



Artist: Anonymous
Formerly attrib. to: Wang Jianji 王兼濟 (early to mid-11th century)
Title: *Ajita, the Fifteenth Venerable Luohan*
《阿氏多尊者像》
Ashiduo zunzhe xiang
Dynasty/Date: Yuan, 1345
Format: Hanging scroll
Medium: Ink and color on silk
Dimensions: 127.0 x 62.4 cm (50 x 24-9/16 in)
Credit line: Gift of Charles Lang Freer
Accession no.: F1917.334
Provenance: Seaouke Yue (You Xiaoqi 游篠溪), Shanghai

Painting subject: Portrait of a luohan, identifiable as Ajita, the Fifteenth Luohan, seated...
The painting is fifteenth in a set of eighteen portraits of *luohan*, four (or maybe five) others of which are in the Freer collection.¹

Object description: Cloth wrapper, with one (1) label. One (1) outside label. One (1) inside label. One (1) dated inscription. Six (6) collector seals

Wrapper label: Anonymous (early 20th century); same as both labels below
Ink on silk. Mounted on fitted brocade wrapper.
1 column, standard script

宋王兼濟 《佛像》

Buddhist figure, by Wang Jianji of the Song dynasty

Outside label: Anonymous (19th/20th century); same as above and below

Ink on paper.

1 column, standard script

宋王兼濟 《佛像》

Buddhist figure, by Wang Jianji of the Song dynasty

Inside label: Anonymous (19th/20th century), same as both above Ink

on paper. On mounting, upper right.

1 column, standard script

宋王兼濟 《佛像》

Buddhist figure, by Wang Jianji of the Song dynasty

Painting description: The painting is comprised of two sections of silk, joined vertically.²

Dimensions: (right): W: 15.2 cm

(left): W: 47.2 cm

A series of painted black dash strokes (probably workshop measurements) run along the right edge of the painting, top to bottom.³

Top left section of silk has been replaced; top portion of inscription is missing.

Inscription: Anonymous.

Ink on silk. Upper left.

2 columns, standard script. Top portion missing.

□□□□□□乙酉歲二月己卯朔十九日甲戌吉，□□□□□□尊者，千五百眷屬，住
鷲峰山中。

...on auspicious *jiaxu*, the nineteenth day of the second lunar month, with *jimao* as its first day, in [the cyclical year] *yiyou* [March 23, 1345],...the venerable [Ajita, or Asita, the Fifteenth Luohan], who resides with one thousand five hundred followers on the mountain of Gridhrakuta [Vulture Peak].⁴

Signature: none

Date: ...乙酉歲二月己卯朔十九日甲戌

...on auspicious *jiaxu*, the nineteenth day of the second lunar month, with *jimao* as its first day, in *yiyou* [March 23, 1345],...

Seals: none

Collector seals: (6)

1. Song imperial seal – (1) – spurious



Double dragon seal (circle relief) – painting, lower right

2. Zhao Mengfu 趙孟頫 (1254–1322) – (2) – spurious

Songxuezhai 『松雪齋』 (rectangle relief) – painting, upper right

Zhao Mengfu yin 『趙孟頫印』 (square relief) – painting, lower right

3. Unidentified – (3)

Chang 『昌』 (square relief) – painting, upper left

Chuan jia zhibao 『傳家之寶』 (square relief) – painting, lower right

Chong 𠂔 『崇𠂔』 (tripod relief) – painting, lower left

Traditional Chinese catalogues: none

Bibliography

Suzuki Kei 鈴木敬 (1920–2007), ed. *Chūgoku kaiga sōgō zuroku* 中國繪畫總合圖錄 (Comprehensive Illustrated Catalogue of Chinese Paintings). 5 vols. Tokyo: University of Tokyo, 1982–83. Vol. 1, 259 (A21–280).

