

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 12D: Sōgen-ga

Sōgenga, the title I've given to this next section, is simply the Japanese pronunciation of *Song Yuan hua* 宋元畫/宋元画, or Song and Yuan painting. But I've used it loosely for the kind of Song and Yuan paintings preserved mainly in Japan, many representing types unknown in China, and what we call Chan painting is prominent among them. I gave a seminar at U.C. Berkeley under this title, and then organized an exhibition of the same title, made up of paintings of this kind as kept in our University Art Museum, along with examples borrowed from dealers in Japan. It was a small and quiet exhibition that didn't get much publicity, didn't cost much (we had a \$5,000 grant from the Society for Asian Art in San Francisco), and produced only a very modest catalog. But I'm still devoted to this kind of painting, which I know well from many years of making the rounds of Japanese collectors and dealers, so I've devoted this section of my last lecture to it. So if this section is seen by any multimillionaire who wants to build a collection of these paintings, and maybe a museum of them, get in touch with me for some introductions and advice. For the rest of you, just enjoy them and try to pay more attention to them in the future.

Chan Buddhism entered China via the First Patriarch of Chan, Bodhidharma. It was adopted in Japan around the 12th century; Japanese Zen monks traveled to China and studied with Chinese Chan masters; upon their return, brought back many paintings. Chinese Chan monks also traveled to Japan and brought paintings with them. Eventually, Sōgenga were incorporated into tea ceremony decoration.

The big project of my career has been to expand the canon of Chinese painting to include these "orphaned" works that reside in Japanese collections.

12.17.1: Anonymous, *Portrait of the Chan Master Wu-chun*, 1238. Tofukuji, Kyoto.
Reproduced in Skira 48; T&V 7-44; Siren, Vol. III, Pl. 210.

Formal portrait of the teacher of Muqi. Dressed in rich robes, holding a staff. Benevolent and intelligent visage. Probably the best portrait of an existing individual we have from the Song dynasty.

12.18.1: Possible attribution to monk painter Zhiweng 直翁 (act. first half 13th c.), *Two Patriarchs in a Landscape*, inscribed by a monk who died in 1250.

Two monks drawn in pale ink; tree in foreground done in darker, rougher inkstrokes. Space established between the trees in the back and the foreground tree by the difference in ink tones.

12.18.2: Attributed to Zhiweng, *Meeting between Yaoshan and Li Ao* 藥山李翱問答圖/药山李翱問答圖, before 1256, album leaf mounted as hanging scroll, ink on paper, 31.8 x 84.5 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY, 1982.2.1. Reproduced in *Beyond Representations*, Pl. 77; *Exquisite Moments* (2001), Pl. 34; *Awakenings*, cat. 25.

Depicts meeting between early 9th-century Neo-Confucian scholar Li Ao and Chan master Yaoshan. Painting inscribed by 13th c. monk, Yanxi Guangwen. Painting done in a “Chan-style,” with landscape mostly in broad, pale strokes and dots of black; figures done in pale ink, faces more distinct. See essay by Yoshiaki Shimizu in *Awakenings* (2008) catalog.

12.19.1: Attributed to Muqi, *Cheng Huang-niu Riding an Ox*, late Song, hanging scroll, ink on silk, 45.2 x 83.5 cm. Formerly Goro Sakamoto Collection, Kyoto, now in private collection. Reproduced in *Sōgen-ga* catalog (1982), Pl. 14.

Another example of a Chan meeting painting, where a secular figure pays homage to a Chan monk. Rough painting of the landscape.

12.20.1: Attributed to Hu Zhifu (13th c.) *Sakyamuni Emerging from the Mountains*, mid-13th c., hanging scroll, ink on paper, 92 x 31.7 cm. Freer Gallery, F1965.9. Reproduced in Lawton, *Chinese Figure Painting*, 21.

Inscribed by Chan master Xiyan Liaohui (1198–1262).

12.21.1: Similar style and subject as above, from Yabumoto Private Collection, Osaka.

12.22.1: *Xianzi the Shrimp-Eater*, another common subject of Sōgenga.

12.23.1: Attributed to Lochuang, *Han-shan Reading a Scroll*, late Song, hanging scroll, ink on paper, 59.3 x 28.9 cm. Berkeley Art Museum, 1970.99. *Suiboku* III, 33; *Sōgen-ga* Pl. 11.

Lochuang a pupil of Muqi; authenticity of seal uncertain.

