Chinese Art and Its Encounter with the World

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Negotiating Alterity in Art and Its Historical Interpretation

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This book is dedicated to my brother, Phil

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Introduction

In recent years Chinese contemporary art has received extensive exposure in the international art arena. The rise of China on the world stage, following the economic liberalization and opening-up of the Deng Xiaoping era, has been one obvious major factor behind this transformation. As the People's Republic becomes increasingly integrated within the global capitalist economy it is natural that individually-made, high-end cultural products from that country should enter the international marketplace alongside the many mass-produced commodities which originate there. Without giving in to an economistic reductionism we can allow that cultural power tends to follow shifts in economic and political power, as it did for instance when New York came to replace Paris as the perceived capital of modern art in the post–Second World War period. It is therefore unsurprising that greater cultural prominence for China should be a consequence of the growth of its gross domestic product.

If we look more closely at the process of recent Chinese art's internationalization, however, we will soon discover limits to the explanatory power of broad-brushstroke economic analysis. Much of recent Chinese art's early exposure in the international arena came not so much as a consequence of a smooth extension of the logic of the marketplace to China but as a result of the interruption of that process which occurred when political opposition spilled onto Chinese streets between April and

June 1989 (most notably of course in Tiananmen Square), leading to a period of cultural repression which all but eliminated opportunities for public exhibition in China of the new art which had been emerging from the middle of the 1980s. That art, which often took a more cynical and disaffected turn in the early 1990s, could only be properly seen in overseas locations for most of the decade following 1989, and thus for many artists the international arena took on a new significance. Some Chinese artists, such as Xu Bing, even responded to the domestic repression of intellectual and artistic dissent by moving overseas to North America, Europe or Australia, creating art in foreign locations as well as simply exhibiting it in such sites.

Despite the familiarity which Western art audiences have developed with contemporary Chinese art (and particularly with the work of the more established amongst those artists who have been living outside of China for some time, such as Cai Guoqiang or Huang Yong Ping), this has not yet led to a sustained curiosity about earlier phases of the Chinese artistic response to the modern world. International awareness of the history of Chinese modernist art remains scant, and although European and American art museums are now often willing to make space in their temporary exhibition galleries for new art from China or other non-Western locations, their permanent collections and displays of the history of modernism remain determinedly Western-centred. A whole century of Chinese visual engagement with the experience of modernity remains largely unknown to international audiences, and Euro-American narratives of artistic modernity remain hegemonic both in textbooks and on museum walls.[1] The implicit assumption is still that the Western story of artistic modernism remains the paradigmatic one, against which the art of other cultures must be calibrated, often to be found lacking in some way.

Rethinking the history of artistic modernism in a way that makes clear the plurality of trajectories through the modern experience that artists in different parts of the globe have taken is a major task for art history at this point in time. Undertaking such a task should not lead to a simple fragmentation of art historical narratives however, since despite the different experience artists on different continents have had of the modern experience it still remains true that in some sense they are experiencing the

'same' objective modernization process, given that an enhanced degree of connectedness is a defining feature of modernity. Trans-continental trade and imperial conquest had forged links between cultures even before this process was intensified by the development of industrial capitalism — although people from different parts of the world were at different ends of the stick as it were, it was still the same stick. As a better, less Western-centred, understanding of artistic modernism emerges we will undoubtedly see an increasing pluralism in the writing of art history, but this will be the proliferation of a variety of perspectives from which art history as a whole is understood, rather than a dividing up of art history into a series of fragmented local narratives without the kind of address to each other that can uncover aporias and blind spots. None of these perspectives will be able to claim any monopoly on explanatory power, or even any priority in advance: each will need to be in dialogue with other perspectives to argue its claims, each will need to be prepared explicitly to talk across differences, and each will have a concern with more than local artistic experience.

It should be clear that I consider the development of purely national art historical narratives an insufficient response to the challenge of Western hegemony in the writing of modern art history. Nationalism is itself one of the most characteristic ideologies of the modern world, a part of the field that must be investigated rather than an independent, unproblematic tool with which to do art historical work, and it is a particularly unhelpful tool for constructing an art history with a more global address. National art historical narratives with their emphasis on cultural distinctness can actually serve to entrench Western hegemony by default through their failure to develop a challenge to Euro-American accounts on their own turf. (Clement Greenberg's once-dominant formalist narrative of the United States taking the baton of artistic modernism from Europe is blatantly nationalistic itself, requiring an aspect blindness concerning the art it discusses to construct its sense of continuity).[2] They can remain parochial and thus be successfully ignored beyond the borders of the nation in which they are being propagated.

Elsewhere I have attempted more explicitly to provide an introduction to modern Chinese art for those who have a prior knowledge of modern

Western art but who may not be familiar with the specifics of the Chinese situation, and the present study can be seen as also offering a bridge into the critical understanding of art in modern China for those coming from an understanding of Western art, but by a different strategy.[3] The six chapters which make up this volume are studies of modern Chinese art in a global frame, attempting to demonstrate the impossibility of comprehending Chinese art by a study of what has taken place within the nation's borders alone. While hoping to present material that will be new to specialists in the study of modern Chinese art, and thus to contribute to the development of scholarship in this area, the very fact that the book's argument will involve attention to places and to idioms of art-making which are European or American means that there will be plenty of opportunities for those whose knowledge base is in Western art to gain access to the discussion.

The approach taken in this book is one which emphasizes the connection between cultures, and sometimes it even finds reason to celebrate that interconnectedness. Implicitly, its approach is in conflict with more narrowly-conceived nationalist or culturally-essentialist accounts of Chinese art which emphasize its absolute differentness from the art of other cultures, or which see strength as coming from within, from engagement with inherited cultural traditions, and view contact with other cultures as only leading to the threat of deracination or weakening. Cultures are here thought of as always plural in their nature, dynamic entities that are constitutively implicated with each other, that are always drawing strength from their encounter with the other, even if that encounter may be over-shadowed by relations of power that cannot be ignored. While recognizing that cultural differences are a part of felt experience I do not see the boundaries between cultures as innate, as something art historical analysis can unproblematically assume as a given, but rather view them as being constituted within the field of cultural experience itself, as constantly liable to shift or even dissolve. In modern and contemporary experience a sense of cultural difference is not simply residual, something that can be attributed to the survival of inherited traditions — difference can emerge in places where it is least expected and can be an attribute of the novel as much as of the traditional. Identities and new cultural forms can be fabricated from 'foreign' material as well as from that which is inherited,

and the latter can be just as difficult to work with and make relevant to contemporary purpose as the former. This is so in part because even the most 'traditionalist' of Chinese artists in the modern period would be aware of the potential availability of imported modes of image-making, would be working in a cultural space that had become in some sense heterogeneous because of the presence of foreign culture, and would as a result be forced to define their own artistic idiom, even if negatively, with an awareness of it.

Rather than attempting to offer an all-embracing overview of modern Chinese art's encounter with the world in this study, I have instead elected to present a series of separate in-depth treatments of particular themes. This multi-focal approach, eschewing the illusion of comprehensive coverage of a field in which much fundamental research still remains to be done, enables me to approach the topic of modern Chinese art from a variety of perspectives which, although distinct, nevertheless often overlap at the level of the material they address. Broadly chronological in their overall arrangement, the six chapters are divided into three separate thematic sections, with the focus of attention being progressively widened as we move from section to section.

The first of the three sections deals with the cross-cultural trajectories of individual Chinese artists, with each of the two chapters featuring a different artist who travelled from China to the West and then returned. With recent artistic émigrés from China having already received a great deal of attention in the English-language literature, I am deliberately choosing to present examples that can help historicize the discussion.[4] I will be looking at cases from much earlier periods where the possibilities for overseas travel were less extensive and the mutual familiarity of cultures less well developed. Although travel was more arduous in the era before air passenger transport was developed, in fact both the early cases discussed here are of artists who experienced acceptance and even success overseas to a degree that was certainly not enjoyed by all their later counterparts. Indeed both cases will show in their different ways that it is following the return home that the more difficult phase of adjustment to cross-cultural experience is often felt.

My first chapter attempts to mark a notional starting point for the story of Chinese art's engagement with the world, at least when told as a narrative of artists' own personal encounters with other cultures, since the links established between artistic traditions through the migration of objects would extend that story back to a considerably earlier era. Fittingly, perhaps, since much recent discussion has focused on the role of the market as mediating contemporary Chinese art's encounter with Western audiences, I begin with the case of an artist who worked explicitly for a foreign market. This was the portrait modeller known to us as Chitqua who in the latter part of the eighteenth century kept a shop in Canton (modern-day Guangzhou) catering to Western traders, and who was to travel to London for several years from 1769 in pursuance of his trade. Despite the pioneering nature of Chitqua's trans-continental trip, the present study is the first attempt to document his life and examine his oeuvre in any comprehensive way.

The second example, discussed in the following chapter, belongs to the earlier part of the twentieth century when a number of Chinese artists began to seek out formal education in Western modes of art-making. Such education was to become available within China itself, and a number of artists were also to travel to Japan in search of training, but several of the most significant Chinese artists of the first half of the century, including Lin Fengmian and Xu Beihong, were to gain their training in Europe. Unlike most but not all of those overseas students, Teng Baiye, the subject of this chapter, was to gain his education in North America. Like Chitqua in being a sculptor, he obtained his training in Seattle, spending time in other American and European cities as well before returning to China. Whereas Chitqua's travel took place in an era before the full development of theories of race and the more sustained phase of Western imperialist ambition in East Asia, both of which are largely phenomena of the nineteenth century, Teng's trip occurred in an age when Chinese artists were more reflexively concerned with issues of national identity. Awareness of the military power of Western nations — most graphically demonstrated in the two Opium Wars of the mid-nineteenth century which both ended in humiliating treaties involving territorial concession — was one of the most powerful spurs to the development of nationalist feeling in China, and led in the long run to the end of dynastic rule and the

establishment of the Republic of China following the Revolution of 1911. A citizen of a nation state, rather than a subject of an emperor as Chitqua had been, Teng attempted to introduce national themes in his art even as he looked to Western artistic means to do so.

Aware of the power of Western modes of representation (this heightened sense of cultural relativity which followed the intensification of cross-cultural contact is a defining feature of modern artistic culture in both China and the West), Teng nevertheless had allegiances to inherited Chinese traditions as well. These were expressed more through his painting than his sculptural output, however, and a justification for including Teng in this study instead of one of the more widely known artists of that era is that his knowledge of Chinese brushwork and its accompanying aesthetic was to be passed on to Western audiences in both China and North America. An aesthetic 'exporter' as well as 'importer', he was to meet and have a significant impact on one of the most important American abstract artists, Mark Tobey. Tobey's breakthrough to his mature artistic idiom, it will be argued here, was indebted to the lessons in Chinese brushwork he received from Teng. Even the story of modern Western art, then, let alone that of modern Chinese art, is not complete without considering the contribution of Chinese artists who operated in the international sphere.

In the second section of the book the focus shifts from a consideration of the movement of individual artists between cultures to an examination of the process by which Chinese artists respond to specific genres of Western art. Here it is more a matter of the transit of visual ideas than the transit of people, although the latter was of course implicated in the former since artists who had studied or spent time overseas were often the ones best placed to appreciate the potential of imported modes. A major aim of this part of the book is to show the selective and active nature of Chinese art's response to the possibilities of Western ways of making images. To talk of the 'influence' of Western art on Chinese art, as is sometimes done, is to conceive of the latter as both passive and belated in the process, and this was certainly not the case. Only certain aspects of the Western artistic heritage, of both modern and earlier times, were to prove of use within modern Chinese visual culture, and when employed they were invariably adapted and made to serve a local function.

As with the first section, the two chapters of the second section will deal with successive chronological periods, the first focusing (like Chapter 2) on the pre–Second World War Republican era, while Chapter 4 will consider the post-war era, shortly after the beginning of which, in 1949, the People's Republic came into being. While Chapter 3 will focus primarily on art made within mainland China, discussion in the subsequent chapter will note the contribution of artists based in Hong Kong and Taiwan, which because of their separate historical trajectories have had a markedly different encounter with the international art world. The relative cultural closure of the People's Republic during the Maoist years made Hong Kong, Taiwan and the international diaspora important sites of Chinese cultural development, but even in the less open and pluralistic environment of Mao's China art was still in touch with the global frame to some extent.[5] Artists were able to learn from Russian teachers in the early Communist period, for instance, and might find opportunities to travel (as Li Keran and Fu Baoshi did, for instance) on exchange visits to other quite culturally different Communist states. Nevertheless, it was only outside mainland China, and primarily in Hong Kong and Taiwan, that Chinese artists of that era were really conscious in a major way of the challenges posed by making art for an audience that, potentially at least, was international in nature.

The theme of Chapter 3 is the reception of the nude as a subject in modern Chinese art. Whereas certain of the subjects of Western art, such as landscape and portraiture, have direct or fairly direct counterparts in pre-modern Chinese art, the nude was almost entirely absent in earlier Chinese visual culture. For this reason the study of its Chinese reception offers a particularly useful test case, and this novel subject will be shown to have had an especial appeal in the first half of the twentieth century. This appeal was based on something more than its sheer novelty, and had to do with its ability to offer a challenge of a fundamental kind to inherited modes of image-making, being implicated in a whole new approach to art-making — working from life — that was being introduced to China at that time and which had particular ramifications with respect to the way art education was conducted. In confronting existing practices of art-making and art education in this comprehensive way the nude proved a controversial subject in China in a way it no longer was in Europe by that date.

The second Western genre to be considered is abstraction. Unlike the nude, one can hardly call this a 'subject' of art (since it implies definitionally an absence of subject matter), and hence it offers a particularly complex and interesting case to consider. As absent from earlier Chinese art as the nude, the specifically modern notion of abstraction took a much longer time to find a place within twentieth-century Chinese art than that more historically established subject. Indeed, abstract art was more or less completely absent from Chinese art of the Republican era: no use could be found for that particular European mode of art-making by even the most ambitious artists working at that specific historical conjuncture. It was only in a later quite different moment when Western abstract art had itself changed considerably (partly as a result of East Asian philosophical and artistic influence, such as occurred in the case of Tobey's encounter with Teng) that it became possible for a cross-fertilization to occur. Delayed in coming, this artistic interchange was nevertheless to be of profound importance for the development of later Chinese modernism, even if much of the Chinese art to result from the encounter was not itself to be purely abstract. Whereas the nude had offered a front-on challenge to inherited modes of art-making, and was often employed by artists who were consciously adopting styles that refer back to Western precedents, the similarly alien mode of abstraction served by contrast to revitalize and extend the possibilities of the Chinese brushwork heritage (as European expressionism had for some artists in the earlier part of the century), even if the problem of accommodating that which was obviously foreign in origin had to be dealt with by artists.

In the final section of the book we look at the encounter of cultures from the perspectives of cities. Here I have pulled back to take a broader view than that afforded by the themes of the earlier sections, although this pulling back is only at the level of the contextual frame being used to interpret the art, and is not in any sense a pulling back from the art itself. As in the earlier parts of the book there will again be the attention to individual objects and images which is at the core of all art historical analysis — the hope is simply that the adoption of different contextual perspectives in different sections of the same study will allow a richer understanding than could be gained from the unrelenting application of a single monocular viewpoint. A broader perspective is not assumed to be better or more

comprehensive: each of the three frames of analysis used in the book has its own individual possibilities. Making cities rather than individual artists or genres the frame for our analysis in this final section will, for example, allow the examination of types of visual culture other than art objects as more narrowly defined. Architecture, town planning and film, for instance, will be juxtaposed in discussion with paintings and photographs.

The city of Canton, on China's southern fringe, is the place from which this book's story begins, and although a number of other cities such as London, Seattle, Shanghai and Taipei also feature in various chapters, it is to the south China coast that we return in this section, with chapters on Macau and Hong Kong respectively. The broadly chronological structure of the book is sustained by this section, which brings us up to the present moment through an examination of the postcolonial life of these two cities, each a former European colony which returned to Chinese sovereignty in the second half of the 1990s. This decolonization process is in a sense a 'migration' from West to East, since although no physical movement is actually involved it has become a commonplace to talk of Macau and Hong Kong as 'going back to China'. One must qualify this metaphorical sense of an eastward move, however, since in the case of both Macau and Hong Kong the return to Chinese sovereignty (and even the knowledge of its imminent approach) led to a new aspiration to be compared culturally to certain valorized Western urban locations. Although it might at first seem to be paradoxical, in the face of a re-absorption into China both these cities started looking West in search of models by means of which they could fashion their sense of identity or find new purpose. The return home, as the chapter on Teng will already have shown, is often the harder part of an encounter with the foreign.

Previous sections of the book attempt to foreground the issue of historical change within modern Chinese art, to provide evidence of the ways in which that art's encounter with the world beyond China's borders was configured differently at different historical moments. One way in which that is done is through the offering of a pair of examples in each case, from differing historical periods. In the final section of the book the two examples belong to the same time frame, however, and the emphasis is thus more on spatial rather than temporal diversity. The passage through

decolonization of Macau and Hong Kong were distinctly different in cultural terms, despite their geographical proximity and the parallels between the constitutional structures (as Special Administrative Regions with a high degree of autonomy) offered to them both after their return to Chinese sovereignty. Examining the basis for the differences, which requires a discussion of the specifics of urban topography and history amongst other matters, will also lead into questions of cultural identity. In a discussion that should hopefully have relevance for our understanding of other Chinese cities as well, evidence will be presented that it makes only very limited sense to talk of Chinese art today in monolithic terms, without attention to an actual heterogeneity occasioned at least in part by the multiple urban sites of its production.[6] Reductive unitary pictures of contemporary Chinese art often rely on an exclusion of art from the former colonial cities of Macau and Hong Kong (as well as of that from Taiwan, which also has a markedly different trajectory through the modern experience from mainland China), so offering them a spotlight is productively destabilizing of art historical oversimplification.

It is not only art-making in modern and contemporary China that is marked by the site of its production in significant ways: the writing of art history is also similarly influenced by its place of production, consciously or unconsciously. Making Hong Kong the subject of the final chapter has the advantage of offering a degree of reflexive engagement with the site from which this book itself has been researched and written. Hong Kong is a site which offers in its liminality a wide range of possibilities for the study of modern Chinese art and in particular, on account of its long-term role as a cultural and economic gateway between China and the world, for a study of this kind which wants to address a transnational frame. Being culturally semi-detached, because of its long separate colonial history, from the national frame which is so often a feature of mainland writing on Chinese art, Hong Kong is nevertheless a site within Chinese cultural space and one from which it is possible to entertain a healthy scepticism concerning the potential aporias of art historical discourse on China produced from Western locations. While, as suggested earlier on in the present discussion, no one site for the writing of art history can ever be sufficient, it is a hope of this book that it can contribute to exploring the possibilities that its own chosen site of production can offer. Unashamedly

partial then, in both senses of that word, this study does not pretend to offer panoptic conclusions concerning the complex and as yet under-researched field it addresses, hoping instead to play a part in advancing understanding of its chosen topic, modern and contemporary Chinese art in the context of global visual culture.

Part I

Trajectories: Chinese artists and the West

1
Chitqua: A Chinese artist in eighteenth-century London

Until recently, accounts of Chinese art have tended to give an undue prominence to the artistic taste of the scholar-gentleman elite, which valorized amateur production and private circulation, and emphasized qualities of rhythmic vitality and expressivity in brushwork. An internalization of literati values by art historians meant that less attention was paid to art produced by professional image-makers in contexts where the market was the intermediary, where accuracy of description may have been a criterion in play, and where working directly from a model may have been a practice. A certain cultural essentialism has also been a consequence of allowing literati culture to stand for Chinese culture as a whole, with the result that art of a more culturally-hybrid nature has often been considered of lesser consequence.

As a contribution to more recent revisionist attempts at understanding the full diversity of Chinese visual production in its own terms, I intend to examine something of a limiting case. Discussion in this chapter will focus on an individual who created work of a sculptural nature, thus working in a medium which was relatively marginal to literati taste; who practised away from China's traditional centres of artistic production and political power in eighteenth-century Canton; and who operated within a context

where the market mediated contacts with buyers in an explicit way. Furthermore, in the case of this artist, known to us only as 'Chitqua' (with variant romanizations of 'Chit-qua', 'Chit Qua', 'Chetqua', 'Chet-qua' and 'Che Qua' also found), we will be looking at someone who worked directly for non-Chinese clients, and who made visual resemblance a defining feature of his work. Even more unusually, Chitqua was to travel to London, becoming the first Chinese artist to visit the West. While in the British capital he was to be admitted into polite society, treated by British artists as their professional peer, and was to play an active role as an artist in a completely different cultural setting from that in which he had been born. Despite Chitqua's pioneering role in the story of Chinese and Western art's encounter, he remains largely unknown in the broader literature of art history, and even remains unmentioned in most accounts of Chinese art. The present study aims to provide as comprehensive a picture of the artist and his work as is possible from the surviving artistic and documentary record, with the aim of remedying that omission. Given the relative neglect of Chitqua in previous art historical discussion it will prove necessary to devote considerable attention to establishing basic biographical facts and to the project of delineating his oeuvre. While this latter task will result in the exclusion from Chitqua's output of certain works with which his name has been associated, it will also produce a clearer sense of the chronology of such Chinese portrait figurines of Westerners as a whole, revealing a least one other hand of a high level of competence at work a generation earlier than Chitqua himself.

Canton

When Western traders arrived in Canton in the eighteenth century they were to encounter Chinese artists who displayed developed abilities in realistic representation, and who were able to respond to the possibilities this new source of patronage offered. One such artist, for instance, was employed by the trader John Bradby Blake (resident supercargo at Canton for the British East India Company) to aid him in his studies of Chinese natural history, according to an obituary in the *Gazetteer & New Daily Advertiser* of 22 May 1774:

> To forward his work he had engaged to his assistance one of the most ingenious artists of the pencil in China, who, under Mr. Blake's direction, followed Nature as near as pencil & paint could reach. This

> person, I am told, Mr. Blake at no small expense, had retained solely in his service, & moreover engaged him, under contract, to continue with him so long as he should remain in China. This assistant was in Mr. Blake's apartments in the factory every day, from nine in the morning till six in the evening, for three or four years past, & in the leisure time, after the shipping were dispatched for Europe, Mr. Blake sat at the same table with him eight or nine hours a day, laying out natural specimens, as they were from time to time gathered, dissecting the parts of fructification, (which the Chinese know nothing of) & drawing the outlines for his assistant to colour and finish them, all which are so elegantly & well disposed, as to appear like the natural plant itself to everyone who has viewed them.[1]

The expense of employing this artist, which implies that he was considered as already possessing a certain level of accomplishment before he began the work with Blake, is also emphasized in another account of the time, found in *St. James's Chronicle*, 7–10 May 1774. Here it is mentioned that for 'the most exact Delineation of the Plants', Blake 'employed a Chinese at a considerable annual stipend, whose Performances are the most perfect copies of Nature'.[2] The particular images produced for Blake, sixty-two in all, are now in the collection of the Natural History Museum, London, and held in its Botany Library.[3] Other works of an analogous nature can also be documented, such as the Victoria and Albert Museum's *Peanut (Arachis hypogaea)*, a watercolour on paper dated to the late eighteenth century or early nineteenth century (see Figure 1). More a 'portrait' of a specific specimen than an attempt to specify visually the characteristics of the plant species in general for scientific purposes, works such as this did nevertheless play a role in the transfer of knowledge about Chinese plants to Europe which was taking place at that time.

William Chambers (1723–1796), the important British architect and one-time China trader who had visited Canton during the 1740s, also employed a Chinese artist while in Canton. In his *Designs of Chinese Buildings, Furniture, Dresses, Machines and Utensils* Chambers claims that his images of dresses were 'copied from the paintings of Siou Sing-saang [i.e. 'Mr. Siou', possibly the Cantonese family name given as 'Sìu' in the Yale system of romanization, and which would be 'Xiao' in pinyin romanization],

Figure 1
Peanut (Arachis hypogaea), watercolour on paper, dated to the late eighteenth century or early nineteenth century. Collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Photo © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

a celebrated Chinese master, whom, when I was at Canton, I employed to paint on glass all the Chinese dresses'.[4] Chambers also mentions another artist of Canton, 'Lepqua', as a source of information about Chinese culture, calling him 'a celebrated Chinese painter, with whom I had several conversations on the subject of gardening'. Chambers admits that his first-hand experience of Chinese gardens was rather slight ('the gardens which I saw in China were very small'), and that what he learnt about the subject was 'chiefly from the lessons of Lepqua'.[5]

In addition to artists who may have worked directly with Western visitors to Canton such as Blake or Chambers, there were a number of other artists based in the city who operated businesses specializing in providing a service for foreigners. Again accurate description appeared to be their forte, but in this case it was exercised in the practice of portraiture. Pehr Osbeck (1723–1805), in *A Voyage to China and the East Indies* (published in Swedish in 1757, with an English translation available in 1771), notes that at Canton 'people of the same trade commonly live in the same street together', and mentions the existence of a 'porcellane street'. Osbeck describes a gallery above a porcelain shop, which gained its light from

windows opening onto the street, in which 'the famous face-maker was at work, who makes mens figures, mostly in miniature. Europeans often go to this man to be represented in their usual dress; and sometimes he hits them exceedingly well'.[6] Although Osbeck only mentions one artist, Olof Toreen (1718–1753), in his *Voyage to Suratte* (1753, English translation 1771) notes 'many artists who are diligent and reasonable as to their prices, especially if you do not suffer yourself to be cheated as frequently happens to new comers'.[7] Toreen comments that 'Their painters would acquit themselves very well, if they knew how to shade. You meet with very fine drawings painted on paper and glass, and likewise the very worst . . . I have not heard of any carvers in wood or stone, but images and busts of clay are cheap'.[8]

This indication that the opportunity existed in Canton for Western visitors to obtain a portrait in either two or three dimensions is backed up by other accounts from the period. One such, in the *Monthly Magazine*, which is given as the journal of a voyage on the ship *Caroline* in 1803, 'communicated to the *Monthly Magazine* by an officer of that ship', disagrees with the commonly stated view that tradesmen were obliged to confine themselves to particular streets according to their occupations, at least with respect to the suburbs (which are often forgotten in accounts of Canton, but which were apparently open to foreigners, unlike the walled city itself). It notes however a few exceptions to this, such as cabinet-makers: 'they generally occupy streets by themselves; and some streets are entirely filled with painters and picture-shops'. The ability of these artists to make realistic portraits from life is again mentioned, but it is noted that the artists seldom give satisfaction due to the very faithfulness of their work, which does not attempt 'to flatter the vanity of their customers, like some of our fine miniature painters'. The result of this was that 'There are therefore many laughable scenes between the Chinese and the Europeans on this subject, when one of the latter begins to find fault with a likeness, the China-man generally answers him by saying "no hah got handsome face, how can hab handsome picture massa"'.[9]

This generalized representation of an encounter between a European customer and a Chinese portrait-maker can be closely paralleled by a more

detailed account from the *Memoirs of William Hickey* which specifically refers to a portrait modeller. Although probably written around 1809, Hickey's account concerns an experience during his 1769 visit to Canton:

> There was a China man who took excellent likenesses in clay, which he afterward coloured, and they were altogether well executed. To this man's shop, Pott and I went to see his performances. We found Mr. Carnegie, surgeon of the ship Nottingham, sitting for his portrait, and complaining violently what a damned ugly phiz he was making. After repeating this several times, the artist lay down his tools and looking significantly at Carnegie, said, "Hy you handsome face no have got how can make", and turning to Pott, he continued "Here can make handsome face, for too much handsome face have got". Carnegie was offended at both observations, declaring he would not pay for or take the model away. He kept his word, and the next time we called at the shop we saw Mr. Carnegie tucked up, hanging by a rope around the neck, to a beam, among several others. Enquiring the meaning of this, the performer with much anger answered, "All these have too much ee grand Ladrones [i.e. pirates or thieves], give me too much trouble, make handsome face, no pay, no take, so must ee hang up". Bob and myself both sat and had good likenesses taken, Bob in a midshipman's uniform, I in scarlet with buff facings and silver lace, being the Madras regimentals.[10]

The accounts given above provide evidence of a thriving community of artists at Canton in the mid-to-late eighteenth century who were proficient (at their best) in producing both two-dimensional and three-dimensional images with a high degree of representational skill. Such works were original in nature: although pre-existing native traditions of image production no doubt provided these artists with valuable resources, such traditions would not by themselves have sufficed for the novel task at hand. At the same time the works produced were not in any sense a simple mimicry of imported Western idioms either, as the absence of shading in the paintings noted by Toreen indicates. Nevertheless, despite occasionally exceeding the degree of realism required by the sitters, as Hickey's account records, these artists were on the whole perfectly capable of satisfying a clientele from a radically different cultural background. Although relatively few objects survive from this particular time and place, these

written accounts alone give a picture of an unusual episode in the history of Chinese art. In the southern fringes of the China of Emperor Qianlong (1711–1799) were artists cosmopolitan enough not only to communicate with visitors from the other side of the world, but also to offer them images of themselves they considered to be accurate and satisfying.

Out of this cultural environment so sophisticated in its openness to otherness came one artist about whom a little more is known than his peers. This is the portrait modeller who was most commonly known in English as Chitqua, and who has left a deeper trace in the historical record because of the quite unusual fact that he made a trip to London between 1769 and around 1772.[11] One is tempted to identify Chitqua as the portrait modeller mentioned by Hickey, given that the medium of painted clay was indeed the one he favoured, although it is hard to reconcile the date Hickey gives for his encounter with that by which Chitqua had arrived in London: Hickey was in Canton between 11 August and 5 December 1769 according to his own account, yet the *Gentleman's Magazine* for May 1771 says that Chitqua 'came over to England . . . the beginning of August 1769' and James Boswell notes meeting him on Thursday 21 September of that year (in the earliest dated record of an encounter with Chitqua in London).[12] Nevertheless we do know that Chitqua was one of the independent businessmen who had shops at Canton specializing in the trade with foreigners since a letter of 3 August 1770 by the antiquary Richard Gough (1735–1809) noted that Chitqua was 'well known by our people who have been at Canton, where he keeps a shop for making figures'.[13]

The full Chinese name of Chitqua has not come down to us with certainty, and indeed so far references to him in Chinese sources of the appropriate date have proven impossible to track down, an indication of the relatively low social status he would presumably have enjoyed in China — and which contrasts so strongly with the acclaim which met him while in London. William Chambers does however give us a hint as to what Chitqua's family name might have been when he calls him 'Tan Chet-qua'. We are entitled to a degree of scepticism about this, though, since Chambers only mentions the name when, in a curious act of cultural ventriloquism, he is pretending that his work *A Dissertation on Oriental Gardening* has been authored by Chitqua.[14] The suffix 'qua' is an honorific term perhaps equivalent to 'Mister'

or 'Esquire' — derived from the Chinese *guan*, meaning 'official' — that was commonly used on the south China coast during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in the anglicized names of prominent Chinese. Where actual names of such individuals are known it can be observed that they often bear no similarity to the name with a 'qua' suffix, indicating that the latter may commonly function more like trade names.[15]

Chambers states that Chitqua was born in 1728 in Guangdong province. Although the play of identity Chambers engaged with concerning Chitqua infects all statements he makes concerning the artist with an element of unreliability, this date does agree with Richard Gough's observation of 1770 in a letter to the Rev. B. Forster that Chitqua was 'about or above forty'.[16] Contemporary physical descriptions of Chitqua are sometimes quite detailed even if other facts about him are hard to pin down, and while we might be tempted to suppose that a curiosity by British observers concerning his appearance could be related to the fact of his ethnic difference and the sheer novelty of seeing a Chinese person in London, one should also understand such interest in written description of appearance as a characteristic trait of an era before photography. Visual appearance and identity were more difficult to specify in that historical moment and this is indeed one reason why accurate portrait sculptures of the kind Chitqua produced had a particular function. Gough, in addition to estimating Chitqua's age, states in his letter that he was a

> middle-sized man . . . thin, and lank; his complexion different from any Eastern I ever saw, with more yellow in it than the Negroes or Moors; his upper lips covered with thin hair an inch long, and very strong and black; on his head, no hair except the long lock braided into a tail almost a yard long; his lips prominent, nose long, eyes not very lively, nails as long as one sees those of our sedentary mechanics.

A May 1771 account in the *Gentleman's Magazine* states that '[Chitqua] is a middle-aged man, of a proper stature, his face and hands of a copperish colour',[17] while James Boswell gives a more generalized description that relies on pre-existing visual representations, claiming that Chitqua is 'precisely such a figure as we see on an Indian skreen'.[18] A more detailed account appears in a letter from Thomas Bentley to his business partner

Josiah Wedgwood of 4 November 1769 which agrees with Gough's pre-photographic word picture in most but not all respects. Bentley notes:

> His complexion is very swarthy, the eyelashes almost always in motion. His arms are very slender, like those of a delicate woman, and his fingers very long; all his limbs extremely supple, his long hair is cut off before, and he has a long tail hanging down to the bottom of his back.[19]

As one of the few Chinese of his age who was in regular personal contact with Europeans due to the special circumstances of the trade which took place at Canton, Chitqua would have been a rather unusual figure within China as a whole. Since he was one of the restricted number of small traders and shop-keepers in Canton who were allowed to deal directly with foreigners without going through the Hong merchants (the members of an exclusive guild of major Chinese merchants in the port city who otherwise controlled the overseas trade), he would have been relatively atypical even in that exceptional trading community (an attempt had been made in 1755 to exclude such independent traders altogether but on appeal an edict was issued allowing such trade in small matters to continue). One can imagine that such an independent shop-owner would have required an especially high level of entrepreneurial acumen and communication skills (in addition to his outstanding professional artistic ability) in order to be able to conduct his business with success. Whereas the trading companies relied on specialist 'linguists' for communications that required more than the restricted vocabulary offered by China Coast Pidgin, and dealt in bulk purchases of products such as tea for which established markets existed and which had long been produced and sold as commodities within China itself, Chitqua would presumably have had to rely on his own language abilities and was in the position of selling items to private individuals (as end users) that were of a non-essential nature. The commodities he produced were novel in nature (there being no pre-existing native market for portrait sculptures of this kind), and they had to be made to order by the proprietor himself for each client rather than purchased in bulk as stock.

London

Presumably because of contacts he had made with the British trading community in Canton, Chitqua came somehow to form the idea of visiting

England. The circumstances of his leaving China are not altogether clear, and we cannot be sure whether he was given particular encouragement to visit by one specific person. Godfrey Bosville, in a December 1769 letter does however mention that a Mr. Walton 'brought him over', and reference to the journal of the ship on which he travelled reveals that 'John Walton, esq.' is listed as a passenger for that voyage.[20] Chitqua seems not to have been under anyone's particular guardianship following his arrival in London, however. Gough states that 'he lodges at a hatter's, the corner of Norfolk Street', and the hatter in question can be specified by reference to Boswell's account as being a Mr. Marr.[21] Boswell notes that Chitqua lodged at Marr's house, recounting that 'Mr. Marr took me into his back parlour and there he introduced me to the Chinese, who was not a man of fashion but an ingenious artist'.[22] A reference to Chitqua dating to 1771 also refers to him as lodging in the Strand (adjoining which Norfolk Street — now no longer in existence — stood), indicating that he seems to have resided at the same address for his whole stay, although his place of residence is recorded on another location as being 'Arundel Street'. However, since Arundel Street (which does exist today) also leads into the Strand this could in fact be a reference to the same location.[23]

Concerning his 1769 passage to London, there is some degree of certainty, since he is noted as having come on the East Indiaman *Horsendon* with 'Captain [Alexander] Jameson'.[24] This knowledge enables us to specify the date of his arrival in England a little more accurately than the *Gentleman's Magazine* account noted above allows, since the *Horsendon* (which had left on its third voyage to China on 29 January 1768) was to first arrive back in England on 11 August 1769, and seems to have reached its final berth on the 19th of that month.[25] The *Gentleman's Magazine* reported in May 1771 that Chitqua had 'obtained leave of the Chinese government (which is very strict with regard to the emigration of its subjects) to go to Batavia [the Dutch East India Company settlement in Java, now the city Jakarta, to which there had been a long history of Chinese migration and which could be a stop for ships travelling between Europe and China], instead of which he took passage for Great Britain'.[26]

Gough reports speculation as to the motivation for Chitqua's trip, noting that some say he came 'on a motive of curiosity', and others that it was

'to avoid his creditors'.[27] The *Gentleman's Magazine* for its part claims that 'curiosity and respect for the British induced him to visit this island'. It seems clear, however, that Chitqua was intending to work at his trade of modelling while in London since he appears to have brought a supply of clay with him for the purpose, and thus we can suspect a financial motivation to have been at least one of the factors inspiring his trip.[28] Thomas Bentley, who had already met him three times by November 1769, noted in a letter of that month to his business partner Josiah Wedgwood that 'he intends to stay here some years'.[29]

Clearly Chitqua's ability to converse in English was a significant factor in the social and artistic success he enjoyed while in London, and several comments concerning his language ability are available to us. Gough wrote of having had 'the pleasure of conversing with a genuine native of China', and notes that Chitqua 'has been long enough amongst us to have done with an interpreter, though his English is broken, and his speech thick'. Although he seems to have obtained quite a bit of information from his conversation with Chitqua (to judge by his letter), Gough adds that 'it was impossible to hold a regular conversation with him'. Bentley writes that he 'had a good deal of conversation with [Chitqua], for he speaks some English', while the *Gentleman's Magazine* reported that he 'speaks the Lingua Franca [possibly a reference to Pidgin], mixed with broken English' and Bosville comments that he 'speaks our language well'. Boswell on the other hand says 'he spoke some imperfect English'.[30]

Chitqua's character and intelligence also seem to have played a part in ensuring him a cordial welcome by London society, since many commentators speak well of him. The *Gentleman's Magazine* has him as 'very sensible, and a great observer', while Bentley writes that he has 'had a good deal of conversation with [Chitqua], for he . . . is a good-natured, sensible man, very mild in his temper, and gentle in his motions'. Given his maturity, language skills and apparently agreeable personality, one could imagine that, quite apart from his artistic ability, he would have been of interest in polite society as a kind of honorary ambassador for his culture. Certainly the very difference of his opinions was a motivating factor to Bosville for seeking his acquaintance, who wrote that 'his notions are so perfectly Chinese that it has raised my curiosity much', while Gough

records learning certain ideas about China from him.[31] Boswell recounts learning a little about the sound of spoken Chinese from Chitqua: 'I got him to read a little to me from a fan with Chinese characters. It was just what Mr. Johnson told me of another Chinese: a sound like the ringing of a small bell'.[32] Bentley and Josiah Wedgwood for their part may have had specific information about porcelain manufacture that they were seeking confirmation on; we can observe that Bentley prefaces his mention of Chitqua by noting:

> We are every day finding out some ingenious man or curious piece of workmanship, all of which we endeavour to make subservient to the improvement of our taste, or the perfection of our manufacture.[33]

One specific case where Chitqua appears to have been of help was in interpreting an album of paintings produced in China. The leather-bound album in question contains a total of thirty images of figures of various kinds, including historical characters, members of the royal household, a monk, a student and a doctor, and is dated to around 1735 (see Figures 2 and 3). Now in the collection of the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, it originally belonged to Mr. R. Martin, who was supercargo on a voyage of that year, becoming chief of council in 1743. It was purchased from the sale of Martin's effects in March 1747 by 'P. Yorke'. This is almost certainly Philip Yorke (1720–1790), who became the second Earl of Hardwicke in 1764. Yorke served as member of parliament for Reigate and later for Cambridgeshire between 1741 and 1764, going on to become lord lieutenant of Cambridgeshire and a privy counsellor.

According to a handwritten note incorporated within the album itself, 'Che Qua, a Chinese modeler, who was in England in 1769' is said to have 'read and explained the characters in this book, which he said were in the Mandarine language'.[34] The note continues by stating that Chitqua's comment was 'exactly like the missionaries', indicating that help had previously been sought in deciphering the subject matter of the images and with translation of their Chinese-character explanations (which are written on strips of red paper that accompany each image). Since a handwritten list of the subjects accompanying this note is given in French rather than English (with romanization of the Chinese pronunciation, including accents) it was perhaps missionaries who had been in China

Figure 2
Image from an album of Chinese figure paintings formerly in the collection of Philip Yorke. Listed as No. 26 in the handwritten list of subjects accompanying the album, and identified there as 'Niang niang. L'Imperatrice dans l'habite Tartare'. Executed c. 1735. Collection of the Peabody Essex Museum, Salem. Photo courtesy the Peabody Essex Museum.

who were responsible for this, rather than Chitqua. The note does indicate, however, that Chitqua was able to provide further information about the figures represented, sometimes attempting to correct the interpretations of the missionaries. He was particularly helpful in providing information concerning some of the images of noted beauties in the collection. The

Figure 3
Image from an album of Chinese figure paintings formerly in the collection of Philip Yorke. Listed as No. 28 in the handwritten list of subjects accompanying the album, and identified there as 'Chang nai nai. La femme d'un marchand'. Executed c. 1735. Collection of the Peabody Essex Museum, Salem. Photo courtesy the Peabody Essex Museum.

Chinese notion of the 'Four Great Beauties' (*si da mei nu*) of ancient history is noted, and some information about the lives of certain of the women represented is given.[35] Image 22, for instance (already identified by the French list of titles as 'Tshao kiun. La dame Tchao', that is, Wang Zhaojun)

is correctly noted as having been given by an emperor to a nomad leader (this is offered as an explanation for her non-Chinese dress), although not all details of this and other biographic accounts seem to tie up exactly with the picture given in known histories and legends.[36] It is hard to tell whether this is because accuracy was lost in transcription, perhaps on account of Chitqua's limited ability to explain in English, or whether it reflects the limits of his cultural understanding. At one point he is noted as acknowledging the limits of his knowledge about the figure depicted, so one must not overestimate the extent of his education.[37]

Chitqua's value as an informant concerning the Chinese language, about which any real expertise was lacking in England at that time, can be seen from Lemuel Dole Nelme's *An Essay towards an Investigation of the Origin and Elements of Language and Letters*. Published in 1772, this work was a speculative study into the origins of language. Early on in his study Nelme makes reference to:

> A Chinese grammar, published in that language for the instruction of their youth, not only in letters, but in the rudiments or *radix* of letters; in the knowledge of the constitution of the empire; its internal police, number of inhabitants, duties, laws, genealogies, geometry, astronomy, computation, and the geography of the Chinese empire; as Mr. Chitqua, a native of China, now in England, assured the writer hereof.[38]

In December 1770 Chitqua was also invited to examine Chinese books in the collection of the British Museum, at that point in its then relatively short history (it had been founded in 1753) more a collection of books and natural history artefacts than of antiquities. According to Frances Wood he looked at both Chinese and Japanese language volumes, including several from Sir Hans Sloane's collection (one of the museum's founding collections). He 'managed brief descriptions of a number of Chinese books, including simple illustrated primers, and correctly described the *Tian zhu jiao yao* as a work on "Christianity in Chinese"'.[39] The inscriptions on the books which record his examination of them (and which appear to be by another hand than his own) help us to date when he was visiting the library: one text, for instance, is marked as 'A book of medicine. Examined by Chetqua. Dec^{r} 17. 1770'.[40]

Apart from what his English interlocutors may have learnt about China and its culture in their interactions with Chitqua, they also seem to have had an interest in the Chinese dress which many commentators note him as wearing (and in which he can also be seen in the portraits that were made of him). Bentley notes that 'his dresses are chiefly of satin, and I have seen him in crimson and black', and the *Gentleman's Magazine* states that he 'is elegantly cloathed in silk robes, after the fashion of his country'. Gough once again offers extended and precise observation:

> He wears the dress of his own country, a pointed stiff cap, with a border turned up of quilted silk, an under vest like a banian [a kind of loose fitting dressing gown-like robe] of green silk, with a lining; his upper vest a kind of mantelet [cloak]; his drawers the same as his under vest; and his slippers yellow.

In addition to meeting prominent members of British society, including Josiah Wedgwood, William Chambers, Johann Zoffany and James Boswell, Chitqua was also presented to King George III and Queen Charlotte at a relatively early point of his stay in England. Bentley's November 1769 letter provides evidence that this audience had already occurred by that date, recording that the royal couple 'were very much pleased with him'. Although it is perhaps not surprising that the king might have come to meet Chitqua, one can conjecture a possible role for William Chambers in introducing him to the royal family, given (on the one hand) this architect's personal connection with Canton and developed interest in Chinese visual culture, and (on the other hand) his connection with the royal family both through his employment as an architect at Kew (where he constructed his still-extant pagoda for the mother of the king, Princess Augusta, in 1762) and his role as architectural tutor to the king when he was still Prince of Wales (a post he held from 1757, three years before George came to the throne).[41] One can similarly conjecture a possible role for Chambers in introducing Chitqua to the members of the newly formed Royal Academy, which was established at the very end of 1768, opening its first exhibition on 26 April 1769, the year of Chitqua's arrival in London. Although Joshua Reynolds was the Royal Academy's first president, Chambers was pivotally involved in setting it up, since he was responsible for initially broaching the idea with the king, and was also to become its first treasurer, an arguably more powerful position than that of president.[42]

Chitqua's contact with the Royal Academy, and his acceptance by its members as an artistic peer, is quite easy to document. He is reported as present at a 23 April 1770 grand dinner held the day before the opening of the second Royal Academy exhibition in the Great Room of the academy's building on the south side of Pall Mall. Other guests at that dinner included the actor David Garrick (1717–1779), who as manager of the Drury Lane Theatre had sponsored in 1755 a production of Noverre's ballet *Les fêtes chinoises*, and who in 1759 had played the part of a mandarin in Arthur Murphy's *Orphan of China*; the statesman and philosopher Edmund Burke (1729–1797); the dramatist George Colman (1732–1792); the actor and theatre manager Samuel Foote (1720–1777); the Poet Laureate William Whitehead (1715–1785); and Charles Jennens (1700–1773), who had been responsible for assembling the texts for Handel's oratorios. Also present was the politician, author and antiquarian Horace Walpole (1717–1797), who in 1757 had published with some success his *Letters from Xo Ho*.[43] Rather more significantly Chitqua was also invited to exhibit his work in that second academy exhibition. According to the catalogue (free to those who had paid their one shilling entry fee) this piece, listed as number 245, was 'A portrait of a gentleman, a model'.[44] Chitqua visited the Royal Academy on at least one further occasion, since the *Gentleman's Magazine* describes 'Mr. Chitqua the celebrated Chinese artist' in February 1771 as being conducted to the Royal Academy at Somerset House [to which it had removed in early 1771, although continuing to hold its annual exhibitions at the Pall Mall venue till 1779], where he not only met with a polite reception but had the honour to have his portrait introduced by Mr. Zoffany into a capital picture of the members of that noble institution which that eminent artist is executing for a great personage.[45]

The same account also claims that Chitqua had 'surveyed with astonishment . . . a part of Mr. Cox's surprising mechanism designed for his exhibition at Spring Gardens, and been introduced to Mr. Merlin' and to the 'very excellent paintings of Signora Angelica'. The particular Mr. Cox referred to here is James Cox (c. 1723–1800), who had made a considerable amount of money between 1766 and 1772 constructing musical automata and other objects d'art (commonly known as 'sing-songs') for export to the Asian market, including China, in which latter market his agent was Captain Alexander Jameson, on whose East Indiaman Chitqua

Figure 4
Johann Zoffany, *The Academicians of the Royal Academy*, 1771–72. The Royal Collection. Photo © 2010, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

had travelled to London. John Joseph Merlin (1723–1803), a multi-talented inventor and mechanical expert in his own right whose 1781 portrait by Thomas Gainsborough is at Kenwood House, London, was Cox's collaborator. Cox's fortunes were undergoing a setback at the time Chitqua encountered him, and he would have been in the process of preparing exhibits for the museum he finally opened in the former Huguenot chapel in Spring Gardens in February 1772 as an alternative money-making strategy. Cox had engaged leading artists to decorate the Great Room of that structure in preparation for the opening: Angelica Kauffmann was responsible for paintings of the liberal arts in the dome, and Zoffany had also worked for Cox in relation to this project.[46]

The painting by Zoffany mentioned in this account is of course his work in oil *The Academicians of the Royal Academy*, 1772, which is in the Royal Collection (see Figure 4). Assumed to have been painted for George III, and including all the academicians except Gainsborough, and George and Nathaniel Dance (but with the two female members, Mary Moser and Angelica Kauffmann, represented only by portraits hanging on the wall because of the presence of nude male life models), it depicts an imagined occasion in the Royal Academy's recently opened Life School at its Old Somerset House home in which a life class is being set up. Each individual

portrait seems (according to Horace Walpole's account) to have been introduced separately into the image, without an overall compositional plan having been made in advance with the aid of drawings. This accounts in part for the additive feel of the image, a general tendency in any case with group portraits containing a large number of figures.[47] Chitqua is shown in the background of the image to the left, a placement which might indicate his secondary status as a non-academician, although he is not the only artist represented by head and shoulders alone. Perhaps Chitqua's position (which has often led to his presence escaping comment when the painting is discussed, despite his obviously Chinese hat in a room of hatless figures) can be more easily explained as a consequence of his being one of the last artists who happened to be available to Zoffany in person. Certainly the decision to introduce Chitqua is an inspired one which serves to give the image as a whole a sense of open inclusiveness. In choosing to paint him into the scene Zoffany might perhaps have been remembering his presence amongst the academicians at the earlier grand dinner. A sense that Chitqua is a part of the convivial group depicted, and not an outsider despite his marginal placement, is conveyed by Zoffany's decision to represent the miniature painter Jeremiah Meyer, who stands to Chitqua's left, as turning to him in conversation. This is one of several such incidents in the painting which place it within the genre of the 'conversation piece', and we can imagine that the conversation may have something to do with the issue at hand, the posing of the life model. Chitqua himself is gazing out towards the model with an inquisitive gaze, and a number of the other figures also look in the same direction.

Zoffany was not the only artist to have attempted a portrait of Chitqua during his time in London. A sketch of him in near-profile view by Charles Grignion (see Figure 5) is reproduced in an article by David Piper, although without indication as to its whereabouts.[48] Piper claims this is more likely to be the work of the younger of two artists of that name in England at the time: the elder Charles Grignion (1714–1810) had been born in France, settling in England in 1750, whereas the younger, his nephew, was born in London in 1754 (living till 1804). This younger artist was an early pupil at the Royal Academy Schools (also studying with G. B. Cipriani), exhibiting at the Royal Academy from 1770 to 1781, and thus

Figure 5
A portrait sketch of Chitqua during his time in London by Charles Grignion, present whereabouts unknown. Reproduced with permission from *Country Life*.

had reason to be present when Chitqua visited Old Somerset House. Piper claims that this precocious artist (in 1765 he had received a premium at the Society of Arts for a drawing by a boy under fourteen years of age) made drawings of several of the sitters for Zoffany's group portrait at the same time as that artist was at work, and it is consistent with Piper's claim that the hat Chitqua is shown as wearing in the sketch is similar to that he is depicted with in Zoffany's painting. The National Portrait Gallery, London, has a portrait in chalk of Joseph Wilton, another of the artists painted by

Zoffany, which is attributed to Grignion. A further Grignion portrait in black chalk of a member of the Royal Academy who sat to Zoffany (a study of painter Charles Catton the Elder, 1728–1798, in the collection of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford) also supports Piper's claim since it has an inscription claiming that it was 'Drawn at the Royal Academy while standing to Zoffany'.[49] In addition to the portrait of Catton, there is also a study of a model's leg on the same sheet which is consistent with the pose of the older model in Zoffany's painting (although viewed from a different angle).

Figure 6
Portrait sketch of Chitqua by Charles Grignion. Collection of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

Although the drawing reproduced by Piper cannot at present be traced, a very similar drawing of Chitqua, almost certainly also by Grignion, has survived and is to be found in the collection of the Ashmolean (see Figure 6). Lost within the museum and hence not included in the published catalogue of its collection, this drawing (in black chalk with a little white chalk highlight on cheek, nose and forehead) was first made publicly known by David Blayney Brown in 1985.[50] As with the version reproduced by Piper, the subject is facing towards the left side of the image, and looking slightly upwards. Dress is also comparable in the two works — the same distinctive Chinese hat is seen, and what appears to be a jacket with a fur collar. The Ashmolean work is a little bit closer to being a three-quarters view than its counterpart — whereas the latter does give a glimpse of the sitter's right eyelid, in the Oxford work both pupils are visible. The

Figure 7
John Hamilton Mortimer, *A Portrait of Chit Qua, the Chinese Modeller*. Collection of the Hunterian Museum at the Royal College of Surgeons of England in London. Photo courtesy the Hunterian Museum.

Ashmolean portrait of Chitqua gives the impression of being a more finished image, and may have been developed from the other drawing, which has a prominent cross-hatched background and the look of having been a sketch from life (it contains more detail of the sitter's ear and pigtail). At 51.6cm by 36.8cm the Ashmolean work is relatively large and therefore of some ambition, but the scale of the Piper work is not known.

It has been known for some time that John Hamilton Mortimer (1740–1779) had painted a portrait of Chitqua which was exhibited at the Society of Artists exhibition in 1771 as *A Portrait of Chit Qua, the Chinese Modeller*.[51] Long considered lost, this work has recently been plausibly proposed to be the painting in the Hunterian Museum at the Royal College of Surgeons of England in London, that had been known as the 'Chinese Mandarin' (see Figure 7).[52] This portrait had previously been considered to be of 'Wang-Y-Tong', who visited London a little after Chitqua's return to Canton.[53] Since the portrait represents a middle-aged man and Wang-Y-Tong is known to have been much younger than that at the time he arrived in London, this already seems unlikely. A comparison with undisputed painted portraits of that other Chinese visitor by Joshua Reynolds, as well as with a drawn profile portrait of him in Western dress by George Dance (graphite touched with watercolour, British Museum

Figure 8
George Dance, Portrait of a Chinese man, said to be Huang Ya Dong [Wang-Y-Tong], graphite touched with watercolour, date given as 1770–79. British Museum Prints and Drawings Collection, catalogue number 1967,1014.67. Photo © Trustees of the British Museum.

Prints and Drawings Collection, catalogue number 1967,1014.67, see Figure 8), all of which show a more youthful figure, helps to clarify the matter further.[54] The sitter of the Hunterian Museum oil (a half-length portrait within a feigned oval, 75cm by 62cm) wears a brown coat with a fur collar (perhaps the same coat he was shown wearing in the Grignion drawings), and a distinctive red Chinese conical hat with a whitish pearl-like rounded finial top to it and two red loops. He is posed with a fan in his right hand, perhaps in a deliberate attempt to introduce a marker of Chineseness. In three-quarters view, he gazes directly out towards the spectator.