Related works

Seven other paintings from the set are known. Each is closely similar to the six Freer works in dimensions, materials, painting style, and compositional detail. Each also has an

inscription similar to those found on four of the Freer paintings (Luohans #1, #10, #15, #17), bearing the same 1345 date and providing the identity of the particular *luohan* portrayed:

#3. Kanaka Bharadvaja 迦諾跋釐墮闍. Dated 1345. 124.5 x 61.0 cm (49 x 24 in). See Sotheby's, *Fine Chinese Works of Art and Paintings*, auction catalogue, New York, Friday, June, 4, 1982, Sale #4882Y, Lot 114; and Michael B. Weisbrod, *Weisbrod, Tenth Anniversary Exhibition, Selected Chinese Works of Art* (New York: Michael B. Weisbrod, Inc., 1986), 86–87 (no. 42).

#4. Subhinda 蘇頻陀. Dated 1345. 128.3 x 62.8 (50-1/2 x 24-3/4 in). See *Kokka* 國華 337 (June 1918):260 and 264 (plate); and Osvald Sirén, *Chinese Painting: Leading Masters and Principles*, 7 vols. (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1956–58), vol. 6, plate 8.

#6. Bhadra 跋陀羅. Dated 1345. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (47.18.103). Unpublished.

#8. Vajraputra 伐闍羅弗多羅. Dated 1345. 127.7 x 62 cm. University of Nanjing. See Hong Yinxing 洪銀興 and Jiang Zanchu 蔣贊初, eds., *Nanjing daxue wenwu zhenpin tulu* 南京大學文物珍品圖錄 (Beijing: Kexue chubanshe, 2002), 113 (plate 5).

#13. Anjida (or Ingada) 因揭陀. Dated 1345. 125.6 x 61.6 cm. The British Museum. See Roderick Whitfield, “The Luohan in China,” in William Watson, ed., *Mahayanist Art After A.D. 900*, Colloquies on Art & Archaeology in Asia, No. 2 (London: Percival David Foundation of Chinese Art, 1972), 96–100, and 123 (plate 19a).

#16. Cuda-Panthaka 注茶半託迦. Dated 1345. 123.7 x 61.7 cm. Shanghai Museum of Art. See *Zhongguo minghua ji* 中國名畫集, vol. 40 (Shanghai: Youzheng shuju, 1926), plate 10; and *Zhongguo gudai shuhua jiandingzu* 中國古代書畫鑒定組, eds., *Zhongguo gudai shuhua tumu* 中國古代書畫圖目, vol. 2 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1987), 129 (*Hu1*–270).

#18. Nandimitra 慶有. Dated 1345. 127.3 x 62.8 cm. Shanghai Museum of Art. See *Zhongguo meishu quanji bianji weiyuanhui* 中國美術全集編輯委員會, *Zhongguo meishu quanji, huihua bian 5, Yuandai huihua* 中國美術全集, 繪畫編 5, 元代繪畫 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1989), 119 (plate 138); and *Zhongguo gudai shuhua tumu*, vol. 2, 129 (*Hu1*–269).

Notes

¹ Other Freer paintings from the same set include: *Pindola-Bharadvaja, the First Luohan* (F1992.41); *Panthaka, the Tenth Luohan* (F1919.163); *The Great, or Seventeenth, Luohan* (F1918.6); *Luohan Meditating in a Grotto* (F2002.4); and perhaps, *Seated Luohan* (F1919.107).

² A similar vertical join, averaging around 13.5 cm from the right edge, can also be found on: F1918.6, F1919.163, F1992.41, and F2002.4. In addition, F1919.107 has a similar vertical join with the narrower width of silk on the left side, instead of the right..

³ Similar black dash strokes are found on: F1918.6, F1919.107, F1919.163, F1992.41, and F2002.4.

⁴ The missing portion of the date in column one can be surmised from intact inscriptions on other paintings in the set, such as F1918.6: 「峇大元至正五年...」 (dated the fifth year of the Zhizheng reign period in the Great Yuan dynasty [1345]). For similar reconstructions of the date, see F1919.163 and F1992.41.

Although the name section is missing from column two, the depicted *luohan* can be identified as Ajita, or Asita, the Fifteenth Luohan, by the remaining text that gives his habitation as Gridhrakuta [Vulture Peak] and the number of his followers.