

Addendum B Talking head

Postlude B: Authenticity and Dating

We decided to add another postlude, dealing in a more detailed and serious way with questions of authenticity and dating than I was able to do in the lectures proper. Those of you who want to read and learn more about this big problem, and who want (very properly) to find out what others than myself have to say about it, so as to know what the arguments on the other side are, so to speak, can read the various writings listed at the end of the handout for this lecture. My own article on the subject, titled "Chinese Art and Authenticity," is included in a volume edited by Jason Kuo titled *Perspectives on*

Connoisseurship in Chinese Painting, ~~also listed on the handout,~~
also listed on the handout.

Postlude: Notes on Judging Priority and Authenticity

Examples from Previous Lectures:

- Nymph of Luo River: two versions, Liaoning and Beijing. Comparisons: pair of mid-air goddesses. Boats, three versions, with Freer Gallery. Issues of priority, closeness to hypothetical original. Do figures occupy space, do their clothes define their three-dimensionality? Do details of the boats "make sense" as representations of some real thing? (Misguided argument: artists of early period, or "cultivated" Chinese artists generally, weren't concerned with effects of space and "realistic" depiction, so your criteria are mis-chosen. Wrong, I reply: even when they are using most individual, eccentric, "anti-realist" styles, they are still painting good pictures in these senses. This is, with me, an article of faith, proven correct by many years of looking at good and bad Chinese paintings.)

- Attrib. Zhou Wenju, "The Double Screen", two versions: Freer, Beijing. Latter credited as "generally deemed to be older of two" on new Freer website <http://www.asia.si.edu/SongYuan/default.asp>. Arguments to contrary for Freer version being older, closer to original (see also Thomas Lawton, *Chinese Figure Painting*, p. 36: "Most significantly, the 'tremulous brush' technique in which the four principal figures are executed is less mannered, suggesting that the Freer version is the earlier work." (Note mistaken extension of right side-piece of inner screen in Freer version: addition?) Not so much question of more or less "realistic" here, but special intent of artist: drapery drawing, deliberate ambiguity in rendering of pictorial spaces.

- Attrib. Muqi, "Hibiscus/Rose Mallow" (*furong*): original in Daitokuji sub-temple, Soken'in; similar "Peony" (*mudan*) in copy scroll, National Palace Museum, Taipei. (I mistakenly discussed these in Lecture 12 as though they were same flower.) Brushwork, ink values, etc.; copy accommodates to literati taste in "disciplined" brushwork, un-evocative image, etc. Other more likely to represent real Muqi, work of artist whose paintings were rejected by critics of time for "bad brushwork" etc. Their "bad" = our (or at least my) good.

- Shrike, from Anon. (Li Anzhong?) "Birds in Thicket of Blossoming Plum and Bamboo," NPM, Taipei; vs. "Li Anzhong" fan ptg, "Shrike," CAT 34. Bird rendered as integrated, rounded body vs. flat pattern. Compare:

sparrow, from scroll with Cui Bo signature; Emperor Hui-tsung? "Five-colored Parakeet." What invalidates purported work by Academy master may validate work ascribed to imperial amateur . . . ?

- Attrib. Xia Gui, "Winter Landscape," NPM, Taipei; vs. "Gao Keming," "Xiao Zhao" copies. In original: readable, textured surfaces, volumetric masses, sense of space, scale of human-presence details, etc. Copies lose these qualities, badly. (Simple cases.)

- Anon. Tang (loosely attrib. to Han Gan), "Horses and Grooms", Musée Cernuschi, Paris: forgery by Zhang Daqian. Cf. forged "Vermeers" including "Supper At Emaus" by Han von Meegeren, Dutch forger, recent. Rendering of space within which figures are set. "Convincing" treatment of materials to show age, in forgeries: van Meegeren was very good at this. Often unreliable. (Case of "Dunhuang" Bodhisattva, Zhang fakes no. 7 in my list on my website: analysis of materials sometimes helpful, sometimes misleading--long footnote telling about careful technical examination of this work in Kyoto art laboratory confirming its genuineness as Tang painting, in Wen Fong, "The Problem of Forgeries in Chinese Painting," in *Artibus Asiae* XXV, 1962). Scientific/technical analysis can go badly wrong; often can prove work is inauthentic; never? can prove conclusively that it's authentic? Can only make it highly likely.

(1955-6)

FORGOT: FAMES
HAVE pencil of
sp. the ... !!