William Hunter (1718–1783) can be connected to the Royal Academy during the period Chitqua was present there, since he was Professor of Anatomy at the academy from 1769 to 1772 (Zoffany's painting *William Hunter Lecturing at the Royal Academy* of c. 1772 is in the collection of the Royal College of Physicians in London). His brother, John Hunter (1728–1793), in whose collection this portrait can be placed prior to 1793, had been invited to lecture on anatomy at the Society of Artists in January 1770 (perhaps by Mortimer). It is therefore entirely possible that one or both of the brothers (who apparently mixed with many of the leading artists of the time) had met Chitqua personally. John Hunter's collection of paintings complemented his much more extensive collection of plant and animal specimens, which included many rare or abnormal examples (such as the kangaroos brought back by Joseph Banks from the 1768–71 voyage of James Cook).[55] Possibly therefore it was Chitqua's exotic origin which encouraged Hunter to add his portrait to the collection (which was exhibited in a gallery attached to his house in Leicester Square to which he moved in 1783, in a space that may have served as a studio for its previous occupant, John Singleton Copley), and it may even be the case that the work was commissioned.[56] Even if that was so, Mortimer did not apparently feel constrained to emphasize otherness in Chitqua's facial features, or depict them in a forensic manner. Otherness is certainly a part of the painting's impact, but is an effect produced by costume and accessories, as well as by the very long fingernail visible on the hand holding the fan. While it is hard to imagine that Mortimer simply invented that detail, it does seem at odds with what we know about the manual nature of Chitqua's profession as a modeller.

Although the Hunterian Museum canvas was not included in John Sunderland's catalogue of Mortimer's works, another portrait of a Chinese sitter, apparently also Chitqua, was included as catalogue number 50.[57] Unlike the Hunterian's portrait, this work (at 75cm by 62cm) does not fit the known three-quarters dimensions of the image of Chitqua recorded as being exhibited at the Society of Artists, but since it would have been possible for a canvas to have been cut down this did not prohibit its inclusion in the catalogue until a better fit was identified. Seemingly Mortimer produced more than one portrait of Chitqua, then. Since he lived in Bedford Street, not far from Chitqua's lodgings in Norfolk Street, one

can speculate that the two men may have had the opportunity to become acquainted prior to any sittings which took place for the portrait.

Chitqua as an artist

Although a number of portrait figurines have been attributed to Chitqua, there is really only one which we know with a high degree of certainty to be by him, and thus it is with this example (see Figure 9) that any discussion of his activity as a modeller must start. This work is the portrait of Dr. Anthony Askew (1722–1774) which is preserved in the collection of the Royal College of Physicians in London, and which entered that collection in 1831 as a gift from Lady Pepys, the widow of Sir Lucas Pepys and the daughter of Askew himself.[58] Given this provenance, and the existence of a family tradition which associated the name 'Chequa' with this image, a degree of certainty as to authorship can be assumed.

Figure 9
Chitqua, Portrait of Dr. Anthony Askew. Collection of the Royal College of Physicians, London. Photo © Royal College of Physicians.

It is not altogether clear, however, how Askew came to sit for Chitqua. We do know that Askew commissioned from Roubiliac a portrait bust of his friend and mentor, the prominent physician Richard Mead (1673–1754), which he donated to the College in 1756. It is easy therefore to imagine that he might also have conceived the idea of commissioning a portrait of himself, especially since portraiture seems to have played a particular role in the self-presentation of medical men in eighteenth-century Britain.[59] According to one account the Askew portrait was 'said to be the work of a grateful Chinese patient', but William Carmichael's biography of Askew given in *The Gold-Headed Cane* (1827), while also claiming that the work was

a gift rather than a commission, states that it was Askew's reputation as an expert on the East (he had been to Istanbul as a younger man) that had led to Chitqua being introduced to him:

> Dr. Askew had been in the East, and so vague and magnificent was the opinion formed at that time of an Oriental traveler, that I verily believe he was supposed to have been able to speak all the languages of that quarter of the globe. It was from some such notion as this that they brought to him a Chinese, by name Chequa, who (however imperfect their oral communication might be) seemed so grateful for the attention and kindness he had received, that he requested before his departure from England to be permitted to make a model of the Doctor in his robes.[60]

Askew's London home in Queen's Square, which was crammed with his enormous collection of books (he was a noted bibliophile), is known to have received a great many visitors, so it is perhaps not surprising that Chitqua would have been invited there.[61] Amongst those who frequented Askew's residence was William Jones, who has been described as England's first sinologist on account of his attempts to learn Chinese, which began around the late 1760s, and who is known as a founding figure in comparative linguistics on account of his claim that Latin and Greek shared a common root with Sanskrit.[62] One can imagine Jones meeting Chitqua at Askew's (and perhaps asking advice from him concerning some of the characters he was attempting to decipher), or even picture him as being the person responsible for introducing Chitqua to the physician in the first place. T. C. Fan, in his essay 'Sir William Jones's Chinese Studies' claims that it is 'almost certain' that Jones met Chitqua, and although he does not mention him by name Jones does (in a letter to his friend from college days in Oxford, John Eardley-Wilmot, dated 3 June 1771) refer to a 'native of China, who is now in London' that could only have been Chitqua. Garland Cannon in his study *The Life and Mind of Oriental Jones* identifies the Chinese visitor as Whang Atong (another romanization commonly used for 'Wang-Y-Tong'), but the date of the letter is too early to permit this to be the case, even if it can be shown that Jones did meet with that later visitor too in due course.[63]

Chitqua's figure of Askew is around thirteen inches in height, and is executed in unbaked clay which has subsequently been painted. This

makes it consistent in both size and medium with the portrait sculptures mentioned by Hickey and others as available in Canton, and one can assume that the small size of these statuettes was in part a practical consideration in the case of fragile objects that needed to be transported over a long distance after purchase. Askew is represented as perched on the ledge of an otherwise irregularly-shaped rock (the lower reaches of which also support his feet), and this rock is perhaps the only part of the sculpture that has any overtly 'Chinese' traits to it. This setting or base, a practical requirement in the case of a seated figure, seems to have a different and less observational visual language than the rest of the sculpture, relying loosely on conventional Chinese taste concerning rocks and on the existing native conventions for their representation in both two- and three-dimensional mediums. The idea of representing a figure as seated on a rock, which might appear somewhat incongruous as a setting for a London doctor, is perhaps borrowed from an existing Chinese convention. A figure of a mandarin in the collection of the Museum Volkenkunde (National Museum of Ethnology) in Leiden, for instance, also shows a figure seated on a rock ledge (see Figure 10), and (as with the Askew portrait) the left elbow is represented as resting on a higher part of the rock. This figure (RMV 360-5) is dated as before 1807, and would have been collected in Xiamen by Johanes Jacob Maria de Groot.[64] A similar rock-ledge seat with left armrest at a higher level is seen in another Leiden work, a temple statue of a god (RMV 962-50) in wood and lacquered gesso of similar provenance.

The figure itself, which remains in a relatively good state of repair, is by contrast to the base strongly observational in feel. We are left with a definite sense of a portrait of an individual, both because of the degree of definition of the features and the effort that has gone into creating a coherent facial expression, but also because the whole body pose reads as expressive of character. Askew's left hand is shown holding his cane, while the right is tucked inside his waistcoat, a pose that (while not particularly prevalent in British portraiture) can on occasion be observed in British painted portraits executed before this time such as certain of Godfrey Kneller's 'Kit-cat' portraits.[65] Askew's feet are represented as slightly apart and his gaze (dignified but conveying good humour or warmth and implying the presence of an interlocutor) is directed in front of him. Much attention has

Figure 10
Figure of a seated mandarin. Dated before 1807. Collection of the Museum Volkenkunde (National Museum of Ethnology), Leiden. Photo © National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, inventory number 360-5.

gone into the dress and accessories, which play an important part in the overall effect: in addition to the cane (a common badge of medical office at the time) there is a well-modelled wig and the folds of the drapery (more complicated because of the seated pose) are executed with care. Askew's plump stomach helps to give a sense of corporeality, preventing the clothes from overwhelming the figure beneath them. The entire visible surface of the sculpture is painted, and there is a clear distinction between the figure and its base. The rock is a uniform grey-green, whereas the figure by contrast is picked out in a variety of colours which help add considerably to the sense of realism the work possesses. Askew wears a red M. D. robe (thus emphasizing his profession), for instance, with tan and white also visible on his clothing, while the shoes are black with gold buckles, and gold also appears on the handle of the cane. Buttonholes, and more crucially, eyebrows and the irises and pupils of the eyes, are picked out in paint, adding to the sense we have of an individual presence.

In addition to the portrait of Askew, several other works of an analogous kind have survived. Although none has a provenance that can be traced as securely as the portrait of the physician, it makes sense to consider them in the present context in order to make a provisional judgment concerning Chitqua's oeuvre. Although it will not prove possible to confirm all the works discussed as being by his hand, an analysis of them will for that very reason serve to clarify a context against which Chitqua's own production can be seen, and indicate something of the historical evolution of a distinct genre of portrait figurines of which he was by no means the earliest practitioner.

Closest in terms of pose to the Askew figure amongst the works ascribed to Chitqua, and thus a piece that can I believe be ascribed to him with some confidence on stylistic grounds, is a figure in the collection of the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, which is believed to be a portrait of Andreas Everard van Braam Houckgeest (see Figures 11, 12, 13 and 14).[66] Van Braam (1739–1801) visited Canton on three occasions between 1758 and 1777 in the employ of the Dutch East India Company, and although he was to return to the city between 1790 and 1795 (becoming the director of that company's Canton factory and participating in the 1794–95 Dutch embassy to Beijing) the presumed portrait must surely have been made during the period of his early visits since the relatively young age of the represented figure is

only consistent with that being the case (the Rijksmuseum assigns a date of c. 1765 to c. 1775). As with the figure of Askew, the pose is expressive and has an observed feel, although the similarities between the two works remind us that such an individualized look can be achieved through the refinement of a pre-existent formula, albeit one the artist himself seems to have had some responsibility for developing if not inventing. In both cases the figure is seated, with the right hand tucked into a waistcoat, the left arm bent at the elbow and resting on a surface, and legs that are apart. The Van Braam figure, which has a detachable head, shares the distinctive irregularly-shaped rocky base of the Askew, as well as the double use of this base as a seat and a foundation for the feet. Unlike the Askew figure, the Van Braam figure has a second ledge to his left, however, on which his hat is placed. He leans slightly in that direction.

Coming to public notice because of its appearance at auction is an 18.5 inch-high standing male figure that has been claimed more recently as a portrait of the actor David Garrick (see Figure 15).[67] As already noted, documentary evidence does place both Garrick and Chitqua at the same Royal Academy dinner on 23 April 1770, so it is entirely plausible to assume that the two men were acquainted to a degree that would make the creation of a portrait possible. Garrick appeared (both in and out of character) in a great number of paintings, including works by artists of the stature of Reynolds, Gainsborough, Kauffman and Hogarth, being an extremely famous figure during his own lifetime. His likeness was widely disseminated through prints after the painted portraits, and even those paintings were often commissioned by third parties, so there is no reason to assume that this image, if actually of Garrick, was ever in his own possession. Indeed it is not beyond the bounds of possibility (if this were in fact an image of the actor) that it was created without any commission at all simply on the basis of the subject's public stature. Such a conjecture is supported by evidence provided by James Boswell, who records a Captain Johnson telling him of 'a Chinaman at Canton' who 'showed him [John] Wilkes's head in china'.[68]

An identification of the sitter as Garrick seems largely based on a visual comparison with other known portraits of the actor, and is thus somewhat conjectural. Even from one painted portrait to another the represented

Figure 11
(opposite above left)
Chinese portrait figure of a seated European man, believed to be Andreas Everard van Braam Houckgeest. c. 1765–75. Collection of the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Photo by the author.

Figure 12
(opposite above right)
Chinese portrait figure of a seated European man — back view. Photo by the author.

Figure 13
(opposite below left)
Chinese portrait figure of a seated European man — detachable head. Photo by the author.

Figure 14
(opposite below right)
Chinese portrait figure of a seated European man — body with head removed, seen from above. Photo by the author.

Figure 15
Chinese portrait figure of a standing European man, previously identified as David Garrick. Photo courtesy Sotheby's, Inc., © 2011.

features of Garrick differ quite markedly, and the similarity between this work and those two-dimensional portraits is in this author's view of a rather general nature. The strongest claim for this figure being a portrait of Garrick appears in the catalogue entry for the figure when it was included in 'Every Portrait Speaks: Portraits of David Garrick', an exhibition held at the Holburne Museum of Art, Bath, between 16 September and 7 December 2003.[69] Here a catalogue entry signed by Rosie Broadley (pp. 69–70) notes a similarity between the figure's pose and that of Garrick in Zoffany's *Mr*

and Mrs Garrick by the Shakespeare Temple at Hampton (oil on canvas, c. 1762, Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection). In both cases the left leg is bent at the knee, crosses the right leg on which the figure is standing, and has a foot that only touches the ground at the toe. Both figures also have a left arm which is resting on something, in the Zoffany image on a balustrade of the Shakespeare temple against which he is standing and in the sculpture against a tree trunk which is the other main element of the work besides the figure itself. The right arms are completely different in the two cases, however, since in the sculpture this limb is shown bent at the elbow, with the hand against the body at the hip, whereas in the Zoffany the right hand holds a stick with which Garrick is pointing something out to his wife. In this author's view the best one can say of this and other painted portraits of Garrick is that they do not provide evidence which rules out the possibility that the sculpted figure has Garrick as its subject.

Just as the suggestion that Garrick is the subject of the sculpture remains conjectural, so does the attribution of the work to Chitqua. A visual comparison of the standing figure with the Askew seated figure helps clarify what similarities exist. The way in which the drapery is treated, and in particular the sense one gets of a body beneath the clothing, does recall the Askew figure. There is also a fair degree of individuation to the facial features, although perhaps not so strong a sense of characterization as with Askew. That seated figure, when compared to this standing one, can also be said to deal more successfully with the transition between head and body. In both cases the left hand is depicted as the most active one. In the Askew portrait it is holding the cane, while the standing figure at first sight seems to be using his left hand to gesture as if to an interlocutor. From our knowledge of other Chinese portrait figures of this type such as those which will be discussed later in this chapter, however, we need to consider that it is possible the hand was originally holding some object which has now been lost.

Despite the evidence given here, which can only be described as circumstantial at its best, that the standing figure is a Chitqua portrait of Garrick datable to his London period, I am quite convinced that this particular work is by another earlier hand and represents a different and at present unknown sitter. The evidence for this view comes from the 'Garrick'

figure's strikingly close resemblance to a further Chinese sculptural portrait of a standing figure with a tree not previously discussed in the art historical literature which can be securely dated to an earlier period in the eighteenth century, well before Chitqua's English trip and indeed to a time when he would have only been a child. This is the portrait of Henry Talbot (1700–1784) which is in the collection of the Dorking and District Museum, and which is currently on loan to the National Trust and held at Clandon Park, West Clandon, Guildford, Surrey (see Figure 16).

Although the faces in these two works are very different, and clearly individualized, the treatment of the bodies and dress are remarkably similar. The bent knee of the right leg in the 'Garrick' work is again seen, and the toe to ground pose reappears, thus undermining any suggestion that the pose is borrowed from Zoffany (the key basis of the claim that the figure is indeed Garrick). The right hand is again placed on the hip, and the left hand also rests on a tree trunk (which itself broadly resembles the 'Garrick' tree). The gesture which in the 'Garrick' figure looked like a conversational one is again found, but this time there is a book in the hand (we will note this again with other Chinese portrait figures that probably date to the same period as that in which this one was made). This strongly suggests that some such prop may also have originally been present in the 'Garrick' work too.

The close similarity between the two figures I believe I have demonstrated here convinces me that they are by the same hand. That this hand was not Chitqua's becomes evident when we consider that Henry Talbot travelled to China for trade with the East India Company as a young man, making four visits between 1719 and 1730.[70] Although he was still alive at the time of Chitqua's visit to England and could theoretically have encountered him in London, it is clear that the portrait is not of a man of around seventy years of age. This youthful portrait was thus produced in China, not England, perhaps at the time of Talbot's last trip, made when he was approaching the age of thirty, between 1728 and 1730. Such an early date would break the connection of the other standing figure with a tree to Garrick, of course, if we assume them to belong to the same era. A date to the occasion of Talbot's last trip is not only consonant with the apparent age of the represented figure, but can also be supported by certain

Figure 16
Chinese portrait figure of Henry Talbot. Collection of the Dorking and District Museum (currently on loan to the National Trust and held at Clandon Park, West Clandon, Guildford, Surrey). Photo courtesy the Dorking and District Museum.

similarities between this work and others that can be securely dated to that time, and which will be discussed later in this chapter. A particular parallel that will be observed is with the already-noted motif of a book being held open in the hand.

Henry Talbot was the fourth son of Dr. William Talbot, bishop of Oxford and later Durham. He was elected by the board of directors of the East India Company as a writer (i.e. clerk) to the supercargoes of the *Essex* on 19 November 1718, for her voyage to Canton. He married Elizabeth Lloyd around 1720, not long after returning from his first visit to China. They had one daughter together, also named Elizabeth, but his wife seems to have died young since on 28 November 1725 he was to marry Katherine (daughter of Sir Hugh Clopton of Stratford-on-Avon), who died in 1754. His second trip to Canton, following his 1721 election as a member of the East India Company's China Council, was on the *Eyles*, which arrived in Canton by 26 July 1722, while his third trip (shortly after his second marriage) began in 1725. For this voyage he was number two of the supercargoes (a 'supercargo' being the person appointed by the owner of the cargo to look after it while it is at sea, to arrange its sale at the destination, and to purchase a new cargo for the return journey), travelling on the *Townshend*, and returning in 1727. Interestingly, Talbot chose to take pictures with him as his private trading concession (of £100) on this voyage. His final voyage to Canton began in 1728, and for that voyage he was 'Second in Council'. Talbot's allowance for private trade on this voyage was £200, and he took out ten lead statues as a part of it (lead being in demand in Canton and also useful as ballast). On arrival in Macau he was to travel up to Canton to negotiate with the authorities there over the terms of trading. Two of the four British ships which had sailed to Canton in 1729 were to leave on 9 December of that year, with the remaining two departing on 13 July 1730. Talbot continued an involvement with the China trade for about another decade, and in 1733 he obtained the lifetime post of commissioner for collecting salt duties, an apparently lucrative position. In 1754 he was appointed sheriff of Surrey. In 1746 he purchased a property in Dorking, Surrey, named The Vineyard, which he later renamed as Chart Park after acquiring adjacent lands.[71]

We know from the sale particulars advertising the sale of Chart Park by auction on 3 June 1813 that there were a few traces of Henry Talbot's

Chinese connection still associated with the house at that time, such as a Chinese gong and hat. One staircase in the house had a 'Chinese Balustrade' (presumably employing a 'Chinese' decorative idiom rather than being imported), and 'a mirror in compartments over the mantle' of the 'Anti Room' is described as 'beautifully painted in the Chinese style'.[72] That the portrait image of Talbot was at Chart Park during his lifetime is suggested by a partially surviving card label on the wooden case in which it is displayed. This reads 'Henry Talbot of Chert Park in Darkin [a variant spelling of Dorking found elsewhere] born A.D. 1700'. Although some other Chinese export figurines were supplied with a case, one can conjecture that at least this label post-dates the work's creation since it mentions Chart Park, which Talbot only acquired after his final Canton voyage. The absence of a date of death implies that it was made during his lifetime. As currently displayed the figure is accompanied by some dried foliage of presumably later date, resembling that which might be found in the display case of a taxidermy specimen such as a stuffed bird or small mammal. A coat of arms has been placed on the back wall of the case, above the figure. The detached head of a sculpted female figure, in a different style from that of the Talbot figure itself and of presumably later and non-Chinese origin, is placed incongruously at the standing figure's feet.

In addition to the two seated figures and two standing figures already discussed, a reclining male figure also exists (see Figure 17) which was linked at one stage to Chitqua's name. This figure was recently acquired by the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, and had formerly been tentatively attributed by David Piper to Chitqua whilst in the collection of Miss Ursula Radford.[73] A date of 1720–30 is now suggested by the museum for this work, on the basis of evidence from the history of clothing. This would rule out an authorship by Chitqua if correct, although doubts inevitably remain since attempts to establish dating in this way are necessarily only approximate, and some evidence from the figure's dress are consistent with a date to Chitqua's lifetime. The figure appears to be wearing a banian, and this can be seen for instance in a portrait from the later eighteenth century, John Singleton Copley's 1767 image of Nicholas Boylson (Harvard University Portrait Collection).

Figure 17
Chinese portrait figure of a reclining European man. Collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Photo © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Apparently the figure formerly possessed a turban-like cap of black velvet, not entirely dissimilar in fact to that worn by Boylson in Copley's image. This cap is now lost, although whether it dated to the time of the figure's actual making is unclear, especially as there is evidence that restoration work has taken place on the figure itself. The presence of a cap in the case of the Talbot figure does however suggest that it was part of the original conception. The wooden Chinese-style couch-bed (*luohanchuang*) on which the figure reclines appears to be original. Not only do the legs of the couch-bed betray Chinese design characteristics, with inward-facing feet of the kind referred to in literature on Chinese furniture as 'horse-hoof' (*mati*), but examination has revealed inscriptions in Chinese indicating their position and thus suggesting manufacture in China.[74]

Like the 'Garrick' standing figure this unidentified portrait displays a certain stiffness about the treatment of the neck. Technical examination by the Victoria and Albert Museum has suggested that the head may have been modelled separately, and this offers a possible explanation for that

infelicity of execution. Whereas the 'Garrick' and Talbot standing figures have a good overall representation of the body, the arms in particular of the Victoria and Albert Museum reclining figure seem less convincing. The degree of individualization of the head is comparable to that of the 'Garrick' and Talbot figures, however, and as with both of those standing figures the legs are crossed. The resting of the reclining figure's right hand on a pillow is not altogether dissimilar to the way in which the left hands of the two standing figures are related to an adjacent tree trunk, and it also recalls the Van Braam figure with its left elbow on a ledge.

As with other works described so far, one has a sense that the figure is displaying awareness of the presence of others. Although the subject holds a book open in his hand, indicating that he has been reading, he looks outwards, engaged rather than absorbed. This particularly parallels the Henry Talbot figure, and leads to a conjecture that they are by the same hand, thus suggesting that a date around 1730 would be possible. A relaxed and casual occasion is suggested which differs from the formality of many portraits of the time, and the work conveys a sense of having been based on actual observation. It would be hard to find direct parallels to this work in British sculptural portraiture of the eighteenth century, but some similarity can be found to certain painted portraits of the era, raising the question of whether the artist was aware of such precedents (perhaps via prints, which artists in Canton were known to make painted copies of), and was attempting to make accommodation to their representational conventions, albeit in his own individual way.[75] Once again the Copley portrait of Nicholas Boylson, albeit that it was executed in North America and at a later date than seems likely here, offers a useful point of comparison. In both cases the subject is shown in informal indoor dress and is associated with books, which signify learning — although the American merchant is shown with a ledger rather than engaged with humanistic study, and his books are props only and not seen in active use. As well as the parallel of the indoor hats, as previously noted, there is also a parallel in that both figures are shown shaven-headed (this is assuming that the Victoria and Albert figure was not originally provided with hair which has now been lost). This contrasts with the wig represented in the clay of the Askew portrait and the use of actual hair in the case of the 'Garrick', and is a further way in which a sense of informality is conveyed.

We are to understand that the subject is a wearer of a wig, but has taken it off while indoors. By the same token Askew's wig and physician's cane tell us that he is being represented in his public and professional role.

In addition to the Victoria and Albert Museum reclining figure, two other such works are known. Both are comparable to it and thus worthy of discussion in this context. Most well documented of the two is a portrait of Thomas Hall (see Figures 18 and 19) which has a provenance to his family and is now in the collection of the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, having been acquired from a sale by Bonhams in London on 13 June 2002 (Lot 103). Thomas Hall (1692–1748) was a merchant and ship owner who traded with Canton and other locations and who travelled to both Canton and Madras as a younger man before taking a land-based trading role as an older and wealthier man. In Madras Hall formed many friendships with influential figures in the resident British community but seems to have suffered difficulties there, presumably of a financial kind as a result of unfavourable ventures in that risky trading environment. Following this less successful phase, Hall can be placed on a British East India Company voyage to Canton of 1716 as purser of the *Essex*, and it seems possible that he had already travelled to Asia before that time in more junior roles. In 1719 Hall was on another voyage to Canton, this time aboard the *Maison d'Autriche* sailing from Ostend in a rival enterprise to that of the East India Company (and as a British subject in breach of a 1716 proclamation against interlopers in the monopoly trade by the British government which was to be supported in 1719, 1721 and 1723 by three acts of parliament). Other voyages from Ostend followed and in 1723 Hall was again sailing to Canton as captain of the *Marquis de Prié*, returning in 1724 via South America. In the year of his return to England in 1727, which was only possible after he had paid compensation to the East India Company and the government for his infringement of British law and the company's monopoly, Hall married Mary Hallett. He continued to exchange correspondence and presents with the leading Canton Hong merchant, Suqua (who could speak English and was known for his reliability), having become friends with him in Canton, on one occasion (in 1723) being invited to stay at Suqua's house while his own accommodation was still being prepared.[76] In 1731 he inherited a house and estate known as Goldings, in the parish of Bengeo near Hertford. His daughter Anne was to marry the

Figure 18
Chinese portrait figure of Thomas Hall. Collection of the Peabody Essex Museum, Salem. Photo courtesy the Peabody Essex Museum.

Figure 19
Chinese portrait figure of Thomas Hall — detail of face. Photo courtesy the Peabody Essex Museum.

antiquary Richard Gough, whom we have encountered as meeting Chitqua during his London stay.[77]

In a better state of preservation than the Victoria and Albert Museum reclining figure, the Hall portrait is accompanied by a carrying case and a straw mat for the floor. Like its counterpart the Hall figure is shown on a couch-bed, wearing a turban-like cap. It also has a similar degree of realism in the treatment of the facial features and an analogous informal pose with crossed legs. In both portraits a cushion provides a base for a right arm, but no book is held in Hall's left hand, which rests instead on his body. Again a banian is worn, in both cases painted in blue, and the two images are of a quite similar scale (the Victoria and Albert figure being a fraction shorter than the 12.75 inches of the Hall figure at 11.8 inches). Given these many similarities a common authorship is certainly a possibility.

Although less is known about it, a further reclining figure which can be documented as formerly in a British private collection, can also be shown to have a close similarity to the Victoria and Albert portrait. A detail of this work is reproduced by David Piper in his 1957 study of British portraiture, *The English Face*, where he describes it as a portrait of Edward Harrison. A different photo, also a detail (see Figure 20), is reproduced in the second edition of the book, and data on the back of this image (held by the National Portrait Gallery, London) indicates that in 1957 it was in the collection of 'Mrs Cleaver' (in his book Piper gives her first name as Sybil), of 'Glebe House, Guilsfield, Welshpool, Montgomeryshire'. The note on the photo describes Mrs Cleaver as 'a descendant' of the portrait's subject, noting that the piece was 'traditionally called in the family Governor Harrison'.[78] Piper dates the work to c. 1715, and ascribes it tentatively to Chinqua, the only other eighteenth-century Chinese portrait artist apart from Chitqua for whom a name is known, and who (as discussion below will clarify) was active at that time.

Although the feet are cropped from both the photos in Piper's book, the torso does suggest a common authorship with the Victoria and Albert Museum reclining figure (and indeed with the Hall figure too). There are similarities in the dress, and in all three cases a cushion is present to support the right arm. However, the Harrison figure's right hand, which

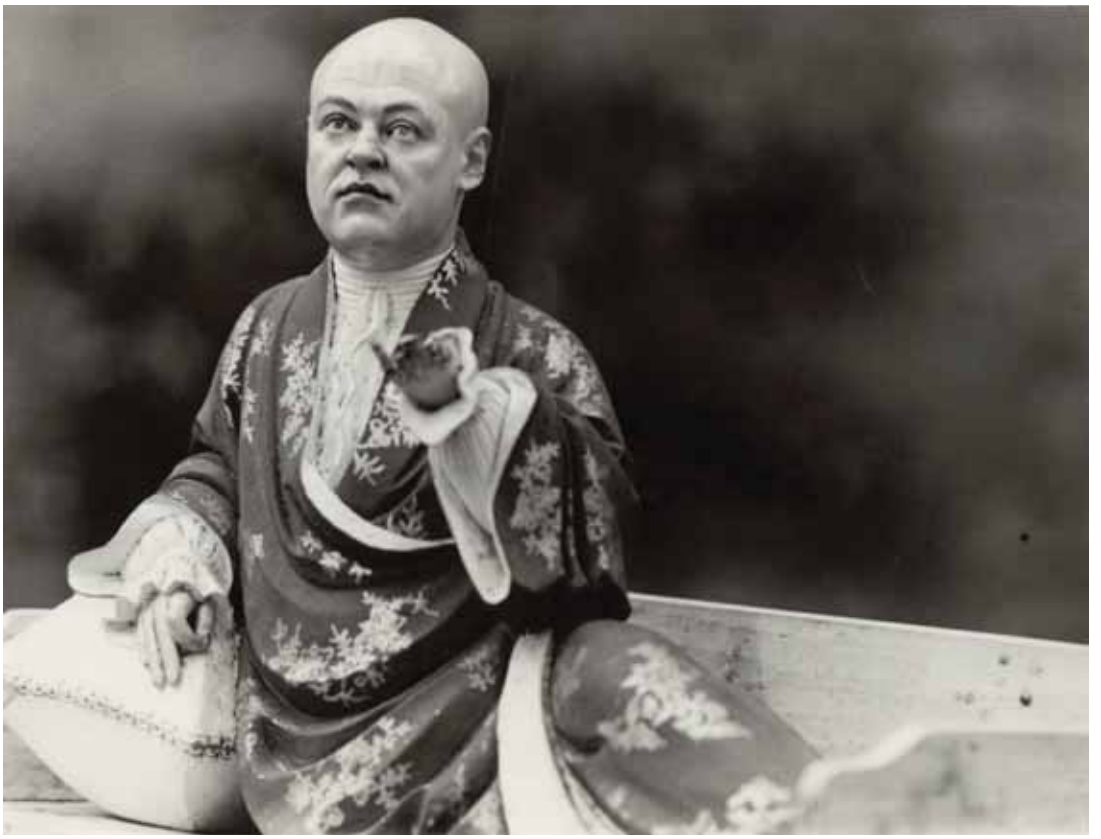


Figure 20
Edward Harrison, possibly by Amoy Chinqua. Sculpture, c. 1715. Unknown collection. Photo courtesy the National Portrait Gallery, London (CAP00280).

seems carefully executed, lies on the cushion itself (as with the Hall figure), rather than holding a book. The left arm, which is missing a hand, is raised rather than meeting the figure at the hip, and could perhaps have originally been holding a book. Both the Victoria and Albert Museum reclining figure and the Harrison figure gaze directly out (the Hall figure is in a slightly more reclined pose), and the sense of an individualized portrait likeness is if anything more intensely conveyed in the Harrison figure than in its Victoria and Albert Museum counterpart. A cap exists for it, again suggesting that one was also an original accessory for the Victoria and Albert Museum figure.

Edward Harrison (1674–1732) had been governor of Madras between 1711 and 1717, where Chinqua is known to have been working around that time, and Piper's tentative date and attribution are most likely a

surmise based on the conjuncture between that knowledge and the fact that Harrison can be placed in the city at that time (he did not travel to China).[79] Given Harrison's date of death and the similarity between these two reclining figures, the possibility of Chitqua having been the author of the Victoria and Albert Museum figure is further diminished. The Hall figure also speaks against Chitqua's involvement: although the Peabody Essex Museum dates it as c. 1744 (when Chitqua would only have been around sixteen years of age and surely incapable of a work of this maturity), I regard it as fairly securely datable to an earlier time when Hall was travelling to Asia, and most likely to the period before 1716 when he was in Madras, and thus close to the date at which the Harrison portrait is likely to have been made in that same city. The possibility of Chinqua's authorship of all three reclining figures can therefore be considered quite high.

The likelihood that Chitqua could have authored the Victoria and Albert Museum reclining figure (or either of the other two discussed here) is even further reduced when one notes similarities between it and various other works of clearer provenance which can be dated quite precisely to 1731, and which appear to have all been the product of a single pair of hands. These are a series of six analogous seated figures — each in their own similar wooden armchair of the distinctive Chinese design commonly referred to as 'horseshoe' (*quanyi*), with a ledge added in front for the feet to rest on, thus eliminating the need for a base — which represent Captain Michael Christian Ludvig Ferdinand Tønder (1692–1753), Supercargo Pieter van Hurk (c. 1697–1775), Undercargo Peter Mule (1693–1749), Chief Assistant Severin Bonsach (b. 1688), Over Assistant Hans Christian Ølgod and Third Officer Frederik Zimmer (1702–1774), all of whom travelled to Canton on the first Royal Danish ship to visit China, and who returned in 1732 (see Figures 21, 22 and 23).[80]

Like all the examples we have examined so far, each of these figures has a clearly individualized facial likeness, and attention to the specifics of dress. As with the Victoria and Albert reclining figure, however, one can see a slightly less proficient treatment of the bodies when compared to the heads, and two of the figures (those of van Hurk and Mule) resemble it in certain more specific details in that they are both holding books which they do not

Figure 21
(opposite left)
Figure of Third Officer Frederik Zimmer. Canton, 1731. Private collection, Norway. Photo © Danish Maritime Museum.

Figure 22
(opposite above right)
Figures of Captain Michael Tønder (left) and Supercargo Pieter van Hurk (right). Canton, 1731. Collection of the Danish Maritime Museum. Photo © Danish Maritime Museum.

Figure 23
(opposite below right)
Figures of Chief Assistant Severin Bonsach (left), Undercargo Peter Mule (centre) and Over Assistant Hans Christian Ølgod (right). Canton, 1731. Collection of the Danish Maritime Museum. Photo © Danish Maritime Museum.

actually read. That detail also links those two figures to the Talbot portrait which could have been executed at the latest a couple of years earlier. Both Hurk and Mule are also shown with caps, once more suggesting that the lost cap on the Victoria and Albert Museum reclining figure was indeed a part of the original work.[81] The figures of Tønder and Ølgod also (like the Victoria and Albert Museum and Thomas Hall reclining figures and the 'Garrick' and Talbot standing portraits) have crossed legs, although in Tønder's case the left is on top of the right and in Ølgod's case the reverse

is true, indicating a desire by the modeller to differentiate in detail at the level of the pose. The Mule figure is different again in having his right leg crossed over his left at the knee rather than the ankle.

The six 1731 figures vary in the degree to which they share the psychological complexity found in the other figures so far discussed. In the case of the Pieter van Hurk figure the book seems less central to what the image is about than in the Victoria and Albert Museum reclining figure, functioning more like a simple prop to help individualize the figure, since we cannot believe he is either absorbed in reading it or has been distracted from doing so. Something of that theme of interruption (which we could read in the Talbot figure too) does come across in the case of Peter Mule though, since he holds the book as if he has been reading it and yet is gazing straight ahead as if aware of another human presence. The Michael Tønder figure also has that sense of a gaze responding to a presence before it (so familiar to us in our own era from photographic portraits), but the other three figures are arguably less successful in conveying this despite their frontward-facing eyes. Another work from this period which also came back on the same Danish ship — a representation of an old man and a boy — shows a more successful use of a prop than in the Pieter van Hurk figure. Although this clay work has a Chinese theme and is without any realistic portrait dimension, the fruit held by the man (and which is represented as attracting the child's attention) is more successfully integrated within the work as a whole than the Pieter van Hurk figure's book. The attention of the man to the boy (and the boy to the fruit) demonstrates that the sculptor had successfully mastered the representation of psychological interaction, and thus the suggestion of such an interaction that has been made with respect to the Askew and Talbot figures, the Victoria and Albert Museum reclining figure and certain of the Danish portraits (even in the absence of a second represented figure) becomes more plausible.

While it is impossible to resolve the matter of dating and authorship with complete certainty, I believe that the evidence given here makes it on balance quite unlikely that either the 'Garrick' figure or the Victoria and Albert Museum reclining figure was made by Chitqua (the Hall and Harrison figures can definitely be ruled out). Most probably they are both

amongst the more successful examples of the genre in which he excelled from a period prior to that in which he worked, and the visual evidence even suggests that (like the Talbot, Hall and Harrison figures) they may have been executed by the same anonymous 'Master of the Danish Portraits' as has already been identified (with a proviso that the three reclining figures can also be linked to Chinqua, and to Madras rather than Canton). The cross-legged pose of the Victoria and Albert Museum figure, which adds to its sense of informality, directly parallels several of the 1731 Danish figures. Both the use of a separately-made hat and the strategy of employing an item of Chinese-style wooden furniture as a base also suggest a shared authorship. As previously discussed, the use of a book as prop, as well as the sense of engagement with the viewer (and of the figure having been interrupted in his reading), are further links which tie the Victoria and Albert Museum reclining figure and the Talbot figure to the Danish works. The evidence of the Chinese characters on the wooden couch of the Victoria and Albert Museum reclining figure certainly suggest manufacture in China rather than in England (and perhaps the help of an assistant or workshop), and thus also perhaps speaks against this being a work produced by Chitqua during his English period unless one assumes he brought a stock of such items with him.

The six Danish figures discussed here serve as representative samples of the kind of portrait work that was produced in Canton a generation earlier than the (securely dated and attributed) Askew figure, providing an even firmer landmark than we are able to have in the case of the Talbot figure. Although the three reclining figures show similarity of style with the other works, they appear to be of an earlier date, and so it would be helpful in clarifying this picture of Chinese portrait sculptures to extend our discussion back into the early part of the century in search of further comparative examples. We can do this by examining a standing figure of Joseph Collet now in the collection of the National Portrait Gallery, London (see Figure 24). This work has an inscription in gold lettering on the front of its plinth stating 'Amoy Chinqua fecit 1716', an identification of authorship which may have been responsible for encouraging Piper to suggest that the Harrison figure is also by the same hand, since Harrison and Collet can both be placed in Madras in the same era and are known to have been good friends.[82]

Figure 24
Joseph Collet by Amoy Chinqua, painted unfired clay statuette, 1716. Collection of the National Portrait Gallery, London. Photo © National Portrait Gallery, London.

Joseph Collet (1673–1725) was an early figure in the British East India Company and had been based in Madras during the latter part of his overseas career, becoming its governor from 1717 to 1720 as Harrison's direct successor. Like Harrison he could not have travelled to China at the time this work was made, and therefore we must assume that the Chinese artist responsible for it was based in India at that time. The date given by the inscription is reliable since Collet refers to the figure in a letter to his daughter Elizabeth written on 14 December 1716, indicating that it was sent to her at that time as his part of an exchange of portraits (according to a letter of 18 September 1716 he had earlier received pictures of Elizabeth and her sisters).[83] He mentions in his letter that he is sending the figure home 'by the Governor' and therefore it seems likely that Harrison took it back along with his own portrait when he left office on 8 January 1717 (a few days after Collet's letter was written), making his return to England on the *King George*.[84] This close connection makes it even more likely that the two works were by the same author, and one can even surmise that the two friends had their portraits made at a similar time, in the knowledge of Harrison's impending return (and in Collet's case perhaps prompted by a desire to reciprocate the gift of portraits from his daughters received at some point before 18 September 1716). This circle of friendship within the relatively small British community may even have extended to Hall, since a connection between him and Harrison can be documented at a later stage, which may have begun in Madras.[85] Leaving the city slightly before Harrison, Hall was perhaps the first of the three to have a portrait produced. The as-yet unidentified subject of the Victoria and Albert Museum reclining portrait might now be conjectured as one of the other members of this Madras community, and perhaps an acquaintance of these other three men.

Amoy is the English name (taken from a Fukienese dialect pronunciation of the then Chinese name) of the Chinese coastal city now known as Xiamen, which had been an early site of Western trade with China and one of the places from which the overseas Chinese diaspora was to come. Although in 1757 Canton was designated as the sole port through which trade with the outside world should be conducted (a status it would hold until the Treaty of Nanjing and the opening of Hong Kong and other cities for trade in the 1840s), in the early part of the eighteenth century, and particularly

in the years around 1710, Western trade with Xiamen from Madras can be documented.[86] Therefore the indication that the creator of the portrait of Collet (and probably those of Harrison and Hall too) originated from that city is not altogether surprising. Indeed, since the family name for Chitqua which William Chambers gives, 'Tan', is a common romanization for the Fukienese pronunciation of a widespread name character which in Mandarin would be 'Chen' and Cantonese 'Chan', one might speculate that this practice of making portrait figures was a specialty originally developed by people from that city or region, and even that the practice (and perhaps some of the language skills necessary for communicating with Europeans) was passed down within one particular family of Xiamen origin over more than half a century.[87] Of course it is entirely possible that there were a larger number of hands involved in producing these portrait figures for Europeans, but this more economical explanation is supported by the fact that both Osbeck and Hickey refer to only one such modeller in their accounts.

Continuity certainly exists between the Collet portrait and the Askew in the degree of attention to realistic detail in the facial features and the dress, although this earlier work can be distinguished from the latter (and indeed also from the Danish portraits of 1731) by its focus more on physiognomy than on character, and by the relative stiffness and lack of expressivity of the figure's pose. In height it is approximately 30 inches, making it rather larger than the Askew figure by Chitqua, but an otherwise similar figure of approximately 11.6 inches height with the same stiff, frontal pose (again with left hand on hip and right hand as if holding a cane, although in this case no longer extant) is in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum, which dates it to c. 1710–25 (see Figure 25).[88] Neither of these standing figures, which can be conjectured to have come from the same hand on stylistic grounds (and which thus suggest an artist who may have worked in both China and India, since the Victoria and Albert Museum example has a fitted lacquered case of clearly Chinese origin), has the same corporeality as the Askew, although the proportion of the head to the body is more comfortably managed than with some of the Danish figures. This attribution of the smaller figure to Chinqua despite the disparity of scale with the Collet work is further supported by the existence of another work in the same media of approximately the same smaller size (in this

case 13.875 inches in height) which does bear an inscription 'Amoy Qinquafe[cit] [1]717' on its base. This is a work (again featuring the same pose as the other two) which is now in the collection of the Peabody Essex Museum, Salem.[89]

Figure 25
Standing figure, with lacquered wood carrying case, clay and bamboo. Collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Photo © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Although our picture of Chitqua's work must remain very narrowly based, some sense of his place within the tradition in which he worked can hopefully be suggested by the brief chronology of work sketched out here. Although a general trend of increasing sophistication over time is demonstrated, one also gains an appreciation of the extent to which Chitqua was reliant on an existing tradition, and it is clear that at least one modeller of high sophistication was active around 1730, the unknown 'Master of the Danish Portraits'. Similarities between the work of that master and at least some of the earlier examples could lead to speculation that a single hand was behind all of them, that Chinqua, having been active in Madras in his early years, later moved to Canton, continuing his trade with a higher level of experience. We can even envisage him — already in his prime in the 1730s — living into the 1750s to become the 'famous face-maker' referred to by Osbeck at a time when Chitqua would only have been in his early twenties and not yet ready to wear such a mantle.[90] A further speculation would place Chitqua as this older master's son and the inheritor of his workshop. Intriguingly, the name 'Chinqua' can be documented in Canton in the period 1723–24, thus leading a degree of credence to these conjectures.

Figure 26
Chinese portrait figure of a standing European man, sold in 2004 as 'A Chitqua plaster figure of a ship's captain'. Photo courtesy Sotheby's, Inc., © 2011.

Chinqua is given as the name of the trader from whom Hall (as captain of the *Marquis de Prié*) bought the largest part of the 13,957 pieces of silk he carried back with him.[91] Could Hall have been reconnecting with a contact he had made earlier in Madras, or was this in fact the occasion on which that modeller, now returned to China, made Hall's portrait?

In the light of this tentative chronology of Chinese portrait sculptures of European subjects we can perhaps now turn to consider various other undated works of this type that are more difficult to place, but which have been attributed to Chitqua. One such, a 16.375-inch standing figure (see Figure 26), appeared in a recent Sotheby's sale as 'A Chitqua plaster figure of a ship's captain', and has also been reproduced and discussed as a 'Painted Clay Figure of a European Gentleman' (again attributed to Chitqua).[92] It has been suggested that it represents Louis Bernard Tribou (1741–1831), although a certain stiffness or conventionality of the pose and

Figure 27
Chinese portrait figure, identified as 'Jacob Nebbens', dated as 1725–49. Collection of the Zeeuws Museum, Middelburg, Holland. Photo courtesy the Zeeuws Museum.

of the treatment of the clothes would also be consistent with an earlier date, thus leaving open the possibility of a different authorship and subject. The pose with the left hand on the hip and the right hand positioned to hold a (now non-extant) cane echoes those of the two otherwise less sophisticated London standing figures already discussed, thus giving less sense of the pose having being observed from life. Such a pose is also close to that of a figurine in the collection of the Zeeuws Museum, Middelburg, Holland (see Figure 27), identified as 'Jacob Nebbens' and dated to 1725–49, and it may

be that this Dutch figurine and that placed on sale at Sotheby's are by the same hand.[93]

Also attributed to Chitqua and coming to light through its appearance in a Sotheby's saleroom is 'A good painted clay figure of Thomas Todd', dated as c. 1770 and therefore claimed as a work produced while Chitqua was in London.[94] As with the Askew figure the right hand is placed inside the waistcoat, and here there is an individualizing detail of a hat tucked under the left arm. The pose is a little stiff, however, and again the work would not be inconsistent with an earlier date of production. It should be noted for instance that the detail of a hat held in the crook of the elbow is not unique to this work and is also found with the 1731 Ølgod figure (albeit that the latter is seated), as well as with three standing figures in the Zeeuws Museum, Holland: the aforementioned portrait of 'Jacob Nebbens', plus portraits of 'Skipper Meertens' (see Figure 28) and 'Lawyer Petrus Gerardus Dobbelaar'. In the case of each of these Dutch figures, as with the 'Thomas Todd' figure, the hat is held in the crook of the left arm. The 'Skipper Meertens' figure parallels the 'Thomas Todd' one in pose in all other major respects too, since it also has a right hand inside the waistcoat and the same open-toed stance, indicating a possible shared authorship. The Meertens and Nebbens figures are dated as 1725–50, while the Dobbelaar figure is given as 1753.[95]

Against this evidence suggesting an earlier date, however, is a similarity with another portrait figure not previously mentioned, that of Jacob Ariesz Arkenbout held by the Nederlands Scheepvaart Museum in Amsterdam, which has been dated to 1792.[96] Both stand with feet slightly splayed, and Arkenbout also has a hat under his left arm, and his two hands are in broadly similar positions (his right clutches his outer coat rather than being tucked inside a waistcoat). A similar pink marbled base with four broad legs is found in both cases, and even the treatment of the breeches and leggings bear comparison. Possibly then, a particular formula for standing figures has been employed over a long period of time by more than one artist.

If it is difficult to confirm the 'Tribou' and 'Todd' standing figures as examples of Chitqua's work on account of there being no standing figures by him of secure provenance (and because of their resemblance to works

Figure 28
Chinese portrait figure, identified as 'Skipper Meertens'. Collection of the Zeeuws Museum, Middelburg, Holland. Photo courtesy the Zeeuws Museum.

which appear to have an earlier date), then it becomes even harder to confirm the tentative attribution to him of a female figure with a child in the collection of the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (see Figures 29, 30, 31, 32, 33 and 34), since all the other known portrait figures are of men. A further difficulty of comparison is that this woman and child group, which is 22.5 inches in height and dated by the museum to around 1775, is not executed in the medium of painted clay, but in wood (although perhaps with modelled additions — for example the cloth around the baby's waist).[97]

Like the other known works it is painted. There is a fine sense of detail to its finishing: the hair of both figures is meticulously painted, as are their eyelashes. The decoration on the arm of the dress is conveyed both through paint and by modelling in relief. Earrings and a hair ornament have been added as attachments to the female figure. The cavities of the ears are quite deeply carved. The fall of the woman's drapery is generally convincingly treated (the flow of the dress behind the figure helps to give it a wider and thus more stable base), although there is perhaps less sense of the figure beneath the clothes than with the Askew portrait. On the other hand the partial nudity of the child offers a direct representation of a body such as is not seen in other examples. Compared to many of the 1731 Danish figures there is a more successful handling of the proportion of head to body — like the Askew portrait it lacks the almost excessive physiognomic detail in the heads that they can display. The baby's left hand is curled around as if holding something, and one must conjecture that some toy or other object created separately was originally a part of the work.

The way in which the mother is represented as holding the child does not successfully convey that she is supporting his weight, and this creates a certain awkwardness. This echoes certain representations of the Christ child in paintings on the theme of the Madonna and Child, and perhaps suggests an awareness of such works via prints. There is, however, a firm sense of thinking the complicated grouping of the mother and child through in three dimensions. Both the woman and the child gaze out in broadly the same direction, and the child is represented as twisting in the direction of his gaze (his torso faces sideways). This gives a sense of immediacy, as if the child has just become aware of someone's presence. This doubling of gazes in a particular direction in front of the sculpture, together with the gesture of ostentation (the woman appears to be about to offer the child to someone who is arriving), creates a strong sense of psychological interaction (even more strongly marked than with the Askew figure). One can conjecture that the work was made for a male client, and represents his wife and young male child as if greeting him on his arrival. How the artist obtained a likeness of the female figure to work from remains an open question, since Western women did not normally visit Canton, but possibly he was working from some painted portrait that his client had taken with him to China.

Figure 29
(opposite top left)
Chinese portrait figure of a woman and child, dated c. 1775. Collection of the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, Photo by the author.

Figure 30
(opposite top right)
Chinese portrait figure of a woman and child — side view of woman's head. Photo by the author.

Figure 31
(opposite middle left)
Chinese portrait figure of a woman and child — close up of woman's face. Photo by the author.

Figure 32
(opposite middle right)
Chinese portrait figure of a woman and child — detail of child. Photo by the author.

Figure 33
(opposite bottom left)
Chinese portrait figure of a woman and child — side view of woman's torso. Photo by the author.

Figure 34
(opposite bottom right)
Chinese portrait figure of a woman and child — detail of the base of the figure. Photo by the author.

Figure 35
Ancestor portrait, watercolour on silk, 1700s, China. Collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Photo © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

As well as these portraits of Westerners which have been attributed to Chitqua, there remains the question of whether he was also the author of any of the figures in painted clay of Chinese subjects that also survive from this period. Some of these works, which exist in quite large quantities, have a portrait-like realism about their facial features which makes them comparable, even if many others are clearly only generalized representations of Chinese types. While a degree of accuracy in the representation of facial features can be commonly found in Qing dynasty ancestor portrait paintings (see Figure 35), one cannot imagine that a detailed likeness would be required by Western buyers of figurines with Chinese subjects in the same way as it was where their own personal portraits were concerned. This would especially be the case where these objects were being purchased away from Canton itself and thus away from any everyday contact with particular Chinese people, and where it would be impossible to know if there was representational accuracy to any given portrait. We can likely dismiss as of different authorship most of these nodding-head 'mandarin-men' and other analogous pieces, such as the pair of female figures in porcelain in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum dated as c. 1740–60, and manufactured in Jingdezhen (see Figure 36).[98] There are however several extant works in the medium of painted clay which bear a closer resemblance to the figurines of Western subjects already discussed in their evocation of a portrait-like individuality (even if perhaps they remain types rather than portraits in a narrow sense),

and which can sometimes be dated to the period when Chitqua was active.[99] Of particularly high quality are a group of figures in the Royal Danish collection consisting of four pairs of male and female figures (one of a young couple, one of an elderly couple, and two depicting mandarins and their wives), which are documented as early as 1779.[100] Figures of comparable quality are also in the collection of the Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, which owns four nodding figures in clay (a mandarin and his wife, a priest and a mandarin's wife). The priest figure belongs to 1790 or earlier since it is documented as being given to the Reverend William Bentley of Salem by Captain Hodges in that year.[101] Carl Crossman has suggested that there is a remote possibility that Chitqua could be the author of the Peabody Essex priest figure, given its date and general high quality, but on the whole I consider the difference between this figure and Chitqua's known work to be too great to make this more than the most outside possibility, and I feel the same must go for all the other known mandarin figures too.[102]

Figure 36
Pair of female figures in porcelain, painted in coloured enamels, Jingdezhen, China, c. 1740–60. Collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Photo © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

While there is no firm evidence, I believe, that can link Chitqua to the production of mandarin figures, one could speculate that his skills in modelling portrait likenesses for foreigners may have their historical roots in another kind of image-making, in this case for domestic clients. In addition to the individualized likenesses that, as mentioned above, are to be found in Chinese ancestor paintings, there is some evidence that realistic sculptural portraits of ancestors have sometimes also been

made in China.[103] Intriguingly, the evidence suggests that this practice was particularly prevalent in Fukienese and Hunanese communities, and it is to the former that both Chinqua and Chitqua have been tentatively linked in this discussion. Such images tend to be seated, as are certain of the portraits of Western subjects, and are of comparable scale to the works made for export.

In addition to the one firmly attributable work by Chitqua which has survived, and the more complex problem presented by the various existing works which have been attributed to him, some of which I have on balance excluded from his oeuvre, there are several non-extant works of his London phase which it has been possible to document, and which can usefully be considered here to extend our picture of his output during that time. Already mentioned is the work Chitqua showed at the Royal Academy, presumably the first occasion that a work by a named living Chinese artist was ever included in any public art exhibition, anywhere in the world. His meeting with the king and queen was also (according to Thomas Bentley's letter to Josiah Wedgwood) to lead to a commission to 'take the portraits of the Royal Infantry'.[104] Such a commission would have allowed Chitqua to display his skill at the detailed description of costume we saw with the Askew portrait, and which indeed is a feature of all the portrait figurines from Canton, although we have no firm evidence that the envisaged works were ever actually executed.

The identity of the sitters for both the Royal Academy piece and the figures of the Royal Infantry (if the latter indeed existed) remain impossible to discover at this point, but one further commission from his London period is known for which the sitter is identifiable. This is a portrait of Wedgwood, and apparently the earliest known to have been made of him. Eliza Meteyard notes:

> In the spring or summer of 1770 we first hear of Mr. Wedgwood sitting for his likeness. This was to an ingenious Chinese modeller, who had arrived in this country the previous Autumn, and becoming a sort of fashion, received a large share of the capricious patronage of the time. Interested as he was in China and its many productions, it seems not improbable that Wedgwood, accompanied by Bentley, first sought the artist as much to learn something of his country, as to see

> his modelling, and that a promise to sit to him naturally followed. We have no intimation if this promise was kept, although it probably was, and the bust thus modelled long remained in the possession of some of his family.[105]

It is interesting to note that the sculpture being referred to here is a bust rather than a whole figure, and thus unlike all the portrait figures so far discussed. Bentley's November 1769 letter to Wedgwood also states that Chitqua 'makes portraits (small busts in clay which he colours)' and the *Gentleman's Magazine* article of May 1771 also refers to 'busts'. That such references to busts are not merely errors resulting from imprecision of description can be confirmed by Gough, who notes that Chitqua could produce both 'a bust on a pedestal' and 'a whole figure'.

