

# China—Art—Modernity

A Critical Introduction to Chinese Visual  
Expression from the Beginning of the Twentieth  
Century to the Present Day

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# Introduction

It was once common for art historians to talk of a tendency in Western art of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries towards greater formal purity and perhaps abstraction. In recent decades, however, this form-centred model of Western art's development has come to seem less viable. Scholars have rejected the idea of a unified narrative of progress, gaining in the process an appreciation for the actual heterogeneity of twentieth- and twenty-first-century European and American art. Issues of content or meaning are discussed, not just those of form or style, and art has been conceived of as both influenced by broader social and intellectual factors and, in turn, as commenting upon the world around it.

This shift of paradigm enables non-Western art of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries to be considered on equal terms with its Western counterpart. No longer condemned as out-of-date for failing to share Western art's concern with formal issues, it can now be seen as offering an equally rich response to the modern condition. If we understand modernity to mean urbanization and industrialization, and indeed all the radical socio-economic transformations caused by the development of capitalism, then China (like other non-Western countries) has certainly experienced modernity too. Indeed, it arguably underwent a more extreme and traumatic break with the past than had Western Europe.

It will be the task of this book to describe the particular ways in which Chinese art responded to the modern experience, thereby hopefully expanding the currently rather Western-centred conception of what 'modern art' can be. My contention is that all of Chinese visual culture was influenced by the broader transformations in society which occurred in the twentieth century, and thus I will be de-emphasizing the distinction often made between 'modern' and 'traditional' art. I will not confine my attention solely to those artists who have attempted self-consciously to be 'modern' (or 'contemporary') but will also look at artistically rich responses to the modern experience made by artists who might at first glance seem quite 'traditional', especially to Western eyes. I will not assume that the painting commonly characterized as 'modern' is any less Chinese than that characterized as 'traditional', even though the former is often described by Chinese commentators themselves as *xihua* ('Western painting'—a category which doesn't exist in the West itself, of course), and the latter as *guohua* ('Chinese painting' or 'national painting', a category which

didn't exist in earlier times).<sup>1</sup> While responses to the West play an important part in the story of twentieth- and twenty-first-century Chinese art (as the discussion will show), borrowed elements are always used to produce local meanings. Equally, though Chinese artists of this period do show an interest in earlier Chinese art, they use it in ways that are specific to their own age and its particular needs.

While it is my hope that I will be able to raise a wide range of issues concerning the interpretation of twentieth- and twenty-first-century Chinese art, it is not my plan to offer a systematic art history survey of the kind which would only be of use to those who already have a developed specialist interest in the topic.<sup>2</sup> My aim is rather to give a broad overview, to provide a map that identifies sufficient key landmarks for the reader to feel confident enough to make their own independent investigation of the fascinating territory that is twentieth- and twenty-first-century Chinese art. Like any map, it will need to leave out much detail in order to reveal the more important features. As a consequence, many significant figures in modern and contemporary Chinese art history will escape mention entirely, while others will be represented by only isolated examples of their many noteworthy artworks. This will particularly be the case with living artists, since there has been a vast expansion of the art field in China in recent years, making comprehensive coverage more difficult to achieve. The topic of contemporary Chinese art has received a great deal of international attention, often treated in isolation from the larger history to which it belongs and in relation to which it has much of its meaning, but the approach here will be one which concentrates on considering it as part of a bigger historical picture. For convenience, I will be adopting a broadly chronological approach, but freely depart from this where it seems productive to do so. I may follow an artist's career through to later phases in order to avoid fragmenting discussion, for instance, or juxtapose examples from different time periods when treating a particular theme. Routes by means of which the richness of Chinese art of this period can be explored in more detail will be suggested by extensive footnotes, which will give advice on further reading (with an emphasis on introducing both primary and secondary literature available in English). In that way I aim to combine the advantages of a relatively concise, fast-paced, and accessible text with a broader address to the field it covers. I hope that the book will prove useful as an introductory text but will also remain relevant as a resource for deeper study and investigation.

In addition to this introduction, which offers an overview of the period as a whole, and also provides background information on Chinese art and history in the period leading up to it, I break my discussion down into six chapters. I begin by looking at some of those artists from the earlier part of the twentieth century who retained a strong relationship in medium, style, and subject with Chinese art of earlier eras. This will be followed by a discussion of those early twentieth-century artists who made a more conscious break with the Chinese artistic heritage, primarily looking to the West for resources with which to reform their country's visual culture. Chapter 3 considers that art of the later Republican period which had a more directly political nature, and also looks at art in the People's Republic (where political considerations were never far away), focusing on the period up to 1976, the year marking the end of the Cultural Revolution. By contrast, the following chapter considers the

contribution of overseas Chinese artists, as well as those based in Hong Kong and Taiwan. These sites for Chinese art production are often given less prominence than they deserve, and it is a particular concern of my book to write them into the story of Chinese artistic modernity. Chapter 4 is the first point where I do so explicitly. I return to Mainland China in the chapter which follows to consider the transformations of art in the period following the death of Mao. Major social and economic changes in that period created opportunities for the development of a new artistic culture, more autonomous and experimental than any that had been seen before in China and more deeply in contact with the outside world. The last full chapter considers trends in Chinese art from the beginning of the 1990s. It begins with Mainland China, but also looks at Hong Kong and Taiwan to examine to what extent art in those locations can be mapped on to the same story. Finally, a short epilogue considers recent trends in art, taking stock at a moment when China has grown to become one of the largest economies in the world and a major international force in an increasingly globalized era.<sup>3</sup>

Rather than structuring my treatment of modern Chinese art as a series of movements defined in stylistic terms (an approach particularly familiar from older books on Western modernism with their parade of successive isms), I look to larger-scale political or societal factors to demarcate my major turning points. Although social historical or contextual approaches have been popular in art history in general in recent decades, such an approach makes particular sense in the case of modern China because of the revolutionary changes the country has seen during this time. The year 1911 saw the republican Xinhai Revolution, with the overthrow of the last of the imperial dynasties, the Qing (which had been founded in 1644), but in 1949 a further massive upheaval was to come with the triumph of the Communist Party in the civil war and the establishment of the People's Republic. In many ways the economic liberalization introduced after the end of the Cultural Revolution in 1976 has led to an even more extreme transformation of the country than ever before.

China's artistic trajectory since the beginning of the twentieth century has been deeply marked by the extraordinary degree of social change the country has witnessed, with two major political revolutions within less than forty years of each other and the radically accelerated economic changes of recent years. Although this has led to many interruptions and historical discontinuities in China's artistic life, justifying the periodization proposed here, there are nevertheless several overarching themes relevant to this modern epoch as a whole that are most usefully flagged up here in advance of the more chronologically organized discussion that follows. While not exactly constituting straightforward continuities, these themes—which to a certain extent interlink—do offer us some way of specifying the particular nature of China's artistic experience over the last hundred years. They will be alluded to from time to time in the pages that follow, serving as a weft to the chronological warp of the book's structure, but signposting them here in an explicit way will forestall the need to highlight each theme in a tediously systematic fashion whenever it appears in the discussion.

Perhaps the most persistent theme in twentieth- and twenty-first-century Chinese art has been its response to non-Chinese art, and more particularly to

Western art. This theme is one we shall return to repeatedly in the course of the chapters that follow. While knowledge of Western art had already been brought directly to the Chinese court and had permeated southern trading cities such as Canton and Macau at a much earlier date, it was only in the early twentieth century that Western ways of image making came to be widely seen in China as viable alternative modes for making high art. One way of defining the experience of modernity in general is to see it as a moment in which meaning-providing contexts weaken because they multiply and blur. This moment of cultural or epistemological relativity also led to an awareness of Japanese art. Japan's importance came also from its role as a conduit of Western ideas, which had often been translated into Japanese earlier than Chinese and had been deeply influential in a wide range of fields during the consciously modernizing era which followed the Meiji Restoration in 1868. Many Chinese artists travelled to Japan or to the West in the early part of the twentieth century to access an artistic education not available to them at home. A reform of Chinese art education to accommodate the lessons of Western models also occurred over time, to a great extent through the efforts of artists and educators returning from overseas study. This was part of a broader project of reform in which the West played an ambivalent role, as both a source of new ideas and as representing the very threat of predominating power that China wished to strengthen itself in order to face.

From the early Republican period onwards ambitious artists in China began to produce work that made use of media, styles, and themes gleaned from Western art. This responsiveness to the West cannot be adequately described as passive influence or abject mimicry but was at its best an active and selective appropriation guided by concerns specific to the times and places in which particular Chinese artists were working. Most evident in art that used oil paint, this accommodation to the lessons of Western art can nevertheless also be seen in ink painting. Even those artists using ink whose work seems determinedly native in its sources are in some sense also a product of a modern world in which foreign modes need to be acknowledged, if only as something one consciously chooses to resist or reject. Western modernist artists also became aware of alternative modes of representation through a contact with the art of other countries—the interest of Paul Gauguin (1848–1903) in Tahitian visual culture or of Vincent Van Gogh (1853–1890) in Japanese woodblock prints are two early examples, and further instances can be found in the twentieth century such as the interest of Pablo Picasso (1881–1973) in African carvings and Henri Matisse (1869–1954) in Islamic art. However, few Western artists have developed as deep a familiarity with non-Western art as a great number of Chinese artists have demonstrated with that of the West. In any case, the differential of power and cultural prestige between China and the West through at least the early half of the twentieth century made the terms of artistic exchange quite different in the two directions.