12.24.1: Shike, *Two Patriarchs in Harmony*: Sleeping monk with tiger and Second Patriarch (Huike)

Guanyin/Kannon Paintings

12.25.1: Arhats looking at scroll of Guanyin, 12th c.

12.26.1: Jueji Yongzhong, *Standing Figure of Guanyin*, early Yuan, hanging scroll, ink on paper, 85.8 x 33.7 cm. Soshiro Yabumoto Collection, Osaka. Inscription by Zhongfeng Mingben (1263-1323). *Sōgen-ga*, Pl. 3.

White-robed Guanyin drawn in simple lines; left side of a triptych. The central panel of the triptych is in the Cleveland Museum of Art: *White-robed Guanyin*, 1978.47.1.

Note: At the time of *Sōgen-ga* exhibition, most paintings not from the Berkeley Art Museum were borrowed from dealers in Japan; the dealers hoped to sell to American museums, but the curator of the Asian Art Museum at the time considered them unworthy of the museum's collection. See Reminiscences #55 on my website: <http://jamescahill.info/the-writings-of-james-cahill/responses-a-reminiscences/177-55-sogenga-a-modest-exhibition-an-opportunity-missed>

12.27.1: Female Painter (17th c.) *Seated Guanyin*, Palace Museum, Beijing. Form similar to above.

12.28.1: *White-Robed Guanyin*, colors on silk. Yabumoto Collection.

12.29.1 *White-Robed Guanyin*, Yuan dynasty. Guanyin seated on woven mat, holding a cup with lotus (?)

12.30.1: [Editor's note: In video, Professor Cahill says he does not remember the details of the painting; it is reproduced in the *Sōgen-ga* catalog, no. 2 as: Anonymous, *Seated Kuan-yin*, late Sung dynasty, hanging scroll, ink on paper, 56 x 29 cm. Soshiro Yabumoto Collection, Tokyo. Inscription by Wu-chun Shih-fan (1175-1249)]

12.31.1: Guanyin as princely figure, floating on a leaf on the water. Robes done in old-fashioned style.

12.32.1: Anonymous, *Guanyin in Tattered Robe*, Yuan dynasty, hanging scroll, ink on silk, 97 x 41.4 cm. Soshiro Yabumoto Collection, Tokyo. Inscription by Qianyan Yuanzhang (1284-1357). *Sōgen-ga*, no. 5.

Paintings of Bodhidharma:

First Patriarch of Chan/Zen Buddhism. Always shown as hirsute, dark-complexioned figure to indicate his Indian ethnicity. After he failed to convert Emperor Liao Wudi to Buddhism, he supposedly sailed across the Yangtze River on a reed, and retired into a cave for meditation. He only came out of meditation to teach the doctrine to Huike, the Second Chan Patriarch, who convinced Bodhidharma of his conviction by cutting off his own hand.

12.33.1: *Portrait of Bodhidharma*, 14th c., hanging scroll, ink on silk, 159.4 x 69.2 cm. Freer Gallery, F1906.261.

12.34.1: Anonymous (signed Yan Hui), *Bodhidharma in Red Robe*, Yuan dynasty, hanging scroll, ink and colors on silk, 115 x 64.2 cm. Soshiro Yabumoto Collection, Tokyo. Inscription by Huizhi Yuanxi (d. 1319). *Sōgen-ga*, no. 9.

12.35.1: *Red-Robed Bodhidharma*. Entered Japanese collections via Ningbo. Inscription dated 1198.

12.36.1: Head of Bodhidharma (detail). Depicted with great humanity.

12.37.1: *Hooded Bodhidharma Crossing Yangtze on a Reed*. Princeton Art Museum.

12.38.1: Anonymous, *Bodhidharma Meditating Facing a Wall* (J. *Menpeki Daruma zu 面壁達磨図*) (detail), Song dynasty (1127–1279), hanging scroll, ink on silk, 116.2 x 46.3 cm. Spurious seal impression reading “Ciping.” Cleveland Museum of Art, John L. Severance Fund, 1972.41.

Meeting between Bodhidharma and Huike, after Huike has cut off his own arm.

Portraits of other Chan patriarchs:

12.39.1: Zhongfen Mingben 中峰名本, *Self-Portrait*, Yuan dynasty. Also inscribed by him.

12.40.1: Yi'an, *Portrait of Mingben*, also inscribed by Mingben. Kōgen-ji Collection. See Cahill, *Hills Beyond a River*, Pl. 65.

It used to be thought that these types of paintings were presented to disciples when they attained enlightenment, but actually, these paintings were widely available on the market.

