

陝西靈州史莊公遺像

陝西靈州史莊公遺像
公字子安，號文忠，性剛直，有
才氣。其先世自北齊以來，世
居靈州。公少時，其父嘗告之
曰：汝當自勉，勿負先人之志。
公聞之，自勵甚力。及長，博學
多聞，尤長於史。其為人，不
事虛名，不慕富貴。其於政事，
尤有見解。其於文學，亦極
有造詣。其於交友，尤為
慎重。其於處世，尤為
謙和。其於死，尤為
坦然。其於遺像，尤為
神聖。其於遺像，尤為
神聖。其於遺像，尤為
神聖。

其學博而性剛，直道而行，不
求聞達。其於政事，尤有
見解。其於文學，亦極
有造詣。其於交友，尤為
慎重。其於處世，尤為
謙和。其於死，尤為
坦然。其於遺像，尤為
神聖。其於遺像，尤為
神聖。其於遺像，尤為
神聖。



Hidden Treasures of Chinese Painting Revealed

The field of art history, much like archaeology, requires some digging. Stephen Little, the Academy's curator of Asian art, fresh from "unearthing" the mysteries of a group of previously unpublished Chinese paintings in the Academy's collection, presents recent findings on these works, at the Academy Theatre, on Sunday, August 2, at 2 p.m.

Acquired since the Academy's founding, some of the works contain inscriptions that have never before been translated. Little's research is shedding new light on the date, function, and significance of many works in the collection. In one case, Little discovered the existence of a

signature that has led to the identification of a previously "anonymous" artist. In another case, close examination of a painting of a Bodhisattva acquired in 1927 as a Korean work of the 17th century has led to its reattribution as a Chinese, Ming dynasty Buddhist painting of the 15th century. The lecture will also include a discussion of several rare ancestor portraits, ranging in date from the 15th to 19th centuries (see illustration).

The works under examination, which date from the Ming (1368–1644) and Qing (1644–1911) dynasties, are now being studied in preparation for a new catalogue of the Academy's Chinese paintings. Research for this catalogue is funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

3216.01
Anonymous



This hanging scroll, *Memorial Portrait of Master Zhuang* (inscribed by Li Shao in A.D. 1457), is one of the Chinese paintings being researched by Stephen Little. Little will present his findings in a lecture on August 2. This painting, executed by an anonymous artist during the Ming dynasty (mid-15th century), was gifted to the Academy by Mr. and Mrs. Walter F. Dillingham in 1964 (3216.1). CL 9-8/92

Anonymous

MEMORIAL PORTRAIT OF ZHUANG GUAN

Ming dynasty; inscription by Li Shao dated 1457

Hanging scroll; ink, colors, and gold on silk

178 x 96 cm.

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Walter F. Dillingham, 1957 (3216.1)

by Steve Little

This dignified memorial portrait depicts a Ming dynasty scholar, dressed in the official regalia of the imperial bureaucracy. The rank badge worn on his chest depicts the mythical *xiezhai*, and indicates that he was a censor - an official who reported corruption in the government. He is shown as a middle-aged gentleman with a mustache and short goatee, gazing out at the viewer with a penetrating gaze. The portrait is clearly realistic, as the figure is shown with two prominent moles, one on his upper lip and one on his forehead. He is dressed in a red robe with a white collar, and wears the scholar-official's hat known as a *wusha mao* ("black gauze cap"). At his waist is a belt with five openwork jade plaques.

During the Ming dynasty, badges decorated with the *xiezhai* were reserved for imperial censors or censors in the provincial surveillance commissions. As Schuyler Cammann has written,

The *xiezhai* ... has been familiar in Chinese tradition since the Later Han dynasty (AD 25-220) as a creature which could distinguish between good and evil. It was therefore singularly fitted to be the emblem of the imperial censors who were appointed to investigate and report any breach in the honesty

and integrity of other members of the official hierarchy, as well as the emblem for judges.¹

The *xiezhai* is traditionally shown with a single horn,² Normally it has paws, but is shown here with hooves in the manner of a *qilin*. That the beast is a *xiezhai* is confirmed by the bony, reptilian ridges on its chest, which are lacking on the *qilin*.³ That there may have been variations in the production of rank badges of this type is suggested by Cammann:

... there were no regular factories for the mass production of such things as the bird and animal insignia. These had to be made on special order, or even woven and embroidered in the officials' own homes.⁴

That the official shown in this painting held censorial rank, as indicated by the *xiezhai* on his robe, is confirmed by the official position mentioned in the inscription on the painting dated to the first year of Tianshun (1457) : "Vice-Censor of Shaanxi province, Master Zhuang."