If the relationship to Western modes of art was problematic, this was no different from the relation of Chinese artists of the modern period to their inherited native tradition. The rich heritage of ink painting and calligraphy in particular was something a great many artists felt a need to accommodate, and since this process is still occurring today it can be considered as the second major theme

of twentieth- and twenty-first-century Chinese art. Although certain art historical accounts have presented Western and Chinese modes of art making as opposed to each other, and certain Chinese artists have indeed felt this to be the case, at other times there has been a sense that bridges can productively be built across the divide. The seeming unavoidability of the inherited visual tradition in China, the difficulty of simply denying or discarding it to achieve modernity without risking some kind of felt deracination (and yet the difficulty of simply continuing to produce the kind of art that had been made in quite different premodern cultural circumstances), marks the Chinese experience of the modern as different from that of most European artists. Whereas for Maurice de Vlaminck (1876–1958) or Umberto Boccioni (1882–1916), for instance, artistic modernity involved a quite straightforward disavowal of the past, such an option rarely seemed adequate in the Chinese context.

In part because of its sheer longevity as a valorized artistic medium, Chinese ink painting is often looked upon, even by its contemporary admirers, as a ‘traditional’ art. In fact, however, it continues to constantly evolve and has seen remarkable changes within the last century which have preserved its relevance. More than being merely a residual survival from an earlier time it has played an active role within Chinese cultural modernity. Even during the Maoist era when Mainland Chinese society was undergoing a radical transformation involving an often-vehement rejection of the past it still proved its resilience. In China, ink, brush, and absorbent surfaces have been the tools and materials of writing as well as painting, and this may have helped to secure the continued relevance of ink art, especially since Chinese calligraphy is valued for its aesthetic worth in a way that has no direct equivalent in Western culture. This special status of calligraphy, together with the distinctive nature of the written Chinese language which it employs, has led to the written word being a particular concern in experimental Chinese art from the late 1980s onwards.

The ambivalence between inherited and imported modes in modern Chinese art has led to a high degree of heterogeneity or pluralism, and (another closely related sub-theme) to much art—particularly in the post–Second World War era—that can be described as ‘hybrid’ in nature, even before the more widespread appearance of such art in the West during the era of ‘postmodernism’. One reason that the clash of cultures was felt particularly strongly in China was that its context was not merely trade, intellectual exchange, and migration in a more neutral sense but rather foreign invasion and occupation of Chinese soil. Although the impact of imperialism is also found in many other parts of the globe, the particular form it took in China’s foreign concessions (and especially Shanghai) is perhaps worth noting, being a causal factor of two further interrelated but not completely identical themes considered here: the importance of the city in modern Chinese art and the importance of China’s margins in its artistic development.

To a very large extent, the story of modern art in Republican China was a story of Shanghai, which had been a settlement of relatively minor importance before the Opium War but had become one of the world’s largest cities by the 1930s. The development of Chinese visual culture during that time occurred primarily in the unprecedented crucible offered by this modern city, connected to the rest of the world through a vibrant port and containing foreign-run areas in which its Chinese



citizens could encounter other cultures on home soil in a relatively undiluted way. In the present era of openness the major Chinese cities are again the primary sites of artistic experiment, often in response to the challenge of the new forms of urban existence emerging there, but even in the earlier years of the People's Republic cities played a central role. This is because the flame of Chinese modernity was kept alive during that extended period of cultural closure by the cities of Taipei and Hong Kong. While art in both these places negotiated the distinction between modern Western and inherited Chinese modes, their existence as separate political jurisdictions also allowed a further kind of heterogeneity to emerge in Chinese art from mid-century on, namely that between Socialist Realist art and its others.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, that distinction between artists using realist modes and those exploring more expressive or formal concerns already existed in the first half of the century, although without the spatial separation which prevailed later. There were both oil painters and ink painters in the Republican era who wished for a greater realism in art, and engagement with Western modernism was similarly widely based, in part because there were certain perceived resonances between it and aspects of the Chinese painting inheritance.

Taipei and Hong Kong were completely outside the People's Republic all through the Maoist years. Taiwan remains a separate political entity today, and Hong Kong only returned to Chinese rule in 1997, but as a Special Administrative Region with legal guarantees in a Basic Law aimed at preserving key aspects of its distinct way of life. Both cities, each in their own particular way markedly open to global economic, cultural, and information flows, are also good examples of how Chinese artistic modernity grew from the margins rather than from the centre. Although Shanghai, Hong Kong, and Taipei can each be thought of as at the edge of China, this theme of the margins only partly overlaps with that of the city. Another significant part of China's cultural margin has been its diaspora (an 'edge' beyond its actual physical borders), and although many diasporic artists were also based in major cities (such as that great hotbed of artistic creativity in the early twentieth century, Paris), not all always were. If most of the important Chinese artists of the Republican era only sojourned in Japan or the West, the period after the establishment of the People's Republic saw many major artists settling overseas, where an encounter with new developments in Western modernism was intense. In the period of post-Cultural Revolution economic liberalization presided over by pragmatic leader Deng Xiaoping (1904–1997)—and especially during the decade following 4 June 1989, when artistic contemporaneity was newly emergent in the PRC but lacked widespread native opportunities for open exhibition—another wave of ambitious artists joined the diaspora, finding opportunities for display and sale not otherwise available to them. Whereas the story of the Chinese diaspora is often ignored in other accounts of twentieth-century Chinese art, my emphasis on the significance of margins in the overall story of modern China will lead me to give it a certain prominence.

Although it is a phenomenon whose consequences are not limited to the sphere of art, and does not only affect China, migration can also be highlighted in its own right as a significant theme. Certainly there have been large movements of populations from Europe to the United States, say, as well as from China, and many of the century's most important artists, from Picasso to Willem De Kooning (1904–1997),

have worked for large periods of their lives outside the country in which they were born. Nevertheless, migrancy has arguably had a particularly significant effect on the direction Chinese modern art has taken. Many key artists of the Republican era, for instance, studied overseas, and in the 1990s overseas venues allowed a chance for experimental artists to show works they were unable to display at home.

Because of China's sheer size, internal migrancy has also been a significant factor. Artists, like others, were often displaced into the country's interior during the period of the Japanese invasion, with manifold consequences, and an analogous movement from urban to rural areas was forced upon many millions of young people during the later Maoist period. The work of artists who were among those sent down in this way was often strongly marked by the experience. The demographic make-up of both Hong Kong and Taiwan was radically altered by flows from the mainland in the face of the Communist triumph in the civil war. Population movement to Hong Kong continued in the following years as well—by the early 1960s more than half the city's population had been born in Mainland China rather than in the city itself. Internal migration from rural to urban areas of China following the country's economic boom of recent decades is taking place at an astounding rate, and may perhaps even constitute the largest such movement in human history. Even artists who are not themselves participants in this recent rural-to-urban flow are touched by it, since it has transformed the cities in which they are dwelling.

A further key theme for twentieth- and twenty-first-century Chinese art, as for other areas of Chinese cultural life, is nationalism. Nationalist thinking gained ground in China during the nineteenth century in the face of territorial incursion by foreign powers. Because the ruling dynasty, the Qing, was itself of foreign (Manchu) origin the revolutionary movement which eventually led to the establishment of the Republic of China in 1912 was directly nationalist in nature in a way that the movements which led to the French or Russian revolutions were not. After the fall of the Qing the transformation from being subjects of an emperor to citizens of a country was marked in an immediately bodily way by an end to the requirement that all males should wear their hair in a Manchu-style queue as a sign of submission. Artists of the Republican era began to introduce nationalist themes in their art, but it was by no means clear what particular visual expression a Chinese nationalism might take, and most solutions to this question remained somewhat tentative. In the PRC era, however, an engagement with national content became a requirement for art that was strictly policed, and the iconography through which it was to be expressed became fixed. Although art was subservient to politics in this period, political power needed ideological tools as much as physical force to retain its position, and so art and its nation-cementing content was a crucial part of the story of the Maoist era. With the decline of belief in communism in recent decades as China transforms into a capitalist economy, nationalism has again morphed, but a reinvented version of nationalist ideology is of major importance today in creating a degree of social cohesion in a radically shifting society. The Chinese state understands the significance of nationalist ideology in delivering consent for one-party rule, although artists, enjoying greater freedom of expression than under Mao, are sometimes sceptical of the given national narratives.

While the embrace of national content during the Republican era was often found in the work of artists whose choice of medium and style was indebted to Western precedent, it had a particular consequence for ink painting because that medium itself came during the twentieth century to have national connotations in a way it would never have done in previous eras. Of course, a reading of ink painting as 'Chinese' was also applied to art that survived from earlier eras (where it had been created for a private elite rather than a public national audience), and not just to that which was being made in the modern moment itself. Because Chinese art historical discourse has itself sometimes been infected by national thinking in this way, a degree of confusion has resulted, making it more difficult to see quite how new a phenomenon nationalism in Chinese art actually is.<sup>5</sup>

Art's involvement with nationalism in twentieth-century China, while certainly a theme in its own right, is but one aspect of a larger story of modern Chinese art's engagement with social change. During the Maoist years the state itself employed art in a process of social remaking but even before that time artists were often deeply engaged in promoting a transformation of society. Indeed, the theoreticians of social change in China themselves gave close consideration to art's possible social role. Even artists who were not particularly socially engaged in their previous works were pushed by the conditions of wartime into producing art with a propaganda function. In more recent periods one can also see art which is in some sense subversive of mainstream political positions, and indeed Ai Weiwei (b.1957) has risen to considerable international fame in the new millennium for playing the role of an artistic dissident. Direct confrontation of state power, such as Ai has employed (albeit at the price of imprisonment), is a relatively uncommon approach in the recent Chinese context and would have been altogether unthinkable in the Maoist years. For the most part, social critique in Chinese contemporary art has tended to take more oblique forms, differing in this respect from its Western counterpart because of the particular constraints of the field in which it operates. In earlier periods of Chinese Communist Party rule hints of a cultural refusal in art are even more difficult to pin down. If they exist they may perhaps be discovered in art where a degree of personal expression is found—individualistic statements which in another context might seem to be the exact contrary of engaged art.