12.41.1: Portrait of Mingben. Japanese Collection.

See catalog: *Sacred Ningbo: Gateway to 1,300 Years of Japanese Buddhism* (J. 聖地寧波：日本仏教1300年の源流), Nara National Museum, 2009.

12.42.1a, b: Portraits of Two Patriarchs, 1220. Flanking panels of a triptych; central panel below.

12.43.1: Portrait of 13th c. Japanese priest, 1227. Done in Japan on his deathbed. Central panel of the triptych, flanked by two portraits above.

Not always easy to tell the difference between paintings of this kind done in China or done in Japan.

12.44.1a: Lu Xinzong 陸信忠/ 陆信忠 (1195–1257, Ningbo painter), *Ten Kings of Hell: Pingdeng Wang*, hanging scroll, ink and colors on silk, 83.2 x 47.8 cm. Nara National Museum, Important Cultural Property, 1013-8.

12.44.1b: Lu Xinzong, *Ten Kings of Hell: Taishan Wang*, hanging scroll, ink and colors on silk, 83.2 x 47.7 cm. Nara National Museum, Important Cultural Property, 1013-7. *Sacred Ningbo*, Pl. 80.

12.44.2: Lu Xinzong, *Nirvana (Death) of the Buddha*, hanging scroll, ink and colors on silk, 157.1 x 82.9 cm. Nara National Museum, Important Cultural Property, 756-0. *Sacred Ningbo*, Pl. 67.

An example of a *Nehan-zu* in Japanese, a depiction of Buddha's "death," or attainment of nirvana.

Hanshan 寒山 and Shide 拾德 :

12.43.1a, b: *Hanshan and Shide*, pair of hanging scrolls.

12.44.1: Anonymous, *Han-shan Pointing at the Moon*, 13th c., hanging scroll, ink on silk, 59 x 32 cm. Kozo Yabumoto Collection, Amagasaki. *Sōgen-ga*, no. 12.

12.45.1: Anonymous (old attribution to Liang Kai), *Hanshan and Shide in a Landscape*, ink on silk. Masaki Art Museum, Osaka.

12.46.1: Attributed to Ru An, *Windblown Shide with Broom*, ink on silk.

Lively and enjoyable, free on constraints of Chinese painting.

12.47.1: *Sixth Patriarch arriving at Monastery with Hoe*, Yuan dynasty, ink on silk. Masaki Art Museum, Osaka.

12.48.1: *Hotei*. Mizutani Isaburo Collection.

Paintings that are loosely Chan:

12.49.1: *Boy on Water Buffalo*, Yuan dynasty, hanging scroll.

14.50.1: Anonymous, Painting of herd boy sitting on bank, water buffalo wallowing in the water. Kumita Collection, Kyoto.

12.51.1: Anonymous, *Moonlit Landscape with Traveler on Donkey*, 13th c. Kimbell Art Museum, Texas.

12.52.1 (redux of image 12.13.1 from Lecture 12B): Attributed to Muqi, *Swallow and Hanging Willow Branch*. Tokugawa Museum, Nagoya. Suiboku 111/75.

12.53.1: Anonymous, ink painting of three baby swallows in willow nest.

12.54.1: Anonymous (old attribution to Muqi), *Dove and Bamboo* (maybe willow), 13th c., hanging scroll, ink on silk, 78 x 40.4 cm. Soshiro Yabumoto Collection, Tokyo. *Sōgen-ga*, no. 30.

A painting of quiet contemplation.

12.55.1: *Sparrow on Bamboo*, ink on paper.

12.56.1: *Gibbon and Child*. Nakamura Collection.

12.57.1: Anonymous (old attribution to Muqi), *Gibbon*, 13th c., hanging scroll, ink on silk, 80.6 x 38.8 cm. Berkeley Art Museum, Ching Yüan Chai Collection. *Sōgenga*, no 32.

Broad, loose strokes of the earth bank recall Yujian's *Waterfall on Mt. Lu*.

12.58.1: Copy of *Gibbon*, ink on paper. Drawn much more aggressively.

12.59.1: Wen (Ziwen) Riguan 日觀 (d. ca. 1295), *Grapes*, 13th c., short handscroll mounted as horizontal painting, ink on paper, 31.2 x 83 cm. Formerly Soshiro Yabumoto Collection, Tokyo; now Berkeley Art Museum, 2000.28. *Sōgenga*, no. 42.

