

## Lecture Notes, by James Cahill

*Note: The image numbers in these lecture notes do not exactly coincide with the images onscreen but are meant to be reference points in the lectures' progression.*

### Lecture: Postlude: Arguing the Aftermath

12.61.5: Anonymous, in the style of Yujian, *Houses on bluff by water; fisherman in boat*. Fan-shaped album leaf. Nezu Museum, Tokyo.

Last seen at conclusion of Lecture 12D. Originally published as a work in the style of Yujian, more recently, it has been attributed to the Japanese painter Sesshu. The connection is that Sesshu studied in China for two years, 1467–1469. He studied Song painting and returned to Japan able to imitate styles of Ma Yuan and Xia Gui, Yujian and others.

### 13.1: Dai Jin 戴進 (1388–1462)

Dai Jin was the closest artist of the Ming who could imitate the Song ink monochrome landscape style, but it was not at all popular.

13.1.1: Dai Jin, inscription by Dong Qichang, *Landscape in the Style of Yan Wengui* 仿燕文貴山水圖, hanging scroll, ink on paper, 91.8 x 45.9 cm. Shanghai Museum.

13.1.2: Dai Jin, *Returning Late from a Spring Outing* 春遊晚歸, hanging scroll, ink and colors on silk, 167.9 x 83.1 cm. National Palace Museum, Taipei.

More typical of Ming landscape: not much sense of real space and distance, strongly locked together. Very different from Southern Song.

### 13.2 Sesshū Tōyō 雪舟(1420-1506)

On the other hand, Sesshū and his followers created a strong tradition of ink painting (J. *suiboku* 水墨) based on his studies in China.

13.2.1a: Sesshū, Album leaf in the style of Yujian

13.2.1b: Sesshū, Album leaf in the style of Yujian

13.2.3: Sesshū, signed and seal, ink monochrome landscape in the style of Yujian, hanging scroll. Private Collection, Japan.

13.2.4: Sesshū, *Haboku, Splashed Ink Landscape*, hanging scroll, ink on paper, 71.9 x 26.7 cm. Cleveland Museum of Art, 1955.43.

13.2.5: Sesshū, *Haboku Landscape* (1495), hanging scroll, ink on paper, 148.6 x 32.7 cm. Tokyo National Museum, National Museum, A-282.

With inscriptions: Preface by Sesshū, praises by Gettō Shūkyō and other five monks.

For more about the shift of Chinese-style splashed ink into a “Japanese style,” see: CLP 120, 1995 Two Snowy Peaks Viewed from Afar: Some Chinese Thoughts on Sesshū and Sesson. <http://jamescahill.info/the-writings-of-james-cahill/cahill-lectures-and-papers/78-clp-120-1995>

13.3.1 and 13.3.2: Two paintings from Korea (15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> c.)

Korean masters of this period should be credited as continuing the Southern Song Ma Yuan/ Xia Gui landscape styles.

13.4.1: Li Zai 李在 (act. ca. 1426–1436), *Landscape* 山水圖, hanging scroll, ink and light colors on silk, 138.8x83.2 cm. Tokyo National Museum, Important Cultural Property, TA-145.

Sesshū cited this Zhe school 浙派 master as a Chinese artist whom he admired.

13.4.2: Li Zai, *Landscapes of the Four Seasons*

13.5.1: Hasegawa Tōhaku 長谷川等伯 (1539–1610), *Bamboo and Gibbons*, pair of six-panel folding screens.

Inspired by Muqī’s Daitokuji triptych: *Crane and Bamboo* and *Mother Gibbon with Child*.

13.5.2: Hasegawa Tōhaku, *Pine Trees Screen* 松林図屏風, pair of six-panel folding screens, ink on paper covered in gold leaf, 156.8x356.0 cm. each. Tokyo National Museum, National Treasure, A-10471.

Reprise of 12.61.3: Attributed to Yujian, *Mountain Village in Mist*. Idemitsu Art Museum. Siren, Vol. III, Pl. 346 (bottom), Suiboku 3/20.

Takeover of painting by literati artists in early Yuan who produced the theoretical and critical writings. Scholar-amateur paintings take the forefront. See Cahill, *Hills beyond a River* (1976) and Cahill, “The Yuan Dynasty,” in *Three Thousand Years of Chinese Painting* (1997), 139–195.

13.6.1: Zhao Mengfu 趙孟頫/ 赵孟頫 (1254–1322), *Autumn Colors on the Qiao and Hua Mountains* 鵲華秋色圖/ 鹊华秋色图 (1296), handscroll, ink and color on paper, 28.4 x 93.2 cm. National Palace Museum, Taipei.