The Republican revolution of 1911, as the consequence of which China became a modern nation-state for the first time, may be taken as the beginning point of the artistic story told in these pages, which will be continued up to the present day.<sup>6</sup> All moments of historical change, however, are prepared for by earlier events, and thus it will be useful to give a brief indication here of the ways in which China had been changing in the late dynastic period and the consequences of this for its art. Some of the themes highlighted above will be shown to have already developed a degree of importance in this earlier period of Chinese history.

The integration of China in the world economy, which has been so much a feature of recent times, was foreshadowed as long ago as the eighteenth century by the trade which took place in certain coastal cities, pre-eminently Canton (modern-day Guangzhou), to which international trade was confined from 1757 until the 1840s. Trading companies from Western nations such as Britain, the United States,

and Denmark were permitted by the Qing government to establish long-term bases in the city, and Chinese commodities such as tea, silk, and ceramics were to find extensive markets in the West. Items of Chinese ceramic production intended for the export trade were often tailor-made for overseas consumers. Not only were these items of commerce complex and self-conscious exemplifications of Chinese cultural and artistic values, and prized as such by Western collectors of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, they also embodied an understanding of the cultures of the countries to which they were sent. The cosmopolitan city of Canton was at the growing edge of China at that time, open to global networks that had aesthetic as well as simply economic dimensions.<sup>7</sup>

One example of such cultural openness is the portrait sculptor known to us as Chitqua (1728?–1796?), who ran a shop in Canton catering to visiting Western traders in the second half of the eighteenth century. Because of the nature of his business he would have had to produce work which pleased specific individual Western customers rather than simply a generic idea of Western taste. Through the contacts he developed Chitqua was to make a visit to England, arriving in 1769 and staying until around 1772. Living independently in the heart of London he was to continue his trade to great artistic and commercial success, meeting King George III and various British luminaries of the age. Aided no doubt by the ability he had already developed for communicating in English, he was able to find new clients for his portrait figurines and busts, which were made of unbaked clay, subsequently painted, and sold for as much as fifteen guineas apiece. Chitqua even obtained an opportunity to exhibit his work in the 2nd Royal Academy Exhibition in 1770. In addition, Johann Zoffany (1733–1810) included him in his group portrait of that body's members, *The Academicians of the Royal Academy* (1771–1772).<sup>8</sup>

One example of Chitqua's work which has survived is his seated portrait of the physician Anthony Askew (1722–1774), which would have been made around 1770 during his trip to England (see Figure 1). About thirteen inches high, this sculptural portrait displays a high degree of realism in its individualized treatment of facial features, and also offers a convincing sense of corporeality in the torso. Close attention has been given to the details of dress, which helps define the subject's social position: Askew's profession is specified by both his red MD robe and his cane. The employment of paint over the entire visible surface helps add definition both to the dress and to the figure itself, picking out buttonholes as well as eyebrows, irises, and pupils.

Just as Chitqua travelled from China to the West, helping strengthen links which the



**Figure 1** Chitqua, *Portrait of the Physician Dr. Anthony Askew* (c.1770).

trade in Chinese luxury objects had already established, so Giuseppe Castiglione (1688–1766) helped enhance Chinese understanding of Western modes of pictorial representation after his arrival in China in 1715. This Italian-born painter joined a circle of fellow Jesuits in Peking (modern-day Beijing) who had gained access to the imperial court because of their usefulness in providing Western knowledge and their strategy of adapting to local customs. Becoming a court artist himself (taking Lang Shining as his Chinese name), he was one source among others for introducing Western approaches to art in China, printed images produced in the West having already found their way there at an earlier date.

The paintings which Castiglione made cannot be simply seen as European in nature, however. He accommodated his art in both style, medium, and subject matter to the requirements of his new imperial patrons and the expectations of his new cultural environment, producing a hybrid art which (like that of Chitqua, too) was novel within both Eastern and Western contexts. Castiglione helped define the visual culture of the Qing court, and no other European artist would have as deep an engagement with non-Western modes of art making until at least the era of Post-Impressionism. The highly detailed style he developed proved particularly suited to imperial taste and purposes, enabling him to produce believable portraits of Emperor Qianlong and his empress and concubines on the one hand (see Figure 2), and on the other (also on silk and in the elongated format of a handscroll) a landscape filled with many horses. Western representational tools such as modelling and linear perspective certainly aided his work when appropriate, but their application was moderated to diminish any sense of a clashing alien look. No shadows are to be seen on the emperor's face in *Portraits of Emperor Qianlong, the Empress, and Eleven Imperial*

*Consorts* (1736–c.1770s), for instance, and it is represented frontally against a bare background. Shading is certainly found on the bodies of the animals in the *One Hundred Horses* handscroll (1728), and the artist has deliberately demonstrated skill in representing the horses from a variety of different directions and in a number of complex groupings, but even here the degree of modelling is tempered to prevent too great a disparity between the horses and their landscape setting.<sup>9</sup>

Another European artist who relocated to China at an early date was George Chinnery (1774–1852), who arrived on the south China coast in 1825. He based himself in the Portuguese enclave of Macau, which had served (since 1557) as the earliest base for Western commerce with China, but in the early part of his stay he also spent time in Canton. Operating in entirely different circumstances from those of Castiglione at the Chinese court, Chinnery produced landscapes



**Figure 2** Giuseppe Castiglione and others, detail from *Portraits of Emperor Qianlong, the Empress, and Eleven Imperial Consorts* (1736–c.1770s).



and genre scenes depicting Macau and its inhabitants in a picturesque style, as well as portraits of both Western and Chinese clients. Not needing to make accommodations to pre-existing Chinese taste, let alone imperial preference, Chinnery's manner lacks the culturally hybrid quality of Castiglione's. Even when depicting a Chinese subject he was able to work in oils and paint in a style he had already developed before his arrival in China. His portrait of Howqua (Wu Bingjian, 1769–1843), for instance, lacks the formality and full-frontal pose Castiglione was constrained to employ when depicting Qianlong, and makes use of quite prominent contrasts of light and shade to draw attention to the face of this major Chinese merchant of Canton (see Figure 3). This portrait was exhibited in London at the Royal Academy in 1831, perhaps indicating that it remained a work addressed to a Western audience, despite its Chinese subject.<sup>10</sup>

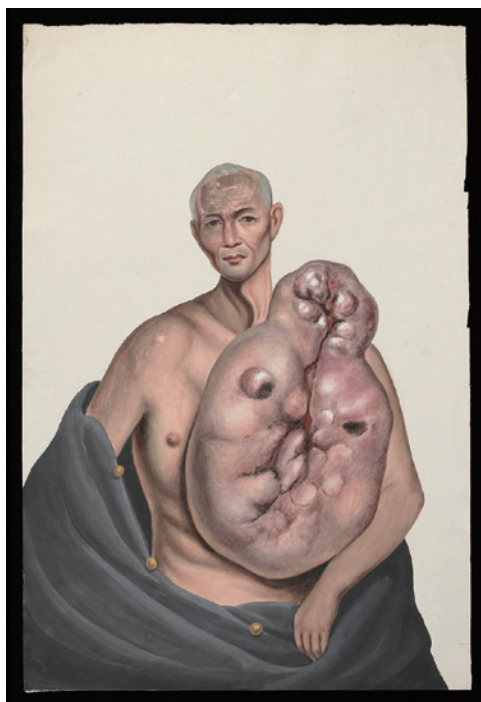
Chinnery's oil painting idiom was to influence Chinese artists based on the South China coast who serviced the growing market which the Western presence there was creating. Perhaps the most talented of these was Lamqua (Guan Qiaochang, 1801–c.1860), whose reputation was such that examples of his works were exhibited during his own lifetime in London, Philadelphia, New York, and Boston. In addition to employing his skill in more straightforward portrait works, such as a self-portrait at the age of 52 (1853, see Figure 4), he also produced a striking and unprecedented set of images documenting preoperative patients with large tumours or other strikingly visible medical conditions for the American physician Peter Parker (1804–1888), who worked in Canton. A study of Woo Kinshing (a fisherman aged 49 with a tumour which had been growing for ten years, see Figure 5) is known in both oil and gouache versions, for instance. Chinese figure painting had generally



**Figure 3** George Chinnery, *Portrait of Howqua* (first exhibited 1831).



**Figure 4** Lamqua, *Self-Portrait of Lamqua at the Age of 52* (1853).



**Figure 5** Lamqua, *A Man (Woo Kinshing), Facing Front, with a Massive Tumour on the Left Side of His Trunk* (c.1837).

de-emphasized physical materiality, not drawing from a basis in anatomical study as European artists were trained to do, and not emphasizing subjects such as the nude which put the body itself into the foreground. In his medical portraits, however, Lamqua confronts the physical body as a topic in an unswerving way. He relies on direct observation to represent flesh which has taken on a life of its own but avoids the dehumanizing forensic gaze of Western medical illustration. Since the conditions depicted tend to be those affecting the body's soft tissue and so take unpredictable irregular shapes, a standard European artistic training in anatomical analysis would not have helped an artist much with this task.<sup>11</sup>

Eighteenth-century Western images of China had often been positive ones, in part influenced by the reports received from the Jesuits attached to the court in Beijing, who had their own reasons for painting a largely affirmative picture of Qing dynastic rule and its consequences. By the nineteenth century, however, a new era of Western imperialistic expansion was under way and the limited trading opportunities afforded to private companies at China's southern tip no longer seemed sufficient.