It is intriguing to consider that Chitqua may have responded during his stay in London to the European sculptural tradition of the portrait bust, a format which is not familiar within Chinese sculptural practice, but it should be noted that there is one known case from earlier in the century of a realistic portrait bust of a European being produced by a Chinese artist, and in Canton itself. This is the remarkably realistic portrait (see Figure 37) of Zacharias Allewelt (1682–1744), captain of the Danish East Indiaman *Kongen of Danmark* (now in the collection of the Danish Maritime Museum, Kronborg), which can be confidently dated to 1738, the year of that ship's arrival in Canton (and thus be ruled out as being by Chitqua himself). At 19.25 inches in height, this head and shoulders work approximates to life size, and is thus on a considerably larger scale than all the other portrait figures known from Canton.[106]

In addition to alerting us to the existence of sculptural portraits made by Chitqua in London which are no longer known, the documentary record also contains useful evidence concerning his working method and about the sale of his works. Although, as we have seen, the evidence of Hickey's account in Canton indicates that the subjects of this kind of portrait did indeed 'sit' for them (and could choose to pose in a particular dress, thus making it unlikely that bodies were modelled in advance of a specific sitter), in Chitqua's case it seems that the well-established practice of posing as a model may not have been so essential as for most

Figure 37
Chinese portrait bust of Captain Zacharias Allewelt, 1738. Collection of the Danish Maritime Museum. Photo © Danish Maritime Museum.

other sculptors. The *Gentleman's Magazine* of May 1771 noted of Chitqua that 'he steals a likeness, and forms the busts from his memory', implying possession of a photographic memory avant la lettre.[107] Bentley tells us that Chitqua worked 'with great expedition', and it seems clear that he was making use of materials which he had brought with him from Canton. We know this because Gough reports Chitqua as telling him that 'he could get no earth here for his work', adding 'whence I conclude he brought over a cargo'. As regards the prices Chitqua was able to ask for his works in London, Bentley claims that 'he has ten guineas a piece for his little portraits, which are very small', while Gough clarifies that this price was for a bust, while for a full figure he would ask fifteen.[108]

An account by Pierre Sonnerat of a Chinese modeller at work in Canton, who (given its date) could actually have been Chitqua himself, can perhaps throw light on the working method that he may have employed when at home in Canton and was thus able to make use of assistants that would be unavailable to him in London.[109] Whereas Hickey only mentions one

modeller, Sonnerat (who did not have a high opinion of Chinese art as he understood it) observed a workshop with assistants and a division of labour in which the master modelled the head and the assistant the body. According to Sonnerat 'the artist first forms the head from his imagination, while his apprentice works separately on the body. He then endeavours to make the features like the original, and when the head is finished, it is put on the body, by means of a piece of wood, which goes through, and unites them'. Such a piece of wood can be seen attached to the head of the Van Braam figure when disassembled from the body, but while this division of labour may account for some of the awkwardness around the neck in certain figures, in fact the transition between the two parts is often well handled. In the case of the Van Braam figure, for instance, there is a well-thought-out integration of the head and body sections: the lower part of the figure's ponytail is modelled as part of the body rather than as part of the head, and the cravat is likewise represented in part by the sculpture's head and in part by its body.

The light shed on Chitqua's working method by historical documents can be supplemented by information gleaned from a physical examination of those portrait sculptures that have survived. Particularly helpful in this respect is the report of a technical investigation of the Victoria and Albert Museum's reclining figure made by Metaxia Ventikou.[110] Occasioned by the need to take conservation measures when the figure first entered the museum's collection, this report clarifies that the unbaked grey-white clay from which the figure is made is supported by an armature of bamboo, but with bronze used as a support for the right hand. Fibrous material was found to be covering the clay in the lower part of the figure, which Ventikou conjectures was applied to aid modelling of the drapery in that area. On top of the clay a yellow ground layer had been applied, with a finer white layer above which provided the base for the coloured paint visible to the viewer. One can conjecture a similar mode of manufacture in other figures. The Victoria and Albert Museum standing figure also shows evidence of a bamboo armature, for instance, with the head (removable as in several other of these pieces, such as the Van Braam figure, and thus revealed as having been modelled separately) constructed around a bamboo core.[111]

Ventikou's discovery of fibrous material over the clay body is intriguing since visual inspection of the Henry Talbot figure suggests that the clothing, which stands out from the body in quite thin layers at certain points, may have been fashioned separately from the body and then placed over it. The braiding and buttons on the clothing also seem to have been made separately and then attached. Such effects would presumably have required the use of a fibrous material of some kind. Similar separate treatment of the clothing seems likely to have occurred in certain other works too — the Van Braam and 'Garrick' figures, for instance, suggest this mode of working. Sonnerat's account of a modeller at work offers some further inconclusive clues as to how such models may have been finished. He notes that after the modelling of the head and body are finished, 'a workman pasted several sheets of fine paper, and gives the work to a third [workshop assistant], who alternately polishes it with layers of white and red'.[112]

Clearly the employment of unbaked clay as a medium is primarily responsible for the rarity of Chitqua's work today, but the choice of the medium is not without precedent, either in Europe or Asia. Andrea Del Verroccio's *Putto Poised on a Globe* (c. 1480, National Gallery of Art, Washington DC) is of unbaked clay, for instance, as are the pair of eleventh-century Chinese seated Bodhisattvas in the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. Unfired clay would have been of particular convenience to Chitqua as a medium while he was working in London, but even in Canton he would have benefited from clay's suitability to the purpose of producing an accurate likeness. That porcelain would have proved a less tractable medium in this respect can be suggested by a comparison with a supposed portrait of Madame de Maintenon in porcelain, with painting in enamels and gilt, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum collection and dated to 1622–1722 (see Figure 38), and with a porcelain figurine of a Dutch merchant in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, dated c. 1765–75 and (rather unconvincingly, I feel) attributed to Chitqua.[113] While these works, which are by no means unique in kind, help us to understand what the portrait of Wilkes mentioned by Boswell might have looked like (the Wilkes and 'Madame de Maintenon' figures may each have been executed after an imported engraving), they are both much less detailed in their facial features than the unbaked clay Askew figure, and the medium itself is one factor in determining this.

Chitqua's return to Canton

According to Bentley's account, Chitqua had originally planned to stay in London for several years. Less than a year after Bentley's letter, however, in August 1770, Gough was reporting that Chitqua 'returns with the next shipping', indicating that he had decided to truncate his British stay.[114] Gough cites the British weather as a major factor in Chitqua's decision: 'He complained much of cold, but had no fire; and preferred the country to London only for quietness from noise for he meets with no insults in the streets. He likes his own climate best'.[115] Gough also notes Chitqua's inability to get the clay he required for his work in England, and therefore a more practical, work-related reason of his early return may also be surmised.

Figure 38
Figure of a European lady (supposed portrait of Madame de Maintenon), porcelain with overglaze enamel colours, Jingdezhen, China. Collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Photo © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

One of the most vivid senses we can get of Chitqua as a person comes from a letter he wrote in connection with his attempts to find a passage back to Canton. This letter, which incidentally seems to be the earliest surviving example of a Chinese person writing in English, offers thanks to three ladies who have been instrumental in finding someone who can approach a ship's captain on his behalf. Two of these ladies remain unknown, although the third was a Miss Margaret Jeffreys, who had written a letter to Lord Hardwicke from Oxford on 5 July 1770 concerning Chitqua (Lord Hardwicke has already entered our narrative as having had an album of Chinese paintings explicated by Chitqua during his stay). Jeffreys's letter mentions one Gailland, who had been visiting her. Miss Jeffreys assures Lord Hardwicke that Gailland would help recommend Chitqua to a ship's captain who could take him back to

Canton.[116] Presumably Lord Hardwicke had conveyed the letter's contents to Chitqua, thus prompting his own letter to Miss Jeffreys and the two other unidentified ladies, which would therefore date to the same year.

The text of Chitqua's letter, which unfortunately is only known from a transcription made by William Whitley, is as follows:

> The two Wife-Women and the Single-woman Chin Chin Chitqua the China gentleman — and what time they quiere [i.e. 'want to'] flirt those nice things truly never can forget for him. Some time he make voyage to Oxford, Christchurch will then open his gates and make Chitqua so welcome he no more tinkee go Canton again. There he find much bisn [i.e. 'business'] as he so well savee [i.e. 'understands'] Art of Modelling Heads, thing much wanted among Mandarinmen of that place. Once more tankee fine present, Adios.[117]

Chitqua's first attempt to return to Canton proved abortive, however, and dramatically so, as an extensive account in the May 1771 issue of the *Gentleman's Magazine* reveals:

> Having embarked on board the *Grenville* East-Indiaman at Gravesend, he discovered that the common sailors were unaccountably prejudiced against him, owing, probably, to his strange dress and appearance. Add to this, he had one day the misfortune accidentally to fall overboard, and being saved from drowning by being buoyed up by his loose habit, after floating with the tide near half a mile, he was taken up half dead. This, with the superstitious fears of the mariners, like those of Tarshish, and their brutish imprecations against the *Chinese dog*, whom they deemed a mad man, so alarmed him, that he begged the carpenter to make him a coffin, and carry his corpse ashore, as it was not lawful in his country to be buried in the water. At length, the captain, who, with the other officers, treated him with proper humanity, seeing his distress, offered to set him onshore at Deal with the pilot, who might accompany him to London. This offer Mr. Chitqua thankfully embraced and to London he came in the machine. But when arrived there, another distress befell him; he could not recollect or express intelligibly where he lodged, and a mob gathering round the hackney coach, began to abuse and beat the pilot, for having, as they supposed, kidnapped a foreigner. Luckily, a gentleman passing

> by happened to know him, and by this means, after the mob was dispersed, Mr. Chitqua was re-conveyed to his former lodgings in the Strand, where he must remain for another season, when it is hoped, for the honour of our seamen, he will not again be deemed a Jonah, but will meet with a more humane crew, to which his wearing the English dress (which he has been persuaded to put on) may probably contribute.[118]

We can date Chitqua's first, unsuccessful, attempt at returning home quite accurately since it is known that the *Grenville*, sailing on its third voyage to China, left Portsmouth on 17 March 1771 under the command of Captain Burnet Abercromby.[119] The exact date of Chitqua's actual return to Canton is not known but we can assume that his journey took place in 1772. After the dramatic account of his aborted 1771 voyage no further mention of him in the documentary record occurs till news of his death is reported, again by the *Gentleman's Magazine*, in December 1797. Chitqua's death may be surmised as having occurred in 1796, since the obituary notes that news of it had been brought to Madras by ships from Canton that arrived in December 1796. Again an element of drama is involved in that his death is described as 'having been occasioned by his taking poison', although no further details as to the circumstances are forthcoming.[120]

In Chitqua's obituary it is stated that he is also known as 'Shykinqua', a name that is not attributed to him elsewhere. The name Shykinqua does however appear in records of the Canton trade, being attributed to a leading merchant of the city who died in 1790. This merchant had worked in the firm of Kershaw, before becoming an independent trader, and later (from 1779) a Hong merchant.[121] Following his death his company was taken over by his son (who was known by the same name), but it failed in 1795.[122] The younger Shykinqua was to die in prison not long after this collapse.[123] Although the date given for the younger Hong merchant's death roughly coincides with that given for Chitqua's, it nevertheless seems impossible to identify him with that prominent figure, whose gardens James Main is recorded as visiting in 1793–94. It is therefore a possibility that some confusion of names occurred in the obituary because of the two deaths taking place at a similar time.[124] Certainly the years around that of Chitqua's death were difficult for several of the major Canton merchants. Like Chitqua, the major Hong merchant Munqua also committed suicide in

1796, in his case following a business failure.[125] Given this context, one can conjecture that financial difficulties might offer one possible explanation for Chitqua's self-poisoning. It is interesting to note that it is difficult to track down portrait figures in clay from Canton of a verifiable date later than that of Chitqua's death, perhaps indicating that no later modeller of Chitqua's stature was to emerge, even if highly proficient painted portraits, such as those attributed to 'Spoilum', are to be found instead.[126] Possibly this change of taste even prefigured Chitqua's death, accounting for a shift in his financial fortunes.

Despite the elite company he kept while in London, and the status of artist he enjoyed there, Chitqua — as a craftsman and shop-owner — would not have enjoyed much social prominence following his return to Canton. Understanding this helps to account for the lack of interest shown in his remarkable adventure of travel by Chinese sources, which indeed offer only sparse help with the question of the Canton trade as a whole.[127] According to one account, however, Chitqua's visit did inspire another visitor from Canton to London, known (among various other romanizations) as 'Wang-Y-Tong'. Identified in a 13 February 1775 account as 'a young man of twenty-two, and an inhabitant of Canton', he is described as 'having received from Chit-qua, the Chinese figure-maker, a favourable account of his reception in England, two or three years ago'. Consequently 'he determined to make the voyage likewise, partly from curiosity, and a desire of improving himself in science, and partly from a view of procuring some advantage in trade, in which he and his older brother are engaged'.[128] Since we know that Wang's passage to London was facilitated by John Bradby Blake, who died when still young in November 1773, any encouragement from Chitqua to undertake a visit to London must have been given in the period immediately following the latter's own return to Canton. Wang was much younger than Chitqua on his arrival in England, where he was to be given an English education by his sponsors at Sevenoaks School, subsequently becoming a page to George Frederick Sackville, the Third Duke of Dorset. As a result one cannot imagine him to have been able to act as a cultural ambassador in quite the same way that Chitqua did, although William Jones, who met him during his British stay, was to attempt to involve him after his return to Canton in a project of translating the Chinese Classic of Poetry (*Shi Jing*) into English.

Wang declined on the grounds that he was very busy in his trading work, and unable to find the time for such a large-scale project.[129] Interestingly, especially since it might obliquely illuminate the presence of the Chinese artist 'Chinqua' in Madras, Jones also tried to persuade Wang to bring Chinese artists to Bengal if the government would subsidize the project.[130]

As more globalized and trans-cultural perspectives on the discipline of art history gradually develop, the study of artists who have worked across cultural and geographical boundaries comes to be understood as particularly valuable. Chitqua's case, as an artist specializing in serving foreign patrons (and as a portrait artist thus representing foreign subjects), is especially deserving of note since its stands at the very beginning of a long and significant story of Chinese artists who travelled to live, study and work in the West. Chitqua's pioneering example was not to be followed for some time, however: one really has to wait until the twentieth century before one again hears of Chinese artists spending time in Western cities. Occasionally one of these artists has an impact on Western art history: Teng Baiye, one of the first to do so, will be the subject of the following chapter, while Zao Wou-ki (Zhao Wuji) will also be discussed in a later part of this book. Most, however, such as Lin Fengmian or Li Tiefu, came to the West as students desirous of learning Western artistic idioms, and not like Chitqua as fully competent practitioners able to command the respect of their Western counterparts from the beginning.[131]

While Chitqua's ability to make an impact as an artist in London may have had something to do with his sheer novelty as a Chinese traveller in the England of that time, as well as owing something to his particular personal qualities, one can also note that it occurred in an era before the full flowering of Western imperial ambition in Asia and before the mature development of notions of race, both of which are really more phenomena of the nineteenth century. In that slightly earlier historical moment some of the complications which cross-cultural interaction later acquired — and which still leave their traces in the present — were yet to fully emerge. To think of a fluidity of cross-cultural interchange as only a possibility of our own more globalized postcolonial moment would be to misunderstand

the extent to which major eighteenth-century cities such as London and Canton were already deeply cosmopolitan environments, with inhabitants or visitors like Chitqua who were able to exploit their possibilities for communicating across cultural divides.

2
Cross-cultural dialogue and artistic innovation: Teng Baiye and Mark Tobey

When American painter Mark Tobey (1890–1976) discussed his artistic development, he emphasized the importance of his study of Chinese brushwork, undertaken in Seattle with a Chinese friend, in liberating him from bondage to the Renaissance heritage and permitting him to discover the dynamic linearity which became the hallmark of his style. Despite the willingness of this prominent American artist to acknowledge an artistic debt, that Chinese artist has remained little more than a name in the English-language art historical record. Indeed, because it was romanized in a variety of ways during his time in America, even that artist's name has been difficult to pin down with certainty. Referred to variously in English as 'T'eng Kwei', 'Teng Kuei', 'Teng-Kroei', 'Teng Quay', or even 'Kwei Dun', the artist in question was Teng Gui (to use the pinyin romanization system), known to many in China by his pen name Teng Baiye (see Figure 39). This chapter will attempt to throw more light on that former Seattle resident, tracing his career (as far as this remains possible) following his return to China. I will argue that Teng's influence on Tobey was somewhat more significant than has hitherto been realized,

Figure 39
Photographic portrait of Teng Baiye, dating from his time in the United States. Photo courtesy University Archives, University of Pittsburgh.

and will also demonstrate that he played a not insignificant role as an agent of cultural exchange in the other direction as well. Utilizing a training he obtained in Seattle, Teng became one of the earliest Chinese sculptors to work within Western-derived aesthetic modes. By putting together information on Teng from Western and Chinese sources it is possible to suggest that this artist has a greater historical importance — as both a cultural interpreter and as an artistic practitioner — than he has so far been accorded in either China or America.

Teng Baiye was born in 1900, and was a native of Suzhou. According to a biographical account by Zheng Yimei published in China shortly after his death, Teng had been born into a poor family, but showed an untutored interest in painting at an early age.[1] His mother (according to an anonymous, typed, one-page biography of Teng held in the University Archives of the University of Pittsburgh) was a designer of silks, and thus he had been exposed to artistic influences while still young.[2] At the end of his primary schooling a priest named Zhen Wenmin apparently arranged for his enrolment in a secondary school and sponsored his studies. Because of Teng's academic success he was able in 1922 to enter Dongwu University on a scholarship (according to Zheng), although a newspaper article claims that his education in China consisted of one year spent at 'the Soo Chow University, near Shanghai'.[3] The Pittsburgh typed biography also places him at 'Soochow University', stating that his intention at the time was to become an architect. It seems unlikely that he actually graduated, and in 1924 (again according to the Pittsburgh typed biography) he travelled to the United States 'to learn something of American ways and

life and to continue his studying'. Soon after his arrival he was to enrol as a Master's student at the University of Washington in Seattle. In that era a large number of young Chinese were eagerly travelling overseas in search of a Western education, including some who chose to study art. Most students of art went to Europe, however, such as Xu Beihong and Lin Fengmian, two major figures in the reform of Chinese painting who had fruitful sojourns in Paris. While Teng was not alone in studying art in North America, he was the only recorded artist of that time to go there to study sculpture. Indeed, he was one of the earliest Chinese artists to study sculpture anywhere in the West.[4]

On finishing his Master's studies, which were undertaken with the supervision of Dr. Pratt, Teng taught at the University of Washington for a year (1927–28), making him perhaps the first Chinese artist to teach in a European or American university. In 1927 he is described in the *Seattle Star* as teaching a class in 'occidental art for the University Extension course'.[5] In 1928 the *Seattle Daily Times* described him as 'assistant this year to Prof. Walter F. Issacs of the University Art Department', adding that he 'came to the faculty last fall through a special petition of his summer students to have him teach them more'.[6] During this period Teng is reported by the *Seattle Daily Times* as having 'completed a sculpture in bas relief that is to be cast in bronze . . . and placed permanently in the entrance hall of the College of Mines at the University'.[7] This relief has not survived and even photographic evidence of it seems lacking. Indeed the only work of art by Teng that I am aware of as having been preserved in a North American public collection of any kind is a lithograph of unknown date (signed 'Teng Kwei') which has been in the collection of the Cleveland Museum of Art since 1941 (see Figure 40).[8] In this work, a landscape titled *Rain on the Yangtse, China*, Teng uses an abbreviated, sketchy manner which allows his printmaking medium to echo some of the qualities of Chinese brushwork. The subject too is reminiscent of the misty mountain and river scenery of Chinese landscape art, although the radical decision to add scored diagonal lines across the entire surface of the image to represent rain is reminiscent of an effect found in the work of certain Japanese printmakers. Utagawa Hiroshige's woodcut *Suhara* from *The Sixty-nine Stations of the Kisokaido* (1834–42) is an example of this cancelling effect, which remains rare outside Japanese art.

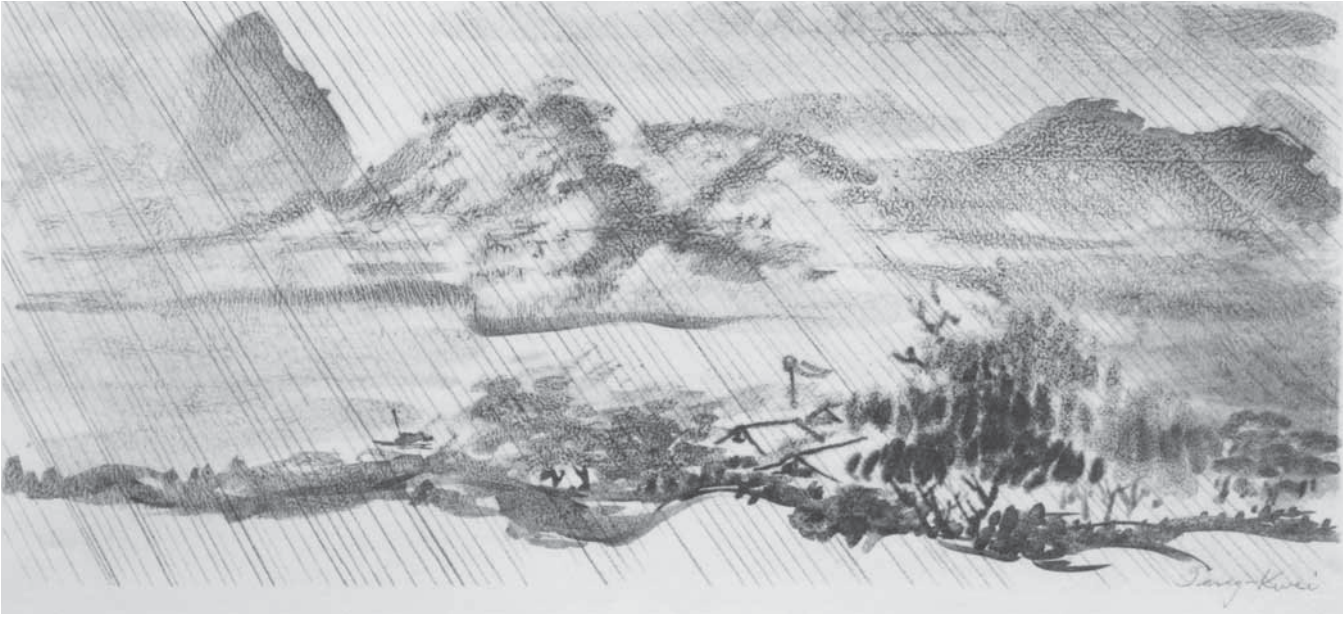


Figure 40
Teng Baiye, *Rain on the Yangtse*, China, lithograph. Collection of the Cleveland Museum of Art (Mr and Mrs Lewis B. Williams Collection, 1941.528). Photo courtesy the Cleveland Museum of Art.

In addition to his teaching at the University of Washington, Teng also lectured on the history and philosophy of Chinese art at various locations down the west coast of the United States. A contemporary printed document lists various topics he was prepared to lecture on, such as 'the history of Chinese art', 'the philosophy of Chinese art' and 'a comparison of Western and Chinese painting'.[9] Teng also exhibited his art works during this period. In 1928 he showed a room of paintings in Chinese media and style at the Henry Gallery (the art gallery of the University of Washington) in an exhibition which closed on 8 June, and held a further exhibit at the East West Gallery of Fine Arts in San Francisco (11–30 June). Both brush paintings and finger paintings were exhibited in both shows, and a brush piece was also hung at the Seattle Fine Arts Association's Northwest Art Exhibit. A price list that accompanied a letter of 1 June 1928 to Mildred Taylor, the director of the East West Gallery of Fine Arts, lists prices (before the vendor's commission is added) of between $30 and $500 for finger paintings, and between $50 and $250 for brush paintings.[10] Several of the less expensive finger paintings are marked as sold, and in addition to the total of 35 pictures (with a total asking price of $3,920) there are a number of reproductions of his paintings indicated for sale at fifty cents or less.

Several finger paintings, a recognized but relatively uncommon tendency within Chinese painting of which Teng was something of a specialist, were reproduced in the Christmas 1928 issue of a Seattle publication the *Town Crier* (see Figures 41, 42 and 43).[11] The illustrated works consist of one landscape (*Storm*), one figure painting (*Tranquility* — which had been the most expensive painting in the aforementioned price list), and three studies of birds (*The Flight*, *Peacock* and *Cock and Family*). Despite the absence of the brush — a tool of central importance for both calligraphy and painting in

Figure 41
Teng Baiye, *Tranquility*, 1928 or earlier.

Figure 42
Teng Baiye, *Peacock*, 1928 or earlier.

Figure 43
Teng Baiye, *Cock and Family*, 1928 or earlier.

China which has changed remarkably little through the centuries — these paintings still broadly share the emphasis on spontaneous linearity which characterizes so much Chinese ink painting, and the casual observer would not be able to tell that the ink has been applied directly with the fingertips.

The *Seattle Daily Times* claimed that Teng was one of only three nationally-known finger painting artists in China (noting in passing that several of his works had been sold to local collectors), and reproduced a picture of Teng posing with one of his paintings as if demonstrating the finger painting method.[12] More detail of the technique was given in the *San Francisco Examiner*, which stated that those who had viewed the artist at work reported that:

> the painter dips his finger in water and quickly outlines his design on the paper. After this, he goes over it swiftly with his finger, which has been dipped in Chinese ink. The finger nail is used for the finer lines.[13]

The *Seattle Star*, which also offered a picture of Teng with one of his works, said Teng taught himself the technique whilst in Shanghai, and made the surprising claim that the artist's sense of touch was so sensitive that he could name shades of colours with his eyes shut, simply by putting his fingertips on them.[14] It recorded Teng explaining that a good fingertip painting takes about ten minutes to make and quoted him as saying that he encourages his students to work quickly as well, spending more time on thinking than doing. A tantalizingly brief introduction to Teng's artistic philosophy at this early date is given in a quotation in which he contrasts Eastern and Western art, criticizing the latter for its realism: 'Occidental art is not so picturesque', he says. 'This is the mechanical age. Artists make paintings exactly as things look, instead of getting the romantic angle. People will soon tire of this too realistic age and turn to the Oriental art'.

At the end of his year of teaching at the University of Washington Teng travelled to New York, via Chicago. The *Seattle Daily News* recorded that 'today he received a special invitation from the Department of Fine Arts, New York University, to come there to study in the fall', and that offer may explain his choice of destination.[15] The newspaper added that 'The Music and Art Foundation is planning a large tea in the young artist's honor', giving evidence of the esteem in which he was obviously held. It is not

known whether he did indeed study at New York University, although it seems unlikely, but the typed biography of Teng in the University Archives of the University of Pittsburgh states that he exhibited his finger paintings and sculpture at the Weyhe Gallery in New York, which specialized in prints. He was also one of the artists featured in a 'Group Exhibition of Paintings, Sculpture and Drawings by American and Foreign Artists' held at the Brooklyn Museum between 1 June and 1 October 1929.[16] According to a report in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* for 11 January 1930, he also exhibited a room of his ink paintings at the Fifty-Sixth Street galleries in Manhattan at that time.[17]

In the same year as he was included in the Brooklyn Museum show Teng was also to put his sculptural skills to work helping Dwight Franklin create a diorama with wax figures depicting 'Marco Polo before Kubla Kahn' in the Brooklyn Children's Museum (see Figure 44). Such dioramas were of course very common in museums at that time, and Franklin (who was well known for this type of work) constructed a total of twenty-seven displays between 1928 and 1932 for a History Room at the museum.[18] Each diorama appears to have been about two-foot square in size, and a broad range of subjects were covered, from cavemen to the conquest of the air. Teng's name is mentioned only in relation to the Marco Polo diorama, an illustration of which appears in the March 1930 issue of a Brooklyn Children's Museum publication, *Children's Museum News*, where it is singled it out as 'one of the most beautiful of the models in the new history room'.[19] Clearly Teng's cultural background as much as his sculptural abilities would have made him a valuable collaborator, and he is mentioned by name in the photo's caption.

After his spell in New York, Teng was to go north to Boston, where he undertook graduate work at Harvard University. He is reported in Chinese sources as having completed a doctoral thesis the topic of which was the investigation and criticism of Chinese cultural relics overseas, and a 29 December 1929 letter from Teng gives his address as 10 Trowbridge Avenue, Cambridge.[20] While Teng is indeed recorded by Harvard as having been a student there between 1929 and 1932, the university records do not show that he completed his dissertation or received his degree. According to a January 1934 report in an English-language Shanghai

newspaper, the *North-China Herald*, Teng's time at Harvard was sponsored by the Harvard-Yenching fellowship, and this is confirmed by the Pittsburgh University typed biography, which places him at the Harvard School of Fine Arts from 1928 to 1931.

During his time at Harvard Teng was to design the 'Chinese Room' in the University of Pittsburgh's Cathedral of Learning, which was begun in

1926, with plans for a number of ethnically-themed classrooms being laid around the same time (although the dedication date was 6 October 1939). A typed letter of 29 December 1929 from Teng concerning the classroom was addressed to Dr. C. F. Lai.[21] In it Teng proposes 'Chinese characters' as the theme although his ideas developed in a different direction as planning progressed. Between June and August 1931 (according to the Pittsburgh typed biography) Teng 'supervised the execution of work on the China Memorial Room . . . making every effort with a staff of Chinese assistants to complete as much of the painting, modelling and carving as was possible before his departure for England', and a 19 January 1931 letter from the architect Henry Killam Murphy, also involved in the project as consulting advisor, to C. C. Mitchell, the Nationality Rooms head, mentions Teng's anxieties concerning the expenses he was running up as a result of his work on the project. Murphy, whose firm had offices in both New York and Shanghai, was responsible for many architectural projects in China which combined a concern for modern Western knowledge and Chinese architectural language.[22] Murphy may have been responsible for involving Teng in the project, perhaps meeting him in New York. Given Teng's early interest in pursuing a career in architecture, it is not even impossible that the two men had already encountered each other in China, during one of Murphy's many visits.

Figure 44
Dwight Franklin (with Teng Baiye), diorama titled 'Marco Polo before Kubla Kahn' installed in the Brooklyn Children's Museum, New York. Photo courtesy the Brooklyn Children's Museum, New York.

A photographic record of several sketches by Teng have survived in the University Archives of the University of Pittsburgh which show various suggested designs for the Chinese Room (see Figures 45 and 46). An early sketch, for instance, shows a blackboard designed as a Chinese mirror. In the final version of the room, which survives today, the main focus is a portrait of Confucius incised on slate, based on a rubbing taken from a stone tablet that had been erected near his grave in Shandong province. (Confucius was born in Qufu, in what was then the State of Lu, but is now Shandong). In the centre of a panelled ceiling there is a golden five-clawed imperial dragon, while the entrance door has a stone frame carved with plum blossoms. Stone lions stand guard on either side.[23]

During his time as a student at Harvard Teng was to have an exhibition of his work at the Twentieth Century Club on Jey Street in Boston, which ended on 16 May 1930. According to a report in the *Harvard Crimson*

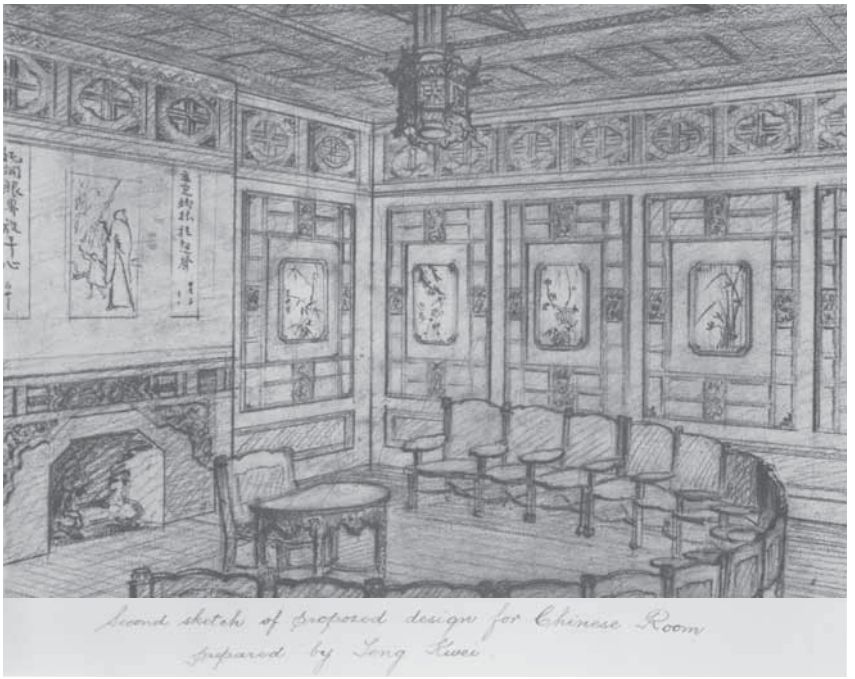


Figure 45
Teng Baiye, second sketch of proposed design for the Chinese Room in the Cathedral of Learning, University of Pittsburgh. Photo courtesy University Archives, University of Pittsburgh.

Figure 46
Teng Baiye, perspective of second design for the Chinese Room in the Cathedral of Learning, University of Pittsburgh. Photo courtesy University Archives, University of Pittsburgh.

for 30 April 1930, which described Teng as presently being a graduate student in the field of fine arts from the Harvard-Yenching Foundation, the exhibit contained forty paintings and drawings.[24] A report of 25 February 1931, also in the *Harvard Crimson*, noted that Teng would be speaking, apparently on that day, at the first of six Studio Salons to be held in the studio of Miss Evangeline Walker at 2 Holyoke Street. His topic was given as 'The Background of Chinese Art'.[25] During his Boston years Teng was also to have a solo exhibition of paintings in Chicago. This was held by the Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago between 1 and 11 November 1930, and Teng gave a lecture about his work at the Renaissance Society in connection with his exhibition at noon on 12 November. The anthropologist and sinologist Berthold Laufer (1874–1934) gave a lecture on Teng's work at noon on 1 November. Laufer, who was a curator at the Field Museum in Chicago, may perhaps have been involved in enabling Teng's exhibition. Amongst the works exhibited were *Russian General*, *Three Ducks*, *Dragon Head*, *Figure Striding*, *Winter Evening*, *Contemplating Nature*, *The Judge (Owl)*, *After the Rain*, *Bamboo* and *Willow in Wind*. Not long after this Teng had a further opportunity to show his work in Chicago: his lithograph *Rocky Landscape*, listed as No. 31 in the catalogue and priced at $20, was included in the Second International Exhibition of Lithography and Wood Engraving at the Art Institute of Chicago, which took place between 4 December 1930 and 25 January 1931. In the Third International Exhibition (3 December 1931–24 January 1932), held at the same venue, he exhibited the lithograph *Water Buffalo*, which was listed as No. 19 in the catalogue and priced at $10.[26] In October 1932, Teng's *Spring Blossoms* was included in an exhibition titled 'Flowers and Still Life' at the Art Gallery of Toronto, which was described as circulated by courtesy of the College Art Association, New York. This work, priced at $10 and listed in the catalogue as No. 87, is marked as loaned by E. Weyhe (of the Weyhe Gallery in New York), and Teng is erroneously described there as being Japanese.[27]

Following his time in the United States, Teng travelled to Europe for several months. In the spring of 1931 (according to the Pittsburgh typed biography) he had been 'appointed head of the first Department of Fine Arts at Yenching University, Peiping [as Beijing was then known]', and a travelling fellowship from Harvard to support his European trip was intended to help him further prepare himself for this important position.

Although his exact itinerary remains largely unknown, it is possible he spent some time in London since we know from the 30 April 1930 and 25 February 1931 reports in the *Harvard Crimson* that he was already at that time a fellow of the London-based Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (the society's own records confirm this claim). We do know that Teng travelled to Paris, though, since he visited the American critic Walter Pach there, and stayed for a while at the home of the mother of Edward Twitchell Hall, who at that time was only seventeen years of age but was later to become a well-known anthropologist. Hall's home was on the Left Bank in what he describes in his autobiography, *An Anthropology of Everyday Life: An Autobiography*, as being in 'a semi-industrial neighborhood not too far from the famous Café du Dôme where all the artists and intellectuals hung out'.[28] Teng, who Hall refers to in his autobiography as 'Teng Quay', appears to have stayed at some time in the late autumn of 1931. Hall was left to cope with the house guest on his own (with the help of a maid) since his mother and her partner had left for a visit to the United States before Teng's arrival. Hall did not form a favourable impression of Teng or feel that they had much in common. He writes: 'I can't say that I ever really understood Quay except that his sense of values was completely different from my own'.[29] He notes that Teng was contemplating the possibility of staying in Paris rather than returning home to take up the position waiting for him at a university in China.

Following his European visit, Teng appears to have returned to China and perhaps taught at Yenching University in Beijing as planned. However, the Pittsburgh typed biography (which seems to date from 1932) notes 'recent reports' that the university had closed in order that all students might be trained for military service, and so far no record of Teng's name can be traced in the relevant documents of Yenching University from that period.[30] In an article published in December 1933 Teng is still described as attached to Yenching University,[31] but in early 1934 he is reported as giving a lecture course at the University of Shanghai.[32]

Even after his return to China Teng persisted with a task he had begun in the United States — interpreting Chinese art for an English-speaking audience. He delivered a lecture to the Royal Asiatic Society in Shanghai in May 1934 on bamboo as a subject in Chinese painting,[33] and this lecture

was to be written up as an article under the title 'Bamboo and Bamboo Painting' in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, North China Branch (Shanghai)*.[34] The text, which was illustrated with a finger painting of bamboo by Teng himself, stresses the important role bamboo painting played in the history of Chinese ink painting. For Teng, bamboo:

> not only serves as an independent subject, but also as a link between calligraphy and painting, and as a point of departure from the ancient and mediaeval, elaborate brush painting to that of the idealistic school which still flourishes in modern times.[35]

Bamboo painting is presented as the paradigmatic subject of ink painting for two reasons. Firstly, because:

> in painting bamboo no painter can hide a feeble hand, a wavering brush or lazy stroke, for its peculiar nature frankly tells everything and strikingly reveals every trick. Only the most powerful masters can paint bamboo with success.[36]

Secondly, because it requires a greater effort of visualization than other subjects such as landscape or the figure where 'the painter may proceed with a general conception in his mind and work out its composition and the details as he goes on'.[37]

In January 1934 Teng had also given a lecture to the Shanghai Art Club, and on this occasion the subject was 'Expressionism in Chinese Art'. Although this lecture does not seem to have been written up as an article, a fairly detailed report of it is given in the *North-China Herald*.[38] This report also notes that Teng had just been engaged by the club (which had recently moved to new quarters on Avenue Joffre) as an instructor in Chinese painting and Western sculpture. It was announced that he would be giving classes every Wednesday afternoon from three to six. A more recent Chinese secondary source claims that during this time he set up his own art school, the Baiye Sculpture and Painting Institute (Baiye diaosu huihua guan), and that he lectured at the Shanghai Art Academy.[39] This latter school, run by the pioneer art educator Liu Haisu, was Shanghai's most well-known art education institution of the Republican era, and perhaps the single most important non-governmental art academy in the country (the nearest state-sponsored institution to Shanghai was at Hangzhou).

An examination of Teng's writings will give us an understanding of his approach to art as he was elaborating it in the period immediately after his return from the West. In his lecture on bamboo painting mentioned above, Teng comes across as a supporter of literati painting values (he himself uses the term 'idealist' to describe this elite aesthetic which privileged displays of character through spontaneous and foregrounded brushwork by gentlemen amateurs over more detailed attempts at representations of the world such as those which professional painters might be expected to produce) and the evidence of his own paintings tend to give weight to such a view. He should not be seen, however, as some kind of unthinking traditionalist who has managed to remain blind during his years overseas. His view of the future direction of Chinese painting was based upon an informed understanding of the nature of Western art and its philosophical underpinnings. Aware of developments in modern Western art as well as of its earlier achievements, Teng seems to have gained a confirmed faith in the possibilities of his own native traditions from the time he spent overseas.

Even in his essay on bamboo painting Teng utilizes a concept from Western painting theory to characterize his subject: he describes the work of the Yuan dynasty masters as showing a 'powerful calligraphic *expressionism*' (p. 61). The use of this term in isolation might appear to be without significance, were it not that he had chosen to deliver a whole lecture on the theme of 'Expressionism in Chinese Art' earlier in that year. In the published account of that lecture there is no indication given as to whether he mentioned the expressionist art of Europe, but his characterization of Chinese painting as 'merely suggestive' leaves room for us to think he may have been drawing parallels with Western modernism's movement away from illusionism.[40] Certainly he was not the only painter in early twentieth-century China to see parallels between Chinese traditions and certain tendencies within Western modernism.[41]

In a 1933 essay titled 'Art in Modern China', which appeared in the Chicago-based publication *The Open Court*, Teng does make two specific and explicit parallels between Chinese art and Western modernism.[42] He writes: 'Like the Impressionists, Chinese artists paint the atmospheric effects of rain, mist, storm, and sunset in the landscape, instead of the

landscape as it appears to most eyes' (p. 489). Referring to a more recent movement of Western modernism, and discussing the representation of birds in flight, he claims that 'not unlike the Futurists in the west, Chinese artists paint the flight instead of the birds only' (p. 489). That this remark can be taken as having some relevance to his own art practice is underlined by the reproduction of one of his own paintings (*Flying Geese*) on the first page of the essay (p. 479). Teng says of this painting that 'In the portrayal of the flight of wild geese . . . their speed is clearly felt and their calls can still be heard' (p. 490). Teng also refers to the two other paintings by him reproduced with this essay, *Landscape after the Rain* and *A Chicken Family*. The latter work (which is in fact the same as that reproduced as *Cock and Family* in the *Town Crier*, and may possibly also have been the work exhibited as *The Family (Chickens)* in Chicago) is described as eschewing outer realism, since it doesn't show 'each feather or any other anatomical detail which means labour rather than art to those who really understand painting' (p. 490).

Although Teng may have found certain things in Western modernism to confirm the aesthetic he had derived from Chinese painting, this does not mean that he endorsed that modernism in a wholesale manner. In his 'Expressionism' lecture, for instance, he is reported as saying that 'the modern art of Europe is too intellectual, with an over-emphasis on form, disregarding texture and losing all sentimentality'.[43] When it comes to discussing Western influence on present-day Chinese art, as opposed to describing parallels and differences between the two traditions, he speaks out against the effects in no uncertain terms. In 'Art in Modern China' he notes that 'profuse Western influence is not wanting in China today'. He feels however that:

> very little good work is seen. Chinese artists who are working in this Western style incidentally learn the worst from the West. In Shanghai one can find all sorts of foreign arts ranging from the primitive to the ultramodern. (p. 494)

It is not just in relation to art that Teng considered the Western influence as negative in effect, but in other areas of life as well:

> Girls from good families dance to jazz music; boys wear tailor-made suits . . . smoke Luckies, read the Saturday Evening Post, and play a

> good game of golf. Hu Shih [Hu Shi, 1891–1962] advocates China's adoption of Western civilization since he has much confidence in both the automobile and the Chinese people. I fear the coming of a "monkey" civilization since I have not enough confidence in either. (p. 494)

It was perhaps the possibilities he felt the Chinese ink painting heritage still offered, allied to his awareness of the changes that were occurring within Western modernist art (and the ways in which those changes often made it more analogous to certain tendencies in Chinese art), that enabled Teng to have an influence on a Western artist looking for something new. This artist (as previously noted) was the American painter Mark Tobey, who played a highly significant role in the development of abstraction which occurred in American painting following the Second World War and whose art showed a deep interest in Chinese and Japanese art and philosophical thought. Teng appears to have offered Tobey his first significant encounter with this new world and thereby opened up a whole new direction in Tobey's art.

Tobey seems to have met Teng in Seattle not long after the latter's arrival in the city, although the exact date is not known. The *Seattle Daily Times* mentions on 18 May 1928 that 'Mark Tobey, Seattle modernist, has been one of Dun's guides', and a photo of Teng with brush and palette, and inscribed to Tobey with the date 16 December 1926, has also survived.[44] This latter document offers us a definite date by which they must have met. In 1929 Tobey was to accompany Teng on his trip to New York City, so the American phase of their contact continued even after Teng left the Pacific Northwest. Most importantly, at some time in the 1920s Teng gave Tobey lessons in Chinese brushwork, and these lessons were to prove the starting point of a transformation in the style of his painting which, although slow in coming, was eventually to be far-reaching.

The effect of the lessons was so great because Tobey was imbibing not just a technique or a style but a way of looking at the world. We can see this in Tobey's statement about an experience he had after a session with Teng: 'I came out and I saw a tree and the tree was no longer a solid'.[45] The dynamic linearity of Chinese brushwork had been a means for Tobey

to become acquainted with the philosophical world views of Buddhism and Daoism, which emphasize process rather than substance, and this had (almost literally) provided him with a new way of seeing things.[46]

Tobey visited Teng in Shanghai in 1934, staying with him at 364 Rue Lafayette — now Fuxing Zhonglu — in the French Concession (an area of the city where its cosmopolitan flavour was particularly felt), and so was able to continue to explore Chinese art with Teng's help in a more conducive environment. Teng took him to meet an unidentified fellow artist of Tobey's own age who invited him to lecture to his students (with Teng translating), and he attended performances of the famous actor Mei Lanfang. Teng also took him to visit the gardens of his native Suzhou, and to an art exhibition in which a private collection of painting, calligraphy and ceramics was being put up for sale. A planned visit to Beijing was abandoned because of fears that the journey by train might not be safe. Whilst in Shanghai Tobey attended an art school (perhaps Teng's own) where he studied calligraphic brushwork as a formal discipline — some examples of his work (which Teng apparently told him were equivalent in grade to three years' practice) are preserved in the collection of the Dartington Hall Trust, Devon, England (see Figure 47).

In a letter written from Shanghai Tobey expresses the idea that its lack of concern with solid mass is one of the main features which distinguishes Chinese art from Western: 'The Chinese are not figure or nude conscious', he states.[47] He was to develop this idea in later, more considered statements such as the following from 1958: 'In a broad comparison between Eastern and Western art it could be said that in the East artists have been more concerned with line and in the West with mass'.[48] Such ideas would certainly be a response to his personal experience of Chinese brushwork, but it appears from the evidence that Teng not only gave him the introduction to that experience but also the intellectual context within which to interpret it. This can be argued by pointing to the similarity of Tobey's comparison to that made by Teng in his 'Expressionism in Chinese Art' lecture, given in the same year as Tobey's visit. Teng states that 'in contrast to Western art, Chinese painting is lineal . . . whilst Western art is the massing of different colours to make a form'.[49]

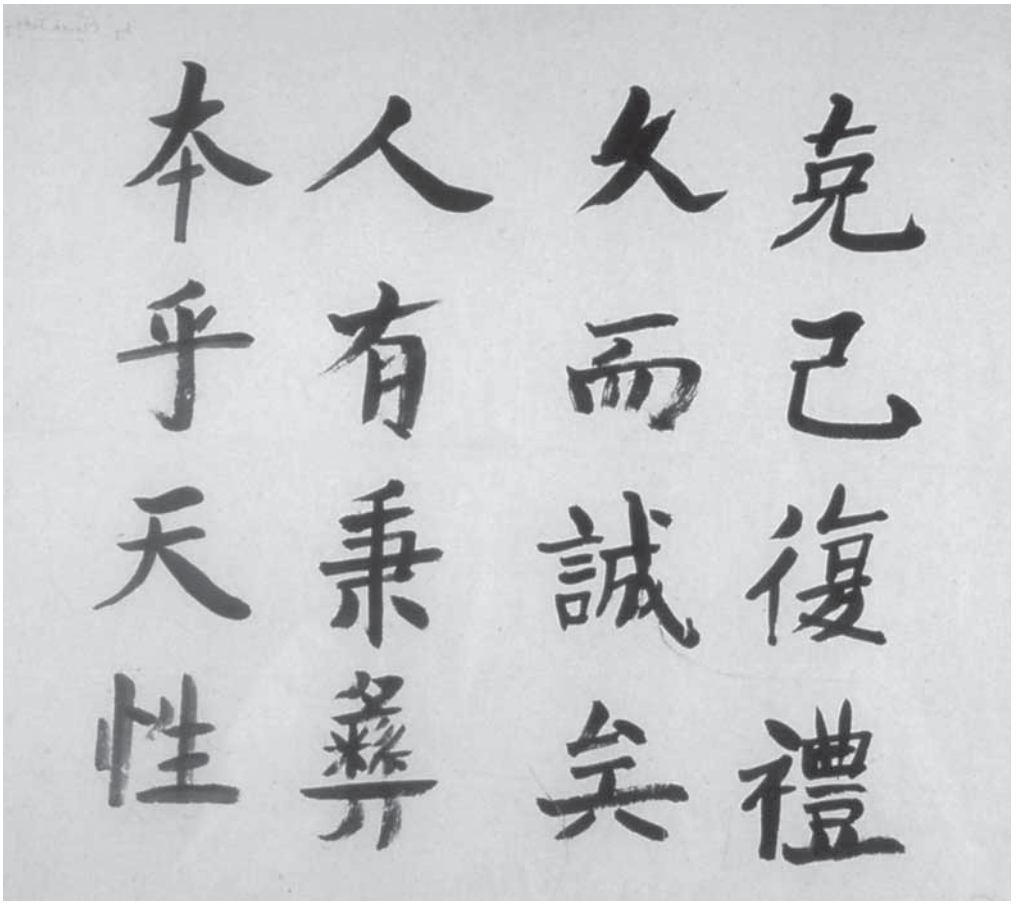


Figure 47
Mark Tobey, *Chinese Characters*. Collection of the Dartington Hall Trust, Devon, England (DHT.319/8/2). Photo by permission of the Dartington Hall Trust. © 2011 Estate of Mark Tobey / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Further parallels can be found between Tobey's statements and points made by Teng in that lecture. In the diary notes Tobey made during his 1934 trip to China and Japan he writes disapprovingly of the Western attitude to nature, and man's absorption in the world he has made to the exclusion of the natural one, with 'thousands of things of our own invention occupying us'. Nature, when it does intrude, is taken for granted, the animal life of the countryside being 'more or less accepted as a matter of fact'. Zoos represent for Tobey the conquered nature preferred by modern man: 'In cages of our own making and set apart we can visit the animal life — mostly the ferocious kind which it took valour to capture'.[50] Teng, in pointing to the close study of nature made by the Chinese, distinguishes their approach to it from this Western attitude of mastery:

'they realized that they were only a small part of this realm, and not the conquerors of nature, as the Greeks had believed'.[51]

At one point in the lecture Teng talks about the Chinese artist's attitude towards the object he is painting, and makes a point which recalls the statement by Tobey quoted above about looking at a tree. Teng is reported as saying 'When a Chinese artist paints a tree, he must absorb its feeling and have it penetrate his head and eye, mind and heart'.[52] Possibly Teng made such a remark to Tobey when he was teaching him Chinese brushwork — certainly it is the case that in his 'Art in Modern China' essay he repeats a point made earlier to Tobey. Here he argues that 'in China there is no such thing as a "still-life", and dead fish certainly do not interest our artists as they do our Western colleagues, for a dead fish must be made alive in painting'.[53] In the diary of his East Asian travels Tobey recalls an earlier conversation with Teng in which his friend asked (with reference to still-life painting) why Western artists only choose to paint a fish after it is dead. According to Tobey, Teng went on to characterize still-life as 'a rather dead way of looking at life'.[54]

This last anecdote shows that Teng was undermining Tobey's concern with static mass at the level of subject matter as well as at the level of style, and it was actually whilst he was in Shanghai that Tobey began to discover an alternative kind of subject matter, one which would allow him to express in his art the new understanding of the world in terms of process or dynamic interconnectedness that he was coming to favour. This subject matter was both drawn from his Chinese experience and at the same time without precedent in Chinese art.

The new subject matter I am referring to is the dynamism of the modern city. Such subject matter appears in a number of Tobey's paintings, but it is first seen in *Broadway Norm* of 1935, a work in tempera on board completed soon after his trip to China and Japan, and which has now sadly been destroyed. In this abstracted image all solidity of form, all sense of mass is abolished in favour of an imagery of flux. A linear style is adopted, and the work has an 'all-over' quality, with similar basic formal units being repeated across the painting surface, knitting it together and preventing any single static focus of attention from emerging. This 'all-over' format

appears again in Tobey's later works in a more developed form, often without any reference being present to the urban subject matter of the paintings in which it was first developed. *Written Over the Plains No. 2* of 1959 (tempera on paper, Seattle Art Museum) is a good example and here the brushstroke betrays a clear indebtedness to Chinese painting traditions, the source of Tobey`s interest in the linear. Such an 'all-over' format becomes common in American abstract art, and is found (pre-eminently) in the mature 'poured' work of Jackson Pollock. However, even Pollock's foremost champion, the critic Clement Greenberg, agrees that Tobey was the first artist to introduce this format into painting.[55]

It can be argued that the imagery of urban dynamism which Tobey develops is a direct response to his experience of the bustling street life of Shanghai. In 1951 Tobey described that city in the following way, drawing attention to its dynamic nature:

> Thousands of Chinese characters are twisting and turning, in every door is a shop. The rickshaws jostle the vendors, their backs hung with incredible loads. The whole scene is alive in a way Broadway isn't alive . . . the human energy spills itself into multiple forms, writhes, sweats, and strains every muscle towards the day's bowl of rice.[56]

Tobey here chooses to point out the differences between Shanghai and Broadway, the New York avenue, and thus appears to be making a statement which is in contradiction to the proposition that *Broadway Norm* was based on his experiences of the Chinese city. However, it is ultimately of greater importance that he considers the two cities comparable in the first place, that he considers them within the same frame, and in any case in his East Asian diary notes of 1934 (which predate that statement) he chooses to emphasize the similarities between Shanghai and New York rather than the differences.

In a letter of April 1934 Tobey exclaimed about Shanghai: 'the language, the beautiful character writing, the unconventionality of life everywhere — God! I wonder what I can do about it'.[57] Rather than referring to calligraphy as an art form, in this statement Tobey is instead talking about the calligraphic signs which lined the streets of the city. In the statement quoted above where Tobey mentions 'thousands of Chinese characters . . . twisting

and turning' that same signwriting is again being referred to, but so (because of the double meaning of the English word 'character') is another aspect of the urban environment, the moving human figures. It is almost as if Tobey, in a verbal description of the city, has given a clue as to how this new subject should be portrayed. Such an analogy between human figures and lines is one which he could have gotten from Teng, who is reported, in his 'Expressionism in Chinese Art' lecture, as having 'dealt with lines, comparing them to all types of human beings, some muscular and powerful and abrupt, and others showing the signs of decadence'.[58] Indeed, when Teng proposed 'Chinese characters' as his initial theme for the Pittsburgh Chinese Room he was perhaps already making a punning reference to both Chinese writing and the famous characters of Chinese history.