Master Zhuang is shown seated on a folding horseshoe-back lacquered armchair, carved with scroll patterns in the technique best known today by its Japanese term, *guri*.⁵ The back of his chair is covered with a gold-embroidered cloth. He rests his boots on a low foot-rest, also carved in the *guri* technique. A table appears in the background; it is decorated with black lacquer inlaid with mother-of-pearl, and has a marble top. On the table are a tortoise-shell box, a bronze tripod incense burner, and a bronze *touhu* ("arrow vase") decorated with the trigrams of the *Yi Jing* (Book of Changes), and containing the "Three Friends of Winter:" pine, bamboo, and

blossoming plum. A young boy stands behind Master Zhuang; he holds a handscroll in his hands.

This portrait is carefully painted, with meticulous attention devoted to the textures of the textile, lacquer, jade, and bronze surfaces. The brushwork describing the folds of the robes is taut and severe, with crisply executed hooks and turns. The image has exceptional clarity. As a memorial portrait, this painting is rare not only in depicting a named individual, but also in bearing a dated inscription (1457) which provides a *terminus ante quem* for the work. A title slip attached to the upper right mounting of the painting reads, "Memorial Portrait of Master Zhuang, Vice-Commissioner in the Censorate of Shaanxi; remounted at the Qingtong Library."⁶

The two inscriptions on the painting provide critical evidence for the identification of Master Zhuang. The first inscription, at the upper right, is by the high official Li Shao (jinshi 1433, d. 1471):

Eulogy for the Memorial Portrait of Master Zhuang, Vice-Commissioner of the Shaanxi Provincial Surveillance Commission.

Grave and dignified was his bearing,
Upright and pure was his virtuous spirit,
Stately and exalted was his discrimination,
Determined and esteemed was his learning.

His brilliant classical knowledge and gift of leadership were such that he achieved great merit in opening up mens' intelligence; his discipline at delegating and his management in governing gave him the advantage in skillfully molding

[affairs]. Although in his actions he was unable to fully exhaust his potential, there was naturally enough residual [effect] for his descendants. Like one who rides a piebald horse, he gave his utmost to having a son who would carry out his will and intentions.⁷

Now, gazing at his portrait, at his refined spirit and noble bearing, although it is still sufficient to cause people to look up to him, and while he looks down with favor on all his descendants, there is no need to seek this [his favor]. It is enough to know that he is long gone, and yet has not disappeared.

Respectfully written on the fifteenth day of the fifth month, in the summer of the first year of the Tianshun reign [1457]; eulogized by the Grand Master for Consultation, Chief Minister of the Office of Seals, and Expositor-in-Waiting of the Hanlin Academy, Ancheng Li Shao.

The inscription is followed by two seals: (s/r) "Keshu" and (s/i) "[] shan shuwu."

The second inscription, at the upper left, is by Yang Ning (1400-1458), and is undated:

His learning was profound and his actions were honest. Nobly did he gather the osmanthus [branch] of the Toad [Moon] Palace [i.e., he passed the *jinshi* examination]. Those students of the National University who had obtained the first [*xiucaif*] degree took him as a model in approaching their studies, and those subordinate officials of the Outer Censorate [the Provincial Surveillance Commission] who came to study with

him all took him as their leader. Those officials who emerged from his gate looked up to his clear virtue; those who traveled with him took delight in his harmonious demeanor and kind words.

At the end of his years he returned to his home to rest. Whether he was advancing or retiring, he always followed ritual and righteousness. In using these [principles], although he never exhausted his talent, his virtue was enough to guide his followers.

Eulogized by Yang Ning of Qiantang [Hangzhou], who entered government service with the *jinshi* degree in the year *gengxu* [1430], who has served as a Vice-Minister, Minister of the Nanjing Board of Punishment, and former Minister of the Board of Rites.