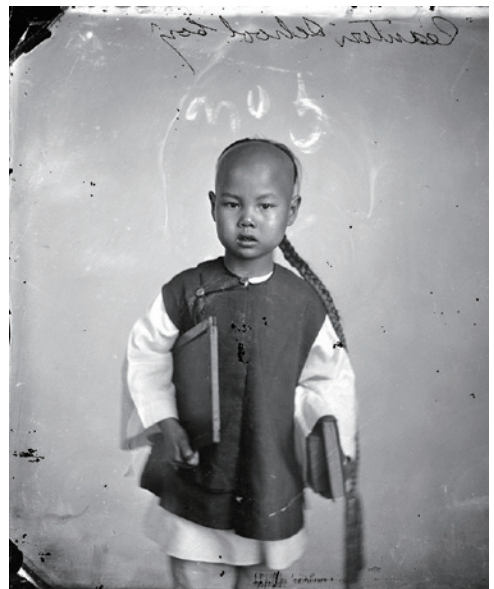
One turning point in this process was the Macartney embassy sent by Britain to the court of Emperor Qianlong in 1793, which aimed at gaining trade concessions but which failed in part because of a mutual lack of cultural understanding as well as China's feeling of economic self-sufficiency. The restrictions on trade which had given rise to the embassy were to lead in due course to the First Opium War (1839–1842) between Britain and China, which was prompted by trade issues including opposition to the import of opium into China—the only commodity supplied by Western traders for which a ready market could be found. The 1842 Treaty of Nanking (Nanjing), which ended the conflict on terms painful to the defeated Chinese side, opened trade freely at several 'treaty ports' including Shanghai and also ceded sovereignty over the island of Hong Kong in perpetuity.

In the decades which followed, the Qing state suffered further weakening, both at the hands of foreign powers and as a result of internal rebellion. The Second Opium War (1856–1860) reinforced the Qing state's awareness of its military inferiority in the face of modernized foreign naval and ground forces: imperial forces were defeated by a considerably smaller Anglo-French contingent. Foreign troops reached as far as the capital Beijing, and the elaborate Western-style palaces at Yuan Ming Yuan (which Castiglione had helped to design) were ransacked and destroyed. Further territorial and trading concessions followed.

Paralleling this economic and military penetration of China was a visual conquest of it achieved with the aid of a new artistic medium, photography. Felice Beato (1832–1909) accompanied the European forces during the Second Opium War, producing images showing breached defences and the dead bodies of defeated Chinese soldiers, a China abject before a dominant Western gaze. *Interior view of the North Fort of Taku on the Peiho River, near Tientsin (Tianjin), China, following its capture by the English and French armies on August 21st 1860. The battlements and cannons are surrounded by Chinese corpses* (an albumen print of 1860) is one example of Beato's work from that time (see Figure 6).<sup>12</sup> John Thomson (1837–1921), who based himself in Hong Kong, travelled through China with a camera at only a slightly later date (1868–1872), recording both people and a physical environment which had never before been made visible to an outside gaze in such replete detail. Whereas portraiture had previously been the privilege of the rich, Thomson made images of Chinese people from all levels of society, paying subjects to sit for him to overcome a reluctance to pose. Although ethnographic in intention, concerned more with documenting types than with specifying individuality, nevertheless the resultant images (such as *A Chinese School-Boy*, see Figure 7) allow particular people of that age to address us as vivid presences. *Illustrations of China and Its People*, the book in which his photographs were in due course published, alongside explanatory texts, appeared in four volumes between 1873 and 1874, forever discrediting the visual fantasies of chinoiserie which had long stood in for real knowledge about China.<sup>13</sup>



**Figure 6** Felice Beato, *Interior view of the North Fort of Taku on the Peiho River, near Tientsin (Tianjin), China, following its capture by the English and French armies on August 21st 1860. The battlements and cannons are surrounded by Chinese corpses* (1860).



**Figure 7** John Thomson, *A Chinese School-Boy* (published in *Illustrations of China and Its People*, 1873–1874).



The Taiping Rebellion (1850–1864) witnessed more than twenty million deaths, mainly among civilians, when a charismatic leader claiming to be the younger brother of Jesus initiated a civil war against the Qing state (perceived as alien since it was a Manchu rather than a native Han dynasty) which could only eventually be defeated with foreign help. Prefiguring, and to some extent inspiring, the revolutionaries of the following century, the Taiping Rebellion demonstrated the vulnerability of Qing rule and proved that ideas of foreign origin (albeit completely localized in their interpretation) could prove inspirational in China.<sup>14</sup>

Foreign threats continued into the twentieth century. The First Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895) saw China defeated by a Japan which had radically modernized following the 1868 Meiji Restoration to become the leading Asian power. The loss of Taiwan to Japan occurred at this time. Foreign troops from an alliance of eight world powers also reached Beijing in 1900 in response to the anti-foreign Boxer Rebellion. The Qing state was under great pressure to reform. The Self-Strengthening Movement (c.1861–1895) focused primarily on military and economic modernization, while the Hundred Days' Reform of 1898 envisaged more fundamental political and institutional change, including the end of imperial civil service examinations, the construction of a modern education system, and the introduction of a constitutional monarchy and democratic government.

All this proved too ambitious for the more conservative factions at court, however, and the reform phase rapidly came to an end, encouraging some in the belief that fundamental societal change must come from below, by revolutionary means. A nationalist ideology emerged in response to the vicissitudes of nineteenth-century China, which were an impetus to much of the reformist energy seen in the century which followed, in art as in other areas of life. Indeed, nationalist feeling remains a potent force in the country even today. Underlying the widespread sense of pride at China's economic rise over the last few decades is a feeling that long-term injustices with roots in that earlier period are finally being put right.

Even contemporary experimental artists have sometimes shown interest in looking back to that century of humiliation in their work. Huang Yong Ping (b.1954), for instance, made the Opium War the focus of his 2008 installation *Frolic*, presented at the Barbican Centre in London—and thus of course in the very country which had been responsible for the drug trade and invasion to which his work alludes. Looking for parallels between that era of enforced cultural interaction and the present era of globalization which sees his work exhibited overseas, Huang took his exhibition title from the name of a ship built in 1844 for the opium trade.

In his installation *Circle of Animals / Zodiac Heads*, exhibited at the 29th São Paulo Biennale in 2010 and also in due course in other venues around the world, Ai Weiwei presents modern replicas of eighteenth-century sculptures representing the real or mythical animals which serve as the signs of the Chinese zodiac (see Figure 8). The originals were at one time installed at the Yuan Ming Yuan complex but were looted by foreign troops at the time of its destruction and have thus been dispersed to a variety of overseas locations. Like Huang, Ai has an eye on both the present and the past, and his work is in some sense a response to the nationalistic uproar which occurred when two of those looted bronze sculptures (fountainheads in the form of

a rat and a rabbit) came up for auction at Christie's in February 2009. Ai is no doubt fully aware of the irony of treating such relatively unsophisticated objects as national treasures, as so many in China do, especially given that they originally came into existence as part of a project designed by Westerners for a foreign (Manchu) ruler.



**Figure 8** Ai Weiwei, *Circle of Animals / Zodiac Heads* (2010).

# Epilogue

## Chinese Art Now

The present moment of Chinese art is, of course, an ever-shifting frame, and anything written from the perspective of now is already lost to the past by the time of reading. Comments about the present moment are more in danger of rapid obsolescence than whatever one might say concerning any earlier time, about which one at least would have information with respect to what it led up to, and not just what led up to it. Nevertheless, without wishing to produce a false sense of narrative closure about a story that is in no sense over, a few final comments from the perspective of the time of writing seem called for at this point. As a structuring device for these brief and provisional observations I would like to return to the list of themes which were identified in the introduction of this book as overarching continuities for the period of time it covers (and which have been repeatedly alluded to in the course of the more chronologically focused discussion in the previous six chapters). To reconsider these themes more explicitly here affords us an opportunity to interrogate their continued relevance with respect to the present moment.

If one looks at Chinese art's engagement with the West, the first theme which was identified, one can see that stylistic languages which have their roots in European or American practice are now so well established in China that one would not want to think of them as markedly foreign at all. If they are used in a distinctive way, that is not as a result of any lack of fluency but because confident local accents or dialects have already developed. A globalization of the art world which has both aided and been aided by Chinese's art's emergence on the international stage is now well established, and as a result it is not unusual to see contemporary Chinese art in major international venues. Ai Weiwei's *Sunflower Seeds*, an installation made from many millions of porcelain replica seeds produced by artisans in Jingdezhen (once home to imperial porcelain manufacture) famously went on display in Tate Modern's Turbine Hall in October 2010, for instance. Song Dong's *Waste Not*, a similarly large-scale installation consisting of items his mother had hoarded, was shown at MoMA, New York, in 2009 (see Figure 193), while Zeng Fanzhi's work was displayed in the Louvre next to that of Eugène Delacroix (1798–1863) in late 2014 (see Figure 194). Significant showings of Mainland Chinese contemporary art have occurred in the Venice Biennale since 1993, but by 2003 official Chinese national representation



**Figure 193** Song Dong, *Waste Not* (2009), as installed in the Museum of Modern Art, New York.



**Figure 194** Zeng Fanzhi, installation view of *From 1830 Till Now, No. 1* (2014), Louvre, Paris (with the artist's work displayed next to that of Eugène Delacroix).

began, indicating that state bodies had realized active intervention in the contemporary art field could help promote China's image and soft power.<sup>1</sup>

Increased possibilities for travel and the rapid developments in digital communication make the world a smaller place. Chinese artists living overseas can nowadays remain in close contact with their home country, maybe even using it as a lower-cost fabrication base where culturally specific artisanal skills may be found (as Gu Wenda has done, for instance), and an artist who is living in China itself can nevertheless travel widely, to exhibit or to undertake an artist's residency, perhaps. From this point of view, the West becomes more important as an alternative context to engage with audiences than as a source of creative inspiration. Artists who made their reputations overseas in earlier eras, such as Zhao Wuji, now have a strong collector base in China itself, although the process does not always work in the other direction. The expansion of the commercial art market has certainly allowed contemporary Chinese art to have broad international recognition, but earlier Chinese modernism is yet to be featured widely outside the Chinese-speaking world even in temporary exhibitions, let alone on the walls of museums which display permanent collections of modern art. Hence, in part, the need for a book like this one to help broaden and reconfigure the currently Western-centred story of modern art by writing China into it.

