Changing Meaning of *Shi* ± Identity

- Originally designated lowest rank of Zhou nobility
- Warring States/Qin-Han Empires: Men schooled in arts of government and pursuing an official career
- From Han to Tang: Aristocratic families with hereditary rights to office
- Song: Classically-educated elite
The Neo-Confucian Movement

- Inspired by Mencius’s pursuit of sagehood:
  (1) Public service as a government official
      -- increasingly remote possibility
  (2) Moral leadership in family and community
      -- fundamentalist moral vision rooted in personal integrity
  (3) Transmission of cultural heritage
      -- ideals of humane culture expressed through aesthetic accomplishment
“Elegant Gathering in the Western Garden”

- This scroll painting depicts Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037-1101) among a dozen famous literati composing poetry, playing chess, etc.
- Attributed to Li Gonglin 李公麟, a member of Su’s circle, this painting probably is a copy dating from the late Song period
Su Shi

“Poem Written at Huangzhou During the Cold Food Festival”

(dated 1082)
“Old Tree, Rock, and Bamboo”

- Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037-1101)
- Considered founder of “literati painting” (shirenhua 士人畫)
Huang Tingjian 黃庭堅 (1045-1105)  
“Gallery of Wind and Pines”

- A renowned poet and calligrapher, Huang was a close friend of Su Shi
“Elegant Gathering in the Western Garden”
Ma Yuan 馬遠 (fl. c. 1200)
“Travelers Amid Mountains and Streams”

Fan Kuan 范寛
(fl. 990-1020)

- Fan’s monumental landscape painting depicted the rugged terrain of northern China
- The early Song period marked the ascendancy of landscape painting in Chinese art
Left: Photograph of Mt. Tianzi, Hunan province
Right: Painting by Jiang Song (fl. 1500)
Mi Youren 米友仁 (1072-1151)  “Cloudy Landscape” (detail)

- Mi’s father, Mi Fu 米芾 (1052-1107), was a close friend of Su Shi and a leading theorist of literati painting
“Scenic View from a Riverbank Pavilion”

- Zhu Weide 朱惟德 (Southern Song)
“Old Tree and Bamboo”

- Wang Tingyun 王庭筠 (1151-1202)
- Lived in North China under foreign (Jurchen) rule; took Su Shi as his model
“Landscape with Female Orchestra”

- Anonymous “workshop” painting of late Ming dynasty
- Taken to Holland in 1596
- Rare survival of a probably once-dominant tradition of representational painting
Qiu Ying 仇英 (1495-1552)
“Garden of Solitary Enjoyment”

- Qiu’s visualization of garden of renowned Song official Sima Guang 司馬光 (1009-86)
- Sima retired from government in disgust in 1071, took refuge in this garden and devoted himself to study of history
“Garden of ‘Seeking Integrity’”

- Qian Gu 錢穀 (1508-78), native of Suzhou
- Pupil of literati painting master Wen Zhengming
- Famous as book-collector, and for his ignorance of “worldly affairs”
Liu Guandao 劉貫道 (1270-1300)  
“Scholar at Leisure”  
- A telling self-portrait of the literati lifestyle (note the mirror-like image painted on screen at left rear)