These inscriptions, replete with fulsome accolades, are important for corroborating the painting's date in the mid-fifteenth century. In addition to the presence of the Tianshun reign title in Li Shao's eulogy, the calligraphic style of both Li's and Yang Ning's inscriptions are characteristic of the fifteenth century. Li's inscription contains elements of both Zhong You's third century manner and classical *sūtra* script found in Buddhist manuscripts from the Six Dynasties period onward. Yang's inscription, with its well-balanced characters and clearly structured composition, is an excellent example of the so-called "chancery" style of writing prevalent at the Ming court in the early 15th century. This was a style that emerged from the standard script of such Yuan dynasty calligraphers as Guo Bi (1301-1355).⁸

Although in the inscriptions on the Academy's portrait the figure is mentioned only by his last name, he can be identified by virtue of the official title he is given in the painting's eulogies: "Vice-Commissioner of the Shaanxi Censorate." The term used in the inscription for "censorate" (*xian*) was used in the Ming dynasty as a designation for the Provincial Surveillance Commission.⁹ A survey of Ming officials with the surname Zhuang has led to the identification of the subject of the Academy's portrait as Zhuang Guan, a native of Shexian, Anhui province, whose last official post before retiring in 1450 was Vice-Commissioner of the Shaanxi Provincial Surveillance Commission. A biographical account of Zhuang was written by the official Zhang Kai (*jinshi* 1424), and is recorded in the late Ming compendium Guochao xianzheng lu (1616):

Epitaph of Master Zhuang Guan, Vice-Commissioner of the
Shaanxi Provincial Surveillance Commission

His study of clear principles and his mastery of words, his stating that the Dao consists of perfecting oneself and others, and his demonstrations of filiality were all unified [by him] into one principle. In this his capabilities were without measure. In my friendship, I took Master Zhuang as an older brother. I can see him [now].

The master's personal name was Guan, and his *zi* was Juzheng. He was a native of Zhuangcun in She[xian, Anhui Province]. When he was fourteen he attended his father's funeral, where he displayed the [proper] etiquette. As a youth

he became a prefectural *xiucai* [first degree graduate], known for his sharp brush and scholarship. Whatever passed before his eyes was transformed into chanted [verses]. Those of his generation all yielded to him.

In the cyclical year *xinmao* of the Yongle reign [1411] he was a Prefectural Nominee [in the second level *juren* examinations] in Ying[tian] [Nanjing]. In the following year, he took second place in the *huishi* [*jinshi*] examination, and was given the post of Instructor of Yiwu in Zhe[jiang] [in the state-sponsored Confucian School]. The master was straightforward in his exercise of bright principles, and excelled at the mastery of words. In the training of students he had [clear] rules, and in succession three of his candidates obtained the first [*xiucai*] degree. [Eventually] eight men came into public service. In every test they were the best of their class.

[Zhuang] was then promoted to Head of the state-sponsored Confucian School [*ruxue*] in Chenxi prefecture [in Hunan]. He immediately used his students from Yiwu to teach his [new] students, as their literary styles were in harmony. A short while later he went into mourning for his mother. When he emerged he again went to the capital, where he was promoted to the position of Instructor at the National University. Those of his disciples who sat at his feet all were well-grounded in bright principles and the mastery of words. When they emerged [from their studies], they followed him as fully knowledgeable officials, capable of promotion. What the Master provided as a model was used by all.

In the first year of the Zhengtong reign [1436], new orders were promulgated stating that in each province officials of the censorate would direct the Confucian Schools and regulate the high officials. Each [official] had an audience with the Commander-in-Chief, Wang Ji [1378-1460]. [Wang] recommended the master for appointment as Assistant Surveillance Commissioner of Shaanxi Province, [with the added duty of] taking charge of the first-degree candidates for eight prefectures. In order to achieve this objective, the master first established a sufficient number of schools. He then sternly exercised his authority, and earnestly toiled to produce virtuous and intelligent students.

When areas of the Shaanxi frontier collapsed, and there were difficulties among the mountains and streams, the master was indefatigable. At the time he personally carried out the duties of his office, and inevitably obtained results. On this account, the students of the eight prefectures [under his influence] contended for first place with determination, and took achievement in their studies and the establishment of their name as key expectations. For example, Yang Ding [1410-1485] of Xianning seized first place in the jinshi examination [in 1439].¹⁰ In addition, Huang Jian [b. 1412, jinshi 1442] of Lanxian¹¹ and Liu Jun [jinshi 1445] of Fengxiang¹² followed close behind, [both] taking a place among the top three jinshi degree graduates and achieving fame after entering the Hanlin Academy. Others who attained the jinshi degree were all second degree graduates who had not had official posts; all of

these achieved eminence and fame. For example, the Censors-in-Chief Wang Hong [1413-1488]¹³ and Ren Ning were in one class.

I once emerged from the Ministry of Justice with the master when he said,

In schools, the first thing is to make one's principles shine. Literary compositions should never [be equated] with [actual] affairs."