In the nineteenth century the West was both a source of knowledge and a potential threat to China. That double identity does still exist in some sense. Large numbers of Chinese students now study in North America, and Mandarin-speaking

tourists are common in Western museums such as the Louvre in the way Japanese ones were before the new millennium began. But despite China's economic rise and concomitant military modernization it still sees a degree of threat to its national interests from the West. The strategic pivot to the Asia-Pacific region announced by the United States in 2011 added to that sense of being in potential confrontation with Western power, and an adversarial rhetoric towards China from the subsequent Trump administration only deepened that sense of geopolitical clash. Partly for this reason, the binary China-West pattern of thinking which affected art in the first half of the twentieth century has not altogether dissolved. Apart from this continued engagement with the West, relatively little exploration of the world's other cultures is visible in recent Chinese art, indicating that established hegemonies still remain largely in place.

The sense of buoyancy and promise that has come from continued economic growth (particularly, perhaps, after China's accession to the World Trade Organization in 2001) has obviously shifted the international balance of power to a great degree, however, and a number of artists who went overseas in earlier moments have now returned to this more clearly resurgent China. Chen Danqing went back in 2000 to teach at Tsinghua University in Beijing, for instance, and Xu Bing became vice president of the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing in 2008. The newly available opportunities for exhibiting contemporary art in Mainland China since the start of the new millennium have undoubtedly been a boost for such returnees, and even artists remaining overseas were able to find chances to re-engage with their home country in the new century. The First Guangzhou Triennial (2002, Guangdong Museum of Art) was one of the earliest major attempts to showcase the art which had been created in the previous decade, bringing a diverse range of contemporary art to a new wider public than it had previously reached in China itself. The work of New York-based Zhang Hongtu, for instance, had not been seen in Mainland China for around two decades. There were still limits to what was possible, however. This was demonstrated when Huang Yong Ping's *Bat Project II* (2002, see Figure 195), a life-size partial replica of the American EP-3 spy plane forced to land on Chinese territory in 2001 after a collision with a Chinese fighter jet, was removed



**Figure 195** Huang Yong Ping, *Bat Project II* (2002), as installed in front of the Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou, for the First Guangzhou Triennial (2002), but removed prior to the official opening.

from exhibition at the last minute. For returnees it has not always been plain sailing, either. Chen Danqing has faced criticism, for instance, and, of course, another artistic returnee, Ai Weiwei, experienced imprisonment and confiscation of his passport for his outspoken views.<sup>2</sup>

While the market for contemporary Chinese art has primarily been for work made in media with no specifically indigenous heritage, the now-burgeoning market for art of the earlier part of the twentieth century is primarily a market for ink painting. With the economic rise of China over the last quarter century and the re-emergence of a middle class and a wealthy elite, many Chinese collectors have appeared and the price of modern ink painting has risen dramatically. To give a sense of exactly how things have changed one can note that the total value of sales of Zhang Daqian and Qi Baishi's work at auction in 2011 apparently exceeded that achieved by both Andy Warhol and Pablo Picasso.<sup>3</sup> Some of this interest in ink art has recently also spilled over into the contemporary field, with various stakeholders working to raise the profile of ink painting as a distinct phenomenon in the marketplace. For the most part, however, one can say that the most interesting engagement with traditional media remains that made by artists of a more experimental nature such as Gu Wenda, Yang Jiechang, and Qiu Zhijie, whose work sits somewhat uncomfortably under this traditional-sounding promotional label.<sup>4</sup>

One problem facing artists who wish to make use of the inherited Chinese brush tradition is that during the course of the past century the tradition has become loaded with national significance, as we have seen. This presents something of a burden or forced responsibility for artists wishing to engage with it today, and one which is not easy to shake off. In addition, art employing inherited media arguably becomes more detached from everyday experience in an era such as this where few learn to handle the Chinese brush and ink for everyday writing, given the prevalence not just of ball-point pens but, more threateningly, of digital input methods that might even rely on a keyboard rather than linear marks. Where the ink heritage has an advantage which can be explored in the future, however, is in being a bridge back to an enormously rich cultural heritage which will inevitably continue to be a source of interest. One area of its strength, for instance, lies in ink painting's nuanced range of expressive and painterly possibilities. Given that much Chinese art of the last quarter century has taken conceptual paths or shown a concern more with image than with form or touch, the ink painting heritage is well placed to be a resource should less distanced approaches to the artistic medium come again to the fore.

A concern for nature is central to ink painting's inherited visual paradigm. A particular prominence is given to the natural landscape, within which man is characteristically represented as only one part of a larger whole. Maoist and, indeed, all other instrumental views of nature are now being challenged by more ecological or holistic perspectives, and ink art, long in dialogue with Daoist and Buddhist thought, arguably holds resources for developing more environmentally balanced conceptions. It might even be said to offer broader possibilities for spiritual renewal in a society which has become extremely materialistic in its emphasis.

The extent to which recent ink art has accommodated trends from outside China such as abstraction is quite striking. The kind of abstract or semi-abstract



ink art which in an earlier post-Second World War era was only really seen in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the diaspora is now to be widely found in Mainland China as well. One can say, therefore, that hybridity is more widely to be found today in Chinese art than ever before, but arguably the issues over cultural meeting—while still present—are usually less marked and less fraught with worry in a culturally confident twenty-first-century China than they were in martial-law era 1960s Taipei or 1970s colonial era Hong Kong. Although individual Chinese artists must surely be going through their own personal trajectories of discovering other cultures and languages, they do not seem particularly drawn to comment upon that in their art in the way that Xu Bing and others did in their 1990s language-based works. Perhaps this is partly because foreign languages and cultures are now less alien and markedly ‘other’ in the sense that they will already likely have been encountered on a daily basis by anyone growing up in a Chinese urban environment. The arrival of Western brands in Chinese cultural space might have been worth noting in Wang Guangyi’s early 1990s paintings, but those brands are now part of the given scenery of contemporary Chinese consumerism. Western fast-food outlets or coffee shops are easy to discover on a city street and international high-end luxury brands rely on China for a significant proportion of their global sales.<sup>5</sup> Many young Chinese people are comfortable in using the English they learned at school, even if they have yet to travel overseas to a place where it is a native language. Cultures have always been cross-fertilizing throughout history, but a strongly hybrid cultural experience is now the new normal in our increasingly globalized world.

This process of accelerated hybridization and the cultural opening and economic connectedness which has permitted it has further eroded not only many of the distinctions between ink artists and those using imported or new media but also the distinctions between socialist and capitalist culture which often seemed to clash oddly in the transformational Chinese cityscape of the late 1980s or early 1990s. Although nominally still a communist country, capitalism (which has not yet proven incompatible with a strongly centralized state) is now the dominant paradigm in China. The heterogeneity of Chinese art might therefore be said to have declined markedly in recent years. The marketplace acts as a great leveller, offering all living artists the same arena of display where the differences that matter are more those which make an individual artwork as commodity stand out from another. The previously striking distinction between state-sponsored socialist ‘realist’ art in Mainland China and market-mediated non-socialist art elsewhere in the Chinese-speaking world is gone. Even that post-Maoist phase in which artists felt they needed to work through Cultural Revolution-era visual culture by ironic play with it is now more or less behind us. Ai Weiwei’s use of sunflower seeds in his 2010 Tate Modern installation is a reference to a once-common symbolic identification of Mao with the sun, but one suspects he has turned back to that symbol not because of any current power it has which he wishes to contest but because of the absence of more recent equivalent symbols of state power which could be engaged with. Given the place as much as the time of its display, relatively few who encountered Ai’s work would be likely to have a direct pre-existing familiarity with that symbolism anyway, and

this can be said to count against its power to play productively with meaning in the present tense.<sup>6</sup>

If forces for real heterogeneity exist today, they may be found in China's cities. At a spatial level alone the forces of urban development, while admittedly having dimensions which are tightly controlled and planned, and which lead to homogenization, also give rise to a certain heterotopic quality. Iconic structures, often designed by renowned overseas architects, may feature in certain highly choreographed areas of a city such as Beijing's Olympic site (see Figure 196 and Figure 197), but in other locations, perhaps more towards the periphery, new physical and social milieus arise where non-mainstream cultures can develop.<sup>7</sup> In a pattern which was already established in the 1990s, artists have been actors in urban formation, creating cultural zones in which to work and live. A similar fragmentation can also be observed in the Chinese-language areas of cyberspace, which offer a massive and diversified new arena for self-expression, albeit one which the Chinese state is concerned to monitor and intervene in. Ai Weiwei's exploitation of Twitter to disseminate his politically-loaded comments far beyond the boundaries of the art world is one well-known use of this emergent virtual public sphere.

A further persisting heterogeneity comes from China's margins and their distance from trends in Mainland China. Hong Kong may now be a part of the People's Republic, but owing to its separate legal structure, that city on the margins of China



**Figure 196** Herzog & de Meuron and others, National Stadium, Beijing (often referred to as 'the Bird's Nest'), completed 2007, opened 2008. Photo by the author, 5 May 2008.