In presenting Teng's views on art I have so far described him as an artist aware of developments in modern Western art but basically determined to work within Chinese painting traditions, a path not dissimilar to that of certain better known twentieth-century Chinese artists such as Huang Binhong or Pan Tianshou. There is one area of his work where the latter characterization must be qualified, however, and that is in relation to his sculpture, the very area in which he chose to gain a training whilst in Seattle. Whereas the literati painting traditions that Teng most admired held a high cultural status in China, the same was not true of sculpture. Despite the enormous richness of Chinese material culture, the making of three-dimensional artefacts did not have any of the cultural prestige enjoyed by painting and calligraphy, perhaps because of the amount of manual labour it inevitably entailed, and thus there was no direct native precedent for a fine art sculptor to follow. While Teng decried the wholesale adoption of Western modes by Chinese painters, distancing his position from that of the many Shanghai artists who were experimenting with oil and canvas during the 1920s and 1930s, he himself turned to Western realist modes in his own sculptural output.

Although the number of sculptors engaging with Western modes in early twentieth-century China was far exceeded by the number of painters engaged in an analogous enterprise, there were nevertheless several other sculptors active at the same time as Teng. Amongst this first generation of Chinese sculptors can be counted Li Jinfa, Jiang Xin, Zhang Chongren,

Hua Tianyou, Liao Xinxue and Liu Kaiqu, all of whom studied in Paris (or in Zhang's case Belgium), and several of whom returned to China in the 1920s or 1930s.[59] All favoured an academic realism rather than the modernism which attracted certain of the Shanghai-based painters of this time, and this relative conservatism can be partly explained by the reliance of sculptors on commissions (and thus on the vagaries of public taste) to enable them to bring their work into existence. While a painter could produce a stack of unsold modernist canvases, it would be altogether more expensive for a sculptor to accumulate a series of unsaleable bronzes. The tendency for full-scale figurative sculpture to find its home in more public environments than most paintings would also have been an inhibition to experimentation. While a great many Chinese painters of the 1920s and 1930s displayed an interest in the female nude, sculptors would be unlikely to have had the same freedom to do so.

Our first-hand knowledge of Chinese sculpture from the pre-revolutionary period is relatively scarce, and so far as is known none of Teng's sculptural works have survived, despite the claim by a Chinese source that his work was once to be widely found in Shanghai and Nanjing.[60] Given the prolonged period of turbulence caused by the war of resistance against Japan and the subsequent civil war (not to mention difficult times after the founding of the People's Republic in 1949), this is hardly surprising. We can only, then, reconstruct his output from what fragmentary textual records remain. Like other Chinese sculptors of that time his chief output seems to have been portraiture, the type of sculptural output for which one might have expected the greatest demand. In addition to whatever private commissions may have come his way, however, Teng also used portraiture as a means for presenting nationalistic content. In 1935 the Nationalist government, then based in Nanjing, held a competition for a sculpture of Sun Yatsen, the widely revered founder of the Chinese Republic. Teng participated, and his entry was to gain second place. Two photos were published in the press of Teng's bust of Sun Yatsen, one of which shows the artist himself dressed in jacket and tie and standing beside his sculpture.[61]

Nationalistic content is also present in the case of another of Teng's sculptures for which a published photo exists, a full-length figure of

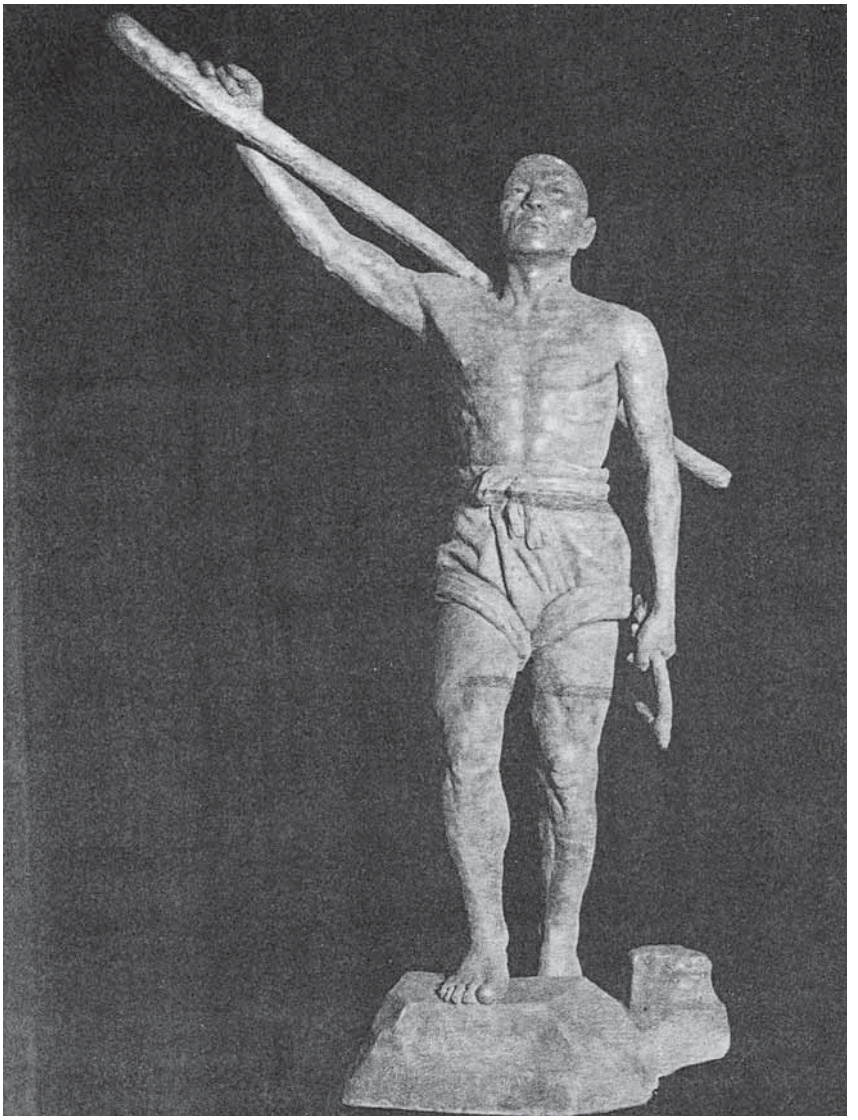


Figure 48
Teng Baiye, *Progress*.

Confucius (of unknown scale).[62] Perhaps a little more ambitious in conception is another full-length figure, *Progress* (*Qianjin*), which depicts a labourer with what seems like a carrying pole (see Figure 48). Although representation of the nude human body was (as previously noted) more problematic for a sculptor than a painter, on account of the more public nature of the medium, and its sheer physicality as an object in the three

Figure 49
Teng Baiye, finger painting exhibited in the Second National Exhibition of Chinese Art, Nanjing, 1937.

dimensional world, Teng here finds a narrative excuse to portray a partially clothed figure. In representing this male figure as stripped to a pair of shorts to undertake strenuous work, and as too poor to even have the benefit of a pair of shoes, Teng was able to create plenty of opportunities to display his skills at representing human anatomy. The title introduces a more symbolic dimension to the work than might otherwise be apparent, especially since poverty and progress don't immediately seem compatible. The figure is however stepping up onto a higher surface (which conveniently provides a base for the sculpture), so the implications of the title are embedded in the work itself. Again with *Progress* nationalistic meanings seem present: the work appears to be expressing a hope that China, at that point in history in a state of weakness, would be able to move forward through its own perseverance. Such a nationalistic meaning would be particularly apposite, since *Progress* was exhibited in the Second National Exhibition of Chinese Art, held under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, Nanjing, in 1937.[63] Teng himself acted as one of the exhibition's jury members. The government, and not just artists, was attempting to use art as a means of nation-building, and the creation of such public opportunities for the display of art which was attempting to position its viewers as national citizens was crucial. As well as exhibiting a

sculpture, Teng was also represented elsewhere in the exhibition by a finger painting depicting ducks on water (see Figure 49), and his persisting interest in this medium is further evidenced by a short article he wrote about this genre of painting in the avant-garde art periodical *Yi Feng* (*Art Wind)* only two years earlier in 1935. A painting by Teng, *Three Geese*, was reproduced in the same issue (see Figure 50).[64]

Figure 50
Teng Baiye, *Three Geese*, finger painting, 1935 or earlier.

The year of the Second National Exhibition of Chinese Art, 1937, was also the year of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, which marks the beginning of the Japanese invasion of China. Nanjing was taken with great brutality in December 1937 and Chiang Kai-shek was forced to move his capital inland to Chongqing. All possibilities for a normal artistic life in Shanghai were now lost (that city having fallen to the Japanese in November 1937), and the more immediate question of survival came to the fore. Large numbers of refugees were on the move, and Teng was amongst those who left the coastal region. He is described as living in Guilin, Chongqing and Chengdu during the war years, and by his own account went to Guilin during the summer in which the war broke out, staying there till 1 March 1938.[65] After that date he seems to have moved to Hankou, where at one time the Chinese were attempting to make a new government base, giving up his artistic endeavours to engage in refugee relief work.

A letter from Teng to Mark Tobey survives from this Hankou period, giving us a snapshot of his thinking at this difficult time in his life.[66] Since it is the first and last such personal document to have survived it will be worthwhile quoting from it here at some length for the insights it gives into

Teng's character. Teng says that he 'answered the call of the Government to start refugee industrial work' in the camps:

> In three months I established eight factories in which most needed supplies are made for soldiers in the front — shoes, towels, socks, uniforms, soap, medical cotton, gauze, etc. The work has proved to be successful and I am asked to enlarge the institution ten times. My formula is now 'give me 25 dollars and one refugee, I shall feed him [for] a year with 50 dollars in his pocket and 25 dollars return back to the original giver at the end' . . . Now you may well picture your friend as a busy man doing something of real value to his government.

The sentiments which had led Teng to create art works with nationalistic themes were now engaging him directly in the patriotic war effort. Under the auspices of the New Life Movement (from whose headquarters Teng wrote his letter) he seemed to have found a renewed sense of purpose. Despite noting 'I am constantly visited by bombs from airplanes' Teng writes that he is 'well and sound', and has his wife and one of his two children with him. He adds:

> In spite of the war I feel nothing happier in my life because I know China is doing something to show the world that the Chinaman is not so easy to be knocked out of the ring and on the contrary she is even better fitted to survive than she was left alone. Iron becomes steel after nine times firing. All Chinamen are in the belief of win the war and I am the strongest believer.

Following the defeat of the Japanese invaders, which was only to come at the end of the Second World War, open conflict between the Nationalists and the Communists again broke out, leading eventually in 1949 to the founding of the People's Republic. The latest contemporary reference to Teng as an artist comes in the *China Art Yearbook for the Thirty-Sixth year of the Republic of China*, which was published by the Shanghai Municipal Cultural Movement Committee in 1948 in the very last days of the pre-Communist era.[67] Following this date we have only secondary sources on which to rely for information about Teng, but he seems to have played a less active role as an artist in his later years. His association with the Nationalist government would not have counted in his favour after 1949, and during the Cultural Revolution period he was to suffer quite

severely. His paintings were denounced as spiritual pollution, his overseas connections brought suspicion on him, and as a result he was forced to do manual labour. Sadly, during this period his wife divorced him, perhaps wishing to publicly distance herself from her disgraced husband from a motive of self-preservation, as was sometimes the case in the highly-charged political atmosphere of that time. Only after the fall of the Gang of Four in 1976 did Teng recover his freedom, apparently enjoying health and vigour until the last few months of his life. He died in the winter of 1980 after being confined to bed following a fall that summer.

Teng's life was marked by the major events of twentieth-century Chinese history. Born as the century opened, he played an active part in the process of cultural renewal that was a major theme in China during the twentieth century's early decades. His sojourn in Seattle, and his sophistication in handling both Western and Chinese cultural knowledge, gave him valuable resources with which to contribute to the task of assimilating lessons from elsewhere while building a national culture. Tragically, the Japanese invasion and the subsequent civil war thwarted his artistic efforts just as they were starting to come to fruition. While he, like many others, found a renewed sense of national purpose during those difficult years, albeit outside the field of art, the unsympathetic cultural environment of the years that followed never let him renew his artistic endeavours. The long period of relative cultural closure that China endured under Mao made it impossible for this cosmopolitan figure to display his full potential, and like others of his generation he was not able to take advantage of the economic and social liberalization China has seen in recent decades. In this present era of openness a whole new generation of Chinese artists have travelled overseas to study and exhibit. When celebrating the possibilities of this era of globalization it is not without value to recognize how globalized the cultural connections of a much earlier era could be. In the case of Teng Baiye, at least, those connections were furthermore a two-way affair, with both the American and Chinese cultural environments being in some way transformed as a consequence of his considered attempts at mediation.

Part II

Imported genres

3
Iconicity and indexicality: The body in Chinese art

In this chapter I consider the place of the body in Chinese art.[1] I begin by identifying in a somewhat schematic way various defining characteristics of literati painting and calligraphy, the art of the social elite in pre-modern China.[2] I then consider, with greater historical focus, the moment when a distinctly modern visual culture, drawing self-consciously on Western sources, appears in China. I see this latter art as modern in a way that is specific to the Chinese cultural context — it directly counters certain key qualities of the dominant inherited tradition, particularly through its emphasis on the represented female body, and thus cannot be seen simply as a mimicking of European modernism. My primary tool in making a contrast between aspects of literati painting and calligraphy and certain tendencies in Chinese artistic modernism is a semiotic one. I am reliant in particular on Charles Sanders Peirce's distinction between iconic and indexical modes of signification, that is, between signs which refer by means of a supposed likeness to their referent, and signs which refer by means of an apparent contiguity to it.[3] I will be arguing that while evocation of the body was important in literati visual culture, this was achieved primarily by means of indexical modes of signification, whereas in early twentieth-century Chinese visual culture iconic modes of representation were to become dominant.

Indexicality and the sculpting of social space: Chinese literati painting and calligraphy

Pre-modern European painting can be broadly characterized as privileging iconic signs because of its concern to make the represented space and its occupants as immediately present to the spectator as possible. European painting between the Renaissance and the appearance of modernism commonly attempted to dissolve the painted surface and open up an illusion of a three-dimensional world as if it existed before the viewing eye, abolishing spatial and temporal distance. It achieved this denial of the gap between the moment of origin and the moment of reception by eliminating anything which draws attention to the body of the spectator, the space of viewing and the time of viewing. The spectator must be constructed as a disembodied eye able to comprehend the whole image as if instantaneously.[4]

Awareness of the body of the artist, and the time and space of making, must also be inhibited for this mimetic art to succeed with its conjuring trick of presence. The artist, like the spectator, needs to be reduced to an eye, and the act of painting must be construed as if happening outside duration. At the level of actual painting practice, this goal requires an emphasis on what Norman Bryson refers to as 'erasive' brushwork, that is, brushwork which does not draw attention to the painted surface or encourage the possibility of its being read as a trace of the artist's hand.[5] We can characterize such brushwork as attempting to serve only an iconic function, and wishing to avoid being read indexically. Within mimetic painting indexical signs are disruptive of the illusion of presence: a trace of the movement of an artist's hand across the canvas is liable to bring awareness of the artist as an embodied being, of the process (the duration) of painting, and of the space of the work's making (that is, the space in front of the canvas as opposed to the space 'within' it).

Whereas indexical signs have to be suppressed or de-emphasized in European mimetic painting, in Chinese literati painting and calligraphy, by contrast, they are foregrounded. Brushstrokes are revealed *as* brushstrokes, as traces of the artist's hand, and in painting there has often been a preference for subjects, such as bamboo, which permit the legibility of individual strokes. Furthermore, an elaborate aesthetic context exists in

literati painting theory where these indexical marks are the subject of interpretation *as* marks.

In calligraphy, an art form central to literati values, the legibility of marks is at its highest level. Here we are able to read not just the individual strokes and the direction in which they were made, but also the sequence of their execution over time. This is possible not just because of the linear organization of writing, but also because of the conventional order in which the strokes of Chinese characters are written within any one script. This persistence at the level of form is paralleled at the level of technique and material, making it possible for a member of the literati to empathize with a piece of calligraphy produced even many centuries earlier. According to Lothar Ledderose this is indeed a major social function of calligraphy, enabling a felt cohesion within the cultured elite (who were characteristically both viewers *and* makers of calligraphic art) over space and time — despite factional rivalries and actual historical discontinuities.[6] Whereas in European mimetic painting the intrusion of indexical signs injures that art's ability to evoke the illusion of presence, in Chinese calligraphy it is the very existence of such signs which permits it. Only because Chinese literati brushwork allows its spectators to empathize with the artist as an embodied being can those spectators feel that the temporal and spatial barriers between viewer and maker are abolished. European mimetic painting seeks to hide the duration of making from awareness, but literati painting and calligraphy foregrounds the time of making, which the spectator, in the temporal process of viewing, can then retrace. A sense of immediacy is created: in the time of viewing one is as if looking over the shoulder of the artist as the brushwork is produced, recapturing the artist's movements from the traces they have left.

As well as emphasizing the time of making, literati painting and calligraphy also differs from European mimetic art in emphasizing the *space* of making. Even the paradigmatic space for the viewing of literati painting is analogous to the space of making, further encouraging an empathic engagement during the viewing activity. While European art has for a long time characteristically encouraged a ritually separate space for art (and different separate spaces — the studio and the gallery — for making and for viewing) a Chinese literati handscroll being viewed in the (private)

space of a scholar's study is not far from the kind of environment in which it was made. Not only is Western painting characteristically viewed in a ritually separate (and public) space but the etiquette requires that a ritual distance be observed from the image. At the preferred viewing distance the 'erasure' of brushwork is enhanced and the illusion of represented space made more convincing. A Chinese handscroll, by contrast, is — as the term suggests — to be handled: one can attain the bodily closeness to it enjoyed by its maker, unrolling it a part at a time to follow the artist's journey across the surface. The characteristic horizontal placement of the handscroll for viewing might also be taken as serving to undermine the illusion of represented space; for this particular genre of literati art at least, there is no analogy between paintings and windows at work as there so often is in the case of wall-hung Western paintings.

Although there is of course a represented space in a literati landscape scroll, for a variety of reasons it generally lacks the priority over the space of making enjoyed by the represented space of Western mimetic art. Partly this is to do with our inability — reading the scroll portion by portion — to take in that space at one go, and partly it is to do with the absence of a unified perspectival viewpoint. In the case of a piece of Chinese calligraphy, as opposed to a painting, there is no represented three-dimensional space at all to offer a possible counterweight to the emphasis on the space of making. It is as absent as the space of making in Western mimetic art. Characters, like letters, have no volume, no 'body', and therefore they suggest no space around themselves. One can imagine no side views, no alternative aspects, on these abstract forms.

Since calligraphy is often found on the surface of literati paintings, it provides another means by which whatever represented space those paintings do contain is devalued in importance. The brushstrokes from which the painted images are constructed become drawn, as it were, into the two-dimensional space of writing, to be considered in the same way as the calligraphic signs, as marks on a surface. That both written and painted marks are made in the same material (ink) with the same tool (the Chinese brush) of course helps the process of assimilating the one to the other. Chinese literati aesthetic theory has repeatedly affirmed the similarity of

writing and painting, thereby serving to underline further what technique already seems to declare.

The calligraphy in literati painting tends to be put on an area of the surface not already occupied by the painting's own brushstrokes. This practice can be partly explained by the obvious desire to maximize the clarity of both writing and painting. However, since the emptier areas of a painting also often tend to be the ones furthest away in the image's representational space (usually the sky in the case of a landscape), calligraphy in those areas is particularly effective in cancelling or inhibiting readings of deep space. This relationship between painted and written areas found its most fully developed form in the Qing dynasty, as Li Shan's *Ink Bamboo* hanging scroll (1749, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York) demonstrates.[7] A work by Zeng Yandong (Tseng Yen-Tung), reproduced as Plate 1 in Chiang Yee's *Chinese Calligraphy*, has writing completely surrounding a human figure.[8] This is something of an extreme case (although paralleled for instance by Jin Nong's *Buddha*, 1760, Tianjin Museum), but for that reason it offers a particularly striking example of the way calligraphy can condition our reading of space in a Chinese painting.

One should note that the calligraphy on literati paintings is not always by the artist or added at the time of the painting's making. I do not, however, consider this fact as undermining my argument since there are enough examples in which the painter *is* the calligrapher to support it, and because cases where this is not so provide evidence concerning the reception of such artworks that also helps my interpretation. They show how easy it was for the spectator to treat the surface of the painting *as* a surface. Those spectators who write on paintings or place their seals on them go even further than empathically identifying with the space of making, they actually in a sense visit or inhabit it themselves.[9]

A particularly vivid example of seals and inscriptions being added to a pre-existing work is the *Fengju Tie* (see Figures 51 and 52), a handscroll of three letters by Wang Xizhi in the collection of the National Palace Museum, Taiwan — although this is calligraphy rather than painting. Ledderose discusses the work and points out how the seals and inscriptions of various

owners and other connoisseurs, including emperors of both the Song and Qing dynasties, have accumulated over time on this handscroll.[10] Not only do such inscriptions attest to the ease with which their makers felt able to commune with the past, they also turn the work itself into a physical claim concerning cultural continuity for which it would be difficult to find parallels in European art.

Figure 51
Fengju Tie, detail from a handscroll of three letters by Wang Xizhi. Collection of the National Palace Museum, Taiwan, Republic of China. Photo courtesy National Palace Museum, Taiwan, Republic of China.

For an example of inscription on *painting* we can also consider the seals placed on a *Landscape* (National Palace Museum, Taiwan) attributed to Yuan dynasty painter Ni Zan (see Figure 53). Some are seals placed by connoisseurs in appreciation, others are those of the various collectors to whom it has belonged during its history. Prominent amongst these is the oversized seal of the Qing dynasty emperor Qianlong, placed at the top centre. The relative crudity of this particular addition to the work perhaps betrays more clearly than is usually the case something of the power relations which are always involved in these communions with the past. From the point of view of the present such a piece may serve as the bearer of a myth of seamless cultural continuity, but from the point of view of the individual making the brush or seal mark on the painting's surface that act is an attempt to claim legitimacy, to produce (under the guise perhaps of homage) the sense that tradition has led up to oneself.[11] A similar process can also, of course, be at work in the painted images themselves. The painter one is communing with may himself be communing with, or paying homage to, the style of an earlier artist.[12] Like the consciously classical European artist, according to Norman Bryson's understanding as argued in *Tradition and Desire*, the literati artist must avoid being simply swamped by tradition, must contest it and appropriate its power for himself whilst appearing rather to respect it, or even to submit to it.[13] Rupture must be presented as return, the move forward taken under the protective banner of (one's own chosen version of) the past.[14]

Figure 52
Fengju Tie, detail. Collection of the National Palace Museum, Taiwan, Republic of China. Photo courtesy National Palace Museum, Taiwan, Republic of China.

Although there are parallels, my understanding of literati brushwork differs from Bryson's understanding of European neoclassicism in that I do not see the issue involved as simply one of *artistic* power. That an emperor can also be a participant in the practice already makes that point clear, but it is not so much that collectors, and not only artists, are players in the game as that in literati brushwork the positions of

Figure 53
Landscape, attributed to Yuan dynasty painter Ni Zan. Collection of the National Palace Museum, Taiwan, Republic of China. Photo courtesy National Palace Museum, Taiwan, Republic of China.

maker and viewer (or owner) are not anywhere near as distinct as they typically are with European art. A fluidity between these different positions (both actual and empathic) is a differentiating quality of the practice itself, allowing it to fulfill its role of helping to bind the social elite together, or (to put the point more strongly) helping to constitute that elite, to sculpt out a 'private' social space (both literally and metaphorically).[15]

Iconicity and visual modernity: The nude in early twentieth-century Chinese painting

Given the particular differences of Chinese literati painting and calligraphy from European mimetic painting that I have attempted to clarify (albeit somewhat schematically) by means of a taxonomy of spaces, times and bodies, and given (following Ledderose) the social function that its particular qualities help literati brushwork fulfill, one might surmise that there would be particular resistances to an incorporation of aspects of European mimetic painting within Chinese literati painting. Resistances at a systemic level, that is, which might inhibit the adoption of certain traits of European painting more than others. Significant features of European painting would have no place within literati visual culture, would find no point of purchase within it — but by the same token, if those features were adopted by a practice which wished to challenge literati cultural values, they would provide a resource which would oppose those values at almost every significant point.

To take one example, we might expect that a focus on the represented body (so common in European mimetic art) would be particularly difficult to assimilate within literati traditions since it would offer a counterweight to the focus on the body of the artist. From this perspective it is not so much that a Chinese painting practice influenced by European painting would be introducing a focus on the body absent in literati painting, but that it would be offering a challenge to literati painting by focusing on an alternative category of body from the one with which that practice was already deeply concerned.[16]

To narrow the focus down further we could consider images of the female nude. Perhaps this type of represented body has been the most

difficult to assimilate into Chinese painting, not just because the symbolic meanings it has in the European context are lacking (this would be true of other non-Western art contexts as well), but because of the particularly disruptive effects that would follow from an intrusion of a female image into the patriarchal process of communing with the traces of the masters' hands. The interest which so many Chinese painters of the early part of the twentieth century who were engaged in exploring the possibilities of European artistic media and styles displayed in the theme of the female nude must, I feel, come from their intuition that it is in some sense a 'radical' or 'modern' subject in the Chinese context, for reasons other than its mere intrinsic novelty.[17] One would be underestimating the importance of what was taking place if one were to label these Chinese artists as 'backward' for only just having become interested in a theme which has been problematic in Western art at least since the time of Manet's *Olympia*. Such a manoeuvre would be a misconstrual of cultural differences as stages of development in an ethnocentrically conceived, linear model. Of course, to say this is not to claim anything concerning the quality of the images involved (which varies immensely), nor is it exactly to present them as 'feminist' art, although there is perhaps something to be learnt by Western feminism from the analysis of a visual culture which has sustained patriarchal structures without significant recourse to iconic representation of the female body.

A survey of periodicals and books published in China during the 1920s and 1930s demonstrates the popularity of the female nude as a subject during this time.[18] Reproductions of images of the female nude by Chinese painters working in a style clearly influenced by European art are readily found. Female nudes by European painters, and (to a lesser extent) Japanese painters are also frequently reproduced. Taking the category of female nudes by Chinese artists for examination we find a general tendency to represent the nude in a way which draws attention to the mass or the space-occupying volume of the figure. By this means the emphasis on the represented body which the theme of the nude introduces is further accentuated. It is also underlined by the insistence of most images that the nude body is the subject in its own right, rather than simply a carrier of complex mythological or allegorical schemes of meaning. As much as by the matter-of-fact treatment of the nude in the images themselves, this is conveyed by the choice of titles: we characteristically encounter

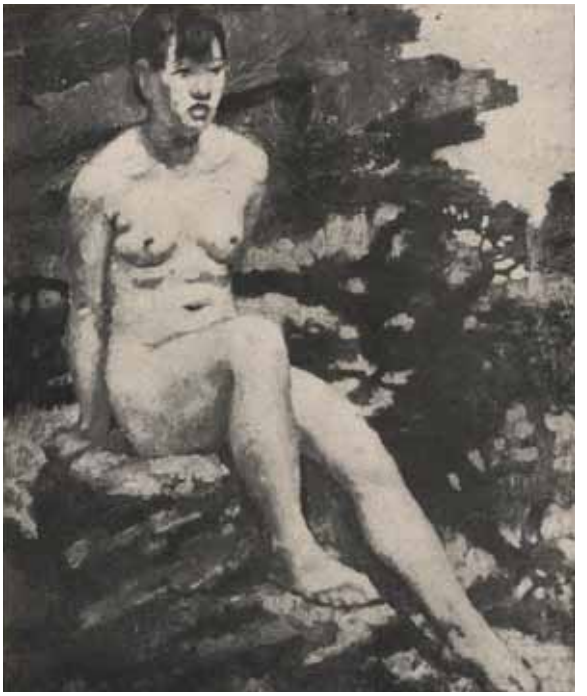


Figure 54 (left) He Tingyao, *Human Body*. Present whereabouts unknown.

Figure 55 (right) Yang Jianhou, *Daydreaming*. Present whereabouts unknown.

not, say, *The Birth of Venus* but *Human Body* (*Renti*)[19] — for example in works by He Tingyao (see Figure 54)[20] and Zhu Shijie. A variety of static poses predominate, further helping to focus attention on the body itself. Movement would have the effect of drawing attention from the actor's body to the action, possibly introducing narrative interest and the opportunity for character to be displayed. Where an activity can be attributed to a static nude figure it tends to be either the activity of reverie, or the activity of posing. The former, seen for example in Yang Jianhou's *Daydreaming* (*Xia si*), emphasizes the body since it presents the mind as somewhere else (see Figure 55).

There are many works which depict figures posing in a way that makes conscious reference to the context in which these nude images were produced. Paintings by Chen Shiwen, Lu Sibai (see Figure 56), Gu Rucheng (see Figure 57) and Zhou Xijie (see Figure 58) can stand as examples. To use a model (*moter* is the equivalent term in modern Chinese) to make an image of a model — as opposed to using a model to make an image of, say, a bather, as appears to have been the case with Hu Yiwen's *Woman by the*

Figure 56 (left) Lu Sibai (title not known). Present whereabouts unknown.

Figure 57 (right) Gu Rucheng, *Human Body*. Present whereabouts unknown.

Riverside (see Figure 59), for instance, or Zhou Bichu's *Evening Glow* (*Wanxia*) (see Figure 60) — is to introduce a reference to the space of making. But to refer to the space of making *within* the represented space is very different from the encouragement to empathically identify with the space of making which I have argued literati painting offers. Indeed, the reference to a particular type of art production space which is distinctly different from that employed in literati practice explicitly lays bare for examination the departure from the literati paradigm.

The new type of art production place is the studio, and whether this is the private space of the professional artist's workroom or the more public space of the classroom, it differs from the literati scholar's study. It is a ritually separate space dedicated to the making of visual art, and not to the viewing of it. Representing a nude model not only invokes this

Figure 58
Zhou Xijie, *Study*. Present whereabouts unknown.

Figure 59
Hu Yiwen, *Woman by the Riverside*. Present whereabouts unknown.

Figure 60
Zhou Bichu, *Evening Glow*. Present whereabouts unknown.

autonomous space for art production, it also alludes to a particular process of art-making which takes place in such a space — namely, working from life — and to a particular (consciously innovative) method of art education which involves such a process.[21]

To point out the extent to which the genre of the nude is in opposition to all aspects of literati art practice one could make a comparison with the case of calligraphy. If the nude is the genre which most requires working from life, this perhaps places it at the farthest remove from calligraphy, a genre in which copying the masters is the *only* possible avenue for training. In respect of this genre it is not even possible to conceive of working from life rather than from tradition, of working from a female model instead of modelling yourself on a male precedent. The same orientation to the past is there whether one is working from a copybook (*tie*) containing reproductions of free-brushed works by great masters, or working from calligraphy carved on an ancient stele; whether one is making a freehand copy (*lin*) or self-consciously producing a work in a particular master's style (*fanggu*).[22]

If we turn our attention to the historical evidence available concerning the reception of Western-influenced Chinese art we find that the nude was indeed a major focus of the debate and friction such consciously modernist art evoked. Attacks were made on paintings of the nude, on the use of nude models in the education process and indeed on the models themselves. An exhibition held in 1915 by the Shanghai Art Academy, which included drawings of draped models, was denounced by a school principal.[23] In 1926 the Academy's principal Liu Haisu was also at the centre of a row with the warlord Sun Chuanfang concerning nude models. Sun had banned their use, and Liu chose to debate the issue with him in the pages of the press.[24] Lin Fengmian had a similar public row concerning the use of nude models with Liu Zhe, the minister of education.[25]

Further evidence that the nude was particularly problematic in the Chinese context can be obtained from a variety of sources. A 1927 cartoon from *Annals of Shanghai* (*Shanghai Chunqiu*) comments on public incomprehension of the practice of using nude models by showing a crowd staring into an art studio where a naked female model is

Figure 61
Cartoon from *Yi Feng*, 1935.

nonchalantly smoking a cigarette. A 1935 cartoon in *Yi Feng*[26] shows a crowd of people — some dressed in the Western style, some more conservatively — in discussion before an exhibited female nude painting (see Figure 61). A photo in another contemporary publication of a nude model in a studio at the Shanghai Art Academy bears the caption in

English *Victims to Art*; whilst a film of the same year by the Great Wall Motion Picture Company, entitled *Resurrection* (*Zaisheng*), seems to have been about a painter of nudes.[27] The concern of the authorities is displayed not only in their attempts to control the use of nude models in the Shanghai Art Academy, but also in a ban on the use of nude paintings as book cover illustrations.[28]

In Chinese periodicals of the 1920s and 1930s there was often discussion concerning the nude and the representation of the human body generally. The articles (by Ni Yide, Zhang Jingsheng, Yu Jifan and others) in which this discussion is to be found should be interpreted in relation to the broader debate over the value of study from life.[29] Commonly, as in articles by Wang Yachen, Yu Jianhua, Jing Youlin and Lin Fengmian, study from nature and copying are presented as directly opposed methods.[30] The latter is regarded as having become the norm in Chinese painting, and is seen as deadening in its effects on creativity. Jing Youlin makes this point most strongly, stating that even the work of someone who has mastered copying is comparable to the display of a corpse.

Whereas the practice of literati painting and calligraphy had taken place largely within the private social spaces of the pre-modern elite, the modernist art practice to which the paintings of the nude belong was occurring in a more public realm. Broader socio-economic changes were, of course, helping to bring this wider public realm into being, but the modernist artists must be given credit for actively responding to the changing situation, and using available public space to contest inherited conceptions of aesthetic value.[31] The debate took place, as the evidence introduced above demonstrates, not only within the narrower confines of specialist art magazines, but also in the broader social space of the public press. One reason, perhaps, why the nude became a key element in the debate was that it was an issue which could be a focus for discussion both in the more narrow attacks on literati artistic values (sometimes seen as overlaying an earlier more realistic tendency in Chinese painting), and in the more broadly framed (and largely pre-existing) disputes concerning 'Western' or 'modern' values on the one hand, and 'Chinese', 'Confucian' or 'traditional' values on the other.[32]

It is clear that the nude was liable to become an emblem of broader controversies, although it was more often its opponents, rather than the artists themselves, who were most explicit in linking it to larger social and political questions. Liu Haisu's use of nude models, for instance, is accused of being anti-Confucian, but (at least in the admittedly charged context of his newspaper debate with the authorities) he denies the accusation. In his published letters he is also careful to deny a link between artistic modernism and political activism (presumably because he thought it likely that such allegations might be made): he claims that his academy's students have never been involved in student movement activities. The accusation Liu seems to fear was to be made in the case of Lin Fengmian, another pioneer in the use of the nude in art education, about a year later. Lin, some of whose students had been arrested, was to be accused of encouraging Communist activities.[33]

Concerned more with establishing their own artistic autonomy and status (in contest with literati values), it would be a mistake to overemphasize the extent to which artists involved with the nude wished to place their art in the service of broader social and political goals, particularly leftist ones. In the case of Lin Fengmian, for instance, we do have evidence to document a relationship between artistic practice and a broader position, but it is to educational or cultural reform, rather than explicitly political positions as they are commonly understood, that we can link him. Lin played an important role in the reform of art education in China, being inspired by the philosophy of Cai Yuanpei, whom he knew personally. Like many intellectuals in China during the period following the modernizing May Fourth Movement, Lin placed great hope in educational and cultural means of revitalizing Chinese society, and looked to the West for resources. Art, taking over somewhat the former social role of religion, was to be a means of cultural revitalization itself, and not just a tool for other means of achieving this goal.[34]

Although its specific content remains somewhat difficult to decipher from the poor quality black and white reproductions which are all that remain of it, Lin's *Suffering* (*Tongku*) of 1929 (see Figure 62) deserves consideration as one of the most complex of the paintings produced in China during the

Figure 62
Lin Fengmian, *Suffering*, 1929. No longer extant. Reproduced with permission of Feng Ye.

1920s and 1930s which make use of the female nude. In contrast to the other images of the female nude we have considered, *Suffering* does more than present the nude in a static, narrative-free context. This relatively large-scale work attempts to go one stage further and mobilize the nude female body as a bearer of elaborated meanings relevant to the Chinese context at that particular moment in time. The language of bodily representation found in earlier Chinese art would have offered little by way of resources for a task of this kind, but because of his emphasis on direct observation and on representing bodies as physical presences in a convincing way, Lin is able to emphatically convey his charged emotional theme. He forces the viewer to confront suffering in all its concrete somatic specificity. A humanistic content that literati painting was not well fitted to convey is addressed to a wider audience than that art had previously attempted to interpolate, and one which was now being differently conceived. The nude becomes a bearer of explicitly public meanings of a national nature, and (to state the case more strongly) becomes involved in an open attempt to call a nationally-conceived public into existence.[35]

4
Abstraction and modern Chinese art

Linear stories of modern art's development have characteristically been formalistic ones, and although such narratives have not always treated abstraction as essential to artistic progress, they have generally given art that is abstract a central role to play. In particular, abstract art proved crucial to narratives that construct postwar American modernism as the inheritor of earlier twentieth-century European modernism, that serve to ratify American artistic hegemony. Such formalistic understandings are widely questioned today, and more meaning-centred and contextual approaches to art have allowed both a new appreciation of non-abstract art of the modern era and readings of 'abstract' works of art as bearers of meanings (even if sometimes that meaning is one of 'purity'). The mechanisms by which artistic hegemony is constructed have been examined, and the potential for a more pluralistic understanding of modern art now exists. To quite a large extent however, that potential has yet to be actualized, and the existing art historical literature of the modern period retains an almost obsessive focus on European and American examples. In this chapter I propose to take one small step towards widening the focus by examining abstraction from the perspective of Chinese art. To take such a deliberately oblique perspective on abstract art's history will I hope lay bare some of the cultural closures that are often found in discussions of artistic modernity, and offer a more globalized perspective than is frequently the case.

To look at the history of abstract art from the perspective of China is illuminating since the Chinese artistic response to the experience of modernity takes a radically different form from its European counterpart. European modernism was born in a crisis of representation which saw mimetic or illusionistic modes, current in some form or another from the time of the Renaissance, being fundamentally challenged and abandoned as no longer intrinsically truthful and inevitable. In China, however, one-point perspective and illusionistic representation had never had the same historical centrality. An awareness of the painting medium's own formal or expressive possibilities (which for European modernism came as a dramatic discovery, creating a rupture with inherited Renaissance paradigms) had been a commonplace understanding for Chinese ink painters over many centuries. Indeed, so different was the inherited visual culture of China from that of Europe that artists in China who were appreciative of Western modernism often commented on similarities with the inherited Chinese practice, and the very mode of representation that Western modernism was reacting against — namely realism — was itself often to function as a radical new import that could be used to create a rupture with the past in the hands of Chinese artists attempting revolutionary change in their country's art. The particular form which modernism took in Europe must therefore be seen as only one possible response to the experience of modern life, rather than as a standard against which art produced elsewhere should be judged.

Because there was no need in China to contest mimetic art's implicit claims to transparency of representation, there was no deep interest there in Cubism (the moment of illusionistic art's definitive overthrow in Europe), nor was there any felt need to produce an art which eliminated recognizable subject matter altogether. While it is possible to point to artists in China of the 1920s and 1930s who were interested in a diversity of European styles from academic realism to expressionism, one cannot point to artists who were interested in the work of the major European abstract artists. Abstract art did not really exist in China at that time — a developed modernist artistic culture existed, but one which had no place for abstraction. We do occasionally see examples of European abstract art reproduced in Chinese art periodicals — an example of Kandinsky's geometric abstraction can be found in *Yi Feng* (July 1935, p.104) for instance

— but this does not lead to a visual response by Chinese artists and only goes to show that the lack of such a response was not due to a simple lack of awareness about abstraction.

Following the 1949 revolution overtly modernist tendencies of any kind (within either oil or ink painting) were discouraged, and idealized realism became the dominant mode of image-making. Clearly state policy concerning the political role of art left no place for abstraction to develop within Communist China. In Hong Kong and Taiwan, however, the political situation was quite different. While the status of the Guomindang in Taiwan was analogous to that of the Communist Party in China and political pressures on cultural and intellectual life did exist there as well, obviously these were informed by different (and indeed almost antithetical) ideological premises. Unlike on the Mainland, there was a valorization of 'traditional' Chinese culture, of which the Guomindang presented itself as the guardian and the Communists as the destroyer, and which it promoted at the expense of indigenous Taiwanese culture and the traces of Japanese colonial influence. Similarly there was an openness to Western modernist culture, partly as a simple consequence of Taiwan's insertion in global trade networks, which contrasted so strongly with the Mainland's economic and cultural closure till the end of the Cultural Revolution period.[1]

Like Taiwan, Hong Kong saw a large influx of refugees as a consequence of the rise of Communism in China, but (because of the re-establishment of British colonial rule following the defeat of the Japanese) the Chinese cultural heritage was not called upon to play a major ideological role in the territory, and although many émigrés from the Mainland became powerful figures they did not constitute a unified political elite dominating the indigenous inhabitants. Perhaps even more so than Taiwan, Hong Kong became a city permeable to Western cultural influences. As a centre of entrepot trade, then of manufacturing (and more recently of financial services), it was the quintessential open city. While the Chinese cultural inheritance thrived in Hong Kong (largely undistorted in this colonial space by the need to bear the national political meanings imposed upon it in Taiwan) it was constantly confronted with and juxtaposed to aspects of Western culture. These were as likely to be American as British, and were

as likely to erode parochial British colonial frames as to entrench them, because of the wider frame of cultural reference they introduced.

Taiwan and Hong Kong were the largest Chinese societies outside of the People's Republic, and given the closure and political restrictions on art-making that prevailed in mainland China they were the only places (with the important exception of the diaspora) where inherited Chinese artistic practices were able to thrive with relative autonomy and to encounter Western modernist modes. It is not surprising therefore that both Taiwan and Hong Kong saw the development of an art which attempted to combine or bridge these two artistic tendencies. Such cultural interchange had already happened in Shanghai during the 1920s and 1930s, but this second phase of internationalism in modern Chinese art differed from its predecessor in that it was primarily within the genre of abstract art — previously not considered of interest by Chinese artists — that the encounter took place.

The choice of abstract modes of working was partly a response to the status attained within the international art world by Abstract Expressionism and subsequent American abstraction — the sense that such art stood for modernity in the 1960s and 1970s, and that any ambitious art must in some way come to terms with it. The hegemonic status of such American art, and the role of both artistic discourse and key institutions such as New York's Museum of Modern Art (with its international touring programmes of American art) in promoting that hegemony have by now been well documented.[2] What needs to be emphasized, however, is that it is not possible to simply talk of an Americanization or Westernization of Chinese art, to propose a straightforward model of cultural imperialism, or to characterize Chinese artists as belatedly attempting to catch up with a more advanced Western artistic culture. The hegemonic status of Abstract Expressionism was a fact, and one can document in certain works by Chinese artists (as will be demonstrated below) direct allusions to specific American sources, but one cannot understand those Chinese works without seeing that borrowed elements are given local or culturally-specific meanings, that they are changed, reconfigured, assimilated and even subverted in the process. The meanings of the works that will be discussed here are specific to the sites in which they are created, indeed are often

specifically concerned with issues of Chinese identity in the modern world, even as they are open to the art of a quite different cultural environment created with quite different thoughts in mind.

Although several of the works that will be treated here can be said to deal self-consciously and even anxiously with the question of how to assimilate or reference current Western signifiers of artistic modernity (to be works that are in some sense *about* the meeting of cultures rather than simply exemplifications of it), for the most part this art does not approach the kind of abjection in the face of valorized imported modes that can be found in certain cases of cultural encounter. One reason for this, which makes the case of the Chinese response to Abstract Expressionism particularly interesting to consider, is that certain resonances were felt to exist between the gestural brushwork of Abstract Expressionism and aspects of the inherited language of Chinese ink painting. Whereas earlier Western abstraction (particularly that of a geometric variety with its specifically European philosophical underpinnings) would have required Chinese artists to abandon most of their native resources if they were to engage with it (to pay a particularly heavy price of deracination as it were), the gestural marks of certain Abstract Expressionist paintings had a felt affinity with aspects of Chinese brushwork. The spontaneous, direct marks found in Abstract Expressionist works recalled (and helped encourage a new attention to) the traces of the artist's hand found in Chinese ink painting or calligraphy, and artists could respond to the challenge those American works offered using a medium with which they were culturally familiar and technical skills which they already possessed. Western modernism now appeared to have become less distant or different from Chinese modes of image-making, and Chinese artists may have also gained confidence in their encounter with it from an awareness that these Western artists themselves had often found inspiration in Chinese and Japanese art or metaphysical thought.[3]

Despite the perceived closeness of Abstract Expressionism to aspects of the Chinese brushwork heritage, the real differences which nevertheless remained between the two visual languages still needed to be visually managed by Chinese artists engaged in cross-cultural dialogue. Although some took advantage of the felt similarities of look and approach to try

to harmonize, elide or deny the differences that still existed, many chose to acknowledge their dual artistic debts openly and created works with some kind of marked hybrid quality. Hybridity of style is commonly associated with the postmodern moment in discussions of European and American art, with works such as David Hockney's *Tea Painting in an Illusionistic Style* of 1961 and *The First Marriage (A Marriage of Styles)* of 1962 amongst the earliest examples. For artists coming from outside the centres of Western cultural power but committed to engaging with international audiences and definitions of artistic contemporaneity, however, hybridity was an issue even in the production of modernist art. Juggling the need to produce images that would be legible within the international arena of contemporary art with the conflicting need to create works that asserted some kind of Chinese identity and connectedness to native visual languages, ambitious artists in Hong Kong and Taiwan had either to visually resolve and surmount the question of stylistic hybridity or else bring it out into the open and deal with it in its own right.

To exemplify the problem of referencing both Chinese and Western artistic languages I would like to consider *Zhuangzi* of 1974 (Hong Kong Museum of Art) by the Hong Kong painter Lui Shou-kwan (Lu Shoukun, 1919–1976, see Figure 63). Lui had been creating images that can be called abstract since the early 1960s, often producing works that can be understood as simplified renderings of landscape motifs (for example *Nature* of 1962 and *Dwelling* of 1963). Lui's works prior to that time reference the Chinese landscape (*shanshui*) painting heritage more directly, seeking a place within its lineage without also wishing to make a claim to modernity (except occasionally at the level of subject matter through somewhat tentative attempts at introducing references to the urban environment, see, for example, *Victoria Peak* of 1959). At a certain point however Lui shifted the balance that characteristically pertains even in the most individualistic earlier Chinese ink painting between our awareness of the depicted subject matter and of the brushwork itself in favour of the latter.

Zhuangzi perhaps represents the highpoint of the development of Lui's abstract style. There is no longer any reference to the landscape format which had enabled his initial moves towards abstraction and also gone is any marked suggestion of a three-dimensional space. The flatness of this

Figure 63
Lui Shou-kwan, *Zhuangzi*, 1974. Collection of the Hong Kong Museum of Art. Photo courtesy the Hong Kong Museum of Art.

image is more akin to that found in European and American modernism (and so fetishized by Greenberg), while also recalling the similarly depthless space of writing in Chinese calligraphy — although it should be noted that for Lui calligraphy itself did not provide the route towards an abstract language (unlike the case of another Chinese abstractionist, Zao Wou-Ki). The only form which can be said to be referential is the red element at the top of this particularly sparse work, which given the work's title can be taken as referring to the butterfly mentioned in a famous passage in the writings of the Daoist philosopher Zhuangzi.

The dualistic structure of *Zhuangzi*, with a small, relatively static red accent balanced above a larger, more active and spontaneous gestural area, is a compositional format that Lui uses with variation in a great many of his abstract works. Often the subject matter reference — present as here only as an allusion or trace — is Buddhist in nature, with the red dot perhaps readable in some works as a lotus blossoming above the mud of illusion, an established metaphor for enlightenment. Many works of this kind are termed by Lui his 'Zen' paintings (for example, *Zen #S-6* and *Zen #T-23*), and the direct spontaneity of his mark-making should be taken as inspired by the emphasis on sudden enlightenment in the Chan (or Zen) Buddhist tradition. While it is possible to find a precedent for this dualistic compositional format in certain of Lui's pre-abstract works (in *Evening Landscape* of 1962 for example the red form over a darker inky area is a setting sun), and while it is possible to liken the red accents in his work to the impressions of seals often found on the empty white areas of earlier Chinese ink paintings, the primary source for *Zhuangzi* is nevertheless the work of the American Abstract Expressionist painter Adolph Gottlieb. In his *Burst* series Gottlieb adopts the same dualistic structure as Lui, with spontaneous brushy areas being placed below more static ones. Other influences from Western abstract art can also be conjectured, since the broad brushstrokes in the lower area of the painting recall somewhat the work of Pierre Soulages, and in works which rely more on washed areas than brushwork one can see similarities with the work of Helen Frankenthaler.

Given the need to present his art as both Chinese and modern, the legibility of these Western references must not be too great in Lui's work. They

must be legible to some degree, however — must be readable references to the then-current international signifiers of contemporaneity and not just disguised 'influences' — and thus there is the risk that they will pull in the opposite direction from the signifiers of Chinese tradition which are also present in the work. These latter signifiers thus need to be anxiously insisted upon in a way that would not have been considered necessary in earlier Chinese art. The gestural brushwork is made more prominent than it would have been, is foregrounded by the work's abstractness almost as a fetishized quotation of the inkiness of ink painting, a reminder that a Chinese medium is being employed. The aforementioned reference to Zhuangzi is also a self-conscious allusion to Chinese tradition, a further saturating of the work with native references at the level of subject matter such as might not be expected from earlier Chinese art.

Like Lui, Taiwanese artist Liu Kuo-sung (Liu Guosong, b. 1932) produced works which attempt to be both modern and Chinese, and thus he also needed to avoid the danger of a collapse into deracinated mimicry on the one hand, or into an irrelevantly parochial traditionalism on the other. Adopting a confident tone when he wrote about this binary challenge in 1965, Liu stated that:

> 'Chinese' and 'modern' are the two blades of the sword, which will slash the Westernized and the traditionalist schools alike . . . By following nothing but the modern styles and forms of the West we lose our identity. We are neither ancient Chinese nor modern Westerners. If copying ancient Chinese paintings is forgery, so is producing modern Western paintings. Imitating the new of the West is no substitute for imitating the old of the Chinese. As a modern Chinese painter aspiring to create, one has to deliver a new kind of painting that has never been seen in the East or West, and which is unique to China.[4]

This search for an art that was both novel and culturally-situated led Liu, as it had led Lui, towards the abstract as a neutral arena within which to reference the inheritance of Chinese painting without being consumed by it. Like Lui he also made his way towards abstraction during the 1960s, with the first such paintings to show a signature style being produced in 1963 (for example, *Light Snow*). As his titles of this period indicate, he also paralleled Lui in finding a path to an abstract style through a schematization of the

inherited formats of Chinese landscape painting: the mountains, clouds and snow found in earlier Chinese art are obliquely alluded to, but not directly represented. Whereas Lui Shou-kwan's abstract style foregrounded brush gestures, as a way of marking a distance from tradition Liu tended to downplay linear brush marks. While retaining the balance of positive and negative space of earlier Chinese painting, and achieving a dynamic quality echoing that which earlier artists had attained through spontaneous brush marks, Liu sought other ways of generating forms. Producing results that sometimes recall the accidental landscapes produced by veining in slices of marble (which were treasured in the Chinese context well before the modern era), he focused in particular on generating textural effects (for example, by collaging fragments of paper onto the image surface on which he was working). One technique he made his own during this time was the creation of jagged white linear marks by the removal of fibres from the already-painted surface of a course-fibred paper.

Although successful in marking a distance from earlier Chinese art while simultaneously claiming a relationship to it, Liu may have felt this signature style of his did not establish a strong enough claim to international status, because by the end of the 1960s (following, crucially perhaps, an extended visit to the United States on a grant from the John D. Rockefeller III Foundation) he had moved towards a more openly hybrid style that involved a direct address to American abstract art of that era.[5] Remarkably similar to the format favoured by Lui Shou-kwan in works such as *Zhuangzi* in the way it involved a static, contained form over a more active, gestural area (and thus surely evidence of artistic interchange between the two artists), it nevertheless referenced hard-edged abstraction rather than the more vitalistic traces of Abstract Expressionism. In doing so, works such as *The Sun Is Coming* of 1971 (Hong Kong Museum of Art, see Figure 64) face the gap between Western and Chinese visual languages head on, deliberately choosing to engage in dialogue with aspects of Western art which do not have obvious resonances with Chinese modes of image-making. Whereas Lui Shou-kwan sought to deny any disparity of reference, Liu openly juxtaposes a hard-edged form that could have been generated with the aid of a pair of compasses with marks that still show the more gestural style he had found sufficient a few years earlier. At the level of subject matter there is also a less overt Chineseness to the image:

Figure 64
Liu Kuo-sung, *The Sun Is Coming*, 1971. Collection of the Hong Kong Museum of Art. Photo courtesy the Hong Kong Museum of Art.

we have moved from the misty mountain landscape format of earlier Chinese ink painting to a more cosmic content. Here the sun (and in other works the moon) enters the painting, and our viewpoint floats free from earth's gravity.

Perhaps one factor leading to the incorporation of references to hard-edge abstraction (albeit of a most generalized kind) could have been a perception that Abstract Expressionism was no longer at that point an up-to-date signifier of contemporaneity within the international artistic arena. Certainly Liu was not alone amongst Chinese modernist painters of that era in turning to hard-edged abstract forms in his art, despite their apparent incompatibility with inherited Chinese modes of image-making. The Hong Kong artist Hon Chi-fun (Han Zhixun, b. 1922) also made reference to such art, for instance, and sometimes combined circles and straight lines with more spontaneous marks that recall loosely the broken-ink effects found

Figure 65
Hon Chi-fun, *Flower and Message*, acrylic on canvas, 1986. Collection of Hong Kong Land. Photo courtesy the artist and Choi Yan-chi.