This is one of several grape paintings done by Wen Riguan; his most famous one can be found in Siren, Vol. III, Pl. 368 as *A Branch of Climbing Vine*, 1291, Inoue Collection. Grapes not technically a Chan subject, but loosely associated because the Buddha came from the West and so did grapes. See my Reminiscences #35 for how I acquired the painting: <http://jamescahill.info/the-writings-of-james-cahill/responses-a-reminiscences/157-35the-great-buson-caper>

This last section of Lecture 12 is about Chan landscape, and particularly about two series of horizontal paintings, one attributed to Muqi 牧溪, the other by an artist named Yujian 玉澗/玉涧. They originally consisted of eight views in each set, representing the Eight Views of the Xiao-Xiang Region (Ch. *Xiaoxiang bajing* 潇湘八景). But most of the originals have been lost or destroyed, and survive only in old Japanese copies. These will be the last items in our long consideration of Chinese landscape painting through the end of Song, and nothing really follows on them in China. The implications of that lack of any continuation in China is a matter I'll discuss in a postlude.

Muqi 牧溪

12.60.1: Muqi, *Evening Glow on a Fishing Village*. Formerly handscroll, now mounted as hanging scroll. Nezu Museum, Tokyo. Siren, Vol. III, Pl. 340–1; Skira 93; Suiboku 3/4.

Splashed-ink style and use of a split-brush. Begins with an evening scene of house on riverbank and fishermen pulling in daily catch; scene obscured by diagonal banks of fog. Second scene shows earth masses shaped by light and shadow done through the split-brush technique. Compare with Xia Gui's *Pure and Remote View*. In splashed-ink style, ambiguous splashes of ink coalesce into coherent images. Why did Zen painters *choose* a Xia Gui style?

For more about Xiao-Xiang paintings, please see: Alfreda Murck, *The Subtle Art of Dissent: Poetry and Painting in Song China* (Harvard University Asia Center, 2002), and Helmut Brinker

and Hiroshi Kanazawa, *Zen Masters of Meditation in Images and Writings* (University of Hawaii Press, 1996).

12.60.2: Attributed to Muqi, *Boats Returning from a Distant Inlet*. Formerly handscroll, now mounted as hanging scroll. Siren, Vol. III, Pl. 354 (detail), Suiboku 3/5.

Splashed-ink manner and split-brush technique. Boats driven by the wind, trees on the shore bent in the direction of the strong gusts. In foreground, traveler arrives at an inn; two figures sit on the shore.

12.60.3: Attributed to Muqi, *Evening Bell from a Temple in Mist*. Formerly handscroll, now mounted as hanging scroll. Loehr 113, Siren 341 (miscaptioned as *Night Rain over Hsiao-Hsiang*), Suiboku 3/7.

Artist has somehow suggested the sound of a bell echoing outwards from the center. Roofs of temple the most distinct part of the scroll, rest covered in washes of ink.

12.60.4: Attributed to Muqi, *Geese Alighting on a Flat Shoal*. Formerly handscroll, now mounted as hanging scroll. Idemitsu Museum, Tokyo. Siren, Vol. III, Pl. 348–9 (below), Suiboku 3/6.

Value in its mystique and space.

12.60.5: *Evening Snow on the Hills*, no longer extant, destroyed in 1945.

Yujian 玉澗/玉涧 (act. 13th c.)

12.61.1: Attributed to and inscribed by Yujian, *Returning Sails from a Distant Inlet*. Tokugawa Collection. Loehr 114, Suiboku 3/99.

12.61.2: Attributed to Yujian, *Autumn Moon over Lake Dongting*. Siren, Vol. III, Pl. 346 (top), Suiboku 3/99.

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

The masterwork painting of this kind of work. Chan painting characteristics: spontaneity, reduction to key points, remainder amorphous, viewer left to interpret the rest. Power in its evocation.

Two large earth-masses connected by bridge in foreground. Middle ground a big area of fog with two old travelers climbing, implying existence of path.

12.61.4: Yujian, inscribed and signed, *Waterfall on Mount Lu*, fragment of handscroll. Tokugawa Museum, Nagoya. Siren, Vol. III, Pl. 347; Loehr 11 5. Both parts: Suiboku 3/19.

Split-brush technique to create texture of rounded peaks. Compare with photograph of Mount Lu. The left side of the painting containing the waterfall was cut off and sold separately.

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

In a recent Japanese exhibition, reattributed to the Japanese painter Sesshu. I don't know what the basis of that decision was and until I can, I will continue to think of it as a late-Song painting in the style of Yujian.

Please see Postlude!