**Figure 197** Office for Metropolitan Architecture, CCTV Headquarters, Central Business District, Beijing, completed 2012. Photo by the author, 3 May 2008.



has retained some of the cultural difference from the Mainland it acquired in earlier times. Taiwan remains politically separate, of course, and in the juxtaposition of its art and that of Hong Kong and Mainland China which was made in the previous chapter a difference was evident even if parallels were also to be found. Overseas artists of Chinese descent, part of a great and continuing story of Chinese migration, are often marching to a totally different beat than their Mainland-based counterparts. Making reputations in arenas far from China itself, some artists of the diaspora may not even consider themselves Chinese in any meaningful sense at all, and may have lost contact with the everyday use and understanding of Chinese language or of other dimensions of Chinese culture.<sup>8</sup> Freedom of expression in these marginal sites means that where their art does choose to reference Chinese issues they may display a frankly antagonistic opposition to the narratives of the Chinese state.

With the decline of active adherence to communist ideals and practice in China, nationalism has arguably become even more important than it was in the first half of the twentieth century. Whereas nationalist discourse was often voluntarily promoted by individuals in that earlier period, with the arts being a key site for doing so, it has now become a primary tool used by the state for building social cohesion. An imported idea as much as Communism (which in China often took a markedly nationalistic form), it offers an optimistic narrative of China's growth which the economic expansion of the last few decades has helped give credence to. In addition to a general trend—at least for the moment—of increasing prosperity felt by individual citizens in their own lives, economic growth also enables the infrastructural development and increasing military might which provide symbols of advancement at the level of the nation as a whole. The incorporation of Hong Kong and Macau into the People's Republic in the second half of the 1990s helped create a sense of national coherence being recovered, a righting of wrongs that went back to the nineteenth century. China's space programme and hosting of the 2008 Olympics have both in their own ways also helped enhance national pride, as they were certainly intended to, and more recently the nationalistic notion of the 'Chinese Dream' has been actively promoted by the state. By their nature, however, national narratives need continual feeding with new triumphs, and this can prove difficult to achieve, if only because economic good news is unlikely to always be forthcoming as internationally connected economies are beyond any state's ability to control. Nationalism can, therefore, be a force which develops its own momentum beyond a state's ability to steer it.

Culture has played a role in China's recent national narrative, for example with the opening (from 2004 onwards) of Confucius Institutes around the world to promote Chinese language and civilization as part of a soft power initiative. So far, however, few direct efforts have occurred within China itself to make contemporary visual art play a major positive role in fashioning a national story, if one excludes the case of architecture. One can point to Cai Guo-Qiang's involvement with the 2008 Beijing Olympics opening ceremony (an event within China but addressed also to the world, see Figure 198), to the official representation of China at the Venice Biennale, and to the establishment in 2012 of the Power Station of Art in Shanghai (PSA, Shanghai Dangdai Yishu Bowuguan), the country's first state-run contemporary art



**Figure 198** Cai Guo-Qiang, *Footprints of History: Fireworks Project for the Opening Ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games* (2008).

museum.<sup>9</sup> But for the most part, the emphasis has been on preventing art from critiquing state power and from offering alternative potentially destabilizing narratives, and, in any case, state attempts to curate contemporary art run the risk of seeming too tame to the sophisticated international art audience.<sup>10</sup> Xi Jinping (b. 1953), who became China's paramount leader in 2012, has made calls for a rather retro-sounding return to art which serves state ideology (as part of his broader strategy for reasserting Communist Party of China centralized control in the country), but in actuality the main force currently serving to defuse art's potentially subversive power is that of the marketplace.<sup>11</sup> One can point to specific cases where artists have actively collaborated with commercial entities, such as Yang Fudong's short film *First Spring*, made in 2010 for Prada Menswear, but in fact no matter what the content of any given artwork might be, the market serves as a force for normalization by turning it into a high-priced commodity for elite consumption.<sup>12</sup>

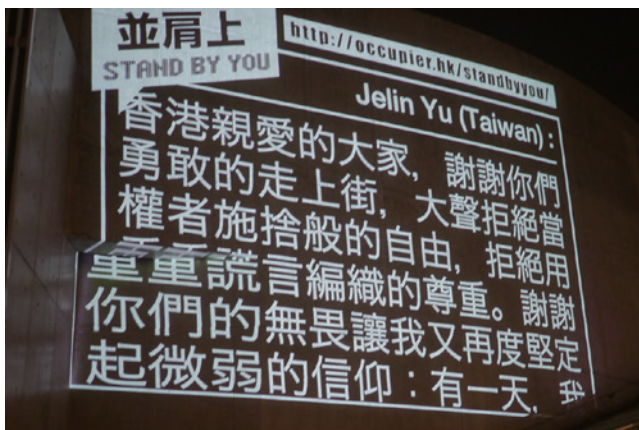
Caught between the twin forces of the Chinese state's tightly scripted national narrative and the marketplace's levelling commodification, one must not overestimate the space available for art to be an effective force for change in China at this moment in time. For the most part, oblique refusals of society's grand narratives, which occasionally connect with audiences able to respond to them might be all we can expect. While questioning of nationalist rhetoric can certainly be found in the work of Mainland-based artists, alongside other expressions of alternative thinking, it is art in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the diaspora which enjoys the greater freedom of expression and the social conditions necessary for elaborating on visions springing from different basic assumptions to that of the Chinese state. Even in such locations it is frequently the case that art is more often deconstructive of China-centred narratives than it is able to escape the orbit of national concerns entirely. Contemporary Chinese art is still largely art about China and the Chinese experience, rather than art that speaks directly to global concerns where matters of identity may not be the main factor.<sup>13</sup>

One recent instance where visual images did play an important role in social change was Hong Kong's Umbrella Movement, in which basic democratic freedoms were being sought by people otherwise excluded from political life. A street

occupation from 26 September 2014 (becoming more extensive from 28 September after tear gas and pepper spray were used by police in a counterproductive attempt to disperse crowds), was unlike anything that had been seen in the People's Republic of China since June 1989. As part of the process of building unity between the occupiers themselves but also to creatively communicate the values being fought for to those who visited the Umbrella Movement sites and (via print and electronic media) to the wider world, visual images played a major part (see Figure 199 and Figure 200). This phenomenon, much commented upon at the time, took place without



**Figure 199** Yellow umbrella sculpture made of smaller yellow umbrellas (a symbol of Hong Kong's Umbrella Movement of 2014). Installed near the Central Government Complex at Tamar, Hong Kong, during the street occupation. Photo by the author, 25 October 2014.



**Figure 200** *Stand By You: Add Oil Machine* (2014) by the Add Oil Team, consisting of Sampson Wong (Huang Yuxuan, b.1985) and others. A projection onto a wall in the Tamar street occupation zone of messages of support for Hong Kong's Umbrella Movement uploaded to a dedicated website by both local and international contributors. The Chinese phrase which can be literally translated as 'add oil' (*jiaoyou*) has the figurative meaning of offering encouragement, somewhat similar to the English phrase 'step on the gas'. Photo by the author, 1 October 2014.

reference to the institutions of the mainstream art world, whether the government-funded and controlled museum sector or the commercial art market.<sup>14</sup> Both new sites and new participants for art making were found, and a pluralistic range of styles and strategies was present, with amateur and professional image makers equally free to become involved. Short-lived though this almost utopian infusion of art into life was (the last street occupation was eventually cleared on 15 December 2014), the visual creativity of the occupation demonstrated that art making and its potential as an agent of social change is alive and well in the Chinese-speaking world.<sup>15</sup> How it will manifest itself in the future remains to be seen.

# Notes

## Introduction

1. *Guohua* may be translated as 'national painting', but also (if treated as an abbreviation of *Zhongguohua*) as 'Chinese painting'. The terms *guohua* and *xihua* (also *xiyanghua*) derive from earlier Japanese terms of the Meiji era which distinguish between 'Japanese-style' and 'Western-style' painting, respectively: *nihonga* and *yōga*. Gao Jianfu preferred the term *xin guohua* ('new Chinese painting'), which perhaps better distinguishes his reformist art from earlier approaches to painting in China. In the modern period, the distinction between Chinese and Western approaches (which I am here offering a caveat about) became the primary one in the painting of China, whereas before, the distinctions which mattered were those between the culturally valorized 'literati' painting of the amateur elite and work produced by professional artists (another questionable pair of categories), as well as the distinctions of genre (landscape, figure, or bird and flower). The term 'literati painting' (*wenrenhua*) continued to be used on occasion into the twentieth century to describe painting using inherited media and idioms, despite the disappearance in the post-dynastic era of the social class which gives the term its meaning, and the rise of middle-class patronage mediated by the market. On the use of the term *guohua*, see Julia F. Andrews, 'Traditional Painting in New China: *Guohua* and the Anti-Rightist Campaign', *Journal of Asian Studies* 49, no. 3 (August 1990): 555–77 (especially 556–59).
2. More systematic English-language surveys of twentieth-century Chinese art aimed primarily at specialists (and requiring a certain stamina from their readers because of their length) are Lü Peng, *A History of Art in 20th-Century China* (Milan: Charta, 2010), and Michael Sullivan, *Art and Artists of Twentieth Century China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996). Sullivan's book is a pioneering study of the field and is written in an accessible style, but it is inevitably less useful as a guide to contemporary art because of its date of publication. My own previous study (David Clarke, *Modern Chinese Art* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000]) has the same limitation, and is in any case superseded by the present volume. The only potential advantage it retains is its relative brevity. Julia Andrews and Shen Kuiyi, *The Art of Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), is a valuable recent study of more manageable proportions than Lü's or Sullivan's volumes but contains much information which is addressed primarily to China specialists rather than those with a broader interest in modern art. It largely supersedes an earlier and less systematic exhibition catalogue by the same authors, *A Century in Crisis: Modernity and Tradition in the Art of Twentieth Century China* (New York: Guggenheim Museum and Abrams, 1998). Among books which address the art of this period as a whole but without any attempt to provide a systematic survey (either because they are collections of essays or because they treat a single medium), are John Clark, *Modernities of Chinese Art* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010) (which mostly concentrates on the second half of the century); Kao Mayching, ed., *Twentieth-Century Chinese Painting* (Hong Kong: Oxford University

Press, 1988); *Twentieth Century Chinese Painting: Tradition and Innovation* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Museum of Art, 1995); Maxwell K. Hearn and Judith G. Smith, eds., *Chinese Art: Modern Expressions* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2001); and Chu-tsing Li, *Trends in Modern Chinese Painting* (Ascona: Artibus Asiae Publishers, 1979).