13.7.1: Dong Yuan (d. 962), *Wintry Groves and Layered Banks* 寒林重汀圖 (ca. 950), hanging scroll, ink and color on silk, 181.5 x 116.5 cm. Kurokawa Institute of Ancient Cultures, Hyogo, Japan.

Some early Yuan artists, known as *yimin* 遺民 or “leftover subjects” were expressing subtle protests to the Yuan Mongol rulers and loyalty to the fallen Song.

13.8.1: Zheng Sixiao 鄭思肖 (1241–1318), *Orchid* (1306), handscroll, ink on paper, 25.7 x 42.4 cm. Osaka Municipal Museum.

Painted without earth under its roots, because the earth had been stolen by the Mongols.

Great Yuan Landscapists

13.9.1: Huang Gongwang 黃公望 (1269–1354), section of handscroll

13.10.1: Ni Zan 倪瓚 (1301–1374), *Wind Among the Trees on the Riverbank* (1363), hanging scroll, ink on paper, 59.1 x 31.1 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1989.363.39.

Popularized the sparse style; every collector needed a Ni Zan in his collection, similar to the popularity of Mi Youren in the early Song.

13.11.1: Wang Meng 王蒙 (ca. 1308–1385), *Dwelling the Qingbian Mountains* 青卞隱居圖 (1366), hanging scroll, ink on paper, 141 x 42.2 cm. Shanghai Museum.

Yuan professional painters still following Southern Song Academy traditions:

13.12.1 and 13.12.2: Sun Junze 孫君澤 (14<sup>th</sup> century), two landscape paintings.

Derided by Yuan literati as “One-corner Ma [Yuan],” because his compositions crowded the matter into one corner and was stylistically interpreted as symbolizing the Chinese loss of territory. His works survive mainly in Japanese collections, with the exception of the painting on the left. Probably his finest work, his signature in the lower left was effaced, and the painting was falsified as a Song work by Ma Yuan.

Detail of Xia Gui’s *Pure and Remote View* and Yujian’s *Mountain Village in Mist*

“The Great Renunciation”: The renunciation by Yuan artists of the Song ink monochrome landscape tradition.

Pattern of renunciations in Chinese history:

-Scientific and technological development through the Song, e.g. “ever-Southward pointing chariot” (c. 3<sup>rd</sup> c. CE). “Needham problem” (after Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilization in China* series, 1954-2008): why did China end this development, leaving Europe to carry out the Industrial Revolution?

-Sea exploration, e.g. Zheng He’s voyages in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Compare Zheng He’s vast ship to Columbus’. Standard accounts attribute the halt in sea exploration to conservative factions in the Ming court.

-Pictorial printing in color, culminating in the late Ming, but fallen off by early Qing.  
Japan picked up the tradition in *ukiyo-e*.

Conservative factions in the early Yuan discontinued the Southern Song tradition of ink monochrome landscape, much as conservative factions in the Northern Song stifled the development of monumental landscapes. I've argued that the great curse of the Chinese people over the centuries have been their unwillingness or inability to counter these orthodox tendencies.

See: Cahill, James. *Pictures for Use and Pleasure: Vernacular Painting in High Qing China*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010.

See also the writings of Pierre Bourdieu for how tastes in art are tied to particular times and socio-economic classes. So let's ignore the orthodoxy and look at the rest of Chinese painting.

I owe a great deal to my friendship with the historian, Joseph Levenson, who wrote about Chinese history *not* in terms of great unity and harmony, but rather as the interaction of divergent and contending factions and forces within society. The heavy dominance of literati painting practice from the Yuan onwards wasn't entirely a positive force at all. So how do we understand the later periods of Chinese painting?

See: Cahill, James. "Some Thoughts on the History and Post-History of Chinese Painting." Haley Lecture, Princeton, 1999. <http://jamescahill.info/the-writings-of-james-cahill/cahill-lectures-and-papers/44-clp-34-1999-qsome-thoughts-on-the-history-and-post-history-of-chinese-paintingq-haley-lecture-princeton>

Also in *Archives of Asian Art* 55 (2005): 17–33. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20111325>

See: Belting, Hans. *The End of the History of Art?* Translated by Christopher S. Wood. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987.