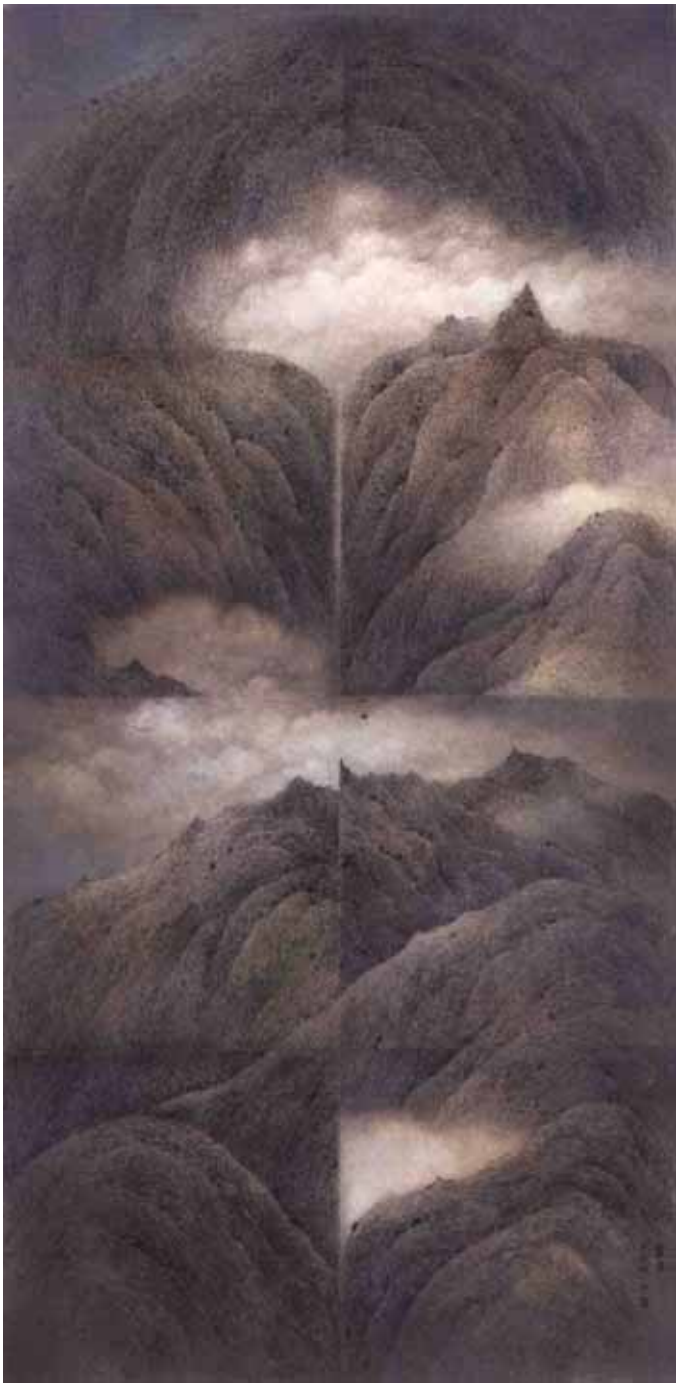
in certain classical Chinese paintings. Such stylistically-hybrid paintings include *Flower and Message* (1986, acrylic on canvas, Hong Kong Land, see Figure 65) and *Rising Light* (1987, acrylic on canvas).[6] Leung Kui-ting (Liang Juting, b. 1945), another Hong Kong artist, also juxtaposes geometric or hard-edged forms in his work with less defined ones. *Composite Assemblage IV* (1967), for instance, opposes forms which betray a debt to the language of American hard-edge abstraction with shapes which recall both Chinese calligraphic brushwork traditions and the art of Robert Motherwell and Helen Frankenthaler.

Another Hong Kong artist, Wucius Wong (Wang Wuxie, b. 1936), also introduces a geometric vocabulary into works which at the same time have more organic forms that are consciously reminiscent of Chinese landscape precedents. Perhaps even more so than Liu or Hon, Wong visually exacerbates the hybridity of reference which is there even in Lui

Figure 66
Wucius Wong, *Home Thoughts*, 1965. Collection of the Hong Kong Museum of Art. Photo courtesy the Hong Kong Museum of Art.

Shou-kwan's art, making it as it were the subject of his works. One of the earliest paintings by Wong to include geometric forms and more fluid marks together is his *Home Thoughts* of 1965 (Hong Kong Museum of Art, see Figure 66). Although rather different in style from his later signature work, this image is nevertheless somewhat revealing in that it not only juxtaposes geometric and fluid forms, but also English words and Chinese characters, thus foregrounding the issue of cultural clash quite directly. The particular words included within the painting space are the English word 'go' and two Chinese characters with a similar meaning, *wang* and *qu*. Since the painting was apparently created in Baltimore not long before Wong finished his study there and returned to Hong Kong, it can be conjectured to be autobiographical in nature, offering comment on a perceived sense of being torn between Western and Chinese cultural paths, or alternative choices about where he should base himself to continue his artistic career after graduation.

Such openly autobiographical content is not to be found in Wong's later work, and instead he turns towards the Chinese landscape heritage as a point of reference. An East/West dimension is nevertheless retained and a clash between the organic and the geometrical persists as a distinctive feature of his work. In paintings such as *Cloud Harmony No. 1* of 1978 (Hong



Kong Museum of Art, see Figure 67), geometric lines, with their association to Western modernist art or more generally to a 'Western' rationalism, fragment the forms of very 'Chinese'-looking mountain landscapes. A purely formal analysis of this hybrid style would be inadequate: instead we must see his work as thematizing a clash between East and West. The task of a painting like *Cloud Harmony No. 1* is to acknowledge the incommensurability of Western and Chinese cultural elements, but yet to ultimately harmonize them through some larger sense of wholeness. The harmonization — which in the culturally hybrid space of Hong Kong at the time must have seemed a pressing concern, and not simply in artistic contexts — comes by treating the different cultural references as binary opposites (with the West as the *yang* to a Chinese *yin*, perhaps) which somehow need each other to coexist.

Although it might seem strange to think of forms derived from geometric or hard-edged abstraction being interpreted within a Chinese philosophy of *yin* and *yang*, that does indeed

seem to be what was happening. Michael Sullivan, for instance, reports in *The Meeting of Eastern and Western Art* that he once heard in Hong Kong 'the dynamic confrontation of areas of pure colour in Hard-Edge painting interpreted as an expression of the interaction of opposites enshrined in the yang-yin concept, and kinetic art as an expression of the state of eternal flux that both Buddhists and Taoists see in the natural world'.[7]

Figure 67
Wucius Wong, *Cloud Harmony No. 1*, 1978. Collection of the Hong Kong Museum of Art. Photo courtesy the Hong Kong Museum of Art.

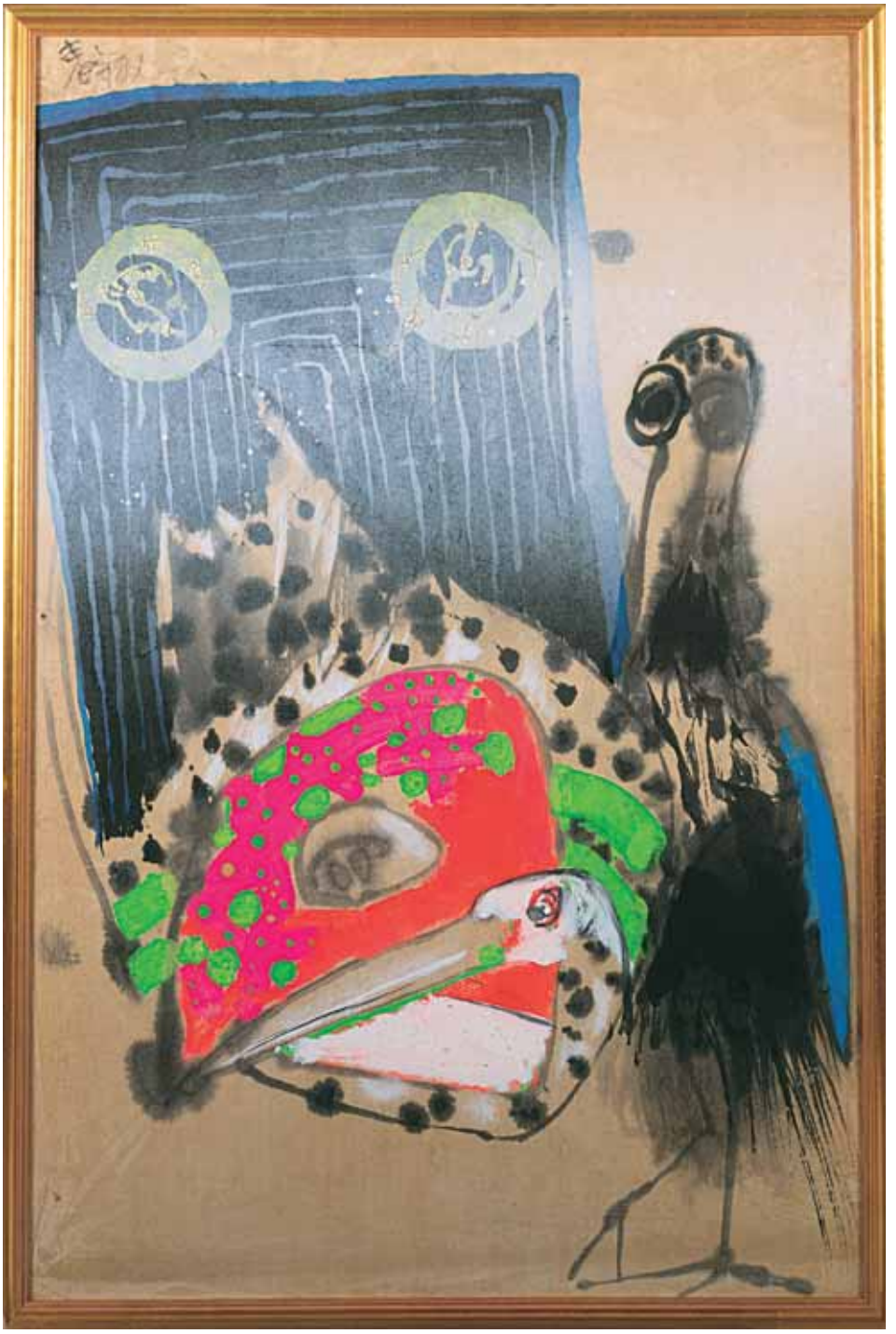
Such a neat and unproblematic solving of the problem of cultural hybridity as Wong's *Cloud Harmony No. 1* offers (which is obtained at the price of making modernity always something referenced through Western signifiers, with Chineseness only appearing in the guise of traditional references), is not found in the case of Chao Chung-Hsiang (Zhao Chunxiang, 1913–1991). Chao, whose work shows a much greater willingness to accept an overt heterogeneity of style than any of the artists so far discussed, had been a student at the prestigious Hangzhou Academy of Art, moving to Taiwan in 1948. In 1958 he made New York his home (after a period during which he spent some time in Spain and toured other parts of Europe), only beginning to spend more time in Taiwan again in the last decade of his life.

In his early years in New York, Chao's work was a kind of Abstract Expressionism with occasional hints of a Chinese flavour exploiting, like Lui Shou-kwan or other Chinese modernists such as the Taiwanese painter Chuang Che (b. 1934), the parallels between the gestural brushwork of such artists as Franz Kline (whom he had met) and the foregrounded linearity of much pre-modern Chinese painting. Perhaps he grew to feel that such an idiom was ultimately too 'Western' in feel, that it required a sacrifice of too much of his own cultural frame of reference in order to attain visual harmony, since he eventually moved to introduce recognizably Chinese elements more directly. Although he was to continue to produce abstract paintings in his later years, the presence of discernible imagery in many works of this period was an important aid to this more open evocation of Chineseness. Birds, fishes and bamboo (that most quintessential of Chinese literati subjects) all make frequent appearances in his later paintings, with perhaps the first of these three being the most prevalent.

Figure 68
Chao Chung-Hsiang, *Birds*, ink and acrylic on paper, c. 1979. Photo courtesy Alisan Fine Arts, Hong Kong.

This decision to employ subject matter familiar from earlier Chinese art was not a traditionalist turn by Chao, however, since such subject matter and the resources of the ink painting heritage he used to introduce it was allowed to coexist in his work with elements which openly invoked the Western and the modern. The spontaneous organic forms created with Chinese ink are juxtaposed to (and most often overlaid quite directly with) geometric forms which naturally invoke associations with Western abstract painting. The result is a deliberately hybrid quality, and a conscious dramatization of the disparity between Western and Chinese artistic languages which painters such as Lui Shou-kwan went to such pains to prevent. Such disparities were made evident within individual paintings at the level of technique, since Chinese ink was combined with acrylic, but it is at a formal level that such technical differences were exacerbated as the monochrome ink traces are characteristically found in conjunction with hot Day-Glo pinks and other equally strident colours. Because Day-Glo paint is associated more with commercial design than with gallery art, Chao can be said to have introduced a high/low as well as an East/West dichotomy into his works. No longer taking Abstract Expressionism as his only frame of reference for Western modernism, Chao seems now to be cognizant of Pop art's engagement with popular culture, and also (like Liu Kuo-sung and Hon Chi-fun) shows awareness of the early phases of American 'Hard-Edge' abstraction.[8]

Chao's use of geometric forms has been characterized here as connoting Western abstract art in a general sense, but sometimes the references are more specific: target-like forms in a number of works recall early Kenneth Noland paintings, while *Birds* of c. 1979 (see Figure 68) seems to openly quote Frank Stella's black stripe canvases (first exhibited in 1959). This inter-textual reference to one of the most anti-gestural groups of paintings one can imagine underlines that the East/West clashes in Chao's work are as much thematic as formal or technical. Alongside these references to hard-edge abstraction, references to Abstract Expressionism do still remain in Chao's later work, but he no longer uses its potential for blending Eastern and Western allusions. When splashed marks are added to his paintings (recalling the signature technique of Jackson Pollock), they can read as attacks on the existing image, as partial obliterations or cancellations, rather than as a completion of it in some ordinary sense



(for example, *Penetration* of 1989). Disparities between the two layers (the second of which may have been added at a later date) are emphasized at the level of both colour and technique, with dilute acrylic layers overlaying monochrome ink layers.

Dealing with the clash of cultures in his daily life, Chao seems to have decided to comment upon it in his art through this strategy of hybridization. The result is a body of paintings more raw and brash in feel than almost any other work that can claim inspiration from the heritage of Chinese brushwork. Chao's images are more double-voiced and conflict-ridden than, say, Wucius Wong's, more willing to take risks, to exacerbate discrepancies of visual language that are as much cultural as stylistic, and thus deeper than those which many Western postmodernists playfully employ. Attempting to wrest something of interest from the clash of cultures, they sometimes fall victim to it and end up exemplifying the dangers of cultural contact instead of celebrating its possibilities.

Amongst the major Chinese artists to engage with abstraction, perhaps the first and certainly the one most acknowledged in Western art historical narratives is Zao Wou-Ki (Zhao Wuji, b. 1921). Although initially trained at Hangzhou, like Chao, he moved to Paris in 1948, making the city his home from that time onwards. Zao had been working in a style influenced by Western modernists such as Matisse and Picasso even before he left China, and his early Paris paintings bear a strong imprint of the art of Paul Klee. By 1954, however, this artist who had arrived in the French capital around the same time as Sam Francis, Jean-Paul Riopelle and Pierre Soulages was producing abstract work. Benefiting from his close involvement with an art world in which abstraction was both understood and practiced, Zao's first non-figurative works nevertheless show no marked debts to the style of other abstract artists. Instead he seems to have turned primarily to Chinese sources, which his work till that moment had shown little engagement with. While he may have been inspired in part by the pictographic signs that can be seen in certain of Paul Klee's images, the abstract vocabulary of linear forms arranged vertically against a shallow, bare, unbounded space in works such as *Wind* of 1954 (see Figure 69) seems a direct response to Chinese calligraphy.[9]

Figure 69
Zao Wou-Ki, *Wind*, oil on canvas, 1954. Collection of the Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris. © Zao Wou-Ki / ADAGP, Paris — SACK, Seoul, 2010.

Paintings such as *Wind* should not be construed as evidence of a return to tradition or roots on Zao's part, since in the works which follow the reference to Chinese calligraphy becomes harder, not easier, to discern. Space becomes less flat in the canvases of the late 1950s and early to middle 1960s, less like the space of writing, and the calligraphic marks evolve into a lively choreography of gestural forms.

Although certain of Zao's paintings of this period can be read as abstracted landscapes, the association with this genre seems more explicit in works of the 1970s, such as *29.01.70*, *10.09.73* and *4.01.79*. Landscape associations are introduced in *29.01.70* by its horizontal format, and by the horizon-like distinction about three-quarters of the way up the image. In *10.09.73* we seem to see reflections of the rock or mountain forms indicated in the distance on the surface of a foreground expanse of water. In *4.01.79* brushstrokes across the middle of the painting seem to indicate cloud or mist in front of a range of mountains. These landscape associations help introduce a sense of space in the images: the reading of a horizontal water surface in *10.09.73*, for example, complicates our understanding of a form which might otherwise seem aligned vertically across the canvas surface. Landscape associations also introduce contrasts between solid masses and more fluid forms which the brush marks in themselves might not evoke.

The mountain and cloud landscape of *4.01.79* is reminiscent of classical Chinese landscape painting. Zao seems to be renewing dialogue with Chinese art here, and as with his earlier engagement with calligraphy, his use of the medium of oil paint helps him preserve his stylistic autonomy in the encounter. Once again, although an allusion to an aspect of Chinese art is present, Zao does not build upon this and actively strengthen a sense of 'Chineseness' in the works that follow. Indeed, direct allusions to any kind of landscape subject matter are harder to find: horizons and orientations to gravity become less distinct and a concern with spatial voids replaces allusions to solid masses. One could still read a more abstract work of this kind (such as *1.04.81*, see Figure 70) as referring to an atmospheric subject matter, but the reference is primarily to natural forces rather than natural forms. One senses a concern with creating visual metaphors for cosmogonic processes, and Zao is aided by a movement away from the brushed gesture. The obviously brushed mark is an index

Figure 70
Zao Wou-Ki, 1.04.81, oil on canvas, 1981. Collection of the Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris. © Zao Wou-Ki / ADAGP, Paris — SACK, Seoul, 2010.

of its author, forcing us to read the painting as a hand-made object, but by moving towards an employment of flows and splatters of paint in his later works Zao creates an illusion that the painting is a site where elemental forces contend directly. The artist seems no longer an active orchestrator, but instead, like the spectator, a passive witness to events that unfold according to their own logic.

Although Zao has produced paintings in ink as well as in oil, he only began this in 1971, when his signature mode was already well established, and then only in following a suggestion from his friend Henri Michaux, who

himself had a fascination with that medium. Many of Zao's works in this medium are not of the same quality as his oil paintings, and one reason for this might be that the medium of ink on absorbent paper offers too direct a relationship to a potentially overpowering tradition. Oil paint, because it introduces a distance from classical Chinese painting at the level of technique, enables engagement with other aspects of Chinese visual culture (such as its sense of empty space) without fear of being overwhelmed by it. While Zao's work shows nothing of the difficult binary quality of the other Chinese abstract artists I have been considering here — he was directly involved in the formative moment of European gestural abstraction itself rather than a belated respondent to established Western modes, and had not absorbed through his training a deep personal investment of identity in ink painting modes — he too has needed to negotiate with care his relation to the Chinese visual heritage.

While the attempt to produce art which was both Chinese and modern did, as I hope to have shown, result in much work that is of enduring interest (and certainly led to an abstract art which differed fundamentally in both meaning and appearance from American Abstract Expressionism), it should also have become clear that the hybrid solutions which were offered were not without their problems. Modernity was always signified through the Western elements in the image — the modernity of the images was always invested in something other than their Chineseness. Indeed, Chineseness tended to become essentialized (although we do not normally associate essentialism with hybridity, in fact the two are here complicit), being reduced on occasion to little more than a rigid, ahistorical cliché little different from that found in the most traditionalist art.

Given this problem, it was not surprising that certain artists sought to move beyond the binary solution of artists such as Lui, Wong and Liu. One such was the Hong Kong painter Luis Chan (Chen Fushan, 1905–1995), who had earlier gained something of a local reputation for his naturalistic watercolours, but who was plunged into crisis when in 1961 his work was excluded from a major exhibition on the grounds that it was 'out of date'. That crisis in Chan's art continued for a large part of the next decade: one modern style after another appeared in the work of an artist who had once seemed so confident about his way of painting, but none was able to provide

a stable foundation for a distinctively personal idiom. Once naturalism was no longer acceptable, the issue of style was inevitably foregrounded, but there seemed to be no criteria he could adopt to choose between the plethora of possible artistic identities. Not all works of this period are failures, but one senses that Chan is experimenting with styles he does not fully understand: Cubist or pointillist idioms, for instance, are present in a partial and largely decorative way, the artist being condemned to the role of a mimic of that which has originated elsewhere.

Chan was to find a way of coming to terms with his marginality in relation to Western modernism after seeing a demonstration of monotype technique by the visiting French artist Jacques Halpern. Halpern seems to have favoured a non-geometric abstract idiom of an *art informel* kind, but importantly Chan did not choose to imitate his style. Discovery of an automatist method of working was more important than the encounter with abstraction, since it provided him with a specific technique for initiating a dialogue with the unconscious. His new works may have started as abstract pattern-making, but this was followed by a crucial second phase in which the abstract marks produced with the assistance of chance were made the object of study. Images were discovered within them which were then further specified. This fantasy art has much in common with aspects of surrealist painting, such as Max Ernst's *decalcomania* technique, and it also recalls certain of the ink experiments of Henri Michaux. Such similarities are only at the level of method, however. At the level of content these works by Chan are highly original, and no longer in the shadow of Western modernist precedents.

Whereas Lui's *Zhuangzi* anxiously counterbalances its engagement with Western modernism by a reference to a traditionally sanctioned Chinese text, when Chan produced a work on the same theme (*Butterfly Dream* of 1986, see Figure 71) his approach was recognizably more playful and accepting of heterogeneity. In a work which was surely undertaken with the intention of conducting a dialogue with Lui's, Chan employed both collage (his butterfly is a real one) and a pouring technique which clearly invokes Pollock (like Lui he brought together Chinese and Abstract Expressionist influences, but whereas Lui sinicized the reference to Abstract Expressionism by rendering it in Chinese ink, Chan left his

Figure 71
Luis Chan, *Butterfly Dream*, acrylic on canvas, 1986. Photo courtesy Hanart TZ Gallery.

quotation in a 'Western' medium). This Pollock-like pouring appears in other works by Chan, and is used in an uninhibited way without worry over what meaning the technique might have had in its original context. Letting his unconscious be the guide to what may be given meaning in his own work, the skeins of paint start to suggest faces, and circles are added to indicate eyes (for example, *Untitled*, 1987). The theme of transformation in the Zhuangzi text is embodied by Chan even at the level of the creative method. Although his treatment may initially appear less reverential than Lui's, Chan has perhaps displayed a deeper engagement with their shared textual source.

Chan not only appropriated or resignified elements of the stylistic vocabulary of other artists in his own work, he also seemed to be doing something similar when in the role of spectator. He talked for instance of the possibility of seeing illusory images of people or creatures in the paintings of Cézanne. The traces of this very idiosyncratic mode of reception can be seen on the copies of the art magazines to which he subscribed: often a face will be 'discovered' in an image, and specified by ballpoint pen marks. Even the austere abstract paintings of Kenneth Noland were given this kind of treatment by Chan. Far more than most Western artists of the same period Chan was reliant on reproductions for information, but the subservient attitude towards Western sources he had adopted in his early years had now manifestly disappeared. His relationship to them became more active and confident, as his graffiti-like additions to the magazine illustrations attest. Rather than treating them as role models for conscious emulation, he offered them up to his unconscious as raw material, accepting whatever result came from the process.

For Chan a step 'backwards' to Surrealism was more liberating than an engagement with abstraction, but for another Hong Kong artist, Antonio Mak Hin Yeung (Mai Xianyang, 1951–1994), an ironic and conceptual approach to figurative sculpture provided a route beyond the binary thinking of local abstract artists. Rather than abandoning such binary modes however, Mak makes them a subject of implicit critique. In works such as the bronze sculpture *Last Tango with Tiger* of 1993 (see Figure 72), in which a human figure is shown dancing with a tiger, a harmony between quite different entities is shown. Clearly this is a fragile state

whose continuance cannot be guaranteed — what will happen to the human when the music stops? For Mak, works of this kind can be read as comments on the peculiar political situation of Hong Kong at that time, where local capitalist multi-millionaires had started to enter a self-serving dance of accommodation with mainland Communist cadres to position themselves prior to the territory's return to Chinese sovereignty in 1997. Just such a politicized reference to the contemporary moment of China is exactly what the essentialized treatment of Chinese signifiers in the binary abstract ink paintings of Lui or Wong does not allow, and indeed that very fact made such art serviceable for the colonial era cultural establishment in Hong Kong. The anxiety concerning their binary address now conveniently forgotten, such abstract art works, free of any possibly troubling local references, were presented (in the words of one curator writing in the catalogue of a government-sponsored exhibition) as 'happy evidence of the blending of aspects of two streams of world culture, the East and the West'.[10] Images that could be taken as showing the harmonious meeting of East and West were promoted in late colonial-era Hong Kong as the perfect camouflage for the less innocuous encounter of cultures that colonialism actually was.

Whereas many of the abstract ink painters in Hong Kong had belonged to a refugee generation who took China as their primary cultural frame of reference, the generation of artists who came to maturity in the 1980s and 1990s had grown up in the city, and came to define their identity in Hong Kong terms. This local turn made reference to Western modernism or Chinese tradition less crucial, and indeed the ink painting tradition so revered by Lui and Wong provided little that was of use to them, since to pick up the Chinese brush was almost inevitably to speak oneself as Chinese, and it was against undifferentiated notions of Chinese identity (particularly in the nationalistic forms in which the mainland government was promoting them) that local Hong Kong identity asserted itself. Abstraction offered little to this identity practice, which turned instead to such media as photography and installation art. While photography could obviously engage at first hand with the city itself, the latter practice was able to directly incorporate items of markedly local material culture through which issues of identity could be addressed. Only in isolated cases such as that of Kwok Ying (Guo Ying, b. 1977) can one see such a

Figure 72
Antonio Mak Hin Yeung, *Last Tango with Tiger*, 1993. Photo courtesy Susan Fong.

Figure 73
Kwok Ying, *Bai He Jin*, colour pencil and ceramic clay on canvas, 2001. Photo courtesy the artist.

concern with local material culture being brought into conjuncture with the language of abstract art, and then only in an ironic way. In a work such as *Bai He Jin* (2001, colour pencil and ceramic clay on canvas, see Figure 73) she makes a meticulous representation of a kind of towel that would have particular local resonance, and because of the specific nature of the chosen subject her image is at the same time hyper-realist and abstract in appearance, recalling the work of Minimal artists such as Agnes Martin. Although local reference seems less a factor in his case, a similar faithful replication of a two-dimensional fabric source imprinted or woven with an abstract geometric pattern can also be seen in the work of another Hong Kong artist, Lee Kit (Li Jie, b. 1978). Finding his source items in photographs discovered on the internet, he displays his hand-made replicas in art gallery environments where the geometric patterns that would have functioned merely as decoration in their models start to request interpretation as motifs such as may be found in abstract painting. Like Kwok Ying, Lee Kit playfully transgresses both the boundary between realism and abstraction, and that between art and functionality. He takes the latter play one step further, however, since in addition to elevating functional objects into artistic ones he is willing to take the process in the other direction as well, using his hand-make cloths as actual table, picnic or cleaning cloths.

In Taiwan too there was a local turn, with the rise of indigenous identity leading to the end of martial law and one-party rule on the island. Many there no longer think of themselves as Chinese, and thus the role of the Chinese cultural heritage — so prominently displayed in the abstract ink painting of Liu Kuo-sung — has become less central to artistic expression. Although a degree of rapprochement with mainland China has been a feature of the presidency of Ma Ying-jeou, which began in 2008, the era of Chen Shui-

bian's presidency (2000–2008) was particularly marked by localism and an assertion of Taiwanese identity. This always fell short of the formal declaration of independence that would undoubtedly have incurred the wrath of the People's Republic, but even the name 'Republic of China' was removed from the covers of Taiwanese passports during Chen's time in office. Whereas local identity in Hong Kong retains its subversive edge even in the post-handover era, in Taiwan it has enjoyed state endorsement and support, and works which explore local perspectives have often appeared in exhibitions sponsored by public institutions. Ink painting on the other hand, precisely because of its strong association with 'Chineseness' and its previously privileged status, often seems to have been less enthusiastically treated in public venues since the advent of political pluralism, particularly during the Chen Shui-bian era.

For the most part, as with Hong Kong, there is little place for abstraction in this artistic search for local identity in Taiwan.[11] In the case of the mixed media work *Particular Tao* of 1995 by Lien Te-cheng (Lian Decheng, b. 1957), however, an ironic allusion to American abstraction plays a part in a work which seems to want to consciously dissect the cultural influences on Taiwan. Whereas Liu Kuo-sung combined American and Chinese references (albeit in works that retained a binary or hybrid flavour), Lien separates the cultural influences out, making an overt inventory of them. The notion of East and West as polar opposites dissolves since Lien has moved from two to four referents, incorporating Japanese and European as well as Chinese and American culture in his work. China is referenced not by an allusion to the ink painting heritage, but by a fragment of a billboard-like sign featuring the opening characters of the *Dao De Jing*, the well-known Daoist classic. America is given central place in the work, in the form of a Barnett Newman-like 'zip' painting. An erotically-themed Japanese image and a wheel — presumably an oblique reference to Duchamp's ready-mades — complete the work. Taiwanese meanings, we seem invited to believe, are to be found across and between these dominant cultural formations, rather than as some fully-formed alternative to them.

In mainland China, with the post–Cultural Revolution opening of the Deng Xiaoping era, a more international artistic scene of the kind which had long existed in Hong Kong and Taiwan began to come into being. Although

prominent figures in the mainland art world continued to call for an art that 'served the people', and even explicitly attacked abstract art for being incomprehensible, a parallel to the abstract and expressive ink painting that had thrived in Hong Kong and Taiwan did emerge there in the work of Wu Guanzhong (1919–2010).[12] Wu was a Paris-trained artist whose career had been put on hold during the years of cultural closure but who was to receive wide international attention for his later work. Although his paintings share the emphasis on linearity of much classical Chinese art he frequently abandoned the brush, commonly adding dribbled or splashed marks to his images to produce all-over patterns of lines and dots that can be reminiscent of Pollock's work in certain respects. In his case, as in that of so many other Chinese artists who engaged with abstract art, pure abstraction is not to be found, and his displays of linear energy have to have some descriptive excuse or starting point that is never altogether transcended. *Knots of Affection* of 1992, for instance, seems to represent a wisteria or other such climbing plant. Like Lui Shou-kwan, he has produced more obviously representational works alongside his 'abstract' ones, showing the kind of partial engagement with abstraction that it is rare to find amongst European or American artists before the postmodern moment, and which can also be characterized as a hybridity of style, even if it is a kind that is only visible across an artist's oeuvre as a whole rather than within individual works as is the case with Wucius Wong. Even where one does find an engagement with both abstract and non-abstract modes in more recent Western art, as in the case of Gerhard Richter, this tends to be a hybridity of the oeuvre as a whole as with Wu and Lui, and not the combination of both abstract and non-abstract within a single image, as one finds with artists such as Chao Chung-Hsiang or Hon Chi-fun.

This partial commitment to abstraction, taking various forms in works of semi-abstract landscapes, works which combine abstract and figurative modes, and works of a more representational nature being produced alongside abstract ones, is a characteristic feature of the Chinese encounter with abstraction. One factor accounting for it (apart from the conflicting pulls of Western and Chinese culture which I have been emphasizing in my analysis) might be a cultural aversion to extremity of any kind, and thus a distance from the kind of absolute or pure attitude that has often informed Western abstraction. There are no Malevich-like last paintings to be found

by Chinese artists, and the lack of a major Chinese artistic response to Minimalism and other such late-period modernist abstractions may be explained by an unwillingness to take up such extreme positions.[13]

For many younger mainland Chinese artists looking to the available languages of recent Western art, Pop art offered more possibilities than abstraction. Rather than searching for an artistic language that would offer the possibility of a tabula rasa-like break with a Cultural Revolution past (which had itself been deeply and traumatically iconoclastic), they sought instead a more figurative mode which would enable them to work through their feelings about the narrow visual culture they had lived with during the Maoist years. Maoist imagery (analogous in some ways to the kind of advertising imagery Pop art dealt with) had to be denatured and deconstructed from within, and could not, it seems, be simply abandoned.[14] Performance and conceptual tendencies of Western modernism have also proved of great interest to mainland artists, as has video. Even today abstract art is only rarely practiced by ambitious younger artists, Ding Yi (b. 1962) being one of the few prominent mainland abstract artists whose work has any relationship to the geometric tendencies that have been so prominent a feature of Western abstraction.[15] Ding Yi's painting (which we might take as offering a conscious refusal of the concern with the image of so much other contemporary mainland painting) displays a persisting interest in a geometrical grid format, and with the use of a cross motif — see for example *Appearances of Crosses 2009–3*, acrylic on canvas, 2009 (see Figure 74). Echoing both early experiments in Western abstraction such as those of Kazimir Malevich and Theo Van Doesburg (in the use of crosses and diagonals respectively), as well as later, more minimal artists such as Agnes Martin (in its use of an all-over grid structure), *Appearances of Crosses 2009–3* might also be related to tendencies outside and even against abstraction such as the concern for process which came to prominence in American art just as more formalistic abstraction was losing its impetus.

Figure 74
Ding Yi, *Appearance of Crosses 2009–3*, acrylic on canvas, 200cm × 140cm, 2009. Photo courtesy the artist and Osage Gallery.

If a trace remains in contemporary art of the binary abstraction which has been considered here it is in the work of certain Chinese artists living in or otherwise encountering the West. Given the absence until the new millennium of opportunities to display contemporary art in mainland China there has been a strong dependence of mainland artists on European and American curatorial and critical support, and artists have faced pressure from Western audiences to both display a recognizable 'Chineseness' in their art and to produce work which can be assimilated to existing Western categories. The conflicting pulls upon their art which their predecessors felt have not altogether disappeared, therefore, even in an age more accustomed to and accepting of cultural hybridity and less inclined to treat difference as binary otherness. While not turning to abstraction in response to this, some artists — such as Xu Bing (b. 1955) with his *Square Word Calligraphy*, which offers a way of writing the letters of the roman alphabet in the strokes of Chinese calligraphy — do feel a need to respond to (and comment upon) their hybrid cultural situation with an art which is itself in some way markedly binary. In a sense, therefore, artists such as Lui, Liu, Wong and Chao, who first attempted to develop a Chinese art adequate to the experience of cultural hybridity, are pioneers whose work still has relevance in our present-day world, in which the negotiation of discrepancies between cultural frames has become an almost ubiquitous experience.

Part III

Returning home: Cites between China and the world

5
Illuminating facades: Looking at postcolonial Macau

First settled by the Portuguese in 1557, Macau's position at the mouth of China's Pearl River enabled it to play a significant role in the early development of trading and other links between East Asia and Europe. Its pivotal role was already threatened by the eighteenth century, however, following the Japanese prohibition on foreign trade, and after the establishment of the British colony of Hong Kong in the mid-nineteenth century it was to become of even less significance in global terms. In the last line of his poem 'Macao' of December 1938 W. H. Auden was only echoing received opinion when he stated 'nothing serious can happen here'. This 'backwater' status of Macau as a small, isolated, culturally distinct European settlement on Chinese soil was to largely persist until its eventual return to Chinese sovereignty in December 1999 as a Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China. Such a 'return' is hardly a postcolonial moment in the usual sense (there being no independent statehood on offer), but the handover of Macau from Portugal to China does represent the end of an era, and has occasioned a major and very visible remaking of the territory. This process of transformation will be the focus of attention of this chapter, and particular consideration will be given to the visual implications or dimensions of this process, and to the possible role of images in providing an interrogation of it.[1]

Figure 75
Portuguese-style mosaic pavement in the area near Senado Square, Macau, 31 December 2003. Photo by the author.

While thinking of Macau as undergoing a transition between 'old' and 'new' that can be temporally mapped onto the 1999 handover moment, it is also important to consider the matter in spatial terms as well, and note that in a certain sense the 'old' Macau is still present alongside the 'new' Macau, although the two exist in largely separate locations. Many pre-existing vernacular structures (and thus the forms of life that they enable) may be disappearing as the city is remade, but churches and other older buildings of 'conservation status', particularly those with European associations, have been preserved and renovated, and the streets around them laid with a kind of mosaic pavement designed to create an old-world Portuguese feel (see Figure 75). The older part of the city is still saturated with such historical relics, but they are less and less a part of any real lived experience and instead are actually the necessary counterpart of its newer side, a new 'old' which functions as the binary other of the (perhaps not so new) 'new'. Instead of being primarily functional structures they are now (particularly since the city's historical centre was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list in 2005) first and foremost structures for looking at — a fact underlined by the nocturnal illumination of such structures, for example by the spotlights before the ruined façade of St. Paul's, a building one can only gaze at since it no longer has any interior to enter (see Figure 76). Furthermore, the 'history' they are the visual reminders of is one that the majority of the enclave's residents have no particular personal sense of connection to. It is not a history strongly entwined with memory and

Figure 76
Façade of St. Paul's, Macau, with spotlights, 26 October 1997. Photo by the author.

identity and thus capable of being mobilized as a potentially subversive force with respect to the present, but a carefully sanitized or embalmed history which addresses across the heads of the local populace the reifying tourist gaze.

The place of the 'new' Macau, by contrast to that of its counterpart, is in sites that literally have no history to them in that they are on newly reclaimed land (space here being a commodity that can be manufactured like any other). In particular such reclamation and subsequent construction took place during the 1990s along the edge of the Macau peninsula facing the island of Taipa (see Figure 77), between the Hong Kong–Macau ferry terminal and the farther ends of the Praia Grande, the city's historic waterfront which now only fronts onto an artificial lake. A further phase of reclamation in this area has been taking place more recently.

Whereas Macau had for a long time been a 'backwater', defined by its separateness, the intention of much of the new construction is to create connectedness: the new Macau is on the one hand to be revitalized by reinsertion within the global networks of capital (in large part through tourism, and especially through an expansion of its well-known gambling industry), and at the same time to be reintegrated within the national fabric of the nominally Communist People's Republic. Such emphasis on a new connectedness can be found even on the level of physical infrastructure.

Figure 77
Land reclamation in progress, Macau, 16 March 1995. Photo by the author.

Since 1995 Macau has had its own international airport, and although since 1974 the city has been connected by a mile-long bridge to Taipa, the nearest of the two islands which together with the peninsula make up the small territory of Macau, it now has three such structures. The islands of Taipa and Coloane, in fact, are no longer even separate from

each other. Over the last few years they have been joined into one by further reclamation (creating a new zone that has been named Cotai), and a second link to mainland China called the Lotus Bridge has been opened from Cotai to supplement the pre-existing Barrier Gate to the city's north. In addition to these already-existing links, a further massive bridge project is planned which will link Macau directly to Hong Kong (its sister Special Administrative Region which returned to Chinese sovereignty a little over two years earlier). This bridge, which could halve the travel time between the two cities, is also intended to further Macau's integration with the Pearl River delta, that massive workshop of the world to which most of its own industrial production has now migrated.[2]

In addition to these physical links, and in part dependent on them, are the flows of people that have equally served to erode Macau's 'backwater' or 'marooned' status. These include the large flows of new immigrants from mainland China (one part of a truly massive process of internal migration taking place within China as a whole) and the increasing number of tourists who are visiting the territory (or who are projected to do so). More than eight million were to visit in 1996, for instance, more than sixteen times the city's total population at the time, and by 2005 the figure had risen even higher, with 21.9 million visitors arriving (including 11.9 million from mainland China).[3] Even within the enclave itself a greater circulation of people seems a characteristic of the new Macau, as if a new addiction to physical speed might help to throw off the city's former inertia and stasis, or at least provide a contrast to the pace of the walkable spaces in its older urban centre.[4] The newly reclaimed areas are traversed by high-speed roads, and even distant Coloane seems much nearer nowadays. Coloane retains some of its previous 'sleepy' status, but only because it is being self-consciously preserved as a tourist destination, a supposed backwater within a backwater that is in actuality accessibly placed on a regular tourist trail (see Figure 78). For a real backwater one would need to travel to Macau's northern district, home to many of the more recent arrivals from China and a place where the traces of relative poverty are easy to discover (see Figure 79). Much nearer than Coloane to the city's centre, it yet remains inaccessible to the tourist gaze because it lies off the patterns of approved circulation.[5]

Figure 78 (left) Dried fish, Coloane Village, Macau, 5 October 2006. Photo by the author.

Figure 79 (right) Dilapidated structure in Macau's northern district, 5 February 2006. Photo by the author.

Although the newness of the reclaimed land prevents any intrusion of the traces of actual history, on one particular part of it, just down the road from the Hong Kong–Macau ferry terminal, a wholly fake, borrowed spectacle of history has been given a place. This is the 'Macau Fisherman's Wharf', where shops and restaurants built behind facades resembling those of various scenic locations in the rest of the world offer an array of consumption possibilities. Both time and space are collapsed here, with the same signpost pointing to, say, a 'Tang Dynasty Department Store' and a 'Roman Amphitheatre', or 'Aladdin's Fort' and 'Da Gama Water World' (see Figure 80). Here Macau does not want to be Macau at all, but some other place (or time) — or in anxiety concerning identity 'new' Macau perhaps wants to be many other places or times, or find for itself new pasts other than the colonial one it has stored away safely in the tourist sites of the old parts of the city. Even in the newly-minted parts of Macau the question of history cannot be completely exorcised, it seems, and although the 'new'

Figure 80
Signage at Macau Fisherman's Wharf, 5 February 2006. Photo by the author.

Macau is structured in visible contrast to the old one, it needs models from elsewhere to follow: newness or contemporaneousness does not mean a pure autonomy but must be thought in terms of borrowed templates.

In fact the primary template for the new Macau is not hard to discover: it is Las Vegas. Macau has long depended on its gambling industry for a significant portion of its GDP, employment and government revenue, and with the decline of manufacturing in the face of mainland China's economic boom this primary pillar of its tourist trade is seen as the enclave's savior. Gambling has been a feature of Macau for some time, but it was following the establishment of a gambling monopoly in 1962 that the industry really began to develop in scale. The holder of the monopoly, Stanley Ho's Sociedade de Turismo e Diversões de Macau (STDM), opened a casino in its Lisboa Hotel (see Figure 81) — itself built on land taken from the harbour during an earlier phase of reclamation — and has played a major role in the city's development, for example by establishing a high speed jetfoil service linking Macau and Hong Kong. In 2001, however, the monopoly came to an end and the gambling industry has now entered a new phase with a diversification of players on the scene, including several who were already associated with the Las Vegas industry including Steve Wynn and the Las Vegas Sands Corporation (both of whom have already opened casinos). Macau had already on occasion been referred to as the

Figure 81 (left) Reflection of the Lisboa Casino in an adjacent building, 20 October 2004. Photo by the author.

Figure 82 (right) The Grand Lisboa under construction, 5 October 2006. Photo by the author.

'Las Vegas of the East' but now the connections between the two cities have become more actual.[6] Furthermore the visual appearance of Macau has in this new phase of the gambling industry begun to be significantly influenced by that of its Nevada counterpart.

The new casinos that have been opened share with those of Las Vegas a concern for their external appearance and an obsession with the use of illuminated signage. Even the Lisboa has undergone a facelift to compete in this new game, and indeed Stanley Ho has also built a new hotel and casino complex called the Grand Lisboa adjacent to the existing one (see Figure 82). The casino opened in February 2007, although the tower which rises above it remained under construction for some time, and the hotel finally opened only in December 2008. Over a base that resembles — apparently deliberately — a massive Fabergé egg stands a flamboyant form more than 200 metres high. Anxious dependency on the model of Las Vegas is not hard to uncover here: this form is deliberately modelled on the feathered headdresses of Vegas showgirls that the architect Dennis Lau Hung-sun had seen on his study visit to the Nevada city, although the original design idea was later altered somewhat to allow a resemblance to the lotus, Macau's official flower and thus a safely localized reference.[7]

Figure 83
View of the Lisboa and Wynn casinos from the far side of the artificial Nam Van Lake, 5 October 2006. Photo by the author.

While the Sands Macau sits on reclaimed land near the Hong Kong — Macau ferry terminal and the Macau Fisherman's Wharf, and the Wynn is practically next door to the Lisboa (see Figure 83), several of the more recently opened casinos are placed instead on Cotai, the strip of reclaimed land connecting the islands of Taipa and Coloane.[8] Amongst these is the 'Venetian Macao', a further project of the Las Vegas Sands Corporation, whose fake historical Venice theme reprises that of its prototype, the Las Vegas Venetian (see Figures 84 and 85). Like the Macau Fisherman's Wharf this mirage of history involves a spatial collapsing, even if it only has one city as its referent (or two if we take this as a reference to Venice made via a reference to Las Vegas): the Rialto Bridge is placed right next to the Campanile di San Marco. Hoardings which surrounded the construction site before the complex opened on 28 August 2007 proclaimed that this was 'Asia's Las Vegas', lest we should take the European reference too seriously.[9]

The image of the good life these casinos offer seems largely aristocratic in its symbolism, and perhaps Venice with its Grand Tour associations fits in with this. An even more blatant expression of such aristocratic conceit can be found in the case of the Grand Emperor hotel and casino, which has enormous, illuminated displays with changing patterns of coloured light

Figure 84 (left) The Venetian Macao, under construction, 5 October 2006. Photo by the author.

Figure 85 (right) 'Bridge of Sighs' — detail from the Venetian Macao, 8 February 2008. Photo by the author.

on more than one façade which feature a version of the British royal crest (see Figure 86). The pretence is carried further by the placement of a pair of imitation state carriages outside its main entrance, together with a pair of guardsmen standing to attention in full uniform, complete with bearskin hats (see Figure 87).

As well as the casinos, their associated hotels and the Macau Fisherman's Wharf, the city's new reclaimed land is also the site of the Macao Cultural Centre (see Figure 88), one of the few places in the new Macau where Chinese national meanings are in any sense given a locus of their own in a city now incorporated within the People's Republic. Such meanings are propagated, for instance, through the exhibitions of Chinese art loaned from prominent mainland museums which are often held at the Macau Museum of Art. Such exhibitions serve to promote a sense of cultural belonging amongst local people in a city where high-cultural events of the colonial era were often primarily expressions of the Portuguese community (see Figure 89). This process of ideological interpolation is not particularly

Figure 86 (left) Illuminated display with changing patterns of coloured light, on façade of the Grand Emperor hotel and casino, Macau, 5 October 2006. Photo by the author.

Figure 87 (right) 'Guardsman' outside the Grand Emperor hotel and casino, Macau, 5 October 2006. Photo by the author.

heavy-handed, however, and the museum, which manages to put together a lively programme on a relatively limited budget, does also present shows of local or international art in which different and perhaps even conflicting agendas are at play.

The most significant national event of the new Macau, the handover ceremony itself which took place over the midnight between 19 and 20 December 1999, was also held in the vicinity of the cultural centre. It took place in a temporary structure specially designed for the purpose by Macau-based architect Vincente Bravo, featuring a translucent ceiling and walls which when illuminated took on the appearance of a giant Chinese lantern. This use of newly reclaimed land for a ceremony in which significant national meanings were at stake had already been seen in the case of Hong Kong's handover ceremony, which took place in the newly-constructed extension of the Convention and Exhibition Centre in Wanchai.[10] In both cases reclaimed land enabled all historical associations with the colonial era to be banished from an auspicious, forward-looking

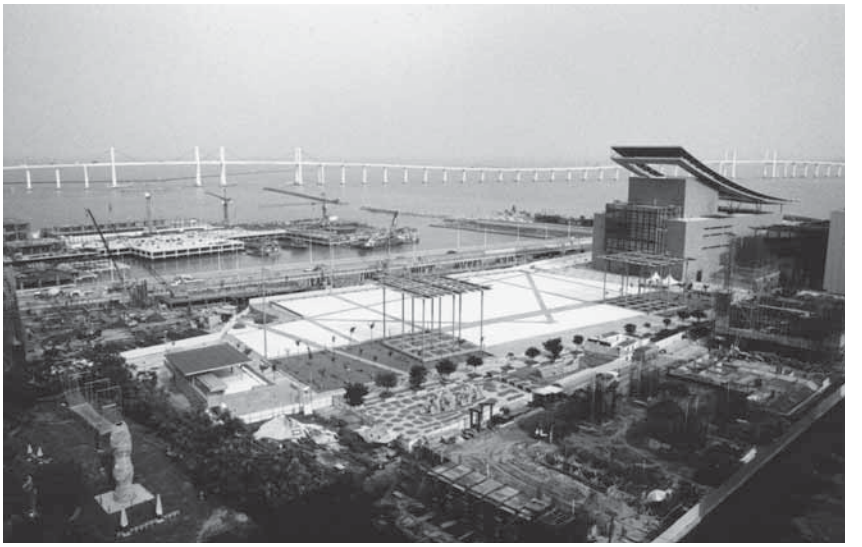


Figure 88
Macao Cultural Centre (right) and its environs, 11 September 2003. Photo by the author.

Figure 89
Interval during the performance of an opera, Macau Music Festival, 20 October 1996. Photo by the author.

event for which the real audience was the Chinese populace as a whole, who were able to view the event on their TV screens. Like their mainland counterparts, the residents of Macau (with the exception of those few actually present at the ceremony itself) were to consume this postcolonial moment as an image, for example on the large screen erected in Senado Square to which live coverage was fed (see Figure 90). By its very nature

Figure 90
Crowds in Senado Square, Macau, shortly before the handover of sovereignty, 19 December 1999. Photo by the author.

a resumption of the exercise of national sovereignty (like any postcolonial moment) is something very abstract, a mere matter of visual symbols such as flags moving up and down poles (even if many real-world consequences follow over the passage of time), and thus the visual parameters and connotations of such an event need to be as carefully controlled as possible to maximize their ideological effectiveness.[11]

Although this (visual) production of a sense of national unity recovered through the Macau handover was very serviceable to the ideological aims of the Beijing government (since not many people in China actually believe in Communism any more nationalist ideology is now the primary social binding force), in actual fact there were few problems locally in gaining acceptance of Chinese Communist rule. In this sense Macau differed significantly from the case of Hong Kong, where even now, more than a decade after its return to China, strong voices critical of the one-party state and its anti-democratic agendas for the city can be heard. The

actual moment of the handover appeared lacking in trauma for most Macau residents, and in analyzing the reasons for this the counter-case of Hong Kong is a useful reference to employ since the two cities shared the unusual postcolonial fate of absorption into a larger state entity rather than independence.

What Macau seems to lack that Hong Kong possesses is a significant sense of local cultural identity, and thus a sense of owning a separate history.[12] The handover, therefore, was not, it seems, taken by Macau people as an event that was happening to them — it was not an event in their own felt history in the same way that the old buildings in the city centre were not felt to be relics of a history that belonged to them. One factor in this is of course the scale of immigration that Macau has faced, one aspect of its increased connectedness noted above. Residents of the city born in mainland China are now a significant percentage of its total population (which immigration has recently brought above a half million), and a sense of relatedness to the city's past is hardly something one should expect amongst these newer arrivals.[13] The smallness of Macau's total population, no matter where born, when compared to that of Hong Kong is also a factor to be considered. The city perhaps lacks the critical mass of population necessary to sustain many of the institutions of civil society which would enable a strong sense of separate cultural identity to emerge in a place which has no real ethnic markers of difference from its hinterland on which more essentialist understandings of selfhood could arise.[14] Crucial amongst such institutions (all of which Hong Kong does possess) are a vibrant newspaper press, a university sector large enough to support a local intelligencia, and an active film industry of its own. Macau does have something of its own artistic scene but this again is relatively small and lacking in infrastructural support when compared to that of Hong Kong, and is thus less able to play a role in the development of the kind of self-representations which are crucial for a reflexive sense of separate cultural identity to be fashioned.

Many of the artistic representations of Macau, by both locals and outsiders, focus on what I am terming here the 'old' city. There is of course much of value in the attempt to photographically document old forms of life being erased through 'development', as Macau's Frank Lei (see Figure 91)

Figure 91 (left)
Frank Lei, *Zheng Family Building*, *Macau*, 1996. Photo courtesy the artist.

Figure 92 (right)
Laurence Aberhart, *Window, Old Chiang Mansions, Macau, 24 November 2000*, selenium and gold chloride toned silver gelatin print, 2000. Image courtesy the artist (New Zealand), and John Batten Gallery, Hong Kong.

and visiting New Zealander Laurence Aberhart (see Figure 92) have notably done, to preserve them at least as memories in visual form in order that a residue of overlooked history might remain as a potential irritant in the amnesiac present.[15] At the same time however, as I am arguing here, 'old' Macau has already been largely refashioned as an innocuous counterpart to 'new' Macau, and thus an engagement with historical relics is not per se of critical value. The many images of peeling walls and shabby decay which photographers in particular have produced of Macau can easily serve an apolitical nostalgia, offering a modern-date variant on the picturesque mode which fails to critically address the actual changes occurring in the city today. Simply to lament what has gone is not quite an adequate response to what is appearing.

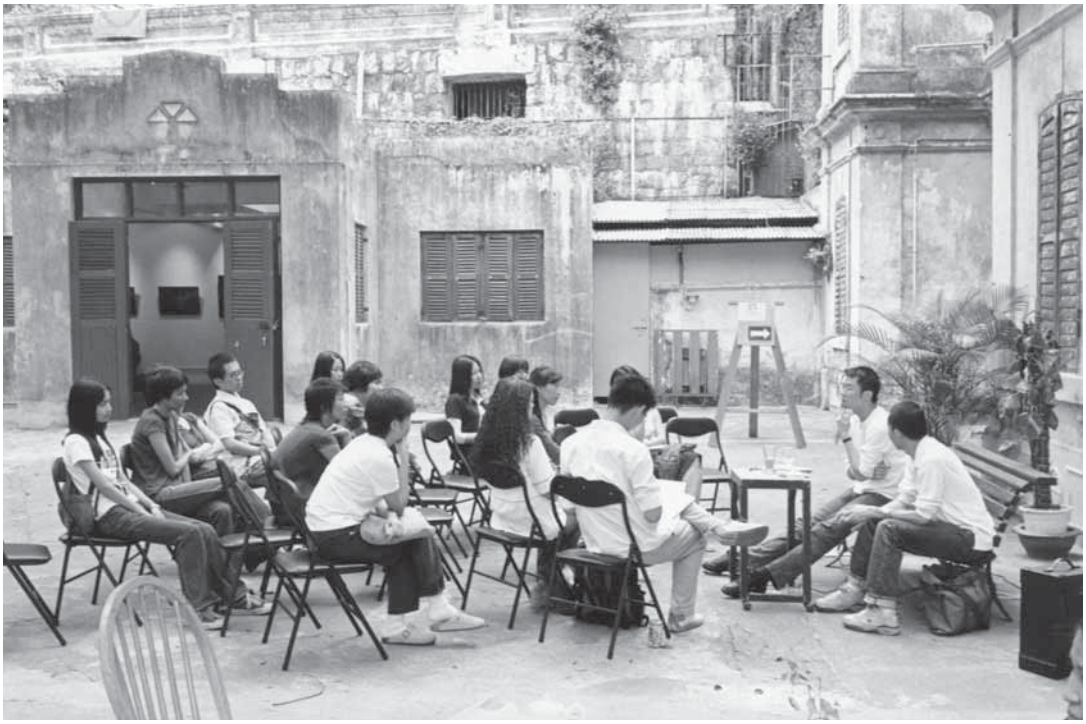


Figure 93
Courtyard of the Old Ladies House Art Space, Macau, with talk by Hong Kong choreographer Yuri Ng taking place, 27 April 2002. Photo by the author.

