 1811, will serve to represent them. The woodcutters in the picture are not the idealized and heavily symbolic figures of the Chinese tradition; they do not reading books or engage in philosophical discourse. They have built a fire and warm themselves before it--the wine-gourd held by one of them does, to be sure, read as a faintly sinophilic touch; but perhaps Edo-period Japanese woodcutters really carried their sake in wine-gourds. In any case, the picture persuades us that they did. The pine trees in foreground are Japanese in lineage, echoing Rosetsu,

→ S. as does the three-stepped move into distance at the top. In finding this side of Nanga painting the more engaging and moving, and in characterizing it as poetic and essentially Japanese, I am of course revealing a personal bias, no doubt conditioned by my late-period boredom with the Orthodox manner of landscape and other manifestations of the high level of conventionalization in later Chinese painting. I wish I had time to continue this account, a personal narrative presented as a passage of art history, into the later periods, especially into the works of Tomioka Tessai--the painter who, although he had been dead for thirty years when I encountered him in Kyoto during my Fulbright year there in 1954-5, still seemed intensely present, and set the direction of all my later ventures into the field of Japanese painting. But that would take us beyond the bounds of this lecture, and even further over my allotted time. Thank you.