3. China overtook Japan in 2010 to become the world's second largest economy in nominal GDP terms. This is more than 90 times the size of the Chinese economy at the point in 1978 when free market reforms were first introduced. Per capita income, of course, still remains relatively low for a great many in China, with development unevenly spread between urban and rural areas.
4. This spatial heterogeneity during the PRC period had its counterparts in the earlier half of the century, since British rule in Hong Kong dates back to its nineteenth-century founding as a city, and Taiwan had been under Japanese rule from 1895 until 1945. In addition, Macau was under Portuguese control. During the anti-Japanese war and the civil war, the mainland of China was also further divided.
5. Nationalism is itself in most respects an imported Western idea, even if the accounts of Chinese history it inspires may be indigenous in emphasis. On the extent to which supposedly indigenous notions in China may have been inspired by foreign thinking, see Arif Dirlik, 'Chinese History and the Question of Orientalism', *History and Theory* 35, no. 4 (Dec. 1996): 96–118. For a study by the present author which offers in-depth analysis of several specific moments in Chinese artistic modernity using an approach which explicitly eschews treating China's history in a national frame and in isolation from the broader historical narrative, see David Clarke, *Chinese Art and Its Encounter with the World* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2011). While that book looks at Chinese art within a wider-than-national narrative frame, in two earlier books I adopted a complementary strategy of employing a narrower-than-national frame: see David Clarke, *Hong Kong Art: Culture and Decolonization* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002) and David Clarke, *Art & Place: Essays on Art from a Hong Kong Perspective* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1996). For a study of Chinese painting history in terms of the audiences to which it was addressed, see Craig Clunas, *Chinese Painting and Its Audiences* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017)—a discussion of art addressed to the nation is given in Chapter 5 (155–91). For a call to decouple historical writing from national frames, which considers the case of modern China, see Prasenjit Duara, *Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 17–50.
6. For a thematically structured introductory overview of twentieth-century China, see Kam Louie, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Chinese Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) (my own contribution to that volume is David Clarke, 'Revolutions in Vision: Chinese Art and the Experience of Modernity', 272–96). An accessible history of modern China in photographs and words is Jonathan D. Spence and Annping Chin, *The Chinese Century: A Photographic History of the Last Hundred Years* (New York: Random House, 1996). A textbook history of China from the Qing dynasty through to the present is Immanuel C. Y. Hsü, *The Rise of Modern China* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).
7. A history of the China trade is Paul A. Van Dyke, *The Canton Trade: Life and Enterprise on the China Coast, 1700–1845* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2005). An overview of China trade art is Carl L. Crossman, *The Decorative Arts of the China Trade* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Antiques Collectors Club), 1991.
8. On Chitqua, see David Clarke, *Chinese Art and Its Encounter with the World* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2011), 15–84.
9. A degree of disparity between figures and setting in Castiglione's works can sometimes be explained as due to the co-authorship of paintings with Chinese collaborators. A full-scale preparatory drawing for the *One Hundred Horses* scroll (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), perhaps created to enable imperial review as much as to guide the production of the painting, shows two clearly different brushwork styles (and therefore

perhaps hands) in the horses and human figures and in the landscape background. The former is thinner and less varied but has more of an observational feel. On Castiglione, see Cécile and Michel Beurdeley (translated by Michael Bullock), *Giuseppe Castiglione: A Jesuit Painter at the Court of the Chinese Emperors* (London: Lund Humphries, 1972) and *Portrayals from a Brush Divine: A Special Exhibition on the Tricentennial of Giuseppe Castiglione's Arrival in China* (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 2015). See p. 208 of the latter publication for evidence of a Chinese emperor explicitly requesting a painting in which Chinese and Western elements are harmoniously combined—that is, where Chinese imperial taste directly calls for a stylistic hybridity. On the Qing court's agency in procuring Castiglione's services (versus a view of him as a 'missionary artist') see the essay by Marco Fusillo, 'The Qing Patronage of Milanese Art: A Reconsideration of Materiality and Western Art History', *Portrayals from a Brush Divine*, 310–22. Castiglione assisted with the production of a Chinese version of Andrea Pozzo's treatise *Perspectiva Pictorum et Architectorum* which was published in 1729, and reissued in 1735 (see C. and M. Beurdeley, 37). Western knowledge concerning anatomy had entered China at an earlier date, with Father Dominique Parennin producing a treatise on anatomy for Emperor Kangxi in 1698. A further example of how European modes of visual expression influenced Chinese understanding, even of themselves, comes from the field of mapping. It was the Jesuits at the Chinese court who provided Emperor Kangxi with the first complete map of China itself, the first comprehensive visual and conceptual overview of China as a distinct entity (see Arif Dirlik, 'Chinese History and the Question of Orientalism', *History and Theory* 35, no. 4 [Dec. 1996]: 106).

10. On Chinnery, see Patrick Conner, *George Chinnery, 1774–1852, Artist of India and the China Coast* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Antique Collectors' Club, 1993). For an anthology of Chinese painting in oil, see Tao Yongbai, ed., *Oil Painting in China, 1700–1985* (Nanjing, Jiangsu Art Publishing House, 1988).
11. An extensive collection of Lamqua's medical portraits is held in the Medical Historical Library at Yale University. A smaller group are in the Gordon Museum of Pathology, King's College London, and a few can be found in other places such as the Wellcome Collection, London. The possibility that studio assistance was involved with the creation of some of these works cannot be ruled out. On these medical portraits, see Stephen Rachman, 'Memento Morbi: Lam Qua's Paintings, Peter Parker's Patients', *Literature and Medicine* 23, no. 1 (Spring 2004): 134–59. On the portrait of Woo Kinshing, see 146 and 147 figure 5 (which reproduces the oil version from the Medical Historical Collection at Yale University). For a broader discussion of Lamqua's work, see Patrick Conner, 'Lamqua, Western and Chinese Painter', *Arts of Asia* (March–April 1999): 46–62. For an overview of Cantonese artistic culture in this period, see Yeewan Koon, *A Defiant Brush: Su Renshan and the Politics of Painting in Early 19th-Century Guangdong* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2014).
12. 'Taku' is Dagu, the 'Peiho River' is the Bei River. This photograph is dated in relation to the event shown, but the exposure would have been made on 22 August or later. Photographing the action of a battle would have been technically impossible at that point, and Beato staged his static scenes retrospectively when he needed to include human figures. On Beato in China, see David Harris, *Of Battle and Beauty: Felice Beato's Photographs of China* (Santa Barbara, CA: Santa Barbara Museum of Art, 1999).
13. John Thomson's *Illustrations of China and Its People* was published in 1873–1874 in London by S. Low, Marston, Low and Searle. A modern edition was published as *John Thomson: China and Its People in Early Photographs* (New York: Dover Publications, 1982). On photography in China, see Claire Roberts, *Photography and China* (London: Reaktion Books, 2013).
14. Artists were of course among those directly affected by the Taiping Rebellion. For an account of the impact on painter Wu Changshi and his family, see Shen Kuiyi, 'Wu Changshi and the Shanghai Art World in the Late Nineteenth Century and Early Twentieth Centuries' (PhD thesis, Ohio State University, 2000), 149–50.



significant differences from the Mainland and Hong Kong concern with the destruction of valorized older structures, but it has parallels with the photographic investigation by Mainland artist team Shao Yinong (b.1961) and Mu Chen (b.1970) of disused Maoist-era meeting halls as relics of a now-abandoned vision of modernity.

68. An early example of Yuan's new media art is *Fish on a Dish* (1992), featuring a video image of a swimming goldfish projected vertically down onto a white ceramic plate, which seems to create a boundary for the creature's movements.
69. *The Midnight After* (2014), a feature film directed by Fruit Chan (Chen Guo, b.1959), uses scenes of a strangely evacuated Hong Kong to similarly uncanny and post-apocalyptic effect but within a more straightforward ghost story genre. Yuan describes the elimination of people and vehicles in the City Disqualified series as attempting 'to create a city that lacks historical memory and is ambiguous in its identity' (email to the author, 12 January 2017).