Amongst more active responses to Macau's postcolonial landscape are those of Macau's main alternative artist-run space, the Old Ladies House Art Space. Originally sited in an older building of some character (see Figure 93) from which it took its name, it was eventually forced to move and is now based in a less favoured location in the city's northern district, the Ox Warehouse. It has responded proactively to the new situation it finds itself in, however, by initiating community art projects with the residents of this poorer, new immigrant area, and even with artists living across the internal border in the neighbouring mainland Chinese city of Zhuhai. Recent exhibitions at the Ox Warehouse venue have made Macau's urban development the subject of critical attention. 'Capture Memories of Ilha Verde' (29 April–17 June 2007), for instance, engaged with a distinctive northern district settlement facing clearance. 'Suspended City Vision' (14 April–26 May 2007) looked at threats to the city's fabric from new development, taking as its focus the Guia lighthouse, the oldest on the China coast, views of which are in danger of being obscured by new high-rise property developments.[16]

Figure 94
Konstantin Bessmertny, *Casino Narrative No. 1*, oil on wood, 2007. Photo courtesy the artist and Amelia Johnson Contemporary.

Finding a very different but equally productive strategy for responding to Macau's present situation is the Russian-born artist Konstantin Bessmertny, who has been based in Macau since 1993. Unlike most other Macau artists he is willing to address the subject of gambling directly in his works, allowing card games or casino scenes to feature in some of his ambiguous, narratively-fragmented paintings (for example, *Casino Narrative No. 1*, 2007, oil on wood, see Figure 94), and even using gambling chips directly as an element in certain sculptural constructions. When Bessmertny was invited to represent Macau in the 52nd Venice Biennale (2007) it was also almost inevitable that he would take the construction of the casino and entertainment complex of the Venetian Macao as an opportunity to play with the connections between the city he was representing and the city in which his work was to be shown. Not denying Macau's present, Bessmertny does also allude to its past, for example through the inclusion of Latin or Portuguese inscriptions in his works (which are also as likely to

include references to Chinese culture). Historical and cultural references are jumbled in this collage-like aesthetic, but unlike at Fisherman's Wharf it here serves a demystifying role.

The history of oil painting seems to haunt Bessmertny's work — appropriately so given that Macau was formerly home to George Chinnery (1774–1852), and through his influence an important site for the dissemination of the medium on the south China coast. At times Bessmertny seems to be alluding to the idiom of Bruegel or of seventeenth-century Dutch masters such as Steen in developing his oblique satirical take on contemporary Macau life. A deliberate naïvety of presentation is often adopted, such as might be found amongst practitioners of European idioms of painting in far-flung colonial locations, thus allowing an allusion to Macau's 'backwater' status that might seem deliberately and humourously anachronistic in the present moment. Such a reference to early oil painting in Macau and the region seems quite explicitly to be made in certain of the paintings included in his exhibition 'China Trade!', held at Amelia Johnson Contemporary, Hong Kong (15 May–6 June 2009).[17] Here the exhibition title refers to the notion of 'China trade painting', a term commonly used to describe the early images of the south China coast produced locally for Western buyers (while also of course alluding to the gold rush of the world's traders and investors to China in our own time). One of the most ambitious paintings in this exhibition was *China Trade: Vista da Praia Grande* (oil on canvas, 2009, see Figure 95), which offers a view of Macau's historic waterfront that deliberately echoes the Praia Grande's representation in numerous China trade images of the city. Written inscriptions that 'explain' certain details help sustain the faux naïve tone, and aid in undermining the visual cliché offered. That undermining also occurs at the visual level itself, since the artist has introduced a number of incongruous elements into the work, such as a Godzilla-like monster (labelled 'thing that destroyed old parts of the city').

As a resident of Hong Kong I am aware that the view of Macau available from the vantage point of its neighbouring city is as liable to be infected by the nostalgic tourist gaze as any other. At the same time, however, there are perhaps specific possibilities available in this particular situated viewpoint. Hong Kong also has a colonial past, after all, having already

Figure 95
Konstantin Bessmertny, *China Trade: Vista da Praia Grande*, oil on canvas, 2009. Photo courtesy the artist and Amelia Johnson Contemporary.

gone through its handover to Chinese rule a little earlier than Macau, and has itself experienced phases of accelerated 'development' (with associated waterfront land reclamation and bridge building). A felt closeness and even identification led several Hong Kong artists to spend time in Macau around the period of its handover: Yank Wong Yan-kwai (see Figure 96) gave informal art classes at the former venue of the Old Ladies House Art Space, for instance, and political cartoonist Zunzi was amongst a group of Hong Kong and Macau street theatre activists arrested briefly on the night of the Macau handover while attempting to perform in the Senado Square (see Figure 97).

The sense that a Hong Kong perspective on contemporary Macau has a certain specific critical potential has encouraged me in my own engagement with the city, and in attempting to actualize that potential I have found a need to make a photographic intervention as well as a textual one. Some of the colour photographs that have resulted from this intervention are

Figure 96
Hong Kong artist Yank Wong giving art instruction in the courtyard of the Old Ladies House Art Space, Macau, 27 April 2002. Photo by the author.

Figure 97
Performance with a cartoon mask of then Chinese President Jiang Zemin created by Zunzi, taking place on the night of the Macau handover near the façade of St. Paul's. Video capture image, courtesy Zunzi.

used to illustrate this chapter (see Figures 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103 and 104), as are certain more documentary photos of varying dates. I have been arguing here that Macau's urban fabric (in both its 'old' and 'new' aspects) is becoming a visual spectacle addressed first and foremost to the tourist or consumer's gaze, and I have found it necessary to explore the

Figure 98
In a taxi on the bridge to Taipa, 19 October 2004. Photo by the author.

Figure 99
Illuminated shop sign, near Senado Square, 19 October 2004. Photo by the author.

Figure 100
(below left)
Outside a restaurant, Senado Square, 19 October 2004. Photo by the author.

Figure 101
(below right)
Entrance to an underpass with illuminated signage, near the Lisboa Casino, 20 October 2004. Photo by the author.

Figure 102
(above left)
Interior and exterior of a shop, near Senado Square, 20 October 2004. Photo by the author.

Figure 103
(above right)
Illuminated sign outside the Regency hotel, Taipa, viewed from behind, 4 October 2006. Photo by the author.

Figure 104
(below right)
Old and new residential structures, Taipa, 5 October 2006. Photo by the author.

possibilities (and also the limits) of a means which is itself visual in developing a critique of that spectacular regime.[18] An evacuation or retreat from the field of the visual would not be appropriate in this context since it would leave the spectacle intact on its own terms, serviced by the compliant tourist imagery which accompanies it.

6
The haunted city: Hong Kong and its urban others in the postcolonial era

When we travel to other cities as the result of personal desire — for example, in our identity as tourists — we are driven to a significant extent by the place that city has in our imaginative life. Towards the beginning of Proust's monumental work *In Search of Lost Time* the narrator's young self looks forward in anticipation to a family visit to a town called Balbec on the French Atlantic coast (actually a fictionalization of the actual location Cabourg), and like that fictional character our notion of a place and its attractiveness can be fuelled by textual and visual images of it we may have consumed (and these may have been derived from film, literature and art as much as from factual television programmes or holiday brochures and their glossy illustrations). In the case of Proust's narrator the reality of Balbec fails to match the promise of those images, and one major lesson of Proust is the recognition of a gap between the world and our desire-laden images of it. Nevertheless it would not be correct to think we could ever escape our imaginary images of a place by going there. No fully demystified relation to the world would ever be possible, even if it were desirable. Despite visiting a city or even living there, our sense of it is still

of course a mediated one, its concrete realities entangled with the stories we have gathered and generated about it.[1]

Even when we don't travel, even when we stay in our home city, the images of other cities stay with us. No city is absolutely different from other cities, so we think of our own city with reference to others, comparatively. We describe it to people by telling them what other cities it is similar to, for instance. At the level of the city itself, too, there is a constant awareness of its others, and since this awareness is not simply neutral but is tainted by the desire to emulate or compete, I want to talk of cities being haunted by other cities. By using this word 'haunted' I wish to convey the sense of other cities as always uncomfortably present, even when a city might wish to exorcise all trace of them, and to signal that the relation with other cities can, on occasion at least, be a problematic one. Although the everyday sense of the word 'haunting' implies a disruptive invasion of the present by a trace of the past, I'm choosing to extend its application here, applying the term to a spatial rather than a temporal dimension.

Perhaps not all cities are significantly haunted by others, but I suspect that all cities with the ambition to be thought of as 'world cities' are, as well as all cities going through significant phases of their physical or socio-political development (as is the case with many Asian cities today).[2] Perhaps such haunting is more common now than in the past, due to the increasing pace of globalization and our increasing awareness of other cities or at least of their images, but I believe it was already quite widespread in developing cities during earlier periods of modernity. Although, if one can imagine cities for a moment as people, there might be particular historical moments when a city might be so deeply affected by trauma that it appears to turn in on itself (perhaps New York in the wake of 11 September 2001 might be considered as such a place) or so sure of itself that it doesn't seem to recognize any peers (again New York at an earlier, skyscraper-constructing stage of its modern history might potentially serve as an example), in fact the narcissism induced by both the extremes of abjection and triumph is unlikely to be complete. Indeed, if one discovers a contemporary city that seems to be free of haunting by its others one is likely to have found a city without a clear sense of itself as a city, without a civic life in any expanded

sense. And a major city at a crucial juncture of its history can on the other hand be haunted by several other cities.

Of course, cities are not the same as people, so to talk of a city as being narcissistic or as emulating another is something of a convenient shorthand or metaphorical turn of phrase, there being no actual consciousness and psychology involved in the case of an entity of concrete, steel and asphalt. However, there is a sense in which one can usefully talk of cities as something more than the sum of their inhabitants' own individual psyches. There is a city as subject even if it is usually the city's government and its various agencies for urban development, tourist promotion and so on that determine its actions and speak for its subject position. When these agencies articulate their developmental plans they may make reference to other cities which they explicitly hope to learn from or emulate in certain respects, but for the most part the work of their town planners and architects (and that of their private sector counterparts) is less likely to reveal the debts to other cities so openly. To do so would be to give too much ground, to expose a weakness or debt, and thus it falls to critical interpretation to expose the ways in which their apparently self-confident monuments and grand redevelopments betray a haunting by civic otherness.

While the case of architecture can demonstrate how a city's imaginary life is not simply something insubstantial that is laid over its actual physical being, but something embodied in that concrete physical reality itself, it is more often in the case of visual artists, filmmakers and other cultural workers (whose work — with the exception of public art and the like — does not generally directly transform the urban fabric itself) that we see a critical engagement with the city, a contesting of a city's existing identity and of the top-down plans for its rebranding or physical remaking. Not all artists succeed in doing this of course — a surprising number produce work which is consonant with their government's civic promotion rhetoric — but where a city's haunting by other cities is revealed, it is often through their efforts. This, at least, is the case with Hong Kong, the specific city that will be the focus of the following discussion.

Figure 105
The Hong Kong Cultural Centre, Tsim Sha Tsui, completed 1989. Photo courtesy the Department of Fine Arts, University of Hong Kong.

Visitors to Hong Kong are often struck first of all by its harbour. This fact of physical geography which was responsible for its annexation by the British and its subsequent development as a port city has however been somewhat neglected by government city planners, who even today are more inclined to treat the harbour as a possible site for lucrative land reclamation than as a potential aesthetic or cultural resource for the city itself. Despite featuring heavily in tourist imagery, the actual harbourfront is often taken up with structures and activities which do not show an openness to the harbour itself, and public access is frequently restricted. In the period following the Joint Declaration of the Chinese and British governments in 1984, which sealed agreement over the city's return to Chinese sovereignty in 1997, some letup in this unremitting process of privatization occurred, however. In the face of the uncertainty created by the impending historical transition it was felt necessary to give the city some cultural monuments to front the harbour as part of a larger plan to create an optimistic mood and sense of belonging. Most prominent amongst these was the Hong Kong Cultural Centre on the Tsim Sha Tsui waterfront (see Figure 105). I read its curved roof, a self-consciously aesthetic gesture, as a reference to a rather more successful cultural-complex-in-a-harbourfront-setting-as-a-civic-icon, the Sydney Opera House (see Figure 106). That a degree of anxiety accompanied this emulation, or that it might be judged to have failed to even register as of the same significance as its Sydney counterpart (it proved a very unpopular building when it first opened), may be indicated by the fact that a second, more prominent structure mimicking the elaborate roof structure of the Sydney Opera House more openly was to follow only a few years later. This was the extension to the Convention and Exhibition Centre in Wanchai, which was completed in 1997 and used as the venue of the handover ceremony (see Figure 107). Of course in neither case could the resemblance with its counterpart be made too obvious, but the engineering complexity of its curved roof, combined with its setting, makes it clear that Hong Kong was attempting to re-imagine itself with reference to Sydney.[3]

Figure 106
The Sydney Opera House. Photo by the author.

Interestingly Australia (along with Canada and New Zealand) was one of the most favoured destinations for emigration in those pre-1997 years amongst Hong Kong people worried about what the handover might bring. While decisions concerning emigration are prompted by many


HOLA

Figure 107
The extension to the Convention and Exhibition Centre in Wanchai, Hong Kong. Photo courtesy the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre.

causes, a purely economic explanation of such flows would seem too limited. Clearly there is an element of desire or of the imaginary involved in the choice of destination, and I suspect one part of Australia's attraction, like that of Canada and New Zealand, might have been that in some sense it resembled the Hong Kong that was about to disappear, with the Queen's heads on coins, the Union Jack incorporated into flags, and the word 'royal' prominent in the names of various organizations (see Figure 108). Emigration there was therefore in some sense a vote to stay living in Hong Kong's pre-handover present, but a present cleared of all the negative downside of colonial existence, such as a lack of democracy. Another place, as it were, served as an imaginary past to retreat to.

While architecture constructed on Hong Kong's harbour in the pre-handover period showed signs of the city being haunted by Sydney, and thus as being perhaps less confident of its own identity than it might have seemed during that period of economic expansion, a much more traumatic

Figure 108
Coins from colonial-era Hong Kong (left) and from Australia (right). Photo by the author.

civic haunting also became apparent during that pre-handover period. This was a haunting by Shanghai.

While I'm focusing on events that have a cultural or imaginary dimension, I don't wish to deny the actual links between these two cities. Clearly the large flow of people from Shanghai to Hong Kong around 1949 was one way in which the fate of the two cities became linked, with many of those migrants going on to play significant roles in Hong Kong's political and economic life, even to the present day.[4] But with the approach of the handover something else started to happen. As Hong Kong began to worry that its way of life might be threatened by reunification with the Mainland, it began to notice similarities between its historical trajectory, as a major Chinese capitalist city becoming absorbed into a Communist country, with that which Shanghai had undergone about half a century earlier. Just as Shanghai had fallen into a kind of frozen stasis for most of its post-1949 life, so Hong Kong feared a similar fate. In the immediate pre-handover years Hong Kong, with its future already decided, entered into a period of premature mourning, a looking back on its present as if from a future-perfect vantage point from which the handover had already happened. This premature sense of loss, this backward-turning gaze, began

to encompass an engagement with pre-revolutionary Shanghai, given the affinities felt between the two times and places.

Admittedly, at one end of the scale this Hong Kong fascination with Shanghai meant a purely straightforward nostalgia expressed through commodity consumption, as for instance in the case of the store Shanghai Tang, which at that time was selling Shanghai-tailored clothes with an ironic postmodern twist, and various artfully chosen products redolent with the flavour of the past (such as leather-bound photo albums, which even at the level of function are involved with a backward-looking gaze). At the other end of the scale, however, were cultural products which engaged with the felt affinity between Hong Kong and Shanghai rather than simply exploiting it. Prominent amongst these are two films by Stanley Kwan, *Centre Stage* (1991) and *Rouge* (1988). The former set up a direct parallel between the two cities by using the Hong Kong actress Maggie Cheung to play 1930s Shanghai actress Ruan Lingyu (see Figure 109). In addition to Cheung as Ruan, the film offers us original footage of Ruan as well, thereby bringing a degree of self-consciousness to the comparison. Straightforward realism which would collapse the present into the past is also denied by the introduction of documentary footage in the form of an interview with Cheung about her role. In *Rouge* a ghost from pre-revolutionary Shanghai comes to haunt Hong Kong in search of a lost love, whom she believes is now living in the city (see Figure 110). Again a conscious juxtaposition of the two cities is given, footage from the two eras being interwoven through the film. The fifty-year gap between the two periods explicitly echoes the length of time that Hong Kong was guaranteed to retain its existing way of life after the 1997 handover.

Following the return to Chinese sovereignty, coinciding as it did with the pan-Asian economic crisis, questions of identity which had preoccupied many of Hong Kong's residents became worries of the government too, worries for or of the city itself.[5] Anxiety that Hong Kong might lose its distinctiveness following absorption into a now economically-burgeoning and demonstrably transforming People's Republic, which seemed to have escaped the financial downturn felt by the rest of Asia, gave birth to a compensatory rhetoric that Hong Kong wished to become 'Asia's world city'. Hong Kong was now openly declaring its desire to be a city

Figure 109
Maggie Cheung in *Centre Stage* by Stanley Kwan, 1991. Screen capture image.

Figure 110
Anita Mui in *Rouge* by Stanley Kwan, 1988. Screen capture image.

of the stature of New York or London, and was beginning to be haunted by those cities too. This 'world city' rhetoric (and the mention of those two Western cities in particular) was first articulated in Hong Kong Chief Executive Tung Chee Hwa's 1999 policy address, being further specified in the February 2000 report of the Commission on Strategic Development. As this new ambition developed it came to have an impact on the fabric of the city itself, most prominently in plans for a West Kowloon Cultural District following a belated discovery that 'world-class' cities tend to have

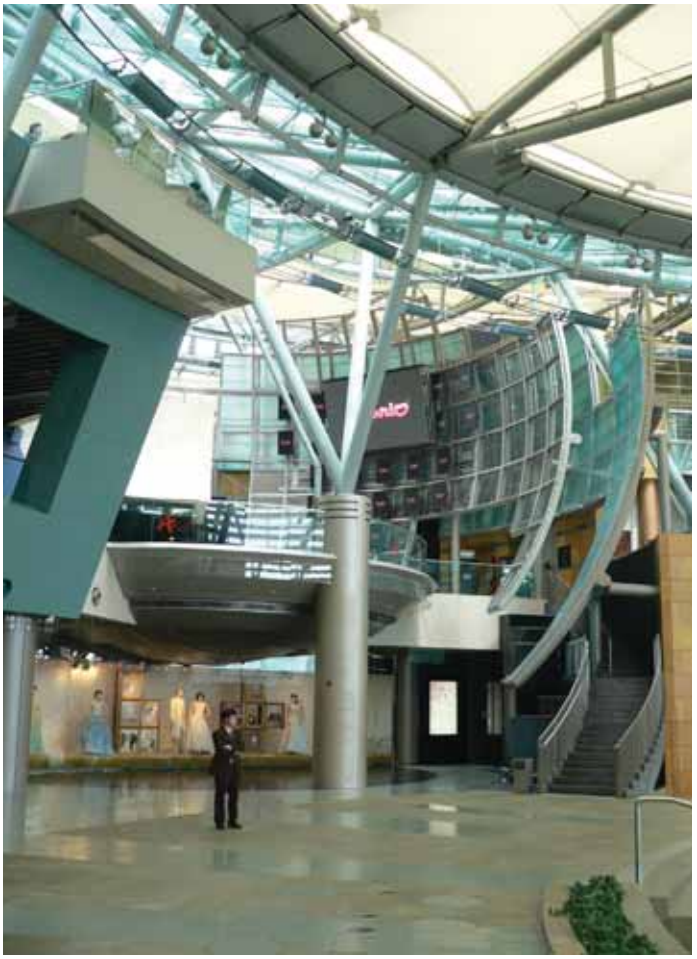


Figure 111
Inside the shopping mall, Cyberport, Hong Kong, 4 April 2008. Photo by the author.

active cultural lives as well as economic ones.

Sustaining the idea that Hong Kong was an equivalent to New York or London, despite the economic recession it was facing and its lack of basic democratic freedoms, was not easy. One cultural effort to raise the city's depressed mood and to kick-start the flagging tourist trade was the Harbourfest, a series of concerts held on the Tamar site, a prominent harbourfront location formerly the site of a colonial-era naval base but at that point in time lacking any defined role. The stars of these concerts were largely Western artists such as the Rolling Stones, and this served not to present Hong Kong as the equal of major Western cities but as their mimic.

A sign of the anxiety hidden by the 'world city' claim is the way Hong Kong's government officials and planners were to move constantly from one overseas city model to the next, with no closure proving possible. Detailed influences from New York or London were not to predominate, however: instead we saw the construction of a 'cyberport' (see Figure 111), an attempt to remake Silicon Valley in Hong Kong (albeit in miniature), and of a Hong Kong Disneyland (again a city-within-a-city solution, a confining of the haunting by civic otherness to one specific part of the urban topography). Fact-finding tours were also made during this period to Las Vegas (with the thought that tourism revenues might help restart economic growth) and to Bilbao (to examine the ways in which the Bilbao

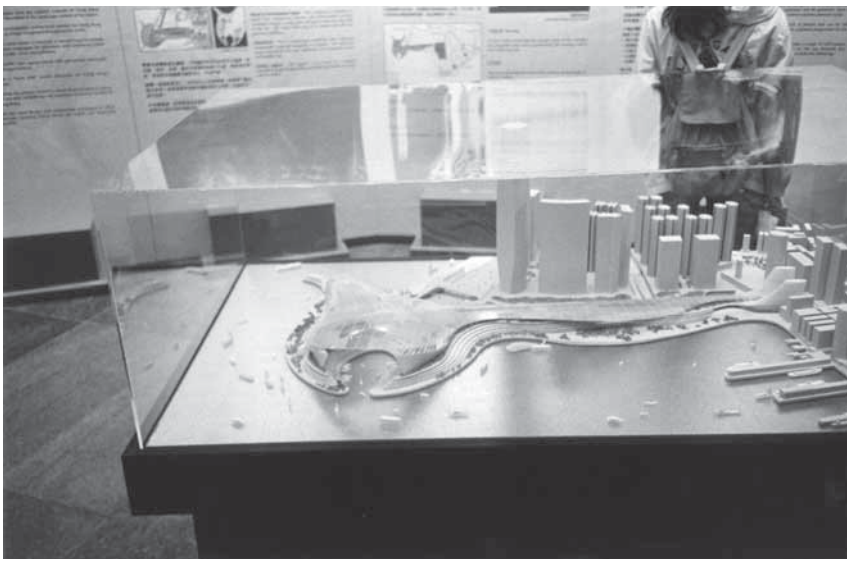


Figure 112
Architectural model of a proposed design for the West Kowloon Cultural District, featuring the Norman Foster canopy concept, placed on display in Hong Kong by a development consortium during a period of public consultation, 13 April 2002. Photo by the author.

Guggenheim Museum had helped to rejuvenate that city's image).[6] The sheer proliferation of cities now haunting Hong Kong, including those of much smaller scale, demonstrates the loss of a sense of identity and direction, and although Western examples have been highlighted here, cities of the Asia-Pacific region were also to influence Hong Kong's self-presentation as well. The West Kowloon Cultural District brief released in 2003 to developers bidding for involvement required them to incorporate a large Norman Foster–designed canopy over the entire project (see Figure 112).[7] One cannot help but see this as a third attempt to echo the Sydney Opera House on a waterfront site, with the sheer scale on this occasion meant to surpass the original model, thus drawing attention away from its belatedness.

A more serious haunting in this period was by Singapore, in economic terms a real rival to Hong Kong — for example as a possible alternative base for the regional headquarters of international companies. The competition between the two cities has been referred to in many newspaper reports, for instance, and on 23 November 2007 Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao even gave a public warning to Hong Kong Chief Executive Donald Tsang concerning what he perceived to be the strong competition from Singapore.[8] It is telling that when Hong Kong turned to image managers

Figure 113 (left) 'Asia's World City' dragon logo, illuminated sign on a roof near Pacific Place, Hong Kong, 29 October 2004. Photo by the author.

Figure 114 (right) Singapore's Merlion fountain sculpture, 11 April 2009. Photo by the author.

to come up with a symbol by means of which it could be marketed as distinctive, they provided it with a dragon logo (launched in May 2001 as part of the 'Brand Hong Kong' initiative, see Figure 113), thus echoing Singapore's use of a mythological animal, the Merlion (see Figure 114), as its own emblem.[9] Ironically, the Hong Kong government had needed to turn to international sources to get this advice about how best to define its own uniqueness, being unable to generate an answer to the question locally.[10] The dragon logo was widely criticized in Hong Kong when first launched, and political cartoonists were amongst those who ridiculed it (see Figure 115). Democracy activists quickly created a parody of it, even producing enamel badges of their version for distribution at rallies in imitation of those the Hong Kong government had produced of the original. In the official version the dragon's stylized body is made up of forms which are intended to refer to the letters 'H' and 'K' as well as to the Chinese characters for 'Hong Kong', so it was a simple matter to change the wording to create instead a call for democratic elections, arranging the appropriate characters into the form of a phoenix (the traditional female counterpart to the dragon in Chinese symbolism), facing in the opposite direction to the original logo. This counterpart logo, which pointed to the very issue which above all others was holding Hong Kong back from the civic maturity the official logo was trying to make claim to, has proved to have a longevity equal to its rival. On the 1 July 2009 demonstration (one of a series that have been

Figure 115
Cartoon of street sleeper from *Apple Daily* [Hong Kong] by Zunzi concerning the 'Asia's World City' dragon logo, 28 August 2001. Photo courtesy Zunzi.

held since 2003 on the anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region) it was still to be seen, and a temporary tattoo version was distributed to those participating.

Despite the nationalistic rhetoric that the Hong Kong government promulgated in the post-handover era, the actual relation between Hong Kong and other Chinese cities tended to involve as much competition as co-operation. Shanghai, as in the pre-handover era, was again the mainland city which most haunted Hong Kong, although now the focus was on the Shanghai of the present, not the Shanghai of the past. This newly resurgent city, recovering and overtaking its previous modernity, was even more than Singapore seen as a direct economic competitor, whether as financial centre, port or location for regional head office. A comforting statement in 2001 from Shanghai Mayor Xu Kuangdi that Hong Kong and Shanghai were like strikers in the same football team only served to point out the very anxiety it was trying to assuage, and a comment in 1999 by then Chinese senior leader Zhu Rongji (a former mayor of Shanghai himself)

that Shanghai would become China's New York, while Hong Kong should rather be compared to Toronto, only served to underline the mainland city's challenge to Hong Kong's world city ambition. In July 2001, Donald Tsang (now Hong Kong's chief executive but then chief secretary for administration), continued the East-West metaphorical competition with Shanghai begun by Zhu when he reaffirmed that Hong Kong could be compared to New York whereas Shanghai could be compared to Chicago.[11] While it is not yet so easy to see physical traces in Hong Kong of this verbally-expressed fear of Shanghai, I suspect that the nightly Symphony of Lights, a spectacle of lights projected onto and from the buildings of the Hong Kong Island skyline (see Figure 116), may have been inspired by the flashing lights, lasers and searchlights that can also be seen on various tall buildings in Shanghai (see Figure 117).

While for the most part I have been talking here of the haunting of Hong Kong by other cities as an anxiety creeping through official discourse that would prefer us to read it as self-confident in tone, and concerned with uniqueness rather than with mimicry and influence, there are also certain films or artworks by Hong Kong directors and artists which explore more openly the city's relation to its urban others. One example is Wong Kar-wai's movie *Happy Together*, which came out in 1997, the handover year. Although set in Buenos Aires, the Argentine location doesn't prevent the film from referring to Hong Kong experience, and not simply because the main protagonists, played by Tony Leung Chiu Wai and Leslie Cheung Kwok-Wing, are Hong Kong people communicating to each other in Cantonese. Although I think it would be wrong to see the film as a straightforward allegory about Hong Kong (I once had it explained to me that the two main characters in the film stand for Hong Kong and mainland China, while a third *putonghua*-speaking character who appears later on in the film represents Taiwan), nevertheless some oblique comment on post-handover life in the city seems intended, just as it is in Wong Kar-wai's 2004 film, *2046*, a science fiction work (at least in part), whose title refers to the year before Hong Kong's guaranteed fifty-year post-handover period of retaining its existing way of life comes to an end. This reading can be firmed up by noting that Buenos Aires is not just a city far away from Hong Kong with no obvious connection to it (not a city that haunts Hong Kong in other words), but is in fact a city more or less directly

Figure 116
Building with nighttime light display, Hong Kong, 2005. Photo by the author.

Figure 117
Building with nighttime light display, Shanghai, 2005. Photo by the author.

Figure 118
Inverted image of Hong Kong from *Happy Together* by Wong Kar-wai, 1997. Screen capture image.

at the antipodes of Hong Kong, so opposite to it that it becomes its twin. The Argentine setting thus becomes a way of finding a fresh point of view on Hong Kong, and this is even obliquely acknowledged within the film itself at one point when Hong Kong is alluded to: some footage of the city is inserted, but upside down, as if to remind us that we are viewing that place from an antipodean perspective (see Figure 118).

The inverted footage of Hong Kong comes just after the Tony Leung Chiu Wai character, Lai Yiu-fai, states in a voiceover the recognition that Hong Kong is on the opposite side of the world from Argentina. Shortly before this point in the film he has taken a job in an abattoir, working nights, and his voiceover has indicated that such a work schedule suits him since it puts him on Hong Kong time. Hong Kong is mentioned at various points during the film, but becomes more a focus of attention in the latter part (to which the previously mentioned episodes belong), for example with Lai making a phone call to his father there in a failed attempt at reconciliation. This culminates in Lai's final break with Ho Ping-Wing (the Leslie Cheung character) and his return to Asia. At the end of the film he is seen in Taipei, on a brief stopover on his way back to Hong Kong, but not in Hong Kong itself. Although in returning to Hong Kong Lai and Ho are now on 'the other side of the world from each other' (as Wong Kar-wai pointed out in a 1997 interview on the film), the return home comes across as a reconciliation — but with Hong Kong this time, rather than his former

partner. As Wong states: 'they start as exiles, and I think in the end it's a kind of return. He's going back to his daily life, his own cities, and going to face his own people'.[12] For this reason the soundtrack music 'Happy Together', which gives the film its title and which plays in its last moments as Lai is leaving Taiwan for Hong Kong, can be read as having affirmative connotations and not simply ironic ones. This more positive connotation of the track is accentuated since — very unusually for such non-diegetic film music — Wong has chosen to use a live recording in which sounds of audience appreciation serve to guide our own interpretive approach by offering a pre-existing frame.

Figure 119 (left) Hollywood Plaza, Diamond Hill, as shown in *Hollywood Hong Kong* by Fruit Chan , 2001. Screen capture image.

Figure 120 (right) Hollywood Plaza, Diamond Hill, and adjacent squatter housing, 30 April 2001. Photo by the author.

A product of a later, postcolonial moment than *Happy Together* in which the 'world city' rhetoric of the Hong Kong government had already been propagated, Fruit Chan's *Hollywood Hong Kong* (2001) seems intended as a direct critical response to that new civic rhetoric. Not only does it focus on the lives of a family of squatter hut dwellers whose reality is anything but globally-connected, it also (as the film's title itself indicates) makes play with attempts to sustain a comparison between Hong Kong and another valorized urban location. Chan does this by setting the action of his film in Diamond Hill, where in reality and not just in the world of the film a large shopping mall named 'Hollywood Plaza' overlooked a squatter village — until the latter's eventual clearance around the time of the film's making (see Figures 119 and 120).

Figure 121
Warren Leung Chi-wo, *Frank Lin Meets Broad Wai*, 1999. Photo courtesy the artist.

Since Hollywood is so strongly associated with film making, Chan's invocation of it in his film title might also be said to remind us of the rush towards that location which was a feature of Hong Kong cinema during this post-1997 era (with such results as John Woo's *Face Off* of 1997). Tong Tong, a mainland Chinese prostitute and the main female character in *Hollywood Hong Kong*, dreams of going to America and eventually succeeds in doing so, offering another sense in which the film links the two locations mentioned in its title. This departure for America echoes that of the Faye Wong character at the end of Wong Kar-wai's *Chungking Express* (1994), which makes a play between a Hong Kong restaurant named 'California' and the American state of the same name (referenced also in the soundtrack via the song 'California Dreaming').

Amongst visual artists to look at Hong Kong in relation to other cities is Warren Leung Chi-wo, whose photographic images of urban skyscapes have featured the city but also others he has lived in or visited such as New York, Venice or Shanghai (for example, *Chambers*, 1999). By focusing on the sky, or rather the silhouette of the sky as framed by a city's architecture viewed from below, Leung finds an aspect that links all cities together. Although different cities may have different characteristic silhouettes, the sky at least is something they all have in common. This may lead one to see a continuity between works of this kind made in Hong Kong and those made elsewhere, but the relationship between the cities he images can even be inscribed within the images themselves. One of his New York works, *Frank Lin meets Broad Wai* of 1999 (see Figure 121), for instance, makes punning connections between actual street names denoting an intersection in Lower Manhattan (represented through four different silhouettes captured in photos taken in different directions from the same location) and fabricated equivalents of the kind of English personal names of Chinese people one might encounter in Hong Kong. In *Crossing Sky* of 2001 (see Figure 122) there is a different and more explicit kind of entanglement or cross-infection between cities: here the skyline is a fabricated hybrid, including elements of both Hong Kong and Venetian architecture to produce the silhouette. This silhouette was also used as a template for constructing a chandelier and for baking shaped cookies, which were part of Leung's work presented in Venice on the first occasion Hong Kong was represented at the Venice Biennale. Seven photographic images of the

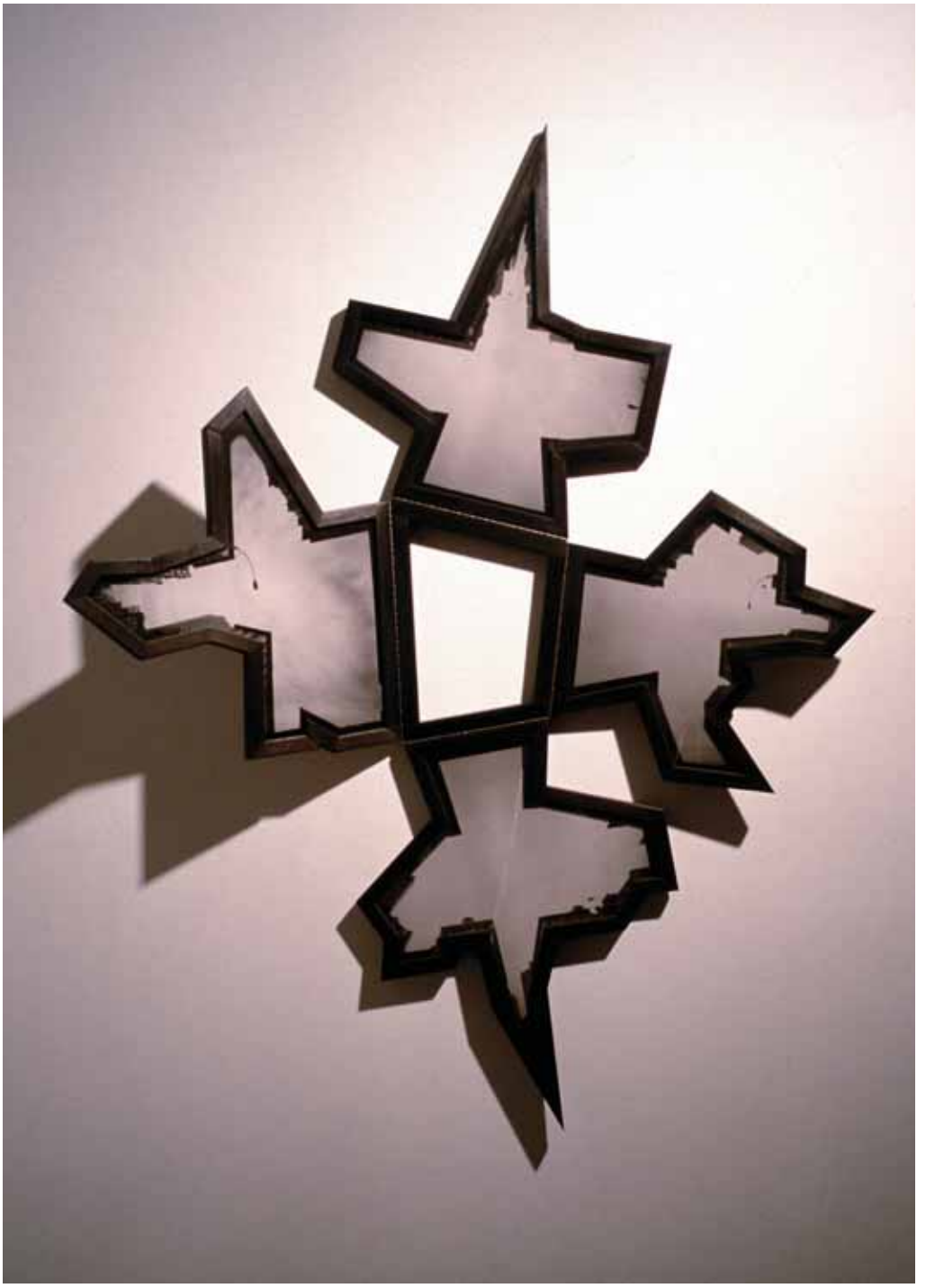


Figure 122
Warren Leung Chi-wo, *Crossing Sky*, 2001. Photo courtesy the artist.

Hong Kong skyline and seven of the Venetian skyline were also used in Leung's work, being presented on table-tops: the spectator was invited to look downwards at images of skylines made with the camera pointing upwards (see Figure 123).[13]

Of course, Biennales are nowadays a commonplace part of international artistic culture, but it is not surprising that Hong Kong's first venture to the Venice Biennale, in 2001, came in the post-handover era of anxiety about

Figure 123
Warren Leung Chi-wo, *Crossing Sky*, 2001 — detail of photographic image on a table-top as installed in the Hong Kong Venice Biennale pavilion. Photo courtesy the artist.

civic identity that I am referring to here, and not at an earlier date (as had been the case with Taiwan, for instance). Representing Hong Kong artists at Venice was one part of the city's aspiration to world-class status, and the speech given at the Hong Kong exhibition's opening by the then chair of the Hong Kong Arts Development Council, Patrick Ho (later to become secretary of home affairs in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region government), drew parallels between Hong Kong and Venice as cities, even mentioning Tai O, a Hong Kong fishing village with stilt houses often referred to as 'the Venice of Hong Kong'.[14] In the 2005 Venice Biennale a linking and even identification between Hong Kong and Venice occurred again when Stanley Wong Ping-pui recreated a 'Hong Kong' teahouse in the Hong Kong pavilion with his work *redwhiteblue: Tea and Chat* (see Figure 124).[15]

While Biennales and city-to-city cultural exchange projects (which have proliferated in Hong Kong in recent years) might by their very structure encourage artists to think about the relationship between cities, one further

Figure 124
Stanley Wong Ping-pui, *redwhiteblue: Tea and Chat*, Hong Kong pavilion, Venice Biennale, 2005. Photo by the author.

artistic project I want to mention was produced outside any such frame. This is Young Hay's *Bonjour Young Hay (After Courbet)*, a performance project made in collaboration with various photographers which took place over several years in a number of different cities. The first part took place in Hong Kong in 1995, but the other segments belong to the post-handover period I am trying to specify here, involving New York and Berlin performances in 1998 and a Beijing performance in 2000 (see Figure 125). Only in the final, exhibitable photographic form (the photographic collaborators being from the cities represented) can cross-city comparison be made, and because Hong Kong was the first city documented and the one from which the artist has journeyed, one inevitably compares the works produced in the other cities primarily with the ones produced there.

Structured almost like a scientific experiment to enable and encourage cross-city comparison, in that it keeps one important factor constant in order to enable the changes in other variables to be observed, Young Hay's work involved the artist moving across cityscapes with a blank canvas strapped to his back. In my personal opinion the sequence shot in Beijing — the last city visited — is the most interesting. Partly this might be, I would suggest, because it is the city of the three which most haunts Hong Kong (despite the parallels that exist between Hong Kong and Berlin, the one containing a capitalist enclave in a Communist country which

Figure 125
Young Hay, *Bonjour Young Hay (After Courbet)*, 2000. Photo courtesy the artist.

later — along with the rest of West Germany — absorbed its Communist hinterland, and the other being a capitalist enclave in a Communist country which was later reabsorbed by it). As the capital of the country Hong Kong has now been reunited with, a post-handover journey to Beijing had particular resonances, which Young Hay's work investigates.[16]

The works of these artists explore dimensions of the relationship between cities that differ from those of official civic rhetoric, and in Yeung Hay's case they venture towards the realm of the political (security officials initially attempted to prevent him undertaking his performance in Tiananmen Square, for instance). For an unofficial identification with another city, a haunting by it that has a more overtly political dimension, we would need to turn to the realm of street politics, and in particular to the annual rally held in Hong Kong's Victoria Park to commemorate the events of 4 June 1989 in Beijing's Tiananmen Square. Because the rally has at its centre a small scale mock-up of Tiananmen Square's Monument to the People's Heroes (although with its calligraphic inscription changed

Figure 126
Replica of the Monument to the People's Heroes in Tiananmen Square, as placed in Victoria Park, Hong Kong, 4 June 2005. Photo by the author.

to make a call for democracy), there is a sense in which the participants at the rally are not simply remembering events that happened in that Beijing location, but are making an imaginative recreation of those events, making Beijing present — by virtue of a collective theatrical gesture — in the here and now of Hong Kong (see Figure 126). Here the haunting of one city by another becomes overt, and one might even want to describe it as something more extreme, as a state of possession, albeit one that was voluntarily chosen.

Notes

Introduction

1. Even a recent and ostensibly revisionist textbook of modern art history, Hal Foster, Rosalind Krauss, Yves-Alain Bois, and Benjamin H. D. Buchloh's co-authored volume *Art since 1900: Modernism, Antimodernism, Postmodernism* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2004), marginalizes non-Western modern art, allowing it to enter the discussion only intermittently and as structurally marginal to the presentation of European and American art.
2. I discuss Greenberg's attempt to Americanize the narrative of modern art in David Clarke, 'The All-Over Image: Meaning in Abstract Art', *Journal of American Studies* 27, no. 3 (1993): 355–75.
3. I offer introductions to twentieth-century Chinese art as a whole which require no background understanding of Chinese art history in David Clarke, *Modern Chinese Art* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 2000), and David Clarke, 'Revolutions in Vision: Chinese Art and the Experience of Modernity', in *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Chinese Culture*, ed. Kam Louie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 272–96.
4. On recent Chinese artists who have worked in Europe, North America and Australia, see particularly Melissa Chiu, *Breakout: Chinese Art outside China* (Milan: Charta, 2006). Concerning the topic of Chinese art's engagement with Western art as a whole, the foundational study is Michael Sullivan's *The Meeting of Eastern and Western Art*, rev. ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).
5. When considering the Chinese diaspora one should not simply focus on the Chinese presence in Western countries, but should also note the longstanding pattern of Chinese migration to other parts of Asia. Although well outside the national borders of China itself, Singapore could also be thought of as in some sense a 'Chinese' cultural space because of the concentration of people of ethnic Chinese origin in that multicultural city.

6. For a study which analyzes recent art from Beijing against that city's physical environment and specific modern history see Wu Hung, *Remaking Beijing: Tiananmen Square and the Creation of a Political Space* (London: Reaktion Books, 2005). Although the cultural heterogeneity of contemporary Chinese cities such as Beijing and Shanghai is in large part a consequence of their recent economic development, even in earlier phases of modern history one can point to ways in which Chinese cities were markedly heterogeneous in cultural terms. Shanghai of the Republican period, for instance, gained a cultural heterogeneity from the existence of foreign concessions in the city. While we are accustomed to emphasizing the negative aspects of such foreign intrusion, at the cultural level the presence of such overseas enclaves as Shanghai's French Concession also had a positive side in enabling exposure to overseas culture without the need for travel. See for example Leo Lee, *Shanghai Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930–1945* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).

Chapter 1

1. *Gazetteer & New Daily Advertiser*, 22 May 1774, cited in Geraldine Mozley, *The Blakes of Rotherhithe* (London and Southampton: The Camelot Press Ltd., 1935), 28. John Bradby Blake died in Canton in November 1773, aged twenty-eight.
2. *St. James's Chronicle*, 7–10 May 1774, cited in Mozley, *The Blakes of Rotherhithe*, 27. Even George Anson, an early British visitor to China who held a generally poor opinion of Chinese artists, was nevertheless to express some admiration of Chinese flower and bird paintings, see Richard Walter and Benjamin Robins, *A Voyage Round the World in the Years MDCCXL, I, II, III, IV by George Anson*, ed. and with intro. by Glyndwr Williams (London: Oxford University Press, 1974 [first edition May 1748]), 367. On British interest in Chinese plants, see Fa-ti Fan, 'Science in a Chinese Entrepôt: British Naturalists and Their Chinese Associates in Old Canton', *Osiris* 18 (2003): 60–78.
3. The Blake images are catalogued by the Natural History Museum, London as *Water-colour drawings of Chinese plants by a native artist, with their Chinese names, and 16 other drawings subsequently intercalated*.
4. William Chambers, *Designs of Chinese Buildings, Furniture, Dresses, Machines and Utensils* (London: published for the author, 1757), 14. Chambers was in Canton between 1743–45 and 1748–49. A letter to William Chambers from his brother John (Gothenburg, 3 July 1756, held in the archive of the Royal Academy of Arts, London) responds to a query made in a now untraceable earlier letter of June 1756: 'As I have no manner of notion of architecture I have no designs of the Chinese houses', suggesting a lack of visual information for his book, despite the commissioned Chinese images and those he is known to have made himself: Olof Toreen, for instance, mentions a drawing by Chambers of a machine to aid with the irrigation of rice crops in his *Voyage to Suratte*, published in English along with Pehr Osbeck's *A Voyage to China and the East Indies* (London: Benjamin White, 1771), Vol. II, 223.
5. Chambers, *Designs of Chinese Buildings*, 14 and 19. H. F. Clark, in 'Eighteenth Century Elysiums: The Rôle of "Association" in the Landscape Movement', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 6 (1943): 180, suggests that Jean Denis Attiret, the French missionary who worked as a painter for the Chinese emperor in Peking, is

the main source that Chambers draws upon for his knowledge of Chinese gardens. Attiret's *A Particular Account of the Emperor of China's Gardens Near Pekin* (1749) was published in an English translation by Harry Beaumont in 1752 (London: printed for R. Dodsley).

6. Pehr Osbeck, *A Voyage to China and the East Indies*, Vol. 1 (London: Benjamin White, 1771), 221–22. This account occurs in the section of the book referring to 1751.
7. Toreen, *Voyage to Suratte*, Vol. II, 244.
8. Toreen, *Voyage to Suratte*, Vol. II, 245.
9. Clipping, headed 'Journal of a Voyage in the Indian Seas', dated only as 1 July, from the *Monthly Magazine*, p. 530, in the Whitley Papers, British Museum Prints and Drawings Room. The source and date of the account are given in a later part of the narrative dated 1 September. A similar exchange is noted by John Nicol in his account of one of his stays in eighteenth-century Canton: 'They [the Chinese] appear to me to be excellent copiers, but not inventors. One of our officers sat for a painter to draw his picture and told the Chinese not to make him ugly. "How can make other than is?" was the reply. He had no idea of altering a single feature to add to the looks of the object he was painting'. See *The Life and Adventures of John Nicol, Mariner*, ed. and with intro. by Tim Flannery (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2000), 160.
10. *Memoirs of William Hickey*, ed. Alfred Spencer (London: Hurst and Blackett, Ltd., 1913), 227–28.
11. Only two previous studies of Chitqua's art in article form exist, and both are brief pieces produced more than half a century ago: Aubrey J. Toppin, 'Chitqua, The Chinese Modeller, and Wang-Y-Tong, the "Chinese Boy"', *Transactions of the English Ceramic Circle* 2, no. 8 (1942): 149–52; and David Piper, 'A Chinese Artist in England', *Country Life*, 18 July 1952, 198–99. Chitqua's work is also mentioned in the context of a more general discussion of Chinese portrait sculptures of British and Danish subjects of the eighteenth century in R. J. Charleston, 'Chinese Face-makers', *Antiques*, May 1958, 459–61, and analogous Dutch examples which also provide a context for understanding Chitqua are introduced in A. M. Lubberhuizen-Van Gelder, 'De factorijen te Canton in de 18de eeuw' ('The Factories at Canton in the Eighteenth Century'), *Oud-Holland* 70 (1955, reprinted by Kraus Reprint, Lichtenstein, 1976): 162–71. Equally useful is Craig Clunas, '"Moulding a Physiognomy" — A Chinese Portrait Figure', *V & A Album* 3 (1984): 46–51, which discusses an early Chinese portrait sculpture from the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Joost C. A. Schokkenbroek, 'Versteend verleden: Chinese portretbeeldjes in de collectie van het Nederlands Scheepvaartmuseum Amsterdam' ('The past in stone: Portrait figures in the collection of the Dutch Maritime Museum'), *Vormen uit Vuur* 203 (2008): 2–13 (with English summary on p. 46) introduces examples from the collection of the Dutch Maritime Museum in Amsterdam, but has a broader usefulness than its title might suggest since it discusses other examples too and contains on pp. 12–13 a helpful table which brings together all the surviving examples of Chinese portrait figures known to the author. Chitqua is also discussed in passing in various art historical accounts of British art of the eighteenth century or of China trade art such as Carl L. Crossman, *The Decorative Arts of the China Trade* (Woodbridge: The Antique Collectors Club, 1991), 314–15. Jack Lee Sai Chong discusses Chitqua in 'China Trade Paintings: 1750s to 1880s'

(PhD thesis, University of Hong Kong, 2005). The whole of his second chapter (pp. 32–58) is given over to the discussion of clay portraits made for the export market, and Chitqua is discussed on pp. 47–58. The earliest reference to Chitqua in the art historical literature (and the basis for much that has been written about the artist at a later date) is William T. Whitley, *Artists and Their Friends in England, 1700–1799*, Vol. I (London and Boston: The Medici Society, 1928), 269–73. For reasons of space, Whitley did not cite sources for most of the points he makes in his study, but his detailed notes (as well as various clippings) are in the Whitley Papers, held in the Prints and Drawings Room of the British Museum.

12. See the *Gentleman's Magazine* XLI, May 1771, 237 (also reprinted in John Nichols, *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century, Consisting of Authentic Memoirs and Original Letters of Eminent Persons*, Vol. V [London: J. B. Nichols and Son, 1828], 319) and Frank Brady and Frederick A. Pottle, *Boswell in Search of a Wife, 1766–1769* (Melbourne, London and Toronto: William Heinemann Ltd, 1957), 317. Boswell notes that he was taken to meet Chitqua (whom he does not mention by name) by 'Mr. John Donaldson, the bookseller'.

13. Richard Gough, letter of 3 August 1770 to the Rev. B. Forster, in Nichols, *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century,* Vol. V, 318. Gough's father Harvey Gough (1681–1751) went to China for trade, keeping accounts for his uncle Sir Richard Gough, and was apparently known to his Chinese contacts as 'Ami Whangi'.

14. William Chambers, *A Dissertation on Oriental Gardening, Second Edition with additions to which is annexed an explanatory discourse by Tan Chet-qua of Quang-Chew-fu, Gent*. (London: W. Griffin, 1773). An analogous but slightly earlier and more acknowledged piece of cultural ventriloquism was performed by Oliver Goldsmith when he published in the *Public Ledger* (as a series of letters) his 'The Citizen of the World', satirical comments on British society purportedly written by a Chinese visitor to England, 'Lien Chi Altangi'. A Canton merchant named 'Tan Chetqua' (who died in 1771 and who thus cannot be identified with the modeller Chitqua) is mentioned by C. J. A. Jörg (see *Porcelain and the Dutch China Trade* [The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982], 70–71, 114, 118 and 338).

15. See for instance the table of names given opposite p. 1 of Weng Eang Cheong, *The Hong Merchants of Canton: Chinese Merchants in Sino-Western Trade* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 1997).

16. Richard Gough, letter of 3 August 1770 to the Rev. B. Forster, in Nichols, *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century*, Vol. V, 318.

17. *Gentleman's Magazine* XLI, May 1771, 237.

18. See Richard C. Cole with Peter S. Baker and Rachel McClellan, eds., *The General Correspondence of James Boswell, 1766–1769* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), 267n8; and Brady and Pottle, *Boswell in Search of a Wife*, 317.

19. For Thomas Bentley's letter see Llewellynn Jewitt, *The Wedgwoods: Being a Life of Josiah Wedgwood* (London: Virtue Brothers and Co, 1865), 209–10.

20. See Godfrey Bosville, letter of 11 December 1769 to James Boswell, in Cole with Baker and McClellan, eds., *The General Correspondence of James Boswell, 1766–1769*, 266. Bosville, who had not met Chitqua at the time of writing his letter (and who was unaware that Boswell already had), mentions that Walton was an acquaintance

of Captain Bosville, presumably a relative. 'John Walton, esq. Supracargo, and John Arnot esq' are listed as passengers on the return journey in the ship's journal of the *Horsendon* (held in the India Office records, British Library).