(Added note: Let me just say—since I am avoiding talking about the best-known, most discussed case of highly problematic dating and attribution in recent times—a painting bought for a major museum which purports to be by a great early master, but which I firmly believe to be a modern fabrication by Zhang Daqian—if my colleagues recognized and respected the methods I have been outlining here, the controversy would immediately be ended; the painting in question would immediately be recognized as the recent forgery that it is, impossible as an early landscape painting by a major master.)

- Fan Kuan, "Traveling Among Streams and Mountains," vs. attrib. to Fan Kuan, "Sitting Alone By the Stream." How features of style that begin as representationally effective within a visually descriptive system turn into non-descriptive conventions, elements of a school manner, in the hands of followers.

(- Zhao Lingrang, section of "River Landscape with Willows and Cottages," dtd. 1100. vs. Li Anzhong, "Cottages in a Misty Grove in Autumn," dtd.

1117. Special case that upsets this pattern: later artist who is professional master adopting imagery and style from aristocrat-amateur.

- Ma Yuan, “Banquet by Lamplight.” Good version, catalogued as “Anon. Song,” vs. “Ma Yuan” version, which is Ming copy. Compare: Ming copy after Ma Yuan, “Landscape with Dancing Peasants.” Landscape by Dai Jin, Ming dynasty. But, what about:

- Attrib. Yan Wengui (! terribly wrong attribution), quite possibly by Li Tang, “A Myriad Trees on Strange Peaks,” Early stage in development of diagonally divided LS, at beginning of So. Song. Still relatively heavy element in “empty” area. Then: small ptgs by Li Tang followers: Yan Ziping, Yan Ziyu, Jia Shigu. Items of school manner harden, turn into conventions, lose naturalistic function. “Classic” example of devolution within stylistic series. Then big break: Ma Yuan, Xia Gui. Only possible then: Kôtôin “Li Tang” landscapes (must be post-Xia Gui.)

Examples from later periods:

- Qian Xuan, “Autumn Melon and Grasses.”: NPM, Taipei; Cahill *Hills* fig. 5, vs. reversed copy: Sotheby’s New York auction catalog, April 1987 (also recent dealer’s publication). Tendrils; leaf veins: do they follow organic structure of leaves, or are they flat patterns filling areas of leaves? Curling tendrils, etc. Cf. Qian Xuan handscroll, *Squirrel on Peach Branch*, CAT 68: generally accepted work by artist that can be used as comparison. (Again, about seals etc.)

(Bring back whole of good one)

Added note: I am not denying value of studies of authenticity that concentrate on calligraphy of inscriptions, seals, provenance and “pedigree” of work, etc. These are also valuable, indeed necessary, and others can use them far better than I can. But they, too, can be misleading. C. C Wang always cautioned against comparing seals to determine “genuine” vs. “fake”—he saw this as mis-use of the 1940 seal book (see below) that he compiled with Victoria Contag.

- Huang Gongwang, “Rivers and Hills Before Rain,” handscroll, ink on paper, ptd. In 1330s? Palace Museum, Beijing; Cahill, *Hills Beyond a River*, 38-9, p. 90; vs. two copies (forgeries), one formerly Hong Kong dealer. Varied inktone and brushwork, within a controlled system, make for volume and depth, etc. Difficult case! In original, paper & ink “look right”; but this can only be learned by long years of looking—not yet reducible to

bad botany

values)

technical analysis or quick rules. (Bob Mowry, curator at Sackler/Harvard, has studied and can approx. date old silks . . .)

- Wen Zhengming, "Living Aloft" (*Louju-tu*), 1543, Met. Mus., NY, Cahill *Parting At the Shore* colorplt. 13; vs. copy (forgery), Hong Kong dealer. Rendering of space, etc. Relatively easy case. (Notice wall). Wen Zhengming not especially noted for rendering of space; but in fact . . .

Spelman's
Richard Copy

- Attrib. to Sheng Mou, Yuan period? "River Landscape." From old auction catalog. Upper section copied from: Qiu Ying, "Waiting for the Ferry in Autumn," NPM, Taipei, CAT 102. Forgery/imitation can be recognized if one knows work it's copied from.