## Epilogue

1. On Chinese representation in the 2013 Venice Biennale, see Ian Volner, 'The Neutralization of Chinese Art', *New Republic*, 23 June 2013, at [newrepublic.com](http://newrepublic.com) (accessed 25 June 2015) and Ning Hui, 'China's Complicated Relationship with the Venice Biennale', *TeaLeafNation*, 19 June 2013, at [tealeafnation.com](http://tealeafnation.com) (accessed 25 June 2015). On China at the 2011 Venice Biennale, see Richard Vine, 'China's New Normal in Venice', *Art in America*, 15 June 2011, at [artinamericamagazine.com](http://artinamericamagazine.com) (accessed 25 June 2015).
2. On criticism of Chen Danqing, see 'Chinese Academic Bemoans "Narrow-Minded . . . Repressive" Attacks', *Reuters*, 26 January 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/01/26/us-china-politics-universities-idUSKBN0KZ0RT20150126> (accessed 30 October 2015). Ai Weiwei was arrested on 3 April 2011, and released on 22 June the same year. His passport was not returned until July 2015.
3. On art auction sales in 2011, see 'Chinese Artist \$507 Million Ousts Picasso as Top Auction Earner', *Bloomberg Business*, 12 January 2012, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2012-01-12/chinese-artist-507-million-ousts-picasso-as-top-auction-earner> (accessed 30 September 2015). On the growth of the Chinese middle classes, see 'China's Middle-Class Overtakes US for First Time as Global Inequality Grows', 14 October 2015, [scmp.com](http://scmp.com) (accessed 6 November 2015).
4. Yang Jiechang distances himself from 'contemporary ink art' in comments made in Martina Köppel-Yang, 'Good Morning, Hong Kong: A Dialogue with Yang Jiechang, May 2015', in *Yang Jiechang: Good Morning, Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Alisan Fine Arts, 2015), 12–15 (see especially 14–15).
5. On shifting Mainland Chinese attitudes towards McDonald's as it became a normalized part of the Chinese cityscape (and for documentation of Chinese-owned entities taking a controlling stake in McDonald's Chinese operations in 2017), see He Huifeng, 'Chinese State Firms Get a Taste for McDonald's as Big Mac Starts to Lose Its Symbolic Power', *South China Morning Post*, [http://www.scmp.com/news/china/economy/article/2106475/chinese-state-firms-get-taste-mcdonalds-big-mac-starts-lose-its?utm\\_source=Direct](http://www.scmp.com/news/china/economy/article/2106475/chinese-state-firms-get-taste-mcdonalds-big-mac-starts-lose-its?utm_source=Direct) (published 12 August 2017). On China becoming (after Japan) the world's second largest market for luxury goods (which are dominated by European brand names), responsible for around a quarter of all global sales, see 'China Becomes World's 2nd Largest Luxury Market', *People's Daily Online* (English version), <http://en.people.cn/90001/90778/90857/90860/6710402.html> (published 27 July 2009).
6. For a critical reading of Ai Weiwei's *Sunflower Seeds* and a sceptical view of the political effectivity of that artist's work in general, see Paul Gladston, 'The Tragedy of Contemporary Chinese Art', *Leap* 6, 2010, [leapleapleap.com](http://leapleapleap.com) (accessed 9 November 2015), and Paul Gladston, *Contemporary Chinese Art: A Critical History* (London: Reaktion Books, 2014), 280–83. Ai's art and thought has been exhaustively documented in English-language



publications; see, for example, *Ai Weiwei Speaks with Hans Ulrich Obrist* (London: Penguin Books, 2011). Although the socialist realist style is no longer credibly employed—despite, for example, a series of realist images of modern Shanghai history commissioned at the beginning of the new millennium's second decade and held at the China Art Museum, Shanghai (Zhonghua Yishu Guan, successor to the Shanghai Museum of Art)—arguably Chinese people still rely on socialist realist images for their visual knowledge of the history of the Maoist era. The use of a reproduction of Chen Yifei's *The Taking of the Presidential Palace* (1977) at the Presidential Palace in Nanjing itself to channel the historical imagination of visitors in a site with potentially strong Republican-era associations is worth noting. More commonly though, it is the sheer absence of alternative visual sources that gives official imagery from earlier times a prominence, and not the active employment of earlier visual imagery to condition historical thinking which we see in this use of Chen's work.

7. Among the iconic architectural structures by international architects that have found a place on the Beijing skyline are the National Centre for the Performing Arts by Paul Andreu (b.1938), which opened in 2007; the Beijing National Stadium by Herzog & de Meuron (Jacques Herzog, b.1950; Pierre de Meuron, b.1950), which opened in 2008; and the CCTV Headquarters by Office for Metropolitan Architecture (Rem Koolhaas [b.1944]), completed in 2012. Well-known architects had already made an impact on the Hong Kong skyline; the HSBC Main Building by Norman Forster (b.1935) was completed in 1985, while I. M. Pei's Bank of China Tower was completed in 1990.
8. An example of a diasporic artist who has explored Chineseness from its fringes is William Yang (b.1943), a third-generation Australian Chinese photographer. See his *Sadness* (St. Leonards, NSW, Australia: Allen and Unwin, 1996), an investigation through words and photographic images into both his Chinese and gay identities, which has also been presented as a slide show with monologue. On Yang and issues of Chineseness, see Ien Ang, 'Can One Say No to Chineseness? Pushing the Limits of the Diasporic Paradigm', *Boundary 2*, vol. 25, issue 3 (Fall 1998): 223–42, especially 223–24 and 238–42. For a discussion of the difficulty of defining Chineseness, see Allen Chun, 'Fuck Chineseness: On the Ambiguities of Ethnicity as Culture as Identity', *Boundary 2*, vol. 23, no. 2 (Summer 1996): 111–38. For a first-person essay which engages with the same issue, see Xu Xi, 'Why I Stopped Being Chinese', *Iowa Review*, issue 45, no. 1 (Spring 2015): 36–40.
9. The Power Station of Art is, like London's Tate Modern, housed in a post-industrial building, formerly (until 2007) the Nanshi Power Plant. The transformation of the building took place for the 2010 Shanghai World Expo, during which it served as the Urban Future Pavilion. The China pavilion of the Shanghai Expo has now similarly been given over to art, becoming the home of the China Art Museum from 2012.
10. For an example of a sceptical review of state-sponsored Chinese representation in the 2013 Venice Biennale, see Ian Volner, 'The Neutralization of Chinese Art', *New Republic*, 23 June 2013, at [newrepublic.com](http://newrepublic.com) (accessed 25 June 2015). An example of an exhibition in a state-run museum on modern and contemporary art where the contemporary representation would have seemed very partial to audience members familiar with that scene as a whole, see 'The Temperature of History: CAFA and Chinese Representational Oil Painting', held at the China Art Museum, Shanghai, 30 April–2 August 2015.
11. On Xi Jinping's call for artists to serve the people and the cause of socialism, see for instance 'Xi Jinping Isn't a Fan of Weird Architecture in China', *The Wall Street Journal*, 17 October 2014, <http://blogs.wsj.com/chinarealtime/2014/10/17/xi-jinping-isnt-a-fan-of-weird-architecture-in-china/> (accessed 24 September 2015). For an account of an artist arrested for producing a parodic image of Xi Jinping of a kind which has been frequently made of Mao, see Jamie Fullerton, "'Humour under Attack" in China as Artist Faces Jail for Insulting Premier', *The Independent*, 29 May 2015, 30.
12. Like earlier works by Yang Fudong, *First Spring* presents a disjointed narrative lacking in spoken dialogue with references to various historical eras (largely effected through costume). Commercialization in the Chinese art scene can be evidenced by the way two leading independent PRC art spaces, Long March Space in Beijing and Vitamin in

Guangzhou, have begun to sell art. This trend is both parodied and embodied by Xu Zhen, who in 2009 set up the Madeln Company, through which he now markets his work, adopting an entrepreneur persona rather than that of an artist (see Lü Peng, *Fragmented Reality: Contemporary Art in 21st-Century China* [Milan: Charta, 2012], 274). Wu Hung shares the present author's sense of a normalization in recent Chinese art; see *Contemporary Chinese Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2014), 432–34. For a classic text arguing for the marketplace's ability to co-opt even the most subversive art, see Walter Benjamin, 'The Author as Producer' (1934), in *Modern Art and Modernism: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Francis Francina and Charles Harrison (London: Harper and Row, 1982), 213–16.

13. On this issue, see David Der-wei Wang, 'In the Name of the Real', in *Chinese Art: Modern Expressions*, ed. Maxwell K. Hearn and Judith G. Smith (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2001), 41–43. Wang quotes C. T. Hsia's critique of modern Chinese writers as having a parochial 'obsession with China', and arguably many contemporary Chinese artists are caught within the same problem. For Hsia's comment, see C. T. Hsia, *A History of Modern Chinese Fiction*, 3rd ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 533–54 (especially 536). For a related discussion, see Ien Ang, 'Can One Say No to Chineseness? Pushing the Limits of the Diasporic Paradigm', *Boundary 2*, vol. 25, issue 3 (Fall 1998): 223–42 (especially 230–33). Counter-trends within twentieth-century Chinese culture can of course be found, such as Cai Yuanpei's interest in Esperanto and Xu Bing's experiments with developing a universally legible pictographic language in works such as *Book from the Ground* (2014), which offers a narrative told entirely through visual signs.
14. On art and visual images during the Umbrella Movement, see, for example, Alexandra Seno, 'Artists Join the Umbrella Revolution', *The Art Newspaper*, published online 1 October 2014, at <http://old.theartnewspaper.com/articles/Artists-join-the-Umbrella-Revolution/35720> (accessed 24 September 2015); 'Giant Pro-Democracy Banner Hung on Lion Rock', RTHK English News, at [http://rthk.hk/rthk/news/englishnews/20141023/news\\_20141023\\_56\\_1048038.htm](http://rthk.hk/rthk/news/englishnews/20141023/news_20141023_56_1048038.htm) (accessed 24 September 2015); 'Add Oil Machine Wins Human Rights Artwork Award', *Ejinsight*, 25 February 2015, <http://www.ejinsight.com/20150225-add-oil-machine-wins-human-rights-artwork-award/> (accessed 24 September 2015); 'Democracy Graffiti Girl Sent to Children's Home', RTHK English News, at [http://rthk.hk/rthk/news/englishnews/20141230/news\\_20141230\\_56\\_1065256.htm](http://rthk.hk/rthk/news/englishnews/20141230/news_20141230_56_1065256.htm) (accessed 24 September 2015); and Vivienne Chow, 'Fight to Preserve Hong Kong's Protest-Inspired Street Art', *South China Morning Post*, 22 October 2014, <http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/article/1622198/race-save-occupy-art-hong-kong-museums-refuse-help?page=all> (accessed 24 September 2015).
15. On trends for social engagement in Hong Kong art which can be said to prefigure the role of visual images during the Umbrella Movement of 2014, see Stephanie Cheung, 'Taking Part: Participatory Art and the Emerging Civil Society in Hong Kong', *World Art* 5, issue 1 (2015): 143–66.

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