

LS.LectNotes.8. The Time of Hui-tsung: Literati Painting

Begin w. bringing back Yen Wen-kuei signed LS, show Hung-jen use of this way of drawing LS masses—leading up to Honolulu ptg. Argument.

Then: Li Kung-nien again. Came to this perception, or moment of enlightenment, while preparing lecture for LS symposium. Flowered while I was preparing these lectures, I came to recognize it as key way to understand transition, No to So Sung, which this lecture will be about. Things fall together. I don't mean in causal terms—this made that happen—in earlier lecture I used Needham's distinction bet Aristotelian and Chinese organic universe. . . etc. But: Li T'ang, principal landscapist of transition, pts LS for contemplation, not LS (like Yen wen-kuei, Fan K'uan, Kuo His etc.) into which one is invited to enter and move around, climb the mt. etc. Only to be gazed at, absorbed as particular view of one corner of nature. Emp. Hui-tsung's insistence on poetic content in ptgs another aspect of that: ptg portrays a conception in the mind, not the world outside. (Later academy ptg will be condemned and rejected by later Ch critics and art-historians, who connect it w. Ma Yuan, as representing "leftover mts and --- rivers," and call him "one-corner Ma"—a reflection of this difference, I now realize.

So. Sung landscape, best of it, devoted more & more to capturing in ptgs effects of *perception* of LS, as one actually perceives it, that is, instead of quasi-rational knowing of world. Investigation of things gives way to School of Mind . . .

And all this relatable, not causally but as part of same big picture, or big change, to move in philosophy from to School of Mind (elaborate).

Quote writer who says: achieving effects of distance & height etc. are tricks of profess. artist, while (blank blank) only possible by . . .

Teng Ch'un's father? being given lots of Kuo Hsi ptgs ...

Idea that representational conventions all equally true-to-life: nonsense. Savage & photo story. But: when Jesuits brought European pictures to China in late 16th-early 17th cent., Chinese were bowled over by them, "like image in a mirror," couldn't believe they were flat, etc.

- Bring back: Li Kung-nien ptg. Discuss the change. Signed work from time of transition. Hui-tsung's catalog writes of him: "The scenes he composes are rich in clouds and mist, and have the indefinable aura of real landscape."

Chao Ling-jang (active ca. 1070-1100.)

- River Landscape with Willows and Cottages, handscroll, dtd. 1100. Boston M.F.A. Loehr 76, A-D, Siren 226. Cf. alb. lf. by Li An-chung, early 12c Academy, dtd. 1117. "Cottages in a Misty Grove in Autumn." Lyric J 1.12, cf. 1.11, Chao Ling-jang.

- River landscape, album leaf, Yamato Bunkakan, Nara.

- River Village in Autumn Dawn, Met. Museum.

Something new, very modern (centuries earlier than this would happen in Eur. ptg): artist is able to choose style consciously; can painting in one style one day, another tomorrow. Not "development" from one to another. Style-consciousness that goes w. antiquarianism, collecting, which was becoming popular, very conscious.

Wang Shen (active ca. 1085. Raised like member of imperial family.

- "Light Snow Over a Fishing Village." 3000 116, Siren 222-23.

Barnhart notes presence of "dark-hooded scholar," and notes that "This is something akin to the romantic LS of 19th cent. Europe, a vision of LS clearly and frankly seen through the eyes of an individual who shapes it into his own image." Good observation. Consistent with p.v. I am taking: etc.

- "Serried Hills Over a Misty River." Shanghai Museum. 3000 117.

No special display of skill here: blue-and-green style adjusted to lower technical skills of aristocrat-amateur artist.

Emperor Hui-tsung (Chao Chi), 1082-1135.

(Hui-tsung calligraphy in "slender gold" manner: Loehr 91)

- "Birds in a Wax-Bush. Siren 234, CAT.

- "Auspicious Cranes Over the Palace." 3000 114,

- "The Five-colored Parakeet," Boston MFA. Loehr 90.