21. Richard Gough, letter of 3 August 1770 to the Rev. B. Forster, in Nichols, *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century*, Vol. V, 318.
22. See Brady and Pottle, *Boswell in Search of a Wife*, 317.
23. See the *Gentleman's Magazine* XLI, May 1771, 237 and *The Exhibition of the Royal Academy MDCCLXX The Second* (printed by W. Griffin, 1770), 22. Although most buildings in that area today are of later date, St. Clement Danes church, which would have been the major landmark of that area in Chitqua's time, still stands. Twinings tea shop is also still on the same site it occupied at that time. Contemporary sources indicate that the area between the Strand and the Thames contained places of lodging. On Arundel Street (built 1678) and Norfolk Street (built 1682), which were linked by Howard Street, see Walter Thornbury, *Old and New London: Volume 3* (London, Paris and New York: Cassell, Petter and Galpin, 1878), 63–84.
24. See the *Gentleman's Magazine* XLI, May 1771, 237.
25. Charles Hardy, *A Register of Ships, Employed in the Service of the Honorable the United East India Company, from the Year 1760 to 1810* (London: Black, Parry and Kingsbury, 1811), 31, notes the *Horsendon* arriving at the 'Downs' on 11 August 1769. Documentation with a covering date of 21 August 1769 from the British National Archives Records of the Admiralty (Navy Board: Records ADM 106/1184/117) notes that 'The *Horsendon*, Captain Jamison [*sic*], from China, came alongside the Nightingale at the 3rd moorings, on the 19th'. No reference to Chitqua as a passenger on the *Horsenden* can however be found in the ship's journal.
26. See the *Gentleman's Magazine* XLI, May 1771, 237. Gough mentions that he had believed there was a general ban on overseas travel for Chinese subjects at that time, but was subsequently told (maybe by Chitqua himself, although the wording is unclear on this point) that it was possible to leave on payment of a sum equivalent to £10. See Richard Gough, letter of 3 August 1770 to the Rev. B. Forster, in Nichols, *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century*, Vol. V, 318.
27. Curiosity was also cited as the motivation in the case of another early Chinese visitor to Europe. In Francis Froger, *A Journal of the First French Embassy to China, 1698–1700* (London: Thomas Cautley Newby, 1859), 151, we learn of a Father Fontaney keeping one of his Chinese servants with him when he left Canton because he 'was curious to see France'.
28. See Richard Gough, letter of 3 August 1770 to the Rev. B. Forster, in Nichols, *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century*, Vol. V, 318. Gough writes: 'He told me he could get no earth here for his work, whence I conclude he brought over a cargo'.
29. For Thomas Bentley's letter see Jewitt, *The Wedgwoods*, 209–10.
30. See Brady and Pottle, *Boswell in Search of a Wife*, 317.
31. Gough writes (in his letter of 3 August 1770 to the Rev. B. Forster, in Nichols, *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century*, Vol. V, 318): 'He said the Emperor of China had no name, and that there were no distinctions of titles amongst

their nobility as amongst us'. One can perhaps see in this exchange an implicit assumption of China and England as broadly comparable in their political structure.

32. See Brady and Pottle, *Boswell in Search of a Wife*, 317. The Chinese visitor Johnson had previously met could have been the merchant 'Loum Kiqua', who was in England in 1756. Boswell's *Life of Samuel Johnson* records an interest Johnson expressed in visiting the Great Wall of China, and elsewhere a conversation with Boswell concerning Chinese art and language (both in 1778). See James Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson* (Ware: Wordsworth Editions, 2008), 654 and 691. See also Tsen-chung Fan, *Dr. Johnson and Chinese Culture* (London: The China Society, 1945) and Adrian Hsia, *The Vision of China in English Literature of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1998). Another Chinese merchant from Canton to travel to Europe in the eighteenth century was Poankeequa (1714–1788) who visited Stockholm in the 1740s, see Jörg, *Porcelain and the Dutch China Trade*, 70.

33. For Thomas Bentley's letter see Jewitt, *The Wedgwoods*, 209–10.

34. See p. 276 of William Sargent, 'Asia in Europe: Chinese Paintings for the West', in *Encounters: The Meeting of Asia and Europe, 1500–1800*, ed. Anna Jackson and Amir Jaffer (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 2004), 271–81. An image from the album, *Liang, the First Minister*, is reproduced on the same page. Information about this album, and Chitqua's involvement with it, was kindly provided by William Sargent in an email to the author on 27 May 2003, and by Dave O'Ryan in a series of emails in May, June and August 2009.

35. 'Of some other figures of women, he [Chitqua] gave the following account. In three or four thousand years time, the Chinese have had four very celebrated Beauties'.

36. 'Tshao kiun. La dame Tchao, No. 22, was another of those famous beauties. She was likewise the second wife of one of their princes, who was a very weak man (a fooly man in Chequa's way of talking) who neglected his affairs. A Tartar king fell in love with her, & her husband to prevent a war, yielded her up to him. For this reason she is represented with the Tartar headdress of furs, over her Chinese garments, and to show her change of country, is standing by a tent in a wood of leafless trees.'

37. 'Neither did he know any thing more of Niu yuen choui la Femme Generale, No. 21, but that she was a woman who fought, and commanded soldiers.'

38. See Lemuel Dole Nelme, *An Essay towards an Investigation of the Origin and Elements of Language and Letters* (London: printed by T. Spilsbury for S. Leacroft, 1772), 19. Nelme (who died in 1796) was involved with the Royal Society of Arts in the late 1760s.

39. See Frances Wood, 'Curiosities of the British Library Chinese Collection', in *Chinese Studies,* British Library Occasional Papers 10, ed. Frances Wood (London: The British Library, 1988), 99–100. As Wood notes (pp. 98–99), a seventeenth-century Chinese visitor, the Catholic convert Shen Fuzong who was brought to Europe by Couplet, had similarly been invited to catalogue the Chinese books of the Bodleian Library in Oxford. T. H. Barrett, *A Singular Listlessness: A Short History of Chinese Books and British Scholars* (London: Wellsweep Press, 1989), 46n1, notes that Wang-Y-Tong (here given as 'What at Tong') 'placed in order' various works for St. John's College Oxford in June 1775. For an account of Wang-Y-Tong being asked to help decipher Chinese writing see 'Hints Respecting the Chinese Language', in *The Bee, or Literary*

Weekly Intelligencer, Vol. 11, ed. James Anderson (Edinburgh: printed for the editor, 1792), 48–52 (the account is given in a letter dated 13 February 1775, included on pp. 50–52). An image of a Chinese plant, *Saxifraga stolonifera,* by Mary Delany (collage of coloured papers, with bodycolour and watercolour, and a leaf sample, on black ink background, collection British Museum, Prints and Drawings, catalogue number 1897,0505.778) has on its verso an inscription 'A Chinese plant — the name written by Whanga at Tong, The China man as he call'd himself'. This Chinese name is given on a label attached to the lower left of the image, which also has a romanization and an English translation as 'Old Tygers Ear'. A colour reproduction may be found in *Yingguo yu Shijie, 1714–1830 nian* (*Britain Meets the World, 1714–1830*) (Beijing: Zijincheng Chubanshe, 2007), 233 (catalogue of an exhibition held at the National Palace Museum, Beijing).

40. Information kindly provided by Frances Wood in email correspondence with the author dated 15 April 2009. All the books Chitqua would have seen in the British Museum are now in the possession of the British Library. The British Library catalogue number of the medical text is: 15252.a.5.

41. Gough wrote of Chitqua's meeting with the King: 'when I asked him if he had seen the King, he said yes, and the King's mother too'. Princess Augusta, the mother of George III, lived till 1772. The pagoda was not the only (or the first) 'Chinese' feature to be constructed at Kew, see H. F. Clark, 'Eighteenth Century Elysiums', 165–89. On Chambers's work at Kew and his relationship with George III see the chapters by John Harris and Jane Roberts respectively in *Sir William Chambers, Architect to George III*, eds. John Harris and Michael Snodin (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996). Chambers was made joint Architect to the King on George III's accession in 1760 (with Robert Adam), and became Comptroller of the Works in 1769, the year of Chitqua's arrival in London.

42. See Whitley, *Artists and their Friends*, Vol. I, 248–50.

43. An account of the dinner is given in a clipping of unknown source (but possibly from either the *Morning Post* or the *Middlesex Journal*), dated 26 April 1770, in the news clippings book held in the Royal Academy of Arts archive:

    Last Monday being the day before the exhibition of the Royal Academy, the Academicians gave a grand dinner in their great room in Pall Mall, where their guests consisting of many of the nobility, remarkable for their taste or patronage of the polite arts, and Gentlemen celebrated for their will or learning, had the double pleasure of feasting not only their appetites but their eyes, with a splendid profusion of excellent paintings which particularly distinguish this year's exhibition. The following noblemen and gentlemen were present [. . .] the Hon Mr. Horace Walpole, [. . .] Edmund Burke, Charles Jennens, [. . .] David Garrick, George Colman, Samuel Foote, William Whitehead, [. . .] Mr. Chitqua'.

    On Garrick's involvement with Chinese-themed productions see Fan, *Dr. Johnson and Chinese Culture*, 17. On Horace Walpole's *Letters from Xo Ho* and other mid-eighteenth century British literary involvement with China, see Chen Shou-yi, 'Oliver Goldsmith and his Chinese Letters', *T'ien Hsia Monthly* VIII, no. 1 (January 1939): 34–52. Walpole had a 'Chinese Closet' at Strawberry Hill, see Horace Walpole, *A Description of the Villa of Mr. Horace Walpole* (Twickenham: 1784, printed by Thomas Kirgate), but was opposed to a faux-Chinese taste in gardens, attacking Chambers's

A Dissertation on Oriental Gardening in a 25 May 1772 letter to the Rev. Mason as 'more extravagant than the worst Chinese [wall]paper' (W. S. Lewis, ed., *The Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, Vol. 28, [London: Oxford University Press, 1955], 34).

44. See *The Exhibition of the Royal Academy MDCCLXX The Second*, 22. The exhibition, which was open every day except Sunday, 8am till 7pm, continued till Saturday 26 May 1770.

45. Cited from a clipping in the Whitley Papers, Prints and Drawings Room, British Museum. This was the old Somerset House, of which the Royal Academy had been one of the last tenants: Chambers's building was begun in 1776, with the first phase ready for use in 1780. The Royal Academy exhibition of that year was held there.

46. On Cox and his trade with Canton see Roger Smith, 'James Cox (c. 1723–1800): A Revised Biography', *The Burlington Magazine* 142, no. 1167 (June 2000): 353–61. Cox's son, John Henry Cox, was to travel to Canton in 1781, and he died there in 1791. T. C. Fan (in 'Sir William Jones's Chinese Studies', *The Review of English Studies* 22, no. 88 [October 1946]: 309) notes him as apparently attempting to collaborate while in Canton on a translation of the Chinese *Classic of Poetry* (*Shi Jing*). On this attempted translation see also Garland Cannon, *The Life and Mind of Oriental Jones* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 265–66 and 318–19. On Merlin see Anne French and Michael Wright, *John Joseph Merlin: The Ingenious Mechanick* (London: Iveagh Bequest and Greater London Council, 1985).

47. Walpole commented that Zoffany 'made no design for it' and that he 'clapt in the artists as they came to him'. See V. Manners and G. C. Williamson, *John Zoffany, R. A. His Life and Work. 1735–1810* (London: John Lane, the Bodley Head, 1920), 28.

48. David Piper, 'A Chinese Artist in England', 199. Piper spells the name as 'Grignon' rather than 'Grignion'. Ashmolean Museum Oxford [compiler David Blayney Brown], *Catalogue of the Collection of Drawings*, Vol. IV (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1938), 363 notes that a portrait of Chitqua (presumably this one) and studies of several of the other sitters for Zoffany's group portrait (Hunter, Nollekens, Richards, West and Wilton) were sold as Lot 230 of the 'Fitzroy Newdegate Sale'. This was presumably a sale which took place after the death on 2 January 1936 of Sir Francis Alexander Newdigate Newdegate of Arbury Hall, near Nuneaton, Warwickshire. Newdegate's estates were inherited by his daughter Lucia, who had married John Maurice Fitzroy in 1919.

49. See Ashmolean Museum Oxford, *Catalogue of the Collection of Drawings*, Vol. IV, 362–63.

50. See David Blayney Brown, 'A Chinaman Found in Western Art', *The Ashmolean* 6 (Christmas 1984–Easter 1985), 10–11. An academy study of a male nude can be found on the verso of the image. The provenance and date of accession to the collection are unknown. Thanks to Colin Harrison of the Ashmolean for bringing this article to my attention, and for enabling me to view the work.

51. See *A Catalogue of the Pictures, Sculptures, Models, Designs in Architecture, Drawings, Prints, &c. exhibited at the Great Room in Spring Gardens, Charing Cross, April the twenty-sixth, 1771, by the Royal Incorporated Society of Artists of Great Britain*, 1771, printed for the Society, p. 9. Mortimer's work, *A Portrait of Chit Qua, the Chinese Modeler, a three quarters*, is listed as No. 86 in the catalogue.

52. See *The Hunterian Museum Volunteers Newsletter*, accessed 24 June 2008, http://www.rcseng.ac.uk/museums/beinvolved/Newsletter%20Issue%203.pdf. Piper mentions the Mortimer work as lost.

53. Wang's Chinese name (given here in pinyin romanization) is identified by Sheila O'Connell as 'Huang Yadong' (see *Yingguo yu Shijie*, 230–31 and 383–84), although the documentary information which enables this identification is not stated. In her catalogue entry O'Connell gives the old identification of the Royal College of Surgeons of England portrait as of Wang.

54. There are three Reynolds images of Wang-Y-Tong: see Algernon Graves and William Vine Cronin, *A History of the Works of Sir Joshua Reynolds*, Vol. III (London: Henry Graves and Co, 1899–1901), 1028–29. One of the three portraits is erroneously described by Graves and Cronin as being of Chitqua (*Wang-y-tong or Tanchequa*). There is also confusion at one point in Whitley's papers: he erroneously states that a now-untraceable painting by Serres of 'Loum Kiqua', another earlier Chinese visitor to London (known through a print by Thomas Burford), is of Chitqua. Through his association with Knole, Sevenoaks, the home of George Frederick Sackville, third Duke of Dorset, Wang-Y-Tong was also to appear in a working drawing by Thomas Gainsborough for his portrait in oil of the Duke's mistress, Giovanna Baccelli (first exhibited 1782, now in the Tate collection).

55. The collection as it now stands (it entered the possession of the Royal College of Surgeons in 1799, after Hunter's death) contains for example such paintings as *A Labrador Woman* (1773, artist unknown) and *Omai* (William Hodges). Some items of less relevance to Hunter's collection were sold in 1794, and paintings were also added to the collection after his time.

56. A manuscript list of 1816 entitled 'A List of Paintings and Drawings framed and glazed, numbered according to the Situation in which they were placed round the rail of the gallery in Mr. Hunter's museum in Castle Street Leicester Square' is referred to in documentation held in the archives of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, which lists 'Portrait of a Chinese Mandarin' as No. 27, indicating that the image of Chitqua was indeed displayed in Hunter's gallery.

57. See John Sunderland, *John Hamilton Mortimer, His Life and Works* (printed for The Walpole Society by W. S. Maney and Son as Vol. 52, 1988), 142. The Chitqua portrait is reproduced as Plate 95, and dated to 1771. It is given as in a private collection. This work was exhibited in Brighton in 1986, and is illustrated in colour in the accompanying catalogue, Patrick Conner, *The China Trade: 1600–1860* (Brighton: The Royal Pavilion, Art Gallery and Museums, 1986), 85.

58. See Gordon Wolstenholme, ed., *The Royal College of Physicians of London. Portraits* (London: J and A Churchill Ltd, 1964), 34. A letter from the donor in the Royal College archive dated 29 January 1831 offers 'the curious little clay figure of my father' to the College. Askew had been a member of the Royal College of Physicians from 1753, hence the gift to this body, which owns an extensive collection of medical portraits.

59. On portraits of medical figures in eighteenth-century Britain, and an argument for the importance of portraiture for medical identity, see Ludmilla Jordanova, 'Portraits, People and Things: Richard Mead and Medical Identity', *History of Science* 41, no. 133 (September 2003): 293–314. See also Ludmilla Jordanova, *Defining Features: Scientific and Medical Portraits 1660–2000* (London: Reaktion Books, 2000).

60. William Carmichael, *The Gold-Headed Cane* (London: Royal College of Physicians, 1968 [a facsimile of the 1827 edition]), 127–28. Carmichael's account could have been based on information from the family, since it was written during the lifetime of Askew's daughter and at a time when the sculpture was still in the family's possession. *The Gold-Headed Cane* recounts the lives of the various owners of the cane (which is represented in the Chitqua portrait and is now also in the collection of the Royal College of Physicians) as if from the point of view of the cane itself. Askew obtained the cane from Richard Mead, who had himself obtained it from John Radcliffe (1650–1714). For the claim that Chitqua had been Askew's patient see Wolstenholme, ed., *The Royal College of Physicians*, 34.

61. See William Munk, *The Roll of the Royal College of Physicians of London* (London: Royal College of Physicians, 1878), 187: '[Askew] saw a good deal of company attracted as well by the abundant luxuries with which his table was furnished as by the classical conversations and learned accounts of curiosities which he had brought with him from Greece'.

62. Munk, *The Roll of the Royal College*, 187, mentions Jones as amongst Askew's most frequent visitors. Askew had been amongst the first to sign the ballot enabling Jones's election to the Royal Society in 1772 (see Cannon, *The Life and Mind of Oriental Jones*, 56). On Jones and Chinese studies see Fan, 'Sir William Jones's Chinese Studies', and A. D. Waley, 'Sir William Jones as a Sinologue', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 11, no. 4 (1946): 842. For confirmation of the rarity of Chinese-language skills in England at that time we can note Chambers's comment in his *Designs of Chinese Buildings* (p. 8) that having brought back from Canton several Chinese inscriptions which he has forgotten to get explained, he needed to send them to 'the Propaganda at Rome to be translated'. On the state of British sinology in the eighteenth century see also T. H. Barrett, *A Singular Listlessness*, 41–46.

63. For Fan's comment on Jones and Chitqua see his 'Sir William Jones's Chinese Studies', 307. On Jones's letter to Wilmot see Lord Teignmouth [John Shore], *Memoirs of the Life, Writings and Correspondence of Sir William Jones* (Philadelphia: The Classic Press, 1805), 99–101. Jones writes:

    I am sorry the characters you sent me are not Persian, but Chinese, which I cannot decypher without a Book, which I have not at present, but, tous Chinois qu'ils sont, I shall be able to make them out, when the weather will permit me to sit in the Bodleian. In the mean time, I would advise you to enquire after a native of China, who is now in London. I cannot recollect where he lodges, but shall know when I come to town, which will be tomorrow or Saturday (p. 100–101).

    Cannon (a generally useful recent source concerning Jones's life) mentions the letter in *The Life and Mind of Oriental Jones*, 59, and on the same page (but without stating his source) claims that Jones, Joshua Reynolds and Wang-Y-Tong would sometimes have dinner together. Cannon also discusses Jones's interest in China and its language and literature on pp. 23, 226, and 318–19.

64. This figure is reproduced in colour on p. 28 of Jan Van Campen, 'Chinese "Schuddebolle"', *Aziatische Kunst* 37, no. 3 (September 2007): 18–35.

65. Kneller's 'Kit-cat' portraits of Lionel Cranfield Sackville, Earl of Dorset and of Robert Walpole (in the collection of the National Portrait Gallery, London) both show the sitter with a right hand tucked inside his jacket. A similar pose can be found in

some early painted portraits of Western visitors made in Canton, see for example Crossman, *The Decorative Arts of the China Trade*, 34, 38 and 46.

66. The identification of Van Braam as the probable subject rests on a broad similarity with another known portrait of him, and not on documentary evidence. On Van Braam and his collection of Chinese artefacts see Jan Van Campen, 'Chinese bestellingen van Andreas Everardus van Braam Houckgeest' ('Orders placed in China by Andreas Everardus van Braam Houckgeest'), *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 53, no. 1 (2005): 18–40 (with English summary pp. 91–93).

67. This work was sold, without its current identification as a portrait of Garrick, by Christie's New York in 1981. It again appeared in auction at Sotheby's New York, in a sale entitled 'Fine Chinese Export Porcelain, Paintings and Works of Art', on 18 January 1996 (Lot number 234), and in Christie's London sale 'Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art Including Export Art', on 8 June 2004.

68. See Brady and Pottle, *Boswell in Search of a Wife*, 303. Captain Johnson amused Boswell with an imitation of the Chinese merchant or modeller's description of the famous political radical Wilkes in Pidgin: 'He knockifar your king. Your king fooly king. Do so here, cutty head. Inglis no love your king; Cots [Scots] love your king'. Boswell notes: 'it is curious that people at such a distance can understand so much of the minutiae of Britain'.

69. The exhibition catalogue, published by the Holbourne Museum of Art itself (Bath, 2003), has an essay by Desmond Shaw-Taylor ('The beautiful strokes of a great actor', pp. 11–30). Shaw-Taylor describes the figure (p. 14) as 'speculatively undertaken' by Chitqua as a way of advertising his skills on his arrival in London, but offers no documentation to support this claim. An identification of the figure as a portrait of Garrick by Chitqua is also assumed in Jan Seewald, *Theatrical Sculpture: Skulptierte Bildnisse berühmter englischer Schauspieler* (Munich: Herbert Utz, 2007), 75–78 and James Fenton, *School of Genius: A History of the Royal Academy* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2006). The work is reproduced in Fenton on p. 76.

70. On Talbot's China voyages see Doris Mercer and Edith Mercer, *Chart Park: Dorking. A Vanished Surrey Mansion* (Dorking: Dorking Local History Group, 1993), 7 and 36–39. Talbot's presence in Macau and Canton is also noted in Hosea Ballou Morse and Patrick J. N. Tuck, *The Chronicles of the East India Company Trading to China, 1635–1934* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1926), 193. I am grateful to Mary Turner, Curator of Archives at the Dorking and District Museum, for help in tracking down this reference and for providing me with a photo of the work. Thanks also to Nino Strachey and Helen Rowse of the National Trust and Clandon Park for help in identifying details of the Talbot figure and its case at a time when I had not yet been able to inspect it personally.

71. Biographical information concerning Henry Talbot comes from Mercer and Mercer, *Chart Park*, 7 and 35–39.

72. See Mercer and Mercer, *Chart Park*, 11, 17 and 46.

73. See David Piper, 'A Chinese Artist in England', 199. Information concerning the Victoria and Albert Museum's evaluation of this work was kindly provided by Ming Wilson, who also arranged access to the work itself, as well as photos of it. At the time of writing, this piece has not yet been put on public display.

74. See Metaxia Ventikou, 'A Chinese Figure in Unfired Clay: Technical Investigation and Conservation Treatment', *V&A Conservation Journal Online* 38 (Summer 2001), accessed 12 June 2008, http://www.vam.ac.uk/res_cons/conservation/journal/issue38/figure/index.html. The Askew figure also has a simple wooden base, but it is not clear if this is original.

75. For evidence of Chinese artists copying Western prints see for example *Artist Copying a European Print onto Glass*, a watercolour on paper of c. 1790 in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. While Western paintings (or prints after them) are being suggested here as a possible precedent, it should be remembered that reclining figures on beds are also known from Chinese art, see for example the thirteenth-century painter Liu Guandao's *Whiling Away the Summer*, handscroll with ink and colour on silk, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri.

76. Evidence of Suqua's status and character can be found in a 20 July 1730 note in the 'Diary and consultations of the Council in China for 1730; 21 Nov 1929 — 8 Jan 1731; at Canton Jul 1730 — Jan 1731', India Office records, held by the British Library, IOR/G/12/30, p. 18, which states that 'Suqua for many years past hath been reputed the most considerable merchant in Canton and can dispatch any number of ships in good time, for he is in great circumstances, and generally allowed to be an able and skillful merchant, but he will always endeavour to make a hard bargain'. On p. 24 of the same document Suqua is also described as 'the senior merchant now in Canton'.

77. On Hall see Conrad Gill, *Merchants and Mariners of the Eighteenth Century* (London: E. Arnold, 1961), which despite its more general title is effectively a study of Hall's trading career. Information given here on Hall's visits to the East is mostly derived from Chapter 2 of Gill's book (pp. 12–28), with other information based on later passages in the book (pp. 30, 45, 118, 131 and 161–62). On pp. 37–39 Gill gives a detailed summary of the cargo brought back on the 1723–24 voyage. Information on Hall and on the Peabody Essex Museum portrait figure of him was also kindly provided by William Sargent in an email to the author of 7 April 2009 in which information from a forthcoming catalogue entry on the work was shared. Dave O'Ryan also kindly assisted in providing visual information concerning the figure.

78. The two photos of the Harrison piece can be found on p. 312 of David Piper, *The English Face* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1957), and p. 250 of the second (and posthumous) edition, published by the National Portrait Gallery in 1992, edited by Malcolm Rogers. Thanks to Emma Butterfield of the National Portrait Gallery for providing me with information about the inscription on the back of the museum's photo.

79. Following his period as governor ('president') of Madras, Harrison was to serve as member of parliament for Hertford and as postmaster-general (1725–1732). He had established a postal service between the East India Company factories at Madras and Calcutta whilst in India. He was the son of Richard Harrison and Audrey Villiers, was married to Frances Bray (1674–1752), and had one daughter, Audrey Ethelreda Harrison. A portrait in oil of Harrison by Charles Jervas (1675–1739), dated to c. 1725, is in the collection of the British Postal Museum and Archive, Camden, London, but no obvious physiognomic similarity to the sculptural portrait can be discerned. Fort St. George, Madras, is shown in the painting's

background. For information on the English community at Madras in the early eighteenth century see, for example, Chapter 11 of Gill, *Merchants and Mariners of the Eighteenth Century*, 118–28 and Tercentenary Madras Staff, Madras Tercentenary Celebration Committee, *The Madras Tercentenary Commemoration Volume* (London: Oxford University Press, 1939) — in which Collet and Harrison are mentioned, and J. Talboys Wheeler, *Madras in the Olden Time* (New Delhi and Madras: Asian Educational Services, 1993 [a facsimile reprint of the original of 1882]). Chapters 25 to 27 of this latter volume discuss the events of Harrison's governorship, while Chapters 29 and 30 discuss those of Collet's. A sketch of life in Madras at that time is also given by Collet himself in a letter to his mother of 13 December 1716, see H. H. Dodwell, ed., *The Private Letter Books of Joseph Collet* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1933), 139–40.

80. See Bente Dam-Mikkelsen and Torben Lundbaek, eds., *Ethnographic Objects from the Royal Danish Kunstkammer 1650–1800* (Copenhagen: Nationalmuseet, 1980), 179–80, which reproduces and discusses four of the figures. Five of these figures are now to be found in the Danish Maritime Museum, Kronborg. The Zimmer figure is kept by his descendants in Norway. Charleston, 'Chinese Face-makers', 459–61, discusses and illustrates (p. 460) the Zimmer figure, while the Ølgod figure is reproduced on p. 168 of Lubberhuizen-Van Gelder, 'De factorijen te Canton', and also on p. 313 of Crossman, *The Decorative Arts of the China Trade*. Other seated figures are known, and they all may share the same authorship as those already discussed. One example, referred to by A. Staring ('Chineesche portretfiguren', *Oud-Holland* 73 [1958, reprinted by Kraus Reprint, Lichtenstein, 1976], 220–28) as a portrait of Willem Philips de Brouwer (reproduced p. 225) is also mentioned by William Sargent (*The Copeland Collection: Chinese and Japanese Ceramic Figures* [Salem: The Peabody Museum of Salem, 1991], 108) as Captain Guillaume de Brouwer of the frigate *Sleswig*, which was in China 1733–35. Sargent also discusses (pp. 108–11) and reproduces in colour (p. 109) a seated figure of a European merchant in the Peabody Essex Museum of Salem collection, which may possibly be a portrait of Issac Pyke (b. 1672). It is dated by Sargent as 1750–55. A further seated figure, tentatively identified as of Jacob van Dam and dated to 1751, is in the Nederlands Scheepvaart Museum, Amsterdam; see Schokkenbroek, 'Versteend verleden', the portrait is reproduced in colour on p. 8. Figures of Zacharias Allewelt and Peter Holter (d. 1762) in the Aust-Agder-Museet, in Arendal, Norway, may be of a similar date to these other works, see *European Scenes on Chinese Art* (London: Jorge Welsh Books, 2005), 103.

81. All the six figures have real hair wigs, including the two with caps, thus suggesting the possibility that the capped Victoria and Albert Museum reclining figure might also have had hair at one time.

82. In a letter to John Bedwell of 14 December 1716, Collet writes

    Governour Harrison's friendship is a very great advantage to me; he is a man of the most solid Judgment, polisht by the brightest conversation, and thereby qualify'd equally for the busy and Gay scenes of life; he is a man of strict honour and justice and firm resolution. We communicate without reserve in our private conversation and we have joyn'd together in publick in the most solemn positive institution of Christianity.

    The letter is given, along with other related correspondence, in Dodwell, ed., *The Private Letter Books of Joseph Collet*, 142–44.

83. See Dodwell, ed., *The Private Letter Books of Joseph Collet*, 131–32.

84. See Dodwell, ed., *The Private Letter Books of Joseph Collet*, 140–41. Collet writes: 'I also send by the Governor [Harrison] in requitall for your Pictures a sort of Picture or Image of my Self. The lineaments and the features are Esteem'd very just but the complexion is not quite so well hit; the proportions of my body and my habit is very exact. I commit it to your Custody till you see the originall'. Collet had mentioned Harrison's impending return home in a letter of 18 September 1716 written to his daughter Elizabeth (pp. 131–32), and in a letter to his mother of 13 December 1716 he asks her to 'wait on Govr. Harrison at his Arrivall', mentioning that he has 'made him my Attorney jointly with my Bro'r Bedwell and given him an Account not only of my own Affairs but also of my Family's and am confident you will find him ready to assist them as occasion shall require. I would have my Daughters respect him as a Father and follow his Directions in all Matters of Importance' (pp. 139–40). In the 14 December 1716 letter to his daughter Elizabeth mentioning his portrait, Collet also asks his daughter and her sisters to meet Harrison on his arrival in England and mentions him as one of three people whose consent she must gain to marry in his absence overseas.

85. Gill, *Merchants and Mariners*, 119, notes that Hall and Harrison (who seems to have continued trading following his return to England despite his other activities) both dealt with the same trading agents in Holland, and that after Harrison's death, one of those agents, Senserf, asked Hall to continue the service Harrison had provided him of transmitting news of finance and commerce in England. Hall can also be documented as consulting with Harrison in the early 1730s over a problem faced by the wife of James Naish (a friend of Hall's who had been the captain of the *Maison d'Autriche* on which Hall voyaged to Canton in 1719). Harrison drafted a letter on her behalf (see Gill, p. 115). One further link between the two men is that John Powney, a Madras merchant, corresponded with Hall from 1733 in an attempt to secure his services as a trustee for his children in England as successor to Harrison who had died the previous year (Gill, p. 125).

86. For evidence of trade between Xiamen and Madras in the early eighteenth century see Gill, *Merchants and Mariners*, 124n6.

87. Charleston, 'Chinese Face-makers', 461, also offers the conjecture that all of the portrait sculptures may have been made by one family. It should be noted, however, that 'Tan' was not an uncommon family name amongst Canton merchants in the eighteenth century (for examples, see Jörg, *Porcelain and the Dutch China Trade*, 69–71, 114, 337, 340 and 350).

88. On the Victoria and Albert Museum standing figure see Clunas, 'Moulding a Physiognomy'. Clunas's date for the figure is based partly on evidence from the history of fashion.

89. Crossman, *The Decorative Arts of the China Trade*, 307–10. On other works attributed to Chinqua see *European Scenes on Chinese Art*, 100–104 (where a further work there attributed to Chinqua is reproduced in colour).

90. Unlike this author, Clunas ('Moulding a Physiognomy', 48) is not convinced that the two London standing figures have the same authorship. He points to their difference of size as well as their geographically disparate locations of manufacture, and (correctly, I feel) notes that the Collet figure is 'rather crudely modeled by

comparison' with its counterpart in the Victoria and Albert Museum. Clunas is instead struck (p. 50) by the similarities between the Victoria and Albert Museum standing figure and the Danish examples.

91. See Gill, *Merchants and Mariners*, 39. Gill's primary source here is a report in the form of nine letters plus plans and drawings, 'Relation du Voyage du *Marquis de Prié* et du *Saint-Joseph*', in the Staatsbibliothek, Munich. Gill attributes the report to Ghiselinck, supercargo on the *Saint-Joseph*, and dates it to 1735 while noting that it was based on a diary kept on the voyage. A Canton trader named 'Chinqua' is also mentioned in Jörg, *Porcelain and the Dutch China Trade*, 337 (see also p. 351).

92. This figure was on sale in a Sotheby's London auction on Wednesday 9 June 2004 as Lot 115. See Sotheby's online, accessed 6 April 2009, http://www.sothebys.com/app/live/lot/LotDetail.jsp?lot_id=483X9. It is discussed and reproduced in colour in *European Scenes on Chinese Art*, 105–9. Possibly this is the same figure as that described by Juliette Kotowicz Hurtut in her review 'Salon du collectionneur, un première édition recherchée', *L'Oeil* 550 (September 2003): 106–7, as having been displayed that year at the salon du Carrousel of the Louvre by Valérie Levesque, a dealer in Asian antiquities. 'Seule sculpture connue du Chinois Chitqua à représenter un révolutionnaire, capitaine au long cours, elle a été conservée dans sa famille depuis des generations' (p. 107).

93. On the Jacob Nebbens figure see the website of the Zeeuws Museum, accessed 9 December 2010, http://www.zeeuwsmuseum.nl/script/P_werken-in-depot_detail.asp?ID=184. The figurine is also discussed in Staring, 'Chineesche portretfiguren', although it is there given tentatively as a portrait of Bastiaan Nebbens.

94. This figure was on sale in a Sotheby's London auction on 14 May 2008 as Lot 627. An image of the work can be seen at Sotheby's online, accessed 6 April 2009, http://www.sothebys.com/app/live/lot/LotDetail.jsp?lot_id=159435810.

95. On the Zeeuws Museum figures see Staring, 'Chineesche portretfiguren', 226–27. The Zeeuws Museum also holds another clay figurine of a Chinese boy with a parasitic twin, which is dated to 1820. A similar figure is in the collection of the Hunterian Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, in London. Information concerning this latter version given in the *Catalogue of the Contents of the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons in London* (London, 1831) indicates that it is also a portrait, of the Chinese boy 'A- Ke', born in 1804 in the vicinity of Canton. This catalogue and other papers held in the archive of the College contain information on his case, including a medical description by John Livingstone, surgeon to the British Factory in China, made on 8 December 1820. According to this account Livingstone was himself responsible for having the model made in Macau. He had originally intended

> having him brought to my house, for the double purpose of more deliberate observation, and having at the same time a correct model made under my own eye; but aware that the only good artist then in Macao was employed, I deferred giving my orders for a few days; in the mean time the monster unexpectedly left Macao. However, the modeler had made such careful observation of the subject, that he informed me he could make an exact representation of what he saw. He succeeded so well, that I am assured by many friends who had examined the original, that the model is wonderfully exact.

According to Simon Brook, 'Chinese Curiosi: Nineteenth Century Examples of the East-West Titration', *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine* 78 (November 1985) 945–48, the model (which he reproduces in his article) entered the collection of the College around 1822, and was subsequently sold to other museums. Thanks to Simon Chaplin of the Royal College of Surgeons of England for bringing this material to my attention.

96. See Schokkenbroek, 'Versteend verleden'. The portrait is reproduced in colour on pp. 8 and 10.

97. On the Rijksmuseum mother and child group see Staring, 'Chineesche portretfiguren', 227. The group has been in the collection of the museum since 1897. Another female figure attributed to Chitqua has recently emerged in the art market. This is a 15-inch-high, seated figure in painted wood, dated to 1775, which was offered for sale at Christie's in Amsterdam on Tuesday, 31 October 2006 (Lot 487) as 'Figure of a seated girl'. See the Artnet website, accessed 15 October 2008, http://www.artnet.com/Artists/LotDetailPage.aspx?lot_id=2D5E74B0649F72AE4666A9CDE17CBA46.

98. On Chinese figures produced for the Western market see Daniélle Kisluk-Grosheide, 'The Reign of Magots and Pagods', *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 37 (2002): 177–97 and Van Campen, 'Chinese "Schuddebolle"', 18–36.

99. On one case where a figure seems indeed to be a portrait of a particular Chinese merchant, see Crossman, *The Decorative Arts of the China Trade*, 320–21. Painted portraits of individual Chinese merchants are also known, see for instance Crossman, pp. 46 and 50.

100. See Dam-Mikkelsen and Lundbaek, eds., *Ethnographic Objects from the Royal Danish Kunstkammer*, 176–78. The same collection also contains a set of twenty-four clay figures representing the imperial household which can be documented to 1777 (pp. 174–75), and a male and female pair datable to the 1730s (pp. 175–76).

101. See Crossman, *The Decorative Arts of the China Trade*, 316–18.

102. See Crossman, *The Decorative Arts of the China Trade*, 318. Other Chinese figures may be found in the British Royal Collection (on loan to the Brighton Pavilion), and in The Victoria and Albert Museum. The presence of Chinese figurines in the Royal Collection from a time before Chitqua's London visit is documented by Zoffany's *Queen Charlotte and Her Two Eldest Sons* (c. 1765, Royal Collection) in which two Chinese figurines are visible on the table behind. Chinese nodding-head figures were apparently to be found in John Hunter's Leicester Square museum where Mortimer's portrait of Chitqua was on display. While one can imagine a workshop which produced both individually-commissioned portraits of a high degree of realism when required and also more routine merchandise for the export trade, it would only be speculation to assume that Chitqua worked in this way, and we would have no basis on which to attribute works to him that bore no stylistic resemblance to his known or probable output.

103. On three-dimensional ancestor portraits see Keith G. Stevens, 'Portrait and Ancestral Images on Chinese Altars', *Arts of Asia* 19, no. 1 (January–February 1989): 135–45.

104. For Thomas Bentley's letter see Jewitt, *The Wedgwoods*, 209–10.

105. Eliza Meteyard, *The Life of Josiah Wedgwood*, Vol. II (London: Cornmarket Press, 1970 [a facsimile reprint of the volume first published in London by Hurst and Blackett in 1866]), 231–32.

106. For an account of a later Danish trading voyage to Canton also under Captain Allewelt, see Mads Kirkebaek, 'The Voyage of the *Droningen af Danmark* to China in 1742', in *China and Denmark: Relations since 1674*, ed. Kjeld Erik Brøsgaard and Mads Kirkebaek (Copenhagen: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, 2001), 21–47. Toreen, as noted earlier, also comments on the availability of portrait busts in Canton.

107. *Gentleman's Magazine* XLI, May 1771, 237.

108. By way of comparison we can note that according to Pierre Jean Grosley's 'A Tour to London' of 1772 (excerpted in Xavier Baron, ed., *London, 1066–1914: Literary Sources and Documents*, Vol. I [East Sussex: Helm Information, 1997], 764), a 'cook-maid' would earn an annual wage of twenty guineas at that time.

109. See Pierre Sonnerat, *A Voyage to the East-Indies and China, performed by order of Lewis XV, between the Years 1774 and 1781*, Vol. II, trans. Francis Magnus (Calcutta: Stuart and Cooper, 1788), 215.

110. Metaxia Ventikou, 'A Chinese Figure in Unfired Clay'.

111. Clunas, 'Moulding a Physiognomy', 47.

112. See Sonnerat, *A Voyage to the East-Indies and China*, 215.

113. On the Rijksmuseum porcelain figure see the Dutch culture education website Cultuurwijs, accessed 14 October 2008, http://www.cultuurwijs.nl/nwc.rijksmuseumamsterdam/cultuurwijs.nl/i000389.html.

114. For Thomas Bentley's letter see Jewitt, *The Wedgwoods*, 209–10.

115. For Thomas Bentley's letter see Jewitt, *The Wedgwoods*, 209–10. A graphic reminder of the ferocity of the English winters at that time comes from a report of Friday 11 January 1771 in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (January 1771, 43) that 'the River Thames was entirely frozen over at Fulham'.

116. Margaret Jeffreys's letter is known only from the transcript of it in the Whitley Papers:

    Gailland has been with us since Tuesday and I read part of your lordship's letter to him concerning Chitqua, and he said he should be glad to do him any service, to recommend him to a captain, etc. I am sure we are very much obliged to him [presumably Chitqua, whom Boswell notes as having a fan — perhaps part of a stock brought with him — in his lodgings] for those very handsome fans that flop of themselves, and I hope he will accept our thanks.

117. Chitqua's letter is quoted in Whitley, *Artists and Their Friends*, Vol. 1, 270. Whitley's book has no footnotes, but the sources he used are collected in the Whitley Papers. Whitley notes in his papers that Chitqua's letter is 'written in a clear but schoolboyish hand on a single sheet of paper', but does not give a location for the manuscript itself. On the implications of Chitqua's letter for the study of Pidgin and the early Chinese use of English, see David Clarke, 'Chitqua's English Adventure: An Eighteenth Century Source for the Study of China Coast Pidgin and Early Chinese Use of English', *Hong Kong Journal of Applied Linguistics* 10, no. 1 (2005): 47–58.

118. *Gentleman's Magazine* XLI, May 1771, 237–38. This account was also printed in the *Annual Register, 1771*, 4th ed. (London, 1794), 107–8. The superstitious reaction of the sailors may be easier to understand when one notes (as ships' journals from that time document) that it would have been common for several hands to die in the course of a single voyage.
119. Hardy, *A Register of Ships*, 45, notes that the *Grenville* sailed from Portsmouth on 17 March 1771, returning to England on 3 August 1772. No passengers are listed in the ship's journal (held in the British Library, India Office records) for that voyage of the *Grenville*. In a slight discrepancy from the account of Chitqua's aborted return trip as given in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, the pilot is given as leaving the ship at Dover, not Deal. No account is given there of the man-overboard incident or of Chitqua's early disembarkation.
120. *Gentleman's Magazine* XXVII, part II, no. 6, December 1797, 1072.
121. See Cheong, *The Hong Merchants of Canton*, 98 and 343.
122. See Cheong, *The Hong Merchants of Canton*, 115.
123. See Cheong, *The Hong Merchants of Canton*, 264.
124. On Main's visit to Shykinqua's garden see 'Observations on Chinese Scenery, Plants and Gardening, made on a Visit to the City of Canton and its Environs, in the Years 1793 and 1794', in John Claudius Loudon, *The Gardener's Magazine and Register of Rural and Domestic Improvement, Vol. II*, (London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown and Green, 1827), 135–40.
125. See Cheong, *The Hong Merchants of Canton*, 89.
126. On Spoilum and early China trade painting see Patrick Conner, 'The Enigma of Spoilum and the Origins of China Trade Portraiture', *Antiques* Vol. CLIII, No. 3 (March 1998): 418–25.
127. See Cheong, *The Hong Merchants of Canton*, 350–51.
128. See 'Hints Respecting the Chinese Language', 50–52, where the name is romanized as 'Whang-At-Ting'. This account says that he arrived in London in August 1774. On Wang-Y-Tong see Toppin, 'Chitqua, The Chinese Modeller, and Wang-Y-Tong, the "Chinese Boy"', and Mozley, *The Blakes of Rotherhithe*.
129. See Fan, 'Sir William Jones's Chinese Studies', 307–9 and Cannon, *The Life and Mind of Oriental Jones*, 226 and 265–66.
130. See Cannon, *The Life and Mind of Oriental Jones*, 226.
131. On Lin Fengmian and Western art see David Clarke, 'Exile from Tradition: Chinese and Western Traits in the Art of Lin Fengmian', *Oriental Art* XXXIX, no. 4 (Winter 1993–94): 22–29. On Li Tiefu see Chi Ke, ed., *Li Tiefu* (Guangzhou: Lingnan Fine Arts Publishing House, 1985).

Chapter 2

1. Zheng Yimei, *Yitan Bai Ying* [*One Hundred Images of the Art World*] (Henan: Zhongzhou Shuhua Chubanshe, 1983), 42–44. Zheng's biographical portrait of Teng Baiye occupies only three pages in a collection featuring over a hundred such sketches of figures from the Chinese arts community. The author claims in a note

on the book's copyright page that the vast majority of the sketches are of people he knew personally, and that some are them were his bosom friends. Zheng freely admits that he is writing in an anecdotal style, and there are no footnotes to his text nor mention of documentary sources. Most probably the main source of the data it contains is Teng's own oral accounts of his earlier life, perhaps given directly to the author at an earlier date. Because of the vagaries of human memory and the impossibility of verifying the information Zheng gives from other sources, a certain caution seems warranted, but I have relied on his sketch for most of the information I give about Teng's life prior to his time in America.

2. 'Teng-Kwei' (anonymous, typed, one-page biography of Teng Baiye), University Archives, University of Pittsburgh.
3. See 'Finger paintings of Kwei Dun are shown', *Seattle Daily Times*, Friday 18 May 1928, 38.
4. Li Tiefu studied in New York with William Merritt Chase between 1908–11, while Yu Ben and Li Bing both studied at the Ontario College of Art, Toronto, in the late 1920s.
5. Peggy McLellan, 'Can shut eyes, pick colors', *Seattle Star*, Thursday 17 November 1927.
6. See 'Finger paintings of Kwei Dun are shown', 38.
7. See 'Chinese artist finishes relief for Mines Hall', *Seattle Daily Times*, Thursday 21 June 1928, 4.
8. The Cleveland Museum of Art gives Teng's date of birth as 1902, not 1900.
9. This document is held in Manuscripts, Special Collection, University Archives, University of Washington Libraries, Seattle.
10. Both these items are held in the University Archives, University of Washington Libraries.
11. See 'Finger tip painting', *Town Crier* [Seattle], Christmas 1928, 40.
12. See 'Finger paintings of Kwei Dun are shown', 38. The photo of Teng is found on p. 21.
13. *San Francisco Examiner*, 17 June 1928.
14. McLellan, 'Can shut eyes, pick colors'.
15. 'Finger paintings of Kwei Dun are shown', 38.
16. Teng's participation in this exhibition is noted in a press release dated 31 May 1929, held in the Brooklyn Museum Archives (Records of the Department of Public Information, Press Releases, 1916–1930). A biographic note on the artist in the press release, where he is described as 'Kwei Teng', gives his date of birth as 1902. It continues: 'Mr. Teng has applied himself very seriously to the study of painting which included ten years of self-study in Chinese painting and ten years of self-training in the old Chinese art of finger painting, in which technique he has established his own method and style'. It also notes: 'By his understanding of Oriental and Western education he hopes to be "one of the builders of the bridge between Western and Eastern civilizations". His painting is in the pure Chinese manner but he is fully aware of the accomplishment and aims of the art of the West'. It claims he has exhibited in Seattle, San Francisco and Rockford, Illinois.

17. See Dr. Frank E. Washburn Freund, 'Guide through New York art land', *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 11 January 1930. The review notes: 'In an adjoining room, a young Chinese painter, Teng-Kwei, shows a number of "modern Chinese paintings", mostly in broad ink washes. These are not imitations of Western art, but go back to Chinese tradition'.
18. Franklin (1888–1971) was born in New York City, and also created dioramas for the American Museum of Natural History and the Museum of the City of New York. He was to leave New York in the 1930s to take up a career in Hollywood as a set designer and technical consultant in the movie industry, working on films such as *Treasure Island* (MGM, 1934). He made a model of the narthex of Hagia Sophia which was put on display at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, in 1917, and which is now in the collection of Fairfield University, Connecticut. See Marice Rose, 'Model of Hagia Sophia Narthex', accessed 2 June 2009, http://www.Fairfield.edu/arts/art_Byzantine.html. A photo by Julius Kirschner of Franklin at work on a model of a bullfrog at the American Museum of National History, New York, can be found on their website, accessed 2 June 2009, http://images.library.amnh.org/photos/ptm/catalog/desc/152490/.
19. *Children's Museum News* [New York, Brooklyn Children's Museum] XVII, no. 6 (March 1930): 119. I am indebted to Nancy Paine for responding generously to my inquiries, and for supplying me with information from the archives of the Brooklyn Children's Museum.
20. The 29 December 1929 letter from Teng is in the University Archives, University of Pittsburgh.
21. Lai seems to have been involved in the project, along with John H. Tsui, who signed himself as 'Chairman of China Room' in a typed letter of 15 April 1925 which, like Teng's, is also held in the University Archives, University of Pittsburgh.
22. On Henry Killam Murphy see Jeffrey W. Cody, *Building in China: Henry K. Murphy's "Adaptive Architecture", 1914–1935* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2001).
23. For images of the Chinese Room as it is today, plus a description, see the Nationality Rooms page of the University of Pittsburgh website, accessed 18 August 2009, http://www.pitt.edu/~natrooms/pages/allnr1.html. Thanks to Ting Chang for alerting me to this website's existence.
24. See 'Group of Chinese drawings now being shown in Boston', *Harvard Crimson*, 30 April 1930. The report notes that *Tranquillity*, 'the study of a goddess', is amongst the paintings being shown.
25. See 'Kwei to speak', *Harvard Crimson*, 25 February 1931.
26. See the catalogue, *Third International Exhibition of Lithography and Wood Engraving, Dec. 1931 to Jan. 1932, The Art Institute of Chicago* (Chicago, 1931).
27. See *Catalogue of Memorial Exhibition of F. McGillivray Knowles, R. C. A., An Exhibition of Flowers and Still-life, Exhibition of English Aquatints in Colour, Exhibitions by Young Canadians* (Toronto: Art Gallery of Toronto, 1932).
28. See Edward Twitchell Hall, *An Anthropology of Everyday Life: An Autobiography* (New York and London: Doubleday, 1992), 66.
29. Hall, *An Anthropology of Everyday Life*, 72–73. Thanks to Joseph Newland for bringing this reference to my attention.

30. See 'Expressionism in Chinese Art. Chinese Authority's Address to Local Club', *North-China Herald* [Shanghai], 31 January 1934, 172, for some information on Teng's activities following his return to China. Documents concerning Yenching University are to be found in the archival collection of Beijing University.
31. See T'eng Kwei, 'Art in Modern China', *The Open Court* [Chicago] XLIII (December 1933): 479–94.
32. See 'Expressionism in Chinese Art', 172.
33. See 'Bamboo Symbol in Chinese Art. Significance and History Described', *North-China Herald*, 9 May 1934, 188.
34. Teng Kuei, 'Bamboo and Bamboo Painting', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, North China Branch (Shanghai)* (1934): 55–61.
35. Teng, 'Bamboo and Bamboo Painting', 56.
36. Teng, 'Bamboo and Bamboo Painting', 57.
37. Teng, 'Bamboo and Bamboo Painting', 57.
38. See 'Expressionism in Chinese Art', 172. This article provides a fairly detailed account of Teng's lecture, giving a sense of his argument and perhaps of the actual words used to convey it, but without making use of direct quotations.
39. Zheng, *Yitan Bai Ying*, 42. Zheng Jie, 'The Shanghai Art College, 1913–1937' (M. Phil thesis, University of Hong Kong, 2005), 66, confirms that Teng taught at the Shanghai Art Academy for about half a year.
40. See 'Expressionism in Chinese Art', 172.
41. See Clarke, *Modern Chinese Art*, Chapter 1.
42. T'eng, 'Art in Modern China'.
43. 'Expressionism in Chinese Art', 172.
44. See 'Finger paintings of Kwei Dun are shown', 38. The photo is in the Tobey papers held in the Manuscripts, Special Collections, University Archives, University Of Washington Libraries, Seattle. Another photo of Teng, dating from around 1928–29 (according to David Martin of Martin-Zambito Fine Art, Seattle, who kindly brought its existence to my attention), was taken by the noted Northwest photographer Virna Haffer (1899–1974). Haffer seems to have met Teng in the late 1920s, and (according to oblique suggestions in the unpublished manuscript of a book of poetry and photographs co-authored with her friend Elizabeth Sale and titled *Abundant Wild Oats* which was scheduled for release in 1939) she may have had a romantic liaison with him. Haffer's bromoil portrait of Teng — the most artistically ambitious image of him that we have — is reproduced in David Martin, *Painted with Light: Pictorialism and the Seattle Camera Club* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2011).
45. Mark Tobey, transcript of taped interview with William Seitz, Seitz papers, Archives of American Art (Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC), 41.
46. For more on Buddhist and Daoist metaphysics, and their influence on American artists, see David Clarke, *The Influence of Oriental Thought on Postwar American Painting and Sculpture* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1988), available online at: http://hub.hku.hk/handle/123456789/48376.

47. Mark Tobey, letter to Dorothy Elmhirst [from Shanghai], 1934, Elmhirst Papers, Dartington Hall Archive, Totnes, England. In another letter to Dorothy and Leonard Elmhirst, dated 25 April 1934 (and also in the Dartington Hall Archives), Tobey offers a glimpse of life in Teng's Shanghai home: 'It's a strange rather mad house in matter of hours. Three of us sleep in one room in which we also eat. Everyone dresses in front of everyone else, and the female servants don't seem to care. Relatives come and go and sometimes the sleeping arrangements get rather complicated'. Teng's mother, who is described as having bound feet (a sign of higher social status rather than the poverty Zheng Yimei claims for Teng's family), comes across in Tobey's account as something of an overpowering presence, claiming not to know her son any more and pestering him to marry and give her grandchildren. Tobey writes that Teng 'gets very depressed over the situation and wonders how he can handle it all'.
48. Mark Tobey, 'Japanese Traditions and American Art', *College Art Journal* 18 (Fall 1958): 22.
49. 'Expressionism in Chinese Art', 172.
50. Mark Tobey, 'Diary Notes, 1934', 13, copy in Wesley Wehr papers, Manuscripts, Special Collection, University Archives, University of Washington Libraries, Seattle.
51. 'Expressionism in Chinese Art', 172.
52. 'Expressionism in Chinese Art', 172.
53. T'eng, 'Art in Modern China', 488–89.
54. Mark Tobey, 'Diary Notes, 1934'.
55. Clement Greenberg, '"American-Type" Painting', revised version in Clement Greenberg, *Art and Culture: Critical Essays* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), 217. This essay also contains Greenberg's argument for the importance of this novel format in painting. The question of Asian philosophical and artistic influences on Tobey's artistic development is discussed further in Clarke, *The Influence of Oriental Thought*, while a reliable treatment of Tobey's stylistic development as a whole can be found in Eliza E. Rathbone, *Mark Tobey: City Paintings* (Washington DC: National Gallery of Art, 1984). *Mark Tobey* (Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, 1997), is a more recent book-length study of Tobey's art, with many good quality reproductions of his work. The most recent major study of Tobey and his fellow Seattle-area artists is Sheryl Conkelton and Laura Landau, *Northwest Mythologies: The Interactions of Mark Tobey, Morris Graves, Kenneth Callahan and Guy Anderson* (Tacoma: Tacoma Art Museum and Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2003).
56. Mark Tobey, 'Reminiscences and Reveries', *Magazine of Art* 44 (October 1951): 230.
57. Mark Tobey, letter to Dorothy Elmhirst [from Shanghai], 25 April 1934, Elmhirst Papers, Dartington Hall Archive, Totnes, England.
58. 'Expressionism in Chinese Art', 172.
59. For a discussion of early twentieth-century Chinese sculpture, see Michael Sullivan, *Art and Artists of Twentieth Century China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 159–63.
60. Zheng, *Yitan Bai Ying*, 42.

