

9C talking
head

9C: The Southern Song Academy

- Replace present beginning of Lecture 9C, make it TH, to 01:39: "Well, there are a great number of album leaves. . . " etc. Put on, for this, images of Album Leaves books, sometimes opened? You decide. This to 02:45: "OK, I'm putting on the screen now . . ." etc., as before.

This third part of Lecture 9 will be devoted to various works by artists of the Southern Song Academy. The works of these masters call for a somewhat different treatment than those of the literati artists who were the main subjects of the previous lecture. Literati artists assumed certain attitudes, value criteria, acquaintance w. previous ptg., in the viewers of their works; so their paintings require explanation, today, if one is to see their point--filling in, that is, something of what people of their time, in their circle, knew & felt, which we ordinarily *don't* know. Paintings by Academy masters, by contrast, mostly don't require any such explanation. Where one can put a few of literati artists' works on screen & talk endlessly about them (as I did), one could put on a series of the Academy ptr's works and say very little about them—the paintings can almost be left to speak for themselves. Max Loehr used to dream of an art history without words: one just puts images of the works of art on the screen and keeps silent. I'm not quite ready to do that, so I'll go on talking, however needlessly, for the next hour and a half or so.

9A
talking head

9A.TH Li Tang and His Followers

Now, as we move into a new age of LS ptg, we encounter another of the great Song masters of LS, Li Tang—and, fortunately, another from whom we have a major, signed work, which moreover is dated. We'll see several other paintings associated with him, and we'll see one with an old attribution to an earlier master which I myself re-attributed and published long ago as probably by Li Tang. We'll see several signed and reliable works by followers of his within the Academy, which allow us not only to construct an oeuvre for the artist himself, but also to chart out his following over perhaps two generations. This is all very new, and allows an art-historical neatness beyond what I could achieve in the earlier lectures. It's a neat enough pattern even to permit us to reject a famous and fine pair of paintings, one of them with a purported Li Tang signature, which used to be taken seriously by many scholars as works by Li Tang, but now can be clearly seen to be much later, dating to around the end of Song. I'll also begin showing photos of real landscapes beside the painted pictures for comparison, to show how the artists transformed what they saw in nature into artistic forms. All these pleasures and revelations—I hope they'll be that--await you in what follows, Lecture 9A.

L.S.LectNotes.9B. The Southern Sung Academy

Misc. Subjects in So., Sung Academy Painting:

Works by So. Sung Academy masters call for somewhat dif. treatment than literati ptg who were main subjects of previous lecture; speak for themselves much more. Literati artists assumed certain attitudes, value criteria, acquaintance w. previous ptg, in viewers of their works; require explanation, today, if one is to see their point--filling in, that is, something of what people of time, in their circle, knew & felt, which we ordinarily don't. Academy ptrs works require no such explan. Where one can put a few of literati artists' works on screen & talk endlessly abt them (as I did), could put on series of Academy ptr's works and say very little--as I shall, mostly.

Great number of album leaves, fan ptgs and others, survive from ^{So.} Sung, most of them in Chinese and Japanese collections—they were easy to preserve, in albums, and popular among collectors. Could make whole series out of them—hundreds. My exhibition *Album Leaves from the Sung and Yuan Dynasties* (China Institute, New York, 1970) had 25 Sung leaves, of which only four will appear in these lectures. Also my *Chinese Album Leaves* (Washington, D.C., Freer Gallery, 1961) with some thirty leaves, only one in these lectures. And big volumes of full-size color reproductions of those in China pub. by Palace Museum, Beijing, Shanghai and Liaoning Museums. And large number in books pub. by National Palace Mus., Taipei.

- 9.24.1-2. Acad. ptg vs. Ch'iao Chung-ch'ang. Split from this time. Ptrs themselves, critics, conscious of it, in a consciousness that changes whole char of ptg. Super-realism, or "magic realism," as if continuing to assert the primacy of actual appearances of things, playing down style; vs. ^{indiv.} literati ptg that draws away from representational concept of ptg and techniques on which it was based; in theory and practice, favoring rougher brushwork, tendency twd abstract and calligraphic form, that are in principle expressive of the artist's inner life. Archaism: which removes picture from subject by dropping screen of style between. This split, embodying important differences, will persist for rest of Ch ptg history, since So. Sung Academy style, as a collective style, becomes basis for all conservative, representationally-directed ptg afterwards. And, strange as it may seem to us, most of that ptg, work of So Sung artists working w/in Academy or outside it in related styles, was downgraded, even scorned,