- "Finches and Bamboo," former Crawford col. Skira 73, Loehr colorplt. VI.

- "Dove on a Peach Branch," dtd. 1107. Setsu Col., Tokyo. Loehr 89, Siren 237.

- Anon. 12th cent., "Bids in a Thicket of Flowering Plum and Bamboo." Skira 69, CAT 33. Cf. Li An-chung, "Shrike" (copy) CAT 34. Cf. Li An-chung, Quail, Nezu Museum.
- Anon. 12th cn. Peonies and Cat. Possessiong Pl. 74. (Li An-chung, "Cottages in Misty Grove," dtd. 1117, Cleveland Museum. Siren 228, 8 Dynasties 19. Cf. Chao Ling-jang, detail.)

Wang Hsi-meng.

"A Thousand Li of Rivers and Mountains." Palace Museum, Beijing. 3000 115. 12 meters long!

Attrib. Chao Po-chü,

- "Autumn Colors Over Rivers and Mountains," handscroll. 3000 121, T&V 7-21.

Beginnings of Literati Painting.

Read, if you want, my old article: "Confucian Elements in the Theory of Painting," Delivered as a symposium paper in 1958; published in The Confucian Persuasion, edited by Arthur F. Wright, Stanford University Press (1960), pp. 115-140. Reprinted in: Confucianism and Chinese Civilization, edited by Arthur F. Wright, New York, Atheneum (1964) Followed up by Susan Bush, Chinese Literati on Painting, 1971, and in Bush & Shih ch. 5, "Sung Literati Theory and Connoisseurship" (1983). Read, for comparison, Wen Fong, "The Scholar-Official as Artist," Possessing pp. 147-157.

Su Shih, or Su Tung-p'o (1036-1101)

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- "Old Tree, Bamboo, and Rock." Loehr 88, Siren 1808. Colophons by Mi Fu and another. Collection unknown.
- Another, Shanghai Museum, part of handscroll. Lyric J. 1.5.

Wen T'ung

- Large Branch of Bamboo, NPM. Siren 182, CAT 27,
- Another, double album leaf. Siren 183.
- "Autumn in the River Valley," landscape handscroll, copy after Wen T'ung? Met. Mus., NY. Siren 184.

Lect.Notes.8A.doc

Before we proceed into later No. Song, time of Emp. Hui-tsung, I want to backtrack and review what I was saying abt great transformation in LS ptg we observed in previous lecture, and its philosophical implications. May be repetitive, but would rather repeat than fail to elucidate this.

First, a brief side-track to make point that seems important to me, and not irrelevant to later materials of this lecture.

S.S. Hung-jen, early LS, and picture of Huangshan cliffs. Describe.

S.S. In 1657 he made a trip to Nanjing, must have seen there some LS ptgs, or copies of ptgs, in Northern Sung monumental style. (Describe)

S.S. Leaf from that album (old reproduction) and my drawing of bluff it depicts. He has learned . .

-- S. Puts this to good use, notably in his great "Coming of Autumn," his masterwork in the Honolulu Art Academy. (Show). *Our 1987 "Shadows of Mt. Huang" -*
Point I always made: radical thing is relatively easy to do in art. Older ptrs of Anhui school, and contemporaries of Hung-jen, were painting even more radically reduced and geometricized LS ptgs. But their works are interesting but unimpressive. Great masterwork of whole school is this one, in which Hung-jen combines radically new with supportively old, I used to use musical analogy: in early 20c music, Edgar Varese---whereas Stravinsky, combining bold new sounds w. forms and techniques from past, creates the masterworks. OK, enough of that, on to rest of lecture.

for an achievement that goes far beyond innovation and shock of the new.

- 8.1.1. 2. Yen Wen-kuei, Fan K'uan. Neo-Confucian philosophy in No. and early So. Sung: takes from Daoism the organic conception of the universe. Human morality and ethics interlocked w. this. Confuc. Sage = Daoist "true man."

Within this order, purposeful action upsets: human agents acting out concerns of their own on world. Daoist spoke of non-action; Confucianists, of no action motivated by self-interest.