61. The photo can be found in *Pei-Yang Pictorial News* (*Beiyang Huabao*) [Tianjin] 29, no. 1401, 19 May 1936, 2. The other photo is in *Shun Pao Pictorial Supplement* [Shanghai], 4 June 1936, 2 (Figure 8).
62. See *Shun Pao Pictorial Supplement*, 28 November 1935, 2 (Figure 5). Illustrations of works by several Chinese sculptors working at that time can be found in this feature.
63. An illustrated catalogue of the exhibition was published as *A Special Collection of the Second National Exhibition of Chinese Art under the Auspices of the Ministry of Education* (Commercial Press, 1937).
64. Teng Baiye, 'Zhihua lueshuo' ['A brief introduction to finger painting'], *Yi Feng*, May 1935, 89 (Teng's *Three Geese* is reproduced in the plates section following p. 130). An essay in English on the topic of finger painting was promised to be forthcoming in the April 1936 issue of *T'ien Hsia Monthly* (see p. 220 of the March 1936 issue), but never appeared.
65. On Teng's whereabouts during the wartime period see Ellen J. Laing, *An Index to Reproductions of Paintings by Twentieth-Century Chinese Artists*, Asian Studies Program, Publication No. 6 (Eugene: University of Oregon, 1984), 376, and a letter from Teng to Mark Tobey, written in Hankou, 1938, copy in Wesley Wehr papers, Manuscripts, Special Collection, University Archives, University of Washington Libraries, Seattle.
66. Letter from Teng to Mark Tobey, written in Hankou, 1938. I have made minor changes to spelling and grammar in the excerpts quoted.
67. Wang Yichang, ed., *Zhonghua Minguo Sanshiliunian Zhongguo Meishu Nianjian* [*China Art Yearbook for the Thirty-Sixth year of the Republic of China*] (Shanghai: Shanghai Municipal Cultural Movement Committee, 1948).

Chapter 3

1. On the body in Chinese art and culture see in particular Mark Elvin's 'Tales of *Shen* and *Xin*: Body-Person and Heart-Mind in China during the Last 150 Years', in *Fragments for a History of the Human Body. Zone 4*, ed. Michael Feher, Ramona Naddaff and Nadia Tazi (New York: Zone Books, 1989), 267–349; Roger T. Ames, 'The Meaning of Body in Classical Chinese Thought', *International Philosophical Quarterly* XXIV, no. 1 (March 1984): 39–53; and John Hay, 'The Body Invisible in Chinese Art?', in *Body, Subject and Power in China*, ed. Angela Zito and Tani E. Barlow (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 42–77.
2. Literati painting and calligraphy, the amateur art of China's scholar elite (often seen as having its beginnings in the eleventh century with the Song dynasty poet Su Shi and his circle), has held a privileged status in China. Indeed literati brushwork has frequently been presented as standing for Chinese art as a whole, or as embodying the essence of Chinese culture. Recent scholarship, while still recognizing the hegemonic status of literati brushwork (or at least of literati aesthetic ideology), has tended to critique such monolithic or essentialist understandings of Chinese art, and has discovered amateur and professional practice to be less distinct than literati claims would lead one to think. Non-elite modes of art-making have been given greater attention, and the interaction between literati and professional practice has been analyzed. The analysis offered in this chapter is intended as a contribution

to this relatively recent trend in the interpretation of Chinese visual culture, and conceives of art as socially active within a dynamic, internally fragmented and contested cultural space.

3. For Peirce's theory of the sign, see J. Buchler, ed., *The Philosophy of Peirce* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1940). For Peirce on indexicality see pp. 107–11 of that text, as well as Douglas Greenlee, *Peirce's Concept of the Sign* (The Hague: Mouton, 1973). Thomas A. Sebeok, 'Indexicality', *The American Journal of Semiotics* VII, no. 4 (1990): 7–28, provides a useful review of thinking about indexicality. The present discussion extends my earlier studies of the relationship between iconic and indexical signs in art, which primarily consider European and North American examples, see David Clarke, 'The Icon and the Index: Modes of Invoking the Body's Presence', *The American Journal of Semiotics* IX, no. 1 (1992): 49–82, and David Clarke, 'The Gaze and the Glance: Competing Understandings of Visuality in the Theory and Practice of Late Modernist Art', *Art History* XV, no. 1 (1992): 80–98.

4. Vermeer`s *View of Delft* may be taken as a fully developed work of the kind I am referring to here, but even when, as in Raphael's *Marriage of the Virgin*, a degree of bodily address to the spectator is present, it must be distinguished from that found in Chinese literati painting. The eye contact made with the spectator by one of the figures in the *Marriage of the Virgin* serves to strengthen the illusion of represented space, the effect of presence, not to undermine it. Unsurprisingly, when figures do appear in literati painting it is rather rare for them to display any awareness of being looked at.

5. See Norman Bryson, *Vision and Painting: The Logic of the Gaze* (London: Macmillan, 1983), 92. Bryson comments on Chinese art as well as Western art, and I have found his remarks about both artistic cultures suggestive. However, I feel he neglects to explore the social function of Chinese brushwork, and thus the indexical mode (this is my terminology, not his) comes across in his discussion as superior to the iconic. Bryson's analysis of the way European mimetic painting fulfills extra-artistic functions (by embedding religious ideology in iconic detail, for instance), is, by contrast, particularly cogent. David Freedberg in *The Power of Images* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), drawing on a study of the reception of images, also offers a useful argument concerning the extent to which a relationship with the represented body is given priority in much pre-modern European art. Again the way an effect of bodily presence helps support a religious function is apparent.

6. See Lothar Ledderose, 'Chinese Calligraphy: Its Aesthetic Dimension and Social Function', *Orientations* XVII, no. 10 (1986): 35–50.

7. Commenting on this work by Li Shan, Vito Giacalone in 'The John M. Crawford, Jr. Collection of Calligraphy and Painting in the Metropolitan Museum of Art — II', *Oriental Art* vol. 32, no. 1 (Spring 1986): 79–85, claims that the character for bamboo, which appears several times in the poem, is 'written with the same brushstrokes as the image of the bamboo' (p. 84). In *Chinese and Japanese Calligraphy* (compiled by Shigemi Komatsu and Kwan S. Wong [Munich: Prestel, 1989]), Heinz Götze ('Chinese and Japanese calligraphy: Introduction', 9–33) also writes in more general terms about the similarity between Chinese depictions of bamboo and the character for it, arguing (p. 32) that 'the ink picture meets the script halfway, yet the script character has broken free from Nature and assumed a symbolic shape'. An early (Yuan dynasty) instance of a painter advising that the techniques of brushwork

used in various calligraphic scripts can be adopted for the rendering of subjects favoured by literati painting is the inscription on a handscroll by Zhao Mengfu, see James Cahill, *Hills beyond a River* (New York: Weatherhill, 1976), 162. The favoured subjects of literati painting tended to be those which did not require the higher level of painting skill found in works produced by professional artists: the relative absence of complicated effects of represented space in literati painting may in part be regarded as a consequence of the technical limitations of its more calligraphy-orientated amateur creators.

8. Chiang Yee, *Chinese Calligraphy* (London: Methuen, 1938).
9. An extended discussion of inscription on painting is given in Michael Sullivan, *The Three Perfections* (New York: George Braziller, 1980). The content of inscriptions (as opposed to the act of inscription itself) may also have a socially cohesive function. Either a reference to a friendship or to a painter of an earlier era would function in this way. Social gatherings are also the explicit subject of many Chinese ink paintings — see for example Luo Ping's hanging scroll *Drinking in the Bamboo Garden*, 1773, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.
10. See Ledderose, 'Chinese Calligraphy'.
11. When an inscription by someone other than the artist was made soon after the painting's completion, as has frequently been the case, the sense of abolishing distance from the past would not be present. Nevertheless, one can still talk of the ease with which entry into the space of making occurred, and of the role of empathy. Issues of power can still be present in such an instance, albeit differently balanced: a prestigious calligrapher could be invited to write on an image, thereby enhancing its artist's reputation. Yang Weizhen, for instance, supplied a colophon (dated 1361) to a handscroll by Zou Fulei. This inscription (which according to Yang's own words was made at the painter's invitation) consists mostly of a poem praising Zou and his late brother. An anecdote by Su Shi tells that his cousin, the painter Wen Tong, would deliberately leave space on his paintings for inscription, and not allow others to touch it until that prestigious writer had been given pride of place. See Shen C. Y. Fu (in collaboration with Marilyn W. Fu, Mary G. Neill and Mary Jane Clark), *Traces of the Brush. Studies in Chinese Calligraphy* (New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1977), 185.
12. Li Shan, according to Giacalone in 'The John M. Crawford, Jr. Collection', is using an album leaf by Shitao as his prototype (see p. 84). James Cahill in *The Distant Mountains: Chinese Painting of the Late Ming Dynasty, 1570–1644* (New York: Weatherhill, 1982), 120–26, discusses Ming dynasty painters' creative imitations of works by earlier artists such as Ni Zan. An ambiguity between motives of reverence and appropriation has also been suggested in the case of Luo Ping's paintings in the manner of his master Jin Nong, see Kim Karlsson's comments in Kim Karlsson, Alfreda Murck and Michele Matteini, eds., *Eccentric Visions: The Worlds of Luo Ping* (Zürich: Museum Rietberg, 2009), 149 (catalogue entry no. 8). Michele Matteini (p. 216, catalogue entry no. 26) also discusses the way in which Luo Ping's conscious references to the art of valorized predecessors in the ten album leaves of his *Landscapes in the Manner of Old Masters* (undated, Princeton University Art Museum) serves to advertise his own talents, providing them with a provenance.
13. Norman Bryson, *Tradition and Desire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

14. One can see this process of struggle with the past taking place in the instance of the twentieth-century Chinese ink painter, Zhang Daqian (Chang Dai-chien). The many ways he related his work to earlier Chinese art (including the production of forgeries) is discussed, albeit somewhat uncritically, in Shen C. Y. Fu, *Challenging the Past. The Paintings of Chang Dai-chien* (Washington DC: Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, 1991). Literati brushwork, despite its emphasis on precedent, can be said to allow rather more room for self-expression than European classicism, and this flexibility may have been a factor which helped preserve the practice. Even quite strongly individual expressions — of the kind only encountered in European art after the arrival of modernism — can occur without breaking the rules.

15. I take 'private' as referring not to a space outside of society, but to a particular type of social space, which may be constituted differently from one culture to another, and from one historical period to another. Similar points could be made concerning the term 'public', which is also employed in this text. My conception of subjecthood as constituted within particular cultural practices is indebted to the work of Michel Foucault, especially *Discipline and Punish* (Middlesex, Penguin Books, 1977), and *The History of Sexuality. Volume 1* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990). The three-part *Fragments for a History of the Human Body* (published as *Zone*, Vols. 3, 4 and 5, 1989) builds on Foucault's pioneering attempts to offer a historical account of the modes of social construction of the human body, and has also proved of use in the present study. In both the texts by Foucault mentioned he tends to focus on regimes of control and the subjected body, and whilst I find his analysis of the micro-processes within which power is constituted suggestive, the practice of literati brushwork is one in which the agents are more active. Stephen Greenblatt's *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* (Chicago: Chicago University Press: 1980) offers theoretical resources for the study of a practice of that kind, although literati brushwork takes place in a less public domain than the activities he considers. To find a Western parallel to the socially constitutive 'private' practice of literati brushwork one might look to the function of photography within the domain of the family and its role in the social reproduction of that institution. In the practice of family photography, image-making and viewing can both (as with literati practice) take place in 'private' spaces of leisure, and there is a role for the amateur producer, a degree of fluidity between maker and viewer, in both cases.

16. The extent to which the spectator of Chinese brushwork can empathize with the artist as embodied is demonstrated by the comments of Chiang Yee in his *Chinese Calligraphy*. While somewhat idiosyncratic, Chiang's remarks are nevertheless revealing — particularly since they date from the same period as the modernist art discussed in this chapter. They show that for him at least, calligraphy was felt to contain clues to somatic type, and not just to nobility of spirit conceived of in some abstract mental sense. Of a piece (his Figure 47) by the Song emperor Huizong (Hui Tsung), he says 'his writing shows him to have been a tall, thin, handsome figure' (p. 83). Responding to an example (his Figure 46) of calligraphy by Mi Fu (Mi Fei), on the other hand, Chiang writes: 'One thinks of a striking tubby figure walking along a road, unaware, apparently, of any one but himself' (p. 82). Of writing (his Figure 36) by Ouyang Xun (Ou-Yang Hsun) he says: 'one imagines the artist to have been a well-built man with a fine, handsome appearance' (p. 71). Even Qing dynasty painter Shitao, when wishing to assert the individuality of his style, must make somatic references, and point to the separateness of his body from those of the

traditional masters: 'I am always myself and must naturally be present (in my work). The beards and eyebrows of the old masters cannot grow on my face. The lungs and bowels (thoughts and feelings) of the old masters cannot be transferred into my stomach (mind). I express my own lungs and bowels and show my own beard and eyebrows'. See Osvald Siren, *The Chinese on the Art of Painting* (New York: Schocken Books, 1963), 188.

17. That the nude was absent from pre-modern Chinese art was noted by French missionaries of the eighteenth century. See Patrick Conner, 'For Western Eyes Only: Chinese "Export" Painting 1780–1850', *Apollo* 123 (May 1986): 328. Connor quotes a source of that date as stating that 'Chinese painting was as careful to avoid the nude as European painting was anxious to expose it'. One of the rare exceptions to the general absence of the female nude in Chinese high art before the twentieth century is You Qiu's *Spring Morning in the Han Palace* (1568, Shanghai Museum), which includes a scene of the emperor spying on the beauty Zhao Hede while she is bathing.

18. Even at that time the ubiquity of the nude was commented upon. Lin Yutang, in 'Contemporary Chinese Periodical Literature', *T'ien Hsia Monthly* II, no. 3 (March 1936): 232, writes of a class of magazines which is 'constantly playing upon the nude motive', and refers to *The Esthete* (*Wei Mei*) as a magazine 'consisting of absolutely nothing besides nude pictures'. The presence of the nude in the popular press can be instanced by the case of the *Pei-Yang Pictorial News* of Tianjin. Issues of this illustrated Chinese-language publication from Volume 1 (1926) to Volume 21 (1933) frequently contained illustrations of paintings of the female nude by both contemporary Chinese artists (for example, Lin Fengmian and Fang Junbi) and Western artists (for example, Ingres and Rembrandt, as well as many lesser salon-style artists of more recent date, and occasional modernists such as Othon Friesz), often juxtaposed with illustrations of earlier Chinese art. Cartoons concerning the nude are also to be found (for example, vol. 1, no. 8 [31 July 1926]: 3, which comments on contemporary attitudes towards nude models), as can a large number of 'art photos' of the female nude, often of Western origin.

19. This term *renti* does not specifically connote nakedness in its most common usage, but would nowadays be understood to be referring to the nude in an art context. For a useful and concise discussion of Chinese body terminology (including both *shen* and *ti*), which analyzes the way in which more objectivizing Western notions of the body began to appear in modern China, see Susan Bronwell, 'Physical culture, Sports and the Olympics', in *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Chinese Culture*, ed. Kam Louie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 339–60 (esp. 343–45). Bronwell's observations are given in a discussion of the development of a modern sports culture in China, and the transformations in that arena parallel in certain respects the changing conceptions of the body which are being examined here in the area of visual art. In the case of Teng Baiye's sculpture *Progress*, discussed in the previous chapter, we can see changing artistic conceptions of the body and new ideas about physical culture coming together. The partially-clad body presented in all its physicality is a necessity for conveying a modernly-conceived sense of somatic strength. A similar point can be made about Xu Beihong's painting *Yu Gong Removes the Mountain* (which dates to 1940, just a few years after Teng's work): again nationalistic connotations seem intended in this wartime-period representation of

semi-clothed male figures illustrating a well-known Chinese story about an old man who succeeds in a seemingly impossible task of moving a mountain.

20. Reference to the location of illustrations of images by Chinese artists mentioned in this section of the text are given here: He Tingyao, *Human Body* (*Renti*), *Yi Feng* (February 1935): plates section following p. 86. Zhu Shijie, *Human Body* (*Renti*), *Yi Feng* (May 1935): plates section following p. 130. Yang Jianhou, *Daydreaming* (*Xia si*), *Yi Feng* (May 1935): plates section following p. 130. Chen Shiwen, *Oil Paint Study* (*Youhua fanzuo*), *Yi Feng* (April 1933): 93. Lu Sibai, title not known, *Yi Feng* (September 1934): plates section prior to p. 13. Gu Rucheng, *Human Body* (*Renti*), *Yi Feng* (October 1934): plates section following p. 44. Zhou Xijie, *Study* (*Fanzuo*), *Yi Feng* (May 1935): plates section following p. 130. Hu Yiwen, *Women by the Riverside* (*Hepan nu*), *Yi Feng* (May 1935): plates section following p. 130. Zhou Bichu, *Evening Glow* (*Wanxia*), *Yi Feng* (July 1934): plates section following p. 70. Much Western-influenced art of this period is knowable only from illustrations in contemporary periodicals, and all the aforementioned works must be presumed lost.

21. The earliest use of nude models in China may well have been in 1914, when Li Shutong (Hongyi Fashi), who had studied Western painting in Japan, introduced them to the Zhejiang First Normal School (Zhejiang Diyi Shifan Xuexiao). Worth consulting concerning early use of the nude in China are Li Shu, 'Woguo zuizaode jiwei youhuajia' ('My country's earliest oil painters'), *Meishu* [Beijing] 4 (1962): 68–70 and Wu Mengfei, 'Wusi Yundong qianhoude Meishu Jiaoyi Huiyi Pianduan' ('Fragmentary recollections concerning artistic relationships before and after the May Forth movement'), *Meishu Yanjiu* 3 (1959): 42–46. The latter has an illustration of a now-lost nude painting by Li, together with a photo of one of his life classes. Li became a Buddhist monk in 1918, giving up Western-style painting at that point. Draped models were also used in 1914 at the Shanghai Art Academy, and nude models soon after. A photo of a nude model in the life class at the Hangzhou West Lake National Art Academy (where French painter Andre Claudot was teaching) can be found in Qingli Wan and David Clarke, 'Faguo huajia Anzhui Kelaoduo ji qi Zhongguo zhi xing' ('French painter Andre Claudot and Chinese art'), *Hsiung Shih Art Monthly* [Taipei] 242 (April 1991): 189. The earliest instances of Chinese artists displaying an interest in Western nude painting come from Guangzhou. The artist known as Lamqua (who was active there till about 1860) made a copy of Ingres's *Grande Odalisque*, which he could only have known via engravings. Such a work, of course, was made for a Western market. Skillful though it may be, it remains purely a copy and would not have involved any encounter with a living model.

22. For a discussion of the various methods of copying calligraphy, see Fu et al., *Traces of the Brush*, 3–4. For a free imitation of a stele by Qing dynasty calligrapher He Shaoji, and a version of Wang Xizhi's *Preface from the Orchid Pavilion* (*Lanting xu*) by Wen Zhengming of the Ming dynasty, see Shen Fu, Glenn D. Lowry and Ann Yonemura, *From Concept to Context. Approaches to Asian and Islamic Calligraphy* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1986). Female exclusion from calligraphy, like the exclusion of most males, was effected in pre-modern society by preventing their access to literacy. Even in more recent times, as Richard Curt Kraus notes in *Brushes with Power* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 155, the vast majority of illiterates in China were female (nearly 70 percent of a 238 million total, according to the 1982 census).

23. Kao Mayching, *China's Response to the West in Art* (PhD thesis, Stanford University, 1972), 78. Even at a later date, as photos show, models were not always *completely* nude. However, the Shanghai *Pictorial Weekly* IX, no. 36 (1933): 35, ran an article claiming that female models *were* usually naked, whereas male models tended not to be.

24. The correspondence took place in the Shanghai newspaper *Shen Bao*. See the issues for 5, 13, 16, 17 and 18 May, 10 June and 1, 11 and 12 July 1926. The letters have been collected in *Zhuanji Wenxue* (*Biographical Literature*) [Taipei] 56, no. 334: 13–20. For a further collection of primary texts concerning the issue of nude models see Zhu Jinlou and Yuan Zhihuang, eds., *Liu Haisu Yi Wenxuan* (*An Anthology of Liu Haisu's Writing on Art*) (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Meishu Chubanshe 1987) and Julia Andrews, 'Luotihua lunzheng ji xiandai Zhongguo meishude jiangou' ('The nude painting controversy and contemporary Chinese art history'), in *Haipai Huihua Yanjiu Wenji* (*Studies in Shanghai School Painting*) (Shanghai: Shanghai Shuhua Chubanshe 2001), 117–50 for an art historical analysis. On the Shanghai Art Academy in general see Zheng Jie, *The Shanghai Art College, 1913–1937* (M. Phil thesis, University of Hong Kong, 2005).

25. Kao Mayching, 'Lin Fengmian: A Butterfly Broken Free from Its Cocoon', in *The Art of Lin Fengmian* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Arts Centre, 1992), 11–16 (see especially p. 11).

26. *Yi Feng* (May 1935): 75. The public discussion, and the space which enables it to occur, are of course as novel as the nude painting itself. The *Sheying Huabao* IX, no. 44 (1933): 8, also has a cartoon of two men in front of a painting of a nude, and the *Xianggang Gongshang Ribao* (*Industrial & Commercial Daily Press*) (25 November 1934) has one of a man in 'traditional' dress who is represented as having been standing in front of a painting of a nude for a long time.

27. For the *Victims to Art* photo see S. S. Chou, *Shanghai Shi Daguan* (*Panorama of Shanghai*) (Shanghai, Wen Hua Fine Arts Press, 1933). A photo relating to the film *Zaisheng*, and showing a nude model, an artist and a nude painting appeared in the Shanghai periodical the *Young Companion* (*Liangyou*) 78 (31 July 1933): 31. An advert concerning a public showing of a film about the aesthetics of the nude at the Beijing Art Academy (of which Lin Fengmian was the head) appeared in *Chen Bao* (*Morning Post*) [Beijing], 22 January 1927.

28. Reported in *Chen Bao*, 23 February 1928, 7.

29. Ni Yide, 'Yishu shangde renti biaoxian kao' ('An examination of the expression of the human body in art'), *Shenbao Yuekan* [Shanghai] 4, no. 9 (September 1935): 69–72; Zhang Jingsheng, 'Luoti yanjiu — you luohua tandao xuduo shi' ('Research on the nude: from nude painting to other matters'), *Xinwenhua* [Shanghai] 1, no. 1 (December 1926): 52–68; Yu Jifan, 'Renti zhi xingshide mei yu biaoxiande mei' ('The formal and expressive beauty of the human body'), *Shenbao Yuekan* 2, no. 6 (15 June 1933): 105–10. Xiong Bingming, who had himself attended life classes in pre-Communist China, recalls in 'Guanyu Luodan' ('About Rodin'), *Hsiung Shih Art Monthly* 143 (January 1983): 120, that early Republican-era artists influenced by Western thought criticized Chinese painting of women as being just clothes, as being 'bodiless' (*wu ti*). An extra-artistic but related issue concerning the display of the objectivized human body was raised by the reformer Kang Youwei as early as 1895 when he mentioned the display of complete human cadavers in Western museums, noting the value this

had for advancing knowledge of the body in a way that could not be matched by the written word. See Lisa Claypool, 'Zhang Jian and China's First Museum', *The Journal of Asian Studies* 64, no. 3 (August 2005): 567–604, esp. p. 595.

30. Wang Yachen, 'Moxie zirande linghui', *Yi Feng* [Shanghai] 2, no. 1 (1 January 1934): 41–42; Yu Jianhua, 'Chuangzuo yu linmo', *Meizhan* [Shanghai] 4 (April 1929): 7; Jing Youlin, 'You mofang dao chuangzao, yifengshe meizhan guangan', *Yi Feng* 3, no. 7 (1 July 1935): 44; Lin Fengmian, 'Women suo xiwangde guohua qiantu' ('What we hope for concerning the future of our country's painting'), *Qiantu* 1 (January 1933).

31. By the time the modernist art discussed here was coming into being, literati artistic culture in any real sense had already been undermined by the broader forces of socio-economic change. 'Literati-style' art was still a contemporary target, however, as was the prestige of literati aesthetic values (which even merchants or Manchu emperors had found a place for). The practice of learning through copying remained widespread in the modern era, and life-class study offered a direct challenge to that method of art education. Even in the pre-modern era the sense of continuity in the cultured elite which literati brushwork helped inculcate was to a large extent an act of imagination abolishing large stretches of time, so it is not surprising that even when socio-economic change had effectively eliminated the literati as a social class in any real sense such imaginative leaps could continue to be made. As Chinese brush art also came to inhabit public spaces of display and sale it had never before known, that imaginary creation of a sense of continuity went on, but with the participation of an audience that was socially broader. The growth of literacy and the dissemination of elite cultural knowledge through an emergent modern education system and publishing industry meant that ink art was now capable of positioning its viewer as 'Chinese', as a national subject, and in a way that de-emphasized the novelty of such modern subjectivity and offered it a fabricated genealogy.

32. The view that modern Chinese painting should aspire to return to a supposed pre-literati realism was espoused by the reformer Kang Youwei. See for instance Jerome Silbergeld, 'The Song-Yuan Transition in Chinese Painting Histories', in *Asian Art History in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Vishakha N. Desai, (Williamstown MA: Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 2007), 45.

33. See A. Chang, 'Chronology', in *The Art of Lin Fengmian* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Arts Centre, 1992), 31–37, especially 32. Student unrest also occurred between 1926–28 at the Shanghai Academy of Art, see Zheng, *The Shanghai Art College*, 51–54 (as well as the chronology of events at the academy offered as an appendix of the thesis, pp. 149–202).

34. The notion of art usurping the former role of religion is developed in Lin's 1927 essay 'Letter to the Entire Country's Art World' ('Zhi quan guo yishu jie shu'), in which he quotes Cai Yuanpei and follows closely the ideas that author had expressed in his essay 'Yi meiyu dai zongjiao shuo' ('Replacing religion with aesthetic education'), first published in *Xin Qingnian* 3, no. 6 (August 1917). On Lin's relationship with Cai, see Lin Wenzheng, 'Cai Yuanpei had a high regard for Lin Fengmian' ('Cai Yuanpei qizhong Lin Fengmian'), in *Lin Fengmian Lun*, ed. Zheng Chao and Jin Shangyi (Zhejiang: Zhejiang Meishu Xueyuan Chubanshe, 1990), 1–3. I discuss Lin Fengmian's response to European art in David Clarke, 'Exile from Tradition', 22–29.

35. On the nude in Chinese art of the Maoist era and beyond, a topic beyond the scope of the present study, see for example Richard Kurt Kraus, *The Party and the Arty in China: The New Politics of Culture* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2004), 73–106. For a study of the body and contemporary Chinese performance art which addresses the issue of nudity see Silvia Fok, *Performance Art and the Body in Contemporary China* (PhD thesis, University of Hong Kong, 2008).

Chapter 4

1. On Taiwanese art after 1945 and its political context see Jason C. Kuo, *Art and Cultural Politics in Postwar Taiwan* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000). Kuo notes (pp. 80–81) that one reason for a lack of hostility to 'Western-style' painting from the Taiwanese cultural establishment was 'the Nationalist government's need to maintain a pro-Western stance in the Cold War years of the 1950s during which Taiwan received American economic aid as well as military protection from the constant danger of a potential Communist invasion from Mainland China'.
2. See for example Max Kozloff, 'American Painting during the Cold War', *Artforum* XI, no. 9 (May 1973): 43–54, and Eva Cockroft, 'Abstract Expressionism, Weapon of the Cold War', *Artforum* XII, no. 10 (June 1974): 39–41.
3. For evidence concerning the interest of American artists in East Asian art and its perceived philosophical underpinnings see David Clarke, *The Influence of Oriental Thought*.
4. Liu Kuo-sung, 'The Way of Modern Chinese Painting', excerpt in *Liu Guo Song: A Universe of His Own* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Museum of Art, 2004), 104.
5. Liu obtained his Rockefeller grant in 1966. While in America he had a solo show at the Laguna Beach Museum of Art in California and studied print-making in Iowa. He also lived in New York for nine months, having a show there at the Rhodes Gallery in 1967. Other Chinese modernist artists who also received Rockefeller grants for travel to the United States include Chuang Che (1966) from Taiwan, and Hon Chi-fun (1969) and Wucius Wong (1970–71) from Hong Kong. Hon had a solo show in New York's Willard Gallery during the year he was there, and attended lectures by Robert Motherwell and other American artists during the early 1970s due to a connection with the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Wong had studied at the Columbus College of Art and Design in Ohio from 1961, continuing his studies at the Maryland Institute College of Fine Arts in Baltimore, with Grace Hartigan as one of his teachers, and guest speakers and visiting artists including Ad Reinhardt and Helen Frankenthaler. Zao Wou-Ki, although more commonly associated with Parisian modernism, had a brother who had lived in New York from the age of seventeen, and whom he visited in 1957. Zao got to know many American abstract artists, including Franz Kline, Mark Rothko and Adolph Gottlieb, and was regularly exhibited at the Kootz Gallery in New York from 1958 until 1967. On the role of grants in promoting awareness of American culture (examining the European case), see Nancy Jachec, 'Transatlantic Cultural Politics in the Late 1950s: The Leaders and Specialists Grant Program', *Art History* 26, no. 4 (September 2003): 533–55.
6. On Hon Chi-fun see for example *Space and Passion: The Art of Hon Chi-fun* (Hong Kong: Choi Yan-chi, 2000).

7. Michael Sullivan, *The Meeting of Eastern and Western Art*, 199.
8. Certain works by Hon Chi-fun show an awareness of Pop art. In *Bath of Fire*, a three-panel painting of 1968 (Hong Kong Museum of Art), Hon combines oil and acrylic paint with silk-screened images, and uses hot colours that parallel somewhat the Day-Glo effects favoured by Chao. In *Moon Walk* (1969) even Liu Kuo-sung was to incorporate a mass-produced image within the space of an abstracted ink painting. This work features a collaged copy of one of the well-known photographs taken by Apollo astronauts on the moon surface (indeed Liu's more abstracted images with sun and moon images from this period may also be seen as inspired in part by the then-current NASA space programme).
9. An analogous work by Zao, *Hommage to Qu Yuan (5.05.55)* of 1955, makes a direct Chinese reference in its title. Liu Kuo-sung describes Chinese calligraphy as abstract art, giving further evidence of how the two quite historically distinct art forms could be perceived as analogous by modern Chinese artists:

   Few people appreciate the beauty of the abstract as much as the Chinese. This is not only reflected in our various forms of art but deeply rooted in our lives. It is widely recognized that Chinese calligraphy is an abstract art, and that it had a direct bearing on the development of Abstract Expressionism in the U. S. A. and the rest of the world. All movements are abstract in Chinese provincial opera: opening a door, rowing a boat, mounting a horse, galloping. What is not expressed in the abstract? . . . The Chinese preference for the abstract can be found in dance and music too, and in other aspects of our daily lives. Rocks taken from Lake Tai and arranged in gardens comprise the world's oldest abstract sculptures . . . It is irrational that we should attribute abstract painting to the West and regard it as something foreign because we do not understand it.

   See 'On the Connoisseurship and Criticism of Abstract Ink Painting' [1999], in *Liu Guo Song: A Universe of His Own*, 122.
10. Lawrence Tam, *Hong Kong Art, 1970–1980* (Hong Kong: Urban Council, 1981), 12. For further discussion of modern and contemporary art in Hong Kong and its political and social context see David Clarke, *Hong Kong Art: Culture and Decolonization* (London: Reaktion Books, 2001).
11. For a study of recent abstraction in Taiwan see Chien-Hui Kao, 'Another Spiritual Perch — Abstract Art in Taiwan', in *Visions of Pluralism: Contemporary Art in Taiwan, 1988–1999* (Kaohsiung: Mountain Art Culture and Education Association, 1999), 63–67. Among Hong Kong artists of a generation younger than those discussed in the present chapter who have shown interest in abstraction, Lui Chun Kwong (Lu Zhenguang) deserves mention. Unlike earlier Hong Kong abstractionists, his work has an engagement with the more minimal and geometric tendencies of Western abstraction, and it concerns itself neither with the East/West issues that mattered to older artists nor with the more localized identity questions that have preoccupied those of a younger generation. Examples of work by Lui and several of the other Hong Kong artists mentioned in this chapter can be found on the website of the Hong Kong Art Archive at: http://finearts.hku.hk/hkaa/.
12. See comments by Jiang Feng, chairman of the Chinese Artists Association, in his 'Yishu wei renmin dazhong fuwu' ('To serve the people with art'), *Meishu*, no. 1

(1980): 5–6, and Ye Yushan, director of the Sichuan Fine Arts Institute, in his 'Jinnian lai woyuan chuangzuo de huigu' ('A review of creativity in recent years at my art institute'), *Meishu*, no. 5 (1982): 52–58. Both comments emphasize abstraction's opacity and Ye also asserts that it is not sufficiently Chinese. For a discussion of these two texts see Jane Debevoise, *Seismic States: The Changing System of Support for Contemporary Art in China, 1978–1993* (Ph D thesis, University of Hong Kong, 2009), 22–23 and 46–49.

13. One can see a Minimalist-like monochrome effect in Qiu Zhijie's *Writing the 'Orchid Pavilion Preface' One Thousand Times* (1986), but the monochrome black of this work is the result of repeatedly writing a paradigmatic calligraphic text (associated with calligrapher Wang Xizhi) on the same sheet of paper — an act of paradoxically subversive obedience that derives its meaning from the process of cancellation involved. A white monochrome effect is the first impression received when approaching many of Qiu Shihua's canvases, but on closer inspection the eye discovers representational landscapes.
14. See David Clarke, *Art and Place: Essays on Art from a Hong Kong Perspective* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1996), 236–49 on resignifying play with Maoist imagery in the work of mainland Chinese artists of the late 1980s and early 1990s.
15. Amongst recent exhibitions to feature Chinese abstract art are 'The International Traveling Exhibition of Chinese Abstract Art', held at the Artist Commune, Cattle Depot Artist Village, Hong Kong, 30 September–17 October 2007; 'Beyond the Image', held at Osage Kwun Tong, Hong Kong, 30 May–28 June 2009; and 'The Burden of Representation: Abstraction in Asia Today', held at Osage Kwun Tong, Hong Kong, 1 May–10 July 2010.

Chapter 5

1. Up-to-date synoptic studies of Macau from a cultural perspective are hard to find. On Macau's history see Cesar Guillen-Nuñez, *Macau* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1984), and Philippe Pons, *Macao* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2002). For a social scientist's perspective on the city around the moment of its return to Chinese sovereignty see Jean A. Berlie, 'Macau's Overview at the Turn of the Century', *American Asian Review* XVIII, no. 4 (Winter 2000): 25–68. A cultural study was made at the same moment by Christina Miu Bing Cheng, *Macau: A Cultural Janus* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1999). More recent is the study by Jeremy Tambling and Louis Lo, *Walking Macao, Reading the Baroque* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2009). Also recent, and close in focus to the present study since it considers the role of monuments and museums in constructing narratives of Macau's history, is Jonathan Potter, '"The Past is Present": The Construction of Macau's Historical Legacy', *History and Memory* 21, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2009): 63–100.
2. On the Hong Kong/Zhuhai/Macau bridge see for instance Bonnie Chen, 'Bridge go-ahead', *The Standard*, 29 February 2008, 1.
3. See Fox Yi Hu and Dennis Eng, 'Booming casinos help Macau narrow visitors gap with HK', *South China Morning Post*, 18 January 2007, A1. It should be noted, however, that a large percentage of the visitors are day-trippers only.

4. For a long time Macau has been host to a Formula Three Grand Prix, but this temporary annual celebration of speed seemed only to emphasize the normal sleepiness of Macau. In the same way one noticed a change of pace on arrival in Macau after travelling to it from Hong Kong on the high-speed jetfoil service.
5. When on 13 July 2007 the Macau government unveiled plans for an elevated light rail link between the peninsula and Taipa it was criticized for ignoring the transport needs of locals. The proposed route bypassed the older residential districts in favour of sites more frequented by tourists. See Fox Yi Hu, 'Fast track to slots; poor rue lot', *South China Morning Post*, 14 July 2007, A3.
6. Such has been the pace of Macau's economic growth (at least until the arrival of the recent global economic downturn, which has caused a dip in casino income and put new construction in that sector on hold) that it seems to have surpassed its model Las Vegas in casino revenue in 2006. See 'Tiny Macau overtakes Vegas Strip', BBC News, accessed 29 August 2007, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/6083624.stm, and Douglas Greenlees, 'Macao rises close to top global spot for gamblers', *International Herald Tribune*, 18 January 2008, 1. On Macau's rising GDP see Neil Gough, 'Macau tops Asia's rich list, but try telling that to the poor', *South China Morning Post*, 29 March 2008, A3. A qualification of the picture offered in that account is given in Jake van der Kamp, 'Glowing GDP figures hide reality of Macau economy', *South China Morning Post*, 1 April 2008, B16. Perhaps heralding the end of an era, in a ceremony on 20 December 2009 to mark the tenth anniversary of Macau's handover Chinese President Hu Jintao called for the territory's economy to be diversified beyond the gaming industry, (see Colleen Lee, 'Turning the tables', *The Standard*, 21 December 2009, p. 2).
7. On the Grand Lisboa see Neil Gough, 'Stanley Ho's feather aims to tickle punters' fancy', *Sunday Morning Post*, 11 February 2007, 3 and Alfred Liu, 'Ho bullish as hotel opens amid setbacks for rivals', *The Standard*, 18 December 2008, 8.
8. A major casino, hotel and entertainment complex which opened in Cotai on 1 July 2009 is named 'City of Dreams'.
9. On the opening of the Venetian Macao see Fox Yi Hu, 'The Venetian effect', *South China Morning Post*, 28 August 2007, A16.
10. I discuss the venue of the Hong Kong handover ceremony in Clarke, *Hong Kong Art*, 138–49.
11. For an analysis of the Hong Kong handover ceremony as an event in visual culture see Clarke, *Hong Kong Art*, 199–202. The visual choreography of the Macau handover was in most respects modelled on the earlier Hong Kong event.
12. Such a sense of belonging to Macau does exist for the long-established Macanese (Portuguese/Chinese Eurasian) community, whose sense of cultural distinctness is expressed in their cuisine, for instance. The Macanese constitute only a small percentage of Macau's total population, however. On cultural identity in Hong Kong and its artistic expression see Clarke, *Hong Kong Art*.
13. The substantial flow of labour into Macau to meet the needs of the casino boom has not been entirely friction-free. Resentment from those left at the bottom of the labour market (together with concerns about government corruption following a

scandal involving the former transport and public works secretary Ao Man-long) has led recently to local calls for political reform and governmental transparency. These concerns, raised against the post-handover Macau administration headed by Chief Executive Edmund Ho Hau-wah (and not against the central government in Beijing), came to a climax in a rally of around six thousand people held on Labour Day (1 May) 2007. Much smaller in scale than the rallies held in Hong Kong, even allowing for the differences in population size, this was nevertheless something of a watershed for post-handover Macau. The rally garnered widespread press coverage since a police officer fired five warning shots into the air, and a passing motorcyclist was injured by a bullet. Several demonstrators and police officers were injured during the protest. See Fox Yi Hu, 'D-Day for democracy', *Sunday Morning Post*, 6 May 2007, 11. On the Ao scandal see, for instance, Fox Yi Hu, 'Fallen minister Ao jailed for 27 years', *South China Morning Post*, 31 January 2008, A1. A rally on 20 December 2009 calling for newly appointed Macau Chief Executive Fernando Chui Sai-on to combat corruption and enhance political freedom is reported in Nickkita Lau, 'Protestors set priorities for Chui era', *The Standard*, 21 December 2009, 6.

14. One can see a strong sense of separate cultural identity in certain places with populations that are equally as small as that of Macau, so this factor alone is not crucial. Iceland, for instance, does have that sense of identity, but the difference is that it is a nation rather than a city, and it has its own language. As an island it also has an obvious, physical separation from neighbouring populations, and this has led to both a cultural and genetic homogeneity since immigration has not been a major factor. Iceland also has a remarkably active cultural scene.

15. Recent photos of Macau by Frank Lei are featured in *City Sights: Photographs by Oan Kim and Frank Lei* (Macau: Macau Museum of Art, 2006). Laurence Aberhart's photos of the city are collected in *Ghostwriting: Photographs of Macao by Laurence Aberhart* (Macau: Macau Museum of Art, 2001). Both books were published to accompany exhibitions held at the Macau Museum of Art.

16. On the Old Ladies House Art Space see Frank Lei, 'In Search of a Direction in Transition — From the Old Ladies House Art Space to Ox Warehouse', in *Trading Places: Contemporary Art and Cultural Imaginaries of the Pearl River Delta*, ed. Matthew Turner and Beatrix Pang (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Art School, Hong Kong Arts Centre, 2007), 99–101.

17. A recent museum show of Bessmertny's work, featuring both paintings and installation pieces, was 'Edictus Ridiculum: Latest Creations by Konstantin Bessmertny' held at the Macau Museum of Art, 5 May–7 October 2007. A catalogue was published to accompany the exhibition.

18. Among aspects of the increasing spectacularization of the Macau cityscape not discussed in the text is the recent proliferation of large-scale digital display screens on building facades, and the construction of the Macau Tower, which opened in 2001. The primary function of this structure, which was built on reclaimed land, is to offer from its observation deck a spectacularizing viewpoint on Macau, and in particular its newer aspects.

Chapter 6

1. On the complex relationship between expectation and experience in travel see Paul Duro, 'The Return to the Origin: Heidegger's Journey to Greece', *Art Journal* 66, no. 3 (Fall 2007): 88–101.

2. A 'haunting' of Macau by Las Vegas was discussed in the previous chapter. Like Hong Kong, Macau also underwent a late decolonization that did not result in independence, and thus was in particular need of resources for a postcolonial civic identity. The unavailability of the normal discursive resources for constructing national identity in a postcolonial era is part of what distinguishes the case of Hong Kong and Macau from that of Singapore, a city that is also an independent state. Unsurprisingly, however, Singapore has also seen a need to benchmark itself to London and New York (and also Hong Kong, Melbourne and Glasgow) as it develops the ambition to be a 'global arts city' (see the 2000 policy document *Renaissance City Report: Culture and the Arts in Renaissance Singapore*, accessed 31 March 2010, http://app.mica.gov.sg/Portals/0/2_FinalRen.pdf). On the high-profile adoption of Dubai as an explicit growth model for their city by Hangzhou municipal officials since 2007 (the cities are even linked by direct flights), and the effect of Dubai's debt crisis of November 2009 on this over-identification, see Will Clem, 'Hangzhou learns tough lesson in market realities after chasing Dubai "miracle"', *South China Morning Post*, 19 December 2009, A5.

3. I discuss the Hong Kong Cultural Centre and the extension to the Convention and Exhibition Centre in David Clarke, *Hong Kong Art*, Chapter 4, which also treats many other aspects of Hong Kong art and visual culture in the late colonial and early postcolonial period. Hong Kong architecture and urban planning since 1997 is further discussed in David Clarke, 'Contested Sites: Hong Kong's Built Environment in the Post-Colonial Era', *Postcolonial Studies* 10, no. 4 (December 2007): 357–77, and I deal with issues of Hong Kong cultural identity during the same period in David Clarke, *Hong Kong x 24 x 365: A Year in the Life of a City* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2007).

4. The cultural linking between Hong Kong and Shanghai I am discussing here also has a pre-history. Leo Oufan Lee, in *City between Worlds: My Hong Kong* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 277, points out that the short stories of Eileen Chang (Zhang Ailing) which were often set in Hong Kong and which were published in Shanghai popular magazines in the early 1940s helped establish awareness of Hong Kong in Shanghai and elsewhere in China.

5. As the then Chief Secretary for Administration Anson Chan put it in an 11 June 1998 speech ('Hong Kong: Riding out the Asian Storm') at the Asia Society Washington Center annual dinner, 'the real transition is about identity and not sovereignty... Late on the evening of June 30, 1997, between the lowering of one flag and the raising of another — in that instant when Hong Kong seemed truly without identity — identity became the issue. That was one of the handover's defining moments and is the challenge Hong Kong faces today.' (Government Information Centre website — former website of the Hong Kong SAR government, accessed 10 December 2010, http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/199806/12/0612097.htm).

6. On the visit of Donald Tsang (then financial secretary) to Las Vegas, see Greg Torode, 'Into the den of decadence', *South China Morning Post*, 25 September 1999, Review p. 1.

7. Foster's canopy design had been the winner of an architectural competition for the West Kowloon Cultural District site which took place prior to serious, detailed consideration (even within the Hong Kong government itself, it seems) of what would actually be happening on the site. Public opposition to the notion of private sector control over such a major cultural site (in particular to the proposed idea of a single for-profit entity being given sole possession, and to the high density of development the three short-listed bidders proposed in their plans) eventually led the Hong Kong government to abandon in 2006 the process of bidding between property developer-led consortiums it had initiated in 2003. When the project was revived in a new form, the idea of using Foster's canopy (which had never received widespread public endorsement) was abandoned. A summary of the history of the project and details of the new proposals announced in 2007 (which envisaged a non-profit-making statutory authority taking charge of the site) can be found on the Hong Kong government website, accessed 22 January 2008, http://www.hab.gov.hk/wkcd/pe/eng/doc/CC_Report_eng/3_executivesummary.pdf. The West Kowloon Cultural District Authority Ordinance was enacted by the Legislative Council on 11 July 2008, and an upfront endowment of HK$21.6 billion was approved. Although an independent statutory body, the authority is chaired by the chief secretary for administration, enabling the Hong Kong government to exercise a high degree of control over it. For details see the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority website, accessed 10 December 2010, http://www.wkcdauthority.hk/en/about_wkcda/index.html. For a critical review of the whole project (which examines it against the backdrop of other Asian governmental initiatives in the art field) see Oscar Ho Hing-kay, 'Government, Business, and People: Museum Development in Asia', in *The Global Art World: Audiences, Markets, and Museums*, ed. Hans Belting and Andrea Buddenseig (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2009), 266–77.

8. Wen Jiabao's comment was made shortly after returning from a visit to Singapore. Wen stated that during his visit to Singapore he 'kept thinking of Hong Kong', adding that 'It is facing very strong competition — the situation is pressing'. Tsang replied that he visited Singapore every couple of years to observe its development, and had also learned from the experiences of Shanghai and Beijing (see Fanny W. Y. Fung and Eva Wu, 'Wen's 4 ways for HK to up its game', *South China Morning Post*, 24 November 2007, A1). On 15 July 2006 Tsang had already referred to Hong Kong and Singapore as 'the closest twin cities on earth' in terms of development and their people's ambition, adding that Hong Kong had much to learn from the other city (see Ambrose Leung, 'Full vote possible by 2012, says Tsang', *Sunday Morning Post*, 16 July 2006, 1). Tsang's views were challenged by former Chief Secretary Anson Chan, who stated in an interview on 22 July 2006 that she didn't believe the Singapore model of democracy was the one Hong Kong should follow, and that there wasn't much Hong Kong could learn from that city about how to develop political talents (see Dikky Sinn, 'All options open for Anson Chan', *Sunday Morning Post*, 23 July 2006, 2). A *South China Morning Post* leader on 18 July 2006 ('Singapore is not the ideal model', A10) also took issue with Tsang.

9. For further information on 'Brand Hong Kong' (note the terminology which treats the city as if it were a commercial product needing to find a place in a crowded marketplace) see the official website, accessed 17 January 2008, http://www.brandhk.gov.hk/brandhk/eindex.htm. In addition to the obvious parallel with Singapore's Merlion, the Hong Kong dragon logo was also compared by Hong

Kong's financial secretary to Canada's maple leaf emblem. See 'Hong Kong celebrates 7th year of city's flying dragon', *People's Daily Online*, 29 March 2008, accessed 30 June 2009, http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90001/90776/90882/6383052.html. A modified version of the logo designed by Alan Chan Yau-kin, in which three flying ribbons were added to the dragon, was unveiled on 27 March 2010 (see Vivienne Chow, 'Closed process on new dragon logo denied', *South China Morning Post*, 2 April 2010, A2). For a governmental statement on the revitalized Brand Hong Kong see the article by Financial Secretary John Tsang Chun-wah, 'A multifaceted city', *South China Morning Post*, 12 April 2010, A15; for an alternative view see Peter Kammerer, 'Logo delusions', *South China Morning Post*, 13 April 2010, A15.

10. This irony was pointed out at the time by commentator Jake van der Kamp, 'So easy to imitate, so difficult to create, so easy to borrow brands', *South China Morning Post*, 15 November 2005, B16.

11. Xu Kuangdi's comments were made on 10 March 2001 (see 'Xu Kuangdi: Shanghai not to replace HK', *People's Daily Online*, 12 March 2001, accessed 17 January 2008, http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/english/200103/12/eng20010312_64780.html). On Zhu and Tsang's comments concerning Hong Kong and Shanghai see Chris Yeung, 'Shanghai no threat, says Tsang', *South China Morning Post*, 28 July 2001, A1. Tsang's comparisons between Hong Kong and New York, and Shanghai and Chicago apparently coincide with the view of the expert on globalization and world cities, Saskia Sassen. See Steve Schifferes, 'Hong Kong v Shanghai: Global rivals', *BBC News website* (international version), 27 June 2007, accessed 29 August 2007, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/6240994.stm. Wang Zhan, director of the Development Research Centre of the Shanghai Municipal People's Government, apparently suggested that 'Hong Kong should become the Switzerland of Asia', see Kwai-Cheung Lo, *Chinese Face-Off: The Transnational Popular Culture of Hong Kong* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 1; while author Simon Winchester claims to have angered Hong Kong's last colonial governor, Chris Patten, by suggesting to him that in fifty years time Beijing would be China's Washington DC, Shanghai its New York, and Hong Kong its New Orleans ('First Person', *HK Magazine* 642 (1 September 2006): 54). More recently politician and former government official Regina Ip has explored the parallels between Hong Kong and Tianjin (see Regina Ip, 'Our other sister city', *South China Morning Post*, 28 April 2008, A11), and a departing speech by British Consul-General Stephen Bradley to the Foreign Correspondents' Club on 13 March 2008 claimed that Hong Kong was still a very small town when compared to London and New York, at least with respect to cultural provision. One response to Bradley's speech was Peter Gordon, 'Judge Hong Kong in its own right', *The Standard*, 17 March 2008, 15. An alternative view that Hong Kong could indeed be reasonably compared to London and New York was expressed by Michael Elliott ('A tale of three cities', *Time* online edition, 17 January 2008, accessed 23 May 2008, http://time.com/time/printout/0,8816,1704398,00.html). Newspapers have been a major site in which the discourse of a supposed rivalry between Hong Kong and Shanghai has been propagated since 1997. Not all such accounts have simply voiced fears of Hong Kong being overtaken by Shanghai, however, and in the period since the retirement of China's Shanghai-associated leaders Jiang Zemin and Zhu Rongji it has sometimes been suggested that that city is also faltering in its direction (see, for instance, 'Shanghai's problem with thinking too big', *South China Morning Post*, 2 September 2006, A12). A 2009 decision of

China's State Council to turn Shanghai into an international financial hub by 2020 has however again raised the stakes. See Chris Yeung, 'A job that suddenly got a whole lot harder', *Sunday Morning Post*, 5 April, 2009, 8, on how this ratcheted up pressure on Hong Kong Chief Executive Donald Tsang, who was already facing low popularity ratings, and 'HK finance sector must up its game, Wen says', *Sunday Morning Post*, 12 April 2009, 1, for a warning to Hong Kong by Premier Wen Jiabao concerning the risks to its status as an international financial centre. See also Bonnie Chen, 'Shanghai 2020 vision is "alarming" news for SAR', *The Standard*, 31 August 2009, 8.

12. See 'Wong Kar-wai exclusive interview', conducted 27 October 1997 for WBAI Pacifica Radio [New York], accessed 10 January 2008, http://www.asiastudios.com/interviews/members/wongkarwai.html.

13. The *City Cookie* project was a collaboration with Sara Wong Chi Hang, and has also been executed in relation to other cities. More recently Leung has also engaged explicitly with Hong Kong's 'Asia's World City' rhetoric. In 2008 he invited people to send him their own wishes concerning changes that should be made in Hong Kong to help actualize its ambition for global status. With this project Leung was still comparing Hong Kong to other cities as he had done in his urban skyline photographs, but now the medium was the written word, with an emphasis on detecting discrepancies between Hong Kong's achievements and those of other cities. From the comments received in response to his invitation Leung chose twelve to be featured on printed banners that mimic those which governmental bodies often place in Hong Kong public space. These banners were installed without permission in a variety of roadside locations, and left there until they were spotted and removed. Works from this project were also featured in a gallery setting in Leung's exhibition 'Asia's World City: A Photo Project by Leung Chi Wo', Goethe-Institut Hong Kong, 20 February–21 March 2009.

    Chow Chun Fai has also displayed a fascination with the Hong Kong government's civic rhetoric in his artworks, which are often painted images made after filmic originals (for example frames from local movies which he has isolated from their context). In *Repainting '10th Anniversary'* (2007, video, 1 minute 20 seconds) he takes the process one step further, producing a series of still images in acrylic after scenes from a made-for-television government propaganda video concerning the tenth anniversary of the handover. He then videos these images in sequence to the original soundtrack, turning his target into an object for scrutiny by this alienation effect. Similar treatment is given to a government video promoting the West Kowloon Cultural District in *Repainting 'A Cultural Hub in the Making, West Kowloon Cultural District'* (video, 2007, 1 minute 20 seconds).

14. At a later date Patrick Ho seems himself to have developed doubts about the world city rhetoric, perhaps because such rhetoric is hard to easily reconcile with the quite different post-handover imperative of propagating Chinese national ideology in Hong Kong. At an Asian cultural co-operation meeting held in Hong Kong in 2005 he gave a speech in which he decried the way Asian cities 'are tagged with nicknames such as the Venice of Asia, the Las Vegas of the East, or Paris in China. Soho here, West End there and Manhattan everywhere. Heaven knows we are liable to forget that we are in Asia' (quoted in van der Kamp, 'So easy to imitate').

15. Wong's teahouse was constructed using a kind of red/white/blue plastic fabric that is widely used in everyday contexts in Hong Kong, and which has come to signify local Hong Kong identity for many. Wong has employed this material in other art and design works as well. Many other artists participating in the Venice Biennale over the years have sought to explore connections between that city and other places. For instance, the Thai pavilion for the 2009 Venice Biennale, *Gondola al Paradiso: Notes from Paradise*, which made use of playful parodies of tourist imagery, featured a map conflating landmarks from both Venice and Bangkok.

16. Hong Kong and Beijing are also linked in Tozer Pak's performance work *A Present to the Central Government* (2005). The first part of this work took place in Hong Kong on 1 July 2005, when Pak placed a strip of yellow cloth across the path of a democracy march; the second part took place in Beijing on 17 July 2005 when he tied fragments of that cloth around the periphery of Tiananmen Square (a friend documented the process and removed the cloth strips not long after they had been placed). *Dubble Happiness: A Story of Siamese Cities* (25 May–1 June 2010, Studio Double Happiness and OV Gallery, Wanchai, Hong Kong) featured artists from both Hong Kong and Shanghai. Although artists involved were not necessarily addressing the question of the connections between the two cities explicitly in their works, the viewer was invited to do so when taking in the show as a whole. An essay 'Dubble Happiness: A Story of Siamese Cities' by Rebecca Catching and Nana Seo in the exhibition catalogue of the same title (edited by Rebecca Catching for the OV Gallery and Studio Double Happiness, Shanghai, 2010) also addressed the entwined history of the two cities.

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