[In this manner] the commanderies and prefectures were guided by his influence. Despite the vulgarity of the Yi and Di barbarians, they all esteemed his modesty. It was the master's virtue that brought this about. Among the first-degree graduates there were those who were intelligent and emerged from the crowd, advancing and taking scholarship as their profession. The pleasure they took in this shone in their faces. He loved cultivation as if it were a great treasure. [The master] spoke to me, saying,

When the men of the west obtain this treasure [i.e., cultivation through scholarship], they are collectively elevated. I exhort them to master every philosopher, enabling them to receive an impression through their observations of each, and to put forth the utmost effort in their work.

Thereafter the ranks of talented men actually took on these qualities.

For nine years [Zhuang's] rank stayed the same; he then obtained a promotion. Now [c. 1447] the Junior Guardian,

Minister of Personnel, and Grand Secretary of the Eastern Hall, Master *Wang, from time to time sent officials of the Censorate to work in the Defense Command of Shaanxi. It was feared that the master would depart [from office], and scholars felt helpless [for him]. [As a result] a special memorial for him was drawn up, for a promotion to Vice-Commissioner of his original department [the Shaanxi Provincial Surveillance Commission]. As before, he was in charge of schools.

Three years later, in the first year of the Jingtai reign [1450], he received the honor of presentation [at court]. He went to the capital and wrote a letter to the emperor, in which he begged to be allowed to retire on account of old age. When he obtained his request, he brought his son and daughter and returned to his native district.

When the master was a newly-appointed official, he received his mother and wife, and they went to Yiwu [in Zhejiang], where he reverentially exhausted the path of filiality. After he was promoted to [serve in] Chenxi [in Hunan], his mother died, and his grief exceeded propriety. [Again,] he used his reserves [of cash] to bury her. He was without strength, yet he was more than complete in his mourning for her.

Now he retired due to old age, and returned home. As an older man, he was even more sincere in his filial conduct. I recall [his?] elder brother Xuan; the grandparents and younger brother of both men died in succession. As for [his] young children, the master left behind an abundant emolument, which was divided and used for their education. None [of the

children] was set apart, and his son had more than was sufficient. When Jili [?] was poverty-stricken, he [ordered] the repair of bridges and roads, in order to help the common people [make a living].

When mourning [him] in the family's ancestral shrine, [people] hold fast [to his memory], and surpass other families in their devotion. When the sacrifices him are carried out, the ritual vessels are meticulously prepared, and extreme reverence is felt. It is something other families find praiseworthy.

The master's great-grandfather was Tianxi; his grandfather was Tingbi. Both concealed their virtue and did not shine forth. [The master's] father was Yongning, and he praised the master. On him was bestowed the position of Assistant Commissioner of the Shaanxi Provincial Surveillance Commission. [The master's] mother had the surname Zhang.¹⁴

In summary, we know that Zhuang Guan obtained the *jinshi* degree in 1412, and after serving as an instructor in state-sponsored Confucian schools in Zhejiang and Hunan, was promoted to the position of Instructor at the National University [*Guozhi xuezheng*] in Beijing, with a rank of 9A. At the beginning of the Zhengtong reign in 1436, after twenty-four years as a teacher of the Confucian classics in the provinces and in Beijing, Zhuang Guan was appointed Right Assistant Surveillance Commissioner of the Provincial Surveillance Commission of Shaanxi Province (*Shaanxi you ancha qianshi*), with a rank of 5A. This was on the recommendation of the

Commander-in-chief of the military, Wang Ji (1378-1460), who himself had been a Vice Commissioner of the Provincial Surveillance Commission in Shanxi Province before becoming Prefect of Beijing in 1425. In about 1447, after serving ten years as an Assistant Surveillance Commissioner in Shaanxi, Zhuang Guan was promoted to Vice Commissioner (*Shaanxi ancha fushi*), with a rank of 4A. In 1450, after the capture of the Zhengtong emperor by the Mongol leader Esen at Tumu in 1449, and at the beginning of the Jingtai reign, Zhuang Guan requested and received permission from the emperor to retire. He then settled in Yiwu, Zhejiang, where he died in ca. 1457.

The identification of the central figure in the Academy's portrait with Zhuang Guan is supported by the references in the painting's eulogies to Zhuang's position as a teacher at the National University and censor of the Shaanxi Provincial Surveillance Commission, just as he is described in Zhang Kai's biography.