Cosmos begins as amorphous, *ch'i*. Changes—transformation = creation, *ts'ao-hua*. Creation w/o volition. Daoists (like Ch'an Buddhists) tried to break free of objectification of outer world, emph. Inner experience, and exper of self as part of world, world part of self, continuous field.

Not subjective or individualistic—that would come later in Ch. art. Not imposition of will or feelings on nature.

Craftsmen in Daoist stories: unconscious of actions—transform materials, but not purposefully. Artist same: uses materials around him in artistic

mode. In proper state of detachment, artist recreates thing that is part of his experience, in terms of his understanding of it. So the order he perceives in world is order that inspires his ptg. But not man-made patterns, schemata. Nature creates w/o volition; artist must do same. Rock created by nature looks, by definition, natural; one painted by artist won't, unless he has attained this state.

LS ptg becomes mode of expressing this understanding and sense of order; iconic just as Bud. ptg is iconic in Buddhism, in that it embodies a kind of enlightenment, state of being toward which one strives.

Ptgs of Yen Wen-kuei & Fan K'uan: stable, rocky, parts locked firmly together; worlds that are universal in character, complete in themselves. No suggestion, as in some 10th cent. ptgs I showed, of hidden spaces, pockets of space to be explored visually—everything presented frontally, fully visible. Compositionally complete, all organized w/in frame. All this accords, I think, w. Neo-Confucian cosmology. And idea of spiritual ascent fits into these compositions as implicit narrative. (I forgot to point out, when talking of this in previous lecture, that one can read that narrative in poetic form in poem titled "The Temple" by Po Chü-I, trans. by Arthur Waley in his book *The Temple and Other Poems*, p 103 ff.)

- 8.2.1. Kuo Hsi 1072. Kuo Hsi has much in common w these, but also profoundly different in other ways. Specific season: in title. Kuo's essay stresses this aspect of natural phenomena—also times of day, weather conditions. Likens these, and relates them, to human feelings. Forms unstable, undergoing transformation, erosion. Mists contribute to this. But keeps quality of *universality*. In this it differs from earlier: Chan Tzu-ch'ien, Ming-huang's Journey, also Chao Kan. But fact that Kuo Hsi wrote his essay at all, and that it was transcribed and annotated by his son Kuo Ssu who held a position in the government, means that Kuo Hsi was more self-conscious than previous major painters had been, moving into persona of literate, cultivated painter. And that is major new development in his period, as we'll see.

- 8.3.1, 2. (Slides: Wu Family Shrines, Han) Back to Wu family shrines, Han period: art of highly sophisticated men, men who aspired to government positions; drew on past, on esoteric literature, etc. Required cultivation in viewer for full appreciation. Now, in No. Sung, something similar happens to ptg, but more sweeping: painting, in effect, taken over by classically-educated elite who were aspirers to official position, and who made up

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the bureaucracy through all levels from local & provincial up to those advising emperor. System that in principle allows men to gain position through merit replaces hereditary aristocracy. (David Johnson, Peter Bol *This Culture of Ours*.) When this newly-risen male elite takes over ptg, that's literati ptg--what's first called *shih-ta-fu hua*, later *wen-jen hua*, trans. as literati ptg, term I'll use. (*Literati* plural; *literatus* singular.)

- 8.4.1.2. (Two literati ptgs we'll see as we proceed; I won't identify them now.) When I was just beginning my study of Ch ptg, Nelson Wu, my senior and teaching at Yale, was giving lectures in NY which I attended, and he talked of primary forms vs. cultivated forms. This distinction is what he was talking about, although he was talking of much later period, 15-17c, great scholar-artist-critic Tung Ch'i-ch'ang.

Not raw sensory data, but data as filtered through organizing mind. (Victoria Contag essay: Confucian mode of organizing raw sensory data. In *Archives of Ch. Art Soc. of America* VI, 1952.)) Made old-fashioned, simply representational ptg (not really that, but could be presented as that) seem unsophisticated, naïve, low-class. Arose in late No. Sung; continued, but weak, thru So. Sung.