Interject: Attrib. to Liu Guandao, "Zhuangzi's Butterfly Dream," formerly C.C.Wang & Walter Hochstadter. Cf.: Liu Guandao, "Whiling Away the Summer," Nelson Gal., K.C.; Cahill *Hills* Fig. 68: formerly attrib. to Liu Songnian; famous collector-connoisseur Wu Hufan finds tiny "Guandao" signature on it. Example used in testimony by Sherman Lee on behalf of Walter Hochstadter in court case, as preserved in transcript (*Walter Hochstadter v. Chi Chuan Wang, Superior Court of the State of New York, October 1956, Index No. 3205/1956*) as quoted in my article, see below. Lee claims his example offers "incontrovertible proof" that the painting is a copy or forgery. My idea of "pictorial integrity," copyist misunderstanding some representational feature where original artist "gets it right." Examples from 1962 "post-mortem symposium" (see below, Readings) by Laurence Sickman, others. (Rule: painting cannot be earlier than latest datable image/feature in it.)

of (it) Firm resistance of many—most?—later specialists to this idea and my practice; I quoted, as analogy, what Carlo Ginsberg (*Clues, Myths, and the History of Method*, 96-7) writes about method of Giovanni Morrelli (ca. 1870)—how, although "Morellian method" of identifying individual hands led to "sensational" re-attributions of important Italian paintings, it was "heavily criticized" by specialists of the time, "in part, perhaps, because of the almost arrogant certainty with which he applied it." And I asked, with mock horror, "Can it be that Sherman Lee and I have been seen as—but no, perish the thought!" Argument for importance of younger generation accepting, for benefit of future studies, the more-or-less self-evident effectiveness of this method. See my essay "Chinese Art and Authenticity," in Jason C. Kuo, ed., *Perspectives on Connoisseurship in Chinese Painting*, Washington, D.C., 2008, 33-64. (Read also in same

of "pictorial integrity"

volume, if especially interested: Jerome Silbergeld's response to my paper, and Karen Lang's "Afterword: Chinese Brushwork and the Well-informed Eye.")

(The two parts of my paper in this volume are accessible also on my website as CLP 45 and CLP 188.)

- Shen Zhou, "The White Cloud Spring," handscroll, ink and some color on silk, surviving section of longer scroll, "Scenes of Wu" (Suzhou area), former George Schlenker collection (Cahill step-father), now Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College. Cahill, *Parting*, Fig. 41: section with Mt. Tianping and Ancestral Hall of Fan Zhongyan. Detail of wall, and flat stones set into its base (cf. photo of real wall; detail of album leaf attrib. to Li Song. Also wall in Wen Zhengming "Living Aloft," seen earlier). Later copy of complete scroll, on paper, in Nelson Gallery, see *Eight Dynasties* no. 152; Marc Wilson, p. 184, writes of Schlenker/Oberlin version as "painted on reddish-brown dyed silk" in "inarticulate and unschooled brushwork" that "suggests an inexperienced painter." Third version, even later than this, based on it, in National Palace Museum, Taipei; promoted by Chiang Chao-shen as the original. Again, idea of "pictorial integrity." (Detail of hillside with trees from K.C. scroll: this alone should be enough to identify it as copy; but connoisseurship by style cannot claim same degree of being "self-evident" as wrong depictions--)

- Du Jin, "Enjoying Antiquities," large hanging scroll, originally mounted on screen? NPM, Taipei. *Possessing the Past* Pl. 183, p. 367; there accepted by Richard Barnhart as genuine work by Du Jin. Also, earlier, Cahill, *Parting*, Fig. 73, there presented as probably a copy by some Suzhou artist close to Qiu Ying, perhaps Qiu himself.

- Another version of left 1/3 of this, hanging in *tokonoma* (alcove) in large gallery within Kongôbuji, great esoteric Buddhist temple on Mt. Kôya, Japan, ca. 1970, photographed there by me. Ownership and present whereabouts unknown, not in Temple collection.

- Another version of right 1/3, from NY auction, 1990s? discussed in Du Jin correspondence (see below), acquired by Yale U. Art Museum. Comparisons of various details, in which artist of this version "gets it right," copyist of Taipei version "gets it wrong," or makes it less readable. Culminating in: two-legged tripod! Copyist of Taipei version paints himself into a dead end, can't get out. I want to say QED: I've proven my case;

others don't agree.

Reading, ad lib.: "The Tu Chin Correspondence, 1994-95." In: *Kaikodo Journal* V, Autumn 1997, pp. 8-62. Correspondence between Richard Barnhart, Stephen Little, Maxwell Hearn, and James Cahill, after publication of *Possessing the Past* catalog, 1996.