Significantly, Li Shao, Yang Ning, and Zhuang Guan were all active in the imperial government in Beijing in the final years of Xuande reign (1433-35), and all three officials had connections with the imperial court during the Zhengtong reign (1436-1449). Furthermore, Yang Ning, author of the painting's second eulogy, was a Secretary in the Ministry of Justice with extensive military experience, and came from Zhuang Guan's native district in Shexian, Anhui. Yang and Zhuang were thus *xiangren* ("fellow countrymen").

The fifteenth century date of this painting is corroborated by the presence of carved and inlaid lacquer furniture as ancillary elements of the composition. In addition to signifying Master

Zhuang's affluence, these appear, as Craig Clunas has demonstrated, as classical expressions of early Ming taste in furniture, well before the mid-sixteenth century vogue for unlacquered hardwood furniture that has continued to dominate Chinese furniture design into the twentieth century.¹⁵

There is a similar portrait in the Palace Museum, Beijing, that may have been created by the same artist or studio (Fig. 1).¹⁶ The points of similarity are the compositions, the arrangement of the figures, the arrangement of the hands and draperies of the central figures, the lacquered furniture, and the arrangements of the objects on the tables. The figures themselves, while completely different, are depicted with a similar degree of realism and understanding.

PREVIOUSLY UNPUBLISHED

NOTES

1. Schuyler Cammann, Chinese Mandarin Squares (The University Museum Bulletin) (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, June, 1953), p. 22.
2. For a late Ming description and illustration of a xiezhai, see Sancai tuhui (1607). 3 vols. (reprint Shanghai: Shanghai gujie chubanshe, 1988), vol. 3, p. 2202.
3. See the image of a qilin in ibid., p. 2201.
4. Cammann, p. 9.
5. Different terms have been used in China for this technique, including xipi and tipi. A rare early sixteenth century armchair of this type, decorated in carved cinnabar lacquer alone, is in the

Victoria and Albert Museum, London; see Rose Kerr, ed., The T.T. Tsui Gallery of Chinese Art: Chinese Art and Design (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1991), pl. 84. The *guri* technique may have appeared as early as the Tang dynasty, but was fully developed in the Southern Song period (13th century); see George Kuwayama, Far Eastern Lacquer [Exh. cat.] (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1982), pp. 34-36; Regina Krahl, "Chinese Lacquer of the Yuan and Ming Dynasties," in Innovation to Conformity [Exh. cat.] (London: Bluett & Sons, 1989), pp. 11-12, 22; .

6. Two Qing men who used this library or studio name were Wang Bin of Shanghai and Sang Shengqiu of Hangzhou; see Qingren shiming biecheng zihao suoyin. 2 vols. (Shanghai: Shanghai gujie chubanshe, 1988), vol. 1, p. 292, vol. 2, pp. 851, 1256.

7. "One who rides a piebald horse" is a reference to the Later Han dynasty attendant censor Huan Dian, who, like Zhuang Guan, was praised for his filial piety and for maintaining and transmitting his family estate to his heirs; see Zhongwen da cidian. 10 vols. (Taipei: Chinese Culture University, 1973), nos. 45951.4, 15061.25 . I am grateful to Professor Jonathan Chaves for tracking down this reference.

8. For an example of Guo Bi's standard script, dated 1325, see Tseng Yu-ho Ecke, Chinese Calligraphy [Exh. cat.] (Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1971), no. 36B.

9. Charles O. Hucker, A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985), pp. 76-77, 243. Hucker demonstrates that during the Ming dynasty, the titles of the officials of the Censorate (*ducha yuan*) and the Provincial Surveillance

Commission (*ancha si*) were often used interchangeably; this was because their functions at the provincial level were nearly identical, namely to seek out corruption and report it to the throne. The term *xian*, found in the painting's title slip and in Li Shao's inscription, means "basic laws," and in the Ming dynasty was an unofficial designation for the Provincial Surveillance Commission in which Zhuang Guan worked.

10. On Yang Ding see Jiao Hong, comp., Guochao xianzhenglu (1616; Reprint, Shanghai: Shanghai shuju, 1987), ch. 28:40a-42a.

11. On Huang Jian, see *ibid.*, ch. 20:33a-b.

12. On Liu Jun, see *ibid.*, ch. 53:5a-b.

13. On Wang Hong, see *ibid.*, ch. 38:55a-57b.

14. *Ibid.*, ch. 94:53a-54b.

15. See Craig Clunas, Chinese Furniture (London: Victoria & Albert Museum, 1988), pp. 41-43.

16. Previously published in Yiyuan duoying, vol. 27 (1985), p. 12.

PROVENANCE

Mr. and Mrs. Walter F. Dillingham, Honolulu.