(this mvt.)

- 8.5.1.2. (Early Yuan literati ptg.: Chao Meng-fu, 1296.) And then, in early Yuan, came more prominently to fore, in effect took over ptg., more or less for rest of its history. Opposition had no spokesmen, no access to the intellectual debate; representational ptg discredited for rest of history of Ch ptg. Outside our subject; but wanted to get this down before proceeding. Fortunately, ptg that continues the old trad. of high workmanship, refined imagery continues in So Sung Academy and in great deal of ptg done outside it.

- 8.6.1.2. (So. Song ptg, Ch'an Bud. ptg, of kinds preserved only in Japan.) Much of this ptg as it survives, as we'll see, preserved in Japan, imported from 13th-14th cent by monks and rulers who weren't so dominated by Ch. literati tastes: they saved it for us, in some large part. What we call Ch'an or Zen Buddhist ptg: virtually wiped out in China, preserved, thank god, in Japan in great examples. Which many Chinese connoisseurs still look at and say "Bad brushwork! We were right in not keeping it." Where I stand on this matter will be clear from this speech, and from my treatment of ptg of So. Song, in the series of lectures on it that will make up Part Two of this series..

- 8.7.1.2. Bring back: Li Kung-nien ptg. Discuss the change. Signed work from time of transition. Emp. Hui-tsung's catalog writes of him: "The

8A. About books:

At the end of my handout for this lecture are several books you can read on Song history and culture. Highly recommended is one by Peter Bol, *This Culture of Ours*. More recent, full of information: Dieter Kuhn, *The Age of Confucian Rule: The Song Transformation of China*. In series on Chinese history edited by my friend Tim Brook.

My discussions of Neo-Confucianism, the cosmological system that I think underlies great development of monumental LS ptg in China, ^{is} based largely on book by Joseph Needham, second vol. in his series *Science and Civilization in China*: titled *History of Scientific Thought and Correlative Thinking*. This was published in 1956; but I had heard him give a series of lectures at U., Berkeley already in 1949, outlining his ideas—invited by Peter Boodberg, chair of Oriental Languages Dept. in which I was a major. And I was deeply impressed—this was one of most influential moments in my intellectual development. Idea of universe that works through correlation, not causation (as in the Western, Copernican system); making up vast *organism*. Needham was struck w. relationship bet. ancient Chinese thought & recent Western scientific thinking, and he even had a theory by which the latter derived from the former: Chinese ideas transmitted by Jesuits in China in 17c to Leibniz, whose Theory of Mind introduced this kind of thinking to Europe in late 17c; then down to Whitehead and other recent European scientific thinkers. How this idea fares today I can't say, but it convinced me, changed my way of thinking.

and then
philosophy
of organism

8B talking
head

8B, before literati ptg etc.

If you find, on watching and listening to my section on the early stages of literati ptg (*shidafu-hua*, later *wenren-hua*), that I sound less enthusiastic than some others who have written or talked about it, and if you want to hear more in that direction, get my new book, *Pictures for Use and Pleasure: Vernacular Ptg in High Qing China* (U.C. Press, out recently), read opening pages, where you will find a stronger expression of the same opinion. (Worth buying and reading for other reasons too—I can use the royalties.) As we continue through the later lectures of this series on Imperial Academy ptg of the Southern Song period, which the Ch. literati tended to scoff at, consider low-class, you'll find me taking the opposite view on that, too. And on the whole, arguing that we shouldn't remain bound to old orthodoxies—as I write in my book, in other areas of culture we don't continue to honor the self-promoting rhetoric of male elites, so why should we go on honoring this one? What about all the rest of China, who *didn't* belong to that dominant male minority? But that's been an attitude of mine throughout my career, and has led some people to accuse me of “not respecting China”—for my response to that, see my website, under “Responses and Reminiscences,” nos. 73 + 75, “On Respecting China” and “What I Learned From Joseph Levenson.”