- Leaves from album of *fenben* (sketch-copies from paintings the artist saw) by Gu Jianlong (1606-1687 or after), Nelson Gal., K.C. vs. Attrib. to Hu Huai/Gui, Liao/Khitan artist, *Scenes of Nomadic Life*, NPM, Taipei. Leaf with girls and woman, hairdresses etc., vs. Gu Jianlong? *Ming-huang Spying on Yang Guifei Bathing*, Fujii Yurinkan, Kyoto. (These are illustrations in first chapter of my book *Pictures for Use and Pleasure*.) For whole Gu Jianlong album, 46 leaves, see *Eight Dynasties* no. 254.

- Finale: Famous leaf from everybody's-favorite Shitao album, "Album for Daoist Yu," work of mid-1690s? (pub. by Victoria Contag in Germany; then my *Fantastics & Eccentrics*, 1967; cover of Silbergeld *Ch Ptg Style* and my *Compelling Image*; etc. Owned by the late C. C. Wang; present whereabouts unknown (!) See *Compelling Image* pp. 196-207 + illustrations there, on Shitao's various adoptions from Anhui school, Nanjing school, Orthodox school artists. Then: cf. leaf from album (with color!) by Gong Xian (Nanjing artist, d. 1689), Palace Museum, Beijing. Drawing productively on past doesn't erode originality; usually, to the contrary, strengthens the work.

Readings:

Wen Fong, "The Problem of Forgeries in Chinese Painting," in *Artibus Asiae*, vol. xxv, 1962, pp. 95-140.

Victoria Contag and Wang Chi-ch'uan [C. C. Wang}, *Maler- und Sammler-Stempel aus der Ming- und Ch'ing-Zeit*. Shanghai, Commercial Press, 1940. Reprinted as *Seals of Chinese Painters and Collectors*. Hong Kong, 1966, with new preface by me.

Jason C. Kuo, ed., *Perspectives on Connoisseurship of Chinese Painting*. Washington, D.C., New Academia Publishing, 2008. Essays by Kuo, Silbergeld, me, others.

Legal document: *Walter Hochstadter v. Chi Chuan Wang, Superior Court of the State of New York, October 1956, Index No. 3205/1956.* (Copies in personal collections.)

Abbreviated transcript of proceedings of two-day symposium held at Asia House Gallery, New York, October 4-5, 1963: "post-mortem" symposium following on *Chinese Art Treasures* exhibition, organized by myself and involving nearly all the major authorities on Chinese painting of that time, some forty of them, along with around thirty grad students, many of whom went on to become major authorities. This followed on:

Combined List of opinions on paintings in CAT exhibition, compiled by myself after correspondence with eighteen authorities to get their opinions on especially controversial paintings in the exhibition, September, 1962. This was lead-up to the October 1963 symposium.

Transcripts of these two documents, 34 and 27 pages of typescript respectively, make up my CLP 2A and 2B, 1963. They should be, and before long will be, made accessible in downloadable texts on my website, jamescahill.info.

AddImages,7

Audio 59

2 addition on
perspective +
foreshortening

At several points in this lecture, comment on use of mists to silhouette trees (first attrib. Kuan T'ung), or later, to hid bases of LS masses, so that they rise out of mist—increases sense of height. Use also in Lec.7. AddImages 242: real LS showing this.

AddImages 8

In Lecture 2, toward end, where we inserted image of tile showing courtyards and buildings, insert this, along with photo AB92.jpg:
AddAudio 1: I put beside this tile a photo of a Chinese courtyard house, taken from a nearby tower or pagoda, showing how visually true the depiction of walls on the tile are. The watch-tower at left and building in upper right are shown in pure elevation, a convention; but the walls are as observed: those running horizontally somewhat foreshortened, the one running vertically (at far right) seen only as a roof, and the one running diagonally up the middle seen much foreshortened. This is exactly as we see the walls in the photograph. I should add that some stimulus for the practice of foreshortening in pictorial art was coming from the West into Han China; an article by a Chinese scholar named Miao Zhe in the *Taida Journal of Art History* no. 27 for September 2009, shows how images of horse-drawn carriages seen in Han art are based on images coming across the Steppe region from Greek painting. But what we see here is, I think, based on observation, in a good Gombrichian way.

Add Image 9: In lecture 3, 1:14:08 ff, on “Famous Women” scroll: add image.

Add Audio 2: And here is a detail from that scroll, which I'll show only briefly to identify it. The figure style is quite archaic, maybe more so than in the other scrolls attributed to Gu Kaizhi.

Add Image 10: in lecture 3, 46:35 ff: add footage of me rolling handscroll reproduction and talking briefly.