I've been following the mode of Gombrich and Loehr by setting out a chronological narrative of painting through the Song-Yuan transition. My younger colleagues and students, including Jerome Silbergeld and Richard Vinograd, following the trends of scholarship in their day, refuse to accept these as clear patterns and instead they point to other paintings of the time and ask, "But what about these? There isn't any revolution at all."

But my observations aren't true or false, but just formulations, art-historical "truth-lettes." The objective of this series was to string together these "truth-lettes" into a style history

for Chinese painting. In this series, I've also tried to address issues of authenticity, quality, dating.

The principles upon how I believe art achieves an effect, about quality in art, are based on the writings of my teachers, including the philosophers Suzanne Langer (1895–1985) and Abraham Kaplan (1918–1993).

Marginalization of “form-likeness” in evaluation of Chinese paintings; prominence given to brushwork. Similar to the much-lauded works of Warhol or Ai Weiwei. What do you see at their exhibitions before moving on to some new visual stimulus, some new clever idea masquerading as art (Damian Hirst, abstract expressionism, minimalism, performance art)? I will make an exception for Willem de Kooning. But in an exhibition of the “transcendentally good picture-makers, the great representational artists” such as Rembrandt, Vermeer, Velasquez, Caravaggio, da Vinci, Degas, people flock to see them and stand transfixed for long periods before their works.

I am arguing for good representation in painting as a criterion for good quality. Appreciation of this criteria requires patient looking, something I've tried to inculcate in this lecture series. Compare Ma Yuan's flower paintings with actual photographs of the same flowers.

Ma Yuan and the others were doing much more than simply good naturalistic depiction, but what that “something more” is difficult to define. See *Lyric Journey* for my attempt to define what the best Southern Academy masters were doing.

13.13.1: Anonymous, *Woman in a Brothel Presented to a Guest*, mid- to late-18<sup>th</sup> c., hanging scroll, ink and colors on silk, 167 x 62.5 cm. Formerly owned by E.A. Strehlneek, Shanghai. Berkeley Art Museum, Museum purchase: Bequest of Phoebe Apperson Hearst, by exchange, 2011.2. Reproduced in *Pictures for Use and Pleasure*, fig. 5.5.

The anonymous artist's meticulous depiction of the fabrics, textures, interior decoration can all bring visual pleasure to the viewer, if the viewer takes the time to appreciate it.

Issue of likeness raised again in my correspondence with art critic and theoretician, David Carrier (b. 1944). He had traveled to Guilin to see the distinctive mountains there and sent me this composite image (at right). A man on his boat was holding up a banknote and comparing the image on the currency to the actual mountains. He wrote me, “I instantly thought, so Jim Cahill is right. China art, too, is representation. Semiotic theories cannot be true, because anyone can see that the image on the banknote looks just like the mountains. Amazing what one learns some days.” I responded, “I know you are making a learned joke, but it's true enough that I've

battled for decades the dumb idea that one image resembles the real thing as much as another. I used to say that people who argued that way should be placed in a dangerous terrain, full of traps, and given the choice of two maps: one showing the real layout of the terrain, which would enable them to make their way out safely; the other not guaranteed to be an accurate representation. And if they followed their beliefs, they would pick the latter as often as the former..."

Chinese Ming artists and viewers, when shown European prints, marveled at their life-like quality, like "images in a mirror." If the semiotics people are right, they would not have reacted so enthusiastically.

Photographs: Kay Cashman-Cahill, my daughter-in-law (left) and Joseph Koerner  
Both argued with me about the matter of resemblance, saying that there was no such thing as degrees of life-likeness because all representation was equally made up of signs and conventions. I say this belongs in the realm of cloudcuckooland, or highly sophisticated nonsense.

See also: Richard Barnhart, "The Song Experiment with Mimesis," in *Bridges to Heaven: Essays on East Asian Art in honor of Professor Wen C. Fong* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), pp. 115-140.

I would also like to insert a tribute to my great teacher, Peter Boodberg (1903–1972), chair of Oriental Languages Department at UC Berkeley in the 1940s. All of us who studied with him think of him as the greatest person we ever studied with. He wrote that the proper concern of the scholar was "the meditative treasuring up of knowledge, the unwearingly pursuit of wisdom, and the timeless instruction of others."

I end with the words of E.M. Forster's "Does Culture Matter?": "The higher cultures rather resemble religion in that it is impossible to enjoy them without trying to hand them on. The appreciator of an aesthetic achievement becomes, in his way, an artist. He cannot rest without communicating what is communicated to him. This passing on impulse takes various forms: some merely educational, others merely critical, but it is essentially a glow from a central fire..."